



The Veterinarian

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MESSAGE FROM THE 73RD PRESIDENT: DR. P. ERANDIKA GUNAWARDENA

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It is with great honour that I write to the very first News Letter of our tenure in the office of 73rd Executive Committee. At the outset I should extend my sincere gratitude for proposing me for this noble post of 73rd President of Sri Lanka Veterinary Association and specially my Mentor Air Commodore Dr. RMPH Dassanayake for the trust and confidence placed on me to carry the flag of SLVA and propel the profession of Veterinarians in this country to greater heights.

We have to accept the fact that, it will be an enormous challenge for all of us in the Committee to function the office of SLVA under this new normal situation in the Country.

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72nd AGM & Annual Convention

The 72nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) was earlier scheduled for 16th October 2020 as a 'hybrid meeting'. It was expected that a limited number of members would gather onsite and the majority of members would join online via Zoom platform. Exactly one week before the date, the government took measures to partially lockdown the country due to the second wave of Covid- 19 in the country banning all gatherings until further notice. Hence, the executive committee was compelled to postpone the event at the special Zoom meeting held on 10th October 2020.

The AGM was re-scheduled for 18th December 2020 adhering to the health regulations imposed by the government, while considering the safety of members as well.

The 'Hybrid' model was novel to the SLVA and the 72nd Exco had to experiment number of new models during its tenure while Covid- 19 global pandemic had a negative impact on almost all the activities in Sri Lanka.



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We should be proud of ourselves as veterinarians because people need us; they need our services 24/7 and our service is equally important to that of medical professionals as you would see the highly potential demand for the veterinarians from all the sectors in the Country. The consumption of livestock products has dramatically increased over the last few years with the increase of per capita income of people and urbanization. Livestock industry of the country which contributes enormously to the GDP needs our expertise.

Our 73rd Executive committee is getting appointed in a crucial juncture where we have to carry the responsibility on our shoulders as veterinarians to eradicate rabies from this Island nation, by 2030.

We are getting appointed when the country is facing numerous disasters, losing their lives and properties due to Human Elephant Conflict.

We are further being elected when the country requires a dramatic change in its legal framework to address episodes of human violence against animal freedom.

Therefore we strongly believe on establishing as a one health forum under collaborative umbrella to conquer these burning issues in the country.

As we all know, the concept of one health is to work together to form a collaborative effort with medical professionals, scientists, environmentalists, government policy makers and any other stake holder to achieve the best health for people and animals in the country with conservation of our environment.

Considering these salient needs, under the present day perspectives, as the president, my theme for coming tenure will be **“Empowering Veterinarians through Professional Collaboration and Knowledge Enhancement”**

In par with this theme I would like to set 07 Goals for the SLVA for my committee:

- To perform as an active mediator in finding solutions with regard to Rabies Eradication Campaign, Human Elephant Conflict and to form a One health Forum.
- To form an e-platform for the pet owners and farmers for provision of medical and clinical advices from a distance under this COVID situation. This innovative platform will cater to the present day needs of the general public. This is already in practice by the medical counterparts as DOC 990. This new e-platform I suggest to be named as VET 990
- And we wish to join hands with Faculty to change the Attitudes of Veterinary Students Community in order to produce productive veterinarians who will have the passion to develop livestock production sectors in the country. I should say we hardly get students in the faculty who have selected veterinary profession as their first choice. We should accept that we have a passive start. We have to defiantly address this situation and actively involve in organizing Carrier Guidance

Programs and actually convince them as how diversified we are. Further, we should continuously engage with Professional Development Programs for the enhancement of knowledge of veterinarians on the fields of livestock, wild life & zoo and small animal sector.

- We should collaborate the SLVA with the other sister veterinary associations namely, State Veterinary Association, Wild life Veterinary Association, Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons, Veterinary Alumni of University of Peradeniya, World Poultry Science Association Sri Lankan Branch, Sri Lanka Association for Laboratory Animals, Society of Companion animal Practitioners of Sri Lanka.
- We should formulate a Strategic plan for the SLVA with setting of Goals and Core values which will serve as a policy guideline for the present and future executive committees in planning the events
- We should establish a Media Platform for the SLVA as a milestone in creating the Voice of Veterinarians in Sri Lanka for the provision of evidence based reliable information in a simple but scientific way to the general public. Convince the public with the opinion of SLVA on veterinary related national issues and dissemination of knowledge on matters of public health importance and information on scientific research findings will be the core aims of this venture.
- To promote the veterinary profession in the country with organizing of a mass educational and scientific exhibition in collaboration with Veterinary Faculty, livestock sectors, wildlife and zoo and pet animal stake holders, if the normalcy is established, by the year end.

I, with my energetic committee members will perform as a team and project the work scopes in order to achieve the set goals by the end of our prospective tenure.

Wish you all the best.





My dear colleagues,

As you all are fully aware the year 2020 was one of the worst periods in the word history owing to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The activities planned by the 72nd Executive committee undoubtedly had a negative impact as a result of this unexpected development and the challenges paused by the lockdown had been tremendous. Yet after a brief dormant period, the 72nd Ex-Co became resilient and motivated with determination and did everything possible for the betterment of the profession adhering to restrictions imposed by the health authorities.

However, I must mention that during the first six months after the 72nd Ex-Co took over responsibilities of the SLVA on 3rd September 2019, that was well before the unprecedented declaration of COVID-19 pandemic, we planned and executed a motivational program for veterinary internees and a number of continuing professional development programs for veterinary professionals including both large and small animal practitioners with the help of reputed international and national resource personnel. In January 2020 we conducted a workshop on Bone plating with the participation of companion animal practitioners, wildlife and zoo veterinarians. To name another few, we contributed to formulate proposals to empower human resources and improve infrastructure facilities for animal diseases investigation and surveillance in the country, to mitigate Human Elephant Conflict/Coexistence, to achieve self-sufficiency in milk and a strategic and action plans to eliminate rabies from Sri Lanka using One Health approach.

During the COVID-19 “panic stage”, SLVA was in the forefront to issue print and electronic media briefings assuring the general public that this virus is not transmitted by domestic animals and thus, not to abandon the household pets, livestock and poultry but to adhere to the guidelines issued by the OIE, WHO, WVA and the local health authorities in dealing with them. We took appropriate

actions to create awareness among veterinary professionals and general public regarding safe handling of animals and animal products during the pandemic through Webinars, SLVA website and social media platforms. We contributed with our inputs to DAPH when needed to ensure uninterrupted supply of animal feed, raw materials and animal products. The Ex-Co conducted an online creative drawing competition during the period of lockdown for three categories of school children of families of veterinarians and presented awards and certificates to the best three creations of each of the three categories of children.

We were able to conduct the Annual Scientific Sessions successfully as an International Webinar for the first time in the history of SLVA with the enthusiastic participation of key note speakers, theme speakers and presenters of oral and poster communications from universities, research institutes and Industries from overseas and Sri Lanka. We conducted it at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science, University of Peradeniya on 3rd and 5th July 2020, where the authors presented their oral scientific communications onsite in the presence of a limited number of audience and larger number joining online which could be considered as a novel experience to the SLVA members, industry personnel and contributors.

We made a collaborative effort with the Sri Lanka Medical Association in conducting a Webinar through One Health approach in preventing the next pandemic on 20th July 2020 with the participation of world renowned subject matter specialists from overseas and Sri Lanka as resource personnel. Some Ex-co members with the cooperation of few of its members conducted another Webinar on 21st July for Wildlife and Zoo veterinarians to discuss the issues faced by them especially in the field. The moderators realised that the lack of protocols for various procedures needed more attention and SLVA was to intervene in formulating protocols.

The working group appointed by the SLVA Ex-Co finalized the strategic plan for Elimination of Rabies from Sri Lanka, and the concept of FORESAW-SL (Forum for Research Animal Welfare Sri Lanka) was further discussed, a constitution drafted by a committee appointed by the Ex-Co for the purpose and a logo for the same was finalised for a soft launch at the induction ceremony of 73rd President. In fact we had to postpone the Annual General Meeting and the Ceremonial Induction of the new President which were scheduled to be held in October 2020 as a physical gathering in just one week before the scheduled date due to the emergence of significant number of new Covid-19 cases in Kandy district and some other areas in the country.

Amidst all these obstacles finally we managed to conduct the AGM and the Induction Ceremony of the 73rd President glamorously as a hybrid event for the first time in the history of SLVA at the Grand Kandyan Hotel, Kandy on 18th December 2020.

73RD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2020/2021

The main objective of the AGM was to elect the next executive committee since the tenure of 72nd Executive committee was ended. Accordingly the outgoing president Dr. Niranjala de Silva invited members to appoint an interim president to conduct the election and appoint the new president and secretary for the 73rd Exco. Prof. Basil Alexander was appointed as the interim president and he

announced president elect Dr. Erandika Gunawardena as the 73rd president of SLVA. Considering the nominations, 74th president elect and secretary for the 73rd Exco were also elected. Rest of the office bearers were elected by the 73rd president and the list of office bearers are as follows.



President
Dr. Erandika
Gunawardana



President Elect
Dr. M.A. Susantha
Mallawa Arachchi



Vice President
Dr. Dilan
Satharasinghe



Vice President
Dr. Janaka
Amarakoon



Secretary
Dr. Sugath
Pemachandra



Treasurer
Dr. W.A.D. Nuwan
Wickramasinghe



Asst. Secretary
Dr. Chandika
Wickramasinghe



Asst. Secretary
Dr. W.M.W. Sanjaya
Wasala



Asst. Treasurer
Dr. Najith
Premalal



Member
Dr. S.T.
Thoradeniya



Member
Dr. R.A.J.U.
Marapana



Member
Dr. Chamari
Kannagara



Member
Dr. Yushika Chamodi
Dharmasuriya



Member
Dr. Kaundika
Wanigasundara



Member
Prof. Neil Alles



Former President
Dr. D.D. Nernjala
de Silva



Former Secretary
Dr. Suneth
Disnaka



Former Treasurer
Dr. Wasantha
Kalupahana

The physical gathering was held at Grand Kandyan Hotel, Kandy from where the live event was broadcast to all the SLVA members via Zoom platform. The AGM started at 3.15 p.m. with the presence of quorum. The president welcomed the participants and briefed about the activities carried out during the tenure of 13 months.



The secretary presented the minutes of the 71st Executive committee which was held on 3rd September 2019 and it was passed without amendments.

The secretary's report which consisted of introductions about activities including CPD programs, membership details, development works, changes of company secretaries, company registrations renewal...etc. was presented to the members. The audited accounts were presented to the audience by the treasurer during his presentation on treasurers' report. The 72nd Exco published a volume of Sri Lanka Veterinary Journal (SLVJ) and the editor of SLVJ, Dr. Oswin Perera presented editors report at the AGM.



The Secretary



The Treasurer



The Editor: SLVJ

ANNUAL CONVENTION

Following the AGM the Annual Convention was held at the same venue starting from 7.00 p.m. The Director General of the Department of Animal Production and Health (DAPH) Dr. Ranjani Hettiarachchi, Additional Secretary (Livestock

Development) to the Ministry Dr. Niroshan Gamage, the Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences (FVMASc), University of Peradeniya graced the occasion as special invited guests.



The event started according to the traditions and the president Dr. Niranjala de Silva welcomed the on-site and online gathering and gave a brief account of the events took place during her tenure amidst of Covid -19 pandemic.



The key note speech was delivered by Prof. Ashoka Dangolla on *current, changing and challenging roles of Sri Lankan veterinarian*.



Prof. Assoka Dangolla delivering the keynote speech



Presenting the memento to the Keynote speaker

INDUCTION OF 73RD PRESIDENT

The new president of SLVA was ceremonially introduced to the members and audience at the Annual Convention night. Dr. Erandika Gunawardena graduated from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science in 1998 holds Master of Veterinary Science postgraduate degree as well. He is a member of Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons and was a past vice president of SLVA too. Currently he

serves as a Group Captain in Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) and has committed for uplifting the veterinary profession by various means in collaboration with numerous veterinary related associations and forums. He briefed about his vision as 'Empowering the veterinary profession through collaboration' during his speech as the new president of SLVA.



More glamour was added to the evening by a few dancing and musical performances by veterinary undergraduates of the FVMASc.



AWARDS

As a tradition, the SLVA appreciates the authors of annual scientific sessions during the Annual Convention by presenting awards to the best presentations in each technical

session and poster session. Following abstracts were selected by judges as best presentations for the 72nd Annual Scientific sessions which was held in July 2020.



Category	Title	Authors
Clinical	Femoral Head and Neck Osteotomy in Dogs with Disorders of Coxofemoral Joint	D.M. Siriwardane and J. Collure
Public Health	Occurrence of Aflatoxin in Cow Milk Available in Sri Lankan Market	B.C.J. Fernando, N.B. Karunarathna, D.M.S. Munasinghe, S.S.P. Silva, R.S. Kalupahana and B.R. Fernando
Wildlife & Zoo	Not selected	Not selected
Animal Health	The Role of the Microbiome in Oyster Health Demonstrated Using an Experimental Ostreid herpesvirus-1 (OsHV-1) Infection in Pacific Oysters (<i>Crassostrea gigas</i>)	Erandi Pathirana, Marine Fuhrmann, Richard Whittington and Paul Hick
Animal Production	Random Regression Test Day Model Approach for Breeding Value Estimation of Dairy Cattle in Three Districts of Sri Lanka	U.D. Ramanayake, L.W.N. Samaranayake, P.G. Senevirathna, A.G. Priyantha, A.D.N. Chandrasiri, C.M.B. Dematawewa, K.W.Vithanage and M.P.G.G.M. Jayathilaka
Poster - Clinical	Surgical Intervention for the Management of Chronic Sinusitis in a Mixed Breed Horse	K. Nizanantha, W.M.T.D. Rathnakumara, K.Saishanthan, W.P.P.S.I. Perera, G.D.R.K. Perera, A.A.A.W.K. Amarasinghe and C.B. Riley
Poster - Research	Design and Manufacture of a low cost Rubber Teat for Dairy Calf Feeding using Compression Moulding Technology	D.A.P.K. Silva, K.I. Rangajith, R.A. Samarakoon, J. Rajaguru and R.A.C. Rabel

Additionally, Gold medals and awards were presented to best academic performances of undergraduate students of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science during

the last year. New award for best performance in Veterinary Surgery was introduced from this year as the SLVA award for the Best Performance in Veterinary Surgery

D. Seneviratne Gold Medal	Excellence in Veterinary Public Health	B.R. Nirujan (2014/15 batch) A.B.S. Pabasara (2014/15 batch)
Mr. & Mrs. M.P. Seneviratne Gold Medal	Veterinary Parasitology	D.M.H.H. Dissanayake (2015/16 batch)
SLVA Award	The Best performance in Veterinary Surgery	S.A.C.H. Rodrigo (2013/14 batch)



PRESENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ELIMINATION OF RABIES

The 72nd Exco worked in collaboration with government and non-government organizations and veterinary surgeons who are involved in the process of rabies elimination. The strategic plan for this task was prepared after number of workshops and discussions held during the last year. The strategic plan which is a revised version of the strategic plan of DAPH was presented to the invited special guests during the event. It was introduced to the membership by Dr. Chamari Kannangara who was an Asst. Secretary of the 72nd Exco.



INTRODUCING FORESAW (FORUM FOR RESEARCH ANIMAL WELFARE)

A forum which was established as a sub group under SLVA to collaborate with medical counterparts and improve and maintain welfare of laboratory animals was introduced to the membership during the convention. The logo for FORESAW was introduced by the president upon the invitation of Dr. Tharanga Thoradeniya who was an Asst. Secretary of the 72nd Exco.



SRI LANKA VETERINARY JOURNAL (SLVJ) – VOLUME 66 (2)

The volume 66 (2) was published by the 72nd Executive committee in November 2020. The editor and the editorial committee had to make an extra effort to publish this volume due to various difficulties encountered during the past specially the pandemic. This volume contains four articles and it is available online in SLVA/SLVJ website and Sri Lanka Online Journals (SLOJ) website for downloading. The editor of the SLVJ is Dr. Oswin Perera and the secretary to the editorial committee is Dr. Samanthika Jagoda.



Dr. Oswin Perera



Dr. Samanthika Jagoda.



THE VETERINARIAN – NEWSLETTER

The volume July – Sep 2020 of the newsletter of SLVA, The Veterinarian was published by the 72nd Exco and circulated among the members of the SLVA. It is available in the SLVA official website also.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Four executive committee meetings were held during this quarter as physical gatherings or zoom meetings. Executive committee members actively participated in those and contributed immensely for carrying out the tasks which were scheduled during the quarter.

- The 11th Executive Committee meeting – 1st October 2020 – OPA, Colombo 7
- 12th Exco meeting – 10th October 2020 – ZOOM meeting
- 13th Exco meeting – 15th November 2020 – ZOOM meeting
- 1st Exco meeting of 73rd committee -31st December 2020 OPA, Colombo 7



SLVA Secretariat, OPA Centre, No. 275/75,
Prof. Stanley Wijesundara Mawatha, Colombo 07.

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