## JEEVAN THIAGARAJAH

he College of S. Thomas the Aposthe will be completing 100 years at
Mt. Lavinia, in 2018. Much has
sechool, en written on the history of the
events around the centenary celebration.
The purpose of this short piece is to look at
a few other angles.
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STC Is not the only off school in this country. There are many lesser known entities. STC is blessed with four campuses located in Mount Lavinia, Colpetty, Gurutalawa and Bandarawela governed by one Board. It's uniquely placed to provide opportunities for education to children across many walks of life and regions.

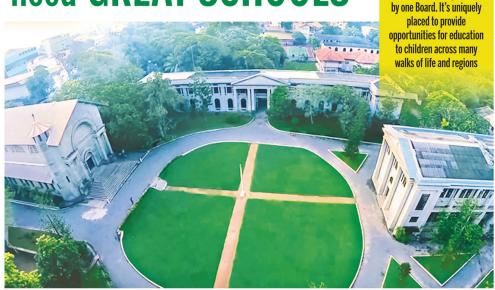
## **Achieving greatness**

A former Warden Puddyfoot captured the nuances of how school could really be great. He spoke about, "A school achieves greatness by responding imaginatively and creatively to the challenges posed by the world in which it exists and the world in which it is exists and the world in which it is exist and the world in which it exists and the world in which it is exist and the world in which its pupils will like their lives. Great schools tend to have well-entrenched traditions, and those traditions can both underpin future progress and obstruct it, depending on how we deal with them.

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**GREAT COUNTRIES** need GREAT SCHOOLS



the challenges presented by new problems; all are at their best when the going is toughest and the tough can really, get going, Great schools do not narrowly predetermine their measures of success: they do not praise only those who are academically giffet; they do not despair of those who struggde; above all, they never give up on any child under any circumstances, and see children who give up on themselves as a measure of the school's failure, not the childs."

These are very valuable thoughts, STC has undeniably been privileged and it is for that reason it must continue coaselessly look for avenues to serve the larger populace and society in SrI Lanka. It's not my intention to catalogue the list of public figures, products of the

school who have led the country. I rather show how some continued to serve the less privileged giving them equal access to opportunities for their well being.

## **Examples of illustrious products**

Prof. Dayantha Wijeyesekera, an academic and civil engineer left school after his O.L's. Proceeded to Maradana Technical College and went onto earn two PhDs. A remarkable achievement. His entire working career has been for public service. He was the first Vice chancellor of Open University of Sri Lanka in 1983. He later served as Chairman, Tertiary and Vocational

Education Commission (TVEC). In 2011, he was named chancellor of the University of Vocational Technology (UNIVOTEC). He has spent considerable time maximizing opportunities for less fortunate students to access higher education. His efforts were taken to its next level by equally well known old boy, Rajiva Wijesinha the son of an illustrious Thomian Sam Wijesinha. He enabled his Minister to present a Cabinet in 2016 which recognizes National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) for Employment Opportunities.

The Cabinet of Ministers decided at its meeting held in June 2016 to consider the completion of NVQ level 3 and NVQ level 4 as equal to passing the G.C.E. (O/L) and

G.C.E.(A/L) examinations respectively, at the instances where the requirement of NVQ level 3 or NVQ level 4 along with the G.C.E. (O/L) are Sc.E. (A/L) has been included in Service Minutes and Schemes of Recruitments as professional and educational qualifications for recruitment to posts in technological and technical sectors. It opens pathways to higher education, employment and income to scores of youth male and female in this country.

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