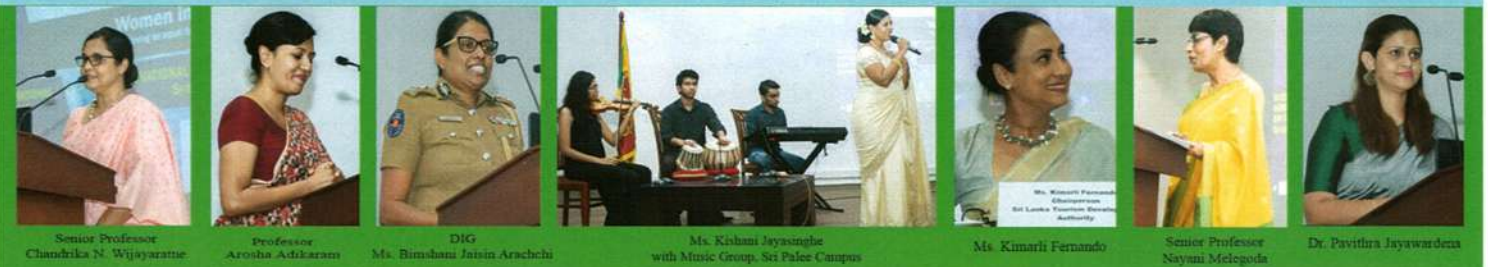


### 'International Women's Day' Celebration @ Faculty of Graduate Studies 08<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2021

Theme: 'Women in Leadership: Achieving an Equal Future in a Covid-19 World'

University of Colombo celebrated International Women's Day 2021 under the theme 'Women in Leadership: Achieving an Equal Future in a COVID-19 World' on March 08, 2021, at the auditorium, Faculty of Graduate Studies. Ms. Kimarli Fernando [Chairperson, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau] was the chief guest and Ms. Bimshani Jasiri Arachchi [Deputy Inspector General of Police, Police Ombudsman Range at Sri Lanka Police] was the guest of honour. The keynote address at the occasion was delivered by Professor Arosha S. Adikaram [Acting Director, Centre for Gender Equality, University of Colombo]. Senior Professor Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne [Vice Chancellor], Senior Professor Nayani Melegoda [Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies] addressed the gathering. Sri Lanka's own Soprano Ms. Kishani Jayasinghe performed at the occasion. The Director of CCIS, University academic and executive staff members were invited to the event.



### CCIS Director Inaugurated Cochin University International Hindi Webinar

INTERNATIONAL WEBINAR ON  
**"PHANEESHWARNATH RENU KI RACHANADHARMITA"**  
फणीश्वरनाथ रेणु की रचनाधर्मिता  
18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2021  
Inaugural Function: 18<sup>th</sup> March 10 a.m.  
Presided by  
Prof. (Dr.) K. N. Madhusoodanan  
(Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, CUSAT)  
Inauguration by  
Prof. (Dr.) Upul Ranjith  
(Sri Lanka)  
Key Note Address  
Prof. (Dr.) Vinod Tiwari  
(Delhi University, New Delhi)  
Google Meet Link: wgo-symr-rcr

DEPARTMENT OF HINDI  
COCHIN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
Kochi - 682 022  
Co Sponsors  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, DEPARTMENT OF HINDI, CUSAT  
KERALA HINDI SAHITYA MANDAL, KOCHI

Chair Senior Professor Upul Ranjith Hewawitanagamage [Director, CCIS] was invited by Dr. K. Ajitha [Head, Dept of Hindi] to inaugurate a Three Day International Hindi Webinar on 'Creativity of Phaneeshwarnath Renu' (Centenary Celebration of Birth Anniversary) held at the Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi, Kerala, India on 18-20 March 2021. While inaugurating the webinar Prof. Upul Ranjith expressed his thoughts in Hindi language regarding Phaneeshwarnath Renu, a renowned Hindi writer. He commenced his speech in Malayalam, Kerala's native language saying "ngaana raawanante naattil ninaanu varunnada" [I came from Rawana's country.] Prof. Upul's attempt to use their mother tongue 'Malayalam' at this occasion was highly appreciated by all the participants.

This was organized by the Department of Hindi in collaboration with the Alumni Association of the Dept. of Hindi and the Kerala Hindi Sahitya Mandal, Kochi, India. Professor K. N. Madhusoodanan [Vice Chancellor, Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi, Kerala, India] presided the inauguration ceremony and Professor Vinod Tiwari [Delhi University, Delhi, India] delivered the keynote address.







'With Gandhi Ji in Ceylon' a book written by Mahadev Desai and published by S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras, India in 1928. 2<sup>nd</sup> (1998) and 3<sup>rd</sup> (2007) editions were printed by Sarvodaya Vishva Lekha Publishers, Ratmalana, Sri Lanka with the ISBN 955-599-122-7.

Readers of 'Contemporary' can read this book continuously March issue onwards.



## Gandhi ji in Ceylon

CHAPTER 1  
IN LANKA : THE ENCHANTED ISLE  
The First Week



LANKA, a name by which every Indian child knows Ceylon, Lanka which our first knowledge associates with Ravana whose insolent might was humbled by Rama, Lanka which a knowledge of history teaches every Indian to connect indissolubly with Bharatavarsha, as the land where Lord Buddha's teaching spread and fructified and still abides, Lanka which has ever been culturally one with India, inasmuch as it claims with India innumerable cultural traditions, Lanka, of which the people in spite of the rather drastic social conquest by the West, still look like the Indians' kith and kin, -Lanka is a land which Gandhi ji in his wanderings of over ten years has ever longed to visit, no less with the object of seeing the land whose ravishing beauty makes it a pearl in the islands of the earth, than for studying living Buddhism at close quarters, no less with the object of studying the life of a people whom Bishop Herber abused in his ignorance, whilst he admired 'the noble island in all its natural riches,' than with the object of sympathising with, and if possible, guiding, a people, alike denationalised as his own, and alike ravaged as his own, by what passes as 'Western civilisation,' but which, in the language of an English historian, 'with its wine and bread and saltpetre came as a scourge upon the Island.

But the visit, when it actually came about, happened, as Gandhi ji said to the Civic Fathers in Colombo with engaging candour, to be a 'mercenary' visit.

It were futile to attempt to give an idea of the various meetings or a summary of the various speeches. I can but mention some of the salient features.

(Contd.)

And yet the receptions and welcome that he had from the day of his landing at Colombo on the evening of the 13th could compare favourably with the warmest and the most enthusiastic ones that he has received anywhere in India. The Colombo Municipality, a more or less Government body, presented a felicitously worded address which was read by the Chairman who is a member of the Civil Service. H.E. the Governor offered Gandhi ji a warm welcome through his Colonial Secretary and invited him to a friendly meeting. For both of these Gandhi ji was entirely unprepared. It was no wonder, then, that the people's reception was something overwhelming in its spontaneity and enthusiasm. Thousands thronged the thoroughfares through which he was announced to pass, and at most places crowding had to be controlled by regulating admission by tickets.

The Buddhist and the Christian Ceylonese vied with the Hindu Ceylonese and Indians in according their tributes of welcome and tokens of sympathy for the cause that took Gandhi ji to Ceylon. They refused to regard the visit as a 'mercenary' one, and understood it instead to be a humanitarian one. All alike contributed their mite for the Khadi fund, the Ceylonese no less than the Tamilians, Government servants no less than private individuals, Members of Council no less than the common shopkeepers, the students no less than their parents and guardians, and the clerks and the cooks and the barbers and the labourers claimed their right to help in a cause which was as much their own as of their more fortunate brethren.

Part of the house where we had been put up was converted into a Khadi shop, and from morning until night the shop was besieged by customers drawn from all sections of the people. In giving Gandhi ji this tremendous reception, the people of Ceylon claimed him as their own, and assured him that his visit was likely to bind Ceylon into more an indissoluble union, if possible, with 'Mother India,' an expression used in the labour address which touched Gandhi ji to the depths.







*'The Anagārika Dharmapāla [1864-1933] A Biographical Sketch'* a book written by Bhikshu Sangharakshita and published by Dreams Line Ad, Colombo, Sri Lanka in 2011. Readers of 'Contemporary' can read this book continuously March issue onwards.



## ANAGĀRIKA DHARMAPĀLA

THE prospects of Ceylon Buddhism in the 'sixties of the last century were dark indeed. Successive waves of Portuguese, Dutch and British invasion had swept away much of the traditional culture of the country. Missionaries had descended upon the copper colored Island like a cloud of locusts; Christian schools of every conceivable denomination had been opened, where Buddhist boys and girls were crammed with bible texts and taught to be ashamed of their religion, their culture, their language, their race and their color. The attitude of the missionaries is expressed with unabashed directness in one of the verses of a famous hymn by the well known Anglican Bishop Heber, a hymn which is still sung, though with less conviction than in the days when it first made its appearance, in churches all over England:

*What though the spicy breezes  
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,  
Where every prospect pleases,  
And only man is vile;*

*In vain with lavish kindness  
The gifts of God are strown,  
The heathen in his blindness  
Bows down to wood and stone.*

Throughout the territories under Dutch occupation Buddhists had been compelled to declare themselves as Christians, and during the period of British rule this law was enforced for seventy years, being abrogated only in 1884, when on behalf of the Buddhists of Ceylon Col. Olcott made representations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London. Children born of Buddhist parents had to be taken for registration to a church, where some biblical name would be bestowed on them, with the result that most Sinhalese bore either an English Christian name and a Portuguese surname, if they were Catholic converts, or an English Christian name and a Sinhalese surname, if they were Anglicans. The majority of them were ashamed or afraid to declare themselves Buddhists, and only in the villages of the interior did the Dharma of the Blessed One retain some vestige of its former power and popularity, though even here it was not free from the attacks of thousands of catechists who, for twenty rupees a month, were prepared to go about slandering and insulting the religion of their fathers. Member of the Sangha, with a few noble exceptions, were intellectually and spiritually moribund; monastic discipline was lax, the practice of meditation had been neglected and then forgotten; and even to those who truly loved the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, it must sometimes have seemed that, after reigning for more than twenty glorious centuries over the hearts and minds of the Sinhala race, they were doomed to be "cast as rubbish to the void", and swept into the blue waters of the Arabian Sea by the triumphant legions of militant Christianity. But this was not to be. Low though the fortunes of the Dharma had sunk the great beam of the national karma was beginning to right itself, and gigantic forces were being set in motion which in the future would lift them to a position high even as their present one was low.

### Beginnings of a Great Sinhalese Patriot

Among the few well-to-do families which through all vicissitudes stood firmly and fearlessly on the side of their

ancestral faith was the Hewavitarne family of Matara in South Ceylon. Hewavitarne Dingiri Appuhamy, the first member of this family with whom we are concerned, belonged to the large and respected goigama or cultivator class. He had two sons, both of whom exhibited the same devotion to the Dharma as their Father. One of them became a bhikshu known as Hittatiye Atthadassi Thera and occupied the incumbency of Hittatiya Raja Mahavihara. His teacher, Mirisse Revata Thera, was fourth in pupillary succession from the Sangaraja Saranankara, the greatest name in eighteenth century Ceylon Buddhism. The other son, Don Carolis Hewavitarne, migrated to Colombo, established there a furniture manufacturing business in the Pettah area, and married the daughter of a Colombo businessman, Andris Perera Dharmagunawardene, who had donated a piece of land at Maligakanda, erected on it the first Pirivena or Buddhist monastic college in Ceylon, and brought a monk from the remote village of Hikkaduwa to be its principal. Since then the names of the Vidyodaya Pirivena and Hikkaduwa Siri Sumangala Maha Nayaka Thera have passed, inseparably united, into the history of world Buddhism. Through the halls of this great institution of Buddhist learning, unrivalled throughout the length and breadth of Ceylon, have passed monks from Burma, Siam, India, Japan and China, and the memory of the great Buddhist Scholar, mathematician and expert in comparative religion who for so many decades guided its destinies is revered wherever the Dharma taught in the Pali Scriptures is known.

(Contd.)





## Mahatma Gandhi Scholarships Awarded to 150 Students Across Sri Lanka



The prestigious Mahatma Gandhi Scholarships were awarded to 150 Advanced Level school students from all 25 districts across Sri Lanka by Hon. G. L. Peiris, Minister of Education of Sri Lanka, and H. E. Gopal Baglay, High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka, at a special ceremony held at the Ministry of Education, on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

Apart from Mahatma Gandhi scholarships, the High Commission of India offers around 750 scholarships annually in various fields including Engineering, Technology, Arts, Science, Para-Medical Courses, Indigenous Medicine etc. to Sri Lankan students. Thousands of seats are also on offer for Sri Lankan students in many highly regarded institutions of India under 'Study in India'.

For more details on the scholarship programmes and other educational assistance, please visit the High Commission of India's website [www.hcicolombo.gov.in](http://www.hcicolombo.gov.in)

### 'Becoming a Successful Entrepreneur'



Mrs. Indrani Fernando, Kalutara, Sri Lanka

A webinar on  
'Becoming a Successful Entrepreneur'  
organized by the Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies  
in collaboration with  
the Career Guidance Unit, University of Colombo  
to promote SME in  
Sri Lanka in May 2021...



Mr. Anuj Agrawal, Uttar Pradesh, India

### CCIS Dissertation Grant

Applicant should be a citizen/permanent resident of Sri Lanka

- \* The applicant should be actively engaged in research at a university or research institute in Sri Lanka in various areas of Social Sciences, Humanities, Science and Technology, Management and Finance and Medicine.

#### Minimum Qualifications

- \* Final year students of undergraduate/postgraduate
- \* Research topic should be related to Indian context.

#### To apply

Call 011-2591610 or email- [director@ccis.cmb.ac.lk](mailto:director@ccis.cmb.ac.lk)

Editor: Upul Ranjith Hewawitanagamage

Asst. Editor: Yodunika Seneviratne

Layout: URH

'CONTEMPORARY' published in March 2021 @ CCIS, FGS, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

### Coming up ...

ඉන්දියානු සාහිත්‍ය සංකට්ඨ

සාහිත්‍ය සම්මන්ත්‍රණ මාලාව

'The Scholarly Discourse on Indian Literature'

'ප්‍රාකෘත සාහිත්‍යයේ විචිත්‍රත්වය'

The Elegance of Prākṛit Literature

Senior Professor Rathnasiri Arangala

(Dept. of Sinhala and Mass Communication,  
University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka)

Jātaka Stories as Audio Books



A joint project of  
Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies and  
Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre,  
High Commission of India, Colombo.