

### TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: INVESTING IN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

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University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

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#### ABOUT THE TALK :

Public transportation is a cornerstone of sustainable urban development, offering a viable solution to the challenges of congestion, pollution, and resource inefficiency. In developing countries, where roads carry the majority of commuters, public transport systems often lag behind global standards due to inadequate infrastructure, poor service quality, and safety concerns. However, the growing global shift towards eco-friendly practices and technological advancements in public transit—such as electric buses, smart ticketing systems, and integrated networks—presents an opportunity for these nations to leapfrog traditional barriers.

This speech will delve into how targeted investments in public transportation can transform cities into sustainable, livable spaces. Using insights from the Kandy region in Sri Lanka and drawing parallels with global success stories, it will emphasize the need for improved bus stops, enhanced passenger safety, and better operator behaviour. By adopting globally inspired yet locally tailored strategies, developing countries can redefine their public transport systems as not just a mode of travel but as a driver of economic growth, social equity, and environmental sustainability.

#### ABOUT THE SPEAKER :

Dr. Jayalath Edirisinghe is a distinguished academician and researcher in Civil Engineering with a career spanning nearly three decades. He earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, and pursued his postgraduate studies at Ehime University, Japan, where he obtained his PhD. Since 1994, he has served as a senior academic staff member at the University of Peradeniya. He has held prominent positions, including Director of the Engineering Education Unit, Director of the Centre for Distance and Continuing Education, and Head of the Department of Civil Engineering.

Dr. Edirisinghe's research focuses on traffic congestion and road safety, including pedestrian safety, public transport systems, and railway crossings. He has authored over 100 publications in international journals and conferences and actively engages in public education through articles, TV programs, books, and photographic exhibitions.

He has enhanced his expertise through programs at the TRL UK, IIT-Delhi, and Lund University, Sweden, and has been an invited speaker at various universities globally. In 2007, the Sri Lankan Society for the Prevention of Accidents, affiliated with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, recognized him as one of Sri Lanka's five most dedicated advocates for road safety.

