



Insight

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COP15



The United Nations climate change conference in Copenhagen (COP 15) will be a turning point in the fight to prevent climate disaster. The science demands it, the economics support it, future generations require it. In early December, negotiators, ministers and world leaders will assemble in the Danish capital to give the people of all nations a strong answer to this common, global threat of climate change.

At Copenhagen, governments will endeavor to reach agreement on all the essential elements of a comprehensive, fair and effective deal on climate change, that both ensures long-term commitments and launches immediate action. We have the opportunity now to shape our common future and that of generations to come, for the better.

Climate change is a terrible threat, but beating climate change is a historic opportunity to turn humanity onto a path of sustainable growth for everyone. The solutions to climate change will vitalize economies, stabilize environments, and build secure, fairer, more innovative societies. Not only must we act, it makes no sense not to act.

In September, at the UN climate change summit in New York, over 100 continued on p2

NEW SL AMBASSADOR ARRIVES



Sri Lankan Ambassador, Afel Jawad being garlanded by Mr Sabarullah Khan and received by members of the community at the King Khaled International Airport in Riyadh

The new Sri Lankan Ambassador to the Kingdom said that his mission in Riyadh would serve as a beacon to all Sri Lankans in the Kingdom looking after their interests in Saudi Arabia and promote bilateral relations between the island and the Kingdom.

Ambassador Ahmed Afel Jawad, who arrived in the Saudi capital on Monday, Dec 7, 2009 stated that his mission is to work for the welfare of the 500,000 Sri Lankan workers in the Kingdom and strengthen the two-way relations between the two countries in trade, political and cultural fields.

To serve his countrymen in the Kingdom, Jawad said that he will coordinate his activities with the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) and other related agencies in the Kingdom. In the field of trade between the two countries, he observed that 75 percent of the island's exports to the Kingdom remain tea and the balance include some 15 products from Sri Lanka. He said that there are plenty of other non-traditional exports that could find easy access to the Kingdom's market. He stressed that he would also make all efforts to encourage foreign direct investments from the Kingdom since the island could offer a wide range of opportunities for Saudi investors coming to Sri Lanka. "Sri Lanka is the most attractive investment zone in Asia." ctd on p4



MICROCREDIT

Microcredit is the extension of small loans to entrepreneurs too poor to qualify for traditional bank loans. It has proven an effective and popular measure in the ongoing struggle against poverty, enabling those without access to lending institutions to borrow at bank rates, and start small business.

The key implication of microcredit is in its name itself: 'micro'. A number of issues come to mind when 'micro' is considered: The small size of the loans made, small size of savings made, the smaller frequency of loans, shorter repayment periods and amounts, the micro/local level of activities, the community-based needs of microcredit etc. Hence microcredit is not **the** solution, but is a menu of options and enablement, that has to be put together, a la carte, based on local conditions and needs.

With the current explosion of interest on microcredit issues, several developmental objectives have come to be associated with the it, besides that of only "credit". Of particular importance is savings - as an end in itself, and as a guarantee for loans. Microcredit has been used as an 'inducer' in many other community development activities, used as an entry point in a community organizing program and as an ingredient in larger education/training exercises.



New Ambassador

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"I am happy to note that there is a 101 percent increase among the Saudi tourists to Sri Lanka with the end of the ethnic conflict on May 19," he noted, adding that the hill resorts have become popular destinations among the Saudis visiting the island.

The ambassador inaugurated the Charity Bazaar organized by the Sri Lankan Expatriates Society in Riyadh on Thursday, Dec 10. The proceeds of the fair will be diverted to the Free Medical Clinic run by the society in Riyadh.

Prior to his posting to the Kingdom, Mr Jawad was the Director General Economic Affairs at the Foreign Ministry in Colombo. He joined the Foreign Service in 1988 as deputy chief of Protocol and subsequently served in countries such as Stockholm, Paris and Beijing as Third Secretary, First Secretary and Minister, respectively.

In 2004, he became the island's Ambassador in Oslo and in 2007, he was appointed the Director General of Economic Affairs at the Foreign Ministry.

During his career, he had participated in the Presidential delegation to Rome and China. He also carried the country's flag as special envoy of the foreign minister to countries such as Denmark, Estonia, Finland and Latvia.

An Old boy of D S Senanayake College Colombo, Mr Jawad has excelled in his curricular and extra-curricular activities before he graduated at the University of Sri Lanka.

BOI

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The BOI companies today employ over 400,000 workers, They account for nearly 70% of Sri Lankan exports and 80% of the country's industrial exports. The BOI is therefore a significant agent of change and its quarter century existence has radically transformed Sri Lanka both economically and socially, placing the country in a position where it can compete in an increasingly globalized world.

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world leaders stood up and committed to seal a successful Copenhagen climate deal. The world now expects its leaders and the negotiations to deliver the ambitious outcome needed to turn the tide.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Danish government for its generous invitation to host this fifteenth United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen and the enormous commitment and work it has shown to make it a success. The time for climate action is now, at Copenhagen.

Yvo de Boer
UNFCCC Executive Secretary

The KYOTO PROTOCOL

The Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The major feature of the Kyoto Protocol is that it sets binding targets for 37 industrialized countries and the European community for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These amount to an average of five per cent against 1990 levels over the five-year period 2008-2012.

The major distinction between the Protocol and the Convention is that while the Convention encouraged industrialised countries to stabilize GHG emissions, the Protocol commits them to do so.

Recognizing that developed countries are principally responsible for the current high levels of GHG emissions in the atmosphere as a result of more than 150 years of industrial activity, the Protocol places a heavier burden on developed nations under the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities."

**FOR A BETTER WORLD
FOR US, TOMORROW!**

FIXED DAY CRUISE LINER IN SRI LANKA



Winds of peace have lured the world's fifth largest cruise operator to Sri Lanka, heralding the country's first ever fixed day cruise service with the prospect of boosting tourist arrivals.

Operated by Louis Cruise Lines of Cyprus, the MV Aquamarine is a luxury cruise liner having 405 cabins and can carry 1,200 passengers. The liner made her first call on Monday Dec 7, 2009 on a fixed day cruise every Monday between Cochin and Male. Around 200 travel agents and media personnel were on board the maiden call.

"We hope to bring in about 20,000 to 30,000 Indian travelers to Sri Lanka within a short span of five months", Marketing Director of Louis Cruise India, Onil Khosha stated.

For cruise tourists the cost is US\$100 per passenger per night which includes accommodation, transportation, meals, some beverages and all onboard entertainment. The newly appointed Tourism Minister, Achala Jagoda, hailed the service and stated that the weekly service will promote Colombo as a popular cruise destination.



The liner has a truly laid back ambience and a host of onboard comforts that make passengers soon feel very much at home. This well appointed ship manages to hit just the right balance between action and relaxation, sophistication and informality. The facilities include four bars, an outdoor swimming pool, one restaurant, Gym, Beauty Salon, Theatre, Live Music, Gaming Parlor and Kids Club.

The liner which was originally built for The Royal Caribbean Cruise Line was launched in April 2005 and has a crew of 432 personnel on board who provide an excellent level of service. The ship is 194 meters long, 24 meters wide and has a depth of 6.7 meters and can cruise at a maximum speed of 21 knots.

**WISHING ALL OUR READERS A VERY
HAPPY & PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR 2010**

DIGNITY FOR ALL



Sri Lanka and the whole world marked Human Rights Day on December 10. It commemorates the day, in 1948, when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

2009 marked the 61st anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

When the General Assembly adopted the Declaration, with 48 states in favour and eight abstentions, it was proclaimed as a "common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations", towards which individuals and societies should "strive by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance".

Human Rights is also referred to as fundamental rights? Among the most well-known are freedom of speech or expression, freedom of movement, the right to information, freedom of worship, freedom from poverty and hunger, access to health and education and the right to equality.

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, gender, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status.

As the United Nations puts it, "We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all inter-related, inter-dependent and indivisible."

Universal human rights are often expressed and guaranteed by law, in the forms of treaties, customary international law, general principles and other sources of international law.

BADULLA



Dunhinda Falls

Badulla is located on the southeast of Kandy, almost encircled by the Badulu Oya River, about 680 metres (2200 ft) above sea level and is surrounded by tea plantations. The town is overshadowed by the Namunukula range of mountains (highest peak 2,016 metres above sea level). It was the base of Sinhalese princes who ruled the area under the king in Kandy before it became part of the British Empire.

Later, it became the administrative hub of the British rulers. The city was the end point of upcountry railway line built by the British in order to take plantation products to Colombo.

Badulla is about 230 km away from Colombo towards the eastern slopes of central hills of Sri Lanka. There are multiple routes to Badulla from Colombo, Kandy and Galle.

From Colombo, one can travel via Ratnapura, Balangoda, Haputale, Bandarawela and HaliEla along A4 and A16 to Badulla which may take about 5-6 hours.

From Kandy there are two routes. Either via "Victoria-Randenigala Raja Mawatha" or via Nuwara Eliya (route A5). From Galle, the best route is via Marata, Hambantota, Wellawaya, Ella, Demodara and HaliEla (route A2).

All routes are scenic and one can get splendid views of geography changes while travelling. Badulla and surroundings are highly recommended for eco-tourists as Horton Plains National Park and the Knuckle mountains are few hours away.

The main heritage sites in and around Badulla are ancient Buddhist temples and waterfalls that are of great interest to tourists and visitors.

INVESTMENT IN SRI LANKA



The Board of Investment of Sri Lanka (BOI) completes 31 years of existence in 2009. In this time, it has acted as an engine of growth creating a considerable impact on the country's economic development.

The organization had its origins in the Greater Colombo Economic Commission, which was established in 1978 to generate development in the outskirts of Colombo. Fourteen years later, in 1992, the Commission was reconstituted as the Board of Investment of Sri Lanka (BOI) with its mandate encompassing the entire island.

The BOI is structured to function as a central facilitation point for investors. It operates as an utmost statutory body. The Board of Directors drawn from the Private and Public sector and its several departments are geared to facilitating the investment process.

A high powered Cabinet Sub Committee inter-ministerial leadership providing a form for investor assistance has been set up to strengthen the BOI, clear all bottlenecks and ensure speedy clearance of investment approvals so that investors can implement projects in a hassle free atmosphere.

Investment climate monitoring has also being implemented by the BOI to ensure the nation's competency profile.

Sri Lanka's advantages as a destination for investment is highlighted and many of the questions posed by investors from overseas on how to set up businesses in Sri Lanka, are addressed effectively.

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