

FrontPage, Vol.11, No. 187 – Daily Delivery of Political Summaries

From Danul Alagiyawanna <dalagiyawanna@outlook.com>

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To Danul Alagiyawanna <dalagiyawanna@outlook.com>



FrontPage sheds light on the different realities between Sri Lanka's two main language communities. By reading today's FrontPage, you can be better informed about the different priorities in the Sinhala and Tamil press.

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DIFFERENT PRIORITIES IN THE SINHALA AND TAMIL PRESS

Tamil Headlines

Virakesari: Provincial council elections must be held without delay; SJB demands. Public express dissatisfaction

Thinakkural: Valvettithurai massacre committed by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF);

with the government for failing to fulfil promises.

Thinakaran: Buried mobile phone of Ishara recovered; masterminds panic. Proposals to regulate the prices of medicinal drugs to be presented in Parliament tomorrow. “May our aspirations shine brightly in the light of Diwali” – President.

compensation of Rs. 4.3 billion (USD 14.6 million) must be provided. The Indian government should apologise to the people of the North and East, emphasises N. Anantharaja, Secretary of the Valvettithurai Citizens’ Committee.

Thamilan: “Don’t blame the Election Commission for the delay in holding the provincial council election,” says EC Commissioner General Saman Sri Ratnayake.

Sinhala Headlines

Lankadeepa: “Officials who cause financial losses to the government must repay them with interest” – decision by the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption. Sewwandi reveals: she visited a health care assistant after removing her lawyer’s robe.

Divaina: ‘Gampaha Baba’ and ‘Nugegoda Babee’ reveal secrets: ‘Gampaha Baba’

Mawbima: Investigations focus on Devinuwara after a boat was seized with 54 kilos of drugs; authorities probe links to an emerging drug network. “Because of my close friendship with Padme, I got involved in Sanjeewa’s murder” – Sewwandi recounts her role and whereabouts.

Dinamina: ‘Gampaha Baba’ and ‘Nugegoda Babee’ reveal secrets: ‘Gampaha Baba’

admits being given bullets to kill Gampaha Osman. Hand bombs and casings found at 'Nugegoda Babee' home.

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Aruna: Treasury Secretary issues circular halting new board appointments, pay rises, and allowance increases.

Anidda: This paper is published only on Fridays.

TAMIL PRESS PRIORITIES



Valvettithurai massacre committed by the IPKF; compensation of Rs. 4.3 billion (USD 14.6 million) must be provided! The Indian government should apologise to the people of the North and East – Anantharaja

Thinakkural

The Indian government must apologise to the people of the North and East for the Valvettithurai (Valvai) massacres committed by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF), according to N. Anantharaja, social activist and Secretary of the Valvettithurai Citizens' Committee. He stated that total compensation of Rs. 4.3 billion (USD 14.6 million) must be provided for the losses suffered. This statement was made at a book launch for a compensation recommendation report at the Jaffna Vadamarachchi Media House yesterday (13th), which detailed the massacres that took place in Valvettithurai in 1989. The report is based on hundreds of direct eyewitness statements recorded in 1989, as revealed by the International Truth and Justice Project (ITJP) in its recent report, 'Confessions of a Massacre'. The atrocities, which occurred over three days, involved the killing of at least 66 civilians and the destruction of 120 houses and 43 shops, with more than 250 houses damaged. The Valvettithurai Citizens' Committee has submitted a claim for USD 15 million (Rs. 4.3 billion) to the Office for Reparations in Sri Lanka, seeking overdue justice for survivors who have not received acknowledgment or remedy for the past 35 years.

**Don't blame the
Election**

**Provincial council
elections must be**

Commission for the delay in holding the provincial council election – EC Commissioner General Saman Sri Ratnayake

Thamilan

held without delay; SJB demands. Public express dissatisfaction with the government for failing to fulfil promises.

Election Commission (EC) Commissioner General Saman Sri Ratnayake stated that the EC should not be blamed for the failure to hold the provincial council elections and that the EC cannot accept responsibility. Ratnayake argued that those now expressing great concern about the elections should also reflect on their own roles, suggesting that if they had been equally concerned earlier, the elections would have been held and some provincial councils would have had fresh polls by now. He explained that at present, there is no law in the country to conduct provincial elections—whether under a mixed electoral system, a proportional

Virakesari

SJB Secretary Ranjith Madduma Bandara claimed that the government is now afraid to hold the provincial council (PC) elections because it lost 2.3 million votes in the local government election. He called for the PC election to be held swiftly, pointing out that the government had previously promised to conduct both the local government and PC elections within its first year. Bandara affirmed that the SJB would secure a significant victory if the government called the PC election, as the public are frustrated by the government's failure to fulfil its promises. He noted that while the government pledged

representation system, or any other method—and that this situation uniquely affects the provincial council elections. He said the problem began when the 2017 Provincial Councils Elections Act introduced a mixed electoral system, leading to a delimitation issue that Parliament rejected after a months-long delay.

Legal issues must be resolved immediately; holding provincial council elections in the first quarter of next year is the way forward – R.M.A.L. Rathnayake

Virakesari

Chairperson of the Election Commission (EC) R.M.A.L. Rathnayake stated that if the provincial council election is to be conducted in the first quarter of next year, the legal complications in the electoral system must be resolved within this

Rs. 2,000 as a basic wage for plantation workers, they currently only receive Rs. 1,300. He also stated he is waiting to see what action the judiciary will take in response to a ruling party MP's statement suggesting that a court order does not have to be implemented.

Massive protest held in Trincomalee's China Bay during the President's visit

Thinakkural

When President Anura Kumara Dissanayake arrived at China Bay Airport in Trincomalee on Saturday (12th) to attend an event, Muthur farmers, who had been protesting continuously for 32 days in front of the Trincomalee District Secretariat, came onto the road to meet the President and demand a solution for their farmland issues. The

year. Rathnayake emphasised that the delay in the provincial council elections is not the fault of the EC, but a consequence of legal issues arising from the new electoral system enacted by Parliament. The Supreme Court has repeatedly advised that the question of which electoral system to use must be settled by Parliament.

Rathnayake stressed that provincial councils run by governors—direct representatives of the president—without an election is undemocratic. He added that the EC cannot undertake any election-related activities until the legal issue is settled, after which a date for the election in the first quarter of next year can be set.

People's Struggle Movement and the All Ceylon Farmers' Federation specifically organised this protest to coincide with the President's visit.

SINHALA PRESS PRIORITIES



Photo credits: Newswire

We now understand the depth of the current crisis involving narcotics, associated crimes, and their political connections – President

Mawbima, Divaina

President Anura Kumara Dissanayake warned that Sri Lanka's narcotics crisis has deep political connections and is no longer confined to criminal gangs, with elements of the state apparatus now implicated and the issue spreading to rural villages. Speaking on October 18 at the Air Force Academy Camp in China Bay during the Presidential Colours Award and the commissioning of SLAF cadet officers, he stressed the significance of maritime surveillance and urged officers to perform their duties conscientiously to protect the nation and its citizens.

No arbitrary board appointments or pay rises – circular from the Treasury Secretary **Sajith and Ranil must meet in person – Thigambaram Mawbima**

Aruna

Secretary to the Treasury Dr. Harshana Suriyapperuma has issued a circular instructing all state-owned enterprises—including public corporations, statutory boards, authorities, and fully state-owned companies—to comply with the Public Finance Management Act No. 44 of 2024 regarding employee recruitment, salary adjustments, and allowances.

Previously, institutions such as the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation and Ceylon Electricity Board operated independently under the Shops and Offices Act, making personnel and pay decisions at their discretion. The circular clarifies that, as government-controlled entities, these organisations must henceforth adhere to the rules, orders, and circulars issued under the Finance Act and Public Finance Management Act, bringing their

SJB MP Palani Thigambaran urged Sajith Premadasa and Ranil Wickremesinghe to hold an in-person meeting to discuss a UNP–SJB merger, warning that a failure to do so could lead minor parties to form a separate alliance and threaten the future of both parties.

operations in line with standard government financial regulations.

This government is stuck in a mess even we don't understand – Jayaweera

Aruna

Sarvajana Balaya Leader MP Dileeth Jayaweera warned that over 25% of the population now lives in extreme poverty, placing the country at the bottom of the poverty scale. Speaking at an event in Akmeemana, he criticised current and former parliamentary representatives for ignoring public hardship, condemning the government as a “puppet government” and a weak administration run by the least capable leaders despite wide national support.

COMMON PRIORITIES: SINHALA & TAMIL PRESS



Photo credits: President's Media Division

Diwali lights will illuminate our path to a ‘prosperous country and a beautiful life’ – President

*Dinamina, Divaina, Thinakkural, Virakesari,
Thinakaran, Thamilan*

President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, in his Diwali message, said the festival's lights symbolise the triumph of good over evil and will guide the country's journey towards fulfilling the people's aspiration for "A Prosperous Country – A Beautiful Life." He highlighted the government's efforts to address urgent challenges, including the drug menace and organised crime, emphasising that safeguarding every citizen's right to live safely remains key to securing a good and healthy life.

Ishara Sewwandi and four others to be detained for 90 days for questioning

*Mawbima, Lankadeepa, Divaina, Dinamina,
Thinakkural, Virakesari, Thinakaran*

Ishara Sewwandi, detained by the Colombo Crime Division in connection with the murder of underworld figure Sanjeewa Kumara Samaratne, alias 'Ganemulla Sanjeewa', along with five others, was extradited from Nepal on October 15 and taken to Kilinochchi for investigation. With the Ministry of Defence granting 90 days' detention for questioning, Sewwandi was shown locations where she allegedly hid after the murder. Police have recovered a mobile phone she reportedly used during the crime, which she buried before attempting to flee, and are tracing contacts linked to it to arrest others connected to the incident. Authorities indicate more arrests and revelations related to other crimes may follow as investigations continue.

Common priorities: Additional stories

- 1. Landslide warnings issued for six districts; heavy rain expected, dengue cases rising; one dead, hundreds affected - *Dinamina, Mawbima, Aruna, Lankadeepa, Divaina, Virakesari, Thinakaran***
- 2. Committee report on UNP–SJB merger to be presented to the managing committee on Wednesday - *Mawbima, Virakesari, Thamilan***
- 3. Petitions are flooding in against excise officers – Commissioner General of Excise - *Aruna, Virakesari***



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