

32nd National Conference of Chartered Accountants inaugurated amidst Sri Lanka's corporate glitterati
The much awaited 32nd National Conference of Chartered Accountants was inaugurated today evening (20th October) at a gala ceremony at the Waters Edge, Battaramulla under the auspices of Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

Mr. Rajapaksa addressing the large gathering spoke on "Expectations from the Private Sector and the Leadership Required for Economic Resurgence."

This year's landmark event was given a further boost with the participation of World Bank's Chief Financial Management Officer Mr. Tony Hegarty who delivered an enlightening keynote address on "Government and Public Sector Role in Sustainable Economic development" to a packed house.

The annual conference has built a reputation over the years as a business summit which deals with broad economic and business issues apart from its emphasis on core finance related topics. Held under the thought provoking theme "Quest for Balance" this year's conference will consist of six technical sessions running over a period of two-days.

The economic and technological transformation over the last few decades has been phenomenal. Our world, country, work places and roles are changing at a pace never seen before. Yet there are many aspects that have been overlooked. Balancing these complex and sometimes conflicting issues has become the greatest challenge ahead of us. With this perspective, the national conference will be a platform to explore and reflect on this stimulating theme "Quest for Balance".

This year's conference is aimed at providing an enriching experience and a learning opportunity at both a technical and a broader level. Over the three days of the conference, participants will explore means of achieving sustainable economic and business growth, in an increasingly challenging environment. The practical issues in the implementation of IFRS will also be examined. The conference will also discuss the complex and diverse roles of CFOs today and the skills needed to balance the demands made on professionals in a world of changing dynamics.

The two-day long technical sessions which will be held on 21st and 22nd October, will feature some prominent Sri Lankan business leaders and renowned foreign speakers who have been specially flown to Sri Lanka to share in their knowledge and expertise on a wide range of subjects as paper presenters during the sessions.

Asian Development Banks (Sri Lanka Resident Mission) Country Director, Ms. Rita O'Sullivan will inaugurate the technical sessions with her presentation on "Quest for Balance - Our World: People, Planet and Profit."

Her session will be followed by, Former Assistant Governor of Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Dr. Anila Dias Bandaranaike, who will speak on "Quest for Balance - Our Country: Vanity, Sanity and Reality."

Eminent business personality Mr. J.M.S. Brito, the Deputy Chairman of Aitken Spence PLC, will examine the varied expectations of investors and other stakeholders at the third session of the conference titled, "Quest for Balance - Shareholder: Risk, Reward and Responsibility."

Mr. Brito's session will be followed by the fourth session which will be presented by Executive Director, Finance and Operations of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), Mr. Robin Fieth who will speak on the role of the CFO today in "Quest for Balance - CFO: Drive, Support and Comply." The fifth session will see a detailed presentation into International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) which are being fast adopted by many countries today. John O'Grady, Partner / Asia Pacific Area IFRS Leader of Ernst & Young will speak on "Quest for Balance - IFRS: Theory, Practice and Transition".

The 32nd National Conference will come to a conclusion with the sixth and final technical session which will feature Widely acclaimed international speaker Ms. Avril Henry, who will shed light on how to organizations facilitate and benefit enormously from good work- life balance, at the conference's sixth and final session "Quest for Balance - You: Role, Rhetoric and Reality."

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