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ISSUE 1008

Sri Lanka in World Cup Final!!!

WORLD CUP FINAL ON SATURDAY 2ND APRIL

Farewell for the king of spin



Members of the Sri Lankan team carry teammate Muttiah Muralitharan, playing in his last Cricket World Cup match in Sri Lanka, after they beat New Zealand in their ICC Cricket World Cup 2011 semi-final match in Colombo. REUTERS

(Island.lk) - There were few nervous moments but at the end, half-centuries by captain Kumar Sangakkara and Tillakaratne Dilshan were good enough to help Sri Lanka qualify for the finals of the ICC Cricket World Cup after they beat New Zealand by five wickets in the semi-final clash yesterday at R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo. Sri Lanka bowled out New Zealand for 217 runs after Lasith Malinga and Ajantha Mendis picked up three apiece and were cruising chasing the modest target at 160 for one with Sangakkara and Dilshan looking solid, but they lost three wickets for nine runs to expose a fragile middle-order and sensing an opportunity, the New Zealanders had their tails up. Dilshan and Sangakkara had given no chance for the bowlers while cutting, pulling and driving with power and elegance and the dismissal of Dilshan suddenly brought New

Zealand back into the game. Mahela Jayawardene lasted only three balls as Daniel Vettori trapped him leg before wicket and three overs later Sangakkara was caught at third man when he cut Andy McKay uppishly to make it 169 for four. Both Thilan Samaraweera and Chamara Silva lived dangerously as the Sri Lankan supporters watched in pin-drop silence with just 16 runs coming off 50 deliveries since Dilshan's dismissal. The introduction of Jesse Ryder helped Sri Lanka break shackles as Silva hit him for two fours in an over. But he was dismissed in the next over with Sri Lanka still requiring 33 runs to win. Angelo Mathews required a runner as he had strained a thigh muscle while fielding and together with Samaraweera ensured Sri Lanka didn't throw a wonderful opportunity away.

As he had done so often, Mathews ensured he came up with the goods when it mattered. He hit a six and a four off a Tim Southee over to calm things and in the next over Samaraweera edged one between the wicket-keeper and wide slip for four to trigger celebrations. Samaraweera was unbeaten on 23 off 38 balls. Dilshan, meanwhile, went onto become the highest run getter in the tournament with 467 runs going past England's Jonathan Trott (422). Sangakkara, who posted his third half-century in the tournament, is five runs behind Trott with 417 runs. He was named Man of the Match. Dilshan's 73 came in 93 balls with ten fours and a six while Sangakkara's 54 came in 79 balls with seven fours and a six. Sri Lanka will now travel to Bombay to play the grand finale on April 2nd against the winners of the semi-final between... See P29

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Drastic Changes forced on Kingsbury Temple Please see page 22

UK Government announces major overhaul of student visa system

(Island.lk) - Tougher entry criteria, limits on work entitlements and the closure of the post-study route were among the changes to the student visa system announced by the British government last week. In December the UK Government launched a consultation on the reform of the student immigration system. Late yesterday the Home Secretary announced to the UK Parliament the results of this extensive consultation process. The outcome of the review heralds a new approach - one that not only minimises abuse of the student immigration system but also builds on the global reputation of the UK as a provider of high quality education. Home Secretary Theresa May said: "International students not only make a vital contribution to the UK economy but they also help make our education system one of the best in the world. "But it has become very apparent that the old student visa regime failed to control immigration and failed to protect legitimate students from poor quality colleges. "The changes I am announcing today re-focus the student route as a temporary one, ... See page 6

Going beyond politics...



A gallery which exhibits historical paintings right from the Anuradhapura era at the Gangarama temple was declared open by President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Picture shows President Rajapaksa and Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremesinghe lighting the oil lamp at the beginning of the opening ceremony. Pic by Gayan Amarasekera

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By **Reggie Fernando**
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