



# CCIS

## Centre 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.

In 2017, the CCIS completed five years of its inception and new budget for year 2017-2022 was approved by the Finance committee of the University of Colombo. The centre received the 1<sup>st</sup> installment of its five year budget on August 2017.

## 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 – 2017

H.E. Mr. Taranjit Singh Sandhu	High Commissioner of India} Co-Chairs
Senior Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake	Vice Chancellor } Co-Chairs
Mr. Arindam Bagchi	Deputy High Commissioner of India
Mr. Niteen Yeola	First Secretary (PIC)
Dr. Ranjan Hettiarachchi	Rector   Sri Palee Campus
Prof. Athula Ranasinghe	Dean   Arts
Prof. Nayani Melegoda	Dean   Graduate Studies
Prof. Manjula Vithanapathirana	Dean   Education
Mrs. W.I. Nanayakkara	Dean   Law
Dr. R. Senathiraja	Dean   Management & Finance
Prof. K.R.R. Mahanama	Dean   Science
Prof. Jennifer Perera	Dean   Medicine
Mr. Rajan Asirwatham	Council Nominee
Prof. Savithri Goonasekara	Council Nominee
Prof. S.A. Nobert	Senate Nominee
Prof. Sandagomi Coperahewa	Acting Director   CCIS

# Annual Report - 2017

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## APPOINTMENTS

**Prof. Sandagomi Coperahewa**, the Founder Director of the CCIS was appointed as the Acting Director | CCIS for a term of one year with effect from 01<sup>st</sup> January 2017 until a new Director is formally appointed.

**Ms. Chathurika Karunanayake** was reappointed as the Secretary of the CCIS for a term of six months with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017. She left the CCIS on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 and joined the Indian High Commission, Colombo.

**Mr. M. V. Premaratne**, being the Office Assistant of the CCIS received an extension of his service for six months with effect from 01<sup>st</sup> August 2017.

## VISITING PROFESSORS | SHORT TERM CHAIR



**Prof. Mohammad Gulrez** assumed the duties as the Visiting Short-term Chair of the CCIS from 15<sup>th</sup> July 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017. Prof. Gulrez serves as the Professor & Former Chairman in the Department of West Asian Studies and North African Studies at the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), India. He is also the Coordinator of the ‘Conflict Resolution & Peace Studies Programme’ and founder Director Centre for South African & Brazilian Studies at AMU. During his stay at the CCIS, he took part in several academic activities such as meeting students in the Department of International Relations and Faculty of Graduate Studies both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. He conducted a Workshop for the final year students of the Department of International Relations those who

working on their dissertations on Contemporary India. He also delivered multiple lectures for the postgraduate students of the Department of International Relations and Faculty of Graduate Studies. Prof. Gulrez was also invited to deliver a Guest Lecture at the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS) for the students of Postgraduate Diploma/Higher Diploma in International Relations. During his tenure he also gave a press interview to the *Daily News* on “Rebuilding India – Sri Lanka Relations”. Prof. Gulrez also took part in a study tour to University of Peradeniya and University of Ruhuna to interact with the lecturers/students attached to the Department of Political Science. Prof. Gulrez also compiled the CCIS monograph titled *Prospects of Cooperation in Higher Education and Capacity Building: A Case Study of India and Sri Lanka*.

## **ACADEMIC VISITORS**

The following foreign academics, researchers and officials visited the Centre during the year:

- Dr. Lopamudra Maitra Bajpai, Cultural Specialist | SAARC Cultural Centre, Colombo.
- Prof. Gita Dharampal-Frick, Head | Department of History, South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University, German.
- Prof. Naima Khatoon Gulrez, Principal | Women's College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India.
- Mr. Shamik Chakrabarty, Special Correspondant | *The Indian Express*, India.
- Mr. Archiman Bhaduri, Assistant Editor, Editorial (Sport) | The Times of India, Kolkata.
- Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, India.
- Prof. Amrit Sen, University of Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, India.

## MONTHLY FORUMS | GUEST LECTURES

### CCIS MONTHLY FORUM ON “EXPLORING AN ESSENCE OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FROM KOLKATA”

15<sup>th</sup> February 2017



CCIS Monthly Forum on “Exploring an Essence of Intangible Cultural Heritage from Kolkata” was conducted by **Dr. Lopamudra Maitra Bajpai**, Cultural Specialist, SAARC Cultural Centre, Colombo at the CCIS Meeting Room.

### CCIS MONTHLY FORUM ON “NORTH INDIAN INFLUENCES ON SINHALA SONGS AND POETRY IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SRI LANKA”

21<sup>st</sup> July 2017



CCIS Monthly Forum on “North Indian Influences on Sinhala Song and Poetry in Twentieth Century Sri Lanka” was conducted by **Dr. Garrett Field** of School of Interdisciplinary Arts and the School of Music, Ohio University, USA. The event was held at the M.B. Ariyapala Auditorium of the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo.

## WORKSHOPS

### CCIS WORKSHOP ON DISSERTATION PRESENTATIONS ON CONTEMPORARY INDIA

6<sup>th</sup> October 2017



**Prof. Mohammad Gulrez**, Visiting Short – term Chair | CCIS conducted a half-day workshop on dissertation presentations for the final year undergraduates of the Department of International Relations who are currently in the process of writing their dissertations related to Contemporary India. The workshop provided an informal forum for the undergraduates to present their work and guided them towards the completion of a good dissertation.

## ENHANCEMENT COURSE IN HINDI LANGUAGE

The Centre in collaboration with the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo and Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), Colombo intends to start an Enhancement Course in Hindi language for the undergraduates of the Faculty of Arts. This course approved by the 421<sup>st</sup> Senate Meeting of the University of Colombo. The course will be commenced from 2018 onwards. This course aims to provide four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in Hindi. The course will be conducted through lectures, discussions, seminars and oral/written/audio-video presentations. It is aimed at a wide range of students with a general interest in learning Hindi.

## OTHER EVENTS | VISITS

### VISIT OF DR. VINAY SAHASRABUDDHE, MP INDIA

6<sup>th</sup> October 2017



**Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe**, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, India visited the University of Colombo. During his visit he met with Senior Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake, Vice Chancellor | University of Colombo, Prof. Nayani Melegoda, Dean | FGS and Prof. Sandagomi Coperahewa, Acting Director | CCIS and Mr. Niteen Yeola, Second Secretary (PIC), High

Commission of India, Colombo also joined this meeting. After his meeting with the Vice Chancellor, Dr. Sahasrabuddhe also visited the Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies (CCIS) and met with Prof. Mohammad Gulrez, Visiting Short - term Chair | CCIS. He also had a brief interaction with some of the undergraduates of the Department of International Relations those who working on their dissertations on Contemporary India.

## GARLANDING OF THE BUST OF NOBEL LAUREATE RABINDRANATH TAGORE

8<sup>th</sup> May 2015



To commemorate the 156th Birth Anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, H. E. Mr. Taranjit Singh Sandhu, High Commissioner of India garlanded the bust of Rabindranath Tagore at the main library of the University of Colombo in the presence of the academic community and Tagore aficionados. Senior Professor Lakshman

Dissanayake, Vice Chancellor | University of Colombo, Mrs. Rajashree Behera, Director | Indian Cultural Centre, Professor Nayani Melegoda, Dean | FGS, Professor Sandagomi Coperahewa, Director| CCIS, academics of the University of Colombo and other invitees participated in the event. This bronze bust of Tagore was gifted by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India in connection with the 150th Birth Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore in 2012. This event was jointly organized by the Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies of the University of Colombo and the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo.



## SPONSORSHIPS



On the request of the Dean | Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo, the Centre sponsored the **Prof. Amrit Sen**, Department of English and Other Modern European Languages, University of Visva-Bharati | Santiniketan, India who delivered his keynote speech on “The Role of Humanities and Social Sciences in Research for Development” at the Annual Research Symposium of the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo which was held on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017.

- On the request of the Physical Education Director, the People’s Education Society (PES), Bangalore, India, the Centre sponsored the Colombo University staff cricket and badminton teams to participate in the University International Staff Sports Festival organized by the People’s Education Society (PES), Bangalore, India from 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

## INTERPRETERS FOR H.E. PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI’S VISIT TO SRI LANKA

**11<sup>th</sup> May – 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

The Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies together with the Indian High Commission, Colombo arranged volunteered interpreters for H.E. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Sri Lanka. There were ten volunteers from the University of Colombo including the Secretary | CCIS, and the temporary lecturers from the Department of Sinhala of the University of Colombo.

## PUBLICATIONS



During the year the Centre took the initiative to publish the CCIS Monograph titled *Prospects of Cooperation in Higher Education and Capacity Building: A Case Study of India and Sri Lanka* authored by Prof. Mohammad Gulrez, Visiting Short – term Chair | CCIS. This monograph discusses the possible cooperation between the governments of India and Sri Lanka in the field of higher education and how to maximize this education cooperation between two countries to enhance their social and economic cooperation. The launch of the monograph was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2017 at the College House with the presence of Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo and the Dean | FGS.

## CCIS LIBRARY



The library of the Centre continued to provide resources for undergraduates/postgraduates who are studying on Contemporary India. It has over 800 books both in English and Sinhala in the field of Contemporary India. It also provides internet and photocopy facility to undergraduates and national/international researchers who study on India. During the year several new academic books were added to the collection and library also received book donations from Prof. Mohammad Gulrez, CCIS Visiting Short – term Chair, the Centre for Policy Alternatives, Colombo and the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS). The CCIS Library is a gateway to anybody who intends to study on history and current issues/topics related to India.

## CCIS WEBSITE



The CCIS website which was launched on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014 by H.E. Arindam Bagchi is now updated regularly with all the events related to CCIS. It is also linked to several academic institutes devoted to the study of India and South Asia.

**Prof. Sandagomi Coperahewa**  
Acting Director | CCIS  
29/12/2017