



VOLUME 8
ISSUE 1
MARCH
2021

CANBERRA LANKAN



Working Committee

Chairman

Jayantha Somasundaram
Charles Perera (outgoing)

Editors

Sangita Ashok
Tarinda Gunawardena
Subramaniam Sukumar

Technical Designer

Shehan Athauda

Committee Members

Lasath Lecamwasam

Canberra Lankan is an e-journal published in English, Sinhala and Tamil. No material, including advertisements designed by Canberra Lankan may be reproduced in part or in whole without the written consent of the editor. Opinions carried in Canberra Lankan are those of the contributors and not necessarily endorsed by Canberra Lankan Editorial Committee.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

Canberra Lankan;

Email:
canlankan1@gmail.com
Web: www.aslaact.com

Editorial

After a hiatus of one year or so it is great to reunite with our community in Canberra through the medium of our e-journal. Having faced a bushfire of catastrophic proportions, a wreckage causing hail, and now the pandemic, humanity has not been spared the wrath of God and nature.

This modern catastrophe can in my mind be explained in the words of William Wordsworth who wrote in his poem 'The world is too much with us' that was published in 1907

Getting and spending, we lay waste
our powers;—
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a
sordid boon!

The themes are as relevant now as it was then. The rat race for material comforts has made people lust after money, power and possessions. Irrespective of one's religious belief, what binds most human beings is greed, the rape and merciless exploitation of one another and of nature. I am amazed at how much time is wasted in aimless pursuits, how little time human beings have for one another, and the ever increasing, unsatiated appetite. The so-called bucket list of things to do and see before you leave this world, is in my opinion just another expression of the wanton and materialistic outlook on life.

Politicians get a lot of bashing by people because their actions come into the public arena, and rightly so. But what we fail to see is that these fallible politicians are merely a reflection of who we are as a people and society. Deep within us is the need to become something more, to be seen to be something beyond our intrinsic capabilities. Our expectations are beyond and limitless. Our capabilities and skills are so limited. To bridge that gap, we are ready to exploit, pander to the whims and fancies of those we think are better than us, display endless fawning, and cultivate fake friendships with those in power.

Every year I went back to my island in the sun, I enjoyed just doing the simple things I did as a kid. Catching buses, although this time around in non-peak hours, walking around town hall experiencing Victoria Park, gazing at the large,

serene Buddha statue, and feeling the sublime oneness with humanity. I walked as much as I could. My friends had tales of which five-star hotel they had frequented, the glamorous events, how awful the sun was, how they disliked the unruly traffic, the list was endless. 'I could never live in Sri Lanka' was the frequently voiced opinion. This coming from people who had before they left the shores of Sri Lanka had possibly never gone beyond their villages in Sri Lanka! 'We cannot live within Sri Lankan traditions, norms and economic and social policies' – this was the all-embracing response to any ills the country may face.

But I stood in awe as the light winds tenderly stroked me after a particularly hot day ended on the few occasions that I was able to get out of Colombo with my mother and son. I watched the sun go down sulkily, the hush of the birds, the lapping of the waves, and the shy moon as it glanced out from an orange sky. I watched in awe as the three-wheel driver narrowly slipped in and out of sea street. I went inside Hindu temples with amazingly sculpted Gods – thought of the beautiful embodiment of womanhood in Goddess *Sita*, and her ultimate sacrifice to prove her sanctity and devotion to Lord *Rama* even as she lived with her abductor *Ravana* in the forests of Sri Lanka. What a story, and so much left unsaid in the portrayal of the life of a woman in any era.



In the evening, I listened to the melodious chanting of the Buddhist monks. It echoed in my soul. In the morning I watched children in clean clothes, clean faces, chattering on their way to school. I remembered my school days as I turned to wave at my mother even as I took the final corner before disappearing from her gaze. I remember telling her not to reduce the song on Radio Ceylon until I was out of earshot and remember her indulgent smile.

I wonder where is that happiness in the children that I now meet, the heady happiness that I felt. I had that spring in my step. I was alive. I did not feel the need to impress or express. I was bookish, poetic, an ardent reader and writer. I was finding my way in this world with honesty. I chose accountancy giving up university admission to do Arts because I did not want to leave my mother, nor did I want to be a burden on my father. I felt his pain as he went about his daily life working and reading the law, preparing for and practising his cases in front of a grimy mirror at home. His daily race to put food on the table and to do it with such honesty. At 18 years I was an audit trainee. My head was in the clouds, so this was the beginning of the thuds that I needed to get to reality, to a world of money and business.

Modern teaching is paving way for greater eloquence, academic and technical knowledge, affluence but at the cost of wisdom. So, we are somehow creating a world that is dissatisfied, and disillusionment is setting in from a young age. From childcare to computers to the disintegration of the family unit we have come a long way from simplicity. I find it hard to understand the *tamasha* of modern marriages. I had a very simple yet beautiful wedding in New Delhi. The wedding sari was of my husband's choice, mehndi in Tilak Nagar, two simple gold rings, hair and make-up (of which I knew very little) done in a small newly emerging beauty corner run inside a room of the beautician's home). There we were at the feet of the priest performing mantras. The customary rounds around the fire, followed by a meal and the hotel proprietor even threw a band in. He even gave me flowers and it was over. Man and wife. Marriages are made in heaven celebrated on

earth – I had got that inscribed into our wedding card. Ah! such innocence.

Forward 20-30 years and the face of weddings has changed drastically. So much of hysteria, lavish extravagance, a modern-day parody of Bollywood heroes and heroines. The fake tears, the over-made faces, everything is in excess. To what extent have we gone in organising pre-wedding shoots, what an exorbitant display of money and power and to what end?

It is hard to keep one's head amid a world that is increasingly becoming dominated by a technologically disparate world. So much is at stake. Our own loneliness has come to the forefront. As much as we like to be technologically connected, we are leading lonelier lives. Now the pandemic has exacerbated these issues. So, the virus to many has been an eye opener. It has stopped people in their tracks from finishing the other things on their bucket list of things to do. But there has been a virus in our society from ages, from the time the universe began.

The problem is that we want what the other person has even though we do not have the mental equipment to attain it. Being content in what we have and mastering our own path is important. Why are we here, what purpose is my life not just to myself but to the greater good of humanity? Who am I?

We are all looking to others to bring about the change. Another leader, another political God, a religious stalwart, the next Kamala Harris. We think the answer is in something higher and lies in something beyond us. We are actively quoting the religious books, the Bible, Gita, Dhammapada, Qur'an. But until we take the messages from these to heart and begin to live it in our daily lives, until we bring in simplicity in our souls. see the universe and the people for who we are - limited beings, grasping and greedy, seeking for gratification, be it in the next promotion, the next partner, the rich and attractive hunk or the beautiful damsel, the social marriages of convenience and what not – we cannot move on in our spiritual journey. Unless and until we come to grips with our common identity, our common human race,

there is no minority and no majority, no black or white or brown, no colour, race or religion to divide us. Just acceptance that we are human beings - some with genius and some seeking genius, some more perfect than others and some on the path to perfection.

We need to see ourselves as seekers. Start going back to basics, find joy in the simple things and in oneself. True wisdom is to be fulfilled in one's company, meditative, giving to those less fortunate, without seeking in return. Unless we recognize who we are we cannot begin to work with our inner energies.

We so desperately need a new world order. A new form of spiritual connection with nature. A better relationship with our souls. Most of all, the need to look within. As Sadhguru, an eminent spiritual leader has mentioned in one of his speeches 'the only way out is the way in'. Until we truly begin to reflect this in our own lives, nothing can and will change.

It is my hope and prayer that we begin this inward journey, 'heart within God o'erhead'.





Australia Sri Lanka Association (ACT) Inc.

Association No: A01192

President's Message – Lasath Lecamwasam

Ayubowan! Wanakkam! As-Salaamu- Alaikum! Greetings!

It gives me great pleasure to have this opportunity to send a message in this edition of the *Canberra Lankan* e-journal in my capacity as the current President of ASLA ACT.

I made a personal commitment to the former ASLA President Charles Perera at the last AGM, to make every effort to resurrect the e-journal, which was last issued in June 2018. Therefore, it is tremendously satisfying to see the journal back in publication again. This simply could not have happened without the passion and dedication of our editor Sangita Ashok, with help from the other editors Tarinda Gunawardena and Subramaniam Sukumar, Jayantha Somasundaram the new Chairperson for the e-journal and Shehan Athauda the compiler. I must also acknowledge the many years of service provided to us so willingly by our previous compiler Dr Leonard Jayasinghe who has since relocated to Melbourne.

ASLA takes pride in being Canberra's oldest association for migrants of Sri Lankan origin, comprising of Sri Lankans of all ethnicities and religious backgrounds. ASLA's objectives is to promote social and cultural ties within the Sri Lankan community, as well as fostering mutual understanding and interaction within the wider Canberra community



The e-journal provides an ideal platform for members in our community to share their stories and interests and to celebrate their successes. In this context I felt happy and proud to attend the recent felicitation held at Stage 88 for a great young achiever from our community, Ranusha Nanayakkara, whose story is narrated in this edition. I am sure there will be many such stories yet to come from our younger generation, who have integrated so well within the Australian society and proved to have the capacity to contribute so much. However, if we are to help them maintain cultural ties with Lanka and understand the true Sri Lankan values of friendship, generosity, warmth, and hospitality, then it is important for us to promote social, cultural and sporting activities within our community, which again is a key aim of the e-journal.

On behalf of the ASLA Committee I wish the team at *Canberra Lankan* all the best in their endeavours to promote friendship, harmony, mutual respect and success among all members within our community.

Lasath Lecamwasam,
ASLA President

What Can You Do with Eight Australian Dollars?

It is a lot, it seems, going by Sri Lankan standards. According to Nilooka Dissanayake who organizes an annual book donation drive every school year, it takes just 8 AUD or around Sri Lanka Rs.1,200 to fulfil a booklist for a child in Sri Lankan public schools.

Is it really so cheap? “Yes,” says Nilooka. “It costs less because we buy at bulk rates. Normally, fulfilling a book list will cost around Rs.2,000 to Rs.3,000 at least. If you have three school-aged children, total costs can easily add up to Rs.10,000. And that is excluding the cost of a school bag, pencil case, or shoes. The Principal, Vice-Principal and teachers have told us over and over again how much parents and children appreciate our donations.”

How many eight dollars do we squander away in a month? In an year? Think of all the booklists you can fulfil with the price of a takeout dinner or snacks! Nilooka urges us to consider these questions.

Book Donation Drive for Ambalegoda Maha Vidyalaya

Ambalegoda Maha Vidyalaya is situated in the Kurunegala District, in Sri Lanka, close to the Deduru Oya Dam. There are 380 plus students learning from Grades 1 to 12. The School conducts the Advanced Level program only in the Arts stream. (This is a common problem around the country.) The Advanced Level class has around 25 students. Students are mostly from farming families.



A Thank You Address from a Parent that Says it All

This is the translated version of a thank you address by a mother on the occasion of the 2020 book distribution ceremony. It gives you much insight into the project.

“We are thankful for your contributions to our children last year and this year.

“Our village mostly has parents who are in farming and agriculture. After farm work, by December, most people in this area are short of cash. I believe that less than 25 kids have parents in government jobs. All other kids have parents who engage in daily labour to find money for their education.

“Your donation (of books and stationery) is a huge help to these parents. Because I come to school often and talk to parents, I know sometimes mothers pawn the earrings they are wearing to buy schoolbooks for the new year. Most parents feel helpless some years around this time when crops fail.

“We have very talented kids in this school. Some students have qualified for university in the Arts stream. Your donations amounting to over Rs.400,000 per year is valuable to us.

“Children should be thankful for these donations. They should be determined to work and prove that they are making the best use of this gift. Children have a responsibility to show the donors that you are talented, that you gained admission to university from this school.

“I thank you on behalf of teachers and parents. I respectfully ask you to continue this work and become a source of strength to our children in the future as well.”



How Did This Project Start?

Nilooka: “My involvement in this project started in the year 2018. The book donation project had been just part of the invaluable services rendered by one of the teachers, now the Vice-Principal of the school, Ven. Dhammanada, through his foundation. As we had not met the priest or the Principal, we wanted to make a donation in kind. I am personally hesitant to handover money to nonprofits. So we asked the Principal for a book list, got quotations from suppliers and selected Atlas, one of the largest stationers in Sri Lanka.

“We also donate more than 100 books to the school library, typically valued over Rs.20,000 and buy textbooks for teachers.”

School Year 2021

For school year 2021, the book list amounted to Rs.425,000. “I believe the school was asking us for less stationery knowing that 2020 was a difficult year,” says Nilooka. “So far, we have donated stationery worth of Rs.300,000 and the amount collected is less than that. The book list for teachers will be my contribution, in addition to whatever the shortfall. We have also collected secondhand books in Sinhala and English for the library this year.”

Other Needs - A Photocopy Machine

When asked what else the school needed the Principal had requested a photocopier. “I know how many photocopies my son needed in the first five years at school,” Nilooka explains. “This is a big money drain that is not in the school budget.”

Invitation

Nilooka extends an invitation to all of you who read this to take part in this worthy project going forward.

“You may even consider adopting another small school as a project of your own, in an area known to you, where your family members reside in Sri Lanka. If you have the connections and a trusted contact, I will introduce the stationers who help us in this project, and you can begin your own project.”



Please visit for more details:
[LinkedIn.com/in/nilookadissanayake](https://www.linkedin.com/in/nilookadissanayake)

[Facebook.com/BusinessTrainerSriLanka](https://www.facebook.com/BusinessTrainerSriLanka) |
[DiyunuwaBlog.com](https://www.diyunuwa.com) |
[NilookaDissanayake.wordpress.com](https://www.nilookadissanayake.wordpress.com) |
[@NVEDissanayake](https://www.instagram.com/NVEDissanayake)

Whatsapp: +94710 150 973

දියුණුව Channels (Diyunuwa)

[Diyunuwa YouTube Channel](#)

[Diyunuwa Blog \(Bilingual\)](#)

[Diyunuwa YouTube Channel Facebook Page](#)

[Diyunuwa Success Group on Facebook](#)

ஆசிரிய தலையங்கம்

கான்பெரா வாழ் இலங்கக மக்களுக்கபகன ஒரு மின் அஞ்சல் ெத்திரிகக நடத்தப்ெடுவது மிகுந்த திருப்த்தி யளிக்கின்றது.

ெத்திரிகக ஒருவரது எழுத்தார்வக்கத வளர்க்கின்றது. எழுத்து ஒருவகர சரி நுட்ெமாகப் பெசவும் எழுதவும் தூண்டுகின்றது. ெிரான்சிஸ் பொப் (Francis Bacon) என்ற அறிஞர் பெருமான், வாசிப்பு ஒருவகனப் பூரண

மனிதனாக்குகின்றது, எழுத்து ஒருவகன சரி நுட்ெமுள்ளவனாக மாடுகிறது, மகாநாடு ஒருவகன ஆயத்த நிகலயில் கவத்திருக்கின்றது என்றார்.

(Reading maketh a perfect man, writing maketh an exact man, conference maketh a ready man) எழுதுெவனிடத்தில் மிககெடக் கூறுவபதா குகறத்துக் கூறுவபதா இருக்க மாட்டாது.

இதனாபல தான் 1816ல் யாழ்ப்பொணத்தில் காலடி எடுத்து கவத்த

அபமரிக்க மிஷனரிமார் 1841ல் 'உதய தாரகக" என்ற ெத்திரிககய ஆரம்ெித்தனர். இதுபவ இலங்ககயின் முதலாவது தமிழ்ப் ெத்திரிககக.

நாலடியார் சமண முனிவர்களினால் எழுதப்பட்டது.

பாரதி

உயிர்களிடத்தில் அன்பு வேண்டும்

தெய்வம் உண்மையென்று சான்றிதல்

வேண்டும்

வைரம் உடைய நெஞ்சு வேண்டும்.

இன்று நாம் அவுஸ்திபரலியாகவ எமது நாடாகப் பொற்றுகின்பறாம்.

இவ்வாறு புகுந்த நாட்கடப் பொற்றுவது சிறந்த ெண்ொகும். இந்தப் ென்பு தமிழ் மக்களிகடபய இன்று பநற்று பதான்றியதன்று.

இரண்டாயிரம் வருடங்களுக்கு முன்னபர தமிழ் மக்கள் இந்தக்
பகாட்டுக்கடக் ககடப்பெரிடித்து உலகத்தார் அகனவகரயும்
தமது உறவினராகக் கருதினர்.

தமிழ் மக்கள் வரலாற்றிபல கி மு முதலாம் நூற்றாண்டுக்கும்
கி பெரி இரண்டாம் நூற்றாண்டுக்கும் இகடபெட்ட காலம்
சங்க காலம்

எனப்பெடுகின்றது. இக்காலத்தில் வாழ்ந்த ஒரு தமிழ்ப் புலவர்தான்
கணியன் பூங்குன்றனார். இவர் பெரிடிய புறநானூறு என்ற பதாகுப்பெரி
காணப்பெடுகின்றது. அது

பெரிவருமாறு: யாதுமம்
ஊபர யாவரும் பகளநீ
தீதும் நன்றும் பெரிறர்தர
வாரா

பந்தலும் தணிதலும் அவற்பறா ரன்ன
சாதலும் புதுவது அன்பற வாழ்தல்
இனிதுஎன மகிழ்ந்தன்றும் இலபம
முனிவின் இன்னா பதன்றலும் இலபம
மின்பனாடு வானம் தண்துளி தகலஇ
ஆனாது

கல்பொருது இரங்கும்மல்லற்
பெர்யாற்று நீர்வழிப் பெருஉம்
புகணபெரிால ஆருயிர் முகறவழிப்
பெருஉம் என்ெது திறபவார்
காட்சியின் பதளிந்தனம் ஆகலின்
மாட்சியின் பெரிபயாகர வியத்தலும்
இலபம சிறிபயாகர இகழ்தல்
அதனிலும் இலபம.

இந்தப் ஁டல் ஁ின்வர஁மாறு பமாழிபயெர்ப்புச்
பசய்யப்டெட்டுள்ளது:

Every city

is ours.

And all

are kin

Good and evil do not come

from others Pain and its relief

are not different Death too is

not new

We do not rejoice when life seems sweet

Nor do we cry when it's bitter & when

troubled For this we know from the

discerning

As frail raft caught in rivers crashing down rocks

Swollen with cold rain pouring through skies split by

lightening Our lives too are tossed sround by the fate

We do not therefore praise the mighty for

their rise Far less do we disdain the lowly.

கான்பெரா வாழ் இலங்கக மக்கள் ஒற்றுமயாக வாழ்கின்றனர்.
இலங்ககயில் காணப்டும் குபராதங்கள் இங்கில்சல. அத்துடன்

அவுஸ்திபரலியாகவ மனமாற பநசிக்கின்றார்கள். இந்த
ஐக்கியமும் நல்லுறவும் பதாடர்ந்து வளர இகறவனின் அன்கெ
'கான்பெரா - லங்கன்' பவண்டி நிற்கிறது.

Guest Column



By **Dr. D.T. Kingsley Bernard**

The million-dollar question: Characteristics of a good political leader!

– By *Dr DT Kingsley Bernard*

Leadership is a subject which has been researched the most in management, yet difficult to understand and practice due to its complex nature. Let me initially introduce leadership in general and to consider a few statements made by management experts about the subject.

According to John Adam, “If your action inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” In other words, someone to get to this status, a leader has to provide his followers or team members a conducive environment to be motivated and deliver their best to achieve the goals and objectives of the team.

Name of the political leader to be evaluated: XXXX

Characteristics	S	C	O	R	E
Honesty	1	2	③	4	5
Integrity	1	2	3	④	5
Humility	1	②	3	4	5
Knowledge	1	2	③	4	5
Ability	1	2	3	④	5
Experience	1	②	3	4	5
Personality	1	2	③	4	5
Patriotism	①	2	3	4	5
Timely decisions	1	2	③	4	5
Team-work	1	2	③	4	5
Historic knowledge	1	2	3	④	5
Global outlookknowledge	1	2	③	4	5

Circled figures are the scores given to Leader XXXX for respective characteristics by someone.

Total: 35/60 (ie. 35/60 X 100=58%)

Lombardi (2001) said: “Self-knowledge is the basis for character and character is the root of integrity and integrity provides the foundation for leadership.” This statement highlights the importance of knowledge, character, and integrity to become a good leader. He further goes on to state that leadership is the ability to direct people and more importantly to have those people to follow that direction.

If I may also quote Peters and Austin (1985): “Leadership that pulls together people with diverse talents, backgrounds, experiences and interests, encourages them to step up to responsibility and continued achievement, and treats them as full scale partners and contributors.”

It is all about the ability to work in teams, with a team spirit, that would ultimately provide for continuous improvement. The emphasis is on really paying attention to people—really believing them, caring about them and really involving them.

Vital characteristics of a leader

Having considered the above statements of experts, let us take a practical approach to consider what qualities and skills a person should possess to be an effective leader. According to past researchers some of the vital characteristics of a leader are; ability, knowledge and experience along with honesty, integrity, and humility which adds up to a leader’s personality.

One can go on expanding this list, however these characteristics are comprehensive enough to mould one to be a good leader. These characteristics are common attributes of a successful leader, hence the need to evaluate these characteristics in political leaders, for they play a vital role in nation building.

Honesty: The quality of being honest and trustworthy. An important characteristic of quality leaders, which helps command the respect of people and their confidence. It is of prime importance in the assessment of political leaders. If found dishonest, there is little else of any importance in the assessment of a good leader. Honest leaders are today at a discount.

Integrity: The uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles. In ethics integrity is regarded as honesty and truthfulness. It is the opposite of hypocrisy.

Humility: Being humble. The absence of pride and arrogance in a good leader. This again is a rare quality in most of the present day leaders. They are proud and arrogant.

Knowledge: The theoretical and practical understanding of any subject acquired through education and experience. Acquired skills of importance in performance, this could be of the society, culture, economy, and specially constitution and laws of the land which are prerequisites for any political leader, the presence of which would help to guide his or her followers. As has been said a leader’s evaluation is based on his/her knowledge of the subject matter.

Ability: The quality or state of being able. A natural aptitude or acquired proficiency. Both physical ability and mental ability are of importance. Hence, the age, health, and mental

fitness are real concerns for any political leader. It is quite natural that functions of certain faculties deteriorate with age.

Experience: Knowledge gained through direct observation or participation in a particular activity or job. Experience and expertise are like the two sides of a coin. One cannot be replaced by the other. Experience in political affairs is an asset to any political leader, as exposure to many different situations will definitely enhance the confidence of facing similar or different situations in the future.

Personality: The combination of all the above characteristics which forms an individual's distinctive character. The uniqueness of an individual, distinct from the rest and likely to arouse emotional feelings in the minds of the followers of any leader.

Having stated most of the important characteristics of a good leader let me now discuss some specific characteristics of a political leader.

Priorities of a political leader

The first priority of a political leader should be to serve one's country, not just oneself. Despite the fact that politics can be competitive and at times dirty, a good leader should align his activities with what is best for the country strictly committing to "country before self". Hence, a political leader should be able to make unpopular decisions if necessary in the interest of the nation. To state differently, a leader must be patriotic.

Secondly, a leader should know experts in specific fields and who can be trusted. Most importantly a leader should know when it is better to trust an expert and when it is necessary to do one's own investigations. Leader should have the right skills for taking appropriate and timely decisions based on good judgement.

Thirdly, a political leader should know the strengths and more importantly the weaknesses of democracy yet one should respect and listen to his followers in leading them and promote shared responsibility and team-work

Fourthly, a political leader should be knowledgeable about the history not only of one's own country, but also of other important countries. Not only a basic knowledge about past events, but he should know much more than an average citizen.

Finally, a political leader should have travelled extensively, attending important meetings of use to the country, not merely for personal benefit. This is important as the leader can develop useful networks and acquaintances with other leaders of international standing. In other words a leader should have a global outlook.

7 common characteristics and 5 specific characteristics

Now that we have considered the vital characteristics of a good leader and it is quite natural that no leader has all these characteristics in adequate quantities. As human beings this will pose a problem on how to select the best out of political leaders who present themselves, for a Presidential Election, which is now the most pertinent issue for the Sri Lankans.

It is my objective to present a simple mechanism for this purpose based on the above discussed characteristics of political leaders based on sound theoretical concepts and expert views.

I have referred to seven (7) common characteristics and five (5) specific characteristics of a good political leader. The premise behind this simple method is to give scores to these twelve (12) characteristics by assigning points varying from 1 to 5 depending on how best a particular candidate fares in relation to each of these 12 characteristics (1- poor to 5- excellent) according to your own judgement and add all these points in respect to each candidate you wish to evaluate.

Finally the candidate who scores the highest number of points should logically be better than the others.

Following matrix (table) will explain the above mentioned method.

Matrix (table) for evaluation

In the example shown in the table, leader XXXX has scored 58% and you can repeat the same exercise for any number of leaders (candidates) and compare the scores which will facilitate you to select the best out of candidates presenting them for leadership. However you may limit this exercise for a small number (3 to 5) of candidates whom you wish to consider for leadership than doing the exercise for a large number of candidates as it is a waste of time. This matrix (table) can be further developed by giving weightages to each characteristics if someone thinks all the characteristics are not equally important. Further you can also add more characteristics to the matrix. This simple matrix will offer a logical basis for evaluating candidates for their suitability for leadership using your own understanding. The judgement of each individual on these characteristics in respect to a particular leader may vary and to some extent there is a subjective element in the method of evaluation. However, that is the way that we make decisions in our daily life and we are not always rational.

The purpose of this short article is to highlight the importance of leadership as we know the progress of any nation depends largely on political leaders and their followers as the history bears testimony to leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed and so many others. These successful leaders had possessed the qualities discussed in this article to a very high degree.

The researchers have concluded that most successful leaders have very high level of Emotional Intelligence thereby they had properly understood their own self and that of others. As a result these leaders had developed strong interpersonal relationships and conducted their own affairs excellently. This article further goes on to introduce a simple method to follow in making an informed and logical decision in making this serious decision in selecting a leader for our nation without being a slave to our emotions.

[The writer is a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Business Management awarded by the Management and Science University (MSU) of Malaysia. A holder of an MBA from the University of Colombo with a gold Medal for Marketing Management and Post Graduate Diploma from the International Marketing School of Colorado State University, USA; Diploma

in Computer Systems Design from CICC-Japan and a Bachelor of Science (BSc) from the University of Jaffna. He is currently the Chairman of the Council for Agricultural Research Policy (SLCARP) and is a Senior Lecturer attached to the Faculty of Business, Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT). He counts more than 38 years of industry experience spanning to various sectors during which he has held top management positions both in private and public sector organisations. He had lead National Chamber of Exporters (NCE) as its president and was the chairman of the Joint Business Forum during 2004-2006. He was the District Governor of Lions International, District 306 B2 in 2009/2010 and was the first Students' Council President of the University of Jaffna.]

හැපි ඉන්ඩිපෙන්ඩන්ස් ඩේ - නිලංග ලොන්සේකා

අමරබන්දු දොට්ට පිලට යන්නේ ලන්දටය. ඔය වැසිකිලි පෝච්චි පාවිච්චිය ඔහුට හුරු නැත, ඔහු හිතන්නේ ඒවා ලන්ද තරම් නිදහස් නැතැයි කියාය. දිනක් නිවාඩු පාඩුවේ ලන්දට වී ඉදගත්තා පමණි.

"ඔ මයි ගෝඩ්.. මයි ගෝඩ්.. හෙල්ප්..හෙල්ප්.. සම්බොඩ් හෙල්ප් මී" කියා කැගසමින් තමන් දෙසට වේගයෙන් ඇදී එන ශබ්දය ඇසීමෙන් තමන් කරන්නට ගිය කාර්යද අමතක කොට අමරබන්දු නැගීසිටියේ ඉංගිරිසියෙන් බික් බික් ගාමින් තමන් වෙත දිව එන්නේ කවුරුන්දැයි දැක බලා ගැනීම සදහාය. සරමද වලාපොට ගසාගත් අමරබන්දු සිත දඩි කොටගෙන නැගී සිටියේය. තමන් වෙත දිව එන්නේ සුද්දෙකි.

"මල හතිලව්වයි.. මේ මොකාද මේ" තමන් වෙත දිව එන හයේ හතරේ සුද්දා දැකීමෙන් අමරබන්දු තමන්ටම කියාගත්තේ යම් තැනිගැන්මකිනි.

"ජ්ලිස් ගෝඩ් හෙල්ප් මී.. ජ්ලිස් හෙල්ප් මී" සුද්දා දිවවින් අමරබන්දු ළග නැවතී හති දමමත් නැවතත් කැගුවේය.

සුද්දා මොනවා කියනවද කියන්න අමරබන්දුට තේරෙන ඉංගිරිසියක් නැත.

"අනේ මහත්තය තේරෙන බාසාවකින් කියන්වද.." අමරබන්දු සුද්දාටත් වඩා බයාදු ලෙස යාප්පු වූයේය.

"ලොකු උන්නැහේ මට හෙල්ප් හෙල්ප්.. උදවු උදවු" එවර සුද්දා කැඩිච්ච සිංහලෙන් අමරබන්දුගෙන් උදවු පැතීය. ඔහුගේ කම්සය ද ඉරි ගොස්ය.

"හත්වලාමේ මොකො මහත්තය උනේ.. මගදි හොර මුලකටවත් අහු වුනාද?" අමරබන්දු ඇසුවේ විමසුම් දැස් හතරාතට යොමුකරමිනි.

"යෙස් යෙස් තීච්ස්... තීච්ස්.. හොරු හොරු ..අර පැත්තෙ" කියමින් සුද්දා අමරබන්දුවද ඇදගෙන ඔහු පැමිණි දෙසට පිය මැන්නේය. යම් දුරක්

ගොස් දෙදෙනාම ළග වූ රුස්ස ගසකට මුවා වී බලා සිටියේය.

හතර අතින් දොර විවෘත කළ පැරණි ඉංග්‍රීසි පන්නයේ මෝටර් රථය ඇතුළෙන් පිටත් රිළවුය. මෝටර් රථය අත්පත කර ගැනීමේ සතුටට උන් උඩ පැන නටති, පිනුම් බඩ පිනුම් ගසති. දැන් ඉහළට ඔසවා ජය සමරති. එකෙක් සුක්කානම උඩ වාඩිගෙන විරිත්තයි, තවත් එකෙක් රියේ පැති කණ්ණාඩියෙන් මුහුණ බලයි, තවත් පිරිසක් රථය වටේ නටමින් දුවති. ඒ කිසිවෙකුත් තමන් ලද වස්තුව කුමක් සදහාද ඉන් කරන්නේ කුමක්දැයි කියා අබමල් රේණුවක හෝ දැනුමක් ඇති උන් නොවූහ. තමන් ලද වස්තුව කුමක්ද කියා එහි හතර කොණ මායිම් කොට ගැනීමට ද නොහැකිව උන් ඉන් මද වේලාවකට පසු කැමොර දෙන්නට වූහ. තවත් කොටසක් ඉන් කෝපයට පත්ව කුලප්පු වූහ. උන් ඉනික්බිති කොටස් කිහිපයකට බෙදී මහා සටනකට අර ඇද්දහ. ඔවුන් ඒ සටන් කරන්නට සැරසෙන්නේ කුමන අරමුණක් වෙනුවෙන්ද කියා උන් එකෙක් හෝ දන්නා මායිමක් නැත්තා සේය. දුවලී රොටු නංවමින් උන් මරාගන්නා අල්ලපනල්ලේ තවත් කොටසක් රියේ පැති කණ්ණාඩි දෙක ගළවාගෙන කැලයට පැනගත්තේය. තවත් එකෙක් රථය තුළ වූ අඩුම කුඩුම ටික රැගෙන කැලේ පැන්නේය. අවසන සුද්දාගේ රථය රිළා වසුරු වලින් වැසී ගියේය. සිය දැස අදහා ගත් නොහී අමරබන්දු සිය දැස පිස දමාද ඒ දෙස බැලුවේය. ඔහුට සුද්දාගැන ඇතිවූයේ අනුකම්පාවකි.



"මේ උන්නැහේ අපි පොලු දෙකක් අරන් ගිහින් රිළවු ටික පන්තමුද?" අමරබන්දු සිතට දිරි ගෙන ඇසුවේය.

"ආර් යූ මැඩ් ලොකු උන්නැහේ.. ඔය කාර් එකේ තව මොනව ගන්නද මට ඕකෙන් ඇති වැඩක් නැහැ" සුද්දා කෝපයෙන් පැවසුවේය.

"ඒත් මහත්තයා ඔහේගේ වාහනේ බේර ගත්තොත් අඩුමතරමෙ යකඩ වලට හරි විකුණන්න ඇහැක් නොවැ" අමරබන්දු එවර කීවේය.

"මොන.... ආර් යූ මැඩ් ලොකු උන්නැහේ..ඕක මගේ කාර් එකක් නෙවෙයි මම ඒකාලෙ ඩියුටි වලට පාවිච්චි කරපු මේ රටේ පීපල් ලගේ මනී වලින් අපේ ආණ්ඩුවෙන් මට අරන් දීපු එකක්". එවර සුද්දා පවසන්නේ කුමක්දැයි අමරබන්දු හට නිව්වියක් නොවීය.

"මොන හරුපයක් ද මහත්තයෝ ඒ කිව්වේ.. ඇත්තටම මහත්තය කවුද" අමරබන්දු උඩ බිම බලමින් ඇසීය.

"මම තමයි ලංකාවේ අන්තිම ඉංගිරිසි ආණ්ඩුකාරය වෙච්චි හෙත්‍රි මොන්ක් මේසන් මුචර්" හෙතෙම මහා ගාම්භීර ලීලාවෙන් පැවසීය.

"අම්මපා.. මේ උත්තමයල මෙහෙන් ගිහින් බොහෝ කල් වෙනවනේ.. මොනවැයි මේ රිළවු ඉන්න බැද්ද අස්සෙ කොරන්නෙ"

"යෙස් යෙස්.. සෙවෙන්ට් ත්‍රී ඉයර්ස් වලට කළින් අපි මේ රට සිලෝනීස්ලටම දීල ගියා තමයි.. ඒත් මම ආවේ අපි ගියාට පස්සෙ මේ ලස්සන රටේ ටිකක් බලා කියාගෙන ආපහු එංගලන්තෙට යන්න කියල"

"ඉතිං බලාකියා ගත්තැයි" අමරබන්දු එසේ අසන විට ඔහුගේ මුහුනේ වූ සිනහව තමන් හට අවමානයක් එක් කළේදැයි ආණ්ඩුකාරය සිතුවේය.

"ඕ මයි ගෝඩ් ලොකු උන්නහේ.. ඒ ගැන කතා නොකර ඉම්මු.. අපේ මහා බ්‍රිතාන්‍ය ආණ්ඩුව සිලෝන් ගිවිස් කරනකොට මේ රට කොච්චර හොදට තිබ්බද.. ඒකට අපි හදාපු රේල් පාරවල් ටික විතරයිනෙ දැන් ඉතුරු වෙලා තියෙන්නෙ" ඔහු සොවින් බරව කීවේය. ඔහුගේ කතාව ඉන් නතර වූයේ නැත.

"අපේ ආණ්ඩුව සිලෝන් ගිවිස් කළේ එයාටම ඇති වුනාට පස්සෙ.. ගන්න තියෙන ඔක්කොම ගත්තට පස්සෙ හරියට අර මන්කීස්ල මගෙන් ගත්තු කාර් එක වගේ.."

ආණ්ඩුකාරයා හෙණගහන්න වගේ ඇත්තම දෙසා බාන විට අමරබන්දුටද කේන්ති ආවේය. කොටින්ම ඔහුගේ සැගව තිබූ ජාත්‍යාල හැගීමත් තරමක් උද්දීපනය වී ශරීරයද ජාතිකාභිමානයෙන් ඇළලී යන්නට විය. නමුත් හෙණ ගැහුවත් මේ උත්තමය කියන්නෙ ඇත්ත නේදැයි සිතූ හෙතෙම සිය කේන්තිය පාලනය කරගත්තේය.

"එතකොට ඔය උත්තමය කියන්නෙ.. අපේ කට්ටිය මහා බ්‍රිතාන්‍ය ආණ්ඩුව රට ඉල්ලගත්තේ ඔය ඇත්තන්ගෙන් රිළවු කාර් එක උදුර ගන්න වගේ කියලද?" කේන්තිය මැඩගෙනම අමරබන්දු ඇසුවේය.

"නෝ.. නෝ.. අපෙන් රට ඉල්ලගන්න දවස්වල භාරගත්තු කට්ටිය මේ රිළව් වගේ නෙවෙයි ඒ අය නියම ඉංග්ලිෂ් ජෙන්ට්ල්මන්ට්ස් ල වගේ මිනිස්සු.. ඒත් සෙවෙන්ට් ත්‍රී ඉයර්ස් වලට පස්සෙ බලනකොට නම් මේ ලස්සන රට මිනිස්සු බාර දීල තියෙන්නෙ මගෙ කාර් එකේ ඉන්න රිළවු කණ්ඩායම් දෙකකට කියන එක පැහැදිලියි.. මොකද උන්ට කාර් එක තිබ්බට ඒක ඩ්‍රයිව් කොරන්න දන්නෙ නැහැ.. ඒකයි" ආණ්ඩුකාරයාගේ කතාවෙන් අමරබන්දුගේ සිනහව ඉස්පොල්ලෙද ගියේය.

"එනිවේ ..හැපි ඉන්ඩිපෙන්ඩන්ස් ඩේ ලොකු උන්නැහේ" කියූ ආණ්ඩුකාරයා ලන්දෙන් එළි බැහැගත්තේ පාරේ යන ටැක්සියක් අල්ලා ගැනීමටය.

We're going online soon...
**You can get everything at your
doorstep with our free delivery
service**



**All Spices,
Rice, Lentils,
Fresh Veggies / Greens
Ceylon Tea and
Other Groceries
for wholesale & retail**

Spice Market
SPICE AND GROCERY STORE (Pvt) Ltd.

Open 7 days

**43-57, Townshend Street
Phillip, ACT 2606**

ABN : 2 155 629 682

Phone (Mob): 0450 560 297
mail : spicemarketact@gmail.com

A MEETING TO REMEMBER

– Sangita Ashok



It was a delight meeting young Ranusha Nanayakkara in his home in Canberra. The option of a zoom meeting in this current online world seemed attractive, but then my curiosity to meet a young super achiever got the better of me, and despite some initial misgivings I set out on my long drive to meet Ranusha and his family.

Fresh from his high school achievements, having topped ACT in year 12 with an enviable 99.95 (the perfect score), and topped the individual subjects Chemistry and Physics, Ranusha was a delight to talk to. Young, eager and enthusiastic, Ranusha was bursting with ideas and youthful ambitions.

An initial opening question on ‘tell me about yourself’ brought forth an outpouring of interests, achievements, and how he saw his future work in the field of medicine.

Ranusha went to school in Isabella Plains, and then to Narrabundah High School for his college education. Ranusha had many strings to his bow having played cricket and been a part of his debating society at College. He was also a student of drama having learnt from his Canberra based drama teacher Indunil Liyanage, and performed in her stage productions held in Canberra. He had a fascination for Astronomy and displayed a keen interest in researching planets and galaxies.



Bright eyed, he professed a liking to move to a bigger city to pursue his medical career. He had a keen interest in conducting medical research using innovative approaches to assist with terminal illnesses and management, fracture surgery, stem cell research and development. It was nice to hear that his sister, a medical intern herself was his source of inspiration.

His parents were in the background offering snippets of information about their son. I could sense their pride. As a mother myself of two children, I could identify with the sense of joy, the heartache, and the fostering of a human – all that goes into the making and emerging of a man or woman.

I wish Ranusha all the best as he embarks on his life’s journey.

நாலடியாரிலிருந்து சில துளிகள்

நாலடியார் சமண முனிவர்களில் கி பி ஆறாம் நூற்றாண்டில் எழுதப்பட்டது. இதனை ஆங்கிலத்தில் மொழி பெயர்த்தவர் Dr G U Pope

யானை அனையவர் நண்பொரீஇ - நாய் அனையார்
கேண்மை கெழீஇக் கொளல்வேண்டும்; - யானை
அறிந்தறிந்தும் பாகனையே கொல்லும் , - எறிந்த வேல்
மெய்யதா வால்குலைக்கு நாய்.

Forsaking friendship with those who resemble the elephant, embrace and hold fast intimacy with those who are like the dog; for the elephant will slay even its keeper though it has long known him; but the dog will wag its tail when it has in its body the javelin (hurled at it by its angry master)

கல்லாரே ஆயினுங் கற்றோரைச் சேர்ந்தொழுகின்
நல்லறிவு நாளுந் தலைப்படுவர்; - தொல்சிறப்பின்
ஒண்ணிறப் பத்திரிப்பூச் சேர்தலாற் புத்தோடு
தண்ணீர்க்குத் தான்பயந் தாங்கு.

Though themselves unlearned, if men live in association with the learned they advance daily in excellent knowledge. The new vessel, by contact with the Padri flower of old renown and lustrous hue, imparts fragrance to the cold water it contains.

குஞ்சி அழகுங் கொடுத்தானைக் கொட்டளகும்
மஞ்சள் அழகும் அழகல்ல; - நெஞ்சத்து
நல்லம்யாம் என்னு' நடுவு நிலையாமல்
கல்வி அழகே அழகு.

Beauty of looks, beauty of circling garment's folds, beauty of saffron tint: these are not beauty true. Integrity of soul that brings the conscience peace is learning's gift: that only is beauty true!

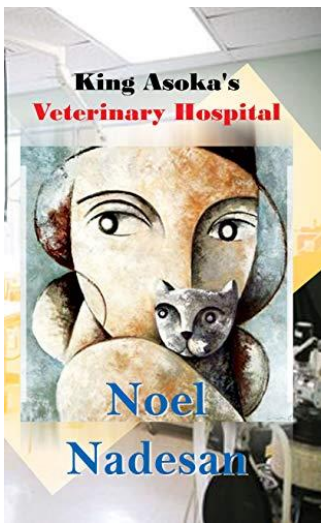


BOOK REVIEW

- Jayantha Somasundaram

KING ASOKA'S VETERINARY HOSPITAL by Noel Nadesan

In recent years a number of Sri Lanka migrants in Australia have taken to creative writing. Some of the best known are Michelle de Kretser, Channa Wickremesekera and Ranjith Savanadasa. Adding to their number is Noel Nadesan.



A Veterinary Surgeon by training and profession, Nadesan published a bilingual Melbourne monthly newspaper called *Uthayam* and in 2013 turned to fiction with the release of *Lost in You*. His most recent novel *King Asoka's Veterinary Hospital* was originally written and published in Tamil and an English edition has just been released.

King Asoka at one level is biographical, in that its narrator is a Sri Lanka migrant Veterinarian who lives and works in Melbourne. Its title is drawn from the Buddhist King Ashoka who ruled India 2,250 years ago, establishing hospitals to care for injured animals, prioritising animal welfare and restricting animal slaughter. In the words of Norm Phelps ([*The Longest Struggle: Animal Advocacy from Pythagoras to Peta*](#)), "one of the very few instances in world history of a government treating its animals as citizens who are as deserving of its protection as the human residents."

While it does recount the trials and travails that migrants encounter in their country of settlement, the novel is only fleetingly autobiographical. It then moves into both the narration of human encounters and the understanding of human experiences. All this is through the eyes of a middle aged South Asian migrant attempting to understand, appreciate and come to terms with modern urban Australian life and mores.

Part of this is achieved by introducing the element of fantasy, and the injection of the emotions and the commentary of articulate domestic animals. This provides a compassionate counter narrative to the

abrasive interactions of the principle human characters.

The protagonist Siva Sundram Pillai had migrated to Australia with his young family to escape the bitter civil war that engulfed Sri Lanka. He takes up a position in a large public veterinary hospital in Melbourne where he initially finds security, friendship and professional satisfaction. This gives him the confidence to set down roots, buying a house in the suburbs, socialising with his colleagues and by becoming involved in their lives.



The novel explores love and romance, passion and greed, ego and ambition, jealousy and vindictiveness, as well as the abuse of power. The interpersonal relationships portrayed are not limited to the Veterinary Hospital but follow the characters to the pubs, their homes, their professional conferences and their formative past. It is a bold depiction of human emotions and drama at its best and its worst; a path breaking novel relevant to our changing times.

One Man Band
Live music for all occasions
(One package includes: Live one man Keyboard, Guitar sessions with vocals + Dj + Sounds + stage Lighting)
Canberra ACT
Uditha **Jay** DeMel
Tel: (04-33651266)



MEMBERSHIP

Inquiries regarding ASLA membership should be directed to the Secretary by email at aslaactinc@gmail.com.

Or follow the link below:

<https://aslaact.com/downloads/ASLAMembershipApplicationForm2020.pdf>

GIRLS WANNA HAVE FUN (*based on a true-life story*)

By Kanthi Fernando

“Bachchi, its 5.30 and you’re still not ready. We need to leave soon”. This was my Amma yelling at me again. The family had arranged to meet at the Green Cabin at Kollupitiya for hoppers as Bappi and Saro Ammi were here in Colombo and would be leaving for UK in a couple of days. Bappi is my Thaththi’s younger brother now settled well in Manchester. As much as I loved my uncle I had a hidden agenda for my reluctance to join the family at this gathering.

Burning with guilt, I had vowed to myself, I would never sight Green Cabin ever again. I was trying my very best to find excuses to boycott this meeting. I yelled back at Amma, “What’s the big deal with hoppers? You also make nice hoppers; I don’t want to go to Green Cabin just to eat hoppers”. “What about meeting Bappi?” I was really stuck!!

The recent memories of last week gave me goose bumps!! How could I have got involved and be a partner of crime? I was brought up in a decent home by decent parents who always taught me to tell the truth. I would not dare tell my parents about it as I was looking forward to January when I would be in Year 12, studying in earnest and hopefully enter University. I was both scared and guilty and would try at all cost not to tell my parents the truth.

The twelve of us in Year 11 were as thick as thieves. Even though some of these girls were dare devils, we were friends in love and war. We had a pact that we would never let our pack down. I was the youngest in the pack and enjoyed the jokes and pranks that some girls related of their older brothers’ mischievous acts. I was awe stricken but would not dare to try out any of these pranks at home as I only had a younger brother and very observant parents.

A week ago, last Friday, the twelve of us in year 11 were overjoyed as school was closing for Christmas holidays. We exchanged phone numbers and addresses promising to keep in touch. Ransi, had a bright idea: “let’s celebrate end of year 11 and have a feast at Green Cabin” she proposed. We all agreed in unison. It was 3 pm and we were all hungry. Green Cabin was renowned for their delicious chocolate cake and pastries. While on our way walking to the bus stop at Galle Road, we realised that there was a bus strike. With unwavering enthusiasm, we decided to proceed walking over 5 kilometers to Green Cabin in the hot sun. It was all in the name of “fun.” At that time of the afternoon Green Cabin was somewhat deserted with a skeleton staff. The girls went mad! We ordered all kinds of pastries, patties, cutlets, bacon and egg rolls, chocolate cake, iced coffee, ice cream sundaes and ate to our hearts content. Luckily, we sat at the annexe area of Green Cabin and people could not care less about the din we made.

About an hour later, a kind waiter left the bill on our table saying he has to assist the chef with an order for the evening to ring the bell if we wanted anything else. We were stunned as the invoice read three hundred and forty rupees, an amount we could not afford! I was shivering in my boots. Sunila said that we should keep enough money for our bus fare and give everything we had in our purses towards the bill. I had ten rupees to spare, most of us had only this kind of money. We collected 140 rupees and sixty cents which was almost less than half the amount on the invoice. Sunila had a brainwave! She said, “we will leave all the money we have collected, and scoot!!” Quiet as mice we left the premises of Green Cabin by

the back door. None of us could talk! We were so scared! We did not realise that we had left a tell-tale mark of our school ties and uniform. Luckily, it was a lazy time in the afternoon and the junior waiter was in a hurry to assist the Chef in the kitchen after delivering our order to the table. After we hurriedly walked to the Bambalapitiya bus stop, we started chattering, with all the “what if” questions. “What if the Waiter reported us to our College Principal” “No, but how is the principal to know it was us?” “What if Green Cabin staff reported us to the Police?” “No they wouldn’t they too would have naughty children like us.” “Besides, they would know we left all we had – one hundred and forty rupees and 60 cents”.



I was dumb struck, knowing the trouble we would get into if discovered. Gone would be my hopes of Year 12, and university! How could I face my parents, what would I say? I felt like killing the girls in the group. Sunila advised us to lie low. Mother was not at home when I arrived at 5 pm that afternoon. I made an excuse that I had a headache and locked myself in my room and sobbed my eyes out! It was fun with no consideration for consequences. I was not very pleased with myself, but how could I escape the pack! Another year with them in Year 12! I realised that we had to grow up, and not engage in such pranks again. No, I vowed to myself I will not join them with such ideas, or I would have to live with my conscience, kiss goodbye to my hopes and dreams, lie to my parents knowing my deceitful behaviour!

Luckily for us, Green Cabin did not make a fuss, and must have written the balance of the invoice as a bad debt!

Yes, I could not escape going to Green Cabin with the family that evening for hoppers and the family gathering. I disguised myself with a cap tucking my two long plaits. I wore a more grown-up looking dress. I felt pins and needles all over when I entered Green Cabin that evening; but for my luck, the waiter who served us the previous Friday was not there. I vowed to myself and to date warn my kids of the guilt and sadness I carried. “Girls wanna have fun” but fun or no fun, not at the risk of cheating! The load of guilt is far too heavy to carry!



DESMOND WITH FRIENDS

LIVE IN CONCERT



SAT 15 - MAY - 2021 7PM
AT GUNGAHLIN COLLEGE THEATRE

Sounds by BLACK ICE

Tickets: Adult \$50 Child \$25 (Limited seats due to Covid-19 restrictions)

All proceeds go to a housing project and Nanadiriya Scholarship Program in Sri Lanka

Contact:

Dulsiri - 0435949570 Dammika - 0423124976 Udaya - 0411096246 Spice Market-0450560297
 Rasika - 0412770693 Shalini - 0447420075 Nish-0404026929 Tharinda - 0432302240



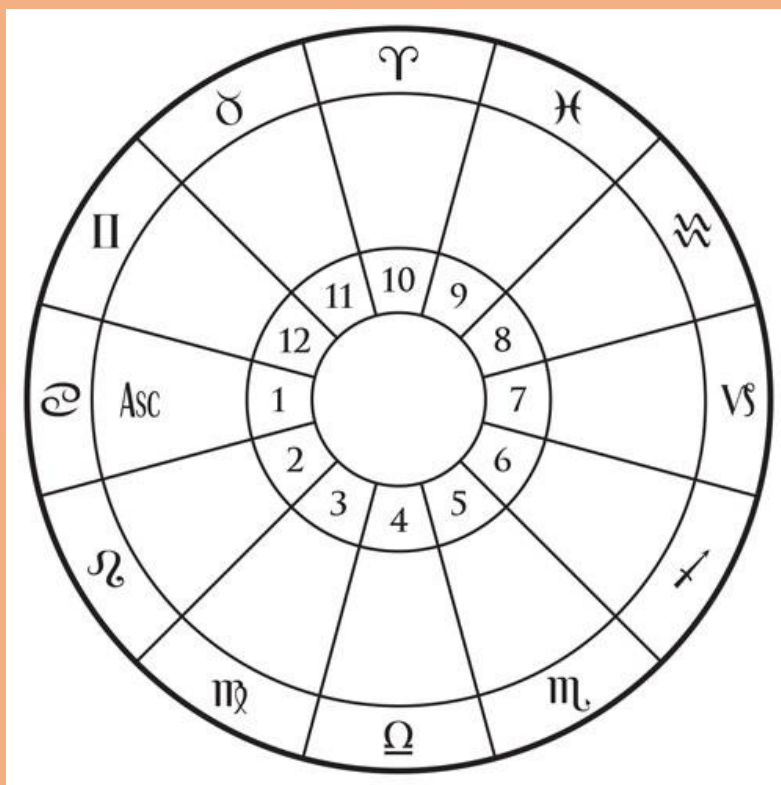
IT'S ALL IN THE STARS

– By Sangita Ashok

What an year it has been since 26 December 2019, after the titanic clash of six planets. Something was in the air, the stars were speaking. The murmurs of Wuhan began and we were all in a pandemic situation for the first time for most of us.

Astrologers scrambled to predict when we would be out of the lockdown. Different predictions surfaced. But the one that made sense was that Saturn was now in its own of Capricorn since 24 January 2020. This slow, plodding planet had finally come into its own after 30 years of traversing through other signs, tired of being with the mirthful Sagittarius in its last two and half years rotation.

Jupiter too joined the party with Saturn and came into Capricorn from November 2020 where it will remain until November 2021 this year. So life has been a mixed bag for all of us. We all zoomed into our lives. From yoga to catching up with friends and relatives, to online classes on meditation, our mobile phones became our means of life support.



Now that the vaccines are slowly making their presence felt, there is a renewed sense of hope.

But the stars are working on individual lives in just the same as it did before the pandemic hit us. This time around there are greater pressures like lockdowns limiting our movements and our way of life, but the Mahadasha effects in your birth chart will continue to work like normal. If the Mahadasha is a beneficial one, then irrespective of everything around you, you will continue to flourish, if not survive. Mahadasha is everything.

In a previous edition we covered Moon through the houses.

In this edition we cover Sun through the houses.

Planet	Effect of Sun in the different houses
Sun in 1 st house	Leadership qualities. Energetic and enthusiastic. Though he may look fragile he has great strength. Has enemies
Sun in 2 nd house	Good from a money point of view unless badly aspected or in a weak sign like Libra or Aries. Unique value of self, liking for luxury
Sun in 3 rd house	Favourable for academic pursuits. Dignity, grace, sound education, help. If in watery signs lot of travel is indicated.
Sun in 4 th house	Attachment of family. Progress through the father or of the father. Careful, slightly aloof. Lover of homeland.
Sun in 5 th house	Spendthrift. Polished temperament. Symbolises wealth and a fortunate post. Not particularly beneficial for children unless in Cancer, Scorpio or Pisces.
Sun in 6 th house	Bodes ill-health for native. Skilful in organising and planning. Ability to heal and cure. Progress by service.
Sun in 7 th house	Marriage into a rich family of high status. Assistance from spouse. Favorable to enter into politics. Indicates popularity.
Sun in 8 th house	Beneficial for matrimony. Father may pass away before the mother. Possible loss of spouse in the horoscope of a female.
Sun in 9 th house	Good fortune in the foreign lands. Good for export business. High intelligence, ideals, good understanding and progress.
Sun in 10 th house	Rise to the top, status higher than the one in which he/she was born. Help from parents, female influences.
Sun in 11 th house	Highly influential friends. Few children unless well aspected. Political interest.
Sun in 12 th house	Seclusion from society and family. Loneliness unless well aspected. Work in hospitals, prison or nursing home or away from ones loved ones.

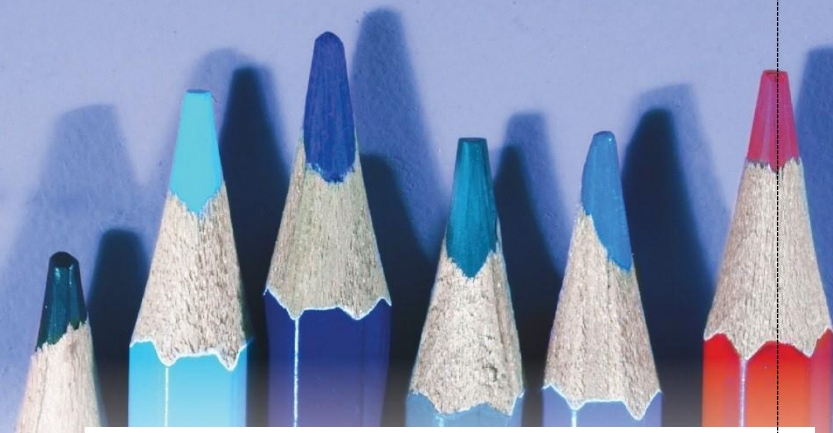
These predictions are excerpted from various books. Astrology is a vast science – from the mouths of seers whose knowledge go beyond our imagination.

Most of what we reap in this lifetime is based on our actions in past lives, current lifetime, each action and interaction. To acknowledge our acts, good and bad is the start of our journey towards understanding, ourselves, and growing inwardly.

A Reflection

by the Late Ram Jethmalani,

*An attorney at the Supreme Court of India,
Chairman of Indian Bar Council, and a former
Union Cabinet Minister for Law and Parliamentary
Affairs in India*



Sometimes in the dark of the night,
I visit my conscience
To see if it is still breathing,
For its dying a slow death
Every day.

When I pay for a meal in a fancy place.
An amount which is perhaps the monthly income
Of the guard who holds the door open.
And quickly I shrug away that thought,
It dies a little.

When I buy vegetables from the vendor,
And his son "chhotu" smilingly weighs the
potatoes,
Chhotu, a small child, who should be studying at
school.
I look the other way
It dies a little.

When I am decked up in a designer dress,
A dress that cost a bomb
And I see a woman at the crossing,
In tatters, trying unsuccessfully to save her dignity.
And I immediately roll up my window.
It dies a little.

When I buy expensive gifts for my children,
On return, I see half clad children,
With empty stomach and hungry eyes,
Selling toys at red light
I try to save my conscience by buying some, yet
It dies a little.

When my sick maid sends her daughter to work,
Making her bunk school
I know I should tell her to go back.
But I look at the loaded sink and dirty dishes,
And I tell myself that is just for a couple of days
It dies a little.

When I hear about a rape
or a murder of a child,
I feel sad, yet a little thankful that it's not my child.
I can not look at myself in the mirror,
It dies a little.

When people fight over caste creed and religion.
I feel hurt and helpless
I tell myself that my country is going to the dogs,
I blame the corrupt politicians,
Absolving myself of all responsibilities
It dies a little.

When my city is choked.
Breathing is dangerous in the smog ridden
metropolis,
I take my car to work daily ,
Not taking the metro, not trying car pool.
One car won't make a difference, I think
It dies a little.

So when in the dark of the night,
I visit my conscience
And find it still breathing
I am surprised.
For, with my own hands
Daily, bit by bit, I kill it, I bury it.



Love (On Valentine's Day)

By Dilantha Gunawardana

A hurried kiss at 7 AM in the front seat of a car, the latch at dusk falling off the gate making more noise than a cowbell, and everything else in between; the assurance that she is at work - that she is safely there in a country known for careless traffic rules -, wondering how many documents she had to play secretary with in the last hour, questioning "is she happy?" at that centre of office, to where her bosses gravitate to, for an email, stationary, or just a "good morning". I wonder, "Should I call her?" for the umpteenth time, just for her not to have anything to tell me and still knowing she is there at the other end of the line thinking the same thing. The worrisome thoughts that remind me "am I neglecting her?" or then "am I inundating her?" and sometimes, nothing, when everything else is irrelevant, and all you want to, is remember that she is the best thing that happened to you: the full smile that omits only the molars, the gaze that fazes my focus and crumbles me knee-up, and the spurning of advances when she has her sniffles, or asking me to stay away when she says she does not feel hunky dory, or telling me that I have to lose weight when my imperfection catches her unguarded eyes, or for that matter, every finger of hers that is worthy of a stubborn rock, every toe that blushes to my slimy gastropod kisses, every navel smooch that catches her in a ticklish reflex pushing all of me away, every hour between dawn and dusk that cracks my lips in yearning, and the mask she slowly removes, for me to gaze at the apotheosis of beauty, and an unseasonal smile, that befriended my untouched lips, a long time back. I can count to a trillion, but I can never cease to love you any less than the last numeric, Math invents, calling it an infinity.

You crashed onto me like an asteroid, and you made extinct the perfect room with a view, where I watched a gender pass me by, and lassoed you, with your ring finger, in perfect aurum. My hope is that I can relive the seven years with you, over and over, like a wave that stumbles upon the shores and returns with greater carry. Tell me do I tickle the right places when you are playful and naughty, or make amends when I am wrong or selfish, or try to be nicer, kinder than you a million times, failing lopsidedly, each humbling time. Tell me what is in store for us my love? 7 AM kisses, or unmaskings at purple dusks, or maybe a whole eternity of that, crazed only by the narcotic that refuses to stop believing, to remember that we are meant for dentures and cochlear implants, pacemakers and cataract-less lenses, crooked spines and plagued arteries, and one day, when two becomes one, - on a different saddening note! -, when all I can ask is – if you are the first to go – for God to gift me perpetual tranquillity in the blink of an eye; to hitchhike on your runaway soul, curling around cosmic spaces of holed oblivions - as not to derail. Soulful spirits travelling the greatest realm, searching for a rare universal artefact – life; to rediscover form, to renew the memory of bliss.

மகா வாக்கியங்கள்

யோகர் சுவாமிகள்

- * ஒரு பொல்லாப்புமில்லை
- * எப்போ முடிந்த காரியம்
- * நாம் அறியோம்
- * முழுவதும் உண்மை

இராமலிங்க அடிகள்

- * பசித்திரு
- * தனித்திரு
- * விழித்திரு



சுப்பிரமணிய பாரதி

- * உயிர்களிடத்தில் அன்பு வேண்டும்
- * தெய்வம் உண்டென தானறிதல் வேண்டும்
- * வைரம் உடைய நெஞ்சி வேணும்



ASLA and the other Sri Lankan
Community Organisations in
Canberra, cordially invite you to the

Sinhala and Tamil New Year Celebrations 2021

Saturday 24th April 2021

**Stage 88, Commonwealth Park
Parkes ACT 2600**

Admission 11am for Covid registration



Food packs will be given on arrival between 11am and
12.30pm due to current Covid restrictions.



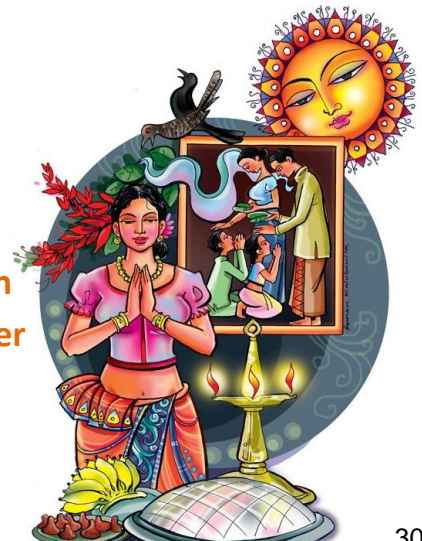
Sports will begin at 11.30am sharp, finishing 1pm.
(There will be a limited number of games due to Covid restrictions)

The stage program will start at 1pm, and
include:

- Religious rituals
- Traditional dancing
- Fancy dress parade
- Avrudu kumari & kumaraya

**Please bring a picnic rug, blanket, or chairs as
necessary for your family to use due to Covid.**

**You are kindly requested to bring a contribution
of water/soft drink bottle or cans, and hand over
to one of the drinks tables.**



SENIORS PROGRAM

By Jayantha Somasundaram

ASLA launched a Seniors Program last year aimed at catering specifically to the needs of Seniors during the post-COVID period. They met once a month at the Seniors Club in the City for a day filled with events, activities and presentations. This project was organised by an ASLA subcommittee chaired by its Public Officer Savi Lecamwasam. On average there were about thirty participants, senior Canberra residents of Sri Lanka origin.

0



The Program was structured around a carefully considered COVID Safe Plan which set down guidelines for participants, volunteers, and guests according to ACT Government guidelines, covering requisite documentation, physical layout, social distancing, hand and equipment sanitising, strict food serving procedures and the use of masks, gloves and face shields. Four COVID Marshals who were present throughout the day ensured strict adherence to, and compliance with the COVID Safe Plan.

Each program commenced with exercises led by a fitness instructor who emphasised the need for activity and movement. The fitness instructor took the participants through simple but effective exercises which focused on breathing, correct posture and the exercise of different sets of muscles.

In addition to physical fitness, specialised presentations were held on a variety of topics that were relevant to seniors. These included talks on COVID, physiology, diet, wellbeing and mental health, as well as in-depth presentations on Arthritis, Alzheimer's and Dementia. There were practical sessions on falls risks, medication safety, podiatry and healthy relationships.

The seniors are increasingly forming a cohesive group and are using the program to make friends and build relationships. They were seen to be getting together and having fun, particularly over meals and during refreshment breaks, as well as enjoying different forms of entertainment that included participating in singing.



Poems



Chance Encounter

by Sangita Ashok

Warm languid summers
Caress of the mocking breeze
Sighs that dare not breathe his name
A whisper in the wind

The waves ripple and cascade
From her balcony
She hears the universe call out for him
Even as the bright glow of sunshine pales into a starry night

He comes to her dark eyed and restless
This time around
His arms lie limp by his side
The passion has died

Another time when they met
By the sea
A chance encounter
Two souls

It was in his smile
The gentle touch of his hand when he handed her mobile back
Does love happen in two seconds
When one meets a kindred soul?

Rapturous love it was
In the longing in her eyes
The glow in her skin
Hers soulful
His the fire that burnt out



Blocked messages
Pain of mature love
But when the rainbow sharply etches
Against the pale blue sky
Emblazoned by the colours of her love

The body remembers
Every romantic whim
Her shawl as it fell on the ground oblivious
Crumpled in passion

She was once a broken vessel; shattered
Now her soul can live through the pain of this lifetime
In the sweetness of a few stolen moments
In the bliss of the part of him that is in her.

My Mom Still in Love

by Dilantha Gunawardana

My mother has a fascination with gardening.
How she would take measure of every
Forensic detail and get my father too involved.
She told me once that my father
Used to hold his torch for my mother to
Pick snails from the yard that could
Make poop out of greenery. Strange how
Love can be in all earnest. Now I see
My mum searching for small gastropods in
The dark and my only wish is not to
Intrude her vigils at night. I get the feeling
That when my mom picks snails,
She sees my dad in the near vicinity.
Presence can be a funny thing;
The ones who see ghosts start talking
To them, and my mom I see picking
Those memories of yesteryear
From the soil, and strangely I see her
Smile effortlessly; I guess remembering
The man with his torch, who is no
Longer the light giver, only a dark force that
Inflicts a sense of grief, is not easy. My mom
Does the little things, as to not let go. Even now,
My mother sleeps with two torches,
Hers and my father's on a makeshift double bed
That is made of two single units,
Juxtaposed to each other, side by side.



*Guess which torch my mom carries with her
To the garden, each time she wishes
To collect snails at night?*

Mothers and Daughters

by Sangita Ashok

In that room for mothers in waiting
Listening to the deep, laboured breathing
Of African women
I await my turn

For hours that stretched from a rushed admission in the
night
To the first slippery feel of this girl child on my stomach
In a narrow birthing bed
A midwife barking orders to her assistant for company

I, hushed in pain
In deep meditation
It is over, I hear the first cry
The midwife exclaims 'she has thick hair'

I know then that I had a daughter
What I intuitively knew over the warm expectant
months
They place her in an incubator
And banish me to the maternal room

I feel bereft, I walk towards her
Touch her finger through the incubator
Watch her until I am asked to leave
This miracle princess in my life

I see her in her different whimsical shades
Baby, her first smile, her cries
Hear her speak, play and learn
Leave her in tears to playschool

Watch her grow, find her place in the world
Baby steps to the poised steps of a woman
Holding her own
I am no longer her teacher, her guide

I think of my grandmother bereft of her mother, a motherless infant
A stepmother then to a man with four children
Then a mother to four herself
Fleeing the partition from Rawalpindi

Then my mother leaving for the shores of Colombo
Married off to a stranger
Adopting the garb of an island culture
From the cocoon of her Punjabi life

The distant African drum beckoned me to her shores
And then to the migrant life in Australia
Starting anew, did I not learn from the past?
Or is it the will of a higher power?

Now she leaves me from the cold clutch of Canberra
To pursue her life in another state
I feel the poignancy of her departure
Just as each mother in my bloodline

Is it the curse of my lineage?
That our women do not just leave their homes
But leave countries behind to tread alone in lonely shores
I know I am not alone in this, yet my fragile heart crumbles.



අසනු මනු සතුනේ

- තරින්ද ගුණවර්ධන

අසනු මනු සතුනේ
කිමද මේ අරුමේ
මමය මාගේ කියා
පසුකදට ගසා ගෙන
අමතක කර දමා
යන අපුරුව
ඔබ කවීද යන වග

ගියෝල් මෙන් අනාචාරීකර
මරණය මෙන් කැදර
ගිලගන්න ගිලගන්න
මාන බලමින්
ලොකු පොඩි කියා නැ
පුරෝගන් බඩ ගෙඩිය

සෙප්පඩ විජ්ජා පෙන්වමින්
උපයාගත් ආඩම්බරකම්
එයි ඔක්කාරයට
නොදිරනා කාසි
රැළිවැටෙන මුහුණු
නොඑන්නේ පසුපසින්
උන්නිටිනානුත් නැ
සිපගනී මහපොළොව

සොබාදහම නම් අපුරුයි
නොමසුරුව බෙදා දෙයි
රුදුරු ලෙස පහර දෙයි
නොපෙන්නේද නොදැනේද
වැස්ස වැටෙනා
සුළඟ හමනා
රිද්මයෙන්

වඩාගත් මා දෝතට
තුරුළුකරන් ළමැදට
කල්පයක් නොව
මේ මොහොත
මනුසන් යෝධ ගස
සෙවන දෙයි දසඅත
විහිදුවා අතුරකිලි
තවමත් ..

ACROSS THE OCEAN

By *Kanthi Fernando*

If I want to hear you call
across the ocean,
over the waves,
would you answer?
Would you hear my thoughts?

If I stood at the edge of nowhere
beaming my mind
searching for yours
would you know?
would you acknowledge?

There is a dream - enmeshed with stars
so high above, with clouds it flies,
take it, and unravel the reams of questions
and the weeks of answers,
and see if they do not
in tangling again and again
pose me problems.

They will you know, - because they must
Is that not what dreams are all about?
tangled moments, moments, premonitions,
a mixture of twisted, fragmented effects
painted on the warp of abstraction
presenting reality.





Australia Sri Lanka Association (ACT) Inc.

Association No: A01192

Committee Members 2020/2021

President	Lasath Lecamwasam
Vice President	Janaka Welikala
Secretary	Surangani Luck
Treasurer	Jayantha Somasundaram

Committee Members	Nayana Liyanage
	Ashrof Farouk
(Public Officer)	Savi Lecamwasam
	Irantha Rajapaksha
	Chitra Jayawardena
	Nalin Wanigasekera
	Shantha Ramasundara
	Ranjith Wijewickrema
	Anne Somasundaram
	Shehan Athauda
	Duvindra Pahalawela
Hon Auditor	Ushantha Jayawardana





Canberra Lankan provides information within the following conditions:

1. Canberra Lankan does not endorse or recommend any product or service, or facility advertised or mentioned on this site unless specifically indicated. In no event do we guarantee the product, service, or facility advertised or mentioned on this site unless specifically indicated.
2. The information and content of this site provided by Canberra Lankan does not necessarily represent the views held by Canberra Lankan, its editors or members of ASLA but writers or contributors.
3. By viewing pages contained on this site it is agreed to release and discharge Canberra Lankan from all liability which may arise, including liability in respect of defamatory material, on any database or linked website address and or software accessed from this site.
4. By accessing this site you agree to assume all risks associated with the use of the system, the site and the internet in general, including the risk to your computer, software or data being damaged by any virus which might be transmitted or activated by accessing this site in general.
5. The presence of copyrighted and other proprietary material without due credit or permission is neither malicious nor intentional. Canberra Lankan makes every effort to establish the bona fides of all material provided for publication, and accepts no responsibility where material provided by writers and contributors are submitted without due care to ascertain the copyright holder.
6. Copyright in general will remain the property of the author submitting the material, including text, photos, and other material of any type whatsoever. Copyright of the published magazine remains the property of Canberra Lankan.
7. Canberra Lankan provides no guarantees whatsoever for websites linked to the Canberra Lankan site, including the truth, accuracy suitability or completeness of linked sites.
8. Canberra Lankan undertakes to provide judicious care in compiling and providing accurate information on this web site, but accepts no responsibility for errors, omissions, completeness, alterations, or accuracy whatsoever.