

International Women's Day 2024

The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka commemorated International Women's Day on 12th March 2024, under the theme '*Economic transformation through support for women*': a response to *the crisis*, at the National Museum Auditorium. The event was graced by the distinguished presence of the Chief Guest, Dr Sonali Deraniyagala, Chairman of the HRCSL, Justice L.T.B Dehideniya, Board of Commissioners and the Secretary of the HRCSL.

The event commenced with the lighting of the traditional oil lamp, followed by opening remarks delivered by Justice Dehideniya, Chairman of the HRCSL. He emphasised the women of Sri Lanka are the considerable contributors sustaining the economy with untapped potential capable of transforming the economy of Sri Lanka. The key note address was delivered by the Chief Guest, Dr Sonali Deraniyagala, an eminent economist and memoirist. In her speech, she elaborated on several key areas such as vulnerability, poverty and income inequality, which has been exacerbated as a result of the economic crisis in Sri Lanka. Drawing parallels with the aftermath of financial crises in other countries and based on empirical research, she narrated how the increase in income inequality results in higher gender inequality. She also emphasised how escalating income inequality decelerates the realisation of all other human rights.

Those resource persons participated namely, Ms Niyanthini Kadiragamar, Ms Chamila Thushari, Ms Mayalagu Chandralekha and Ms Swasthika Arulingam made eloquently shared insights on economic justice, impacts of the economic crisis on the free trade zones, the impact of the economic crisis on the plantation sector and the impact of the economic crisis on labour class respectively.

The event came to a close with a brief presentation made by Prof. Farzana Haniffa, Commissioner of the HRCSL, on the work done by the HRCSL with particular reforms to women's rights violations followed by a question and answer session that provided the opportunity for the participants to exchange views with the speakers and the members of the Commission.

The event was attended by Government and Non-Government Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, members of Diplomatic Corps, journalists and academia.



Chairman, Justice L.T.B. Dehideniya delivering
The opening Remarks



Chief Guest, Dr. Sonali Deraniyagala



Ms. Niyanthini Kadirgamar



Ms. Chamila Thushari



Ms. Mayalagu Chandraleka



Ms. Swasthika Arulingam



“Dalwalmu” song by HRCSL staff



Secretary, Mr. Ranjith Uyangoda delivering the vote of thanks



Stakeholders participating at the occasion



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