

# People's Bank and CA Sri Lanka Collaborates to Launch a Mentoring Program for SME Exporters

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*Sujeewa Rajapakse, Chairman, People's Bank; Manil Jayasinghe, CA Sri Lanka immediate Past President; Lakshman Abeysekara, CA Sri Lanka SME task Force Chairman addressing the gathering.*

People's Bank has partnered with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka (CA Sri Lanka) to provide a timely boost for Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) customers of the Bank through a mentoring program.

The inauguration ceremony of this program was graced by Sujeewa Rajapakse, Chairman, People's Bank; Manil Jayasinghe, CA Sri Lanka immediate Past President; Lakshman Abeysekara, CA Sri Lanka SME task Force Chairman; Saman Sri Lal, CA Sri Lanka Council Member; Harsha Gunasena, CA Sri Lanka SME Task Force Executive Committee Member; Anoji De Silva, Women's Chamber of Industry and Commerce Sri Lanka President/CA Sri Lanka Council Member; Nandika Buddhipala, President of the National Chamber of Commerce Sri Lanka; Chaaminda Kumarasiri, CA Sri Lanka Asia Pacific Institute of Money and Entrepreneurship; Krishani Narangoda, DGM (Enterprise Banking), People's Bank; Wickrama Narayana, AGM (SME); D.M.D. Dasanayake, AGM (Off Shore Unit & Corporate Banking-1); P.M

Ariyawanse, AGM (Commercial Credit); Thushari Hewawasam, AGM Commercial Banking; Nalin Perera, AGM (Corporate Banking- Relationship II); S.L.M.A.S Samarathunga; Regional Manager (Colombo North); and Chamari Perera, Senior Manager (Project Finance and Rehabilitation).

The SME Task Force of CA Sri Lanka invited People's Bank to join hands to promote SMEs in Sri Lanka through a mentoring program for selected customers of the Bank. Through this partnership CA Sri Lanka aims to help People's Bank customers on a one-to-one basis by appointing Mentors on financial and other business-related issues free of charge for a maximum period of one year. Accordingly, People's Bank has selected export or ICT customers from its large base of SME customers spread across the country.

CA Sri Lanka has appointed Mentors for each customer and the People's Bank Mentor coordinates with the customers (Mentees) and CA Sri Lanka Mentors.

The program commences after signing a formal tripartite MOU between CA Sri Lanka, the respective Mentee, and CA Sri Lanka Mentor. Initially, the Mentees will be provided consultation virtually, and subsequently, they will be visited twice a month by CA Sri Lanka Mentors for closer cooperation and monitoring.

The Bank's Mentors are responsible for directing and guiding the respective Mentees continuously so they can obtain the maximum benefit from the mentoring program during the one-year period. The Mentees will be provided relevant information through reading material and booklets in Sinhala and English by CA Sri Lanka, which offers knowledge on financial and other areas of their business operations.

The Mentees and their company accountants will be provided consultations during the Mentoring Program. CA Sri Lanka Mentors are supervised and evaluated by CA Sri Lanka continuously to ensure that the partnership benefits the Mentees and the required goals are achieved. If a Mentee needs the service from the CA Sri Lanka Mentor beyond the initial one-year period, it can be continued based on a new agreement, which will be made on new terms and conditions.