

The biggest business summit in Sri Lanka, the 39th National Conference of Chartered Accountants inaugurated on Monday, 08th October 2018 with the country's corporate glitterati including locally and internationally acclaimed visionaries, decision makers, business leaders, and entrepreneurs in attendance.

The conference, organised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka (CA Sri Lanka) was held under the patronage of Mr. James Dauris, British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, who was the Chief Guest while Prof. Lalith Gamage, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer of the Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT), who revolutionized IT education in Sri Lanka was the Guest of Honour.

The keynote address was delivered by Sri Lankan IT visionary Mr. Tony Weeresinghe, who stakes claim to building some of the world's most sophisticated trading systems, including the current platform for the London Stock Exchange. He is the Founder of MillenniumIT, and the Chairman/CEO of Ustocktrade, LLC as well as Co-Founder/Director at The Cainan Foundation.

This year's conference set a new record having attracted over 2000 participants to the event's main venue, live broadcast and webcast. The conference which will conclude on 10th October following two days of technical sessions will revolve around the theme "Hyperleap" focusing on technological disruption, and the rapidly changing global economy among other factors that challenge the business world.

President of CA Sri Lanka Mr. Jagath Perera said that there has been a considerable impact on the role of the accountancy profession with the influence of disruptive technologies. "This has renewed the call for us as professional accountants to comprehend the need to adapt with time, while understanding that technology is here to stay and we have to work beside it, and not against it. This is why it has become increasingly important for professionals including chartered accountants to take bold strides and leap forward to evolve in their professional role," he said.

Chairman of the National Conference Committee Mr. Dulitha Perera said that technology has impelled finance professionals to grow at a rapid speed in order to stay relevant, keep up and thrive in this ever-evolving landscape and Chartered Accountants must evolve and change with it if they are to remain relevant. He noted that while technology is here to stay, does this mean that computers can do the same functions of a human. "It would be impossible to programme a computer or create a software programme with the ability to exercise the judgement a fully trained, senior accounting professional has at their disposal. But, nevertheless there are renewed complexities and challenges. Being an accountant means becoming an elemental force to the organisation's governance and strategy execution," he added.

Chairman of the National Conference Technical Committee Mr. Moiz Rehmanjee said that with heavy sounding punchlines such as artificial intelligence, block-chains, machine learning technologies, millennial wave, social media revolution, and changes to the global economic order, the single unanswered question remains as to what this means for everyone. "The blunt reality is that no one quite knows exactly what all this entails for our future, but what we do know is that big changes lie ahead and to ride this tide we need to be prepared to change ourselves, boldly. The topics and speakers that we have lined up for the two days of interaction at the conference will focus on our capabilities as professionals and as a nation to not be subdued by the disruptions but to emerge out of them in better shape than before," he said.

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The National Conference of Chartered Accountants has once again attracted Sri Lanka's top business leaders, c-suite executives including top accounting professionals. The two days of technical sessions will be steered by highly acclaimed speakers and panelists recognised both locally and internationally, for taking bold leaps towards success without being shackled by the never ending changes to the business ecosystem.

CAPTIONS :





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An entertainment act describing the theme of the conference "Hyperleap"



A section of the audience at the inauguration of the 39th National Conference



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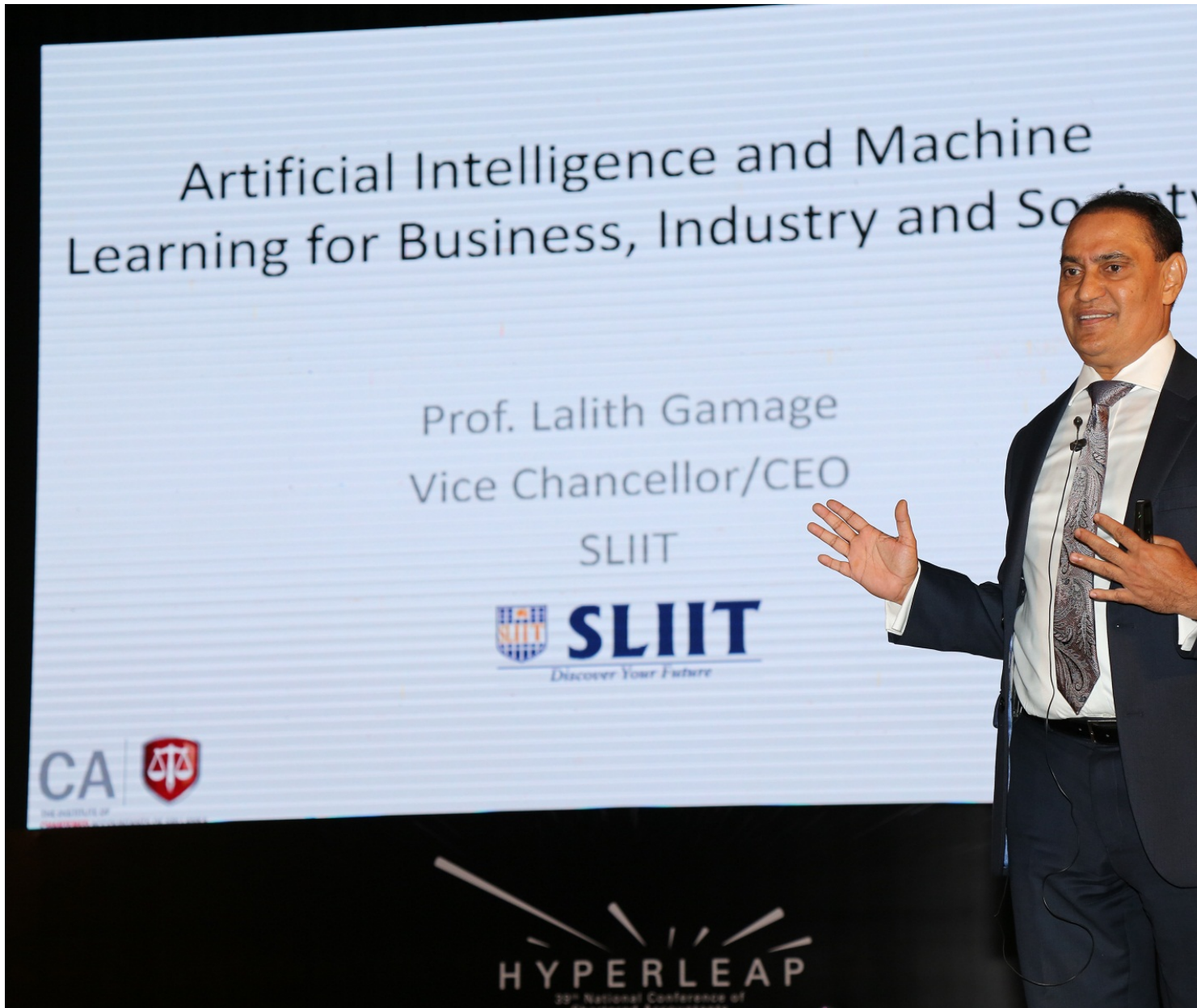
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Keynote speaker Mr. Tony Weeresinghe addressing the gathering.

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Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer of the Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT) Prof. Lalith Gamage



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British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Mr. James Dauris delivering his speech.

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From left to right - Keynote speaker Mr. Tony Weeresinghe, Chief Guest Mr. James Dauris, National Conference