



Deputy ED joins TI Secretariat

TISL Deputy Executive Director Rukshana Nanayakkara has joined the Transparency International Secretariat in Berlin as Programme Coordinator - Asia Pacific Region.

Joining TISL in 2005 to handle the Value for Money project in the aftermath of the tsunami in December 2004, he was appointed Deputy Executive Director and also functioned as Director - Advocacy Unit.



Training village level officers on governance & accountability

Two workshops were held at Polpitiyagama to train grama niladharis on their duties and good governance. There were 69 participants. The resource persons were attorney-at-law Abeyratne, former deputy auditor general Wijepala Wasdala, additional district secretary - Kurunegala H M P Hitisekera, Divisional Secretary - Polpitiyagama R M R Ratnayake and additional divisional secretary P P Podineras.

In a bid to raise the level of accountability in the provincial administrative offices, a workshop was held on 16 September in Anuradhapura to train grama niladharis attached to the Nuwaragam Palata East divisional secretariat.

The discussions centre round finding solutions for problems faced by grama niladharis in discharging their duties, and how as a public official a grama niladhari can contribute towards building a nation of integrity. Resource personnel were secretary to the Governor - NCP M S B Ratnayake, divisional secretary-Medawachchya P L Madanayake and Sanduna Gunawardena of TISL's capacity building unit.



Right to Information workshops

TISL is conducting workshops on Right to Information under a planned programme to educate academics, journalists and other interested parties.

A group of trainee academics of the Open University attended a one-day workshop on 14 September. Presentations were made by TISL Deputy Executive Director Rukshana Nanayakkara and Director-Advocacy Dirukshi Handunetti.

A one-day workshop organised by TISL in association with SAFMA for electronic media personnel was attended by 22 persons. Another 18 journalists - both Sinhala and Tamil participated in a workshop held in Trincomalee.

The programme for journalists is sponsored by FES.



NIA presentation on 9 December

For the seventh successive year, TISL will commemorate the UN Anti-Corruption day on 9 December with the presentation of the National Integrity Award at a ceremony to be held at the BMICH.

The chief guest will be the renowned South Asian advocate of good governance and democracy Kanak Mani Dixit.

Corruption fighters meet in Bangkok



Asia Pacific Regional Meeting

TI Annual Membership Meeting



TISL Annual Report officially launched

TISL stall at 14th International Anti-Corruption Conference



Global Integrity Award ceremony

INTEGRITY

NEWSLETTER OF TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL SRI LANKA
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Poddala wins Global Integrity Award

Investigative journalist Poddala Jayantha won this year's Global Integrity Award becoming the second Sri Lankan journalist to be recognized with this prestigious honour. The first was Sunday Leader editor Lasantha Wickrematunga who won the award in its inaugural year in 2000.

Both were selected on the recommendation of Transparency International Sri Lanka (TISL).

Transparency International (TI) created this award to recognise the courage and determination of individuals and organisations fighting corruption around the world.

Poddala Jayantha who fled the country following a brutal attack in June 2009 which permanently incapacitated him, could not attend the award ceremony held in Bangkok on 12 November at the International Anti-Corruption Conference. The award was received by TISL Executive Director J C Weliamuna on behalf of Poddala Jayantha.

Poddala Jayantha won the coveted National Integrity Award at the inaugural presentation by TISL in 2004 following his revelations as an investigative journalist in the 'Silumina'. Amidst threats he investigated fearlessly into malpractices in numerous sectors including health, education and transport. Besides, there were dozens of exposes he wrote week after week that blew the lid off fraudulent job agencies, child farms and tax evasions.

Sergei Magnitsky, a Moscow based lawyer whose commitment to integrity ultimately cost him his life and Gregory Ngwua Minsta, a Gabonese activist also received the integrity award at this year's ceremony. The latter supported an investigation against three South African leaders who had acquired luxury properties in France.

PODDALA'S PLEDGE
"This Award gives me an additional responsibility to continue fighting corruption for the rest of my life. I want to join your journey to eliminate corruption in my country and in the world."

Poddala Jayantha who could not attend the ceremony described the occasion as "undoubtedly one of the most important moments in my life".

Stressing that of all the movements he had been associated with, TI occupies a special place, he said he appreciates the courageous work done by TI members. "I sincerely thank Transparency International for honouring me with this prestigious recognition."

This was the pledge given by Global Integrity Award winner Poddala Jayantha in a message sent to the award ceremony held in Bangkok at the International Anti-Corruption Conference organised by Transparency International (TI).

TISL Executive Director now on TI Board

TISL Executive Director J C Weliamuna is now a member of the Board of Directors of Transparency International (TI). He was elected at the Annual Membership Meeting of the leading global movement against corruption, held in Bangkok recently.

Commenting on his election, Mr Weliamuna said that he would dedicate his time and energy to work towards a world free of corruption through this position.

Two directors were elected to the 12-member TI Board. Jacques Terray of France was the other.

The first Sri Lankan to be elected to this prestigious position at TI's highest policy making body, Mr Weliamuna has steered TISL for eight years as its first Executive Director. It was under his astute leadership that TISL has become perhaps the most visible anti-corruption entity in Sri Lanka and an active contributor to the global TI network. His creative and persuasive skills have ensured a wide support base for TISL from within the public, private and civil society sectors. This has been achieved in an increasingly challenging environment of suppression and extreme anti-NGO sentiments.



Interview:

Democracy is owned by the people

Nepalese journalist and activist Kanak Mani Dixit will be the chief guest at this year's National Integrity Awards presentation to be held on 9 December at the BMICH.



Adorning Kanak Mani Dixit's publishing office wall in Nepal's capital city Katmandu is a fascinating world map. The map itself has been the topic of vigorous debate. It is hung upside down!

It forces one to consider an alternate world, just like alternate opinions that Dixit promotes in the region and offers a glimpse of the creator's alternate thinking.

A controversial journalist and activist, Dixit played a significant role in Nepal's Peoples' Movement that ushered in a parliamentary democracy.

Admittedly, all is not well in the Himalayan nation and democracy is yet to take firm root. "Nepalese have been ruled by a feudocracy. It excluded the average citizen's voice. Democracy needs to be embraced not as a concept but as a reality and should be owned by the people."

"The Nepalese in my opinion did not have a taste of democracy. They were governed in abhorrence of the totality of people and the diversity of this nation. I strongly believe that democracy stems from the people and it belongs to the people. The actual source of political/administrative power stems from the people. It is theirs to own and to lead."



Image: Prabin's Picasa Gallery

An internationally acclaimed writer and activist, Dixit now wishes for further change in the Nepalese society. "This transition is like the end of a golden string. To make this complete, people must come forth and own the process. This is rightfully theirs."

Dixit has, through his democracy work and through platform creation across South Asia by journalistic and cinematic engagement, creatively sought to dissolve national boundaries.

Arrested in 2006 for defying King Gyanendra's curfew order, Dixit famously claimed upon arrest "I want to be back on the streets, to be part of a history-making people's tsunami demanding democracy."

In 1987, Dixit founded Himal Southasian, a high quality, independent, monthly journal that offers informed critical commentary on social and cultural issues with a strong South Asian focus. An icon of Nepalese culture yet a truly South Asian in identity, Dixit pioneered Film South Asia (FSA), a documentary film festival that draws filmmakers from around the world to the Himalayan capital.

A co-founder of the post-2005 Civil Society Platform, Dixit continues to play a key role in the pro-democracy campaign, challenges repression and promotes freedom of expression and was honoured with the prestigious Prince Claus Award for his outstanding contributions to public debate and for the creation of platforms transcending national and cultural boundaries. - D.H.



Position Paper on 18th Amendment released

all measures should be taken to ensure institutional integrity by appointing persons with high integrity to independent commissions and other constitutional positions. This is by no means an easy task but the time has come for a vital public debate in that direction. (Alternatively, the public must be educated with the ill effects of the 18th Amendment with a view to pressing the government to further Amend the 18th Amendment to be in line with 17th Amendment), the Position Paper states.

The need for the legislative process to be fully transparent with adequate opportunity given for public debate is stressed in a Position Paper released by TISL on the 18th Amendment to the Constitution.

Another recommendation is that the selection criteria of all members of commissions and other key appointees must be disclosed and consequential provisions must be introduced requiring public scrutiny of the suitability and integrity of the nominee to any key position.

Visit www.tisrilanka.org for more details

Maintaining integrity during elections



Image: <http://article.wn.com>

These are among key recommendations made by TISL's elections monitoring arm, 'The Programme for Protection of Public Resources (PPPR)' in its final report released recently.

PPPR has said that only the President and the Cabinet of Ministers should constitute the Caretaker Government without any non-cabinet or deputy ministers. During Presidential Elections, the incumbent President and the Cabinet of Ministers should be permitted to attend only to routine functions that have no bearing on the election. No public ceremonies

of any magnitude should take place incurring public expenditure, where the President or the Cabinet of Ministers or Members of Parliament or any candidate attends, the report has suggested.

Elaborating further, it has been recommended that the Commissioner of Elections may give appropriate directions to any of the members of the Caretaker Government in order to ensure a free and fair poll.

Referring to Provincial Council and local

authorities' elections, it has been suggested that members of the relevant bodies should cease to hold office, if they are to be candidates.

Highlighting grave abuse of public resources in the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, the report has pointed out the cost that people are compelled to bear as a result of these abuses, and how such abuses compromise the integrity of the whole election.

For full report visit www.tisrilanka.org

Corruption Index: Marginal increase

In the annual Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2010, Sri Lanka has increased its score marginally by 0.1 from last year to reach 3.2 points and is placed in the 91st position among 178 countries. The Index, which focuses on corruption in the public sector, is conducted by Transparency International (TI), the global civil society organization leading the fight against corruption.

Sri Lanka is clubbed together with six other countries - Bosnia & Herzegovina, Djibouti, Gambia, Guatemala, Kiribati and Swaziland - all with a score of 3.2. The score indicates that these countries continue to have a serious corruption problem in their public sector.

The CPI Index, though perceptual, has been accepted as the most recognized and often quoted international index on corruption.

Commenting on this year's score, Mr J C Weliamuna, Executive Director of Transparency

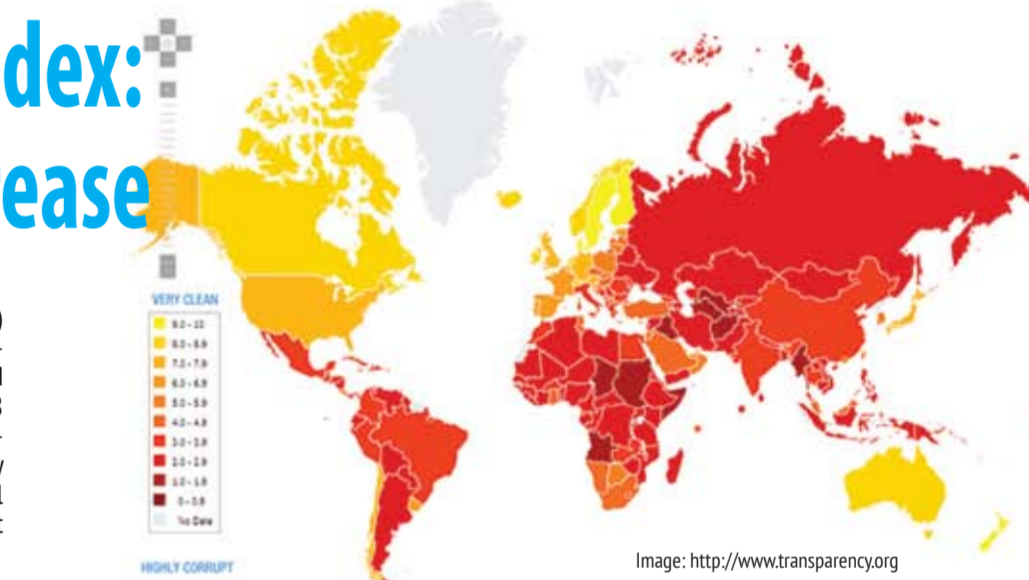


Image: <http://www.transparency.org>

International said that for an increase to be significant, it should at least record an increase of 0.5 or above.

Making his observations on the Index as a whole, Mr. Weliamuna pointed out that the dictatorial regimes and countries plagued with internal conflicts are much worse in governance and therefore scored poorest in the Index. At the bottom of the list are Afghanistan, Myanmar & and Somalia (1.4), and Uzbekistan & Iraq (1.6).

In the sub-region, except for Bhutan (5.7), Sri Lanka's neighbouring countries have failed to record a significant increase. India's score is 3.3 while Maldives (2.3), Bangladesh (2.4), Pakistan (2.3) and Nepal (2.2) continue to be below 3.0.

Highest scorers in the 2009 CPI are Denmark, New Zealand and Singapore at 9.3, and Finland and Sweden at 9.2. These scores reflect political stability, long established conflict of interest regulations and solid functioning public institutions.



Urgent call for greater enforcement of anti-corruption laws and citizen mobilisation

With the theme Restoring trust: global action for transparency, the conference explored five areas: peace and security, natural resources and energy markets, climate governance, accountability in the corporate world and restoring trust in institution. The more than 50 sessions looked for new ways to increase pressure on both the public and private sector to act against corruption.

The conference was officially opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Soamsavali and attended by Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva and featured prominent speakers including Sri Mulyani Indrawati, managing director, World Bank, Haruhiko Kuroda, president, Asian Development Bank, Sali Shetty, secretary general, Amnesty International, Ashok Khosla, president of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Patrick Atley, founder and director of Global Witness, Richard Boucher, deputy secretary general, OECD and Paul Collier, Professor of Economics at Oxford University and author of The Bottom Billion.

The message is clear: laws are not enough. The anti-corruption community must work to push governments to turn words into actions by enforcing anti-corruption laws in all areas, and mobilize ordinary people, in particular the young, to demand that action.

The IACC, first held in 1983, has evolved into the leading global forum on governance and anti-corruption. The conference fosters cooperation and innovation in developing tools to tackle corruption to help end the vicious cycle of poverty that traps millions of people and threatens sustainable development. The 14th IACC was organized by the IACC Council in cooperation with Transparency International, Transparency Thailand and was generously hosted by the Government of Thailand and the National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand.

Let's fight together to stop corruption
join us

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