

SOCIAL COHESION AND RECONCILIATION THEMATIC PRESENTS



IDS V

Understanding Economic Justice

23.02.2023 || 15:30 – 17:30

The Intergenerational Dialogue Series, organised by the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) aims to generate knowledge of past events surrounding the civil conflict that spanned three decades to promote reconciliation, non-recurrence, and social responsibility through inter-generational discussions, for sustainable peace in Sri Lanka. CEPA's working hypothesis on IDS is that it is imperative to contextualise the present within Sri Lanka's violent past, and in doing so the conversation needs to take place between generations to ensure cohesive understanding of the problem. In its fifth installation, IDS aims to explore the concept of "Economic Justice" as it pertains to Sri Lanka's present context, exploring the nexus between social cohesion and economic justice.

You are invited to this event (hybrid):

16, Jawatta Road, Colombo 05
or
Register in advance on Zoom
Feb 23, 2023 03:30 PM, Colombo



SOCIAL COHESION AND RECONCILIATION THEMATIC PRESENTS



IDS V

Understanding Economic Justice

23.02.2023 || 15:30 – 17:30

The Intergenerational Dialogue Series, organised by the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) aims to generate knowledge of past events surrounding the civil conflict that spanned three decades to promote reconciliation, non-recurrence, and social responsibility through inter-generational discussions, for sustainable peace in Sri Lanka. CEPA's working hypothesis on IDS is that it is imperative to contextualise the present within Sri Lanka's violent past, and in doing so the conversation needs to take place between generations to ensure cohesive understanding of the problem. The fifth installation will take place on the 23rd February, 2023.

The series was launched with a discussion by Rev. Galkande Dhammanada Thero titled 'Loving Kindness for Inner Peace.' on December 6, 2019. The conversations followed by a guided meditation session where participants were encouraged to tap into their inner healing. The second dialogue was held on August 24, 2020 with the late Dr Malathi de Alwis on the challenges to memorialisation, titled "Memorialisation and Community". The presentation explored the human desire to remember as well as forget and socio-political implications of the same. Both sessions were attended by a cross section of academics, development partners, researchers, students, and journalists.

The third dialogue planned for this series was an online discussion with author and activist Sarah Kabir. Sarah shared insights from her book "Voices of Peace". Voices of Peace is an anthology of stories from a sample of twenty combatants from the Sri Lanka armed forces and the LTTE. In its fourth installation, the Social Cohesion Thematic brought into conversation the carrefour of art, identity, technology, and conflict in relation to the youth demographic of the country. In doing so, the findings of the research conducted under the title 'Youth and Identity Discourses in Post-war Sri Lanka' were presented; this study was conducted focusing on the wave of murals which took place between late 2019 and early 2020 on both physical and virtual spaces and places.

In its fifth installation, IDS aims to explore the concept of "Economic Justice" as it pertains to Sri Lanka's present context, exploring the nexus between social cohesion and economic justice. In September 2022, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) alleged that Sri Lanka is culpable of economic crimes which consequentially led to abuse of human rights, necessitating a conversation on what economic justice entails. It is our view that at this moment where the social contract is being renegotiated, the broad context of the post-war realities must be at the forefront of the conversation. In doing so, it is imperative to understand the concept of "economic justice" as it pertains to the complicated, systemic ground realities of the country that predates the present crisis. Given CEPA's unique position of operating on the nexus between poverty and social cohesion, IDS V will initiate a conversation on what economic justice means to Sri Lanka, bringing together academics, activists, and opinion leaders.

The panel includes Natasha Palansuriya, Mythri Jegathesan, Bhavani Fonseka, and Shiran Fernando. The event will be held at CEPA premises with the option of joining virtually for remote participants.



Ms Natasha Palansuriya is an Independent Consultant, working in the development sector offering research and advisory services. Prior to this she was a Senior Researcher at the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) leading the Social Cohesion thematic. She is a PhD Candidate at City, University of London, and successfully defended her thesis at her viva in December 2022 and is in correction stage. Her PhD research focuses on the Sri Lankan Tamil transnational engagement in post-war justice. Her areas of research expertise includes transitional justice and reconciliation, diasporas and diaspora engagement, transnational activism, governance and democracy. Natasha has a Masters in International Politics and Human Rights from City, University of London, where her dissertation explored the reconciliation process of Sri Lanka. Natasha also has a First Class Honours Bachelors degree in Journalism and Media from Coventry University.

Dr Mythri Jegathesan is a social scientist and associate professor in the Department of Anthropology at Santa Clara University. She earned her PhD in Anthropology from Columbia University in New York and has been researching gender and labor dynamics in Sri Lanka's tea plantation sector since 2008. Her book, *Tea and Solidarity: Tamil Women and Work in Postwar Sri Lanka* (2019) is a ten-year ethnographic study of plantation life and work in south-central Sri Lanka and was awarded the 2020 Diana Forsythe Prize and 2021 Michelle Z. Rosaldo Award for its contributions to both science and technology and feminist anthropological studies.

Bhavani Fonseka is a constitutional lawyer and a prominent human rights lawyer and activist in Sri Lanka. She is a researcher and Attorney at Law in the Centre for Policy Alternatives. She is a member of the policy committee of Human Rights Watch. She was an advisor to the Consultation Task-force on human Rights and member to formulate the National Human Rights Action Plan in Sri Lanka. She is counsel in cases in the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka. She did her bachelor's degree in law from the University of Bristol and her masters in law from the Denver University and masters in public administration from Harvard University.

Fonseka was a Mason Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School for the period 2013–2014. In 2015 she was selected to participate in the 2nd Women's Leadership Program Eisenhower Fellows

Shiran Fernando is the Chief Economist at the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (CCC) and leads the Economic Intelligence Unit which is the focal point of the Chamber for economic research and policy advocacy. He was previously a member of the Steering Committee on Economic Policy of the CCC. Shiran previously held the role as the Lead Economist and Senior Product Head at Frontier Research. He has been part of numerous economic and business forums both locally and internationally as a speaker, panelist and a moderator. Shiran is also contributing writer to LMD's monthly Economic Outlook Column and an alumnus of the U.S International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). Shiran is also a member of the Investment Advisory Panel of the Softlogic Investment and was recently appointed to the board of Biodiversity Sri Lanka.

Shiran holds a Bachelors in Economics and Finance from the University of London, holder of the ACMA and CGMA professional qualifications, a Post-Graduate Diploma in International Relations from the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS) and an Executive MBA from the Post Graduate Institute of Management, Sri Lanka.

