

# NAAL NEWS

Netherlands Alumni Association of Lanka Newsletter



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*My Dear Friends,*

*At a time when all of us are faced with the COVID 19 threat again, it is very important to be positive and also to be alert on activities we are engaged in. Nevertheless, we can't neglect the requirements of the country, society and individually ourselves in relation to social, physical and mental wellbeing.*

*While wishing all of you a safe and healthy environment, I am happy that I could reach you with the latest newsletter which contains some information on the Golden Jubilee celebration of NAAL.*

*NAAL is a another family for all it's members and we all know that all these family members are hopefully waiting for the day of celebrating the success of their family. Let us act together to overcome this situation and end the restrictions for us to meet very soon! Please send your contributions to publish here.*

*For any comments, suggestions please reach me by email [lintonfernando@ymail.com](mailto:lintonfernando@ymail.com) or by phone 0712306999*

*Cheers!  
Linton Fernando  
The Editor, NAAL*

Dear NAAL Members,

Yes! We are now old. But old is Gold. This year, our 50th active year, we are creating a milestone in the history of Netherlands Alumni Associations (NAAs) in the world being the one and only association which has an unmatched record of activities.

Let us celebrate this unique situation together. We may not in a physical contactable situation due to the present COVID 19 pandemic which has opened our eyes to look at the human activities from a different angle.

At the same time, development of technology has taken us to a level that we all can get connected in different ways. The Sri Lankan "Marketing Guru" Prof. Udhitha Liyanage once said that the "Development, Networking and Fun are the key elements of an alumni association to be success". You know that NAAL has always been focusing on the networking and fun.

NAAL is now planning the following activities;

1. An E-Conference to connect members, other NAAs, Nuffic, other institutions and well wishers
2. A Newspaper supplement
3. A Half day symposium in Sri Lanka with participation of all who supported NAAL to reach this level. This will include a networking session as well
4. A coffee table book which reflects the activities of NAAL and relationship between The Netherlands and Sri Lanka as a souvenir

We will keep you informed on the dates and update you with more information on these activities in due course. We need your kind assistance to make a very successful year of meaningful celebration for all of us in NAAL family.

Stay safe, be active and creative ....

Cheers!

**INSTEAD OF WORRYING ABOUT WHAT YOU CANNOT CONTROL, SHIFT YOUR ENERGY TO WHAT YOU CAN CREATE.**



# THE NETHERLANDS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF LANKA – 50 YEARS

By Mr Sarath Jayatilaka (Vice President, NAAL 2020/21)



The Netherlands Alumni Association of Lanka (NAAL) commenced its activities with twenty-five Founder Members in 1971. Its Membership is open to all personnel who have undergone a Program of Studies in the Netherlands and today the enrolment number has passed 700. It is registered with the Registrar of Companies under the Companies Act of Sri Lanka. Today NAAL is proudly celebrating the Golden Jubilee year.

We are indeed grateful today to Late Mr. L S de Silva, the founder President and Late Mr. A. Denis N. Fernando who were the founder Convenors of this Association. If not for their vision and courage NAAL may have not achieved such distinction today. We need here also to mention the hard work done by late Mr. K S C de Fonseka who was the President for a long period of time and also late Mr. S H C de Silva who was the founder Hony. Secretary who continued in the same capacity for many years. Thereafter Mr R P Wimalasena also held the presidency and presently Mr S P C Kumarasinghe is continuing for the last 18 years. Out of the founder members we still have two members with us today after 50 years: Mr K.D. Paranawithana who has been a recipient of "Officer in the order of Oranje Nassau" granted by the Government of Netherlands and Prof Dayantha Wijesekera who was the Vice Chancellors of Moratuwa University as well the Open University. Further, the Mr S P C Kumarasinghe was also awarded with the same honors. Today we are proud of these founder and present members who have achieved high posts in public and private during their professional careers.

The respective Executive Committee members, who are/were contributing to the success of NAAL spend/spent their valuable time voluntarily and they all are/were a great strength to build up the Association to what it is today and for its sustainability.

Some of the Objectives of the NAAL are:

- to promote spirit of fellowship and co-operation among all Members
- to provide opportunities to its members to meet and exchange ideas with visiting Dutch scientists, engineers, economists, artistes, and experts
- to strengthen cultural ties between Sri Lanka and the Netherlands

Sri Lanka and The Netherlands has had bilateral relationships for over 400 years and with the Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC) being established in 1952, many international training and higher education facilities were opened up for the developing countries.

Sri Lanka was able to obtain many such fellowships in addition to fellowships granted by the Royal Netherlands Government which had proved to be extremely useful in national development. Many of these fellows today occupy high posts in Government and Private Organizations.

We are very thankful to Late Drs Evert Jongens who mooted the idea of Alumni Associations during his tenure at the NUFFIC for being the driving force behind the alumni associations in the world. Late Drs. Jongens was conferred with the National Title of 'Sri Lanka Ranjana', for the distinguished service of a highly meritorious nature rendered by him to Sri Lanka. The members of NAAL who a family of Dutch scholars are, proud today that NAAL has been recognized as the best Alumni Associations in the world.

The NAAL has made an immense contribution during the span of 50 years and Netherlands Alumni Association can be proud of what she has achieved so far. These programs were implemented by the dedicated Presidents and the Committee of Management on purely on a voluntary basis despite their normal work commitments. It may be worthwhile to indicate the major projects undertaken during the 50 years by NAAL. Here, only 50 projects are mentioned and there are many more accomplished during the period.

(Please refer the webpage <http://www.naal.lk/picture.htm> for some photographs.)

1. Improvements to the Galle Public Library
2. Donating a fire fighting vehicle to Galle Municipality
3. Purchase of a van to the elder's home in Bonavista
4. Supply milk food on monthly basis to elder's home in Bonvista
5. Providing 10 beds and mattresses and side cupboards to Bonavista Elders home
6. Donated a refrigerator for the girl's section Elders Home
7. Supply equipment for a day care center in Galle







8. Providing medicine to needed poor children at Lady Ridgeway Children's Hospital
9. Providing ventilators and repair of some equipment at Lady Ridgeway Hospital
10. Providing fellowships to under-privileged University Students
11. Providing monthly assistance to a under privilege student at Royal College
12. Organizing seminar on Roman-Dutch law
13. Providing proper facilities of storage of pharmaceuticals under low temperature in Karapitiya Teaching Hospital
14. Donating essential equipment to Cardio Thoracic High Dependency Unit at Lady Ridgeway Hospital
15. Donating Ambulances to Karapitiya Blood Bank and to Lady Ridgeway Hospital
16. Providing a liquid Oxygen storage system to Karapitiya Teaching Hospital
17. Twinning Program of a city (Velsen) with the Municipality of Galle
18. Developing the infrastructure facilities of then known as Galwalawatte and now known as Velsenpura
19. Established a community center at Velsenpura
20. Establishment of two sewing centers in Dadella and Magalle
21. Provided 700 Garbage disposal bins out of concrete to Matara Urban Council
22. 22 Pre-Schools in Galle were handed over with educational toys and other equipment
23. Provided furniture and equipment to the community center at Habaraduwa
24. Built and equipped a community center at Ethiligoda Tsunami Housing Scheme
25. Providing Water Storage tanks at Kings Girls Home in Murunkan
26. Providing beds and mattresses to the Kings Girl Home in Murunkan
27. Building 38 two stored houses at Ethiligoda for the Tsunami affected persons
28. Building 25 houses at Habaraduwa for the Tsunami affected persons
29. Providing Fishing boats to the affected Tusnami fishermen
30. Establishing two pre-schools in Waskaduwa and Katukurunda area for affected children due to Tsunami
31. Providing 4 Fog Generators to Galle Municipality for Dengue prevention program
32. Establishment of a Computer training centre and providing all the hardware required and also help them in the training
33. Music instruments were donated for the school band of the Malharus Sulhiya Central College (Muslim school)
34. Organizing painting competitions for school children on theme of Dutch-Sri Lanka relationships
35. Publishing books on the historical relationships between Sri Lanka and Netherlands
36. Provided assistance to construct four houses for poor families in Minuwangoda
37. Supporting the Skills Development Program of the Organization of Professional Association

38. Develop two sewing centers at Magalle and Dadalla in Galle with sewing machines and other equipment.
39. Recently the Magalle Sewing Centre which was damaged due to Tsunami was re-constructed
40. Supported to improve the YWCA - building at Galle
41. Constructed the Siyambalagahawatta community center
42. Supported the Dutch Reformed Church improvements
43. Fort Galle has a unique sewerage system using high tide and low tide – undertook repairs of the sewerage and drainage system
44. Supported the Maritime Museum, Galle Fort
45. Scouts Headquarters at Galle, supported several repairs
46. Vidyaloka Vidyalaya, Galle: a lathe, welding-equipment, and typewriters for training programs for school leavers.
47. Established an ICT Academy in Galle and Computer network in Town Hall Galle
48. Installation of computers on 27 schools in Galle District
49. Empowering war widows and less privileged citizens with self-employment opportunities
50. Networking and fellowship sessions for membership and their families

Now, NAAL is regarded and the only organization out of all Netherlands Alumni Associations in the world who conducts and exits with a similar and an active history.

Every year NAAL conducts at least two programs for member networking and fellowship. The Executive Committee Members meet once in every month and lead the Association with the help of a full time Administrative Secretary. NAAL has it's office inside the premises of Dutch Period Museum at 95, Prince Street, Colombo 11.

The Ambassador and representatives of The Royal Netherlands Embassy in Sri Lanka always participate in these events they classify the members of NAAL as "Real Ambassadors" for "the Netherlands" which shows the value NAAL has generated during the past and still continuing.

For further information on NAAL activities could be obtained by visiting NAAL website [www.naal.lk](http://www.naal.lk).

At this point NAAL wishes to recognize and appreciate all Present and Past Members, Present and Former Presidents, Executive Committee Members, and other Officials, Embassy Officials, NUFFIC, Other Institutions and all Well Wishers for their invaluable contributions towards the success of NAAL.

*A Note by the Editor: Thank you Sarath for the contributions. Please await for more news and pictures on NAAL activities in future newsletters!*



# The Forum (Het Forum)

In the September newsletter, some ideas for thought were shared for your inputs and discussion. Please send your thoughts on "Effectiveness of The Dutch Presence in Sri Lanka" to publish in the next edition.

Cheer up friends, This is the time for you to rethink and recover the meaning of LIFE. Here are some ways for you get involved in the process

- **Read a joke and enjoy it!**

Abe and Esther are flying to Australia for a two week vacation to celebrate their 40th anniversary. Suddenly, over the public address system, the Captain announces, "Ladies and Gentlemen, I am afraid I have some very bad news. Our engines have ceased functioning and we will attempt an emergency landing. Luckily, I see an uncharted island below us and we should be able to land on the beach. However, the odds are that we may never be rescued and will have to live on the island for the rest of our lives!"

Thanks to the skill of the flight crew, the plane lands safely on the island.

An hour later Abe turns to his wife and asks, "Esther, did we pay our \$5,000 PBS pledge check yet?" "No, sweetheart," she responds.

Abe, still shaken from the crash landing, then asks, "Esther, did we pay our American Express card yet?" "Oh, no! I'm sorry. I forgot to send the check," she says. "One last thing, Esther. Did you remember to send checks for the Visa and MasterCard this month?"

he asks. "Oh, forgive me, Abie," begged Esther. "I didn't send that one, either."

Abe grabs her and gives her the biggest kiss in 40 years.

Esther pulls away and asks him, "What was that for?"

Abe answers, "They'll find us!"

- **Work out a SUDOKU puzzle !**

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

Send the solution with time you spent on solving! We will publish the best three most efficient players.

- **Write about your life / yourself! What are you?**

- ⇒ "I am eager to learn."
- ⇒ "I am determined."
- ⇒ "I never give up until I get something right."
- ⇒ "I get on well with all kinds of people."
- ⇒ "I like to keep a positive attitude."
- ⇒ "Hard work doesn't bother me. I actually like it"
- ⇒ "I enjoy facing challenges."

**BE ACTIVE & STAY HEALTHY AT HOME!**

World Health Organization

#BeActive #HealthyAtHome

**The sudden and near-constant stream of news reports about an outbreak can cause anyone to feel worried.**

**Get the FACTS; not the rumors and misinformation. Facts can help to minimize fears.**

#Coronavirus #COVID19

World Health Organization

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