

NAAL NEWS

Netherlands Alumni Association of Lanka Newsletter



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*My Dear Friends,
I hope (and wish) that you enjoyed the holiday period and now settling down with the new normal situation.*

There is no doubt the year 2020 was a challenging year in every way. But if you look back, don't you think that we have successfully survived and looking forward to meeting new challenges in the coming year 2021?

Remember, any challenge we face sharpens our skills to face it and many more.

During the 2021 try your best to "Sharpen your competitive edge" and be ready to overcome all obstructions in life.!

I wish you all a new year 2021 filled with happiness, good health and lots of courage to focus your goals and achieve the same!

Also my prayers are with all those who are facing difficult situations and experiencing the negative effects of COVID 19. The situation has proved one this! " We can't challenge nature!". Understanding and living with it is the solution.

For any comments, inputs please contact ; lintonfernando@gmail.com or by phone 0712306999

Cheers!
Linton Fernando
The Editor, NAAL

"The best thing one can do when it's raining is to let it rain."
— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Good bye 2020

The year of challenges!

Every year we face challenges. Most of them, we continue. Some of these are intensifying political division, widening economic inequality, and climate crisis etc., to name a few. While these challenges affect everyone in every community, the fact is, they don't affect everyone equally. You know why!

The year 2020 introduced us to a new challenge - facing COVID 19 - which effects everyone equally. You still know why!!

In 2020, people around the world experienced something which they have never experienced before... Lockdown and quarantine, irrespective of a place, a person or a community, was the only solution to avoid the deadly pandemic illness.

What did it teach us? Its time to look back and understand the reality of life to adjust ourselves to face the future. The new vaccine may create a hope for an end but still not sure when it will be!

We have to come together to help each other, individually or as allies and advocate for not only our friends and community members, but for people we never meet. The time ahead is not a "new normal" but a "new" situation where most of our traditional lifestyles have to change. Therefore getting used and adjusting the situation is the best way to survive. This is what "nature" is always messaging us. Now, we like it or not, we have no choice. Live with nature's gifts!



Netherlands alumni Association of Lanka (NAAL) wishes you a very successful, peaceful, healthy and happy new year 2021!

May you be blessed with courage, strength and resources to fulfill your dreams while facing the challenges and assisting others also to achieve their goals in 2021!

NAAL President's wish!



Dear All,

It is with a great sense of pride and joy that we hope to celebrate fifty years of NAAL this year. Thank you for all your contributions to NAAL activities through the past years. We have grown closer and created new bonds with our friends from the Netherlands as a result of your active participation in NAAL activities.

I wish all NAAL Members and stakeholders a very happy new year filled with health, wealth and happiness.

S P C Kumarasinghe
President, NAAL



NAAL during 2020

Memories... at a glance!



- ⇒ A family get-together of NAAL members and their families was held on 1st March 2020 at Ramadia Ranmal Hotel in Moratuwa. Every year NAAL holds a member networking event and this year NAAL was lucky to have conducted it just before COVID 19 affected Sri Lanka.
- ⇒ The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of NAAL was held at the Auditorium of the Organization of Professional Associations on 23rd August 2020 followed by lunch. To comply with the health guidelines and restrictions imposed due to COVID 19, the AGM was restricted only for the members. Normally AGM is an outing for members, families and well wishers.
- ⇒ NAAL Executive Committee conducted their council meetings physically whenever possible and arranged online meetings also through ZOOM. NAAL had to postpone activities planned on the 50 year celebration to 2021.
- ⇒ NAAL lost Mr S G Punchiheva (former Vice President), Archt. Thilina Kiringoda (Former Secretary) during 2020 and Mr R. M. J.de Silva (member) while Mr J Paranamaana (former Vice President) and Mr P Senarath (member) during the latter part of 2019.
- ⇒ Following NAAL members were appointed to higher positions of the government;
 - Prof. W D Laxman - The Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka
 - Mr S Hettiarachchi - Secretary to the Ministry of Tourism Development
 - Ms Shyamalee Perera - The Surveyor General (The first Female to hold the post)
- ⇒ Continuation of NAAL projects;
 - Renovation of Dutch Period Museum
 - Scholarship for school children
 - Activities for 50 year Celebration
- ⇒ Said good bye to the former Ambassador of The Kingdom of the Netherlands in Sri Lanka Her Excellency Ms Joanne Doornewaard and welcomed the new Ambassador Her Excellency Ms Tanja Gonggrijp who met NAAL members during the NAAL AGM.
- ⇒ Mr Linton Fernando - The Editor, Represented NAAL and did a presentation on NAAL at the webinar held on 'Linking Knowledge and Holland Alumni' organized by NUFFIC on 1st December 2020.

The Effect of Corona as at 4th January 2021

Country	Total no of cases	Confirmed deaths (absolute)	Population (in millions)	Deaths per million (total)
Netherlands	821,164	11,517	17.33	664
Sri Lanka	44,774	211	21.8	10
World	85,520,240	1,850,941	7800	237

Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1043366/novel-coronavirus-2019ncov-cases-worldwide-by-country/>



Embassy news

Form the Royal Netherlands Embassy, Sri Lanka



SAY IT WITH FLOWERS

A colorful thank you to the Sri Lankan frontline workers. To appreciate their hard work, dedication and personal sacrifices.

Source: FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/NLambassadeColombo>

2020 was a year full of surprises and difficulties, but also of creativity and innovation. We all were constrained in our activities. But we also got opportunities to explore new pursuits. We all did our best, even though it was not easy at times! The new year is now approaching. And with the lessons learned in 2020, we will start the new year in high spirits! Of course we remain at your service in the new year. We wish everyone good health and much happiness in 2021.

Kind regards, The Netherlands Embassy team in Sri Lanka.
GELUKKIG NIEUWJAAR



Webinar by NUFFIC - Linking Knowledge and Holland Alumni

NUFFIC organized a series of Webinars and one was focused on the Netherlands alumni Activities in the World. Mr Linton Fernando, the Editor, NAAL was invited to do a presentation on NAAL and MSM Alumni Association work in Sri Lanka. Being active for the last 50 years NAAL was recognized as the oldest active Netherland Alumni association in the world. The contributions by NAAL was very much appreciated by NUFFIC as well as all other associations in the world. Answering a question raised by one of the participants on the challenges face in developing NAAL, Mr Fernando said that the biggest challenge is to get the younger generation attracted to become members and showed

Holland Alumni Network
Linking Knowledge and Holland Alumni

Ms. Laila Vittali
Sr. Programme Manager Alumni
Nuffic

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
Orange Knowledge exchange series
nuffic meet the world

Holland Alumni Associations & Activities
Webinar
Conducted by NUFFIC
1 December 15:00 - 16:30 CET

Presentation by
Linton Fernando
Sri Lanka

nuffic meet the world
DILIGENT Solutions

that NAAs have to concentrate on giving value to the young members. The full recording of the webinar is available at the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2415VUGAI0&feature=youtu.be>. Watch the event and know what NUFFIC has to offer and what are activities conducted by other Alumni Associations around the world. NUFFIC offers financial assistance to Holland Alumni Associations to develop their membership and networking activities and support knowledge enhancement programs as well. Visit www.nuffic.nl for more information. NAAL wishes to thank Ms Laila Vittati of NUFFIC for the opportunity given.



Christmas 2020

A different perspective!

Over 2.2 billion people in the world and about 1.4 million people in Sri Lanka Celebrate Christmas on 25th December and the year 2020 was no exemption. But most of them couldn't celebrate their festival as they were doing before. COVID 19 prevented them attending their usual mid night Mass / Service which remembers the birth of Jesus Christ.

At the same time, their leaders requested the Christmas celebrators to think of the real meaning of Jesus Christ's teaching which focuses on "love". This is the time everyone need love. Even others couldn't enjoy the holiday period during the end of the year.

Therefore it is very important for us to rethink, recover and rebuild our lives in consistent with nature and try to share love with everyone without any conditions like Jesus did!

Merry Christmas and happy holidays for your family and loved ones!



Some New Year Quotes

"New Year's Day now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual."

– Mark Twain

"Drop the last year into the silent limbo of the past. Let it go, for it was imperfect, and thank God that it can go."

– Brooks Atkinson

"I think in terms of the day's resolutions, not the years."

– Henry Moore

"Good resolutions are simply checks that men draw on a bank where they have no account."

– Oscar Wilde

Work out a SUDOKU puzzle !

No 3

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

Please send your solution and the time taken.

Sorry, I didn't receive any solutions for the last one No 2!

Are you interested in writing? Here are some useful tips!

1. Enrich Your Vocabulary By Reading Great Books
2. Never Stop Learning About Writing
3. Practice Writing As Much As You Can
4. Research And Give Credit Where It's Due
5. Use Online Tools To Check Your Grammar And Originality

Use this opportunity and start writing.... Write something you can and send us for publishing in the newsletter. You may start with a short story, poem or even an essay.... We have space for you.... Don't delay! Start today... nothing like trying!

Some Haiku poems

"Wealth and happiness
For every creature in world
Unique, different "

"Our dreams, thoughts and aims
Create fruitful life and hope
Though finally fails"

"Death of creation
Beginning of slavishness
Starting together"

- Maximus Linton

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