



UPDATE FROM SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka's COVID-19 Response Deemed the Best in South Asia

Sri Lanka came out on top in an evaluation on its COVID-19 response against its neighbouring countries – India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. It was also shown to have the largest expenditure on health out of the group, with the greatest contribution (43%) by the government. Health expenditure as a share of GDP was a close call between the countries, with Bangladesh at the lowest (2.3%) and Sri Lanka on top (3.8%). In terms of per capita health expenditure, Sri Lanka was in the lead again. Additionally, the poverty headcount ratio in Sri Lanka, at 4.1% of the population, is about 5 times lower than the other countries in the study.

Read more here:



<https://bit.ly/2z6BDfQ>

Could July be a Reawakening for Sri Lanka Tourism?

Travellers from Europe and India have already begun making arrangements to book visits to Sri Lanka, and the government is planning out the COVID-19 protocol that will enable the country to welcome guests from July onwards. This marks a turning point in the impact that the coronavirus has had on Sri Lanka Tourism, as outlined by Sri Lanka Tourism Chairperson Kimarli Fernando in an interview with Al-Jazeera: "The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact for Sri Lanka from both an economic and social point of view. However, we have seen this as an opportunity to reset Sri Lanka's profile and the type of tourist we get to our country."



<https://bit.ly/36fxWAj>

Government Set to Reopen BIA Under Strict Health Protocols

The government has stated that the country's main airport – Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) – is ready to recommence its operations soon under strict health protocols outlined by international and local health agencies. Tourism and Aviation Minister Prasanna Ranatunga said, "We are ready to resume operations of BIA as soon as the health authorities and other sectors agree. A protocol has been finalised for the resumption of operations at Katunayake airport." The reopening will also comply with international aviation regulations.



<https://bit.ly/3g83vAQ>



Nas News Daily Endorses Sri Lanka as the 'Most Generous Country during COVID-19'



Palestinian vlogger Naseer Yassin – better known as Nas Daily on social media – has made waves on his previous visits to Sri Lanka, truly enjoying his time with us. Now, the social media influencer has used his 'Nas News' platform to praise Sri Lankans for taking care of tourists currently stranded on the island due to COVID-19. Watch the video here:



<https://bit.ly/2ZjZpzu>

The People of Ella on Stranded Tourists: "They need our help".



Recovering from the effects of the Easter Sunday Attacks of 2019, Sri Lanka's tourism industry undoubtedly took a hit. Having finally moved past this hardship, the country met yet another obstacle – COVID-19. In conversation with a local café owner in the city now famous for giving its stranded tourists a home away from home with that unmistakable Sri Lankan hospitality, 'The Sunday Morning' unearthed the reasoning behind Ella's altruism. "The reason why we are able to wait out this curfew and the reason why Ella is where it is now is because whatever income we gained was from tourists, so we have a duty to take care of them now that they are helpless. They are in a strange land, have no friends, can't see their families, and don't know the language – they need our help." – Dharshana Ratnayake, Owner, Café Chill. Read the full story here



<https://bit.ly/2Tk5YOz>



Travel Inspiration



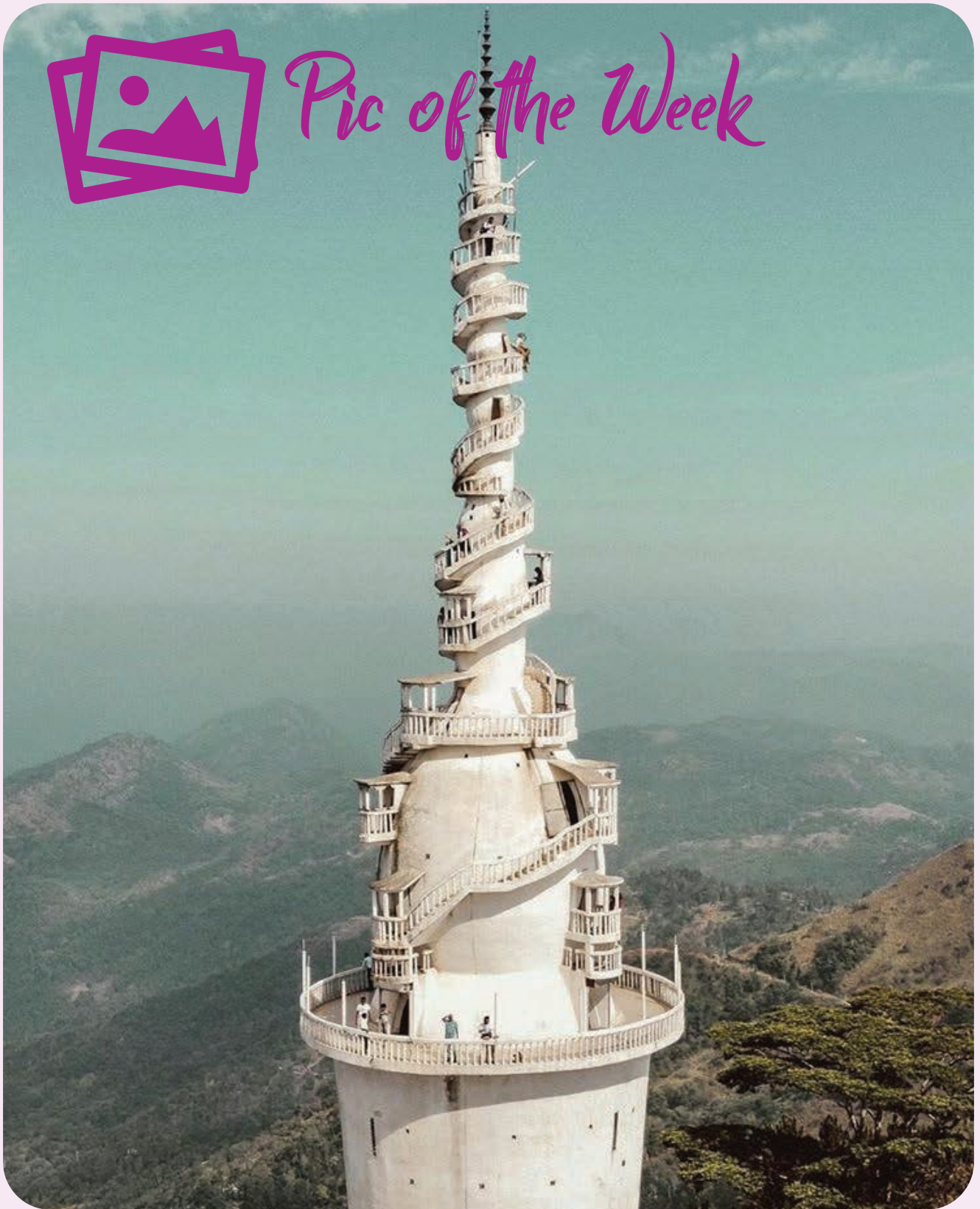
"See Now, Experience Later" by Cinnamon Hotels

For now, we stay at home. But we will travel again. And when we do, we will do so more consciously, more sustainably and with a greater feeling of solidarity than ever before. Join in with your travel plans across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram!

#TravelTomorrow #InspiringMoments #WeWillTravelAgain #CinnamonHotels #SriLanka



Pic of the Week



May we never again take life for granted. Looking forward to stepping back into this world when all is over with a new outlook filled with more gratitude and appreciation. Until then lets, #SeeNowExperienceLater...the stunning fairytale like Ambuluwawa awaits you
Credit: @dariia.matveeva