



# OPA News

The e-magazine of The Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka



## OPA GETS ITS FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT

The initialism “OPA” represents the Organisation of Professional Associations. This Organisation may be considered unique due to several factors. It was established in 1975 and is, therefore, a very old institution. Furthermore, it is the only one of its kind in the whole of South East Asia. Its membership comprises 52 professional associations representing 32 professions in Sri Lanka. For reasons unbeknownst throughout this long period of its existence, the Victorian “fairer sex” was not visible at the helm. This may sometimes give the mistaken notion that the OPA is a male dominated organisation. This does not in any way imply that female professionals did not participate.

They were very much around, vibrantly engaging in the affairs of the OPA but not navigating the higher planes.

It was not a taboo but it simply did not happen. This is why the years 2019 and 2022 will be reckoned as unique in the annals of the OPA. The Members of the OPA, who are nurtured in the quality and character of high-level professionalism, displayed their non-discriminatory and gender-neutral disposition when they elected Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera for the post of President-Elect for the period 2022/2023. Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera had been involved with OPA activities for the past 10 years. She has served in a multitude of committees during this period and has gained an excellent understanding of OPA functions.

Her continuous engagement was recognised by the OPA membership, when she was elected as the first ever women General Secretary in 2019. She was then uncontested for a second term, thus serving that position for two consecutive years.

Bidding adieu to the Post of Secretary at the end of two successful and fulfilling terms, she did not rest on her laurels. The resolute and determined persona in her enthused her to courageously venture to contest for the Post of President-Elect of the OPA for the years 2022/2023. Thus, Ms. Gunasekera holds the rare double distinction of being the first woman General Secretary and the first woman President of the OPA.

Her alma mater, Musaeus College, Colombo 07, will be proud of her achievements, both in the academic and professional fields. She also currently holds the position of the President of Sri Lanka Women Lawyers' Association, which has a membership of nearly 3,000 attorneys – at –law. She brings to OPA her vast experience, insightful knowledge and excellent understanding of a range of national issues all of which would be beneficial to the organization. It is expected that her exposure will set the guidelines and directions for this august body to offer its professional input at a national level. The OPA can confidently look forward to a fruitful year of further achievements under her presidency.



# OPA News

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

A country with an unstable economy, even slightly over the forecast, could fall and experience fiscal imbalance. In Sri Lanka, following the pandemic, inflation has reached the recorded highest in history.

The government restructured and reformed financial policies expecting fiscal stability. Unexpectedly, all sectors were affected due to the contraction of credit and depreciation of the asset quality. Now we are experiencing the impact of the forecasted decisions made by the people with a narrow spectrum of financial knowledge and understanding.

In a storm if you want to survive, you need to override the clouds. So Sri Lanka needs to focus on one vision to combat this situation, where OPA has an advantageous space.

As this is a country-specific, unique situation, the government needs the assistance of professionals. Achieving fiscal balance, macro economic recovery, stable financial systems and economic resilience are not the words of dreams. We as professionals need to face reality with the purpose of changing it

for the better. The OPA has taken the leadership in guiding the leaders and changing the citizens' purviews. A country with more fragility and uncertainty will not move in the right direction. Political games amount to trafficking innocent citizens, resulting in further fragility. We have experienced the impact of all of these. Therefore, this is a challenging time and it is not an easy task to achieve success overnight. What is necessary is an approach at the grassroots level, with changes of the consumption pattern into a more independent and country specific manner, Cost efficiency in purchasing and consumer preferences of goods and services need a blue ocean approach. The OPA has led a few initiatives focusing on the economic development of the country. The OPA is not only a pillar to drive the country back to its strength, but also a shield to protect her in this financial war. I am very pleased to invite all the member associations and Members of OPA to "Let's work to find a way out of this crisis together" like the little birds that flew away from the trap of the Veddah for their survival, focusing on a common goal.

**Let us hope Sri Lanka will escape, survive and win.**

**Dr.Thilina Wanigasekera**

**Editor –In- Chief**



## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

As the 42<sup>nd</sup> President of the Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA), my role has been to provide visionary leadership and foster a culture of collaboration among all member associations. By recognizing the immense potential in working together, I have endeavoured to create a cohesive and impactful platform for the betterment of our nation and its people. I would like to highlight the key aspects of my leadership journey and my efforts to promote unity and cooperation among our diverse member associations.

Sri Lanka's professional landscape is richly diverse, comprising numerous associations representing various industries and disciplines. Recognizing the diversity of talents and expertise in our country, my leadership has focused on uniting these distinct voices under the common goal of advancing our society. By creating a collaborative space for discussion, I have

fostered a sense of inclusivity, where every member feels valued and heard.

As the unified voice of professional associations in Sri Lanka, the OPA has played a pivotal role in advocating for the interests of its members and their respective professions. I have strived to ensure that we work together, effectively addressing common challenges, such as regulatory reforms, professional standards, and ethical guidelines. This collective advocacy has strengthened our position in influencing decision-making processes at both the government and corporate levels.

To encourage collaboration, I have introduced several cross-collaborative programs and projects that transcend the boundaries of individual associations. Fostering relationships with other professional leaders, government bodies, and stakeholders has allowed us to advocate for collective interests and work towards solutions to shared challenges. Building collaborative relationships has been instrumental in establishing a cohesive voice for the professional community, amplifying our impact and driving meaningful change.

Recognizing that the strength of our member associations lies in the capabilities of their members, I have prioritized capacity building and knowledge sharing initiatives. Through workshops, seminars, and conferences, we

have facilitated the exchange of expertise and best practices among professionals.

By investing in continuous learning and development, we have empowered our members to excel in their respective domains and contribute meaningfully to the nation's progress.

As the OPA's first woman President, I have taken a lead role in advocating for gender equality within the organization and in the broader professional landscape of Sri Lanka. My aim has been to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for women professionals, breaking down barriers and promoting their participation and leadership in various fields. I have also attempted to align our member associations' efforts towards addressing the country's pressing societal concerns, working towards creating a more prosperous and inclusive society.

Recognizing that the future of Sri Lanka's professional landscape lies in the hands of the next generation, I have spearheaded initiatives to mentor and nurture young professionals. Through mentorship programs, internships, and scholarships, we have encouraged youth participation and involvement in our member associations. By empowering the next generation of professionals, I believe we can help create a strong and resilient workforce ready to tackle the challenges of tomorrow.

As the President of the Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka, my leadership has been centered on promoting unity, collaboration, and a shared vision among all member associations. By harnessing the collective strength of our diverse professions, we have been able to make significant strides towards the betterment of our society. As we move forward, I am confident that our collaborative efforts will continue to drive positive change, empower professionals, and shape a brighter future for Sri Lanka. Together, we can achieve greatness and leave a lasting legacy for generations to come.

**Ms.Ruchira Gunasekera**

**Attorney – at - Law**

**President – OPA**



## SECRETARY'S DESK

### **National Dialogue on Strengthening the Recognition on Prior Learning (RPL) System in Sri Lanka**

The Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) together with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) Skilled and Resilient Migrant Workers (SRMW) project aims to ensure women and men migrant workers have access to gender-responsive skills qualifications and increased employability in local and global economics. The project is implemented in the five priority districts of Anuradhapura, Kandy, Kurunagala, Puttalam and Vavuniya.

The President and General Secretary participated in the discussion on the way in which the RPL mechanism can be implemented to meet the increasing demand for RPL certificates and in the National

Dialogue on Strengthening the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) System in Sri Lanka

The discussion was based on the following:

- The contribution of the RPL system to the employment market in Sri Lanka
- Quality assurance in RPL assessment and certification
- Role of VT providers in strengthening the RPL system.
- Innovative practices in using digital technology for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the RPL process.
- Strengths and weaknesses of current implementation of RPL systems in Sri Lanka.

### **Discussion on Health Sector Issues with the Sri Lanka Economic Association (SLEA)**

The Economic Research Committee of Sri Lanka Economic Association held a discussion in association with the National Issues and Health & Nutrition Committees of the OPA on health sector issues (shortages of medicines, medical services, immunizable diseases, etc.) for their quarterly research report on contemporary economic issues. The discussion covered background, status, risk and recommendations for said sector issues. A stakeholder consultation session on FTAs (Trade in Services) with India, China & Thailand was organized by the Office for International Trade – Presidential Secretariat

at the Ministry of Finance. Mr. Sarath Gamage, President –Elect & Mr. Bhanu Wijayarathne, Member of Executive Council participated as the representatives of the OPA on 25th January 2023. Objectives of the session were: Update on the current status of trade in services negotiations, understand the Sri Lanka service industry, accessing service markets in the subject countries. In addition, protections needed by Sri Lankan service industry and establishing a mechanism to feed SL service industry interests throughout the negotiation process were discussed. Since the negotiating team has expressed their willingness to re-visit, it was suggested to make use of such opportunities for better understanding on related matters and to forward suggestions more effectively. In addition, suggestions would be solicited from member associations for onward transmission to the negotiation team.

### **“Architect 2023” of the Sri Lanka Institute of Architects (SLIA)**

The Sri Lanka Institute of Architects (SLIA), the governing body for Architecture in Sri Lanka, held their annual sessions “Architect 2023” celebrating their 66th Anniversary at Waters Edge and BMICH from 22nd to 26th February 2023.

The theme of Architect 2023, “Rising”, aims to bring the building and construction

industry closer to the public by increasing awareness and access.

It was an excellent opportunity for the public to engage with architects and other professionals in the field. Architects 2023 comprised several events, including the Inauguration ceremony of the Annual Sessions 2023, the National Conference, and the Architects 2023 – Architects Work & Trade Exhibition. The ceremonial opening of the “Architect 2023 – Architects’ Work & Trade Exhibition was held on 23rd February at BMICH. The exhibition was opened to the public from 24th to 26th February, featuring 140 trade stalls and providing an opportunity to learn more about the products and services available in the construction industry. The attendees had an opportunity to join an Architects’ Discussion Forum during the exhibition. This forum offered educational sessions on various aspects of the architects’ profession, providing a valuable learning experience for those who attended. The President, President- Elect and General Secretary attended the programmes representing the Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka.

### **Discussion on Anti-Corruption Bill with the Minister of Justice**

A meeting was held on 19th December 2023 at the Ministry of Justice to discuss the above Bill. Mr. Wijeyadasa Rajapakse PC,

Minister of Justice, Mr. Sarath Jayamanne PC, Officials of the Ministry of Justice and several other organisations representing government and civil society had attended this meeting.

Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera, President, Mr. Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake, General Secretary, Mr. Dulitha Perera, Immediate Past President and Mr. Mass Usuf, Chairman of the National Security, Law & Order Committee represented the OPA.

During the discussions, several issues were put forward on behalf of the OPA. The most substantive concerns highlighted were the independence of the institutions envisaged under the bill, the significance of creating an enabling environment for the functioning of the institutions, checks and balances to ensure that there is no political interference, the putting in place of a mechanism where members of the Commission and staff are free from coercion, intimidation, threats and influence from external quarters and to secure a working environment for the Commissioners and staff to conduct their investigation and the prosecution processes without any hindrance.

In addition, matters relating to the extradition of suspect persons, recovery of property and funds transferred overseas, repatriation of illicit funds, confiscation and/or freezing assets, exploring avenues for joint bilateral and multilateral investigations were also put forward by the OPA.

## **Institute of Chemistry Ceylon inaugurates 'Action Plan 2023'**

Chemistry, being the fundamental science embracing all aspects of our lives, has strong links with most of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). “The Institute of Chemistry, Ceylon has great responsibility to achieve SDGs by 2030 as per the UN agenda and should launch programmes towards achieving these,” said Education Minister Susil Premajayantha at the inauguration of the Action Plan 2023 in line with the international year of basic sciences for sustainable development 2022 by the Institute of Chemistry, Ceylon.

The Institute of Chemistry, as the national professional body of Chemists, has introduced result-oriented activities contributing to all 17 SDGs as well as the launch of the Virtual ChemEX 2023 through the website [www.virtualchemex.com](http://www.virtualchemex.com).

The introduction of the new Postgraduate Degree in Chemical Analysis and Quality Assurance (MSc) and CPD programmes, along with establishment of a chemical laboratory and chemist’s training centre and the national secretariat of professional practice of chemistry, also took place.

The Minister added, “Science, technology, engineering and math play a crucial role in the modern education system and STEM

education is adapted by ninety six countries as of today. We have to benchmark with emerging methods of education, hence we will adapt STEM education with education transformations in 2023. With these reforms we will introduce IT and AI as compulsory subjects.”

“Free education sheds light on the importance of increasing the literacy rate in Sri Lanka though our education system has not evolved for decades. Education reforms and transformations should be aligned with the ten-year national education policy prepared by the National Education Commission, which is to achieve the goal of quality education by 2030.” The President of the Institute of Chemistry, Ceylon, N.M.S. Hettigedera said, “People should consume food that does not contain harmful additives. By scrutinizing samples and setting standards of food items catered to the masses, we can achieve zero hunger and poverty, as well as the health and wellbeing of STGs.” “In agriculture, chemistry helps increase food production while reducing the use of harmful chemicals and preserving natural resources. Hence, it is crucial that we minimize negative impacts by continuing to invest in research and development of sustainable chemistry,” said Secretary General, Sri Lanka National Commission for UNESCO, Prof Sirimali Fernando. The President of the OPA had been invited as a special guest and delivered a

speech at the inauguration ceremony held at Waters Edge.

**Mr. Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake**  
**Attorney - at - Law**  
**General Secretary – OPA**

## OPA News in General



OPA conducted a Christmas Carol programme on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022. The event was organised by Social Event Outreach Programs & Young Professional Committee and proved a success with the participation of OPA members. The event helped to enhance fellowship among the OPA members.



The OPA Social Event Outreach Programs & Young Professional Committee organized a New Year get together for forum members

and their families on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023 at the OPA premises

### Young Professionals Forum

The Social Events, Outreach Programmes & Young Professionals' committee has planned to conduct the inaugural event of the Annual General Meeting of the Young Professionals Forum as soon as possible.

## Workshops and Seminars

### Seminar on “Budget 2023 Connecting with Recent Tax Reforms”



The Organisation of Professional Association of Sri Lanka conducted a seminar on “Budget 2023 Connecting with Recent Tax Reforms” which held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023. The program was a success and provided a platform to discuss the new tax reforms aligned with the budget.

### Seminar on “Power Crisis & Electricity Tariffs”



A joint seminar organised by the National Issues committee and Seminars, Workshops and Programmes committee of the OPA was held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at the OPA auditorium. Highly experienced resource personnel such as Eng. Rohan Seneviratne - General Manager, Electricity Board, Mr. Damith Kumarasinghe - Director General, Public Utilities Commission of Sri Lanka, Prof. Rohan Samarajiva - Chairman,

LIRNEasia, Former Director General, TRCSL.

Former Chairman, ICTA and Eng. (Dr) Thilak Siyambalapitiya - Energy Specialist presented their view on the topic, which provided insight into the power crisis which impacts all Sri Lankans.

## Seminar on “Opportunities in Supply Chain for non-Supply Chain Professionals”

Supply chain is an important area for many industries, where supply chain professionals and non-professionals have the opportunity to work together for the betterment of their respective industries. The seminar was organized by the Career Guidance and Skills Development committee of the OPA.

## Seminar on “The Importance of Human Quality Advancement to Enhance Productivity”

The Seminars, Workshop and Programmes committee of the OPA as well as Institute of Quality and Productivity Management (IQPM) have jointly organised a seminar on 26th January 2023, which thoroughly discussed the influence of human quality advancement towards enhancing productivity. On the same forum, IQPM Academy was launched at the OPA auditorium.

Seminars, Workshops and Programmes Committee of the Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA) jointly with the Institute of Quality and Productivity Management (IQPM) present

**“The Importance of Human Quality Advancement to Enhance Productivity”**  
- The Launch of IQPM Academy

Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
from 6.00 pm – 7.30 pm at the OPA Auditorium followed by dinner

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**Dr. Kumara Hirimburegama**  
Former Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo  
Founder Dean, Faculty of Management, Kotuwala Defense University  
Founder Director, Institute of Human Resource Advancement, University of Colombo  
Former Director, Institute of Workers Education, University of Colombo

**Participation by registration only**  
To register, click the registration link below or scan the QR code

Due to limitation of seats, registration will be done on first come first served basis.  
**Hurry! Reserve your seat!**

**More Details – Call / WhatsApp**  
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Institute of Quality & Productivity Management (IQPM)  
Professional Center, #25/26, Prof. Stanley Wijesundara Mawatha, Colombo 7  
Website: <http://iqpm.net>



## Seminar on “Rising Trend of Aging & Effective Management of Cognitive Impairment”

The seminar was jointly organised by the Graduate Nurses’ Foundation of Sri Lanka and the Seminar, Workshops and Programmes committee of the OPA.



The seminar was jointly organised by the Graduate Nurses’ Foundation of Sri Lanka and the Seminar, Workshops and Programmes committee of the OPA.

The Seminar was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 at the OPA auditorium. Prof. Sudath Warnakulasuriya - Dean Faculty of Nursing, University of Colombo, Dr. Kalpana Abhayasinghe - Head, Senior Lecturer, Department of Nursing & Midwifery, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, KDU participated as the resource persons and the program was moderated by Dr. Lalitha Meegoda - Head, Department of Nursing &

Midwifery, University of Sri Jayawardenapura.

## Seminar on “Symposium on Malnutrition”

A symposium was organized by the Health and Nutrition committee of the OPA on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at the OPA auditorium. Highly experienced resource personnel such as Prof. Pujitha Wickramasinghe- Senior Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Dr. Thimathi Wickramasekara – President – Sri Lanka College of Nutrition Physicians, Dr. Mahendra Arnold – President - College of Consultant Community Physicians, Dr. Lakmini Magodarathna, Director Nutrition, Ministry of Health, Dr. Jayani Tennakoon Jayaweera, Consultant Nutrition Physicians, Apeksha Hospital, Maharagama. Prof. Pujitha Wickramasinghe – keynote speaker of the event presented valuable views on the topic.





The public consumes Over the Counter (OTC) medicine and some of the drugs are commonly used for different diseases. The Seminar, Workshops & Programmes Committee of the OPA organized a valuable seminar on the topic to create awareness on the correct usage of commonly used medicine, which was held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at the OPA Auditorium.

## Seminar on “Correct Usage of Commonly Used Medicine to Improve Patients’ Quality of Life”

## Meet the Minister Programme – 01



Under the Meet the Minister Programme - Hon. Dr. Wijeyadasa Rajapakshe PC, Minister of Justice, Prison Affairs & Constitutional Reforms shared his views on the proposed Anti-Terrorism Act and the Anti-Corruption Bill with the members of the OPA on 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2023 at 5.30 p.m.

## Seminar on “Part-Time Employment”

**THE ORGANISATION OF PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF SRI LANKA (OPA)**

**Way Forward Session on PART TIME EMPLOYMENT**

Organised by **Education & Human Resources Development Committee**

**26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2023**  
FROM 9.00 A.M. TO 12.00 NOON

**Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera**  
Attorney - at - Law  
President - OPA

**Eng. Ravil Rupasinghe**  
Chairman - Education & Human Resources Development Committee  
Vice President

**275/75, Prof. Stanley Wijesundera Mawatha, Colombo 07**  
T.P. - 0112 580268  
Email : opasrilanka@gmail.com

**Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake, Attorney - at - Law, General Secretary - OPA**

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**FOLLOWED BY LUNCH**



The Way Forward Session on “Part-Time Employment” organised by Education & Human Resource Development Committee was held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023. Special documents prepared by the OPA on part-time employment were handed over to the labour ministry.

## Seminar on “Rising Trend of Cancer in Sri Lanka”

**The Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA)**

**SEMINAR ON RISING TREND OF Cancer IN SRI LANKA**  
Organised by Health & Nutrition Committee

**11<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 6.00 p.m. at the Auditorium of the OPA**

**Dr. Eshani Fernando**  
BDS, MSc, MD (Community Dentistry)  
Director National Cancer Control Programme

**Dr. Prasad Abeyasingha**  
MBBS, MD (Oncology)  
Consultant Oncologist  
Apeksha Hospital - Makaragama & President, Sri Lanka College of Oncologists

**Dr. Suraj Perera**  
MBBS, MSc, MD (Community Medicine)  
Consultant Community Physician  
National Cancer Control Programme

**Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera**  
Attorney - at - law  
President - OPA

**Dr. Anuruddha Padeniya**  
Chairman, Health & Nutrition Committee  
President - Society of Health, Research & Innovation

**Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake**  
Attorney - at - Law,  
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A seminar on “Rising Trend of Cancer in Sri Lanka” organised by Health & Nutrition Committee of the OPA was held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 6.00 p.m.

## Seminar on “Gender Based Violence”

**20<sup>th</sup> MAY 2023**  
from 9.30 a.m. onwards @ the Auditorium of the OPA

**WORKSHOP ON GENDER - BASED VIOLENCE**

Organised by National Security, Law & Order Committee jointly with Seminars, Workshops & Programmes Committee of the OPA

**SPEAKERS**

- Domestic Violence - Identifying reasons and finding solutions
- Overcoming harassment and exploitation of women at work
- Ensuring the effective implementation of laws protecting women

**SPEAKERS**

- Prof. Prathiba Mahanamahewa  
Senior Attorney-at-Law,  
The Rajar, Sri Lanka Campus,  
University of Colombo.
- Ms. Renuka Jayasundara  
Deputy Inspector General,  
The Chief of Police in Charge of  
the Child and Women Abuse  
Prevention Division
- Ms. Sajeevani Abeyroon  
Attorney-at-Law,  
National Child Protection Authority

**MODERATOR**

- Mr. Mass Usuf  
Attorney - at - Law  
Chairman - National Security,  
Law & Order Committee of the OPA
- Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera  
Attorney - at - Law  
President - OPA
- Mr. Tisara De Silva  
Chairman - Seminars, Workshops &  
Programmes Committee -  
Vice President - OPA

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Attorney - at - Law  
General Secretary - OPA



A workshop on “Gender Based Violence” was organised by the National Security, Law & Order Committee jointly with the Seminars, Workshops & Programmes Committee.

## Seminar on “Solar Energy Powering A Safer Future”

A seminar on "SOLAR ENERGY - POWERING A SAFER FUTURE" was organised by the Seminars, Workshops & Programmes Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023.

The Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA)

**SEMINAR ON “Solar Energy”**  
Powering a Safer Future

Organised by Seminars, Workshops & Programmes Committee of the OPA

at 6.00 p.m.  
02<sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2023  
at the Auditorium of the OPA

**SPEAKERS**

- Eng. J.M. Athula  
Director General,  
Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy  
Authority
- Eng. Kushan Jayasuriya  
Vice President,  
Immediate Past President  
Solar Industries Association
- Eng. Chamil Edirimuni  
Vice President - OPA  
Chairman - Electrical, Electronics &  
Telecommunication Sectoral Committee (EESL)  
Chief Engineer (Tr Line Design),  
Ceylon Electricity Board

**MODERATOR**

- Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera  
Attorney - at - Law  
President - OPA
- Mr. Tisara De Silva  
Chairman - Seminars, Workshops & Programmes Committee  
Vice President - OPA

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## Seminar on “Future Supply Chain with Industry 4.0”

The Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA)

Seminar on - Future Supply Chain with  
**INDUSTRY 4.0**

22<sup>nd</sup> MAY 2023  
at 6.00 p.m. at the Auditorium  
of the OPA

**SPEAKERS**

- Eng. (Dr.) H. Niles Perera  
Senior Lecturer, Department of Transport Management  
and Logistics Engineering, University of Moratuwa  
Director, Center for Supply Chain, Operations and  
Logistics Optimization, University of Moratuwa
- Eng. (Dr.) Samudaya Nanayakkara  
Senior Lecturer at the Department of  
Transport Management & Logistics Engineering,  
University of Moratuwa.

**MODERATOR**

- Eng. Samran Kandanearachchi  
Chairman - Supply Chain, Transport & Logistics Committee  
Vice President - OPA

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Attorney - at - Law  
President - OPA

Mr. Tisara De Silva  
Chairman - Seminars, Workshops &  
Programmes Committee  
Vice President - OPA

**ORGANISED BY**  
Supply Chain, Transport & Logistics Committee  
jointly with  
Seminars, Workshops & Programmes Committee  
of the OPA

Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake  
Attorney - at - Law  
General Secretary - OPA

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A seminar on "Future Supply Chain with Industry 4.0" organised by the Supply Chain, Transport & Logistics Committee jointly with the Seminars, Workshops & Programmes Committee was held on June 22, 2023 at 6 p.m.

The seminar created a platform for the participants to get a clear picture on industry 4.0, which includes automation in the supply chain that eventually reduces wastage and carbon foot print. Furthermore, Dr. Niles Perera and Dr. Samudaya Nanayakkara discussed a high-level strategy to enable industry 4.0 in Sri Lanka.

## Seminar on “Financial Literacy to Achieve Your Financial Wellbeing”

The Organisation of Professional Associations together with the Young Professionals Forum of the Social Events, Outreach Programmes and Young Professionals’ Committee organized a seminar on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June at the OPA auditorium. President Ruchira Gunasekara in her welcome address encouraged the participants to use the opportunity to expand their financial knowledge and gain valuable insights.

The guest speaker for the event, Mr. Ravi Abeysuriya, the Director/Advocacy Chair – CFA Society of Sri Lanka, stated that financial literacy is defined as a person’s ability to understand, analyse and manage personal financial matters.

Everyone should have a financial goal and allocate their money in the most productive way of generating additional income. Although many people save, they hardly derive any income due to high inflation.

Mr. Abeysuriya strongly advised the attendees to avoid debt, particularly credit card debt. Indiscriminate spending was to blame for many people falling into the debt trap. He noted that various “Buy now pay later” schemes have caused many people to spend beyond their means. However, smart, financially literate people ensure that their

expenditure is greater than their income and use their income to buy assets such as gold and real estate.

Getting rich involved investing regularly over a long period. Mr. Abeysuriya encouraged the participants to start small and spend time studying financial data in order to make informed stock market decisions. He suggested that people open a Central Depository System (CDS) account to start internet trading. They could begin by picking a bank as their first investment. People should also consider depositing money in a money market account, which offers decent returns. Diversification in asset classes was key in mitigating risk.

## Seminar on “Cyber Security Basics for Survival”

**THE ORGANISATION OF PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF SRI LANKA (OPA)**

**SEMINAR ON CYBER SECURITY BASICS FOR SURVIVAL**

Organised by  
The Career Guidance & Skills Development Committee of the OPA jointly with  
the Computer Society of Sri Lanka (CSSL)

**9<sup>th</sup> June 2023**  
at 6.00 p.m.  
@ the Auditorium of the OPA

**SPEAKERS**

- Mr. Jayantha Fernando  
Digital Law Specialist,  
Director - LK CERT
- Air Cdre (Retd) Jayasiri Amaraseena  
Chief Executive Officer  
LK CERT
- Eng. Dileepa Lathara  
Chief Executive Officer  
TECHCERT

**MODERATOR**

- Mr. Hanishka Sugathadasa  
Member of the General Forum - OPA  
Managing Director,  
IT Adkoon (Pvt) Ltd
- Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera  
Attorney - at - Law  
President - OPA
- Dr. Ajantha Athukorala  
President  
Computer Society of Sri Lanka
- Mr. Hennyaye Bandara  
Chairman, Career Guidance &  
Skills Development Committee  
Vice President - OPA

The Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA)  
275/75, Prof. Stanley Wijesundera Mawatha, Colombo 07,  
0112 580 268  
opasilanka@gmail.com

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Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake  
Attorney - at - Law  
General Secretary - OPA



A Seminar on "Cyber Security Basics for Survival" was held on 09th June 2023 at 6.00 p.m. It was organised by the Career Guidance & Skills Development Committee jointly with the Computer Society of Sri Lanka.

## Meet the Minister Programme - 02

**THE ORGANISATION OF PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF SRI LANKA (OPA)**

**MEET THE MINISTER**

**"Reforms Imperative for Recovery and Sustainability of Sri Lankan Economy"**

**Hon. Shehan Semasinghe, M.P.**  
State Minister of Finance  
the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER**

**MODERATOR**

- Prof. Lakshman R. Watawala  
Past President - OPA  
President - Institute of Certified Management Accountants (CMA)

**19<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2023**  
at 6.00 p.m.  
at the Auditorium of the OPA

**Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera**  
Attorney - at - Law  
President - OPA

**Mr. Sarath Gamage**  
President - Elect - OPA

**Mr. Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake**  
Attorney - at - Law  
General Secretary - OPA

The Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA)  
275/75, Prof. Stanley Wijesundera Mawatha, Colombo 07, Tel : 0112 580 268 Email : opasilanka@gmail.com

The Meet the Minister programme was graced by the State Minister of Finance, the Hon. Shehan Semasinghe. The event, held on 19<sup>th</sup> of June at the OPA auditorium, focused on the timely topic of “Reforms Imperative

for Recovery and Sustainability of Sri Lankan Economy.”



OPA President Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera, President-Elect Mr. Sarath Gamage and General Secretary Mr. Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake attended the seminar along with a broad crosssection of OPA members. Minister Semasinghe noted that the country had faced its gravest economic calamity, which had been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ukraine war and poor policy decisions. This had resulted in the country’s GDP contracting by 7.5% and skyrocketing inflation, forcing the country to default on debt. Blaming weaknesses in the financial sector leading to unsustainable debt as being one of the main reasons behind the crisis, the minister stated that the key goal now is to restore macroeconomic stability. Securing the IMF loan was a major first step in this regard. He said measures would be taken to address the crisis include broadening the tax base, creating a business-friendly environment, and introducing anticorruption legislation. Investment in key industries, including renewable energy, food and beverage, healthcare and tourism, would be

encouraged while pursuing trade agreements with selected countries.

The minister described proposed reforms including the restructuring and divestment of State Owned Enterprises (SOEs), which are facing significant financial challenges. He opined that long-term economic growth could be achieved only by embracing comprehensive structural changes, promoting investment and trade, enhancing fiscal and monetary policies, strengthening social protection and pursuing land and labour reform.

The minister’s speech was followed by an informative question and answer session moderated by Past President Prof. Lakshman Watawala.

## Meet the Opposition Programme - 01

THE ORGANISATION OF PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF SRI LANKA (OPA)

### MEET THE OPPOSITION

**“Reforms Imperative for Recovery and Sustainability of Sri Lankan Economy”**

Hon. Dr. Nalaka Godahewa  
Member of Parliament

Hon. Prof. G. L. Peiris  
Member of Parliament

Hon. Prof. Charitha Herath  
Member of Parliament

**MODERATOR**  
Prof. Lakshman R. Watawala  
Past President - OPA  
President - Institute of Certified Management Accountants (CMA)

**20<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2023**  
at 6.00 p.m.  
at the Auditorium of the OPA

Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera  
Attorney - at - Law  
President - OPA

Mr. Sarath Gamage  
President - Elect - OPA

Mr. Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake  
Attorney - at - Law  
General Secretary - OPA

The Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA)  
275/75, Prof. Stanley Wijewardena Mawatha, Colombo 07, Tel : 0112 580 768 Email : opasrilanka@gmail.com

A “Meet the Opposition” programme on the subject of “Reforms Imperative for the Recovery and Sustainability of Sri Lankan Economy’ was held at the OPA auditorium on the 20th of June. Opposition members of the Parliament Dr. Nalaka Godahewa, Prof. G.L. Peiris and Prof. Charitha Herath were invited to address the OPA members.

The former Justice Minister Prof. G.L. Pieris spoke to the gathering. Noting that he would be offering his personal reflections on reforms that are urgently needed, Prof. G.L. Pieris stated that transparency and consensus are essential for the process. He went on to note that fundamental change was necessary as the country was living beyond its means. The economy has contracted by 11.5%, while 850,000 people have lost their jobs. He pointed out that 1.5 million children go to school on an empty stomach, while 42% of families are skipping at least one meal. Consequently, a social security plan is essential to cushion people from the shocks. He also pointed out that the country must make the best possible use of finite resources. At present, the expenditure for the military far exceeded the combined budget for health and education. Corruption was another major issue with people being arrested for small bribes while large bribe takers are ignored. Prof. Charitha Herath focused on reforms for the state enterprise sector. He pointed out that some believe that the country’s development

relates to growth, but distribution is also important to ensure an equitable solution for all. He noted that there are 40 state enterprises, 214 enterprises and 125 corporations under government purview.

He pointed out the President has stated that he believes the government should move more away from commercial activities and take more of a commercial role. However, it is important that the President should get a mandate from the people for the same.

Prof. Nalaka Godahewa challenged the notion that things had returned to normal, just because there were no power cuts and fuel queues. Electricity bills have risen by up to 300 times, while fuel has gone up by up to 70% leading people to reduce what they consume drastically. The GDP shrank by 8% last year and 11.5% in the first quarter of this year. Although the government had increased revenue by hiking taxes, it has failed to increase GDP while import restrictions have caused many people to lose their livelihoods. The increases in interest rates have wiped out many small and medium sized businesses. The government claims that high interest rates are to limit inflation by controlling money circulation, but the printing of money has the opposite effect. Prof. Godahewa further stated that rapid reforms are vital for the three revenue collecting institutes i.e. excise department, customs and income tax department, but none have been

implemented. Prof. Godahewa observed that the main problems in the country were corruption, wastage, inefficiency, lack of vision and poor planning. The speeches were followed by an interesting question and answer session, moderated by Past President Prof. Lakshman Watawala.

## Seminar on “Role of Domestic Aviation in Sri Lankan Tourism”

The Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA)

Panel Discussion on  
**“The Role of Domestic Aviation in Sri Lankan Tourism”**  
 Organised by the National Issues Committee of the OPA

**Speakers:**

- Capt. Amal Wahid, General Manager, Senok Aviation (Pvt) Ltd.
- Capt. Lasantha Dahanayake, Director - Flight Operations, Saffron Aviation (Pvt) Ltd.
- Mr. Asitha Ranaweera, Accountable Manager & Deputy Chief Executive, Fits Aviation (Pvt) Ltd.
- Mr. Kasun Abeynayake, Senior Lecturer - Travel & Tourism, William Angliss Institute at SLIIT
- Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera, Attorney - at -Law, President -OPA
- Dr. Sanath Hettige, Chairman - National Issues Committee, Vice President -OPA

**Moderator:** Capt. Gihan Fernando, Member - Executive Council, OPA, Member - The Association of Airline Pilots, Sri Lanka

**27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 6.00p.m.**  
 AT THE AUDITORIUM OF THE OPA

**REGISTER NOW!** [Click Here](#)

275/75, Prof. Stanley Wijesundera Mawatha, Colombo 07  
 Tel : 0112 580 268, Email : opa@lanika@gmail.com

Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake, Attorney - at-law, General Secretary -OPA



A panel discussion on “The role of domestic aviation in Sri Lankan Tourism” organized by the National Issues Committee of the Organisation of Professional Associations was held on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June at the OPA auditorium.

The guest speakers were Capt. Amal Wahid, General Manager – Senok Aviation, Capt. Lasantha Dahanayake, Director Flight Operations – Saffron Aviations, Mr. Asitha Ranaweera, Accountable Manager and Deputy Chief Executive – Fits Aviation, and Mr. Kasun Abeynayake, Senior Lecturer Travel and Tourism- SLIIT.

OPA President Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera noted that the full potential of domestic aviation needed to be harnessed as it was a very important part of the country’s tourism industry. Following an introduction by Executive Council member Capt. Gihan Fernando, the guest speakers addressed the gathering.

Capt. Amal Wahid noted that although the domestic aviation industry thrived in the 1990’s, entering a golden era in 2016-18, it had presently fallen on hard times. The Easter Sunday attacks in 2019 followed by the Covid pandemic gravely affected the industry. Severe over-regulation has also been detrimental to the industry, along with stringent security measures.

Capt. Lasantha Dahanayake echoed the sentiments, pointing out that tourist arrivals had fallen dramatically, gravely affecting the

industry. He cited a 2015 World Bank study, which estimated that domestic passenger numbers could reach 37,000 by 2035. While there was a great deal of potential in domestic aviation, a lot of work needed to be done to reach full capability.

Mr. Asitha Ranaweera expressed confidence that, although the domestic aviation industry is presently shattered, good times were in store. He stressed that all stakeholders, including the government, regulators and operators needed to work together. Presently, it was hard to keep costs down due to international rules being implemented in the domestic industry. He opined that the biggest problem affecting the industry were pilots, engineers and other staff members migrating overseas.

In comparison to destinations such as Singapore and Maldives, Mr. Kasun Abeynayake noted that the domestic aviation industry in Sri Lanka had some way to go despite completing almost 60 years. While Sri Lanka has 5 international airports, domestic aviation accounted for just 10% of travel. Furthermore, there were no waiting areas for domestic passengers while those coming from overseas had to walk a considerable distance and pass several security checks to reach the domestic terminal. There was a need to cater to the high end market, which could be done by providing seamless travel to the resort itself.

An informative question and answer session was moderated by Capt. Gihan Fernando. The evening concluded with a vote of thanks by General Secretary Mr. Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake.

## **BRIEFING OF SECTOR COMMITTEES**

### **National Issues Committee**

The National Issues committee has decided to create a dialogue through seminars and discussions to address a few key topics such as the present energy crisis, dollar crisis, high interest rates, inevitable inflation, and supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with credit lines. As a start, the National Issues committee together with the Seminars and Workshop committee conducted a seminar on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 under the topic of “Power Crisis and Electricity Tariffs” at the OPA auditorium.

In addition, the National Issues committee is working on analysing the need of a strong development bank to support SMEs and has suggested having a media conference in this regard. The National Issues committee also suggested creating a dialogue with professional experts to suggest a new electoral system for Sri Lanka, which supports taking the best representation to the local government and the parliament

## National Security, Law & Order Committee

The committee represented the OPA for a discussion at the Ministry of Justice to discuss issues relating to the proposed anti-corruption bill. The committee presented their observations and concerns on behalf of the OPA.

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### "Inspiring Young Professionals to become successful Entrepreneurs" We need research to be more scientific

The best worldly things have been developed as a result of scientific investigations. Scientific investigation is both research and art. It is also regarded as a systematic effort and a way to gain new knowledge. In other words, it is a careful investigation or enquiry especially, through search, for new facts in any branch. Most human activities are based on intellectual application in the investigation of matters. It is common in medicine, engineering, industrial, social and media. A professional can be a good researcher. Good research is developed according to the ability, dedication and interest of the researcher and the availability of resources. It is more productive if it is focused on novel things to study.

Approach of research can be quantitative as well as qualitative. Though quantitative research is well planned and well executed it is observed that many questionnaires are

hastily and poorly written. It's better to engage in qualitative research rather than poor quantitative research. Some qualitative researchers use quantitative methods, while some quantitative researchers use qualitative methods.

A researcher can take the whole population or part of the population as a sample to study in research. Research is systemic because there is a definite set of procedures and steps which you need to follow and processes which are always done in order to get the most accurate results.

Research topic and the objectives (main and specific) are the main key matters in developing research. A research topic is essentially the specific problem area which requires an investigation. The review of literature is a good mental exercise and helps to find answers for the construction of topic and objectives. Once the topic and objectives of a research have been developed, it should be included in the format of the research proposal.

**Title:** The title should represent the proposed study. It should be short and unnecessary terms should be avoided.

**Background information:** It gives the study a brief introduction about it and the background of the problem and relevance to the proposed study.

**Statement of the problem:** It includes a statement of the general problem which is

being investigated and a statement of the detailed problems such as different variables and their associations.

**Significance of the problem:** The researcher must demonstrate why it is worth the time, effort and expenses required to carry out the proposed research.

**Definitions, assumptions, limitations and delimitations:** It is necessary to define all unusual terms that could be misinterpreted, clearly state the assumptions of the study, conditions beyond the control of researcher that may place restrictions on the conclusion of the study and boundaries of the study.

**Review of related literature:** A summary of the writings of recognized authorities and of previous research must be given.

**Statement of hypothesis / objective:** The research hypothesis which the researcher will try to test.

**Research methods:** It consists of subjects (defines sample and sampling method), procedures (describes in detail what will be done, how it will be done) and data analysis (the method of data analysis)

**Reference/bibliography:** The published sources of information which should be alphabetically listed.

It is easy to produce high quality work by adhering to those steps in proposal writing and researching.

Reference:

<https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/74214/10/12-%20chapter-3.pdf>

**Dr Hathshya M Munasingha**  
**MBBS, MSc, MD (com med)**  
**Consultant Epidemiologist**  
**Epidemiology Unit,**  
**Ministry of Health.**

## PROFESSIONS OF THE OPA

1. Accountancy
2. Architecture
3. Dentistry
4. Engineering
5. Gemmology
6. Law
7. Medicine( Registered under Section 29 of the Medical Ordinance)
8. Librarianship
9. Pedagogy
10. Science
11. Supply Management
12. Surveying
13. Veterinary Science
14. Banking
15. Shipbrokering
16. Economics
17. Pharmacy
18. Chemistry
19. Management
20. Town Planning
21. Computer Science
22. Defence
23. Quantity Surveying
24. Valuation
25. Marketing
26. Nursing
27. Agriculture
28. Hospitality
29. Statistics
30. Maritime
31. Archeology
32. Human Resource Management
33. Aviation
34. Taxation

## Member Associations of the Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka

01	Association of Public Service Engineers	1975
02	Association of Scientific and Technical Workers	1975
03	Bar Association of Sri Lanka	1975
04	Gemologists Association of Sri Lanka	1975
05	Government Medical Officers' Association	1975
06	Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka	1975
07	Sri Lanka Institute of Architects	1975
08	Sri Lanka Library Association	1975
09	Sri Lanka Medical Association	1975
10	The Surveyors' Institute of Sri Lanka	1975
11	Chartered Institute of Management Accountants	1976
12	Institute of Supply and Materials Management	1976
13	Sri Lanka Dental Association	1977
14	Independent Medical Practitioners' Association	1977
15	Institute of Quality and Productivity Management	1977
16	Sri Lanka Veterinary Association	1978
17	Government Dental Surgeons' Association	1978
18	Pharmaceutical Society of Sri Lanka	1979
19	General Dental Practitioners' Association	1980
20	Institute of Chemistry Ceylon	1980
21	Engineers' Guild of Sri Lanka	1981
22	Institute of Chartered Corporate Secretaries of Sri Lanka	1983
23	Institute of Town Planners of Sri Lanka	1985
24	Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Sri Lanka	1986
25	Sri Lanka Economic Association	1988
26	Computer Society of Sri Lanka	1988
27	The Institution of Engineers of Sri Lanka	1992
28	The Institute of Valuers of Sri Lanka	1992
29	The Textile Institute of Sri Lanka	1993
30	Association of Professional Bankers of Sri Lanka	1993
31	The Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers of Sri Lanka	1994
32	Sri Lanka Council of Archaeologists	1996
33	Association of Retired Flag Rank Officers	1998
34	Institute of Quantity Surveyors Sri Lanka	1998
35	Institute of Hospitality	2003
36	Company of Master Mariners of Sri Lanka	2004
37	Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing	2005
38	Graduate Nurses' Foundation of Sri Lanka	2005
39	Sri Lanka Institute of Agriculture	2006
40	Sri Lanka Institute of Taxation	2007
41	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants of Sri Lanka	2007
42	Association of Retired Chiefs of Police	2007
43	Institute of Applied Statistics of Sri Lanka	2007
44	Sri Lanka Institute of Landscape Architects	2013
45	Society of Chief Engineers Marine	2016
46	Institute of Certified Management Accountants of Sri Lanka	2016
47	Society of Structural Engineers of Sri Lanka	2016
48	Chartered Financial Analysts of Sri Lanka	2017
49	Institute of Facilities Management of Sri Lanka	2018
50	The Association of Chartered Insurance Professionals	2018
51	Association of Airline Pilots of Sri Lanka	2019
52	Institute of Physics, Sri Lanka	2020

## Obituaries of OPA Members



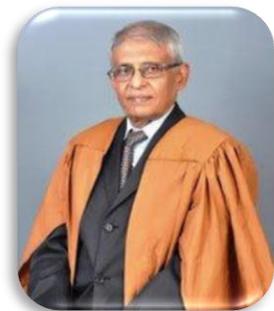
**Dr. Joel Fernando-**  
**Past President**  
**(1995-1996)**



**Dr. Reggie**  
**Gunatileka**  
**Past President**  
**(1995-1996)**



**Vidya Jyothi (Eng.)**  
**Prof. Dayantha**  
**Wijesekera - Former**  
**Senior Member of the**  
**Executive Council of**  
**the OPA**



**Mr. Sarath**  
**Vidanagama -**  
**Former Vice**  
**President & Member**  
**of the Executive**  
**Council of the OPA**



## Office Bearers 2022/23



**Ms. Ruchira Gunasekara**  
President



**Mr. Sarath Gamage**  
President-Elect



**Mr. Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake**  
General Secretary



**Mr. K Baskeran**  
Treasurer



**Mr. Dulitha Perera**  
Imm. Past President



**Eng. Ravi Rupasinghe**  
Vice President



**Mr. Jayantha Gallehewa**  
Vice President



**Eng. Saman Kandanarachchi**  
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**Mr. Tisara De Silva**  
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**Eng. Chamil Edirimuni**  
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**Prof. Indika Karunathilake**  
Vice President



**Dr. Naresha Samarasekara**  
Vice President



**Mr. Nishantha Wickramasinghe**  
Vice President



**Mr. Hennanayake Bandara**  
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**Dr. Priyath De Silva**  
Vice President



**Mr. Athula Haputhanthri**  
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**Dr. Thilina Wanigasekera**  
Editor



**Mrs. Apparajitha Ariyadasa**  
Assistant Secretary



**Dr. Ruwan Rekogama**  
Assistant Secretary



**Mr. Dimuka Hemantha Samarawickrema**  
Assistant Secretary



**Eng. K Ariyawansa**  
Asst. Treasurer



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