

April 2012

### Individual Highlights

One Color	2
Island of Paradise	2
Cricket Update	3
Whales	3
Jewels	3
All Around Us	4
New Year Games	5
Sinhala New Year	5
Sinhala New Year	6
Offering Betels	6
Kandy Perahera	6
Sri Lankan Culture	7
New Year Games	7
කල යන්ත්‍රය	9
History Timeline	10
Carrom	13
Memories of New Year	14
International Bazaar	15
My Last Visit	15
මේ ගසේ බොහෝ	16
Sinhala New Year	16
Global Politics	17
Day With a Friend	18
New Year	19



## New Jersey Sri Lankans Celebrate Avurudu

The Sri Lankan New Year arrived on Friday the April 14th. 4000 miles away in New Jersey USA, many Sri Lankans did not fail to observe the cherished traditions and to introduce them to the Sri Lankan American youth. The two long standing New Jersey Avurudu Charithra Uthsavas, those organized by the New Jersey Buddhist Vihara and by the Samadhi Buddhist Foundation, were once again held this year and were very well attended.

Samadhi Children Experience Avurudu Charithra - page 12  
New Year Program at NJBV - page 12



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## One Color One Nation

In the middle of the Indian Ocean  
Comes the pearl of the deep  
Sri Lanka arises  
Shows a seasonal harvest heap

"Come together" the elders say  
"Come together for it's Avurudu Day!"

Sing oh sing, Asian Koels  
With eyes gleaming like ruby jewels

The drummers drum  
The singers hum  
Rabanpada Rabanpada  
Sing a little song  
Rabansural Rabansural  
All day long  
Does it ever bore us?  
No, it's so joyous!

Preparations are intense  
Cleaning must commence  
For the auspicious times  
Are not only for fun rhymes

Harvest from the muddy field  
Kiri bath: devoured  
Kithul treacle is poured  
Kavum, kokis, is served

Mung aluwa, seeni sambol, sweets galore  
It's "vada allana" time, no one waits anymore  
We change in to the new color momentarily  
To celebrate the New Year monumentally

The gifting of treats  
The gifting of sweets  
Makes the enemy fight ends  
And creates new friends

For multicultural unity  
Joy and prosperity  
Sri Lankans we are and Sri Lankans alike  
Celebrate Avurudu fest, a feast we all like!!!

Yelani Warusawithana (15)

## The Island Of Paradise

My country, Sri Lanka, lies in the Indian Ocean  
A very small yet important island  
It is a neighbor to India in the Asian Continent  
It bears the nickname "Pearl of Indian Ocean"

Sri Lanka is an exotic place  
famous for gorgeous wild life  
The places inside rainforests  
are pretty and divine.  
Waterfalls and mountain ranges  
in the hill country with spring like weather  
Golden, sandy beaches with cozy breezes  
with summer like weather throughout the year

This island has a variety of food  
that is very tasty  
They range from foods like rice  
to **pittu** and **roti**

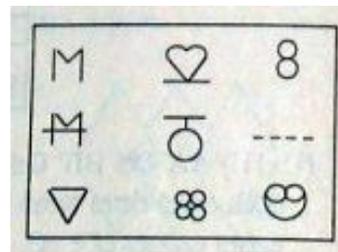
Sri Lanka is well known for spices  
that were originally bought from traders  
Curry in this island range from many vast things  
from chicken to mutton to even fruit curries  
There are also side dishes that include chutneys  
Hoppers known as **Appa** are delicacies  
There is **parippu**, **haalmasso** and other things too  
In Sri Lankan cuisines with many other foods

Sri Lanka is quite cozy for food fanatics and  
sightseers  
and the location is quite good for the ports and  
the traders

There are calming temples and historical sites  
with skyscrapers and comfy hotels  
You should visit Sri Lanka someday or another  
There is much to try in this island full of wonder.

Sahan Kumarasinghe (11)

A Kindergartener can solve this !



Fill the blank space.



## Monthly Update

- England coach Andy Flower is looking forward his team's tour to Sri Lanka this month. The England cricket team will play two test matches against Sri Lanka in Galle and Colombo
- Sri Lanka played well in the Commonwealth Bank series, eliminating world champions India from the final and giving a close run to Australia. Sri Lanka will be a leading team at the 2012 Asia cup cricket which began in Bangladesh on March 12, 2012.
- Former Pakistan player, Wasim Akram said Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardena as the best captain in the world. After closely observing Mahela's captaincy during Commonwealth Bank series held in Australia.
- As a result of Commonwealth Bank series played in Australia, Sri Lankan batsmen Kumar Sangakkara, Tillakaratne Dilshan and Dinesh Chandimal moved up in ODI ranking.

Shalinka Gunatilaka (8)

## Jewels

The earth is a pristine jewel in our galaxy. However recently, we, the sentient caretakers of our planet, have reduced our planet's majestic beauty into blackened ruin. We are not very good caretakers of our planet, and our wondrous, wild environment, and because of it, the natural majesty of our planet is being ruined.

However, all is not totally lost. Sri Lanka, the "Jewel of the Indian Ocean", is perhaps one of the few places on earth that I believe retains its natural beauty. It's wondrous white, sandy beaches, and crystal clear waters, devoid of most trash, are in stark comparison to the trash filled, yellowish beaches of America. Sri Lanka's forests always strike me with the sheer vividness and sense of life that it emits. The green color is especially striking; it is the color of a rare emerald. The beautiful fields and the wonderful, blue sky that to my eyes is

## Whales

There are many whales  
Even dolphins and orcas  
Are just some of them.

Here are some types of whales  
sperm, belugas, gray,  
humpback, blue, white, and some more

Narwhales, bottlenose  
pilots, orcas, hourglass  
You name it, but now

Time to figure out  
which are whales or are dolphins  
Can you guess which ones?



Dinitha Samaranayake (10)

devoid of pollution makes yearn to be there. For a person who lived most of their life in America, its sheer life and color makes me want to swim across the ocean just to be there. In America, we have to cope with pollution, smog, and trash, which make it hard to appreciate and love the environment. In Sri Lanka, the environment is so clean and beautiful; it's like you're seeing it through a dream.

Sri Lanka's vast, natural beauty is truly a wonder, I would dearly like to spend some time and wonder through its leafy forests before I die. But despite its vast natural beauty, it's inevitable that people will try to take advantage of its natural resources. I believe that this is a shame, and that we, the people of Sri Lanka, should make sure this jewel that is our country will not be cut up and sold, but left to floating on the tranquil sea's for all to see and marvel at.

Induwara Dalawella (14)

## New Year - All Around Us

People around the world celebrate New Year on different days. Some celebrate the New Year on January 1<sup>st</sup>, marking a new year in the Georgian calendar. Some celebrate in March, on the first day of spring. Some base their New Year on the cycles of moon, and most Asian people celebrate the New Year in mid-April.

In Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese celebrate the New Year some time on 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> of April. The date and time is based on astrological calculations, marks the Sun's movement from house of Pisces to house of Aries. Unlike the celebration of the New Year at midnight on December 31<sup>st</sup>, the ending of the old year and the beginning of the Sinhala New Year spans more than 12 hours. No food is cooked and there are no lights or fires lit during this time. People clean and paint their houses to welcome the New Year and they also make several types of sweets to be eaten on New Year's Day. The melodious call koo-koo of the Asian Koel bird, known as 'Koha' in Sri Lanka is heard during the New Year season.

The Chinese New Year takes place between January 21 and February 20. Chinese people believe that evil spirits dislike loud noises so they decorate their houses with plastic firecrackers. People give each other red envelopes with money inside of them. Some people even dress as dragons!

On the French New Year or Jour des Étrennes, celebrated on January 1<sup>st</sup>, parties are thrown for the entire family. Oysters are to France sort of what pasta is to Italy. On the New Year fireworks are lit in the air near the Eiffel tower.

On the German New Year people would drop molten lead into cold water and try to tell the future from the shape it made.

In Thailand, New Year celebrations start by people chasing each other down the street with buckets of water. They squirt water on anybody they meet in the streets, even if it is a stranger. Thai New Year is celebrated for 3 days from April 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>.

In South America, including Argentina and Brazil, bright colored underpants are worn. Those who wear red hope for love in the New Year, those who wear yellow hope for money, and those who hope for peace wear white.

In Spain and some Latin American countries people consume 12 grapes, one each to guarantee a month of happiness, and they try to consume all of them by the time the clock stops chiming.

In Denmark people leap off chairs at midnight, hoping to ban all bad spirits in the New Year. People throw their old dishes on their friends' doors on New Year and the one with the most dishes outside their door usually has the most friends.

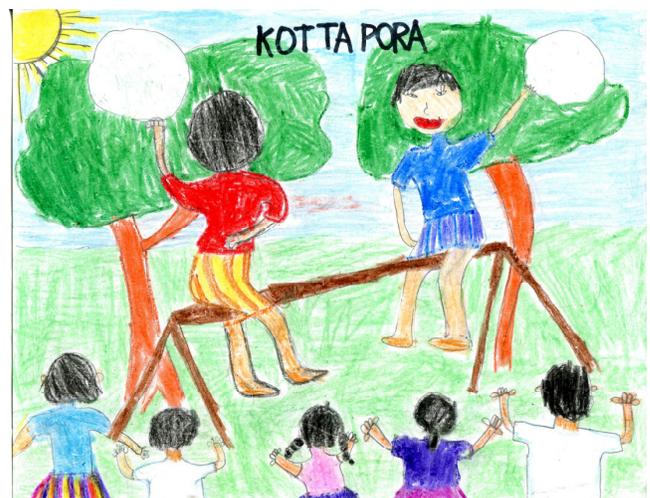
It is a tradition in the Philippines that Filipinos focus on all round things. They consume round fruits such as grapes and wear clothing with round shapes such as polka dots.

In Britain, the custom of first footing is practiced. The first male visitor to the house after midnight is usually supposed to bring good luck. The first person must not be blond, red-haired or women as these people are supposedly bad luck.

In Russia, Santa is replaced with Grandfather Frost. Often kids dance around the tree, tell rhymes to Grandfather Frost then receive their presents.

The Japanese celebrate the New Year on January 1, but they also keep their beliefs from Shinto, their religion. To keep out evil spirits, they hang a rope of straw across the front of their houses, which stands for happiness and good luck.

Dulan Gunasena (11)



Biyon Gunasena (6)

# New Year Games

During the Sinhala and Hindu New Year, there are lot of traditional games are played. They are both indoor and outdoor games and sports.

Foremost among the traditional games are the board games, like Olinda Keliya, Pancha and Dam. Modern games like Carom, Chess, Ludo, playing cards, and Monopoly are also played. The whole family and

friends joined together to play these games.

The traditional outdoor games are swinging, rabon drum beating, chack, Gudu, Tachchi, etc. hop scotch, volley ball, badminton, soft-ball, cricket, are also played. A large number of organized New Year

Celebrations are common in these days. They conduct them on a grand

scale, involving one or more villages. Many new items such as competitions, pillow fighting on a log, tug of war, bicycle races, and greasy pole are included in these celebrations. New Year's Day is a day that everyone can enjoy.

Kenneth Bandara (7)

# Sinhala New Year

Sinhala New Year is celebrated on April thirteenth and fourteenth. People believe the sun moves from Meena Rashiya (house of piscies) to the Mesha Rashiya (house of Aries). Sri Lankans began celebrating the New Year since it was their harvest season. Unlike the New Year Westerns celebrate; Sinhala New Year has a time gap between the elapse of the Old Year and New Year.

We call this "Nonagathaya". During that time no one does work. They engage in religious activities.

In the beginning of the New Year, people put milk in a pot on the hearth, bring it to a boil and let it overflow. Our family does the same traditions. We eat milk rice and lots of sweets on this occasion. Along with this there is a time when you get money and clothes.

You get the new clothes to wear from the morning until you go to bed. Then we say our prayers and pay homage to our parents.

The best part of the New Year is playing games. We play dice, tug and war, pillow fighting on balance beams, racing, and more. We also get presents for wining. I love our New Year and the traditions.

Nelusha Dias (9)

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## Sinhala New Year

Sinhala New Year I have just had  
 Nothing is gonna go bad  
 Races and fun things to do  
 You can watch cricket too  
 Rice and yummy things to eat  
 I got a trophy from a race I beat  
 Kids bounce up and down  
 Birds roam around  
 Gum I got and chewed  
 Adults gave us food  
 Wow! This is so much fun  
 I will be sad when it's done  
 But, I will come next year  
 To have another best New Year!

Dinuri Samaranyake (8)

## Kandy Perahera

The Kandy Perahera is a grand parade in Sri Lanka that occurs during the month of August every year. It starts from the Temple of the Tooth (Dalada Maligwa) in Kandy and parade along streets in the evening. This is a traditional Buddhist and a national event. Thousands of Sri Lankans and foreigners come to see this event.

This parade holds many dancers and nicely decorated elephants. This includes fire-dancers, whip-dancers, Kandian dancers and other unique cultural dancers. The elephants wear dresses that are illuminated with flashing lights. The mostly decorated elephant of this parade carries a golden casket containing one of the Buddha's teeth. This parade is a unique

## A Sri Lankan New Year Tradition Offering Betels

Offering betels to the parents and elders is considered as a token of love and gratitude. Elders feel accepted and cared by their children and give the blessings in return.

Betels are a kind of leaves that grow in a vine. It is also a stimulant and for its medicinal properties.



Sarah Ratnayake (7)

symbol of Sri Lanka.

I saw this parade a few summers ago. This is a very beautiful. It had a few hours of demonstrations. We started counting elephants, but we lost track because there were too many.

This parade is also called the Esala Perahera or Dalada Perehara. This perehera is thought to have begun when the Sacred Tooth Relic of the Buddha was taken to Sri Lanka from India during the fourth century.

Ryan Fernando (10)



## Sri-Lankan culture

There are many ways of describing Sri-lanka culture, but my way of explaining it as a mass river with memories and tradition. Sri-Lankan culture is especially unique than any other country.

During the eight years living in Sri-lanka, I have experienced a lot of culture. One Sri-Lankan culture is dancing. Usually in the U.S it is mostly hip hop and fast dancing but in Sri-Lanka, we do kandian dancing. There might be millions of other dances in Sri-Lankan culture, but a popular one is kandian. Kandian takes grace, patience, and mindfulness and a whole lot of practice.

Museus collage is where I went to school in Sri-lanka. In this school we had Kandian dancing class. For me it was a great experience. Just looking at my teacher dancing swiftly and gently made me learn more. There are always kandian dancers in parades in Sri-lanka. Such as the vesak perahara and ect.

I have a chance to show this great dancing skill. My friends and I will be taking part in a kandian dance. We will be dancing it for the Sri-Lankan independence celebration in New York. Also I have found out that a lot of Americans have taken great interest in Sri-Lankan culture and is coming to the show. So it will be such an honor showing this wonderful style of dance.

Another Sri-Lankan culture is the food. Sri-Lanka is known for it spicy tastes. Some of the traditional foods are milk rice, kaum and many other foods. A lot of people eat mika rice after the New Year's Eve, during the Sri-Lankan New Year or just for breakfast.

I had an extraordinary chance to show the Sri-Lankan culture foods. In my regular school in the U.S, we had been given countries to research and make foods that country makes. Of course I got Sri-Lanka. I thought of making a plate of milk rice and some sinisambal. When I brought it to school, I really thought that no one will eat my food, but to my surprise after the tasting session, everyone had finished this big plate of milk rice and a quarter of the sinisambal.

The most important culture I will be writing about is the culture of religion. Sri-Lanka has three main religions. One popular religion is

Buddhism. Sri-lanka is not the only country that practices this religion, other countries such as china practices Buddhism too. But they have a different view of this religion. Our view is that the Buddha created Buddhism. The Buddha was a prince who became a very great being. My family and I worship him almost every day. I did not have an opportunity to show this religion, but I get to talk about it with my friends and make them interested in this religion.

In conclusion, these examples are what I think are very important aspects of Sri-Lankan culture.

Rashmika Molligoda (15)  
(Written 4 years ago)

## Sri-Lankan New Year Games

New Year's time is just around the corner, and one of the best parts to it is the day's activities. On December 31st, we count down to the New Year, then boil milk and let it overflow from the pot. This symbolizes that we should let go of all our old wrong doings and get ready for a New Year. The morning of the next day, we have Kiri Bhaath. After the meal, we go to the temple to celebrate the New Year. Many activities are planned for the day, one of my favorites would be:

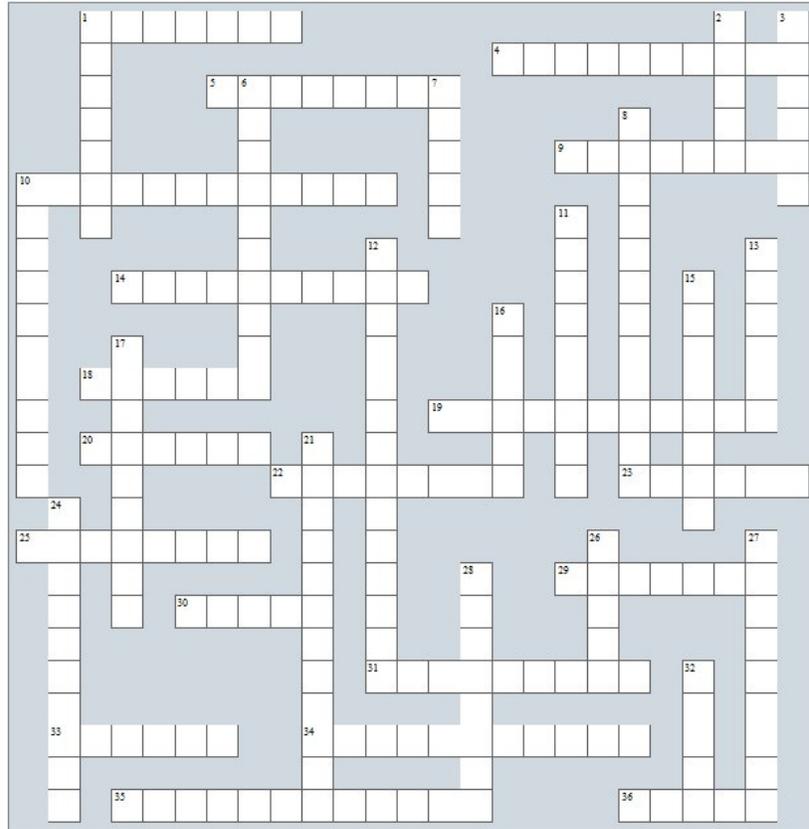
Lissana Gaha

"Lissana Gaha" is the Singhalese word for "slippery tree". Adults or referees of the game fill bags with Sri-Lankan treats such as rambutan, mangoes or sweets. They tie the bags to the top of the tree or pole. Then the tree/pole is coated with grease. That's when the competition begins! The first one to reach the top of the pole and climb down gets the bag of delicacies all to themselves! As easy as it may sound, Lissana Gaha is very difficult, depending on your skill level.

Next time you feel like getting some sweets, trying climbing a greased pole for it...

Sean Seneviratne (13)

## How good you are with Sri Lankan History 500BC-1000AD

**Across**

1. 276-303AD King Mahasen built this tank
4. Which king built Kala Wewa around 470
5. Which king made Siigiriya his kingdom
9. Great historian wrote Mahavanshaya(Great Cronical of Sri Lanka) during the rein of Dhathusena(452-470)
- 10.King Dutugemunu built as resident quarters for Bhikkus. Today can see 40x40 remnant pilers in Anuradhapura
- 14.Who defeated Elara and bring Lanka under one king/flag
- 18.Who was with a cotton wheel when Vijaya came to Sri Lanka
- 19.First Dagaba king DewanamPiyaThissa had made
- 20.During king BuddhaDasa's time which monk travelled Sri Lanka from China
- 22.Which king marched to India brought back 12000 originally captured during his fathers time
- 23.Around 300BC who was the buddhist king empiorer in India
- 25.Anuradhapura ended as capital around 1000AD with Mihindu V ; Invading ..... took Mihindu V as a prisoner
- 29.Old time name for Trincomalee
- 30.Who was the doorman during the time when Yasa was ruling
- 31.Kanthale and Girithale tanks were constructed during the period of kings ..... I and II
- 33.During Mihindu Thera's arrival who is the king of Sri Lanka
- 34.Another name for SangaBodhi Who gave his own head to a peasant
- 35.Who killed most of his uncles and became king
- 36.Dravindian(Tamil) who attacked and governed Sri Lanka 205BC-161BC

**Down**

1. King Dhathusena had two sons. One is Kashyapa. Who is the other
2. King Gajabahu's Giant's name
3. Mahatitha is today called as
6. After recapture of power king Valagamba built this viharaya
7. Vijaya was an ..... Prince
8. During king Walagamba time, this was written in Matale Alu Viharaya
10. Physician King
11. He killed both SangaThissa and SanghaBodhi before becoming king
12. Name of the city that Pandukabhaya developed
13. He came to Sri Lanka around 544BC with 500 followers
15. During times of king Sena who is the Pandyan lead the attack on Sri Lanka
16. One of the sons of Kawanthissa and Vihara Maha Devi
17. One of the largest Chaiythya king Dutugemunu started but finished by his brother
21. Because Dutugemnu's son Saliya married law caste AsokaMala who became king afterwards
24. Empiorer Ashoka's daughter
26. Which relic of Buddha brought to Sri Lanka during the rein of Siri MeghaWarna(303-331 AD)
27. Sri Lankan chronicle is written in
28. Name the Princess who brought tooth relic to Sri Lanka along with Price Dantha
32. Name the queen who came to power by poisoning powerful people around her

# කාල යන්ත්‍රය

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එක දවසක් මම මිදුලේ සෙල්ලම් කර කරා හිටියා. මොකක්දො බිම දිලිසුනා. ඒක ලොකුයි. මම අක්කාට කතා කළා. ඒක භාරලා ගන්න අක්කා උදව් කළා. ඒක කිලිටුයි. අපි සුද්ද කරා. ඒක ලොකු මැෂිමක්. බොත්තම් ගොඩාක් තියෙනවා. ගියර් තිබ්බා. ඒක නිල් පාටයි. අක්කා ගෙදර ඇතුලට ගියා. මම අළු පාටයි බොත්තම එබුවා. ඉස්සෙල්ලාම මැෂිම භයානක සද්දයක් කළා. මැෂිම කැරකුණා. මම අතුරුදහන් වුණා.

කැරකිල්ල නැවතුණා මම මාලිගාවක් ළඟට මතු වුණා. මම අනුලා දේවිය දැක්කා. මට ඇහුණා අනුලා දේවිය නපුරු කෙනෙක් කියල. ඇය ගොඩක් දෙනෙක් මරලා තියෙනවා. මම පොඩි කොළ පාට බොත්තමක් එබුවා. ඒක කියෙව්වා 242 A.D.

මම කැලයක් මැදින් මතු වුණා. සිරිසඟ බෝ භාවනා කරනවා. දුප්පත් මිනිසයෙක් එතනට ආවා. සිරිසඟ බෝ දුප්පත් මිනිසෙකුට ඔළුව දන් දුන්නා.

මං ඉන්නෙ කාල යන්ත්‍රයක් ඇතුලෙයි. මට ඒක දැනුයි තේරුනෙ. මට මහන්සි. මම නින්ද ගියා. ඇහැරුණේ වෙරළ ළඟයි. නැවක් මගේ පැත්තට එනවා. නැව උඩ හේමමාලි කුමරිය සහ දන්ත කුමරු ඉන්නවා. ඔවුන් දන්ත දාතුව ගෙනාවා. කිත්සිරි මෙවන් රජුගේ නම කුලුනක තියෙනවා.

කාල යන්ත්‍රයේ බැටරි අඩුවෙනවා. මම ඉක්මනින් ආපසු නැග්ගා. නොබි එකක් කැරකුවා 335AD වලට. මම “යන්න” බොත්තම එබුවා. ඉස්සරහ එක මිනිසෙකු නයකුට බෙහෙත් දුන්නා. මට දොස්තර හොදහිත මතක් වුනා. ඒ බුද්ධදාස රජු වෙන්න ඇති.

බැටරි තවත් අඩු වෙනවා. දැන් මම “ගෙදර යන්න” ලනුව ඇද්දා. මම වටපිට බලනවා. මම ගෙදර මිදුලේ ඉන්නවා. කාල යන්ත්‍රයෙන් බැස්සා. මම මේ ගමනට ගොඩාක් කැමතියි. පස්සෙ අනෙක් තැන් වලට යන්න ඕනේ.

(Translation help from Mom)

කිත් මි වික්‍රමසිංහ (9)

## දන්නවාද ?

### කොණ්ඩය

කොණ්ඩය යැයි කියන්නේ පැරැන්නන් කෙස් වලින් හිසේ සැදූ ගැටයටයි.

එසේ නැතිව හිස කෙස් කොණ්ඩය නොවේ.

කොන්ඩ කැවුමේ උඩ කොටස ඔබට කෙස් වාගේ පෙනේද ?

### හත්මුතු පරම්පරාව

අත්තා, මුත්තා, නත්තා, පනත්තා, කිත්තා, කිරිකිත්තා සහ මිමුත්තා.

### පංච කලාශාසය

කේශ, මාංස, අස්ථි, ඡවි, හා වයඩ.

හිසකෙස්, මස්, ඇට (දත්), හම හා වයස ය.

### ෂඩ භාෂා පරමේශ්වර විමට දැනගත යුතු භාෂා

සංස්කෘත, ප්‍රාකෘත, මාගධි, අපභ්‍රංශ, ෂාගෞරසෙනි හා වෛශ්‍යාව

### සතරවරම් දෙව්වරු

වෛශ්‍රවණ , ධ්‍රතරාෂ්ඨ, විරුඪ, විරූපාක්ෂ

### ක්‍රිකට නිවේදනයේදී

තණනිල්ල - වැරදිය

තණනිල්ල - නිවැරදි

තණ, කොළ පාට මීස නිල් පාට ද ?

### සින්දු වලින් හමුවෙන වචන

දඹ = ජම්බු

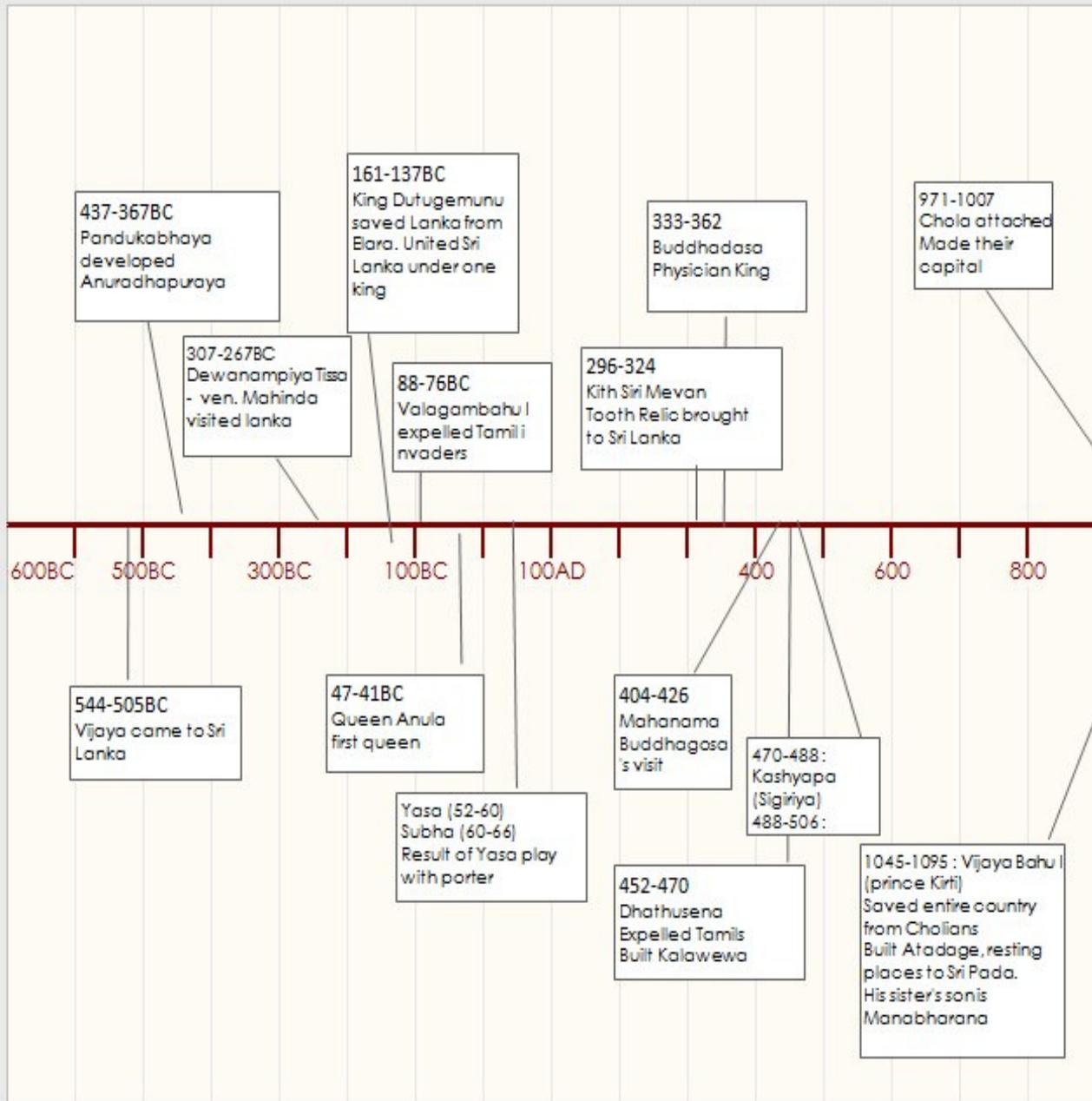
පනා = කොස්

තාවලු = වැව ඉස්මත්තෙ වගා බිම්

තුමුල = මහත්

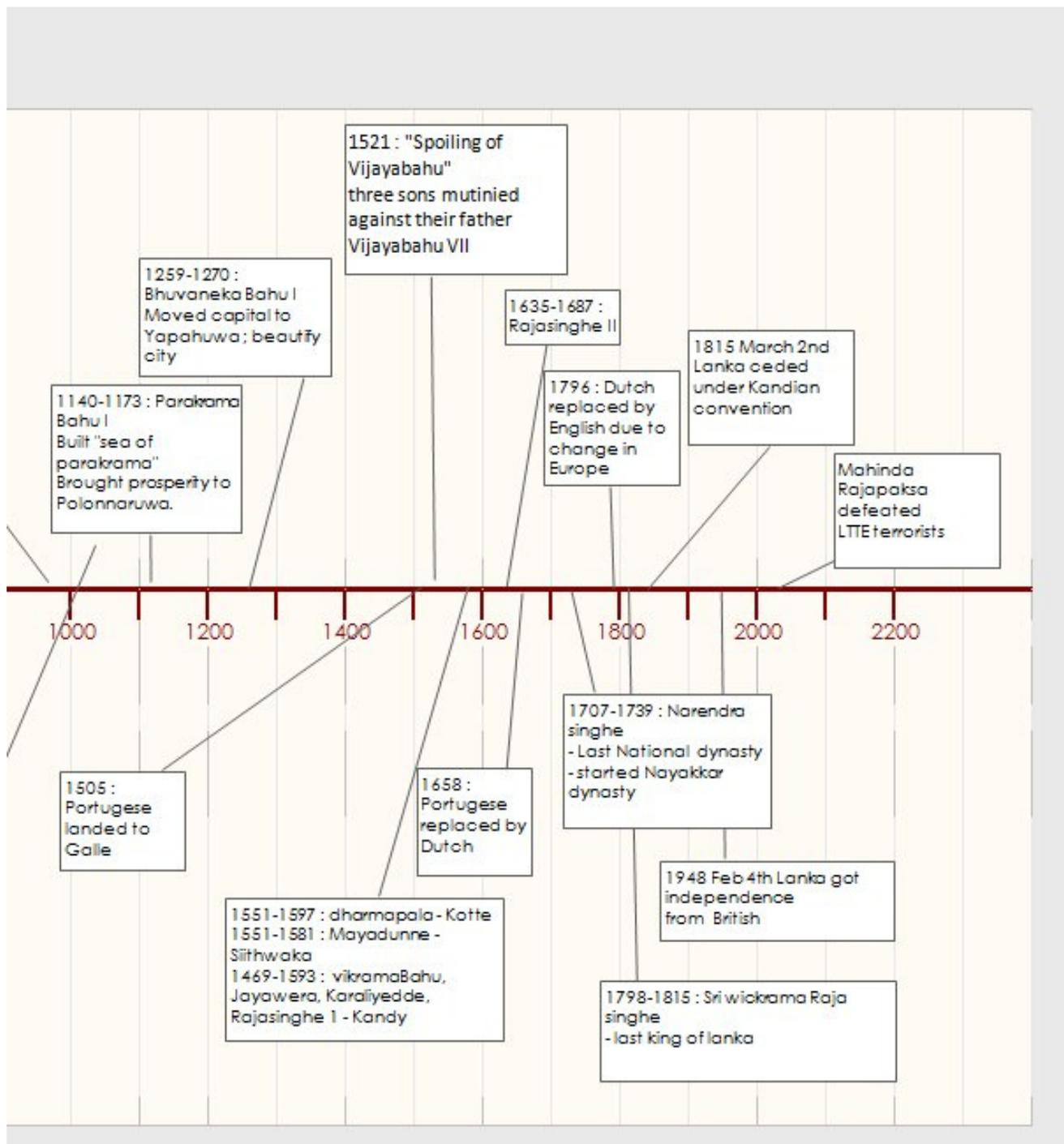
refer : silumina.lk , පුත්කළස , දොස් නිදොස්

## Sri Lanka History Timeline



### Lunar Years and Great Years

Not everyone used the solar calendar as ancient Sri Lankans and Indians did. Egyptians used the lunar calendar and a year had an average of 354 days. Their agriculture was based on the annual floods of the Nile River. When Egyptians noticed that the Nile's rising coincided with the heliacal rising of the star Sirius, they started to base the year on the cycle of the star's reappearance. However, this occurred every 365 ¼ days. To correct it, the Egyptians introduced an extra month to create a "Great Year" of 384 days every 2 or 3 lunar years!



### Almanac... Sri Lankan Way

Sri Lankan astrologers create and distribute a Panchanga Litha (Almanac of Five Factors) every year. It contains everything you need to know to celebrate a traditional New Year, things like: auspicious times for doing various activities for the first time in the New Year and what colors to wear on the New Year day. In a sign of changing times, recently some bloggers were wondering if the Litha should include an auspicious time to begin the New Year's first post/comment/chat!

## Samadhi Children Experience Avurudu Charithra

The annual Avurudu Charithra program of the Samadhi Buddhist Foundation was held on Sunday April 15<sup>th</sup> at the Unitarian Society premises in East Brunswick New Jersey.

This year's event was entirely conducted by the Dhamma School children. Welcome speeches were made in Sinhala and English and the speakers went on to describe the Sri Lankan traditions and their significance. The speeches were followed by action as students from various classes demonstrated those traditions: they enacted the 'Lipa Gini Melavweema', Ahara Anubhawayaya' and 'Ganu Denu Kireema'.

The entertainment was provided by the children too as they sang several songs for their parents and teachers. Afterwards the children paid respects to their elders by offering beetle leaves.

An important novel feature of the event was the house like enclosure that was set up around the stage. It was supposed to signify the traditional 'Kanu Pela' (stick hut) that is built in a harvest field to conduct the New Year activities.



## 2012 New Year Program at New Jersey Buddhist Vihara

The New Jersey Buddhist Vihara had been conducting the New Year blessings program every year since its inception. The 2012 was held on Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup> at the vihara grounds in Princeton and was attended by over a hundred devotees.

Religious observations were held from 11 AM to 1 PM and were followed by Avurudu Charithra observations including *Bulath Deema*. Afterwards both children and adults enjoyed activities such as putting eye on the elephant, kana muttiya bindeema, tug'o'war, and lime and spoon race.

A noteworthy feature of the event was the Dhamma presentation by the children. The uthsavaya concluded with a Seth Pirith chanting to invoke blessings upon the participants.

SLAS correspondent reporting from Central Jersey  
Photos from Senaka Seneviratne and Ruki Rupasingha



# Carrom - කැරමි

Carrom is a fun and addictive game that is played mostly in South Asia. The first serious competitive carrom games are thought to have begun in Sri Lanka in 1935. The game quickly spread to other countries such as India, Switzerland, and Holland. Today, thousands of serious carrom players are spreading its popularity even more. People play carrom for entertainment and also as a good stress reliever.

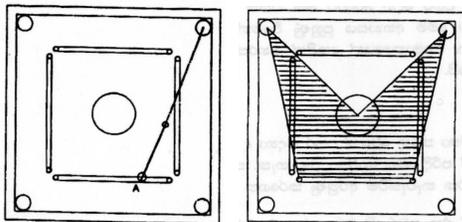
The object of the game is to sink all your men (either white or black) into the pockets before your opponent. You can shoot the striker by using your index finger, middle finger, or the scissors shot.



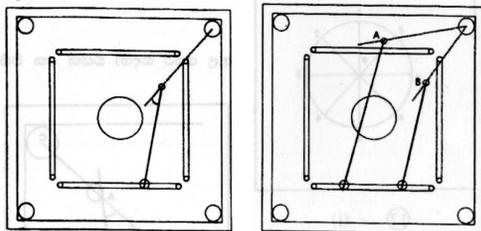
(scissors shot)

On your turn, if you pocket your piece, you can keep going for as long as you sink pieces. The red piece, or queen, can be sunk at any time after your first piece but before your last piece. After you pocket the queen, you must "cover" it by sinking another one of your pieces into any pocket.

## Shots

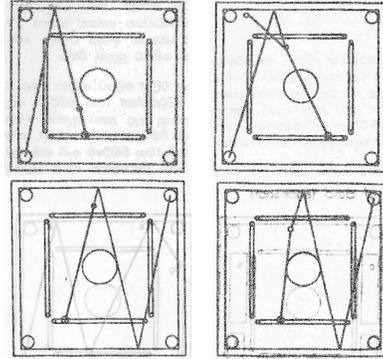


The shot shown at above left is the straight shot. The striker directly knocks the man into the pocket. The straight shot cannot hit anything outside the shaded area shown in the diagram at above right.

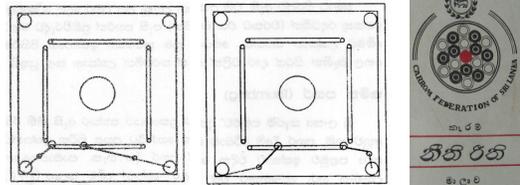


The angle shot, shown at above left, can cover some of the areas that the straight shot

cannot reach. The striker hits the man at an angle to pocket it. However, the larger the angle, the harder it is to hit. In the diagram at above right, shot B is easier than shot A because it has a smaller angle.



If you cannot hit the man with an angle shot or a straight shot, you can use a double shot. In a double shot, the striker bounces the man off the front of the board and then into the pocket. If it is impossible to get a double shot, try an angle double shot by striking the man at an angle to bounce off the front. In the same manner triple shots and angle triple shots can be made.



To get men that are behind the two base lines, you can use the back shot. You can use the scissors shot or another method called thumbing to pocket the man. You can also make an angle back shot in the same manner as a normal angle shot.

I have never understood why Sri Lankan people say, "අපි නොදන්න වෙස්" and act fingers like they are making a carrom shot.

The Carrom Federation of Sri Lanka organizes tournaments in Sri Lanka. If you have any questions about the rules of carrom, you can refer to their printed booklet.

Kavindya Wickramasinghe (11)

# My memories of Sinhala New Year

I was so lucky to stay in my Grandma's house in Sri Lanka for the last year's Sinhala Awurudu. My grandma, my mom, and my aunt made so many different sweets. My grandpa, my dad and my uncle get together and cleaned the house few days before the Awurudu day. My Grandpa cut a big bunch of bananas from his garden and kept in our house a week before the Awurudu day. Those days I had been hearing the kuku bird sound everywhere. My grandma showed me one of the kuku birds who came to mango tree in our garden. On Awurudu day we woke up early morning and dressed up with new cloths. At auspicious time my grandma gave me the chance of lit the hearth. We boiled the milk on the hearth and waited till it boiled and spilled away. Then my grandma cooked milk rice. Little later my mom, aunt, and grandma arranged the Awurudu table. There were so many different sweet dishes. Kokis, moon kawum, aluwa, oil cake, and milk toffee are some of the items. At auspicious time my grandpa fed milk rice to us. Then we all had milk rice and sweets. Everything was so yummy.

Then we all worshiped our grandparents and parents by giving betel leaves. My dad gave some money which was wrapped in a betel leave to my grandparents. After that my mom and dad gave some presents to my grandma and grandpa. We all exchanged presents. I also got many presents too. I was so happy. At night time me, my sister, and my cousin sister lit lightning crackers which is known as "Nilakooru" with my grandpa. It was so fun.

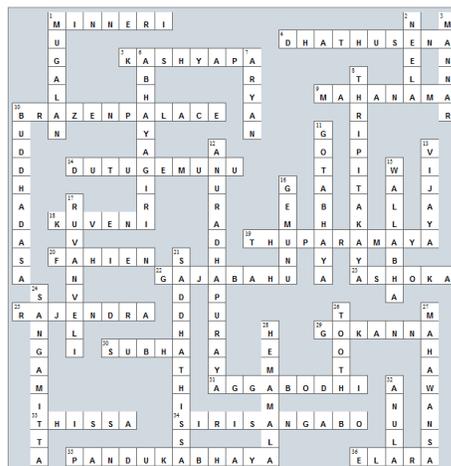
Those days I watched several Awurudu celebrations on TV. I saw several fun activities in them. Some were playing Raban while singing song called "Raban padha". Mostly this is done by senior citizens. Some young kids rode swings while singing nice poems, which are called "Onchili Waram". Another fun game was "Kotta pora". I think Sinhala Awurudu celebrations are so much fun.

I really enjoyed my visit to Sri Lanka during Awurudu time. I wish I could go to Sri Lanka for this Awurudu too.



Jasmine Seneviratne (7)

## Crossword Answers



රන් කුඹලක් රන් කුඹලක් රටින් පලවිලි  
ගෙදර හිටිය හෙකටු කෙල්ලෙදී ග පලවිලි  
කකදොං දී ග පලවිලි

හොඳ හොඳ කුක්කන් - ගමගෙට දක්කන්  
කෙම්බිඩ කුක්කන් - දුදුලට දක්කන්  
ලොක්කන් බක්කන් - කොළඹට දක්කන්

## Sri Lanka at International Bazaar

Venue: Bridgewater-Raritan school district at Hillside Intermediate School.

It was the yearly exposition of cultural, food, national costumes and music/dance events of countries around the world. 23 countries participated. Not to miss an opportunity to tell the others about Sri Lanka, a table exhibiting items that are unique to our country and a board with full of beautiful scenes of Sri Lanka was set up. Dinitha and Dinuri got into a lama sari and national costume to tell the viewers about our country.

Delicious food, 'Wade' with 'sambal' and 'Kokis' were tasted by many, delighting their taste buds. There was also a national costume parade on the catwalk with a brief description of the costumes. The show ended with performers from many countries. Dinitha played a Sinhala song on the piano with Dinuri helping him with the "Thalam pota". It was surprising how few knew about Sri Lanka and how many we were able to educate about the beauty, culture and food of the "pearl of the Indian ocean". Overall, it was an educational, informative and fun filled day for the kids.

Hiranthi Samaranyake



## My last visit to Sri-Lanka

On my last visit to Sri-Lanka, we went to my dad's parent's house. We were so excited to see our grandparents. The first thing me and my family did was just relaxing. On the second of June, we went to our mom's parent's house just for a little while. We watched T. V and played with their dog named Henry.

One day we went back to our dad's parent's house which we already spend the night with. On the fourth of June, we went to Bentotha beach. It was so awesome. It had all the channels like Cartoon Network., Nick, and Nicktoon. We went outside and took a dip in the pool. It was so warm. I did five laps each time my brother does three laps. When we went out of the pool, we went to our room in the hotel and took a rest. Suddenly, we went to dinner in the food court. I ate a lot of things.

Finally we went to the room again and slept. It was the time to go. We were all sad. We went to another beach. Well, we did not spend the night in it, because it wasn't a hotel. When we went to the water it was so horrible because it was so cold and it was filled with bird poop. Suddenly, we went out of the pool and went to our mom's parent's house. Quick as a flash, my friends came by.

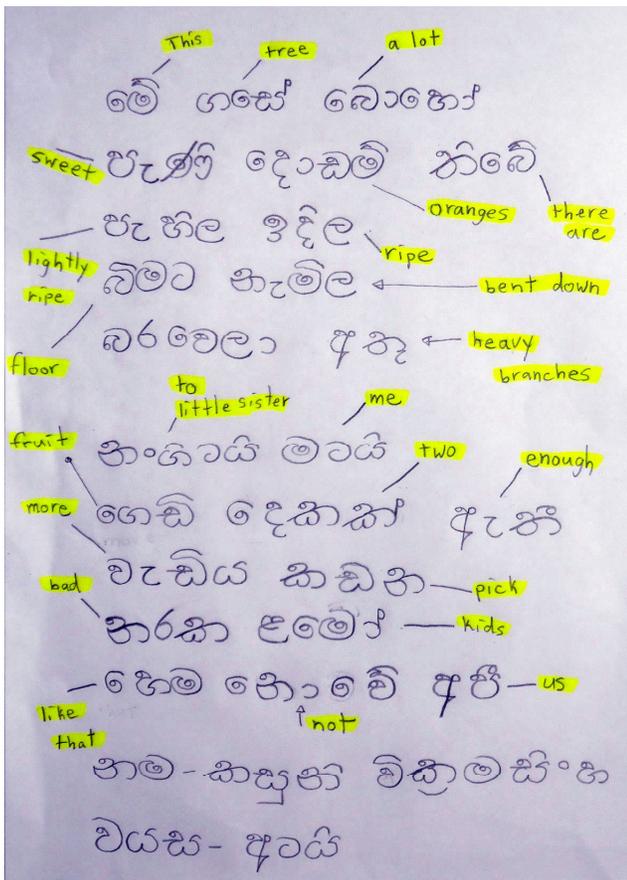
We played cricket, dodge ball, and mat ball. We also played with the dog. Next we fed him. Later on, we went inside and watched T.V. The next day, we went back to our dad's parent's house. Seven or eight days later we went back to the US. I miss Sri-Lanka, but I was happy because I was home. I love home.

Hirendra Molligoda (12)  
(Written 4 years ago)

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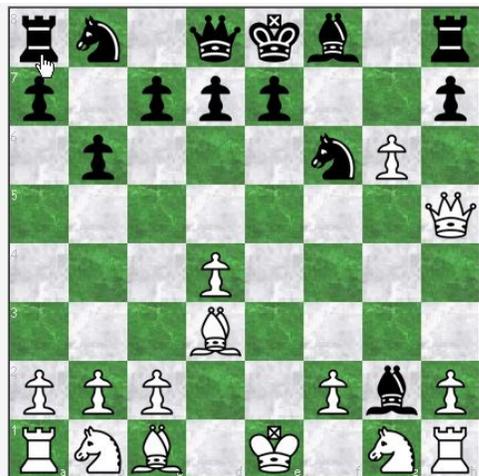
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Kasuni Wickramasinghe (8)

## Chess Problem

White to mate in two moves



# Sinhala New Year

Aries to pieces in a celestial sphere,  
 Sri Lankans celebrates Sinhalese New Year,  
 Koha sings,  
 And New Year begins  
 People gather together to end harvest season  
 And start festive season.  
 Lighting the hearth  
 To signal another year's birth.  
 Kids worship elders with betel leaves  
 In return they receive good merits  
 For the New Year's sleeves.  
 Folk games are played,  
 With so many games to choose,  
 It's like playing in an arcade.  
 So what are you waiting for?  
 Go get started on your way.  
 And please,  
 Enjoy this great day.

Jeffrey Bandara (11)



Best part of my trip  
 to Sri Lanka

මගේ තර්තයි - සිනෙලියා

Sineli Bombuwala (5)

# Global politics today and the nation of Sri Lanka. Discuss...

A nation is relevant in global politics in two ways – if they are powerful or if they affect another country's interests. Strong nations can attack, support, or defend weaker nations, thus making them relevant in global politics. There are two types of power – economic power and military power. Most strong nations have at least one of these. Major examples of this are the United States, India, China, the European Union, and Russia. A country can affect another country's interests by posing a threat to that country, affecting that country's economy, or starting a regional conflict. This can make a country that is not a power relevant in global politics. For example, the United States went into Iraq because of a suspected nuclear threat. Similarly, Saudi Arabia is relevant in global politics because of the oil it produces for other nations. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is relevant in the world because it holds potential for a regional conflict.

Sri Lanka is not that relevant in global politics because it does not have much power and does not affect other countries' interests. Economically, it is weak because of the civil war that is draining its resources. Sri Lanka does have plenty of resources; however most of the budget goes towards funding the war. Militarily, Sri Lanka is not relevant on a global scale because it has a small population, does not have advanced technology, and is not a strong sea power. Most importantly, Sri Lanka does not have nuclear weaponry.

Because of their lack of military power, Sri Lanka does not pose a threat to other countries. Since it does not have major exports that are essential to world powers, it does not affect other countries' economies. The only conflict of Sri Lanka is within its borders and it has good relations with its neighbors. Thus there is no potential for a regional conflict.

Seeing as though Sri Lanka is not relevant in world affairs, major powers are not necessarily concerned with its problems. An example of this would be their responses to the civil war against the LTTE. Although some countries, such as Pakistan, China, and Israel supply weaponry to Sri Lanka, most countries overlook the struggle against the Tamil Tigers.

Although Sri Lanka is not that relevant in global politics, it still plays some role in world affairs. During the Cold War, it was one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which allowed countries to remain neutral. To this day, Sri Lanka is part of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the United Nations (UN). Yet, these activities alone are not enough to make Sri Lanka a major player in global politics. Should Sri Lanka hope to receive assistance in future conflicts, they will have to take steps to become more relevant in world affairs.

Aswina Ranasinghe  
(wrote 4 years ago)

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## Day With a Friend Who Visited Me From USA

My friend Sally came to visit me from South Carolina when I was holidaying in Sri Lanka. We were living in my father's grand parent's house in Galle. We were planning to go to Kandy. But the next day stormy clouds came up in the sky, & I told Sally lets go next week. The day we decided to postpone the trip, the fan was on & the lights were on and it was a normal day until the lights went out & the fan stopped. We could hear cries from our window. Then we heared the waves crashing in. I was there in the house with Sally not knowing what it was & what to do. In my head, I was thinking should Sally and I hide or should we run? From outside I can hear the screams and trembles of the people in Sri Lanka. It's such a terrible day for Sri Lanka for many Sri Lankans & tourists who visited Sri Lanka. Many lives were gone that day. Sally and I ran to the car and drove away I had to speed or Sally and I would be caught in the tsunami it was at our tail. Finally, it was over tons of houses, which were destroyed mine was too. The next day, Sally and I had to stay at my friend's place till I could find a new house. Now you know, that Sri Lanka faced a tsunami!

After a week, I had found a new house, Sally and I went to a restaurant to have a meal. We were at "Sen Sal" eating rice & vegetables and every single bite she took, she needed a sip of water, which was kind of silly. We heard "Machan ara egg eka thachchiyata danna!". It came to my mind, how my Thaththa talks with his friends when they visit our place in USA. Sally told me "this is very yummy food but, too spicy!" I told her now you know next time you come here you should ask for mild food. She replied "I think mild will be too spicy too, so I think, it should be NO SPICY." Now that you know the food in Sri Lanka is spicy, don't forget the bottle of water. As Sri Lanka is back to normal, we thought, to go somewhere to relax!

People were playing in the sand and there is so many people relaxing, some are playing volleyball. Can you guess where we were? Yes! We were at the beach. The beach is the most tourists' place ever. Hey, but when ever you come, bring your sunscreen because you are going to be toast when you go back home because the sun will frizzle. There is a beach called "Hikkaduwa beach" where you can walk for miles! So now you can picture Sri Lanka. But, wait you only know the beginning to the story of Sri Lanka so hey come along and visit this beautiful country Sri Lanka because I am just saying this in my words but, when you put your foot on Sri Lanka you know this is the place for you, and its not going to be my words its going to be our words. So come on enjoy Sri Lanka.

SRI LANKA IS AWESOME!

Scenic Rich Island  
 Loving Adventures  
 Nice Kind Attractive

Rasali Kodikara (10)

## Sinhala and Hindu New Year

New Year in Sri Lanka or the Sinhala and Hindu New Year – "Aluth Avurudhu" regularly falls on April 13th or 14th every year. According to Sinhalese mythology, New Year begins when the sun moves from Meena Rashiya (the house of Aries) to Mesha Rashiya. It also symbolizes the end of the harvest and spring.

### Sinhalese New Year Rituals

Aluth Avurudhu rituals begin with observance of "Nonagathe". At this time, people consider it to be inauspicious to engage in any activity. They go to temples and perform religious activities to receive the blessings of the priests. Women in villages congregate to play "rabana" (drums) to announce the time to start performing New Year rituals.

### New Year Cuisine

Food is the essential part of New Year festivities in Sri Lanka. Sinhalese food is very rich in nutrition. They prepare sweet meats such as *mung kavum ad*, *konda kavum*. There is also a tradition of preparing "Kiri Bhaat" (milk rice) with rice from new crops. All the family members sit together to enjoy the lavish feast on the New Year's Day.

### New Year Celebrations

The main New Year 's Day begin with the lighting of hearth. Then the family members wear new clothes and exchange New Year gifts with each other. For some "Aluth Avurudhu" is the day to venture into new business. Another custom of offering betel to the parents and elders is considered as a token of love and gratitude. Elders feel accepted and cared by their children and give them blessings in return.

People of Sri Lanka love to visit their relatives and friends to gift them sweets like *Kavum*, *kokis* and other gifts. The festivities come to an end with the anointing of the oil ceremony. In this auspicious hour, an elder anoints the young with herbal oil. Sinhalese also set an auspicious time to go to work.

Tiffany Seneviratne (8)



Jasmine Seneviratne (7)

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Sinhala or English related to Sri Lanka  
 Preferred 300-400, Max 700 words  
 Fiction or non-Fiction must be in Ms Word format

#### artwork

on A4 size must be in JPG format

#### parents

Write about your kid's accomplishments.

Check accuracy.

Email article with child's name, age and parent's email, mailing address

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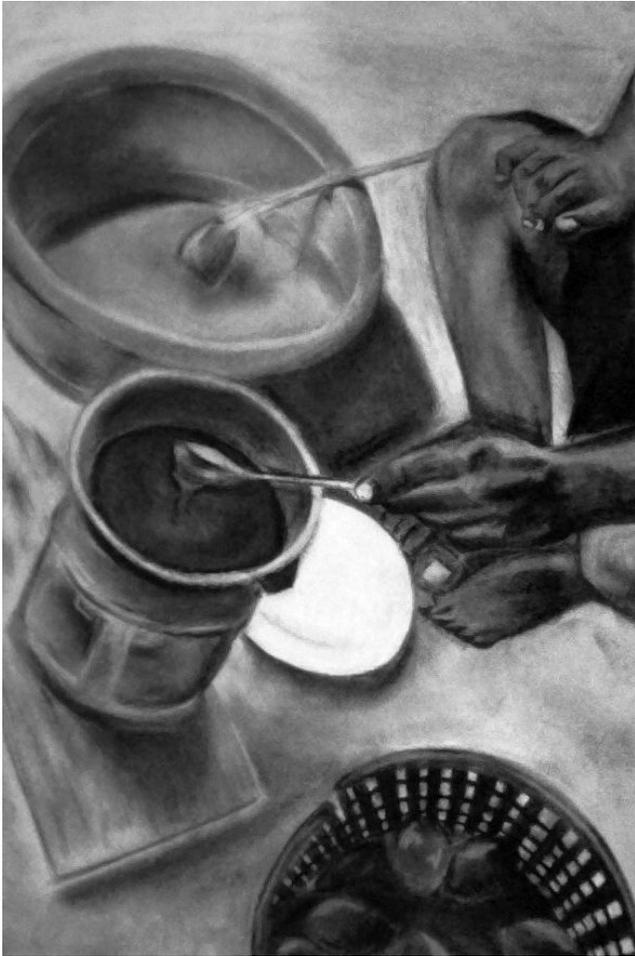
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### Answers to puzzles :

Chess puzzle : 1. gxh7+ Nxh5 2. Bg6#

Diagram puzzle : Try simpler and simpler. Not harder.  
 Ask a First Grader !

# What Charcoal Can Do In The Right Hands !



Amanda Goonetilleke ( කැවුම් බදිමු )



Kavindya Dalawella (11)



Sayuni Dias (12)

## Kambyan Dancer



Siluni Karunaratne (11)