



News & Views



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64TH NATIONAL DAY OF SRI LANKA-CANADA CALLS UPON MEMBERS OF THE SRI LANKAN TAMIL COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP CREATIVE IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO CONTRIBUTE CONSTRUCTIVELY

The High Commission of Sri Lanka in Ottawa celebrated the 64th Anniversary of Independence on 4th February at the High Commissioner's Residence with the participation of the High

Commission Staff and their families and the main Office Bearers of the Sri Lanka Canada Association of Ottawa.



Outside the snow covered grounds of the official residence the programme commenced with hoisting of the National Flag, and singing of the National Anthem. Religious observances of the Buddhist, Hindu, Islam and Christian religions, the reading of the Messages of the President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister were followed by a brief speech by the High Commissioner who spoke on the current developments in Sri Lanka, and urged the Sri Lankan community to extend their support to their Motherland.

On the 8th of February a grand function was held at the Theatre of the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa which was attended by over 500 participants. The Guest of Honour was Hon. Deepak Obhrai, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs who was joined by Mr. Mac Harb, Senator and, Ms Louise Brown, Member of Parliament. The other participants were Canadian Government



Officials, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, invitees from the corporate sector, the media and the Sri Lankan community.

The High Commissioner welcoming the guests spoke of the peace that has been restored in Sri Lanka and the economic, trade, tourism and industrial sectors that are growing rapidly. She stated that Sri Lanka has many challenges to face in addressing a political solution to satisfy all communities in a democratic setting within the country.

She further stated, “we know that we have the support and goodwill of our friends in the international community. What we seek from the international community is the understanding of the complexities of a multi cultural, multi lingual and multi religious society”. She also called upon the large Sri Lankan community who have made their home in Canada to continue to play a positive role for Sri Lanka in their adopted country.

The Guest of Honour Deepak Obhrai in his initial comments spoke of his visits to Sri Lanka in the past, and stated that “Canada has looked to build on that friendship by supporting the Sri Lankan people with over \$ 800 m in assistance since the 50’s”. He stated that “the most pressing challenge at this important juncture is to resolve the underlying sources of conflict through political reconciliation”. He also called upon the Sri Lanka Government to implement the recommendations of the LLRC.

While referring to “a deeper dynamic” to Canada’s vibrant Sri Lankan population and its contribution to the fabric of Canadian society, he stated “I further call upon members of Canada’s Sri Lankan Tamil community to develop creative ideas about how to contribute constructively and collaboratively to a new era in Sri Lanka’s history”.

Following the brief official segment of the evening’s programme the audience was entertained to a rich cultural performance staged by the outstanding and well renowned Channa Upuli Dance Ensemble. The performance included items such as the story of

Vijaya and Kuveni, a traditional Kandyan wedding ceremony, Baratha Natyam, Lion dance, Dialogue of drums, etc. which kept the audience spell bound with the vibrant colour, style and the music of the Sri Lankan culture.

[For photos see page 5]



DEYATA KIRULA SCHOOL BOOKS PROJECT

Hon. G L Peiris, Minister of External Affairs donated, approximately 2000 books collected by the Ministry of External Affairs to the Public Library of Anuradharapura, University of Rajarata and 12 Sinhala and Tamil medium schools selected from the Anuradharapura district at the Deyata Kirula 2012, held in Oyamaduwa from 4 - 12 February 2012.

The Minister also opened a forum on global issues organized by the Ministry for school students which was modeled on the United Nations General Assembly thematic sessions. Many students from the schools in the North Central Province enthusiastically took part in the forum and delivered speeches on a wide range of issues such as global warming, regional cooperation, global peace, etc.



OTTAWA CHAPTER OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA



The Ottawa chapter of the Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya was established on 28th January 2012 at the St. Monica Parish Church, Ottawa. Mr. Priyantha Wijeweera who was the convener and a committee member of the interim organizing committee organized the event under the patronage of Brahmanagama Muditha Thero. At the inaugural session, 36 participants with academic affiliations to the University of Peradeniya joined in electing the first executive committee. Dr. Nimal Ratnayake, was elected unanimously as the President, while Dr. Deepananda Herath was elected as the Vice-President, Dr. Jayananda Weerasinghe, Secretary and Mr. Premartna Tennakoon as the Treasurer. In addition, faculty representatives were also elected to ensure the smooth implementation of activities and functioning of the Association. Dr. Ajith Samarajeewa, Agriculture Faculty, Mr. Saman Jayathilake, Arts Faculty, Dr. Nissanka Pussegoda, Engineering Faculty, Dr. Samudrika Amarakoon, Medical Faculty, Veterinary Science and Dental Science and Dr. Susantha Mohottalage to represent the Faculty of Science. Mr. Priyantha Wijeweera was elected as Director Membership Drive and Ms. Deepani Waidyaratna, as Editor of the Association.

The High Commission wishes all success to the newly formed Ottawa Chapter of the Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya.



NEW BUILDING COMPLEX TO TELLIPPALAI MAHAJANA VIDYALAYA JAFFNA



A new three storied building of the Tellippalai Mahajana Vidyalaya - Jaffna was declared open on 24th February 2012.

The Tellippalai Mahajana Vidyalaya of Jaffna has a profound history of 102 years. At present there are 1553 students studying and the school is equipped with 60 teachers. The new building comprises 16 class rooms, 2 office rooms, Aesthetic Section, 02 Indoor Gymnasiums and 02 fully equipped washrooms.



ARMY TO PROBE INTO LLRC REPORT OBSERVATIONS

A five member Court of Inquiry has been appointed on 2nd January 2012 to inquire into the observations, made by the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) in its report on alleged civilian casualties during the final phase of the humanitarian operations and probe as regards the Channel-4 video footage irrespective of its authenticity or otherwise.

A Court of Inquiry is an initial fact -finding inquiry, akin to a non-summary inquiry by a magistrate. If there is a prima facie case disclosed against any person from the evidence led before the court of inquiry, a general court martial, is convened to try the alleged offenders. The court of inquiry has already commenced its proceedings.



"RUTHLESS" -VIDEO ON LTTE ATROCITIES



"Ruthless" the documentary movie produced by the Ministry of Defence and Urban Development was launched on 8th February 2012.

The documentary recounts true accounts of survivors who once, had lived under brutal and repressive regime of Tamil Tigers; now speak freely, of what they had experienced during the days of war.

The Tamil Tigers not only targeted innocent civilians but also targeted many religious places, the clergy, children and even their disabled and wounded cadres. You can access the documentary at : http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20120208_RuthlessDV



DIYAWANNA WALKWAY AND LEISURE AREA UNVEILED FOR PUBLIC



A newly landscaped spectacular walkway and leisure area adjacent to Diyawanna Oya Waters Edge premises in Sri Jayawrdanapura Kotte was declared open to the public on 23rd February 2012.

Earlier, the area was a part of widely spread marshland surrounded the Diyawanna Oya. The area is open for the public 24 hours a day and seven days a week.



FOUNDATION LAID FOR RS 700 M HOTEL PROJECT IN JAFFNA



The Jetwing Yarl hotel is to be constructed on a 46 perch land area on the Old Clock Tower Road, in Jaffna. The Rs 700 million project is a joint venture between Mercantile Merchant Bank Ltd, and the Jetwing Group. The star class hotel will have 76 rooms, 14 storied, roof top swimming pool, Presidential Suite etc. According to the project estimation the construction work is to be completed within 18 months.

This hotel is expected to create employment for youth in the area in addition to boosting income and business opportunities to the self-employed, micro enterprises and farmers.





*Sri Lanka High Commission, Ottawa, Canada.
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