

# Education TODAY

BY LIHINI JAYAWARDENE

In an exclusive interview with Ceylon Today, Prof. Sarath Pieris, an expert in Applied Statistics at the Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT), shared insights into the role of mathematics in higher education. He focused on the B.Sc. (Hons) in Financial Mathematics and Applied Statistics (FMAS) programme offered by SLIIT, which ensures a promising future for students interested in actuarial science. This article outlines the key points from the conversation with Prof. Pieris.

## Mathematics and higher education

Mathematics is the foundation for various fields, including science, technology, engineering, computing, and actuarial science. It fosters analytical and creative thinking, problem-solving, logical reasoning, and the ability to provide proof. The Ordinary Level examination is the first national assessment that evaluates students' mathematical proficiency in Sri Lanka. Encouragingly, the pass rate for Mathematics in GCE (O/L) has increased over the years.

For students looking to further their education in Mathematics, Combined Mathematics is a popular subject choice at the GCE Advanced Level, taking up two additional subjects. The number of students sitting for the Physical Science stream has increased from 32,075 in 2017 to 35,386 in 2023. Likewise, university eligibility rates have also improved, with the number of qualifying students rising from 17,534 in 2017 to 20,498 in 2023.

However, despite these positive trends, not all qualifying students secure a place at a state university. The number of Physical Science students missing out on state university admissions has increased from 11,747 in 2017 to 11,930 in 2023. This highlights the need for alternative educational pathways for talented students wishing to pursue a mathematics and statistics career.

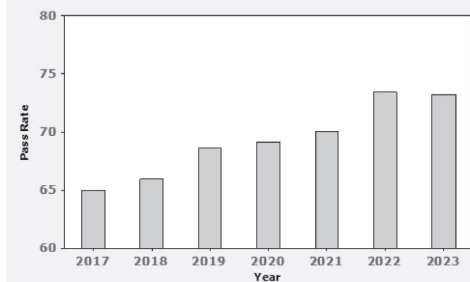
## Introducing the B.Sc. (Hons) in Financial Mathematics and Applied Statistics (FMAS)

To bridge this gap and provide an opportunity for students passionate about mathematics, SLIIT introduced the four-year FMAS (Financial Mathematics and Applied Statistics) degree in 2021 under the Department of Mathematics and Statistics (DMS), Faculty of Humanities & Sciences (FHS) of which the first batch will be graduated this August. This programme,

## A PATHWAY TO A CAREER IN ACTUARIAL SCIENCE

Explore the impact of SLIIT's FMAS degree on shaping future actuaries in Sri Lanka and beyond

Fig. 1 - Pass rate of GCE (O/L) of mathematics by school candidates



approved by the Ministry of Education, is designed to produce actuarial graduates equivalent to international university graduates. Notably, Sri Lankan state universities do not offer undergraduate degrees in Actuarial Science, making this programme particularly significant.

### What is Actuarial Science?

According to Prof. Pieris, actuarial science is a discipline that assesses financial risks in organisations, including insurance companies, financial institutions, and large production firms. Actuarial science plays a crucial role in risk management, ensuring the success and stability of businesses. Students enrolled in this degree will develop strong logical and analytical thinking skills, equipping

them to accurately analyse and predict financial risks. This skill set provides them with a competitive edge in the job market, where actuarial expertise is in high demand.

### The Nature of the FMAS Degree

The B.Sc. (Hons) in Financial Mathematics and Applied Statistics at SLIIT is structured to equip students with expertise in quantitative finance, risk management, statistical modelling, and mathematical applications. The programme integrates statistics, mathematics, finance, and information technology, preparing graduates for banking, investment, insurance, and business analytics careers.

### The distribution of course modules is as follows:

- Statistics: 32.5%
- Mathematics: 22.0%
- Finance: 22.0%
- Actuarial Science (Direct): 17.0%
- Information Technology: 6.5%

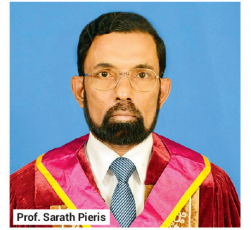
### Additionally, the degree programme includes the following features:

- Six months of industrial training in an actuarial work environment, combined with a six-credit research project, providing students with practical experience in risk analysis and financial forecasting.
- Students can transfer to Butler University (USA) after completing two years at SLIIT to earn a B.Sc. (Hons) in Actuarial Science.
- 1+2 and 2+2 transfer programmes are available with Bond University (Australia), allowing students to complete a B.Sc. in Actuarial Science abroad.

### Benefits and job opportunities

Prof. Pieris emphasised the growing global demand for actuarial professionals, noting that a shortage of trained actuaries has reached critical levels in many countries. Consequently, FMAS graduates can expect excellent career prospects in diverse fields, including:

- Actuarial Analyst
- Market Risk Analyst
- Quantitative Analyst
- Data Scientist
- Business Analyst
- Insurance Actuary



Prof. Pieris highlighted that actuarial careers offer financial stability and job security, with significantly lower stress levels than managerial positions. Specific global career prospects include roles such as:

- Risk Managers
- Research/Actuarial/Business/Financial Analysts
- Enterprise Risk Actuaries
- Insurance Actuaries
- Investment Bankers
- Life Insurance Actuaries

In Sri Lanka, graduates can find employment opportunities in government and private banks, insurance firms, financial institutions, and private sector companies, where there is an ongoing shortage of qualified actuaries.

### Eligibility and further information

To enrol in the FMAS degree, candidates must meet the following requirements:

- At least an 'S' grade in Combined Mathematics and two other subjects at the GCE (A/L) examination in a single sitting or an equivalent qualification from the London/Cambridge A-Level examination.
- A pass in the Aptitude Test conducted by SLIIT.

For more details, prospective students can visit the official website: <https://www.sliit.lk/humanities-sciences/programmes/undergraduate-degree-programmes/>.

With the increasing demand for actuarial expertise worldwide, SLIIT's FMAS degree provides a strong academic foundation and practical exposure, making it a valuable option for students passionate about mathematics and statistics. By combining theoretical knowledge with hands-on industry training, graduates are well-positioned to thrive in financial risk management and actuarial science careers.

# British Council Sri Lanka marks Commonwealth Day

By hosting latest cohort of returning Commonwealth and Chevening Scholars from Sri Lanka

The British Council in Sri Lanka hosted its annual networking event to welcome home the latest batch of Sri Lanka's Commonwealth and Chevening Scholars returning from the UK on completion of their studies.

This year's event, organised with the British High Commission Colombo, marked the 65th anniversary of the Commonwealth Scholarships. It occurred on Commonwealth Day, the first-ever "Welcome Home" event celebrating both Commonwealth and Chevening Scholars. The scholarships enable outstanding emerging leaders from all over the world to pursue advanced studies in the UK.

The British High Commissioner - Andrew Patrick; the Country Director of British Council Sri Lanka, Orlando Edwards; the Policy Lead from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Commonwealth and Marshall Scholarship Unit, Philip Everest, and Commonwealth and Chevening Scholarship alumni attended.

Commonwealth Day was celebrated across 56 Commonwealth member countries on 10 March under this year's theme "Together We Thrive," demonstrating how working together can build a future defined



Panel discussion with Sri Lanka's Commonwealth and Chevening Scholars



British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Andrew Patrick, Jivanka Pathirage, Commonwealth Scholarship - University of Cambridge, Commonwealth and Chevening Scholars and Policy Lead from the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) Commonwealth and Marshall Scholarship Unit, Philip Everest

by opportunity and resilience. During his Commonwealth Day Message, the Head of the Commonwealth, the King, stated,

"The Commonwealth's ability to bring together people from all over the world has stood the test of time and remains ever-important today,



Returning Commonwealth and Chevening Scholars of Sri Lanka with their alums during the event held on Commonwealth Day 2025

As we mark this Commonwealth Day together, there is no more important task than restoring our entire planet's disrupted harmony. For our younger generations' threatened future, I can only hope the Commonwealth will continue its vital work to restore that harmony."

British High Commissioner, Andrew Patrick said, "Should you go to the UK to complete your education, gain work experience and come back, economists predict that this region in the next 20-30 years will be an epicentre of growth and development."

Country Director of British Council Sri Lanka, Orlando Edwards, stated, "The British Council has provided generations of scholars the opportunity to get a world-class education and apply their knowledge for the benefit of

Sri Lanka. Commonwealth Scholars are similar to engineers who carefully build development foundations, while Chevening Scholars are architects. Many scholars are now prominent in tertiary education institutions, Government, and the private sector."

Six Commonwealth Scholars and seven Chevening Scholars were presented with certificates by Andrew Patrick and Philip Everest. The returning scholars of 2024 have completed their postgraduate studies in diverse fields, including law, engineering, and international development.

The event included a panel discussion featuring five Commonwealth and Chevening scholars. All five panelists shared insights on their professional growth, including the skills and

expertise they gained. They reflected on their personal development, including key takeaways and how they embraced their new life abroad. The panelists also discussed how they plan to use their newly acquired knowledge and experience to drive positive change and innovation in their respective organisations and Sri Lanka. Since its inception in 1959, the Commonwealth Scholarship scheme has enabled over 1,100 talented Sri Lankan scholars to study in prestigious universities in the UK.

The application process for Commonwealth Scholarships differs according to the type of scholarship. Applications open in May/June of each year. For further information, visit: <https://cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/> and <https://www.chevening.org/scholarships/>

# GATEWAY COLLEGE HOSTS SACE INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WORKSHOP

## For Educators in South East Asia

Gateway College proudly hosted the SACE International (South Australian Certificate of Education) Professional Learning Workshop from Thursday, 13 March, to 15 Saturday, 2025. This in-person teacher training initiative, facilitated by a team of experts from SACE International, brought together educators from China, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka. It provided an invaluable platform for collaboration, innovation, and the advancement of teaching methodologies.

The workshop commenced with an opening ceremony on March 13th, graced by Paul Stephens, Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka. Joining him was a distinguished panel of education professionals. Virginia Steele, Program Manager at SACE Education Services; Leanne Jarvis, Faculty Manager at SACE International; Deanna Isles, Faculty Manager at SACE Education Services and Wassim Negroh, Education Consultant at SACE Education Services.

The event was further honoured by the presence of Dr. Harsha Alles, Chairman of the Gateway Group, along with Group Directors Anishka Alles and Asoka Herath, Nirmali Wickremesinghe (Consultant, Gateway Group), Vinita Shenoy (Principal, Gateway College Colombo), Devika Alldis (Principal, Gateway College Negombo), and Priyanthi Seneviratne (Principal, Gateway College Dehiwala & Ratmalana).

As education extends beyond the classroom to celebrate culture and creativity, both the opening and closing ceremonies featured vibrant student performances. These included multi-faith celebrations representing Sri Lanka's four major religions, Australian and Sri Lankan national anthems singing, and traditional dance items. Adding a unique student perspective, Lisha Perera, a SACE student from Gateway College Colombo, shared her experience studying the programme.

### Workshop focus areas

Over the three days, participants engaged in intensive subject-specific sessions in Sciences, Mathematics, English, and Humanities. The workshops focused on key educational themes, including:



Guests, Trainers and Teachers



- Metacognition and student-centred learning
  - Natural evidence of learning
  - Student agency in the classroom
  - The integration of AI in education
- Participants participated in hands-on training, networking opportunities, and collaborative discussions to refine instructional strategies and enhance the student learning experience.

Specialised sessions were also held for teachers, coordinators, and school leaders, featuring Deep-dive discussions with subject experts, Leadership forums on educational Innovation and Collaborative Communities of Practice, fostering ongoing professional development. A highlight of the



Jayamin Pelpola

programme was a special session on the future of education, exploring strategies to address the evolving demands of global education.

The closing ceremony on March 15th celebrated all delegates' dedication and active participation, marking the successful conclusion of this impactful professional learning experience. Jayamin Pelpola, a distinguished alumnus of Gateway College, Chairman of Cambridge Ventures and Cambridge Real Estate, Director at Onterra Group, and Board Member of the Bank of Ceylon, was the special guest for the final day. His insights on leadership and innovation inspired and motivated participants.

### SACE graduates: A global future

In today's fast-changing world, education must equip students with the knowledge, skills, and competencies essential for success. The South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) is a globally recognised qualification on par with the GCE Advanced Level, fostering academic excellence, critical thinking, and adaptability. Accepted by the world's top universities—including Australia's Group of Eight, Asia's Top 10, Canada's U15, the UK's Russell Group, and the USA's Ivy League—SACE opens



Virginia Steele - Program Manager, SACE Education Services and the Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Paul Stephens

doors to higher education and global career opportunities.

Gateway College Colombo was the first school to introduce SACE to South Asia, marking a transformative milestone in the region's educational landscape. In just two years, Gateway has celebrated the graduation of two successful cohorts, with a third currently progressing through the programme. As of 2025, Gateway has expanded SACE offerings to its Kandy and Negombo campuses, widening access to this world-class education.

The SACE International Professional Learning Workshop 2025 was pivotal in empowering teachers with innovative strategies. It ensured that students received a high-quality education that prepared them for success in an increasingly dynamic and interconnected world. Hosting this regional forum further cements Gateway College's reputation as a leader in delivering world-class education.

The next intake of SACE students will be in June 2025 at Gateway Colleges in Colombo, Kandy, and Negombo. For further information, please contact [sace@gateway.lk](mailto:sace@gateway.lk) [074 146 7737] | <https://gatewaycollege.lk>. SACE is offered at Gateway College Colombo - 185, Koswatta Road, Rajagiriya [011 2888288, 011 288828; Gateway College Kand - 80, Wariyapola Sri Sumangala Maw, Asgiriya, Kandy [081 2200300, 081 220020; and Gateway College Negombo - No 62, Negombo Road, Kurana [031 2227772, 031 222 7722.



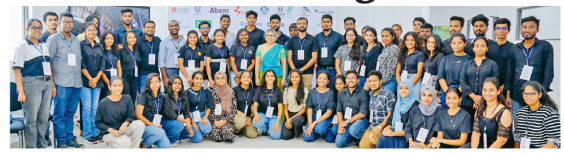
For the first time in the Career Fair's history, the Career Guidance Unit of the University of Kelaniya, along with the university's Rotaract Club, LEO Club, LED Club, Gavel Club, and AIESEC, hosted a main event in addition to a series of immensely successful workshops and open days. Held recently at the Faculty of Computing and Technology Auditorium, the event was a productive day filled with walk-in interviews, where undergraduates could directly meet and interact with potential employers.

Career Fair 2025 featured a series of Open Days workshops, and a main event from January to March. Eight Open Days were hosted by leading companies, including MAS Holdings, Unilever, Abans PLC, Brandix, North Sails, and A. Baur & Co. (Pvt.) Ltd, Sunshine Holdings, and John Keells, offering students invaluable career guidance. The main event, held on 5 March at the Faculty of Computing and Technology, saw participation from eleven renowned companies, including Orient Finance PLC, Acom Ventures (Pvt.) Ltd, Gateway College, Sisi Projects Consortium (Pvt.) Ltd, WIA Systems LK, Ceylenco Life Insurance Ltd, CodeGen International (Pvt.) Ltd, Baker Tilly Edirisinghe & Co, B. R. De Silva & Co, Prime Lands (Pvt.) Ltd, and George Steuart Consumer (Pvt.) Ltd. Each company was allocated a separate room, with a waiting area in each room that included desks and chairs for interviewees to conduct their interviews comfortably while maintaining privacy. Moreover, refreshments and lunch were provided to the company representatives to keep them energised and motivated throughout the day.

Since the event attracted companies from various sectors, including financial services, construction, real estate, infrastructure, technology, logistics, teaching, software development, legal services, insurance, accounting, consulting, manufacturing, healthcare, and engineering, students from all five faculties had the opportunity to participate, with something beneficial for everyone. These companies conducted walk-in interviews and offered invaluable opportunities and advice that will undoubtedly serve as a cornerstone for undergraduates looking to build solid and prosperous careers.

The companies attended this event seeking potential candidates for positions in Tourism and Travel, Human Resources, Finance, Marketing,

## Shaping Futures: Career Fair 2025 Ends on a High Note



Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, Software Engineering, Academic Positions in IT, French, English, Mathematics, Science, Business and Accounting, as Lab Assistant, Audit Trainee, Assistant Internal Auditor, Management Trainee (Marketing), Junior Executive (Customer Service), Customer Relations Executive, Audit Associates, in Digital Marketing, Sales, and Procurement. With this diverse range of job positions, the Career Fair aimed to provide various opportunities for undergraduates to kickstart their corporate careers and become successfully employed by the time they graduate.

The biggest compliment the Career Fair received was how well-organised and comfortable the facilities provided were. The privacy each company had in their allocated rooms improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the interviews, as there was no noise from the crowd disrupting the interview process, offering more confidentiality and comfort to both the interviewer and interviewee.

Additionally, the attending companies praised the undergraduates' preparedness for the interviews, mentioning that they had researched the companies and had a solid understanding of technical matters. Considering that this was the first time the Career Fair had organised such an event with major companies in one place, the day was a resounding success. The Career Guidance Unit of the University of Kelaniya looks forward to future Career Fairs that will further enhance the spirit of corporate excellence and feature even more impactful events.

The closing ceremony of Career Fair 2025

arrived. It occurred on 12 March 2025 at the K14 Hall of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Kelaniya. Student clubs affiliated with the Career Guidance Unit (CGU), including Rotaract, LEO, LED, Gavel, and AIESEC, coordinated the event. Held annually, the Career Fair serves as a vital platform for undergraduates to explore career opportunities and connect with potential employers in the corporate world.

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kelaniya, Senior Professor Nilanthi de Silva, was the chief guest. Rolf Blaser, Managing Director and CEO of A. Baur & Co. (Pvt.) Ltd delivered an insightful keynote speech. He shared his journey, provided wonderful advice, and motivated the undergraduates. Director of the Career Guidance Unit, Senior Professor Dilkushi Wettew, attended the event with Faculty Deans, academic staff, K. A. M. Viraj Abeyasinghe, R. P. A. Minoon Perera, Career Counsellors, company representatives, and undergraduates.

A ceremony concluded the event, acknowledging the organising committee's hard work and launching the Career Fair Magazine, which paid tribute to the entire Career Fair programme. The magazine is filled with valuable insights from industry experts, entrepreneurs, graduates, and undergraduates, as well as articles by undergraduates.

As the curtains closed on the Career Fair 2025, the event marked a significant milestone in the University of Kelaniya's efforts to foster the gap between academia and industry, fostering a future where undergraduates are better prepared to enter the workforce with confidence and expertise.



From left Dinuk Parameshwaran (HNB Executive - Marketing Communication), Sanduni Basnayake (HNB Executive - Master Brand), Anuk De Silva (HNB Manager - Marketing Communication), and Upul Adikari (HNB Head of Marketing) receive a token of collaboration from SLIM President Gayan Perera, alongside Dr. Dilhan Sanjath, Jayatilake (SLIM Vice President - Events and Sustainability), marking the launch of 'SLIM Marketing ROKS powered by HNB'.

## HNB partners with SLIM to launch the Marketing ROKS programme

HNB PLC, Sri Lanka's leading private sector bank, recently announced a landmark partnership with the Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing (SLIM) to launch 'SLIM Marketing ROKS powered by HNB', an innovative educational initiative designed to empower school students with essential marketing, business, and financial skills. This initiative builds upon the efforts of SLIM Brand Week 2025, with HNB continuing to nurture future leaders.

The MoU was signed at the HNB Towers, and the collaboration represented a significant step in both organisations' commitment to nurturing the next generation of business leaders and entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka. The programme will deliver a comprehensive series of masterclasses targeting O/L and A/L students nationwide and across government and private schools.

"This strategic partnership with SLIM exemplifies HNB's dedication to educational development and our broader vision of empowering Sri Lanka's youth. By introducing students to real-world business concepts and challenges at this crucial stage of their education, we're building knowledge and inspiring

future leaders who will drive our nation's economic growth. This initiative perfectly aligns with our core social impact pillars, particularly in education, and demonstrates our commitment to creating sustainable value for the community," said HNB Head of Marketing, Upul Adikari.

The programme aims to reach over 80 schools across the island, offering students practical insights into modern marketing strategies, financial management, and business innovation through interactive learning sessions. A key highlight of the initiative includes awarding scholarships for students to pursue SLIM's Professional Certificate in Marketing, creating a clear pathway for their professional development.

"SLIM Marketing ROKS has always been about nurturing future leaders by giving them a real taste of the challenges and opportunities in marketing and business. Partnering with HNB allows us to take this initiative to new heights, offering students across the island a truly engaging and valuable learning experience. We are confident that this programme will continue to inspire and shape the next generation of marketers and entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka," said SLIM President, Gayan Perera.



Australian Government's Zero Chance Art and Essay Competition was graced by Deputy High Commissioner Lalita Kapur and the representatives from Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education of Sri Lanka

# FOSTERING TALENT AND AWARENESS THROUGH THE ZERO CHANCE SCHOOL COMPETITION

170 students representing 32 schools across 18 districts in Sri Lanka were celebrated recently during a prize giving ceremony at the BMICH Colombo for the Australian Government's Zero Chance Art and Essay second competition.

Running from June to August 2024, the competition, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education of Sri Lanka, saw close to 1,520 students participating in the creation of essays and artworks on the theme of illegal maritime migration to Australia – *Norawatemu Novaradimu*.

Speaking on the sidelines of the award ceremony, Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Paul Stephens said that the initiative has helped amplify the Australian Government's Zero Chance message, discouraging vulnerable Sri Lankans from undertaking such journeys.

"Zero Chance strategic communication campaign is designed to inform, educate and deter people from undertaking dangerous journeys by sea. I am pleased to have the chance to review the entries in the 2024 Zero Chance Art and Essay competition and I am delighted by what I have seen. The students have done a fantastic job in expressing the theme in their own creative ways, and the level of participation it has generated across many schools is nothing short of exceptional. I thank the Ministry, school principals, and teachers for their support," said Stephens.

The ceremony was graced by Deputy High Commissioner Lalita Kapur. Divided into two age groups, Years 9 to 11 and Years 12 to 13, 14 judges, nominated by the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education, evaluated the entries and selected the winners.

Stephens added that it was important to



170 students representing 32 schools across 18 districts in Sri Lanka were celebrated during the prize giving ceremony for the Australian Government's Zero Chance Art and Essay 2nd competition at the BMICH Colombo

note that the students did not receive any formal information on the theme prior to the creation of their submissions.

"What is particularly striking is the unanimous feedback from the judging panel. They have been thoroughly impressed by the depth of understanding, critical thinking, and knowledge displayed. Their insights were astute and original. The perspectives presented in the Zero Chance Art and Essay competition have heartened me greatly because they speak for the importance of peaceful co-existence, as well as warning vulnerable Sri Lankans about the perils of illegal migration" remarked Stephens.

Further commenting on this initiative, Nalaka Kaluwewa, Secretary to the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education stated: "In order to further strengthen our friendship and address this challenge, both our nations have collaborated to successfully conduct several social awareness programs, highlighting the perils of illegal migration and the threats it poses to people's lives. This is a commendable accomplishment."

Among these initiatives, under the theme "Attempting to journey by boat to Australia is a foolish action", we reached school children across 15 districts and launched an essay and art competition for the first time in 2023. The winners were awarded computer course scholarships from the National Vocational Training Institute. Building on this success, the second phase in 2024 culminated in an award ceremony at BMICH on 1 March 2025. Along with prizes and certificates, we showcased the incredible creativity of these young minds."

All winning students were presented with certificates, jointly signed by the Australian High Commissioner & Secretary to the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education. The winners of the competition were also awarded with scholarships for courses to further enhance their skills from the Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka (VTA).

For more information on Australia's border protection policies, visit [www.australia.gov.au/zerochance](http://www.australia.gov.au/zerochance).

## Atlas SipSavi enhances infrastructure at Ethulgama Maha Vidyalaya To foster a supportive learning environment



Schoolchildren at Ethulgama watch with fascination as the restoration of their school unfolds

Atlas, the leading learning brand in Sri Lanka, demonstrated its unwavering commitment to creating better learning environments in schools nationwide by initiating an infrastructure restoration and development project at Ethulgama Maha Vidyalaya in Kandy. As part of the Atlas SipSavi programme, a special ceremony was recently held to mark the project's successful completion.

This initiative reflects Atlas SipSavi's mission to ensure that "No child is left behind" by transforming schools into inclusive, stress-free learning spaces that allow students to reach their full potential. Many schools across Sri Lanka, particularly rural ones, grapple with infrastructure challenges, leading to a poor learning environment. Atlas's continuous efforts were further strengthened by its partnership with the Peradeniya National College of Education, thus supporting and enhancing Ethulgama Maha Vidyalaya's infrastructure that provides students with safer, more inspiring, and functional spaces, making learning fun.

Discussing the importance of such initiatives in shaping Sri Lanka's future leaders, Head of Corporate Affairs of Atlas Axillia Co. (Pvt) Ltd. Nadeeka Jayasinghe, said, "Education is the foundation of progress, and every child deserves access to a learning environment that inspires curiosity and creativity. Following this infrastructure

development programme, we can improve the physical infrastructure and create a nurturing space where students can dream, explore, and grow. This project reflects our belief that quality education should be accessible to all, and by working closely with the public sector, we strive to bring this vision to life."

The school and the local community enthusiastically received the project, including students, teachers, and parents, who all expressed gratitude for this undertaking. By addressing practical and aesthetic needs, Atlas SipSavi is transforming learning spaces to ensure students have a focused and engaging educational experience. Therefore, this initiative reflects Atlas's dedication to holistic education, ensuring that children in under-served communities have the tools and space they need to succeed.

Guided by its commitment to ensuring equal access to learning, Atlas SipSavi conducts numerous initiatives each year. These include providing school supplies and financial support to students in financial distress, as exemplified by its SipSavi Scholarship Programme, and improving learning environments through initiatives such as the SipSavi Infrastructure Development Project. Together, these efforts are transforming the lives of many underprivileged children across Sri Lanka, unlocking a prosperous future through equitable access to education.



Atlas SipSavi team is rebuilding the school's steps to make the students' footpaths safer



The closing ceremony featured a keynote address by the Director - People Operations at Sysco LABS, Rehan Anthonis, who emphasised the programme's impact in facilitating career progression and leadership development

## Sysco LABS concludes the first edition Of 'Mentor Mash' mentorship programme



Mentor Kalana Dias - Associate Director, Delivery at Sysco LABS, reflecting on the rewarding nature of the programme

Sysco LABS recently concluded the first edition of Mentor Mash, an internal mentorship initiative designed to foster learning and professional development among colleagues. Over six months, 26 mentor-mentee pairs engaged in structured mentorship, focusing on knowledge-sharing, career guidance, and professional growth.

Speaking on the initiative, Senior Director of People Operations, Rehan Anthonis said: "At Sysco LABS, we recognise that the foundation of a strong workforce lies in continuous learning and development. The 'Mentor Mash' programme was designed to provide colleagues with structured opportunities to gain insights, refine their skills, and receive guidance from experienced professionals within the company. By fostering an environment where

knowledge-sharing is prioritised, we are equipping our teams to drive innovation and excel as technology leaders."

Sysco LABS remains committed to creating opportunities for internal learning, mentorship, and professional development, ensuring that colleagues are well-equipped to contribute meaningfully to company growth.

## NDB Bank Partners with Educate Expo 2025 as the Official Banking Partner Showcasing Tailored Financial Solutions for Students

NDB Bank is thrilled to have partnered with Educate Expo 2025 as the Official Banking Partner, reinforcing its commitment to empowering Sri Lanka's youth in their academic and professional journeys. Held recently at BMICH, Educate Expo 2025 was a premier educational and career fair that brought together students, parents, universities, higher education institutions, vocational institutes, and study-abroad consultants under one roof.

As a key event in Sri Lanka's academic calendar, Educate Expo 2025 served as a dynamic platform where students could explore various educational opportunities, career paths, and global study prospects. The event provided invaluable insights into evolving educational trends, helping students and parents make informed decisions about their future.

Recognising the critical role of financial support in higher education, NDB Bank strategically leveraged this platform to introduce its flagship solution for students - NDB Student File. Designed to simplify overseas education financing, the NDB Student File ensures students can quickly pursue their academic dreams. As an integral part of NDB Bank's commitment to youth empowerment, this product provides



a seamless, end-to-end financial solution tailored to the unique needs of students planning to study abroad. Students and parents who visited the NDB Bank stall at Educate Expo 2025 had the opportunity to engage with the Bank's financial experts, gaining firsthand insights into how NDB Student File can help them navigate the financial challenges of overseas education. The product offers many exclusive benefits, including waiving the OTT fee on the first payment, an NDB education loan covering up to 75% of the course fee, and a comprehensive insurance cover from AIA to ensure financial security during the study period. Additionally, students benefit from a 0% instalment plan for visa processing fees

payable over 12 months via NDB Credit Cards and global student privileges through ISIC membership.

Through strategic partnerships and innovative financial solutions, NDB Bank is steadfast in its commitment to empowering Sri Lanka's youth. By providing them with the resources and support needed to achieve their academic and professional goals, the Bank aims to ensure that young individuals are equipped to thrive in an ever-changing world.

NDB Bank is the fourth-largest listed commercial bank in Sri Lanka. NDB was named Sri Lanka's Best Bank for Corporates at Euromoney Awards for Excellence 2024 and was awarded Domestic Retail Bank of the Year - Sri Lanka and Sri Lanka Domestic Project Finance Bank of the Year by Asian Banking and Finance Magazine (Singapore) Awards 2024. NDB is the parent company of the NDB Group, which is comprised of capital market subsidiary companies, forming a unique banking and capital market services group. The Bank is committed to empowering the nation and its people through meaningful financial and advisory services powered by digital banking solutions.



# SLIIT MARKS 25-YEAR LEGACY OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

*With grand Silver Jubilee celebrations*



Prof. Lalith Gamage



Prof. Lakshman Rathnayake



SLIIT proudly marked a significant milestone by celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on 8 March 2025 at The Forum, Cinnamon Life – City of Dreams. This remarkable event reflected 25 years of excellence, growth and impact, highlighting the company's journey in empowering thousands of students with industry-aligned education. The Silver Jubilee Celebration was a memorable evening of reminiscence, discussion and networking, bringing together the SLIIT community, industry leaders, corporate partners, and international delegates to honour their shared achievements.

The event was graced by distinguished guests, including Australian High Commissioner H.E. Paul Stephens; High Commissioner for Canada in Sri Lanka and the Maldives H.E. Eric Walsh; Vice-Chancellor, Curtin University, Australia,



H.E. Paul Stephens



Prof. Harlene Hayne



Prof. Nimal Rajapakse



Prof. Mahesha Kapurubandara

Prof. Harlene Hayne and many esteemed industry experts. The evening commenced with a welcome address by the Chairman of SLIIT, Prof. Lakshman Rathnayake, followed by a panel discussion.

Prof. Lalith Gamage, founder of SLIIT, shared a remarkable journey of the institution's growth over the past 25 years. Mr. Mano Sekaram, founder and Chairman of 99X Technology, highlighted the sustainability and industry advancements that SLIIT has contributed to. Insights from esteemed experts Prof. Nimal Rajapakse, Prof. Mahesha Kapurubandara, Dr. Kalpani Manathunga and Ms. Randima Niroshini further enriched the panel discussion.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined in making this celebration truly special. Here's to many more years of success, innovation, and global impact!



H.E. Eric Walsh



Mr. Mano Sekaram

