


VET COLLEGE NEWS



"Advancing Veterinary Knowledge, together"



 Tenth AGM and the Induction of the New President of the College

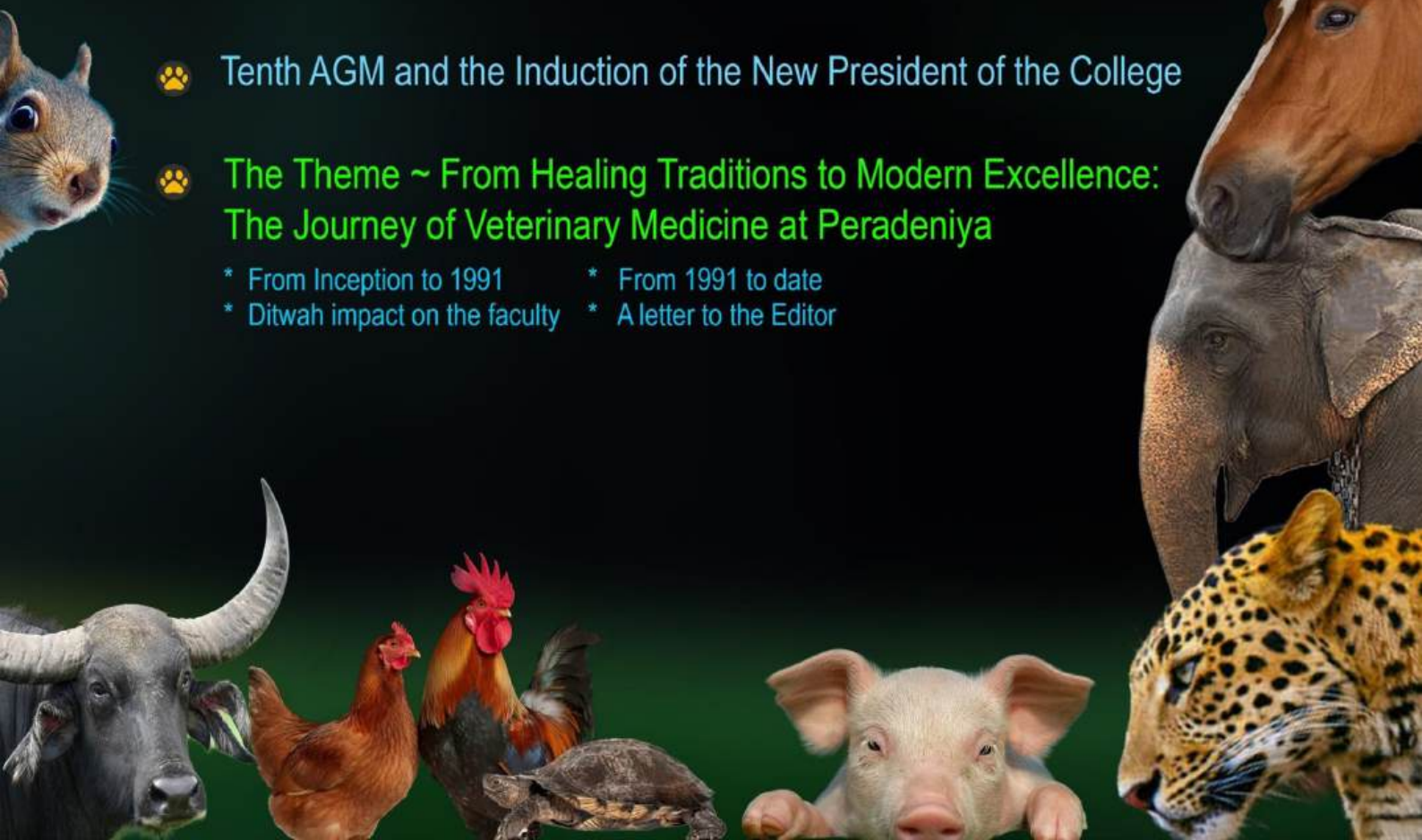
 The Theme ~ From Healing Traditions to Modern Excellence:
The Journey of Veterinary Medicine at Peradeniya

* From Inception to 1991

* From 1991 to date

* Ditwah impact on the faculty

* A letter to the Editor



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Sixth Executive Council of the College



Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons 6th Executive Council 2025-2027



Seated L to R: Prof. R.M.S.B.K. Ranasinghe (Treasurer), Prof. Erandi Pathirana (General Secretary), Prof. L.G.S. Lokugalappatti (President-Elect), Prof. P.G.A. Pushpakumara (Vice-President), Prof. N.P. Sunil-Chandra (President), Dr. D.M.S. Munasinghe (Vice-President), Prof. M. Gunatilake (Immediate Past President), Dr. Janith Gunasekera (Editor), Dr. K.K. Sarath (Ex-Officio: DG-DAPH).

Standing L to R: Dr. A.D.N. Chandrasiri, Dr. Erandika Gunawardena, Dr. Sugath Premachandra, Dr. K.G.J.S. Disnaka, Prof. Indunil Pathirana, Dr. Ganga Wijesinghe, Dr. Pavithra Eshwara, Dr. K.K.N. Laknath (Assistant Secretary), Prof. H.R.N. Jinadasa.

Absent: Dr. A.W. Kalupahana (Ex-Officio: Dean-FVMAS)

President:	Prof. N.P. Sunil - Chandra
President - Elect:	Prof. L.G.S. Lokugalappatti
Immediate Past President:	Vidya Nidhi Prof. Mangala Gunatilake
Vice Presidents:	Senior Prof. P.G. A. Pushpakumara Dr. D.M.S. Munasinghe
Treasurer:	Prof. R.M.S.B.K. Ranasinghe
General Secretary:	Prof. Erandi Pathirana
Assistant Secretary:	Dr. K.K.N. Laknath
Editor:	Dr. Janith Krishantha Gunasekera
Executive Committee:	Prof. Indunil Pathirana Prof. R. Jinadasa Dr. A.D.N. Chandrasiri Dr. Erandika Gunawardena Dr. Chandani Ganga Wijesinghe Dr. K.G.J.S. Disnaka Dr. Sugath Pemachandra Dr. Pavithra Eshwara
Ex-Officio:	Dr. A.W. Kalupahana (Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine & Animal Science) Dr. K.K. Sarath ((Director General, Department of Animal Production & Health) Prof. L.G.S. Lokugalappatti (President, Sri Lanka Veterinary Council) Dr. Sugath Pemachandra, (President, SLVA)

Tenth Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the Induction of the New President of the College –

The Tenth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons (SLCVS) was held on June 28, 2025, at Renuka City Hotel, Colombo. This event marked a decade of accomplishments of the college and progress thus showing the activities of the college from last AGM to this AGM



Ceremonial Procession



Welcome Speech by
Prof. Mangala Gunatilake

The AGM commenced with the welcome address by Prof. Mangala Gunatilake, the fifth president of the College, highlighting the past year's achievements and outlining the vision and strategic plans for the future.



Lighting of Traditional Oil Lamp



Dignitaries at the Head table

Words of Wisdom from the Chief Guest



Vidya Jyothi Prof. Vajira H W Dissanayake

Prof. Vajira Dissanayake begins by congratulating the incoming President, Prof. Sunil Chandra, and appreciating the strong leadership of the outgoing President, Prof. Mangala Gunatilake, noting that the College has grown significantly in reputation and maturity under her guidance. He highlights the SLCVS's development into a respected professional body recognized for its high standards in veterinary science, education, and practice.

A central theme of his message is the importance of the "One Health approach", emphasizing the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health. He stresses that veterinary professionals play a vital role not only in animal care but also in safeguarding public health and supporting national well-being.

Looking forward, Prof. Dissanayake expresses confidence that under the new presidency, the College will continue to advance clinical standards, strengthen veterinary specialization, promote research, and build meaningful collaborations locally and internationally. He also commends the College's ongoing commitment to professional development, innovation, and policy engagement, noting that these efforts are essential in addressing current and future challenges in veterinary and public health in Sri Lanka.



Associate Professor Dynatra Subasinghe

Guest of Honour Associate Professor Dynatra Subasinghe, BVSc, PG Dip, MSc, PhD, SFHEA - Associate Dean Education, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, Associate Prof. of Small Animal Clinical Practice, Department of Clinical Science, University of Surrey, United Kingdom

Summary of the Guest of Honour's Message -

The speaker expresses sincere gratitude for being invited as the guest of honour at the induction of the 6th President of the Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons (SLCVS), coinciding with the College's 10th anniversary. She

acknowledges the College's decade-long commitment to professional development, leadership, and advancing veterinary standards in Sri Lanka.

She extends warm congratulations to the incoming President, Prof. N.P. Sunil - Chandra, and conveys appreciation for the contributions of the outgoing leadership, noting how their efforts have shaped SLCVS into a vibrant body that promotes innovation, knowledge-sharing, and professional growth.

Looking to the future, she expresses confidence that the new leadership will further enhance the College's role in raising clinical standards, encouraging veterinary specialization, and strengthening collaborations nationally and internationally. She concludes by thanking the SLCVS for the honour and offering best wishes to all its members as they continue advancing the veterinary profession in Sri Lanka and beyond

A Report from the Founder President of the College -



Prof. Oswin Perera, BVSc, PhD

The Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons (SLCVS) was established to fill a long-standing gap in Sri Lanka's veterinary profession—the absence of a formal system to recognize and certify specialists beyond university postgraduate degrees. The initiative began in 2009 through collaborative discussions led by the Sri Lanka Veterinary Association, bringing together senior veterinarians from academia, government institutions, and private practice. After studying international models and refining a constitution and by-laws suited to the local context, the College was formally established in July 2014 and legally registered in October 2014.

The ceremonial inauguration of the SLCVS took place in October 2015 in Colombo, with the induction of the Founder President and the award of Founder Fellowships and Memberships to over 60 veterinarians. Since then, the College has focused on continuing professional development through training programmes, workshops, seminars, webinars, newsletters, and the launch of its official website. Regular Annual General Meetings have ensured continuity in leadership and governance.

Looking ahead, the SLCVS aims to formalize pathways for specialist recognition by establishing specialty chapters, conducting examinations, and awarding certified qualifications. Through these efforts, the College seeks to enhance the professional competence of veterinarians and strengthen their contribution across key sectors, including companion and farm animal practice, wildlife, aquaculture, food safety, pharmaceuticals, and related industries.

Felicitation of Past Presidents

Brief Summaries of Work Done by the Four Past Presidents



1. Dr. Oswin Perera – Founder President

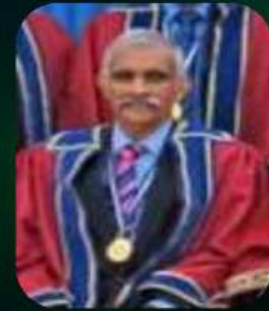
- Led the establishment of the SLCVS and guided its formative years.
- Strengthened CPD activities, governance structures, and early membership development.
- Brought extensive international experience in livestock production, reproduction, and zoonoses to uplift the College's academic and professional standards.

2. Emeritus Prof. H. Abeygunawardena – Second President



- Expanded academic and professional visibility of the College through strong leadership.
- Contributed significantly to veterinary education, university governance, and national policy development.
- Strengthened institutional credibility through his experience as Dean, Vice-Chancellor, and national education leader.

3. Dr. D.S. Kodikara – Third President



- Advanced the College's engagement with private veterinary practice and clinical excellence.
- Brought international credentials and practical expertise to enhance professional standards.
- Supported training, examinations, and professional recognition through his long-standing service to the veterinary community.

4. Dr. D.D.N. de Silva – Fourth President



- Strengthened CPD, membership growth, and digital learning platforms, including launching the SLCVS Moodle system.
- Expanded collaborations with universities, practitioners, and international partners.
- Championed communication, newsletters, and professional development during a period of significant growth.

Felicitation of Senior Fellows -

Senior Fellows of the College were formally felicitated in recognition of their distinguished service and contributions

❖ Dr S.B. Dhanapala

❖ Dr. H.P Premasiri



❖ Dr. R.M.P.H. Dassanayake



Citations were done by

❖ Prof. Anil Pushpakumara and

❖ Dr Janith Krishantha Gunasekera



Outgoing President's Message



Prof. Mangala Gunatilake, serving as the 5th President of the Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons (SLCVS), reflects with gratitude and pride on her tenure during the College's landmark 10th anniversary. She highlights the College's forward-looking focus on establishing veterinary specialties and chapters through education, noting the development of a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) manual led by Dr. Sampath Lokugalappatti. She acknowledges the honour of hosting distinguished academics — Prof. Vajira Dissanayake as Chief Guest and Prof. Dynatra Subasinghe as Guest of Honour—whose presence reinforces the College's commitment to advancing veterinary education.

She emphasizes the importance of continuous learning for veterinary professionals in a rapidly evolving landscape of clinical practice, research, public health, and animal welfare. Over the past two years, she notes significant progress through collaborative activities with academic institutions, associations, and practitioners, as well as the landmark publication of three e-newsletters that strengthened communication and engagement within the veterinary community.

Membership expansion under the leadership of Prof. Sunil - Chandra is highlighted as an important achievement for the College's future sustainability. Prof. Gunatilake expresses deep gratitude to the Council, members, fellows, sponsors, and especially the General Secretary and Treasurer for their dedicated support throughout her presidency.

She concludes by affirming that the true strength of the College lies in its people and calls for continued commitment to excellence, lifelong learning, ethical leadership, and collaboration. Finally, she offers warm congratulations and best wishes to the incoming President, Prof. Sunil Chandra.

- *Vidya Nidhi Professor Mangala Gunatilake, BVSc, PhD, MLAS, FSLCVS, FELASA, FIUPS President (2023-2025) Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons*

A Message from the New President



The Sri Lanka College of veterinary surgeons (SLCVS) founded in 2014, was established to advance veterinary professionalism in Sri Lanka. Guided by its articles and by-laws, the college is committed to: Promote veterinary excellence, empower veterinarians through lifelong learning, set standards for specialisation and certification, drive research and innovation, foster global collaboration and uphold ethics and the best practises.

Sri Lanka has a proud history of veterinary education, beginning with the undergraduate programme in 1947. This foundation strengthened by the School of Veterinary Science of the Faculty of Medical, Dental and Veterinary sciences since 1973 and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science at the University of Peradeniya since 1980. Veterinarians play a vital role in the society by contributing to animal health, animal welfare, public health, livestock production and overall community well-being. Postgraduate training, both locally and abroad, has produced generations of specialist veterinarians contributing to academia, state and private sector veterinary practice and research. Yet the need for a dedicated College remains vital to support professional development, establish specialist chapters, and recognised accredited CPD activities. Through these efforts SLCVS continues to honour excellence by conferring membership and fellowship to deserving veterinarians.

I extend my sincere gratitude to past Presidents executive committees, founder members and fellows for their dedication. It is a privilege to serve as the 6th President of SLCVS for the 2025 – 2527 term. Together with the executive committee I will prioritise the development of veterinary specialties, ensuring our profession grows stronger and gains greater recognition both nationally and globally.

Let us move forward together with pride, purpose, and a shared commitment to excellence!

- ***Emeritus Professor NP Sunil - Chandra BVS (SL), M.Phil (Peradeniya), PhD (Cambridge), FSLCM (Hons), FSLCVS, FNASSL***

Message from the New General Secretary



It is a pleasure to connect with the respective veterinary community of Sri Lanka through the latest edition of the newsletter of the Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons (SLCVS). Last year the College celebrated its 10th anniversary. Since its inception, the SLCVS has contributed to the continuous development and advancement of the veterinary profession in Sri Lanka in diverse and numerous ways. To date, the SLCVS has contributed to the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of the veterinarians in Sri Lanka, in diverse fields of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery which extends from Companion Animal Medicine, Farm Animal Medicine to Wildlife and Aquatic Animal Health Management, and beyond.

The 6th Executive Council of the College is currently working to implement an effective system that provides formal recognition to the professional development of veterinarians in Sri Lanka. The system will recognize and endorse the CPD qualifications earned by veterinarians, through careful assessment and endorsement of the CPD programmes aimed at veterinarians and the CPD providing institutions. To date, the College is working on this with discussions and professional support from overseas veterinary colleges and in identifying the ground-level professional development needs of veterinarians in Sri Lanka. At the local level, the College is working in collaboration with the Department of Animal Production and Health, Sri Lanka Veterinary Association and the Association of Companion Animal Practitioners Sri Lanka. The plan of the College is to establish the CPD recognition system this year.

Looking ahead, the SLCVS will continue its role in contributing to further uplift the veterinary profession in Sri Lanka and as an official body that recognizes the veterinary profession and professional developments of veterinarians in Sri Lanka.

Thank you.

- ***Prof. Erandi Pathirana BVSc (Peradeniya) MSc (Osaka) PhD (Sydney) FSLCVS***

Message From the Editor



It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I pen this message as the third editor of our newly established Veterinary College Newsletter. This publication marks a significant milestone in our institution's journey—an effort to foster communication, share knowledge, and celebrate the achievements of our college community.

Our primary objective is to publish this newsletter biannually, ensuring that it serves as a reliable platform for updates, reflections, and scholarly contributions. Alongside the newsletter, we aspire to launch a college journal, which will provide a dedicated space for scientific articles, case studies, and research findings. With sufficient resources and collective commitment, we aim to make both publications not only informative but also impactful within the veterinary profession.

Through these initiatives, we seek to encourage faculty, students, and alumni to contribute their insights and experiences, promote scientific writing and critical thinking within our community, highlight advancements in veterinary medicine and allied sciences, and strengthen the bond between academia and practice by sharing knowledge that benefits both.

This newsletter is more than just a publication- it is a reflection of our collective voice, our academic spirit, and our commitment to excellence in veterinary education and research. I invite each of you to participate actively, whether by submitting articles, sharing updates, or offering feedback. Together, we can build a vibrant platform that grows with our college and stands as a testament to our dedication to the veterinary profession.

On behalf of the editorial team, I extend my gratitude to all contributors and supporters who make this endeavour possible. Let us move forward with passion, purpose, and pride.

- **Dr Janith Krishantha Gunasekera**
BVSc (SL), MSc in Vet. Epidemiology and Public Health (RVC), MSLCVS, PG Dip. Psych (Colombo)



The Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons (SLCVS) was founded a decade ago, marking its Tenth Annual General Meeting in June 2025. Over these ten years, SLCVS has grown into a respected professional body recognized for its high standards in veterinary medicine, education, and practice.

From its inception, SLCVS focused on advancing veterinary standards, professional development, and leadership within Sri Lanka. The College has consistently promoted innovation, knowledge-sharing, and professional growth, shaping itself into a vibrant community for veterinary professionals.

The College has also expanded its membership, ensuring sustainability and a broader impact on the profession. The Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons, though recently established, has already grown to include more than 139 members, reflecting its rapid development and the strong interest it has generated within the veterinary community. This impressive membership base underscores the College's role as a dynamic and respected professional body in Sri Lanka.





Former Secretary addressing the Gathering



An Appreciation



Exchanging Cloaks and Garland



Exchanging Cloaks and garland



Welcome Speech by New President



Celebrating 10th Anniversary



Entertainment by Faculty Students



Entertainment by Faculty Students

Awarding Fellowships and memberships



Participants



- The Theme -

"From Healing Traditions to Modern Excellence: The Journey of Veterinary Medicine at Peradeniya"

How the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science Grew Up: From Inception to 1991



The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science is unique as it remains the only faculty of its kind among Sri Lankan universities. Despite its limited resources, the faculty has consistently produced nearly 40 fully qualified graduates annually who are competent to face challenges in their respective fields. The academic staff consists of nearly 50 professionals responsible for educating and training approximately 200 undergraduates across four academic years.

The faculty admits the smallest number of undergraduates among university faculties, yet it provides a wide range of services. These include advisory services to local and foreign institutions, consultancy to departments related to livestock and agriculture, and quality control services for food and pharmaceutical products. In addition, the faculty actively cooperates with national and international institutions in related fields. It plays a significant role in the prevention of animal and zoonotic diseases, wildlife conservation in collaboration with other organizations, and public education through seminars and conferences. The faculty also supervises postgraduate degrees in several fields of study. The University of Ceylon was formed in 1942 by combining the Ceylon Medical College, founded in 1870, and the Ceylon University College, established in 1920. Although Ceylon was internationally recognized as an agricultural country, the University initially offered no opportunities for studies in veterinary science. Consequently, students interested in veterinary education were compelled to pursue their studies mainly at Indian universities. In response to this need, a separate department to conduct veterinary science courses was established in 1948 under the Medical Faculty of the University of Ceylon, at the request of the late Prime Minister D. S. Senanayake. Professor C. A. McGuffey, then Acting Director of the Institute of Animal Pathology at the University of Cambridge, was appointed as Professor of Veterinary Science and Head of the Department.

Admission to the veterinary science course required a pass at the GCE Advanced Level examination with prescribed standards. Students were required to pass Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, and Botany with high grades. The top students were admitted directly to the Medical College in Colombo, while a selected group followed the veterinary science course, which was a five-year programme. Veterinary undergraduates were required to obtain a minimum of 50% marks at the First Examination, which was common to both medical and veterinary students. During the second and third years, students studied general physiology, veterinary physiology, histology, embryology, and anatomy. These subjects were taught at the Medical College in Colombo. They also attended lectures on animal science and participated in practical work. At the end of five terms, students sat for the Second Examination. Anatomy, histology, physiology, and biochemistry classes were conducted by the Departments of Anatomy, Physiology, Biochemistry, and Pharmacology of the Medical Faculty at Peradeniya. In the sixth term, students were required to study general pathology, pharmacology, and pharmacy. The fourth and fifth years were conducted at Peradeniya as a residential course. Students were required to pass the Third Examination before entering the fourth year.

During the third year, students studied pathology with microbiology, parasitology, entomology, toxicology, and public health, including veterinary hygiene, meat and milk inspection, and sanitary law. In the fourth year, students attended clinical lectures together with final year students. The final year curriculum included veterinary medicine (with pharmacology, materia medica, and therapeutics), veterinary surgery (including obstetrics and anaesthesia), and animal husbandry (including dietetics and genetics).



Each subject was assessed through two written papers, and answer scripts were sent to the United Kingdom for evaluation by external examiners. All subjects were tested through written, oral, and practical examinations. Graduates in veterinary science were afforded opportunities to pursue higher studies in the United Kingdom and the United States, enabling them to obtain postgraduate qualifications. Initially, pre - veterinary subjects were taught by senior lecturers and professors of the Faculty of Science. General physiology, histology, pharmacology, and general pathology were taught by professors and lecturers of the Medical Faculty at Peradeniya. Veterinary physiology and veterinary

Peradeniya: Progress and Transformation Since 1991

anatomy were taught by postgraduate qualified staff. Due to the inadequacy of existing laboratory and lecture facilities, the faculty was fortunate to receive a new building donated under the Colombo Plan in 1954. This building now houses the Department of Veterinary Paraclinical Studies. Equipment and instruments donated by the United States were also utilized.

In 1954, the Departments of Veterinary Science, Agriculture, and Animal Husbandry were combined to form the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Science. Professor C. A. McGuffey served as the first Dean of the Faculty. As a devoted professional and pioneer in veterinary education, he made a significant contribution to the rapid development of the faculty and to veterinary education in Sri Lanka.

In 1973, the University of Peradeniya had a single Faculty comprising Medicine, Dental Sciences, and Veterinary Sciences. In the same year, the School of Veterinary Science was inaugurated, incorporating pre-clinical, para clinical, and clinical studies. In 1980, the school became a fully-fledged Faculty and was named the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science, as it encompassed pre-clinical, para clinical, clinical, and animal science departments. The Department of Animal Science, which had previously been shared with the Faculty of Agriculture, became fully independent in 1991 when the faculty began conducting its own biochemistry lectures and practical work, which had earlier been conducted by the Faculty of Medicine.



While only 20 students were admitted to the faculty in 1948, student intake gradually increased to approximately 50 students per year. Although the eligible number of admissions reached 74 in later years, the actual intake remained around 50 students. Today, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science offers BSc, MSc, MPhil, and PhD degree programmes.

This account draws on classical references, including Veterinary Science as a Career in Ceylon, published by the Ceylon Veterinary Association. Grateful acknowledgment is made to Dr. Indira Silva for her valuable assistance in the preparation of this article.

- *Dr Janith Krishantha Gunasekera*

Since 1991, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science (FVMAS) has made a remarkable progress in its curricular and infrastructural development. This has enabled it to remain as the leading national institute for veterinary education, in addition to providing veterinary services to related sectors and the public at large in Sri Lanka.

Reforms between 1991 and 2000

One of the milestones achieved by the FVMAS during its progressive journey was the revision of the Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc) curriculum in 1991. Undertaken under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme in collaboration with the World Health Organisation, this initiative was led by Professor E. J. L. Soulsby at the invitation of Professor S. T. Fernando, the Dean at the time. It was recorded as the first systematic effort to modify veterinary education in Sri Lanka to meet national needs in animal production, animal health and public health, deviating from curricula initially designed following the colonial university system. Concurrently, certain infrastructure developments were also executed at FVMAS, funded by the Asian Development Bank. In addition, research collaborations and academic staff exchange programmes with overseas universities, namely University of Cambridge, UK and University of Ghent, Belgium, were established, which supported undergraduate and postgraduate training, collaborative research programmes and vehicle and laboratory equipment acquisition. While the FVMAS was progressing, mainly focusing on imparting theoretical knowledge and practical skills to undergraduates, research and infrastructure development, the demands of an evolving society and emerging needs in the country had to be taken into account. Thus, another curriculum revision was proposed in 1999 and implemented in 2000, aiming to prepare graduates for emerging professional needs, emphasising soft skills while retaining strong scientific foundations. Greater emphasis was given to integrating animal health and production sciences relevant to the local context. Meanwhile, the faculty administrative structure also underwent a major reorganisation, strengthening the techniques of disseminating knowledge and skills through emerging trends at the time, its capacity for research, clinical and field training, and outreach activities. The FVMAS was one of the faculties in Peradeniya University to secure funds from the World Bank funded IRQUE (Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education) project (2003-2010), which immensely helped with the reforms of FVMAS during that period.

Current Organisation Structure

Currently, FVMAS consists of five academic departments and five academic units. The departments are, namely, the Basic Veterinary Sciences; Veterinary Pathobiology; Veterinary Public Health and Pharmacology; Veterinary Clinical Sciences; and Farm Animal Production and Health. The five academic units are Veterinary Medical Education Unit, Veterinary Postgraduate Education Unit, English Language Teaching Unit, Computer Unit and Internal Quality

Assurance Cell, which operate as separate entities and support academic endeavours.

In addition, FVMAS provides services to the general public and allied industries in the country through its Companion Animal Veterinary Teaching Hospital, Farm Animal Veterinary Teaching Hospital, Veterinary Teaching Farm, Mobile Service Unit (Ambulatory Clinic), Centre for Aquatic Animal Disease Diagnosis and Research, Rabies Diagnosis Unit, Molecular and Nutritional Laboratory, Food Safety and Quality Assurance Laboratory, Microbiology Laboratory and Veterinary Business Centre. While providing service functions, these units contribute to undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and research programmes and enable them to experience the “world of work” across livestock, companion animals, aquatic species, zoo and wild animals, as well as veterinary public health. The faculty remains the only institution in Sri Lanka responsible for training veterinary surgeons to date, highlighting its national significance and responsibility.

Towards Global Alignment in Veterinary Education: Reform since

2020

The most significant change in the history of the BVSc programme was implemented in 2020 through an international twinning programme with Massey University, New Zealand, supported by the World Organisation for Animal Health. As part of this globally aligned reform, the BVSc degree programme was extended from four years to five years, as an attempt to match with some of the contemporary international veterinary education standards. An important feature of this revised curriculum is the lecture-free final year, which is devoted entirely to industry-based externships. This approach was expected to provide students with extensive hands-on clinical and professional exposure across diverse practice settings, significantly enhancing graduate readiness and employability.

Research and Postgraduate Education

Apart from its main focus on undergraduate education, FVMAS has established a strong, multidisciplinary research environment supported by national and international funding bodies. The faculty currently provides a postgraduate coursework programme in Animal Reproduction & Animal Science, along with research degrees leading to MPhil and PhD qualifications, enabling advanced research and human resource development in veterinary and related sectors.

Expected Outcomes and Future Directions

The BVSc degree awarded by FVMAS is recognised by the Veterinary Council of Sri Lanka, permitting graduates to register and practise as veterinary surgeons upon completing the mandatory Internship training programme. Graduate employability remains exceptionally high, with alumni serving in government services, private industry, academia, research institutions, and international organisations.

FVMAS is effortlessly working towards accreditation by the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council amidst numerous challenges. Planned developments include increasing the annual student intake from approximately 100 to 130 students and upgrading clinical training facilities and infrastructure to further align veterinary education in Sri Lanka with international standards.

From record-worthy curriculum revision of 1991 to the globally relevant reforms of the present and future, it is evident that the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science is striving to achieve excellence, relevance, and professional advancement. As it continues to evolve, FVMAS remains at the forefront of veterinary education, research, and service provision, positively impacting the future of animal health and public health, not only in Sri Lanka but beyond its boundaries.

- **Dr D. D. Niranjala de Silva BVSc (Sri Lanka) PhD (Cantab) FSLCVS**

A concise article on the Devastative Impact by Cyclone DITWAH 2025 on the Academic Program and National Services rendered by the FVMAS

In the “Royal” declaration that the University of Ceylon was to be “More Open than Usual”, what was envisaged was the perpetuation of the Oxbridge model. How could this ever have been a realistic aspiration? (eLanka Newsletter, January 5, 2022).

The Ceylon Daily News of 9 August 1949 published the address delivered by Sir Ivor Jennings, the first Vice-Chancellor of the University, to the inaugural group of freshmen:

“Peradeniya will be your home even if some of you never live there, for it is the University that is the alma mater, not its buildings. In 25 years’, time you will, I am sure, look upon it as a worthy home, a generous and comforting alma mater.”

Will we ever again witness the glory of the University of Peradeniya campus, once described as one of the most beautiful university sites in the world, set in the valley of the Mahaweli River, likened to “a necklace of pearls on the neck of a Queen of Ceylon”? This question arises in the aftermath of the devastation caused by Cyclone Ditwah on 28 November 2025 which swept across Sri Lanka, causing widespread and severe damage to the campus environment and several of its structures. The mighty Mahaweli River burst its banks, flooding the University with muddy and contaminated water following torrential rainfall that delivered nearly ten percent of the annual average precipitation within a single day.

This catastrophe resulted in an estimated loss of approximately Rs. 3 billion. Laboratories, central stores, animal houses, computer laboratories, server rooms, office complexes, document archives, vehicle parks, gymnasiums,

sports facilities, internal roads, transformer houses, and student hostels located in the floodplain were severely affected. Students lost books, electronic devices, and personal belongings, along with their accommodation. Critical infrastructure, including electricity distribution, sewage systems, and internal access roads, sustained extensive damage. In addition, new signs of potential landslides have appeared on slopes above major buildings, posing a long-term environmental and structural risk. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science (FVMAS), University of Peradeniya—the only higher education institution producing veterinary professionals in Sri Lanka—suffered catastrophic damage. This disruption has severely affected veterinary education, clinical training, diagnostic services, and research activities. Veterinary teaching in Sri Lanka commenced at the Colombo Medical Faculty on Kynsey Road in 1948 with two pioneering students, George E. Kodituwakku and P. L. G. (Lionel) de Silva. Teaching continued at Peradeniya from 1953 until the establishment of a single Faculty of Medical, Dental, and Veterinary Sciences, comprising independent Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, and Veterinary Science in 1972. Subsequently, the FVMAS was formally established on 18 March 1980.

Clinical training, which initially took place at the Government Veterinary Hospital in Getambe, was later relocated to the University premises. Beginning on the ground floor of the only three-storeyed building in the faculty, with a modest outpatient unit and a small laboratory, this facility gradually evolved into the first Veterinary Teaching Hospital in Sri Lanka for both companion and farm animals, under the leadership of Vijitha Y. Kuruwita. Exposure to this expanded clinical training encouraged many graduates to establish their own veterinary clinics and hospitals across the island. Those tireless efforts and achievements of more than five decades of veterinary education were profoundly compromised by a single environmental calamity.

Due to its proximity to the Mahaweli River, FVMAS experienced extensive and large-scale flooding during Cyclone Ditwah. Farm animal clinical training was severely compromised. The loss of teaching laboratories, teaching hospitals, and diagnostic and research facilities has disrupted hands-on training for five undergraduate batches, delayed academic progression, and significantly weakened the faculty's ability to provide essential clinical, advisory, and diagnostic services to livestock and poultry farmers, the wildlife sector, and the aquaculture industry. This disruption threatens the national supply of qualified veterinarians and undermines animal health, food security, and public health in Sri Lanka.

The destruction caused by Cyclone Ditwah represents one of the most significant challenges in the history of FVMAS. The broad extent of the disruption to the academic programme may be summarized as follows:





sector has been severely affected. This includes impacts on market access, fish disease treatment, training capacity, research, and the loss of fish stocks in holding units.

- Biochemistry and Animal Nutrition Laboratories: Loss of equipment and consumables, along with structural instability of the building, has rendered these facilities unusable for academic purposes.
- Department of Veterinary Pathobiology (DVPB): Destruction of student training facilities, national disease surveillance capacity, diagnostic services, and research infrastructure.
- Wild Animal Treatment, Management and Rehabilitation Unit: Loss of student training, diagnostic capacity, and research activities.
- Common examination hall and Faculty Sales Centre: Severe structural and functional disruption.
- Student facilities: Damage to the canteen and common room.
- Psychological distress among students and staff: The loss of essential teaching spaces, clinical training facilities, and academic resources has caused significant emotional and mental strain. Furthermore, many postgraduate students in the affected departments lost research materials, including equipment, consumables, and critical documentation. An allocation of approximately LKR 2,800 million was estimated for the reconstruction of facilities and the procurement of laboratory equipment and consumables. Cyclone Ditwah created a national crisis by exacerbating the existing shortage of State veterinarians, thereby threatening food security, public health, and exports related to livestock, poultry, and cultured aquatic species. Therefore, the immediate resumption of academic activities is a national priority. It is essential to prevent further disruption to the supply of veterinary professionals and to avoid additional delays in student admissions, which would further compound the academic backlogs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The aspiration of FVMAS is to emerge stronger, more resilient, and better equipped to serve the critical needs of Sri Lanka for decades to come. This will require coordinated national government support, assistance from international partners, and the collective commitment of alumni and the wider University community.

I believe it is appropriate to conclude this article for the Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons (SLCVS) with a poem by Professor Peter Seneviratne, The Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Science 1966 to 1972.

“Where the mighty Mahaweli meanders along,
Where the verdant canopied rain trees throng,
Where the road to Galaha winds through the valley,
There, my heart reposes, to leave a folly?
The Senate building stands on stilts concrete,
Like a gaunt reminder of past cities of the east,
Flanked by hills where fine teas grew,
Now replaced by Halls, great and new.
Marrs and Marcus, the hills dominate,
And Sanghamitta, a “Walled-off Astoria” made
To secure ‘gals’ in their pristine youth,
From nasty barbs, and males uncouth
A bridge too narrow, for traffic vehicular,



- Department of Farm Animal Production and Health, including the Veterinary Teaching Hospital – Farm Animal (VTH-FA): Complete loss of emergency, surgical, and core clinical teaching capacity, including the destruction of a large stock of consumables. The interruption of services to livestock and poultry farmers, as well as to industry and the wider community, is likely to have long-term consequences until the established teaching programmes and services are restored.
- Centre for Aquatic Animal Disease Diagnosis and Research (CAADDR): In addition to student teaching disruptions, diagnostic support for the nationally important aquaculture

Spans the river, now so popular
 An avenue for boys of Akbar-Nell Hall,
 To meet the girls under willows tall
 On the grounds where once golfers strode,
 Stands a faculty, today the abode
 Of lads and lasses, Lanka's pick
 Learning the art of healing the sick
 The scene has changed,
 The trees have grown,
 Oh how I love,
 To be there again"

- **Professor Indira D. Silva, Professor Emeritus,
 University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
 Fulbright Scholar (University of California, USA)
 PhD, FSLCVS, SLCH,**

In parallel, fund-raising initiatives continue locally and internationally to support restoration activities. It is encouraging to note that substantial donations have already been received and disbursed to the most affected units of FVMAS. These financial and in-kind contributions are making a meaningful difference in rebuilding infrastructure, replacing damaged equipment, and restoring essential services.

Through this letter, published in the newsletter of the Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons, we wish to convey our heartfelt gratitude to all individuals and organizations who supported us during this difficult period. Their timely and generous assistance will be remembered with deep appreciation.

Yours sincerely,

- **Dr Anil Kalupahana
 The Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and
 Animal Science, University of Peradeniya**

A Letter to the Editor



I wish to express my sincere appreciation, through the SLCVS Newsletter, for the extraordinary support extended to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science, University of Peradeniya, following the severe flooding caused by the recent Ditwah Cyclone. The scale of the damage posed a serious challenge to the continuation of academic and clinical activities, and the recovery would not have been possible without the timely assistance received from numerous professional bodies and well-wishers. In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, the rapid and well-coordinated response by the Veterinary Alumni Association of Peradeniya (VAAP), Sri Lanka Veterinary Association (SLVA), Association for Companion Animal Practitioners of Sri Lanka (ACAPSL), State Veterinary Surgeons' Association (SVSA), and several other voluntary groups was truly commendable. In addition, the dedicated support provided by the faculty staff, students, and the general administration of the University of Peradeniya played a vital role in the recovery process. Teams worked continuously under difficult conditions to clean, clear, and restore the affected premises and essential facilities. Their collective effort was instrumental in enabling the faculty to recommence academic programmes with minimal delay. This remarkable demonstration of unity, leadership, and professional responsibility clearly reflects the strength and solidarity of the veterinary and academic community.

Notable Accolades of College Members

Prof. Mangala Gunatilake



Prof. Mangala is a recipient of the Global Animal Welfare Award 2025 awarded by the World Veterinary Association and the ICLAS-AFLAS Outstanding Contribution Award 2025 conferred by the Asian Federation of Laboratory Animal Science Associations, with ICLAS referring to the International Council for Laboratory Animal Science and AFLAS to the Asian Federation of Laboratory Animal Science Associations. She also holds several international appointments, including serving as a member of the Ethics Committee of the International Union of Physiological Sciences (IUPS) for four years until 2029, acting as the international representative of the Teaching Physiology Section (TEPS) of the American Physiological Society (APS) for three years until 2028, and serving as a member of the Board of Directors of the Asian Federation of Societies for Alternatives to Animal Experiments (AFSAAE) until 2028. Awards Received

Prof. Erandi Pathirana



Dr. Erandi Pathirana was promoted to the post of Professor in Aquatic Bioresources. She was the first academic of the Faculty of Urban and Aquatic Bioresources, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, to be promoted to the post of Professor (on merit) basis.

NOTICE

Renewal of SLCVS Membership and Fellowship

The Sri Lanka College of Veterinary Surgeons (SLCVS) wishes to remind all Members and Fellows below 60 years of age that renewal of membership or fellowship every three years is a mandatory requirement under the College By-Laws.

The Executive Council, having resolved to implement this provision with effect from 2023, has further decided that the next cycle of renewals will commence in January 2027. Compliance with this requirement is essential to maintain active membership or fellowship status.

Eligible Members and Fellows are kindly requested to visit the official SLCVS website to access application forms and detailed instructions for the renewal process.

We strongly encourage all to complete the renewal promptly to ensure uninterrupted affiliation with the College and continued participation in its professional activities.

Prof. Sampath Lokugalappatti, BVSc, MSc, PhD, FSLCVS
Chair, Membership Committee

Publication Committee (PC)

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Dr Eranga De Seram

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