

**SUNDAY OBSERVER** print media sponsor

■ Derana Veet Miss Sri Lanka for Miss World 2011

# Pushpika is new *Miss Sri Lanka*



She has ravishing looks which resembles universal beauty but has the humility of a girl next door. She is young, ambitious and her take on life is nothing but unique. Pushpika de Silva, the newest Miss Sri Lanka for Miss World 2011 shared exclusively with the Sunday Observer what it means to be the new beauty queen of our paradise island.

**Question:** Apart from joy, what were the other emotions that ran through your mind when you heard your name being announced as the new Miss Sri Lanka for Miss World?

**Answer:** I felt like I was very fortunate and a brand new level of self confidence that I can now achieve anything I want. The impossible challenges in life suddenly felt like an arms length away and I knew that many new avenues would open up after being crowned as the winner.

**Q: How would you have reacted had you not won the crown?**

**A:** I would have been extremely sad. I worked very hard for the crown. I made sure that there were no loopholes in my commitment to win the pageant. However, I wouldn't have given up at all. I am not the one to sulk. Even Thomas Alva Edison faced over 999 setbacks before he invented the incandescent light bulb, then why should I?

**Q: What has changed in life so far after winning the crown?**

**A:** This is only the beginning, I don't think change has taken place in a grand scale yet. But I know the ride is going to be huge. There is so much more to conquer and I am trying to take one step at a time, but the industry works at a faster pace, so unless I keep up with it, I might not make it. I am confident I will.

Where family is concerned, I understand that they have also been spun into the public eye, but they are not aware of the magnitude of the trade, so they are coping well for now and I hope they will always do so.

**Q: How important do you think it is to be conversant in the English language to increase one's competitiveness in the Miss World pageant?**

**A:** The crowning is not governed by one's English language ability but by the amount of pride you take in your own language and how well you represent that pride. As long as one projects one's personality with confidence in one's mother tongue, language deficiencies do not act as a significant barrier. However, being conversant in English helps to build a rapport with other contestants at such international pageants.

**Q: Who are the three people you will like to gratify the most at this point?**

**A:** Every single person who has helped me so far. My Father and Mother must top the list. I thank them for bringing me into this world. I have gained so much through their guidance and support. Michael Wijesuriya who has believed in me from the first day he saw me. He has been a pillar of strength and helped me maintain my perseverance through thick and thin. I want to thank the Derana team especially Sharmila Dhar-marasa, Rozanne Dias, Kumara Hewage, Lakshitha and his family for all their support and all the finalists of the pageant.

**Q: How do you aspire to serve the Miss World Motto 'Beauty with a purpose'?**

**A:** I am very keen on uplifting the standards of education of the rural community in the country, especially girls. There are so many intelligent children in many rural districts of the country who are waiting to grasp any opportunity to learn. As someone who hails from Polonnaruwa, I believe it is my duty to help bring out more individuals from the rural community to assist with the country's development.

The anticipation is finally over, Pushpika de Silva who hails from Polonnaruwa was crowned Derana Veet Miss Sri Lanka for Miss World 2011 at the grand finale held at the Galadari Hotel in Colombo last week. Colombo based Shimalka Bodaragama walked away with the first runner-up title apart from being crowned Miss Sunday Observer - Most Popular Contestant and Kandy bound Chamupa Godage was adjudged second runner-up.

The ten finalists took centre stage to flaunt their best before a large audience and the panel of judges which comprised ace choreographer Upuli Panibharatha, popular actress turned producer Sachini Ayendra, President of the Colombo Fashion Week Ajay vir Singh, personality coach and beautician Nayana Karunaratne, tourism industry veteran Prema Cooray, famous architect Bernard Gomes and renowned motor sportsman Dilantha Malagamuwa. Many other members of the film, modelling and media fraternity were present at their best attire to add flavour to the night and the excitement held out by the show was simply spellbinding.

The girls made a grand entrance as a dance performance was nearing its end. The taller contestants of the pageant stormed the stage and the rest of them followed suit. The elegance that rolled out, kept the audience captivated until the curtain came down on the colourful show. The girls featured outfits inspired by Zodiac Signs, Kandyan paintings and supernatural elements

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designed by the Fashion Designing students of the University of Moratuwa and many other famous designers chipped in to churn out the finale's evening dresses of the girls.

The glamorous show was hosted by Saranga Dissasekara and the Miss Sri Lanka for Miss World 2009 Ganya Wijayadasa. Royal Warriors, Beat Drummers, Rivega dance group and Voice Print added to the night's entertainment quotient with memorable performances that enthralled all those who were present to witness the grand crowning glory. Iraj, Peshala and Upeksha rendered a live version of the Miss Sri Lanka Theme song with the participation of all finalists who grooved to the melody.

Director Editorial of Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Limited Seelarathna Senarath and Editor-in-Chief of the *Sunday Observer* Dinesh Weerawansa sashed Shimalka after being crowned first runner-up and Miss Sunday Observer. All ten finalists walked away with valuable prizes at the end of the night and professional portfolios which were designed by fashion photographer Aranthha Sirimanne.

The night came to a close as last year's winner Fallon Ranasinghe clad in a white dress crowned her successor Pushpika who has assumed duties to do justice to the Miss World motto 'Beauty with a Purpose' and prepare to take Sri Lankan essence to the Miss World Pageant scheduled to be held in London later this year in all its elegance.

## Mini-title Winners

### Shimalka Bodaragama

Miss *Sunday Observer*  
Miss 'Veet' Smoothest Skin  
Miss National Costume  
Miss Beautiful hair  
Miss Talent  
Miss 'Clean & Clear' Fresh Face  
'Veet' Most Beautiful Legs.

### Pushpika De Silva

Miss Congeniality  
Miss Personality  
'Veet' Top Model  
Dream Figure  
Best Design of the Night -  
Designed by Michael Wijesuriya

### Charitha Waidyasiri

Miss Photogenic  
First Runner-up, Best Design  
of the Night - Designed by  
Lou Ching Wong

**Chamupa Godage**  
'Veet' Miss Popular



Pic: Kavindra Perera

