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New Year Celebrations of UoC on middle page

2017

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1. Workshop on Third World Approaches to International Law

A two-day workshop on *Third World Approaches to International Law* was held at the UoC on 3rd and 4th of January 2017. The workshop was organized by the Department of Public and International Law of the Faculty of Law in view of the revival of interest in Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL). This event marked the first official large-scale conference on TWAIL held in Sri Lanka. The workshop was convened by Prof. Anthony Anghie of the National University of Singapore; Prof. Vasuki Nesiah, Associate Professor of Practice, New York University; Mr. V.T. Thamilmaran, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, UoC; and Ms. Wasantha Seneviratne, Head, Department of Public and International Law, Faculty of Law, UoC.

Nearly 100 participants were selected to attend this two-day workshop subsequent to a competitive selection process. Participants representing institutions of Sri Lanka engaged in teaching law, undergraduate and postgraduate students, members of academia, civil society organizations, foreign scholars, local and foreign doctoral candidates, and researchers attended the workshop.

The workshop was conducted under thematic segments on human rights, globalization, investment law, environmental law, feminism, and trade with a view to introducing the participants to various aspects of TWAIL. The workshop highlighted the significance of drawing on TWAIL as a set of tools in understanding the implications of colonialism and the modern conception of globalization. How different actors react to international influences, economic realities, and international politics was a key recurring topic that was touched upon in several thematic sessions. Selected panellists and discussants guided thematic sessions by drawing on their experience and expertise in different fields. Notable scholars, both international and local, contributed through their intellectual expertise to the project of reviving and revisiting the debate on TWAIL. The workshop is expected to function as a stepping stone to further initiatives on contributing to the global debate on TWAIL from a Sri Lankan perspective.
1.2 Open Research Seminar
Senior Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake, Vice-Chancellor of the UoC and Professor of Demography, delivered the inaugural speech of the open research seminar on Population Dynamics and Social Research on 22nd of March 2017 at the FGS Board Room.

1.3 The International Conference on Computational Modelling & Simulation 2017
The International Conference on Computational Modelling & Simulation (ICCMS-2017), organized by the Faculty of Science, UoC, in collaboration with the Department of Mathematics, South Asian University, Delhi, India and the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Institute of Technology, Bandung, Indonesia was held from 17th to 19th of May 2017. The conference provided a platform to discuss and share knowledge on Computational Modelling and Simulation across many disciplines.

2 Community Development Projects

2.1 Astronomy Camp - Karandeniya
An Astronomical Night Observation Camp was successfully conducted by the Astronomical Society of the UoC on 31st of March 2017 at the Karandeniya Central College, Karandeniya.
2.2 Astronomy Training Programme

The inaugural session of the Astronomy training programme organized by the Astronomical Society of the UoC was held on 6th of May 2017 at NAT, UoC. It was also marked by a guest lecture and demonstration conducted by Prof. Hari Om Vats from India.

2.3 Programme to support those affected by floods

All faculties worked together under the leadership of the Vice-Chancellor of the UoC, to organize a programme to support those affected by the floods. The programme took place on 31st of May 2017 in the university premises.
2.4 Neem extract to cure cancer

The Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology of the UoC announced the discovery that a chemical combination (Gedunin) found in the Neem plant can destroy cancer stem cells. Under the leadership of Dr. Sameera R. Samarakoon and Prof. Kamani Tennekoon, Dr. Meran Ediriweera, Dr. Purna Piyathilake, Kathika Mayan, Daniel Nokvu, Rana Mohan, Lakshmika Dharmaraja, Uma Rajagopalan, Kanishka Senathila, and Prof. Ira Thabrew contributed to this research project. Prof. Nedra Karunarathne and Dr. Nuwanthi Katuswawela assisted them with the use of Nano-Technological methods.

This research project was started in 2013. In its earlier phases, The Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology provided funding under its MSc programmes for this project, and since the beginning of 2017, the National Research Council has provided funding for the project under the leadership of Prof. Kamani Tennekoon and Dr. Sameera R. Samarakoon.


3.1 Prof. Eric Karunanayake was awarded the World Academy of Sciences Award

Prof. Eric Karunanayake, Founder and Founder Director of IBMBB, was awarded the World Academy of Sciences Award for building Science Institutions in Central and South Asia. This award was presented in appreciation of his magnanimous role in securing funds from Swedish Funding Agencies for building IBMBB, seeing it through to completion, and nurturing its expansion during his tenure as the Director and for many years after that. Two students of the IBMBB also received travel awards from the Third World Academy of Science (TWAS) to participate in the regional conference held on 4th and 5th of December 2016 in Bangalore, India, where Prof Karunanayake received this award.

3.2 Prof. Kamani Tennekoon received the SUSRED Award 2016

Prof. Kamani Tennekoon, Senior Professor of Molecular Life Sciences at IBMBB, received the SUSRED Award 2016 on 31st of January 2017 at an Awards Ceremony held at the BMICH organized by the National Science Foundation. This award was presented in recognition of the supervision of the PhD titled Molecular identification of toxigenic cyanobacteria and effects of cyanotoxins on human renal cell lines.
3.3 UoC Researcher wins Outstanding Oral Presentation Award at the Global Breast Cancer Conference 2017

Dr. Nirmala Sirisena, Senior Lecturer, Department of Anatomy and Clinical Geneticist, Human Genetics Unit, Faculty of Medicine, UoC, received the Korea Breast Cancer Foundation Scholarship Award for the Outstanding Oral Presentation at the Global Breast Cancer Conference 2017 held in Jeju Island, South Korea from 20th to 22nd of April 2017. She received this award for her paper titled Genetic Determinants of Sporadic Breast Cancer in a Cohort of Sri Lankan Postmenopausal Women. The paper was based on her PhD work at the UoC supervised by Prof. Vajira H. W. Dissanayake and Prof. Rohan Jayasekara. Her paper was adjudged the best paper in the thematic area ‘cancer risk and prevention’. She was one among only 7 recipients of the award and her paper was selected from among 241 papers presented at the conference. The other recipients were from Singapore, Hong Kong, Thaiwan, and the USA. The conference was attended by 1,245 participants from 32 countries.

4.1 NRC Grants for Innovative Research to resolve national issues

The Faculty of Science, UoC, is delighted to report two projects for which senior academics of the Department of Chemistry have secured mega grants from the National Research Council. The NRC has awarded a Target-Oriented Multidisciplinary Research Grant of Rs. 50 Million to the Faculty of Science, UoC, to develop advanced materials-based filters for water purification. Dr. Rohini M. de Silva is leading this project as the Principal Investigator. The research team consists of Prof. K. M. Nalin De Silva (Deputy PI), Prof. Dhammika Dissanayake, Prof. Ranil Dassanayake, Prof. Nilmini Gunawardena, Dr. N. V. Chandrasekharan and Dr. Gareth Williams, University College London.

A group of scientists, Prof. Ranil Dassanayake and Dr. N. V. Chandrasekharan, together with academics from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, engineered the first ever transgenic mosquito in Sri Lanka, as a step towards interrupting transmission of the dengue virus by mosquitoes using a technique called RNA interference. This work is supported by a large grant from the NRC for research on integrated vector control. The work is carried out by Mr. Kalindu Ramyasoma, a Ph.D. student attached to the Department of Chemistry.
5.1 Achievements 2016

Achievements 2016 – the Students’ Award ceremony of the UCSC, was held on 24th of May 2017 at the New Arts Theatre, UoC.

6.1 Signing of a Cooperation Agreement with Justus Leibig University, Germany

Strengthening the long term partnership between the UoC and the Justus Leibig University, Germany, the Vice-Chancellor of the UoC and Prof. Joybrato Mukherjee, the President of Justus Leibig University, Germany signed a Cooperation Agreement between the two universities on 24th of April 2017 at the UoC. This agreement will open up many opportunities for the students and the staff of the two universities.
6.2 Delegation from Taipei Medical University

A group of delegates from the Taipei Medical University visited Sri Lanka with a view to developing a research collaboration with the university and other stakeholders. The group consisted of Prof. Hung-Yi Chiou, Professor and Vice-Principal, Taipei Medical University; Prof. Ya-Wen Chiu, Director and Professor, Master Programme in Global Health and Development, Taipei Medical University; Po-Ya Chang, Postdoctoral Research Fellow; and Yu-kai Kevin Lien, Research Assistant. The delegates attended a meeting with the Dean, Faculty of Medicine, UoC, on 23rd of March 2017. They also met with the Vice-Chancellor, UoC, on 24th of March 2017 at the College House. The two parties agreed to draw up an MOU between the two universities. This visit was coordinated by the Department of Medical Education, UoC.

6.3 Changchun University of Chinese Medicine to collaborate with UoC

Ms. Hong Jiang, a representative for the Changchun University of Chinese Medicine (CCUCM), China, visited the Vice-Chancellor of the UoC on 3rd of May 2017. The purpose of the visit was to explore the possibility of academic collaborations between the two universities in the area of Indigenous Medicine. The Vice-Chancellor expressed his sincere willingness to collaborate with the CCUCM.

Dr. S. D. Hapuarchchi, Director, Institute of Indigenous Medicine (IIM), and Dr. Kokila Konasinghe, Director, International Office, UoC, accompanied the Vice-Chancellor at the meeting. This collaboration is expected to bring great opportunities for both the faculty and students of the IIM.

6.4 Delegation from North Carolina State visits UoC

Prof. Raji Ranjithan and Prof. Himara, Senior Lecturers from the North Carolina University, USA, visited the Vice-Chancellor of the UoC on 24th of May 2016. During the meeting, the parties discussed possible collaborations between the two universities.

Dr. R. Senathiraja, Dean, Faculty of Management and Finance; Prof. Sumedha Jayanetti, Dean, Faculty of Technology; and Dr. Ranjan Piyadasa, Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, Faculty of Arts, participated in the meeting.
6.5 Inje University, South Korea, to collaborate with UoC

Marking the inauguration of a formal partnership between the UoC and the Inje University, South Korea, the Vice-Chancellor of the UoC and Prof. InJune Cha, President of the Inje University, signed an MoU between the two universities on 25th of May 2017 at the Senate Hall, UoC. Prof. InJune Cha was accompanied by the Deans and senior academics of the Inje University during the ceremony. This collaboration was initiated by Prof. Devaka Weerakoon, Dean of Faculty of Nursing, UoC, and will open up opportunities for both students and the staff of the faculty.

Prof. Manjula Vithanapathirana, Dean, Faculty of Education; Prof. Nayani Melegoda, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies; Dr. R. Senathiraja, Dean, Faculty of Management and Finance; Prof. Sumedha Jayanetti, Dean, Faculty of Technology; Prof. Devaka Weerakoon, Dean, Faculty of Nursing; Dr. Shanthi Segarajasingham, Head, Department of Commercial Law; Dr. Nirmali Wijegonawardene, Head, Department of History; Mr. K. A. S. Edward, Registrar, UoC; and Mrs. K. S. T. S. Jayasooriya, Bursar, UoC, represented the UoC at the inaugural ceremony. The event was organized by the International Unit of the UoC.

6.6 Delegation from the Tianjin Medical University visits UoC

Prof. Fenglin Guo, Director, International Exchange Department and Dean, International Medical School, Tianjin Medical University, China, and Prof. Chen Jinhe, Executive Vice-Dean, Tianjin International Chinese College, visited the Vice-Chancellor of the UoC on 25th of May 2017 to discuss a possible collaboration between the two institutions. During the meeting, the parties agreed to collaborate in joint research and short term student and staff exchanges. Dr. Suranga Silva, Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts, UoC, coordinated the meeting with the delegation.

6.7 President of the Southwest University of Political Science & Law, China, visits UoC

Prof. Fu Zitang, the President of Southwest University of Political Science and Law, Chongqing, China, visited the Vice-Chancellor of UoC on 9th June 2017. The purpose of the visit was to formalize the ongoing academic collaborations between the two universities through an MoU and to discuss possibilities of extending the partnership into other possible areas.
The Vice-Chancellor of the UoC and Prof. Fu Zitang signed an MoU between the UoC and the Southwest University of Political Science and Law, formalizing the academic partnership between the two institutes. His Excellency Mr. Yi Xianliang, the Ambassador of the Peoples Republic of China to Sri Lanka, initiated this fruitful collaboration. Prof. Jerry Zhu, the Vice-Dean of the School of Foreign Languages, and Prof. Guo Meisong, Director, International Cooperation and Exchange Office, Southwest University of Political Science and Law, accompanied Prof. Fu Zitang at the meeting.

7.1 Signing of MoU with Mitsubishi UFJ Foundation

An MoU was signed by the Vice-Chancellor, UoC and Yoshiaki Ozawa, Managing Director, Mitsubishi UFJ Foundation on 14th of March 2017. The officials from the Colombo Representative Office of the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, and the banking entity of the Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG) witnessed the signing of the agreement. The MoU marks the first time a Japanese company is offering scholarships to students of the UoC.

The foundation, which was established to promote and support talent development and international cross-cultural relations, will award scholarships to as many as 17 students from the UoC, and the recipients will be chosen based on their academic performance. The scholarship will be awarded for one year, but it may be renewed for the second year based on the academic performance of the students and the recommendation by the university. The scholarship awarding ceremony will be hosted in Colombo later this year.
8 Cultural Events

8.1 Naada Nu

*Naada Nu*, musical evening, organized by the Rotaract Club of the Faculty of Science, UoC, in collaboration with Music Crew of the Faculty of Science, UoC, was held on 26th of April 2017 at the New Arts Theatre.

8.2 Shraddhanjali – A performance of Buddhist devotional songs

A performance of Buddhist devotional songs, *Shraddhanjali*, organized by the Buddhist Society of the Faculty of Science, UoC, was held at the Faculty of Science premises on 08th of May 2017.
9.1 Freshers’ Tournament 2017

The closing ceremony of the Freshers’ Tournament 2017 was held on 17th of March 2017 at the UoC grounds. The Faculty of Science emerged the overall champions, while the University of Colombo School of Computing and the Faculty of Management and Finance became the first and second runners-up respectively.

9.2 Under 23 3x3 International Tour Champs – Czech Republic and Hungary 2017

The National Selection Committee of Basketball selected Keyasha Siriwardana, a second year undergraduate of the Faculty of Arts, UoC, to represent Sri Lanka at the Under 23 3x3 International Tour Champs – Czech Republic and Hungary 2017 Basketball Championship held from 1st to 10th June 2017 in the Czech Republic and Hungary. Keyasha Siriwardana has also represented the country in many other international basketball and netball tournaments held in China, Australia, and Malaysia since 2010.
10.1 FGS commemorates International Women’s Day 2017

The Faculty of Graduate Studies commemorated International Women’s Day on 8th of March 2017. Ms. Rosy Senanayake, the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Office of the Prime Minister and the Chief Spokesperson for the Honourable Prime Minister, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. She delivered a powerful and emotive speech on *Women’s Participation in Politics: Challenges and Opportunities*. The Vice-Chancellor, UoC, Deans of the faculties, and other staff members of the university attended the event.

10.2 Consumer Rights Day 2017

The Department of Commercial Law, Faculty of Law, UoC, organized a series of events to mark Consumer Rights Day on 28th of March 2017. The programme for the day focussed on the theme *Consumer Rights and Sri Lanka*. The department organized poster, cartoon, and short video competitions based on the theme *consumer protection in contemporary society* among the students of the Faculty of Law. The main event consisted of cultural events, a documentary video, an expert presentation, and a panel discussion. The panellists at the latter discussion were Mrs. Chandrika Thilakarathne, Director, Consumer Affairs & Information, Consumer Affairs Authority; Mr. Ranjith Vithanage, Chairman, National Consumer Rights Movement in Sri Lanka; Dr. Shanthi Segarajasingham, Head, Department of Commercial Law; and Dr. Prathiba Mahanamahewa, Senior Lecturer, Department of Commercial Law.
10.3 A Sinhala and Tamil New Year Feast at the Faculty of Science

A Sinhala and Tamil New Year Feast organized by the First Year students of the Faculty of Science was held on 19th of April 2017.

10.4 Intellectual Property Day 2017 at the Faculty of Law

The Department of Commercial Law of the Faculty of Law hosted the first ever Intellectual Property Day on 26th of April 2017 at the Advocacy Room of the Faculty of Law. The theme for the event was Intellectual Property Law and Policy: Sri Lankan Perspectives. The programme consisted of student debates on key topics of IP and a panel discussion by experts in the field.

The panel discussion, which was attended by the Dean of the Faculty of Law Ms. Indira Nanayakkara, staff members and students of IP law, began formally with the welcome address that was delivered by Dr. Shanthi Segarajasingham, the Head of the Department of Commercial Law. The Chairman of the panel, Mr. N. Selvakkumaran, Senior Lecturer in IP and former Dean of the Faculty of Law, introduced the theme and outlined the key points on which the discussion should take place.

The first panellist was Dr. D. M. Karunaratne, Founder Director-General, National Intellectual Property Office (NIPO) of Sri Lanka, whose presentation was on Managing the NIPO and striking a balance between the TRIPS Agreement and local needs. The next presentation titled Shaping IP Jurisprudence: the role of the Commercial High Court and significant IP judgements was made by Hon. Justice K T Chitrasiri, Judge of the Supreme Court and former Judge of the Commercial High Court. This was followed by a presentation by Mr. Jagath Gunewardene, Attorney-at-Law, Biopiracy expert and environmental scientist, on the topic Protecting vital local interests within the global IP framework. The final presentation was made by Ms. Soundarie David, a well-known artist and Entertainment Law Specialist, on the topic New Facets of IP Protection in the Digital Era, focusing on the law of copyright protection and the impact on performers. The session was wrapped up by the Chairman, and an interesting Q&A session followed.

The proceedings concluded with the award of certificates of participation to students who took part in the student activity and a presentation of souvenirs to the panellists. Fellowship and refreshments brought the event to a close.
The Sinhala and Tamil New Year Celebration of the UoC organized by the Sports and Welfare Society of the UoC was held in great style at the university playground on 22nd of April 2017. The Chief Guest at this occasion was the Vice-Chancellor of the UoC, Senior Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake.
10.5 Garlanding Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore

To commemorate the 156th Birth Anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, H. E. Mr. Taranjit Singh Sandhu, High Commissioner of India, garlanded the bust of Rabindranath Tagore placed at the Main Library of the UoC, in the presence of the academic community and Tagore aficionados. This bronze bust of Tagore was gifted by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, to mark the 150th Birth Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore in 2012. The event to mark the 156th Birth Anniversary of Tagore took place on 8th of May 2017. The Vice-Chancellor, UoC; Mrs. Rajeshree Behera, Director, Indian Cultural Centre; Prof. Nayani Melegoda, Dean, FGS; Prof. Sandagomi Coperahewa, Director, CCIS; academics of the UoC; and invitees participated at this event. This event was jointly organized by the Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies of the UoC and the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo.

10.6 Celebrating World Environment Day

The Base for Enthusiasts of Environmental Science and Zoology (BEEZ) of the Department of Zoology and Environment Sciences, together with Biodiversity Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka Business and Biodiversity Platform) and Insee Cement, celebrated World Environment Day on 5th of June 2017 by embracing the true meaning of the global theme for the year Reconnecting People to Nature. The event witnessed the participation of several eminent personalities in the country who have made a significant contribution towards bringing nature closer to communities. Mr. Hiran Wickramasinghe, Managing Director, Informatics (Pvt.) Ltd., graced the event as the keynote speaker. Many other dignitaries participated in a discussion on the theme focusing on its relevance to Sri Lanka and its people. INSEE Cement was the principal sponsor, and during the event, the company launched its latest publication on to biodiversity.
BEEZ has planned a series of competitions for school children along with a novel initiative named *The Green Canvas* with the objective of allowing people to embrace the beauty of nature through art. As an organization that is constantly striving to appreciate and interact more closely with nature, BEEZ, together with its principal partners, hopes that this World Environment Day celebration was yet another reminder of the importance of the natural world as an integral part of our survival. It is only by reconnecting with the environment that we can truly enjoy the benefits it offers.

### 11.1 Training programmes for the members of CCT

The CCT (The Centre for Combating Tobacco) is a newly established centre at the Faculty of Medicine, UoC (UCFM), to monitor the activities of the tobacco industry in Sri Lanka and the region. The influence of the industry at political, economic, social, and personal (individual) levels is closely monitored, analysed, and articles are written on relevant findings. These are to be published on the CCT’s website, which was launched in May 2017. Two training programmes on generating articles based on available data, reporting, and publishing were conducted by the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), USA and the University of Bath (UOB), United Kingdom to the team members of the CCT.

The director of the CCT, Dr. Mahesh Rajasuriya, attended the training programme on ‘Truth industry document library’ at the UCFM in August 2016. The whole team at the CCT participated in another training programme which was held in March 2017 by the UOB on ‘Tobacco industry observatory’. This is a project powered by the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) secretariat in its fight against tobacco.

### 11.2 BIC 2016 - Grand Finale

The Grand Finale of *Business Idea Competition* (BIC) 2016 organized by the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Unit (IEDU), Department of Management and Organization Studies (MOS), Faculty of Management and Finance, UoC, was successfully held on 9th of February 2017 at the faculty premises.

The event was graced by the Vice-Chancellor of the UoC as the Chief Guest; the Chairman of Master Divers, Mr. Ariyaseela Wickramanayake as the Guest of Honour; the Chairman of the Inventor’s Commission Dr. Mahesh Edirisighe as the keynote speaker; and many other distinguished invitees from the academia and the industry.

The Grand Finale enabled the top ten ideas (selected by an evaluation panel consisting of academics and industry experts) to be presented in the presence of industry representatives and the university community. The event took place on 16th of December 2016. Out of these ten ideas, the top three business ideas were selected at the Grand Finale.

Medical Tissue Paper by Ms. Wasana Batugedara emerged as the first place, while Alternative Commode Brush and Coconut Milk Machine by Ms. Upeksha Thumbovila claimed the second and the third places respectively. The competition yielded financial and non-financial rewards to the finalists.
11.3 CCIS Monthly Forum by Dr. Lopamudra Maitra Bajpai

Dr. Lopamudra Maitra Bajpai, Cultural Specialist, SAARC Cultural Centre, Colombo, conducted a monthly forum on *Exploring an Essence of Intangible Cultural Heritage from Kolkata* on 15\(^{th}\) of February 2017 at the CCIS Meeting Room. The officials of the Indian Cultural Centre, the officials of the SAARC Cultural Centre, and other academics and students of the UoC were among the participants at this forum.

11.4 ASCENT Research Colloquium and Discussion Forum 2017

The Social Policy Analysis and Research Center (SPARC), Faculty of Arts, UoC, participated in the Advancing Skill Creation to Enhance Transformation (ASCENT) Research Colloquium and Discussion Forum organized by the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna, funded by the ASCENT consortium and held from 27\(^{th}\) of February to 4\(^{th}\) of March 2017 at University of Ruhuna, Kamburupitiya and Fisherman’s Bay Hotel, Weligama. The colloquium covered an array of topics related to disaster management such as research methods, disaster risk resilience, observation and experimental studies,
interviews, the Delphi Method, systematic reviews, questionnaire survey: planning and design, and research ethics.

The colloquium also provided training on research profile designing, understanding the impact of research, online presence, interdisciplinarity of research, fundamentals of advocacy and communication, and case studies of international collaboration. Seventy academics representing the United Kingdom, Sweden, Estonia, Thailand, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka participated in the event. SPARC is one of the local partners of the ASCENT Project.

11.5 Field Course for the students of the Master of Disaster Management programme, University of Copenhagen, Denmark 2017

The Social Policy Analysis and Research Centre (SPARC), Faculty of Arts, UoC, in partnership with the University of Copenhagen, Denmark, organized a three-week field course for the students following the Masters Programme in Disaster Management at University of Copenhagen, Denmark. Assistant Prof. Emmanuel Raju, the course leader of this Masters Programme, and Ms. Mariel Britanico, the Programme Coordinator, accompanied the students on the excursion.

The students stayed in Sri Lanka for a period of three weeks. In the first week, the students were given an introduction to Sri Lanka from historical, political, social, economic, and geographic perspectives by local specialists. In the second week, the students visited two field locations in the Anuradhapura District – Ruwanmaduwa village and Kiwulekada village – affected by a series of natural disasters including floods, droughts, and wild elephant attacks. Students conducted field work in these sites using multiple research tools such as transect walks, seasonal, spatial and disaster maps, seasonal calendars, historical timelines, and social network analysis. In the third and the final week, SPARC organized multiple interactive discussion sessions with the local government and non-governmental organizations working in the field of disaster management such as the Disaster Management Centre, the Department of Meteorology, the National Building Research Organization, the UNDP, the UNHABITAT and the Child Fund. By comparing field work experience with policy making, students were able to get a better understanding of the ground reality of disaster risk management in Sri Lanka.

11.6 UCIARS Student Welcome 2017

The Student Welcome for the 8th intake of the Bachelor of Agro-Technology Degree Programme for farming community at the Institute for Agro-Technology and Rural Sciences at Weligatta, Hambantota was held on 18th of March 2017. The Vice-Chancellor, UoC; the Registrar, UoC, Prof. Ranjith Mahanama; the Acting Director of UCIARS; academic and administrative staff of the UCIARS; students of senior batches; and family members of the new entrants attended the event. The presence of the Vice-Chancellor at the occasion and the discussion held with students about their issues made a positive impact on the student body.
11.7 Semi-finals of *Enliven 2017*

The semi-finals of *Enliven 2017*, the all-island humorous speech competition organized by the Gavel Club of the UoC, was held on 26th of March 2017 at the Department of Physics, Faculty of Science, UoC.

11.8 *Stat Day 2017* – Statistics for a Better Tomorrow

The most significant event of the Stat Circle of the UoC, *Stat Day 2017*, was held for the 14th time on 30th of March 2017 at the Faculty of Graduate Studies with the participation of many distinguished guests from the government sector, private sector, academia, university students, and school children. ‘Statistics for a Better Tomorrow’ was the theme of *Stat Day – 2017*, where the keynote speech was delivered by Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy, Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. The guest speech was delivered by Dr. Amara Satharasinghe, Director General of the Department of Census and Statistics.

An Inter-School Poster Competition, Panel Discussion and the Prof. V. K. Samaranayake Memorial Inter-University Quiz Competition also took place on the same day. Dr. Asoka Ramanayake, Mr. Chamara Gunathilake, Dr. Dileepa Ediriweera and Mr. Ravi Bamunusinghe participated as the panelists. Participants from Col/Ramanathan Hindu Ladies College emerged as the champions of the Inter-School Poster Competition and the University of Colombo won the Inter-University Quiz. These competitions marked the conclusion of another successful and memorable *Stat Day*. 
11.9 Annual Plant Sale 2017

The annual plant sale 2017, organized by the Botanical Society of the UoC, was held on 4\textsuperscript{th} of April 2017 within the College House premises.

11.10 UOC Rhythm 3.0 – Live

\textit{UOC Rhythm 3.0} was once again in cyberspace all day long on 8\textsuperscript{th}, 9\textsuperscript{th} and 10\textsuperscript{th} of April 2017. Two years back, FOS media, UoC, was the first to initiate an e-radio station powered by a Sri Lankan university. During the very first attempt, it went beyond the Faculty of Science and joined the UCSC, the Faculty of Management and Finance, and the Faculty of Law. This year it has moved further to include the voices of students from other universities like the University of Kelaniya, the University of Sri Jayawardenepura and the University of Moratuwa as well.
The station crew, together with the presenters, provided a wide range of programmes including music, the latest news of the leading universities in the country, insightful interviews with great personalities of the university as well as the country, stories related to subcultures of different universities and news of clubs and societies run within other universities.

11.11 Prof. Ajantha Hapuarachchi as Invited Speaker

Prof. Ajantha Hapuarachchi, Journalism Unit, Faculty of Arts, UoC, was invited as the Invited Speaker of the Multidisciplinary International Seminar on *UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Social Justice and Media*. This seminar was conducted by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad, India, on 28th and 29th of April 2017.

Prof. Hapuarachchi discussed about the validity of the theme of the conference, not only for today but also for the future. She also stated that most of the content of fundamental human rights had been included into SDGs, for instance health, education gender equality and women’s empowerment, and how the media plays one of the key roles for sustainability.
11.12 Buddhist Sermon 2017
A Buddhist sermon organized by the Buddhist Society of the Faculty of Science, UoC, was held in the faculty premises on 8th of May 2017.

11.13 An Alms Giving to Buddhist monks
An Alms Giving to Buddhist monks, organized by the Second Year students of the Faculty of Science, UoC, was held on 8th of May 2017 in the faculty premises.
11.14 Kavi Bana

A Buddhist Sermon in verse, organized by the Buddhist Society of the Faculty of Science, UoC, was held on 8th of May 2017 in the faculty premises.

11.15 Guest Lecture on ‘The Interaction of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism’

The Department of Buddhist Studies and the Confucius Institute organized a guest lecture on *The Interaction of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism*, on 16th of May 2017 at the Faculty Boardroom, Faculty of Arts, UoC. The lecture was delivered by Dr. Wang Fei, Lecturer, Politics and International Relations School, Honghe University, China. She obtained her PhD (Major in Philosophy of Religious Studies) from the Assumption University in Thailand, and her research focussed on interfaith dialogue. She has also published articles under the themes *A Comparison between Chinese Culture and American Culture, The Critical Research of Abortion* and *Does God have Many Names*, and attended several international conferences.

11.16 Ceremony to lay the Foundation Stone for Sarasavi Medura

The foundation stone for *Sarasavi Medura*, the New Hostel Complex for the Faculty of Technology, UoC, was ceremonially laid on 29th of May 2017, at Mahahenwaththa, Pitipana, Homagama with the participation of Hon. Lakshman Kiriella, Minister of Higher Education and Highways; and Hon. State Minister Mohan Lal Grero, Ministry of Higher Education and Highways.
11.17 Opening of the Health and Wellness Centre, Faculty of Medicine

The Health and Wellness Centre of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, initiated its activities with an inauguration ceremony held on 30\textsuperscript{th} of May 2017, at the New Building Lecture Theatre of the Faculty of Medicine. This centre is the brainchild of the Dean of the Faculty, Prof. Jennifer Perera. It envisages to provide a variety of tailor-made advocacy and health promotion programmes to the corporate sector. Dr. Ranil Jayawardena of the Department of Physiology is the academic coordinator of the centre.

The Health and Wellness Centre aims to cater to the Sri Lankan corporate sector by providing services to uplift employee health, thereby increasing the productivity and profitability of organisations. The centre’s expertise is provided by both internal and external faculty: Dr. Ranil Jayawardena (diet and nutrition), Prof. Piyanjali de Zoysa (mental health), Dr. Piyusha Atapattu (general health and women’s health), Dr. Sachith Abhayaratne (endocrinology), Dr. Chathuranga Ranasinghe (exercise and fitness), and Dr. Lasantha Malavige (sexual medicine). The inauguration was attended by human resource decision makers from several corporate bodies.
11.18 Farewell for Library Staff

A farewell was organized by the Librarian and the staff of the library of the UoC to bid farewell to eight staff members who retired between 2015 and 2017 after a long and dedicated service. The event was held on 30\textsuperscript{th} of May 2017 at the Auditorium of the Main Library with the participation of the Librarian and the staff of the UoC library network.

11.19 NACULA 2017

The National Conference of University Librarians’ Association (NACULA) 2017 was held on 1\textsuperscript{st} of June 2017, at the Auditorium of the Main Library of the UoC, under the theme ‘Information for Sustainable Development’. For the first time in the history of ULA, this national conference was held to bring together university librarians and other academics to strengthen faculty-library collaboration. Papers were presented under the subthemes \textit{Right to information & ICT for sustainable development}, \textit{Libraries’ role for sustainable development and sustainability through economic & social development} covering a wide range of subjects such as Library and Information Sciences, Social Sciences, Management, Economics and Law. The Vice-Chancellor, UoC, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, while Mrs. Geethanjali Ranawaka, Director General, National Intellectual Property Office, Sri Lanka, delivered the keynote address.
12.1 Demise of Prof. Valentine Joseph

One of the prominent former Professors of the Department of Mathematics, UoC, Prof. Valentine Joseph, passed away on 15th of March 2017. His remains were kept at the New Arts Theatre (NAT), UoC, on 17th of March 2017 for the staff and the students of the UoC to pay their last respects.

Prof. Valentine Joseph is a well-known Professor and served the UoC in the past. His students are now both administrative and academic staff members. Interestingly, Prof. Joseph has worked under Einstein as a student many years ago. Prof. Joseph conducted guest talks to the students of the UoC even after his retirement. He dedicated his time to the well-being of university students despite his ailing health condition which caused him difficulties in standing and talking to a large audience. He did a great service to the university. Prof. Valentine Joseph’s passing is indeed a loss not only to the UoC, but also to the entire country.

12.2 Demise of Senior Prof. Nimal Attanayake

Senior Prof. Nimal Attanayake, Professor of Economics, former Head of the Department of Economics, Faculty of Arts, passed away on 27th of April 2017. The remains of the late professor were brought to the UoC on 28th of April 2017, and the cremation took place at Borella Cemetery on 29th of April 2017.

13.1 ICTer

The 17th International Conference on Advances in ICT for Emerging Regions (ICTer2017) will be held from 7th to 8th of September 2017 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. ICTer is technically co-sponsored by IEEE’s Sri Lanka section and is the successor to the seminal International Information Technology Conference (IITC) held in Sri Lanka since 1998. The ICTer conference is a unique opportunity for
researchers and practitioners alike to present research and development activities in the Computer Science and Information and Communication Technology domains.

In addition to the presentation of selected papers, the conference will also include several keynote addresses by leading personalities of international repute in the domains of Computer Science and ICT. The conference will include several pre and post-conference workshops on the 6th and 9th of September 2017, conducted by top experts in the cutting edge areas of Computer Science and Information and Communication Technology.

13.2 IRSEL 2017

The International Research Symposium on English Language Studies – 2017 will be held on 28th and 29th of September 2017 at the UoC under the theme *English as a Second Language: Knowledge, Learning, and Production.*

In order to provide a forum for research conducted both locally and internationally to be presented and discussed, the English Language Teaching Unit of the UoC is holding its second international symposium on language studies. With the rise of English as a global lingua franca, the field of second language studies has become enriched with innovative, reflective, and rigorous research aimed at evaluating and challenging the existing theory and practice of second language teaching. The subthemes of this symposium include *Language and Education, Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, Innovation in Language Teaching, Translation Pedagogy, and Language, Power and Ideology.*

13.3 ICAUST 2017

The fifth International Conference on Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and Traditional Medicine, organized by the Institute of Indigenous Medicine (IIM), UoC, under the guidance of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Sri Lanka, will be held from 27th to 29th of October 2017, under the theme *Ayurveda: Inspiring Health and Happiness.*

The aim of the conference is to provide a forum to bring together eminent researchers, academics, physicians, traditional and medical practitioners, manufacturers and exporters of Ayurveda and herbal products, members of the corporate sector, agricultural sector, and stakeholders from all over the world.

This conference will provide an overview of the latest information on Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and Traditional Medicine’s approaches to healthcare including practical strategies for incorporating evidence-based modalities into clinical practice, using practices to prevent illness, recommendations for management of specific conditions, and tools to evaluate the latest research findings.
Do you wish to publicize any significant news related to your Campus, Institute, Faculty, Department or Centre of the UoC, in the Newsletter?

Kindly send them before

- 15th of August 2017, to be published in the September 2017 issue
- 15th of November 2017, to be published in the December 2017 issue
- 15th of February 2018, to be published in the March 2018 issue
- 15th of May 2018, to be published in the June 2018 issue

Please limit the news items to 100 words and the number of photographs to four. In submitting photographs to be published in UoC newsletter, we encourage you, as far as it is possible, to submit photographs for which the photographers have obtained consent from those who have been photographed, to have their photograph taken and be published.

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