

# THE LOGISTICIAN

**Anchoring Knowledge - Charting Tomorrow**

**"I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE PORT OF COLOMBO BECOMING A GREEN PORT BY 2030"**

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*Former Chairman*  
Sri Lanka Ports Authority

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*International Consultant in Port Management*

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-A KEY  
TOWARDS  
SRI LANKA’S  
ECONOMIC  
PROSPERITY”**





# OCEAN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

Nestled in the heart of Sri Lanka's coastal landscape, the Ocean University of Sri Lanka has been a beacon of maritime education since its establishment in 2014.

With a commitment to excellence and innovation, the university boasts two faculties: Engineering and Management, and Fisheries and Ocean Science. Offering a diverse array of Bachelor's degree programs, including Marine Engineering, Maritime Transportation Management & Logistics, Coastal & Marine Resources Management, Fisheries & Marine Science, Oceanography, and Aquaculture & Seafood Technology, the university prepares students for dynamic careers in the marine sciences and maritime industry.

Through interdisciplinary education, research initiatives, and industry partnerships, the Ocean University of Sri Lanka is shaping the future of marine exploration, conservation, and sustainable development both locally and globally.

## VISION

To provide innovative solutions for marine, maritime and fisheries sectors.

## MISSION

To be the center of excellence in marine, maritime and fisheries education in the region.



# MESSAGE FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR

It gives me immense pleasure and honor to convey this message for the ‘The Logistician’ magazine published by the Logistics Club of Ocean University of Sri Lanka. First, I warmly extend my heartiest congratulations and gratitude to the editorial board for doing all the arduous work to publish their inaugural edition under theme of "Maritime Logistics - A key towards Sri Lanka's economic prosperity"

The Ocean University of Sri Lanka is a young state university, and it found a huge demand for the BSc Honours in Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics Degree Program offered by the Department of Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics. The Department is dedicated to

the pursuit of an excellent teaching and research culture to deliver high-quality education for our students and other stakeholders.

As a state university of Sri Lanka, our prime responsibility is to produce quality able graduates who can contribute to uplift the socio-economic standard of the country. While the rewarding indicators of our efforts are the quality of our graduates, the scholarly works we published and the support we provided to our stakeholders in the industry, we also have gained CILT accreditation and recognition for BSc Honours in Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics Degree Program. With this magazine too, we can show the world what we do. The magazine will publish annually to enlighten scholars, industry and the public with quality, accurate, and timely needed information.

I believe the theme is timely important since the entire maritime logistics industry was severely affected due to the devastating effect of the Covid 19 pandemic and political instability situation in Sri Lanka during the last three years. The crisis was more vulnerable and, therefore, thousands of people lost their employment and income sources, at the same time thousands of people had to stay in their houses without travelling. During this new normal, the ‘logistics industry’ is regaining fast, however, the industry needs to learn the lessons from the pandemic and the associated issues. Rethinking Maritime Logistics means the industry needs to be prepared for future challenges which require collaboration and a sense of interconnectedness between one another.

I wish all the best for the Logistics Club of Ocean University of Sri Lanka to continue its valuable services forever.

**Prof. Wasantha Rathnayake**  
**Vice Chancellor**  
**Ocean University of Sri Lanka**



# MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

It is my privilege and great honor to extend this message for "The Logistician", the esteemed magazine published by the Logistics Club of Ocean University of Sri Lanka. First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the editorial board for their dedication and effort in bringing this publication to life under the theme "Maritime Logistics-A Key Towards Sri Lanka's Economic Prosperity."

The Faculty of Engineering and Management at the Ocean University of Sri Lanka plays a vital role in shaping the future of the maritime and ocean sectors through its three distinct departments: Marine Engineering, Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics, and Coastal and Marine Resources Management. Each department is committed to producing professionals equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet both national

and global industry demands. Notably, the Bachelor of Science in Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics continues to be a flagship program, offering an exceptional pathway for students to excel in the dynamic and challenging logistics field.

As an island nation positioned strategically along major international shipping routes, Sri Lanka is endowed with abundant marine resources and unique opportunities for development in sectors like logistics, port management, and coastal resource utilization. Our faculty strives to nurture graduates who not only possess academic and technical expertise but also demonstrate innovation and leadership in contributing to the nation's socio-economic growth. The interdisciplinary approach of our programs ensures that students are prepared to navigate the complexities of the maritime world while promoting sustainability and resilience in their practices.

I am particularly pleased to note the collaboration between the Logistics Club of the Department of Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics and the faculty in fostering industry engagement and intellectual discourse. Initiatives such as "The Logistician" magazine reflect the commitment of our students and staff to bridge the gap between academia and industry while promoting knowledge-sharing and innovation. It is through such endeavors that we can collectively address pressing challenges, such as the need for automation, efficiency, and sustainability in maritime logistics.

I wish the Logistics Club of Ocean University continued success in their endeavors. May this publication serve as a beacon of knowledge and inspiration for students, professionals, and industry stakeholders alike.

**Dr. Priyantha Jinadasa**  
**Dean**  
**Faculty of Engineering and Management**  
**Ocean University of Sri Lanka**



# MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT

It is with immense pride and honor that I write this message for "The Logistician" magazine, a publication by the Logistics Club of the Ocean University of Sri Lanka. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the editorial team for their relentless efforts in publishing this inaugural edition under the timely and relevant theme of "Maritime Logistics: A Key Towards Sri Lanka's Economic Prosperity."

The Department of Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics at Ocean University of Sri Lanka is a pioneering entity, offering the nation's first-ever Bachelor of Science degree program in Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics. This program was initiated to address a significant national need for skilled professionals who can lead Sri Lanka's maritime and logistics industry towards greater innovation, efficiency, and sustainability. Our collaboration and accreditation from the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transportation (CILT), Sri Lanka, further validate the program's quality and relevance to global standards.

As the Head of the Department, I am proud to witness the academic and professional growth of our students, who are not only equipped with academic and technical expertise but are also instilled with analytical skills, ethical values, and a commitment to community advancement. Our department is dedicated to fostering a culture of excellence, innovation, and research that empowers students to address industry challenges and optimize the utilization of scarce resources within the maritime and logistics sector.

The publication of "The Logistician" is a testament to the commitment, creativity, talents and aspirations of our students. This magazine serves as a platform to highlight their talents, ideas, and aspirations while bridging the gap between academia and industry. I firmly believe that initiatives like this will inspire informed dialogue among industry professionals, academics, and policymakers, ultimately contributing to the socio-economic development of our nation.

The significance of maritime logistics has never been more apparent, especially in light of the challenges faced during recent years, such as the global pandemic and economic instability. These challenges underscored the importance of resilience, adaptability, and collaboration within the logistics sector. As the industry continues to recover and evolve, it is essential to focus on innovation and interconnectedness, ensuring that Sri Lanka positions itself as a vital player in the global maritime economy.

I commend the Logistics Club of Ocean University of Sri Lanka for their dedication and vision in making "The Logistician" a reality and encourage our students to continue taking the lead in advancing knowledge and fostering connections with the industry.

I wish the Logistics Club of the Ocean University of Sri Lanka every success in this endeavor and beyond. Let us continue to strive for excellence and work together to shape a brighter future for maritime transportation and logistics in Sri Lanka.

**Ms. H.D.M.M. Pussella**  
**Head of the Department**  
**Department of Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics**  
**Ocean University of Sri Lanka**

# DEPARTMENT OF MARITIME TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AND LOGISTICS

The Department of Maritime Transportation and Logistics was established in 2014 under the Faculty of Engineering & Management of Ocean University of Sri Lanka. The department provides high-quality education and training in the fields of maritime transportation, logistics, and related disciplines. It plays a crucial role in preparing students to meet the demands of the maritime logistics and supply chain industry, which is vital for the global economy.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

**BSc (Hons) in Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics** (*Duration: 4 years*)

**BSc in Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics** (*Duration: 3 years*)

The degree program intends to provide the students with the required knowledge, skills and attitudes to utilize the limited resources in the Maritime and Logistics industry and to drive the industry to the next level through efficient, effective and innovative solutions.

The curriculum of the degree program is designed with the consultation of senior academics and practitioners in the industry to prepare students to take leadership roles in the sectors of shipping, port operations, freight management, logistics services, supply chain management, manufacturing etc .

## ACADEMIC STAFF PROFILES

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



**Lakshan Boparachchi**  
President  
The Logistics Club  
Ocean University of Sri Lanka

As the current President of the Logistics Club, it is both an honor and a pleasure to share this message to the inaugural edition of The Logician.

Established in 2018, the Logistics Club of Ocean University serves as the student body supporting all undergraduates under the Department of Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics. Our mission is to assist the university in producing well-rounded, highly skilled logistics graduates while providing support for academic activities and creating opportunities for collaboration. Through various projects such as workshops, seminars, and CSR activities, we aim to nurture future leaders in logistics and supply chain management.

The primary objective of The Logician magazine is to bridge the gap between academia and industry, offering a platform for club members to gain insights into the logistics sector and showcase their creative thinking. By fostering knowledge-sharing and industry exploration, this publication highlights the talents and aspirations of our undergraduates.

The OCU Logistics Club has become a leading student body within the university. We are proud to collaborate with industry partners to bring expert knowledge to our members and provide them with exposure to real-world challenges and opportunities. These collaborations not only enhance our members' understanding of the field but also strengthen our ties with the logistics industry.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the editorial committee of The Logician for their tireless efforts in bringing this publication to life. My sincere thanks also go to the executive committee members of the club for their unwavering support in all our initiatives.

A special note of appreciation goes to Mrs. Madushi Pussella, Head of the Department of Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics, and Mrs. Wathsarani Anjalika, the lecturer in charge of the club, for their continuous guidance and encouragement. I am also deeply thankful to the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Management, Dr. Priyantha Jinadasa, and the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Wasantha Rathnayake, for their blessings and unwavering support of the club's endeavors.

I hope this magazine will attract a wide readership and serves as a valuable resource for all who are passionate about logistics and supply chain management.

# EDITOR'S NOTE



**Madhushan Wijesinghe**  
Chief Editor  
The Logistician Magazine - Issue 01

## Dear Readers,

It is with immense pleasure and honor that I welcome you all to the inaugural edition of The Logistician Magazine, a milestone achievement by the Logistics Club of the Ocean University of Sri Lanka. Our university holds the unique distinction of offering the only fully specialized 4-year degree program in BSc (Hons) in Maritime Transportation Management & Logistics in the country. As the anchor of this groundbreaking endeavor, our slogan, "Anchoring Knowledge, Charting Tomorrow," beautifully captures our commitment to laying a strong foundation of knowledge today while paving the way for a brighter and innovative future in the field of logistics.

This magazine is a significant initiative aligned with the vision and mission of the Logistics Club, which strives to bridge the gap between academia and industry in the field of logistics and supply chain management. With this publication, we aim to nurture logisticians par excellence, fostering a platform for knowledge-sharing, innovation, and collaboration. The objectives of The Logistician Magazine are clear and ambitious which are to showcase educational excellence by providing a space for undergraduates to present their research and insights, to strengthen the bond between industry and academia through expert interviews and discussions, and to engage the broader community in advancing the field of maritime logistics. The magazine's content has been meticulously curated, featuring articles from undergraduates and insights from leading industry professionals. Batch 2020 and 2021 undergraduates have dedicated their efforts to making this vision a reality.

In this inaugural edition, we emphasize the pivotal role of the maritime logistics sector in Sri Lanka's economic growth and development. Through this theme, we hope to highlight the strategic importance of the field and its transformative potential for the nation's prosperity.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our corporate sector partners who, despite their busy schedules, shared their invaluable expertise with us, enriching the magazine's content. My sincere thanks go to Mrs. Madushi Pussella, Head of the Department of Maritime Transportation Management and Logistics, and all other lecturers for their invaluable guidance and support in reviewing the content. I am deeply grateful to Prof. Wasantha Ratnayake, Vice Chancellor, and Dr. Priyantha Jinadasa, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Management, for their unwavering encouragement.

A special note of appreciation goes to the editorial committee members for their tireless dedication and to the designers and photographers who gave the magazine its creative flair. I also thank the Executive Committee of the Logistics Club for their constant support. Finally, I acknowledge every author, contributor, and club member who worked collectively to make the publication of The Logistician Magazine a success.

As you embark on this enriching journey through our magazine, we hope it serves as an inspiring and enlightening experience for all. Thank you for being part of this historic moment.

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**“I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE PORT OF COLOMBO  
BECOMING A GREEN PORT BY 2030”**

**Mr. Keith D. Bernard**  
**Former Chairman**  
**Sri Lanka Ports Authority**

Interviewed by: Amantha Sankalpa  
Transcribed by: Ashani Yashmi Handapangoda  
Photographed by: Sudheera Marasinghe  
Videographed by: Vidushan Thushyanthan, Devinda Vishwajith

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watch the full interview:



Mr. Keith D. Bernard is a distinguished professional with over 40 years of diverse experience spanning industries such as packaging, plantations, insurance, media, and maritime logistics. His illustrious career includes key leadership roles in corporate and public sectors, reflecting his commitment to excellence.

In October 2022, Mr. Bernard was appointed as the chairman of SLPA, where he championed transformative initiatives at the Port of Colombo. His tenure also underscored a dedication to positioning Sri Lanka as a key player in port sector in the region.

Our team had the privilege of interviewing Mr. Bernard in August 2024 for The Logistician magazine, during his chairmanship at SLPA. Recently retired, Mr. Bernard leaves behind a legacy of progress and vision, making his insights invaluable for shaping the future of logistics and maritime industries.

**Q You have been the Chairman of the Sri Lankan Port Authority for nearly two years and under your Visionary Leadership, SLPA has recorded a Year-on-Year increase in Container volume of 48% and Transshipment has surged by nearly 50% in the first quarter of 2024, compared to the same period in 2023. Could you elaborate on the key strategies and decisions and changes you have been implementing to gain this advantage?**

The success we achieved today is not something that was achieved in the short term. I don't want to take full credit for what has been happening here, but all the developments that have taken place at the port over the last decade have contributed to the success that we are today. So, it's a continuous journey. This institution operates 24/7, year-round, unlike many others.

We are harnessing those benefits today but we're also paving the way for the future of the of this growth story in the future as well yes so, the Port of Colombo has been going through an interesting phase in the last few years where we have, you know, surpassed most expectations. We must give credit to the people who work here because they work under the harshest conditions sometimes.

So, we work with over 120 countries in the world today. Take it from Africa to Europe to the Americas to Australia, Asia, all regions we connect to the port of Colombo. I mean more than 85% of our business today, connected to the Port of Colombo, is all Transit, and that is growing.

We also work with all the Top Shipping Lines in the world, and we maintain top relations with all the shipping lines, and we have some other advantages like, if you take, the Colombo International Container Terminal (CICT), which was the first in South Asia to have the deep terminal. So now we are expanding it. We are also looking at new terminals which will be 18m -20m draft with berths of at least for 1300 to 1400 meters and with the latest modern equipment.

**Q ECT and CWIT projects are expected to be completed soon. So, beyond this initiative, what are the primary development projects being prioritized?**

The East Container Terminal and the West Container Terminal( which is managed by the Adani Group) are the latest two developments that are happening at the Port of Colombo and there is a high level of focus in this because our whole future, growth and our maintaining and retaining position depends on the delivery of these East and West container terminals.

ECT is being developed by us and now is partially

operational, with about 440 meters quay. We are extending this up to about 700 meters right now. By the end of this year (2024), you will see at least about 1,000 meters. We are getting the new equipment that we have ordered. We already have received 6 cranes out of the 12 STS cranes that are already coming to the ECT and they're all operating and these cranes are the latest in the market, the most sophisticated, the best that is available in the market and these container terminal will be completed next year(2025), There will be 1300 meters quay and with a Yard capacity of about 75 hectares, with eco-friendly and future ready equipment. So, it's going to be a new semi-automated port. Similarly, CWIT is making steady progress because they are well on course to completing their project on time. With the ECT, CWIT and of course CICT, we can have the largest, ultra-large container vessels calling at the Port of Colombo.

In line with these developments, we are also looking at Commissioning the Port Community System to bring all the stakeholders on a single digital platform so that we can cut down the unnecessary documentation for a better service and faster service levels and have seamless information so that will be a huge advantage. Even the gates will all be smart gates and we also will have an automated vehicle booking system, so we will not have this congestion. Every truck coming to Port will know exactly what time they should come in and after what time they should leave so they have specific slots so the congestion can also be managed. We will be able to manage the traffic within the port quite well.



**Q Could you elaborate how Sri Lanka's Port Authority in advancing the development of other key ports, particularly Hambantota, Galle and Trincomalee to enhance the connectivity to the Silk route and generate, increase the revenue of Sri Lanka?**

Right now, SLPA is one of the top foreign exchange earners in the country because we generate our income in US Dollars, so yes, we are an essential engine in the World Economy for the country. Besides Port of Colombo, Hambantota you already might be knowing is on a 99-year lease with China Merchant Ports. They have 85% ownership of the Hambantota Port. SLPA has 15% ownership. And they also manage the Hambantota Port. As the chairman of SLPA, I also attend the board of the HIPG. That gives me the

opportunity to convey my thoughts on behalf of the country to the China Merchant Group.

Until very recently, the Hambantota Port had been managing mainly the Ro-Ro business (Roll in- Roll out), some of the conventional cargo, bulk cargo like clinker. But lately, I have also been pushing them into going for Container Cargo and of course now they're looking at expanding into containerized cargo in their future and they have already placed orders for STS Cranes and RTGs for Hambantota port. Sinopec has also already signed agreements with Hambantota port, so they will also be operating in Hambantota soon.

When it comes to the Port of Galle, we haven't been operating the port at its real potential, mainly because it requires some level of development. We identified Galle to be a tourism related port. So yes, we will develop that into a tourist port. That will start happening very soon.

Trincomalee port is now operational, profitable. We do a lot of work with cargo, IOC from India operates from there. The Prima factory operates from there. Turkey Cement operates from there. We have a huge land bank in Trincomalee. And as a part of the whole government initiative, there is a huge push to make Trincomalee Port an industrial port. So, we will find a lot of industries coming into Trincomalee in the future and we are well placed to support all those industries.

We also have Kankesanthurai Port, which is now with the support of India, we are trying to develop that also. We have Ferry and Freight services between Sri Lanka and India. Similarly, for even Talaimannar, we are looking at re-commencing the connection between Talaimannar and Rameshwaram. So that the connectivity has been looking in and moving in that direction fast. So, these are things that are happening as regards Hambantota, Trinco, Galle, KKS and Talaimannar. Last year (2023), we saw the Indian cruise ship Cordelia, calling at Sri Lanka. This ship is again now operating between India and Hambantota, Trincomalee and KKS. So, we'll see a lot of Cruise ships also coming to Sri Lanka after the Port of Colombo. Since last year, we have seen an increase in the number of Cruise ships calling at Colombo, Trinco, KKS, and Hambantota. And we expect that trend to continue in the future. So, we'll see much more, just as much as the Container ships and the Tankers.

**Q** What were the main challenges SLPA faced such as the Suez Canal crisis during the past period? Could you elaborate the strategies and the measures you have taken to overcome those challenges?

Well, it was not a challenge. It had a positive impact on the Port of Colombo. The Red Sea crisis and the Swiss crisis were unfortunate for the world, but that meant that the vessels had to change their shipping routes.

And so that placed Sri Lanka in an advantageous position because most of the ships were going via the east-west route and going past the port in South Africa and then going to Europe. Yes, so the challenge is that we must work within a finite capacity. The port can only handle that many ships at a particular time because we have limited tugs, and we have limited capacity to accommodate. The challenge was managing the demand. I think we managed that very well. I think all the terminals operated at 100% capacity and were successful.

We did our best job to make sure that we didn't disappoint our regular callers. So, our regular callers were taken care of. It gave us an opportunity where we didn't have to go to the shipping lines to promote ourselves. Rather, the shipping lines were coming to us. And it opened a huge opportunity window for us, to showcase our competencies and I think our service levels were well respected, of course well received.

Right now, we are in a peak season, July and August. Together with our inter-terminal trucking companies and the terminals, we have been proactive in making sure that we don't get into a situation where the port will get over-congested. We've also spoken with the CASA representatives to coordinate the whole activity in the port of Colombo. I must acknowledge the support that we get from CASA. They have given us great support. Just as much as they bring a lot of traffic to Colombo, they also have helped the Port of Colombo to manage the traffic and to schedule these vessels in a way that can be controlled and managed in an optimal way. So, yes, it's been challenging, but we have been successful in that challenge. It's been a learning experience for all of us, but it was positive learning.

**“THERE IS A HUGE  
PUSH TO MAKE  
TRINCOMALEE  
PORT AN  
INDUSTRIAL  
PORT”**



**Q Sri Lanka faces competition from the regional players, especially from India and Dubai. What are the biggest challenges do you think Sri Lanka needs to overcome to establish itself as a leader in maritime logistics and how?**

I would be very naive if I think that India and Bangladesh are going to sit on the sidelines and let Sri Lanka dominate the whole South Asian region when it comes to ports. Yes, we are a main hub port in the region, but India is also emerging as a strong competitor. There are new ports like, Vizhinjam is one port that is being developed, and so is Mundra. There are several other ports also in India and of course in the region, that are an off course. Like you said, all the ports in the Middle East region are top ports. And they are competitive. I see challenge as a positive thing. I mean, we should not be complacent about where we are today.

I think we need to be challenged, so that makes us think outside the box and make sure that we stay ahead of the curve in the game. As much as it offers a challenge. The whole Indian economy is growing at a phenomenal pace. And I think Sri Lanka will stand well to gain benefit from that growth. I don't think as a country we alone can grow without neighbors like India. So, the Port of Colombo needs to grow. We need India to grow. Otherwise, we are not going to grow.

We are very neutral when it comes to geopolitics. We have maintained it very well. If you look at the port of Colombo, we have India, China, and we have all the other players around the world in the port of Colombo, but very harmoniously. And of course, we collaborate, and so teamwork happens in the port of Colombo. So, the world sees Sri Lanka as neutral, and they think that the port of Colombo is reliable.

Even during the worst times, you know, in the 'Aragala' time, it's not a secret, the port of Colombo was shut down for only one day. We continued our services. So, I think we have shown the world that we are very

resilient.

We are also looking at the next levels of our development. So, we are looking at CWIT phase 2 which is after phase 1, and the ECT Phase 2 extension. And while this is happening, we are also looking at extending the current breakwater. And we are looking at the development beyond the Colombo South port. We are also looking at the Colombo North Port. So, work on this is already happening. We have already done the feasibility. We are looking at operationalizing this whole plan. And in the next 10 years, I believe by 2035, we also expect the Colombo North Port to be ready.

And that would increase our capacity to 35 million TEUs. I think if you take Singapore today, Singapore has about 43 million TEUs and they are going for 70 million TEUs. So that says, if Singapore was one country that can handle that much of TEUs, I'm sure, together with the region of India and Sri Lanka and of course the Middle East, we can pool our resources and make this whole region as the main maritime region in the world.

Last year (2023) we signed BOT (Build-Operate- Transfer) agreement again with China Merchant Group, they are to set up again the state-of-the-art logistics center in the region. And now they are completing their design work and hopefully, they will start the construction and in the next two years we will see at least the first phase of the logistics center within the port commencing its operations.

One important thing is to be a good logistics center you also have good connectivity by the roadways connecting the rest of the country to the port. And now with the elevated highway that is running to the port to have an exit within the port so when this going to be completed soon, the port of Colombo will connected to the express ways with airports in Mattala and Katunayake and Hambantota port and also with main trade zones in country and it will position well to become strong logistic center. In that space, we also look at things like container freight stations, LCL, also bonded warehouses.

**“I SEE  
CHALLENGE AS  
A POSITIVE  
THING”**



**“I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE PORT OF COLOMBO BECOMING A GREEN PORT BY AT LEAST 2030. IT'S AN ARDUOUS TASK BUT I THINK WE CAN GET THERE”**

**Q** How do the Sri Lankan Port Authority integrate sustainability into its operations, particularly in the light of recent discussion with the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation on green energy trends in port sector?

For any business in the world today, we cannot work without being socially and of course environmentally responsible.

The shipping sector itself is looking at going green. IMO has been very active and strong in their position. All the shipping lines should look for green energy to fuel their vessels. In that respect, there have been clear deadlines for achieving certain performance levels. Vessels are to be carbon free by the year 2050.

It's critical to develop green energies like green hydrogen. So, we are already in contact with some of the universities who are already doing research studies, looking at the country, and of course mainly the Trincomalee to generate green hydrogen. And yes, I have also been talking to the World Bank and IFC (International Financial Corporation) on green energy and green agenda. The World Bank has already pledged their support to work with the Port of Colombo. I would like to see the Port of Colombo becoming a Green Port by at least 2030. It's an arduous task but I think we can get there.

I'm already in discussions with several parties, both Chinese and American, who are very supportive. We want to do technical studies. What we would like to do is to get some expertise coming to the Port of Colombo today, do a complete assessment of exactly where we are today and look at where we should be in 2030 and use a roadmap so that we can start working in that direction. So, we would love to be green by 2030 and we would have to provide shore power to all the vessels that are calling at the port of Colombo.

Whilst we speak just now, all the terminals in port of Colombo are going into more electric equipment. CICT and SAGT terminals are already converting from diesel into electric. All that said, at the end of the day converting to electric is not the answer, but of course at the end of the day if they are going to use electricity which is going to be generated using fossil fuel or thermal power, I don't think we are delivering our social responsibility. That's why we should also look at generating renewable energy within our ports and the facilities that we own so that we can be not net zero. We will be contributing, and we will be compensating for what we are using by generating green energy. So that is our plan. I think we are getting there.





**“FOR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, FUTURE LEADERS MUST MAKE THE RIGHT POLICY DECISIONS AND PUT A LOT OF EMPHASIS ON THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY”**

**Mr. Iqram Cuttilan**  
**Managing Director**  
**Aitken Spence Shipping Ltd.**

Interviewed by: Rekhani Jayawardane  
Transcribed by: Nethmi Weerasinghe  
Photographed by: Sachith Pathirana

Mr. Iqram Cuttilan, an eminent figure in Sri Lanka's maritime and logistics sector, currently serves as the Managing Director at Aitken Spence Shipping Ltd. His expertise extends across a diverse range of roles, including directorships at Ace Cargo (Pvt) Ltd, Hapag-Lloyd Lanka Pvt Ltd, Aitken Spence Maritime Ltd, Fiji Ports Corp. Ltd, and many other notable organizations. He is also a key member of the Management Board at Aitken Spence PLC.

His distinguished career includes leadership roles as Chairperson of the Ceylon Association of Shipping Agents (2019–2021) and as President of The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, the Sri Lanka-Malaysia Business Council, and the Sri Lanka Indonesia Friendship Association. Mr. Cuttilan is affiliated with several professional bodies, including CILT Sri Lanka and UK.

With an MBA in Business Administration, Mr. Cuttilan has demonstrated exceptional leadership in advancing maritime logistics, both locally and internationally. His extensive contributions and visionary leadership make him a respected authority in the industry.

**Q Aitken Spence Shipping has undergone a significant transformation over the past three decades. Could you elaborate on the key factors that drove this evolution from a traditional shipping agent to a fully integrated logistics service provider?**

150 years ago, Aitken Spence was a trading house, and Aitken Spence became a ship agent in 1870. From then until 2004, we were traditional shipping agents. But in 1980, with the birth of containerization, we ventured into other areas of logistics such as Freight Forwarding, Container depots, Distribution centers, and Transportation. We were one of the pioneers in that in Sri Lanka.

With the freight sector, we expanded overseas. We were the first to move to Bangladesh, where there was a huge business for containerization, and we started expanding to other countries too. We are still the largest in containerization and consolidation. Then we moved into warehouse management, which includes 3PL and 4PL activities, along with the transportation division.

The turning point of our organization was in 2004, with Dr. Parakrama Dissanayake, who is the present CEO of the organization. In 2004, we diversified into the ship-owning business, and in 2006, we entered the port management sector in Durban. In 2013, we entered a Public-Private Partnership with Fiji port. To sustain in this industry, we've expanded our business beyond being just a shipping agent, covering other areas as well.

**Q Given Aitken Spence Shipping's diverse range of services, what do you consider to be the company's core competencies that set it apart from competitors in the region?**

The first core competency is expertise. I think we don't rely on just one area of expertise. We extend that specialization into all spheres of the logistics business. Our predecessors had a vision of moving into other areas as well. The second core competency I see is the staff's adaptability to the market environment, which has been another strength for us. And lastly, I recognize the people who have supported us up to now. They've provided a lot of support to help us come this far.

**Q The maritime industry is known to face various challenges every day. These must be common to your organizations as well despite being a market leader. How has Aitken Spence shipping navigated through these challenges, and what strategies have been implemented to sustain its competitive edge?**

One strategy is looking outside the box, not just focusing on our current business but also considering what is available outside. The second strategy is

navigating to ensure profitability and reaching the market with business expansion. Since one industry can face a downturn, having another industry can help to cover that. The third strategy is moving from manual processes to digitalization. We had to adapt, from communication via telex to fax, then courier, then mail, and now everything is automated. We have had to change as the world changes to stay competitive in this industry.

**"FOR THE COUNTRY TO PROSPER, WE NEED TO KEEP EXPANDING THE PORT INDUSTRY. WE NEED TO PLAN NEW, BETTER TERMINALS TO COMPETE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. WE ARE BLESSED WITH OUR GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION. AN ADVANTAGE THAT NONE OF THE OTHER PORTS POSSESSES"**

**Q As a former Chairperson of the CASA (Ceylon Association of Shipping Agents), how do you see CASA's role in supporting the growth of the Sri Lankan port industry? What are the key areas where collaboration between the public and private sectors is essential for this industry's development?**

CASA plays a unique role in assisting the shipping lines with changes, loading, and discharging operations. It ensures the maintenance of an exceptionally good dialogue with the Government because we are dependent on authorities. Our key role is facilitating communication with specific people to make the movement of cargo and shipping much easier. As an industry, we can address our challenges from an industrial perspective rather than as individuals, and CASA plays a huge role in that.

For example, during the COVID time, we had discussions with Customs, the Navy, and Port authorities because we couldn't stop port operations, but we needed to ensure the health and safety of the workers. CASA was able to discuss with customs, the Ministry of Shipping, and Department of immigration to ensure that cargo and ship movements continued safely, which gave confidence to those coming to Colombo port. CASA took on the responsibility of addressing these issues. CASA is the Voice of Sri Lankan shipping Industry.

**Q Given the dynamic nature of the global supply chain, what are the key trends and challenges you foresee in the maritime industry in the next five years? How is Aitken Spence Shipping positioning itself to capitalize on these opportunities?**

Obviously, in the next five years, technology will drive everything. Terminals will be automated, ships will be automated, and human intervention will become less. The port community will transition to a single window system.

In Aitken Spence's case, we will heavily invest in IT and the respective processes, allowing technology to automate activities. However, in the service industry, human touch remains important, so we will still need human interaction. We also need to train our people, and as a group, we will invest in sustainability and advanced technology to meet future market demands.

**Q You have been engaging with this industry as an experienced professional for nearly 4 decades. What advice would you offer to young professionals entering your industry? What skills and qualities do you believe are essential for success in this rapidly evolving field?**

The right attitude is essential to get involved in the industry, along with dedication and having good knowledge of what you are doing. If you don't make

the right decisions in this industry, you cannot succeed. You also need to be able to adapt and change according to the demand.

For the new generation coming in, we do all things for career progression, but the new generation aligns with what they like. So, like the job you are doing and take steps forward. And, most importantly, you need the right attitude, hard work, adaptability, and a good knowledge of the industry.

**Q Finally, can you share your thoughts on our program? What do you think about our the theme we have selected? And any comments you would like to share?**

First and foremost, this helps the fellow students to connect with the industry. It's an opportunity because it shows how people start, how they run their business, how they adapt and change, and how they move forward.

Regarding the topic you have chosen, yes, Sri Lanka's maritime sector is a promising gateway. Our port is one of the key gateways, and we are the biggest volume drivers. For the country to prosper, we need to keep expanding the port industry. We need to plan new, better terminals to compete with other countries. We are blessed with our geographical location, An advantage that none of the other ports possesses.

We need to enhance our port capabilities and continue development because if we delay, we won't have time to catch up. For economic prosperity, future leaders must make the right policy decisions and put a lot of emphasis on the shipping industry. Colombo, in particular, can be transformed into an economic hub, which will create numerous job opportunities for the future, and by doing so, we can enhance our economy through this industry.



# NAVIGATING ECONOMIC PROSPERITY THROUGH SRI LANKA'S INLAND WATERWAYS

R.A.A.S. Ranathunga  
2021/22 Batch



## INTRODUCTION

Maritime transportation refers to moving goods and people via sea routes, rivers, and other navigable waters. It is a vital component of the global economy and facilitates around 90% of world trade by volume (UNCTAD, 2023). This mode of transportation is especially efficient for moving large quantities of goods over long distances, making it indispensable for economic development. Maritime transportation includes various forms, including ocean shipping, coastal shipping, and inland water transportation.

Inland Water Transportation (IWT), a subset of maritime transportation, involves the use of rivers, canals, and lakes for the movement of goods and passengers. Although this mode of transportation holds significant potential, it is currently underutilized in many countries, including Sri Lanka. Although Sri Lanka has an extensive internal waterway system, it is currently underutilized. If this hidden resource is used efficiently, it will bring a new breath to Sri Lanka's logistics sector and economy. This paper is intended to show that these inland waterways, like the brave queens of the ocean, have the power to become an essential force in driving our economy forward.

## RECENT USAGES OF INLAND WATER TRANSPORTATION IN SRI LANKA

Currently, Sri Lanka's inland water transportation is limited and primarily serves a few key areas:

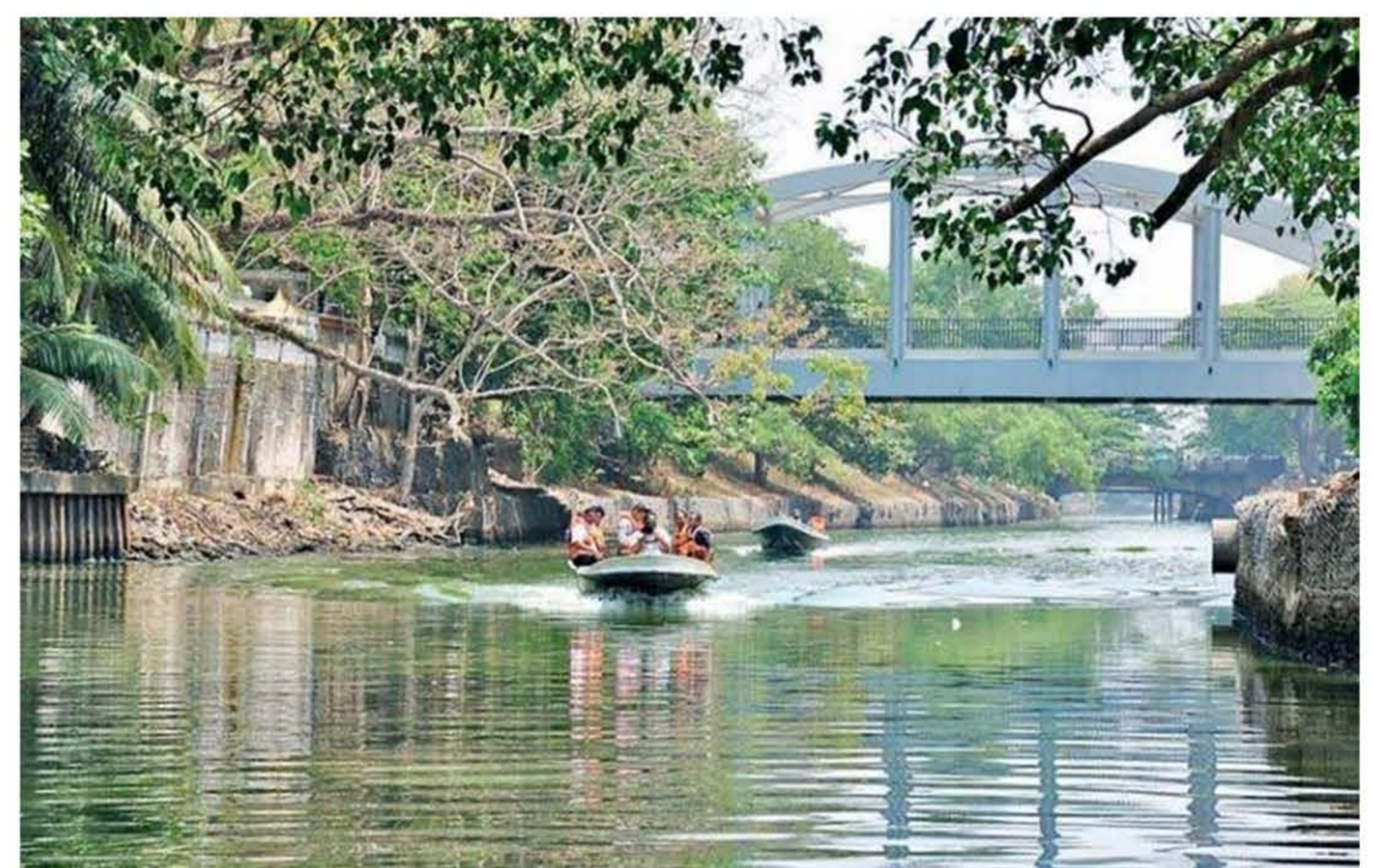
### • Passenger and Cargo Transport

In 2019, a passenger boat service was started from Union Place to Colombo Fort across Beira Lake as a new mode of urban transport to reduce the traffic congestion in Colombo. (Daily Mirror, 2023)



*Figure 1-The passenger boat service on the Beira Lake (Onlanka, 2019)*

In 2020, another passenger boat service was started between Wellawatte and Battaramulla providing the facility to travel in 30 minutes. It starts from Diyatha Uyana, going past Nawala and Kirulapone, and ends at the Savoy Cinema in Wellawatte along the Colombo's canals. (Daily FT, 2020)



*Figure 2-Boats enroute to Wellawatte (Daily FT,2020)*

Regrettably, it must be emphasized that although these projects have been started, they are currently not being implemented.

However, in the year 2024, the Kelani River has been used several times to transport large project cargo. (Fiberglass\_composite boat building\_Srilanka,2024)



**Figure 3-Transportation of goods using barges across the Kelani River (Fiberglass\_composite boat building\_Srilanka,2024)**

**• Tourism**

Inland waterways are utilized significantly for tourism activities such as river safaris, boat tours, and leisure cruises. The Madu Ganga River Safari is a popular attraction, showcasing the rich biodiversity of the Madu Ganga wetland. Apart from this, tourist boat services are also operating in areas like Negambo Lagoon, Pulmude Lagoon, and Galle.

**• Fisheries and Irrigation**

Inland water bodies support the local fishing industry and agriculture through irrigation, contributing to food security in the country.

Now you can see that the potential of inland waterways for commercial transport is largely untapped. The lack of infrastructure, policy support, and integration with other modes of transport appear to be significant obstacles to fully utilizing these waterways. Despite these constraints, the implementation of the concept of freight transportation through these inland waterways can offer cost efficiencies as well as environmental benefits.

## THE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY OF PROPERLY IMPLEMENTING INLAND WATER TRANSPORTATION

If Sri Lanka successfully installs a well-developed inland water transportation system, it could catalyze significant advancements in the shipping sector and the broader economy.

**• Enhanced Shipping Sector Efficiency**

Inland waterways can serve as an efficient feeder system for ports in the transport of freight as they connect coastal areas with the interior of the country. By connecting inland waterways with major ports, Sri Lanka can create a seamless multimodal transport network that facilitates the swift movement of goods from ports to inland destinations. This could reduce port congestion and streamline logistics operations,

boosting the overall efficiency of the shipping sector.

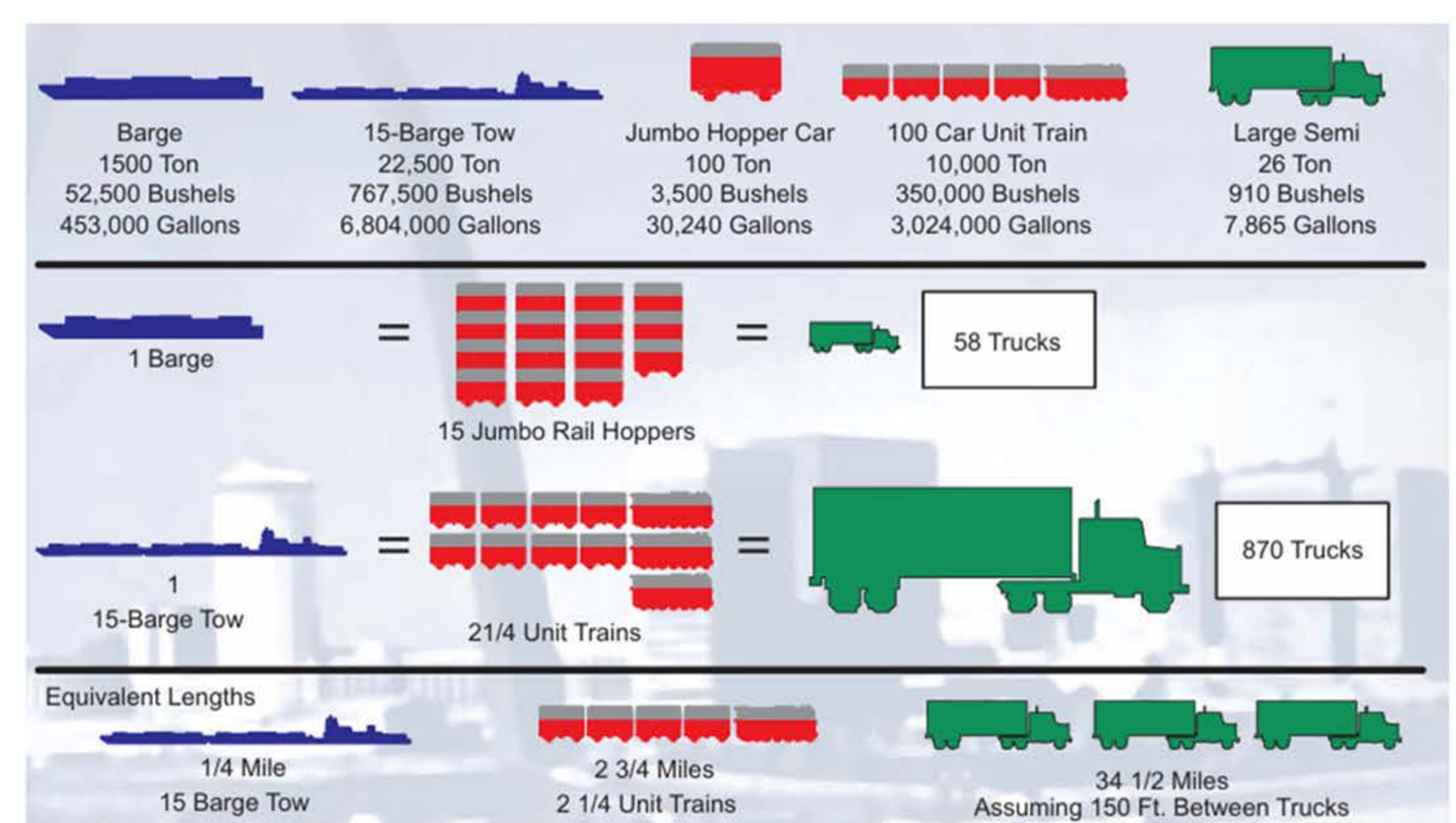
**• Economic Growth and Job Creation**

The development of IWT can create jobs in related industries such as construction, maintenance, and operation of waterways, ports, and terminals, as well as vessel building and logistics services. This can lead to economic diversification reduce dependence on traditional sectors such as agriculture and textiles and stimulate the local economy.

Moreover, the development of IWT networks will improve connectivity between rural and urban regions, facilitating easy movement of bulk commodities like agricultural products, coal, and other goods. This will help raise the income of rural communities, reduce urban-rural economic disparities, and promote overall economic growth. Also, improved connectivity will contribute to Sri Lanka's increased trade volume and better integration into regional and global trade networks.

**• Cost and Environmental Benefits**

IWT is significantly more cost-effective and environmentally friendly than road and rail transport. When using barges for this transportation, towboats push barges lashed together to form a "tow". A tow usually consists of 4 or 6 barges on small waterways. 15- barge tow is used for transportation in larger rivers. Such 'tows' are an extremely efficient mode of transportation, moving about 22,500 tons of cargo as a single unit. As the following figure illustrates, a single 15-barge tow is equivalent to about 225 rail cars or 870 tractor-trailer trucks.



**Figure 4- Alternate Transportation Mode Comparison (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, n.d)**

On average, a gallon of fuel allows one ton of cargo to be shipped 59 miles by truck, 202 miles by rail, and 514 miles by barge. Now you can understand how cost-effective and fuel-efficient this IWT concept is. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, n.d)

According to the World Development Report 2024 of the World Bank, by shifting a portion of freight transport to inland waterways, Sri Lanka can achieve significant cost savings and lower its carbon footprint. (World Bank, 2021) Through this, environmental benefits such as reduced air pollution from fuel combustion and noise pollution open the doors to a sustainable green economy. This may also help to attract environmentally friendly businesses and investors in the future.

• **Tourism and Cultural Preservation**

Sri Lanka's inland waterways already attract domestic and international tourism. If further developed these inland waterways can become a major attraction for tourists and provide river cruises, eco-tourism, and cultural experiences. This can generate sizable revenue, especially if integrated with broader tourism strategies that highlight Sri Lanka's natural beauty and heritage sites.

## HAMILTON CANAL: A FORGOTTEN ASSET WITH UNTAPPED POTENTIAL

The Hamilton Canal, also known as the "Dutch Canal," has historical significance as one of Sri Lanka's inland waterways, serving as a valuable resource for commercial goods and passenger transport. This 14.5 km long canal connects Colombo and Puttalam and flows through Negombo. However, today it has

become a forgotten asset and is only underutilized for transportation purposes. Reactivating the Hamilton Canal and developing it as an alternative transport route can bring significant benefits to Sri Lanka's economy. By rehabilitating and modernizing the canal, Sri Lanka can create a new transport corridor connecting the western coastal region to Colombo, reduce traffic congestion, and provide an alternative route for freight transport. The canal's proximity to Colombo port provides opportunities for its integration into the wider maritime logistics network, increasing the efficiency of cargo movement between the port and inland destinations.

## CONCLUSION

The revival of Sri Lanka's inland water transport assets is a critical component of Sri Lanka's prosperous maritime logistics sector. By overcoming current challenges and investing in infrastructure, policy support, and integration with other modes of transport, Sri Lanka can unlock the full potential of its inland waterways. Sri Lanka's strategic geographical positioning has already made it a competitive player in the global logistics landscape. So why is IWT still not established here? The time to act is now, to ensure that Sri Lanka does not miss out on the transformative benefits that inland water transportation can offer.

# M.S.C Aponsu

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**“PORT SERVICES ARE VERY VITAL IN FACILITATING THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT”**

## **Mr. Sudattha Silva** **Additional Director General** **Sri Lanka Customs**

Interviewed by: Prathagi Munipura  
Transcribed by: Raweena Tharushi  
Photographed by: Buddhi Vishwajith

Mr. Sudattha Silva, the Additional Director General of Sri Lanka Customs, brings over 35 years of expertise in Customs enforcement, Border management, and Trade facilitation. A proud alumnus of Asoka Vidyalaya and Ananda College, Colombo, he is an Attorney-at-Law of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka and holds an MBA in Customs and International Trade from the Postgraduate Institute of Management (PIM), University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

Joining Sri Lanka Customs in 1988, Mr. Silva has held pivotal roles, contributing significantly to customs modernization, trade facilitation, and international collaboration. His extensive contributions extend to national policy committees and global platforms such as the United Nations and the World Customs Organization (WCO).

Mr. Silva has served as a visiting lecturer, presenter, and trainer for over two decades, imparting his vast knowledge to academic institutions and professional audiences. His leadership and dedication continue to shape the future of customs and trade on both national and international fronts.



**Q As an additional director general of Sri Lanka customs, what do you think about the impact and role of Sri Lanka customs in facilitating maritime logistics and trade in Sri Lanka?**

Well, without Customs, there is no way you can talk about Maritime Logistics, especially in International Trade. Look what happens in international trade. There is a buyer and a seller in 2 different countries, and they transact goods, and the buyer makes a payment. The seller must transport the goods to the buyer. This is logistics. And when these goods move from the Country of Origin to the Destination, there are 2 borders the goods must cross, the border at the Origin country and the border at the Destination country. Customs is a border regulatory agency. Customs is there to regulate the Cross-border movement of goods. So, whenever goods are moving across borders, they are subjected to customs regulations. Customs facilitation is vital. And without customs support, without customs facilitating these cross-border movement of goods, it is impossible to talk about international trade development or logistics

**Q Are there any specific initiatives are undertaken by Sri Lanka Customs to achieve the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) which emphasizes the streamlining customs procedures in the maritime sector?**

Many initiatives have already been taken Internationally and Locally. If you look at the revised Kyoto Convention of the World Customs Organization, there are many tools introduced by the UN agencies. But the most significant one, as you correctly said, the Trade Facilitation Agreement introduced by the World Trade Organization (WTO-TFA), which came in to force in 2017, but before it came into force Sri Lanka customs acted. In 2013, we had the opportunity to do a gap analysis before the agreement came into force. We formed a committee to move forward with the initiatives within Customs.

But if you look at the TFA, it covers not only Customs, but all the other border regulatory agencies. They all have to fall in line with these recommendations. We took the initiative to bring that to the national platform.

**Q Sri Lanka aspires to become a regional Maritime hub, especially with the Port of role can Sri Lanka Customs play in achieving this vision?**

Economic development is the development of all industries. Port services are very vital in order to bring the Economic development. The port operators have a great responsibility to improve the services in Port of Colombo. So, we have competitive ports to provide the services to the Shipping industry. When it comes to customs, it regulates the movement of ships, the

movement of other vehicular traffic inside the port. Customs control the movement of people coming into the port and moving out of the port and all the imports and exports. Therefore, it is impossible to operate a port without the support of customs. Customs is an agency which has authority above all the other operations.

**Q Technological advancements play a vital role in every sector. What role does technology play in modernizing customs operations related to maritime logistics and are there any current ongoing plans or future plans that are being discussed?**

We have an exceptionally good Automated system. We have automated almost all the processes related to customs covering all the major requirements for customs clearance, but of course, there is much more to do.

What we did to facilitate the maritime industry; I can provide an example. In past, cargo manifest was printed and submitted manually. But in our system, since the year 2010, we started capturing the cargo manifest automatically. The system we were earlier using is called ASYCUDA to submit the cargo manifest. There were certain limitations.

To eliminate the limitations, we recently started a project to implement a new application called ASYHUB, where we can now receive the cargo information much in advance. Through this, we can receive cargo information 24 hours before the departure from the foreign port. To enhance risk management, we can identify low-risk shipments, allowing for zero interventions. Currently, the system is undergoing testing, which has been highly successful. We plan to officially launch it within the next few weeks.



**Q Looking to the future, what are Sri Lanka customs' long-term goals for facilitating and promoting the maritime trade?**

ASYHUB is one of the very latest developments. Sri Lanka customs is piloting it for the first time in the world along with Cambodia. Since we have an efficient system in place, we have successfully addressed nearly all aspects of customs operations using ASYCUDA. The next level we can take in the shipping industry regarding customs requirements is to introduce the ASYHUB. So, we agreed, and we started it, and it was successful. With that, we can also move forward with this trade facilitation recommendation called Pre-arrival processing.

Customs is there to collect taxes from the trading community. As both customs and ports serve the same trading community, collaboration between the two can significantly enhance the quality of service provided. Ultimately by facilitating trade effectively, the final dividends will be delivered to the country.

**Q How does Sri Lanka customs address challenges like smuggling and illegal trade within the maritime sector while ensuring the smooth flow of legitimate trade?**

Customs must work strategically. Risk management is the key. That is one of the recommendations again from the WTO-TFA to do the customs clearance using risk management principles or to apply risk management during customs clearance. We collect all the statistics by analyzing the data and identify the compliant traders. We have the statistics of all the offenders, those who have committed customs frauds as well.

We also have the information provided by the shipping lines and banks. By using this information, we can analyze them, build profiles, and identify the high-risk shipments. Once high-risk shipments are identified, we can give them (compliant traders' shipments) the least intervention by customs.

Customs has more time to focus on the non-compliant traders, the high-risk shipments. As we spend very little time for the compliant trader, we save time and use that time to work with the non-compliant traders, where we have more time to focus and examine their cargo or carry out other enforcement activities if any contravention is detected.

**Q How does Sri Lanka customs manage the training and development of its personals to keep up with the evolving maritime logistics and customs procedures?**

In Sri Lanka customs, we have a Training division dedicated for training of the officers. In addition to that, we also train the Customs House Agents, those who are coming to customs as Customs Brokers. This training division has a training calendar where they

have structured training programs starting from induction training to the new recruits to customs. And, also, depending on the area of work, like, if the officer is transferred to the enforcement division, we have specific training for enforcement functions.

Customs lacks dedicated internal training programs for its officers in the logistics industry. However, Customs House Agents, crucial to the clearance process, undergo training before receiving their licenses—a primary program conducted by Customs. Additionally, upon request from stakeholders like Shipping Agents or Freight Forwarders, Customs provides specific training for their staff.

**“AS BOTH CUSTOMS AND PORTS SERVE THE SAME TRADING COMMUNITY, COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE TWO CAN SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF SERVICE.”**

**Q** Is there anything else you would like to add regarding Sri Lanka customs' commitment to enhancing maritime logistics and contribution to Sri Lanka's economic prosperity?

One of the major areas I can highlight is the automation of our processes. Very soon, we will be going paperless processing. When we don't want papers, it means that we don't want you to come to customs. The stakeholders can work from the office or from wherever the place they are. This is one way we can help the logistics industry, those who are ready to integrate with our system. If you have your own system and have implemented automation, we can integrate your system with ours.

Basically, ASYHUB is one such project. It all started connecting the reputed shipping platforms available in the world right now. However, this does not mean we are limited to connecting only with international shipping platforms. If you are a small operator or a small freight forwarder, where you don't have sufficient infrastructures or automated systems. Still, you can work with us. We will provide you with the necessary facility for you to do your processes manually.

**Q** Can you share your thoughts on our program? And what do you think about our magazine, the theme we selected, and any comments or things you want to share with us?

When I visited for the lectures to Ocean University, that's one of the places I visited with a lot of pleasure and happiness. Because Ocean University is one of the upcoming Universities. But I can see a drastic improvement in the programs they're delivering.

And, also, the students, those who are coming, I can see a big improvement in the student community at Ocean University. And with this initiative, when I heard about it, I was delighted to see that you all are going beyond the academic environment and putting all your efforts into your self-development. These activities will really give you hands-on experience when you come out of the University, you can integrate with society in your career individually. This initiative, the magazine, is really a good one.

And I'm sure this magazine will be one of the publications which will be outstanding because now, there's very little focus in the logistic industry to have this type of initiatives.





**“MANY FEMALE GRADUATES AND UNDERGRADUATES ARE NOT ENTERING THE LOGISTICS FIELD, DESPITE HAVING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES”**

**Mr. Dharshana Wijemanne**  
**Director/CEO**  
**Advantis 3PL**  
**Hayleys Advantis Limited**

Interviewed by: Kushan Kavindu Munasinghe  
Transcribed by: Erashi Navaratne, Thisun Dathsara  
Photographed by: Sudheera Marasinghe  
Videographed by: Kusal Gamakaranage

Scan the QR code to  
watch the full interview:



Mr. Dharshana Wijemanne, a seasoned professional with over two decades of experience, began his career in 2003 as a logistics analyst and management trainee at Maritime Holdings. Over the years, he has excelled in diverse roles across logistics, finance, procurement, compliance, and general management, showcasing his versatility and leadership skills. Currently, as the head of Advantis 3PL, he leads a dynamic team, driving innovation and excellence in the logistics industry. Mr. Wijemanne holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Statistics and a Master of Business Administration (Finance) from the University of Colombo. His professional qualifications include certifications in Management Accounting from the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) and the Institute of Certified Management Accountants, Australia. Additionally, he earned a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) from Buckinghamshire New University.

**Q** What are the core services provided by Advantis 3PL, and how do they contribute to the logistics and supply chain management sector in the region?

At Advantis 3PL, we provide a wide range of services to our clients. First, we identify non-core areas that are key pain points for our clients which are warehouse management, inventory management, value-added services, and distribution, essentially creating an end-to-end logistics solution. Our integrated logistics services cover the entire process, from freight forwarding and shipping lines to the end consumer, including the last mile. We offer comprehensive end-to-end logistics solutions across various industries, such as FMCG, pharmaceuticals, apparel, and more.

**Q** Can you share some best practices in logistics that have proven successful for Advantis 3PL? How do you ensure operational efficiency and customer satisfaction in your logistics services?

When discussing best practices embedded in our culture, the first thing to note is that Advantis has a unique and distinctive culture, which we are proud of. Regarding best practices, when we started our third-party logistics facility, we implemented state-of-the-art warehouse back in 2003. Safety is our top priority and is deeply ingrained in our culture and DNA. We focus on driving efficiency throughout our operations and have adopted a lean approach, which is an essential and useful tool that enhances our operations. We also prioritize innovation, especially in technology, constantly exploring how best to integrate modern technologies into our operations.

**Q** What innovations do you see driving the industry forward?

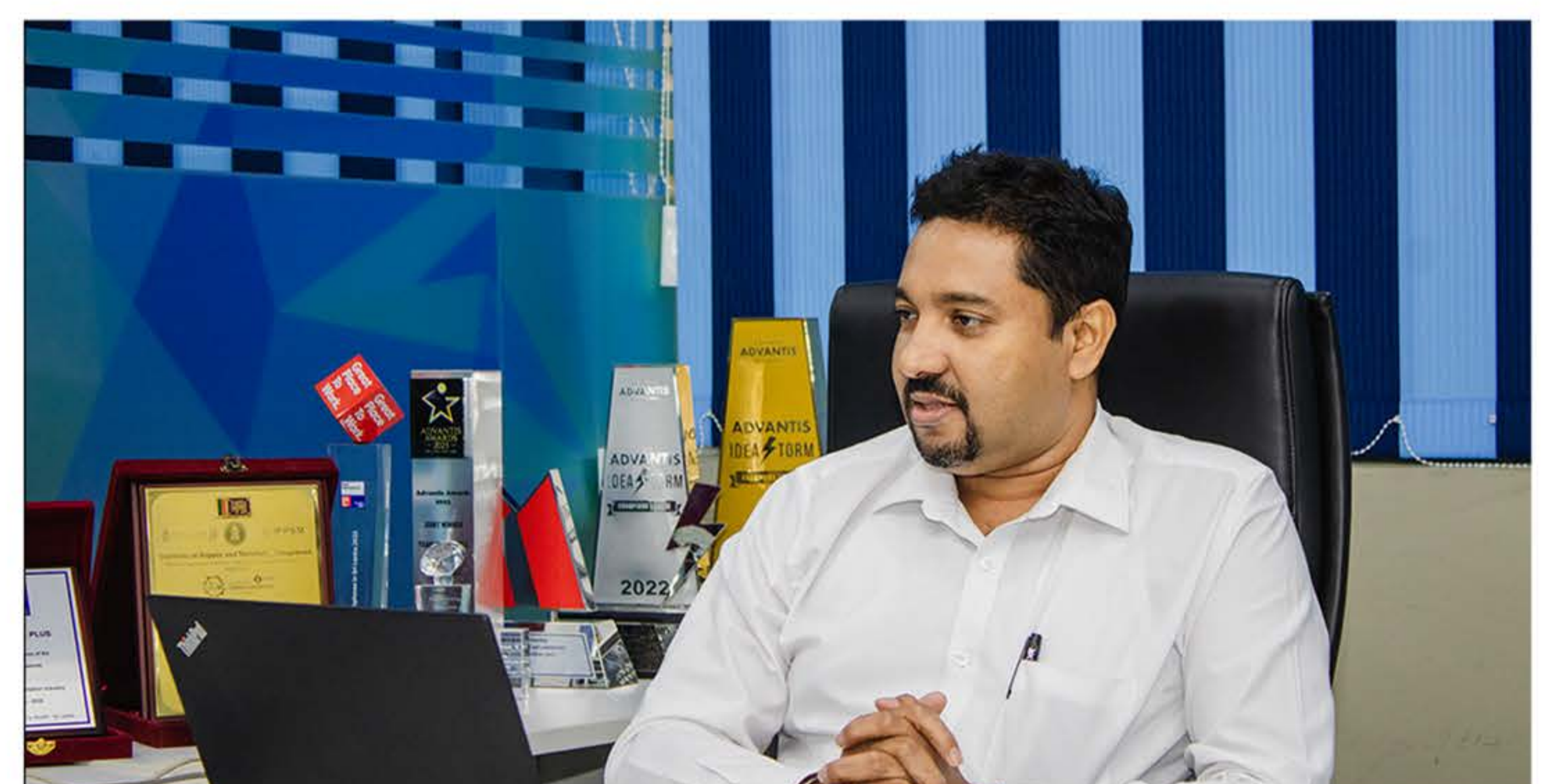
Innovation is non-negotiable in the logistics industry. Like the IT and other technology sectors, logistics is constantly evolving and changing rapidly. In the past, logistics often followed a typical, standardized approach, but now it's continuously changing, and customer demands evolve daily. We must adapt, be agile, and remain flexible to cater to our clients' needs. We've faced unexpected situations, like the COVID-19 crisis, that have forced us to rethink how we operate. To meet these challenges, we have implemented a tier-one Warehouse Management System and a Transport Management System, which are key innovations in the logistics industry. These systems have reached very advanced levels, and while we've used similar systems before, they must continually evolve and be up to date.

**Q** Sustainability is everywhere now. How is Advantis 3PL incorporating sustainability into its operations, and why is this important for the future of this industry?

In terms of sustainability, we at Advantis 3PL have made significant strides over our 20-plus-year journey. Sustainability is a buzzword these days, but for us, it ensures that operations continue uninterrupted. We have pursued many sustainability initiatives. One aspect is solar energy. We have two flagship facilities, Kelaniya Distribution Center and Advantis Logistics City in Ja-Ela, Kotugoda. At these locations, we've installed solar systems with a capacity of 1.8 megawatts, providing energy for our operations and supplying power to the national grid. We have roof capacity to expand our solar capacity to 2.8 megawatts, and we're working on this as we've recently completed phase two of the Advantis Logistics facility.

We also collaborate with Hayleys, following their ESG framework and governance, which is integrated into each company. We emphasize sustainability due to current trends and global movements in that direction. Sustainability is becoming essential for business continuity, and without it, we cannot progress. Regarding waste, we aim to regenerate waste through operations using the 3R- Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

Furthermore, we engage and collaborate with our suppliers and customers to ensure the sustainability journey is shared. We also practice a bottom-up approach, involving employees in our sustainability activities as both a company and a group.



**Q** What major trends do you see currently shaping the logistics industry in Sri Lanka and in the region?

In the logistics industry, several trends are shaping the future. As I mentioned earlier, logistics involves facilitating trade. Previously, it took longer to deliver goods to the end consumer, but now the trend is to provide faster delivery. Lead times have decreased significantly, as customers are no longer willing to wait for long periods. What used to take days is now

expected to take only hours or even minutes.

For example, in transportation, we used to rely on renting cabs, but now platforms like Uber and Pickme allow customers to get a vehicle instantly. This reflects the growing customer demand for shorter wait times. One of the key trends is reducing lead time, which requires the use of technology-driven solutions, such as drones, system tools, scanners, and IoT devices. These innovations help us minimize lead times throughout the entire operation.

**Q Sri Lanka is geographically positioned as a key maritime hub. How can the country leverage this advantage to become a leader in maritime logistics?**

This is an important and timely question. Regarding location, Sri Lanka is strategically positioned on the world map, connecting the East and West maritime routes. Known as the "pearl of the Indian Ocean," Sri Lanka has significant potential to capitalize on these shipping lines. However, over the years, we have failed to fully leverage our strategic location in terms of maritime logistics.

One major challenge has been the inconsistency of policies, which change every time a new party comes into power. Consistent policies are crucial for leveraging maritime logistics in Sri Lanka. In terms of infrastructure, we must develop not only our ports but also increase the capacity of port operations and improve inland transportation, including road and rail networks. Currently, we lack sophistication in these areas. By enhancing our infrastructure, Sri Lanka can establish a robust network and become a strategically located maritime hub.

**Q What specific logistics services do you see Sri Lanka specializing in for future growth?**

Sri Lanka has enormous potential to specialize in several key logistics services. When it comes to integrated logistics services, clients are looking for a single point of contact and a one-stop solution. They seek end-to-end solutions that cover everything from raw material sourcing to delivering the final product to the end consumer, all handled by a single provider. Providing these comprehensive solutions is crucial for Sri Lanka's future growth.

Additionally, Sri Lanka's strategic location offers opportunities for capitalizing on transshipments. We can leverage this advantage to offer extensive transshipment solutions. Furthermore, Sri Lanka can serve as a hub for fulfilment centers and e-commerce platforms, similar to Amazon or eBay, due to its strategic position.

**“CLIENTS ARE LOOKING FOR A SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT AND A ONE-STOP SOLUTION. THEY SEEK END-TO-END SOLUTIONS THAT COVER EVERYTHING FROM RAW MATERIAL SOURCING TO DELIVERING THE FINAL PRODUCT TO THE END CONSUMER, ALL HANDLED BY A SINGLE PROVIDER”**

**Q Sri Lanka faces competition from regional players specially from India and Dubai. What are the biggest challenges do you think that Sri Lanka needs to overcome to establish itself as a leader in logistics?**

Compared to the global giants in maritime logistics, Sri Lanka can leverage its smaller-scale infrastructure to achieve greater efficiency in port operations and maritime logistics. The key factor is driving efficiency. While we have limited capacity compared to global giants, we need to ensure that efficiency is prioritized. To achieve this, we must focus on enhancing IT capabilities, integrating advanced technology, and improving capacity. By addressing these aspects, Sri Lanka can overcome limitations and establish itself as a leader in logistics.

**Q** What skills and competencies do you consider essential for success in the logistics industry? What advice would you give to students and young professionals aspiring to build a career in this field?

One issue I've noticed is that many female graduates and undergraduates are not entering the logistics field, despite having equal opportunities. Although women make up about 70% of university students, the logistics industry remains predominantly male. This disparity may stem from cultural factors.

To address this, we should encourage female students to apply their academic knowledge and problem-solving skills in the industry. Graduates should focus on developing effective communication and problem-solving abilities to stay competitive. Given that Gen-Z individuals are tech-savvy and accustomed to using technology, it's essential to provide them with the skills to effectively use technological tools, from IoT devices to smartphones, within logistics.

Moreover, graduates should remain focused and committed to the field. The logistics industry often involves routine tasks that can be automated with AI or robotics, but it also presents unforeseen challenges that require human problem-solving and critical thinking. By equipping students with these skills, we can better utilize their potential and address the industry's evolving needs.



**Q** Are there any additional thoughts or comments you would like to share with us regarding this topic?

As I mentioned, it's crucial to be ahead of the situation by anticipating developments in the environment and industry. While some challenges may arise unexpectedly, it's important to be nimble and adaptable in response. At Advantis, we are committed and passionate about what we do, and we try to be ahead of the situation as the leader of the logistics industry in Sri Lanka.

**Q** Finally, can you share your thoughts on our program? What do you think about our magazine, the theme we have selected? And any comments you would like to share?

I believe Ocean University's magazine, “The logistician” is commendable and an excellent initiative. It brings important maritime and logistics issues to the forefront, fostering discussion on relevant topics. This approach is thought-provoking and highly relevant to the current situation. I encourage you to continue this excellent work and contribute even more to the industry. Such efforts will certainly be recognized and valued at various levels.

I wish you good luck and all the best!

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THE LOGISTICS  
INDUSTRY IN  
SRI LANKA”**



# THE LOGISTICS CLUB

## DEDICATED TO NURTURE LOGISTICIANS ABOVE PAR

The Logistics Club of Ocean University has been a cornerstone for undergraduate development since its inception in 2018, offering a platform for students to excel in both theoretical and practical aspects of logistics. The club's mission is to uncover and nurture the inherent talents of its members, fostering academic excellence while enhancing their soft skills to shape the next generation of innovative logisticians for the industry.

Over the years, the club has successfully organized a series of impactful events, including seminars, webinars, and workshops, designed to enhance members' skills and provide valuable industrial exposure. To ensure efficient operations and maximize benefits for its members, the club operates through three specialized committees.

One of the flagship initiatives of the Logistics Club is the annual blood donation campaign, a CSR project that reflects the club's commitment to giving back to the community. Additionally, the club maintains a robust partnership with CILT Sri Lanka, encouraging members to take part in their events and expand their professional networks.

Looking ahead, the Logistics Club is dedicated to building on its achievements, striving to create even greater opportunities for its members and ensuring their continued growth and success in the dynamic field of logistics.





# THE LOGISTICS CLUB 2024/2025

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# ANCHORING SRI LANKA'S MARITIME FUTURE: THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AT OCUSL AND BEYOND

**M.D.S Hansanee**  
2021/22 Batch



In the quest to establish Sri Lanka as a maritime logistics powerhouse, one factor stands out as particularly crucial: human capital development. As we aim to leverage our strategic location and expand our maritime sector, investing in education and training programs focused on maritime logistics is not just beneficial—it's essential. This article explores how human capital development in maritime logistics can be a key driver of Sri Lanka's economic prosperity.

Sri Lanka's maritime sector has shown promising growth, with the Port of Colombo recognized as the World's Fastest-Growing Port in Q1 2024. However, to fully capitalize on this potential, the country needs a workforce equipped with specialized skills in maritime logistics. Currently, there's a gap between the industry's needs and the available talent pool, which, if addressed, could significantly boost the sector's contribution to the national economy.

Universities and vocational institutions in Sri Lanka are developing comprehensive programs in maritime logistics. These range from undergraduate degrees to specialized diplomas, covering areas such as supply chain management, port operations, shipping economics, and maritime law. The Ocean University of Sri Lanka (OCUSL), established in 2014, is at the forefront of this effort. As a specialized state university dedicated to ocean sciences and marine affairs, OCUSL offers a range of programs directly relevant to maritime logistics. Located in Colombo, with several other campuses across the country, OCUSL focuses on practical, industry-oriented education, making it a vital institution in developing the human capital needed for Sri Lanka's maritime sector.

Academic pathways at OCUSL have been designed to cater to the requirement of highly specialized human resources in both academic and skilled sectors, to expand the Ocean Economy. The university's programs are designed to produce graduates who are ready to meet the evolving demands of the maritime logistics industry.



**Figure 1 - General Convocation of Ocean University of Sri Lanka, 2016)**

OCUSL also places a strong emphasis on developing soft skills crucial for maritime logistics professionals. The university offers a comprehensive approach through various extracurricular activities to complement students' theoretical education. Sports programs, including cricket, football, volleyball, and athletics, foster teamwork, leadership, discipline, and stress management skills. The university's commitment to social responsibility is evident in its regular CSR initiatives, such as beach clean-ups, blood donation programs, educational programs for underprivileged children, and environmental conservation projects.



**Figure 2 - Interdepartmental Volleyball Tournament, 2023**

OCUSL supports several student-led clubs and societies, including the Logistics Club, Engineering and Innovation Club, and Environmental Society. These organizations provide valuable platforms for students to enhance their public speaking, organizational, and leadership skills while building professional networks. The university's international exchange program with the Korea Maritime & Ocean University offers students a unique opportunity to gain cross-cultural communication skills and a global perspective on the maritime industry. For final-year students, OCUSL facilitates internships with maritime and logistics companies as part of their curriculum, allowing them to apply their knowledge in real-world settings.



Figure 3 - Field Visits, 2023

The Sri Lankan government has recognized the importance of maritime education, as evidenced by the establishment and continued support of the Ocean University of Sri Lanka. This commitment underscores the national priority given to developing a skilled workforce in the maritime sector.

As Sri Lanka positions itself as a maritime hub, the development of human capital in maritime logistics is not just an option, it's a necessity. By investing in education and training, Sri Lanka can create a skilled workforce capable of driving the maritime sector forward. This, in turn, will contribute significantly to the country's economic prosperity, transforming Sri Lanka into a knowledge-based maritime nation. The journey to becoming a maritime powerhouse begins with nurturing the minds that will steer the ships of progress.



Figure 4 - KMOU - OCUSL Capacity Building Project Opening Ceremony, 2024

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**“COLOMBO IS IDEALLY PLACED TO BE A MAIN TRANSIT PORT FOR EAST AND WEST AFRICAN DESTINATIONS.”**

## **Mr. Ananda S. Premachandra** **International Consultant in Port Management**

Interviewed by: Tashni Perera

Transcribed by: Sandali Nireeksha

Photographed by: Buddhi Vishwajith

From humble beginnings to earning international recognition, Mr. Ananda S. Premachandra's journey exemplifies resilience, vision, and a steadfast commitment to excellence. A graduate in Business Administration from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, he advanced his expertise with a master's degree in Port Management and Harbor Administration from the University of Antwerp, Belgium.

His professional journey began humbly as an Audit Clerk in a public entity while pursuing his degree. At the age of 25, he transitioned into the port sector as a management trainee, in the year 2000 ascending to the role of Additional Managing Director of the Sri Lanka Ports Authority. His extensive experience includes pivotal roles at the Port of Fujairah (UAE) and Westport of Malaysia, alongside serving as Regional Manager for Ports and Terminals in Asia for CMA CGM, the world's third-largest shipping line at the time, from 2002 to 2015. Then he led SLPA as Managing Director once more in 2015 to 2018 and later helmed Laugfs Terminals as Director/CEO. He was once again appointed as the Managing Director of SLPA in 2020, a position he held till 2021. Since 2021, Mr. Premachandra has been a sought-after International Port Management Consultant, providing expertise to prestigious organizations, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and projects such as the Colombo West International Terminals (CWIT) and Tanzania's East Africa Gateway Terminals. Additionally, he serves as Senior Advisor (Master Planning) to the Tanzania Ports Authority's Steering Committee for a major port refurbishment initiative, solidifying his legacy as a global leader in maritime logistics.

## “CWIT IS INDEED A GROUNDBREAKING PROJECT THAT REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT LEAP FORWARD FOR SRI LANKA'S MARITIME SECTOR.”

**Q** Could you provide an update on the current development progress of CWIT? What key milestones have been achieved so far, and when do you expect the terminal to commence operations? As the third deep-water terminal in Colombo Harbor, how will CWIT differentiate itself and complement the existing deep-water terminals?

CWIT is indeed a groundbreaking project that represents a significant leap forward for Sri Lanka's maritime sector. As part of the first phase, we have already completed a 400-meter quay line, with the full 800 meters of berths set to be ready by May 2025. This phase will feature ultramodern infrastructure, including eight Ship-to-Shore SPP (Super-Post-Panamax) cranes and an automated yard supported by 18 Automated Rail-Mounted Gantry Cranes. Together, these developments will inject a handling capacity of 1.6 million TEUs into the port of Colombo, positioning CWIT as a key player in regional logistics.

CWIT is making excellent progress with the commissioning of the installed equipment and automated systems. The process is on track, and we are confident in achieving the desired operational readiness with trial operations scheduled for February 2025. Commercial operations are expected to commence within the first quarter of the year, ensuring seamless integration into the Port of Colombo's operations. One of the standout aspects of CWIT is its sustainability-focused design. It will be Colombo's first green terminal, with electrically powered quay cranes, yard cranes, stackers, and internal transfer vehicles. These advancements reflect our commitment to reducing the environmental impact of terminal operations. The quayside cranes will be operated remotely from a centralized control center, while waterside operations will be fully automated. Landside operations, on the other hand, will involve remote-controlled assistance to serve road trucks effectively.

Another key innovation is the use of twin cantilever-type RMG cranes. Unlike conventional RTG-based terminals, these cranes will provide separate service lanes for Internal Transfer Vehicles (ITVs) and road trucks, eliminating queuing delays. Additionally, the terminal's gate operations will be fully automated using OCR (Optical Character Reading) and RFID technology. Real-time tracking of vehicle movements will be facilitated by RTLS (Real-Time Location System), and quayside tallying will utilize the cutting-edge box catcher OCR system, ensuring precision and efficiency.

What truly sets CWIT apart is its commitment to social impact. We are introducing a groundbreaking initiative in the Sri Lankan maritime industry by creating equal opportunities for women. For the first time, women will be employed as remote operators and operations teammates in large numbers, at both management and non-executive levels, promoting gender equality and fostering a more inclusive workforce. With its focus on sustainability, technological innovation, and inclusivity, CWIT is set to transform not only the Port of Colombo but also the broader maritime industry, setting a benchmark for future terminal developments.

**Q** India is advancing its deep-water terminal projects, such as Vadhvan Port, which may shift a significant portion of its transshipment needs away from the Port of Colombo. Currently, Colombo handles about one-fifth of India's transshipment volume, and while India's growing economy may sustain demand for Colombo's services in the medium term, there's a clear risk of losing key spokes from India and neighboring countries like Bangladesh. However, Africa, with its rapid economic development, the second highest, presents new opportunities. How do you view these dynamics from the perspective of the Colombo Port, and what strategies can be adopted to mitigate risks and leverage new opportunities?

It's true that Colombo handles around 20% of India's transshipment business which accounts for a gateway volume to 2.0 million TEU which is roughly less than 10% of total Import Export throughput of all Indian ports. Many analysts tend to misrepresent facts to say that a significant percentage of containerized Indian cargo is transshipped through Colombo. This happens when they compare transshipment throughput of Colombo which represents two moves for each TEU generated by India directly with Gateway volume statistics.

Therefore, the Indian EXIM (Exports & Imports) volume we handle in Colombo is insignificant in terms of total EXIM business generated by India.

We must understand that India has been developing its own gateway ports for decades and ports like Mundra has the ability to handle largest container vessels. Thus, already a major portion of India's trade is handled by so called direct main liner services that deliver to the hubs in end markets. Only a small percentage of the trade goes through external Asian hubs as TS (Transshipments). In addition, India has launched two TS hubs in Kerala, Vallarpadam and Vizhinjam. Vizhinjam has already attracted a major shipping line that carries out its TS business there. Both these ports serve the West Coast of India which has deepwater ports that can serve direct main liner calls. However, Colombo by serving mainly the East coast of Indian ports and Bangladesh as the regional hub can survive for a decade or so till East Coastal ports too attract direct services. As it happened in China where Hongkong lost out its top position as the number one hub globally thanks to expansion of China's gateway ports in leaps and bounds. Colombo will not grow into a mega-hub by depending on current traditional market as direct calls will replace transshipment and Indian TS hubs will also take control.

In my opinion talking about Geographic location, Colombo is ideally placed to be a main transit port for East and West African destinations. My involvement as a Consultant in Dar Es Salam port which serves as the gateway for six land locked countries (Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia) has given me an opportunity to see how far Colombo can penetrate if we strategically change direction of our focus from a limited market to the entire Indian Ocean rim area as a whole, we can see the potential to grow. Multiple strategies are needed to reach this end. Development of capacity alone will not ensure that major lines would find us as the solution. Instead, we need to go into strategic alliances to secure new markets.



**Q As the Port of Colombo faces increasing competition and shifts in regional trade dynamics, what other strategic options do we have beyond solely functioning as a transshipment hub? Are there innovative operational models or concepts, such as the relay concept, that could redefine Colombo's role in global shipping?**

Of course, we need to move from being a dumb TS hub to a major shipping center. This requires major changes in our port management strategies as well as legislation and policies. We need to expand into other areas in maritime business that stabilizes a port as a logistics center and a business center. Whilst value added services should be expanded to make Colombo a cargo consolidation processing and a distribution center on the water side, too many aspects need attention. Those are provisions of low-cost bunkers (not only fossil fuel but also cleaner energy supplies) Ship supplies, Crewing and crew management, financial services, Capacity to manage maritime mishaps and casualties providing other non-major ancillary services to shipping. I personally think the presence of Port City with a large land mass should be used to achieve this end. Unfortunately, we function like independent business entities without looking at synergies the neighbors can find for mutual benefit.

From being a hub that depends on spokes to feed Colombo needs to become the relay port for major export nations. Major shipping lines would like to use Colombo as the relay point as they did in 1980/90's when APL and Sealand Maersk carried out major relay operations here. I was fortunate to be the head of JCT when this business was handled in Colombo. Unfortunately, when Colombo failed to grow in capacity to handle the larger ships entering the main East-West services, they left Colombo for Salalah and Fujairah. This potential is greater now with both CWIT and ECT on offer with WCT 2 project being supported by ADB.

**Q With major changes in shipping alliances set for 2025, such as the formation of the Gemini Cooperation between Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd, MSC's decision to operate independently, and Hapag-Lloyd exiting The Alliance, how do you see these shifts affecting global trade routes and port operations? Specifically, how can Sri Lankan ports, particularly the Port of Colombo, leverage these changes to capitalize on opportunities presented by the relay concept and other strategic perspectives?**

Shipping Alliances will form and break indeed. Along with developments, ports would gain or lose business depending how proactive they are to the demand of lines. The new alliances are critically looking at port calls with a view to limiting them to hubs that are fully reliable and that offer strategic partnerships.



Time is ripe for Colombo to go into strategic partnerships with major lines. All major transshipment hubs secured business by moving in this direction. The Port of Singapore, which once failed to keep healthy partnerships with key shipping lines, has seen CMA CGM, Evergreen, and Maersk redirect their operations to Malaysian hubs. When this happened, I was serving West Ports Malaysia as the head of the Container Terminal operations. Therefore, I saw it firsthand. I was also responsible for organizing hub operations for CMA CGM in West ports. After losing several million TEU of business to competition overnight, they changed the strategies. Now even PSA corporation (Port of Singapore Authority) offers partnerships in their terminals to keep business secured. I cannot see major lines committing huge volumes of business to relay cargo handling unless they have some control over their destiny in those ports. Colombo happens to be the only hub that does not have a strategic partnership with any major shipping line.

**Q As a leading expert and a mastermind in this industry, how necessary do you believe the Colombo North Port Project is for Sri Lanka's maritime and economic future? In your view, what critical gaps or opportunities does this project address, and why is its development essential for the country's economic growth?**

I am happy you asked me about North Port. During my tenure as MD of SLPA it was I who sought assistance of ADB for the National ports master plan study which was granted. I was fortunate to stay in position till my dream of North port was set up as a feasible project and financial assistance was offered by ADB for feasibility studies.

WCT 2 development concept is now the first step in creating the North port. The originally planned breakwater was planned only to provide extension of the container terminals. However, I proposed modifying this design to reclaim a large land area behind the breakwater for logistics activities in addition to land required for an ultra-modern automated container terminal. A liquid cargo handling facility too has been included within this WCT 2 project which

would also form the southern breakwater required to make the North Port a safe haven. This has been incorporated in the optional designs provided by the international consultants. Northport breakwaters will provide a large, enclosed water area and land areas for future expansion for 30 years and allow ECT and SAGT to expand into an ultra-large terminal that can offer a capacity of 10/12 M TEU once breakwaters are built. North port provides the missing facilities such as liquid cargo handling and land for logistics activities for Colombo to become a mega hub.

I am humbly proud of being the team leader that master minded the National ports master plan with few capable and dedicated team members of SLPA who were passionate about this cause.

**Q Are there any additional thoughts or comments you would like to share with us on this topic?**

If we move into strategic partnerships with international partners who control maritime business, having the right legislation to facilitate trade without unnecessary barriers, and move away from "Frog in the well thinking "of protectionism and overly public control, Colombo will become a global maritime center with WCT 2 and North port Breakwater development. Also, strategically developed and utilized Hambantota, Trinco and KKS ports together with mega port Colombo can be the catalysts for National development if we understand the true potential of our ports.

**"WE ARE INTRODUCING A GROUNDBREAKING INITIATIVE IN THE SRI LANKAN MARITIME INDUSTRY BY CREATING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN."**



**“IT IS CRUCIAL TO HAVE THE RIGHT TEAM ON THE FRONT WITH THE APPROPRIATE SKILLS TO MAINTAIN QUALITY.”**

## **Ms. Aranthi Fernando** **Head of Manufacturing** **Fonterra Brands Lanka**

Interviewed by: Jithendi Weerasinghe  
Transcribed by: Kaushal Maduranga  
Photographed by: Sudheera Marasinghe

Mrs. Aranthi Fernando, an accomplished professional in logistics and supply chain management, stands as a beacon of excellence in her field. A distinguished graduate in Logistics and Transport Management from the University of Moratuwa, she brings over a decade of extensive experience to the industry. A certified supply chain manager and Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, Mrs. Fernando's commitment to operational excellence has garnered widespread recognition. Under her guidance, Fonterra Brands Sri Lanka recently won the National Supply Chain Excellence Award 2024 (Large Scale Manufacturing), underscoring the team's extraordinary achievements in supply chain operations.

Mrs. Fernando began her professional path at Toll Global Logistics as an Assistant Manager in Commercial, Solutions, and OHS. Her exceptional capabilities soon propelled her to the role of Head of Control Tower Logistics at Global Star Logistics (Pvt) Ltd. In 2018, she joined Fonterra Brands Sri Lanka, where her expertise and leadership skills have driven remarkable results. Initially serving as the Customer Service and Logistics Manager, she now leads as the Head of Manufacturing.



**Q How does your organization utilize quality management practices to maintain a advantage against both local and regional competitors?**

The quality here at Fonterra is extraordinarily strong and it comes from the global initiative itself. So, we have a strong quality protocol like a quality culture, with that we evaluate what needs to be changed and the knowledge level of the team and our processes like zoning environmental conditions, conditions that set them apart from other yogurt manufacturers. These standards ensure that the products meet the highest quality and safety levels. For Fonterra, quality is crucial, especially for products meant for children. So, we need to make sure that we have no recalls. We invest in quality processes, even though it can result in higher costs compared to competitors. Competitors

We do a lot of testing before we release a product to the market. This thorough approach ensures that only high-quality products are reaching the consumers. Our commitment to quality is being consistent across all products, from yogurt to powder, maintaining the same standards locally and regionally. So, whatever the market is, we gain the same image and the consumer buying because we follow that quality protocol.

**Q Given that Fonterra Brands Sri Lanka has attained ISO 17025, ISO 9001, and ISO 22000 certifications, how do you ensure that your production quality management practices align with these global standards, particularly while working with 4500 local dairy farmers?**

The concept of "Grass to Glass," ensures quality from the sourcing of local milk to the final product. We make sure that even our collection centers all that is adhered to the same quality parameter. We provide farmers with essential knowledge through its training farm facility at Pannala, to ensure that they follow the same quality standards we uphold at our facilities.

Our commitment to best practices has led to consecutive successful audits, including a recent BRC audit where we achieved an A++ rating. It is an audit-ready plan that we have. We have made sure whenever they come to see the audit that we have the same best practices getting continued.



**Q Fonterra Brands Sri Lanka has progressed to phase 4 of the Integrated Work Systems Certification, which ensures a consistent culture and standards across all factory functions and levels. Could you please share the strategies and efforts that led to this achievement?**

We follow the IWS framework, developed by Procter & Gamble. This framework, which we adopted five years ago, has 11 key pillars. Each pillar is managed by a dedicated leader. Despite challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, we have progressed to Phase 4 of the IWS framework. That enables us to understand what our loss factors, wastage and year on year the improvements can be brought in and at the same time the framework makes sure that it focuses on all the areas. It also covers production quality, material quality, and supplier interactions. It provides a structured approach for identifying and implementing improvements. This system supports Fonterra in maintaining high standards and efficiency. As a result, our plant has been recognized across Fonterra for its efficiency and cost-effectiveness, being one of the most efficient and cost-effective plants.

**Q What are some of the prevalent challenges you encounter in maintaining production quality within your company, and what strategies do you employ to overcome these challenges?**

From a manufacturing perspective, the primary challenges often involve material defects, particularly inconsistencies from batch to batch. To address these, we follow the "Diamond model," where procurement teams and quality teams work closely with suppliers to ensure the necessary improvements are implemented.

Since much of the work is manual, it is crucial to have the right team on the front with the appropriate skills to maintain quality and adhere to safety standards. This involves conducting annual skill assessments, identifying skill gaps, and providing training to enhance knowledge and capabilities. These efforts ensure that the team is well-equipped to meet the required standards.

I believe these are the two main challenges. Outside of a crisis, while alternative fuels remain an area of focus, the specific actions required will depend on the situation. In the current context, the focus should be on improving processes to ensure consistency, making sure everyone is working in sync, following the correct procedures, and maintaining accurate records to measure progress. Also, prioritizing material improvements is another key area to address to overcome these challenges effectively.

**Q Advanced production quality management systems are currently utilized by only a few companies in Sri Lanka. What are the underlying reasons for this, and could you offer any suggestions for implementing these systems in small-scale businesses?**

Quality always comes at a cost. It is about finding the right balance between cost and quality. While it is possible to maintain cleanliness in operations, implementing environmental control zoning or conducting advanced pathogen testing may not be practical for small-scale businesses. For such enterprises, it is important to evaluate what is appropriate for their scale. If the business is very small, they might not even need an elaborate quality framework.

The strategy should be about doing what is suitable and right for the business, rather than trying to replicate everything that a multinational corporation does. However, it is critical to ensure that nothing you produce poses a risk to people. My belief is that if you would not give a product to your own family, you should not produce it for consumers.

For small-scale businesses, it is essential to prioritize food safety and deliver a product that is safe for consumers and meets an acceptable taste profile. If you can achieve this with your existing mechanisms, I would encourage to continue with that approach. As the business grows, it is important to invest in the right manufacturing processes to ensure scalability and quality.

**Q The future of quality management in manufacturing is increasingly associated with the integration of smart manufacturing and industry technologies such as real-time data analytics, IoT sensors, and AI. What are your views on this trend, and how do you anticipate Sri Lankan companies will adopt these practices in the future?**

I think even if you take Fonterra as an example, a lot of digitization is utilized. The entire manufacturing process is managed through an ERP system, from work order initiation to closure. Machine temperature profiles are monitored and controlled using IoT solutions. From a digitization perspective, real-time data is captured to monitor machine downtimes and other key metrics. This enables traceability, allowing us to identify and address issues. Such systems are validated periodically, with tests conducted a couple of times a year to ensure their accuracy and reliability.

About AI, I would say Sri Lanka is not yet fully mature in adopting advanced AI technologies, partly due to the associated costs.

However, globally, process-based AI solutions are being implemented for areas like health and safety. These systems allow users to ask specific questions and receive precise information. In the future, I believe companies in Sri Lanka will adopt such AI solutions as global involvement and understanding of these technologies grow.

We are now advanced in digitization, ensuring real-time data capture and secure storage. Even document management is streamlined, and many documents are saved in shared folders for accessibility. However, since we are in food manufacturing, some critical documents are still kept in manual form. Regular assessments are conducted to determine which documents should remain manual and which can be digitized.



**Q As you have progressed in your career, how have you seen the manufacturing and logistics landscape in Sri Lanka change, and what future developments do you anticipate?**

When I started in logistics, many processes were manual. Initially, it began with basic systems. Now, we have advanced to monitoring transporters visually. Digitization in logistics has come a long way, especially over the past 7 to 8 years. Warehousing, for example, has also seen a massive transformation. Small warehouses now operate with warehouse management systems. In the past, bin cards were used to manually track inventory, and only the storekeeper knew where items were located. Now, everything is systematic, and the process is accessible and standardized for everyone.

I recall working on a stock-taking system with the internal IT team at a previous workplace. At the time, such systems had to be developed from scratch. Today, they are readily available, and processes like blind counts for stock taking are well standardized. Even in Sri Lanka, logistics has made considerable progress, similar to advancements in manufacturing.

Processes that were once manual are now digitized and continue to improve over time. For instance, earlier, transfers did not involve barcode scanning, but now, every material or pallet is scanned, simplifying the process, and improving accuracy. Digitization not only simplifies operations but also prepares businesses to tackle new challenges, such as reducing costs or supporting new product development. As the environment changes, continuous innovation and digitization will remain essential for adapting and staying competitive.



**Q** You are the Vice Chairperson-Membership Development pillar of WiLAT Sri Lanka. As a woman in a leadership position in manufacturing and logistics, what unique perspectives do you bring to the role, and what advice would you give to young women aspiring to similar careers?

I have been part of WILAT for about three years, and what I truly value about being part of this team is the professional environment we share. It is a network where we support each other and are given opportunities to give back in meaningful ways. I try to add value by fostering positive thinking among students, speaking at forums, and organizing projects. It is all about giving back to society and using our experiences to make a positive impact.

For women in logistics, I always encourage them to embrace the field. Not every female will fit every role, but it is important to build excitement and confidence in handling various positions, whether it is working with a driver or as a tool supervisor. Every role is important, and we must appreciate the value each person brings to the table. Without drivers, for example, products would not reach the market. Every job in the logistics chain is critical to ensuring the entire system functions smoothly.

As women, we need to understand how we can fit into different roles and contribute meaningfully. Ultimately, we're all working towards a larger purpose. It is not just about who we are, but why we come together. I encourage women to take on challenges, do what is right, and always ensure their contributions have a positive impact on society. This not only helps others but also brings personal fulfillment by doing things the right way.

**“MY BELIEF IS THAT IF YOU WOULD NOT GIVE A PRODUCT TO YOUR OWN FAMILY, YOU SHOULD NOT PRODUCE IT FOR CONSUMERS.”**

**Q** Finally, can you share your thoughts on our program? What do you think about our magazine, the theme we have selected? And any comments you would like to share ?

I am happy with the enthusiasm you all have been showing. At your age, it is impressive to see you taking value in what you are doing. Working on this project, handling this magazine, and collaborating as a team, is preparing you for the future. When you enter the corporate world, you will be able to manage on a larger scale, and that's where teamwork comes into play. The university experience should be about learning to work in teams and producing something meaningful. When this magazine is well-received, you will feel a sense of accomplishment because you have contributed to something purposeful.

The theme chosen for the magazine is highly relevant to today's context, and anyone in this field would benefit from this knowledge. The university is adding value to your education by giving you this opportunity, as it helps you learn practical skills that will shape you in the future. You may not realize it now, but the exposure and experience you gain will help you grow in ways that you can connect later in life.

I really appreciate the effort from both the university and all of you, as it reflects your passion and dedication. It is all great progress.

# UNLOCK SRI LANKA'S MARITIME POTENTIAL WITH GREEN ENERGY

**W.M.J.J  
Wickramasinghe**  
2020/21 Batch



## INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka's strategic maritime location at the crossroads of major shipping routes to South Asia, the Far East, Europe, and America, coupled with its proximity to the vast Indian subcontinent market, has solidified its position as a compelling hub for logistics and manufacturing.

Paralleled to the global energy transition, Sri Lanka is actively transitioning to a sustainable energy future. The country boasts abundant renewable resources like hydropower, solar, wind, and biomass, which align with its goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2050. To achieve this, Sri Lanka is promoting energy efficiency, expanding renewable energy innovation, and economic growth.



Image Source: Google

Sri Lanka can significantly advance its green maritime logistics agenda by benchmarking successful initiatives from global leaders.

- Implementing shore power facilities at major ports, similar to Singapore, to reduce vessel emissions.
- Exploring the production and bunkering of green hydrogen, following Norway's lead, to position Sri Lanka as a green fuel hub.
- Aligning with global efforts like the European Green Deal to establish Sri Lanka as a key node in sustainable shipping routes.
- Creating a supportive regulatory environment for green maritime investment is exemplified by global logistics giants.

## EXAMPLES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

### Port Sector

The Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) aims to transform the Port of Colombo into an ecofriendly port by 2030, with a focus on renewable energy sources, aligning with the principles of a blue ocean economy.

As a key player within the maritime landscape, South Asia Gateway Terminals (SAGT) is focused on reaching net zero ahead of the IMO target, which is achieving net zero emissions by 2050 in the international shipping industry. Over the past five years (2019/20 to 2023/24), SAGT achieved a 36% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions through substantial investment in capital and leading-edge technology.

### Manufacturing Sector

Unilever Sri Lanka has installed a 2.33 MW solar power plant at its Horana factory in partnership with Abans Electricals. This is a significant step towards achieving the company's sustainability goals and supporting Sri Lanka's renewable energy targets.

The project is expected to generate 30–35% of the factory's energy needs.

Taking a step towards more sustainable energy usage, Hayleys Solar commenced a rooftop solar panel installation for Advantis 3PL Plus Logistics City at Ekala.

Several wind farms are under construction or planned along the coastal areas, tapping into the country's wind potential.

And also, Sri Lanka possesses a significant potential for harnessing wave energy. Its strategic location in the Indian Ocean, exposed to consistent swell waves from the south, creates ideal conditions for wave power generation.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

The integration of renewable energy into Sri Lanka's maritime logistics sector offers substantial environmental and economic benefits.

Environmentally, the adoption of clean energy sources such as solar and wind power in port operations and vessel propulsion can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, and noise levels, contributing to improved air quality and marine ecosystem health.

Economically, the transition to renewable energy can lead to cost savings through reduced fuel consumption and increased energy independence.

Additionally, it can stimulate investment in renewable energy technologies, create new job opportunities, and enhance Sri Lanka's reputation as a sustainable and environmentally conscious maritime hub, attracting environmentally conscious businesses and customers.



Image Source: Google

## CHALLENGES

The integration of renewable energy into Sri Lanka's maritime logistics sector faces several challenges.

High initial investment costs for renewable energy technologies, coupled with limited financial resources, hinder widespread adoption. The intermittent nature of renewable energy sources like solar and wind poses challenges in ensuring a consistent power supply for port operations.

Additionally, the lack of a robust charging infrastructure for electric vessels and port equipment is a significant obstacle. Furthermore, the technical complexities associated with integrating renewable energy into existing maritime systems require specialized expertise, which is currently limited in the country.

Lastly, the regulatory framework for renewable energy in the maritime sector is still under development, creating uncertainties for potential investors and project developers.



Image Source: Google

## THE WAY FORWARD

Sri Lanka's maritime logistics sector presents a unique opportunity to transition towards a sustainable future by harnessing renewable energy resources. Overcoming the initial challenges requires a strategic approach.

To mitigate high investment costs, government incentives, such as tax breaks and subsidies, can stimulate private sector participation. Energy storage solutions like batteries and hydrogen can be integrated to address the intermittency of renewable energy sources. Developing a skilled workforce through training and capacity building is essential for the successful implementation of renewable energy technologies. Moreover, public-private partnerships can be fostered to share risks and expertise. By creating a conducive regulatory environment, streamlining permitting processes, and providing clear guidelines, the government can accelerate project development.

Additionally, exploring innovative financing models, such as green bonds and crowdfunding, can unlock additional capital for renewable energy initiatives.

## CONCLUSION

Sri Lanka stands at a pivotal juncture to transform its maritime sector into a global green logistics hub. By harnessing its abundant renewable energy resources and strategic geographic location, the country can significantly reduce its carbon footprint, enhance energy independence, and create new economic opportunities.

Leveraging successful models from global leaders, Sri Lanka can implement shore power facilities, produce green hydrogen, and align with international sustainability initiatives. The port sector, led by Sri Lanka Port's Authority and South Asia Gateway Terminals, is already making strides towards eco-friendly operations.

Additionally, the manufacturing sector's adoption of solar power demonstrates the potential for wider industry engagement. While challenges such as high investment costs and infrastructure development exist, strategic government policies, public-private partnerships, and technological advancements can overcome these hurdles.

By embracing a sustainable future, Sri Lanka can position itself as a leader in the global blue economy, attracting investments, creating jobs, and safeguarding its pristine environment for generations to come. Key to Sri Lanka's success will be a concerted effort to balance environmental stewardship with economic growth, ensuring a sustainable and prosperous future for the nation.



*Image Source: Google*



**“A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING RELATIONSHIP REQUIRES EFFORT AND DEDICATION FROM BOTH SIDES.”**

## **Ms. Amra Zareer**

**Vice Chairperson, External Relations and Publications - Global WiLAT**

**Founder/ Chief Heart Officer**

**The Corridors**

Interviewed by: Erashi Navaratne

Transcribed by: Tharushi Edirisinghe, Vidarshana Lekamge

Photographed by: Sudheera Marasinghe

Mrs. Amra Zareer stands out as a distinguished figure in the Transportation and Logistics sector in Sri Lanka. Beyond her extensive corporate experience, she has dedicated herself to imparting her industry knowledge to young undergraduates preparing to enter the workforce. With over 15 years of experience at notable organizations such as ETA Melco Engineering, Expolanka Group - Expo Rail, EFL, ITX360, she currently holds the position of Director and co-founder of CTX Logistics.

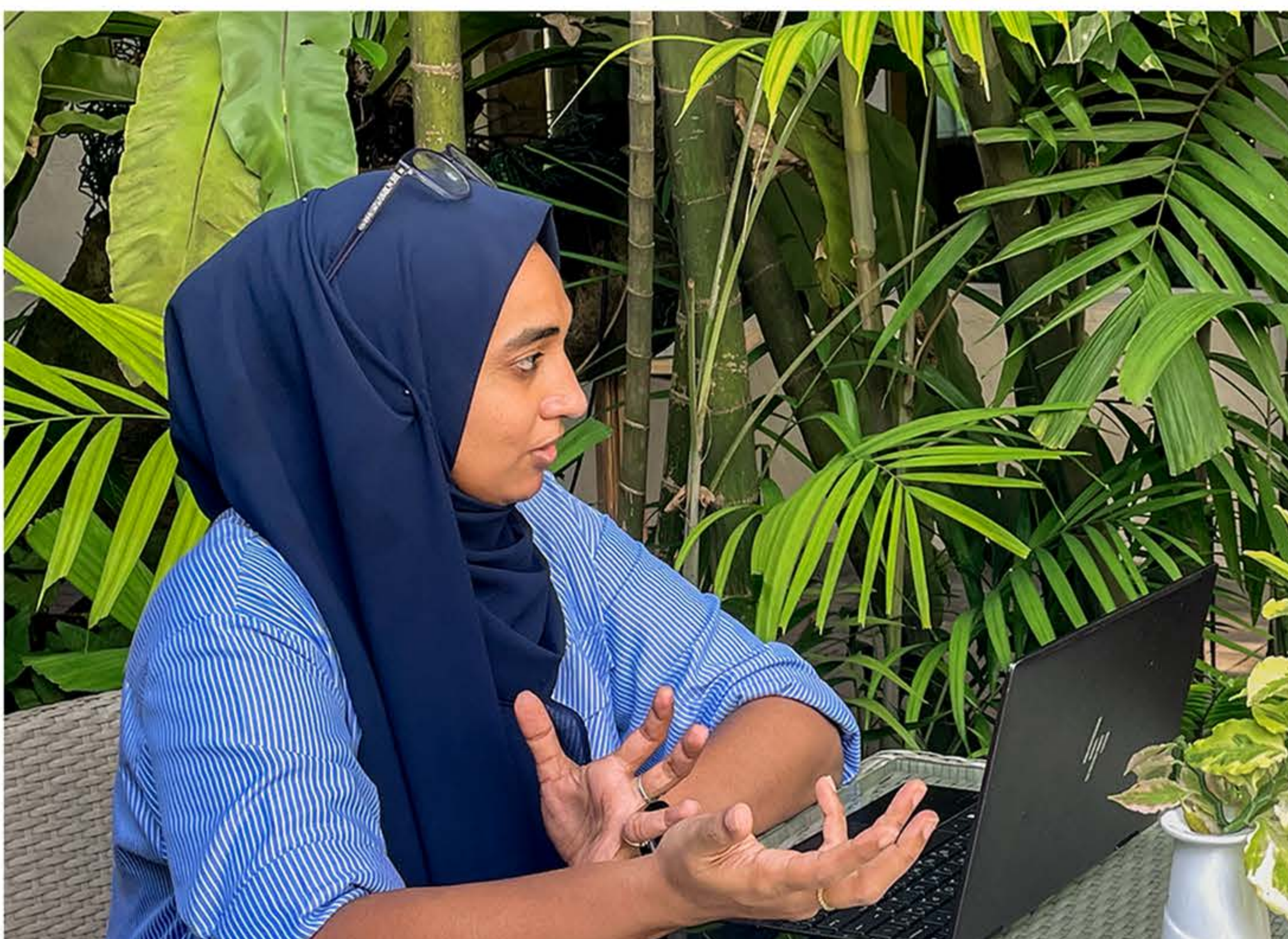
Her journey in educating future professionals began with her involvement with WiLAT Sri Lanka, where she served as the Vice Chairperson and her current role of Global Vice Chairperson of WiLAT Global. Recognizing the need to bridge the gap between academia and industry, she took the initiative to establish "The Corridors Academy," a voluntary program aimed at mentoring and supporting young undergraduates.

**Q What inspired you to establish an academy like the Corridors?**

That is quite an interesting question. What I felt was that the industry had a noticeable gap. We lacked skilled undergraduates entering the workplace. When I say ‘skills,’ I am not really talking about technical skills, because most graduates come in with solid academic achievements. That part is usually well-covered. However, what we observed was a lack of essential skills required in the workplace. Skills like communication, confidence, discipline, and other soft skills that we expect in any professional environment, regardless of the industry. I realized that it took considerable effort to teach these skills to graduates after they joined the workforce. Students usually come into the industry with an internship period, which typically lasts six months or a bit longer if an extension is required. But that time frame is not enough for us to give them the necessary grooming to learn these essential skills.

I believed that if we could invest in students earlier, they would be corporate-ready by the time they entered the workforce. What students learn in university is often very theoretical. Even though students might engage in case studies, presentations, and similar activities, it is nothing like getting the basics right from the beginning. So, I realized that if there was a place, an academy, where students could develop these skills, they would be much better prepared to face the corporate world. They could then use their time in the workplace more effectively, focusing on practical learning and adapting to professional environments and working with seniors.

That is how the entire concept of Corridors was born. I focus on three key verticals which are business development, young leaders in corporate environments, and students. This is purely voluntary, as I want to make sure everyone is corporate-ready, able to face challenges, and secure better opportunities.



**Q As a distinguished businesswoman, seasoned mentor, and trailblazing woman leader in logistics, could you share the key milestones that shaped your journey to success?**

I would say it is about having a shared purpose, perseverance, and the spirit of never giving up. Those are some of the key attributes that have guided me in working toward achieving my goals. These qualities really helped me reach the big milestones in my life, not just in terms of climbing the corporate ladder, which shaped me a lot, but also in many other aspects of my life.

I also had some amazing mentors who gave me the exposure I needed at a very early age. Back then, I was one of the youngest leaders in my organization. At that time, there were not any structured programs or initiatives for young leadership, but I was lucky to have a few individuals who genuinely supported me. There was one mentor who really stood out and empowered me to trust myself and do what I felt was right. That belief, along with the confidence and my ‘never give up’ attitude, really helped me move up the corporate ladder. This foundation also paved the way for me to establish my own venture, Corridors Academy.

**Q Why do you believe mentoring is crucial in the logistics and transport sector, especially for young professionals? And in your opinion, what are the most significant gaps or challenges young logisticians face today that mentoring can address?**

If you look at logistics, supply chain and transport industry, collaboration and adaptability are the keys. You cannot navigate this industry alone; we are all partners in progress. To keep everything running smoothly and the global economy moving, you need strong relationships, a solid network, and meaningful connections. These things take time to build, as relationships are mainly built on trust. In logistics, you are dealing with other people's cargo, moving tons of goods. Trust and resilience are crucial. No matter what happens, you must be able to face challenges head-on. We have seen various crises in the recent past, from the pandemic to other disasters, and the ability to adapt was the key.

What we realized was that we did not always have people who were ready to take on those challenges with confidence. There was often a lack of accountability and responsibility, which led to gaps in performance. That is why mentoring is so important in this industry. It is an evolving field, and with professional bodies like the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) and, WiLAT, which focuses on women in logistics, and the Next Generation, we have new opportunities to raise



awareness about this industry.

Mentoring is important to guide these young professionals, providing them with leadership opportunities and preparing them to accept challenges. By grooming them, we can help them become more agile, make better decisions, and develop essential skills that are needed to navigate this dynamic field. Mentoring builds a stronger foundation for young logisticians, ensuring they are better equipped to tackle the challenges of today's industry and lead it into the future.

**Q** Could you describe your approach to mentoring both through WiLAT and your platform Corridors? What qualities do you think make an effective mentor-mentee relationship?

If I start with WiLAT, it is an extension of the CILT professional body, and mentoring is one of its core strategic thrusts. WiLAT is built on four pillars: leadership, mentorship, empowerment, and entrepreneurship. These pillars guide our efforts to groom young women leaders and entrepreneurs. We felt that mentoring, however, did not get the limelight it deserved, so we started structured programs like IGNITE, which has now been rolled out globally. Today, WiLAT has 39 chapters, and we are expanding the mentoring program to create a global space for mentorship.

Having led mentoring programs for WiLAT Sri Lanka over the years, I noticed how transformative the journey can be. I noticed that when we assigned students to mentors, the relationship often blossomed into something truly impactful. When I had the opportunity to become a mentor, I took that role seriously. I decided not to take on too many mentees, and that gave me the chance to dedicate more time and attention to each one. I found that the more open I was with my communication and having clear expectations, such as assigning them tasks, the better they performed. When I went through mentoring as a mentee, there was not always consistent follow-up unless the mentee showed high commitment. I realized that with dedication and time, a mentor can genuinely make a difference in someone's life.

So, inspired by the success of these mentorship programs, I also wanted to start something of my own as well. That is how The Corridors came to life. Through Corridors, I created a platform and welcomed a wonderful first batch. While it began as a trial period for me, it evolved into a truly rewarding experience. My approach prioritizes being open and available, as mentors should never leave mentees waiting for days for a response. Mentoring requires presence and a commitment to walking alongside mentees on their journey.

It's a beautiful process to understand people and their perspectives on life. However, I have also seen mentoring relationships fail, often due to a lack of commitment from either the mentor or mentee. I have learned that I can only mentor effectively if I am ready to invest my time and energy fully. This understanding shaped The Corridors platform, which is designed to offer genuine support to those involved.



**Q** In your experience, what common misconceptions do young logisticians have about mentoring, and how can they overcome them?

One common misconception I often hear is that people worry about how to find the right mentor. Many undergraduates specializing in different areas of logistics often ask, "How do I find a mentor who is experienced in my specific area of interest?" But if you look at the logistics industry, career growth and progression are very dynamic and volatile. You might start in procurement, transition to operations, and eventually find yourself in a leadership role. So, the misconception is thinking that a mentor must align perfectly with your current skill set or area of specialization.

Then another one is regarding the availability of time and commitment. People often wonder, "Can mentors truly commit to helping me?" or "How do I choose the right people to support me?" What is often overlooked is the importance of self-discipline and commitment, not just from the mentor but also from the mentee. A successful mentoring relationship requires effort and dedication from both sides.

The logistics field is constantly evolving and as logisticians, we are learning every day. The challenges we face today are completely different from those we faced a few years ago. So, we need to stay aware of these changes so we can adapt. Being informed about what is happening around the industry will help you relate better to the mentors and avoid misconceptions

throughout the mentoring journey. This awareness will help you decide whether you are truly gaining value from the program and help you grow and adapt to the ever-changing nature of the industry.

**Q** What do you think about our magazine? Do you have any comments you would like to share?

About your magazine, I think it is a fantastic initiative. You are helping us amplify our voices by creating a platform for it. I really admire the consistency in your work. As you mentioned, this is your seventh interview. The effort you have put into reaching out, interviewing people, and gathering their perspectives is wonderful. What is even more interesting is that all of this is being done by you, it is your initiative. Through this process, you are not just creating a magazine, you are learning and growing. That is a beautiful thing. I wish your magazine every success in the future.

As you hand over this project to the next group in your university, share the lessons that shaped you. Emphasize the importance of consistency and growth, encouraging the new team to keep moving forward. Your work in branding and launching the magazine is invaluable, and a smooth transition is key to its success. So, continue this excellent work because your magazine has exciting potential. The initiative is inspiring and remember, all of you have amazing skills. Voice your opinions and make this magazine a go-to resource logistics, transport, and maritime insights. There are not many magazines focused on these fields, so aim to make this one a resource that people seek out for. information, insights, and fresh perspectives.



**“THE LOGISTICS  
FIELD IS  
CONSTANTLY  
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LOGISTICIANS, WE  
ARE LEARNING  
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COMPLETELY  
DIFFERENT FROM  
THOSE WE FACED A  
FEW YEARS AGO.  
WE MUST STAY  
AWARE OF THESE  
CHANGES TO ADAPT  
EFFECTIVELY.”**



“

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# HAMBANTOTA INTERNATIONAL PORT



## Port Services

- Ro-Ro
- LPG
- Bunkering
- Dry bulk/BB/Project cargo
- Cruise
- Marine Services
- Container

## Port Related Industry

- Supporting services
- Port-Park-City model
- Community development

## Integrated Logistics

- Bonded warehouse
- Value added services
- Duty free facility
- Logistics finance
- Wholesale centre
- Product exhibition

## Energy Hub

- IMO2020 compliant fuels
- Marine bunker
- LPG
- Petro chemicals



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**“BEHIND EVERY GREAT  
LEADER THERE WAS  
AN EVEN GREATER  
LOGISTICIAN”  
— JAMES M. COX —**

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