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Geological Society of Sri Lanka (GSSL)

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27th Executive Committee (2010)

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Address for Correspondence:

Geological Society of Sri Lanka,
C/o Department of Geology,
University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya,
Sri Lanka
Phone: (94) 81-2394200; 2392011
Fax: (94) 81-2388018
Website: <http://www.gsslweb.org>
Email: editor@gsslweb.org

Colombo Office:

Geological Society of Sri Lanka,
C/O GSMB,
No. 4, Senanayake Building,
Galle Road, Dehiwala,
Sri Lanka

The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the GSSL. The Editors invite contributions not only from members of the Society but also from other geoscientists on matters relevant to geology of Sri Lanka. Contributions in the form of short articles, letters, communications, drawings and photographs are welcome. The GSSL Newsletter is issued in volumes of four fascicles, every year.

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AGM & Technical Sessions 2009 26th Annual Sessions

26th Annual General Meeting and the Technical Sessions of the GSSL was held on Friday, 26th of February 2010 at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute (SLFI), Colombo. More than 200 members and well-wishers attended the event and Prof. Kapila Gunasekera, Vice Chancellor, Vocational Technology University, Ratmalana was the Chief Guest of the Event. Prof. Mahinda Rupasinghe, Vice Chancellor, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka was the Guest of Honor. Professor C.B. Dissanayake, Director, IFS delivered the Keynote Address.

Ananda Commaraswamy Oration- 2009

Prestigious Ananda Coomaraswamy Medal for the Year 2009 was awarded to Mr. Dayantha Priyalal Dias for his significant contribution to Sri Lankan Geology particularly for his contribution to National Development through private sector enterprises. Mr. Dias delivered the Ananda Coomaraswamy Memorial Oration on "Geotechnical drilling in inland water bodies and off shore for national development projects".

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SOCIETY NEWS & NOTICES

Message from the President

Being the newly elected President of the Geological Society of Sri Lanka I am pleased to send this message for the first newsletter published by the 27th Executive Committee of the Society. At the Same time, I take this opportunity to thank all members of the Society sincerely for electing me as the President and placing confidence in me to continue the Society activities during the year 2010.

The Geological Society of Sri Lanka is the only forum to discuss the matters of interest to geoscientists. GSSL was established in 1983 and the total membership now stands at more than 300. I must thank all our past Presidents and Executive Committees of the Society for their immense contribution paving the way for the present achievements. I wish to give my assurance to the members to put my maximum effort to achieve the goals of the GSSL during my Presidency.

It is my pleasure to inform to the members that the present EC has already planned to conduct a series of activities in this year such as the publication of the journal, publication of newsletters, Earth Science for Schools, geo-scientific workshops, popular talks, award scholarships to the geology undergraduates, organize a National Earth Science Olympiad Competition for school children. In addition, the Society will make efforts to increase the number of Bursaries, Scholarships and grants to encourage our members as well as to support our future geo-scientists. The EC also planned and necessary steps have been taken to organize an International Symposium on Geo Sciences. It may be a very valuable forum to our members to share their achievements and knowledge among the international community.

At last I would like to thank all members for their contributions made for the betterment of the Society and I am looking forward for your continued support and guidance towards the development of the Geological Society of Sri Lanka.

R.M.S. Bandara
President, GSSL-2010

PG Cooray Medal -2010

Applications are invited from Sri Lankan young geoscientists under the age of 35 years at the time of application for the award of the PG Cooray Medal. The medal will be awarded to the most outstanding contributor to the field of Earth Sciences of Sri Lanka in the recent past. Prospective applicants are requested to submit copies of their theses, dissertation, publications patents etc. to the secretary, GSSL on or before 15th January 2011.

Ananda Coomaraswamy Medal-2010

The Executive Committee of the GSSL now calls for nominations for the award of the Ananda Coomaraswamy Medal for the year 2010. To honour the late Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy for his pioneering contribution to the geological knowledge in Sri Lanka. The Society annually offers a medal to an earth scientist who has made outstanding contributions towards understanding the geology of Sri Lanka. The memorial oration and medal presentation will be held during the Annual General Meeting of the Society. The General membership is requested to send nominations on behalf of eligible geoscientists with the CV of the nominee to the Secretary- GSSL, on or before 30th Oct. 2010.

ANNUAL REPORT – 2009/10

1. Twenty Fifth Annual General Meeting and Technical Sessions

The 25th Annual General Meeting of the Geological Society of Sri Lanka was held on 27th and 28th February 2010 at the Plant Genetic Resource Center (PGRC), Gannoruwa, Peradeniya. Following members were elected as the office-bearers for the year 2009 at this meeting.

President	-	Mr. M Premathilake
Vice President	-	Dr. ALT Hewawasam
President-elect	-	Mr. RMS Bandara
Past President	-	Mr. CHER Siriwardana
Secretary	-	Dr. NP Ratnayake
Treasurer	-	Mr. DM Upul Premarathna
Editors	-	Prof. Atula Senaratne
		Mr. LRK Perera
Members	-	Prof. V Nandakumar
		Dr. Jagath Gunatilake
		Mr. ASMNB Samarakoon
		Mr. Asoka Perera
		Miss Nilmini Taldena

Incidentally, Mr. Asoka Perera had resigned from the GSSL EC and Mr. KLS Gamagen was appointed as a replacement.

Inauguration Ceremony was held with the participation of the Vice-Chancellor of University of Peradeniya, Prof. H. Abeygunawardena as the Guest of Honour and Major Gen. Gamini Hettiarachchi, Director General, Disaster Management Center representing the Chief Guest Hon. Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe, Minister of Disaster Management. Prof. Atula Senaratne, Department of Geology, University of Peradeniya delivered the Keynote address on “25 years of GSSL activities”.

Thirty six research papers were read at the Annual Technical Sessions. The Annual Get-together and the Dinner was held at the Hotel Tree of Life, Kandy with the participation of 70 members.

2. Executive Committee Meetings

Nine meetings of the GSSL Executive Committee were held, and one meeting was cancelled due to lack of quorum. Four meetings were held at the Department of Geology, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya and five at the Geological Survey & Mines Bureau, Dehiwala, and one at the Education Resource Center, Meegoda. Total attendance of each member at the committee meetings as per the order in the above list of office-bearers is 10/10, 5/10, 5/10, 2/5 (Left for the PhD), 9/10, 6/10, 4/10, 4/10, 2/10, 3/10, 4/10, 2/4 (Mr. KLS Gamage), and 9/10.

3. Membership Database

Thirteen (13) new memberships (6 Ordinary members, 2 Life members and 5 Associate members) were offered in 2009/10. There are 175 ordinary members, 84 life members and 18 associate members in the membership database.

4. Institute of Geology, Sri Lanka (IGSL)

As the first step of establishing IGSL, present Executive Committee (EC) has hired a constitutional lawyer and redrafted the IGSL Act and the IGSL regulations and translated those into Sinhala and Tamil. Thereafter, the EC of the GSSL, self appointed to be the Caretaker Council of the IGSL, convened a special meeting on 12th July 2009 with the participation of a group of invited senior geologists. The EC of the GSSL served as the Caretaker Council of the IGSL until a new Council was elected at the Inaugural General Meeting of the IGSL.

The EC of the GSSL as the Caretaker Council of the IGSL appointed a sub-committee comprising of four senior geologists (Mr. SK Jayawardane—Chairman, Prof. Athula Senaratna, Mr. Upul Premarathna and Mr. Asoka Perera) to propose IGSL Membership eligibility criteria. The sub-committee submitted its recommendations to the EC of the GSSL by an interim report. Membership Eligibility Criteria have been standardized with that of similar institutions to maintain parallel standards with other professional organisations. Applications for IGSL membership had been called from members of the GSSL. A Membership Selection Committee comprising five senior geologists (Dr. NP Wijayananda-Chairman, Dr. HA Dharmagunawardana, Mr. Priyalal Dias, Mr. Upul Premarathana and Mr. SK Jayawardana) was appointed for evaluating the membership applications. The Membership Selection Committee had selected the applicants eligible to be the members of the IGSL and applicants whose applications did not meet the minimum eligibility criteria were handed over to the first elected Council for necessary actions.

The Inaugural General Meeting of the IGSL was held on 6th November 2009 at Sri Lanka Foundation Institute (SLFI), Colombo. More than 50 eligible members of the IGSL were present at the meeting and the first Council of the Institute was elected and draft Rules of the IGSL were approved unanimously by the members.

A competition was organized among GSSL members to design a suitable logo for IGSL. The Logo which received the highest number of preference of IGSL members at the Inaugural General Meeting became the official logo of the IGSL. The designer of the selected logo was given a cash price.

Elected IGSL Council of the Institute is doing their best at present to incorporate the Institute of Geology, Sri Lanka (IGSL) through an act of Parliament.

5. Publications

Journal of the GSSL

The Editors of the GSSL had received fourteen research papers for the Volume 8 (2007/2008) of the Journal of the Geological Society of Sri Lanka. However, the print ready version of the manuscripts has not been handed over to the EC until the last committee meeting for approval.

Felicitations Volume

Seven research papers for the Felicitations Volume of Prof. CB Dissanayake and Prof. Kapila Dahanayake are being reviewed and printing of this volume would be expected at the end of 2010 or the beginning of 2011 under the 27th GSSL EC if 25-30 papers can be accommodated.

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Vol. 26 No. 1 issued in July 2009 and Vol. 26 No 2 issued Feb. 2010.

Other Publications

EC decided to publish the manuscript titled “Earth and the Environment” co-authored by Rohana Chandrajith and C B Dissanayake as a GSSL publication upon recommendation of GSSL editors. EC believes the content is appropriate as a supplementary text book for school education for some of the lessons from grade 6 to grade 12 (Geology related subjects) and therefore suitable to market this book at future GSSL School Science Programs. The EC had requested the authors to revise the manuscript following the suggestions proposed by the EC-editors and to submit the final version as soon as possible. Also, the EC decided that the royalty of this manuscript should be kept by the GSSL.

6. GSSL Website

The official website of the GSSL continues to be hosted at <http://www.gsslweb.org>. Present Executive Committee has arranged the website to be regularly updated.

7. GSSL Scholarships

P. W. Vitanage Scholarship

Mr. P.L. Dharmapriya is awarded the P. W. Vitanage Scholarship for the academic year 2009/10 in recognition of his outstanding performances at 100 and 200 level examinations in geology.

GSSL Alumni Scholarship

Presently over Rs. 170,000/= have been accumulated in this Scholarship Fund. Arrangements have been made to provide a scholarship from next year.

Tissa Munasinghe Scholarship

Miss J.P.D.R.K. Jayalath is awarded the Tissa Munasinghe scholarship for the academic year 2010/11

8. GSSL Medals

Ananda Coomaraswamy Medal (AC Medal)

There had been two nominations for the AC medal of the year 2009. Executive committee of the GSSL, on the recommendation from a panel chaired by Dr. NP Wijayananda and consisting of former Ananda Coomaraswamy medal recipients, decided to award the above medal to Mr. Dayantha Priyalal Dias, for his contribution towards geology in Sri Lanka. The Medal was awarded during a special ceremony conducted after inauguration ceremony at the 26th Annual Technical Sessions of the Geological Society of Sri Lanka. Mr. Priyalal Dias delivered the Ananda Coomaraswamy Memorial Oration on “Geotechnical drilling in inland water bodies and offshore for national development projects”.

P. G. Cooray Medal (PGC Medal)

There had been four applications for the year 2009 award. A sub-committee consisting of Mr. LRK Perera (Chairman), Prof. A. Senaratne and Dr. N.W.B. Balasooriya has recommended Miss Nayomi Kulasekera for the award of P.G. Cooray medal for the year 2009.

10. Workshops

Workshop on “Effective Scientific Writing”

The Geological Society of Sri Lanka (GSSL) organized a two-day workshop on “Effective Scientific Writing” on 10th & 11th July 2009 at the PW Vitanage Lecture Theatre, Department of Geology, University of Peradeniya. The main objective of this scientific writing workshop was to help and guide young scientists in writing articles for journals. Dr. Rohana Chandrajith coordinated this event while Professor C.B. Dissanayake, Professor Kapila Dahanayake, Professor Gamini Rajapaksha, Dr. Rohan Weerasooriya, and Dr. Rohana Chandrajith were the resource persons. More than 40 members have participated in this event. The topics covered were, Introduction to Journal-Style Scientific Writing, Writing an Abstract and Deals with Proofs, Scientific thinking, Problem definition and research methodology for problem solving, Making Sense from Your Data, Manuscript Reviewing- Role of Editor, Reviewer and Author and Submission of a manuscript, tips and hints.

11. Earth Science for Schools Programme

13th workshop on “Earth Science for Schools - 2009”—Colombo District

The 13th workshop on Earth Science for Schools conducted by the GSSL was held on 30th and 31st March 2009 at Ananda Shastralaya Kotte, in collaboration of the Department of Education Western Province and the Old boys Association of Ananda Shastralaya. The program was intended and designed to enhance the earth science knowledge of science, geography, and environmental science teachers, so that it will build up their capacity in teaching earth science-based subjects in the school curriculum. Over 100 teachers participated in the workshop. The two-day program was conducted by the members of the GSSL who have specialized in different subject areas of earth science. The workshop was coordinated by Dr. H.A.Dharmagunawardhane. Topics covered during the workshop included, Earth processes, Minerals and Rocks, Geology of Sri Lanka, Economic minerals/gem industry in Sri Lanka, Mineral exploration, Environmental pollution, Geology and health, Groundwater resources and exploration for water. The closing session of the workshop and the certificate distribution ceremony were chaired by Professor Lakshman Jayathilake, Chancellor, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.

14th workshop on “Earth Science for Schools - 2009”—Kalutara District

This workshop was successfully held on the 13th and 14th July 2009 at the Resource Centre, Meegoda with the collaboration of Department of Education, Western Province. About 60 school teachers from science and geography subject areas participated and Economic Minerals and Rock and Geological Hazards/Tsunami were the main topics highlighted. Dr. DMDOK Dissanayake, Director, Geological Survey and Mines Bureau, attended the closing ceremony.

15th workshop on “Earth Science for Schools - 2009”—Gampaha District

This workshop was successfully held on the 20th and 21st July 2009 at Resource Centre, Meegoda with the collaboration of the Department of Education, Western Province. About 45 school teachers from science and geography subject areas participated and Economic Minerals and Rocks, Geological Hazards, and Sri Lanka’s Petroleum Potential were the main topic highlighted. Dr. NP Wijayananda, Chairman, Geological Survey and Mines Bureau, attended the closing ceremony.

Present, EC has also come into agreement with the GSMB to jointly organize future School science programs, annually.

12. International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE)

The appointed Sri Lankan national committee under the coordination of Mr. Ashwin Wickramasooriya for the International Year of Planet Earth has arranged four school students to participate in the 3rd International Earth Science Olympiad and he further arranged to send a Sri Lankan delegation to represent the Planet Earth Lisbon Event 2009.

Mr. Mahinda Prematilaka
President/GSSL

Dr. NP Ratnayake
Secretary/GSSL

2nd Sri Lankan Earth Science Olympiad Competition - 2010

Organized by Geological Society of Sri Lanka (GSSL) in collaboration with Department of Geology and Department of Geography, University of Peradeniya

One of the main objectives of the Geological Society of Sri Lanka is to promote Earth Science in the country. This objective can be achieved by introducing basic knowledge of Earth Science/ Geology for the younger generation at schools. In addition to the Earth Science for Schools program organized by the GSSL, the Society initiated the Sri Lankan Earth Science Olympiad Competition in 2009 for secondary school students under 18 years. The GSSL has decided to organize the event annually. Sri Lanka Earth Science Olympiad Committee (SLESOC) has been appointed to organize this event for the year 2010. Mr. R.M.S. Bandara, President of the GSSL, Dr. G.A. Pitawala, Head, Department of Geology and Prof. V. Nandakumar, Head, Department of Geography agreed to organize this activity as a collaborative event. The 2nd Sri Lankan Earth Science Olympiad Competition was held on 15th May, 2010 at the Department of Geology, University of Peradeniya premises to select the best students to participate in the international Olympiad Competition. Mr. Ashvin Wickramasooriya is coordinating the competition which is focused on four main topics of the earth, the Geosphere, Hydrosphere, Biosphere and Atmosphere. Students representing many schools in the Central Province of Sri Lanka actively participated in the competition. Next year the GSSL is planning to attract students from every corner of the island for the competition. The ten best students were selected on the basis of their performance at the local competition and the Sri Lanka Earth Science Olympiad Committee interviewed them and selected the four most outstanding students to participate at the 4th Earth Science Olympiad Competition to be held in Indonesia from 19 - 28, September, 2010.

Mr. Ashvin Wickramasooriya
Coordinator / Sri Lanka Earth Science Olympiad Competition

GEOMISCELLANY

Research Papers by Sri Lankan Geoscientists

Paddy and Water Environment 8; 71-79 (2010)

Fate of phosphate and nitrate in waters of an intensive agricultural area in the dry zone of Sri Lanka

Young, S.M., Pitawala, A., Gunatilake, J.

^a Department of Geoscience, Shimane University, 1060 Nishikawatsu, Matsue, 690-8504, Japan

^b Department of Geology, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Abstract

The chemistry of surface waters and groundwater draining agricultural catchments in the north-central and northwestern areas of Sri Lanka is described. Hydrochemical data from 296 water samples are used to evaluate water quality and to identify the processes that control nitrate and phosphate concentrations in the water. The results indicate that nutrient concentrations in the groundwaters are greater than those in the surface waters. Increased nutrient levels were observed in groundwater in a selected area in the fortnight following fertilizer application. Detailed geochemical investigations of selected groundwater samples reveal a gradual rise of nitrate-N and other solutes along the horizontal flow direction. Compared to the application rates of fertilizer in the area, the average nutrient concentrations in all waters are relatively low (1.5 mg/l nitrate and 0.5 mg/l phosphate) and stable. The results suggest that prevailing reducing conditions, iron-rich overburden soil cover and manmade canal networks control nutrient accumulation in the groundwater.

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MEMBER'S CORNER

Mr. SMATB Mudunkotuwa appointed as the Director of the GSMB.

Mr. R.S. Wijesekera has been recently appointed as the Acting General Manager of the Water Resources Board.

Dr. Amarasooriya Pitawala has been appointed as the Head, Department of Geology, University of Peradeniya from 2nd July 2010.

Mr. Ashvin Wickramasooriya has been appointed as the Chairman of the Young Scientist Forum of the National Science & Technology Commission, Ministry of Science and Technology for the year 2010/2011.

Dr. Rohana Chandrajith has been promoted to the Grade of Professor in Geology.

Dr. Rohana Chandrajith of the Department of Geology participated in the first Technical Meeting on Micro-analytical Techniques based on Nuclear Spectrometry for Environmental Monitoring and Material Studies from 17 to 21 May 2010, at the IAEA's Headquarters in Vienna.

Dr. Meththika Vithanage has been awarded the Natural Hazards Focus Group Award of the American Geophysical Union for Graduate Research, given annually to recent Ph.D. recipients for outstanding contributions to natural hazards research.

Dr. WKBN Prame participated in a CTBT workshop held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 15th - 16th March

Ms. SNB Thaldena attended a "Technical Training Program for waveform Station Operators" organized by CTBTO from 17th- 28th May in Vienna, Austria.

Mr. SMATB Mudunkotuwa attend a CTBTO workshop on "Capacity Building of NDC for SEAPFE countries" held in Canberra, Australia from 16th -21st June.

Dr. WKBN Prame and **Ms. Dharani Wijesundara** attended the OSI training program in Hungary from 28th June.

ERE 2010

5th Annual Conference on “*Earth Resources for National Development*” Organized by the Department of Earth Resources Engineering, University of Moratuwa

Department of Earth Resources Engineering, University of Moratuwa has planned to hold its 5th annual conference (ERE 2010) on 24th September 2010. This conference is designed to bring together mining and other engineers, geologists, scientists and managers in the fields of mining, earth resources and related fields from universities, industries, local authorities and non-governmental organizations to make them actively take part in presenting their new findings to their colleagues for constructive discussion and paving the way for applications of those findings for betterment of the trade, industry and standards of public life. The conference will be held under the theme of ‘*Earth Resources for National Development*’ at **Sri Lanka Foundation Institute (SLFI), Colombo.**

Thematic areas: Mining and Mineral Extraction, Alternative Minerals for Construction, Environmental Engineering, Water Treatment and Re-use, Disaster Management, RS and GIS for earth resources management, Emerging Technologies and offshore Potential for Minerals

Symposium Deadline

Abstract (300 words) on or before 10/08/2010

Notification of the acceptance 15/08/2010

Draft Paper Submission on or before 31/08/2010

Final Submission 15/09/2010

For further information please visit <http://www.ere.mrt.ac.lk/> for the conference brochure.

**Submit your abstracts for the Annual Sessions
2011**

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www.gsslweb.org**

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