

PRESTIGE

A woman in a yellow and white sari is shown in a forest, using a specialized tool to tap a rubber tree. She is looking down at her work with concentration. The background is filled with the trunks of other trees, creating a dense forest setting.

January 2024 (e magazine)

Sri Lanka RUBBER

*The revival of our
147 year old legacy.
A project to rejuvenate
the rubber sector towards
achieving 4 billion USD
foreign exchange
earnings by 2026*

CH17

Rewards & Loyalty

NEWS

CH17 Loyalty extends our support to Rubber Research Institute (RRI) in their great efforts towards rubber development in Sri Lanka

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CH17 extends support towards

කිරි තුරු අතිමන

A Program in Support of Rubber Sector's Ambitious Rubber Master Plan Capital Development Project

In recognition of the first batch of 200 NVQ qualified rubber harvesting technicians, CH17 will offer

a special privilege card under a master plan capital development project designed and developed by the Rubber Research Institute of Sri Lanka (RRI)

The 147 year old rubber industry was once the main stay of the country's economy enjoying the front

seat of the dynamic export market along with tea and coconut (also spices). Over the years, with the entry of

several other turn around industries such as garments, employment, IT services that contributed to the

economy surpassed the rubber sectors forex contribution and in no time was pushed to the bottom stretch of significant foreign exchange earning bracket.

A formal ceremony to mark this milestone in the rubber sector is scheduled to be held in January 2024



Jumar Preena CEO CH17 explaining the proposed image building concept for the rubber production community to the Chairman of RRI Mr. Lakshman Abeysekera and Dr. Susantha Siriwardena Deputy Director - Research (Technology) RRI of Sri Lanka



ECHELON

FROM DISCOUNT CARD TO SAAS PLATFORM: CH17'S REMARKABLE JOURNEY

Article published in the December issue of the Echelon Business Magazine and the Economy Next online news portal

“

While the concept was successful, it didn't generate immediate revenue. However, I remained dedicated to its success because it benefitted more than a million people indirectly, the employees and their families.

”

Can you share the story behind the inception of CH17 in 2013, from being a small start-up to where it is today, providing innovative loyalty solutions?

CH17 has evolved from a basic discount card scheme to a software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution, emphasizing rewards, loyalty, and privileges across various sectors.

My earlier career was in broadcast media, where the apparel industry approached me to develop a campaign to enhance the image of Sri Lanka's apparel sector. To achieve this, I organized various activities like road shows, CSR programmes, and talent showcases to spotlight the accomplishments of apparel sector workers and integrate them into society. These efforts improved the sector's image, but I realized we needed to create tangible benefits.

I proposed a programme that united consumer goods and service merchants to provide discounts to apparel sector

employees. Despite the challenge of serving a vast workforce, I gained the support of 25 factories and 450,000 employees, leading to my first entrepreneurial venture, the “Ransalu” programme. Ransalu offered workers and their families discounts that were previously exclusive to top corporate credit cardholders. While the concept was successful, it didn't generate immediate revenue. However, I remained dedicated to its success because it benefitted more than a million people indirectly, the employees and their families.

Another pivotal moment was when I partnered with a bank in 2015 to introduce the first co-branded bank card. Soon after, private companies approached me to create similar programmes for their employees, expanding my market reach. I collaborated with technology experts to develop a digital platform that extended our services into the insurance sector, and we introduced Asia's first insurance card directly tied to lifestyle benefits. My aim is to expand into the Micro SME segment by offering a free multi-functional digital platform for entrepreneurs to run on an e-commerce platform. I hope to reach a million micro and SME entrepreneurs through collaborations with various state agencies supervising this sector, financial institutions, insurance companies and telecommunications service providers. Empowering the nation's entrepreneurs is my next big goal.

You describe CH17 as a medium between brands and communities. Can you explain how this approach works and the unique value it brings to businesses aiming to boost customer loyalty and brand success?

We don't possess any physical assets or capital. Our core mission is connecting brands with communities,

and this approach has been quite successful. My programme benefits both customers and retailers alike.

Retailers naturally want customers to visit their showrooms, while customers seek discounts, a delicate balance we manage meticulously by devising a system that shares costs and earnings with merchant partners. For instance, besides cash discounts, CH17 also provides flash offers, sometimes as generous as a 40% discount, to please the retailer. While I'm not the one spending on these discounts, I still contribute to share the costs. Furthermore, we offer cashback as an additional benefit.

If, for any reason, a merchant fails to apply the agreed-upon discount despite the customer presenting their card, we've got it covered. Whether it's due to a technological glitch or a new employee's lack of knowledge, customers can forward the discounted component of their bill to us. We take care of everything, ensuring that customers are not left feeling frustrated or cheated.

What sets CH17 apart from traditional loyalty programmes, and how does the company envision its role in connecting brands with communities evolving in the future?

Traditionally, retail businesses have relied on point-based loyalty programmes where customers must redeem points within a specified timeframe. However, more often than not, they go unused, and people tend to forget about them. I believe in offering tangible and immediate benefits, and here's how my approach differs: I provide cash benefits, which are clear and straightforward. On top of that, if a particular retailer has their own points system, that's fine too, and customers can accumulate points with them if they wish.

The traditional points scheme lures customers to return to the same business to redeem their points. It limits their choices and can be somewhat

restrictive. In contrast, I prioritize the consumer's freedom to choose. I want them to have the flexibility to go to any of my partner businesses and enjoy discounts without being tied down by accumulating points.

What's unique about my platform is its adaptability. It can cater to various industries. For instance, even the construction industry has approached us, seeking a solution. The key here

is flexibility and adaptability. Loyalty isn't limited to a specific industry; it's a universal concept, and CH17 is bespoke, multifunctional and scalable by design.

What are your goals, plans and vision for CH17?

CH17 operates as a sole proprietorship with private equity liability, meaning it's just me managing everything. However, I recognize the need to plan for succession because I can't simply hand it over to my two adult children because they live abroad and sadly this is not their forte. Ideally, I'd like to partner with someone who shares my vision and possesses entrepreneurial skills. This way, the concept can continue to thrive and benefit both the retail industry and consumers.



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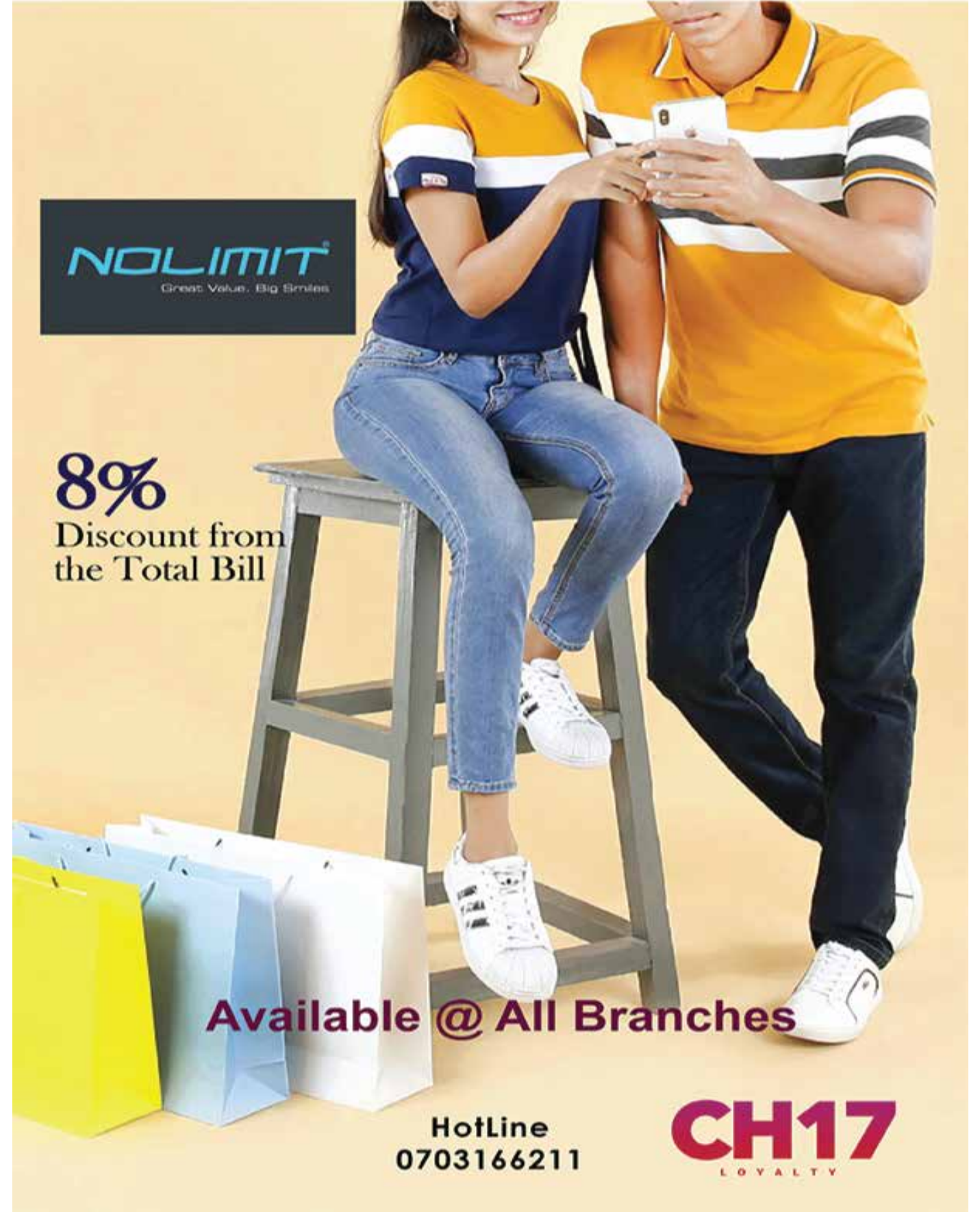
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Kadulla is a comprehensive e-commerce haven, meticulously tailored to cater to the intricate needs of micro, small, and medium businesses also extending its support generously to smart startups.

“Kadulla” refers to obstacles that individuals must overcome on their path to business success.

Functioning as an entrepreneurial compass, Kadulla helps individuals navigate businesses through the entire journey from planning to execution.

This platform serves as the handbook for entrepreneurs, offering not just theoretical guidance but also hands-on expertise, cutting-edge technology, and a gateway to diverse markets.

It operates on a subscription model that fits any business startup.

Kadulla eliminates the necessity for financial investments, allowing businesses of all sizes to access its resources. It seamlessly intertwines itself with the entrepreneurial ecosystem, offering a symbiotic relationship that extends beyond mere guidance.

Entrepreneurs would find solace in the array of essential third-party support services provided by Kadulla, such as banking services, finance and leasing, telecom services and last not least insurance facilities for the individual, family and the business

This creates a dynamic and cohesive environment where businesses thrive and evolve.

Kadulla.lk platform to support SME and Micro business



In essence, Kadulla is more than an e-commerce platform; it's a strategic partner, a mentor, and a catalyst for the success of businesses on their journey from inception to prosperity.

Our goal is to empower the nation's entrepreneurs. With a healthy and robust SMEs

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Our goal is to empower the nation's entrepreneurs. With a healthy and robust SME sector we can solidify our economy sector we can solidify our economy

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EMPOWERING THE NATION'S ENTREPRENEURS

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Jumar Preena, CEO of CH17, explained that he was impressed with the enthusiasm shown by all three levels of the organisation in carrying out community projects in the greater interest of the society and the country in general. Youth engagement was of immense importance, he added.

Jumar further announced that he would invest up to 50% of the subscription fees collected from the second year onwards to be donated to the organisations welfare projects. He stated, “The funding will be progressively phased out over the next three years, with the possibility of extensions subject to evaluation thereafter.”

In addition to financial support, CH17 plans to implement a loyalty scheme designed to recognize and reward the unwavering dedication and personal commitment of Rotaract and Interact members in Sri Lanka. Mr. Preena emphasized the importance of member retention, stating, “We

In a landmark move toward fostering sustainable community development, CH17 LOYALTY proudly announces its steadfast commitment to support Rotaract and Interact clubs in RID 3220, Sri Lanka.

Two significant Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signings have solidified a three-year partnership, aiming to fund both new and existing community welfare projects initiated by these esteemed organizations. The MoU signing ceremony was graced by the presence of District Rotaract Representative Rtr. PP Sathma Jayasinghe, Rtr. Haneef Mohamed, representing Rotaract in RID 3220 and PHF Int. PP. Aamir Akram

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want to retain our membership from the time they join the junior brigade until they reach the topmost tier.”

Furthermore, Mr. Preena highlighted the significance of giving back to these committed members as a token of appreciation. “This is the moment for us to give back and express our gratitude for their continuous support over the years,” he declared.

As a part of this collaboration, CH17 sees an opportunity to not only strengthen existing ties but also to expand its reach by enrolling new members from diverse segments of society. Mr. Preena added, “We will use this great opportunity to enroll new members into these organizations across different segments of society. There should be a purpose for anyone willing to spend their precious time amidst their personal commitments for the cause of the community in movements such as this.”

The strategic partnership between CH17 LOYALTY, Rotaract, and Interact marks a significant step towards sustainable community development, demonstrating the power of collaboration and shared commitment to making a positive impact on society.



CH17 Forges Strategic Alliances with Rotaract and Interact Clubs for Sustainable Community Development Projects

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CH17

Welcomes new year

2024



Looking forward to a bright and prosperous New Year for everyone! Traditional boiling of milk with the participation of our staff and their families and extended helpers.



Tharaka Samarakoon and Dhanushka Rambukwella,

I extend my sincerest congratulations on your recent promotions! Your dedication and hard work have not only contributed to the success of our company but have also earned you well-deserved advancements in your careers.

Tharaka, your role as Assistant General Manager is a testament to your leadership and strategic prowess. Your commitment to excellence has undoubtedly played a crucial role in the growth of our team.

Dhanushka, as the Head of Digital Services, your innovative approach

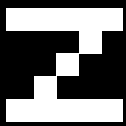
and forward-thinking have significantly elevated our digital initiatives. Your achievements are a true reflection of your expertise and dedication.

Your promotions are a clear recognition of your outstanding contributions. I am confident that both of you will excel in your new roles, continuing to inspire those around you. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to the success of our company.

Wishing you continued success in your new positions!



ECHELON



ZEN

en
economynext



The founder and Chief Executive of CH17 says, before he forgets, that he loves minding his own businesses, hates his self-glorification and fears being misunderstood

JUMAR PREENA

What is your idea of perfect happiness?

Perfect happiness does not exist

What is your greatest fear?

Being misunderstood

What is your life philosophy or mantra that you live by?

Be good to all living beings

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?

Self-glorification

What is the trait you most deplore in others?

Ego

On what occasion do you lie?

When my wife confronts me

What is your favourite occupation?

Minding my own business

What is your most marked characteristic?

An infectious smile (so I've been told)

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?

Before I forget...best way to bring a wandering discussion back on track

What do you most value in your friends?

Sincerity

Which historical figure do you most identify with?

The Holy Ka'ba

Who are your heroes in real life?

Healthcare workers (during the pandemic).
ILL