



# News & Views



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## SRI SAMBUDDHATVA JAYANTHI CELEBRATION IN OTTAWA, CANADA

The 2600th Anniversary of Sri Sambuddhatva Jayanthi was celebrated by the Sri Lanka High Commission in Ottawa, Canada, together with the Sri Lankan expatriate community at the official residence of the High Commissioner.

To mark the event, the High Commissioner and the staff organized a "Pirith Chanting Ceremony" followed by an 'alms giving' to the Buddhist priests of the three Sri Lankan temples in Ottawa on 16<sup>th</sup>



May and 17th May 2011. Dhamma sermons were conducted by Venerable Panditha Brahmanagama Muditha Thero, Chief Incumbent of the Buddhist Congress of Canada (Hilda Jayewardenaramaya), Venerable Kekanadure Hemalankara Thero of the Theravada Buddhist Centre and Venerable Dr. Walasmulle Siri Sumana Thero, Chief Incumbent of Ottawa Buddhist Vihara.



A special feature at the Pirith Chanting Ceremony was the participation of two Sri Lankan Catholic



priests, Reverend Father Freely Muthukudaarachchi and Reverend Father Romesh Lowe. In a brief address Reverend Father Muthukudaarachchi spoke of the importance of the message of Vesak which is applicable to all communities and religions.

In her address, High Commissioner Chitrangene Wagiswara noted the significance of the 2600th Anniversary of the Sri Sambuddhatva Jayanthi on the Vesak Poya Day of this year. She also highlighted the important activities being carried out in Sri Lanka under State patronage to celebrate the event.

The official residence was colorfully decorated with Vesak lanterns and Buddhist flags by the High Commission Staff.



According to senior members of the expatriate Sri Lankan Community, this is the first Pirith Chanting Ceremony held in Ottawa to celebrate Vesak at the official residence with their participation



## PRESIDENT CONGRATULATES PRIME MINISTER HARPER

The President of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapaksa has sent a congratulatory message to the Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper on the electoral victory of the Conservative Party at the Parliamentary election held on 2nd May 2011.



In his message President Rajapaksa has stated that Sri Lanka appreciates the firm position taken by the Conservative Government “in helping Sri Lanka to defeat terrorism” and the support given in the post-conflict phase.



The High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in Canada Chitrangene Wagiswara, has also sent a message of felicitation to Prime Minister Harper.

A message of felicitation was also extended to the newly elected MP for Scarborough – Rouge River, Rathika Sitsabaiesan. In her message the High Commissioner stated, “we are indeed proud to have the first Sri Lankan Canadian in the Federal Parliament of Canada”.



## **'BASAKA VARUNA" -LANGUAGE FESTIVAL**



The Sinhala Language Day "Basaka Varuna, was organized in Toronto under the patronage of the Consulate General Mr Karunaratna Paranawithana by the Sinhala Language Day Committee on 1st May 2011. Prof J B Disanayake, was the chief guest of the event. A similar event was held in Ottawa on 2nd May organized by the Hela Hamuwa Organizing Committee.



## **2600TH SRI SAMBUDDHATHVA JAYANTHI IN SRI LANKA**

President Mahinda Rajapaksa officially inaugurated the 2600th Sri Sambuddhathva Jayanthi Year and the Vesak week at the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi in Anuradhapura on 14 May 2011. Accordingly, the year starting from the 2011 Vesak full Moon Poya day to the Vesak Full Moon Day of next year 2012 has been named as the 2600th Sri Sambuddhathva Jayanthi year.

President Rajapaksa also unveiled the 2600th Sambuddhathva Jayanthi commemoration monument constructed at the roundabout opposite the Jayanthi Viharaya in the Anuradhapura town. Formerly a road named Sambuddhathva Jayanthi Mawatha was also declared open by the President to mark this great,

*Sri Lanka High Commission, Ottawa, Canada.*

*News & Views – June*



sacred national Buddhist event. It was followed by the issue of four postage stamps to commemorate the Sambuddhathva Jayanthi. These stamps depict Lumbini, Buddhagaya, Jethavana and Kusinara, four important places of religious worship in Lord Buddha's life.



## **WAR HERO MONTH BEGINS 19 MAY**

The month beginning from May 19 has been declared as the month of War Heroes, to commemorate valiant men and women who risked life and limb to save Sri Lanka from terrorism.

War Heroes Flags are to be sold to raise funds to support needy war heroes families especially to assist them on their medical and educational need and to uplift their living standards. A victory Day



parade was also held in Colombo as a part of the commemorative celebrations.



### ROYAL WEDDING PROMOTES CEYLON SAPPHIRE

The Export Development Board(EDB) in association with the Sri Lanka Gem and Jewellery Association (SLGJA) highlighted the Royal families deep and longstanding connection to the Ceylon Sapphire over many generations, dating back to Henry V and more recently with Princess Diana and Kate Middleton. The SLGJA and EDB has identified that the Blue Sapphire on the engagement ring worn by Kate Middleton is from Sri Lanka . With the announcement of the Royal wedding, jewellers have been overwhelmed with orders for replica rings, with some retailers reporting an increase in sales of 800 percent for Ceylon sapphires. A Ceylon Sapphire and Diamond Hair Pin was gifted to Kate Middleton by SLGJA on her wedding. In the background of the Royal wedding a website has been launched to promote the Ceylon Blue Sapphire. [www.ceylonsapphire.co.uk](http://www.ceylonsapphire.co.uk).



A Sri Lankan film festival is organised by the High Commission in collaboration with the Canadian Film Institute at the Auditorium, Library and

### SRI LANKA FILM FESTIVAL IN OTTAWA

Archives of Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa. The following films are to be screened : 15th June *Sakman Maluwa*, 18th June *Walapatala*, 25th June *Ekaamth Eka Rataka* and on 29th June *Sudu Kaluwara*. Tickets could be obtained at the entrance C\$ 8.00. The Films are subtitled in English. (see page 09 for more details) .



### JAFFNA HZS FURTHER REDUCED

The Sri Lanka Army has released Nine Gramaniladhari Divisions in Valikamam North which had been a part of Jaffna Kankasanturai (KKS) High Security Zone (HSZ), back to its owners.

The Thelippalai Divisional Secretariat is planning to resettle over 3500 families in the newly released areas, where their original homes were located. Further, many areas within the HSZ have been de-mined and made accessible to the public by the Army.

With the shrinking of these HSZs, and houses constructed, around 17000 displaced persons were resettled.

Jaffna District which is returning to normalcy in the post war era is experiencing a rapid construction boom. The government is in the process of building 13,350 houses with the funds provided by the World Bank. So far construction of 9,406 houses has been completed, and construction of another 3,944 houses is almost complete.



## MANITOBA BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT VISIT



The High Commissioner visited Winnipeg and Whistler in the Province of Manitoba on a Business/Investment tour from 9-11 May. She addressed two business groups and had meetings with Canadian International Grains Initiative, Keystove Grains Ltd, Dyna Pro Ltd, PVC Waste Management, Global Grain Canada Ltd, and an SME "Ten Thousand Villagers/MCC". She also met the Dean and a few members of the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Science of the University of Manitoba and also addressed high school students at the Garden Valley High School. A brief Radio interview was also held with the local Golden West Radio.



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

## SRI LANKAN TWENTY 20



Sri Lanka's version of the Indian Premier League Twenty 20 will be played between July 19 and August 4 at the Premadasa Stadium. The teams are represented by Province: Northern Province with a team called Oryxes, Western Province Bears, Hill Country Kites, East Nagas, South Rhinos, South Western Unicorns and North Western Wolves.

Each franchise is limited to five overseas players of whom only four can make it to the final eleven. An under-21 player must be picked among the seven local players. The tournament is set to feature Shahid Afridi, who is to captain one of the teams, along with compatriots Misbah-ul-Haq, Shoaib Akhtar, Umar Gul and Umar Akmal.



## ELECTRICITY AND WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS IN NORTH-EAST

Over 95 percent of a quarter million displaced people in the North-East are now receiving electricity free of charge after resettlement in their places of origin.

The Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) started its electricity enhancement projects in the districts of Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Vavuniya, Mullaitivu and Mannar in the Northeast as part of the



government's strategy for the revival of infrastructure in war-torn areas under Vadakkin Wasanthan (The Awakening North).

Further, the Cabinet of Ministers have approved implementation of a Water Supply & Sanitation Project benefiting about 300,000 people living in the Jaffna Peninsula and the Kilinochchi Districts. The project will be implemented with financial assistance from ADB, AFD and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The total cost of this project amounts to US\$ 164 Million of which the donor component will be US \$138 million. The project is to be completed in 2017.



#### **SRI LANKA'S KKS PORT TO BE DEVELOPED WITH INDIAN AID**

Sri Lanka's Northern Kankasanthurai Harbour is to be developed with Indian assistance. A two phase development program will involve the repairs to the existing break water, jetty and deepening of the harbor and a new break water.



#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CSLBC**



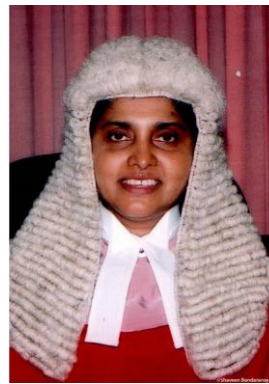
The Annual General Meeting of the Canada Sri Lanka Business Council (CSLBC) was held on 3rd April 2011 in Toronto. The Board of Directors elected for 2011/2012 are as follows. Mr Upali Obeyesekere President, Mr Ganesan Sugumar, Vice President, Mr Mohan Perera, General Secretary. Board members: Nalaka Weerasinghe, Hony Treasurer, Ranjith Wickremasinghe, Roshan

Navaratnam, Rohan Perera, Membership Director, Lalith Wickremasinghe and Ranier de Lambert, Directors at large.

The Canada Sri Lanka Business Council was formed in 1990, by a group of Canadian businessmen led by Sir Christopher Ondaatje in collaboration with the Sri Lanka High Commission in Ottawa. The Council is federally incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation and engages in promotional work and provides advocacy to its members who do business in Sri Lanka. The CSLBC plans to visit Sri Lanka on a trade and investment promotion mission in the third quarter. The Consul General Mr Karunaratna Paranawithana and Deputy Consul General Mr H M B Herath were also present at the meeting.



#### **FIRST WOMAN CHIEF JUSTICE OF SRI LANKA**



Dr. Shirani Bandaranayake was appointed as the new Chief Justice of Sri Lanka. She is the first woman Chief Justice in the country.

Dr. Bandaranayake obtained her degree of Bachelor of Law with Second Class honours in the (Upper Division) becoming first in the order of merit in 1980 from the Law Faculty of the University of Colombo. She was awarded a Degree in Master of Philosophy from the same university in 1983 and in 1986 she obtained a Doctorate in Philosophy from the University of London, becoming the first woman in Sri Lanka to obtain a Ph.D in Law from a foreign University.

She was awarded the Commonwealth Open Scholarship in 1983, the Chevening Scholarship in



1989, Fulbright – Hays Fellowship in 1996 and the British Council Asser Award in 1983 and 1994.

Since joining the Judiciary in 1996, she has functioned as a member of the Judges Institute and the Judicial Service Commission. She has also served as the Acting Chief Justice on 11 occasions.



#### 42 TAMIL YOUTHS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE SINHALA LANGUAGE COURSE AT MANIPAY



On the request of civilians the Commander Security Forces in Jaffna, (SF-J) has organized Sinhala language classes for enthusiastic adults and students in Jaffna. One such course that was held for 17 weeks at Manipay Ladies' College came to an end with award of certificates to those who successfully completed the course.

Out of 42 students, five students succeeded in getting a "B" grades with over 75% marks at the end-of-course test. 24 obtained between 75% and 50% and the rest got over 40%.

Classes that started in November 2010 were conducted free of charge by experienced lecturer of Sinhalese language Prof. S. Leelakrishnan (JP), a visiting lecturer at the Kopay Teachers' College.

Further, the Army in Jaffna have also arranged Tamil language classes for soldiers.

*Sri Lanka High Commission, Ottawa, Canada.*

*News & Views – June*

#### NATIONAL STUDENT COMMONWEALTH FORUM

The National Student Commonwealth Forum for the year 2011 was held in May in Ottawa under the theme "Human Security". The High Commissioner briefed the two students who had been selected to represent Sri Lanka at the forum on the developments being implemented in Sri Lanka to restore Human Security and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. They were also appraised on the political and economic developments in the country in the post conflict phase.

A representative of the High Commission also participated at the flag procession and the Inter Faith Service held on 12th March at the Holy Cross Church, Ottawa to mark the Commonwealth Day organized by the Royal Commonwealth Society of Canada.



#### BUDDHIST CONGRESS OF CANADA DONATES FOR FLOOD VICTIMS



Dr Piyasena Hapuarachchi, President on behalf of the Buddhist Congress of Canada donated CD\$800 in response to an appeal made for funds for the flood victims in Sri Lanka. The funds were collected at the Sri Lanka Night-Charity and Dinner Entertainment in March 2011 organized by the members of the Buddhist Congress. The donation was handed over to the High Commissioner on 17th May 2011 at the residence of the High Commissioner. Including the donation received from the Buddhist Congress, the High Commission has so far received C\$3,551.30 (Rs404,956.24) for flood victims in Sri Lanka.



### OUTSTANDING ASIAN CANADIAN AWARD

Mr Aloy Stephen Perera a Sri Lankan Canadian was awarded the outstanding Asian Community Award by the Canadian Multicultural Council of Asians in Ontario at the Asian Heritage Month Gala Dinner held in Toronto on 30th April 2011. The Canada Sri Lanka Association of Toronto nominated Mr Perera for this award in appreciation for his contribution to the Sri Lankan community over the last four decades. The High Commission congratulates Mr Perera on receiving the award.



### PIGEON ISLAND NATIONAL PARK

The Pigeon Island, National Park in Trincomalee has been reopened, which is one of the two marine national parks of Sri Lanka. Situated 1 km off the coast of Nilaveli, Pigeon Island consists of two islands; large Pigeon Island with the best coral reefs and small Pigeon Island surrounded by rocky islets.

The islands have derived its name from the bird Pigeon that is most abundant in this park. The other animals that are part of the Pigeon Island National Park are the various types of turtles, birds and Rock Pigeons. Visitors from all over the world visit the island to watch the Rock Pigeons.



# Sri Lankan Film festival

Sri Lanka High Commission in Canada

in collaboration with

The Canadian Film Institute

presents

15<sup>th</sup> June at 7.00 p.m.

Sakman Maluwa (The Garden) by Sumithra Peries

18<sup>th</sup> June at 7.00 p.m.

Walapatala (Penumbra) by Vijitha Gunarathna

25<sup>th</sup> June at 7.00 p.m.

Ekamath Eka Rataka (Once Upon a Time) by Sanath Gunathilaka  
(Adults Only)

29<sup>th</sup> June at 7.00 p.m.

Sudu Kaluwara (The Intruder) by Sudath Rohana

at the

Auditorium, Library and Archives of Canada

395 Wellington Street, Ottawa

All Films are in Colour with English Subtitles

TICKETS AT THE ENTRANCE C\$ 8.00