



Vision

To secure Sri Lanka by nurturing visionary, collective, and decisive leaders in security policy and decision making

Institute of National Security Studies (INSS) is the premier think tank on national security in Sri Lanka established under the Ministry of Defence

INSS Celebrates the dawn of the New Year on 02nd January 2023



Institute of National Security Studies (INSS), the premier think tank on National Security, commenced duties for the New Year 2023 on 02nd January 2023 under the patronage of Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena, RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc Acting Director General and Director (Communications and Publications). INSS staff, including Ms. Nilmini Ulluwishewa, Director of Administration, were also present at this occasion. It also coincides with the 6th Anniversary since officially inaugurating the Institute.

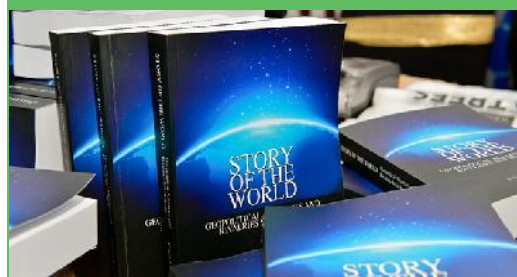


INSS Staff Participates in a Book launch by Colonel Nalin Herath titled 'Geopolitical Alliances and Rivalries Set in Stone'

The book titled 'Story of the World Geopolitical Alliances and Rivalries Set in Stone' authored by Colonel Nalin Herath RSP, the Director Media, Ministry of Defence was ceremonially launched at the Officers' Mess Banquet Hall, Rock House Army Camp, Colombo, on 12th January 2023.

author. Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Acting Director General, Institute of National Security Studies, Ms. Nilmini Ulluwishewa, Director (Administration) and Ms. Charani Patabendige, Acting Research Analyst and Research Assistant were invited for the event.

The State Minister of Defence, Hon. Premitha Bandara Tennakoon, was the Chief Guest for the event while the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, General Kamal Gunaratne (Retd.) WWV RWP RSP USP ndc psc MPhil was the Guest of Honour. The Chief of Defence Staff, General Shavendra Silva WWV RWP RSP VSV USP ndc psc MPhil, also attended the event as a special invitee on the cordial invitation extended by both the M D Gunasena & Co (Pvt) Ltd and the



New Staff for Research Department



Wing Commander Udith Pathirana psc
Military Research Officer (Air Force)

Wing Commander Udith Pathirana was appointed as the Military Research Officer (SL Air Force) on 02nd of January 2023. He has completed his Masters' Degree in Defence & Strategic Studies at the General Sir John Kothalawala Defence University, Sri Lanka. Further, he is currently following a Bachelor of Science Degree in Management in the same university and has completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Management as well. He has successfully completed the Junior Staff Course in the Sri Lanka Army and Junior Command and Staff Course in the Sri Lanka Air Force. Hence, he has successfully completed the Young Officers Course in MHOW, India. Furthermore, he has graduated from the Defence Services Command and Staff College at Sapugaskanda, Sri Lanka which earned him the distinguished title of 'psc'.



Ms. Madhushi Sandamini
Research Assistant



Lt Col E M G Nalin Samaranayake psc IG
Military Research Officer (Army)

Lieutenant Colonel E M G N Samaranayake psc IG SLA was appointed as the Military Research Officer (SL Army) on 30th of January 2023. He joined to the 17 Intake of the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU). Upon completion of the basic training, he was commissioned to the Regiment of Sri Lanka Artillery. He has followed many local and foreign courses. He has obtained his BSc (Management and Technical Sciences degree) from the General Sir John Kothalawala Defence University. Further, he was graduated from Defence Services Command and Staff College in year 2011. He obtained Masters of Military Science and Management degree from University of Peshawar, Pakistan. Currently, he is reading for Masters in Management at the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University. During his military career, he has held numerous important appointments in Command, staff and instructional capacities.



Ms. Chandani Dissanayake
Research Assistant



Ms. Avani Sasanka Samarakoon
Research Analyst

Ms. Avani Sasanka Samarakoon was appointed as the new Research Analyst of the INSS on 15th February 2023. She has successfully completed her Bachelor of Laws at General Sir John Kotelawala Defense University. She is also in possession of a postgraduate diploma in criminology and criminal justice from the University of Sri Jayewardenapura and Master of Laws in International Business Laws from the Cardiff Metropolitan University (UK). She has worked as a research assistant at the University of Sri Jayewardenapura for two years prior to joining INSS.



Ms. Minoshi Perera
Research Assistant

Ms. Madhushi Sandamini is a Research Assistant of the INSS on 15th February 2023. She is a graduate in Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from the University of Kelaniya with a second-class upper division. She is currently reading for a Master of Arts in Sociology (MA) at the

University of Colombo. In addition, she has worked in several development projects conducted by Ministry of Irrigation and Ministry of Urban Development Authority as a Research Assistant.

Ms. Chandani Dissanayake is a Research Assistant of the INSS on 15th February 2023. She is a graduate who graduated in Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Sociology from the University of Kelaniya and currently she is reading for a Master of Social Sciences in Sociology (MSSc) in University of Kelaniya. She has successfully completed a certificate course in Postgraduate Research, faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo. Before joining INSS she was a Project Assistant at the Open University of Sri Lanka.

Ms. Minoshi Perera joined INSS as an Intern (Research) on 18th December 2022 and was subsequently selected to serve as a Research Assistant with effect from 15th February 2023. She holds a Bachelor of Laws degree from the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University and Bachelors of Arts in English and Linguistics from the University of Sri Jayewardenapura. She is currently reading for her Masters in Human Rights and Democratization at the University of Colombo.

INSS Staff Participates at the 9th Biennial Conference on Science and Technology Sri Lanka (BICOST-IX)

The National Science Technology Commission of Sri Lanka (NASTEC) organized the 9th Biennial Conference on Science and Technology Sri Lanka (BICOST-IX) which was held on 23rd and 24th of March 2023 at the Waters Edge, Colombo.

The NASTEC is mandated to provide a platform to discuss science and technology in Sri Lanka as per section 5(e) with section 2 of the Science and Technology Development Act of 1994.



Research staff of INSS, including Acting Director General and Director (Communications and Publications), Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena, RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Lieutenant Colonel Nalin Samaranayake, Military Research Officer and Ms. Chandani Dissanayake, Research Assistant represented the INSS at the aforementioned conference. The conference consisted of four parallel technical sessions under the following thematic areas; Climate Change, Agriculture, and Food Safety; Nutraceuticals and Lead Medicinal Compounds from Endemic BioResources; Natural Resources and Minerals; and Renewable Energy, Green Hydrogen, and Energy Storage.



INSS Organizes a Discussion on ‘Marine Environment Protection in Sri Lanka: A Lesson Learnt from Maritime Accidents’

Institute of National Security Studies (INSS), the premier think tank on national security established under the Ministry of Defence organized a Close Door Round Table Discussion on “Marine Environment Protection in Sri Lanka: A Lesson Learnt from Recent Maritime Accidents” on Wednesday, the 18th of January 2023, from 1400hrs to 1600hrs (IST) via Zoom. The four esteemed Guest Speakers for the event were, Mrs. Dharshani Lahandapura, the Chairperson of the Marine Environment Protection Authority, Prof. Prasanthi Gunawardene, Department of Forestry and Environmental Science, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Dr. Dan Malika Gunesekara, Attorney-at- Law and Captain (G) Lasantha Vithanage, the Commanding Officer of SLCGS Suraksha, Sri Lanka Coast Guard. The moderator for this informative and timely session was Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena, Acting Director General and Director (Communications and Publications), INSS. The audience comprised ministry officials, academics, researchers, policymakers, representatives from Sri Lanka Armed Forces, Sri Lanka Police, Sri Lanka Coast Guard and Civil Security Department.

The first speaker, Mrs. Dharshani Lahandapura commenced her presentation by giving a brief introduction of the Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA) and its role and functions in protecting marine environment in Sri Lanka. In addition, she also discussed the implementation of the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NOS COP) in Sri Lanka and the application of the Marine Pollution



prevention Act. Finally, she elaborated how MEPA responded to recent ship-based accidents such as MT New Diamond and MV X-Press Pearl.

The second speaker, Prof. Prashanthi Gunawardene delivered her presentation focused on the economic valuation of maritime accidents, along with the statistical assessments of recent marine environmental damages and estimated compensations for the same. Finally, she highlighted the complexities in applying marine environmental valuation and the elements impact on maritime security.

Third speaker, Dr. Dan Malika Gunesekara

presented the applicability of law after a maritime accident. During his presentation he discussed threats posed by ship wreck and the legal status of shipwrecks in Merchant Shipping Act No.52 of 1971. Furthermore, he highlighted gaps in application of international laws into the prevailing local laws.

Finally, the fourth speaker, Captain (G) Lasantha Vithanage brought out a clear insight on the topic of the Marine Emergency Response and Role of Sri Lanka Coast Guard. During his discussion he highlighted major marine emergencies, the duties and responsibilities of Coast Guard when activated NOS COP and maritime casualty management. At the end, he discussed the Sri Lanka Coast Guard capabilities and the equipment available for maritime disaster response.

The session was followed by an interesting and interactive Q and A session, which generated an interactive discussion between the speakers and the audience. After making his concluding remarks, the moderator, Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena brought the event to a closure. Commander Amila Prasanga, Military Research Officer was the overall coordinator of the event.

U.S. Embassy in partnership with General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University Launches “A Shared Vision for the Indo-Pacific: Implications for South Asia”



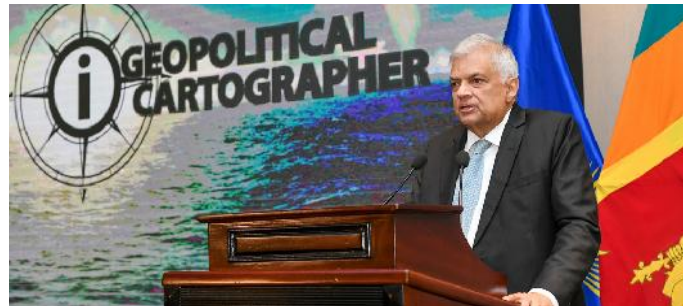
In partnership with the U.S. Embassy, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University organized an event to launch the publication “A Shared Vision for the Indo-Pacific: Implications for South Asia” on 27th February 2023. Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Acting Director General, and Director (Communications and Publications) represented INSS in this event. Further, the discussion is based on the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy: strategic support and its impact on prosperity, democracy, and security.



Meeting at Ministry of Education on Policy Recommendations

Institute of National Security Studies held a meeting with the Ministry of Education to discuss a few policy recommendations forwarded by the Institute on the 02nd of February 2023 at the Ministry of Education. Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Acting Director General and Director (Communications and Publications), and Ms. Kalpani Gunathilake, Research Assistant represented INSS in the above mentioned meeting.

Staff of INSS Participates at the Inaugural Lecture Organized by the Geographical Cartographer



The staff of the Institute of National Security Studies (INSS) attended the Inaugural Lecture delivered by Rt. Hon. Patricia Scotland, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth. The event was organized by the Geopolitical Cartographer on 03rd February 2023, from 1630 hrs. to 1830 hrs. at the Sapphire Ballroom of the Courtyard by Marriott in Colombo. The theme of the event was 'Role of the Commonwealth in an Era of "Polycrisis"'. The event was conducted under the patronage of the Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.



INSS Launches The 'Defence Review 2022'

The Institute of National Security Studies, the premier think tank on national security established under the Ministry of Defence launched "Defence Review 2022" in a simple ceremony held at the conference hall of the institute 8th floor of the Suhurupaya building, Battaramulla, on 9th February 2023. Defence Review is the annual scholarly international journal of INSS which is a double-blind peer-reviewed journal.

General G D H Kamal Gunaratne (Retd) WWW RWP RSP USP ndc psc MPhil Secretary to the Ministry of Defence graced the occasion as the Chief Guest while the audience comprised of Ven. Professor Nedalagamuwe Dhammadinna Thero, Senior Lecturer, Department of Modern Languages, University of Kelaniya, Mr. E A Jayantha Edirisinghe, Additional Secretary (Defence Services), Ministry of Defence, Professor Hemanthi Ranasinghe, Senior Professor, Department of Forestry and Environmental Science, University of Sri Jayewardenepura attended the event.



The paper titled "On Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield Process Automation" was written by Dr. Janaka Alawathugoda, Dr. Isuru Nawinna, Engineer Hishan Adikari, Engineer Sathyanga Agalakumbura, and Engineer Jayamal Jayamaha. The paper titled "The Landmines- Resulted Environmental Consequences; A Review Based on Post-War Scenario" was written by Mr. K. Nijamir, Head of the Department of Geography Faculty of Arts and Culture, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. Dr. Punsara Amarasinghe was the author of the paper titled "Class of Soft Power in Sri Lanka; China Vs. India's View of Buddhist Foreign Policy".



INSS Bids Farewell to Two Members of the Research Department



Wing Commander Meuna Heendeniya
Military Research Officer (Air Force)

Wing Commander Meuna Heendeniya was appointed as the Military Research Officer (SL Air Force) to the Institute of National Security Studies on 17th August 2020, and contributed by organizing, coordinating, and participating in national security discussions, and in research pertaining on national security. Further, he participated in the National Defence College Research Symposium titled "Exploring Multinodal Security Dynamics" held on 17th August 2022 at the KDU auditorium. INSS wishes him all the best in his future endeavors.



Lieutenant Colonel Indika Chandrakumara USP psc IG SLA
Military Research Officer (Army)

Lieutenant Colonel Indika Chandrakumara USP psc IG SLA was appointed as a Military Research Officer (SL Army) to the Institute of National Security Studies on 18th July 2022. He contributed to works related to National Security in Sri Lanka. Moreover, he participated in the National Defence College Research

Symposium titled "Exploring Multinodal Security Dynamics" held on 17th August 2022 at KDU auditorium, and International Research Conference - Kotelawala Defense University 2022 held on 29th and 30th of September 2023. INSS wishes him all the best in his future career.

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Colonel Nalin Herath Conducts a Lecture on Leadership

The Institute of National Security Studies conducted a Leadership Enrichment Programme on 17th of February 2023 to empower the staff members with the desired acquaintance, and master their leadership attributes. The lecture was delivered by the Director of Media & Spokesman of the Ministry of Defence, Colonel M B Nalin Herath RSP at the conference hall at INSS.

During his lecture, he highlighted the five C's, which encompass the key leadership traits considered the bedrock of effective leadership including Character, Commitment, Courage, Confidence, and Communication. Thereby, he highlighted the essence of leadership qualities which everyone should develop as a skill. The lecture culminated after a fruitful Q and A session.



Workshop by Mrs. Ama Dissanayake

The Institute of National Security Studies invited Mrs. Ama Dissanayake, a national trainer & a lecturer in positive thinking to conduct a workshop on Personal development and motivation lecture on the theme of "How to be a Valuable Person" on 23rd February 2023 at the conference hall of INSS. This event was organized for the members of the INSS to motivate themselves and reach higher goals despite the challenges encountered by them in both official and personal capacities in their daily life.

During the workshop, she discussed ways to enhance the determination and future goals of staff members, and thus, she pointed out the essence of positive thinking, which helps to attain life goals. Finally, she stated the need to create a positive environment to support them in having a successful future.



INSS Staff Participates in a Lecture Titled 'Uniting For A Greener World: The Role of International Cooperation In Protecting The Environment'

The staff of the Institute of National Security Studies (INSS) participated in a panel discussion with Mr. Erik Solheim as the main speaker titled 'Uniting for a Greener World: The Role of International Cooperation in Protecting the Environment,' which was organized by the think tank, Geopolitical Cartographer on 28th March 2023, from 1530 hrs. to 1830 hrs. at the 'Jasmine Hall'



of BMICH. Mr. Erik Solheim was also the former Norwegian peace envoy to Sri Lanka during the separatist war and is presently the Sixth and former United Nations (UN) Environment Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General of the UN. The event was conducted under the patronage of Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe, President of the Democratic, Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Research Staff Defend their Selected Titles for the Individual Research



The research staff of the Institute of National Security Studies defended their titles selected for the Individual research work they will be conducting during the year 2023. The event was held on 03rd March 2023 at the conference hall at INSS. Mr. Lasantha Noel Wickremesooriya, an honorary senior fellow of INSS and a management consultant at Strategy and Leadership Inc (Pvt.) was invited to assist the researchers in selecting an appropriate topic related to national security perspectives. His insightful guidance was highly appreciated in enhancing our research areas.

Visit of Defence Attaché of India to INSS



Institute of National Security Studies welcomed Capt. Vikas Sood, Defence Attaché of India, on 29th March 2023. The Acting Director General of INSS welcomed the Defence Attaché and gave an introduction about the role and responsibilities of the institute. Further, he explained the research work and other events conducted by the INSS. The Defence attaché also exchanged views and assured all cooperation from the Indian side with special emphasis on collaboration with other think tanks in India. It was a productive discussion to enhance the relationship between the two countries.

INSS Organizes a Round Table Discussion titled 'Past, Present and Future Pandemics: Think Globally, Act Locally'

Institute of National Security Studies (INSS), the premier think tank on national security established under the Ministry of Defence organized a Round Table Discussion on "Past, Present and Future Pandemics: Think Globally, Act Locally" on Wednesday, the 15th of February 2023 from 1400hrs to 1530hrs via Zoom. The three esteemed Guest Speakers for the event were Dr. Samitha Ginige, the Consultant Epidemiologist, Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health, Dr. Pradeep Kumarasinghe de Silva, the Consultant Physician, National Hospital of Sri Lanka, and Prof. Suranjith Seneviratne, the Consultant in Clinical Immunology, Allergy, and Immunogenetics, Royal Free Hospital and University College London, United Kingdom. The event was moderated by Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Acting Director General and Director (Communications and Publications), of the Institute of National Security Studies. The audience comprised ministry officials, academics, researchers, policymakers, representatives from Sri Lanka Armed Forces, Sri Lanka Police, and Civil Security Department.

Dr. Pradeep Kumarasinghe de Silva pointed out a detailed analysis on past epidemics in history which caused millions of deaths. In addition, he also discussed the emergence of COVID-19. Finally, he elaborated the



difference between COVID-19 and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

Prof. Suranjith Seneviratne delivered his presentation focused on the lessons to be learnt for the future from COVID-19, along with the Pandemic Response Action Plan which is implemented to take positive and correct actions for future pandemics. Finally, he highlighted the approach of United Kingdom to stand against COVID-19.

Finally, Dr. Samitha Ginige presented on the

emergence of pathogens. During his presentation he discussed how the pandemic transformed in to a global issue in the current context. Furthermore, he highlighted the strategies to prevent the current situation of the pandemic.

Following up, several timely related questions under the discussed topic of concern were posed by the audience in the Q and A segment, where each speaker was directed with a question as per their topic of discussion. The speakers responded constructively along with adequate facts as well as realistic concerns of the current context.

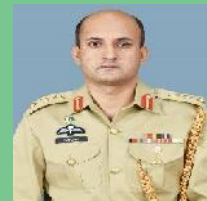
Guest Lecture to the Officers in Army War College, Buttala

Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Acting Director General, and Director (Communications and Publications) of the Institute of National Security Studies (INSS) visited Army War College, Buttala on 13th March 2023, and delivered a lecture on the theme 'National

Security and the Role of the Institute of National Security Studies. Rear Admiral Gunawardena presented a brief overview of the functions of the institute after briefly explaining National security and its various facets in the current century. The lecture concluded after an interactive Q and A session with the audience.



Visit by Defence Advisor of Pakistan to INSS



Institute of National Security Studies welcomed Colonel Muhammad Safdar Khan, psc, Defence Advisor of Pakistan, on 15th March 2023. The Acting Director General of INSS gave an introduction about the role and responsibilities of the institute. Later, he elaborated on the research work and other events conducted by the INSS. The defence advisor also extended the fullest cooperation for INSS from Pakistan. It was a successful discussion to build up relations with Pakistan, a country in our region.

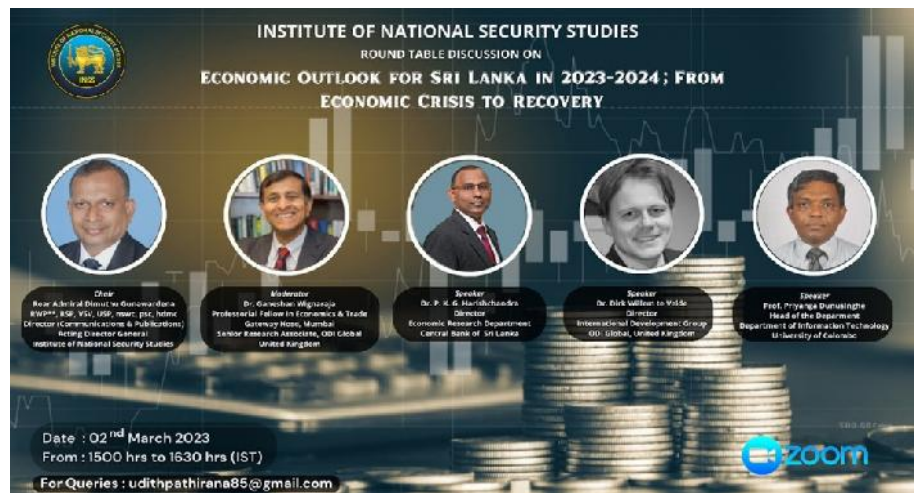
INSS Attends the 52nd Anniversary of Independence and National Day of Bangladesh

Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Acting Director-General, and Director (Communications and Publications) of the INSS participated the reception hosted by the Bangladesh High Commission at the Shangri La Hotel, Colombo on 27th March 2023. The Minister of Education of Sri Lanka graced the event as the Chief Guest. The reception was also attended by Cabinet Ministries, Heads of Diplomatic Missions and International Organizations in Colombo, diplomats, and high civil and military officials.



INSS Organizes a Round Table Discussion Titled ‘Economic Outlook For Sri Lanka In 2023-2024 – From Economic Crisis To Recovery’

Institute of National Security Studies (INSS), the premier think tank on national security established under the Ministry of Defence organized a Close Door Round Table Discussion on “Economic outlook for Sri Lanka in 2023-2024 - from economic crisis to recovery?” on Thursday, the 02nd of March 2023, from 1500hrs to 1630hrs (IST) via Zoom. The chair for this informative session was Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP** RSP VSV USP nswc psc hdmc, Acting Director General and Director (Communications and Publications) of the Institute of National Security Studies (INSS). The three esteemed Guest Speakers for the event were Dr. P.K.G. Harischandra, Director, Economic Research Department, Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Prof. Priyanga Dunusinghe, Professor in Economics, Head, Department of Information Technology, University of Colombo and Dr. Dirk Willem te Velde, Director, International Economic Development Group, ODI Global, United Kingdom. This informative and timely session was moderated by Dr. Ganeshan Wignaraja, a Professorial Fellow in Economics and Trade at Gateway House in Mumbai and Senior Research Associate at ODI Global in London. The audience comprised of ministry officials, academics, researchers, policymakers, representatives from Sri Lanka Armed Forces and Police. Dr. P.K.G. Harischandra explained about the current status of inflation, GDP, trade deficit and fiscal deficits etc. In addition, he further



elaborated on recent economic developments and anticipated improvements on the economy of Sri Lanka. Thereafter, he has emphasized the remarkable way forward in the current situation.

Dr. Dirk Willem te Velde focused on the Lessons for Sri Lanka through international experience and elaborated on a bird’s eye view of the situation. Corollary, he has been giving valuable insights on policy challenges for the growth of Sri Lanka.

Finally, Prof. Priyanga Dunusinghe highlighted

the policies for inclusive growth in Sri Lanka. He critically analyzed Sri Lanka’s predicament and suggested a way forward towards the recovery.

Following up, several timely related questions under the discussed topic of concern were posed by the audience in the Q and A segment, where each speaker was directed with a question as per their topic of discussion. The speakers responded constructively along with adequate facts as well as realistic concerns of the current context.

INSS Staff Participates in a symposium titled “Maritime Security in the Bay of Bengal 2023”

The Royal United Services Institute, UK, a Defence and Security think tank in partnership with the Pathfinder Foundation, Sri Lanka, organized the Maritime Security in the Bay of Bengal Symposium on 24th March 2023 at the Galle Face Hotel, Colombo. HE Sarah Hulton OBE, British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, delivered the keynote address during the opening remarks of the symposium. Ambassador Bernard Goonetilleke, Chairman of Pathfinder Foundation, delivered the welcome speech. Professor Rasheduzzaman, Lead Researcher of Bangladesh Institute of Maritime Research Development, and Nur Ahmed, Research Officer of Bangladesh Institute of Maritime Research Development researchers, presented the findings from the research conducted over the past six months in collaboration

with Royal United Services Institute Further, a distinguished panel commented on the research findings at the symposium. Research staff of INSS, including Director (Communications and Publications), Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena, RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Commander Amila Prasanga, Military Research Officer and Mr. Thusitha Bulathgama, Research Assistant represented the INSS at the aforementioned conference. The conference consisted of four discussions as follows; Illegal and Forced Migration - the challenge of human trafficking and other maritime crime; Illegal fishing - the challenges with monitoring and tracking illegal activities across the region; Climate change and Environmental Protection - impacts of sea-level rise, natural disasters, pollution and plastics in the sea; and the future of regional

cooperation – the role of regional actors in promoting regional cooperation to tackle maritime security challenges in the Region.



INSS Participates in the Commemoration of International Mother Language Day – 2023, Organized by the Bangladesh High Commission

Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**, ‘Mother Language/Unity in Diversity.’ The celebration was held at the Independence Square, Colombo 07, with the patronage of Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena who was the Chief Guest. Ministry officials, academia, political and cultural personalities, and students from schools across the island also participated in the event.



The Progress of Sustainable Development Goals in Sri Lanka by 2022

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by all United Nations Member States including developed and developing countries in 2015 are a collection of 17 interlinked aspirational global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs were developed in the Post-2015 Development Agenda as the future global development framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which ended in 2015. These 17 goals encompassing 169 targets and 244 indicators meet the urgent political, economic and environmental challenges facing the world.

There are 194 countries including Sri Lanka that have agreed to comply with SDGs by improving lives while protecting the planet over the next fifteen years (by 2030). The 17 SDGs or Global Goals is being achieved via initiating and continuing a variety of development-oriented programs in Sri Lanka. This attempt brings out the prevailing results from the indicators related to SDG progress in Sri Lanka for the first 6 goals.

Progress of Sustainable Development Goals

The first goal of 'End poverty in all its forms everywhere' includes 7 targets and 14 indicators. According to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL, 2020) statistics, poverty headcount ratio indicates a decline from 8.9 (2009/10) to 6.7 (2012/13) to 4.1 (2016). Further Gini coefficient of household income in 2016 has been recorded as 0.45.

SDG number two; 'End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture' includes 8 targets and 13 indicators. As per the CBSL statistics, the average daily kilocalorie intake was 2,111 (2012/13) and 2,095 in 2016.

The third goal; 'Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages' includes 13 targets and 27 indicators. Accordingly, the maternal mortality ratio, premature mortality and infant deaths are crucial criteria. In 2016, the crude birth rate was 15.6 per 1,000 persons and has declined to 13.8 in 2020. The crude death rate also indicates a slight decline in number from 6.2 per 1,000 persons in 2016 to 6.0 in 2020. The infant mortality rate shows an increase from 8.2 per 1,000 live births in 2013 to 8.5% in 2015.

The fourth goal is to 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' that expands to include preprimary education, vocational and technical education for employment and entrepreneurship, qualified teachers and eliminate gender disparities in education, etc. According to the recent CBSL statistics, the entire literacy rate is 93.2% (2015) and 92.9% in 2019. The government expenditure on education in 2016 is 2.0% of the GDP while it has declined to 1.9% in 2019. University admission as a percentage of eligibility was 18.6 (2016) and 22.5% in 2019. With regard to primary education, the net school enrolment ratio was 95.9% in 2016 that has reached 91.1% in 2020.

In the 5th goal; 'Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls,' a sensitive concern is drawn to eliminate discrimination, violence and any other harmful practices against women and provide women with equal access to economic activities. Without any doubt, water is a basic need for living purposes. Therefore, the 6th goal is to 'Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. In 2020, access to safe drinking water is 93.2% per unit and it is an increase of 3.5% since 2016. Further, pipe-borne water access in 2016 was 47.7% which increased up to 53.1% in 2020.

Economic Growth and Key composite indices

During the past five years, the economic growth rate of Sri Lanka maintained a falling trend starting from 5% to 4.5%, 3.6%, 3.3% and 2.3% from 2015 to 2019 respectively. Due to the adverse effects caused by Covid-19, the economy reached a negative value of -3.6% last year. In 2019, the distribution of employees in agriculture (25.3%), industry (27.6%) and services (47.1%) have changed into agriculture (27.1%) industry (26.9%) and services (46.0%). Precisely the statistics indicate an increase in the agriculture employment and decrease in the other sectors.

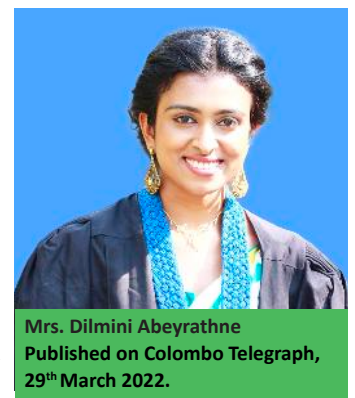
Concerning the economic and business climate and socio-economic infrastructure in the country, the Sri Lanka Prosperity Index (SLPI) provides a better guidance. Hence, the index has changed 0.783 to 0.786 from 2019 to 2020. Amidst the Covid-19 pressures, the sub-theme of the well-being of the people has improved from 0.731 to 0.795 while decreases were noticed in the other indicators as economy and business climate decreased from 0.871 to 0.846 and socio-economic infrastructure from 0.748 to 0.718. Furthermore, the Human Development Index ranking for Sri Lanka has improved 73rd place to 72nd place from 2015 to 2019.

Current Situation

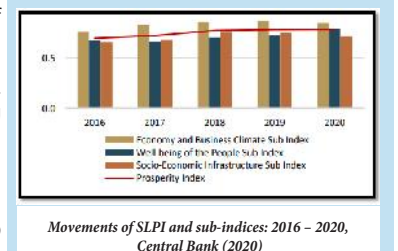
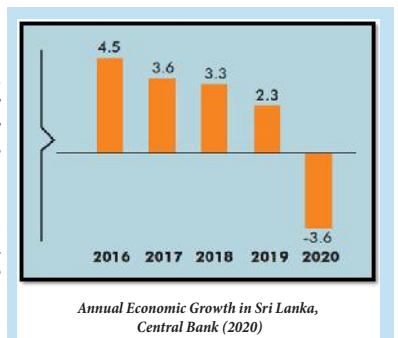
Even though Sri Lanka has shown positive trends in the Human Development Index (HDI), the current situation of economic security is threatening. People are trapped in an obscure economic crisis. The way out is uncertain and unpredictable. Shortages in necessary food items, medicine, petroleum products and continuous bans on imports add to the distress of people day by day. Therefore, some of the aforementioned triumphs in SDGs are at a stake at present. Hopefully, crises do not prevail every day. They vanish gradually with time and long-term solutions for a persisting recovery.

A way forward

According to the World Bank, Sri Lankan economy has already shown signs of weaknesses prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Owing to the decreasing trend of foreign reserves, allocating funds to uplift SDGs has become a daunting task. In order to overcome the financial issues, academics, economists and other policy-making authorities have suggested seeking the assistance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and establish economic security to enable the flow of investments into Sri Lanka.



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