



NEWSLETTER

January 2022 | Volume 01

COVER STORY

Kalladi bridge is connecting the suburb of Kallady to the town of Batticaloa. This was constructed in 1924 under British Colonial rule and was known by the name Lady Manning Bridge.

Being a special destination well known for the panoramic beauty and the melodious tones of singing fish, Kalladi Bridge has faced harsh weather conditions and dark shadows of war. Photographer C. Delakshan caught the glimpse of these youths enjoying their leisure on Kalladi Bridge amidst the pandemic and mild rains.

C. Delakshan | SLAS 2017 Intake



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2022

Message from the SASA President

My heartiest wishes for new year 2022 are extended to the fellow members of SASA.

Since Sri Lanka Administrative Service has faced numerous challenges, your cooperation and tremendous service to keep SASA live, is highly appreciated. Bearing the massive responsibility to sustain the service while contributing for the development of the country, SASA has extended its wings even amidst the pandemic.

Our association will be sharing all its future ventures through the newsletters. I invite all the members to gather with SASA to make our future goals a reality.



Padula Sri Rohana De Silva

Message from the Editor

SASA is humbly honored to share the January issue of the newsletter with all the fellow members of the service. SASA is walking to 2022 with fresh hopes to communicate about our latest activities through this newsletter.

I cordially extend my invitation to our members island-wide to make this newsletter a valuable platform to share their valuable views and insights. You can mail your articles to sasa.execo@gmail.com.

Please feel free to contact
Dharanee Weerasekara (Editor) 0773091264,
Kalindra Jayaweera Fernando
(Assistant Editor) 0718016096 for any of your queries. Wishing you a glorious year ahead.



Dharanee Weerasekara

Special Notice

Country Winning SASA- Branch Reorganization Programme

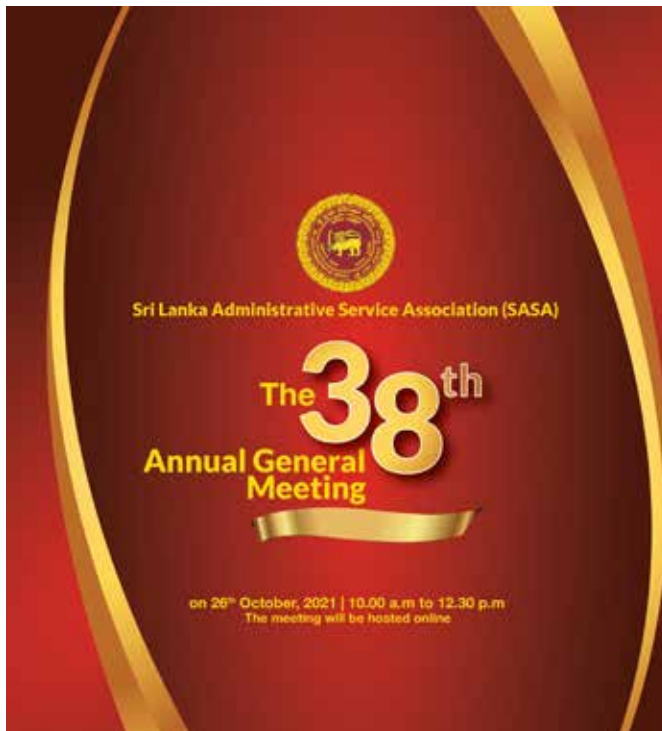
The Executive Committee (2021/2022) of Sri Lanka Administrative Service Association has decided to recognize branches of all institutions, including Ministries, Departments and Districts considering the importance of making the organization more powerful.

All District Secretaries are requested to take necessary arrangements to fix dates for reorganization before 15th January 2022.



Shantha Weerasinghe
Shantha Weerasinghe (National Organizer)

OVERVIEW ON THE JOURNEY OF SASA DURING THE PAST QUARTER



SRI LANKA ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE ASSOCIATION (SASA) 38TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 38th AGM of SASA was held on October 26, 2021 at 10.00 a.m. at the Auditorium of District Secretariat, Colombo. According to the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic situation related health guidelines, only a limited number of members were participated physically.



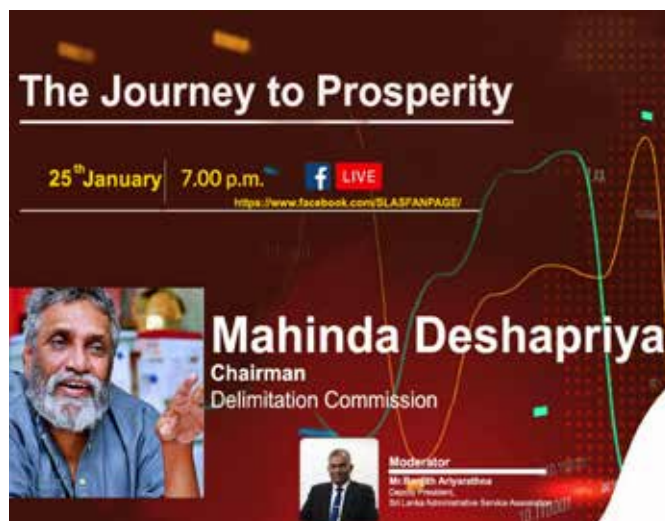
They were comprised of 37th Executive Committee and the nominees for the office of the 38th Executive Committee. All other members of SASA were invited to participate through the zoom links adhering to government health regulations



AN HOUR WITH SASA



An hour with SASA is an online forum to discuss the prevailing situations, challenges and opportunities for the country while linking it with the role of public service. A series of discussions were conducted online under the theme 'a walk through the budget 2022' with the participation of veterans in public service and Parliamentarians.



SASA HAD A MEETING WITH THEN SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER MR. GAMINI SEDARA SENARATH ON 9TH DECEMBER 2021

GALLE DISTRICT BRANCH REORGANIZATION PROGRAMME



SASA PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE ONLINE DISCUSSION

This online discussion series was conducted with the participation of Senior members of SLAS and CAS during the past month through Facebook live.





SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION BETWEEN SASA-EXCO AND THEN SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT

The President of SASA extended his gratitude to the Secretary to the President for allocating a date for the meeting and explained briefly about the upcoming events by SASA. He also emphasized the fact that SLAS is having a strong mechanism to actively contribute for the development of the country even during the pandemic period. The necessity of maintaining a closer and stronger communication and coordination between SASA and the higher Public Officials was explained in this discussion. The President sought the assistance in executing this process in order to find the effective solutions for the issues regarding SLAS.

The SASA President requested for a leadership initiative from the Secretary to the President, in order to strengthen the second level leadership of the public service through capacity development.

The SASA President requested for a leadership initiative from the Secretary to the President, in order to strengthen the second level leadership of the public service through capacity development. The Secretary to the President extended his greetings to the newly elected Executive Committee and mentioned that he can be reached through telephone at any time and the meetings can be arranged at very short notice.

The Secretary to the President commented that the expected role is not rendered from the senior officials in the process of building up and mentoring the second level leadership. He mentioned that the prevailing promotion scheme is not satisfactory and young officers should be given opportunity for promotion

based on their skills and capabilities. The Secretary to the President also appreciated the significant service given by the District Secretaries and Divisional Secretaries during hard times.

He also stated that a series of seminar will be held in order to exchange views with higher public officers regarding the execution of budget proposals and other important matters.

The SASA President emphasized the importance of the recommendations and suggestions highlighted by the Secretary to the President and ensured the fact that SASA will be acting in a closer coordination and maximum contribution.



KEY MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE EXCO- MEETING

It was noted that the Cabinet approval has been granted to increase the maximum age of retirement up to 65 years and the Secretary, Ministry of Public Services has issued the circular accordingly. The Executive Committee requested to committee already appointed in this regard, to study the PA Circular No. 02/2022 and submit a report on the impact of the same to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

It was decided to remind the Prime Minister's Office to organize the meeting with relevant stakeholders regarding the establishment of SASA resource center, as agreed during the meeting with the Secretary to the Prime Minister. The SASA special subcommittee appointed for this purpose was requested to prepare an activity plan for this venture.

It was reported that several Branch Association meetings were organized recently. It was further reported that the other meetings will be organized at the earliest. SASA Ex-officio members from the Association of Divisional Secretaries & Assistant Divisional Secretaries were requested to provide the maximum support for the reorganization of branch associations.

It was emphasized that the Grievance Handling should be one of the prime tasks of the SASA Executive Committee so as to build the confidence among the members of SASA.

Necessity of a fundraising activity was stressed. There were proposals to conduct an online lottery, a YouTube channel and a musical event. The relevant SASA subcommittee was requested to discuss and identify suitable programmes to be implemented at the earliest.

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அழகினில் அடங்கி
தானும் அதுவாய் ஆனதுவோ?

Navajeevana Navaretnarajah,
Assistant Commissioner of Labour,
Trincomalee

NEWSROOM

SLAS 2021 (Limited) Batch - Induction Training



Fifty cadets of SLAS (Limited) Batch 2021 were welcomed to SLIDA on 16th June 2021 for the induction training programme. The training programme was conducted over a one-month period online.

It is our honour to have Mr. Lalith Weeratunga, principal advisor to the President as the guest speaker for the SLAS (Limited) Batch 2021 inauguration.

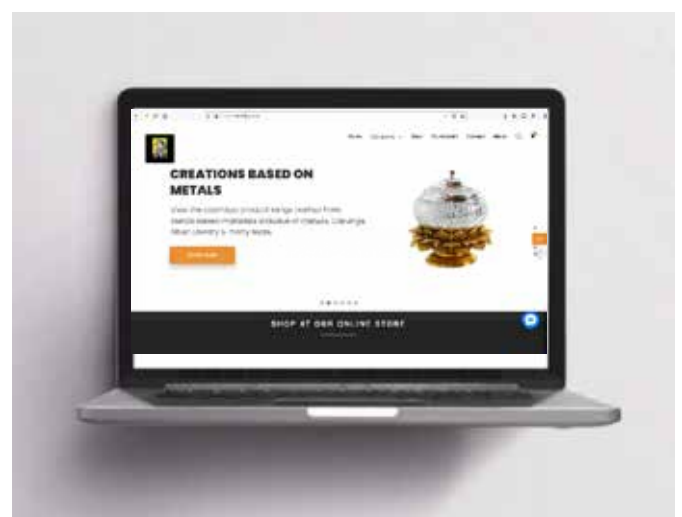
The event was graced by Mr. Weeratunga by delivering a speech on **“SLAS officer as a role model for an ethical and innovative public service”**.

The event was graced by the presence of Secretary, Ministry of Public Services, Provincial Councils & Local Government and Director General of SLIDA.

National Crafts Council Launches lakshilpa.com

National Crafts Council has launched its online shopping platform Lakshilpa.com recently.

Through this innovative introduction Sri Lankan Craftsmen will be getting a vivid local and international market for their products’ said Mr. Buddhika Lakmal, the Director (Development). Customers can view and order the items online and the products will be delivered through Sri Lanka Postal Service.



Congratulations to the newly appointed Secretary to the President

Gamini Senarath, a senior official of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service, was appointed as the new Secretary to the President. The letter of appointment was handed over by the President to Mr. Senarath at the Presidential Secretariat.

Mr. Senarath, a Special Grade Officer in the Sri Lanka Administrative Service, has served as the Additional Secretary and Chief of Staff to the Fifth Executive President Mahinda Rajapaksa. He also served as the Prime Minister's Secretary in 2004-2005, 2019 and in the present government after Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa assumed office.

Mr. Senarath received his primary and secondary education from Methodist College-Hakmana, Rahula College-Matara and Richmond College-Galle.

He obtained his first degree from the University of Kelaniya in 1984 and joined the Sri Lanka Administrative Service. He holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Computer Technology from the University of Colombo and has completed training courses in a number of countries including the United Kingdom, Japan, Singapore, Pakistan, Germany and France.

He has held senior positions in a number of government institutions such as the Department of Motor Traffic and the Department of Immigration and Emigration, and has chaired a number of state-owned enterprises, including the People's Bank, Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation and Litro Gas Lanka Limited.

Mr. Senarath assumed his duties amidst the chanting of Seth Pirith by the Mahasangha.



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Congratulations to the newly appointed Secretary to the Prime Minister

Mr Anura Dissanayake, a Special Grade Officer of Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS) assumed duties as Secretary to the Prime Minister.

D.M. Anura Dissanayake was appointed as the new Secretary to the Prime Minister and his appointment letter was handed over by the President.

Mr. Dissanayake, a senior official of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service, served as the Secretary to the Ministry of Irrigation.

He has held the post of Secretary to several Ministries and is an experienced public servant who has held many senior positions in the government sector.



VOICES FROM OVERSEAS



First tell us about yourself

My name is Leelanath Wickrama Arachchi and my friends call me Wickrama. I have been serving as an officer of Sri Lanka Administrative Service from 2010 and I have worked in Sandilippay Divisional Secretariat, Eastern Provincial Council and in Election Commission of Sri Lanka. I am passionate about language policy in Sri Lanka as well as participatory policy designing.

What made you apply for Australian Awards Scholarship?

As members of Sri Lanka Administrative Service, we are fortunate to contribute the development of our country by making critical decisions at the right time. Australia Awards scholarships are given annually by the Australian Government as a development assistance for our country. Therefore, I thought that obtaining one such scholarship is a way of committing myself to the development of Sri Lanka. By giving these scholarships, Australians wish to help Sri Lanka to fill the knowledge gap in the development arena, and therefore, I also wanted to apply for an Australian Awards Scholarship and try to bring the modest knowledge of development to my country.



Secondly, I thought that Australian Awards Scholarship would give me the best learning experience. I finished my bachelor's degree from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura back in 2009. However, the Sri Lankan University learning process is more teacher-centric and therefore, sometimes it hinders students to develop their potentials but parroting the lecturers' ideas in assessments. Moreover, I wanted to give my son a strong basement in his education by introducing him to the student-centric primary education system in Australia. An awardee can experience the advanced technology and the customer friendly services and living in a country like Australia will give a person number of opportunities to improve.

How was your journey to Australia?

I was selected as an awardee in August 2019 and therefore I had enough time to get myself ready to meet the new challenges. I had almost four months for the preparation, however amidst that I had to fulfill my usual duties as the Assistant Commissioner of Elections of Polonnaruwa District, including the Presidential Election, 2019. I had a folder starting with the Application for the Award and, I still remember me seeing that folder growing thicker with various documents.

Then, on the 8th of January me, my wife and my son arrived in Canberra. It was all new for me as this was my first time in Australia. Soon after, I started the preparatory course in Crawford School of Public Policy at Australian National University.

What are your unforgettable memories in Australia?

It is not an exaggeration, if I say that every day is an unforgettable memory in my life. However, I can never forget the day I went to see the Sydney Opera House as it was my life-time dream. I really like the course I studied with Professor Hendriks, 'Public Participation and Engagement in Public Policy'.

She was an outstanding teacher, and the discussion was amazing which invited me to develop many fresh ideas and connect them to the context of my home country. Another one

memory is a bit of hilarious. I always wanted to donate blood and tried many times when I was in Sri Lanka but it failed as I had a history of 'Yellow Fever'. However, I had a chance to donate blood in Australia where they can still use blood from a person like me.

The donation was successful and after the donation I fainted and all the staff in the red cross happened to attend me until I recover. The red cross sent me a letter to appreciate my donation and to request me not to participate in any future blood donations.

As you think, why a young officer should follow a master's degree from a foreign university?

A foreign institute would not give you only a degree title, but also an ability to identify your skills in researching, critically analysing and arguing.

These skills are essential for budding officers to contribute to the country's development in their full capacity. And such skills never lead you to a wrong or a weak decision. Therefore, especially an officer of Sri Lanka Administrative Service should improve such abilities by engaging with an advanced study program. Australia Awards Scholarships allow you to select one from the best universities in the world which owns many leading scholars in the field.

Other than the modern academic skills you gain, the network you build in such institutes provides you with enormous opportunities in both your professional and personal lives. You will be studying with many other international students. They may bring their insights with the same policy issues you study, and these discussions will broaden your understanding about the issue as well as the possible policy solutions.

Such experiences are not possible in a local university and therefore, I highly recommend young officers to apply a degree program outside the country and let these different experiences enhance one's ability to perform as a good manager.

SUCCESS STORIES

Congratulations to Mrs. Anusha Gokula Fernando



Congratulations to Mrs. Anusha Gokula Fernando, Director General of Department of Manpower and Employment for winning the Certificate of Excellence in International Icon Award 2021.



Congratulations to Mrs. Himali Rathnaweera

Congratulations to Mrs. Himali Rathnaweera, Divisional Secretary of Galle, Four Gravettes for winning the Integrity Icon Peoples' Choice Award 2021.



VENTURING THROUGH A D. S. DIVISION

AMBAGAMUWA KORALAYA DIVISIONAL SECRETARIAT

Ambagamuwa Koralaya Divisional Secretariat located bordering to Yatiyanthota – Deraniyagala, Nawalapitiya, Nuwara Eliya, Balangoda and Rathnapura is well known for its active role during Sri Pada Perahera Season. While facing the massive threat of Covid-19 pandemic, Ambagamuwa Koralaya Divisional Secretariat could usher Sri Pada Perehera on last 17th December, in a majestic manner with their high managerial dedication.

Conducting the relevant meetings with all the stakeholders and Buddhist clergy along with the guidance of District Secretary for supplying the necessary infra-structural facilities is a main step in this process. The main motive of these meetings is to provide a smooth pilgrimage experience enriched with devotion for the devotees through effective environmental conservation and waste management. Thus, several Shramadana campaigns were conducted with the coordination of state and NGO sector for cleaning Sripada pilgrimage and Perahera routes.

Two Sripada Peraheras which commence from Rathnapura extend through Hatton and Bagawathalawa roads passing Ambagamuwa Koralaya D.S. So, the D.S office had to ensure the fact that necessary arrangements were made to usher the perahera in a grand scale. This Saman devi Perahera is ushered by Ambagamuwa Koralaya D.S at Kalugala Seema Malakaya with the participation of public officials and political leadership of the area.

Many Dansalas were organized in this festival season while ensuring the security and well being of the devotees during the season. Specially, Ambagamuwa D.S plays a magnificent role in developing and maintaining Sripada as a religious site, through settling the land related matters and other disputes.



Discussion with –

Mrs Sithara Gamage, Divisional Secretary,
Ambagamuwa Koralaya Division

Ms Shalika Lindukumbura, Divisional Secretary
(Acting)

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