

AAUP NEWSLETTER

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA

MARCH 2023

Message from the President, Prof. Pradeepa Bandaranayake



I am honored and privileged to welcome you to the Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya, the AAUP. While I complete my second consecutive year of presidency, I am proud to announce the launch of the “Pera Concept Store”, a one-stop solution for University memorabilia. In 2021, we laid the foundation for the Concept Store, and successfully launched it in full-scale in 2022. The funds raised through this project will be

utilized for the AAUP Needy Studentship Program, Student Welfare activities and the University Development Programs. Visit our Pera Store on campus, located at the Alumni Centre, Gatambe, Peradeniya or Online at <https://mypera.lk/> and support the community while proudly wearing the UoP merchandise. As the country is facing its worst economic crisis, the students need your assistance more to succeed. I thank all the foreign and local chapters and individuals who contributed to the AAUP Studentship Programs. The Counselling and Psychological Support project initiated by the Canberra Chapter of the AAUP and nurtured by the AAUP, grew up with the support of the Health Centre and the Counselling and the Psychological Support Unit of the University (CaPSU) and launched as a support system. I invite you to join alumni events, regional networking get-togethers, on-campus activities, and social media resources. Currently, four local chapters, eight overseas chapters, and seven faculty alumni associations are connected with the AAUP, giving you more opportunities to interact. At the same time, there are many ways to give back, not just monetarily, from career and academic mentoring to volunteering time at on- and off-campus events. Explore all that AAUP has to offer to stay connected, and build yourself, the AAUP and the UoP stronger. Thank you everyone for the support during my two-year tenure.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2022-2023

President: Prof. Pradeepa Bandaranayake

Immediate Past President: Prof. Siril Wijesundara

General Secretary: Dr Samanthika Jagoda

Treasurer: Dr Jayalath Edirisinghe

Vice Presidents: Prof. Swarna Wimalasiri

Eng. Sarath Seneviratne

Prof. Amalka Pinidiyaarachchi

Prof. Chantha Jayawardena

Mr. K.A.H Kalugampitiya

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Asst. Secretaries: Ms. Pamoda Jayasundera and
Dr Suranji Wijekoon

Asst. Treasurer: Mr. Ravi Mulleriyawa

Elected Committee Members:

Prof. Shyama Banneheka

Eng. Mrs. Inoka Liyanagama

Dr Dhilma Atapattu

Dr Kapila B. Wijayarathne

Mr. Nalin Jayatissa

Nominated Committee Members:

Mrs Lalitha Gunawardana, Late Mrs Sujatha
Karunaratne, Dr V. Sivakumar,

Dr A Danthanarayana, Prof. SP Nissanka,

Prof. Jayanthi Edirisinghe, Dr SB Botota,

Dr ML Pathirathna, Eng. Sisira Piyaratne,

Eng. Chandrasiri Liyanage, Prof. Dileep de Silva,

Dr Keerthi Mohotti, Prof. Leena Senheweera



OFFICIAL WEBSITE: <https://site.pdn.ac.lk/alumni/>

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/groups/149154311160>

33RD AGM WAS HELD ON MARCH 27, 2022



The 33rd AGM was held on 27th of March 2022 at the Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya under the Presidency of Prof. Pradeepa Bandaranayake. It was held as a hybrid event, virtually through Zoom and in-person with a limited number of participants. The Chief Guest on the occasion was Prof. M. P. Ranaweera, Department of Civil Engineering. The Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Patron of the AAUP, Prof. M.D. Lamawansa also graced the occasion. After the lighting of the traditional oil lamp by the dignitaries, the President welcomed the invitees and the members to the AGM. Prof. Ranaweera addressed the inaugural session on the theme '*Technology of our ancient Stupas and their rehabilitation and conservation*'. A key event of the AGM was the felicitation of Emeritus Prof. K. N. O Dharmadasa recognizing his services to the university and society. Prof. Dharmadasa joined virtually via Zoom. Mrs. Sujatha Karunaratne presented the citation on Prof. Dharmadasa. The vote of thanks was proposed by the General Secretary, Dr Samanthika Jagoda. Election of office bearers for the coming year was the next key event, after which the invitees and members dispersed.



The online store www.mypera.lk of the 'PERA' concept store was ceremonially launched by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Lamawansa.



AGM PHOTO GALLERY



CAREER PORTAL

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WELCOME TO UNIVERSITY OF
PERADENIYA ALUMNI
COMMUNITY



<http://aaup.pdn.ac.lk>

Being part of the university community, AAUP thrives on positively affecting our graduates to improve their chances to find better professional engagements. We have launched an Online Career Portal (OCP), providing a platform for the job seekers of the University of Peradeniya to connect and network with job providers from companies, industries, educational institutes and other job providers around the globe.

The AAUP members can register and create an account. The account holder maintains a completed resume using the tool and subscribes for relevant opportunities under-identified themes and tags based on the area of interest and the degree obtained. The opportunities are categorized as a full-time professional, part-time, work from home, consultation, etc. Similarly, the OCP provides user accounts for opportunity providers and allow them to publish the available positions through the system under suitable themes and associated tags. The alumni and the employer will be notified once the customized resumes under the given theme match the advertised opening. Alumni can manage the history of previously applied resumes separately. Also, the hashed URL expires after the validity period.



YET ANOTHER MILESTONE FOR THE AAUP SUBCOMMITTEE ON STUDENT WELFARE: ESTABLISHMENT OF CAPSU AT THE HEALTH CENTRE

The 03rd of August 2022 marks a historic day in the activities of the AAUP, with the launching of the Counselling and Psychological Support Unit (CapSU) at the Health Centre.

This landmark project was initiated due to a plea from the President of the AAUP Canberra Chapter, Mr. Pushpan Piyigala, an Agriculture alumnus. The fate of several of his batch mates who dropped out from graduate studies due to mental health problems lingered in his mind for decades. His request to develop a system to help such students with financial support from the Canberra Chapter became a reality within five months.

The AAUP, armed with a Concept document, met the VC-Prof. C.M.D. Lamawansa. He not only gave the green light to the project but also the support of the Psychiatry Department of the Medical Faculty. Thus, CaPSu was born overnight, appointing 2-trained counsellors to work for specific hours during the day and a 24-h call system. The President AAUP, former and present VP of the Subcommittee, the dynamic Director of CaPSU, Dr. Sayuri Perera and members, the CMO Dr. Chandima Herath and her team at the HC are to be congratulated for fulfilling this long-felt need of students and staff.





Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya (AAUP)

APPEAL FOR NEEDY STUDENTS

The AAUP receives many requests from undergraduates for financial assistance due to the prevailing situation in the country.

HOW CAN YOU HELP THEM

Please donate to our Needy Student Fund

Savings Account No. 76458461

Account name: Student Welfare Fund

Bank: Bank of Ceylon

Branch: Peradeniya Super Grade Branch

Swift Code: BCEYLKLX



Please email the deposit slip to info@alumni.pdn.ac.lk when you have made your remittance.

We can acknowledge your contribution by email when you include your name in the "Purpose" or "Description" in cash or online transfers forms.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

For more information contact us or visit <https://rb.gy/41zpvc>

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OPENING OF THE PERA CONCEPT STORE



THE NEW ON-CAMPUS STORE WAS CEREMONIALLY OPENED BY PROF. M.D. LAMAWANSA, THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, IN THE PRESENCE OF AN ARRAY OF DIGNITARIES ON THE 23RD FEBRUARY 2023.

THE STORE IS OPEN FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY FROM 10.30 AM – 5.30 PM AND ON SATURDAYS FROM 10.00 AM- 3.00 PM, IT OFFERS A VARIETY OF “PERA” BRANDED MERCHANDISE INCLUDING CLOTHING, GIFTWARE, ACCESSORIES AND MEMORABILIA, WITH MORE NEW PRODUCTS ON THE HORIZON.



IELTS PROGRAM 2022

FOR PROSPECTIVE IELTS APPLICANTS

AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON IELTS WAS CONDUCTED ONLINE BY MRS. LALITHA GUNAWARDENA SUPPORTED BY MS. ARUNDATHI GUNAWARDENA, FOR 19 SELECTED APPLICANTS. CLASSES WERE HELD FROM SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2022, ON EVERY SUNDAY FROM 9 AM TO 11AM.

AN INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION WAS HELD WITH THE STUDENTS WHEN MRS. LALITHA GUNAWARDENA RETURNED FROM SINGAPORE. THE COURSE WAS CONDUCTED BY VOLUNTEERS AND WAS OFFERED FREE OF CHARGE. HOWEVER, THE PARTICIPANTS MADE DONATIONS TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROJECT (ELP) OF THE AAUP TO THE TUNE OF RS. 55,000.

FOUR OF THE PARTICIPANTS WHO FOLLOWED THE COURSE, JOINED THE AAUP AS NEW LIFE MEMBERS. THE AAUP EXPRESSES ITS GRATITUDE TO MRS. LALITHA GUNAWARDENA AND MS. ARUNDATHI GUNAWARDENA AND APPRECIATES THEIR INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTION AND VOLUNTEER SERVICE.



ANNUAL TRIP



THE ANNUAL TRIP OF 2022 WAS TO NAWALAPITIYA OAKWIN RESORT, WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF 40 AAUP MEMBERS. THE AAUP IS THANKFUL TO DR ANURA DANTANARAYANA, THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ALUMNI CLUBS AND REUNIONS FOR ORGANIZING THE TRIP SUCCESSFULLY.



Souvenir sales during General Convocation



Finance Committee successfully organized a 'PERA' stall at the General Convocation premises to promote the sale of concept store items.



GENERAL CONVOCATION
ACADEMIC YEAR 2019/2020.
UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA



ENGLISH CORNER PROJECT

THE ENGLISH CORNER, AN INITIATIVE OF MRS. LALITHA GUNAWARDENA IS THE LATEST ADDITION TO THE AAUP'S EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS OF JUNIOR ACADEMICS AND AAUP MEMBERS WHO WISH TO PURSUE OVERSEAS TRAINING. HOUSED IN A ROOM OF THE NEWLY ACQUIRED SECTION OF THE FORMER PERADENIYA POLICE STATION, IS A COLLECTION OF PRINTED AND ELECTRONIC RESOURCE ALONG WITH MUCH NEEDED ITEMS FOR THE IELTS EXAMINATION. IT IS DESIGNED TO FUNCTION AS A SELF-ACCESS CENTER, BUT HELP WILL BE AVAILABLE IF AND WHEN NECESSARY. THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY FUND (ELPF) ESTABLISHED BY WELL-WISHERS OF MRS. GUNAWARDENA PROVIDED THE SEED MONEY FOR THIS INITIATIVE..



Voluntary contributions from participants of IELTS programs conducted by the AAUP were also made available for this venture. In time to come, it is expected to expand the English corner to a Language corner with self-access material for other languages such as Mandarin and French

CHAPTER NEWS

University of Peradeniya Alumni Association USA (UPAA-USA)



The latest addition to the list of foreign chapters is UPAA-USA, formed in late 2021 to promote and support the interests of alumni in the USA and the University and its students. A highlight in 2022 was the get together and fundraiser held in Edison, NJ in September where, more than 175 alumni and well-wishers participated with fun-filled entertainment session led by an alumni band by former Ghandharva Sabha members and performances by alumni.



We are happy to outline a few ongoing and planned activities for 2023.

Studentship Awards. We worked with the Alumni Association of University of Peradeniya (AAUP) and its student welfare group and funding NINE needy students, one from each of the nine faculties. Each student will get Rs. 5000 per month for a 12-month period.

Wi-Fi Access to Residential Halls. Working with AAUP, UoP Infrastructure and IT Network Management Teams, we are assessing installing Wi-Fi routers in selected halls. Currently, all the academic buildings, faculty and staff offices in the University has Wi-Fi capabilities with good bandwidth, but no service in residential halls. As a pilot, we have selected Akbar and Wijewardena halls.

Funds to the Physics Department. The Department is in dire need of help to purchase much-needed teaching materials. Many instruments are either broken or completely outdated, making it difficult for the faculty to provide quality teaching. To help address this issue, we are calling alumni to lend their support and contribute toward purchasing new instruments and materials requested.

Annual Get-together and Fundraiser. With the success of last year's event, we are excited to announce that this year get-together which, will be held in the Washington DC area on Saturday, September 2.

Planning for Higher Studies in USA: A series of information sessions for the undergraduate on continuing higher education in the USA. It will include choosing a PhD or MS program, application requirements and preparation, university and a research group selection, completing aptitude tests, details on financial support and, ways to maximize the chances of getting succeeded in the process.

CHAPTER NEWS



VICTORIA CHAPTER

Annual Cricket encounter between Peradeniya and Kelaniya University Alumni Associations

This event is usually held on 26th January, the 'Australia Day' holiday on a grand scale. In 2022, the event had to be postponed a couple of times due to the pandemic and eventually took place on Saturday 19th March 2022.

The cricket match was easily won by the Peradeniya team.



Hantane Nite 2022

Hantane Nite is one of the two key fund-raising events organized by the Chapter annually to raise funds for the scholarship program. The event was held on Saturday 3rd July after a lapse of two years due to the pandemic. The attendance was just under 200, which was less than what we see in a normal year, however, was still a great turnout considering the pandemic situation.



Father's Day Get-together

Father's Day fundraiser is the brainchild of our second generation living in Australia, who came up with the idea of donating money to assist Peradeniya undergraduates who are doing it tough financially, which, they would otherwise use to buy gifts for their fathers, on this day.. This year's event was held on 3 September 2022 with the participation of many families.

CHAPTER NEWS

ARTS FACULTY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA (AFAAUP)

The Standing Committee on Public Relations and Alumni Welfare led by Mr. K.A.H Kalugampitiya took the initiative to form the Arts Faculty Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya (AFAAUP). The Constitution drafted for the AFAAUP was tabled at the standing committee on Elections and Constitutional Matters headed by Dr. Keerthi Mohotti and the content was recommended subject to a few modifications. After several rounds of discussions, an Action Plan for the proposed PAFAA was drafted by Prof. Rohitha Dassanayake (Arts faculty coordinator for AFAAUP). The Arts Faculty Alumni Association was officially formed with the approval of the Faculty Board, and the Inaugural Session of the Funder Executive Committee was held on 28th November 2022 at the Arts Faculty Conference Room. Dr E M P C S Ekanayake, the Dean/Faculty of Arts serves as the president of the founder executive committee.



UNIVERSITY RANKING

University of Peradeniya is ranked #901 among the Best Global Universities by the US News & World Report. More : <https://www.pdn.ac.lk/>

UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA

901

in **Best Global Universities** by
the **US News & World Report**



01 - Normalized citation impact

55 - Percentage of most cited papers that are among the top 1% most cited among the worldwide universities

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Obituaries

It is with deep sorrow that the AAUP records the death of its first president – Prof. Bernard Leslie Panditharatne



Prof. Panditharatne was the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Peradeniya from 1978-1984. He has also served as the Chairman of the UGC and the Chairman and Director General of the National Institute of Business Management (NIBM). His contribution and achievements to teaching, research and administration have been recognized both locally and internationally. Leslie P. – as he was fondly referred to - was a cheerful gregarious person with a great love of life and people. He will be remembered as a much-loved teacher, administrator and great human being.

May Leslie rest in peace.



The AAUP is sad to announce the passing away of its Executive Committee member, Mrs. Sujatha Karunaratne on 14th October 2022, after a brief illness. She was the loving and devoted wife of the late Dr. Santha Karunaratne, a former Director of the National Zoological Gardens, Dehiwala. Sujatha graduated from the Faculty of Arts 1969 and was a life member of the AAUP since its inception. She was an active member of the Executive Committee of the AAUP until her death. She will be missed by all her friends and colleagues in the ExCo.

May Sujatha rest in peace!



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COMING
SOON



Standing Committees

Vice-President, Standing Committee on Student Welfare – Prof. Chantha Jayawardena

Vice-President, Standing Committee on Finance – Prof. Amalka Pinidiyaarachchi

Vice-President, Standing Committee on Public Relations and Alumni Welfare – Mr. K.A.H. Kalugampitiya

Vice-President, Standing Committee on University Development – Prof. Swarna Wimalasiri

Vice President, Standing Committee on Continuing Education and Extension Education – Eng. Sarath Seneviratne

Chairperson, Standing Committee on Elections and Constitutional Affairs – Dr Keerthi Mohotti

Chairperson, Standing Committee on Alumni Clubs and Reunions – Dr. A. Danthanarayane

Sub Committees

Chairperson, Web Updates – Dr. Kapila Wijayaratne

Chairperson, Memberships and Membership Drive – Prof. S. Banneheka

