

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka (CA Sri Lanka), which prides itself on being a world-class body, continued to make vast strides both locally and globally, by successfully hosting its inaugural international conference at the Millennium Airport Hotel in Dubai recently.

The first-of-its-kind conference, which was part of CA Sri Lanka's larger goal aimed at disseminating thought leadership among a cross-section of corporate professionals, including Chartered Accountants and other finance professionals in the Middle East, was a houseful event attracting over 250 participants, who are employed in the region.

The conference, themed LEAD - Navigating the Future,'centred around three power-packed sessions that focused on Entrepreneurship: Finding the Next Wave,'Agility: Digital Finance Transformation and Emerging Trends,'and Developments: Global Trends and the Way Forward.' The insightful sessions were steered by a vibrant panel of speakers and panelists.

Among the special invitees were Mr. Nalinda Wijerathna, the Counsel General of Sri Lanka to Dubai and the Northern Emirates, who was the Guest of Honour, and Ms. Chafika Al Blooshi, Developers Affairs and Licensing Director at Abu Dhabi City Municipality. The keynote on Uncovering the Leader in You' was delivered by Dr. Udaya Indrarathna, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to UAE.

Mr. Sanjaya Bandara, President of CA Sri Lanka, Mr. Heshana Kuruppu, Vice President of CA Sri Lanka, as well as Member of Council Mr. Saman Sri Lall, Ms. Dulani Fernando, CEO of CA Sri Lanka, Ms. Nishani Perera, Co-Chairperson of the Technical Committee of the Middle East Conference; and Ms. Jani Ganeshan, Co-Chairperson of the Middle East Conference Committee also attended the event in Dubai.

The power packed conference was a joint initiative of CA Sri Lanka and its overseas chapters in the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.

In his speech, Mr. Bandara highlighted that CA Sri Lanka, although small in size, when compared with other professional bodies, in stature, it commands an impressive standing regionally and internationally.

"I firmly believe that thought leadership is not a subject that should be pursued by only a few. Ultimately, it is not about

the quantity but quality, and in our journey to evolve, and in our standing as catalysts of change, it is truly a privilege and an honour to have the opportunity to disseminate powerful thought leadership to the professional community in the Middle East,” he said.

CA Sri Lanka stakes claim for introducing the concept of “National Conference” in Sri Lanka, over 40 years ago, which primarily caters to the requirements of Chartered Accountants. In the past, CA Sri Lanka’s event focused primarily on the Western Province, but in 2021, it took a step further and introduced the regional conference concept for the benefit of the professional community outside the Western Province including in Galle, and Kandy. Following two successful regional conferences, CA Sri Lanka decided to expand this overseas for the benefit of overseas members, and the inaugural international conference in the Middle East was the first step towards fulfilling this vision.

In that context, the purpose of the conference was to cater to the Continuous Professional Development of Chartered Accountants in the Middle East region specially focusing on the requirements of CAs in the Middle East Region and to enhance the connections of the members within the Middle East Chapter network.

The conference concluded with a gala dinner, during which the Best Outstanding CA and the Best Inspiring CA from every CA Sri Lanka Middle East Chapter was recognised.



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