

Message from the Chief Guest



Prof. G.L. Peiris

Hon. Minister of Education

It is my honour to send a message to the Conference on “COVID - 19: Impact, Mitigation, Opportunities and Building Resilience”, being organised by the National Science Foundation under the theme, “From Adversity to Serendipity”.

I congratulate the National Science Foundation for organising this very timely conference. We have accumulated a considerable amount of information and experiences in managing the COVID-19 pandemic which need to be shared widely and documented for the benefit of the posterity.

Despite limited information in the beginning, decisive leadership backed by informed science enabled Sri Lanka to successfully manage the challenging epidemic. Later Sri Lanka, like most places, experienced a second wave that is now being brought under control.

Sri Lanka, much like the rest of the world, has been experiencing unprecedented and far-reaching health, socio-economic and environmental consequences and I learn that the conference will provide the platform to share varied experiences and learn from the successes and practices in other parts of the world. The pathogens do not respect local, national nor international boundaries. Hence, the world needs to work together to share knowledge on the virus and its transmission dynamics, its public health and clinical management and prevent any future outbreak leading to pandemic level. We need to learn how best we can protect our vulnerable populations, restore our economies, resume the education of our children and rebuild back better in a new normal.

For this purpose, learning across disciplinary boundaries and inclusive knowledge sharing mechanisms would be crucially important. Therefore, I commend the NSF for inviting scientists and policy makers of outstanding calibre and international esteem from all regions of the global to share their valuable knowledge and experiences with us during the conference.

I wish the conference all success.