



YOUR PAPER TODAY 16 PAGES

SriLankan Airlines grounds five aircraft due to lack of funds

SriLankan Airlines is facing a USD 1.2 billion debt, and outgoings such as interest and lease payments eat into any possible profit margins

BY DARSHANA SANJEEWA BALASURIYA

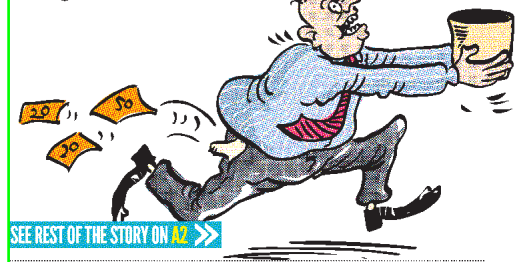
Five aircraft from the Sri Lankan Airlines fleet have been grounded for several months due to lack of funds to pay for engine repairs, according to the Civil Aviation Authority.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

Rs.110 spent to recover Rs.20

BY RANITH RAJAPAKSE

The Central Province Chief Secretary's office has spent Rs.110 as stamp fees to inform a PHI to pay Rs.20 to issue a copy of an audit report under the Right to Information Act.



SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

CHINA DEBUNKS DISINFORMATION ON REQUEST FOR 100,000 TOQUE MONKEYS

Did Agriculture Ministry lie?

BY KELUM BANDARA

The Chinese Embassy in Colombo yesterday laid to rest what it called 'disinformation' on local and foreign media about Sri Lanka getting ready to export "100 thousand" toque macaque monkeys to a Chinese private company for 'experimental purpose.'

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

Monkeys exported to China to be eaten raw while they are alive: Environmentalist

BY CHATURANGA PRADEEP SAMARAWICKRAMA

Environmentalist Nayanaka Ranwella said yesterday that according to investigations conducted by them, the government is planning to send 100,000 monkeys to China for their brains to be eaten raw while they are still alive.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

Petitions filed in support of Dolawatte's Bill

Several intervening petitions have been filed in the Supreme Court supporting SLPP MP Premnath Dolawatte's Private Members' Bill that decriminalise same sex consensual relationships. The intervening petitioners have submitted that if the proposed Bill is enacted by Parliament that it will remedy a long-standing injustice against the LGBT community.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

WHY IS THE GOVERNMENT NOT CLAIMING USD 6.4BN

COMPENSATION FOR X-PRESS PEARL TRAGEDY?

- Serious allegations of bribes paid to a Sri Lankan to bury the matter
Minister Wijeyadasa Rajapakse instructs police to initiate probe
CEJ says only 29 days remaining for govt. to take legal action
Delays in filing the case will influence witnesses; certain groups can cause the evidence to disappear under the seabed

BY JAMILA HUSAIN AND CHATURANGA PRADEEP SAMARAWICKRAMA

At a time when the country is depending on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and its international partners to bail Sri Lanka out of its worst ever economic crisis, there are serious questions as to why the government has failed to claim a massive compensation of US 6.4 billion dollars from the X-Press Pearl Disaster.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

X-PRESS PEARL MARITIME DISASTER

Timeline of the X-Press Pearl maritime disaster from May 25, 2021 to June 30, 2021, including details on the explosion, fire, sinking, and environmental impact.

Who is the Sri Lankan who was paid \$250mn bribe to derail litigation against X-Press Pearl?

BY KELUM BANDARA

Justice Minister Wijeyadasa Rajapakse said he got hold of details regarding the transfer of US \$ 250 million to the foreign account of a Sri Lankan as a bribe to obstruct the legal process related to X-Press Pearl disaster, and directed the police to initiate investigations into it.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

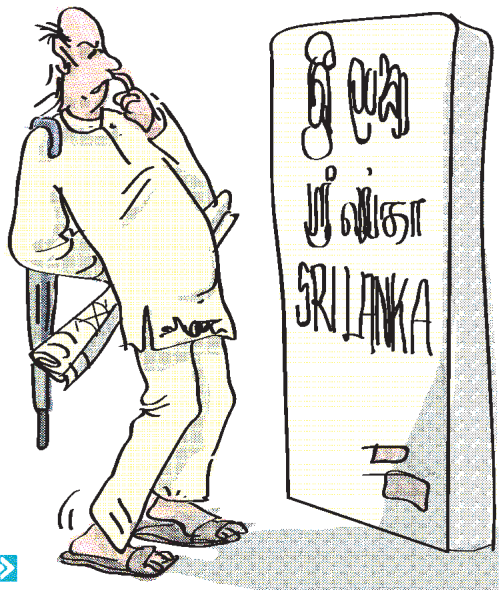
Name change from Ceylon to Sri Lanka has caused utter destruction: Astronomer

Claims country faced bad luck since 1956, with the formation of the SLFP

BY CHATURANGA PRADEEP SAMARAWICKRAMA AND INDIKA SRI ARAVIDA

Science writer and astronomer Anura C. Perera claims that the country's name change from Ceylon to Sri Lanka has caused utter destruction over the past few decades owing to the unfavourable word 'Sri'.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>



MALAYSIA BUSTS SYNDICATE TRAFFICKING SRI LANKAN KIDS TO EUROPE

- The syndicate received 30,000 to 50,000 euros for each Sri Lankan child taken to Europe on Malaysian passports
The syndicate would trick parents into bringing their child's birth certificate to the immigration office on the pretext of wanting to make a passport for the kid

The Immigration Department of Malaysia has busted a syndicate which used Malaysian passports to smuggle Sri Lankan children to Europe, following the arrest of a local married couple.

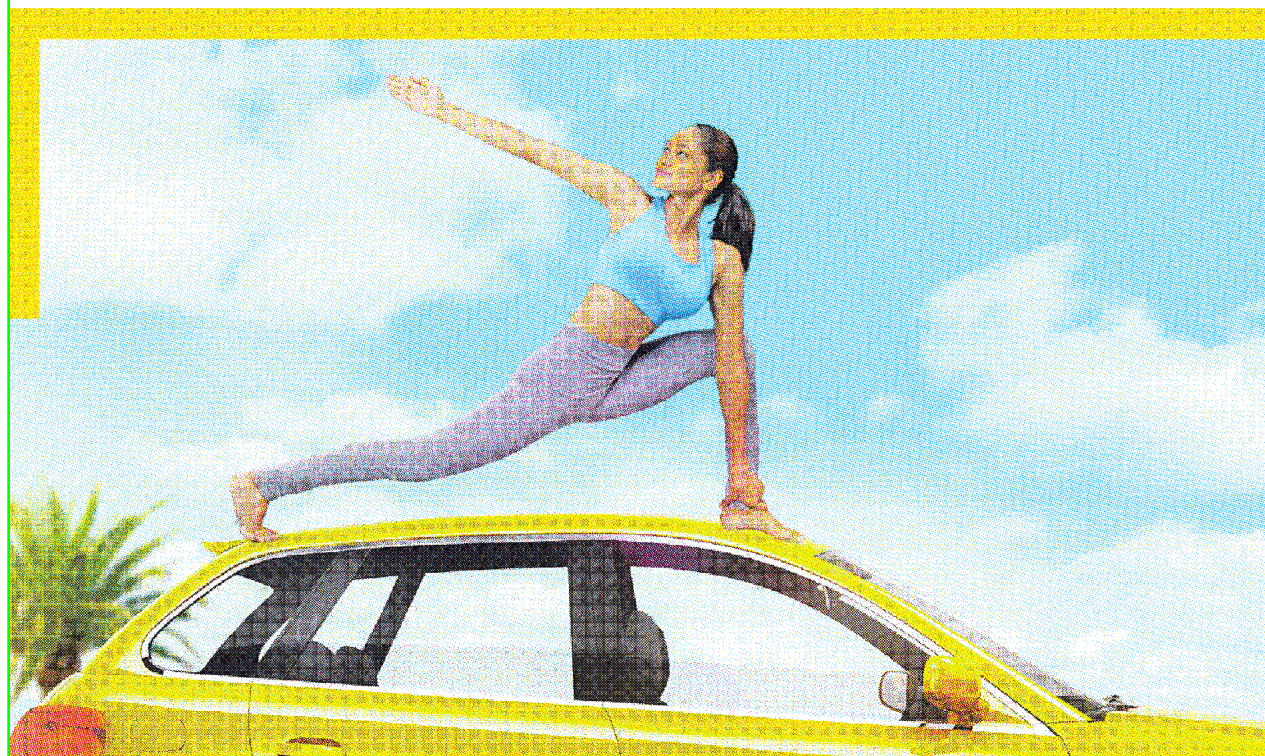
Immigration Director-General Datuk Ruslin Jusoh said the couple was nabbed last Wednesday (April 12) when they turned up at the Kuala Lumpur Immigration headquarters to get a Malaysian passport for a Sri Lankan child.

SEE REST OF THE STORY ON A2 >>>

Advertisement for Susil Premajayantha, Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna, mentioning IMF assistance and a factcheck.

Factcheck advertisement titled 'Minister Premajayantha inefficient in claiming efficiency of IMF process'.

Advertisement for Vogue Jewellers featuring Akshaya Tritiya and special old gold rates.



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CONT'D.
FROM PAGE 1

SriLankan Airlines grounds five aircraft due to lack of funds

SriLankan Airlines currently has an all-Airbus fleet of 24 modern, sophisticated aircraft which includes twelve A330 (long haul) and twelve A320/A321 aircraft (medium haul). Out of those, the airline has 19 in-service aircraft. The airline flies to 39 destinations in 21 countries.

An official told Daily Mirror that SriLankan Airlines were forced to ground five A320 aircraft due to lack of engines.

They include an A321-200N registered as 4R-ANF, an A320-200N registered as 4R-ANA, an A321-251N registered as 4R-ANB and three Airbus A321neo registered as 4R-AND, 4R-ANE and 4R-ANF.

The official said that the aircraft have been grounded for several months as SriLankan Airlines lacked funds to fix the engines.

Petitions filed in support of Dolawatte's Bill

The intervening-petitions sought to dismiss the submissions made by political activist Jehan Hameed, Shenali Waduge and Athula De Silva that the Penal Code amendment bill will expose children to child abuse.

The intervening petitioners include former Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo, Prof. Savitri Gunasekara; former Human Rights Commissioner, Ramani Muttetuwegama; former Chairperson of the National Child Protection Authority, Natasha Balendra; former Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka and former UN Undersecretary General for Children Radhika Coomaraswamy; Child Rights Activist Dr. Tushara Wickremarajapaksa; Executive Director of the Family Planning Association (FPA), Thushara Ranasinghe; Director of Advocacy of the FPA and former Child Protection Advisor at Save the Children and Coordinator for the National Partnership to End Violence Against Children, Sonali Peiris; Programme Officer for HIV Services in South East Asia, Jake Oorloff; Equality Director of iProbono, Aritha Wickramasinghe; Executive Director of the National Transgender Network, Bhoomi Harendran and LGBT Human Rights organisation Equal Ground. President's Counsels Sanjeewa Jayawardena and Dilrukshi Wickremasinghe and Attorneys-At-Law Thishya Weragoda and N.K. Ashokbaran are among the senior lawyers representing the intervening-petitioners.

The petitioners asserted that there are sufficient provisions in the Penal Code to protect children from abuse. Furthermore, the petitioners argued that Section 365B of the Penal Code defines "Grave sexual abuse" as "any act" done for sexual gratification "by the use of [his] genitals or any other part of the human body (ER)

Rs.110 spent to recover Rs.20

PHI R.R.S. Medawela of Doluwa MOH office in Gampola said he was in need of a copy of the audit report on an alleged fraud involving Rs.9.8 million in 2020 in Hatton Dickoya Urban Council where he worked.

He said the Chief Secretary's office had informed him by registered post at the expense of Rs.110 to pay Rs. 20. He pointed out although the involvement of loss to the government in this instance was Rs. 90, there could be major losses due to the administrative frailties.

Name change from Ceylon to Sri Lanka has caused utter destruction: Astronomer

"From the assassination of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and Vijaya Kumaratunga, to the bankrupt entities named with it, the word 'Sri' has had a disastrous effect. Even the last king of Sri Lanka was named Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe," he explained.

He said the use of the word 'Sri' before the name of the country, and the names of leaders, political parties, and government institutions had caused the bankruptcy of the country.

Our country had received bad luck since 1956, with the formation of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) by its founder, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike.

WHY IS THE GOVERNMENT NOT CLAIMING USD 6.4BN COMPENSATION FOR X-PRESS PEARL TRAGEDY?

The Singapore flagged X-Press Pearl, which caught fire and began sinking off Sri Lanka's western coast on May 20, 2021 was the worst maritime disaster to have struck the country. It has had a significant impact on Sri Lanka's sensitive coastal environment, local communities and the economy and killed a large number of marine life.

Now almost two years since the tragedy, the government is yet to take legal action against the X-Press Pearl owners to claim a whopping compensation of US 6.4 billion dollars, leading to serious questions as to why the government is delaying or ignoring to claim this amount which would benefit the ailing economy.

The Center for Environmental Justice, said only 29 days remain for the Sri Lankan government to take legal action against the X-Press Pearl Disaster, and delaying filing the case against the disaster will cause

the evidence under the sea bed to disappear.

CEJ Chairman and Senior Lawyer Dr Ravindranath Dabare told Daily Mirror that only the Sri Lankan government has the power to file a case against the incident under the Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA) Act.

The CEJ has filed a Public Welfare Prosecution on behalf of the public, the country, the environment, the fishermen, the tourism industry, and future generations in some hope to claim for compensation following the tragedy.

"According to the court's decision, we would be able to get the compensation. As a civil organization, we filed the case within 14 days after the disaster. but the government institutions have not taken any decision to file the case," Dr. Dabare said.

Getting late to file the case will influence the witnesses; certain groups

can erase the witnesses and cause the evidence to disappear under the seabed, he said.

Justice Minister Wijeyadasa Rajapakse has already made a shocking revelation that he had got hold of details regarding the transfer of US \$ 250 million to the foreign account of a Sri Lankan as a bribe to obstruct the legal process related to X-Press Pearl disaster, and directed the police to initiate investigations into it. However he has failed to name the Sri Lankan involved and will await further details from the probe.

At the time the X-Press Pearl tragedy occurred, now Minister of Power and Energy Kanchana Wijesekera was the Minister of Fisheries and now Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Sabry was the Minister of Justice and the government at that time had assured that all action would be taken to claim the required compensation.

WHO IS THE SRI LANKAN WHO WAS PAID \$250MN BRIBE TO DERAILED LITIGATION AGAINST X-PRESS PEARL?

The X-Press Pearl had been carrying 25 tonnes of nitric acid, along with other chemicals and cosmetics, when it caught fire on May 20, 2021.

The government authorities are now planning for litigation against the company seeking compensation.

Minister Rajapakse told Daily

Mirror that he received details related to the bank transaction involving a US \$ 250 million bribe to derail the process, denying compensation to the country.

"Money has been transferred to the foreign bank account of a Sri Lankan national. As the minister, I directed the police to investigate the matter.

I gave all the details to the police. The police have already commenced investigations," he said.

Meanwhile, he said the Attorney General is proceeding with plans for litigation in Singapore.

Sri Lankas lawyers have hired a few foreign legal experts since the case is to be heard under a different direction.

Monkeys exported to China to be eaten raw while they are alive: Environmentalist

The issue of exporting monkeys to China had become the main topic in the country. However, according to the Wildlife Protection Act, there are no legal provisions to export a large number of wild animals.

"According to the Act, our country cannot export animals for money as we have signed an agreement not to engage in the sale of wild animals.

"Exporting wild animals will not help in bringing in foreign exchange. However, it has been reported that the wife of a senior official of the Coconut Development Board has been involved behind the scenes with this programme," Ranwella said.

Malaysia busts syndicate trafficking Sri Lankan kids to Europe

He said the 'Bahnu International's syndicate made use of poor Malaysian parents with children under 12 to get the passports.

The syndicate would trick parents into bringing their child's birth certificate to the immigration office on the pretext of wanting to make a passport for the kid, he added.

"However, during the application process at the immigration counter, a Sri Lankan almost the same age as the Malaysian child would be ushered to the counter instead to get their fingerprint and photograph taken.

"Once completed, the husband and wife, who are the syndicate's masterminds, would act as a

'transporter' by bringing the Sri Lankan child with a Malaysian passport to Europe," he said in a statement yesterday.

He said the immigration officer processing the passport application that day suspected something amiss when the guardian looked significantly different from the child, who could not speak Malay.

He said it was learnt that the parents were paid RM 500 for bringing their child to the immigration office.

Ruslin said initial investigations showed the syndicate received 30,000 to 50,000 euros for each Sri Lankan child taken to Europe on Malaysian passports.

Minister Premajayantha inefficient in claiming efficiency of IMF process

IMF Staff Level to Board Level Agreement with Sri Lanka Delayed Relative to Recent Restructuring Episodes

Country	Days
Indonesia 2009	49
Greece 2010	7
China 2010	38
St. Kitts and Nevis 2011	88
Jamaica 2013	75
Cyprus 2013	42
Guatemala 2014	104
Ukraine 2015	27
Monrovia 2017	94
Barbados 2018	24
Kenya 2019	18
Suriname 2021	237
Zambia 2021	268
Argentina 2022	22
Sri Lanka 2022	200

Source: IMF Press Releases

Note: Lebanon is excluded as they have not yet received board-level agreement. It has been 348 days since staff-level agreement.

Note: The selection of countries was based on those that underwent debt restructuring since 2009, and for which there is publicly available information regarding the dates of agreement. Unless stated otherwise all countries entered an Extended Fund Facility Programme (EFF) *Standby Agreement ** Rapid Credit Facility *** Extended Credit Facility

On claim 2: As illustrated in Exhibit 1, of all the countries that entered debt restructuring episodes, half of them were able to secure a board-level agreement within 46 days of reaching the staff-level agreement, and most others took under 100 days, while Sri Lanka took 200 days (about 7 months). Therefore, the minister is not correct in his second claim as well.

The minister argues overall that Sri Lanka has been exceptionally efficient in the process of entering into the current IMF programme.

Both claims he makes for this argument are incorrect. And, relative to other countries, Sri Lanka is not among the best (as argued), but amongst the worst, on time taken to formalise an IMF programme. Therefore, we classify his statement as BLATANTLY FALSE.

*FactCheck.lk's verdict is based on the most recent information that is publicly accessible. As with every fact check, if new information becomes available, FactCheck.lk will revisit the assessment.

Three decades under the rule of Father, Mother and Daughter

By KALANI KUMARASINGHE

Sri Lanka was ruled for almost three decades by a trio of father, mother and daughter, Prof. Charitha Herath said responding to former President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga's statement on the country becoming a failed state.

Former President Kumaratunga recently said that Sri Lanka was a country which ranked well on social indices at the time of independence, but has now regressed and become a failed state.

"What are these ridiculous statements? Out of these 75 years, for at least 30 years, it was her father, mother and herself who ruled the country," Herath said, responding to questions by journalists.

He said that former President Bandaranaike ruled the country for 11 years, her mother Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike ruled for 12 years, while her father S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike ruled the country for four years.

China debunks disinformation on request for 100,000 Toque monkeys

Issuing a press release, the Embassy said the Chinese National Forestry and Grassland Administration, the main government department supervising and managing the import and export of wild animals and plants, clearly clarified that it is not aware of the request and has not received any such application from any side.

"The Embassy would like to further stress that as a contracting party of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), China has already adopted its Wildlife Protection Law

in 1988 with several subsequent amendments.

The Chinese government always attaches great importance to wildlife protection and actively fulfill international obligations, which makes China one of top countries in the world in terms of wildlife protection legislation and law enforcement," the statement said.

Agriculture Minister Mahinda Amaraweera earlier said he received a request from a private entity in China to import around 100,000 Toque monkeys from Sri Lanka.

Cardinal is not the AG: Sirisena responds to Cardinal's statement

Former President Maithripala Sirisena said that the Cardinal is not the Attorney General to make decisions. "He is not the Attorney General to make decisions.

That is done by the court," he said. The former President made these comments in response to a statement by Archbishop of Colombo Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith.

Weligama Divisional Secretariat building on the verge of collapse

By SUNIL DHARMABANDU DE SILVA - WELIGAMA

On a commemorative plaque, it is mentioned that the two-story structure was constructed as part of late President Ranasinghe Premadasa's decentralization of administration initiative, and was inaugurated on 29th October 1992 by the then Minister of Home Affairs, Amara Piyasili Ratnayake.

Even the two pillars at the entrance to this two-storied building are stripped of their plaster, revealing iron rods underneath. The same condition can be observed in several areas of the ground floor.

Signs that read 'Caution: The building is unstable. Please refrain from staying in or around it' are posted both outside and



within the premises. As a result, several divisions

that previously occupied the premises have been relocated. When questioned, T.L.N.S. Mendis, Divisional Secretary of Weligama, stated that the concerned authorities had been notified of the situation. Given the potential risk of loss of life, if the building collapses suddenly, it is the responsibility of the relevant authorities take to immediate measures to address the issue.

OBITUARIES

KANAGARATNAM - ISAAC VELUPILLAI (formerly of OTS Colombo). Beloved husband of Laurel, loving brother of late Peace, late Pushpam, Ivan, Joy and Elizabeth. **The remains will lie at the A.F. Raymond Funeral Parlour on 20th April 2023 from 8.30 a.m. Funeral service at 3.00 p.m. followed by burial at the General Cemetery, Kanatte. 109869**

RANASINGHE - EVELYN. Loving wife of late Proctor Henry David Ranasinghe, loving mother of Manini, late Athula and Mahinda, Kumudini and Anoma, loving mother-in-law of Oscar, Rohan and Aruna, loving grandmother of Kushani, Nushara, Senuri and Inuli. **Cortege leaves A.F. Raymond's Funeral Parlour at 4.00 p.m. on Thursday 20th April, for cremation at 4.30 p.m. at General Cemetery, Borella (New Crematorium). 109603**

ONLINE OBITUARIES
www.dailymirror.lk/obituaries

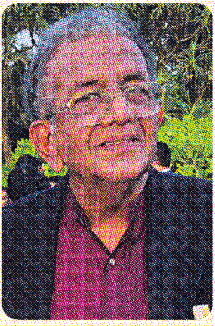
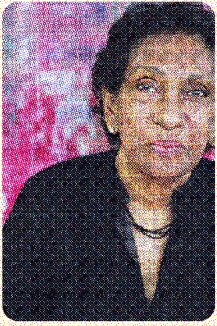
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REMEMBRANCE

In Loving Memory of
Nalini Bulankulame Seneviratne



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birth nor death can
erase our good deeds."
-The Buddha.

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INTERVIEW

Use this crisis as an opportunity to make serious strides toward asset recovery related to corruption.

- World Bank Country Director



By
**Kelum
Bandara**

World Bank Country Director for Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Maldives Faris Hadad -Zervos, in an interview with Daily Mirror, responds to questions related to the current economic crisis of Sri Lanka and the way forward. Excerpts:

Q Sri Lankans have begun to feel some relief in terms of somewhat reduced prices of essential commodities, availability of domestic gas and absence of petrol lines. The World Bank says it is a challenging time ahead. How can Sri Lanka sustain the present momentum and get Sri Lanka back on the growth path without burdening people anymore?

The current crisis is not a temporary liquidity shock that can be resolved by external financing support. It is a result of longstanding structural weaknesses, which were elevated by a series of exogenous shocks. Poor governance, fiscal indiscipline, a restrictive trade regime, a weak investment climate, and episodes of loose monetary policy and an administered exchange rate, contributed to macroeconomic imbalances in the last two decades. Resolving a deep crisis of this nature will be difficult.

A strong and credible structural reform program is critical to avoid a prolonged crisis and address the (above) root causes of the current economic difficulties. Meaningful outcomes of debt restructuring and the collective support of international partners will also be needed to maintain the reform momentum and chart the course for a speedy and robust economic recovery. The necessary macroeconomic adjustments may initially adversely affect growth and poverty but will correct overall imbalances, help regain access to international financial markets, and build the foundation for sustainable growth. Mitigating the impacts on the poor and vulnerable remains critical during the adjustment through better-targeted social assistance.

“The Bank recommends that government fully implements the proposed Anti-Corruption Bill, by ensuring the independence of investigations and prosecutions, and an adequate budget for the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (CIABOC), as commensurate with its expanded mandate.

Q How important is it to fast-track debt restructuring?

Sri Lanka's public debt is unsustainable, and as a result, the country lost international financial market access in 2022. As of the end of 2022, Public and Publicly Guaranteed (PPG) debt is estimated to have increased to 122.5 percent of GDP, while the government's gross financing needs (GFN) were about 26 percent of GDP. Restoring a sustainable debt path, therefore, entails reducing the unsustainable level of debt and high GFN through debt restructuring and supported by a broader fiscal adjustment. Speedy and successful debt restructuring is critically important to bring Sri Lanka back to a sustainable path, build confidence among investors and development partners, and regain international financial market access that Sri Lanka lost in 2022, all of which will contribute to raising much-needed foreign exchange inflows.

Q The Sri Lankan government is increasingly under pressure from the trade unions that stand in the way of reforms in the institutions such as the Ceylon Electricity Board and the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation. In economic terms, can Sri Lanka afford to abandon these reforms due to such pressure emanating from various quarters?

A key factor in Sri Lanka's poor productivity and competitiveness in domestic and international markets is the dominance of SOEs in the economy. Many have monopoly or dominant market positions, receive public subsidies, and compete directly with the private sector. Misallocation of resources in favour of SOEs, along with market advantages and weak governance and management, has resulted in labour and capital inefficiencies, and financial losses. By crowding out the private sector, SOEs diminish the scope for new investment and innovation that can drive productivity and service delivery improvements. SOEs have also been a major source of fiscal



Sri Lanka's public debt is unsustainable

There are complex and discretionary trade policies; tax advantages provided to certain industries, firms or interest groups; and conflicts of interest and opaque decision making regarding the oversight of state enterprises.

Recommends full implementation of anti-corruption bill

Reforming SOEs is critical for Sri Lanka's recovery and sustainability.

They require firm resolve of political leadership and significant burden sharing by all citizens, including trade unions

Sri Lanka should increase energy mix for energy security

Liberalizing fuel trading can increase competition in the sector and improve service, promote operational efficiency, and help ensure transparent and fair retail prices

risks. Reforming SOEs is critical for Sri Lanka's recovery and sustainability.

Globally, SOE reforms are not easy. They require firm resolve of political leadership and significant burden sharing by all citizens, including trade unions. Examples of other countries with similar experiences suggest that unless the root causes of the crisis are addressed, such crises tend to reoccur.

Q Sri Lanka has been a country that remained resilient in the face of crises such as the tsunami disaster in 2004 and the civil war. How optimistic are you about Sri Lanka this time?

The Sri Lankan people have indeed remained resilient in the face of multiple challenges in the past years. There are currently two key factors critical for the recovery and rebound of the Sri Lankan economy – the public debt restructuring process and the implementation of the government's ambitious reform programme.

Firstly, it is important for the debt restructuring negotiations and an agreement to be reached as soon as possible, but certainly by the time of the first review of the IMF's EFF (in about September/October 2023). Reaching this

agreement will be a positive boost to the economy and provide greater clarity on Sri Lanka's path back to fiscal sustainability.

Secondly, the authorities have committed to a wide array of important structural reforms. These include reforms to stabilize the current crisis, such as enhancing revenue mobilization, improving tax administration, cost-recovery-based energy pricing, safeguarding financial sector stability, and a stronger social safety net to protect the most vulnerable.

They also include reforms to enhance productivity and competitiveness, streamline Sri Lanka's trade and investment environment, unlock the country's growth potential, and address governance and corruption issues.

As a result, our optimism for Sri Lanka revolves around whether the country can stay the course of these reforms and also reach a debt restructuring agreement as soon as possible.

Q Sri Lankan Cabinet decided to liberalize fuel trading, opening it up to three main global suppliers. What is your view in this regard?

Liberalizing fuel trading can increase competition in the sector and improve service,

promote operational efficiency, and help ensure transparent and fair retail prices. Like in any market, it is important to ensure transparent regulation, fair competition, and good governance in the sector.

Q There is a school of thought that liberalization of fuel and electricity sectors will have a bearing on the country's energy security. But reforms in these sectors and liberalization of them are stressed to put the country back on the growth trajectory. What kind of insights can be derived from elsewhere in the world to prove that such steps won't lead to any such problem?

The most important thing Sri Lanka can do to improve energy security is to further increase the share of renewable energy, improve energy efficiency, and otherwise diversify sources of energy to reduce dependency on imported fuels. Fuel and electricity sector reforms can support these objectives. International experience on sector reforms is varied and the outcomes of sector reforms – including on energy security – are influenced by a wide range of complex factors. To the extent that such sector reforms increase the number of market actors, including suppliers of fuels and electricity, and help diversify the energy mix, energy security can be enhanced.

Q What kind of an impact does corruption have on development in Sri Lanka?

We know from experience around the world that corruption can be damaging in many ways. It impacts people directly through unofficial payments that they make, through services they are denied due to corruption, and indirectly when the economy becomes skewed to favour well-connected firms and individuals. In countries where corruption is rife, the impact is not just a waste of resources, although this is also important.

The real cost of corruption lies in sub-standard infrastructure or medicines, often bringing both health and economic consequences. When building inspections, occupational safety regulations, and environmental protections are subverted by corruption, the impact can be tragic for people and the environment. Corruption dissuades investment, and when corruption allows certain firms or interest groups to control the economy, rather than market efficiency and fairness, the result is weakened competition and sluggish growth. Corruption rots the social contract between the people and the government, and this can lead to a loss of trust and instability.

“The Bank urges the government to use this crisis as an opportunity to make serious strides toward asset recovery related to corruption. In the past, the World Bank, working through the Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative (StAR), its joint partnership with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), has provided extensive support on the legal framework governing income and asset declarations...

Q What are the specific areas observed by the World Bank as riddled with corruption in Sri Lanka?

Discretionary approaches to decision-making are rife in many important areas in Sri Lanka. For example, there are complex and discretionary trade policies; tax advantages provided to certain industries, firms or interest groups; and conflicts of interest and opaque decision-making regarding the oversight of State enterprises.

As a result, the Bank recommends that government fully implements the proposed Anti-Corruption Bill, by ensuring the independence of investigations and prosecutions, and an adequate budget for the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (CIABOC), as commensurate with its expanded mandate.

The Bank welcomes the plans to strengthen the assets and liabilities declarations system, and the new power to access complementary databases, both of which require investments and training. The Bank urges the government to use this crisis as an opportunity to make serious strides toward asset recovery related to corruption. In the past, the World Bank, working through the Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative (StAR), its joint partnership with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), has provided extensive support on the legal framework governing income and asset declarations by public officials, including on e-filing such declarations, and on the Proceeds of Crime Bill which governs the process for investigating, seizing and confiscating the proceeds of corruption.

StAR stands ready to provide further assistance on both the legal framework and any further capacity building required to implement it. The crisis is also a chance to shore up other important institutions, such as the Right to Information Act, which is well-designed and has been effective, but requires a renewed commitment to the ideals outlined in the law.

The Bank urges the government to reassert the primacy of transparency by ensuring that new legislation does not explicitly or implicitly reduce the power of the Right to Information Law. Finally, the Bank emphasizes the importance of an independent and vibrant civil society in the fight against corruption.

“The most important thing Sri Lanka can do to improve energy security is to further increase the share of renewable energy, improve energy efficiency, and diversify sources of energy to reduce dependency on imported fuels. International experience on sector reforms is varied and the outcomes of sector reforms are influenced by a wide range of complex factors. To the extent that such sector reforms increase the number of market actors, including suppliers of fuels and electricity, and help diversify the energy mix, energy security can be enhanced.

Q How long will it take for the World Bank to resume its projects in Sri Lanka now recovering from the foreign exchange crisis?

The World Bank Group (WBG) has been working closely with the government, development partners and civil society since the start of the crisis. WBG was the first institution that immediately restructured existing projects to respond to urgent needs. The World Bank repurposed \$325 million from existing projects to address the people's most pressing needs, including medicines, cash transfers, liquid petroleum gas, and fertilizer.

Beyond ensuring the well-being of the people, the assistance was targeted to ensure that key institutions for public services and food security, as well as small and medium enterprises, survived the crisis. In doing this, the Bank created a crisis response framework that brought in the ADB, AIB and other bilateral partners to provide additional funding to these sectors.

WBG is also preparing its new partnership framework with Sri Lanka for the 2023–2026 period. The World Bank remains conscious of Sri Lanka's challenging context and the limited financial resources available. The upcoming partnership framework is selective – it focuses on specific objectives to support the country's greatest development needs, where the government sees a catalytic role for the WBG's support, and where the World Bank Group can add distinct value.

The upcoming CPF aims to assist Sri Lanka in restoring economic stability and building a stronger foundation for green, resilient, and inclusive development and recovery while protecting poor and vulnerable populations.

Q Does the current appreciation of the Sri Lankan Rupee, though slightly, a healthy sign? Or is it a phenomenon triggered mainly by the low demand for imports?

In the absence of large debt service payments, the authorities have been able to manage the outflows (mainly the import bill) with inflows such as exports, tourism and remittances since the second half of 2022, leading to a balance of payment surpluses (please see the latest Sri Lanka Development Update for more details).

These surpluses helped an accumulation of official reserves (US\$700 million by January 2023, excluding the currency swap with China), and an improvement in net foreign assets in the banking system (US\$4.3 billion in January 2023, up from US\$6.4 billion in April 2022).

In addition, the lack of demand for imports from the real sectors and increasing expectations of approval of the IMF program contributed to a rise in foreign exchange liquidity, including through the unwinding of speculative Dollar holdings.

The above factors have led to an appreciation of the LKR against the US Dollar from February 27, 2023, somewhat easing inflationary pressures. Amid the currency appreciation, the Central Bank announced that it will transition back to a flexible exchange rate. A flexible exchange rate is the first line of defence against external imbalances. As such, a flexible exchange rate and trade liberalization would be needed to help Sri Lanka avoid stagnation at a below-potential equilibrium.



By **Gayanga Dissanayaka**

insight

CAN YALA BE SAVED?

IS THIS TREND REVERSIBLE?

Pilapitiya explained that putting limits on the vehicles entering Yala is easier said than done since there are over 700 jeep drivers in the Yala National Park. If we put a limit on it, we suddenly get a lot of political pressure that the jeep drivers' livelihoods are being affected and from the hotel industry as well. Pilapitiya, from his experience as a former wildlife manager, explained that he realised a lot of problems come with putting these limits. Therefore instead of putting limits on the vehicles immediately, he highlighted the importance of disciplining the jeep drivers, both private and safari as well as the visitors in the vehicle.

He also explained that it's important to impose limits on all the non-overcrowded parks in the country immediately before they end up like Yala.

Pilapitiya also said that we should move towards quality over quantity. He mentioned that most tourists say that they don't learn anything during a park visit and that they want proper nature interpretation.

"Majority of tourists are coming to learn something but we are not giving them that, we are just showing them the animals," said Pilapitiya. He mentioned that to maintain our natural assets, we should make Sri Lanka, a land in harmony with nature.

This can be done by having a plan for converting Yala into a high-quality wildlife tourism destination which includes improving both the drivers' and the visitors' discipline.

Pilapitiya referred to a quote by Aldo Leopold's, saying that we can't influence human occupancy now, but in creating a better understanding of the extent of that influence and a new ethic for its governance, we might be able to save Yala from its current position.



Dr Sumith Pilapitiya



Stresses on Animals are on the rise (File photo)

THE GENERAL POTENTIAL FOR WILDLIFE TOURISM IN SRI LANKA

"Wildlife tourism could be the biggest driver for the growth of tourism in Sri Lanka," said Pilapitiya.

He pointed to several countries such as South Africa whose direct impact of tourism is ten billion dollars a year. He explained that wanting to promote wildlife tourism and being able to do that are two separate aspects. In a study done among Asian countries, he mentioned that Sri Lanka comes number one in a category called observability.

This means it's extremely easy to see wildlife in Sri Lanka and that within a few minutes of entering a Sri Lankan park, we can begin to see wildlife. Sri Lanka also ranks first in wildlife tourism potential and Pilapitiya explained that this means the assets we need are plentiful as well and noted several unique resources which we can brand and promote.

YALA, LAND OF THE LEOPARDS

According to him, Yala and Wilpattu are the best places in the world to see leopards. He also explained that Yala National Park holds over 40 species of mammals, and 215 species of birds, including six endemic species as well. He also quoted Angie Scott, award-winning photographer who said "If God created a patch of land for leopards on Earth, then it must be Yala"

Similarly, Pilapitiya mentioned that Yala National Park is the only national park in the world that has an Albino Elephant in the wild.

WHAT HAS BECOME OF YALA NATIONAL PARK TODAY?

Pilapitiya said that tourist numbers have increased by over 1,000% from 2008 to 2017, and the Department of Wildlife Conservation or any other agency would not be geared to handle this increase.

He explained that this is why the department had no alternative but to allow the Safari jeeps to take guests into the park without a tracker. "Before 2008, every Safari jeep had a tracker to accompany them," Pilapitiya said. But with over visitation and lack of trained trackers, this has changed.

Pilapitiya listed out some of the consequences of over-visitation that have been recorded at Yala National Park such as road kills.

He mentioned a tragic situation where leopards were killed due to traffic inside the National Park. "Never take photographs at the expense of the animals," Pilapitiya added.

He also noted harassment of wildlife at sightings, feeding wildlife and changing their behaviour as some other consequences of this issue. In addition to this, neglect of protection and management of the park, a decline in wildlife population and serious habitat issues are prevalent at Yala as well.

STRESS ON THE ANIMALS

According to a study conducted at Uda Walawe, Pilapitiya explained how elephants feed less when they are surrounded by vehicles since they are in protection mode and are constantly stressed out. In his presentation, he also mentioned a study that suggests human presence can alter leopard movement patterns and behaviour and can have adverse effects on their health, reproduction and survival. "I'm not saying we should stop visitation, all I'm saying is to give some space for the animals," he said.

Pilapitiya questioned whether a natural ecosystem can sustain this type of abuse and still meet its objectives.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED DIRECTLY?

Pilapitiya pointed out several major issues that should be given attention to prevent this imminent disaster. Other than the disciplinary issues of safari drivers and passengers, high speed and reckless driving, vehicular congestion, over-marketing Yala as a leopard-sighting destination, lack of adequate staff and facilities such as patrol vehicles and also poor nature interpretation services offered by the Department of Wildlife Conservation are some of the vital issues that should be addressed. Pilapitiya also highlighted that one of the most important issues to be addressed is the continued political interference resulting in the lack of independence for DWC to regulate tourism within Yala.

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GBP	5.50%	4.85%	5.65%	4.85%	5.85%	4.90%	6.00%	4.90%
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EDITORIAL

"Freedom of the press is not just important to democracy, it is democracy."
-WALTER CRONKITE

OUR THOUGHT

Media freedom: A MIRROR FOR SOCIETY TO SEE ITSELF

One of America's best-known newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst has said news is something that someone wants suppressed. The rest is advertising. Thus, news conferences, media statements, and speeches made at political rallies are largely advertising. In this modern digital age, journalism is to dive deep down below the headlines and tell the people not only what happened but also why it happened. While maintaining the traditional principles of fair, balanced and accurate reporting or feature writing, journalists also need to venture into the risky assignments of investigative reporting or feature writing and interpret what happened, who was behind it, and why it happened. This needs to be done in a balanced way.

Journalists need to keep these virtues in mind as we join the United Nations on May 3 in marking 'World Media Freedom Day' on the theme of shaping a future of rights: Freedom of expression as a driver for all other human rights. In a statement, the UN says 2023 year marks the 30th anniversary of World Media Freedom Day. Three decades have passed since it was proclaimed in 1993 and we have seen substantial progress towards achieving a free media and freedom of expression around the world. The proliferation of independent media in many countries and the rise of digital technologies have enabled the free flow of information. However, media freedom, safety of journalists and freedom of expression are increasingly under attack. This impacts the fulfillment of other human rights.

According to the UN, the international community faces multiple crises: conflicts and violence, persistent socio-economic inequalities driving migration, environmental crises and challenges to the health and wellbeing of people all around the world. At the same time, disinformation and misinformation online and offline proliferate, with serious impact on the institutions underpinning democracy, the rule of law and human rights. It is exactly to counter these critical situations and threats, that media freedom, safety of journalists and access to information take centre stage. The right to freedom of expression, enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is a prerequisite and a driver to the enjoyment of all other human rights. This year's Special 30th anniversary celebration of World Media Freedom Day is, therefore, a call to recentre media freedom, as well as independent, pluralistic and diverse media, as key to the enjoyment of all other human rights.

Outlining the origin and purpose of the day, the UN says World Media Freedom Day was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in December 1993, following the recommendation of General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Since then, on every May 3, the anniversary of the UNESCO declaration is celebrated worldwide as World Media Freedom Day.

After 30 years, the historic connection made between the freedom to seek, impart and receive information and the public good remains as relevant as it was at the time of its signing. Special commemorations of the 30th anniversary are set to take place during World Media Freedom Day International Conference.

May 3 acts as a reminder to governments of the need to respect their commitment to media freedom. It is also a day of reflection among media professionals about issues of media freedom and professional ethics. It is an opportunity to celebrate the fundamental principles of media freedom; assess the state of media freedom throughout the world; defend the media from attacks on their independence and pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Referring to the freedom of information, the UN says the fuel that drives this engine is information and therefore, access to information is critical. Freedom of information laws, which permit access to public information are essential, but so are the means by which information is made available, be it through ICTs or the simple sharing of documents.

Information can change the way we see the world around us, our place in it, and how to adjust our lives in order to maximize the benefits available through our local resources. Fact driven decision-making can significantly alter our political, social and economic perspectives. Therefore, open and pluralistic media are, perhaps, the most precious when they simply provide the mirror for society to see itself. These moments of reflection are instrumental in defining community objectives, making course corrections when society or its leaders have lost touch with each other or gone astray.

One of the world's greatest statesmen Mahatma Gandhi had said that freedom of the media is a precious privilege that no country can forego. While the widely admired former UN President John F. Kennedy has said that a nation that is afraid to let its people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market, is a nation that is afraid of its people. As they say on this World Media Freedom Day, journalists need to be aware not only of their rights but also of their responsibilities.



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Sri Lanka's Dilemma: INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

By **Damitha Gunasekera**

Currently, the proposed Counter-Terrorism Bill dominates the headlines. After all, with the aragalaya and the subsequent ousting of the Rajapaksa regime, isn't this the type of crackdown Sri Lanka was hoping to move away from? However, amidst this proposed bill and other authoritarian actions taken by the Government, it is imperative that we get an understanding of the situation - in order to develop there will inevitably be trade-offs, and in Sri Lanka's case the trade-off for development may be individual liberties.

Delving into the details of the Bill is beyond the scope of this article. Instead, it will explore the compromises we as a people may need to make in order for Sri Lanka to develop and move forward for the 'common good'.

CIVIL LIBERTIES OR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY?

During the Cold War, the West emphasized civil and political rights, while the Soviet bloc prioritized economic, social, and cultural rights. Decades later, little has changed, with the West still promoting democracy and individual liberties as the blueprint for governance. However, this model hasn't particularly resulted in economic prosperity for many developing countries throughout the global south. Instead, it's resulted in the rise and fall of several military dictatorships, tyrants, oligarchies, and democracies that have failed to deliver adequate development. On the other hand, the 'Chinese Model of Development', which prioritizes economic growth and stability over individual liberties and freedom, has proven successful in many Asian countries.

This begs the question of whether we are on the right path or if an alternative model for development should be considered. Should individual liberties be traded off for economic prosperity for all? While the West is apprehensive of China exporting its development model,

their proven track record shows there is some merit. Even Henry Kissinger, one of the world's greatest diplomats, understood that in peacemaking efforts, there is an overriding problem of how to address 'the sense of individual justice to the common good'.

In many ways, the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) brought in 1979, is outdated and does not adequately address the new forms of terrorism Sri Lanka may endure in the 21st Century

EFFECT OF PROTESTS, UNIONS, AND FREE SPEECH ON ECONOMY

In many ways, the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) brought in 1979, is outdated and does not adequately address the new forms of terrorism Sri Lanka may endure in the 21st Century. Thus, there is an urgent need to bring in legislation that is able to tackle the current forms of terrorism, but that may include trading off individual liberties.

Even the Founder of Human Rights Watch, Arie Neier, noted in his essay, "Rights of People," that certain limits on rights may be necessary to protect the rights of others, ensure public safety, and promote military necessity. However, those opposing the newly proposed Counter-Terrorism bill in Sri Lanka, including left-leaning parties, journalists, trade unions, student activists, and civil society unions, argue that the bill aims to curtail free speech and the right to protest.

Despite this, a considerable portion of society believes that the ongoing strikes and protests led by the same parties impede the progress of the President's efforts to rescue the economy. For example, for a rural farmer in Polonnaruwa, having the right to protest may not be as crucial as economic stability through access to affordable fertilizer or kerosene. Additionally, Sri Lanka has been held back for decades by the same leftist parties, trade unions, and student activists that advocate for protectionist policies and inefficient government-run businesses, which led

us to bankruptcy in the first place. Is it reasonable to let them persist as an obstacle to the state's development programme?

WHY AN ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT MODEL MAY BE THE WAY FORWARD

Several countries in East and South East Asia including Taiwan and Singapore, are proof that there is merit to this development model. While economic development necessitates government's intervention and regulation to guarantee stability, attract investment, and foster growth; individual liberty requires freedom from government interference, enabling citizens to make their own choices and pursue their interests.

The trade-off between economic development and individual liberties is a significant issue for Sri Lanka, a country that has struggled to transition from a closed, socialist economy to a more open, market-oriented one. Unfortunately, nationalist and populist parties have often misled the population, resulting in a lack of reforms and isolation from the global market. This has caused Sri Lanka to fall behind other countries in the region, such as Vietnam, Bangladesh, and Malaysia, that have embraced economic liberalization and connected with the world.

NAVIGATING SRI LANKA FORWARD

Reforming the Sri Lankan economy is not without its challenges. The country's history of a flawed democracy and ineffective leadership has left many citizens skeptical of market-oriented reforms. Nationalist, leftist-leaning groups continue to resist change, arguing that free-market policies will harm the most vulnerable in society and lead to inequality. Therefore, these groups insist that the government should continue to support loss-making state-owned enterprises and protect domestic industries from foreign competition.

To navigate this trade-off between economic development and individual liberty, policymakers in Sri Lanka should look to the 'Chinese Model of Development'. While this approach has been criticized by human rights groups, it has undeniably led to rapid economic growth and lifted millions of people out of poverty.

While some argue that economic development and individual liberty can be mutually reinforcing, as economic growth can lead to increased political freedoms and greater protection of human rights, it does not seem to have been proven successful for many countries in the global south. Even Kenneth Roth, former Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, argues that the advocacy of civil and political rights and the advocacy of social and economic goals do not necessarily go hand in hand, suggesting that these two goals may be competing rather than complementary.

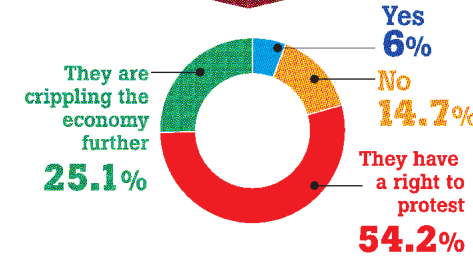
DM Poll

Government's main aim behind introducing new Anti-Terrorism Act is.....

- To protect the country
- To control dissenting voice
- To respond to an urgent danger of terrorism
- To prevent any Aragalaya in future.



LAST POLL
Do you agree with the continuous strikes by Trade Union members? Is it fair to be inconveniencing the general public in return for their demands?



See web poll at www.DailyMirror.lk

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Prolonged agony of Easter victims!

The Easter Sunday tragedy has been a contentious issue with a series of investigations made, but to no avail as the agony of the hapless victims of this dastardly crime keeps continuing and exacerbating with no hope of justice being meted out to them.

It would be four years since this carnage was perpetrated on that fateful Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019, and yet the peace-loving citizenry, not only the adherents of the Christian faith, but of other creeds too, keep clamouring for this elusive justice for their grief-stricken compatriots. The manner in which the investigations have been conducted to date, all what we have seen is ludicrous histrionics laced with controversial outcome.

It is scandalous that still our leaders and those in power who pledged their support to investigate this crime judiciously have stealthily opted to be nonchalant, all because the hidden objective behind their liberal promises have been achieved. All what they wanted was to hoodwink the people and gain political mileage to be elected to power exploiting the horrendous opportunity created by the innocent lives lost and maimed on Easter Sunday. The political chicanery of these leaders and decision makers, with their conscience stricken, will undoubtedly have to face the consequences of justice being delayed.

The limit to tolerance is now fast running out, and the head of the Catholic Church, His Eminence Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith remains resolute in his pastoral obligation to ensure that this misery and trauma of these victims should be ended with justice being meted out to them. His Eminence has urged all fellow citizens irrespective of racial and religious differences to form a human chain in silent protest on Friday April 21, to highlight the lack of commitment and crass indifference of the leaders and decision makers who have denied justice to the hapless Easter Sunday victims, by attempting to sweep this affair under the carpet so as to erase it from their memories. It must be noted that the protracted agony of the Easter Sunday victims will further embolden them in their fervent entreaties to seek nothing but justice.

DON PETER DEHIWELA

Govt. restricts events, meetings taking place at Galle Face Green

WEB COMMENTS

- MAN** - Ranil do not ponder Sri Lanka's progressive economic plans but his position as noble for Sri Lankans.
- KARALASINGAM SIVALINGAM** - Very wise decision. It is exclusively for leisure only.
- DISGUSTED** - Excellent! Galle Face should be available for people to enjoy, not to engage in rubbish!!
- LANKA** - This shows disrespect to all Aragalaya people and freedom of expression is suppressed...this is what MPs think is law of the country not what people think?
- SOKRATES** - This man is doing everything to guarantee his re-election. This will not happen, however, since the population has now become more far-sighted and no longer believes the promises of a despot.

See more web comments at www.DailyMirror.lk

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DOES THE CENTRAL BANK BILL VIOLATE THE CONSTITUTION?

The Bill consists of 134 clauses...at least 21 clauses were held to be inconsistent with the Constitution. 73 clauses/sub-clauses should be amended

The Bill titled Central Bank of Sri Lanka was presented to the Parliament on March 7. Six citizens petitioned the Supreme Court claiming that the Bill violated the constitution and need to be passed by 2/3rd in Parliament and approved by people at a referendum to become law.

The case was heard on the 23rd and 24th of March. Dr Nandlal Weerasinghe, the Governor of the Central Bank (CB) was present in person and heard by Supreme Court in terms of Article 134(3) of the constitution.

The new law repeals the present Monetary Law Act and establishes an autonomous Central Bank (CB) with administrative and financial autonomy. The new law restricts third-party interference with the affairs of the CB. The autonomous CB determines and implements the Monetary Policy, Exchange Rate Policy and Macro-prudential policy measures (among others) in Sri Lanka.

The Constitution does not permit any State institution to function outside the control of the Executive (Government) and the Legislature (Parliament).

Presently, the direction and control of the government are vested with the cabinet of ministers (Article 43(1)) and the full control of public finance is with the parliament (Article 148). Petitioners argued new law violates both these aspects.

Does the bill create an autonomous and independent institution which is not subject to Executive and Parliamentary control?

The Supreme Court considered clauses (Sections) 26 and 28 of the Bill in this regard. Clause 26 provides that "(1) The Minister and the Central Bank shall sign a monetary policy framework agreement with regard to setting out the inflation target to be achieved by the Central Bank." The Supreme Court viewed that "Clause 26(1) of the Bill does not provide for a proper criterion to address a possible situation where a difference of opinion arises between the Minister and the Central Bank, the said Clause is arbitrary and capricious."

Dealing with Clause 28, which stipulates the duty of the Monetary Policy Board where it anticipates economic disturbances that are likely to threaten the domestic price stability or there are abnormal movements in the price level that are endangering such domestic price stability, the Supreme Court held,

"[However], the said Clause is silent on the action/steps that should be taken by the Minister. The drafters of the Bill should have included such a procedure in the said Clause with the expectation that such situations warrant the intervention of the Government. In the circumstances, the omission to include a provision for the Government to intervene in such instances makes Clause 28 of the Bill arbitrary and capricious."

SUPREME COURT CONCLUDES;

"The Constitution has conferred power on the executive to make decisions on the economic and monetary policy of the Government. As at present, the link between the Central Bank and the executive and thereby the formulation of the monetary policy is established through the presence of the Secretary to the Treasury being a member of the Monetary Board. However, the Bill has removed the participation of the Secretary in the decision-making process of the Central Bank. A careful consideration of the submissions made by the learned counsel for the petitioners, intervenient-petitioners, and the learned Additional Solicitor General shows that the Bill does not contain sufficient provisions to have executive control over the Central Bank. Thus,

the Bill is inconsistent with Articles 3 and 4(b) of the Constitution, and thereby should be passed in Parliament by a special majority as required by Article 84(2) and approved by the People at a Referendum in terms of Article 83 of the Constitution."

AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Petitioners complained that while distancing the CB from the Government and Parliamentary control, the new Bill provides no room for accountability of the CB for its actions and inactions.

Clause 80, which deals with the subject of accountability, was totally "dead" and ineffective.

Addressing "autonomy" stated in clause 5 of the Bill Supreme Court gave mind to the following sub-clause; "5 (2). The Central Bank shall be autonomous and accountable as provided for in this Act"

The Supreme Court held; "Autonomy entails operational freedom in carrying out its functions, whereas accountability requires the Central Bank to act in a transparent manner and to be accountable for their actions and inactions. Thus, the Central Bank shall not only be accountable to the Executive and the Parliament but also to the People of the country.

Further, the words "as provided for in this Act" in Clause 5(2) of the Bill restrict the accountability of the Central Bank only to the matters specified in the Bill. Thus, the said phrase effectively excludes the accountability of the Central Bank under the common law and other laws of the country. Thus, Clause 5(2) is arbitrary, capricious, and therefore inconsistent with Article 12(1) of the Constitution."

The Supreme Court appreciated the proposition of the Additional Solicitor General to amend Clause 80 at the Committee stage of the Parliament by deleting Clauses 80(2) and 80(3) in the present Bill and replace by the following clauses;

"(2) (a) The Governor of the Central Bank, the members of the Governing Board and the Monetary Policy Board and every Deputy Governor of the Central Bank shall, at the request of Parliament, be heard by Parliament or any of its committees once in every four months, regarding the functions of the Central Bank.

(b) The Governor of the Central Bank, the members of the Governing Board and the Monetary Policy Board and every Deputy Governor of the Central Bank may, on their own initiative, seek an opportunity to apprise of the functions of the Central Bank or to submit any document or report of the Central Bank to Parliament."

(3) The Governor of the Central Bank shall ensure that the Central Bank shall, within a period of four months after the close of each financial year, publish, and lay before the Parliament through the Minister, a report approved by the Governing Board, on the state of the economy during such financial year emphasizing its policy objectives and the condition of the financial system. The report shall include a review and an assessment of the policies of the Central Bank followed during such financial year."

In order to enhance accountability on the part of the Central Bank, the

Governor of the Central Bank, the members of the Governing Board and the Monetary Policy Board, and every Deputy Governor of the Central Bank, and to increase Parliamentary control over the affairs of the Central Bank, the Supreme Court has suggested the Parliament to insert the following provision to Clause 80 of the Bill;

(a) to make it mandatory for the Governor of the Central Bank, the members of the Governing Board and the Monetary Policy Board of the Central Bank, and the Deputy Governors to be present in Parliament after one month from the release of the quarterly reports of the Central Bank.

"A similar provision can be found in other jurisdictions. For example, the Federal Reserve Act of 1913", the Supreme Court held.

CURRENCY OTHER THAN SRI LANKAN RUPEE

Clause 47 deals with CB powers regarding issues and currency and its usage. Clause 47(2) reads that

(2) Any transaction executed or liquidated between or among residents in Sri Lanka shall, unless otherwise authorized by the Central Bank, be in Sri Lanka Rupees."

The Supreme Court held; "Clause 47(2) of the Bill confers power on the Central Bank to allow the residents of Sri Lanka to use currencies other than the Sri Lanka rupee for any transaction executed between residents. It is pertinent to note that the Foreign Exchange Act No. 12 of 2017 stipulates the criteria for such authorization of transactions. However, the Bill does not repeal the provisions in the Foreign Exchange Act relevant to the above, and thus, Clause 47(2) of the Bill will lead to confusion and ambiguity. Further, though the Foreign Exchange Act sets out a procedure for such authorization of using foreign currency in Sri Lanka, Clause 47(2) of the Bill does not stipulate a procedure/criterion that should be followed by the Central Bank in authorizing the use of currencies in Sri Lanka other than the Sri Lanka rupee. Thus, the said Clause 47 (2) of the Bill is vague and therefore, inconsistent with Article 12(1) of the Constitution. Hence clause 47(2) should be passed in Parliament by a special majority stipulated in Article 84(2) of the Constitution. However, the said inconsistency will cease if a Committee Stage amendment is made by conferring power on the Central Bank to take steps in terms of the Foreign Exchange Act No. 12 of 2017."

"(2) (a) The Governor of the Central Bank, the members of the Governing Board and the Monetary Policy Board and every Deputy Governor of the Central Bank shall, at the request of Parliament, be heard by Parliament or any of its committees once in every four months, regarding the functions of the Central Bank.

(b) The Governor of the Central Bank, the members of the Governing Board and the Monetary Policy Board and every Deputy Governor of the Central Bank may, on their own initiative, seek an opportunity to apprise of the functions of the Central Bank or to submit any document or report of the Central Bank to Parliament."

(3) The Governor of the Central Bank shall ensure that the Central Bank shall, within a period of four months after the close of each financial year, publish, and lay before the Parliament through the Minister, a report approved by the Governing Board, on the state of the economy during such financial year emphasizing its policy objectives and the condition of the financial system. The report shall include a review and an assessment of the policies of the Central Bank followed during such financial year."

In order to enhance accountability on the part of the Central Bank, the

GOVERNORS HOLDING POSITIONS OUTSIDE THE CB

Proviso to clause 14(6) permits the Governor to accept and hold various positions outside the CB. These include academic positions in research institutions, Commissions of Inquiry, investigation councils, committees etc. The Supreme Court's view was that this may lead to conflicting interests and this clause should be removed;

"Although Clause 14(6) of the Bill states that the Governor of the Central Bank shall not accept or hold any other office or employment whatsoever, whether public or private, and whether remunerated or not, the proviso to Clause 14(6) of the Bill enables the Governor of the Central Bank to accept and hold other positions. Taking into consideration the duties and functions that are required to be performed by the Governor of the Central Bank, such a proviso is unwarranted, arbitrary, and capricious, and thereby violates Article 12(1) of the Constitution. Therefore, Clause 14(6) shall be passed in Parliament by a special majority required under the provisions of Article 84(2) of the Constitution. However, the said inconsistency in Clause 14(6) will cease if the proviso to the said Clause is deleted."

CENTRAL BANK ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT

Clause 86 states that the CB shall not directly or indirectly grant credits to the Government or public authority owned by the Government and the CB should not incur any cost on behalf of the Government. The Supreme Court decided that the total restriction of CB assisting the Government contravenes the Constitution. Supreme Court held;

"However, the Central Bank has the overarching duty to ensure liquidity in the market. Therefore,

even though the bank is prohibited from directly granting credit to the Government, by entrusting liquidity, the Central Bank will provide avenues for the Government to raise the necessary money through the banking system.

Further, the above does not capture a situation where assistance is needed to cope with a national crisis, e.g., liquidity issues that arose during the COVID-19 pandemic or Easter Sunday attacks

Further, there can be a situation in which the banks in the country may face liquidity issues due to reasons beyond the control of the Central Bank and the Government. Though there is a provision for the Central Bank to assist financial institutions there is a prohibition for monetary financing of the Government in similar circumstances. Thus, the total prohibition on the Central Bank assisting the Government to maintain liquidity in the market violates the equal protection of the law enshrined in Article 12(1) of the Constitution. Therefore, it should be passed by a special majority in Parliament as required by Article 84(2) of the Constitution.

However, the said inconsistency will cease if the said Clause is amended by requiring the Central Bank to assist the Government in exceptional circumstances where liquidity issues have arisen due to unforeseen circumstances. However,

such assistance shall be provided by the Central Bank only for a limited period and the Government shall take immediate measures to remedy the situation in consultation with the Central Bank."

OTHER INCONSISTENCIES

The Bill consists of 134 clauses. At least 21 clauses [3, 5, 13(10), 14(6), 15(9), 17(2)(m), 19, 20, 23(1), 24(2), 26(1), 28, 47(2), 59 (6), 73, 86, 103(5), 106, 107 (3), 111(2), 120] were held to be inconsistent with the constitution. About 73 clauses/sub-clauses should be amended.

The Bill could be passed by a simple majority only if such amendments were done to bring it consistent with the Constitution.

Had six citizens not petitioned the Supreme Court, the Bill would have been passed with all such violations creating a monstrous Central Bank. -The writer is an Attorney-at-Law

LICENCE FROM THE REGISTRAR GENERAL OF COMPANIES


In pursuance of Section 34 of the Companies Act No: 7 of 2007 an application has been made to the Registrar General of Companies for a License indicating that an Association to be formed under the name and style of TAMIL ECONOMIC COUNCIL is to be registered with limited liability without the addition of the word LIMITED to its name.

The Objects for which the Association is proposed to be established is:

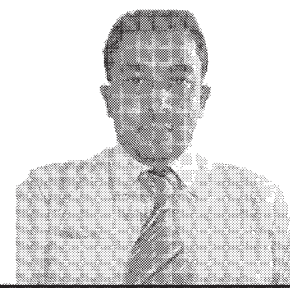
- 1) To assist, support income generation, facilitate the furtherance and promotion of economic development.
- 2) To identify and undertake agriculture, horticulture, sericulture, bee keeping, dairy farming, poultry farming and environmentally-suited income generating ventures and development of vocational and modernized vocational skills.
- 3) To provide, promote and care of kind's nutrition and educational development and to provide vocational training, education support service, higher education support, education infrastructure development, and career guidance and education awareness programs.
- 4) To engage in charitable purposes and social welfare activities, relief works on non-profit.
- 5) To provide relief to the people affected by natural disasters and assist in their rehabilitation and development.
- 6) To encourage and promote national harmony among different communities.
- 7) The company does not engage primary and secondary education.
- 8) To establish, set up, administer, manage and maintain business, Centres and bodies for the promotion, purposes and achievement of the objects of the ASSOCIATION.
- 9) To organize, conduct and hold public lectures, classes, seminars, conferences, demonstrations, training courses and workshops for the promotion, purposes and achievement of the objects of the ASSOCIATION.
- 10) To accept and raise moneys required for the promotion, purposes and achievement of the objects of the ASSOCIATION by any means including by way of subscriptions, gifts, donations, endowments and benefactions in cash or kind or in movable or immovable property whether subject or not to any special trust or condition in favour or furtherance of the objects of the ASSOCIATION.

The copy of the Articles of Association may be inspected at the Company's office at 1/416, WALLUPURAM, PULIOY, JAFFNA.


Notice is hereby given that any person, Company or Corporation objecting to this application may bring such objection within 21 days by a letter addressed to the Registrar General of Companies, 400, D. R. Wijewardane Mawatha, Colombo 10. MASTER BUSINESS CONSULTANTS (PVT) LTD COMPANY SECRETARIES


THE MEDICO-LEGAL SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA
Annual General Meeting 2022/23
Friday
12th May 2023
6.30 PM
at
Forecastle Hall
Light House Galley,
Chaitiya Rd,
Colombo 01
Hon. Jt. Secretaries

NOTICE
THIS IS TO INFORM
MR. CHAMIKARA BOTEJUE
WHOSE PICTURE APPEARS BELOW



Has resigned from the position of **Head of Sales & Marketing** at **Jinasena Infotech Pvt Ltd** and no longer functions his duties or manages his clientele at present, and we will not be responsible for any future acts conducted by him.

 **JINASENA INFOTECH (PVT) LTD.**

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INTERNATIONAL



The fire broke out at the Beijing Changfeng Hospital in the Fengtai district (AFP)

BEIJING HOSPITAL FIRE DEATH TOLL RISES TO 29

Chinese authorities said on Wednesday they had detained a dozen people over a hospital fire in Beijing that left at least 29 dead and forced desperate survivors to jump out of windows to escape. The blaze, which broke out on Tuesday afternoon at the Changfeng Hospital in China's capital, killed mostly patients, and left scores of other people injured. Dramatic footage posted to social media showed people clinging to ropes and jumping from the building, while others perched on external air conditioning units in a desperate bid to shelter from the flames. The Fengtai district's deputy mayor expressed his "deep condolences" over the deaths of the 16 women and 13 men killed in the inferno, the deadliest in Beijing in over two decades. "We feel deep remorse and guilt," Li Zongrong told journalists as he announced

the toll at a press conference on Wednesday. "I hereby express our deep condolences for the victims, and express our sincere respects to the victims' families, the injured and their relatives, and apologise to the people of the whole city," he said. Twelve people, including the hospital's director, have been detained in connection with the fire, said Sun Haitao from Beijing's public security bureau, adding that representatives from a company renovating the facility were among those being held. A preliminary probe revealed the blaze had been caused by "sparks generated during the internal renovation and construction of the inpatient department of the hospital", according to Zhao Yang from the city fire brigade. The sparks "ignited the volatile elements of the flammable paint on the site", Zhao said. **BEIJING (AFP), 19 APRIL, 2023**

North Korea touts new spy satellite

North Korea says it has completed work on its first reconnaissance satellite and is preparing for its maiden launch, stressing the need to bolster its military capabilities amid continued threats from the US and South Korea. After visiting the country's space development agency one day prior, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un unveiled the new military satellite

on Tuesday, saying the tech would enhance Pyongyang's "war deterrence" given Washington and Seoul's "anti-DPRK military posture." Under these circumstances, it is only natural for our state to develop military deterrence commensurate with the current... security environment, and acquiring and operating military reconnaissance means is essential in enhancing our military effectiveness," Kim said, as cited by the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Macron heckled on first outing since pension battle



President Emmanuel Macron talks to an opponent of his pension reform in the town of Sélestat, in France's eastern Alsace region

AFP.COM, 19 APRIL, 2023 - French President Emmanuel Macron was loudly booed by crowds in eastern France on Wednesday as he embarked on his first trip to a French region since signing his unpopular pensions reform into law. The French president was heckled during a visit to the small town of Sélestat, in the Alsace region, with protesters banging pots and chanting slogans including "Macron resign!" "You'll fall soon, just wait and see," one man told the French leader, describing his government

as "corrupt." "We don't want this pension (reform), what don't you get?" asked another. Electricity was briefly cut while he visited a local factory, where demonstrators had gathered holding hostile banners. Asked by a journalist how he felt, the president replied: "I have had it worse." Police pushed back dozens of protesters banging kitchenware earlier in the day ahead of the president's arrival in the village of Muttersholtz. "Saucepans will not allow France to move forward," Macron said as he visited a wood factory in the village.

EU adopts ban on imports driving deforestation

AFP.COM, 19 APRIL, 2023 - The European Parliament adopted a new EU law on Wednesday that will ban imports deemed to be driving deforestation, throwing the bloc's trade muscle behind a global fight against climate change. The legislation, which has to get final approval from the European Union's member countries, would apply to coffee, cocoa, soy, timber, palm oil, cattle, printing paper and rubber, and derived products, coming from countries around the world. Imports that come from land that was deforested after December 31,

2020 will be prohibited in the huge EU market. Companies sending such merchandise to Europe will have to show a certificate guaranteeing they do not come from such zones, with checks conducted on a sliding scale according to how high risk the exporting country is ranked. The European Union is the second-biggest market for consumption of the targeted products after China. The European Parliament estimates Europe is responsible for around 10 percent of deforested land around the planet.



Aerial view of a house belonging to illegal miners burning in flames after being set on fire during an operation by the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA) against Amazon deforestation at the Yanomami territory in Roraima State, Brazil (AFP)

Russia could arm N.Korea if South sends weapons to Ukraine: Medvedev

RT.COM, 19 APRIL, 2023 - Moscow could offer advanced weapons to North Korea if South Korea begins to supply military aid to Ukraine, former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has suggested. South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol indicated a possible policy shift regarding the Ukraine conflict in an interview with Reuters on Wednesday, ahead of a state visit to the US next week. "If there is a situation the international community cannot condone, such as any large-

scale attack on civilians, massacre or serious violation of the laws of war, it might be difficult for us to insist only on humanitarian or financial support," Yoon said. "Considering our relationship with the parties engaged in the war and developments in the battlefield, we will take the most appropriate measures," he added. Medvedev, who currently serves as deputy chair of the Russian National Security Council, noted that Seoul had thus far refused

to supply lethal aid to Kiev. I wonder what the residents of this nation would say when they see the newest example of Russian weapons in possession of their closest neighbors, our partners from the DPRK [Democratic People's Republic of Korea]?" Medvedev wrote on social media. Yoon told Reuters that he plans to discuss with US President Joe Biden how the two nations can achieve "tangible outcomes" in deterring North Korea.

CALLING FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI) GROUND SPONSORSHIP RIGHTS, TV BROADCASTING RIGHTS & TV PRODUCTION FOR THE SOUTH AFRICA MEN'S A - TEAM TOUR OF SRI LANKA 2023



Sri Lanka Cricket wishes to call 'Expression of Interests' from Local and International firms to acquire the Broadcasting Rights, Ground Sponsorship Rights & TV Production for the forthcoming South Africa Men's (A Team) Tour of Sri Lanka 2023 from the 04th June to 22nd June 2023.

MATCH SCHEDULE:

One Day Matches

- 1st Match - 04th June 2023 – Day Game, Venue to be confirmed
- 2nd Match - 06th June 2023 – Day Game, Venue to be confirmed
- 3rd Match - 08th June 2023 – Day Game, Venue to be confirmed

Four Day Matches

- 1st Match - 12th to 15th June 2023 – Venue to be confirmed
- 2nd Match - 19th to 22nd June 2023 – Venue to be confirmed

Note : Dates & Venues are subject to change

SLC seeks sponsorship on any of the following rights or as a combination of rights.

1. **Terrestrial /Satellite TV Broadcasting Rights** (Only in respect of the territory of Sri Lanka) + **Global Digital Broadcasting Rights** (Excluding local YouTube Broadcasting Rights)
2. **TV Production**
Interested firms, should be equipped to carry out a LIVE Production for the above matches on par with accepted Broadcasting Standards, with the deployment of **11 High-Definition (HD) Camera's** (inclusive of a drone camera) as a minimum requirement with the capacity to provide required TV umpiring facilities.
3. **Ground Sponsorship Rights**
 - a. Ground Branding Rights Below 15 Feet of the stadium
 - b. Naming Rights of the Tour "Eg: <Sponsor's Name> South Africa Men's (A Team) Tour of Sri Lanka 2023"
 - c. Branding and designing rights of the trophies for following categories. (N.B. – Trophies should be provided by the Ground Sponsorship Rights holder or its sub-licensee)
 - Champions
 - Player of the match in respect of each match - One Day & Four Day
 - Player of the series in respect of One Day & Four Day
 - d. Branding opportunities on Parameter Boards
Ground Sponsorship Rights holder or its sub-licensee should supply 72 Parameter Boards as a minimum (If Static: 60 for Event Rights Partner + 12 for Sri Lanka Cricket (Ground Rights holder must bear the cost of SLC parameter boards) , (If Digital: 20% Exposure to be given to Sri Lanka Cricket at no cost)
 - e. Boundary Rope Branding - 10% Exposure should be given to Sri Lanka Cricket at no cost, in the event there are no sponsors Ground rights partner must use fillers.
 - f. Advertising on 3rd Umpire Giant Screen - Ground Rights partner must provide a 30x15 Feet LED Digital Screen for each match
 - g. Branding on Sight Screens - Static/Digital Screens should be provided by the Ground Sponsorship Rights Holder
 - h. Branding on Pitch Mats - As per ICC rules and regulations
 - i. Branding Rights for Stumps

In the event a sole organization acquires the complete range of rights, the chosen partner will be recognized as the 'Event Rights Partner of South Africa Men's (A Team) Tour of Sri Lanka 2023'.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- a) Companies related to Tobacco, Alcohol (surrogated and non-surrogated), Betting, Online betting, Gambling shall not be eligible to participate in the EOI process.
- b) Marketing Agencies are eligible to participate in the EOI process.
- c) Sub-licensing of the rights to be granted herein will not be permitted for TV Production Rights. Any and all costs associated with Ground Sponsorship Rights Properties / TV Production / Broadcasting and exploitation thereof including without limitation any pandemic/medical related expenditure shall be solely borne by the respective rights holder/s. The rights fee to be offered to SLC shall be free from all such expenses and applicable taxes.

EOI SUBMISSION PROCEDURE:

The EOI along with financial offer qualifying the above mentioned criteria must be submitted to the Sri Lanka Cricket Headquarters at No 35, Maitland Place, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka **on or before 8th May 2023 - 3PM (Sri Lankan Time)** ['Deadline'] and should be in a sealed envelope addressed to: Chief Executive Officer, Sri Lanka Cricket.

Alternatively, firms are permitted to submit the EOI along with its financial offer (**Financial Offer as a Password Protected .pdf file**), qualifying the above mentioned criteria and necessary documentation electronically via email to; sponsorship@srilankacricicket.lk on or before the deadline with all the hard copies of the same being couriered to aforementioned address.

The EOI needs to be accompanied with the following documents:

1. Certificate of Incorporation/ Business registration
2. Company Profile and Individual Directors' / Owners' Profile.
3. Certified copy of Memorandum and Articles of Association along with Certificate of Incorporation or similar constitutional documents
4. Updated VAT Registration Certificate, Trade License and Tax Identification Number (TIN) Certificate or similar documents.
5. Reference from a reputed Bank certifying the financial stability (Bank Solvency Certificate)
6. Updated auditor's report on financial statements (in case of consortium, each party's auditor's report needs to be submitted individually).

FINANCIAL PROPOSAL STRUCTURE AND PAYMENT TERMS:

- a.) Financial proposal should state the figure of the Net Rights Fee offered in Sri Lankan Rupees and/or US Dollars (in words and numbers) excluding of VAT/Tax/any other deductions depending on local or foreign EOI Participant.
- b.) The following payment structure will apply in respect of the rights to be granted and rights fee thereto shall be payable by the successful EOI participant to SLC in the following manner:
 - a. The total Rights Fee (i.e. the Offered Value) should be paid in full on or before **22nd May 2023**.
 - b. The Mode of Payment: Bank transfer to the SLC Designated Account/ Bank Draft issued in favor of SLC.

If you require any further information in relation to this EOI, please contact Business Development Manager - SLC via +(94) 779 429 035.

The SLC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers at its sole discretion without assigning any reason. The SLC also reserves the right to cancel the entire EOI process and / or modify, add or alter the terms of the document and/ or the conditions for EOI process by issuing an addendum(s) at any time.

India population to surpass China mid-year: UN

NEW DELHI, (AFP), 19 APRIL, 2023 - India is set to overtake China as the world's most populous country by mid-year with almost three million more people, UN estimates showed on Wednesday.

India's population will be 1.4286 billion compared to China's 1.4257 billion at mid-year, the United Nations Population Fund's State of World Population report showed.

China's population shrank last year for the first time in more than six decades, official data showed

earlier this year. The report also estimated that the global population will have hit 8.045 billion by the same date.

India has no recent official data on how many people it has because it has not conducted a census since 2011.

India's once in a decade census was due to be held in 2021 but was delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

It is now bogged down by logistical hurdles and

political reluctance, making it unlikely the massive exercise will begin anytime soon.

Critics say the government is deliberately delaying the census to hide data on contentious issues such as unemployment ahead of national elections next year.

According to the Pew Research Centre, India's population has grown by more than one billion people since 1950, the year the UN began gathering population data.



CALLING FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI)

ODI - BACK OF THE JERSEY BRANDING RIGHTS FOR AFGHANISTAN MEN'S NATIONAL TOUR OF SRI LANKA 2023



Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) hereby invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) along with financial offers from reputed Corporate Houses/ Companies/ Firms for acquiring the "BACK OF THE PLAYER JERSEY BRANDING RIGHTS" for the tour specified below.

- **Afghanistan Men's National Tour of Sri Lanka 2023** (Home Series) - Three (3) ODI Matches Scheduled to be played during 02nd to 07th of June 2023

The selected sponsor will be recognized as the 'Back of the jersey branding sponsor of Sri Lanka National Team during Afghanistan Men's National Tour of Sri Lanka 2023'.

GRANT OF RIGHTS:

The successful bidder will be offered with branding/advertising rights on the National Team Members – Back of the Player Jersey as specified below:

- Game Day Jersey | Back of the Jersey Position - Size not exceeding 32 SQ Inches (206.45 cm²)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Companies related to Tobacco, Alcohol (surrogated and non-surrogated), Betting, online betting, gambling shall not be eligible to participate in the EOI process.
- Marketing Agencies are eligible to participate in the EOI process.
- Sub-licensing of the rights herein offered will be permitted.

EOI SUBMISSION PROCEDURE:

The EOI along with **financial offer and brand name/logo** qualifying the above mentioned criteria, which will be depicted in the game day clothing must be submitted to the Sri Lanka Cricket Headquarters at No 35, Maitland Place, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka **on or before 1st May 2023 - 3PM (Sri Lankan Time)** ['Deadline'] and should be in a sealed envelope addressed to: Chief Executive Officer, Sri Lanka Cricket.

Alternatively, firms are permitted to submit the EOI along with its financial offer (**Financial Offer as a Password Protected .pdf file**), brand name/logo qualifying the above mentioned criteria and necessary documentation electronically via email to; sponsorship@srilankacricket.lk on or before the deadline with all the hard copies of the same being couriered to aforementioned address.

THE EOI NEEDS TO BE ACCOMPANIED WITH THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:

- Certificate of Incorporation / Business registration
- Company Profile and Individual Directors' / Owners' Profile.
- Certified copy of Memorandum and Articles of Association along with Certificate of Incorporation or similar constitutional documents
- Updated VAT Registration Certificate, Trade License and Tax Identification Number (TIN) Certificate or similar documents.
- Reference from a reputed Bank certifying the financial stability (Bank Solvency Certificate)
- Updated auditor's report on financial statements (in case of consortium, each party's auditor's report needs to be submitted individually).

FINANCIAL PROPOSAL STRUCTURE AND PAYMENT TERMS:

- Financial proposal should state the figure of the Net Rights Fee offered in Sri Lankan Rupees and/or US Dollars (in words and numbers) excluding of VAT/Tax/any other deductions depending on local or foreign EOI Participant.
- The following payment structure will apply in respect of the rights to be granted and rights fee thereto shall be payable by the successful EOI participant to SLC in the following manner:
 - The total Rights Fee (i.e. the Offered Value) should be paid in full on or before **15th May 2023**
 - The Mode of Payment: Bank transfer to the SLC Designated Account / Bank Draft issued in favor of SLC.

If you require any further information in relation to this EOI, Please contact Business Development Manager - SLC via +(94) 779 429 035.

The SLC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers at its sole discretion without assigning any reason. The SLC also reserves the right to cancel the entire EOI process and / or modify, add or alter the terms of the document and / or the conditions for EOI process by issuing an addendum(s) at any time.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - SRI LANKA CRICKET

CALLING FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI)

SRI LANKA CRICKET NATIONAL TEAM SPONSORSHIP (INBOUND) FOR AFGHANISTAN MEN'S NATIONAL TOUR OF SRI LANKA 2023



Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) hereby invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) along with financial offers from reputed Corporate Houses/ Companies/ firms for acquiring the "Sri Lanka Cricket Inbound National Men's Team Sponsorship Rights" for the tour specified below.

- **Afghanistan Men's National Tour of Sri Lanka 2023** (Home Series) - Three (3) One Day International (ODI) Matches Scheduled to be played during 02nd to 07th of June 2023

The selected sponsor will be recognized as the Sri Lanka National 'Inbound' Team Sponsor for Afghanistan Men's National Tour of Sri Lanka 2023.

GRANT OF RIGHTS:

The successful bidder will be offered with branding/advertising rights on the National Team Members Player Jersey as specified below:

- Game Day Jersey | Middle Chest Position - Size not exceeding 32 SQ Inches (206.45 cm²)
- Practice Jersey | Middle Chest Position - Size not exceeding 32 SQ Inches (206.45 cm²)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Companies related to Tobacco, Alcohol (surrogated and non-surrogated), Betting, online betting, gambling shall not be eligible to participate in the EOI process.
- Marketing Agencies are eligible to participate in the EOI process.
- Sub-licensing of the rights herein offered will be permitted.
- Bidders are permitted to nominate the brand name/ logo to be displayed on the player jerseys from the following product and service categories only. However, this clause will not be applicable to the existing National Outbound Team Sponsor.
 - Telecommunication
 - Pay TV and Digital Entertainment
 - Digital (FinTech, EduTech & Digital Health)

EOI SUBMISSION PROCEDURE:

The EOI along with **financial offer and brand name/logo** qualifying the above mentioned criteria, which will be depicted in the game day clothing/practice clothing must be submitted to the Sri Lanka Cricket Headquarters at No 35, Maitland Place, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka **on or before 1st May 2023 - 3PM (Sri Lankan Time)** ['Deadline'] and should be in a sealed envelope addressed to: Chief Executive Officer, Sri Lanka Cricket.

Alternatively, firms are permitted to submit the EOI along with its financial offer (**Financial Offer as a Password Protected .pdf file**), brand name/logo qualifying the above mentioned criteria and necessary documentation electronically via email to; sponsorship@srilankacricket.lk on or before the deadline with all the hard copies of the same being couriered to aforementioned address.

THE EOI NEEDS TO BE ACCOMPANIED WITH THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:

- Certificate of Incorporation / Business registration
- Company Profile and Individual Directors' / Owners' Profile.
- Certified copy of Memorandum and Articles of Association along with Certificate of Incorporation or similar constitutional documents
- Updated VAT Registration Certificate, Trade License and Tax Identification Number (TIN) Certificate or similar documents.
- Reference from a reputed Bank certifying the financial stability (Bank Solvency Certificate)
- Updated auditor's report on financial statements (in case of consortium, each party's auditor's report needs to be submitted individually).

FINANCIAL PROPOSAL STRUCTURE AND PAYMENT TERMS:

- Financial proposal should state the figure of the Net Rights Fee offered in Sri Lankan Rupees and/or US Dollars (in words and numbers) excluding of VAT/Tax/any other deductions depending on local or foreign EOI Participant.
- The following payment structure will apply in respect of the rights to be granted and rights fee thereto shall be payable by the successful EOI participant to SLC in the following manner:
 - The total Rights Fee (i.e. the Offered Value) should be paid in full on or before **15th May 2023**
 - The Mode of Payment: Bank transfer to the SLC Designated Account / Bank Draft issued in favor of SLC.

If you require any further information in relation to this EOI, Please contact Business Development Manager - SLC via +(94) 779 429 035.

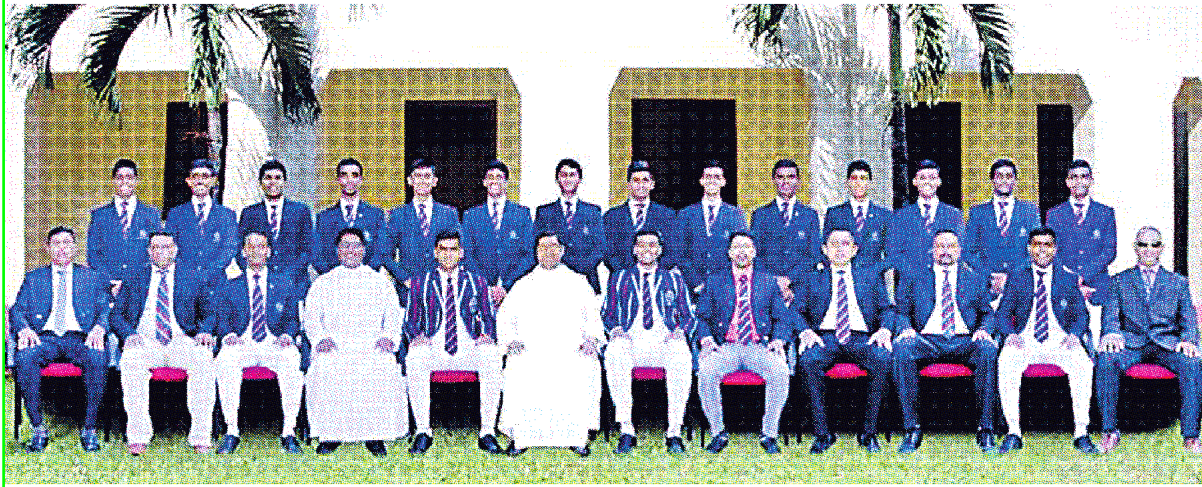
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - SRI LANKA CRICKET

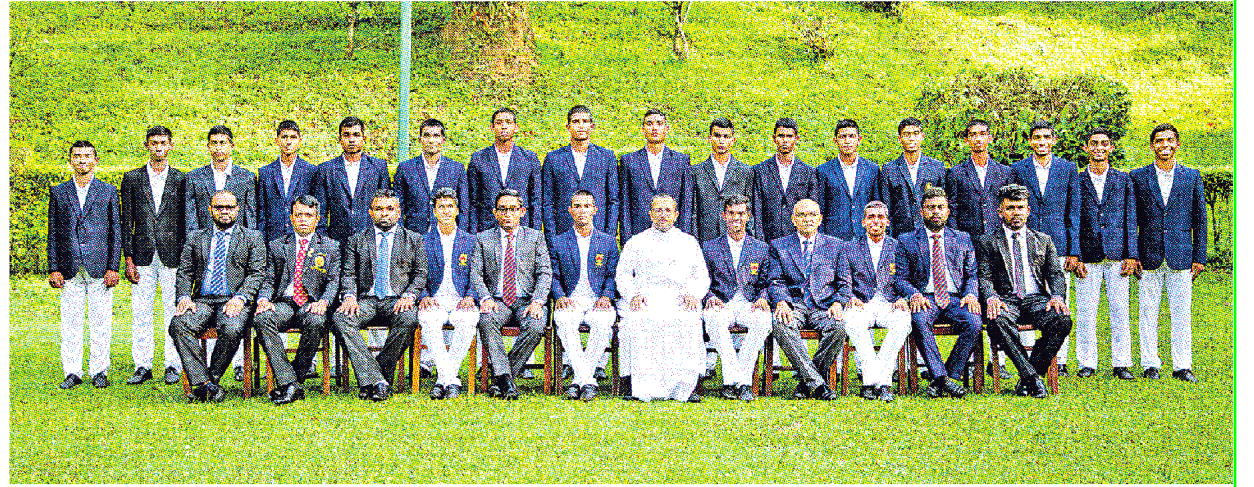
SPORTS

104th Battle of the Blues Hill Capital

ANTONIANS HOLD SLIGHT EDGE



St. Anthony's College



Trinity College



Lahiru Abeysinghe (C) Traveen Mathew (VC) Kaveesha Piyumal Janith Rathnasiri



Rahal Amarasinghe (C) Vibawith Ehelepola (VC) Kaveen Gamage Dinuka Tennakoon Wathila Udara



Dasun Weliyanga Thisara Ekanayake Ravindu Kapukotuwa Ryan Anthoniz



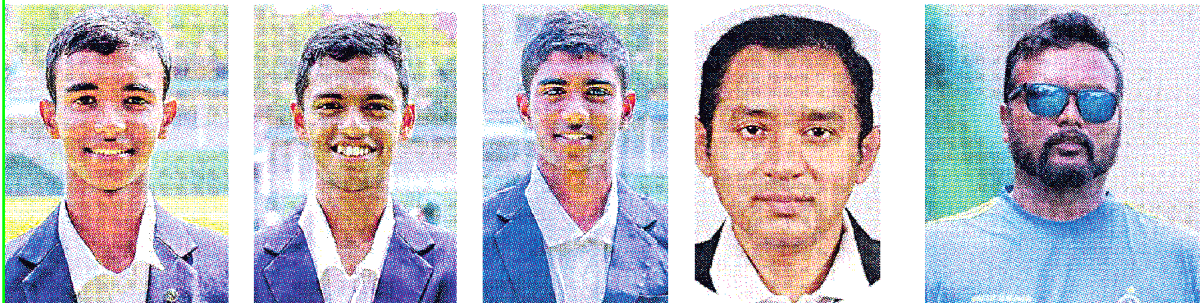
Viduka Dhammage Tharana Wimaladharna Theeraka Ranathunga Kusal Wijethunga Dinusha Peiris



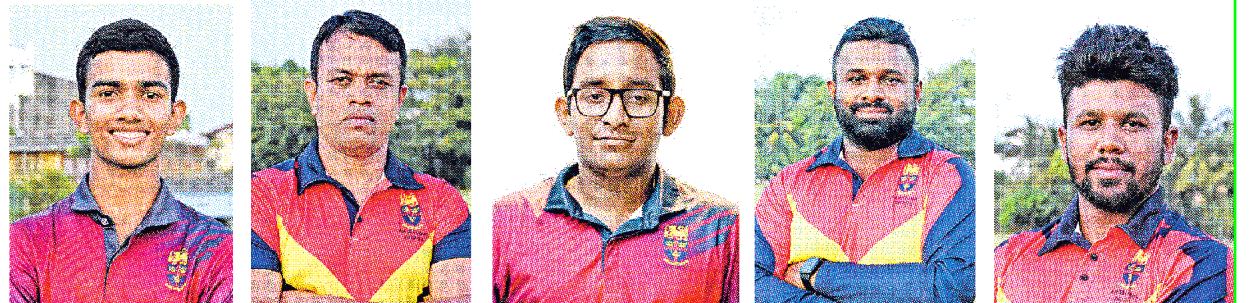
Charuka Ekanayake Kavindu Shehan Senura Abeyssekara Mohomad Aaqil



Supun Waduge Manula Kularathne Jayavi Liyanagama Lakvin Abeysinghe Janith Warnakula



Ravindu Kasthuriarachchi Dinura Ganegoda Induwara Galapitige Lenin Jayasinghe (Master in Charge) Suneth Gunathilake (Head Coach)



Yewan Hulangamuwa Bandula Pushpakumara Bryan Senarath (MIC) Dinusha Jayasanka (Asst. Coach) Lakshitha Alahakoon (Asst. Coach)

BY SHAMSEER JALEEL

St. Anthony's College will host Trinity College in their 104th Battle of the Blues Hill Capital on April 21 and 22 at Katugastota. This encounter is played for the John Halangoda Trophy. Taking into consideration the strength in both teams, which are high quality and equally balanced, playing at Katugastota the home team will have a slight edge in this encounter. Trinity have 23 wins to their name, while the Antonians have 12 with 68 encounters ending in no decisions. The last Trinity win came under Niroshan Dickwella when they won in 2012 at Asgiriya while Antonians last win was in 1992 under Umesh de Alwis at Katugastota. Trinity, led by Rahal Amarasinghe, have played 18 matches this season winning seven. Their wins were against Royal College Colombo (twice), Dharmaraja College, Gurukula MV, Ananda College, Devapathiraja MV and Maliyadeva College. They also had six first innings wins, with one their wins against Royal College the first time they had won at Reid Avenue in their 130-year history.

Amarasinghe scored 625 runs inclusive of five half centuries this season. He led Trinity College to the All Island One Day title and the final of the Two Day tournament where they finished joint winners with St. Joseph's College. This feat was repeated after 11 years. The Trinitian batting is led by left-hander Kusal Wijethunga, who had a magnificent season scoring 739 runs. Wijethunga was the vice-captain of all Junior sides from Under 13 to Under 17 was in the top 10-run scorers in the recent two-day format matches. He scored a magnificent 103 for Trinity at Reid Avenue which resulted in a famous win. He also scored another hurricane innings against Maris Stella College away at Welisara with a knock of his life by scoring 165. Dinusha Peiris too had a magnificent season for Trinity scoring 721 runs with two centuries and equal number of half centuries. In the bowling, it was Dinuka Tennakoon, who had 76 wickets inclusive of six five-fors while Tharana Wimaladharna too supported well with 67 wickets taking 5 or more on two occasions. Both Manula Kularathne and Theeraka Runathunge were selected for the Sri Lanka

Under 19 tour of UAE, and both missed eight of the two-day matches for their alma mater. Kularathne scored over 500 runs and took 16 wickets while Runathunge took 22 wickets including five or more wickets on two occasions. One of them was badly needed in the final against the Joes, taking 5 for 59 which helped them to end as Joint Champions. He also scored a Hurricane knock of 134 for Ace Capital against NCC in SLC Division 1 encounter. The Antonians meanwhile are led by Lahiru Abeysinghe, and this season they beat Jaffna Central, Thurstan College, Wesley College, Ananda College and Dharmaraja College while they had four first innings win as well this season. Skipper Abeysinghe scored 675 runs and took 24 wickets for the Katugastota lads with a highest of 77. Kavindu Shehan scored 601 runs, inclusive of a blistering 118 against the Rajans. Induruwa Galapitige (421) and Mohommed Aaqil (415) also supported their batting this season. Aaqil, the talented opener, had four half centuries this season with a best of a magnificent 76 against Royal at Reid Avenue. He was the Best Batsman in the last big

match at Asgiriya where he scored a very good 86 in that innings. Both Kaveesha Piyumal and Thisara Ekanayake were very unfortunate to miss out on the national Under 19 tour of UAE. Both destroyed many of their opponents with their spin unplayable most of the time. Piyumal (62), Thisara (60) and Charuka Ekanayake (30) were the three chief wicket takers for the Katugastota outfit. Kaveesha took five or more wickets on three occasions while taking one match bag of 10 wickets. Meanwhile, Thisara took five or more wickets on six occasions and two match bag of 10 wickets this season. Both Abeysinghe and Treveen Mathew represented the national Under 19 outfit. Antonians 1981 skipper, Fazzal Majeed will be the Chief Guest. He is the only successful skipper to beat Trinity at Asgiriya. **St Anthony's College:** Lahiru Abeysinghe (Capt), Traveen Mathew, Mohommed Aaqil, Kavindu Shehan, Kaveesha Piyumal, Ravindu Kapukotuwa, Induwara Galapitige, Ryan Anthonizs, Thisara Ekanayake, Janith Rathnasiri, Charuka Ekanayake, Senura Abeyssekara, Ravindu Kasthuriarachchi, Dasun Weliyanga and Dinura Ganegoda

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Gamer.LK announces action-packed Esports Roadmap for 2023

Gamer.LK, Sri Lanka's leading Esports organisation, has announced its 2023 roadmap which promises to be an exciting year for Esports athletes and enthusiasts alike. The roadmap features a wide range of Esports events, leagues and championships happening throughout the year. The 2023 roadmap kicked off in February with the IGE Community Series and the Dialog-SLESA National Esports Awards. This followed with the Sri Lanka Esports National organised by the Sri Lanka Esports Association in March where top athletes

competed to earn their way into the Sri Lanka Esports national teams. Gamer.LK Women's Cyber Games will be happening later in the year, aimed at providing a platform for female gamers to showcase their skills. May brings Gamer.LK's Inter-University Esports Championship and the IGE Challenger Series, while June will feature the Dialog-SLESA All Island Free Fire Championship, expected to become one of Sri Lanka's most popular Esports events. The second half of the year will see Gamer.LK's Mercantile Esports Championship in

July, followed by the IGE Community Series in August. In September, the Sri Lankan national Esports team will compete and represent Sri Lanka at the Asian Game, and the popular PUBG MOBILE event, the Esports Premier League will return. In October, Gamer.LK's Inter-School Esports Championship will take place, followed by the 15th World Esports Championship in Romania where Sri Lanka's national team will also be competing. The year will end with the national team playing at the Global Esports Games in Riyadh following the IGE Masters South Asia and the

return of Gamer.LK's most prestigious event, Sri Lanka Cyber Games, in December. Three new tournaments have been introduced by InGame Esports, the global brand of Gamer.LK. The IGE Community Series – an amateur series designed to awaken the community's interest in Esports – allowing grass-root level teams to showcase their talents. IGE Contenders is a highly competitive tournament that attracts top teams from each country, while IGE Masters is an invitation-only tournament for the best teams from IGE Contenders, with one of the most prestigious

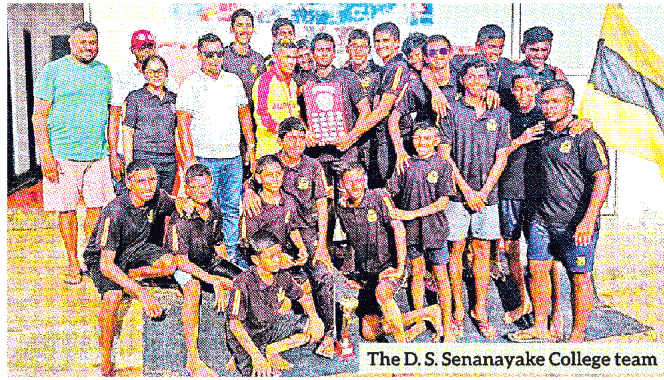
and exciting tournament formats of the year. "The new IGE Masters, Contenders and Community series marks a significant milestone in our vision for developing Esports in South Asia. These series will provide a platform for players to compete at all levels, showcase their skills, and be recognized for their achievements" said Raveen Wijayatilake, CEO of Gamer.LK. "We believe that Esports has the potential to become a major industry in Sri Lanka and South Asia, in a multiplicity of different avenues and we are committed to providing a platform for Esports athletes and people passionate about video games to excel within this ecosystem."

TRINITY PIX BY NIMALSIRI EDIRISIGHE

D. S. SENANAYAKE, MUSAEUS EXCEL AT THE 35TH NATIONAL INTERMEDIATE LIVE SAVING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023



The Musaeus College team



The D. S. Senanayake College team

D. S. Senanayake College and Musaeus College won the Overall Boys and Girls titles respectively at the 35th National Intermediate Life

Saving Championship 2023 held recently. D. S. Senanayake scored a total of 1163 points, finishing ahead of Ananda College (1150) and Richmond College (1134) in the overall results.

Musaeus College, with 1364, finished well clear of runners up Ruwanpura Aquatic Club (938) and third placed Surf Club Mount Lavinia (445). The Musaeus girls also won the Under 14 Girls age group

title, also finishing on top in the Under 17 category. They finished runners up to Surf Club Mount Lavinia in the Under 20 girls event. D. S. Senanayake won the Under 20 boys age group title.

Out-of-form Warner makes Australia's Ashes squad as Marsh recalled

Under-pressure David Warner was yesterday spared the axe and included in Australia's squad for the first two Ashes Tests and the World Test Championship final, while all-rounder Mitchell Marsh earned a recall.

Veteran opener Warner is fighting to save his career after a lean run with the bat that had some questioning whether his time was up.

But the 36-year-old will head to England as part of a 17-man squad that also includes Josh Inglis as cover for wicket-keeper Alex Carey, and Marcus Harris and Matthew Renshaw as back-up batters.

There was no room for batsman Peter Handscomb, who featured on the recent Test tour of India and is currently playing county cricket in England.

Chairman of selectors George Bailey all but confirmed Warner -- on his fourth Ashes tour -- would play the World Test Championship final against India at The Oval from June 7.

But he would not guarantee Warner's place for the first Ashes Test at Edgbaston in mid-June.

"Not specifically to Dave, but I think we'll get through that Test championship and then start to have a look at what it looks like," he said when



David Warner

pressed on Warner's longer-term place in the team.

"Different opposition, different surface. We'll work through that." Should Warner be overlooked, Harris or Renshaw would step in to partner Usman Khawaja at the top of the order.

In the bowling department, spinners Ashton Agar, Mitchell Swepson and Matt Kuhnemann, who went to India, were overlooked with Todd Murphy getting the nod as second spinner to Nathan Lyon.

"The UK is a very different assignment from our most recent tour of India and some of the changes are based upon the conditions we are anticipating," said Bailey.

Big-hitting Marsh, who has long battled injuries, returns as a back-up for first-choice all-rounder Cameron Green.

Marsh has not played a Test since the 2019 Ashes tour but is a mainstay of Australia's white-ball teams and Bailey said he deserved another chance in the red-ball format. "It's great to have Mitch back, he hasn't really had the opportunity to be bowling in longer-format cricket for some time and the (ankle) operation he had just prior to Christmas has worked really well," he said. (AFP)

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AUCTION SALE OF UNREDEEMED PAWN GOLD JEWELLERY
Gold articles pawned at the Wickramasinghe Pawn Brokers, No. 416, Negombo Rd, Hendala, Wattala during the period 17/10/2021 to 29/03/2022 and having completed one year and not redeemed will be sold by public auction on 25/05/2023 at the same address at 10.00 a.m.
W.A.J.T. Wickramasinghe Manager / Owner

AUCTION SALE OF UNREDEEMED PAWN GOLD JEWELLERY
Gold articles pawned at the Wickramasinghe Pawn Brokers, No. 38, Minuwangoda Road, Minuwangoda during the period 07/11/2021 to 31/03/2022 and having completed one year and not redeemed will be sold by public auction on 25/05/2023 at the same address at 10.00 a.m.
W.A.J.T. Wickramasinghe Manager / Owner

TENDER NOTICE

Mahindra IDEAL FINANCE MAHINDRA IDEAL FINANCE LIMITED
No.299, Dr. Colvin R. De Silva Mawatha, Union Place - Colombo 02.

VEHI. NO	MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	LOCATION
YX-2XXX	Bajaj	4 Stroke	2012	Bandarawela
ABS-8XXX	Bajaj	4 Stroke	2018	Embilipitiya
AAS-4XXX	Bajaj	4 stroke	2014	
PY-2XXX	Tata	Super Ace	2014	
ZA-1XXX	JCB	3CX Site Master	1996	Kadawatha
HC-0XXX	Mitsubishi	Canter	1998	
42-6XXX	Isuzu	Elf	1985	
CAV-3XXX	Toyota	Axio	2016	
59-9XXX	Toyota	Hiace	1993	
QK-2XXX	Bajaj	4 stroke	2007	
AAI-2XXX	Bajaj	4 stroke	2013	
ABT-7XXX	Mahindra	Alfa	2017	Monaragala
YF-8XXX	Bajaj	4 stroke	2010	
ABS-1XXX	Mahindra	Alfa	2018	
250-8XXX	Nissan	Caravan	1993	Monaragala
HM-2XXX	Toyota	Town Ace	1999	Welimada

Vehicle Inspection, during week days from 9.00 am to 4.30 pm
Mahindra Ideal Finance reserves Right to remove any vehicle without prior notice whatsoever
Kadawatha - Chamath - 0714940020 Embilipitiya - Chinthaka - 0703564162
Bandarawela - Sumith - 0703561449 Monaragala - Rasika - 0719923732
Welimada - Ramanayake - 0706923906

Matale District Cricket Association

TENDER NOTICE
PURCHASE OF A LAND TO CONSTRUCT A DISTRICT CRICKET GROUND

Matale District Cricket Association has decided to purchase a land in the District of Matale in order to construct a District Cricket ground under the 'National Pathway' program with a intention of providing an equal opportunity to every talented Sri Lankan Cricketer to represent the National Team.

Hence, Matale District Cricket Association is seeking to purchase a land from the District of Matale to construct the District Cricket Ground.

Eligibility requirements for the proposed Land

1. Land with minimum extent of 10 Acres or Above.
2. Land should face the main road
3. Availability of the Three-phase power supply
4. Availability of the Water supply facilities (through the National Water Supply and Drainage Board)

The application should be accompanied with the following documents

- » Deed of the land and approved plan
- » Relevant Volumes/Folios in relation to the land for more than 35 years issued by the Department of Land Registry.
- » Prepared title report certified by a lawyer.
- » Survey plan approved by the relevant local government authority
- » Latest notice of Tax Assessment.

N. B - Applicant should be the owner of the land. / In case of a Company, the application should be submitted by a duly authorized director.

Application in respect of this invitation can be obtained from the below mentioned address from 20th of April 2023 to 03rd of May 2023 (3.00pm) by paying a non-refundable fee of Rs. 1000/=

Duly perfected sealed applications should be submitted to the 'President, Matale District Cricket Association, No.02, 1/1, Gongawela Road, Matale on or before the 04th May 2023 at 3.00pm indicating at the upper left corner of the envelope as "Land purchase for the District Cricket Ground."

For Inquiries, please contact the President, Matale District Cricket Association, Matale via 077 - 1231661 / 066 - 3131055

The Matale District Cricket Association reserves the right to cancel, amend or vary this process at any time as its sole discretion, without assigning any reason there of.

**President, Matale District Cricket Association,
No.02, 1/1, Gongawela Road, Matale**

CALLING 'EXPRESSION OF INTEREST' (EOI)
TERRESTRIAL RADIO BROADCASTING RIGHTS
AFGHANISTAN MEN'S NATIONAL TOUR OF SRI LANKA 2023

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), being the Governing Body of Cricket in Sri Lanka hereby invites and seeks "Expressions of Interest" from reputed Local Broadcasters that are interested in acquiring Terrestrial Radio Broadcasting Rights of Sri Lanka Cricket for the tour specified below only in respect of the territory of Sri Lanka.

1) Afghanistan Men's National Tour of Sri Lanka 2023 - 3 ODI Matches
1st ODI 2nd June 2023 - Venue to be confirmed (Day / Day & Night)
2nd ODI 4th June 2023 - Venue to be confirmed (Day / Day & Night)
3rd ODI 7th June 2023 - Venue to be confirmed (Day / Day & Night)

DETAILS OF THE RIGHTS:
A document detailing the Rights for which SLC will be floating an Invitation to Tender indicating SLC's Requirements and Guidelines in relation to the submission of Bids will be notified to the firms/organizations that express an interest.
Further, category protection for the selected Terrestrial Radio Partner will not be granted against other sponsorship categories.

EOI SUBMISSION PROCEDURE:
Interested firms/organizations are called upon to submit their letters of Expression of Interest [EOI] together with a summary of credentials, and corporate profile of the firm/organization via e-mail to SLC on sponsorship@srilankacricket.lk to reach on or before 03:00 pm. [Sri Lankan Time] on 27th April 2023. If further information is required in relation to this EOI, please contact Manager Business Development - SLC via +94 779 429 035.

SLC reserves the right to cancel, amend or vary this EOI at any time at its sole discretion, without assigning any reason whatsoever.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
SRI LANKA CRICKET**

CALLING 'EXPRESSION OF INTEREST' (EOI)
TERRESTRIAL TV BROADCASTING RIGHTS (FREE TO AIR)
AFGHANISTAN MEN'S NATIONAL TOUR OF SRI LANKA 2023

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), being the Governing Body of Cricket in Sri Lanka hereby invites and seeks "Expressions of Interest" from reputed Local Broadcasters that are interested in acquiring Terrestrial TV Broadcasting Rights (Free to Air) of Sri Lanka Cricket for the tour specified below only in respect of the territory of Sri Lanka.

1) Afghanistan Men's National Tour of Sri Lanka 2023 - 3 ODI Matches
1st ODI 2nd June 2023 - Venue to be confirmed (Day / Day & Night)
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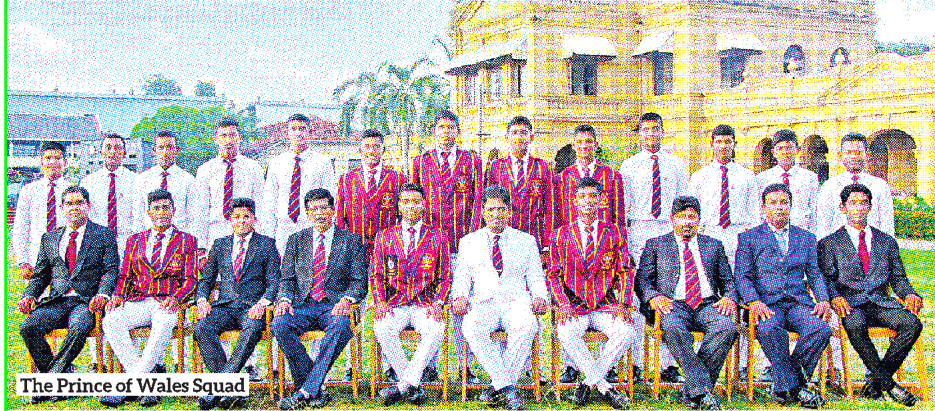
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SLC reserves the right to cancel, amend or vary this EOI at any time at its sole discretion, without assigning any reason whatsoever.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
SRI LANKA CRICKET**

SPORTS

73rd Battle of the Gold's CLOSE TUSSLE EXPECTED BETWEEN TWO EVENLY MATCHED TEAMS



The Prince of Wales Squad



The St. Sebastian's Squad

Seated (L to R) R.A. Sanjaya (Asst. Coach), Tharindu Amarasinghe, Kasun Dewapriya (POG), Ranjith Alapperuma (Deputy Principa), Omesh Mendis (Capt.), Hasitha Kesara Weththimuni (Principal), Samalka Fernando (Vice Capt.), Sarath Thilakarathna (MIC), Kelum Fernando (Head Coach), Sameera Fernando (Physiotherapy).
Standing (Front Row L to R) Nethul Anuhas, Rasindu Fernando, Basuru Kalhara, Oshan De Silva, Uneth Peiris, Achala Perera, Suhas Gawrawa, Rivith Jayasuriya, Prince Fernando, Gaveesha Roshan, Prasanna Lakmina, Pasan Cooray, Ranuka Rodrigo

1st Row Seated (L to R) Kelum Perera (Trainer), Kanishka Perera (MIC), Mahen Silva (Vice Capt.), Ref. Fr. Dilusha Chamara Perera (POG), Rev. Fr. Sanjeewa Mendis (Rector), Sandeesh Fernando (Capt.), Bradman Edirweera (Head Coach), Asanka Perera (Asst. Coach)
2nd Row Standing (L to R) Agitha Kudaligama, Tyra Baskaran, Navod Fernando, Vimath Dinsara, Adesh Almeda, Nadeesh Fernando, Aloka Fernando, Janaka Silva, Nilash Perera
3rd Row Standing (L to R) Sajjan Wijerathna, Dineth Malawarachchi, Rayan Dissanayake, Manuja Chanthuka, Yashin Fernando, Ruwanath Kumaradasa, Saneesh Fernando, Sasindu Prarthana

BY M. SHAMILAMIT
The much awaited Battle of the Gold's big match between two of the leading cricket playing schools Prince of Wales and St. Sebastian's College in Moratuwa will take place on Friday (21) and Saturday (22) at De Zoysa Stadium in Moratuwa.

This is the 73rd encounter in the series, of which the Cambrians are leading with six wins against three to the Sebastianites. The last win in the two-day series was achieved by St. Sebastian's in 2011 breaking a long-standing hoodoo of neither teams being able to record a win for 33 years. This was also their first win since 1966, a gap of 44 years. On the other hand the last win in the two-day series achieved by the Cambrians was in 1977 when the side was led by Pemaal Fernando, so they have a 43-year hoodoo haunting them. Looking back at the performances of the two sides they have had fluctuating

fortunes with the Cambrians undergoing an outright defeat. The Sebs this year will be led by Sandeesh Fernando while the Cambrians will be led by Omesh Mendis. Sebs skipper Fernando will be depending on their inform players in the likes of Vimath, Dinsara, his deputy Mahen Silva and Sanesh Fernando in the batting department and Manuja Chanthuka in the bowling attack. The Cambrians skipper Mendis on the other hand will bank on Oshan

de Silva, Uneth Peiris, Sumalka Fernando, Tharindu Amarasinghe, Rivith Jayasuriya, Prince Fernando and Achala Perera in the batting and bowling departments. The two-day encounter will be followed by the 38th limited over match due to be played on April 23 at the SSC ground. In this version the Sebs are leading with 18 wins to the 15 by the Cambrians with one tied and the two abandoned due to rain.

Rohana De Silva confirmed as BWF Referee

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) recently confirmed experienced badminton match referee Rohana De Silva as a BWF referee.



Rohana De Silva

De Silva, who represents Sri Lanka, was one of only four candidates who passed the theory exam in Malaysia last year and as a referee for the Osaka International Challenge 2023, he passed his practical assessment in Osaka, Japan this year.

In Sri Lankan badminton history, he is only the second Sri Lankan to be confirmed as a BWF referee. He also creates history by becoming the first Sri Lankan to achieve the highest level of umpiring. He has been a BWF-Certificated umpire since 2012.

Rohana de Silva began his career in badminton in 1995 as a local technical official

and advanced to international status in 2002. He has served as an international technical official for 21 years with many more to go.

De Silva has always been a valuable asset to Sri Lanka Badminton. He is now assisting a lot of aspiring young Umpires and Referees in rising through the ranks and achieving recognition on an international level.

All Sri Lankans should be extremely proud of De Silva for reaching such heights in badminton. Many more young athletes will be inspired to follow in his footsteps as a result of this.

It is a proud moment for all Sri Lankans and a great achievement from De Silva to reach such heights in Badminton. This will surely motivate many more young athletes to follow his footsteps. (SP)

SLVB to conduct selection trial for AVC event on April 24

BY SUSILPREMALAL

The Sri Lanka Volleyball Federation (SLVB) has selected the national men's volleyball team to participate in the fourth AVC Men's Challenge Cup Volleyball Championship 2023 conducted by the Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC).

This will be the first time that a Sri Lanka National Men's Volleyball team will participate in an international volleyball tournament in 2023.

AVC has made arrangements to hold this tournament with the participation of 16 Asian countries

from July 8-15 in Chinese Taipei.

SLVB has decided to form a volleyball national training pool targeting the tournament and has taken steps to hold its first selection trial on April 24 from 8:30 a.m. at the Volleyball House Indoor Stadium in Galle.

SLVB Secretary A.S.Nalaka requests volleyball players who wish to participate in the selection event to report to the stadium at 8:00 a.m. on that day.

From the first selection trial, 24 players will be selected and the final 12 will be selected after training.

Uchchitha and Priya in the lead on day one

BY SHAMSEER JALEEL

Uchchitha Ranasinghe and Priya Hemantha were on equal terms with 74

points each after Day one in their Sri Lanka Golf (SLG) conducted trials for the Asian Games which commenced at

the Victoria Golf Resort (VGR).

The four day event saw Vijith Bandara (75) in second place while

Chanaka Perera and Reshan Algama tied on third place with 78 points each.

TEAM SPONSORSHIP 2023 ICC MEN'S CRICKET WORLD CUP QUALIFIER (ODI) - ZIMBABWE



SRI LANKA CRICKET (SLC), BEING THE GOVERNING BODY OF CRICKET IN SRI LANKA WISHES TO CALL EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) ALONG WITH FINANCIAL OFFERS FROM LOCAL AND GLOBAL FIRMS INTERESTED IN SPONSORING THE SRI LANKA MEN'S NATIONAL TEAM DURING THE ICC MEN'S CRICKET WORLD CUP QUALIFIER (ODI) IN ZIMBABWE, WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN 18TH JUNE - 9TH JULY 2023.

THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ATTRACT GLOBAL ATTENTION TO YOUR VALUED BRAND. SRI LANKA NATIONAL MEN'S A TEAM, A HIGHLY COMPETITIVE TEAM WITH WORLD CLASS PLAYERS ONBOARD. THE MATCHES WILL BE BROADCASTED GLOBALLY AND ALSO BE AVAILABLE ON DIGITAL MEDIA. THIS WILL PROVIDE WIDE SCALE EXPOSURE FOR BRANDS, WHICH ASSOCIATES WITH THE GLOBAL EVENT.

THE SELECTED PARTNER WILL GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISPLAY ITS 'BRAND LOGO' ON THE TEAMS PLAYING ATTIRE AS SPECIFIED BELOW.

SPONSORSHIP CATEGORY	LOGO POSITION/S	LOGO SIZE/S
TEAM SPONSOR	FOR BOTH LOGO POSITIONS, ONLY 1 (ONE) LOGO CAN BE ACCOMMODATED.	
	PLAYING SHIRT - LEADING ARM	10 SQ INCHES (64.5 CM ²)
	TEAM TRAINING BIB	32 SQ INCHES (206.45 CM ²)

THE FOLLOWING PRODUCTS AND/OR SERVICE CATEGORIES ARE PROTECTED:

- MOBILE TELEPHONE DEVICES INCLUDING SMARTPHONES, HEADPHONES, TABLETS, CHARGERS AND RELATED ACCESSORIES;
- TYRES AND INNER TYRE TUBES;
- BOOKING, AND/OR RESERVATION SERVICES IN RESPECT OF ACCOMMODATION AND/OR ATTRACTIONS, INCLUDING ANY DIRECT OR INDIRECT SEARCH, COMPARISON (INCLUDING PRICE), REVIEW AND APPRAISAL, RESERVATION, BOOKING, SELLING, RE-SELLING, BUYING, AND/OR PURCHASE BOOKING AND/OR RESERVATION SERVICE FOR ACCOMMODATION AND/OR ATTRACTIONS; AND
- OILS, LUBRICANTS AND NATURAL GAS.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

COMPANIES RELATED TO TOBACCO, ALCOHOL (SURROGATED AND NON-SURROGATED), BETTING, ONLINE BETTING, GAMBLING SHALL NOT BE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EOI PROCESS.

FINANCIAL PROPOSAL STRUCTURE AND PAYMENT TERMS:

- FINANCIAL PROPOSAL SHOULD STATE THE FIGURE OF THE NET RIGHTS FEE OFFERED IN SRI LANKAN RUPEES AND/OR US DOLLARS (IN WORDS AND NUMBERS) EXCLUDING OF VAT/TAX/ANY OTHER DEDUCTIONS DEPENDING ON LOCAL OR FOREIGN EOI PARTICIPANT.
- THE FOLLOWING PAYMENT STRUCTURE SHALL APPLY IN RESPECT OF THE RIGHTS TO BE GRANTED, AND RIGHT FEE THERE TO SHALL BE PAYABLE BY THE SUCCESSFUL EOI PARTICIPANT TO SLC IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER.
 - THE TOTAL RIGHTS FEE (I.E THE OFFERED VALUE) SHOULD BE PAID IN FULL ON OR BEFORE 15TH MAY 2023
 - THE MODE OF PAYMENT: BANK TRANSFER TO THE SLC DESIGNATED ACCOUNT/BANK DRAFT ISSUED IN FAVOR OF SLC.
- INTERESTED PARTIES, PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) ALONG WITH FINANCIAL OFFER (AS A PASSWORD PROTECTED .PDF FILE) AND SPONSOR LOGO ON OR BEFORE 3PM 3RD MAY 2023 TO SPONSORSHIP@SRILANKACRICKET.LK AND THE HARD COPIES OF THE SAME BEING HANDED OVER/COURIERED TO SRI LANKA CRICKET HEADQUARTERS NO.35, MAITLAND PLACE, COLOMBO 7, SRI LANKA IN A SEALED ENVELOPE ADDRESSED TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, SRI LANKA CRICKET.

THE EOI NEEDS TO BE ACCOMPANIED WITH THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS

- CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION
- COMPANY PROFILE AND INDIVIDUAL DIRECTORS / OWNER'S PROFILE
- CERTIFICATE OF MEMORANDUM AND ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION ALONG WITH CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION OR SIMILAR CONSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS
- UPDATED VAT REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE, TRADE LICENSE AND TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (TIN) CERTIFICATE OF SIMILAR DOCUMENTS
- REFERENCE FROM A REPUTED INTERNATIONAL BANK CERTIFYING THE FINANCIAL STABILITY (BANK SOLVENCY CERTIFICATE)
- LATEST AUDITOR'S REPORT ON FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (IN CASE OF CONSORTIUM, EACH PARTY'S AUDITOR'S REPORT NEEDS TO BE SUBMITTED INDIVIDUALLY).
- IN CASE OF CONSORTIUM, NOTARIZED CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT.

IF YOU REQUIRE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION IN RELATION TO THIS EOI, PLEASE CONTACT MANAGER BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT - SLC VIA +94 779 429 035.

THE SLC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL OFFERS AT ITS SOLE DISCRETION WITHOUT ASSIGNING ANY REASON. THE SLC ALSO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CANCEL THE ENTIRE THIS PROCESS AND / OR MODIFY, ADD OR ALTER THE TERMS OF THE DOCUMENT AND/ OR THE CONDITIONS FOR EOI PROCESS BY ISSUING AN ADDENDUM(S) AT ANY TIME.



Mirror Business

www.dailymirror.lk/business

Full Stock Market P14

Tea output dips for third straight month in March

- March tea production dips by 3% YoY
- High and Low Grows show a marginal decline, Medium Grows record a slight gain
- Tea Board expects crop output to improve from 2Q23 with application of fertilisers



about 3 percent year-on-year (YoY) to 21.34 MnKgs in March. However, it must be noted that the dip in production is lower than the 16 percent YoY drop in January and 12 percent in

February.

The analysis by Forbes & Walker Tea Brokers showed that the High Grows and Low Grows have shown a marginal decline, whilst the Medium Grows record a marginal gain. When compared to 28.81 MnKgs of March 2021, March 2023 shows a decrease of 7.47 MnKgs.

The cumulative production for the January-March 2023 period totalled 58.52 MnKgs, recording a decrease of 7 percent when compared with the corresponding period in 2023. Similarly, on a cumulative basis, all elevations have recorded a considerable decrease, in comparison with the corresponding period 2022.

Further, when compared to 74.51 MnKgs of January-March 2021, the

cumulative production of 2023 showed a decrease of 15.99 MnKgs. Here again, all elevations show a decrease over the corresponding period of 2021.

According to the statements made by the Sri Lanka Tea Board previously, tea production is expected to pick up from 2Q23, as by then the usage of fertilisers, after the end of the agro-chemical ban, is expected to boost crop growth.

The Tea Board expressed confidence in having improved crop growth from April and expects the output to increase from then on.

Tea production is expected to recover to 300 MnKgs in 2023, after the lowest production of 251.50 MnKgs, since 1995, was recorded in 2022.

Employees go before Supreme Court against proposed sale of SLT

- Sri Lanka All Telecommunication Employees Union files FR petition in Supreme Court
- Seeks an order restraining Treasury Secretary from taking any steps to divest SLT shares held by him
- Also, state-proposed sale of shares affects other state sector shareholders of SLT

By Lakmal Sooriyagoda

The Sri Lanka All Telecommunication Employees Union yesterday filed a fundamental rights (FR) petition in the Supreme Court, seeking an order restraining the Treasury Secretary from taking any steps to divest the shares held by him in Sri Lanka Telecom PLC (SLT).

Sri Lanka All Telecommunication Employees Union President J.B. Gurusinghe and its General Secretary Kamalanath Hettiarachchi filed this petition against the decision taken in principle by the Cabinet of Ministers to divest the shares of SLT held by the Treasury Secretary.

The petitioners stated that the purported decision is said to be implemented by the purported State Owned Enterprise Restructuring Unit. The petitioners said they are unaware as to when this decision was taken in principle by the Cabinet of Ministers and such a decision has not been made public.

The petitioners maintained that the arbitrary decision purported to be taken to divest the shares also affects the other shareholders of the state sector, including the Employees' Provident Fund, Bank of Ceylon A/C Ceybank Trust, Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation Ltd Fund, Employees' Trust Fund, National Savings Bank,

Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation Ltd General Fund and Bank of Ceylon No. 1 Account.

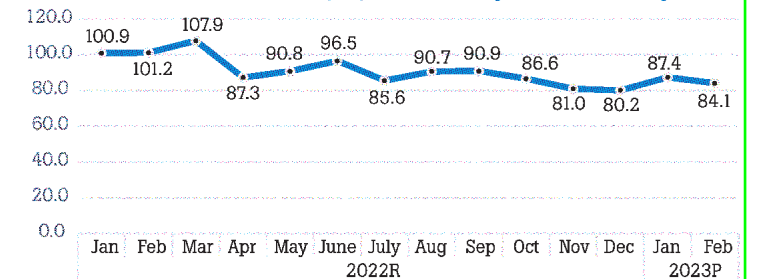
The petitioners stated that the said decision has not been made after public consultation or after consultation with the employees of SLT, including the petitioners' trade union.

They further stated that the said decision goes against the hallowed concept of public trust and the spirit of the Constitution, as a majority of the shares of SLT (54.01 percent) are held by the Government of Sri Lanka and by public corporations, in which the state is the majority shareholder.

This petition was filed through Attorney-at-Law Manjula Balasooriya.

Sri Lanka's industrial activity struggles to return to pre-crisis levels

Index of Industrial Production (IIP) 2022 January - 2023 February



Source: Index of Industrial Production, Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka

Index of Industrial Production records index value of 84.1 in February, compared to 101.2 a year ago

measures the manufacturing heart of the economy, recoded an index value of 84.1, compared to an index value of 101.2 a year ago, signalling the problems faced by the industrial sector.

The index also slipped 1.6 index points in February to 89.1, from 90.5 index points in January. However, industrial activity might have picked up pace from March amid the improvement in the foreign exchange conditions and the optimism following Sri Lanka's successful deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a US \$ 3 billion facility.

In February, the Index of Industrial Production, which

MORE ON P14

YoungShip Sri Lanka elects first female chairperson



From left: Rishantha Mendis and Maleena Awn

YoungShip Sri Lanka is shaping the future of the country's maritime industry by empowering young professionals through opportunities to learn, share and collaborate whilst being part of a global network.

The organisation celebrated its 10th anniversary on March 21, 2023, at Marino Beach Hotel in Colombo. The celebration earmarked an extra special day in the organisation's calendar

with the appointment of its first female Chair – Maleena Awn, to lead YoungShip Sri Lanka for the upcoming year.

Awn is Director Operations and a board member at Meridian Maritime Services Limited, a shipping agency and logistics company with 35 years of experience in the maritime industry.

MORE ON P14

Link Natural's Samahan now served onboard SriLankan Airlines

Link Natural, a subsidiary of the CIC group, has partnered SriLankan Airlines, the national carrier, to introduce Link Samahan, a trusted herbal drink, as an onboard beverage choice.

Link Natural is a leading manufacturer and marketer of herbal healthcare and herbal personal care products in addition to ayurveda pharmaceuticals.

Its flagship brand, Link Samahan, is a 100 percent natural authentic herbal drink formulated with 14 trusted ayurvedic herbal ingredients that have been used traditionally over centuries to enhance the health and well-being and supports immunity when consumed regularly.

Moreover, it can be conveniently consumed in hot water, tea or coffee, depending on the consumer's preference.



Link Samahan will be served onboard SriLankan Airlines' medium and long-haul flights. Passengers can now enjoy a cup of the healthy herbal drink, which promotes wellness and health.

The company prides itself on the state-of-the-art modern Research and Development Centre, providing the core of research, product formulation and development, ensuring stringent quality and

regulatory standards. The facility is also US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) audit compliant, maintaining high standards for Good Manufacturing Practices, which supports the brand reaching global markets.

Today, Link Samahan is available in over 30 countries and has won the confidence of consumers across the globe.

MORE ON P14

HSBC's largest shareholder outlines bank break-up strategy

AFP: HSBC's largest shareholder ramped up pressure on the bank to break up its business on Tuesday, saying it was underperforming and has failed to "address key business model challenges".

In a rare public statement, Chinese insurer Ping An said HSBC was lagging behind international peers and a recent improvement in performance was tied to rising interest rates, which have now peaked.

Ping An outlined revised proposals for restructuring that highlight HSBC's precarious position as US-China tensions rise, with some observers doubting whether Europe's largest lender can continue to straddle East and West.

"It is necessary for HSBC to push for structural reform to fundamentally address HSBC's underlying market competitiveness issues," Michael Huang, Chairman and CEO of Ping An Asset Management, said in a statement.

Ping An last year suggested a series of ideas for HSBC to separate its business but Huang said the bank's management had "exaggerated many of the costs and risks" associated with a split.

The previous proposals involved spinning off the bank's Asia business into a separate entity listed and headquartered in Hong Kong, and a consolidation of the bank's interests in the region, Huang said.

MORE ON P14

DIMO realigns healthcare operations under 'DIMO Healthcare' identity with recent foray into pharmaceuticals

Company recently acquired Mansel Ceylon (Private) Limited and Associated Laboratories (Private) Limited, expanding into pharmaceutical field

Diversified conglomerate DIMO, with its recent expansion into the pharmaceutical sector, has now realigned all its healthcare operations under the new identity of 'DIMO Healthcare'.

DIMO has been at the forefront of the nation's healthcare sector by providing state-of-the-art medical equipment in the fields of radiology, ophthalmology, neurology, cardiology and oncology for over seven decades.

Adding more value to the country's healthcare sector, DIMO expanded into healthcare devices, consumables, contrast mediums and most recently into pharmaceuticals.

Aligned with its strategic vision, the company recently acquired Mansel Ceylon (Private) Limited and Associated Laboratories (Private) Limited, expanding into the pharmaceutical field.

This recent acquisition enables DIMO Healthcare to offer over 250 pharmaceutical products that cover pain management, respiratory disorders, gastroenterology, liver diseases, antibiotics, endocrinology, cardiovascular antihistamine, vitamins and supplements, neurology, dermatology and psychiatric treatment

from renowned pharmaceutical manufacturers such as Medochemie Ltd – Cyprus, Grifols Inc – USA, Hetero Ltd – India, PT.Harsen – Indonesia, HovidBhd – Malaysia, Geno Pharmaceuticals Ltd – India and Tabros Pharma (Pvt.) Ltd – Pakistan, just to name a few.

The DIMO Healthcare pharmaceutical arm also consists of an islandwide distribution network facilitating easy access for medicine.

DIMO Chairman and Managing Director Ranjith Pandithage said, "Under this bold new identity DIMO Healthcare, we aim to expand the horizons of Sri Lanka's healthcare sector with our objective of building a healthier nation. Our strategic vision has given us opportunities to facilitate

multiple spectrums of the healthcare sector and we are confident that it will play a significant role in fuelling the dreams and aspirations of the communities we serve, within our efforts in building a healthier nation."

DIMO Executive Director Wijith Pushpawela, who also oversees the healthcare segment of the group, said, "DIMO has always led the way in providing the latest internationally renowned technology to the local healthcare sector. It is after much careful consideration that we chose consumables, devices, contrast mediums and pharmaceutical brands that would further enhance our reputation within the healthcare sector."

MORE ON P14

Thimira Godakumbura new MD/CEO at Colombo Dockyard

Colombo Dockyard PLC yesterday announced the appointment of Thimira Samantha Godakumbura as the company's MD/CEO, with effect from April 19, 2023, after the retirement of D.V. Abeyasinghe from the MD/CEO position.



Thimira Godakumbura

Godakumbura's appointment is backed by Onomichi Dockyard Co. Ltd Japan, the majority shareholder of Colombo Dockyard PLC.

Godakumbura obtained a BCS. Eng. Degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Moratuwa in 1999 and started

the career in 2000 as a Trainee Engineer at Colombo Dockyard PLC.

He has gained vast experience and knowledge in the shipbuilding and ship repairing industry, with local and overseas training, including Onomichi Dockyard, Japan and Dry Dock World, UAE.

He obtained his Master's in Business Administration from the Postgraduate Institute of Management, University of Sri Jayawardenepura.

MORE ON P14



SARVODAYA DEVELOPMENT FINANCE PLC

1319

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19.04.2023

Table with columns: SECURITY, VOLUME, VWA, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, VWA TODAY'S, CHANGE, SECURITY, VOLUME, VWA, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, VWA TODAY'S, CHANGE. Lists various stocks and their market performance.

Bearish sentiment continues

Indices closed in red as a result of price losses in counters such as Expolanka Holdings, Hatton National Bank and Sampath Bank with the turnover crossing Rs 632 Mn.

in Expolanka Holdings, Tokyo Cement Company novoting and Vallibel Finance whilst retail interest was noted in Marawila Resorts (rights), Browns Investments and LOLC Finance.

contributor to the market turnover (due to Expolanka Holdings) whilst the sector index lost 4.60%. The share price of Expolanka Holdings decreased by Rs 8.00 (4.60%) to close at Rs 165.75.

0.61%. The share price of Hayleys moved down by Rs 0.40 (0.55%) to close at Rs 72.40. National Development Bank, Tokyo Cement Company novoting and Browns Investments were also included amongst the top turnover contributors.



share price of Tokyo Cement Company novoting closed flat at Rs 48.00. The share price of Browns Investments declined by Rs 0.10 (1.67%) to close at Rs 5.90.

Contd. from Page 13

Link Natural's...

The product has been recently endorsed by world-renowned British supermodel Naomi Campbell in her interview with Vogue India. As milestones in its growing international journey, Link Samahan has gained approval to be marketed at Costco Wholesale stores in Japan, Lulu supermarkets in the Middle East and Amazon.com in the USA.

shareholders including valuation unlock, capital relief, long-term efficiency gains, geopolitical risk mitigation and competitive repositioning," he added. However, HSBC said the proposed restructuring alternatives would not "deliver increased value for shareholders. Rather they would have a material negative impact on value."

"We remain clear that our current strategy is the fastest way to deliver returns," the bank said in a statement. HSBC was among a number of major banks to cancel dividends early in the Covid-19 pandemic after a de facto order from the Bank of England -- a move that riled some Hong Kong investors.

YoungShip...

She was also the previous Vice Chairperson of YoungShip Sri Lanka for the year 2022 and has served on the committee since 2019, before being elected as Chairperson for 2023. Founded in Norway, YoungShip International is a non-profit establishment with a dynamic and diverse footprint of over 4000 members in 30 countries, dedicated to promoting the interests and values of the next generation of maritime leaders.

Over the past year, the organisation has grown to 285 members, representing over 130 companies.

To strengthen its commitment to building a more youthful and inclusive industry, the organisation signed MoUs with key associations to facilitate hands-on experience and training opportunities to budding professionals. These include the Sri Lanka Logistics and Freight Forwarders Association (SLFFA), Lanka Association of Ship Owners (LASO), Sri Lanka Association of NVOCC Agents (SLANA), Sri Lanka Ship Suppliers Association (SLSSA) and Association of Inland Container Depot Operators (ACDO).

Moreover, YoungShip Sri Lanka has also worked to provide educational discounts from the Institute of Shipping and Logistics (IOSL) and Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers (ICS) on several courses to its members. YoungShip Sri Lanka also appointed its Executive Committee for the new year. The members elect are as follows: Chairperson - Maleena Awn (Meridian Maritime Services Ltd), Vice Chair - Nirmal Dissanayake (Eastern Maritime (Colombo) Ltd), Secretary - Prashan Fernando (Panama Shipping (Pvt.) Ltd), Treasurer - Sunera Wijesekara (Eastern Maritime (Colombo) Ltd), Assistant Secretary - Aruni Wijepala (Hayleys Energy Services Lanka (Pvt.) Ltd), Assistant Treasurer - Patali Karunarathne (Ceyline Holding (Pvt.) Ltd), Immediate Past Chair - Rishantha Mendis (Prudential Shipping), Shane De Alwis (Hapag Lloyd Lanka (Pvt.) Ltd), Innaad Hameem (Evergreen Shipping Agency Lanka (Pvt.) Ltd) and Shanga Jayawickreme (McLarens Group of Companies).

Siemens Healthineers, Carl Zeiss, Draeger and more.

In terms of the implants segment, the company provides cardiac stents, X-ray accessories, mechanical heart valves, catheters and pacemakers from internationally reputed principals such as Boston Scientific, St. Jude and more. In the consumables and contrast mediums sector, the company provides medical printers, monitors, pressure indicators and accessories for neonatal care, critical care, anaesthesiology and immobilisation accessories for radiation therapy and diagnostics from Sony & Codonics. DIMO Healthcare is the largest provider of PET scanners, MRI scanners and operating microscopes in Sri Lanka, covering every part of the island. The radiology equipment such as MRI, CT and PET-CT scanners supplied by DIMO Healthcare serves 525,643 patients per annum, while the operating microscopes perform 213,000 surgeries and over 1.5mn diagnostic tests per year.

The company also has supplied Sri Lanka's first Tomotherapy unit, bringing the latest technology to the country. DIMO Healthcare is equipped with an unparalleled aftersales service as the service aspect plays a crucial role for uninterrupted functionality of these medical equipment.

Sri Lanka's...

This was reflected in the Purchasing Managers' Index data for March, where the broader manufacturing sector staged an expansion after nine months of decline.

garments and rubber and plastics products, declined in February over the same period in 2022.

Manufacturing of coke and refined petroleum products edged up 1.5 percent. This reflects the dampened demand conditions locally and the demand pullback in advanced economies for things like clothing.

Thimira Godakumbura...

Godakumbura is a Chartered Mechanical Engineer and a Corporate Member and a Fellow of the Institute of Engineers Sri Lanka and Fellow Member of the Royal Institution of Naval Architects, UK. He is also a serving member of the Indian Technical Committee of Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (ClassNK).

During his career at Colombo Dockyard over 22 years, he has held many positions and served as Assistant Production Manager (Hull Construction), Special Projects Manager, Assistant General Manager (New Construction) and General Manager (New Construction).

He was redesignated as General Manager (Design and New Construction) with the addition of the Design Department under his purview.

In December 2020, he was appointed as General Manager (Production), with the formation of the expanded Production Division, amalgamating the Design and New Construction and Ship Repair Production Division.

Thereafter, he was appointed as Chief Operating Officer of the company in March 2022 and continued to hold office till his appointment as MD/CEO on April 19, 2023.

Meanwhile, former MD/CEO D.V. Abeyasinghe, who retired, has been appointed as an Executive Director to the board of Colombo Dockyard, with effect from April 19, 2023.

DIMO realigns...

DIMO Healthcare has been a leader in various areas of the medical equipment industry, including radiology, ophthalmology, critical care, cardiology, oncology, urology and neonatal care by offering products from world-renowned manufacturers such as

Ceylinco Life wins Sri Lankan hearts to be most popular life insurer for 17th year

Sri Lankan consumers have chosen Ceylinco Life, which recently celebrated its 35th anniversary, as the most popular life insurance company in the country for an unprecedented 17th consecutive year, leading to the life insurance leader receiving the prestigious SLIM Kantar Peoples Award at the awards gala hosted by the Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing (SLIM) recently.

This award is based on consumer preferences as determined by the results of a survey instead of by a panel of judges, making it a true reflection of popular sentiment. Ceylinco Life is the only company in Sri Lanka's life insurance sector to be accorded this honour every year since the inception of the awards programme.

This emphatic reaffirmation of Ceylinco Life's popularity came hot on the heels of the announcement of the company's financial results for 2022, which confirmed its dominant status as the market leader in Sri Lanka's life insurance industry for the 19th consecutive year. Ceylinco Life policyholders received a mammoth Rs.19 billion in net claims and benefits in 2022 and the company recorded gross written premium income of Rs.29.16 billion for the year, reflecting growth of 14 percent.

Commenting on this award, Ceylinco Life General Manager Marketing Samitha



Representatives of Ceylinco Life and company's marketing team led by General Manager Marketing Samitha Hemachandra (third from right) accept SLIM-Kantar Peoples Award

Hemachandra said, "We are naturally delighted to be chosen as the best life insurer in the country by a people-led jury that recognises Ceylinco Life for having won the hearts and minds of the consumers. By consistently winning this award, Ceylinco Life has established that it is a brand that is completely attuned to the voice of its customers and has invested in the lives of the people it serves, both by de-risking their futures and by adding value to their lives through multiple community initiatives."

The purpose of the Peoples Awards is to reward and recognise brands and personalities

that are closest to the hearts of the Sri Lankan people. A hallmark awards event of the SLIM, the awards programme is the result of a collaboration between the Institute and Kantar Group, UK. The award winners are chosen solely by people's votes, through country-wide research conducted by Kantar and honour the country's top brands across multiple sectors each year, with respondents to the survey asked to mention their favourite brands and personalities across various categories. The theme for the latest edition of SLIM-Kantar People's Awards was 'Choices define us'.

Sri Lanka Insurance partners with MegaPay



From left: SLIC Chief Executive Officer Chandana L. Aluthgama and MegaPay Director Vardan Aslibekyan

Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation (SLIC) entered into a strategic partnership with MegaPay (Pvt.) Ltd recently to provide greater convenience for SLIC customers to make real-time payments.

The official signing of the agreement took place at the SLIC head office in the presence of Chief Executive Officer Chandana L. Aluthgama, Chief Information Officer Aloka Jayawardena, Chief Financial Officer Malaka Bandara, DGM/Head of Marketing and Life Distribution Namalee A. Silva, AGM Category Marketing General Insurance Mahesh Gamage, AGM Finance Sriyani Kulasinghe, Portfolio Manager Business Development Unit Nuwan Jayawardena of SLIC and Director Vardan Aslibekyan, Head of Sales and Marketing Ushantha Samaraweera and Project Manager Shashika Malagamuwa of MegaPay (Pvt.) Ltd.

This strategic partnership between the two organisations will enable the real-time pay facility for SLIC customers to make hassle-free payments to SLIC at their convenience. SLIC customers can make their life and general insurance payments via MegaPay's islandwide kiosks network, online portal and the MegaPay app. Furthermore, customers also can purchase their third party motor insurance from SLIC and make their payments using the MegaPay payment gateway facility.

MegaPay (Pvt.) Ltd, operating under the brand name 'Pay&Go', is one of Sri Lanka's leading outsourced payment gateways offering a reliable, convenient, safe and easy bill payment service through its 1000 plus islandwide network of payment kiosks, 600 plus Universal Android POS Terminals network, mobile app and web page.

BOC relocates Pinnawala branch with seamless digital banking experience



Opening doors to a seamless and reliable banking experience accompanied with digital banking for its customers, Bank of Ceylon's (BOC) Pinnawala branch was recently relocated to convenient and spacious locations equipped with CRM facilities.

The opening ceremony of BOC Pinnawala branch took place with the patronage of the bank's General Manager Russel Fonseka, Deputy General Manager Branch Operations Priyal Silva, Deputy General Manager Support Services Priyanthi Wijesekera, Assistant General Manager Sabaragamuwa Province Duminda Dayawansa, Additional Divisional Secretary Rambukkana Sameera Gamath and National Zoological Gardens Department Assistant Director Navod Abeysinghe were also among other distinguished guests. Pinnawala Branch Manager Nadeeka Senali and the staff of the branch officiated the ceremony.

With BOC's modern facilities allocated to the Pinnawala branch, it is set to provide customers of the area with access to a full range of modern banking services, including digital banking channels under one roof. The bank aims to play a greater role in uplifting

socio-economic wellbeing of the people by further enhancing its service excellence. This branch is connected with the network of over 2000 BOC customer touch points, including 651 other BOC branches across the country. Hence, customers are privilege to carry out banking transactions to any part of the country through the Pinnawala branch.

In offering a one-stop smart banking service to its customers, the Pinnawala branch also extend a wide array of banking services to its customers, inclusive of deposit products such as current and local or foreign currency savings/ fixed deposit accounts, investment plans, retail loan products and special development loans schemes. Moreover, customers can also avail themselves of international debit/credit cards and international money transfer/remittances services. In order to conduct daily banking transactions with greater convenience, BOC customers are also encouraged also enrol for digital banking services such as BOC Smart online banking, B-APP mobile banking and SmartPay QR scan mobile app.

Amana Bank promotes Harindra Obeysekere as Treasury Head

Experienced treasury dealer Harindra Obeysekere has been promoted as Amana Bank's Head of Treasury and Financial Institutions while being inducted to the bank's Management Committee.

Prior to this, Obeysekere was the bank's Assistant Vice President Treasury and Financial Institutions.

Obeysekere counts over 30 years of banking experience predominantly as a dealer with 18 years in conventional banking and 12 years with Amana Bank, where he pioneered many non-interest-based treasury instruments and solutions.

Obeysekere holds a Master's Degree in Finance and Postgraduate Certificate in Finance from the University of Southern Queensland, Australia while also possess an



Harindra Obeysekere

ACI Dealing Certificate from the Financial Markets Association. Obeysekere is Past President of the Sri Lanka Forex Association, the premier body in developing, promoting and stimulating innovation in the financial market/s of Sri Lanka.

Commenting on his appointment, Amana Bank Managing Director/CEO Mohamed Azmeer said, "Having been with us for the last 12 years, Harindra brings in a wealth of knowledge in treasury functions, including sound understanding of non-interest-based treasury solutions. He has been instrumental in ensuring a good stream of trading income for the bank and we look forward to his leadership in taking the bank's treasury and financial institution function to the next level."

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Singer Finance expands network with 50th branch in Jaffna

Singer Finance PLC, a subsidiary of Singer Sri Lanka and the Hayleys group, is set to mark a significant milestone as it celebrates the opening of its 49th and 50th branches in Nelliady and Jaffna, respectively.

Singer Finance PLC has been providing financial solutions to customers since its inception in 2004. The company has become the preferred finance partner for Sri Lankans and seeks to empower more individuals and businesses to achieve their financial goals by continuously expanding its network islandwide.

Singer Finance PLC Chairman Aravinda Perera commented on the historic opening said, "The opening of our 50th branch is a truly meaningful milestone for our dedicated and passionate team. It is a clear indication of how far we have grown as a company and how much trust customers have placed in us over the years. I would like to extend my gratitude to all involved in our expansion over the years."

Despite economic challenges and setbacks such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Singer Finance PLC has demonstrated resilience and managed to double its network from 25 branches in 2017 to 50 in 2023.



Singer Finance PLC Director CEO Thushan Amarasuriya and Consultant to Chairman on Gold Loans Chandrika Alwis at Nelliady branch opening

At the opening of its 50th branch, Singer Finance PLC Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director Thushan Amarasuriya shared his thoughts, "It is indeed gratifying to be able to witness such an achievement for Singer Finance PLC, especially in light of the current economic predicament. We plan to continue with our expansion plans, so that even more Sri Lankans can access the innovative and customised financial products such as leasing, fixed deposits, savings accounts, gold loans and internet banking.

People's Bank charters Toastmasters Club for employee development



People's Bank Toastmasters Club Executive Committee Members and Charter Members with People's Bank Chairman, CEO/GM and Colombo Toastmasters Club

People's Bank, one of the leading banks in Sri Lanka, has launched a Toastmasters Club to provide its employees with an opportunity to develop their leadership and communication skills.

The installation ceremony for the club was held at the staff training college auditorium recently.

Toastmasters is a global movement headquartered in Englewood, Colorado, USA, empowering its members to become better communicators and leaders. The People's Bank Toastmasters Club

will enable its members to enhance their soft skills, preparing them for future leadership positions within the bank. People's Bank Chairman Sujeewa Rajapakse was the chief guest at the ceremony, which was graced by Past International President of Toastmasters (for the year 2017/18), Toastmaster Balraj Arunasalam as the guest of honour. People's Bank Acting Chief Executive Officer/General Manager Clive Fonseka, other Toastmasters of D82, including other district officials, members of Toastmasters and members of the sponsor club, The Colombo Toastmasters Club, were present at the ceremony



People's Bank Chairman Sujeewa Rajapakse addresses gathering

along with several special invitees from People's Bank corporate and executive managements.

Rajapakse addressing the gathering emphasised the importance of improving the soft skills of employees to develop them as the future leaders of the bank. While congratulating the charter members and the newly-appointed executive committee members of the club, he requested them to make use of this opportunity to improve themselves and other employees of the bank.

Arunasalam, in his speech on 'Communication for Leadership', enlightened the audience with the importance of appropriate communication skills to perform as an outstanding leader. The elected office bearers of People's Bank Toastmasters Club for the Toastmaster year 2022/2023 - President TM Dhunisha Athulathudali, Vice President Education TM Chamari Perera, Vice President Membership TM Nadeesha Tennakoon, Vice President Public Relations TM Mangala Kariyawasam, Secretary TM Indrani Rodrigo, Treasurer TM Maagha Seneviratne and Sergeant At Arms TM Ravin De Silva.

An open letter to the Governor

Consider bank consolidation to achieve financial sector stability

BY KUMARAGE GUNAWARDENE

"Maintaining a sound and adequately capitalised banking system is important. Implementing a bank recapitalisation plan and strengthening financial supervision and crisis management framework are crucial to ensure financial sector stability." Press release included in the IMF country report No. 23/116, released in March 2023.

The measures introduced to soften the impact of the pandemic on borrowers are gradually being rolled back. This, together with the high

interest charged, due to the current crisis that will constrain the ability of borrowers to service their debt and the losses that may arise as a result of restructuring government debt, would result in the need for further provisioning and writing off debt. This would have a significant adverse impact on bank profits that will lead to capital shortfalls and defeat the objective set out by the IMF to ensure financial sector stability.

The recent IMF staff report states that "Private sector capital may be difficult to secure until the economy has stabilised." In the light of this situation, should bank consolidation be seriously considered as an option to recapitalise the banking system?

Larger commercial banks created through bank mergers will have the capability of raising

equity through capital markets on a much larger scale than is possible at present. Limitations caused by restrictions imposed by the Central Bank on ownership of issued capital carrying voting rights can be overcome when there is a significant quantum of issued capital. The stipulated percentage of a bigger issued capital will be large enough to encourage high-net-worth individuals and institutional investors to make investments that will conform to their minimum investment criteria.

A bank consolidation programme will bring immediate benefits towards stabilising the financial system when smaller banks, that are more vulnerable to organic growth being hampered by NPLs, are amalgamated with the bigger banks.

Surviving entities will have higher profitability through economies of scale resulting from bigger single borrower limits, stronger retail loan growth and deposit mobilisation utilising the larger loan portfolios and depositor bases, lower cost of funds, due to higher CASA ratios and the ability to raise equity and issue debentures at lower rates, lower cost income ratios, as a result of operations rationalisation backed by digitalisation, cost-effective branch administration and prudent tax management.

Larger banks will be capable of implementing efficient compliance and risk management processes to support their capacity to operate on a much larger scale.

With an enhanced capacity to expand the balance sheet, the merged entities will be capable

of organic growth to build comfortable capital cushions, which can insulate them from asset quality stress.

The IMF country report issued in March 2023 refers to an asset quality report for the two largest state-owned commercial banks and the three largest private commercial banks to be completed by the end of this month. By July 2023, the CBSL will develop a road map for financial sector restructuring and recapitalisation. It was heartening to see you talking of the need for bank consolidation at a recent interview. We are hopeful that the CBSL would consider what has been raised in this letter when completing the financial sector restructuring and recapitalisation exercise.

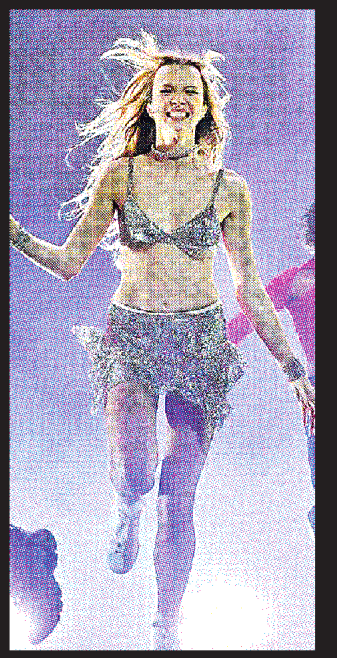
DailyMirror

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BELGIUM'S ANGELO ON COACHELLA SET

She's been a star of the francophone pop universe for years now, but Angele has started making a splash stateside, nabbing a primetime performance slot at this weekend's Coachella festival. She's no stranger to big crowds, but playing the desert event that traditionally kicks off the summer tour circuit is next level for the 27-year-old from Belgium, who has collaborated with the likes of Dua Lipa and broken records previously set by Stromae. "I'm overwhelmed," she told AFP prior to her performance Friday night, smiling and sipping tea, a pink bandana knotted casually over her free-flowing blonde hair. **AFP**



MICHELLE YEOH URGES WOMEN TO RESIST BEING 'PUT IN A BOX'

Oscar winner Michelle Yeoh spoke up on Tuesday for diversity and women's empowerment in the entertainment industry, telling reporters in Kuala Lumpur "we should never allow somebody to put us in a box". Speaking at her first news conference in her home country



since her historic best actress win, the Malaysian star returned to themes that had been staples of her awards season interviews. "I have been very blessed that I've continuously been able to work, and work (with) very interesting, very diverse and very forward-thinking filmmakers. That has enabled me to fight for what I truly believe in: representation, diversity, especially empowerment of women," she said. "I don't believe just because we are women, we are a weaker sex... We should never allow somebody to put us in a box." Winning the best actress Oscar as the first Asian woman ever to do so "represents so much to so many of us", she said. **AFP**

DISH OUT



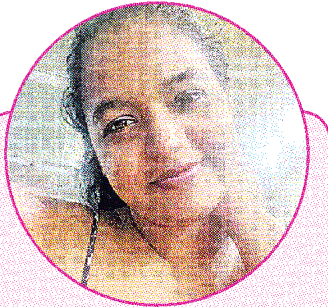
The concept of consistently plating your food on something red is very unique, what pushed you to keep up with it?

I eat on a red plate, and I have always had the habit of taking pictures of the food I eat. One time I went through my phone gallery and realised how good that red plate theme looks in a grid. Since then, I've been taking pictures from the same angle, and I try to be as creative as I can. It has certainly added a unique character to it.



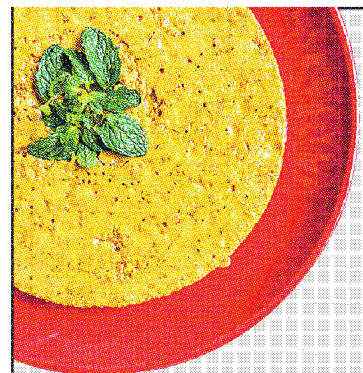
It's your last day on earth, where are you?

At home, surrounded by my favourite family and friends, eating either some properly made lamprais, or a combination of yellow rice, black pork curry, boiled jackfruit, dal curry and pol sambol.



What was your favourite childhood meal?

White Rice, Dal Curry, Pol Sambol, Deep-fried Keeramin Dry Fish and Wade combination that my dad would make when my mom needs a break from the kitchen. While I was a picky eater growing up, I loved my mom's food; she always made sure to prepare some nutritious, well-balanced, healthy meals, while my dad's sole focus was on letting us eat to our heart's content without having to worry too much about nutrients. I still do make it, at least versions of it from time to time.



What's a fool-proof recipe on your page would you recommend to anyone trying your recipes for the first time?

There are 3, actually. My Bread Pudding, Butterscotch Pudding and the Biryani.

Do the cooking or have someone cook for you?

I don't mind both. What I don't like is doing the dishes, and yet I do it because I'm a little bit Monica-like.

What's one restaurant that has never failed you?

Giovanni's for sure. I have been visiting them since 2015 when they were this little establishment with just a few tables and chairs. Quite happy to see how they have grown. I make sure to visit them at least once a fortnight.

For food/cooking inspiration, you always go to _____?

For Sri Lankan cuisines, it's @savisquishes on Instagram. I'm amazed by how she takes our cuisine to the next level. @hungrylankan is my one-stop for Sri Lankan short eats, and @preppykitchen for more baking inspiration.

You've travelled a lot. What's the most adventurous/exotic food you've eaten?

I was recently in Salalah, Oman and had the opportunity to try Camel meat, from a traditional, streetside eatery. While dining in a traditional setup - an indoor tent, decorated with beautiful Arabic mattresses and floor pillows was a unique experience, the camel meat itself was kinda too gamey for my taste.

What's a dish you want to explore in the future?

The San Sebastián Cheesecake in Turkey. It looks so luscious and creamy! Been watching a lot of TikToks about it and now it's all I can think about.

Your favourite odd food pairing?

Vanilla ice cream and soy sauce. It surprisingly creates a nice sweet and salty flavour profile.

What's the trick to making good content?

I think having a passion for it plays a big role there. When it's something you're passionate about, the care and effort for it comes in naturally.

You are also a food reviewer on your other blog @malpapadam; what attracts you to a restaurant and what can a restaurant do to really impress you?

I was a professional food reviewer for about 6 years, and absolutely loved doing it, so I continued that habit through my personal handle. I'm a coffee person and a reader, so if there is a place that offers good coffee with the ambience to read, there is a pretty good chance that you'd find me there. Aside from that, I like visiting places that feel like home, especially with good service and of course, good food and drinks to boot. Those are the places I always return to.



Your favourite comfort food?

Dumplings. The worst thing about dumplings is that there is never enough.

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

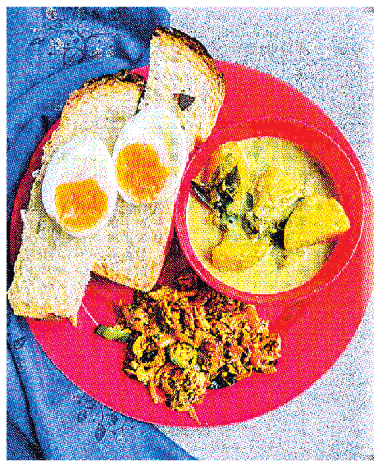
My first, authentic Hyderabad Biryani experience from Paradise Biryani, Hyderabad. I travelled through India for about a month and visited the state of Hyderabad just for its famous biryani. That Mutton Biryani wasn't like any other biryani I've had before. It has set the bar so high for me now.

Vishvi

Vidanapathirana

Text Panchali Illankoon

How do our food experts cook and eat? This week, food blogger and reviewer Vishvi of @platedonred and @malpapadam takes our Q&A!



What started your passion for food?

I guess, home. My mom's side is from Down South, and my dad's side is from Ratnapura, so I've had the pleasure of growing up with the best of both.

What kicked off your food blog - Plated on Red?

I got married about 2½ years back, and I couldn't even make tea back then. So since day one, my kitchen was my place of experiments. As I continue to cook, I realised that my palate is improving, which made me confident about the food I was making and I wanted to document that journey on a digital platform.

Dead or alive, who would be your dream dinner-party guests to cook for?

Melissa Leong, of course! Man, I wanna make a lovely Sri Lankan feast for her!

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

Japanese food. From ramen and yakitori to sushi and katsu, I absolutely love Japanese cuisine, especially when they are not fusioned. I feel like ensuring the authenticity of them is a little hard in a normal Sri Lankan kitchen at home, because we don't always get access to the right ingredients.



The Sweetest Story of the Cinnamon Grand Colombo Chocolatier

This Easter, Cinnamon Grand Colombo had the sweetest surprise for all those with a sweet tooth. A range of chocolates and confectionaries created with lots of love was hand-crafted by Stephan Praharsa Aponso.

From a young age, Stephan was taught the art of cooking by his mother. In fact, it was his mother that taught him all of life's important lessons. And it is her family recipes that are today a part of Stephan's extensive repertoire of culinary achievements.

After completing his initial culinary training at hotel school, Stephan joined the ranks of Cinnamon Grand Colombo as an Industrial Trainee Cook in the Pastry Kitchen in 2016. Thereafter,

he was promoted to Kitchen Trainee at the Pastry Kitchen for a further three years. Stefan's gift for creating exceptional cakes and pastries landed him another promotion to Commis Level III at the Chocolate Room where he gained his first experience at hand-crafting the beloved desserts. Further cementing his skill and attention to detail, Stephan received another promotion to Commis Level II in recognition of his outstanding skill. For months Stephan's Chocolate Room was a hive of activity in preparation for Easter.

Having now spent much time in the cold kitchen, Stephan's next dream is to conquer the hot kitchens. Inspired

by the likes of Gordon Ramsay and other Master Chef culinary greats, many are the occasions where Stephan has entertained friends and family to full buffet spreads put together by him at his home. Together with his wife, Stephan loves entertaining at home and cooking is something that comes naturally. When asked what his favourite recipe is, Stephan takes a trip down memory lane to the Christmas Cake his mother makes and was such an integral part of growing up.

So, what makes Stephan different? Or correction, what makes him special? How is he different to any other Chocolatier or budding, young chef out there? Stephan Praharsa Aponso

was born with both a hearing and speech impairment. Yet, not once has he allowed his impairment to get in the

way of achieving his goals. Conquering every mountain with the help of his supportive family, and a culinary team led by Chef Kapila Jayasinghe, Executive Chef of Cinnamon Grand Colombo, Stephan is a beacon of hope. Much like the message of Easter that brings new hope, Stephan's story is an inspiration to all young ones, despite their difficulties and differences to aim high and persevere.

