



Newsletter

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF SRI LANKA

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National Observance of the 80th United Nations Day - 2025

United Nations Association of Sri Lanka conducted the National Observance of the 80th United Nations Day at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute on 25th October 2025.



The Chief Guest was Hon. Dr. Rizvie Salih, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka.

Main Sponsor was by of Mr. S. Kumarendiran JPWI Chairman - YASHI Holding Private Limited, Rev. Matheesan, Chandrasiri Distributers, Aitken Spence Maritime LTD, and Amāna Bank gave the support to make this event a success.

A special appreciation to all Digital and Print media is extended from the Exco of the UNASL for a wonderful job done in covering the event.

The function commenced with the National Anthem. Around 350 participants from all walks of life participated. The special invitees and dignitaries present appreciated the work of the Association throughout the year. Welcome address was made by the President of UNASL Mr. Mohamed Zawahir.



The keynote address was delivered by a student of Visakha Vidyalaya, Colombo The Best Speaker Minuri Bandara (English Medium), and Second Place, T. G.



At the request of the Executive committee UNASL, members of the Diplomatic Corps, UN Representatives, Members of United Nations Association of Sri Lanka, Teachers and students from many study circles of United Nations Association of Sri Lanka, around the country, and other distinguished guest also participated.

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Vinuja Nethmin (Sinhala Medium), They were the winners of the Annual Speech Contest conducted by the United Nations Association.

“Sustainable Development Goal 4 – Quality Education” which was the United Nation theme for the year 2025. Cultural items were presented by Sri Lanka Army Dancing Troupe with Visakha Vidyalaya Presenting Singing Item.



Southlands College, Galle won the Trophy, Cash Prizes as the Best Study Circle of the school and Best Teacher In – Charge of the 2024 / 2025 year.

Awards were also distributed for the Best Teacher in Charge of the Study Circle 2024 / 2025, Best Study Circle 2024/2025, Winner and Runner-up of the Speech



Competition, General Knowledge and Essay Writing Competition. They were presented with awards, certificates and cash prizes.



On behalf of United Nations Association of Sri Lanka, the staff of Sri Lanka Foundation Institute, we sincerely thank for all the arrangements and assistance provided to make this event a success. The Vice Chairman Dr. Sarath Samarage delivered the vote of thanks. Executive President Mohamed Zawahir ceremoniously handed over the copy of the 2025 Annual 75th Anniversary of the Sri Lanka Association of the United Nations to the Chief Guest, Hon. Dr. Rizvi Salih, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka.



**Written by: Mr. Dharmadasa Vitharanage
Executive Chairman & Assistant
Treasure of the UNASL**

Food for THOUGHT Services

PLASTICS – The Good Bad and the Ugly

Plastics, Plastics, Plastics ...

Everywhere but not a square foot of land to stand on, no water body to dip into or drink a few drops of unpolluted water. No forest, no mountain or any other space that escaped the plastic menace.

Plastic have become the most ubiquitous man-made material on earth and also the most commonly used for multitude of purposes and certainly become the “Cannot Do Without” material. Plastics are GOOD, BAD AND UGLY.

Approximately 400 million tons of plastics is produced annually the basic raw material being the residue of the Oil Refining Industry. Some of the basic products used in the Plastic Industry are Polyethylene, Polyurethane, Nylon which are further treated physically and chemically to such the final products.

The Good about plastics is that it could be used for multitude of purposes in many sectors – Food, Clothing, Shelter, Water, Agriculture, Medicine and Surgery Industrial and others.

Food and agriculture

Plastic materials play a major role from food production to the dining table. Fertilizer and Pesticides used in agriculture come in plastic containers, the harvest is packed and transported in plastic bags or boxes. Most food items.

Food Grains, Legumes, Vegetables, Fruits, partly prepared and Cooked Food items are all packed in polythene or similar packing material. When one walks into a market, most items are packed in plastic coverages and these items such in soap are placed in yet another plastic bag and the entire collection of goods purchased is put into a large bag and perhaps a second bag to support the weight. Food served at take away and in aircraft are all packed in plastic containers.

Water

Plastic containers of many sizes are used to store water -
- Large. Plastic Tanks for water harvesting at community level, Container of many sizes to suit the needs at family level, plastic water jars for festivals, mass rallies, sporting events, public toilets and bathing places small plastic bottles for individuals. Domestic water tanks, pipes and accessories for water carriage dram of system are all made of plastics.

Shelter

Recycled plastic in the form of hard blocks are used to construct cheap houses for holiday homes, temporary refugee camps and for the needly accessories such as dowse and windows, water supply and sewage pipes are all available for such needs.

Domestic needs such as those needed for food preparations food serving and dining are all available to the house holders.

Medical Services

Most medical and surgical appliances are made of synthetic materials and some of these are used only once: eliminating the need for costly and time-consuming sterling procedures.

Plastic drip sets, tubing containers for drugs and appliance and many other utensils are packed in plastics. Disposable syringes of all sizes and made of plastic. Specially made of plastics. Specially made plastic devices are used in replacement of body parts surgery and many devices are used in replacement of body parts surgery and many devices inserted into the body in surgery.

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Industry

Durable light weight plastics are used widely in automobiles to make vehicles lights and the re by improve fuel.

Consumption

In transportation and manufacturing industries in order to reduce weight and hence the transport costs.

BAD – an easy to remember guidelines (Slogan) for this use of plastics in

- i. Reduce the use refuse to use
- ii. Reuse
- iii. Recycle

However, the use of plastics has not diminished even though some community and some countries have adhered to the above guidelines. In the year 2024 approximately 400 million toes of plastic have been rolldown and marketed. Only about a quarter of this quantity being recycled.

One hardly ever sees an individual rejecting or refusing a plastic bag or plastic spoon or a jug is all given with an item in order to market a product many rural industries processing packing bags, boxes etc. out of natural raw materials such as straw, reed and temp, banana three leave dosed down, due to the availability of plastics, causing rural unemployment.

Massive amount of plastics is accumulating in the Environment in the soil, degrading for agriculture in the water ways, takes and in the oceans Burning of plastics produces highly toxic substances such as Dioxin and Furan which are injurious to health plastic vapor itself is cancer causing.

Approximately 200 million form of plastic waste is popping up and down in the oceans. One of the biggest collections of plastic is called the great plastic garbage patch in the ocean adjacent to the so-called rightly developed USA at is estimated that 1.89 trillion pieces of plastics which include used razors tooth brushes, ball

point pens, empty water bottles, containers of all sort – shampoos hair cream containers etc. float in the oceans.

Advantages and Disadvantage

Massive scale production, marketing and sale of many wanted and glut of unwanted consumer goods most of these packed in plastic bags and containers ultimately reach the consumer.

One sees no continuity with the 3 Rs. Reduce, reuse and recycling. All of many homes even among the literate and developed community, breathing tea in plastic jugs, consuming food in cheap plastic utensils are common occurrences.

The fact that nuclear explosions can be devastating and kill millions in a fur's moments in common knowledge that the same could happen is the human race due to the slow damage done by plastic is not intelligible to the average individual. The plastic bits and pieces break up into micro plastics.

The microplastic will further break down into narrow plastics causing much damage to the plant and animal cells. The interference with the internal equilibria may well lead to genetic changes and break the immunity systems of plastic and animals. Human mothers may deliver NON-HUMAN BABIES and such ether unearthly happening's may be common in the future.

This "BIO-CATASTROPHY" is not far away – May be few decades from now or sooner the results would be more devastating then nuclear explosions. However, a ray of hope for humanity could well be the production enzymes by micro organic which digest the plastics convent them to innocuous substances' Neither the intelligent man non the heavens have failed to meet the challenge of plastics.

Written by: Dr. G. P. P. Silva
Honorary Member
UNASL

200 Preschool Teachers in Galle Receive Free English Diploma Course



This program was initiated based on the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4) of the United Nations: the right to quality education. The course aims to enhance the English language proficiency of preschool teachers and provide them with special training on understanding children's minds and delivering effective education.

The program was led by Dr. Madhavi Bandara, Senior Executive Director of the Institute of Professional Studies and Skills Development Sri Lanka and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka. During the session, participating preschool teachers received specialized training on understanding children's psychology and providing them with appropriate education.

Furthermore, Mr. M.M. Zawahir, President of the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka, conducted a special training session on positive thinking for the teachers.

The event was attended by President Mr. M.M. Zawahir, Secretary-General Dr. M.M.M. Rushanudeen, Executive Chairman Mr. Dharmadasa Vitharanage, Vice Chairman Mr. Ravi Nagaraj, and Assistant Secretaries-General's Dr. Chrisantha Dissanayake, Dr. Madhavi



Bandara and Ms. Panchali Ratnayake, all directors of the Executive Board of the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka. Also present were UNASL members Mr. Dhammika Sisira Kumara, Mr. Sujeewa Nuwan, Mr. Asindu Induwara and along with course instructors from the Institute of Professional Studies and Skills Development Sri Lanka, Ms. G. Chandrani, Mr. Vihaga Deshapriya and Mr. Hemantha Vitharana.

Writing By: Dr. Madhavi Bandara
Assistant Secretary General
UNASL



The United Nations Association of Sri Lanka (UNASL) and the Institute of Professional Studies and Skills Development Sri Lanka (IPSSD) jointly launched a free English Diploma Course for 200 preschool teachers in the Galle District today (June 22) at Sussex International College, Galle.

United Nations Association of Sri Lanka Hosts Successful 5th National Executive Committee Annual Conference



The United Nations Association of Sri Lanka (UNASL) held its 5th National Executive Committee Conference on Sunday, 27th July 2025, at Waters Edge, Battaramulla, bringing together esteemed members, youth representatives, and national thought leaders to reflect on the Association’s legacy and chart a collaborative course towards a sustainable future. Mr. M.M. Zawahir, President of UNASL, delivered the Welcome Address, setting the tone for the day’s proceedings. He was followed by Mr. Dharmadasa Vitharana, Executive Chairman, who took participants “Down Memory Lane” with a compelling account of UNASL’s rich history and its contributions to Sri Lanka’s development through global engagement. A session on volunteerism and leadership experiences was presented by Dr. M.M.M. Rushanudeen, Secretary-General of UNASL.

The morning keynote on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), titled “A Common Agenda, A Shared Responsibility: Bridging Generations to Localize Global Goals in Sri Lanka,” was delivered by Mr. Ashan Perera, Founder of The Road to Rights and recipient of the United Nations SDG Action Award 2018. His address

emphasized intergenerational responsibility and collective action for sustainable development. The role of the United Nations and the critical contribution of national UN Associations was articulated by Prof. Rohan Fernando, Chairman of the National Science and Technology Commission and Senior Professor in Geology at the Open University of Sri Lanka.

The Chief Guest, Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage, delivered a keynote address reflecting on multilateral cooperation and Sri Lanka’s engagement with the UN. Further insights into the current and future direction of the Association were shared by President M.M. Zawahir, followed by a dynamic session titled “Youth in Action and The Way Forward,” led by the UNASL Youth Members, showcasing the vibrancy and potential of youth-led initiatives. The afternoon saw the launch of a fundraising project featuring the unveiling of the official UNASL T-shirt, a symbolic step to bolster public awareness and resource mobilization and Token Appreciation Presentation.

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Two key governance meetings followed:

- 3rd National Executive Committee Meeting (2025/26)
- Special General Meeting (2025/26)

The event concluded with a Vote of Thanks delivered by Dr. Sarath Samarage, Vice Chairman of UNASL, who acknowledged the contributions of all members, partners, and stakeholders in making the conference a resounding success. The UNASL remains committed to advancing the values of the United Nations in Sri Lanka through advocacy, education, and action. This annual gathering reinforced the Association’s vision to empower communities, engage youth, and promote sustainable development across generations.

A Token of Appreciation was presented to Chief Guest, Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage, Guest Speakers Prof. Rohan Fernando, Mr. Ashan Perera, Mr. S. Kumarendiram – Chairman Yashi Holdings Private Limited Colombo, Mr. Buddika Perera Father Rev. M. Matheesan, of Jaffna, Mrs. Fathima NAZRA Rushanudeen Mohamed Nizar, Mr. Chaminda Perera Editor – News Daily News National Paper Lake House, President Mr. M. M. Zawahir, Executive Chairman Mr. Dharmadasa Vitharanage, Secretary-General Dr. M. M. M.

Rushanudeen dedicated his daughter Miss. Nabeeha Rushanudeen, Treasurer Mr. Kumudu Weerasinghe, Editor Mrs. Shiyama Wijekulasuriya, Mrs. Chandani Kusumalatha Vitharanage, ASG Mrs. Panchali Rathnayake VC Dr. Ravi Nagaraja, Dr. Sarath Samaraghe, ASG Dr. Madavi Bandara, ASG Dr. Krishantha Dissanayake.

This 5th National Executive Committee Conference, 3rd Exco & Special General Meetings was Sponsored by : Honorary Exco Member S. Kumarendiram Chairman-Yashi Holdings Private Limited, Buddhika Perera, Father Rev. M. Matheesan (Gold Sponsors) M. S. M. Mafraz (Bronze Sponsor) I. M. Ijilan, M. S. M. Saleem, A. A. Azeez, Dr. Jayaruwan Bandara, M .H. M. Ibrahim, Lalith Peris, M. H. M. Abdeen (General Sponsors) all Special Life / Life Members of United Nations Association of Sri Lanka affiliated to with The World Federation United Nations Associations WFUNA.

**Written by: Dr. M. M. M. Rushanudeen
Secretary - General
UNASL**

Welcome Our New Members 2025 07 01 to 2025 12 31

Special Life Members

Farther Rev. Manmatharajan Matheesan	– 2151 SL
Mr. Sinhara Yasiru Tishan Silva	– 2154 SL

Life Members

Ms. Chamila Gayani Samarathunaga	- 2150 L
Ms. P. A. Sakura Wasanthi Panditharathna	– 2152 L
Ms. B. Niluka Madhuwanthi	– 2153 L
Mr. I. D. Mahinda Palliarachchi	– 2155 L
Mr. K. A. D. Leon Marcillino Chester Pieris	- 2156 L
Mr. Karunathilaka Arachilage Sagara	– 2157 L
Ms. Inoka Sajeewani Karunathilaka Asachchi	– 2158 L
Mr. Gukanathan Sriram	- 2159 L
Mr. Pulenthiran Nimalaraj	- 2160 L
Mr. Karthigesan Sacheekatan	- 2161 L
Ms. Uthayaraj Vasuki	- 2162 L
Mr. Nadimuttu Sivakumar Dayanandan	- 2163 L



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