



# CCIS

## Center for Contemporary Indian Studies

### University of Colombo

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## Introduction

The Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies (CCIS) is a multidisciplinary research centre which promotes activities connected with developing knowledge in Sri Lanka on contemporary studies in India and strengthening Indo-Lanka relationship through an institutionalized network between the two countries. It was established in 2012 under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the High Commission of India in Sri Lanka and the University of Colombo. The Centre functions under the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) for academic and administrative matters and it is also linked with other faculties through its Advisory Board and Management Board.

India and Sri Lanka are connected through social, religious, linguistic, cultural, economic and strategic ties that date back several centuries. However, less importance has been placed on the study of contemporary developments and changes in India. By realizing that such research and study undertaken at Sri Lanka's seat of higher learning will play an important role in guiding and strengthening the social and economic development of the country and existing bonds of friendship between India and Sri Lanka, the Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies serves to deepen the understanding of contemporary India in Sri Lanka.

## Vision of the CCIS

To evolve and grow as an academic hub for promoting research and knowledge on contemporary India.

# Objectives

The chief function of the Centre is to provide an intellectual forum for academic staff and postgraduates working in the field of contemporary Indian studies and offer a base for research for its members in collaboration with other institutions. It hopes to nurture a new generation of interdisciplinary scholars, and to provide a forum for public dialogue among the academic, business, and foreign policy communities. Therefore, the Centre aims to serve as a focus for lectures, seminars and other research events in the field, including collaborative research projects. The CCIS welcomes links with other scholars, nationally and internationally.

## Advisory Board of the CCIS

H.E. Ashok K. Kantha	High Commissioner of India } Co-Chairs
Prof. Kshanika Hirimburegama	Vice-Chancellor }
Mr. P. Kumaran	Deputy High Commissioner –
	High Commission of India
Mr. Birender Singh Yadav	Counsellor/ High Commission of India
Dr Tudor Weerasinghe	Rector/Sri Palee Campus
Prof. Athula Ranasinghe	Dean/Arts
Prof. Marie Perera	Dean/ Education
Prof. Sunil Chandrasiri	Dean/ Graduate Studies
Mr. V.T. Thamilmaram	Dean/Law
Prof. H.D. Karunaratne	Dean/Management & Finance
Prof. Rohan Jayasekera	Dean / Medicine
Prof. T.R. Ariyaratne	Dean/ Science
Mr. Rajan Asirwatham	Council Nominee
Dr. Ranjanie Gamage	Council Nominee
Mrs. Leisha de Silva Chandrasena	Council Nominee
Prof. Amal Jayawardena	Senate Nominee
Prof. M.D.P. De Costa	Senate Nominee
Prof. Sumanapala Galmangoda	FGS Nominee
Mr. Sunimal Fernando	FGS Nominee
Mr. Thirikumar Nadesan	FGS Nominee
Dr. M.A. Nuhuman	FGS Nominee
Mr. S. Sandrasegaram	FGS Nominee
Dr. Sandagomi Coperahewa	Director/ CCIS

# Annual Report - 2012

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## Appointments

**Dr. Sandagomi Coperahewa** assumed duties as the founder-Director of the CCIS with effect from November 1<sup>st</sup> 2011. Dr. Coperahewa is a Senior Lecturer in the Dept. of Sinhala, University of Colombo. He holds a PhD in South Asian Studies from the University of Cambridge, UK.

**Ms. Saummya Amarasinghe** assumed duties as the Secretary of the CCIS with effect from 16th January 2012. Ms. Amarasinghe who was the Secretary of the CCIS from January 2012 to August 2012 resigned from the post in August 2012 as she left the country for her higher studies.

**Ms. Jayani Fernando**, assumed duties as the Secretary of the CCIS from 27<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

**Mr. M.V. Premaratne** was appointed as the Office Assistant of CCIS from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2012.

## Civil Works and CCIS Office

The initial civil works of the CCIS started in November 2011 and then onwards the civil works of the Center was carried out step by step. Except for the carpeting, the



refurbishment of the premises was completed and office was fully-operated from Jan 2012. The office equipment was purchased during the following months and now the CCIS is fully-furnished office with internet facilities.

## CCIS Board Meetings

The following meetings were held during the year.

Meetings	Dates
Advisory Board - 1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting	06 <sup>th</sup> January 2012
2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting	29 <sup>th</sup> Nov. 2012
Management Board - 1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting	27 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 2012
2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting	11 <sup>th</sup> October 2012
Administrative and Finance Committee	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2012

## Visiting Professors



**Dr. A.K. Chattopadhyay** (Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan) completed his term as a 1<sup>st</sup> Visiting Professor at the CCIS. He was attached to the Dept. of Economics, University of Colombo. During his stay at the University of Colombo from April 2012- June 2012, he assisted the CCIS to prepare a syllabus for a certificate course on Contemporary India.

## Visits

Following Indian academics and researchers visited the Centre during the year:

Prof. Geetha Reddy (Centre for Indian Ocean Studies, Osmania University)

Prof. T.V. Gopala Chari (Centre for Indian Ocean Studies, Osmania University)

Prof. A. Bala Kishan (Centre for Indian Ocean Studies, Osmania University)

Dr. V. Yoga Jyotsna (Centre for Indian Ocean Studies, Osmania University)

Prof. A. Subramaniam Raju (Centre for South Asian Studies, Pondicherry University)

Prof. Radha Chakaravarty (University of Delhi) & Mr. Ranjan Chakravarty (Ministry of External Affairs, India)

Prof. Sushanta Dattagupta (Vice Chancellor, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan)

## Guest Lectures

**2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012**



Guest lecture by Prof. **T. Ramakrishna** Professor of Law, National Law School of India University, Bangalore on *Challenges to the Access to Medicine in the Post-TRIPS Era* was held at the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo.

**15th May 2012**

Guest lecture by **Mr. Garrett Field** a Visiting Fulbright-Hays Fellow and PhD candidate of the Wesleyan University, USA on “*The Sinhala Radio Opera and the Indian Cultural Imagination*” was held at the Department of Sinhala Auditorium.



**11th June 2012**



Guest lecture by **Dr. Radha Chakravarty**, Associate Professor of English, Gargi College, University of Delhi on “*Tagore’s Short Stories in English*” was held at the Department of English Auditorium.

**23<sup>rd</sup> July 2012**

Guest lecture by **Ms. Namita Gokhale**, a renowned Indian Author & Founder - Director of the Jaipur Literary Festival on “*Many Languages One Literature*”, was held at the Department of Sinhala Auditorium.



**30<sup>th</sup> July 2012**



Guest lecture by **Prof. Sumit Ganguly**, Professor of Political Science and Rabindranath Tagore Chair in Indian Cultures and Civilizations on “*US Foreign Policy towards South Asia*,” was held at the Senate Hall, University of Colombo. This lecture was organized in collaboration with Dept. of International Relations.

**17<sup>th</sup> December 2012**

Guest Lecture by **Dr. Neil DeVotta**, Associate Professor of Political Science, Wake Forest University, USA on ‘*Levels of Analysis and Indo-Lanka Relations in a Changing Global Order*’ was held at the Room No. 230 – Department of International Relations, University of Colombo.



## CCIS Website



In January 2012, a new website for the CCIS was designed to publicize the activities of the Centre. The CCIS website is linked to the main site of the University of Colombo and it has links to Indian High Commission, Colombo, India-Sri Lanka Foundation and Indian Cultural Centre. The catalog of the CCIS library is also uploaded to the site. The site has updated news about the Centre. The following address provides the link to the site. <http://ccis.cmb.ac.lk>

## Seminars, Symposiums & Other Events

**12<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

**One day Seminar on ‘Tagore and Sri Lanka’** (in collaboration with the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo)



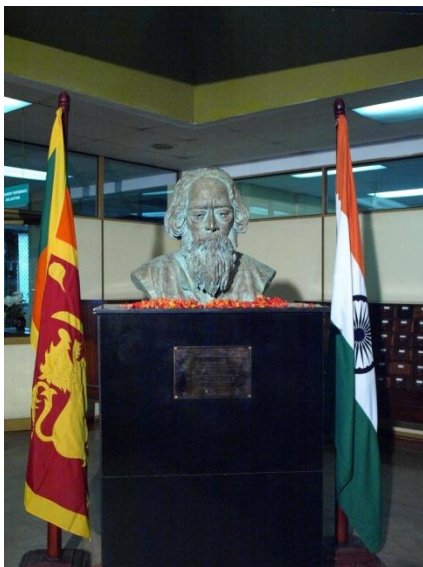
A One day seminar on ‘Tagore and Sri Lanka’ organized by the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo, in association with the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International Relations



and Strategic Studies and the Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies, University of Colombo was held on 12 June 2012. The seminar was organized as part of the 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Nobel laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore. It mainly focussed on the travels of Tagore to Sri Lanka and the cultural linkages. The seminar was divided into five sessions, including three academic sessions and the inaugural and valedictory sessions. Eminent Indian author, historian and educationist, Prof. Bharati Ray, who is currently Vice President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, New Delhi, delivered the keynote address titled “Through the Prism of Travel: Rabindranath Tagore’s Internationalism” at the seminar. The following Indian and Sri Lanka academics presented papers at this seminar: Emeritus Prof. K.N.O. Dharmadasa, Emeritus Prof. Vini Vitharana, Prof. Radha Chakravarty, Prof. Tissa Kariyawasam, Prof. Wimal Dissanayake, Prof. Chandragupta Thenuwara, Dr. Sandagomi Coperahewa, Dr. Sushohan Adhikari and Mr. Ravibandi Vidyapathi.

**26<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

### **Unveiling of the Bust of Rabindranath Tagore**



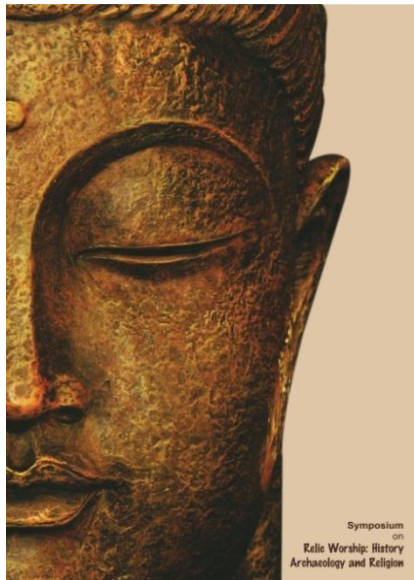
A Bust of Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore was unveiled by Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister of External Affairs in the presence of H.E. Ashok K. Kantha, High Commissioner of India and Prof. Kshanika Hirimburegama, Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo at the Main Library of the University of Colombo on 26th June 2012 afternoon.

The bronze Bust was gifted by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India on the occasion of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore. The greenish bronze bust is sculpted by Janak Jhankar Narzary, a renowned sculptor and Professor of Art History in Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati.

At this function the High Commissioner of India recalled the yearlong series of activities organised by the High Commission in partnership with the government of Sri Lanka, University of Colombo and other institutions to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Tagore. He underlined that there was a groundswell of genuine interest in Tagore, his life, his works, his legacy in Sri Lanka.

**20th August 2012**

### **Symposium - ‘Relic Worship: History, Archeology and Religion’**



On the occasion of the exposition of the Sacred Kapilavastu Relics in Sri Lanka, Center for Contemporary Indian Studies (CCIS), Pali and Buddhist Studies Unit, University of Colombo in association with the Lakshman Kadiragamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKIIRSS) organized a half-day Symposium on ‘**Relic Worship: History, Archaeology and Religion**’ at LKIIRSS auditorium on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2012. The Indian Cultural Center, Colombo assisted in organizing the symposium.



In the inaugural session H.E. Mr. Ashok K. Kantha, High Commissioner of India Colombo, Hon. Prof G.L. Peiris Minister of External Affairs of Sri Lanka and Hon. Kumari Selija Minister of Culture, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation India addressed the gathering.

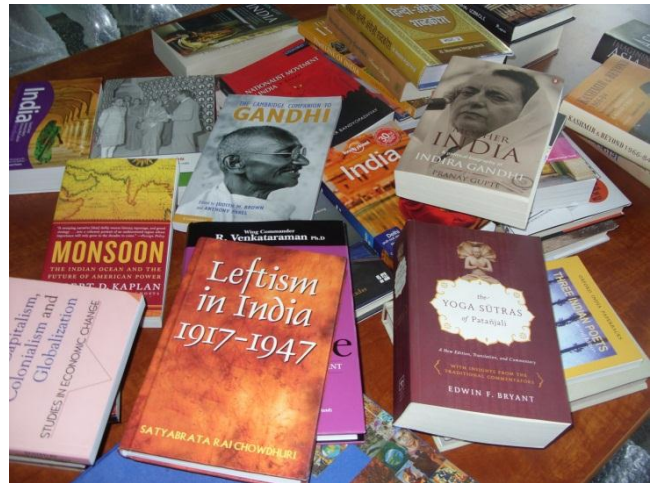


In the academic session of the symposium Dr. Sandagomi Coperahewa was the moderator. Dr. Ravindra Panth (Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, India) presented his paper on Relic Worship: History, Archeology and Religion. The paper of Prof. Anura Manathunga (Department of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya) was on Excavations at Kapilavastu and the Discovery of Buddha's relics. Prof. Asanga Tilakaratne (Pali and Buddhist Studies Unit, University of Colombo) spoke on relic-worship as a religious practice. The final paper was of Emeritus Prof. K. N. O. Dharmadasa (Editor-in- chief, Sinhala Encyclopedia) and he presented his paper titled Worship of Relics in the Sinhala Literary Tradition.

## CCIS Library

CCIS Library is a gateway to anybody who intends to study about Contemporary India. The library consists of a collection over 450 books and it is well equipped in subjects like History, Arts & Literature, Political Science, International Relations, Sociology, Journalism and Economics related to India.

The library is open to anybody during weekdays from 9.00 am to 4.30 pm and it is located in the CCIS office (NILIS building - Faculty of Education-Block 2). Photocopy facility is also available for university undergraduates and graduates. The library catalog could also be viewed on the CCIS website. A library poster was circulated among the departments, faculties and other institutions.



## CCIS Journal

The CCIS is planning to publish *Sri Lanka Journal of Contemporary Indian Studies* a multi-disciplinary peer-reviewed annual academic journal in the field of contemporary India. The main objective of the journal is to promote research on contemporary Indian studies in Sri Lanka and also to provide an intellectual forum for academicians, policy makers and students who are working in the field of contemporary India. In September 2012, the CCIS circulated a notice to call papers for the journal. The following academics were appointed as the Editorial Board members:

Emeritus Prof. K.N.O. Dharmadasa  
 Prof. Nayani Melegoda  
 Prof. Neloufer De Mel  
 Prof. Sharya Scharenguivel  
 Dr. Dilhari Atygalle  
 Dr. Saman Dassanayake  
 Dr. Sandagomi Coperahewa

Editor-in- Chief / Sinhala Encyclopedia  
 Dept. of International Relations  
 Dept. of English  
 Dept. of Private and Comparative Law  
 Head/ Dept. of Statistics  
 Dept. of Human Resources Management  
 Director/CCIS

## Certificate Course

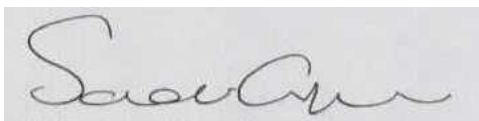
The CCIS has drafted a syllabus on **Certificate Course in Contemporary India** as a step to deepen the understanding of the dynamics of the tremendous transformation that is taking place in India and its implications to the South Asian region, particularly for Sri Lanka. It is designed to provide an introduction to the field of contemporary Indian Studies and interdisciplinary research addressed to India's development, achievements and problems. The proposed course contains following compulsory modules:

Indian Politics since 1947  
Foreign Policy & India-Sri Lanka Relations  
Economy of Contemporary India  
Culture, Society & Human Development

The draft syllabus was sent to the FGS for approval with the changes suggested by the Management Board members of the CCIS.

## CCIS Brochure

To popularize the Centre activities a A4 (folded) colour brochure was designed and printed in December 2012. This brochure provides information about the Centre and its activities to general public and students.



**Dr. Sandagomi Coperahewa**  
Director/CCIS

16<sup>th</sup> January 2013

