‘Shilpa Abhimani 2019’ felicitates and uplifts Sri Lankan craftsmen

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The award presentation for the first place of the Shilpa Navoda All Island Schools Handicraft Competition Junior category

Shilpa Abhimani 2019, the Presidential Awards Handicrafts Competition and Exhibition organized by the National Crafts Council in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Resettlement of Protracted Displaced Persons, Cooperative Development and Vocational Training and Skills Development, felicitated Sri Lankan craftsmen. Shilpa Abhimani seeks to preserve and promote

traditional handicrafts and to encourage artisans by improving their livelihoods. Additionally, ‘Shilpa Suraksha’– an insurance scheme was launched for the craftsmen.

The event was graced by Rishad Bathiudeen, Minister, Industry and Commerce; Buddhika Pathirana, State Minister, Industry and Commerce; Dr Ghada Hijjawi-Qaddumi, President, World Crafts Council Asia Pacific Region; and Heshani Bogollagama, Chairperson of the National Crafts Council. Shilpa Abhimani 2019 recorded the highest number of entries, where over 4,000 craftsmen completed entering over 10,000 craft items representing all 25 districts of Sri Lanka. Over 15,000 visitors came to witness these award winning crafts. The Handicrafts were showcased under 21 categories which had 57 sub categories. Winners from the ‘Shilpa Navoda’ All Island School Handicrafts competition were also felicitated.

An International Crafts Festival was also held, there were over 80 stalls, which included 26 international artisans representing India, Thailand, Bangladesh and Iran. Performances highlighting the heritage of Sri Lankan arts, including a puppet show, were held to entertain the visitors. The Exhibition provided the opportunity to purchase high quality craft items at the Local Trade Fair at the premises.