SIYANE SPEAKS



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SIYANE TOASTMASTERS CLUB

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THE PASSIONATE TEAM STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

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ABOUT SIYANE

SIYANE TOASTMASTERS CLUB IS AFFILIATED TO TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL. THE CLUB CHARTERED ON 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2010. CLUB NUMBER IS 1553096 AND IT BELONGS TO AREA 3 OF DIVISION F IN DISTRICT 82

THE CLUB MISSION IS TO PROVIDE A SUPPORTIVE AND POSITIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN WHICH MEMBERS ARE EMPOWERED TO DEVELOP COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS, RESULTING IN GREATER SELF-CONFIDENCE AND PERSONAL GROWTH.

WE MEET



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AT ESOFT METRO CAMPUS,

COLOMBO ROAD, GAMPAHA

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE NELUKA GUNASEKARA HARINDU JAYARATHNA EDITORIAL TEAM CHAMIN ATHAUDA SHEHARA DISSANAYAKE

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Siyane' is known in the fraternity for its vibrancy and uniqueness. Mutual understanding, caring nature and the bond we have among each other have immensely contributed to maintain this uniqueness. This has created a family atmosphere rather than a club which has gifted us lifetime friends irrespective of age, profession and level of social standing. We often drive with positive emotions and the same has helped to maintain the vibrancy. Everyone commits to create a friendly atmosphere in which anyone who walks into the club feels warm and welcome.

Founder of Toastmasters International- Dr. Ralph C Smedley - believed that individuals needed a positive and friendly atmosphere to grow and develop. He believed that "we learn best in moments of enjoyment and meetings should be made enjoyable by fine helpful fellowship. We must always remember this as it is essentially the secret of the success of Toastmasters".

Siyane Toastmasters club was chartered in 2010 and has come a long way. Siyane immerged as the 'Best Club in District 82' in 2015/16. Currently the club is ranked within the top five clubs among 210 clubs in the District. It was a result of loads of sacrifice, hard work and commitment of the leaders and members of the club.

Our mission this year is to "Create Passionate Toastmasters" with the mission statement abbreviated "STF"– Standardizing whatever we proceed, enriching Talents of members by creating a Fun filled atmosphere. We will live up to the core values of Toastmasters: Integrity, Respect, Service and Excellence. We will keep on practicing Integrity & Respect as we always do. Every support will be given for the members to achieve Excellence. We will start the Service from the club itself and go beyond the club at every opportunity we get. The District's mission this year; Focus! Follow through! And Feel the success! provides an ideal platform for us to execute our plan. Whilst helping our members to achieve excellence in their individual plans, we will contribute in every possible way to accomplish our District's goal of "Becoming the best -President's Distinguished District in the world of Toastmasters".

Join Siyane family and do keep in touch!

Nilantha Bandara, ACS, ALB President Siyane Toastmasters Club



LEADERSHIP TIME IS PRECIOUS BY SHEHARA DISSANAYAKE

The true value of being a Toastmaster is depicted in the way we conduct ourselves outside a Toastmasters' meeting. That is how we distinguish ourselves from the rest and take the brand of Toastmasters to the society. Everything we learn and practice in a Toastmasters meeting is to make us better both personally and professionally. We give so much importance to 'TIME' in our Toastmasters meetings. In fact the main point highlighted and appreciated by so many guests that walk into a club meeting is how much we focus on being punctual and keeping to timelines within the meeting. However, how many of us practice this aspect of TIME, outside our club meeting?

There are so many instances where we make people wait for us, and once we finally arrive, give lame excuses. 'Traffic' is the most common excuse, and the irony is that most often this excuse is for a route we use every day to get to the venue in question. We already know the traffic situation and we know that traffic in the country in general is not so great. Therefore we are well aware of it and all we need to do is keep necessary allowance for it in order to be at the agreed venue on time. Those who make it on time do not come on time because they have nothing to do. They balance various schedules; escort kids to classes, doctor's appointments, marketing, family visits, etc. in order to be at venue on time.

As Karen Joy Fowler says, "Arriving late is a way of saying that your own time is more valuable than the time of the person who waited for you."

Being late has become such a 'norm' in society around us that we - more often than not - tend to mention starting time of important functions 30 minutes earlier than the actual starting time. For example at a church wedding if the wedding mass is at 9.00 am, the invitation says 8.30am, just to ensure that everyone is there in the church when the ceremony actually begins. On the other hand there are also instances where we purposely delay the starting time, of certain functions. If it is scheduled to start at 7.00 pm we delay starting the function until the crowd fills in. When we do that, what about those who have arrived on time? Is it not being disrespectful to them? Those who have managed their schedules and made it a point to be at the function on time, have to wait until they – who have no regard of time and in turn no regard for the time of others – show up. Ironic!

Being punctual has remarkable implications. One can win important business contracts or land on that job he/she has been dreaming about simply by being there for the meeting or interview on time. Of course one needs to perform well at the meeting, but one has already made a positive first impression on those who matter, by being punctual. As Toastmasters we need to set an example, a standard. Whenever we organize an event - be it in Toastmasters or outside Toastmasters - we need to ensure that things are in place to begin the event on time. If we set an appointment for a particular meeting we need to honour that by being punctual. If the meeting is at an unfamiliar venue, leave adequate time for traveling, finding location and parking. When a speech slot is given in an agenda ensure that we finish speaking within the time period given. These simple actions make a huge

difference to our personality as well as how others perceive us.

There are a few individuals I know whom I can count on for being punctual and they have my utmost respect and confidence for that quality alone. Regardless of the importance of the meeting, being punctual to the meeting is a direct way in which one shows respect to others. So let us inculcate this habit and spread it to those around us. Time is precious, yours and mine. Let us use it wisely and help others to do so as well.



Shehara Dissanayake, ACB, ALB was the President of Siyane Toastmasters in 2015/16. Siyane Toastmasters Club won the Platinum Club award from the District under her leadership. She was the Area Director, Area F3 in 2016/2017. A committed Toastmaster and an exemplary leader who always loves to help new members to become better speakers and leaders. Currently, she is the Charter President of Kadawatha Toastmasters Club

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL VISION

To be the first-choice provider of dynamic, high-value, experiential communication and leadership skills development.

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL MISSION

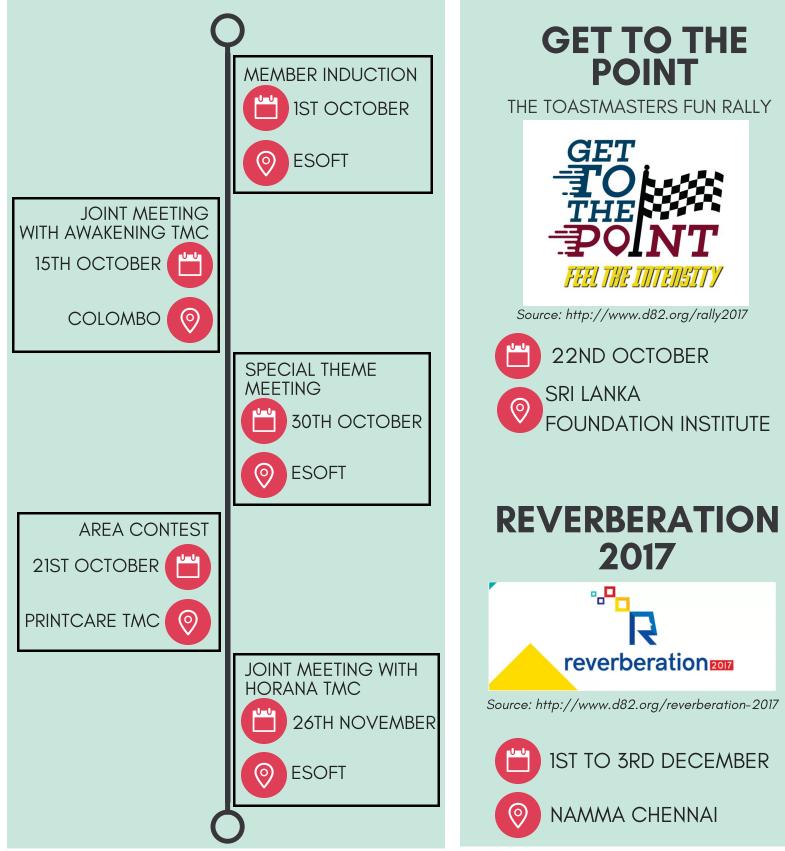
WE EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS TO BECOME MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS AND LEADERS.



Source: www.toastmasters.org







FRESHER'S VOICE **NEW FAMILY FOUND** BY HESHANI THATHSARA

It has been almost a year to the first day I walked into Siyane Toastmasters Club. From that day onwards this became my Siyane Family, even before taking membership. After officially being a member of this wonderful family, so many doors opened in my life. I got a chance to discover my hidden talents. The credit goes to the senior members who are always willing to offer chances for newcomers. It's our responsibility to grab them and take out the best use of it. Once a fellow Toastmaster told me never to miss a chance in Toastmasters because we won't get a second chance like that. When I recall a year back and compare myself then and now, I feel proud and happy. It's all because of the Toastmasters fraternity. When I hear the name "Siyane Toastmasters Club", the first thing that comes to my mind is the friendly environment; the warm welcome from the moment we step in, the encouraging and praising words, comprehensive and sincere feedback on our speeches and roles, offering us opportunities and helping to make them a success, very understanding and caring team of leaders. That's how I feel about my Siyane family. It's all about helping others while improving yourself. Toastmasters is the best place for unlimited personal growth, increasing self-confidence, improving leadership and communication skills and specially for career advancement.

"Speak in such a way that others love to listen to you. Listen in such a way that others love to speak to you." As a person who is new to Toastmasters, I know how true this is. The reason that helped me to

overcome my fear of public speaking to some extent is the nicest audience in Siyane family. Another important thing that I learned from Toastmasters is how to praise good work which ought to be praised and how to show the improvements without hurting them. I got a chance to meet different people who are awesomely talented and creative. This is a place where there are people who believe "impossible is nothing" and "busy is nothing". You will learn so many things even by just being seated in the club meeting. You will not be the same person you were when you first walked into Toastmasters. In conclusion what I feel is that being a member in Toastmasters is one of the greatest investments that one can make in one's self.



Heshani Thathsara is a newly-joined member to Siyane Toastmasters Club. She is passionate and energetic. Even though she is new, she has engaged herself in most of the activities of Siyane Club other than the usual education meetings.

CELEBRATIONS

CONGRATULATIONS!

WINNERS OF HUMOROUS AND EVALUATION CONTEST SIYANE TOASTMASTERS CLUB

HUMOROUS SPEECH CONTEST 1ST PLACE: THARANGA KAMBURAWALA 2ND PLACE: HARSHA KUMARASINGHA 3RD PLACE: ERANGA DILHAN

EVALUATION SPEECH CONTEST 1ST PLACE: CHAMIN ATHAUDA 2ND PLACE: NELUKA GUNASEKARA 3RD PLACE: ERANGA DILHAN







NEW HOME

Siyane Toastmasters Club moved to new meeting location on 9th July, 2017. We now meet at **ESOFT METRO CAMPUS**, Gampaha.



INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

FROM SRI LANKA BALRAJ ARUNASALAM, DTM



"**MY VISION** is to lead by example, in both my personal and professional life, while continuing to invest in my own development to become an effective leader" *Source: www.toastmasters.org*

EXPERIENCE I WANT TO BE A BOOKWORM AGAIN

BY WARUNI PERERA

I was a bookworm when I was schooling. I can recall how hungry I was to read. This habit of reading made me a hunter to run after good books and libraries. As a result I became a regular book borrower in my school library as well as my Dharma school library. Books were my good friends.

There were times I was scolded by my teachers for reading novels while the lessons were in progress. Even my mother had warned me on a few occasions as I had neglected my homework due to this habit. The best book I have ever read in my life is a Russian novel, "The Blind Musician" by Vladimir Korolenko. I got that book as a present for earning highest marks for mathematics in grade 6. It was a story woven around emotions of a blind child and his life's journey. That book taught me not only to be empathetic but also to be courageous.

"Hey Waruni, let's go in," my friend Archana's words destroyed my dreamy world. We were in a queue to enter the Colombo International Book Fair at BMICH. I felt the aroma of new books once I entered. The place was filled with book-lovers. Most of the conversations I heard were about books and authors. Everyone was searching and selecting books, like eagles hunting for food.

"Hey!.. Waruni look what I found," Archana had found the book that she was looking for, "The seven habits of highly effective people". Her face was decorated with a big smile. "Wow nice! Look what I found, "Long walk to freedom' the autobiography of Nelson Mandela," I replied.

Both of us spent a couple of hours wandering here and there and stepping in and out of book stalls. Time spent with books was an booster and a different experience for me. I regret that my busy schedules have kept me away from my good friends – books – for the last couple of years. Colombo International Book Fair awoke the greedy reader within me. Now, I want to be a bookworm again.

My thoughts replicate with what Elizabet Scott says, "I love books, I love that moment when you open one and sink into it. You can escape from the world, into a story that's way more interesting than yours will ever be."



Waruni Perera is the current secretary of Siyane Toastmasters Club. She is an accountant by profession and passionate member of the club who goes beyond her responsibilities in serving the club.

EVENTS

INSTALLATION OF CLUB OFFICERS 2017

The Club Officer Installation Ceremony of Siyane Toastmasters club was held on 01st July, 2017 at Wet Water Resort, Gampaha.



SPECIAL SESSIONS

ROOTS OF SIYANE

The meeting held on 20th August was special for Siyane. All the Past presidents and most of the charter members attended the meeting and played roles at the educational meeting.



EDUCATIONAL SESSION 'KNOW-HOW'

Parallel to the 180th educational session of Siyane Toastmasters Club, there was a special educational workshop on humorous speeches and evaluation speeches. The two dynamic Toastmasters of the



District shared their knowledge with the members.

ADDITIONS TO THE FAMILY

Siyane family took new members under its wings based on their commitment towards the programme, after being inspired on the values of the programme by senior toastmasters. They participated in the Orientation





Programme conducted by the club, on 24th September, 2017.

INFORMATION SCIENCE FICTION IS NOT SCIENCE FICTION ANYMORE

BY KASUN JAYALATH

If you ever wonder about fancy terms such as Artificial intelligence, Machine learning, Neural networks etc., know that you are wondering about the hottest topics of this decade. Those will be the most popular and well-known keywords in near future which will be able to facilitate most of the human needs at a completely different level. However, you are not too early to experience these upcoming technologies because they have already been implemented by many high-tech companies in various technological areas. While you are typing on the Google search bar, you will be going through a deep neural network. Traditional page ranking algorithm which is used in Google search engine is now obsolete. The newest iPhone x has a deep neural network dedicated to learn your face. Don't worry, the technology will be much more affordable to the next generation as this amazing technology is widening up its boundaries at neck-breaking speed.

After the industrial revolution in the 1950s, it took another 50 years to turn the existing technology into a whole new direction. The Second World War gave a reason to invent cars, aircrafts, machine guns, heavy machinery, bombs and even the Turing Machine. Later on, the technology introduced by Alan Turing was developed into a computer. The size

of a computer reduced in the nineties along with the development of the transistor. Those computers were programmed using line by line assembly codes. Computers convert codes written in assembly language into binary number stream which represents using 5 volts and 0 volts. It was convenient because machines were repetitively performing preprogrammed tasks more efficiently than a human being. A robot which was programmed to pick and place an object was doing it in endless cycles without any difficulty. An automatically guided vehicle which is programmed to follow a magnetic tape, would follow it as long as the magnetic tape existed. The problem arose when the anomalies came into play. One fine day, a particular object was not placed correctly where it should have been placed. The Robotic arm moved to the picking bay, not knowing the position of the object had changed. It could not grip the object correctly and as a result the object had fallen and smashed. Another day, the magnetic tape was missing on the floor, the automatically guided vehicle halted in the middle of the road not knowing what to do.

Just assume, you are blindfolded and asked to drive a vehicle listening some instructions and suddenly your instructions fail to come through. What would you do? You may forget about the instructions and try to go towards a random direction. If that direction is a dead end, you may come back and go towards another direction knowing that the first direction would not lead you to the end. Once you do this for few iterations, you know how to find your end point without any instructions because you have a brain with millions of neurons which are designed to LEARN. Neurons and synapses in your brain help to learn from your errors, mistakes. It is simple as learning how to walk. You fell thousand times until you learnt how to keep the balance while you walk. What if we implement an Artificial Neural Network (ANN) in our robot appliances? What if we can define the end results we want and let the machine learn how to achieve it. This is called machine learning. We can implement an artificial neural network in the machine and let it find the optimum way to do what we want to do.

Engineers have carefully studied the behavior of a neuron and synapse in the brain and modeled it with simple mathematical terms which are fairly similar to the functioning of the brain. Connecting few neurons in complex layer architecture (input-output layers, hidden layers) could mimic how we decide things using the previous knowledge we have. As a little intuition to this approach, I would say, our decisions are based on the weightages we set to the inputs we get from the outside. For example, how do you recognize your coffee mug? Initially you know that it is red colored, round shaped and you have a slight measurement of its height. However, everything which is red colored, round shaped and similar height is not your mug. So initially you will grab everything which looks like your mug and later on you will know how to give different weights to each elements on your mug in order to clarify your mug correctly among so many objects which are red, round shaped and similar height.

In conclusion, the robot who missed grabbing the object will learn to find the object which is put closer to the picking bay and the automated guided vehicle would find a way forward towards the end location without getting the help of a magnetic tape. This would be the last generation who types codes into a microcontroller and run one by one instruction. In the future we would let machines to figure its own way to do things and their way of doing it will be much more optimum than our codes. Facebook recently did an experiment using two artificial intelligent engines by opening up a chat in messenger. They started chatting and it was normal in the beginning. They started by saying 'Hi" to each other, but after some time they started building their own language and Facebook engineers could not figure it out. As they kept using secret language, they shut the system down.

Welcome to the era where science fiction is not science fictions anymore.



Kasun Jayalath is a young and energetic member of Siyane Toastmasters. He is an Engineer by profession. This article was written based on the area he is currently working on.

FACE-TO-FACE A CONVERSATION WITH SHEHARA DISSANAYAKE BY NELUKA GUNASEKARA

Do you remember the first day you attended Siyane Toastmasters?

Yes. It was in mid, 2012. The meeting was held at Sanasa Building, Gampaha. Everyone was friendly. I sat with 2 other guests. There are a few things that I remember very well from that day; the personality and confidence of the President, a powerful speech during the prepared speech session, the '40-second' table topic speech I did (which I 'thought' was a major flop) after being convinced by several senior Toastmasters who said, "Even 1 minute is ok," and the friendly, encouraging evaluation I got for the speech I did.

How was it to be a judge for the first time?

The Chief Judge was Toastmaster Kamburawala. The briefing was very comprehensive, which made me understand the gravity of the task at hand. I Felt honoured to have been considered to be in the panel and also responsible since I was playing a role which would decide the future of the contestants where a wrong decision could have detrimental consequences.

How was it to take part in a contest for the first time?

Exciting! The preparation for it was a lot of fun. A few us – contestants – got together, rehearsed together, gave feedback to each other to make the best speech each of us could give. That is the beauty of the bond we have especially in Siyane – regardless of who wins, we enjoy the journey and are always there for each other.

I was nervous on the day of the performance, but it felt good to step out of my comfort zone.

What are you specialized in your profession?

Procuring Engineering Materials

What else you want to share with us?

I will always be grateful for the faith Siyane Toastmasters had in me, especially when I started off the journey as a Toastmaster. The opportunities and freedom they gave to evolve as a leader and performer is what has brought me to where I am today in this fraternity. It has changed the way I do things and look at things personally and professionally. Toastmasters is a wonderful place to learn and develop if you embrace the opportunities you get and deliver to the best of your ability.



Neluka Gunasekara, CC is presently the Vice President Public Relations of Siyane Toastmasters. She is a Research Analyst by profession.

MEMBERS AND MEETINGS



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2016/17



NILANTHA BANDARA, ACS ALB PRESIDENT



A, THARANGA KAMBURAWALA, CC CL VP EDUCATION





ERANGA DILHAN, CC NELUKA GUNASEKARA, VP MEMBERSHIP VP PUBLIC RELATIONS



NISHALA ABEYWICKRAMA TREASURER



CHAMIN ATHAUDA SERGEANT AT ARMS

WARUNI PERERA SECRETARY



RUWAN JAYASOORIYA, CC ALB IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

COMMUNICATION LISTEN, AND LEARN A LESSON BY CHAMIN ATHAUDA

Listening to others is an amazing thing and it can reward you in many ways. Whenever I meet a new person, I prefer to listen to him or her rather than talking to that person. The reason is quite simple: I may get a chance to learn something new. For instance learn about different cultures, latest technology or different attitudes of people towards the same issue. But I would not get this opportunity if I talked instead. There are many incidents which had astounded me and changed the way I used to look at some of the matters in life.

A few months ago I was waiting outside a small shop and a man, who worked as a tuk-tuk driver to earn his living, all of a sudden came to me and said, "I can't remember a time I spent leisurely without being engaged with a task." I was puzzled but decided to listen to him instead of asking questions. "We are always busy with something. Wake up early, work until late and repeat the same every day." I had seen this person in the same place many times and even spoken to him a few times but I did not expect these kinds of words from him. What he said that day startled me. It's due to several reasons. The first thing is, I never expected something this meaningful from a person like him. The second reason is his facial expression when he was saying the above; which showed that he meant what he said, and lastly, I was in the same situation as he mentioned so I thought he had read my mind. I started to think, after going home, about what he said and realized he was right and I too was

a victim of being too busy

with my work and not spending enough time with my loved ones. Even I could not think of a time spent without thinking about my workrelated tasks. From that day onwards I try to spend at least 5-10 minutes, every day, just to relax without engaging with any specials objectives.

Some may think Toastmasters is all about talking to others, making speeches and presentations, but it's not. Toastmasters teach us to listen to others effectively and decide what to talk and how to talk to others. What I believe is if you want to be a good speaker, you should be a better listener. The benefits of listening cannot be gained by talking, therefore let's listen, and learn a lesson.



Chamin Athauda is the Sergeant at Arms of Siyane Toastmasters Club. He is committed and dedicated when it comes to activities in the club. He is an English lecturer of an Education institute cofounded by him.

LEADERSHIP **RISE** BY ERANGA DILHAN

Can you remember the first day that you found Toastmasters?

You may have found it as an avenue for becoming a better communicator or becoming a better leader. Further, Toastmasters has a well-established slogan – 'Where Leaders are made'.

What do you think?

With my experience in Toastmasters during the last two years, I would like to share the key enablers I found to becoming a better leader through Toastmasters. As many of you, I was also in the understanding that just completing leadership manuals would make me a better leader. However, with time I realized that there are key enablers which could create the framework for me to become a better leader through the leadership manuals.

Therefore, to raise yourself to become a better leader, you need to have the 'RISE' within you, which are the values believed and practiced at all times. The 'RISE' is none other than the core values of Toastmasters.

1. Integrity

Integrity is considered the first key enabler we need to build and develop within ourselves to become a better leader. If you are a leader who 'walks the talk', everyone has confidence in you and relies on you as a person who is honest and trustworthy. Therefore, if we can have integrity as a quality in us, others can be convinced that you are a leader who is always doing the right thing with greater transparency. Thus, no one would have doubts to work with such a leader.

2. Respect:

Respect is the second key enabler that we

need to build in ourselves. Your subordinates, peers and also superiors would recognize you as a better leader provided you have due respect for them. In return, they would be selfmotivated to support you, putting in their maximum effort and driven towards the goals that you have set as a leader.

3. Service

Service is the third key enabler we need to have with us to become a better leader. A higher level of commitment towards service will enhance your image while delivering significant outcomes through your service.

4. Excellence

The last key enabler we need to build in us and develop is the focus towards excellence. Great leaders are always raising the bar, setting standards so that the organization/institute etc. excel in their performance. Therefore, focus towards excellence always provides frame work for us to become a better leader through higher level of performance. Therefore, if we could inculcate the 'RISE' within us as key enablers, we are on right track of crowning ourselves as better leaders and reach the pinnacle of success.



Eranga Dilhan, CC is the Vice President Membership of Siyane Toastmasters Club. He believes in hard work and is always ready to spend his time with Toastmasters.

MEETING FLYERS



SIYANE TOASTMASTERS CLUB STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE