

Good Evening

Honourable Prime Minister of Sri Lanka , Mr. Ranil Wickramasinghe; Honourable Minister of Transport and Aviation, Mr. Nimal Siripala De Silva ; Honourable State Minister of National Policies and Economic Affairs, Dr. Harsha De Silva; Other distinguished invitees; Colleagues from CILT International; past chairmen and Council members of CILT Sri Lanka; My dear Friends; Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is indeed a pleasure to be the project chairman of Sri Lanka's first ever National Logistics and Transport Excellence Awards. It is even a prestige for me to deliver a speech in front of highly respectable audience like you. The CILT Awards was first announced at the CILT International Conference in 2017. Since then we saw a huge interest from the industry. Today, we give away 8 excellence awards in the corporate category for the valuable contribution they have made to the Logistics and Transport industry. We also have an individual award. One of the most commendable persons in Logistics and Transport industry in Sri Lanka will receive the 2018 CILT Pinnacle award. A person will receive this award only once in his or her life time. Our key focus in the selection was to make the most impartial decisions for awards.

Therefore, we carefully selected highly respectable and eminent panel of judges. There was no interference from CILT to the panel. And none of them have any conflicting interests with applicants or nominees.

Since this is the first ever National Awards in Logistics and Transport we received many requests to be sponsors of this event. Although it is an extremely difficult job to meet the expenses of this kind of event, the Awards committee decided that we will not entertain sponsorships (How much big they are) that could create any conflicting interests. We consider this an investment for the future. We value the presence of Honourable prime Minister and subject ministers is valuable to us more than any sponsorships. CILT has made highly respectable platform for you to perform. Today is your day for the Excellence of Logistics and Transport industry.

As the Chairman of Sri Lanka's first ever excellence awards in Logistics and Transport I wish to state following points before I conclude.

1. If your organization did not apply for the corporate awards, then you will regret today. But please apply next year.
2. If you applied but did not win an award, please do not get disappointed.
3. Because submitting the application for awards itself is a win. The profile that was made according to the criteria given by our experts is the first step towards Excellence in logistics and transport. This is a good learning exercise in the right direction. Please keep good contact with CILT and improve your submissions for the next year.
4. The CILT awards are not only for the logistics service providers. For example, manufacturing companies, Banks universities, Shipping lines, Ports, Airports, Railway, Roads, and even audit firms can claim for their contribution.
5. We as professionals and academia in Logistics and Transport cannot be happy for what we did to the industry during our lifetime unless we take Sri Lanka to the top 20 countries in Global Logistics performance ranking. (The LPI published by the World Bank)
6. We take this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Education for incorporating 20 periods of Logistics lessons in School curriculum. We urge the Honourable Prime minister and subject ministers to consider creating a statutory Body that gives leadership to the logistics and supply chain management activities in Sri Lanka. We CILT will assure you that we will move this industry forward. This is yet another milestone in our long journey.

Today we give award you for the excellence. Therefore, I conclude by paraphrasing what Aristotal once said. I quote, "*Excellence is not an Act, but a habit*". Unquote, thank you and have an exciting event.