



Editor

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# OPA NEWS

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## Director Commonwealth Foundation visits OPA



**Mr. Vijay Krishnarayan**, Director Commonwealth Foundation met the President and members of the OPA on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2013 at the OPA auditorium. Over hundred professionals were present.

Mr. Benedict Ulluvishewa, President OPA welcomed Mr. Krishnarayan.

The Director CF said that the Commonwealth Foundation is an Inter-Governmental agency established in 1965.

He explained the specific objects of his visits to Sri Lanka

- To organize preparations before the Commonwealth Heads of Government Ministers in Sri Lanka (CHOGM)
- To make logistical and technical support for the Commonwealth Peoples Forum (CPF) that will be held from 10 – 14 November in Hikkaduwa
- To raise an awareness among Civil Society organizations including Govt. organizations in relation to CPF and importance of their participation
- To develop a programme for the CPF to discuss issues raised by Civil Society especially in Sri Lanka, but including all Commonwealth countries.

- To make the voice of the Civil Society felt at the Commonwealth Ministers' Meeting in Sri Lanka

The theme of the CPF in Sri Lanka has been selected as "Development"  
This coincides with the theme "future of development" global conversation taking place currently.  
It is anticipated that the outcome of the CHOGM will bring many benefits to Sri Lanka.

The meeting was followed by a reception and dinner

## Meet the Minister Programmes



President OPA Mr. B. Ulluvishewa presents a plaque to Dr. Sarath Amunugama

The OPA conducted three Programmes in the series "Meet the minister". The first was on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2013 with Mr Champika Ranawaka, Minister of Environment, the second with Dr. Sarath Amunugama,

Minister of International Monetary Co-operation and Deputy Minister of Finance, on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2013. He deliberated on the current economic environment in the country and on means to enhance its states to suit the global economic surge.

It was stated that a special World Bank report on Sri Lanka in a bid to accelerate growth prospects and propel its economy towards an emerging nation will be released soon.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> in the series was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2013 with the Minister of Health Mr. Maitripala Sirisena.

He said when he took over there was no National Health Policy. A 5 year National Health Policy was prepared and submitted to HE the President. The Minister has attended several fora abroad and observed that our health services are regarded in high esteem in those countries. Many questions are directed to him. Sri Lanka is preferred to even train personnel in the health sector, in our region.

He said it is a matter for regret that some officers purposely create drug shortages as well as delay tenders to feather their nests. They often resort to emergency purchases at exorbitant prices.

Although there is lot criticism for not eradicating Dengue, no Asian country has so far halted the spread of the disease.

The fight against Dengue can be won only by having a clean environment. Spread of Dengue is promoted by the scrap heaps of big organizations like the CGR and CTB. In Cuba, he said there is a special army to visit houses and eradicate Dengue in that country.

We have to educate the people to prevent rather than treat diseases. Diabetes and High blood pressure are on the increase as people exert themselves much less than our forefathers.

Although our medical personnel are highly capable, in fighting among some of them has delayed kidney transplant and liver transplant programmes.

Speaking on the National Drug Policy, the Minister said that although it was passed in 2006, it has not seen the light of day yet! The legal draughtsman who handled the matter has retired and along with her the relevant document has also disappeared!

### **A Page for Member Associations**

At the request of Member associations OPA News will publish news and activities pertaining to Member Associations. A page will be allocated for this purpose. Presidents/Secretaries of Member Associations are requested to send in News items for publication, in the OPA News. These items may be items pertaining to your institution/ profession, but should preferably be of interest to the general membership. Any future programmes and activities should be intimated to the OPA by email to [opasrilanka@gmail.com](mailto:opasrilanka@gmail.com), for the attention of Dulanthi, well in advance as the newsletter takes about 3-4 weeks for the preparation, printing and posting. The items will be published on a first come basis as the space permits. The next issue is due in September 2013.

### **2nd Meeting with Presidents of Member Associations**

The OPA Presidents and Office Bearers met with the Presidents of Member Associations on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013 at the OPA Auditorium.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Benedict Ulluwishewa, President, OPA.

It was noted that there is some Progress regarding the decisions taken at the last meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2013.

1. Draft Standing Orders have been prepared for the better conduct of Meetings which are being currently discussed at the meetings of the Ex-Co.
2. Introduction of a Management Committee is being discussed to deal with the Management of the Centre so that the Ex-Co and Forum will have more time to devote on achieving the objectives of the OPA.

The following were suggested:

- The OPA could circulate a Newsletter among Member Associations once in three months
  - There is a difference between OPA Members and Centre Members which needs to be addressed properly in order to avoid confusion.
  - To rethink the charging of Municipal Rates and also a special rate when hiring Halls to Member Associations.
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- To organize more Social Activities so that more Members will be able to patronize the Restaurant and Bar.
  - a more conducive atmosphere was required for the Members to feel that the OPA is part of theirs.
  - the OPA organizes activities to bring all Associations together and facilitate interaction amongst Members.
  - to look into the parking problem which is very critical at times.
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- organizing some events in the outstations
  - To circulate a summary of decisions taken at the meeting.
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- not to issue statements to the press on National Issues without consulting Member Associations
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- the OPA should submit their views with the concurrence of all Member Associations..
  - to charge a higher rate from outsiders for using the Auditorium, Conference Room and other facilities at the Centre.
  - the need for assisting Member Associations and working together with them
  - to inform the Members about the facilities that were available at the Centre and to invest on improving the facilities so as to attract more Members to the Centre that will bring in more revenue to the Restaurant and Bar as well as the OPA

The General Secretary thanked everyone present for having come for the meeting inspite of their busy schedule of work.

### **Six a Side Cricket Tournament**

Six a Side Cricket Tournament amongst Member Associations will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2013 at Wesley College Grounds. Member Associations are requested to participate and provide competition at this tournament.

## **Annual Conference and National Apex Awards Ceremony**

Annual Conference combined with National Apex Awards Ceremony will be held at the Kingsbury, Colombo, on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013. The annual Conference will be inaugurated on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013. The theme of the conference is “Human Capital Towards 2020”. The Technical Sessions will be held on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013

### **Technical Sessions**

#### **“Human Capital Towards 2020”**

**Date : 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

**Venue : *The Kingsbury Colombo- Sri Lanka***

**Chief Guest: HE Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka**

#### **Session I - “ Future of Sri Lanka Education System”**

**i) Human Capital Requirements for Sri Lanka to be the Wonder of Asia**

Prof. Lalith Gamage, Chairman/CEO, Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology

**ii) Lessons from Malaysian Experience**

#### **Session II- “Gearing the Next Generation for Enhancing Human Capital”**

**i) Innovation Towards Enhancing Employability**

**ii) Reforms for a Knowledge Economy**

Prof. Uditha Liyanage, Director, Postgraduate Institute of Management

#### **Session III- “Building Competencies for 2020”**

**i) IT and BPO**

Dr. Arul Sivagananathan, Managing Director, Heyleys, Business Solutions International(Pvt) Ltd

**ii) Tourism and Hospitality**

Mr Sirilal Miththapala, Project Director/Consultant, The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce Solutions (Pvt) Ltd

#### **Session IV – Panel Discussion- “Vision 2020”**

**i) Mr Hiran Cooray, Chairman, Jetwing Hotel**

**ii) Mr Reshan Devapura, CEO, Information Communication Technology Agency**

**iii) Dr Rohan Fernando, Director, Head of Business Development Aitken Spence**

## **Issue of Car Labels to Members**

Car labels are now issued to Life Members. Each Life Member will be entitled to one car label. These are available at the OPA Secretariat, at a cost of Rs.50/- per Label.

## **Skills Upgrading Workshop**



A Skills Upgrading Workshop was conducted by the OPA in collaboration with the Department of Technical Education & Training for Semi Skilled Craftsman engaged in the Building Industry on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at the Technical College, Embilipitiya.

Mr. Benedict Ulluwishewa, President of the OPA attended with Mr. D V P Y Kulatunga, Additional Director General –Department of Technical Education & Training and Mr. Ranjith Athukorala, Lanka Tile(Pvt) Ltd

### **Programme for August 2013**

Aug 5<sup>th</sup> - Seminar on Art of Living

Aug 8<sup>th</sup> - Joint seminar with QRSSL

Aug 16<sup>th</sup> Meet the Opposition – Mr. Eran Wickremanayake

Aug 28<sup>th</sup> - Joint Seminar with SLIA

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As I hurtled through space, one thought kept crossing my mind - every part of this rocket was supplied by the lowest bidder.

- John Glenn

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When the white missionaries came to Africa they had the Bible and we had the land. They said 'Let us pray.'

We closed our eyes. When we opened them we had the Bible and they had the land.

- Desmond Tutu

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America is the only country where a significant proportion of the population believes that professional wrestling is real but the moon landing was faked.

- David Letterman

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After the game, the King and the Pawn go into the same box.

- Italian proverb

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When a man opens a car door for his wife, it's either a new car or a new wife.

- Prince Philip

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Having more money doesn't make you happier. I have 50 million dollars but I'm just as happy as when I had 48 million.

- Arnold Schwarzenegger

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I don't believe in astrology. I am a Sagittarius and we're very skeptical.

- Arthur C Clarke

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America is so advanced that even the chairs are electric.

- Doug Hamwell