

# EXPLORE SRI LANKA







# PROPELLING GOVERNMENT PROJECTS TO STELLAR HEIGHTS.

SLTMobitel presents the most versatile SD-WAN service in the galaxy.

Experience the true digital age with a Software-Defined Wide Area Network;  
to manage private data through essential security,  
cloud computing and guaranteed reliability,  
all managed through an end-to-end service.

SLTMobitel SD-WAN  
Accelerate your digital transformation

hotline: 0112381381 | email: [queries@enterprise.slt.com.lk](mailto:queries@enterprise.slt.com.lk)

[www.sltmobitel.lk](http://www.sltmobitel.lk)



Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.  
[noolaham.org](http://noolaham.org) | [aavanaham.org](http://aavanaham.org)







# ROLEX

## THE SKY-DWELLER

The revolutionary watch for world travellers,  
blending watchmaking ingenuity with simplicity of use.  
It doesn't just tell time. It tells history.



OYSTER PERPETUAL SKY-DWELLER  
Rs. 1,000,000 Upwards

### THARAKA TIME HOUSE

Sales & Service Since 1973

No. 75/1, Ground Floor, Hemas Building,  
York Street, Fort, Colombo 1

Tel: (+94 11) 2391343

E-mail: [atharaka@sltnet.lk](mailto:atharaka@sltnet.lk)



# Do it all with fastest internet

Live life on your terms with  
faster mobile access to endless content



**Get Connected Today!**

[www.sltmobitel.lk](http://www.sltmobitel.lk)





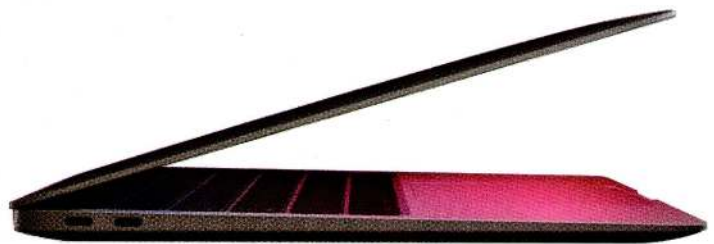


# Elevate your lifestyle



**iPhone 12**

Blast past fast.



**MacBook Air**

Power. It's in the Air.

**MacBook Pro**

All systems Pro.



**iPad Air**

Powerful. Colorful.  
Wonderful.



**iMac**

The all-in-one for all.

**call anytime for service and support**

Sales: (+94) 715 136 136 | Technical: (+94) 719 146 146



20-2/1 Lauries Place, R A De Mel Mawatha, Colombo 4  
Tel: (+94 11) 255 5871 (+94 11) 259 7991  
info@btoptions.com





ONLY  
IB WORLD  
SCHOOL  
IN  
SRI LANKA

THINKERS  
REFLECTIVE INQUIRERS KNOWLEDGEABLE  
COMMUNICATORS OPEN-MINDED PRINCIPLED RISK-TAKERS

**EXCELLENCE**  
IN EDUCATION  
FOR OVER **64 YEARS**  
BALANCED REFLECTIVE KNOWLEDGEABLE RISK-TAKERS

**OVER 50 NATIONALITIES**

FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE  
COMMUNICATORS OPEN-MINDED  
**INTERNATIONALLY  
DIVERSE  
COMMUNITY**  
OPEN-MINDED  
RISK-TAKERS  
PRINCIPLED  
REFLECTIVE  
CARING

KNOWLEDGEABLE  
COMMUNICATORS  
RISK-TAKERS  
PRINCIPLED  
REFLECTIVE  
CARING

**THE  
OLDEST AND MOST  
PRESTIGIOUS  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
IN THE  
ISLAND**

CARING  
KNOWLEDGEABLE  
**A GLOBALLY  
RECOGNIZED  
QUALIFICATION  
TAUGHT ACROSS  
146 COUNTRIES**  
COMMUNICATORS  
KNOWLEDGEABLE  
REFLECTIVE  
BALANCED  
CARING

**OSC's  
IB CREDENTIAL HAS  
THE WIDEST REACH  
FOR ENTRY TO THE  
WORLD'S BEST  
UNIVERSITIES**  
COMMUNICATORS  
RISK-TAKERS  
PRINCIPLED  
REFLECTIVE  
CARING



# TRULY INTERNATIONAL

Sri Lanka's first international school, The Overseas School of Colombo has a proud history of intercultural understanding and academic excellence. The diversity of our staff and student body hailing from over 50 nations across the world, is our strength. For over 64 years, our unique learning model has developed the confidence and cultural competence of students, enabling them to become true global citizens and the change makers of tomorrow. OSC is the only International Baccalaureate (IB) World School in Sri Lanka, following the globally recognized qualification taught across 146 countries, with a holistic vision of education that puts the student at the center of everything we do. The IB credential has the widest reach for entry to all national university systems world-wide, and is much sought-after by the best universities in the world.

In creating Sri Lanka's first international school, our founders recognised the power of education to change society. We hold that belief just as strongly today.





# EXPLORE SRI LANKA

# CONTENTS

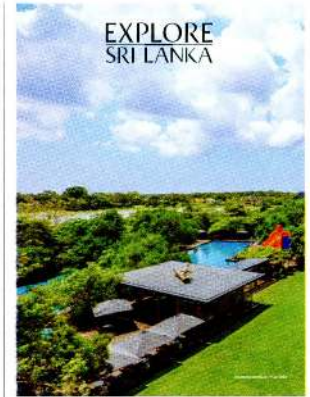
May 2021 Volume 34 Number 7



## 8

### ***Celebrating Vesak with Spirituality***

Vesak Poya is an important festival to Buddhists and non-Buddhists around the world. It signifies three important events in the life of the Buddha.



## 12

### ***DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort***

The lush greenery enhances the beauty and welcoming ambiance as you step into the DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort.



DoubleTree by Hilton  
Weerawila Rajawarna Resort.  
Photo: Menaka Aravinda

## 18

### ***Religious Ceremony at Siri Alanmathiniyarama Temple***



## 20

### ***The Wonders of Jackfruit***

Growing up in a culture where the jackfruit was eaten as a sweet juicy fruit and cooked as a vegetable, one certainly knows that with a jackfruit tree you can live a food-filled life of one flake at a time.

## 24

### ***Bundala National Park in a Day!***

Hambantota District is only a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Colombo via the Southern Expressway.



#### **BT Options**

20-2/1, Lauries Place, Colombo 4 Sri Lanka

T (+94) 112 597 991 | M (+94) 715 134 134 | F (+94) 112 597 990 | [info@btoptions.com](mailto:info@btoptions.com) | [btoptions.com](http://btoptions.com)

The contents of this publication may not be reproduced in whole or part in any form without the written consent of the publisher. All material © Explore Sri Lanka.

Opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the writers and not necessarily endorsed by the publisher.

Registered as a newspaper at GPO under No. 12502/2021. Printed by Sharp Graphic House (Pvt) Ltd.  
[noolaham.org](http://noolaham.org) | [avanaham.org](http://avanaham.org)



# CEYLON TEA

*We blend them best*



## Mesna Tea Centres

*The Island's Most Exclusive Tea Shops*

- LIBERTY PLAZA • MAJESTIC CITY • CRESCAT BOULEVARD • HILTON COLOMBO • GALADARI HOTEL
- ARCADE INDEPENDENCE SQUARE • ONE GALLE FACE MALL • THE GATEWAY HOTEL SEEDUWA • COLOMBO AIRPORT
- TEA FORTRESS - KANDY • KANDY - CITY CENTRE & DALADA VEEDIYA • TEA CASTLE - TALAWAKELE
- BANDARAWELA • BERUWALA

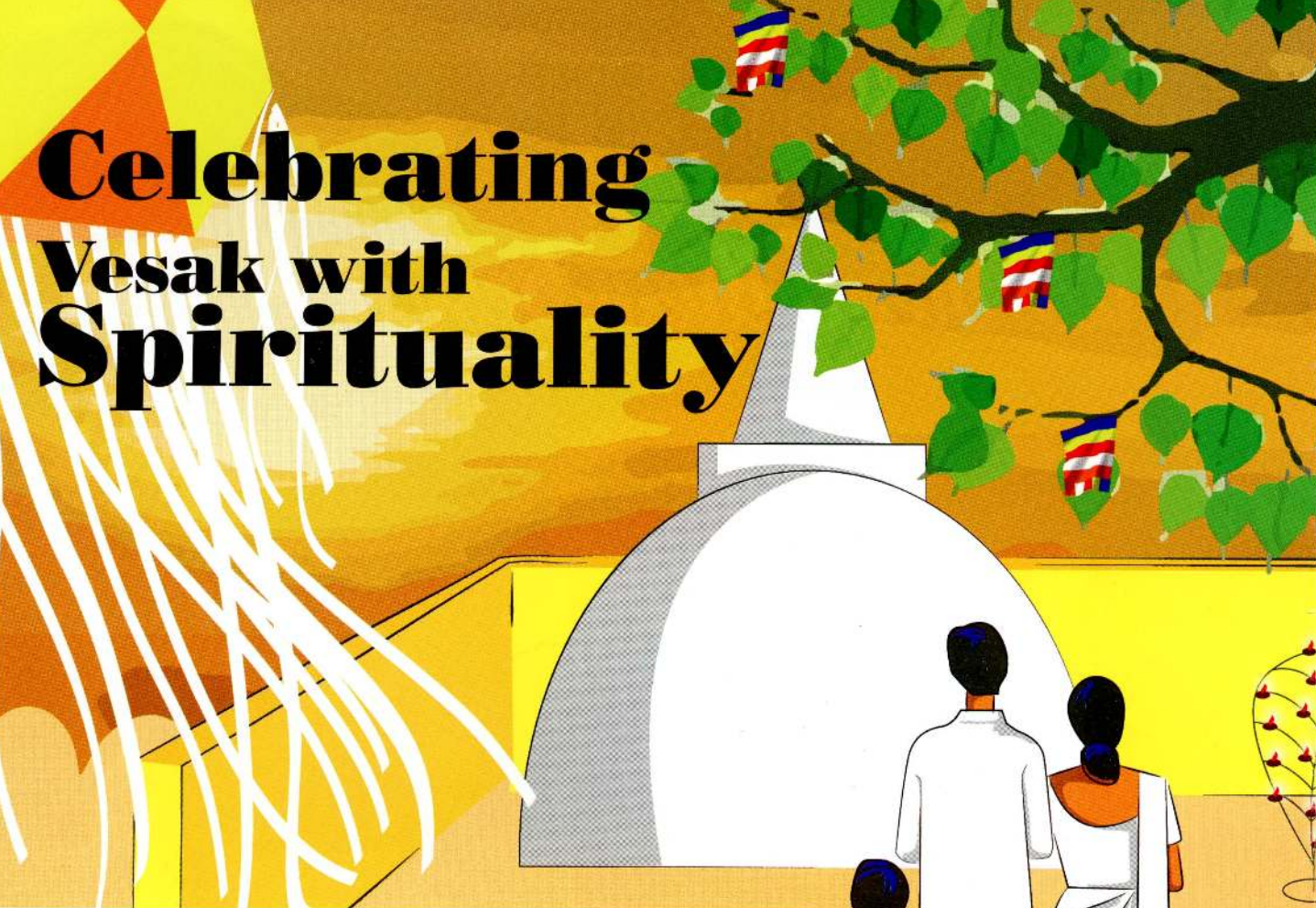
BOX 2072, Colombo. ✉: [euroscan@slt.lk](mailto:euroscan@slt.lk) ☎: +94 11 2696348

Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.  
[noolaham.org](http://noolaham.org) | [aavanaham.org](http://aavanaham.org)





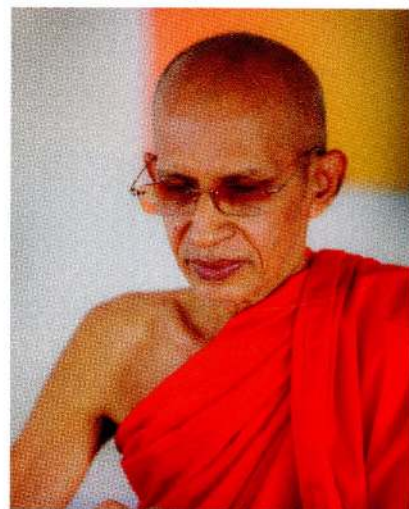
# Celebrating Vesak with Spirituality



Vesak Pōya is a time to engage in religious observances (Illustration by Sujith Heenatigala)



Vesak Pōya is an important festival to Buddhists and non-Buddhists around the world. It signifies three important events in the life of the Buddha, namely, Birth, Enlightenment, and the Passing of the Buddha (Parinibbāna). Furthermore, the Buddha made his first visit after Enlightenment to his hometown of Kimbulwath Nuwara to see His father, King Suddhodana, and other relatives on Vesak day. Another significance of this day, especially for Sri Lankans, is the Buddha's visit to the country. Ven Diyapattugama Revatha Thero, Chief Incumbent of the Siriwardhanaramaya Temple, Colpetty, explains that while these events heighten the festival's significance, the most crucial aspect in the life of a Buddhist is the teachings of the Buddha – Dhamma.



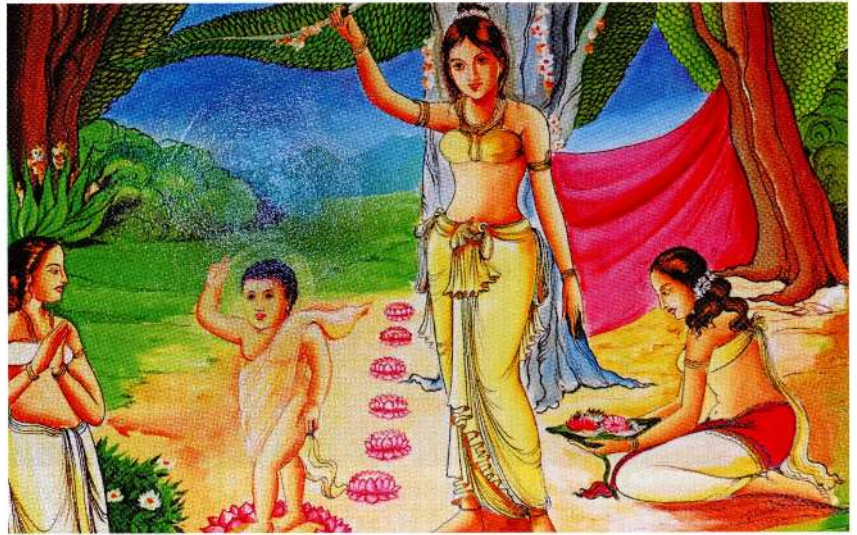
©Mehaka Aravinda

Ven Diyapattugama Revatha Thero, Chief Incumbent of the Siriwardhanaramaya Temple, Colpetty.

By Udeshi Amarasinghe.



**I**t is believed that a Buddha brings great peace to the world and is reflected in the Pali phrase 'Sukkhō Buddhānang Uppādō.' For this reason, a Buddha always emerges after tens of thousands of years (many kalpas) in India (Dambadiva). Gautama Buddha was from Kimbulwath Nuwara, but he was born in the royal Sal Uyana in Lumbini. The reason being that Queen Maya decided to travel to her hometown close to the baby's birth, and on the journey, Prince Siddhartha was born. After that, the Queen and the baby Prince were brought back to Kimbulwath Nuwara by relatives. The Birth of Prince Siddhartha is the first



**Many Sutta describes that the Dhamma and Bhavana are good medicine for the mind and body. This year Vesak celebrations should focus on the spiritual growth.**



Vesak is the thrice blessed festival and signifies the Birth, Enlightenment and Parinibbāna of the Buddha (Photographs taken at the historical Anjali Paura Purana Maha Viharaya).

significant milestone in the life of the Gautama Buddha on Vesak Pōya Day.

In relation to Vesak Pōya, the second significant milestone in the life of the Gautama Buddha that occurred on that day was that he understood the Four Noble Truth of life and attained Enlightenment. King Suddhodana built three beautiful palaces known as Ramya, Suramya, Subha for each season for the young Prince who was 16 years old. The King wanted the young Prince to appreciate the wealth of the kingdom. Furthermore, the King also arranged the marriage between Prince Siddhartha and Princess Yashōdhara, the daughter of the Sakya King, Suppabuddha. However, after 13 years of marriage Prince Siddhartha

became disillusioned with life. He observes the 'Sathara Pera Nimithi' or the Four Great Signs, an elderly man, a sick man, a funeral procession, and finally, saffron-robed Priest. These four sights were the reasons for Prince Siddhartha to leave all worldly pleasures and seek the end to suffering. According to the 'Canki Sutta,' while his entire family was in tears, having shaved his hair and donning a saffron robe, the Prince left mundane comforts behind him and left the palace (renunciation). Thus, it is believed that at the young age of 29, a Bodhisattva who is seeking Enlightenment will realize about life, and as Prince Siddhartha had seen the Four Great Signs, he understood life and left home.

After years of meditation and reflection, the hermit Siddhartha having understood the Four Noble Truths, attained Enlightenment and thus became the Buddha. This is the second milestone in the life of the Buddha, which is signified by the Vesak Pōya. From that day onwards, the Buddha preached the Dhamma to many people starting from his first five disciples (Paswaga Thausan) to Subhadra Bhikkhu, His last disciple, and showed them the path of the Dhamma. For over 45 years, the Buddha taught the Dhamma, and at the age of 80, he passed away (Parinibbāna), which is the third significant milestone of the Buddha's life on Vesak Pōya.





Colorful Vesak lanterns can be seen during Vesak festival.

In addition to the three significant milestones, the Buddha made his first visit to his hometown of Kimbulwath Nuwara, also on Vesak Pōya. It is said that King Suddhodana, the Buddha's father, had sent an envoy headed by Minister Kāludaai to Rajagaha Nuwara to invite the Great Teacher, the Buddha to visit Kimbulwath Nuwara. However, upon arrival, the entourage listened to the Buddha's sermon on the Dhamma, and they became ordained. However, seven days later, having remembered the King's invitation, it was communicated to the Buddha on Medin Full Moon Day. The Buddha accepted the invitation and began the journey to Kimbulwath Nuwara, which took two months, and arrived on Vesak Pōya day.

Another important event is the Buddha's visit to Sri Lanka on Vesak Pōya day during his eighth year after Enlightenment on the invitation of King Mani Akkhika of the Naga tribe. The Buddha had visited Kelaniya and delivered a sermon to the people of the Naga tribe. God Sumana had been present on this occasion, and he invited the Buddha to visit Samanala Kanda. Upon arrival, the Buddha placed his footprint on the stone slab on the invitation of God Sumana. From that day onwards, Samanala Kanda was known as Sri Pada, and thousands of people visit this site annually. On this same journey, the Buddha visited Deegavapi, the Sri Maha Bodhiya, Magul Maha Seya, and Shaila Chaitya in Anuradhapura before returning to

Jethavanaramaya in Savath Nuwara in India.

In the present day, prominence has been given to Ahmisa pooja, which includes Vesak lanterns, pandals, the singing of Bhakthi Geetha, and people making this occasion to enjoy. However, Vesak has a more profound significance and should also be a time to engage in the Dhamma. During this time in the pandemic environment, when people are stressed and under pressure, we should partake in religious observances and obtain a deeper understanding of the Dhamma on Vesak Pōya. At the time of his passing (Parinibbāna), seeing Ananda Thero weeping, the Buddha advised him by saying, "Ananda, do not cry or be sad. Every pleasant aspect in this world is bound to change. Thus, it is futile to prevent this by saying do not decay or not change. No one can change the inevitable."

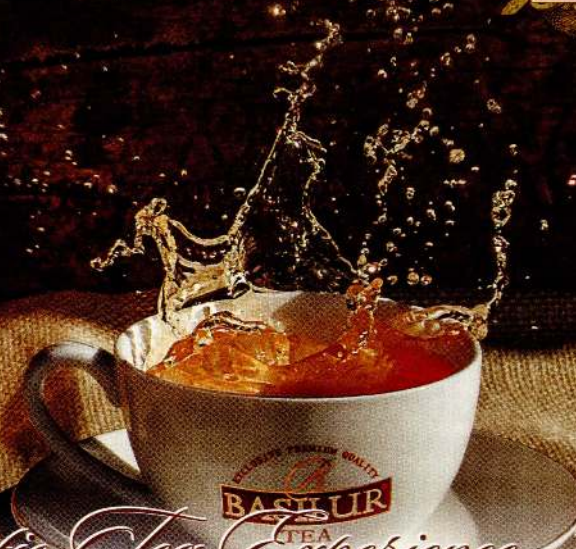
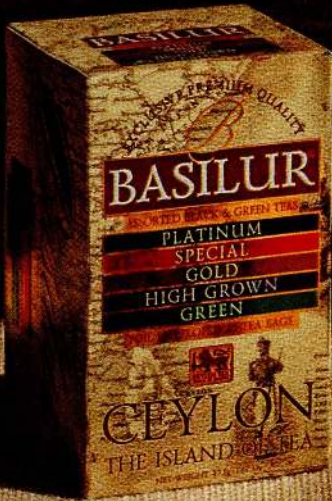
In the Buddha's first sermon to the five disciples, he emphasized this fact in the Damsak Pavathum Sutta, which describes the Four Noble Truths. In the section on Dukka, the Sutta says that when we do not receive what we expect and what we want, there is sadness. In psychology, this fact is explained where people experience mental pressure during day-to-day life. Thus, by understanding the Dhamma, a person would have a clear and peaceful mind. During this pandemic period, there is uncertainty in terms of employment, education, business, and the fear that

loved ones and those close to you may fall ill, resulting in stress and anxiety. Furthermore, the new normal of social distancing, sanitizing all equipment, and touchable surfaces have resulted in a stringent lifestyle with many rules and regulations, which causes stress. Watching or reading the news regularly could also cause anxiety and fear amongst the people. This constant fear of the virus and having to adhere to strict rules and regulations can cause obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and insomnia. Thus, there are many challenges that a person would have to face in daily life.

We should celebrate Vesak this year simply and charmingly. The country does not need to overspend on Vesak lanterns, massive pandals, large-scale dansal, and Bakthi Geetha competitions. We should focus on assisting the poor and taking care of the sick. We should either go to the temple or at home, worship the Buddha thrice a day and engage in meditation. This will provide great spiritual benefits. You can engage in Anapanasathi Bhāvanā if you feel stress, anxiety, and mental pressure as described above, focusing on the impermanence of life. If you are a person who loses your temper regularly, then engaging in Maithri Bhāvanā would be beneficial. Many Sutta describes that the Dhamma and Bhāvanā are good medicine for the mind and body. Thus during this pandemic period, by engaging in such spiritual activities, you will be able to develop your immunity as well. This year Vesak celebrations should focus on the spiritual growth of the mind and body. ☺

*Information provided by:*  
*Ven Diyapattugama Revatha Thero*  
*(MPhil)*  
*Expert Psychological Counselor and*  
*Meditation Teacher*  
*Siriwardhanarama Buddha Dhamma*  
*College*  
*Manodaya Meditation Center*  
*Siriwardhanaramaya*  
*Colpetty*  
*sirirevathad@gmail.com*  
*dhammavedi.com*



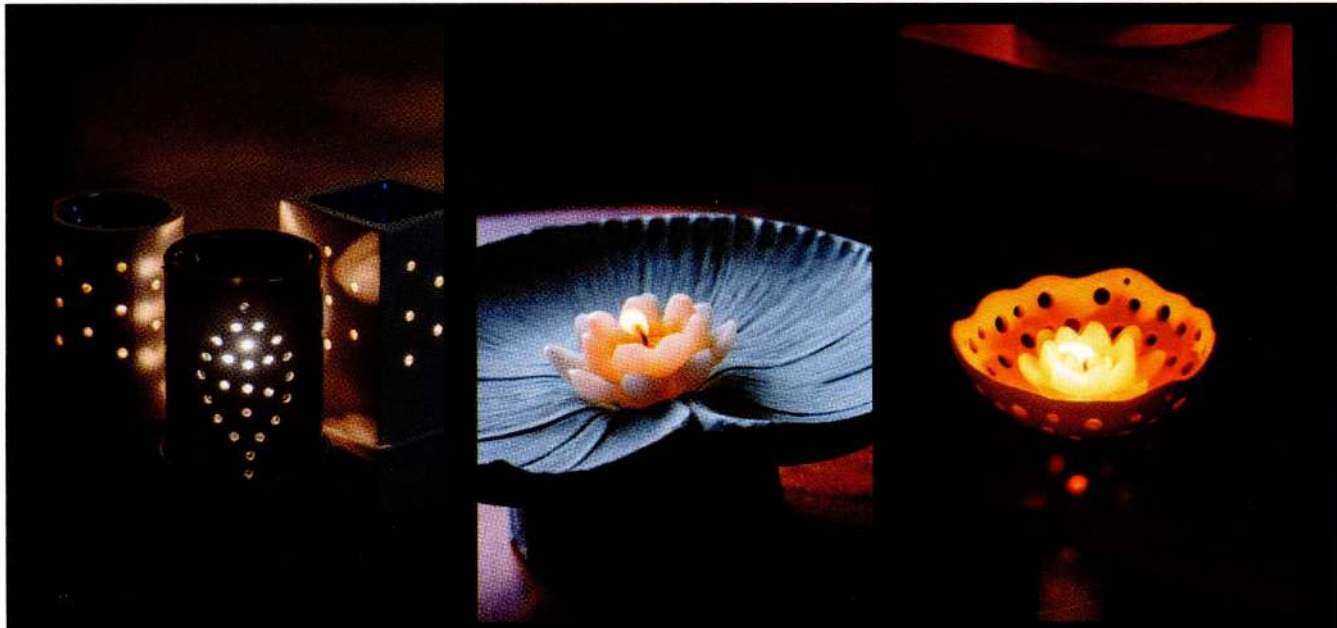


*Authentic Tea Experience*



Basilur Tea Export (Pvt) Ltd., No. 143/6, Weediyanbandara Mawatha, Kelanimulla, Angoda,  
SRI LANKA. Tel.: (+9411) 2549500 / 2549600 E-mail: info@basiurtea.com WWW.BASILURTEA.COM

Basilur Tea Gallery - Liberty Plaza, NR7A, New Retail Podium, 1st Floor, R A De Mel Mawatha, Colombo 3.  
- Colombo City Center, No.137 Sir James Piers Mawatha, Colombo 2.  
- Hotel Riff, No.870 Galle Road, Thiranagama, Hikkaduwa.



# Kalaya

DESIGNER HOME STORE

260/A, PANNIPITIYA ROAD,  
PELAWATTA, BATTARAMULLA. TEL : 2786886



# DOUBLETREE BY HILTON WEERAWILA RAJAWARNA RESORT



DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort has a 270-degree view of the Weerawila Lake.

The cooling breeze greets you, and the view of the Weerawila lake creates a mesmerizing sight. The lush greenery enhances the beauty and welcoming ambiance as you step into the DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort.

**Words** Udeshi Amarasinghe. **Photographs** Menaka Aravinda.



The resort was named after the rare Rajawarna tree (Photo Credit: KDU Group).



Opened in November 2020, the five-star resort is the brainchild of Saman Upasena, Chairman, KDU Group. He envisaged a stylish property that respected the environment and provided all modern luxuries for guests to enjoy a wonderful holiday during their stay in the South. Managed by Hilton Worldwide, the resort encompasses the standards and finesse that the international hotel chain offers. As the property owner, Saman Upasena adopts a hands-on approach to enable the smooth operations of the resort. Situated in Weerawila, a short distance away from the Mattala exit of the Southern Expressway, the resort is easily accessible. The Rajawarna tree is supposed to be prevalent in the Southern region. Still, it is rare, and on this property, there is a single Rajawarna tree, which is protected. Thus, the name of the resort was given as DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort. With a 270-degree waterfront view of the Weerawila Lake, guests are immersed in a relaxing and rejuvenating environment. Weerawila is home to many endemic and migratory birds. Thus, various spaces of the resort have been named after these birds.

You are welcomed with a warm Ayubowan, a signature Cookie, and a refreshing, welcome drink made of fruits sourced from the area. The lobby lounge is spacious and decorated with natural cooling colors. The furniture is

**Managed by Hilton Worldwide, the resort encompasses the standards and finesse that the international hotel chain offers.**



Saman Upasena, Chairman, KDU Group and Owner of DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort.

simple yet elegant in beautiful designs reflecting the resort theme. Opening out to the garden, the views are lush and relaxing with the soothing sounds of the nearby water. Ensuring that the environment is protected is a priority

at DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort. Even during the construction phase, no tree was cut, but the building design was adapted according to the natural environment. Sculptures made of recycled metal



The lobby lounge is furnished with cooling and subtle shades.



Woolf's Deck is the outdoor sitting area where guests can enjoy views of the Weerawila Lake.



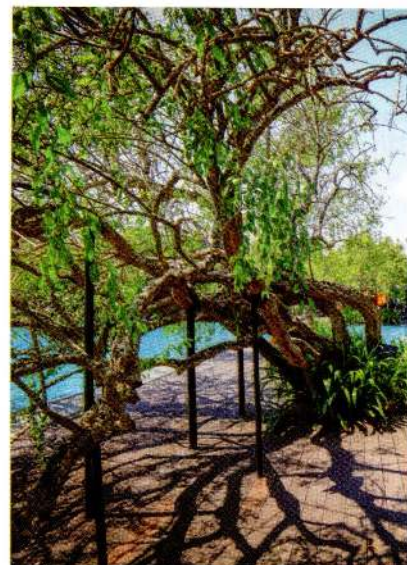


The comfortably furnished gazebos are named after birds.

adorn the gardens and ponds, reflecting the wildlife and birds of the area. The outdoor sitting area, which is known as Woolf's Deck, was inspired by the book, "The Village in the Jungle" by Leonard Woolf. This sitting area faces the lake, garden, and swimming pool and consists of gazebos with varying numbers of sitting arrangements. The pavilions are named after birds, such as Wigeon, Waxbill, Wagtail, Stork, and Tringa. Guests can enjoy beverages, meals with privacy, and afternoon high-tea. Other evening functions are also held in the gazebo area.

The swimming pool has a unique shape and extends a length of 97m. The unique form is because no trees were cut for its construction. As a

walk-in swimming pool, the depth is a uniform four feet. There's a children's pool for the little guests to enjoy and play. Hornbill the poolside bar serves delicious snacks and refreshing beverages. Featuring a swim-up bar, guests can enjoy beverages from the Hornbill while in the pool. As you walk along with the swimming pool, you will see a tree held up by steel crutches. Before the resort's opening, there had been a storm the previous night in which the tree had fallen. Reflecting Saman Upasena's love for the environment, instead of cutting the tree, it was literally brought back to its feet by placing the steel crutches under the damaged branches. Many paths run across the property, and



The restored tree held up with steel crutches.



The 97m swimming pool has a unique shape as trees were incorporated into its design.





Each room of the Presidential Suite is unique.



Another room of the Presidential Suite with a different interior.



A Deluxe Double Suite.



A Deluxe Room.

guests can enjoy a relaxing walk or cycle along the lake and witness many aquatic birds. The resort has its own fitness center and spa as well. Guests can use electric buggies, which is an environmental initiative, to travel around the resort.

DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort has 78 rooms, including 74 Deluxe rooms, three Deluxe Suites, and one Presidential Suite. Guests can opt for either the garden view with a terrace or with a balcony. The rooms are elegantly furnished with subtle shades and beautiful decorative pieces. The Deluxe rooms can accommodate up to triple occupancy and are provided with king beds or twin bed configurations. Deluxe Suites are set in double occupancy and are with a king bed configuration. All rooms and suites are equipped with the most modern amenities and lush en-suite bathrooms to ensure that the guests have a wonderful stay. The Presidential Suite consists of four separate rooms that can accommodate

***The five-star resort is the brainchild of Saman Upasena, Chairman, KDU Group. He envisaged a stylish property that respected the environment and provided all modern luxuries for guests to enjoy a wonderful holiday...***



Above and below: Quaint spaces for guests to relax are adorned with Sri Lankan instruments.





Spoonbill, all day dining restaurant, Tea Lounge and BBQ Grill.



Turnstone, the main bar of the resort.



Redshank, the resort's signature seafood restaurant.



At dusk, Nightjar has a beautiful ambiance (Photo credit: DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort).

***The Spoonbill, named after the bird that frequents the resort, is the all-day dining restaurant, Tea Lounge and BBQ Grill... The central highlight is a prominent wooden feature where one could walk through to serve their food.***

up to triple occupancy with a central sitting area, pool, and gymnasium.

Spoonbill, named after the bird that frequents the resort, is the all-day dining restaurant, Tea Lounge and BBQ Grill. It serves exquisite cuisine featuring an international fusion of Sri Lankan, Western, Chinese, Indian, Thai, and much more. The restaurant's design is beautiful, with ample natural light drawn in from the large glass panes. It maintains a balance between furniture and space. The central highlight is a prominent wooden feature where one could walk through to serve their food.

Another highlight is the lighting feature that creates a surreal ambiance. There is a private dining room within the restaurant, providing a space for family gatherings or corporate events. True to its name, a metal sculpture of a Spoonbill can be seen in the restaurant's pond.

The BBQ Hut is situated outside, and guests can select from a spread of meats and seafood, including lake prawns. The lighting at the BBQ Hut can be changed according to the theme for the evening.





Grand Rajawarna provides banquet and conference facilities (Photo credit: DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort).

The main bar, Turnstone, has a beautiful wooden and stone finishing, thus, exuding a warm ambiance. The Turnstone serves various types of beverages, including wines, cocktails, mocktails, fruit juices, and much more. Shisha is also available for guests to enjoy. The bar provides both indoor and outdoor sitting. The Karaoke Lounge can be used upon reservation, and the Pelican Boardroom is also on the same floor. On the rooftop of the resort, guests can enjoy beautiful views of the South. Redshank, the hotel's signature seafood restaurant, and Nightjar are both on the rooftop, providing an unforgettable experience.

The resort also provides banquet and conference/meeting facilities with a seating capacity of up to 600. The hall can be separated as Rajawarna, and Lake Rajawarna according to the number of guests and requirements for the function. Furthermore, the banquet hall has the facilities for groups to have workshops in separate (breakaway) rooms.

On holiday to DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort, guests can simply relax and enjoy themselves at the resort for their entire stay. They can also visit the



Guests can enjoy beautiful views of the South from the rooftop.

**On holiday to  
DoubleTree by  
Hilton Weerawila  
Rajawarna  
Resort, guests can  
simply relax and  
enjoy themselves  
at the resort for  
their entire stay.**

Sooriyawewa International Cricket Stadium, Weerawila Tissa Sanctuary, Tissamaharama Temple, Kataragama, Kirinda, Wedihitikanda, Yala, Bundala, Lunugamvehera and Udawalawe National Parks, Ussangoda, Ridiyagama Safari Park, and Kalamethiya Beach if they wish.

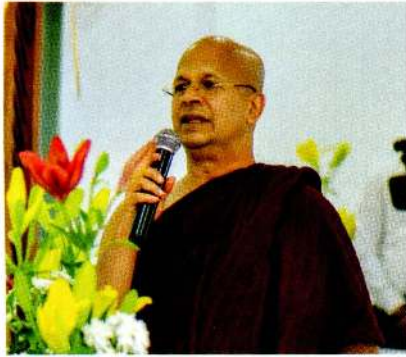
A stay at the DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort would indeed be a memorable experience. ☺

DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajawarna Resort  
Weerawila Watta, Weerawila.  
(+94 47) 203 0100  
DoubleTreeWeerawila.com



# Religious Ceremony at Siri Alanmathiniyarama Temple

An alms giving ceremony was held at the Siri Alanmathiniyarama Temple in Kirulapone under the direction of Ven Uduwe Dhammaloka Thero to mark the opening of the newly constructed buildings at the Temple. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Madam Loma Rajapaksa participated on this special occasion.



Ven Uduwe Dhammaloka Thero.



The alms giving and religious ceremonies were held to commemorate the newly constructed Alms Hall, Gini Hal Geya, Awasa Mandhiraya and Sakman Mediation Garden at the Siri Alanmathiniyarama Temple. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa upon arrival engaged in religious observances and thereafter participated in the alms giving ceremony and served alms to the Maha Sangha.

Basil Rajapaksa, Head of the Task Force on Economic Revival and Poverty Eradication, and Mrs Pushpa Rajapaksa were also present on this occasion. Minister Sarath Weerasekera, Nalin Fernando, MP and Defence Secretary General (Retd) Kamal Gunaratne were also some of the invitees.

The religious ceremony was held to bless Ven Uduwe Dhammaloka Thero and his Mother for their birthdays as well.

The alms giving ceremony was held under the patronage of Anunayake Theros of Malwathu Chapter Most Ven Dimbulkumbure Wimaladhamma Thero, Most Ven Dr Niyangoda Vijitha



Siri Thero, Anunayake of the Asgiriya Chapter Most Ven Veduruwe Upali Thero and Anunayake of the Amarapura Culawansika Maha Nikaya, Chief Incumbent of the Siri Alanmathiniyaramaya Temple in Kirulapone Ven Yogyane Sobitha Thero.

Most Ven Dimbulkumbure Wimaladhamma Thero, Anunayake of the Malwathu Chapter presented a souvenir to the President. ©



## Hilton Partners with SPAR Supermarkets to Celebrate Earth Day



Top left image: Linda Geibing, travel with purpose champion for the Asia Pacific and General Manager, Hilton Colombo Residences flanked by Martin Schoeman, CEO, SPAR Sri Lanka; Kumar De Silva, COO, SPAR Sri Lanka; Gigi De Silva, Marketing Communications Manager, and Yasanthi Wadugodapitiya, Food & Beverage Promotions Manager & CSR Champion Hilton Colombo and Sameera Ranasinghe, CSR Champion Hilton Colombo Residences. Top right and above images: attendees at the event, and viewing the products on display.


In celebration of Earth Day, 1,200 reusable grocery bags made from denim waste material was distributed amongst customers at four selected SPAR Supermarket outlets. Hilton's Travel with Purpose Initiative focuses on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) strategy to drive responsible travel and tourism globally. Hence, Hilton Colombo and Hilton Colombo Residences partnered with SPAR Supermarket outlets in Union Place, Negombo, Pepiliyana, and Thalawathugoda for this worthy cause. This project aims to encourage the "three Rs" principle of sustainable development – Reduce, Re-use and Recycle; helping to cut down on the use of plastic and the amount of waste we throw away, contributing towards conserving natural resources, landfills space, and energy.



## CHINESE GIFT PALACE






For Sri Lankan and Chinese Arts and Crafts, Feng Shui Symbols, Gift items and more...

78 Galle Road, Colombo 6, Sri Lanka  
Tel: (+94 11) 259 4931 | E-mail: [cgpalace@hotmail.com](mailto:cgpalace@hotmail.com)



### UNDERWATER SAFARIS LTD.

*Divine Village Trincomalee*








**Sea food Restaurant with A/C and Non A/C Rooms**

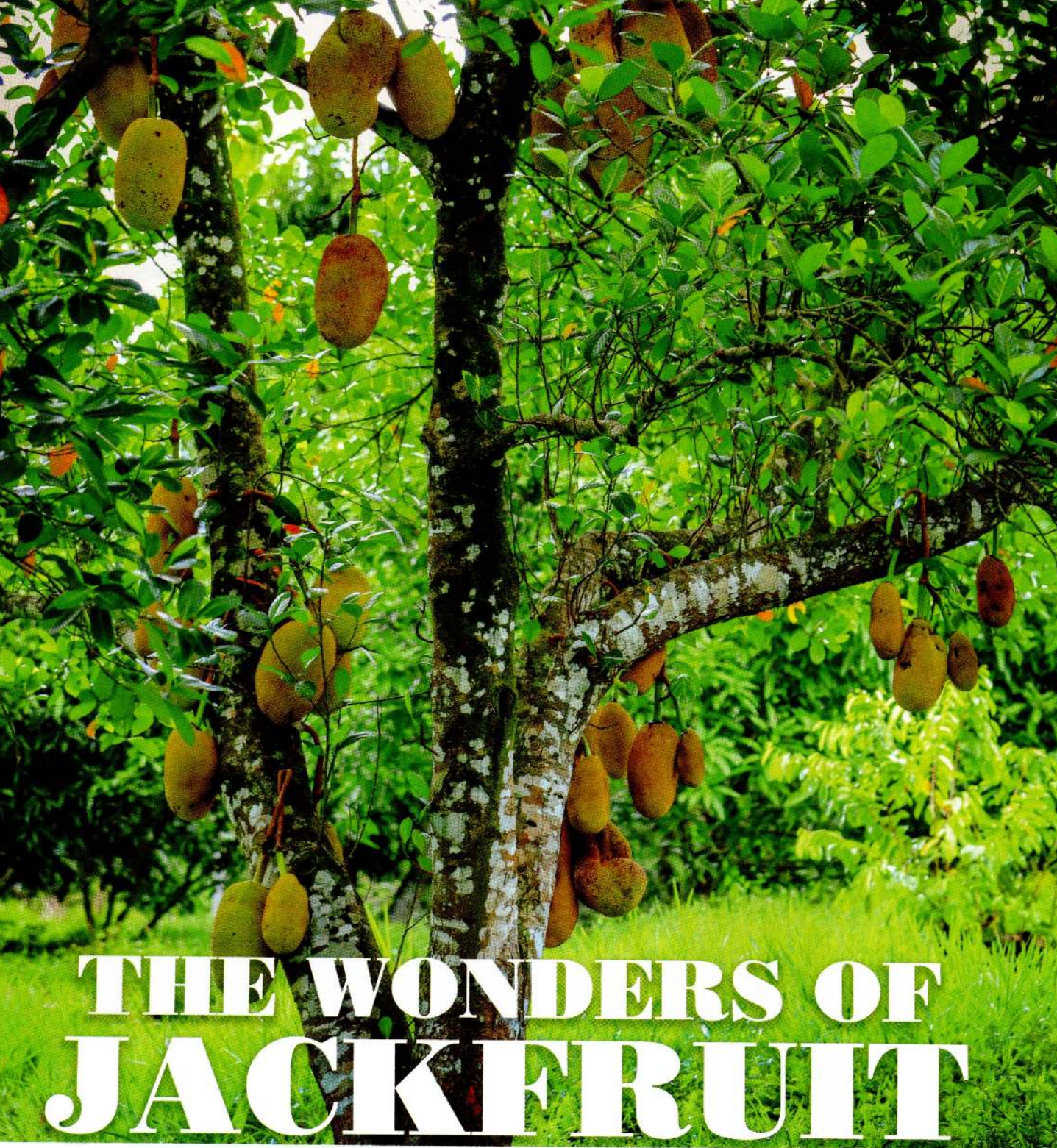
**SCUBA Diving, Snorkeling, Boat Diving Trips.**  
**Diving Equipment for Sale and Hire.**

**Head Office:**  
25 C Barnes Place, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.  
Off. Tel: 0112 694 012, 0112 679 766  
Fax: 0112 694 029

**Divng Vilge & Hotel**  
47 Beach Road, Alles Garden, Uppuveli, Trincomalee, Sri Lanka.  
Tel: 026 2050350 Mobile: 0773 596 804  
Email: [scuba@eureka.lk](mailto:scuba@eureka.lk) Web: [www.underwatersafaris.org](http://www.underwatersafaris.org)







A dwarf jackfruit tree.

Growing up in a culture where the jackfruit was eaten as a sweet juicy fruit and cooked as a vegetable, one certainly knows that with a jackfruit tree you can live a food-filled life of one flake at a time. The Jackfruit tree provides many benefits and its timber is one of the best.

**Words** Jennifer Paldano Goonewardane. **Photographs** Menaka Aravinda.



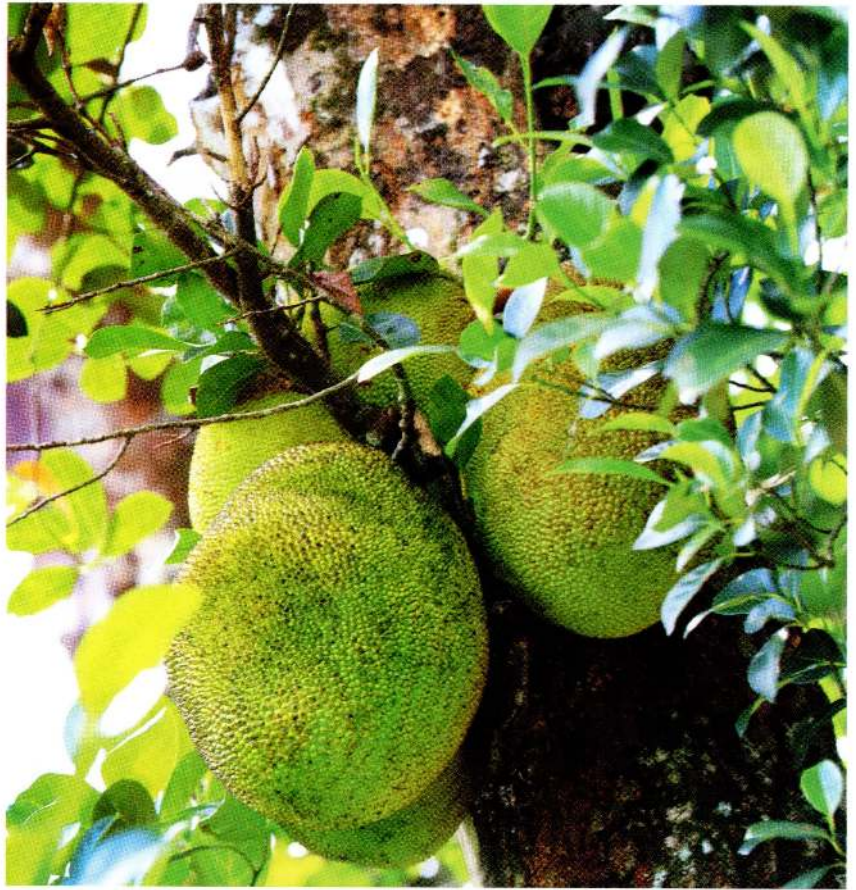
Only second to our staple rice, the jackfruit tree is dubbed the 'tree of rice' not without reason. It was first introduced from Malaysia in 1918 by Arthur V Dias. His visionary hindsight grasped the ubiquitous nature of jackfruit to make the country self-sufficient as rice cultivation got neglected under the colonial yoke while the wars and plagues of the time induced extreme food shortages. With time this fruit has become 'nativized' as an essential presence in our home gardens and gastronomic tradition.

Other than for consumption, the tree is used for timber and the tree parts for medicine. However, jackfruit remains as one of the most underutilized crops in Sri Lanka where only 20 percent is consumed and 10 percent is sold.

In Sri Lanka's wet zone the tree thrives, but will yield a good harvest even in the intermediate and dry zones as it can tolerate long dry spells. The existing population of jackfruit trees are so numerous that there are distinct differences not only between the trees, but also the leaves, and the fruit, and from one tree to another. A protected tree in Sri Lanka, with an estimated 31,131 hectares of land cultivated, and 150,185,121 fruits produced annually, seed planting is the normal method of propagation, although grafted trees have become more cost-effective methods, which allow the tree to bear fruit in less than four years.

Sri Lanka has several jackfruit cultivars such as, Fatherlong, Maharagama, Kothmale, Hirosh, Mandoor and Singapore or Ceylon Jackfruit. At the height of the jackfruit season in Sri Lanka from March to June and minor season from November to January, there'll be plenty of stalls selling flakes in different forms.

With a relatively high productivity of about 25.71 tons per hectare, a mature tree can yield from 10 to 200 fruits. The favorable weather condition for jackfruit is between 1000 – 1500 millimeters of rain, with temperature between 25 – 35°C and an elevation of up to 1000 meters.



Sunlight is vital for the growth of a jack tree.



Sunlight is vital for growth. The soil must be fertile, ideally, made of clay, loam and silt, the pit size being at least three feet in depth and width, filled with top soil and compost manure. Generally the ground is prepared two weeks ahead of planting, when a combination of 10 kilograms of organic manure (compost) is mixed with the top soil. The application of organic fertilizer continues through the first year of growth and after, applied once in six months, gradually reducing to around five kilograms, assessed according to the width of the canopy, which would be around one kilogram of fertilizer per square kilometer. As the tree can't tolerate too much moisture, irrigating has to be done cautiously in the initial stages lest the roots decay. Good moisture drainage is crucial to growth. While the wet and the intermediate zones experience intermittent rainfall, the best way to gauge water requirement is to observe the level of aridness



around the soil and the plant. Moreover, excessive soil moisture during flowering and fruiting will affect the quality of the fruit. Uprooting weed around the growing tree is important to retain the nutrients in the soil. If properly nurtured, a tree grows rapidly in the first four years, reaching a height of up to 1.5-2 meters annually.

The jackfruit cultivars are classified into 'Vela' and 'Waraka' – soft and firm variety according to the texture of the flake. Rich in carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber, the flakes in 'vela' and 'waraka' exhibit a wide diversity in color, from cream, light yellow, yellow, deep yellow, light saffron, saffron, deep saffron, to an orange. Generally, the flesh of 'vela' is soft, rubbery, and spongy. 'Waraka', is crunchy with crisp flakes and is considered more desirable for consumption and better preserved and hence, high in quality. As the fruit matures at 12 to 16 weeks, the smell surrounding the tree is an indication for harvesting, along with the change in the surface color from green to a greenish yellow and the hollow sound that it releases when the surface is tapped. The weight of a fruit may vary between two and 20 kilograms; larger fruits of about 50 kilograms have also been recorded.



Jackfruit bulbs vary in size, shape, and texture.

**The jackfruit cultivars are classified into 'Vela' and 'Waraka' – soft and firm variety according to the texture of the flake.**



Jackfruit seeds (kos ata) like the flakes, can be cooked and prepared as a snack in many ways.





The jackfruit seed (kos ata) curry has a uniquely flavorsome recipe.



Kiri Kos is a mild and creamy accompaniment with rice.



Red 'Polos' curry brimming with spices, herbs, and exotic flavors.

Jackfruit can be the 'poster child' to showcase the link between food and culture; our skill and knowledge surrounding harvesting, cutting, and cleaning, the recipes and preparation and preservation. It is, after all a meal staple. The fruit's flakes are boiled and consumed with grated coconut or grated coconut relish known as '*pol sambol*', which is filling and astoundingly scrumptious, it suffices for the everyday rice-lunch of the natives. Mature flakes cut and cooked to a thick dish in coconut milk is '*Kiri kos*', meaning milk jackfruit, a dish given to new mothers to increase lactation. The red hot '*polos*' curry made from the tender fruit is the quintessential dish for rice, milk rice, or string hoppers because it is full of spice seasonings and culinary herbs. Cooked in coconut milk, it tingles and brims with exotic flavors.

Boiled '*polos*' can also be pickled in a combination of mustard paste, vinegar, and salt or cut finely to be combined with mustard and pepper-infused grated coconut to prepare a '*malluma*'. This wonder fruit is a vegan's delight as it's the new meat that can make fleshy fillings for short eats. One of its best long-term usages locally is dried flakes known as '*Atu Kos*', prepared by boiling unripe mature bulbs in salt-infused water until it turns pale and sun-dried for at least four days prior to being stored

in a stove hood built above the hearth in the kitchen – the '*Dum Messa*'. Or else, stored in an airtight container or bag. This can be cooked, boiled, or deep-fried. Similarly, fresh seeds (kos ata) can be well-preserved in sand and retrieved when required.

Despite these benefits, the jackfruit is not widely grown as a commercial crop in Sri Lanka owing to the wide variations in fruit quality and the time taken to bear fruit, which vary between three to seven years for trees originating from seedlings, whereas grafted trees can be better managed by maintaining a maximum height of 15 meters by pruning during growth and is bushier and will bear fruit after two years, allowing the fruits to be harvested with a ladder or fruit picker. Significantly, the Singapore or Ceylon Jackfruit tree begins to bear fruit by its third year.

In a bid to promote commercial farming in jackfruit, the Department of Agriculture is developing dwarf varieties for high density planting in Sri Lanka. High density planting involves bushy varieties, which will allow a large number of high yielding trees to be planted in a hectare. While a distance of at least 20 meters is required between grafted trees, the dwarf varieties will require only 15 meters spacing between them. The cultural practices surrounding ground and soil preparation, and fertilizer

use and harvesting will be easier, and thus, reduce the cost of labor in high density planting.

Meanwhile, the red jackfruit is the 'new kid on the block': promoted by the Department of Agriculture, nearly 500 trees of this variety have been planted, which will take at least another two years for fruition. With its minimal fluid content, glassy appearance and texture, and longer shelf life of up to two weeks, it's hoped that it will take off as a commercial crop.

As we live in unprecedented times, it's not too late to plant a jackfruit tree. Unlike before, newer grafted dwarf varieties yield fruit in a shorter time and are easier to pluck and ideal for today's little homesteads. A step further would be to promote the fruit commercially by introducing high-density planting for easy harvesting and management. Simultaneously, newer varieties, such as the red jackfruit, a high-yield semi-dwarf tree, that can be stored longer following harvesting can be an excellent start to a consistent program. 🌱

*Information provided by:*  
 Mangala Agalakumbura  
 Assistant Director of Agriculture  
 Fruit Crop Research and Development  
 Center  
 Department of Agriculture  
 Horana



# BUNDALA NATIONAL PARK IN A DAY!

Hambantota District is only a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Colombo via the Southern Expressway, it allows you to enjoy the sights and sounds of Bundala National Park in a day.

**Words** Udeshi Amarasinghe.  
**Photography** Menaka Aravinda.







**B**undala National Park is an important habitat for migratory birds. Bundala was recognized as a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 2005. It is the only such coastal reserve in Sri Lanka. The landscape is of the dry zone scrub jungle with sand dunes, and the National Park has four brackish water lagoons. Due to its location and natural environment, Bundala is home to about 230 indigenous and migrant bird species, including many wetland species, crocodiles, deer, elephants, and much more.

Driving along the gravel roads of the Park, we were able to see Purple Swamphens appearing near the water holes, striking against the lush greenery. Up in the sky, birds soared as they enjoyed their freedom. A Spot-billed Pelican rested on a tree, not even glancing our way, soon to take flight to venture farther away. Painted Storks stood tall, creating a picturesque sight. The soothing cooling breeze from the lakes and ponds momentarily made us forget the heat of the day.

An Indian Darter with a group of Black Cormorants seemed to enjoy a moment of camaraderie. A beautiful peacock with its vibrant colors stuttered across, and farther away, peahens gathered together. A group



A Greater Thick-knee





Purple Swamphen with a prey in its beaks.



Lesser Whistling Duck posing against the lush greenery.



An Indian Darter with a group of Cormorants.

of Torque Macaques was grooming the young, while some of the older ones' running to and fro. A juvenile Brahminy Kite perched on a dry branch ever alert on its surroundings.

Lesser Whistling Ducks paddled along, emerging out of water the momentarily camouflaged. The surroundings were enchanting as we drove ahead, looking here and there, searching for the wildlife of Bundala. A couple of Greater Thick-knee birds were relaxing in the afternoon light when one did a peculiar movement with his feet. Bright green bee-eaters were highlights on broken branches and mounds of soil on the ground. Upon us approaching, they would hurriedly fly away to once again land on a nearby branch.

***Bundala National Park is an important habitat for migratory birds. Bundala was recognized as a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO. It is the only such coastal reserve in Sri Lanka.***



An elegant Grey Heron.





Two cute Rose-ringed Parakeets also known as Mala Girawa in Sinhala.



A juvenile Brahminy Kite on alert.



A Spoonbill watchful in the afternoon sun.



The beautiful Painted Stork.

Gradually the birds were coming out as afternoon became evening. The sounds of birds were mesmerizing, giving us a hint that though they could not be seen, they were definitely around. We could see two cute Rose-ringed Parakeets, also known in Sinhala as Mala Girawa, on the branch of a tree. They were bright spots of green against the brown of the tree.

Bundala is bordered by the sea, and there is a beautiful location with rich red soil, almost copper-like in color. The cliff drops into the ocean, and the waves lash onto its surface below. The view is mesmerizing, and you can see far out to sea.

As we headed our way back to the main entrance, we passed again the lush aquatic bulrush plants that swayed to the rhythm of the wind. Large wild buffaloes were either soaking themselves in the water or were leisurely walking along the road. Our attention was suddenly directed towards a massive crocodile relaxing on the small bund of the lake. Another short distance away had its mouth wide open, basking in the sun.

We had enjoyed a few hours in the Bundala National Park and had observed many birds and animals. We were soon back on the road returning to Colombo. It is indeed possible to visit Bundala in a day and enjoy the beauty of nature. ©



# businesstoday.lk



August 2020

September 2020

October 2020

November 2020

December 2020

January 2021

February 2021

March 2021

April 2021

May 2021

# exploresrilanka.lk



September 2020

October 2020

November 2020

December 2020

January 2021

February 2021

March 2021

April 2021

May 2021

## BT Options

20-2/1, Lauries Place, R A De Mel Mawatha, Colombo 4, Sri Lanka.

V: (+94 11) 259 7991 E: info@btoptions.com W: btoptions.com

Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.





KCC operates in compliance with COVID-19 safety guidelines advised by WHO and Ministry of Health - Sri Lanka

Kandy City Centre  
www.kandycitycentre.lk

5, Dalada Veediya, Kandy, Sri Lanka

+94 716 555 555 | +94 812 202 846  
Digitized by Noolabam Foundation  
noolabam.org | aavabam.org



# "THE PLACE TO BE"

## Arugambay **ROCCOS**

Arugambay Roccas is a chic and modern cube-style hotel. The 22 Cubes (upper and lower) provide air-conditioning and offer either balconies or verandahs. The restaurant, The Square and The Space, upstairs, offer panoramic views of the Water Cube (swimming pool) and the Indian Ocean.

Arugambay Roccas, Main Street, Arugambay, Pottuvil  
(+94) 718 10 99 99  
info@arugambayroccos.lk | arugambayroccos.lk



**ENJOY A FABULOUS VACATION UNDER THE WARM SUN IN THE SOUTH EAST COAST. EACH MOMENT CREATES YET ANOTHER UNFORGETTABLE MEMORY.**

## **PAPER MOON** — Kudils —



Enjoy barefoot luxury at the oceanfront Paper Moon Kudils. With 20 spacious and fully AC Kudils located in two sections (pool/restaurant side and garden side). This unique property has a swimming pool (Water Hole) and restaurant (Kusini) serving delicious cuisine made using garden fresh produce.

Paper Moon Kudils, Whiskey Point, Arugambay.  
(+94) 719 97 97 97  
info@papermoonkudils.lk | papermoonkudils.lk



## Arugambay **PodBay**



Arugambay PodBay is a novel concept that comprises compact convertainers (NapPods) in pastel hues, HomePods, and Bay rooms. The seaside hotel has one of the largest swimming pools in the area (WaterPod), and the restaurant PotPod serves a range of cuisine and beverages in an area ideal for relaxation.

Arugambay PodBay, Main Street, Arugambay, Pottuvil  
(+94) 718 10 99 99  
info@arugambaypodbay.lk | arugambaypodbay.lk