



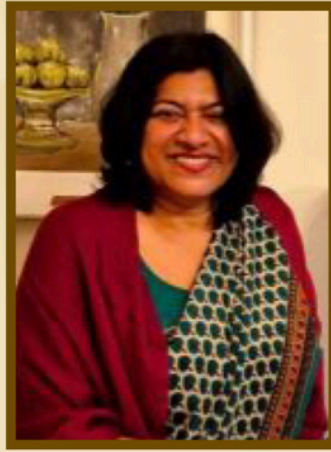
“THORATHURU”

**Sri Lanka Association Of New South Wales
Newsletter Special Christmas Edition 2025**





**Christmas and New Year Message
from
Her Excellency Yasoja Gunasekera
High Commissioner Of the Democratic Socialist Republic Of Sri Lanka to Australia**



***Dear Members of the Sri Lanka Association of New South Wales Inc,
I extend my warmest greetings and best wishes to you and your families on the
joyous occasion of Christmas and the New Year.***

***I would also like take this opportunity to express appreciation for the
contributions of the Sri Lankan community in New South Wales, towards
strengthening the friendship between Sri Lanka and Australia.***

***Yasoja Gunasekera
High Commissioner***



Christmas and New Year Message from the newly elected committee.

Dear SLANSW members

As we celebrate the season of Christmas and welcome the New Year, we extend our warmest greetings to you and your families on behalf of the newly elected President and Committee of the Sri Lanka Association of New South Wales.

This festive season also reminds us of the hardships faced by many in Sri Lanka due to recent disasters. Our thoughts and prayers are with all affected families, and we sincerely thank our members for the compassion, generosity, and unity shown through continued support and relief efforts.

Christmas calls us to reflect on love, peace, and compassion, while the New Year inspires hope, unity, and renewal. Let us move forward together, embracing harmony and inclusiveness, and strengthening our commitment to serving our community in Australia and those in need in Sri Lanka.

May this season bring peace to every heart, comfort to those who suffer, and renewed hope for the year ahead.

Merry Christmas and a Happy, Peaceful New Year.

Saliya Jennehoon

President on behalf of the SLANSW Committee



SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

Year 2025/2026

Newly Elected Committee

President
SALIYA TENNEKON

Vice President
HARAN PERERA

Vice President
KASUN HAPUTHANTHRI

Secretary
UPEKA PASQUAL

Treasurer
THILAK EKANAYAKE

Public Officer/Secretary
PUSHPAMADHURI ARAMPATTA

Editor
DEVNI GOONARATNE

Committee Members

SRIYANI TENNEKON
SHAMILA LINDSAY WHITE
SIVALINGAM SRIKANDAKUMAR
BUDDHIKA ABEYWARDHANA
MARITA SILVA
SHEYANA LA BROOY
NAMAL DINESH

Trustees
Mr. Ananda Amaranath
Mr. Kalinga Wijeyewardene

Honorary Auditor
Mr. Eliya Arumainathan



"As the newly appointed committee, we are committed to high standard of service to our community.

Any issues raised at the AGM will be addressed in a timely manner, with the support of the previous committees and with the utmost respect for all members.

Your feedback and suggestions are most welcome.



President

Introducing the new committee

Saliya Tennakoon is an experienced event professional with over three decades in event management, production, and creative design.

He is the Chairman & Director of Event360 (Pty) Ltd, Australia (since 2012), delivering corporate and destination events for Australian and offshore clients. He is also the proprietor of Butterfly Avenue and Crafts with Love Australia.

From 1995–2012, he founded and led Shans Entertainment (Pvt) Ltd, Star Promotions, and SPARX Digital Recording Studio in Sri Lanka leading event and entertainment brands. From 2000 to 2012, he also served as Event Manager for Asia Broadcasting Corporation, managing promotions across five radio channels, and previously handled major promotions for Maharaja Broadcasting Corporation (Sirasa FM & YES FM).

An old boy of St Benedict's College, Colombo, Saliya has a strong background in youth leadership and community service through the Colombo YMCA, where he served as the youngest Director (1988/89). He has represented Sri Lanka at international youth forums, including Canada (1979) and the World Youth Conference, Aruba (1989), and has been actively involved in theatre, street drama, and community rehabilitation projects.

After migrating to Australia in 2011 under the Business Migration Programme, Saliya has remained deeply engaged in community, cultural, and multicultural service. He has served on government-linked business and cultural committees, supported major health and humanitarian projects (including equipping Colombo Apeksha Hospital), and held leadership roles with organisations such as the Sinhalese Cultural Forum Inc. and the Sri Lanka Association of NSW (SLANSW), where he has served as Committee Member, Editor, and Vice President (two terms).

He played a key creative and production role in SLANSW's 50th Anniversary celebrations (2023), managed over 23 online engagement programmes during COVID-19 to support seniors and members, and has been a long-standing supporter of SLANSW Seniors programmes. He is the Founder of Golden Wattle Multicultural Events Inc., actively supporting NSW multicultural and Buddhist community events, and has produced multicultural concerts at the NSW Parliament Theatre.

Saliya has also led major cultural initiatives including the first-ever Digital Mega Pandol (Thorana) in Sydney, co-ordinated bushfire relief fundraising donating \$35,000 to the NSW Fire Brigade, founded the MUZIK Café Sydney creative platform for emerging singers, served as Festival Director of the South Asian Film, Arts & Literature Festival (NSW) for three consecutive years, and currently oversees seniors' programmes as a Board Director – Programmes of AASHA Australia Foundation. In recognition of his service, he was nominated for the NSW Volunteer of the Year Award (2024).





Introducing the new committee



Vice President

KASUN HAPUTHANTHRI is an experienced, people focused leader known for guiding teams through complex and demanding environments with calm, grounded direction. He brings a steady approach to organisational delivery and change, and is currently serving as the Acting Chief Information Officer for HammondCare, an aged care organisation with 6000+ staff and 45,000 clients.



Vice President

HARAN PERERA is a Sydney-based entrepreneur engaged in engineering and infrastructure projects, including government-related work, with professional collaborations across Japan, Singapore, and the Middle East. He is also a respected community leader who has served in many community based associations in New South Wales.



Secretary

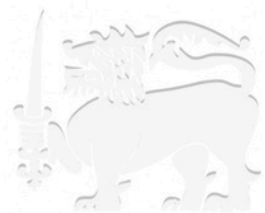
UPEKA PASQUAL joins the Sri Lanka Association of NSW Committee for 2025/2026, bringing with her strong experience in public service and a genuine passion for community and culture.

She currently works as an Administrative Officer at a leading public hospital in Northern Sydney and has nearly seven years of experience in the Australian public sector. Her professional background began in administration in Sri Lanka, followed by further studies in hotel and business management in Australia.

A Life Member of SLANSW and a past committee member (2019/2020), Upeka has remained actively involved in the Association's activities. She is also deeply connected to the arts, with interests in theatre, drama, community performances, and singing with a vocal group led by a renowned Sri Lankan musician.

Upeka looks forward to contributing positively to the Association and working together to strengthen community bonds and celebrate Sri Lankan culture in NSW.





Introducing the new committee



MDHURI ARAMPATTA is a dedicated community leader with a strong commitment to serving and empowering the community.

Having lived in Sydney for nearly three decades, she has built her professional career in the banking industry, specialising in credit solutions. Alongside her career, Madhu has actively served in leadership roles across several community organisations over the past decade, gaining valuable experience and insight into community development.

Public Officer/Secretary

She looks forward to contributing meaningfully to the Sri Lanka Association of NSW and supporting its continued growth and service to the community.



Treasurer

THILAK EKANAYAKE is a Telecommunications Engineer who has worked with leading service providers in Sydney. Alongside his professional career, he has been a committed social worker, actively supporting numerous Australian–Sri Lankan community organisations.

Thilak is currently serving in a full-time voluntary role with the Lanka Rama Temple Committee, where he dedicates his time and expertise to supporting the temple's administration and the conduct of religious and spiritual programmes for the community.



Editor

DEVNI GOONARATNE is a passionate creative director and designer with a fresh outlook and a love for bold, meaningful design. As the creative mind behind Amoda Designs, she enjoys turning ideas into visually engaging stories. Growing up with a mother who is an accomplished author and book writer, Devni was surrounded by creativity, imagination, and storytelling from a young age. This influence shines through in her work, where design is not just about visuals, but about expressing a story, a feeling, and a voice.





Introducing the new committee



SHEYANA LA BROOY is an experienced higher education professional driving business agility, capacity building, inclusion and strategic engagement in tertiary education. She holds a Master of International Studies, a Bachelor of Commerce and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Sydney. She is an Operations Manager within the Faculty of Arts at Macquarie University and the Institutional Coordinator for the Association of Tertiary Education Management. Sheyana is looking forward to applying her skills and experience to support the association, and has a special interest in education-led initiatives.



SRIYANI TENNEKOON

Veteran Art & Craft Instructor | Internationally Renowned Quilt Artist | Cloth Doll Designer | Floral Designer | Gospel Song Lyricist | Author

Sriyani Tennekoon is a veteran Art & Craft Instructor and internationally recognized quilt artist known for her mastery in patchwork, embroidery, and cloth doll design. With over three decades of experience in Sri Lanka and Australia, she has inspired countless students through her workshops, exhibitions, and creative mentorship. A gifted floral designer, gospel song lyricist, and author, Sriyani is dedicated to preserving traditional craftsmanship while empowering communities especially women and young learners to discover their own creative potential.



BUDDHIKA ABEYWARDHANA is a driven and ambitious entrepreneur with a proven track record in building and leading successful businesses. As the Co-Founder and Director of Spread Wings Travels, established in 2017, he has been instrumental in developing the company into a trusted and respected name within the travel industry.

In 2023, he expanded his entrepreneurial portfolio by founding Mr B Rentals Pty Ltd, where he also serves as Director, introducing innovative solutions and delivering exceptional service to the car-rental market.

With hands-on leadership, a clear business vision, and a passion for creating customer-centric enterprises, Buddhika continues to excel as a dynamic entrepreneur dedicated to excellence, innovation, and long-term growth.





Introducing the new committee



NAMAL DINESH brings over 20 years of experience in software development, specialising in object oriented analysis, design, and enterprise application development.

His expertise spans the full software lifecycle, including analysis, design, development, re-engineering, testing, and delivery of mission critical systems.



SHAMILA LINDSAY WHITE is a Senior IT Software Manager at Telstra, Australia's leading telecommunications and technology company. A graduate of the University of New South Wales (Bachelor of Computer Science – Honours), she began her career as a graduate and has built a strong professional pathway in the technology sector.

Alongside her career, Shamila has a long-standing passion for music and the arts, having performed in musical shows from a young age and continuing to develop her creative interests alongside her professional life.



MARITA SILVA Experienced education and childcare leader with over 20 years' local and international expertise in childcare management, disability-inclusive education, and early childhood development. Proven track record in leading high-performing teams, managing operations, and ensuring compliance with regulatory, safety, and audit standards.

Currently the CEO and founder of Celestia Disability services pty Ltd



SIVALINGAM SRIKANDAKUMAR With over two decades of experience in Sri Lanka's media industry, Sri, popularly known in Colombo as "Captain Sri," has built a distinguished career as a radio DJ, news anchor, and senior media professional across several of the country's leading broadcast networks. After completing his Master's degree at the University of London (UK), he returned to Sri Lanka and played a key role in the establishment and growth of several start-up radio channels, serving in senior management roles and helping shape their vision, culture, and audience engagement.

In 2020, Sri migrated to Australia and embraced a new professional journey, following a lifelong passion for understanding and working with dogs. Now based in Sydney, he is a professional dog behavioural trainer. By blending the communication skills refined through years in the media with a deep respect for animal behaviour, Sri supports families and their canine companions with empathy, clarity, and professionalism.





Trustees



Mr.KALINGA WIJEYWARDENA

Admitted to practice as a lawyer in Sri Lanka, England & Wales and New South Wales. Began his career as State Counsel in the Attorney Generals Department, Sri Lanka. Lawyer in Australia since 1984 and Legal Counsel, Telstra since 1989 to date, including International Counsel Asia South, China; Global Wholesale Counsel; Dispute Resolution Counsel ; Director of Telstra overseas subsidiaries – Telstra South Asia Holdings Ltd (Mauritius), Modi Telstra Pvt Ltd (India), Olex – Telstra JV (Pakistan), Mobitel Pvt Ltd (Sri Lanka); Actg CEO Mobitel, Director Corporate Affairs and Sales, Mobitel.

Member of Toastmasters International District 90 NSW and President Killara Toastmasters Club 2021-22, 2022-23, Area Director 2021-22, 2022-23, Hawkesbury Division Director 2023-24, 2024-25 Conference Chair 2025-26. Member of Sri Lanka Association of NSW Inc since 1985 and Secretary of the SLA in 1986-87, 2021-22, 2022-23 and President of SLA 2023-24, Trustee 2025-26.



Mr.ANANDA AMARANATH is a highly respected legal professional with over four decades of service, known for his integrity, compassion, and commitment to the community. He served for 27 years as a Senior Prosecutor with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, NSW, handling a wide range of matters that directly impacted individuals, families, and community wellbeing.

Admitted as a Solicitor and Barrister in New South Wales, and also in England and Wales, Ananda has further contributed his expertise internationally through senior legal roles in Sri Lanka and Seychelles. Throughout his career, he has been recognised for managing sensitive and complex matters with care, discretion, and fairness, offering practical guidance during difficult times. Ananda continues to be valued as a trusted legal practitioner whose work reflects a strong belief in justice, service, and giving back to the community.

Honorary Auditor

ELIYA ARUMAINATHAN

Accountant and Registered Tax Agent(Australia)
FIPA (Australia) & FIPA (U.K)





Sri Lanka Association Of New South Wales Inc. Higher School Certificate-High Achievers Recognition Programme

NOTICE

The Sri Lanka Association of New South Wales Inc. (SLANSW) extends its warmest congratulations to all students who sat for the Higher School Certificate (HSC).

As part of the Association's High Achievers Special Recognition Programme, SLANSW invites eligible students to register for formal recognition of their outstanding academic achievement, subject to the following criteria:

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- A. The student must have achieved an ATAR of 95 or above
- B. The student must be of Sri Lankan descent

REGISTRATION DETAILS

Eligible students are requested to email the following information to the Public Officer: publicofficer@slansw.org.au

- Full Name
- School Attended
- ATAR Achieved
- Contact Details (Mobile number and/or Email address)

CLOSING DATE

All registrations must be submitted on or before 1st March 2026.

Please note that only students who register within the stipulated timeframe will be considered. Further details regarding the award ceremony will be communicated to registered candidates in due course.

Sheyana La Brooy

Coordinator

High Achievers Recognition Programme



Sri Lanka Association Of New South Wales Inc.

P.O Box 114, Castle Hill NSW 1765.
ABN 76983916417

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

The Sri Lanka Association of New South Wales (SLANSW) wishes to formally advise all members that, with immediate effect, all official communications and transactions of the Association will be conducted only through the Public Officer, acting on behalf of the duly elected and officially announced Committee currently in office.

No other individual, including former office-bearers or members, is authorised to represent SLANSW or to engage in any Association-related matters. This includes, but is not limited to, communication with members, financial transactions, and attending to or representing the Association in official matters, unless expressly authorised by the present Committee and communicated through the Public Officer.

Accordingly, the Association and the present Committee will not accept responsibility for, nor be bound by, any information, communication, or actions undertaken by any person other than the currently elected Committee members acting through the Public Officer.

Members are kindly requested to take note of this directive and to ensure that all Association-related matters are channelled strictly through the above official process.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support.

Sri Lanka Association of New South Wales (SLANSW)
By order of the Committee

“Thorathuru” is the official Newsletter of the Sri Lanka Association of New South Wales (SLANSW). This Special Edition, released on 23rd December 2025, is presented with warmth and pride by the Editorial Sub-Committee, in the spirit of Christmas and the New Year, reflecting our shared values of unity, goodwill, and community harmony.

Devni Goonaratne-Editor



The Sri Lanka Association of New South Wales expresses its deepest sympathy to all those affected by the recent floods in Sri Lanka.

We are deeply saddened by the loss of lives, the destruction of homes, and the displacement of families caused by this natural disaster. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, their families, and communities who are enduring immense hardship during this difficult time.

We stand in solidarity with the people of Sri Lanka and commend the efforts of emergency responders, volunteers, and humanitarian agencies working tirelessly to provide relief and support.

May those who have lost their lives rest in peace, and may strength, courage, and hope be granted to all those rebuilding their lives.

Sri Lanka Association of New South Wales Inc.





The Sri Lanka Association of New South Wales expresses its deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims of the tragic shooting incident at Bondi, Sydney.

We are profoundly saddened by the loss of innocent lives and the pain suffered by those injured. Such acts of violence have no place in our society, and we stand united in grief with the wider Australian community during this difficult time.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, their families, and all those affected. We also extend our appreciation to the emergency services and first responders for their courage and dedication.

May the departed souls rest in peace, and may strength and comfort be granted to all who mourn.

Sri Lanka Association of New South Wales Inc.



"THORATHURU" PHOTO GALLERY

SLA Seniors Christmas Luncheon





Sri Lanka Association Of New South Wales

FAMILY DAY **Lump-rice & BBQ**

FOR MEMBERS AND GUESTS

26th January 2026

At Rouse Hill Regional Park

10am to 3.00pm

Live Music & Sing-Along

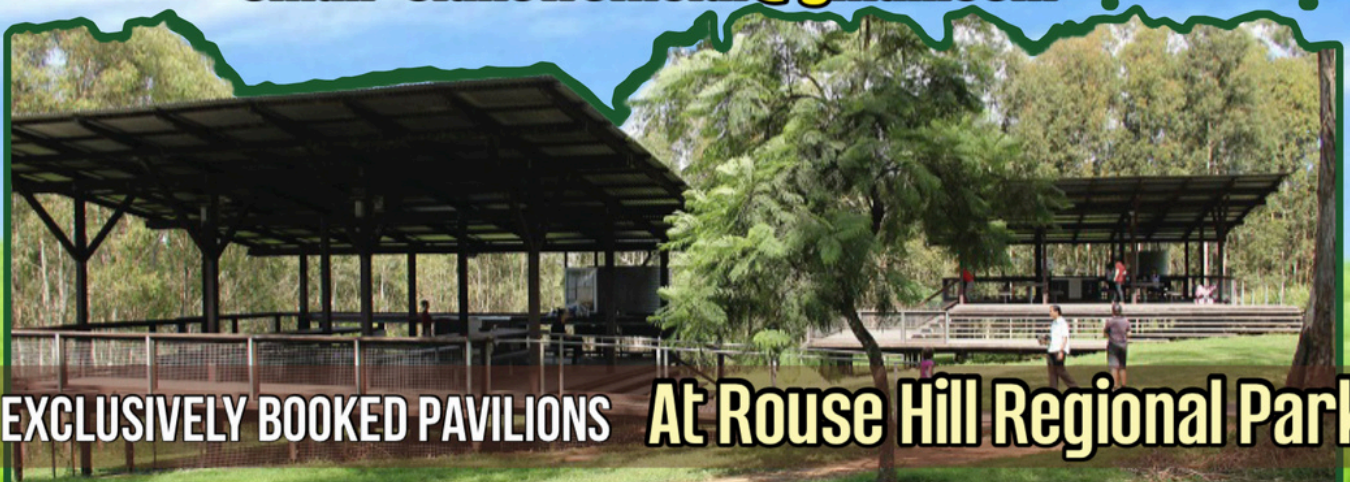
Registration by payment

Adults \$30/Kids \$10.00

(Lunch will be provided with Beverages)

Call the friendly line 0494 622 454 to REGISTER

email: slanswofficial@gmail.com



TWO EXCLUSIVELY BOOKED PAVILIONS At Rouse Hill Regional Park



Sri Lanka Association Of New South Wales Inc.

P.O Box 114, Castle Hill NSW 1765.

ABN 76983916417



OUR FRIENDLY LINE

0494 622 454



OUR OFFICIAL EMAIL

slanswofficial@gmail.com



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