

Dear Ms. Jansz,

We write with reference to the article entitled '**More nepotism in IT contract**' with the byline 'Nirmala Kannangara' published in your newspaper, 'The Sunday Leader', of 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2009.

I wish to inform you that all the allegations made in the said article are incorrect and baseless, and therefore request you to carry the following clarification in your newspaper, "The Sunday Leader", with the same prominence as given to the aforesaid article.

Listed below are the responses to the information in the "The Sunday Leader" article:

- **H.E President Mahinda Rajapaksa never signed a contract for the Lanka Government Network (LGN) on behalf of ICTA.**
- **A Company named Asset Networks never signed a contract on behalf of Samsung Networks for the LGN.**
- **The contract for the establishment of (LGN) was signed between ICTA and Samsung Networks in 2006, consequent to a credit facility provided by the Korean Government.**
- **There were more than 2 companies which submitted bids for LGN in 2005. Samsung Networks bid was NOT the highest bid, as incorrectly stated in the Article. Samsung Networks bid WAS the 'Lowest Evaluated Bid' for the LGN.**
- **Asset Networks did not provide any hardware or software in respect of LGN. Asset Network has nothing to do with providing hardware or software for the LGN project. A company named Asset Networks does not "store excess spare parts for the future repairs" as suggested in the article. All hardware was directly shipped from Samsung Networks in Korea to ICTA, consequent to the contract, and all the payments per shipments were made through a Letter of Credit through Bank of Ceylon. Samsung Network maintains a 10% of spare stock of each items provided to LGN, which is a contractual obligation.**
- **Your Article also gives wrong facts pertaining to equipment costs. All stated equipment costs are also inclusive of warranty as well as on-site support costs for three (3) years in addition to the cost of the hardware itself. The equivalent local costs are much higher for combined hardware, warranty and on-site support. Below are the true facts in relation to the equipment mentioned in your article:**
  1. Your article refers to purchase of 3225 PC's at USD 1394.19 each – This cost per PC, includes the Hardware (512 MB RAM/ 80 HDD), genuine Software –XP Home edition/ Office 2003 package/ Antivirus kit/ Desktop Management Agent, **3 year warranty as well as 3 years on site support and on call support.** It also includes one to one backup in the event of total failure.
  2. Reference is made to 325 IPG Hard Drives - **ICTA never imported IPG hard drives** for the project paying USD 1175.19. This information is incorrect and misleading. **Instead what has been done is to import 325 site servers.** – Each of these Servers includes the Hardware (1 GB RAM/ 2 X 80 HDD), Software – Cent O/s, Antivirus kit/ Network Management Agent, 3 year warranty as well as 3 years on site support and on call support. It also includes one to one backup in the event of any failure.

3. Reference is made to 325 HP Scanjet 8200C imported at the rate of \$ 519.00 - Local market costs are much higher than this SAMSUNG quoted price. **This Price is also inclusive of 3 year warranty as well as 3 years on site support and on call support.** It also includes one to one backup in the event of any failure.
4. Reference is made to 123 Central UPS at a rate of 1598.29 – ICTA has imported 325 Central UPS’s for the project paying USD 1598.29. This is a 2 KVA UPS with 3 year warranty and includes 3 years on site support and on call support. It also includes one to one backup in the event of any failure.

**The LGN implementation period was January to December 2007. Any issues that arose during the implementation period regarding site related issues were successfully handled and rectified before the full operational acceptance was given in January 2008, which was conducted by ICTA LGN Project team, which inspected each of the implemented sites.**

**From January 2008, all IT related incidents of the LGN, were handled by the LGN Helpdesk and resolved through desk side support teams within 24 hours. (The resolution of each single case is documented at the LGN Helpdesk)**

**In addition contractual compliance of Samsung Networks on the implementation of LGN contract was further established, consequent to a comprehensive audit carried out by an internationally reputed audit firm, during the period from October 2008 to April 2009.**

**In a public statement, Reedimaliyadda Divisional Secretary, Mrs. Chandrani de Silva and Thumpane/Galagedara Divisional Secretary, Mrs. M.D.K.S Suriyanpola stated that they are using the LGN computers and LGN services such as internet, e-mail, data sharing, VoiP extensively for their day to day activities and they do not have any issues. Whenever they do have questions or problems, they contact LGN Helpdesk which rectifies them immediately.**

**In this context it would be useful to focus on what the District/Divisional Secretaries have said about LGN. The following excerpts are a random selection of comments made:-**

**\*Matara District Secretary Ms. W. K. K. Atukorale:**

“Thanks to the Lanka Government Network, all Divisional Secretariats including the District Secretariat have been provided with computer facilities. About 600 staff have been given training in computers. Before the implementation of this project, we carried out correspondence by post. But now we do so by email. Telephone cost has been slashed due to VOIP facilities. On the whole due to the Lanka Government Network, efficiency has increased. It has been possible to provide an effective service to the public”.

**\*Divisional Secretary of Tumpane, Galagedera Ms. M.C.K.S. Sooriyampola**

“The implementation of this project has greatly facilitated our internal and external office activities. Our office buildings are located somewhat far apart. However because of this project it has been possible to combine with all the sections with ease. We are now living during a period when national programmes are implemented for which discussions have to be held frequently. This project is very handy for such tasks.”

**\*Badalkumbura Divisional Secretary Anura Hewakumara**

“Since internet facilities have been provided to us as a result of this project we have been able to exchange information with other Divisional Secretariats in the island. Our goal is to bring about a situation where people could obtain the services they expect from their homes”.

\*Katana Divisional Secretariat Accountant V. D. S. Rodrigo

“Thanks to this project we have been provided with VOIP telephone facilities. As a result of this it has been possible to reduce the telephone bill drastically. Since we have been provided both internet and email facilities, our official work has become easy. There are times when some of our official duties have to be done safely and in confidence. This project has provided us with facilities ensuring these requirements as well”.

\*Chief Accountant, Nuwara Eliya District Secretariat D. L. A. Wijenayake

“Before the implementation of the Lanka Government Network there did not exist a smooth inter-relationship among institutions. When we needed any information from another institution we had to physically visit that institution. We had to spend time, money and energy in vain. But as a result of this project we have resolved a large number of such problems. “

\*Divisional Secretary of Reedimaliyadda, Ms. Chandrani Silva

“Facilities in this area are very poor. The income level of the people here is quite low. Because of the Lanka Government Network project it has been possible to provide a great service to the people even in these difficult circumstances. Previously we carried out correspondence by ordinary post. But now we do so by email.”

ICTA is taking the appropriate steps to seek legal remedies in respect of the aforesaid incorrect article.

However, we expect that you comply with our request to give the above details and facts stated in this letter the same prominence you had given the aforesaid article in “The Sunday Leader”, dated 11<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

Thanking you.

**Athula Pushpakumara**  
Head of Strategic Communications  
ICT Agency of Sri Lanka