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**THE TEAM 2023 / 24**

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***From the President.***

Happy New Year, I hope you all had a fantastic break with family and friends.

We ended 2023 with some very successful functions, none of which would have been possible without the hard work of the entertainment committee and members:

Day trip to Mulwala, we could not have asked for a better day. Forty-three members headed to the Mulwala Ski Club to try their luck at the gaming machines. Each member kindly brought a plate to share for breakfast and the lunch provided by the Chinese restaurant was scrumptious indeed. To end the day the group had a sing along and bingo on the bus for the journey home.

- Children's Christmas party was well attended with 35 children who had a fantastic day with all the games and a visit from Santa.
- Christmas luncheon was a sell out and members who attended had an unforgettable time with excellent food and music.
- New Year's Eve ball in conjunction with Derrick Junkeer was held at the Grand on Cathies. The raffle was run by the ACF and all funds generated from the raffle was donated towards to the ACF. Special thanks to Srilankan Airlines for donating a return air ticket to Sri Lanka and also Derrick Junkeer for giving us the opportunity to conduct the raffle.

Thank you again for your continued support and let me end by wishing you and your families a very Happy New Year with good health, happiness and God's Blessings.

**President**

***Desmond Kelaart***



**A C F SENIORS' ANNUAL  
CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON  
03 DECEMBER 2023  
AT THE CEYLON CENTRE.**

**RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS**

Vice President ***Nilanthi Martin*** announcing,  
Asst. Secretary ***Dawn Rahim*** presenting the gifts  
and President ***Desmond Kelaart*** conveying the  
Fellowship's best wishes.



## NEW YEAR'S EVE DANCE 2023




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*When he had finished creating Eve, God promised Adam that good and obedient wives would be found in all corners of the world. Then, on an impulse, he made the earth round and has never stopped laughing since !!!*



A C F DAY TRIP TO MULWALA by coach - 25<sup>th</sup>. November 2023 -



THE A C F WECOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS :

Emma Diaz

Dawn & Nanda Liyanage





### DATES TO REMEMBER

### ACF EVENTS 2024

- |                           |   |   |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| <b>10th February 2024</b> | - | Valentine's Day at the ACF \$ 35.00       |
| <b>13th April 2024</b>    | - | Gatsby Night at the ACF \$ 40.00          |
| <b>5th May 2024</b>       | - | Mother's Day Luncheon at the ACF \$ 30.00 |
| <b>8th June 2024</b>      | - | Bollywood Night at the ACF \$ 40.00       |

**Contacts: Nilanthi Martin 0432 020 115 Pauline Kelaart 0418 570 244**

**OBITUARIES ABROAD by VICTOR MELDER**

**DE SILVA, Gerard Donn (Donn)**, 13/11/1939 - 7/11/2023, beloved husband of Marieke, father and father-in-law of Milton and Karen, Jeremy and Denise, Russell and Anita, Brendon and Jane, Gareth and Ange, and Donnella, grandfather and great-grandfather of Melissa and Robbie, Catherine and Greg, Niamh, Georgia, Stephanie, John Paul, Lovina, Belle, Quinn, Katya, Sophia; Alex, Noah, Delta, Dallas and their partners, in New Zealand. (The New Zealand Herald, November 10, 2023.)

**NICOLLE, Carol Roma Lorenz**, (11.02.1936 – 30.11.2023), wife of late Dexter Nicolle, mother of Dan and Rochelle Godamunne Nalin and Sharon Fonseka and Sidath and Diane Kodikara, grandmother of Thanishka, Shanalie, Chantal, Chayann, Jhanik and Kiara, in Sri Lanka. (Contributed).

**RODRIGUEZ, Nghai Fareena Laiyeely (Née SOURJAH)**, daughter of Late Mahmooda Assan & Tuan Mithra Sourjah. Wife of Alfred William Gratiaen Rodriguez, mother of Patrick(Can) Fidelia, Bernadina & Aasmahan (Can), mother in law of Nimal Karunaratne (Dec) & Beverly Lappen, grandmother of Fallon, Renee (Aust) Katrina & Salomi, on the 30th Of November 2023 in Canada. (Sunday Times, 3.12.2023)

**LABROOY, Jude**, husband of Mallika, father of Dilan. Son of late Duke Labrooy and Maurinne Labrooy, brother of Gillian, Radley and Sandra, bother-in-law of Saman, Inoka and Keith, in Sri Lanka - **187/16C, Suraweera Mawatha, Walpola, Sri Lanka**. (Daily News, 6.12.2023)

**BERMAN, Christie**, (02.01.1953 – 08.12.2023), husband of Mailka, father of Michelle. Brother of Calpurnia and Noel, in Sri Lanka. (Contributed)

**RAYMOND, Aubrey. V**, husband of Marie, father of Shannon, in Colombo, on December 11, 2023, aged 85 years. (Contributed & Internet Resources)

**KULUGAMMANA, Callista Marion Antoinette**, wife of Kummar (dec), mother of Samanthha. Sister of Damindra and Nalindr, in New Zealand. (Contributed)

**IQBAL, Mohamed**, (05.09.1935 – 14.12.2023), husband of the late Jean Irene, father of Zan and Zak, father-in-law of Clara. Grandfather of Zara and Digger, in New Zealand. (The New Zealand Herald, 16.12.2023)

**OBITUARIES by VICTOR MELDER**

**PEREIRA, Anne BEATRIX (Née PATTERSON)**, mother of Cian and Guy, grandmother of Georgia, mother-in-law of Tanya. Sister of Richard (dec) and Elizabeth, on Saturday 25th November 2023 at age 85. (West Australian, 27.11.2023)

**ROBERTSON, Henry George**, (20.02.1935 – 26.11.2023), husband of Beryl, father of Diane and Rochelle. Brother of Rita (dec), Ronnie (dec), Wilton (dec), Melville (dec), Terrence (dec) and Rita, in Melbourne. (Contributed)

**THIELE, Colin Norman**, (25.02.1935 – 16.11.2023). (Adelaide Advertiser)

**MENDIS, Dr Lal**, husband of Davina, father of Shehara and Ramali, father-in-law of David Troppo and Oliver Bennett, grandfather of Jesse and Alex, in Brisbane on December 1, 2023, aged 69 years. (Federation of Sri Lankan Organisations of Queensland Inc)

**GUNERATNE, Daulette Patricia Antonia (née PEREIRA)**, 25.09.1941 – 02.12.2023, wife of Fred, sister-in-law of Paddy, Gerry and Merry, sister of Elmo, Bernard, Delphine Rasanayagam, Roger and Yvette Pereira, in Melbourne. (Contributed and Internet Resources)

**BERHARDT. John Maurice**, husband of late June, father of Horace, Steuart, Jerome (All of Aust), Sherlock and Veron, father-in-law of Romaine and Perin (Aust), Tracy and Dilika, grandfather of Kirk, Amanda, Dexter, Derrick, Joshua, Jadyne, Natalie, Sherwyn, Trent, Bomal and Delvin. (Daily News, 5.12.2023)

**DE WIT, Arie**, in Geelong on November 30, 2023. (Geelong Advertiser, 5.12.2023)

**PONNIAH, Sathiaseelan** (03.05.1939 – 04.12.2023), in Melbourne. (Tamil Thakaval)

**DE SILVA, Garret Dunsford (Gary)**, 05.06.1935 - 01.12.2023, husband of Barbara (née Ingram), father of Ricardo, father-in-law of Geraldine, adored grandfather of Aaron and Caitlyn. Brother of Yvonne, Anthony, Frank and Barbara, Dudley, Jenny (deceased). on 1st of December 2023.. (Herald Sun, 7.12.2023 and Contributed)

**DIAS, Ranjith**, son of the late Henry and Mrs Dias, in Darwin, NT on December 8, 2023. (Contributed)

**HOLMES, Maureen**, (10.12.19043 – 01.12.2023), mother and grandmother of Cass, Joe, Madi, Mollie, Jeremy and Tom. (Hobart Mercury, 7.12.2023)

**KOCH, Rev Evan**, husband of June, father of Andrew, Mandy and Wendy and their partners. Grandfather of Ruby, Evie and Hugo, on December 7, 2023, aged 87 years. (The Adelaide Advertiser, 8.1.2023)

**CRAGGS, Russell**, on 28.11.2023. (The Adelaide Advertiser, 8.12.2023)

**PARSONS, Anthony Granville**, (12.04.1942 – 09.12.2023), husband of Marcelle, father of Boyd and Karen, grandfather of Soraya, Hadley, Isabelle and Kayla. Son of Blossom and Wyndham, in Melbourne. (Contributed)

**KONESWARAN, Chelliah**, (31.10.1945 – 11.12.2023), in Melbourne. (Tamil Thakaval)

**ARIYAMALA, Jeyaratnam** (02.11.1944 – 07.12.2023), in Melbourne. (Tamil Thakaval)

**EATON, Mervyn**, on 29 November 2023. (West Australian, 13.12.2023)

**ARAM, Maureen Inez**, wife of William, mother and mother-in-law of Lauren, Deirdre and Steve, Roderick and Bles, and Vanessa. Grandmother of Meli, Nick, Sherene, Corey and Jordan. Great-Grandmother of Charlotte, Avery, Archie, Alfie and Rory, on December 11, 2023, aged 93 years. (Adelaide Advertiser, 13.12.2023)

**GRENIER, Rev. Bro. Brian Bede**, (27.02.1934 – 07.12.2023), on December 7, 2023. (Brisbane Courier Mail, 14.12.2023) .

**VIRGINIE, Gilliam Mary(née VANDERWALL)** 20.8.1958 – 12.12.2023, wife of Maurice. Sister of Hans, Robert, Arlen, Amber and Ralph (dec) Sydney Morning Herald, 15.12.2023 and Contributed)

**PARANAVITANA, Miriam Faith**, wife to Ananda (dec), mother of Nish & Janine, Roshi & Ed., grandmother of Jess, Shani, Evelyn and Zoe, on December the 10th, 2023, at the age of 87. (Melbourne Age, 16.12.2023)

**KOCH, Joyce Ellen** (01.08.1925 – 09.12.2023). (Canberra Times, 16.12.2023)

**DIAS, Ranjith**, (16.05.1944 – 08.12.203), husband of Malkanthi, father of Shanaka, Anushka & Dyani & step father to Chandika & Ishan. (Northern Territory News, 16.12.2023)

**SCHOKMAN, Loraine Anne**, (19.11.1948 – 16.12.2023), daughter of Lorenz and Elaine (both deceased). (Adelaide Advertiser, 19.12.2023)

**LUDOWYK, Theodore Derrick Brian**, son of late Desmond & Bertha, husband of Durgha (née Weerasekara), father of Damian, Tashmi and Jason, brother of Sandra and Tania, father-in-law of Peshani. (Daily News, 21.12.2023)

**RASARATNAM, Ramupillai**, (23.03.1929 – 22.12.2023), in Melbourne. (Tamil Thakaval)

**COSTA, Nancy**, (13.01.1939 – 04.12.2023), mother of Wilbur and David, grandmother of Lloyd, Flynn and Poppy. (Adelaide Advertiser, 23. 12.2023)

**WIKRAMANAYAKE, Prasanna Nimal** (11.08.1923 – 20.12.2023), husband of Anna Maria. Brother of Dr Ranji, Prenitha and Dileeni, in Melbourne. (eLanka Newsletter)

**PARARAJASINGAM, Chandranayagi**, in Melbourne, 26.12.20-23). (Tamil Thakaval)

**MASON, Jeffrey**, father of Michael, Son of the late Edward (Bugs) and Merlyn Mason, brother of Elaine and Rodney. (Daily Mirror, 28.12.2023)

**WHITE, Bertram Willard (Bommer)**, 09.07.1948 – 27.12.2023), partner of Corinne Hindle, stepfather of Sandrine and Michelle. Son of the late Bertram and Beryl White, brother of 15 siblings. (Daily News, 30.12.2023)

**HATHARASINGHE, Rumesh**, in Melbourne (Contributed)

**DIRCKZE, Beverley**, wife of Mervyn. (Contributed).

**AN IRATE MP OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT SAID TO PRIME MINISTER DISRAELI -  
“ SIR. YOU WILL EITHER DIE ON THE GALLOWS OR OF AN UNSPEAKABLE DISEASE ’**

**AND THE PRIME MINISTER REPLIED  
“ THAT DEPENDS , Sir , ON WHETHER I EMBRACE YOUR POLICIES OR YOUR MISTRESS “**

## **SRI LANKA NEWS in BRIEF**

**RELAXED VISA PROCEDURES for all categories within two weeks.** Sri Lanka will take steps to relax the visa procedure in the country, Controller General of the Immigration and Emigration Department, Harsha Illukpitiya has said. Illukpitiya made the announcement at a press conference held at the Ministry of Public Security yesterday (18). Illukpitiya said they had reviewed all procedures related to issuing visas and that they had come up with a process to relax the procedures relating to all categories of visas.

The new procedures would be introduced in the next two weeks, he said, adding that under the present visa procedures, a person who visited Sri Lanka on a tourist visa could only extend his or her visa after a month of staying here. However, under the new visa scheme, anyone could obtain a visa for the total period of stay when he or she applied from a foreign country, he said.

## **Community police committees keeping tabs on visitors & CCTV Cameras**

Community police committees totalling 14,022 had been established in all Grama Niladari divisions in the country, and they had been asked to inform the police of those who visited their areas, Acting IGP Deshabandu Tennakoon told journalists in Colombo yesterday (18).

Forms had been issued in all three languages for that purpose, he said. “If a new person visits a village, the committee must report his or her arrival to the police. If someone is leaving the village, that too should be brought to the notice of the police. IGP said that from 22 January, the police would start cracking down on road rule violations in the city of Colombo. Sometime before, a CCTV system had been established in Colombo, but the police had not taken advantage of it, he said.



**IMF REVIEW** - the IMF plans its upcoming formal review and Article 4 consultation, key areas of focus will include the new public financial management law, potential conflicts with the public-private partnership law, electricity tariffs and urgent preparations for property taxation. The IMF has stressed the importance of perseverance with ongoing reforms, addressing fiscal issues and advancing governance agendas. However, the IMF has applauded the country's significant progress in implementing economic reforms and Sri Lanka's courage in publishing the governance diagnostic, a first in Asia.

The IMF has highlighted the positive start of the programme, recognising the challenging reforms undertaken by Sri Lanka and their significant impact on the domestic population. Senior Mission Chief for Sri Lanka, Peter Breuer has noted encouraging signs regarding the programme's impact on stabilising the economy, particularly in policy-oriented variables and fiscal areas. Breuer has said that a meeting the IMF had with Sri Lankan fiscal authorities revealed promising revenue collection, indicating the effectiveness of implemented policies since reaching a staff level agreement in the second half of 2022.

The IMF has emphasised the positive surprise in these developments have resulted in Sri Lanka boosting its confidence with the international community, official creditors and private creditors. Peter Breuer has told President Wickremesinghe that with respect to revenue collection, there are 'very encouraging' numbers that basically highlight the policies the government implemented after the IMF had reached the staff level agreement in the second half of 2022 are working. "They have had the intended effect. You're collecting the revenue that's needed to address the cause of the crisis. So, that really is very good news," he has said.

**Number of closed farms in Sri Lanka exceeds 14000.** The Committee on Public Accounts (COPA) revealed that more than 14000 farms in Sri Lanka have been closed and this has been identified according to the data received from the provinces. The officials pointed out that most of these farms are small-scale farms and **most of these farms have been closed due to animal theft.** COPA pointed out that it is not acceptable to say that farms are closing down only because of the frustration of small-scale farmers due to animal theft. Officials pointed out that the destruction of pastures needed for cattle and land-related problems have also caused this. Thus, the COPA pointed out that the Department of Animal Production and Health should maintain accurate and clear data. Moreover, the Committee emphasized the importance of actively maintaining the data system by updating the existing data. This was discussed at the COPA meeting held recently (11) under the Chairmanship of Hon. Lasantha Alagiyawanna, to consider the progress of the recommendations given to the Department of Animal Production and Health on July 06, 2023 by the Committee on Public Accounts. Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera, the Minister in charge of Agriculture, was also involved for this at the invitation of the Committee. **The Committee discussed at length the need for local milk in this country and the Minister thus pointed out that the amount of milk received by the Milco company on a daily basis has greatly decreased.**

**The Criminal Investigation Department** has started a probe into the death of preacher Ruwan Prasanna Gunaratna, who committed suicide on Dec. 28, and the death of seven persons, including three teenagers, who committed suicide after Gunaratna's death under similar circumstances. All seven people were reported to be followers of Gunaratna and attended his funeral. The next day after Gunaratna's suicide, his 35-year-old wife was reported to have committed suicide by consuming poison after feeding poison to her two sons and daughter at their home. Later, the body of a 21-year-old woman was recovered in her house and a 34-year-old man was found dead at a guest house where he was temporarily staying. According to police, all seven deaths were the result of ingestion of the same type of poison. Buddhism believes in rebirth.

Police spokesperson Nihal Thalduwa has cautioned people against listening to the sermons of Gunaratne. Venerable Jinananda Thera filed a police complaint on Jan. 9 against a person who claims to be 'Avalokitheswara Bodhisattva,' a person who has attained enlightenment. Videos of his followers worshipping him have gone viral. In his complaint, the monk said the preacher was abusing Buddhism. On Jan. 9, Jinananda Thera stated that "there was a direct relationship between Gunaratne and Avalokitheswara." Avalokitheswara has made statements about destroying lives for the sake of Lord Buddha, added Jinananda Thera. Buddhist leaders, including Akuratiye Nanda Thera, chancellor of Ruhuna University, have called on people to listen to the sermons of Buddhist monks who preach pure Buddhism. "Don't follow myths," said Nanda Thera.

Sri Lanka is a Buddhist-majority nation with around 70 percent of its 21 million people following it. Among the rest are 13 percent Hindus, 10 percent Muslims and 7 percent



**Dengue mosquito population increases** There had been a 29.5% increase in the population of mosquitoes which carry dengue in Sri Lanka, the National Dengue Control Unit (NDCU) said on Saturday. NDCU said the increase had occurred in the second week of January compared to the first week. About 6,689 cases of dengue had been reported in the first 18 days of the year, and one person has died the NDCU said. NDCU added that 2,951 dengue cases had been reported from January 8 to 14

.Most cases had been reported from the Colombo district (1,391), the most populous district, while 1,320 cases had been reported from Jaffna, which faces the brunt of the North Eastern monsoon, the NDCU said. There were over 88,000 cases in 2023, and 58 deaths had been reported, Dr. Sudath Samaraweera, Director of the NDCU said.

**Two-hundred refugees in TN receive Sri Lanka passports** - Grateful for taking the Sri Lankan people in and looking after them for over four decades. “Even during the most recent economic crisis, the Government of India stepped in to assist Sri Lanka to stabilise its economy,” he said. Sri Lanka’s High Commissioner said that the issuance of all-country passports to these Sri Lankan nationals was due to a decision taken by the President and the Government of Sri Lanka within its overarching national policy framework to “promote national reconciliation and integration with the collaboration of related stakeholders”.

Though they were encouraging Sri Lankans to return to Sri Lanka, Deputy HC Venkateshwaran said that this initiative would permit them to also “explore the possibility to further legal migration to other countries.” January 21, 2024 Daily News

**CCTV-based detection of traffic violations: Fines to be imposed from 01 Feb.** Public Security Minister Tiran Alles and police personnel at yesterday’s launch of a pilot project to detect traffic violations through the CCTV system established within the Colombo city limits. Public Security Minister Tiran Alles yesterday launched a pilot project to detect traffic violations through the CCTV system established within the Colombo city limits. The pilot project will continue until January 31, the Minister said. During the pilot project, if a driver violated road rules, the registered owner of the relevant vehicle would be notified, Police Media Spokesman SSP Nihal Thalduwa said. As per the project, 108 CCTV cameras have been installed at entry points to Colombo city. In addition, warning boards are fixed at nine places informing the drivers that they are under observation. He said that the owner of the vehicle would be informed of any such offences during the pilot project, and the issuance of fines would commence after Jan 31.

**Over 100,000 nude photos circulated on social media last year.** More than 100,000 nude photos have been shared on social media in the last year alone, Commencing the parliamentary debate on the Second Reading of the Online Security Bill Minister of Public Security Tiran Alles said. Commenting further, the Minister said that the bill specifically focus on child abuse and violence against women. A lot of incidents of violence against women and child abuse is happening through social media in our country which includes rape cases as well as murders. More than 8000 such complaints have been received last year and majority of them on sexual harassment.

“There have been a lot of complaints about money fraud, cyber harassment and theft of computer data”, he said. He pointed out that the Members of Parliament as well as their wives and even children have been insulted using social media networks. He pointed out that rules are necessary to stop all these things. “We are appointing a commission for this. Its members will be appointed by the President.



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