



## **NAAL AND THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS**

The Netherlands Alumni Association of Lanka (NAAL) was formed by twenty-five Founder Members in 1971 and active right throughout up to now. Its Membership is open to all personnel who have undergone a Program of Studies in the Netherlands and today the Enrolment Number has passed 600. It is registered with the Registrar of Companies under the Companies Act of Sri Lanka.

The Executive Committee is annually elected from the General Membership at the Annual General Meeting. All Ex-Co Members do an Honorary service. Meetings of the Ex-Co are generally held monthly. Apart from the get-togethers at the AGM, Committee arranges for the Spouse and the Children of Members to enjoy with the families of the other Members at social gatherings.

This year is extremely important for NAAL as it will be celebrating the Golden Jubilee. To celebrate the “Golden Jubilee” NAAL had organized several activities (a) e-conference (b) supplement on the Netherlands King’s birthday (c) Printing a Souvenir to mark the occasion, (d) to have a Symposium and (e) Supplement on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on daily papers. We were also planning to hold the Annual General Meeting along with these events.

Main Objectives of the NAAL 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations were:

- To promote spirit of fellowship and co-operation among members.
- To celebrate the success of NAAL operations during the last fifty years and to recognize the contributions by members, the Royal Netherlands Embassy, NUFFIC and all stake holders
- To showcase the world on the outcome of bilateral relationship between Sri Lanka and Netherlands, NUFFIC and Institutions
- To encourage other Holland Alumni Associations and potential members to join in enhancing the relationship with the Netherlands
- To motivate the new generation to take the association forward to a continuous improvement journey.

Originating the concept of Alumni Association and rendering a yeomen service to form Associations, we are extremely thankful to Late Drs. Evert Jongens a former director of NUFFIC, his contribution to NAAL is mentioned under the Heading of Founders of NAAL in this souvenir. The members of NAAL a family of Dutch scholars are, proud today that NAAL has been recognized as one of the best Alumni Associations in the world. The NAAL has made an immense contribution to the country,

### **e-conference**

E-Conference which included Representatives of Netherlands Embassy in Sri Lanka, Representations from NUFFIC, Representatives of Alumni Associations of Nepal and Philippines, prospective members of NAAL, and present members of NAAL was held on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The Conference last nearly 2 hours and there were more than 100 participants who joined from Sri Lanka and abroad was a great success.

NAAL conducted this E-conference with the collaboration of the Embassy of Kingdom of the Netherlands in Sri Lanka to mark the Golden Jubilee of NAAL and the Kings Day of the Netherlands. Her Excellency, the Ambassador, Ms Tanja Gonggrijp and the Deputy Ambassador Ms Anouk Baron, Representatives from NUFFIC & other Netherlands Alumni Associations (NAAs) in Asia (Nepal, Philippines etc.), present and potential members of NAAL, the Executive committee of NAAL and many well-wishers joined with NAAL to express their views.

NAAL President Mr S P C Kumarasinghe, welcomed the participants and briefed on the success of NAAL over the past 50 years. Mr Sarath Jayatilaka, Chairman of the 50-year celebrations committee did a brief presentation of the NAAL activities including member events, projects etc. using a Power Point presentation.

The glamour of the E-Conference was enhanced by the experiences shared NAAL members specially Mrs Samantha Ratnayake and Mrs Tamara Mallawarachchi and few scholars who had benefited from NAAL and by studying in the Netherlands. It was further enhanced with the speeches by the representations of H.E.Ambassador, NUFFIC, Nepal and Philippines NAAs.

Participants expressed their views, and the Q&A session was moderated by the Vice President Mr S.B. Niyangoda.

Her Excellency, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Sri Lanka appreciated the organizers and showed the importance of being a member of NAAL and requested the scholars to join hands in developing the

relationships further into a new level with the new technology available and by using their knowledge gained. She wished NAAL a very successful future.

The Social Secretary Mr Nihal Fernando presented the results of a survey done by NAAL to assess the present situation of NAAL. Further a message sent by a representative from the municipality of Velsen Mr Klaas Van Slooten was read by the President NAAL.

Mr Linton Fernando, Editor, NAAL moderated and compared the session.

Mr S Hettiarchchi Treasurer NAAL, delivered the vote of thanks. NAAL appreciates and values all those who supported NAAL to make the E-conference a successful event.

### **King's Day paper supplement**



For the King's Day Supplement NAAL collaborated with the Royal Netherlands Embassy in the publication of Supplements in three daily newspapers on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021. One such supplement is shown in the picture attached.

Extract of this publications is given herewith "Indeed, NAAL is delighted to write a few words on the King's Birthday (National Day) of Holland on the voyage of NAAL. We would take this opportunity to congratulate Netherlands and the Embassy on its "National Day" on this occasion. This year is extremely important for NAAL as it will be celebrating the Golden Jubilee."

The entire article has been reproduced in this souvenir

### **Souvenir to mark the Occasion**

This Souvenir has been published by NAAL to celebrate the success of NAAL during the last 50 years. Some of the projects undertaken by NAAL during the last 50 years for the benefit of mainly deserving people has been include in the souvenir. Due to space, we are unbalance to show case all the projects which

have been completed during this period in this souvenir, but main projects have been described and many pictures of the other project which form the large number projects undertaken by NAAL. The souvenir also includes few articles from members highlighting their experience in Netherlands.

## **Symposium**

Although the symposium was planned to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021, we were reluctantly compelled to postpone this event due to the present corona situation in the country. The committee was to invite the Ambassador of the Royal Netherlands Embassy, a Keynote speaker, and an eminent speaker as Guest of Honour as speakers at this Symposium. However due to the present pandemic situation of the country the committee of management decided to cancel this event.

## **Paper Supplement**

We were planning for publishing a paper supplement to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of NAAL. This was to be published on the day of the Symposium and the Annual General Meeting, however since the Symposium has now been cancelled this event too has been dropped.

## **Annual General Meeting**

Annual General Meeting which was to be held along with the symposium was also postponed. Annually NAAL conducts the AGM to elect office bearers, present the annual audited accounts and to discuss the way forward for the Association. AGM will be held as soon as the situation of the country improves perhaps early 2022. In the meantime, the annual accounts have been audited.



Committee elected at AGM 2021 with the H.E. Ambassador