



ANNUAL REPORT 2015



International Centre for Ethnic Studies

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PROFILE

For 33 years the International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES) has contributed to the world of ideas and has informed policy and practice through research, dialogue, the creative arts and other interventions.

The ICES vision is encapsulated in a desire for a world which celebrates diversity in all its multiple shades. The institution's goal is to contribute towards relevant rigorous intellectual traditions that recognise our common humanity, promote diverse identities, and generate ideas that inform and guide policies and institutions in order to promote justice, equity and peaceful coexistence. The unique mission of ICES is to deepen the understanding of ethnicity, identity politics, conflict and gender, and to foster conditions for an inclusive, just and peaceful society nationally, regionally and globally, through research, publication, dialogue, creative expression and knowledge transfer.

The ICES has been an important player in the areas of peace, justice, gender and human rights and has been particularly influential in shaping policy and public imagination on issues of gender equality, ethnic diversity and constitutional reform in Sri Lanka. The institution has contributed to the development and promotion of minority and group rights and has previously worked closely with the United Nations' Special Rapporteurs, the several Working Groups and with the Treaty Bodies. In recent years ICES has carved a niche for itself as a centre for the study and promotion of diversity within a framework of democracy and human rights.

The ICES has empowered national and local grass-root level organisations in over ten countries in Asia and Africa through the development of educational material using international human rights instruments and national mechanisms. ICES continues to work closely with a wide range of partners and civil society organisations to provide a space for dialogue, strengthen their capacity to collect information, channel their grievances, and question how claims for justice and rights may be advanced in post-war Sri Lanka.

The ICES has played three broad roles: one of research, the other of policy advocacy and a third of providing space for dialogue. It has also used the creative arts to ignite the public imagination and promote truth, beauty and diversity. Following extensive academic, legal and political involvement in the constitutional and policy formulation process in Sri Lanka in the 1980s and 1990s, and strong advocacy in the areas of gender and human rights, ICES has established a strong reputation globally for its capacity to generate high quality research which is politically relevant nationally, regionally and globally. It has also provided a space for and encouraged creative expression as a vehicle for political and social change, through its support to documentary film-making, seminars for writers and regular film and art festivals.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

November 2014/December 2015

Daneshan Casie Chetty, Chairman (*From 6 November 2014*)
Retired career diplomat

Tissa Jayatilaka
Executive Director of the Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission

Rajan Asirwatham
Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka, Corporate Director and former Senior Partner and Country Head of KPMG Ford Rhodes Thornton & Company

K. M. de Silva
Founder, former Chairman and Executive Director of ICES; Retired Professor of Sri Lanka History, University of Peradeniya

John Gooneratne
Retired Career Diplomat and former Secretary-General of the Sri Lanka Peace Secretariat

S. H. Hasbullah (*From 1 September 2015*)
Retired Professor of the Department of Anthropology, University of Adelaide, Australia

Nira Wickramasinghe
Professor of Modern South Asian Studies, Leiden University Institute for Area Studies, School of Asian Studies, Netherlands

Wijaya Jayatilaka (*From 1 September 2014*)
Professor of Archaeology, University of Peradeniya

Fazeeha Azmi (*Till August 2015*)
Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, University of Peradeniya

Indrajit Coomaraswamy (*Till September 2015*)
Economist and former Director, Economic Affairs, Commonwealth Secretariat

Frankly Amerasinghe (*From 29 September 2015*)
Attorney-at-Law, Corporate Director and former CEO of Employers' Federation of Sri Lanka

VISION

A world which celebrates diversity anchored in the fundamental unity of the human species.

GOAL

To contribute towards relevant rigorous intellectual traditions that recognise our common humanity and promote our diverse identities, and to generate ideas that inform and guide policies and institutions in order to promote justice, equity and peaceful coexistence.

MISSION

To deepen the understanding of ethnicity, identity politics and conflict, and to foster conditions for an inclusive, just and peaceful society nationally, regionally and globally, through research, publication, dialogue, creative expression and knowledge transfer.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE, 2015



A noteworthy change occurred in the political climate in the country, on 8 January 2015, brought about by the discerning Sri Lankan voter at the Presidential Election for the 'Common Candidate', Maithripala Sirisena. Those of us in the non-governmental sector, and those institutions engaging in research that sought to be unbiased and impartial, found a tremendous, oppressive weight lifted off our backs. The outcome of the January election was reinforced by the result of the General Election of 17 August 2015, which enabled the two major parties that had hitherto been opposing each other on policy issues, to forge a compact to govern the country as coalition partners. The President and Prime Minister from rival parties were now working in tandem to restore the Rule of Law and provide Good Governance to a country that needed to revive from the debilitating effects of a bitter conflict of over a quarter of a century and authoritarian rule.

When invitations were extended by us to foreign Resource Persons to address seminars or workshops, it was no longer necessary to wait with bated breath, wondering whether the requisite security clearance would be granted for entry visas to be issued.

The government of Sri Lanka co-sponsored a Resolution 30(1) in 2015 at the 30th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva at which Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mangala Samaraweera made the following pledges on behalf of the Government to establish:

- A Commission for Truth, Justice, Reconciliation and Non-Recurrence to independently inquire into and help remedy any sense of injustice.
- An Office of Missing Persons on the principle of the families' right to know, to be set up with expertise from the ICRC.
- An Office for Reparations to be set up.
- To guarantee non-recurrence, through administrative and judicial reform, and the adoption of a new constitution. The best guarantee of non-recurrence was according to the Minister's statement a political settlement that addresses the grievances of the Tamil people.

The Foreign Minister's statement encapsulates all that the ICES stands for when our institution states that it celebrates the diversity and richness of our multi-ethnic, multi-religious culture.

We must take justifiable pride in the fact that our former Executive Director Radhika Coomaraswamy is a member of the prestigious Constitutional Council. Our former Chairperson Deepika Udagama is now Chair of the Human Rights Commission.

The 18th Amendment to the Constitution permitting the former President to contest elections beyond the two-term limit was superseded by the 19th Amendment which also enabled the empowerment of several independent bodies such as the Elections Commission, the Office of the Auditor-General, the Constitutional Council, the Human Rights Commission, the Police Commission, the Judicial Service Commission and the Public Service Commission. The Attorney-General, the principal Law Officer of the Crown whose office had been brought under the former President was able to revert to its customary place in the Ministry of Justice.

The Ford Foundation has reviewed our activities and financial management. On the basis of that appraisal they have given us a small grant as a token of their renewed confidence in us.

The new political environment provided new opportunities for ICES during 2015. ICES continued its research and dialogue work on religious conflict and co-existence; initiated a series of dialogues on transitional justice; continued its research on memory; continued with quantitative and qualitative work on women's empowerment in the North; continued its research on urban displacement and inequality; engaged in two surveys on women and politics; and initiated several new projects including one on women and disability.

The ICES auditorium continued to provide a safe and secure space for academic discussions, the screenings of films, poetry readings and the staging of a powerful play '*The Villa*', by the Chilean playwright Guillermo Calderon.

In an atmosphere of greater freedom to undertake objective research, and the multiplicity of themes that could be focused upon in the aftermath of a long civil conflict, the ICES is developing a strategic vision that will encompass the following areas:

- Gender
- Social Inclusion and Vulnerability
- Justice, Memory and Reconciliation
- Diversity, Coexistence and Religious Coexistence
- Rights and Institutional Reform
- Inclusive Economies and Sustainable Growth

In this new liberal, 'liberated' climate, the ICES family led by Executive Director Dr Mario Gomez would be able to compete in bidding for a range of projects, particularly in the areas where we have demonstrable skills.

On behalf of the ICES Board, I take this opportunity to wish everyone at ICES a great future.

C.D. Casie Chetty
Chairman

RESEARCH AND INTERVENTIONS

BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

November 2013 – March 2017

This project aims to understand the emerging Buddhist-Muslim conflict in Sri Lanka and to intervene in creating productive dialogue between the two communities using innovative techniques in two districts in Sri Lanka: Ampara and Galle. One part of the project seeks to understand the rise in Sinhalese nationalism in post-war Sri Lanka and the evolving Muslim identities through research. The second part seeks to create a space for dialogue through the innovative use of grassroots video, comic and cartoon productions, and aims to promote civic dialogue at a basic level where ordinary people talk to each other across ethnic, religious and linguistic divides through a variety of stories. These narrative dialogues in turn will be highlighted at the national level through the media and will feed into publicised inter-faith and inter-ethnic civic dialogues. The project's overall goal is to build resilience within communities to withstand violent triggers from external sources.

The project commenced with mono-religious 'context mapping workshops' in Colombo, Galle and Ampara with Buddhists and Muslims to map the grievances of grassroots communities in relation to the conflict.

The research analyses conflicts that arose as a result of the political manipulation of religions, as well as a result of the deterioration of the respective religious societies in the modern liberal economic context. The first study focuses on the recent radicalisation of political Buddhism in the Sinhalese-Buddhist South of Sri Lanka. The second study attempts to analyse the conditions informing unprecedented levels of ethno-religious tensions between the Sinhalese, predominantly Buddhist majority and the Muslim minority, in post-war Sri Lanka. Since a radical and 'fundamentalist' orientation was becoming clearly evident within both the Sinhalese and Muslim communities, the research seeks to examine the dynamics shaping this radicalisation. The third study espouses the reasoning that the new 'presence' of Muslims in Sri Lanka is due to an Islamic revival characterised by internal tensions regarding the practice of Islam among Muslims of Sri Lanka. Therefore, it examines and critiques the sectarian splitting and factionalism among Muslims of Sri Lanka and how these splits in the form of different ideologies, religious practices and customs create problems among and for the Muslim community in a multi-ethnic society.

The project has also been involved in training a group of individuals in Galle on the use of grassroots comics to promote coexistence and inter-religious harmony. The advanced grassroots comics workshops that were designed and conducted taking into account the

findings of the mapping workshops and research studies provided insight into the attitude regarding the 'other' of both Buddhist and Muslim individuals who participated. For most, this was the first time they had participated closely with each other on such a platform, being given the opportunity to work together regarding such a sensitive issue in which their two communities were the primary focus. Thus, they were made to understand the importance of coexistence and also impart the knowledge gained through pilot workshops in their respective villages.

Ten films were directed and produced by grassroots community groups from Ampara who were trained by documentary film-maker Anoma Rajakaruna.

The films are Sinhala and Tamil with English subtitles.

The Rope – Anthonipillai Nishanthan

The Judgment – Suranga Kulatunge

Let Her Fly – Fathima Nafla

God must be Deaf – Kaushalya Pathirana

At a Workshop – K. Sanujan

On the Way – Kamal Nethmini

The Boat – Hasini Sandunika

Nursery - Samanthi Yamuna

Dream – Suminda Janaka

Until the End – Ruwanthi Saumya

Research Papers:

- Self, Religion, Identity and Politics: Buddhist and Muslim Encounters in Contemporary Sri Lanka – Dhammika Herath and Harshana Rabukwella
- Fracturing Community: Intra-Group Relations among the Muslims of Sri Lanka – Mohomad Faslan and Nadine Vanniasinkam
- Picturing Coexistence and Conflict: Learning about the Other through Grassroots Comics – ICES

INVOLUNTARY RESETTLEMENT: A CROSS COUNTRY STUDY ON URBAN INEQUALITY AND POVERTY

April 2013 – May 2016

The project looked at the inter-connections between displacement, violence, poverty and inequality and the impact that displacement and violence have had on the social structure and the economic landscape of urban dwellers in post-conflict and stable political environments. The project focused on three urban environments: Colombo, Jaffna and Kochi. The research covered development, forced displacement (Colombo and Kochi) and conflict-induced displacement (Jaffna). In each city the research included control groups which enabled us to consider if urban violence was experienced differently among the relocated/resettled neighbourhoods. The research team at ICES along with a team from Centre for Development Studies (CDS) undertook this work.

The project generated comparative quantitative and qualitative data on the types of violence encountered by displaced communities and host communities to document the violence livelihood nexus across the post-conflict/stable divide, across the disaster-induced/conflict-induced displacement divide, and across the gender divide. We have achieved this by conducting a longitudinal household survey (2,578 households in 2013/14 and followed survey with 2,003 households in 2015/16) in all three cities using a shared/common questionnaire. The post-conflict element was covered using data from the two Sri Lankan cities while the stable-state element was covered using data from Kochi. In addition to the survey we also conducted a series of in-depth interviews among households (60 interviews in 2013/14 and 60 interviews in 2015/16).

The project also conducted a detailed social profiling of the communities. We selected three neighbourhoods (Sinhapura in Colombo, Passaiyoor in Jaffna, and Edachira near Kakkanad in Kochi) one each from the three cities for this profiling exercise. All three community profiles have been published as working papers. The two in Sri Lanka were translated to the main language spoken in the relevant community (Tamil in Passaiyoor and Sinhala in Sinhapura) and published separately.

Dissemination of the Results of Community Profiles

The Community Profile report of Colombo was translated into Sinhala and that of Jaffna into Tamil. Shorter versions of both of these local language reports were also produced. These local language versions of the community profile were made available to members of the community during. Copies were kept with the local authorities, community organisations, the village church, the village library and with libraries of local universities (University of Colombo and University of Jaffna).

PROMOTING RELIGIOUS HARMONY AND INTER-FAITH DIALOGUE

January 2014 – March 2016

The Promoting Religious Harmony Project aims to enhance understanding between different religious groups in Sri Lanka, promote social harmony, and foster inter-religious co-existence through an approach based on human rights. Project activities focused on communities representing the main faiths in Ampara, Colombo and Galle districts. The project has three main components: research, capacity-building and a public education campaign. The project is being implemented in partnership with Equitas—International Centre for Human Rights Education in Montreal.

The main activities during 2015 were:

- Legal and Social Research on the State of Religious Freedom in Sri Lanka
- Three Capacity-Building Workshops on Human Rights Education and Promoting Religious Harmony.
- Action projects in three communities aimed at promoting religious harmony and building religious co-existence.
- A Practitioners' Forum and Launch of the Research

A second capacity-building workshop was held in May 2015 strengthening the participants' knowledge on human rights, while focusing on gender and social media to promote religious harmony. Following two capacity-building sessions with the participants from the three district groups; Ampara, Colombo and Galle, proposals to implement community activities were generated by the groups.

The **Ampara group** facilitated dialogues with youth, government and religious leaders with the aim of addressing inter-religious conflict in the district. The **Colombo group** engaged children, parents, teachers, and religious leaders from Sunday schools in activities to promote awareness about different religions. The **Galle group** brought together children, teachers, government, religious leaders, and civil society organisations to create inter-religious and inter-cultural awareness.

In November a National dialogue for practitioners brought together the participants from the three communities and other civil society organisations who are implementing projects around the same issue to discuss best practices and lessons learned, and to come up with policy recommendations to be presented in the subsequent national dialogue. The launch of *'The Chronic and the Acute: Post-War Religious Violence in Sri Lanka'* took place in November followed by a panel discussion. The study examines the state of religious freedom in Sri Lanka. It discusses a method for classifying religious attacks and the actors associated with those attacks. It adopts a broad definition of 'violence' which includes tangible types—both physical and non-physical—and structural types of violence. The study

also examines the legal, policy and institutional framework pertaining to religious freedom and the socio-cultural, economic and political contexts in which violence takes place.

Mrs Chandrika Kumaratunga, Chairperson, Office of National Unity & Reconciliation; Shelly Whiting, Canadian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, and Gehan Gunatilleke, author of the report spoke at the launch. Dr Farzana Haniffa from the University of Colombo moderated the discussion.

IDENTIFYING POST-WAR GROWTH AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN SRI LANKA (GrOW)

October 2014 – September 2017

Poverty levels among women in the Northern Province are among the highest in the country. While the government, private sector, NGOs and the diaspora have invested in initiatives to support livelihoods and economic growth, there is little rigorous evidence on what has worked. This study seeks to understand the impact of post-war recovery initiatives on women in Sri Lanka's Northern Province and to inform policy and best practices to empower women emerging out of conflict.

The quantitative survey of 4,025 Tamil, Muslim and Sinhalese households for the research project was completed in December 2015. The districts surveyed were Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya and Mannar in the Northern Province. The survey included 3,907 Tamil-speaking households, (3,705 Tamil and 202 Muslim households), and 118 Sinhala-speaking households reflecting the population ratios of the province. The data has been entered and cleaned, and analysis is on-going in the first quarter of 2016. The qualitative survey covering 120 households is nearly complete. Approximately 108 in-depth interviews have been completed, and the material is being transcribed and translated.

The quantitative and qualitative research teams have taken part in a number of joint meetings discussing initial findings, lessons learnt and challenges. Some preliminary analysis of the data was done and was shared with visiting International Development Research Centre (IDRC) representatives. The research has included a mapping of livelihood programmes supporting women-headed households in the five districts. The data gathered has been converted into a range of Geographic Information System (GIS) maps at regional and district level using criteria such as types of intervention, values and coverage. Thirty eight maps have been uploaded to the ICES website. Some of the data has been used to develop semi-interactive Google Earth maps and ICES researchers are exploring scaling up the exercise into a fully interactive GIS mapping system.

The research will include a number of focused case studies covering NGO interventions, apparel sector and ex-fighters. Concept notes on Hirdaramani for an apparel sector study and CARE for a handloom weaving study have been approved and fieldwork has commenced. The project included a capacity-building component providing qualitative training to 11 female field researchers with the support of INTRAC from Oxford and another 25 enumerators on quantitative survey techniques with the support of lecturers from the University of Jaffna and University of Colombo.

The study has been closely supported by a Project Advisory Group (PAG) consisting of a cross-section of academics and advocacy experts/activists from Colombo and the North and East.

FOSTERING PLURALISTIC MEMORIES AND COLLECTIVE RESILIENCE IN FRAGILE TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE PROCESSES

April 2014 – March 2020

In the aftermath of protracted civil conflicts, as in Sri Lanka's case, truth and reconciliation processes have come to be accepted as the normal process forward to foster public rituals of truth telling. There is growing academic evidence internationally that post-conflict truth and reconciliation processes and the sharing of collective memories has had significant value in bringing about reconciliation between communities, strengthening democracy in the civic sphere, consolidating a lasting peace between peoples and providing a space for healing after the trauma of conflict.

The 'Pluralistic Memories' Project, presently hosted at ICES, is a broad spectrum academic research that hopes to elicit the views, opinions and memories from all Sri Lankan ethnic communities, spanning the recent decades of conflict and the post-conflict period. It is being simultaneously piloted in three societies of complex environments following several decades of conflict, i.e. Burundi, Israeli-Palestine and Sri Lanka. It is recognised that none of these societies provide ideal conditions for the working out of classic truth and reconciliation processes. Therefore, the research and intervention programme of the project is geared to create a space for pluralistic discussions of the memories of war as well as to provide a safe space for those who share these memories. It is envisaged that these interventions will facilitate spill-over effects that will lead to community healing through the sharing of memories and the first steps to encouraging positive critical social change.



The 'Pluralistic Memories' Project uses a mixed-methods research design that includes ethnographic methods of observation and purposive sampling as well as a representative longitudinal survey. Research data collected will be assessed and disseminated for feedback through local community interventions and media dialogues. The Project is funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, under the auspices of the Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development, and is coordinated by a research group based at University of Lausanne in Switzerland.

ADVANCING TRUTH AND JUSTICE IN SRI LANKA

2015

The political transformation that occurred in January 2015 provided a window for a serious dialogue around transitional justice. The sustainability of this political transition will depend, among other things, on how the state responds to claims from the past. ICES saw a need for civil society to take the lead and initiate a serious, intellectually sophisticated and candid dialogue on the shape and sequencing of a relevant transitional justice process in Sri Lanka.

Six dialogues on transitional justice were held in Colombo, Galle, Jaffna, Nuwara Eliya and Trincomalee. These discussions provided space for a broad group of stakeholders from civil and political society to explore the complexities of pursuing justice in a complex and volatile, post-war context. The long-term objective of this initiative was to contribute to the generation of an organic and relevant transitional justice process in Sri Lanka. This initiative sought to do this by providing space for key decision-makers from different communities to dialogue and debate the variety of different options that may be available in order to forge a transitional justice process that is politically feasible and sensitive to the peculiarities of the Sri Lankan conflict.

Three experts, Bina D’Costa, Eduardo Gonzalez and Albie Sachs, enriched the discussions with perspectives from other post-conflict and post-war societies.

A report, in Sinhala, Tamil and English, and a video documentary titled ‘Advancing Truth and Justice in Sri Lanka’ were released as part of the project. The report and video will contribute to the public discussion on transitional justice that has only recently begun.



WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Understanding Capacity Gaps and Public and Political Party Attitudes in Three Districts in Sri Lanka

April 2015 – August 2015

This baseline study was conducted by the ICES as a part of the ‘Women in Local Governance’ project being implemented by Search for Common Ground (SFCG). It consists of a survey that assesses the capacity of a sample of women to contest elections at the local government level, and a survey of a sample of the public on understanding their attitudes to the representation of women in local government. The study was conducted in the districts of Kurunegala, Badulla and Ampara from April to August 2015. The overall goal of the project was to contribute to women’s inclusion and participation in decision-making structures of local authorities in Sri Lanka. The specific objectives included:

1. To strengthen the capacity of emerging women political leaders to engage in local governance in selected districts;
2. To create positive public attitude towards women as political leaders; and
3. To engage political parties to increase participation of women in local authorities

Specific results included:

1. Participating women leaders demonstrate increased knowledge and understanding on local government functions and regulations;
2. The public are willing to vote for potential women candidates without gender preference during local elections; and
3. Key political parties develop action plans to operationalise the regulations regarding women participation at local authorities

The Capacity Assessment component of the project was conducted with the participation of 96 women who attended three workshops in Kurunegala, Badulla and Ampara. The objective of the series of workshops was to identify potential women for a training programme to be conducted by SFCG in order to prepare them for the upcoming local government elections. The survey endeavoured to identify the skills and capacities these women hold to run a successful election campaign. The number of respondents from each district was: 21 from Ampara, 32 from Badulla and 43 from Kurunegala. While the main objective of the survey was to identify skills and capacity gaps among the women interested in contesting for local government, the general analysis was based on all the women who participated, so as to get a sense of the nature of women active in local government politics.

Since this was an action-oriented project, it was crucial to have baseline data on the capacities/skills of women active in local government politics, perceptions of people on women’s representation, policy level party motivations to increase the women’s participation and on the Sri Lankan political context in relation to women’s participation to plan the advocacy and capacity building initiatives.

SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL PROJECT ON JUSTICE

October 2012 – August 2015

The South Asia Justice Project supported by IDRC came to conclusion in August 2015 with a series of seminars in Kathmandu, Colombo, New Delhi and Dhaka. The Colombo seminar held on 5th and 6th June was attended by participants from Nepal, India, Bangladesh and India. This seminar series emerged from a research project coordinated by *Aakar* which was aimed at building a series of dialogues across five countries in South Asia through films and research papers that map a range of contexts on ideas and practices of justice, as they take shape in different sites of South Asia. The project generated a paper co-authored by Chulani Kodikara and Neloufer de Mel.

BUILDING PEACE AND GOVERNANCE THROUGH PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES IN SRI LANKA

November 2015 – October 2017

The objective of the project is to encourage women with and without disabilities to actively participate in decision-making in relation to Sri Lanka's peace and reconciliation processes. The project, carried out by the ICES in partnership with Handicap International and the Women's Development Centre, Kandy, aims to pursue its goal by achieving three specific objectives:

- (1) Women with disabilities in Kilinochchi and Kandy have enhanced leadership skills to facilitate community reconciliation
- (2) Women with and without disabilities participate in Disabled Persons' Organizations (DPOs) local mainstream women's, development and religious groups, contributing to national peace processes promoting social inclusion, protection and rights
- (3) Gaps and opportunities in the LLRC National Action Plan, the National Action Plan on Disability, and Sri Lankan Women's Charter are addressed at national and local levels through inclusive gender sensitive evidence based advocacy.

The project commenced in November 2015 and will be implemented over a period of 22 months. The project's aim is to promote and enhance the participation of women with and without disabilities in decision-making in relation to Sri Lanka's peace process. ICES's role will be to contribute to the research and support some of the training. The project is focusing on the geographical areas of Kandy district in the Central Province and in Kilinochchi district in the Northern Province. During the months of November and December of 2015 the main focus was the recruitment of required human resources for the project and the conducting of project orientation and planning meetings to prepare for the commencement of the research and training.

CASE STUDY

INCLUSION IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS: AN ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN ON DISABILITY

Persons with disabilities in Sri Lanka face **multiple barriers to participating** in the social, economic and political life. Disability Rights advocates and persons with disabilities have identified the main challenges to be the non-accessible built environment, discriminatory attitudes of society multiplied by the stigma attached to disability and the absence of inclusive policies and practices. Disability is mainly ignored in policy-making due to the inability as well as the reluctance of the community of persons with disabilities to actively engage in the political process. The majority within the community are unable exercise their basic right to franchise.

The Commissioner of Elections acknowledged this shortcoming and took proactive measures in providing facilities for persons with disabilities to engage in the 2015 General Election within his capacity and within the availability of resources. His circular of May 2015 numbered PE164/2015 provided instructions to all Assistant Commissioners of Elections on making the elections more inclusive for persons with disabilities.

ICES hosted two roundtable sessions to lobby with disability specific advocacy groups during which the suggestion to partner with Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) was proposed. This proposal materialised in a partnership with CMEV together with a group of volunteers launched a month-long **campaign** leading up to the elections to support the initiative by the Commissioner of Elections, with the hope of **ensuring that persons with disabilities were given equal opportunities at the electoral process**. The initiative was instrumental in engaging with independent Disability Rights advocates, civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations with inclusive mandates and journalists in the process of outlining the strategy for the campaign.

The campaign named **'Enabled Elections'** focused on three key areas

- 1) Creating awareness among persons with disabilities on their rights, entitlements and responsibilities in exercising their civic duties
- 2) Lobbying with mainstream political parties to recognise the concerns of the community of persons with disabilities
- 3) Lobbying with other election monitoring bodies including international observers to include disability in their election monitoring activities

Significant **outcomes of the campaign** were:

- Drafting of a manifesto to assert the social, economic, political and cultural rights of persons with disabilities and the presentation of this to His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka Maithripala Sirisena on 4 August 2015
- Party Leader of Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna Mr Anura Kumara Dissanayaka on 5 August 2015
- Party Deputy Leader of the United National Party Minister Karu Jayasuriya on 13 August 2015
- A discussion with the Election Commissioner Mr Mahinda Deshapriya to follow up on the circular issued by the Elections Commissioner's office in May 2015 to ensure that at Grama Niladhari level (village administrative division) persons with disabilities are informed about applying for special provisions to ensure access on elections day
- Launching of a social media campaign through Enabled Elections Facebook page and Twitter
- Print media and electronic media features to communicate messages on the available provisions issued by the Elections Commissioner's office to ensure persons with disabilities has 'reasonable access' at polling stations
- Formulating accessible information and education material (braille flyers) for persons with disabilities on their Right to Vote, accessibility provisions they are entitled to at polling stations and how to lobby for these
- Formulate an informative video encouraging persons with disabilities, and their caregivers to ensure that their 'voice is heard' at the General Elections
- Two awareness raising workshops (Southern Province and Eastern Province) for leaders of Disabled Peoples Organisations, persons with disabilities and caregivers on the available provisions through the Elections Commissioner's circular, and informative session on 'how to vote' and extraction of recommendations/suggestions from participants to inform 'Enabled Elections' follow up action after the General Elections



DIALOGUES and SEMINARS

The “Justice Project” Seminar Series

5 – 6 June 2015

The ICES, in partnership with *Aakar* India, organised the Justice Project Seminar Series (Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), consisting of paper presentations and films. This seminar series emerged from a research project coordinated by *Aakar* aimed at building a series of dialogues across five countries in South Asia through films and research papers that map a range of contexts on ideas and practices of justice, as they take shape in different sites of South Asia.

“Women, Peace and Security: The Way Forward”

24 – 25 March 2015

2015 marked 15 years since the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution ‘1325’ on women, peace and security—a watershed in women’s empowerment, where for the first time, the impact of war on women and the role of women in conflict resolution, conflict management and peace-building were recognised at the international level. The ICES organised a discussion on the relevance and impact of the four pillars of UNSCR 1325—participation, protection, prevention and relief and recovery—in providing a gender-sensitive framework to understand peace, security and justice issues of women and girls in Sri Lanka. The lead author of the “UN Secretary-General’s Global Study on Women, Peace and Security: A 15-Year Review”, Ms Radhika Coomaraswamy who was inquiring into the experiences of and challenges in implementing Resolution ‘1325’, participated in the consultation. The discussion was moderated by Ambika Satkunanathan.

Realizing Women’s ESC Rights in Post-War Sri Lanka

25 August 2015

The International Centre for Ethnic Studies in collaboration with the Programme on Women’s Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (PWESCR) organised a panel discussion on ‘Realizing Women’s ESC (Economic, Social and Cultural) Rights in Post-War Sri Lanka’. The purpose of the discussion was to facilitate an exchange between local human rights defenders and international human rights activists who attended the PWESCR Training Programme in Colombo.

Bhavani Fonseka, Shyamala Gomez, Priya Thangarajah and Sabrina Esufally spoke on the challenges faced in Sri Lanka and the discussion was moderated by Ambika Satkunanathan.

Legislating and Implementing the Right to Information in Sri Lanka

3 – 4 December 2015

The International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES) and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), New Delhi, organised a consultation on the challenges of implementing the Right to Information in Sri Lanka. Earlier in 2015, Parliament introduced a 'Right to Information' by including Article 14A as a fundamental right. This was one of the changes introduced by the 19th Amendment to the Constitution. The amendment enables citizens to have access to information in the custody of a Ministry, government department, statutory body, Provincial level bodies, local authorities, and other state entities 'as provided for by law'. Since then a team of advisors had been helping the government prepare a Right to Information Law. Such a law will have to deal more specifically with how the right to information could be exercised and address, among other things, the circumstances in which information may be reasonably withheld, the circumstances in which government entities are proactively required to disclose information, and the procedures for a citizen to obtain information and seek review where the initial request is denied.

The 'December Consultation' focused on the following themes with a particular focus on international best practices: 1) Nature and scope of a Right to Information Law: what kinds of information and duty holders should be covered; 2) Nature and scope of the exceptions to the rule of disclosure: under what circumstances is it reasonable to withhold sensitive information; 3) Nature and scope of procedures for accessing information: timelines, forms of access, costs, kinds of information that must be proactively disclosed in a timely manner; 4) Mechanisms for redressing disputes 5) Establishment, constitution, composition, powers and functions of the autonomous entity that will oversee the implementation of the law: the proposed Information Commission; and 6) The penalty regime: sanctions against unreasonable refusal to disclose information or other contraventions of the provisions of the law.

The consultation was resourced by regional and international experts who have been engaged with promoting the right to information in their respective countries including Shailesh Gandhi, former Information Commissioner, India; Professor Rick Snell, University of Tasmania; Tanka Aryal, Citizens' Campaign for RTI, Nepal; Dr Shamsul Bari, Transparency Advisory Group and 'Research Initiatives', Bangladesh; Kalim Ullah, Information Commissioner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan; Thoriq Hamid, Transparency Maldives; Wajahat Habibullah, Former Chief Information Commissioner, India, and Venkatesh Nayak, Programme Coordinator, Access to Information, CHRI, India. The consultation was conducted in English with simultaneous interpretation into Sinhala and Tamil.

Stanley J. Tambiah Prominent Anthropologist Remembered

30 November 2015

The International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES) celebrated the work and life of the late Anthropology Professor Emeritus Stanley J. Tambiah, described by colleagues as one of the giants of 20th century anthropology and who was known for his studies of Buddhism and South Asia was held at the ICES Auditorium on 30 November 2015. Panelists at this event were: John D. Rogers, Historian and Director of the American Institute of Sri Lankan Studies; a close friend of Tambiah's, Gananath Obeyesekere, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, Princeton University; Sarath Amunugama, Minister of Special Assignments. Moderator Tissa Jayatilaka, Executive Director, U.S.-Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission. A large gathering inclusive of academics, senior government officials, journalists, researchers from NGOs and university students were present.

'The Villa': A Play by Guillermo Calderón

15 – 16 August 2015

In August ICES staged the play 'VILLA' written by Chilean playwright Guillermo Calderón at the ICES Auditorium in Colombo. The play featured Nushelle de Silva, Thanuja Jayawardene, and Indika Senanayake, was directed by Calderon and ran for two nights.

In this riveting play, three women find themselves on a commission that will decide the future of Villa Grimaldi—a notorious Augusto Pinochet-era torture site in Santiago, Chile, where thousands of people were detained and 'disappeared'. These women debate, argue, vote and re-vote, grappling with the challenge of raising a monument to the real and complex legacy of an authoritarian regime.

Guillermo Calderón, has been hailed by *The New Yorker* magazine as "an authentic genius of the theatre", and is considered to be Chile's foremost contemporary playwright. He visited Sri Lanka to direct this production, which was presented by ICES with the support of the Theatre Communications Group and the Alumnae Association of Mount Holyoke College.



DOCUMENTARIES

Short Documentary Films

These films were directed and produced by grass-root community groups from Ampara who were trained under the ICES programme, “Building Resilient Communities”.

The films depict the issues that threaten harmony in ethnically mixed communities and how those communities react and respond under such circumstances. While the films give important insights in to possible points of intervention that would prevent a misunderstanding from escalating into a conflict, they also show how new media tools can be effectively used by community leaders to help a community take a fresh look at issues that threaten harmony and coexistence.

The films are Sinhala and Tamil with English subtitles.

1. **The Rope** – Anthonipillai Nishanthan
The Rope deals with the issue of the escalation of suicide in Mannar during the post-war period as a result of psychological trauma. It shows how the protagonist contemplates suicide, but changes her mind after engaging with children from different ethnic groups. She realizes that her life holds more meaning and that her new friends will be a source of strength to her.
2. **The Judgment** – Suranga Kulatunge
The unending struggle of men and women in society where words, perceptions and ideologies have different faces.
3. **Let Her Fly** – Fathima Nafla
We are all born equal, without any identity markers. It is external factors such as religion and ethnicity that impose these ideologies on us. Women are especially susceptible to different social constructions, and are unable to break the barriers defined by these constructions.
4. **God must be Deaf** – Kaushalya Pathirana
A man wakes up from his sleep disturbed and irritated by the prayer from a Muslim mosque. He goes from door to door rallying people against it. This group led by a Buddhist monk plays Buddhist chanting using a loudspeaker. New actors enter this battle of sounds resulting in absolute chaos.
5. **At a Workshop** – K. Sanujan
Participants attend a workshop on peace building and meet people from different ethnicities. Since it is a resident workshop they are compelled to share lodgings, giving them the opportunity to experience the religious practices of the other and respect them.

6. **On the Way** – Kamal Nethmini
Three monks are on the way to a religious service for a dead soldier. On the way one monk's motorcycle runs out of fuel. The other monks continue their journey and on reaching their destination send help. In the meantime two Muslim individuals stop on seeing the monk in distress and attempt to help him. While they are examining the motorcycle, the Sinhalese men sent by the other monks arrive and assume that the Muslims are attacking the monk.
7. **The Boat** – Hasini Sandunika
This film deals with the issue of illegal migration that is rampant in Sri Lanka.
8. **Nursery** - Samanthi Yamuna
This is a documentary about a plant nursery in Ampara where Tamil and Sinhalese employees work in harmony selling plants to the rest of the community including Muslims.
9. **Dream** – Suminda Janaka
This film critiques the desire of the Sinhalese for a mono-ethnic society when in reality it is not so.
10. **Until the End** – Ruwanthi Saumya
This film is about the important role every individual has to play in society irrespective of ethnic identity and social class.

Advancing Truth and Justice in Sri Lanka

This documentary records the complex nature of seeking truth and pursuing justice in post-war Sri Lanka. Drawing from a series of dialogues with civil and political society on the issues of truth and justice conducted in different parts of the country by the International Centre for Ethnic Studies, the documentary emphasises the need for social healing, integration of communities, memorialisation and concrete responses to multiple claims for justice.

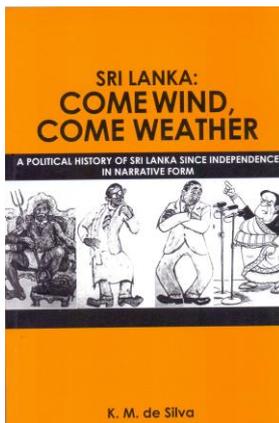
The documentary explores the practical aspect of truth seeking whereby focusing on 'complete truth' is impractical and hampers national development while, on the other hand, truth plays an integral role in coming to terms with the past, reconciliation and social healing. Despite these conflicting opinions expressed by the activists, academics and politicians in the documentary, the need for 'participation' and 'freedom of information' were highlighted as integral for reconciliation through which a common goal to have a better future can be built. Underlying this are the long standing and deep seated prejudices held by the different ethnic communities against each other. It is essential to build understanding and coexistence between these communities which will in turn facilitate a more effective reconciliation process.

PUBLICATIONS

The ICES has published almost 160 books, monographs and reports, which make it an important source of information on contemporary ideas. This also includes monographs and reports of workshops the ICES has conducted on human rights, religion, anthropology, politics, women's studies, sociology, judiciary in plural societies, education and ethnicity, and periodicals, research papers, working papers and lectures.

Publications in 2015

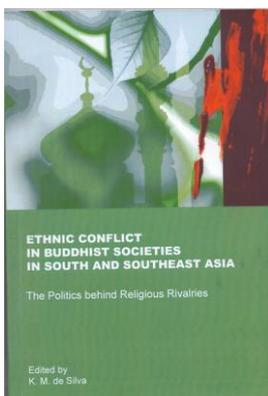
Books



Sri Lanka: Come Wind, Come Weather

A Political History of Sri Lanka since Independence in Narrative Form (Vol. One)
by K.M. de Silva, 2015 (pp. 227 + xix)

This book seeks to provide the beginnings of a comprehensive political history and could be treated as the first volume of Sri Lanka's post-colonial history in a narrative form. It deals with two other themes in Sri Lanka's history: first the far-reaching changes in Sri Lanka's land policies and revival of its irrigation system through the leadership, primarily of D.S. Senanayake; and just as important, the negotiations with Britain on the transfer of power through his leadership.

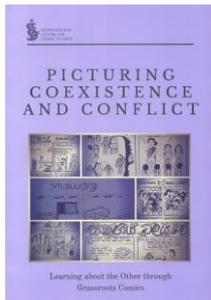


Ethnic Conflict in Buddhist Societies in South and Southeast Asia

The Politics behind Religious Rivalries
Edited by K.M. de Silva, 2015 (pp. 270 +xvi)

The book aims to examine the role of Buddhism as a factor of conflict in the three main Theravada Buddhist societies of South and Southeast Asia—Sri Lanka, Thailand and Myanmar.

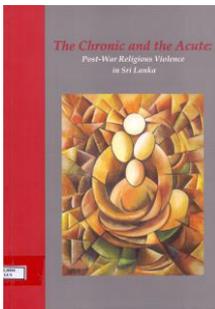
The dispute in this island had engaged the attention of Sri Lanka's political class for the two previous decades, while political analysts from Sri Lanka and others from various parts of the world examined the impact of Buddhism on the Sri Lanka polity and the prolonged ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. The situation in Thailand and Myanmar provided a convenient comparative basis in the reviews and in the literature in these three Buddhist societies.



Picturing Coexistence and Conflict: Learning about the Other through Grassroots Comics

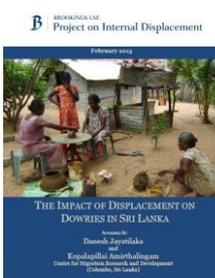
The wall poster and eight-pager comics in this publication, represent the experiences and perspectives of school children, teachers, village leaders, members of village-level women’s groups, journalists, moulavis and monks on religious and ethnic coexistence in the Galle District of Sri Lanka. The comics are introspective, self-critical and reflect multiple experiences of discrimination and communal harmony.

Initiated by the ICES and World Comics India (WCI), this publication is a modest attempt at exploring the potential of innovative media, created by and for the community, as a means of fostering meaningful and productive dialogue across religious and ethnic boundaries.



The Chronic and the Acute: Post-War Religious Violence in Sri Lanka
by Gehan Gunatilleke

The study examines the different types of religious attacks and the perpetrators involved; the legal and institutional framework pertaining to religious freedom in Sri Lanka; the socio-cultural, economic and political contexts in which religious violence occurred in Sri Lanka, and the roles that mainstream and social media played in promoting certain discourses relating to religious freedom and religious violence. The concluding section offers key observations and recommendations pertaining to religious freedom and religious violence.

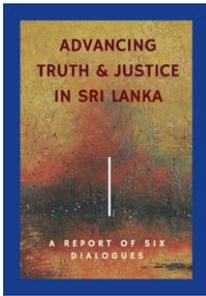


The Impact of Displacement on Dowries in Sri Lanka

by Danesh Jayatilaka

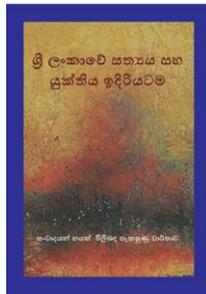
This study is based on a comprehensive desk review, supplemented by a limited number of interviews. As part of the desk review, the researchers examined the social science literature, including both printed materials and electronic sources. The researchers then consulted a number of academics and practitioners who had expertise on the topic and also conducted face-to-face interviews with four internally displaced families in the country’s Northern and Eastern provinces, three of which were headed by females.

Advancing Truth and Justice in Sri Lanka: A Report of Six Dialogues



The report documents, the discussions of six dialogues on transitional justice that were held in different parts of the country during 2015.

The discussions provided space for a broad group of stakeholders from civil and political society to explore the complexities of pursuing justice in a complex and volatile, post-war context. The aim of this series of dialogues was to enhance the quality of the public debate on transitional justice.



The long-term objective of this initiative was to contribute to the generation of an organic and relevant transitional justice process in Sri Lanka. This initiative sought to do this by providing space for key decision-makers from different communities to dialogue and debate the variety of different options that may be available, in order to forge a transitional justice process that is political feasible and sensitive to the peculiarities of the Sri Lankan conflict. Three independent experts from Bangladesh, Peru and South Africa, enriched the dialogues with global perspectives. The report documents and discussions which were published in English were also translated into Sinhala and Tamil languages and were published separately.



ICES Research Papers

ICES Research Paper No. 15 - November 2015

Self, Religion, Identity and Politics: Buddhist and Muslim Encounters in Contemporary Sri Lanka

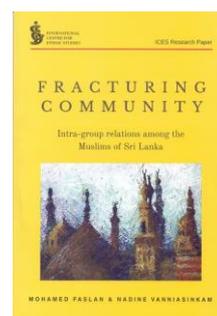
by Dhammika Herath and Harshana Rabukwella



ICES Research Paper No. 16 - November 2015

Fracturing Community: Intra-Group Relations among the Muslims of Sri Lanka

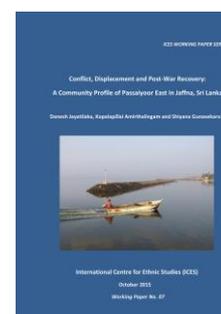
by Mohamad Faslan and Nadine Vanniasinkam



Working Paper No. 7 - October 2015

Conflict, Displacement and Post-War Recovery: A Community Profile of Passaiyoor East in Jaffna, Sri Lanka

by Danesh Jayatilaka, Kopalapillai Amirthalingam and Shiyana Gunasekara



This study is based on a comprehensive community profile conducted in a war-affected fishing village called Passaiyoor East in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. The village is one of 25 Grama Niladari Divisions in the Jaffna Divisional Secretariat and the research sets out to understand the scope of the inhabitants' recovery and the strategies they used to achieve it after their resettlement.

LECTURES, DISCUSSIONS and WORKSHOPS

- “The Role of the State in Economic Reform in Sri Lanka” by Dr Indrajit Coomaraswamy on 25 February 2015
- “Contemporary Debates in Human Rights History” by Dr Vasuki Nesiah on 23 March 2015
- Felicitating Distinguished Writer and Poet Jean Arasanayagam, organised by English Writers Cooperative of Sri Lanka (EWC) and ICES. Key speakers Professor Ashley Halpe and Professor Ranjini Obeyesekere on 31 March 2015
- “Impact of Displacement on Dowries in Sri Lanka” on 1 April 2015 Professor Tudor Silva (Department of Sociology, University of Peradeniya), Dr Sepali Kottegoda (Director, Women and Media Collective) and Dr Vagisha Gunasekara (Senior Research Professional, Centre for Poverty Analysis) with Mr Danesh Jayatilaka (Research Fellow, ICES) and Dr Kopalapillai Amirthalingam (Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, University of Colombo)
- The 19th Amendment to the Constitution Roundtable Discussion led by Mr Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, Dr Jehan Perera and Ms Dinesha Samararatne on 8 April 2015
- Discussion on the 19th Amendment led by Professor Savithri Goonasekere (Professor of Law and former Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo) and Dr Deepika Udagama (Head Department of Law, University of Peradeniya) on 9 April 2015 (Kandy)
- Professor Gananath Obeyesekere on his forthcoming book “The Doomed King: A Requiem for Vikrama Rajasinha” on 7 May 2015
- A second Discussion on the 19th Amendment titled “The Political and Legal Implications of the 19th Amendment” led by Dr Jayampathi Wickremeratne (President’s Counsel in Sri Lanka and the leader of the three-member team that prepared the 19th Constitutional, Amendment) and Professor Gamini Keerawella (Senior Professor of Modern History, and Former Head of Department of History University of Peradeniya) on 28 May 2015 (Kandy)
- “Art and Survival” by Dr Sonali Deraniyagala on 22 June 2015
- “Displaying South Asian Heritage: The Global Nataraja Image” (an illustrated talk) by Professor Karen Pechilis (Professor of Religious Studies, Drew University USA) on 28 June 2015 (Kandy)
- “Restorative Justice and Truth Commissions in Sierra Leone and Peru” by Dr Rebekka Friedman on 11 August 2015
- “Pogroms and Riots: 100 Years” by Professor Kumari Jayawardena, Mr Ahilan Kadirgamar, Mr Vijay Nagaraj and Dr Farah Haniffa on 24 August 2015

- “An Analysis of the Victim and Witness Protection Law: The Need for Further Reform” Panel Discussion by Ms Aruni Jayakody, Mr Ruki Fernando (Human Rights activists) and Mr Gehan Gunatilleke (Lawyer) on 2 September 2015
- Discussion on “Obergefell v. Hodges The Historic U.S. Supreme Court Ruling on Same-Sex Marriages” on 15 September 2015 led by Ms Priya Thangarajah (Lawyer Activist), Ms Rosanna Flamer-Caldera (Executive Director, Equal Ground) and Ms Nehama Jayewardene (Attorney-at-Law)
- Launch of two books: *Sri Lanka: Come Wind, Come Weather, A Political History of Sri Lanka since Independence in Narrative Form* by Professor K.M. de Silva (2015); and *Ethnic Conflict in Buddhist Societies in South and Southeast Asia: The Politics behind Religious Rivalries* edited by Professor K.M. de Silva on 17 December 2015 at ICES Kandy Auditorium

FILM SCREENINGS

The ICES has a monthly film screening and also screens documentaries and conducts regular film festivals.

Films screened in 2015:

- The Broken Circle Breakdown – 29 January
- The Grand Budapest Hotel – 27 February
- Ida – 29 April 2015
- Winter Sleep – 29 June
- Monsieur Ibrahim – 29 July
- Human Capital – 28 August
- Timbuktu – 30 September

Film Festivals

- International Women's Day Film Festival from 11–13 March (Kandy)
Films screened: Bol, Twin Sisters, Wadja
- International Women's Day Film Festival from 18–20 March (Colombo)
Films screened: Hannah Arendt, Provoked, Born into Brothels, India's Daughter

VISITING SCHOLARS/AFFILIATES

- Dr Mumin Chen, Associate Professor, Graduate Institute of International Politics, National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan (January – February 2015)
- Ms Jasmine Mitchell, MA candidate, Kings College, London (7 July – 20 July 2015)
- Dr Rebekka Friedman, Lecturer, Department of War Studies, Kings College, London (Mid July – 31 August 2015)
- Ms Rapti Ratnayake, University of Edinburgh, Asia Foundation LankaCorps Fellow (2 July – 31 December 2015)
- Ms Shiyana Gunasekera, Pitzer College, Fulbright Scholar (January – 31 August 2015)

VISITING FELLOWS

Dr Shermal Wijewardene, Lecturer, University of Colombo (June 2015)

WEBSITE

The ICES website was re-designed in order to reflect the mandate of the institution as a research centre. The ICES team worked closely with the web designing team *rukizone* to come up with a suitable template that would show case the work ICES has done in the past and is currently engaged in. The interface was made more user-friendly and also incorporated photographs/videos directly on the homepage so that all interested stakeholders will get a very clear indication regarding the work of ICES. The projects and gallery are also presented thematically to convey that ICES works across a wide range of thematic areas including women and development, disability, religious co-existence, transitional justice and urban development.

The events calendar was also designed so as to highlight and give prominence to the different movie screenings, literary evening and panel discussions hosted by ICES. The ICES publications are also featured on the website, and can be accessed directly by scholars, academics, students and all other interested parties. An archive is also available to access all past research of the organisation. The library and auditorium facilities have also been given more prominence on the website so as to promote their usage. It was felt that the library is under-utilised and needs to be showcased so that more researchers, academics and students can benefit from its wealth of materials. The facilities in the auditorium have also been listed so that it will continue to be used for diverse discussions, screenings and plays.

LIBRARY

The two libraries in Colombo and Kandy constitute the central academic facility of the Centre, both in resources and standing as the repository of knowledge. The library specialises in social sciences and women's studies with strong collections on ethnicity, culture and history. It also has an excellent collection on law, religion, anthropology, transitional justice and fiction. It contains one of the best collections on ethnicity and identity politics in the country. The library holdings include material usually unavailable to scholars from the Asian region.

The library plays an important role in all academic activities of ICES. It is not only used by the research staff of the Centre, but also serves scholars, academics, senior government officials, politicians, media people, universities and other research institutes.

The catalogue is being computerised and will enable better access to the collection in the future. Readers can also make use of the Wi-Fi internet connection in the library.

AUDITORIUM

The ICES auditorium which initially started in a 'thatched patio' in the previous building adjacent has over these 34 years been transformed into a modern and attractive facility. Over these years it has been the site of a number of conversations, academic discussions, film screenings and poetry readings on a variety of topics from constitutional reform to displacement to religious freedom to plays and exhibitions 'about the past'.

The auditorium's facilities have been recently enhanced by adding a state-of-the-art sound system, two ceiling mounted projectors and two screens at both ends of the hall. It also has facilities for simultaneous interpretation and a patio for informal discussions and receptions. Maximum seating capacity is for approximately 90 persons. The area has Wi-Fi coverage as well. A generator has been recently added.

Consequently, the venue has been sought by organisations for its seminars, academic discussions and film screenings. It has emerged as an 'alternative site' for a broad range of academic and artistic activities.

STAFF

Executive Director

Mario Gomez

Administrative, Finance, IT and Library

Ponnudurai Thambirajah – Chief Librarian

B. M. Mowsil – PA to the Executive Director

Gallage Ayoma Shyamalee – Finance Officer

Bhagya Wijayasooriya – Accounts Executive

Dimuth Geethananda – Assistant Librarian/IT Officer

Lakmali Alwis – Assistant Librarian

Anthony Christopher – Receptionist

Kandiah Raveendran – Office Assistant

Rengasamy Arumugam – Office Assistant

Chalani Lokugamage – Finance and Administration Manager

Iranga Silva – Publications Officer and Managing Editor, IJESS – Kandy

Vasantha Premaratne – Programme Coordinator - Kandy

Samarakoon Bandara – Administrative/Accounts Executive – Kandy

Niranjala Sarojini – Librarian – Kandy

Saleeka Peiris – Secretary and Receptionist – Kandy

R. Wasantha Jayawathie – Office Assistant – Kandy

Research and Programme Staff

Chulani Kodikara – Senior Researcher

Kasun Pathiraja – Senior Project Coordinator

Asela Ekanayake – Programme Officer

Danesh Jayatilaka – Research Fellow

Samitha Hettige – Senior Programme Officer (*till 14 August 2015*)

Faslan Mohamed – Programme Officer

Nadine Vanniasinkam – Programme Officer

Dinushka Jayawickreme – Programme Officer (*from 20 January 2015*)

Ranmini Vithanagama – Researcher (*from 1 February 2015*)

Kethaki Kandaneerachchi – Programme Officer (*from 1 June 2015*)

Avanthi Upekshi Kalansooriya – Programme Officer (*from 8 June to 8 September 2015*)

Nirmi Vitarana – Researcher (*from 1 November 2015*)

Emeritus Fellow

Radhika Coomaraswamy

Research Fellow

Nireka Weeratunga

FINANCE: KANDY/COLOMBO

Private & Confidential

B.R.DE SILVA & CO.
Chartered Accountants



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR ETHNIC STUDIES

1. Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of International Centre for Ethnic Studies, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2015, and the statement of Income and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and, Statement of Cash Flow for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

2. Board's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

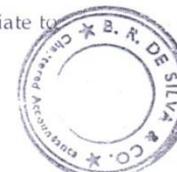
The Board of Directors ("Board") is responsible for the preparation of these financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with Sri Lanka Accounting Standards for SME's, and for such internal controls as Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

3. Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by Board, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.



Partners - N.S.C. De Silva FCA, FCMA(UK), L.C.Piyasena FCA, LL.S. Wickremasinghe FCA,
F.S.N. Marikkar FCA, S.M.S.S. Bandara MBA, FCA, D.S. De Silva LL.B./Attorney-at-Law
ACA, ACMA(UK)
Partner (Kandy) W.L.L. Perera FCA.

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4. Opinion

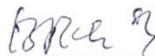
In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Company as at March 31, 2015, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Sri Lanka Accounting Standards for SME's.

Without qualifying our opinion we draw attention to Note No. 26 to the Financial Statements.

5. Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

As required by section 163 (2) of the Companies Act No. 07 of 2007, we state the following:

- a) The basis of opinion and scope and limitations of the audit are as stated above.
- b) In our opinion :
 - We have obtained all the information and explanations that were required for the audit and, as far as it appears from our examination, proper accounting records have been kept by the Company.
 - The financial statements of the Company, comply with the requirements of section 151 of the Companies Act No. 07 of 2007.


B. R. DE SILVA & CO.
Chartered Accountants

Date:..... 23/09/2015

LCP/NM/lr/74/07



International Centre for Ethnic Studies

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