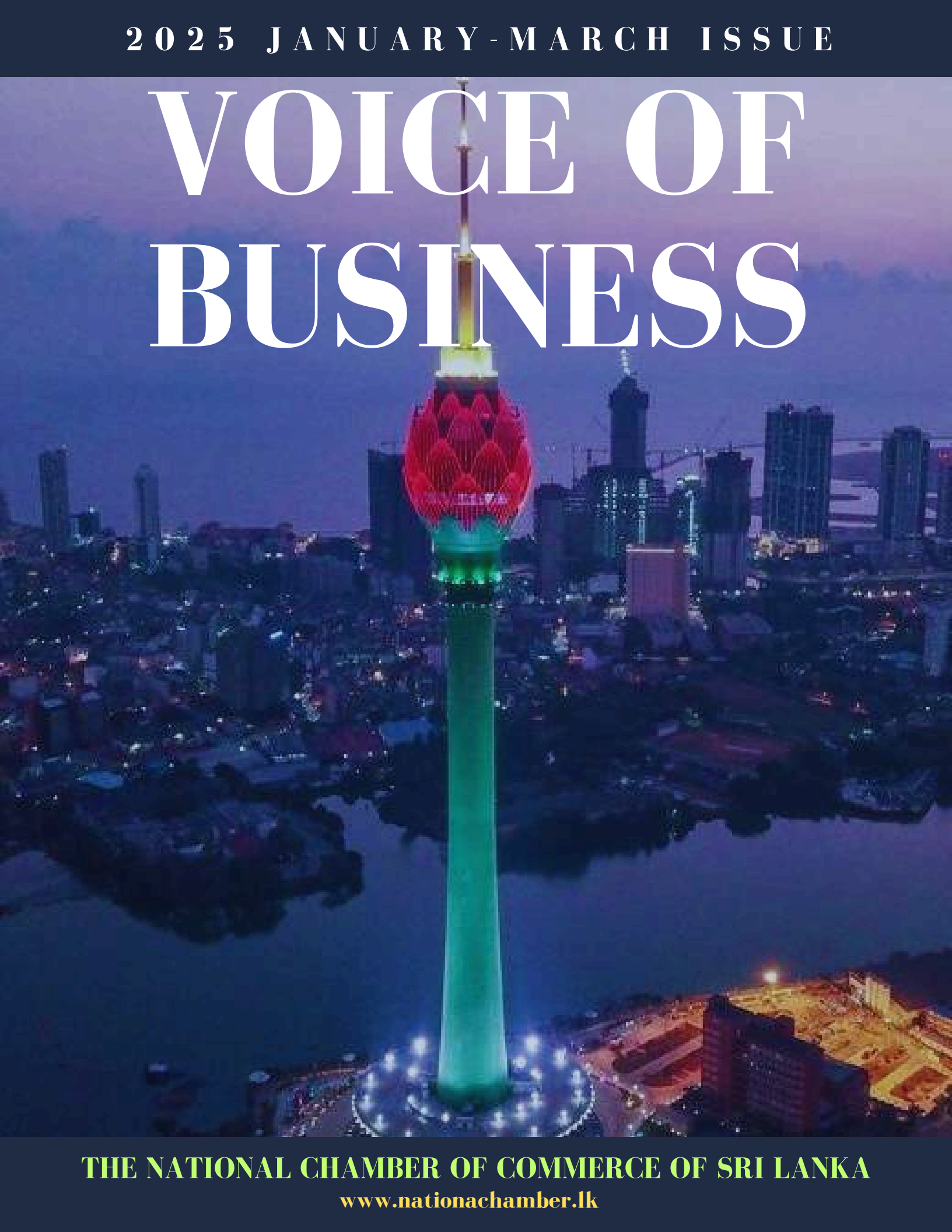


2025 JANUARY-MARCH ISSUE

VOICE OF BUSINESS



THE NATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF SRI LANKA

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CELEBRATING THE DAWN OF NEW YEAR 2025

A moment to celebrate the energy and team spirit of the NCCSL family at our New Year Celebrations 2025! Grateful for the camaraderie, dedication, and shared vision that continue to drive us forward. Stepped into another year of growth, impact, and collective success!



HIGHLIGHTS





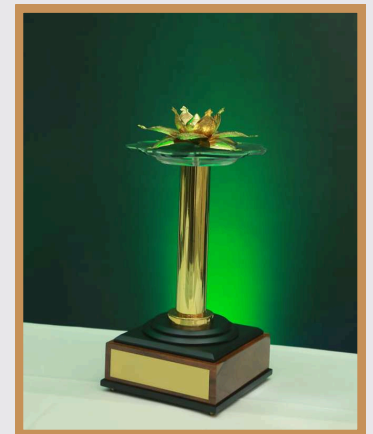
NBEA 2025 LAUNCH

NBEA 2025 WILL RECOGNIZE BUSINESS EXCELLENCE ACROSS MULTIPLE CATEGORIES, INCLUDING EXTRA LARGE, LARGE, MEDIUM, SMALL, AND MICRO ENTERPRISES, AS WELL AS 29 DIVERSE INDUSTRY SECTORS.

NATIONAL BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2025 OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED

**CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF BUSINESS EXCELLENCE
(FRIDAY, 17 JANUARY 2025 AT 2.30 P.M., NATIONAL CHAMBER
AUDITORIUM, COLOMBO 10)**

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka successfully launched the prestigious National Business Excellence Awards (NBEA) 2025 on Friday, 17 January 2025, at the National Chamber Auditorium, Colombo. The launch of the National Business Excellence Awards (NBEA) 2025 marks a significant milestone as it celebrates its 20th anniversary. This flagship initiative underscores the enduring impact of recognizing and fostering excellence within Sri Lankan businesses. By honoring contributions to economic growth, exemplary governance, and sustainable practices, the NBEA continues to align with modern business priorities and inspire organizations to strive for greater achievements.



From left:

Mr. Chamika Godamanne (Honorary Treasurer of the National Chamber), Mr. Deepal Nelson (President of the National Chamber), Mr. Sunil G. Wijesinha (Chairman of the Panel of Judges, NBEA 2025), Mr. Anura Warnakulasooriya (Senior Deputy President of the National Chamber), and Dr. Lakmal Fernando (Honorary Secretary of the National Chamber) during the trophy unveiling ceremony.

The launch event highlighted the enduring legacy and credibility of NBEA, which has been honoring outstanding businesses since its inception in 2004. The awards program has evolved to align with emerging trends, emphasizing the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ethical and environmentally friendly practices, sound governance structures (ESG), and fostering long-term societal value.

NBEA 2025 will recognize business excellence across multiple categories, including Extra Large, Large, Medium, Small, and Micro enterprises, as well as 29 diverse industry sectors. A total of 92 awards will be presented, including the coveted Overall Excellence Awards of Gold, Silver, and Bronze.

The evaluation process comprises a rigorous multi-stage review, beginning with assessments by a Technical and Financial Panel and culminating in interviews with a distinguished Panel of Judges. This meticulous process ensures the selection of the most deserving winners.



The highly anticipated Grand Awards Ceremony will be held in July 2025, where the winners will be celebrated for their achievements.

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka takes this opportunity to thank the business community for their enthusiastic participation and invites all enterprises to look forward to this esteemed competition, widely recognized as a symbol of business excellence in Sri Lanka.



"FORGING ALLIANCES, MULTIPLYING GLOBAL IMPACT": 66TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL CHAMBER

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka successfully held the 66th Annual General Meeting (AGM), on the 6th of February 2025, a landmark event that brought together diplomatic missions, government and non-government officials, industry leaders, members, and key stakeholders. The AGM served as a platform to reflect on the Chamber's achievements in 2024 and unveil its strategic vision for 2025, with a strong focus on uplifting the MSME sector and enhancing global business engagement.



The theme for the 66th AGM, "Forging Alliances, Multiplying Global Impact," encapsulated the Chamber's commitment to strengthening partnerships and fostering economic growth in Sri Lanka.

The event was graced by Hon. Justice Yasantha Kodagoda, P.C. Justice of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka as the Chief Guest and Hon. Chathuranga Abeysinghe, Honourable Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development as the Guest of Honour.



New Office Bearers were elected at the 66th AGM of the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka; President: Mr. Anura Warnakulasooriya, Senior Deputy President: Mr. Kavinda Rajapaksa, Deputy President: Dr. Lakmal Fernando, Honorary Secretary: Mr. Eassuwaren Subramaniam, Honorary Treasurer: Mr. Chamika Godamanna. Immediate Past President: Mr. Deepal Nelson

Mr. Deepal Nelson, the outgoing President of the National Chamber, emphasized his achievements during his tenure, highlighting key initiatives undertaken to support businesses and advocate for policy reforms. He expressed his gratitude to the members and stakeholders for their unwavering support and encouraged continued collaboration for a thriving business environment.

At the AGM, our newly elected President, Mr. Anura Warnakulasooriya, Managing Director of Midaya Ceramic Co. (Pvt) Ltd., shared his vision for the Chamber's role in shaping Sri Lanka's business landscape. He emphasized the importance of innovation, sustainability, and international collaboration in navigating economic challenges and positioning Sri Lanka as a competitive business hub.



During the AGM, Chief Guest Hon. Justice Kodagoda delivered an insightful address on "Uniting Against Corruption and Shaping the Future." His speech underscored the critical role of ethical business practices, transparency, and integrity in fostering a sustainable and thriving economy. His message serves as a reminder of our collective responsibility in driving positive change for Sri Lanka's business landscape.

Guest of Honour of the event, Hon. Chathuranga Abeysinghe, Deputy Minister of Industrial and Entrepreneurship Development, also shared his perspectives on the need for a unified effort between all Chambers and the government to address the critical economic challenges faced by the nation. He emphasized the importance of identifying sectoral strategies to unlock the potential of key industries, ensuring targeted growth and economic resilience.

Mr. Chamika Godamanna, Honorary Treasurer, presented the Chamber's digital transformation initiatives for 2023/2024, showcasing the successful initiatives under the leadership of outgoing President Mr. Deepal Nelson. He highlighted the significance of the 'fromSriLanka' platform in taking local products to the global market and invited all foreign missions and the local business community to partner with this initiative to expand Sri Lanka's product portfolio and attract international buyers. Marked another significant milestone with the launch of the new digital platform for the issuance of Certificates of Origin, with the presence of the Chief Guest, Hon. Justice Yasantha Kodagoda, P.C. Justice of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka, the Guest of Honour, Hon. Chathuranga Abeysinghe, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development, the newly elected President, and Immediate Past President Mr. Deepal Nelson.

As the closing remarks of the 66th AGM, Hon. Secretary Mr. Eassuwaren Subramaniam emphasized that the National Chamber expresses gratitude to all distinguished invitees/participants, Main Sponsor BMT Campus and other sponsors, and supporters who contributed to the success of this milestone event. The Chamber remains committed to driving economic growth, fostering collaboration, and championing the interests of its members.

Standing from Left to Right:

Mrs. Nilupul Chandrasena - Secretary General/CEO, Mr. Kavinda Rajapakse - Senior Deputy President, Dr. Lakmal Fernando - Deputy President, Hon. Justice Yasantha Kodagoda, P.C. - Justice of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka (Chief Guest), Mr. Anura Warnakulasooriya - President, Hon. Chaturanga Abeysinghe - Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development (Guest of Honour), Mr. Deepal Nelson - Immediate Past President, Mr. Eassuwaren Subramaniam - Honorary Secretary and Mr. Chamika Godamanna - Honorary Treasurer





Chief Guest Hon. Justice Yasantha Kodagoda, P.C, Justice of Supreme court of Sri Lanka, addressing the gathering



Guest of Honour Hon. Chaturanga Abeysinghe, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development, addressing the



President of National Chamber, Mr. Anura Warnakulasooriya, addressing the gathering



Immediate Past President of National Chamber, Mr. Deepal Nelson, addressing the gathering



Presentation on Issuance of digital Certificate of Origin Online System and from Sri Lanka Platform by Mr Chamika Godamanna - Honorary Treasurer of the National Chamber



THE NATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF SRI LANKA CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY WITH A FOCUS ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The Women's Forum of the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka hosted a special knowledge-sharing program in celebration of International Women's Day on Thursday, 6th March 2025, at the National Chamber Auditorium.

Aligning with United Nations theme for International Women's Day 2025, "Accelerate Action, Act Now for Equal Rights, Power, and Opportunities" the program emphasized the need for women to be empowered to become financially independent with their own source of income and also be concerned by their health and well-being. Informative sessions on 'Nutrition for women', recognizing its vital role in overall well-being and economic productivity. The event featured expert guest lectures, inspirational success stories of women entrepreneurs, and an interactive culinary session focused on preparing a nutritious meal.

The audience comprised women entrepreneurs from the MSME sector, professionals, and homemakers, all of whom play a significant role in driving the economy. The event underscored the importance of women's economic empowerment and gender equality, reinforcing the need for continued action to create inclusive opportunities for women.

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EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH KNOWLEDGE:

Speaking at the event, Ms. Nilupul Chandrasena, Secretary General of the National Chamber of Commerce Sri Lanka, emphasized the importance of women uplifting and supporting each other, especially in these challenging economic conditions of the country. Stated, "...Women must uplift and support each other. We come across many young women entrepreneurs who not only create employment opportunities for other women but also provide financial support and economic independence for women.



equal opportunities for women are essential, and their contributions must be valued and recognized. The role of a mother within a family is paramount, yet many women tend to neglect their own well-being, particularly their nutritional needs, due to the multiple responsibilities of work and family life. This is why we have dedicated this knowledge-sharing session to women's nutrition because their health and well-being matter..."



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

Key highlight of the event was an informative session titled "Nutrition Plays a Crucial Role in a Woman's Overall Health and Well-being at Every Stage of Life." The session, presented by Ms. Imihiri Pathirana, Chief Dietitian at Nawaloka Hospitals PLC, and Dr. Amilani Rathnayake, an experienced Ayurvedic doctor, provided valuable insights into the nutritional requirements of women at different life stages. It also highlighted how a balanced diet contributes to a healthy work-life balance and the prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and other critical illnesses that women are particularly vulnerable at present.

NUTRITIONAL AWARENESS SESSION:

"Nutrition Plays a Crucial Role in a Woman's Overall Health and Well-being at Every Stage of Life"—presented by Ms. Imihiri Pathirana, Chief Dietitian at Nawaloka Hospitals PLC, and Dr. Amilani Rathnayake, an experienced Ayurvedic doctor, provided valuable insights into the nutritional needs of women at different life stages and the importance of a balanced diet in maintaining a healthy work-life balance while preventing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and other health risks.



CULINARY EXPERIENCE ON BALANCED DIET AND NUTRITION FOR WOMEN:

A live cooking demonstration by Chef Chathurika, sponsored by Unilever Sri Lanka, showcased practical ways to prepare nutritious meals tailored to women's dietary needs.



'BEAUTIFUL YOU' – WOMEN EMPOWERMENT SESSION:

Conducted by Ms. Dulari Fernando, Certified Trainer, this engaging session focused on self-confidence, personal development, and the importance of self-care in a woman's journey to success.

INSPIRING ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNEYS:

Three women entrepreneurs Ms Sasiru Lokuge – Sensa Solutions Pvt Ltd, Ms. Sammu Upeka Tharindi Thilimali - Ample clothing and Deshamanya Benari Nelum Senarathna-Berni Creations shared their remarkable success stories, highlighting the hardships they overcame through perseverance and courage to establish themselves as successful business leaders contributing to the economy.



Acknowledgment of Sponsors

The Women's Day program was powered by the Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC, along with Asia Pacific Institute of Information Technology (APIIT), Esna Allied Enterprises Ltd., Pussalla Meat Producers (Pvt) Ltd., Salota International Pvt. Ltd., Illukkumbura Industrial Automation (Pvt) Ltd., Akbar Brothers (Pvt) Ltd., Bellose Lanka (Pvt) Ltd., Country Style Foods (Pvt) Ltd., Darley Butler & Co. Ltd., Edinborough products (Pvt) Ltd., Fadna - Food & Nature (Pvt) Ltd., Hettigoda Industries (Pvt) Ltd., Mega Life science and Unilever Sri Lanka, who contributed immensely to the success of the event. The Chamber extends its heartfelt gratitude to all sponsors for their generous support in making this event a meaningful and impactful celebration of women empowerment.

RECOGNIZING THE VALUABLE SERVICE OF OUR IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

NCCSL team extends heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Deepal Nelson, Immediate Past Mr. Deepal Nelson, Immediate Past President of the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka, for his unwavering commitment, visionary leadership, and dedicated service. His guidance has been instrumental in strengthening the Chamber's mission and advancing the Sri Lankan business community. In keeping with the protocol of the Chamber, a photograph of Mr. Nelson was ceremonially unveiled in the Board Room of NCCSL on 21st March 2025 by the current President, Mr. Anura Warnakulasooriya, and Senior Deputy President, Mr. Kavinda Rajapaksha, in recognition of his outstanding contribution.



Mr. Nelson brings over 35 years of diverse industry experience spanning apparel, cosmetics, hospitality, and healthcare. He has significantly contributed to the advancement of Sri Lanka's business sector, currently serving as the Managing Director of GSH City Hotel and Ogabo Global Parfumerie (Pvt) Ltd. In 2024, he was appointed as a Non-Executive/Independent Director of Ceylinco Holdings PLC.

During his tenure as President of the National Chamber from 2023 to February 6, 2025, Mr. Nelson played a pivotal role in the Chamber's strategic transformation and growth. His visionary leadership, commitment to excellence, and emphasis on collaboration greatly enhanced the Chamber's national and international engagements.

Throughout his distinguished career, Mr. Nelson held several key roles, including:

- President, Sri Lanka Chamber of Garment Exporters
- Technical Committee Member, Sri Lanka Inventors Commission
- Member, Steering Committee for the National Policy for Industrial Development
- Member, National Economic Development Council
- Member, High-Level Steering Committee for the National Single Window System Project under the Ministry of Finance

Widely regarded as a game changer in the business community, Mr. Nelson's strategic foresight and passion for progress have left an enduring legacy. The unveiling ceremony was a heartfelt tribute to his invaluable service and leadership over two impactful years.

525TH COUNCIL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The 525th Council Meeting of the National Chamber of Commerce was held on Thursday, 30 January 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at GSH City Hotel (Pvt) Ltd., Colombo 06.

This meeting marked the final council session chaired by Mr. Deepal Nelson, President of NCCSL. Following the meeting, a Knowledge Sharing Session was conducted by Guest Speaker Mr. Takafumi Kadono, Country Director, Sri Lanka Resident Mission, Asian Development Bank. The topic was "Role of Asian Development Bank in Sri Lanka's Economic Development".



The event concluded with a cocktail and dinner hosted by the President.

NCCSL TEAM FIELD VISIT FOR PRACTICAL INDUSTRY EXPOSURE

As part of our ongoing efforts to stay connected with the realities of the business landscape, a team from the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka undertook a field visit to gain practical industry exposure. These engagements allow us to better understand current challenges and opportunities across sectors, strengthening our ability to advocate effectively on behalf of the business community.

On 26 February 2025, the team from the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka (NCCSL) participated in an engaging and insightful field visit to the Midaya Ceramics Factory. This immersive session provided team members with a valuable opportunity to observe the full spectrum of ceramic manufacturing processes—from raw material handling to the intricate finishing touches.

The visit not only deepened understanding of industrial operations but also sparked meaningful discussions on innovation, quality control, and sustainability within the sector. The NCCSL team expresses sincere appreciation to Midaya Ceramics for hosting an informative and enriching experience.





Goodness Always



Goodness Always



40 YEARS OF
EXCELLENCE
Since 1982



NCCSL

B2B Meetings & Bilateral Session

B2B MEETINGS AND BILATERAL SESSION

Visit of H.E. Semih Lütfü Turgut, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye, to the National Chamber

H.E. Semih Lütfü Turgut, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Sri Lanka, paid a courtesy visit to the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka on 22nd January 2025. He was accompanied by Ms. Merve Gözde Otlı, Deputy Chief of Mission, and Mrs. Gamze Ercan, Commercial Counsellor. The delegation was warmly received by the President and members of the Executive Committee at the Chamber's Boardroom at 3:00 PM.

The discussions centered on strengthening bilateral trade and investment relations between Sri Lanka and Türkiye. Both parties explored avenues for collaboration, with a particular emphasis on facilitating B2B meetings to enhance private sector engagement and economic cooperation. This visit marks a significant milestone in the Chamber's ongoing efforts to foster closer economic ties and promote mutual opportunities between the two nations.



NATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF SRI LANKA HOSTS B2B SESSION WITH IGTD EXIM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INDIA

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka (NCCSL), in collaboration with the IGTD Exim Chamber of Commerce, India, successfully hosted a Business-to-Business (B2B) session aimed at strengthening trade and investment ties between Sri Lanka and India. The event was held on Tuesday, 11th March 2025, at 2:30 p.m. at the National Chamber Auditorium.

The visiting Indian business delegation comprised prominent exporters and importers representing a wide array of industries. The session offered Sri Lankan businesses a valuable platform to establish direct connections with Indian exporters and suppliers, fostering meaningful trade partnerships.

The visiting exporters specialized in Red Chillies & Rice, Engineering & Manufacturing Equipment, Handicrafts & Corporate Gift Items,

Hardware & Construction Materials, Packaging Solutions & Materials, Textiles & Leather Products, and Agricultural & Spice Products.

In addition to exporters, the delegation also featured Indian importers seeking to source high-quality Sri Lankan agricultural and spice products such as pepper and cinnamon.

Sri Lankan importers and exporters in attendance had the opportunity to engage in targeted discussions and access detailed delegate profiles to explore collaboration possibilities.

The National Chamber encourages continued engagement with regional business counterparts and remains committed to facilitating similar initiatives that enable local enterprises to expand their market presence and foster international trade relations.





NATIONAL CHAMBER HOSTS BILATERAL TRADE & INVESTMENT SESSION BETWEEN SRI LANKA AND NEW ZEALAND

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka successfully hosted an insightful Bilateral Trade & Investment Session with the gracious presence of His Excellency David Gregory Pine, High Commissioner of New Zealand to Sri Lanka, on Tuesday, 18th March 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the National Chamber Auditorium, Colombo.

This exclusive session provided an invaluable opportunity for the Sri Lankan business community to directly engage with His Excellency David Gregory Pine, who shared key insights into New Zealand's trade environment, investment landscape, policies, and emerging opportunities for collaboration between the two nations.

His Excellency Prasanna Gamage, Sri Lankan High Commissioner to New Zealand, addressed the session virtually, offering further perspectives on potential avenues for bilateral economic engagement and highlighting opportunities for Sri Lankan enterprises in the New Zealand market.



Key Discussion Areas the session focused on potential growth sectors, including: Strengthening Sri Lanka-New Zealand trade and investment ties; Gaining valuable insights into New Zealand's market dynamics and investment climate; Fostering business connections for mutual economic growth and development; Tourism & Hospitality - Strengthening partnerships in sustainable tourism and hospitality management; Technology & Innovation - Exploring emerging opportunities in fintech, IT solutions, and digital transformation.

Speaking at the event, His Excellency David Gregory Pine emphasized New Zealand's commitment to deepening economic cooperation with Sri Lanka. "New Zealand sees great potential in expanding trade and investment partnerships with Sri Lanka. From agribusiness to technology, there are multiple opportunities for collaboration that can bring mutual benefits," he stated.

His Excellency Prasanna Gamage, Sri Lankan High Commissioner in New Zealand added, "Sri Lankan businesses can leverage New Zealand's expertise in innovation and sustainable development while positioning themselves to expand their reach in a highly competitive global market."

The event saw the participation of key business leaders, industry representatives, policymakers, and entrepreneurs eager to explore opportunities in the New Zealand market. The session concluded with a vibrant discussion, paving the way for new initiatives and strengthening economic ties between the two nations.



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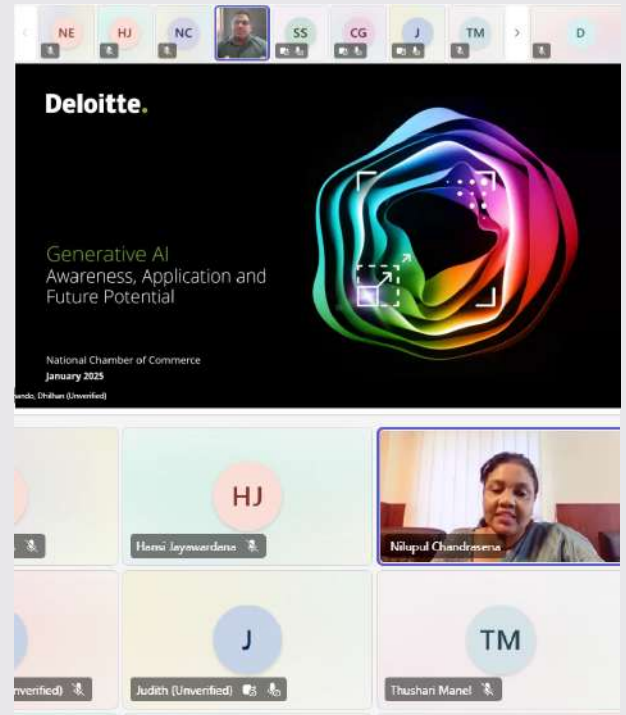
Seminars & Workshops

WEBINAR ON GENERATIVE AI – 9 JANUARY 2025

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka, in collaboration with Deloitte, successfully organized a free webinar on Generative AI on 9 January 2025, from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The session was conducted by Mr. Dhilhan Fernando, Associate Consultant – AI & Data at Deloitte Advisory Services Pvt Ltd. The informative session was tailored for beginners and received highly positive feedback from participants, who found the content both insightful and practical.

The webinar was attended by over 90 participants and NCCSL staff, reflecting strong interest in the evolving field of artificial intelligence and its implications for business and industry.



KNOWLEDGE-SHARING SESSION ON “THE POWER OF GEOPOLITICS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR SRI LANKA'S NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT”

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka hosted an insightful knowledge-sharing session titled “The Power of Geopolitics and Its Implications for Sri Lanka's National Development” on 17th January 2025 at 4:15 p.m. at the Chamber Auditorium, 4th Floor.

The session was conducted by Prof. Patrick Mendis, Presidential Advisor to the National Security Education Board, U.S. Department of Defense. Drawing from his extensive expertise in international relations and strategic affairs, Prof. Mendis shared valuable perspectives on how global geopolitical dynamics influence Sri Lanka’s development trajectory and economic positioning.

The event drew the participation including business leaders, academics, policy professionals, and other stakeholders keen to understand the broader implications of geopolitical shifts on national development.

This session forms part of the Chamber’s continued efforts to foster informed dialogue and promote strategic thinking among the Sri Lankan business and policymaking communities.



NCCSL PARTICIPATES IN SERVICE DESIGN WORKSHOP ORGANIZED BY ITC AND WIPO

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka participated in a three-day online workshop on Service Design, jointly organized by the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), held on 10th, 11th, and 13th February 2025.

The NCCSL staff attended the workshop, which was conducted as part of a pilot project aimed at equipping Business Support Organizations (BSOs) with the tools and knowledge to integrate Intellectual Property (IP) support into their service offerings.

The primary objective of the workshop was to assist the Chamber in incorporating the WIPO IP Diagnostic Tool into its suite of services. Through guided sessions, participants worked on identifying how the Chamber could offer targeted IP support services in alignment with its strategic priorities and the evolving needs of its member base.

By the conclusion of the workshop, participants had developed a draft service plan encompassing key elements such as strategic alignment, customer segmentation, value proposition, resource planning, and performance measurement strategies.

This initiative marks an important step in enhancing the Chamber's capacity to support innovation, competitiveness, and IP awareness among Sri Lankan enterprises.

INTRODUCTORY SEMINAR ON NATIONAL BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS (NBEA) 2025

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka conducted the Introductory Seminar on the National Business Excellence Awards (NBEA) 2025 on 18th February 2025 at 9:00 a.m. The seminar was held in a hybrid format — physically at the Chamber's 4th Floor Boardroom and virtually via an online platform — to accommodate wide participation.



The session was headed by Mr. Sunil Wijesinha, Chairman of the Panel of Judges, and attended by fellow panel members, the Secretary General, Chamber staff, and NBEA 2025 applicants. A total of 150 participants took part in the session.



The seminar was designed to provide detailed guidance and clarity to applicants on the NBEA 2025 application and submission process. It served as a valuable platform to address applicant queries and ensure a comprehensive understanding of the competition's expectations and evaluation criteria.

The Chamber remains committed to supporting applicants and upholding the standards of excellence celebrated through the NBEA platform.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE POST BUDGET SEMINAR 2025, ORGANIZED BY THE NATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF SRI LANKA

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka successfully hosted a successful Knowledge-Sharing session on Post Budget Analysis Seminar 2025 on 19th of February at the National Chamber Auditorium, bringing together an esteemed panel of experts, policymakers, and industry leaders to analyze the impact of the National Budget 2025 on the economy and the business climate.

The National Budget 2025 was officially presented by H.E. President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on 17th February 2025, this post budget analysis seminar provided a comprehensive breakdown of key budgetary policies, taxation related proposals, government expenditure and revenue generation commitments.

Key Discussions and Insights:

The expert panel featured Mr. Hasitha Raddella, (Principal Tax and Regulatory KPMG Sri Lanka), Ms. Jayani C. Wickrama Arachchi (Director, Department of Fiscal Policy, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development), Ms. S. Iyesha Asanthi (Commissioner, Tax Policy and Legislation, Inland Revenue Department), Mr. Ruwan Fernando (National Chamber Council Member & Former Partner E & Y). The session was moderated by Mr. Nandika Buddhipala, a respected finance and investment professional (CFO of Commercial Bank PLC, Past President of The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka).

The discussions covered key aspects of the budget which may have implications on the business community, sectoral implications including the highlights of the key economic features, fiscal projections and proposed changes to the tax structure outlined for the year 2025, Mr. Hasitha Radella, Principal Tax and Regulatory KPMG Sri Lanka presented an overview of the Tax reforms, stated "...As Sri Lanka continues its recovery, budget is focused on several taxation reforms with sustained improvements in fiscal management will be key to maintaining growth momentum for the country... discussed about positive aspects of the proposals such as ease of paying taxes and government expectations to enable the ease of doing business mainly through the digitalization of public services, however VAT implications on the digital services are yet to be further clarified..".

"...Clarifications on the Simplified Value Added Tax (SVAT) system and the transition from SVAT to a Risk-Based Refund System that will streamline the VAT refund process to an efficient process was explained by Ms. Iyesha Asanthi, Commissioner Tax Policy & legislation, Inland Revenue Department. Further commented that if any eligible exporter who exports more than 50 percent of total supplies is willing to get VAT Refunds under new risk-based refund system he can be included to the pilot project... Current VAT threshold is LKR 15 million per quarter and LKR 60 million per year at the standard rate 18%. Due to current situation of the country the budget proposals of 2025 doesn't include tax exemptions or concessions, however the budget proposals made to amend individuals' tax rates by increasing tax relief from Rs1.2 million to 1.8 million and by relaxing tax brackets the individuals including employees will be benefitted..."



Ms. Jayani Wickrama Arachchi, (Director Fiscal Policy Dept of Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development highlighted... "With fiscal space being highly constrained, every policy move must be strategic-ensuring key fiscal targets are protected while safeguarding economic stability in the medium term.. and the interest payments remain a significant burden, accounting for a substantial government recurrent expenditure, primarily due to Sri Lanka's high borrowing costs. We need to move ahead despite these challenges..."

Mr. Nandika Buddhipala, (CFO of Commercial Bank PLC) emphasized "...We appreciate the government efforts to come up with 2025 Budget with unprecedented constraints, inter alia, Public Finance Management Act and IMF Debt Sustainability Framework, however, making sure the alignment with them. Furthermore, it is extremely important to be cognizant of the persisting debt servicing and interest cost burden and our concrete plans with regard to creating conducive environment for export oriented and FDI conducive economy with decreasing emphasis on non-tradable orientation."

Further mentioned about proposal to enhance Sri Lanka's network of FTAs, especially with ASEAN nations, through participation in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and other agreements would be favourable for the business community. Expansion of DTAs beyond the current 46, prioritizing countries with significant trade and investment potential would be more advantageous to the country.

Mr. Ruwan Fernando, Council member of the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka also added his comments, noting that "Budget 2025 looks optimistic and presents a forward-thinking approach in supporting the business community. The allocation of resources towards innovation and export growth will create a more dynamic and resilient economy."

Attendees gained insights to understand the policy changes and capitalize on new opportunities. During the Q & A session the participants clarified on the plans to establish a development bank to provide Development Bank Establishment tailored financial solutions for SMEs and new entrepreneurs within the existing state bank framework and the focus on providing relief to the exporters.

SEMINAR ON “ENHANCING WORKPLACE EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH EFFECTIVE LABOUR RELATIONS”

A seminar on ‘Enhancing Workplace Efficiency and Productivity through Effective Labour Relations’, ‘Enhancing Workplace Efficiency and Productivity through Effective Labour Relations’, conducted in collaboration with the Labour Department on Tuesday, 25 February 2025.

Shared valuable insights into key aspects such as: Building an effective and efficient workplace by improving employee attitudes; Basic Labour laws for promotion of institutional productivity and efficiency; Positive attitudes and employee motivation; New trends in industrial relation in Sri Lanka; Management and Human Resource Management; Social Dialogue and workplace cooperation.

The Resource Personnel: Ms. Iresha Udayangani, Commissioner of Labour, W P Nimal Weerasinghe Labour Officer of Social Dialog and Workplace Development Division of Labour and K P L Sanjeeewa, Labour Officer.

The session was conducted by Mr. W P Nimal Weerasinghe, Labour Officer, Department of Labour. 50 participants attended the meeting.



A WORKSHOP ON TAXATION APPLICABLE FOR BUSINESS

A workshop on Taxation Applicable for Business organized in collaboration with the Department of Inland Revenue, Sri Lanka on Tuesday, 4 March 2025 from 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. at the National Chamber Auditorium at No. 450, D. R Wijewardene Mawatha, Colombo 10.

This seminar provided valuable insights into: Understanding the Role of the Inland Revenue Department - Key responsibilities and updates., Taxes Applicable for Businesses - Including Income Tax (corporate & personal tax implications), Withholding Tax (WHT), and Advanced Personal Income Tax (APIT)., Recent Tax Policy Changes - Key amendments, implications for businesses and individuals, compliance requirements, and deadlines., Tax Calculations and Submissions - Practical guidance on computation, filing procedures, essential documentation, and compliance requirements.

This seminar focused on enhancing the understanding of recent tax amendments and ensure compliance with updated regulations.

Key resource persons of the session: Ms. S.A.P.D. Disabandara - Commissioner of Inland Revenue Department and Mr. H.A.K.K. Sanath - Deputy Commissioner of Inland Revenue Department, shared their expert knowledge and insights during the program, providing valuable guidance on relevant topics.



NATIONAL CHAMBER HOSTS INTERACTIVE “MEET THE MINISTER” SESSION WITH MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka (NCCSL) hosted an exclusive and interactive session titled “Meet the Minister of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development” on Wednesday, 26th March 2025, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the National Chamber Auditorium.

This high-level engagement featured Hon. Sunil Handunneththi, Minister of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development, and Hon. Chathuranga Abeysinghe, Deputy Minister, offering a valuable platform for business leaders, entrepreneurs, and industry stakeholders to interact directly with key policymakers.

Organized as part of the Chamber’s ongoing initiative to foster dialogue between the government and the private sector, the session addressed pressing challenges in the industrial and entrepreneurial landscape, highlighted current policy directions, and explored collaborative avenues for driving sustainable economic growth.

Key highlights of the session included:

- Strategic insights from the Minister and Deputy Minister on government priorities for industrial development, entrepreneurship promotion, and investment facilitation.
- An interactive Q&A segment, where participants raised questions and received direct responses on regulatory frameworks, support schemes, and incentive programs.
- Networking opportunities with peers and policymakers to encourage ongoing engagement and collaboration.



ONE DAY WORKSHOP ON "MEASURING AND IMPROVING ENTERPRISE PRODUCTIVITY" - FRIDAY, 28 MARCH 2025

The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka (NCCSL) hosted an insightful workshop on "Measuring and Improving Enterprise Productivity," which took place on Friday, 28 March 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the National Chamber Auditorium.

This exclusive session was conducted by Mr. Sunil G Wijesinha, a distinguished advocate of Japanese productivity techniques. Recognized as a pioneer in implementing Japanese management practices in Sri Lanka since 1980, Mr. Wijesinha underwent extensive training in Japan and held esteemed positions such as Past President of JASTECA and Past Chairman of JASTECA Trust. His contributions to productivity development in the Asia-Pacific region earned him the APO Regional Award, and in recognition of his efforts in fostering Japan-Sri Lanka relations, he was conferred the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays by the Government of Japan.

Key topics covered included: Measuring Labour, Energy, Material, and Capital Productivity; Prioritizing Productivity Efforts for Maximum Impact; Enhancing Workplace & Workstation Layout using Ergonomics; Implementing Method Study Techniques & Principles of Motion Economy; Utilizing Multiple Activity Charts & Two-Handed Process Charts; Identifying & Minimizing the Seven Wastes (Toyota Production System); and Conducting Activity Sampling for Performance Improvement.

This session was designed for professionals across various industries, including CEOs, COOs, Department Heads, Managers, Executives, and Trainees from manufacturing, service, government, SOEs, and educational institutions.



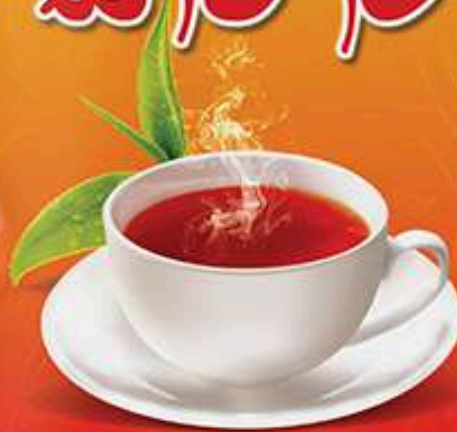
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NCCSL

ACTIVITIES & ENGAGEMENT

HIGHLIGHTS AND NATIONAL CHAMBER WEEKLY ENGAGEMENTS

EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Date & Time	Title	Represented by	Venue
3 January 2025 at 11.00 am	A meeting to discuss on Trade National Single Window System Project, under the Chairmanship of Hon. Dr. Harshana Suriyapperuma, Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning.	Dr. Lakmal Fernando, Hon. Secretary	Ministry of Finance
6 January 2025 at 5:00 pm	Discussion at the Ministry of Industries on the NCCSL Budget Proposals 2025	President, Office Bearers, 10 Council Members and SG/CEO Participated	Ministry of Industries
29 January 2025 at 2.30 pm	Signed a MOU with BIMT (British Institute of Management and Technology Campus) Campus	Officials of BIMT campus, President, Office Bearers and SG/CEO attended.	Boardroom, NCCSL
30 January 2025 at 09.00 am	ADB's (Asian Development Bank) Serendipity Knowledge Program on Driving Power Sector Reforms for Enhanced Renewable Energy Growth and Sector Performance	Dr. Lakmal Fernando, Hon. Secretary and Mr. Parakrama Jayasinghe, Council member	Lotus Ballroom, Shangri La, Colombo.
31 January 2025 at 10.00 am	Discussion on Implementation of Electricity Tariff Reduction organized by the Public Utilities Commission of Sri Lanka (PUCSL)	Dr. Lakmal Fernando, Hon. Secretary	Boardroom, PUCSL
5th February 2025 at 10.30 am	Discussion at the Sri Lanka Customs regarding the Digital Certificate of Origin System of NCCSL and digital verification of customs declaration.	Mr Chamika Godamanna, Hon. Treasurer, SG/CEO, Chamber staff and Auradot (Pvt) Ltd	Sri Lanka Customs
7 February 2025 at 3.00 pm	Presidential Export Awards 2023/24 organized by the Sri Lanka Export Development Board	Mr Deepal Nelson, Immediate Past President and SG/CEO	BMICH
21 February 2025 at 8.30 am	Language for Peace and Harmony organized by the Bangladesh High Commission in Sri Lanka - Observance of the International Mother Language Day (IMLD).	Mr. Yavinka Mendis, Senior Executive – Events Management of the National Chamber	Independence Square, Colombo 7
7 March 2025 at 3.00pm	The 'International Women's Day celebration of Embassy of Turkey	Ms. Nishanthi Dilrukshi, Project Executive	Turkish Residence, Colombo 7
10 March 2025 at 4.00 pm	National Single Window (NSW) Implementation; ADB Scoping visit for technical assistance	Dr. Lakmal Fernando, Deputy President	The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce

11 March 2025 at 3.30 pm	1 st Meeting of the High-Level Steering Committee on Trade National Single Window Project - 2025	Dr. Lakmal Fernando, Deputy President	New Auditorium, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
14 March 2025 at 9.30 am	The Launching Ceremony of the SheTrades Sri Lanka Hub	Ms. Nilupul Chandrasena, SG/CEO	Galle Face Hotel
14 March 2025 at 4:00 pm	Virtual Meeting on the Establishment of Joint Oman - Sri Lanka Business Council between Embassy of Sri Lanka in Oman and National Chamber of Commerce in Sri Lanka	President, Mr. Anura Warnakulasooriya, Secretary General/CEO and NCCSL Staff	Online
17 th March 2025	Women's Leadership & Empowerment	Ms. Nilupul Chandrasena, SG/CEO participated as a Guest Speaker	BIMT Colombo Campus
19 March 2025 at 10.30 am	Meeting with Mr. Nalinda Wijerathna, Actg. Director of Commerce to introduce the fromsrilanka platform	President, Hon. Treasurer Secretary General/CEO and fromSriLanka Team	Department of Commerce

INTERNAL MEETINGS

Date & Time	Title	Represented by	Venue
15 January 2025 at 2:00 pm	Management Meeting of National Chamber to discuss 66 th AGM activities.	President, Office Bearers, SG/CEO and the staff members	Boardroom, 4th Floor, NCCSL
18 February 2025 at 3.00 pm	Management meeting of the NCCSL, Chaired by Mr. Anura Warnakulasooriya, President of NCCSL	Office Bearers, SG/CEO and staff	Boardroom, NCCSL
19 February 2025 at 12:00 Noon	FromSriLanka Weekly Meeting	SG/CEO and fromsrilanka team	online

24 February 2025 at 2:00 pm	FromSriLanka (FSL) Supplier Forum - Phase 04	Registered suppliers of the FSL platform, 53 organizations, SG/CEO and fromsrilanka team	online
28 February 2025 at 9.00 am	New Member Interviews	Deputy President, SG/CEO and two new members participated.	Boardroom, NCCSL
5 March 2025 12:00 Noon	FromSriLanka Team Meeting	SG/CEO and fromsrilanka team	Virtual
5 March 2025 2:30 pm	NCCSL Management Meeting	Office Bearers, SG/CEO and staff	Boardroom, NCCSL
10 March 2025 5:00 pm	Discussion with the Indo-Sri Lanka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ISCCI) & NCCSL	Two Executive members from the ISCCI, Economic Counsellor from High Commission of India, President & office Bearers of NCCSL	Boardroom, NCCSL
11 March 2025 4.30 pm	New Member Interviews of the National Chamber chaired by the President	Two new members, President and SG/CEO	Virtual and Boardroom, NCCSL
12 March 2025 12.00 pm	FromSriLanka Weekly Meeting	SG/CEO and fromsrilanka team	Online
12 March 2025 2.30 pm	Meeting to discuss IP (Intellectual Property) service design updates	Officers from WIPO (World Intellectual Property Office), International Trade Centre (ITC), SG/CEO and Chamber staff joined.	online
14 March 2025 4.00 pm	Meeting on the Establishment of Joint Oman - Sri Lanka Business Council between Embassy of Sri Lanka in Oman and NCCSL.	Ambassador, Ms. Anodya Chirasrie, Charge d' Affairs, Mr. Anura Warnakulasooriya, President, Mr. Ruwan Fernando, Council Member SG/CEO and few staff members joined the meeting	Online
19 March 2025 at 1.15 pm	New Member Interviews of the National Chamber chaired by the President	Four new members, President and SG/CEO	Boardroom
21 March 2025 at 4.00 pm	526th Council Meeting of the National Chamber	President, Office Bearers and Council members participated	Online & Boardroom



The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka

450, D.R. Wijewardana Mawatha, Colombo 10, Sri Lanka

+94 11 4741788 (Office)

+94 11 2689596 (Fax)

Email : sg@nationalchamber.lk

Website: www.nationalchamber.lk