

SLITHM talk MAGAZINE

Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management
Volume 15 | January - March 2022



TRANSFORMING FUTURES

*BUILDING LONG-TERM
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS*



**SRI LANKA INSTITUTE OF
TOURISM & HOTEL MANAGEMENT**
Taking Sri Lanka to Global Heights
A Journey Towards Excellence in Sri Lankan Hospitality

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Volume 15
January - March 2022

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**SRI LANKA INSTITUTE OF
TOURISM & HOTEL MANAGEMENT**

Taking Sri Lanka to Global Heights
A JOURNEY TOWARDS EXCELLENCE IN SRI LANKAN HOSPITALITY



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EDITOR'S NOTE



Dear Readers,

It is indeed a great honour to be the Editor for the SLITHM-Talk Magazine, and it is an immense pleasure to launch this first edition for 2022.

I shall do my best to continue the proud tradition of our society magazine, relying on the outstanding contributions of our editorial team and our contributing writers.

Do you have a flair for writing?
Do you have an experience you would love to share? A cause you want to speak out for?
An event you would like publicized and reported?
The ears of the SLITHM-Talk Editorial Board are thirsting to hear your story!

Thank you to everybody who took the time to share their praise for the redesigned SLITHM-Talk newsletter. The Editorial Board is delighted to hear that the new format was well-received by the members, and is thrilled that the presentation of the newsletter matches the quality of the content produced by our members.

Of course, a magazine requires articles, research, reports, and those come from our membership and as well as from outsiders. So, none of the magazines would have been possible without the input and effort of the contributing members. They all deserve a big thanks for their support.

This semester, the Hotel School team has once again proved that nothing is impossible for them!

Even under restrictive and changing Covid19 lockdown alert levels, an adjusted academic calendar and a struggling Hospitality Industry, the SLITHM managed to successfully place students on Work Integrated Learning, celebrate student academic success and continue to treat guests to the well-known excellent experiences in our facilities. I wish to thank the hard-working staff of the SLITHM for a successful year ahead and keeping the focus on the development of future hospitality industry leaders!

The campus is again filled with smart, inspired students ready to take advantage of SLITHM's breadth of offerings – both in the classroom and in the many extracurricular options of student life. SLITHM is our community's college and we share our community's values.

Finally, we want to thank all of you for your continued support of SLITHM. SLITHM is a distinctive place and none of what we do could be accomplished without the generosity and interest given by our community. ♦

GANGA WALPOLA
Assistant Director - Librarian
EDITOR

EDITORIAL BOARD

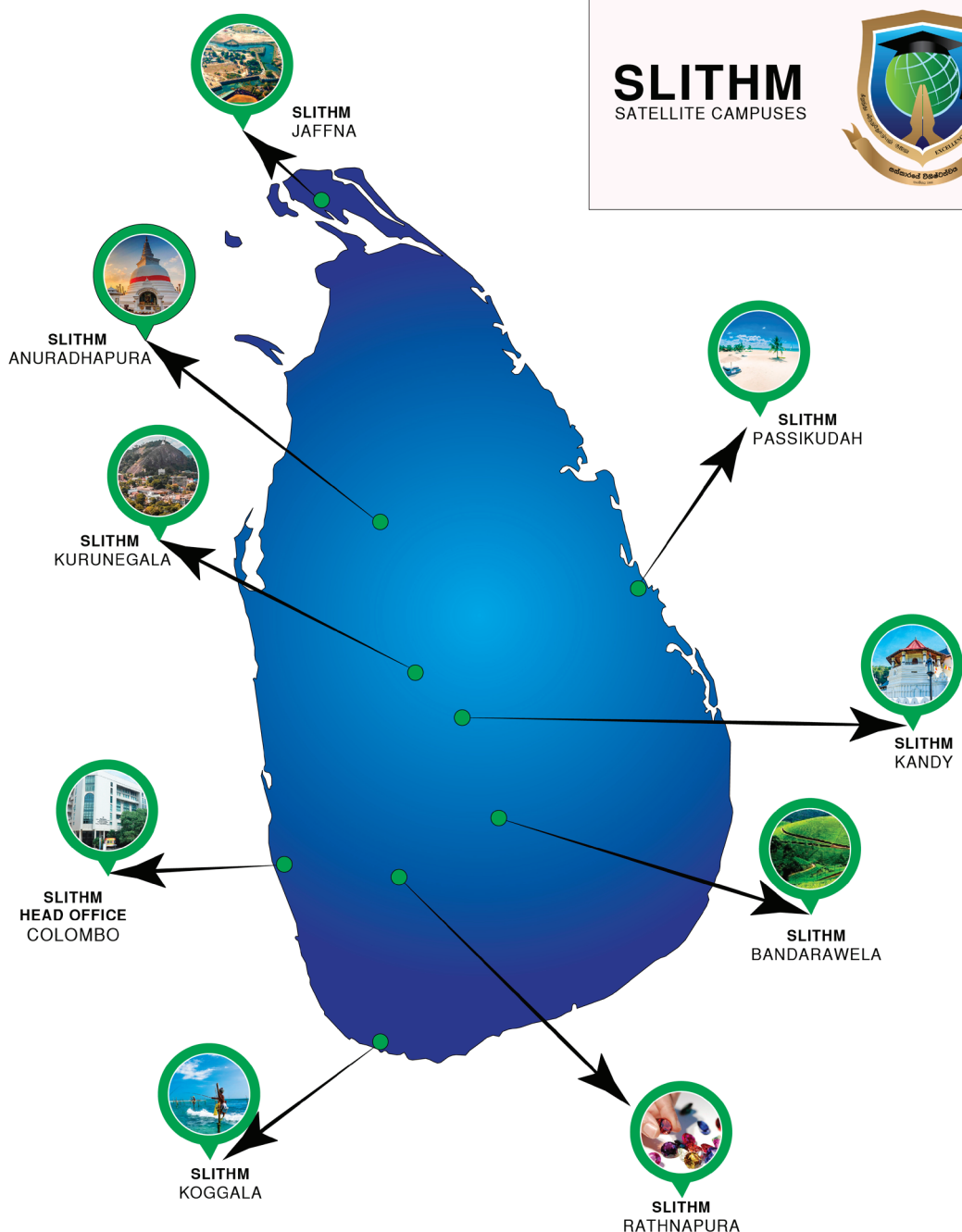


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TRANSFORMING FUTURES

SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR MOU'S AND CONTINUATION OF OUR JOINT EFFORTS FOR BUILDING A LONG-TERM STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE THREE INSTITUTIONS.

“Our will makes constantly a sort of agreement with the world, whereby, if the world will continually show some respect to the will, the will shall consent to be strenuous in its industry.”



KOREA LANKA SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY & HOTEL MANAGEMENT

Higher studies are offered at SLITHM for those who complete NVQ 04 level at Korea Lanka School of Hospitality & Hotel Management. This will benefit the industry with highly qualified employees in future.

KLSHHM is an organization based in the Republic of

South Korea aimed at supporting the underprivileged youth interested in developing their career in the Hospitality and Hotel Industry.

KLSHHM is jointly funded by the Good Partners and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).





NSBM GREEN CAMPUS

This collaborative endeavour between NSBM and SLITHM encompasses multiple objectives, viz. facilitating SLITHM Graduates for postgraduate courses conducted in the Departments of Marketing and Tourism Management at NSBM Faculty of Business as well as Department of Postgraduate Studies, and for incorporating industry and academic inputs for curriculum development of NSBM Degree, Postgraduate Degree leading to Masters and PhD programs.

NSBM Green University Town is the first-ever green university in South Asia and sets an example for the whole of South Asia by paving the way for environmental sustainability. The university is open to both national and international student communities and it has turned a new chapter in Sri Lankan higher education.





THE UNIVERSITY OF
VOCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY
(UNIVOTEC)

UOVT RATMALANA

This collaboration between UoVT and SLITHM to obtain NVQ 07 qualification equivalent to degree status for the higher diploma holders of SLITHM. This will benefit the students with higher vocational qualifications offered by UoVT.

Established in 2008, under the University of Vocational Technology Act Number 31 of 2008, the University of Vocational Technology has the same legal and academic status as any other national university in Sri Lanka.

According to Section 6 and 7 of the Public Administration Circular No. 16/92, dated 13.03.92, issued by the Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils & Home Affairs, the degrees awarded by the University of Vocational technology are treated as equivalent to degrees awarded by any other University under the purview of the University Grants Commission, and the universities listed in Association of Commonwealth Universities, and/or in the International Handbook of Universities. ♦







GRAND HOTEL

ESTABLISHED 1891



THE GRAND HOTEL

HIGHLIGHTS FROM ITS HISTORY AND NOW

In 1819, there arrived in what was then Ceylon a man who was to change the country, laying the foundations for the modern Sri Lanka, as well as for the Grand Hotel; Sir Edward Barnes. By the time he took over as Lieutenant Governor in 1820, he had already made a tour of the island and decided what Ceylon needed was “first roads, second roads and third, roads.”

It was during his main term as Governor, from 1824 to 1831, that he became enchanted with Nuwara

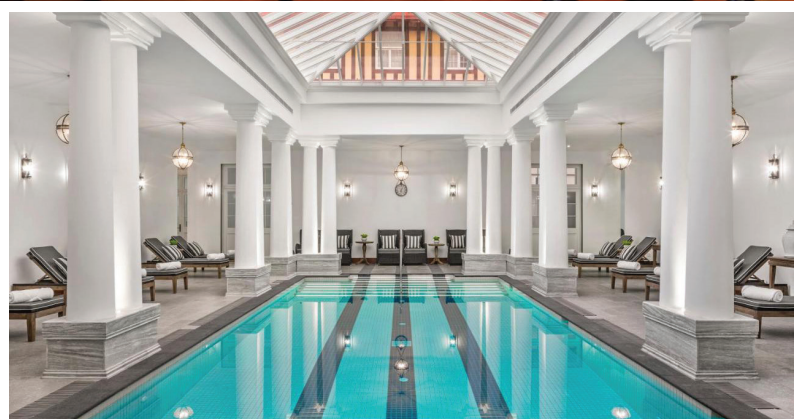
Eliya and built a bungalow there at his own expense at a cost of £8,000 which eventually became the Grand Hotel.

The residence Sir Edward Barnes built was his private residence, not a government residence. Barnes was 55 when he left Ceylon in 1831, leaving behind his beloved Barnes Hall, which was rented to his successor as Governor, Sir Robert Wilmot Horton.

Subsequently one hundred and thirty two years ago, in the year

1891 that the Nuwara Eliya Hotels Company Limited was formed to own and operate the Grand Hotel.

As you drive into the Hotel, you will be welcomed amongst a vivid array of flowers including magnolia in the garden and some exotic plants. The 154 tastefully decorated rooms including Three Presidential Suites and three Junior Suites which exudes colonial charm. The spacious Barnes Restaurant extending to an outer terrace offers the possibility of enjoying a rich breakfast buffet on the splendid outdoor terrace. The



Magnolia – All day Dining opened 24 hours offers variety of dishes. The Barnes Fusion Grill is yet another novel experience for those who love to savour wood-fired pizzas, mouth-watering steaks, sandwiches and wraps etc. The much talked about and world recognized Tea Lounge is serves the most delectable High Tea and patronized by visitors from all over the world. The Coffee Bar Just across the lovely front lawn of Grand Hotel is for that perfect break with a hot beverage and delicious treats. Specialty Cuisines ranging from Thai to Indian, Fusion to International cuisines captures the true spirit and flavours of its origins. This authenticity secures the Grand Hotels' legendary reputation as the pinnacle of exquisite dining in the hills. Our range of unique dining experiences caters to those diners who are looking for an extraordinary luxurious gourmet dining that

includes the 131 year old Boiler Room, or the 131 year old Laundry, Tree Hut, Teppanyaki Chef's Table in the Main working Kitchen or the Green House for a truly authentic Vegan meal.

A wide selection of drinks, from Single Malts and Cognacs to Cocktails and Fresh fruit juices, can all be enjoyed in a nostalgic retro environment at our Public Bar, which along with the adjoining Billiard room is perhaps, the oldest part of the hotel, while the Wine Bar is for a quiet evening with ones' dear and near ones, surrounded by the best wines from around the world.

Whether travelling for leisure or business, guests, the Mindfulness Studio is a complete Body, Mind and Soul relaxing venue with the temperature controlled indoor pool, the state of the art Gymnasium as

well as yoga and other stimulating exercises. It also offers a wide range of luxury Spa and beauty treatments. Whilst maintaining the British Colonial architecture, the Hotel has evolved to resonate palatial grandeur blended with exceptional hospitality that has surpassed the expectations of many a visitor.

Transcending from a Legacy to a Legend ♦



REFHAN RAZEEN
General Manager
Grand Hotel – Nuwara Eliya



ACCOMMODATION OPERATIONS

AT THE GRAND HOTEL NUWARA-ELIYA

Accommodation Operations / Housekeeping Department play a major role in the 131 years old Heritage Property to maintain and preserve its Grand Standards by keeping its royal and Historical value.

The Housekeeping department not only prepares, cleans guest rooms on a timely basis for arriving guest, it also cleans, maintain everything in the hotel so the hotel is so fresh and attractive. The task performed by the Housekeeping Department is critical to the smooth daily operation.

Professional housekeeping does 80% of the marketing directly and indirectly in a hotel. Although this output is not directly visible, the efforts put into maintaining a property is humongous and that requires a well-planned, well equipped, well trained and motivated staff and that is the secret behind the well-kept Grand Hotel at all times.

Low and No Occupancy challenged us than 100% occupancy during the pandemic

With the weather condition in Nuwaraeliya it is a challenge for us to keep property shining round the clock. The challenge was when the hotel experienced low or no occupancy, every effort had to be

taken to prevent Mildew formations in ceilings, wall, floors, Curtains, carpets, Furniture etc.

The role of the Housekeeping Department plays a pivotal part especially in the present pandemic where Guests who travel pay a vital attention to the cleanliness and upkeep of the property they aspire to spend the holiday. They would be very particular to see that the areas they use have been hygienically cleaned, and surfaces are safe to touch. At Grand Hotel we have gone the extra mile in ensuring the best hygiene practices are followed and the guests feel relaxed and comfortable in the rooms they stay.

Transforming the way we do business has been the cutting edge for Grand Hotel. We always strive to create and innovate rather than replicate. The team is encouraged to always think smart and think differently and be adoptable to change and diversity.

Smart Housekeeping practices keep our guest happy and team motivated with highest productivity and less manpower usage. Further when you adopt the concept of Quality Circles within the Department, and a Bottom Up communication method with standards, we could derive many novel and innovative suggestions. Here are some of the activities I wish to share

- Introduced innovative Linen caring program which increased durability of our linen up to 700 washes by maintaining highest level of linen quality and required whitening. This has enabled to save an average of Rs. 12 to 16 million during the last 6 years and strengthen the bottom line of the Hotel.
- High efficiency and innovative methods reduces man hours, Noise levels, energy usage and indoor air quality.

For the guest services enhancement we have introduced unique services to Grand Hotel such as Butler service for all rooms, Guest baggage cleaning service, Sunglass butler, shoe shining and washing etc

Taking a step further to the Credo of the Grand Hotel which is Regally Serving you our Royalty, the Housekeeping Associates practice and ensure to add moments of Best Living to Guests during their stay at the Grand Hotel. ♦



K G S K UDAGAMA
Accommodation & Quality Assurance Manager

Q AND A



GRAND HOTEL
ESTABLISHED 1891

QUESTIONS TO BE POSED TO A HOTEL GENERAL MANAGER



A realistic, yet optimistic overview of how the hospitality industry and institutions will adapt, survive and re-emerge from the pandemic. Invaluable insights from the General Manager, Mr. Refhan Razeen of Grand Hotel, NuwaraEliya, a leading hotel in Sri Lanka that range from the importance of soft skills such as empathy and communication to pragmatic crisis and team management.

Q.1 WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO PURSUE A CAREER IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY?

My late father and uncle were attached to the industry and my father was based in England. This background and upbringing led all the three sons to join the industry, as the outlook was very optimistic. I am the second in the family

Q.2 CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FIRST JOB IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY?

I joined Hilton International which is now Hilton Colombo for the position of Steward. If you recall, in the good old days, the present day Waiter was referred to as a Steward. I went for the interview at 9.00 a.m. and came home after 5.30 p.m. with a string of interviews, commencing from the Human Resources Department, thereafter lunch, followed by an interview with the my first Food and Beverage Manager, late Mr. Athula Senanayake. He asked me what I would be in ten years; and I replied 'Manager'. When my father was driving me back home, he asked me about the questions that were asked, and with regard to the particular question posed by late Mr. Senanayake, my father said, you should have told him that I would be sitting in the seat

of the F&B Manager. I achieved this in nine years, when I assumed duties as the Food and Beverage Manager at Heritance Kandalama.

There were 78 prospective candidates for the Interview and only 20 were selected and I was one of them. This was the stepping stone and the grounding I got at Hilton International to pave the way to what I am today.

Q.3 IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE MOST CHALLENGING ASPECT OF A HOTEL MANAGER'S JOB?

The Hospitality industry is one of the dynamic, fast changing and challenging industries. If any pandemic strikes, the industry is the first to be effected, and in this context, a Managers' job is extremely crucial. Every day is trying and thus the Manager needs to be adoptable to face whatever consequences. A Manager needs to be balanced and rational. Keeping the hotel intact while being able to motivate the staff is vital. A manager needs to foresee what may occur in the future and take proactive and forward thinking measures right now. In the industry, its those who innovate and create win and not those who replicate.

“Another challenge to deter tourists from traveling into the country is that there is no proper system in place at the Airport for travelers who come to the country and if tested positive, where to be channeled as most hotels have done away with the quarantine concept and switching back to normal operations”

Q.4 WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES OUR INDUSTRY FACES TODAY?

With the pandemic, borders being closed, strict travel guidelines, deter people from traveling out of their own countries and prefer to do short travels within their own country resulting in countries like ours who are dependent on tourism getting a hard blow. When it comes to MICE marketing, with many events happening via zoom, curtailing of numbers participating for functions including weddings have deterred organizers from holding such events in Hotels, there again losing a sizable income.

Another challenge to deter tourists from traveling into the country is that there is no proper system in place at the Airport for travelers who come to the country and if tested positive, where to be channeled as most hotels have done away with the quarantine concept and switching back to normal operations

Many Sri Lankans are opting to leave the country and look for greener pastures resulting in a mammoth Brain drain. The industry is losing many talented, skilled youngsters who would have been future managers. Another major impact is that school leavers and youngsters are not joining the industry. They have seen the negative consequences that befell the employees losing jobs, facing pay cuts and the instability of the industry

Q.5 HOW WELL-PREPARED WAS THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY FOR A CRISIS LIKE THIS? HAD IT DONE ITS HOMEWORK?

From the inception of Tourism being promoted in the country way back in 1966, it has faced many upheavals including riots, a war that spanned for nearly 30 years, tsunami, different kinds of flus, floods, earth slips to name a few, and every time the industry has bounced back strongly, coming up with new and innovative concepts to combat challenges. Although the SARS Virus was dominant sometime back, it did not cause much threat to our country few years back but this time around, the entire world was not ready. It took some time for the industry to gradually pick up, look at different business models such as home delivery, take away, online food preparation tutorials, to being Preventive Care Centres, Quarantine centres etc., to be introduced in order to survive rather than thrive.

But most Hotels who acted spontaneously with different business models were able to manage their enterprises. The pandemic is definitely a lesson for the entire world and the industry needs to build up reserves on how well it could manage or rather mitigate such unforeseen factors in the future

Q.6 BUSINESS CONTINUITY IS CURRENTLY A BIG WORD. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR A HOTEL BUSINESS WHOSE OPERATIONS ARE PARALYZED AND THE WORKFORCE IS LAID OFF OR 100% ON PART-TIME?

At the Grand Hotel, with its sound financial footing, the business continuity was not challenged. During the lock down period, the product was given a total facelift with continuous cleaning, repairing etc., by the staff maintaining social distancing and working in batches. Job security was guaranteed of the entire team which I think, where Grand Hotel was one of the very few Hotels in Sri Lanka where no staff were laid off. Thus when the country reopened, we were back in operation.

Our hotel with its 11 food and beverage offerings and six unique dining experiences has more to offer the guests visiting Nuwara Eliya which has now become a year around destination, be it Sri Lankans or foreigners. Grand Hotel has become a culinary destination and any visitor who is residing in any boutique Hotel, or villa, deem it a point to have one meal at the Grand Hotel.



Q.7 THE INDUSTRY IS CURRENTLY IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT MODE. IF YOU LOOK TO THE FUTURE, POST-COVID, WHAT TRENDS DO YOU SEE?

As the world slowly recovers from COVID-19 and borders gradually start to open, we expect travel to look a little different than it did pre-pandemic. It is certain that travelers would focus on the following when deciding their travel itineraries

1. Travellers would prefer more socially distant travel and avoid large crowded cities to visit
2. Less Group travel and more FIT Itineraries
3. Market popularity will change towards travelers opting for countries or regions where they have managed the Covid 19 pandemic well
4. Travelers may sought the assistance of Travel Experts more than ever
5. There is an emerging niche – Reunion travel, where people want to reunite with their loved ones across shores whom they have not met in two to three years
6. Another emerging market would be the Millennial, and their lifestyles and patterns
7. Hotels would do well with Wellness Tourism, Nature tourism and Revenge Tourism
8. Sustainable Tourism would be another major market trend to look for, as travelers would be more conscious in deciding to select their service providers in terms of accommodation

Q.8 WHAT LESSONS DO WE AS AN INDUSTRY HAVE TO LEARN FROM THIS GLOBAL LOCKDOWN?

We need to be optimistic when challenges are posed and the C-19 has made us to reflect and look at the following

1. Inspire empathy – most hotels, restaurants and bars survived when they took the pivot to act and think differently.
2. The pandemic showed the industry how to get creative and work innovatively
3. How to do more with less. Cost reduction was the name of the game for survival. Each cost incurring aspect was deeply scrutinized and measures taken on how to reduce it
4. Adoption of technology – Although the Hospitality industry relies heavily on physical interaction and soft skills, the pandemic showed on how best to adopt and use technology such as contactless check-in, QR Coding for Menus, Chatbots etc
5. Shifting of our culture - we are witnessing the end of offices. As organizations see how productive their teams can be while working remotely, they are starting to rethink what a traditional working environment looks like. So the usual meet ups and high end luncheons could give way to different dining habits. Markets will die, but whole new industries will rise to serve audiences in bold, new ways. Each of us gets to decide — through our actions — which side we choose to be on.
6. Cleanliness matters – Guests will be more than concern about the cleanliness in the hotel they book.
7. Travelers are now more focused towards sustainability and even the pandemic has taught us many positive factors of how to be in harmony with nature.



Q.9 WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS?

To manage a star class property and be based in Colombo. To work and go home in the evening to be with the family. All of my career of 30 years, I have been outstation and missed being with the family. I was only in Colombo for nearly 1 – 1 ½ years when at Galle Face. Hence would like to strategize my work whereby in five years I would be able to spend more time with the family by being based in Colombo.

Dear Legends of Aitken Spence,

Good afternoon and greetings from the chilly mountain hill station. It's been a while since we have had a zoom chat to reminisce and check on each other. Suggest that we now arrange a physical meet up on a convenient venue, date and time and I leave it in the good hands of Mr. Selviah and the Team to initiate same.

Wishes for a pleasant day. Stay safe ♦
REFHAN



Q.10 MR. RAZEEN, A SIMPLE BUT DIFFICULT QUESTION AT THE END: IF THIS CRISIS IS SHORT AND INTENSE, IT WILL PASS. OR WILL THE ECONOMY, AND TOURISM IN PARTICULAR, HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES FOR A LONG TIME TO COME?

Every challenge is short lived if you take it in the right spirit. You cannot wait until everything falls into place in due course. You need to adjust sails and go with the tide.

Challenges are what makes people leaders, the more resilient you are, and the more becoming you would be a leader who lives by example.

Today, it will be the pandemic, tomorrow it could be another natural disaster or a man-made violence. Hence we need to look at a challenge as a stepping stone to work towards being better and able to provide a service, where the present day traveler looks and yearns for emotional luxury.

JANUARY- 1ST INTAKE

INAUGURATION CEREMONY - CRAFT /CERTIFICATE LEVEL / PASTRY & BAKERY SLITHM - COLOMBO SCHOOL

The Heartiest Congratulations to all the freshers' for stepping into a new chapter in life, pursuing your education with dignity and sincerity and "living college life in style."

Inauguration Ceremony of Certificate Level / Craft Level / Pastry & Bakery (Certificate Level): 1st Intake / 2022 held on Tuesday 18th January 2022 at 9.30am at SLITHM auditorium,

CHIEF GUEST

Mrs. Gitanjali Chakravarthy - *General Manager Hilton Yala*

PARTICIPANTS / SPEAKERS

Mrs. Kimarli Fernando - *Chairperson*

Mrs. Nadeeka Wataliyadda - *Director General*

Welcome speech by Mr. Saman Hathurusinghe- *Principal*

Vote of Thanks by Mrs. Nirmalie Mendis - *Lecturer* ♦





INAUGURATION CEREMONY INTERMEDIATE LEVEL-238 (YEAR 2022) SLITHM - COLOMBO SCHOOL

Inauguration Ceremony of Intermediate Level-238 (2022) held on Monday 14th February 2022 at 9.30am at SLITHM auditorium

CHIEF GUEST

Mr. Asela Wavita - General Manager Victoria golf & amp; Country Resort, Kandy

PARTICIPANTS / SPEAKERS

Mrs. Kimarli Fernando - Chairperson

Mrs. Nadeeka Wataliyadda - Director General

Welcome speech by Mr. Saman Hathurusinghe - Principal

Vote of Thanks by Mr. Chaman Perera - Senior Lecturer ♦





Igniting Precision & Performance LANGUAGE DAY 2022 SLITHM



LANGUAGE DAY *A Red Letter Day in the History of Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management*

The 04th of March, 2022 was the day SLITHM students took a flight ! Because we had a Language Day for the first time in the history of SLITHM. We are ever so grateful to Director General Mrs. Nadeeka Wataliyadda for granting this invaluable opportunity to students of SLITHM for thinking bigger, pushing limits and imagining the unimaginable.

Our maiden Language Day ceremony was graced by many dignitaries. Our Chief Guest was Dr.D.L.S.Ananda, the Head of English Language Teaching Department, University of Sri Jayawardenapura, Guest of Honour was Ms. Sriyanthie Salgado, District Director, District 82 Toastmasters, the Keynote Speaker was Mr.Thilina Yapa Bandara, Engineer, Former Area Director, Toastmaster, Guest

Speaker was Mr.Nadeesha Palliyaguru, Sri Lankan Representative, German Embassy of Sri Lanka & Maldives. In addition to the above the Managing Director of Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) Ms. K P P Siriwardana and the Vice President of Ceylon Hotel School Graduate Association, Mr. Patrick Pereira were also among the special invitees. Although the Chairperson of Sri Lanka Tourism, Mrs. Kimarli Fernando and the Secretary to the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation Services Mr. S. Hettiarachchi were unable to be present due to unavoidable circumstances, their unending blessings have always been there with SLITHM academic activities. The Deputy Director General Academic - Mr. Kanishka Jayathunga, Principal of Colombo - Saman Hathurusinghe, Executives of the Academic and nonacademic staff

were also among the other valued invitees.

Further, it was an epic life changing experience for the students to unleash their ultimate potential, hidden talents, creativity, energy and strength in gaining momentum and creating the esthetic sense they have ever dreamt. In fact the students could celebrate their uniqueness. Furthermore, this signature event opened an entirely new world of possibilities to build a better version of the students since they utilized multiple languages in the innovative items.

Since this spectacular event had novel items such as Let's Reflect, Harmonious Musical Segmentation, Melodious Individual Songs with Live Music, Sprightly Dances Accompanied by Melodic Group

Songs and Mesmerizing Mash-up Songs, creativity was unlimited thus the the students could express best of the best. Moreover ,the outstanding compering done by the masters of ceremonies was fantabulous and the students could grow, excel and expand by taking part in it. It is very precious to state that our dear students' fruitful efforts were appreciated by the Director General towards the end of the programme.

Other inspiring fact about the Language Day is that the live music was provided by the students and the elegant decorations were also the tireless efforts of the students. Therefore SLITHM is proud to have star performers, versatile masters of ceremonies , graceful dancers, silvery musicians , lilting singers and seasoned speakers. All in all, our well accomplished ,gifted, talented and blessed students of Advanced Level,

Management Level and Certificate Level had the ability to move mountains and inspire the audience. Additionally, the enthralled ushering team consisted of Certificate Level and Craft Level Students captivated the attention of all with their magnetic personality when they escorted invited guests to the auditorium. I am sure all the students were able to paint themselves with a better communicator plus public speaker by actively taking part in this function. Another valid point to contemplate is that all the students who took part in the Language Day programme stayed energized, exuded confidence and leveled up their leadership skills.

The our talented students did justice to the theme of the Language Day, 'Igniting Precision & Performance' by unlocking their hidden potential. The students' dazzling performance

was beyond the expectations. The students were able to reach an epitome of success as they strove for new heights.

As the Lecturer-in-Charge of the Language Unit at SLITHM , I would like to convey my utmost gratitude to SLITHM management for their immeasurable cooperation in making all possible arrangements to organize this academic event for the students to expand their horizons, flight , soar ,innovate greatness and invest in untapped potential. Director General's blessings have been the wind beneath my wings. I am ever grateful to Maintenance, IT, Marketing, HR/Admin, Finance Divisions for providing their perfect logistic support.

I am so impressed with the students's brilliant performance at the Language Day which was absolutely





phenomenal. Language Day might have created an ultimate breakthrough in the students' life as they explored potentials in the challenging post pandemic time. Thus kudos to all the students who took part in the Language Day activities as they performed better than the best. On top of all the students knew how to bloom with grace in all the

Language Day items.

In conclusion, I would say it was the Grace of all invitees that we were able to have the Language Day glamorously and end on a High Note. ♦



LATHISHA J. RAMANAYAKE
Lecturer-in-Charge of the
Language Unit, SLITHM

PRESIDENT VISITS

SRI LANKA INSTITUTE OF TOURISM & HOTEL MANAGEMENT



Sri Lanka can be made an Asian destination for tourists. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa pointed out that obstacles should be removed and plans should be made to attract tourists through global promotional programmes.

More than 260,000 tourists have arrived in the country in the first quarter of the year. That's higher than last year's overall tourist arrivals. The government expects to achieve the target of 1.3 million tourists by the end of the year. The President pointed out that all sectors of the tourism industry should be prepared to achieve this target.

The President made these remarks during an inspection visit to the Sri Lanka Tourism at No. 80, Galle Road, Colombo 03, on 24th March 2022 in the morning hours.

The Ceylon Hotel School & School

of Tourism was established in 1966 for the training of young men and women in the Hotel & Tourism Industry and it has reached rapid economic development through the systematic and streamlined development of the tourism industry and it became the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management (SLITHM) in 2005.

The SLITHM is empowered to oversee all areas related to the tourism industry, including manpower training, providing training to the hospitality sector, training of tourist guides, conducting demand-driven training programmes for the industry and delivering services to the hotel sector etc....

The President inspected the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, and Sri Lanka Convention Bureau and commended the staff for

their commitment to the promotion of the tourism industry.

The government aims to raise USD 10 billion annually from the tourism industry. The Easter Sunday attack was a major blow to the tourism industry. It was further devastated by the Covid-19 pandemic. The government has taken all necessary steps for the rapid development of the infrastructure in the tourism sector.

Minister of Tourism Prasanna Ranatunga, Principal Advisor to President Lalith Weeraratna, Ministry Secretary S. Hettiarachchi, Chairperson of the Tourism Development Authority Kimarli Fernando, Director General SLITHM Mrs. Nadeeka Wataliyadda and several other higher officials were present at the occasion. ♦

SRI LANKA INSTITUTE OF TOURISM AND HOTEL MANAGEMENT

STUDENTS' SPORTS AND WELFARE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

WAS ELECTED FOR THE YEAR 2022.



Students' Sports and Welfare Executive Committee of Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management, Colombo, the main campus was elected in February 2022 at the school auditorium with the participation of more than 300 students. Talented and energised Executive Committee consisting of "President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Events and Sports coordinator, Media and Public Relation Officer, Fund Raising Officer, and two class representatives from each class were appointed. This includes about almost 40 students.

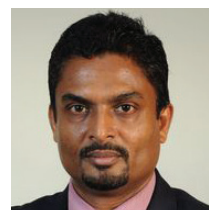
I, myself and Mr. Kanchana Krishantha have been appointed by the SLITHM Management as the Lecturers-in-Charge to advise and support the students' welfare committee. We want to support the students wholeheartedly because

students could not involve in any extracurricular activities over the past two years due to Covid-19. Welfare activities, sports, social and inter-active performance are very much needed to balance their work-life.

Moreover, Sports and Welfare are important in the overall management of student matters. This encourages a healthy, joyful, educative, playful and admirable learning environment at SLITHM. Further, it could motivate the students to participate in various academic and co-curricular activities: Such as Cricket matches, Vesak celebration, Sinhala and Tamil new year celebrations, Blood donation campaigns, First aid, Fire fighting, Musical events, Environmental cleaning, and so on. While Welfare activities also ensure effective and efficient communication and leadership qualities,

It develops and sustains recreational facilities, supports maintaining a cordial relationship, and discipline, and offers guidance, support and assistance to the students with financial difficulties.

I congratulate all the students and executive committee members and wish they would do some fruitful activities during the year. ♦



H. K. C. PERERA
Senior Lecturer SLITHM.
Lecturer-in Charge of
Student Welfare Association



NEW WELFARE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF SRI LANKA INSTITUTE OF TOURISM AND HOTEL MANAGEMENT FOR THE YEAR 2022



MR. SAMPATH KODITHUWAKKU

has been appointed by the SLITHM Welfare members as the president for the year 2022.

Welfare Executive Committee of SLITHM has appointed for the year 2022 on 11.02.2022.

Executive Committee consisting of "President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Chief Organizer, Organizing Secretary and eleven committee members covering from each SLITHM Provincial Colleges and head office.

This includes total 19 executive members.

MISSION

Our mission is making all activities by the association voluntarily for the intellectual, physical, moral, and economic betterment of SLITHM employees. Thus, succeed to above objective by offering medical, facility educational facility, loan facilities, nutrition facilities, rest and recreation and cooperative programmes are offered.

PRESIDENT

Mr. Sampath Kodithuwakku
Kandy

SECRETARY

Mrs. Ganga Walpola
Colombo

TREASURER

Mr. Aruna Madapatha
Colombo

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Ravindra Gamage
Mr. Lahiru Madushan
Miss. Chamini Senathilaka
Mr. Dharshana Jayasinghe
Mr. Nuwan Viranga
Colombo

VICE PRESIDENT

Mr. Mahinda Jayasinghe
Colombo

VICE SECRETARY

Mr. Dimuth Chathuranga
Colombo

VICE TREASURER

Miss. S.K.S. Katugampala
Colombo

Mrs. Samankanthi Lokuhetti
Koggala
Mr. Yasith Basura
Ratnapura
Mr. Sampath Weerakoon
Kurunegala

CHIEF ORGANIZER

Mr. Ranganath Peiris
Colombo

SPORTS SECRETARY

Mr. Mangala Suraweera
Colombo

ORGANIZING SECRETARY

Mr. Maneesha Henricus
Colombo

Mrs. Kishomi Kaluarachchi
Bandarawela
Mr. Sarath Amarabandu
Anuradhapura

TREE PLANTING CAMPAIGN

COMMEMORATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE DAY



Instructions were given by the Ministry of Tourism to plant 75 trees on 04th February 2022 to commemorate the 72nd Anniversary of Independence Day.

Accordingly, a campaign was organized in Colombo School to plant, water and nurse the trees that were bought in celebrating this important day. This was organized in all the Provincial Colleges too on the same day with the presence of all Provincial College Principals, Lecturers, Staff and Students.

Bestowing the directives, this campaign is to be continued 04th of every month till 2023.

Therefore, we arranged for the students also to actively participate in this affair by bringing plants and cleaning the plots to maintain nurturing cultivation. Plants were allocated amongst the students and Lecturers were assigned to supervise the work.

The students were invited and were informed that at least 05 plants were to be contributed by each class. We hope that by this ceremony we will make the environment green and also inspire others to plant trees and contribute to making the environment green and clean. ♦





NEWS AND EVENTS

JANUARY - MARCH 2022

SLITHM BANDARAWELA



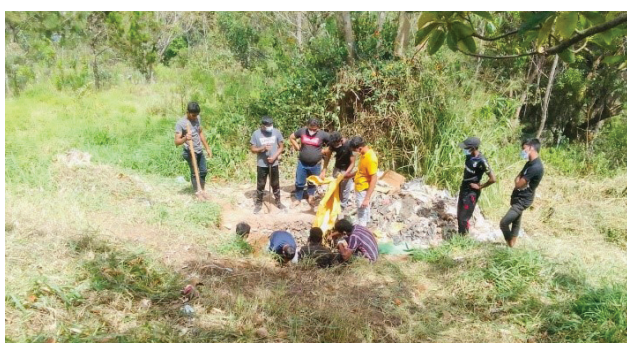
REPORTER
CHAAMILA RATHNAYAKE
Assistant Lecturer - Bandarawela

**CRICKET TOURNAMENT**

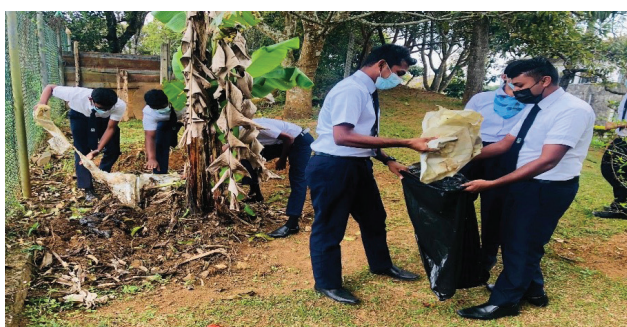
Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management (SLITHM) Bandarawela Students' Sports & Welfare Association successfully organized a cricket tournament on 28th March 2022 at Survey Department Grounds, Diyathalawa.

**MEE PLANTATION PROGRAM**

SLITHM, Bandarawela, organized the 'Mee' Tree Planting Program on 08th February 2022 at school premises. The 'Mee' tree has been selected for the program considering its contribution to pest control, ability to be used in the production of organic manure, ability to purify the air and its use as a natural medicine.

**SHRAMADANA CAMPAIGN**

SLITHM Bandarawela Organized Shramadana Campaign on 28th February 2022 at school premises and around the surrounding village area.

**"DENGUE CONTROL" SHRAMADANA CAMPAIGN**

SLITHM Bandarawela Organized "Dengue Control" Shramadana Campaign on 20th February 2022 in the school premises.

SLITHM ANURADHAPURA



REPORTER
NUWAN DISSANAYAKE
Assistant Lecturer Anuradhapura



SHRAMADANA CAMPAIGN



STD PROGRAMME



DRUG AWARENESS



VOLLEYBALL AND CAROM TOURNAMENT



CELEBRATED WOMEN'S DAY



FIELD VISIT

SLITHM JAFFNA



REPORTER
NIRANJALA ALEX
Lecturer in Charge Jaffna



Trained 25 students under craft level cookery and placed them in hotels for training This was a funded project with Northern Tourism Bureau and they paid all the fees directly to SLITHM by a cheque.



Hotel Marriot group visited Jaffna hotel school and conducted interviews to hire trainees for their hotels. The HR from Marriot, Sheraton Hotel visited here and conducted the interviews.



Mrs. Niranjala Alex – Lecturer in Charge Jaffna, attended the Board Meeting and represented SLITHM, and presented about the operation of SLITHM – Jaffna and requested for the sponsorship to build a fully-fledged hotel school in the new land

SLITHM PASIKUDAH



REPORTER
RISAN MOHAMED
Lecturer in-Charge

Two National Schools were visited in the Batticaloa District namely;
(01) BT/Hindu College, Batticaloa
(02) BT/Kattankudy Central College.

Teachers-in-Charge in Schools participated under 13 Years Guaranteed Educational Programme and O/L Students in both Schools.



SLITHM – KANDY



REPORTER
G .BRIAN BENEDICT
Assistant Lecturer, SLITHM-Kandy

Adding colors to the Edu First Expo at Kandy City Centre (KCC) on 12th and 13th March 2022

The Edu First Expo is the largest higher education career guidance exhibition & job fair in Kandy organized by Ceylon Exhibitions and Cooperate Services Institute. The main aims of the event were to

- create awareness of the higher education opportunities in the public & private sectors
- create awareness of national & international scholarships for higher education

- provide career guidance for vocational training
- create opportunities for school leavers to apply for jobs and make opportunities to get financial support for higher education.

We had a full house at the SLITHM Kandy stall at the Kandy City Centre exhibition held on the 12th and 13th of March 2022. We were able to nurture young minds to be future hoteliers by making the right choice today.



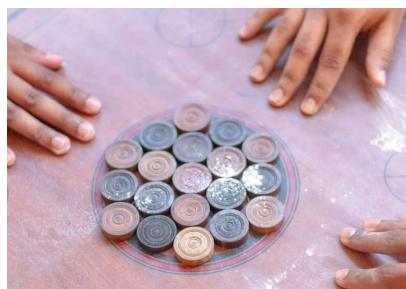
SLITHM KANDY LOVE SPORTS

Sporting events play huge roles in the contribution to unifying a nation because sport acts as a surface for human interaction. People all around the world from all different walks of life, backgrounds and beliefs can still come together in supporting or discussing sports and sporting events.

Students' Sports and Welfare Association opened up opportunities to showcase students' sports talents by organizing Carom and Badminton tournaments for the first quarter of 2022. Students were able to sharpen their

leadership qualities, unity and harmony among all. Students enthusiastically participated in the events to bear the victory and defeat equally.

Both Carom and Badminton tournaments were held at the school premises on 25th February and 8th March respectively. The Sports and Welfare committee of SLITHM Kandy greatly promotes Gender Equity in organizing all events including sports. These snaps reflect the highlights of the Carom and Badminton tournaments.



SLITHM KOGGALA



REPORTER
ANUSHA SAMANMALIE
Assistant Lecturer- Koggala

- Tourist Drivers Refresher Programme - 13th January 2022
- 04 Days of Tourist Drivers Training Programme - 18th January to 03rd February 2022
- Certificate Level Student's Batch 031-Final Buffet Practical - 13th January 2022
- Tree Plantation for 74th Independence Day Celebration - 04th February 2022
- Carom Tournament- 18th February 2022
- Badminton Tournament- 07th March 2022
- 02 Days of Awareness Programme Kotapola, Deniyaya. 19th, 20th March 2022
- Table Tennis - 23rd March 2022
- Government School Students Awareness Programme, Deiyandara National College - 07th April 2022
- First Aid and Life Awareness Programme - 03rd April 2022





SLITHM KURUNAGALA



REPORTER
AMALEE RAJAPAKSHA
MA-Kurunegala



Inauguration Programme Certificate level 032 batch 1st Intake – 18th January – Certificate level batch



The carom tournament organized by the Students Sports & Welfare Association – 11th February – Certificate level students of batch 032



International Women's Day celebration - tree planting programme organized by students sports & welfare Association SLITHM Kurunegala – 03rd March



Two weeks Short Term Training programme in Food & Beverage conducted At the Ananthaya Hotel Chilaw.



Awareness Programme conducted at the AG office for the school-leavers and their parents. 11th March - 100 nos participants



Awareness Programme conducted for the 13 year students. AulegamaSangabodhividyalaya 14th January. - 100nos students from the Zonal Education Nikawaratiya



School Awareness Programme for Dodamgaslanda School – 18th March - 16 students



Fire safety education programme conducted by. Mr.Krishantha Chief Officer Municipal Council Kurunegala. – 18th March – Certificate Level Batch



One month "Apprenticeship Course" commenced from 19th March 2022 to 24th April



SLITHM RATNAPURA



REPORTER
SHERAN PIERIS
Assistant Lecturer- Ratnapura

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

Students' Sports & Welfare Association of SLITHM Ratnapura Organized STD program for Students on 21/02/2022 at School Auditorium. For this program we invited,

Ms. Thilini Weerasekara (District Educational Officer - Topic is Drug and Narcotic)

Mr. Leelarathna Bureau of Foreign Employment - Topic is Foreign Employment Rules)

**CAROM TOURNAMENT**

The Sports and Welfare Association of SLITHM Ratnapura Organized the Carom tournament on 15/03/2022 at the school premises. In this tournament



Single (Men) Winner - HouseKeeping
Double (Men) Winner - Professional Cookery

Single (Ladies) Winner - Professional Cookery
Double (Ladies) Winner - Housekeeping



HIGH-TECH AND LOW-TOUCH OR HIGH-TOUCH AND LOW-TECH?

Technology that pushes self-service on the promise of making many everyday tasks less arduous has proved to do just that in many cases. However, there is still an ongoing debate as to how much and how far it can be adapted in the hospitality industry.

Proponents of Self-service technologies (SSTs) say it is the way forward; where hotel frontline and service staff are freed from interacting with customers over mundane and/or routine chores, and can instead, attend to more important tasks. Detractors of SSTs claim it takes away the traditional interpersonal 'high touch-low tech' experiences and is contrary to the spirit of hospitality. In the process, two polarized camps, on both sides of the 'embrace SST' divide have emerged; one screaming 'we should' and the other saying 'we shouldn't'.

At individual level, as discovered by many companies, the biggest obstacle was not the technology itself. It was the reluctance or fear in several customers to use it. COVID-19, however, not only reduced that fear factor, but also accelerated the acceptance level - although not due to the convenience in service it brings and one that customers value, but simply from a safety-above-all angle, as the pandemic choked cus-

tomers' contact.

The advent of self-service check-in kiosks in the hotel lobby came in response to reduce 'wait for lines' and to get guests to their rooms swiftly. The guest can slide in their credit cards and receive their room key cards. Pretty soon AI-based SSTs such as facial recognition check-in will make it even easier to get to the hotel room.

Hotels that introduce kiosks argue that it resonates well with the 'fast and furious' paced lives of the millennials and frees front desk staff to devote more time to guests who need attention. True, and also true, although hardly mentioned, is that at an organisational level, it translates to employing a fewer staff and reduced payroll burden. It allows hoteliers to provide certain services devoid of any physical presence of service staff with the benefits of significantly lowering operating costs and boosting profits.

Whilst hotels have now begun installing other self-ordering gadgets including smart speakers and robots, some hoteliers and customers remain wary about introducing technologies across-the-board in the service industry. In a 'people looking after people' industry, where hotel service is largely a human-oriented business, they express fear that the

use of emotionless technologies may result in service indifference and irreparably tear hospitality's delicate role of caring.

To summarize; decreased workload and improved efficiency are economic benefits in an organisational context, perhaps better suited to the 'no frills' and 'no-luxury' hotels. Robots can be that 'pull factor' to attract guests but lack attributes of personalization due to two-way dialogue limitations. They are less prone to making mistakes, are available 24/7 and do not resign. Whilst they may be novel, their monotonous sounding voices can be off-putting and they can falter when it comes to problem resolution.

All these factors need to be taken into account when considering the delivery of desirable guest experiences, driven by SSTs in today's fast-evolving tech world. ♦

Written by:

SHAFEEK WAHAB

*Editor, Hospitality Sri Lanka,
Consultant, Trainer, Ex-Hotelier*

Moderated by:

RAMESH PERERA

*Writer/Proofreader:
Publication Committee*

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