



News & Views



ISSUE NO 11

NEWS LETTER OF THE SRI LANKA HIGH COMMISSION IN OTTAWA, CANADA. December 2010

The High Commissioner and the staff of the Sri Lanka High Commission in Ottawa wish you and your family a very happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

CONTENT

PRESIDENT'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE -01

SRI LANKA - CANADA PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION REVIVED-02

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION (LLRC) -03

EX-LTTE COMBATANTS SIT FOR G.C.E. (O/L) EXAM -03

FORTY EX- LTTE CADRES QUALIFY FOR UNIVERSITIES-03

ELEPHANT PASS SALTERN : DEMINING - 03
INTERNATIONAL SAIL PAST-03 & 04

523 BRIGADE ORGANIZES ENGLISH LANGUAGE SEMINAR FOR O/L STUDENTS

TOURIST ARRIVALS INCREASE IN NOVEMBER - 04

RS. 45MN JAPANESE ASSISTANCE FOR RETURNEES' LIVELIHOOD PROJECT IN BATTICALOA-05

JAFFNA HOLY FAMILY CONVENT STUDENTS VISIT DELHI-05

JAFFNA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR 2011

PRESIDENT'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

I wish a Happy Christmas to all Sri Lankans and citizens of the world who celebrate the birth of Christ at this Christmas!

The purpose of celebrating Christmas is to enshrine the message of peace and love in one's heart.

It is especially a time to spread the message of love and compassion towards the poor and peace among all peoples.

Our great commitment in the recent past to promote solidarity among communities, is in keeping with the teaching of Christ to 'love thy neighbour'. Our efforts to free our people from poverty have been appreciated by Christians and those of all other faiths, alike.



Christ taught that, whosoever shall receive a child in my name receiveth me. Christian tradition holds that the three kings came to worship the new born child guided by the star light that marked his birth. Similarly, we must bring the joyous message of Christmas closer to the hearts of our children. Thus, we will be able to come closer to the peace and love of Christ through Christmas.

I wish you all a Happy Christmas filled with peace and joy.



SRI LANKA - CANADA PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION REVIVED



A meeting to revive the Sri Lanka - Canada Parliamentary Friendship Association was held at the Parliament on 8th December 2010 in Sri Lanka. The Canadian High Commissioner, His Excellency Bruce Levy, attended the event at the invitation of the Speaker, Hon Chamal Rajapakse. The Deputy Speaker Chandima Weerakkody chaired the meeting and nominated Prof. Rajiva Wijesinha, M.P. as President. Suresh Premachandra, M.P. Lohan Ratwatte, M.P. and Harsha de Silva, M.P. were elected Vice Presidents. Ramesh Pathirana, M.P. was elected Secretary, and Mr Saravanaparvan Asst Secretary, with Ms Talatha Athukorale, M.P. as Treasurer.

The Deputy Speaker in his remarks noted the diplomatic links between Sri Lanka and Canada for well over half a century. Canada had also been a long standing development cooperation partner of Sri Lanka, beginning from the days of the Colombo plan. Special projects which Canada had supported included the Bandaranaike International Airport, the Hardy Technical Training Institute in Amparai, the Maduru Oya Reservoir project under the accelerated Mahaveli Development Scheme and the extension of Gal Oya transmission lines. He noted the high levels of Sri Lankan migration to Canada, as well as developing economic relations, with the Sri Lanka-Canada Business Council promoting bilateral relations for 20 years.

In his response the High Commissioner thanked the Parliament personnel for having so quickly acted on his suggestion to set up a Friendship group. He had noted the existence of such a group in the Canadian

Parliament, and he noted that Parliamentarians would be amongst the best placed to break down any distrust and build on ties, as was also being done through the recently launched Sri Lanka Canada Alumni Association.

He noted that Canada had one of the largest Sri Lanka Diaspora in the world, which could present a challenge to him as well as Sri Lanka. This was not because of a small minority that might engage in unacceptable activities in pursuit of old agendas but because 3,00,000 people could be an incredible source of growth for this country. Promoting constructive engagement for them to develop their homeland would forestall objections to efforts to deepen bilateral ties.

He noted that, in addressing grievances that had led to so much tragedy, it was for Sri Lanka to find specific answers. This was not the job of the international community, but Canada had experience in dealing with multiple cultures and languages that might be useful to policy-makers in Sri Lanka.

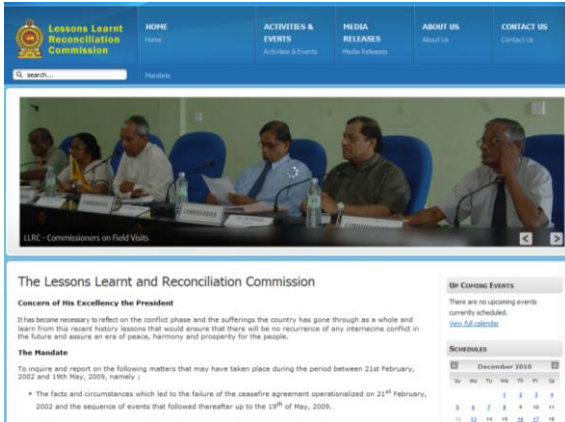
It may be noted that the Canada-Sri Lanka Parliamentary Friendship Group was reconstituted with 19 members in the Canadian Parliament following its Annual General Meeting held at the end of September 2010. The group elected a new Committee for the year 2010-2011 with the Liberal Party MP Maria Minna as the Chair, the Conservative MP David Sweet and the New Democratic Party MP Joe Comartin as two Vice Chairs. Six Directors were also elected to the Executive Committee.



❦❦❦



LESSONS LEARNT AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION (LLRC)



The website of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) can be accessed on <http://www.llrc.lk>. The transcripts pertaining to the public sittings which have been held so far are also available on this website.



EX-LTTE COMBATANTS SIT FOR G.C.E. (O/L) EXAM

170 ex-LTTE combatants including 45 females who were rehabilitated by the Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation (BCGR) sat for the G.C.E. (Ordinary Level) examination which commenced on 13th December 2010 in Vavuniya.

This year, 2,598 internally displaced students are expected to sit the exams while 20,016 other students will also sit the examination in their respective schools.



FORTY EX-LTTE CADRES QUALIFY FOR UNIVERSITIES

It is reported that out of 361 former LTTE cadres who sat for the GCE (A/L) examination last August, 40 would qualify for university entrance according to their Z-score marks. Two students had obtained 1-A,

2-Bs and 3-Cs from Kilinochchi District and are expected to enter medical faculty of the universities. 211 students have got through in all three subjects.



Four students have sat the exams in the Mathematics stream, five from the Bio Science stream, 34 in Commerce and the others from the Art stream. The students were released after rehabilitation and are now living in their respective districts.



ELEPHANT PASS SALTEN : DEMINING

The process of demining at the Elephant Pass saltern has been accelerated in view of reactivating the industry with table salt production on mass scale. The industry is expected to generate 2,000 jobs.

According to reports, the Elephant Pass saltern is capable of annually producing 15,000 to 20,000 metric tonnes of table salt for both household and industrial purposes. The annual table salt consumption in the country is 195,000 metric tonnes of which 40 percent is imported.



INTERNATIONAL SAIL PAST

In view of the Sri Lanka Navy's 60th Anniversary the International Sail Past was held on 11 December 2010. Making yet another milestone in the Naval history of Sri Lanka, eight ships from Bangladesh (BNS Umar Farooq), China (Lanzhou), India (INS Mysore and INS Tarangini), Iran (IRIS Alvand), Pakistan (PNS Zulfiqar), Russia (Admiral Vinogradov) and Thailand (HTMS Chonburi) Navies joined their Sri Lankan counterparts SLNS





Samudura, Sayurala, Suranimala, Nandimithra, Shakthi, Prathapa, Jayasagara and Ranawickrama sailed in formations at sea to mark the diamond jubilee of the Sri Lanka Navy.

The locally made highly efficient Arrow boats of the Special Boat Squadron (SBS) and Rapid Action Boat Squadron (RABS), Wave Rider Craft, Fast Attack Craft, Dvoras and also the Jet Liner passenger craft took part in the formations.

The International Sail Past was held in the waters of the Indian Ocean off Galle Face Green. The International ships began their journey home soon after the Sail Past.



523 BRIGADE ORGANIZES ENGLISH LANGUAGE SEMINAR FOR O/L STUDENTS

The 523 Brigade in Nunavil organized a seminar for G.C.E. O/L candidates in Jaffna on English Language and Literature for the students at the Kaithady Muthukumarswamy School.

Fifteen language teachers and three hundred forty five students attended the seminar. The 18th Battalion of the Gemunu Watch and 7th Battalion of the Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment provided free transport and meals to all participants. Printed

model papers and school items were also distributed among the students by the 523 Brigade at the seminar.



TOURIST ARRIVALS INCREASE IN NOVEMBER

According to the latest figures released by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, the number of tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka has gone up by 63.1% to 72,251 in the month of November 2010, compared to November 2009 which was only 44,311. Figures showed an increase in the number of arrivals from Western Europe, South Asia, East Asia, Middle East and North America.

Tourists from Western Europe, the traditional tourist generating market, rose 61.7 percent to 24,594 in November 2010. The number of visitors from the UK went up by 54.5 percent to 9,788, those from France up 127.0 percent to 3,232 and from Germany up by 41.6 percent to 4,862.



South Asian visitors rose to 65.2 percent to 22,091 with tourists from India up by 77.3 percent to



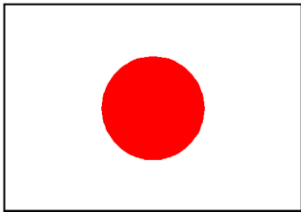
15,550, from Maldives up by 42.0 percent to 5,091 and from Pakistan up by 44.2 percent to 982.

Arrivals from Australasia has gone up by 70.1 percent to 4,178 and from East Asia up by 69.2 percent to 7,951. Japanese visitors increased 74.9 percent to 1,420, visitors from Malaysia rose 66.9 percent to 1,893.

Visitors from Singapore rose 94.9 percent to 1,536. Tourist arrivals in the country increased sharply from May 2009 after the restoration of peace.



**RS. 45MN JAPANESE ASSISTANCE FOR
RETURNEES' LIVELIHOOD PROJECT IN
BATTICALOA**



Japan has extended US\$405,099 (approximately Rs. 45 million) for the "Support for Livelihood of Returnees in Batticaloa District (Phase 3)" to be implemented by JEN, a Japanese NGO, in order to improve the living conditions of the resettled communities in the East.

The project supports the construction of 29 agrowells, provides 29 water pumps and seeds, to conduct workshops, and to reconstruct 17 culverts in the five Grama Niladhari Divisions of Kiran and Chenkalady District Secretary Division in Batticaloa. It is envisaged that the project would facilitate stable water supply, ensure livelihood and food security, and improve the income of nearly 5,000 families directly and indirectly.



**JAFFNA HOLY FAMILY CONVENT STUDENTS
VISIT DELHI**

A 10-member team of school girls of the Holy Family Convent, Jaffna, concluded their visit to India on 19 December 2010. The visit took place under a student exchange programme, organised by the India-Sri Lanka Foundation. The group of students were hosted by St Francis de Sales Senior Secondary School, Janakpuri, New Delhi. In October this year, a team of students from this school had visited Jaffna, and were hosted by the Holy Family Convent of Jaffna.

Father Melroy Almeda, principal of the New Delhi school that hosted the Jaffna group, who had accompanied a group of students from his school to Jaffna two months ago, said: "We had a fantastic time in Jaffna. We met so many people and made friends with them. Our students made a documentary on their visit to Jaffna. We screened it at a meeting of the parents' body a few days ago. The children also published many articles about the trip in several magazines. We were thrilled because this was the first time we organized such a visit to a sister school for the first time since our school was established 34 years ago."

The India-Sri Lanka Foundation is to consider organizing similar trips for students from places such as Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Vavuniya, Matara and Hambantota to schools in other parts of India on an exchange basis.

The Governments of India and Sri Lanka established the India-Sri Lanka Foundation in 1998 to promote greater understanding through enhancement of economic, scientific, educational, technical and cultural cooperation between the peoples of the two countries.

The High Commissioners of the two countries act as Co-Chairpersons of the Foundation while the two governments have nominated two Directors each as the other members of the Board of Directors.



**JAFFNA INTERNATIONAL
TRADE FAIR 2011**



Open for Business...



JAFFNA
International 2011
TRADE FAIR
2nd Edition

21ST, 22ND & 23RD JANUARY 2011
AT DURAYAPPAH STADIUM - JAFFNA

The Jaffna International Trade Fair 2011 (JITF-2011) will be held at Durayappah Stadium, Jaffna from January 21-23, 2011. This event is being held for the second consecutive year and is jointly organized by Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka while the Republic of India is the partner country.

The JITF-2011 would provide opportunities for the business community from all over the world, including the Sri Lankan diaspora to meet potential entrepreneurs and investors in the North.

For more information please contact

Mr. H.M.B Herath
Deputy Consul General (Commercial)
Consulate General of Sri Lanka
Toronto

Tel: 1-416-323-2159
Email: trade.srilanka@bellnet.ca

Ms. Ranjani Tudugala, Head of International Affairs or Ms. Malithi Nanayakkara

Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka
Federation House, 53
Vauxhall Lane
Colombo 02

Tel: +94-1 1-2304253, +94-77-7351404
Fax: +94-1 1-2304255
Email: tudugala@fccisl.lk, malithi@fccisl.lk

ORGANISED BY:



CO - ORGANISED BY:



IN ASSOCIATION WITH:



SUPPORTED BY:



2010 IN PICTURES



Sri Lanka High Commission, Ottawa, Canada.
News & Views – December