



Peradeniya Medical School Alumni Association - UK

"We Endeavour to Foster and Promote Medical Education and Research"

ANNUALS & BALL

On 27th September 2025 at
Shendish Manor Hotel Hemel Hempstead, HP3 0AAG



www.pemsaa.uk



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Greetings and a warm welcome to the Annual Ball of PeMSAA-UK.

PeMSAA-UK continues to stand as a symbol of unity, purpose, and unwavering commitment. As a charitable, non-political organization, we uphold the values of equality and diversity, free from any religious affiliations. Our mission remains clear: to support the Peradeniya Medical Faculty by sharing knowledge, nurturing skills, and sponsoring essential academic and professional activities.



As President of PeMSAA-UK, I feel immense pride and gratitude. The continued success of our organization is the result of the dedication and tireless efforts of our members and supporters. Each of you plays a vital role in advancing our mission, and together we create a positive and lasting impact.

In line with our Vision and Mission, today's gathering unites our esteemed alumni across the UK along with our well-wishers, all of whom share a deep commitment to the welfare of Sri Lanka, particularly the Peradeniya Medical School. Our collective goal is to support our beloved Alma Mater and our motherland in reaching ever greater heights of excellence.

This year, we are privileged to be joined by the Prof Saman Nanayakkara Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, and the Prof Indi Nanayakkara, President of PeMSAA. I extend my sincere gratitude to both for gracing our event with their presence.

I also wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to our alumni, friends, and families. Your presence here today reflects your enduring connection to our Alma Mater and to Sri Lanka. Your support and participation are invaluable.

To our sponsors, I extend my sincere thanks. Your generosity has made this event possible, and your commitment to our cause is truly commendable.

I am equally grateful to our committee members and volunteers. Your hard work and dedication have been the driving force behind the success of this occasion.

In closing, I wish to emphasize that the journey of PeMSAA-UK is a shared one. It is through our collective effort and commitment that we continue to move forward. As we enjoy the celebrations and academic exchanges of this event, let us carry with us the spirit of unity, purpose, and service to our Alma Mater.

Ashan Gunarathne

Message from the Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya Page 5

It is with great pleasure and deep appreciation that I join you as the Chief Guest at the PeMSAA UK Annual Get-Together and Dr. Varagunam memorial lecture 2025. This gathering stands as a testament to the strong bonds that unite the global community of Peradeniya Medical School alumni.



The legacy of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, extends far beyond the walls of our institution. Our alumni, spread across the world, have made remarkable contributions to healthcare, medical education, and research. Events such as this bring us together not only to celebrate these achievements but also to renew our shared commitment to advancing the practice of medicine and the wellbeing of our communities.

For over three decades, PeMSAA has been an integral partner of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya. The generous support extended by PeMSAA UK in the form of scholarships for our students, providing a bus and improving the Faculty's infrastructure—has strengthened our academic and social mission while enriching the lives of many within our community.

As we reflect on the past and look towards the future, I am filled with pride at how our graduates continue to embody the values of excellence, compassion, and service that lie at the heart of our Faculty. I am confident that through continued collaboration and the exchange of ideas, we can build an even stronger network that inspires the next generation of healthcare professionals.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to PeMSAA UK for their tireless efforts in fostering these connections and supporting the mission of our alma mater. May this year's gathering be a memorable occasion filled with friendship, inspiration, and renewed purpose.

Prof. Saman Nanayakkara

Message from PeMSAA Sri Lanka, President

It gives me great pleasure to be invited to the Annual Dinner-Dance and the Professor Thambapillai Varagunam Memorial Lecture 2025.



Over the years PeMSAA has grown not only in numbers, but in its capacity to make a difference — helping students, supporting the Faculty, fostering research. I believe that this event is more than ceremonial. This is an opportunity: to renew our shared commitment to advancing medical education; to reflect on where we stand, what remains to be done; and to chart a future in which our students are better equipped, our Faculty better resourced, and our society better served.

May this gathering strengthen old friendships, spark new collaborations, and renew our sense of belonging to this special community that is Peradeniya. Let this activity be joyful, but also meaningful.

In closing, I wish to thank all who made this event possible — the organizing committee, donors and sponsors, and every alumnus and alumna whose generosity of spirit supports this mission. And to all those who are part of this event: thank you for honoring this legacy, and for being part of the future of PeMSAA and the Faculty of Medicine at Peradeniya.

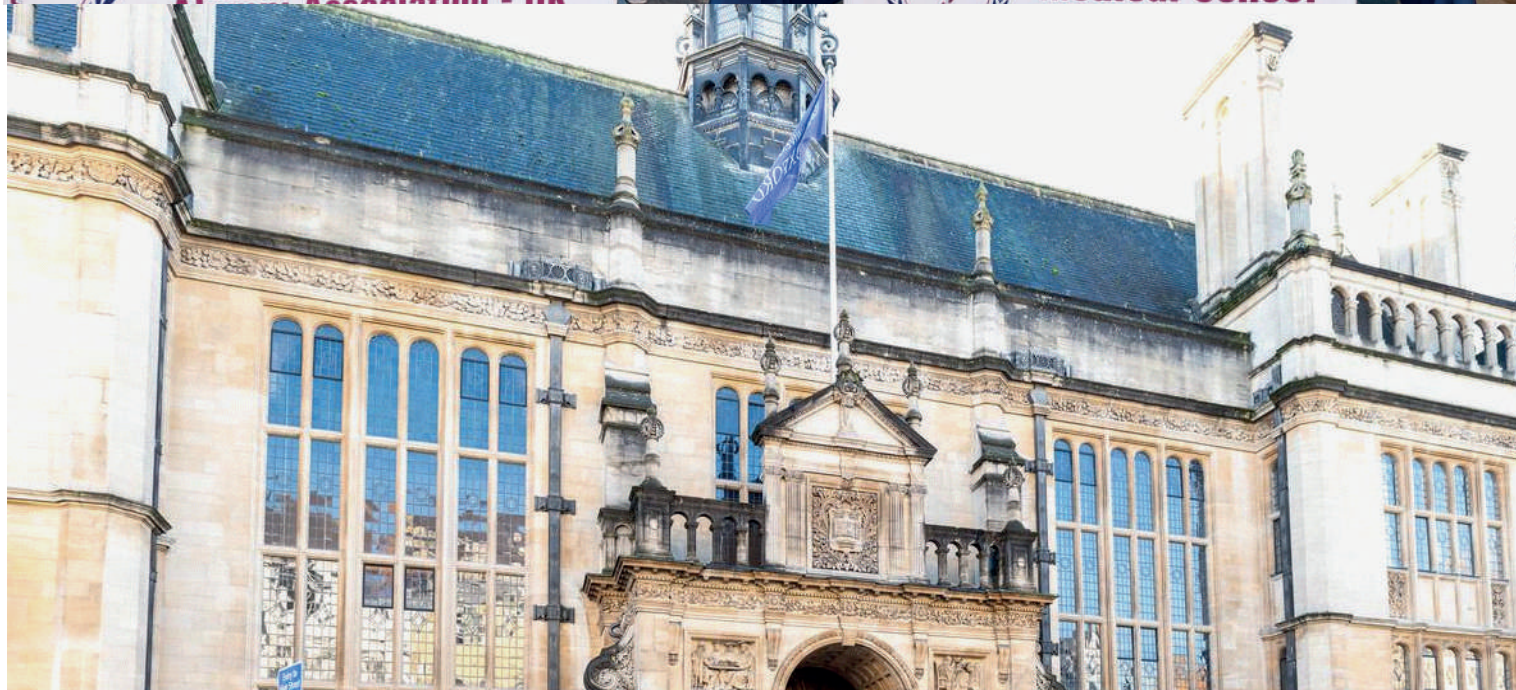
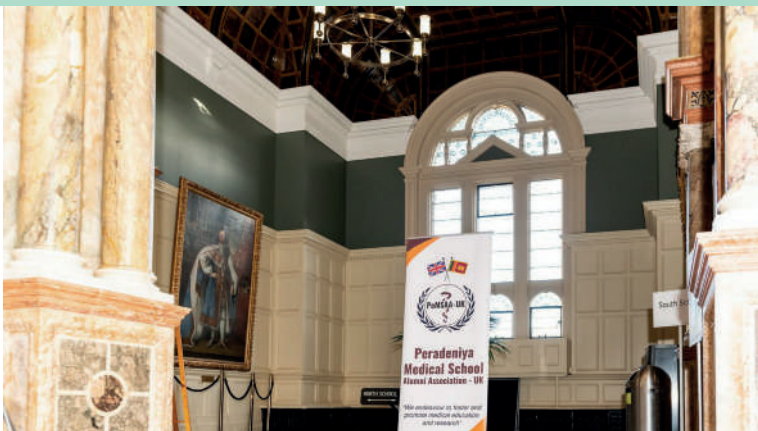
With warm regards and sincere gratitude,

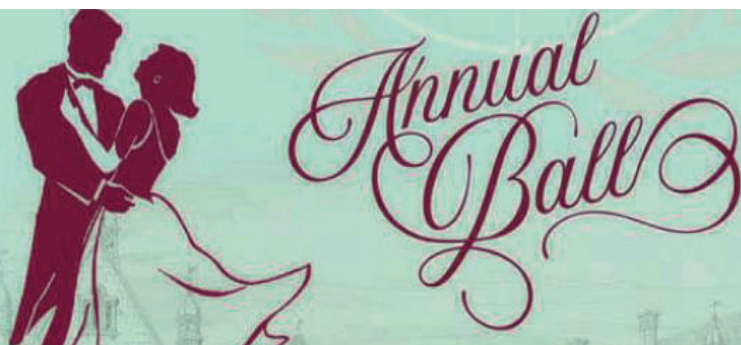
Prof. Indumathie Nanayakkara

International Academic Conference

11th November 2023

**University of Oxford, Examination
Schools Oxford, OX1 4BG**





11th November 2023



CHARITY WALK & SUMMER GALA

AT PEAK DISTRICT - 20TH OF JULY 2024



CHARITY WALK & SUMMER GALA

AT PEAK DISTRICT- 26TH OF JULY 2025





PeMSAA-UK Academic Award

For Best Research / Audit/ Quality Improvement Project in Sri Lanka

1st Prize:

- PeMSAA-UK embossed personalised Plaque and Certificate
- A gift to the total value of £250.00 in cash

2nd Prize

- PeMSAA-UK embossed personalised Plaque and Certificate
- A gift to the total value of £150.00 in cash



PeMSAA-UK donated two scanning beds to the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya. The project was made possible through the generous contribution coordinated by Prof. Dayananda Samarawickrama and Padma Samarawickrama.



Peradeniya Medical School annual Research Conference (PeMSARC '24) was sponsored by PeMSAA UK



Peradeniya Medical School annual Research Conference (PeMSARC '25) was sponsored by PeMSAA UK



Supporting the Medical Student
Elective Programme



Sharing Knowledge and Expertise-
KSM lecture at Kandy hospital



Award of Prof Jayasena Pharmacology
medal and award, sponsored by
PeMSAA UK



PeMSAA-UK - Gunarathne Research
Grant

Provides up to £250 to support research
initiatives by medical students at the
University of Peradeniya.



Evening Agenda

Arrival of guests and Drinks Reception
 Welcome and Lighting of Traditional Oil Lamp
 Presidential Address: Dr Ashan Gunaratne
 Cultural Dance #1
 Introduction to Prof R Swaminathan by Dr Sethsiri Wijeratne
 Prof Varugunum Lecture: Prof R Swaminathan
 Cultural Dance #2
 Speech by Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya: Prof Saman Nanayakkara
 Speech by President, PeMSAA Sri Lanka: Prof Indumathie Nanayakkara
 Dinner
 Raffle
 Dance the Night Away until 11:30 PM
 Vote of Thanks: Dr Lalith Jayasekera
 National Anthems



1st - Afternoon tea for two at The Ritz London

2nd - Dinner voucher for two at Hutong at The Shard



3rd - Luxury Hamper

Professor Thambapillai Varagunam (1930 – 2018)

An Appreciation

Thambipillai Varagunam was born in Kallady Upodai in the Eastern Region of Sri Lanka, on 08/11/1930. The young Varagunam received his early education at Govt Central College, Batticaloa moving to Royal college, Colombo where he excelled in academics and sports, Rugby being his forte.



Entering the University of Ceylon to read medicine in 1950, he qualified in 1955 taking up training posts in Colombo North after which he left for UK to further his training. On completing the training with a membership of the Royal College of Physicians, Varagunam returned to Colombo to join the department of medicine as a lecturer.

He was a pioneer in all his endeavours. He challenged the status quo, exhibited “out of the box” thinking and was a visionary whose thought process was years ahead of many of his contemporaries. This approach led him to lead a group of exceptional individuals leaving the portals of Colombo to establish the Medical Faculty in Peradeniya. The rest is history.

Prof Varagunam’s visionary outlook led him to establish the Medical Education Unit in Peradeniya at a time when many questioned the need for an evidence-based approach to education and teaching.

Always a pioneer, he together with a physician friend Dr. Kolitha Karunaratne and the surgeon Mr Rudra Rasaretnam were responsible for the organisation of the Kandy Society of Medicine, one of the foremost medical organisations in the country. With its scientific programmes it remains a vibrant source of continued medical education to the medical community, doctors and students, in the central regions of this country.

As we remember and celebrate Prof Varagunam’s life, one cannot fail to see exemplary leadership qualities in all his endeavours. Never a person to mince words, but always careful as to their choice, not to hurt a soul, he was a free spirit, though heavy with sense of responsibility. He always led from behind, never hesitant to take the blame when things go wrong but handing over the accolades of success to others. His leadership qualities allowed him to excel beyond the portals of Sri Lanka. His contributions to the World Health Organisation have been well documented.

Once in a lifetime, humanity is adorned by exceptional individuals. Prof Varagunam belonged to this rare breed who through their selfless service and goodness of their heart touch the lives of so many. He was an astute clinician and a talented teacher but what defined him above all was his exceptional personality; humble, humane and kind. He treated prince and pauper alike. A patient, a Departmental attendant, a Dean or Professor of Medicine, a medical student, a Vice Chancellor or a nurse; they were all received with the same level of acceptance, humour and straight talk. Prof Varagunam’s love for the Peradeniya Medical Faculty and its graduates led him to play an active part in supporting Alumni organisations and he encouraged them to contribute positively to the development of their alma mater.

The members of PeMSAA-UK were delighted that he was able to be their Chief Guest at its inauguration on the 17th June 2017. It is also somewhat consoling that this occasion allowed many of us to express our thanks to him in person.

“A good head and a good heart are rare but formidable combinations”- Nelson Mandela

The Professor Varagunam Memorial Lecture 2025

Professor Ramasanyiyer Swaminathan MBBS, Msc, PhD, FRCPath,

Professor Ramasanyiyer Swaminathan is a pioneer in clinical biochemistry and chemical pathology. He completed his MBBS in 1967 at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, and earned a PhD from the University of Leeds in 1976, with a thesis on the hormonal factors influencing calcium absorption and the role of calcitonin in calcium homeostasis.



Professor Swaminathan was the founding chairman of the Department of Chemical Pathology at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK).

His last appointment was professor of chemical pathology and chairman of the Department of Chemical Pathology at King's College London, GKT School of Medicine, from 1991 to 2014.

He authored the Handbook of Clinical Biochemistry (2nd edition) and has contributed to the academic and professional development of clinical biochemistry. His qualifications include MRCPPath and FRCPath, with a further FRCPath (UK).

The Professor Varagunam Memorial Lecture 2025 sponsored by



Our endeavors to the Faculty



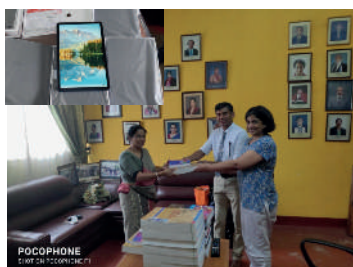
Sponsorships & Welfare

- **PeMSAA-UK Studentships**
- **2nd MBBS book donations for needy students**
- **Mentoring and Career guidance to those visiting UK for post MD Fellowships.**
- **Bursary Scheme for students/support for meals**



Academic & Research

- **Fully subscribing for International Journal of Medicine & Surgery**
- **Book donations to the Library**
- **i-Pads for students**
- **CME lectures to students and postgraduate trainees**



Awards

- **PeMSAA-UK & Professor Panabokke Stethoscope award**
- **PeMSAA-UK Academic awards to encourage Research Projects at grass root level**





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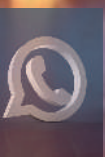
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Peradeniya Medical School Alumni Association - UK

"We endeavour to foster and promote medical education and research"

Our mission -

- To promote close relations between the faculty and its alumni in the UK
- To provide financial support to the faculty and the students
- To support the academic and research activities of the faculty
- To support and enhance the welfare of the students
- To exchange of information, professional expertise, and collaboration on mutually beneficial programs

PeMSAA-UK is the UK branch of The Peradeniya Medical Students Alumni Association. PeMSAA-UK was inaugurated in 2017 to re ignite the passion and share in the memories of our time at Peradeniya Medical School. In accordance of our vision and mission we endeavour to bring together all the Alumni in the UK who are interested in the welfare of the Peradeniya Medical School to assist our Alma Mater.

We are eternally grateful to our School and the University of Peradeniya for laying strong foundations and nurturing us, to reach the positions we hold in the medical profession and in the society today. Now it is our turn to payback. The great Nelson Mandela famously said: "There is no greater gift than that of giving one's time and energy to helping others without expecting anything in return." There are many ways to give back, from career and academic mentoring to volunteering time at alumni events, to simply attending academic and social events. We want to reach out and connect with you. Thank you for your support for PeMSAA-UK.



If you'd like to contribute to the exciting projects by PeMSAA-UK and give back to your alma mater, join us by following the QR code.

- *Use our social events to reconnect with your batch mates*
- *Help us to raise funds to support students and the faculty*
- *Give your expertise back to the faculty and students*

Contact us:

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