

# UoR HIGHLIGHTS

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## FEATURE ARTICLE

**Are we ready for a second green revolution?**  
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# 20<sup>th</sup> Academic Sessions and 19<sup>th</sup> Vice Chancellor's Awards Ceremony



The Academic Sessions and Vice Chancellor's Awards ceremony is one of the most prestigious annual events in the university calendar that creates a distinct platform to showcase the research outcomes of academics, academic supportive, administrative and non-academic staff, postgraduate Students and undergraduate students of the University of Ruhuna and to award scholars for their outstanding performance.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Academic Sessions and the 19<sup>th</sup> Vice Chancellor's Awards Ceremony of the University of Ruhuna was held on 07<sup>th</sup> June 2023. This year's event was hosted by the Faculty of Management and Finance (FMF) and it was concluded with resounding success. The inaugural ceremony of the event was held at the Auditorium of the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology.

experience in driving transformation and innovation in many sectors of Sri Lanka, making him a veritable authority on intellectual and entrepreneurial thrust required for a resilient and progressive society.



Dr.A.M.S.S. Amarasiri, of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Ruhuna delivered the oration on "*Unraveling the Mystery in Search of Nephroprotective Therapeutics from Sri Lankan Flora*".



Proceedings of the 20<sup>th</sup> Academic Sessions was published with 82 abstracts which were selected through a double-blind peer-review process, of the 92 extended abstracts received from diverse fields, including Agriculture, Environment and Biological Sciences, Computer Science & Information

Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasekera, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna, graced this occasion as the Chief Guest, while Prof. E.P.S. Chandana, the Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna participated as the Guest of Honor.

The theme of the 20<sup>th</sup> Academic Sessions and 19<sup>th</sup> Vice Chancellor's Awards 2023 was "*Intellectual and Entrepreneurial Thrust for a Resilient and Progressive Society*". The Keynote Speech was delivered by Dr. Chandra Embuldeniya, the founder Vice Chancellor of Uva Wellassa University, who is also a business leader with hands-on



Technology, Economics, Finance & Management, Education, Humanities & Social Sciences, Engineering, Technology and Applied Sciences, Human Health, Pharmaceuticals & Medicine, Pure Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics.

The technical sessions were conducted in nine oral and four poster sessions at the Faculty of Management and finance.



At the 19<sup>th</sup> Vice Chancellor's Awards Ceremony, the scholars were awarded for their outstanding performance and excellent contributions in the fields of research, invention/innovation, promoting international relations, and contribution to the development of the University. Accordingly, the following academic members and students were awarded.

- **Most Outstanding Scholar:** Prof. Sudhira De Silva, Faculty of Engineering
- **Highest Recipient of Grants:** Prof. W.A. Indika, Faculty of Science
- **Most Outstanding Promoter of International Relations:** Prof. D.A.L. Leelamanie, Faculty of Agriculture
- **Most Outstanding Young Researcher:** Mr. W.A.H.M. Karunarathne, Faculty of Technology
- **Most Outstanding Student Inventor/Innovator:** Mr. A.G.P.D. Alahakoon, Faculty of Graduate Studies



Moreover, certificates were awarded by the Vice Chancellor to those who received the best presenter awards in oral and poster presentations at the 19<sup>th</sup> Academic Sessions held in 2022.

At the 20<sup>th</sup> Academic Sessions, Senior Prof. L.M. Abeywickrama of the Faculty of Agriculture, Senior Prof. C.M. Navarathna of the Faculty of Agriculture, Senior Prof. E.A.G. Fonseka of the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, Senior Prof. R.P. Dharmawathie of the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences and Prof. S.K.C. Wimalasundara of the Faculty of Medicine were conferred Emeritus Professorships.



Chairperson of the 20<sup>th</sup> Academic Sessions and 19<sup>th</sup> Vice Chancellor's Awards was Dr. A.C. Karunaratne of the FMF, while the Secretary and the Editor-in-Chief were Ms. Onandi Wijayarathne, and Prof. P.A.P. Samantha Kumara of the same faculty respectively.

The organizing committee consisted of a representative from each faculty, and they were Dr. Maduka Subodhinee of the Faculty of Agriculture, Dr. Thamudi Sundarapperuma of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, Dr. Thilina Weerasinghe of the Faculty of Engineering, Dr. Kelum Sanjaya of the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology, Dr. S.G.S. Samaraweera of the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, Mrs. Vidyaneer Vithanage of the Faculty of Management and Finance, Prof. Janaka Lenora of the Faculty of Medicine, Prof. Shirani Manel Kumari of the Faculty of Science, Dr. Wathsala Rajawatta of the Faculty of Technology and Mr. Thilina Madusanka of the Library of the University.



# Are we ready for a second “Green Revolution”?



**Prof. W.G. Shirani Manel Kumari**  
Department of Botany  
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Food security has been one of the most important global concerns since ancient civilizations. Today, despite the large development in science and technology, the food supply remains far from the global requirement. Each year, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is putting a number on global hunger with the aim of assessing the progress in reaching the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of ending hunger by 2030. A recent report revealed that in 2020, nearly 2.37 billion people did not receive adequate food which was 30% of the world population. Hence, the FAO projects that if the present trend continues, achieving the SDG goal would be beyond 2030. Hence, food production needs to be expedited more than ever to feed growing population.

Plant breeding is one of the major and the oldest agricultural practices that targets increasing food supply. Approximately, 12 thousand years back, our ancestors marked the beginning of plant breeding by domesticating wild plants through the selection of desired cultivars which we call today as 'artificial selection breeding'. Since then, we passed two major stages in plant breeding, 'hybrid breeding' and 'molecular breeding' that contributed increasing the crop productivity. However, combined use of synthetic agrochemicals led long-term negative consequences such as pollution of water and soil, high consumption of freshwater resources and lose of biodiversity and extinction of wild and indigenous crop varieties. On the other hand, with molecular breeding, although many genetically modified (GM) crops have been commercialized and are growing all over that world, like all new technologies, public concerns arose against GM crops. However, GM crops are widely grown in many countries that contribute greatly to the global agricultural productivity such as United States, Canada, Brazil, China and India.

Although we have witnessed many technological advances that helped to enhance crop productivity during the past few decades, yet the present food supply is far from global demand. Further, it appears that water scarcity, climate change and extreme weather conditions make crop production highly challenging in the future. Thus, there is an urgent call for new technologies in plant breeding for feeding the future population which is projected to reach over 11 billion by 2100.

## 'Omics' for precise plant breeding

Among the plethora of recent advances in life sciences, omics-based approaches appear to mark new era of plant breeding. Omics is a new term that has emerged to describe the field of large-scale data-rich biology which encompasses 'genomics', 'epigenomics', 'transcriptomics', 'proteomics' and 'metabolomics'. By simply, genomics refers to structure, function, evolution, mapping and editing of genomes whereas epigenomics include complete modifications of the epigenetic materials. In similar manner transcriptomics, proteomics and metabolomics refers to the entire set of transcripts, proteins and metabolites of an organism. Thus, omics offers the possibility to understand and predict biology from a global perspective in a way that was previously unthinkable. For plant breeding, omics provide faster and more direct route for generating genetically improved crops. This advancement gradually diverting the molecular breeding into its next stage known as 'optimal and exact design breeding'. A prerequisite in this novel breeding approach is to link phenotype with genotype where genetic dissection of agronomic traits and identification of corresponding genotypic variation are essential.

Large-scale biological data for omics are increasingly available with recent advances in DNA sequencing technologies such as next-generation sequencing (NGS). NGS revolutionized many areas in life sciences including plant breeding in the last three decades. NGS provide platforms to determine the order of DNA or RNA in entire genomes or specific regions giving opportunities to study biological systems at a level never before possible with traditional sequencing technologies. It offers ultra-high throughput scalability and speed. Further, quality of data is becoming significantly improving with new NGS technologies such as Illumina®, and the cost is continuously decreasing, which greatly increased the availability of new datasets on crop species. Presently, a large number of germplasm collections of various crops have been genotyped at the whole genome level. For example, over 10,000 rice accessions and 6,000 soybean accessions have been genotyped. This allows genetic dissection of complex traits by quantitative genetic approaches such as quantitative trait locus (QTL) mapping and genome-wide association study (GWAS) with high accuracy.

In the genetic dissection of phenotypic traits, earlier it was considered that single-nucleotide polymorphism (SNPs) and short insertions/deletions (indels) are responsible for plant phenotypic variations. Later, sequencing of whole genomes of many crops showed that additionally, large structural variations (SVs) contribute greatly to plant phenotypic variations. Availability of

pan-genomes made easier to identify SVs, because a pan-genome contains a collection of whole-genome sequences of multiple individuals representing a species. More and more pan-genomics data became available since 2019 probably due to enhanced research on bioinformatics during the Covid-19 pandemic which restricted field and wet-lab research due to lock-down and many other reasons. Pan-genomics is becoming popular among the plant scientists recently due to the decrease in the cost of NGS technologies such as PacBio® and Nanopore®.

In traditional breeding, phenotyping is often a difficult task to do with high accuracy due to the existence of phenotypic plasticity. Phenotypic plasticity is caused by the interactions between genotype and the environment resulting in different phenotypic variations between individual although they have the same genetic makeup. Phenotyping is even difficult with powerful selection tools such as GWAS and QTL mapping. In this context, association between omics tools such as mGWAS (associations between genome and metabolome), EWAS (association between genome and DNA methylation, the representation of epigenome), TWAS (association between the genome and transcriptome) have been currently successfully used to resolve the problem phenotyping caused due to the plasticity. However, precise phenotyping remains a major technical bottleneck in the present omics era of plant breeding because manual-based observation is still in practice among the plant breeders. As a result, most phenotypic data are rarely comparable due to the lack of phenotypic standards. Development of phenotypic standards is impossible due to phenotypic plasticity and temporal variation in phenotypes. Thus, 'phenomics' comes as a practical solution for precise characterization of phenotypes. Phenomics include recent advances in sensors, imaging and automation technologies with high throughput, reliable and automatic and intelligent phenotypic system at different scales such as microscopic imaging, 3D scanning, high throughput plant phenotyping platforms, ground wheeled phenotyping systems and automated aerial vehicles. Therefore, phenomics can provide information for breeders on crop performance and environmental conditions across a growing season at temporal and spatial scaler. Thus, traditional time consuming and tiresome phenotyping in the field can be replaced with phenomics.

### **CRISPR/Cas for editing plant genomes**

Integration of genome and functional omics data combined with genetic and phenotypic information leads to the identification of genes and pathways involved in important agronomic phenotypes. Thereby, combination of genetic, metabolic and phenotypic data can be used to identify new candidate genes potentially responsible for agronomic traits leading to the generation of GM crops at a faster rate. Presently, GM crop generation has be-

come even more faster when omics is combined with genome editing with CRISPR/Cas9 technology. CRISPR/Cas9 provides simple, efficient and low-cost genetic modification that can target multiples genes. CRISPR/Cas9 (clustered regulatory interspaced short palindromic repeats associated with Cas9 endonuclease activity) revolutionized research in life sciences including biomedical and plant sciences. It permits editing genes by precisely cutting DNA and letting natural DNA repair processes to take over. More than a decade of research effort was awarded Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 2020 for the discovery of CRISPR/Cas9. In recent years, CRISPR/Cas9 systems are the most popular gene editing technologies. It can significantly accelerate process of insertion of desired traits and greatly save labor and costs. Many efforts have focused on increasing crop yield, quality and stress resistance. Presently, nearly 50 food crop species have been modified with CRISPR/Cas9-mediated genome editing of which rice and tomato are the top two crops. Some of the modifications in rice include improving eating and cooking quality to have soft and sticky texture targeting the Asian consumers. Another quality improvement was production of fragrant rice. One of the greatest creations of CRISPR/Cas9 is heavy metal pollution-safe rice cultivars. In tomato, there has been many modifications that change fruit size, shape and color to satisfy consumer demand, improving fruit texture for prolonged shelf life and biofortification of macro and micro nutrients. With only few years of research, some of the gene-edited crops have been commercialized which would otherwise take more than a decade with conventional breeding. Of the first commercialized crops, there are TALEN-fad2 soybean, TALEN-ppo potato and CRISPR-wx1 maize while more crops are on the pipeline to the market. Soon there will be more products that come from the lab to the markets within a short period of time. Although there are some concerns over GM crops, production strategy of gene-edited crops can escape from GM regulations due to no exogenous gene integration in host genomes. Therefore, many countries are preparing new regulations while others are revising the existing GM crop regulations to accept the market invasion of gene-edited crops in the near future.

In summary, recent advances omics and gene-editing technologies coupled with bioinformatics tools brought crop breeding to a level that has never been imagined and it appears that a second 'Green Revolution' is on its ways. Would it be able to feed the future population?

## European Resuscitation Council Basic Life Support Course

A European Resuscitation Council Basic Life Support Course was held at the Senior Common Room, Faculty of Medicine on 09<sup>th</sup> June 2023 for 16 medical students representing the Resuscitation club of the Faculty of medicine. This is the 1<sup>st</sup> time this course was conducted for medical students in Sri Lanka. The project was a collaboration between Department of Anaesthesiology, Sri Lankan College of Anaesthesiologists and Intensivists of Sri Lanka and Galle medical Association. The resource personnel were Dr. Chamin Weerasekera (Senior Lecturer, Consultant Intensivist), Dr. Nilmini Wijesooriya, Dr. Kesharie Desilva and Dr. Nalaka Nenuwan (Consultant Anesthetists).



## Systematic Literature Review with Bibliometric Analysis

The Faculty of Management and Finance together with the Staff Development Centre (SDC) of the University of Ruhuna (UoR) organized a workshop on "Increasing Publications through Systematic Literature Review (SLR) with Bibliometric Analysis" on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023. The main objectives of this workshop were to improve the research skills and capacity of the academic and academic supportive staff of the UoR and to enhance the possibility of publication of their scholarly work in indexed and reputed journals. This workshop was organized by the coordinator of the SDC, Faculty of Management and Finance with the support of the SDC of Ruhuna University as a virtual session.



Mr. K.G. Priyashantha and Dr. Thedushika De Silva of the Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Management and Finance, UoR were the resource persons of the workshop. About 60 participants attended this workshop and they were provided an understanding of step-by-step methodology of conducting a SLR. Drawing upon the extensive knowledge and experience of the two resource persons, they guided participants through the intricacies of SLR and demonstrated the application of bibliometric analysis in research, in order to provide a solid foundation for conducting comprehensive and evidence-based research. Attendees expressed their gratitude for the valuable insights gained, which will undoubtedly enhance the quality and quantity of their publications.

## Linking University Life for Entrepreneurial Career: Panel Discussion & Poster Session

An event "Linking university life for Entrepreneurial Career" was organized by the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship for the students of the 1000 level on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January, 2023 at the faculty premises.

Prof. Nalaka Wickramasinghe, Department of Commerce and Financial Management Studies, University of Kelaniya and Mr. Dulanjana Withanage, Entrepreneur/CEO, Jack Fruit Ceylon Pvt Ltd attended as the resource persons of the session. Students were keen in interacting with both resource persons throughout the session, and the poster session created a platform for unfolding the hidden talents and creative ideas of our undergraduates.



## Practical Demonstration for Advanced Level Engineering Technology Students

The Department of Engineering Technology of the Faculty of Technology, conducted two workshops on A/L Technology stream practical demonstration for the students of Weligama Sri Sumangala Girls's College, Weligama Siddhar-



ta College and Lubuduwa Sirirdhamma College on 29<sup>th</sup> March and 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023. In these workshops, students were able to get practical experience in production technology, workshop machineries, automobile technology, electrical and electronics, and materials technology.

Students were facilitated to get hands-on experience in the laboratories and familiarize with the equipment during this one-day workshop series. Eng. Harshana Laknath, Eng. Hasini Ganegge, Eng. Akesh Deemantha, Eng. Ayomi Pabasara, Mr. Lahiru Fernando, Ms. D.N. Liyanage, Eng. Harshana Helaruwan and Mr. Chanaka Weeraratne contributed to conduct the practical sessions with the support of academic supportive staff and non-academic-staff-members.

Students and teachers appreciated the effort and opportunity provided by the department and, they requested to continue the same workshop for next year as well. Department of Engineering Technology expects to enhance the awareness of the technology stream among the school community and facilitate school children to improve their practical knowledge through this workshop.



## Workshop on "Java Spring Boot and Hibernate"

The Department of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Faculty of Technology conducted a two-day workshop on Java Spring Boot and Hibernate for the interested students of Level-I, II and III of the department of ICT on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2023. Spring boot, hibernate, packaging, and delivering Java projects were the main topics of the workshop. As it was a fully practical oriented workshop, students were given an opportunity to understand these technologies and its applications in practical scenarios.

Mr. Imal Hasaranga Perera, founder and CEO at Treinetic (Pvt) Ltd was the resource person of this workshop. He successfully conducted the two-day workshop with the support of academic staff and non-academic staff members of the Department of ICT. All students in the department of ICT appreciated the excellent work done by the resource person and the organizing committee. Further, they extended their sincere thanks for giving such a valuable opportunity for the students who are planning to join industry as well. Department of ICT willing to enhance the knowledge of students by organizing different workshops on upcoming technologies used in the industries at present.



## Business Plan Development Skill Enhancement

A two-day workshop on “Business Plan Development” for the subject of Venture Creation, organized by the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship was successfully held on 31<sup>st</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 at the Faculty of Management & Finance. The target group of this workshop was the Undergraduate students of the 2000 level in the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship, while Mr. Jayampathi Kumasaruru and Mrs. Deepika Dissanayaka attended as the resource persons. The workshop supported to enhance business plan development skills of students to pursue their success in the field of entrepreneurship.



## “Terra Prospera 2023”



“Terra Prospera 2023”, a workshop organized by the Ruhuna University Soil Science Club (RUSSC) was successfully held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna under the guidance of the academic staff of the Department of Soil Science. Three eminent resource persons, Emeritus Prof. R.B. Mapa, Dr. W.M.D.B. Wickramasinghe, and Mr. Anil Dassanayake delivered guest lectures in this workshop. A debate competition was held between two groups of undergraduate students on “Inorganic fertilizer use in agriculture”, and it was won by the proposed team, who claimed the positive impacts of inorganic fertilizer usage in agriculture. The afternoon session of the workshop was a field training activity on soil profile observation for soil identification, which was conducted by the three resource persons. The event was also glamourised by a cultural performance by the students. The workshop was financially sponsored by Unipower (Pvt) Ltd.

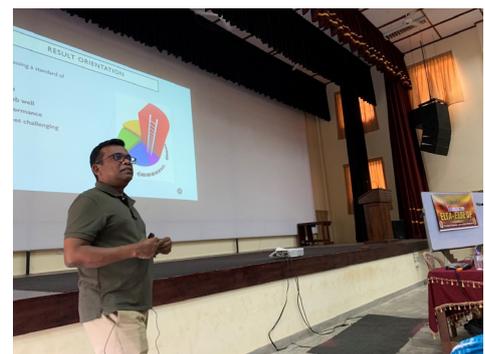
## Basic First Aid Programme by St. Johns Ambulance Service

A basic first aid programme was conducted by the St. Johns Ambulance service Galle which was organized by the Department of Anaesthesiology . A total of 14 students and two academic staff members of the Department participated in the event. The event was carried out in the skills lab, clinical block for two days.



## Tech Talks: Invited Lecture Series

An invited lecture series called “Tech talks” have a major impact on an undergraduates’ life. Recently, three tech talk sessions were organized by the Department of Computer Science, Faculty of Science for the undergraduates of both BCS and BSc degree programmes. Two reputed companies from the IT Industry; IFS and Calcey successfully conducted these sessions on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May and 05<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 respectively. Apart from these tech talks, Mr. Pubudu Liyanage (Former HR Consultant at the IFS Company) conducted a session on “Preparing for IT Industry - your Next Step” on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023. The students who actively participated for these sessions were able to get an experience in real work environment in the IT industry.



## Research Findings Dissemination Platform on Dried Fish Industry in Sri Lanka

*“Dried Fish Matters: Mapping the social economy of dried fish in Sri Lanka for enhanced wellbeing and nutrition” is an international project operationalized in collaboration with the University of Manitoba, Canada, and the University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka.*

This project implemented in five other countries including India, Bangladesh, Thailand, Cambodia, and Myanmar, and it was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (“SSHRC”) of Canada. Although this foundation was established in 2018, the MoU between the University of Ruhuna and the University of Manitoba was signed in 2020. The Dried Fish Matters project has reached to the end of its scoping phase. Having completed five years of the project with a number of workshops, fieldwork, two MPhil de-



grees, and ten undergraduate research projects, a research finding dissemination workshop was held on 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 at the Granbell Hotel, Colombo. Sixty participants representing academia, institutional heads, NGO and INGO representatives, freelancers, and many other experts attended the workshop. The workshop was followed by a policy briefing session where all the participants interactively engaged in the activities brainstorming on policy needs and policy suggestions. Thus, the workshop concluded as a successful event drawing the attention of the subject matter specialists on the Dried fish industry, value chains, limitations, and policy needs.

## Guest Lectures at Faculty of Engineering

The Civil and Environmental Engineering Society (CEES) of the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna, organized a series of guest lectures. On 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023, an enlightening guest lecture on “Innovative Ground Anchor Designs and Piling in Melbourne, Australia” was conducted by Renowned engineer, Eng. Ranjan Fernando, captivating the audience with his profound knowledge and expertise in the field. The lecture delved into groundbreaking advancements in ground anchor designs and piling techniques, providing attendees with valuable insights and transformative ideas to revolutionize the industry.

The next guest lecture on “Talk to University,” was organized in collaboration with the Institution of Engineers Sri Lanka (IESL), on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023. Eng. Sandaruwan D. Jayasinghe and Eng. Kanthalingam Sivaskaran were the speakers of the event in which aimed to shed light on the current industry scenario, deeply impacted by the post-pandemic economic crisis, and explore the future potential prospects of the civil engineering industry.



On 28<sup>th</sup> December 2022, a workshop on Autodesk Civil 3D was held at the Computer Center, Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna, while there was another workshop on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023 for Etabs. These events served as an exceptional opportunity for engineering enthusiasts to expand their knowledge and embrace cutting-edge practices in civil engineering.

# Establishment of UoR Rover Scout Crew

Career Guidance Unit (CGU) of the University of Ruhuna conducted the Rover Scout investiture ceremony on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023. During this event, scarf and badges were awarded for 134 Rover members with the participation of Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. E.P.S Chandana, Assistant Chief Scout Commissioner Mr. Srilath De Silva and Mrs. Priyadharshani Jayakodi, commissioner of the Headquarters, Mr. Indika Prasanna former District Commissioner, Matara, Mr. Nimal Fernando, District Commissioner, Gampaha and District Commissioner, Matara.



A special greeting message of Chief Commissioner of the Sri Lanka Scout Association, Attorney at Law Mr. Janaprith Fernando, was delivered by the Assistant Chief Commissioner Mr. Srilath de Silva.

Rover Scouts is the most senior section of the scouting programme available for the age group of 18-26. Although many Rover Scouts have completed either all or most of their younger scouting stages, a Rover Scout category fit with any young person interested in self-discovery through an adventure. The Rover Scout Crew was established at the University of Ruhuna as a concept of Prof. Thusitha Gunawardana, Director, CGU, University of Ruhuna, with the support of the Vice Chancellor Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amaraseena. The first time in the Rover Scout history in Sri Lanka, Rover Crew of the University of Ruhuna established all three forms of Rovers including Sea Rovers, Air Rovers, and infantry Rovers.



# Waste Management and Entrepreneurship Workshop at Faculty of Technology

The Zero Plastic Ruhuna Community together with Career Guidance Unit of the Faculty of Technology organized a workshop on Waste Management and Entrepreneurship on 01<sup>st</sup> Feb 2023 at Faculty auditorium. The resource person was Prof. Thusitha Gunawardana, Director, Career Guidance Unit of University of Ruhuna. All interested students of the Faculty of Technology were allowed to participate for this workshop. Student had an opportunity to understand how can waste be managed towards developing entrepreneurship. Mrs. Champika S. Jayaweera, Academic Career Advisor of the Faculty of Technology coordinated this event.



## Career Development of Advanced Level students

The Career Development Workshop organized by the Career Guidance Unit (CGU), University of Ruhuna under the theme of "Future Employment Opportunities" was conducted for the advance level students of Mahinda Rajapaksha Vidyalyaya, Matara, from 09<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2023 at the University of Ruhuna. Vice Chancellor Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. E.P.S. Chandana and Principle of the Mahinda Rajapaksha Vidyalyaya participated as the guests for the inauguration session.

This workshop consisted of lectures, leadership programmes, aesthetics activities, and practical sessions to guide future leaders of the country. Major topics discussed in this programme were, design thinking to explore how students can create a sustainable life and work where they thrive, learn tools to help students to navigate their career path, get unstuck, and try out easy changes to increase their wellbeing and satisfaction at work.

CGU organized this programme as a CSR project and Prof. E.P.S Chandana, Dr. Nandasiri Keembiyahetti, Mr. Keerthi Kottawaththa, Ms. Pubudu Mallawaarachchi, Mr. Nilanka Srinath, and Mr. Nilantha Kalansooriya participated as the resource persons. Assisting participants to recognize and explore a variety of educational and career opportunities were explored at the first day of the workshop. These activities assist people to discover either congruent educational or career possibilities or ensure the congruence of the available options under consideration. On the last date, Mr. Sisira Kumara conducted an aesthetic programme for the students.



## New Librarian of UoR: Mr. Nimal Hettiarachchi

Mr. Nimal Hettiarachchi of the Library, University of Ruhuna has recently been appointed as the Librarian of the University of Ruhuna. Mr. Nimal Hettiarachchi, officially assumed duties as the Librarian on 16<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023 in the presence of Maha Sangha and Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, Vice Chancellor, University of Ruhuna, Prof. E. P. S. Chandana, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Deans of the faculties, Heads of the departments, academic staff members, and the library staff.



Mr. Nimal Hettiarachchi graduated from University of Ruhuna with a B.Sc degree in Mathematics with a first class honors. He joined University of Ruhuna on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1991 as a Temporary Instructor, while he was recruited as an Assistant Librarian to the same place in 1996. Upon completion of his M.Sc in Library and Information Science at University of Kelaniya, he was promoted to the Senior Assistant Librarian Grade-II on 01<sup>st</sup> November 2001. Later on, Mr Nimal was promoted to Senior Assistant Librarian Grade-I and Deputy Librarian in 2005 and 2019 respectively. Before appointing as the Librarian of the University of Ruhuna, he extended his service as the Acting Librarian from 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct 2019 to 21<sup>st</sup> Nov 2021. University of Ruhuna wishes him all the best for his achievement and all future endeavors.

## MoU Between UoR and the National Child Protection Authority

A memorandum of understanding was signed between the University of Ruhuna (UoR) and the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) to establish a newly equipped video recording unit for victims of child abuse at the Department of Forensic Medicine, University of Ruhuna on 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna. The main objective of establishing such a unit is to prevent revictimization of children.



Mr. Udaya Kumara Amarasinghe, the chairperson of the NCPA, Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, the Vice Chancellor UoR, Prof. T. P. Weeraratne the Dean Faculty of Medicine, Ms. Sujatha Alahapperuma, Deputy Chairperson NCPA, Ms. Anoma Siriwardhana, Director General NCPA, Dr. Hemamal Jayawardhana, UNICEF, Dr. Nayana Liyanarachchi, Senior Lecturer, Department of Paediatrics and Prof. Janaki Warushahennadi, Head of the Department of Forensic Medicine were present.

## Development of Entrepreneurship Skills in Undergraduates



A three-day workshop on Entrepreneurship Development was conducted by the Career Guidance Unit (CGU), university of Ruhuna for their undergraduates with the collaboration of National Enterprise Development Authority (NEDA) from 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2023. Entrepreneurship development is gradually becoming a popular aspect in economic developments, and thus, the main objective of this workshop was to develop entrepreneurship skills among undergraduates of the University of Ruhuna. In practice, this means developing a set of specific competencies and practices that can be acquired and applied by entrepreneurs.

The main contents of this workshop included foundations of entrepreneurship development along with tools and techniques for creative and innovative thinking, the important role of intellectual property along with the types, and the development of business models along with the budget and finance issues. Prof. E.P.S. Chandana, the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Mr. Lasantha Kariyapperuma, Chairman, NEDA, Prof. Thusitha Gunawardana, Director, CGU participated as the guests of the inauguration session, and 156 undergraduates participated for the event. The NEDA will evaluate the business proposals and they will award the initial capital for students' start-ups.

## Workshop on Leadership

The Career Guidance Unit of the Faculty of Technology organized a workshop on Leadership on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at the faculty auditorium. The resource person was Mr. Ranjan Fernando, Principal Geo-technical Engineer of the Ranjan Fernando Consulting Engineers Pvt Ltd, Melbourne, Australia. All interested students of Faculty of Technology were allowed to participate for this workshop. This was an immense opportunity for students to learn from this resource person as he has experiences as an entrepreneur who is carrying years of overseas experiences running his own company. Mrs. Champika S. Jayaweera, Academic Career Advisor of the Faculty of Technology coordinated this event.



## Lunch Time Talk at Faculty of Medicine



*The Library Committee of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna holds a monthly talk during the lunch hour to share the thoughts, & ideas on books written on various fields.*

During the first half of year 2023, five episodes of lunch time talks were conducted as follows.

“Village by the sea” (by Anita Desai)- Dr. Ruwanthi Kulathunga, Lecturer in Community Medicine

මල්වඩම් සිනාසිය යුතුද (By Dinu Rajaguru) – Dr. Janaka Chandana, Lecturer in Community Medicine

කවියාට ගෝවර වූ අම්මා – Mr. Supun Madhawa, from 40<sup>th</sup> batch of Faculty of Medicine conducted the lunch time talk as the first undergraduate to deliver a lunch time talk

මල්ලියේ චිත්ති, මල්වේරිකාරයෝ (Gunadasa Liyanage) – Prof. Vasantha Devasiri, Professor in Paediatrics

The Kite Runner by Khalid Hosseini - Prof. Champika Bodinayake, Professor in Medicine

The lunch time talks are well appreciated by the audience consisting of the academic staff, nonacademic staff and the students of the Faculty of Medicine.



## Thai Pongal Event 2023 at UoR



University of Ruhuna celebrated the Thai Pongal on 23<sup>rd</sup> January at the University premises with the participation of the Vice Chancellor Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena as the Chief Guest. Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof. E.P.S. Chandana, Dr. Deva Michel De Silva, Coordinator of the Cultural Center of the university, Deans of the Faculties, academic staff, nonacademic staff and students attended this event. This event was organized by the cultural center of the university of Ruhuna, and the event was sponsored by “Watawala Tea”.



## Industrial Field Visit: Department of Computer Science

Three industrial field visits for the undergraduates of the Bachelor of Computer Science (BCS) degree programme were organized by the Department of Computer Science, Faculty of Science under the guidance and supervision of the Head of the Department Prof.W.A Indika and Senior Lecturer Mr.S.A.S Lorensuhewa.

All the BCS students from first year (SC/2021) to third year (SC/2019) were lucky to have this valuable experience. The Second year students (SC/2020) visited Creative Software on 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2023 while the third year students visited both WSO2 and 99X companies in two groups on 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2023 and the first year students visited IFS, CodeGen and SimCentric companies on 03<sup>rd</sup> of March 2023. All these industrial visits were funded by the AHEAD, ELTA/ELSE DP project, Faculty of Science. The students were accompanied by the staff members of the Department of Computer Science.

The main objectives of these visits were to tighten up the relationship between the department and the IT companies enabling students exposure to the IT industry by grabbing high quality internship opportunities while the department could gain more resources which will be beneficial for the undergraduate students in the future as well. During these industrial visits, the used laptop computers were received from the Creative Software, WSO2 and IFS companies, and those laptop computers are very helpful for the practical sessions of the BCS Degree programme.

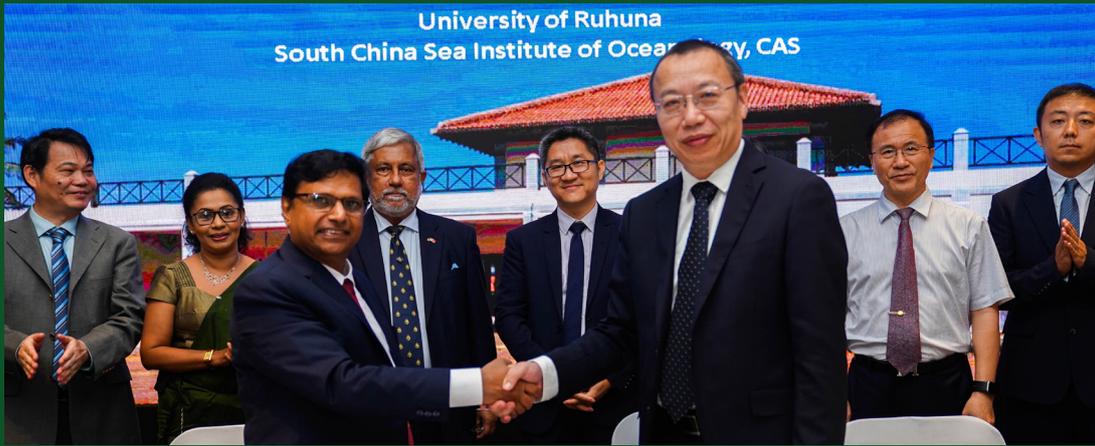


## Renovation of UoR Library Building

The Main Library of University of Ruhuna was initiated as the inception of the university at Maddewatta and it was shifted to the present premises in 1986 when establishing the campus as a full-fledged university at Wellamadama. The first renovation of the University of Ruhuna main library building was ceremoniously initiated on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023, with the blessings of pirith chanting by Maha Sangha. The first building block was laid by the Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, the Vice Chancellor and Prof. E. P. S. Chandana, the Deputy Vice Chancellor of University of Ruhuna. This is the Phase-1 of the major renovation project which costs 147.6 million Sri Lankan Rupees, and this phase-1 renovation project is planning be completed within a period of one year.



# The 8<sup>th</sup> China - Sri Lanka Joint Workshop on Marine Sustainable Development



On April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the China Sri Lanka joint Center for Education and Research (CSL-CER) of the University of Ruhuna and the South China Sea Institute of Oceanology (SCSIO), Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), successfully concluded their 8<sup>th</sup> annual joint workshop at the Sapphire Meeting Rooms in Colombo. The primary objective of the workshop was to facilitate meaningful discussions on crucial topics, including Indo-Pacific Ocean variability and its environmental impacts, as well as environmental issues and corresponding remedial measures. Theme of this year workshop was "Marine Sustainable Development".

HE, Dr. Palitha T. B. Kohona, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the People's Republic of China; Counselor Hu Wei, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Sri Lanka; Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, Vice Chancellor, University of Ruhuna;



Ms. Haihua Gong, Director of Division of Asian and African Affairs, Bureau of International Cooperation, CAS; Prof. Chaolun Li, Director General of SCSIO; Prof. Disna Ratnasekera, Co-Director of CSL-CER; Prof. Changsheng Zhang, Deputy Director General of SCSIO & Director of CSL-CER, and other senior scientists from various esteemed institutions participated in the event.

The opening ceremony commenced with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

between SCSIO and UoR. Prof. Chaolun Li and senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, Vice Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna signed this MoU and it signifies the commitment of both institutions to strengthen their relationship and establish joint research works, fostering collaboration in areas of mutual interest. Additionally, it paves the way for the organization of joint academic activities such as training courses, seminars, and conferences.

During her opening remarks, Prof. Disna Ratnasekera, Co-Director of CSL-CER, warmly welcomed all participants and expressed her confidence that the workshop's deliberations and interactions would significantly enhance research activities while opening gateways for young researchers. Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, Vice Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna, highlighted the importance of the workshop for strengthening the commitment and determination of the China-Sri Lanka Joint Center for Education & Research.

The success of the 8<sup>th</sup> China-Sri Lanka Joint Workshop on Monsoon Climate and Environment Change further strengthened the collaborative efforts between CSL-CER and SCSIO. By fostering knowledge exchange, promoting joint research endeavors, and organizing academic activities, both institutions are actively contributing to the advancement of oceanology, environmental research, and sustainable development.

## Visit of the Ambassador of Japan HE Mizukoshi Hideaki



The Ambassador of Japan, HE Mizukoshi Hideaki accompanied by several other delegates of the Embassy of Japan visited the University of Ruhuna on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

HE Mizukoshi Hideaki and the delegation were welcomed by the Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. E.P.S. Chandana and the Director of CINTA Prof. P.B. Terney Pradeep Kumara. A formal meeting was conducted at the Vice Chancellor's office with the participation of the Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna, Most venerable Dr. Akuretiye Nada Thero. The the close relationship between Japan and Sri Lanka build over the time through Buddhism was emphasized during this discussions.

Followed by the discussions, Ambassador planted a tree commemorating his visit to the University of Ruhuna and participated in a sightseeing tour around the University premises. Prof. H.D. Karunarathne the Vice Chancellor of University of Colombo was also present for the occasion.



Parallel to the International Symposium on Agriculture and Environment (ISAE) -2023, a pre-symposium session was organized by the Faculty of Agriculture. The Japanese Ambassador HE Mr. Hedeiki MISHIKOSHI attended the session as the Chief Guest at the invitation of the ISAE-2023 Coordinator, Dr. I. R. Palihakkara of the Faculty of Agriculture

## Visit of the Ambassador of France HE Jean-François PACTET

The France ambassador HE Jean-François PACTET accompanied by several other delegates from the French embassy in Colombo made a courtesy visit to the University of Ruhuna on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023

His Excellency Jean-François PACTET and the delegation were welcomed by the Vice Chancellor Senior. Prof Sujeewa Amarasena, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. E.P. S. Chandana and the Director of CINTA Prof. P.B. Terney Pradeep Kumara. A formal meeting was conducted at the Senate Room of the University with the participation of the Deans of the Faculties, coordinators of French-funded projects and the coordinator of the French Language teaching programme.

Vice Chancellor did a small presentation on University of Ruhuna explaining its establishment and the present status. Improving the existing collaborations between France and Sri Lanka and the French Language teaching programmes of the university was discussed at the meeting.

HE Jean-François PACTET greeted the Vice Chancellor and the University of Ruhuna for their future endeavors and expressed his willingness to strengthen the bond between France and the University of Ruhuna in future.



## Collaborative Study Programme Between University of Ruhuna and University of Amsterdam

A two-week collaborative training programme was conducted during the period of 6<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> March 2023 for the final-year students who follows Agribusiness Management degree programme at the University of Ruhuna and students from the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies of the University of Amsterdam. The main objective of this programme was to foster knowledge exchange and to provide valuable learning opportunities for all participants. During this programme, students engaged in various activities, including case studies, field visits, and research. The synergy between two student groups of Sri Lanka and the Netherlands facilitated a vibrant exchange of ideas and perspectives, enriching their educational journey. Development of the research ideas of the students of Amsterdam through their interactions with Sri Lankan counterparts was highlighted in the event.

They willing to continue their researches in Sri Lanka, further strengthening the bonds of collaboration and creating avenues for long-term partnerships between two universities. This is the second consecutive time of this programme, and this programme was developed and organized by Prof. W. Nilantha De Silva, of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness of the Faculty of Agriculture, UoR.



## Visit of Scientists from Chinese Academy of Sciences



A team of Scientist from the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) visited University of Ruhuna on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to strengthen the collaborations between CAS and University of Ruhuna. This visit aimed to facilitate knowledge exchange and joint exploration in areas of mutual interest, focusing on marine biological resources, marine mammals, and coast subsidence.

Meeting with the team of CAS was held at the China Sri Lanka Joint Center for Education and Research (CSL-CER) from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm. During this meeting the scientists of the CAS engaged in fruitful discussions with members from the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology, Faculty of Technology and Faculty of Science of the University of Ruhuna. The CAS scientists expressed their keen interest in exploring joint research projects in behavior, migration patterns, and conservation needs of the magnificent creatures in Sri Lankan waters for contributing global marine mammal research and conservation.

Vice Chancellor Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amaraseena, Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. E.P.S. Chandana, Prof. Disana Rathnasekara, Co-Director CSL-CER, Deans of the faculties of FMST, Technology and Science, and academic staff members attended to the event.

## Empowering Entrepreneurs in the Southern Province



One of the main objectives of the Techno-Economic-Societal Sustainable (TESS) project is to foster an entrepreneurial culture that empowers both potential and existing entrepreneurs while promoting circular economic principles and sustainable practices within the entrepreneurial community of the country. As an initial step, an APEX body has been established, overseeing the separate commercial units for three districts within the southern province of Sri Lanka.

The TESS project, co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education programme, involved a delegation of international partners, including programme countries and partner universities. During their visit, this delegation visited solid waste-based enterprises in Galle, Matara, and Hambanthota districts. The purpose of these visits was to engage in discus-

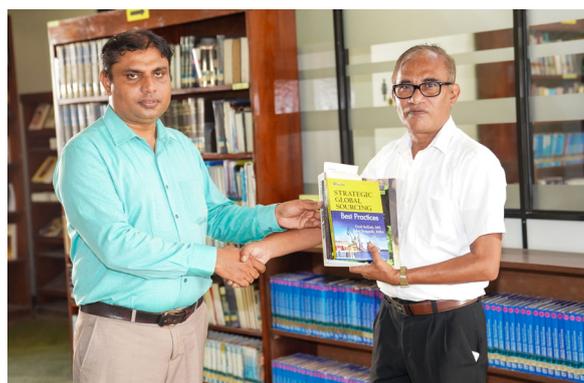


sions with the enterprises regarding their current and prospective challenges in the realm of solid waste. A deficiency in the technical and business management knowledge of these entrepreneurs was observed during these visits, and consequently they decided to facilitate sessions wherein entrepreneurs are adequately informed about their technical challenges. Simultaneously, management sessions will be arranged with the aim of enhancing their understanding of market linkages and emerging markets, exploring potential avenues for business expansion, and reinforcing proficiency in bookkeeping and financial management.

Additionally, the TESS team members reached a consensus to coordinate with private and public organizations with the aim of addressing their current obstacles and optimizing their business processes. This visit took place from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and it was organized by the TESS team at the University of Ruhuna in collaboration with District commercial units.

## Book Donation : EU Co-funded Techno-Economic-Societal Sustainable (TESS) Project

Seventy six books have been donated to the University Main Library by the EU co-funded Techno-Economic-Societal Sustainable (TESS) project. With the coordination of Prof. Thusitha Gunawardana, this project has allocated EURO 5,000 to donate books in different disciplines such as solid waste management, entrepreneurship, energy management, data analysis, risk management, & green supply chain management etc. By donating these books to the library, TESS team aims to buildup a research culture in those subject areas to strength and create entrepreneurship opportunities.



TESS is an Erasmus+ Capacity Building project in Higher Education, which is co-funded with 969089 Euros from the European Union. The project adopts an interdisciplinary approach to introduce new educational programmes in the disciplines of waste management, circular economy, waste treatment, and valorisation in Sri Lanka. In addition, the collaboration among universities, municipalities, private sector entities and not-for-profit organization is also promoted by this project. The USN School of Business is the primary coordinator of the project. University of Sri Jayewardenepura, University of Ruhuna, University of Moratuwa, University of Jaffna and the University of Vocational Technology are the Sri Lankan partners in the project. In addition to USN, the University of Nova, Lisboa, the Technical University of Denmark and University of Essex are the European universities of the project.

## Workshop on Solid Waste Management and Entrepreneurship

The Techno-Economic-Societal Sustainable (TESS) team and the Staff Development Center of the University of Ruhuna in collaboration with the EU co-funded TESS project under its Erasmus+ CBHE programme organized a workshop to disseminate the knowledge on waste management and entrepreneurship on 08<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at the China Sri Lanka Joint Center for Education and Research, University of Ruhuna. The target group of this workshop was the academic and administrative staff members of the University of Ruhuna and the partner universities of the TESS project.

Under the work package 1.7 of the TESS project which focuses on Solid Waste Management, University of Ruhuna works on developing cross-sector collaboration between educational institutes, industry, municipalities, business development service organizations (BDS), and NGOs. Therefore, this workshop was organized to make aware the university academics and administrative officers on sustainable solutions for waste management and the entrepreneurial opportunities.

The resource persons of this workshop were Prof. Boban Vesin and Prof. Chamara Kuruppu from University of South Eastern, Norway, and Senior Lecturer, Dr. Debashree De from University of Essex, UK. Prof. Boban Vesin delivered his lecture on 'Digitalization and the usage of Information communication technologies in the Scandinavian public sector, while Prof. Chamara Kuruppu presented his lecture on 'Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Development'. Dr. Debashree De express her ideas based on the presentation on "Exploring Sustainable Solutions for Waste Management".

In addition to the academic staff members and administrative officers of the University of Ruhuna, academics of University of Sri Jayawardenepura, University of Vocational Technology, and Chief Executive Officer and Director Operations of Janathakshn GTE Ltd Sri Lanka also participated to this workshop. Further, the chief guest of the event, Prof. E.P.S. Chandana, the Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna, Prof. Liv Kristi Burnstad, the Deputy Head of the Department, University of South-Eastern, Norway and Prof. Terney Pradeep Kumara, Director of the Center for International Affairs addressed the gathering.



## Fundamental Critical Care Support Provider Course

Dr. Chamin Weerasekera, Senior Lecturer and Consultant Intensivist from the Department of Anaesthesiology was awarded a grant from the Society of Critical Care Medicine USA to conduct a fundamental critical care support provider course. The Course was organized as a collaborative event for 16 participants with Ceylon College of Critical Care Specialists and Galle Medical Association as a two days event. This event was held on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 at the senior common room of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna.



## Establishment of the APEX Body for Environmental Protection and Sustainability in Sri Lanka

The EU co-founded Techno-Economic-Societal Sustainable (TESS) project is operated under its Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education programme. This project aims to develop new interdisciplinary educational programs and redesign existing programs in Solid Waste Management (SWM). In this TESS project, the University of Ruhuna is responsible for developing cross-sector collaboration between higher educational institutes, industry, BDS providers, municipalities, and NGOs. As a part of this project, University of Ruhuna ceremonially established the APEX Body on 09<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 at the Solis Hotel, Matara.



Managing solid waste in Sri Lanka is the main goal of this APEX Body, and this body was named as the "Center for Environmental Protection and Sustainability" (CEPS). The Vice Chancellor of University of Ruhuna, the Deputy Vice Chancellor, the Director of Center of International Affairs, Dean, Faculty of Management and Finance, TESS team members represented the University of Ruhuna attended for this occasion. Further, representatives from the partner universities of this project including University of South Eastern, Norway, University of Essex, UK, University of Vocational Technology, University of Sri Jayawardenapura, and Officers of Janathaksana GTE Ltd also participated. Further, the Chief Secretary of the Southern Province, Sri Lanka; the District Secretaries of Galle and Matara Districts; the Divisional Secretariat, Matara; the Commissioner of Local Government, Southern Province; industry representativeness, government officers, BDS providers, Central Bank Officers, Bank officers, Officers of Central Environmental Authority, and Entrepreneurs participated also attended to the event.

During this meeting, members of the advisory board and office bearers for the CEPS, and office bearers for the Commercial units in Galle, Matara, and Hambantota districts received their appointment letters.

The Vice Chancellor of University of Ruhuna, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Director of Center of International Affairs, Dean, Faculty of Management and Finance, and the key representatives of the southern province addressed the gathering. During their talks, they emphasized the importance of the involvement of the University academics for such corporate social responsibility work.

After establishment of the CEPS, selected solid waste based entrepreneurs who joined with the Commercial units in Galle, Matara, and Hambantota districts were visited by the TESS team of University of Ruhuna, academic members and other officers from the partner universities, local universities, and Janathakshan GTE Ltd.

## MoU with Cochin Institute of Science and Technology

An MoU was signed between University of Ruhuna and the Cochin University of Science and Technology, India on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023 in the Senate room of the University. The two Vice Chancellors of the Institutes signed this MoU in the presence of MR. Dipin P.R, the Consular General of India in Hambantota, Deans of the Faculties, and other dignitaries from the two institutions. This MoU will enable student and staff exchange between two institutions and research in the field of Marine Sciences.



## Workshop on “End-of-Life Care”

Department of Nursing, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Ruhuna organized a workshop called “End-of-Life Care” in collaboration with the End of Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC), which is a part of American Association of College of Nursing (AACN) in Washington, DC.

First phase of the workshop was conducted on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2023 at the senior common room of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna . Academic staff members of the FAHS and nursing officers from Teaching Hospital Karapitiya participated in this workshop. The next phase of the workshop was scheduled to be held on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of September 2023.



## Student Exchange Programme with Okayama University, Japan

Two students (Ms. N.R.R.W.S Rathnayake and Ms. R.A.N.D Rajapaksha) of the Department of Soil Science, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna received an opportunity to study at Okayama University, Japan under the MoU between Okayama University, Japan, and University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka.

These two students entered Okayama University in April 2023 to conduct a part of their MPhil research study in the Spring Semester and they will be returning back to Sri Lanka in September 2023.



## Entrepreneurship Exchange Programme

The delegation consists of business leaders from the USA and representatives from the University of Oklahoma visited the Faculty of Technology, to exchange the entrepreneurship experiences with the students and to explore any potential collaborations with the common interest of empowering the Sri Lankan economy through business entrepreneurship.

Sri Lanka Unites coordinated this event as it is the in-country partner in Sri Lanka for The University of Oklahoma, through the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication, in connection with the United States Department of State, Global Leaders Division, Professional Fellows Programme.

Eight experienced student entrepreneurs presented their business status to the team. Ms. Champika S. Jayaweera, Academic Career Advisor of the Faculty of Technology and Dr. N. W. Prins, Academic Career Advisor of the Faculty of Engineering coordinated this programme.



## Workshop on “Coral Reef Ecology”

In order to promote understanding and conservation of coral reef ecosystems, a workshop on Coral Reef Ecology was conducted at the Blue Meeting Rooms of Hilton Colombo on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023. This workshop was sponsored by the China Sri Lanka Joint Center for Education and Research (CSL-CER), University of Ruhuna (UoR), and South China Sea Institute of Oceanology (SCSIO), Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), while this event was hosted by CHEC Port City Colombo (Pvt) Ltd. Under the guidance of Prof. Disna Ratnasekera, Co-Director of CSL-CER, this year's workshop sought to assemble a diverse range of experts in the field of coral reef ecology. Workshop consisted of presentations and interactive sessions covering various topics, including coral reef biodiversity, the impact of climate change and pollution, innovative conservation approaches, and current & future aspects of Sri Lankan coral reefs.



The workshop commenced with the opening remarks given by Prof. P.B.T.P. Kumara, Director of the Center for International Affairs at UoR. Vice Chancellor Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, Prof. Weiqiang Wang, the Executive Director of CSL-CER/SCSIO, and the Chief Officers from government organizations addressed the gathering. There was a fruitful panel discussion featuring leading scientists, who shared their insights on the current threats faced by coral reefs. Further, this discussion emphasized the urgency of addressing issues related to the climate change and pollution, as these two are the major driving forces behind the risks on these fragile underwater habitats. By organizing such collaborative initiatives, the CSL-CER, UoR, SCSIO, and CAS continue to demonstrate their commitment to protect coral reef ecosystems.

## A Guest Lecture by Prof. Naoki Tojo: Hokkaido University, Japan

Prof. Naoki Tojo, Faculty of Fisheries Sciences, Hokkaido University visited the Department of Agriculture Economics & Agribusiness, Faculty of Agriculture on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023 under the Nor-Lanka Blue Project. He delivered a lecture titled “Participatory approach in data-poor situations in fisheries communities and value chain analysis” which provided insightful guidance on navigating challenging data environments, empowering students to overcome obstacles and excel in their research endeavors.

Final-year students in the BSc Agribusiness Management programme of the Faculty of Agriculture attended the lecture. The lecture commenced with an introduction to the complexities associated with conducting research in situations where data availability is limited or unreliable. Prof. Tojo further emphasized the significance of leveraging alternative data sources, employing qualitative research techniques, and employing innovative methodologies to extract meaningful insights even in the absence of extensive data sets.



# ZeroPlastic National Volunteer Awards 2021/2022

ZeroPlastic National Volunteer Awards for the year 2021/2022 was held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at Radisson Hotel, Colombo 04. The University of Ruhuna was awarded as "The Best University of the Year" at this prestigious event. Twenty-three students from the university were awarded at this ceremony in honor to their exceptional contributions as the volunteers in promoting a plastic-free environment. Accordingly, following awards were received by the UoR team.

- The Best President:** Mr. Aruna Madhushanka
- The Best Director Operation:** Mr. Dileepa Nuwan
- The Best Secretary:** Ms. Hiruni Chamathka
- The Best Volunteer Photographer:** Ms. Nadhee Nanayakkara
- Super Hero Volunteers:** Mr. Dileepa Nuwan and Mr. Aruna Madhushanka



In addition, Ms. S.Achini Ishanthika, Mr. Jeewantha Prasad, Ms. D.H Nethmi Navodya Diddeniya, Ms. W.W.M.Dilshini Priyankara Bandara, Ms. Nadee Tharakee Nanayakkara, Ms. P.H.Akshika Sewwandi Kumari Jayathunga, Mr. H.B. Nalaka Madhushanka, Ms. Wanasinghe Mudiyansele Chamathka Sandagomi Gunawardhana, Ms. Hiruni Chamathka Nishshanka Silva, Ms. A.M Charuni Attanayaka, Ms. Pathakada Mahagamage Nisansala Sewwandi, Ms. Karagoda Hewage Akila Waruni Kumari, Ms. Rashmi Piyumali Vitharanage, Ms. A. W. Nadeesha Sewwandi Kumari, Ms. Mallikaarachchillage Kanchana Ruweni Piyuma Kumari Mallikaarachchi, Ms. P.Hanshika Gunarathne and, Ms. Dilhani Hansika were awarded as Hero volunteers.

## Book Donation

Students from SAGARAM Project organized by the Leo-Club of the University of Ruhuna donated 144 books to the Main Library of the University of Ruhuna on 06<sup>th</sup> Feb 2023. This donation included 102 Tamil books, 41 Sinhala books and one English book.



## “Thathsara Gee Nada” Musical Evening

“Thathsara Gee Nada”, A Musical Evening was staged for the staff and the students of the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna, on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023, at the faculty auditorium. Nruthya Nipun, Sangeeth Visharadha, and Engineer Dumitha Gunawardana on sitar performed alongside the students of the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> batches. Apart from developing the soft skills of the students, the objective of the event was to convince the value of work-life balance from a role model who is a civil engineer by profession but also presents his aesthetic skills as a performing artist. The event included instrumental music, singing, and dancing items.



The Consul General of India to Hambantota, Hon. Mr. Dipin P.R., and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of UoR Prof. E.P.S. Chandana graced this occasion with their presence. The event was coordinated by Ms. Saumya Batuwatta under the guidance of Dr. Chithral Ambawatta, the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, and Prof. Tushara Chaminda, the Faculty Coordinator of cultural affairs.

## Poson Festival of Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

The Faculty of Allied Health Sciences (AHS) celebrated this year's Poson Festival on 08<sup>th</sup> June 2023, at the Faculty of AHS in Uluwitike. The event brought together the faculty staff and students in to a festive atmosphere. Remarkable performances were showcased by students from the Department of Nursing, Medical Laboratory Sciences, and Pharmacy, alongside the enthusiastic participation of the academic and non-academic staff members of the faculty.



## CSR Project at Matara Kirala Kale

In line with the world wetland day, the Rover Scouts Group of the Career Guidance Unit participated to the CSR programme to remove Acacia plants at Matara 'Kirala Kale' on 02<sup>nd</sup> February 2023. It was a combined project with District Secretariat office, Central Environment Authority, and other government officers. 130 Rovers participated for this project from the University of Ruhuna (UoR). Rovers of UoR shared the experiences with the community leaders, and members of the farmers association. Prof. Thusitha Gunawardana, Director, Career Guidance Unit and Ms. Pubudu Mallawaarachchi, Mr. Nilanka Srinath, and Mr. Nilantha Kalansuriya, Career Counselors of the Career Guidance Unit of UoR participated for this event.



## The Fresher's Welcome: Faculty of Engineering

The Welcome of the 24<sup>th</sup> Batch of Faculty of Engineering, was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 at the Faculty Auditorium. The Dean of the Faculty, Dr. Chithral Ambawatte, honored the event with his presence, and he shared valuable insights and advice specifically aiming new students. His contribution provided guidance and knowledge to help them navigate their academic journey successfully. The event showcased a series of entertainment acts of senior students and it provided a comprehensive experience that offered insights into university life and culture for new students.



## Photography Exhibition: "RuCapture 2023"

The Career Guidance Unit of the University of Ruhuna organized a photography exhibition called "RuCapture 2023" on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at the University premises. RuCapture was a ideal platform for the young photographers not only from the University of Ruhuna but also for the entire Sri Lankan university system. Young photographers submitted their photographs under six themes, including portrait, Life style and Cultural aspect, University of Ruhuna, Animal behavior, Nature, and Macro & Micro. Although there were 350 submissions, only 152 photographs were selected and exhibited at the event. Each photographer had submitted a portfolio of three pictures for consideration and the final selection was based on various factors such as creativity, technical proficiency and the overall impact of the photographs.

During the exhibition, the selected photographers were especially honored by the chief guest, Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, Vice Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna for their outstanding work. The Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof. E.P.S. Chandana, Registrar, Mrs. Senani Kalugama, Librarian, Mr. Nimal Hettiarachchi, Burasr, Mr. Rohitha Jayakody and Mr. Nuwan Samadhi, Secretary General of the National Photography Association participated as the guests to the certificate awarding ceremony. The undergraduates of the CGU photography course participated this event and students of Event Management course of the CGU organized the exhibition successfully.



## Outbound Training: Department of Management & Entrepreneurship

An outbound training programme was designed to enhance students' leadership skills and foster personal development. The programme utilized an experiential learning approach, emphasizing the importance of learning through engaging activities and enjoyable experiences. Session was organized by the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship in collaboration with the Career Guidance Unit on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023 from 6.00 am to 6.00 pm in the university premises.



The session was targeted both 3000 and 4000 level undergraduates of the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship. The main focus with the leadership training programme was to impart learning on organizational needs such as to improve self confidence, personality development, team building and effective communication.



## Dansala Hosted by the Chemical Society of the Faculty of Science

The Chemical Society of the Department of Chemistry, Faculty of science hosted a delightful soft drink Dansala, attracting thousands of visitors. This charitable event was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023 as charity work for Poson full moon Poya Day with the generous sponsorship of Elephant House. As the event ended, participants left with cherished memories and the satisfaction of contributing to a meaningful event.



## Valentine Pop Up Sales



Pop-Up sale of Paper quilling and Origami products of students was organized by the Career Guidance Unit (CGU) on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023 aiming to improve the entrepreneurial skills of university undergraduates. The pop-up sale created a platform for start-up entrepreneurs to sell their products, such as birthday cards, new year cards, ornaments, foot wears, bags, toys, paper flowers, dream catchers, and food items. The university undergraduates actively participated for this Pop-up sale, and the CGU expects to organize this event in every month. Vice Chancellor Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena participated as the Chief Guest, while Professor E.P.S Chandana, the Deputy Vice Chancellor also participated in the event of Pop-Up Sales. The undergraduates from different faculties engaged with the Pop-up sales and experienced their entrepreneurship skills.

## Community Awareness Projects by the Fourth Year Medical Undergraduates

Community Attachment Programme is conducted under the Community Medicine curriculum in which the medical undergraduates are allocated to a community and expected to arrive into community diagnosis and formulate strategies to solve the identified health, socio-economic, environmental and behavioral problems; and to implement these strategies. This programme was halted for two batches due to the COVID pandemic and it was recommenced last year.

The department was pleased to notice students engaged in community awareness projects with much enthusiasm and creativity.

These include "ආරෝග්‍ය" Health Camp (29<sup>th</sup> April), "නෑණසුව" Health Education Workshop and Art Competition among school children on dengue prevention (4<sup>th</sup> June), "සුරක්ෂා" Health Education Programme (10<sup>th</sup> June), "සුවසාත්‍රා" Health Awareness Programme (11<sup>th</sup> June), "මහා පායනය", Street drama (11<sup>th</sup> June) conducted in Kalegana, Watareka areas in the Bope Poddala MOH division. The students had actively engaged with the community and facilitated to hold a mobile Well women Clinic, Eye clinic, NCD screening clinic, conducted Health education on diseases of community concern and awareness programme on waste management during these events.



## Crown Every Child 2022

*“Good health is not just absence of disease, but a wholeness that involves physical, mental and spiritual well-being”.*

In search of a way to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal-3 “Good health and well-being”, the community group “Good Mother Good Nation” was initiated by V.T. Samudi Rohana, the University Ambassador for SDG-3 of university of Ruhuna, also a third year student of Faculty of medicine.

With the mission of “Building a good nation by nourishing its roots”, they unveiled their first chapter as “Crown Every Child 2022” on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 at Katugahahena divisional hospital, Kalutara, Sri-Lanka selecting 50 mothers from Katugahahena division. They participated in an awareness session conducted by well-known consultants in the fields of child health and mental health.

Dr. Ranjith Dissanayake the Chief Medical officer of Katugahahena divisional hospital, Kalutara and Consultant Paediatrician, Teaching Hospital Karapitiya, Dr. Nayomi de Silva discussed about nutrition of the child. Prof. Harshini Rajapakse

who is a Professor in Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna conducted a session on mental health. At the end of the sessions, all mothers were gifted a pack of essential items for their babies and a pack of dry rations donated by well-wishers. The first project was completed successfully with the support of volunteers and the staff of the hospital.



## Workshop on “Entrepreneurship and Solid Waste Management Practices”

Techno-Economic Societal Sustainable Development (TESS) project of the University of Ruhuna is working under the work package 1.7 which aims to develop cross-sector collaboration between industry, municipalities, and NGOs emphasizing its main focus on solid waste management. The project is cofunded by EU under its Erasmus+ CBHE programme.

One important workshop organized by the TESS project team of UoR in collaboration with Career Guidance Unit and Zero Plastic Community was the knowledge dissemination session on solid waste management practices for undergraduates. This event was held on 08<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 at the Auditorium of the Faculty of Humanities of Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

Academic staff members representing TESS project team from partner universities of the projects served as resource persons for the workshop namely, Prof. Chamara Kuruppu of the University of South Eastern, Norway, Dr. Debashree De of the University of Essex, UK, Prof. Anil Jayantha Fernando of the university of Sri Jayawardanapura, and Dr. Aruna Warahena, of the University of Vocational Technology. Around 200 undergraduates representing different faculties of UoR participated for this workshop. This awareness session would strengthen the knowledge on solid waste management practices of undergraduates which would support them for practical application in their day to day life as well as to identify new business opportunities in this field.



## “Tomorrow’s Leaders Today” : An Outward Bound Training Camp

One day outward bound training camp on “Tomorrow’s Leaders Today” was held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 for the final year students of the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology (FMST) in the university playground. This event was jointly organized by the career guidance unit (CGU) of University of Ruhuna and Faculty of FMST. The objectives of this training programme were to develop the skills of leadership, fellowship, and communication. Career counselors of the CGU contributed as the resource persons under the guidance of Prof. Thusitha Gunawardane, Director of the CGU of University of Ruhuna, and the event was coordinated by the faculty coordinator Ms R.G.A. Iroshanie.



## Unleashing Creativity and Collaboration: Highlights of the AIESEC Marketing Summit 2023

The AIESEC Marketing Summit 2023 convened marketing enthusiasts and professionals from diverse backgrounds at the Unilever Sri Lanka headquarters. The event kick-started with an interactive icebreaker session, fostering connections among participants. Esteemed facilitators, including Mr. Tilosh Karunanayake, VP for Brand, and Mr. Ayesh Rajapaksha, VP for Digital Experience, shared invaluable insights on brand marketing strategies. Equally noteworthy was Mr. Thivanka Seneviratne, VP for Business to Business, who offered guidance on nurturing crucial partner relationships.

The summit showcased several highlights, such as the introduction of a groundbreaking multi-language brand guideline exclusively tailored for AIESEC in Sri Lanka. This was further complemented by the unveiling of a marketing policy booklet, which set out innovative approaches and strategies. Participants indulged in refreshing breaks, providing an avenue for networking and informal discussions. The energy reached new heights during the interactive activity, where attendees formed groups and collaborated to produce captivating TikTok videos based on assigned brand strategies. This dynamic exercise was a testament to their creativity and teamwork.

A standout session was led by Mr. Shamil Akbar, Manager of Internal Communications & EA to the Chairperson at Unilever Sri Lanka, who stressed the significance of aligning marketing efforts across platforms to convey a uni-



fied brand message. Engaging in discussions and active participation allowed participants to gain valuable insights from Mr. Akbar's who is an extensive expertise in Integrated Marketing.

As the summit approached its finale, Mr. Ayesh Rajapaksha returned to the stage to share his personal journey as both an AIESECer and marketer, leaving attendees inspired by his experiences and reflections. The pinnacle of the event included the proud showcase of the TikTok videos created during the interactive session, enabling everyone to appreciate the remarkable creativity on display.

The AIESEC Marketing Summit 2023 served as an invaluable platform for marketers to exchange ideas, learn from industry experts, and expand their knowledge across diverse marketing domains. Engaging sessions, interactive activities, and networking opportunities all contributed to the personal and professional growth of the attendees.

## “Wasath Nupura” Dancing Evening



The dancing subcommittee of the Cultural Center of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna organized a dancing evening “වසන් නූපුර” to celebrate the Sinhala New Year Festival under the guidance of Dr. Janithra De Silva, Faculty Coordinator of the Cultural Center. The event was held at the T.W. Wikramanayake auditorium of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna on 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2023. The students of the all batches added glamour to the evening through their performances. The academic staff of the Faculty of Medicine also performed in the evening and were well enjoyed by the audience. The academic staff and students performed together in some of the items creating joyous moments. The event was graced by the presence of Prof. Vasantha Devasiri, the Dean, Faculty of Medicine, the academic staff of the faculty and many students. The decorations were done by the students of the 45<sup>th</sup> batch, the new entrants of the faculty and were highly appreciated by the audience.

## “Sarasabhiwandhana” Music Programme

The Circle of Human Resource Development, Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Management & Finance organized “Sarasabhiwandana,” a Posen devotional music programme for the second consecutive time. The event took place at the outdoor open theatre of the University in the evening on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

The primary objective of this event was to provide an opportunity for students to participate in the celebrations of the historic, religious, and cultural aspects of Posen Poya, while showcasing their aesthetic talents.

The programme highlighted the rich diversity and cultural heritage of each batch of the Faculty of Management and Finance. Through mesmerizing performances, student groups showcased their cultural and spiritual experiences while paying homage to the merits of the Lord Buddha with unwavering devotion. It was truly a captivating celebration that brought together the entire community. The outdoor theatre served as the perfect setting for this breathtaking event. Under the open sky, surrounded by the serene beauty of nature, attendees



were treated to an evening of soul-stirring music, dance, and artistic expression. “Sarasabhiwandana” drew a large audience, including university students, staff, and other esteemed guests.

The programme not only showcased the immense talent of our students but also provided a platform for them to shine. It was heartening to witness the enthusiasm and passion with which the performers embraced their cultural identities and shared their experiences.

# The Annual CSR project, Athwela at Kanahalagama Primary College, Matara,

The Circle of Human Resource Development (Circle of HRD) of the Department of Human Resource Management at the University of Ruhuna has once again made a remarkable impact through its annual CSR project, 'Athwela.' This year project centered its efforts on MR/Kanahalagama Primary College, a rural school in Akuresa, with the goal of uplifting the educational environment and supporting the students' aspirations.

There are 130 students in this primary school who studied in grade one to grade 11 while facing significant economic challenges that limits their access to essential educational resources. Recognizing the need for assistance, the Circle of HRD undertook the 'Athwela' initiative, with the objective of providing vital educational resources and motivate these students to pursue their dreams.

In collaboration with Nippon Paint, a significant step was taken to renovate some infrastructure facilities of this primary school. On 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2023, the school premises underwent a vibrant transformation as the dedicated students of the Circle of HRD successfully completed the painting project. The newly painted surroundings now provide a more pleasant learning environment, for students to do their learning activities.

Furthermore, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2023, a special event was organized to distribute stationery items and an office cupboard to the school children. The ceremony was filled with enthusiasm and joy as the students, and academic staff from the Department of Human Resource Management actively participated for the event. The warm welcome and hospitality extended by MR/Kanahalagama Primary School were heartwarming, fostering a sense of unity and collaboration.

The 'Athwela' CSR project not only benefited the students of MR/Kanahalagama Primary School but also served as an invaluable learning experience for the undergraduates of the Department of Human Resource Management. By actively engaging in these initiatives, the students are developing essential leadership skills and a sense of social responsibility, preparing them to become future leaders and managers with a deep understanding of community engagement.

The Circle of HRD expresses deep gratitude to Nippon Paint, JF&I Packaging Company, and all the individuals and external parties who have provided generous support including financial and material contributions. Their unwavering commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of these deserving students is commendable and has left a lasting impression. The support and cooperation received from the principal and teachers of MR/Kanahalagama Primary School played a pivotal role in the successful completion of this project.



The 'Athwela' CSR project at MR/Kanahalagama Primary School exemplifies the Circle of HRD's dedication to driving positive change and empowering rural communities through education. It serves as a testament to the transformative power of collective efforts and the lasting impact that can be made when individuals come together for a common cause. As the Circle of HRD, Department of Human Resource Management continues its mission, it remains committed to creating more memorable and impactful initiatives that uplift and empower those in need.



## Revit Design Competition-2023

The Civil and Environmental Engineering Society (CEES), in collaboration with SFS Academy, successfully organized the Revit Design Competition-2023 on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna. This exhilarating event brought together aspiring architects, engineers, and design enthusiasts to showcase their creativity and technical expertise. Participants from university and design firms crafted exceptional designs using Revit, revolutionizing the field of architectural design.

With a focus on innovation and excellence, the competition provided a platform for participants to exchange knowledge, gain valuable insights from industry professionals, and push the boundaries of their skills.



## Dhamma Sermon



A Dharma sermon was held in the boys' hostel of the Faculty of Allied Health Science (FAHS) on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 with the participation of students, academic staff members, non-academic staff members of FAHS and villagers. The event was organized by the boys' hostel committee of the FAHS.



## Esala Full Moon Poya Day at Faculty of Engineering

In line with the celebration of the "Adhi Esala Full Moon Poya Day", the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna organized an event known "Esala Kuduwa saha Belimal Dansala". In front of the Faculty of Engineering, the lantern was exhibited from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> of July 2023, at 6:30 pm onwards. This event was attended by a large number of guests and faculty members. During the event, a Dansala was organized to treat the audience. This event provided an opportunity for students, faculty members, and visitors to come together and embrace the cultural significance of Esala Full Moon Poya Day.



## Tree Planting at Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

The tree planting event was held at the new faculty site of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences (AHS), Walahanduwa, Galle on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2023 with the participation of students, academic staff members, and non-academic staff members. The event was organized by boys' hostel committee of FAHS.



## Thai Pongal 2023: Faculty of Medicine

*Thai Pongal is one of the Hindu Festivals which is celebrated by Tamils across the world. The multi-day harvest festival of South India and Sri Lanka is observed during the second week of January. It is dedicated to the Sun and celebrates the harvest for the whole year. This festival is celebrated for four days including Bhogi Pongal, Surya Pongal, Mattu Pongal and Kaanum Pongal.*

The students of Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna celebrated the Thai Pongal Vizha 2023 on 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2023 for the second consecutive year. The event was held in the lobby of faculty auditorium and attracted a large number of attendees, including students from multiple cultural backgrounds.

Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, the Vice Chancellor of University of Ruhuna graced this occasion as the Chief Guest. The Former Dean Prof. Vasantha Devasiri, Pediatric Cardiologist Dr.I.R.Ragunathan, academic staff, non-academic staff and students of the Faculty of Medicine attended the event in traditional attire.

It was a perfect opportunity for the students who came together and celebrated the festive season with cultural ceremonies, Bhajana and delicious food. The event was a showcase of the rich cultural heritage of the Tamil community and was enjoyed by all who attended. It was a testament to the strong sense of community and inclusiveness that exists within the university.



AND RE-USING IMAGES OF THIS ALBUM FOR COMMERCIAL AND OTHER PURPOSES WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF "MEDCLICK" IS PROHIBITED AND IS CONSIDERED AS A

## Belimal Dansala

The "Belimal Dansala" which was organized by the students of the Girls' Hostel, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences was held on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023 in front of the Hostel.



## Ramadan Kareem at Faculty of Medicine



*On April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the grand annual iftar gathering; was held at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna. The Muslim Majlis successfully conducted the event with the collaboration of the Spiritual and Religious Practices Subcommittee of the Medical Faculty, attracting a wide range of people, including the Vice Chancellor, the Dean, the Senior Treasurer, the Head of the Cultural Center, academic lectures, alumni, and students.*

The event started with the Quran recitation with its translation, followed by gathering addressed by the Vice Chancellor, the Dean, and the guest speaker. Furthermore, the event was soothed by the qaseeda sung by the students and the quiz session attracted the audience's interest.

Later on, the Athan was called, followed by the breaking of the fast, leaving everyone happily stuffed. The most exciting moment of the whole programme was the Maghrib prayers, where everyone stood in rows calling out loud to the Almighty. The latter part of the programme consisted of henna stalls and photo booths, which piqued the interest of all.



## Bathi Gee Saraniya: Faculty of Engineering

A "Bathi Gee Saraniya" programme was jointly organized by the Art society and the Faculty Student union to coincide with the Posen full moon Poya celebration of 2023 in the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2023 at the Faculty Auditorium. Many of the guests, including the Dean of the Faculty, academic staff, and non-academic staff members together with the undergraduates from all the years participated in this event. The students from all the batches performed during this occasion. It was evident throughout the Faculty Auditorium that the participants embraced their religious devotion through their performances.



## Kadala Dansala

The Kadala Dansala was held in front of Uluwitike premises of FAHS on Posen full moon poya day with the participation of students, academic staff members and non academic staff members of FAHS. The event was organized by the Boys' Hostel committee of FAHS with the financial support of students, academic members and other staff members of FAHS.



## First Local Committee Meeting of AIESEC in UoR

The journey of AIESEC in Ruhuna has been one of the determinations, hard work, and resilience. From its humble beginnings as an Initiative Group to becoming the 7<sup>th</sup> Local Committee in Sri Lanka, the chapter's dedication has been rewarded with recognition. With a sense of pride and anticipation, AIESEC in Ruhuna gathered for their first physically held local committee meeting (LCM). The event radiated with energy from the start, beginning with spirited roll calls that ignited the atmosphere. The introduction of the chair created a buzz of excitement, leaving everyone pleasantly surprised. The chair's captivating presence set the tone for an engaging and dynamic session. Q&A sessions fostered a friendly and interactive environment where members eagerly participated. Later, member and team leader appreciation awards were distributed, recognizing the dedication and contributions of individuals. To encourage connections, attendees were encouraged to mingle with unfamiliar faces, fostering a sense of camaraderie and expanding their network.

A remarkable highlight of the event was a group activity that encompassed creativity, presentation skills, and innovative ideas while reinforcing AIESEC's values and culture. Frequent roll calls injected moments of liveliness, keeping a high momentum. Refreshments were provided throughout the event, boosting the energy of the attendees. The Local Committee President (LCP) delivered an impactful presentation, rewarding those who answered correctly with a sweet treat. Awareness sessions from various functions of AIESEC provided valuable insights and showcased the diversity of expertise within the chapter. The Local Committee Vice Presidents (LCVP) presented their functional details, showcasing their dedication and commitment. Adding a touch of lightheartedness, a punish-



ment team ensured the event flowed smoothly while providing joyful punishments to keep members entertained.

The event concluded with a mesmerizing moment as everyone came together to celebrate the achievement by cutting a beautifully decorated cake. The air was filled with joy as teammates and friends captured the moment through pictures and shared laughter. The festivities continued after a lunch break with a lively DJ party that had everyone dancing and creating lasting memories. One of the most remarkable aspects of any AIESEC gathering was the ability to balance professionalism and creativity seamlessly. The event exemplified this spirit, fostering an environment where members could express themselves freely and creating an atmosphere of unity and shared purpose.

The first LCM of AIESEC in Ruhuna was a testament to the dedication, resilience, and passion of its members. With engaging activities, insightful sessions, and a celebration of achievements, the event served as a catalyst for growth within the chapter. AIESEC in Ruhuna's commitment to excellence and creativity continues to shape its journey, setting the stage for even greater accomplishments in the future.

## Poson Bakthi Geetha Programme

Cultural Center of the University of Ruhuna organized a Bakthi Geetha Programme to commemorate the Poson Festival, and the event was held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023 at the auditorium of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Vice Chancellor Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, the deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof. E.P.S. Chandana, Acting Coordinator of the Cultural Center Dr. Darshana Bandara, academic staff & non academic staff, members and students attended the event.



# Business Idea Presentation for Business Start-Ups

Third-year students of the B.Sc in Agribusiness Management degree programme presented their Business Ideas as a compulsory component of their Business Startup course module (EC 3207). The event was held on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2023. This event witnessed the enthusiastic participation of the students of the 42<sup>nd</sup> batch, who presented their innovative and valuable business ideas.

Ten student groups showcased their entrepreneurial spirit and creativity by introducing novel business concepts. The ideas encompassed a diverse range of products, aiming to cater to various consumer preferences. Some of the captivating business ideas included Flower Blended Tea, Flower Blended Jelly, Pumpkin Pancake, Pumpkin Fries, Coconut Crepes, and Coconut Mojito. The teams exhibited their passion for agribusiness and demonstrated how these ideas could be transformed into successful business ventures.



# Best Project Awards - Ruhuna LEO Respirāre

'LEO Respirāre', the mangrove restoration project was successfully conducted on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to enhance the biodiversity of the coastal ecosystem. There were three objectives of this project viz, to make aware and attract youth to conserve coastal ecosystems using a series of virtual sessions, to establish 1000 new mangrove plants to enrich coastal richness through mangrove restoration in Ambakadawila area in Chilaw, Sri Lanka; and beach cleaning for a cleaner environment. Ms. M.W.K.K. Dilrukshi, an undergraduate student of the Faculty of Agriculture, is the leader of this team & her team consists of 67 undergraduates of the University of Ruhuna.

The success of the team effort was awarded as the Best Project for sustainable development goals and the Best joint project with Non-Leo / outside organizations at the award ceremony of the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual District Conference of Leo District 306 A1, Sri Lanka, and Maldives held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

'LEO Respirāre' was organized by the Leo Club of the University of Ruhuna in collaboration with the National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency (NARA), the Department of Forest Conservation, the Ruhuna Explorers' Club, Agribusiness Development Association and Small Fishers Federation (Sudeesa) in Chilaw.



Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, Vice Chancellor, University of Ruhuna; Prof. Thusitha Gunawardhana, Senior Treasurer, Leo Club of University; Dr. I.R. Paliykkara, Department of Crop Science (Patron- Ruhuna Explorers' Club); Dr. Dilanthi Koralagama, Department of Agricultural Economics, and Prof. Sunanda Kodikara, Department of Botany, have given their invaluable assistance to make this event a success.



## Yathra: Book Donation Programme

The Soft Skills Society of the Faculty of Fisheries & Marine Sciences & Technology (FMST), University of Ruhuna successfully completed the second phase of their stationery donation programme called "Yathra Project".

MA/Yahamulla primary school in Athuraliya, Akuresa was selected for this second phase of their programme and it was held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023. The "Yathra Project" is organized with kind donations received from undergraduates, alumni and staff of the faculty of FMST. In this second phase of the project, Soft Skill Society donated stationery items, text books/children's books (new / used books in good condition) for 28 students who are studying in Grade 1- 5.



## Padura : A Musical Programme

The Art Society of the Faculty of Engineering organized Padura, an annual outdoor musical event that showcases the utmost passion for music. Each year, Padura presents a refreshing continental theme, and this time it took place on 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. The chosen theme for this year was a Dutch colonial village, creatively set up beneath the banyan tree, by a student center of the faculty. Attendees could indulge in the mesmerizing voices of university students accompanied by the melodious orchestral performances by students from the Faculty of Engineering.



The performances encompassed a variety of languages such as Sinhala, Tamil, and Hindi. Padura encompasses not only music but also incorporated elements of drama, dance, and a delightful farewell event to the final year students, culminating in a celebration of aesthetic events at the university.

## International Water Day Activity of LimSo-2023

The world water day 2023 was aimed at the theme of "Accelerating the change to solve the water and sanitation crisis". The theme emphasizes the need for more active action to address global water issues to achieve sustainable development goals. Accordingly, the Society of Limnology and Water Technology (LimSo) of the Department of Limnology and Water Technology, Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences and Technology conducted an awareness programme on the sanitary conditions of domestic wells around the university. Under this project, LimSo conducted a microbial quality assessment by selecting 20 houses near the university (Rassandeniya and Janaraja mawatha) to analyze the drinking water sources. Finally, an awareness programme on quality of drinking water was conducted on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 which was the International world water day.



This programme was a great helping hand for the villagers to identify the quality of their drinking water, and further it strengthen the relationship between the university and the local community. The encouragement from the public to the students to conduct more social services was significant. This project was successfully completed with the immense guidance and encouragements of the head of the department Dr. U.A.D.Jayasinghe, Prof.H.B.Asanthi and Dr.L.N.Wijewardene (Senior Treasurer LimSo) of the Department of Limnology and Water Technology.

# Sinhala and Hindhu New Year Celebrations of UoR

## Faculty of Allied Health Sciences



The New Year festival of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences (AHS) took place on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023, at the playground of the Faculty of Medicine with the participation of students, academic staff, & non-academic staff members of the Faculty of AHS. The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine graced the occasion as the chief guest, while this event featured several traditional activities such as “Kiri Ithiraweema,” and the “New Year Kavili table”. In addition, there were 27 New Year games, including “New Year Kumara” and “Kumariya” & the event was thoroughly enjoyed by almost all participants.

## Faculty of Engineering

The Art Society of the Faculty of Engineering has organized the annual New Year Festival “Wasantha Udanaya”, to celebrate the New Year. This event consisted of a range of traditional games and activities, and students actively participated. Students from different backgrounds come together to witness and appreciate the customs and traditions of the Sinhala and Tamil cultures.



This year event was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2023, and the event made an atmosphere of unity, where everyone can learn from and respect each other's cultural practices. This enjoyable experience fosters teamwork and soft skills development of students and promotes cultural understanding among the wider community.

## Faculty of Technology

Faculty of Technology Welfare Society organized a newyaer festival for the second consecutive year, on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at the Faculty Premises. The Academic staff members, students, non-academic staff members and their family members participated for this occasion. There were so many entertaining Avurudu games.



# Sinhala and Hindhu New Year Celebrations of UoR

## Faculty of Management and Finance



“Kokila Rawaya”, the Sinhala and Tamil New Year festival organized by the Entrepreneurship Study Circle was held on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at the open space near to the university gymnasium from 10:00 am onwards, aiming to celebrate and promote cultural diversity, unity, and inclusivity among the university community. This event provided an opportunity for students to showcase and share their rich traditions, customs, and heritage of their own cultures. Academic staff members, non-academic staff members and students participated for the event.

## AIIESEC : Southfest '23

Southfest 23, Ruhuna AIIESEC's Sinhala and Tamil New Year festival was held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at Galle Fort army camp. The ground was wonderfully colorful on that day, not for any other reason than that the Ruhuna AIIESECERS were all dressed in different colors.

The event began in the traditional style with the lighting of the oil lamp, followed by “Kiri Ithirima” which symbolizes the prosperity and abundance for the upcoming year, and the opening of the Avurudu sweets table to all participants. The Avurudu sweets table featured everything from soft, sweet treats to crunchy treats.

The Avurudu games began with “eye on the elephant, followed by “breaking pots,” “passing water balloons,” “musical chairs,” and other fun activities. And the most memorable aspect of any AIIESEC event is our roll calls. The roll call steps, a popular TikTok dance, were known by nearly all of the participants. The roll call was also fun; no event would have been complete without a dance. As Southfest drew to an end, AIIESECers danced to baila music, and everyone sang and enjoyed.



## Erabadu Wasanthaya of Catholic Students' Society

The “Erabadu Wasanthaya” Awrudu Festival, organized by the Catholic Students' Society of the University of Ruhuna came alive with the vibrant festivities of the Sinhala and Tamil New Year on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2023, at the St. Mary's Convent Grounds in Matara. This joyous event showcased a wide array of traditional Awrudu games and cultural activities, bringing together students, faculty, and the local community in a celebration of our shared heritage.



## Mathematics and Science Seminar 2023

Ruhuna University Mathematics and Statistics Society (RUMSS) of the Department of Mathematics, University of Ruhuna, conducted a seminar series on Mathematics and Science for school students aiming G.C.E. (O/L) examination-2023. This seminar series was successfully conducted as two sessions. The first session was held on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of April while the second session was held on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 at Mr/ Gandara Maha Vidyalaya. The main objective of this seminar was to improve the knowledge of subject matters aimed at G.C.E. (O/L) examination for school students as a social service. A group of student representing RUMSS was able to discuss two model papers highlighting key points of Mathematics and Science subjects. Almost 35 school children actively participated in this seminar series and it helped students to prepare for the G.C.E (O/L) examination. The principal of the Gandara Maha Vidyalaya highly appreciated the service done by the RUMSS.



## Sports Meet: Faculty of Allied Health Sciences



In the year of 2023, the “Inter-Batch Sport Meet” was the first event organized by the Sport Association, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Ruhuna. Volleyball, chess, carrom, badminton, table tennis, and cricket were among the six sports held. The opening ceremony was held at the playground of the Faculty of Medicine on 11<sup>th</sup> February, and the sports meet was concluded with final cricket match and a colorful closing ceremony held on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 at the playground of the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna.

## Sustainable Building Design Competition



The Civil and Environmental Engineering Society (CEES) of the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna, organized the highly anticipated Sustainable Building Design Competition 2023 on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2023. This prestigious event aimed to inspire innovative and sustainable design solutions for the built environment. Architects, engineers, and design enthusiasts showcased their creative talent and technical expertise, competing to develop sustainable building designs that address real-world challenges. The competition not only celebrated the outstanding achievements of the participants but also highlighted the importance of sustainable practices in the construction industry. With the Sustainable Building Design Competition 2023, CEES and the Faculty of Engineering continue to lead the way in fostering sustainable design principles and shaping the future of the built environment.

## Blood Donation Event at Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

A Blood donation programme was conducted on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023 in the Department of Nursing, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Ruhuna. This programme was organized by the student batch of 2017/2018 with the support of the blood bank, Teaching hospital Karapitiya under supervision of Faculty students' counselors. Students, academic and non-academic members were donated blood, and seventy-five blood packets were collected.



## Youth Space 3.0

AIIESEC is a platform for future young leaders to scrutinize and nurture their potentials towards the executing of sustainable development goals which is run by youth including 150+ countries across the globe. AIIESEC in University of Ruhuna is the one and only AESEC entity in the South of Sri Lanka. As the AIIESECers in University of Ruhuna; we aim to enhance the leadership potential among the young undergraduates while furnishing a high quality experience our membership.

Youth Space is the largest external project organized by the AIIESEC in University of Ruhuna, which is earmarking 5000+ individuals from all over the island covering 25 districts. The project primarily aims at educating GCE O/L, GCE A/L students and school leavers about the opportunities to pursue a suitable career which can complement with their dream careers while developing their skills and personality to open out over the competitive world after leaving the school. Youth Space is awareness and educating session series to make students cognizant of the requirements of creating a better CV, and provide situ-



ational awareness of the other skills and strategies required, how to prepare for a job interview, firsthand experience with industry personnel to instill the requisite qualities in a student who are going to finish the school journey, value of entrepreneurship career paths, public speaking a communicating skills and self-grooming. All these sessions are conducting by the industry professionals and experts in each field.

Youth Space 1.0, and Youth SPACE 2.0 were effectuated successfully in 2021,2022 with many positive feedbacks and Youth Space 3.0 is the most waited upcoming external project of the year 2023 which embodies 2 days Online sessions and 2 days physical events with objective of dwindle youth unemployment in Sri Lanka and to provide space for young people becoming world citizens who believes in their ability to make a difference in the world.

## Annual Christmas Gathering

The annual Christmas Gathering, organized by the Catholic Students' Society of University of Ruhuna, was held on 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2023 at the picturesque St. Mary's Cathedral in Galle which brought members of the society in a joyous celebration of the holiday season. Under the esteemed guidance of University Chaplain Rev. Fr. Michael Colin, the gathering was a testament to the spirit of unity and fellowship within our society. From the inspiring religious ceremonies and services to the vibrant cultural performances and activities, the event truly captured the essence of Christmas.



## Way of the Cross and Holy Mass

Catholic Students' Society of the University of Ruhuna organized a meaningful event to commemorate the Lenten season. On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023, members of this society, gathered at the Shrine of Our Lady of Matara for a Holy Mass and the Way of the Cross. This solemn occasion provided an opportunity for reflection, prayer, and spiritual growth as we embarked on the journey of Lent.



# 5<sup>th</sup> Indian Open Para Athletic International Championship 2023

Ms W.A.K.K Dayani, a student of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HS/2020/18351), University of Ruhuna participated to the 5<sup>th</sup> Indian Open Para Athletic International Championship 2023 which was held on from 05<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023 Bangalore, India. This is a qualifying Championship for competing in the Asian Para Athletics Championships and World Para Athletics Championships. Dayani has been selected by Sri Lanka Para Athletic Committee to compete in the running events of 100m, 200m and Long Jump event in the above Championships.



For the first time in history, Dayani qualified to represent University of Ruhuna in this international Championship. She won the silver medal for the both running events, and she completed 100 m and 200 m in 13.55 and 27.68 seconds respectively. Further, she was lucky enough to secure the bronze medal for the long jump event by recoding 4.46 m.



After completing the 5<sup>th</sup> Indian Open Para Athletic International Championship 2023, Dayani returned to Sri Lanka on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023. She was welcomed by her coach Ms. Dilupa Priyadharshani, Mr. Keerthi Kumara the acting Director of the Physical education unit of the University of Ruhuna, and his team at the Bandaranayaka International Airport.



After arriving to the University, she was warmly welcomed by the Vice Chancellor, Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, and the Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. E.P.S. Chandana and they extended their heartiest wishes for her achievement. The University of Ruhuna wishes her all the very best.

## K.I.K. Madhushani Represented Sri Lankan Baseball Team



Ms K.I.K Madushani (MF/2019/5586) of the Faculty of Management and Finance, University of Ruhuna was selected as a member to the Sri Lankan base ball team and she participated for the 3<sup>rd</sup> women baseball Asian cup tournament which was held from 1<sup>st</sup> May to 02<sup>nd</sup> June 2023 in Hon Kong.

## Best Paper Award at the Project Day Competition-2023

Mr. Kaveesha Fernando of the Faculty of Engineering (EG/2017/3187) was awarded the best paper award for the paper title "Numerical Modelling of Gravel Compaction Piles in Soft Soil under Drain Condition" at the "Project Day competition-2023" organized by the Sri Lankan Geotechnical Society (SLGS). Project Day Competition is an annual event organized by the SLGS since 2000, with the objective of promoting research and enhancing the presentation skills of Sri Lankan Civil Engineering students. The event features a competition among final year undergraduates who have conducted research projects in Geotechnical Engineering. Based on the written paper and the presentation, the best project is selected by a committee of distinguished geotechnical professionals appointed by the SLGS. This year, there were 18 competitors from Sri Lankan Universities who have completed their undergraduate research projects on various Geotechnical Engineering aspects. Among them, Mr. Kaveesha Fernando won the best paper award for his research which was supervised by Dr. N.H. Priyankara, of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna.



## Obtaining a Research Award at the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Academic Sessions of the Sri Lanka College of Psychiatrists

An oral presentation titled "Behavioral changes among primary grade school children and measures carried out by teachers; A cross-sectional study in Galle education division" presented by Mevan Induruwa, an undergraduate of the 41<sup>st</sup> batch of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna has won the third place in the free paper category at the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Academic Sessions of the Sri Lanka College of Psychiatrists which was held on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2023 at Galle-face Hotel, Sri Lanka.

The authors of the research were Mevan Induruwa, Upeksha Indrachapa, Hansanthika Jayasinghe, Sudeepa Illankoon, Dilakshi Jayasinghe and Janithra De Silva. This study was carried out as an undergraduate research study of the students and it was supervised by Dr. Janithra De Silva, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna.



## The Best Oral Presentation Award at ICAPS 2023

Ms. Nabadawa Vithanage Methmini Dilhani (SC/2017/9977), of the Department of chemistry, Faculty of science, university of Ruhuna won the Best Oral Presentation award under the theme of "Pioneering Chemical Research Towards a Greener Tomorrow" at the International Conference on Applied Sciences (ICAPS 2023) organized by the Faculty of Applied Sciences, Sarbagamuwa University of Sri Lanka which was held on 30-31 May 2023.

Ms. Methmini did this presentation based on her undergraduate research titled "Micro plastics Pollution in Garanduwa Lagoon, Matara, Sri Lanka" which was jointly supervised by Dr. Y.M.A.L.W. Yapa & Prof. Chinthaka Sanath Gangabaddage of the Faculty of Science and Dr.K.S.S Athapaththu & Prof. P.B.T.P Kumara of the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Science & Technology.



## Independence Cup Taekwondo Championship

Chamudika Gunawardhana, a talented 3<sup>rd</sup>-year undergraduate studying B.Sc in Green Technology at the Faculty of Agriculture, won the 1<sup>st</sup> place in the individual Poomsae event (Green belt category - Senior) and 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Pair Poomsae event (Senior) at the Independence Cup Taekwondo Championship organized by the Sri Lanka Taekwondo Federation and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The event was held from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023, at the National Youth Centre, Maharagama. Further, Ms. Gunawardhana was honored with the Sri Lanka University Colours Award 2022 for Taekwondo during the SLUSA colours night at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura on 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2023, solidifying her position as a respected athlete, an esteemed recognition in the university sports community.



## Sports Achievements: Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology

### SLUSA Colours 2022

Colours Awarding Ceremony-2022 of the Sri Lanka Universities Sports Association (SLUSA) was held on 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 at University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Mr. T. Abeywickrama and Miss S. S. Singaneththi of the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology were awarded Sri Lanka University Colours Insignia for Swimming and Elle respectively for their exceptional performance in the Inter University Championships 2022.



### Best Defender (Men) Hockey

J. Kirupavan was awarded as the Best Defender (Men) in Ruhuna Hockey League 2023 held on 03<sup>rd</sup> of June 2023, organized by the Hockey team of University of Ruhuna.



## Sports Achievements : Faculty of Agriculture

### Inter University Games:

Mr. Malith Udara, a final year student of the Faculty of Agriculture was able to secure second place in the Inter university Weightlifting Championship (under 55 Kg weight category) held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2023 organized by the Eastern University, Sri Lanka. In addition, Mr. R.H.A.M.D. Tharindu Ravishanka Thilakasiri, another final year undergraduate won the Gold Medal for the Inter-University Boxing Championship under the 54Kg – 57Kg category which was held 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2023 at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.



### Inter Faculty Sports Meet:

The Women Elle team of the Faculty of Agriculture won the first runners-up while their men's team was the second runners-up at the interfaculty Elle tournament which was held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at the Wellamadama Sports Complex. Further, women's volleyball team of the same emerged as the first runners-up of the Interfaculty volleyball tournament after a competitive final with the Faculty of Management and Finance which was held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at the Gymnasium of the University of Ruhuna.



# Award one'23 - The 18<sup>th</sup> Leo District 306 A1 Conference

The Leo Club of the University of Ruhuna which is performed under the Career Guidance Unit has been recognized for its outstanding achievements. With great honor, Leos of Ruhuna proudly accept the prestigious awards that have been bestowed upon them. This remarkable accomplishment is a testament to the unwavering dedication, hard work, and collective efforts of the exceptional team of Leos and lions of University of Ruhuna. At present, Prof. Thusitha Gunawardhana is the Senior Treasurer, while the former District Governor Kapila Manamperi is the Leo club adviser of the Leo Club of the University of Ruhuna.

## CLUB AWARDS

- Most Outstanding University/institute Based Omega Leo Club in the district - 1st Runner Up
- Leo club with Highest Net Membership Growth - 2nd Runner Up
- Individual Awards
- Most Outstanding Club President - 2nd Runner up

## PROJECT AWARDS

### 1. Winner Awards

- Best project for the sustainable Development Goals
- Best project for Disaster Management and prevention
- Most innovation Project
- Best join Project with Non-leo/ outside Organization
- Best project For Hunger
- Best project for Poverty and Better Life

### 1st Runner Up

- Best project for Youth Empowerment
- Best project for woman's Empowerment
- Best project for paediatric Cancer

### 2nd Runner up

- Best project for crime and Road accident prevention
- Best project for Responsible Consumption and waste Management
- Best project for helping Hand to Differently Abled
- Best project for Peace, Religious and Cultural Activities
- Area One campaign Awards
- Best Camper
- Most Emerging Camper
- Past Club Exco Appreciations

We are confident that our collective efforts will continue to shape a brighter future for Leo club of University of Ruhuna, and may their future endeavors be filled with boundless success and fulfillment.



## Senior Professor Sujeewa Amarasena Visited Bhutan to Fulfill a WHO Assignment



Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna recently visited Bhutan to fulfill a WHO assignment in the elimination of Measles, Rubella, and Congenital Rubella Syndrome. Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena is a member of the Regional Verification Commission for Elimination of Measles, Rubella, and Congenital Rubella Syndrome of South East Asia Region (RVC-SEAR) since 2015, and he joined this event as an external expert.

## A Patent by Dr. Sachinithani Amarasiri, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

A patent titled "A herbal composition for the treatment of kidney disease and method thereof" has been awarded to Prof. Anoja Attanayake, Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine, Dr. Sachinithani Amarasiri, Department of Medical Laboratory Science, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, Prof. Kamani Jayatilaka, Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine and Prof. Lakmini Mudduwa, Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna.

The invention was related to a synergistic herbal composition comprising a combination of therapeutically effective amounts of leaves of *Abelmoschus moschatus* Medik., *Asparagus falcatus* (L.), and whole plant of *Barleria prionitis* (L.) and the method of preparation of the herbal composition which will be useful for the treatment of kidney disease. In addition, the invention disclosed nephroprotective mechanisms of the herbal composition in vivo.



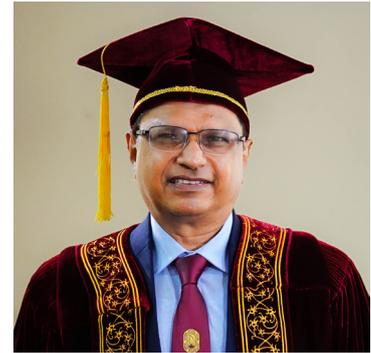
## Best Oral Presentation at ASNAC-2023

Dr. I. L.A.N Darshna, Senior Lecturer attached to the Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine won the "Award for the Best Oral Presentation" at the Association of Sri Lankan Neurologists 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress- 2023 (ASNAC 2023). Paper titled "Diagnostic validity of General Movements Assessment (GMA) and Hammett Infant Neurological Examination (HINE) in early detection of Cerebral Palsy in high risk infants: A modified approach for Sri Lankan patient care setting". It was based on findings of a collaborative research done at the Pediatric neurology unit, Teaching Hospital Karapitiya with the Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna, and Department of Pediatrics, University of New Mexico School of Medicine, United States. Paper authored by Hewawitharana GP, Darshana ILAN, Madhushani ULAN, Chathuranga DPS, Priyangika DLN, Madumadhavie, RGY, Kumara RDS, Mihiran DKD, Nilukshika KVK, Hewawitharana BDR, Wijesinghe CJ, Phillips J and Kodituwakku PW.



## New CVCD Chairperson: Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena

The Vice Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna, Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena was appointed as the Chairperson of the Committee of Vice-Chancellor Rectors and Directors for a period of one year in January 2023. The first CVCD conference under his Chairmanship was held at the University of Ruhuna on Saturday 14th January 2023.



## Dr. Gamini Karunarathne Award for the Best Paper

Dr. I. L. A. N Darshna, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Community Medicine, won the "Dr. Gamini Karunarathne Award for the Best Paper" for the oral presentation titled "Early detection of developmental disorders among high-risk infants; The success story of a modified approach from Sri Lankan Setting" done at the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual scientific congress of the Sri Lanka College of Pediatricians in May 2023. It was a product of collaborative research done at the Pediatric neurology unit, Teaching Hospital Karapitiya with the Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna, and Department of Pediatrics, University of New Mexico School of Medicine, United States. The paper was authored by Hewawitharana GP, Darshana ILAN, Madhushani ULAN, Chathuranga DPS, Priyangika DLN, Madumadhavie, RGY, Kumara RDS, Mihiran DKD, Nilukshika KVK, Hewawitharana BDR, Wijesinghe CJ, Phillips J and Kodituwakku PW.



## President's International Fellowship Initiative (PIFI): Chinese Academy of Sciences 2022-2023

The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) President's International Fellowship Initiative, PIFI, is a specific funding programme to attract talented foreign scientists to CAS for high-quality research cooperation. There are seven types of fellowships for; distinguished scientists, visiting scientists, postdoctoral researchers, special experts, young university staff, and students following Ph.D. and Master's degree programmes.

Senior Prof. Disna Ratnasekera of the Department of Agricultural Biology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna was selected as a visiting scientist attached to the South China Sea Institute of Oceanology, Guangzhou, Peoples Republic of China to explore bioactive compounds associated with Mangroves. PIFI is open to scientific research personnel from around the globe and selection is based on competitive research performances. The PIFI is an excellent platform for scientists from developing countries to initiate long-term research with well-equipped laboratories that cannot achieve in their home countries.



## Interaction Design for International Development Award

Mrs. Theja Kuruppu Arachchi, a Senior Assistant Librarian (Grade 1), Main Library, University of Ruhuna was awarded the Interaction Design for International Development Award at the INTERACT2021, IFIP TC13 Conference on Human Computer Interaction on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 in Bari, Italy. She presented this paper by using PhD thesis. Ms. Theja has completed her PhD studies on 24-Jan-2023 through a joint PhD programme conducted by the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Australia and University of Colombo. This Joint PhD Programme organized by the University Grant Commission, Sri Lanka.



## SUSRED Award 2021/2022 by the NSF Sri Lanka

Senior Prof. D.A.L Leelamanie of the Department of Soil Science (Principal Supervisor), Senior Prof. S. Subasinghe of the Department of Crop Science (Co-Supervisor), Faculty of Agriculture and Prof. P.K. Subash Jayasinghe of the Department of ICT (Co-Supervisor), Faculty of Technology received the SUSRED (Support Scheme for Supervision of Research Degrees) Award for the year 2021/2022 by the National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka.



SUSRED Award is presented to Supervisors of postgraduate research degrees in recognition of their service to the nation and to encourage universities and research institutions to promote and facilitate post-graduate research training. This award was awarded for the above supervisory team for the supervision of the MPhil study of Mr. H.I.G.S Piyaruwan on "Onsite soil water repellency and its implications on hydrological regimes of Pine and Eucalyptus plantation forests in Up Country Intermediate Zone".

## Obtaining an Award at the Profood Propack International Exhibition

The Department of Food Science and Technology received 1st Runner Up Award for the Banana Vinegar developed by Ms. Udeshika Harischandra and Dr. (Ms) Buddhika Perumpuli under the Institutional Category Best Green Innovation at Profood Propack 2022 International Exhibition held from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at BMICH Exhibition Centre Colombo. The award was received by Dr. (Ms) Buddhika Perumpuli, Head of the Department of Food Science and Technology at the Launching Ceremony of the Profood Propack 2023 Exhibition held at Water's Edge, Battaramulla.



## Invited Lecture on "Conservation of Fireflies in Sri Lanka"

Mr. W. M. C. D. Wijekoon, Lecturer attached to the Department of Zoology, Faculty of Science, University of Ruhuna was invited for a guest lecture on "Conservation of Fireflies in Sri Lanka" organized by "The Butterfly Conservation Society of Sri Lanka". They invited Mr. Wijekoon for this guest lecture as he is an expert in firefly beetles of Sri Lanka. Further Mr. Wijekoon contributes to the "World IUCN Firefly Specialist Group" as the only representative from Sri Lanka and the South Asian region. It was a virtual event, with more than 100 participants on 25<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2023. Mr. Wijekoon delivered his lecture productively by highlighting the present status of fireflies in Sri Lanka, their threats and conservation recommendations, based on his twelve years of experience in fireflies research.



## Launching of Sammanana: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Emeritus Professor Ven. Midigama Soratha Nayaka Thero



The Sammanana Journal launching ceremony was a momentous event held on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December, 2022, to honor the venerable scholar, Emeritus Professor Ven. Midigama Soratha Thero. This great Buddhist monk had served as a distinguished academic staff member over three decades in the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna. His expertise in Buddhist culture was widely recognized, with notable contributions to the fields of Buddhist Management, Buddhist Educational Philosophy, and Buddhist Vinaya and Jurisprudence.

Beyond academia, Ven. Prof. Midigama Soratha Thero's noble and virtuous character extended to religious and social service both nationally and internationally. His profound impact was evident through his founding of the Weligama Agrabodhi Rajamaha Vihara and other Buddhist temples. As a pioneer in the establishment of the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies at the University of Ruhuna, he served as the esteemed Head of the Department and as a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, providing invaluable support to the university administration.

The publication of the felicitation volume 'Sammānanā' was a fitting tribute to acknowledge Ven. Prof. Midigama Soratha Thero's outstanding academic, religious, and social contributions. The Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Ruhuna, took this opportunity to express deep appreciation for his dedication and service. The ceremony was graced by scholars, devotees, and esteemed guests who recognized the significance of Ven. Prof. Midigama Soratha Thero's remarkable achievements.

As the book was launched, attendees celebrated the scholarly legacy and spiritual guidance he had offered throughout his illustrious career. The event served as a poignant reminder of the profound impact Ven. Prof. Midigama Soratha Thero had on both academia and society. Participants expressed their heartfelt gratitude and wished him continued good health and success in his endeavors to serve the community and academia further.

## TRCSL Research Grant for Blockchain-Enabled RF Radiation Exposure Level Measurement Project

A research team from the Department of Electrical and Information Engineering (EIE) of the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna, has won the TRCSL Financial Research Grant Competition for their project proposal titled "Blockchain-enabled RF Radiation Exposure Level Measurements in Wireless Mobile Networks" in 2023. Dr. Geeth Priyankara, and Dr. Chatura Senaviratne of the Department of EIE, and Dr. Madushanka Liyanage from University College Dublin, Ireland are the members of the research team. Three final-year undergraduate students, R.W.P.K.T.D. Thalgahagoda, A.A.P.I. Gunathilake, and D.M.K.N.V. Madawalage from the Department of EIE joined the research team.



This achievement marks the fourth consecutive year that the Department of EIE won the TRCSL financial grant for a research project. This research aims to identify areas and time frames where harmful RF radiation is deployed using state-of-the-art blockchain technology.

## Academic Staff

### Dean: Faculty of Technology

Prof. P. K. S. C. Jayasinghe of the Department of Information & Communication Technology was appointed as the Dean of the Faculty of Technology (FoT), University of Ruhuna, and he assumed duties as the Dean of the FoT on 13<sup>th</sup> Feb 2023.

This occasion was graced by Prof. E.P.S.Chandana, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Ruhuna, Dr. K.G.S.H.Gunawardena, Former Dean of the Faculty of Technology & other invited senior academic staff members of Faculty of Agriculture & other faculties. All the academic staff members & non-Academic staff members of the Faculty of Technology also participated in this occasion.



### Dean: Faculty of Management and Finance

The University of Ruhuna recently witnessed the Assumption of Duties by Prof. Manjula K. Wanniarachchige as the Dean of the Faculty of Management and Finance. The event was held at the New Boardroom of the Faculty on 01<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The occasion was graced by the Senior Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, the Vice-Chancellor of University of Ruhuna, Prof. E. P. S. Chandana, the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof. P.A.P. Samantha Kumara, former dean of the Faculty of Management and Finance, the registrar, heads of the departments, academic staff, academic supportive staff, and non-academic staff members.

The event commenced with the welcome speech by Dr. Tharaka Wijesundara, followed by the acceptance speech of new dean, Prof. Manjula K. Wanniarachchige expressing his gratitude for the opportunity to serve as the Dean of the Faculty of MMF and pledged to work tirelessly to uphold the academic standards of the faculty. Then, Professor E.P. S. Chandana, the Deputy Vice Chancellor addressed the audience. Senior Professor Sujeewa Amarasena, the Vice Chancellor congratulated the new Dean and expressed his confidence in his leadership abilities. The event concluded with the vote of thanks by Mrs. M.S. Nananyakkara.



### New Recruitments

Dr. W P P Kumara: Senior Lecturer (Grade II). Department of Electrical & Information Engineering. Faculty of Engineering.

Dr. P R D Weerasooriya, Senior Lecturer (Grade II). Department of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering Faculty of Engineering.

### Promotions

#### Senior Professors

Prof. Sampath Gunawardena. Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine

Prof. M.D. Hettiarachchi, Nuclear Medicine Unit, Faculty of Medicine.

#### Professors

Dr. (Mrs). Peiris H.H. Department of Medical Laboratory Sciences. Faculty of Medicine.

Dr. Jayasinghe P.K.S.C. Department of Information & Communication Technology Faculty of Technology

Dr. Wanniarachchige M.K. Department of Finance, Faculty of Management & Finance

Dr. Wickramarathna K.A.C. Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine

#### Senior Lecturer (Grade-I)

Dr. (Mrs). Subasinghe H.W.A.S. Department of Pharmacy Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

Dr. U.G.A.M.K.S.S. Atapaththu. Department of Limnology and Water Technology, Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology.

# Non Academic Staff

## Promotions

### Staff Technical Officer Grade I

Mrs. K.N. Palahepitiya Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine Staff

Mr. M.M.S. Ranasinghe, Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Science

### Staff Technical Officer (Grade II Segment A)

Mr. M.S. Manamperi, Dean's Office Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology

### Senior Staff Management Assistant

Mr. P.P. Ilamperuma Arachchi Division of General Administration

Mrs. J. Thamara, Department of Sinhala

Mr. G.K. Prasantha, Non-Academic Establishment Division

Mrs. G.U. Nagoda, Finance Division Faculty of Agriculture

Mrs. R.C.D. Jayathri, Department of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering

Mr. D.L.B.P. Suraweera, Department of Pathology

Mrs. U.K.S. Irangi, Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering

Mr. A.T.D. Munaweera, Maintenance Division

Mrs. R.K. Welahetti, Department of Accountancy

Mrs. R.G.L. Roshani, Dean's office Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology

### Staff Management Assistant

Mr. H.P.J. Kapila Kumara, Department of Management & Entrepreneurship

### Management Assistant Grade I

Mr. K.A.T.N. Wijenayake, Account Division

Mr. J.H. Ajith Manjula, Department of Sociology

Mrs. H.M.N.S. Kumari, Dean's office, Faculty of Management and Finance

### Management Assistant Grade II

Mrs. N.K.C.R.S. De Silva, Non-Academic Establish-

ment Division

### Senior Staff Management Assistant (Store Keeper)

Mr. J.P.Y. Buddhika, Faculty of Engineering

### Staff Management Assistant (Shroff)

Mr. N.K. Hewage, Payment Division

Mr. A.G. Amal Shantha Kumara, Faculty of Medicine

### Senior Staff Assistant (Library Service)

Mr. U.L. Indika, Faculty of Medicine

Mrs. B.W.D. Pathirana, Main Library

Mr. S. Jayananda, Faculty of Engineering

Staff Assistant (Library Service)

Mrs. M.P. Nilanthi, Faculty of Engineering

### Library Attendant (Grade I)

Mrs. N.P. Pramila, Main Library

### Lab Attendant (Supra Grade)

Mr. N.K.M.NNanayakkara Dean's office, Faculty of Engineering

Mr. A.K.J. Prabath Kumara, Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture

### Lab Attendant (Grade II)

Mr. K.V.P. Ruwan Kumara, Department of Medical Laboratory Science

Health Attendant (Special Grade), Mrs. S.A.M. Abayawardhana Medical Centre

## 30<sup>th</sup> Convocation: University of Ruhuna

The 30<sup>th</sup> Convocation of the University of Ruhuna will be held at the Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Auditorium of the University of Ruhuna on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2023



The Faculty of Technology (FoT), University of Ruhuna is planning to launch its 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference under the theme of “Technological Transformation: Navigating Innovations and Trends”. This Symposium is intended to create a platform for students, university staff, industry personnel and other relevant stakeholders to share their research findings and experiences. The conference will consist of technical sessions on Science and Agriculture, Engineering and Technology, Computer Science and Management and entrepreneurship. There will be a showcase to exhibit invention and innovation of Engineering Technology undergraduates of the FoT.

## Acknowledgment:

Prof. E.P.S. Chandana, the Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University, is greatly acknowledged for his continuous guidance & encouragement. Dr. S.G.S. Samaraweera, Head of the Department of English Language Teaching, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences is acknowledged for language editing, while the Directors, Coordinators and Administrative Officers who provided information relevant to their Centers, Units and Divisions are also acknowledged.

## Editorial Board

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