

# NEWSLETTER

University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Volume 07 | Issue 01 | January - April 2021



University of Sri Jayewardenepura

**Editors-in-Chief**

Dr. (Mrs.) Chitra Jayathilake  
Dr. (Mrs.) Nayana Wijayasundara

**Editorial Board**

Senior Prof. R.M.S. Chandrasena  
Prof. S.T.W.S. Yapa  
Prof. Praneeth Abhayasundara  
Prof. T.S.M. Amarasena  
Dr. (Ms.) Lishanthi Wijewardene  
Dr. (Ms.) Chinthika Gunasekara  
Dr. (Mrs.) Varuni Tennakoon  
Dr. (Ms.) W.A.K.C.P. Warnapala  
Dr. P.C. Kaluthanthri  
Dr. (Mrs.) Nithushi Samaranyake  
Dr. Rajitha Gunaratne  
Dr. (Rev.) Panahaduwe Yasassi Thero  
Dr. Uditha Wijewardhana  
Dr. (Mrs.) Dimuthu S. Manamgoda  
Dr. Laksiri Weerasinghe  
Mr. D.P. Rajapaksha  
Ms. Shehara Ranasinghe  
Ms. S.V.W. Udugahapattuwa  
Mrs. Nishanthi Vidanage

**Technical Assistance:**

Mr. R.M.P.B. Rathnayake

**We acknowledge the University web team:**

Prof. Hiran Amarasekara (Leader)  
Mr. Harsha Munasinghe (Information Systems Manager)  
Mr. D.D.P. Sanjeewa  
Mr. S.M. Vithanage  
Mr. W.G.S.S. Kandambi  
Mr. K.M.T.D. Rakogama

‘Japura Flames’ is acknowledged for some photographs.

**Contact:**

Librarian,  
University of Sri Jayewardenepura,  
Nugegoda, Sri Lanka.  
Tel/Fax: +94 11 2804194  
Web: [www.lib.sjp.ac.lk](http://www.lib.sjp.ac.lk)  
E-mail: [editors.nl@sjp.ac.lk](mailto:editors.nl@sjp.ac.lk)

The newsletter of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura  
“Savidu” is a tri-annual newsletter carrying the vibrant academic,  
cultural and communal life of  
the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

## NEWS

### USJ extends best wishes to Prof. Kiwulegedara Narada Thero for being appointed as the Most Venerable Anu Nayaka: Udarata Amarapura Nikaya

The University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJ) extends its best wishes and respect to Professor Rajakeeya Panditha Kiwulegedara Narada Thero for being appointed as the Most Venerable Anu Nayaka Thero of the Udarata Amarapura Maha Nikaya. The appointment ceremony took place on the 25th of April 2021 at Vidurupola Sri Sumangalarama Maha Viharaya. Ven. Kiwulegedara Narada Thero is a professor at the Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.



### Prof. Janitha Liyanage – an alumna of Faculty of Applied Sciences – appointed as the new VC of Gampaha Wickramarachchi University of Indigenous Medicine

Senior Professor Janitha A. Liyanage – an alumna of the Faculty of Applied Sciences of USJ and the former Vice Chairperson of UGC – assumed duties as the 1st Vice-Chancellor of the 16<sup>th</sup> National University, Gampaha Wickramarachchi University of Indigenous Medicine. The inauguration ceremony took place on 01.03.2021 at the premises of the Gampaha Wickramarachchi University of Indigenous Medicine in Yakkala. The official appointment ceremony was held on 4th March under the patronage of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. The event was graced by Hon. Minister of Tourism, Mr. Prasanna Ranathunga; Hon. Minister of Urban Development, Coast Conservation, Waste Disposal and Community Cleanliness, Dr. Nalaka Godahewa; Hon. State Minister of Indigenous Medicine Promotion, Rural and Ayurvedic Hospitals Development and Community Health, Mr. Sisira Jayakody and the University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman, Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunga.

Senior Professor Janitha Liyanage is the wife of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sri



Jayewardenepura, Senior Professor Sudantha Liyanage, and it is for the first time in the history of the Sri Lankan university system that both spouses serve concurrently as Vice-Chancellors in two state universities.

The University of Sri Jayewardenepura congratulates Senior Professor Janitha A. Liyanage on becoming the 1st Vice-Chancellor of the 16<sup>th</sup> national university and wishes her all the best for all her future endeavors.

## Dr. W. G. S. Kelum, Dept. of Accounting appointed as Director, PIM (Postgraduate Institute of Management)

Dr. W. G. S. Kelum, of the Department of Accounting, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, USJ was appointed as the new Director of Postgraduate Institute of Management (PIM) with effect from 8th May 2021 by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

Dr. W. G. S. Kelum completed his education at Royal College, Colombo 7; he completed his M.Sc. in Economics (Specialized in Accounting) (USSR) in 1988 and his Ph.D. (Accounting) (Russia) in 1992. Dr. Kelum joined the Department of Accounting as a Probationary Lecturer in 2001. He is currently working as a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Accounting, University of Sri Jayewardenepura and also as the Director of the World Bank Funded Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development Operation Programme at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. The University of Sri Jayewardenepura congratulates Dr. W. G. S. Kelum and wishes him all the best in all his future endeavour.



## Prof. Shantha Gamage became the President of the Institute of Physics, Sri Lanka (IPSL)



Prof. NGS Shantha Gamage, attached to the Department of Physics, has been elected as the President of the Institute of Physics, Sri Lanka (IPSL) at the 41st annual general meeting held on March 20, 2021, at the Auditorium, Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science, Colombo 07. The Institute of Physics, Sri Lanka is the apex body of physicists in Sri Lanka, and it has been incorporated by an Act of Parliament. Before becoming the president, he served as the Vice President, Secretary of IPSL and Center Coordinator of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura in the Physics Olympiad, Astronomy Olympiad and Junior Science Olympiad competitions conducted by IPSL. In the 41-year history of IPSL, he is the first person to become a president of the association heralding from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

Prof. Gamage is a professor in Physics attached to the Department of Physics, University of Sri Jayewardenepura and has been serving as an academic staff member at the Department of Physics, USJ since 1997. He obtained his Ph.D. and M.Sc. in Geophysics at Tohoku University, Japan under the Japanese Government Scholarship program. He earned his B.Sc. (Special) Degree in Physics from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

Prof. Gamage is a researcher in Geophysics and his current research interests are on Solid-Earth Geophysics, Seismology, Geothermal Energy and Wave propagation. He is a Fellow of IPSL and a member of the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLAAS), Asia Oceania Geosciences Society (AOGS), American Geophysical Union (AGU) and Seismological Society of Japan (SSJ). IPSL is a member of the Organization of Professional Associations (OPA) of Sri Lanka.

## The unveiling ceremony of the statue of the most Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Thero

The Faculty of Technology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, reached a new milestone in the history of the faculty, with the modest ceremony held to unveil the statue of the Most Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Thero. The ceremony took place at the premises of the Faculty of Technology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Pitipana on the 25th of February 2021 adhering to the COVID-19 prevention guidelines.

The ceremony was attended by Rev. Balangoda Sobitha Nayaka Thero, Parivenadipathi, Vidyodaya



Pirivena, Maligakanda; Sr. Prof. Sudantha Liyanage, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura; Prof. Nilmini Liyanage, Dean, Faculty of Technology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura; Emeritus Prof. Sunil Ariyaratne and Deans of the Faculties.

Sr. Prof. Sudantha Liyanage in his welcome address emphasized the historical significance of this milestone and the journey of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura through the vision and

the leadership of the most Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Thero.

Emeritus Prof. Sunil Ariyaratne in his key-note address added to the points expressed by the Vice-Chancellor, expounding on the significance of commemoration and the veneration of the Most Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Thero. Prof. Ariyaratne in his narration of the history of the university and the most venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Thero emphasized the great feats achieved by the Thero and his single-minded efforts to identify Vidyodaya University's future success potentials.



According to Prof. Ariyaratne, the journey of the most venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha and his efforts for the Vidyodaya University was riddled with challenges. Many of his initiatives such as the Department of Education were taken away from the university. Yet amidst these challenges the university prevailed and is now one of the most leading universities in Sri Lanka.

The legacy left by the most Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Thero will forever guide the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

## Felicitations to Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunge and Senior Professor Sudantha Liyanage

"Ashinsana 2020" – a felicitation ceremony organized by the Alumni Association of USJ to felicitate Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunge and Senior Professor Sudantha Liyanage – was held on the 15th of December 2020 at 4.30 pm at Senate Board Room of USJ.

The Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Ven. Dr. Ittapana Dhammalankara Maha Nayake Maha Thero; Honorable Minister of Trade, Dr. Bandula Gunawardene; Chairman of the University Grants Commission, Prof. Sampath Amaratunge; Dr. Sunethrani Amaratunge, Vice-Chancellor of the



University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Prof. Sudantha Liyanage and Vice-Chairperson, University Grants Commission Prof. Janitha Liyanage graced the ceremony as chief guests.



Senior Professor Sunil Ariyaratne, Mr. Nadeeka Guruge, Mr. Saman Lenin, Mr. Nilar N Kasim, members of alumni association of USJ; National Coordinator; Mr. Ranjith Iddamalagoda, Vice President; Dr. Ravi Liyanage, Prof. Wimaladharm Abeyewickreme, Deans, Registrar, Bursar, Librarian, Professors, Heads of Departments, Academic and Non-Academic staff members also took part in the ceremony.

## Ceremonial opening of the Postgraduate Centre for Business Studies

A ceremony to mark the opening of the Postgraduate Centre for Business Studies (PCBS) was held on 17th March 2021 at 8.30 a.m. at the Soratha Building, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

The occasion was graced by Senior Prof. Sudantha Liyanage, Vice-Chancellor, University of Sri Jayewardenepura; Senior Prof. M.M. Pathmalal, Dean – Faculty of Graduate Studies; Prof. P.D. Nimal, Dean – Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce; Prof. S.T.W. Saman Yapa; Board of Study Chairman – Board of Studies in Business Studies; Senior Prof. R.G. Ariyawansa, Board of Study Chairman; Prof. Aruna Shantha Gamage representing all Postgraduate

Coordinators of the Faculty and Prof. Janak Kumarasinghe, Director – Postgraduate Centre for Business Studies. In addition, Professors of the Faculty, Heads of Departments, academic and non-academic staff members participated in the event.



Senior Prof. Sudantha Liyanage, Vice-Chancellor of the University addressed the gathering by highlighting the importance and the responsibility of the University in expanding its Postgraduate studies. The ceremony was brought to a close by Prof. Janak Kumarasinghe, Director – Postgraduate Centre for Business Studies by extending his special thanks to everyone who supported the opening of this Centre and acknowledged the companionship of all the invitees at the event.

## USJ Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation launches OURS: one-stop shop for Sri Lankan made products



OURS Super Center is a one-stop shop for all Sri Lankan made products to promote and develop the local entrepreneurs established under the direction of the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Department of Entrepreneurship, University of Sri Jayewardenepura. OURS Super Center is located at No. 454, High-Level Road, Pannipitiya (Next to Malshan Flora). It's open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

OURS Super Center houses a wide variety of products from Organic and Eco-Products to Optical Services.

## Identification of the new SARS-CoV2 variant in Sri Lanka



The Ministry of Health has been sending samples of SARS-CoV2 patients to the laboratory at the Department of Immunology and Molecular Medicine of Faculty of Medical Sciences of University of Sri Jayewardenepura which has been carrying out sequencing of the

SARS-CoV2 viruses since the onset of the epidemic in Sri Lanka. Several samples from those who came from the UK were sent to the Department of Immunology and Molecular Medicine and the members of the laboratory have identified the new UK SARS-CoV2 variant in one of the samples. This virus variant contains specific strain defining mutations – N501Y, P681H and 69-70del – thus belongs to the Pangolin lineage B.1.1.7.

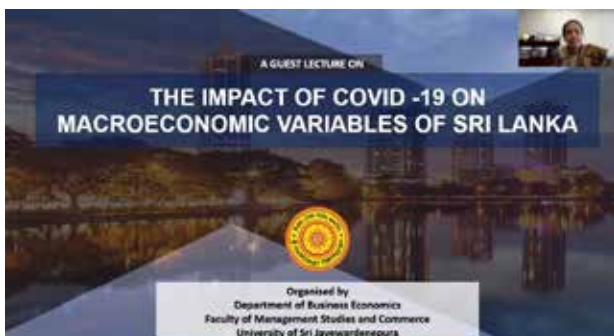
The University of Sri Jayewardenepura is willing to support the Ministry of Health in sequencing the virus variants with the emergence of different types of novel SARS-CoV2 variants from several countries such as South Africa, Malaysia and Japan.

## More infectious and airborne strain of COVID-19 detected in Sri Lanka – Prof. Neelika Malawige

In the backdrop of the massive resurgence of COVID-19 in several parts of the world, a new, more infectious and potent strain of SARS-CoV-2 has been discovered in Sri Lanka. "This variant of coronavirus is more, highly transmissible than all found so far in the island. The new strain is airborne, the droplets can remain airborne for nearly an hour," said Prof. Neelika Malawige, the Head of the Department of Immunology and Molecular Sciences of the Sri Jayewardenepura University.

Advising people to follow the appropriate COVID behavior, the medical experts have warned that the new strain could trigger a third wave of COVID-19 in Sri Lanka in the next two to three weeks. Like India, Sri Lanka is witnessing a massive spike in daily cases. The island nation currently has nearly one hundred thousand COVID-19 cases while more than 600 patients have succumbed to the infection. However, the country's health department has urged its people not to panic but has advised them to strictly follow all necessary COVID-19 protocols like using face masks and practicing social distancing.

## Guest lecture: Impact of COVID-19 on macroeconomic variables in Sri Lanka



Dr. (Ms.) Sujeetha Jegajeevan (Deputy Director, Economic Research Department, Central Bank of Sri Lanka) delivered a guest lecture on 11th February 2021 via Zoom under the theme of 'The impact of COVID-19 on macroeconomic variables in Sri Lanka' for the second-year undergraduates of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce. The Department of Business Economics organized this session with the objective of increasing awareness among the undergraduates on contemporary issues and challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and the role of the government in overcoming those challenges.

## Post-new year season COVID-19 patients show severe symptoms – Dr. Chandima Jeewandara, Medical Faculty, USJ

Dr. Chandima Jeewandara, the Director of the Department of Immunology and Molecular Medicine of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura implied that the COVID-19 patients of the post-new year season are showing severe symptoms as opposed to the patients reported before.

Dr. Jeewandara said, "At present severe complications are being reported among young individuals infected with the virus, and they are being directed to Intensive Care Units as severe disease cases." According to Dr. Jeewandara, it has been observed that the S-Protein which is one of the main genes targets to detect the presence of the COVID-19 virus, cannot be identified in the PCR samples obtained from Colombo and surrounding areas. "We call this condition 'S-gene Target Failure'," elaborated Dr. Jeewandara.

Furthermore, Dr. Jeewandara noted that the new B.1.1.7 variant that spread in the United Kingdom recently was detected following observation of such manner. "As of yet, we do not know what is causing this 'S-gene Target Failure.' We do not know if this is another new variant. When the spread of the virus intensifies, it mutates; such mutations cause various problems. For example, there is a possibility the virus may not answer to the vaccines, it could transmit rapidly or cause severe complications," Dr. Jeewandara further elaborated.





## Foundation stone laying ceremony of the building of the Faculty of Engineering



The ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the building proposed for the newest faculty complex of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, the Faculty of Engineering, was held on 31st of December 2020 at 10.40 a.m. in accordance with health guidelines, and with the participation of the Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Ven. Dr. Ittavana Dhammalankara Maha Nayake Maha Thero; Honorable

Minister of Education, Prof. G.L. Peiris; Honorable Minister of Trade, Dr. Bandula Gunawardene; Chair of the University Grant Commission, Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunge (former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura); Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Prof. Sudantha Liyanage and Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Dr. Chaminda Konthesingha.

In addition, the Registrar of the University, Deans of other Faculties, Heads of Departments and academic and non-academic staff members participated in this auspicious event. The project named "Science and Technology Human Resource Development Project" (Design and construction of building and infrastructure facilities for Faculty of Engineering, USJ) was undertaken by Sanken Construction (Pvt) Ltd. The construction period proposed will be 2 and a half years. The project will be implemented in a 10-acre area with an investment of Rs. 3624.96 million (tax excluded). This event marked another special milestone for the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.



## The inauguration ceremony of the 13<sup>th</sup> intake of the DCBA programme and the 8<sup>th</sup> intake of the ADCBA programme

The inauguration ceremony of the 13<sup>th</sup> intake of the Diploma in Computer-Based Accounting (DCBA) programme and the 8<sup>th</sup> intake of the Advanced Diploma in Computer-Based Accounting (ADCBA) programme which are offered by the Department of Accounting was held at the Accounting Resource Centre (ARC) on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2021 while adhering to health and safety measures indicated in the COVID-19 guidelines. The Programme Coordinators, Deputy Coordinators and the lecturers of both programmes participated in this occasion. 60 students for the DCBA programme and 50 students for the ADCBA programme have been selected and the programmes will be conducted on a virtual platform.

## Inauguration ceremony of the 6<sup>th</sup> intake of Master of Professional Accounting (MPAcc) Programme

The inauguration of the 6th intake of the Master of Professional Accounting (MPAcc) Programme was successfully held on 20th March 2021. The event was held via online adapting to the health guidelines as a result of the current situation in the country due to the pandemic.

Mr. Chandana Ranathunga [CEO, Tokyo Supermix (Pvt) Ltd.] was the keynote speaker for the day. Prof. P.D. Nimal (Dean, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce), Prof. Harendra Kariyawasam (Head, Department of Accounting), Dr. Roshan Ajward (MPAcc Programme Coordinator) and academic staff members embellished this occasion with their participation. The invitees from the industry, alumni members of the Department of Accounting and the students added colour to this ceremony.

## Welcome ceremony & orientation program of the Faculty of Engineering, USJ



A welcome ceremony & orientation program of the Faculty of Engineering was held online on 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2021.

The Faculty of Engineering, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, is the latest addition to the Faculties of Engineering in the state Universities coming under the purview of the University Grants Commission. Established in January 2016, it consists of five Departments of Study with a mandate to offer study programs in Engineering, and in particular an undergraduate study programme in Engineering leading to the award of the degree of the 'Bachelor of the Science of Engineering'.

## Opening ceremony of the OTM Resource Centre

The Operations and Technology Management (OTM) resource centre of the Department of Decision Sciences (funded by the AHEAD department grant) was opened by the Vice-Chancellor, Senior Prof. Sudantha Liyanage at 9.00 a.m. on

27<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Prof. P. D. Nimal, Dean of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, Prof. T. S. M. Amarasena, Head of the Department, academic and non-academic members participated in the opening ceremony. All the academic and non-academic members of the Department are appreciative of the contributions made by various parties to make this a reality.



## The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences launches the first-ever E-banking Student Identity Card

For the first time in the history of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, an E-Banking Student Identity Card was introduced on 12th March 2021 at the Administration Board Room of the University. The event was graced by the Chairman of the People's Bank Mr. Sujeewa Rajapakse; the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Senior Professor Sudantha Liyanage; Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Shirantha Heenkenda; Deputy General Manager, Process Management and Quality Assurance of the People's Bank, Ms. Renuka Jayasinghe; Senior Manager, Ms. W.M.A. Sanjeevani; Deputy Manager Retail Banking, Ms. Nirmani Kaushaly; System Analyst of the People's Bank, Mr. G.P.R. Fernando; The Registrar of the University, Mr. A.B Weliwita; The Senior Assistant Registrar of the Faculty, Ms. Samantha Geeganage and the Senior Assistant Bursar of the Faculty Ms. Lalani Priyanthika.

Understanding the need to digitize banking and other transactions, Professor Shirantha Heenkenda took the initiative to introduce the new system. The merging of the student identity cards and debit cards facilitates

the undergraduates to engage in a range of online banking activities such as cash withdrawals, cash transfers, purchases and to check the status of the bursary and the Mahapola grant.

Senior Professor Sudantha Liyanage highlighted in his speech that this exemplary initiative needs to be implemented by the other faculties as well, extending to all the internal, external, and postgraduate students of the university. Addressing the gathering, Mr. Sujeewa Rajapakse, the Chairman of the People's Bank denoted that this productive collaboration between two of the largest government institutions stands as a significant moment in the history of the University and the People's Bank. He further stated that the People's Bank would continue to work together with the university, broadening banking facilities to the student community in the university.

During the event, the E-Banking Student Identity Card was symbolically presented to Ms. Yuganthi Ranshani, a first-year undergraduate by the Dean of the FHSS in the presence of other dignitaries of the event.



## FMSC Students' Orientation Programme 2019/2020

The Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce virtually conducted the students' orientation programme for the 2019/2020 batch from 17th to 19th March 2021, being the first management faculty to commence the new academic year amidst the pandemic situation.

The inauguration ceremony of the programme took place on 17th March 2021 with the participation of Senior Prof. Sudantha Liyanage (Vice-Chancellor), Prof. P.D. Nimal (Dean, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce), and members of the academic and non-academic staff, followed by a pragmatic session conducted by the senior academics of the Faculty to make the undergraduates aware of the virtual learning environment.



During the two days, undergraduates engaged in a number of inspiring informative sessions conducted by senior academics of the Faculty. In addition, Mr. Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne, a prominent faculty alumnus delivered a motivational speech to inspire the undergraduates to achieve the best in their university life. Also, the supportive services and programmes, namely the student support services, welfare facilities, disciplinary procedures, sports and physical education opportunities, library facilities, and student career guidance services were introduced by the respective units to familiarize undergraduates with university life.

The programme successfully concluded with a talent show and a cultural flare creating a platform for the new 2019/2020 batch to display their aesthetic talents with senior students and prominent Sri Lankan artistes.

## Orientation programme for the first-year students of the Department of Public Administration

The orientation programme for the first-year students of the Department of Public Administration was successfully held on 21st April 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic health restrictions, the orientation programme was conducted virtually via Zoom. The objectives of the session were to welcome the new students to the Department and to raise their awareness about the Department, degree programme and the academic staff members of the Department.



## USJ wins awards at Best Annual Report and Accounts Competition 2018

The University of Sri Jayewardenepura has emerged as the 1st runner up in the University Sector and 2nd Runner up in the Public Sector at the Best Annual Report and Accounts Competition for the year 2018.

The awards ceremony was held on 22nd February, 2021 at 3 p.m. at the BMICH. The awards were received by the Registrar, Mr A. B. Weliwita; the Bursar, Ms. K. T. C. Priyangani and the Deputy Bursar, Ms. J. T. L. Dharmasena.

Best Annual Report and Accounts Competition for the year 2018 is a competition organized by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka (CA) and the Association of Public Finance Accountants of Sri Lanka (APFA).



## Inaugural programme of the Diploma in Public Management - 17<sup>th</sup> Intake

The Department of Public Administration hosted the virtual inaugural session for its 17<sup>th</sup> intake of the Diploma in Public Management on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Sr. Prof. Sudantha Liyanage, the Vice-Chancellor, Dean of the Faculty, and Head of the Department addressed the new students. The keynote address on 'Emerging trends in public management' was delivered by Mr. G.P. Saputhanthri, Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Market Diversification.

## Guest lecture on macroeconomic fundamentals and the Central Bank's economic and price stability goal

The Department of Business Economics successfully organized a guest lecture on the topic 'The nexus between macroeconomic fundamentals and the Central Bank's economic and price stability goal' for the second-year undergraduates of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce. The lecture was delivered by Dr. W.A. Wijewardena (Former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka) on 4th March 2021 via Zoom. This was organized in order to broaden the understanding among the undergraduates on the interaction between macroeconomics concepts and the Central Bank's objective of economic and price stability.



## Launching of the Digital Wall at the main library

The Digital Wall facility was launched at the library, the University of Sri Jayewardenepura on 5th April 2021, in collaboration with the British Council, Sri Lanka. The event was graced by Prof. Sudantha Liyanage, the Vice-Chancellor and Ms. Maarya Rehman, Country Director, British Council Sri Lanka, together with the academic, administrative, and non-academic staff of the university. The established Digital Wall facility enables the USJ community to scan QR codes and download the available books, podcasts, and reports on the UK content. This facility will transform the university library services to be on a par with the international library experience.



## The inaugural ceremony of Postgraduate Programmes - MPM and MPPM (2<sup>nd</sup> Intake)

The inaugural ceremony of the two postgraduate programmes of the second intake, Master of Science in Public Policy and Management and Master of Public Management Program was held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2021 via the Zoom platform and physically at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Mr. R. H. S. Samaratunga, Former Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Treasury, Sri Lanka delivered the keynote speech. The



Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, the Dean of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Head of the Department of Public Administration, Coordinator of the Master of Science in Public Policy and Management and Coordinator of the Master of Public Management addressed the gathering.

## Opening ceremony of External Degrees and Extension Courses Unit at Ellawala Building

The opening ceremony of the new building of the External Degrees and Extension Courses Unit at Ellawala Building was held on 04th of January 2021 at 9.45 am. Honorable Maha Sangha, the Vice-Chancellor of University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Senior Prof. Sudantha Liyanage, Deans of the faculties, Heads of departments, Registrar of the University, academic and non-academic staff members participated in the ceremony.



## The Faculty of Allied Health Sciences expands its wings

The Faculty of Allied Health Sciences (FAHS) recently expanded its wings to the 'Saagra building' located in close proximity to the university. The building accommodates the Dean's office, the newly established Department of Basic Sciences and the Department of Optometry through which a new degree will be offered by the Faculty in 2022. The opening ceremony was held on 1st February 2021 at 9.30 am at the Saagra building. The occasion was graced by the Senior Prof. Sudantha Liyanage; Vice-Chancellor, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Prof. P.D. Nimal; Dean, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, Senior Prof. Aloka Pathirana; Dean, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Prof. Shirantha Heenkenda; Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Registrar and Bursar of the University. In addition, Heads of departments, academic and non-academic staff members of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences participated in the event.

The administrative and finance sections, including the Dean's office and the Department of Basic Sciences, are housed in the Saagra building. It is a three-storied building where there are lecture halls, laboratories and staff rooms for the Department of Basic Sciences. In addition, the Examination unit of FAHS will be housed in this building.



## A timely innovation from Dr. Ranga Dissanayake, FAHS

Dr. Ranga Dissanayake, Senior Lecturer from the Department of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, FAHS, USJ, together with Dr. Prasanga Manthilake, University of Peradeniya developed an eco-friendly, long-lasting, organic-based sanitizer/ disinfectant, which is a timely need during this COVID-19 pandemic. The innovative attribute in this sanitizer is its 'long lasting nature' says Dr. Dissanayake which, he explains, could be used for an array of external surfaces for long-lasting disinfection. The product was introduced to the Minister of Environment, Mr. Mahinda Amaraweera on 15th December 2020. Dr. Dissanayake won a merit award for this innovation at the recently held 'Young Innovators Award in Health Sciences' hosted by the FAHS.



## Ongoing staff development workshops by the FAHS

The Staff Development Committee (SDC) of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences organized a workshop on abstract writing for academic members of the faculty. This was one of many other events organized by the SDC to develop staff members of FAHS. This half-day workshop was held on 6th April 2021 and was conducted by Dr. Anuruddha M. Abeygunasekera, Consultant Urological Surgeon, and the former editor of the Ceylon Medical Journal (CMJ). One aim of this effort was to encourage publications among young academics. Dr. Abeygunasekera also explained the strengths and weaknesses of abstracts and many of his experiences as an editor of CMJ, which was useful for the participants in both correctly writing and reviewing abstracts in the future. Around 30 academic members participated.





## Solar Sensation - CFS partners with Gesla Power (Pvt) Ltd. for renewable energy

The Center for Sustainability of the Department of Forestry and Environmental Science made another step forward in achieving the goal of carbon neutrality on campus by installing a 24.0 kW System in the Forestry Building. When fully functional, the new system should provide an estimated electricity generation of 2057 kWh per month.

The process was initiated in March 2020 when the CFS was able to facilitate the signing of an MOU between the University of Sri Jaywardenepura and Gesla Power (Pvt) Ltd. As part of the MOU, all university staff and



projects are entitled to a promotional offer from Gesla Power (Pvt) Ltd whereby they will donate one additional solar panel for each one purchased. The capacity of the solar system is expected to further expand in the future.

## USJ receives a plot of land to set up a model Mangrove Resource Center

Dr. B.M.S. Batagoda – an alumnus of the University of Sri Jaywardenepura – has donated a 2-acre mangrove-dominated plot of land located in Ittapana, Walallawita DS Division, in Kalutara District to establish a Mangrove Resource Center. The 2-acre land borders the Bentara river and includes a building that will be refurbished to establish a Mangrove Resource Center.

Mangroves of Sri Lanka provide numerous ecosystem services and play an essential role in supporting the livelihoods of local people. Despite their significance, mangroves currently face multiple threats and are fast disappearing. However, a state university is able to play a major role in the conservation of mangrove ecosystems, while providing sustainable economic opportunities for local communities.

A successful mangrove conservation and community development project had been carried out at the same location under the guidance of Dr. Batagoda, 15 years ago. Using this previous model, the Center for Sustainability

of the Department of Forestry and Environmental Science plans to initiate a similar venture with improved educational, conservation, and economic opportunities for the mangrove ecosystem and surrounding communities.



## Women's Day 2021: 'Ground views' interviews Dr. Theshini Perera Senior Lecturer at Dept. of Chemistry



Dr. Theshini Perera – Senior Lecturer, Department of Chemistry of USJ – has been interviewed by Ground views for Women's Day 2021. By breaking the stigma held against women, Dr Perera has proved that women can not only drive change and succeed but also can do so within the fields conventionally dominated by men.

Dr. Perera is a professor and researcher in Chemistry at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura with a special interest in synthesizing new metal complexes having biomedical relevance. She went to Ladies' College, where she was awarded the most outstanding girl of the year award in 1996. She is a graduate of the University of Colombo and received her PhD in Chemistry from Louisiana State University, USA, under the guidance of the world-renowned bio-inorganic chemist Professor Luigi Marzilli. Dr. Perera was awarded the outstanding research scholar award in 2009 and 2010.

Returning home in 2010, she has made every effort to popularize science and inspire young minds to engage in science and has served the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLAAS) in many capacities.

## CONFERENCES AND RESEARCH RELATED EVENTS

### The International Conference in Health Sciences 2021 – the inaugural conference of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

The International Conference in Health Sciences 2021 was hosted for the first time by the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, USJ on 31st March 2021 through a hybrid model. There was a wide range in participation with undergraduates and postgraduates of different disciplines both local and from foreign institutions, and healthcare professionals working across the country making it a very successful conference. The Chief Guest for the occasion was Snr. Prof.



Sudantha Liyanage, Vice-Chancellor, University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Snr. Prof. Liyanage, together with Deans of all other Faculties, Registrar, Librarian, and many members of the Faculty of Medical Sciences both past and present graced the inauguration ceremony.



The inauguration was also a platform to felicitate the members of the Faculty of Medical Sciences which was preceded by a tree-planting programme, where two 'Kaluwara', four 'Malmurutha', four 'Jakaranda', one 'Kohomba', one 'Beheth Asoka' and a very rare plant 'Rath handun' were planted in the FMS premises. The trees were planted as a mark of gratitude towards the Faculty of Medical Sciences, where the Allied health degrees were first commenced. All former Deans of the Faculty of Medical Sciences and all past Coordinators/Heads of the

Department of Allied Health Sciences and other eminent dignitaries including Prof. Narada Warnasuriya, a former Dean and a Vice-Chancellor of the University were present at the occasion.

This inaugural research conference of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences was organized by the Research Committee, FAHS under the guidance of the Dean, Snr Prof. Sharaine Fernando. The contribution by all faculty members and the strength of unity among all staff members was the key to the success of the conference in disseminating many aspects of research findings in health sciences in Sri Lanka.



## The 7<sup>th</sup> International Research Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences, USJ

The 7th International Research Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) organized by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura was successfully held as a hybrid event on the 18th and 19th of March 2021.

The Inauguration Ceremony of the conference was held on 18th March 2021 with the participation of the chief guest; Ms. Alaina B. Teplitz; the U.S ambassador to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, Senior

Professor Sampath Amaratunge; the Chairman of the University Grants Commission, Snr. Prof. Sudhantha Liyanage; Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof. Shirantha Heenkenda; Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Mr. A. B. Walivita; Registrar of the University. In addition, prestigious guests including deans of other faculties of the university, heads of departments, invitees and prominent academics participated in the inauguration ceremony.



This year's IRCHSS included three plenary speeches, organized with the goal of generating an interactive discourse on some key topics in contemporary humanities and social sciences. The first plenary was delivered by Professor Praneeth Abhayasundere of the Department of Anthropology, the University of Sri Jayewardenepura on "Anthropomorphism and Zoomorphism: Resolving the Praxis." Meanwhile, the second plenary was

delivered by Dr. Oshan Wedage, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura along with Dr. Siran Deraniyagala, Professor M.M. Pathmalal and a team of researchers from Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History, Germany on "Fruits Of The Forest: Sri Lanka and Its Global Prehistory". Finally, the third plenary was delivered by Professor Daniel Seely of the Eastern Michigan University, USA, on "Toward Explaining Language: The Minimalist Perspective".



IRCHSS is one of the most prestigious conferences organized in Sri Lanka in the fields of humanities and social sciences. This year's conference was taken place in a real-time [Online] knowledge exchange platform under the theme, "Collaborate and Discover: Break the Barriers". More than 100 research presentations were presented through the two conference dates under 08 conference tracks, including Buddhist Studies, Religion, and Philosophy; Communication, Media and Society; Environment, Governance and Development; History, Culture and Heritage; Language and Literature; and Technology, Innovation, and Education.

## The 25<sup>th</sup> Silver Jubilee International Forestry and Environment Symposium 2020

Distinguished as the oldest and most renowned Forestry and Environment Symposium in South Asia, the International Forestry and Environment Symposium, organized by the Department of Forestry & Environmental Science, Faculty of Applied Sciences, USJ was held online for the 25th consecutive year under 4 sessions on 22nd and 23rd January 2021 at University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka.



This is one of the premier events where researchers, academia, professionals,

policymakers and the industry meet to network, discuss and learn about the latest developments in forestry and the environment in the region. The theme of this year's symposium was "Post Covid -19 Environment and Society".

The symposium was graced by Dr. Anil Jasinghe; Secretary to the Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka as the chief guest. Dr. Danister Perera; Advisor, All Ceylon Indigenous Medical Association, Professor J. Patrick A. Hettiaratchi; Department of Civil Engineering, Schulich School of Engineering, University of Calgary, Canada, Associate Professor Shobha Muthukumaran; Institute for Sustainable Industries & Liveable Cities, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia and Professor Richard Vlosky; Louisiana Forest Products Development Center, United States of America participated as session keynote speakers. Chairman of the University Grants Commission; Prof. Sampath Amaratunga, Vice-



Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura; Snr. Prof. Sudantha Liyanage, Dean of the Faculty of Applied Sciences; Prof. Laleen Karunanayake, Prof. Upul Subasinghe, Prof. Hiran Amarasekara, Prof. Hemanthi Ranasinghe, Dr. Daham Jayawardana and other members of the Department of Forestry and Environmental Science, researchers, academia and professionals also participated in the event.

Key research findings and details under the themes of Impacts of COVID -19 on "Society and Environment, Forest and Natural Resource Management", "Biodiversity and Sustainable Tourism", "Climate Change and Water Resource Management", "Biomass and Sustainable Energy", "Waste Management and Pollution Control", "Wood Science, Wood and Non-Wood Industry", "Environmental Economics in Resource Management", "Geology, Soil and Disaster Management" and "Environmental Engineering and Green Technology" were discussed by the scholars, local and foreign participants including key government officials, academics, researchers and business leaders in Forestry and Environment Sectors.



## 18<sup>th</sup> FMSC Research Sessions

The Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce (FMSC) Research Sessions are held biannually with the intention of providing a platform for researchers and young academics to share their research findings and promote a vibrant research culture within the Faculty. The 18<sup>th</sup> session of the series was conducted on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at the New Boardroom of the FMSC. The Chief Guest of the session was Prof. P.D. Nimal (Dean of the Faculty). The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Janaka Fernando (Senior Lecturer, Department of Business Economics) on brain circulation in the knowledge services industry in Sri Lanka. As the special speaker of the session, Senior Professor (Mrs.) R. Lalitha S. Fernando (Department of Public Administration) shared her experience on the application of the mix method in research.

The session served as a platform to promote the intra-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research culture in the Faculty by presenting four extended abstracts.



## Operations and Technology Management Undergraduate Research Symposium (OTMURS) 2021

The Department of Decision Sciences organized the fourth Operations and Technology Management Undergraduate Research Symposium (OTMURS) 2021 which was held online on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce with the participation of the Dean, Head of the Department, industry participants, academics from other universities, staff members and students of the Department. The aim of this symposium was to provide a platform to the research/internship students to present their research or internship project findings with theoretical and practical value to an audience of their peers, staff members of the Department, and experts from the industry. The keynote speaker of this occasion was Prof. Saman Yapa of the Department of Decision Sciences.



## Anthropology Day 2021

The Department of Anthropology, of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, celebrated its 61 years of proud history on 26th March 2021 by organizing the "Anthropology Day 2021". Anthropology Day consisted of lectures on the history and development of anthropology (both physical and cultural anthropology) in Sri Lanka. Mr. Edvin Ganihigama; a former Head of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and Emeritus Prof. B. A. Tennyson Perera of the same department were honoured at the event for their lifetime contribution and dedication as academics.



Snr. Prof. Sudantha Liyanage; Vice-Chancellor of the USJ and Prof. Shirantha Heenkenda; Dean of the FHSS, Prof. Pathmalal Manage; Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Prof. Charmalie Nahallage; Head of the Department of Anthropology, Mr. Edvin Ganihigama, Emeritus Prof. B. A. Tennyson Perera, Dr. Preashantha Perera, Former Director of the Central Cultural Fund and a large number of reputed guests participated in the event.

The keynote speech on reputed and prominent pioneers in the field of Sri Lankan Anthropology was delivered by Prof. Praneeth Abhayasundara of the Department of Anthropology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Furthermore, Snr. Prof. Yasanjalee Jayathilake, Prof. Jayantha Jayasiri, and Dr. Sepala Samarasekara of the same department delivered short lectures on various fields related to anthropology.



Prof. Anura Manathunga; Director-General, Department of Archaeology, Prof. Gamini Ranasinghe; Director-General, Central Cultural Fund, Dr. Shiran Deraniyagala, Prof. Gamini Adhikari; Director, Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya, Dr. Nimal Perera were also among distinguished guest speakers.

This event was funded by an AHEAD department grant.

## Undergraduate Research Day 2021 of the Department of Business Administration

The Department of Business Administration successfully conducted its Undergraduate Research Day 2021 themed, 'Transformation of work and organisations: Managing challenges and organising for the future', on 9th April 2021 at the University premises as well as via the virtual platform. The Department convened the Undergraduate Research Day for the second consecutive year with the intention of opening a forum for the undergraduates to be part of the knowledge creation and dissemination process.

Eighteen undergraduates presented their research papers on broad areas of Management and Organisation Studies under three research tracks: namely, Managing Work and Organisational Life, Managing Challenges in the Contemporary Society and Humanities and Other Studies. All the research tracks were chaired by Senior academic members of the Faculty. The research papers were selected through a blind review process and selected papers



were published in the proceedings of the Undergraduate Research Day 2021.

Dr. Mangala Fonseka, Former Senior Professor of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, delivered the keynote speech titled, 'The great transformation- with apologies to Karl Polanyi'. Many parties graced the event including the Vice Chancellor of the University, Senior Prof. Sudantha Liyanage, Dean of the Faculty, Prof. P.D. Nimal, Heads of

academic departments, all the members of the Department of Business Administration and members from other academic departments.

Undergraduates of the Department representing Year II, Year III and Year IV participated in the event and were able to gain many insights which would be useful in carrying out their research activities in the forthcoming years, and thereby becoming true researchers. The event was funded by



the AHEAD ELTA-ELSA Project of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce.



## Undergraduate Research Day 2020

The Department of Public Administration organized its Undergraduate Research Day for the fifth consecutive year on 23rd March 2021. Ten research papers were selected through a blind review process and the presented papers were published in the Undergraduate Research Day Proceedings. This event was an excellent platform to disseminate the research findings of the final year students who have successfully completed their research as part of their degree programme. The keynote speaker, Professor N.S. Cooray, Professor in Economics from the International University of Japan (IUJ) joined online and delivered an insightful speech. The Vice Chancellor of the University and the Dean of the Faculty also joined the event. The event was funded by the AHEAD ELTA-ELSA Project, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura.



## Workshop on how to get your research funded

The Research Centre for Management Studies and Commerce (RCMSC) organized a workshop on 'How to get your research funded' on 5th April 2021 using the Zoom platform. Senior Professor M. M. Pathmalal, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Co-Chairperson of Research Council, University of Sri Jayewardenepura was the resource person of the workshop. Snr. Prof. Pathmalal addressed the event emphasizing the importance of engaging in research by the academics. Further, he discussed the procedures to be followed when preparing a research proposal. Finally, he highlighted the research grant-awarding institutions in Sri Lanka and encouraged young academics to apply for the research grants. Snr. Prof. Pathmalal's invaluable



contribution was gratefully acknowledged by the academic staff of the faculty as his valuable expertise in the field of research drives to motivate and energize the academics in the faculty.

## The Center for Nanocomposite Research (CNR) develops a novel thermally conductive rubber material

The scholars of the Center for Nanocomposite Research, a newly established research center at the Faculty of Applied Sciences, have successfully managed to develop a novel rubber compound with enhanced thermal conductive properties. This research group has been the pioneers of rubber research at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. The novel rubber compound was developed with natural rubber and natural graphite from the mines of Bogala, Sri Lanka. The inherently thermally insulative rubber is transformed into thermally conductive material by the incorporation of graphite. This invention is of paramount importance to the tire industry. One of the major advantages of the enhanced thermal conductive properties is the reduction of the vulcanization time during material preparation. The second most important benefit is the indulgence of heat built up during the cause of action due to friction between tire and ground & intermolecular friction.

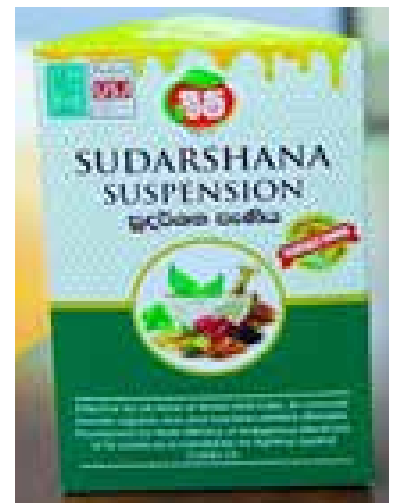


Whilst continuing their research at the center, the research group in collaboration with Bogala Graphite Lanka PLC has now initiated discussions with potential dry-rubber product manufacturers to carry out the next phases of the material development. It is believed that an invention of this caliber could potentially result in an uproar of the tire industry around the globe, which could ultimately bring fame to the Alma Mater/ University.

Prof. N.M.S. Sirimuthu, Dr. Thusitha N.B. Etampawala, Prof. Laleen Karunanayake, Prof. A.R. Kumarasinghe, Mr. P.E.J.Fernando and Mrs. P.Pamunuwa were instrumental in conducting the research. The funding for this research was provided by AHEAD operations, a World Bank supported project.

## USJ and UBL Cell (USJ tech transfer) commercialize its first research-based invention

The University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJ) and the University Business Linkage Cell (UBL) commercialized its first research-based invention in its history by transferring the technology through an exclusive license agreement with Beam Hela Osu Lanka (Pvt) Ltd for manufacturing and distribution rights of the product.



This Sudarshana Suspension was innovated by a team of researchers from the Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJ) and the Institute of Indigenous Medicine, University of Colombo (UOC). The research team members are Dr. Saroja Weerakoon (UOC), Dr. Kamal Perera (UOC), Prof. Sugandhika Suresh (USJ) and Prof. Dulanie Gunasekera (USJ).

Sudarshana Suspension is indicated for the symptomatic treatment of viral fever, phlegm, allergic rhinitis, bronchitis, inflammatory arthritis, pain and allergic skin conditions. It provides potent antioxidant protection. This medicine has been proclaimed by the State Ministry of Indigenous Medicine of Sri Lanka as a candidate for fighting against COVID-19. Plans are being made to conduct a clinical trial to test the efficacy of this suspension in the treatment of persons with COVID-19 infection.

The product launch of "Sudarshana Suspension" was held in the evening of Tuesday 30th March 2021 at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. The event was graced by Hon. State Minister Prof. Channa Jayasumana, Hon. State Minister Sisira Jayakodi and other distinguished guests.

## AMR investigating on novel quick and easy Phthalate Detection Method using Carbon Nanotubes

Dr. Thusitha Etampawala and co-workers of the Center for Advanced Material Research (CAMR) of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, in collaboration with the Open University of Sri Lanka, have successfully developed a novel, sensor platform to detect different phthalate molecules in a solution. The platform was developed using Multi-Walled Carbon Nanotubes. Upon adsorption of phthalate molecules, the Faradaic Impedance of sensor platform changes. It was detected quickly and easily using Electrochemical Impedance Spectroscopy (EIS).

Phthalates or Phthalic Acid Esters is one of the widely used classes of plasticizers in plastic product manufacture, especially in polyvinyl chloride-based packaging materials. The incompatibility of plasticizer with its matrix polymer allows the plasticizer to leach out to its surrounding.

The developed sensor platform shows the ability to selectively detect the presence of phthalates in solutions, along with the ability to distinguish different phthalates. Currently, these CAMR members are working on developing a test kit for the phthalate detection in solution, using carbon nanotube incorporated cellulose composites. The Director of CAMR emphasized that the Research Center is equipped with advanced analytical equipment and support facilities to enable an innovative environment for advanced material research by minimizing the barriers to research output, while uplifting local research standards to global level.



**Buckypaper**



**EIS analysis using potentiostat**

## CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Prof. Gamini Ranasinghe, Dept. of History and Archaeology of USJ appointed as new DG at Central Cultural Fund

Prof. Gamini Ranasinghe, Professor of History and Archaeology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, officially assumed duties as the new Director General of the Central Cultural Fund.

Prof. Ranasinghe officially assumed duties on March 10, 2021, in the presence of Maha Sangha and Deshabandu Prof.



Kapila Gunawardena; Secretary to the Ministry of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs. Prof. Ranasinghe obtained his Doctorate from the University of Xiamen in China after following a Master's Degree in Archaeology from the University of Kelaniya. He read for his Bachelor's Degree at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

The university congratulates Prof. Gamini Ranasinghe on becoming the new Director General of the Central Cultural Fund and wishes him all the best for all his future endeavors.

## AWARDS

### Ven. Prof. Medagampitiye Vijithadhamma Thero receives the Agga Maha Ganthawachaka Pandit Degree

Ven. Prof. Medagampitiye Vijithadhamma Thero of the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of USJ receives the Agga Maha Ganthawachaka Pandit Degree from the Burmese government. Aggamaha Ganthawachaka Pandit Degree, which is a special degree awarded by the government of Burma (Myanmar), is the highest degree awarded to monks below 60 years old, in recognition of their academic service

This degree was awarded in recognition of the service rendered to the development of the Pali language and literature, by composing prose and verse in the Pali language, lecturing in the Pali language, and for the service rendered in teaching and mentoring undergraduate and postgraduate students. Ven.



Vijithadhamma Thero is also the youngest Sri Lankan monk to receive this degree from the government of Myanmar. The graduates were announced on Myanmar's Independence Day, 4th of January 2021.

### Japan confers 'The Order of the Rising Sun' to Snr. Prof. Sampath Amaratunge

For his dedication to the cause of promoting friendly relations between Japan and Sri Lanka, Senior Prof. Sampath Amaratunge (Professor Chair of Business Economics, USJ and Chairman of the University Grants Commission) was conferred 'The Order of the Rising



Sun, Gold Rays' award by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan in April 2021.

'The Order of the Rising Sun' is the highest order conferred by the Government of Japan, in the name of His Majesty the Emperor, upon those who have made distinguished achievements in international relations, promotion of Japanese culture, achievements in their respective field, development in welfare or preservation of the environment.

## President's Award for Scientific Research 2018 awarded to academics of the Faculties of Applied Sciences, Medical Sciences and Allied Health Sciences

The following academic members were honoured with President's Awards for Scientific Publications in 2018 at the President's Awards Ceremony held on 06th April 2021 at the Auditorium of Sri Lanka Institute of Architects. The top 100 scientific publications published in 2018 in Sri Lanka, based on their SCImago Journal Ranking, were eligible for this award.

### Faculty of Applied Sciences:



Prof. Nissanka de Silva and Dr. Sachini Fernando,



Dr. Laksiri Weerasinghe



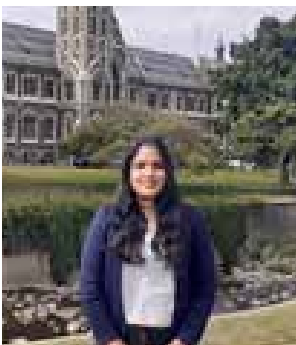
Dr. Lilani Attygalle

### Faculty of Medical Sciences:

1. Snr. Prof. Kamani Wanigasooriya
  2. Snr. Prof. Renu Wickramasinghe
  3. Prof. Neelika Malavige
  4. Prof. Chandanee Wanigathunga
  5. Prof. Nirmala Wijekoon
  6. Dr. Sanjeewa Wijekoon
  7. Dr. Chandima Jeewandara
  8. Dr. Shalindra Ranasinghe
- Professor Neelika Malavige won the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> positions while Prof. Nirmala Wijekoon won the 19<sup>th</sup> position among the top 20 publications.



### Faculty of Allied Health Sciences:



Ms. LGT Shanika



Dr. Ranga Dissanayake

## Prof. Neelika Malavige won the Inspirational Woman of the Year award at Women Top 50 Professional and Career Women Awards 2020

Professor Gathsaurie Neelika Malavige, Professor in Department of Immunology and Molecular Medicine, Faculty of Medical Sciences of University of Sri Jayewardenepura, won the 'Inspirational Woman of the Year' award at Women Top 50 Professional and Career Women Awards 2020 held on the 26th of January 2021 at Shangri-La hotel Colombo.

The 'Top 50 Professional and Career Women Awards' is the Women in Management's (WIM's) foremost annual event that recognizes and celebrates individual and corporate achievements of trailblazing women leaders in Sri Lanka. The year 2020 celebrated the 10th year of the awards since the WIM's inception.

Women in Management (WIM) is a Private Limited company registered under the Companies Act in Sri Lanka, dedicated to uniting Sri Lanka's professional and entrepreneurial women. 'The Professional & Career Women Awards' celebrates the achievements of remarkable women who inspire those around them, through media, through their astounding achievements in their careers, businesses and everyday lives.

The university congratulates Prof. Malavige on winning the Inspirational Woman of the Year award at Women Top 50 Professional and Career Women Awards 2020 – a well-deserved award recognizing the tireless efforts in fighting the Covid-19 pandemic.



## OSShCa KVD 20: a semi-automated, mobile chest physiotherapy machine wins its 3rd award

A team lead by Dr. Sajith Edirisinghe (Lecturer, Department of Anatomy) won their 3rd award at the 'Young Innovators Award in Health Sciences at the Research Conference in Health Sciences 2021', organised by the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, USJ on 31st March 2021.

The invention is a mobile, semi-automated chest physiotherapy machine (OSShCa KVD 20) that can be operated remotely. The winning team consisted of Mr Osanda Somarathne, Didula Hapuarachige and Kaveen Samarasinghe from the University of Moratuwa; Shashika Liyanwalage and Viraj Niroshan from the Faculty of Technology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura and Chamara Mathangaweera (Physiotherapist) from the Department of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medical Sciences, USJ.



## Historic win for University of Sri Jayewardenepura at CFA Sri Lanka Research Challenge 2020/21

For the 14th consecutive year, CFA Sri Lanka Society organized the CFA Sri Lanka Research Challenge partnering with the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), Kaplan, and Acuity Group of Companies. Each of the eight teams representing six state universities took part in producing an investment report in November 2020. It was the culmination of comprehensive analyses and valuation of Overseas Realty (Ceylon) PLC: the subject company of the competition this year.

After a tough competition, Team A of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura became the winners of the local finals. The team members were Vindula Perera (Team Leader), Ishanika Seneviratne, Winura Wijekulasooriya, Chamini Apeksha, Hirza Careem, and Mohamed Hussain Shakib (Reserve Member) – final year undergraduates of the Department of Finance. The team was guided by the industry liaison – CFA Charterholder – Mr. Daham Hettiarachchi (Softlogic Asset Management (Pvt) Ltd.) and the faculty advisor – Ms. Piumi Abeyrathne (Senior Lecturer, Department of Finance), throughout the challenge.



Team B of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura emerged runners-up at the local finals and the team comprised of final year undergraduates of the Department of Finance and Department of Business Economics, namely, Ranmal Perera (Team Leader), Tharushi Egoda Hewage, Tharuka Arampaththa, Osuri Jayasiriwardana, and Upeksha Kalutharaarachchi. The team was mentored by the industry liaison – CFA Charterholder – Mr. Travis Gomez (Frontier Research (Pvt) Ltd.) and the faculty advisor – Ms. Abeththa Fernando (Lecturer, Department of Finance).

The eminent panel of judges were from top financial institutions in Sri Lanka and the Asia-Pacific Region at the virtual local finals held on 24th February 2021. The local champions won a cash award of Rs. 200,000 and will advance to compete in the Asia-Pacific Sub-Regional Challenge in March 2021, representing Sri Lanka.

## Patent obtained for 'a method to preserve human tissues by room temperature resin casting'

Dr. Sajith Edirisinghe and Senior Prof S.G. Yaswardene obtained a local patent (Patent No – 17967) for a novel method of human tissue preservation from the National Intellectual Property Office (NIPO), according to the Intellectual Property Act, No. 36 OF 2003 (Section 79 (2) (b)) Gazette no 2,182 dated June 26th, 2020, which was handed over to the Vice-chancellor of USJ, Snr. Prof. Sudantha Liyanage in February 2021. This method has the advantage of zero exposure to formaldehyde.





## USJ wins big at Nestle – Project Connect

Team Twinkle which represented the University of Sri Jayewardenepura emerged as the winners of Project Connect. Organized by Nestle Lanka PLC, Project Connect provided a unique platform for disruptive new thinkers to come up with fresh and innovative ideas and hence create a positive impact on Sri Lanka.

Out of 69 ideas presented by undergraduates from 5 Universities, Team Twinkle consisting of; Vindula Perera, Ishanika Seneviratne and Tharushi Egodahegawa, from the Department of Finance emerged victorious. Team Twinkle pitched POWERGANIC, a coconut water-based hypertonic (Isotonic + Revitalizer) as its unique idea.



All teams in the competition were assigned industry mentors by Nestle Lanka PLC for guidance. Team Twinkle was guided and mentored by Mr. Bandula Egodage (VP Corporate and Regulatory Affairs at Nestlé Lanka PLC).

Next, it was Team Nesleaf who made University of Sri Jayewardenepura proud again by being the runners-up of the same competition. The Team Nesleaf consisting of Mohamed

Shakib from the Department of Finance and Wageesh Rajapakshe and Isuru Udayanga from the Department of Entrepreneurship pitched the product idea to the judges. The Team Nesleaf's idea was to bring back the traditional 'Kola Kanda' as NESLEAF in a revolutionized way to the customers. As per Shakib, his mother Mrs. Rilwana made a huge impact on Team Nesleaf's performance by helping them to make the prototype while, Mr. Shamshard Marikkar (Head of Categories, Nestle Lanka PLC) guided and mentored the team.

Since the commencement of the competition in September 2020, Mr. Ruwanga Wijesooriya (Assistant Lecturer, Department of Finance) has been the University Mentor for both the teams. The competition spanned from September 2020 to April 2021.

## A student from Faculty of Medical Sciences contributes to the winning team at the Prof. Senaka Bibile Memorial Debate

Mr. Amal Weeratunga represented the Faculty of Medical Sciences, USJ, at the Prof. Senaka Bibile memorial debate on 13th February 2021. He and three other members of the debating team, representing medical students from the University of Ruhuna, Sabaragamuwa and Peradeniya, emerged as the Champion team under the theme "Implementation of drug policies of Prof. Bibile in Sri Lanka". The event was organized by SIRHA as a hybrid session at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo marking the 101st birthday of the late Prof. Bibile.

## Sandun Priyankara nominated as one of the Top Six Entrepreneurs at the Global Student Entrepreneur Award (GSEA) Sri Lanka 2021

Sandun Priyankara, a third-year undergraduate of the Department of Accounting was recognized as one of the top six entrepreneurs at the Global Student Entrepreneur Award (GSEA) 2021 Sri Lanka, organized by the Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO) Sri Lanka, in conjunction with the GSEA 2021 Australia on 8th March 2021.



Sandun was nominated for this award for his organic herbal products such as Herbal Powder and Tea named 'You Choice Green Products', which are produced from Curry Leaves, Thebu, Moringa, Neem and Cinnamon. Currently his company operates under the guidance of Prof. Piyal Marasinghe, (Botanist at the Diyatalawa Ayurvedic Hospital). In addition, Sandun was able to launch a mobile business recently in order to sell vegetable seeds, vegetable plants, fruit plants and flower plants to alleviate food shortages

during the COVID-19 period and to encourage people to grow vegetables and fruits in their own backyard without using toxic chemical fertilizers. He has also partnered with Colombo Cargo Express Pvt. (Ltd.) and Trico Maritime Pvt. (Ltd.) to export Thebu and Pharmaceutical Triphala to the United States of America, where ground-level operations are already underway. Sandun's expectation is to expand his company and introduce many more innovative products to the local and global market in the future. Currently, Sandun is the Entrepreneurship Director of the Vikings Social Entrepreneurship Club of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.



## Team Starks emerges as runner-up at RB Global Challenge 2020

RB Global Challenge is a competition organized by Reckitt Benckiser annually to create 'entrepreneurs with a purpose'. It's a global championship which seeks business ideas that are high on social impact, address critical issues in society, and have the power to bring about positive change.

Teams Starks, made up of Mithma Amarathunga of the Department of Accounting, Akna Vinu of the Department of Accounting, and Geeshan Liyanage of the Department of Finance, all being fourth year undergraduates of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, took part in the



competition and were chosen to be among the six teams that were fortunate enough to be selected for the National Finale from 150 competitors. All rounds were held virtually via Zoom. Team Starks was able to secure the position of the first runner-up at the National Finale held on 4th March 2021 after a tough competition among the six finalist teams.

## USJ students win at SLASSCOM National Ingenuity Awards

'Sanify', an innovative project carried out by a team of final year undergraduates of the Department of Information Technology won the National Runners-up position in the Best Innovative Product/Project (University Category) at the SLASSCOM National Ingenuity Awards 2021. The project was also selected as a winner at the Western Province Level Category of the same competition. The talented project team consisted of Mr. Pramuk Hewawasam, Ms. Ishara Thennakoon, Mr. Dinuka Wiesundara and Ms. Nipuni Fernando.



SLASSCOM is the national chamber for the IT/BPM industry in Sri Lanka, and the competition pitted them against projects from universities and higher education institutes around the country. The awards ceremony was held recently at the Shangri-La Hotel amongst a gathering of leading figures in the IT industry in Sri Lanka.



Further, 'Sanify' secured the first place at D-Hack 2020, the annual Business Idea Generation and Mobile Application Design competition organized by the Department. It is currently a finalist at the Innovation and Invention Competition and Exhibition (IIICE) 2020/21 conducted by the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. The project involves Mobile, IoT and Machine Learning Technologies to uplift the life of the general public. The project is supervised by Dr. Lasith Gunawardena, Senior Lecturer, Department of Information Technology.

## USJ mycologist discovers three new species of fungi

As a part of an ongoing research project on cereal pathogenic fungi, funded by the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Ms. Himashi Ferdinandez, a PhD student at the Department of Botany, has discovered three new fungal species. These species are named as *Curvularia eleusinicola*, *Curvularia panici-maximi* and *Curvularia simmonsii*. The research outcome was recently published in the Journal Mycological Progress (<https://www.springer.com/journal/11557>). The research project was supervised by Dr. Dimuthu S. Manamgoda, Prof. Nelum Deshapriya and Dr. Mayuri Munasinghe from the Department of Botany and Dr. Dhanushka Udayanga from the Department of Biosystems Technology, Faculty of Technology.



*Curvularia eleusinicola*

*Curvularia panici-maximi*

*Curvularia simmonsii*

## First runners-up and the best Point Builder at the 'Clash of Minds' inter-university English debating competition

The English Literary Association of the Faculty of Medical Sciences recently took part in the "Clash of Minds" Inter-University English Debating Competition organized by "J'pura Voice".

Out of 13 teams from the state universities of Sri Lanka, the team from the 26th batch of medical



undergraduates became the 1st runners-up and Ms. Sachitra Ratnasooriya was awarded the 'Best Point Builder' title at the grand finale held on 10th April, 2021. The team from the 30th batch was selected as the semi-finalists.

The 1st runner-up team was represented by Asel Wijesinghe, Manuli de Silva and Sachitra Ratnasooriya.

## "New Generation Awards" 2020: Madhavi de Silva - young Agro Processor of the year



The "New generation Awards" 2020 was presented by Women in Management in partnership with the National Youth Services Council. New Generation awards 2020 were conferred recently on Sri Lankan young leaders, recognized for their youth leadership achievements in sports, arts & music, education, careers, profession, agriculture, social, media, tourism, innovation & entrepreneurship. The event was held on 8th December 2020.

Madhavi de Silva received this award for the successful development of a novel nano-fertilizer during her Ph.D. research at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura under the supervision of Prof. Nilwala Kottegoda. The research was fully funded by a University of Sri Jayewardenepura research grant. This patented slow-release smart nitrogen-phosphorous nano fertilizer with high nitrogen content and low production cost is now being commercialized.

## English Literary Association (ELA) activities : Faculty of Medical Sciences

A few interactive sessions which targeted communication and debating skills were organized by the ELA of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, and held via online platforms amidst the ongoing global pandemic. An interactive online session which aimed to improve speech and communication skills of medical students was held with the participation of nearly 100 students on the 19th of February 2021.



An online workshop on debating skills, titled the "Art of Debating" was held with nearly 100 participants, on 26th February 2021. The prospects of this session were to inspire potential debaters in the faculty. This was not confined to USJ students, but extended to any university undergraduates, which was a great success.

The informative session included a keynote by the guest speaker Mr. Dinusha Pathirana who is an undergraduate of the Faculty of Applied sciences, USJ, a student of Sri Lanka Law College and an accomplished debater with multiple debating titles under his belt.

A friendly debate followed on the topic "Batman was right to strike Superman with kryptonite" in which the core idea was "Too much power without check and balance is dangerous or is needed in dire circumstances?". The winning team was decided with a unanimous vote by a panel of student judges.

## PUBLICATIONS

### Launching a Sinhala poetry book

Dr. Manori Gamage, a consultant Paediatrician and a senior lecturer in the Department of Paediatrics published a Sinhala poetry book named "lockdown නොකළ සිතුවිලි". This book was launched on the 4th March 2021 at the Auditorium of the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka. The Chief Guest of the event was Professor Praneeth Abeyesundara, Senior Lecturer from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, USJ.

The book was written on the incidents that Dr. Manori has experienced during the lockdown period in 2020. She has expressed the behaviors of the people of Sri Lanka and of the whole world in a simple poetic language.



### Issuing of the Accounting Standards Handbook

The Department of Accounting issued the latest version of the Accounting Standards Handbook (which was referred to earlier as Panorama) which is a valuable book for the students who face the G. C. E. Advanced Level examination and the teachers. The handbook was written by the lecturers of the Department and it includes the revised conceptual framework, SLFRS 15 and SLFRS 16 with all the other accounting

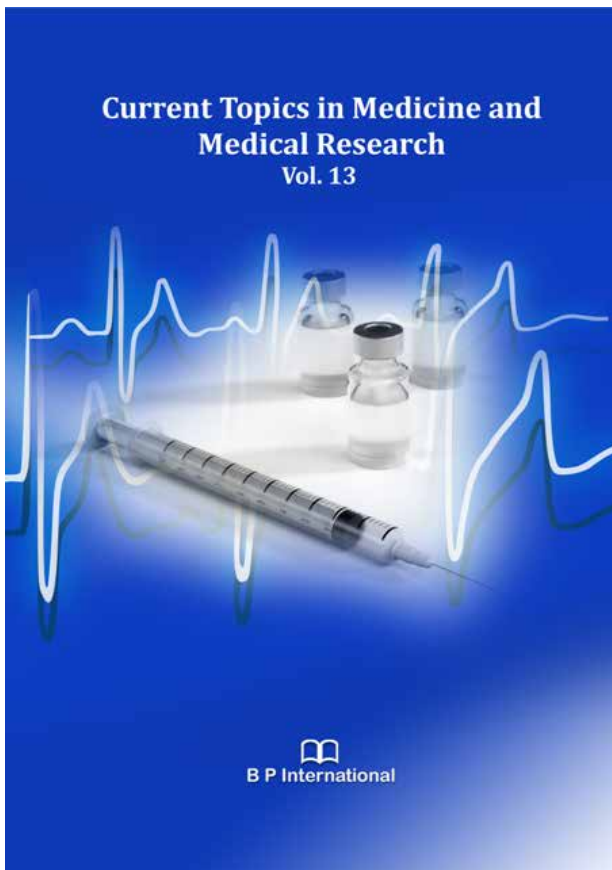


standards relevant for the Advanced Level examination. The handbook is distributed by the student body of the department, Accounting and Financial Management Association (AFMA).

The first copy of the Accounting Standards Handbook was presented to the Head of the Department, Prof. Harendra Kariyawasam on 15th January 2021 by the Assistant Coordinator of the AFMA, Ms. Amali Henadirage and the President of the AFMA, Hashen Madhusha.

## Book chapter publication

Dr. Varuni Tennakoon, Head, Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medical Sciences, USJ authored a book chapter titled 'Possible Risk Associations for the Formation of Antisperm Antibodies: A Review' in 'Current Topics in Medicine and Medical Research Vol. 13'.



## Book launch by Vidya Jyothi Emeritus Professor E.R. Jansz

A book launch for two books authored by Vidya Jyothi Emeritus Professor E.R. Jansz was held on 20th March 2021 at the BoardRoom of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, USJ. The two books were titled 'Pitfalls, rewards and reflections of a retired scientist' and 'Weerasinghe land and other non-fictional stories'. Senior Professor Sudantha Liyanage, Vice-Chancellor graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. At this occasion, Prof. Jansz was appreciated for his monumental contribution to USJ, particularly during the beginning of the faculty where he shouldered considerable academic, research and administrative responsibilities for many years.



## COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS

### A warm welcome to 2021



The new year blessings ceremony 2021 organized by the Registrar and the community of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura was held, according to health guidelines, on the 01st of January 2021 at 8.30 am at the University Buddha Mandiraya. Honorable Maha Sangha, the Vice-Chancellor of USJ; Senior Prof. Sudantha Liyanage, Deans of the Faculties, Heads of Departments, academic and non-academic staff members participated in the auspicious event and ceremoniously begun the year after warmly welcoming the New Year 2021.

### Erabadu Wasanthaya



The Business Economics Students' Association (BIZCON) of the Department of Business Economics organized 'Erabadu Wasanthaya', a Sinhala-Tamil New Year Celebration Programme on 16th April 2021 via Zoom. The event was graced with the participation of popular artistes in Sri Lanka, namely, Mr. Sahan Ranwala, Mrs. Dinupa Kodagoda, Mr. Nadeeka Weligodapola and Mr. Sahan Weeraman. They contributed to a fruitful discussion on folk music and its application in the modern music industry in Sri Lanka.

### Ama Dam Sisila

'Ama Dam Sisila', a dhamma sermon organized by the Business Economics Students' Association (BIZCON) of the Department of Business Economics was held virtually, on the 4th of February 2021 via Zoom. The Most Venerable Dr. Mawarale Bhaddiya thero delivered the dhamma sermon on the topic of 'Youth and religious life' for an audience of over 500 persons.





## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### CFS teams-up with Diyasaru Wetland Park to create a Butterfly Garden

Since January 2021, the Center for Sustainability has been developing a piece of land in Diyasaru Wetland Park for the purposes of encouraging the increase of native butterfly populations. The project was conducted as part of the initiative, 'Restoration and Sustainable Redevelopment of Diyasaru Wetland Park Ecosystem', funded by the UNDP GEF OP VI. By demarcating the selected plots within the park, clearing the existing weeds and nonnative plants in it, and replanting the land with butterfly-friendly species, butterfly diversity in the park can be increased.



'Host species', such as Heen araththa (*Alpinia calcarata*), Kaha (*Curcuma longa*) and Pila (*Tephrosia purpurea*) were planted to offer breeding areas for the egg-laying process and larval development. In addition, 'feeding species' including Panithora (*Cassia occidentalis*), Zinniya (*Zinnia elengas*), Andanahiriya (*Crotalaria retusa*) were added to the garden as feeding plants for the matured butterflies. The new planting plots will be a great benefit to biodiversity and will enhance visitor experiences in the park.

### Center for Sustainability and Ministry of Mahaweli Development restore 400 ha of forest in Wanniyagama

In collaboration with the Center for Sustainability of the Department of Forestry and Environmental Science and the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and



Environment, a carbon sink was created, by restoring the 400 ha of degraded dry-mixed evergreen forest in Wanniyagama, Puttalam, owned by the Department.

At a time where deforestation and loss of biodiversity have become major issues in Sri Lanka, this construction project addresses the urgent needs to combat deforestation and habitat loss for the sustainable management of Sri Lanka's forest resources. It will contribute to the national forest cover of Sri Lanka while fulfilling the goal of neutralizing the carbon emissions of USJ.

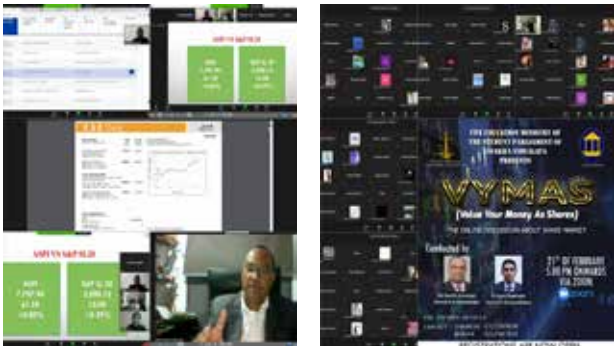
The clearing of the forest was started after conducting awareness programs and placing awareness boards on the perimeter boundary, under the Department's approval and supervision. A labor team was selected and trained under the direction of the Beat Forest Department officers. A group of 12 members worked on the clearing of the forest from December 2020 to February 2021. This area was cleared free from invasive thorny species which were a threat to important native species. A project to plant suitable species, and the steps to maintain their sustainability were also planned.

## STUDENTS ACTIVITIES

### VYMAS 2021

The Education Ministry of the Student Parliament of Visakha Vidyalaya successfully conducted the VYMAS (Value Your Money as Shares) session on 21st February 2021 which was an online discussion about the share market.

The event was graced with the presence of Prof. Harendra Kariyawasam (Head, Department of Accounting) and Dr. Kingsley Karunarathne (Senior Lecturer, Department of Accounting) who conducted the session giving the participants a valuable guidance and instructions to make the programme a success. There were around 300 participants in the session including the teachers, students of the Old Girls' Association and the students of Visakha Vidyalaya.



### Annual Dharma Deshana ceremony 2021

The Student Association of the Department of Human Resource Management organized the annual Dharma Deshana ceremony on 1st January 2021, which was conducted by a venerable monk of the Mahamevnawa Monastery. Due to the prevailing situation in the country this program was conducted virtually via the Zoom platform. Head of the Department, academic staff, alumni members and students of the Department, participated in this event. The HRM family started the New Year with a blessing sermon by successfully adapting to the new normal via the Zoom technology.



### Vishrawas 2.0

The mini welcome for the second year students of the Department of Accounting was ceremoniously held on 28th March 2021. The event was organized by the Accounting and Financial Management Association (AFMA), the student body of the Department of Accounting. The programme was held online adhering to the rules and regulations of the country due to the pandemic.

Prof. Harendra Kariyawasam (Head of the Department) and academic staff of the Department graced the occasion with their presence. Several artistes also participated in the event making it an entertaining and a memorable one. The fun-filled games and quizzes which were organized by the second year and third year students, gave the magic of fun and joy to the event. This occasion also gave an opportunity for the students to bond well with each other and to showcase their talents.

All the students were appreciated and congratulated at the end by Senior Prof. (Ms.) D.S.N.P. Senaratne on behalf of all the staff members, for the hard work they had put in, in making the event successful.

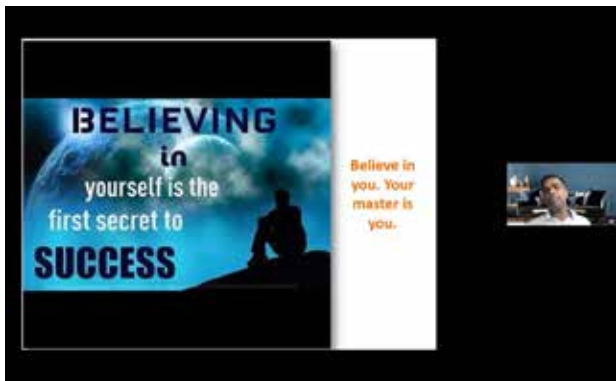
## HRM Experience Sharing Sessions

The Alumni Association of the Department of Human Resource Management successfully organized four 'HRM Experience Sharing Sessions' with the participation of prominent alumni members of the Department where they shared their expertise in the respective fields with the undergraduates of the Department. This virtual session series was organized under the guidance of Dr. (Mrs.) G.D.N. Perera (Head, Department of Human Resource Management).

The first session themed 'A career in HRM' was held on 22nd January 2021 with the participation of Mrs. Amanthi Motha (Chief Manager Human Resources, Seylan Bank PLC). Mr. T.D. Weerasinghe (Senior Lecturer, Department of Human Resource



Management, University of Kelaniya) participated as the resource person for the second session themed 'New landscapes of HRM during the post-COVID-19 pandemic' on 12th February 2021. The third session of the series was conducted by Mr. Anura Edirisinghe (Manager HR / T and D in Swaranavahini TV, Shree FM, Ran FM, E FM, Hotel Sapphire, Hotel Concord under Ben Holdings (Pvt.) Ltd.) under the theme 'Practical approach of HRM in a business organization' on 5th March 2021. As the fourth session, Mr. G.A. Kalum Disnaka (Director of People and Culture at Anantara Kalutara Resort) shared his experience on 'Human resource transformation with COVID-19' on 1st April 2021.



## International Women's Day Celebration 2021

The International Women's Day Celebration 2021 organized by the HRM Speech Club in collaboration with the HRM Family was held on 8th March 2021 from 4.00 p.m. onwards virtually via Zoom for the 2nd consecutive year.



Inspiring all the women, two prominent women personalities, Ms. Thanuja Masakorala (Co-founder of one of the fastest-growing Human Resource Information Systems - MintHRM) and Ms. Dulani Nissanka (Spearhead Group Human Resources of Abans Group), who are alumni members of the Department of Human Resource Management, participated as the Chief Guests of the event. The occasion was glamoured with activities from current and past members of the HRM Speech Club together with speeches by Ms. Ama De Silva, lecturer of the Speech Club, and Professor Bhadra Arachchige, founder and the key strength of the club and concluded with the vote of thanks by the President of the HRM Speech Club for 2021, Anuradha Dayabandara.

The occasion was graced with the participation of Dr. (Mrs.) G.D.N. Perera, Head of the Department and most of the lecturers of the Department making the event a success.

## INDUSTRY/COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

### USJ Engineering Faculty signed an MOU with CRD of Ministry of Defence

The University of Sri Jayewardenepura signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Research and Development Collaboration with the Centre for Defense Research and Development (CRD) under the Ministry of Defence (MoD). The main objective of this MoU is to collaboratively develop maritime surveillance systems using Machine Learning and Image Analysis for the Country. CRD and the Faculty of Engineering (Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering – USJ) will bring together their areas of expertise and knowledge for collaborative research and development.



Snr. Prof. Sudantha Liyanage, Vice- Chancellor, University of Sri Jayewardenepura; Mr. Anuruddha Welivita, Registrar; Dr. Chaminda Konthesingha, Dean, Faculty of Engineering; Dr. Akila Mike Subasinghe, Former Dean, Faculty of Engineering; Dr. Chamitha de Alwis, Head, Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering; and Dr. Randima Dinalankara, Head, Department of Computer Engineering were in attendance from the University. Major General (Rtd) KRP Rowel – The Director-General, CDRD, Group Captain KSC Rodrigo – Chief-Controller, Commander RMGC Navarathne – Chief Coordinator Radio & Electronics Wing, Lieutenant Colonel NABSM Nissanka – Chief Coordinator Explosive Wing were present at this occasion representing the CRD.



### Extension of the MoU with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), United Kingdom

The Department of Accounting extended their Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for a second term of three years with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), United Kingdom (UK) on 22nd February 2021 at the premises of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

Senior Prof. Sudantha Liyanage (Vice Chancellor, University of Sri Jayewardenepura), Prof. P. D. Nimal (Dean, Faculty of Management Studies and



Commerce), Prof. Harendra Kariyawasam (Head, Department of Accounting), Senior Prof. (Ms.) Samanthi Senaratne, and Mr. H. M. R. W. Herath from the Department of Accounting, Ms. Nilusha Ranasinghe (Head of ACCA Sri Lanka) and Ms. Dilani Perera (Business Relationship Manager, Learning of ACCA Sri Lanka) participated in this event.



## MoU between the Faculty of Technology and CodeGen International (Pvt) Limited

The Faculty of Technology of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura and CodeGen International (Pvt.) Limited, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to collaborate on joint advanced research projects. These projects will include the development of high-performance construction infrastructure and novel energy harvesting devices.

The MoU was signed at the Vice-Chancellor's Office on March 19, 2021, under the patronage of Senior Professor Sudantha Liyanage, Vice-Chancellor, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, and Dr. Harsha Subasinghe, CEO, CodeGen International (Pvt) Limited and the founder of Vega Innovations. Professor Renuka Nilmini (Dean, Faculty of Technology), Dr. Asanka Weerasekara (Head, Department of Civil and Environmental Technology), Dr. Vikum Premalal (Department of Civil and Environmental Technology), Dr. Rohan Dassanayake (Department of Biosystems Technology), and Ms. Dinusha Mohanasunderam (Legal officer, CodeGen International (Pvt) Limited) also graced the occasion.



CodeGen is a world-renowned Technology company with the vision of "Transforming Tomorrow's World with cutting-edge Innovations." CodeGen ventures into emerging markets to optimize the travel and tourism industry at large: its service is also extended to other fields such as agriculture, transportation, education, energy, healthcare, retail,

gaming and AI based applications, to provide high-performance technology solutions that are sustainable to power tomorrow's world.

The Center for Industrial Technology Development Research was recently established to support the technology-based research commissioned to the Faculty of Technology by industrial partners and clients, including research projects, consulting, quality control assessments, sample testing, certification, prototype development, and subsequently contributing to national economic prosperity.



## Panel discussion on credit ratings and the Sri Lankan economy

The recent downgrading of the Sri Lankan sovereign credit ratings reflects an increasingly challenging external debt repayment position of the country over the medium term. The sharp rise in the sovereign debt-to-GDP ratio associated with the coronavirus shock and narrowing financing options have intensified debt sustainability risks of the nation. Observing this current economic situation, a webinar on 'Credit ratings and the Sri Lankan economy' was organized by the Research Centre for Business Economics and Development Studies (RCBEDS) of the Department of Business Economics. This was virtually held on 21st January 2021 via Zoom.

Dr. W.A. Wijewardene (Former Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Sri Lanka) and Mr. Nuwan Jayewardene (Associate Director, Acuity Knowledge Partners) participated as the eminent panelists for this online forum. The moderator of the session was Prof. P.J. Kumarasingha, Professor of the Department of

Business Economics. The event was organized under the guidance of Dr. (Mrs.) M.A.K. Sriyalatha (Director-RCBEDS). The event was well-received by an audience of over 200 participants.





# NEWSLETTER

University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Volume 07 | Issue 01 | January - April 2021



**University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka**

Tel : +94 11 2758000, +94 11 2802022

Email : [info@sjp.ac.lk](mailto:info@sjp.ac.lk)

Web : [www.sjp.sc.lk](http://www.sjp.sc.lk)

