

ISSN 2630-774X



GEOGRAPHY NEWS
Department of Geography
University of Ruhuna

Biannual Newsletter

May 2018 - December 2018

Volume 03

“Geography News” is a biannual compilation of information on the academic and professional activities of the staff and students of the Department of Geography, University of Ruhuna, Matara, Sri Lanka.

**Department of Geography
University of Ruhuna
Matara
Sri Lanka**

A Guest speech



A guest speech was delivered at the Department of Geography on 11th of June in 2018 by Professor Sirinimal Wickramaratne, former Head, Department of Geography, University of Peradeniya and shared his academic experience both in Sri Lanka and the USA.



New Comers Welcome Function.....

The welcome function of the Special Degree Part I students was held at the Department of Geography, University of Ruhuna on the 09th of July 2018.

2013/2014 Final Year Students Farewell Function.....

52 final year students (academic year 2013/2014) in the Department of Geography, completed their undergraduate studies in May 2018.



A farewell function for them was held at the University Guest House, University of Ruhuna on 16th of July 2018. The Head, Department of Geography and all academic and non-



academic staff members participated in this event.



Ruhuna Geography Teachers Association.....

Annual General Meeting of the Geography Teachers' Association was held on 14th July 2018. This Association conducted several seminars and workshops with the contribution from Head and other academic members in the Department of Geography, to help the teachers to update their geographical knowledge. In addition, the association helped school students to enhance their geographical knowledge.



Mr. W. K. N. C. Withanage



Mr. W.K.N.C. Withanage, Probationary Lecturer in the Department of Geography was awarded MSc in GIS & Remote Sensing from the Postgraduate Institute of Science, University of Peradeniyawith effect from 02.05.2018. We congratulate him for his future academic life.

Dr. S. Wijerathne



Dr.SamanWijerathne,Senior Lecturer was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Ruhuna with effect from 01.12.2016. The title of his PhD thesis was “Impact of the Tsunami in 2004 on Landforms and Ecosystems in the South West Coast of Sri Lanka”.

The Department wishes him good luck for further progress in his academic work.

Our Academic Members Presented Several Research Papers at the International Conferences

Jayasinghe, C., Hemakumara, G. P. T. S. and Hewage, P. (2018). **GIS Based Assessment of the Urban Green Space Per-Capita in Galle City, Sri Lanka.** International Research Symposium on Social Sciences and Humanities (IRSSSH-2018) organized by the National Centre for Advanced Studies, Colombo on 13-14 December 2018.

Dayalatha, W. K. V., Siddhisena, K. A. P. and Ali, S. K. M. (2018). **People's Awareness of Seagrass and Affected Reasons for Its Degradation in the Southern Coastal Area.** International Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS-2018), University of Sri Jayawardanapura, on 29-30 November 2018.

Dayalatha, W. K. V. (2018). **Human Impact on Degradation of Coral Resources in the Southern Coastal Area in Sri Lanka.** International Research Symposium on Social Sciences and Humanities (IRSSSH-2018) organized by the National Centre for Advanced Studies, Colombo on 13-14 December 2018.

Dayalatha, W. K. V. (2018). **The Use of Mangrove as a Source of Fire Wood: A Socio-Economic Study on Selected Mangrove in Southern Sri Lanka.** 5th International



Conference on Arts and Humanities -ICOAH, Colombo on 27-28 September 2018.

(Mrs. W. K.V. Dayalatha with the other presenters at the ICOCH conference, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 27/28. 09. 2018).

Ranabahu, S., Siddhisena, K. A. P., Amarasinghe, S., Ali, S. K. M. and Amaraweera, P. (2018). **Family Relationships and Social Support among Community-dwelling Elders of Sri Lanka**. International Sociological Association Joint Conference for RC06 (Family) & RC41



(Population) National University of Singapore, on 17-19 May 2018.

(Mrs. R. A. S. P. Shyama Ranabahu amidst the panel discussion at the ISA conference,
Singapore, 17/19. 05. 2018)

Ranabahu, S. (2018). **Implications of Active Ageing among Female Elders of Sri Lanka.** IFA 14th Global Conference on Ageing organized by the International Federation of Ageing, Ryerson



University, Toronto, Canada on 8-10 August 2018.

(Mrs. R. A.S.P. Shyama Ranabahu with two other presenters at the IFA conference, Toronto, Canada, 08/10. 08. 2018)

Full paper publications in International Journals and conference proceedings

Edirisinghe, G. and Pannilage, U. (2018). **A Socio Economic Analysis on Environmental Health Issues in the Hambantota District of Sri Lanka.** International Journal of World Journals of Engineering Research and Technology (WJERT).4(4):125-132.

Jayasinghe, D. B. C., Hemakumara, G. P. T. S. and Hewage, P. (2018). **Measuring the Suitability of Urban Residential Zones in Galle City: A GIS Analysis**. Proceedings of the International Conference on 'Cities, People and Places' - ICCPP - University of Moratuwa on 05-06 October, 2018.

Hemakumara, G. P. T. S. and Rainis, R. (2018). **Spatial Behaviour Modelling of Unauthorized Housing in Colombo, Sri Lanka**. KEMANUSIAAN, International Journal of The Asian Journal of Humanities, 25(2):91-107.

Hemakumara, G. P. T. S. and Rainis, R. (2018). **Geo-statistical Index for Reshaping the Pattern of Households Emerging over the Low Lying Areas of the Colombo Metropolitan Region**. International Journal of the Information and Decision Sciences, 10 (03).



Full paper publications in National Journals

Ranabahu, R.A.S.P., Siddhisena, K.A.P., Amarasinghe, S., Ali, S.K.M. (2018). **Social Dimension of Active Ageing among Community-dwelling Elders in Sri Lanka**. Sri Lanka Journal of Population Studies, Population Association of Sri Lanka, Vol. 18-19: 21-32.

Dayalatha, W.K.V. (2018). **The Use of Mangroves as a Source of Fire Wood: A Socio-Economic Study on Selected Mangroves in Southern Sri Lanka**. Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Review (JSSHR), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna, Vol. 03(03).

Dayalatha, W.K.V. (2018). **Population Increase in the Coastal Belt of Matara and Galle Districts in Southern Sri Lanka**. The Faculty Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (FJASS), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna, Vol. 07(02).

Yapa, L.G.D.S. (2018). **Contribution of Home Garden to Household Food Security in Sri Lanka: A Comparative Study on Wet zone**. Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Review (JSSHR), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna, Vol. 03(03).

Ranasinghe, W. C. and Hemakumara, G. P. T. S. (2018). **Spatial modelling of the householders' perception and assessment of the potentiality to improve the urban green coverage in residential area: A case study from Isadeen Town, Matara, Sri Lanka**. Ruhuna Journal of Science, Faculty of Science, University of Ruhuna, Vol. 9, 44-56.

Withange W.K.N.C. (2018). **Urban-rural interactions and role of planned townships in North central province, Sri Lanka: An empirical investigation of functions for rural**

development approach, Journal of social sciences and Humanities Review, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka, Vol 3 (3).

Amaraweera, P. H. (2018). **Community perception and response to drought risks in the Hambantota district in Sri Lanka**. Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Review (JSSHR), Vol. 03(04), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

Ranabahu, R.A.S.P. and Amaraweera, P.H. (2018). **Perception of elders on active ageing: a case study of Southern Sri Lanka**. Rohana, Research Journal of the University of Ruhuna, Vol. 10, 2018, University of Ruhuna.

Appointments

Our Staff Members served as visiting lecturers

Senior Professor. P. Hewage served as a visiting lecturer, at the Department of Geography, University of Kelaniya.

Dr.G.P.T.S. Hemakumara served as a visiting Lecturer, at the Department of History and Archaeology, University of Ruhuna.

Our Staff Members served as Resource Persons in Several Government Establishments

Senior Professor. P. Hewage served as;

Resource Person of the awareness program conducted for the school teachers, by the Disaster Management Unit, District Secretariat, Matara on 02nd July 2018.

Resource Person at the workshop of the Certificate Course in Professional Development in Higher Education (CCPDHE) - 2018, at the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna, Hapugala, Galle which was held on 20th June 2018.

Dr. S.Wijeratne served as;

Resource Person of the Preparation of Sri Lanka's third National communication on climate change and provincial adaptation plan for the southern province-2018, organized by Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment.

Our Staff Members were invited to be Chairpersons in Several Research Symposiums

Senior Professor. P.Hewage served as;

Chairperson of the International Research Symposium - 2018 of NCAS which was held from 13th December, 2018 to 14th December, 2018 under the sub theme “Law, Good Governance and Sustainable Development”.

R. A. S. P. Ranabahu served as;

Chairperson of the 3rd Ruhuna Arts Students ‘Annual Sessions (RASAS) – 2018, which was held on 20th September 2018, at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

Several Academic Members Received Invitations to be Committee Members in Research Symposiums

Senior Professor.P.Hewage served as;

Committee Member of the International Research Symposium on Social Sciences and Humanities (IRSSSH) 2018: Towards a Sustainable Future which was held on 13th and 14th December, 2018 in Colombo.

Editorial Committee Member of the National Centre for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (NCAS) - 2018, Colombo.

Dr.S. L. J. Fernando served as;

Member of the Scholarship Committee, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

Dr. H. I. G. C. Kumara served as;

Committee Member, Judge panel, 3rd Undergraduate Research Symposium, Faculty of Science, University of Ruhuna.

Dr.G. P. T. S. Hemakumara served as;

Committee Member, Advisory Committee, Urban Housing Development Authority (UHDA), Ministry of Housing and Construction.

Member of Board of Education(BOE)/ Institute of Town Planners.

Member, Internal Review Panel, Program Review of the Faculty of Management and Finance, University of Ruhuna.

Mrs. W. K. V. Dayalatha served as;

Member, Organizing Committee, 40th Anniversary of the University of Ruhuna.

Mr. P.H. Amaraweera served as;

Committee Member, Learning Management System (LMS), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

Reviewer, 4th Ruhuna University International Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences (RUICHSS) - 2018.

Mrs. R. A. S. P. Ranabahu served as;

Member, Organizing Committee, 3rd Ruhuna Arts Students Annual Sessions (RASAS), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

Senior Professor. P. Hewage, Dr. S. L. J. Fernando, Dr. G. P. T. S. Hemakumara, and Dr. H. I. G. C. Kumara were nominated as;

Members of the Self-Evaluation Report Writing Committee of Institutional Review of University of Ruhuna.

Several Staff Members Served as Coordinators in Several Institutional Contributions

Dr. G. Edirisinghe served as;

Research Coordinator, Ragging and Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) at University of Ruhuna.

Mrs. W. K. V. Dayalatha served as;

Coordinator, Information Technology Unit, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

Several Staff Members Received Invitations to be Reviewers in Several Institutional and Research Symposiums

Senior Professor. P. Hewage and Dr. G. P. T. S. Hemakumara served as;

Program reviewer of the State Universities for Institutional and programme review - 2018.

Dr.S. L. J. Fernando served as;

Reviewer,1st National Undergraduate Research Symposium, Faculty of Science, University of Ruhuna.

Dr. H. I. G. C. Kumara served as;

Reviewer,Curriculum of Diploma/ Certificate Course on Biodiversity Conservation and Management, University of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna.

Reviewer and Evaluator, 1st undergraduate Research Symposium - 2018. Ruhuna Science Research Circle, Faculty of Science, University of Ruhuna.

Mrs. W. K. V. Dayalathaserved as;

Reviewer, 3rd Ruhuna Arts Students Annual Sessions (RASAS) – 2018, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

Mrs. R. A. S. P. Ranabahuserved as;

Reviewer, 3rd Ruhuna Arts Students ‘Annual Sessions (RASAS) – 2018, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

Several Staff Members Participated in One - Day Training workshop on counselling

Dr. S.L.J, Fernando, Dr. H.I.G.C, Kumara, Dr. S. Wijartne, W. K. V, Dayalatha, P.H, Amaraweera, Manjula Karunaratne and W. K. N. C. Withanage participated in the one - day Training workshop on counselling conducted by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

Appointment as a Student Counsellor

Mrs. W. K. V. Dayalathahas been appointed as a student counsellor, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna with effect from 01.11.2018 to 31.10.2019 under the University Act.

Appointment as a Treasurer

Mrs. W. K. V. Dayalathahas been appointed as a treasurer of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna for a period of one year with effect from 15th October, 2018.

Appointment as an Evaluator

Mr. M. S. M. L. Karunaratne served as an evaluator, 1st undergraduate Research Symposium - 2018. Ruhuna Science Research Circle, Faculty of Science, University of Ruhuna.

AHEAD - Project 2018, Department of Geography

Dr. H. I. G. C. Kumara, Dr. S. L. J. Fernando, Mr. P.H.Amaraweera, Mrs. R. A. S. P. Ranabahu, Dr. G. P. T. S. Hemakumara and Mr. W. K. N. C. Withanage.

The above committee served in the development of the ELTA-ELSE Department Project **proposal of Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development (AHEAD) - 2018** in the Department of Geography, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna.

The proposal aims in “Strengthening student-based learning and enhancing employability of students in BA (Hons) Degree program in Geography”. After reviewing the proposal, an evaluation panel of AHEAD visited the Department of Geography on 27th November, 2018.

The academic staff participated in discussion session with the evaluation panel at the Department of Geography, University of Ruhuna.



(Discussion session with the evaluation panel of AHEAD, 27. 11. 2018)

Soft Skills Development Program - (2017 – 2018)

The Department of Geography has started a soft skills development programme for the final year special degree students. The aim of this program is to prepare the students to be familiar with working environments by developing their soft skills. The Career Guidance Unit, the ELTU, Individual experts and institutions are contributing to the success of this program. Mr. M. S. M. L. Karunaratne of the Department of Geography is coordinating the programme. Senior Prof. P. Hewage and Mr. A. C. Karunaratne (Director – CGU) completed the introductory session on 02nd January 2018.

Social Contribution.....

Department of Geography Respects and Adheres to the Social Responsibility

An awareness program for the subject of Geography was held MR/ St' Thomas Girls' School for the A/L students (Grade 12/13) to uplift their knowledge in relation to the new syllabus. Prof. M. Rathnayake served as the resource person.

A Government Officer Training Program on Sustainable Development was conducted by the Southern Provincial Council. Dr. H. I. G. C. Kumara served as a resource person.

A Workshop on Environmental Management and Conservation was conducted by the Ministry of Environment Affairs, Labuduwa, Galle. Dr. H. I. G. C. Kumara served as a resource person.

An awareness program for the school teachers was held by the Disaster Management Centre, District Secretariat office, Matara. Dr. S. Wijerathne and Mr. P.H. Amaraweera served as resource persons.



(Event of awareness program for the school teachers)

Dr. S. Wijerathne participated as a resource person for the Seminar on Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management, conducted by the Disaster Management Centre, Matara and Natural Disaster Information Centre, Department of Geography.

Dr. S. Wijerathne conducted an awareness program of “Disaster Response in a Disaster Event” for the doctors and nurses of the Kamburupitiya



Hospital.

(Event of awareness program for the doctors and nurses)

An awareness program for the school teachers was held by the Disaster Management Centre, District Secretariat office, Matara. Prof. P. Hewage and Prof. P. Liyanarachchi served as resource persons.



(Event of awareness program for the school teachers)

Roleplay Testing was held at the Department of Geography, University of Ruhuna. This program was conducted by the United Nations Volunteer Program. Dr. S. Wijerathne participated as a resource person for this event.



(Event of roleplay testing program with Geography students)

Resource person of the school teachers' awareness workshop which was held on 02nd July was organized by the District Secretariat in Matara, collaboration with the Disaster Management Centre, Matara.

A Seminar for the Advanced Level students of the UdugamaMaha Vidyalaya in Galle was conducted by Dr. S. L. J. Fernando as a resource person.

A one day training workshop on counselling service for the student counsellors and mentors of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna, was conducted at the University Guest House by Dr. S. L. J. Fernando as resource person.

An awareness program for A/L students of Geography at MR/St. Thomas' Collage was held in the Department of Geography, University of Ruhuna. Senior Prof. P. Hewage, Dr. S. L. J. Fernando, Dr. G. P. T. S. Hemakumara and Mr. P.H. Amaraweera served as the resource persons in this programme.

A one day workshop on "Understanding Sustainable Solutions for Management of Losses of Agriculture from Wild Animals" was held at Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Train Institute. Mr. M. S. M. L. Karunarathne served as a resource person in this workshop.

Field Excursions

(a) Colombo Urban area

Students who are following Urban Planning (GEO 41653) attended a field visit in the Colombo metropolitan area on the 30th of June 2018. The objective of this visit was to identify the different profiles of the urban area, such as urbanization patterns, housing schemes, road networks, development activities, pollution and open spaces. Students collected data using interviews, discussions and observations during the field visit. They analysed and interpreted their findings for the 1st Assignment. The field activity was conducted the whole day by Dr. G. P. T. S. Hemakumara, W. K. V. Dayalatha, and Neel Withanage.

Mrs.
Mr.



Hemakumara,
W. K. V.
Dayalatha, and
Neel
Withanage.

(Field visit at Sri Jayawardanapura Kotte – 30. 06.2018)

(b)UdawalaweReservior and Chandrika Wewa

Students who are following Hydrology and Water Resources Management (GEO 32633) attended a field visit in UdawalaweReservior& Chandrika Wawa on the 18th of December 2018. The objective of this visit was to study the water management process in UdawalaweReservior& Chandrika Wawa and observe the reservoir and tank components and processes and identify the water distribution ways. Field observation and lectures were conducted with the assistance of Mahaweli Authority, Embilipitiya. The field activity was conducted for the whole day by Ms.



L.G.D.S. Yapa.

(Field visit atUdawalaweReservior – 18. 12. 2018)

Field Visit toWavulpana Limestone Cave

Students have attended a field visit in the Wavulpana Limestone cave at Kumburugamuwa, Embilipitiya on 28th November, 2018, under the course unit of Geomorphology (GEO 22513/22613). The objectives of this visit were to study the process of the limestone cave,

reaction effects of the limestone and interior nature of limestone cave. The Wavulpana field visit was conducted by Dr. S. L. J. Fernando.

Field Excursions along the Coastal Belt of Southwest Coast of Sri Lanka

Field excursions along the coastal belt of Southwest coast of Sri Lanka were conducted with students of the St. Thomas boy's school, Rahula Collage and St. Thomas Girl's School in Matara. These excursions were conducted by Dr S. L. J. Fernando from June to October, 2018.

Field Excursion along the Coastal Belt from Matara to Ambalangoda

Students who are following 3000 level attended a field visit along the coastal belt from Matara to Ambalangoda on the 10th of October 2018. The objective of this visit was to study the coastal land forms, and coastal vegetation such as mangroves and other plants. The field activity was conducted the whole day by Dr S. L. J. Fernando and Mrs. W. K. V. Dayalatha, Ms. L.G.D.S. Yapa, and Ms. Wasana Fernando, participated in this event.

Field Excursion to Jaffna University and surrounding Area

Students who are following 4000 level attended a field visit to Jaffna from 19th-21st of December 2018. The objective of this visit was to study the land and sea transport systems and understand the transport system related challenges. Dr G.P.T.S. Hemakumara, Mr. P. H. Amaraweera, Mr. Neel Withanage and Ms. L.G.D.S. Yapa participated in this event.

During the visit, an initial step was put forward to establish academic collaboration with the Department of Geography, University of Jaffna with the guidance of Senior Prof. P. Hewage, and Dr Sudakar, Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Jaffna



(Field visit - Jaffna University and surrounding Area - 19/21. 12.2018)

(Field visit - Jaffna University and surrounding Area- 19/21. 12.2018)

Field study along the Coastal Region from Matara to Hambantota

A Field visit from Matara to Hambantota with 4000 level students (GEO 42623) was organized on 27th December, 2018. Prof. M. Rathnayake, Dr G. Edirisinghe and Ms. Iresha participated in this event. The main objective of this visit was to study the coastal region including the areas such as Rakawa, Tangalle, Ussangoda, Hambantota and Bundala coastal areas.

Field Visit to Hiyare Reservoir

Students who are following 4000 level (GEO 42653) participated in a field visit on the 11th of December, 2018. The objective of this visit was to study the Eco-system management and conservation in relation to the reservoir. Dr H. I. G. C. Kumara, Mr. M. S. M. L. Karunaratne and Mr. Neel Withanage participated in the visit.



(Field visit to Hiyare Reservoir – 11. 12. 2018)

Field Excursion to Diyatalawa

Students who are following 3000 level (GEO 32563/32663 Advanced GIS) participated in a field visit to Survey the 12th of December, 2018. Dr G.P.T.S Hemakumara, Mr.



P.H.Amaraweera and Mr. Neel Withanage participated in the event. The objective of this visit was to study the global positioning system and surveying.

(Field visit to Diyathalawa – 12. 12. 2018)

Field Visit to Waturana

Students who are following 3000 level (GEO 32643-Bio Geography) participated in a field visit from 8th -09th November, 2018. The objective of this visit was to study the Waturana Swamp forest. Mr. M. S. M. L. Karunarathne and Mr. Neel Withanage participated in the visit.



(Field visit to Waturana Swamp forest – 18/19. 12. 2018)



(Field visit to Waturana Swamp forest - 18/19. 12. 2018)

Field Visit to Pahiyangala

Students who are following 2000 level (GEO 22513/22613 Geomopology) participated in a field visit on the 26th of December 2018. Dr H.I.G.C. Kumara, Mr. P.H.Amaraweera, Mr. M. S. M. L. Karunarathne, Mr. Neel Withanage, Ms. L. G. D. S.Yapa and Ms.Wasana Fernando participated in the event.

The GIS Database Developed by the Students

The 3000 level students (GEO 32663 - Advanced Geographic Information System Course) completed the GIS database for Mountain Range Analysis on Balangoda area. This GIS project comprised of a field study in the Balangoda area for ground data collection and the final output indicated the slope aspects, slope angle, 3D view and 20m interval contour digital data for 1: 50000 area of Balangoda. This project was coordinated by Dr G.P.T.S. Hemakumara Department of Geography.



(Advanced Geography students have prepared their assignment in GIS based Mountain Management Systems above photo display their final submission to Head of Department on 17/12/2018)

Laboratory Study at the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology

Students who are following Environmental Pollution and Control course (GEO 32623) attended a field visit in the faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences and Technology, University of Ruhuna on the 21st December, 2018. The objective of this visit was to study the water quality testing and understand the use of instruments and parameters. The laboratory visit was guided by Mrs. W. K. V. Dayalatha, Ms. Dulanji Dharmasena and Ms. Iresha Maduwanthi.

News and Suggestions to be sent to

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