

2011 Field Survey Report

Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding Efforts in Sri Lanka

In collaboration with the National Library and Documentation Service Board



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Field Survey Report

**Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding Efforts
in the Asia-Pacific
2011**

International Information and Networking Centre for
Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region
under the auspices of UNESCO

In collaboration with National Library and Documentation Services Board, Sri Lanka

Preface

The International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region proposed by the Korean government was finally approved as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO at the 35th session of the UNESCO General Conference last October. Over the course of the next year, the Centre and the Korean government prepared for the establishment of the UNESCO category 2 centre which is intended to become a hub for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in Asia and the Pacific region.

As a well intentioned objective for the future activities of this centre, ICHCAP initiated the 2009 Field Survey Project of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding Efforts in the Asia-Pacific Region.

In 2011 ICHCAP worked in collaboration with institutions from seven countries which include: Cook Islands, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Marshall Islands, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Tonga to carry out the field surveys. The purpose of the field survey project was to obtain a grasp on the current situation of ICH safeguarding, along with specific details on each country's efforts in inventory making and relevant policies, laws, organisations, etc. The centre will continue this project over the next several years to cover all of the countries within the Asia-Pacific region.

The centre will serve Asia-Pacific Member States as an information and networking centre for the safeguarding of ICH. The final report from the project will serve as a resource that will help determine particular needs and provide direction for new cooperative projects for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. It will also be used as a resource for states within the region to strengthen their understanding of intangible cultural heritage of other countries in the region.

Lastly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the institutions and researchers who actively cooperated with ICHCAP on the field survey project.

Seong-Yong Park, Ph.D
Acting Director
International Information and Networking Centre for
Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region
under the auspices of UNESCO



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Introduction

Asia and the Pacific region is an area rich with various elements of intangible cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage has been handed down from generation to generation and has contributed to the development of cultural diversity and the creativity of humanity. Intangible cultural heritage for social development is well recognised as it represents the evolvement of historical traditions and the cultural identity of a society embodied in creative expression.

Over time, the form and substance of intangible cultural heritage has become vulnerable to deterioration. In particular, rapid social change and globalisation have made this situation even more pressing. Fortunately, there has recently been an increase in global awareness in relation to the value of intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding.

In this regard, ICHCAP has created a survey study plan to collect all the necessary information related to current safeguarding systems for intangible cultural heritage in the region. ICHCAP has been preparing this survey since 2008, and 2010 is the second year of the implementation of this project.

ICHCAP has collected relevant data from reports, workshop books, meeting resolutions, internet databases, etc. While the information is valuable, in many cases, the data is neither accurate, nor up to date. This is the reason ICHCAP has prepared a new survey to accumulate more current pertinent data.

The field survey was carried out by respected researchers in each country. For this project, ICHCAP developed a questionnaire to guide the research teams conducting the field surveys in each country. The questionnaire encompassed topics pertaining to safeguarding the present system & policy; intangible cultural heritage inventory; information regarding relevant conferences, symposiums and workshops; national and local pending issues and urgent needs within the field of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding.

Lastly, the information and data may be open to the public and ICHCAP will share necessary data with other Member States to support the implementation of the most effective and appropriate practices for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. We expect the project will assist in strengthening regional capacity and solidarity as well as international cooperation for the safeguarding of ICH in the region.

Forward

Intangible Cultural Heritage is an important aspect of the Culture of a country. Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage of a country is a responsibility of a National Library in any country, accordingly National Library and Documentation Services Board has started a project for the conservation and preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Sri Lanka. A national committee to deal with ICH in Sri Lanka has already been appointed.

This report on ICH in Sri Lanka has been compiled on the request of Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and Pacific (ICHCAP). ICHCAP sponsored this project. This report includes information on different aspects of ICH in Sri Lanka. The information for the report was collected by a team of qualified researchers. I am extremely thankful to Mr. Pandula Endagama, Senior Anthropologist and Chairman of the Research Committee and all others who were involved in compiling this report.

Prof.Somarathna Balasuriya
Chairman
National Library and Documentation Services Board, Sri Lanka

Acknowledgement

ICHCAP where Sri Lanka is an enthusiastic member dedicatedly committed to the achievement of the golden objectives of the ICH Convention, invited Sri Lanka too to be a party to the planned programme of activities intended to make the preservation, conservation and the propagation of ICH a reality. It is with much happiness and high hopes that Sri Lanka responded positively since we being one of the world's best repositories of ICH and hence are determined to comply with the ICH Convention terms and conditions.

Therefore, it is in response to the request made to submit our views relating to some of the areas where further research and investigations are necessary with the sacred ultimate objective of preserving the un-renewable ICH for the benefit of the future generations. Hence the National Committee for the Preservation of ICH in Sri Lanka swung into action immediately and appointed a Committee headed by Mr.Pandula Endagama, a reputed anthropologist with much experience in the field as a museologist, environmentalist and a cultural activist to prepare this report. Other members of this Committee are, Prof Piyadasa Ranasinghe , a senior academic, attached to the University of Kelaniya, Prof Yasanjali Devika Jayatillake, a senior academic, Dr Jayantha Jayasiri, a senior academic, both attached to the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at the University of Sri Jayawardhanapura and Dr. Danister L. Perera, a well known practitioner of indigenous medicine and a popular disseminator of knowledge on these subjects through publications and the media.

The hard work done by the Committee members needs special mention since it was their dedication that helped this report to see the light of the day. It was within a very limited time period that it had to be completed and they stood very solidly behind me till the completion of the job entrusted. It was almost a fulltime assignment since the time allocated was limited. But they faced the challenge with a smile and ultimately achieved the goal. But it must be recorded very frankly that the Committee would not have been able to boast of such an achievement but for unstinted support given and assistance provided by the two Coordinators from the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB). Ms Varuni Gangabadaarachchi Head/Extension Services and Mr Udaya Prasad Cabral, Document Conservator/Head, Conservation and Preservation were behind the Committee almost full time until the report was in their hands. Their dedication is most exemplary to say the least. Furthermore, Mr. Chaminda de Silva deserves our thanks for the enthusiasm displayed by him in providing the services as the photographer.

The contribution made by the National Library and Documentation Services Board needs to be highlighted specially since it has taken on itself without any hesitation the great responsibility of giving the leadership in this laudable

venture of preserving and safeguarding one of the world's most valuable wealth that is incomparable and irreplaceable. Therefore the role played by this Institution as the foster parent of the National Committee of ICH of Sri Lanka deserves the appreciation of all who are genuine in their love for our ICH. Hence we owe a big thank to the Chairman, Prof. Somaratna Balasuriya and the members of the director board, former Director General Mr S. Hewage, present acting Director General Mr. N.H.M. Chithrananda, Director Mr. G.D. Amarasiri and Deputy Director Mr. W. Sunil. In addition we would like to thank Director Ms. N. Mallawarachchi and Deputy Director S. Bandara for their cooperation.

We would like to put on record a great achievement we have gained even before the finalization of this report. While deliberating on the useful proposals to be recommended for implementation for the benefit of the future researchers in the field, we unanimously decided to request the Chairman of the NLDSA to open up a separate library unit dedicated to ICH. National Committee members undertook to donate whatever copies of their writings to swell this collection before inviting others to do so. We genuinely believe that this would probably be the first of its kind and hence we were eager that this be implemented during the month of September which is the Literary Month in Sri Lanka. The enthusiastic manner in which the Chairman NLDSA accepted this suggestion and the prompt action taken to implement it gave us much satisfaction and an indication that our dedicated efforts would not go waste.

We have no doubt whatsoever that once our suggestions to the ICHCAP are found favour with, same support and assistance would be forthcoming from them for the implementation of the projects and share with us the joy and happiness that will flow from that success.

We would also like to add a word to the large number of local scholars in the field and many more budding young ones waiting to be initiated into the field. Our own country has within itself a large wealth of ICH that may not be exhausted within the foreseeable future. But if it is not properly handled it can go waste forever. Therefore making full use of the knowledge available and working in cooperation with others in the field, both local and international, let the world be richer with whatever Sri Lanka can gift to the world community through your dedicated efforts in a manner to bring more and more glory and pride to the land of our birth.

Pandula Endagama
Chairman of the Research Committee.

Prof. Somarathna Balasuriya
Chairman
National Library and Documentation Services Board, Sri Lanka

Field Survey Report

I . Safeguarding system & policy

1. National Law

I. A. Short Title: Intellectual Property Act, No. 36 of 2003

Full title: An Act to provide for the Law relating to Intellectual Property and for an efficient procedure for the registration, control, and administration thereof; To amend the Customs Ordinance (Chapter 235) and the High Court of the Provinces (Special) Provisions Act, No. 10 of 1996; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Section/Division in charge: The National Intellectual Property Office of Sri Lanka

Year of Establishment: January 1, 1982

Established under the Intellectual Property Act No 36 of 2003. Mandated with the administration of the intellectual Property System in Sri Lanka. First established on January 1, 1982 with the same mandate under the provisions of Code of intellectual property Act no 52 of 1979.

Amendments: This Act repeals Code of Intellectual Property Act, No. 52 of 1979 (as amended by Act, No. 30 of 1980, No.2 of 1983, No. 17 of 1990, No. 13 of 1997 and No. 40 of 2000).

Particular articles related to ICH:

Chapter 1, Section 5 - Definition of Terms

“expression of folklore” means a group oriented and tradition based creation of groups or individuals, reflecting the expectation of the community as an

adequate expression of its cultural and social identity, its standards and values as transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means, including:

- 1) folktales, folk poetry, and folk riddles;
- 2) folk songs and instrumental folk music;
- 3) folk dances and folk plays;
- 4) productions of folk arts in particular, drawings, paintings, carvings, sculptures, pottery, terracotta, mosaic, woodwork, metalwork, jewellery, handicrafts, costumes, and indigenous textiles; “performers” means singers, musicians, and other persons who sing, deliver, declaim, play in, or otherwise perform, literary or artistic works or expressions of folklore;

Responsible organization/department: National Intellectual Property Office of Sri Lanka

Contact details:

1. **Name:** Director General
2. **Telephone:** +94 (11) 2689368
3. **Fax:** +94 (11) 2689367
4. **Email:** nipos@sltnet.lk
5. **Web:** www.nipo.gov.lk
6. **Postal address:** National Intellectual Property Office of Sri Lanka, 3rd Floor, Samagam Medura, No. 400, D.R. Wijewardena Mawatha, Colombo 10, Sri Lanka.

Information source: *Official sources*

II. Short Title: Antiquities Ordinance No. 9 of 1940

Full Title: An Ordinance to provide for the better preservation of the antiquities of Sri Lanka, and of sites and buildings of the historical or archaeological importance in Sri Lanka

Section/Division in charge: Department of Archaeology, Sri Lanka

Year of Establishment: 1890

Amendments: The Ordinance was amended by the following Acts: No. 2 of 1955, No. 22 of 1955, No. 24 of 1998 and No. 12 of 2005

Particular articles related to ICH:

1. Part 1, Article 2

- (a) No antiquity shall, by reason only of its being discovered in or upon any land in the ownership of any person, be or be deemed to be the property of such person : Provided that such person shall be deemed to be interested in such antiquity in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance.
- (b) Every ancient monument which on the date on which this Ordinance comes into operation is not owned by any person or the control of which is not vested in any person as trustee, incumbent or manager, shall be deemed to be the absolute property of the State. [3,24 of 1998
- (c) All undiscovered antiquities (other than ancient monuments), whether lying on or hidden beneath the surface of the ground or in any river or lake or within the territorial sea of Sri Lanka, shall be deemed to be the absolute property of the State, subject to the provisions of this Ordinance

2. Part 5, Article 36

- (a) No person shall, except upon a license in the prescribed form issued by the Director-General of Archaeology, export any antiquity from Sri Lanka.
- (b) For the purposes of the application of the provisions of the Customs Ordinance, antiquities shall be deemed to be articles the exportation of which is restricted by enactment or legal order.

3. Part 5, Article 37

- (a) Every application for a license under section 36 shall be made to the Director-General of Archaeology in the prescribed form, shall set out a list of the antiquities

sought to be exported, and shall contain such other particulars as may be prescribed.

- (b) If the Director-General of Archaeology is of opinion that any antiquity sought to be exported should be acquired for the Colombo or other museum in Sri Lanka or that for any other reason it is not desirable that such antiquity should be exported, he may refuse to issue a license under section 36 in respect of that antiquity.

4. Part 5, Article 38

- (a) Any person aggrieved by the refusal of the Director-General of Archaeology under section 37 to issue any license may appeal against such refusal to the Minister.
- (b) The decision of the Minister on any appeal preferred under subsection (1) shall be final and conclusive.

5. Part 5, Article 39

- (a) Where a license to export any antiquity has been refused on the ground that such antiquity should be acquired for the Colombo or other museum in Sri Lanka, and there is a dispute between the authority empowered to purchase objects for the use of such museum and the owner of the antiquity as to the price to be paid therefore, such price shall be determined in the manner provided in section 45, and such determination shall be final and conclusive. On payment of the price so determined the antiquity shall become the absolute property of the museum.
- (b) Where the price determined under subsection (1) is not paid to the owner of the antiquity within two months from the date on which the price was so determined, the museum shall be deemed to have lost all right to the acquisition of the antiquity at such price, and the Director-General of Archaeology shall issue a license to export the antiquity subject to any other conditions which may be applicable to the issue of such license being complied with.

6. Part 8, Article 48-Definition of Terms

In this Ordinance, unless the context otherwise requires

"ancient monument" means any monument lying or being or being found in Sri Lanka which dates or may reasonably be believed to date from a period prior to the 2nd day of March, 1815, and includes

- 1) any other monument which has been declared to be an ancient monument by an Order published in the Gazette under section 16, and
- 2) any tree in respect of which an Order under section 17 has been published in the Gazette ;

"antiquity " means

- 1) any ancient monument, or
- 2) any of the following objects lying or being or being found in Sri Lanka, which date or may reasonably be believed to date from a period prior to the 2nd day of March, 1815:- statues, sculptured or dressed stone and marbles of all descriptions, engravings, carvings, inscriptions, paintings, writings, and the material whereon the same appear, all specimens of ceramic, glyptic, metallurgical and textile art, coins, gems, seals, jewels, jeweler, arms, tools, ornaments, and all other objects of art which are movable property;[16, 24 of 1998]

"archaeological heritage" means that part of the material heritage of mankind in respect of which archaeological methods provide primary information and includes all vestiges of human existence and places relating to all manifestations of human activity, abandoned structures and remains of all kinds (including subterranean and underwater sites), together with all the portable cultural material associated with them.

"Director-General of Archaeology" means the person appointed to be or to act as Director General of Archaeology and includes any person authorized by the Director-General of Archaeology under section 43 in respect of any power, duty or function of the Director-General of Archaeology under this Ordinance;

" State land" means any land which under any law is deemed or presumed to be the property of the State or to which the State is law-fully entitled together with all rights, interests and privileges attached or appertaining thereto ; and includes any land belonging to the State vested in any local authority ; [16, 24 of 1998]

"monument" means any building, or other structure or erection, or any tomb, tumulus or other place of interment, or any other immovable property of a like nature or any part or remains of the same or any other site where the material remains of historic or prehistoric human settlement or activity may be found; and includes the site of any monument and such portion of land adjoining such site as may be required for fencing or covering in or otherwise preserving any monument;

"owner", with reference to any property, movable or immovable, means the person whose title to that property is recognized by any written or other law in force in Sri Lanka;

"peace officer" means a police officer and includes any grama niladhari appointed by a Government Agent to perform police duties;

"prescribed" means prescribed by regulation;

"regulation" means a regulation made by the Minister under this Ordinance; [16,24 of 1998]

"territorial sea" means the area declared to be the territorial waters of Sri Lanka by Proclamation made under the Maritime Zones Law, No. 22 of 1976.

Responsible organization/department: Department of Archaeology, Sri Lanka

Contact details:

1. **Name:** Director General
2. **Telephone:** +94 (11) 2694727
3. **Fax:** +94 (11) 2696250

4. **Email:** arch@diamond.lanka.net
5. **Web:** www.archaeology.gov.lk
6. **Postal address:** P.O. Box 532, Sir Marcus Fernando Mawatha,, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka.

Information source: Official sources

III. Title of Law-Short title: Cultural Property Act, No. 73 of 1988

Full Title: An act to provide for the control of the export of cultural property to provide for a scheme of licensing to deal in cultural property: and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Section/Division in charge: Department of Archaeology, Sri Lanka

Year of Establishment: Established in 1890

Amendments: None

Particular articles related to ICH:

Part I - Export of Cultural Property

1. Section 2 - Prohibition of export of cultural property except upon license
 - (a) No person shall, except upon a license in the prescribed form issued by the Controller of Exports (hereinafter referred to as the "Controller") and upon the payment of a prescribed fee export or attempt to export any cultural property from Sri Lanka.
 - (b) This section shall have effect as if it formed part of the Customs Ordinance and the provisions of that Ordinance shall apply accordingly.
2. Section 3 - Application for license to export cultural property

- (a) Every application for a license under section 2 shall be made to the Controller in the prescribed form and shall be accompanied by a statement from the Archaeological Commissioner stating that he has no objection to the issue of such license to the applicant.
- (b) The Controller may refuse to issue a license where,
 - 1) the Archaeological Commissioner in the statement issued by him objects to the issue of such licence ; or
 - 2) he is of opinion that any cultural property sought to be exported is a property which is required for museum in Sri Lanka.

3. Section 4 - Appeal against refusal of licence

- (a) Any person aggrieved by the refusal of the Controller to issue any licence under section 3 may appeal against such refusal to the Secretary to the Ministry in charge of the subject of Cultural Affairs (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary ") against such refusal.
- (b) The Secretary may in dealing with any appeal preferred to him under subsection (1), affirm or set aside the decision of the Controller against which the appeal has been preferred.

4. Section 5 - Penalty for export of cultural property without permission

If any person, himself or by another person on his behalf exports or attempts to export any cultural property in contravention of section 2, he shall, without prejudice to any forfeiture or penalty to which he may be liable under the provisions of the Customs Ordinance, be guilty of an offence and shall, upon conviction after summary trial before a Magistrate, be liable to a fine not exceeding five thousand rupees or to imprisonment of either description for a period not exceeding three years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

5. Section 6 - Delegation of powers and duties of the Controller

- (a) The Controller may delegate to an officer of the Department of Archaeology the power to issue licence.

- (b) Every officer appointed under subsection (1) shall exercise the power delegated to him subject to the general or special directions of the Controller.

Part II - Establishment of the Cultural Property Board

6. Section 7 - Establishment of the Cultural Property Board

There shall be established a Board called the Cultural Property Board (hereinafter referred to as " the Board ").

7. Section 8 - Constitution of the Board

(a) The Board shall consist of-

- 1) the Secretary to the Ministry of the Minister in charge of 'the subject of Cultural Affairs, who shall be the Chairman;
- 2) the Director of Museums ;
- 3) the Director of National Archives :
- 4) Chairman, Central Environmental Authority;
- 5) two members who shall have specialized knowledge and experience in matters relating to cultural property appointed by the Minister.

(b) A person shall be disqualified for appointment or continuing as a member of the Board under paragraph (5) of subsection (a) –

- 1) if he is or becomes a member of Parliament; or
- 2) if he is not or ceases to be a citizen of Sri Lanka.

(c) The members appointed by the Minister under paragraph (5) of subsection (a) subject to the provisions of subsections (d) and (e) shall hold office for a term of three years but shall be eligible for reappointment

(d) The Minister may remove from office any member of the Board appointed under paragraph (5) of subsection (a) without assigning any reason therefor and such removal shall not be called in question in any court.

- (e) In the event of the vacation of office of any member appointed under paragraph (5), or his removal from office under the provision of the preceding subsection, the Minister may appoint another person to hold such office during the unexpired part of the term of office of the member whom he succeeds.
- (f) If any member of the Board appointed under paragraph (5) is temporarily unable to discharge the duties of his office due to ill-health or absence from Sri Lanka or for any other cause, the Minister may appoint some other person to act in his place as member,
- (g) The members of the Board shall be remunerated at such rates as may be determined by the Minister in consultation with the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance.

8. Section 9 - Meetings and quorum of the Board

- (a) The Board may regulate its procedure in regard to the meetings of the Board and the transaction of business at such meetings.
- (b) The quorum for a meeting of the Board shall unless the Board otherwise determines be four members.

9. Section 10 - Power of the Board

- (a) The Board shall be an Advisory Board and shall advise the Archaeological Commissioner in the exercise of his powers or on any other matters referred to the Board for their opinion.
- (b) The Board may in the exercise of their power retain the services of any person having a specialised knowledge and experience in matters relating to cultural property.

Part III – Registration of Cultural Property

10. Section 11 - Minister to specify the categories of cultural property to be registered

The Minister in consultation with the Board and with the approval of the Cabinet may from time to time by Notification published in the Gazette specify the categories of cultural property that shall be registered under this Act, having due regard to the following considerations :

- 1) the necessity for conserving such category of cultural property;
- 2) the need to preserve such objects within Sri Lanka for the better appreciation of her cultural heritage ;
- 3) such other factors as will or are likely to contribute to the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka.

11. Section 12 - Registration of cultural property in private possession

No person shall own or have in his custody or possession any cultural property specified in the Notification referred to in section 11 unless such cultural property is registered by the registering officer and such officer has issued a certificate of registration in respect of such property.

12. Section 13 - Government Agent to be the registering officer

The Minister may, by Notification published in the Gazette appoint for the purpose of section 12 the Government Agent to be the registering officer for the administrative district for which he has been appointed Government Agent.

13. Section 14 -Applications for certificate of registration-

The Minister may, by Order published in the Gazette, prescribe the period within which an application for a certificate of registration may be made under section 15.

14. Section 15 -Grant of certificate of registration

- (a) Every person required to obtain a certificate of registration under, section 12 shall make an application for such certificate, to the registering officer of the

administrative district within which he resides on an application form prescribed for the purpose.

- (b) On receipt of an application under subsection (1) the registering officer may, after holding such inquiry as he deems fit, grant a certificate of registration containing such particulars as may be prescribed.
- (c) Where an application received under subsection (1) has been rejected, the registering officer shall inform the applicant in writing stating his reasons for such rejection.
- (d) Where an application for a certificate of registration has been rejected, the applicant may, within fourteen days from the date of such rejection, appeal to the Archaeological Commissioner against such rejection.
- (e) Any applicant who is aggrieved by a decision of the Archaeological Commissioner rejecting an application for registration may appeal against such decision to the Court of Appeal.

15. Section 16 - Transfer of ownership of any registered cultural property to be intimated to the registering

Where any person transfers the ownership or custody or possession of any cultural property registered under section 12 such person shall intimate within fourteen days from the date of such transfer, the fact of such transfer to the registering officer of the administrative district within which such person resides.

16. Section 17 - Penalty

Any person who-

- 1) owns or has the custody or possession of any cultural property, fails to make an application under section 15, or
- 2) transfers the ownership or custody or possession of any cultural property and fails to notify such transfer to the registering officer, under section 16.

shall be guilty of an offence and shall, upon conviction after summary trial before a Magistrate, be liable to a fine not

exceeding one thousand rupees or to imprisonment of either description for a period not exceeding one year or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Part IV – Licence to deal in Cultural Property

17. Section 18 -Licence to deal in cultural property

No person shall, by himself or by any other person on his behalf, carry on the business of selling or offering to sell any cultural property, except under the authority of a licence issued under section 19.

18. Section 19 – Grant of Licence

(a) The Archaeological Commissioner may issue a licence to any person to carry on the business of selling or offering to sell any cultural property after taking into consideration-

- 1) the experience of the applicant with respect to trade in cultural property;
- 2) the town, village or area where the business is to be carried on; and
- 3) such other matters as may be prescribed.

(b)

- 1) Every application for a licence to carry on any business as specified in subsection (a) shall be in the prescribed form and shall be accompanied by the prescribed fee ,
- 2) The Archaeological Commissioner may, after holding such inquiry as he deems fit, issue or refuse to issue a licence to an applicant therefor.
- 3) Where the Archaeological Commissioner refuses to Issue a licence to an applicant, he shall inform the applicant of the refusal to issue a licence,
- 4) Every licence authorising the carrying on of any such business as specified in subsection (a) shall be in the prescribed form, for a prescribed period and shall be subject to such terms and conditions, as may be

necessary to ensure that the business authorized by such licence is carried on in compliance with the provisions of the Act.

- 5) The Archaeological Commissioner may cancel a licence issued under subsection (a), if the licensee contravenes or fails to comply with any condition attached to the licence
- 6) Where the Archaeological Commissioner cancels the licence under paragraph (e), he shall cause notice of such cancellation to be given to the licensee-
- 7) An applicant for a licence who is aggrieved by the decision of the Archaeological Commissioner refusing to issue a licence, or the licensee who is aggrieved by the decision of the Archaeological Commissioner cancelling his licence may, within thirty days from the date of such decision, appeal in writing to the Secretary from such decision.

19. Section 20 –Person whose licences have been cancelled may sell cultural property to other licences

Notwithstanding anything contained in section 18, any person whose licence has been cancelled under paragraph (5) of subsection (b) of section 19, may, after making a declaration in writing to the Archaeological Commissioner within such period and in such form and manner as may be prescribed, of all the cultural property in his ownership, custody and possession immediately before the date of such cancellation, sell such cultural property to any other person holding a valid licence issued under section 19 : Provided that no such cultural property shall be sold after a period of six months from the date of cancellation of the licence.

20. Section 21 –Liability of person contravening Sections 18,19 and 20 of this Act

Any person who-

- 1) by himself or by other person on his behalf, sells or attempts to sell any cultural property to a person outside Sri Lanka in contravention of section 18, or
- 2) contravenes the provisions of section 19 or section 20, shall be liable on conviction after summary trial before a Magistrate, to a fine not exceeding five thousand rupees or to imprisonment of either description for a period not less than three years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Part V – Power and Duties of Archaeological Commissioner

21. Section 22 – Powers of Archaeological Commissioner

The Archaeological Commissioner is hereby empowered-

- 1) to prepare a list of the categories of cultural property required to be registered under section 12;
- 2) to conserve, maintain, repair and restore cultural property that requires registration ;
- 3) to control and administer the registration, sale and protection of cultural property that require registration ;
- 4) to purchase valuable cultural property with such funds as may be granted for the purpose by Parliament,

22. Section 23 – Duties of the Archaeology Commissioner

The Archaeological Commissioner shall perform and discharge all such duties and functions as are assigned to him by this Act him by this Act or by any regulation made thereunder, or by any regulation made thereunder.

23. Section 24 – Power of inspection of cultural property

- (a) The Archaeological Commissioner or any officer authorized by him in writing for the purpose may, at all reasonable times, inspect any cultural property in the possession of any person and it shall be the duty of every such person to permit such inspection and to give to the

Archaeological Commissioner or such officer all reasonable facilities to study such cultural property and to make drawings, photographs or reproductions thereof by the making of casts or by any other means:

Provided that no such drawings, photographs or reproduction shall be sold without the consent of the person in possession of the cultural property:

Provided further that, in the making of casts the prior consent of the person in possession of the cultural property shall be obtained

- (b) Any person who fails to comply with the provisions of subsection (a) shall be guilty of an offence and shall on conviction after summary trial before a Magistrate be liable to a fine not exceeding one thousand rupees or to imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding three months or to both such fine and imprisonment.

24. Section 25 –Direction by the Archaeological Commissioner

- (a) Where the Archaeological Commissioner is of the opinion that any cultural property of national importance owned by or in the custody or possession of any person, is in danger of being destroyed, defaced, misused, allowed to fall into decay or where the character of such property is about to be, or is being, or has been, changed, he shall with the concurrence of the Board give directions to the owner or the persons who have custody or possession of such cultural property to safeguard such property.
- (b) Where the Archaeological Commissioner is of opinion that the owner or person in possession is unable to comply with his directions within a reasonable time or where he is of opinion that such directions will not be complied with or that such cultural property will be removed from Sri Lanka without a licence he shall with

the concurrence of the Board take such property into his custody.

- (c) Any person who wilfully obstructs the Archaeological Commissioner in performing the duties made under subsection (b) shall be guilty of an offence and shall on conviction after summary trial before a Magistrate be liable to a fine not exceeding one thousand rupees or to imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding three months or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- (d) Where the Archaeological Commissioner subsequent to the taking of into his custody any cultural property under subsection (b) is satisfied that the owner or the person who had custody or possession of such property is now in a position to comply with his directions or has complied with such directions and that such property will not be in any danger of being destroyed, defaced, misused or allowed to fall into decay he may with the concurrence of the Board. return such property to such owner or person,
- (e) Any property taken into custody under subsection (b) may be handed over to the Director of Museums by the Archaeological Commissioner for exhibition at a Museum for public display.

25. Section 26 – Authorization of Government Agents and other officers to exercise powers of Archaeological Commissioner

The Archaeological Commissioner may generally or specially authorise the exercise, performance or discharge of any of his powers, duties or functions under this Act-

- 1) by the Government Agent of any district, within that district ; or
- 2) by any officer of the Department of Archaeology in any part of Sri Lanka.

Part V1 - General

26. Section 27 – Authorization of Government Agents and other officers to exercise powers of Archaeological Commissioner

No suit or proceeding shall be instituted against any officer appointed under this Act, for any act which is done in good faith or is purported to be done by him in the performance of his duties or the discharge of his functions under this Act.

27. Section 28 –Regulation

- (a) The Minister may make regulations in respect of any matter required by this Act to be prescribed or in respect of which regulations are authorized by this Act to be made.
- (b) Every regulation made by the Minister shall be published in the Gazette and shall come into operation, on the date of such publication or on such later date as may be specified in the regulation.
- (c) Every regulation made by the Minister shall, as soon as convenient after its publication in the Gazette, be brought before Parliament for approval. Any regulation which is not so approved shall be deemed to be rescinded from the date of its disapproval but without prejudice to anything previously done thereunder. Notification of the date on which any regulation is deemed to be rescinded shall be published in the Gazette.

28. Section 29 – Interpretation

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires- "antiquity" includes any of the following objects lying or being found in Sri Lanka, and has been in existence for more than one hundred years- Statues sculptured or dressed stone and marbles of all descriptions, engravings, carvings, inscriptions.. paintings, writings, and the material where on the fame appear all specimen of ceramic, glyptic metallurgic and textile art, coins, gems, seals, jewels, jewellery, arms, tools, ornaments, furniture, household utensils, and all other objects of art which are movable property; " Archaeological Commissioner" means the person appointed to be or to act as Archaeological Commissioner and includes any person

authorized in respect of any power, duty or function of the Archaeological Commissioner under this Act ; "cultural property" includes cultural property which on religious or secular grounds is specifically designated by the Minister with the approval of the Cabinet, as being of importance for archaeology, prehistory, history, literature, art or science, and which belongs to one of the following categories;

- 1) rare collections and specimens of fauna, flora, minerals and anatomy;
- 2) property relating
 - i. to history, including the history of science and technology, military and social history: or
 - ii. to the life of national leaders, thinkers, scientists and artists; or
 - iii. to events of national importance;
- 3) products of archaeological excavations or of archaeological discoveries;
- 4) elements of artistic or historic monuments or archaeological sites which have been dismembered;
- 5) antiquities more than one hundred years old, such as inscription, coins, currency notes and engraved seals;
- 6) objects of ethnological interest;
- 7) pictures, paintings and drawings produced entirely by hand;
- 8) original marks of statutory art and sculpture;
- 9) original engravings, prints and lithographs;
- 10) rare manuscripts, old books, documents, drawings, maps, plans and publications of special interest;
- 11) postage revenue and similar stamps;
- 12) archives;
- 13) articles of furniture more than one hundred years old; and
- 14) old musical instruments.

Responsible organization/department: Department of Archaeology, Sri Lanka

Contact details:

1. **Name:** Director General
2. **Telephone:** +94 (11) 2694727

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5. **Web:** www.archaology.gov.lk
6. **Postal address:** PO Box 532, Sir Marcus Fernando Mawatha,, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka.

Information source: Official sources

IV. Short title: National Archives Law, No. 48 of 1973

Full title: A law to provide for the establishment of a department of national archives; to provide for the transfer of public records to the national archives; to make better provision for the custody and preservation of public archives and public records; and for matters incidental thereto or connected therewith.

Section/Division in charge: Department of National Archives, Sri Lanka

Year of Establishment: Established in 1947 as the Department of Government Archivist. Renamed as the Department of National Archives in 1973

Amendments: Amended by Acts No. 5 of 1976 and No. 30 of 1981

Particular articles related to ICH:

Functions of the Advisory Council

1. Section 6, Article 7

The function of the Advisory Council shall be to advise the Minister on all matters relating to the location, preservation and use of public archives, the custody and transfer of public records, inspection and preservation of documents and manuscripts of historical or cultural or literary value in private possession, inspection by members of the public of public archives, editing and publishing of public archives and private manuscripts.

2. Section 6, Article 8

- (a) Subject to the direction and control of the Minister, the Director shall have charge of the National Archives and of the public archives deposited therein and in addition to the specific functions conferred or imposed on him by this Law, he shall take all such measures as are necessary for the conservation of public archives.
- (b) Subject to the provisions of this Law and any regulations made thereunder, the Director or any other officer of the National Archives authorized by him, shall have the power to do all such things as appear to him to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of the efficient administration of this Law and may, in particular
 - 1) make available and publish lists, indices, guides, inventories, calendars, texts, translations and such other things as may be necessary as aids to the public archives in his custody;
 - 2) subject to such terms and conditions, if any, on which any records or manuscripts are transferred to or acquired by the National Archives, produce, edit, print or make any other public use of any public archives in his custody;
 - 3) provide for the restoration and conservation of public archives in a suitable manner and make photographic reproductions or duplicate copies of any public archives where necessary;
 - 4) produce or cause to be produced for inspection by any individual, any public archives open to public inspection;
 - 5) acquire by purchase, donation, bequest, contract, or otherwise or take on loan, any record, manuscript or document or any other material which, in his opinion, should be deposited in the National Archives for permanent preservation;
 - 6) examine any record or any other manuscript or document containing references to Sri Lanka or which had its origin in Sri Lanka but lying outside Sri Lanka, with a view to securing either on loan or by purchase, the original or any copy thereof
 - 7) examine any collection of records or printed material in private possession for purposes of listing and

recording and render such technical aid or assistance as may be necessary for the conservation and preservation of such records or printed material; and
8) hold public exhibitions or expositions of any class or description of public archives, private documents, manuscripts or printed material deposited in the National Archives, either in the premises of the National Archives or elsewhere.

(c) The Director may in writing delegate any of his powers and functions under this Law to any officer of the National Archives.

Regulations

Section 16 (1) (g)

purchase from private individuals or organizations of manuscripts and documents and other printed matter of historical or cultural or literary value for permanent preservation in the National Archives.

Interpretation

Section 24

In this Law, unless the context otherwise requires-" Director ". means the Director of National Archives and includes an Assistant Director of National Archives;

"manuscript" means any handwritten document made of paper, ola, copper, silver, gold, or other material except granite;

"National Archives" means the Department of National Archives established under this Law;

"public archives " means all public records and any other manuscript, document or printed matter kept or deposited at the National Archives for permanent preservation;

"public record" or "record" means any original or copy of any manuscript, paper, letter, register, report, book, magazine, map, chart, plan, drawing, picture, photograph or any other record or part thereof either handwritten, drawn, printed or produced in any other way on paper or on any other material except granite and officially received or produced or prepared in any public office in the course of its official functions and includes any cinematograph, film, recording, tape, disc or production in any other media received in any public office;

"printed matter" means any book, magazine, leaflet, newspaper, or any other paper containing information printed by any mechanical or by any other process;

"responsible officer " with reference to any public office, means the head of that office or the officer for the time being discharging the duties and functions of the head of that office.

Responsible organization/department: Department of National Archives, Sri Lanka

Contact details:

1. **Name:** Director
2. **Telephone:** +94 (11) 2694523 / +94 (11) 2696917
Fax: +94 (11) 2694419 / +94 (11) 2688756
3. **Email:** narchiv@sltnet.lk
4. **Web:** www.archives.gov.lk
5. **Postal address:** Department of National Archives, P.O. Box 1414, No.7, Philip Gunawardena Mawatha, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka

Information source: Official sources

V. Short title: National Museums Ordinance, No. 31 of 1942

Full title: An Ordinance to provide for the establishment and maintenance of National Museums in Sri Lanka, and to declare the Colombo and Kandy Museums to be National Museums

Section/Division in charge: Department of National Museums, Sri Lanka

Year of Establishment: The Colombo Museum was established in 1877. The present department was established in 1942 under this Ordinance.

Amendments: This Ordinance repeals the Museum Ordinance No. 11 of 1873

Particular articles related to ICH:

1. Section 2

The Minister may from time to time by Order published in the Gazette establish one or more National Museums for the collection, preservation and exhibition of objects of scientific, historical or artistic interest and for the maintenance of libraries of books and other documents relating to subjects and matters of such interest. 3. (1) On and after the 20th day of November, 1942, the Colombo Museum established under the Museum Ordinance*, and the institution, heretofore subsisting, called and known as the Kandy Museum, shall be deemed to be National Museums established under this Ordinance.

2. Section 7

The Director may, acting with the prior approval of the Minister in any particular case, or under such general authority and in accordance with such instructions as may be given by him by the Minister in that behalf

- (a) purchase for the purpose of preservation at any National Museum any book, document or object which it is in his opinion desirable to acquire for that museum;
- (b) exchange or sell, or dispose of, whether by way of gift or otherwise, any book, document or object kept at any National Museum, which is a duplicate book, document or object, or which is in his opinion unfit to be preserved or not required for the purposes of the museum;

(c) lend any book, document or object kept at any National Museum for the purpose of being temporarily displayed at any gallery, museum or exhibition;

(d) transfer any books, documents or objects from any National Museum to any other such museum.

3. Section 8

All books, documents or objects given or bequeathed to any National Museum, or to the public or the Director for the purposes of any such museum, or given or bequeathed by words showing an intention that the gifts should enure to or for the benefit of any such museum, or which are acquired by purchase or otherwise for the purposes of the museum, shall vest in the Government. 9. (1) The Minister may make regulations for the purpose of carrying out or giving effect to the principles and provisions of this Ordinance.

Responsible organization/department: Department of National Museums, Sri Lanka

Contact details:

1. **Name:** Director
2. **Telephone:** +94 (011) 2695366
Fax: +94 (011) 2692092
3. **Email:** nmdep@slt.lk
4. **Web:** www.museum.gov.lk
5. **Postal address:** Department of National Museums, P.O Box 854, Sir Marcus Fernando Mawatha, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka

Information source: Official Sources

VI. **Short title: National Library and Documentation Services Board Act, No. 51 of 1998**

Full title: An Act to provide for the establishment of the National Library and Documentation Services Board and the National Library and Documentation Centre; and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Section/Division in charge: The National Library and Documentation Services Board, Sri Lanka

Year of Establishment: First established as Ceylon National Library Services Board in 1970. Renamed in 1998 as the National Library and Documentation Services Board.

Amendments: This Act repeals the Ceylon National Library Services Board Act, No. 17 of 1970

Particular articles related to ICH:

Establishment and Functions of the National Library Documentation Centre

1. Section 12 Article 1

There shall be established, under the management and control of the Board, a National Library and Documentation Centre (hereinafter referred to as the Centre).

Subject to the provisions of section 4, the functions of the Centre shall be

1. Section 12 Article 2(a)

to make available for the use of all sections of the community, a national collection of library and documentation resources appropriate to their needs;

2. Section 12 Article 2(b)

to preserve the national and cultural heritage of Sri Lanka through the establishment, development and maintenance of a national collection of library and documentation materials, published in, or relating to, Sri Lanka;

3. Section 12 Article 2(c)

to receive copies of Sri Lankan publications deposited in the Department of National Archives under the Printers and Publishers Ordinance (Chapter 179) ;

4. Section 12 Article 2(d)

to acquire, by purchase or otherwise, copies of publications published in, or relating to, Sri Lanka, or of foreign publications relevant to the needs of Sri Lanka ;

5. Section 12 Article 2(e)

to provide bibliographic services, including National Bibliographic Services and to compile a National Union Catalogue of library materials of libraries in Sri Lanka;

6. Section 12 Article 2(f)

to establish and create a national bibliographic database of documents and publications, published in, or relating to, Sri Lanka;

Section 34 – Interpretation

"Library and Documentation Materials" mean any form, whether written, printed, graphic, electronic, magnetic, optical or otherwise, in or on which information or literary, creative or artistic ideas, are or may be recorded, displayed, stored or reproduced, and include manuscripts, typescripts, books, newspapers, periodicals, maps, microforms, music, photographs, prints, drawings, cinematograph films, sound recordings and video recordings and the expressions "Library and Documentation resources" and "Library and Documentation services" shall be construed accordingly.

Responsible organization/department: National Library and Documentation Services Board, Sri Lanka

Contact details:

1. **Name:** Director General
2. **Telephone:** +94 (11) 2698847
3. **Fax:** +94 (11) 2685201
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5. **Web:** www.natlib.lk

6. **Postal address:** National Library and Documentation Services Board, Independence Avenue, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka

Information source: Official Sources

VII. Short title: Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act, No. 49 of 2000

Full title: An act to amend the Town and Country Planning Ordinance, No. 13 of 1946

Section/Division in charge: National Physical Planning Department, Sri Lanka

Year of Establishment: Established in 2001

Amendments: This Act amends the Town and Country Planning Ordinance, No. 13 Of 1946

Particular articles related to ICH:

1. *Section 2 - Replacement of long title to Ordinance No.13 of 1946*

The Town and Country Planning Ordinance. No. 13 of 1946, (hereinafter referred to as "The principal enactment") is hereby amended by the substitution for the long title thereof of the following : "An Ordinance to authorize the formulation and implementation of a national physical planning policy; the making and implementation of a national physical plan with the object of promoting and regulating integrated planning of economic, social, physical and environmental aspects of land in Sri Lanka; to provide for the protection of natural amenities, the conservation of natural environment, buildings of architectural and historic interest and places of natural beauty; to facilitate the acquisition of land for the purpose of giving effect to such plan and to provide for matters incidental to or connected with the matters aforesaid".

2. Section 2 -Replacement of sections 2. 3 and 4 of the principal enactment

Sections 2, 3 and 4 of the principal enactment are hereby repealed and the following new sections substituted therefore:"

- 1) A national physical plan may be prepared under this Ordinance in conformity with the national physical planning policy, with respect to land, whether there are or are not buildings thereon, with the general object of promoting and regulating the development of the land, of securing proper infrastructure, amenities and conveniences, of conserving the natural and built environment of architectural, historic of aesthetic interest and of natural beauty.
- 2) There shall be established a National Physical Planning Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) consisting of"
 - i. the Head of the Government, who shall be the Chairman;
 - ii. the Minister in charge of the subject of National Physical Planning, who shall be the Vice Chairman;
 - iii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Economic Planning;
 - iv. the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance;
 - v. the Minister in charge of the subject of Land;
 - vi. the Minister in charge of the subject of Agriculture;
 - vii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Industry;
 - viii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Housing;
 - ix. the Minister in charge of the subject of Urban Development;
 - x. the Minister in charge of the subject of Transport;
 - xi. the Minister in charge of the subject of Highways;
 - xii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Ports;
 - xiii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Civil Aviation;
 - xiv. the Minister in charge of the subject of Coast Conservation;
 - xv. the Minister in charge of the subject of the Environment;

- xvi. the Minister in charge of the subject of Forestry ;
- xvii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Tourism ;
- xviii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Irrigation;
- xix. the Minister in charge of the subject of Power ;
- xx. the Minister in charge of the subject of Culture ;
- xxi. the Minister in charge of the subject of Provincial Councils;
- xxii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Plan Implementation;
- xxiii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Health.
- xxiv. Chief Ministers of all Provinces.

3. Section 3 - Insertion of new sections 4A. and 4B in the principal enactment

The following new sections are hereby inserted immediately after section 4 and shall have effect as sections 4A and 4B respectively of the principal enactment:"

- 1) There shall be established an inter- Ministerial Co-ordinating Committee on National Ministerial Physical Planning (hereinafter referred to as "Coordinating Committee")'
- 2) The Coordinating Committee shall consist of the following members who shall be appointed by the Minister, appointed under Article 44 of the Constitution to be in charge of the subject of Physical Planning :"

The Secretaries of the Ministries of the Ministers appointed under Article 44 of the Constitution in charge respectively of the subjects of-

- Physical planning
- Economic Planning
- Finance
- Land
- Agriculture
- Industry
- Housing
- Transport
- Highways
- Ports

- Civil Aviation
- (xii)Coast Conservation
- Environment
- Forestry
- Tourism
- Irrigation
- Power
- Home Affairs
- Provincial Councils
- Plan Implementation
- Culture
- Fisheries
- Mahaweli Development
- Plantation
- Construction

Responsible organization/department: National Physical Planning Department, Sri Lanka

Contact details:

1. **Name:** Director
2. **Telephone:** +94 (11) 5550601
3. **Fax:** +94 (11) 2872061
4. **Email:** nppd@sltnet.lk
5. **Web:** www.nppd.gov.lk
6. **Postal address:** National Physical Planning Department, 5th Floor, Sethsiripaya Battaramulla, Sri Lanka

Information source: Official Sources

VIII. Short title: Tower Hall Theatre Foundation Act, No.1 of 1978

Full title: An act to provide for the establishment of a foundation called the Tower Hall Theatre Foundation, to specify its objects and powers and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto

Section/Division in charge: Ministry of Culture and Arts, Sri Lanka

Year of Establishment: Established in 1911

Amendments: Amended by the Act, No.11 Of 1998

Particular articles related to ICH:

Section 6 - The aims and Foundation shall be-

- (a) to encourage and promote national theatrical activities;
- (b) to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the Theatre;
- (c) to provide financial assistance to Theatre artistes and craftsmen, and to assist in the training of artistes ;
- (d) to engage in the production, experimentation and performance of opera, dance, drama and music; and
- (e) to restore, preserve, maintain and utilize the Tower Hall Theatre as a national monument in order to secure the objectives set out above and for such other purposes as the Board may consider fit, so however that the Theatre shall not be used for partisan political purposes

Responsible organization/department: Tower Hall Theatre Foundation

Contact details:

1. **Name:** Director General
2. **Telephone:** +94 (11) 2686088
3. **Fax:** +94 (11) 26778517
4. **Email:** towersl@sltnet.lk
5. **Postal address:** No 123, "Sausiripaya", Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka

Information source: Official Sources

IX. Short title: Arts Council of Ceylon Act

Full title: An act to provide for the and regulation of the Arts Council of Ceylon

Section/Division in charge: Ministry of Culture and Arts, Sri Lanka

Year of Establishment: 1958

Particular articles related to ICH:

1. *Section 2*

The general objects for which the Council is constituted are hereby declared to be

- 1) to develop a greater knowledge, understanding and practice of the fine arts.
- 2) to increase the accessibility of works an arts to the public in Sri Lanka.
- 3) to improve the standards of execution in the fine arts.
- 4) to preserve, promote and encourage the development of such arts and crafts as are indigenous to Sri Lanka; and
- 5) to advise and co-operate with Government departments, local authorities and other bodies on any matter concerned directly or indirectly with aforesaid objects

2. *Cultural Policy*

The Constitution of Sri Lanka accepts the importance of the national cultural heritage. Under the Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Duties in section 27, article 10 of the constitution it is a responsibility of the state to assist the development of the cultures and the languages of the People. Although the Cultural Policy statement of the government is of recent origin (2007), the successive governments of the country since Independence have been preserving, protecting and developing cultural heritage of the country through a state mechanism which involved creation of the Ministry and Department of Cultural Affairs and related bodies devoted to divers activities in the fields of tangible as well as intangible cultural heritage. It is to be mentioned here that various Ministries and Departments created to cater for other

subjects such as education, agriculture, town and country planning, archaeology, have also been playing a considerable role in the sphere of cultural heritage of the country.

3. National Cultural Policy Documents

- (a) **Title:** National Cultural Policy (Cabinet Paper No. 07/1862/354/020 of 31st October, 2007, to publish the National Cultural Policy and to implement it as the National Cultural Policy of Sri Lanka)
- (b) **Purpose:** Vision of the policy: Being a proud Sri Lankan nation blessed with national heritage to go forward with the other countries of the world as a country with a unique culture that promotes development
- (c) **Mission of the policy:** To assist in building Sri Lanka as a proud nation with a unique Sri Lankan identity by facilitating the emergence of a culture that would develop all communities of the country while in the process protecting and preserving Sri Lankan national heritage
- (d) **Objectives:** (1) To build a positive cultural environment that would help direct the people on their own in a manner that would successfully accomplish the general national development of the country (2) To promote cultural diversity and thereby to prevent harm caused to positive cultural characteristics through various forces (3) To pave way to organize cultural life of the people of the country through the preservation, maintenance and utilization of cultural heritages (4) To motivate the people to identify positive cultural characteristics and thereby to promote a culture with distinct Sri Lankan identity (5) To help the people in identifying themselves the external and internal factors causing cultural downfall and in exterminating these factors (6) To pave way to inculcate in the society the fact that culture is an energetic , challenging and free force

According to the Policy statement the programme which is commonly approved by the general public from time to time will be the foundation of the cultural policy of the government policy of the government. The policy has the authority of the state as all cultural activities within

Sri Lanka are to be implemented in accordance with the Constitution of Sri Lanka and all Acts and Regulations approved by the Parliament.

The principle institution implementing the people's power in relation to all subjects relevant to culture is the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. It will intervene and also represent the subject.

The Policy seeks to ensure the Sri Lankan identity through various arts and crafts, tangible and intangible heritage, languages and literature and folk life.

Also, the Policy envisages implementing programs to protect, restore, promote and extend all forms national heritage and to maintain them for the sake of the future generations. Action would be taken to prevent all sorts of activities that would cause destruction and harm to national heritage.

In order to stimulate national pride by highlighting the cultural heritage all sorts of arts including language and literature and subjects such as technology, history, archaeology, museums, archives, would be made use a s a mechanism. Development of cultural diversity would be the final outcome of all these activities. Steps would be taken when necessary to keep national as well as international community aware of visible and invisible cultural heritage for the advancement and maintenance of Sri Lankan identity.

It is agreed by the Policy to advertise cultural heritage without causing any damage and to utilize the profits earned thereby for the economic and social development of the country.

Action would be taken to protect and develop all forms of traditional and hereditary arts and crafts and to advertise them nationally and internationally in a manner that would highlight their value.

The policy, having accepted the fact that culture is a series of activities that could be freely experienced and

participated by all the citizens, action would be taken to direct all sorts of cultural activities so as to enable the management of the cultural life of the common people in such a way that their life style is made easy and that benefits of all national and other development projects are accrued to them.

The Policy embraces all sorts of tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

4. National Policy of Traditional Knowledge and Practices

In addition to the above mentioned National Cultural Policy there is a draft National Policy of Traditional Knowledge and Practices, prepared by the Biodiversity Secretariat of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources.

1) Title of the Policy: National Policy of Traditional Knowledge and Practices and Strategies (Final Draft)

2) Purpose of the Policy:

- i. Identification, collection, preservation and promotion of sustainable use of traditional knowledge and practices
- ii. Equal and reasonable distribution of the benefits accrued through the use of traditional knowledge and practices
- iii. Respect, make available benefits and ensure protection to trustees and users of traditional knowledge and practices
- iv. Provision of institutional framework, legal powers and resources to facilitate the coordination and implementation of relevant specific programmes for the preservation and use of traditional knowledge and practices

3) Common Strategies for the Preservation of Traditional Knowledge and Practices:

- i. Make all the sectors understand that it is a national need to preserve traditional knowledge and practices and inclusion into sectoral policies

- and plans activities that use traditional knowledge
- ii. Documenting documentable traditional knowledge and practices using a suitable common methodology in order to preserve it and collection and preservation of non documented knowledge
 - iii. Identifying geographical areas where traditional knowledge and practices are concentrated and collection and preservation of such knowledge and practices. Minimize development activities that may harm the knowledge culture in such specific areas.
 - iv. Study the preservation of traditional knowledge and practices in regional communities of the world with a view to decide whether such methodologies are suitable to this country and to use them in the preservation of traditional knowledge and practices
 - v. Establishment of a national centre with all necessary facilities for the preservation, use and promotion of traditional knowledge and practices
 - vi. Establishment of language laboratories to preserve local languages and folk usage that form the foundation of traditional knowledge
 - vii. Establishment of a central data system for the preservation of local languages and folk usage

Among other things, the Policy contains sections on strategies for the use of traditional knowledge and practices, strategies for the exchange of traditional knowledge and practices, strategies for the use of benefits achieved from traditional knowledge and practices, institutional strategies for the preservation and sustainable use of traditional knowledge and practices, socio-economic strategies for the preservation of traditional knowledge and practices, strategies for education and promotion of traditional knowledge and practices and strategies for legal protection of traditional knowledge and practices.

4) Relevant projects: please refer to Section C

5) Comments:

It is the opinion of the learned people that in order to enhance the process of developing and safeguarding cultural policies and systems, first of all a clear definition of cultural heritage is needed. Any cultural policy should be based on such a definition. The definition should cover both tangible and intangible aspects of culture. The definition should be formed taking into consideration all sorts of cultural activities and practices of the country.

Similarly, the national cultural policy should be an outcome of close coordination among different stake holders dealing with cultural heritage. This will avoid unnecessary duplication in developing and safeguarding endeavours. Cultural diversity in multi- ethnic, multi- religious, multi- lingual society in Sri Lanka should be clearly articulated in the national cultural policy of the country. Participation of masses in all such groups in developing and safeguarding cultural activities can be ensured through such a strategy.

Responsible organization/department: Arts Council of Ceylon

Contact details:

1. **Name:** Chairman
2. **Telephone:** +94 (11) 2884027
3. **Fax:** +94 (11) 2861420
4. **Email:** artcouncil@sltnet.lk
5. **Web:** www.artcouncil.lk
6. **Postal address:** 12/1Polduwa Rd, Battaramulla, Sri Lanka

Information source: Official Sources

II. Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory

1. National inventory

Compilation of the ICH Inventory was commenced in 2008 by the National Library and Documentation Board, under the support of the UNESCO. A National Committee consisting several scholars and Heads of institutions in the relevant fields was set up for the purpose.

It is to be noted here that although a common national inventory of ICH as such was not in Sri Lanka, the different institutions such as the National Museums Department, Department of National Archives dealing with cultural heritage in the country have their own inventories of intangible as well as tangible cultural heritage in their custody. These inventories are used for efficient delivery of missions of such institutions.

The ICH data collected at the Department of National Archives forms the nucleus of the resent ICH inventory of the National Library and Documentation Board. The objective of the compilation is to collect, preserve and make available ICH data to interested parties for research purposes. The Compilation is ongoing and not completed yet. Information contained in the inventory is available at the Official website for ICH:
<http://www.natlib.lk/inhe/>

Categories of ICH

In the inventory ICH is classified into three categories. They are: 1. Traditions, 2. Rituals and rites, 3. Rites of passage. Each category is subdivided as follows:

I. Traditions

Animal lore	Customs
Ethics	Folk belief
Folk games	Folk language
Folk medicine	Folk songs
Folk tales	Magic
Mass communication	Plant lore

	Proverbs and riddles	Other
II.	Rituals and rites	
	Agricultural	Architectural
	Business and industrial	Illness
	Religious	Other
III.	Rites of passage	
	Birth	Death
	Marriage	Puberty
	Other	

At present the database contains 65 entries. With each data set the following information are given:

1. Recording number
2. Institutional recording number
3. Name (category)
4. Location
5. Responsible entity
6. Categories
7. Community value
8. Description (text)
9. Observations (present condition of IH)
10. Source of information
11. Registration
12. Availability of photo/sound records/video clips

III. Relevant Organisations

1. Governmental organisations

1. Ministry of Culture and Arts, Sri Lanka
8th Floor, Sethsiripaya, Battaramulla, Sri Lanka
Tel: +94 1 2872001, +94 11 2876586; Fax: +94 11 2872024
Email: itasst@cultural.gov.lk; culturalmin@gmail.com
2. Ministry of National Heritage, Sri Lanka
8th Floor, Sethsiripaya, Battaramulla, Sri Lanka
Tel: +94 11 2876586; Fax: +94 11 2872024

Field of concentration: both these Ministries concentrate on Culture and National Cultural Heritage.

Institutions under these Ministries:

- (a) Department of Cultural Affairs,
8th Floor, Sethsiripaya, Battaramulla,
Sri Lanka.
Tel: +94 (11) 2872031, +94 (11) 2866731
Fax: +94 (11) 2866732
Email: dcanews@sltnet.lk
Web: www.cultural.gov.lk
- (b) Central Cultural Fund,
212/1, Bauddhaloka Mawatha,
Colombo 07, Sri Lanka.
Tel: +94 (11) 2500732
Fax: +94 (11) 2500731
Email: info@ccf.lk;
Web: www.ccf.lk
- (c) Tower Hall Theatre Foundation
No 123, "Sausiripaya",

Wijerama Mawatha,
Colombo 07, Sri Lanka
Tel: +94 (11) 2686088
Fax: +94 (11) 26778517
Email: towersl@sltnet.lk

Board of Trustees

- i. the Prime Minister who shall be the Chairman of the Board;
- ii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Local Government;
- iii. the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance;
- iv. the Minister in charge of the subject of Cultural Affairs;
- v. the Secretary to the Prime Minister;
- vi. the Secretary to the Ministry of the Minister in charge of the subject of Cultural Affairs;
- vii. the Secretary to the Ministry charged with the subject of Education;
- viii. the Director of Cultural Affairs;\
- ix. the Mayor of the Colombo Municipal Council;
- x. the Municipal Commissioner, Colombo Municipal Council;
and
- xi. five persons appointed by the Prime Minister, of whom two shall be persons of recognized competence or eminence in the Arts.

(d) Arts Council of Sri Lanka
No. 12/1, Polduwa Road,
Battaramulla, Sri Lanka.
Tel: +94 11 2861420, +94 11 2 884027
Fax: +94 11 2 861420
Email: artscouncil@yahoo.com
Web: www.artscouncil.lk

(e) Department of Archaeology
Sir Marcus Fernando Mawatha,
Colombo 07,
Sri Lanka.
Tel: +94 11 2692840, +94 11 2692841
Fax: +94 11 2696250
Email: archacct@sltnet.lk
Web: www.archaeology.gov.lk

Advisory Committee

- i. The Minister may, by Order published in the Gazette, establish an Archaeological Advisory Committee (hereinafter referred to as "the Advisory Committee").
- ii. It shall be the function of such Advisory Committee to advise the Director-General of Archaeology-
 - a. on any or all of the matters the Minister considers necessary for the purpose of carrying out or giving effect to the principles and provisions of this Ordinance ; and
 - b. where advice is sought by him on matters connected to the performance of his duties under this Ordinance.
- iii. The Minister may appoint to such Advisory Committee such number of members and on such terms and conditions as he may determine.
- iv. The Advisory Committee shall have the power to fix and regulate its own procedure including the power to determine the number of members necessary to form a quorum for its meetings. Every member of the Advisory Committee shall hold office for two years unless he earlier resigns, dies or is removed from office.
- v. A member of the Advisory Committee may resign from office by letter addressed to the Minister.
- vi. A member vacating his office by resignation or by expiration of his term of office shall be eligible for reappointment.
- vii. Where a member of the Advisory Committee becomes by reason of illness or other infirmity or absence from Sri Lanka, temporarily unable to perform the duties of his office, the Minister may appoint another person to act in his place.
- viii. The Minister may, if he considers it expedient so to do, remove from office, by Order published in the Gazette, any member of the Advisory Committee

(f) Department of National Museums

No. 854, Sir Marcus Fernando Mawatha,
Colombo 07,
Sri Lanka.
Tel: +94 11 2695366
Fax: +94 11 2692092
Email: nmdep@slt.lk
Web: www.museum.gov.lk

(g) Department of National Archives
No.7, Phillip Gunawardena Mawatha,
Colombo 07,
Sri Lanka
Tel: +94 11 2694532
Fax: +94 11 2694419
Email: achives@slt.lk
Web: www.archives.gov.lk

3. National Library and Documentation Board,
No 14, Independence Avenue,
Colombo 7,
Sri Lanka
Tel: +94 11 2698847
Fax: +94 11 2685201
Email: conserv@mail.natlib.lk
Web: www.natlib.lk
4. National Colleges of Education
5. Universities with Departments of Sociology, Social Anthropology,
Archaeology, Language and cultural studies, Sinhala, Tamil, Colleges of
Aesthetic Such as Sri Palee, Swami Wipulananda and University of the
Visual and Performing Arts

Financial support for all these institutes is from the Government

IV. Meetings on Intangible Cultural heritage

International Partnership Programme for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Training Course for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, 15-22 July 2009, Kyoto, Osaka and Nara, Japan. Case study report; Sri Lanka. A Project of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in Sri Lanka with special reference to folklore. Ministry of Cultural Affairs and National Heritage

Projects: Preservation of Sri Lankan Folk Music and Folk Songs through Setting up a Folk Music Library, Ministry of Cultural Affairs and National Heritage

V. Provisional List to be nominated on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

Provisional inscribed items (to be examined)

Sri Lanka being a signatory to the Convention ICH and a country with enormous wealth of ICH of universal significance would be pleased to submit a representative number of items from among the innumerable number of such items for the consideration and the kind attention of the ICHCAP. Selection of the items had been done carefully to give priority to national events, ethnically important events and events of religious importance in order to give a true and wider picture of the diversity of the culture that had been evolved through united efforts of the members of a harmonious and tolerant society that exists in Sri Lanka.

1. Item: Sinhala/ National New Year Festival.

Official name: Sinhala and Hindu New Year. (see below for the explanation to get the correct name)

Local name: Sinhala / Jathika Aluth Awrudu Ulela (Sinhala/National New Year Festival). Alternatively it is referred to as Bak Maha Ulela-Great Festival of the Month of Bak or April. New Year falls on the month of April (Bak in Sinhala denotes prosperity)

History & Background: The celebration of the dawn of New Year had come from time immemorial and no period of its origin is traceable. However it is believed that the custom of celebrating the New Year with several appended customs had been in vogue from the time of the known history. Evidences are traced among the poetry in the Sigiriya mirror wall dating back to about the 7th century where reference is made to the custom of sighting the new moon which indeed is an essential custom during the New Year celebrations. . References can be found in the writings of some of the foreign visitors in the past as well. The importance attached to this festival as one that was celebrated as a national event by

everybody in the Island at the time can be understood by the action taken by the British colonial rulers to declare it a public holiday in 1885 in response to the demands made by the people. In doing so they made a blunder of naming it as Sinhala and Hindu New Year day in order to appease a section of the society. The blunder occurred when the festival was named after an ethnic group (Sinhala) and another religious group (Hindu) when in actual fact it was a national festival celebrated by everyone living in the country irrespective of ethnicity or religion. This was another instance of proving their adherence to the policy of divide and rule.

New Year is dawn on 14th April and the 13th is considered very important as the preparatory day to receive the expected New Year Prince on the following day. The personification of the New Year is very symbolic of the importance attached to this event by the indigenous people. All the preparations are aimed at this arrival of the most welcome visitor. However the actual preparation for the New Year begins much earlier specially with the environment starting to show signs of the prosperous season to come. Trees start blooming and rich harvest of fruits and berries is assured. Birds and beasts, bees and insects start roaming in the village environment more frequently converting the whole surrounding to a garden of festivals. The singing melodies of the New Year bird (*Kovla* in Sinhala) perform the role of a crier to inform the village folk about the impending arrival of the New Year and then the whole village gets activated like a hive of bees.

Preparation for the New Year is an essential feature and it is a long process. Starting with the cleaning of the surrounding, and the footpaths and the path leading to the well that provides drinking water they finish up with the cleaning and repairing of the houses. This displays their concern for the clean environment. The process would see an end only after new pots and pans are bought and new dresses, clothes and other new requirements are brought home. Need to be new in every sense is emphasised here. Finally, everyone at home will be busy collecting the items required to prepare the sweetmeats etc, bunch or two of plantain (banana), *cadju* nuts, and many other items necessary to prepare the New Year meals and sweets. However children never forget to ensure that required nuts and seeds be used at the folk games on the New Year day are collected. While the children attend to the collection of games materials, the elders will help them to prepare the swings of different types, playing areas for other types of folk games etc.

The special foods and sweetmeats etc will be prepared by the competent ladies in the village only a few days before the due date and will be kept safely without leaving any room for anybody to partake them before the due date since the first share has to be offered to the Lord Buddha for whom left overs will never be served. Hence it will be seen that from the time of the preparation for the event there is much observances to be followed and maximum community participation with all, men, women, children and elders jointly contributing their share to make the festivities most successful. Hence it is really a national event in its widest meaning.

When considering the great festivities believed to have been associated with the New Year celebrations invariable question that arises is as to how the people who had been engaged in such a heavy and strenuous job could have found the time and leisure to spend on games and amusements. The answer is very simple. Mother Nature herself had found them the way out by making this particular period the off-season in the cultivation cycle. The people are also free soon after completing the hazardous workload of the previous cultivation period and for them this happens to be the time for relaxation before the beginning of the next cultivation season. Therefore they had not only the required leisure to spend on them but also had all the resources to spend since attics and grain stores are full of the fruits of their labour and hence could enjoy the New Year in great joy and happiness with the family and neighbours..

From the very beginning of the preparation process till the end of the New Year customs proper everything pertaining to the New Year is performed according to auspicious times given by the astrologers. Not only the times were given but specific colours to wear and suitable directions to face are also prescribed and they have to be carefully followed. Hence one can see that there is a strong connection between the New Year, Religion and Astrology. Sighting of the old moon (moon of the past year) and the bathing for the last time for the year have to be performed according to the prescribed way and time. These symbolically indicate the severing of connections with the previous year.

There is a host of customs and rituals to be performed before the actual New Year dawns. Visiting the relatives in distant villages will be undertaken on a convenient day. The share to the temple will

have to be taken as dry rations before the penultimate day since nothing will be exchanged with anyone during the transition period that is from the time Sun is considered to have left one planet to the time it arrives at the other or in other words from day previous to the dawn of the New Year till the actual dawn of the New Year. Very importantly all the different people who provide their services towards the successful achievement of day to day activities in the normal life have to be rewarded for the New Year when they pay a visit. This is an absolutely essential duty to be performed by everybody since this is the opportunity to show gratitude to each other.

The dawn of the transition period called Sankranthi kalaya or the time the Sun is on the move and hence neither here nor there is the link between the old and the new year. By now everyone has finished the last bit of activity, cleaning the hearth and removing the ashes, emptying the water pitches and turning them upside down, and ensuring that nothing from the old year is left over. Then they eagerly wait for the arrival of the New Year Prince. This is also called the Punya kalaya (time for meritorious activities and hence the auspicious time). Since the transition period is considered to be good for nothing other than meritorious or religious activities, temples become the centres of activity during this period. The reverence in which the traditional people had observed these customs can be measured by the fact that everyone in the village including those who would have never been to the temple for the year do go to the temple with the family members on this occasion. Hence it can conveniently be argued that this is a mechanism adopted from the good old days to motivate people to engage in religious activities on this very auspicious day. Hence, one will be able to understand how and why the religiosity of the people in this country had originated and also the close connection between the temple and the New Year celebrations. The other most important feature during this period is the custom of refraining from taking any food (fasting) during this entire period until the arrival of the auspicious time for consuming food after the dawn of the New Year.

After several hours lasting for 8 to 10 hours of the transitional period comes the time when the Sun is believed to return to the planet from where the journey started completing a 365 day journey to start another journey once again. It is the auspicious hour of the dawn of New Year and the beginning of the festivities. Therefore the entire Nation in much jubilation starts the activities

for the New Year with a new vigour after getting the religious blessings for a happy and prosperous New Year. This is the beginning of the real significant part of the activities for the New Year. Most striking feature in these celebrations is the engaging of that entire Nation as one single individual in all these customs in the specified manner. This is unique since nowhere else can one find such commitment of an entire nation to adhere to the specified times, colours and directions to face in performing the New Year rituals.

The first task as the auspicious hour comes on is to revamp the hearth in order to kindle the new fire in the new hearth. Most significantly this great and honourable duty had from time immemorial been entrusted to the chief lady in the family or the mother. Significance of the honour associated with these inaugural activities can be properly understood only if the deep meaning hidden under these activities is well comprehended. Kindling the hearth for the first time is symbolic of introducing energy of the sun into the life of the residents. Without sun's energy none and nothing can survive hence mother is represented here as the giver of that power to the family members. Soon after the kindling of fire she starts cooking the new rice for the preparation of the first ceremonial meal namely Kiribath or Milk Rice a special ceremonial food of the Sinhalese. Having prepared the milk rice in the prescribed manner and giving necessary instructions to the other members of the family to prepare the table for auspicious meal, she takes the empty water pot with a pre-prepared bundle of herbal items and accompanied by a little girl in the family goes to the well that provides drinking water.

Here she first keeps the pot on the floor and worships the well saying "I thank you for the benevolence shown to us by providing drinking water through the year" and deposits the bundle of herbal medicinal materials inside the well and takes away a pot of new water. She tells the inquiring little girl that we have to be grateful to everyone whether a man or matter if any service had been rendered to us. This is what our Lord Buddha had taught us when He spent the second week after attaining Buddhahood by staring at the Bo-tree which provided Him only the shelter. This custom of taking a pot of water after depositing the bundle is called Ganu-denu kirima or first exchange for the New Year. One would be sad to know that such a valuable custom worth exemplifying by all has been corrupted after the commercialisation of the society and

replaced with an exchange of monetary gifts. This is a classic example of the ignorance of the true meaning of some of the ICH items depriving the society a very meaningful traditional custom and also bringing in the detrimental of modernization. Hence the need to make the society knowledgeable about them has become urgent.

As the lady returns from the ganu-denu with the well, the time is almost close to the next auspicious activity of consuming the first meal. Children and others at home had by now prepared the table with all the different sweetmeats and other items like the national ceremonial food, Kiribath (Milkrice) plantains (Banana), Hat-maluwa, a special dish of minimum of seven varieties prepared for the New Year meal only. Depending on the time fixed for the meals (if the time is in the morning hours) the first share will be offered to the Triple Gem by all the members in the family, another instance proving the strong link between the people, religion and the New Year. Then all the members will rally round the table dressed in the prescribed colour and facing the prescribed direction for the head of the family to feed everyone with the first handful. The father lights the lamp on the table wishing brightness to everybody's life in the coming year and reciting a blessing will start from the youngest in the family to feed everyone. This includes wife and any other elder in the family present on the occasion. Once the ceremonial part is over everyone would enjoy a hearty meal to each one's satisfaction in expectation of the next move. Father's role displayed here is a crystallization of the traditional responsibility of the head of a family namely feeding and looking after them. Father by feeding the first mouthful assures that in the same way he fed and looked after them during the previous year would not fail in his duty this year as well.

Then we come to the most important part of the ceremony, namely the exchange of blessings. The children and the young ones would come in with whatever gifts one could have afforded with a sheaf of betels and bend in knees and worship both father and mother after giving them the gifts. Parents then would kiss and hug them to bless them and give in return a suitable gift to be remembered for a long time. This ritual will go on until last one had paid the due respects to all the elders to him or her. This is considered most important since this is the exact time the younger ones are transmitted the correct ethics, values and virtues. The sheaf of betels is very symbolic here and the primary objective is to

inculcate the virtue of paying gratitude and gifts have no special significance at all.

It will be followed by an equally important custom. Once all have finished their meals everyone will be enthusiastically engaged in preparing shares to the neighbours and the loved ones in the vicinity. Each member in the family accompanied by another will visit a home with a plate full of New Year sweets with good wishes covered by a white cloth, symbolic of purity of the goodwill taken along with and hand over the plate with all the blessings to a member of that family. It is very important that you enter the neighbour's house before handing over and spend a short while to express the goodwill one would carry with the plate. If you are not ready to do so your plate will have no true acceptance and the hosts cannot be blamed. One who cannot spend a while on an auspicious occasion like that will not be accepted as a true friend and a well wisher. This custom is known as the *Beda hada gena kema* or enjoying by sharing with others. This again is an exemplary virtue that had been transmitted from generation to generation fostering the unity and cooperation among the people encouraging them to be interdependent.

However, most people prefer to be engaged in another customary practice even before going to visit neighbouring houses. That is to attend to some regular activity for the first time of the New Year. Elders in the village situations always prefer to start something connected to agriculture while the women folk engage themselves in knitting and weaving or mat weaving or some similar customary activity. But they encourage their young ones to engage in some sort of learning from books showing winds of change that is taking place in the society. This custom is known as the *weda aramba kirima* or the official starting of the usual activity for the New Year. This is intended to remind the nation that their main duty is to engage in productivity whether in goods or in service.

Once all these major customs are meticulously adhered to all the members of the society are free to engage in whatever way they prefer in the numerous activities associated with the New Year. This is the time they visit freely their own friends and known ones with whatever gift they can afford. Then most or almost all do engage in New Year games and past times or the folk games day and night. This is the time they are compelled to eat beyond their capacity since it is very rude to refuse anything offered from a house visited. Since folk games take place everywhere this is the

time for the folk games to breathe fresh life to sustain until the next New Year time. Most conspicuous feature of the New Year folk games is the emphasis laid on the participation rather than on the victory or the defeat. Also outstanding is the participation without any distinction of male and female, young and old, parents and children, and teacher and pupil. This is in quite contrast to the present day heavy attraction for victory and rewards.

All these festivities and enjoyment with uncontrolled eating and non-stopped participation in games and competitions have to come to an end in keeping with the vision of the indigenous people. Traditionally nothing is allowed to be carried on to endless levels. Everything has a limit beyond which none can go. System itself stipulates the limits. In the case of the New Year festivities the limit will be determined by the auspicious hour for anointing oil and bathing for the New Year which falls 2 to 3 days after the dawn of New Year. On this day according to astrological instructions specially prepared herbal oil will be anointed by a healthy and virtuous elderly person, mostly a native medical practitioner or a Buddhist priest followed by the new year bath. Often they are invited for a meal by the medical practitioner who is always regarded as a highly respected community leader. The idea behind this custom is the inculcation of the need to pay attention to the health and healthy life to the people indicating that the traditional practices had always been modelled to lead the community on the correct path.

Soon after this, may be in a day or two, the auspicious time to set out for the first time in the New Year for work arrives. Having enjoyed fully the New Year, and taking all the precautions to maintain good health and beaming with blessings from the temple, people set out in a new vigour for work with enthusiasm and in high spirit with the most laudable determination of doing a better service in the coming year. They never forget to take whatever gift they can get for their fellow-men. This in fact is the end of the customary traditions and practices related to the New Year. However now a days it can be seen that the celebrations meant for the month of April are been dragged on until about August through the efforts of the business community whose only motive is to promote their businesses rather than the traditional culture.

A close examination of the different customs adhered to on different occasions during this period it can be seen that the entire

festival has one basic objective to achieve, namely, the annual rejuvenation of the culture and its many aspects useful for the continuation of the peaceful and harmonious self-sufficient society in a healthy and strong position for the future. Therefore it is the occasion to transmit to the younger generation through practical lessons the knowledge about the manner in which they are adhered to. Festivities are mechanisms invented to keep them attached to the customs which teach them all the valuable virtuous qualities essential in leading a happy social life. In this context it is the occasion when all the different national identities like folk games, foods and beverages, full community participation, etc come into prominence. The high value given to sheaf of betels and the invariable get together of the members of a family at the ancestral home are also outstanding features of this occasion. Finally the importance attached to the custom of exchanging betels by members of the families as well as the village as a token of begging and granting of pardon for an enmity or misunderstandings if any, during the past year can be considered key factor of the strength of their society to survive amidst all the hindrances and encumbrances.

2. Item: Wesak Poya Celebrations

Local name: Wesak Maha Mangalya (Great Wesak Celebrations)
Temagul Wesak Mangalya (Three Great Wesak Celebrations)

History, background: The full moon poya (religious day in the calendar) day that falls on the month of May is considered to be the day on which Guathama Siddhartha of ancient Dambadiva (India) was borne 2635 years Before Present (BP), attained supreme knowledge to be the Lord Buddha 2600 year BP and passed away 2555 years BP. Hence the adherents of His eternal teachings consider this triply auspicious day as the most significant religious day in their calendar and engage in highest level of celebrations in His honour. Ever since Buddhism had been made the official religion of the country this day had been declared a holiday to facilitate the people to engage in meritorious activities in His honour. Sri Lanka was denied this privilege by the European colonial masters from about 1771 but restored after strong demands in 1885.

Its international acceptance as a worthy day to respect a worthy religious teacher was given legal validity in 2002 when the UNO

declared it as an international holiday from then onwards. In Sri Lanka the celebrations to mark this day assume gigantic proportions with every household been extravagantly decorated and lit, every major road and town been gaily decorated and illuminated to give a bright and colourful glitter that astound even the locals, leave along the many foreigners who come here with the sole ambition of seeing this rare event. Locally all the Buddhists through the temples, some to engage in religious activities and others to observe the precepts for the day. This too is a national event with many a added events like decorated and illuminated pandals, free eating halls on the way sides, different performances to enhance the religious feelings etc. Country 's history shows that this is one of the oldest celebrations conducted under the patronage of the Kings.

However it must be said that Wesak celebrations are been held in almost all countries where Buddhism enjoys great recognition though the intensity, decorative aspects and other details may differ from country to country. Yet the fact remains that all of them remember and mark the three main events in the life of Lord Buddha on this day. This has been further encouraged by the United Nation's recognition of this day as an international holiday.

3. Item: Poson Poya Celebration

Local name: Poson Mangalya (Poson celebrations)

History, background: This can be called one of the most unique local ceremonies confined to Sri Lanka since it is connected with the arrival of Arahanth Mahinda Thero in Sri Lanka some 2300 years ago to propagate Buddhism though certainly did not carry with him any weapon or other lethal object in hand intended for using force in spreading the Dhamma that is based on non-violence. Poson is the month of June and on the full moon day of June, history records that Venerable Arahanth Mahinda Thero, the son of King Dharmasoka of India came with a group of 6 to Sri Lanka to preach Buddhism in Sri Lanka appeared on the summit of the Mihintale rock.

This event is a turning point in the history of the country and ever since then this day has been celebrated as a national day. Entire country join in the celebrations with the main attraction and hence the emphasis been Mihintale, a suburb of Anuradhapura and its

surroundings. Anuradhapura, the oldest capital city of Sri Lanka was the royal city when Arahant Mahinda Thero landed and started his campaign from the summit of the rock at Mihintale, few miles away to the north of the capital city. During this festival season the entire area is thronged with and filled to the capacity and only the intervention of the Government and the local bodies along with hundreds of Voluntary organizations in providing the numerous needs from transportation to food, medicine, rest places, water supply, sanitation, security etc to the millions who gather there to help to get over the situation.

However this is not a strange phenomenon since there are records by the colonial rulers describing the alarming situation that they had fallen into owing to this unusually large gathering of devotees in Anuradhapura during this period. The Assistant Government Agent of Anuradhapura in 1870 during the British colonial period reported in his administrative Report how this large crowd thronged the sacred city of Anuradhapura and the terrible scare he has had in controlling this unusually large crowd and the surprise he had when he achieved it with ease. Since as he says “these people were not only unaccustomed to criminality but also they do not seem to know even the meaning of criminality.”

Therefore it would be seen that the centre of attraction for celebrations for Poson is Mihintale and Anuradhapura to which area the people from all over the country clad in white as the symbol of purity and religiosity throng in large numbers for pilgrimage. The main reason why many of them come to this place is to observe the eight precepts (Atasil) that the lay Buddhists consider as the highest meritorious act that they can and are expected to fulfil. Hence one can see that all temples in the island crowded with devotees on this day. They consider it most meritorious to be physically present in the very land where Arahant Mahinda Thero preached the Dhamma. Hence the largest majority of the devotees who throng there do engage in this religious act among many other things.

Consequent to this heavy flow of devotees solely for pious and religious purposes another astonishing custom of feeding these large crowds on the way and in the sacred area has arisen in the country that all the foreign visitors too are surprised to find and amazed at the devotedness of the locals in providing free meals to the millions of devotees. This custom has become a part and parcel

of the Sinhala-Buddhist culture that by now these feeding centres called Dansela, meaning free alms-centres are been conducted by the non-Buddhists as well. Furthermore there are many other features been added every year to these celebrations Mihindu Perahera, the very colourful pageant or procession in grand style in honour of Arahant Mahinda Thero is one of the new additions that has gained much popularity and admiration. Hence it appears that new organizations come up with new modes of commemorating the great Savant of Buddhism every year. The erection of pandals that has become a popular feature for Wesak celebrations has become a popular item in the outskirts as a part of Poson celebrations. However, to the dismay of the religious minded people it appears that sometimes new features that appear to be irreligious to say the least are been added every year owing to the attempts by unscrupulous people who through ignorance try to make the Mihindu commemorations another fun fare completely forgetting its deep religious significance.

4. Item: Esala Festivals

Local Name: Esala Mangalya (Esala celebrations)

History, background: Month of Esala is the month of July/August and this month is synonymous with religious pageants and processions pertaining to both Buddhism and Hinduism. These are not confined to urban centres either. They are found all over the island where the abodes of the gods ([Devala] whether Buddhist or Hindu) are located. They are very colourful annual events in honour of the gods and take an identical form the only difference been the intensity and glamour added to each depending on the capacity of the patrons of each Devala. Therefore it will be seen that the two major religions have common ground here to be attractive to the devotees of each others' faith and hence to be united in conducting the procedures which can be considered the hallmark of their success.

Considering the significance of the Esala festivals as a whole one would be immediately reminded of the chief among all these Esala festivals, namely the Kandy Esala festival which has gained international fame. Although Kandy Esala pageant is synonymous with the Kandy Dalada (Tooth relic) Pageant, it has 2 main parts. The Dalada procession is the most important and significant of them. The 4 Devala processions form the other part of this great

pageant. The Gods that come for veneration are the gods of Natha, Vishnu, Kataragama and goddess Paththini. Hence the combination of these two processions is considered the main pageant of international fame. Therefore it is seen that the Esala festival is basically the homage paid in honour of the benevolent gods to whom the gratitude of the people is paid for what they have done for the success of the people's undertakings. That is why Esala festivals form such a valuable part the cultural heritage of the people.

Equally important is the Kataragama Esala festivals that takes place in far corner of South Sri Lanka. This festival too has gained international fame for several reasons. On the one hand it is a holy place for adherents of all four major religions in the world namely Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. Buddhists believe that it was the abode of the God who was the provider of all the prerequisites of Lord Buddha when He visited and made Kataragama a sacred place in His third visit to visit Sri Lanka. Therefore divine person called God of Kataragama was a Buddhist and the abode was built subsequently for him by the king Dutugemunu who before embarking on the mission of war against king Elara in Anuradhapura to save the country from the invaders got the blessings of this god. After gaining the success of his mission the king fulfilled his promised of building an abode for the God. It is the reason why the affairs of the Kataragama god are been made the responsibility of the Sinhala-Buddhist. On the other hand Hindus believe the God Skanda who had come from India is residing here after marrying a second wife Vallimatha, a native of the place. But owing to the opposition shown to him in his marriage with the native woman by the Dravidians he punished them by not entrusting any personal duty on his behalf to the Hindus and entrusting every responsibility to the Sinhala Buddhists who supported him. Most believe that some of the forms of offerings of enormously painful and unbearable nature resorted to by the Hindus who go there on pilgrimage are also forms of punishments or acts of repentance for the betrayal they have done to their god.

The international fame of the Kataragama Esala festival does not depend on its popularity among the foreign crowds who visit here to watch it but on the patronage of the foreign devotees who gather here annually to perform their offerings on behalf of this god. Hindus from all over the world come during the festival season to Kataragama and make their offerings as done by the Hindus in Sri

Lanka who make pada yathra (trekking on foot) annually through the thick jungles in the eastern province as a ritual to pay homage to the god. Since some section of Muslims believe that there is a well of water with miraculous powers to heal discovered by some of their saints and hence they also have much faith on this god. Therefore groups of Muslim devotees make annual pilgrimage here. Christians likewise do make annual pilgrimage here and hence Kataragama Esala festivals have been getting the patronage of the people of all different faiths. The annual festival lasting several days and ending with the water cutting ceremony followed by walking on fire (embers) is rich with all the cultural features from the Sinhala-Buddhist as well as the Hindu culture. The rituals associated with it, the customs connected with and the belief system underlining, are all pregnant with ICH value and therefore deserve the attention of all interested in ICH.

The pageants in honour of God Sumana Saman in the Sapparagamuwa Saman Maha Devale in Ratnapura, Mahiyangane, Deraniyagala and Bolthumbe, God Basnahira at Getabaruwa Devale in the Matara District, God Upulwan in Devundara (Dondra), God Dediminda in Hingula Devale off Mawanella, Hindu Gods at Munneswaram in Halawatha (Chilaw) are prominent among the large number of pageants throughout the country that take place during the Esala season.

5. Item: Religious ceremony concluding the confinement of the Buddhist monks during three-month rainy season

Local Name: Katina Cheewara Pinkama (offering of rainy season robes)

History, background: According to the teachings of Lord Buddha the monks are expected to be confined to their abodes during the rainy seasons for reasons of safety and health. It is a rule of discipline enacted during the life time of Lord Buddha after listening to the representations made by the patrons about the dangers and the difficulties the monks will have to face if they are to be on the move as in other times for their meals during rainy times as well. This indeed had been the democratic way Lord Buddha had managed the order of the Bikkhus. The rainy season in the orient continues for about 3 months beginning from August during which period the monks come into agreement with the lay devotees to stay in the temple and attend to the religious needs of

the laymen while laymen vow to provide all the requirements of the Bikkhus during that period.

The ceremonial period begins on the full moon day of month of Nikini (August) with special religious rituals and sermons at the end of which the laymen symbolically invite a number of Bikkhus mostly the resident monks to be kind enough to stay in their temple and enjoy the hospitality of the laymen until the end of the rainy season. From then onwards until the last day of this 3 month period there will be special offerings and sermons and other convenient rituals to transmit the religious knowledge to the devotees. Every household considers it a great honour and duty to take over unto themselves the task of patronizing the proceedings of a particular day thereby easing the burden of the others and enjoying the happiness of been a party to the celebrations. For several days before the final date arrives, there will be special celebrations and various events followed by a sermon by a reputed preacher in the area each day.

On the final night there will be an all night Pirith (Parittha) chanting in the temple while the village ladies will be busy stitching the robes to be offered to all the Bikkhus who participate in the Vas (rainy season) ritual in the temple on the following morning at the end of the reciting of Pirith. This will be followed by the morning alms offerings (breakfast to the Bikkhus). There will be mid-day almsgiving to even a larger number of Bikkhus invited from other places as well. Finally the same evening there will be a religious ritual where normal religious activities will be performed and at the end of all the rituals transfer of merits to all those who had contributed in whatever little way towards the successful completion of the proceedings during the 3 months period will be conducted by a leading priest. This is one of the great occasions in the series of Buddhist rituals that the Buddhists are engaged in, in their efforts to sustain the Sasana (Dispensation) well and unhindered and uninterrupted.

6. Item: Paddy Broadcasting Festival

Local Name: Vap Mangula

History, background: Agriculture been the main means of livelihood and the guiding light of the people of Sri Lanka from the time of known history there are many a rituals and ceremonies

associated with the vocation of agriculture. They had been continued unbroken and unhindered over the years and many of them had the full participation of the Kings and members of the royal families which indicates great patronage given by the royalty to agriculture in the country.

Vap Mangula is the festival of broadcasting of seeds performed as the final act after the completion of the preparation of the field. Since the royal participation was considered indispensable it always took a ceremonial appearance. The ploughs used by the royals on this occasion were considered to be of gold while lesser officials had silver ploughs and the ordinary cultivators used the normal wooden ploughs. The animals harnessed, either the cattle or the buffalos were gaily decorated. The work started at the auspicious time prescribed by the royal astrologers. The fields were muddied and levelled with the wooden levellers and at the end the germinated seeds were broadcasted.

At the end of this long process there were many other rituals adhered to as means of crop protection against birds and beasts and evil eye or evil mouth. With the broadcasting of seeds openings for water will be closed for several days since otherwise the seeds will be washed away. But then the birds and beast who feed on seeds will harm the field. Hence as a precaution several measures would be adopted. One is to plant scarecrows to drive away them. There will be a variety of herbs planted here and there along the weirs to scare away the beasts. Small children will be used during day time to make various sounds to scare away the seeds pickers. Sound producing indigenous implements will be used in the field to scare them away. (see the next chapter for details)

The antiquity of this custom could be measured by the fact that history records the incident that Prince Pandukabhaya who later became king in 2500 years BP found his future queen Swarna Pali when she was taking meals to her father who was in the field participating in the Vap Mangula. Lord Buddha in one of His previous births had been participating in a Vap ceremony according to the birth stories. Prince Siddhartha is said to have performed his miracles while watching the father participating in a Vap ceremony. Hence the ritual of Vap ceremony has to be considered as one of the most important of the agricultural rituals having a long history.

7. Item: Alms to the Seven Grandmothers

Local Name: Kiriamma Danaya

History, background: The Sinhala-Buddhist community holds in very high respect the ritual associated with the alms to the Kiriammas since they symbolically represent the seven Goddesses of Paththini (seven incarnations). Though the belief system of Paththini is said to have come from India Paththini is the only female deity held in high esteem and worshipped. She is a model of purity, trustworthiness, motherhood and virtuousness of womanhood and hence the worship of Paththini is considered synonymous with the worship of motherhood. Therefore in all matters of distress where the help of some outside power is required it will be the Goddess Paththini that will be looked up to. Especially in cases of children and females the rituals in the name of the Paththini will be resorted to. The elderly ladies invited as Kiriammas to represent the Goddess Paththini are essentially mothers of several children and hence no unmarried or childless women will be qualified to be invited.

Seven Kiriammas representing the seven incarnations of the Goddess Paththini would be invited and all of them would come very early in the morning before the sun rises. Once they are offered alms they would conduct the ritual and confer the blessings on all the residents of the house. This is done specially in cases of vows taken to offer or donate certain specific things in the name of the children or women in distress. The Kiriammas appear in white dress, white been the symbol of purity, at home under the leadership of one talented and experienced elderly lady and perform the ritual and taking whatever is offered will go away rise after blessing the householders before the sun rises. Since this a deeply rooted custom among the Sinhala-Buddhist community it again assumes greater importance in the social system in the country and hence attaches much significance.

8. Item: Offering of the Medical Practitioners

Local Name: Bath Malawa (Beheth Malawa)

History & Background: This is a unique blessing ceremony

conducted by the village shamans on invitation extended by the village medical practitioners. The series of ceremonies in the village starting with the main one by the senior most medical practitioner in the village in the month of Bak (April) goes on until the end of the last ceremony as a mark of respect and paying of gratitude to the deity who is considered to be the guardian of the medical practice namely, Kadawara. The belief is that the deity Maha Kadawara is considered to be the chief guardian deity of the medical practice and he is followed by several minor Kadawaras. Hence the ritual is perpetuated as a ceremony of the medical practitioners intended to show their gratitude to the deity for the services rendered to preserve and sustain the practice.

The ceremony starts in the hours of the evening with the village shamans gathering at the house of the patron and preparing the arena for the performance. There is not much of a decoration other than the erection and decorating of the pahan pela or structures to accommodate the lamps and other offerings like flowers. Lots of flowers will be collected along with different varieties of grains and certain number of betel leaves which will be spread on the floor to deposit the offerings. Initial rituals of obtaining the blessings of the triple gem etc will be done after which the protection of the premises will be ensured before the partaking of evening meals in preparation for the actual ritual activities. One of the main functions of the occasion is the feeding of everyone who attends to watch and participate in the proceedings. This indeed is the hallmark of this ceremony since the medical practitioners consider it obligatory to display their philanthropy and hospitality towards the people who happen to be their clients. Hence the lavish feeding of the visitors could be witnessed from early hours of the evening till the end of the ceremony in the early hours of the following morning.

The ritual will see the end in the early hours of the morning with blessings showered on the patrons, family members, the visitors and the premises with the hope that better future will dawn for the practitioner and his family. The final activity will be the feeding of the shamans and the participants who oft to remain until the end. Looking back into the actual significance of the ritual it would be seen that the belief system of the indigenous people tend to consolidate the convictions of the people deeply in whatever field they opt to dwell in by attaining perfection through virtuous means with heavy emphasis on religious and righteous life style. In this

process from king to the farmer there is an accepted code of conduct which none can deviate from. This can be considered the primary reason for the stable and strong nature of the social system of the Sinhala-Buddhist nation that Sri Lanka very proudly nurtures. Therefore the rituals that still occupy an important place in the social life of Sri Lanka can be considered as most important exemplary sources of valuable ICH the entire world community can benefit from.

9. Item: New Rice Ceremony

Local Name: Aluth Sahal Mangalya

History, background: This is one of the most important agricultural ceremonies Sri Lanka is well known for. The entire ritual is pregnant with a series of deeply meaningful activities and concepts. Hence, the reason for its survival for such a long time since its origin is unknown past.

The ritual occurs at the end of the harvesting season of the main cultivation period. Often it falls on end of March or beginning of April. It invariably occurs in a temple or a devale, an abode of a deity. Each region may have its own central place where the main ceremony is held. Ancient Rajarata or the modern North Central Province has Sri Maha Bodhi as its centre while Central province has the Temple of the Sacred Tooth or Dalada Maligawa as its centre. Likewise Kirivehera in far South, Maha Saman Devale in Ratnapura, Muthiyangane Rajamaha Vihara in the Uva or South-East Sri Lanka, Kelaniya Rajamaha Vihara near Colombo in the Western province are among the many religious centres well known in Sri Lanka for the New Rice Ceremonies. In addition to all these all village level temples and devales play the same role since it is such a popular and commonly celebrated ritual by the agricultural society that we have and live in, in Sri Lanka.

The main activity associated with the ritual is the offering to the triple Gem (Lord Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha) or the deity, the first or the initial share of the newly harvested paddy by the farmers. The grain is taken in procession to the sacred place and after the religious proceedings the grain is offered while a separate cooked meal will also be offered in the traditional way such an alms would be offered. In the case of the New Rice Ceremony of the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic there is a separate paddy field set apart from the ancient times for this purpose thus showing how

important this ritual had been. The entire ritual clearly demonstrates the virtuous qualities the indigenous people had been known for from the very early days. This act is almost entirely set apart to show their gratitude to the various forces, both seen and unseen who had been responsible for the successful harvest they are been blessed with. Religiosity, unity and cooperation, and the commitment of the people in their day to day activities are well reflected through this ceremony. That again can be interpreted as the secret behind their great success and achievements. Hence their value as a part of ICH is amply demonstrated.

VI. Provisional Urgent Safeguarding List

1. Traditional Agriculture in Sri Lanka and its value as a repository of ICH

Sri Lanka is essentially an agricultural country whose society, culture and life pattern have been entirely based on and fashioned by an agrarian socio-economic system. Understandably the economy of the country can still be seen revolving round the pivot of agriculture as it has been the case from the beginning of the Island's long history. The chorus of activities, large in magnitude associated with agriculture had given rise to a whole world of wisdom and knowledge that compares very well with any known body of wisdom in any other country, whether new or old, east or west. The gamut of paraphernalia associated with agriculture in this country is marked by several special features unique to it like its indigenoussness, utilitarianism, appropriateness, simplicity, inexpensiveness, reliance on religious and mythical beliefs, dependence on cooperative efforts, environment friendliness and many others.

Yet what is very interesting is the fact that most of the wisdom and knowledge that goes to produce multitude of implements and mechanisms essential for the proper execution of the vocation had remained in unwritten form as traditions and practices that was passed down from generation to generation orally and through practical lessons in the daily life. Hence this entire body of knowledge that is fondly cherished and dearly preserved with utmost care despite numerous difficulties in the face of so-called modernization and development, can be considered a rich storehouse of ICH, a gift only a very few countries are fortunate enough to bestow on the entire humankind. Hence the unfathomable value of Sri Lanka to the scholars and researchers, conservationists and promoters of ICH in the world.

Beginning of Agriculture

Beginning of civilization is considered to have coincided with the beginning of agriculture. E.B.Tylor, the pioneering writer on Anthropology, takes the beginning of agriculture still further back and says that the dawn of civilization was the result of the beginning of agriculture and hence the agriculture is the forerunner of civilization. (E.B.Tylor. Anthropology 1878). Ever since the introduction of agriculture, all societies in the world in most probability in their primary stages practiced agriculture in some form and today agriculture continues to be the basic means of livelihood of the vast majority of the world population.

Through-out the ages the people in these societies invented adapted and adopted from the nature the implements and techniques required for their agriculture. Borrowing and adopting from other societies where possible was not unknown to many early societies. Consequently today we see that from the primitive wooden hoe and the plough, the agricultural technology has developed to the present day all-purpose tractor and host of other machinery. Yet in those countries where history goes back to very early times and agriculture remains as their main means of livelihood the body of knowledge on agriculture can necessarily be seen surviving among the people solely through the practice of the vocation. Therefore with the increased pressure from the so-called developed countries to sell their wisdom and technology as another commercial commodity, the threat of losing forever the valuable body of knowledge that had been brought from ancient past to this day is mounting unprecedentedly.

Agriculture in ancient Sri Lanka

The antiquarian nature of the practice of agriculture in Sri Lanka is well reflected in the manner the human settlements were located in the early days of the country's history. It is well known that the early human settlements in Sri Lanka were centered round water ways as is proved by the different waterways associated with all the known centers of early settlements. Malwatu oya, Kala oya, Kirindi oya, Galoya, Walawe ganga, Nilwala ganga, Gin ganga, Kalu ganga, Kelani ganga. Maha oya, Deduru oya right round the island are prominent among these rivers and streams with multitude of other small waterways accommodating many a pockets of minor settlements. These settlements, it must be remembered, are much older than the beginning of the written history of the island.

The knowledge and experience gained and attachment to practice of cultivation were the guiding factors in founding new settlements as well. When a particular settlement had shown signs of over-population, forcing them to find a new settlement, a group from the spilled population under the leadership of an elderly chief set on the mission of finding a place for new settlement. The main target was a source of water and where damming was feasible. Once the place was decided first thing they did was to build a dam to store water if no ready flow of water was available to tap for irrigation. Therefore it would be seen that before the village the water reservoir originated since the availability of water was the key factor of successful agriculture.

The size of the settlement depended on the capacity of the tank to irrigate and often it ranged from 5 to 20 families. The residential area called “gamgoda” (cluster) was located on a higher elevation above the irrigated fields below the tank and all the houses were concentrated within common compound which was made easy owing to the close kinship affinities of the group. This mechanism was instrumental in guaranteeing the much needed protection, social security and fostered and promoted unity and cooperation thus ensuring the indispensable environment for successful agriculture.

The antiquity of agriculture in Sri Lanka is discernible not only through the settlement plan of the island. Walahaka Jataka story, one of the 550 birth stories of Lord Buddha, relates that the Yakkinis (female demons) of the city of Tammanna in the island of Tambapanni (another name by which the island had been known) pretended to behave like humans by resorting to ploughing etc. Well before the arrival of Vijaya from Dambadiva, as India was known then, Tambapanni had been practicing agriculture. It is proved by the evidence on the availability of warehouses full of rice and other grains with which Vijaya and his retinue of 700 were fed instantly by the ruler of the port, Kuvanna on their sudden arrival there (Mahawansa vii.24-25).

At the time of the arrival of Arahant Mahinda Thero 2400 yers BP, the starting point of the written history of Sri Lanka, there had been a well developed society where agriculture was extensively practiced. Prince Pandukabhaya (2500 years BP) who is credited with starting the indigenous line of rulers in the island had met his future queen, Princess Pali while she was carrying mid-day meals

to her father, Girikanda Siva who was at work with others in the paddy field. (Mahawansa x. 29-31).

From very early period of history royal patronage to agriculture had been very crucial that the tradition had compelled the kings to consider it their bounden duty to ensure a very steady supply of water for cultivation and hence embarked on major irrigation schemes. The philosophy behind their policy towards the supply of water can very well be seen from the declaration attributed to the great benefactor of irrigation system in Sri Lanka, King Parakramabahu the Great. (1000 years BP) "Let not one drop of water falling from the sky be allowed to flow into the sea without been harnessed for the benefit of the mankind." Therefore "Extensive works of irrigation secured with an immense amount of labour skill and science had transformed arid plains into areas of plentiful prosperity at a time when agriculture in Europe was in the rudest and most primitive state" (R.L.Brohier Pt 1 p.1). Concrete evidence are found in abundance to substantiate the fact that this deep involvement of the kings and the ruling class in providing and guaranteeing the steady and uninterrupted supply of water for cultivation in Sri Lanka had in actual fact been materialized. It can be seen how this sacred and solemn duty is been adhered to up to the present day in the country unhindered.

Ancient wisdom still remain unrecorded

It is interesting to note that despite all the developments and progresses made in the fields of agriculture and science and technology, much of the great wisdom and deep knowledge of the past that helped Sri Lanka to be self-sufficient in the food supply, still remain unwritten and unrecorded. However it cannot be denied that during the last several decades the strong winds of change and forced influences of the powerful industrial and commercial organizations have been making great inroads into these spheres necessitating the taking of urgent measures to ensure the protection of this priceless world heritage from the impending threat of disappearance. Hence the immeasurable value and relevance of the efforts like UNESCO's to safeguard and conserve human treasures like ICH can be seen gaining more and more acceptance in the intellectual world

The ICH that is part and parcel of the traditional agriculture is not easy to be compartmentalized since the entire activity or vocation (certainly it had never been a mere vocation in this country) of

agriculture carries intangible knowledge, wisdom, values, virtues, ethics etc. in every aspect of its multitude of activities, starting from the beginning to the end of the agricultural cycle. Therefore it would be seen that an enumeration of the whole host of ICH associated with agriculture is not feasible in a short essay like this. Hence laying emphasis on few most important aspects, only a brief mention of other aspects would be made in this exercise depending on their relevance to the main theme.

Fortunately, the entirety of the activities associated with agriculture can be seen fully and vividly described in the course of relating a story in a chapter of a Sinhala literary classic (Saddharma Ratnavaliya) belonging to the 13th century followed by yet another Sinhala classic (Pujavaliya) belonging to a slightly later period from which we can elicit out the all important information on ICH. This proves very well that the knowledge of scientific agriculture is not new to Sri Lanka and that it had been a popular knowledge at the time so much so that the Buddhist priests too could have written treatises on the subject enumerating and describing in detail the different aspects of the vocation.

Traditional agricultural cycle

The traditional agriculture as practiced by the people in this country in the past, when most of the problems encountered by the present day people had been unheard of, has had three main branches identified according to the type of work involved, place of work and the manner in which the work was embarked on.

- (a) Field cultivation-wet
- (b) Chena (slash and burn) cultivation-dry
- (c) Home-garden cultivation-mixed

Taking the first two branches into consideration one can see several stages in their cultivation cycles to be identical.

- (a) Preparation of the field
- (b) Selection and preparation of seeds and plant materials
- (c) Sowing or planting
- (d) Crop protection
- (e) Harvesting
- (f) Religious rituals- paying back gratitude

In the traditional agricultural cycle of activities, the clearing marks the beginning of the preparation of the fields. In the case of chena cultivation a plot of jungle land was used for the cultivation of different varieties of grains, yams, pulses, vegetables etc. In the other form of wet cultivation only paddy was cultivated in the muddied fields. In the case of dry cultivation the cultivators in a group go out to the jungle and choose a suitable area which can accommodate all and where everyone will have an equal size plot to work. The manner in which the plots were demarcated made the plots appear like a cart wheel.

Scientifically this design had ensured the unity and cooperation in the work, protection and the success of the vocation. In the case of the wet cultivation the initial activity again was the clearing of the surrounding of the field and attending to the repairs if any, of the canals and channels conducting water into the fields. This speaks volumes about the civic consciousness of the people in the olden days. They had never waited for the state's intervention in attending to their minor works, a worthy lesson to learn from the past to the present.

The next step in the chena cultivation is more or less the most hazardous of all. Clearing the jungle and preparing the land for cultivation is on the one hand a painful job not only for the heaviness of the work involved but for the guilt instilled through the religious training discouraging them from intervening with the nature, disturbing the life pattern of the wild birds and beasts and vandalizing the forests and its resources. Yet since they were compelled to resort to the jungle clearing for the sake of their sustenance, they took every precaution to minimize the damage done to the nature and its many resources. When clearing the jungle all the large and valuable trees were spared and protected. In setting fire to the dried jungle waste they resorted to an almost a ritual of running round the plot with the torch of fire in hand thrice crying loudly a request to the beasts and birds to be kind enough to leave the place since they are compelled to resort to this action for the sake of their young ones.

The cultivators of the wet fields did not have such painful experiences other than the heaviness of the workload they had before them. Soon after clearing the surroundings, the waste is dumped into the fields left with the paddy stems from the previous harvest for decaying and fertilization of the field. Towards

achieving this objective the cultivators open the gates (vakkadaya) to conduct water into the fields and close exit points so that all the Liyaddas (plots) will be soaked in water for several days. While this helps to acquire the nitrogen from the sun rays on to the plots, it helps immensely to convert the waste and the paddy stems etc in the plots to enhance the fertility of the fields while softening the bottoms of the plots to facilitate the next step of muddying and levelling the plots.

The third stage in the cultivation of chena is the preparation of the land for cultivation. Unburned remnants will be collected and where necessary burnt in heaps or dumped into the boundary of the chena. Simultaneously the protective wooden fence built with heavy logs to keep the wild beasts away from the cultivation will be attended to. At the same time action will be taken to assemble the seeds and other things required for the cultivation. Also of importance is the construction of the temporary hut to keep watch in the night and to rest during the day since watching is almost essential as the wild beasts are in abundance in the surroundings. In the areas where elephants are abundant the huts are built on tree tops to avoid been threatened by them. The wet field cultivators devote their attention to repair and restore bunds and dams that form an essential part of the field helping to retain water in the individual plots. The preparation of the plots too starts and the first ploughing (hi-neguma) or the first hoeing (bim ketuma) takes place to condition the plots by turning up the soil. This process is continued for two more times (de-hiya) or de-ketum) and (tun-hiya) or (tun-ketum) with a short break in between and finally the field will be ready for sowing or replanting (vepireema or pela situveema).

As the work progresses much activity is taking place at home. The seed paddy chosen will be tested for its capacity to germinate according to the traditional methods of soaking a selected number of seeds for a day in water or mostly in a stem of a plantain (banana) tree. A short piece of banana stem will be cut half-opened and the selected seeds will be deposited in it and sealed till following morning. Then it will be examined and number of germinated seeds will be counted and the success percentage will be calculated. This process will be continued until the most suitable variety is found. The selection of other cultivable items for chena cultivation is done according to the personal experience or on the advice of the elders.

The chena cultivation though is condemned and rejected by certain sections accusing it to be environmentally harmful and dangerous to the conservation of the nature, it would no doubt be seen that it is their thorough ignorance of the proper functioning of the chena system that prompts them to make such wild accusations. On the one hand chena cultivators never destroy the jungle. Nor they ever cleared the plot chosen completely to deprive it of all the big trees either, since they knew how useful they are for their survival. They were able to realize this because they were conscious of the long duration such trees have taken to grow to such heights. But most importantly the chena cultivation survives only for a maximum of 2-3 years after which it would be left fallowed for a long time. It may not be within 40 to 50 years hence that it would be re-cleared if at all necessary. Besides, all these chena had been the chief benefactor of the innocent villagers since it guaranteed them with food security for an extended period of 2-3 additional years since it produced fruits, yams, pulses and green leaves well beyond the time chena had been in actual fact abandoned. Systematic chena cultivation and the destruction of nature are two concepts far apart.

It also brings to us yet another virtue inherent to chena cultivation namely that it is only a temporary occupation of the jungle for a limited purpose by the people who never allowed the jungle to be destroyed. However the population explosion we see today is making a heavy demand of the forest which is fast dwindling and hence it is an indication that chena cultivation can no longer survive in the modern world. With the phenomenal increase in the population there is the stiff competition to share the limited and scarce resource of land. More over there is vehement opposition to the clearing of jungles from the environmentalists throughout the world since it tends to increase the global warmness and acts as a threat to the entire mankind as well as the animal world. Hence the practice of chena cultivation in any case is losing its significance as a great economic factor and therefore even though very reluctantly we will have to accept that it will remain only as a thing of the past. Yet as genuine appreciators and conservationists of intangible cultural heritage we are bound to hold it in high respect for what it had bestowed on us. Hence there is the urgent need today of collecting and recording all the wisdom and knowledge the chena cultivation system had passed on to the mankind before it is perished and lost forever to be deposited in the repositories in the hope that this wisdom and knowledge we had gained from it can be

made use of for the betterment of the humans where necessary and feasible in the future as well.

The belief system and rituals, customs and manners, traditions and practices, wisdom and knowledge associated with chena cultivation can be considered a very proud acquisition to the ICH. The folk-lore, including stories, poetry, magic, puzzles, riddles, mantras (sorcery) and many more by-products of this particular vocation will compel us to pay more attention on them before they are lost forever to the mankind. How the cultivators predicted correctly the coming of rain, signs of nasty droughts, impending dangers from the wild animals, appropriate and useful first aids in the jungle are all locked inside them and we have heavy responsibility of eliciting them out from wherever they are for the benefit of the mankind. Equally important will be the host of paraphernalia-instruments and implements associated with the vocation since they enlighten us on the appropriateness of the technology suitably developed to the vocation and to the indigenous situation.

Coming back to the agricultural cycle attention can be concentrated to the paddy cultivation in the wet fields since it is the surviving form of cultivation today. Here we see the cultivators getting rather busy organizing the next stage of the cultivation cycle namely the sowing or replanting. Every farmer was proud to be self-sufficient in the supply of seed paddy. Having tested the germination capacity of the different seeds, the right variety will be measured and packed into sizeable bags and kept at the auspicious hour in the water for 2-3 nights to germinate. Meanwhile the last ploughing (Tun-hiya) or the preparation of the field for third time (final) will be completed. On the day before the sowing the bags of paddy left for germination will be brought home and dumped on the plantain leaves or habarala (*Alocasia indica*) leaves spread on the floor and loosened and separated by thrusting between the two palms for easy sowing. On the sowing day the farmers will gather in the morning at the home of the owner of the paddy fields and enjoy the morning meals before going into the field for the auspicious duty. First the owner or an elderly person considered by everyone to be lucky or fortunate and evil-free will descent on to the field and start work for others to follow him. The leader will mark the channels in the plots and others will complete them properly and the work will continue until all the plots are prepared with short stoppages for tea and victuals. The gates in the dams will be kept open for the

water to drain out since otherwise paddy seeds will be submerged or drained out.

Once the preparation is over the seed paddy brought from home will be carried in a specially designed basket (Vi-pettiya) hung on the shoulders by a “fortunate” and experienced person and sown in the plots to be evenly scattered. At the end of the sowing a bunch of flower from an areca nut tree will be planted on the dam in the middle of the field. This is considered to be a magical action to keep off the evil influences on the paddy field. At the end of the entire work load for the day the cultivators would be entertained to a sumptuous lunch which happens to be the only form of remuneration for the heavy load of work done (Robert Knox 1681). The villagers participate in these activities as a voluntary and mutual help.

However the real period of hard work starts only after the sowing is completed. It is the period when utmost care of the cultivations is absolutely essential. Seeds sown have to be protected from the birds and beasts. Water needs be conducted in time for the tender plants to grow up. Tender plants have to be protected from the plant eating animals like rabbits, deer etc. Plants have to be taken care of to prevent from different infections, insects and other forms of diseases. It is therefore not surprising that the period of protecting the crops in the field is considered the most strenuous part of their vocation since deep vigilance and personal attention throughout day and night is imperative and sacrificing one’s own comfort and happiness is unavoidable. Hence this period in the agricultural cycle will certainly be considered the most important from ICH point of view since most of the rare and deep meaningful practices are found here.

The cultivators of the past unlike the “farmers” of today devoted almost their full time on the cultivation and hence it was rightly described as most hazardous yet very enjoyable and above all most righteous vocation since ultimately it was their sweat and labour that they ultimately enjoyed as the product or the harvest . They never left the field to the mercy of the wild beasts and remained at home until it was time for reaping the harvest. Proper and controlled water supply to the field had to be maintained, seeds had to be protected from birds and insects and plants had to be safeguarded from birds, beasts and animals until the plants come up of age to bear fruits when even more care had to be taken if the

harvest had to be rich and plentiful. This could not be achieved by staying at home. Hence this necessitated a hut in the field to stay day and night to watch the crops. It was a second house for them. Much entertainment was there in the huts since to keep up the nights to drive away the animals they engaged in reciting poetry to a meter one after the other thus making the entire vicinity almost like an entertainment ground. Since a rich heritage of folk-lore consisted of songs, music, literary skills, expression of experiences, deep feelings, ups and downs in the life and many more could be collected here its value as a storehouse of ICH is immeasurable.

The cultivators in the past never believed in fertilizing the plants after sowing seeds. Instead the organic manure they procured was used before the sowing since their main objective in using the manure was to enrich the soil rather than the yield. On the one hand the philosophy behind the use of manure was that since, we extract in the form of harvest the essence of the soil, we owe the soil much and therefore by manuring the soil we try as much as possible to repay to the soil even a part of what we have extracted from the soil. What a wonderful philosophy!. On the other hand concerted effort was not necessary for them to enrich the soil since the soil was allowed to acquire regularly the deficient qualities through natural process. Exposure of the water filled plots to the sun rays over a period of time caused accumulation of nitrogen requirements. Composed manure out of cow-dung, domestic waste, etc. was added to the field in addition to the shrub clearance in and around the field thrown to the field, paddy stems and grass etc in the field once decayed added richness to the soil. Since this was a continuous process it helped a lot to allow the regeneration of lost fertility of the soil uninterrupted.

The weeding process was yet another way the forefathers resorted to look after the crop while at the same time ensuring the successful growth of the plants. The village ladies in number took to the field during this process and forming a row started moving forward removing the weeds and competing plants and burying them in the field itself to decay. While in this process they removed excess plants and replanted them where necessary. Furthermore the trampling of the tender plants by the weeding ladies helped them to shoot out in numbers thereby contributing to the swelling of the yield.

The pest and insect control was no problem to them despite numerous insecticides and pesticides so rampant today were unknown to them at the time. Whatever the pest they were confronted with was checked and wiped out by adhering to a set time schedule in attending to the various activities by all the cultivators of a particular village as a group. This is besides indulging in charms and customary practices which though appear to be mere superstitious acts, display much scientific basis. Chanting of Pirith (Pariththa- Stanzas invoking the blessings of the Lord Buddha), sprinkling of pirith water, charmed sand, ashes, juice of various unpalatable herbs, roots or fruits on the top of the crop was resorted to along with several other methods. Lighting of lamps in the night at the four corners of the field is still considered a form of charm but in actual fact it had a very scientific explanation in that it helped to attract the harmful as well as other insects and destroy them instantly.

Planting of certain varieties of herbs like habarala (*Alocasia indica*) inguru (ginger - *Zingiber officinale*), niyada (*Sansevieria zeylanica*), randomly on the bunds of the field soon after sowing seeds was intended to destroy the earthen creatures like rats, pests and insects through the disagreeable taste and odour of the root system. A bundle of crushed herbs, fruits or roots of certain varieties was deposited at the mouth of the topmost vakkadaya (an opening for water to flow into the field cut on the weir or bund) which helped to destroy much of the insects and creatures harmful to the paddy roots and trunks since the juice was carried all over the field through the channels.

It has become an absolute necessity today as a primary method of environmental protection to encourage and mobilize the people to resort to bio-technological methods in their cultivation activities. Glad to mention that our forefathers had been masters at making full use of bio-technology in agriculture from the distant past and despite all the distractions emanating from the modern day foreign chemical dealers Sri Lankan cultivators can still be seen making use of all these environment friendly methods without any body's instigations or instructions but solely as an inherited tradition. Excellent example of this phenomenon of harnessing the bio-technology in the cultivation is the planting of coconut stems or similar stems all over the field with tender plants to accommodate birds of prey day and night in the field. This helped the birds of prey to frequent the fields day and night to feed on insects and

other creatures like rats and crabs thriving in the field. It provided easy access to a resting place within the field itself when dashing to and from the prey. The validity of this can be measured only when considering the fact that the fields with large stretches do not have trees or any other suitable places for the birds of prey to watch from and dash into the prey and come back to rest after the successful mission. Thus it can be seen that the traditional cultivators have been making full use of the inherent habits of the predators to their benefit.

Yet another method through which the traditional cultivator had been controlling the pest and caring the cultivation was by planting mixed vegetables on the weirs after the sowing. This on the one hand was an example of multi-cropping and making maximum use of the land. Secondly it helped to distract the insects from the paddy crop. Depending on the varieties planted they acted as a repellent to the insects. The vegetable plants helped to enrich soil as well while at the same time helping cultivators to manage their food requirements. Therefore it would prove to any one that the crop protection process in the traditional agricultural cycle stands out as the most interesting and rich repository of most valuable intangible cultural aspects which can be harnessed for the benefit of the modern day requirements as well.

Many more are the mechanisms used in the fields to protect the crops from the various sources of attack. It was customary in the rural areas for the cultivators to set apart a portion of the field untapped leaving its harvest to the birds. This portion was named kurulu paluwa, (reserved to the birds) signifying that it had been set apart for the benefit of the birds. They believed that this portion nearest to the jungle would prevent the birds from destroying the crop in the other part since they had enough to feed on in the kurulu paluwa. In the similar fashion, the fruits on tree tops and ends of the branches are left alone untouched for the benefit of the birds and beasts that thrive on fruits.

Another very interesting and innovative method of protecting the crops resorted to by the local cultivators is the scaring away of the birds and beasts from the cultivation. In adopting this method the variety of means and mechanisms invented is very astonishing. Often the fields can be seen accommodating several scarecrows, white-spotted pots on sticks, wasted animal skulls on the fences, bunches of tender coconut leaves,(now stripes of polythene have

encroached), in the middle of the fields to the height of the eye-level. This is resorted to by the cultivators to gain twin objectives. On the one it helps to drive away the animals especially in the night when the moonlight falls on these objects and gives the appearance of a human being in the eyes of the animals. On the other hand it is a precaution taken to distract the attention of the evil-men from the crops or the cultivation. People believe that ill-effects of evil-eye, evil-mouth and evil-thought will fall on the crop if first and direct attention of the evil-person is attracted to the crop. Therefore if any object above the crop can attract that attention, then the evil-effect will be avoided since it will fall on the dummy. How scientific is this explanation the traditional cultivators had known for centuries?

The other main mechanism of scaring away animals is by the use of noises. Sri Lankan traditional cultivators had been experts at the using of this mechanism. Takaya (a barrel or a piece of wooden board with accompanying heavy sticks attached to them) is hung on the fruit trees with one end of the string going up to the house. Every now and then somebody at home will manipulate the string when the sticks will bang on the barrel or the board producing a noise to scare away the animals. This can be manipulated even by a child and hence this has become a very popular mechanism among the fruit cultivators today due mainly to its low-cost, simplicity and the success rate. Hulang Holmana or the wind ghost is yet another sound maker but without any human intervention. It is also hung on a tree and manipulated by the wind and the sound is produced when the wind cause the stick to hit against the plank.

There is yet another ghost of course manipulated by the flowing water and hence it is called Diya-Holmana or the Water-ghost. A bamboo stick of about 3 feet long is cut with one end opened. The bamboo is pierced across in the middle and a stick is sent through the hole. This will be fixed to a vakkadaya (a gate to flow water in and out cut on the weir) with the help of two supportive sticks carrying the two ends of the stick piercing through the bamboo. When the bamboo is fixed the opened end must be able to take in water coming from the opening. Just below the other end of the bamboo is a large size stone. Mechanism involved is that when the bamboo gets filled on the upper side it lowers itself due to heaviness and then empties itself and as a result the other end which had gone up will bang on the stone creating a loud noise. As a

result the birds and beast will run away. This is a continuous process.

In both these instances it would be seen that there is no known creator of the noise or the action but there is an action. Hence the name ghost originated. In both cases it would be again seen that the traditional cultivator had been very wise in harnessing the power of natural sources. More over the innovativeness of the traditional cultivator is much appreciable since he had made full use of the freely available materials of the surrounding without having to spend anything other than his creativeness. This is where the traditional Sri Lankan cultivators stand out above almost all others when it comes to environmental friendly activities.

List may be incomplete if mention is not made of another mechanism of course used mainly by the children as a plaything but serves the purpose of protecting the crop in the remote villages. It is called Burum petta-flat bamboo stripe tied to a long and strong string. A flat piece of bamboo of about 9-12 inches long is tied to a strong long string at one end. The children after school go to the fields where the parents are at work and play about with the burum petta held from the other end of the string. As they run about swirling the burum petta round the head fearful noise is created as a result of the bamboo stripe cutting through the wind. This is one instance where the innocent children' play efforts are harnessed in the economic activities and in this instance, protecting the cultivations since the sound they produce through their play instruments scare away the birds and beasts. Here again it is an inexpensive mechanism and a very simple technological creation that had been serving immensely in a useful purpose. What a valuable piece of traditional wisdom that speaks high in ICH.

Charms and Magic

There are also numerous charms and magical practices the cultivators are expected to perform by compulsion in some most abnormal and even sarcastic manner if they are keen to obtain highest results and increased yields. One such charm is the sprinkling of ashes on the crop very early in the morning before the sun rises. Stipulated conditions to follow are that the cultivator should go to the field very early in the morning before sun rises. He should be naked and should not be seen by anybody and without even a murmur with anybody. Having gone to the field the ashes will be sprinkled over the plants all over the field and get back

home. In actual fact the only charm that can be seen here is the absolute necessity to sprinkle the ashes at the opportune time namely, before the sun rises since with the sun rise the flies will move away and the dew will be dried out.

Here the nature of the human behaviour has been given due recognition. People can be lazy and tend to postpone their activities to their convenience and hence the proper time to administer the solution may be missed. The need to sprinkle the ashes that early morning is due to the fact that flies will have dew on them before the sun rise and the ashes sprinkled will cover their bodies thus damaging their sight, bodies and even progenitor system thus eradicating the pest. Hence to achieve the maximum benefits the application of the remedy has to be done at the proper time. It is with this intention the stipulation of nakedness, refraining from been seen by anybody and even murmuring with anybody had been introduced to compel the cultivators to attend to their activities at the right time. But for that the tendency would to postpone the job for his convenience.

Furthermore when one studies the actual meaning behind the protective measures adopted by the ancient Sinhala people there is an interesting feature underlining the entire process of protecting the crops. It can be seen that all the measures adopted are intended to produce a sound or noise and even a sight which will scare away the wild breasts and birds from the crop. None of the methods used had been intended at killing or harming the wild creatures and therefore it has to be borne in mind that these people who had been moulded by the teachings of Lord Buddha who preached the doctrine of non-violence had never intended any harm to any even in their laborious attempts at protecting the cultivation that had been their bread and butter.

Folklore

A very significant portion of the ICH from Sri Lanka can easily be obtained from the field of agriculture as had been explained above. Still there is much more to talk about in the same field especially in the area of folk-lore, songs, tales, myths, beliefs, customs, rituals etc and most importantly the paraphernalia of objects, instruments and implements associated with traditional agriculture. There is much singing and reciting associated with agriculture from the beginning to the end of the cycle. Often they have been considered as essential items to ease the fatigue of continuous hard work in the

field while on the other side it provided them the opportunity to express their feelings in addition to avoid the feeling of solitariness. Hence singing by the ladies at replanting, weeding and reaping have become a common sight even today while the males who are not ready to be outdone kept on reciting poetry from the huts in the night and their loud voice kept the entire environment awakened when they started their reciting as if they are engaged in a competition of poetry recitation. What is important is the fact that these songs and verses all give expression to the religious feelings or the personal feelings of the men involved in the hard work. In either case they reveal storehouses of information very important as ICH.

The vast sea of Folklore prevalent in the country on the one hand speaks volumes about experience and the knowledge behind all the creative objects and instruments while on the other hand they draw our attention to the sharp and deep wisdom with which we had been able to achieve all that we are proud of today. The marvellous agricultural technology our forefathers had invented is still considered as very appropriate to the environment of the country and to fulfil the requirements for which they were invented. Robert Knox, the Englishman who was an open-air prisoner for 19 years in this country clearly states this in his monumental work on Ceylon namely *An Account of Ceylon and its Inhabitants* (1681).
Astrology and the cultivators

All the activities associated with every aspect of the life of the natives take place according to the readings of the astrologers. One can say it is even more carefully adhered to in the case of their cultivation activities where the cultivators embark on each phase of the cycle according to the auspicious times and other instructions prescribed by the astrologers. Yet another outstanding custom adhered to by them is the worshipping with clasped hands every time they touch a new object or start a new task. This is one of the most conspicuous sign of their respect towards the job they are engaged in and the sacredness attached to the vocation they get engaged in. The final activity of this long cultivation cycle is the various religious rituals attended to. It is in other words thanks giving ceremony or a show of gratitude to who-ever who had been instrumental in making their efforts successful and bestowing heavy yields.

High degree of discipline and devotedness the hallmark of success.

However when a serious study is made about the various aspects of traditional agriculture as it is the case with any other field what is most outstanding about the success they have achieved is its relationship to the discipline and the devotedness displayed to any vocation or activity by the members of the Sri Lankan society. Some of the mechanisms described above as instrumental in the protection of the crop clearly prove that unless the cultivators had been fully devoted and disciplined no success could have been achieved in their vocations. What is even more conspicuous is the high discipline displayed in keeping to the proper time frame in the cultivation cycle.

When it is time for the start of the initial work, the head of the village community sends out the message to the village and everyone would be there in time for the work to get going. In this manner every step in the cultivation cycle will be carried out in the entire village. Preparation of the fields, sowing, consolidation of the common fence etc will be undertaken as a group and hence no one can lag behind. The great achievement brought to the entire village through this means is that maximum results are achieved with minimum efforts. Protection is implemented by all as a group with a common fence right round the entire stretch of the field. The crop does not suffer from mixing of varieties, pests and insects, lack of or over supply of water and other similar factors since all the fields are worked simultaneously leaving no room for spilling from one to the other. Hence the production of good high quality seed paddy was achieved with ease. This in other words is the total achievement resulting from the cooperative efforts, correct and proper time management in the activities and the full devotion towards the activity engaged in. Hence this aspect of time management needs to be highlighted as a cardinal factor in the success of the traditional agriculture in the ancient society.

2. Kotahalu Yaagaya, The ritual pertaining to Sinhalese puberty rites in Sri Lanka

Sinhala culture regards the attainment or coming of age or the puberty of a girl as an event of utmost significance in her life. Once a girl reached puberty, she is kept indoors and isolated from others and even the males of her own family for a certain number of days until the time for bathing comes. Sinhala people have been

celebrating this event for an immemorial time in the annals of their history originally on a very low key at family level but eventually leading to grand scale celebrations signifying its commercialization as we find it today. Sinhala people refer to this event leading to the girl being taken out of doors as Kotahalu Mangalya.

This custom which is followed to make the physically matured girl to become mentally matured consists of many features. The main objective of all these features is to instill in the newly attained girl the discipline and restraint while gifting her knowledge and wisdom useful in the initiation of her to the society with a new identity. Through all these customs pertaining to puberty, the girl is socialized by subjecting her to various exercises and techniques leading to play her future role as a woman, wife and mother. KotahaluYagaya then is the final ritual of the puberty ceremony performed on the evening of the day the girl is bathed for the first time after her attaining of age.

History of the Ritual

Sinhala people refer to the coming of age of a girl as kotahaluweema. Scholars have various opinions on the origin of the word kotahalu. According to some of them, kotahalu mangalya refers to a new clothes festival or a festival where the girl who comes of age wears new clothes. According to J. E. Sederaman (1968), a well known exponent of the traditional healing ceremonies, the ritual has derived the name from the keti saluwa or kotahaluwa (short cloths), used in the blessing of the girl. According to him the exorcists or shamans who perform the ritual recite poems to exorcise the girl of any evil spirits and bless her, refer to a saluwa or haluwa (cloth) in the poems and bless her using this cloth or saluwa and therefore this is called keti saluwa or kotahaluwa, It is quite possible that keti has become kota since both terms keti saluwa and kotahaluwa mean a short cloth. In this regard, it can be assumed that what in fact happens when a girl comes of age is the removal of kotahalu (short clothe). This means that a girl used to wear short dresses during her childhood and should wear long dresses after she comes of age.

There are also various legends about this ritual. One such legend is regarding King Maha Sammatha who became King with the consent of all. His wife died and when the King's daughter came of age, he entrusted his sister and her husband to perform the rituals. She bathed this daughter and tore a salu or cloth into two and gave one

piece to wear and the other piece to cover her up. Piece of cloth given to the young girl to wear was shorter which came to be known as kotalalu or short cloth.

There are several stories connected with the puberty ceremony in Sri Lanka most of them shedding light on the origin and history of the ritual. Among them the prominent ones are the stories connected with Neela maha yodaya, a giant by the name Neela and king Maha Sammatha and his queen Ma devi. The story about Neela tries to depict Neela as an earliest known descendant of the washer-caste and hence the reason why washer woman takes part in the bathing of the girl.

According to Sedaraman (1968) a book called, 'Kotalalu Upata' (The birth of kotalalu) written by a poet, Middellawa Korale of Sath Korale in the Upcountry refers to another story of birth of this ritual.. According to this book, 'Ridee Nenda' and 'Hene Mama' (washer woman and man) brought a long salu (cloth) from heaven and gave it to the King, When the princess Saraswathie saw the salu she requested the King to give it to her. The King tore the long salu into two parts and the long salu became short or kotalalu or kotalalu and the King gave it to her. Since then the name of Kotalaluwa came into use.

Kotalalu Ritual

It appears that the birth of the kotalalu ritual was a result of a variety of beliefs. The kotalalu dance is a feature in Sinhala culture which dates back to time immemorial. It is probable that the kotalalu dance was performed during the time of Sinhala Kings, in the households of the nobility as well as in those of the village elite. A few books or manuscripts pertaining to the kotalalu mangalya which help to enlighten us on the history of this shanthikarma or 'ritual of blessing' are known to be in the possession of some individuals in the country.

According to Sedaraman (1968) there are a few families who had become well known as performers of the kotalalu dance, in places such as Udunuwara, Matale and Sath Korale. He was of the opinion that the kotalalu dance which has become obscure and unknown with the passage of time is beyond revival. The last occasion he had seen the performance of the kotalalu mangalya was when he was a child. Professor Tissa Kariyawasam (1986) too in his article on "Our Folk Arts Which Are Disappearing", has included the

information about this yaga which he has gathered from the few persons living at that time in Nochchiyagama and Hiriyalagama. This writer too had the opportunity to gather valuable information, when the same shamans were performing the kotahalu yagaya at Pandulagama in Anuradhapura on March 19, 1990.

How the Kotahalu Yaga is performed

A special hut will be constructed for the purpose of performing the yaga. Here a mat is spread and all the offerings are placed on the mat. This mat is known as pidum karachchi. A heap of paddy is placed at the center of the mat on which an unhusked coconut tied with a pirith nool (a chanted thread) is tied and the other end of which is given to the girl to hold. On the right side of the paddy heap, is the "pas moru kulla". Pas moru kulla consists of kevum (oil cakes), plantains, kiribath (milk rice), white rice, thala (sesame), mung (green gram), paddy, cotton seeds and the hath maluwa (which consists of five vegetables and two varieties of meats of species living on ground and water). On the left of the paddy heap is the malwila (a basin with water, having flowers and a coin in it). Behind the paddy heap is a pestle with a sheaf of betel and rice placed on a tray. A coconut is placed on the mal bulath thattuwa (a tray woven with bamboo leaves on which seven betels, seven arecanuts, a mirror, a comb and a silver coin are placed). The atamagala enda (the octagonal bed) is on the paddy and the rice. Scholars say that the atamagala denotes the atakona or the eight directions. There is no clear idea as to why the pestle is placed on the pidum karachchi. It is possible that it represents Neela's yagadawa.

Kiri leeya (milky wooden plank) known as the magul poruwa is placed behind the pidum wattiya (offerings tray). Magul poruwa is made by wrapping white cloth around a plank from a milky tree. There is a mortar on either side of the magul poruwa. When the Shamans enter the mandapa, they place the two copper trays with yellow rice used in blessing the girl on the mortar. The yaga is performed throughout the night. During this period as it is impossible to keep the girl standing on the special dock right throughout the girl and the two blessing women are provided with a folding bed which is covered with a white cloth to make them comfortable.

Shamans (exorcists), who perform this blessing dress up with dhothi and tie up a turban on the fore head and a belt made of

cloths to the waist and a silver chain over it. Also he wears ringing hand bangles and a special ringing ring on each thumb. It is known as wendama. Shamans hold a white cloth in the hand. Every shaman wears a blessed tying thread diagonally running over the left shoulder and the hip, known as poona noola – Poona thread.

Shamans, the attained girl and the two blessing women enter the hut in an orderly fashion. Chief shaman and the four other shamans holding wicks in their hands come inside the hut one after the other. The attained girl who is after her ceremonial bath dressed in new clothes follows them with the other two blessing women. The attained girl's body is covered with a white cloth. The blessing women are dressed up with white osariya (a sinhala saree). The shamans who enter the hut put the wicks to the coconut oil lamps which are placed on the wooden mortar. The attained girl and the blessing women stand by the side of the special dock.

This blessing consists of six stages. The chief shaman commences the blessing with the rest joining him. The veil is removed while reciting the verses. Thereafter the girl is taken to the dock amidst reciting of blessing verses. The girl has to take the chair in the midst of the blessing women and stay overnight keeping her feet on the ceremonial dock.

The wonder of a white magic could be observed right throughout the kotahalu yaagaya. The shamans recite kotahalu verses and the sober manners are maintained throughout the ceremony. The shamans sing the verses while shaking the wendama (special ring on the thumb) and the hand bangles and keeping their feet rhythmically. It is interesting to note that no other musical instruments are played or no dancing is performed during the kotahalu yagaya. Prominence is given to the singing of kotahalu verses in this ceremony. Verse by verse the shamans invoke blessings and wave the white cloth over the attained girl. At that time the girl is also being blessed by the two women beside her, by touching the yellow rice in the plate and moving their hands from head to toe of the girl. Traits of Buddha are included in many kotahalu verses. It is evident that the kotahalu yagaya is directly influenced by Buddhism, inherited with the arrival of Arahath Mahinda. The girl's puberty evil effects are dispelled by the powers of the Lord Buddha.

As the kotahalu yagaya, as a ritual is rapidly disappearing from us, it is of paramount importance to preserve this in record so that we could study the socialization of the early adolescence through this ritual. Let us consider one of the kotahalu verses under the title, gabha uppaththiya (conception of the foetus) which is unfolded as a dialogue among the shamans. This verse explains the formation of the foetus, the step by step growth of the foetus and finally the delivery of the baby.

<i>Sathosa vadana mithurani ahapa</i>	<i>n</i>
<i>Mama dën melesa kiyanu pada sathutu sithi</i>	<i>n</i>
<i>Nidosa bilindu vadumata anganu</i>	<i>n</i>
<i>Nisi koyi vayase sitada mata kiya diya</i>	<i>n</i>

(Meaning: *Friends, who bring joy, please listens to my verses that I am singing merrily. Let me know the suitable age for a young woman to give birth to a child.)*

<i>Savu satha hata upathak ëthi vilasata</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>Kavuruth dënagena ëthi dën bohokot</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>Avurudu dasaya pirunoth elandut</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>Kivu daru upadithi ethanin pasuwat</i>	<i>a</i>

(Meaning: *Now it is evident that once a woman reaches the age of sixteen (16), she is in a position to give birth to children thereafter.)*

Arrangements were made in the past for a girl to get married once she reached puberty or soon after. Therefore it is evident that the kotahalu yagaya had been cleverly used to educate the girl to acquire the knowledge required for a married life.

The ancient Sinhala society, nourished and shaped by the culture and ethics, considered sexual matters as extremely confidential. Therefore the young women in the past did not have an opportunity to learn about those matters. The elders believed that it is unethical to discuss such matters with their younger generation. But it is essential to provide a sex education covering from conception up to giving birth to the girls who reached puberty, in order to prepare them to face future responsibilities. The kotahalu yagaya was strategically utilized to provide the necessary sex education for the girls who had come of age. It is often

explained very clearly how to indulge in sexual activities in a healthy and fruitful married life.

Thun dina ethulatha rudhiraya dutu then a
Kamrasa vindeemen sathahata leda en a
In dahasaya dina thula daru pala den a
Min mathu wata daruwan noma upadin a

(Meaning: *Having sexual intercourse during the first three days of the menstrual period would lead to diseases and from then onwards to the next sixteen days (16) are ideal for having sex to get conceived. After this period conception is impossible.)*

Accordingly, although the age old villagers did not discuss the sexual issues openly, the knowledge they had about it is quite clear. Thus they practiced the natural birth control successfully and healthily.

Further knowledge they had about the sexual intercourse and the knowledge about the practice of lesbianism is explained thus.

Kama sepehi nirathuruwa kamathi wan a
Prema ithiri dedenek ek vee men a
Boma raga paha kara gatthoth den a
Keema kusehi eta netthek upadin a

(Meaning: *Union of two women who are lust for sexuality though help to bring enjoyment will not give birth.)*

Accordingly it is evident that even at that time women had engaged in lesbianism in order to release the sexual tension.

Thus the verse unfolds a fraction of the human behavior which had continued throughout the human history. It also reveals the breadth of knowledge that our ancient people had, and their disapproval of the lesbian activities. This is indicated by stating that those who indulge in lesbian activities are exposed to the possibility of giving birth to abnormal babies. In a dialogue which clearly reveals the knowledge that our ancients had about the conceiving of a child and the development of the foetus.)

Kuhul wenda mokatada dangalann ë

*Avul sandu bas motada kiyann ě
Vipul palamuveni gebaya landunn ě
Sevel watura piri dalambuwa wann ě*

(Meaning: *Why do you have doubts? Why do you speak in a provocative tone? Human embryo in a womb is like a caterpillar in a pool of greasy water.)*

This is how the monthly development of the human embryo in a womb is explained by the verses in the form of questions and answers. In the final two verses it is questioned in verse as to how the mother gives birth to the child at the age of ten months, and the answer is given in the following verse.

*Dasa masa pirilaa bihivena kala kumarunn ě
Is mas den bihi vennata siritha bolann ě
Dosa vedi unu thena venas velaa bihivenn ě
Kohomada koi setiyata deyi thava pavasann ě*

(Meaning: *On completion of ten months, normally the head of the baby comes out first. But due to some fault the baby may come out in a different orientation, please tell us more details on the child birth.)*

*Isath payath katiyath elayath athakin loo
Pitath elath kondath namilla bihivē loo
Thavath bendun thum polakin etha kivvaa loo
Namuth meyin luhunden vaga nima keruvaa loo*

(Meaning: *The baby comes out bending by head, by feet, by hip, by back, and by spine. In addition to this there are three other bends in the body. Thus the detail of the child birth is summed up in short.)*

It is clearly evident that the information available in the kotahalu yagaya brings out the social history related to folk beliefs. This cultural event (kotahalu yagaya) will be extremely helpful in gaining sufficient knowledge regarding the ancient social system, the world view, the values and the attitudes on life acquired by these people through their interaction with the nature.

Therefore it is important to investigate the socio-anthropological concepts arising from the historical kotahalu yaga. This cultural event consists of ideals important for a prosperous life.

The ancient adults hesitated to discuss a number of matters pertaining to life with their younger generation as a result of the culture they inherited. From the distant past the nature has provided numerous legacies to the human beings, among which male-female dichotomy and the roles associated with them, which are inevitable. The role entrusted by the society on a girl who has reached puberty is enormous. In order to bear those responsibilities she has to understand number of things. It is anthropologically important to investigate the subtle manner how the kotahalu yaga was utilized to provide that understanding.

The ancient women developed their personality based on modesty which is common to women hood. They did not have the understanding and the experience of the present day women. Therefore they had to maintain the modesty essential for the ancient social order at a certain level so that the modesty was not a hindrance in gaining an understanding the vital events of life. Kotahalu yagaya is a creative attempt by the ancient people to educate the girls who had come of age about their responsibilities and experiences through a legend. The fact that this legend was based on the attainment of the Umayangana the daughter of the Great King provides the understanding to the attained girl that puberty is an episode common to every woman. That understanding provided the mental stability of the attained girl which in turn enhanced her personality.

A girl who has reached puberty is eligible for a marriage and therefore she should have a proper understanding of sexual matters. We have already discussed how the verses titled 'Gabha Uppaththiya' (getting pregnant) in the kotahalu yagaya provide the sex education needed for an attained girl. Unlike the present day, the ancient young women did not have the opportunities of learning from books and mass-media. Therefore the attempt made through the verses of 'Gabha Uppaththiya' in the kotahalu yagaya is extremely useful in imparting a sex education to the young women.

The kotahalu yagaya reveals, numerous information regarding the ancient social system. During that period young women were isolated from the social relationships to a large extent. But it was

extremely important to convey the message to the society regarding the availability of a prospective spinster in order to make arrangements for her wedding. We can infer that kotahalu yagaya was instrumental in facilitating this communication.

While the spinster has to fulfill the expectations of the society, the society should also provide the necessary protection to her. Through the rituals of the kotahalu yagaya certain social control is established around the young girl, at the same time creating a responsibility on self control in her mind. Among the puberty rituals of a girl, the first bathing after her isolation period was done very secretly. It was a ritual solely restricted to women. But many villagers collectively participated in the kotahalu yagaya. During this whole episode, the attained girl had to face the audience bearing in mind her newly acquired status and the role. This creates a sense of control and responsibility in her mind. Therefore it is of anthropological value to investigate how the kotahalu yagaya is instrumental in socializing the newly attained girl. A highlight during the entire kotahalu yagaya is the fact that no musical instruments were played and no dancing was performed. The reason for this may be to create the necessary atmosphere so that the girl's attention is not distracted from the message of the verses.

Kotahalu yagaya is also extremely important in respect of the solidarity and interdependence which is evident in village life. Since the villagers were accustomed to a self sufficient socio-economic pattern, there was no need for competition and exploitation of labour. As an example the shamans who performed this yagaya were rewarded with agricultural yield instead of cash. Unlike at present where everything is valued commercially, the ancient villagers gave priority to collective social interactions. When considering in these lines the kotahalu yagaya brilliantly denotes the cultural inclinations of the ancient village folk, thereby revealing many important features of their life pattern and the early stages of our non-material culture.

It is also important to investigate the reasons for this type of cultural events becoming obscure with the passage of time. Sedaraman's (1968) explanation in this regard is that, with the decline of the prosperity of a society people tend to retain only the rituals which they can afford and let the rest to disappear. According to astrology there are some cases where the time of

attainment of a girl is inauspicious. Sederaman (1968) further states that at present the expenditure incurred in performing the kotahalu yagaya is unaffordable to many people. Therefore in spite of the fact that this yagaya helps to eliminate the evil effects of the inauspicious time of attainment of a girl, most villagers are unable to afford it.

The economic hardships experienced by the villagers largely contribute to the disappearance of such important rituals like this yaagaya. Sedaraman (1968) provides another reason for the disappearance of kotahalu yagaya, according to which less expensive white magic has replaced it. He also mentions that the shamans are looked down upon in the present society, and their children and grand children do not continue the shaman tradition. Therefore with the demise of the remaining shamans the kotahalu yagaya is bound to disappear from the villages.

One of the most notable reasons for the disappearance of the kotahalu yagaya is the western cultural hegemony. The western cultural hegemony infiltrated and still been maintained mainly through the western education system imposed on us by the British. As a result of this, the generations that were moulded through this education system were inclined to look down upon our knowledge systems and the associated culture, by condemning our rituals and practices as myths. In addition, this western cultural dominance is further aggravated through the mass media.

It is highly unlikely to resurrect this long lost cultural event namely the kotahalu yagaya which contained so many melodious and meaningful Sinhala verses. Therefore like many other cultural events kotahalu yagaya has also faded into the history. It is a tragedy that such an important ritual like kotahalu yagaya which was so rich in educational, social and psychological values has become obscure with the passage of time.

3. The Marriage Ceremony as a rites of passage

Sri Lanka is a small island nation in the Indian Ocean with a rich civilization and a rich heritage going back to a long past. The introduction of Buddhism enabled the people to establish a tangible

as well as an intangible culture of their own and develop all aspects of their culture with an identity of its own.

Yet the history of culture and rituals in Sri Lanka has been fashioned over the centuries by a synthesis of several intrinsic and extrinsic factors some of which were unique to the country. Being an island, Sri Lanka was insulated to a large extent from external forces that influence culture by a heavy and strong natural barrier. But India, Portugal, Netherlands and finally Britain succeeded at different times in penetrating this natural barrier. The cultures they introduced had a significant effect to determine the state of tangible and intangible cultures in the country.

With Indian influence many Hindu beliefs and practices have also entered the Sinhala Buddhist practices. Religious beliefs have brought in ritual practices to the fore. The ritual is a symbolic expression attached to the given situation. Rituals and associated ceremonies have always played a vital role in the Sri Lankan society from ancient times. They have been transferred from one generation to the other in the island.

Among the Sinhalese Buddhists most of these rituals are embodied into their livelihood behavioral patterns especially in the social and religious spheres. Although Sri Lanka today appears to be advancing towards a more technologically oriented state with beliefs acquired via globalized technological progress, traditional customs and rituals seem to retain their strength within the Sinhalese Buddhist society.

It is also observed that those rituals and related ceremonies have been constantly centred on important life events or rites of passage such as birth, puberty, marriage and death. In addition, those life cycle events are explicitly celebrated by the society and they attach precious significance to the kinship network within the society.

Among the rites of passage 'marriage' is one of the most important events in anyone's life. Marriage of a person is not considered as just a union of a man and a woman, it is a series of rituals performed in a ceremonial manner to introduce the couple to the four clans of relatives (satara varigaya) that is the relatives of the parents of both the bride and the bride - groom.

Among the Sinhalese Buddhists there are two types of marriages known as the 'Diga' the popular form of marriage and the 'Binna' a more restricted form followed by in certain geographical areas. The Diga marriage results in bringing a bride to the house of the bridegroom whereas in Binna marriage, the bridegroom takes residence at the house of the bride thus foregoing all his customary rights in the ancestral home. In the village, the marriage is contracted in different ways. There is of course the love marriage or where the young man and the young woman have fallen in love and desire marriage. Very often the two people belong to the same caste, clan and religion and if there are no serious obstacles, the parents may give their consent and blessing to such a marriage.

The traditional marriages are either proposed or arranged. The customary marriage is arranged by parents or through the help of intermediaries such as elderly relatives or friends. There are occasions when the parents of a girl would speak directly to the parents of a boy and arrange the marriage. Otherwise, they would have to rely on the services and advice of a third party. Accordingly, the marriage broker (Magul Kapuwa) has a valuable role to play in this socio- cultural event. In addition caste, clan and religion play an important role here. According to the culture and the tradition the first cousins are preferred but the blood relatives are tabooed. That is father's brother's children or mother's sister's children are not allowed to marry each other.

In a marriage among the Sinhalese Buddhists the horoscope (a description written on an Ola leaf or on paper describing what someone is like or what might happen to him in future based on the positioning of the planets at the time he or she was born) plays an important role. At the beginning horoscopes of the two are compared and out of the twenty factors (visi porondam) to be considered, at least fifteen should match. Otherwise, the proposal is dropped. If the horoscopes are matching then the groom's parents prepare a table of auspicious times (Nekat patraya) for the ceremonial ritual and present it to the girl's parents for acceptance and the date of the marriage is fixed. The 'Nekat patraya' literally means a 'statement of the astrological times prescribed for the performance of various ceremonies connected with the marriage. It is traditionally believed that eleven auspicious times have to be decided to embark on essential activities before the marriage takes place. For examples, offering of first betel leaves as a mark of formal invitation (Magul Bulat deema) to the closest relatives, the

construction of the wedding hall, preparing of the sweets (oil cakes), opening of the the wedding hall (for this purpose, a most suitable person from the area will be selected), and the departure of the groom from his house to the bride's house etc. are chief among them.

The marriage proper starts with the arrival of the bridegroom at the house of the bride on the propitious day. He comes there with a bulk of food items such as various kinds of sweets and plantains etc. (Nekath kanda or Dekum kanda- Pingo of presents) to the bride's family along with the elderly relatives of the groom's party. When the groom's party arrives for the ceremony the groom is received by washing his feet, by a younger brother of the bride and for that he receives a gold ring as a present, which is usually dropped into the basin of water by the groom.

The main rituals of the marriage are organized by the bride's family. The most important ceremony of the marriage is the "Poruwa ceremony" (a series of rituals conducted on the wedding day as the couple gets married) on a specially prepared stage which is considered sacred for the occasion and hence blessed. During the poruwa ceremony a series of acts, rituals that are associated with religion, myth and magic take place. Among the Sinhalese Buddhists in Sri Lanka "Poruwa Ceremony" holds an important place in a marriage due to numerous cultural implications and obligations. It is assumed that the history of the Poruwa goes back FOR than two thousand years. There is a remnant piece of decorated granite "magul Poruwa" in the Magul Maha Viharaya at Lahugala in Ampara District of Sri Lanka. The popular belief is that it was used during the marriage of the King Kawantissa of Ruhuna and Vihara Maha Devi of Kelaniya, the parents of the well - known Sinhala King Dutugemunu (161 B.C. - 137 B.C.).

As already mentioned, poruwa is a ceremonial pedestal or platform made with planks out of a tree with latex, mainly of a jack tree (*Artocarpus indicus*) On the top of this a mat is spread and red rice is sprinkled on it and covered with a white cloth which is known as 'pawada'. Anthropologists describe 'Magul Poruwa' as a ceremonial dais built with wooden planks decorated with young coconut leaves'. The colourful construction of the poruwa is the responsibility of the bride's family. The artistic outlook of the poruwa differs from ceremony to ceremony and it displays the innovativeness of the designer.

The placement of the Poruwa is also vital. It should face the direction that gives prosperity to the couple as stated by the astrologer at the consultation of both horoscopes. In constructing and decorating the poruwa the people of different localities use different materials like plantain trunks (*Musa acuminate* or *Musa balbisiana*), arecanut logs (*Areca catechu*), the coconut flowers (*Cocos nucifera*) the young coconut leaves, Na Leaves, (*Messua ferrea*), kohomba (*Azadirachta indica*), koboleela (*Bouhinia*), lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) and lily (*Nymphaea stellata*). Kohomba is used by the people because of its qualities like hardness, medicinal value and the divine affiliations.

The poruwa is covered from above under the roof or ceiling of the house with another white cloth which is known as 'Viyana' or uduviyana (a cloth placed above the head of the people who are standing or seated). To denote the prosperity the flowers, paddy or rice (*Oryza sativa*) or both and grains, betel leaves (*Piper betel*) and coins are strewn on the poruwa. The strewn paddy, rice and the grains depict that the couple's future life will not suffer from any wants for their survival. The strewn betel leaves too indicate the prosperity in the relation to foods. According to the local culture betel is the symbol of fertility. The coins strewn on the poruwa too denotes that the couple will have the much needed and desired economic or financial stability.

On the four sides of the poruwa four 'Punkalas' (the earthen pots that symbolize prosperity) decorated with arecanut (*Areca catechu*) or coconut (*Cocos nucifera*) flowers are kept. These are placed to denote the prosperity. It is covered with white cloth and coconut oil lamps are lit on all sides. One of them is for Triple Gem (to Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha). Four coconut oil lamps at the four corners are for the 'Satarawaram Devivaru', (four Gods of the four directions) namely Drutharashta, Viruda, Viroopaaksha, and Vaishravana. This symbolizes that the couple that gets wedded will be protected by these divine powers at their 'good and bad' times.

The couple is mounted on the poruwa at the auspicious time by their uncles, the elder or younger brothers of the mothers. There is a specific direction the couple and the uncles have to face when they step on to the poruwa. In the Sinhala Buddhist tradition the people are highly concerned about the 'time' and the 'direction'. They believe that there are 'good' and 'bad' times in their lives

according to the planetary movements of their horoscopes. So in the poruwa ceremony too time and the direction are vital.

As the couple is mounted to the poruwa by the uncles at the auspicious time the conch shells are sounded and the drums are played. The conch shell sounds are used to convince the dignity and the majesty of the activity and the environment is filled, with its gorgeous sounds. The sound of the “magul bera” (the drum played at the auspicious hour) also fills the entire surrounding with charming and a majestic atmosphere. The rituals are conducted by an elderly uncle of the bride or another elder proficient in conducting of the ritual. The rituals always begin with recitals in honour of the Buddha.

The recital of ‘ashtaka’ (stanzas recited at poruwa) or sanskrit verses by proficient elder to invoke the blessings of the gods and any other super human powers on the newly wedded couple follows. At this time both Buddhist and Hindu ‘ashtaka’ are sung or recited. These ashtaka are not only to invoke the blessings of the divine realm but are also intended to protect them from the ‘evil eye, evil mouth’ and ‘evil breath’ of the people and to minimize the influences of the malicious planets. In addition the ‘jaya mangala gatha’ (benedictory Buddhist verses) are also sung usually by a bevy of young girls dressed in white to bring blessings of the Buddha.

While the ‘ashtaka’ are being chanted or recited the elderly officiator ties together ‘Sulangili’ (the small fingers) of the bride and the groom with a sacred cotton thread chanted with ‘pirith’ and by pouring holy water on to the tied fingers in front of all relatives present legalises their marital union. This indicates that this tie should remain forever, and the couple should not get separated or divorced. According to the Sinhala culture water is another valuable symbol since time immemorial. Water is life, without which no one can survive. So water poured on their hands means that they will never be in want of anything in their future life.

The next important item of the poruwa ceremony is the offering of the ‘redi kachchiya’ or ‘kirikada selaya’ (a large bundle of white cloth) to the bride’s mother as a gift of gratitude. It has many meanings. First, it is the paying back for the suffering the mother of the future wife has undergone in nurturing the bride till now. The mythical implications of this action too are note worthy. According

to the tradition during king Okkakas time daughter of Malathi was given in marriage to the son of the Brahmin Subrahma. The mother of the bride, Malathi started crying because she could not bear up the separation of her daughter. At this moment the groom handed over a pile of white cloth to soak the breast milk of the bride's mother according to the verses of this story sung by the lay priest in front of all the relatives and the kins of both parties make us believe. The mother accepts the gift and carries it on her head showing the value of the present.

There are certain rites to be performed by the couple at the poruwa ceremony. A primary act in the poruwa ceremony is the wrapping of the couple together at the waist level with a white cloth. The use of 'white' always symbolizes 'purity' because the purity of the bride is a prime concern of both parties and all the invitees gathered. The bride who has preserved her purity till her formal marriage brings dignity not only to herself but to the parents, relatives and all her associates. Thus the use of white colour becomes extremely symbolic in the context. Then the groom dresses the bride with valuable cloths and jewellery such as gold necklace and rings. Wearing of the jewellery too becomes symbolic because jewellery signifies the value the husband has place on the wife and the economic security.

The poruwa ceremony ends with the presentation of betel leaves to all elders by the newly married couple. They bend and pay respect to the elders and the relatives. Each sheaf of betel has forty (40) betel leaves symbolizing the fingers of the one who gives and receives in their hand and legs. The first seven (07) sheafs are offered in memory of the 'hath muthu paramparawa' (the seven generation) that are dead and gone. This ritual too signifies the recognition of the sufferings and sacrifices the past generations have made to build the present generation up to this level. Likewise, the presentation of betel leaves is a demonstration of accepting the new couple to the family.

The wedded couple descends from the poruwa at an auspicious time with their right foot in front. At this time a coconut is broken by cracking it with a knife to drive away any evil influences that will plague them in future. If the coconut is broken into two equal halves and fall down facing upwards it is lucky and auspicious and if both are facing downwards it is inauspicious. After the couple get down from the poruwa an oil lamp is lit and partake 'kiribath' (milk

rice) as the first meal after marriage by each feeding the other. A rich and delicious sumptuous mid – day meal for all the relatives and friends of both parties will follow.

Finally the washerman or woman from the 'rajaka' caste without whose services the entire process of the marriage and poruwa ceremony cannot be completed will be rewarded with many things like rice or paddy, money, clothes, betel leaves and other food items. They are the ones who deal with the two main concepts of 'Purity' (being pure or the status of the purity) and 'killa' (being impure or the status of impurity) in the local tradition.

A day or two after the marriage depending on the circumstances whether the young couple spend a honeymoon (it is a totally new concept to the locals) or spend the days at the home of the bridegroom, a ceremonial party of elderly relatives of the bride visit them at home. This is a very important ceremonial day of the marriage procedure. If the bride has proved her virginity a bunch of red flowers is displayed by the elders of the bridegroom. Otherwise a bunch of white flowers is sent as a symbolic gesture. This visit is known as 'Isadiya' or pouring of water on the head. That means the bride is ritually bathed for the first time after the marriage. The arrival of the bride's relatives is for the purpose of ascertaining proofs about the presence of virginity. This is done by examining the piece of white cloth on which the couple slept on the wedding night. Once the proof of virginity is ascertained the overjoyed relatives of the bride and the bridegroom join in to enjoy a very happy feast that follows. The absence of virginity leads to much embarrassment and straining of relationships between the two parties. In some cases they go on to such extremes as sending away the bride to her relatives after been rejected and despised.

All these rituals were built up to emphasise the responsibilities of the young couple towards each other and towards their relatives and vice – versa in a traditional social setup. Social ethics behind all these rituals are to highlight a sense of responsibility to each other and ultimately to have a sustainable family life. However they have changed now and foreign influences are so strong that traditional rituals and social mechanisms which bear up all the ICH traits are fading away.

4. Indigenous Traditional Medical Practices

Heritage information

Official name: Gurukula education (Education under the tutelage of a Master)

Local name: Parampara vedakama igeneema

History, background: see below

Area: Indigenous System of Medicine (ISM)

Relevant information

Community-involvement: Sri Lankan Ethno-medical knowledge base is generated through community's intellectual treasures and ISM inherent and found within the cultural repository of the natives.

Preservation association: Ministry of Indigenous Medicine, Department of Ayurveda, National Institute of Traditional Medicine, Provincial Departments of Ayurveda, Divisional Ayurveda Preservation Boards

Activities: Ayurveda Medical Council with Ayurveda Hospital and Education Board has initiated a national programme for the preparation of an inventory of "parampara" or traditional family lineages of indigenous medical practitioners (IMP).

Practitioners: Indigenous medical practitioners (IMPs) hail from various traditional family lineages in different communities living in different localities all over the country. Also their practices belong to different disciplines of healthcare and heterogeneous healing traditions in non-formal knowledge system.

Relevant events: Gurukula education is obtained by an acolyte under the tutelage of a master for a long period of apprenticeship to be competent in the practice.

Explanation: Over the centuries, the ancient indigenous communities have developed their own ways of treating illnesses. These systems are known to international agencies as "indigenous medicine or native medicine or folk medicine". They are based

totally on their own Indigenous knowledge (IK). IK is the practical common sense based on technologies and experiences passed on from generation to generation. This knowledge is more or less verbally and empirically transcended in a well-controlled and disciplined manner. Very few documented sources are available and these documents in manuscripts forms are primitive, rudimentary and symbolic literatures which need a scholarly effort to get decoded.

It is a known fact that the IK cannot be compartmentalized, fragmented and abstracted from the culture in which it is embedded or from the people who hold it. IK is rooted in the environment, culture and language of the people. Therefore it is multi-dimensional and pluralistic. This knowledge is entirely bound to the culture, territory and the natural resources. It is a way of life, an art of living and a science of nature. But always it is an authoritative system which has an obligation to share. It is a dynamic, cumulative, stable and collective wisdom which is integrated with all other sources of knowledge related to any life event. It gives credibility to people who own it and ultimately becomes a media of cognition, perception, validation and application of life-skills. Various researchers all over the world are interested in IK but have not given a precious etymological explanation or unanimous definition for this word. ISM is also a part of Sri Lankan IK which had been nurtured throughout the history of civilization for thousands of years.

Anthropologically, ISM in Sri Lanka has a very long history dating back to the paleolithic era where our ancestors had used natural healing methods for their health problems. Sri Lankan ISM has been influenced and reinforced specially by both North and South Indian systems of Ayurveda from ancient time as is the case with most of our socio-cultural heritages. But the history and the tradition explicitly reveal the existence of our own system of knowledge inherited by the people of the soil. Sri Lankan tradition of ISM consisted of well-preserved literary sources with some great texts and a personal manuscript is an invaluable national treasure trove of knowledge. Non-formal knowledge base in traditional medicine in Sri Lanka is called Paramparika Vedakama or Deshiya Chikitsa (traditional medical system), which is the inherited indigenous knowledge of this country. Over thousands of years, this knowledge system had thrived within the territory of Sri Lanka nurtured by various cultural values and norms. ISM has its own system of epistemology and ontology on nature and universe and is called the

theory of Macrocosm and Microcosm in which the universe represents the human and the human represents the universe. It expands hypothetical correlation between cosmological form of human biology and anthropomorphism of nature.

Traditional system of Indigenous medicine is neither a mere system of medicine nor a system of health care. It covers a broader area of life. Therefore it can be called a system of living or a way of life. It is not confined only for diseases, ailments, illnesses, maladies, impairments, disorders, dysfunctions of the body or mind. It is dealing with religion, culture, rituals, environment, culinary, agriculture, customs, norms, values, ethics, morals etc. This ranges from inner seed of soul to outer boundary of universe as a collectively contextualized wisdom of community. Sri Lankan ISM had been thriving within the indigenous socio-cultural system and positioned with national tradition of healthcare in a sustainable manner. But inevitably the entire system was devastated due to foreign invasions over five centuries and as a result the system of traditional medicine had to struggle to regain its genuine identity after independence.

Preserved ISM knowledge is passed down from a master to pupil on hands to hands experiences and is basically found on tradition of palm leaves manuscripts. But the relationships between the traditional healers and their patients and the medicine prescribed not only preserve a medical knowledge, they preserve knowledge and wisdom as well which is of a cosmological order. This has three major areas like written, oral and practical sources. These written sources are originally embedded in palm-leaf manuscripts which are several centuries old. The written segment is small and these literary sources had been extradicted or destroyed by invaders at several occasions. It is evident that foreign invaders had eliminated and robbed these manuscripts in a vandalising way and destroyed the expert human resources. Most of the remaining manuscripts kept in temple libraries or personal custodies are not well-preserved. Important and valuable part of this knowledge is not written, instead kept orally as family treasures. These traditional medical practitioners in the past had served the community with distinction to have received royal honours.

Traditional medical knowledge had been transmitted through family lineage by Guru Kula system of education which accommodates skill-based and practice-oriented training. This was

prevailing for many centuries as an effective mechanism of transmitting ISM knowledge from one generation to next. This system explicitly relies on language and socio-cultural sources where linguistic roots are playing a key role implanting and propagating ISM knowledge in a proper way. Since the language is mandatory basis of ISM learning, one must be born and thrived in a naive socio-cultural context and belong to the same community.

Terminology of ISM articulates vernacular identity of language and usages and it is the tool of traditional healthcare communication. A Sinhala proverb says, Asakkuvata Mateyapputh vedaralalu (Even Matteyappu, an ordinary villager also can be a physician in an emergency). It shows the way normal people cope with problems through positive thinking and maximum human resource utilization at primary level. Sinhalese community is very optimistic and their folklore is enriched with many epics, anecdotes, fables, legends, tales, episodes, narratives, parables, apologues, allegories etc. which can be entertained in a constructive manner. The simple lifestyles as well as altruistic social relationships were the foundation of quixotic peaceful states described by some medieval time writers.

Sinhalese language and colloquial usages have been reinforced by this cultural heritage and this figurative linguistic identity is absorbed by the traditional medical terminology as well. Rajakama nettam Vedakama (if not the kingship then the medical profession) is a famous proverb to describe the dignity of the profession where it is depicted as secondary only to the royalty or the kingship. It uplifts the honourable image of ISM practitioner and encourages the professional involvement with a reputed social status. In ancient society doctor-patient relationship of ISM practice prevailed in priestly model in which practitioner was highly regarded as a supra-human personality. The renowned role of ISM practitioner in a ancient culture was only second to the priest or monk in the temple. He was essentially a part of decision making hierarchy and socially supremely important person in all events.

There is a famous proverb saying Leda Malath Bada Suddai which means even if the patient died the bowels were purified. It was the general perception of health that enhances the credibility of the treatment since it ensures that the patient is free from his illness by the time of his death. Ugurata hora beth kanna behe is also another proverb which describes that nobody can take medicine unnoticed

by the throat. It indicates the bitter taste of traditional medicine. Paya barawayata pitikara beth bendeema is the execution of a treatment where medicine is applied not to the affected part but some other place physically unrelated to the affected place. This is the way of treating some diseases through some extraordinary techniques. Ateesareta amude gahanawa also refers to another method of treatment for diahorea by using medicinally treated underwear.

Sinhalese community uses an amazing word for greeting or saying Hello to their visitors or companions; Ayubovan! meaning “may live long!” wishing

them a long life. That may be the oldest humane greeting form connected to longevity and good health in the world. Normally, villagers are saluting each other by saying; Kohomada Ayubovan? which cannot be articulated in English in similar meaning but it can be literally translated as ‘how is your health’. Then they ask Kohomada Vase Dese Sepa Saneepa? Which is an inquiry about one’s livelihood, habitat or environment, pleasure or happiness and health? Opposite of Sepa Saneepa (good health) is Leda Duk, which means illnesses and sorrow or suffering. Most of the time, they wish to live without Leda Duk and that is their foremost ambition or desired state of well-being. When older people suffer from sicknesses they call themselves as Leda Duka, the person who is sick and suffering. Also they use various different terms to describe their situations as they perceive and there are several words specially used to explain the pain such as; Emma, Evililla, Kekkuma, Rudava, Kaduththuva. They are words expressing different sensations of pain.

Therefore physician and patient are communicating through a comprehensive mode which enhances the rapport and empathy. This is first impression of efficacy that is nurtured by compassion, sympathy, clemency, mercy, kindness, benevolence, bounteousness, generosity etc. and which leads to the final effect called Athgunaya (excellent quality of healing inherent in the physician or hands that heal). Our society believes that a competent physician is full of all the excellent qualities that enhance the healing process and medicinal value of drugs. When they consult a physician, a sheaf of betel leaves is offered. There is no fee involved but a gift called Panduru which has a meaning of sacred gift is offered along with betels. It can be gifted to or accepted by a noble person like a god, a king, a physician, or a teacher since it is a noble gift. That is the way

adopted to pay respect and express gratitude to the physician who plays a conscientious role in health promotion.

The dignity of the profession is very high and second in importance only to the royalty or kingship. The house of physician is called Veda Gedara which gives an idea of shelter provided for sick people who are seeking a relief. In this term ancient Veda Gedara was a home for patients and they get basic facilities like food and lodging during their stay. This was not just a dispensary or medical center but the homely center of healthcare as well as focal point of counselling service within the community. Concept of family physician has originated from this kind of community-centered practice which had taken care of individual's health in a socio-biophysical model.

Indigenous system of medicine is sometimes called Goda Vedakama to describe medical practices not considered as professional. The literal meaning is Terrestrial Remedy. Home remedies are called Ath Beth which means the medicines in hand or medicines that can be prepared easily without any professional prescription. In the local usage there is Beth Heth, which gives the meaning for medicines and commitment that is needed to achieve healthy state. Vedakama and Hedakama are words having similar meaning of therapeutic measures and nursing procedures. When this caring process is applied to a patient suffering from a chronic condition, it is called Epa Upasthana Kireema which means "nursing with an accountable commitment." Caring mentality is totally fashioned out of Buddhist practices and regarded as a good deed which can lead to heaven after death. In a diseased condition the routine to be followed by the patient is called Pattiyam Rakeema, which means "restricted lifestyle in wholesome conducts leading to healthy state." In that period patient is fed only by Leda Kema, which clearly indicates the "food and dietary habits instructed as therapeutic nutrition." This knowledge is inherited from mother to mother and enriched through professional inputs. Even basic preparations like pattu, mallum, thelivili, kashaya, anupana, thembum, were part of culinary knowledge inherited by a housewife.

Even equipment used in preparing medicines is honoured in their names. i.e; Beth Gala - grinding stone, Beth Vangediya - wooden mortar, Beth Heppuwa - casket used for keeping medicines, Beth Ge - where medicines are manufactured, Beth Muttiya - earthen pot used for boiling decoctions, Beth Handa - the spoon used for giving

medicinal liquids, Beth Peha – the device used for compressing medicinal oils, Beth Vattiya - the basket used for drying medicinal substances, etc. Every word starts with the adjective Beth or medicinal to differentiate that specific instrumental purpose from others. Also there are some herbs that are believed to be medicinally valuable, bearing this adjective Beth, i.e.; Beth Gotukola (*Centella asiatica*), Beth Sarana (*Bohharvia diffusa*), Beth Suduloonu (*Allium sativum*), Beth Babila (*Sida cordifolia*), Beth Kohila (*Lasia spinosa*), Beth Nelli (*Emblica officinalis*), Beth Endaru (*Recinus communis*), Beth Anoda (*Abutilon indicum*)

There is a proverb saying; Payabarvayata pitikara Beth Bandeema literally meaning the applying of medicines on the backside of neck for treating filarial edema of leg which gives the idea of doing things without proper coordination. But in actual fact it is not its true meaning. It is interesting to note that therapeutic burning a point on backside of neck with medicinal herbs is an effective treatment for the same condition and it was widely practiced by local physicians specialized in therapeutic burning. Traditional physicians use their ring finger which is called Veda Angilla or Finger of Physician, to apply or mix medicine because it is believed to be connected with the heart and having healing powers. Padama is famous term used to describe the standard quality of a product at domestic level. It clearly manifests ultimate result of good manufacturing practices which is highly appreciated in modern pharmaceutical industry. Padama symbolically covers all the aspects of quality of the end product and the process in a controlled manner.

The whole manufacturing process is personally supervised, monitored and evaluated by the physician himself. They strongly believed that giving below-quality medicine to patients is kind of cheating or deceiving them and violating basic ethics of humanity. Therefore ISM practitioners were socially and spiritually bound to protect basic rights of individual who expect treatment from them. There was no written code of ethics but it was a value-oriented social behaviour endorsed by the master's oath. In ISM master's word is only second to god's word because master is respected as a earthly god.

To describe the diseased states or maladies Sinhalese people use very specific words which are having epistemological meanings. Therefore indigenous Nosological terms are absorbed by the

vernacular usage and vocally adjusted to their day to day language. Physical causes are called Thun Dos Kipeema or aggravation of natural humours, and the conditions are classified into Ata Anoovak Roga (Ninety Eight illnesses), Nava Anoovak Vyadhi (Ninety Nine Diseases). Sudden and disastrous situations are called Athuru Anthara. All the evil inhumane forces which cause diseases are described in Demonology are called Butha Dosa, Yaksha Dosa, Ammanussa Dosa etc. There are some genogenic malevolencies like Es-vaha (evil eye), Kata-vaha (evil tongue), Ho-vaha (evil mind) or Anavina Kodivina (charms dispelled for disaster), Hadi Hoonoyan (black magic), which are believed to cause serious maladies.

All the conditions resulted by cosmogenic negative forces or bad celestial influences are called Apala (fruitless) and Upadrava (repercussions). Incurable or untreatable conditions are considered to be caused by Karume or results of sinful actions of previous births and the condition is accepted as a mandatory. Vaduru Vasangatha is a term used for describing epidemics or pandemics which are seriously hazardous. There is a famous proverb saying Leda Malath Bada Suddai which means even if patient died the bowels were purified. It was the general perception of health that enhances credibility of treatment and the patient is free from his disease by the time of death.

This knowledge is considered to the wisdom of a tradition which is sometime claimed to be having a supra-mundane and para-human origin. It is common to any oriental tradition to entertain celestial sources of their own sciences, arts, literature, religion etc. This creates the sacredness which ensures acceptability and respectability through authenticity, validity, authority, legitimacy of the derivation. The erudite sagacious intellectuals called Rishi who secularize this divine discourse, were the linkage between extraterrestrial authors and earthly acquirers. All the holders of this kind of knowledge are treated as greater persons or leaders of the community as they are perceived to be useful and powerful. Also they traditionally live in morally good conducts reputed by the society. Therefore the learner or the student is expected to be having moral qualities accepted by the teacher or the holder of wisdom. In the process of acquisition of knowledge, this learner becomes an acolyte while the teacher holds his guardianship.

Initiation into the learning will take after a comprehensive selection test on criteria in various aspects. Basically the acolyte

should bear an in-borne destiny for becoming a physician which is proven by the horoscope. It gives a descriptive explanation of the inherited character and personality with special psycho-spiritual compatibilities for being a physician in future. Then family background, physical health, general knowledge and behavioural features will be assessed carefully. After the basic selection student must go through a preliminary phase of aptitude testing for about two to three years of observatory period. This is very difficult, laborious and vigorous but critically evaluated by the master for student's endurance, compatibility, courage, enthusiasm, personality, aspirations, attitudes, devotedness, dedication and achievements.

The period of Gurukula education can have four different stages or phases of learning namely;

1. **Dena purudda:** Gaining Knowledge through rote learning or some times by reading manuscripts, listening to the master. This phase is initially based on self-exposure and understanding fundamentals through memory improvement.
2. **Deka purudda:** Learning through observation and self evaluating the knowledge gained at the first step. In this phase pupil is assisting to the master and getting familiarized with ground level practice and application of theories.
3. **Kala purudda:** In this phase student is assigned to trial out, do testing and get practical experiences by applying the self-realized knowledge. This kind of training gives a full term understanding of safety and efficacy of the therapy.
4. **Pala purudda:** This phase is more or less like an internship where skill enhancement through experimenting takes place. Innovations are encouraged through confidence and competence which lead to generation of new knowledge to ISM.

Traditional medicine had been educated and trained in well-known Buddhist monasteries as one of the curricular of their major disciplines. It was recorded that a student should complete a period of seven to twelve years to become a skilled physician. That is the apprenticeship period which belongs to Gurukula. Meaning of Gurukula is master's family. In this period pupil should become a part of teacher's family and living within the norms of the same. During that training he should learn not only medical subjects but

also subjects like astrology, poetry, languages, spiritual rites, horticulture etc. Especially astrology is practically applicable to practice of medicine and performing spiritual rites is an essentially a part of healing. Maintaining herbal gardens and medicinal plant forests is a mandatory tradition which had been practiced for centuries in order to promote the sustainable utilization of natural resources.

At the end of learning Guru Mushti (final essence or the most secret part) is given by the master as the ultimate and supreme gift of the master. This is sometimes most valuable secret coded family recipe or chant or therapy inherited through generations with a great respect. All the effective therapies are traditionally endorsed as 'atdutuwai sattai pitanodenu maha papayai". It is the cultural authority of safeguarding ISM heritage. Atdutuwai means efficacy is tested and proven. Sattai is never become a false or wrong. It is totally safe. Pitandenu maha papayai means should not be given to anybody out of circle or restricted for unsuitable persons. If it is done so it will be great sin. This was a cultural mechanism established for safeguarding IPR and restricting access levels to ISM database. Also moral obligations and ethical interventions are naturally and gradually encountered through active involvement in case studies based on patient-oriented evidence based learning.

The knowledge of therapeutic measures is well-admitted by enhanced skills on nomenclature, identification, cultivating, collecting, harvesting, processing, preparing, manufacturing, storing, using medicinal substances. For medicinal use raw materials are acquired from natural sources like plants, minerals, animals. Every phase of therapeutic process is strengthened by a ritual or sorcery or occult practice and personally monitored or handled by the physician. Then and there he ensures the efficacy and safety of the medicine. Most of the treatments are customized and individualized in accordance with the patient's humoral uniqueness. Traditional physicians use minimum medicines to get maximum relief. He has various medicines for the same ailment and same medicine for various ailments to be used in different forms and vehicles. Always he administers the medicine in the safest and most effective route.

The role of local physician is more or less similar to family physician who knows the patient as well as his family background, livelihood, habitat, history of previous diseases etc. The patient is not considered as a "case." He is recognized as a living organism or a person. Physician starts with his second, third and fourth fingers

of right hand to feel pulse of the patient. Social distance or professional gap is inactivated by touching or holding hand and create trustworthiness and rapport. Physician – Patient relationship in traditional medicine can be explained in three models, viz; Priestly model, collegial model, Contractual model. These three models are respectively operated in framework of guardianship, friendship, and stewardship which consecutively take place in the process of treatment procedure.

Most apparent technique that is used to diagnose is pulse reading by which expert physician can describe all the symptoms without any inquiry. This is very exclusive method which is specifically different from pulse checking and pulse diagnosis. Pulse reading is a cultural context where the patient's body is completely understood by physician through his wisdom. That's why the word 'reading' is expressively having a comprehensive meaning for local people. Pulse reading is not done only to understand the pulse or heart rate condition. It is totally a tool to describe and analyse the whole situation of the patient. These techniques are not similar or identical in all family traditions. They can vary from one to another. But these are not documented since almost all of the practices are entirely cannot be textualised. This is sometimes not only a proficiency of knowledge, skill and competency. But it is matter of empirical wisdom of veteran practice and diverse experiences for long time. In some cases, like snake bites his diagnostic tool is messenger's verbal behaviour or body language and the same person who brought the message is slapped as a preliminary therapeutic measure. Sometimes physician use special techniques to verify the disease by using Threads, Dreams, Oil lamp flame, Omens, Vital points, Drugs which are unique to indigenous system of medicine. The student should attend all most all the cases during his training and get familiarized with discourse of teacher.

Especially the horoscope is used significantly as a reliable diagnostic contrivance to reveal the para-clinical side of the disease. Then he is able to prescribe some remedial measures in term of medical astrology to repel any supra-terrestrial resistant which can diminish efficacy of medicines. In chronic cases or obstinate conditions, physician provides astrological counselling and guidance to reinforce the therapy through ritualistic practices with support of an exorcist. That is the multidisciplinary approach of therapeutic process conducted in traditional system of medicine. Sometimes the physician, astrologer, priest, exorcist altogether play

responsible and conscientious roles in same therapeutic process as a joint venture which aims expel unhealthy condition.

In this process the sick person is also very important because he has a major role to play in the context of self-responsibility and accountability of regaining the healthy condition. Therefore reliance on therapeutic procedure in a confident manner is essential. There is a very restricted routine to be followed by a sick person in accordance with traditional system. Especially dietetics and behaviour are proscribed and regularized according to the medical advice. Therapeutic diet and lifestyle are recommended and closely monitored by physician. In long term management of chronic cases, in-home care is highly accepted and effective. Ancient society was an oasis for well-being of sick persons in terms of social relationships to enhance healthy atmosphere in convalescence.

Medicine is the utmost substance in therapeutic process which is considered to be having the heavenly powers, in ISM. All medicinal substances are honoured as vital parts of environment with the blessings of nature and extraction is performed as a holy practice. Every time physician's effort is to utilize genuine medicine to cure the patient without any side effect or adverse reaction, or after complication. As the medicines prepared by knowledgeable persons under the supervision of physician, authenticity is ensured and that leads to rapid efficacious results. Technology is environmental friendly and economically sound as well as appropriate technology invented through IK. All the material facilities needed are designed to get the maximum efficacy.

Quality control is maintained from the beginning through good manufacturing practices (GMP) which ensures the standard finish product. It is developed and implemented on skill based technical know-how which utilizes natural resources in a sustainable manner.

For the sake of adsorbing healing force prevailed in nature, range of medicinal raw material (herbal- mineral – animal) varies from quantum to solar system, i.e.; solar and lunar energy, cosmic influence, heat, air, water, soil, biogenic vital force, mutagenic morphological differentiations of species, supernatural forces (sorcery – occult practices – exorcism) etc. Ancient drug manufacturing process was operated as a small scale and domestic level process which was not industrialized and commercialized in terms of monetary values. Since the TK is localized generic recipes are not available and products are customized according to the

personal requirements. Therefore large scale multiple uses of limited resources for top ranked formulae is avoided.

Ancient medical artefacts are another heritage of national treasure of traditional medicine. Especially surgical instruments are well-designed and properly engineered for performing very subtle and critical surgeries. Instruments and devices used for Vidum Pillissum Vedakama which is a special branch of medicine executed for curing severe diseases by puncturing and burning vital points on the body. With all these instruments physician's hand is considered to be the greatest instrument among all. Also there are equipments and apparatus used for medicinal preparations by grinding, extracting, crushing, boiling, fermenting and storing. Traditional medicine has special way of preparing medicines with all the natural healing properties encapsulated into a preferred form. In this process medicinal substances are collected from the proper source, during the right season, at correct time, with performing ritualistic offerings and spiritual rites.

For understanding the proper medicine there is a secret key which is called Nigantuwa. This is a traditional document of codified names of medicinal plants and remedies which should be decoded with orally transmitted guidelines. This is also a mechanism to protect critical ISM sources from exploitation by outsiders or foreigners. It is basically cultural taboo to avoid unnecessary human manipulation in nature. Traditional medicine respects the nature and it gathers nature's potencies with the permission of nature. That is the way of healing with nature's blessings. All these practices should be learned by the student by working experiences and practical involvement in the process for long period. Therefore this Gurukula education system was sustainable and effective way of transmitting ISM from one generation to next.

Safeguarding projects

Under the Ministry of Indigenous Medicine Sri Lanka Conservation and Sustainable Use of Medicinal Plants Project funded a 3 year training program for 5 selected areas and recommended a national level program based on the outcome of the pilot project.

Rewarding of the Practitioners

Physicians who are involved in preservation of ISM through Gurukula education are rewarded by the ministry of indigenous medicine and All Ceylon Ayurveda Congress. These recipients are conferred with some honorary titles or medals as token of appreciation. Most of the fora where ISM practitioners are awarded this, their performance is essentially evaluated and it has become a mandatory criterion. Sometimes provincial councils also confer honorary awards for their services rendered in propagating ISM through Gurukula education.

- (a) Sahashrabhisheka Vaidya Shoori
- (b) Vaidyachintamani Pandita
- (c) Ayurveda Visharada Pandita

During the British colonial period some elite ISM practitioners were rewarded with titles such as Veda Arachchi, Ved Mudali, Veda Muhandiram etc. These individuals were actively involved in enhancement and advancement of ISM in the country. Some eminent ISM practitioners were rewarded and honoured with honorary titles and awards by the British royalty as well.

VII. Safeguarding Measures

1. An alternative and appropriate validating model should be introduced instead of biomedicine oriented validation

A traditional healer is a person who is recognized by the community in which he lives as competent to provide health care by using vegetable, animal and mineral substances and certain other methods based on the social, cultural and religious background as well as on the knowledge, attitude and belief that are prevalent in the community regarding physical, mental and social wellbeing and the causation of disease and disability. These concepts and practices cannot be validated by conventional Western scientific methodologies. Too often they were not considered worthy of notice because they were not based on the same scientific concepts as “modern medicine” and sometimes referred to irrationally as “unscientific or non-scientific” practices. Therefore ISM does not belong to so called scientifically evaluated or proven knowledge systems according the mainstream dominated by biomedicine. To overcome this discrimination there is a timely need to introduce an alternative and appropriate validating model instead of biomedicine oriented validation.

2. Establishment of unique identity of ISM in contrast to mainstreaming Ayurveda or Ayurvedization of ISM

There is no doubt that the ISM in Sri Lanka which was theoretically augmented through cultural, economic, religious, technological connections prevailed with India for several centuries, and of expanded knowledge with the help of the medical knowledge systems of various countries through the silk route. The ISM engaged in care services as well within the National Health System from its inception had been receiving the state sponsorship within a well organized institutional structure. It was engaged in a vital mission as a network of Sri Lankan socio-human value system connected to natural resources and biodiversity more than a mere system of medicine or system of healthcare. The vast indigenous knowledge, which had been heavily subjected to much destruction due to enemy invasion, faced a deteriorative fate in a very unfortunate manner during the imperialist colonial era. Similar threat is perceived with

mainstreaming Ayurveda as an alternative healthcare system in national health which will supersede ISM.

3. Cultural value system should be revisited and health stewardship should be revalidated to encounter medicalized society and commoditized health.

In the ancient community individuals were intensively enthusiastic about their personal hygiene and were aware of basic principles of health. They had learnt to prevent disease by avoiding unwholesome causes which cause illnesses. Since most of them were knowledgeable on their own biophysical constitution, they were able to take care of personal health through a customized routine. Family health was a collective effort to maintain optimum level of healthy life style in every aspect. In each phase of life such as infancy, childhood, adolescent, adulthood, senility etc. as well as special occasions such as in puberty, pregnancy, postpartum period, contagious diseases, death etc. they were used to practice preventive measures to minimize the susceptibility. All health oriented performances were tailored to avoid macroscopic and microscopic threats which can alter the equilibrium of somatopsychic states.

In simple conditions they were capable of using home remedies to control the situation or get rid of it. But surveillance is not neglected and if any seriousness occurs medical advice is obtained. They were well aware of contagiousness of infectious diseases and in such cases the home of sick one is declared as a forbidden area by the owner, displaying taboo signal to refrain any visitor to enter the home. It is their stewardship of public health and sometimes in epidemics there are ceremonial holy rituals performed with contribution and participation of relevant community to get the blessings of celestial beings to restore the salubrious state. They are several regular ritualistic practices performed personally as well as collectively for expelling bad causes and gaining blessings to maintain health.

4. Technology should be modified and modernized in an appropriate and sustainable manner

Technology is involved in every step in medical science and healthcare by means of not only objects or physical devices but also in forms of techniques, mechanisms, applications, practices and skills. There is an urgent need to propagate ISM technologies at macro-level and explain it in nano-level. Scientific approach will not be imprisoned in reductionistic frame and let it expand beyond the organoleptic and technoleptic

boundaries. Then only it will escape from artificial intelligence and reach humanistic intelligence. Technology exemplified by many gifted engineers in the last century who worked with no formal scientific understanding of their problems, and 'applied science' technology in which one increasingly needs to grasp the conceptual science even to understand the problem, let alone explore solutions.

5. Resource-base should be conserved and sustainable practices should be propagated

Natural resources were essentially considered as "a gift with blessings of nature" and sustainable utilization was a mandatory norm. Language, education, cultural norms, social network, livelihoods and religion were organized in nature-friendly manner in order to establish an ecological discipline. Core areas of natural habitats were culturally declared as "sacred groves" which protect ecologically critical forests and keystone species within. Natural objects as forests, trees, mountains, rivers, springs, are respected as totems which indicate cultural identities of relevant communities. There are various rituals and taboos prevailing for centuries with coded ethics to preserve ecological and biological diversity of local habitat. Cultural heritage and vernacular communication system strongly supported to dictate a self-disciplined community guide in sustainable use of natural resources. Therefore culture and nature were indispensable entities and leading to new model of bio-cultural diversity. This model accommodates plurality of IK systems in multiculturalism and multi-nationalism. Therefore every local community enriched with IK is a unique resource in eco-friendly development process.

Sri Lankan society is historically grown up with nature and nurtured through IK of natural resource management. Our ancestors were the key holders of this knowledgebase which had been transmitted from generation to generation before mainstream knowledge system is overrun by colonial imperialism. The rights of ownership of our IK system was ensured through a locally established intellectual property defensive mechanism and cultural repertory model of collective wisdom inherited by elderly people. IK in interpretation of nature and natural events basically can be explained according to the theory of animism (everything is living) and pantheism (divinity is everywhere) which demonstrates the idea "livingness of sacred spirits within the nature".

It indicates that nature as a holistic system as well as a multiple organism. Everything in universe is linked together. They are inter-dependent. People believed that they can influence the nature only through deities who abode in natural habitat. If human's interference made in natural

environment it should not violate ethics of conservation practices. Specially forest deities were annually offered ritualistic oblations to protect natural sanctuaries of endangered flora and fauna. Sri Lankan IK best practices must be incorporated with mainstream formal education with a clear vision for enhancement of cultural intelligence and environment literacy.

6. Traditional lifestyles should be encouraged as a catalyst to revitalize ISM healthcare practices

Sri Lankan traditional lifestyle is fabricated by culture, heritage and tradition which include plenty of habits, beliefs, practices, customs, norms, values, rituals, conventions. This versatile and multifaceted way of living was inherently the royal path to a healthy life. From womb to tomb, even beyond that health is considered to be the most beneficial gain among all. Every life event is installed with rational and logical configurations which boost one's immune system by regularizing consumptive behaviour. Dietetics is well designed in every aspect of nutrition and health. Basic needs are fulfilled with the minimum consumption of resources which does not lead any issue on over-exploitation. Social relationships are well nurtured by religio-cultural values and conflict management is very simple and easy. It is therefore IK is an indispensable and unique feature in ISM and its implications in healthcare in Sri Lanka. The urgent need is to develop a strategic model for mainstream the best practices and inventorise the resources available in IK related to healthcare. In such intervention exploring the existing IK knowledgebase must be the initiative.

7. Legislation should be introduced for safeguarding Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

The need to protect traditional medical knowledge and to secure fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from the use of biodiversity and associated traditional medicine knowledge has been fully recognized. At present, existing conventional patent law protection requirements are not applicable to traditional knowledge. There is no agreement as to how and what would be the most appropriate effective way to achieve protection of traditional medicine in developing countries. But considering natural resources or biodiversity of world the South is richer in environmental assets. 16 out of 25 biodiversity hotspots are in tropical countries which belong to third world. Therefore industrialized world is more eager on indigenous knowledge available in developing countries that are wealthy in traditional resources.

Third world is more suspicious and alarmed by international trade agreements ratified in related to their traditional resources such as GATT, TRIPs. The avenues are opening to explore the unknown treasure trove of traditional knowledge by means of monetary beneficiaries which drain the traditional resources in a respectable way. There are living examples to show how this kind of misconducts executed through modifications. The most controversial issue related to IPR in last decade was bio-piracy or stealing TK in terms of benefit sharing and bio-prospecting. In the context of Globalization the knowledge has become the power of world politics that governs scientific technology in a desired manner within Western regime.

8. A workable and conducive policy support should be ensured

During the past 2 or 3 centuries when the western medicine took root in the country, the mission rendered to uplift the health conditions in this country became more conspicuous due to the contribution made to upgrade the health and nutrition indicators which crashed down before challenges in the national, socio-cultural, educational and economic systems. Although this image was successful in suppressing the great and excellent features of the ISM, its completeness could be reached only by giving due consideration to the utilization of ISM when preparing a national health policy.

Therefore, the contemporary requirement of a national policy for Sri Lankan Indigenous Systems of Medicine was a matter subjected to discussion for a long time. It is not a secret that the absence of a national policy happened to be the reason for situations where the ISM did not receive the Government sponsorship and the social attention, except for certain special reasons. If one observes the problems and involvements of the Indigenous medical sector during the pre-Independence period, their common factor of the general nature and the reason is the improper plans without these policies. Therefore, every Government has accepted that a special section on ISM should compulsorily be included in the national health policy but not done.

Recommendations of the Presidential Task Force on National Health Policy has officially accepted the role of the ISM sector within the National Health System and among the recommendations made in that regard, emphasis has been made of the necessity of a national policy. The diversity of Healthcare Systems seen in Sri Lanka as liveliness in the Indigenous Systems of Medicine would result in maintaining its time-suitability. Similarly, the variety in the sphere of knowledge regarding ISM can undoubtedly, be wisely utilized for national health needs. Especially the

knowledge in ISM is a knowledge coupled with beliefs, values, existing within the cultural and traditional heritages, is a knowledge tested by time. Another side view of an approach of this nature is the presence of features compatible with local, social, cultural and economic environment of Sri Lanka.

9. Financial support of international agencies should be properly coordinated and streamlined

In 2002 WHO by its four-year strategy plan regarding traditional medical systems very clearly demonstrated that when the use of Indigenous Systems of Medicine are carried forward progressively, problems could arise policy, safety, effectiveness, quality, approach and rational use. These involvements are very vital to secure similarity in winning the challenges arising in maintaining the ISM effectively as a source within the mainstreamed national health system. The WHO attempts to maintain an “apolitical, neutral stand” and refrains from directly commenting on political and economic policies that had an impact on health. Similarly the global interest in conserving the indigenous knowledge systems and traditional knowledge and utilizing them successfully parallel to primary health practices is in the increase. For that very reason, the sponsorship of the international funding agencies for developing the availability accessibility and affordability of Indigenous Systems of Medicine is considerably on the increase.

The international initiative to integrate ISM into health care systems in the 1970s therefore appears to have made nominal impact on national levels in the following decades. This may be partly related to the complexity and contentious nature of the policy issue (which was not purely technical in nature), but also because adoption of the policy as envisaged had onerous requirements that acted as a deterrent. The impact of international initiatives at country levels can vary widely. In relation to TRM, the impact at national levels could be argued to be minimal. For example, the critical indicators identified in the TRM Strategy 2002-2005 demonstrate that very little progress had been made on national levels between the 1970s and the end of the century. Only 25 out of 191 member states had a TRM/CAM policy (13%), 65 member states had laws and regulations on herbal medicines (34%), and 19 member states had a national research institute for TRM/CAM (10%).

10. Legal provisions should be granted for uplifting privileges of ISM practitioners

ISM practitioners were the legal owners of the healthcare system in the country from the beginning as recorded in the written history. It is evident that institutional system and organizational structure of national healthcare prevailed in the past were operated in a hierarchical manner under the supervision of physician-in-charge. Therefore registration of ISM practitioners or state approval for practicing ISM was a legal requirement during any reign. But with all the factors after imperial dominion of healthcare system, role and identity of ISM practitioners had been extensively neglected by the rulers. ISM practitioners who had not gained a formal institutional training from a recognized education centres are considered as traditional medical practitioners. Registration of such ISM practitioners is a legal procedure which grants the official approval for practicing ISM and endorsement of their professional identity in healthcare system. Council has facilitated and moderated very generous and comprehensive procedure for registering these ISM practitioners so far.

Most of these practitioners live in rural areas which are spatially remote and marginalized but serve their communities with dedication. Council conduct a special programme called 'Hela Weda Ruwanara' which means 'Treasure Trove of ISM Gems' extends services at local level for searching for efficient and proficient ISM practitioners in villages. Those who have completed age 70 will be provided with honorary registration with recommendations from village level community and participatory observation by a panel appointed by the Council. The practitioners over 50 years but below 70 will be registered after an interview conducted with participatory methodology which proves the knowledge, skill and experience of the candidate. Other candidates who are under 50 and have completed satisfactory apprenticeship of at least 10 years should sit for a written examination and a viva conducted by the council.

Legal rights and privileges of ISM practitioners are one of the struggling and provoking issue discussed since colonial era under the monopoly of imperial medicine. Also it is an everlasting universal problem prevailed in any culture where modern medical system is propagated and established. Therefore it is not a problem of medical pluralism or co-existence of multiple systems and explicitly has become problem of medical hegemony. Although it is officially accepted as a parallel healthcare system operated in Sri Lanka, rights and privileges of ISM practitioners have been very much neglected, ignored, disregarded and deserted for long time.

Anomalous situation prevailed that even though ISM is highly regarded as a national heritage and cultural repository it is not duly esteemed and legally recognized by in terms of medical profession. ISM practitioner is not officially included into the medical category professions and allowed to entertain any full-pledged rights of medical practitioner registered under the Medical Ordinance. Official healthcare system in Sri Lanka hardly reflects ISM segment and trivially utilizes ISM resources due to lack of mutual understanding and professional harmonization. Therefore rights and privileges of ISM practitioners must crucially be taken into the agenda of notational forum in terms of accountability of state stewardship.

There are some unwritten and legally undocumented rights and privileges accepted as social norms. Any ISM practitioner has right to manufacture medicines from own recipes inherited as family secrets but not for selling to general public. They are also entitled to use poisonous substances for producing own medicines and dispensing to patients. ISM practitioner can train students and recommend their competency to the council as a prerequisite to the registration. Every registered ISM practitioner should follow the code of ethics published by the council and violation of any of these will be a professional misconduct. Practitioners registered only for one section of medicine are entitled to practice only that respective field of medicine such as snakebite, fractures, wounds, burns, eye diseases, mental disorders, skin diseases etc. In some cases it is reported that the ISM registration is irrespectively misused for committing criminal abortions and manufacturing illegal narcotics critically taken into consideration by the council and special investigations conducted in such cases to avoid low social reputation of the profession.

Council strongly believes that empowering professional rights and privileges as one of the major support for the upliftment of the identity and consolidation of streamlining of ISM sector in national health system. With regard to quality ISM service and professional dignity council has initiated island-wide awareness building programme on ethical and legal issues pertaining to practice. Also there is surveillance and monitoring mechanism has been developed and implemented through the provincial departments and local level ISM professional clusters called 'Ayurveda Sanrakshana Sabha' (Ayurveda Preservation Society). Council has successfully adopted its activities in accordance with decentralized administrative structure established under the 13th amendment of Sri Lankan constitution. There is a two-way communication strategy is continuously in operation to achieve council's objectives in ISM professional development throughout the country.

VIII. Living Human Treasures System (LHTS)

Sri Lanka does not have any Living Human Treasures System to ensure transmission and safeguarding of the traditional culture and folklore in the island.

But since culture embraces practically all aspects of our daily life like food, dress, social customs, religious practices, rituals, rites of passage, entertainments etc. that represent distinctive cultural traits of each culture and civilization, society as well as the authorities have realized that it is not only necessary to preserve our culture and values but it is equally important to strengthen them through sustained and coordinated efforts. Therefore, certain measures appear to have been taken by all concerned to protect the cultural traditions of the country after independence at different levels.

- (a) Action at Government Level
- (b) Action at Institutional Level
- (c) Action at Academic Level
- (d) Action at Community Level

Government Level

For the first time a separate Department of Cultural Affairs was established in 1956 after the peoples' political upheaval at the 1956 general elections which marked the turning point in the political history and the cultural renaissance of the island nation. The 'Ministry of Culture' followed few years afterwards. Ministry and the Department of Cultural Affairs have ever since then taken several steps to uplift the Sri Lankan culture with the sole aim of making the Sri Lankans, spiritually perceptive. In order to achieve this vision they prepare and implement programmes aimed at the preservation, propagation and development of Literary, Arts and Cultural Activities, maintaining the Sri Lankan identity. However one cannot underestimate the contribution made by the Arts

Council of Ceylon established in 1952 and continuing up to date under the name of Arts Council of Sri Lanka.

At present there are two Ministries in charge of Cultural Affairs. Ministry of National Heritage with the Departments of Archives, Archaeology and National Museums under it is largely concerned with the tangible culture where as the Ministry of Culture and Arts with the Department of Cultural Affairs and several other institutions under its authority, is more bent on culture with emphasis on intangible culture. It must be mentioned that both Ministries have equal concern on both tangible and intangible since they are two sides of the same coin and hence inseparable.

The Department of Cultural Affairs initiates the activities to uplift the Sri Lankan culture with programmes for the preservation, propagation and expansion of literary, arts, and cultural activities maintaining Sri Lankan identity. The Arts Council of Sri Lanka is also mandated to undertake services towards the promotion, preservation and propagation of arts and crafts as an important segment of ICH in Culture in a wider sense. Among the activities embarked on by the Dept of Cultural Affairs following can be highlighted.

1. Preparation and implementation of plans for the efficient and productive development of cultural activities of Sri Lanka.
2. Assisting the Sri Lankan writers and artists
3. Recognizing that the Sri Lankan Languages, Literature and history as the foundation of the culture, provides necessary facilities for the compilation of Encyclopaedia, Dictionaries and updating the Mahawansa etc.
4. Building a society rich in values through the formulation and implementation of programs embracing all the sectors of the society regenerating the tangible and intangible aspects of the culture.

Several schemes to ensure the conferment of benefits to the artists like pension schemes, insurance schemes, conferment of honorary titles in recognition of their services, medical benefit schemes and funeral assistance schemes have been launched and operated.

Establishment of cultural centres in each Divisional Secretariat division with all facilities and programmes to train locals in arts and crafts, dancing and music etc to make them centres of village cultural revival. This is in addition to the promotional assistance extended to Kalayatanas or centres of training conducted by master artists and craftsmen.

IX. Pending issues & urgent needs regarding the safeguarding of ICH

1. Is any of the intangible cultural heritages in your country in danger of disappearance or transformation?

Invariably with the transformation of the society in the light of modern development most of the ICH in the country is in danger of disappearance or transformation. This in fact is a common problem confronted by almost all the different societies and all the different aspects of ICH exposed to this epidemic. Few of the most threatened are taken for discussion here.

Traditional Agricultural Practices

The threat is most conspicuous in the field of traditional agriculture where mechanization, chemical fertilizations application of pesticides and weed killers have encroached the field in a most disastrous manner. This situation threatens the Sri Lankans' rich indigenous knowledge system on agriculture which depicts their nature friendly attitudes and values, details of which are given above under F. In the past they neither used pesticides nor fertilized with artificial chemicals. Sinhalese have their own indigenous methods for enhancing the fertility of the land and protecting the crops from pests and weeds.

But the present generation is deviating from these traditional practices and embracing modern methods which are detrimental to traditional agriculture. Modernization is never despised but it must be done in a meaningful way and adopted only if the indigenous system is inappropriate to the extant needs. Otherwise the valuable traditional knowledge which had been perpetuated for such a long time solely due to its appropriateness will be lost forever for no fault of its own.

Knowledge Systems Recorded in Ola manuscripts pertaining to Medicine, Treatments, Magic, etc.

Sri Lankans own knowledge systems had been documented in Ola manuscripts and most of them were preserved in temples. During the invasions by the foreigners from South India, many of these treasures containing our knowledge were destroyed. Subsequent invaders from Europe took away most of the remaining manuscripts and kept them in the museums of their countries.

Still a good collection of these can be seen in temples and with some individuals who had inherited them from their ancestors. But they suffer from lack of proper care, protection and conservation. They deserve to be taken care of as a national asset.

Folk Music/ Folk Dance/ Folk Tales/ Lullabies/ Folk Rituals

Sri Lankans have a very popular and expressive folk culture basically because it has been nursed and nourished by their life pattern. During the agricultural activities, rites of passage, festivals, and entertainment people participate very actively in folk music, dance, tales and rituals for the sake of enjoyment and relaxation from fatigue and stress. The Sri Lankan folk music is very rich in meaning as well as in the expressions. Folk songs related to the livelihoods of the people give enormous courage and endurance. Folk tales are invaluable in shaping the characters of the children and youth. Lullabies are also rich of meaningful messages in socializing and developing the personalities of the children.

But all these arts are rapidly disappearing from the people due to the influence of modern life styles.

Folk Theatre

Mask craft and dancing and Puppetry art as a part of folk drama are most popular art form in the Sri Lankan. Although the elder generation had preserved these arts and still continues to do so, the same commitment is not seen among the younger generation because of the social constraints and economic factors. Same fate has befallen on Sokari, another traditional drama form prevalent in the rural areas.

Therefore the urgent need has arisen to introduce mechanisms to preserve and propagate this aspect of ICH because any more neglect would result in the gradual disappearance of these modes of folk entertainments.

Traditional Culinary Art

Sri Lankans have an opulent culinary art tradition inherited from ancient times which has been admired by the natives as well as foreigners. This culinary tradition was maintained in the villages until recently. They had their own methods of preserving food for long periods, natural flavoring substances and traditional delicacies. From recent times there had been instances when certain knowledgeable individuals had engaged in research and experiments on our ancient food and culinary tradition, thus promoting these practices by disseminating knowledge and demonstrating traditional culinary practices in the media.

Unfortunately Sri Lankans are distancing themselves from their traditional culinary practices and embracing alien food culture due to the powerful marketing strategies adopted through the media. However a situation has arisen where alarmingly high instances of new health problems identified all over the world seem to ascribe the causes to wrong food habits and foods thus forcing the people back to old culinary habits Hence there seem to be an ideal situation where if proper action is taken to resurrect our valuable culinary art as an attempt at resurrecting ICH. It must not be forgotten that our culinary traditions have emerged to suit the environment in which we live.

Folk Games

Folk games in Sri Lanka relate to the folk festivals. The main festival occasion engaged in by the people of Sri Lanka is the Sinhala New Year Festival about which a detailed account is provided above. Although no other festival where folk games form an integral part can be claimed to be in popular use among the Sinhalese or any other segment of the population, it needs be emphasized that most of the folk games are in vogue among the children wherever they gather for recreation in their daily life. It indicates how much these folk games have been a part and parcel of the folk life of the people.

Sinhala New Year period is the action-packed time when all the people in the country irrespective of any difference get engaged in entertainment through participation in folk games. Hence this is considered the period of rejuvenation of all things called traditional and specially folk games owing to their capacity to promote unity,

cooperation, group consciousness in addition to the entertainment value.

Beside the entertainment quality in the folk games the psychological value is highly appreciated by the people and hence they allow the children to get engaged in them. However, as a result of the domination of the colonial education system all things of indigenous origin had been devalued and discouraged from being used. Hence most unfortunately along with the folk games the inherent ICH qualities too have started to fade out. Hence the need for the use of these folk games in the schools among the children during their formative stages has been felt by the knowledgeable people.

But most of the folk games have gone into oblivion due to lack of knowledge and appreciation related to these games. Any move by the promoters of ICH to revitalize these traditional items is sure to bring in much beneficial results since they are not mere modes of entertainment but inventions imbued with unlimited knowledge and wisdom.

Traditional Combat Arts- Angam Pora

Sri Lankans had a traditional combat system called 'Angam Pora.' In several Provinces in Sri Lanka, the traditional lineages carry on with them and still preserve and transmit this valuable self protective and combat system. This traditional combat system is gaining ground among the youth and therefore there appears the possibility of preserving and propagating this useful branch of ICH if proper attention is paid to it.

2. What are the reasons the heritage is in danger and what type of safeguarding measures have been taken? Please be specific.

There are many reasons affecting the survival of ICH. Colonization, modernization, urbanization, westernization and globalization have been responsible for massive changes within the Sri Lankan society over the last five centuries during which period Sri Lankans were under the rule of the colonial invaders of Portuguese, Dutch, and British. It resulted in a heavy blow to the heritage leading to the probable danger of their disappearance. This threat was aggravated after the fall of the Kingdom of Kandy in 1815. Resistance to the

foreign rule took many forms. Apart from the 'great rebellion' of 1817, which lasted one and a half years and almost succeeded in ousting the British, the Kandyan provinces were in a state of continuous ferment, culminating in the war of independence of 1848. Yet it did not bring desired results.

The advent of imperialism brought many changes to the political and social structure of the country. It had direct impact on the whole culture including the attitudes and the value system of the society. Education in pre-colonial Sri Lanka was largely a function of the Buddhist monks and was carried out in temples and monastic institutions known as Pirivenas. They were the fountains of knowledge as well as giver of life to the men and society. Once they were done away with disaster fell upon the nation.

The ancient society was immensely shaped by the traditional norms, values, cultural traits and practices. Since these rituals were performed collectively, the solidarity among the members of the society was maintained. During the colonial rule the traditional economy was pushed into oblivion. Along with that, all modes of expression of their feelings and knowledge like folk music, arts, crafts, drama etc started to fade away. Collectiveness of the society has been destroyed and interdependence has been projected as a weakness. These are the results of the forced mechanization and commercialization. Due to these factors the entire ICH in the country is in danger of fabrication, misinterpretation and devaluation leading to ultimate natural death.

The establishment of a 'Folk Music Conservations Library' with the aid of Norway Government is a recent attempt by the authorities to achieve the objective of preserving traditional music pattern of the country. 'Adi Vasi Jana Uruma Kendraya' (heritage center for indigenous community) at Vedda habitat in Dambana is yet another project implemented in the recent times.

The Cultural Ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Education has started a project 'Daye Urumaya Daruvantaya' (The heritage of the nation belongs to children). A series of books on ancient knowledge pertaining to food practices, agriculture, knowledge on ancient irrigation system, rituals related to ancient tanks and on archeological sites etc. was published and distributed among school libraries for the benefit of the children.

The government's initiative in the preservation of the ICH is further proved by the establishment of an Aesthetics university, a campus, and two teacher training schools for fine arts. Fine arts have been included in the curriculum of the national education and hence all the students from grade six have to select one subject in fine arts.

3. What are the pending issues for safeguarding ICH in your country that you have found through interviews and the field survey?

Despite the actions taken by the Ministry of Culture to safeguard ICH in the country several issues can be recognized as deserving more attention.

The lack of coordination and cooperation among the many institutions involved in the protection and preservation, promotion and propagation of ICH in the country is seen as a great drawback in the successful implementation of the plans drawn up for the purpose. Hence a Centre with full pledged powers and funds to initiate and implement necessary projects and coordinate all the activities in the area is an absolute must.

There is also the urgent need for a very comprehensive policy on the part of the Government towards the protection and preservation and promotion and propagation of ICH.

The failure to achieve the desired results from the Government's policies on this subject can also be attributed to the failure to pool the necessary expertise on the subject. Plans and programmes have to be drawn up with the proper expertise and on the basis of correct facts gathered after methodically undertaken research rather than on the raw statements of the bureaucracy. Lack of knowledge among the officials in charge on the subjects like folklore, culture, research methodology etc is often hindering the progress of these programmes.

4. What kind of problems and difficulties were encountered during the safeguarding projects?

The Convention for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage [ICH] adopted by UNESCO in 2003 defines ICH as practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, and the associated

instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces. Furthermore it is recognized as a part of cultural heritage by communities, groups and in some cases, individuals. Accordingly, Sri Lanka is well-known for its distinctive and abundant cultural heritage of both tangible and intangible cultural properties has willingly opted to be a signatory to it.

Successive governments after the independence have been taking measures to safeguard them. But whether satisfactory results have been achieved is debatable. Despite the many acts and ordinances added into the law books up to now, there have not been specific programmes or projects to protect the ICH of the country. This is responsible for the many problems and difficulties encountered in safeguarding the ICH.

Following can be identified as problems and difficulties responsible for this situation

1. Lack of a comprehensive policy statement on ICH. Only policy statement available is a brief statement published in 2007 but not known by the public.
2. Lack of a comprehensive plan of action to achieve the objectives.
3. There is a problem of lack of necessary funds to carry out the work
4. Lack of proper coordination and cooperation among and between the various government agencies involved which brings negative results.
5. There is the urgent need to evolve mechanisms to discourage the people from being addicted to lifestyles harmful to the ICH of the country.
6. Integration of the basics of ICH into the school curriculum and other educational centres including the training colleges of the armed forces a means of popularizing and safeguarding of these valuable resources of a country.

5. What future plans are there for the safeguarding of ICH?

Realizing that the ICH is in danger of disappearing due to industrialization, modernization, westernization and globalization, the authorities are getting alarmed and looking for ways and means necessary to be taken by the relevant authorities to stop this trend and develop and promote the ICH of the country. However the

official action seems to suffer from lethargy. Therefore following actions are recommended to speed up the accepted action plan.

Empowerment of the National Committee of ICH

As a major step intended at safeguarding the ICH of the country urgent need is there to establish the high powered Committee with full powers. It can act as the body responsible for preparation and implementation of relevant policies and advise the government on the subject. Hence it will function as the sole authority on the subject as far as policy and programmes are concerned. It can be entrusted with the following tasks.

1. Encouraging the research on ICH at the University level as well as the national level
2. Conducting awareness programmes and assignments at school level to disseminate and promote ICH knowledge.
3. Launching websites for the proliferation of the hidden treasures of the ICH
4. Convert the existing cultural centers in the country as the nucleus of ICH activities in the island and improve them as village centers.
5. Launch an island wide in-service training programmes for Cultural Officers to prepare them to undertake these responsibilities.
6. Strengthening of the National Inventory of ICH which has been created by the Ministry of Education at the Board of National Library Services
7. Implement more and more pilot projects for the protection of the traditional arts and crafts.
8. Embark on popularization programmes at school level.
9. Create mini museums at rural level.

6. What type of contributions and cooperation from the international society is needed for the safeguarding of ICH in your country?

Provision of funds and resources as well as the expertise knowledge essential for the successful completion of programmes and projects planned can be one of the best way the international community can be of help in these less affluent states.

International support for the establishment of a full pledged institute to conduct research into the preservation and development of the ICH of the country will be of immense importance.

Granting scholarships to improve the knowledge and skills for the locals who are serving in the field of ICH will be a productive way to improve the existing conditions.

Establishment of full pledged ICH Libraries in the member States as databases for future researchers.

Helping to develop a national, regional and global network with other countries to document the ICH across the globe would be of paramount importance for research on ICH.

Introduction of strong and severe rules and regulations to curb the commercial misuses related to the ICH is a crying need and hence the need for the support of the international community.

International pressure will be of immense help in compelling the relevant countries to take genuine steps to return the valuable ICH items that have been taken away during colonial rule.

Seasonal symposiums to exchange and benefit from the knowledge of each country will be a useful mechanism to widen the awareness and also the interest on ICH

7. What role do you expect ICHCAP to play in the safeguarding of ICH in the region in terms of programs, projects etc.

There is the high potential for ICHCAP to join hands with the local activists in many ways. Local National Committee can embark on programmes intended to conduct national surveys for collecting ICH and background information. This should include knowledge items, knowledge sources, knowledge holders (practitioners), and other resources. This should explicitly focus on ICH knowledge system management and traditional knowledge transferring mechanisms. In this exercise the ICHCAP can be of great help and support to the local Committee by way of providing expertise, guidance and financial assistance.

At the end of the survey the need will automatically arise for the establishment of a national database / registry / inventory for preservation and management of ICH. Every country should be encouraged to have an ICH museum, library and information centre with the database to make the people aware of this heritage.

Encourage researchers and research institutes in ICH by financial support and recognition. There should be an international channelling and networking system for disseminating, exchanging and sharing research outcomes.

ICHCAP can enlist research Institutes, academia, journals and experts involved in ICH research activities and encourage international research projects to facilitate them. Also ICHCAP must establish an international exchange program and collaborative research initiatives among ICH interest groups on research findings and project outputs.

Introduce guidelines for preparing legally stable, socially acceptable, and financially equitable IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) mechanism at country level for sharing of mutual benefits among stakeholders. ICHCAP must closely monitor each country's legal strategies to ensure protection of IPR in ICH and facilitate interest groups to work with communities in awareness programs.

Set up a national focal point to network and coordinate all resource centers and stakeholder institutes. There should be a proper coordination and mutual understanding among all the institutes, Departments, authorities, bureaus, units under various ministries.

Encourage national policies to be in correct place and implemented. The reciprocal commitments and formal roles of each and every stakeholder should be defined.

8. Please include any requests or suggestions you have on this matter.

Substantial proportion of ICH is not recorded or written or documented. 70 percent of such ICH is in practice. Most of the rest is in verbal form. A very few elements have been previously recorded. But these documentations are also in danger of extinction due to various reasons. Hand written manuscripts are naturally

getting decomposed. There are resources like instruments, apparatus, articles, objects which are relevant to ICH but most of them are in private custody and not well-protected due to negligence. Therefore there is an urgent need to preserve these resources physically and make an inventory.

In indigenous knowledge systems prevailed in traditional societies, cultural semantics, socio-linguistics, etymology, ontology and epistemology are playing a key role in defining the nature of ICH in each country. Therefore terminology is very critical in this kind of survey projects. This can also include not only virtual library but also a collection of manuscripts, items, articles, objects as well as audio and video records of ICH practices.

There is an urgent need to study the outcomes of ICH in sustainable livelihoods in terms of environmental, social, economical, physical, mental and spiritual health. ICH can contribute very effectively in humanitarian crisis evolved in many countries due to culturally displacement in globalized societies. Also it will recover the dehumanized values and commoditized needs of society through readopting workable norms of ICH practices.

Anthropological and ecological perspectives of ICH should be broadly and extensively studied in a systematic way to understand the origin and survival of these knowledge, practices and values in ancient societies. It would define and describe the evolutionary process of ICH in a given culture or community. These studies should be culture-specific or community-specific.

There should be an effort to regain cultural identities and replant values into national educational system with an intension to communication for behavior change in young generation. It will help to prevent the upcoming society from injurious, unethical, disgraced and socially harmful behaviour pattern. This is a kind of cultural immunity to develop a resistance against "contagious invasions of cyber exploitation and immoral abuses" transmitted from an alienated cultures. Story telling is a powerful tool which can be used to cultural immunization of early childhood development and implanting personality morals. Some mental attributes and characters are beneficially and positively streamlined with cultural norms with folk stories, lullabies, puzzles, songs, poetry and games. It was the foundation of "cultural man" inside every citizen who was extremely proud his cultural heritage.

Ultimately legal enforcement is very crucial to preserve ICH and avoid the politically planned, socially driven or spontaneous threats. The legal system must be strengthened, enhanced, and expanded through community charters, conventions and organizations in preservation and socialization of ICH.

9. What should be considered to encourage or to ensure active involvement from community in safeguarding ICH?

Recognition of ownership and representation of particular ICH at national, community and individual level

Creating awareness and vigilance in value of ICH to ensure transferability and pedagogue (cultural literacy and cultural intelligence) to next generation

Responsible participation in every level of safeguarding (policy planning, project implementation, research, publication, legal representation etc.)

Equitable benefit sharing and tangible support for their commitment through a rewarding system or financial incentives

Empowerment of rights and role of community with regard to ICH through skill-based awareness

Capacity building pertaining to strengthening KAP (Knowledge, Attitude, Practice) in ICH

List of co-researchers

Name	Authorship of the Contributions
Mr. Pandula Endagama <i>(Chairman of the Research Committee)</i>	Acknowledgement / Introduction 2-E (The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity) 2-F 1 (Traditional Agriculture in Sri Lanka and its value as a repository of ICH) Conclusion / Editing
Prof. Piyadasa Ranasinghe	2-A (Safeguarding system & policy) 2-B (Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory) 2-C (Relevant Organization) 2-D (Meetings on Intangible Cultural Heritage)
Prof. Yasanjali Devika Jayathilake	2-F 2 (Kotahalu Yaagaya, The ritual pertaining to Sinhalese puberty rites in Sri Lanka) 2-G (Living Human Treasures System (LHTS)) 2-H 1 (Is any of the intangible cultural heritages in your country in danger of disappearance or transformation?) 2-H 2 (What are the reasons the heritage is in danger and what type of safeguarding measures have been taken? Please be specific.) 2-H 3 (What are the pending issues for safeguarding ICH in your country that you have found through interviews and the field survey?)
Dr. Jayantha Jayasiri	2-F 3 (The Marriage Ceremony as a rites of passage) 2-H 4 (What kind of problems and difficulties were encountered during the safeguarding projects?) 2-H 5 (What future plans are there for the safeguarding of ICH?) 2-H 6 (What type of contributions and cooperation from the international society is needed for the safeguarding of ICH in your country?)
Dr. Danister L Perera	2-F 4 (Indigenous Traditional Medical Practices) 2-H 7 (What role do you expect ICHCAP to play in the safeguarding of ICH in the region in terms of programs, projects etc.) 2-H 8 (Please include any requests or suggestions you have on this matter.) 2-H 9 (What should be considered to encourage or to ensure active involvement from community in safeguarding ICH?)
Mr. Chaminda de Silva	Photographer
Ms Varuni Gangabadaarachchi	<i>-Project Coordinators -National Library and Documentation Services Board, Sri Lanka</i>
Mr Udaya Prasad Cabral	<i>-Project Coordinators -National Library and Documentation Services Board, Sri Lanka</i>

Annex 1 | ***Cultural Property Act***

Cultural Property Act in Sri Lanka

(No. 73 of 1988)

Sect 1. Short title

1. This Act may be cited as the Cultural Property Act, No. 73 of 1988.

Sect 2. Prohibition of export of cultural property except upon license

2. (1) No person shall, except upon a license in the prescribed form issued by the Controller of Exports (hereinafter referred to as the "Controller ") and upon the payment of a prescribed fee export or attempt to export any cultural property from Sri Lanka-
- (2) This section shall have effect as if it formed part of the Customs Ordinance and the provisions of that Ordinance shall apply accordingly.

Sect 3. Application for license to export cultural property

3. (1) Every application for a license under section 2 shall be made to the Controller in the prescribed form and shall be accompanied by a statement from the Archeological Commissioner stating that he has no objection to the issue of such license to the applicant.
- (2) The Controller may refuse to issue a license where-
 - (a) the Archeological Commissioner in the statement issued by him objects to the issue of such license ; or
 - (b) he is of opinion that any cultural property sought to be exported is a property which is required for museum in Sri Lanka.

Sect 4. Appeal against refusal of license

4. Any person aggrieved by the refusal of the Controller to issue any license under section 3 may appeal against such refusal to the Secretary to the Ministry in charge of the subject of Cultural Affairs (hereinafter referred to as the " Secretary ") against such refusal. (2) The Secretary may in dealing with any appeal preferred to him under subsection (1), affirm or set aside the decision of the Controller against which the appeal has been preferred.

Sect 5. Penalty for export of cultural property without permission

5. If any person, himself or by another person on his behalf exports or attempts to export any cultural property in contravention of section 2, he shall, without prejudice to any forfeiture or penalty to which he may be liable under the provisions of the Customs Ordinance, be guilty of an

offence and shall, upon conviction after summary trial before a Magistrate, be liable to a fine not exceeding five thousand rupees or to imprisonment of either description for a period not exceeding three years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Sect 6. Delegation of powers and duties of the Controller

6. (1) The Controller may delegate to an officer of the Department of Archaeology the power to issue license.
- (2) Every officer appointed under subsection (1) shall exercise the power delegated to him subject to the general or special directions of the Controller.

Sect 7. Establishment of the Cultural Property Board

7. There shall be established a Board called the Cultural Property Board (hereinafter referred to as " the Board ").

Sect 8. Constitution of the Board

8. (1) The Board shall consist of-
 - (a) the Secretary to the Ministry of the Minister in charge of 'the subject of Cultural Affairs, who shall be the Chairman;
 - (b) the Director of Museums ;
 - (c) the Director of National Archives ;
 - (d) Chairman, Central Environmental Authority;
 - (e) two members who shall have specialized knowledge and experience in matters relating to cultural property appointed by the Minister.
- (2) A person shall be disqualified for appointment or continuing as a member of the Board under paragraph (e) of subsection (1) -
 - (a) if he is or becomes a member of Parliament; or
 - (b) if he is not or ceases to be a citizen of Sri Lanka.
- (3) The members appointed by the Minister under paragraph (e) of subsection (1) subject to the provisions of subsections (4) and (5) shall hold office for a term of three years but shall be eligible for reappointment
- (4) The Minister may remove from office any member of the Board appointed under paragraph (e) of subsection (1) without assigning any reason therefor and such removal shall not be called in question in any court.
- (5) In the event of the vacation of office of any member appointed under paragraph (e), or his removal from office under the provision of the preceding subsection, the Minister may appoint another person to hold such office during the unexpired part of the term of office of the member whom he succeeds.
- (6) If any member of the Board appointed under paragraph (e) is temporarily unable to discharge the duties of his office due to ill-health or absence from Sri Lanka or for any other cause, the Minister may appoint some other person to act in his place as member,

- (7) The members of the Board shall be remunerated at such rates as may be determined by the Minister in consultation with the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance.

Sect 9. Meetings and quorum of the Board

9. (1) The Board may regulate its procedure in regard to the meetings of the Board and the transaction of business at such meetings.
(2) The quorum for a meeting of the Board shall unless the Board otherwise determines be four members.

Sect 10. Power of the Board

- 10.(1) The Board shall be an Advisory Board and shall advise the Archaeological Commissioner in the exercise of his powers or on any other matters referred to the Board for their opinion.
(2) The Board may in the exercise of their power retain the services of any person having a specialised knowledge and experience in matters relating to cultural property.

Sect 11. Minister to specify the categories of cultural property to be registered

11. The Minister in consultation with the Board and with the approval of the Cabinet may from time to time by Notification published in the Gazette specify the categories of cultural property that shall be registered under this Act, having due regard to the following considerations : (a) the necessity for conserving such category of cultural property ; (b) the need to preserve such objects within Sri Lanka for the better appreciation of her cultural heritage ; (c) such other factors as will or are likely to contribute to the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka.

Sect 12. Registration of cultural property in private possession

12. No person shall own or have in his custody or possession any cultural property specified in the Notification referred to in section 11 unless such cultural property is registered by the registering officer and such officer has issued a certificate of registration in respect of such property.

Sect 13. Government Agent to be the registering officer

13. The Minister may, by Notification published in the Gazette appoint for the purpose of section 12 the Government Agent to be the registering officer for the administrative district for which he has been appointed Government Agent.

Sect 14. Applications for certificate of registration-

14. The Minister may, by Order published in the Gazette, prescribe the period within which an application for a certificate of registration may be made under section 15.

Sect 15. Grant of certificate of registration

15. (1) Every person required to obtain a certificate of registration under, section 12 shall make an application for such certificate, to the registering officer of the administrative district within which he resides on an application form prescribed for the purpose.
- (2) On receipt of an application under subsection (1) the registering officer may, after holding such inquiry as he deems fit, grant a certificate of registration containing such particulars as may be prescribed.
- (3) Where an application received under subsection (1) has been rejected, the registering officer shall inform the applicant in writing stating his reasons for such rejection.
- (4) Where an application for a certificate of registration has been rejected, the applicant may, within fourteen days from the date of such rejection, appeal to the Archaeological Commissioner against such rejection.
- (5) Any applicant who is aggrieved by a decision of the Archaeological Commissioner rejecting an application for registration may appeal against such decision to the Court of Appeal.

Sect 16. Transfer of ownership of any registered cultural property to be intimated to the registering

16. Where any person transfers the ownership or custody or possession of any cultural property registered under section 12 such person shall intimate within fourteen days from the date of such transfer, the fact of such transfer to the registering officer of the administrative district within which such person resides.

Sect 17. Penalty

17. Any person who- (a) owns or has the custody or possession of any cultural property, fails to make an application under section 15, or (b) transfers the ownership or custody or possession of any cultural property and fails to notify such transfer to the registering officer, under section 16. shall be guilty of an offence and shall, upon conviction after summary trial before a Magistrate, be liable to a fine not exceeding one thousand rupees or to imprisonment of either description for a period not exceeding one year or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Sect 18. Licence to deal in cultural property

18. No person shall, by himself or by any other person on his behalf, carry on the business of selling or offering to sell any cultural property, except under the authority of a licence issued under section 19.

Sec 19

19. (1) The Archaeological Commissioner may issue a licence to any person to carry on the business of selling or offering to sell any cultural property after taking into consideration-
 - (a) the experience of the applicant with respect to trade in cultural property ;
 - (b) the town, village or area where the business is to be carried on ; and

(c) such other matters as may be prescribed.

(2)

- (a) Every application for a license to carry on any business as specified in subsection (1) shall be in the prescribed form and shall be accompanied by the prescribed fee ,
- (b) The Archaeological Commissioner may, after holding such inquiry as he deems fit, issue or refuse to issue a license to an applicant therefor.
- (c) Where the Archaeological Commissioner refuses to Issue a license to an applicant, he shall inform the applicant of the refusal to issue a license,
- (d) Every license authorising the carrying on of any such business as specified in subsection (1) shall be in the prescribed form, for a prescribed period and shall be subject to such terms and conditions, as may be necessary to ensure that the business authorized by such license is carried on in compliance with the provisions of the Act.
- (e) The Archaeological Commissioner may cancel a license issued under subsection (1), if the licensee contravenes or fails to comply with any condition attached to the license
- (f) Where the Archaeological Commissioner cancels the license under paragraph (e), he shall cause notice of such cancellation to be given to the licensee-
- (g) An applicant for a license who is aggrieved by the decision of the Archaeological Commissioner refusing to issue a license, or the licensee who is aggrieved by the decision of the Archaeological Commissioner cancelling his license may, within thirty days from the date of such decision, appeal in writing to the Secretary from such decision.

Sect 20. Person whose licenses have been cancelled may sell cultural property to other licenses

20. Notwithstanding anything contained in section 18, any person whose licence has been cancelled under paragraph (e) of subsection (2) of section 19, may, after making a declaration in writing to the Archaeological Commissioner within such period and in such form and manner as may be prescribed, of all the cultural property in his ownership, custody and possession immediately before the date of such cancellation, sell such cultural property to any other person holding a valid licence issued under section 19 : Provided that no such cultural property shall be sold after a period of six months from the date of cancellation of the licence.

Sect 21. Liability of person contravening Sections 18, 19 and 20 of this Act

21. Any person who- (a) by himself or by other person on his behalf, sells or attempts to sell any cultural property to a person outside Sri Lanka in contravention of section 18, or (b) contravenes the provisions of section 19 or section 20, shall be liable on conviction after summary trial before a

Magistrate, to a fine not exceeding five thousand rupees or to imprisonment of either description for a period not less than three years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Sect 22. Powers of Archaeological Commissioner

22. The Archaeological Commissioner is hereby empowered-

- (a) to prepare a list of the categories of cultural property required to be registered under section 12;
- (b) to conserve, maintain, repair and restore cultural property that requires registration ;
- (c) to control and administer the registration, sale and protection of cultural property that require registration ;
- (d) to purchase valuable cultural property with such funds as may be granted for the purpose by Parliament,

Sect 23. Duties of the Archaeology Commissioner

23. The Archaeological Commissioner shall perform and discharge all such duties and functions as are assigned to him by this Act or by any regulation made thereunder, or by any regulation made thereunder.

Sect 24. Power of inspection of cultural property

24. (1) The Archaeological Commissioner or any officer authorized by him in writing for the purpose may, at all reasonable times, inspect any cultural property in the possession of any person and it shall be the duty of every such person to permit such inspection and to give to the Archaeological Commissioner or such officer all reasonable facilities to study such cultural property and to make drawings, photographs or reproductions thereof by the making of casts or by any other means:

- (2) Any person who fails to comply with the provisions of subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall on conviction after summary trial before a Magistrate be liable to a fine not exceeding one thousand rupees or to imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding three months or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Sect 25. Direction by the Archaeological Commissioner

25. (1) Where the Archaeological Commissioner is of the opinion that any cultural property of national importance owned by or in the custody or possession of any person, is in danger of being destroyed, defaced, misused, allowed to fall into decay or where the character of such property is about to be, or is being, or has been, changed, he shall with the concurrence of the Board give directions to the owner or the persons who have custody or possession of such cultural property to safeguard such property.

- (2) Where the Archaeological Commissioner is of opinion that the owner or person in possession is unable to comply with his directions within a

reasonable time or where he is of opinion that such directions will not be complied with or that such cultural property will be removed from Sri Lanka without a licence he shall with the concurrence of the Board take such property into his custody.

- (3) Any person who wilfully obstructs the Archaeological Commissioner in performing the duties made under subsection (2) shall be guilty of an offence and shall on conviction after summary trial before a Magistrate be liable to a fine not exceeding one thousand rupees or to imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding three months or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- (4) Where the Archaeological Commissioner subsequent to the taking of into his custody any cultural property under subsection (2) is satisfied that the owner or the person who had custody or possession of such property is now in a position to comply with his directions or has complied with such directions and that such property will not be in any danger of being destroyed, defaced, misused or allowed to fall into decay he may with the concurrence of the Board return such property to such owner or person,
- (5) Any property taken into custody under subsection (2) may be handed over to the Director of Museums by the Archaeological Commissioner for exhibition at a Museum for public display.

Sect 26. Authorization of Government Agents and other officers to exercise powers of Archaeological Commissioner

26. The Archaeological Commissioner may generally or specially authorise the exercise, performance or discharge of any of his powers, duties or functions under this Act- (a) by the Government Agent of any district, within that district ; or (b) by any officer of the Department of Archaeology in any part of Sri Lanka.

Sec 27.

27. No suit or proceeding shall be instituted against any officer appointed under this Act, for any act which is done in good faith or is purported to be done by him in the performance of his duties or the discharge of his functions under this Act.

Sect 28. Regulation

28. (1) The Minister may make regulations in respect of any matter required by this Act to be prescribed or in respect of which regulations are authorized by this Act to be made.
- (2) Every regulation made by the Minister shall be published in the Gazette date as may be specified in the regulation.
- (3) Every regulation made by the Minister shall, as soon as convenient after its publication in the Gazette, be brought before Parliament for approval. Any regulation which is not so approved shall be deemed to be rescinded from the date of its disapproval but without prejudice to anything previously done thereunder. Notification of the date on

which any regulation is deemed to be rescinded shall be published in the Gazette.

Sect 29. Interpretation

29. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires- "antiquity" includes any of the following objects lying or being found in Sri Lanka, and has been in existence for more than one hundred years- Statues sculptured or dressed stone and marbles of all descriptions, engravings, carvings, inscriptions.. paintings, writings, and the material where on the fame appear all specimen of ceramic, glyptic metallurgic and textile art, coins, gems, seals, jewels, jewelry, arms, tools, ornaments, furniture, household utensils, and all other objects of art which are movable property; " Archaeological Commissioner" means the person appointed to be or to act as Archaeological Commissioner and includes any person authorized in respect of any power, duty or function of the Archaeological Commissioner under this Act ; "cultural property" includes cultural property which on religious or secular grounds is specifically designated by the Minister with the approval of the Cabinet, as being of importance for archaeology, prehistory. history, literature, art or science, and which belongs to one of the following categories :
- (i) rare collections and specimens of fauna, flora, minerals and anatomy ;
 - (ii) property relating-
 - (a) to history, including the history of science and technology, military and social history : or
 - (b) to the life of national leaders, thinkers, scientists and artists ; or
 - (c) to events of national importance;
 - (iii) products of archaeological excavations or of archaeological discoveries;
 - (iv) elements of artistic or historic monuments or archaeological sites which have been dismembered ;
 - (v) antiquities more than one hundred years old, such as inscription, coins, currency notes and engraved seals ;
 - (vi) objects of ethnological interest;
 - (vii) pictures, paintings and drawings produced entirely by hand ;
 - (viii) original marks of statutory art and sculpture ;
 - (ix) original engravings, prints and lithographs ;
 - (x) rare manuscripts, old books, documents, drawings, maps, plans and publications of special interest;
 - (xi) postage revenue and similar stamps;
 - (xii) archives;
 - (xiii) articles of furniture more than one hundred years old; and
 - (xiv) old musical instruments.

Annex 2 | *Photographs*

Photographed by

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Mr. W.Suni Dayaratna-Ministry of Culture and the Arts

Mr. C.H.de Silva-National Library and Documentation Services Board

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Conducting the Bikkhus for an alms giving



Traditional masks carver at work



Wesak lantern made on Wesak poya day to mark the birth, enlightenment, and passing away of Buddha.



Low country dancers on parade



Cultivators singing while ploughing with oxen (Andahera pema)



Performing rituals in the field before reaping



Traditional potters at work on potter's wheel (Saka poruwa)



Ritual of fulfilling vows at the Maha Saman Devale at Mahiyanganaya in the Uva province



Traditional mode of transporting goods on the back of bulls (Thavalam)



Cuisine - Grinding flour to Prepare the traditional sweets by a grinding stone (Kurakan gala)



Fishing through a traditional fishing basket



Devotees worshipping God Kataragama(One of the main Gods in Sri Lanka)



Traditional hand drum (Ath rabana) player participating in the procession



Angampora is an ancient martial art practiced by a set of special families in Sri Lanka



Ritual associated with the preparation of indigenous medicinal decoction. (Agra Raja Kasaya)



An ancient stone boat used by the indigenous practitioners to immerse the patients in oil baths



Threshed paddy is ready to be taken home and hence measured



Village women contributing their share of labour in the paddy cultivation by reaping and collecting the paddy



Mal yahana or the ritual structure built for offering at traditional rituals



Low country dancers performing a ritual with burning of resin



Dance round the milk bowl



Boiling milk on an auspicious occasion is an essential prerequisite in the traditional rituals and customs



First bathing after puberty



The two wooden mortars with lighted oil lamps either side of the girl.



Ritual associated with healing of cattle on a floral structure (Mal asna)



Kiriammas (Grandmothers) bless the residents with the lamp wicks in hand at the end of the ritual early in the morning



Ritual Ceremony of Devil dancing



A Mask of a Sanni Yaka (Amukku Sanniya) indigenous name For a sickness



Performance of a kolam dance a traditional folk art



Reaping paddy in the field



An elder person ties together small fingers of the bride and groom with a sacred cotton thread chanted with Pirith and pouring holy water on the tied fingers invoke blessing



Groom dresses the bride with clothes and jewelry during the Poruwa ceremony of a wedding



Buddhist Pirith chanting ceremony to invoke blessing



Decorated illuminated pandol constructed for Wesak poya Celebrations to mark birth, enlightenment, and passing away of Buddha



Artistic structure specially made for a ritual



Traditional paddy store called Bissa



Winnowing of paddy after threshing in the threshing floor of the field by going up the cross structure made for the occasion



Dancers of the Dalada Perehara (Possession of sacred tooth relics of Buddha

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