

Mihin Lanka flies to Dubai...
One way
RS. 14,000/=
Return
Rs 30,450/=
For more information... 2002255
MIHIN LANKA
Yours to fly

The Island

Vol. 29 No. 07 Monday 23rd November, 2009, 28 Pages Rs. 20 Registered in Sri Lanka as a Newspaper - Late City Edition

Mihin Lanka flies to Trichy...
One way
RS. 8,200/=
Return
Rs. 13,850/=
For more information... 2002255
MIHIN LANKA
Yours to fly

Page 7 Education for children affected by conflict

Page 10 Maldivian master stroke ahead of Copenhagen climate change conference

Page 11 Challenges for the New Government in Afghanistan

Lanka-Afghan refugees clash on Christmas Island

Moragoda wins UPFA recognition as colleagues turn Blue
See page 3

Now rubber band found in bottle of cloxacillin

by Percy Kuruneru
Our Apura corr

Hot on the heels of a government ban on several Indian suppliers of pharmaceutical products for supplying low quality drugs, a rubber band had been found in a bottle of cloxacillin meant for a patient ward at the Anuradhapura Teaching Hospital, a hospital spokesman told *The Island*.

T. B. Wijekoon, director of the hospital said that the Health Ministry had been informed of this.

The Health Ministry is under heavy fire over the import of low quality drugs, particularly from India.

Health Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva has vowed to rectify shortcomings and take all possible measures to ensure the supply of good quality medicine to government hospitals.

Vanni Gold handed over to banks

by Dinasea Ratugamage



Basil

Senior Presidential Advisor Basil Rajapaksa, MP on Saturday (Nov 21) handed over gold jewellery worth Rs. 680 million which had been recovered by the security forces during operations in the Vanni east, to local managers of the state-owned banks at the Vanni Security Forces headquarters in the presence of Vanni SF Commander Major General Kamal Gunaratne.

SB won't leave UNP

by Norman Palihawadana

UNP National Organiser S. B. Dissanayake yesterday said that he would not quit the party ahead of forthcoming presidential and parliamentary polls.

The former SLFP MP told *The Island* that he would never switch sides for personal gain. He accused political opponents of spreading rumours in a bid to destroy his political career.

He rejected claims that he would return to the SLFP as he opposed on-going efforts to nominate former Army Chief Sarath Fonseka as the common candidate at the forthcoming presidential election.

● Conditions for endorsing his presidential candidature

Fonseka willing to negotiate with Mano

by Norman Palihawadana

Former Army Chief General Sarath Fonseka yesterday said that he was ready to negotiate with Opposition political parties regarding any conditions for nominating him as the common presidential candidate.

Fonseka yesterday told *The Island* that there was nothing wrong in discussing conditions though some may find fault with such a strategy. Fonseka said that in keeping with his policy, he could discuss with Western People's Front leader Mano Ganesan, MP his conditions to facilitate an agreement.

Meanwhile, Lalith Weeratunga, Secretary to President Mahinda Rajapaksa told *The Island* that the President had given the retired General time to stay at the General's House at Buller's Road and there was absolutely no truth in accusations that there was a move to 'throw Gen. Fonseka and his wife out on to the streets'.



Sarath Fonseka

Continued on page 2

Army waging a different war



The National Authority on Tobacco and Alcohol has involved the Sri Lanka Army in a campaign to discourage smoking. A group of soldiers is pictured marching in Polonnaruwa in support of the campaign. This was followed by a ceremony held at the office of the Regional Director of Health Services, Polonnaruwa, to felicitate traders who had stopped selling cigarettes. The main attraction of the march was a poster with a bent cigarette illustrating a slogan that smoking caused impotence.

German NGO joins battle against Executive Presidency

The Friedrich Naumann Stiftung will support the Opposition's call for abolition of the executive presidency. The German NGO recently joined hands with Institute for Democracy and Leadership to campaign against the executive presidency.

According to organisers SLMC leader Rauff Hakeem will deliver the key note address at an open forum at the Booker Recreation Centre on December 3. Organised as part of the Lalith Athulathmudali commemoration programme, the forum will feature TNA leader R. Sambanthan, MP, SLFP (M) Mangala Samaraweera, MP, JVP MP Vijitha Herath and UNP MP Ravi Karunanayake. UNP Western Provincial Councillor attorney-at-law Shiral Lakthilake will be the moderator.

INGOs advise ministers, MPs on presidential, parliamentary polls

by Shamindra Ferdinando

With President Mahinda Rajapaksa deciding to call an early presidential election ahead of parliamentary polls, a section of the 'international community' is pushing for an unprecedented agreement among Tamil speaking politi-

effort to explore ways and means of turning politicians, now with the UPFA against the President.

Sources said that on the final day (Saturday Nov 21), the focus was on the presidential and parliamentary polls scheduled for early next year. Sources said that the organis-

involved in the programme. The Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs had hosted the Sri Lankan participants who had been subsequently addressed by Peter Bowling who had been the Executive Secretary of the International Working Group on Sri Lanka (IWG).

Craig Collins (Coordinator of the Global Initiative on Conflict Prevention through Quiet Diplomacy-ICPQD), Sally Holt also of the ICPQD, Judith Large (Richardson Institute for Conflict and Peace Studies, Lancaster University), Zdenka Machnyikova (ICPQD), Rajadurai Manoharan (one of the founding members of the Tamil Information and Research Unit of the Tamil Information Centre and a TULF candidate at the 1989 parliamentary polls), John Packer (advisor to ICPQD) and Vairamuttu Varadakumar (also of the Tamil Information Centre).



Sri Lankan participants at the three-day seminar in Switzerland.

cians, both in and out of Parliament to undermine the incumbent President's campaign.

Government sources told *The Island* that a three-day seminar recently concluded in Switzerland was nothing but an

effort to explore ways and means of turning politicians, now with the UPFA against the President.

Sources said that the government was concerned about this development, particularly as Switzerland, too, had been

Continued on page 2

How Lanka capitalised on peace time US-funded initiative to clear mines

by Shamindra Ferdinando

A US funded project launched in the aftermath of the Norway-arranged CFA in February 2003 to train Sri Lanka Army in humanitarian de-mining has been one of the key reasons for Sri Lanka's success in resettling the war displaced in areas once controlled by the LTTE.

Clearing an area of mines as well as unexploded explosive ordnance (UXOs) is prerequisite to resettlement of civilians in the North and East.

The SLA launched de-mining operations in the Jaffna peninsula in mid 2002 with limited resources, knowledge and equipment,



Some of the mine clearing machines recently brought to Sri Lanka.

on a directive given by the then Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.

The then government had been in a hurry to resettle civilians, in keeping with the CFA though it lacked the required expertise to launch an accelerated programme to clear mines before the US stepped in August 2003.

An army spokesman told *The Island* that the US State Department had provided both training and equipment through RONCO, a specialist private firm. He said that RONCO had trained 664 officers and men before completing its assignment in May 2007.

Continued on page 2

Australia, struggling to cope with a fresh influx of bogus Sri Lanka refugees over the weekend, battled to control bloody clashes between Sri Lankan and Afghan asylum seekers involving about 150 persons. According to agency reports, about 37 persons and several Australian personnel who tried to prevent clashes were injured.

Three asylum seekers were flown to hospital in Perth, Australia with serious injuries.

They were among 37 asylum-seekers who needed medical treatment, including 10 who were sent to the island's hospital.

This is not the first time tension between Sri Lankans and Afghans have emerged at detention centres.

At Christmas Island, Afghans form an overwhelming majority of the asylum-seekers who have been granted visas this year.

UN Chief hails release of IDPs

New York, Nov 22 : UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Saturday welcomed the Sri Lankan government's decision to allow greater freedom of movement to people sheltering in makeshift camps in the north of the country.

There were more than 270,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) staying in closed camps in May after a final push by Government forces ended the decades-long civil war with separatist Tamil rebels.

In a message praising the release of over half of the IDPs from the camps since the end of military operations against the LTTE, Ban encouraged Sri Lankan authorities to prioritize the return home of the remaining people.

He also urged the government to continue working with the United Nations and its humanitarian partners to improve assistance programmes which support the return of IDPs and to ensure that the best possible services are provided to those who go home.



Ban Ki-moon

HINI threat: CP schools closed for a week

by Cyril Wimalasurendre

KANDY - The temporary closure of schools of the Central Province for fear of spread of swine fever Influenza HINI will be effective till Friday (27) from Monday (23) today. Any extension of the closure of schools will be announced following

Continued on page 2

Undergrad arrested for assaulting fresher

by Cyril Wimalasurendre

KANDY - A senior undergraduate was arrested by the Peradeniya police for allegedly assaulting a fresher.

The victim had complained that he was assaulted by the suspect at the university canteen.

The suspect, a third year Arts Faculty student, was remanded till November 26 by the Kandy Chief Magistrate Sumudu Premachandra.

The Island www.island.lk
THE LEADER IN INTERNET SERVICES
LankaCom
Subsidiary of Singapore Telecom
Phone: 011-2437545 | Web: www.lankacom.net