Prathyavalōkana

A Four-Faceted History
of the Faculty of Humanities and
Social Sciences
1959–2022



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University of Sri Jayewardenepura
Gangodawila, Nugegoda
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Prathyavalōkana

A Four-Faceted History of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 1959–2022

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Dedication

Prathyavalōkana:

A Four-Faceted History of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 1959–2022

is dedicated to the memory and legacy of

Emeritus Professor Wimal G. Balagallē

and

to the academic staff, administrative officers, non-academic staff,

alumni and the student body.

Note on the English Translation

This book is an English translation of the original Sinhala edition titled ප්‍රත්‍යවලෝකන: මානවශාස්ත්‍ර හා සමාජීයවිද්‍යා පීඨයේ චතුර්මාන ඉතිහාස කතාව 1959–2022 published in 2025.

The contents reflect the history of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka, as it stood on 16 December 2022, which served as the cutoff date for the original publication. To preserve the historical and scholarly integrity of the work, the translation remains faithful to that period. Accordingly, any appointments, promotions, or institutional changes that occurred after December 2022 are not reflected in this edition.

Every effort has been made to maintain consistency in the spelling of institutional names and recurring technical terms throughout this volume. Variations in the spelling of personal names, however, reflect individual preference or established usage rather than editorial inconsistency; such differences also arise primarily from the challenges of transliteration. Owing to the marked differences between Sinhala and English phonological and orthographic systems, variation in Romanized representations is inevitable. Such spellings can convey only an approximate representation of the original Sinhala pronunciation rather than a precise phonetic equivalent. For instance, Sinhala dental and retroflex consonants (e.g. ද/ත/ඨ/ට/ඨ) may be represented in English as *d*, *t*, *th*, or *tt*, while geminated forms (e.g., ට්ට) may appear as *tt* or *tth*, depending on convention. The Sinhala semi-vowel /ව/ does not consistently differentiate between /*v*/ and /*w*/ in English. Similarly, nasal clusters (e.g. *ng*), aspirated consonants, and distinctions between long and short vowels may yield alternative spellings. The vowel /එ/ (*e*) may represent more than one English vowel sound and is therefore represented variably.

Moreover, the English edition generally follows the APA style for both in-text citations and the reference list to ensure clarity and consistency. However, certain Sinhala sources cited in this work consist of unpublished documents, and many Sinhala titles are considerably long in their original form. Due to these practical considerations, minor variations in formatting and presentation have been adopted where strict adherence to APA guidelines was not feasible. In addition, many newspapers are cited in the text with full publication details; to prevent the reference list from becoming unnecessarily extensive, not all dates are repeated therein. Also, Sinhala newspaper clippings remain untranslated in this edition.

Both the Sinhala and English editions of *Prathyavalōkana* were prepared under the guidance of the Dean of the Faculty. However, the Sinhala edition was produced through a collaborative editorial process involving both content and language editors, whereas the English edition, ***Prathyavalōkana: A Four-Faceted History of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 1959–2022***, is an independent effort carried out solely by the translator.

Acknowledgements

Documenting the history of a faculty of a university that has functioned for nearly sixty-four years, while tracing its origins to a *pirivena* established in 1873, has been a complex task. For the Editorial Board, this endeavour involved not only extensive research but also a deep sense of responsibility and accountability in recording the faculty's institutional journey. The chronological reconstruction of the history of a pioneering faculty within a university context posed significant challenges, arising from the limited availability of reliable records, questions of source credibility and validity, and the existence of conflicting and inconsistent historical data.

This underaking, however, extends beyond the task of historical reconstruction and constitutes a scholarly responsibility. Its significance lies in preserving the history of the faculty in its most authentic form and in transmitting this carefully documented record to future generations. Despite numerous obstacles and challenges, this book—written to systematically trace the historical trajectory of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura—represents the culmination of a research project spanning more than two years.

The primary guidance for this book was provided by the current Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Shirantha Heenkenda. It is with profound yet humble pride that I reflect on the confidence he placed in my leadership as Chief Editor, formally entrusting me—upon the approval of the Faculty Board—with this significant responsibility. Beyond the initial appointment, his continued trust was evident in the unwavering support he extended throughout the project, attending to its varied requirements while granting me the academic autonomy and creative freedom necessary to realize my vision. For these contributions, I offer him my deepest gratitude.

I must also extend my heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Himalika Ranaweera, Chairperson of the Faculty Cultural Committee. It was this committee that initially proposed the compilation of the faculty's history as a formal volume and recommended my appointment as Chief Editor, thereby laying the foundation for this scholarly project.

The culmination of this endeavour reflects a sincere and collaborative effort. Accordingly, Dr. Hansamala Ritigahapola served as the compiler of the first chapter, while Senior Lecturers Ms. Imanga Nadeeshani and Mr. Anura Jayasinghe were responsible for the compilation of the second. The third and final chapters were compiled and synthesized by Dr. Sujeeva Sebastian Pereira and myself, respectively. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Senior Lecturer Mr. Neranja Bandara, whose unwavering dedication was instrumental throughout the duration of this project. His meticulous oversight in content and manuscript editing provided the essential continuity and structural depth necessary for a work of this magnitude. I would also like to

acknowledge Senior Lecturer Mr. Anuruddha Pradeep Karnasuriya, whose critical insight and assistance in refining the manuscript contributed to its overall scholarly quality. Furthermore, the language editing of the original Sinhala book was expertly facilitated by Ms. Bhagya Dilhani Mabulage and Mr. Gayantha Dushan Karunathilaka, ensuring the clarity and sophisticated tone of the final text. Beyond these specific roles, every member of the team—including senior, junior, and temporary staff—contributed immensely within their respective scopes. Their dedication manifested in primary and secondary data collection, liaison with administrative bodies, conducting interviews, and transcribing the data collected.

The inspiration for this work was continually nurtured through informal conversations shared over tea at the university canteen, *Santhāgāra*; through collective debates and analytical reflections, often conducted amidst the tranquil surroundings of Beddagāna; and through an ongoing digital exchange of ideas and companionship on WhatsApp. In essence, this work stands as a testament to our collective effort, mutual empathy, and shared intellectual vision.

It is difficult to individually acknowledge every person and institution that contributed to the process of data collection; nevertheless, their contribution is immeasurable. We are deeply indebted to the National Archives, the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Limited (Lake House), and the National Library and Documentation Services Board for their invaluable assistance. Special recognition is due to the late Professor Wimal G. Balagallē and his family, University Librarian Dr. Nayana Wijayasundara, and Mr. Ranjith Iddamalgoda, President of the Alumni Association, for their generous support.

I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to the administrative staff members of the faculty, including the Registrar, Mr. Anuruddha Welivita; the Deputy Registrar, Ms. Samantha Geeganage; and the Deputy Bursar, Ms. Dhammika Galkaduwa. My gratitude extends to the staff of the Faculty Computer Centre and to the members of the Department of English and Linguistics for their steadfast assistance, particularly in the crucial task of gathering photographic records. I must also record my heartfelt thanks to the staff of the Krishnamurti Study Centre in Beddagāna, whose serene environment provided the contemplative space necessary to engage deeply with this complex historical narrative. Any recognition or honour this book may receive must be shared with the Dean and all members of the Editorial Board of the original version, whose concerted commitment made this work possible.

In conclusion, although this book documents events up to December 2022, certain limitations in the historical record remain, arising from the nature and availability of the sources consulted. Nevertheless, it is my opinion that this pioneering endeavour, undertaken through innovative methodological approaches, will serve as a vital cornerstone for future scholarly histories of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

Editor-in-Chief and Translator

Sri Sumangala Building



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Prathyavalōkana

A Four-Faceted History of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 1959–2022

Editor-in-Chief: **Chitra Jayathilake**

The concept of "history," derived from the Greek term *historia*, finds a parallel in the Sanskrit term *itihasa* (iti-ha-asa), which literally means "thus indeed it happened." While the *Oxford Dictionary* (n.d.) defines history as a continuous, chronological account of past events, British philosopher R. G. Collingwood (1946) emphasized that its true value lies in fostering human self-knowledge—helping us understand who we are by reflecting on what we have done. In this spirit, the present work aims to systematically preserve the record of past human endeavours for the benefit of both the present generation and those yet to come.

The Sinhala title ***Prathyavalōkana***, simply meaning "reflections," underscores the idea of looking back with insight, while ***Four-Faceted History*** conveys that this reflection unfolds across four chapters, and through four complementary facets—archival, departmental, pictorial, and oral—together offering a layered understanding of the faculty's past.

This book marks a significant milestone in the distinguished journey of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. On 16 December 2022, the faculty commemorated the ceremonial inauguration of *Sri Wimaladhamma Mandiraya*, a seven-storey complex and the first major building granted to the faculty in more than six decades. In recognition of this landmark achievement, this comprehensive history, commissioned by the Faculty Board, traces the faculty's growth and development from 1959 to 2022.

The University of Sri Jayewardenepura traces its roots back to Vidyodaya Pirivena, established in 1875. In 1959, the Pirivena was elevated to university status, initially known as Vidyodaya University,

with a mission to grant pride of place to the Sinhala language. With a historical legacy spanning sixty-four years, documenting the history of this University has become an important undertaking. Although contemporary information can be readily accessed through advanced technological tools, retrieving data from more than six decades ago remains a challenging task. While notable scholars such as Sunil Ariyaratne (2009), Wimal G. Balagalle (1984), and Alexander Ranasinghe (1970) have recorded aspects of the university's past, a comprehensive, four-faceted account of its founding faculty—the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences—has yet to be undertaken. This work seeks to fill that gap, providing a systematic and constructive documentation that extends beyond existing records.

By 2022, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences comprised sixteen academic departments, serving a total internal student population of 3,556. Its operations were supported by 147 permanent academic staff, 73 contract-based academic staff, and 53 non- academic staff, as reported in the Annual Report 2022 (University of Sri Jayewardenepura). In addition, the total number of registered external degree candidates reached 83,331, including 4,571 new registrations within the same year (University of Sri Jayewardenepura, *Annual Report 2022*). Given the Faculty's historical legacy spanning over six decades and the current scale of its student body, presenting a comprehensive chronological account in a single document is a formidable task. This challenge is largely due to the limited availability of consolidated primary sources capable of providing accurate information across such an extended period.

It should be noted that the data collection for this study employed a tri-modal approach, utilizing written, pictorial, and oral media within a specific methodological framework. Primary data were obtained through written sources, including newspapers and annual reports, while the National Archives of Sri Lanka provided invaluable support in accessing accurate information. Additional contributions came from personal and institutional collections, including the library of the late Emeritus Professor Wimal G. Balagalle, Emeritus Professor Sunil Ariyaratne's *Sri Jayewardenepura Vishvavidyalayiya Vruththanthaya* (2009), and Dr. Hansamala Ritigahapola's *Viyath Silumini Balagalle* (2017). The commemorative volume published for the University's Diamond Jubilee, together with the extensive holdings of the University Library, further enriched the study.

While written records often focus on specific events, they are occasionally shaped by the reporter's subjective experiences or mediated through editorial processes. In contrast, photography provides a means of capturing historical realities with minimal interpretation, preserving details that words may struggle to convey. Visual media, therefore, offers a unique lens for examining the nuanced aspects of particular incidents. The documentary use of photographs to reconstruct history is a widely recognized contemporary practice, enabling a focused exploration of narratives that might otherwise remain obscured in written or oral records. The primary photographic sources for this study include the National Archives of Sri Lanka, which maintains historical newspaper collections, and the University of Sri Jayewardenepura Main Library. Additional visual materials were obtained from various private collections, further enriching the historical record.

The methodology of oral history has evolved considerably over time, attaining significant international recognition and academic prestige in the 21st century (e.g., Abrams & Lyon, 2016; Leavy, 2011). Reconstructing history through oral sources—facilitated by modern technological advancements—is now a widely adopted practice. As a primary source, oral history offers high reliability and accessibility

for modern research, serving as a constructive methodology for historical reconstruction. It functions both as an extension of the written record and as a means of validating documented history through lived experience.

In this study, oral testimonies formed a specialized component of the research approach. Data were primarily collected through interviews, allowing contributors to provide information either guided by a structured questionnaire or through open-ended narratives. These sessions were recorded using audio devices to ensure accuracy. In compliance with ethical guidelines, oral narratives were collected to uncover a wealth of subjective, person-centred experiences absent from written records and photographs. Following systematic editing in accordance with established protocols, the collected material was synthesized for publication. Within this framework, and subject to the approval of the Editorial Board, only the most pertinent information was selected and included for critical reflection.

Hence, the historical journey of the faculty is presented across four thematic chapters:

Chapter I

***Lēkhanāvalōkana*: An Archival History** – A chronological analysis of the faculty's institutional development from 1959 to 2022, based on written records, official reports, and archival materials.

Chapter II

***Adhyayanāṅśāvalōkana*: A Departmental History** – A focused examination of the individual growth, achievements, and contributions of the faculty's sixteen academic departments.

Chapter III

***Rūpāvalōkana*: A Pictorial History** – A visual reconstruction of the faculty's journey, featuring rare archival photographs and newspaper cuttings spanning from the Pirivena era to the present-day infrastructure.

Chapter IV

***Ākhyānāvalōkana*: An Oral History** – A collection of personal narratives and oral histories that documents the triumphs, challenges, and lived experiences of administrators, lecturers, alumni, and non-academic members, capturing the "human element" that defines the faculty's culture.

Lēkhanāvalōkana chapter offers an exploration of the faculty's history, grounded in written scholarship. To ensure a comprehensive and accurate reconstruction, the study extends beyond conventional university records. Historical legislative acts related to the establishment and governance of the University were cross-referenced with archived documents from the National Archives, as well as contemporary newspaper reports. A unique feature of this study is its comparative methodology, where formal official records were validated against public media reports to provide a nuanced perspective on the institution's evolution. To reflect the faculty's chronological development and its restructuring through various legislative reforms, the first chapter is organized into four distinct phases.

Phase 1 (1959–1966) provides an extensive account of the faculty's inception. During this period, the university comprised four primary

faculties: Buddhist Studies, Philosophy, Languages, and Arts. This section unearths several lesser-known historical milestones, such as the fact that students were engaged in English Language and Literature as major subjects from the very beginning of the university's operations. Phase II (1966–1972) reports the implementation of the Higher Education Act No. 20 of 1966 on 1 October 1966 which marked a pivotal moment in the University's history. Vidyodaya University transitioned from its traditional *Pirivena* model to a conventional university structure. A landmark development during the 1966/1967 academic year was the admission of female students as internal undergraduates for the first time. This period of restructuring also involved the consolidation of departments; for example, departments previously under the Faculty of Philosophy were merged into the Faculty of Buddhist Studies, reducing the total number of faculties to three: Buddhist Studies, Languages, and Arts. Phase III (1973–2011) documents a transformative era characterized by significant socio-political changes within the country, which profoundly impacted the university's trajectory and the faculty's internal environment. The narrative illustrates how the institution responded to and negotiated the complexities of national politics over these decades. The final phase (2011–2022) tracks the faculty's progress leading up to the present day. Given that information from this period is more readily accessible through contemporary digital and print media, this section provides a concise yet comprehensive summary of the faculty's recent expansions, leading up to the historic milestones of 2022.

The second chapter titled ***Adhyayanāṅśāvalōkana*** documents the structural part of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, tracing the evolution of its individual departments from their inception up to December 22, 2022. To ensure the highest level of accuracy, the information was primarily gathered from official written records, supplemented by independent examination conducted by the departments themselves, and insights from individuals nominated by the departments as key historical witnesses. This data collection was carried out with the formal approval and cooperation of the respective Heads of Departments. The findings are presented both structurally and descriptively; while we used tables to organize data for clarity and easy reference, significant historical milestones are narrated in detail. It is also important to note that the Dean and the Editorial Committee made necessary revisions to remove redundancies, ensuring a concise and professional record.

The third chapter named ***Rūpāvalōkana*** is a visual journey. It reconstructs the story of the faculty through photographs, capturing its progress from the earliest days to the present. By utilizing images, we offer a different "reading" of history—one that complements and sometimes transcends the written word. Beyond documenting physical infrastructure and academic activities, these photographs offer a rare glimpse into student life and culture. For instance, while written or oral histories might struggle to describe the specific fashion and lifestyle of the student community in the 1960s, a single photograph provides immediate clarity.

The visual archives included here consist of:

- Archival Newspaper Records: Photographs and news clippings from 1959 onwards.
- National Archives: Images curated by the Department of National Archives.
- Private Collections: Personal photographs shared by individuals under the coordination of the Dean.

- Social Media Outreach: Rare images sourced from the public following a call for voluntary contributions.

While the editorial board selected only the most relevant images, it is worth noting that some older photographs may lack modern clarity due to natural aging. However, their historical value in documenting the faculty's legacy is immeasurable.

In a bold departure from traditional academic recording, the fourth chapter – ***Ākhyānāvalōkana*** –adopts an oral history approach. By using the language of lived experience, this section makes the history of the university more accessible, engaging, and "human." Under the direction of the Faculty Board, we conducted twenty-six in-depth interviews to capture the voices of those who shaped this institution. This includes:

- Former Deans of the Faculty
- Retired academic and non-academic staff
- Alumni recommended by their respective departments. This includes prominent figures such as journalists, lyricists, university administrators, the current Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and so on.

Every effort was made to include all former Deans who were living and contactable at the time of the study. While these interviews were recorded in full, the Editorial Committee selected key excerpts to be featured as direct quotes, ensuring the most vital information was preserved. The full recordings remain the property of the History Book Committee for future verification, as consented to by the contributors.

A retrospective view of the faculty's history highlights 1972 and 1979 as the two defining pillars of its modern identity. While both legislative reforms were significant, the 1979 restructuring was especially transformative. Many of the academic pillars we recognize today were forged during this period through a process of steady evolution. For instance, the current Departments of Economics, Statistics, and Political Science; these three standalone entities began their journey as integrated subject streams within a singular Department of Economics. Furthermore, the post-1979 era acted as a period of restoration and expansion. It allowed the faculty to revive vital programmes—such as the Sinhala Honours degree—which had been dismantled during the Vidyodaya Campus transition. By reclaiming its heritage and embracing new academic frontiers, the faculty navigated various socio-political pressures to arrive at its current form.

Viewed as a whole, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences has clearly undergone a rapid quantitative expansion. This growth is evidenced by the surging student population, the distinguished academic staff, the increasing number of departments and degree programmes, and the physical expansion of its infrastructure and creative works. Furthermore, modern milestones such as digitalization, the acquisition of foreign aid, and the hosting of international research symposiums have become defining characteristics of its recent progress. To draw from a participant's narrative in the fourth chapter of this very book: [the faculty] "has evolved from a strong Banyan tree—one with a humble row of tender leaves, a cluster of flowers, and a sturdy core—into a vast, sprawling *Bo* tree [Bhodi / *Ficus religiosa*]" (pp. 216). However, it is equally important to mention the more nuanced challenges that emerged throughout this journey. These include the setbacks in disciplinary curricula caused by the University of Ceylon Act No. 1 of 1972, the shift toward job-oriented developmental studies at the expense of traditional

subject-based courses, and the ongoing necessity of maintaining academic depth while functioning as a modern seat of higher learning.

It is our sincere hope that this effort to document the history of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences will serve as a catalyst for future scholars and researchers exploring university history. This chronicle, which honours the 64-year legacy of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, is presented to you through the dedicated efforts of the Editorial Board and the invaluable support of the Vice-Chancellor, the Dean, and other esteemed contributors. By unifying fragmented data into a single cohesive path, we hope this endeavour fulfils the aspirations of our readers and provides a profound light for students and researchers alike.

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Vidyodaya Maha Pirivena

Chapter I

Lēkhanāvalōkana

An Archival History: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 1959–2022

Compilation: **Hansamala Ritigahapola**
Translation: **Chitra Jayathilake**

Overview

Vidyodaya University—currently known as the University of Sri Jayewardenepura—was formally inaugurated on 18 February 1959 at the auspicious hour of 6:05 a.m. The historical roots of the institution, however, extend much further back, to the year 1873, with the establishment of the *Vidyadhara Sabha* at Maligakanda, Maradana. This seminal initiative was founded by a group of thirteen individuals under the principal patronage and leadership of Don Philip de Silva Epa Appuhamy. Over time, the institution evolved and assumed the identity of the *Vidyodaya Pirivena*, gaining widespread recognition and laying the foundation for its later development as a national university.

At its inception, the University was comprised of five distinct faculties:

1. Faculty of Buddhist Studies
2. Faculty of Philosophy (*Samaya*)
3. Faculty of Languages
4. Faculty of Arts
5. Faculty of Ayurveda and Science

Under the Faculty of Ayurveda and Science, departments included Ayurveda, Mathematics, Astrology, and Science. Aside from this faculty, the other four—Buddhist Studies, Philosophy, Languages, and Arts—were primarily dedicated to the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences (Balagalle, 1984, p.195).

The first chapter of this history book examines the structural and administrative evolution of the faculty from its inception up to the year 2022. For analytical clarity, this historical route is divided into four key phases of development.

1.1 The First Phase: 1959–1966
Faculties of Buddhist Studies, Philosophy, Languages, and Arts

1.2 The Second Phase: 1966–1972
Faculties of Buddhist Studies, Languages, and Arts

1.3 The Third Phase: 1973–2011
Faculty of Arts

Faculty of Arts I: 1973–1999
Faculty of Arts of Vidyodaya Campus
Faculty of Arts of University of Sri Jayewardenepura
Faculty of Arts II: 2000–2011

1.4 The Fourth Phase: 2011–2022
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

1.1 The First Phase: 1959–1966 Faculties of Buddhist Studies, Philosophy, Languages, and Arts

1.1.1 Introduction

As noted, Vidyodaya University was formally established as a modern institution of higher education on February 18, 1959. The principal impetus behind the elevation of the Vidyodaya Pirivena to university status came from the Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Thero who served as the Deputy Principal. This transformative initiative was undertaken at the request of W. Dahanayake, who held the portfolio of Minister of Education in the government of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike (1956–1959).

As part of this initiative, a fifty-six-page draft bill titled *An Ordinance for the Establishment of the Vidyodaya University* was prepared and submitted to the Minister of Education on 2 October 1956. The document was printed at the Samayawardhana Press in Maligakanda. Its preparation marked a significant collaborative scholarly effort, bringing together members of Buddhist monks and lay intellectuals. Among the contributors from the Pirivena teaching staff were Venerable Palannoruwe Wimaladhamma Thero and Venerable Balagalle Wimalabuddhi Thero, together with the lay scholars Dr. Senarath Paranavithana and D. P. Jayasekera (Balagalle, 1984, p. 195).

The draft comprised sixty-seven clauses addressing university governance and other essential regulatory matters. It was presented to Parliament on 16 September 1958, approved by two Boards, and received the assent of the Governor-General on 19 December 1958. The legislation was enacted as the *Vidyodaya University and Vidyalankara University Act No. 45 of 1958*. With the Act coming into force on 1 January 1959, the “Pirivena University Era” formally began (Balagalle, 1984, p. 194).

At the time of its establishment, the position presently designated as Vice-Chancellor was titled President of the University (*Vishvavidyālayādhipathi*). With the enactment of the Act, the Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Thero was appointed as the institution’s inaugural President. Owing to the fact that the Vice-Chancellor was a Buddhist monk, the original provisions of the Act restricted both student enrolment and staff appointments exclusively to males (Balagalle, 1984, p. 198).

The university’s governance followed a structured hierarchy established by the regulations from 1959 to 1963. At the top of this structure was the President (Vice-Chancellor), who served as the chief executive and administrative officer. General academic organization fell under the purview of the Court (*Vidyagoshtti*), while the Council was tasked with managing general administration and executive decisions. For daily academic operations, the Senate (*Sanathana Sabha*) held responsibility for matters such as conducting examinations, releasing results, and overseeing student welfare. Finally, the faculties (*Adhyayanendriya*) functioned as specialized

academic bodies dedicated to specific disciplines. (Vidyodaya University, *Regulations and Syllabuses 1959-63, 1953, p.3)*

Terminology for the "Sinhala University"

Since the institution was established as a "Sinhala University," there was a concerted effort to introduce new terminology to the academic field. Instead of adopting existing English terms, many new technical words were derived from Sanskrit equivalents to fit the linguistic identity of the university (Ariyaratne, 2009, p. 45).

English Term	Original Vidyodaya Terminology
Academic Dress	*Vidvath Nepathya* විද්වත් නේපථ්‍ය
Board of Selection	*Uddharaka Mandalaya* උද්ධාරක මණ්ඩලය
Bursaries	*Chathropakruthi* ඡාත්‍රෝපකෘති
Chancellor	*Viyath Gananayaka* වියත් ගණනායක
Convocation	*Upadhi Pradana Parshadha* උපාධි ප්‍රදාන පර්ෂද
Court	*Vidyagoshttiya* විද්‍යාගෝෂ්ඨීය
Dean	*Vinethru* විනේතෘ
Examiners	*Adhitha Pareekshakayo* අධිත පරීක්ෂකයෝ
Faculty	*Adhyayanendriya* අධ්‍යයනේන්ද්‍රිය
Hostel	*Chathravasa* ඡාත්‍රාවාස
Professor	*Pramukhacharya* ප්‍රමුඛාචාර්ය
Scholarship	*Chathra Dakshika* ඡාත්‍ර දක්ෂිකා

1.1.2 The Founding Academic Staff

The following scholars were the initial members responsible for the academic and administrative leadership of Vidyodaya University.

- Ven. Welivitiye Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero*

  Position: President (Vice-Chancellor)

  Qualifications: Winner of the *Prachina Swarna Mudrika* (Gold Medal for Oriental Studies); ranked First in the Language Arts honours; Pandit Degree with First Class Honours.

  Experience: Renowned teacher at Vidyodaya Pirivena and acclaimed author.

  Appointment: His appointment as the first President was officially announced via Government Gazette on January 09, 1959.

- Ven. Palannoruwe Wimaladhamma Nayaka Thero*

  Position: Professor of Buddhism

  Qualifications: Winner of the *Syamaraja Prize* (awarded to the top student of the Vidyodaya Pirivena final exams); Pandit Degree with First Class Honours; Final Vidyodaya Examination with First Class Honours.

  Experience: Teacher at Vidyodaya Pirivena; holder of the title *Tripitaka Vagishvara*; prolific author

- Ven. Parawahera Vajiragñana Nayaka Thero*

  Position: Professor of Philosophy

  Qualifications: First Class Honours in the Vidyodaya Pirivena Final Examination; University Doctorate (PhD).

  Experience: Holder of the title *Tripitaka Vagishvara*; acclaimed author

- Ven. Dehigaspe Paññasara Nayaka Thero*

  Position: Professor of Pali

  Qualifications: Recipient of the *Syamaraja Prize*; Pandit Degree with First Class Honours; Vidyodaya Final Examination with First Class Honours; University First Degree and University Doctorate (PhD).

Experience: Teacher at Vidyodaya Pirivena; holder of the title *Tripitaka Vagishvara*

- Ven. Kalukondayave Paññasekera Nayaka Thero*

  Position: Dean of the Faculty of Languages; Professor of Sinhala and Pali

  Qualifications: Recipient of the *Syamaraja Prize*; First Class Honours in the Vidyodaya Final Examination.

  Experience: Teacher at Vidyodaya Pirivena; acclaimed author

- G. P. Wickramarachchi

  Position: Part-time/Honorary Lecturer

  Qualifications: Pandit Degree with First Class Honours; Vidyodaya Final Examination with First Class Honours

- S. F. de Silva*

  Position: Professor of History (Part-time)

  Qualifications: University First Degree with Second Class Honours; renowned author

- Ananda Guruge

  Position: Administrative Assistant to the President (Vice-Chancellor)

  Qualifications: University First Degree with First Class Honours; University Doctorate (PhD); professional administrative qualifications and acclaimed author

- Ven. Weragoda Amaramoli Nayaka Thero

  Position: Librarian

  Qualifications: Pandit Degree with First Class Honours; Vidyodaya Pirivena Final Examination with Distinction

  Experience: Teacher at Vidyodaya Pirivena and acclaimed author

- D. J. Kumarage

  Position: Registrar

  Qualifications: University First Degree with Second Class Honours.

  Experience: Teacher at Vidyodaya Pirivena; possessed extensive administrative qualifications

- Wimal G. Balagalle*

  Position: Head of Department - Sinhala; Professor - Sinhala; Assistant Registrar - Examinations

  Qualifications: Winner of the *Prachina Swarna Mudrika* (Gold Medal for Oriental Studies); Recipient of the *Syamaraja Prize*; Pandit Degree with Distinction; Vidyodaya Pirivena Final Examination with Distinction; University First Degree with Second Class Honours.

  Experience: Teacher at Vidyodaya Pirivena and acclaimed author

- A. W. Kaluarachchi

  Position: Assistant Registrar - Administration

  Experience: Teacher at Vidyodaya Pirivena; administrative expert and author

In addition, the following eight scholars were recruited to strengthen the university's academic core:

- Ven. Balangoda Ananda Maitreya Nayaka Thero*: Professor of Mahayana Buddhism
- Ven. Handupelpola Puññaratana Nayaka Thero*: Archaeology
- Ven. Mirisse Gunasiri Thero*: Buddhism
- L. L. K. Gunatunga*: Professor of English

- Hema Ellawala*: History
- Linus Silva*: Professor of Economics and Business Administration
- K. P. G. Wijayasurendra*: Sanskrit
- K. P. Mukherji*: Professor of Political Science

To provide diverse expertise, the following part-time lecturers were also recruited:

- T. H. D. Abeyagunawardena*: Geography
- D. M. Hettiarachchi*: Education
- D. C. Gunawardena: Modern Science
- M. M. Uvise*: Tamil
- A. M. M. Sahabdeen*: Western Philosophy
- D. P. Jayasekera: Mathematics
- S. Abeyasinghe*: Logic

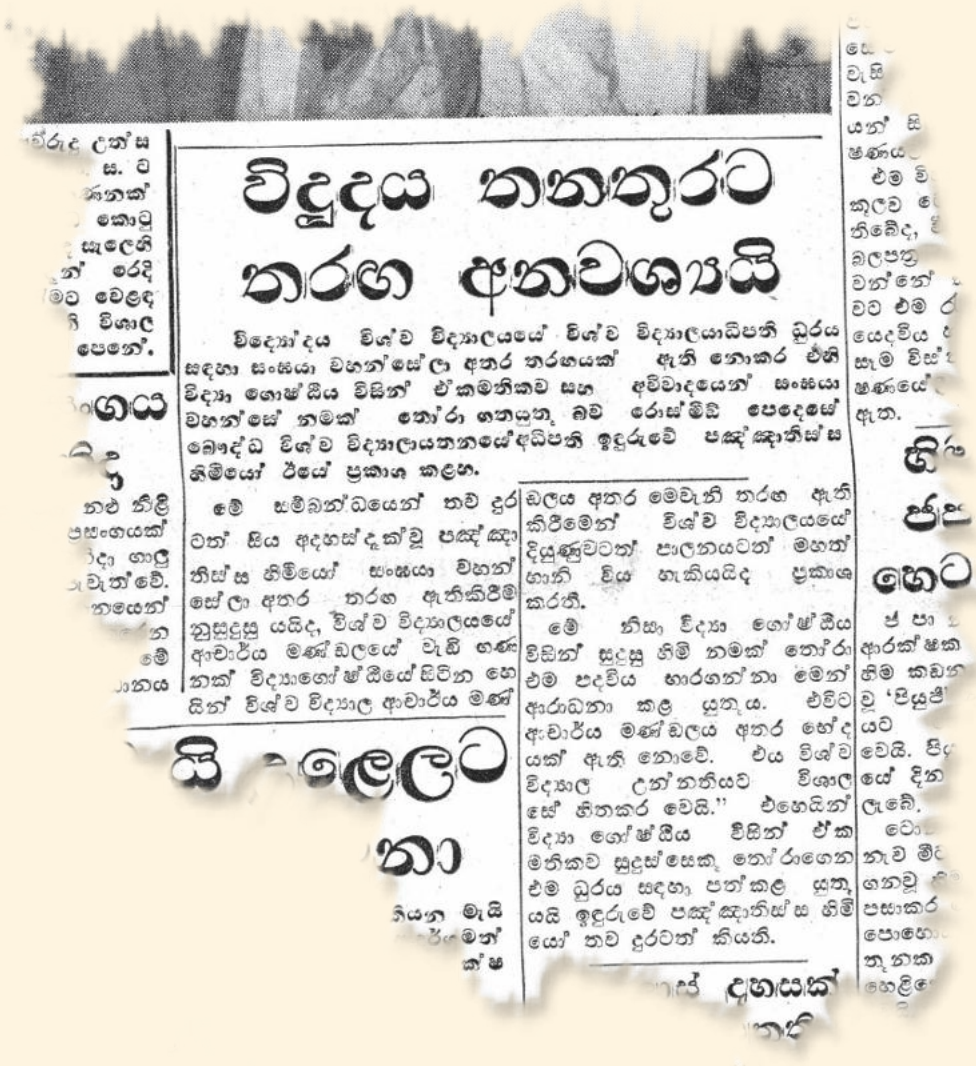
(Balagalle, 1984, p. 196; *Dinamina*, January 6, 1959)

- P. E. P. Deraniyagala (Director of National Museums): Professor of Anthropology

(*Dinamina*, March 20, 1959)

(**Note**: *All scholars marked with the symbol* belonged to the four primary faculties: Buddhist Studies, Philosophy, Languages, and Arts.)*

During the early years, the university implemented a distinctive policy for members of the *Maha Sangha* (Buddhist monks) holding academic or administrative positions. According to Dr. Ananda Guruge, then Administrative Assistant to the President, these monks did not receive a regular salary. Instead, the university provided each with a stipend (*nadaththu mudal*) to support their livelihood and religious obligations. Moreover, monks who served the university for



විදුදය තනතුරට තරහ අනවශ්‍යයි

විදුදය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයාධිපති ධුරය සඳහා සංඝයා වහන්සේලා අතර තරහයක් ඇති නොකර එහි විද්‍යා ගොෂ්ඨිය විසින් එකමනිකව සහ අවිවාදයෙන් සංඝයා වහන්සේ නමක් තෝරා ගනයුතු බව රෝස්මීඩ් පෙදෙසේ බෞද්ධ විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයතනයේ අධිපති ඉඳුරුවේ පඤ්ඤානිස්ස නිමියෝ ඊයේ ප්‍රකාශ කළහ.

මේ සම්බන්ධයෙන් තව දුරටත් ඔය අදහස් දැක්වූ පඤ්ඤානිස්ස නිමියෝ සංඝයා වහන්සේලා අතර තරහ ඇතිකිරීම නුසුදුසු යයිද, විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ ආචාර්ය මණ්ඩලයේ වැඩි හණක් විද්‍යාගෝෂ්ඨියේ ඔවින හෙයින් විශ්ව විද්‍යාල ආචාර්ය මණ්ඩලය අතර මෙවැනි තරහ ඇති කිරීමෙන් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයයේ දියුණුවටත් පාලනයටත් මහත් හානි විය හැකියයිද ප්‍රකාශ කරති.

මේ නිසා විද්‍යා ගෝෂ්ඨිය විසින් සුදුසු හිමි නමක් තෝරා එම පදවිය භාරගන්නා මෙන් ආරාධනා කළ යුතුය. එවිට ආචාර්ය මණ්ඩලය අතර භේදයක් ඇති නොවේ. එය විශ්ව විද්‍යාල උන්නතියට විශාල සේ හිතකර වෙයි." එහෙයින් විද්‍යා ගෝෂ්ඨිය විසින් එකමනිකව සුදුස්සෙකු තෝරාගෙන එම ධුරය සඳහා පත්කළ යුතු යයි ඉඳුරුවේ පඤ්ඤානිස්ස හිමියෝ තව දුරටත් කියති.

(*Dinamina*, 1966, March 18, p.1)

a minimum of three years became entitled to receive this stipend for life upon retirement (*Dinamina*, January 15, 1959).

A significant shift occurred in 1961 due to a government decision stipulating that active officials of the Ministry of Education could no longer hold concurrent positions within the university. This led to the resignation of several key figures who chose to maintain their positions, including: S. F. de Silva (Dean, Faculty of Arts), Dr. Ananda Guruge (Administrative Assistant to the Vice Chancellor), and D. M. Hettiarachchi (Department of Education).

Following these vacancies, K. P. G. Wijayasurendra of the Sanskrit Department was appointed Assistant Registrar (Examinations) to fill the role (Balagalle, 1984, p. 206). In May 1959, Lecturer Wimal G. Balagalle, who had been serving as Assistant Registrar (Examinations), was appointed Head of the Department of Sinhala. This transition enabled Venerable Kalukondayave Paññasekera Nayaka Thero to dedicate himself fully to his responsibilities in the Pali Department. On 1 October 1959, after his promotion to Professor, Balagalle conducted formal interviews to recruit permanent academic staff. The following four scholars were appointed in order of merit:

- T. B. Kangahaarachchi
- A.V. Suraweera
- Nandasena Ratnapala
- Vini Vitharana (Ritigahapola, 2017, p. 32).

On 17 July 1963, the University experienced a significant loss with the passing (*apavath vīma*) of its first President (Vice-Chancellor), Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero. Following this vacancy, Venerable Palannoruwe Wimaladhamma Nayaka Thero was appointed as the second President (Vice-Chancellor) of the University. At the time of his appointment, he was serving as the Dean of the Faculty of Buddhist Studies and as Head of the Department of Theravada Buddhist Studies (Balagalle, 1984, p. 206).

The leadership of the University underwent a further transition after the passing of the Venerable Wimaladhamma Nayaka Thero on March 7, 1966. Consequently, on July 1, 1966, the Venerable Dr. Parawahera Vajiragnana Nayaka Thero was appointed as the third President of the University. Prior to assuming this office, he had served as the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and as the Head of the Department of Indian Philosophy (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1965–66*, p. 1).

1.1.3 Degree Programmes, Academic Departments, and Curricular Reforms

In the inaugural phase of Vidyodaya University, degree programmes were formally referred to as “Classes” (*Panthi*). Internal students enrolled within the Faculties of Buddhist Studies, Philosophy, Languages, and Arts were categorized into the following Classes:

- First Year (Intermediate) Class
- General Degree Class (Bachelor of Arts)
- Honours (Special) Degree Class

The General Arts Degree spanned a total of three years, which included the first-year Intermediate Examination followed by two additional years of study. The Honours Degree required a total of four years, consisting of the first-year Intermediate level followed by three years of specialized study (Vidyodaya University, *Regulations and Syllabuses 1959-63*, 1959, pp.1-9).

A diverse range of subjects was offered to fulfil the University’s specific mandate. According to Section 5(a) of the *Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara University Act*, the institution bore a special responsibility to promote Sinhala and Buddhist Culture. Thereafter, Buddhist Civilization and English were established as compulsory subjects for all students.

The broader curriculum included:

- Buddhist Studies, Indian Philosophy, Western Philosophy, and Logic.
- Sinhala, Pali, Prakrit, Sanskrit, Tamil, Hindi, English, and Linguistics.
- History of Ceylon, Indian History, World History, Archaeology, Education, Economics, and Geography.
- Mathematics, Ayurveda, and Astrology

(Vidyodaya University, *Regulations and Syllabuses 1959–1963*, 1959 p. 1)

Completion of the *Pirivena* Final Examination or the *Prachina Bhashopakara Samagama* (Oriental Studies Society) Final Examination served as recognized qualifications for university entrance (Vidyodaya University, *Regulations and Syllabuses*, 1958, pp. 22-23).

The academic departments were organized under their respective faculties as follows:

The Faculty of Buddhist Studies

Initially, this faculty was highly specialized, consisting of five distinct departments:

1. Department of *Sutta* Studies
2. Department of *Abhidhamma* Studies
3. Department of *Vinaya* Studies
4. Department of *Mahayana* Buddhist Studies
5. Department of Buddhist Culture

Later, the departments of *Sutta*, *Abhidhamma*, and *Vinaya* were amalgamated into a single Department of Buddhism. This new department functioned through two main units: Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism. The Theravada unit—incorporating *Sutta*, *Abhidhamma*, and *Vinaya*—attracted many students, whereas the Mahayana unit initially commenced with only four students in the Intermediate Class (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, pp. 1-4). In 1960, the Buddhist Society was established within this department, and the Honours Degree programme for Buddhism was officially launched (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, pp. 8-9).

[Note: '*Court Report' is used to refer to the report submitted to Vidyaghoshtti*].

> "While the Department of Mahayana Philosophy was an independent unit, students could only take Mahayana Philosophy as a subject for the General Degree. For those pursuing an Honours Degree in Buddhism, three out of the nine required papers were dedicated to Mahayana Philosophy. Prescribed texts included seminal works such as *Vigraha Vyavarthini*, *Madhyamika Karika*, *Kashyapa Parivarthana*, *Rathnavali*, *Abhidharmakosha*, *Shiksha Samuchchaya, Adikarama Pradeepa* and *Sarvadarshana Sangraha*" (Balagalle, 1996, p. 43).

By 1966, plans were finalized to abolish the independent Department of Mahayana Buddhism and integrate its curriculum fully into the primary Department of Buddhism. Meanwhile, the compulsory subject of Buddhist Civilization remained under the purview of the Department of Buddhist Culture (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1965-66*, p. 16).

The Faculty of Philosophy (*Samaya Peethaya*)

This faculty was designed to provide the philosophical depth necessary for a comprehensive understanding of religious and academic thought. It originally consisted of two primary departments:

- Department of Indian Philosophy (*Bharata Darshana*)
- Department of Western Philosophy (*Pratichina Darshana*)

In 1959, the Department of Indian Philosophy began with five students. By 1960, only one student was enrolled in the first-year Honours (Special) Degree class (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, p. 7). The Head of the Department, Venerable Parawahera Vajiragnana Thero, emphasized that the university's unique identity was rooted in Buddhist studies. He, therefore, proposed that:

> "The university's distinctive strength lies in the discipline of Buddhism. To comprehend this field fully, a solid understanding of philosophy is essential. Traditionally, scholars studied Buddhism through comparative analysis alongside other philosophical systems, a method that underscores both its depth and universality. Buddhist Studies at the university integrates the rich heritage of monastic scholarship with rigorous academic inquiry. In light of this, students in every Buddhism Class should be ordered to study Indian Philosophy, and those who excel in this area should be recognized through scholarships and awards" (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, pp. 15-61).

Initially, a separate Department of Logic was established in 1959; however, it was soon dissolved, and its curriculum was incorporated into the Department of Western Philosophy (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, pp. 9-10). The programme included courses in Logic and Scientific Methods, Ethics, Introduction to Modern Symbolic Logic, Psychology, and the History of Western and Modern Philosophy. Notably, no Honours Degree was offered in this discipline during this period. Unlike most other departments, lectures in Logic were conducted entirely in English (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report 1965–66*, p. 18). In 1959, the department enrolled 42 students, many of whom were non-Sinhala speakers. The main lecturer at the time was A. M. M. Sahabdeen (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, p. 11).

The Faculty of Languages (*Bhasha Peethaya*)

The Faculty of Languages was the cornerstone of the university's mission to preserve oriental heritage while embracing global communication. It was organized into the following departments:

- Department of Sinhala
- Department of Pali
- Department of Sanskrit
- Department of Linguistics (*Vagvidya*)
- Department of Oriental Languages (Tamil, Sinhala, and Burmese)
- Department of Western Languages (English)

Within the Faculty of Languages, the Sinhala Degree Programme held the distinction of having the highest student enrolment at Vidyodaya University. Consequently, during the second term of the 1959 academic year, a specialized "Sinhala Class" was inaugurated for the Honours (Special) Degree—marking it as the university's very first Honours programme.

Class of Study	**Number of Students**
Intermediate (First Year)	281
General Arts (Second Year)	55
General Arts (Third Year)	14
Honours (Special) Degree	07
Total Enrolment	357

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, p. 12)

The Sinhala Department experienced significant growth and academic diversification during its early years. In 1959, the department established the Sinhala Literary Society (*Sinhala Sahitya Sangamaya*) and launched the scholarly journal *Vidyodaya* to foster research and creative expression (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, p. 16). The curriculum expanded in 1960 with the introduction of a dedicated degree programme for Modern Sinhala Literature, which initially enrolled 28 students and contributed to a total departmental student body of 362. This surge in enrolment led to the recruitment of three permanent lecturers to maintain academic standards (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, pp. 18-22). Furthermore, the department promoted linguistic integration by organizing specialized Tamil language classes for Sinhala Honours students, reflecting a commitment to comparative linguistics. Student-led research also reached a milestone in 1961 when a group of 26 Modern Sinhala Literature students published a collection of essays titled *P. B. Alwis Pererage Kruthi* (The Works of P. B. Alwis Perera) (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 4*, 1962, pp. 12).

During the academic year 1963/1964, based on a decision by the Senate (*Sanatana Sabha*), the degree programme for "Modern Sinhala Literature" was abolished. From that year onward, the curriculum was consolidated into a single comprehensive degree programme titled "Sinhala" (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 6*, *1963-64*, p. 13). Despite this consolidation, the department's growth remained unparalleled. By 1966, the total number of students studying Sinhala reached 1,152, solidifying its position as the largest academic department within the entire university

Since a separate department existed for Buddhist Studies, the Department of Pali focused exclusively on the instruction of Pali Language and Literature. Recognizing the need for advanced scholarship, Honours (Special) Degree Classes for Pali were inaugurated in 1960 (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, p. 23).

The Department of Sanskrit was uniquely characterized by its international academic exchange during this era. Following a Senate decision to integrate external expertise, two distinguished Indian professors were recruited in 1959: Professor G. Sitharamiah from the University of Mysore, who arrived on September 16, and Professor C. Venkatacharya from the University of Gauhati, who arrived on September 8 (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, p.19). Both scholars served until 1960, coinciding with the introduction of Honours Degree Classes in Sanskrit (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, p. 27). The department's academic culture was further enriched by the Sanskrit Society (*Sanskrutha Sangamaya*), which by the 1965/1966 academic year was actively organizing specialized guest lectures. These efforts were part of a broader institutional drive to standardize language instruction across various disciplines (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1965-1966*, p. 26).

A significant feature of the Tamil Unit (operating under the Department of Oriental Languages) was its diverse student body. A majority of the students enrolled in Tamil were from the Muslim community, many of whom were teachers in Muslim schools. Notably, the 1960 records mention that a Buddhist monk was among the students sitting for the Tamil degree examination—a unique example of cross-cultural scholarship at the time (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, p. 33).

By the 1963/1964 academic year, the department provided facilities for the study of Tamil, Burmese, and Hindi. The enrolment was distributed as follows:

Language	**Intermediate Level**	**Degree Level**
Tamil	6	1
Burmese	6	1
Hindi	6	1

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 6, 1963-64*, p. 21)

The department underwent significant changes to reflect its evolving academic focus. Between 1961 and the 1963/64 academic year, it was officially known as the Department of Oriental Languages (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 6, 1963-64*, p. 21). However, from the 1964/65 academic year onwards, the name was transitioned to the Department of Modern Oriental Languages. During this transition, student preferences remained predominantly in favour of the Sinhala medium, although contemporary records indicate that a small minority of students expressed an interest in pursuing Tamil language studies through the English medium (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1964-65*, p. 8).

In 1959, the Department of Western Languages focused exclusively on the English language. Aside from the discipline Buddhism, English was the only other compulsory subject for all students. To improve the standard of the compulsory English programme for the general student body, a specialized conference was held in August 1960. This led to the creation of a comprehensive textbook series featuring 150 exercises under four categories:

- Grammar
- Sentence Composition
- Vocabulary
- Idioms/Conventions

By August 13, 1960, the first 35 exercises covering Fundamental Grammar had already been completed to facilitate immediate student use (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, p. 32).

In addition to the compulsory English course, "English Language and Literature" was offered as an elective for both the Intermediate and Degree examinations (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, pp. 23-26). To ensure quality, the university revised its entry requirements in 1960. Candidates were required to achieve a prescribed minimum aggregate score across two specific papers in the Entrance Examination to qualify for English (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*,1960, pp. 30-32). Professor Kanakaratne Gunatunga had noted that few students chose English as a major subject, primarily due to a lack of foundational knowledge (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 4*, 1962, pp. 19-20). By 1965/66, only 22 students were specializing in English. However, this year also marked the establishment of the English Society (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1965-1966*, p. 29).

English Examination Papers Answered in Sinhala

"Hitherto, all examination papers in English Language and Literature conducted in this country had been set exclusively in English, and candidates were required to answer solely in English. This procedure has now been revised in accordance with our policies. Examination papers related to English are presently prepared in Sinhala, and candidates are permitted to submit their answers in either English or Sinhala.

In universities such as University of London and University of Cambridge, papers for elective subjects—such as Latin, Greek, Sinhala, Pali, and Sanskrit—are set in the principal language of instruction, namely English, and answers are likewise required to be written in English. We are adopting the same principle, as it is imperative to correct the error of having relinquished the rightful place of our primary language, Sinhala, to English. Although this measure, introduced for the first time in the history of Sri Lankan education, is accompanied by numerous challenges, it must be acknowledged as a necessary revolution" (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, p. 26).

In accordance with this policy, students enrolled in English Language and Literature courses were permitted to write their examination answers in Sinhala. The effectiveness of this reform was soon evident. In the 1960 Intermediate Examination, several answers to the English Literature questions, written entirely in Sinhala, were noted for their exceptional quality.

Reflecting on this development, Professor of English Kanakaratne Gunatunga observed:

"It was a source of great satisfaction for me to read two or three exceptionally high-quality answers written entirely in Sinhala for the English Literature questions in the 1960 Intermediate Examination. Of the six students who offered English as a subject for the 1961 Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Intermediate Examination, four were successful; moreover, all five students who sat for the 1961 B.A. (General) Examination under the same arrangement passed the subject" (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 4*, 1962, p. 19).

Faculty of Arts

- Department of Ceylon History
- Department of Indian History
- Department of World History

(These three departments were later amalgamated into a single department.)

- Department of Archaeology
- Department of Economics
- Department of Geography
- Department of Education

  (Vidyodaya University, *Regulations and Syllabuses, 1959–1963, p. 2)*

- Department of Anthropology

  (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 3*, 1961, p. 29)

By this time, the History degree programme recorded the second-highest student enrolment in the university. This programme consisted of three segments: Ceylon History, Indian History, and World History. In 1959, the total number of students studying Ceylon History was 267. There were 45 students registered for Indian History, while only 15 students studied World History (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, pp. 27-28).

The History Society was inaugurated in 1959, and from 1960, Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Classes for History were commenced (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, p. 2). Under the guidance of the History Society, a journal titled *Itihasaya* (History) was published, and two field study tours were organized. Furthermore, a significant highlight was the translation of Professor Geiger's "Introduction to the *Mahavamsa*" into Sinhala, which was printed and distributed among students (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, p. 37). By the 1965/66 academic year, the total number of students studying History had reached 850. By this period, the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) examination was conducted under two parts: Ancient History and Modern History (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1965-66*, pp. 30-31).

The Department of Archaeology was established by 1961, with a total student population of 30 in that year (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 3*, 1961, p. 26). The Archaeology Honours Degree programme was inaugurated in 1962. With the participation of the History section, 25 inscriptions and other traces (*Sparsha Langchana*), discovered during the investigation of antiquities in the Gal Oya Valley, were donated for the use of the Archaeology Department. Many of these had not been copied until then. An archaeological museum named the "Archaeology Museum" (*Puravidya Katugeya*) was opened for the subject of Archaeology on October 28, 1962 (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 5,* 1963, p. 24). The hall reserved for this museum measured 3,000 square feet. Further details regarding this are mentioned in Appendix 02.



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(*Dinamina*, October 17, 1961, p. 7)

The Economics degree programme recorded the third-highest student enrolment; consequently, Honours degree classes for the subject were commenced from 1960. Four special subjects taught therein were identified as Constitution (Political Science), Banking, Sociology, and Accountancy. Lecturer K. A. D. Perera organized field studies to shanties in Colombo city under the subject of Sociology (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2,* 1960, pp. 42-43). In October 1960, applications were invited for new Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree programme in Business Administration and Public Administration. Linus Silva, the then Head of the Department, requested permission from the University President, Venerable Welivitiye Soratha Nayaka Thero, to initiate these programmes. By 1961, the Department of Economics had expanded as the Department of Economics, Public Administration, and Business Administration. Under this, several degree programmes were conducted, namely Economics, Public Administration, Business Administration, and Public & Business Administration. As the space facilities at the Maligakanda Pirivena premises—where university academic activities were held—were limited by this time, the teaching activities of this department were commenced at “Sarana” residence, No. 3/1, Racecourse Avenue (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 3*, 1961, p. 3).

The department had also taken measures to award a number of scholarships and cash prizes to students studying these subjects, based on the results of the Entrance Examination, Intermediate Examination, and Final Examination (Vidyodaya University, *Degrees in Economics, Business Administration and Public Administration 1960-61*).

Scholarships and Prizes for the New Degree Programme in Public and Business Administration

1. **Ceylon Insurance Co. Ltd. Scholarship:** An annual award of Rs. 1,200.00 for a period of two years. This is awarded based on the results of the Intermediate Examination in Business Administration.

2. **Vinita Limited Scholarship:** An annual award of Rs. 1,200.00 for one year, gifted by V. M. de Mel, Managing Director of the company. It is awarded to the student with the best performance in Government Systems at the University Entrance Examination.

3. **Banking Systems and Finance Prize:** A prize of Rs. 500.00 gifted by V. M. de Mel, Director of the Bank of Ceylon. It is awarded to the student with the best performance in Banking Systems at the Final Examination.

4. **Bankers' Prize:** A prize of Rs. 500.00 awarded by the Bank of Ceylon to the student with the best performance in Banking Systems and Finance at the Intermediate Examination in Business Administration.

5. **Sri Krishna Co. Ltd. Prize:** A prize of Rs. 500.00 gifted by K. Selvanathan, Managing Director. It is awarded to the best student in the Business Administration course based on the Intermediate Examination results.

6. **Edward Lumley & Sons Ltd. Prize:** A prize of Rs. 500.00 gifted by B. Whitefield, Managing Director of this firm, which represents Lloyd's of London in Ceylon. It is awarded to the student with the best performance in Marine Insurance at the Final Examination.

7. **Adamjee Lukmanjee & Sons Ltd. Prize:** A prize of Rs. 250.00 gifted by Director K. H. Taibolly. It is awarded to the student with the best performance in the Essay Paper at the University Entrance Examination.

8. **United Insurance Co. Ltd. Prize:** A prize of Rs. 150.00 awarded by the company to the student with the best performance in Insurance at the Final Examination.

9. **Collettes Finance Prize:** A prize of Rs. 100.00 awarded by the company to the student with the best performance in Finance at the Final Examination.

10. **Cash Prize (Rs. 100.00):** A gift from Justin Kotalawela. It is awarded to the best student in Economics based on the results of the Intermediate Examination in Economics.

11. **K. D. and A. D. Silva Prize:** A prize of Rs. 100.00 gifted by K. D. Silva, owner of the K. D. and A. D. Silva Company in Colombo. It is awarded to the student with the best performance in General Knowledge at the University Entrance Examination.

12. **Yusuf Ali & Co. Ltd. Prize:** A prize of Rs. 100.00 gifted by Director Mohsin Yusuf Ali. It is awarded to the student with the best performance in Economic History at the Intermediate Examination in Economics.

13. **Cash Prize (Rs. 50.00):** A gift from Dr. H. C. H. Soysa. It is awarded to the student with the best performance in Welfare Services Administration at the Final Examination.

(Vidyodaya University, *Degrees in Economics, Business Administration and Public Administration 1960-61*, pp. 3-69)

Composition of Economics, Public, and Business Administration Degrees

Economics Course

Intermediate Examination (2 Papers):

1. Economics
2. Government Systems

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree Examination (9 Papers):

1. Principles of Economics
2. Applied Economics
3. Modern Economic History
4. Political and Social Theories
5. Banking Systems and Currency
6. Elementary Statistical Methods

7, 8, & 9. Electives (Select three units from the following):

- Banking Systems and Financial Accounting
- History of Economics
- Political Science (3 Papers): Comparative Constitutions, Political Ideology: Age of Machiavelli, Constitutions of India, Pakistan, and Ceylon.
- Sociology (3 Papers): Sociological Methods and Theories, Elements of Social Structure, Criminology and Penology
- Statistics (3 Papers): Statistical Theory, Statistical Methods, and Applied Statistics

Business Administration and Public Administration Course

Intermediate Examination (6 Papers):

1. Principles of Economics
2. Government Systems
3. Economic History
4. Banking Systems and Currency
5. Elementary Statistical Methods
6. Electives (Select one):

- Principles of Public Administration
- Principles of Business Administration

Public Administration - B.A. (Honours) Degree (9 Papers):

1. Principles of Economics
2. Banking Systems and Currency
3. Statistics
4. Principles of Commercial Law
5. Accounting
6. Business Administration

7, 8, & 9. Electives (Select three units):

- Insurance • Transport • Accounting • Trade Statistics • Banking and • Finance

Business Administration - B.A. (Honours) Degree (9 Papers):

1. Principles of Economics
2. Banking Systems and Currency
3. Political and Social Theories
4. Comparative Government Systems
5. Public Administration
6. Public Finance
7. Local Governance
8. Welfare Services Administration
9. State Business Administration

(Vidyodaya University, *Degrees in Economics, Business Administration and Public Administration 1960-61*, pp. 3-69)

Naming the Degree as Public Administration and Business Administration

Following the 1962-1965 specific recommendations, the Public and Business Administration degree programme was restructured into distinct two disciplines: Public Administration and Business Administration. The subjects were revised as follows:

Intermediate Examination (Six Papers)

1. Economics 2. Political Science 3. History of Economics
4. Banking Systems 5. Elementary Statistical Methods
6. Elective (One of the following):

- Principles of Public Administration
- Principles of Business Administration

Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree Examination

Candidates must complete the following subject blocks:

1. Major Track (Choose one):

- Public Administration (3 Papers): Public Administration, Public Finance, Local Governance
- Business Administration (3 Papers): Business Administration, Marketing (Commodity Trading), Accounting

2. Economics (3 Papers): Principles of Economics, History of Economics, Applied Economics
3. Political Science (3 Papers): Principles of Political Science, Constitutions of India and Ceylon (1820–1950), Modern Foreign Constitutions
4. Sociology (3 Papers): Principles and Methods of Sociology, Social Institutions, Social Problems

(Vidyodaya University, *Examination Regulations for Degrees in Economics, Business Administration and Public Administration 1962-65*, pp. 1-11)

Established in January 1960, the Department of Education became instrumental in the development of teacher education at the University. The curriculum comprised subjects such as History of Education and Educational Traditions, Curriculum and Teaching Methods, Teaching Aids, Health Education, and Child Development. As part of the academic programme, an educational field visit was organized in 1960 to the nursery school of Visakha Vidyalaya, Colombo (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, p. 48). On 10 May 1963, under the presidency of the Vice-Chancellor, the Diploma in Education was formally awarded (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 5*, 1963, p. 37). The diploma programme extended over two years and was structured into a First Year and a Final Year. By the academic year 1965–1966, student enrolment had increased to 207. In 1965, the degree programme in Education was formally recognized as the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1965–1966*, pp. 40–42).

At the commencement, the number of students enrolled in the Department of Geography was 20. Lectures were conducted covering the areas such as Physical Geography, Climatology, and Educational Geography (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1,* 1959, p. 29). The department activities and lectures were held in the *Rathanasara Mandiraya* of the university. This included a lecture hall, a cartography laboratory, a storage room, and a staff room for lecturers (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 5*, 1963, p. 34).

The Anthropology course commenced in January 1961. By the year 1962, there were two Classes for students studying Anthropology; the

number of Bachelor of Arts (General) degree candidates (First Year) studying this subject was 13, while there were 47 students for the Intermediate Examination (Second Year). In 1961, the Anthropology Society was addressed by Professor Htin Aung of Rangoon University, who was then serving as the Burmese (Myanmar) Ambassador to Sri Lanka. The first Anthropology journal published in this country was also released in 1961 (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 4*, 1962, p. 34).

1.1.3.1 Revised and New Courses

At the inception of the university, students were enrolled under 19 subject areas (Balagalle, 1984, p. 196). Dr. Ananda Guruge, the Academic Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor, stated that while twenty-three subjects were taught, only about fifteen of them were conducted in Sinhala (*Dinamina*, January 16, 1959). Although the Sinhala language was generally used as the medium of instruction for these courses, certain lectures in subjects such as Linguistics, Indian History, Economics, Geography, World History, Archaeology, Western Philosophy, and Mathematics were conducted in the English medium (Vidyodaya University, *Regulations and Syllabuses for Entrance Examinations*, 1958, pp. 1-20).

Subsequently, it was resolved that English would be taught as a compulsory second language to all students. According to Dr. Ananda Guruge, this measure was introduced to prevent any potential deficiency in graduates' knowledge that might arise from higher education being conducted exclusively in the mother tongue (*Dinamina*, January 16, 1959). Further elaborating on this, he stated that since this was an institution designed for the benefit of those receiving an education in Sinhala, English proficiency was not an essential factor for admission. However, it was vital to provide university students with the ability to read and comprehend textbooks related to their respective subjects—starting even from the alphabet level. To achieve this, a specially trained staff was appointed. [This mission of English instruction, which began under the Department of Western Languages and was taught as a compulsory subject, eventually became the Department of English Language Teaching in 2018. Before gaining departmental status, it was known as the English Language Teaching Unit/ELTU].

Additionally, he expressed the view that the university was prepared to teach Russian, French, and German as compulsory second languages as soon as the opportunity arose. His opinion was that university graduates could not be presented to the world without any knowledge of such global languages (*Dinamina*, January 16, 1959).

In 1960, a degree programme titled Modern Sinhala was introduced by the Sinhala Department of Vidyodaya University. This was a General Degree programme started with the objective of directing degree candidates toward the art of writing and literary creation. While the Sinhala Honours Degree programme was being conducted, this programme was carried out as an additional experiment under the leadership of Lecturer Nandasena Ratnapala. Furthermore, every student following this degree programme was required to submit a creative analytical assignment in place of one question paper. This was the first and only course started by a university in Sri Lanka aimed at creative writing (Ritigahapola, 2016, pp. 32-33).

In 1961, under the guidance of Professor Linus Silva of the Department of Economics, a degree programme in Public and Business Administration was started for the first time in a Sri Lankan university. This marked the next major experiment of the institution.

> "In September 1960, Mr. Linus Silva submitted a memorandum to the Venerable Vice-Chancellor seeking permission to introduce two new courses. These were intended to be inaugurated as additional programmes to the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Economics already provided by the department. The Vice-Chancellor granted immediate approval for these programmes, which were designated as the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business Administration and the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Public Administration."
>
> (Vidyodaya University, *Degrees in Economics, Business Administration, and Public Administration 1960-1961*, p. 8).

The total enrolment for these courses amounted to 354 students. In due course, this subject, separated from the Department of Economics, was established as an independent department. Students enrolled in these degree programmes were also given the opportunity to pursue subjects such as Political Science, Sociology, Statistics, Criminology, and Penology (Vidyodaya University, *Degrees in Economics, Business Administration, and Public Administration 1960–1961*, pp. 15–75). The later expansion into disciplines including Political Science, Sociology, Social Statistics, and Criminology originated from this subject unit, which had been introduced under the leadership of Linus Silva.

In addition, the Anthropology degree programme, organized under the direction of Dr. P. E. P. Deraniyagala, commenced in 1961. This marked the first occasion on which a university in Sri Lanka introduced a degree programme in Anthropology (Vidyodaya University, Court Report, Session 3, 1961, p. 29). Similarly, the Department of Education, which had hitherto taught Education as a subject for the Bachelor of Arts (General) degree, commenced a Postgraduate Diploma course from 1963. This was a course conducted specifically for teachers. With the cooperation of that same Education Department, the Faculty of Buddhist Studies commenced a Buddhist *Dharmāchārya* Certificate course. This occurred in 1962 (Balagalle, 1984, pp. 204-206). The qualifications required to follow the Buddhist *Dharmāchārya* Certificate course were as follows:

- Trained Teacher's Certificate (Sinhala, English, or Bilingual)
- Untrained Teacher's Certificate (Sinhala or English)
- First or Intermediate Examination Certificate of a recognized university (Arts or Science)
- Higher Secondary Certificate (H.S.C.)
- General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (G.C.E. A/L) in three subjects
- Final Examination Certificate of the Vidyodaya Pirivena
- Intermediate Examination Certificate of the Oriental Studies Society (*Prāchina Bhāshōpakāra Samithiya)*
- Buddhist *Dharmāchārya* Certificate conducted by the Colombo Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA)
- Two years of recognized service as an uncertificated teacher in a school approved by the Director of Education

1.1.4 Student Enrolment

In 1959, at the inception, student enrolment for Vidyodaya University took place for three Classes (corresponding to the current first, second, and third years).

- Bachelor of Arts (General) First Year Class (Current 1st Year): 55 students were selected from among those who passed the Vidyodaya Pirivena Final Examination, including the year 1958.

- Intermediate Examination Course Class (Current 2nd Year): 297 students were selected based on the Entrance Examination results.
- Bachelor of Arts (General) Final Year Class (Current 3rd Year): 14 students were selected via interview from among those who passed the Vidyodaya Pirivena Final Examination.

Accordingly, the total number of students enrolled for the first degree during the inaugural academic year (1959) was 366 (Balagalle, 1984, p. 196). The qualifications required for admission to the three classes mentioned above were as follows:

- **First Year (Intermediate Examination) Class**

- Those who passed the University Entrance Examination
- Trained Sinhala teachers
- Teachers who obtained the First-Class Sinhala Teacher's Certificate
- Those who passed three subjects at the London University General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (G.C.E. A/L) examination
- Pirivena teachers who served for more than five years in a recognized pirivena approved by the government
- Those who passed the Intermediate Secondary Examination or a higher examination in languages at Vidyodaya Pirivena

- **Bachelor of Arts (General) Class**

- Those who passed the University Intermediate Examination
- Those who passed the First Examination in Arts (First in Arts) at the University of Ceylon
- Holders of a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree or a Diploma in Sinhala from the University of Ceylon
- Those who passed two major languages in the Final Examination of the Oriental Studies Society (*Prāchina Bhāshōpakāra Samithiya*)
- Those who passed two major languages in the Final Secondary Examination of Vidyodaya Pirivena

- **Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Class**

- Those who passed the Intermediate Examination with a First Class (Distinction) in the major subject intended for the Honours degree
- Those who passed the Bachelor of Arts (General) degree
- Graduates who passed the Bachelor of Arts (General) examination from a recognized university
- Holders of the Pandit degree from the Oriental Studies Society, or the Final Certificate in Languages from Vidyodaya Pirivena, or the Final Certificate from the Pirivena Teachers' Training College in Ratmalana

Additionally, it was noteworthy that the public was notified via newspapers regarding the eligibility list for students qualified to sit for the Intermediate Examination as external candidates (Vidyodaya University, *Regulations and Syllabuses 1959-1963*, 1959, pp. 4-6).

In addition to the aforementioned first degree, in the year 1959, ten students were enrolled for postgraduate degrees: one student for the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) and nine students for the Master of Arts (M.A.). Including postgraduate students, the total number of internal students was 376, and 283 of them were monastic students (Balagalle, 1984, pp.197-203). By the end of September 1959, the number of students registered for the Intermediate, Bachelor of Arts (General) (1959 and 1960), and Bachelor of Arts (Honours) (1961) by subject was as follows:

Table 01: Number of Students Registered for Degree Programmes

Class	Sinhala/Buddhist Culture	Buddhism	Sinhala	Pali	Sanskrit	Tamil	Hindi	English	Prakrit
Intermediate 1950	297	109	281	172	37	42	2	28	-
Intermediate 1960	55	24	55	36	4	-	-	3	-
B.A. (Gen) 1959	14	6	11	13	6	-	-	-	1
B.A. (Hon) 1961	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Students	366	139	357	221	47	42	2	31	1

Table 02: Number of Students Registered for Degree Programmes

Class	Ceylon History	Indian History	World History	Archaeology	Economics	Geography	Indian Philosophy	Western Philosophy	Logic
Intermediate	181	25	11	5	37	20	5	42	1
1960	41	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	1
B.A. (Gen) 1959	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B.A. (Hon) 1961	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Students	230	25	11	8	37	20	5	42	2

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, pp. vii)

At this time, seven students were registered for the Master of Arts in Pali and two students for Sanskrit. Only one student was registered for the Doctor of Philosophy, specifically in the subject of Sanskrit (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, p. vii). The first person to be registered for the Bachelor of Arts (General) examination was Venerable Ratmale Ananda, who had won the *Syamaraja* Prize as the most talented student of Vidyodaya Pirivena in 1958 (Ariyaratne, 2009, 48).

The Most Venerable Purijjala Sri Saranankara Mahanayaka Thero of the Malwatta Chapter of the Siam Nikaya, who presided over the ceremony that day, presented this prize to the Venerable Ananda Thero. By placing an ancient palm-leaf manuscript before him and having him read it aloud, the scholarly activities of the university were symbolically inaugurated. The administrative establishment of the institution was further marked by the Most Venerable Mahanayaka Thero of the Malwatta Chapter presenting student record books (Student Identity/Registration Books) to the Bachelor of Arts degree candidates. Subsequently, the Vice-Chancellor, Most Venerable Welivitiye Soratha Nayaka Thero, conducted the first lesson for the degree class at an auspicious moment. On the same day, the Government Agent of Mahawalatenna donated his entire library, which contained a vast collection of works, to the university (*Dinamina*, February 18, 1959). Even by that time, twelve books required for the first-year curriculum had already been prepared (*Dinamina*, January 16, 1959). Among these were books specifically prepared for Arts subjects such as History and Geography. Following

the student registration, the formal inauguration ceremony of the university was held at Independence Square in Colombo under the patronage of the Governor-General, with the participation of Prime Minister S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and Minister of Education Wijayananda Dahanayake (*Dinamina*, February 18, 1959). From 1959 to 1966, the internal student population increased progressively as follows. While all internal students were male, the external candidates included females.

Table 03: Number of Students Registered for Internal Degree Programmes

Year	Number of Monks	Total Student Population
1959	286	376
1959/1960	272	501
1960/1961	250	990
1961/1962	254	1,070
1962/1963	290	1,165
1963/1964	366	1,396
1964/1965	407	1,492
1965/1966	342	1,649

Table 04: Number of Graduates Produced by the Faculties of Buddhist Studies, Languages, and Arts

Year	Date	Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Degrees
1960	August 07	11
1961	November 22	34
1962	December 18	77
1963	November 19	217
1964	December 21	254
1965	December 21	447

(Vidyodaya University, *Convocation Brochure,* 1960, p. 22)

Many scholars across the island expressed their approval regarding the newly established university and its composition. Speaking after the annual examinations at Walasgala Sri Saranangkara Pirivena, the Chief Inspector of Pirivena, Venerable Pandit Akuretiye Amarawansa Nayaka Thero, stated that by elevating existing *pirivena* in Sri Lanka to university status, the opportunity for lay students to achieve any high position had been created. He further remarked that the elevation of Vidyalankara and Vidyodaya to university status opened pathways for those who were previously unable to access higher education due to economic difficulties. He also noted that this would enable the reconstruction of the nation and national education. Furthermore, he stated that although the Sinhala language had become the Official Language, the government had not yet afforded it its proper place; however, the establishment of the Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara universities would serve as a catalyst for this cause. Venerable Akuretiye Amarawansa Nayaka Thero pointed out that the "rightful place" for the Sinhala language—which had been denied until then—would finally be secured, and that national education, which had declined, would be revitalized through *pirivena* education (*Dinamina,* March 3, 1959, p. 6).

Sir Nicholas Attygalle, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ceylon, stated that by elevating *pirivena* to university status, it would be possible to systematically rejuvenate pirivena education, which had previously been unregulated. Attygalle expressed these views while participating in the Silver Jubilee Prize Giving ceremony at St. Anne's College, Kurunegala; he also highlighted the necessity of teaching science subjects in schools (*Dinamina*, March 13, 1959). The high regard for Vidyodaya University was further evidenced during a meeting of the Literary Council (*Sāhitya Mandalaya*) held on January 12, 1959, where it was discussed that three representatives from Vidyodaya University should be included in the Sri Lanka Language Council, necessitating an amendment to the Language Council Act (*Dinamina*, March 13, 1959).

Perspectives on the Pirivena Universities

Although there was broad social consensus regarding the elevation of Vidyodaya Pirivena and Vidyalankara Pirivena to university status, a wave of opposition emerged when the government proposed extending this status to other types of *pirivena* across the country starting in 1960. Critics argued that implementing such a decision was ill-advised without first considering the employment opportunities available for the graduates already being produced by the existing Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara universities (*Dinamina*, February 26, 1959).

Furthermore, certain displays during the inauguration of Vidyodaya University drew public dissatisfaction. Specifically, a banner displayed on Maligakanda Road described the institution as *Duppathage Dayadaya* [Vidyodaya University: The Heritage of the Poor]. This sparked a debate among those who believed that injecting class distinctions into the right to education was contrary to the noble objectives of Vidyodaya University, which they regarded as a vital national asset (*Dinamina*, 1959).

1.1.5 The First Convocation

The final examinations for the university degree were held for the first time in April 1960. Fourteen internal students and thirty-three external students sat for this examination, which marked the first university degree examination ever conducted in the Sinhala medium. It was also the first external degree examination conducted by a university in Sri Lanka. Based on the results, the number of Sinhala-medium graduates produced for the first time in the island was thirteen, of whom eleven were internal students (Balagalle, 1984, p. 197). Out of the thirty-three external candidates, only two passed.

The university's first Convocation was held on August 07, 1960, at the present university premises in Gangodawila, Nugegoda. It took place in the building currently known as the Bandaranayake Hall [*Basha*], which was a temporary structure at the time. The Convocation, presided over by Chancellor (*Viyath Gananayaka*) Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, was held under the patronage of the Advisor to the Malwatta Chapter, Most Venerable Purijjala Sri Siddhartha Sharanankara Mahanayaka Thero, and the Mahanayaka of the Asgiriya Chapter, Most Venerable Yatawatte Sri Dhammaratana Thero (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, pp. 3-4).

During this ceremony, in addition to the Bachelor of Arts (General) degrees awarded to the university students, some scholars were honoured for their contributions to academic advancement. The degrees were conferred as follows:

- Venerable Kiriwattuduwe Sri Pragnasara Nayaka Thero: *Agama Chakravarti*
- Governor-General Oliver Goonetilleke: *Sahitya Suri* (Doctor of Letters / DLitt)
- Minister of Education Al-Haj Badi-ud-din Mahmud: *Sahitya Suri* (Doctor of Letters / DLitt)
- Professor Senarath Paranavithana: *Sahitya Suri* (Doctor of Letters / DLitt)
- Professor Gunapala Malalasekera: *Sahitya Suri* (Doctor of Letters / DLitt)
- Venerable Amunugama Rajaguru Sri Vipassi Anunayaka Thero: *Shastra Suri* (Honorary Doctorate)
- Venerable Pandit Hisselle Gñanodaya Mahanayaka Thero: *Shastra Suri* (Honorary Doctorate)

- Venerable Polwatte Buddhadatta Mahanayaka Thero: *Shastra Suri* (Honorary Doctorate)
- Martin Wickramasinghe: *Shastra Suri* (Honourary Doctorate)
- Venerable Neluwe Jinaratana Thero: *Shastrapati* (Master of Arts)
- Piyasena Nissanka: *Shastrapati* (Master of Arts)
- P. F. Abeywickrama: *Shastrapati* (Master of Arts)

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, p. 4)

As previously mentioned, the eleven internal students who received the Bachelor of Arts (General) degree are listed below. Notably, among them was only one lay student.

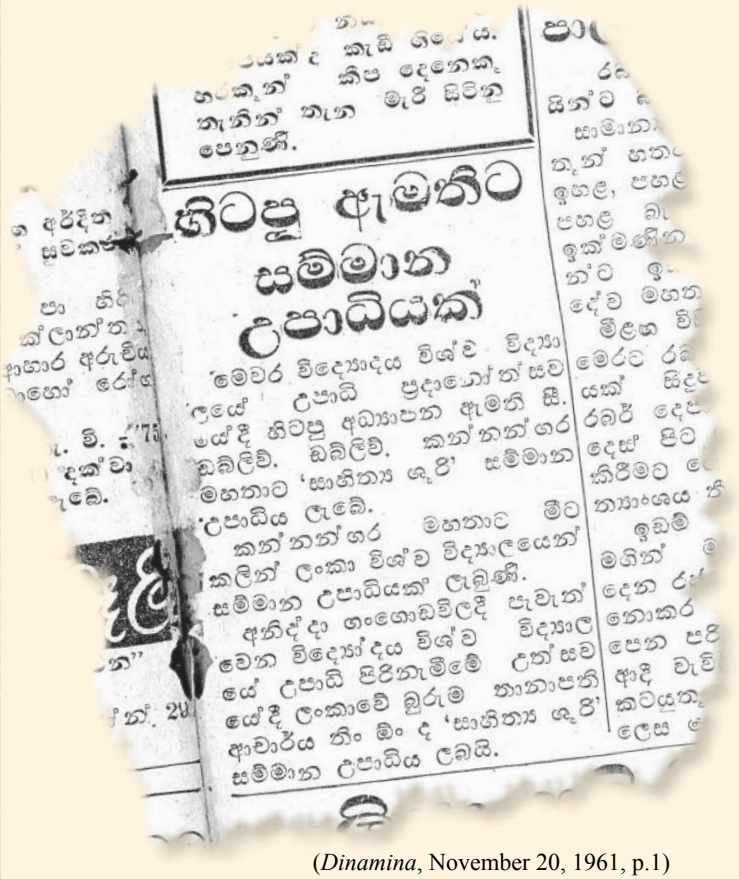
- Venerable Morape Dhammawasa Thero
- Venerable Weligama Seelananda Thero
- Venerable Ratmale Ananda Thero
- Venerable Kotmale Gnanawasa Thero
- Venerable Kendawinne Dhammajothi Thero
- Venerable Kotigala Dhammaratana Thero
- Venerable Halmillaweva Piyarathana Thero
- Venerable Hundirapola Rathanajothi Thero
- Venerable Telambugammana Seelawimala Thero
- Venerable Induruwe Sumanasara Thero
- Stephen Koralalage Gunapala Dharma Sri

(Vidyodaya University, *Convocation Brochure*, 1960, p. 4)

Appointments of New Graduates

"With the aim of increasing the number of monastic lecturers within the university's academic staff and to encourage students associated with the university, ten monks who were successful in the first Bachelor of Arts (General) examination were appointed as Student Instructors (*Shishya Upadeshaka*)."

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, p. 3)



(*Dinamina*, November 20, 1961, p.1)

1.1.6 Extracurricular Activities and Student Societies

A major highlight of Vidyodaya University's extracurricular life was the magazine *Vidudaya*. The first volume of this annual journal of the Sinhala Literary Society was published in 1960, edited by Ven. Migolle Medhananda Thero and Mr. H. G. Charles (Medhananda Thero et al., 1959/60, pp.1-2). The second volume, released in January 1961, featured contributions from Ven. Induruwe Sumanasara Thero, Ven. Lelwala Wanarathana Thero, Dr. Vinnie Vitharana, Dr. Ananda Guruge, and Gunadasa Amarasekara (*Dinamina*, January 22, 1961). Students also published two other journals titled *Vichara Charcha* and *Eliya* (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 4*, 1962, p. 13).

In the 1965/66 academic year, this society organized three lectures and four discussions featuring scholars such as Prof. Tennakoon Vimalananda, Dean Wimal G. Balagalle, and others. They also published the third volume of the journal *Magadhi* (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1965-66*, pp.23-24).

Founded in 1961 by the staff and students of the History Department, Ruhunu Archaeology Society aimed to explore and develop antiquities in the jungles of Ruhuna, receiving support from the Department of Archaeology (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 3*, 1961, p.21).

Academic and
Cultural Events 1959, Sinhala Society

September 10, 1959

Topic: The Development of Sinhala Literature;

Key Speaker: Ven. Baddegama Wimalawansa Nayaka Thero

September 20, 1959

Topic: Illustrated Talk (*Sanidarshana Kathawa*);

Key Speaker: Premakumara Epitawala

October 01, 1959

Topic: Discussion on Sinhala Arts and Crafts

October 08, 1959

Topic: Poetry Evening;

Key Speakers: Ven. Wathuregama Wimalakhanthi Thero, Bingiriye Wijayakumara, Karunaratne Abeysekera, and Sesiri Wijesekera

October 11, 1959

Topic: Journalism,

Key Speaker: Piyal Wickramasinghe

October 30,

1959 Topic: Free Verse Poetry (*Nisandesa*);

Key Speaker: Siri Gunasinghe

(Medhananda Thero et al., 1959; 1960, p. 89)

Pali Society Lectures and Discussions (1965/66)

Topic: Lyric Poetry

(*Sentimental Songs*) in Pali;

Key Speaker: Professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra

Topic: Mahayana Influences in Sri Lanka;
Key Speaker: Venerable Moratuwe Sasanaratne Thero

Topic: Iranian Religious Views that Influenced Buddhism in Sri Lanka;

Key Speaker: Dr. Henpitagedara Gnanawasa Thero

Topic: How Events in Pre-Buddhist Indian History Led to the Emergence of Buddhism;

Key Speaker: Venerable Kahadenigama Piyarathana Thero

Topic: The Influence of Buddhism on the Evolution of the Mauryan and Gupta Eras;

Key Speaker: Professor Hema Ellawala

Topic: The Unique Emergence of Chronicle Literature *(Vansakatha)* in Sri Lanka;

Key Speaker: Dr. Henpitagedara Gnanawasa Thero

Topic: The Evolution of Pali Commentarial *(Attakatha)* Literature;
Key Speaker: A. P. Jayasuriya

(Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1965-66*, pp.23-24)

The Archaeological Research Society was established in 1962, and research tours were organized for students in conjunction with the subject **(**Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 4*, 1962, pp. 32-33). In 1964, the Archaeological Research Society published the *Puravidya* (Archaeology) journal, edited by Karunadasa Welivita. The following is an excerpt from its editorial note:

> "I wish to present an important recommendation for our university: Archaeology, which is currently offered only at the undergraduate level, be introduced as a formal subject in the University Entrance Examination.
>
> Archaeology is deeply interconnected with the study of History, the Sinhala language, and Sinhala Buddhist culture. Recognizing it at the entrance level would help ensure that students admitted to the university possess a stronger and more relevant academic foundation for advanced study in these disciplines. It would also encourage early intellectual engagement with the cultural and historical heritage that forms a central part of our national identity.
>
> For this proposal to be effectively implemented, the full cooperation and support of the Department of Education will be essential. With coordinated effort and institutional commitment, this initiative could significantly enhance the academic preparedness of future undergraduates and strengthen the overall quality of scholarship within the university".
>
> (Welivita, *Editorial Note*, 1964)

Research and Lexicography: Pali and Sinhala Literature

The Sri Lanka Vidyodaya University Review (*Sri Lanka Vidyodaya Vishvavidyalaya Sangrahaya*), a scholarly journal dedicated to the research of the academic staff, was inaugurated in 1960. From its inception, the university prioritized formal research by establishing a dedicated Research Unit, which undertook the monumental task of compiling both a Pali Dictionary and a Glossary of Proper Names in Sinhala Literature.

The Research Unit was initially directed by the Most Venerable Welivitiye Pemaratana Nayaka Thero, a distinguished lecturer of the Vidyodaya Pirivena. Following his demise, Venerable Panamgala Jinaratana Thero was appointed as the Chief Director. Under this leadership, the unit conducted an exhaustive survey of over one hundred Sinhala texts published up to the Matara era. This meticulous process resulted in the extraction of approximately 45,000 proper names, which were systematically indexed in alphabetical order.

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, pp. 57-58)

In the 1963/1964 academic year, the Education Society published an annual journal titled *Adhyapanaya* (Education). Furthermore, an educational conference was held from July 9 to July 11, 1964. This conference, themed "Education for International Understanding," was conducted with the sponsorship of the United States Information Service (USIS) (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 6*, 1963-64, p. 37).

Identifying the Ancient Name of Rajagala (Rassagala)

The following report, submitted by the Most Venerable Handupelpola Puñ̃naratana Nayaka Thero in his capacity as Acting Professor of History, details the results of the 1962 field research:

"The historical identity of the site popularly known as Rassagala (Rajagala) within the antiquity-rich region of Digamadulla has now been definitively established. Collaborative research conducted by the Department of History and Archaeology, supported by the discovery of new epigraphical evidence, confirms that these extensive ruins complex is the Girikumbhigala Vihara. This identification aligns with the *Mahavamsa*, which attributes the foundation of the vihara to King Lakatisa [Lajjatissa]."

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 4*, 1962, p. 24)

The Geography Society was established in 1960 and organized two significant field trips. The first was to the Hydraulics Laboratory in Jawatta, and the second was to observe the Meteorological Laboratory. Additionally, the society conducted the following three special lectures:

1. The Ten-Year Plan – Dr. Kularatnam
2. The Geology of Polonnaruwa – Dr. Vitanage
3. Mineral Resources of Sri Lanka – Mr. Abeykoon (Department of Mineralogy)

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, pp. 40-41)

The Geography Society also awarded the annual "Abhayagunawardena Prize" to the student who achieved the highest marks in Geography at the final examination. Furthermore, to assist with learning in the department, several films were screened with the sponsorship of the British Broadcasting Service, including *Antarctic Crossing*, *An English Village*, and *Hey Wedding* (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 3*, 1961, pp. 24-25).

Discontinuation of the "Modern Sinhala" General Degree Course

The Modern Sinhala General Degree programme, originally inaugurated by Professor Wimal G. Balagalle, was discontinued by 1963. The programme's trajectory was closely tied to its key faculty members; while Professor Balagalle had personally managed student admissions for the 1960 and 1961 academic years, his departure led to a transition in leadership. Subsequently, Lecturer Nandasena Ratnapala oversaw the admission of a batch in 1962 before departing for Germany to pursue postgraduate research. Following this final intake, the university ceased further admissions, leading to the programme's eventual conclusion.

(Ritigahapola, 2017, p. 42)

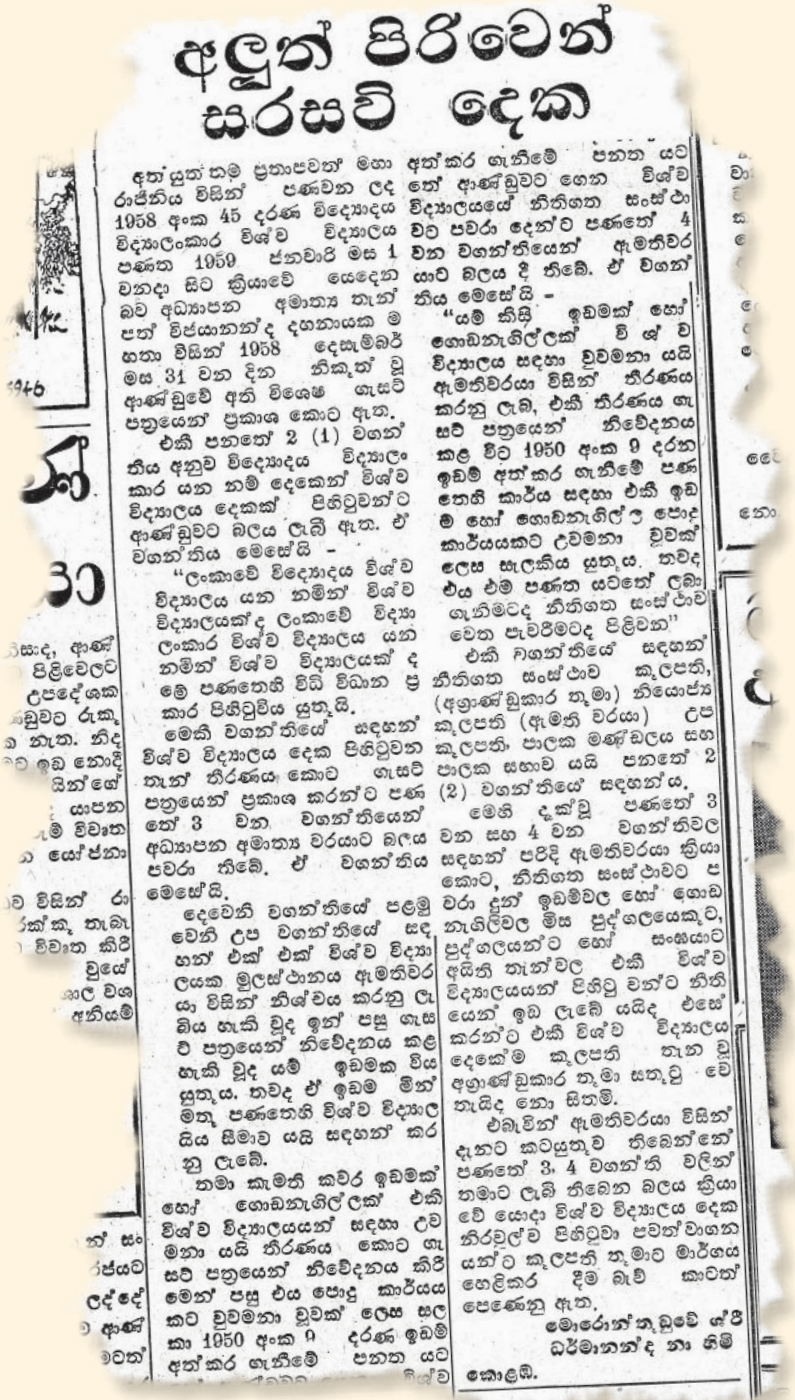
The third volume of the *Sarasaviya* journal, released during the 1963–64 academic year, was officially recognized as a publication of the monk Students' Union of Vidyodaya University. Edited by Venerable Nettipola Saddharama Thero and Venerable Imbulgoda Pannasobhana Thero, the journal served as a significant platform for monastic scholarship (Saddharama Thero et al., 1963–64, *Editorial Note*). However, by the publication of the fifth volume in 1965–66, the journal's affiliation had shifted, becoming the annual publication of the Lay Students' Union of Sri Lanka Vidyodaya University (Lokuwithana, 1965–66, p. 3).

Beyond these student union publications, the university fostered a prolific academic culture through various subject-specific societies. These organizations produced a range of quarterly, tri-annual, and annual journals, most notably *Patibhana*, and the *Bauddha Sangrahaya* published by the Buddhist Society. Historical and social scientific inquiry was further supported by journals such as *Itihasa Sangrahaya* and *Itihasa Lipi* (History Society), *Manava Vidya* (Anthropology Society), *Arthikavidya* (Economics Society), *Bhugolavidya* (Geography Society), and the interdisciplinary *Samajaya ha Parisaraya* (Society and Environment).

1.1.7 Infrastructure

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the academic and administrative activities of the university were initially conducted within the premises of Vidyodaya Pirivena in Maligakanda. Due to the limited space available there, the university administration decided to relocate to a different site. Following the proposal for a fully equipped, independent university, a request was made for a 5-acre plot of land on Bullers Road, Colombo. This request was approved by the then Minister of Education, Wijayananda Dahanayake, and the Minister of Cultural Affairs, Jayaweera Kuruppu (*Dinamina*, February 11, 1959).

However, a 25-acre plot of land in Gangodawila, Nugegoda, was eventually acquired for the construction of the university via a Gazette notification on July 20, 1959 (Balagalle, 1984, 202). This land was acquired by transferring a coconut estate of equal size belonging



අලුත් පිරිවෙන් සරසවි දෙක

අත්‌යුත්තම් ප්‍රතාපවත් මහා රාජ්‍යතිය විසින් පණවන ලද 1958 අංක 45 දරණ විද්‍යෝදය විද්‍යාලංකාර විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය පණත 1959 ජනවාරි මස 1 වනදා සිට ක්‍රියාවේ යෙදෙන බව අධ්‍යාපන අමාත්‍ය තැන් පත් විජයානන්ද දහනායක මහතා විසින් 1958 දෙසැම්බර් මස 31 වන දින නිකුත් වූ ආණ්ඩුවේ අති විශෙෂ ගැසට් පත්‍රයෙන් ප්‍රකාශ කොට ඇත.

එකී පනතේ 2 (1) වගන්තිය අනුව විද්‍යෝදය විද්‍යාලංකාර යන නම් දෙකෙන් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය දෙකක් පිහිටුවන්ට ආණ්ඩුවට බලය ලැබී ඇත. ඒ වගන්තිය මෙසේයි -

"ලංකාවේ විද්‍යෝදය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය යන නමින් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයක් ද ලංකාවේ විද්‍යාලංකාර විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය යන නමින් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයක් ද මේ පණතෙහි විධි විධාන ප්‍රකාර පිහිටුවිය යුතුයි.

මෙකී වගන්තියේ සඳහන් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය දෙක පිහිටුවන තැන් තීරණය කොට ගැසට් පත්‍රයෙන් ප්‍රකාශ කරන්ට පණතේ 3 වන වගන්තියෙන් අධ්‍යාපන අමාත්‍ය වරයාට බලය පවරා තිබේ. ඒ වගන්තිය මෙසේයි.

දෙවෙනි වගන්තියේ පළමු වෙනි උප වගන්තියේ සඳහන් එක් එක් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයක මූලස්ථානය ඇමතිවරයා විසින් නිශ්චය කරනු ලැබිය හැකි වූද ඉන් පසු ගැසට් පත්‍රයෙන් නිවේදනය කළ හැකි වූද යම් ඉඩමක විය යුතුය. තවද ඒ ඉඩම මීන් මතු පණතෙහි විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය යි සඳහන් කරනු ලැබේ.

තමා කැමති කවර ඉඩමක් හෝ ගොඩනැගිල්ලක් එකී විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයයන් සඳහා උචිත මනා යයි තීරණය කොට ගැසට් පත්‍රයෙන් නිවේදනය කිරීමෙන් පසු එය පොදු කාර්යයකට චූවමනා චූවක් ලෙස සලකා 1950 අංක 9 දරණ ඉඩම් අත්කර ගැනීමේ පනත යට අත්කර ගැනීමේ පනත යට තේ ආණ්ඩුවට ගෙන විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයයේ නීතිගත සංස්ථාව පවරා දෙන්ට පණතේ 4 වන වගන්තියෙන් ඇමතිවරයාට බලය දී තිබේ. ඒ වගන්තිය මෙසේයි -

"යම් කිසි ඉඩමක් හෝ ගොඩනැගිල්ලක් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය සඳහා චූවමනා යයි ඇමතිවරයා විසින් තීරණය කරනු ලැබ, එකී තීරණය ගැසට් පත්‍රයෙන් නිවේදනය කළ විට 1950 අංක 9 දරන ඉඩම් අත්කර ගැනීමේ පණතෙහි කාර්ය සඳහා එකී ඉඩම හෝ ගොඩනැගිල්ල පොදු කාර්යයකට චූවමනා චූවක් ලෙස සැලකිය යුතුය. තවද එය එම පණත යටතේ ලබා ගැනීමටද නීතිගත සංස්ථාවෙත පැවරීමටද පිළිවන"

එකී වගන්තියේ සඳහන් නීතිගත සංස්ථාව කුලපති, (අග්‍රාණ්ඩුකාර තුමා) නියෝජ්‍ය කුලපති (ඇමති වරයා) උප කුලපති, පාලක මණ්ඩලය සහ පාලක සභාව යයි පනතේ 2 (2) වගන්තියේ සඳහන්ය.

මෙහි දැක්වූ පණතේ 3 වන සහ 4 වන වගන්තිවල සඳහන් පරිදි ඇමතිවරයා ක්‍රියා කොට, නීතිගත සංස්ථාවට පවරා දුන් ඉඩම්වල හෝ ගොඩනැගිලිවල මිස පුද්ගලයෙකුට, පුද්ගලයන්ට හෝ සංගමයාට අයිති තැන්වල එකී විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයයන් පිහිටු වන්ට නීති යෙන් ඉඩ ලැබේ යයිද එසේ කරන්ට එකී විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය දෙකේම කුලපති තැන වූ අග්‍රාණ්ඩුකාර තුමා සතුටු වෙ නැයිද නොසිතමි.

එබැවින් ඇමතිවරයා විසින් දැනට කටයුතු්ව තිබෙන්නේ පණතේ 3, 4 වගන්ති වලින් තමාට ලැබී තිබෙන බලය ක්‍රියා වේ යොදා විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය දෙක නිරවුල්ව පිහිටුවා පවත්වාගන යන්ට කුලපති තුමාට මාර්ගය හෙළිකර දීම බව් කාටත් පෙණෙනු ඇත.

මොරොන්තුඩුවේ ශ්‍රී ධර්මානන්ද නා හිමි

කොළඹ.

(*Dinamina*, March 14, 1959)

to the university to the Sunethradevi Pirivena as compensation (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966-67*, 1968, p.28). The Vice-Chancellor, Most Venerable Welivitiye Soratha Nayaka Thero, reported on this matter to the first and second sessions of the Court as follows:

> "Our primary objective was to secure a land suitable for the construction of facilities essential to the university's efficient operation. Following an extensive period of surveying various sites, arrangements were finalized to acquire twenty-five acres in the village of Gangodawila. I wish to acknowledge with profound gratitude the Most Venerable Medagoda Sumanatissa Thero, Chief Incumbent of the Pepiliyana Sunethradevi Pirivena Rajamaha Vihara, who graciously consented to provide twenty-five acres from the estate known as *Karapinchagaha-Kurunduwatta* for the university's permanent campus. Consequently, the preliminary legal notification for the government's acquisition of this land was published in the Government Gazette on July 20 by the Honourable Minister of Education."
>
> (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 1*, 1959, p. v)

"The land acquired by the Ministry of Education was formally transferred to the University on 12 January 1960. However, approximately 11.5 acres of this property had been acquired several years earlier by the Government for the Department of Social Services. From the outset of our acquisition efforts, we repeatedly appealed to the Minister of Cultural Affairs and the officials of that Department to release this portion for university use. It is regrettable that these requests have thus far not received a favourable response. In addition to the principal twenty-five-acre tract, a further two-acre plot of land directly in front of the site was also secured. Arrangements have since been completed to incorporate an adjoining one-acre plot and a nearby 6.5-acre tract into the University grounds, and the formal

transfer of these lands is expected shortly. Upon consolidation of all acquisitions, the University's total land area will extend to approximately thirty-four acres".

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report*, *Session 2*, 1960, p. 5)

The land in Gangodawila, Nugegoda, mentioned here, which was part of the property belonging to the Papiliyana Sunethradevi Pirivena, was established by King Parakramabahu VI during the Kotte Kingdom era (1415–1565 CE) in honour of his mother, Sunethradevi. At that time, this Pirivena was renowned throughout the country as a primary centre for transcribing manuscripts, focusing primarily on the *Tripitaka* (Ariyaratne, 2009, p. 59). Venerable Welivitiye Soratha Nayaka Thero stated that while the university could be moved to a different location, the Pirivena premises and its buildings should continue to be managed by the University Council (*Dinamina*, February 11, 1959). He further mentioned that until the university buildings were constructed, the Pirivena Classes would be held at Nalanda College, Colombo: space would be provided again within the Maligakanda buildings for teaching activities (*Dinamina*, February 11, 1959). Accordingly, the academic activities of the Pirivena were conducted within 10 classrooms at Nalanda College after regular school hours.

In the design and construction of the university buildings, Venerable Soratha Thero was deliberate in his decision not to adopt the University of Peradeniya as a model. Given the limited nature of state funding, his objective was to design structures that, while devoid of elaborate carvings and ornamentation, maintained an aesthetic elegance and offered maximum functional utility. To achieve this, he turned his attention toward the contemporary university architecture then emerging in India. Consequently, a study tour to India was organized with great urgency to observe these modern structural designs.

The study tour took place on December 1, 1959. The delegation included the architects Panditarathne and Adithiya, representing their architectural firm, alongside Venerable Soratha Thero, Professor Wimal G. Balagalle, and Assistant Registrar D. J. Kumarage, representing the university. Inspired by this visit, the university's main building, the Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Nayaka Thero Mandiraya, was modelled on the library building then under construction at Kerala University (Balagalle, 1984, p. 202). A key catalyst for this development was the Ministry of Education's decision to allocate 40,000 rupees for new buildings at both Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara universities (*Dinamina*, March 24, 1959). Construction commenced after Dr. Ananda Guruge, at the invitation of the Vice-Chancellor, cut the first sod in a ceremonial event held at an auspicious time on the morning of January 18, 1960, following an all-night *Pirith* chanting ceremony.

The expenditure for the construction projects at the Gangodawila campus, along with the funding received from the government, was categorized into Capital Expenditure and Recurrent Expenditure, as detailed below.

Project / Building	Estimated Cost (Rs.)
Acquisition of Land (35 Acres)	300,000.00
Gnaneshwara Mandiraya (11 classrooms, 3 floors)	400,000.00
Bandaranayake Memorial Hall	125,000.00
Press Building (2 floors)	120,000.00
Vinethru Mandiraya (2 floors)	168,569.77
Chancellor's Residence (2 floors)	49,108.71
Rathanasara Mandiraya (8 classrooms, 3 floors)	400,000.00
Sri Sumangala Mandiraya (5 floors)	3,500,000.00
Dining & Common Room (2 floors)	450,000.00
2 Student Hostels (3 floors each - under construction)	900,000.00

Year	Capital Grant (Rs.)	Recurrent Grant (Rs.)
1958 - 59	500,000.00	500,000.00
1959 - 60	500,000.00	1,500,000.00
1960 - 61	1,875,000.00	1,385,185.00
1961 - 62	500,000.00	1,454,445.00
1962 - 63	1,500,000.00	1,508,157.00
1963 - 64	2,125,000.00	1,600,000.00

(Saddharama Thero et al., 1963–64, p. 125)

Foundation-Stone Laying Ceremony

The foundation-stone laying ceremony for the university buildings took place on August 07, 1960, the same day as the first convocation. The stones were laid by the following dignitaries:

- **Vihara Mandiraya (Shrine Room):** Most Venerable Purijjala Sri Siddhartha Saranangkara Mahanayaka Thero, Advisor to the Malwatta Chapter.
- **Sri Sumangala Statue:** Most Venerable Yatawatte Sri Dhammaratana Mahanayaka Thero of the Asgiriya Chapter.
- **Anagarika Dharmapala Mandiraya:** Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, the Governor-General.
- **Sri Rathanasara Mandiraya:** Al-Haj Badi-ud-din Mahmud, Minister of Education.

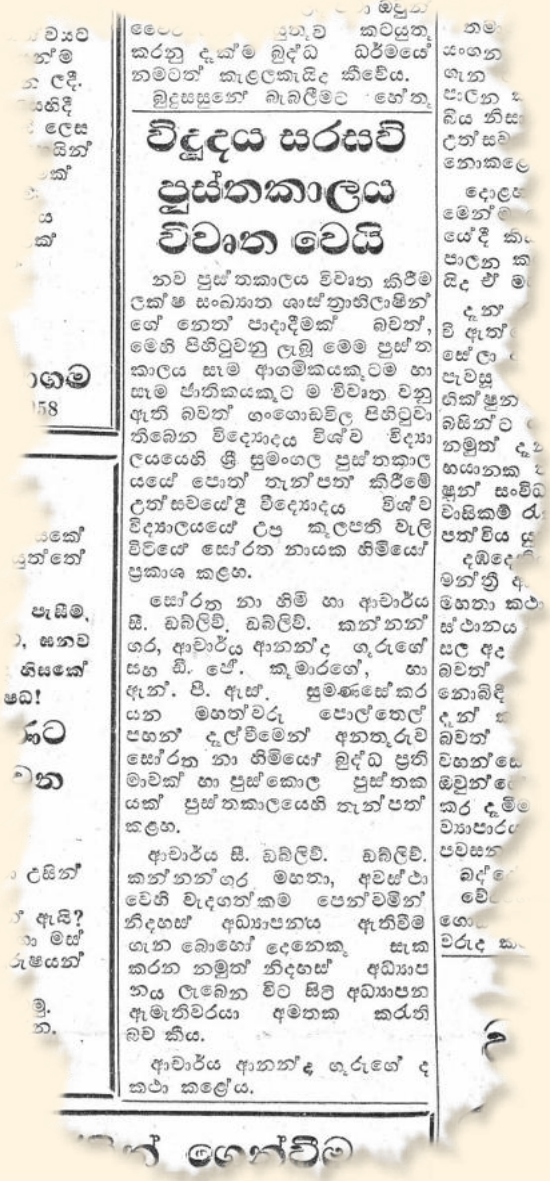
  Note: Following a tender process, the contract for constructing this hall was awarded to Jason Fernando & Co. for Rs. 238,836.25.
- **Sri Sumangala Mandiraya:** Bernard A. Gufler, the United States Ambassador.

  Note: After the calling of tenders, the contract for the concrete works of this building, amounting to Rs. 1,054,221.90, was awarded to U. N. Gunasekera & Co.
- **Hewavitharana Mandiraya:** Wimaladharma Hewavitharana.

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 2*, 1960, p. 6)

On September 09, 1961, the university office was relocated to the university premises after renovating an old Royal Air Force (R.A.F.) building that existed on the site (Balagalle, 1984, p. 203). The first library constructed at Vidyodaya University was named *Sri Sumangala Pusthakalaya*. Opened on October 19, 1961, the first books were placed there by the then Vice-Chancellor, Most Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero. When the library was moved to Gangodawila in 1961, its collection consisted of approximately 10,000 books, but by 1966, this had grown to nearly 35,500 volumes. Its value was significantly enhanced by the donation of several private libraries, such as the Mahawalatenna Library, which contained rare and unique collections (Balagalle, 1984, p. 207).

The Sri Sumangala Library was established on the ground floor of the Sri Sumangala Mandiraya. In addition to the library space, the premises were prepared to house a reading hall, an examination hall, and a laboratory (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 3*, 1961, p. 3). The ceremonial entry into the new buildings at the Gangodawila, Nugegoda took place on November 22, 1961, under the patronage of the then Prime Minister, Sirima Bandaranaike. A significant highlight of the day was the opening of the Sri Gnaneshwara Mandiraya, which coincided with the university's second convocation. The Gnaneshwara Mandiraya is a three-storey building with a seating capacity of 720 (Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 3*, 1961, p. 3). From that point onward, the university's academic activities were fully transitioned to the new premises in Gangodawila.



විද්‍යෝදය සරසවි
පුස්තකාලය
විවෘත වෙයි

නව පුස්තකාලය විවෘත කිරීම ලක්ෂ සංඛ්‍යාත ශාස්ත්‍රාභිලාෂීන්ගේ නෙත් පාදාදීමක් බවත්, මෙහි පිහිටුවනු ලැබූ මෙම පුස්තකාලය සෑම ආගමිකයකුටම හා සෑම ජාතිකයකුටම ම විවෘත වනු ඇති බවත් ගංගොඩවිල පිහිටුවා තිබෙන විද්‍යෝදය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයෙහි ශ්‍රී සුමංගල පුස්තකාලයේ පොත් තැන්පත් කිරීමේ උත්සවයේදී විද්‍යෝදය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ උප කුලපති වැලිවිටියේ සෝරත නායක හිමියෝ ප්‍රකාශ කළහ.

සෝරත නා හිමි හා ආචාර්ය සී. ඩබ්ලිව්. ඩබ්ලිව්. කන්නන්ගර, ආචාර්ය ආනන්ද ගුරුගේ සහ ඩී. ජේ. කුමාරගේ, හා ඇන්. පී. ඇස්. සුමණසේකර යන මහත්වරු පොල්තෙල් පහන් දැල්වීමෙන් අනතුරුව සෝරත නා හිමියෝ බුද්ධ ප්‍රතිමාවක් හා පුස්කොළ පුස්තකයක් පුස්තකාලයෙහි තැන්පත් කළහ.

ආචාර්ය සී. ඩබ්ලිව්. ඩබ්ලිව්. කන්නන්ගර මහතා, අවශ්‍යතාවෙහි වැදගත්කම පෙන්වමින් නිදහස් අධ්‍යාපනය ඇතිවීම ගැන බොහෝ දෙනෙකු සැක කරන නමුත් නිදහස් අධ්‍යාපනය ලැබෙන විට සිටි අධ්‍යාපන ඇමැතිවරයා අමතක කරන්නේ බව කීය.

ආචාර්ය ආනන්ද ගුරුගේ ද කථා කළේය.

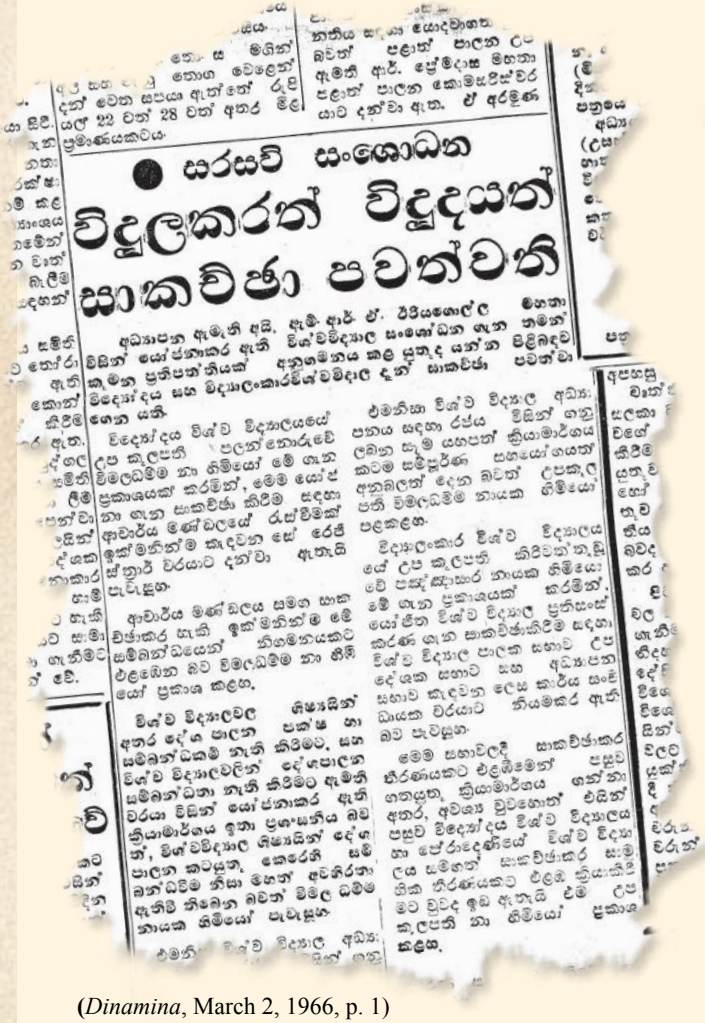
(*Dinamina*, October 20, 1961, p.7)

1.2. The Second Phase: 1966–1972
Faculties of Buddhist Studies, Languages, and Arts

1.2.1. Introduction

The Vidyodaya University and Vidyalankara University Act, No. 45 of 1958, which had been in force since the establishment of the University, was repealed with the enactment of the Higher Education Act, No. 20 of 1966, which came into effect on 1 October 1966. With this legislative shift, the *Vidyagoshtti*, which had served as the university's primary administrative structure, was dissolved, and the authority to supervise the university and advise the Minister on matters of higher education was vested in the newly established National Council of Higher Education. This National Council was inaugurated following legislation passed under the leadership of I. M. R. A. Iriyagolla, who served as the Minister of Education in the Dudley Senanayake administration of 1965.

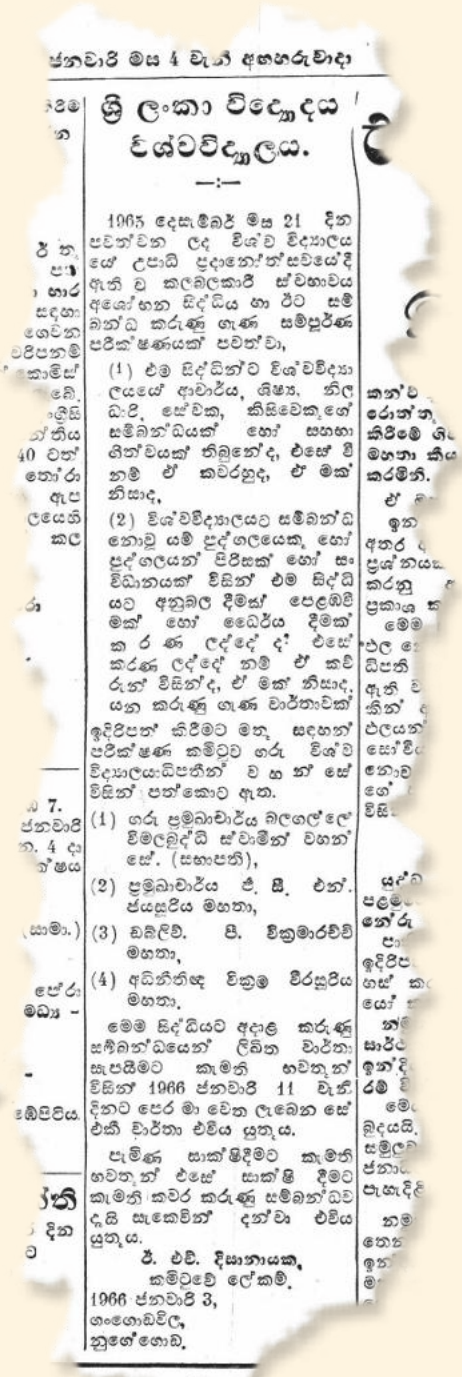
Several key factors contributed to the introduction of the aforementioned restructuring Act. From 1964 onward, intermittent strikes and student protests gradually escalated into direct confrontations involving both lay and monk students. During the 1965 convocation ceremony, the then Minister of Education, I. M. R. A. Iriyagolla, encountered strong opposition from the student body (Ariyaratne, 2009, p. 77). Incidents of this nature directly contributed to the enactment of the Higher Education Act, No. 20 of 1966, which sought to restructure and bring greater regulatory oversight to the system of higher education.



සරසවි සංශෝධන

විදුලකරන් විදුදයන් සාකච්ඡා පවත්වති

(*Dinamina*, March 2, 1966, p. 1)



ජනවාරි මස 4 වැනි අහඹරුවාදා

ශ්‍රී ලංකා විද්‍යෝදය විශ්වවිද්‍යාලය.

—:—

1965 දෙසැම්බර් මස 21 දින පවත්වන ලද විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ උපාධි ප්‍රදානෝත්සවයේදී ඇති ව කලබලකාරී ස්වභාවය අගෝහන සිද්ධිය හා ඊට සම්බන්ධ කරුණු ගැන සම්පූර්ණ පරීක්ෂණයක් පවත්වා,

(1) එම සිද්ධින්ට විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයයේ ආචාර්ය, ශිෂ්‍ය, නිල ධාරී, සේවක, කිසිවෙකුගේ සම්බන්ධයක් හෝ සහභාගිත්වයක් තිබුනේද, එසේ වී නම් ඒ කවරහුද, ඒ මක් නිසාද,

(2) විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයට සම්බන්ධ නොවූ යම් පුද්ගලයෙකු, හෝ පුද්ගලයන් පිරිසක් හෝ සංවිධානයක් විසින් එම සිද්ධියට අනුබල දීමක් පෙළඹවීමක් හෝ ධෛර්ය දීමක් කරණ ලද්දේ ද? එසේ කරණ ලද්දේ නම් ඒ කවුරුන් විසින්ද, ඒ මක් නිසාද, යන කරුණු ගැන වාර්තාවක්

ඉදිරිපත් කිරීමට මෙතැ සඳහන් පරීක්ෂණ කමිටුව ගරු විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයාධිපතීන් වහන්සේ විසින් පත්කොට ඇත.

(1) ගරු ප්‍රමුඛාචාර්ය බලගල්ලේ විමලබුද්ධි ස්වාමීන් වහන්සේ. (සභාපති),

(2) ප්‍රමුඛාචාර්ය ඒ. සී. එන්. ජයසූරිය මහතා,

(3) ඩබ්ලිව්. පී. වික්‍රමාරච්චි මහතා,

(4) අධිනිතිඥ වික්‍රම වීරසූරිය මහතා.

මෙම සිද්ධියට අදාළ කරුණු සම්බන්ධයෙන් ලිඛිත වාර්තා සැපයීමට කැමති භවතුන් විසින් 1966 ජනවාරි 11 වැනි දිනට පෙර මා වෙත ලැබෙන සේ එකී වාර්තා එවිය යුතුය.

පැමිණ සාක්ෂි දීමට කැමති භවතුන් එසේ සාක්ෂි දීමට කැමති කවර කරුණු සම්බන්ධව දැයි සැකෙවින් දන්වා එවිය යුතුය.

ඊ. එච්. දිසානායක,
කමිටුවේ ලේකම්.

1966 ජනවාරි 3,
ගංගොඩවිල,
නුගේගොඩ.

(*Dinamina*, January 4, 1966, p.3)

Under these new reforms, Vidyodaya University was decoupled from its traditional *pirivena* (monastic) institutional model. Consequently, the university was opened to all qualified students regardless of gender, and in the 1966/1967 academic year, the institution admitted its first batch of 500 female internal students. Furthermore, the office of Vice-Chancellor was made accessible to both laypersons and the Buddhist monks (Balagalle, 1984, p. 209), with the total student enrolment for that year reaching 1,896 (Ariyaratne, 2009, p.78).

Significant structural changes were also introduced to the faculties and departments. The Faculty of *Samaya* (also known as the Faculty of Philosophy) was dissolved, and its constituent departments were integrated into the Faculty of Buddhist Studies. Accordingly, by 1966, the total number of faculties was merged into three: Buddhist Studies, Languages, and Arts (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966–67*, 1968, pp. 3–4).

Following the 1966 restructuring, the leadership of the newly merged faculties was established as follows:

- Faculty of Languages
  Dean: Professor Wimal G. Balagalle
  (Note: No change was made to the incumbency of this position.)
- Faculty of Arts
  Dean: Professor Hema Ellawala
  (Note: No change was made to the incumbency of this position.)
- Faculty of Buddhist Studies
  Dean: Venerable Professor Kotagama Wachissara Thero
  (Note: Appointed to the Professorship of Buddhist Culture in 1967.)

(Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966–67*, 1968, pp. 3–6)

The Pirivena Act to the Higher Education Act

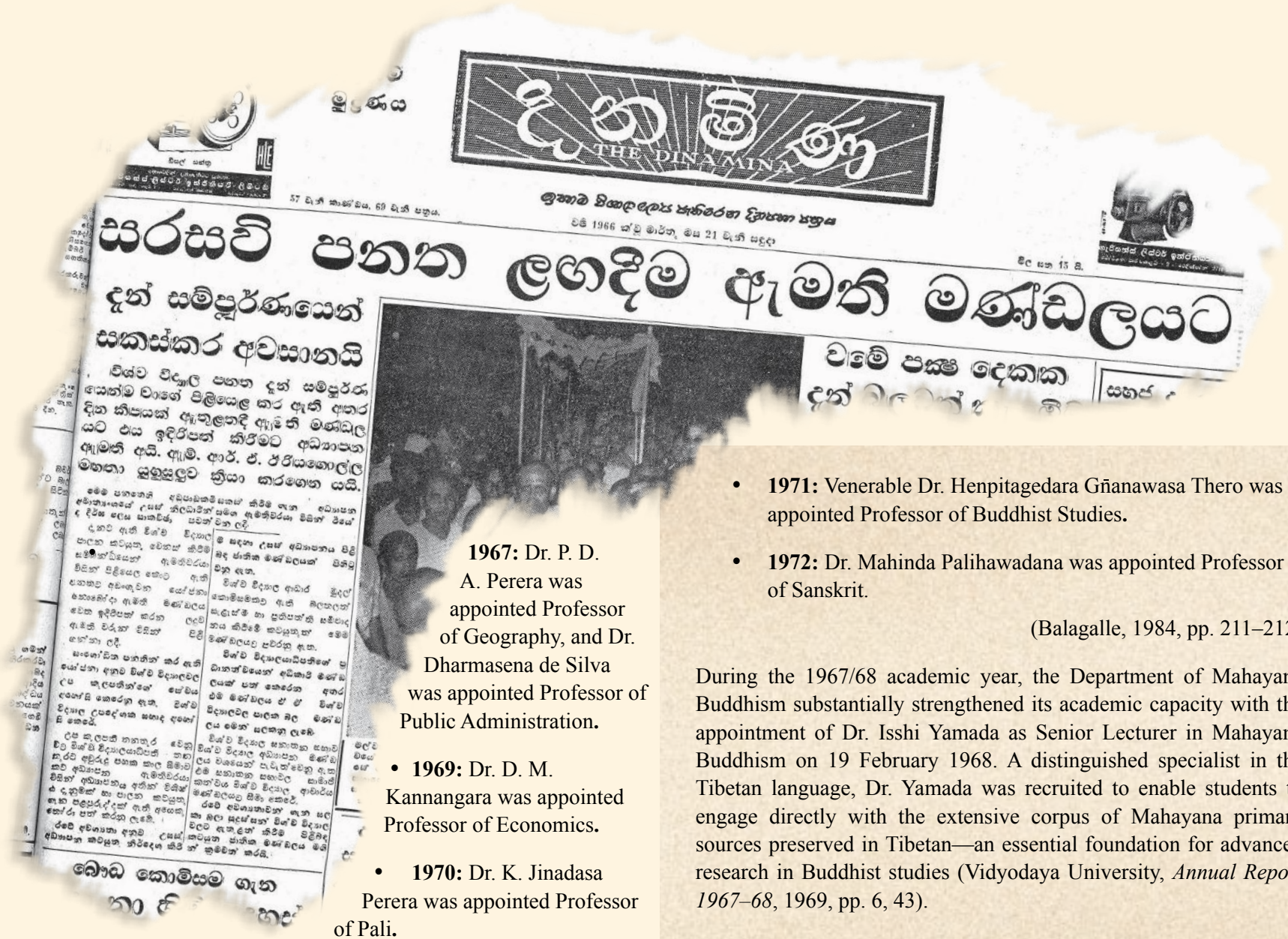
"Hitherto, the three universities in Sri Lanka were governed under two separate statutes: the Ceylon University Ordinance, No. 20 of 1942, and the Vidyodaya University and Vidyalankara University Act, No. 45 of 1958. This new Bill is introduced with the vital objective of unifying higher education through the establishment of a National Council, and to provide for the regulation, maintenance, and administration of higher educational institutions and all ancillary matters related thereto."

(Ranasinghe, 1970, p. 7)

1.2.2 The Academic Staff

Following the implementation of the 1966 Act, the Minister appointed Venerable Dr. Walpola Rahula Thero as the university's first Vice-Chancellor under the new legislative framework (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966–67,* 1968, p. 10). Following his resignation in July 1969, Professor D. E. Hettiarachchi, a senior academic from the University of Ceylon, was appointed to the office. Upon his subsequent resignation in October 1970, Professor Hema Ellawala was appointed as the new Vice-Chancellor. Professor Ellawala was a pioneering academic who had been recruited for the subject of History at the university's inception; his appointment marked the first instance of a lay Dean ascending to the position of Vice-Chancellor.

The vacancy in the office of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, created by Professor Ellawala's promotion, was filled by Professor L. G. Hewage. During this period, several key professorial appointments were made to strengthen the academic departments:



- **1967:** Dr. P. D. A. Perera was appointed Professor of Geography, and Dr. Dharmasena de Silva was appointed Professor of Public Administration**.**
- **1969:** Dr. D. M. Kannangara was appointed Professor of Economics**.**
- **1970:** Dr. K. Jinadasa Perera was appointed Professor of Pali**.**
- **1971:** Venerable Dr. Henpitagedara Gñanawasa Thero was appointed Professor of Buddhist Studies**.**
- **1972:** Dr. Mahinda Palihawadana was appointed Professor of Sanskrit.

(Balagalle, 1984, pp. 211–212)

During the 1967/68 academic year, the Department of Mahayana Buddhism substantially strengthened its academic capacity with the appointment of Dr. Isshi Yamada as Senior Lecturer in Mahayana Buddhism on 19 February 1968. A distinguished specialist in the Tibetan language, Dr. Yamada was recruited to enable students to engage directly with the extensive corpus of Mahayana primary sources preserved in Tibetan—an essential foundation for advanced research in Buddhist studies (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68*, 1969, pp. 6, 43).

However, the administrative reforms introduced under the 1966 Act also resulted in a number of institutional closures and personnel changes. The post of Curator of the Archaeological Museum was abolished, thereby bringing the service of Leelananda Caldera to an end (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966–67,* 1968, p. 53). Likewise, the appointments of the long-serving Student Counsellors were terminated under the new legislative framework (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966–67*, 1968, p. 48). In addition, the Department of History experienced the resignation of Lecturer L. Wickramaratne, who left on 30 March 1968 to assume a position at the University of Peradeniya (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68,* 1969, p. 53).

Faculty of Buddhist Studies

Dean: Venerable Professor Kotagama Wachissara Thero (1968)

- Department of Theravada Buddhist Studies

  Head of Department: Venerable Professor Kotagama Wachissara Thero (1966–1968)

  Lecturer: Venerable Pandita Mirisse Gunasiri Thero (1959–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: Pandita S. Weerasinghe (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: Venerable Medagampola Sumanasantha Thero (1968)

  Student Counsellor/Lecturer: Venerable Makandure Dhammarakkhitha Thero (1965–1968)

- Department of Mahayana Buddhist Studies

  Head of Department: Venerable Lecturer Demunumeye Gnanaratana Thero (1965–1968)

- Department of Buddhist Culture

  Assistant Lecturer: Venerable Pandita Wekada Indasumana Nayaka Thero (1965–1967)

- Department of Indian Philosophy

  Assistant Lecturer: Venerable Pandita Parawahera Pragnananda Thero (1965–1967)

- Department of Western Philosophy

  Head of Department: External Lecturer A. M. M. Sahabdeen (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: G. D. K. Nanayakkara (1965–1968)

Faculty of Languages

Dean: Professor Wimal G. Balagalle (1965–1968)

- Department of Sinhala

  Head of Department: Professor Wimal G. Balagalle (1959–1968)

  Lecturer: Dr. A. V. Suraweera (1960–1968)

  Lecturer: Pandita T. B. Kangaha Arachchi (1960–1968)

  Lecturer: V. H. Vitharana (1960–1968)

  Lecturer: D. S. Nanayakkara (1965–1968)

  Lecturer: B. Nandasena Ratnapala (1960–1968)

  Lecturer: Venerable Hundirapola Rathanajothi Thero (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: H. M. Gunatilake (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: Pandita Wimal Wijayasooriya (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: Tissa Kariyawasam (1967–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: Venerable Gathare Dharmapala Thero (1968)

- Department of Pali and Prakrit

  Head of Department: Venerable Lecturer Henpitagedara Gnanawasa Thero (1965–1968)

  Lecturer: Dr. K. Jinadasa Perera (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: L. P. N. Perera (1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: Venerable Pandita Puhulwelle Wimalawansa Thero (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: Venerable Rathmale Ananda Thero (1965–1968)

- Department of Sanskrit

  Head of Department: Lecturer M. Palihawadana (1965–1968)

  Lecturer: S. Weeratunga (1960–1968)

  Lecturer: Venerable Weligama Seelananda Thero (1965–1968)

  Student Counsellor: Venerable Kaluwachchimulle Mahanama Thero (1965–1968)

- Department of Modern Oriental Languages (Tamil Unit)

  Head of Department: Lecturer M. M. Uwise (1959–1987)

  Assistant Lecturer: K. Sivathamby (1965–1968)

- Department of Western Studies (English)

  Assistant Lecturer: A. J. Gunawardena (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: D. C. R. Gunatilleke (1968)

  Instructors: N. B. Sri Gunawardena (1965–1968)

  P. N. C. Perera (1965–1968)

  R. A. V. Dharmasena (1965–1968)

  Premachandra Wijesinghe (1965–1968)

  U. C. Wickramasinghe (1965–1968)

  D. Rodrigo (1968)

Faculty of Arts

Dean: Professor Hema Ellawala (1966–1968)

- Department of History
- Head of Department: Professor Hema Ellawala (Served since 1959; HOD 1965–1968)

  Lecturer: Dr. W. M. K. Wijetunga (1965–1968)

  Lecturer: Mendis Rohanadeera (1965–1968)

  Lecturer: L. A. Wickramaratne (1965–1968)

  Lecturer:D. B. H. Alahakoon (1965–1968)

  Lecturer:H. B. Rambukpotha (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturers: P. V. J. Jayasekera (1965–1968)

  Asoka Kalegama (1966–1968)

  D. Wesumperuma (1965–1968)

  Venerable Kahadenigama Jinaratana Thero (1965–1968)

  H. G. Charles (1965–1968)

- Department of Archaeology

  Head of Department: Lecturer Abaya Aryasinghe (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: Venerable Kamburupitiye Vanaratna Thero (1965–1968)

  Curator: Leelananda Caldera (1965–1967)

- Department of Anthropology

  Head of Department: Lecturer U. A. Gunasekara (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturer: W. J. S. Karunaratne (1967)

- Department of Economics

  Senior Leadership: Professor Linus Silva (1959–1961)

  Head of Department: Lecturer Dharmasena de Silva (Acting Head in 1968; served 1965–1967)

  Lecturers: N. A. Gampola (1965–1968), K. T. R. de Silva (1965–1968), H. D. B. Karunatilake (1960–1968), and K. A. Munasinghe (1965–1967)

  Assistant Lecturers: T. A. D. Sirisena (1965–1967) and B. W. Dissanayake (1965–1968)

- Department of Public and Business Administration

  Head of Department: Lecturer Dharmasena de Silva (1968)

  Senior Lecturer: Dr. G. H. Wadinambiarachchi (1968)

  Lecturers: Dr. T. A. D. Sirisena and K. A. Munasinghe (Both appointed 1968; served since 1965)

  Assistant Lecturers: W. M. Jayaratne, G. H. M. Wijayawardhana, and M. W. Wickramarachchi (All 1968)

- Department of Geography

  Head of Department: Dr. P. D. A. Perera (Served since 1960; HOD 1965–1968)

  Lecturer: N. P. Perera (1965–1968)

  Assistant Lecturers: S. C. A. B. Attanayake, M. M. Karunanayake, D. U. Hewapathirana, Y. A. D. Wanasinghe, C. Siyambalapitiya, and B. P. S. Tennakoon (All served through 1968)

- Department of Education

  Head of Department: Professor L. G. Hewage (1965–1968)
  Lecturers: D. Arampatta (1965–1968) and R. D. E. Jayasekera (1968)

  Assistant Lecturers: K. H. M. Sumathipala, D. G. W. Gunapala, B. S. Siriwardena, S. A. Gunasekara, D. Manawadu, M. G. Nandadasa, and S. J. Perera (All served through 1968)

- Department of Law

  Lecturer: W. S. Weerasooria (1965–1968)

  (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966; 1967*, pp. 74–80, pp. 88–95)

Publication of *Vichithi*

In 1966, a dedicated editorial board comprising lecturers from Sri Lanka Vidyodaya University inaugurated the publication of a journal titled *Vichithi*. Funded entirely by the editorial members themselves, the journal was established as a four-monthly scholarly publication catering to academic disciplines within the university system.

The inaugural editorial and management board consisted of the following members:

- Professor Wimal G. Balagalle (Department of Sinhala)
- Lecturer M. H. Gunatilake (Managing Editor; Department of Sinhala)
- Senior Lecturer Dr. A. V. Suraweera (Department of Sinhala)
- Professor Hema Ellawala (Chief Treasurer; Department of History)
- Lecturer D. C. R. A. Goonatilake
- Senior Lecturer Lakshman Waidyashekhera (Faculty of Science)
- Assistant Librarian V. B. Dorakumbura

(Gunathilake, 1966, *Front Pages*)

1.2.3 Degree Programmes and Academic Departments

During the 1966/67 academic year, the Sinhala degree programme held the highest enrolment, with a total of 1,303 registered students. For those pursuing the Sinhala Special (Honours) Degree, study requirements were rigorous; in addition to their primary subjects, both lay and monk students were mandated to study Tamil, Sanskrit, and Pali. Similarly, students enrolled in the History Special (Honours) Degree programme were required to study the Pali language as a core component of their curriculum.

Despite the academic emphasis placed on linguistic proficiency, structural changes were proposed under the new reforms. By 1968, a proposal was tabled to merge the Department of Pali and the Department of Buddhist Studies into a single consolidated academic unit (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68*, 1969, pp. 47–49).

The 1966/67 academic year marked a milestone for the Department of Geography, as it introduced Biogeography as a subject for the first time in Sri Lanka within the Geography Honours degree programme (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966–67*, 1968, pp. 39–57). This period saw a surge in fieldwork and empirical research; notably, it was the first time female students participated in field research in Sri Lanka. Beyond Biogeography, the department expanded its curriculum to include modern trends such as Agricultural Geography, Soil Science, Climatology, Meteorology, and Geology. By 1968, the department had further modernized its infrastructure by establishing both a Cartography Laboratory and a Map Library (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68*, 1969, pp. 59–61).

At that time, Archaeology was taught in only two universities in Sri Lanka. The National Council of Higher Education (NCHE) had obtained a report from Professor Codrington regarding archaeological studies, which suggested that a specialized Department of Archaeology should be established and developed at only one university to consolidate resources. Abaya Aryasinghe, the Head of the Department of Archaeology at Vidyodaya, argued strongly that if the NCHE were to adopt this policy, the Vidyodaya Department of Archaeology should be the chosen centre for excellence, given its eminent position in the field (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68*, 1969, p. 56). The Department of Archaeology distinguished itself by maintaining a specialized archaeological museum and library, known as the *Puravidu Katugeya*, which served as a central hub for academic preservation and study. During this period, the department's practical research capabilities were significantly enhanced through the mentorship of Professor Senarath Paranavithana, who provided expert guidance for various fieldwork initiatives, archaeological excavations, and diverse research projects. These institutional assets and high-level academic oversight positioned the department as a prominent centre for archaeological training within the university system (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68*, 1969, p.78).

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of UNESCO, the Department of Education launched the UNESCO-Vidyodaya Community Education Service in 1966. This initiative undertook several vital socio-economic surveys to bridge the gap between academic research and community needs:

- September 1966: A study of the educational, social, and economic conditions in the Haegodagama area

- August–September 1967: A survey on the flood issues in the Gin Ganga basin (conducted in collaboration with the Department of Geography)
- September 1967: A study of educational and socio-economic conditions in Dikyaya-Badulla
- September 1968: A survey on the relationship between education and the agricultural industry in Baddegama-Ganegama (North)
- General Survey: An investigation into the problems facing Sri Lankan youth and the strategies employed to resolve them

(UNESCO-Vidyodaya Community Education Service, 1968, p.3)

In 1968, the Department of Education launched a pioneering two-year teacher training programme designed to integrate visually impaired students into the general education system. This initiative was a collaborative effort between the Department of Education at Vidyodaya, the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of Sri Lanka, and an organization for the visually impaired in America. Key details of this programme include:

- Leadership and Guidance: The programme was initially conducted under the guidance of Professor R. K. Harley, representing the American institution. Following his tenure, coordination was handled by Francis Weisenfeld.
- Participants: The inaugural group consisted of eight graduate teachers seconded by the Ministry of Education and four students selected by the Department of Education.
- National Survey: Professor Harley conducted a nationwide survey involving the students to estimate the population of visually impaired children in the country who could be integrated into the mainstream school system.
- Specialist Support: Dr. R. Pararajasekaram, an eminent ophthalmologist, contributed his expertise to the programme on a voluntary basis.

(Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68*, 1969, pp. 65–66)

The Degree in Public and Business Administration, originally launched by the Department of Economics in 1960, saw such a significant rise in popularity that by 1967, the National Council of Higher Education authorized the creation of a dedicated department. Consequently, in 1968, the original department was bifurcated into two distinct entities:

- Department of Economics
- Department of Public and Business Administration

Professor Dharmasena de Silva, the Head of the new Department of Public and Business Administration, also served as the Acting Head for the Department of Economics during this transition (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966–67*, 1968, p. 65).

In 1968, the newly formed Department of Public and Business Administration planned several specialized programmes to meet the growing industrial and social needs of Sri Lanka. Although approved by the Faculty of Arts and the Senate, implementation faced delays due to a lack of administrative facilities.

- Diploma / Certificate in Marketing and Advertisement Management

Recognizing that industrial development led to increased production requiring systematic distribution, the department identified a critical need for experts in marketing and advertising. This programme aimed to fill the professional gap created by the expanding service sector (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68,* 1969, pp. 73–74).

- Postgraduate Diploma in Industrial Law and Labour Relations / Human Resource Management

As industrialization progressed, the complexity of human resource management and the rise of powerful trade unions necessitated specialized knowledge. The department proposed this course to serve the state, private sectors, and trade unions alike. The curriculum aligned with requirements highlighted by the Chairman of the Industrial Disputes Commission in a letter to the Council of Higher Education dated August 30, 1967 (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68*, 1969, p. 74).

- Postgraduate Diploma in Management Accounting

The department recommended this course recognizing that accounting had evolved beyond mere bookkeeping into a vital tool for decision-making in both public and private sectors. The programme focused on the analysis of financial reports to facilitate effective administrative decisions (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68*, 1969, pp. 74–75).

The Department of Public and Business Administration significantly expanded its global footprint during this period by establishing a partnership with the Faculty of Administration at the University of New Hampshire. Following discussions with Professor Heyman



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(*Dinamina*, November 21, 1961, p.5)

Gaydon (Herman Gaydon), two scholarships were awarded to assistant lecturers to pursue postgraduate studies.

Furthermore, to support the localization of management education, the department compiled a glossary of administrative terminology translated into Sinhala, which was handed over to the Department of Official Languages for publication (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68*, 1969, p. 76).

Other notable postgraduate developments during this era included:

- Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Literary Creative Writing, conducted by the Department of Sinhala (Balagalle, 1984, pp. 211–212).

1.2.4 Student Admissions

The Higher Education Act of 1966 brought a fundamental shift in how students entered the university. Starting from the 1966/67 academic year, admissions were based on the results of the G.C.E. Advanced Level (A/L) examination conducted by the Department of Examinations, rather than the university's own entrance exams.

This policy change had a significant impact on the university's traditional means:

- End of Special Privileges: The special admission pathway previously available to students from the Vidyodaya Pirivena was abolished.
- Declining Enrolment in Buddhist Studies: The impact was immediate in the Department of Buddhist Studies. In the 1955/66 academic year, 73 students were admitted to the first-year programme; however, following the reform in 1966/67, this number plummeted to just 28 students (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966–67*, 1968, p. 39).

Table 05: Total student enrolment across all years of study by Department

	Department	Faculty	1966/1967	1967/1968
01	Buddhist Studies	Buddhist Studies	199	141
02	Sinhala	Languages	1,303	1,069
03	Pali and Prakrit	Languages	204	131
04	Sanskrit (and Linguistics in 67/68)	Languages	22	25
05	History	Arts	881	970
06	Archaeology	Arts	29	40
07	Geography	Arts	537	570
08	Education	Arts	100	124
09	Economics, Public & Business Admin.	Arts	1,262	1,526
10	Anthropology and Sociology	Arts	21	27

However, the annual reports for the years 1966/1967 and 1967/1968 did not include student enrolment data for several specific departments. These omissions included the departments of Oriental Philosophy, Western Philosophy, Tamil, English, and Law. Consequently, while the official records provide a detailed look at the growth of major sectors like Management and Geography, the statistical data for these particular humanities and legal studies programme remains unavailable in the reports presented (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966-1967*, 1968, pp. 39-57*;* Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967-1968*, 1969, pp. 37-78).

The Department of Pali and Prakrit attracted international interest during this period. A Spanish national named Mattias registered as a first-year student in the Bachelor of Arts (General) programme; following his success in the first-year examinations, he was granted permission to pursue a Pali Special (Honours) Degree in 1967/68. Additionally, M. Kitsudo from Japan was attached to the department to conduct postgraduate research (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967–68*, 1969, p. 47).

The following table summarizes the number of Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degrees awarded between 1967 and 1969:

Table 06: Degrees Awarded at Convocation Ceremonies (1967–1969)

Year	Date	Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Degrees
1967	March 23	420
1968	March 24	1,169
1969	March 24	509

(Vidyodaya University, *Convocation Brochure*, 1969, p. 22).

Production Details: The First Play *Sakkaya Ditthi*

The university's first stage drama, *Sakkaya Ditthi*, was a satirical comedy based on a rural folk story. It was a monumental production that brought together some of the most iconic figures in Sri Lankan arts and culture.

Creative and Technical Leadership

- Script: M. H. Gunathilake and Mahagamasekera
- Melody Composition: W. D. Amaradeva and C. de S. Kulathillake
- Music Direction: Jayatissa Alahakoon
- Lyrics: M. H. Gunathilake
- Dance Choreography: Panibharatha (Director), Rohana Beddage, Wilson Olaboduwa, Dharmadasa Kuruppu, and P. K. Ariyaratne
- Make-up & Masks: Gamini Wickramasuriya and Chandrasena Dasanayake
- Costume Design: Prema Gunathilake

The Orchestra

The live music for the play featured a lineup of musicians:

- Harmonium: Jayatissa Alahakoon
- Drums (*Bera*): Rohana Beddage
- Violin: W. M. P. Fernando
- Sitar & *Tarshnai*: Sarath Dasanayake
- *Tanpura* & Flute: Annesley Hettiarachchi

Cast of Characters (In Order of Appearance)

Role	Performer
Narrator (*Kathaka*)	Victor D. Mel
Gamaya (The Villager)	Upali Lakshman Rajakaruna
Gamamahage (Villager's Wife)	Champa Matilda
Teacher (*Guru*)	P. K. Ariyaratne
Student (*Golaya*)	W. R. Ariyasena
Nanchohami	R. A. Premavathi
Mudali	Ariyasena
Sada	Dharmadasa Karandana
Josephina	Thalatha Abeywickrama
Villagers	Susil Premasiri, W. P. Alwis, Buddhadasa Galappatti
Chorus / Sound Cues	Premachandra Helapitiya, S. A. Premaratne, P. K. Rubasinha

Vocalists (Chorus)

- Vijayarathna Pathiraja
- K. H. Wimalasena, George A. Weerakoon, K. W. Jayaratne, K. P. Gunatunga
- W. Soma Ratnasekera, Latha Alahakoon, Andrea Costa, Chandra Samarasinghe
- R. Gnanawathi, Prabha Weerawarna, U. K. Tilaka, D. D. Wickramarachchi
- Anula Mahipala, J. L. Ariyawathi

(Gunathilake, 1968, pp. 7–8)

During the period under review, the student societies and associations active at the university were as follows:

- *Shishya Sabha* (Student Council): This served as the umbrella organization, including student societies from all faculties.
- *Peeta Shishya Samithi* (Faculty Student Societies): During the 1966/1967 academic year, separate student societies operated for the Faculty of Buddhist Studies, the Faculty of Languages, and the Faculty of Arts.
- *Wishaya Samithi* (Subject Societies): These were academic societies operating through the various departments under each faculty.

- *Bauddha Sangamaya* (Buddhist Society)
- *Sinhala Sangamaya* (Sinhala Society)
- *Sinhala Sahithya Sangamaya* (Sinhala Literary Society)
- *Pali Shishya Sangamaya* (Pali Student Society)
- *Sanskrit Sangshadhaya* (Sanskrit Council)
- *Ingrisi Sangamaya* (English Society)
- *Ithihasa Sangamaya* (History Society)
- *Purawidhya Paryeshana Sangamaya* (Archaeological Research Society)
- *Manawa Widhya Sangamaya* (Anthropology Society)
- *Adhyapana Widhya Sangamaya* (Educational Society)
- *Arthika Widhya Sangamaya* (Economics Society)
- *Nithi Shishya Sangamaya* (Law Student Society)
- *Bhugola Widhya Sangamaya* (Geography Society)
- *Rajya ha Wyapara Paripalana Widhya* Sangamaya (Public and Business Administration Society)
- *Chithrapata Sangamaya* (Film Society)
- *Lekhaka Sangamaya* (Writers' Society)
- *Natya Parshadhaya* (Drama Cluster)

In the 1967/1968 academic year, despite the diverse range of student organizations, three specific societies—the *Sinhala Sahithya Sangamaya* (Sinhala Literary Society), Sanskrit *Sangshadhaya* (Sanskrit Council), and *Ingrisi Sangamaya* (English Society)—were abolished or became inactive (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966-67*, 1968, p. 29*;* Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967-68*, 1969, p. 25).

However, other societies remained highly active in fostering a creative and intellectual environment:

- *Sinhala Sangamaya* (Sinhala Society): This group organized *Nirmana Sakachcha* (Creative Discussions) to promote literary creativity among students. They also hosted a major Literary Conference featuring prominent professors and lecturers from both the University of Ceylon and the Vidyalankara University.

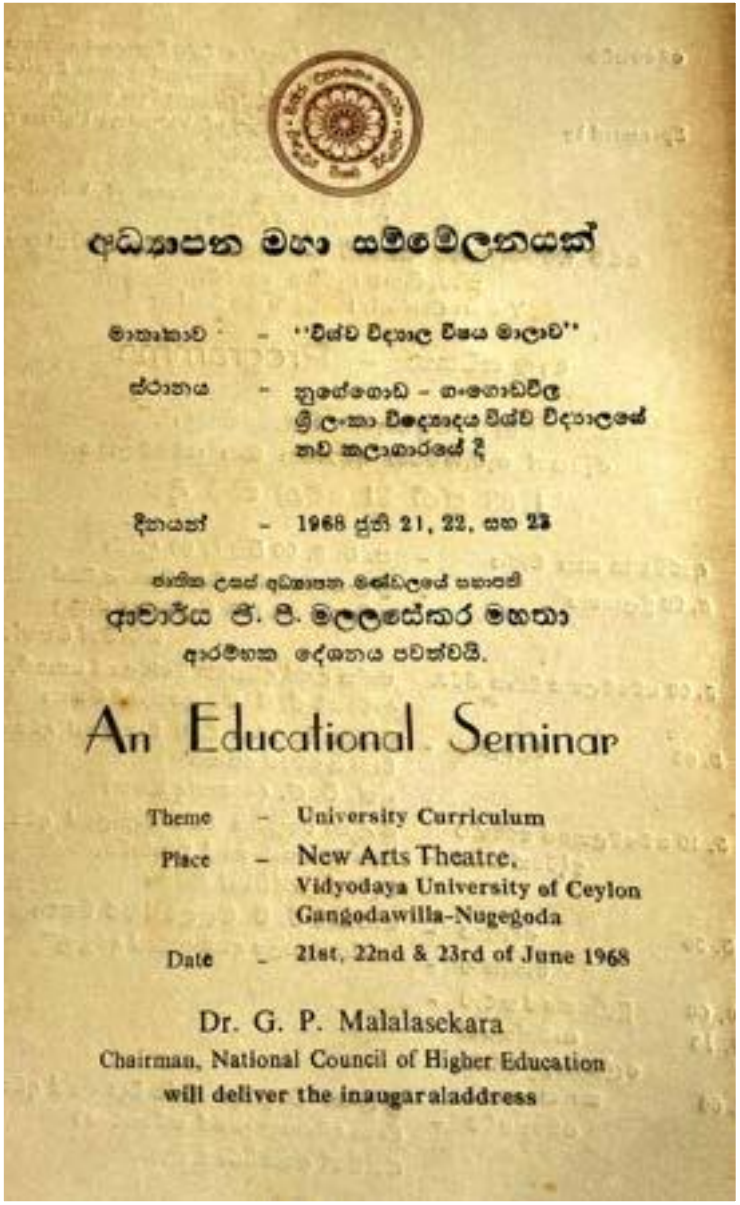
- *Natya Parshadhaya* (Drama Council): Operating under the Department of Sinhala, this council organized a specialized Music Course conducted by the renowned maestro Visharada W. D. Amaradeva (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966-67*, 1968, p. 46).

Dissolution of the Student Council

During the 1967/1968 academic year, the university faced a period of severe institutional instability, resulting in the formal invalidation and dissolution of both the *Shishya Sabha* (Student Council) and the various *Peeta Shishya Samithi* (Faculty Student Societies) (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967*, 1968, p. 25)

This administrative decision was precipitated by a widespread student strike and class boycott that broke out in late 1967. In response to the unrest, the university administration took the rigorous step of expelling several students identified as participants in the strike. This action led to a landmark legal battle in the Supreme Court, which ultimately issued a ruling confirming that the Vice-Chancellor (*Vishwavidyaladhipathi*) possessed the definitive legal authority to expel students as a necessary measure for maintaining university discipline. Consequently, the period concluded with a significant consolidation of administrative power and a temporary cessation of organized student representation.

(Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967*, 1968, p. 2)



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An Educational Seminar

Theme - University Curriculum

Place - New Arts Theatre,
Vidyodaya University of Ceylon
Gangodawilla-Nugegoda

Date - 21st, 22nd & 23rd of June 1968

Dr. G. P. Malalasekara
Chairman, National Council of Higher Education
will deliver the inaugaraladdress

The Department of Economics was highly active during this period, organizing a series of lectures and seminars on Applied Economics, Public Administration, and Business Management. These sessions featured world-renowned economists such as Professor Hansen and Professor Little. Simultaneously, the Anthropology Society, with guidance from the Vice-Chancellor and support from the Film Society, produced a documentary film focused on the Vedda community (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1966-67*, 1968, pp. 65-69). In May, the Education Society organized a three-day conference titled "The University Curriculum" (Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1967-68*, 1969, p. 66).

The university's intellectual life was further enriched by several key publications:

- *Andure Pipena Mal*: A short story collection published by the Vidyodaya Writers' Society in 1967/68.
- *Vidudaya Kavi*: A poetry anthology edited by Lecturer Nandasena Ratnapala in 1968. Ratnapala, originally from the Sinhala Department, moved to fill a vacancy in the Sociology Department and was notably the only individual at the time to hold a D.Litt. (Doctor of Letters) degree (Ritigahapola, 2017, pp. 41-44).
- *Vidyodaya Journal of Science, Arts, and Languages*: Launched in 1968, this bilingual (Sinhala and English) annual research journal became a cornerstone for academic research at the institution.

1.2.6 Infrastructure

During this formative period, the university's physical landscape underwent significant expansion to accommodate its growing academic needs. The Sri Sumangala Mandiraya served as the central hub of the university, housing administrative offices, the library, and faculty offices. Academic space was distributed across several key structures:

- Sumangala Building: 1,968 sq. ft. was dedicated to laboratories and science classes.
- Sri Rathanasara and Sri Gñaneshwara Buildings: A combined area of 14,680 sq. ft. provided the primary lecture hall space.
- Bandaranayke Hall: Originally a temporary 7,400 sq. ft. structure built for graduation ceremonies, it was repurposed as a lecture hall to handle the surge in student enrolment.

As existing facilities became insufficient, construction began on a new 100' x 67' lecture theatre known as the *Nawa Kalagaraya*. Located near the university printing press, construction started on June 27, 1967, and was completed by May 22, 1968. This versatile building functioned as a lecture hall, a theatre, and a ceremonial space.

[Note: *This historic building remained in use until a few years ago, when it was demolished to make way for the new buildings of the current Faculty of Applied Sciences*].

On June 4, 1968, Vice-Chancellor Ven. Dr. Walpola Rahula Thero officially opened the University Printing Press. It was a modern facility for its time, equipped with:

- Advanced printing presses and paper-cutting guillotine machines.
- Typesets for Sinhala, Tamil, English, and Nagari (Sanskrit), allowing for complex multilingual printing.
- Capabilities for general university printing, confidential examination materials, and documents for the Department of Education.

The construction of a stylistically designed main entrance gate began on February 13, 1967, and was completed on February 2, 1968. This entrance defined the university's perimeter for decades until the premises were further renovated and modified to their current state in 2019.

1.3. The Third Phase: 1973–2011
Faculty of Arts

1.3.1 Introduction

Under the United Front (*Sabhaga* government) of Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike, the Minister of Education, Badi-ud-din Mahmud, passed the University of Ceylon Act No. 01 of 1972. This legislation initiated the necessary steps to restructure all existing universities. In accordance with this Act, the *Jathika Usas Adhyapana Sabhava* (National Council of Higher Education), which had been mentioned in the second phase, was abolished effective from February 15, 1972.

Accordingly, on April 04, 1971, a bill was presented to the House of Representatives based on a promise made by the United Front government. The objective of this legislation was to restructure the university system in a manner that granted a greater degree of academic freedom.

The April 1971 Insurrection broke out on the following day, the 5th of April. Due to this situation, a bill prepared by a committee of seven university academics, headed by Dr. Osmund Jayaratne of the University of Colombo, was presented to the Cabinet on November 3, 1971. This bill, which received assent on January 21, 1972, became known as the University of Ceylon Act No. 1 of 1972 (Balagalle, 1984, p. 213).

According to this Act, instead of maintaining all universities as separate entities, they were converted into *Mandapa* (campuses) under a single university titled the "University of Sri Lanka," centred at *Sanathana Mandiraya* (Senate House). Vice-Chancellors (*Upakulapathi*) were redesignated as Presidents (*Mandapadhipathi*). The institutions formerly known as independent universities were renamed under the University of Sri Lanka as the Peradeniya Campus, Vidyodaya Campus, Vidyalankara Campus, and Colombo Campus. Furthermore, not only were the academic departments of Vidyodaya University reorganized, but resources including equipment and academic staff were transferred among the various campuses. Several course modules were restructured, with Education, Archaeology, and Sanskrit serving as primary examples. A number of special degree programmes held at Vidyodaya University, the Department of Education, a significant portion of the library, and the highly advanced printing press were transferred to the Vidyalankara, Colombo, and Katubedda campuses (Ariyaratne, 2009, pp. 92-93; Balagalle, 1984, p. 214).

"A country like Sri Lanka cannot afford to maintain separate universities" — Education Minister Badi-ud-din Mahmud

While introducing the reforms under the University of Ceylon Act No. 1 of 1972, Education Minister Badi-ud-din Mahmud emphasized that a country like Sri Lanka lacked the financial capacity to maintain separate, independent universities. During the second reading of the bill, he argued that the previous system of maintaining four distinct universities with their own faculties was entirely inconsistent with the country's economic reality. To illustrate this inefficiency, the Minister pointed out that separate faculties—complete with their own Deans, Professors, and Lecturers—were being maintained across all four universities for the sole purpose of teaching the Sanskrit language to only 36 students.

(*Dinamina,* January 1, 1972)



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THE DINAMINA
ඉතාම විශාල ලෙස්ස ඇතිරෙන දිනපතා පත්‍රය
1972 ජනවාරි මස 18 වැනි අඟහරුවාදා
63 වැනි කාණ්ඩය, 15 වැනි පත්‍රය

තනි සරසවිය පෙබරවාරි 15 දා

නම: ලංකා විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය

පේරාදෙණිය, කොළඹ, විද්‍යෝදය හා විද්‍යාලංකාර විශ්ව විද්‍යාල හතර ලබන මස 15 වැනිදා සිට තනි විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයක් බවට පත් කෙරෙනු ඇත.

මෙම බිල්ම මඟින් විද්‍යාල හතර එක්කොට තනි විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයක් බවට පත් කිරීමේ අධිකාරිය ලැබෙන්නේ අග්‍රාමාත්‍ය ශ්‍රීමතී බණ්ඩාරනායක මැතිනියටය.

එකම උප කුලපතිවරයකු, සේ පාලනය යටතේ පවත්නා විශ්ව විද්‍යාල හතරක් ඇති කිරීමේ පියවර මෙම බිල්ම මඟින් ගනු ලබනු ඇත.

අලුත් සරසවි පනත අද මැති සබේට

විශ්ව විද්‍යාල හතර වෙනුවට එකම විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයක් පිහිටුවීමේ පනත අලුත් අධ්‍යාපන රැුද්දේදී මූලින්ම නියෝජිත මන්ත්‍රී මණ්ඩලයෙන් සම්මත කර්වා ගැනීමට අධ්‍යාපන ඇමති බදඋදව්දීන් මහතා මූද මහතා තිරණය කර ඇත. ඒ අනුව, අද නියෝජිත මන්ත්‍රී මණ්ඩලය රැස් වූවිට මේ පනත විවාදයට ගනු ලැබේ.

"ලංකා විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය" නමින් එකම විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයක් පිහිටුවීමට අධ්‍යාපන ඇමතිවරයා විසින් දැනටමත් මූලික විධිවිධාන යොදා තිබේ. අලුත් බැඩ පිළිවෙළ අනුව, එක විශ්ව විද්‍යාල පාලක මණ්ඩලයක් පත්කොට "ලංකා විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ" පාලනය ඒ මඟින් පවත්වා ගෙන යනු ඇත.

දැනට නිබෙන පේරාදෙනිය, කොළඹ, විද්‍යෝදය සහ විද්‍යාලංකාර විශ්ව විද්‍යාල ලංකා විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ අංශ (කැම්පස්) බවට පත්වනු ඇත.

දැනට එක් එක් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයෙන් වෙන් වෙන් විෂයයෙන් පිරිනමන උපාධි වෙනුවට මින්පසුව සමත් වන උපාධිධාරීන්ට ලංකා විශ්ව විද්‍යාල උපාධිය නමින් එකම උපාධියක් පිරිනමනු ලැබේ.

විශ්ව විද්‍යාල ඒකාබද්ධ කළ විට විශ්ව විද්‍යාල හතරේ දැනට සිටින උප කුලපති වරුන්ට එම තනතුරුවලින් කැමති නම් අධ්‍යාපන ඇමති වරයාගේ අනුමැතිය ඇතිව අස්වීමට සිදුවන අතර ඔවුන් ලංකා විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ පාලක මණ්ඩලයට පත්වීමට ඔවුන්ට ඉඩ ලැබේ.

5 වැනි පිටුවට

රජයේ සේවයට බැඳෙන්නන්ගේ

(*Dinamina,* January 04, 1972)

The Impact of the Youth Uprising of April 1971 on Vidyodaya

The youth uprising of April 1971 served as the foundational catalyst for the eventual establishment of the Faculty of Arts in 1973. The onset of April 1971 ushered in a period of extreme hardship for Sri Lanka and its higher education system, with Vidyodaya University in particular, facing a series of decisive and disruptive events. Following the sudden outbreak of the rebellion across the island on April 5, 1971, all universities were immediately closed, and the process of resuming academic activities was hindered by numerous obstacles. At the time, the government of Sirima Bandaranaike, which had assumed power in 1970, held administrative control. Following the suppression of the insurrection, the Vidyodaya University premises were converted into a detention camp for insurgents and officially designated as the country's first Rehabilitation Centre.

As a result of this displacement, the university administration was forced to relocate its office in April 1971 to a temporary building adjacent to Royal College on Thurstan Road. Academic lectures were conducted at Lumbini Vidyalaya and Isipathana Vidyalaya on Havelock Road, scheduled only after regular school hours had concluded. While the third term for final-year degree students finally commenced in late July and new students were admitted in October, examinations for other batches continued until April 1972. This significant delay meant that the new academic year, designated as the 1971/72 session, could only officially begin on May 15, 1972. It was not until October 1972 that the university was finally able to return to its original Gangodawila campus.

(Balagalle, 1984, p. 212)

Vidyodaya as a Detention Camp

When discussing the university premises and buildings, the description of the campus following the 1971 insurrection reveals a sombre chapter in the long and difficult journey of the institution. During its period as a detention camp, the Gangodawila premises were heavily fortified; the site was divided into three distinct sections secured by two parallel barbed-wire fences. These barriers stood 25 feet high and were constructed with 24 strands of wire, with additional rolls of barbed wire placed in the gap between the two fences. The *Sumangala Mandiraya* was repurposed as the operational headquarters for military and prison officials. The rest of the campus was partitioned into functional zones: Section 1 included the Gñaneshwara and Rathanasara halls, the New Arts Theatre (*Nawa Kalagaraya*), and the canteen behind Gñaneshwara; Section 2 comprised the Soratha and Dharmapala hostels; and Section 3 consisted of the Bandaranayake Hall. A portion of the Gñaneshwara building was specifically designated as a medical centre to treat detainees suffering from contagious diseases such as smallpox, diarrhoea, eye infections, and mumps.

> While the Gangodawila premises functioned as a prison, university operations were forced into a fragmented existence across various temporary locations. Lectures and administrative work were conducted at Lumbini Vidyalaya, Isipathana Vidyalaya, Thurstan Junior Vidyalaya, and Royal Primary School. Additional space was utilized within the Royal Primary Principal's quarters, as well as private houses located on Thurstan Road, London Place,

> and Havelock Town. The Y.M.B.A. Hall in Nugegoda and the upstairs floor of a building belonging to W. J. Gunawardena's company in Nugegoda were also utilized for campus purposes. Once the university was finally reopened for academic activities, the students, reflecting the political climate of the era, used to name the *Nawa Kalagaraya* (New Arts Theatre) as "Lenin Hall."
>
> (Ariyaratne, 2009, pp. 91-92)

Thus, from the early 1970s onwards, the political climate of the country fundamentally influenced the revisions made to existing university academic and administrative affairs. As noted by Balagalle, "the youth uprising of April 1971 served as the foundational basis for the birth of the Faculty of Arts" (1984, p. 212).

Under the new restructuring approved in 1972, a new faculty was established under the name Faculty of Arts. This new faculty was formed by consolidating the departments and courses remaining from the three previous faculties: Arts, Languages, and Buddhist Studies. Effective from July 1, 1973, Wimal G. Balagalle, who had served as the Dean of the Faculty of Languages until then, was appointed as the first Dean of the Faculty of Arts (Balagalle, 1984, p. 215).

Accordingly, this third Phase of the history of the faculty is detailed under two primary sections: Faculty of Arts Phase I, and Faculty of Arts Phase II. The Phase I spans from 1973 to 1999, while the Phase II covers the years 1999 to 2011. The primary reason for this division is the transition from the "Annual Academic" system to the "Semester-based Academic" system, which took place starting from the year 2000.

1.3.2 Faculty of Arts Phase I :1973–1999

This period can be identified and categorized into two distinct eras:

- Faculty of Arts of the Vidyodaya Campus
- Faculty of Arts of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Throughout Faculty of Arts Phase I, the "Annual Academic System"—which had been in place since the inception of the university—remained the operational framework.

1.3.2.1 Faculty of Arts of the Vidyodaya Campus

As all universities were merged into a single entity called the "University of Ceylon" centered at the Senate House, independent universities were converted into campuses. This transition led to the formal creation of the Faculty of Arts at the Vidyodaya Campus.

1.3.2.1.1 Academic Departments and Degree Programmes

Following the restructuring, the number of academic departments within the Faculty of Arts was significantly reduced to five. They were:

- Department of Economics
- Department of Geography
- Department of History and Sociology
- Department of Language and Cultural Studies
- Department of Sinhala.

(Balagalle, 1984, p. 214)

> "The 1972 restructuring marked a particularly regressive chapter for Vidyodaya, characterized by the arbitrary and severe abolition of several academic programmes

and departments. The Faculties of Buddhist Studies and Languages were essentially dismantled, and key departments—including Buddhist Philosophy, Pali, Sanskrit, Tamil, English, Philosophy, and Archaeology—were entirely phased out under the new systemic changes. Even the Sinhala Department, despite its immense popularity, saw its Special Degree programmes suspended; these were only reinstated after a period of intense advocacy. In a move that diluted their individual academic focus, Buddhist Studies and English were relegated to sub-departments within a newly formed "Department of Language and Cultural Studies," while Sociology was merged into the Department of History and Sociology. The impact extended beyond the termination of programmes to the loss of intellectual


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> capital and infrastructure. Between 1973 and 1974, many experienced lecturers were transferred to other campuses. Most significantly, the Department of Education—which was then prepared for elevation to faculty status—was moved in its entirety to the Colombo Campus. This transfer included a substantial portion of the university's library resources, which were used to establish the new Faculty of Education in Colombo."
>
> (Balagalle, 1984, p. 214)

According to the provided citations, English (currently referred to as Compulsory English), which had been offered under the Department of Western Studies from 1959–67, was transferred to a sub-unit within the Department of Language and Cultural Studies following the restructuring. This sub-department was subsequently renamed the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU).

Furthermore, the termination of specific academic paths forced many students to transfer from the Vidyodaya Campus to other institutions. A primary example was the suspension of the Sinhala Special Degree programme at Vidyodaya; students who wished to pursue this specialization were required to enrol at the Vidyalankara Campus, as Vidyodaya was restricted to offering only the Sinhala General Degree. This policy led to a significant and visible decline in the number of students seeking admission to the Vidyodaya Campus for Sinhala studies (Ariyaratne, 2009, p. 93).

Following the 1972 revisions to the academic curriculum, which restricted the Department of Sinhala to offering only a General Degree, the department launched a new Master of Arts (MA) programme in 1976 to address this gap. Initiated by Associate Professor A.V. Suraweera, this programme focused specifically on Literary Creation. Notably, two award-winning works of literature—*He Siddhartha Nam Viya* by Ven. Ko. Ananda Thero and *Yashoravaya* by Somaweera Senanayake—were originally produced as creative requirements for this MA degree (Ritigahapola, 2017, p. 51). During this same period of restructuring, Lecturer M.H. Gunathilake, who had been recruited to teach Drama and Theatre, was among the staff members transferred to other university campuses (Ariyaratne, 2009, p. 93).

In an effort to move beyond traditional subject boundaries, the university also introduced Development Studies programmes (Balagalle, 1984, p. 214). In 1973, a "Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Applied Social Sciences for Development Studies" was jointly introduced at the Colombo and Vidyodaya campuses. The curriculum was structured as follows:

- First Year: Focused on the physical and social environment, Mathematics and Statistics, English, Cultural Studies, General Science, and optional vocational training.
- Subsequent Years: The second, third, and fourth years were organized around the general theme of "Development."

The primary objective of this programme was to generate interest and knowledge in national development, motivating a significant number of students to pursue professional careers in developmental fields. While the foundation year provided a broad education, the final year offered a specialized curriculum that was intended to be streamlined across both campuses (University of Colombo & Vidyodaya Campus, 1973, p. 1). However, within a few years, this initiative was identified as an unsuccessful experiment. Consequently, from the 1975/76 academic year onwards, the university reverted to offering degree programmes based on traditional academic disciplines (Balagalle, 1984, pp. 214-215).

1.3.2.2 The Faculty of Arts of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Following the 1977 general election, the government led by President J.R. Jayewardene (United National Party) granted independence to all campuses that had previously existed as constituent parts of the "University of Sri Lanka." This was enacted through the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978. Under this new legislation, universities were renamed based on their geographical locations, following a tradition seen in many Eastern and Western nations. Accordingly, the institution formerly known as Vidyodaya was renamed the "University of Sri Jayewardenepura," effective from January 1, 1979 (Balagalle, 1984, pp. 214–217).

1.3.2.2.1 Academic Departments and Degree Programmes

In accordance with the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978, the five independent departments that had been operational since 1973 were expanded and revised into seven distinct departments:

- Department of Economics
- Department of Geography
- Department of History
- Department of Sinhala
- Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies
- Department of Languages and Cultural Studies
- Department of Sociology

(Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1980*, p. 70)

This structural revision significantly impacted the degree programmes offered by these departments, allowing for a broader academic scope compared to the previous campus system. In 1980, under the Department of Economics, the subject of Statistics was reintroduced to the Bachelor of Arts General Degree programme, alongside Economics and Political Science. Previously, these subjects had been integrated into the Public and Business Administration curriculum (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1980*, p. 77).

As of 1979, Pali and Buddhist Studies were still housed under the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies, offered only as elective subjects for first-year students. However, starting from the 1979/1980 academic year, BA degree programmes were launched encompassing Pali Language, Buddhist Studies, Philosophy, Sanskrit, and Linguistics. Additionally, Master of Arts (MA) programmes in Pali and Buddhism were conducted during this period, (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report*, 1979, p. 37). Archaeology remained under the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies until 1982 (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1980*, p. 99; *1982*, p. 73).

This era was also marked by the introduction of new courses and the subsequent renaming of departments to reflect their expanded academic scope:

- Department of Sociology and Anthropology: Renamed in 1983 after the Department of Sociology began offering Anthropology as a distinct subject (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1982*, p. 58).

- Department of History: At the end of 1983, the Archaeology course was transferred from the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies to the Department of History. Consequently, from the 1983/84 academic year, Archaeology was taught under this department (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1983*, p. 50).

Regarding the three compulsory courses within the Faculty of Arts, the "Buddhist Culture" course was revised and renamed "Cultural Studies" by 1983. The other two compulsory courses—Practical

English (known as Compulsory English) and Science and Society—continued under their original titles.

In 1986, a new English Certificate Course was launched, designed to run from the second year through the fourth year (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report*, 1986, p. 83). However, it is important to note that for a considerable period following 1979, subjects such as Political Science, Statistics, Philosophy, and Practical English were restricted to the first year and the General Degree programme only (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1979*, pp. 30-41).

As previously mentioned, by 1983, the Faculty of Arts offered three compulsory general courses for all its students:

- Practical English
- Science and Society
- Buddhist Culture (renamed as "Cultural Studies" from 1983 onwards).

(Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1983*, p. 38)

Research Grants Awarded to Faculty Members

The University Research and Publications Committee implemented a programme to provide financial assistance to university lecturers for various research projects.

No.	Name	Department	Research Topic	Grant Amount (Rs.)	Year
1	Dr. Chandra Wickramagamage	Pali and Buddhist Studies	A study on the art of ritual (*Bali*) and its techniques	4,350/-	1980
2	A. Bandaranayake	Languages and Cultural Studies	Various aspects of how parents value children in Sri Lanka	6,200/-	1980
3	M. D. C. Abhayaratne	Geography	Water Management in the 'H' area of the Mahaweli Scheme	10,750/-	1980
4	D. S. Epitawatta	Geography	The nature of milk farming around Colombo and its related issues	8,690/-	1980
5	Jinadasa Katupotha	Geography	Recent geomorphological changes in the South-Western coastal belt of Sri Lanka	16,149/-	1981
6	Dr. D. S. Hettige	Sociology	Impact of social stratification on social-economic development in a peasant context - A case study	3,500/-	1981
7	B. A. Tennyson Perera	Sociology	Rural Economy	6,000/-	1983
8	H. G. Charles	History	Folk beliefs and rituals in the Hewaheta area	6,000/-	1983
9	D. C. Galapitage	Economics	An Economic Evaluation of Pond Fish Culture in Sri Lanka	9,750/-	1983

Additionally, the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies introduced a variety of foreign and local language courses to all university students. These included Practical Tamil, Hindi, Japanese, French, German, and Russian. Students who successfully completed these courses were awarded a certificate of proficiency by the department. According to the Annual Report (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1983*, p. 57), the degree structures were clearly defined.

For the General Degree, students were required to complete three selected subjects in addition to the three compulsory general courses mentioned previously. For the Special Degree, the path was more rigorous. Following the first year, students had to dedicate three additional years of study to a single specialized subject. Eligibility for this track was determined by the results achieved in the first-year examinations. During these three years of specialization, students focused exclusively on their chosen field while also fulfilling the requirements of the compulsory general courses.

There were 17 optional courses offered under the faculty, distributed across the following departments:

- **Department of Economics**
  Economics
  Political Science
  Social Statistics
- **Department of Geography**
  Geography
- **Department of History**
  History
  Archaeology
- **Department of Languages and Cultural Studies**
  Sanskrit and Linguistics
  Cultural Studies
  English (as a main subject)
- **Department of Sinhala**
  Sinhala
- **Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies**
  Pali
  Buddhist Civilization
  Buddhism
  Buddhist Philosophy
  Philosophy
- **Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology**
  Sociology and Social Anthropology

(Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1983*, pp. 38-39)

In addition to the degree programmes offered by the various departments mentioned above, a special degree programme titled "Bachelor of Development Studies" was also offered. This degree was exclusively available to students in their second or third year across various subject fields. Furthermore, students selected from those who had completed the General Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree were given the opportunity to study "Development Studies" as a subject for their Bachelor of Arts degree in their fourth year. For the 1979/80 academic year, 114 students were registered for these courses (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report, 1979*, p. 9).

Department	**Special Degree Course Modules-Development Studies**	**Reference** (*Annual Report*)
Department of Economics	Banking, Insurance, and Financial Services	
	Development Planning and Administration	
	Statistical Studies	1980, p. 77
	Population Studies	1980, p.77
	Agricultural Economic Studies	1983, p. 44
Department of Geography	Population and Human Resources; Agricultural and Fisheries Development and Administration; Transport, Industry, and Forestry; Development and Administration	
	Industrial Studies: (Industrial Geography, Small Industry Promotion and Development, Industrial Sociology, Indigenous Technology, Industrial Psychology, Industrial History of selected countries)	1980, p. 83
	Settlement Studies: (Urban Studies, Settlement Planning, Rural Sociology, Ancient Settlement Systems of Sri Lanka, Rural Development Methods, Social Psychology)	1980, p. 83
	Note: "Sinhala Folk Arts" and "Traditional Architecture" were included in 1981 but removed by 1982.	1981, p.72; 1982, p.64
	Agricultural Studies: (Land Reforms, Water Management, Soil Geography, Agricultural Marketing, Agricultural Geography)	1980, p.83; 1981, p.72; 1982, p.64
Department of Sociology Department of History	Rural Sociology	1981, p.88; 1982, p.81
	Public and Industrial Relations Studies	
	Co-operative Studies	1981, p.76
	State and Foreign Service	1980, p.8
Department of Sinhala	Principles of Communication and Communication Media in Sri Lanka	1981, p. 82; 1982, p.70
	Literary Theory and Applied Criticism	
	Sri Lankan People: Folk Beliefs, Folklore, Folk Arts, and Literary Creation	

The faculty's emphasis on foreign language education was a tradition present from the university's inception, which continued strongly into the 1980s.

- **Japanese Language Programme**

In 1986, with the support of the Japanese government through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japanese language instruction was initiated within the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies.

- Initial Instructor: Kazuko Terada (commenced 1986)
- Succession: Following the end of Terada's term on March 31, 1988, Azusa Kobayashi assumed the post, serving until December 21, 1989.

  (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1986*, p. 85)

- **Russian Language Programme**

In March 1987, the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies signed an agreement with the Pushkin Institute in Moscow, Russia. The institute pledged to provide all necessary facilities to teach the Russian language and literature at an advanced level.

- Instructor: B. Farhat

  (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1986*, p. 85)

In 1988, the Department further expanded its linguistic scope by offering Tamil as an additional language, alongside Japanese, Russian, French, and German. This move signified a broader commitment to multilingualism and regional language proficiency within the university's academic framework. In 1991, the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies introduced a Fine Arts course designed to be accessible to the entire student body of the university. Commencing on June 14, 1991, this one-year programme placed a specialized emphasis on indigenous dance and folk music, bridging the gap between academic study and traditional cultural heritage. Admissions to this certificate programme were open to students from all faculties, provided they were selected through a formal interview process. Upon the successful completion of the course, students were awarded a recognized certificate, marking a significant step in the university's efforts to provide a holistic and inclusive education in the arts.

Additionally, on February 7, 1986, the responsibility for Practical English—now commonly known as Compulsory English—was transferred from the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies to a newly established independent unit: the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU). W. M. K. P. Athukorala was appointed as the first Head of this unit (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1986*, p. 85).

Although the subject of English was offered during the initial stages of the University under the Department of Western Languages, this early provision was subsequently almost discontinued, as noted earlier. The revival and consolidation of English as an academic discipline commenced in 1993 within the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies, with the appointment of Dr. Rajiva Wijesinha and Parvathi Nagasundaram as Senior Lecturers. These developments paved the way for the formal separation of the English Degree programme—comprising English Language and English Literature—from the parent department in 1997, leading to the establishment of an independent Department of English with an Honours Degree programme.

The mid-1990s marked a period of rebranding and increasing specialization across several academic disciplines within the University. In 1994, the Department of Sinhala was renamed the Department of Sinhala and Mass Media, and this was further refined in 1995 as the Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication.

Similarly, in 1995, the subject of Statistics was separated from the Department of Economics, leading to the establishment of the Department of Social Statistics as an independent academic unit. During this period, the faculty also experienced temporary setbacks alongside its expansion. For instance, due to a lack of permanent academic staff for the subject of Philosophy, the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies was forced to limit its Special Degree offerings to only three subjects in 1990: Pali, Buddhist Philosophy, and Buddhist Civilization. However, the Faculty was able to successfully resume the Special Degree programme in Philosophy by 1991.

Despite such challenges, the expansion and birth of new academic streams continued steadily. In the 1985/1986 academic year, the Department of Sociology and Anthropology introduced a new Special Degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice, adding to its existing Special Degrees in Sociology and Anthropology.

This initiative was spearheaded by Professor Nandasena Ratnapala, who served as the Head of the Department at the time (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report*, 1986, p. 102). Notably, this subject had previously been integrated into the Public and Business Administration curriculum. To support this new specialization, the Asia Foundation provided financial assistance to cover the payments of visiting lecturers.

In addition to these undergraduate degrees, the Faculty of Arts also conducted several Certificate, Diploma, and Postgraduate Diploma programmes as listed below:

- Diploma in Social Statistics
- Diploma in Creative Writing
- Diploma in Translation Methods
- Diploma in Mass Media Communication

By 1987, the Department of Sinhala had introduced two self-financed courses under Writership and Communication, initially commencing at certificate level to cater to aspiring writers and media practitioners. The first intake of the certificate course enrolled 16 students, while a further 20 students were admitted to the Postgraduate Diploma programme in the same field (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1986*, p. 64). The inaugural ceremony of the Writership and Communication course was held under the patronage of the Minister of State, Ananda Tissa de Alwis (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1986*, p. 101). In 1987, the Certificate Course in Writership and Communication was elevated to the level of a Diploma programme. This course was designed primarily for individuals who had acquired prior experience in the fields of communication studies or writership but had not previously had the opportunity to pursue university-level education. The academic standard of this Diploma programme was considered equivalent to that of the University's First Year Examination, as stated by the Head of the Department at the Awarding ceremony (Sinhala Department, 1992).

1.3.2.2.2 Student Admissions

By the 1979/1980 academic year, the Faculty of Arts admitted 403 students. To assist these new entrants, a short-term intensive English course was conducted, along with several orientation programmes designed to familiarize them with the university environment (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1979*, p. 10).

Table 07: Student enrolment in the faculty for the academic years 1981, 1982, 1983, and 1984

Academic Year	Total Students	Male Students	Female Students	Source
1981–1982	391	–	–	*Annual Report 1982*, p. 51
1982–1983	388	–	–	*Annual Report 1982*, p. 51
1983–1984	408	202	206	*Annual Report 1983*, p. 12

No new student admissions were made to the University for the academic years 1980–1981. According to the enrolment figures for the 1983–1984 academic year, it is evident that by this period the ratio of male to female students within the faculty had reached a balanced level. The following table provides a comprehensive breakdown of first-year student registrations by subject within the Faculty of Arts from 1985 to 1991. This data reflects the fluctuating popularity of specific disciplines and the introduction of new language and philosophy streams during this period.

Table 08: First-Year Student Registration by Subject (1985 -1991)

	Subject	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
1	Sinhala	251	183	215	410	412	236	224
2	Economics	296	229	159	308	311	150	273
3	Geography	125	120	76	145	137	58	64
4	Sociology	226	171	166	297	300	219	218
5	Political Science	83	58	61	115	130	76	73
6	History	19	14	07	29	47	11	19
7	Statistics	57	29	22	52	51	27	50
8	Archaeology	22	28	41	72	66	45	61
9	Cultural Studies	07	13	07	14	09	02	06
10	Pali	29	16	23	36	28	19	11
11	Sanskrit & Linguistics	17	05	09	11	08	06	-
12	Buddhist Philosophy	30	26	33	73	61	18	17
13	Buddhist Civilization	65	41	86	148	123	126	96
14	English	-	04	01	01	05	10	20
15	Philosophy	-	-	06	07	01	-	03
16	Hindi	01	02	03	03	02	04	04
17	Sanskrit	-	-	-	-	03	05	12
18	Russian	-	-	-	-	02	01	01

Following a hiatus since 1969, the University resumed its convocation ceremonies in 1979. The first graduation ceremony held under the university's new name, the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, took place in December 1979 (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1979*, p. 10). It is noted that because no new undergraduate students were admitted for the 1980/1981 academic year, no convocation ceremony was held for that specific cycle (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1980*, p. 31).

1.3.2.2.3 Student Societies, Cultural and Aesthetic Activities

During this era, the faculty fostered a vibrant intellectual environment through various academic seminars and public lectures. These sessions brought together renowned scholars and international experts to discuss diverse topics ranging from archaeology to technology.

- **Feb 13, 1979:** *The Unhisasisa Feature of the Buddha* – Dr. Chandra Wickramagamage
- **May 16, 1979:** *The History of the Boat* – Dr. Vini Vitharana
- **July 13, 1979:** *Interpretation of the Terms Vaharala and Gidavi in Sinhala Inscriptions* – Dr. S. B. Hettiarachchi (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report, 1979,* p. 37)

- **1980s:** *Social Consciousness as Revealed in Paintings of the Southern Province* – Ven. Gathare Dharmapala Thero (Department of Sinhala)
- **1980s:** *The Lineage of Mihindu IV: How Classical Historians were Misled* – Senior Lecturer Wimala Wijayasuriya (Department of Sinhala)
- **July 1985:** *Farm Power and Appropriate Technology* – Prof. Shun Sakai (Kyushu University, Japan)
- **Dec 1985:** *Environmental Strategies of Farmers* – Klaus Sandell, postgraduate student, Linköping University, Sweden (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report 1985*, p. 48)

During the mid-1980s and 1990s, the Faculty of Arts experienced a significant cultural renaissance, marked by international academic collaborations and a revival of university theater. A major milestone during this period was the return of creative theatrical productions after a 17-year hiatus. While the university (then Vidyodaya) had produced plays like *Sakkaya Ditthi* and *Kendan Gedara Ada* in 1967/68, no significant creative effort had emerged until 1985.

***Kiri Muttiya Gange Giya* (1985)**

Initiated by the Sinhala Society of the Department of Sinhala, this production broke the long silence in university theatre.

- Director: The legendary Professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra
- Concept: The proposal to create a play utilizing student talent was put forward by Dr. Sunil Ariyaratne.
- Participation: Training was opened to all students across the university.

(Ariyaratne, 2009, pp. 176-177).

***Cherry Uyana* (The Cherry Orchard) (1986)**

In 1986, the Sinhala Society produced Ranjit Dharmakeerthi's *Cherry Uyana*.

- Cast: Included both university students and renowned veteran artists such as Somalatha Subasinghe and Sathischandra Edirisinghe
- Achievement: The play was performed across the island and was selected for the final round of the State Drama Festival.

(*Cherry Uyana,* Sinhala Department, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, 1986)

***Mahacharya* (The Professor) (1996)**

The theatrical process reached a high point with the production of *Mahacharya* by the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies.

- Director: Professor Walter Marasinghe.
- Origin: An adaptation of the Greek comedy *The Frogs* (Greek: *Bátrakhoi*) by Aristophanes.
- Production Team: Students Mangala Atigala and Nandana Alagewatta handled the script/production, while choreography was by Basil Mihiripenna.
- Music: Composed by Senior Musician M.G. Sugathadasa and Professor Walter Marasinghe.
- Recognition: Premiered on December 5, 1996, at the Bandaranayake Hall and was selected for the final round of the 1997 State Drama Festival.

(Ariyaratne, 2009, p. 177)

In 1986, the Sinhala Society, under the guidance of Dr. Sunil Ariyaratne, organized the *Samichi* Seminar Series. These seminars saw active student participation and contributed significantly to the intellectual discourse on campus (University of Sri Jayewardenepura, *Annual Report 1986*, p. 100).

The artistic and cultural contributions of the university during this era extended far beyond theatre, evolving into music competitions, archaeological milestones, and a flourishing academic publication culture. In the 1990s, the university introduced innovative musical experiments. A prime example was *Nala Mudu Suvanda*, a song-based competition launched in 1995 under the leadership of Professor Sunil Ariyaratne. The competition recognized excellence in three distinct areas: Best Male Singer, Best Female Singer, and Best Lyricist. This programme became a key element of the university's aesthetic life, bridging academic study with professional-standard performance.

In 1996, to mark the launch of his book, *Purana Sinhala Nadagam Pitapath* (Ancient Sinhala *Nadagam* Scripts), Professor Sunil Ariyaratne organized a grand *Nadagam Sendeva* at the Open-Air Theatre of the university. The event featured veteran stage actors and traditional *Nadagam* artists, bringing classical folk drama to the university community. Additionally, the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies initiated a monthly *Musical Soirée* (Music Evening), with the inaugural programme held on August 15, 1993.

The university's focus on heritage was formalized with the opening of the University Archaeological Museum on November 11, 1985, by the Commissioner of Archaeology, Roland Silva. In 1987, a lecture series was launched to complement the museum. The inaugural lecture, titled *"The History of History and Archaeological Studies at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura,"* was delivered by Professor Wimal G. Balagalle. The year also saw the publication of the journal *Itihasa Puravidya* (History-Archaeology).

The year 1991 was a landmark for student-led academic publishing. Sanskrit students of the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies launched the scholarly journal *Yatra*, while the Department of Sociology and Anthropology introduced its own journal, *Sama*. In the same year, the Faculty of Arts organized a comprehensive Academic Seminar Series, featuring presentations from every department, further fostering a culture of scholarly engagement across the faculty (Ariyaratne, 2009).

1.3.1.2.4 Infrastructure

Until 1986, the university library—originally known as the Sri Sumangala Library—operated within a section of the ground floor of the Sumangala Mansion (Sumangala Mandiraya). By 1986, a seperate library space was under construction. An archival pamphlet titled *"*Study About Your Library*"* [*Obe Pusthakalaya Gena Hadaranna*] describes the original layout as follows:

> "The Vidyodaya University Library is currently located on the ground floor of the Sri Sumangala Building. Entering through the main door into the lobby, you can access the library through the door on the left. Directly in front of the lobby is the Main Reading Room. To the left of this hall are the Lending/Circulation Library and the Periodicals Room, while the Reference Library is located to the right." (Library of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, n.d., p. 6)

The archival pamphlet provides a detailed description of the specialized reading environments within the original library space at the Sri Sumangala Mansion.

Reading Room & Reference Room in Sumangala Mandiraya

The Reading Room is a facility provided solely for readers to bring their own books and notebooks for private study. Currently, no books belonging to the library collection are housed in this hall. Only in instances where there is no seating available in the two main Reference Rooms may readers take a book from the Reference Section to the Reading Room. This is permitted only with the prior authorization of the officer-in-charge. Any book utilized in this manner must be returned to the Reference Section within the stipulated time limit. *Sandella* (the balcony), located above the main Reference Room, is reserved exclusively for the use of the Academic Staff. When necessary, lecturers may take one or more books from the Reference Rooms to this balcony for research or reference. To do so, they must record the items on the designated form provided for that purpose. All books taken to the balcony must be returned before the library closes for the day.

(Library of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, n.d., p 6*)*

The layout of the building was strategically divided between student resources and high-level administration:

- Ground Floor: As previously noted, this floor was dedicated to the library, featuring the Main Reading Room and the Reference Library. The primary objective was to provide a centralized, accessible location for students to engage in research and study.

- Second and Third Floors (Administrative Hub): The upper levels housed the executive offices of the university's top leadership. These included the offices for the:

  Vice-Chancellor

  Registrar

  Dean of the Faculty of Arts

  Dean of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce

  Bursar (Financial Officer)

  General Administrative Staff

1.3.3 Faculty of Arts: Phase II 2000–2011

The annual academic system, which had been in practice during the Faculty of Arts' initial phase, was abolished and replaced by the semester-based academic system. This transition marked a significant turning point for the faculty. Several key academic and administrative reforms implemented during this period are highlighted below:

1.3.3.1 Academic Departments and Degree Programmes

By the year 2000, the Faculty of Arts comprised the following academic departments:

- Department of Economics
- Department of History and Archaeology
- Department of Sociology and Anthropology
- Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication
- Department of Social Statistics
- Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies
- Department of Languages and Cultural Studies
- Department of Geography
- Department of English

By the year 2000, the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies offered a total of three-degree programmes. Among these, Sanskrit as well as Cultural and Aesthetic Studies could be pursued from the first year through to the postgraduate level. The Hindi course, however, was limited to the General Degree level.

By 2009, the Faculty of Arts offered a diverse range of subject areas across its various degree programs. The disciplines available for study included:

- Anthropology
- Buddhist Civilization
- Buddhist Philosophy
- Business Statistics
- Criminology
- Cultural and Aesthetic Studies
- Economics
- English
- French
- Geography
- Hindi
- History
- Information Technology for Management (MIT)
- Mass Communication
- Pali
- Philosophy and Psychology
- Political Science
- Sanskrit
- Sinhala
- Social Statistics
- Sociology

The Faculty of Arts recognizes exceptional academic achievement through the conferment of several prestigious gold medals and prizes. The following are the notable awards presented for various degree programmes:

- Venerable Sri Soratha Faculty of Arts Gold Medal: Awarded to the student with the highest overall marks in the Faculty of Arts
- Sinhala – G.B. Senanayake Memorial Gold Medal: Awarded for excellence in Sinhala studies
- Sociology and Anthropology – Special Degree Prize: Awarded for the highest performance in the Sociology and Anthropology Special Degree programme
- Criminology – Criminology and Criminal Justice Special Degree Prize: Awarded for outstanding achievement in the Special Degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- Geography – Professor Dhammika Wanasinghe Gold Medal: Awarded for excellence in Geography
- Archaeology – R.M. Dingiri Menike Upasika Matha Memorial Gold Medal: Awarded for excellence in Archaeology

A revitalized programme was launched as a joint project between the Ministry of *Buddhasasana* and the University to train Dhamma school teachers and award them a Diploma in Dhamma Teaching. The Department of Buddhist Affairs was responsible for selecting Dhamma school teachers from 18 districts across the island for this diploma course. This was named as *Daham Sarasaviya.*

In preparation for this initiative, a seven-day training workshop for lecturers was conducted starting March 14, 2005. Teaching activities officially commenced in the Kalutara District on March 19, 2006. Subsequently, the programme was expanded to include the following districts:

- Colombo
- Gampaha
- Ratnapura

- Badulla
- Matara
- Galle
- Kurunegala
- Kegalle
- Kandy
- Anuradhapura
- Puttalam

In addition to the aforementioned programmes, the Faculty of Arts maintained several self-financed certificate and diploma courses during the "Faculty of Arts: Phase II" period. These programmes were designed to cater to professional development and specialized academic interests. The following is a structured list of these offerings, followed by the postgraduate diplomas administered by the faculty:

- Diploma in Criminology
- Certificate in Writership and Communication
- Diploma in Writership and Communication
- Diploma in Dhamma Teaching (*Daham Guru*)
- Certificate in English

The faculty also offered several specialized Postgraduate Diplomas (PGD), highlighting its commitment to advanced professional training:

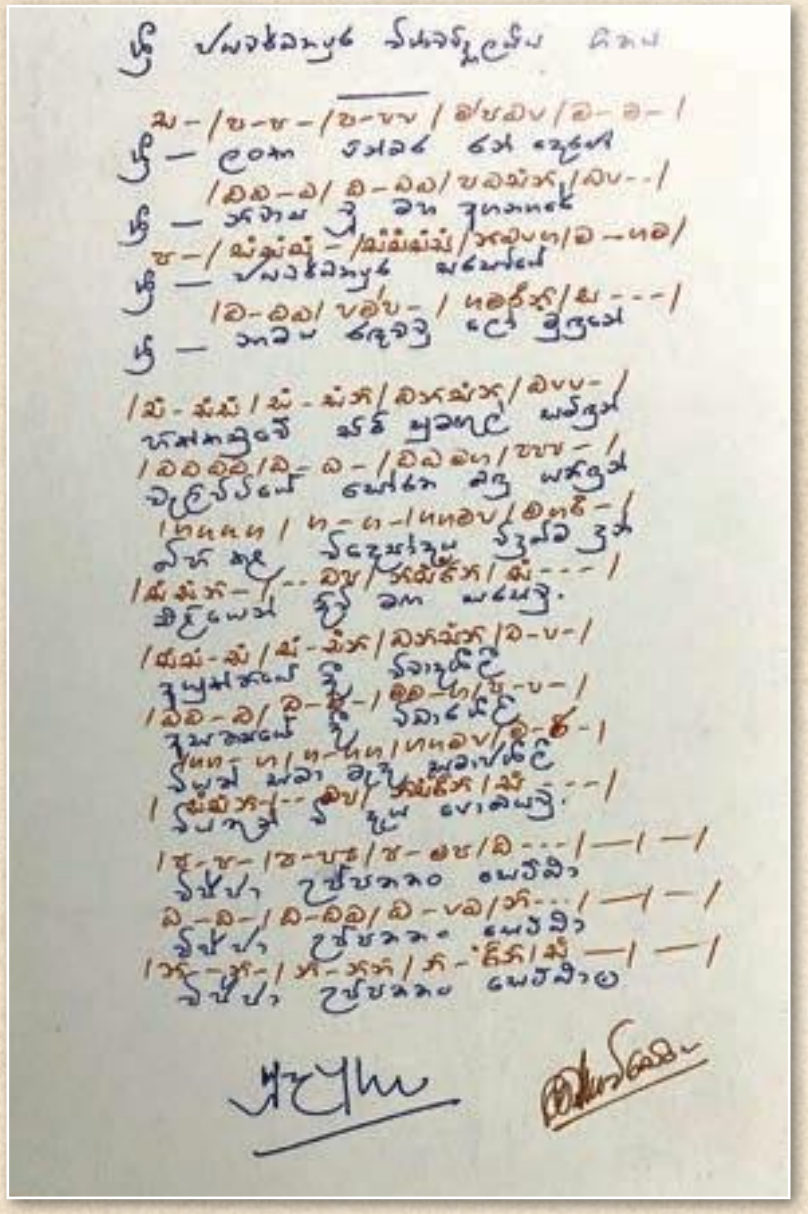
- Postgraduate Diploma in Writership and Communication
- Postgraduate Diploma in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- Postgraduate Diploma in Social/Business Statistics
- Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Sociology
- Postgraduate Diploma in English Language and Literature Teaching
- Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Statistics

During this period, the faculty undertook several initiatives to strengthen both its academic and cultural environment. In 2007, a two-day residential workshop on Research Methodology was organized for the academic staff of the Faculty of Arts at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute (SLFI). In the same year, the Department of English, supported by the World Bank through the IRQUE (Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education) project, established a state-of-the-art Language Laboratory. This facilitated the launch of a comprehensive English language course, made available to undergraduates across all faculties, thereby enhancing language proficiency and interdisciplinary engagement.

1.3.3.2 Extracurricular Activities, Student Associations, and Cultural Initiatives

Between 2000 and 2011, the faculty organized various extracurricular activities to foster a vibrant campus culture. A historic milestone was reached in 2005 with the creation of an official University Anthem for the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. The lyrics were composed by Professor Sunil Ariyaratne, and the music was directed by Dr. Rohana Weerasinghe. The anthem was recorded on October 4, 2005, and was publicly performed for the first time during the Convocation ceremony held on October 14, 2005 (Ariyaratne, 2009, p.170).

To honour creators who have made outstanding contributions to Sri Lankan Sinhala literature, to pay them the respect of the university community, and to inspire a literary awakening among undergraduates, the Vidyodaya Literary Awards Ceremony was inaugurated on March 29, 2000.



Conceptualized by Professor Sunil Ariyaratne and organized by the Sinhala and Mass Communication Society, the awards were initially limited to four categories for works published in the preceding year:

- Best Novel
- Best Short Story Collection
- Best Poetry Collection
- Best Lyric Anthology (*geya kavya*)

At its inception, this initiative functioned as a scholarly alternative to the State Literary Awards. Significantly, it remains the first and only instance in which a Sri Lankan university has played a direct role in a national-level literary evaluation process. Following the initial award ceremonies held in 2000, 2001, and 2002, the Vidyodaya Literary Awards Ceremony was revived in 2009 after an eight-year hiatus, coinciding with the University's 50th Golden Jubilee Anniversary. The relaunch introduced a new competitive category—the award for the Best Collection of Newspaper Columns [*puvath lipi*]. Since then, the Vidyodaya Literary Awards Ceremony has been conducted annually without interruption and continues to be held to the present day.

In 2009, the University of Sri Jayewardenepura celebrated its 50th Golden Jubilee Anniversary. The main commemorative ceremony was held on February 18, 2009, at the University's Bandaranayake Hall, under the distinguished patronage of the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. W.J.M. Lokubandara, and the Chancellor, Ven. Bellanwila Wimalarathane Thero. During the event, Professor Emeritus Wimal G. Balagalle delivered a comprehensive review of the university's first twenty-five years. The retrospective of the subsequent twenty-five years was presented by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. N.L.A. Karunaratne. To mark the occasion, the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies presented two specially commissioned performances:

- *Jayewardenepura Varnana* (A Eulogy to Jayewardenepura)
- *Vidudaya Vannama* (The Vidyodaya Recital)

Beyond these formal ceremonies, a series of public programmes were organized with the collective participation of all faculties. As part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations, an educational exhibition was held within the university premises, with the active participation of the Faculty of Arts. Each department designed exhibition stalls that creatively showcased their respective subject areas in a manner accessible to the general public. A standout feature of this event was the book exhibition titled *Vidudayange Poth Dekma* (An Exhibition of Vidyodaya Books), which exclusively featured works authored by alumni who had received their first degree from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. The series of programmes commemorating the Golden Jubilee concluded on February 18, 2010. The closing ceremony featured the launch of *Sri Jayewardenepura Vishvavidyalayiya Vruththanthaya* (A Chronicle of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura), a pictorial retrospective documenting the fifty-year history of the institution. Authored by Professor Sunil Ariyaratne, the most senior professor in service at the time, this publication was a landmark achievement. Although various articles and pamphlets had been written previously, this work stands as the first comprehensive book ever published on the history of the university.

In 2007, a new student talent recognition programme titled *Pahan Tharu* (*superstars*) was launched under the inspiring theme, *Yam Dineka Baebalenu Pinisa* (to rise to prominence in time). This initiative was a revitalized successor to the *Nala Mudu Suwanda* arts festival, which had been a feature of university culture for twelve years since its inception in 1995. The *Pahan Tharu* competition was structured into five distinct categories to celebrate diverse artistic talents:

- Best Male Vocalist
- Best Female Vocalist
- Best Presenter/Best Compere
- Best Lyric Composition
- Best Musical Composition (Melody)

Organized by the Sinhala and Mass Communication Society, the programme was open to the entire student body of the university. Following several preliminary rounds, the grand finale of the *Pahan Tharu* festival was held on November 25, 2010.

The Sinhala and Mass Communication Society continued organizing several other notable cultural events during this period. One such highlight was the Chinese Film Festival, held in collaboration with the Sri Lanka–China Society. The inaugural ceremony took place on May 17, 2010, at the Balagalle Hall, under the distinguished patronage of the Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka. Following the opening, a selection of Chinese films was screened over three consecutive days.

Furthermore, with the dual objectives of enhancing the aesthetic appreciation of undergraduates and fostering stronger ties between the academic staff, non-academic staff, and the student body, the Society organized a musical programme titled *Gee Pedura***.** This event was held on Tuesday, June 15, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. near the Sumangala Hall (Ariyaratne, 2009, p. 178-179). Additionally, on October 20, 2010, the Society organized *Shwetha Rathriya* (The White Night), a solo musical concert by the renowned vocalist *Visharada* Nanda Malini. Originally broadcast on the Sirasa FM radio station, the concert was brought to the stage as a live performance at the university's Bandaranayake Hall, marking a significant cultural moment for the University community.

In 2009, the Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication organized an inter-university educational camp titled *Gimhana Kandavura* (Summer Camp). Developed on a concept proposed by Senior Lecturer Kusumalatha Lankamulla, the programme was designed to provide students with subject-related practical knowledge. Participation was open to selected undergraduates studying Sinhala and Mass Communication from universities across the country. The two-day residential workshop was successfully conducted in both 2009 and 2010.

Earlier, on February 10, 2000, the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies organized a major cultural performance titled *Gangthera.* In addition, in 2007, the Department of History and Archaeology contributed to national-level state programmes—including *Seetawaka Abhimana* and *Deyata Kirula*—by organizing specialized archaeological exhibitions (Ariyaratne, 2009, p.179).

Two other significant institutional milestones occurred in 2009: the acquisition of a bus for the Faculty of Arts and the inauguration of a specialized Computer Centre to serve the faculty's students. Additionally, the residential workshop on Research Methodology for academic staff continued to be held during this year, maintaining its established format.

1.3.3.3 Infrastructure

Since its inception, the departments of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce had been housed within the Sri Sumangala Mansion (*Sri Sumangala Mandiraya*), which originally belonged to the Faculty of Arts. A significant administrative shift occurred in 2008, when five academic departments belonging to the Faculty of Management were relocated, along with all their equipment and resources, to the newly constructed Soratha Mansion (*Soratha Mandiraya*). Following this relocation, the Sri Sumangala Mansion became exclusively dedicated to the Faculty of Arts, providing much-needed space for its expanding academic and administrative activities.

1.4. The Fourth Phase: 2011–2022 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

This section details the significant milestones in the faculty's history, spanning from the formal renaming of the faculty in 2011 to the inauguration of the new Wimaladhamma Mansion (*Wimaladhamma Mandiraya*) on December 16, 2022 A pivotal turning point occurred when the University Grants Commission (UGC), during its 819th meeting on January 06, 2011, officially approved the renaming of the Faculty of Arts to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

In granting this approval, the UGC provided specific guidance regarding the faculty's structure. It was advised that the faculty should remain a single entity rather than bifurcating into two separate faculties for Humanities and Social Sciences in the future. The Commission noted that such a separation might diminish the appeal and student recruitment potential for the Humanities disciplines (University Grants Commission, *Annual Report 2010*, 2011).

1.4.1 Academic Departments and Degree Programmes

During this period, the Faculty of Arts, which had previously consisted of 10 departments, underwent significant expansion to reach a total of 16 departments. This growth was marked by several strategic structural changes and the establishment of new specialized units:

- **Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice**: Formally established on May 16, 2016, following its separation from the Department of Sociology.
- **Department of Anthropology**: Established as an independent academic department on February 02, 2018.
- **Department of Philosophy and Psychology**: Originally part of the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, it commenced operations as a new, independent department on March 02, 2018.

- **Department of English Language Teaching (DELT):** In 2018, the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU), which was responsible for the Compulsory English courses, was elevated to the status of a full academic department (Sri Jayewardenepura University, *Annual Report, 2018)*.

- **Department of Languages, Cultural Studies, and Performing Arts:** In 2020, the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies was renamed to reflect its broader scope.

- **Department of Music and Creative Technology:** On March 16, 2020, the Music discipline was separated from the aforementioned department to be established as a standalone academic entity.

- **Department of Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** The most recent addition to the faculty's structure was established in 2022.

By the end of 2022, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences comprised a total of 16 academic departments offering an extensive range of 33 distinct degree programs.

[Note: *Although the list in the Sinhala version is arranged according to the Sinhala alphabetical order, it has been reorganized here in accordance with the English alphabetical order for clarity and consistency*.]

Anthropology
- Anthropology

Criminology and Criminal Justice
- Criminology and Criminal Justice

Economics
- Economics

English and Linguistics
- English
- Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL)

English Language Teaching (DELT)

Does not confer a separate degree

Geography
- Geography
- Geo-Spatial Technology

History and Archaeology
- History
- Archaeology

Information and Communication Technology
- Information Technology

Languages, Cultural Studies, and Performing Arts
- Dancing
- Sanskrit
- Hindi
- French
- Chinese
- Japanese

Music and Creative Technology
- Music
- Creative Music Technology and Production

Pali and Buddhist Studies
- Pali
- Buddhist Civilization

- Buddhist Philosophy
- Buddhist Heritage and Tourism

Philosophy and Psychology

- Philosophy
- Psychology

Political Science

- Political Science

Sinhala and Mass Communication

- Sinhala
- Mass Communication

Social Statistics

- Social Statistics
- Business Statistics
- Information Technology

Sociology

- Sociology
- Social Work

1.4.2 Co-curricular and Extracurricular Activities

1.4.2.1 Centres, Units, and Committees

To enhance the co-curricular and extracurricular activities associated with the aforementioned degree programmes, the faculty has established various centres and units. As of 2022, the following diplomas, certificate courses, and projects were being administered:

- Centre for Digital Education and Professional Development (CDEPD)

  Certificate in Computer Networking

  Diploma in Applied Tamil

  Diploma in English

  Bahuvidha Buddhi Kalambhana competition (Multi-Intelligence Brainstorm – An aptitude and skills competition)

  Subhasha – A Sinhala language proficiency competition
- Entrepreneurship Development Unit
- Equal Opportunity Centre
- Student Support Centre

To maintain academic standards and promote a holistic university environment, several key committees operate within the faculty:

- Curriculum Development Committee: Responsible for the annual review and modernization of the faculty's syllabi and degree structures
- Quality Assurance Committee: Ensures that all academic programmes are aligned with the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF) standards to maintain high educational quality
- Faculty Publications Committee: Tasked with promoting and facilitating the research and creative publications of the academic staff, non-academic staff, and students
- Dean's Advisory Committee: A high-level body that assists in making collective decisions regarding the general administration and strategic direction of the faculty
- Cultural Committee: Established to promote performing arts and creative initiatives within the faculty

- Green Hub (*Haritha Viyana*): An initiative aimed at establishing a clean, sustainable, and aesthetically pleasing learning environment. This Green Hub project focuses on eco-friendly campus development.

(FHSS, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, 2022)

1.4.2.2 Research

During this period, the faculty significantly expanded its research profile by organizing two major recurring conferences. One of these serves as a prestigious international platform, while the other is dedicated to fostering the research capabilities of the faculty's own students.

- International Research Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS): As the flagship academic event of the Faculty, IRCHSS attracts local and international scholars, providing a forum for the dissemination of high-impact research across diverse disciplines. It has become a cornerstone of the faculty's commitment to global academic excellence.

- Vidyodaya Undergraduate Research Day (VURD): In addition to the international conference, the faculty conducts a specialized symposium aimed at encouraging the research culture among its undergraduate students. This initiative provides a formal platform for young researchers to present their findings and engage in scholarly dialogue within the university community.

In 2012, the first International Research Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) was inaugurated under the leadership of the then Dean, Professor P. Athukorala. This conference established a dedicated international platform for scholarly discourse in the humanities and social sciences. Starting from 2016, the faculty decided to transition the IRCHSS into a biennial event. The following academic staff members served as Chairpersons and Secretaries from its inception through 2021: (Their titles are mentioned as held at the time of these positions).

Year	Chairperson	Secretary
2012	Assoc. Prof. Sunethra Thennakoon	Prof. Chamalie Nahallage
2013	Dr. Shanta Wijesinghe	Senior Lecturer Vishaka Suriyabandara
2014	Dr. Shirantha Heenkenda	Dr. Lalith Ananda
2015	Prof. Chamalie Nahallage	Ven. Prof. Medagampitiye Wijithadhamma Thero
2016	Dr. Chitra Jayathilake	Senior Lecturer Senani Harischandra
2018	Dr. B.W.R. Damayanthi	Dr. Nelum Kanthilatha
2020	Dr. Sujeeva Hettiarchchi	Senior Lecturer Ajantha Kalyanaratne

Vidyodaya Undergraduate Research Day (VURD) was launched in 2017 under the guidance of the then Dean, Professor D.P.S. Chandrakumara. This symposium has been held annually and without interruption since its inception.

The following academic staff members have provided leadership for VURD:

Year	Chairperson	Secretary
2017	Dr. Nimal Wasantha Mendis	Dr. Neranji Wijewardena
2018	Ven. Dr. Pinnawala Sangasumana Thero	Senior Lecturer Imesha Dharmasena
2019	Dr. Nishantha Hettiarachchi	Dr. D.P.K. Manel
2020	Senior Lecturer Aruna Shanta Walpola	Dr. Asha Fernando
2021	Prof. Nimal Wasantha Mendis	Dr. Sanjeevi Manthrirathne
2022	Dr. Shanta Gamlath	Ven. Dambara Amila Thero

In addition to the recurring conferences, the faculty also organized specialized symposia to address specific academic needs and celebrate institutional milestones. Notable among these were NARCHE and ICOL.

- NARCHE (National Action Research Conference on Higher Education): Held in 2021, this conference focused on the methodology of Action Research within the higher education sector.

  Chairperson: Dr. Sampath Pushpakumara (Senior Lecturer)

  Secretary: Dr. Himalika Ranaweera (Senior Lecturer)

- ICOL (International Conference of Oriental Languages): Organized to coincide with the 60th Anniversary of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, this conference was held on February 20, 2019. It prioritized scholarly study in Classical and Oriental languages, specifically Sinhala, Pali, Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Tamil.

  Chairperson: Ven. Prof. Medagoda Abhayatissa

  Secretary: Ven. Prof. Medagampitiye Wijithadhamma

During this era, individual departments also initiated specialized international platforms to cater to their unique subject areas.

- ICICH (International Conference on Intangible Cultural Heritage): An international forum dedicated to the preservation and study of living traditions, oral histories, and cultural practices.

- ICPBS (International Conference on Pali and Buddhist Studies): A premier international platform for Buddhist scholarship, attracting monks and lay scholars from across the globe to discuss Pali literature and Buddhist philosophy.

1.4.2.3 Literature and the Arts

During this period, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences inaugurated a premier arts festival titled *Ran Rasu Pratibha Abhinandana* (The Festival of Golden Excellence). This cultural initiative was the brainchild of the then-Dean, Senior Lecturer Lasantha Nawarathna. The competition was exclusively open to the undergraduates of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The inaugural festival was held in 2014, where Gold Medals were awarded across numerous categories, including:

- Best Poet and Best Short Story Writer
- Best Lyricist
- Best Male and Female Vocalist
- Best Dancer
- Best Male and Female Announcer

A highlight of the 2014 ceremony was the presentation of a Special Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr. Vajira Chitrasena, honouring her unparalleled contribution to the art of Sri Lankan dance. Furthermore, every department within the faculty presented creative showcases based on specific themes. The Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies emerged as the overall champions of the 2014 festival.

In 2015, the *Ran Rasu* festival marked a milestone by releasing its first professional production: a music video of the best lyric composition from the 2014 competition. The song, titled *Diyawanna Oya Balanna* (Behold, the Diyawanna River), was written by Chabodha Thirimanne of the Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication. The musical composition and vocals were provided by Dr. Priyantha Thilakasiri, a Senior Lecturer in Music. The visual direction was handled by Madhu Wijekoon, while the creative concept for the music video was developed by Dinu Ariyaratne of the Department of Social Statistics.

The *Ran Rasu* Arts Festival was successfully executed through the collective guidance of several prominent academics, including Dr. W.B.A. Vitharana, Senior Lecturer Hansamala Ritigahapola, Senior Lecturer Sunil Derangala, and Dr. Wasantha Mendis.

The second major creative production by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences during this period was the poetic drama (verse play) titled *Sandeshawali***.** This project was a multidisciplinary collaboration involving the faculty's scholars and artists.

The creative concept, script, and direction were executed by Senior Lecturer Hansamala Ritigahapola. The musical direction was a collaborative effort between Dr. Priyantha Thilakasiri and Lecturer Nuwan Vithanage, with a special musical contribution for the *Diyawanna Vaenuma* (Ode to the Diyawanna) provided by Professor Pradeep Ratnayake. The sound mixing and tonal arrangements were handled by Lecturer Amitta Bandaranayake.The choreography and dance direction were guided by a specialized team consisting of Dr. Himalika Ranaweera, Lecturer Deepal Gunasekera, Visiting Lecturer P.W.T. Dayan, and Assistant Lecturer H.P.A. Sulochana.

As documented in the commemorative booklet released at the premiere:

> "The Sandeshawali poetic drama is a vibrant mixture of poetry, music, and dance created by the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. It is based on the five great messenger poems (*sandesha kavya*) composed during the Kotte Kingdom era: *Parevi, Kokila, Selalihini, Gira,* and *Hansa*. The play is structured around the unique concept of these various birds—serving as messengers—arriving at the royal court of King Parakramabahu VI to pay their respects and present their messages."

The production was staged multiple times:

- 2018: Two performances were staged at the Bandaranayake Hall (University Premises).
- 2019: A special performance was held at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) in Colombo to coincide with the Diamond Jubilee (60th Anniversary) of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

To mark this artistic milestone, a special commemorative volume titled *"Sandeshawali Kavinaluwa"* was published. This editorial volume features a collection of scholarly articles and insights related to the production and its literary roots (Pereira, 2018, p. vii-x).

Starting from 2019, the faculty launched an annual Faculty Publications Day. This event was organized to officially recognize and celebrate the scholarly output of the academic staff, non-academic staff, and the student community. It serves as a platform to highlight published research, books, and creative works, fostering a culture of intellectual documentation and dissemination.

In 2020, a prestigious new accolade known as the "Dean's Award for Excellence" (*Pīṭhādhipathi Gourawa Sammānaya*) was introduced. This initiative was based on a concept by the current Dean, Professor Shirantha Heenkenda. The award is presented annually to internal undergraduates to recognize and appreciate their outstanding social leadership and holistic contributions to the university community beyond academic performance.

1.4.3 Infrastructure

During this period, the faculty and university undertook several significant construction and restoration projects to honour its legacy and modernize its facilities. To mark the 50th anniversary of the passing of the University's founding father, Venerable Welivitiye Sri

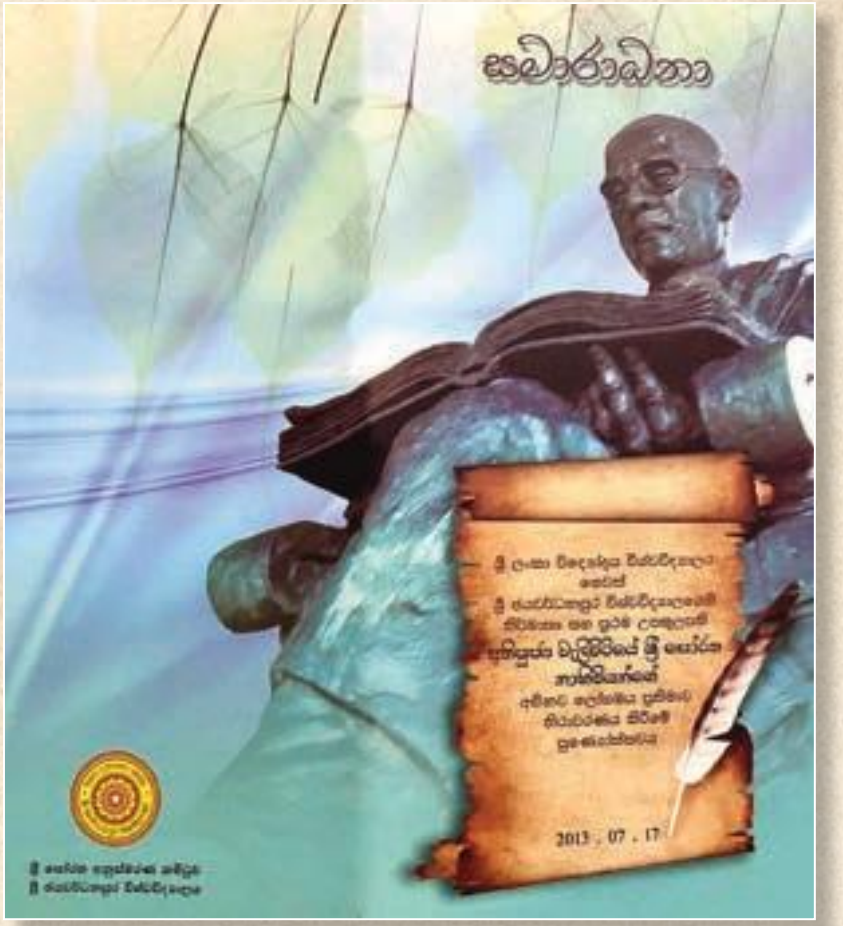
Soratha Nayaka Thero (1897–1963), a project was initiated to erect a bronze statue in his honour. The preliminary steps were taken on June 16, 2011, following a proposal made during the organizing committee meeting for the 48th death anniversary of the Nayaka Thero.

The bronze statue was officially unveiled on July 17, 2013, by the then-President, Mahinda Rajapaksa. This tribute was made possible through the generous financial contribution of Professor Sunil Ariyaratne, a distinguished alumnus of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. The statue was sculpted by Professor Sarath Chandrajeewa of the University of the Visual and Performing Arts (Suresh & Ritigahapola, 2013).

Between 2015 and 2018, the Bandaranayake Hall, which belongs to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, underwent extensive renovations. The facility was upgraded to meet the standards of a modern performance theatre, enhancing its capacity to host high-level artistic and academic events (University of Sri Jayewardenepura, *Annual Report 2015*, 2016).

During this era of expansion, the faculty also provided infrastructural support to other sections of the university. Several departments and offices of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce continued to be housed within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences premises until their own new building complex was completed.

During this period, the faculty witnessed a transformative phase in its physical landscape, transitioning from the historic Sri Sumangala Mansion to state-of-the-art modern facilities. For decades, the Sri Sumangala Mansion served as the heart of the faculty, housing almost all academic departments and lecture halls. However, the need for specialized vocational spaces led to new developments: On October 3, 2022, a dedicated “Incubator Space” was established for the Mass Communication programme. This facility was designed



to enhance the professional, communication, and journalistic skills of undergraduates aiming for careers in the media industry. This project was made possible through a collaborative partnership with HELVETAS Intercooperation gGmbH (HELVETAS), an international non-governmental organization (University of Sri Jayewardenepura, *Annual Report 2022*).

Name of the Project	Multipurpose Building for the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Project Commencement Date	01.03.2020
Contract Sum	Rs.1,183 Million +VAT
Contract sum with Price Escalation (Estimated)	Rs.1,420 Million +VAT
Physical Progress	91%
Capitalized Work in Progress	Rs.843 Million
Outstanding Bills as at 31.12.2022	390 Million
Interest Claim Bills	97 Million

The faculty continued its engagement with development initiatives by joining the AHEAD (Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development) project in 2020, building on earlier experience gained through programmes such as IRQUE and HETC. The project was initiated under the leadership of the then Dean, Dr. D. P. S. Chandrakumara, who, together with his team, worked with sustained commitment to secure the grant. These collective efforts culminated in the formal opening of a fully equipped modern auditorium on 17 February 2022. Located on the ground floor of the Sri Sumangala Mansion and formerly used as the Library Reading Room, the auditorium was officially named the *Sri Sumangala Sabhāsadaya* (University of Sri Jayewardenepura, *Annual Report 2021*, 2022).

The most significant infrastructural achievement in sixty years occurred under the current Dean, Professor Shirantha Heenkenda. The long-awaited new building for the faculty was officially inaugurated on December 16, 2022. The building was opened by the then-Vice Chancellor, Senior Professor Sudantha Liyanage, and the Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and former Vice-Chancellor of the University, Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunge. The new complex was named Sri Wimaladhamma Mansion (*Sri Wimaladhamma Mandiraya*) in honour of Ven. Palannoruwe Wimaladhamma Nayaka Thero, who served as the second Vice-Chancellor of the University (1964–1966) and the first Dean of the Faculty of Buddhist Studies (1959–1964).

This inauguration marked a historic milestone: it was the first time since 1961—exactly sixty years later—that the faculty received a completely new dedicated building. The Sri Wimaladhamma Mansion now stands alongside the Sri Sumangala Mansion as the primary hub for the faculty's academic and administrative operations.

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Chapter II

Adhyayanāṅśāvalōkana

A Departmental History: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 1959–2022

Compilation: **Imanga Nadeeshani & Anura Jayasinghe**

Translation: **Chitra Jayathilake**

Overview

The second chapter of this historical book, titled *Adhyayanāṅśāvalōkana* – official historical narrative of the departments – is dedicated to presenting detailed information about each department within the faculty, introduced in the first chapter of this book. This chapter covers the period from their inception up to December 16, 2022.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, by the end of 2022, there were 16 academic departments established within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. These have been organised here according to the chronological order in which they were established as independent departments.

While this narrative is primarily based on information provided by the departments themselves, the editorial board revised certain facts using historical records as a foundation. Notably, the names of lecturers who served as Acting Heads of Departments have not been included. Furthermore, as there are slight variations between the official names and the commonly used names of some lecturers, a separate, complete list of the academic staff has been included at the end of the chapter.

Chronology of Department Establishment: 1959–2022

The following table summarises the formal founding years of the various departments within the current Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Department	Founding Year
Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies	1959
Department of Languages and Cultural Studies	1959
Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication	1959
Department of History and Archaeology	1959

Department of Sociology	1959
Department of Geography	1960
Department of Economics	1973
Department of Social Statistics	1995
Department of English and Linguistics	1997
Department of Political Science	2009
Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice	2016
Department of Philosophy and Psychology	2018
Department of Anthropology	2018
Department of English Language Teaching (DELT)	2018
Department of Music and Creative Technology	2020
Department of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	2022

Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies

Establishment

One of the founding departments established in 1959 along with the inception of Vidyodaya University.

Field of Study

Pali, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Civilization, and Buddhist Heritage and Tourism

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (Special) Degree
Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree
Master of Arts (MA)
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Extended Programmes & External Degree programmes

Diploma in Buddhist Studies
Diploma in Buddhist Counselling
Diploma in Chinese Language
Daham Sarasaviya Diploma & Higher Diploma
Diploma in Pali Language
Bachelor of Arts (General) External Degree

Current Academic Staff

Senior Prof. Ven. Magammana Pañňananda Thero
Prof. Ven. Nayimbala Dhammadassi Thero
Prof. Ven. Medagampitiye Vijithadhamma Thero
Prof. Ven. Medagoda Abhayatissa Thero
Prof. K. A. Weerasena
Prof. M. M. D. D. I. Gunathilake
Prof. Ven. Elamaldeniye Sarananda Thero
Prof. A. M. N. W. Mendis
Prof. Ven. Panahaduwe Yasassi Thero
Prof. G. A. Gamini
Senior Lecturer Ven. Dr. Kumbuke Chandraloka Thero
Senior Lecturer Ven. Kudakathnoruwe Vineetha Thero
Senior Lecturer Ven. Dr. Witharandeniye Chandasiri Thero
Lecturer (Probationary) Ven. Matibembiye Dhammasiri Thero
Lecturer (Probationary) W. M. C. L. Madhusanka

Heads of the Department

Ven. Sahitya Chakravarthi Panditha Palannoruwe Wimaladhamma Thero
Ven. Aggamaha Panditha Balangoda Ananda Maitreya MahaThero
Ven. Panditha Dr. Parawahara Vajiragñana Thero
Ven. Panditha Kalukondayawe Pañňasekera Maha Thero
Ven. Panditha Mirisse Gunasiri Thero
Ven. Prof. Kotagama Vachissara Thero
Ven. Prof. Henpitagedara Gñanavasa Thero
Prof. Jinadasa Perera
Prof. L. P. N. Perera
Prof. Chandra Wickramagamage
Ven. Prof. Bellanwila Wimalaratana Thero

Prof. Ariyapala Perera
Ven. Prof. Meegoda Paññaloka Thero
Prof. Chandima Wijebandara
Prof. H. M. Moratuwagama
Prof. K. A. Weerasena
Ven. Prof. Naimbala Dhammadassi Thero
Senior Prof. Ven. Magammana Paññananda Thero
Prof. Ven. Medagampitiye Vijithadhamma Thero
Prof. M. D. D. I. Gunathilake
Prof. Ven. Elamaldeniye Sarananda Thero

Publications

- *Magadhi* Academic Journal,
- Vidyodaya Journal of Buddhist Studies (VJBS)

Special Programmes

- International Conference on Pali and Buddhist Studies (ICPBS)

Societies

- Pali and Buddhist Studies Society

Awards and Gold Medals

Ven. Prof. Bellanwila Wimalaratana Anu Nayaka Thero Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who obtains the highest GPA with a First Class or Upper Second Class in the BA (Special) Degree in Pali.

Prof. Ariyapala Perera - Sitha Perera Gold Medal: Awarded for the highest GPA in the BA (Special) Degree in Buddhist Civilization (with at least one Pali unit).

Ven. Kudakathnoruwe Siddhartha Nayaka Thero Gold Medal: Awarded for the highest GPA in the BA (Special) Degree in Buddhist Philosophy.

Ven. Bellanwila Sri Somaratana Nayaka Thero Memorial Scholarship: Awarded to the student with a First Class and the highest GPA across any BA (Special) Degree offered by the department.

Historical Context

Chapter I of this book notes that during the university's second phase – when it comprised only three faculties – this department functioned under the Faculty of Buddhism. Following the university restructuring under the University of Ceylon Act of 1972, curriculum reductions confined the formal study of 'Buddhist Philosophy' exclusively to the Vidyalankara Campus. As a result, lecturers teaching Pali and Buddhist Philosophy at the Vidyodaya, Colombo, and Peradeniya campuses were instructed to report to the Vidyalankara Campus for their service. During this transition, only two academics remained at the Vidyodaya Campus: Ariyapala Perera, who was in charge of Compulsory Sinhala and Buddhist Culture, and Dr. Jinadasa Perera, who served as the advisor for students pursuing Pali and Buddhist Philosophy as subjects for General Degrees and Master of Arts (MA) degrees.

A few years later, Tilak Kariyawasam, who had returned after completing his PhD at Lancaster University in the United Kingdom, was also transferred to Vidyalankara. Meanwhile, Dr. Chandra Wickramagamage was permitted to remain at Vidyodaya to serve in his capacity as an Archaeology specialist. Ven. Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero aspired to develop Vidyodaya University into a Buddhist seat of learning similar to the ancient Indian universities of Nalanda and Vikramshila [Vikramaśilā]. Consequently, Buddhist Studies was established as a compulsory subject for all monastic (monk) students.

Students wishing to pursue a Special (Honors) Degree in Buddhist Studies were required to pass two separate papers on Pali and

Sanskrit in the university entrance examination. This rigorous requirement was set because the curriculum for both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism necessitated the study of Pali primary sources **(***Pali Tripitaka*, *Atuwa Tika* and *Chandolankara*), Indian Philosophical Texts **(***Rig Veda, Upanishads,* and the *Bhagavad Gita*) and Sanskrit Mahayana Texts (*Lalitavistara*, *Vijñapti-matrata-siddhi*, *Mulamadhyamakakarika*, and *Vigrahavyavartani*).

In addition to the Heads and current academic staff members of the Department previously mentioned, the following scholars have contributed to the department's academic activities: Ven. Dr. Damunumeye Gñanaratana Thero, Ven. Panditha Raddelle Panñaloka Thero,Ven. Panditha Thalalle Dhammananda Thero,Ven. Dr. Parawahara Paññananda Thero, Ven. Dr. Kannimahara SumangalaThero, Ven. Panditha Ganegama SaranankaraThero, Ven. Dr. Walpola RahulaThero, Ven. Panditha Henpitagedara Gñanasiha Thero,Ven. Panditha Telembugammana SeelarathanaThero,Ven. Panditha Puhulwelle Wimalawansa Thero,Ven. Panditha Rathmale Ananda Thero (Prof. Ananda Gunasinghe),Ven. Panditha Abanwelle Paññasekera Thero, Ven. Panditha Weligama Seelananda Thero, Ven. Panditha Pallawela SaddhatissaThero,Ven. Panditha Kirimatiyane Dhammarakkhita Thero,Ven. Panditha Kaluwachchimulle MahanamaThero (Prof. Mahanama Karunaratne), Ven. Dr. Medagampola Sumanashantha Thero (Prof. Shantha Ratnayake), Ven. Dr. Wellawatte Ananda Thero, Ven. Most Ven. Ganthune Assaji Mahanayaka Thero, Ven. Dr. Aparekke Punyasiri Thero, and Ven. Dr. Keembiye Gnanathilaka Thero (Prof. Tilak Kariyawasam) were among the scholars in the monastic category. Dr. Tissa Weerasingha, Prof. Mahinda Palihawadana, Prof. S. Weeratunga, Prof. S. G. M. Weerasinghe, Dr. P. Nanayakkara, Dr. Siripala Leelarathna, P. Weeratunga, Dr. Harrison Perera, Prof. Daya Edirisinghe and Dr. Abhaya Bandaranayake contributed as lay scholars. Also, as first female lecturers, Ashoka Gunasekera and Sitha Perera contributed to the department. Additionally, Prof. Gñanadasa Perera, who currently serves in the Department of Philosophy and Psychology, is also considered part of this academic lineage.

(Source: www.sjp.ac.lk)



Department of Languages, Cultural Studies and Performing Arts

Establishment

This is one of the original departments established in 1959 alongside the founding of Vidyodaya University.

Fields of Study

Sanskrit, Hindi, French, Japanese, Chinese, Dancing, Drama and Theatre

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree
Bachelor of Arts (Special) Degree
Master of Arts (MA)
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (External) in Sanskrit
Bachelor of Arts (External) in Hindi
Bachelor of Arts (External) in Dancing
Bachelor of Arts (External) in Drama and Theatre

Current Academic Staff

Senior Prof. R. M. Saman Chandra Ranasinghe (Sanskrit)
Prof. R. K. D. N. K. Rajapaksha (Hindi)
Prof. W. B. A. Vitharana (Dancing and Drama & Theatre)
Senior Lecturer Dr. A. K. M. S. Manamperi (Dancing)
Senior Lecturer I. U. Chandrasekara (French)
Senior Lecturer Dr. E. G. W. P. Gunasena (Hindi)
Senior Lecturer Ven. Meepitiye Seelarathana Thero (Sanskrit)
Senior Lecturer Dr. W. V. P. H. Ranaweera (Dancing)
Senior Lecturer Shravastipura Shanthasiri (Sanskrit)
Senior Lecturer Dr. S. K. A. Lokugamage (Japanese)
Lecturer Dr. K. B. D. Gunasena (Dancing)
Lecturer (Unconfirmed) W. L. S. Udayakumari (French)

Heads of the Department

Prof. Ananda Guruge (1959–1965)
Prof. Mahinda Palihawadana (1966–1971)
Ven. Prof. Henpitagedara Gnanavasa (1972–1973)
Prof. Jinadasa Perera (1973–1980)
Prof. Chandra Wickramagamage (1977–1980)
Dr. Mahanama Karunaratne (1981–1986)
Prof. Mahinda Palihawadana (1987–1990)
Prof. Ananda Gunasinghe (1991–1995)
Prof. Walter Marasinghe (1996–1998)
Prof. Bandara Menike Wijetunga (1998–2004)
Prof. Saman Chandra Ranasinghe (2005–2011)
Prof. Darshana Pradeep Ratnayake (2011–2017)
Prof. W. B. A. Vitharana (2017–2022)

Publications

- *Yathra* (Sanskrit Medium Journal)
- *Sanvadi* Journal

Special Programmes

Hindi Language

- Indian Food Exhibition

French Language

- Providing scholarships for students studying French through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Embassy of France, the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, and the University of Kelaniya
- Musical programmes conducted in collaboration with the French Language and Cultural Institute
- Organizing special programmes to coincide with International French Language Day

Japanese Language

- Programmes introducing Japanese culture
- A language programme in collaboration with Kurume University and Hiroshima University in Japan

Dancing

- *Hadin Hadata* (Heart to Heart): A programme dedicated to distributing books to schools
- Annual workshops organized for alumni
- *Salanga Puja***:** Bharatanatyam performances
- *Gunguru Mangalyaya:* Kathak dance performances
- *Nrutya Darsha***:** Dance showcases
- *Saba* Dance Concert
- *Nirmana* Creative Dance Concert
- *Guruwaram Mangalyaya***:** A programme based on the Sabaragamuwa dance tradition

Drama and Theatre

- *Sabe Vilakkuwa*: Creative performances based on traditional rituals and Sri Lankan folk drama

Other Aesthetics Programmes

- *Gangthera* Aesthetic Concert
- *Dhwani* Aesthetic Concert

Societies

- Language, Cultural Studies, and Performing Arts Student Society

  Sanskrit Society
- Hindi Society
- Dancing Society

Awards & Gold Medals

Madanwala Sri Dharmodaya Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who obtains the highest-Grade Point Average (GPA) in the B.A. Sanskrit (Special) Degree programme.

***Kalasuri* Piyasara Shilpadhipathi Gold Medal:** Awarded to the student who completes the B.A. Dancing and Cultural Studies (Special) Degree with a First-Class honour and achieves the highest overall average marks for all practical course units within the field of dance studies

Historical Context

The current Department of Languages, Cultural Studies and Performing Arts originated from the Department of Sanskrit and Linguistics, which functioned under the Faculty of Languages—one of the five original faculties at the university's inception.

The first Head of the Department was the internationally renowned scholar Professor Ananda W. P. Guruge, who also served as the Sri Lankan Ambassador to the United States. Other pioneering faculty included: Sitharamaiah (invited professor), most Ven. Raddelle Pannaloka Thero and Most Ven. Kahaduwe Chandajothi Thero (visiting lecturers), K. P. G. Wijayasoondara (lecturer) and Tissa Rajapathirana (research assistant). A notable highlight of the department's history is its close association with the university's inaugural student cohort, which included Ven. Rathmale Ananda Thero and Ven. Weligama Seelananda Thero. Ven. Rathmale Ananda Thero—later known as Professor Ananda Gunasinghe—holds the distinction of being the

university's first registered student. Significantly, two of the first eleven graduates were subsequently appointed to the department's academic staff.

In addition to these, Hindi Language and Literature—a major subject of this department—was originally offered under the Department of Modern Oriental Languages (formerly the Department of Modern and Oriental Languages) at the Faculty of Languages. This clarifies that the subject of Hindi, which currently offers both Special and General Degree programmes within the Department of Languages, Cultural Studies, and Performing Arts, has been a part of the university since its inception.

With the education reforms implemented in 1972, subjects including Sanskrit were transferred to Vidyalankara University (now the University of Kelaniya). Consequently, Professor Mahinda Palihawadana and Professor S. Weeratunga, both eminent Sanskrit scholars who served as Heads of this Department, were seconded to the University of Kelaniya. As detailed in the first chapter of this book, following these reforms, the department was reconstituted as the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies in 1972. As noted in the first chapter, the Department of Archaeology had previously functioned independently under the Faculty of Arts. However, under the aforementioned curricular restructuring, Archaeology was brought under the purview of the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies. During this period, hence, the department offered the following degree programmes: Sanskrit (Special and General Degrees), Cultural Studies (Special and General Degrees), Archaeology (Special and General Degrees) and Hindi (General Degree). During this era, Ven. Professor Kamburupitiye Vanaratana Thero and Dr. Bandaramenike Wijetunga served as visiting lecturers for Archaeology.

Furthermore, in accordance with the aforementioned curricular revisions, the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU)—which provided English proficiency to all university students (now known as Compulsory English)—was incorporated into this department. It is this unit which has since evolved into what is known today as the Department of English Language Teaching (DELT). At that time, the unit functioned under the leadership of Dr. Mahanama Karunaratne, who was the Head of the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies.

Additionally, the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies held the responsibility for teaching English as a subject (including English Literature). Professor A. J. Gunawardena facilitated the English programme by engaging various guest lecturers. Subsequently, the English curriculum was further enriched by a distinguished panel of subject experts, including Professor Rajiva Wijesinha, Parvathi Nagasundaram, Geetha Premaratne, Dinali Fernando, and Maithree White. Ultimately, the Department of English was established as an independent department in 1997.

Subsequently, a request was made by Professor Mendis Rohanadeera, the then Head of the Department of History, to transfer the subject of Archaeology to his department. With the concurrence of Dr. Mahanama Karunaratne, the then Head of the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies, this proposal was submitted to the Senate. Consequently, the responsibility for conducting the Archaeology degree programme was transferred to the Department of History, which functions today as the Department of History and Archaeology. Furthermore, it should be noted that the secondment of Sanskrit scholars Professor Mahinda Palihawadana and Professor Samson Weeratunga to the University of Kelaniya (then Vidyalankara University) was a result of the 1972 reforms. In that same year, Venerable Henpitagedara Gñanavasa Thero was appointed as the

Head of the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies. He was succeeded as Head of Department by Professor K. Jinadasa Perera, a scholar of Pali Language and Literature, who also served as the Vice-Chancellor of the University from 1979 to 1981. Following him, the headship was assumed by Professor Chandra Wickramagamage, a specialist in Pali Language and Literature, who later served as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts.

At the beginning of the 1980s, upon his return to the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Professor Mahinda Palihawadana became the most senior member of the department. Consequently, having served as its second Head of Department in the past, he was once again appointed to the office. It was also during this period that Professor Walter Marasinghe joined the department.

Following Professor Palihawadana, the headship of the department was assumed by Professor Ananda Gunasinghe, a specialist in the field of Cultural Studies. In 1995, following his appointment as the Director of the Institute of Aesthetic Studies (which currently functions as the University of the Visual and Performing Arts), Professor Walter Marasinghe served as the Head of Department from 1996 to 1998. The current Head of Department is Professor Nilanthi Rajapaksha. Having served in this role since 2022, she is a Professor in Hindi Studies.

A significant milestone occurred in 1991 when, through the intervention of Professor Ananda Gunasinghe and Professor Walter Marasinghe, a Certificate Course in Fine Arts was inaugurated. This programme was open to the entire university student body. During this period, the department had the privilege of engaging the expertise of several renowned artists and scholars as invited practitioners, including: *Sangeeth Nipun* P. V. Nandasiri, *Visharada* B. Victor Perera, Piyasara Shilpadhipathi, Professor Mudiyanse Dissanayake, Professor Lionel Bentharage, Professor Karunaratne Bandara, Lionel Ranwala, Lionel Gunathilake, Dr. Miranda Hemalatha and Dr. Vaidyavati Rajapaksha.

Moreover, Linguistics and the Russian language were offered as degree subjects within the department for a considerable period. Instruction in the Russian language was conducted by Venerable Professor Pallekande Rathanasara Thero. In addition, Professor Janaki Wijesekera—currently a Professor at the University of Kelaniya—was among the lecturers who taught Linguistics in the department during this period. Beyond these core subjects, the department also conducted various certificate courses from time to time in Sanskrit, Hindi, German, Japanese, Chinese, Tamil, and Russian.

Under the leadership of Professor Ananda Gunasinghe and Professor Walter Marasinghe, the aesthetic subjects of Music and Dance—which were previously integrated into the Cultural Studies Special Degree—were reorganized in 1991. This led to the introduction of a new degree programme titled Cultural and Aesthetic Studies, which was offered as both General and Special Degree programmes. A significant academic contribution of the department was the publication of *Yathra*, a Sanskrit-medium journal launched in 1990. The department maintained this publication for 20 issues, with a circulation of 100 copies per issue. Furthermore, in 1992, under the guidance of the then Head of Department, Professor Ananda Gunasinghe, the inaugural issue of the journal *Sangvadi* was launched. Published by the Language and Cultural Studies Society, it was edited by students of that era, namely Venerable Mahara Nugegoda Sujatha Thero and Subhani Amaradeva. It is noteworthy that *Sangvadi* has since evolved into a dedicated student publication, with four volumes released to date.

In 2019, under the leadership and initiative of Dr. W. B. A. Vitharana, the subject area of Cultural and Aesthetic Studies was expanded to

include Drama and Performing Arts as a General Degree programme. By 2020, the department—then offering a quintet of degree programmes in Sanskrit, Hindi, French, Dance, and Drama and Performing Arts—was formally restructured as the Department of Languages, Cultural Studies, and Performing Arts. During that same year, the discipline of Cultural Music was separated from this department to establish the Department of Music and Creative Technology.

By 2022, Chinese and Japanese languages were added to the curriculum. Currently, the Department of Languages, Cultural Studies, and Performing Arts offers Dance (Special and General Degree) programmes, and Drama and Performing Arts (General Degree) programmes. A notable feature of this department is its tradition of offering postgraduate degrees since its inception. Following the establishment of the Faculty of Graduate Studies in the 1990s, its first student was R. M. Saman Chandrasena (now Senior Professor Saman Chandra Ranasinghe).



(Source: *Japura Flames*)

Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication

Establishment

This is one of the founding departments of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (formerly known as Vidyodaya University) established in 1959.

Fields of Study

Sinhala

Mass Communication

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General)
Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
Master of Arts (MA)
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (External) in Sinhala
Bachelor of Arts (External) in Mass Communication
Diploma in Writing and Mass Communication
Postgraduate Diploma in Writing and Mass Communication
Postgraduate Diploma in Creative Writing

Current Academic Staff

Senior Professor: A.V.D. Ratnasiri
Senior Professor: Ven. Kiwulegedara Narada Thero
Professor: K. Lankamullage
Professor: K.A.J.P.K. Medawatta
Associate Professor: K.K. Sunethra
Senior Lecturer: Dr. M.A.S. Harischandra
Senior Lecturer: K.A.N. Bandara
Senior Lecturer: M.K.G.I. Dharmasena
Senior Lecturer: Ven. Kosgoda Chandajothi Thero
Senior Lecturer: Dr. K.M.S.A.D. Bandara
Senior Lecturer: Ven. Dr. Anuradha Sudhammika Bhikkuni
Senior Lecturer: K.K. Sunil
Senior Lecturer: Dr. R.G.H.U. Menike
Lecturer (Probationary) Charitha Marcus

Heads of the Department (Past to Present)

Ven. Kalukondayawe Paññasekera Thero
Professor Wimal G. Balagalle
Professor A.V. Suraweera
Professor T.B. Kangahaarachchi
Professor Tissa Kariyawasam
Professor Ratna Wijetunga
Professor Sunil Ariyaratne
Professor Dammika Ganganath Dissanayake
Senior Professor Ven. Kiwulegedara Narada Thero
Senior Professor Ratnasiri Arangala
Professor Kusumulatha Lankamulla

Publications

- *Vidudaya:*The Journal of Languages, Literature, Cultural and Media Studies
- *Andure Pipena Mal*
- *Vidudaya Kavi*
- *Vidudaya Ulpath*

Special Programmes

- Vidyodaya Literary Awards: An annual ceremony honouring literature (from its inception until 2021)
- *Athwela* : A community social service project
- *Balamu Pothak - Labamu Nethak*: A social service programme aimed at encouraging reading and education

Societies

- The Sinhala and Mass Communication Association

Awards & Gold Medals

Professor G.B. Senanayake Gold Medal

This medal is awarded to the student who obtains the highest GPA/marks in the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Sinhala examination, with either a First Class or an Upper Second-Class Honours.

Professor A.V. Suraweera Gold Medal

This medal is awarded to the student who achieves a First-Class Honours pass in the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Sinhala degree and obtains the highest marks for at least two of the following course units: Modern Sinhala Novel, Modern Sinhala Short Story, Social Study of Literature, Eastern/ Western Literary Criticism and Theory.

Historical Context

The Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication was established on 18 February 1959 as part of the newly founded Vidyodaya University. At its inception, the permanent academic staff of the Sinhala Department comprised only two members: Ven. Professor Kalukondayawe Paññasekera Thero, who served as Head of the Department, and Lecturer Wimal G. Balagalle. In addition, approximately ten visiting lecturers contributed to the department's teaching activities. When Ven. Professor Paññasekera Thero assumed responsibilities in the Department of Pali, Wimal G. Balagalle was appointed Head of the Sinhala Department in May 1959. In the same month, he was promoted to the position of Professor and it was formally confirmed on 1 October 1959.

From 1960 onwards, the academic staff of the department expanded considerably, with the appointment of a number of distinguished scholars who contributed significantly to its teaching, research, and intellectual life. Over the years, the department has benefited from the service of Professor Ven. Gathare Dhammapala Thero, Lecturer Ven. Talpe Assaji Thero, Professor T. B. Kangahaarachchi (who retired in 1985), Professor A. V. Suraweera, Professor Nandasena Ratnapala and Professor Vini Vitharana (both of whom were later transferred to other departments), Professor Wimal Wijayasooriya, Professor Tissa Kariyawasam, Professor Ratna Wijetunga, Professor Wimala Wijeratne, Dr. Udaya Mallawarachchi, Dr. M. H. Gunatilake, Professor Dammika Ganganath Dissanayake, Professor Sunil Ariyaratne, and Professor Samantha Herath, who later transferred to the University of Colombo.

In 1960, with the objective of stimulating scholarly engagement with modern literature, a new General Degree course titled *Modern Sinhala* was introduced. This pioneering initiative sought to guide degree candidates towards literary creation and the practice of writing as an academic discipline. The programme, which was coordinated by Lecturer Nandasena Ratnapala, functioned alongside the existing Sinhala Special Degree. A distinctive feature of the course was the mandatory submission of a creative–analytical thesis by every student, making it the first—and at the time, the only—degree programme in Sri Lanka to place creative writing at the core of its academic framework.

The department made a significant contribution to the university system by introducing the first-ever Postgraduate Diploma in Creative Writing. Launched in 1970, the programme was conducted on weekdays after 3.00 p.m. and offered structured training in Modern Fiction, Poetic Techniques, Dramatic Methods, and Literary Criticism. A distinctive feature of the diploma was its emphasis on practice-based learning, requiring students to submit a creative collection for formal evaluation. This initiative stands as one of the earliest professionally oriented postgraduate diploma programmes in the field of literary studies.

In 1976, Professor A. V. Suraweera introduced an MA programme in Creative Writing. The inaugural cohort comprised Ven. Kotte Ananda Thero and the distinguished writer Somaveera Senanayake. As part of the degree requirements, both candidates submitted original creative manuscripts—Somaveera Senanayake's *Yashoravaya* and Ven. Kotte Ananda Thero's *He Siddhattha Nam Viya*. Notably, both works were subsequently published and received State Literary Awards.

Under the 1972 university restructuring, several lecturers (teaching subjects such as Sinhala, Buddhist Culture, and History) were transferred to other universities, including Dr. M. H. Gunatilake of the Sinhala Department. During this period—under the 'Vidyodaya Campus' phase—the Sinhala Special Degree programme was temporarily discontinued, leaving only the General Degree in operation.

In 1979, the University of Vidyodaya was renamed the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Under this new designation, Mass Communication was integrated into the Sinhala Department's curriculum as a primary sub-discipline. It was only after this transition to the University of Sri Jayewardenepura that the department succeeded in re-establishing the Sinhala Special Degree programme, which had been suspended during the university's tenure as the Vidyodaya Campus.

In 1986, following a proposal by Professor A. V. Suraweera, the Department of Sinhala launched two self-financed courses titled Writership and Communication. By 1987, this Certificate Course in Writership and Communication was upgraded to a Diploma programme.

To support the academic advancement of students pursuing the Sinhala Special Degree, the "Professor Wimal G. Balagalle Scholarship" was established on September 30, 1990. This scholarship was made possible through the personal financial contribution of the retired Professor Balagalle. It is awarded to the student who achieves the highest marks for the subject of Sinhala in their first year of study.

In addition to these developments, as a co-curricular initiative, the Vidyodaya University commenced the publication of an annual journal titled *Vidudaya* during its foundational years. This stands as the very first journal published by Vidyodaya University, spearheaded by the Sinhalese Literary Society of the Department of Sinhala. Furthermore, a poetry collection titled *Vidudaya Kavi*, edited by Lecturer Nandasena Ratnapala, was published in 1968. Additionally, during the 1967/68 academic year, the Vidyodaya University Writers' Association—with the primary support of the Department of Sinhala—published a short story collection titled *Andure Pipena Mal.*

The Department of Sinhala also holds the distinction of producing the first-ever theatrical play in the history of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Titled *Sakkaya Ditthi*, the play was written and produced by the then-Lecturer M. H. Gunatilake. Its premiere took place on January 11, 1967, at the Lumbini Theatre in Colombo.

In 1994, the Department of Sinhala was renamed the Department of Sinhala and Mass Media, and a year later, it was designated as the Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication. Starting from the year 2000, the department officially introduced both General and Special Degree programmes in Mass Communication.



(Source:*www.sjp.ac.lk*)

Department of History and Archaeology

Establishment

From the inception of Vidyodaya University in 1959, History and Archaeology existed as two independent departments. In 1982, these two units were merged to form the unified Department of History and Archaeology.

Fields of Study

History

Archaeology

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General)

Bachelor of Arts (Honours)

Master of Arts (MA)

Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Diploma in History

Bachelor of Arts (General) External Degree

Current Academic Staff

Professor: K. Padmasiri (History)

Professor: K. Hettiarachchi (Archaeology)

Professor: K.M. Alexander (Archaeology)

Professor: G. Ranasinghe (Archaeology)

Associate Professor: S.D.N. Dharmaratne (History)

Senior Lecturer: Dr. M.A.S.R.S. Manthriratne (History)

Senior Lecturer: Ven. Dambara Amila Thero (Archaeology)

Senior Lecturer: R.K.M.T. Indrani (History)

Senior Lecturer: M.D.I.K. Abeynayake (Archaeology)

Senior Lecturer: U.N.K. Ratnayake (History)

Senior Lecturer: Dr. W.M.C. Oshan (Archaeology)

Lecturer (Probationary): D.L. Ranagala (History)

Heads of the Department

Professor Emeritus Mendis Rohanadeera (1982–1985)

Senior Lecturer Ashoka Kelegama (1985–1988)

Professor Emeritus S.B. Hettiarachchi (1988–1989)

Professor Emeritus Malani Endagama (1989–1991)

Professor Emeritus T.G. Kulatunga (1991–1995)

Professor D.L. Abeywardhana (1995–1998)

Professor Nandani Damayanti Karunatilake (1998–2003)

Professor Emeritus T.G. Kulatunga (2003–2005)

Professor P.B. Mandawala (2006–2010)

Professor Pathmasiri Kannangara (2010–2013)

Professor P.B. Mandawala (2013–2016)

Professor Alexander Kapukotuwa (2016–2022)

Professor K. Hettiarachchi (From April 2022–Present)

Publications

Academic Journal: *Vidarani*

Special Programmes

- The Rajagala Archaeological Project (A major excavation and conservation site managed by the department)

Societies

- The History and Archaeology Association

Awards & Gold Medals

R.M. Dingiri Menike Upasika Matha Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who achieves the highest-Grade Point Average (GPA) in the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Archaeology degree, with either a First Class or an Upper Second-Class Honours pass.

Professor D.L. Abeywardhana Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who achieves the highest-Grade Point Average (GPA) in the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in History degree, with either a First Class or an Upper Second-Class Honours pass.

Professor Mendis Rohanadeera Memorial Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who achieves the highest marks (with an "A" grade) for the Epigraphy and Palaeography course units. The candidate must have completed a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in either History or Archaeology with a First Class or an Upper Second-Class Honours pass.

Professor Malani Endagama Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who achieves the highest marks in the European History course units. The candidate must have completed a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in History with a First Class or an Upper Second-Class Honours pass.

Historical Context

During the initial period of the Faculty of Arts, as described in the first chapter of this book, the faculty consisted of seven departments. Notably, three of these were dedicated to branches of History: Department of Ceylon (Sri Lankan) History, Department of Indian History and Department of World History. However, a few years after the university's inception, specifically during the 1961/1962 academic year, these three departments were amalgamated into a single Department of History. Alongside this, the Department of Archaeology also functioned as a separate, independent department.

In its formative years, S. F. de Silva served as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts as well as the Head of the Department of History. The department's first Professor was Hema Ellawala, who rendered extraordinary service to the growth of the department from its inception until his retirement in 1980. During this tenure, he held several key administrative positions, including Head of Department, Dean, Vice-Chancellor, and Campus President (*Mandadhipathi*).

Ven. Handupelpola Puññaratana Thero, one of the university's founding academics, was originally recruited to teach Archaeology; however, in the early stages, he contributed primarily to the teaching of History. He also served as the Head of the Department of History for a brief period between 1961 and 1963. Additionally, during the department's beginning, scholars such as W. M. Warnasuriya, P. D. Perera, P. A. B. Gunasinghe, Cyril Gamage, S. P. S. Walisinghe, Ven. Ganegama Saranankara Thero, and D. Vedage served as visiting lecturers.

Between 1962 and 1963, the permanent academic staff included: Professor Mendis Rohanadeera, Dr. L. A. Wickramaratne, Dr. Hector Alahakoon, Lecturer S. M. H. B. A. Rambukpotha, Lecturer K. M. W. Somasara Dssanayake (Attorney-at-Law), Assistant Lecturer D. Samaradiwakara and Lecturer P. V. J. Jayasekera. During this era,

Professor Mendis Rohanadeera was tasked with the vital responsibility of deciphering Pali sources to interpret Sri Lankan history and impart an accurate understanding of ancient civilization to the students. Dr. Hector Alahakoon also specialized in teaching Ancient Sri Lankan History. World History was taught by a team comprising Dr. Wickramaratne, Lecturer G. C. Edirisinghe, Lecturer S. M. H. B. A. Rambukpotha, and Lecturer P. V. J. Jayasekera. Somasara Dasanayake, who was also a prominent lawyer, oversaw the teaching of Indian History until his departure from service in 1967. D. Samaradiwakara, who joined as an Assistant Lecturer, also contributed to the teaching of Indian History.

The Department of Archaeology

Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero pioneered the introduction of Archaeology as a primary degree subject—an opportunity previously limited to postgraduate studies at Peradeniya University—and became the founding Head of the Department of Archaeology.

During this period, the academic staff within the Department of Archaeology included Professor Abhaya Aryasinghe, Venerable Pandit (Honorary) Kamburupitiye Vanaratana Thero, Visiting Lecturer Dr. Saddhamangala Karunaratne, Visiting Lecturer and Demonstrator Leelananda Caldera, and Lecturer Venerable Handupelpola Punnaratana Thero.

Furthermore, in 1962, the Archaeology Society launched a journal titled *Puravidya*. During this period, it became evident that the services of visiting lecturers were essential to teach Archaeology in a comprehensive manner. Consequently, a proposal was made to involve external experts to cover various specialized subject areas. Accordingly, Professor Senarath Paranavitana, Dr. Nandasena Mudiyanse (Art and Architecture of the Gampola and Kandy Kingdoms), Dr. H. Ratnayake (Minor Arts and Crafts of Sri Lanka), Dr. Raja de Silva (Conservation of Art, Archaeology, and Chemistry), and Dr. L. Prematilleke (History of Art) conducted lectures. Despite existing as two separate entities, the Departments of History and Archaeology managed their academic programmes collectively through a single staff body, owing to the profound and intrinsic relationship between the two disciplines.

Transition to a Unified Department

Due to the higher education reforms implemented in the 1970s, the number of degree candidates in the Department of History experienced a sharp decline. As a further consequence of these reforms, the subject of Archaeology was removed from Vidyodaya University in 1975 and annexed to Vidyalankara University (now the University of Kelaniya).

By 1978, Professor Chandra Wickramagamage of the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura had taken preliminary steps to teach components of Archaeology under the subjects of Buddhist Arts and Sri Lankan Culture. However, since Archaeology had historically functioned under the Department of History, a committee was appointed to investigate the matter. Based on their recommendations, the subject of Archaeology was officially reintegrated into the Department of History. Consequently, since 1982, the department has continuously operated as the Department of History and Archaeology, conducting academic and research activities across both fields.

A vibrant student society, consisting of all second, third, and fourth-year students pursuing Special Degrees in History and Archaeology, actively organizes various annual activities. A significant highlight of their work is the publication of the journal *Vidarani*, produced with the collective contribution of the academic staff and the student body. Since 2014, the *Vidarani* journal has been published biannually.

In 2017, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was established between the Department of History and Archaeology and the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute in India. Under this agreement, second-year students pursuing a Special Degree in Archaeology are sent annually to Deccan College for specialized

archaeological training. In accordance with this programme, three groups of students were successfully sent for training in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

In addition to theoretical studies, practical knowledge and field training are organized at several key archaeological sites to enhance the degree programmes. These include the Abhayagiriya and Jetavana archaeological complexes, the Rajagala and Ramba Vihara sites, the Maritime Archaeology Unit in Galle, the Polonnaruwa archaeological site, and the National Museum in Colombo.

Rajagala Project

A significant milestone was reached on August 22, 2012, when a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Department of Archaeology of Sri Lanka and the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. This agreement placed the exploration, excavation, conservation, and landscape management of the Rajagala archaeological site under the guidance and supervision of the department's academic staff. Since then, the Rajagala site has been maintained as a joint project between these two institutions (*see* the appendix for details).

Museum of History and Archaeology

The Department's Museum of Archaeology was established on October 28, 1962, under the visionary guidance of Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero, who was the Head of the Department at the time. The museum's collection has been enriched by artifacts donated by the university community as well as various external donors. Currently, the museum is located on the ground floor of the Sumangala Building, with Nilmini Nettasinghe serving as the Museum Curator (*see* the appendix for details).

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



Department of Sociology

Establishment

In 1959, the subject of Sociology was taught under the auspices of the Department of Economics within the Faculty of Arts.

Fields of Study

Sociology

Social Work

Degree Programmes

BA (Honours) in Sociology

Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Honours

MA in Sociology, MPhil, and PhD

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Diploma in Sociology

Diploma in Social Work

Bachelor of Arts (General) External Degree

Current Academic Staff

Senior Professor: M.T. Samarakoon

Professor: W.A.S. Wijekoon

Associate Professor: M.A.N.R.M. Perera

Lecturer (Probationary): W.M. Watsala Shyamali

Lecturer (Probationary): W.T.D. Wijetunga

Lecturer (Probationary): R.A.R. Karunaratne

Lecturer (Probationary): I.G.N.P. Menike

Heads of the Department (Past to present)

Dr. Alex Gunasekera (1964–1970)

Professor Nandasena Ratnapala (1972–1985)

Senior Lecturer Edwin K. Ganihigama (1985–1993)

Emeritus Professor B.A. Tennyson Perera (1993–1996)

Senior Lecturer Edwin K. Ganihigama (1996–2002)

Professor M.S. Swarnalatha Perera (2002–2005)

Professor Praneeth Abhayasundara (2005–2008)

Professor M.W. Jayasundara (2008–2014)

Senior Professor Mayura Samarakoon (2015–2021)

Professor W.A.S. Wijekoon (2021–Present)

Publications

Samajavidya Shasthriya Sangrahaya

Special Programmes

Akuruwalata Athwelak: An annual social service programme targeting a selected rural school

Societies

- Sociology Association
- Sociology Alumni Association

Awards & Gold Medals

Professor Nandasena Ratnapala Memorial Gold Medal: Awarded to the student with the highest marks and most "A" passes in the BA (Honours) Sociology degree (First or Upper Second Class)

Sociology Postgraduate Gold Medal: Awarded to the most outstanding student in the one-year Master of Arts (MA) programme

Historical Context

The initial concept of teaching Sociology at Vidyodaya University emerged in the early 1960s. The discipline was first introduced and evaluated as a subject under the Department of Economics within the Faculty of Arts.

The pioneering responsibility for this task was undertaken by K. A. D. Perera, who played a leading role in developing a Sinhalese vocabulary for sociological terminology. He translated Ralph Pieris's seminal English work, *Sinhalese Social Organization*, into Sinhalese and concurrently published a sociological journal titled *Samajaya* (Society). Furthermore, Perera collaborated with Professor Nandasena Ratnapala in conducting a landmark sociological study on the beggar population in Sri Lanka, contributing significantly to historical sociological research in the country.

During the 1964–65 academic year, Dr. U. Alex Gunasekera joined the university as a lecturer and subsequently served as the Head of the Department of Anthropology from 1965 to 1968. In 1968, he was instrumental in the integration of Sociology to establish the Department of Anthropology and Sociology. Dr. Gunasekera played a pivotal role in institutionalizing the fields of Sociology and Anthropology within Sri Lankan society. He is particularly credited with democratising the discipline; at a time when Sociology was taught exclusively in English and accessible only to English-proficient students, he pioneered the transition that enabled students to study the subject in the Sinhala medium.

In 1968, the department began enrolling students for the Special Degree in Sociology and Anthropology. Although eleven students originally registered for this specialized programme, only three successfully completed the course. Among those three graduates was B. A. Tennyson Perera, who is now a retired Professor of Sociology. The other two graduates from that initial cohort were Dr. Dayalal Abeysekera and Dr. Edward Perera, both of whom later served within the Department of Sociology. In 1969, the Special Degree group consisted of four students. Among them were Professor Swarnalatha Perera, who eventually served as a Professor of Sociology at this university, and Herath Rajakaruna, who later joined the University of Peradeniya.

Following the 1971 Insurrection, Dr. Alex Gunasekera left Sri Lanka to settle in England. His departure created a significant shortage of academic staff, leading to the temporary suspension of the Special Degree programme. However, the programme was later successfully reinstated following a formal appeal made by a group of students, including Edwin Ganihigama.

In accordance with the 1972 higher education reforms, the subject of Sociology was, for a short period, integrated and taught under the Department of History and Sociology. However, following further amendments in 1973, an independent Department of Sociology was established, with Professor Nandasena Ratnapala appointed as its Head. Under the guidance of Professor Ratnapala, his successor, Senior Lecturer Edwin Ganihigama, expanded the department's academic scope by introducing Special Degree programmes in Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology.

Furthermore, Professor B. A. Tennyson Perera, who initially joined the faculty as a temporary Assistant Lecturer in the 1970s and subsequently served for many years as a Professor and Head of Department, stands as one of the most distinguished sociologists and anthropologists produced by this institution. According to the 1983 Annual Report of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, the department was officially renamed the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology starting from that year.

By the beginning of 1986, the department's academic staff had grown to ten members, notably including Professor Siripala Hettige, who

had transitioned from his studies at the University of Colombo, to join the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology as an Assistant Lecturer. From 1992 to 2006, the faculty was comprised of a distinguished group of scholars, including Professors Nandasena Ratnapala and B. A. Tennyson Perera, along with Edwin K. Ganihigama, Yasanjali Perera, Praneeth Abhayasundara, Jayantha Jayasiri, Anuruddika Buddhadasa, M. W. Jayasundara, W. M. Dhanapala, E. B. R. Deshapriya, Mayura Samarakoon, Sepala Samarasekera, W. A. Sarathchandra, Sunil Rajaneththi, W. A. S. Wijekoon, Samanti Kulatilake, Chanka Udaya Kumara, Sunil Ratnayake, Chamalie Nahallage, Nelum Kanthilatha, Rasanjali Perera, and Neranji Wijewardhana. A major administrative milestone occurred during Professor Mayura Samarakoon's tenure as Head of Department when the Department of Criminology and the Department of Anthropology were officially established as independent entities, leading to a specialized redistribution of the academic staff based on their research expertise.

Since 2016, the Department of Sociology has undergone significant curriculum reforms to modernize its academic offerings, enabling students to engage with contemporary subjects such as the Sociology of Law and Community Participation while gaining technical proficiency in tools like SPSS and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The department's assessment methods have also evolved to include practical, fieldwork-oriented assignments such as the production of video documentaries and the performance of street theatre to address social issues like substance abuse. Furthermore, this period saw the introduction of a one-year Master of Arts in Sociology and the launch of the Bachelor of Social Work (Honours) for internal students. To foster a vibrant academic culture, the department inaugurated the Professor Nandasena Ratnapala Memorial Gold Medal, revived the Sociology Journal, *Samajavidya Shasthriya Sangrahaya,* and established the *Sociology Society* to serve the internal student body.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



Department of Geography

Establishment

The Department of Geography was established in 1960.

Fields of Study

Geography

Geo-Spatial Technology

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree in Geography

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree in Geography

Master of Arts (MA) in Geography

Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Geography

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Geography

Bachelor of Science (Honours) Degree in Geo-Spatial Technology

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Social Sciences (General) External Degree in Environmental and Development Studies

Current Academic Staff

Professor R. M. K. Ratnayake

Professor T. M. S. P. K. Tennakoon

Professor Ven. Pinnawala Sangasumana Thero

Senior Lecturer Dr. M. A. S. Wijesinghe

Senior Lecturer H. M. J. R. Herath

Senior Lecturer H. M. B. S. Herath

Senior Lecturer Dr. H. A. N. Hettiarachchi

Senior Lecturer B. A. S. C. Kumara

Senior Lecturer G. G. R. Nandana

Senior Lecturer A. V. G. N. M. Aberathna

Lecturer K. T. L. Sathsara

Lecturer (Probationary) D. K. D. A. Ranaweera

Lecturer (Probationary) A. M. A. R. Geethalankara

Heads of the Department

Prof. Tyurin Henry Abayagunawardena (1965)

Prof. P.D.A. Perera (1965–1975)

Dr. N.P. Perera (1975–1976)

Prof. Emeritus M.M. Karunanayake (1976–1988)

Prof. Y.A.D.S. Wanasinghe (1988–1994)

Prof. Emeritus M.M. Karunanayake (1994–1997)

Prof. M.D.C. Abhayaratne (1997–1999)

Prof. D.S. (Senevi) Epitawatte (1999–2000)

Prof. Emeritus Jinadasa Katupotha (2000–2002)

Prof. C.K.M. Deheragoda (2002–2005)

Prof. G.M. Bandaranayake (2005–2008)

Senior Lecturer U.H.N. Vishwakula (2008–2011)

Ven. Prof. Pinnawala Sangasumana Thero (2011–2014)

Prof. T.M.S.P.K. Thennakoon (2014–2017)

Prof. R.M.K. Rathnayake (2017–2020)

Dr. M.A.S. Wijesinghe (2020–Present)

Publications

Mahi, a biannual publication featuring geographical research and academic articles

Special Programmes

In collaboration with the Department of Coast Conservation and Coastal Resource Management, the Department of Geography conducted a project from 2021 to 2022 which focused on mapping coastal access routes across several districts in Sri Lanka.

Societies

Since 1960, the Geography Society has been an active body within the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. The society was established and guided by the founding Head of the Department, Tyurin Henry Abeyagunawardena, alongside the academic staff. To commemorate the first anniversary of the Geography Students' Society, the inaugural volume of its academic journal was published.

Awards & Gold Medals

Professor M. M. Karunanayake Gold Medal: This medal is awarded to the student who obtains the highest-Grade Point Average (GPA) in the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Geography degree examination, graduating with either a First Class or a Second Class (Upper Division) pass.

Professor Dhammika Wanasinghe Gold Medal: This medal is awarded to the student who graduates with a First Class or Second Class (Upper Division) pass in the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Geography degree examination and achieves the highest marks with an "A" grade for the course unit, Settlement and Urban Geography.

Historical Context

As noted in Chapter I, the academic journey of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (then Vidyodaya University) commenced in 1959. At its inception, the university was structured into five primary faculties: the Faculty of Buddhist Studies, the Faculty of Philosophy, the Faculty of Languages, the Faculty of Arts, and the Faculty of Ayurveda and Science. Within the Faculty of Arts, Geography was introduced as a core subject during the very first academic year. At the time, the teaching and administration of the subject were conducted under the guidance of S. F. de Silva, who served as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts.

The foundation stones for the Rathanasara and Gñaneshwara buildings, where the Department of Geography is currently situated, were laid on August 7, 1960. This historic event took place on the same day as the first-ever graduation ceremony of Vidyodaya University. The ceremony was presided over by the Most Venerable Mahanayake Theros of the Malwatta and Asgiriya Chapters, alongside the Governor-General. These two buildings were named in honour of two former Chief Incumbents (*Viharadhipathi*) of the Vidyodaya Pirivena: Ven. Mahagoda Sri Gñaneshwara Nayaka Thero, who headed the institution from 1911 to 1922, and Ven. Kahawe Sri Rathanasara Nayaka Thero, who served from 1922 to 1936.

According to financial reports released by 1965 regarding the development of the Gangodawila campus, a total allocation of Rs. 400,000 was recorded for the construction of the Gñaneshwara Mandiraya, a three-storey structure designed to accommodate 11 classrooms. A matching sum of Rs. 400,000 was allocated for the Rathanasara Mandiraya, which was also built as a three-storey structure containing 8 classrooms. These records underscore the substantial financial investment and architectural planning undertaken during the mid-1960s to establish the permanent physical infrastructure that continues to serve the university's academic mission today.

When examining the history of the Rathanasara and Gñaneshwara buildings, a significant event emerged following the April 5, 1971 youth insurrection against the government. During this period, Vidyodaya University was repurposed as a rehabilitation camp for thousands of detained young men and women. The Gñaneshwara and Rathanasara halls were designated as "Section 01" within the camp infrastructure to house the detainees. Furthermore, a medical centre and a small ward were established within the Gñaneshwara building to provide treatment for the various ailments suffered by those held at the site.

Since the inception of Vidyodaya University, the Department of Geography was led by its first Head of Department, Professor T. H. D. Abeyagunawardena (Tyurin Henry Abeygunawardena). He holds the distinction of being the first Sri Lankan to obtain a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree in Geography and Geology from the University of London. Academic activities within the department commenced alongside the university's founding in 1959, and the department maintains a comprehensive archive of independent dissertations dating from 1960 to the present day. Among its most preserved academic treasures are the field-study-based workbooks and independent research theses produced by students since 1967, which are housed within the department library.

To support these academic endeavours, the department is equipped with modern physical resources, including lecture halls, a cartography laboratory, and a soil science laboratory. Furthermore, it features two fully-equipped Geographic Information System (GIS) laboratories, providing students with essential technological facilities for spatial analysis and contemporary geographical research.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk)*



Department of Economics

Establishment

The Department of Economics stands as one of the founding departments of the faculty. At the inception of Vidyodaya University, the discipline was initially established as *Arthashastharaya*. Following the educational reforms of 1973, the department expanded its academic scope.

Fields of Study

Economics

Financial Economics

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree

Master of Arts (MA) Degree

Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Degree

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree

Postgraduate Diploma in Economics

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Diploma in Development Policy Studies (since 2018)

Diploma in Economics and Information Technology (since 2022)

Bachelor of Arts (General) External Degree

Current Academic Staff

Senior Professor H. M. T. N. R. Herath

Professor D. P. S. Chandrakumara

Professor S. C. B. Heenkenda

Professor K. G. G. Weerasinghe

Professor B. W. R. Damayanthi

Professor D. P. Withanage

Senior Lecturer S. W. A. Kalayanaratne

Senior Lecturer C. W. Kalansooriya

Senior Lecturer N. M. A. Jayasinghe

Lecturer (Probationary) S. U. B. Hewage

Lecturer (Probationary) H. H. M. P. Madhusanka

Lecturer (Probationary) K. K. T. Udayanga

Lecturer (Probationary) K. D. Indeevari

Heads of the Department

Senior Prof. H.M.T.N.R. Herath (2005–2006)

Prof. P. Athukorala (2006–2007)

Prof. D.P.S. Chandrakumara (2007–2010)

Prof. Dhammika P. Withanage (2010–2013)

Prof. Shirantha Heenkenda (2013)

Prof. Dhammika P. Withanage (2013–2014)

Prof. Gamini Weerasinghe (2014–2016)

Prof. D.P.S. Chandrakumara (2016)

Prof. Gamini Weerasinghe (2016–2019)

Prof. Shirantha Heenkenda (2019)

Prof. B.W.R. Damayanthi (2019–2022)

Prof. Gamini Weerasinghe (2022–Present)

Publications

Vidyodaya Arthika Vidya

Special Programmes

Econ Pulse: Undergraduate Research Forum

Societies

Economics Association

Awards & Gold Medals

Professor P. Wilson Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who achieves the highest Grade Point Average (GPA) in the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Economics, graduating with either a First Class or a Second Class (Upper Division) pass.

Professor S. Thilakaratne Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who graduates with a First Class or Second Class (Upper Division) pass and obtains the highest average marks for Economics course units.

Professor Upali Wickramasinghe Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who graduates with a First Class or Second Class (Upper Division) pass and obtains the highest average marks for Development Economics.

Dr. T. W. K. Rajapaksha Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who graduates with a First Class or Second Class (Upper Division) pass and obtains the highest average marks for Financial Economics.

Historical Context

Evidence shows that Economics has been a fundamental discipline since the very inception of the university, serving as one of the primary fields of study offered to students. When the university first opened its doors, there were 22 subjects prescribed for the curriculum, and Economics was introduced among them under the classical designation of *Arthashasthraya* (Economics).

Following the structural changes within the Faculty of Arts, the Department of Economics was established as an independent academic department in 1973. Since its inception, the department was responsible for a triad of disciplines: Economics, Political Science, and Statistics. A significant milestone occurred in 1994 with the introduction of the Special (Honours) Degree programme for Political Science. However, as the university expanded, these sub-disciplines evolved into their own independent entities:

- 1995: The Department of Social Statistics was established, taking over the discipline of Statistics.
- 2009: The Department of Political Science was established as an independent body.

As a result of this decentralization, the Department of Economics transitioned to focusing exclusively on offering General and Honours (Special) degree programmes in Economics.

In alignment with national policies and to meet the evolving demands of the labour market, the Department of Economics has introduced several specialized fields of study. These include Development Economics, International Economics, Financial Economics, and Environmental Economics. A wide array of new course units has been integrated into the degree programmes to cover these contemporary subjects. A landmark achievement occurred in 2010, when the Department of Economics became the first in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to introduce “Institutional Training” (Internships) into the degree structure. Following this pioneering move, subsequent curriculum revisions ensured that institutional training was extended to all degree programmes within the department.

By consistently fulfilling its national responsibility since its inception, the Department of Economics continues to stand as a distinguished department within the faculty. It remains committed to producing productive economists capable of serving the nation and contributing to the global community, successfully navigating modern academic challenges.

(Source: *Japura Flames Facebook Page*)



Department of Social Statistics

Establishment

Although the Department of Social Statistics was formally established in 1995, it was housed in the Department of Economics until 2001. A significant transition occurred on January 21, 2002, when the department was relocated to its own independent space within the Sumangala Building.

Fields of Study

Social Statistics

Business Statistics

Information Technology (IT)

Management and Information Technology

Degree Programmes:

BA (Honours) in Social Statistics

BA (Honours) in Business Statistics

BA (Honours) in Information Technology

Postgraduate Diploma in Social Statistics

Postgraduate Diploma in Business Statistics.

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Advanced Certificate in Data Analysis for Social Scientists

BA (General) External Degree

Current Academic Staff

Senior Lecturer C. L. K. Nawarathna

Senior Lecturer H. P. Diunugala

Senior Lecturer Dr. D. P. K. Manel

Senior Lecturer Dr. H. P. T. N. Silva

Senior Lecturer I. D. Jayaruwan

Senior Lecturer R. M. K. G. U. Rathnayake

Senior Lecturer N. A. N. J. Maduwansha

Lecturer G. P. S. Nalaka

Lecturer (Probationary) A. I. S. Perera

Heads of the Department

Senior Prof. W.A. Jayathissa (1995–1997)

Senior Lecturer S.A.S.C. Silva (1997–2001)

Senior Lecturer A.M.M.J. Wijayasiriwardhana (2001–2002)

Senior Lecturer S.K.R. Silva (2002–2005)

Senior Lecturer A.M.M.J. Wijayasirivardhana (2005–2006)

Senior Lecturer K.A. Dharmasena (2006–2009)

Senior Lecturer C.L.K. Nawarathna (2009–2013)

Senior Lecturer H.P. Diunugala (2013–2018)

Senior Lecturer Dr. D.P.K. Manel (2018–2021)

Senior Lecturer Dr. H.P.T.N. Silva (2021–Present)

Publications

Sankhyana Saraniya

Special Programmes

*Vidumaga Arunalu***:** Annual social service projects aimed at developing rural schools with limited facilities, helping students achieve higher social mobility through education.

Societies

The Social Statistics Association (SADSS)
The Alumni Association (AADSS)

Awards & Gold Medals

Professor W. A. Jayathissa Memorial Gold Medal (Since 1999): This medal is awarded to the student who achieves the highest-Grade Point Average (GPA) among all those graduating with a First Class in any Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree programme offered by the Department of Social Statistics.

Senior Lecturer S. A. C. Stanley Silva Gold Medal (Since 2022): This medal is awarded to the student who passes the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social Statistics or Business Statistics with a First Class and obtains the highest marks and highest-grade point average specifically for the course units related to Probability and Inferential Statistics.

Historical Context

The rapid development within the faculty led to a significant surge in demand for Statistics, prompting the Department of Economics to establish both General and Special degree programmes in Social Statistics. The subject was first introduced as a course unit for first-year students during the 1991/1992 academic year, attracting an initial enrolment of approximately 150 students. From this group, a pioneering cluster of 50 students was selected to pursue the inaugural Social Statistics Special Degree. By 1993, driven by increasing student interest and the contemporary needs of the labour market, the department further expanded the curriculum, On August 18, 1993, a formal request was submitted to the University Grants Commission (UGC) to establish the Department of Social Statistics as an independent academic entity. This request was approved on June 5, 1995. At its inception, seven academic members from the Department of Economics were transitioned to form the foundation of the new department. This pioneering staff included Professor W.A. Jayathissa, Senior Lecturer S.A.C.S. Silva, Senior Lecturer A. M. M. J. Wijayasirivardhana, Senior Lecturer S.K.R. Silva, Senior Lecturer H.M.T.N.R. Herath, Lecturer K. Dharmasena, and Senior Instructor L.N. Beelin.

Initially, the department focused on General and Special (Honours) degree programmes in Social Statistics. However, to meet contemporary global and local demands, the department expanded its curriculum significantly, offering students the opportunity to study in both Sinhala and English mediums. Beyond undergraduate education, the department launched Postgraduate Diplomas in Social Statistics and Business Statistics in 1998, followed by an Advanced Certificate Course in Data Analysis in 2020.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



Department of English and Linguistics

Establishment

The Department of English was established in 1997, and it was renamed the Department of English and Linguistics in 2015.

Although it was established as an independent department in 1997, the subject of English, including English Literature, has been offered for the Bachelor of Arts degree since the inception of the university in 1959.

Fields of Study

English Language

English Literature

Applied Linguistics

English Language Teaching (ELT) Methodology

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree in English

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree in English

Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL)

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL)

Master of Arts (MA) in English

Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in English

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in English

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) External Degree in English

Current Academic Staff

Professor M. G. Lalith Ananda
Professor R. M. C. Jayathilake
Associate Professor I. J. Mawelle
Senior Lecturer D. C. Walisundara
Senior Lecturer Dr. H. A. G. Sujeewa
Senior Lecturer Dr. W. A. K. C. P. Warnapala
Senior Lecturer Dr. S. S. Pereira
Senior Lecturer Dr. W. A. T. Weerasuriya
Lecturer (Probationary) M. N. D. Costa

Heads of Department

Prof. A.J. Gunawardena (1997–1998)
Senior Lecturer Parvathi Nagasundaram (1998–2005)
Assoc. Prof. Indira J. Marwelle (2005–2008)
Dr. Maithree White (2008–2009)
Senior Lecturer Dilini C. Walisundara (2009–2012)
Prof. M.G. Lalith Ananda (2012–2018)
Prof. R.M. Chitra Jayathilake (2018–2021)
Senior Lecturer Dr. H.A.G. Sujeewa (2021–2022)

Publications

SPARK Magazine (since 2018)

Special Programmes

House of Commons
Book Boutique
Yuletide
Desi Night

Societies

ELA: English Literary Association

Historical Context

At the university's inception in 1959, English was incorporated into the Bachelor of Arts (BA) curriculum, comprising both English Language and English Literature. According to the administrative reports presented at the first session of the *Vidyaghoshtti* of the Vidyodaya University (1959, pp. 23–26), the subject was formally administered by the Department of Western Languages within the Faculty of Languages. The initial teaching staff was led by a distinguished group of scholars, most notably Kanakaratne Gunatunga, who played a pivotal role in shaping the early academic foundations of the discipline. By the end of September 1959, a total of thirty-one students had registered for the Intermediate and General Bachelor of Arts programme for the 1959 and 1960 academic years (1959, vii).

However, following the legislative amendments introduced by the Higher Education Act No. 20 of 1966, a marked decline in academic engagement became evident, with institutional records indicating that student enrolment in English as a formal degree-level subject had ceased. This development is clearly documented in the Annual Reports 1966–1967 (1968) submitted to the *Mahādhikāri Maṇḍalaya* of the Vidyodaya University, which records a temporary suspension of English as a major field of study within the university curriculum.

With the reorganisation brought about by the Universities Act of 1972, English was reintroduced as a subject offered for the General Bachelor of Arts degree under the newly established Department of Languages and Cultural Studies. As recorded in the Annual Report for the period 1987–1992, student enrolment in English at the first-year level during the years 1986 to 1991 shows a gradual but limited increase, with the respective numbers being 4, 1, 1, 5, 10, and 20 students. However, subsequent reports do not indicate a consistent or sustained pattern of student registration in the subject.

In 1992, a significant revamped initiative was launched to systematically develop English as a discipline. Recognizing the immense national demand for English at the degree level, Dr. Rajiva Wijesinha introduced a conceptual revolution in English studies in the university. The transformative aspect of this initiative was its inclusivity: it provided students who had not followed English as a main subject for their G.C.E. Advanced Level (A/L) examination the opportunity to study English as a core subject for their degree. Under this new framework, students admitted to the Faculty by the University Grants Commission (UGC) could qualify to read for an English degree by passing an internal "Selection Test" conducted by the department.

While Dr. Wijesinha was the architect of this concept, the responsibility for its practical implementation fell to Senior Lecturer Parvathi Nagasundaram, who provided the necessary leadership during this critical phase. This transition occurred because, by the time the programme was fully set in motion, Dr. Rajiva Wijesinha had already moved on from his service at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

In 1997, the Department of English was formally established as an independent department, marking a significant institutional milestone that coincided with the introduction of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in English degree programme. During this period, student enrolment expanded beyond the standard intake administered by the University Grants Commission (UGC). Admissions were extended to include students from Additional Intake, as well as a specialised cohort of trained English teachers from government schools. These teachers were admitted to the Department upon the successful completion of the first year of the External Degree programme, with English offered as a principal subject.

At the inception of the independent department in 1997, the permanent academic staff consisted of Professor Gunawardena (Head of Department), Senior Lecturer Parvathi Nagasundaram, Senior Lecturer Dinali Fernando, and Dr. Maithree White. During this foundational period, the department also drew upon the expertise of a distinguished visiting faculty, which included Professor Ashley Halpé, Professor Rajiva Wijesinha, Professor Tissa Kariyawasam, Indira Mawelle, Tissa Jayatilaka, and Kamala Wijeratne.

A significant turning point occurred in 2014 with the introduction of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL). Following this expansion of the curriculum, the department was formally renamed the Department of English and Linguistics in 2015, under the leadership of Professor Lalith Ananda, who was serving as the Head of Department at the time.

In addition to these developments, English was introduced as a subject for the external degree programmes of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura since the 1990s. The Department of English pioneered a significant innovation in Sri Lankan external English education by offering a comprehensive curriculum for external Bachelor of Arts (BA) candidates. This curriculum uniquely integrated English Literature, English Language, and English Language Teaching (ELT) methodology as core components of the degree.

Between 2002 and 2005, the Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching English Language and Literature was conducted under the leadership of Senior Lecturer Parvathi Nagasundaram. During this period, the Department also implemented several collaborative programmes in partnership with the World Bank. A notable initiative was the *English for Employment* Certificate Course, conducted between 2004 and 2007 for graduands of the University. This programme was funded under the World Bank–supported project *Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education* (IRQUE) and was coordinated by Chitra Jayathilake. More recently, the introduction of the Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Second Language (MA in TESL) in 2020 represents another significant milestone in the developmental trajectory of the Department.

Maintaining a 100% employability rate among its graduates, the Department has consistently contributed to individual, university, national, and global development, particularly in the field of education. It has nurtured numerous prominent figures in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), as well as scholars and writers in English Language and Literature, both within Sri Lanka and internationally. Notable alumni include ministry secretaries, senior public administrators, and university academics. In the field of media, the Department produced the country's first female editor of a daily newspaper, Champika Liyanarachchi, alongside many other journalists, educational consultants, and teachers serving in both the public and private sectors. Furthermore, a significant number of graduates have pursued advanced studies, with many obtaining Master's degrees and several earning PhDs.

At present, in addition to the standard Faculty admission process, the Department admits students through special schemes such as "Special Window," "Additional Intake," and the recruitment of trained English teachers from government schools who have successfully completed the first year of the External Degree with English. The "Selection Test" mechanism mentioned earlier remains in practice today as a method for identifying students eligible to study English.

(Source: *Japura Flames Facebook Page*)



Department of Political Science

Establishment

Since its inception, Political Science was taught within the Department of Economics. However, in 2009, a separate, independent Department of Political Science was officially established.

Fields of Study

Political Science

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree

Master of Arts (MA) Degree

Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Degree

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) External Degree in Political Science

Current Academic Staff

Professor K. B. G. S. K. Gamlath

Senior Lecturer H. A. A. Nishantha

Senior Lecturer V. S. Suriyabandara

Senior Lecturer A. P. Karnasuriya

Senior Lecturer S. D. R. Gunasekera

Senior Lecturer H. P. I. Nadeeshani

Senior Lecturer Dr. H. E. N. Priyadarshani

Heads of the Department

Professor P.L.T. Purasinghe (2009—2012)

Senior Lecturer H.A.A. Nishantha (2012—2014)

Professor P.L.T. Purasinghe (2014—2020)

Senior Lecturer V.S. Suriyabandara (2020—present)

Societies

Political Science Association

Awards and Gold Medals

Professor P. Athukorala Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who obtains the highest-grade point average (GPA), having passed the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Political Science degree examination with either a First Class or a Second Class (Upper Division).

Historical Context

Since the inception of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (then known as Vidyodaya University) in 1959, Political Science was included as a major subject. However, under the University Reorganization of 1972, Political Science was removed from the degree programmes of the Faculty of Arts.

The subject was revitalized in 1979 with the recruitment of the first permanent lecturer, leading to the reintroduction of Political Science for the General Degree programme. Between 1979 and 1994, students who qualified for a Special (Honours) Degree in Political Science were forced to transfer to the University of Peradeniya to complete their studies. To overcome this challenge, the Special Degree programme in Political Science was officially introduced at Sri Jayewardenepura in 1994.

In 2009, the Faculty of Arts undertook a major initiative to enhance the quality and relevance of undergraduate education through the World Bank-funded IRQUE (Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education) project. Aligning with this policy, the Department of Political Science revised its curriculum and introduced several new courses designed to meet the evolving demands of the labour market. Currently, the Department of Political Science conducts its teaching in both the Sinhala and English mediums.



Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice

Establishment

The department was officially established on May 10, 2016, focusing on the specialized fields of Criminology and Criminal Justice.

Fields of Study

Criminology
Criminal Justice

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree

Master of Arts (MA) Degree

Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Degree

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Diploma in Criminology and Criminal Justice

Diploma in Forensic Psychology and Offender Counselling

Diploma in Legal Education for Crime Control and Prevention

Bachelor of Arts (General) External Degree

Current Academic Staff

Professor W. M. Dhanapala

Professor R. N. Sunil

Professor B. V. N. Wijewardena

Professor M. W. Jayasundara

Senior Lecturer M. P. A. A. Buddhadasa

Senior Lecturer A. R. P. C. Udayakumara

Senior Lecturer Dr. R. B. N. Sunil

Senior Lecturer K. G. N. U. Ranaweera

Senior Lecturer Dr. H. P. K. N. Hewawasam

Awards & Gold Medals

> **Professor Nandasena Ratnapala Memorial Gold Medal**: Awarded to the student who achieves the highest overall marks (GPA) in the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Criminology and Criminal Justice degree programme. To be eligible for this honour, the student must graduate with a First-Class honours pass.

Historical Context

The Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, established under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, initially commenced its operations under an Acting Head of Department. The University of Sri Jayewardenepura holds a unique position among Sri Lankan higher education institutes as it is the only national university to possess a dedicated Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice. The pioneer behind the introduction of this new discipline to the Sri Lankan university curriculum was Senior Professor Nandasena Ratnapala, an eminent scholar in Sociology and Anthropology. Criminology was first taught in the mid-1980s as a component titled “Social Problems” for final-year students pursuing Special Degrees in Sociology and Anthropology. Under the guidance of Professor Ratnapala, Mr. J. P. Delgoda, who served as the Commissioner General of Prisons at the time, contributed as a visiting lecturer.

The Special Degree programme in Criminology and Criminal Justice was officially launched in the 1985/86 academic year. During this formative period, Senior Lecturer E. K. Ganihigama held the position of Head of Department. The programme benefited significantly from the specialized expertise of retired Deputy Inspector General of Police, Dr. S. P. Dharmadasa. Special mention must also be made of the contributions of Richard Guyer, the Resident Representative of the Asia Foundation, and the leadership of Professor Richard Ward, the Vice-Chancellor of Administration at the University of Illinois in the United States. Subsequently, under the guidance of Professor Ratnapala, several postgraduate programmes were introduced, including Master of Arts (MA), Master of Philosophy (MPhil), and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees. Parallel to these academic advancements, the Diploma in Criminology and Criminal Justice was launched in the year 2000 to prioritize these specific fields of study.

The initiative to establish a dedicated and independent Department for Criminology and Criminal Justice was spearheaded during the tenure of Professor M. W. Jayasundara as Head of Department. In 2012, Professor Sunil Rajaneththi was tasked with preparing the proposal for the new department, a task completed with the contribution of Professor Dhanapala Wijesinghe. This proposal was submitted to the University Grants Commission through the formal channels by the Head of Department. Approval for the establishment of the new department was eventually granted in 2016. Following this, several academic staff members from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology expressed their formal consent in writing to the Vice-Chancellor to be attached to the new department, including Professor M. W. Jayasundara, Senior Lecturer M. P. A. A. Buddhadasa, Professor W. M. Dhanapala, Professor Sunil Rajaneththi, Professor B. V. N. Wijewardena, Senior Lecturer A. R. P. Chanaka Udayakumara, Dr. R. B. N. Sunil, Senior Lecturer K. G. N. U. Ranaweera, and Dr. H. P. K. N. Hewawasam.

In its early stages, the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice was housed within a section of the Research Laboratory. However, in 2019, it was relocated to the first floor of the Sumangala Mansion (*Sumangala Mandiraya*) following the departure of the Commerce Department from the left wing of the building. Professor Sunil Rajaneththi, who was appointed as the Head of Department in 2019, oversaw the modernization of these new premises. Currently, more than 800 students are enrolled in Criminology and Criminal Justice as either a Special Degree or a selected subject for the General Degree, exploring various branches of the discipline.

A special award is presented during the convocation ceremony to the student who secures the highest marks with a First Class in the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Criminology and Criminal Justice. The fund for this monetary prize was initiated by Professor Nandasena Ratnapala with an initial deposit of 20,000 LKR. Since 2019, Senior Lecturer Anuruddhika Buddhadasa has contributed a further 36,000 LKR to this account, a sum accrued during her 36-month tenure as Head of Department. Furthermore, since 2016, she personally funded the arrangements to award the Professor Nandasena Ratnapala Memorial Gold Medal.

In 2020, in addition to existing degree programmes, a proposal for a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Honours degree was developed by Senior Lecturer and Attorney-at-Law Raja Gunaratne, Head of Department Professor Sunil Rajaneththi, and Senior Lecturer Nishani Ranaweera. The department's academic staff remains actively engaged in internal and external teaching processes as well as various research activities. Additionally, Senior Lecturer Udaya Kumara Amarasinghe, who served as a Director of the National Authority for the Protection of Victims of Crime and Witnesses, currently serves as the Chairman of the National Child Protection Authority.



(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)

Department of Philosophy and Psychology

Establishment

The Department of Philosophy and Psychology was formally established as an independent academic unit through Gazette Notification No. 2045/17 on November 10, 2017. Although it is a relatively new independent department, its academic roots stretch back to the very inception of the university.

Fields of Study

Philosophy

Psychology

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Psychology

Bachelor of Arts (General) in Psychology

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) External Degree

Diploma in Addiction Psychology and Rehabilitation

Diploma in Psychology

Diploma in Child Studies

Diploma in Community Psychology

Current Academic Staff

Senior Professor W. A. G. Perera

Professor W. M. Yaparathna

Senior Lecturer Dr. R. A. N. Fernando

Senior Lecturer W. A. Shantha

Senior Lecturer Ven. Dr. Nelliwala Meththananda Thero

Lecturer G. R. N. Gunaratne

Heads of the Department

Senior Prof. W.A.G. Perera (2018–2021)

Prof. W.M. Yaparathne (2021–Present)

Publications

Chintanadhara Academic Journal

Historical Context

With the implementation of the Higher Education Act No. 20 of 1966, which aimed at restructuring universities, the Faculty of Philosophy was abolished, and its curriculum was integrated into the Faculty of Buddhist Studies. Consequently, the Philosophy unit began its operations under the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies.

During this era, prominent faculty members included Senior Lecturer Ven. Demunumaye Gnanarathana Thero, who taught Oriental Philosophy, and Dr. G. D. K. Nanayakkara, who taught Western Philosophy in both English and Sinhala media. To facilitate the teaching of Philosophy, external resource persons such as Dr. S. Dahanayake, Harrison Perera, and Dr. Pushpa Rodrigo contributed their expertise. Additionally, Professor Thirunavukkarasu from the University of Colombo oversaw the Psychology curriculum during this period, with further support from academics at the Universities of Peradeniya and Colombo.

To elevate Philosophy—which had previously been taught as a subject within the Vidyodaya Pirivena—into a comprehensive degree programme, the Vice-Chancellor of Vidyodaya University, Ven.

Welivitiye Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero, appointed Ven. Parawahera Vajiragnana Nayaka Thero (an eminent author and master of *Tripitaka*) as the Professor of Philosophy and Dean of the Faculty of Arts. Furthermore, A. M. M. Sahabdeen (Oriental Philosophy) and S. Abeyasinghe (Logic) were recruited as lecturers. Thus, the foundation for the formal study of Philosophy was firmly established at the inception of the University.

Since 2003, the Philosophy degree programme has evolved to encompass both Philosophy and Psychology. As of 2020, the department offers Bachelor of Arts Honours and General degrees in both Philosophy and Psychology, conducted in both Sinhala and English media. Gnanadasa Perera, who joined the academic staff in 1992, played a pivotal role in developing the Philosophy curriculum into a comprehensive degree programme. This expansion reflected the department's commitment to modernizing its academic scope while maintaining its foundational strengths.

Over the years, students who studied Philosophy at this institution have gained national and international recognition as distinguished scholars. Notable alumni include Dr. Abhaya Bandaranayaka, who currently serves as a Senior Psychological Counsellor in New South Wales, Australia, and the late Professor Daya Edirisinghe. Professor Edirisinghe was a prominent scholar produced by this department who held numerous prestigious positions, including Head of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Kelaniya, Chairman of the Official Languages Commission, Chairman of NARA, and Director of the University of the Visual and Performing Arts. He continued to serve the academic community as a guest lecturer until his demise.

(Source:*www.sjp.ac.lk*)



Department of Anthropology

Establishment

The Department was one of the first few academic units established at Vidyodaya University following its inception in 1959. It was founded in early 1960 under the Faculty of Arts by Venerable Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero. However, in the years that followed, the department was dissolved, and its degree programmes were offered under the Department of Sociology. The Department of Anthropology was subsequently re-established as an independent unit in 2018.

Fields of Study

Cultural Anthropology

Physical Anthropology

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree

Master of Arts (MA) Degree

Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Degree

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes

Certificate Course in Tourism

Certificate Course in *Angampora*

Bachelor of Arts (General) External Degree

Current Academic Staff

Senior Professor H.D.Y.D. Jayatilleke

Professor C.A.D. Nahallage

Professor A.P.N. de S. Abeysundara

Professor A.A. Jayantha Jayasiri

Professor K.M.S. Samarakoon

Senior Lecturer Dr. W.S.P.Y.N. Kanthilatha

Lecturer (unconfirmed) Dr. D.T.H. Ananda

Lecturer (unconfirmed) Dr. H.W.R. Kumara

Heads of the Department

Prof. P.E.P. Deraniyagala (1960–1964)

Dr. Alex Gunasekera (1964–1970)

Prof. Nandasena Ratnapala (1972–1986)

Senior Prof. H.D.Y.D. Jayatilleke (2018–2021)

Prof. C. A. D. Nahallage (15.02.2021–30.08.2021)

Prof. A.P.N. de S. Abeysundara (2021–2022)

Prof. C. A. D. Nahallage (2022)

Publications

Journal of Anthropological Studies

Journal of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Special Programmes

International Conference on Intangible Cultural Heritage

Anthropology Day

Anthropology Field School

Societies

Anthropology Association

Awards & Gold Medals

Professor B.A. Tennyson Perera Gold Medal: Awarded to the student who passes the BA (Honours) in Anthropology with a First Class and the highest overall GPA.

Historical Context

According to University Administration Reports from 1966/1967, Anthropology was offered under the Department of Sociology and Anthropology within the then Faculty of Arts. Following the University reforms of 1972, the subject continued to be administered under the same department. Notably, the Department of Anthropology at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura remains the only department in Sri Lanka to confer a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree specifically in Anthropology.

During the 1960s, under the visionary leadership of Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero, who established the study of Anthropology at Vidyodaya, the department's first Professor (and Chair) was Professor P. E. P. Deraniyagala, a renowned anthropologist and paleoanthropologist. In its formative years, the curriculum primarily focused on Physical Anthropology, Palaeoanthropology, Ethnology, and Social Anthropology. Thus, by introducing Anthropology to the Sri Lankan university system in 1960, Vidyodaya University rendered an invaluable service to the field of Anthropology in Sri Lanka.

From its inception, Anthropology was initially offered only for the Bachelor of Arts (General) degree. The curriculum was structured with a primary emphasis on Physical Anthropology, complemented by course modules in Socio-Cultural Anthropology. In 1964, Dr. Alex Gunasekera joined the permanent academic staff, and following the retirement of Professor P.E.P. Deraniyagala that same year, Dr. Gunasekera was appointed as the Head of the Department. Under his leadership, the disciplines of Anthropology and Sociology were integrated, and the unit was renamed the Department of Anthropology and Sociology.

The year 1968 marked a significant milestone for the department when the University Senate granted approval for students who completed Anthropology in their first year to pursue Sociology as an Honours (Special) degree starting from their second year. In 1977, Professor Nandasena Ratnapala, who was serving in the Department of Sinhala, returned to Sri Lanka after earning a Doctorate in Anthropology from a German university. As a distinguished scholar, he played a vital role in articulating the profound academic value of a discipline like Anthropology. Subsequently, in 1980, the sub-department was formally designated as the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. A notable figure during this transformative period was Senior Lecturer Edwin Ganihigama, whose contributions were instrumental to the department's progress.

Guided by the vision of Professor Nandasena Ratnapala, who recognized that the time was ripe for advanced specialization, the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Anthropology was inaugurated in the year 2000. Reaching a pinnacle of institutional growth, the Department of Anthropology officially separated from the Department of Sociology in 2018 to become an independent department. Professor Yasanjali Devika Jayatilleke was appointed as its first Head of Department. A distinctive strength of this department is its highly qualified faculty, as every member of the academic staff holds a doctoral degree (PhD). By 2022, six batches of Anthropology Honours had completed their studies, successfully securing professional roles in various sectors both in Sri Lanka and abroad.

The Department of Anthropology has embarked on a clear trajectory of rapid development. It is the sole institution in the country to host an International Conference on Intangible Cultural Heritage. Furthermore, to support national development and the promotion of tourism, the department launched a Certificate Course in Tourism in 2020. This programme educates industry professionals on Sri Lankan culture and identity. Simultaneously, to preserve indigenous martial arts and traditional folk games, a Certificate Course in *Angampora*

was established. The department's academic excellence was twice recognized at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura Research Awards in 2018 and 2019, where it won the award for the Best Department in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

In 2019, the department secured a significant competitive milestone by obtaining World Bank AHEAD (Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development) funding, having submitted the highest-scoring project proposal among all national universities. International growth is further bolstered through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with institutions in Canada and Japan, as well as the Red Cross Society, facilitating student knowledge exchange and global networking. Revitalizing its scholarly foundations, the third volume of the *Journal of Anthropological Studies* (originally launched in the 1960s) was published in 2018. Additionally, the former Anthropology Society was re-established as Anthropology Association, which continues to spearhead diverse educational initiatives to advance the discipline.

(Source:*www.sjp.ac.lk*)



Department of English Language Teaching (DELT)

Establishment

The Department of English Language Teaching was officially established as an independent academic department in 2018.

Fields of Study

Compulsory English

English Language Programmes

English in Use 1

English in Use 2

English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

English for General Purposes (EGP)

English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)

English for Scientific Discourse (for the Faculty of Applied Sciences)

English Level 1 and 2 (for the Faculty of Urban and Aquatic Bioresources)

(**Note**: *The Department does not offer independent degree programmes; rather, it serves as a specialized department providing English language support across the university.*)

Extended and External Programmes

Certificate in English

Diploma in English

(The unit offers the afore-mentioned programmes for school leavers who were unable to secure university admission, as well as for officers in the public and private sectors.)

Current Academic Staff

Senior Lecturer Dr. M.M.K. Ratnayake

Senior Lecturer Dr. P.B.S.L. Pushpakumara

Senior Lecturer Ms. H.P.L.W. Shashikala

Senior Lecturer Ven. Dr. Dodamgoda Sumanasara Thero

Lecturer D. L.S. Ananda

Senior English Instructor K.A.C. Silva

Heads of the Department

Lecturer D.L.S. Ananda (2018–2018)

Senior Lecturer Dr. P.B.S.L. Pushpakumara (2018–2021)

Lecturer D.L.S. Ananda (2021–present)

Publications

2013: *English in Use* Vol. I (April)

2013: *Basic English* Vol. I (June)

2013: *English in Use* Vol. II

2013: *English in Use* Vol. II (October)

2014: *English in Use* Vol. I

2015: *English in Use*

2015: *Pathways in English*

2015: *Certificate Course in English*

2016: *English in Use*

2016: *Pathways in English*

2018: *English in Use*

2019: *English in Use*

2020: *English for General Purposes (EGP)*

2020: *Diploma in English (Internal)*

2022: *English in Use I* (Student Book & Teacher's Guide)

2022: *English in Use II* (Student Book & Teacher's Guide)

2022: *English for Academic Purposes (EAP)* (Student Book)

2022: *English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)* (Student Book & Teachers' Guide)

Special Programmes

- English Language Day
- DELT Magazine Launch Rise Up
- DELT Speech Star

Societies

English Language Society (ELS)

Historical Context

Although the Department of English Language Teaching (DELT) was formally established in 2018, the teaching of English has been an integral part of the institution since its inception. Recognizing the importance of English in higher education, the university's founder, Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero, made English a compulsory subject for all students when Vidyodaya University was established in 1959. At the university's start, English was taught as a mandatory subject under the Department of Western Languages within the Faculty of Languages.

Following the 1972 reforms, the responsibility for compulsory English instruction was moved to the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies. Later, in February 1986, English language instruction (practical General English, currently known as Compulsory English) was separated from that department to form an independent English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU). This unit functioned directly under the Dean of the Faculty of Arts. Ms. W.M.K.P. Athukorala was appointed as its first Head (*Annual Report*, 1986, p.85). Since then, the ELTU has been led by several Heads, namely Silvia Fernando, D.P. Ahangama, Oranee Jansz, Chitra Galappatti, S. Guruge, and M.M.K.Ratnayake.

Under the recent academic reforms within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, significant structural changes were made to the Compulsory English curriculum. Students who achieve an A grade or higher in the placement test conducted by the DELT are exempted from the first-year Compulsory English course. For all other students, mandatory English lectures are held every weekday from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM. In addition to the foundational courses, the curriculum is specifically tailored to the students' medium of instruction during their second year. Students pursuing their degree in the English medium are required to complete the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course, while those studying in the Sinhala medium follow the English for General Purposes (EGP) course. Furthermore, the Department of English Language Teaching introduced the English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) course for all third-year students to enhance their professional communication skills. Under this structured framework, students of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences earn a total of 09 academic credits for their Compulsory English.

(Source: *Japura Flames Facebook Page*)



Department of Music and Creative Technology

Establishment

The department was established in 2020. While the subject had been offered since 1991 under the Department of Languages, Cultural Studies, and Performing Arts, it was transitioned into the newly created Department of Music and Creative Technology.

Fields of Study

Music
Creative Music Technology and Production

Degree Programmes

Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree
Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.)
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Current Academic Staff

Professor D.P. Ratnayake
Senior Lecturer W.M.D.G.K. Wanasinghe
Senior Lecturer Dr. K.R. Priyantha Tilakasiri
Senior Lecturer M.R. Arumawadu
Lecturer J.A. Bandaranayake

Heads of the Department

Professor D.P. Ratnayake (2020–2022)

Special Programmes

Dhwani Musical Concert

Societies

Music and Creative Technology Society

Historical Context

Since the establishment of Vidyodaya University in 1959, Sanskrit was taught under the Faculty of Languages. In 1972, the academic scope was broadened with the formation of the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies. Subsequently, in 1991, Music and Dance were introduced as subject streams within the field of Cultural Studies. A major milestone was reached in 2014 when the department was renamed the Department of Languages, Cultural Studies, and Performing Arts. This transition was led by Professor Pradeep Ratnayake, who served two terms as Head of the Department.

From 1991 onwards, the department offered General and Special (Honours) Degrees in Cultural and Aesthetic Studies (Music). Since 2014, the curriculum has been further refined to offer both General and Honours Degrees exclusively in Music.



(Source: *Japura Flames Facebook Page*)

Department of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Establishment
This department was established in the year 2020.

Fields of Study
Information Technology

Degree Programmes
Bachelor of Science in Information Technology Degree

Extended Programmes & External Degree Programmes
Diploma in Information Technology
Bachelor of Arts (General) External Degree

Current Academic Staff
Lecturer (Probationary) S. A. Nanayakkara
Lecturer (Probationary) D. P. M. Perera

Societies

- Information and Communication Technology Students' Association (ICTSA)
- I.C.T. Student Association

Historical Context

The Bachelor of Science Degree Programme in Information Technology was introduced in the academic year 2014/2015 by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. From its inception, the programme was administered through several departments within the faculty. These included the Departments of English and Linguistics, Geography, Sociology, and History and Archaeology.

Subsequently, in June 2020, following approval by the University Grants Commission, the Department of Information and Communication Technology was formally established as an independent department. From its establishment until 2022, Professor B. W. R. Damayanthi of the Department of Economics has served in an acting capacity in overseeing the duties of the Head of the Department.



(Source: *Japura Flames Facebook Page*)

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: Staff Directory

Department	Official Academic Name & Title	Common / Preferred Name
Pali & Buddhist Studies	Senior Prof. Ven. Magammana Pagnananda Thero	Senior Prof. Ven. Magammana Pagnananda Thero
	Prof. Ven. Nayimbala Dhammadassi Thero	Prof. Ven. Nayimbala Dhammadassi Thero
	Prof. Ven. Medagampitiye Vijithadhamma Thero	Prof. Ven. Medagampitiye Vijithadhamma Thero
	Prof. Ven. Medagoda Abhayatissa Thero	Prof. Ven. Medagoda Abhayatissa Thero
	Prof. K.A. Weerasena	Prof. K.A. Weerasena
	Prof. M.D.D.I. Gunathilaka	Prof. Dunesh Gunathilaka
	Prof. Ven. Elamaldeniye Sarananda Thero	Prof. Ven. Elamaldeniye Sarananda Thero
	Prof. A.M.N.W. Mendis	Prof. Wasantha Mendis
	Prof. Ven. Panahaduwe Yasassi Thero	Prof. Ven. Panahaduwe Yasassi Thero
	Prof. G.A. Gamini	Prof. Gamini Rathna Sri
	Senior Lecturer Dr. Ven. Kumbuke Chandaloka Thero	Senior Lecturer Dr. Ven. Kumbuke Chandaloka Thero
	Senior Lecturer Ven. Kudakathnoruwe Vineetha Thero	Senior Lecturer Ven. Kudakathnoruwe Vineetha Thero
	Senior Lecturer Dr. Ven. Witarandeniye Chandasiri Thero	Senior Lecturer Dr. Ven. Witarandeniye Chandasiri Thero
	Lecturer Ven. Metibembiye Dhammasiri Thero	Lecturer Ven. Metibembiye Dhammasiri Thero
	Lecturer W.M.C.L. Madhusanka	Lecturer Charith Madhusanka
Languages, Cultural Studies & Performing Arts	Senior Prof. R.M. Saman Chandrasena	Senior Prof. Saman Chandra Ranasinghe
	Prof. R.K.D.N.K. Rajapaksha	Prof. Nilanthi Rajapaksha
	Prof. W.B.A. Vitharana	Prof. W.B.A. Vitharana
	Senior Lecturer Dr. A.K.M.S. Manamperi	Senior Lecturer Dr. Manori Manamperi
	Senior Lecturer I.U. Chandrasekara	Senior Lecturer Irosha Chandrasekara
	Senior Lecturer Dr. E.G.W.P. Gunasena	Senior Lecturer Dr. Vajira P. Gunasena
	Senior Lecturer Ven. Meepitiye Seelarathana Thero	Senior Lecturer Ven. Meepitiye Seelarathana Thero

	Senior Lecturer Dr. W.V.P.H. Ranaweera	Senior Lecturer Dr. Himalika Ranaweera
	Senior Lecturer Ven. Sravastipura Shanthasiri Thero	Senior Lecturer Ven. Sravastipura Shanthasiri Thero
	Senior Lecturer Dr. S.K.A. Lokugamage	Senior Lecturer Dr. Samanthika Lokugamage
	Lecturer Dr. K.B.D. Gunasena	Lecturer Deepal Gunasena
	Lecturer (unconfirmed) W.L.C. Udayakumari	Lecturer Charitha (unconfirmed) Udayakumari
Sinhala & Mass Communication	Senior Prof. A.V.D. Ratnasiri	Senior Prof. Ratnasiri Arangala
	Senior Prof. Ven. Kiwulegedara Narada Thero	Senior Prof. Ven. Kiwulegedara Narada Thero
	Prof. L.M.K. Lankamullage	Prof. Kusumalatha Lankamulla
	Prof. K.A.J.P.K. Medawatta	Prof. Jayalatha Medawatta
	Associate Prof. K.K. Sunethra	Associate Prof. Sunethra Kankanamge
	Senior Lecturer Dr. H.A.S. Harischandra	Senior Lecturer Dr. Senani Harischandra
	Senior Lecturer K.A.N. Bandara	Senior Lecturer Neranja Bandara
	Senior Lecturer M.K.G.I. Dharmasena	Senior Lecturer Imesha Dharmasena
	Senior Lecturer Ven. Kosgoda Chandajothi Thero	Senior Lecturer Ven. Kosgoda Chandajothi Thero
	Senior Lecturer Dr. K.M.S.A.D. Bandara	Senior Lecturer Dr. Senesh Bandara Dissanayake
	Senior Lecturer Dr. Anuradha Sudhammika Bikkuni	Senior Lecturer Dr. Navalapitiye Anuradha Sudhammika Bikkuni
	Senior Lecturer K.K. Sunil	Senior Lecturer Sunil Derangala
	Senior Lecturer Dr. R.G.H.U. Menike	Senior Lecturer Dr. Hansamala Ritigahapola
	Lecturer (probationary) Charitha Marcus	Lecturer (probationary) Charitha Marcus
History & Archaeology	Prof. K. Padmasiri	Prof. Padmasiri Kannangara
	Prof. K. Hettiarachchi	Prof. Karunasena Hettiarachchi
	Prof. K.M. Alexander	Prof. Alexander Kapukotuwa
	Prof. G. Ranasinghe	Prof. Gamini Ranasinghe
	Associate Prof. S.D.N. Dharmaratne	Associate Prof. Nanda Dharmaratne
	Senior Lecturer Dr. M.A.S.R.S. Manthriratne	Senior Lecturer Dr. Sanjeevi Manthriratne

	Senior Lecturer Ven. Dambara Amila Thero	Senior Lecturer Ven. Dambara Amila Thero
	Senior Lecturer R.K.M.T. Indrani	Senior Lecturer R.K. Monica Trilishiya Indrani
	Senior Lecturer M.D.I.K. Abeynayake	Senior Lecturer Kaushalya Abeynayake
	Senior Lecturer U.N.K. Ratnayake	Senior Lecturer Nelum Ratnayake
	Senior Lecturer Dr. W.M.C. Oshan	Senior Lecturer Dr. Oshan Wedage
	Lecturer D.L. Ranagala	Lecturer Damith Ranagala
Sociology	Senior Prof. M.T. Samarakoon	Senior Prof. Mayura Samarakoon
	Prof. W.A.S. Wijekoon	Prof. W.A.S. Wijekoon
	Associate Prof. M.A.N.R.M. Perera	Associate Prof. Rasanjalee Perera
	Lecturer (probationary)T.D. Wijetunga	Lecturer (probationary)Tharindu Wijetunga
	Lecturer (probationary) R.A.R. Karunaratne	Lecturer (probationary) Rasika Karunaratne
	Lecturer (probationary) I.G.N.P. Menike	Lecturer (probationary) I.G.N.P. Menike
	Lecturer (probationary) W.M. Wathsala Shyamali	Lecturer (probationary) W.M. Wathsala Shyamali
Geography	Prof. R.M.K. Ratnayake	Prof. R.M.K. Ratnayake
	Prof. T.M.S.P.K. Tennakoon	Prof. Sunethra Tennakoon
	Prof. Ven. Pinnawala Sangasumana Thero	Prof. Ven. Pinnawala Sangasumana Thero
	Senior Lecturer Dr. M.A.S. Wijesinghe	Senior Lecturer Dr. Shantha Wijesinghe
	Senior Lecturer H.M.R. Herath	Senior Lecturer Jayani Rupi Herath
	Senior Lecturer H.M.B.S. Herath	Senior Lecturer Bhadra Herath
	Senior Lecturer Dr. H.A.N. Hettiarachchi	Senior Lecturer Dr. Nishantha Hettiarachchi
	Senior Lecturer B.A.S.C. Kumara	Senior Lecturer Sumanajith Kumara
	Senior Lecturer G.G.R. Nandana	Senior Lecturer Ravi Nandana
	Senior Lecturer A.W.G.N.M. Abeyerathne	Senior Lecturer Nadeesha Abeyerathne
	Lecturer K.T.L. Sathsara	Lecturer Thisara Sathsara
	Lecturer (probationary) D.K.D.A. Ranaweera	Lecturer (probationary) Dilhani Ranaweera
	Lecturer(probationary) A.M.A.R. Geethalankara	Lecturer (probationary) A.M.A.R. Geethalankara
Economics	Senior Prof. H.M.T.N.R. Herath	Senior Prof. H.M.T.N.R. Herath

	Prof. D.P.S. Chandrakumara	Prof. D.P.S. Chandrakumara
	Prof. S.C.B. Heenkenda	Prof. Shirantha Heenkenda
	Prof. K.G.G. Weerasinghe	Prof. Gamini Weerasinghe
	Prof. B.W.R. Damayanthi	Prof. Damayanthi Bamunusinghe
	Prof. D.P. Withanage	Prof. Dhammika Withanage
	Senior Lecturer S.W.A. Kalyanaratne	Senior Lecturer Ajanta Kalyanaratne
	Senior Lecturer C.W. Kalansooriya	Senior Lecturer Wasana Kalansooriya
	Senior Lecturer N.M.A. Jayasinghe	Senior Lecturer Anura Jayasinghe
	Lecturer (probationary) S.U.B. Hewage	Lecturer(probationary) Sohani Badulla Hewage
	Lecturer(probationary) H.H.M.P. Madhusanka	Lecturer (probationary) Mayuri Madhusanka
	Lecturer (probationary) K.K.T. Udayanga	Lecturer (probationary) Tharidu Udayanga
	Lecturer(probationary) K.D. Indivari	Lecturer(probationary) K.D. Indivari
Social Statistics	Senior Lecturer C.L.K. Nawaratna	Senior Lecturer Lasantha Nawaratna
	Senior Lecturer H.P. Diyunugala	Senior Lecturer Hemantha P. Diyunugala
	Senior Lecturer Dr. D.P.K. Manel	Senior Lecturer Manel Deerasinghe
	Senior Lecturer Dr. H.P.T.N. Silva	Senior Lecturer Thanuja Nilanthi Silva
	Senior Lecturer I.D. Jayaruwan	Senior Lecturer I.D. Jayaruwan
	Senior Lecturer R.M.K.U. G. Ratnayake	Senior Lecturer Geethika Ratnayake
	Senior Lecturer N.A.N.J. Maduvansha	Senior Lecturer Nuwan Maduvansha
	Lecturer G.P.S. Nalaka	Lecturer Suresh Nalaka
	Lecturer (probationary) A.I.S. Perera	Lecturer (probationary) Sandamali Perera
English & Linguistics	Prof. M.G. Lalith Ananda	Prof. M.G. Lalith Ananda
	Prof. R.M.C. Jayathilake	Prof. Chitra Jayathilake
	Associate Prof. I.J. Mawelle	Associate Prof. Indira Mawelle
	Senior Lecturer D.C. Walisundara	Senior Lecturer Dilini Walisundara
	Senior Lecturer Dr. H.A.G. Sujeewa	Senior Lecturer Dr. Sujeewa Hettiarachchi
	Senior Lecturer Dr. W.A.K.C.P. Warnapala	Senior Lecturer Dr. Kanchankeshi Warnapala

	Senior Lecturer Dr. S.S. Pereira	Senior Lecturer Dr. Sujeeva Sebastian Pereira
	Senior Lecturer Dr. W.A.T. Weerasooriya	Senior Lecturer Dr. Tharanga Weerasooriya
	Lecturer (probationary) M.N.D. Costa	Lecturer (probationary) Nelani D. Costa
Political Science	Prof. K.B.G.S.K. Gamlath	Prof. Shantha Gamlath
	Senior Lecturer H.A.A. Nishantha	Senior Lecturer H.A.A. Nishantha Hettiarachchi
	Senior Lecturer V.S. Suriyabandara	Senior Lecturer Vishakha Suriyabandara
	Senior Lecturer A.P. Karnasuriya	Senior Lecturer Anuruddha Pradeep Karnasuriya
	Senior Lecturer S.D.R. Gunasekera	Senior Lecturer Ravindra Gunasekera
	Senior Lecturer H.P.I. Nadeeshani	Senior Lecturer Imanga Nadeeshani
	Senior Lecturer Dr. H.E.N. Priyadarshani	Senior Lecturer Dr. Niluka Priyadarshani
Criminology & Criminal Justice	Prof. W.M. Dhanapala	Prof. W.M. Dhanapala
	Prof. R.N. Sunil	Prof. Sunil Rajaneththi
	Prof. B.V.N. Wijewardhana	Prof. Neranji Wijewardhana
	Prof. M.W. Jayasundara	Prof. M.W. Jayasundara
	Senior Lecturer M.P.A.A. Buddhadasa	Senior Lecturer Anuruddhika Buddhadasa
	Senior Lecturer A.R.P.C. Udayakumara	Senior Lecturer Chanaka Udayakumara
	Senior Lecturer Dr. R.B.N. Sunil	Senior Lecturer Dr. Ratnayake Sunil
	Senior Lecturer K.G.N.U. Ranaweera	Senior Lecturer Nishani Ranaweera
	Senior Lecturer Dr. H.P.K.N. Hewawasam	Senior Lecturer Dr. Kaushalya Hewawasam
Philosophy & Psychology	Senior Prof. W.A.G. Perera	Senior Prof. Gnanadasa Perera
	Prof. W.M. Yaparathne	Prof. Yaparathne Weerasekara
	Senior Lecturer Dr. R.A.N. Fernando	Senior Lecturer Dr. Asha Nimali Fernando
	Senior Lecturer W.A. Shantha	Senior Lecturer Aruna Shantha Walpola
	Senior Lecturer Dr. Ven. Nelliwala Meththananda Thero	Senior Lecturer Dr. Ven. Nelliwala Meththananda Thero
	Lecturer G.R.N. Gunaratne	Lecturer Niromi Gunaratne

Anthropology	Senior Prof. H.D.Y.D. Jayatilleke	Senior Prof. Yasanjali Devika Jayatilleke
	Prof. C.A.D. Nahallage	Prof. Charmalie Nahallage
	Prof. A.P.N. de S. Abeysundara	Prof. Praneeth Abeysundara
	Prof. A.A. Jayantha Jayasiri	Prof. A.A. Jayantha Jayasiri
	Prof. K.M.S. Samarasekera	Prof. Sepala Samarasekera
	Senior Lecturer Dr. W.S.P.Y.N. Kanthilatha	Senior Lecturer Dr. Nelum Kanthilatha
	Lecturer (unconfirmed)Dr. D.T.H. Ananda	Lecturer (unconfirmed) Dr. Tharaka Ananda
	Lecturer (unconfirmed)Dr. H.W.R. Kumara	Lecturer (unconfirmed) Dr. Ravindra Withanachchi
DELT	Senior Lecturer Dr. M.M.K. Ratnayake	Senior Lecturer Dr. Madhubhashini Ratnayake
	Senior Lecturer Dr. P.B.S.L. Pushpakumara	Senior Lecturer Dr. Sampath Pushpakumara
	Senior Lecturer H.P.L.W. Shashikala	Senior Lecturer H.P.L.W. Shashikala
	Senior Lecturer Dr. Ven. Dodamgoda Sumanasara Thero	Senior Lecturer Dr. Ven. Dodamgoda Sumanasara Thero
	Lecturer D.L.S. Ananda	Lecturer Sarath Ananda
	Senior English Instructor K.A.S. Silva	Senior English Instructor Anjali de Silva
Music & Creative Technology	Prof. D.P. Ratnayake	Prof. Darshana Pradeep Ratnayake
	Senior Lecturer W.M.D.G.K. Wanasinghe	Senior Lecturer Githara Wanasinghe
	Senior Lecturer Dr. K.R. Priyantha Thilakasiri	Senior Lecturer Dr. Priyantha Tilakasiri
	Senior Lecturer M.R. Arumawadu	Senior Lecturer Muditha Arumawadu
	Lecturer J.A. Bandaranayake	Lecturer Amiththa Bandaranayake
ICT	Lecturer (probationary) S.A. Nanayakkara	Lecturer (probationary) Samitha Nanayakkara
	Lecturer (probationary) D.P.M. Perera	Lecturer (probationary) Pasangi Perera

Chapter III

Rūpāvalōkana

A Pictorial History: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 1959–2022

Compilation: **Sujeeva Sebastian Pereira**

Translation: **Chitra Jayathilake**

Overview

This chapter seeks to reconstruct the history of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences by leveraging the power of photography. Its central aim is to offer readers a visual narrative, allowing them to interpret the faculty's history through a pictorial lens.

The images presented here were primarily collected from the national newspaper archives at the Department of National Archives and the University of Sri Jayewardenepura's Main Library. These are supplemented by rare photographs obtained from personal collections. The following section outlines the thematic arrangement of these visual records:

- Newspaper Reports on the Conferment of University Status upon Vidyodaya Pirivena
- Ceremonial Inauguration of Vidyodaya University

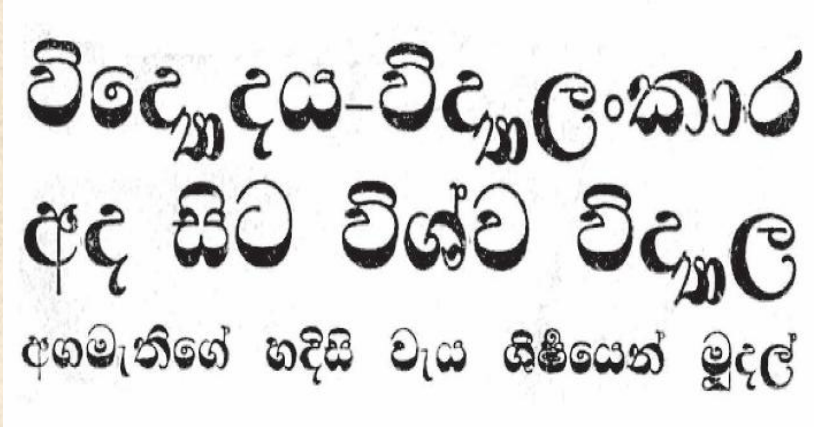
  (This section includes images from the ceremonial opening of the new buildings at the Gangodawila premises, as well as photographs capturing the significant milestones in the university's subsequent history.)
- Convocation (Graduation) Ceremonies

  (Since photographs of more recent convocations are readily available online, only a limited selection of these images has been included here.)
- University Demonstrations and Protests

  (Although these events were not exclusive to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, they have been included due to the faculty's direct involvement in these historical occurrences.)

- Publications, Research and Conferences, and Arts and Cultural Activities
- Infrastructure: Main Buildings and Statues of the Faculty
- Student, Academic, and Non-Academic Community

Newspaper Reports on the Conferment of University Status upon Vidyodaya Pirivena



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අද සිට විශ්ව විද්‍යාල
අගමැතිගේ හදිසි වැය ශීර්ෂයෙන් මුදල්

(*Dinamina,* January 01, 1959, p. 1)

Official parliamentary announcement declaring the legal elevation of Vidyalankara Pirivena and Vidyodaya Pirivena to National University status, with their original names formally retained.



සිංහල සරසවි දෙකක්
අද බිහිවේ

බඹරැන්දේ සිරි සීවලි හිමියන් විසිනි

(*Dinamina*, January 01, 1959, p, 3)

An article authored by the Ven. Bambarende Siri Seevali Thero.

The article emphasizes the significance of transforming these National Universities into Sinhala Universities, highlighting their vital role within the national movement that sought to establish itself following the Official Language Act.



‘දෙ පිරිවෙන සරසවි කිරීම ජාතික වස්තු රැකීමක්’

විද්‍යෝදය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය ඇරඹීමේ දී ප්‍රගමැති කියයි

‘ආරක්ෂක පනත අනතුරුදායකයි; ඒ නිසා එය අස්කර ගත යුතුයි’

ආගමික දිසුණුවක් සිදුවී නැතැයි කියයි

‘ආරක්ෂක පනත ගැන කියවන්න දෙයක් නැ

“සියරෝ” සිගරට් ඔබෙන්ය

ඔබ වෙත ඉදිරිපත් කරයි.

(*Dinamina*, January 19, 1959, p. 3)

An analysis of how the elevation of Vidyodaya Pirivena and Vidyalankara Pirivena to the status of National Universities was interpreted within the political context of that era.



THE DINAMINA

VOL. 51 වැනි කාණ්ඩය

වසර 1959 ක්වූ ජනවාරි මස 12 වෙනි සඳුද MONDAY, JANUA

සරසවි පිවිසුම සියබසින් :

ඉංග්‍රීසි ඉගැන්වීමට විශේෂ පන්ති

ලංගමයෙන් තවත් ඉල්ලීම

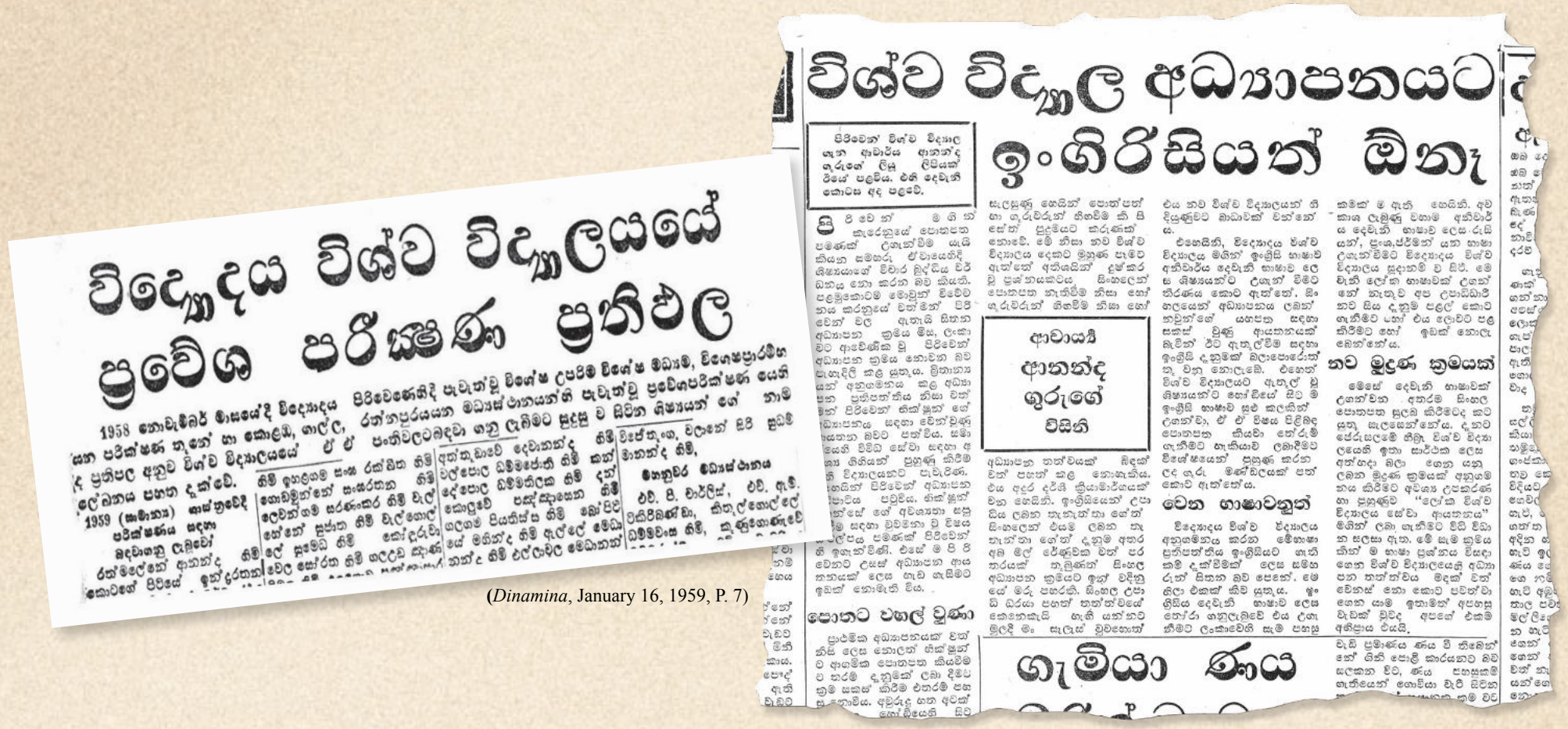
රජයේ තීරණය හෙළා දකිති

ගම් සභාපතිට නැපැල් බෝම්බයක්

විද්‍යෝදය සරසවියේ ප්‍රථම විභාගයට ඉංග්‍රීසි අනිවාර්යයි

(*Dinamina*, January 12, 1959, p. 1)

Although the initial Entrance Examinations were conducted in English at the inception of the University in 1959, a decision was made to conduct the examinations in Sinhala, Tamil, and English from 1960 onwards (with the first of these scheduled for December 1959).



විද්‍යෝදය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයයේ
ප්‍රවේශ පරීක්ෂණ ප්‍රතිඵල

1958 නොවැම්බර් මාසයේදී විද්‍යෝදය
යන පරීක්ෂණ නැනේ හා කොළඹ, හාල්ල,
දී ප්‍රතිඵල අනුව විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයයේ
ලේඛනය පහත දැක්වේ.
1959 (සාමාන්‍ය) ශාස්ත්‍රවේදී
පරීක්ෂණය සඳහා
බඳවාගනු ලැබුවෝ

පිරිවෙනෙකිදී පැවැත්වූ විශේෂ උපපිම විශේෂ මධ්‍යම, විශෙෂප්‍රාරම්භ
රත්නපුරයයන මධ්‍යස්ථානයන්හි පැවැත්වූ ප්‍රවේශපරීක්ෂණ යෙහි
පංතිවලට බඳවා ගනු ලැබීමට සුදුසු ම සිටින ශිෂ්‍යයන් ගේ නාම

(*Dinamina*, January 16, 1959, P. 7)

විශ්ව විද්‍යාල අධ්‍යාපනයට
ඉංගිරිසියන් ඕනෑ

පිරිවෙන් විශ්ව විද්‍යාල
ගැන ආචාර්ය ආනන්ද
ගුරුගේ ලියූ ලිපියක්
රියේ පළවිය. එහි දෙවැනි
කොටස අද පළවේ.

ආචාර්ය
ආනන්ද
ගුරුගේ
විසිනි

ඒ පිරිවෙන් මගින්
කුරෙඳුගේ පොතපත
පමණක් උගැන්වීම ඇති
කියන සමහරු ළඟා යෙහිදී
ශිෂ්‍යයාගේ විචාර බුද්ධිය වර්
ධනය නොකරන බව කියති.
පළමුකොටම මෙවැනි විවේච
නය කරනුයේ වත්තේ පිරි
වෙන් වල ඇතැයි සිතන
අධ්‍යාපන ක්‍රමය ඕස, ලංකා
වට ආවේණික වූ පිරිවෙන්
අධ්‍යාපන ක්‍රමය නොවන බව
පැහැදිලි කළ යුතුය. විත්තාත්‍ය
යන් අනුගමනය කළ අධ්‍යා
පන ප්‍රතිපත්තිය නිසා වත්
මන් පිරිවෙන් හික්ෂූන් ගේ
අධ්‍යාපනය සඳහා වෙන්වූණු
යෙහෙන බවට පත්විය. සමා
යෙහි විවිධ සේවා සඳහා අ
ශ්‍ය ගිහියන්ට ප්‍රහුණු කිරීම
ඒ විද්‍යාලයනට පැවැරිණි.
හෙයින් පිරිවෙන් අධ්‍යාපන
ප්‍රාථමිය පවුවිය. හික්ෂූන්
න්නේ ගේ අවශ්‍යතා සපු
රීම සඳහා වර්තමාන වූ විෂය
ල්පය පමණක් පිරිවෙන්
ඒ ඉගැන්වීණි. එසේ ම පි රි
වෙනට උසස් අධ්‍යාපන ආය
තනයක් ලෙස හැඩ ගැසීමට
ඉඩක් නොණිති විය.

පොතට එහල් වුණා

ප්‍රාථමික අධ්‍යාපනයක් වත්
නිස් ලෙස නොලත් හික්ෂූන්
ට ආගමික පොතපත කියවීම්
ට තරම් දැනුමක් ලබා දීමට
ක්‍රම යකක් කිරීම එතරම් පහ
සු නොමිය. අවුරුදු හත අවක්
හේ ඕයෙහි සිට

සැලසුණු හෙයින් පොත්පත්
හා ගුරුවරුන් හිඟවීම කි සි
සේත් පුදුමයට කරුණක්
නොවේ. මේ නිසා නව විශ්ව
විද්‍යාලය දෙකට මුහුණ පෑවෙ
ඇත්තේ අතිශයින් දුෂ්කර
වූ ප්‍රශ්නයකටය. සිංහලෙන්
පොතපත නැතිවීම නිසා හෝ
ගුරුවරුන් හිඟවීම නිසා හෝ
අධ්‍යාපන තත්වයක් බිඳක්
වත් පහත් නැළ නොගැකිය.
එය අදුර දර්ශී ක්‍රියාමාර්ගයක්
වන හෙයිනි. ඉංග්‍රීසියෙන් උපා
ධිය ලබන තැනැත්තා හේත්
සිංහලෙන් එයම ලබන තැ
නැත්තා හේත් දැනුම අතර
අඟ මිල් රේණුවක් වත් පර
තරයක් නැතිකන් සිංහල
අධ්‍යාපන ක්‍රමයෙට ඉඟ වදිනු
යේ මරු පහරකි. සිංහල උපා
ධි ධරයා පහත් තත්වයේ
සෙනෙකැයි හැඟී යන්නට
ඉඩදී මං සැලැස් වූවහොත්

එය නව විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයන් ගි
යිගුණුවට බාධාවක් වන්නේ
ය.

එහෙයිනි, විදෙහාදය විශ්ව
විද්‍යාලය මගින් ඉංග්‍රීසි භාෂාව
අනිවාර්ය දෙවැනි භාෂාව ලෙ
ස ශිෂ්‍යයන්ට උගැන්වීමට
තීරණය කොට ඇත්තේ. සිං
හලයෙන් අධ්‍යාපනය ලබන්
නවුන්ගේ යහපත සඳහා
සකස් වුණු ආයතනයක්
බැවින් ඊට ඇතුල්වීම සඳහා
ඉංග්‍රීසි දැනුමක් බලාපොරොත්
තු වනු නොලැබේ. එහෙත්
විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයට ඇතුල් වූ
ශිෂ්‍යයන්ට හෝඩියේ සිට ම
ඉංග්‍රීසි භාෂාව සුළු කලකින්
උගන්වා, ඒ ඒ විෂය පිළිබඳ
පොතපත කියවා තේරුම්
ගැනීමට හැකියාව ලබාදීමට
විශේෂයෙන් ප්‍රහුණු කරන
ලද ගුරු මණ්ඩලයක් පත්
කොට ඇත්තේය.

වෙන භාෂාවනුත්

විදෙහාදය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය
අනුගමනය කරන මේභාෂා
ප්‍රතිපත්තිය ඉංග්‍රීසියට ගැනි
කම් දැක්වීමක් ලෙස සමහ
රුන් සිතන බව පෙනේ. මෙ
ය්‍රීසා එකක් කිව යුතුය. ඉං
ග්‍රීසිය දෙවැනි භාෂාව ලෙස
හෝරා ගනුලැබීමේ එය උගා
නීමට ලංකාවෙහි සැම පහසු

කමක් ම ඇති හෙයිනි. අව
කාශ ලැබුණු වහාම අනිවාර්
ය දෙවැනි භාෂාව ලෙස දැඩි
යන්, ප්‍රංශ,ජර්මන් යන භාෂා
උගැන්වීමට විදෙහාදය විශ්ව
විද්‍යාලය සූදානම් ව සිටී. මෙ
වැනි ලෝක භාෂාවක් උගැන්
නේ නැතුව අප උපාධිධාරී
කව සිය දැනුම පළල් කොට
ගැනීමට හෝ එය ලොවට පළ
කිරීමට හෝ ඉඩක් නොලැ
බෙන්නේය.

නව මුද්‍රණ ක්‍රමයක්

මෙසේ දෙවැනි භාෂාවක්
උගන්වන අතරම සිංහල
පොතපත සූලබ කිරීමෙද කට
යුතු සැලසෙන්නේය. දැනට
පේරාදෙණියේ තිබූ විශ්ව විද්‍යා
ලයෙහි ඉතා සාර්ථක ලෙස
අත්හදා බලා ගෙන යන
ලබන මුද්‍රණ ක්‍රමයක් අනුගම
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හා ප්‍රහුණුව "ලෝක විශ්ව
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ගැමියා ණය

වැඩි ප්‍රමාණය ණය වී තිබෙන්
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ගැනියෙන් හොඳියා වැරි බිරින

(*Dinamina*, January 1, 1959, p. 16)

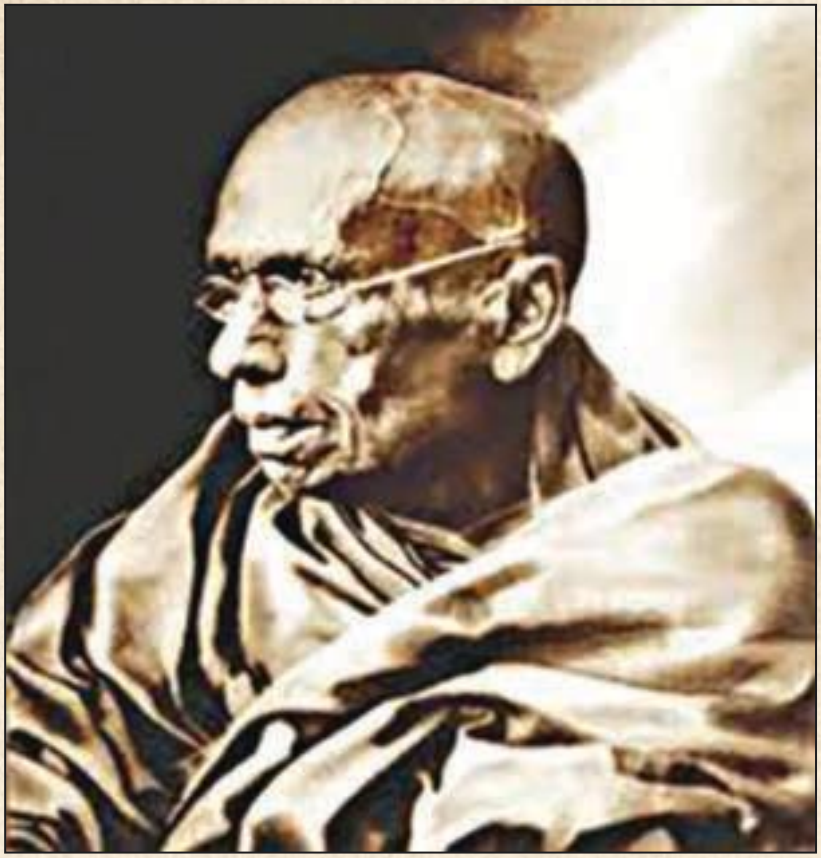
The Entrance Examination for the 1959 university intake was conducted in November 1958. The list of successful candidates was published in the newspaper.

Although these institutions were identified as “Sinhala Universities” within the context of the National Movement and the promotion of native languages (*Swabhasha)*, these reports indicate the importance of the English language.



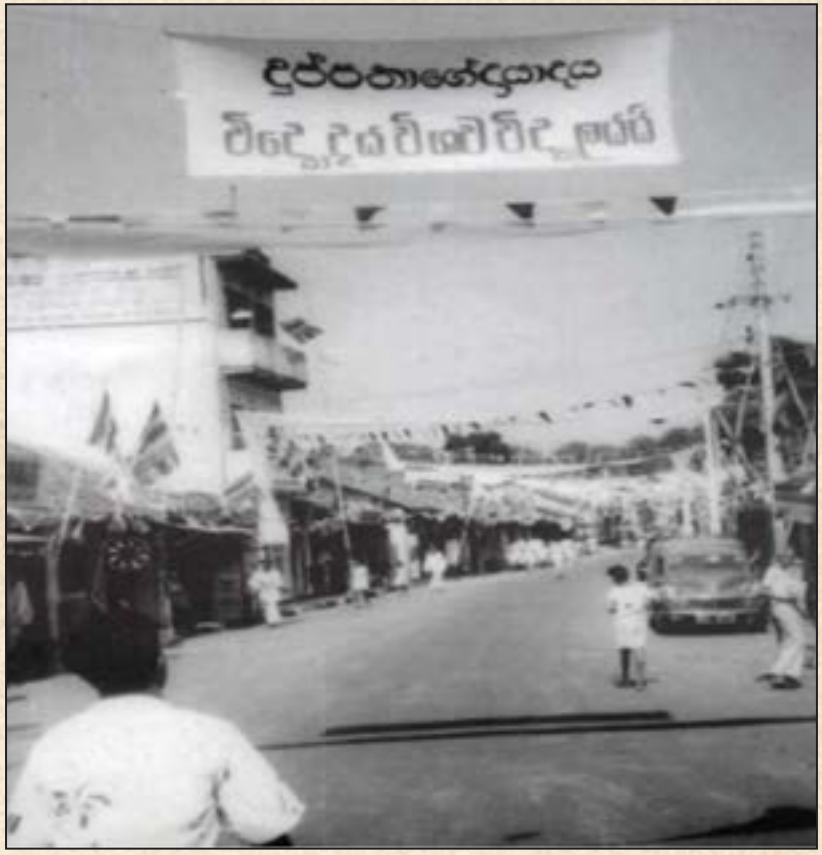
(*Dinamina*, February 18, 1959)

A special supplement, published in *Dinamina* on Wednesday, 18 February, commemorating the ceremonial inauguration of Vidyodaya University.



(*Dinamina*, February 18, 1959, p. 8)

In addition to the special supplement issued for the inauguration of Vidyodaya University, the main newspaper featured a photograph of the Most Venerable Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Nayaka Thero.



(Ariyaratne, 2009, p. 51)

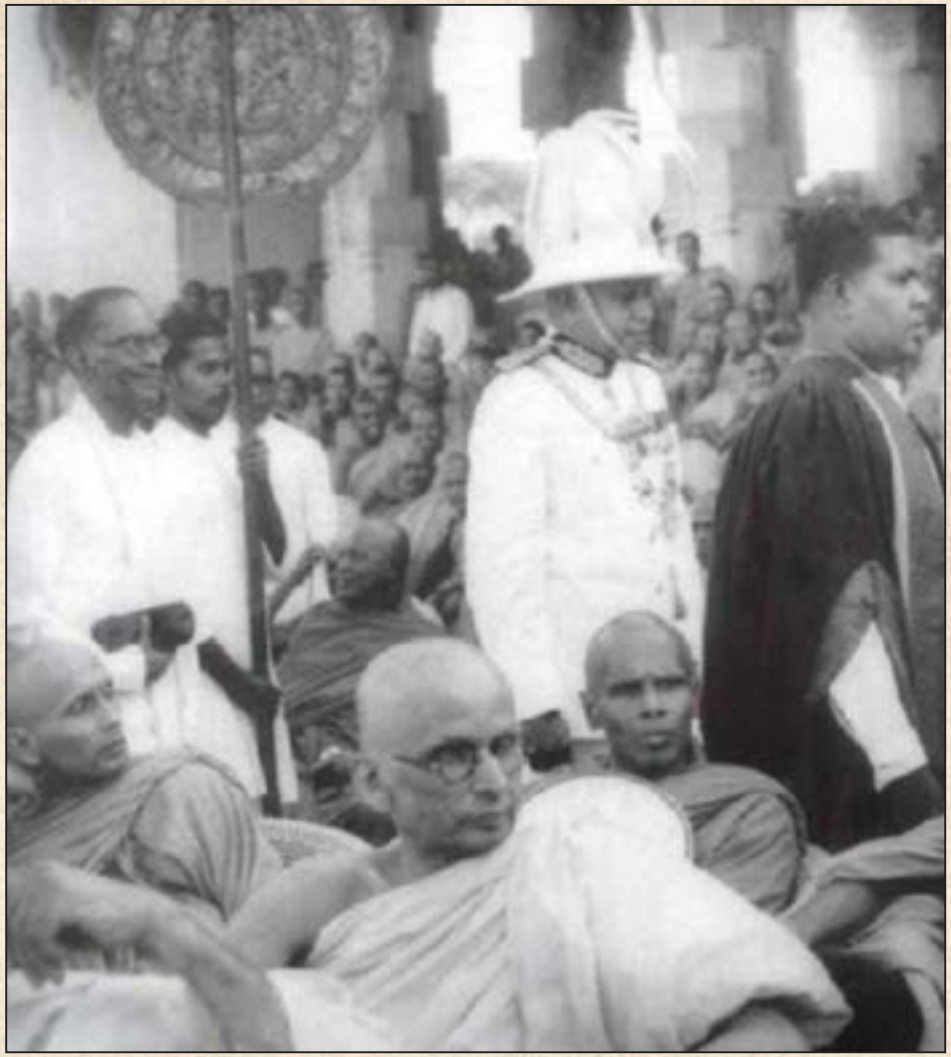
The elevation of Vidyodaya Pirivena and Vidyalankara Pirivena to university status was widely regarded as the establishment of "Sinhala Universities" within the broader *Swabhasha* (Native Language) movement. At the same time, this banner may reflect that the university status of these pirivenas is intended to benefit the marginlised poor.

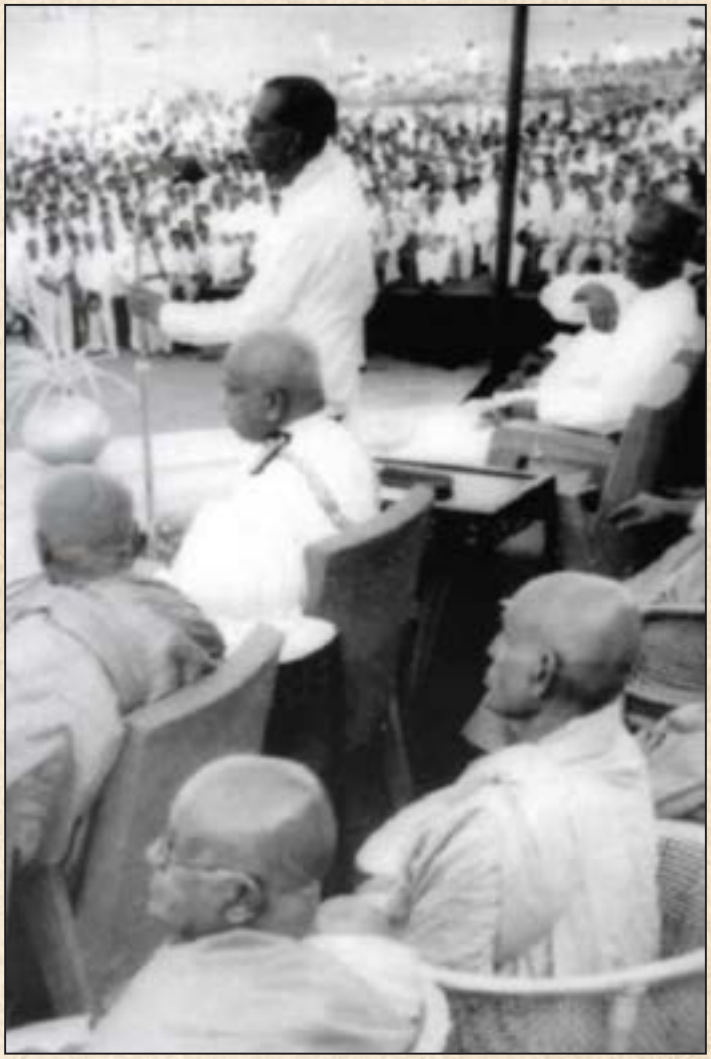
Ceremonial Inauguration of Vidyodaya University



(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

A photograph taken at Independence Square on 18 February 1959 during the ceremonial inauguration of Vidyodaya University.





(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

This refers to a collection of photographs taken on 18 February 1959 at Independence Square during the ceremonial inauguration of Vidyodaya University.



(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

This photograph captures the historic occasion on November 23, 1961, when Vidyodaya University was relocated to the Gangodawila premises in Nugegoda. From 1959 until that date, Vidyodaya University had been situated in Maligakanda, Maradana. The image depicts Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike lighting the traditional oil lamp, accompanied by the Most Venerable Welivitiye Sorata Nayaka Thero, Governor-General Oliver Goonetilleke, and Mr. C.W.W. Kannangara.

Convocation Ceremonies



(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

A scene from the first Convocation Ceremony, 1960



අද පැවැත්වෙන විද්‍යොදය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ දෙවැනි උපාධි ප්‍රදානෝත්සවයේ විධිවිධාන නිසි පරිදි සංවිධානයවී ඇද්දැයි පරීක්ෂා කර බැලීම සඳහා ආදර්ශ උත්සවයක් ඊයේ ගංගොඩවිල පිහිටි අභිනව ගොඩනැගිලිවලදී අග්‍රාණ්ඩුකාර තුමාගේ ප්‍රධානත්වයෙන් සිදු කරන ලදි. විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයාධිපති වැලිවිටියේ සෝරත නාහිමි සහ ලේඛකාධිකාරී බී. ජේ. කුමාරගේ නිවසදී උපාධිය ප්‍රදානය කරනු ලබන බී. ඩබ්ලිව්. ඩබ්ලිව්. කන්නන්ගර යන මහත්වරුද මෙහි වෙති.

(*Dinamina*, November 22, 1961, p. 9)





(*Dinamina*, November 23, 1961, p.9)

The second Convocation Ceremony, held on November 22, 1961

The upper photograph depicts the Buddhist monks receiving their degrees. The lower photograph captures the moment when the Doctor of Letters (D.Litt.) degree was conferred upon C.W.W. Kannangara.



‘මිනිසා පරමාණු බලය විනාශයට යොදගෙන’

(*Dinamina*,
November 23, 1961, p. 8)

During the 1961 Convocation, the Doctor of Letters degree was conferred upon the then Burmese Ambassador to Ceylon, Dr. Htin Aung.





විදුදය උපාධි උළෙල සරුයි

(*Davasa*
March 20, 1969, p. 10)

This section includes a report and photographic documentation of the 1969 Convocation Ceremony held at the Bandaranayake Hall of the University of Vidyodaya. The event was attended by the then Vice-Chancellor, Ven. Dr. Walpola Rahula Thero, and His Excellency William Gopallawa.



(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

The Convocation held at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH), Colombo, on 29 April 1983 marked an important milestone in the University's ceremonial history, as it was the inaugural use of this venue for the event. The photographic record of the ceremony includes Professor Wimal G. Balagalle, a distinguished pioneer of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.





(Sunday Observer, June 15, 1987, p. 10)

This photograph was taken at the Convocation held at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall in 1987. The image captures the University's first female Chancellor, Dr. Wimala de Silva, alongside the then Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Karunasena Kodituwakku, marking a significant moment in the institution's history.



කොළඹ ඉණිමාථනායක සම්මන්ත්‍රණ ශාලාවේදී පැවැති ශ්‍රී ජයවර්ධනපුර විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ උපාධි ප්‍රදානෝත්සව යේදී කුලපතිනි විමලා ද සිල්වා මහත්මිය විසින් අධ්‍යාපන හා

උසස් අධ්‍යාපන ඇමැති ලලිත් අතුලත්මුදලි මහතාට 'සාහිත්‍ය ශූරී' සම්මාන උපාධිය පිරිනමූ අවස්ථාව.

(ඡායාරූපය - ලූ. එන්. පෙරේරා)

ශ්‍රී ජයවර්ධනපුර විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ උපාධි ප්‍රදානෝත්සවය කොළඹ, ඉණිමාථනායක සම්මන්ත්‍රණ ශාලාවේදී පැවැත් විණි. එහිදී කුලපතිනි විමලා ද සිල්වා මහත්මිය විසින්

දේශමාන්‍ය නෙවිල් කනකරත්න මහතාට 'සාහිත්‍ය ශූරී' සම්මාන උපාධිය පිරිනමූ අවස්ථාව.

(ඡායාරූපය - ලූ. එන්. පෙරේරා)

(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

During the November 1990 Convocation, Chancellor Dr. Wimala de Silva conferred Doctor of Letters degrees upon Lalith Athulathmudali and Deshamanya Neville Kanakaratne.





(Photograph Collection: Examinations Branch, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

These two photographs document the occasion held on 11 December 1998. In the second photograph, Professor Ratna Wijetunga and Professor Walter Marasinghe appear together, representing a memorable moment of the ceremony.



This image from the 48th Convocation held in 2022 concludes the pictorial series on graduation ceremonies. At the time, the Most Venerable Dr. Ittapana Dhammalankara Thero served as Chancellor, Professor Sudantha Liyanage as Vice-Chancellor, and Professor Shirantha Heenkenda as the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Notably, this Convocation marked the first occasion where academic caps (headwear) were introduced for the academic staff to be worn with their convocation gowns.



The Chancellor, Most Venerable Dr. Ittapana Dhammalankara Thero, affixing his signature to the register of graduates.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



A photograph of the "Vidudaya Detention Camp" (*Vidudaya Sira Kandawura*) established on the university premises during the 1971 insurrection.



A photograph showing "Detention Camp" at the Bandaranayake Hall of the university.



A photograph showing detainees held at the Bandaranayake Hall of the university (commonly known as "Basha") in 1971. The hall is visible in the background.

(Personal Photograph Collection: Ranjith Iddamalgoda)



A photograph from the funeral procession of Kithsiri Mewan Ranawake, a student of the Faculty of Applied Sciences of the University, who was killed during the 1987 May Day rally.

Despite the ban imposed on the May Day celebrations by the J.R. Jayewardene administration, the Inter-University Students' Federation (IUSF) supported the "Motherland Protection Movement" (*Mavbima Surakime Vyaparaya*) in their march. A police crackdown ensued, resulting in the death of this student.

(*Sunday Mirror;* https://www.ft.lk/Columnists/sri-lankas-may-day-87-claimed-two-lives/4-413557, May 01, 2015)



An image capturing a student demonstration.



This depicts a protest against the 1982 "White Paper" *(Dhawala Pathrika)* on proposed education reforms introduced by the government of that era.

(Personal Photograph Collection: Ranjith Iddamalgoda)



A record of the conflicts within the student community that led to the deaths of two students: Samantha Vithanage, (November 2, 2002), and Sampath Wimalathissa Bandara, (June 5, 2004).

(Source: *https://www.st.lk/columnist/campus/4321* (retrieved on May 20, 2024)

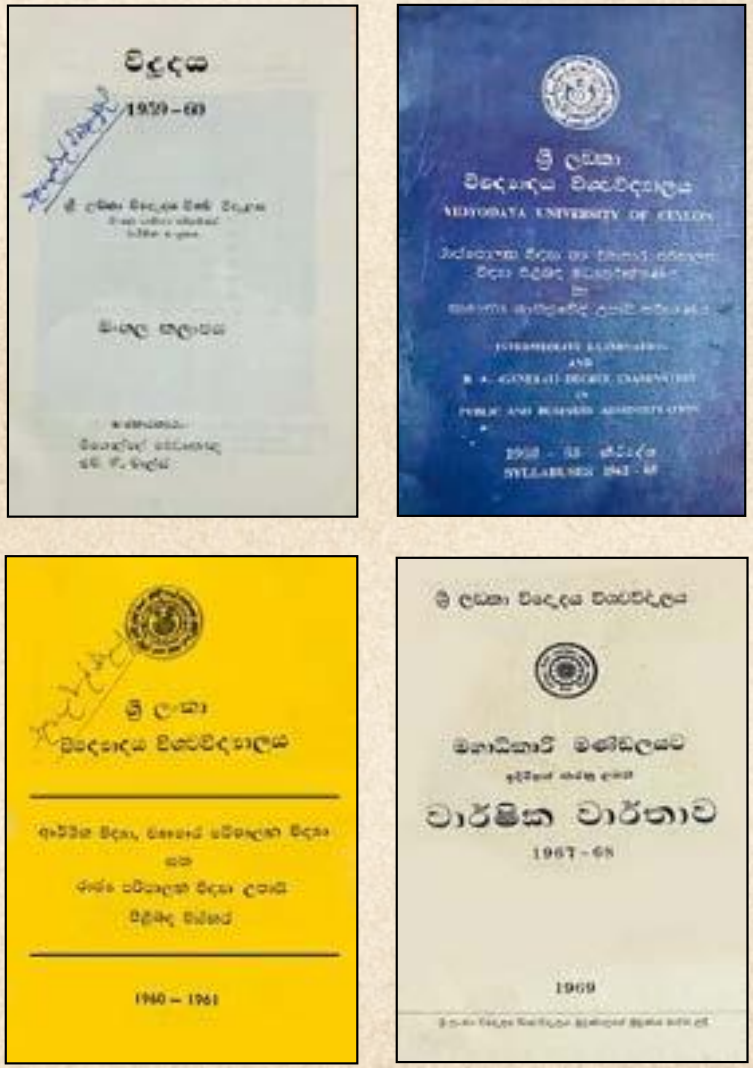
Publications, Research Conferences, Arts and Cultural Activities

Publications



A photograph depicting some academic staff members of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences taking part in a protest organized by the Federation of University Teachers' Associations (UTA) in 2004, in opposition to the university administration.

(Personal Photograph Collection: Ranjith Iddamalgoda)



(Personal Photograph Collection: Wimal G. Balagalle)



A collection of images of scholarly publications

(Personal Photograph Collection: Wimal G. Balagalle)



(*Dinamina*, November 04, 1961, p.9)

A discussion held regarding the compilation of the Comprehensive Pāli Dictionary, featuring Professor L.L. Hammerich from Denmark, Most Venerable Welivitiye Sorata Nayaka Thero, and some other distinguished scholars.

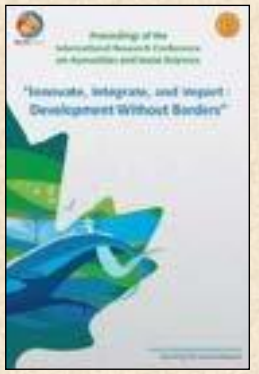
Research and Conferences

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences reached a significant milestone in 2012 by hosting its inaugural International Research Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS). While the conference was held annually until 2016, a decision was subsequently made to transition to a biennial format. Below is a collection of images featuring the covers of the Conference Proceedings (Abstract Volumes) published over the years.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



IRCHSS 2012



IRCHSS 2014



IRCHSS 2015



IRCHSS 2016



IRCHSS 2018



IRCHSS 2021





IRCHSS 2012: The first conference was chaired by Professor Sunethra Thennakoon, with Professor Chamalie Nahallage serving as Secretary. The keynote address was delivered by Professor Emeritus Gunnar Olsson from the Department of Human Geography, Uppsala University, Sweden.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



IRCHSS 2013: The second conference was chaired by Dr. Shantha Wijesinghe, with Professor Vishaka Suriyabandara serving as Secretary. The keynote speaker was Professor Emeritus Tony Binns (Ron Lister Chair of Geography) from the University of Otago, New Zealand.





IRCHSS 2014: The third conference was chaired by Professor Shirantha Heenkenda, with Professor Lalith Ananda as Secretary. The keynote speaker was the renowned archaeologist Dr. Shiran Deraniyagala, while His Excellency Nobuhito Hobo, the Ambassador of Japan to Sri Lanka, attended as the Chief Guest.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)

IRCHSS 2015: The fourth conference was chaired by Professor Chamalie Nahallage, with Professor Ven. Medagampitiye Wijithadhamma Thero serving as Secretary. The keynote address was delivered by Professor Ronald S. Laura from the University of Newcastle, Australia.

IRCHSS 2016: The fifth conference was chaired by Professor Chitra Jayathilake, with Dr. Senani Harischandra as Secretary. The keynote speakers were Professor David Amigoni (Keele University, UK) and Professor Scott McCracken (Queen Mary University of London, UK).









(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)









IRCHSS 2018: The sixth conference was chaired by Professor B.W.R. Damayanthi, with Dr. Nelum Kanthilatha serving as Secretary. The keynote speaker was Professor Mike Baynham from the University of Leeds, UK.

IRCHSS 2021: The seventh International Research Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences, organized by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, was held in 2021. The conference was chaired by Dr. Sujeewa Hettiarachchi, with Dr. Ajanta Kalyanaratne serving as Secretary. Her Excellency Alaina B. Teplitz, the United States Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives, participated as the Chief Guest of the event.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)

Arts and Cultural Activities

Over the past six decades, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences has organized a vast number of cultural and artistic programmes. For this pictorial chapter, only a selected few could be included.



A photograph of the sinhala literary association, 1960



Sakkaya Ditthi Drama (1967): A group photograph from the 1967 production of the drama *Sakkaya Ditthi*. Featured in the photograph are Vice-Chancellor Ven. Dr. Walpola Rahula Thero, Professor M.H. Goonatilleka, Professor A.V. Suraweera, Pandit Amaradeva, and the Drama Council (*natya parshadaya*) officials including P.K. Ariyaratne, Preethi S. Mathangaveera, Buddhadasa Galappatti, Upali Lakshman Rajakaruna, Wijerathne Pathiraja, and Thalatha Abeysinghe.

(Personal Photograph Collection: Buddhadasa Galappatti)

Among the various art festivals organized by the Faculty, the *Nala Mudu Suwanda* festival holds special significance. It has been instrumental in introducing talented vocalists, composers, and lyricists to the nation. Based on a concept by Professor Sunil Ariyaratne, the inaugural *Nala Mudu Suwanda* was held in 1995.



(Personal Photograph Collection: Iman Perera)

The 1996 *Nala Mudu Suwanda* contest featured Iman Perera, who was honoured with the Amaradeva Award.



(Personal Photograph Collection: Sujeeva Sebastian Pereira)

Nala Mudu Suwanda 1997: A scene from the 1997 *Nala Mudu Suwanda* concert, where finalists performed alongside renowned guest artists Nanda Malini, Sunil Edirisinghe, and Neela Wickramasinghe.



(Personal Photograph Collection: Sujeeva Sebastian Pereira)

A group photograph of the winners of the 1996 *Nala Mudu Suwanda* contest. The Best Male Singer award was presented to Chamath Nirosh, while Sureka Nirmani received the Best Female Singer title. Thilana Malalasekera was recognized for lyrics, Samarkoon Pathiraja for poetry, and Anil Perera for short stories.



(Personal Photograph Collection: Sujeeva Sebastian Pereira)

A photograph featuring a group of renowned artistes who participated as guests in a *Nala Mudu Suwanda* concert.



(Personal Photograph Collection: Iman Perera)

This photograph captures the occasion where Professor Sanath Nandasiri and his wife (Malkanthi Nandasiri) were welcomed to the *Nala Mudu Suwanda* festival.

The *Nala Mudu Suwanda* concert series concluded in 2007. Subsequently, the Faculty organized the *Ranrasu* Art Festival as the next major competitive performing arts event. The inaugural *Ranrasu* festival was held in 2017. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the festival could not be held in its traditional format during 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022. However, certain competitions were successfully conducted via online platforms. The following collection features photographs from various *Ranrasu* festivals.





(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



Special honorary award was presented by the faculty to the legendary dancer Vajira Chitrasena during the 2014 *Ranrasu* festival.



A group vocal performance by the academic staff members of the faculty during the 2017 *Ranrasu* festival.

Below is a collection of photographs from *Sandeshawali*, an original creative production of the faculty in its recent history. Created to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the university, this poetic drama was written and directed by Dr. Hansamala Ritigahapola, drawing inspiration from the *Sandesha* (Messenger) poetry of the Kotte period.



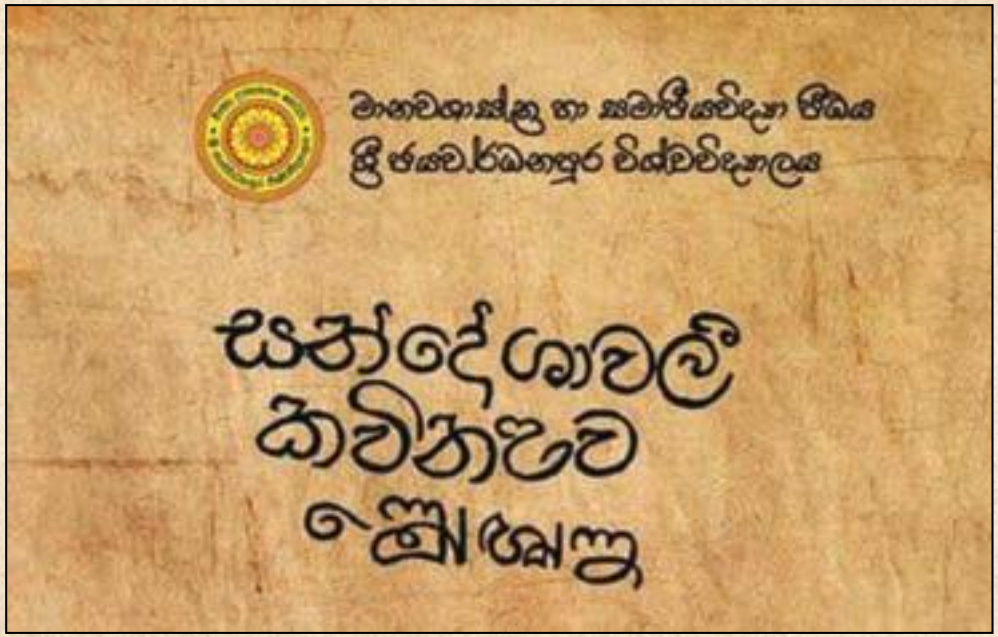




(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)







The unique typography was used for the *Sandeshawali* production, and its invitation cards were designed by Professor Karunasena Hettiarachchi. The lettering was meticulously crafted following a study of historical stone inscriptions (epigraphy) from the Kotte era.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



A group photograph of the contributors to *Sandeshawali*

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)





Sandeshawali received the Inventions and Innovations Trophy from the Innovation, Invention and Venture Creation Council (IIVCC) of the university in 2019. The photograph shows the drama's director, Dr. Hansamala Ritigahapola, and Dr. Himalika Ranaweera accepting the award.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)

Vidyodaya Literary Awards

Under the pioneering leadership of Professor Sunil Ariyaratne, the Vidyodaya Literary Awards, a national event organized by the faculty, was held for the first time in the year 2000.



This photograph features some members of the organizing committee for the Vidyodaya Literary Awards 2000, including Professor Tissa Kariyawasam and Professor Dhammika Ganganath Disanayaka.

(Personal Photograph Collection, Hansamala Ritigahapola)

This section lists the distinguished winners of the Vidyodaya Literary Awards across some years.



Winners of the 2011 Vidyodaya Literary Awards

Best Short Story Collection of the Year (Joint Winners): * Nissanka Wijemanna (*Muva Meru Salaman*)

Susantha Mahaulpatha (*Sudu Malvila*)

Best Collection of Newspaper Columns of the Year (Joint Winners):

Ariyananda Dombagahawatta (*Eelame Kathawa*)

Prabhaswara (*Pannaraya*)

Best Novel of the Year: Sumitra Rahubadda (*Kandak Se Ma)*

Best Poetry Collection of the Year: Nandana Weerasinghe (*Reya Kara Gamana*)

Best Lyrics Collection of the Year: Ven. Pallegama Hemarathana Thero (*Seethala Gangule Wagei*)



Winners of the 2012 Vidyodaya Literary Awards

Best Short Story Collection of the Year: Prabath Jayasinghe (*Wayamba Diga Wesiyekuge Dina Satahan*)

Best Collection of Newspaper Columns of the Year (Joint Winners):

Indrani Rathnasekara (*Vishwa Sahithyaye Spagnna Pilibimbuva*)

Wimalanath Weeraratne (*Wimalage Kolama)*

Best Novel of the Year: Jayathilaka Kammellaweera (*Chumbana Kanda*)

Best Poetry Collection of the Year: Ratna Sri Wijesinghe (*Sandhya Theerthaya*)

Best Lyrics Collection of the Year: Dharmasiri Gamage (*Kalak Evemen Perum Pura)*

(Personal Photograph Collection: Hansamala Ritigahapola)



Winners of the 2013 Vidyodaya Literary Awards

Best Short Story Collection of the Year: Liyanage Amarakeerthi (*Ara Mihiri Seenu Nadaya*)

Best Collection of Newspaper Columns of the Year (Joint Winners):

Nalaka Gunawardene (*Sivumansala Kolugetaya*)

Buddhadasa Galappatti (*Sahurda Satahan*)

Best Novel of the Year: Mahinda Prasad Masimbula (*Senkottan*)

Best Poetry Collection of the Year: Mahinda Prasad Masimbula (*Ehi Piyan Eherila)*

Best Lyrics Collection of the Year: Ratna Sri Wijesinghe (*Nikini Wessa*)

(Personal Photograph Collection: Hansamala Ritigahapola)



Winners of the 2019 Vidyodaya Literary Awards

Best Short Story Collection of the Year: Prabath Jayasinghe (*Swarnakaya*)

Best Collection of Newspaper Columns of the Year: Sundara Nihathamani de Mel (*Manige Theeruwa*)

Best Novel of the Year: Virajini Thennakoon (*Makaranandaya*)

Best Poetry Collection of the Year: Timran Keerthi (*Pemvathiyagen Venvunu Lulek Harei Elakata)*

Best Lyrics Collection of the Year: Nilar N. Cassim (*Sarasa Vasanthaya)*

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



Winners of the 2020 Vidyodaya Literary Awards

Best Short Story Collection of the Year: Eric Ilayapparachchi (*Vishramika Pemvathiya)*

Best Collection of Newspaper Columns of the Year (Joint Winners):

Anurasiri Hettige (*Kolamba Katha*)

Yasawardhana Rodrigo (*Yashage Wakkiya*)

Best Novel of the Year: Eric Ilayapparachchi (*Petha*)

Best Poetry Collection of the Year: Ajith Tilakasena (*Mona Tharam Awulakda*)



Winners of the 2022 Vidyodaya Literary Awards

Best Collection of Newspaper Columns of the Year: Nayanasena Wanninayake (*Wannige Kolama*): Award accepted by the publisher on behalf of the author

Best Short Story Collection of the Year: Eric Ilayapparachchi (*Pappochcharanaya*)

Best Novel of the Year: Chandrarathna Bandara (*Premanishangsa*)

Best Lyrics Collection of the Year: Wasantha Kumara Kobawaka (*Pama Wee Pipunu Mal Suwandai)*

Best Academic/Scholarly Work of the Year: Saman Panapitiya (*Sinhala Jana Gayana Shaili*)

Best Poetry Collection of the Year: Sandaresi Sudusinghe (*Gini Wedunu Piyapath*)

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)

The Rajagala Archaeological Project

The Rajagala Archaeological Project holds an eminent position among the academic and research activities of the faculty. Given below are some photographs from the site.







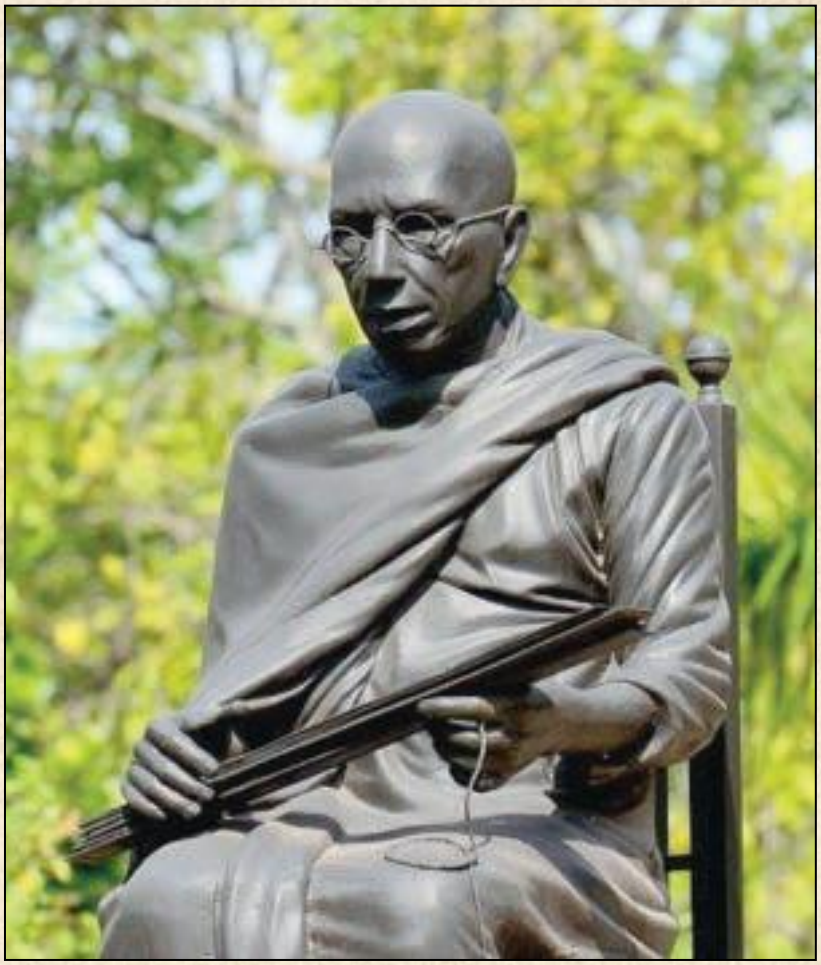
Active since 2012 under a formal agreement between the University of Sri Jayewardenepura and the Department of Archaeology, the Rajagala Archaeological Project is a flagship initiative of the faculty. It is of exceptional historical importance due to the valuable archaeological remains and artifacts unearthed through its ongoing excavations. The Department of History and Archaeology leads the project.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)

Infrastructure : Main Buildings and Statues of the Faculty



In 1962, a statue of the Most Venerable Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero was erected in front of the Sumangala Mansion (*Sumangala Mandiraya*). This photograph captures the unveiling ceremony, attended by the then Prime Minister, Sirima Bandaranaike, and the Governor-General, William Gopallawa, among other dignitaries.

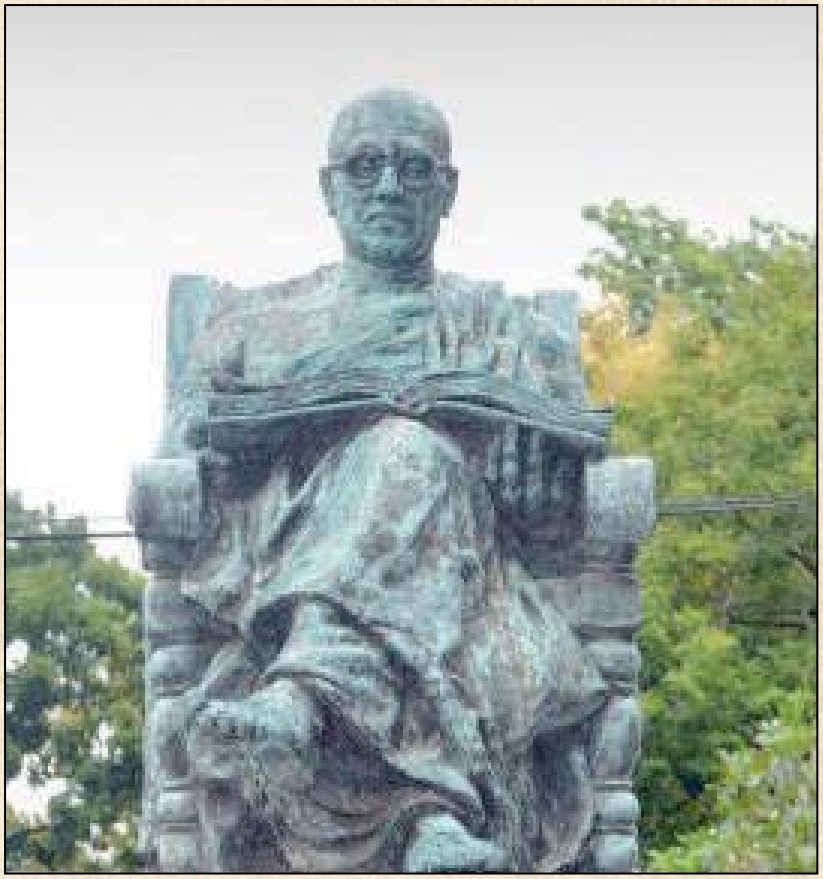


The statue of Most Venerable Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero, originally established in 1962 in front of the Sri Sumangala Mansion, as it appears in 2022.

(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)



The statue of the Most Venerable Welivitiye Sorata Thero, situated to the side of the front of the Sri Sumangala Mansion.



The statue of Venerable Sorata Thero was erected through a generous donation by Professor Emeritus Sunil Ariyaratne. Sculpted by Professor Sarath Chandrajeewa, the commemorative plaque of the statue was unveiled on July 23, 2013.

(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)





Vidyodaya Pirivena



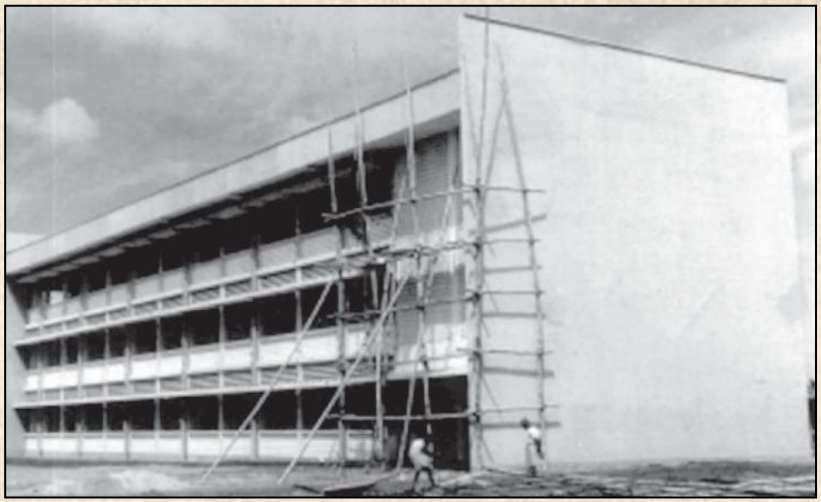
The statue of Venerable Sorata Thero sculpted by Professor Sarath Chandrajeewa, and unveiled on July 23, 2013.



Sri Sumangala Mansion and the adjoining Gñaneshwara Hall under construction.

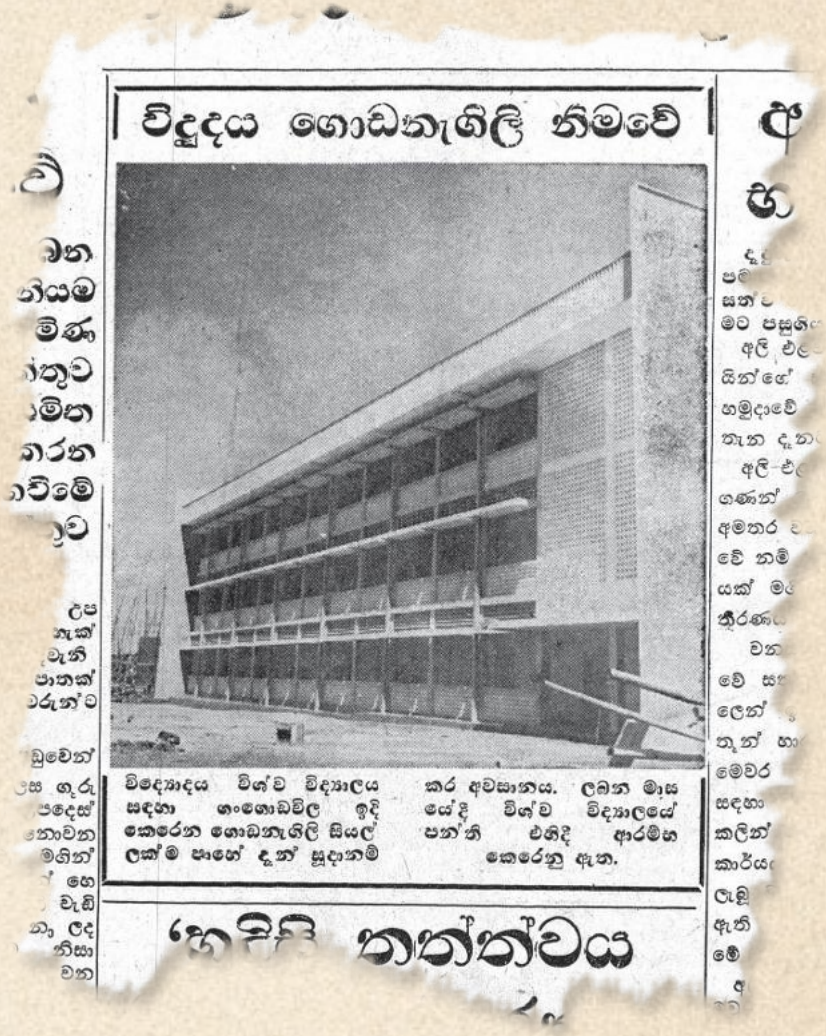
(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)





The commencement of the construction of buildings on the university premises at Gangodawila in 1961.

(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)



විදුදය ගොඩනැගිලි නිමවේ

විද්‍යෝදය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය සඳහා ගංගොඩවිල ඉදි කෙරෙන ගොඩනැගිලි සියල් ලක්ම භාරභේ දැන් සූදානම් කර අවසානය. ලබන මාස යේදී විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ පන්ති එහිදී ආරම්භ කෙරෙනු ඇත.

(*Dinamina*, October 20, 1961, p. 10)

This report announces the completion of the newly constructed buildings at the Gangodawila site for Vidyodaya University. It further states that these facilities are ready to be officially handed over for student use.



ගංගොඩමිල විද්‍යෝදය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ අලුතින් ගොඩනගා ඇති ශ්‍රී සුමංගල පුස්තකාලයට ඊයේ උදේ සුබ මොහොතින් පොත් තැන්පත් කරන ලදී. අලුත් පුස්තකාලයට මුලින්ම පොත් තැන්පත් කළ විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයාධිපති වැලිමිටියේ අසාරත නාහිමියෝ (වමේ) පුස්තකාලයාධිපති මේර ගොඩ අමරමෝලි නා හිමියන් ද, ආමාර්ය ආකාන්ද ගුරුගේ සහ ලේඛකාධිකාරී ඩී. ජේ. කුමාරගේ මහනාද සමඟ පොත් බලති.

Following the completion of Sri Sumangala Mansion, which functioned as the main building of Vidyodaya University in 1961, this photograph captures the auspicious occasion when the first collection of books was placed, marking the establishment of the university library.



A photograph showing the original structure and exterior of Sri Sumangala Mansion during its formative years

(Photograph Collection: Main Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)



A contemporary photograph of the Sri Sumangala Mansion, highlighting its current state and architectural preservation. (Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



A historical view of the Main Entrance of the University as it appeared in its early years.



This photograph was taken during the official opening of the renovated and reconstructed Main University Entrance in 2015.



A comparative view of the faculty buildings and the university landscape as seen in 1970 and 2013.

(Source: *Facebook Page*, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

Sri Wimaladhamma Mansion, the newly constructed building of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, was officially declared open on 16 December 2022.



Featured in this photograph are the Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Ven. Dr. Ittapane Dhammalankara Thero; the Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC) an alumnus of the Faculty, Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunge; Vice-Chancellor Professor Sudantha Liyanage; and the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Shirantha Heenkenda.

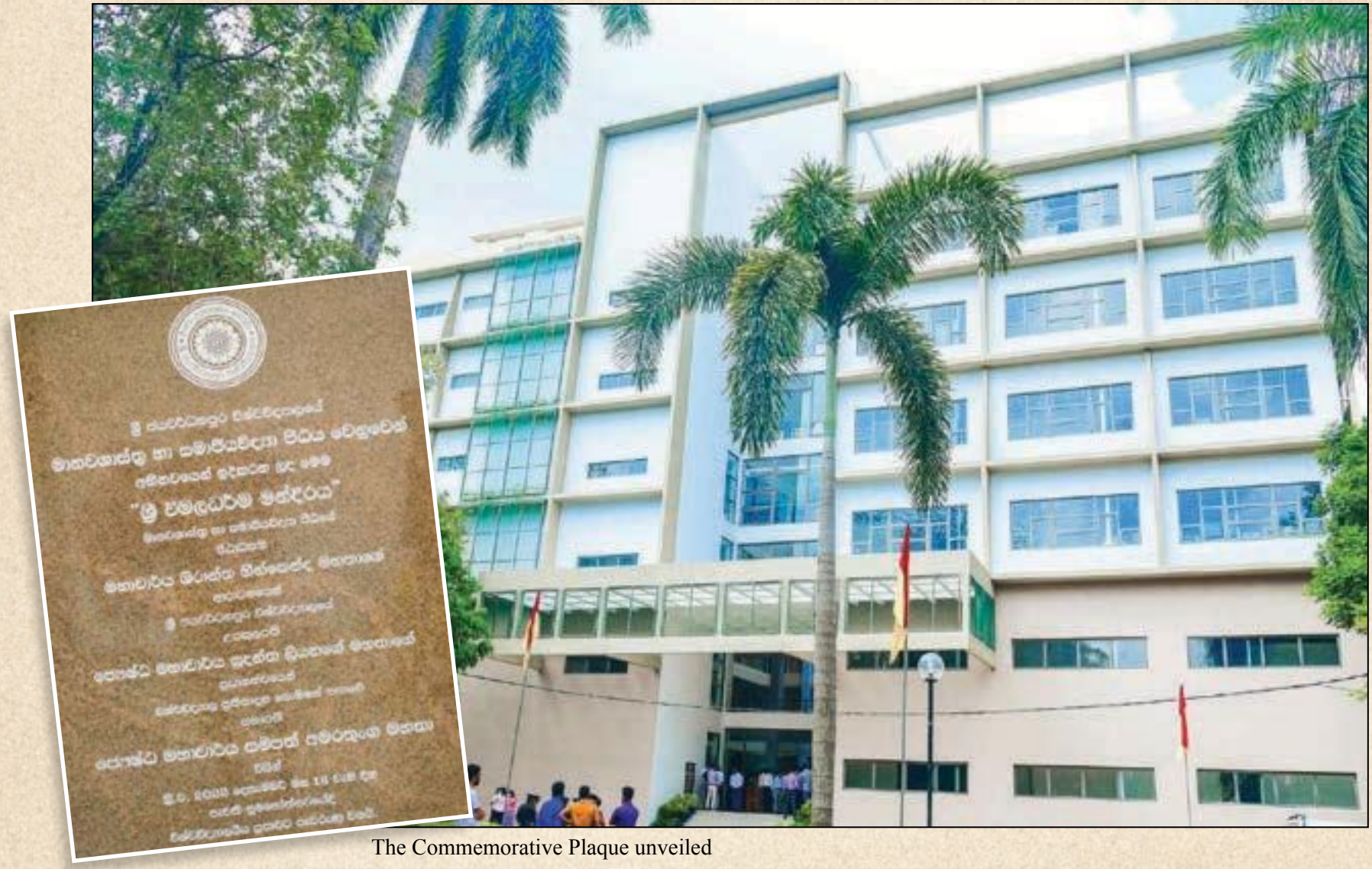
(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)



A group of distinguished guests, including alumnus Ranjith Iddamalgoda, participating in the ceremonial lighting of the traditional oil lamp.



Samantha Geeganage, then Assistant Registrar of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, delivering the vote of thanks at the ceremony.



The Commemorative Plaque unveiled

The photograph captures the moment the commemorative plaque was officially unveiled to mark the inauguration of the new building.

(Source: *www.sjp.ac.lk*)

Sports and Field Trips



A group of players from the victorious Vidyodaya University team following a cricket match against Vidyalankara University in 1966. Featured here are Ranjith Silva, Milton Amarasinghe, and some other teammates.

These two photographs capture students preparing for an excursion in front of the Sumangala Hall in 1966, along with a candid moment taken during the trip.





(Personal Photograph Collection: Milton Amarasinghe)

Students pictured during short breaks between lectures











(Source: *Facebook Page,* Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

To reflect the contemporary phase of the faculty's history, this chapter includes three photographs of students who participated in the 2019 Student Orientation Programme.

In addition, the chapter presents two group photographs of the Academic and Non-Academic Staff of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, serving as a formal visual record of the faculty's current staff.









The Non-Academic Staff of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, 2022

(Source: *www.fhss.sjp.ac.lk*)



The Academic Staff of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, 2022

(Source: *www.fhss.sjp.ac.lk*)

Chapter IV

Ākhyānāvalōkana

An Oral History: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 1959–2022

Compilation & Translation: **Chitra Jayathilake**

Introduction

This chapter presents an interpretive reconstruction of the history of the faculty, developed through the systematic collection of oral data. It foregrounds events that may not been previously documented, together with information and perspectives provided by individuals who were directly and intimately connected with those events. The ability to obtain such oral data from first-hand participants, and the insights thereby generated, constitutes a particularly significant feature of this study.

In this context, oral narratives were collected from a broad spectrum of contributors, including the current Dean and former Deans (both retired and still in service), members of the academic staff, members of the administrative and non-academic staff, and alumni engaged in diverse professional fields. These contributors, drawing on their varied personal experiences of the faculty, provided a substantial body of material. From this corpus, information deemed significant has been excerpted, and incorporated into the written narrative presented in this chapter.

This chapter brings together a total of twenty-six oral narratives drawn from individuals who have engaged with the faculty in multiple capacities over time. For the purposes of presentation, contributors have been grouped according to the primary institutional role they represent in this book**.** Accordingly, seven narratives are presented under the category of former and current Deans of the Faculty**,** while ten are grouped as narratives by members of the academic staff, past and present. A further six narratives are included under the category of alumni, and two are contributed by members of the non-academic

staff. [Although the original edition of this book was published in 2025, the oral narratives and institutional details documented here relate to the period up to 2022. The information in this translation is, therefore, presented as it was originally compiled, without retrospective updates].

Unlike other chapters in this book, the oral history presented here adopts a mixed-language approach. This is primarily because contributors provided their narratives in both Sinhala and English, and because the narratives themselves vary in linguistic register, ranging from relatively formal modes of expression to more colloquial and conversational forms of speech. Four of the narratives were originally delivered in English and are therefore presented in this chapter exactly as given by the participants: Prof. Rajiva Wijesinha, Ms. Parvathi Nagasundaram, Ms. Anuruddhika Buddhadasa, and Dr. Saroja Adhihetty.

It should be noted that oral narratives of this nature may offer perspectives that differ from those found in conventional written histories. This chapter, therefore, represents a novel methodological approach within the present volume, as it seeks to capture subjective, experience-based viewpoints alongside established historical accounts.

The central objective of this chapter is to examine the history of the faculty through individualised and experience-based perspectives and to present these narratives in a manner that reflects their diversity, variability, and interpretive richness. In accordance with this objective, the processes of collecting, selecting, and organising the oral material were carried out in line with decisions taken by the Editorial Committee, under the guidance of the Dean.

Deans

The Development Studies Programme proved detrimental to academic programmes.

Dean: 1976–1979
Emeritus Professor
Marcus M. Karunanayake



I was appointed as an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Geography of our university, then known as the Vidyodaya University, in the year 1964. Prior to my retirement, I was able to complete a total of forty-one years of service. Of these, twenty-seven years were spent in the Department of Geography, serving first as a professor and later as a senior professor, as well as the Head of the Department (Professor, Senior Professor and Chair). I served as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts during the period from 1976 to 1979. This was a time when, under the Universities Act No. 1 of 1972, the Vidyodaya University had become a constituent campus of the University of Sri Lanka. In this account, I shall confine myself to a few significant matters relating to the short period during which I functioned as Dean of the Faculty of Arts.

Under the provisions of the Universities Act No. 1 of 1972, in addition to other administrative changes, the restructuring of faculties and the revision of curricula were carried out. One outcome of this process was that the Faculty of Pali and Buddhist Studies was affiliated with the University of Kelaniya. Also, instead of subject-based degree programmes in the Faculty of Arts, a Development Studies Programme with an orientation towards employment was introduced. This replacement proved detrimental to academic programmes.

At the same time, it became evident that the Development Studies Programme, as introduced by the higher university authorities, contained many unresolved issues. When these issues were identified and steps were taken to restructure the programme in a manner more appropriate to the discipline of development studies, I was able to play a significant role—initially as the Chief Coordinator of the Development Studies Programme and subsequently as Dean of the Faculty of Arts. The publication of a handbook on Development Studies under my supervision greatly contributed to raising the academic standard of the programme. Although it was not easy to arrange practical training placements for students in various

institutions relevant to the programme, the experience proved to be both challenging and rewarding. I wish to record my deep appreciation for the cooperation extended to me in these endeavours by officers responsible for employment-oriented programmes, by heads of departments, and in particular by Professor A. V. Suraveera, who had served as Dean prior to my tenure.

The enactment of the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978 marked an important turning point, as it resulted in the University of Sri Jayewardenepura being reconstituted as an autonomous university. With this transition, I was once again appointed as Dean of the Faculty of Arts. I consider it a unique and noteworthy coincidence that I was both the last Dean appointed under the 1972 Act and the first Dean appointed under the 1978 Act.

I wish to highlight a few important responsibilities that I undertook following the introduction of the new Act. According to its provisions, the task of restructuring faculties and departments was assigned to the University Grants Commission. When a delegation led by Professor Kalpage visited the university to examine matters related to this restructuring, it became my responsibility, in my capacity as Dean of the Faculty of Arts, to present the Faculty Board's strong request for the re-establishment of the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies. Owing to the well-substantiated case I presented, approval was granted to establish the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies at our university. In this regard, I gratefully acknowledge the guidance provided by Professor Jinadasa Perera, who was serving as Vice-Chancellor at the time.

Another significant development during my tenure as Dean was the decision to reintegrate Development Studies into the conventional academic degree structure. Although this decision had been taken by the Council of the University of Sri Lanka in 1975, a suitable environment for its implementation emerged only after the enforcement of the Universities Act of 1978. I made a concerted effort to ensure that the necessary administrative measures were taken to give effect to this decision. As a result, steps were taken to gradually phase out the Development Studies Programme.

Nevertheless, following a proposal made by Professor S. Thilakaratne of the Department of Economics, I took action to facilitate the introduction of a Development Economics degree programme within the Department of Economics, designed with an interdisciplinary and applied orientation. Consequently, a degree in Development Economics was introduced. As part of this programme, subjects such as Agricultural Economics, Statistics, and Demography were incorporated. Accordingly, it became possible to conduct the special degree programme in Development Studies in parallel with the special degree programme in Arts.

Finally, I wish to draw attention to the efforts I made to revitalise postgraduate studies and research activities within the Faculty of Arts. Due to the constraints imposed on academic programmes under the 1972 Act, postgraduate work had also experienced a significant decline. In response, steps were taken to establish a Faculty Postgraduate Committee and to conduct postgraduate activities in a systematic and structured manner. Through this committee, I also worked towards revising and updating postgraduate rules and regulations.

This foundation eventually led to my appointment as the pioneering Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, where I established the Boards of Study for both Humanities and Social Sciences, in accordance with the institute's statutory provisions. This laid a strong foundation for the further development of postgraduate education within the Faculty of Arts, and I view with great satisfaction the progress achieved in postgraduate studies in the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences.

I feel that true university autonomy is more of a dream than a reality.

Dean: 1989–1990
Emeritus Professor
S.B. Hettiarachchi



My academic journey began in 1965 when I was recruited as a Temporary Assistant Lecturer—a position I secured primarily due to my high marks as a student. I completed my MA in 1967 and was appointed to a permanent Assistant Lecturer post in 1968. It was from this position that I took study leave to travel to London to pursue my PhD. Upon my return, I was eager to contribute, and I took on whatever responsibilities were assigned to me.

In 1976, I was elected President of the Teachers' Association. This role provided a platform to advocate for a new University Act that would restore the independence of our institutions. We formed a dedicated committee to draft the clauses for what is now known as the Higher Education Act. It was our committee that proposed several landmark structures that define the current system: we proposed the establishment of the Ministry of Higher Education, the creation of the University Grants Commission (UGC), and the restoration of autonomy/independence to individual universities.

I worked alongside a brilliant group of scholars, including Professor Sirisena Tilakaratna, Professor Wimal G. Balagalle, and Professor Ariyapala Ekanayake. Professor Chandra Wickramagamage is the only other member of that original group still with us today. We realized that fighting for these reforms as a single university would not be enough. To create a stronger, unified voice, we reached out to other universities and founded the Federation of University Teachers' Association (FUTA). I had the honour of serving as FUTA's first Chairman, with Ariyapala Perera serving as the Secretary.

Then, subsequently, the general election of 1977 took place, and the party that won that election, accepted our proposals, leading to the enactment of the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978. This is the fundamental law that still governs universities today, though it has undergone many amendments. Previously, under that Act, the appointment of Vice-Chancellors was carried out by the university itself. Now, however, such appointments are made by the President. According to the original Higher Education Act, the University Grants Commission did not possess such extensive powers. Those powers have since been expanded in a remarkable manner.

As a result, I do not believe that universities today truly enjoy autonomy. Even the idea of returning the authority to appoint Vice-Chancellors back to the universities themselves seems extremely difficult to contemplate. Looking at the current state of higher education, I feel that true university autonomy is more of a dream than a reality. It is difficult to imagine a return to the days when universities could choose their own leaders. However, despite these systemic challenges, I believe the work being done by the current academic staff is vital and continues to be of the utmost importance for the nation.

> *If you do that — if you cross that line — the very next morning I will leave this university. I will resign.*

Dean: 2002–2004
Professor
Chandima Wijebandara
(Retired)



I never, at any point in my life, expected to be appointed Vice-Chancellor. Honestly, I wasn't aiming for that position at all. But at a time when I least expected it, I ended up being appointed to that role. And this happened soon after a tragic incident where a student of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura was killed by fellow students themselves.

At that time, no one really wanted to take on the role of Vice-Chancellor. There were even death threats going around. Still, because I was a teacher who had earned the affection of the students, and because I felt I had a responsibility to the university, I decided to accept that burden.

What I asked from the students was simple: whatever you do, do not subject new students to ragging. For one full year, we managed things well — there was no ragging at all, and we carried on peacefully. But then, the following year, I started hearing that the new batch of students was being ragged.

So, one day I thought to myself, "I should go and see this for myself." Around midnight, I went to the university. The senior students I had personally appealed to earlier were behaving properly and seemed to be following what I had asked. But the next batch — the group that came after them — was ragging the newcomers quite openly. I could see it happening with my own eyes.

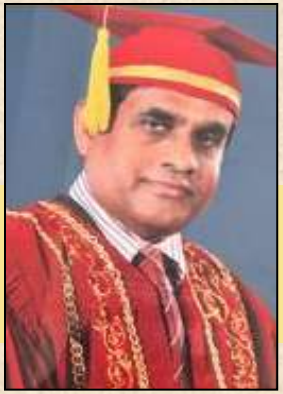
The president of the Students' Union was also involved in ragging the new students. After seeing this, I went home and the very next morning I submitted my letter of resignation from the Vice-Chancellor's post to the President. If I remember correctly, this was around 2005 or 2006.

There's something else I should mention. Just a few days before that incident, the male students were preparing to occupy a female's hostel by force. The problem was that there were no hostels for female students within the university premises — they were all located outside. Because of security concerns, during the tenure of the previous Vice-Chancellor, one of the male hostels had been allocated to female students.

After that decision, the male students came to me and said, "Now we need that hostel back." I told them clearly, "I won't give it back. Female students must be accommodated within the university premises. If you want, we can arrange an external hostel for the male students." Later, I heard rumours that the male students were planning to forcibly enter the female's hostel. I warned them openly. I said, "If you do that — if you cross that line — the very next morning I will leave this university. I will resign." The students took that warning seriously. They didn't carry out the plan. But even after that, when ragging started again, it deeply hurt me. It cut me to the core. And just as I had said before, I resigned from the position of Vice-Chancellor.

It was during my tenure that we changed its name to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Dean: 2007–2013
Emeritus Professor
P. Athukorala



I served as Dean from 2007 to 2013. When I took over as Dean, honestly, there were two major challenges right from the start. The first was improving the quality of the degree programmes we offered to our undergraduates — and specially making sure those programmes were relevant and competitive in the labour market. At that point, it was very clear that the existing curricula needed serious revision and updating. The second challenge was that when I became Dean, the majority of the faculty staff were junior lecturers. It was essential to provide them with the facilities and opportunities to obtain their PhDs. They needed proper opportunities and support to obtain their postgraduate qualifications. Facing and managing these two challenges required one main thing above all else — securing adequate financial resources for the faculty.

During that period, we managed to obtain a project called IRQUE. What that project focused on was the relevance, importance, and quality of undergraduate degree programmes. Through this project, we competitively secured about 20 million rupees for the faculty. That was in 2009. In fact, this was the first time since the establishment of our faculty that we managed to win a grant through a competitive process.

At the same time, there was another project called HETC, which focused on higher education for the 21st century. We submitted proposals under that scheme as well, and as a result, we received about 23 million rupees. Then, between 2011 and 2013, we were involved in yet another project called IDAS**.** This one was specifically designed for Arts Faculty students, and through it we managed to secure around 64 million rupees**.**

With the funds we received through these projects, we carried out several important improvements. For instance, what used to be called the “reading hall” at Sumanagala was converted into a mini auditorium. We also allocated funds to establish small department libraries and to purchase essential books for all departments.

Another very important step we took was carrying out a major curriculum revision in 2009. This was significant because the degree structure in place at that time had essentially remained unchanged

since 1999–2000. From then until I became Dean, no comprehensive revision had been done at all. So, for this process, we collected feedback from postgraduate students, from graduates who were already employed, from employers, and even from parents.

Based on that feedback, we strengthened subjects like IT and English. For the first time [in the recent history], English-medium instruction was introduced in 2013. Around the same period, we also managed to secure a bus for the faculty, mainly to support field trips and academic excursions.

Another important point is this: when I took over as Dean, the Faculty was still officially called the Faculty of Arts**.** It was during my tenure, that we changed its name to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**.** One particularly significant achievement during this time was that we initiated our first-ever international research conference, which we launched in 2012.

The decision to change the faculty's name was not arbitrary. One reason was that the label "Faculty of Arts" often led people to look down on it or misunderstand its scope. Another reason was the need to clearly reflect the academic disciplines that were actually being taught within the faculty. And this change wasn't meant to stop there. Looking ahead, it was entirely possible to further separate the Faculty into a Faculty of Humanities and a Faculty of Social Sciences.

Our faculty succeeded in securing a grant of approximately 110 million rupees.

Dean: 2013–2016
Senior Lecturer
Lasantha Nawaratna



I assumed the deanship in 2013. At that time, there was a sense of unrest within the university, and particularly within our faculty. My first priority was to calm that situation and manage the underlying causes of that instability.

With my appointment, we initiated a complete curriculum revision across the faculty. This was during the time of the LLRC (Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission), and the Ministry of Higher Education had issued guidelines based on its recommendations. Under those directives, we took steps to make Sinhala, Tamil, and English compulsory for all students to foster reconciliation. Furthermore, we made Computer Science a mandatory subject in the second year. Beyond the first year, we introduced several certificate courses for English and IT. We also introduced 'Institutional Training' (internships) for the first time, along with several new subjects and course units. We established the Department of Criminology and prepared proposals for several other new departments during this period.

Specifically, during this time, we participated in the World Bank-funded HETC (Higher Education for the Twenty-first Century) project under the Ministry of Higher Education. Our faculty succeeded in securing a grant of approximately 110 million rupees. Our primary targets for these funds were the improvement of English and IT skills and the modernization of lecture halls. Under this initiative, we established a new computer laboratory and, for the first time, provided laptop computers to the senior faculty members, along with electronic boards and multimedia projectors.

To provide a platform to recognize and celebrate student talents, we launched *Ran Rasu*, a grand arts festival that brought together the academic staff, students, and non-academic staff.

At the same time, we decentralized the management of the Faculty and Departments into about fifteen committees. We appointed Chairpersons and Secretaries for these and involved the clerical staff of the departments in the committee process. We established dedicated offices for these functions on the upper and lower floors of the

Sumangala Building. Under the Soft Skills Development Committee, we provided numerous training and development programmes.

A major issue for our students was financial hardship. Until then, students relied only on government's *Mahapola* and Bursary scholarships or private bursaries. We innovated by allocating a portion of the revenue generated from the faculty's fee-levying courses to provide scholarships for our own students. We also established a Student Counseling Centre, which I believe greatly enhanced our ability to identify and address student grievances.

[Not only that] ... we changed the way we welcomed new students. We introduced an Outbound Training (OBT) programme. The faculty members joined together to conduct a comprehensive residential training programme in Mathugama.

Regarding research, the International Research Conferences had already begun by the time I took office, and I was able to ensure they were held every year. Additionally, we held specialized research conferences for subjects like Archaeology. We also found opportunities to provide foreign training for our academic staff.

Finally, we addressed the issue of physical space. At the time, a portion of the Sumangala Mansion was occupied by the Management Faculty. We managed to acquire the entire building for our faculty, allowing us to develop the departments further. We renovated and repainted the entire Sumangala Building and modernized the Faculty Office premises. We also began the complete renovation of the Bandaranayake Hall, which had fallen into disrepair. I remember we were able to provide the necessary facilities for a 'Resource centre' in every single academic department. We also conducted several workshops for the non-academic staff to ensure their professional development and training.

The core mission of the faculty is to continuously enhance the quality of our graduates.

Dean: 2016–2019
Professor
D. P. S. Chandrakumara



After my appointment as Dean, I identified the construction of a new building as an urgent priority. When I first joined the university as a student in '89, there were about 250 students; by the time I was Dean, that number had grown to 500. Having experienced the difficulties of providing student facilities within such a limited space, we had been trying for a long time to initiate a building project.

Actually, during Professor Athukorala's time, we developed the first building proposal and secured approval. We even received Cabinet approval for 675 million rupees, but due to certain complications, we couldn't proceed. Later, during Mr. Lasantha's tenure, we tried again, but it still didn't materialize. As soon as I took office, I looked into the old proposal to see if we could build it, but I was informed that it was outdated. We had to write a brand-new proposal in 2016.

I must appreciate Ms. Labroy from the Academic Establishments branch (she may have been promoted by now); she was a key member of our team and did an incredible job. We eventually secured approval for 1,164 million rupees. Although the construction was delayed for various reasons, we finally received permission to proceed under a Capital Grant. Many staff members worked hard for this, and I thank them all. I am also happy to see the current Dean working diligently to complete it.

Beyond infrastructure, we faced a massive responsibility: the Second Round of Quality Assurance (QA) and the Program Review. We worked tirelessly to organize our Department programmes into clusters. Following that, a World Bank-funded project (AHEAD) was introduced. The UGC and the Ministry of Higher Education created a competition to develop faculties. They announced that only three faculties from all the Humanities and Social Sciences faculties in the country would be selected for a 100-million-rupee grant (Ranked 1, 2, and 3).

We worked incredibly hard on that application. I want to thank my team—not a single person refused to help. The entire Faculty operated as one team. Sometimes we would start in the morning and work right through the night. As a result, our World Bank proposal was ranked Number One in the entire country.

We are still reaping the benefits of that success; the construction of the new Auditorium is a result of that work. Additionally, a 'Faculty Fund' that we had established back in Professor Athukorala's time was also used to fund part of the auditorium construction.

On the academic side, we conducted a large number of workshops to improve graduates' quality. For the staff, we provided research grants, held conferences, and established the Faculty Research Centre. On the cultural front, based on the suggestions of our members, we launched *Sandeshavali.* It was a massive success, so much so that there was a public demand for a second one. The second *Sandeshavali* was organized by the current Dean, Prof. Shirantha, before he assumed the deanship. I believe the core mission of the faculty is to continuously enhance the quality of our graduates.

We developed the faculty through digitalisation.

Dean: 2019–present
Professor
Shirantha Heenkenda



I assumed duties as Dean on 1st July 2019. From that date, I served for three years**.** Subsequently, in July 2022, I was reappointed for a second term. During this period, we were able to bring about significant changes in the faculty. The challenges were considerable, as our work coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite these difficulties, we succeeded in transforming our faculty into the first Faculty in Sri Lanka to commence academic activities entirely online. The support extended by our academic staff was invaluable in this endeavour. Essentially, our progress depended on the cooperation of three groups: academic staff, non-academic staff, and students. Without the collective effort of all three, this journey would not have been possible.

As Dean, I paid special attention to administrative matters**,** particularly during this period. A key focus was the transformation of our traditional communication systems by adopting digital modes of operation. As an initial step, we began communicating with our community through email**.** Email technology was systematically introduced for academic staff, non-academic staff, and students. Email accounts were created and provided to students as well.

Another major dimension of this digital transition was the introduction of our Filing Management System**,** which modernised documentation and administrative record-keeping within the faculty. The management system was completely restructured, and to a significant extent it was digitalised. In addition to the Faculty Board, the faculty has several committees, such as the Cultural Committee and the Publications Committee. The meetings and reports of all these committees were digitalised. All subcommittee reports were compiled into a single consolidated report and presented to the Faculty Board. This itself marked an important institutional change.

Under this digitalisation process, a major reform was carried out in the examination system. Previously, the examination process involved preparing documents manually, printing them, submitting them to the Faculty Board, and forwarding them to the Senate through traditional procedures. We replaced this with a centralised digital database. The database includes details such as lecturers' names, course codes, and related information. It records who sets the question paper, who moderates it, and other academic responsibilities. Each department submits a single structured document to the faculty through this system.

At the same time, the entire examination division was digitalised through the introduction of a Performance Evaluation System. This system covers the processing of student results, result verification, appeals, course registration, issuing admission cards, examination applications, and all related procedures entirely through an online platform.

In addition, an App was developed specifically for students. Through this App, communication between students and academic staff was strengthened. All notifications and examination-related information are provided through this App, which now functions as a mobile application. Alongside this, another important initiative was launched: the creation of a Student Portfolio. This portfolio is designed to be maintained for three years, even after a student graduates. If a graduate seeks employment, the portfolio provides a comprehensive record of all academic and extracurricular activities completed during their university life—sports, drama, music, debating, volunteer work, and competitions. A general knowledge test is also included as part of this portfolio.

Through this digital transformation, we further developed our Diploma programmes, including the English Diploma and the Tamil Language Diploma, as well as Library and Information programmes—all delivered through digital platforms. As an extension of these efforts, the CDEPD (Centre for Digital Education and Professional Development) was established. This centre functions as the main administrative hub for digital initiatives, coordinating all related activities within the faculty.

As part of the faculty's digital transformation, we focused on continuous development through training programmes, student workshops, webinars, and the enhancement of the Learning Management System (LMS), ensuring that it was accessible to all students. We also developed blogs, including the Green Hub blog, as platforms for academic engagement and sustainability initiatives.

The academic environment within the faculty—particularly the culture shaped by the academic staff—significantly contributed to these developments. We also placed strong emphasis on soft skills development, community service activities, and experiential learning gained through field visits. All these achievements are recorded in each student's digital portfolio. Through this portfolio, students are able to generate a CV. Each CV contains a QR code, enabling potential employers to scan it, review the student's profile, and directly access verified academic and extracurricular information.

Alongside these initiatives, we introduced two major flagship programmes. One is "Brilliant Minds", which includes Sinhala Language Competitions, conducted entirely on a digital platform. Another is the Multiple Intelligence Challenge. In addition, we maintain the FHSS Blog, and several initiatives are carried out through the Faculty Publications Committee. All these activities are grounded in digitalisation.

Digitalisation was applied not only as an administrative tool but also as a teaching medium, an assessment mechanism, and a student feedback system. The faculty's teaching–learning processes, assessments, and evaluations were fundamentally transformed through this approach. We developed the faculty through digitalisation.

Furthermore, various competitions, community leadership programmes, and Dean's Awards were introduced. Considerable effort was dedicated to enhancing student skills development through these initiatives.

Academic Staff

Ven. Soratha Nayaka Thero's flexibility and vision were instrumental in shaping the development of the university.

Professor
Ratna Wijetunga
Department of Sinhala
(Retired)



When I was a student, and later when I worked there as a lecturer, what I clearly observed at Vidyodaya University (University of Sri Jayewardenepura) was Ven. Sorata Nayaka Thero's (Vice-Chancellor at the time) strong commitment, generosity, and dedication, right from the beginning, all with the aim of developing the university.

He paid close attention to selecting suitable lecturers for teaching, as well as to appointing academics for administrative responsibilities. In doing so, he made a strong effort to recruit highly qualified scholars—both local and foreign—who were well recognised in their respective fields. Alongside this, he received invaluable support from experienced administrators in the field of higher education, such as Ananda W. B. Guruge, S. F. de Silva (from the Ministry of Education), and Professor Wimal G. Balagalle, among others. All of this was done because there was a clear vision to develop the institution.

At the same time, when planning and constructing buildings within the university premises, detailed and well-thought-out plans were followed, taking into account future needs. The plan for the main building was brought from India and implemented here. The Bandaranayake Hall was another major project. Everything was done methodically, with determination, to ensure the long-term development of the university.

Another important step was the recruitment of a group of highly capable students who had studied at Vidyodaya Pirivena into the first intake of the university. After a very competitive selection process, ten students were admitted, and I was one of them. All ten of us began our studies together and successfully completed the general Bachelor of Arts degree. After that, we were appointed as student instructors (tutors).

Each of us was assigned to a different department—Sinhala, Sanskrit, Pali, Buddhist Studies, and so on—not merely as students, but as tutors assisting academic work. We were then encouraged to pursue BA Honours degrees, and after that, we were appointed as assistant lecturers in our respective disciplines. This group, including myself, was thus absorbed into the academic staff across various subject areas. Later, we were further encouraged to go abroad and obtain postgraduate qualifications in different fields, which greatly strengthened the university.

From that group, several went overseas. I was one of them. I went to Pune University in India, where I completed my MA degree over two years. After that, I received the opportunity to obtain a highly competitive Fulbright Scholarship, which enabled Sri Lankan students to study in the United States. I was selected for that scholarship. Following this, I spent some time at Cornell University, and then proceeded to Austin, Texas, where I completed my PhD. After returning, I rejoined Vidyodaya University and resumed my academic duties, engaging actively in teaching.

Later, in 1965, I was appointed under a special scholarship to teach at the University of London in the United Kingdom, in the Department of Oriental Languages. For two years, I taught Sinhala, Pali, and Theravada Buddhism, and then returned to Sri Lanka. After that, I worked for two years as Director of the Institute of Human Resource Advancement at the University of Colombo.

Throughout all this, it was clear how deeply Ven. Sorata Nayaka Thero cared about the progress of students under his guidance. He genuinely believed that the university would develop through the advancement of its students. He was not only an administrator but also actively involved in academic work. Initially, he personally taught us Pali texts and related studies. Later, several faculties were established to further develop the university—such as the Faculty of Languages, the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Faculty of Buddhist Studies and related disciplines. Subsequently, faculties such as Education and Management were also initiated. By that time, the physical infrastructure had also been properly developed, and the institution was ready to expand further. Various academic facilities were gradually introduced, and that is when the university truly began to grow.

Therefore, Ven. Sorata Nayaka Thero should be appreciated not merely as an administrator, but as a compassionate and farsighted academic leader who worked tirelessly—with discipline and determination. Ven. Sorata Nayaka Thero's flexibility and vision were instrumental in shaping the development of students and the long-term growth of the university.

The National Archives in Nuwara Eliya was moved here to transform this into a Research University.

Emeritus Professor
Ariyapala Perera
Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies



I attended the ceremony at which this university was formally declared open. It was held at Independence Square. The inauguration was carried out by the Governor-General, Mr. Oliver Goonetilleke. Ven. Sorata Nayaka Thero delivered the inaugural address in his capacity as Vice-Chancellor of the university.

For the very first academic year, only seven students were selected. For some time, university admission examinations were conducted independently by each university. By October 1973, the Sumangala Building had been constructed and was ready to be opened. This single building was originally planned to be sufficient for the entire university; even the library was entirely housed in a wing of this building.

The university initially commenced with five faculties. There was a Faculty of Buddhist Studies, which included Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. A Faculty of Philosophy existed, covering both Eastern and Western philosophy. There was a Faculty of Languages, where subjects such as Sinhala, Pali, Sanskrit, Prakrit, Hindi, and Tamil were taught. There was a Faculty of Arts, which included disciplines such as Anthropology, History, and Geography. A Faculty of Science was also established, and it too initially functioned within this same building.

In 1966, through legislation introduced by Mr. Iriyagolla, this institution was elevated to the status of a national university. That year marked the first intake of female students, numbering sixty.

I served as the first Secretary of what is now the Federation of University Teachers' Association (FUTA). Speaking about the relationship between lecturers and students during those early days, before the 'virus' of politics entered the system, there was a profound sense of love and mutual respect between teachers and students.

We had no idea that a rebellion was going to break out on April 5, 1971. We were actually on an educational field trip in Jaffna at the time, staying at the Naga Vihara. At midnight, we started hearing the sound of explosions everywhere. We honestly thought it was some kind of celebration. Suddenly, the police arrived and rounded everyone up. They threatened us, saying, 'We are going to kill you

all.' There were bodies of those who had already been killed lying around. Even though we insisted that we were university staff and not part of the uprising, they refused to believe us. Finally, a monk who was with us suggested that we contact the Government Agent (GA) or the Director of Education, both of whom he knew personally. After a phone call was made, they confirmed our identities, verifying that we were not there to 'rescue Wijeweera' (the leader of the *JVP*). That is how we narrowly escaped with our lives.

I have witnessed three distinct eras of this university: the original Vidyodaya University era. The 1972 Act, which turned the university into a 'Campus' (Vidyodaya Campus of the University of Sri Lanka). The era under President J.R. Jayewardene, who changed the system again to grant it status as an independent university (University of Sri Jayewardenepura).

Another important historical fact is that the National Archives which was then located in Nuwara Eliya, was moved to this university in 1963. The intention was to transform this into a 'Research University.' After some time, it was moved to a newly constructed Red Cross building. The Department of National Archives, currently located at Torrington Square, was first housed in Nuwara Eliya before being systematically organized right here at this university.

The President intervened and appointed a new university council.

Professor Abhaya (Abhayaratne) Bandaranayake
Department of Philosophy and Psychology
(Retired)



I'm Abhaya Bandaranayake. I entered the university in 1966. Our batch was the historic first batch to include female students. While previous admissions were handled through university-specific exams, we were the first group admitted based on the 1965 G.C.E. Advanced Level examination results. Before 1966, there were no female students at Vidyodaya; we were the pioneers of a co-educational campus.

I pursued my Special Degree in Western Philosophy from 1967 to 1970. Our batch was also the first to have Philosophy taught in both Sinhala and English mediums. There were only three of us in that Special Degree programme—myself, Professor Daya Edirisinghe, and a student named Hewapathirana. Daya and I both secured First Class honours in 1970, and we were immediately granted the privilege of joining the academic staff as Temporary Assistant Lecturers.

My early career was marked by the 1971 Insurrection. The university was closed due to the violence and was even turned into a detention camp for those involved in the unrest. When Vidyodaya eventually resumed, we didn't have our campus; classes were held at Thurstan

College, Isipathana College, and the Senior Science School in Havelock Town. It wasn't until around 1972 or 1973 that the campus was liberated and returned to us.

In 1972, a new Act was introduced for the university. Along with subject-based disciplines, a vocational stream was also introduced as part of the curriculum. At that time, when I was working as a university lecturer, we experienced some very distinctive programmes. One of them was Management, which functioned under the Management Faculty. Later, a separate vocational programme was introduced for the Faculty of Arts as well. However, that arrangement lasted only from around 1972 to 1977. Then, with the introduction of the Higher Education Act of 1978, the system was restructured once again, and the university returned to the earlier subject-based academic structure. It was during this period that several new developments took place. Special degree programmes, and English courses were introduced, and later Geography was added. Under the faculty structure, departments were formally established. At that time, there were around ten departments functioning.

Before that, when the university was first established, there were only five faculties, as far as I can remember. Initially, there was no separate Department of Philosophy. Philosophy and English teaching were both conducted under the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, which also housed what was referred to as the Language and Cultural Studies section.

With the 1978 reforms, lecturers were formally appointed to newly created departments. Separate academic staff and professors were assigned to each department under the newly established administrative framework. This structure, I believe, remained largely functional from 1978 until about 1990.

When we were students, especially around the time the Perera Commission Report was released, there was considerable unrest within the university system. I was a student then; this would have been around 1969. At that time, Ven. Walpola Rahula Thero served as Vice Chancellor. Under his leadership, we were given permission to study Philosophy in the medium of English, and to offer certain other subjects as well.

Later, around 1978–1979, I served as a Course Coordinator for subject streams within the Faculty of Arts, working across the entire faculty. The name "University of Sri Jayewardenepura" came into use after the 1978 Act. Before that, it was known as Vidyodaya University. Following the 1972 Act, it had functioned as a university campus, administered by campus directors. There was essentially one university, and the others functioned as campuses. That was the structure until about 1978.

Around 1980 or 1983, due to a statement made by the Vice Chancellor of our university, the President intervened and appointed a new University Council. For the first time, someone from outside the university was appointed as a key administrator for the Department of Economics. He is Dr. Karunasena Kodituwakku, who at that time was serving as a Director of the National Youth Centre.

Then, during the turbulent period of 1988–1989 [in the country], we faced serious challenges. It was in 1988. The police at Kohuwala had arrested some students, and in retaliation, the students forcefully detained lecturers on campus overnight on one occasion, including the Vice–Chancellor. It was an extremely tense and difficult night. The police were preparing to storm the university, which would have resulted in a bloodbath. I intervened and negotiated with the police, successfully securing the release of four of the six detained students. Only after I brought them back to the university did the students allow the lecturers to go home.

I decided to take sabbatical leave in 1990. Later, in 1999/2000, when I returned to teaching, the course unit system had been introduced.

Under the course unit system, greater flexibility was introduced, with units structured across semesters. Before that, the structure was based on general degree programmes—students would study three or four subjects per year over three years to obtain a degree. The major change to this system took place around 1999 or 2000, with this course unit system.

The job-oriented programme is the first revision which began in 1972. In fact, the idea itself emerged after the 1971 insurrection. There was a belief that unemployment among Arts graduates had contributed to that unrest, and that this new programme could address the issue. However, in reality, the programme was not particularly successful. As a result, with the 1978 Act, the entire system was reorganised once again, and the university returned to subject-based degree programmes.

I introduced a course titled *Logic and Scientific Methods*. Although Management was also teaching a similar course, inter-faculty coordination was established at that time through what was known as the Inter-Faculty Education System.

In 1982, I was appointed as a Student Counsellor. During that period, student indiscipline reduced significantly, largely because I focused on analysing student behaviour rather than simply controlling it. There was a strong relationship of mutual respect between students and lecturers. Compared to today, lecturers were held in very high esteem. Students regularly used the library, read extensively, and those who completed special degrees, particularly those who obtained First Class or Second Upper honours, were given opportunities to pursue PhDs or Master's degrees abroad.

I will get the jack trees from the monks I know, and build the faculty. I don't want a single cent from the funds!



Professor Wimal Wijeratne
Department of Sinhala
(Retired)

I entered Vidyodaya University on October 18, 1963. It is today called the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. After my first year of study, I chose Sinhala, Pali, and Buddhist Philosophy as my subjects for the intermediate level.

At that time, the Department of Sinhala was led by Professor Wimal G. Balagalle, a scholar of the highest calibre. The Department of Pali was headed by Ven. Kalukondayawe Paññasekera Maha Nayaka Thero, succeeded later by Professor Jinadasa Perera, who also served as Vice-Chancellor for a time. Ven. Balangoda Ananda Maitreya Maha Nayaka Thero was the Professor of Buddhist Studies. I vividly remember Professor Hema Ellawala heading the History Department. He was a distinguished historian who later became the Vice-Chancellor.

In those days, if you excelled in your subjects, you could read for an Honours degree (then referred to as a Special Degree), which involved

three years of continuous specialized study. So, in 1964, I entered the Sinhala Department for my Honours degree.

My teachers included Professor Balagalle, Professor A.V. Suraweera, Ven. Gathare Dhammapala, and Professor Ratna Wijetunga. We were required to achieve proficiency in an additional language—Pali, Sanskrit, or English. There was a separate mandatory examination for this. Ultimately, I earned a First-Class Honours degree; I believe it was the first-ever First Class awarded in the Languages stream in the history of both Vidyodaya and Jayewardenepura.

I remember a time when there was no Faculty of Science, nor were there funds to establish one. Professor G.P. Malalasekera was the Chairman of the National Council of Higher Education. It is the predecessor to today's University Grants Commission. The Vice-Chancellor at the time was Ven. Walpola Rahula Thero, who then held the title of *'Upa-viyath Gananayaka'*.

During an official meeting, Professor Malalasekera invited Ven. Rahula Thero to discuss university development. The Thero requested support specifically for construction, saying, 'I can find the money to build these structures, but if you could just provide the jack (*kos*) timber needed for the roofing, that would be enough.'

When Professor Malalasekera expressed his deep regret that there were no provisions or funds even for the timber, Ven. Walpola Rahula Thero stood up indignantly. He declared, 'No, I don't need it! I will go to the temples I know, get the jack trees from the monks I know, and build it. I don't want a single cent from the funds!'

"With Professor Nandasena Ratnapala, I 'fought the battle' to save the Sociology Department."

Senior Lecturer
Edwin K. Ganihigama
Department of Sociology
(Retired)



The year 1970 was a major turning point in my life. Although I was originally selected to the University of Colombo, my deep passion for Anthropology led me to seek a transfer to Vidyodaya University under the 'Mutual Transfer System' (*Suhada Maru Kramaya*) that existed at the time.

The Department of Anthropology was founded in March 1960 by the Vice-Chancellor, Ven. Welivitiye Soratha Thero. Its first head was Professor P.E.P. Deraniyagala. Following his retirement in 1964, Mr. Alex Gunasekera took over the leadership. Under the recommendation of the University Court, he integrated Anthropology and Sociology, renaming it the Department of Anthropology and Sociology. A significant milestone occurred in 1968 when the Senate approved that the students who had entered the university in 1967 and studied Anthropology in their first year, could proceed to pursue Honours in sociology from the second year.

I was appointed as a Temporary Instructor in the then Department of History and Sociology of the Vidyodaya campus, with effect from the 1st of September 1976. With Professor Nandasena Ratnapala, I 'fought the battle' to save the Sociology Department. By the end of 1976, we succeeded in separating it from History, establishing it as the Sub-Department of Sociology. On October 3, 1977, I was appointed as a Probationary Assistant Lecturer.

The department continued to grow, regaining full status in 1980 as the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology. The Special Degree programme, which was restarted in 1976 with 26 students, flourished until 2002, when it transitioned into the Course Unit System. In 1983, we reached another landmark by introducing the Special Degree in Sociology, Criminology, and the Criminal Justice System, broadening our academic horizons beyond traditional sociology. I served as the Head of the Department until late 2002.

By the Extraordinary Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka dated January 19, 2016, a new department was established as a fully independent academic unit for "Criminology and Criminal Justice." Then, by the Gazette dated July 19, 2017, the department which had until then functioned as the "Department of Sociology and Anthropology" was established as two separate, fully independent academic units: namely, the Department of Sociology and the Department of Anthropology.

"The university has evolved from a strong Banyan tree into a vast, sprawling Bo tree."

Professor
Dhanapala Wijesinghe
Department of Criminology and
Criminal Justice



I wish to share a few thoughts regarding the history of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. I possess a vast range of experiences spanning a long period from 1982 to 2022. While I have observed many things—specifically during my four years as a student and then as a lecturer since 1990, this is not the occasion to mention them all.

However, there is one primary point that must be noted. To express it in another sense, my observation is that this university has evolved from a strong Banyan tree—one with a humble row of tender leaves, a cluster of flowers, and a sturdy core—into a vast, sprawling *Bo* tree. The Bo tree has spread across a vast area, creating a comforting environment with a massive trunk.

The university community is overjoyed by this growth. The university has expanded in terms of institutions, departments, and faculties.

While this evolution is a matter of satisfaction, I also perceive a certain deficiency in this transition from a Banyan tree to a Bo tree. A significant change that arose with the dawn of the 21st century, as compared to the time we received our education, is the gradual decline in the academic depth that an institution of learning ought to possess. We see this as a prominent characteristic. Although every department of the university consisted of highly renowned and scholarly academic staff until the early 2000s, there is a question as to whether that status can be maintained in recent times.

"He was the first to realize that university education was moribund."

Rajiva Wijesinha
Emeritus Professor of Languages



I joined Jayewardenepura in 1992. This happened essentially because of the vision of the then Dean of the Arts Faculty, a really fantastic person, Prof. Mahinda Palihawadana. When he was Dean, he had some priorities which he then transferred to me.

First, he had taken up in a big way, as Jayewardenepura as a university did under a man called Prof. S. B. Hettiarachchi, who was Vice-Chancellor then, the vision of Prof. Arjuna Aluvihare, who was the best chairman ever of the UGC. He was the first to realize that university education was moribund. It was dying on its feet, particularly with regard to Arts faculties, and he wanted to revitalize it. He wanted products who would be employable, so he tried to develop practical degrees. He wanted degrees that would help in work and saw they needed more of what they called soft skills, general knowledge, English and so on. We started these then in what were called Affiliated University Colleges. Jayewardenepura

was a pioneer in this, and took on several, in particular, those that offered English courses. Hettiarachchi was the Vice Chancellor and Mahinda Palihawadana was the Dean. They took on a number of affiliated university colleges.

Arjuna was very keen on English degrees for many students, and he wanted a modern syllabus. That was how I got involved. Prof. A. J. Gunawardena was away on sabbatical. So, Prof. Palihawadana asked me to help Geetha and we developed a comprehensive syllabus which was very practical and gave language proficiency to those who had not got it at school. But then Geetha got admission to Australia and Prof Palihawadana was retiring, and they asked me to join saying that otherwise it would all die. So, I thought I couldn't give it up. It was a good project. So, I left the British Council and joined, and then they wanted me to take charge of a whole lot more, English Language Teaching at the University too, and also developing an English Department.

English then came under the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies, and they gave me virtually a free hand in recruitment. A person I persuaded to come to us was Parvathi Nagasundaram who had been a student of mine at the University of Peradeniya, and, not only one of the best but also someone who understood the problems of youngsters learning English. So Paru [Parvati] joined us and the then Vice-Chancellor wanted her to run the ELTU [English Language Teaching Unit], but the ladies there did not like this. But that perhaps was just as well and Paru could concentrate on the degree course English and finally took charge of the Department [English] we planned. We did get Dinali Fernando, who was a great teacher

In the ELTU there was a fantastic instructor, Oranee Jansz, whom Prof. Palihawadana appointed to look after the new Medical Faculty, and who later coordinated the pre-University GELT course with me, and was a wellspring of productive ideas.

There were also a few other bright instructors, Saroja Adhihetty and Pearl Weerasinghe among them. I also recruited two very able young chaps who were outstanding, great teachers, Sarath Ananda and Lalith Ananda. I also took in a Tamil gentleman, whom some of the leading ladies of the ELTU objected to, but Oranee at once adopted him and he turned into one of the best instructors at the Medical Faculty. And she took too this lively old lady Mrs. Kalubovila. And there was Manel Wijesinghe, whom I allocated to Accounts, one of the first departments which was only in English medium.

I also started an External Degree, with English Language as a subject in addition to English Literature, and it proved very popular. We received thousands of applicants, and later when I was in charge of reintroducing the English medium in schools, I wrote from the Ministry to all the universities, asking them to start 'English language teaching' as a subject. And they all refused except Paru, and when that became the third subject for the external degree, the numbers increased even more.

We gave the students, who wished to offer English for the degree, a chance.

Senior Lecturer
Parvathi Nagasundaram
Department of English and Linguistics
(Retired)



In the early 1990s, we were under the Languages and Cultural Studies Department. Then we got a department which comprised a room, near the Dean's office and a file. That was the department. The first head was Prof. A.J. Gunawardena and when he retired, I was appointed the Head, I think in 1998. I think we got the Department in 1997 I am not sure about the year. and then we had no peon, no clerk.

We all gathered in that room near the Dean's office. When I became the head that room was where we had the department meetings. Finally, I managed to get a clerk and a peon. So, it was a real struggle for us to fight and get places to teach… lecture rooms… but the faculty was always very supportive. Whatever, any proposal I brought up at the Faculty Board was passed. I had no issues regarding that... the only thing was we didn't have a proper place to house the Department. Then we had a few rooms here and there... I think after I left only, we got the present place. When we started... I was there. Dr. Maithree White was there and Dinali Fernando; Dinali is at Kelaniya now. Then we had Prof. Mawelle. Only a few of us.

And also at that time, we didn't have students who had got through the A/L English. We gave the students who wished to offer English for the degree a chance. And we had a selection test, and we identified the students who had the potential... and they had to work very hard. We also had a few trained, government teachers who had got through the first year of the Degree (External Degree) with English as a subject. They were permitted to complete the degree course internally. The University Grants Commission admitted them through a selection scheme.

They all did work very hard and some performed well and qualified to follow a Special Degree in English. Now five of them [joined as students from one of those systems] are lecturers in the department today, and all of them have completed their PhD.

Our experience with the students was very good...our students were very good. They never took part in ragging. In fact, they protected the freshers... We were like a family. The numbers were not large then.

We never had more than 50 at a time. The maximum we had in a group was 25-30. We worked very hard with them. In the first year, it was mainly language development... and they improved a lot with their own effort also. And we used to pay special attention to their academic needs. The students could come and meet us with their assignments to get feedback on their errors. But there were only three of us. At one time only Dinali and me and Prof. Rajeeva Wijesinha were there... then he left and joined Sabaragamuwa, and then only Dinali and me. So, we had to work extra hours. It was not a course unit system at the beginning. 60 hours per subject for the whole semester... we had about 12 extra hours per week. Dinali and I used to work 21 hours each a week... and then… I introduced two subjects in place of the previous single English subject. So, we had English Language, as one subject and English Literature, as another subject... for the approval of such proposals, the faculty was always supportive. and even the special degree… I can't remember the year… but we started the special degree with the approval of the UGC.

"His advice to us was to wait for half an hour. And even if there's one student, teach that student."



Senior Lecturer
Dr. Saroja Adhihetty
Department of English Language Teaching (DELT)
(Retired)

So, I'll start at the very beginning. So, there was a paper advertisement calling for instructors. That was in 1992, I guess. Then I came for the interview. The interviewers were Prof. Rajeeva Wijesinha and Prof. Chitra Wickramasinghe who was a well-known educationalist. And 10 of us were recruited at that time.

Prof. Rajeeva was there who reorganized the English language education here at Jayewardenepura University. I think he worked as a consultant. I think... and after recruitment... he had a series of workshops to train the teachers for all those who were at the ELTU (English Language Teaching Unit). So, we had these workshops. And he encouraged some of the senior instructors to make material. And we made use of them in our teaching.

There was a history of the students not coming to lectures. His advice to us was to wait for half an hour. And even if there's one student,

teach that student. But fortunately for us the students came. we all were instructors… we got on very well. The old hands and the so called young ones…

Mrs. Jansz was a very active lady. She was already there on the staff when we joined. She introduced drama … Most of her teaching revolved around Medical Faculty. Drama, that was a real success. By then we have been teaching Management Faculty, Science Faculty also. So, Arts, Management and Science. And we introduced this drama element as a continuous assessment.

We introduced singing also to our continuous assessments. We managed to record the songs… we got the students to sing, put them into groups, and without any musical instruments… they did a wonderful job. They enjoyed it and I think they gained a lot of confidence… so we were very innovative in drama and singing. Drama and singing were used to give the students the confidence to use the target language. we were even able to organize an Interfaculty Drama contest.

...I can't remember when the course unit system came into being… [and] what we offered to the first-year undergraduates in the Arts Faculty. Now it is a credit course… We offer.... we have classes every day. Every day from 8-10... that means, five days of the week… so, we have 150 hours. And it is a credit course. Now they have gone a step further...now they have second and third years also... compulsory credit-bearing course... that is a new development. We have a Diploma...and we also have a weekend certificate course and a weekend diploma. That is for outsiders. Some of our internal students also follow it.

"We had to submit background reports and all the formal letters in three languages, in English, Tamil and Sinhala."



Senior Lecturer
Anuruddhika Buddhadasa
Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice

[I am] a member and the first Head of the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice: this department is one of the major [departments] in Sri Lanka today. And this department was established on the 10th of May 2015. So, before the establishment of this as an individual department, we were under the Department of Sociology. We had 3-degree programmes offered in that department: those are Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology and Criminal Justice. We were expecting three separate departments. This degree programme was awarded under the Department of Sociology. Dr. Sunil Rajaneththi, as a senior lecturer, was keen on the official things that are related to the formation of a separate department. And at that time, the Head was Prof. M.W. Jayasundara, so at that time we had a big responsibility... to prepare the necessary documents and submissions...and it took a while. An unexpected delay was there in the Sri Lankan system. There were so many mistakes. So that was in 2015.

We were informed that a required formal approval was granted from the university grant commission. Then… at that time the Vice Chancellor of this university was Prof. Sampath Amaratunge. And the Dean at that time was Senior Lecturer Lasantha Nawaratna. So, we were called for a meeting, given the formal approval of the department, then… We should have a Head of Department. Then we were asked to propose the names… There were some [proposed]; finally, my name was proposed. They required the Vice Chancellor and the Dean to get [the] consent to appoint me as the first Head of the Department. So, I managed to get the consent in writing, and I was appointed as the Acting Head of the Department… to see whether I was capable of the required duties of the Head of the Department.

At that time, one student wanted to transfer her degree to English medium... This girl had gone up to the Vice Chancellor and told her willingness to follow her degree programme in the English medium. We had to offer the degree programme in English. So, the Vice Chancellor had told her that if the Head agreed, that she could go ahead. So… I was the first one to start… not that I am boasting… that is the fact. I started with 4 students. So, I said that girl at least we should have 5, and then we had to interview and test their capability… and we had a formal interview and managed to select three boys and three girls. That was a new change in the faculty.

I was then just in a corner [of the] department of Sociology and… we had to submit background reports and all the formal letters in three languages, in English, Tamil and Sinhala; that was the formality once the department was established formally.

At that time the Dean said that we could use a part of the Wimarshana Hall; it was separated just a as a room and made the partition. But then, finding places to conduct lectures was difficult.... Before a lecture starts, I had to take 10 to 15 minutes to find the lecture room... I think the department name board is still there in that place. So, we managed to go through getting the spaces and to use lecture rooms. That is how we did it. One of our lecturers, Prof. Jayasundara, Dr. Sunil Rathnayake and I went to the Dean and managed to get the downstairs basement lecture hall.

During my headship, I managed to award students two gold medals; one was in memory of our Professor Ratnapala and the other one is for the Department of Anthropology in the name of Emeritus Professor. B.A. Tennyson Perera. And we had to hire visiting lecturers who are capable of doing lectures in both mediums, English & Sinhala. We managed to do it.

…and the next Head was Prof Sunil Rajaneththi. And now it is Prof. Dhanapala. Now there are diploma programmes introduced in the times of Prof. Ratnapala, as well as Prof. Jayasundara; a number of diplomas were introduced by Prof. Rajaneththi for the A/L students. So, the department is contributing to national development.

The first-ever drama produced at Vidyodaya University was 'Sakkaya Ditthi'.



Buddhadasa Galappatti

Writer, Poet, and Renowned Makeup Artist

I was a student at the Vidyodaya University of Ceylon from 1965 to 1968. During my time, I witnessed the very first steps taken toward a formal theatre culture on campus. The first-ever drama produced at Vidyodaya University was *Sakkaya Ditthi*. It was a production of the Drama Society (*Natya Parshadaya*), which was under the purview of the Department of Sinhala. At that time, I served as the Editor of the Drama Society.

Following that success, the Department of Sinhala produced its second major drama, *Kendan Gedara Ada*, directed by Professor Mendis Rohanadeera. Around the same period, another notable production emerged from within our campus community titled *Pitastharaya*, produced by Bandusiri Egodage. This was entirely a student-driven production and was successfully staged.

Furthermore, even the legendary Professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra created a play specifically for Vidyodaya University titled *Kiri Muttiya Gange Giya*, produced through the Sinhala Department. These years marked a golden era where the university began to establish its own unique identity in the world of Sri Lankan drama.

I was a student from the Arts Faculty and specialized in Economics.



Emeritus Professor
M.W. Wickramarachchi

Department of Accounting
Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce

One thing I observed was those students in universities—especially at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, that is to say, the students of Vidyodaya—they study, they graduate, but there are no jobs. At that time, we only had the Faculty of Arts. Within it, there was a department for Economics, Public and Business Administration. I was a student who specialized in Economics within that department.

The graduates we produced found employment very rarely. That was a major problem. We don't think about that enough. Around [19]78, I tried to bring those ideas to the Business Department, but I wasn't able to do it. Later, around [19]85, I think... perhaps having taken my ideas into consideration as well, the Deans made an effort to start a department called the Department of Accounting. At that point, what I said was that this degree must be prepared in a way that graduates can find jobs in Sri Lanka; that priority must be given to that. During meetings of the Management Faculty, I spoke about this. After the Accountancy Department was established, I made significant efforts to shift our focus toward more employable, professionalized education. To achieve this, students needed professional English proficiency. At that time, the English Unit functioned under the purview of the Department of English. The lecturers within that unit were very supportive.

I am a 'legitimate son' of that mother, Faculty of Arts.

Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunga

Chairman: University Grants Commission (2020–present)
Former Vice-Chancellor: University of Sri Jayewardenepura (2014-2020)



I entered the University of Sri Jayewardenepura in late 1983, having sat for my G.C.E. Advanced Level examination in 1982.

A significant event in my journey as Vice-Chancellor was the complete renovation of the Bandaranayake Hall. When that historic building was on the verge of collapsing, I took it upon myself to fully restore it. It was Professor Sunil Ariyaratne who provided the vision and guidance, advising me on how to recreate the hall exactly as it appeared in its original, traditional form.

My education in Economics was shaped by one of the giants of the field in Sri Lanka, Professor Chandrasena Thilakarathna. He was a former Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC). Today, I am speaking to you from that very chair—the same seat he once occupied. This brings me a sense of profound, humble satisfaction.

There is a historical significance to my appointment as Chairman of the UGC; at the time of my appointment, I was the youngest person to hold the post in its 40-year history. Also, for four decades, this position had been almost exclusively held by Vice-Chancellors from the University of Colombo or the University of Peradeniya. I was the first to break with tradition, a distinction I believe brings great honour to the Department of Economics and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences where I was nurtured.

My own undergraduate years were shaped by the upheavals of that turbulent period. Like many of my peers, I took nearly seven years to complete my degree, as the universities were closed during the dark years of 1987, 1988, and 1989. The memory of that disruption—the frustration of lost time and interrupted study—has never left me. It was this experience that informed my actions many years later. When the COVID-19 pandemic once again forced universities to close, I negotiated with the government to ensure that students were provided with free data access. I was determined that this generation would not endure the same educational standstill that we had faced.

The physical scenery of the university was also very different in those days. The reading room of our time is what now stands as the Auditorium; it was there that we spent long hours immersed in books and conversation. The main library, along with the Faculties of Science and Management, was then housed in the Sumangala Building. It was within those same walls that the Venerable Sri Sumangala Thero established what later became the National Archives of Sri Lanka.

The Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, as we know it today, originated from the Departments of Business Administration and Public Administration; both of which were initially sub-sections of the Department of Economics. The Faculty of Management was originated from the Department of Economics within the Faculty of Arts. I am a 'legitimate son' of that mother, Faculty of Arts.

The Faculties of Arts, Applied Sciences, and Management all commenced on the same day.

Senior Professor
U. Anura Kumara

Former Dean (2014–2020)
Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce



I entered the Faculty of Arts (now Humanities and Social Sciences) at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura in 1985. Having followed the Arts stream for my G.C.E. Advanced Level, I studied Economics, Geography, Buddhist Civilization, and Sinhala. Although I pursued the Arts, I possessed a Distinction for Mathematics at my Ordinary Levels. During my first year at the Faculty, I selected Economics, Geography, and Statistics as my subjects. Based on my performance in the first-year examinations, I was granted the opportunity to specialize in any of those three subjects. I chose to pursue a Special Degree in Economics, and within that field, I further specialized in Econometrics.

I was fortunate to have a natural aptitude for Mathematics, which became a strong foundation for my study of Economics. At that time, the Departments of Economics and Geography were led by highly respected scholars. In particular, the teaching of Statistics, Mathematics, and Operational Research was anchored within the Department of Economics itself. Looking back, I consider it one of the great blessings of my life to have learned under such distinguished academics. I made a conscious effort to work closely with my teachers and to benefit as much as I could from their guidance.

A particularly formative part of my undergraduate years was the six years I spent as a Research Assistant under Professor Rohana Uluwisheva in the Department of Geography. Because of the social unrest of the time, the university was closed for nearly two and a half years. As a result, what should have been a four-year degree became a six-year journey—one that, despite its challenges, shaped me in lasting ways.

Assisting Professor Uluwisheva did not merely provide me with a deep understanding of research methodology; his compassionate nature and character profoundly influenced the trajectory of my life. To this day, I continue to collaborate with him on research projects. Furthermore, as an undergraduate, I had the privilege of assisting various other professors and lecturers in both the Geography and Economics departments with their research endeavours. My university life was not confined to the classroom. I was an active participant in student activities and served as the Treasurer of the Economics Society. During my tenure, we generated a record income for the society and successfully published *Economics Journal* of the department.

A unique aspect of our time was the shared residential life. The Faculties of Arts, Applied Sciences, and Management all commenced on the same day. Our hostel placements were made without faculty segregation, allowing students from all three disciplines to live together. This integration provided us with a rare opportunity to build friendships and share diverse experiences across different academic fields.

Following the completion of my Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Economics in 1992, I was appointed as an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Business Administration within the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce. This role allowed me to teach Economics, Mathematics, and Statistics, which were the subjects I mastered in the Faculty of Arts, to Management students.

While serving as a lecturer, I completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Social Statistics at the Faculty of Arts. The quantitative knowledge I gained through my initial faculty, that is the Arts Faculty, served as a vital stepping stone for my future qualifications: just to name, an MSc in Operational Research from the Department of Mathematics, Faculty of Engineering, University of Moratuwa, and a PhD in Computer Simulation from the Materials and Engineering Research Institute at Sheffield Hallam University, UK.

It is a point of great pride for me that the foundation laid by my Special Degree in Economics and my Postgraduate Diploma in Social Statistics at the Faculty of Arts enabled me to earn postgraduate degrees from Faculties of Engineering. This foundation also empowered me to excel in subjects like Management, Marketing, and Accounting, ultimately leading to the honour of serving twice as the Dean of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce.

I firmly believe that the social and academic environment of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura did more than just provide me with a base for a successful life; it provided the inspiration to serve the world. I extend my deepest gratitude to all the professors and lecturers of the faculty, my contemporaries, everyone who assisted me in various ways, and finally, the citizens of this country whose tax money funded my free education.

The bond between teacher and student is built on affection and mutual respect.



Champika Liyanaarachchi
Daily Mirror
Consultant Editor (2015–present)
Chief Editor (2007–2015)

I arrived at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura as a student in 1992, joining the degree programme two months after it had commenced. In the very first English examination, I secured the highest marks in the batch. Recognizing this potential, the Dean granted me a life-changing opportunity to participate in a global programme sponsored by the Japanese Prime Minister's Office. This experience took me across the world—to Japan, South Africa, Tanzania, the United Arab Emirates, and Singapore.

The foundation laid at the 'Arts Faculty' of Jayewardenepura was the bedrock of my professional success. It led me to become the Chief Editor of *Daily Mirror* and allowed me to serve as an external lecturer at the University of Colombo.

Coming from an all-girls school, the university environment was my first real window into the world; it gave me the confidence to engage with male peers and understand global dynamics. In Eastern cultures, the bond between teacher and student is built on affection and mutual respect, and I was incredibly fortunate to be part of such a community. This bond transcended my university years. My relationship with my English lecturer, Ms. Parvathi Nagasundaram, was more than academic: it is like the bond between a mother and a daughter.

It is not the certificate that matters most, but the tempering you receive at university.

Rohana Hettiarachchi
Executive Director
PAFFREL Organisation



I remember this incident vividly; it happened during my first few days at the university in early 1995. As everyone knows, the first few months are the 'ragging season.' One night, around 9:00 or 10:00 PM, three or four of us were walking back to the hostel from the direction of the Bandaranayake Hall.

We encountered a young man, perhaps 30 or 35 years old. He approached us and asked, 'Where did you go, children?' We smiled and replied that we had just gone for a walk. At that moment, we had no idea if he was a lecturer or an older student. After chatting for a minute or two, he took us by our hands and led us to an official residence on the ground floor of the Soratha Building. He took us straight to the kitchen and gave us as much food as we could eat, treating us with incredible friendliness. It was only much later that we realized the person who had fed us was Professor Saman Sir (Chandra Ranasinghe).

Most of our early university experiences revolve around the 'rag season' and student activism. However, the true strength of Jayewardenepura at that time was the lack of barriers between faculties. Whether you were from the Faculty of Arts, Management, Medicine, or Science, we all lived together in the same hostels. This created a profound bond and a sense of belonging that remains just as strong today.

I want to share this message: Today, there are many ways to obtain a degree certificate. It is not the certificate that matters most, but the tempering (*pannaraya*) you receive at university and the relationships you build. During the ragging period, there was a saying: 'By the second year, if a student can get on a bus with not even a single rupee in his pocket, travel around the country, and return well-fed and looked after by friends, then he has received the true university tempering.'

'Nala Mudu Suwanda' concert created a great sense of inspiration.

Nilar N. Cassim
Deputy Director
Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation
Lyricist



When I had to choose between the University of Colombo and the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, I was already a budding poet and lyricist. I chose Jayewardenepura specifically because of the opportunity to become a student of Professor Sunil Ariyaratne.

The cultural activities that existed at that time also created a great sense of inspiration within us. It was during that period that the *Nala Mudu Suwanda* concert series was inaugurated. I, too, became a part of that endeavour.

At the same time, I was working as a presenter for the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation. A significant milestone was when Rupavahini decided to produce a special *Shanida Ayubowan* live broadcast from within the university. We spent three to four hours showcasing the musical talents, innovations, and unique skills of J'pura students to the entire nation. I had the privilege of being the lead presenter for that historic broadcast.

My academic and professional lives were as two parallel tracks. In maintaining the synergy between them, I drew immense strength from two pillars, the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation and the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

Under the shade of *Kasa* trees [Casuarina], we conducted various musical appreciation programmes. Later on, I had the opportunity to join the Alumni Association. Through that, I became involved in several aesthetic activities centered around the university, like *Gi Pedura* programmes. Also, the Alumni Association spearheaded an annual awards ceremony. Professor Sunil Ariyaratne and other distinguished alumni played a leading role in organizing this.

The Nayaka Thero said, 'University students must be revolutionary in spirit, yet relentlessly exploratory in the pursuit of truth'.

K.B.G. Peter
Labourer: 1961–2001
(Retired)



When the university started back in 1959, we didn't have our own space. We were operating out of the Vidyodaya Pirivena premises. The Nayaka Thero [the founding leader] was on the hunt for a proper piece of land to call our own.

At one point, they found a plot in Ratmalana. But the Nayaka Thero wasn't convinced. He felt it was a bit risky, too close to the Galle Road where all sorts of people hung around. He worried about the students' safety and even the equipment. Plus, being so close to the ocean, the salty air would have rotted the buildings in no time. He thought about the future of the institution and the well-being of the kids, and that's why he then chose this historic land in Gangodawila, which belonged to Sunethradevi Pirivena.

Back then, there was just one single-storey building with a tiled roof. That's where the university began. While we were there, the Bandaranayake Hall was being built. I remember the 1960 convocation; there were only about thirty-six graduates back then!

Water was a huge problem. We didn't have taps or running water, so the Nayaka Thero took matters into his own hands to dig a well. Behind the guest house, there was a pond. It was meant for the science labs, to grow water plants and breed fish for experiments. That's where the plans for the well were made, too.

I'll never forget this one story: there were nine students who were real firebrands—the kind of guys always leading protests and unions. But they were brilliant; all nine of them passed with honours. The Nayaka Thero was so happy for them. One evening, they all came running to him and knelt at his feet to show their respect. The Nayaka Thero was so moved, he actually was in tears. Right then, he said something that students still repeat today: "University students must be revolutionary in spirit, yet relentlessly exploratory in the pursuit of truth."

University's Thalagoya suspended three staff members.

M. K. G. Silva
Office Aide: 1981-2022



I've been working here since 1981, and I'm still in service today. Back then, I started as an Office Aide I remember a pretty famous story from the early days involving a bit of trouble with the law. Two of our staff members got caught by the Supervising Officers for killing a *Talagoya* (monitor lizard) for meat. They were immediately suspended.

At the time, Professor Kanggahaarachchi was the Vice-Chancellor [VC]. Someone who worked at the VC's house back in 1982 tried to pull some strings to get those two guys off the hook. But it backfired. All three of them ended up getting suspended! It actually made the headlines in the *Divayina* newspaper. I still remember the title: "University's *Thalagoya* suspended three staff members."

Things got much darker during the '88-'89 period of terror (*Bheeshanaya*). There was a lot of suspicion in the air. There was a hostel named Rahula Hostel. As I remember, Mr. Gamini Dissanayake was in the ruling government at the time. Some university students found a diary belonging to a couple of guys who had been staying there. After reading it, the students became convinced these two were outsiders.

The next morning, right in front of where the water tank stands today, there were two big trees. One is still there. Those two guys had been dragged to these trees, and tied their arms out wide, lashing them to the trunks. Students had thought that these two were spies sent to keep tabs on them. By about 10:00 AM, a "Kangaroo Cab"— you remember those red taxis back then? –- pulled up to the main gate. Two men got out, casually twirling pistols in their hands, and walked straight up to the trees.

The whole thing was being watched; even international journalists were at the main gate with their cameras. As the men started untying them, one of the captives got so spooked that he managed to break free, shoved everyone aside, and bolted toward the woods near the library. They untied the other guy, threw him into the cab, and sped off toward Wijerama. Not five minutes later, we got the news—he had been taken to the rubber-estate road nearby and shot dead.

During that time, the military took over parts of the campus. They set up a camp at the Lady Marcus hostel and used the Bandaranayake Hall as a detention holding centre. It was a terrifying time to be on campus.

Rajagala Project

All activities relating to exploration, excavation, conservation, and archaeological landscape documentation at the Rajagala Archaeological Site are carried out under the academic direction and supervision of the academic staff of the Department of History and Archaeology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura. In order to formalise this collaborative framework, a Memorandum of Understanding was executed on 22 August 2012 between the Department of Archaeology, Sri Lanka and the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Since the execution of that Memorandum of Understanding, archaeological research and field investigations at Rajagala have been conducted as a joint project of these two institutions.

The Rajagala Archaeological Site is located approximately 26 kilometres along the Ampara–Mahiyanganaya main road and about 1 kilometre inland from the Bakkiella junction, within the Uhana Divisional Secretariat Division. The site rises to an elevation of approximately 1,038 feet above mean sea level and extends across nearly 800 acres of archaeologically significant terrain containing numerous structural remains. Although the site is presently known as “Rajagala” or “Rassahela,” available historical and epigraphic evidence suggests that these names are of comparatively recent origin.

In ancient times, the site presently known as Rajagala was referred to by several names recorded in literary sources and stone inscriptions, including *Girikumbhila Viharaya, Kumbhilathispav Viharaya, Ariyakara Viharaya, Ariyakoti Viharaya,* and *Arittara Vehara*. Epigraphic and literary evidence indicates that these appellations were in use during the Anuradhapura period and remained current for nearly ten centuries, after which they gradually fell out of usage. In contemporary practice, the name “Rajagala” has gained common acceptance.

Apart from the ancient capitals of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, the Rajagala Archaeological Site is the location with the highest concentration of monuments in Sri Lanka. It is also the only site

conclusively identified through inscriptional evidence as the location where the relics of Arahant Mahinda were enshrined. Archaeological remains, dating approximately from the 1st century BCE to the 10th century CE, are distributed throughout the site. To date, more than 500 monuments and nearly 100 inscriptions have been documented. All identified remains thus far are attributable to the Anuradhapura period. The preservation of such a substantial number of monuments from this period, largely unaffected by later reconstruction or structural modification, demonstrates the exceptional historical and archaeological significance of the site.

Financial support for archaeological activities at Rajagala has been channelled through the Department of Archaeology by the Government of Sri Lanka, the Central Cultural Fund under the Ministry of Education, and the U.S. Ambassador's Fund in 2013 and again in 2015. With the direct involvement of the Department of History and Archaeology, extensive programmes of exploration, excavation, documentation, and conservation have been undertaken at the site, including:

- Archaeological investigation and systematic documentation
- Excavation and conservation of the stone-pathway in the East
- Excavation and conservation of *Lahabathgeya*
- Excavation and conservation of the *Galpathra* building
- Excavation and conservation of *Pohoya Geya*
- Excavation and conservation of the refectory (*Danashalava*)
- Excavation and conservation of the *Janthāghara*
- Excavation and conservation of *Tempita* building
- Restoration of the Rajagala reservoir and its embankment
- Excavation and conservation of *Pethmaga*
- Excavation and conservation of *Upāshika Shamika Lena*
- Conservation of *Sihamukha Lena*
- Conservation of Cave No. 01
- Excavation and conservation of Cave No. 22 with inscriptions
- Excavation and conservation of the stone-pathway leading uphill from the reservoir
- Excavation and conservation of buildings near the pathway
- Conservation of the access road around the reservoir
- Excavation of No. 23 building
- Excavation and conservation of small stupas
- Excavation and conservation of the large stupas
- Excavation and conservation of the terrace of the small stupa
- Excavation and conservation of the stone retaining walls around the terrace of the stupa
- Excavation and conservation of *Bodhighara*
- Conducting three annual international research excavations related to *Mahalena*, with the participation of foreign scholars

In addition to protecting archaeological remains for future generations, the project has also contributed to the development of essential infrastructure associated with the site, including:

- Construction of a new access road to Rajagala summit via Pulukunawa
- Construction of a pilgrims' rest at the summit
- Construction of an administrative office at the summit
- Construction of sanitary facilities
- Construction of a canteen and a kitchen
- Provision of water facilities

- Construction of a police post
- Construction of a temporary store
- Provision of electricity
- Construction of a smithy
- Construction of an information centre at the foot of Rajagala
- Construction of sanitary facilities at the base
- Construction of a rest area and field office
- Construction of three parking areas for vehicles
- Construction of a 600-metre access road

Furthermore, the project continues to carry out maintenance activities, promote public awareness in the Ampara region regarding heritage protection and archaeological values, provide schoolbooks and equipment to students at nearby schools through donor support, and deliver educational programmes and exhibitions for visitors at the information centre.

Currently, the Rajagala Project also serves as an important source of employment for the local community. It offers professional opportunities for graduates in History and Archaeology, as well as training for undergraduates pursuing these disciplines. In addition, the project has significantly enhanced the visibility of the region among both local and international tourists, thereby contributing to the development of the tourism sector.

History and Archaeology Museum

The Museum of History and Archaeology was founded on October 28, 1962, under the visionary guidance of the Most Venerable Welivitiye Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero, who was both the Head of the Department of Archaeology and the first Vice-Chancellor of Vidyodaya University. This collection was built through the generosity of the university community and the public.

Initially housed in temporary locations within the Sumangala Mansion, the museum was moved to its permanent home on the ground floor of the mansion on November 15, 1985. The collection is a treasure trove of university history and national heritage, featuring personal items used by the late Ven. Sri Soratha Nayaka Thero, ancient coins, pottery, sculptures, beads, and replicas of artifacts from the Indus Valley and the Khajuraho Monuments.

The museum's collections encompass a diverse range of artefacts and exhibits, reflecting the rich historical and cultural heritage of the region. In addition to donations from scholars and the public, the museum houses ancient coins, murals, and other significant archaeological finds. These items have been carefully preserved and documented to facilitate research, education, and public engagement.

1. **Murals and coins**

The most valuable early acquisition was a gift from the Department of Cultural Affairs:

- Prince Siddhartha's Archery Display
- The *Vessantara Jataka***:** A scene showing King Vessantara donating the white elephant on two large 12x3 foot canvas reproductions (*Senkadagala* era).



The Numismatic Collection

Vidyodaya University Chancellor: 7 silver coins.

Leelananda Caldera (Nugegoda): 255 coins (gold, silver, and copper).

N. P. Perera (Wadduwa): 24 silver and copper coins.

Ven. Nawulle Dhammananda Thero: 1 copper coin.

L. B. de Silva (Kurunegala): 114 Dambadeniya-era copper coins.

M. K. Sirisena (Beralapanathara): 342 Dutch copper coins.

D. Allis (Anuradhapura): 12 copper coins.

Ven. Mahaweva Rathanapala Thero: 03 copper coins

Edmond Gunawardene (Gangodawila): 02 copper coins

Ven. Akuratiye Amarawansa Thero: 13 copper coins.

Ven.T.P. Wimalabuddhi Thero: 03 silver coins

T.Y. Piyasena: 03 copper coins

2. Other Donations

- Ven. Mahawewa Rathanapala Thero: A fragment of a small bronze pillar
- Ven. Handupelpola Punñyarathana Thero: An Indian pointed knife
- Ven. Handupelpola Punñyarathana Thero: A carved wooden eaves tile (*pekada*)
- Ven. Walawahangunawewa Sri Rathnajothi Thero: A small headless stone statue of the Goddess Tara of *Mahayana*
- M. P. A. Kariyawasam: A ceramic shard featuring the figure of a *liyakinduri* (a mythical half-human creature)
- Ven. Keselgamuwe Jinarathana Thero: An iron arecanut cutter (*giraya*) with floral engravings
- Dr. Ananda Guruge: Ten replicas of seals from Mohenjo-Daro
- Sarath Wattala: A replica of a bronze Buddha statue in the *pralambapada* (sitting on a chair) posture
- The Chief Prelate of the Pelmadulla Rajamaha Viharya (Temple): A large brass lamp

3. Artifacts Acquired for Exhibition

- A bronze Buddha statue
- A Chinese *Mahayana* Buddha statue
- A small bronze *Samadhi* Buddha statue
- A bronze figure of a deity
- The stone pillars and circular bases believed to be from the bed where the remains of Ven. Sri Rahula Thero of Ambana Gallena were kept (*Galpada* and *Mavakara Padama*)
- Four wooden pillars found buried in the mud of a field in Ambana
- A clay pot with beaded patterns (*Boradath*)
- A blue marble lamp
- A pointed stylus knife
- A fragment of a stone inscription dating back to the 2nd Century AD
- A large brass utensil (*Serukkal)*
- A brass tobacco box (*heppuva*)
- Another utensil (*Serukkal)*
- A brass tray
- A small lime box (*killota*) for betel chewing

- A brass *sembuwa* (water pitcher)
- A "double-bottomed" brass lime box
- A stylus for writing on palm leaves (*panhinda*)
- A brass plate
- Two lime boxes
- Four brass Buddha figures
- Eight brass figures in a kneeling/worshipping posture
- An ancient Sinhalese sword
- A wooden walking stick (*bastama*)
- A spear fitted with an iron point
- A bronze statue of *Mahayana Bodhisattva*
- A roof tile found from Hiroshima, Japan

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 5*, pp. 24-27)

Acquisitions Recorded by 1964

By 1964, the following items were added to the museum's collection:

- A 4 ½-foot canvas painting of a Sigiriya fresco
- A photograph of King Buwanekabahu's *demaladuva* copper plate (*sannasa*)
- A photograph of the 1815 Kandyan Convention (the agreement between the Sinhalese and the British)
- Maps of Colombo and Galle from the Portuguese and Dutch periods
- A stone carving featuring two lion figures
- A stone relic casket (*karanduwa*)
- Forty replicas of Indian artifacts, spanning from the Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa eras up to the 12th Century AD
- A head of an Avalokiteshvara statue

(Vidyodaya University, *Court Report, Session 6*, pp. 24-27)

The museum, maintained in affiliation with the Department of History and Archaeology also commissioned high-quality replicas of significant historical works. These include replicas of the *siripatula* (Sacred Footprint) stone slabs—both the version with the ceremonial umbrella (*chathra*) and the version without—based on the originals kept at the Colombo National Museum. Another notable replica added was the depiction of the Great Renunciation (*mahabhinishkramana*) from the Ambalantota Temple. By 1965, the collection had grown to include several other rare items:

- Ancient Manuscripts: Several palm-leaf manuscript pages (*puskola paththiru*) believed to date back to the 15th Century, discovered at the Maniyangama Rajamaha Viharaya.
- Numismatic Finds: Ten Roman coins discovered during the excavation of a house foundation in Etthalawatta, Madampe.
- Pottery and Architecture: A broken clay head fragment finished with a smooth plaster coating found at the Pidurangala Temple, and an ancient carved roof tile found at the Themgallanda Temple.

(Vidyodaya University, *Annual Report 1965/66,* 1967, pp. 1-48)

Among the most scientifically significant items housed in the museum is a fragment of a human skull coated in red ochre, which was discovered in the Pahiyangala Cave. This artifact remains a vital link to Sri Lanka's prehistoric past. The museum is now undergoing a major transformation. Modernization efforts are currently underway to provide better hall facilities and specialized laboratory spaces. These upgrades include new, state-of-the-art lighting systems designed to protect and highlight the artifacts, ensuring the museum remains a premier centre for research and heritage for years to come.



Sri Wimaladhamma Building

Sri Wimaladhamma Building - Proposed Structure





University of Sri Jayewardenepura
Gangodawila, Nugegoda
Sri Lanka.