



# NEWSLANKA



WE CARRY THE BROADEST SELECTION OF SL NEWS FOR THE BROADEST CROSS-SECTION OF SRI LANKANS

Established since **1991**. FREE, WEEKLY NEWSPAPER.

THURSDAY - 19 JANUARY 2017

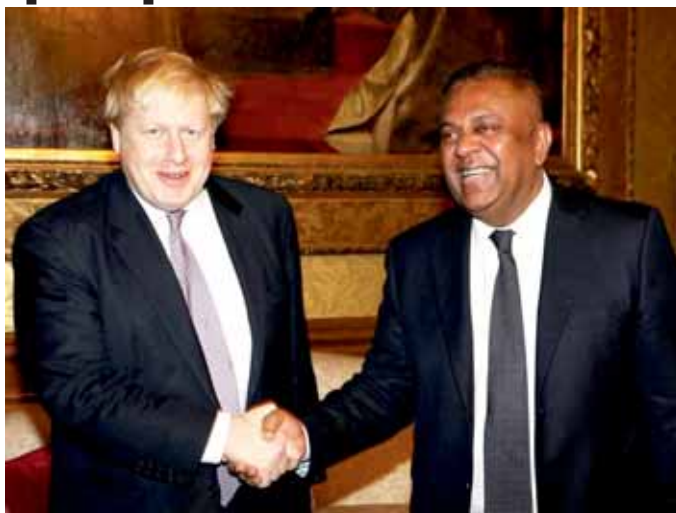
T: 020 7978 9030

E: info@newslanka.net

ISSUE 1311

## Constitutional proposals can be debated in Feb – Mangala

(Island.lk) - Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera has vowed to pursue yahapalana government's post-war political objectives in spite of difficulties. The minister dealt with reconciliation process in Sri Lanka in his address at the Chatham House, London on Wednesday. The topic on which I speak today – 'The Reconciliation Process in Sri Lanka', in fact holds special significance for us Sri Lankans this week. This is because, the Cabinet of Ministers recently declared this week, from January 8th to the 14th, as the 'National Integration and Reconciliation Week'. This coincides with the completion of two years since the historic Presidential election of January 8th 2015, and this is the first occasion on which this annual National Integration and Reconciliation Week is being observed in my country. Several of my predecessors too have spoken here at the Chatham House. This includes the late Lakshman Kadirgamar who spoke at length here, in 1998, about the danger faced by our nation at the time, and democratic societies everywhere, from terrorism. Although the violence ended in May 2009, the healing of wounds of over two decades of conflict, achieving reconciliation and national



Sri Lanka's foreign affairs minister, Mangala Samaraweera met with the UK's Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs, Boris Johnson in London last week. The foreign minister also gave a talk about Sri Lanka's reconciliation process at Chatham House in London.

integration, catching up on economic progress and development that eluded us due to conflict, and ensuring non-recurrence, remain challenging tasks for our Nation. Similarly, the tasks of improving governance, institutions, rule of law, and putting in place necessary measures to strengthen, promote and protect individual rights; while ensuring the dignity of all and building a truly national identity while preserving our pluralistic society – remain work in progress. This week, 2 years ago on the 8th of January, the people of Sri Lanka courageously turned out to vote across the country to end authoritarianism, corruption and the politics of hate; they voted for a new democratic Sri Lanka where democracy, reconciliation, the rule of law and sustainable development would flourish. This courageous decision by the

people of Sri Lanka enabled us, for the first time in our country's history, to form a Government of National Unity, bringing together, the two main political parties – the Sri Lanka Freedom Party headed by President Maithripala Sirisena, and the United National Party headed by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. Having achieved a significant number of promises set out in the 100 Day Work Programme of the Government, the most significant being the repeal of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, and the adoption of the 19th Amendment, fresh Parliamentary elections were called in August 2015. The 19th Amendment, as most of you I am sure are aware, Re-introduced the two-term limit of the Presidency, Reduced the term of the Presidency from 6 to 5 years, Established a Constitutional Council, Restored Independent Commissions, Recognised ... SEE P13

(asianmirror.lk) - Srilankan Airlines will be commencing daily flights on the Muscat-Colombo sector from May onwards. Siva Ramachandran, chief commercial officer of Srilankan Airlines told the Muscat Daily that "We plan to start daily flights from Oman and Bahrain from May onwards after the airport in Colombo is

### SriLankan To Start Daily Flights To Oman

completely opened. We currently operate five flights a week." The airport is partially closed for renovation work. Ramachandran, a seasoned aviation professional, who was visiting Oman to discuss the possibility of cooperation with other airlines in the region said, "We have had meetings for code sharing on different routes and the other reason was to revive cooperation as Mihin Lanka was operating on

these routes. "We currently have 80 per cent seat load factor." Speaking about Oman, he said, "The potential in Oman has not been tapped to maximum. When we look at possible opportunities, we would like to explore the options and we have also thought of Salalah as a destination in the future. "We need to optimise the product. In future, we can increase the seat capacity too." The country has a restructuring strategy in place to make a comeback, "We have acquired Mihin Lanka's routes. Our losses have reduced considerably. In 2017-18, we will be heading towards a progressive

financial condition while we will be breaking even in 2018-19." The traffic from the Gulf has increased considerably as Sri Lanka is becoming a great tourist destination, infrastructure is improving and hotels are coming up with better and bigger properties. Ramachandran said, "We are cutting down on non-profit routes and concentrating on what brings more money per seat. "We encourage tour operators to offer a variety of packages by attracting a diversified tourist segment and encourage more people to explore the country as a tourist destination.



Siva Ramachandran, chief commercial officer of Srilankan Airlines

### Pongal Lights ceremony in Hewham



The Pongal Lights Switching on Ceremony took place on 14th Jan 2017. (Back-row r to l) - Cllr. Paul Sathianesan, Rt. Hon. Stephen Timms MP and Hon. Lyn Brown MP with the Newham Youth Academy Dance Schools children. See page 16

### 69th Independence Day Celebrations

The High Commission of Sri Lanka Cordially invites All Sri Lankans living in the UK to the 69th Independence Day Celebrations on Saturday 4th February 2017 at 10.00am. to be held at the Sri Lanka High Commission, No 13, Hyde Park Gardens, London W2 2LU [Nearest Tube Station - Paddington (Lancaster Gate Station will be closed on that day)] RSVP (on or before Thursday, 02 Feb 2017) mail@slhc-london.co.uk or 0207 262 1841(ext:0234)

**REGGIE FERNANDO - IS NOW IN COLOMBO**  
Give him a call on 00 94 11 2 500 124



**Taprobane Travel**  
Great offers on flights & hotels. See page 3. 0207 434 3921

**DUKE'S COURT TRAVEL**  
Fly to Colombo fr. £449 Call 0208 748 3535

**LycaFly**  
CALL US 24x7 on 0207 132 32 32 Colombo Best offers! SEE PAGE 9

**FAST CASH**  
MONEY IN MINUTES TO SRI LANKA See Page 7

**CARLTON LEISURE**  
020 8100 0000 www.carltonleisure.com SEE PAGE 5

SEE P11 **Brightsun TRAVEL**  
24x7: 0203 603 2044

**NEWSLANKA COLOMBO OFFICE: + 94 77 446 40 90 CALL CHANDIKA NOW**  
We can accept payment in SL rupees & we can help with artwork. Tell your friends.

**FREE PERSONAL CLASSIFIEDS**  
NOW YOU CAN ADVERTISE YOUR PERSONAL PROPERTY RENTALS IN UK & SRI LANKA, TUITION, ECT...  
**FREE OF CHARGE**  
AND IF YOU ARE A BUSINESS, IT ONLY COSTS £6 PER WEEK.  
FOR FULL DETAILS GO TO PAGE 26 OR WWW.NEWSLANKA.NET