

# 14th November is World Diabetic Day

In a population of approximately 22 million, there are one million diagnosed diabetic patients. It is believed, there are an equal number of undiagnosed diabetics.

In the indigenous population the percentage of diabetics trebles.

There is no cure for diabetes.

A smaller number are due to Type I Diabetes, the larger number being Type II (Maturity onset) diabetes.

Diabetes is now a silent pandemic and should be prevented by all means possible.

Prevention of the onset of Type II diabetes is by:

- Reducing obesity

- Curtailing the consumption of fast foods and energy drinks

- Avoiding sedentary habits. i.e. lead an active life

An increase in the ageing population too has contributed to increase in prevalence since 50% of Type II diabetics are over 60 yrs.

Australia is now the leading country where obesity is concerned. We have overtaken the US of A.

Diabetes affects the health by causing target organ damage.

In the Eyes – microvascularpathy (disease of small blood vessels) leads to diabetic retinopathy,

leading to defective vision and eventual blindness.

In the Kidney – microvascularpathy leads to progressive kidney disease, leading to renal failure which may necessitate repeated dialysis and finally a kidney transplant.

In the Feet & Legs – reduced blood supply and neuropathy may need amputation of toes, feet and legs.

65% of Cardio Vascular disease is related to uncontrolled diabetes.

If one has a family history of diabetes (parents, uncles & aunts, elder siblings etc) one should:

- Check out for diabetes

- Make all attempts to lose weight

- Get involved in an exercise program

- Plan out a healthy diet

Annually the Australian government spends > \$6 billion on diabetic care.

The annual cost per diabetic patient is approximately \$4000/=.

The cost of care of a diabetic patient with target organ damage is approximately \$10,000/= a year.

Dr. Reggie Seimon

## CHOGM 2012 ‘‘A WORLD WITHIN ‘‘Opportunity for Sri Lankan tourism

The 2013 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) will be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 15 to 17 November. This is the first time an Asian country is hosting the summit in 24 years.

There are 54 independent states under the belt of commonwealth and many of those already confirmed their participation. The Commonwealth Business Forum (CBF) will also take place in Colombo in conjunction with the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

This is the premier business event in the Commonwealth, bringing together heads of government, ministers and top business leaders from around the world and will be attended by over 1,000 delegates.

Strategic window now open

At the moment Sri Lanka is enjoying the dividends of peace. The growth of the tourism sector can be witnessed. This is more important for economic growth since the country always depends on garments as well as traditional exports like tea. Especially for products like garments, we have to import the materials from overseas. So the net income is not that significant in terms of revenue generation.

We can now also see the pressure mounting from Western countries (GSP+, etc.) on Sri Lankan garments. Hence, in this context the strategic window has been opened for tourism in Sri Lanka (strategic window is the temporary period of ‘alignment’

or ‘fit’ between the competitive capabilities of an organisation and the key requirements of the existing or new markets it intends to compete in), because Sri Lanka has been named by the world as the most attractive and diverse palace to be visited on earth.

The world’s most renowned and largest travel guide book and digital media publisher, The Lonely Planet, has named Sri Lanka as the number one destination in the world to visit in year 2013. World leading UK Magazine Conde Nast Traveller has ranked Sri Lanka as the third hottest new holiday destination to travel to in 2012.

Furthermore, National Geographic has listed Sri Lanka at No. 2 of the 25 ‘Best New Trips for 2010’. Moreover, a CNN survey has ranked Unawatuna in the 79th position among the 100 best beaches in the world, while Arugam Bay has been ranked as the 46th best surfing spot among the best 50 surfing spots in the world.

Sigiriya

There are many places in Sri Lanka which can be promoted and marketed to the world. Sigiriya is one location which we can market and communicate the proud history of Sri Lanka. Sigiriya has been named as the eighth Wonder of the World. It also is an icon of Sri Lankan tourism.

The original name can be loosely translated as ‘Remembrance Rock’ and the latter as ‘Lion Rock’. Around this rock, there are fourth century A.D. remnants of perhaps the most

magnificent buildings Lanka can boast of (Sandarasagara, 1997). There are many aspects that can be communicated with Sigiriya.

The fortified garden city of Sigiriya is one of the typical examples of identifying landscape design concepts with Sri Lankan traditions of hydraulic engineering. There is a need for a novel, innovative website concentrated on Sigiriya. It is desirable to have a catchy theme like ‘I left my heart at Sigiriya’ to attract more tourists to the destination.

The website should be kept simple and it should consist of beautiful photos, carefully selected melodies and brief statements. Further, a 24/7 hotline is also recommended. Links should be available enabling the visitor to have information about visa procedures, to book hotels in the location, etc. Even the web ads can be posted on selected popular websites. Furthermore, visitors should be able to purchase products through the web just by clicking the icon.

For easy access of search engines like Google some key words can be used. As an example when the potential customer types ‘Handicrafts’ on Google, the Kibissa (this is the place that markets the handicrafts of the people to tourists with many creative pieces of work) is a word will come as the second or third search. To promote Sigiriya and the surrounding area as a tourist destination, there is a need for better website together with some tools like customer relationship

management, sales promotion and word of mouth communication, etc.

Opportunity

The CHOGM event is one opportunity for the authorities to launch the website and communicate our identity with values to the world. CHOGM can be considered an opportunity as many world leaders and top business leaders will be coming to this part of the world.

In the future they will be the brand ambassadors of Sri Lanka. There is a need for better strategy in terms of marketing in order to inspire them. Not only the authorities but the citizens who love Sri Lanka should understand this as their responsibility and duty.

Counting the countries which are not attending this meeting is for the people who do not wish the nation to prosper. Accordingly, it is important for Sri Lanka to make use of this opportunity by using the strategic perspective with long-term mission. It is only then that the country will regain the pride it has lost for the last 100 years.



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