

CIMA Janashakthi Pinnacle Awards 2005



(L-R) Raja Gnanasiri Hewabowela, Chairman/ Managing Director, Nippolac, Lal Keerthi Amarasinghe Gunewardhane, Managing Director, Lucky Lanka Dairies, Anil Suneetha Amarasinguriya, Managing Director/CEO of Sampath Bank - winners of the 'Business Leader of the Year' in the medium, small and large scale categories respectively with Alessandro Pia, Country Director, Sri Lankan Resident Mission, ADB and Chief Guest, W T Ellawela, Chairman of Janashakthi Insurance and Guest of Honour and Lalith Fonseka, President, CIMA - Sri Lanka Division.

The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) Janashakthi Pinnacle Award Ceremony was held at the Cinnamon Grand Hotel in March 2005. The awards have become a benchmark for both business and professional excellence awards in Sri Lanka. The aim is to recognise outstanding achievers in the corporate world who have excelled in their professional background as well as career. The winners were in four categories: Business Leader of the Year, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Year, CIMA Business Manager of the Year and Young CIMA Star of the Year. The award for 'Business Leader of the Year' is based on achievement and performance. The judges looked for outstanding corporate leadership as well as the candidate's contribution towards society, social responsibility and outstanding personal achievements. The 'Business Leader of the Year' and 'Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Year' have three categories each -small scale, medium scale, and large scale business. These are graded according to an annual turnover of up to Rs250m between Rs250m and Rs 1bn, and above Rs1bn. Anil Suneetha Amarasinguriya, Managing Director/ CEO of Sampath Bank was the winner of the 'Business Leader of the Year' in the large scale category. As an Associate of CIMA and a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, he has over 25 years of experience in the financial services sector. He leads the only organisation within its sector to be among the best Ten

Corporate Citizens of Sri Lanka.

The winner of the 'Business Leader of the Year' in the medium scale was Raja Gnanasiri Hewabowela, Chairman/ Managing Director of the Nippolac Group of Companies. Hailing from the south of Sri Lanka, he was cited as having great commitment to develop his team from the front, giving them the necessary training and encouragement to perform Quality at a reasonable price is his motto and this has paved the way for his organisation to progressively increase market penetration and market share.

Lal Keerthi Amarasiri Gunewardhane, Managing Director of Lucky Lanka Dairies, won the gold award for the 'Business Leader of the Year' in the small-scale category. He hails from the deep south of Sri Lanka where he used a raw material abundantly available in his village. Today with expansion, he sources this same raw material from across a wider geographical area of the country. His vision of 'Creating a Healthy Generation toward the Prosperous Future in Sri Lanka' was pursued through the Research and Development Team, which was able to identify the nutritional value of their products and innovate awareness programmes to disseminate this. Starting out with a single product he has now expanded to a portfolio of over 20 products. This range expansion has contributed to trebling his turnover this year.

The award for the 'Young CIMA Star of the Year' was presented to Hasitha Premaratne, Head of Research for Hatton National Bank Stock Brokers. As the Gold award winner he is entitled to a scholarship to study at the Institute of Management, Bangalore, together with sponsored airfare and accommodation.

Premaratne is an Associate of CIMA with a BSc from the University of Colombo. He is also an Associate of the ACCA and of the SCMA, Sri Lanka, and is currently completing an :MBA from Oxford Brookes University, London. He has already achieved a name for himself in his area of specialisation and has effectively contributed his expertise at forums on Sri Lanka and its investment potential overseas. He is a Senior Lecturer for CIMA Examinations and has achieved distinction in this role.

Sriyan de Silva Wijeyeratne, Country Manager for Microsoft, Sri Lanka, and Rajiv Casie Chetty, Executive Director of Lankan Ceramics and Managing Director of Ceytea Plantations, Horana Plantations and Uni Dil Packaging, were the joint

winner for the 'CIMA Business Manager of the Year' award. Wijeyeratne has a First Class Degree in Business Administration and a Masters Degree, both from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. He moved very early into Marketing and Sales and has been a Resource Speaker and Panellist at international seminars. Handpicked for his current job at Microsoft, Sri Lanka, he has shared his passion and vision to set up and drive his organisation towards groundbreaking initiatives. He has been recognized by his employer and within two years received a Gold Star Award for his leadership in 2005. He was elected to membership of the Asia Pacific Leadership Team. He is the Chairman, Public Relations and the Director-elect for Vocational Services of the Rotary Club of Colombo and is actively involved in other associations.

A Fellow of the ACCA and a Chartered Financial Analyst, Casie Chetty was instrumental in turning around a troubled and debt-ridden new acquisition. He used his analytical skills and financial tools to successfully carry out the task. He has written several articles on stock market and financial markets in Sri Lanka, and published a research study on the impact of Institutional Investors on the Colombo Stock Exchange. He is also a lecturer on Economics and Equity Investments. He is Charter Chairman of the Colombo Taprobane Round Table No. 3 and is actively involved in raising funds for charity projects. The gold award winners receive a scholarship to INSEAD Paris - one of the most recognised entrepreneurial and executive development institutions in the world.

This year's new award - the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Year - was presented for the first time with a view to strengthen CIMA's commitment to the field of financial and management accounting in Sri Lanka. It was open to all finance professionals, and they were judged on career and personal achievement. The award is a prestigious recognition of a CFO for distinction in the field of finance.

The winner CFO of the Year in the medium scale category was Thilina Gomes, Director Finance, Confifi Management Services. He is a fellow of CIMA, with an MBA from the University of Colombo, where he received two Gold Medals for Accounting and Management Information Systems and for his Dissertation. He is currently reading for a PhD in Business Administration. Also a Faculty Member of the PIM, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, he teaches MBA students Finance and Management Accounting and supervises several MBA students' research projects. His career progress has been marked by a systemisation of business and

related processes and an active imparting of his knowledge and expertise to others. His ability, achievement and desire for continued learning impressed the Panel of Judges who considered him deserving of the accolade of “CFO of the Year” in the medium-scale category.

Alessandro Pio, Country Director, Sri Lankan Resident Mission, Asian Development Bank, was the Chief Guest at the ceremony. In his speech, he said, “It is important to realise that in order for a pinnacle to stand tall, there has to be a mountain or a building under it. For such a mountain or building to stand firmly, there must be a strong foundation and solid ground beneath, in society at large. Repairing fault lines within society upon which success is built will require vision, leadership and risk-taking on an even larger scale than the business leadership we are recognizing through these CIMA Janashakthi Pinnacle Awards.’ W T Ellawala, Chairman, Janashakthi Insurance Company, and Guest of Honour said that Janashakthi was proud to be associated with the CIMA Sri Lanka CIMA Division in continuing with the awards ceremony for the third consecutive year. He added, “The awards ceremony has become a benchmark for both business and professional excellence. We are committed to playing an active role in recognizing and rewarding professionalism and corporate leadership in the Sri Lankan business sector.”



Anil Suneetha Amarasuriya, Managing Director/CEO of Sampath Bank receiving his award from Lalith Fonseka, President, CIMA - Sri Lanka Division while Alessandra Pio, Country Director, Sri Lankan Resident Mission, ADB and Chief Guest looks on.