

THE PROFESSIONAL

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APSL EVENTS

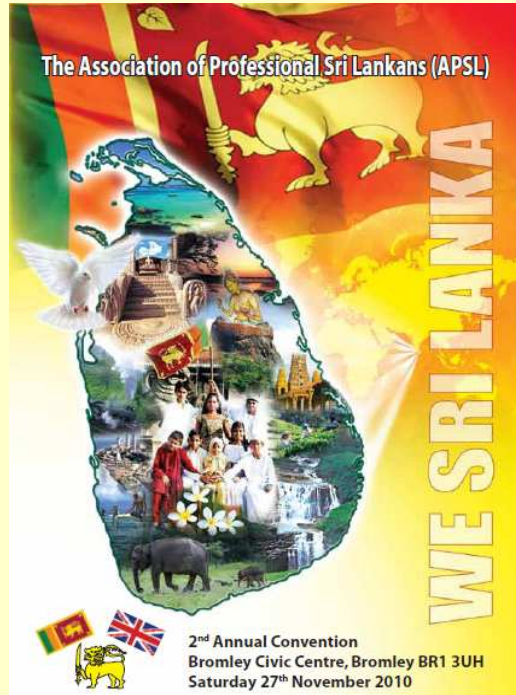
**2nd APSL
Convention
“We Sri Lanka”**
27th November 2010

**7th Annual General
Meeting**
April 2011

Please visit APSL
website
www.apsl.org.uk
for more details.

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‘WE SRI LANKA’ is launched!



For over 30 years, our ‘resplendent’ land was torn apart by ethnic strife which brought death, destruction and despair upon a generation of Sri Lankans. Now, after the ceasing of hostilities, we look forward to a new era – an era of peace, stability and prosperity denied to our people for far too long. The absence of war, however, is not the guarantor of a long lasting peace. Mistrust and racial animosity resulting from the wounds of war remain deep within the psyche of our people.

For a durable and long lasting peace there needs to be a healing of wounds. There needs to be a coming together of the hearts and minds of all Sri Lankans, irrespective of ethnicity or religion – united by the single purpose of taking the country forward. Of course, this is easier said than done. Historic prejudices developed over many generations, and 30 years of extreme violence are not going to be forgotten easily.

How can we build a common identity, a shared identity, an equal identity accessible to all our people? Martin Luther King, Jr. once dreamed of a day when his children would be judged by the content of their character, and not by the colour of their skin. Today we see that dream being realised with the election of America’s first black President, Barack Obama. How about Sri Lanka? How can we ensure that children of Sri Lanka are recognised for the content of their character, the value of their potential, and the nobility of their aspirations – without being disadvantaged by the language they speak?

This is why ‘WE SRI LANKA’ was conceived. The aim of ‘WE SRI LANKA’ is to foster reconciliation among the various ethnic and religious communities that make-up Sri Lanka. We wish to encourage goodwill, dialogue and understanding to help develop mutual trust and remove the barriers that divide us. We seek to uphold the dignity and further the potential of all our people so that we can build a stronger nation together. We also wish to encourage a stronger ‘Sri Lankan consciousness,’ and celebrate our vibrant culture, heritage and diversity as we forge together a shared destiny for our common homeland.

‘We Sri Lanka’ is being launched at the 2nd Annual Convention of APSL on November 27th, 2010. Dennis Godfrey, CBE of the Northern Ireland Office will deliver the key note address, ‘The Road to Reconciliation: The Northern Ireland Experience’ to inspire the audience with ideas from a successful, on-going reconciliation process. This will be followed by a panel discussion drawing from members of the various communities of Sri Lanka who will address the question, ‘The conflict is over – how do we secure the peace?’ Finally, together with the participation of the audience, the session will focus on identifying the key impediments to reconciliation, as well as the top set of actions we in the UK need to take to strengthen reconciliation among all Sri Lankans. Participants will also be able to enjoy dancing, music and refreshments celebrating the multi-ethnic tapestry of Sri Lanka.

The time has come! The time to unite all Sri Lankans - Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim, Malay, Burgher and Other – as one family, one people, and one nation - for the sustainable development of our beautiful island, our resplendent land, our Paradise on Earth, our common homeland, our Sri Lanka.

May the tear drop of the Indian Ocean gleam once more as the Pearl of the Orient!

Don Gihantha Jayasinghe / APSL

APSL activities in Sri Lanka during summer 2010

APSL members carry out various development projects in Sri Lanka as summarized in the above project portfolio below. In particular, the current President of APSL continues to promote and establish clean energy applications in Sri Lanka over the past two decades. He normally makes at least one long visit to Sri Lanka every year to initiate new projects and monitor on-going solar energy research activities and renewable energy application projects.

One of the activities during summer 2010 was a meeting with the Minister for Housing and Common Amenities Mr. Wimal Weerawansa to up-date him with the latest developments in BIPV (Building Integrated Photovoltaics). Rohan de Alwis (Vice President of APSL) and two other collaborators (Prof. Krishan Deheragoda & Dr. Siribaddana) from Sri Lanka also joined this discussion. The solar energy take up is the first revolution in the 21st Century and is now taking place with annual growth rate exceeding 68%. Solar roofs are appearing in millions round the globe and Sri Lanka should benefit from these new developments. The country is blessed with this free source of energy, and this effort is to transfer new knowledge to the highest authorities in Sri Lanka.



Among other activities, Dharme was addressing large gatherings in the process of monitoring the progress of pilot solar village, explaining and discussing solar village replication plans, promoting the island-wide APSL Award scheme, distributing 20 APSL motivation certificates & prizes to bright school children, discussing the progress of on-going solar energy research programme at the University of Kelaniya and promoting renewable energy applications in Sri Lanka.

More details can be found on the APSL website.



Ask the Ayurvedic Doctors event

APSL added yet another dimension to the “Ask the Expert” Series on 18 September at the Sri Lanka High Commission by hosting the “Ask the Ayurvedic Doctors”. The response from both the members, as well as non Member Sri Lankans was high. Dr Palitha Serasinghe of the Ayurvedic Training College of the University of Middlesex (formerly the Principal of the Ayurvedic College in Sri Lanka) lead the highly knowledgeable and experienced Panel of Ayurvedic Experts consisting of Dr V. Joshi and Dr Shantha Godagama.

Main themes of the Experts were to compare the medicinal and medical developments of the Eastern world with the scientific discoveries on similar issues in the West. Dr Serasinghe highlighted the fact that in Ayurveda, the root cause of the medical problem was attended to by the medical practitioner, while in Western medicine the symptoms were primarily treated by medicines. Thus Eastern medicine always took more time to show signs of recovery to the patient. Dr Joshi, an Indian Ayurveda Practitioner who has worked as a Consultant at the Ayurvedic College in Sri Lanka, who is now a Practitioner in the U.K. spoke on the benefits of taking natural herb based medicines and food to help reduce the ageing process of human beings. Dr Joshi mentioned for example of eating fresh vegetables, fruits and also taking herbal supplements such as Tripala to help reduce weight and keep the digestive systems in good working order. Aralu, Bulu, Nilli had a magical medicinal impact on the human body to ensure the balances of wata, pita etc. Dr Godagama also the author of a number of books on Ayurveda spoke on the Management of Chronic Pain and the scientific interest shown and research made into herbal medicines by Western based Scientists. Please visit our website for more information.

APSL Project Portfolio

The Association of Professional Sri Lankans in UK (APSL-UK) now in its 7th year is pleased to report the wide range of activities it carries out, especially in relation to using the expertise of the Sri Lankans in UK to the benefit of Sri Lanka.

APSL has initiated four core projects this year namely, 'We Sri Lanka'; 'Eastern Values', 'Employability' and 'APSL Awards Scheme'.

We Sri Lanka – The aim of 'We Sri Lanka' project is to foster reconciliation among all Sri Lankans. The 2nd APSL convention will be the first event organised based on the 'We Sri Lanka' theme by APSL to build understanding, goodwill and a sense of shared purpose through dialogue, learning, and a celebration of our cultural diversity.

Eastern Values – Two successful events under the 'Life in the UK and Sri Lankan Cultural Values' seminar series were held at Jethawana Buddhist Vihara in Birmingham on 20th June and 24th October this year.

Employability – The aim of this project is to improve employability of Sri Lankan professionals in the UK. Dedicated webpage in the APSL website is created to provide useful information such as vacancies and CVs of job seekers, advise, networking opportunities and weblinks to employers, recruitment agencies and employment platforms.

APSL awards scheme – APSL in collaboration with the Institute of Research and Development (IRD) Sri Lanka, are holding an island-wide essay competition open to all school children in the age group of (16-19) yrs. The aim is to actively engage the country's younger generation and seek their ideas and stimulate the rapid development of Sri Lanka. The deadline to submit essays is extended to 31st December 2010.

APSL has also been supporting individual member driven on-going projects such as 'Renewable Energy', 'Speech Therapy for Children', trilingual journal 'Gaveshana', the 'Mettha Foundation' and 'Motivation Certificates & Prizes' for bright children and Sri Lanka Hospitals Project.

On average two main 'knowledge dissemination' events are held in UK and Sri Lanka every year. In addition to the above core projects APSL continued organising the popular 'Ask the expert series' and releasing publications under 'Through the professional eye series' during 2010.

Further projects and events will be added to the ongoing list by the APSL Charity Arm and the Business Arm as they develop in the future.

Ask the Diplomat event

'Ask the Diplomat Event' was held at the Sri Lankan High Commission, London on Saturday, 10th July 2010 at 6.00 pm. The event was well attended with a house full of delegates from the Sri Lankan Diaspora as well as their local friends and counterparts. Prof IM Dharmadasa, President, APSL welcoming the speakers and the delegates. He briefly outlined the history of the APSL, its aims and activities and events conducted to-date under the Ask the Expert Series. The panel of speakers consisted of Mr. P. M. Amza, Deputy High Commissioner, Mr. S. Ekanayake, Minister, Mrs. S. Wijeratne, Minister (Commercial) and Mr. M.R.K. Lenagala, Minister Counsellor (Political) and was facilitated by Dr Andrew Nayagam, Immediate Past President of the APSL.



Mr Amza's topic was Diplomatic Relations - The concept and its implementation. -: An overview. The speaker's rigorous diplomatic training and years of experience in the field came across during the speech. Mr Amza treated the audience to the development of international diplomatic relations, Geneva Convention, Diplomatic rights, obligations and immunity using practical examples. Speaking about the Functions of Diplomatic Missions with special reference to Sri Lanka High Commission in London, Mr. Ekanayake outlined the many different services provided by the mission both for the benefit of the Sri Lankan Diaspora in UK such as registration of births, marriages and deaths, issuing new Sri Lankan passports and paying pensions for the Sri Lankans now living in the UK. Mrs. Wijeratne outlined the country's development priorities and the different initiatives being taken to promote investment and trade in Sri Lanka. She also mentioned that her trade division is there to assist anyone who would like to open business relations with Sri Lankan counterparts. Under 'Sri Lanka UK Political Relations' Mr.Lenagala outlined the historical ties between the two countries going back centuries. He referred to the ethnic conflict and the effect it had on the relationship in the recent past and the steps being taken to strengthen the ties.

A full report of the event is available on the APSL website.

Mervyn Silva / APSL

UPDATE:

"APSL Awards" - An Island-wide Essay Competition

How to Develop Sri Lanka as Seen Through the Eyes of the Younger Generation

APSL in collaboration with the Institute of Research and Development (IRD) Sri Lanka, are holding an island-wide essay competition open to all school children in the age group of (16-19) yrs. Ten winning essays will receive Rs 10,000 each from APSL (Rs 5,000 for the pupil and Rs 5,000 for the pupil's school library) together with an APSL certificate and a trophy. The prizes will be awarded during an event in Sri Lanka and the winning articles will be widely publicised in the local press, magazines and on websites. The essays should be submitted to "Island-wide essay competition", IRD, 393/3, Lily Avenue, Robert Gunawardane Mawatha, Battaramulla. Deadline for submission is extended till 31st December 2010. For more information including submission requirements and assessment procedure, please visit APSL website for details in all three languages.

Prof. I. M. Dharmadasa / APSL

Living in the UK & Eastern Values: Birmingham Event



The 24th of October this year marked the second in the series of seminar sessions organised by the APSL in collaboration with the Jethawana Buddhist Vihara in Birmingham. This particular series is titled 'Living in the UK' and it focussed on both 'Eastern Values' and 'Western Values'.

The event was attended by Vice President, Rohan de Alwis and General Secretary, Ranjan Perera (both Speakers at the Event), Thushara Madurasinghe (Deputy Treasurer / Chair of the Event), Minister Counsellor of the Sri Lanka High Commission, Chaminda Kularatne and many devotees and well wishers of the Sri Lankan community in the Midlands. Ven. Gunawansa Thero commended the post-presentation discussion and pledged his fullest support and co-operation for future discussions and programmes. The Organizing committee would like to thank all those involved in making this event a success and anticipate everyone's continuing support.

Please visit the website for a full report of the event.

Thushara Madurasinghe / APSL

APSL @ Festival of Cricket 2010



APSL continued feature at the annual Festival of Cricket this year too. A number of new members joined APSL, and some of the current members networked with each other, making it a very memorable and productive day for us. As in previous years, our Patron HE the Sri Lankan High Commissioner to the UK Justice Nihal Jayasinghe visited the stall and extended his continued support to APSL. Well done to the APSL organising committee for their commitment and hard work to making this effort a success.



Invitation to contribute to the Newsletter

Members are warmly encouraged to contribute to the future issues of our Newsletter. Articles and messages contributing to the aims, mission, vision and strategic objective of APSL (please see the website home page), can be forwarded to APSL for consideration for publication in this newsletter. For more information, please contact Leslie Dep (w.dep@ntlworld.com) or Mohan Siriwardena (mohan.siriwardena@googlemail.com).

How to pay membership fees

Electronic payment: HSBC Bank plc; Rickmansworth Branch;

Sort Code: 40-38-20; Account Number: 11444506

Account Name: ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SRI LANKANS IN THE UK (APSL)

Cheque:

Please send a cheque drawn in favour of **APSL UK**, to our Treasurer, Mr. Suraj Wijendra, Treasurer, APSL, 41, Tudor Way, Mill End, Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 8JA

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