

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF SRI LANKA
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Profiles of Nominees

Annexure I – Notice of the 47th Annual General Meeting of the National Academy of Sciences of Sri Lanka

To: All Fellows of the National Academy of Sciences of Sri Lanka

Agenda item – Election of New Fellows

The Council, in terms of Rules 3.11 to 3.13, has recommended the following nominees as eligible for election as Fellows vide rule 3.23.

A: MEDICAL, DENTAL AND VETERINARY SCIENCES

01. Hithanadura Asita de Silva
02. Lallindra Viranjan Gooneratne
03. Mangala Gunatilake
04. M.D. Lamawansa

B. AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND FISHERIES

05. Puliheenga Mudiyanseelage Pradeepa Chandani Kumari Gunathilake Bandaranayake
06. Hemesiri Bandara Kotagama

C: ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE & SURVEYING

07. Dileeka Dias
08. Udeni Nawagamuwa

D: LIFE AND EARTH SCIENCES

09. Sinnathamby Noble Surendran
10. Devaka Weerakoon

E. PHYSICAL SCIENCES

11. Sivalingam Sivananthan

12. Nalin Chandra Wickramasinghe

F. CHEMICAL SCIENCES

13. N.A.K.P.J. Seneviratne

Date: 25th January 2026

Schedule to Annexure I



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES SRI LANKA (NASSL)

Details of Nominees

A: Medical, Dental and Veterinary Sciences

1) Hithanadura Asita de Silva (Asita de Silva)

Proposer: Prof. Malik Ranasinghe

Seconded: Prof. Arjuna Premawardhene

Date of Birth: August 8, 1962

Profession: Clinical Pharmacologist & Senior Professor Pharmacology

Qualifications: M.B.B.S. (North Colombo Medical College, Sri Lanka), D. Phil. (University of Oxford, UK), FRCP (Royal College of Physicians, London), FBPhS (Fellow of the British Pharmacology Society)

Professor Asita de Silva has held many positions in academic medicine over the last 32 years. He is a Clinical Pharmacologist and is currently Senior Professor of Pharmacology and Director, Clinical Trials Unit at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, which he founded in collaboration with the University of Oxford. Prof de Silva graduated MBBS in 1991 from the North Colombo Medical College, Sri Lanka, and had his postgraduate training in clinical pharmacology at the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford. He holds a doctorate in Clinical Pharmacology from the University of Oxford and is a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, London. In recognition of his leadership and contribution to clinical pharmacology, Prof de Silva was elected as a Fellow of the British Pharmacology Society in 2024.

Prof de Silva's clinical research interests have focused on neglected tropical diseases and major non-communicable diseases with a major focus on developing cost-effective and scalable therapeutic interventions. He serves on numerous international steering committees of large clinical trials on cardiovascular disease and is a member of the editorial board of the Journal of the American Heart Association. He has a prolific scientific publication record that includes highly cited papers in New England Journal of Medicine, Lancet, Journal of the American Medical Association, Nature Medicine and Lancet Global Health. He has delivered six national orations and delivered more than 200 invited lectures. Prof de Silva is a recipient of many prestigious research grants including project grants from the Wellcome Trust, Medical Research Council, UK, and the National Health & Medical Research Council in Australia. He has received Presidential awards for medical research on numerous occasions and is included in the database of the world's top 2% of scientists compiled by Stanford University.

He was Chairman of the National Medicines Regulatory Authority in Sri Lanka from June 2016 to March 2021. In 2019, Prof de Silva was awarded the titular honour '*Vidya Jyothi*', Sri Lanka's highest award for science.

2) Lallindra Viranjan Gooneratne

Proposer: Prof Vajira H.W. Dissanayake

Seconded: Prof. Prasad Katulanda

Date of Birth: December 15, 1966

Profession: Professor in Pathology, Consultant Haematologist

Qualifications: MBBS, Diploma in Pathology, MD (Haematology), FRCPath (UK), FCCP, FSLCH

Professor Lallindra V. Gooneratne, is a distinguished academic and clinician-scientist. He has made pioneering contributions to haematology and pathology education in Sri Lanka, training numerous postgraduate and undergraduate students while serving as Professor of Pathology at the University of Colombo. His extensive research portfolio includes over 50 peer-reviewed publications in high-impact journals, book chapters, and invited plenary lectures at leading international conferences.

He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists (UK), the Ceylon College of Physicians, and the Sri Lanka College of Haematologists. He has delivered prestigious national orations, including the Dr. G.M. Heennilame Oration (2024), the Prof. S.N. Wickramasinghe Oration (2021), and the Dr. S.C. Paul Oration (2019). His work has earned the President's Award for Scientific Publication, National Research Council Merit Awards, and international recognition through the Lancet Haematology profile (2024) highlighting his contributions amid national health crises.

Professor Gooneratne established Sri Lanka's first Bone Marrow Transplant Centre in 2014, achieving the nation's first successful allogeneic transplant. He set up the country's first flow cytometry diagnostic laboratory for haematological malignancies, making advanced diagnostics accessible. His research on thromboelastometry, coagulopathies in tropical diseases, and haemato-oncology has had direct clinical impact on the management of snakebite, dengue, thalassaemia, and leukaemia in Sri Lanka.

He has demonstrated exceptional leadership as President of the Sri Lanka College of Haematologists, Director of the Central Laboratory, University of Colombo, and Director of Clinical Haematology and Bone Marrow Transplant Unit at Asiri Central Hospital. He was a member of the national guideline committees on dengue and leptospirosis, and contributed to policy on genetic material and stem cell research, and served as a senior examiner and trainer at the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine. His influence has been pivotal in advancing haematology and medical science in Sri Lanka and the wider Asia-Pacific region.

3) Mangala Gunatilake

Proposer: Prof Vajira H.W. Dissanayake

Seconded: Prof. Priyanga Ranasinghe

Date of Birth: June 26, 1963

Profession: Professor in Physiology and Specialist in Laboratory Animal Science

Qualifications: BVSc (University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka), PhD (University of Colombo, Sri Lanka), MLAS (RWTH Aachen University, Germany), FSLCVS, FELASA, FIUPS

Professor Gunatilake holds a PhD from University of Colombo and MLAS from Aachen University, Germany, making her the first laboratory animal science (LAS) specialist in Sri Lanka. She has made significant contributions to LAS education, animals ethics, rabies immunology and potency, pathophysiology of envenoming, and natural product efficacy. She has authored multiple book chapters, contributing to the *Guidebook on Laboratory Animal Science*, *One Health for Dog-Mediated Rabies Elimination in Asia*, and *Alternatives to Animal Testing*. She has also co-authored the *Physiology Practical Workbook* for medical students.

Professor Gunatilake has been recognised through many national and international honours, including *Vidya Nidhi* (2019), the Global Animal Welfare Award from the World Veterinary Association (2025), the Charles River Prize from the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (2022) and the International Opportunity Programme Award from the American Physiological Society (2017).

Her research on anti-rabies post-vaccination immunity in animal models and vaccine potency assessments in collaboration with the WHO Reference Centre for Rabies in France has significantly impacted rabies control strategies in Sri Lanka. Her initiatives in the LAS field have strengthened research through the application of ethical principles and replacement models impacting scientific practices. She actively contributes to build a younger generation well equipped with necessary skills and knowledge in LAS.

She has served in leadership roles across national and regional professional societies, including presidencies of the Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons (SLCVS), Sri Lanka Association for Laboratory Animal Science (SLALAS), Society for Alternatives to Animal Testing in Sri Lanka (SAAT-SL), and South Asian Association of Physiologists (SAAP), as well as Principal investigator of rabies immunogenicity and potency studies, fostering international collaboration, training, and policy dialogue that integrates scientific excellence.

4) Meegahalande Durage Lamawansa (M.D. Lamawansa)

Proposer: Prof. A.P.R. Aluvihare

Seconded: Prof. Namal Priyantha

Date of Birth: December 8, 1959

Profession: Chair Professor of Surgery, Consultant General & Pediatric Transplant Surgeon

Qualifications: MBBS (Ruhuna) | MS (Colombo) | PhD (Western Australia) | FRCS (Edin)

Prof MD Lamawansa has served the University of Peradeniya for over 34 years and is presently the Senior Professor of Surgery. His research record includes an h-index of 9 with 285 citations.

He has held several senior distinguished appointments: President of the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka; President of the SAARC Surgical Care Society; Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Peradeniya; founding Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka; and Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the Russian Federation with concurrent accreditation to five other countries.

He is a Fellow of the apex surgical College of Surgeons of: Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, and Glasgow. He has delivered over 100 invited lectures locally and internationally, including the Kandy Society of Medicine Oration and the Sri Lanka–Edinburgh College of Surgeons Lecture. He was recognized for national service at the CWW Kannangara Commemoration, with an award presented by the President of Sri Lanka.

Beyond general surgery, he spearheaded Sri Lanka's first national paediatric kidney transplant program, achieving results comparable to developed nations; pioneered limb reimplantation with significant national impact; and guided the establishment of a liver transplant program at Peradeniya. He is a postgraduate trainer and has trained over 100 surgeons.

As Dean and Vice-Chancellor, he advanced research, co-chaired the BoM of Tripartite Water Research Centre (Ministry of Water Supply, University of Peradeniya, Chinese Academy of Sciences), and promoted collaborations with the University of Illinois on soybean, solar energy, and medical research. He led the institutionalization of multidisciplinary research culture at the University of Peradeniya.

B: Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

**5) Puliheenga Mudiyanseelage Pradeepa Chandani Kumari Gunathilake Bandaranayake
(Pradeepa Bandaranayake)**

Proposer: Prof. Rupika S. Rajakaruna

Seconded: Dr. D.K.N.G. Pushpakumara

Date of Birth: September 28, 1974

Profession: Professor, Director

Qualifications: PhD with Designated Emphasis (UC Davis), MPhil in Crop Science (UoP), MSc in Horticulture and Agronomy (UC Davis), MSc in Biotechnology (UoP), BSc in Agriculture (UoP).

Prof. Bandaranayake received her PhD from #1 University for Agriculture, UC Davis. She did two majors in parallel (PhD in Plant Biology specializing in Molecular Biology, Biochemistry and Genomics and MSc. in Horticulture and Agronomy) and a Designated Emphasis in Biotechnology with industry experience at Monsanto. She has an MPhil degree in Crop Science and a MSc in Biotechnology from the UoP and an LLM (IT & IP) from Cardiff Metropolitan UK.

She is recognized as a dual Fulbrighter. (<https://lk.usembassy.gov/ambassador-chungs-remarks-on-the-occasion-of-the-70th-anniversary-of-the-united-states-sri-lanka-fulbright-commission/>), won almost all the graduate student awards for research and academic excellence at UC Davis. She has won over 40 international and national fellowships and awards, including Early Career Fellowship-OWSD/UN, Endeavour Research Fellowship from Australia, Cochran Fellowship and Borlaug Research Fellowship from the USDA, Presidential awards, SLCARP Award, Tier4*-Award, Two Sahasak Nimavum Silver awards for inventions (patents underway).

Contributed a lot <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=np3BMqqhB74&t=1s> and published more than 40 SCI publications, obtained over 20 research grants as the PI and supervised over 15 research degrees. However, the landmark research work on Ceylon Cinnamon has already contributed immensely to the Sri Lankan economy.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?mibextid=oFDknk&v=431787836529635&rdid=KajJPf6iZ3obnkqj>;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lsb2tkCo6Cw>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jsvcnN6amw>

AgBC was a place with no staff, no money, and broken equipment when she assumed the Director position in 2013. She could uplift it as “the Centre of Excellence in Biotechnology” including the only National Referral lab LMO/GMO testing within 8-years (<https://agri.pdn.ac.lk/agbc/>), recognized by international organizations and personnel including the US Ambassador to the UN (<https://www.facebook.com/agbcpera>) with no direct funding from the treasury or the university and with mainly foreign research funding she obtained as the PI. She developed a 24x7 facility with everything needed for Research & Development needs in biotechnology (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BaDv_PB6kwQ). It operates as a self-sustainable facility and supports the undergraduate and postgraduate programs.

6) Hemesiri Bandara Kotagama (Hemesiri Kotagama)

Proposer: Prof. Malik Ranasinghe

Seconded: Prof. S. B. S. Abayakoon

Date of Birth: January 26, 1956

Profession: Head of Academics, Colombo International Campus

Qualifications: PhD (University of London, UK), MSc (Agricultural Economics). University of the Philippines at Los Banos, Philippines. BSc (Agriculture) Honours (University of Peradeniya)

Dr. H. B. Kotagama has a Ph.D. in Natural Resource Management and Environmental Economics from the University of London and an M.Sc. in Agricultural Economics from the University of the Philippines. His doctoral research developed an economic assessment framework for irrigation systems in Sri Lanka, a significant scholarly contribution. This work was informed by his master's thesis, which provided a rigorous analysis of the impact of water access on paddy production. He holds a B.Sc. in Agriculture with Honours from the University of Peradeniya.

Throughout his career, Dr. Kotagama has been the recipient of several notable distinctions. He was awarded a Presidential Award in 2003 in recognition of his contributions to agriculture, environmental science, and economics education. His academic efforts were further honored with the Best Masteral Thesis Award and an Overseas Research Students Award during his doctoral studies. Additionally, his research has been recognized with the Distinguished Research Paper award from Sultan Qaboos University and the Best Research Paper Presentation award from the Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture.

Dr. Kotagama's work has made substantial contributions to the fields of agricultural and environmental economics. His expertise encompasses environmental impact analysis with valuation, financial analysis of farming systems, and the development of agricultural and environmental policies. The practical application of his research is evidenced in diverse areas, including the evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of desalination, the economic impact of international trade policies, and the analysis of consumer preferences. His research provides valuable insights that inform sustainable resource management and economic strategy.

Dr. Kotagama's leadership is demonstrated through his extensive tenure as a Professor and his service in key administrative capacities, including Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Business Management and Chairman of the Post Graduate Board of Study. He has also been a key resource person for numerous training programs, including workshops for senior policymakers on biodiversity, an intensive training on Environmental Impact Assessment, and sessions for various government departments. These activities highlight his pivotal role in disseminating scientific knowledge and developing professional capabilities.

C: Engineering, Architecture and Surveying

7) Subasinghe Arachchige Dileeka Dias (Dileeka Dias)

Proposer: Prof Malik Ranasinghe

Seconded: Prof Ananda Jayawardane

Date of Birth: September 24, 1961

Profession: Engineer / Professor

Qualifications: PhD, University of California, Davis, USA . MS, University of California, Davis, USA, BSc Engineering (Hons), University of Moratuwa.

Throughout her career, Prof. Dileeka Dias has been active in teaching, research, innovation, and industry engagement, demonstrating my commitment to fostering holistic higher education. With over 60 publications and numerous international conference presentations, she has significantly contributed to the academic community and the advancement of knowledge. Her contributions to enhancing the postgraduate research profile of the University have resulted in increasing enrollments, publications and degrees awarded.

After excelling in her B.Sc. Engineering degree, she received the Presidential Scholarship for postgraduate studies and the University of California Regents' Fellowship. Her research teams have won multiple National Science and Technology Awards and the overall gold at the National Best Quality Software Awards. Prof. Dias has also been honored with the Zonta Woman of Excellence award in Engineering and several annual University of Moratuwa awards for research excellence.

Her passion lies in bridging research and real-world solutions. She has made transformative contributions in leading R&D initiatives that produced Sri Lanka's first disaster early warning network (DEWN) and its largest industrial IoT system. Her work on smart meter networks and a 5G test-bed has positioned Sri Lanka at the forefront of telecommunications innovation in the region. She has also a co-author of three Sri Lankan patents. Industry collaboration, funding from local and international agencies, and community engagement have been pivotal to this work.

Prof. Dias contributed to curriculum development by introducing content based on research and industry engagement and led the launch of a new degree program in the Faculty of IT. I strengthened the university's research ecosystem by establishing joint PhD programs with foreign institutions and multidisciplinary research centers. As Head of the Department, I oversaw the construction of new facilities and increased student intake. My pioneering work in establishing Sri Lanka's first industry-sponsored research lab set a precedent for similar initiatives at Moratuwa and beyond.

8) Udeni Priyantha Nawagamuwa (Udeni Nawagamuwa)

Proposer: Prof Malik Ranasinghe

Seconded: Prof Ananda Jayawardane

Date of Birth: September 17, 1972

Profession: Professor in Civil Engineering

Qualifications: BSc Eng Hons (Moratuwa), MEng (AIT), Dr Eng (YNU), Japan, CEng, Fellow (IESL)

Prof Udeni Nawagamuwa, holds a BSc Eng (Hons) degree from the University of Moratuwa (1999) and an MEng from the Asian Institute of Technology (2002). In 2005, he earned a Doctor of Engineering from Yokohama National University. He became a Chartered Engineer in 2008 and was honored as a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers Sri Lanka (IESL) in 2016.

Prof Udeni's academic journey began with a significant achievement as the winner of the Sri Lanka National Mathematical Olympiad in 1992. Over the years, he has been recognized with numerous awards, including the prestigious E.O.E. Pereira Award for the Best Technical Paper presented at the IESL Annual Sessions in both 2009 and 2010. He has consistently been recognized for his research contributions at the University of Moratuwa and received the Best Performance Award in the Summer Training Course for Slope Land Disaster Risk Reduction at National Taiwan University in 2013. Additionally, he was awarded the Endeavour Research Fellowship by the Australian Government, allowing him to spend his sabbatical at the University of Wollongong from August 2017 to February 2018.

With over two decades of experience in civil engineering, he has served both academia and the construction industry as a consultant. Notably, he contributed as a Geotechnical Engineer to the Southern Expressway Project and other significant ventures requiring expert geotechnical input.

Since joining the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLAAS) in 2007, he has held various leadership roles, including President of Section C, Chairman of multiple committees, General Secretary, and now, President-elect. He has also served the IESL as a council member and contributed to the community as Editor of the IESL Newsletter for four years.

D: Life and Earth Sciences

9) Sinnathamby Noble Surendran (Noble Surendran)

Proposer: Prof. P. Ravirajan

Seconded: Prof. S.H.P. Parakrama Karunaratne

Date of Birth: May 13 1968

Profession: Senior Professor & Chair of Zoology

Qualifications: PhD (University of Colombo), BSc (Hons.) in Zoology, University of Jaffna

Prof. Noble Surendran, is a distinguished scholar with a prolific career in medical entomology. His scholarly contributions include over 83 peer-reviewed publications listed on Google Scholar, boasting an impressive h-index of 31, an i10-index of 61, and over 2,882 citations. He has produced seven MPhil and three PhD candidates and secured research grants totaling over Rs 50 million from the NRC and NSF. Additionally, he is a co-principal investigator on a Rs 30 million grant from the Swiss NSF, collaborating with the University of Bern to enhance research capabilities and to produce PhD-level scholars.

Among his accolades, he has received the Presidential Award for Scientific Publications for ten times and the NSF Research Award in 2013. In 2019, he was awarded the Professor Kandaiah Balasubramaniam Gold Medal by the Jaffna Science Association. He has also held Commonwealth Academic Staff Fellowship, Swiss NSF Scientific Exchange Fellowship and is a Fellow of the Royal Entomological Society.

Surendran's research has significantly advanced scientific knowledge and public health. He identified two sibling species in the primary malaria vector in Sri Lanka, enhancing malaria vector control strategies. His work on the brackish water adaptation of dengue vectors has spurred global studies on the physiological and molecular basis of salt adaptation in dengue vectors, leading to recommendations to target brackish water habitats to eliminate vector development sites.

Surendran is a Senior Professor and Chair of Zoology and serves as the Director of the Centre for Research in Entomology, which he founded in 2020, and the Centre for Science Education at the University of Jaffna. He secured a grant from the UGC to revamp the biological science study program in 2013. He co-founded the Jaffna Entomological Society in 2023. Additionally, he serves on the expert panel for vector control at the National Dengue Control Unit.

10) Hettiarachchige Kirthi Devaka Gomes Abeysinghe Weerakoon (Devaka Weerakoon)

Proposer: Dr. Ranjith Mahindapala

Seconded: Prof. Preethi Udagama

Date of Birth: February 26, 1963

Profession: Professor

Qualifications: B.Sc. Biological Sciences, University of Colombo, M.Sc. Biological Sciences, Illinois State University, USA , Ph.D. Biological Sciences, Illinois State University, USA

Professor Weerakoon holds an M Sc and Ph D (Biological Science) from the University of Illinois, USA, and is the Chair Professor in Zoology and Environment Sciences, University of Colombo.

Professor Weerakoon is a recipient of Fellowships from the Fulbright programme (for M Sc) and from the American Heart Association for Doctoral Studies. He has received the Presidential Award and the National Research Council Merit Award for Scientific Publications.

Professor Weerakoon's main research area is conservation of threatened animals, especially Asian Elephants, results of which have led to new knowledge on ecology and biology of Asian Elephants in Sri Lanka, providing novel insights on the effectiveness of elephant management practices. He led the development of two national plans for human-elephant conflict mitigation. He has contributed immensely towards Sri Lanka's global commitment to biodiversity conservation; specifically, the first recovery programme for Globally Critically Endangered freshwater fish, *Pethia bandula*, nearing extinction in 2003, establishment of a second population in a forest stream, and studies on three other Globally Critically Endangered Fish species, *Systemus martenstyni*, *Labeo fisheri*, and *Labeo lankae* are highlights.

Professor Weerakoon's national contribution as the Chief Technical Advisor in developing five National Red Lists (1996 to date), and as the Team Leader for developing the National Biodiversity Strategic Plan 2016-2022, and the National Adaptation Plan 2026-2035 have significant value to the Government. Because of his expertise and wide experience, he has been requisitioned as a technical expert to several UN agencies, and donors, and has provided technical advice on biodiversity aspects of development project to numerous government agencies. He has served on several Boards of Studies in Universities, and in about 15 expert committees of Government agencies during the period 2000 to date.

E: Physical Sciences

11) Sivalingam Sivananthan

Proposer: Prof. M.A.K. Lakshman Dissanayake

Seconded: Prof. J.B. Ekanayake

Year of Birth: 1956

Profession: Distinguished Professor and Director

Qualifications: BS, Physics, University of Peradeniya, MS, Physics, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA, PhD, Physics, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA

Recognition for his innovative contributions emerged in 2013 when the US White House honored him with the "Champion of Change" award in the Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Innovators category. In 2017, Dr. Sivananthan was bestowed with the Vidya Nidhi title in the Sri Lankan national honors. In 2024, Prof. Sivananthan was awarded the Honorary D.Sc. degree by the University of Peradeniya for his outstanding contributions to the development of scientific research and training in Sri Lanka, especially during the period 2008 - 2024.

The Microphysics Laboratory (MPL) under the leadership of Dr. Sivananthan, has made significant scientific contributions to the development and understanding of molecular beam epitaxial (MBE) growth of heteroepitaxial systems, particularly HgCdTe (MCT) for infrared detectors. Notably, the lab pioneered the growth of II-VI semiconductors on silicon substrates, overcoming critical challenges like lattice mismatch. These innovations have direct applications in infrared detector and photovoltaic technologies. MPL is now internationally recognized as a leading academic center for MCT MBE growth.

Dr. Sivananthan has made significant contributions to advancing science and technology in Sri Lanka. He organized and funded a series of national photovoltaic research conferences at four major Sri Lankan universities (2011–2016), fostering academic collaboration. He also led the "Edu Training Project" (2017–2023), securing government support and launching university-based R&D programs focused on CdS/CdTe thin-film solar cells and panel prototyping. Driven by Sri Lanka's potential as a solar hub, his efforts have laid the foundation for sustainable energy development and scientific capacity-building in the country.

13. Nalin Chandra Wickramasinghe (Nalin Wickramasinghe)

Proposer: Dr. Locana Gunaratne

Seconded: Prof. Ajit Abeysekera

Date of Birth: January 20, 1939

Profession: Distinguished Professor and Director

Qualifications: BSc (Ceylon); MA, PhD, ScD (Cantab); Hon. DSc (Soka-Japan), Hon.DSc (Ruhuna), FRAS, FRSA

The proposed candidate's research over 5 decades changed the way we think of interstellar dust and comets, the origin of life on planets and throughout the universe more profoundly than any astronomer has done in the past century. The transformation from the paradigm of volatile ice grains in space to refractory carbonaceous dust changed interstellar astronomy forever. He published over 50 peer-reviewed papers in this period for which Cambridge University awarded him the degree of PhD, ScD (Cantab) and he was elected a Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge. He was also appointed a founding Staff Member of the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge University. Besides his academic achievements, he received the Powell Prize for English Poetry from Trinity College Cambridge in 1962.

From 1973-2010 he was a Professor at Cardiff University and Head of a new Department of Applied Mathematics there. During this period, he introduced and developed the new discipline of Astrobiology is now pursued in academia the world over. Jointly with the late Sir Fred Hoyle he also developed the modern version of the Theory of Panspermia for which evidence is now rapidly accumulating.

During the period 1973-1985 he has held numerous appointments as distinguished Research Professor at the University of Maryland, USA and Visiting Professor at the University of Western Ontario and London in 1974 and 1976. From 1982-1984 he was the founder/Director, Institute of Fundamental Studies, Sri Lanka, and UNDP Consultant/ Advisor to the President of Sri Lanka. He was a Visiting Professor at Institute of Space and Astronautical Studies, Japan in 1993 and Visiting Professor, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston in 1994.

During the period 1972-2025 he has published over 450 peer-reviewed papers in scientific journals and over 40 technical books on Astronomy and Astrobiology. He was decorated by the President of Sri Lanka with the titular honour of *Vidya Jyothi*, and by King Charles with the MBE.

F: Chemical Sciences

13. Nalawatta Appuhamilage Kapila Pinto Jayathilake Seneviratne (Kapila Seneviratne)

Proposer: Prof. M.J.S. Wijeyaratne

Seconded: Prof. Priyani Paranagama

Date of Birth: August 18, 1963

Profession: Professor

Qualifications: B.Sc. Special Degree in Chemistry, University of Kelaniya; Ph.D. in Chemistry, Wayne State University, USA; Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of British Columbia, Canada

Prof. Kapila Seneviratne holds a BSc Honours degree in Chemistry from University of Kelaniya (UOK) and a PhD from Wayne State University, USA. He is a Commonwealth Fellow, Fulbright Fellow, Postdoctoral fellow (University of British Columbia), visiting Research Fellow (University of Queensland) and Chartered Chemist. He was the Dean/Science and Dean/Graduate Studies at UOK and currently is the Chairman of the University Grants Commission.

He has received President's Awards for Innovations, President's Awards for Scientific Publications for several years, NSF Research Award, several SUSRED awards of the NSF, Dr. C.L. de Silva Gold Medal of the Institute of Chemistry, Estr and Stanley Kirschner Graduate Award of Wayne State University for outstanding academic and research achievements, and many Senate awards and Vice Chancellor's awards of the UOK including the awards for the Outstanding Senior Researcher and Best Inventor/Innovator. He has served as the President and Secretary of Section E2 of SLAAS, a Council member and Treasurer of the Institute of Chemistry.

He established the mammalian cell culture facility and developed the Research Services Centre at the UOK. He has published 26 papers in high indexed international journals, two books, four book chapters and 97 abstracts. He has 10 national patents and one international patent. He has 104,438 ResearchGate Reads, h-Index of 18 and i10-Index of 25. Some of his patented products are in the process of commercialization.

He has administered many research grants as the principal investigator and has served as the Chairman/Research Council, Chairman/Ethics Review Committee, Director/University-Industry- Community Interaction Centre, Director/Career Guidance Unit, and Director/Research and Consultation Centre for Coconut Oil of the UOK. He has supervised many PhD and MPhil students. He was also a member of the Boards of Management of the Institute of Indigenous Medicine of the University of Colombo and the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology.