



OPA News

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



05

Annual
General
Meeting
of OPA



Developing
& Sustaining
Foreign
Exchange

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Editorial: Professionals Should Come Forward

02



10/04/2022

OPA News

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Cover Page Image: Imalka Weerasundara

Editor's Note



Welcome to the online version of the OPA Newsletter! This is an important platform of communication for the professionals of Sri Lanka. It caters for a total membership of over 60,000 under 52-member associations representing 32 disciplines.

During this very moment, Sri Lanka is going through one of the most decisive moments of the nation's history. As the apex body of Professional Associations, OPA is deeply concerned about the current national catastrophic situation caused by multitude of reasons including errors in decision making, poor leadership, mismanagement, incompetence, and malpractices at all levels. This situation needs immediate, meaningful, and sustainable solutions to avoid this catastrophe escalating into a social, security and humanitarian crisis. It is the responsibility of the professionals to come forward during this hour of need of the nation. The mantra for saving the nation should be meritocracy, transparency, honesty, and pragmatism.

On a more positive note, crisis situations are always opportunities for progress (or regression) depending on how

organizations respond to them. Professional organizations and associations are critical for generating the energy, flow of ideas and proactive work. The advocacy, motivated by moral and ethical principles, attempts to influence policies by interaction with political, professional, economic and social systems, and institutions. There need to be very clear understanding of the dynamics of economic, socio-cultural situation and political complexities. Professional associations should move away from political biases and play a major role in political advocacy.

OPA News will be a powerful platform for the members to share their viewpoints, expertise, and professional experience during this critical period. When greater numbers unite in one voice, stronger and more powerful arguments can be advanced to achieve advocacy outcomes.

As professionals, let us contribute to the best of our capacity in addressing the serious issues faced by the nation during this need of the hour.

Prof. Indika Karunathilake

Editor-in-Chief

Media Statement: OPA proposal on revival from current crisis

The Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka “OPA” , established in 1975, is the umbrella body for 52 Professional Associations representing 32 professions in Sri Lanka. As the apex body of Professional Associations, OPA is deeply concerned about the farfetched national catastrophe caused by multitude of reasons including errors in decision leading to anarchy and indecisiveness. We are equally concerned about the very realistic possibility of this situation escalating into social and humanitarian crisis.

OPA considers duty bound to assist the executive and the legislature with proposals to overcome the current situation. Sri Lanka is in an economic catastrophe and people are demanding the President and all 225 Members of Parliament (MPs) to step down. While this may be the ultimate solution, from practical standpoint, even if the President and 225 MPs step down today, it will take at least 6 months for the country to have fresh elections and elect their new leaders. Besides that, there are roadblocks in the constitution preventing Sri Lanka from having early presidential and parliamentary elections. As a nation, we cannot afford to wait that long

to handle the current economic crisis and it need to be handled immediately.

To stabilize the economy and the administrative system in the country, the OPA hereby proposes solution to address multifaceted issues faced by the country. OPA is of the view, that the executive and legislature encompassing all political parties’ wholehearted support is mandatory if we are to reap maximum benefit of this proposal.

As the general public is rejecting the existing administrative system altogether with the incumbent Cabinet and MPs, fresh appointments are suggested comprising of people with subject matter knowledge based on meritocracy. This Cabinet should be outside of the current MPs and should consist of subject-matter experts. e.g. Ministry of Power should be handled by an expert in power sector and Ministry of Finance should be handled by an expert in finance sector. The constitution does not permit appointing non-MPs as Cabinet Ministers, therefore; first, we need to get such subject-matter experts into the Parliament. OPA proposes that all political parties get their current National List MPs to resign and mutually agreed subject-matter experts to be appointed as new National List MPs. This would pave way for subject-matter



experts to take up appointments as the New Cabinet.

The President should allow the subject-matter experts to take independent decisions in the best interest of the country. Such decisions should not be subjected to revision by the President through his executive power and such decisions of subject-matter experts should be upheld.

As a matter of urgency, the new Cabinet should negotiate with all multilateral financial institutions on debt restructuring and actively get involved in administering day-to-day affairs. While the discussions are on-going with multilateral financial institutions similar process should be followed in restructuring of bilateral borrowings.

Parliamentary and presidential elections shall be held at the earliest possible time according to the constitution, fulfilling peoples' desire of

having a new Parliament and a New President. National lists to be reserved for subject-matter experts in the new Parliament as well.

OPA is currently developing a set of proposals that will assist in resolving multifaceted issues including foreign exchange crisis faced by the country. We intend to submit these proposals to the New Cabinet in due course provide necessary assistance in execution / implementation assistance for proposals of subject-matter experts.



OPA News in General

The 46th Annual General Meeting of the OPA

by Eng. Upali Jayawardena

The 46th Annual General Meeting of the OPA was held on Friday, 07th January 2022. The AGM was presided by the outgoing president, Eng. Shantha Senarath. The incoming president, Mr. Dulitha Perera took the oath of office and became the 41st President of the Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA).



Outgoing President, Eng. Shantha Senarath presenting the President's Medal to Mr. Dulitha Perera, Incoming President

A Chartered Accountant by profession, Mr. Dulitha Perera, served the OPA for many years in numerous capacities including as President Elect, Vice-President, Treasurer and on various standing committees such as National Issues Committee, Development Policies, Strategies & Development Financing Committee, Education and Human Resource Development



Forum members at the AGM

Committee, and Career Guidance & Skills Development Committee and Young Professionals & Outreach Programs Committee, to name a few, where he actively contributed.

In his acceptance speech, as the OPA President, Dulitha Perera solicited support to achieve the objectives of the OPA from the



Mr. Dulitha Perera, Incoming President, Addressing the AGM

newly elected office bearers, past presidents, constituent member associations, life members and members of OPA, to rally around OPA in providing insights and input on matters of national and regional interest and promoting such interest by co-operation with both government and non-governmental organisations.



The new office bearers

Following office bearers were appointed during the AGM.

President



Mr. Dulitha Perera

President Elect



Ms. Ruchira Gunasekera

General Secretary



Eng. Upali Jayawardena

Treasurer

Mr. Bandula Gamarachchi

Immediate Past President

Eng. Shantha Senarath

Vice Presidents

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The AGM was followed by dinner and fellowship.

Meet the Minister Programme

by Eng. Upali Jayawardena



"Meet the Minister" programme is an innovative initiative to discuss national issues with relevant subject ministers and political leaders during a face-to-face meeting and to identify the ways forward.

The first discussion for this year was with Hon. Leader of the Opposition Mr. Sajith Premadasa, and Hon. Member of the Parliament Mr. Eran Wickramaratna. This programme was well attended, physically and well as virtually. There was an extensive discussion on the current political and economic situation of the country.

The second "Meet the Minister" programme for the year was with, Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prof. G.L. Peiris held on 23rd of March 2022, which was well attended.

The main focus of the discussion was the recently concluded UNHRC meeting and Sri Lanka's situation. The Minister explained in detail his stance regarding the issue.



\Workshops and Seminars

Press conference on short and long term proposals of the Development and Sustenance of Foreign Exchange

by Eng. Upali Jayawardena

A press conference was held on 27th January 2022 from 11 a.m. onwards at the OPA. The aim of this was to educate the general public on short and long term proposals of the Development and Sustenance of Foreign Exchange in order to overcome the present foreign exchange related crisis. The proposals made by the Development & Sustenance of Foreign Exchange Committee which were



handed over to the Governor of the Central Bank at the press conference.

One of the short-term initiatives proposed included is to establish credit-lines extending to long years with countries from which major levels of imports are prevalent.

It was proposed that it is necessary to re-negotiate prevailing Free Trade Agreements with neighbouring countries to enhance exports with quota allocations based on increased shipping costs due to issues from

COVID-19 pandemic. It was also proposed to provide short term incentives for exporters holding US\$ funds at banking institutions to release the same,

providing them with an incentive scheme to overcome the current impasse on US \$ limitations.

The government has taken some positive initiatives to diffuse the critical situation, which may be based on the proposed solutions.

This press conference brought much publicity to the OPA through the electronic as well as print media. This included the television channels such as, Siyatha TV, TNL, and print media: Ceylon Today, Daily News, Island and Daily FT. It was well disseminated in the social media including Facebook.

"While we see some of the measures the government has adopted are in the same line of thinking as proposals submitted by OPA, we will continue our efforts to provide our expertise and recommendations"

Dulitha Perera, President, OPA

Hybrid Seminar on “Construction Sector Skills Gap

by Eng. Saman Kandaneerachchi

The seminar on “Construction Sector Skills Gap” was held on the 02nd of March 2022 from 6 p.m. onwards at OPA. The seminar was conducted as a joint activity in collaboration with the Career Guidance and Skills Development Committee. The participants of this hybrid seminar that was hosted at the OPA Auditorium and participants joined via Zoom.

Keynote speaker and session moderator was Prof. Chitra Weddikara. The resource panel constituted of Chairman, Construction Council Dr. Ravihansa Chandratilake, CEO of Survey Research Lanka Ms. Mlhirani Dissanayaka, Director General of TVEC Dr. K.A. Lankadheera, Deputy Director General of TVEC Dr. Janaka Jayalath, Director, (Planning & Research) of TVEC Dr. Ajith Polwatta, Vice President and Chairman - Career Guidance & Skills Development Committee Eng. Ravi Rupasinghe, Vice President and Chairman - Seminar, Workshops & Programmes Committee Eng. Saman Kandaneerachchi.

Seminar on “Is One Country One Law Practical in a Multiple Legal System?”

Seminar on “Is One Country One Law Practical in a Multiple Legal System?” organized by the National Security, Law & Order Committee of the OPA, was held on the

25th of March 2022 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the OPA Auditorium.

The Resource Persons were Attorney-at-Law, Former Adjunct Professor at University of Technology, Jamaica and John F. Kennedy University USA, Prof. Prathiba Mahanamahewa and Attorney-at-Law, Senior Lecturer at Faculty of Law- University of Colombo, Mr. M.A.M. Hakeem. The Seminar was moderated by Attorney-at-Law, and Member of the General Forum of the OPA, Mr. Mass Usuf.

Webinar on Managing Scientific Information Resources for Professional Work

Webinar on Managing Scientific Information Resources for Professional Work jointly organized by the OPA and Sri Lanka Library Association was held on the 29th of March 2022 from 6 p.m. onwards via Zoom. The speaker for this webinar was Senior Assistant Librarian of the Technology Faculty Library of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Dr. S.K. Illangarathne.

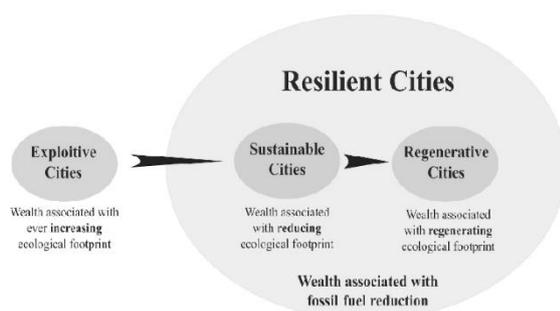
Seminar on “Resilience in Transportation System to Mitigate Current Economic Crisis”

Seminar on “Resilience in Transportation System to Mitigate Current Economic Crisis” jointly organised by the Supply Chain, Logistics and Transport Committee of the OPA and the Institute of Supply & Materials Management (ISMM) was held on the 30th

March 2022 from 6 p.m. onwards at the Auditorium of the OPA.

Senior Prof. Department of Transport and Logistics Management University of Moratuwa Amal S. Kumarage, Research Director of Verité Research, Mrs. Subashini Abeysinghe, Senior lecturer at the Department of Transport and Logistics Management University of Moratuwa Dr. Niles Perera and Immediate Past President of the Institute of Supply and Materials Management Mr. I.G. Perera attended as the members of the resource panel.

Currently the country is experiencing an economic distress due to dwindling of foreign reserves. Transport sector is affected due to fuel shortage and is a direct contributor to this crisis. Road transportation alone attributes to 63% of the petroleum consumption. The sustainable way to reduce the fuel consumption would be to reduce the use of vehicles.



Process of change that has been emerging over the past decade in how we seek to frame the kind of cities we want in the future

Due to this crisis, motorization is likely to slow down in the 21st century. As a nation, it is vital to take steps to ensure resilience of the public

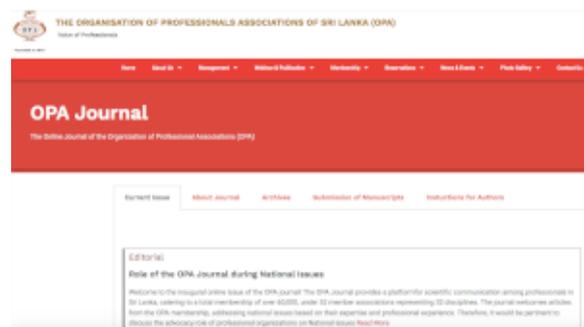
transport sector. People oriented urban development should take the following into consideration:

- Reduce congestion.
- Improve walkability
- Incorporate digital technology to improve and modernize public transport sector.

OPA Journal goes online

by Prof. Indika Karunathilake

The OPA journal will be expanded as a peer-reviewed, open access and indexed journal. As the first step, an online version of the journal will be made available on SLJOL maintained by the National Science Foundation (NSF). This online edition is expected to improve the visibility of the journal with higher reach and will become a main platform in promoting and disseminating the advocacy role of OPA focusing on the national issues. The web page of the journal will be improved according to the international requirements. It was decided to develop journal page including more details regarding articles submission, guide for authors and more visible to the end users.



Hybrid Seminar on Electronic Governance: What? Why? & How

Hybrid Seminar on “Electronic Governance: What? Why? & How” was held on 31st of March 2022 at the OPA Auditorium and broadcast via Zoom.

The speakers of this seminar were former Secretary to the Ministry of Telecommunication & Digital Infrastructure, Mr. Wasantha Deshapriya Chairman of the Institution of Engineering & Technology (IET) Sri Lanka Network, Senior Lecturer Department of Computer Science and Engineering University of Moratuwa, Dr. (Eng.) Lalith Liyanage, Eng. (Dr.) Chathura R. De Silva, Vice President OPA Chairman, Career Guidance & Skills Development Committee Eng. Ravi Rupasinghe.

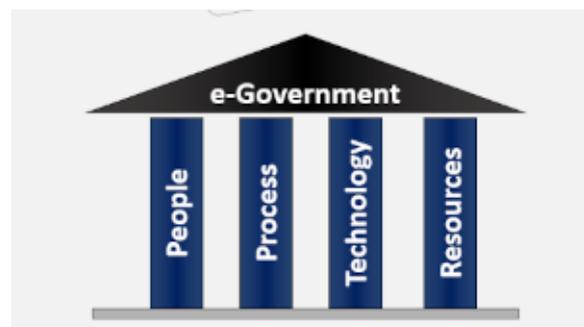
Dr. (Eng.) Lalith Liyanage in his presentation elaborated on the definition and nomenclature of e-government, common misconceptions, and principles of e-governance.

"It is the transformation of government to provide efficient, convenient & transparent services to the citizens and businesses through Information & Communication Technologies"

The pillars of e-governance are the people, processes, technology and resources. Some of the challenges to establish e-governance are the budget constraints, lack of political will,

poor legal frameworks and un-readiness of infrastructure. There are several benefits of e-governance: cost effective, time saving, removal of corruption and ease of access to information etc. however transformation is required after analysis of existing systems and re-engineering processes and develop new workflows. E-participation index value is 0.7143, compared to the sub-region leader India's 0.8571.

Mr. Wasantha Deshapriya spoke on the success and failure factors of e-governance on national, organizational and project level. At national level, realistic policy, apex body of governance and monitoring & evaluation determines success or failure. At organizational level active participation to achieve government's goals, digitally empowered staff are vital. Issues in e-leadership, organisational e-capability issues and technology related issues were also identified. The next step of transformation is a digital government. The best practices of e-governance in selected countries were discussed.



Articles

Air Safety

Today, air travel is the safest mode of travel in the world. It didn't happen overnight and the main reason for achieving this status was the ability of the industry to learn from mistakes, in a non-punitive environment. By the very definition of an accident, it is an unexpected and unintentional event. The results of all investigations on accidents were published for the benefit of all and were not intended to apportion blame. We in Ceylon/ Sri Lanka have had our share of air accidents. On 15th November 1961, a rainy afternoon in Ratmalana, an Indian Airlines Vickers Viscount aircraft, inbound from Madras (now Chennai) was making an approach to land on Runway 22 (from the Attidiya end). At the controls were two experienced captains. One occupied the captain's left-hand seat while the other occupied the right-hand seat, carrying out the

duties and the functions of the first officer (co-pilot). Although equally experienced, the acting first officer had more experience on Viscounts. The aircraft was only three years old, powered by four Rolls Royce Dart engines. Named after the Dart River and very successful. The flight had 6 crew members and 36 passengers. The registration of the aircraft was VT-DIH. The Viscount was the first turboprop airliner in the world and was popular worldwide. Turbine engines are smooth and do not vibrate like piston engines. Therefore, gave a more comfortable ride to the passengers.

The aircraft was observed to be high on the approach path, probably being pushed by the prevalent north-east monsoon (wind direction is defined from where it blows and not to



where it goes). The projected touchdown point was about one third of the way into the runway. Normally, the pilots aim to land about 1000 feet beyond the runway threshold. Some eyewitnesses said that it was raining heavily. Suddenly, at a very low altitude, the co-pilot in the right-hand seat, who was more experienced on the type, initiated go around action, by opening up the throttles and selecting the landing gear (wheels) up without informing the captain. Unfortunately, at this occasion the other pilot (LH seat) was intent on landing. The turbine engines have a lag between throttle and power known as the 'spooling up time'. There is also a drag created by the gear doors opening up to receive the retracting wheels. As a result, momentum, drag and slow engines, the aircraft continued its descent and landed on its belly. The large propellers touched the ground and the aircraft veered to the left, out of control, all the way towards the New Airport

Road and smashed through the fence. The aircraft was badly damaged by the concrete fence posts and hit the Bata board, coming to rest across the airport road, facing Attidiya again. Fortunately, there was no resulting fire.

None of the 42 occupants were injured. The aircraft was damaged beyond repair and subsequently scrapped. The official International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) accident report stated that the pilot in the right-hand seat (First Officer) had interfered with the controls without instructions from the captain. The actions of the co-pilot, however well-meant was both "unauthorised and unwarranted". Obviously there had been a huge communication gap between the two pilots.

It took many more high-profile air accidents all over the world, for the safety experts to acknowledge that there were serious behavioural problems among cockpit crew



members that need to be addressed including the "Intra Cockpit Authority Gradient" between Captains and Co-pilots.

The first person to identify these "Human Factors" in aircraft accidents was a Ceylon born, WWII pilot, David Beaty, who flew for BOAC as a Captain and then qualified in Psychology at Oxford. When he propounded his theories for causation of air accidents and that there was a "cause behind the cause" of accidents, many, especially the airline pilots didn't like their human problems going public, as at that time they were considered to be "supermen" and thought to be infallible. David Beaty was a prolific writer of airline stories. "The Cone of Silence", "The Heart of the Storm", "The Naked Pilot" and "The Temple Tree" were some of his many books. Now there are other researchers like Roger Green, Mica Ensley, Prof. Tony Kern and Prof. James Reason to name a few, who are continuing the studies to reduce air accidents and improve air safety. Essentially, while equipment is getting more and more reliable the human element is still in the Stone Age. As they say a chain is as strong as its weakest link.

The time we were flying school trainees, in the late sixties the best place to buy aviation related books was at K.V.G. de Silva & Sons at the YMBA, Fort. We didn't have Amazon.com then. Whenever we visited the Directorate of Civil Aviation, at Lotus Road, Fort, we never failed to drop in at the McCollum's book

Depot to pick up the latest Air Progress Magazine (Rs.10/-) and then before taking the bus home, check K.V.G. de Silva & Sons out. Here is the strangest part. The gentleman in charge was Mr. K.V.N. de Silva and had been a passenger in that Indian Airlines Viscount flight in November 1961 and lived to tell the tale. He could exercise his discretion on what books to order. That was how we could pick up interesting books pertaining to aircraft accidents. In fact, I picked up a copy of the "Human Factors in Aircraft Accidents" by David Beaty from there (didn't know the Ceylonese connection then).

That sparked my initial interest in human factors in aircraft accidents. Now, after over fifty years in the aviation industry, organizing the first ever Crew Resource Management workshop (CRM) in Air Lanka, being trained as a CRM Facilitator in Singapore Airlines, serving in the Air Accident Investigation Panel in the Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka (CAASL) and serving as a Designated Flight Operations Inspector at the CAASL, I think I am qualified to comment on the Viscount crash at Ratmalana occurred on 15th November 1961, as we now have established many procedures, checklists and alternative positive behaviours which are in common place and are taken for granted by all and sundry in the industry. All reforms were made after blood was spilt somewhere.

So, let us start from the beginning. Was it a good idea to have two equally experienced

Captains in the flight deck on a scheduled flight? Unless the person on the left seat was undergoing training or was under supervision for a routine check flight, it is not a good idea. During a training or check flight, the Instructor Captain sits on the right and is designated officially as Captain of the flight. There can be only one captain. There are pre-flight briefings now in place to remove any ambiguity as to who is in authority. In most airlines, unless they are trained to fly from the right seat the captains are prohibited from handling the controls from an unfamiliar (right hand) seat. There is something now identified by the safety experts as "Intra Cockpit Authority Gradient". Having similar experience (11,000 plus hours each) the authority gradient would have been flat. The co-pilot, having more experience on the type (Viscounts) than the captain, the perceived authority gradient would have even gone the other way and given a sense of greater authority to the co-pilot. That is where the designated captain sets the tone at the pre-flight briefing, by saying something like "If you see something unsafe happening, please say it out loud, even at the risk of being embarrassed". Believe me it works!

Then there is something called the "Support Process" which is now becoming a standard airline practice. Only one pilot should handle the aircraft at all times. He shall be called the "Flying Pilot". The non-flying pilot, now called the "Monitoring Pilot" should in the case of an

undesired situation, like what happened in the Ratmalana accident, where the aircraft ended up high on the final approach, should verbally show his concern. If no corrective action is taken by the "Flying Pilot", then the monitoring pilot should suggest a solution. For instance, when the aircraft was observed to be high on approach, he could come up with a solution statement "Shall we extend our landing gear?" or "Shall we apply more flap?". Both these actions create more drag and help the aircraft to get down quickly. If the flying pilot does not give a rational answer or does not respond, the monitoring pilot is expected to use the flying pilot's rank and name and say "Capt....., you have to go around" with a sense of urgency. If this does not trigger the flying pilot into action, then the monitoring pilot assumes that the flying pilot is incapacitated and takes over control. In case the monitoring pilot takes over control, he is supposed to announce, "I have control" and the former flying pilot acknowledges that by saying "You have control" as to whether it was mutiny or self-preservation could be sorted out later on ground. In this case, the two captains were well experienced and could have easily noticed that an undesirable situation was building up. The "Support Process" could have helped.

In the present day, in case of a go around (aborted landing), the flying pilot has to wait for a positive climb indicated on the altimeter before calling for the monitoring pilot to select the landing gear up. The monitoring pilot will

confirm a “positive climb” and then select the gear up. That was introduced to the procedures later (in the seventies), to prevent accidents such as this. If the wheels were still down when the aircraft touched down, it would have been a non-event. Since the aircraft had full power, it would have bounced back into the air and prevented a belly landing and when it climbed out safely, the gear could have been retracted. A matter of the team getting the sequence right. The pilots now have to demonstrate this drill every six months in the simulator, to a CAASL designated examiner, over and over again.

Unlike other conventional aircraft, where the lever to raise and lower the landing gear, is situated in the forward instrument panel, the Vickers Viscount had an electric switch in the centre pedestal. The flying pilot couldn't have observed the monitoring pilot, interfering with the undercarriage, even with his peripheral vision, until it was too late. That could have some implications too. The switch design should be error proof. Usually, the aircraft would have had a geometric or electric lock to prevent the gear being retracted once the aircraft is firmly on ground. The aircraft would have been still in the air when the "Gear up" button was pushed by the co-pilot. Now by regulation, all air crew must undergo Crew Resource Management (CRM), sometimes known as Team Resource Management (TRM) training once in two years. The studies involve New Accidents/ Incidents, Communication

Skills, Team Building, Briefing techniques, Use of Checklists, Situational Awareness, Automatic Flight, Personality Types and Conflict Resolution among other interesting topics.

The aircraft crashed through a perimeter barbed wire fence with concrete posts which ripped the wings and the fuselage and wrote off the aircraft. The same type of perimeter fences is still there at Ratmalana. The recommendations contained in the Annex 14 to the ICAO Convention is to have all perimeter fencing to be frangible (Breaking on impact) have been ignored. There are also other obstacles such as metal security watch towers and mounds of earth on either side of the runway, within the perimeter of the airport, introduced by the SLAF during the almost thirty-year war. There is also a hazardous concrete wall at the Galle Road end of the runway.

For certain, if the pilots were aware of what the airline pilots know today, this accident need not have happened.

Capt. G. A. Fernando, Former Member,
Accident Investigation team CAASL

gafplane@sltnet.lk

News on OPA Member Association

CSSL Launches 40th Anniversary edition of National Information Technology Conference (NITC) 2022

By Dr. Damith Hettihewa

Computer Society of Sri Lanka (CSSL) launched the 40th Anniversary edition of the National Information Technology Conference (NITC), themed "Digitally Enriching Lives", on Monday 07th February 2022, at a Press Conference held at OPA Auditorium 275/75, Prof. Stanley Wijesundera Mawatha, Colombo 7. NITC is the Sri Lanka's flagship ICT Conference organized by the Computer Society of Sri Lanka (CSSL) and will be held on 12th and 13th October 2022 at Shangri-La Hotel, 1 Galle Face, Colombo 2.

This year's National IT Conference theme, "Digitally Enriching Lives" reflects on the government's vision on enriching citizen's lives through digital transformation. At CSSL, we welcome the government of Sri Lanka placing a high priority for technology by creating Ministry of Technology and State Ministry of Digital Technology and Enterprise Development. CSSL would like to emphasize the need for Sri Lankan ICT professionals to play the catalyst role in enriching citizen's lives through digital technologies. 'CSSL strives to take the message on the importance of rapid digital transformation and

technology adaptation in order to enrich lives of Sri Lankan citizens to the policy makers and the general public leveraging National Information Technology Conference (NITC) as a platform', said Damith Hettihewa, President of Computer Society of Sri Lanka.

We are in an era of a digital revolution. During and the post pandemic period, digital acceleration will create new wealthy nations. If Sri Lanka is to leverage COVID-19 pandemic and associated digital acceleration across the world to an opportunity to become a wealthy nation, technology diffusion and early adapting of frontier technologies such as

"At this year's conference, our ICT fraternity will deliberate these aspects along with several global experts on these topics over a period of two days"

Damith Hettihewa

Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Augmented Reality, Internet of Things, Robotic Process Automation and Integration, Big Data and Real Time Analytics, Cloud Computing, Blockchain & Crypto Currencies is imperative. Our country needs to accelerate, R&D, policy formation, and legal enactments

to adopt and leverage frontier technologies in the vital sectors of the economy.

NITC 2022- Digitally Enriching Lives will have 5 key elements. NITC Conference, CSSL Awards, CSSL Colloquium, CSSL CEO Conclave and Digital Investment Summit. NITC 2022 conference will feature 3 tracks and will have 30+ local and foreign high-profile speakers and a series of prior events. To mark the commencement, the 40th Anniversary NITC launch keynote on the topic Enriching Lives Beyond 4.0 was delivered by Prof. Siegfried Zurn, Director International Centre and Graduate School, University of Applied Sciences, Esslingen, Germany at the OPA auditorium in a hybrid mode.

NITC 2022 will be held under the state patronage and will be supported by the Ministry of Technology, State Ministry of Digital Technology and Enterprise Development. Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) of

Sri Lanka will be the National Partner of NITC 2022.

SLT Mobitel partnered NITC 2021 as the Platinum sponsor and Facebook partnered with CSSL Colloquium of the National IT Conference to support CSSL's efforts, in furthering research, innovation and digital literacy in Sri Lanka. Huawei Sri Lanka partnered as the Gold sponsor and Axiata Digital Labs partnered as the Silver sponsor. Independent Television Network (ITN) was the electronic media partner and Wijeya Newspapers was the print media partner of the 2021 event.

All NITC 2021 sponsors have expressed their willingness towards sponsoring the 40th Anniversary Conference.

The Computer Society of Sri Lanka (CSSL), which was established in 1976, is the apex body representing Information and Communications Technology (ICT) professionals in Sri Lanka. The CSSL is a member of the Southeast Asia Regional



Computer Confederation (SEARCC) and the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP). Locally, CSSL is a member of the Organization for Professional Associations (OPA). CSSL is a provisional signatory of Seoul Accord, the international accreditation agreement for professional computing and information technology degrees through which CSSL brings international standards on ICT related degrees to Sri Lanka.

CSSL Conducts Degree Accreditation Awareness Program for Universities

Computer Society of Sri Lanka (CSSL) recently conducted an awareness session on the Seoul Accord Computing Degree accreditation process for universities and higher educational institutes offering computing and IT degrees. Several universities including University of Moratuwa and University of Sri Jayewardenepura who are planning to achieve Seoul Accord accreditation participated in the session.

Chairman of Computer Society of Sri Lanka Accreditation Board (CSSLAB) Prof. Gihan Dias, Consultant of CSSLAB Prof. Indra Dayawansa, President of CSSL Mr. Damith Hettihewa, Project Chair of CSSL Accreditation Program and Vice President of CSSL Dr. Ajantha Atukorale, Secretary to the CSSLAB and CSSL Past President Mr. Chrishantha Silva participated as speakers of the event. They outlined the benefits and provided

comprehensive details of the accreditation process for a globally recognized accredited Computer and IT degree program.

Accredited degree programs provide students with the assurance that their degree is recognized and market-relevant in key international markets such as USA, UK, Canada, and Australia etc. and valuable to the graduates who are seeking career opportunities in global IT industry.

The Seoul Accord is an international agreement for accreditation of computing degrees in its signatory countries. Established in 2008, the signatories include Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, the United States among several other countries. CSSL is the sole entity representing Sri Lanka at the Seoul Accord.

Computer Society of Sri Lanka commenced accreditation activities in 2018. CSSL is a provisional member of the Seoul Accord since then. CSSL Accreditation Board manages the independent computing degree accreditation body for the Sri Lankan IT industry. CSSL is dedicated to improving professional standards in Information and Communication Technology sector. It promotes professionalism and foster maintaining highest professional standards among the Information and Communication Technology fraternity.

SLIA Blood Drive 2021

By Archt. Dilummini De Mel

COVID-19 pandemic has eventually attacked all of us in various ways, so as the cancer patients in Maharagama Apeksha Hospital. The cancer patients are in need of blood for their treatments in large quantities on daily basis. But, due to the prevailing pandemic situation and due to the smaller number of blood donation camps organized in the country, the blood banks are running out of blood stocks. Therefore, as an act of kindness to support the Apeksha Hospital, the Disaster Assistance Unit of Sri Lanka Institute of Architects (SLIA-DAU) organized a Blood

pointing the finger, ruminating on Donation Camp on 29th October 2021 at the SLIA Lobby from 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. The event was organized adhering to the strict health guidelines, with the permission of divisional PHIs and doctors and was limited only for the SLIA membership with pre-allocated time slots for the donations. With the participation of approximately 35-40 members, the event was concluded successfully, and Apeksha Hospital extended their gratitude towards the SLIA for the worthy course organized.

Light Reflections

By Mr. Chandra Maliyadde, Vice President, Sri Lanka Economic Association

I can remember as a child watching a Sinhala Film titled "Adata Wada Heta Hondai" (Tomorrow is better than today). I cannot remember the story but never can forget the title. Because it represents the nature of the thinking of an island nation called Sri Lankans. We, Sri Lankans are "wishful thinkers" .

Making wishful thinking trigger of a familiar chain of events, conducting postmortem, sharing and transmitting news and information with an added pinch of salt, making oneself absolved, finding a scapegoat,

what could have been done and what was not done. The cycle repeats.

During every crisis, many committees are appointed in rush. But nothing concrete found. Instead, many instant spokesmen come out and issue statements contradicting each other.

We had a series of opportunities since independence. Each time we made convincing statements of seizing the opportunities and we ended up losing, nevertheless. Hope the current crisis situation will not be another lost opportunity.

Member Achievements

70th SAFA Board Meeting

The 70th South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA) board meeting and induction of the SAFA President for the year 2022 was held recently, hosted by the Institute of Certified Management Accountants of Sri Lanka (CMA), supported by the SAFA Secretariat, at Taj Samudra, Colombo.

SAFA outgoing president A.K.M. Delwer Hussain inducted H.M. Hennayaka Bandara, from CMA Sri Lanka, as President SAFA for the year 2022. The SAFA was formed in the year 1984 to serve the accountancy profession in the South Asian region and Prof. Lakshman R.

Watawala was a founder signatory to the formation of the SAFA as the President CA Sri Lanka. This is a historic occasion for the CMA Sri Lanka to be elected to the high office of the presidency of the SAFA for the first time since admission to membership in 2010.

Some of the members present physically included CMA Sri Lanka President and SAFA Past President Prof. Lakshman R. Watawala, presidents and representatives from CA Sri Lanka, ICMA Bangladesh, CA Nepal, past SAFA presidents, along with CMA Council members.

Central Bank Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal, a past president of the SAFA, delivered his



70th SAFA Board Meeting, 94th Assembly and Strategy Meeting

congratulatory remarks on behalf of the Sri Lankan past presidents of the SAFA.

Institute of Chartered Accountants of India President Nihar N. Jambusaria was elected as Vice President of the SAFA. The board members and presidents from the SAFA Chartered and Management Accounting member bodies gave their congratulatory remarks.

"The SAFA as an IFAC Network Partner has been playing a very important role for the harmonisation of professional standards in the areas of accounting, auditing, ethics and education."

Hennayaka Bandara

Bandara's contribution to the field of professional education counts more than two decades in various capacities. He is a fellow (FCMA) and Founder Member of CMA Sri Lanka and joined the council in 2012. He has been associated with the SAFA since 2005. He also had the opportunity of working very closely with all Sri Lankan past presidents of the SAFA.

Bandara is a past president of the Association of Accounting Technicians of Sri Lanka (AATSL), past president of Association of Professional Bankers Sri Lanka (APBSL), Treasurer, Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka and Council Member of Sri Lanka Institute of Advance Technological

Education. He was a general manager/CEO of National Savings Bank.

The new president stated that as influential professional bodies in the South Asian region, they are in the unique position to add value to businesses and the economy by assisting our nations in this task by creating agile SME entrepreneurs, who can scale up and be globally recognised businesses.

He also thanked all past presidents, who participated and all the presidents and board members of the SAFA for their valuable contributions made for the development of the accounting profession in the region during the last 38 years.

It was decided to hold the next SAFA board meeting in Nepal in the fourth week of January, when the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nepal will be celebrating its silver jubilee and was one of the first projects undertaken by the SAFA in 1984 to assist in the setting up of the professional accounting body in Nepal. Thereafter, the SAFA assisted in the setting up of the professional accounting bodies in the Maldives and Afghanistan.

3rd Biennial Academic Sessions 2022 and 18th Annual General Meeting of GNFSL

By Dr. K.A. Sriyani

The 3rd Biennial Academic Sessions-2022 of Graduate Nurses' Foundation of Sri Lanka (GNFSL) was held as a virtual conference on 12th February 2022 aligning with the theme "Advancement of Nursing Practice through Evidence-based Research" . Mr. Dulitha Perera, the President of OPA graced the occasion as the Chief-Guest.

The keynote speech was delivered by the University of Colombo, Faculty of Nursing Dean, Prof. S. S. P. Warnakulasuriya. Two parallel technical sessions were conducted to share research findings and insights of nurse researchers.

As a special event of the conference, Dr. K. A. Sriyani, Conference Chairperson of the 3rd Biennial Academic Sessions and the president of GNFSL launched the official website of GNFSL (<https://gnfsl.lk/>).

The academic sessions were followed by the 18th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of GNFSL. Office bearers and executive committee members for the session 2022/2023 of GNFSL were appointed during the AGM.

Obituaries of OPA Members

Mr. Nihal Serasinghe



Senior Attorney at law, former vice president and long standing executive committee member of the OPA, passed away on 5th March 2022. A private

funeral was held on 6th March 2022 according to his wishes.

Mr. W.B.A. Jayasekera



Past president and a founder member passed away 18th March, 2022. The funeral was held on the same day at the Borella cemetery. Several past presidents, office bearers

and senior OPA members attended the funeral.

Eng. Upali Delpachithra



Senior civil engineer and senior forum member of OPA, passed away on 8th March 2022. A private funeral was held according to his wishes.

April is one of the most important months for all Sri Lankans, with Sinhala and Tamil New Year, Easter and Ramadan coming together. According to Sri Lankan cultural beliefs, the long, repetitive, musical sound of the Koel brings the news of New Year arriving. During a period of uncertainty, the message of hope becomes even more significant.





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