



# මොස්කව්



## 3rd Year Anniversary



*"We will further improve our newspaper and make it the flagship of Embassy of Sri Lanka in Russian Federation."*

**Udayanga Weeratunga-Ambassador**

## People rejected those who betrayed country



The people do not want to see those who betrayed the country in power. "The resounding mandate given by the People to the Government at all elections since 2005 shows that they do not want to see treacherous elements in power," said President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

The President was speaking at the opening of the first phase of the Lak Vijaya coal power plant in Norochcholai. The President said that provision of electricity to the rural villages would no longer be an election pledge nor a slogan as the Government will complete providing electricity to all households in the country within the next two years.

The President added that 87 percent of all house holds in the country are supplied with electricity and it would be increased to 100 per cent within two years. The first phase of Lak Vijaya Power plant generates 300 MW of electricity to the National Grid. The project was funded by the Chinese Government. Construction work was carried by a Chinese company. The Sri Lankan Government also invested Rs 5,300 million for the first stage and Rs 11,000 million for the second stage of construction.

- \*Electricity for all within two years*
- \*Govt focusing on alternative power sources*
- \*Infrastructure facilities for rural areas*
- \* Massive development drive country*

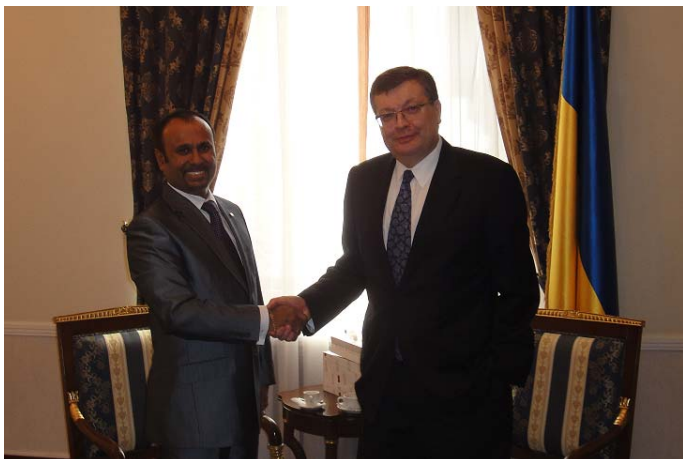


President Rajapaksa said that the Government is in the process of providing infrastructure facilities to the rural areas. The President noted that those who stood in the Government's path to liberate the country from the clutches of terrorism have raised their ugly heads again to deter the country's development march. President Rajapaksa added that they have launched protests demanding the ban of GSP+ facility on Sri Lanka. The President added these elements want to prevent the country from being developed.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa added that Sri Lanka is one of the few countries in the region where electricity is provided for domestic and industrial purposes round the clock.

The President said the Government has focused on alternative power sources such as wind power. He said the Government conducted all elections in time and sought fresh mandates from the people. "The process of conducting elections strengthens democracy," he added. President Rajapaksa said that the country faced insurrections and terrorism due to the lack of a proper mechanism to develop the country. (.....page 7)

## Ambassador Weeratunga meets Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine



Udayanga Weeratunga, Ambassador of Sri Lanka in the Russian Federation concurrently accredited to Ukraine, met with Kostyantyn Gryshchenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on 23.03.2011 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

At the meeting the two sides discussed the progress of bilateral agreements which had been reached between Sri Lanka and Ukraine during the visit of President Mahinda Rajapaksa to Ukraine in 2010. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the progress of work and the level of bilateral cooperation between the two countries following the visit of President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

The necessity of finalizing the pending legal agreements in the spheres of trade and economy etc was also discussed at the meeting. The further development of trade and economic cooperation as well as the intensification of Sri Lanka-Ukraine relations at different levels was also discussed.

Ambassador Weeratunga briefed the Ukrainian Foreign Minister regarding the increase of Ukrainian tourists' arrival in Sri Lanka during 2010. He thanked the Ukrainian government for the assistance provided in commencing direct flights between Kiev and Colombo. The number of Ukrainian tourists' visiting Sri Lanka continues to increase significantly as a result of the direct flights operating between Ukraine and Sri Lanka.

Ambassador Weeratunga also took the opportunity to brief H.E. Gryshchenko regarding the rapid progress of various development projects in Sri Lanka. He invited the Ukrainian State owned and private industries to invest in Sri Lanka taking into account the highly favourable economic situation in Sri Lanka.

The Ukrainian Foreign Minister agreed with Ambassador Weeratunga on the need to have regular high level political contact between Sri Lanka and Ukraine and expressed the readiness to visit Sri Lanka in the near future. The two sides also agreed to hold the next round of Political consultations between the Foreign Ministries of Sri Lanka and Ukraine at the earliest.

Moscow Puwath

## Expo Bazaar to showcase Lanka's product range



Sri Lankans will get an opportunity to see and feel the range of goods and services exported under one roof at the Expo Bazaar at Green Path from April 8-10 for the first time.

The trade fair and exhibition is organised by the Export Development Board (EDB) on a concept of MP Namal Rajapaksa.

Chairman, EDB Janaka Ratnayaka said that 1,500 exporters export 4000 varieties while a total of 550 exporters contribute to 85 percent of the export revenue.

Around 150 exporters will exhibit their products and services at the exhibition.

"The objectives of the Expo are to show the potential of our exports to the diplomatic community, stimulate potential entrepreneurs to become exporters and change the attitude of people towards our products", said the chairman. He said that this is the launching pad for next year's Expo.

As the diplomatic community will visit the exhibition and trade fair, we will be able to attract the best buyers next year. The exhibition and trade fair will be open from 10 am to 10 pm.

### The new Secretary to the Ministry of External Affairs assumes duties



The new Secretary to the Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. Karunatilaka Amunugama assumed office on 28th March 2011 at the Ministry at a simple ceremony. He was welcomed on his arrival by senior officials of the Ministry.

Mr. Amunugama joined the Sri Lanka Foreign Service in 1985 and has served in many Sri Lanka Missions abroad. He has also served as Sri Lanka's Ambassador in Bangkok, Tokyo and Beijing, prior to his appointment as the External Affairs Secretary.

**රුසියාව වෙනුවෙන් නව සංචාරක ප්‍රවර්ධන වැඩ සටහනක අවශ්‍යතාවය**



රුසියාණු සංචාරකයින් අද ලෝකයේ වැඩිම රටවල් ගණනකට සංචාරය කරන සංචාරකයින් බවට පත් වෙලා. මේ සංචාරකයින් වැඩි වශයෙන් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවටත් ගෙන්වා ගැනීමට අපට විශේෂ ක්‍රියා දාමයන් ආරම්භ කිරීමට අද කාලය පැමිණ තිබෙනවා. මේ සදහා ශ්‍රී ලංකා සංචාරක මණ්ඩලය විසින් නව වැඩ සටහන් සහ ව්‍යාපෘති හඳුන්වා දිය යුතුව තිබෙනවා යයි තානාපති උදයාංග විරතුංග මහතා පවසයි.

විරතුංග මහතා මෙසේ පැවැසුවේ වසරක් පාසා රුසියාවේ මොස්කව් නුවර පැවැත්වෙන අන්තර්ජාතික වෙළඳ හා සංචාරක ප්‍රදර්ශනයට සහභාගි වූ ශ්‍රී ලාංකික සංචාරක ව්‍යාපාරයේ නියෝජිතයින් මොස්කව් නගරයේ වෙසෙන ශ්‍රී ලාංකිකයින් සහ රුසියාවේ සංචාරක ව්‍යාපාරයට සම්බන්ධ නිලධාරීන් සහභාගි වූ විශේෂ උත්සවයකදීය.

18 වරටත් මොස්කව්හි පැවැති මෙම ප්‍රදර්ශනයට ශ්‍රී ලංකාව නියෝජනය කරමින් සංචාරක ආයතන 15 ක නිලධාරීන් සහභාගි වූහ.

සංචාරකයින් ගේ ආගමනයට සම්බන්ධව වැදගත් සංඛ්‍යා ලේඛණ පෙන්වා දුන් විරතුංග මහතා වැඩි දුරටත් පැවැසුවේ දැනට ඊජිප්තුවේ සහ අනිකුත් මැද පෙරදිග රටවල් වල පැතිරෙමින් පවතින සංචාරකයින්ට හිතකර නොවන වාතාවරණයන් නිසා රුසියාණු සංචාරකයින්ට නව සංචාරක රටවල් සොයා යෑමේ අවශ්‍යතාවය මතු වී තිබෙන බවත් ලැබී ඇති මේ අවස්ථාවෙන් උපරිම ප්‍රයෝජනය ගැනීම ශ්‍රී ලංකා සංචාරක මණ්ඩලය සතුව ඇති විශාල වගකීමක් බවත් සඳහන් කළේය. රුසියානු සංචාරකයින් මිලියන 2කටත් අධික ප්‍රමාණයක් වසරකට ඊජිප්තුවේ සංචාරය කරන අතර මෙයින් අවම වශයෙන් 1% ක පමණක සංචාරකයින් වත් ශ්‍රී ලංකාව වෙත ආකර්ශණය කර ගැනීම සඳහා අප සූදානම් විය යුතුවන විරතුංග මහතා තව දුරටත් පැවැසුවේය.



එරොස්ලොව් ගුවන් සමාගමද ලබන සැප්තැම්බර් මාසයේ සිට කොළඹ බලා යලි ගුවන් ගමන් ආරම්භ කිරීමට බලාපොරොත්තු වන හෙයින් මෙවැනි ප්‍රචාරණ වැඩ සටහනක අවශ්‍යතාවය අවධාරණය විය යුතු බව තානාපති විරතුංග මහතා රුස්ව සිටි පිරිසට කරුණු පැහැදිලි කරමින් සඳහන් කළේය.



එසේම ශ්‍රී ලංකා රජය විසින් යෝජනා කර ඇති අන්තර්ජාතික සංචාරක ව්‍යාපෘතීන් එනම් විශේෂයෙන්ම කල්පිටිය ආරුගම් බේ සංචාරක ව්‍යාපෘතිය ගැනද විශේෂ දත්ත ඉදිරිපත් කරමින් රුසියාණු ආයෝජකයින්ට අවශ්‍ය තොරතුරු සපයා දීමට විරතුංග මහතා මේ අවස්ථාවේදී කටයුතු කළේය.

යුක්රේනයේ සංචාරකයින්ගේ ශ්‍රී ලංකාවට පැමිණීමේ වර්ධන වේගය ගැනද විශේෂයෙන් සඳහන් කල විරතුංග මහතා පසුගිය වසරේදී එම වර්ධන වේගය 125% ක ප්‍රතිශතයක් පෙන්වුම් කල අතර යුක්රේන ජාත්‍යන්තර ගුවන් සේවාව සහ සැප්තැම්බර් මාසයේ ආරම්භ කෙරෙන එරොස්විට් ගුවන් සේවාවේ දායකත්වය මෙම සංචාරකයින් ගේ පැමිණීමට බෙහෙවින් බලපාන බවද පැවැසීය.

යුක්රේනයේදී පැවැත්වෙන සංචාරක ප්‍රවර්ධන ප්‍රදර්ශනයට සහභාගි වෙන ශ්‍රී ලාංකික සංචාරක ආයතන වෙනුවෙන් වෙළඳ කුටි වෙන් කර ගැනීම සඳහා කුසපත් ඇදීමක්ද මෙහිදී පැවැත්වුණි.

සංචාරක මාධ්‍ය වාර්තාකරුවන් ශ්‍රී ලංකාව වෙත යැවීම සඳහා තානාපති කාර්යාලය අනුගමනය කරන ප්‍රතිපත්තීන් සම්බන්ධයෙන්ද කරුණු පැහැදිලි කල විරතුංග මහතා ඒ වෙනුවෙන් වැඩි අවධානයක් රුසියාව සහ යුක්රේනය වෙත යොමු කල යුතු බව ශ්‍රී ලංකා සංචාරක මණ්ඩලයට කරුණු පැහැදිලි කල යුතු බවත් පැවැසීය.



ශ්‍රී ලාංකික ආහාර පාන වලින් සමන්විත විශේෂ රාත්‍රී හෝප්පා සංග්‍රහයක්ද මෙම උත්සවට ඇතුළත් විය. **Moscow Puwath**

## “Why Invest in Sri Lanka” A Seminar in Moscow



Ambassador Udayanga Weeratunga delivered keynote address at a seminar held on 10th March, 2011 at the Ambassadors Residences in Moscow. Around 50 business representatives, ministry officials, and media persons were participated at this event and the theme of the seminar was “Why Invest in Sri Lanka”.

At the outset Ambassador Weeratunga outlined recent political and economic development of Sri Lanka and explained that Sri Lanka has a history of over 2600 years. Country obtained independence on 04<sup>th</sup> February 1948 after 453 years of colonization under protégées, Holland and British. There are nine places declared by UNESCO as world famous objects. Sri Lanka economy develops very fast in the recent past. GDP in 2008 was 6% and in 2010 it was 8%. The forecast for this year is 8.5%. Sri Lanka is one of the potential destinations for worldwide investors to consider for their investments in many spheres.

**Key sectors in the Economy** - The Apparel sector is the #1 exporter in the economy. Country has some world class Sri Lankan apparel companies. The software sector has benefited from the country's well educated workforce. The BPO sector is growing rapidly as Sri Lanka is perfectly positioned to complement the growing BPO sector in India. Sri Lankans are highly adaptable and skilled. We have the world's second largest pool of UK-qualified financial accounting graduates. A wide range of precious and semi-precious stones including sapphires, rubies and cats-eye are found in Sri Lanka. The country is increasingly focusing on improving the value addition of its Gems & Jewellery.

**Business Environment** - Ambassador explained advantages of having free trade agreement to Access to the Indian and Pakistan markets. Sri Lanka is positioned as the Gateway to Asia,

Sri Lanka will be developed as a major Global Logistics Hub in the South Asian region for trade, investment, communications, and financial services. Today, Sri Lanka is ranked as the most liberalized economy in South Asia. Investors are provided with preferential tax rates, constitutional guarantees on investment agreements, exemptions from exchange control and 100% repatriation of profits.

Total foreign ownership (100%) is welcome in almost all areas of the economy, with only a few areas limited or restricted to foreigners. Sri Lanka has Solid infrastructure facilities Tele communications, Power, Roads and High quality life.

**Investment Opportunities** - There is a wide range of investment opportunities in the Travel and Tourism sector as the country focuses on rapid tourism development in four planned tourist zones namely Kalpitiya, Nilavelly, Passicuda and Arugambay. Further there are many projects offered for public private investments such as:  
Kankasanthurei Cement Plant, Kanthale Suger Factory.

**The Board of Investment of Sri Lanka (BOISL)** - The BOI is structured to function as a central facilitation point for investors. It operates as an utmost statutory body. The BOI completes 33 years of existence in 2011. In this time, it has acted as an engine of growth creating a considerable impact on the country's economic development. Sri Lanka's advantages as a destination for investment will be highlighted and many of the questions raised by investors from overseas on how to set up businesses in Sri Lanka, will be addressed.

The BOI companies today employ over 470,000 workers, They account for nearly 65% of Sri Lankan exports and 86% of the country's industrial exports.

The objective of this seminar was to enlighten Russian investors to consider Sri Lanka as their destination to invest, relocate their investments to in Sri Lanka country having low-cost of production, high living standard, Solid Infrastructure, talented & educated work force and rich culture & traditions.



All participants were given complete set of information required to start up business in Sri Lanka which is one of the world's top "Big Emerging Markets" having very good legal system based on British law. Ambassador Weeratunga further stated that Sri Lanka Mission in Russia is ready to provide any assistance and support required for Russian investors through the many government institutions established for the promotion and facilitation of investment in to Sri Lanka.

During the reception Mr. Oleg Avdev of Ministry of Foreign Affairs commenting on the presentation suggested that Ambassador should attend an interview on the Economic TV channels.

**මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ ජනාධිපතිතුමා ගැමි සුවද ලොවට ගෙන ගිය නායකයෙක් - ජනාධිපති ලේකම්**



ගැමි දරුවකු ලෙස ගමේ සුවද නිවැරදිව හඳුනාගත් අතිගරු ජනාධිපති මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ මැතිතුමා ඒ ගමේ වටිනාකම සහ වත්පිළිවෙත් ලොවට පෙන්විය හැකි රාජ්‍යයක් තීරණය කළ බව ජනාධිපති ලේකම් ලලිත් විරතුංග මහතා පැවසී ය.

ජනාධිපති ලේකම් ලලිත් විරතුංග මහතා මේ බව පැවසුවේ ස්වර්ණවාහිනී නාලිකාව ඔස්සේ විකාශය වූ හඳුමු රට සජීවී රූපවාහිනී වැඩසටහන සමග එක්වෙමිනි. ජනාධිපතිවරයාගේ දර්ශනය අනුව සංවර්ධන ක්‍රියාදාමය කෙසේ මෙහෙයවන්නේ ද යන්න පිළිබඳව මෙහිදී දීර්ඝ වශයෙන් සාකච්ඡා විය.

**2005 හැරවුම් වර්ෂයයි**

2005 නොවැම්බර් මස 19වන දින අලුත් ගමනක ආරම්භයයි. 2005 ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ හැරවුම් වර්ෂයයි. දශක ගණනාවක් පුරා පැවති අන්තරාදායක මෙන්ම පීඩාකාරී යුගය නිමා කරමින් ගෞරවාන්විත සාමයක් සමග අළුත් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවක් මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ මැතිතුමා උදා කළ බව පැවසූ ලලිත් විරතුංග මහතා ශත වර්ෂ ගණනාවක් යටත් විජිත නිසා හැති වූ ගමේ ශ්‍රී විභූතිය නැවත ගමට ගෙන ඒම අලුත් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ විශේෂත්වය බව ද පැවසී ය.

**ගමේ දියුණුව නිසා නාගරීකරණය අඩු වුනා**

ගමට ආවේණික වූ ශක්තීන් විනාශ වීමට ඉඩ නොදී නව නවත් නිවුරු කිරීම සඳහා දියුණු තාක්ෂණය ගමට ගෙන යාම මහින්ද වින්තනය පුරාවට දක්නට ඇති සුවිශේෂී ලක්ෂණයකි. 2005 වසරේ මහා මාර්ග අමාත්‍යවරයා ලෙස මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ මැතිතුමා ගම ගැන පැවසුවේ ගමේ මිනිසුන් පාරවල් ටික හඳුලා දුන්නොත් ඉතිරි වැඩ ටික ඔවුන්ට කර ගන්න පුළුවන් කියා යැ යි සිහිපත් කළ ජනාධිපති ලේකම්වරයා එතුමා සෑම ගමකට ම කොන්ක්‍රීට් මාර්ග ලබා දුන් බවත් අද කාපටි මාර්ග, අධිවේගී මාර්ග ඇතුළු දියුණු මාර්ග පද්ධතියක් රටට ලැබී තිබෙන බවත් වැඩිදුරටත් පැවසීය. එපමණක් නොව අද ගමට හොඳ රෝහලක්, හොඳ පාසලක්, ගොවිතැනට යටිතල පහසුකම් ඇතුළු සියලු දේ ලැබී තිබෙන බව ද ජනාධිපති ලේකම්තුමා පෙන්වා දුන්නේය.

ගමේ දියුණුව නිසා අද බොහෝ දෙනා ගමේ රැදී සිටීමට කැමති බවත් එමගින් නාගරීකරණය අඩු වී ඇති බවත් ඒ හේතුවෙන් අඩු වැටුපට රැකියා සොයා නගරවලට පැමිණෙන පිරිස බෙහෙවින් අඩු වී ඇති බවත් ජනාධිපති ලේකම්තුමා මෙහිදී පැවසී ය. දෙමාපියන් දරුවන්ගේ අනාගතය ජනාධිපතිතුමාට හාර දිලා මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ යන ජනමුල නායකයාට අද අනාගත දරුවන්ගේ වගකීම දෙමාපියන් හාර දී ඇත . නමා ජනාධිපතිතුමා දකින්නේ දරුවන්ට අසීමිතව ලෙන්ගතු නායකයෙකු ලෙස බව පැවසූ විරතුංග මහතා අරලියගහ මැදුර අද පාසල් දරුවන්ට විවෘත ස්ථානයක් බවත් එහි යන එන දරුවන්ට සංග්‍රහ කොට පොත් පත් ඇතුළු තෘතී මෝග ලබාදී ඡායාරූපයකට පෙනී සිටින නිහඬමානී නායකයෙක් ලෙස තමා ජනාධිපතිතුමා දකින බවත් පැවසී ය.

ගමේ දරුවන්ට හොඳ පාසලක් ලබාදීම සඳහා පාසල් දහසක් සංවර්ධනය කිරීමේ වැඩපිළිවෙල ජනාධිපතිතුමාගේ උපදෙස් මත

ආරම්භ වූ බව ද මෙහිදී සඳහන් කළ විරතුංග මහතා දරුවන්ගේ අධ්‍යාපනය සම්බන්ධයෙන් ජනාධිපතිතුමා තුළ ඇත්තේ දැඩි කැපවීමක් බව ද පැවසී ය.

**ගමට තොරතුරු තාක්ෂණය**

ගමේ දරුවන්ට තොරතුරු තාක්ෂණ ඥානය ලබාදීම සඳහා හැණසල ලබාදුන්නේ මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ මැතිතුමා බව ද සිහිපත් කළ ජනාධිපති ලේකම්තුමා 2005 වසරේ සියයට 5 ක් ව පැවති තොරතුරු තාක්ෂණ සාක්ෂරතාවය අද සියයට 32 ක් දක්වා වර්ධනය වීමට එය ඉවහල් වූ බව ද කීය. ආසියා ශාන්තිකර කලාපයේ තොරතුරු තාක්ෂණ සහාපතිත්වය දෙවරක්ම ශ්‍රී ලංකාවට හිමි වූයේ ජනාධිපතිතුමා එම ක්ෂේත්‍රය කෙරෙහි දැක්වූ උනන්දුවේ ප්‍රතිඵලයක් ලෙස බව ද විරතුංග මහතා මෙහිදී පැවසී ය.

**වෛද්‍යානුකූල රාජ්‍යයක්**

තොරතුරු තාක්ෂණය සේම ශ්‍රී ලංකාව වෛද්‍යානුකූල රටක් කිරීමේ ජනාධිපතිතුමාගේ අභිලාෂය පිළිබඳව ද කරුණු ගෙනහැර දැක්වූ ජනාධිපති ලේකම්තුමා සඳහන් කළේ ජනතාව අතර සැකය අවිච්චාසය දුරලීමට නම් භාෂා පිළිබඳ දැනුම වර්ධනය කළ යුතු බවයි. අද ජනාධිපතිතුමා දෙමළ බස ඉගෙනීමටත් කථා කිරීමටත් ඉතා උනන්දු බව කී ලලිත් විරතුංග මහතා එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ සමුළුවක දෙමළ බසින් කථා කළ එකම රාජ්‍ය නායකයා ජනාධිපති මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ මහතා බව ද මෙහිදී සිහිපත් කළේ ය.

**අලුත් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ අභියෝග**

ජනාධිපති මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ මැතිතුමා විශේෂිත කළමනාකරන හැකියාවක් ඇති ආදර්ශමත් වර්තයක් බව පෙන්වා දුන් ජනාධිපති ලේකම්තුමා එතුමා මුහුණ දුන් සෑම අභියෝගයක් ම ඉතා සාර්ථක ලෙස කළමනාකරනය කර ගත් ආකාරය ද මෙහිදී සඳහන් කළේය. අලුත් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ අභියෝග පිළිබඳව ද කරුණු පැහැදිලි කළ ජනාධිපති ලේකම්තුමා අසීරුණු ම අභියෝගය ජයගත් මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ ජනාධිපතිතුමාට සෙසු අභියෝග ජය ගත හැකි බවත්, ඒ සඳහා රාජ්‍ය සේවකයින්ගේ කැපවීම අත්‍යවශ්‍ය බවත් අවධාරණය කළේය. එසේම රාජ්‍ය සේවය උතුම්ම සේවය බව ද පැවසූ ලලිත් විරතුංග මහතා කලට වේලාවට හැකි උපරිම ප්‍රමාණයක් ඉෂ්ට කිරීම ජනාධිපතිතුමාගෙන් තමා ලද ආදර්ශය බව ද පැවසී ය.

**මහින්ද වින්තනය මැතිවරණ ප්‍රකාශයක් පමණක් නොවේ**

වෙනත් පක්ෂවල මැතිවරණ ප්‍රකාශ බාල කොල කැල්ලකට සීමා වෙද්දී මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ මැතිතුමා එය පොතක් ලෙස ජනතාව අතට පත් කළේය. දෙවන වර අති බහුතරයකින් ජනාධිපති ධුරයට පත් මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ මැතිතුමා මහින්ද වින්තනය වැඩි දියුණු කර ඉදිරි දැක්මක් ලෙස ඉදිරිපත් කළේ ය. එබැවින් මහින්ද වින්තන දර්ශනය යනු නුදු මැතිවරණ ප්‍රකාශයක් පමණක් නොවේ. එය සංවර්ධනයේ අන්පොත බවත්, ක්‍රියාකාරකම් 611 ක් අඩංගු මහින්ද වින්තනය අද යථාර්ථයක් බවට පත් වෙමින් තිබෙන බවත් කී විරතුංග මහතා 2016 ඉලක්ක කරා රට සාර්ථකව ගමන් කරන බව හිඳසුන් සහිතව පැහැදිලි කළේ ය.

2005 ඇමරිකානු ඩොලර් 1048 ක් වූ ඒකපුද්ගල ආදායම අද ඇමරිකානු ඩොලර් 2068 කි. 2016 දී එය ඩොලර් 4000 දක්වා නංවා ගැනීම අපේක්ෂාවයි. මීට වසර කිහිපයකට පෙර සියයට 15ක් වූ සේවා වියුක්තිය අද සියයට 5 කටත් වඩා අඩු මට්ටමක පවතී. ජනතාවගෙන් සියයට 85 කට විදුලි බලය ලැබී ඇත. ඒ අනුව 2012 වන විට සෑමට විදුලි බලය ලබාදීමේ ජනපති වැයම මල් එල ගැන්වී තිබේ. ලෝකයේ හොඳම කොටස් වෙළඳ පොළ ඇත්තේ ද ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ බව සංඛ්‍යා ලේඛන ගෙන හැර දක්වමින් මෙතෙක් ලබා ඇති ප්‍රගතිය පිළිබඳව ජනාධිපති ලේකම්තුමා වැඩිදුරටත් කරුණු පැහැදිලි කළේය.

**රට ම එකාචන්ච සිතීමේ අවශ්‍යතාව**

1987 වඩමාරවිචි මෙහෙයුමේ දී නිම කළ හැකිව තිබූ ත්‍රස්තවාදී උවදුර එදා එල්ල වූ බලපෑම්වලින් හකුලාගත් නිසා එදා සිට 2009 මැයි 19 දක්වා වසර 22 ක් සංවර්ධනය ඇණ නිටි බව ද සඳහන් කළ ජනාධිපති ලේකම්තුමා අද අපි ලබා ඇති සැබෑ නිදහස යළි අපි අභිමි කර ගන්නේ නම් එය අපටත් අපේ දරුවන්ටත් කර ගන්නා බරපතල අපරාධයක් බවත්, රටම එකාමෙන් සිටියහොත් පමණක් රට හදාගත හැකි බවත් වැඩිදුරටත් අවධාරණය කළේ ය.

[www.priu.gov.lk](http://www.priu.gov.lk)

## MITT 2011, Travel & Tourism Fair 16<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> March 2011



18<sup>th</sup> International Travel & Tourism Fair “MITT 2011 was held from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> March 2011 at the Expo Center in Moscow, Russia. Sri Lanka Tourism promotion Bureau organized the “Sri Lanka Stand” with support of Sri Lanka Embassy in Moscow. Tangerine Tours, Pigeon Island Beach Resort, Ceylon Tours Ltd Mount Lavinia Hotel/Club Bentota, Maldiviana Sri Lanka Ltd, Connaissance de Ceylon (Pvt) Ltd, Aitken Spence Travels (Pvt) Ltd, Favourite Holidays (Pvt) Ltd, Concord Exotic Voyages, Calista Travels, Jetwing Travels & Hotels, Delux Holidays, Walkers Tours and Look Asia Holidays Lanka (Pvt) Ltd took part at the Sri Lanka stand at the MITT 2011.

H.E. the Ambassador Udayanga Weeratunga opened the Sri Lanka stand with lighting traditional oil lamp with other participants. Delivering the speech at the opening ceremony, Ambassador Weeratunga explained the current situation of tourism in Egypt and requested the support of all participants to attract more tourists from this region. It will be helped to achieve the government target which is attracting 2.5 million tourists per annum by 2016.



Also on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011, Ambassador Weeratunga & Mrs. Weeratunga invited all Sri Lankan participants, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau officials and tour/travel operators in Russia to participate the presentation and dinner at the Ambassador’s residence.

At this reception Ambassador explained the current situation of tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Also H.E. Ambassador invited all Sri Lankan companies to participate at the Kazakhstan Travel & Tourism Exhibition which will be held from 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2011 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

**Moscow Puwath**



### **Aeroflot operations to Colombo**

Aeroflot, the Russian Airline intends to resume the regular flights operation to Colombo twice a week commencing from 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

Aeroflot was terminated their flights to Colombo in 2001 due to low yield and lack of traffic which was the only direct flight between Colombo and Moscow.

After the dawn of peace and the country opening up once again to tourists and investors from all over the world, Aeroflot once again schedule to commence their operations to Colombo with a view of supporting Sri Lankan government by attracting more tourists from CIS, East and West European countries. Also the Aeroflot seeks to enter in to code share partnership on agreed sectors with SriLankan Airlines. Such code share operations would be benefited both airlines and passengers of both airlines. Commencing of Aeroflot Airlines operations to Colombo, will strengthen relationship between Sri Lanka and Russian Federation and tourists arrivals to Sri Lanka will be increased dramatically.

## UITT 2011, Travel & Tourism Fair 23rd -25th March 2011



The Embassy of Sri Lanka took part in 17<sup>th</sup> International Travel & Tourism Fair UITT 2011 which was held from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> March 2011 in Kiev, Ukraine. 10 Sri Lankan tour companies and hotels participated at the event: Delux Holidays, Ceylon Tours, Connaissance de Ceylan, Concord Exotic Voyages, Tangerine Tours, Jetwing Travels, Calista Travel, Mount Lavinia Hotel, Maldiviana Sri Lanka, Nkar Travel & Tours.

This year the Embassy had the common Stand of 63 sq. m. with "Ukrainian International Airlines" (UIA), the official carrier of Ukraine. That gave the unique opportunity for visitors to discuss flight options at the same place. UIA commenced a direct flight from Kiev to Colombo from 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 twice a week. Before the Fair starts the Airline expressed its intention to extend the flight for a summer period. Ambassador Udayanga Weeratunga opened the Sri Lanka stand and introduced Mr. Yury Miroshnikov, President of UIA, and Mr. Sergey Fomenko, Vice President of UIA, to Sri Lankan travel trade community. We are happy to inform that this is the first ever happened consolidation of the Embassy and Airline in the history of the UITT Travel Fair. We hope for the benefits of that alliance for all participants in the future.



The Embassy would like to note about high demand for Ukrainian Fair from Sri Lanka companies. Some companies were not able to join the company because of late confirmation.

During his stay in Ukraine Ambassador met representatives of Aerosvit Airlines and got a very positive intention to commence direct non-stop flight to Colombo from October, 2011. That is the great achievement for Sri Lanka Tourism industry.

Finally, Sri Lanka will have 4 direct flights per week from October, 2011 and it might make Ukrainian tourists arrival double than in the year 2010.

Looking back for the year 2007 Ukrainian Tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka was 524 persons. Year 2009 brought 2577 tourists from Ukraine to Sri Lanka which was 5 times more than the 2 years before. Last year Ukrainian Tourist Arrivals increased 121.3% or 5703 tourist. For 2 months of the current year 2011 Sri Lanka got 2407 tourist which is 156% more than for the same period year 2010. As for the year 2011, we are looking for 10000 - 12000 tourists.



During the Fair the Ambassador took part in a workshop devoted to a destination Sri Lanka for travel agents which was held by Magonia Travel Company in cooperation with Tangerine Tours.

**Moscow Puwath**

## Sri Lanka, hub for outsourcing

Sri Lanka is becoming an attractive location for 'Finance and Accounting Outsourcing' (FAO) with the world's second largest pool of management accountants and wages lower than India. "The availability of a large pool of skilled finance and accounting professionals makes FAO one of the most logical niche competences to continue to build capacity," quoting Dinesh Saparamadu, chairman of Sri Lanka Association of Software and Services Association (SLASSCOM), LBO reported. "The key export markets for Sri Lankan FAO industry are USA, Europe and Asia Pacific regions."

Sri Lanka has been recognized as a service hub for financial services outsourcing globally for its niche competency, he said. Many global companies, including UK Accounting and Legal Services Center of WNS, Investment Research Center of Amba Research, UK Banking Center of HSBC, and Finance & Accounting Center of RR Donnelley, have set up their delivery centres in Sri Lanka.

SLASSCOM has published an industry report on the FAO sector in Sri Lanka, prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers and sponsored by Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. It provides information on Sri Lanka's accounting talent and statistics about the FAO industry, which will help to market the island.

"Colombo is comparatively cost competitive and has a lower upward wage pressure than many established global sourcing destinations, and the country's labour costs rank 15 - 20 percent lower than in India," the statement said.

"The attractiveness of the sector is also underscored by the availability of a sizable skilled workforce of finance and accounting professionals.

"Sri Lanka now has the world's second largest pool of CIMA trained students and members outside of the UK."

The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants is the world's largest professional body of management accountants. The pool of students and fully qualified accounting professionals (including technicians) in Sri Lanka is estimated at around 86,000 and 25,000.

Higher education in accountancy is offered by five main professional accountancy bodies, 15 state universities and numerous foreign affiliated private universities operating in the country.

"Sri Lanka offers a rapidly growing skilled workforce which is low cost, highly productive, English speaking and loyal," said the statement by SLASSCOM, a Sri Lankan IT and BPO industry outfit.

In 2009, global consulting firm, AT Kearney, ranked Sri Lanka at number 16 on their top 20 global outsourcing destinations list, while Global Services Magazine ranked Colombo amongst their top 20 emerging outsourcing cities in the world.

[www.priu.gov.lk](http://www.priu.gov.lk)

### Continued from Page 1

"We did not have a proper program to build the country and this led to youth upheavals in 1971, 1988 and terrorism which engulfed the nation for nearly 30 years," he added.

He said the entire country has been brought under a massive development drive. The President added that new ports, Super high ways and new power stations are being constructed in the country. President Rajapaksa added that the country has been in the path of progress since the victory of UPFA government led by him in 2005. "The people of this country started hearing news about the country's achievements in respect of all key sectors since the Government came into power in 2005", he added. He paid special gratitude to the Government of China and the officials who helped complete the project in time.

The President added that all developed countries in the world laid more focus on the development of the power and energy sector.

[www.dailynews.lk](http://www.dailynews.lk)

### Activities of Seva Vanitha Unit

The Seva Vanitha Unit of the Embassy as an overseas branch of the Seva Vanitha Association of the Ministry of External Affairs of Sri Lanka is involved in various fundraising events and activities within the Russian Federation. The aim of the Seva Vanitha Unit is to raise funds for a range of welfare and charitable projects of the Seva Vanitha Association of the Ministry of External Affairs of Sri Lanka.

In 2010, the Seva Vanitha Unit of the Embassy took part in the Asia Pacific Charity Bazaar held in June, organized by the Asia Pacific Region Diplomatic Women and Spouses Association of the Russian Federation and the Winter Bazaar held in November 2010, organized by the Diplomatic Womens' Association of the Russian Federation. The participation of the Seva Vanitha Unit in the various charity events in the Russian Federation was organized by Mrs. Premila Srikantha, former Minister Counsellor (Tea Promotion) of the Embassy under the supervision of the Chairperson of the Seva Vanitha Unit of the Embassy, Madam Uma Weeratunga. The other home based female staff of the Embassy also actively contributed in organizing the Seva Vanitha Unit activities.

Ceylon Tea and Sri Lankan handicrafts products, the main items sold by the Seva Vanitha Unit at these events received high demand from the participants and the visitors to the events.

An amount of Rubles 92,538/= (Sri Lankan Rupees 341,093.04/=) raised by the Seva Vanitha Unit of the Embassy at the fundraising events in 2010, was transferred to the Ministry of External Affairs on 19.11.2010 and 28.12.2010 respectively.

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## Third World War to begin during Winter Games in 2014



**On March 24, well-known Russian astrologists, shamans and parapsychologists gathered to discuss forecasts for near and distant future.**

"The phenomenon that they call the world financial crisis, and which, as they believe, is now ending, was not the financial crisis per se. It was just an omen of the imminent crisis. The real financial crisis is going to take place in the future," astrologist Aleksei Kolov said in the beginning of the meeting.

The most impressive astrological forecast was made by Pavel Globa: "Many attack me now claiming that I was promising Russia a quiet year. What kind of quiet year is it if earthquakes rattle Japan. But Japan is not Russia. There will be wars in the world this year, but everything will be fine in our country, except for the summer. The summer is going to be tough: there will be three eclipses in a row in June-July. This year, there will be six eclipses in total. We had such a catastrophic year as this one 20 years ago, when the Soviet Union collapsed," the astrologist said.

Eclipses will cause a lot of trouble this year, Globa warned. By the moment of the latest one, which is going to take place on December 10, armed conflicts will occur on the Balkans. Terrorists will plant a bomb at the Nobel Prize award ceremony.

According to Globa, this year can be compared to 1939 - the year preceding WWII, from the point of view of astrological data.

The participants of the meeting also unveiled the date for the beginning of Third World War. The new war is said to begin in March of 2014, during the Olympic Games in Sochi. It is also possible that the war may start five days after the Games end. Globa did not say in which country exactly the war would begin. He only said that the African revolutions would slowly be moving towards Russia. Massive protests will eventually spark in Central Asia, the astrologist said. According to Globa, such events are happening because of the Black Moon. NATO attacked Libya the day when the Black Moon allied itself with

the sun. When the Black Moon allied itself with Uranus, the Japanese earthquake occurred.

In the nearest future, one shall expect revolutions in Syria and Yemen. The Yemeni leader will be toppled only in three years, though. Algeria will be the luckiest country among them all: the riots there will not last long.

"I studied the horoscopes of the leaders of all countries of the region. The Algerian president is the only leader who has no charisma at all. By the way, his birthday is the same day with Gorbachev - March 2nd, 1931. He will leave peacefully. They'll even give him a yacht and a villa. There will be no revolution in Algeria. As for Gaddafi's fate, the problem is that no one knows his birth date - it's either 1937 or 1940 or 1942. If he was born on June 7 indeed, he will die on his birthday - there is an eclipse just near that date. But I don't believe that he is a Gemini. He acts like an Aquarius. Newspapers have recently written that he is a son of a French pilot, they even published a photo of the pilot. I saw the photo - they both look the same indeed," Pavel Globa said.

Parapsychologist Larisa Vais did not predict anything positive either. "It's going to be a long spring, the summer will be hot, six-fingered children and beasts will be born. I saw it inside of me," she said.

The parapsychologists also saw (inside of her as well, apparently) that the "supreme commander-in-chief" is already looking for his successor. The successor's name will start with a letter 'K'. Larisa Vais said that such visions had never tricked her before. Back in 1996, Larisa saw a Ukrainian woman with a braid. The parapsychologist even mentioned that in one of her interviews to a well-known Russian journalist during those years. Now Larisa Vais can see a woman as well. This woman, Vais said, would be ruling Russia from behind the back of her husband, the president.

Speaking about global problems, Larisa Vais said that Japan would suffer from other mammoth earthquakes. "A lot of people will die on the planet this year," she said. Andrei Dondukov, a shaman from Tuva Republic, said that the year 2009 marked the beginning of the era of Yamaraj, the god of death. "Everyone will be held accountable for all they did. Death will be especially close on November 5," shaman said. Dondukov confirmed Vais's predictions. According to him, men lost their true power a long time ago. "We are living in the era of pseudo-patriarchate. This era will soon end and matriarchate will return," he said.

Russia will survive this change of trend easily. Dmitry Medvedev will remain the nation's ruler. Medvedev is the man, whom Russian Buddhists recognized as the incarnation of female deity - White Tara. When asked about Putin's role, Dondukov said that Putin is a fighter. "Putin is a military man, and Medvedev does yoga. There are two types of men in general. One of them is the horizontal type - this is where military men refer to. There's also the vertical type of men - they aim for spiritual growth. Medvedev is a true czar, the Lord's  
[www.pravda.ru](http://www.pravda.ru)

## Ferry service to enhance Lanka's tourism goals



Ports and Highways Ministry Secretary Sujatha Cooray and Indian High Commissioner Ashok K. Kantha sign the MOU in the presence of President Mahinda Rajapaksa

Though Sri Lanka is being served by over 60 airlines it seriously lacks an international passenger service.

The passenger service Sri Lanka can boast of despite being an island nation that depends heavily on tourism is the Jetliner by the Sri Lanka Navy and a mini ferry service from Trincomalee to Mannar.

However over 30 years down the line Sri Lanka was operating a ferry service between Talaimannar and Rameshwaran. When this service was in operation it was fed by a night mail train service and both these services were used by locals, Indians as well as foreigners.

The service was also used by entrepreneurs to ferry goods across and coconut oil, soap, pepper and cinnamon were some of the commodities that were traded from Sri Lanka. In India, wrist watches, sarees, sarongs and banians were priority items that came Sri Lanka's way.

Low budget tourists who at the time were labelled as 'Hippies' too heavily depended on this service mainly to travel to Hikkaduwa.

It is said that tourism in Sri Lanka started from Hikkaduwa and the ferry service played a major part towards this endeavour. LTTE terrorism put a halt to this ferry service resulting in the air fares that were hovering round the Rs. 5,000 region to then Madras shooting past the Rs. 12,500 mark.

Today Indian tourists top the arrivals for Sri Lanka and this service which is set to take off in the first week of April will give another boost to tourism.

The resumption of the ferry service was being discussed by successive governments in the past decade.

However, it only became a reality at the last SAARC Summit where this matter was once again discussed by President Mahinda Rajapaksa and Indian Premier Manmohan Singh.

Deputy Minister of Ports, Rohitha Abeygunawardane said that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Sri Lanka and India for passenger transport by sea on January 7 at Temple Trees which was the key for this service. The MOU will first pave the way for a ferry service between Colombo and Tuticorin and subsequently between Talaimannar and Rameshwaram.

The service was to commence last week but had to be rescheduled as the ships that were to sail to Sri Lanka from India had to be diverted to Libya to ferry Indians and Sri Lankans who were trapped in the country.

The first ferry, a vessel with a capacity of 500 passengers run by a private Indian operator, is scheduled to sail from India in April. Thereafter there would be three ships per week which would soon be extended to a daily schedule.

The Minister said that Sri Lanka will operate three ships while India will operate four per week. The island's ferries will be operated by State-owned Ceylon Shipping Corporation which is in talks with several parties on chartering vessels.

"We're looking to hire a ferry with a capacity of 500-600 passengers, including cabins. We are also thinking of operating this service at night so that passengers can sleep during their journey."

Colombo and Tuticorin are about 280 miles away and the duration of the journey will be about 10 to 12 hours.

The fare of each journey is expected to be around Rs. 8,000 and each ship could carry around 400 passengers. Over 10,000 are expected to use this service weekly.

### **Colombo Port renovation**

The Colombo Port was geared to accommodate passengers as well as cruise ships. However this service was hardly used in the past three decades and was in a dilapidated state.

"In view of the ferry service we have now begun renovation of the Colombo Port with even immigrations, baggage scanning and Customs counters being set up," the Minister said. He said that the old passenger building was completely redone in view of this service.

A new charter bus service would be launched from the passenger terminal so that the Colombo Port security would not be jeopardised, he said. "New security measures too would be in place."

The passengers would be loaded from a point from D.R. Wijewardene Mawatha, Colombo and then taken to the Colombo Port.

"When this service gets popular we will also introduce modern ships so that it could take more passengers and also their personal vehicles so that they could travel inland in their own vehicles."

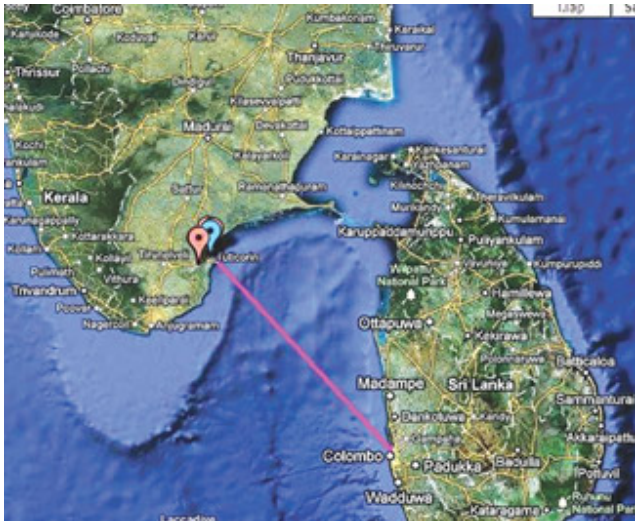
This is very common in European countries. Reports from India indicate that they are ready for this passenger service and a large warehouse has been converted into a passenger terminal. Tuticorin Port is one of the 12 major ports in India. It was declared to be a major port on July 11, 1974.

It is the second-largest port in Tamil Nadu and the fourth-largest container terminal in India after Kochi International Container Transshipment Terminal, Jawaharlal Nehru Port

(Mumbai) and Chennai Port. The Tuticorin Port is an artificial port. This is the third international port in Tamil Nadu and its second all-weather port.

All Tuticorin Port's traffic handling has crossed 10 million tons from April 1 to September 13, 2008, registering a growth rate of 12.08 per cent, surpassing the corresponding previous year's handling of 8.96 million tons. It has services to USA, China, Europe, Sri Lanka and Mediterranean countries.

The service will add more revenue to the port with other logistic services such as hotels, restaurants, fruit and vegetable transport too expected to receive a boost.



#### Air fares to come down

One of the biggest advantages of the service is the enhancement of 100 kilogram cargo that would be offered to the passengers. "This would be a major attraction," a local travel agent said.

He said that most of the passengers that ply the two routes are going for shopping and they would be happy to take advantage of the 100 kg 'bonus.'

Since the service is cheaper than the airfare there would also be a new 'budget' market' from both countries who would use this service.

Pilgrims too would use this service as it would be cheaper.

"Although the flight time between Sri Lanka and South India is less than an hour, security concerns that require passengers to arrive three hours ahead of their flights and the time taken to travel between airports and city centres also need to be considered," he said. He also said that the Colombo, Chennai market is price-sensitive and this too would attract more passengers to the ferry service.

However airlines are confident that the ferry service would not eat into their market. "This is a different low cost market who do not take the flight," an airline official said.

#### Main attraction

In addition the main attraction for the India Chennai sector is shopping and there are no big shopping opportunities in Tuticorin. Passengers who take the ferry have to spend 10 hours in the ship and then travel another 11 hours in the train to reach Chennai. "This may not be practical though there is a 100 kg baggage allowance," she added. She said that from the

point of view of tourism it would definitely help increase numbers for both countries.

The Indian Embassy is anticipating a huge growth of passengers and has introduced an on-line visa application system and the service will most importantly create a better understanding between the two countries.

#### China Port

Sri Lanka is scheduled to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with one of the busiest ports in the world, Ningbo of China.

Deputy Minister of Ports and Highway Rohitha Abeygunawardane said that one of the priorities of this agreement would be to obtain technological knowhow for Sri Lanka and also to share the success stories of the Chinese ports. In addition, Ningbo Port would help secure additional businesses to Sri Lanka. The Ningbo Port some times cannot meet the demand and they would divert some of the ships to both Colombo and Hambantota for logistics support, the Minister said. This would bring in additional revenue to the country. With these developments in the Port sector with the Hambantota Sri Lanka is poised for growth in both cargo and passenger transport.

Shirajiv Sirimane  
www.sundayobserver.lk

## Indian New Year Celebration 2011




**Venue:** concert hall of Institute Gubkina.  
**Date:** 10th April 2011.

**Leninsky Prospect, 65/4**  
**Starting time:** 15:00  
**Concert at:** 17:00


All Moscow Malayalee Association (AMMA) and Hindustani Samaj cordially invite your good self with family to kindly be present at the auspicious occasion of "Indian New Year 2011." on 10th April, at concert hall of Institute Gubkina.

CONCERT: Performance by famous classical dancer and actress Miss. Lekshmi Gopalaswami & famous classical dancer and actor Mr. Vineeth Nambiyar in accompaniment of famous play back singer Mr. Anand Narayanan. The winners of dance competition held on 2-3 April will also participate in the concert.





Lakshmi Gopalaswami




Vineeth



Anand

Foyer • **Food mela** (Indian culinary items).  
• **Indian bazaar**- Exhibition & sales.

\*Entrance ticket rate- **350 rub.** • Day of Concert the entrance ticket rate will be **500 rub.**

**Organizers:**  

Please contact at email - indian.newyear@yandex.ru

For the additional information, to book the place on foyer, to book and purchase the tickets to collaborate with us

**Contact - 8-963-718-71-69/**  
**232-35-51 / 232-22-68/ 510-26-07/**  
**8-963-718-71-69/ 8-916-304-46-67**

## Lanka's first sea plane port in Ja-Ela



In a bid to meet the future demand for domestic travel from locals and foreigners, Sri Lanka is building the country's first sea plane airport at Dadugam Oya Ja-Ela.

SriLankan airlines was planning to use a section of the Negombo Lagoon for this project, but decided against it as fishermen in the area pointed out that it may not be conducive to them. The new float-plane landing strip in Ja-Ela would also have a mini passenger terminal and also offer hangar facilities for aircraft.

"We are planning to raise the standard of the mini sea plane airstrip to international level and even allowing private operators to land here. We also expect sea planes from other countries like the Maldives to land here," the Minister of Aviation, Priyankara Jayaratne, said. He said that the proposed Colombo-Katunayake highway too would be linked to the float-plane airport. "This would enable a passenger from the Colombo international airport to get to the sea plane port in less than five minutes."

The Minister said that the future of this airport would also see immigration and custom offices being set up. "President Mahinda Rajapaksa has set a target of 2.5 million tourists visiting the country by 2015 and we are gearing to meet this target more international entry points to the country are needed to achieve this target."

Sri Lanka has entry points at Colombo airport and the harbour, and the future includes the Ja-Ela, Galle Harbour and Hambantota airport and the harbour. CEO SriLankan airlines, Manoj Gunawardane said that the construction of the seaport has already begun and it is expected to be ready early June this year. This is a coordinated effort made by the Ministry of Airport and Aviation and the Divisional Secretariat. "We will use this to land and for take off of SriLankan airlines float planes as well," he said. Gunawardane said that they are also looking at permitting sea planes to land in the Beira Lake. "We are currently working with the Defence Ministry in this regard."

Currently Sri Lankan float planes land at 10 points and our aim is to increase this to 20 by the end of this year. He said that the launch of Mihin Lanka has made international travel within the

reach of everybody and similarly sea plane travel will be an economical mode of travel for locals as well.

"We believe this would strengthen the country's tourism industry attracting up market clientele."

The CEO said that they are looking at obtaining one more sea spot for operations in two months and were looking at another 15 seater plane. "We will also be recruiting more pilots and stewardesses, to serve on these flights." Asked if the airline had plans to operate domestic flights he answered in the negative.

Commenting on the new airport being built at Mattala he said that it was one of the best things that happened to the local aviation sector. "We are currently preparing a synergy for the Mattala airport," he said. He said that the airport would also focus on cargo operations and they will look into pilot training and other logistics. Commenting on the flights to Japan he said that President Mahinda Rajapaksa is keen to provide an uninterrupted service and the airline has not lowered its frequency. Out-bound traffic from Japan is currently on hold. "This is common when a country faces problems and it is only a temporary setback."

Air Taxis will give travellers the option of turning a 6-hour road trip into a 40-minute flight and with the private sector too showing an interest, operational the cost would come down, enabling everyone to take a way flight from a long distance destination such as Nuwara Eliya to another spot.

by Shirajiv Sirimane [www.sundayobserver.lk](http://www.sundayobserver.lk)



Mr. S.M. Ameer Hamza of No.35, Meeraniya Street, Colombo-12, Sri Lanka has informed this Embassy that his son, **Mr. Ameer Hamza Mohamed Zulfikar Ali**, date of birth - 11.01.1977, who arrived in Russia in 1996 for studies has still not returned to Sri Lanka.

Mr. Ameer Hamza has lost contact with his son and every effort taken to contact him has failed. According to Mr. Ameer Hamza, his son is still living in Russia.

Mr. Ameer Hamza has requested the assistance of the Embassy to find out the whereabouts of his son. The Embassy seeks the assistance of the public regarding the present contact details of Mr. A.H.M. Zulfikar Ali.

Please send your articles & comments to;  
[moscowpuwath@srilankaembassy.org](mailto:moscowpuwath@srilankaembassy.org)

Fax: +7 495 688 17 57

**Embassy of the Democratic Socialist Republic of  
Sri Lanka in Russian Federation  
Shepkina Street , 24 129090 Moscow,Russia.**