



SUTURE

NEWSLETTER OF THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF SRI LANKA

"Binding Surgeons Together"



Inside this issue

**Message of the President
The CSSL 50 years on**

page 4



Dr. Satish K Goonesinghe
President, The College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka

**50th National Trauma
Management Course
Felicitation Ceremony**

page 11



**Induction of
the President**

page 5



**NTMC Programme
passes fiftieth
milestone**

page 9



Dr Kamal Jayasuriya
Director, NTMC

**Life of a Surgeon
in the hills**

page 14



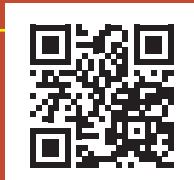
Dr. Sandani Wijeratne
*Consultant Onco-surgeon
PGH Badulla*

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From the Editors Desk

Welcome Dear Readers to the first issue of the Suture for the Year 2022.

At the outset, let us apologise for the delay in bringing out this issue. Following our successful Golden Jubilee celebrations of last year despite the unprecedented events of the last two years, the new committee headed by President Dr Satish Goonesinghe has taken office with renewed vigour. The College has already hosted a number of events this year which we report on in this issue.

Much of the last two years was spent under the cloud of the global coronavirus pandemic. Just as light appears at the end of this particular tunnel, our nation must now contend with a devastating economic and political crisis. It is easy as medical professionals to feel disheartened by these events, especially given the fact that many of were stretched to our limits in confronting the challenges of the Covid pandemic. Nevertheless, we can and must carry on. We must take comfort in the resilience of our people and continue to have faith in our nation's ability to now overcome this new challenge.

Dulantha de Silva & Gayan Ekanayake



The College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka is pleased to invite you to attend the 2022 Sri Lanka Surgical Congress (SSC) to be held from **23rd – 26th November 2022 at the Noel and Nora Bartholomeusz Foundation - College of Surgeons Premises, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.**

SSC brings together the best in contemporary scientific and medical education from around Sri Lanka and the Region. Participate in high quality presentations and networking events with colleagues, peers and opinion leaders.

We look forward to seeing you in Colombo.

The College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

The CSSL 50 years on



Dr. Satish K Goonesinghe

President

The College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka

We celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka last year. It was a time to celebrate, reflect back and ponder into the future. The College and its work are firmly founded on its 50-year history and with great attributes of development, flexibility, amenability together with excellent team play. The final beneficiaries of our activities are all surgical patients in the community-at-large.

Compassion is an attribute / quality that we all as surgeons need to possess at all times. The College and its activities focus on the expansion of the surgical knowledge base and development of technical prowess. I feel that we also need to focus on our leadership skills, good ethical practice and a compassionate approach. Compassion expected from a surgeon is an all-encompassing phenomenon – it needs to be directed towards his / her patients, patients' family and relatives, colleagues and subordinates etc. Surgical leadership that is compassionate

leads to excellent teamwork and enhances patient outcomes and satisfaction. This year our theme will be Compassionate Surgery. The Sri Lanka Surgical Congress 2022 (SLSC 22) is scheduled to be held from 23rd to 26th November 2022 in Colombo. We intend to see you at this key scientific congress which will be a joint meeting with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and the SAARC Surgical Care Society.

The College activities and programmes this year too will focus on the development of surgical trainees and academic and professional enhancement of our members and fellows. Starting from the Golden Jubilee year, we have expanded our academic role in holding of specialty exit examinations. I am very happy to

report the successful completion of the first Pilot Exit Examination in Urological Surgery in March 2022. It is planned to hold such examinations in general surgery and surgical specialties with the co-operation of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow.

This is your college and we welcome your inputs in the planning of its activities. We hold office in trust for the benefit of our members / fellows – ultimate beneficiaries being the surgical patients of our island nation. Please send in your queries, comments, contributions to Suture, the newsletter of your college. Suture is a platform for bidirectional communication between the College and its membership.

A Bibliography of Sri Lankan Surgical Research
Scientific publications and abstracted presentations by Sri Lankan Surgeons from 1850-2020

Compiled for the 50th Anniversary of The College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka

A Limited Edition Jubilee year Publication

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Presidential Induction Ceremony 2022

Presidential induction was held at college premises on a grand scale on 8th January 2022. This was the first such event held at the renovated college premises. The whole event was a moment to remember since the event was attended by generations of surgeons after a long pause. Dr Sathish Gunasinghe took the reins to steer the college for the year 2022. He becomes the 40th president of the college taking over from the jubilee year president Prof Srinath Chandrasekara. The gathering witnessed the impressive digital platform of the college and ability to compete with current conference location providers in Colombo. The Suture newsletter would like to wish our new president success in all his endeavours during the year.





Fellowship Award Ceremony

Life members who fulfilled the fellowship criteria and elected to Fellowship of the College of Surgeons in 2021 received their fellowship awards at the Fellowship ceremony held on March 25th, 2022. The Suture congratulates all the new Fellows of the College. We share the special moments of the event captured by our photographer.



Dr Saman Pushpakumara



Dr Asela Jayathilaka



Dr Sujeewa Thalaspitiya



Dr A.W.S. Sameem



Dr Joel Arudchelvam



Dr Amila Rathnayake



Dr Parthiepan Ariyathurai



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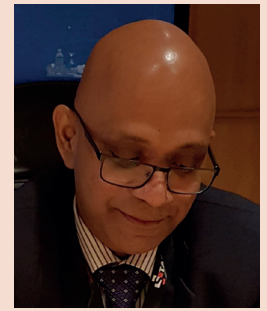


Dr Udaya Samarajeewa



Dr Jeyakumar Janarthanan

NTMC Programme passes fiftieth milestone



Dr Kamal Jayasuriya
Director, NTMC

Trauma care encompasses prevention, prehospital care, intra hospital care and rehabilitation. Trauma training is a mandatory component in trauma care and it a diverse subject. In Sri Lanka over the years most of the hospital admission is due to the trauma. Trauma care is being delivered by the primary care doctors, medical officers in specialty units such as anaesthesiology, orthopaedics, radiology, ENT and OMF.

There is a large group of post graduate trainees in surgical,

anaesthesia, critical care, Emergency medicine, Disaster management and Military medicine and consultants heading these units need to update in trauma care.

The first structured trauma course in Sri Lanka was Primary Trauma Care Course (PTC) introduced by the College of Anaesthesiologists in 2003. Advanced Trauma Resuscitation and Initial Management for Surgeons (ATRIMS) introduced in 2004.

The first National Trauma Management Course (NMC) was

held in 2009. We trained 2378 doctors over the last 12 years and 40 programs were held in Colombo and 10 outsides.

We developed a course for the nurses Initial Trauma Care for Nurses (ITCN). Following the 1st program in 2010, the course was revised three times. We have conducted 19 programs up to now and trained 867 nurses and 8 out of 19 were held in the peripheries.

The majority of our medical officers and nurses who are leading the emergency units have





appointment to such units in future.

Over the last 50 course we observed compulsory groups of trainees are the majority who obtained the NTMC certificate. There is an accepted general reluctance among the medical officers to obtain

not had any training in trauma care.

NTMC is compulsory for the trainees in six specialties as mentioned above and it is yet to recommend for other supportive units and administrators. NTMC completed its 50th recently and recognized the value of trauma training at national level.

This is the high time to identify the logistics to make compulsory the NTMC for each doctor who will get the primary care hold in future. In our university training up to the MBBS and internship doesn't cover an initial trauma care training since the internship mainly focus on medical,

paediatrics, gynaecological & obstetrics and surgical emergency in general. The NTMC faculty propose to complete

the trauma training. The ministry of health might discuss with the faculty and the college of



this course who are attached to primary care and make the course a prerequisite to get the

surgeons in future to overcome the this considering as a national health care requirement.





Arrival of Chief Guest Prof Mohan de Silva and Guest of Honour Dr Narendra Pinto

50th National Trauma Management Course Felicitations Ceremony



Lighting of the Oil Lamp by NTMC Global Chair Dr Ranjith Ellawala



Welcome address being delivered by Director NTMC Sri Lanka Dr Kamal Jayasuriya



Address by the College President Dr Satish Goonesinghe



Keynote address being delivered by Dr Ranjith Ellawala



Trainers of the NTMC Course Sri Lanka after the Felicitations Ceremony

A tribute to an outstanding surgical trainer

- Dr Daya Rodrigo FRCS



Prof KB Galketiya

*Department of Surgery
University of Peradeniya*



After obtaining the MS qualification in 1992, I faced the dilemma of selecting the stream in surgery and the trainer. After much thought, I chose general surgery with the opportunity to select any of the training units at National Hospital, Colombo. I decided on Dr Daya Rodrigo, who was newly appointed to General Hospital Colombo (NHSL) as my trainer. I was aware that he had not trained any surgical postgraduate earlier. However, the decision was made as I had heard of his good attitudes during the long

periods he had spent in many hospitals outside Colombo, I felt he could guide me as to how I should work in the periphery.

Very soon I found that he was a man of principles and self-discipline, polite and simple, qualities worthy of emulation.

He provided me with confidence, while guiding the team under his supervision. From the very first day he allowed me to operate, with him assisting. Later I operated by myself, and he sat in the operating room or was helping the registrar on the side room to operate.

After six months, to my surprise he asked me whether I prefer to be released to other units, except on casualty day, to learn a wider range of surgery. He said it will

help me to serve better in the periphery. He released me for two months for GU and another two months for paediatric surgery with Dr LS Attygala and Dr Gamini Karunatilake respectively. This followed another month at the ICU in the theatre suite, known as the recovery unit with Dr Deepthi Attygala and Dr Nalini Rodrigo. I had only one month left, and he proposed that I spend that month in the plastic surgery unit. I didn't agree, indicating that I would like to spend that time doing general surgery, a decision I still regret. He suggested that I observe laparoscopic cholecystectomy under Dr KL Fernando. I couldn't do so as I was posted as acting surgeon to Polonnaruwa as soon as I finished my senior registrar period. During my stay at Polonnaruwa as the only surgeon with just one medical officer in Anaesthesiology, I realized the value and the vision Dr Daya Rodrigo had for training, building on the foundation laid by many surgeons who trained me as a registrar.

I have been a trainer for over twenty years now, getting closer to retirement, yet finding it difficult to match Dr Daya Rodrigo as a trainer.



Events & Courses – 2022

January

- Presidential Induction – 8th January 2022
- National Trauma Management Course (NTMC) – 20th to 21st January 2022
- Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) – 28th to 30th January 2022

February

- National Trauma Management Course (NTMC) – 14th to 15th February 2022
- Online Teaching for Surgical Trainees - Surgical Diagnosis, Investigations and Treatment - Fundamentals & Hand Infections – 18th to 19th February 2022
- ESTC – 22nd February 2022

March

- Webinar on Practical aspects of energy devices in Laparoscopy – 6th March 2022
- Surg Ahead Vol 1 2022 - Management of thoracic trauma – 10th March 2022
- Online Teaching for Surgical Trainees - Primary care in Minor Injuries by Dr Imali Perera & Examination of a Lump by Dr Rukman Sanjeewa – 12th March 2022
- Urology Specialty Exam – Viva – 22nd March 2022
- ERPM Preparatory Course (Part B & C) – 24th March 2022
- Annual General Meeting (AGM) – 25th March 2022
- Fellowship Ceremony – 25th March 2022
- Online Teaching for Surgical Trainees - Examination of Injured hand by Dr Kolitha Karunadasa – 26th March 2022
- 50th National Trauma Management Course (NTMC) – 31st March to 1st April 2022

April

- Online Teaching for Surgical Trainees - Update on CBD Disease by Dr Rasika Hendahewa – 10th April 2022
- Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) – 22nd to 24th April 2022
- Online Teaching for Surgical Trainees – Management of Colorectal Cancer by Dr Neil Jayasuriya – 30th April 2022

Life of a Surgeon in the hills



Dr. Sandani Wijeratne

*Consultant Onco-surgeon
PGH Badulla*

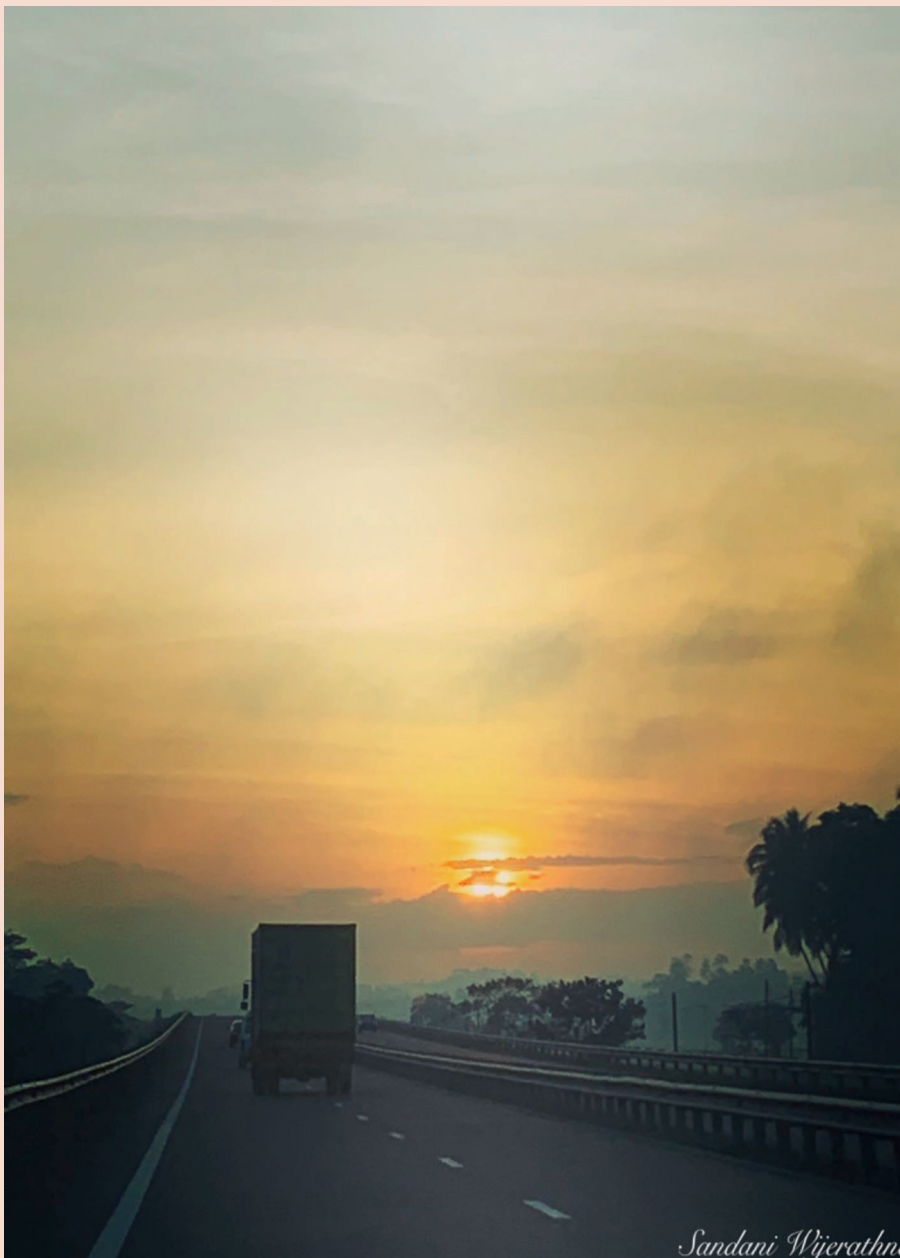
Leaving behind the beloved in the capital, I take the wheel, well before the dawn, for my solo drive of 317 km uphill. As the road leading to the beautiful hill capital

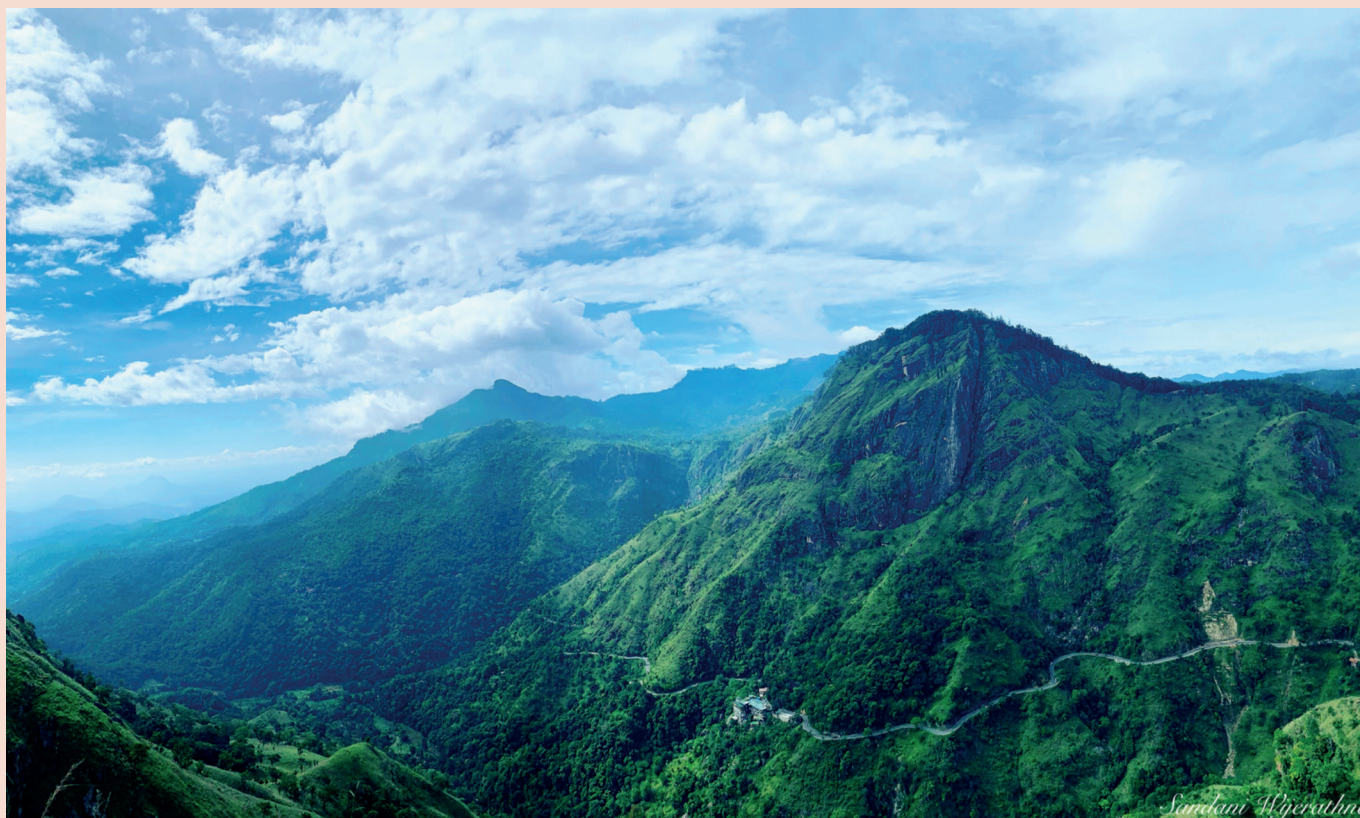
unfolds through green meadows and mist covered mountains, my mind goes into a peaceful serenity giving me space to enjoy the precious “me time”.

Local vendors, uninvited guests such as wild elephants, beautiful waterfalls and foggy roads, never forget to accompany me during the long drive, just like the golden rising sun.

I first came to this mesmerizing city, amidst the hills, to start my very first appointment as an Onco- surgeon, on a bright sunny day in June. My arrival as the second consultant of the department was, I must say, not as welcomed, as I expected it to be. “Do we really need another one?” “We do not have facilities to open new theater slots” “ We are too busy, we won’t be able to assist you in the theater “, these were the remarks I got. I was left just with a clinic and a ward. Of course, what’s the use of clinic to a surgeon who does not have operating time.

After a couple of frustrating weeks, came the miracle phone call which was the turning point of my career at Badulla. “Nangi, I’m Dr Upul, the general surgeon, I heard that you do not have MO s to assist you in the theater. I can send you one of my House officers if you want”. After that, I started operating with this enthusiastic little one, who later became my RHO.





Writing letters to DGHS downwards and going to the ministry asking for junior MOs and other facilities, were always part of the routine. I never refused any offer of a theater slot, be it a Saturday list or just a four-hour evening list. Finally, with few good-hearted fellow surgeons and anaesthetists, who I'm forever grateful to, I managed to have a permanent six hours slot per week to operate. "Just six hours per week to operate!" One would say, with an exclamation mark on their faces. Yes, that's the maximum I could get at the moment, with Badulla having all the surgical sub-specialities, yet non expanded theater facilities. So far, I have managed, without doing any injustice to my poor cancer patients. I firmly believe that a harmonious relationship with colleagues rather than harsh fights, would always help.

Next came the issue of not having a single MO allocated

to me. Doing major surgeries such as oesophagectomies and colorectal resections always left me worrying "would the other MOs look after my patients as of their own?". Nevertheless, the worries never stopped me doing the big ones. Even today I never leave Badulla until all my post op patients become stable. Performing a laparoscopic surgery was near impossible as I had to do camera handling and the surgery both by myself. Untrained assistance made the theater days exhausting. Finally, as a response to handful of letters, the administration agreed to give me a MO from the post intern list. There came a girl, yes, a girl who had never worked in a surgical ward, as my sole MO. Again I worried, "will she be able to properly look after my patients who undergo major oncological resections?" Yes, she was! This energetic girl was very capable, and I frequently found her running around the ward, even while she

was heavily pregnant. Later I got two more hard working and skillful boys to complete the second Onco-surgical unit at Badulla. Now I'm slowly coming back to my usual relaxed mode, doing all the surgeries I always loved doing. Slowly the patients started to come even from faraway Monaragala, Mahiyanganaya and Batticaloa. Refusal from old MOs to work with me initially, came as a blessing in disguise. Yes, some dark clouds do have silver lines on them. My patience made me the proud leader of the perfect trio in my unit.

Surgery is not my only passion. The unspoiled beauty of Badulla always have something to offer the nature lover in me. There are hundreds of virgin waterfalls and mountain tops with breathtaking views providing me with many opportunities to take beautiful photographs. Early morning hikes to see the sunrise over the hills and late afternoon hikes with

similar nature loving colleagues always give me a chance to be closer to the nature. These beautiful souls along with other colleagues in Badulla offered me the warmth of friendship while being away from my own family. Over the weekends I travel around with my husband, looking for the gems of Mother Nature, without sparing the adjacent Haputale, Mahiyanganaya, and Nuwara Eliya. Early morning gym sessions always give me enough serotonin to run a whole happy day. Dinner outs with my dear friends give a refreshing end to a tiring day.

Going home after an exhausting week is also fun as couple of people would always accompany me. Non-stop chats on millions of topics and shopping the local goods from street vendors, can make the long drive short.

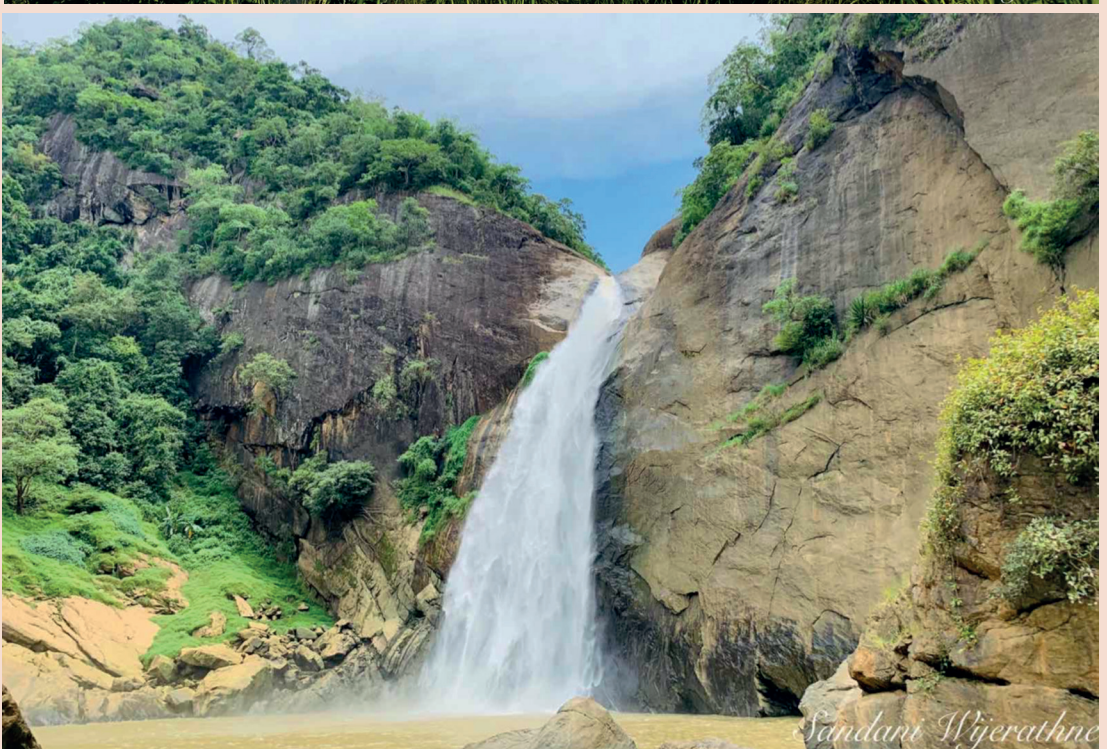
It's priceless to have a husband who is your strength not the weakness, who will always have your back especially if you are working many hundred kilometers away from home. He always had plenty of time to listen to me, come up with solutions and

even back up plans to almost all my problems, while fighting his own battles at the far north end of the island. Coming home to his charismatic smile magically wipes away all my sorrows.

Each moment I spend in Badulla is a challenge. Not just work, but also the work-life balance, attending academic and social events that happen in the capital, and even providing myself with

basic needs such as food is a challenge. But still, I enjoy each minute of it. Badulla taught me how to face and win a variety of challenges, and still teaching. In another two years, I'll be leaving Badulla as a sharper, more mature and more capable consultant and a surgeon.

"A ship is always safe at shore but that is not what it's built for"





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International Association for Trauma Surgery and Intensive Care



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Dr Ranjith Ellawala
Global Chair, NTMC

Dr Kamal Jayasuriya
Course Director, NTMC

Dr Kavinda Rajapakse
Honorary Secretary
The College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka

