

NAAL NEWS

Netherlands Alumni Association of Lanka Newsletter



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- Feedback form members
- Celebrating 50 years of NAAL
- Leisure activities

My Dear Friends,

I hope and wish that you all are safe and secure.

It is natural that we feel sad when we lose our family members. It is with great sorrow I state that we have lost one of our active NAAL family members - Prominent Architect / Town Planner, Mr Thilina Kiringoda. While wishing him the "Supreme Bliss of Nibhana", we sincerely express our heartfelt condolences to his wife Champika, two children, and all family members.

I wish to thank all members who has sent messages of appreciations and feedback on publishing and sharing the monthly newsletter. It is your contributions which helps to blossom the newsletter and I really value your inputs. Please keep going!

Remember, we still have to live with the pandemic situation and need to be careful when moving around.

Take care!

For any comments, suggestions please reach me by email lintonfernando@ymail.com or by phone 0712306999

Cheers!

Linton Fernando
The Editor, NAAL

CHOOSE:

- FAMILY OVER FORTUNES.
- FRIENDS OVER FAME.
- LOVE OVER HATE.
- SUPPORT OVER BETRAYAL.
- HAPPINESS OVER STATUS QUOTA.

#ENTREVISION

Important links for NAAL members and others

Here are some important links to join and experience NAAL, The Netherlands Embassy in Sri Lanka and NUFFIC.

NAAL website: www.naal.lk - Know more about NAAL, download the application and be a member, refer previous newsletters

NAAL FB page (new): <https://www.facebook.com/NAALSriLanka> - Please visit, join, share your views and be friends

The Netherlands Embassy in Sri Lanka FB page: Join, like and be a friend!
<https://www.facebook.com/NLambassadeColombo>

NUFFIC FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/NufficNL> - See and explore opportunities you have in The Netherlands for education and building networks among Alumni,

NUFFIC Website: <https://www.nuffic.nl/en> - Connect with your peers, grab opportunities, enjoy benefits

Go through these links and be updated with what is happening and share among your networks. The Netherlands Embassy in Sri Lanka treat NAAL members as "Active ambassadors of the Netherlands". Similarly potential NAAL members can be the "Active Ambassadors of Sri Lanka in the Netherlands"

LIVE WEBINAR SERIES

FREE Towards self-sufficient dairy industry in Sri Lanka

Offered by Sri Lanka Dutch Dairy Solutions (SDDS) with the support from Dutch technical experts

The overall aim of the webinar series is to support Covid 19 affected Sri Lankan dairy sector with Dutch knowledge and technical knowhow

Link for more details
<https://www.facebook.com/NLambassadeColombo/photos/a.664777483535053/3756220311057406/>

Here are few links to useful events conducted by The Netherlands Embassy in Sri Lanka. The link is available in the FB page of the embassy and also its given above.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS:

Water and Energy for Food – innovators in Sri Lanka wanted!

Water and Energy for Food (WE4F) is looking for innovators working on local, sustainable, and innovative solutions for challenges in the water, energy, and agriculture sectors in Sri Lanka.

For more information visit:

https://innovations.smapply.io/.../we4f_sse_asia_rih.../ & Home - Water and Energy for Food Grand Challenge (we4f.org)

Deadline to submit your proposal is December 15, 2020 at 5:00 PM GMT+7

[#zerohunger](https://www.instagram.com/zerohunger)

DAY OF THE ENTREPRENEUR

Every third Friday of November, we celebrate the Day of the Entrepreneur in the Netherlands. On this day, we thank every Dutch entrepreneur – in the Netherlands and abroad – for their courage and perseverance. Today, the Embassy acknowledges the hard work of Dutch entrepreneurs with their local counterparts in Sri Lanka to continue business operations and foster economic development for all in this challenging COVID year! We all hope next year will be easier; the Embassy of course remains available to support responsible business development.

Source: FB Page of The Netherlands Embassy in Sri Lanka



NAAL – 50 YEARS Memories

My Trip To The Netherlands – 50 years ago!

BY G. E. M. Gomez - A NAAL member from the inception (past 50 years)



In 1969, While I was working at the Irrigation Department of Sri Lanka, I was offered a UNESCO Sponsored fellowship to proceed to the Netherlands to follow a Diploma course at the The University of Technological Studies, at No.95, Oude Delft, The Netherlands. There was another engineer named Mr Kanagalingam who joined with me and we both planned the trip.

NUFFIC coordinated our affairs and Ms Blom was the lady who assisted us. We took the chance and jointly wrote her requesting her to kindly look out for a 1 room apartment with basic cooking facilities, 2 beds, 2 tables and other necessary facilities and also at a reasonable walking distance from 95, Oude Delft. We knew this was a "Tall Order" but we tried our luck

During the flight, our first stop was Rome where we spent 2 days enjoying the splendor of this great city. Our next halt was Heathrow, London where we both had relatives. After another 3-day stay, we flew to Schiphol. We checked in to a hotel in The Hague where NUFFIC was located. The next day we proceeded to NUFFIC and found many participants from all over the world reporting like us to register for their respective courses. The most important of all for us was to receive our living allowance, which was a tidy sum, compared to the meager allowance we got for travel from Sri Lanka.

When we met Ms Blom, she mentioned that we were the only persons who write to her and mentioned that she had found the ideal place for us down Leewenhoekshingal which is close to Oude Delft. Our future landlord showed us the room and instantly we liked it. Later we went to the town primarily to have some lunch and purchased items we will need to settle down. There was an Indonesian Supermarket called "Tokorami" which catered to all our Sri Lankan needs.

We went through a grueling course in Engineering Hydrology (myself) and Engineering Hydraulics (Kanags). The varied subjects kept us tied down to our work which consisted of lectures, exercises for each subject and occasional field

visits. Fortunately, my roommate was a master cook who produced some wonderful Sri Lankan meals. However, I too had to do my share as well. I can boldly say that the meat products available in Delft were of superior quality and really satisfied our taste buds. After covering our studies during week days, we never failed to relax a bit on Sundays which included few rounds of beer or something stronger to keep our spirits up!

All Sri Lankan Participants did not fail to take the opportunity for to meet during our local holidays like, Christmas, Independence Day, Sinhala and Tamil New Year, Easter etc. On Sundays I had the opportunity to meet A Dutch Family who invited me and Kanags to their home to spend an hour or two drinking beer and exchanging views about Sri Lanka and Holland. This was indeed a good diversion for us, since we were mixing with a different culture.

In April 1970, we were given a seven-day vacation during the Easter Period. We did a mini tour of Europe, which included Hamburg in Germany. We spent 2 days there including a "naughty night" in St. Pauli. We then crossed over to Denmark via Puttgarden. It was a memorable short voyage which included enjoying Duty Free Scotch in the upper deck. We stayed in Copenhagen for 2 or 3 days. Thereafter we proceeded to Antwerp in Belgium and returned to Delft.

The next 5 months the course was smooth without much pressure until our finals in late August and early September. We had to answer written papers and face an interview. At the awarding ceremony I was informed that I had completed my Diploma with Distinction together with an endorsement in Ground Water Recovery.

So we are now in 2020 which is also 50 years after obtaining my Diploma and is also the Golden Jubilee of NAAL. I take this opportunity to offer my best wishes all NAAL members, the Presidents and the members of Executive Committees of NAAL. Their hard work kept the NAAL Flag flying much to the satisfaction of the stakeholders.

Thank you Mr Gomez for sharing your experiences! - The Editor

The Present President of NAAL, the uncontested president for the last 18 years, Mr S P C Kumarasinghe, has more memories on some of the projects and he kindly obliged to share his experiences to add a glamour on the 50-year celebrations;

Restoration of Dutch Period Building

In 1974 the side wall of the former Dutch Orphanage (Later old Post Office) at the Prince Street in Pettah collapsed. The restoration committee requested Drs. Evert Jongens to raise funds for the restoration. For this purpose, Drs. Jongens founded the Stichting Nederlands –Sri Lanka in 1976 in the Netherlands (Foundation Ned- Sri Lanka). After a successful fund raising the building was repaired and Dutch Period Museum (DPM) was opened in this building by the then President of Sri Lanka in 1982. The Netherlands Alumni Association of Lanka (NAAL) who took a leading role in restoration was allocated a special room for their office. So the Dutch visitors to DPM could meet Dutch Alumni at the NAAL office.

....continued on the next page





Galle –Velson Twining Program

Ships of Dutch East India Company (VOC) sailed from the Ijmuiden harbor in “Velserbroek during the VOC operations to far East by the VOC. Later they started digging a canal connecting Ijmuiden in North Sea to Amsterdam harbor in 1876. The Velsen Municipality had plans for celebrating 100 years of building this canal in 1976. Dr. Jongens was a citizen of Velsen and proposed to initiate a twinning program with the City of Galle in Sri Lanka where the Dutch ships anchored, with the city of Velsen in the Netherlands. The Velsen Municipality formed the organization, “Velsen helps Galle” to coordinate at their end and in Sri Lanka, NAAL was appointed as the coordinator.

Contributing to Infrastructure Development and Service delivery

Galle is more loved by Dutch visitors due to historical monuments specially the Dutch Fort. With the Galle - Velsen twining program Galle Municipality was most benefited as more projects assisted by Velsen to develop the service delivery systems of the Municipality with infrastructure and equipment.

The Netherlands Municipalities Federation (VNG)

A Project Manager from VNG Mr. Jaap Breugem met NAAL president in Velsen to discuss and plan to visit Sri Lanka to do an assessment of post Tsunami devastation in Sri Lanka. They visited Hambantota with Urban Development Authority (UDA) officials. The Hambantota super market building was nearing completion when Tsunami wave came destroying Hambantota township. Upon NAAL’s request, VNG agreed and sent the required funds of nearly Rs 44 million to NAAL to pay UDA and when the repair works completed, NAAL handed over the completed Supermarket building to the Hambantota Town Council.

Expressing gratitude to an unforgettable friend... Archt. Thilina Kiringoda



Kiringoda and I joined the NAAL together in the year 1997. Immediately afterwards we got our very first invitation from NAAL to participate at the AGM to be held in a star class hotel just passing Negombo. The invitation also said that lunch will be provided and that the hotel had the longest swimming pool in Asia. Taking a clue from there we prepared our swim wear and since we did not know anything about NAAL, we also hid a bottle of spirits in our travelling bag. When we went to the location the event was totally different to what we thought it would be. Everyone was having a glass in hand, vine for ladies, bites for all etc. Being newcomers we felt very relaxed, placed our bottle which was hidden in our bag on the table and joined the rest. After a couple of shots, when the older members started a sing-song, Kiringoda became the outstanding performer in that gathering, which position he maintained till our last NAAL events where he participated. With this performance both Kiringoda and I got elected to the NAAL executive committee and continued till the last years, till Kiringoda became the President of OPA.

Thilina Priya Kiringoda is a batch mate of mine from the University of Moratuwa. At the University everyone called him Kira. We met for the first time when we entered the University in the year 1978 to study Architecture. He obtained a Masters Degree in Architecture from University of

Moratuwa. Apart from being a batch mate he was a very good friend of mine too. He was from Galle. With other batch mates we have spent numerous nights in Kiringoda's lovely house in Galle. There are very many stories of those gatherings which I am not going to record now.

Both of us after roaming in different work places joined the UDA and spent long years working together. By then Kira was a Chartered Architect, Chartered Town Planner, Chartered Environmentalist and an expert on Archeology. At UDA Kiringoda rose to the post of a Director UDA. While in the UDA we were fortunate to win scholarships to study in the Netherlands during the same period. Kiringoda in Enskade a few yards from Germany and me in Rotterdam. This was the time of opening up of country borders in Europe. Walking to Germany and coming back became a usual habit for Kira. But, one day we went to Enskade to visit Kira and how he took us, me and my family to Germany and what happened is a story which Kira promised to write to our NAAL newsletter for amusement, at the invitation of the editor Linton. I think this was the only task Kira promised to NAAL and could not fulfill.

For all of us at NAAL Kira's sudden demise is an irreparable loss. He was a true friend to us, a profound educator a very lively entertainer and for the NAAL President Kiringoda was the stimulator for most NAAL Presidents speeches. With all our blessings may he attain the supreme bliss of nibbana.

On behalf of NAAL I will take this opportunity to express our heartfelt condolences to his beloved wife Champika, two children Usuru and Kimuthu and other family members.



Yes, we all are undergoing a difficult period with the spread of COVID 19. We have our responsibilities to be safe and also to make others safe. We have to be creative and innovative in facing the new situation in life. Cheers!



An Appreciation form NUFFIC;

Thank you very much for your newsletter. 50 years already, that really is very special!

Will you share the newsletter via the country community as well?

Thank you in advance and we are looking forward to read about your activities on the Holland Alumni platform!

Regards

Laila Vittali

Sr. Programme Manager Alumni

Nuffic | Student mobility and international talent retention higher education

NOTE: NUFFIC conducted an international webinar on Holland Alumni Associations & Activities during which a six minute presentation on NAAL was done by the Editor Linton Fernando. NAAL was the most senior association among them and its activities were highly appreciated by the participants. The link for the recording will be shared in the future. Please login to <https://www.nuffic.nl/> for more information on their programs

A joke....

A man is talking to god;

The man: "God how long is a million years to you?"

God: "To me, it's about a minute"

The Man: "god how much is a million dollars?"

God: "To me, it's a penny"

The man: "god, May I have a Penny?"

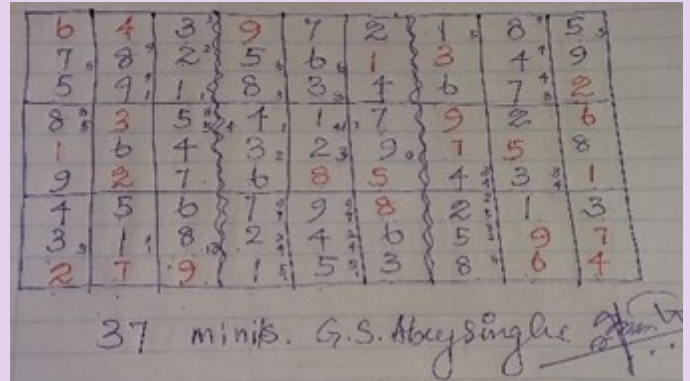
God: "Wait a minute"



• **Work out a SUDOKU puzzle ! No 2**
Please send your solution and the time taken.

						1		8
						3		
7					9			
			6					
			3	1				
5							2	
		8	5				4	
	1	3						
	6				2			

Solution: Sudoku No 1 - Sent by Mr G S Abeysinghe Only 37 minutes - Congratulations Gamini!



Some feedback form the recipients of the Newsletter

- Thank you for your continuing commitment. Keep the good work going. Best regards , Thamara
- Many thanks for your excellent work on the NAAL news letter. Better to make arrangements to send NAAL members. Munasinghe
- Thanks Linton for your commitment. How are you both sending this to other members? We need to send this also to the Embassy and to NUFFIC, Kum, I hope like last time Linton will try to send it all other members too. Stay safe, Cheers, Sarath
- Thank you. Please keep us informed of the 50th anniversary activities. I'm glad to join in. C K Premasiri
- Excellent job, appreciate, Sunil
- The ADB funded assignment, which I am working with now, will be over on 20th November 2020. Will right an account of my life in NL and of achievements thereafter. Kirin (**His final communication with me - sent few days before his sudden demise.**)
- Thank you very much. We are doing fine, but only work from home as far as we can on Zoom contact. We hope we have better times soon. Please stay safe. Lalith Hettiarachchi
- Thanks for the informative news letter. Regards, Devsriyani
- Thanks Linton. Very interesting. The proposals are fine. Hope we have funds to cover up expenses. Covid had kept you busy, S Kanendran
- Thanks Sir, N Bambaravanage

- Thank you dear Friends.... you are the livewire. The Editor

Published by the Netherland Alumni Association of Lanka for circulation among the members and well wishers. For any comments and /or feedback please contact the Editor on email lintonfernando@gmail.com

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