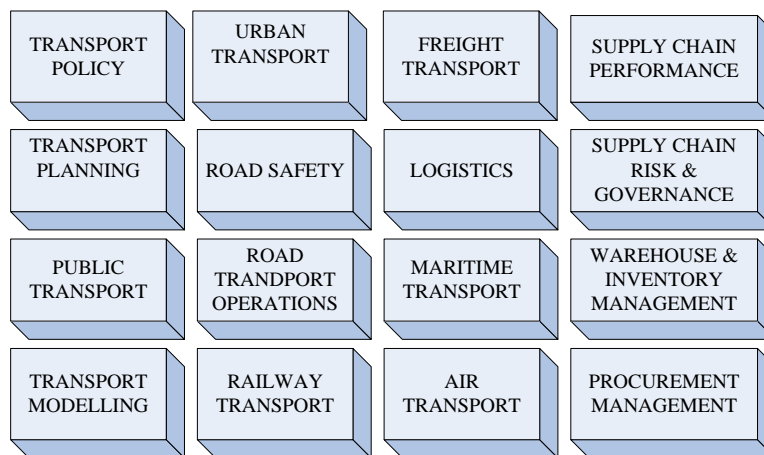


FIRST EVER RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM ON TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS CONCLUDES SUCCESSFULLY

Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Sri Lanka (CILT SL) in partnership with Sri Lanka Society of Transport and Logistics (SLSTL) held a joint research symposium recently titled Research for Transport and Logistics Industry (R4TLI). This is the first time a research symposium was organised in this magnitude for the transport and logistics industry. The objective of the R4TLI was to promote research thinking into industry problems and to make the industry and policy makers adopt these solutions to resolve the existing gaps and to explore new areas. The event was a great success with over 170 representatives from the industry, academia and government sector as well as from overseas attending the symposium. Research presentations covered sixteen areas of the sector which made the symposium quite unique.



Chairman of CILT Capt Lasitha Cumaratunga commended the joint organising committee comprising of members from CILT SL and SLSTL for taking the lead to foster a culture of research and development within our industry in Sri Lanka by organising this research symposium. Chairman of the Joint Organising Committee, Professor Amal Kumarage said at his inauguration speech that the research for transport and logistics industry came from a growing understanding of the gap that exists between the practice and research of transport and logistics in many developing countries. Sri Lanka needs to carry out cutting edge research and development in logistics and transport if we are to realise our ambition to become a logistic hub, he said. Symposium organisers received an overwhelming response from the young researchers for the call for papers and out of the sixty abstracts received, forty six were selected to be included in the proceedings. The first day of the symposium was held at the Kingsbury hotel and had three keynote speakers, Prof Tetsuo Yai, President of Eastern Asia Society of Transportation Studies (EASTS), Dr Tilak Siyambalapitiya, Energy Consultant and Mr Gayan Fernando, Head of Safety Lafarge Holcim Sri Lanka. The second day symposium was held at Galadari hotel where forty six presenters from different sectors and one invited speaker Prof Okamoto of University of Tsukuba, Japan presented their papers at the symposium.

Research symposium received wide appreciation from many who were present on the occasion encouraging the organisers to make this an annual event of the calendar for the logistics industry. Assistant Secretary CILT, Lalith Edirisinghe who chaired the session on freight transport said,

the high performances in the transport and logistics industry (TLI) heavily depend on the knowledge dissemination and transfers followed by the opportunities to access and apply these knowledge and good practices. Research is the key that facilitates these outcomes effectively. However, research would mean nothing if the industry have no access to the findings of the researchers. The timely inauguration of R4TLI by CILT SL in collaboration with SLSTL reflects the commitment of CILT SL towards linking research and TLI.

Vice Chairman CILT, Chaminda Perera, said that CILT SL joined hands with SLSTL to organize the research symposium, to lay the platform to display the theoretically carried out research into a competitive environment. Hence, this forum was an ideal platform for the discerning researcher as well as the regulators and the industry.

Chief Commercial Officer SAGT Ted Muttiah said that research remains the cornerstone of strategic development of our industry beyond the conventional notion of service deliverables, value-add and business efficiency benchmarking. The two day program was very well supported in audience attendance and importantly in the research presentations with a conducive and supportive environment for robust discussion on the presented. SAGT commends this initiative and is a willing partner in support of future such initiatives with CILT SL.

CILT council member, Dr Ganga Samarasekera said that R4TLI was a long awaited forum to deepen research experience for students at different levels of research exposure. The MSc students from SLIIT who were about to start their research enthusiastically participated in the symposium. They were able to have a direct exposure to the latest research to identify the topics of the day, types of methodologies adopted, present directions of long-run research, industrial implications of research work presented as well as responses of different stakeholders to research. Also they were able to network with researchers of similar interest so that they could take up more informed research.

Head of Business Development, Advantis 3PLPlus Leroy Eberts said that it was a pleasant surprise for the Head of Business Systems, Sumeera Madurapperuma and the other co-authors when the paper was accepted for publication in the symposium proceedings. The team paid attention to updating the knowledge in following an academic approach towards identifying client's needs. The R4TLI is a novel concept and it really is important to motivate internal teams within companies to adopt a structured approach towards addressing innovation and new product development. It helps to identify and anticipate customers' needs and wants prior to developing solutions.

Inshi Nishara, an undergraduate whose paper won the award for the best paper in supply chain said that R4TLI provided a great opportunity for all young undergraduate researches to showcase their talents where they are often giving up the idea of presenting their unique conceptual frameworks in international conferences due to financial constraints. Recognizing their talents and the hard work through awards for each category of research areas, was able to both uphold their enthusiasm and bring out the best of the researches she said.

Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) is the leading International professional body for supply chain, Logistics and Transport. With a global membership of over 33,000 in 100 countries, CILT is present in 34 countries across the globe. CILT support the professionals who are involved in aviation, maritime, land transport and logistics and is the leading International

voice for supply chain, Logistics and Transport in the country. For more details about CILT SL please access the website <http://www.ciltsl.com>.