



Preparedness and response for COVID -19 at workplaces

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Outline

- The importance
- Basic facts
- How to be prepared at the workplace
- Response
- Monitoring mechanism



The importance

- COVID-19 is not only a health battle but certainly an economic battle too
- Business continuity and resilience is very much essential during this pandemic
- We need to grow economically to achieve sustainable development in Sri Lanka

Work → Health

(occupational disease/work related ill health)

Health → Work

(medical fitness for work)



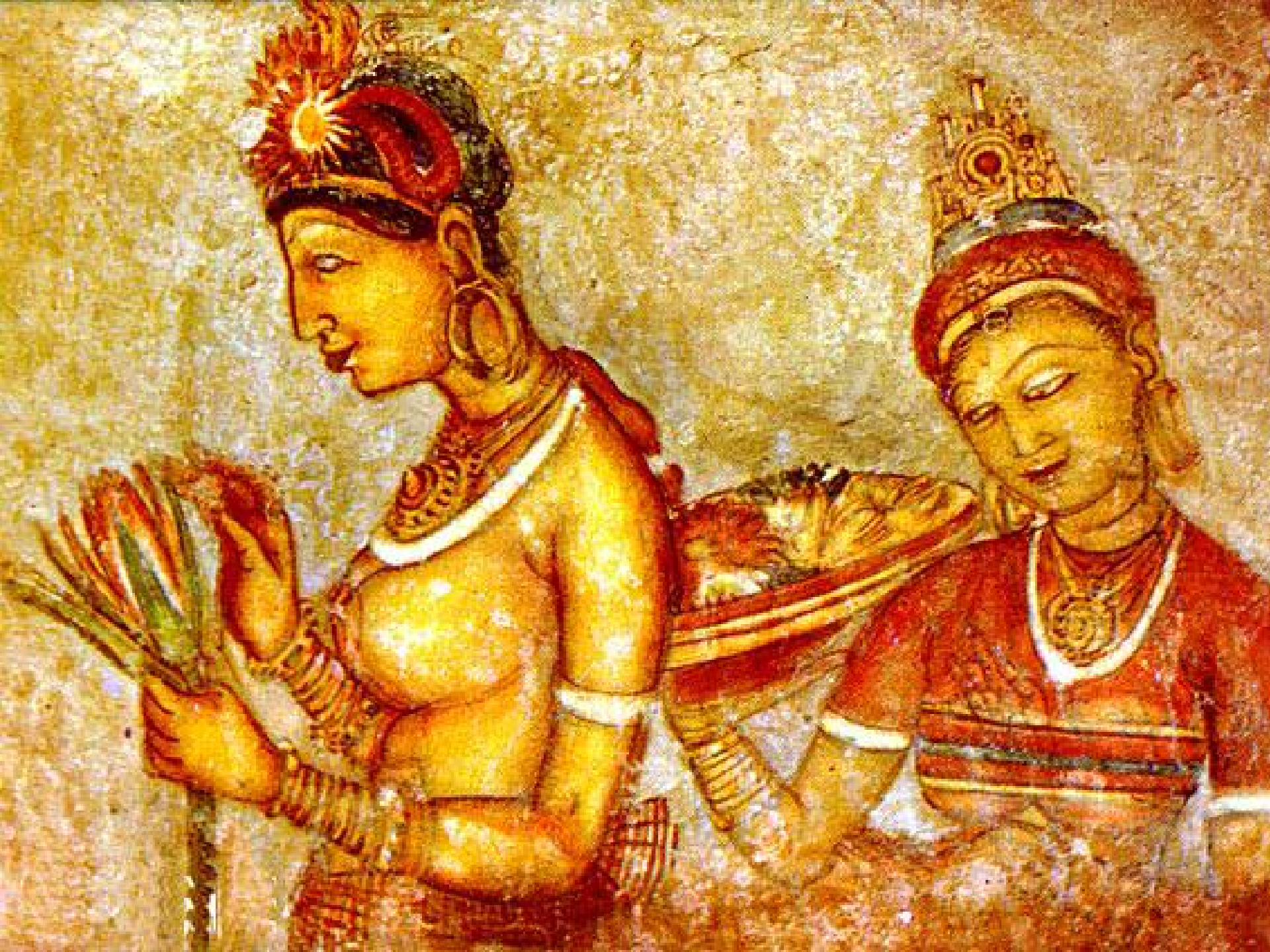
Why are you all special?

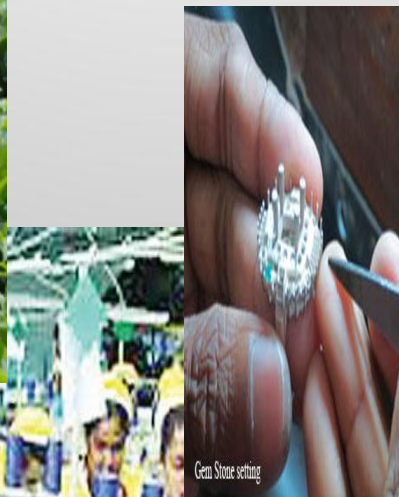
Sri Lanka's abundance of **natural resources**, our historical position as a **global trading centre**, and the availability of **knowledge** and **technology**, position Sri Lankan exporters in an enviable and an **unrivalled position** in comparison to the manufacturers, suppliers, and exporters in the region.

EDB website



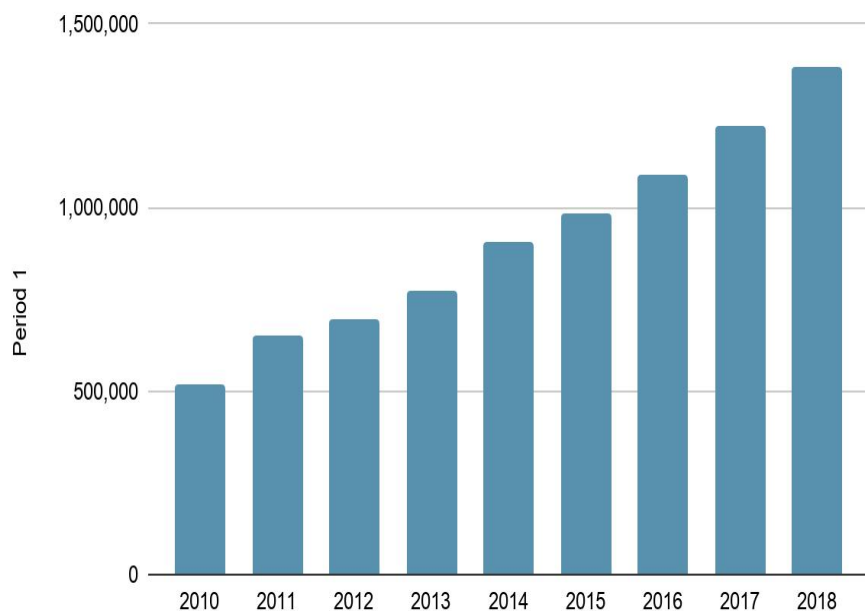




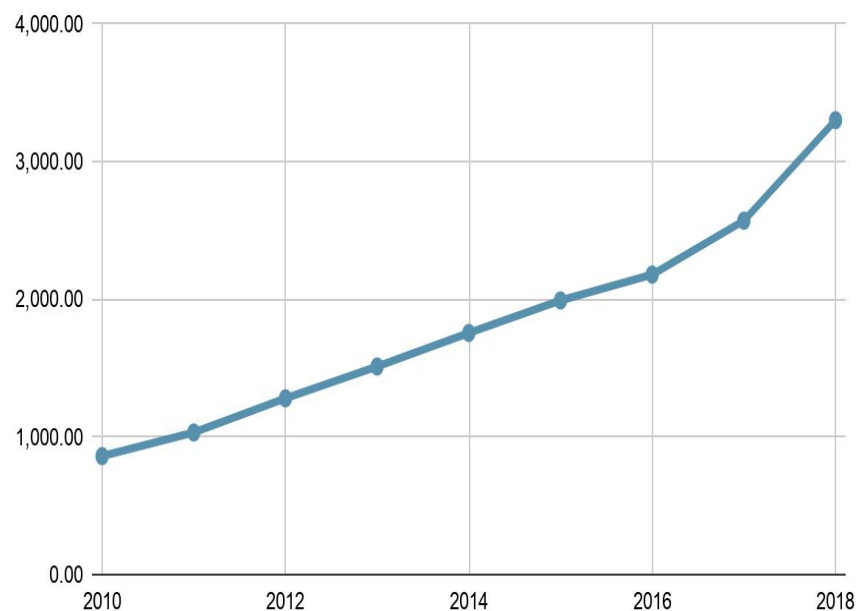


BOI Enterprises: Gross Export Earnings & Investments

Gross Export Earnings (Mn)



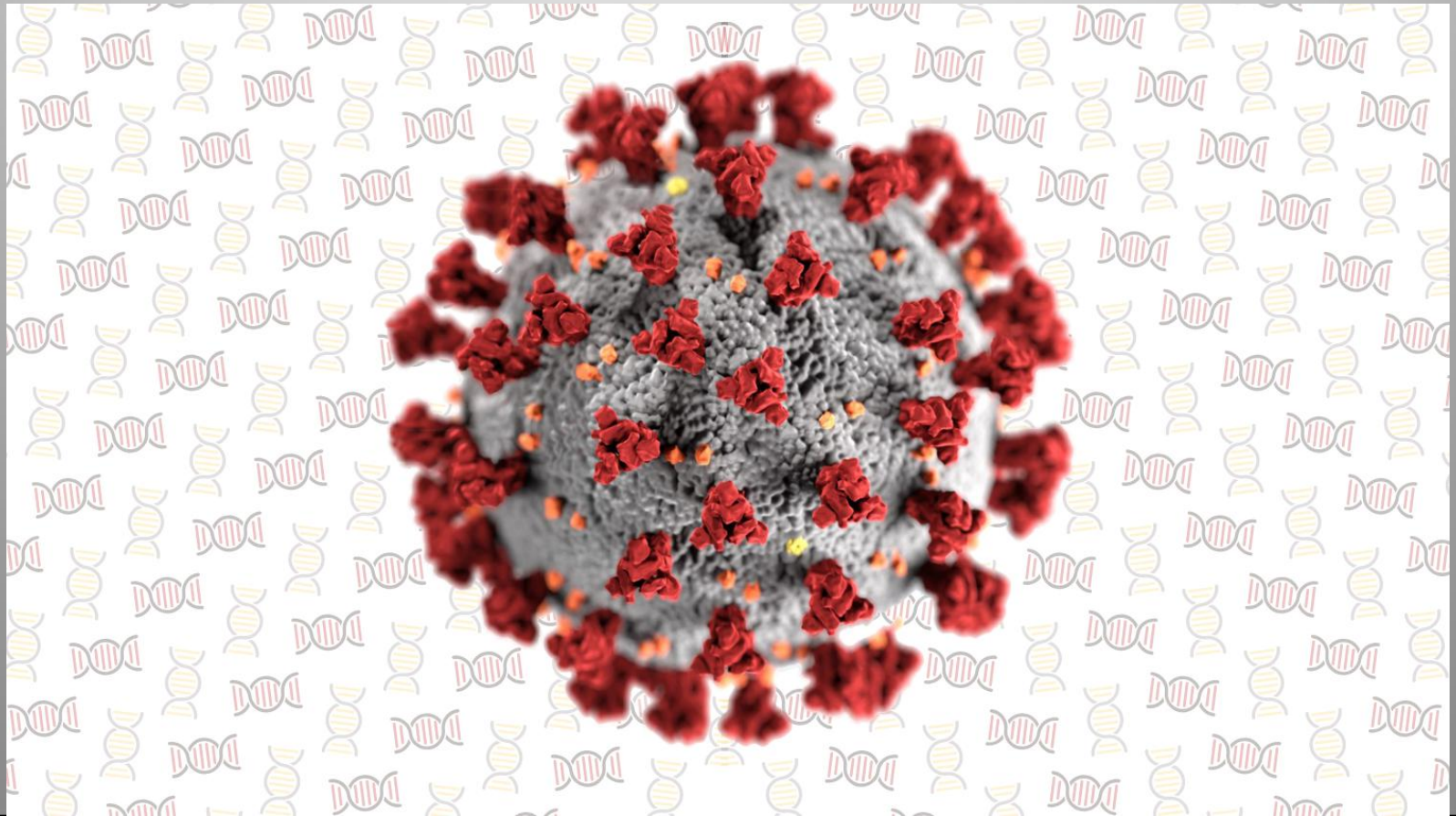
BOI Investments (Bn)



Source: Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka (2019) - CBSL Report

Basic facts

- Information on COVID-19 is rapidly changing, sometimes daily



Extent of the problem

How widespread could it get?

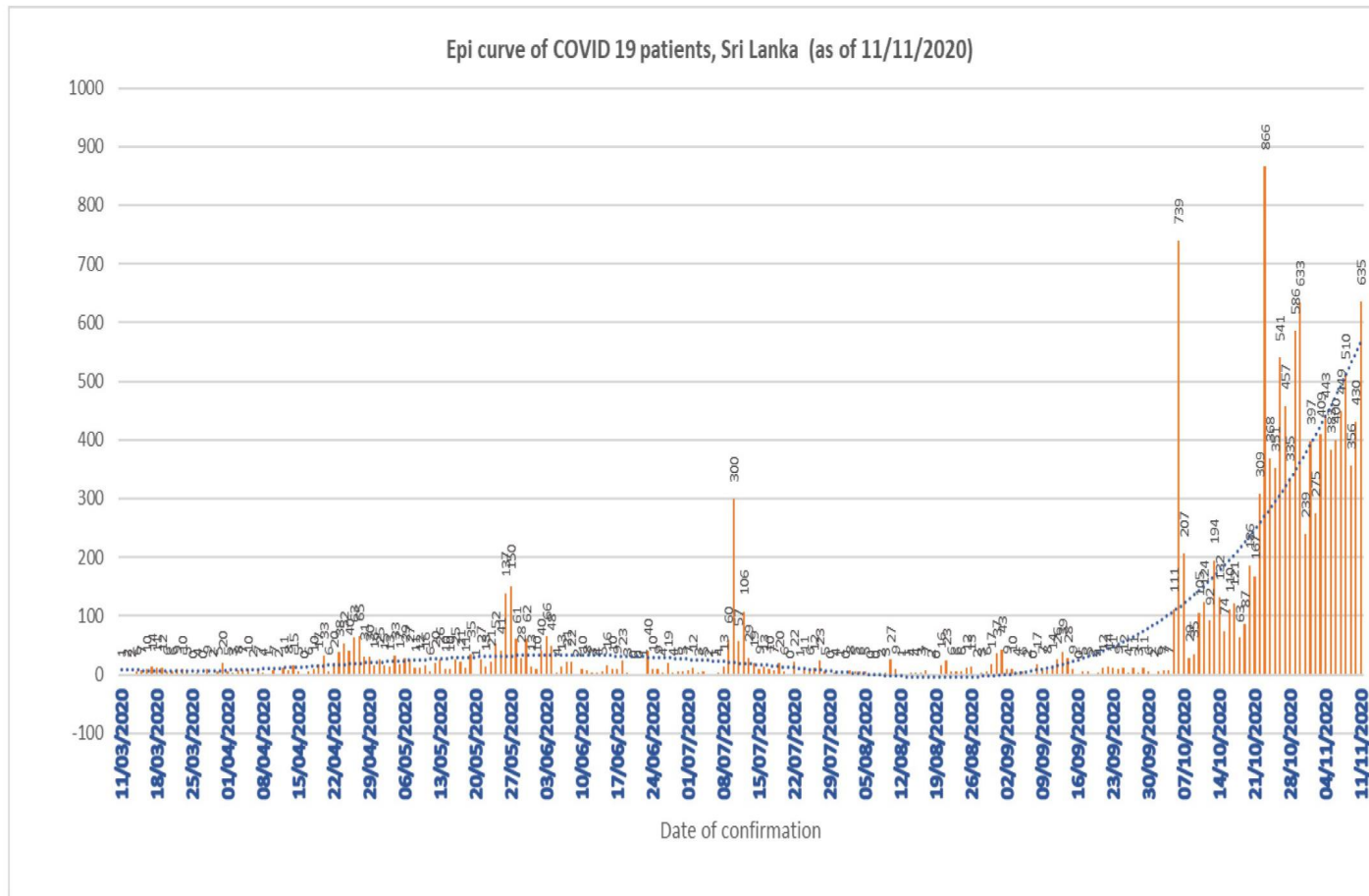
- On March 11, 2020, WHO characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic
- It has caused severe illness and death. It features sustained person-to-person spread worldwide.
- Poses an especially high risk for
 - the elderly (60 or older),
 - people with preexisting health conditions such as high blood pressure, heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, autoimmune disorders, and certain workers

Because COVID-19 is new, there are a lot of scientific unknowns such as the impact on pregnant women and their fetuses.

CURRENT COVID-19 SITUATION in Sri Lanka

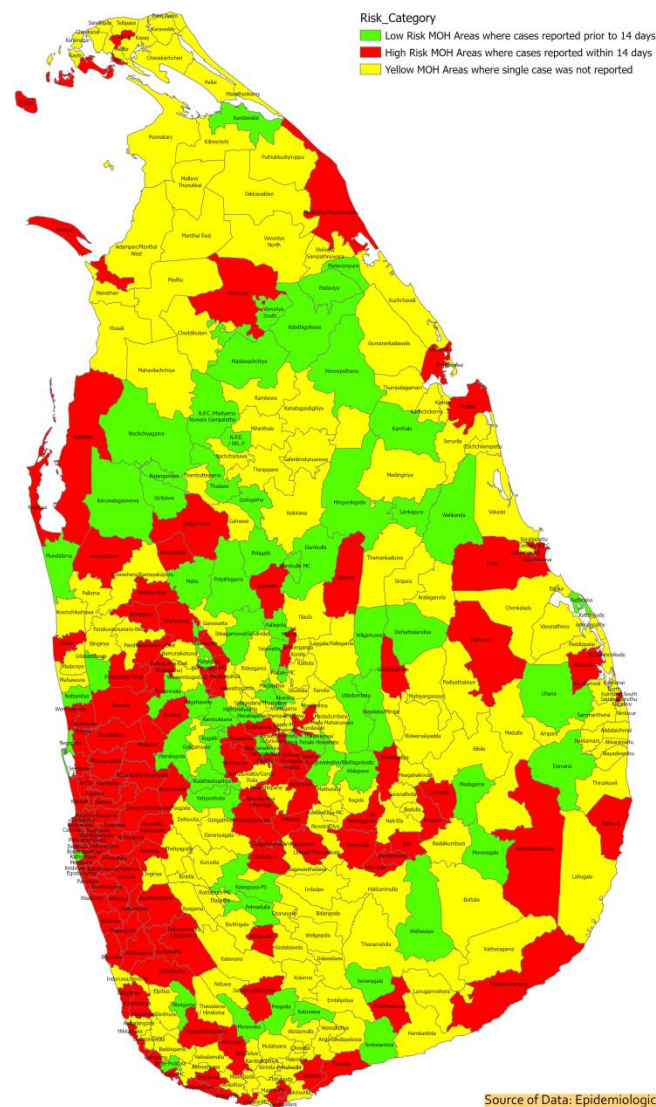
(11.11.2020, 9.50pm)

- COVID – 19 confirmed cases- 15350
- COVID-19 related deaths – 46



Distribution of COVID-19 cases (01.11.2020)

Categorization of Medical Officer of Health Areas Based on Number of Cases Reported by Date and the Distribution of Quarantine Centers (QC) with Cases Reported within last 14 days as per 01.11.2020



Source of Data: Epidemiological Unit, Illustrated by: Disaster Preparedness and Response Division, Ministry of Health.

0 23.5 47 94 Miles

SL COVID MAP - 58

COVID-19 Situation

Country	Total no. of Cases	Total no. of deaths
Thailand (WHO - 11.11.2020 5.52pm Central European Time)	3847	60
Taiwan (Taiwan Centers for Disease Control 12.11.2020, 00.30 am)	584	7

COVID-19 BASICS

- SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)
- SARS = Severe Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome
- Spreads easily from person-to-person
- Little if any immunity in humans

Transmission of COVID-19

- Spread from person to person mainly through
coughing
sneezing
possibly talking and breathing

Direct

- Droplets - respiratory secretions from coughing or sneezing landing on mucosal surfaces (nose, mouth, and eyes)

Indirect

- Contact -Touching something with SARS-2 virus on it and then touching mouth, nose or eyes
- Other possible routes: Through fecal matter ????

- COVID-19 spreads primarily through respiratory droplets or contact with contaminated surfaces.
- Exposure can occur at the workplace, while travelling to work, during work-related travel to an area with local community transmission, as well as on the way to and from the workplace.

COVID-19 mainly spreads from person to person

But it can also be left on objects and surfaces...



tissue

doorknobs



lift buttons



laptop and mouse



digital devices



pens

So if you touch something contaminated and then touch your face or another's face, you might all fall ill.



Incubation period

- The incubation period is the time between exposure to a virus and the onset of symptoms.
- With COVID-19, symptoms may show 2-14 days after exposure.
- CDC indicates that people are most contagious when they are the most symptomatic.
- Several studies show that people may be most contagious before developing symptoms.

Symptoms

- COVID-19 can cause mild to severe symptoms

Most common symptoms

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Other symptoms may include:

- Sore throat
 - Body aches
 - **Loss of smell and taste**
 - Fatigue
- Runny or stuffy nose
 - Headache
 - Chills
 - Gastrointestinal: diarrhea, nausea

How long does SARS-CoV-2 survive outside of the body?

- How long does SARS-CoV-2 survive outside of the body?
- It is not clear yet how long the corona virus can live on surfaces, but it seems to behave like other corona viruses.
- Virus may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days, depending on conditions and the type of surface.
- Copper surfaces - up to four hours
- Cardboard - up to 24 hours
- Stainless steel/plastic - up to 72 hours

Five basic steps for prevention of COVID-19

- Physical distancing
- Hand hygiene
- Respiratory etiquette – masks, not touching face
- Disinfection of frequently touched surfaces
- **Mindfulness**

Reduce your risk of COVID-19



Clean your hands often

Cough or sneeze in your bent elbow – not your hands!



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

Limit social gatherings and time spent in crowded places



Avoid close contact with someone who is sick

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces



Please Adhere to the Following Simple Steps to Prevent COVID-19 in Your Workplace



Wear a mask.



Maintain distance of one meter with everyone.



Wash hands with soap and water or sanitize with a hand sanitizer.



Cover coughs and sneezes with the elbow



Do not allow any person having fever with or without respiratory symptoms to report for work.



Frequently disinfect commonly contacted surfaces by staff or customers.



Avoid exchange of equipment, utensils or any other items between workers. If exchanged disinfect them before and after exchanging.



Avoid sharing personal items between workers. If shared disinfect them before and after sharing.



Ensure good ventilation and use air-conditioning only if necessary.



If your duty involves close contact or touch customers, (Eg. Barber, Tailor) wear an eye shield or a goggle and sanitize hands immediately afterwards.



If your duty involves using instruments that touches customers (Eg. Measuring tape, Comb) disinfect them after use.



For details please refer to the "Operational guidelines on preparedness and response for covid-19 outbreak for work settings" published by the Ministry of Health. Visit health.gov.lk.

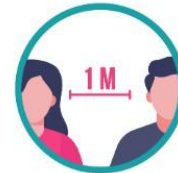
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Wash your hands



Preparedness - General

Employees should not report for work when they belong to the following groups

- Those having temperature above 98.6 °F or 37 °C, body aches and/ or acute onset respiratory symptoms such as cough, runny nose, sore throat and shortness of breath
- Those who are being quarantined for COVID-19.
 - 14 days self quarantine
 - House quarantine (1st line contact)
 - Living in a quarantine mandated household

They can report for duty only after obtaining the quarantine completion certificate issued by the Medical Officer of Health (MOH)

Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces

- Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine wiping/cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other items in the work environment
- First clean by damp dusting/wet mopping or washing with soap and water or a general-purpose detergent.
- Secondly disinfect
 - all metal surfaces with minimum of 70% v/v alcohol solution
 - all non-metal surfaces with 0.1% sodium hypochlorite solution
- Disinfection chambers and foot baths are not recommended

Guide for meal rooms and canteens

- Meal and tea breaks to be given in a batch-wise manner to prevent overcrowding
- Maintain a minimum distance of one meter among persons in the canteen
- Avoid sharing food, beverages, glasses, plates and other utensils during meals
- Allocate dedicated person(s) to serve meals/food/ beverages served in buffet style
- Self-serving of meals arranged in buffet style should not be allowed to prevent cross contamination

When an employee suspected of COVID 19 is detected at the workplace

- If an employee develops COVID-19 like symptoms (fever, cough, cold, sore throat or difficulty in breathing) during work hours the following measures should be followed:
- Isolate the person immediately in an isolation room/ space preferably with a dedicated wash room facility.
- He/she should continue to wear a face mask.
- Provide first aid medical assistance if required.
- All persons attending the patient should wear face masks, maintain physical distance of 1 meter at all possible instances and practice hand hygiene frequently. In addition, should wear an overall and face shield.
- Inform the Medical Officer of Health (MOH)/Public Health Inspector of the area and seek advice. Additionally seek assistance from 1999

Transport of workers (if applicable)

- Clean and disinfect the vehicles (the seats, all handles, interior door panel, windows, locks, exterior door handles, poles, etc.) before passengers are allowed in
- Number of workers should not exceed the number of seats
- All persons in the vehicle must wear masks while travelling
- Conduct awareness to drivers regarding COVID-19 preventive measures regularly
- Maintain details of workers transported according to batches. Details should consist of the name, ID number, contact details and the address (temporary and permanent)

What needs to be done on returning home from the workplace

Before entering the house,

- Wash the hands properly with soap and water and remove the mask with minimal handling. Safely dispose it to a pedal operated closed bin lined with a garbage bag. Wash your hands again with soap and water
- Remove the clothing and shoes/slippers and leave them outside. Wash them before wearing again or taking them inside
- Take a bath before entering the house
- If bathing facilities are not available outside, enter the wash room without touching anything inside the house and bathe yourself
- Clean/disinfect your accessories, bags using soap and water or minimum 70% v/v alcohol solution
- Refrain from participating large gatherings (Ex: Funerals / Weddings / Excursions / Sports and Religious Activities etc.) as much as possible

Maintain good personal health and hygiene by practicing the following

- A balanced diet
- Drinking adequate amounts of clean water
- Regular physical exercise
- Abstain from unhealthy habits such as smoking and consuming alcohol
- Adequate sleep

Responsibilities of the management of the enterprises

- Should develop a COVID-19 preparedness and response plan for the workplace
- Should appoint a responsible worker as the focal point to monitor the implementation of the plan.
- Reorganization of the workplace physically and administratively in order to prepare for COVID-19

- Improve ventilation in the workplace and where feasible install air filters.
- A register /registers should be maintained for workers and their name with initials, employee number, addresses (permanent and temporary), contact details and ID card number must be documented.
- Screening for respiratory symptoms and thermal screening (with a non-contact medical grade thermal scanner) of all the workers at the time of entrance to the workplace. Any person recording a temperature above 98.6 F or 37 C or respiratory symptoms should be sent back to seek medical advice.
- Hand washing facilities with soap and water must be available at the entrance preferably with a pedal operated tap and sink. Ensure facilities for hand washing and hand sanitizing at other appropriate places within the workplace.
- Provision of welfare facilities for all workers (e.g.: adequate facilities at meal rooms, toilets, changing rooms, provision of pedal operated closed bins etc.).
- Ensure adequate supply of personal protective equipment (mask, gloves, etc.)
- Avoid in-person meetings and non-essential training.
- Ensure raising awareness on COVID-19 prevention among all workers regularly. Consider using public address system/ posters/ notices/ videos on electronic screens etc. for the purpose.

Service and maintenance staff/ contract staff

- Before getting the services, shall be screened using the checklist annexed (annexure 3)
- It is better to obtain the service and maintenance operations from dedicated persons for a particular enterprise as much as possible
- Maintenance staff/contract staff shall follow COVID – 19 operational and response health guidelines mentioned herein
- Avoid contact of maintenance staff/contract staff with the staff of the enterprise if possible

Response

- **Steps to be followed in case a positive employee for COVID-19 is found in an enterprise**

Step 1

- As soon as a member of the staff is found to be infected with COVID-19 all relevant precautions should be taken to limit the spread of the disease within the enterprise.
- Isolate the patient immediately in an isolation room/ space preferably with a dedicated wash room facility.
- He/She should continue to wear a face mask. Take all relevant precautions to limit the spread of the disease, until transfer to the health facility.
- Inform the area Medical Officer of Health immediately.
- Transfer of the patient to a health facility should be done as per the instructions of the Medical Officer of Health/ Regional Epidemiologist

Step 2: Identify all close contacts of the Covid-19 positive employee

- A close contact is defined as someone who was within one meter proximity for at least 15 minutes or had direct physical contact with the person who tested positive during the exposure risk period.
 - Same section
 - Same meal room
 - Same transportation
 - Same accommodation

- The exposure period is defined as:
- Start: 7 days before the person had symptoms (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 weeks before date of sample collection for the positive test)
- End: last day the positive person was at work place.

- Complete the case and contact data collection forms. The employer should gather the following information for all employees who have been identified as close contacts, including any vendors/suppliers, visitors, or others who had close contact with the employee at the worksite.
 - Name with initials
 - Phone number
 - Permanent address
 - Current address (if different from the permanent address)
 - ID number
 - Provide these details to the area Medical Officer of Health/area Public Health Inspector.

Step 4: Communicate with all employees about work exclusion, quarantine & testing recommendations for close contacts

- All close contacts (First contacts) identified according to the above-mentioned criteria, should undergo mandatory 14 day quarantine.
- Sample collection for COVID-19 testing will be determined by the Regional Epidemiologist or the area Medical Officer of Health.
- Even if the test is negative, close contacts should remain in quarantine for the full 14 days.
- All others present at the workplace, but NOT identified as close contacts, may return to work as usual but should be advised to self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days after the last day that the person diagnosed with COVID-19 was at the work place.
- The enterprise should strictly conduct symptom monitoring for all employees attending work. If they develop symptoms, please follow step 1.

Step 5: Disinfection recommendations **after a confirmed COVID-19 case at** **the workplace**

- Until cleaning and disinfection are completed, close off areas visited by the patient within the last 24 hours.
- If safe, open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection.

- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the patient including office rooms, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces as per the guidelines.
- Continue routine cleaning and disinfection of all high-touch areas throughout the day, following the health guideline. Clean visibly dirty surfaces and objects using soap and water prior to disinfection.

Step 6: Preventing workplace COVID-19 further transmission

- Strictly enforce the COVID-19 prevention guidelines.
- All persons must be instructed to wear face masks at all times.
- Restructure the workplace to better support physical distancing , as appropriate.
- Ensure that all personnel are properly trained on the protocol and that the protocol measures are being strictly implemented and followed.

Monitoring mechanism to be followed in enterprises during the current COVID – 19 outbreak

- It is compulsory to appoint a focal point from each enterprise responsible for the implementation of the COVID-19 preparedness and response measures, as per the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health.
- The focal point shall be made responsible for ensuring health and safety of all employees. He/she shall assess the preparedness and response of the enterprise to COVID-19 using the checklist on a daily basis.

Check list to monitor workplaces for preparedness and response to COVID-19 for Enterprises

	Name of the enterprise		Date of inspection	
	Address of the enterprise		MOH area	
			PHI area	
Please mark the following items as follows				
Available/Satisfactory - √				
Not available/unsatisfactory - X				
1	Availability of an identified focal point for COVID-19 preventive activities			
2	Availability of a preparedness and response plan for COVID-19			
3	Availability of a mechanism to inform COVID-19 patients or any other workers with suspected symptoms of COVID-19 to the area MOH and PHI			
4	Supervision of workers in terms of adhering to COVID -19 prevention health instructions is being done satisfactorily by the supervisors			
5	Availability of records on details of workers per shift/day			
6	Availability of updated records on workers with symptoms suspected of COVID-19 (Eg: Temperature more than 98.4F, body aches and/ or respiratory symptoms; cough, runny nose, sore throat etc.) (Fact sheet on COVID 19 is available at - https://www.epid.gov.lk/web/images/pdf/Fact_Sheet/fact-sheet-covid-19-english.pdf)			
7	Screening the workers for respiratory symptoms is being carried out before they enter the workplace			
8	Checking the body temperature of all workers before entering the workplace on a daily basis			
9	Availability of hand washing facilities/alcohol hand sanitizers at the entrance of the workplace			
10	Availability of adequate hand washing facilities/alcohol hand sanitizers inside the workplace			
11	Maintaining physical distancing inside the workplace (One meter apart between two persons)			
12	Maintaining the recommended distance during the transport of workers (if relevant)			
13	Workers and cleaning staff are provided with required PPE, in adequate amount to prevent the transmission of COVID-19			
14	Workers are wearing masks while working			
15	Ventilation in the workplace is satisfactory			
16	Maintaining cleaning and disinfection activities as recommended in the guideline 'Operational guidelines on preparedness and response for COVID-19 outbreak for work settings'			
17	Maintenance of a chart on cleaning and disinfection activities			
18	Awareness for workers on COVID -19 prevention has been done			
19	Lunch, tea breaks are given in small groups to prevent overcrowding of the canteen/ dining room			
20	Availability of bag lined pedal bins to discard waste (gloves, masks, tissues etc.)			

Any other comments:

Name of the Officer :
 Designation :
 Signature :

Date:

- The focal point in each enterprise shall ensure the completion of the summary sheet and send it to the following authorities on a weekly basis
 - Enterprises within the BOI zones to the Zonal Manager
 - Enterprises outside the BOI zones to the Director/
Industrial Relations BOI
- The summary sheet of the preceding week shall be sent to either zonal managers or Director, Industrial Relations BOI depending on where the enterprise is located by **Monday** of the following week.

Summary sheet

(To be filled by the focal point of the relevant enterprise)

Name of the enterprise :

District where the enterprise is located :

Period of reporting (The period from Monday to Sunday of each week. Please write the dates) : From to

1. Summary of activities

The following must be assessed and marked with a 'tick' to indicate the satisfactory (available) or unsatisfactory (not satisfactory) nature. These must be discussed and the problems identified must be documented.

	Satisfactory/ available	Unsatisfactory/ Not available	Remarks/ problems identified (if any)/ <u>if unsatisfactory</u> <u>please give reasons</u>
Administrative requirements			
1	Functioning focal point available for COVID-19 preparedness and response.		
2	The COVID-19 preparedness and response plan is updated with latest circulars/guidelines etc. and functioning well		
3	Mechanism to inform workers with suspected symptoms of COVID-19 to MOH and PHI		
4	Supervision of workers on adherence to COVID - 19 prevention and health instructions by supervisors		
5	Maintenance of records of workers with symptoms suspicious of COVID-19		
6	Precautions taken during transport of workers (Eg: maintain the recommended distance etc. if relevant)		
Maintaining distance			
7	Maintenance of physical distance inside the workplace		

- The summary sheets of each enterprise has to be compiled in an excel sheet, according to the format by Zonal Manager and emailed to the Environment and Occupational Health Unit of the Directorate of the Environmental and Occupational Health, Ministry of Health, and to the area Medical Officer of Health, to reach by **Wednesday.**
- The zonal managers must conduct review meetings, with the participation of representatives of all the enterprises in the zone once a week until notified. Considering the current COVID-19 situation in the country virtual meetings are recommended.

Format for summarizing the data by Zonal Managers

Review meeting, Month and Week no:

BOI zone:

Date:

1. Summary of activities in the enterprises

		Name of enterprise 1		Name of enterprise 2		Name of enterprise 3		Remarks/ problems identified (if any)/ if unsatisfactory please give reasons
		Satisfactory /available	Unsatisfactory/ Not available	Satisfactory /available	Unsatisfactory/ Not available	Satisfactory /available	Unsatisfactory / Not available	
Administrative requirements								
1	Functioning focal point available for COVID-19 preparedness and response.							
2	The COVID-19 preparedness and response plan is updated with latest circulars/guidelines etc. and functioning well							
3	Mechanism to inform workers with suspected symptoms of COVID-19 to MOH and PHI							
4	Supervision of workers on adherence to COVID - 19 prevention and health instructions by supervisors							
5	Maintenance of records of workers with symptoms suspected of COVID-19							
6	Precautions taken during transport of workers (Eg: maintain the recommended distance etc. if relevant)							

- This summary sheet will be reviewed by the Additional Secretary and Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health.
- Therefore, it is mandatory to send the summary sheets to the Zonal managers by focal points of each enterprise by MONDAY.

PCR test for surveillance

- PCR testing should be done on 1% of the total workers daily, until further notice.
- The statistics of the PCR tests done shall be sent to the zonal managers or Director, Industrial Relations BOI daily by completing the format every week.

Annexure 4

Information of employees with symptoms suspected of COVID -19 and details of PCR testing

	Name of the enterprise	No. of workers with suspected COVID-19 symptoms during the last week	No. of workers with suspected COVID-19 symptoms during the last week informed to the MOH/PHI	No. of PCR tests done during the last week	No. of positive PCR tests during the last week	No. of PCR test results pending for the week
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						

RESPONSIBILITY

- GOVERNMENT
- MANAGEMENT OF THE ENTERPRISES
- WORKERS/EMPLOYEES
- Community

MANAGEMENT OF THE ENTERPRISES

- Preparedness for COVID - 19
- Response – early detection and prompt action
- Welfare of the workers
- Keep the workplace free from COVID-19

- According to the available evidence, that the COVID – 19 pandemic could last for few years until an effective vaccine is invented.
- Therefore, we need to have a plan for at least 2 years duration.
- In view of business continuity, enterprises may have to develop dedicated hostels/boarding places under the concept of “BIO-SECURE BUBLE’.

WORKERS/EMPLOYEES

- All workers / employees should strictly adhere to the measures taken to prevent COVID-19

ALL HAVE RESPONSIBILITY TO BE
accountable!

WE ARE

ONE

TEAM!

*and we
rock!! :-)*

UNITE!



**Together we
conquer COVID 19**

Health is wealth



**We need to build a better Sri Lanka
for our children!
We don't have time to waste!**





THANK YOU