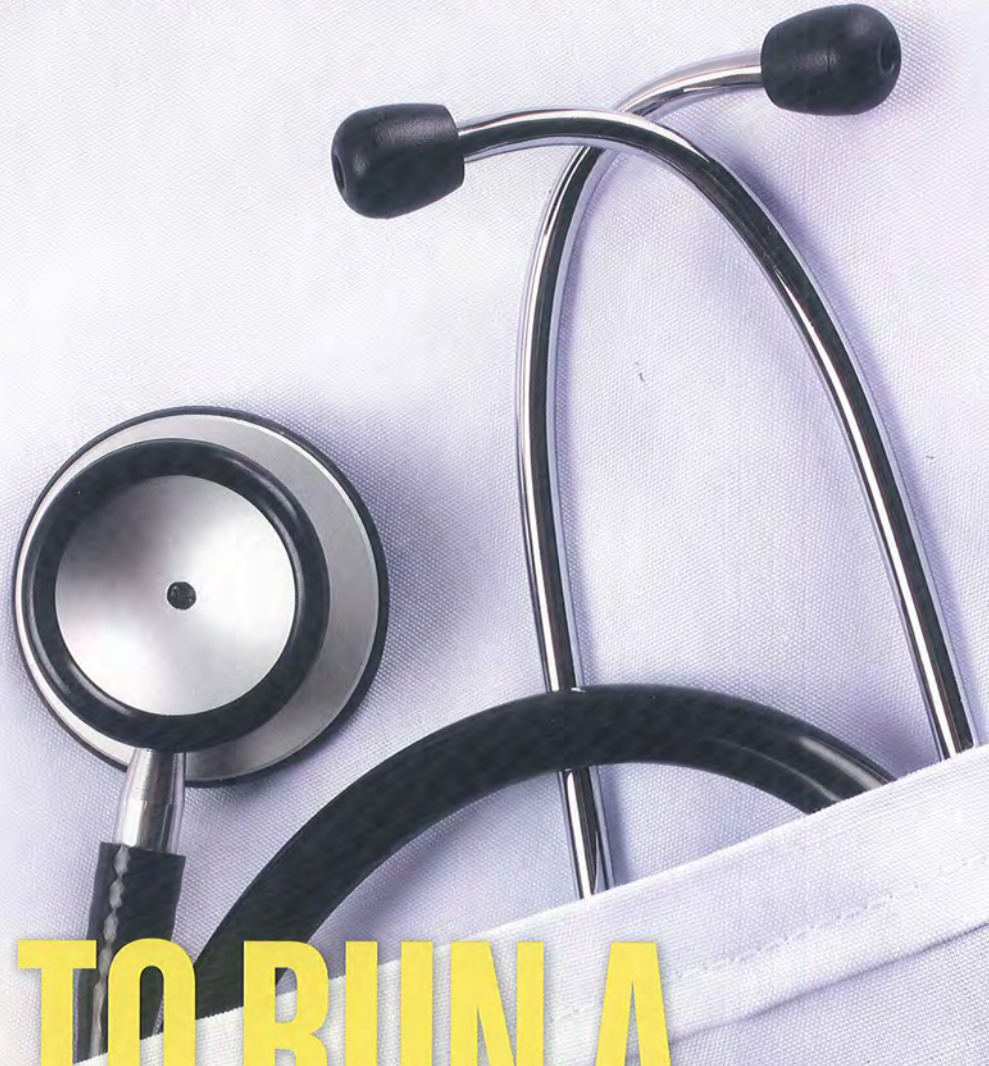


# ECHELON

JUNE 2017

**Protectionist  
taxes don't  
protect;  
they plunder  
ordinary  
Sri Lankans**

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# HOW TO RUN A CARTEL

A doctors' cartel hurting the sick and against freedom of education has thrived

# ECOCORP ASIA: PIONEERING THE NANOTECHNOLOGY REVOLUTION IN SRI LANKA

Ecocorp Asia has ventured into a field that no one else in Sri Lanka has stepped into before, marking a milestone by bringing in German nanotechnology for industrial use in Sri Lanka. Without stopping there, they have taken it another step further and come up with a daily use, DIY product called Nanorepel, a surface coating made of liquid glass, which protects various household items ranging from metal to ceramics, and even cars. Malik Fernando, CEO and Managing Director of Ecocorp Asia, sat down with Echelon to discuss his business venture and its innovative range of products.

## What was the inspiration behind this product?

A few years ago, in Europe and the US, nanotechnology was making all the buzz and they were coming up with nanotechnology-based products for day-to-day use. We wanted to be the company to bring this new nanotechnology to Sri Lanka. When we looked at the existing surface coatings available here, there were many carbon-based coatings. However, the current trend is to "go green" and move away from carbon-based coatings, so we decided it was the right time to introduce this product to the Sri Lankan market. In Sri Lanka, we were the first to get involved in nanotechnology, and we started by bringing in German know-how for industrial surface coating. We

developed a range of products to increase productivity in various industries including fabric and tyres. We work with many local manufacturers who supply goods to a number of countries across the world to help improve efficiency.

This new product is a silicon-based (quartz) coating, and we work directly with its patent holders. For industrial clients, our team of nano technicians would carry out the coating on metal, glass or plastic surfaces in the factories themselves. While doing this, we realized that these products are useful in our daily lives as well. Based on this finding, we simplified the process and developed a daily use, DIY (Do-It-Yourself) product for local consumers.



### What are some of your other products available in the market?

We have three product ranges in Sri Lanka. They all make the specific surface hydrophobic and oleophobic, making them very easy to clean.

First, we have the outdoor range. It is for shoes, jackets, active wear and such that are often exposed to rain and mud. Second, we have a product range for cars that is affordable and long-lasting. In the local market, there are no affordable coatings, only cleaners. Most coatings available in Sri Lanka are either very expensive, or the more affordable options need to be regularly reapplied. Third, is the homecare range. These products can be used on numerous surfaces – natural stone, ceramic, glass and fabric.

### What is special about your range of products and what is the USP you offer?

What is special about our surface coatings is that it uses the purest form of quartz glass as its base; nanotechnology helps convert it to a surface coating. In addition, it is environmentally sound. Since it creates a protective layer on the surface, it minimizes the use of harsh chemicals in the long term. The German company we work with has won several globally recognized green awards in recognition of its green technology and production processes.

Nanorepel is an easy-to-use, affordable, DIY product. For instance, to protect your car paint with a surface coating from a car detailing centre will be time-consuming and expensive. Even after applying a surface coating, you will have to wax it or regularly reapply the coating. Our product is a thin, transparent layer that you can apply in the comfort of your home; thus, it is practical and cost-effective. It clearly provides you a good return on investment as well. Cleaning



Malik Fernando - CEO and Managing Director of Ecocorp Asia

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and maintaining your vehicle or any other surface becomes easier after applying Nanorepel.

### Tell us a little about your company.

Ecocorp Asia is a joint venture with Aitken Spence. Our vision is to be at the forefront of new technology, which can help improve the way we live, while taking into consideration the impact it has on the environment. Our research and development team is committed to constantly developing solutions to benefit Sri Lankan consumers.

### What are your plans for the future?

This product has immense potential in Sri Lanka. Although we have been in the market for industrial level surface coating products, we have only recently launched the consumer product range. At the moment, we focus on promoting only our DIY car care, home care and outdoor products. Several years ago, the local market was not ready for DIY products, but today we are, as it is easy, fast and convenient. Our products are available in leading supermarkets and on our online store. Most of our marketing promotions are focused on giving consumers the option to see the product and experience it firsthand.

Nanorepel is a very small subset of what nanotechnology-based coatings can really do. We are currently testing several new products such as a coating product for plants, which will prevent loss of yield. Extensive testing and factory trials assure us that the product will deliver the benefit we intend to give our customers. Since the technology is patented and the production process takes place entirely in Germany, we can confidently market this product in Sri Lanka, and thereby truly use today's technology to change the way we live.

# NANOREPEL™