

The Surf Reopens Its Doors



Situated in Bentota, the newly refurbished The Surf was ceremonially opened by Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development on the invitation of Sanjeev Gardiner, Group Chairman of Galle Face Hotel, Chandima Weerakkody, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka, Lakshman Samarasinghe Chairman of Ceylon Hotels Corporation, Gayan Sirimanna, Chairman of Pradheshiya Saba, Geetha Kumarasinghe, Chief SLFP Organiser for Bentara Elpitiya and Chethiya Perera, Chief Executive Officer/ Vice President of Galle Face Hotel Management also participated in the ceremony.

Event Coordination, Publicity: Glenda Parthipan of Emphasis

Speech by Sanjeev Gardiner, Group Chairman of Galle Face Hotel at the opening ceremony of The Surf.

We are deeply grateful to you for accepting our invitation for this official opening of

The Surf Bentota. The management and staff are very grateful that you are here.

Hon Minister, we know how busy you are and we are indeed very grateful that you made the time to be here. Thank you very much sir.

As you know, our groups' flagship is the Galle Face Hotel established in 1864, and today we have 19 properties in our portfolio and several others in the pipe-line. We have upgraded nine of our properties in the last few years and we are in the process of doing several more in this year and the coming year.

Hon sir, we are very proud today that you have graced this occasion of the opening of The Surf, as Bentota was selected as the first National Holiday resort in Sri Lanka during the infancy of tourism in Sri Lanka in 1969. So it has tremendous significance.

This is a very important fact as we've launched Surf as a new product in our product line and we are expecting to do very well here in the golden mile of Bentota. With the resurgence of tourism we believe – The Surf, where all hundred rooms face the sea and have wonderful views of the ocean with two swimming pools – that our investment of a billion rupees here will bear fruit in the years to come.

Hon Minister, ladies and gentlemen, on this occasion we need to pay tribute to His Excellency the President Mahinda Rajapaksa for his determination and direction. And also to the dedication of the Government and the Security Forces of this nation that enabled us to reap the benefits of peace and stability.

Hon Minister, with the stability bought by the efforts of His Excellency the President and the leadership of His Excellency and yourself as the Honourable Minister of Economic Development under whose purview tourism lies, we have surpassed a million tourists. This number was unthinkable four years ago. With rapid investments in infrastructure, roads, highways and the new Airport and other mega-development projects, we are on our way to achieving the goal of two and a half million tourists in 2016.

Hon sir in this context we assure you our commitment to continue to develop and enhance properties we have, and add to the portfolio significantly, in line with the Government's vision of making tourism one of the primary engines of growth in Sri Lanka.

We are committed to providing affordable travel to the domestic traveller, in addition to catering to a broader international market as well. We have developed more, and several more are in the pipe-line.

In conclusion, I wish to thank all those who contributed in making this event a success. And the unstinted blessings they had given towards its success.

Predominantly our thanks go to Ven Thalawe Sangarathne Thero, thank you very much for being here. Hon Basil Rajapaksa, we are very grateful for your time, and all the other dignitaries.

I wish to also thank the Board of Directors of the GHF Group, and those at the CHC and our staff who worked unstintingly to make this a success. And a special mention of Mr Chetiya Perera and his co-team, who worked very hard to make this a success in record time.

Similarly I like to mention our gratitude to our contractors, Tudawe Brothers, sub-contractors and our lead architect Hiranthi Welendawa and the interior designer Mr Mitchell Fragne who also worked tirelessly to make this a success.







