

# Colombo International Book Fair

# Milling crowds make a beeline to BMICH

BY ANURADHA KODAGODA



*"Books are the quietest and most constant of friend, they are the most accessible and wisest of counsellors and most the patient of teachers."*

The Colombo International Book Fair (CIBF), Sri Lanka's best-patronised public exhibition which is being held for the 14th consecutive year at the BMICH is attracting book lovers in their thousands.

CIBF is Sri Lanka's best attended and largest book fair visited by millions of book lovers. It has already established itself as a premier fair in South Asia and is poised to be a major event in the region with many publishers from the region and Europe participating. CIBF is also a place where local publishers get exposure.

"The theme of the International Book Fair is 'Children of the World'. The Sri Lanka Book Publishers Association hopes to promote the reading habit among the younger generation. In fact, the exhibition was opened by a group of children", President of the Sri Lanka Book Publishers Association, Ranjith Samaranyake said.

"The International Book Fair has more than 400 book stalls of 170 local and foreign publishers".

As usual the organisers have provided free transport facilities from Bambalapitiya to BMICH and BMICH to Borella and also food and beverage facilities, reading spaces, free drinking water and many other entertainment for book lovers. "Another attraction of the exhibition is 'Guru Gedara' where the book lovers get an opportunity to meet their favourite authors and to build a personal rapport with them.

This should have been started long time back but due to the space constraints we could not do so. 'Guru Gedara' has also organised special events for children. They include seminars, reading sessions and other events to improve the reading habit", he said.

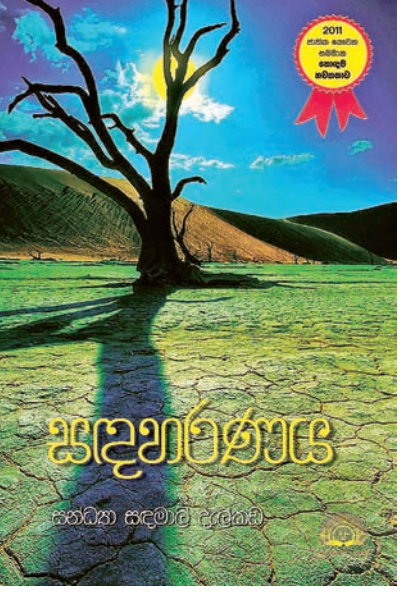
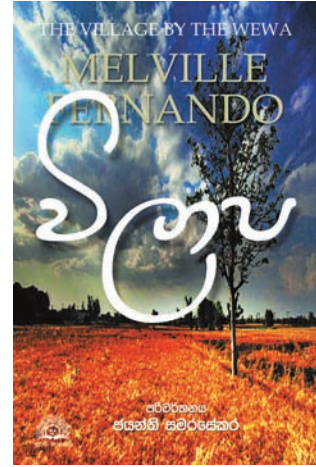
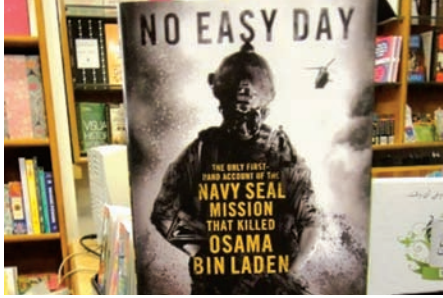
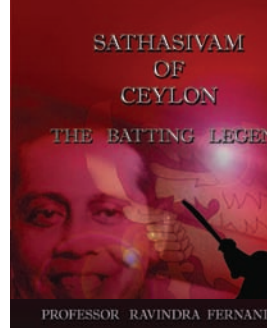
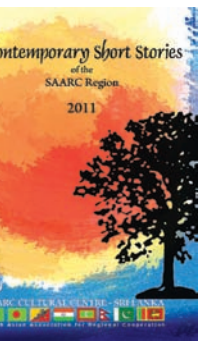
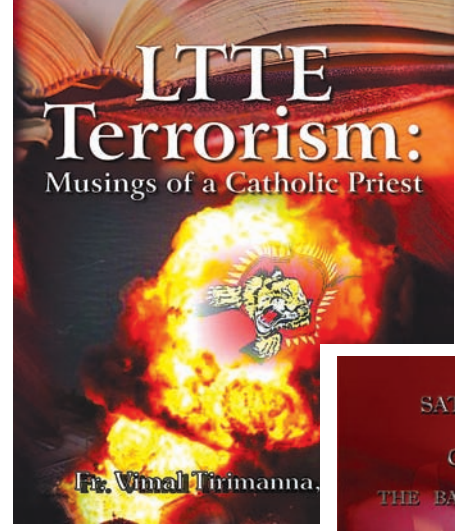
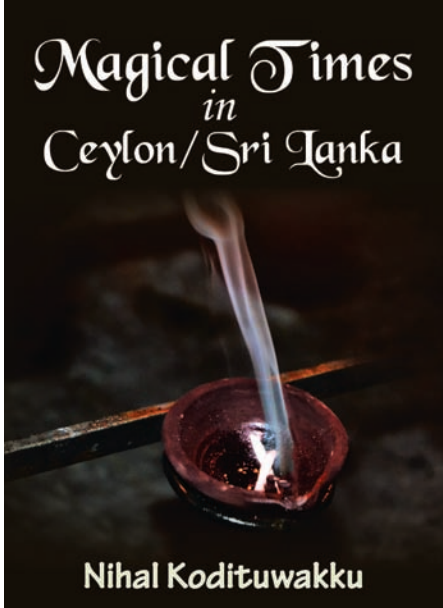
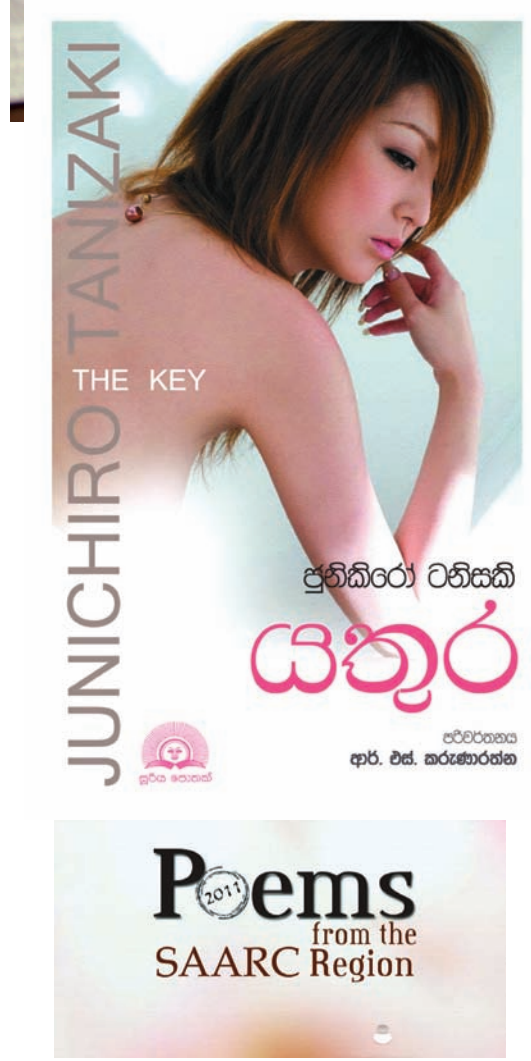
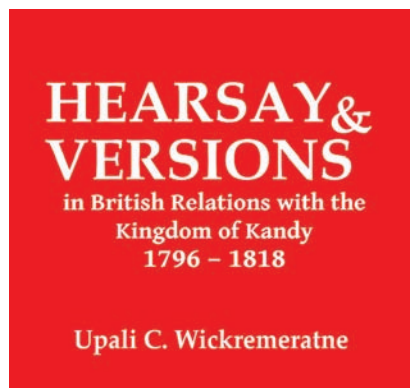
"Although we started the exhibition on a weekday book lovers kept coming in their thousands from the first day."

As the Colombo International Book Fair is a literary festival. Visitors can get a lot of information about literature. The organisers also want people to cultivate the habit of buying books.

Among the new arrivals at the Vijitha Yapa stall is 'Illustrated History of Sri Lanka' by Dr. Anthony Sebastian. The book is based on six years of research done by the author who narrates the history of the country from King Vijaya's to President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Vijitha Yapa has published two translations 'Mama Hondin Pasuwemi' and 'Sadathanikathwaye Neethi'. The original books are by the world recognised Japanese author Riyoh Okawa.

Dayawansa Jayakody Publishers is the main sponsor of this year's exhibition. Dayawansa Jayakody who marks



50 years of publishing has put out eight new books. Some of them are 'Kiri Gedara' by Jayakody Seneviratne, 'Kihiragura' by Prof. Sunanda Mahendra, 'Mama Thawama Yami' by Karunadasa Sooriyarachchi and 'Abhirahas Tibbanaya' by Thilak Kudahetti. Vidar-

shana Publishers has published 20 new books. Sixteen of them are award winning novels translated into Sinhala. Sarasavi Publishers, have put out five books. The authors will participate in the 'Guru Gedara' program.

Sampath Bandar's 'The Story of Twenty-Twenty Cricket', Ajantha Theruni's 'Gehenu Saha Pirimi', Dr. Wijaya Godakumbura's 'Anathuruwalin Obe Daruwa Reka Ganna' and Budhadasa Galappathi's 'Sahurda Sarahan' will be available at CIBF.

Sarasavi Publishers have launched over 30 books on creative writing. Suriya publishers have put out eight new books including, R.S. Karunaratne's maiden translation 'Yathura'. It is a psychological novel in the diary form.