



Insight



A Clarion Call



Let us have hope
for the tomorrow,
and be free
from all sorrow.
Working day & night,
and doing only what's right!
Ensuring Peace and Prosperity
across our Motherland.

A single Nation
united as one,
61 years since,
Independence was won.
The duty we owe
is to salvage our land,
in spite of strife,
and mischievous hands.

A mighty loud roar,
to the forces of good;
who fight evil and pain
and deliver us again..
Conflicts overcome,
tranquility will be won;
with Unity and Love,
A Blessing from Above.

"United, we stand,
Divided, we fall!"
A struggle against violence
and not against love.
May the land flourish
and may God give us a Hand,
Let Sri Lanka live
Like no other Land!

Lankan Expats Celebrate National Day In Saudi Arabia



Sri Lankans in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia look forward to permanent peace back home for them to work at ease in Saudi Arabia, said Abdul Ageed Mohamed Marleen, Sri Lankan Ambassador when he was delivering his opening remarks at the 61st Independence Day celebrations held in Riyadh on Feb 4, 2009.

"Sri Lankan expatriates in the Kingdom want their families to live peacefully in Sri Lanka. President Mahinda Rajapaksa has assured that he would restore permanent peace so that all the ethnic groups in the island could lead a normal life without any fear from terror," the envoy said, adding that violence in any form should be condemned at all costs.

He pointed out that the Sri Lankans in the Kingdom have set an example to be emulated by others in their motherland for living in unity and amity.

The Ambassador, with his wife Fathima, hosted a breakfast morning to all Sri Lankans in Riyadh following the ceremonial flag hoisting ceremony. He unfurled the national flag amidst the beat of drums (Magul Bera) at the Embassy premises. The community members then joined the choir of the Sri Lankan International School in Riyadh to sing the National Anthem. This was followed by the recital of Jayamangala Gatha and observance of two-minute silence by the audience in memory of the fallen heroes back home. "This was done as a mark of respect to all those who had laid their lives for the sake of the nation towards maintaining peace," Ambassador Marleen said.

The traditional oil lamp was lit by the Ambassador and prominent community members to mark the day. Sabarullah Khan, First Secretary, Sarath Kumara Minister, and Labor Counselor, W. Ranawake, read out the messages of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayaka and Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama, respectively, during the morning function. Religious dignitaries from all faiths also prayed for the progress and prosperity of the nation. ctd on p3



Business Opportunities

Tea
Mr. Tyeab Akbarally, Director
Akbar Brothers Ltd
No.334, T.B. Jayah Mawatha, Colombo 10
Tel: +94 11 2697151
Fax: +94 11 2699029
Email: akbar@akbar.com
Web: <http://www.akbar.com>

Soft Toys, Toy hand bag, Infants Toys
Mr. M. D. S. Goonatilleke
DSL Lanka (Pvt) Ltd
No.221, Panchikawatta Rd, Colombo 10
Tel: +94 11 4608400, 2446895,
Fax: +94 11 2541128 Ms. Emy Neumaier -
Consultant: douglas@dslk.com dsl@stt.lk

Jam, Marmalades & Chutneys
Ms. Emy Neumaier, Consultant
Kern & Hundt (Pvt) Ltd
No.24, Palm House, St. Peter's Road,
Moratuwa, Sri Lanka
Tel: +94 11 4992054
Fax: +94 11 2641366
Email: emy-efk@eureka.lk

Cut Foliage
Mr. Dananjaya Dasanayake, Managing
Director **Eco Foliage**
No.16/2, Sarasavi Udayanaya, Nawala Road,
Nugegoda, Sri Lanka
Tel: +94 777712070
Fax: +94 11 2813070
Email: dananja@stnet.lk

National Day ctd from p3



Students perform a cultural dance at the open-house function organized by the SLES in Riyadh on Feb 5 evening at the Embassy premises

On Thursday Feb 5, the Sri Lankan Expatriates Society, (SLES), in association with the Mission, hosted a reception to the members of the community. The function was attended by more than 1,000 Sri Lankans from all walks of life. Children entertained the audience with cultural dances and songs. Unity songs were recited by students from the Sri Lankan International School in Riyadh. Sri Lankan food was served at the end of the function. In Jeddah, Consul General ALM Lafeer hoisted the National Flag at the Consulate premises.

SL Embassy Wins at 20 Over Cricket



The Sri Lanka Embassy team won the first match, by eight wickets, against the Indian Embassy, in the Inter Embassy 20 Over Castrol Cup Cricket Tournament organized by the Riyadh Cricket Association which was held on February 19, 2009 at the RCA Grounds in Riyadh

Final Scores:
India 149/5 in 20 Overs
Sri Lanka 150/2 in 19 Overs
India, Australia, Pakistan, England and Sri Lanka Embassy teams are participating the tournament



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insightnewsletter@gmail.com
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SLES Picks New Office-Bearers



The new President of the Sri Lankan Expatriates Society (SLES), left, is being inducted by the outgoing president SAM Rasdeen at the 17th AG Meeting held at the Sri Lankan Embassy on Friday Feb 20, 2009. In the center is Sri Lankan Ambassador Abdul AAM Marleen. The Riyadh based Sri Lanka Expatriates' Society elected its new office-bearers at its 17th Annual General Meeting held at its Embassy premises, on Feb 20, 2009.

Speaking on the occasion, the country's Ambassador, AAM Marleen, said that the greatness of a country is judged by the good conduct of its people. "I am happy that the Sri Lankans in the Kingdom have earned a good reputation by way of their hard work and good behavior", Marleen said, pointing out that every Sri Lankan in the Kingdom could be his country's Ambassador to promote goodwill and understanding between the two nations.

The envoy said that the SLES has not only done yeoman service to its community members but also built an image in the Kingdom as a service oriented organization which serves its countrymen both in the Kingdom as well as in Sri Lanka.

The outgoing President, SAM Rasdeen, thanked the community members for the excellent cooperation extended to his committee to carry out eight cultural projects during his tenure.

Niron Fernando was inducted as the new President of the society with a team of 15 Members in his Executive Committee. In his brief speech, Fernando stressed that the cooperation given by the Mission and the past presidents of the society was the key to the success of the organization.

"This year, we hope to assist our less fortunate members of our community back home by providing facilities to ameliorate their social and economic conditions", Fernando said, pointing out that the such help could be rendered solely on the support of the philanthropists in the community.

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Kingdom Donates SR 75,000 To ICPH



Abdulaziz Ibn Abdul Rahman Al Jammaz, Saudi Ambassador in Colombo, center, hands the Kingdom's donation to Jiffry Haniffa, director of the Islamic Center For the Physically Handicapped, right, at the Saudi Embassy in Colombo last week. At left is Independent Television Network Director Omar Hashim

RIYADH- The Kingdom donated SR 75,000 to the Islamic Center For the Physically Handicapped (ICPH) in Sri Lanka. Saudi Ambassador in Colombo, Abdulaziz Ibn Abdul Rahman Al Jammaz, handed the check for the contribution to ICPH Director Jiffry Haniffa at a simple function held at the Saudi Mission in Colombo in the presence of Independent Television Network (ITN) Director Omar Hashim, an advisor to the IPCH.

Al-Jammaz said that the donation was made by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Call, Guidance and Endowments in recognition of the center's services toward the disabled children in the island. The specific donation is contributed to the center's newly opened wing for mentally retarded children, the envoy added. Thanking the generosity of the Saudi government led by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah, Haniffa noted that the mentally retarded wing has only 34 children including 15 girls. "The donation will be diverted to upgrade the section and to take more inmates from a waiting list of 150 mentally retarded children," Haniffa said, pointing out that paucity of funds prevents the center to enroll all those who are in the waiting list. IPCH is the only center in the island which serves the 1.6 million Muslim population in the island. Currently, it has 174 children including 98 boys. The children who pass out from this center find lucrative jobs in private and public sector. "Some of them have attained excellent results in public examinations," said Haniffa. The director also said the center's functions solely depend on Muslim philanthropists and Islamic organizations from all parts of the globe and a majority of them came from the Kingdom. "We also get a sizable donation annually from Sri Lankan Muslims living in Sri Lanka and abroad during the holy month of Ramadan.

Meanwhile, the Saudi Embassy in Colombo has moved to a spacious location on Horton Place diplomatic area in the heart of the Colombo city. Riyadh Al Kheneini, Deputy Chief of Mission, said that the shifting was a long felt need of the mission to offer speedy services to the visitors and to accommodate the increasing number of Saudi staff in the mission.

The Embassy issues an average of 200 visas per day which include Umrah, Haj, employment, business and visits by people whose relatives are working in the Kingdom. Besides the 6,000 Haj pilgrims who annually frequent the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, he said that a large number of Sri Lankans come to the Kingdom on Umrah visas throughout the year. "A large number of Sri Lankan expatriates in the Kingdom also make use of the online facility to obtain visas to their close relatives and visit the Colombo mission to get them stamped officially," he said.

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SLES AGM ctd from page 2

According to the Annual Report adopted at the meeting, the outgoing Committee was able to increase the paid membership from 75 to 129 members, a 72% increase during the year under review. 25 new members joined the society and the total number of paid members stands at 129 as at date. This significant increase is due to increased activities organized by the committee.

The Society has always focused on its objective to promote various Social and Cultural activities among the Sri Lankan community living in Riyadh. Based on these guidelines, SLES has organized various events in promoting goodwill, understanding, and brotherhood among all Sri Lankans living in Riyadh. The SLES has dedicated its time and effort in organizing events, not only for the members but also for the general public. Non-members have expressed their sincere gratitude to SLES for granting such opportunities and have showed willingness to join the society. The SLES has also encouraged children's participation by providing many events in all their programs.

During the period under review, the SLES organized the following events: **Coffee Evening, Sinhala/Tamil New Year Celebrations, Wesak, Charity Bazaar, Deepavali, Iftar, Ladies Nite, Hajj, Badminton Tournament, and the 61st Independence Day Celebrations.**

SLES Office Bearers for 2009

Patron: **Ambassador A.AM. Marleen**
President: **Nirone Dissanayake**
Sr Vice President: **Andrew Sinnen**
Vice President: **Krishna Kumar**
Secretary: **Namsil Rahman**
Asst. Secretary: **Barny Hameed**
Treasurer: **K Ganeshamoorthy**
Asst. Treasurer: **Asanga Fernando**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Lalith Dharmasiri
Jude Fernando
Ruxshan Juhardeen
Farhan Aboosalay
Dilshan Punchihewa
Mala Pullukkuttiarachchi
Khadeeja Mohideen
Preethika Sivakumar

Chairmen of Committees
Medical: **Shameel Hameed**
Sports: **Shane Almeida**
Newsletter: **Romesh Perera**
Humanitarian Projects: **Athula Ranasinghe**
Financial Affairs: **Gamini Jayasekera**
Internal Auditor: **Raju Sivakumar**
All Past Presidents of the Society will be Ex-Officio Members of the Executive Committee.

National Day ctd from p1

In the evening, Ambassador Marleen and his wife hosted a dinner reception at the Tuwaiq Palace in the Diplomatic Quarter in Riyadh. Nasser Al Dawood,



Under Secretary to the Riyadh Governorate represented the Government at the function. Head of Telemoney Jamal Al Ribh and Head of Public Relations at Almarai, Talal Al Otaibi were also present.

Guests at the evening function were given a colorful gift package containing Sri Lanka tea, souvenirs and a video documentary titled 'Faces and Places' together with a CDROM on Sri Lanka featured as a tourist destination. The items were donated to the Sri Lanka Embassy, by Unique Choice, Media Insight, Stassen, Dilmah Tea, Akbar Brothers, ANB Telemoney and Moule Trading Company.

The mission also published a special five-page color supplement in the Arab News, the leading English newspaper in the Middle East, containing messages from President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayaka, Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama, and Ambassador Marleen. The special issue carried articles on the island's Investment, Tourism, Tea, Gems and Saudi-Sri Lanka relations and the publication was coordinated by Yasantha de Silva.

The supplement was sponsored by the Peoples Bank, Seylan Bank, Al-Marai, Sri Lankan Airlines, Unique Choice, Islamic Center For the Physically Handicapped in Sri Lanka, ANB Telemoney and Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE).



Dr. Nasser Al Dawood, Undersecretary to the Riyadh Governorate, watches while Sri Lankan Ambassador Marleen cuts the cake to mark the National Day event.

ctd on n4

Mountains & Peaks of Sri Lanka

IN THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN PARTS OF SRI LANKA THERE ARE SEVERAL PEAKS THAT ARE HIGHLY ECOLOGICAL AND RICH IN BIO DIVERSITY. THESE MOUNTAINS ARE PRESERVED AS FORESTS AND ARE THE STARTING POINTS OF MANY RIVERS

Pidirutalagala Mountain 2534 m
HIGHEST MOUNTAIN IN SRI LANKA
Haputhale Mountain 2351 m
Totupala Mountain 2351 m
Namunukula mountain 2035 m
Knuckles Mountain 1515 m



Sri Pada (Adams Peak) 2243 m
Venerated by all communities and religions as a sacred mountain



Sigriya

A giant rock peak where King Kashayapa built his Citadel and now a world heritage site



Hantana Mountains -Kandy
Popular among local climbers



Batalegala Mountain
Also known as Bible Rock



World's End

One of the attractions of Horton Plains is Worlds End where the steep drop falls 1312 m down



Gongala Mountain

Situated in the Rakwana mountain range, Gongala is a great place for an eco experience of the Sinharaja forest

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