



# The Professional

10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Association of Professional Sri Lankans in the UK

UK Registered Charity No: 1145786

2014 June – 10th Anniversary Edition

## Message from the President of the Association of Professional Sri Lankans in the UK (APSL UK)

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to our 10th Anniversary Celebrations.

The APSL was formed in 2004 by a small group of like-minded professionals in London, encouraged by Mr Faiz Mustapha, the Sri Lankan High Commissioner to the UK at the time.

APSL's vision is to see a peaceful and prosperous Sri Lanka where everyone lives in harmony, Sri Lankans around the world having realised their full potential turn around and support those coming behind them in realising their full potential. APSL is unique that it is the only Sri Lankan association in the UK, open to all Sri Lankans regardless of their languages, creeds, profession or political affiliation.

During the past decade the APSL has carried out a large number of activities aimed at:

- ❖ Fostering unity and promoting professionalism among the Sri Lankans in the UK,
- ❖ Providing relief and economic development, and knowledge transfer to Sri Lanka,
- ❖ Professional development, networking and social and cultural relations in the UK and beyond.

The APSL formalised what it has been doing for years by becoming a UK Registered Charity in 2012. This has enabled us to do even more by allowing us to raise funds and making our money go further.

Whilst celebrating our achievements of the past decade it is also time to look back, take stock and plan for the future.

I see the following as priorities for ensuring our continued growth and sustainability:

- ❖ Regular two-way dialogue with the membership which is possible and much more affordable now than it was ten years ago due to the advances in technology,
- ❖ Ensuring a continuous income streams needed to do more and better things, by making it easier for members to pay their annual subscriptions,
- ❖ Attracting and retaining more younger members and developing them

into future leadership roles,

❖ Finding more innovative ways to harness the knowledge capital of our members which is by far our greatest asset. We have decided to mark this special occasion with a symposium showcasing eminent Sri Lankan speakers followed by a Dinner Dance for the members, families and friends.



Mr. Mervyn Silva  
President

***In keeping with the APSL's 'alleviation of suffering' agenda, proceeds from this event will be donated to help those who are affected by Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) in the North Central Province (NCP) of Sri Lanka. You will hear more about this tragic situation on the day. Please support this worthy cause and give generously.***

I would like to use this occasion to thank our members, friends and well-wishers who have been with us and supported us over the years. A special thanks to the distinguished guests local and international who have travelled to join our celebrations. A very special thanks to the distinguished speakers who are addressing us today. Finally, a big thank you to my Executive Committee and the Event Organising Committee for all their behind the scene activities and months and months of voluntary hard work in making this event a big success.

Today, the London Grange City Hotel, has laid an excellent South Asian cuisine to tease your nostrils and tickle your palates. The music provided by the famous Sri Lankan band 'Sky High' who will thrill and entertain you until the midnight. I am sure you will have a great time and a night to remember!



*HIGH COMMISSIONER*  
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

### Message

I am pleased to send this message to the Souvenir being published on the occasion of the "10th Anniversary Symposium: Achievements-Sky is the Limit" organized by the Association of Professional Sri Lankans in the UK.



I commend the commitment and dedication of all those in the APSL for all their work over the past decade in providing an eminently suitable platform for Sri Lankan Professionals in the Diaspora.

I have had the pleasure of both attending as well as hosting some APSL events at the High Commission over the past few years. During these, I have been struck by the opportunities the APSL provides for Sri Lankan professionals to present their work; the inclusive approach to both membership and Committees; the mentoring support for youth; and the fascinating research symposia and workshops which impart professional advice.

These provide fertile opportunities for capacity building, technology transfer, scientific outreach and professional development, and in turn can also provide a coherent and sound contribution towards Sri Lanka's economic ascendance in the post-conflict era.

I take this opportunity to wish the Association of Professional Sri Lankans in the UK the very best for their 10m Anniversary Symposium and all their future endeavours.

**Dr. Chris Nonis**  
High Commissioner

# Editorial



APSL, established a decade ago by a group of like-minded professionals from Sri Lanka, has grown into a strong organization grounded in diversity, dignity, equality and honesty. It achieved the full charity status in the year 2012. The journey has not been easy, with many obstacles to overcome. However, through unity and professionalism, we have grown into a wide network of people, hailing from different ethnicities, professional backgrounds, religions and places. Our work and influence has extended to many spheres including academia, research, charity, public engagement, capacity building, peace building, reconciliation and national policy both in the UK and in Sri Lanka. Through our projects, we have promoted reconciliation in post-conflict Sri Lanka, contributed to the

## A decade of professionalism

development of the country, promoted dissemination of science and research to Sri Lankan children and brought Sri Lankan communities together in the UK.

The success of the APSL model has spawned many similar organizations among Sri Lankan professional communities in various other countries including the Middle East. APSL has played a pivotal and pioneering role in harnessing the knowledge and expertise of expatriate Sri Lankans for developmental work in Sri Lanka. We have been recognized by the Sri Lankan government as a key representative of Sri Lankan expatriate knowledge pool and our members have contributed to national development initiatives. Through our work, we have stimulated our next generation of professionals, encouraging them to engage in science and research. Sustainable energy promotion has been another key area where we have made an impact. Many

of our activities in the UK focus on bringing various ethnic and religious communities together, and promoting sustainable reconciliation.



Dr. Chesmal Siriwardhana

We are determined to continue this wonderful and exhilarating journey in the new decade, contributing to the improvement of Sri Lanka and its people, as well as to the development of our professional community. At this fantastic moment when we are celebrating our 10 year anniversary, we would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you to join us for the journey ahead!!!

**Dr. Chesmal Siriwardhana**  
Editor - APSL Newsletter  
[www.apsl.org.uk](http://www.apsl.org.uk)



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வெளிவிவகார அமைச்சு

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ජනරජ කොට්ඨාසයේ, කොළඹ-01, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව குடியரசுக் கட்டிடம், கொழும்பு-01, இலங்கை Republic Building, Colombo-1, Sri Lanka

### **Message for the APSL- 10th Anniversary Celebrations**

I have great pleasure in extending my heartiest congratulations and best wishes to the Members of the Association of Professional Sri Lankans in the UK (APSL), on its tenth anniversary. On a personal note, I take great pride in having been associated with the founding of the APSL during my tenure as the Deputy High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in London, and to have witnessed its impressive growth while serving as the High Commissioner subsequently.



It is heartening to note that a committed group of professionals of Sri Lankan origin from different walks of life, united by their patriotic zeal, have dedicated themselves to promote the interests of Sri Lanka, through the various activities that they have undertaken over the years. I pay my humble tribute to all Members of the APSL and their families for the decade of service that they have rendered.

It is my sincere belief that the Association will continue its good work in the years ahead, and while wishing every success in its future endeavours, I am delighted to be able to join in the celebration of the APSL's decade of achievements.

**Kshenuka Senewiratne**  
Secretary

# Past Presidents' Message from Eng. Leslie Gunaratne, Dr. Andrew Nayagam, Prof. I. M. Dharmadasa and Mr. Rohan de Alwis, Solicitor.



We are very pleased and feel proud and privileged to send this message to the 10th Anniversary Dinner Dance Souvenir of APSL. -

"Pleased" because it is very rare for a voluntary non-profit making UK registered Charity to last 10 years, let alone grow during such a long period and "Proud" that we have all individually and as a team been able to get APSL to where it is today!

APSL was set up on a very firm foundation with just a handful of professionals 10 years ago. We are proud to note that APSL has grown to almost 500 Members. Engineer Leslie Gunaratne was elected its first President with Rohan de Alwis as General Secretary. We were determined to work across the established vertical professional silos, and as a result we were able to reach out to lawyers, doctors, engineers, accountants, academics, business professionals and many more. We grew rapidly and along with it came the desire to develop our members to be leaders and to work outside their established areas, - so we decided to rotate most executive committee positions every two years. Dr Andrew Nayagam then became our second President, followed by Professor I.M. Dharmadasa and Rohan de Alwis, who is now the immediate past President.

APSL is all about professional and social networking and equally giving back to Sri Lanka (private and public sectors and also to individuals) to benefit from the great knowledge and capacity building skills APSL has got through

our own members and beyond. Here are a few areas where we have been active:

Lankan community by reaching out to the three communities. We must all remember that reconciliation is not just 'one event', but a continuing



Eng. Leslie Gunaratne

Dr. Andrew Nayagam

Prof. I. M. Dharmadasa

Mr. Rohan de Alwis, Solicitor

In Sri Lanka: APSL's ability to organise at short notice was first tested during its infancy, when the Tsunami hit the coastal areas of Sri Lanka. We were able to mobilise our members to raise funds and also get 'feet on the ground' in Sri Lanka to help those who were left destitute in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. We then followed it up with a housing project in the Southern Province for 10 homeless families.

APSL has also encouraged Sri Lankan youth and entrepreneurs to become active and to be recognised. We have therefore held an island-wide Essay Competition and launched the "Green Energy Ideas into commercial uses" Project. We were also able to coordinate with two of our members to help set up two water purification plants in Anuradhapura District, an area very badly affected by the Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). These two Plants provide clean drinking water to almost 5000 people, and we are very proud that the technology has been developed wholly in Sri Lanka.

In the UK, we have contributed to the reconciliation effort and building bridges within the multi-ethnic Sri

process where all the parties will have to work together to achieve a lasting and prosperous peace. We have a lot to do therefore in the UK in reaching out to the youth, a whole generation who has never set foot in Sri Lanka to visit their parental land, see for themselves how life in Sri Lanka is and make up their own minds.

The Research Symposium platform offered by APSL to Sri Lankan doctors and scientists to present their papers before a live and intellectual audience has now become a main fixture in our events calendar. "Living in the UK" is another "regular" in our Series interaction with the Sri Lankan community outside of London. The popularity of the "Ask the Expert" Series with "Ask the Lawyer", "Ask the Medical Doctor", "Ask the IT Professional", "Ask the Ayurvedic Doctor" were some of the presentations made in London.

As past-Presidents of APSL, we are therefore very privileged to be associated and continue to be active with our current executive and the members and we very much look forward to working with the current leadership, as well as the new leaders that will emerge from APSL in the future!



# The eminent Sri Lankan professionals addressing the 10th Anniversary Symposium

## Professor Chandra Wickramasinghe

Professor Chandra Wickramasinghe is an internationally renowned astronomer who has made pioneering contributions to the theory of cosmic dust. In 1974 he first proposed the theory that dust in interstellar space and in comets was largely organic, a theory that has now been vindicated. In collaboration with Sir Fred Hoyle he propounded the theory of cometary panspermia.

Jointly with Sir Fred Hoyle he was awarded the International Dag Hammarskjöld Gold Medal for Science in 1986, and in 1992 he was decorated by the President of Sri Lanka with the titular honour of Vidya Jyothi. He was awarded the International Sahabdeen Prize for Science in 1996. He holds the ScD degree from the University of Cambridge and an honorary doctorate from the Soka University of Tokyo, Japan, an honorary doctorate from Ruhuna University of Sri Lanka, along with several other international



distinctions. A Fellow of Jesus College Cambridge, 1962-1973; Staff Member of the Institute of Theoretical Astronomy in the University of Cambridge, 1965-1973; Professor and Head of the Department of Applied Mathematics and Astronomy, Cardiff University 1973-1990; Professor of Mathematics, Cardiff University 1990-2000; Director of the Cardiff Centre for Astrobiology, 2000-2010; Honorary Professor and Director of the Buckingham Centre for Astrobiology, University of

Buckingham.

An award-winning poet and the author or co-author of over 25 books and over 350 scientific papers, 70 of which are in Nature. He has held visiting professorial appointments in a large number of Universities world-wide and has at one time been advisor to the President of Sri Lanka and Founder Director of the Institute of Fundamental Studies in Sri Lanka.



## Professor S Homer-Vanniasinkam

June 2008 she was awarded a Personal Chair in Clinical and Experimental Vascular Research by the University of Bradford; in 2006, she was appointed to the first Chair in Translational Vascular Medicine at Bradford. In September 2008, she was appointed Director of Research and Education at the Northwick Park Institute for Medical Research (affiliated to University College London; UCL) and was invited to accept an Honorary Chair in Surgery at UCL. On 1 June 2014, Professor Homer-Vanniasinkam will take up the post of the Founding Chair of Surgery at the University of Warwick.

Professor Homer-Vanniasinkam is Clinical Sub-Dean of Leeds Medical School and has significant medical undergraduate teaching and examining commitments. In 2006, she developed and launched a novel undergraduate medical research scholarship programme, LURE (Leeds

Undergraduate Research Enterprise) which is a 'first' for the UK. She also has an ongoing global programme of medical under- and post-graduate teaching and mission work, with a particular emphasis in South East Asia. In addition to her clinical work as a full-time vascular surgeon, she is actively involved in a number of basic, applied and translational research projects.

Professor Homer-Vanniasinkam holds office in a number of national and international committees and organizations, has published over 100 papers and has a significant research grant profile. She was on the Council of the Vascular Society of Great Britain & Ireland (2009-13) and was the Founding Chair of its Research Committee. She currently holds a number of Visiting Professorships and collaborative appointments in this country and abroad.

Consultant Vascular Surgeon, The General Infirmary at Leeds, Hon Professor, Division of Surgery and Interventional Sciences, University College London; United Kingdom

Professor Shervanthi Homer-Vanniasinkam was appointed Consultant Vascular Surgeon at The General Infirmary at Leeds in October 1995, having trained in India and the UK. In



## Professor Terrence Fernando

Professor Terrence Fernando is the Director of the THINKlab at the University of Salford. The THINKlab combines both physical and virtual spaces to provide innovative collaborative workspaces for innovation. Professor Fernando has a broad background in conducting multi-disciplinary research programmes involving a large number of research teams in areas such as distributed virtual engineering, virtual building construction, driving simulations, virtual prototyping, urban simulation and maintenance simulation.

During 2001 and 2004 he led a regional research centre on advanced virtual prototyping involving the Universities of Salford, Manchester & Lancaster. This EPSRC/ OST funded (£1.7m) project brought together key research teams in the region to develop visualisation and simulation techniques for product design. Furthermore, as a part of the EU funded Future Workspaces roadmap project and the MOSIAC project, Prof Fernando brought together over 100 companies and research centres from areas such as aerospace, automotive, building construction, multi-modal interfaces, system architecture, networking & human factors to define a 10 year European vision for future collaborative engineering workspaces and mobile workspaces.

He was also a core member of the INTUITION Network of Excellence

project involving over 50 research centres across Europe to develop coordinated research activities on VR. This has resulted in an European Association for Virtual Reality for promoting

advanced VR research in Europe. As a part of the EPSRC funded Vivacity project he led the development

of a collaborative urban planning environment in collaboration with the Black Country Consortium and Ordnance Survey. This work is now being further developed to support three regeneration projects within Salford involving a range of stakeholders including the City Council, the Police, PCT and the Environment Agency. Prof Fernando leads the Virtual Futures theme within the EPSRC funded FIRM project with a view to creating new media platforms for media professionals and citizens.



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Established in February 2004, APSL membership is open to Sri Lankans of every race, creed, OBA / OGA and profession. We are a group of Sri Lankans spread across the UK who are in various different professions. Our aim is to promote unity and professionalism among the Sri Lankans in the UK and harness their skills and knowledge for the redevelopment of Sri Lanka. We see diversity as a strength, regard family, community, religion and culture as the foundation and

education and hard-work as the building blocks of success. We endeavour to uphold our reputation for honesty, generosity and professionalism in everything we do.

Our activities are designed to inform and educate, build fellowship and entertain and raise funds to support worthwhile causes. Among other things they include:

- ◆ Regular seminars and workshops organised around a professional theme, or subject of professional interest,
- ◆ Quarterly events to build fellowship among members and friends,
- ◆ Social and cultural activities to bring the community together

for fostering unity and providing networking opportunities,

- ◆ Keynote addresses by eminent Sri Lankans to celebrate their achievements and serve as role models for younger professionals,
- ◆ Coaching and mentoring of young Sri Lankans through their professional development,
- ◆ Humanitarian relief activities in Sri Lanka during times of need,
- ◆ Multi-disciplinary projects for the development of Sri Lanka,
- ◆ Provide web space for our members to advertise their professional services

We are a UK registered charity (No: 1145786). Come join us and support our endeavours while enhancing your own professionalism.

## APSL Project Portfolio

*Led by members of the Executive Committee, APSL conducted five core projects during the past decade, creating a lasting impact on various communities in Sri Lanka and the UK.*

### **We Sri Lanka**

The aim of 'We Sri Lanka' is to foster reconciliation among all Sri Lankans in the UK. The 'We Sri Lanka' theme based events organized by APSL aims to build mutual understanding, goodwill and a sense of shared purpose through dialogue, learning, and a celebration of our cultural diversity.

### **Eastern values**

Several successful series of talks and discussions under the banner 'Life in the UK and Sri Lankan Cultural Values' seminar series have been conducted at the Jethawana Buddhist Vihara in Birmingham and Kethumathi Buddhist Vihara in Manchester. APSL aims to replicate the seminar

series in other parts of the UK.

### **Promoting solar power initiatives**

The first solar power project under the solar village programme was completed at Kaduruwea village in the Kurunegala district. Water supply to the village was provided using solar pumps replacing a diesel pump. The villagers have formed a society to operate the scheme and saving about Rs 100,000 per annum on diesel costs. These savings are invested in various development projects to uplift living standards of the village community.

# Journey.... the years (2004-2014)

# 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



## APSL awards

The aim of APSL awards is to actively engage the country's younger generation and seek their ideas and stimulate the rapid development of Sri Lanka. The first stage of this project – APSL essay competition was successfully completed in July 2011. Second stage of the project that promoted green energy based sustainable entrepreneurship was completed successfully in 2013 with the collaboration of the Sri Lanka National Science Foundation, Institute of Fundamental Studies and Institute for Research & Development.

## Ask the expert

APSL has conducted a series of events that brings together experts in areas of medicine, engineering, accountancy, diplomacy, research, IT and other areas with the general public to promote dialogue and discussion about various current issues around these themes.



[www.apsl.org.uk](http://www.apsl.org.uk)

The Association of Professional Sri Lankans in the UK | 07



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## Message of Felicitation 10th Anniversary Celebration of APSL 21 June 2014



It gives me a great pleasure to issue this Message of Felicitation on the happy occasion of the 10th Anniversary Celebrations of the Association of Professional Sri Lankans (APSL) in the UK.

The APSL is the uniting factor to all professionals of Sri Lankan origin in the UK irrespective of their expertise, socio-economic diversity, or political affiliation. The APSL since its inception has been forging all their talents, and experiences with the aim to promote unity and professionalism among Sri Lankans in the UK and to harness their best contribution for the development of their motherland - Sri Lanka.

I have had the pleasure and privilege to engage closely with the APSL during my tenure in the Sri Lanka High Commission in London from August 2009 to February 2012, which I cherish very sincerely to date.

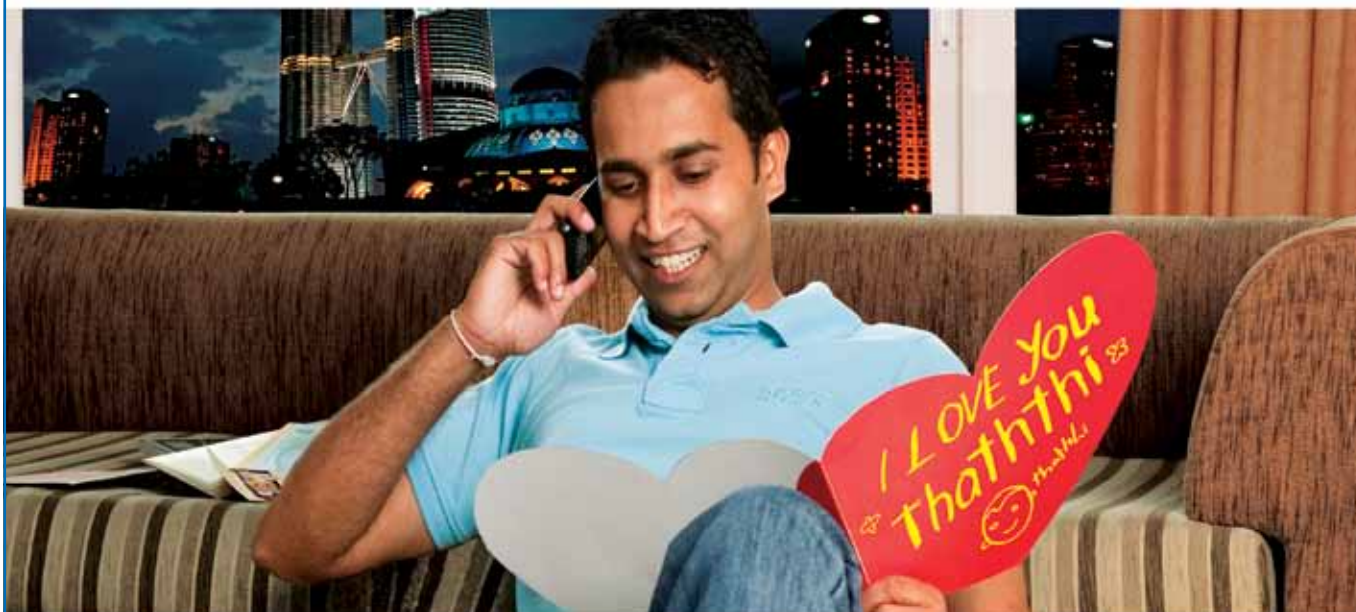
I take this opportunity to wish APSL the very best in its future endeavours.

  
P.M. Amza  
Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg &  
Head of Mission to the European Union

13 June 2014



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### APSL 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

*Best Wishes*

*From*

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## The APSL Executive Committee 2014-15

**Patron:** H.E. The High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in the United Kingdom

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Mr. Mervyn Silva

**Vice Presidents:**  
Mr. Suraj Wijendra, Mr. Ranjan Perera

**General Secretary:**  
Dr. Mahesh de Silva

**Membership Secretary:**  
Mrs. Gayani Senaratne

**Treasurer:** Mr. Thushara Madurasinghe

**Executive Committee Members:**  
Prof. Sir Sabaratnam Arulkumaran  
Mr. Derrick Brainard  
Dr. Chesmal Siriwardhana  
Dr. Asanga Fernando  
Mr. Mohan Siriwardena  
Prof. Athula Sumathipala  
Mr. Asaf Bakeer Markar  
Mr. Gihantha Jayasinghe

**Co-opted Senior Members:**  
Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy  
Prof. I. M. Dharmadasa  
Dr. Marc Dissanayake  
Dr. Andrew Nayagam  
Mr. Leslie Dep  
Mr. Rohan de Alwis – Immediate Past President

**Co-opted member:**  
Ms. Buddhini Liyanage



You can join APSL online now by clicking 'Join Us' on our website [www.apsl.org.uk](http://www.apsl.org.uk).

Once you become a member, you can update your contact details, pay your subscriptions and access members resources by clicking My Account.

## Programme 10 June 2014 10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

### Programme Symposium

**2.00 – 2.45**

Registration

**2.45 – 3.00**

Welcome & Introduction  
- President

**3.00 – 3.30**

APSL Projects – Past, Present  
& Future. Short presentations

**3.30 – 4.00**

Professor Terence Fernando

**4.00 – 4.15**

Comfort break. Tea & Coffee

**4.15 – 4.45**

Professor Shervanthi Homer-  
Vanniasinkam

**4.45 – 5.15**

Professor Chandra  
Wickremasinghe

**5.15 – 5.45**

Panel discussion

**5.45**

Vote of thanks

**7.00 – 12.30**

Dinner dance



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## Help combat Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) in North Central Province of Sri Lanka

Each day approximately 13 middle aged farmers in the North Central Province die from CKD, i.e. nearly 5,000 deaths a year. Currently around 450 villages in the North Central Province are significantly affected. CKD related deaths have already surpassed the number of deaths caused by the Tsunami in 2004.

### **Probable causes of CKD are;**

- Consumption of polluted water
- Excessive use of subsidised fertiliser, pesticides and herbicides that saturate farm lands and reservoirs with chemicals - especially phosphates
- Inadequate use of protective gear resulting in exposure to toxic agrochemicals (via skin, inhalation, and food intake)
- Runoff from exposed sloping land due to soil erosion exacerbated by sloppy farming practices, deforestation and climate change

### **Potential short and long term remedies for CKD are;**

- Providing equipment, consumables, expertise and food for patients undergoing treatment
- Providing clean and safe drinking water through water purification plants
- Raising farmer awareness to prevent environmental and soil pollution, reduced usage of subsidised fertilisers or agro chemicals, and ensuring safety precautions during their use.
- Developing an efficient, cost effective method to identify contaminated water

Net proceeds from APSL's 10th Anniversary Dinner Dance on 21st June 2014 will be earmarked for selected CKD alleviation projects in Sri Lanka.



## THE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SRI LANKANS IN THE UK (APSL)

UK Registered Charity No; 1145786

### APSL EVENTS DIARY 2014 –2015

Event	Venue	Date
Festival of Cricket (FOC)	Merchant Taylor School Ground, Sandy Lodge Lane, Northwood Middlesex HA6 2H	20th July 2014
APSL Family Event in South of England	To be confirmed	August 2014
Young Professionals & Students Event & Ex-Co meeting	Sri Lanka High Commission, London (To be confirmed)	September 2014
Living in the UK	To be confirmed	November 2014
Debate- 'Global Warming a Myth' (Topic TBC) & Ex-Co meeting	Sri Lanka High Commission, London (To be confirmed)	January 2015
Ask the Expert Event & AGM	Sri Lanka High Commission, London (To be confirmed)	April 2015





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# THE REGAL CALIBRE GROUP OF COMPANIES OF SRI LANKA IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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TENTH ANNIVERSARY AND WISH THEM FURTHER  
SUCCESS AND PROGRESS IN THE FUTURE

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