



APPSTAT NEWSLETTER

Published by
The Institute of Applied Statistics Sri Lanka
2nd floor of the OPA building
'The Professional Center'
No. 275/75
Prof. Stanley Wijesundara Mawatha
Colombo 07
Sri Lanka
Tel/Fax : 011 2588291 Email: appstatsl@gmail.com

ISSN -1391-4995

March 2012

International Statistics Conference: A great success

Institute of Applied Statistics, Sri Lanka (IASSL) that was incorporated by an act of parliament in August 2011, organized its first major event 'The International Statistics Conference 2011' during the last week of December. This is regarded as the occasion that brought the largest number of Statisticians in the international arena into Sri Lanka. This was organized with the intention of uniting Statisticians from across the world through presenting their latest research findings on theory and applications of statistics under the theme 'Statistical Concepts and Methods for the Modern World'. As expected this forum incited greater knowledge in the participants and stimulate further research prospects, as well as venturing to modernize approaches to statistical methodologies in educational curricula in Sri Lanka.

The International Statistics Conference was held for three days from 28th to 30th December 2011 at Waters Edge, Battaramulla and was conducted in five tracks as there were over 150 invited and contributory papers for discussion. Prof. Tissa Vitarana, Hon. Senior Minister of Scientific Affairs graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Prof. C. R. Rao, (91 years) the living legend in Statistical Science, whose research, scholarship, and professional services have had a profound influence on theory and applications of statistics, and Dr. Nancy Geller, the President of the American Statistical Association were the keynote speakers of the conference. There were large number of special guest speeches on variety of topics presented by eminent statisticians of the world such as Prof. John Robinson (Australia), Prof. Rahul Mukarjee (India), Prof. Neville Weber (Australia), Dr. Samaradasa Weerahandhi (USA), Prof. Davis Allen (Australia), Prof. Martin Hazelton (New Zealand), Prof. Tim Swartz (Canada), and Prof. Alan Hutson (USA).



Senior Minister Prof. Tissa Vitarana delivering the Chief Guest's address

Institute of Applied Statistics organized this event in collaboration with the University of Sydney, Australia and the University of Colombo. There were over 250 participants representing 21 countries, spanning six continents.

A special feature of the International Statistics Conference was the award of the first Honorary Fellowship of the Institute of Applied Statistics, Sri Lanka, to the world renowned statistician Prof. C. R. Rao.



The first Honorary Fellowship of the IASSL was awarded to Prof. C. R. Rao by Mr. Palitha Sarukkali, President of the IASSL.

The conference was preceded by two workshops conducted by two eminent scholars at the University of Colombo. One workshop was conducted by Prof. Nitit Mukhopadhyay of University of Connecticut, USA on 'Sequential Methodologies with applications' and the

other by Dr. Maheswaran Rohan of Department of Conservation, New Zealand on 'R commander and R for Statistical Research'. Facilities were provided by the University of Colombo free of charge.

Photo Gallery



Lightning of oil lamp: Prof. Tissa Vitarana, Prof. R.O. Thattil, Prof. K.S. Hirimburegama, Prof. C.R. Rao, Dr. Nancy Gellar



Head-table: From Left to right: Prof. S. Ganeshalingam-Massey University, New Zealand (Co-chair, international program), Mr. P. Sarukkali (President of the IASSL), Prof. C.R. Rao-Pennsylvania State University, USA (Keynote speaker), Prof. Tissa Vitarana -Hon. Senior Minister of Scientific Affairs, Prof. K.S. Hirimburegama -Vice Chancellor University of Colombo (Joint organizer), Dr. Shelton Peiris -Sydney University, Australia (Co-chair, international program), Dr. Chandima Tilakaratne-University of Colombo (Chair, local program)



Left to right: Co-chairs (international program): Dr. Shelton Peiris, Prof. S. Ganeshalingam, Prof. Tim Swartz, Prof. Nitis Mukhopadyay, Chair (local program): Dr. Chandima Tilakaratne,









ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

IASSL greatly appreciates the valuable services, efforts and contributions made by

- The Joint Organizing Institutions
- International Program Committee (IPC),
- Local Program Committee (IPC),
- Referees,
- Session organizers,
- Session chairs,
- Participants,
- Sponsors,
- and very specially all others who volunteered spending time, money and energy

to successfully complete the International Statistics Conference 2011.



Induction of the President

Mr. Palitha Sarukkali was inducted as the first president of the Institute of Applied Statistics Sri Lanka in a ceremony held on 15th February 2012 at the Auditorium of the Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research & Training Institute, HARTI. Prof. Tissa Vitarana, Hon. Senior Minister of Scientific Affairs, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The Induction was administered by Prof. S. Samita, a past President of the former Association of Applied Statistics, Sri Lanka which was incorporated as the Institute of Applied Statistics in September, 2011. Mr. Palitha Sarukkali proposed that the theme of the Institute of Applied Statistics for the year 2012 would be 'Statistical thinking for building trust in Statistics'.



Left: Prof. Samitha congratulates Mr. Sarukkali after taking oath. Middle: Mr. Sarukkali makes the presidential address. Right: the participants

STATISTICS JOKES

(Source: <http://www.workjoke.com/statisticians-jokes.html>)

- Three statisticians went out hunting, and came across a large deer. The first statistician fired, but missed, by a meter to the left. The second statistician fired, but also missed, by a meter to the right. The third statistician didn't fire, but shouted in triumph, "On the average we got it!"
- Did you hear about the politician who promised that, if he was elected, he'd make certain that everybody would get an above average income?
- I asked a statistician for her phone number... and she gave me an estimate.
- "Give us a copper Guy," said the beggar to the Treasury statistician when he waylaid him in Parliament square. "I haven't eaten for three days." "Ah," said the statistician, "And how does that compare with the same period last year?"
- A statistician's wife had twins. He was delighted. He rang the minister who was also delighted. "Bring them to church on Sunday and we'll baptize

them," said the minister. "No," replied the statistician. "Baptize one. We'll keep the other as a control."

- Patient: "Will I survive this risky operation?" Surgeon: "Yes, I'm absolutely sure that you will survive the operation." Patient: "How can you be so sure?" Surgeon: "9 out of 10 patients die in this operation, and yesterday died my ninth patient."
- Learning Statistics is like taking a Mediterranean cruise.

You gain a new appreciation for the vastness of the world; You meet dozens of new characters, half of them with Greek names; and After 2 hours you feel utterly seasick.

- How statisticians do it...
 - Statisticians probably do it.
 - Statisticians do it continuously but discretely.
 - Statisticians do it when it counts.
 - Statisticians do it with large numbers.
 - Statisticians do it with significance.
 - Statisticians do it on random walks.
 - Statisticians do it. After all, it's only normal.

Calling Papers for SLJAS

Eleven volumes of the Sri Lankan Journal of Applied Statistics have been published by the Applied Statistics Association of Sri Lanka until 2010. It will be continued by the IASSL from volume 12, which will be a special issue carrying the selected papers from the International Statistics Conference 2011. The special Issue will be released in March 2012.

The main purpose of the journal is to publish results of original work on the applications of Statistics and on theoretical and methodical aspects of Statistics. The journal also welcomes critical reviews including conceptual discussions, opinions and book reviews. Applications of Statistics in the area of Agriculture & Forestry, Medical, Dental and Veterinary Sciences, Natural, Physical and Social Sciences fall within the scope of the journal.

SLJAS is a refereed journal. Each paper is reviewed by three reviewers who are experts in the particular subject area of the paper. Papers recommended by at least two reviewers are accepted for publication. Review process is carried out completely independently and anonymously. It is expected to publish two volumes per year from 2012; One volume in July and another in December.

The deadlines for the manuscripts for volume 13 and volume 14 are **30th of March 2012 and 31st of August 2012** respectively.

TRUE or FALSE?

- The well known Z transformation, $Z = \frac{(X-\mu)}{\sigma}$, transforms variables with different distributions into a common distribution.
- Z-test (not to be confused with Z score) with test statistic $Z = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{S_p \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}}}$ can be used to test whether the means of two populations are different, when the populations are large.
- The standard deviation can be described as the average deviation of a value from the mean.
- The variables 'marks' (for a subject), 'height' (of a person) and 'weight' (of a person) are of the same type.
- The ratio between two values of an interval level variable is meaningless.

Seminar on Application of Forecasting Techniques

A two-day seminar will be held on 20, 21 March 2012 at the Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research & Training Institute No. 114, Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 7.

Main Topics to be covered:

- Regression Analysis
- Generalized Linear Model
- Time series Analysis
- Forecasting using Neural Networks

Resource persons consist of a panel of University lecturers.

Registration Fee: Rs. 6,000.00. Registration fee includes tea & lunch during the seminar, a copy of the seminar proceedings

Deadline for registration:

Registration form with the payment should be received by the IASSL office on or before 15th March 2012.

The payment should be made either by: Cash or Cheque written in favour of the Institute of Applied Statistics Sri Lanka or Paying directly to the People's Bank Ac. No. 086100130008638 Thimbirigasyaya branch and by attaching the remittance slip to the registration form.

For more information, contact Mr. Palitha Sarukkali, Coordinator / Statistical Forecasting Seminar.

Tel: 011-2588291, 077-3060520 Email: palithasaru@gmail.com, appstatsl@gmail.com

INSTITUTE OF APPLIED STATISTICS SRI LANKA (IASSL)



Preparation and type setting by
B.M.S.G. Banneheka
Editor of IASSL
E-mail: sarath.banneheka@gmail.com