



REAL - ESTATE NEWS FEED



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1. REAL-ESTATE

- **Port City opens for business; adds 269 hectare to Lankan map**

China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd will invest US\$ 400 million to construct an office, retail and apartment (3) towers, each rising up to minimum 65 storey at the Colombo Port City Head of Strategy & Business Development CHEC Port City Colombo Pvt Ltd, Thulei Aluvihare said.

This will be constructed on the South Entrance on the reclaimed land dedicated to the CHEC. He said that construction would start next year and it will be completed by 2023. It is expected to be the most livable city in South Asia with 5.7 million square feet of built space.

He said that the Port city is now open for investment and adding 269 hectares to the map of Sri Lanka, the Colombo Port City was officially declared part of Sri Lanka on Friday by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa who was the mentor behind this Sri Lanka's largest investment project. "With the official declaration, the Colombo Port City Project is now open to investors."

[Read more](#)

- **The Residences at Colombo City Centre brings exceptional style, luxury**

Whether you are looking for a home or an investment The Residences at Colombo City Centre offer you the best.

The Residences at Colombo City Centre offer you the opportunity of being one of the 192 lucky owners of an apartment that provides you with a home to match your unique lifestyle. The uniform, refined, and spacious interior design of these apartments are specially devised to help residents to de-stress, relax and unwind.

The apartments feature a broad open-plan living, dining, and kitchen area where families and guests can gather relax and spend quality time during numerous activities. The two-kitchen concept, namely, the wet and dry kitchen is complemented by stain-proof quartz countertops to minimize the stress and chaos associated with cooking and cleaning. The wet kitchen also conceals the disruptive and untidy nature of heavy cooking from family or guests, and provides ample storage space for large home appliances.

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- **‘South Asia including Sri Lanka must look at cost effective ways to build highways’**

South Asia including Sri Lanka must look at innovative and cost effective ways to build road and highways Nitin Jairam Gadkari, Minister for Road Transport & Highways, and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India told the opening of the 10th annual EXCON construction exhibition in Bangalore yesterday.

The Minister suggested using waste and even plastic for road laying purposes in the future. “For the road sector alone, the government is investing INR 2 lakh crores this year. The amount of investment for the next year will increase to INR 3 lakh crores. Within the next five years, the total government spend on the road infrastructure will be about INR 17 lakh crores,” he said.

“We will invite tenders from any company who comes up with new innovative road building techniques,” he said.

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- **One Transworks Square tower to be 6th tallest in South Asia**

The construction of Sri Lanka’s tallest building, the 92 story commercial and Residential Tower of ‘The One Transworks Square (Pvt) Ltd’ will commence next year and would be completed in three years, said Chief Executive Officer and Director of The One Transworks Square, Janaki Siriwardhana.

When completed it would be among the top 6 tallest buildings in South Asia.

She also said that The One Transworks Square (Pvt) Ltd’ also was placed among Asia’s finest real estate players at the PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards 2019 held in Bangkok when it secured the title, ‘Best Mixed Use Development (Asia).

This was for ‘The One’ state of the art design and on time delivery for its towers. “The One project beat 8 other nominees from Australia, China, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Thailand, Philippines and Myanmar.

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- **ITC's iconic and historic 'Ahasa One' sky bridge becomes reality**

India's ITC One Hotel and Sapphire Residences at the picturesque Galle Face reached a historic milestone yesterday when its iconic 'Ahasa One' sky bridge connecting the two towers became an engineering reality..

It is South Asia's first sky bridge and Sri Lanka as well as ITC, WelcomHotels and construction specialist Larsen & Toubro (L&T) are proud to have made it a reality.

In what could be described as an engineering marvel in South Asia, with region-grown design, engineering prowess, software and sheer grit, the steel bridge weighing 2,000 tons and spanning 55 m was hydraulically lifted and fitted to link the 19-21 levels of the two towers over an eight hour period. The process started with religious blessings in early hours yesterday and completed by afternoon.

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- **Unparalleled view, exceptional style, nonstop luxury at CCC Residences**

Whether you are looking for a home or an investment, the Residences at Colombo City Centre offers you the best option for both.

The Residences at Colombo City Centre offers you the opportunity of being one of the 192 lucky owners of an apartment that provides you with a home to match your unique lifestyle. The uniform, refined, and spacious interior design of these apartments are specially devised to help residents to de-stress, relax and unwind.

High white ceilings, homogeneous porcelain tile flooring, full glass elevation, and sophisticated colour palettes figure prominently in the space, allowing for a greater intake of natural light and providing the perfect canvas for prospective homeowners to define their living space. The apartments also perfectly demarcate the private areas of the home, such as the bedrooms from public spaces, heightening the privacy and comfort of residents in their homes.

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- **Sri Lanka facilitating first US\$400mn investment at Port City: Cabraal**

Sri Lanka is facilitating the maiden 400 million dollar investment at the newly reclaimed land at Port City in Colombo, a top official said.

“It will be a 400 million dollar plus project, with two towers and a connecting block,” Senior Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister Nivard Cabraal said.

The land was reclaimed by CHEC Port City Colombo (Pvt) Ltd, a unit of China Communications and Construction (CCCC) group.

Sri Lanka is facilitating the investment with tax and other incentives, Cabraal said.

The 269 hectare reclaimed land has 178 hectares of buildable land and 91 hectares for public areas including a park.

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- **China welcomes Lanka’s working committee to accelerate Port City Project**

China welcomes Sri Lanka’s move to set up a working committee to review and accelerate the Colombo Port City project under the principles of mutual respect and benefit, a press release from the Chinese embassy in Sri Lanka said here Sunday.

The Prime Minister decided to set up a working committee to study and accelerate the project. The Chinese embassy appreciated Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa’s successful visit to the opening of the Colombo Port City on DecEMBER. 7, during which opinions of all parties were shared.

Noting that Sri Lanka’s Cabinet of Ministers recently approved the proposal to set up a working committee to review and accelerate the legislative framework of the project, the embassy said,

“The Chinese side is willing to guide relevant enterprises to strengthen communication and cooperation with Sri Lanka, under the principles of mutual respect and benefit, fairness and justice.”

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- **UDA to introduce new global building and transport concepts**

The Urban Development Authority will look at introducing several new global building and transport concepts to Sri Lanka within the next few months, new Secretary Urban Development Authority, Prof Ranjith Dissanyake said.

Speaking to Daily News Business he said one of the prime areas the government would focus on is to minimize the number of people coming to the Capital to get their work done. “To meet this objective there would be a high focus on ICT sector where the government would link Ministries with each other online. People requesting government services then could also get ‘online’ and ‘not in line’ and fulfill their duties.

More and more government institutions going on line would also help people to access their services from home and it would also lead to less corruption.

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- **Marina Square – Uptown Colombo participates in LPS Shanghai 2019**

Marina Square – Uptown Colombo, Sri Lanka’s first and largest harbor front development project, was one of the two participants from Sri Lanka at LPS Shanghai 2019, the leading luxury real estate exhibition held in China’s commercial and financial capital.

The event welcomed over 200 luxury real estate companies from all over the world, presenting unique estates to a discerning audience of Chinese luxury home buyers.

Organised in cooperation with over 200 official media and show partners, the twentieth consecutive edition of LPS allowed the city’s elite property buyers to interact and mingle with the world’s most influential property experts.

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- **Sri Lanka's tallest A-grade office complex MAGA ONE achieves full occupancy**

MAGA ONE, Sri Lanka's tallest A-grade office complex developed by the country's largest construction company, Maga Engineering, has reached full occupancy within its first year of operations, making it the leading choice for global and local corporates.

A testament to MAGA ONE's unmatched offering, the building is now home to multinational giants such as Chevron, Pearson, AkzoNobel, Wiley Global, and Wabtec Corporation, together with trailblazing Sri Lankan start-ups such as eMarketingEye and Digital Mobility Lanka. The latter is behind Sri Lanka's fastest growing and largest ride-hailing service (PickMe).

Standing at 33 floors, the building is a state-of-the-art, purpose-built business tower with an array of modern, sustainable features, which is strategically located in Colombo-5, between Sri Lanka's central business district and administrative capital Sri Jayawardenapura, Kotte.

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2. ECONOMY

- **Tourist arrivals dip in November**

Sri Lanka's tourist arrivals were down 9.5 percent in November 2019 to 176,984 from 195,582 a year earlier.

The total number of international tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka in November 2019 were down 9.5% with the arrival of 176,984 in the country. In comparison, 195,582 arrivals were recorded in November 2018, according to the latest data from the Tourism Ministry.

Year-on-Year tourist arrivals declined 22.5% in October, 27.7% in September, 28% in August, 46% in July, 57% in June and 70.8% in May this year.

As at November 30, 1,672,039 of tourists had visited Sri Lanka this year. It is a decline of 19.6% over last year when 1,885,045 of tourists has visited the country during the same period.

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- **'IFC to offer special incentives to investors'**

The Government would keep on promoting the financial city (IFC) concept for the Colombo Port City said Project Director Colombo Port City Nihal Fernando.

Colombo International Financial City will be a special financial zone at the Colombo Port City giving special incentives to investors and banks.

The financial centre will be operated similar to IFC's in Dubai, Singapore and Hong Kong. International Financial Centres such as London, New York, and Tokyo -are large international full-service centers with advanced settlement and payments systems.

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- **Foreign investors sell Sri Lanka rupee bonds**

Foreign investors have sold rupee bonds in the first week of December, after being net buyers in the previous week, official data show.

Foreign investor holdings of rupee bonds fell to 116.5 billion rupees in the week to December 04, from 120.8 billion rupees a week earlier, central bank data showed.

However foreign investors were net buyers in the previous week.

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- **Lanka just 19.6% behind last year's tourist arrival**

The total number of international tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka during November 2019 was 176,984. In comparison to November last year, there was a decline of 9.5% when the arrivals were 195,582.

This month, the largest source market for tourists was India followed by Germany and China. Almost 90% of tourists travelled by air to Sri Lanka.

As of November 30, 2019, 1,672,039 of tourists had visited Sri Lanka for this year. It is a decline of 19.6% over last year when 2,080,627 of tourists had visited the country during the same period.

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- **SL should broaden tax base, continue fiscal consolidation
-ICRA Lanka**

The Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) reduced variety of taxes substantially in an attempt to revive the economy, which could possibly cost over RS 500 billion according to government's own estimates.

Whilst acknowledging the potential boost to the aggregate demand and corporate profitability from the fiscal stimulus in the short-run, ICRA Lanka believes Sri Lanka should broaden the tax base and continue fiscal consolidation to avoid macroeconomic instability to benefit from the tax buoyancy effect.

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- **Govt. likely to raise some taxes to balance loss of revenue from stimulus package**

The government may raise some taxes to compensate the loss of tax revenue stemming from the sweeping tax cuts announced about three weeks ago aiming to stimulate economic growth, according to ICRA Lanka, the local arm of credit rating agency Moody's Investors Service.

"Reduction in tax revenue is highly unlikely to be compensated by raising non-tax revenue in the short-run. Therefore, we expect the government may consider raising some taxes to counterbalance the loss in revenue.

Furthermore, increasing profitability of SOEs can also improve non-tax revenue," ICRA Lanka said in its latest analysis on the Lankan economy.

The government estimates revenue loss from the tax cuts at Rs.500 billion while Moody's estimates the hit to revenue to be around 1 to 1.5 percent of GDP.

Sri Lanka's total government revenue in 2018 was Rs.1.9 trillion.

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- **SL poised for growth**

Well-known investor and emerging markets guru Dr. Mark Mobius this week placed the odds of Sri Lanka returning to strong growth in its favour, provided the Government moved efficiently to implement policies, which include establishing an investor-friendly environment and competitive tax regime.

Dr. Mobius, who is a founding partner of the Templeton Emerging Markets Group, which is estimated to be worth \$ 50 billion, and is widely recognised as the architect of the emerging markets asset class, gave his assessment of Sri Lanka's opportunities and challenges as well as an analysis of global prospects to a packed audience at the Cinnamon Grand Hotel this week.

Recalling Sri Lanka's 8% or more growth just after the end of the ethnic conflict in 2009, Dr. Mobius was optimistic that with the stimulus package introduced by the Government earlier this month, reducing interest rates and overall global economic trends, the country has a window to tap into a strong growth recovery trajectory.

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- **Government unveils policy framework for next 5 years**

The new government of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has unveiled its National Policy Framework (NPF) themed 'Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour' to achieve US\$ 6500 per capita income with an economic growth of 6.5 percent per annum under stable macro-economic fundamentals over the next five years, largely by focusing on supporting domestic industries.

The NPF constitutes of 10 key principles aimed at achieving fourfold outcome of a productive citizenry, contented family, disciplined and just society and prosperous nation.

The NPF has given the utmost priority to ensuring national security, emphasising that the government would adopt new methodologies to safeguard national security without compromising the democratic space available to the people.

With a high economic growth and below 4 percent unemployment rate, the government plans to maintain inflation at 5 percent or below while bringing down the fiscal deficit to 4 percent of GDP.

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- **Bond market activity moderates**

Secondary bond market yields closed on a steady note during the short trading week ending 13th December, as activity across the yield curve moderated.

However, activity slowed down considerably with limited amount of trades taking place consisting of the 01.05.20, 15.03.23, 01.01.24, two liquid 2024's (i.e. 15.06.24 & 15.09.24), 15.03.25 and 15.09.34 maturities at levels of 7.85%, 9.40%, 9.95% to 10.05%, 9.80% to 9.85%, 10.08% to 10.15% and 10.30%, respectively.

At the weekly Treasury bill auction, the weighted average yield of the 182-day and 364-day maturities increased by 5 and 1 basis point(s), respectively while the weighted average yield on the 91-day maturity remained steady.

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- **Stocks gain on preliminary US-China trade deal**

Global stock markets rallied yesterday, lifting Wall Street's three major indexes and a global gauge of equity performance to record highs after a preliminary US-China trade deal pointed to stronger global growth, helping to drive up oil prices.

A pan-European index also hit a record high and the landslide election victory last week by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson pushed the benchmark FTSE 100 to its biggest single-day gain in more than three years.

Chinese stocks rose to a six-week closing high as investors cheered the trade deal and growth in China's industrial and retail sectors beat expectations in November.

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- **Lanka to see economic revival from 2020 – President**

Sri Lanka will see an economic revival from next year as series of prudent measures were taken after the President election, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said.

Speaking to Media representative at the Presidential Secretariat yesterday he said that towards this revival, firstly a series of tax concessions were introduced to the country to reduce the tax burden. In addition security and intelligence was strengthened, where people could live without fear.

Rajapaksa said that new steps were taken to create a healthy environment for both local and foreign investors. "We have brought back investor confidence once again and we expect to see more investments."

He stressed that the drastic tax concessions and reliefs that were provided would not be reversed after the upcoming general elections or in the future. "They are here to stay."

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- **Tax reductions support construction industry development**

On the advice of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the reduction of tax components in the construction industry on Pay As You Earn (PAYE) tax to 14% from the original 28%, Value Added Tax (VAT) from 15% to 8% was appreciated by the leading institutions and the trade chambers in construction sector, says CIOB President and Chamber of Construction Vice President Dr. Rohan Karunaratne.

Dr. Karunaratne further states that this PAYE Tax and VAT reductions will support the industry to be developed in the long term which has currently been moving in a downward trend.

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- **'Following Presidential election, SL to improve economic stability'**

Growth in Sri Lanka dropped from 3.7% in Q1 of 2019 to 1.6% in Q2, after bomb attacks in April 2019 severely hit tourism and disrupted the economy.

However, a recent presidential election is expected to improve political stability and aid economic recovery, according to Asian Development Outlook Supplement December 2019.

Moreover, the report said the South Asian GDP growth forecast for 2019 is cut from 6.2% to 5.1%, and for 2020 from 6.7% to 6.1%.

These revisions reflect lowered growth projections for India at 5.1% in fiscal year 2019 (FY2019, ending March 30, 2020) and 6.5% in FY2020, the report stated.

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3. INTERNATIONAL

- **Intermediary mortgage case volumes stable in Q3 2019**

Case volumes among advisers were steady in Q3 2019 despite the political uncertainty, according to the Intermediary Mortgage Lenders Association's (IMLA) Mortgage Market Tracker.

The average number of Decisions in Principle (DIPs) that intermediaries dealt with in Q3, 2019 has remained stable at 28 from the previous quarter (27).

A divide in case volumes between the regions is clear, with advisers in the north of the UK reporting average DIP volumes of 36 in Q3, 2019 with those in the south handling 25 in the same three months.

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- **Rental property provider for businesspeople Blueground to launch in London**

Blueground, a company which provides furnished apartments to rent for work-related travellers in various cities, is expanding into London in 2020.

The company was founded in Athens, Greece, but now operates in Istanbul and Dubai, as well as six US cities including New York and San Francisco.

While the plan is to launch in six major European cities in 2020, its founder Alex Chatzieleftheriou said London will be the most significant new location.

He said: "London is a huge business hub and I think it will be our biggest market along with New York.

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- **Irish economy to see reduced growth in 2020**

The Republic of Ireland economy is set to grow at a slower rate next year, economist Petrox Petros Varthalitis of the Economic and Social Research Institute has predicted.

The Irish economy saw GDP increase by almost 6% in 2019, but this is expected to fall to 3.3% in 2020.

Varthalitis said the Brexit process has merely been parked, with the possibility of a free trade agreement being negotiated between the UK and the EU in 2020.

This will almost certainly result in further uncertainty in the years ahead.

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