

AAUP NEWSLETTER

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA

November 2021

Message from the President, Prof. Pradeepa Bandaranayake



I am deeply honoured by the opportunity to serve as the President of the Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya (AAUP) for the next twelve months. Together with the Executive Committee, I am pleased to represent you – the proud alumni of the University of Peradeniya. As I welcome you, a thousand things are running through my head; the impact and the legacy that I want to leave in the University community as the President of the AAUP.

This year, we focus on elevating the alumni experience, a mutually beneficial, enduring relationship among alumni, and serving and supporting our University family. As your representatives, we are constantly seeking meaningful ways to address your needs and coordinate our efforts in the name of our alma mater. I urge you to become an active alumnus and bring your colleagues and friends to the Association to share in the exciting activities and opportunities AAUP has to offer. Whether you are in your motherland or elsewhere, there are various ways you can show gratitude alma mater. I suggest you start with simple activities that would help you to develop the AAUP community:

- Wear apparel with the University logo, proudly wherever you are
- Be an ambassador sharing your University experience with students, parents, and fellow alumni
- Attend AAUP events on campus or in your local or foreign chapters
- Support the Needy Students' Fund with your generous donations

I invite you to accompany us in the exciting year we have planned. The best way to stay connected is through the website and social media. We welcome your feedback and guidance as we plan our projects and events for the years ahead.

Executive Committee Members 2021/2022

President: Prof. Pradeepa Bandaranayake
Immediate Past President: Prof. Siril Wijesundara
Secretary: Dr. Samanthika Jagoda
Treasurer: Dr. Jayalath Edirisinghe
Asst. Secretary: Mrs. Sujatha Karunaratne
Asst. Secretary: Dr. Bimali Weerakoon
Vice Presidents: Dr. Amalka Pinidiyaracchi
Prof. Anoja Wanigasekera,
Dr. V. Sivakumar
Eng. Sarath Seneviratne,
Col. Dr. Udula Krishnaratne

Editor: Prof. Rupika Rajakaruna
Assistant Treasurer: Dr. Damayanthi Menika
Committee Members: Mr. M.K.S. Kumarage,

Mr. A.M.G.B. Abeysinghe
Ms. Hema Gamage
Prof. Namali Handegama
Dr. S.B. Botota
Mrs. Lalitha Gunawardena
Mr. Nalin Jayatissa
Mr. Ravi Mulleriyawa,
Dr. Anura Danthanarayana
Prof. S.P. Nissanka
Prof. Jayanthi Edirisinghe
Dr. Sunishka Ponnampetuma
Mrs. M.L. Pathirathna
Mr. R.M. S. K. Piyaratne
Mr. K.A.H. Kalugampitiya



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The 32nd AGM of the AAUP held on 27th March 2021

The 32nd AGM was held under the Presidency of Prof. Siril Wijesundara as a hybrid event due to the health situation in the country. It was held virtually through Zoom and in person with a limited number of participants, at the Department of Animal Science in the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Peradeniya. The chief guest on the occasion was the former chairman of the election commission, Mahinda Deshapriya. The guest of honour was Prof S.A. Kulasooriya, an emeritus professor of the University. The Vice-Chancellor and AAUP Vice-Patron, Prof. Upul B. Dissanayake also graced the occasion. After the lighting of the traditional oil lamp by the dignitaries, the President of the AAUP welcomed the invitees and the members to the 32nd AGM. A key event of the 32nd AGM was the felicitation of Emeritus Professor Savitri Kumar, a former Professor of Organic Chemistry who has served 43 years at the Faculty of Science and has made a significant contribution to the AAUP. The vote of thanks was proposed by the General Secretary, Ms Hema Gamage. Election of office bearers for the coming year was the next key event, after which the invitees and members dispersed.



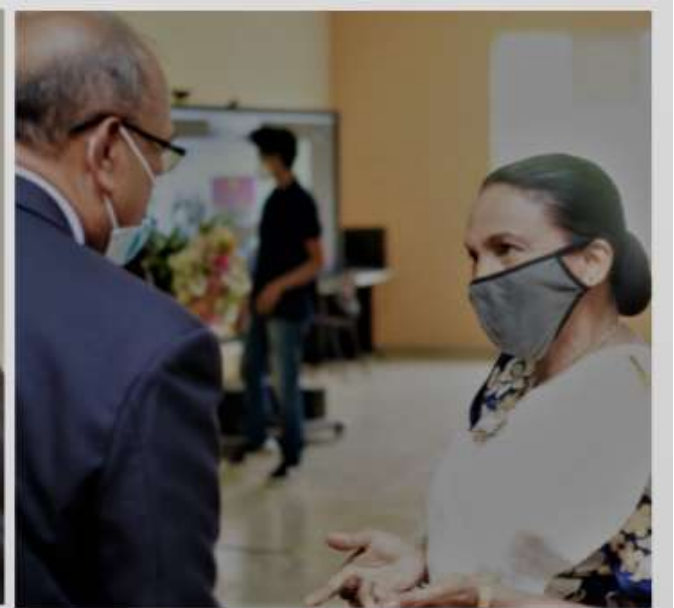
Emeritus Prof. Savitri Kumar



Emeritus Prof. S.A. Kulasooriya



**The president-elect
Prof. Pradeepa Bandaranayake**



THE GALLERY



GREENROOM PROJECT



RENOVATION OF THE GREENROOM OF THE SARACHCHANDRA OPEN – AIR THEATRE

The Sarachchandra Open – Air Theatre, located in the University of Peradeniya is the only theatre of its kind in Sri Lanka. It is popularly known as the 'Wala' among the University community and theatre lovers in Sri Lanka. Built in the early 1950s to match the architectural style of ancient Greek theatres, the 'Wala' was later named in memory of Prof. Ediriweera Sarachchandra, Sri Lanka's best known playwright, who was also an alumnus and an academic staff member of the University of Peradeniya. Spectators sit on the stone steps created on a slope. The theatre can accommodate a very large number of spectators and even the people seated at the far back are able to hear clearly. The Greenroom located behind the performance space is essential for the crew of a drama. Built in 1950, with cadjan as a temporary structure and it later evolved to rooms with cement walls and asbestos roofs. However, currently, they are not in usable condition and urgent renovations or rebuilding is needed. The current Vice-Chancellor and the Executive Committee (ExCo) of the AAUP identified it is an urgent need to protect this historical place for the current and future generations of theatre lovers in Sri Lanka. After several discussions and site visits of a group of theatre lovers, artists, architects, engineers, ExCo members, and the University authority, a decision was taken to construct a Greenroom with two separate changing rooms, a lobby, a verandah and a roof with a concrete slab to be used for a floral garden. The estimated cost of the project is around 12 million for a floor area of 2000 ft² at the rate of Rs. 6000.00 per ft². Due to the current pandemic situation, the AAUP and the University is in a challenging situation to raise funds for the completion of the project. The AAUP has requested UNESCO to support in making this project a success. All alumni are invited to contribute towards this project.

GREENROOM



OUTSIDE



INSIDE

GLOBAL FORUM

A platform to connect with alumni worldwide sharing expertise and supporting internationalization

Global Forum is a creative way to boost alumni engagement amidst COVID-19. As the pandemic outbreak continues to disrupt alumni relations around the world, we have found ourselves in a tight spot as a consequence of canceled events, awarding scholarships, and other planned University community engagement activities. With a virtual platform we found ways to engage our alumni digitally. We upgraded our "*Thursday Forum*" to a "*Global Forum*" bringing it to a new level and extending to a bigger audience worldwide.

Two talks on COVID-19 and road accidents were organized:

Let's talk about COVID-19 vaccines: Truth vs. Myth

As soon as the COVID-19 vaccines were rolled out worldwide, we all started wondering where and how to get accurate information on the vaccines. Many myths about COVID-19 vaccines and their effects had been in circulation, causing some confusion to many in the community. With this in mind, a specially tailored timely webinar was organised by the AAUP on July 3 2021 at 11.30 GMT. The speaker Prof. Malik Pieris, one of the world's leading clinical and public health virologists, attached to the University of Hong Kong, is an alumnus of the Peradeniya University Medical School 1967 Batch. Prof. Peiris provided valuable information about COVID-19 vaccines and addressed the questions on vaccine misinformation among the community causing Sri Lankans to be hesitant to vaccinate. The program was well attended and streamed live via the YouTube.



Driving madness: Accidents on SL Roads

According to the records of traffic headquarters, road traffic accidents are increasing at an alarming rate in Sri Lanka with a very high number of deaths and critical injuries reported due to road traffic accidents. At this juncture, to talk about the leading contributory factors for road traffic accidents in Sri Lanka, the AAUP invited Dr. Jayalath Edirisinghe, a Senior Lecturer in Civil Engineering at the University of Peradeniya with over 25 years of experience in the field of traffic accidents and traffic congestion. Dr. Edirisinghe provides his expertise to a number of organizations, including the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Prevention of Traffic Accidents and is an advisor to the Road Safety Committee of the Central Province. He also serves as a lecturer at the Traffic Headquarters and the National Council for Road Safety under the Ministry of Transport. He was selected as one of seven most dedicated people by the Ceylon Society of Prevention of Accidents in 2007.



September 26, 2021

SPARK ENGAGEMENT WITH A VIRTUAL EVENT PLATFORM

TO SERVE BETTER

STORIES OF ALUMNI COMMITTED MAKING A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITIES

Hats off to the AAUP Standing Committee on Continuing Education & Extension Education for arranging three online programs for the AAUP membership



During the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, members of the Standing Committee made the best use of Zoom technology to bring IELTS classes, French language classes and Tamil Language classes to the laptops of its membership. Mrs Lalitha

Gunawardena stepped in and volunteered to conduct IELTS classes as always, this time from Singapore, and assisted by her daughter Arundathi. Eighteen young graduates /IELTS aspirants joined the program to improve their scores to enter overseas universities. Three parallel classes were held weekly from July to September 2021. Judging from the progress of IELTS students, the

need to improve their knowledge of English grammar became apparent. As a remedy, setting up an English Language & IELTS

Corner comprising textbooks and Examination papers in the AAUP office is in the pipeline. The dedication and commitment

of Mrs Gunawardena and Arundathi are admired and appreciated by all participants and the AAUP.

The Director Alliance Francaise Kandy (AFK) offered an especially designed French language course to the AAUP to arouse the interest of academics intending to form research links with

European countries. The 10- week-long course conducted by a teacher in France began on the 9th of July with a few senior academics. The Director AFK is keen to provide opportunities to the university community, the AAUP, staff and students to learn French, the global language next to English.

The Committee organized Tamil Language classes for the benefit of the University community, under the slogan 'Know Your Second National Language'. A former Director of Education in the Tamil Language is teaching the course whose objective is to

enable communication in Tamil; impart reading and speaking skills. For the 20 staff members who joined, three parallel classes are held weekly for 3- months. Once the present series of classes end, another cycle would begin to meet the demand.



1

2

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Alumni Prepare Next Generation of Leaders



INTERACTIVE WEBINAR ORGANISED FOR THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS BY THE AAUP

The AAUP started a series of workshops titled "Shaping the Future" with the expectation of providing career guidance and mentoring for undergraduates under the Sir Ivor Jennings Endowment fund.

The inaugural session was held on October 13, 2021, via an online platform.

After the welcome address by the President, Prof. Pradeepa Bandaranayake

Dr V Sivakumar, the session chair, introduced the program

"Dreamers are achievers"

and the speaker, Dr Jayalath Edirisinghe,

a senior lecturer in Civil Engineering attached Faculty of Engineering

and a former president of the AAUP.

In his speech, Dr Edirisinghe highlighted the importance of

dreaming big to achieve higher goals

and the importance of self-belief, commitment and dedication for any given task

and the self-resilience for self development.

He emphasized how lucky the undergraduates at Peradeniya are,

by highlighting the countless opportunities for intramural and extramural activities

and the facilities for extracurricular and recreational activities including the open-air theatre, playground, gymnasium, swimming pool, etc. within the University.

He added saying:

"To Laugh, Live and Love while Learning at Lecture rooms, Laboratories and Library..."

.... and many stories and cherished moments of university life.

After an interactive Q & A session,

Dr Amalka Pinidiyaarachchi wrapped up the session

by proposing the vote of thanks

and inviting students to join future mentoring sessions on career development

organized by the AAUP.

The event was well attended with about 200 student participation

and was streamed live on YouTube.

SHAPING THE FUTURE



STUDENTSHIPS 2021

FIFTY ONE STUDENTS RECEIVED STUDENTSHIPS IN 2021. STUDENTS FROM ALL NINE FACULTIES: ARTS (9), ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES (5), AGRICULTURE (5), DENTAL (5), ENGINEERING (6), MANAGEMENT (3), MEDICINE (5), SCIENCE (8), VETERINARY MEDICINE (5) BENEFITED FROM THE STUDENTSHIPS.

Name of Donor	No. of Studentships	LKR/Student/Year
Canberra Chapter	14	36,000.00
Ottawa Chapter	20	36,000.00
New South Wales Chapter	9	12,000.00
Emeritus Prof. Savitri Kumar Studentship	1	36,000.00
Mr. Y.A Piyatissa Studentship	1	36,000.00
Mr. & Mrs. Norman & Matilda Abeyrathna and Anula Malini Abeyrathna Studentship	1	36,000.00
Mr. Jehan Sumedha Piyasena Studentship	1	36,000.00
Mr. Ramasamy Manoharan Memorial Studentship	1	60,000.00
Prof. G.P. Wannigama Memorial Studentship	1	24,000.00
AAUP Studentship	2	36,000.00

WELFARE ACTIVITIES

RS. 25,000 WAS DONATED TO THE FACULTY OF DENTAL SCIENCE AS PER THE DONOR'S REQUEST.

RS. 10,000 WORTH FACE MASKS WERE PURCHASED AND DISTRIBUTED TO ALL THE FACULTIES.

RS. 15,000 WAS DONATED TO COVER THE MEAL EXPENSES OF COVID-19 POSITIVE STUDENTS AT THE COVID INTERMEDIATE CARE CENTRE AT MAHAKANDA



MEETING WITH THE NEW VICE CHANCELLOR

A meeting was held with the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. M.D. Lamawansa on 17th September 2021 at 4.30 p.m to discuss the AAUP activities. At the outset, the President presented the progress made by the AAUP over the years. During the discussion, four special requests were made to the Vice-Chancellor: (i) to allocate a place within the University for the proposed concept store "*LovePera*", (ii) to identify an assistant registrar to liaise with the AAUP and University administration, (iii) to give more prominence and visibility to the AAUP within the University (Eg. website, alumni representation at the convocation) and (iv) to provide access to the university guest house for the AAUP members. The Vice-Chancellor has expressed his willingness to support future activities organised by the AAUP.

MEETING WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COUNCIL

A meeting was held upon a request made by Prof. J.B. Ekanayake, the Director of the University Research Council, on October 22, 2021 at 2 pm via Zoom to discuss how the AAUP and chapters could help to enhance the research portfolio of the University of Peradeniya. Representing AAUP, the President, general secretary, and the treasurer attended the meeting. Prof. Ekanayake requested to initiate a discussion with the AAUP Ex-Co to seek the AAUP support for the following activities: to create a research fund maintained by AAUP; to invite AAUP to become a part of multidisciplinary research activities of the University; to assist UOP researchers in applying for research grants and to create a database with experts who are willing to evaluate grant applications and final reports.

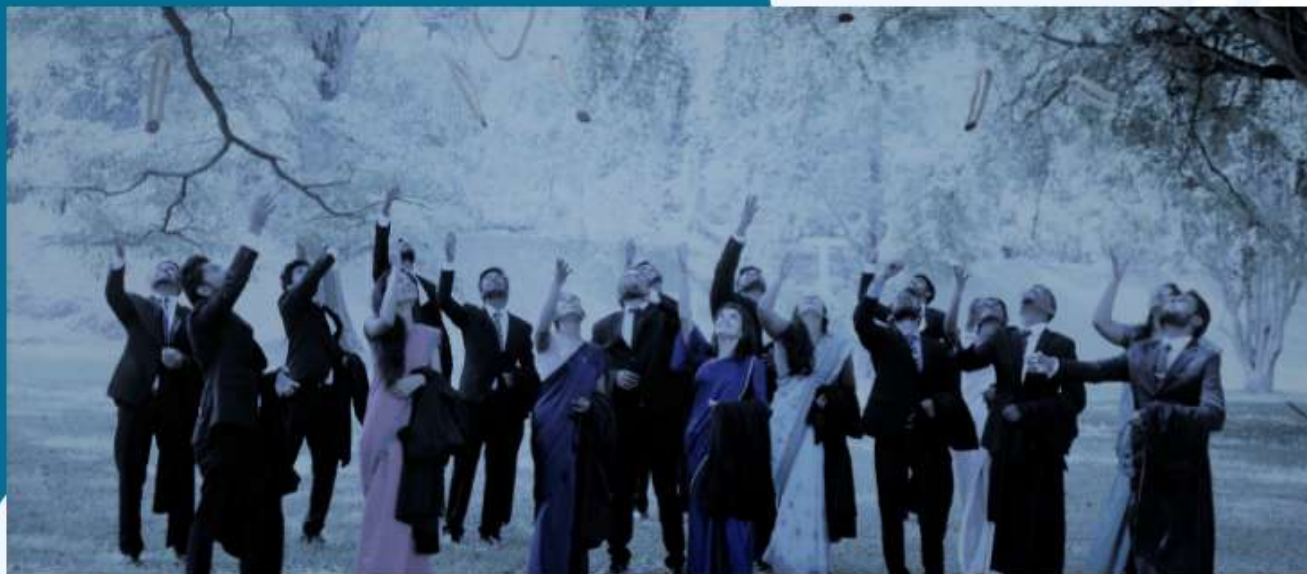
PRESIDENT'S DIARY

The President participated in the Colombo Chapter Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on an online platform.

The President attended the orientation program for the new entrants of the Faculty of Arts held online.

Both the President and the Secretary had participated at the AGM of the Peradeniya Medical School Alumni Association (PeMSAA).

CHAPTER NEWS



LOCAL CHAPTERS

AAUP has made provision to establish Regional Chapters in any geographic area except the Central Province of Sri Lanka. The established regional chapters are:

Colombo Chapter
Ruhuna Chapter
Wayamba Chapter
Northern Chapter

OVERSEAS CHAPTERS

The AAUP is keen to establish foreign chapters. The presently established foreign chapters are:

Western Australia Chapter- Perth in Australia
Victoria Chapter in Australia
Canberra Chapter in Australia
New South Wales Chapter in Australia
Ottawa Chapter in Canada
Toronto Chapter
New Zealand Chapter

FACULTY ALUMNI ASSOCIATIONS

Agriculture (AAFAUP)
Allied Health (AHSAA)
Engineering (PEFAA)
Dental (PDFAA)

Medicine (PeMSAA)
Science (UPSAA)
Veterinary Medicine (VAAP)

Alumni chapters engage in social activities, networking and student enrichment programmes and provide support to specific areas of the University.

Any member who wishes to establish a new chapter is requested to contact us.



FOUNDER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE VETERINARY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF PERADENIYA 2019/2020



Bashan Chelappan/Chelappan
011 6074 448

Seated Left to Right : Dr. R.A.C. Rabel, Dr. Susantha Mallawa Arachchi, Dr. B.M.A.O. Perera, Dr. R.M.P.H. Dassanayake, Dr. D.M.S. Munasinghe, Dr. I.D. Silva, Dr. R.M.C. Deshapriya

Standing Left to Right : Dr. D.D.N. de Silva, Dr. D.S. Kodikara, Dr. M.D.N. Jayaweera, Dr. N.M.T. Anupama, Dr. A.W. Kalupahana, Prof. Mangala Gunatilake

Absent : Dr. Sumith Wanniarachchi, Dr. D.M.A.P. Dissanayake, Dr. W.A.D.N.C. Wickramasinghe, Prof. Sivali Ranawana, Dr. Sugath Pemachandra, Dr. D.J. Weilgama, Dr. R. Hettiarachchi, Prof. P.A.B.D. Alexander

Inaugural Meeting of the Veterinary Alumni Association of Peradeniya (VAAP)

The Veterinary Alumni Association of Peradeniya (VAAP) was founded at its Inaugural Meeting held on 19th July 2019, with the broad objective of encouraging, fostering and promoting a close relationship between the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine & Animal Science and its alumni, and also among the alumni themselves. The meeting was presided over by the Dean of the Faculty Dr. D.M.S. Munasinghe, who is the Patron of VAAP, and the Founder Executive Committee (Ex-Co) was elected with Air Commodore (Retd) Dr. R.M.P.H. Dassanayake as the Founder President. The Ex-Co undertook several important activities, including a membership drive and the establishment of two funds to assist students at the Faculty. The first was a 'Needy Students' Fund' with initial donations being made by several members of the Ex-Co. The second was a 'COVID Emergency Assistance Fund', established when the COVID-19 crisis caused a range of problems to both staff and students at the Faculty.

The first Annual General Meeting and Induction Ceremony were held on 20th March 2021. The Chief Guest was Prof. Upul B. Dissanayaka, the then Vice-Chancellor of the University, and the Guest of Honour was Prof. Siril Wijesundara, the then President of the AAUP. At this event, the second Ex-Co was elected with Dr. Oswin Perera being inducted as the President.

Our membership now stands at close to 200, and we appeal to all our Alumni to join us and support the Faculty in its efforts to produce veterinary graduates that we can all be proud of. Please visit our website at <https://vaap.lk/> for further information.



UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA SCIENCE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (UPSAA)

UPSAA
AGM

DEC 12, 2021

keep the day free



The 1976 science batch sponsored a three million research grant in 2021. The recipient is a young, dynamic researcher, Dr Chani Perera attached to the Department of Physics. She and her team proposed a project which aims to synthesize highly efficient, low-cost, recyclable and environmentally friendly magnetically modified nano-adsorbent composite that could be used to treat contaminated wastewater or groundwater sources. The 1976 batch has pledged to continue funding research projects in the future on a regular basis.

CONCEPTUALIZING THE CONCEPT STORE LOVE PERA



President and the team exploring the location

The Shop for Authentic
"Love Pera"
Merchandise

The concept Store is your source for authentic Love Pera merchandise made exclusively for Peradeniya alumni. Choose from t-shirts, apparels, hats, umbrellas, accessories, car stickers, fun gift ideas and many more.....



Store Solutions
to fit all your
Pera Nostalgia Frenzy Souvenir
Needs!

Online shopping will be available



Store location : Old building next to Peradeniya
Police station

LOVE PERA OPENING SOON.....

PERADENIYA IN BRIEF

COVID Intermediate Care Centre at Mahakanda

With the escalating number of infections of COVID-19 within the university community and the healthcare facilities dwindling in Kandy area, the need for intermediate care centre to treat and take care of patients arose. In this backdrop, the University of Peradeniya embarked on establishing a Covid Intermediate Care Centre in May 2021 to cater to the infected staff, students, and their immediate family members of the University under the directions of the COVID Management Committee of the University.



Opening of University Athletic & Hockey Pavilion

The athletic and hockey pavilion complex was opened on July 8, 2021, under the patronage of the former VC, Prof. Upul B. Dissanayake. This stadium and its grounds were built for the University's undergraduates and sports students of the Central Province. The stadium's seating capacity is around 200 and there are facilities for sportsmen and women.



Prof M D Lamawansa assumed duties as the Vice-Chancellor

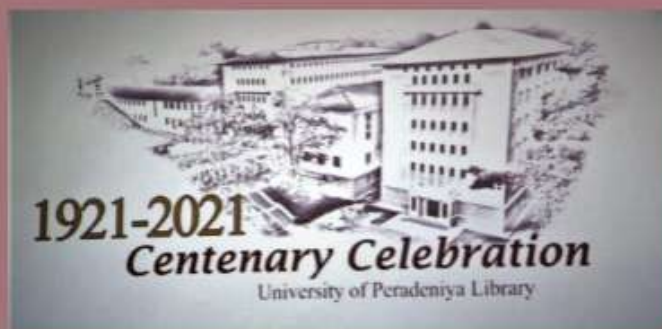
Prof. M D Lamawansa, the former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, assumed duties as the Vice-Chancellor on August 4 2021. He was the Professor of Surgery and the former Ambassador for the Russian Federation. He was also the founding Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the Wayamba University, and a consultant general surgeon at the Peradeniya Teaching Hospital.



Times Higher Education World Ranking - 2022

The University of Peradeniya has been ranked among the world's top 500 Universities for the 3rd consecutive year and number one university in Sri Lanka according to Times Higher Education (THE) Ranking 2022. The THE World University Rankings is one of the largest and most comprehensive rankings. In 2022 ranking, it includes more than 1600 universities spread among nearly 100 countries and territories. The THE ranking takes core areas such as teaching (the learning environment); research (volume, income and reputation); citations (research influence); industry income (knowledge transfer) and international outlook (staff, students and research) into consideration in ranking universities.





THE OLDEST AND THE LARGEST UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN SRI LANKA

The library of Peradeniya University originated in 1921 as the library of the Ceylon University College. Then it was shifted to Peradeniya in 1952 and was moved to the present premises in 1960.

To mark the anniversary, a new logo was unveiled under the theme "*The unpatrolled Repository of Knowledge at the Centre of Excellence – past and present.*"

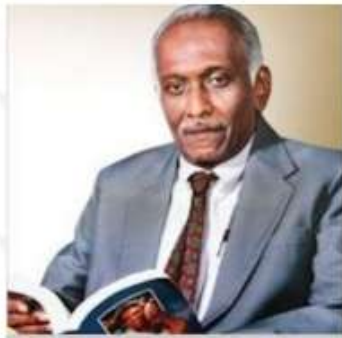


*This year
Peradeniya
Library sytem
marks its 100th
anniversary*





Professor C.L.V. Jayathilaka



The AAUP expresses its deepest condolences on the death of Prof. C.L.V. Jayathilaka, a former Vice-Chancellor of the University. Prof. Jayathilaka passed away on August 31, 2021. He served in the capacity of Dean of the Faculties of Engineering, of the University of Peradeniya and the University of Ruhuna, Vice-Chancellor at the Wayamba University, and Chairman of the National Education Commission, and had contributed his services immensely to the country.



Editor's Desk



*Yes, I agree;
the pandemic reshaped how we sustain and
enrich relationships with our alumni community. We went virtual.
We held the AGM as a hybrid event. We realized the amazing benefits of
the virtual platform.
All AALP events and meetings were presented online. The virtual platform
allowed lots of our alumni worldwide to connect with our activities.
But is university nostalgia — the bittersweet emotion associated with rosy
recollection of our uni days at stake?
Peradeniya always fosters powerful memories for its graduates.
Whether you are a baby boomer or a millennial, the wistful longing of the
university years is because of those cherished social
connections and beautiful in-person events you took part in. Then only can we
talk about "The way we were" as Barbra Streisand sings...
Misty watercolour memories of the way we were.....*

Rupika Rajakaruna

