



# INTERN WITH **VERITÉ RESEARCH**

THINK THANK BASED IN COLOMBO, SRI LANKA



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# ABOUT US

Verité Research (VR) is an interdisciplinary think tank that provides strategic analysis and advice for governments and the private sector in Asia.

Founded in 2010 by Dr. Nishan de Mel it is based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. VR has conducted research and private consultancy for multilateral agencies, diplomatic missions, government departments and civil society actors. Verité's economics, law, media and politics teams cross-fertilise and improve each other's understanding and insight, providing a powerful lens into Sri Lanka's complex politico-economic environment.

Verité synthesises the thoughtfulness of academia, the professionalism of business and the commitment of civil society to create a unique value proposition in pursuing the greater good. Verité Research, being a think tank invests in learning and development of its staff.

## Vision

An informed world which engages in constructive dialogue and reasoned decision making through transformative research and strategic analysis.

## Mission

Enhance critical discourse through relevant and credible information, analysis and solutions to influence the public and decision-makers.

## Our Values

- 1. Professionalism:**  
We are competent, deliver on our promises, work efficiently and strive for excellence.
- 2. Ethical:**  
We do what we think is right, even if it comes at a cost.
- 3. Curiosity:**  
We are driven to understand the world around us.
- 4. Supportive:**  
We are more than the sum of our parts. We help each other become better humans, work more effectively and develop professionally. We help each other through critique, sharing and sometimes through plain old-fashioned hand-holding.
- 5. Humility:** the more we realise how much we do not know. Respect diversity including different perspectives, backgrounds and cultures. Appreciate everyone's contributions and what each person brings to the table.



# Nishan de Mel

## Executive Director

Nishan is an economist with extensive academic, policy and private sector experience. Nishan taught and researched economics at Oxford and Harvard universities. In the 1990s, he sat on multiple Presidential Task Forces in Sri Lanka, playing an instrumental role in designing national policies on Health Sector Reform, Social Security and Tobacco & Alcohol. He also served as the Executive Director of the International Centre for Ethnic Studies and the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute. He sits on multiple private sector boards and consults regularly as a strategist for some of the region's largest firms. Nishan completed his undergraduate studies at Harvard University, and his graduate studies at Oxford University, where he was a Chevening Scholar.

# Subhashini Abeysinghe

## Research Director



Subhashini Abeysinghe is an economist specializing in international trade. She is an expert on Sri Lankan economy, private sector development, trade policy, WTO, regional trade agreements, ports and logistics. In addition to these, her current research includes data driven analysis of China's economic engagement in Sri Lanka.

She has a bachelor's degree in economics (first class honors), a Master's Degree in Economics from University of Colombo, Sri Lanka and a Master's Degree in International Law and Economics (Summa cum Laude) from World Trade Institute, University of Bern, Switzerland. She has worked for the Ceylon Chamber of commerce (CCC) for nearly 10 years as a senior economist. She has also worked as a visiting lecturer at Faculty of Graduate Studies of University of Colombo and Sir John Kotalawela Defence University in Sri Lanka



# Cilani Wijesinghe

## Chief Operating Officer

Cilani Wijesinghe is an experienced Finance Manager with over 12 years of Expertise in the Corporate Sector. Prior Verite, she has been working as the Finance Manager at MAS Brands (PVT) Limited. Cilani is skilled in Negotiation, Business Planning, Management and Financial accounting.

# Deepanjali Abeywardana

## Deputy Director - Media and Politics



Deepanjali has extensive experience in media ethics, media behaviour as well as media and women. She also trains journalists on media ethics and has taken part in several fellowships and programs on media studies abroad. Additionally, she has experience in conflict resolution and human rights through her studies at University of Oslo, Norway and the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. Deepanjali received a BA in International Relations from the University of Colombo and a MA in South Asian Studies from Pondicherry University, India where she was selected as one of the first two Sri Lankans to undertake the MA on a Madanjeet Singh Scholarship. Deepanjali has worked with a wide range of local and international stakeholders and media practitioners on understanding the Sri Lankan media, media ownership and media's role in fostering reconciliation.

## Websites

Verité Research (*Main*)



Economics Team



Parliamentary Team



Verité Media



## Dashboards

Economics Team



## Social Media Pages

Verité Research (Main)



AirQuality.lk  
(Managed by Economics Team)



Manthri.lk  
(Managed by Parliamentary Team)



FactCheck.lk  
(Managed by Verité Media)



**Ethics Eye**  
*(Managed by Verité  
Media)*



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**The Media Analysis**  
*(Managed by Verité  
Media)*



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**Verité Law**  
*(Managed by Legal  
Team)*



## Our Research Teams





# ECONOMICS RESEARCH TEAM

**Objective:** Enhance space for critical discourse and influence policy through timely, relevant, and insightful economic research.

## Policy Impact Through Research



## Research Pillars



### 1. Public Finance and Macroeconomics

The foremost think tank for public finance and macroeconomic research in Sri Lanka



### 2. International and Trade Economics

To be an influential voice in the area of international economic policy of Sri Lanka by providing insightful research and data.



### 3. Socioeconomic Research

Data driven insights to increase the understanding of the socio-economic landscape of the country.



### 4. Environmental Research

Data driven insights to identify the environmental damage caused by economic activities.

## Websites operated by our Economics Team



### PublicFinance.lk

PublicFinance.lk is a platform for public finance-related information in Sri Lanka. This platform intends to bridge the gap in information and understanding of public finance by providing insights and analysis on Sri Lanka's public finance.

### airquality.lk

Airquality.lk is a platform conceptualised by Verité Research to create awareness on the risks of air pollution in Sri Lanka and to promote research and policy reforms on the subject.



## Dashboards operated by our Economics Team



### Budget Promises: Beyond Parliament

Budget Promises: Beyond Parliament is a dashboard under publicfinance.lk that tracks the government's performance in delivering on its budget promises.

### Fuel Price Tracker

Fuel Price Tracker is a dashboard under publicfinance.lk developed to create awareness on the discrepancy between global oil prices and domestic prices.

[Fuel Price Tracker](#)

[Infrastructure Watch](#)

### Infrastructure Watch

Infrastructure Watch is a dashboard under publicfinance.lk that assesses proactive disclosure of information online in relation to large scale infrastructure projects that are currently being implemented. This is as per the requirement by the Right to Information (RTI) Act No. 12 of 2016

## Team publications

### Public Finance

1. [Restoring Efficient Tax Collection Methods: Withholding Tax and Pay-As-You-Earn \(veriteresearch.org\)](#)
2. [Public Report on the 2022 Budget: Assessment of the Fiscal, Financial and Economic Assumptions used in the Budget Estimates \(veriteresearch.org\)](#)
3. [Cigarette Taxation Formula – The Cost of Forgetting \(veriteresearch.org\)](#)
4. [Charting a Path for Debt Sustainability in Sri Lanka | Verité Research \(veriteresearch.org\)](#)

### Socioeconomics

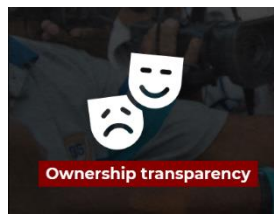
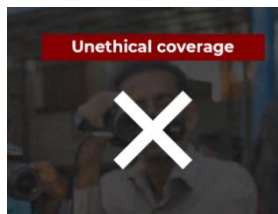
1. [Targeting Assistance: Electricity Consumption is a Superior Method \(veriteresearch.org\)](#)
2. [Gender-Responsive Budgeting: Evaluating KPIs | Verité Research \(veriteresearch.org\)](#)
3. [Costs of Doing a Job for Urban Women in Sri Lanka \(veriteresearch.org\)](#)

### International Economics & Trade

1. [The Lure of Chinese Loans \(veriteresearch.org\)](#)
2. [De-mystifying the Increase in Sri Lanka's Debt \(veriteresearch.org\)](#)

# VERITÉ MEDIA

**Objective:** Contribute to education towards responsible media practices and critical consumption of news. The broad areas that the team focuses on are:



## Verité Media Team Initiatives:



**Media Ownership Monitoring:** The “Media Ownership Monitor” (MOM) has been developed as a mapping tool in order to create a publicly available, continuously updated database that lists owners of all relevant mass media outlets - press, radio, television and online media. MOM aims to shed light on the risks to media pluralism caused by media ownership concentration.  
**For More Information, Visit:** [Media Ownership Monitor Sri Lanka](#)

**The Divide:** The Divide is a publicly accessible, continuously updated platform that highlights the differences in reporting between Sinhala and Tamil language newspapers. It mainly focuses on issues relating to transitional justice and reconciliation, minorities, and women. The platform provides weekly observations on these differences.  
**For More Information, Visit:** [The Divide](#)



**Factcheck.lk:** public service platform that monitors a select sample of Sri Lankan media (Sinhala, Tamil, and English) to identify and fact check statements attributed to high-level decision makers in public office on subjects of public interest. The main objective of FactCheck.lk is to improve the space of public understanding and information in Sri Lanka and thereby help to hold decision makers accountable for their public statements as reported in the media.  
**For More Information, Visit:** [FactCheck.lk](#)

**The Media Analysis:** The Media Analysis (TMA) fills a void in mainstream political analysis by assessing the local language media to understand the factors shaping public sentiment. TMA offers cutting-edge analysis and insight into the public mindset by analysing the political and cultural assumptions underlying the Sinhala press reporting, TV coverage and social media posts—including popular memes—on topics of national importance.  
**For more information, Visit :** [The Media Analysis](#)



**Ethics Eye:** A research-based public education platform that serves to foster ethical journalism in Sri Lanka. The platform engages both the public and journalists on current ethical concerns that arise from daily reportage.  
**For more information, Visit:** [EthicsEye](#)

## PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH TEAM

**Objective:** Deepen understanding and accessibility of the political information, through data-driven, insightful, and transformative research and advice.

### Parliamentary Team Initiative:

#### Manthri.lk

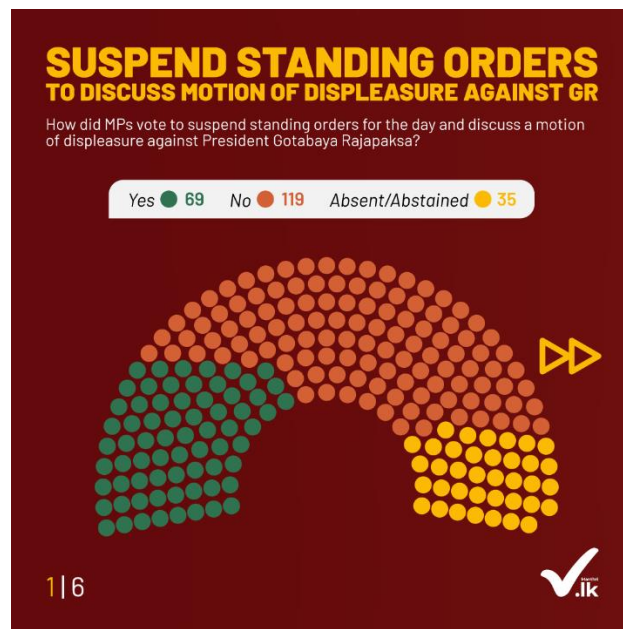
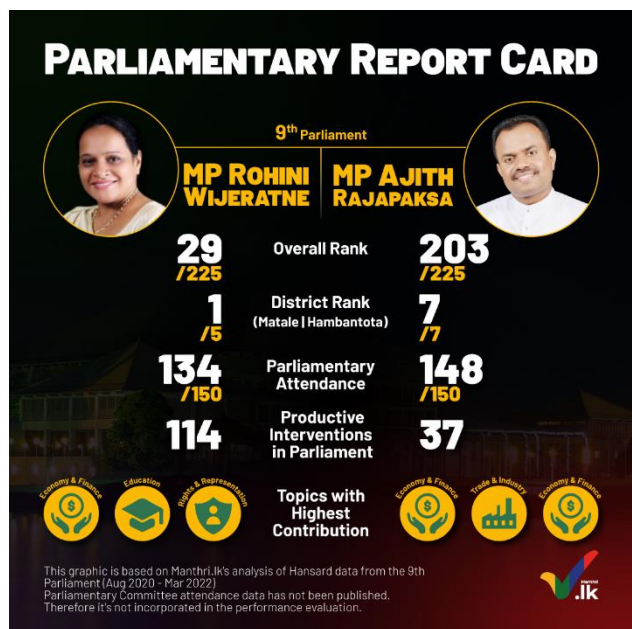


#### What do MPs do in your name?

Manthri.lk is a pioneering trilingual website which, for the first time, profiles the actions and activities of each of the 225 Members of Parliament in Sri Lanka. As a MP monitoring scorecard, Manthri.lk recognizes the need for accountability between MPs and their electorates. In doing so, it seeks to promote transparency and good governance in order to improve Sri Lanka's democratic framework.

Additionally, Manthri.lk also provides a profile for each MP, detailing their educational background in addition to their contact and social media details. In doing so manthri.lk seeks to improve the flow of information between MPs and the general public. It also intends on incentivising better performance by MPs in light of the enhanced scrutiny of their parliamentary activity.

For more information, Visit: [Manthri.lk](http://Manthri.lk)



# LEGAL RESEARCH TEAM

**Objective:** Deepen understanding and accessibility of the law, through data-driven, insightful, and transformative research and advice.

## Pillars of Research



**Quantifying the Unquantifiable**



**Unclocking Justice**



**Redrawing the margins of vulnerability**

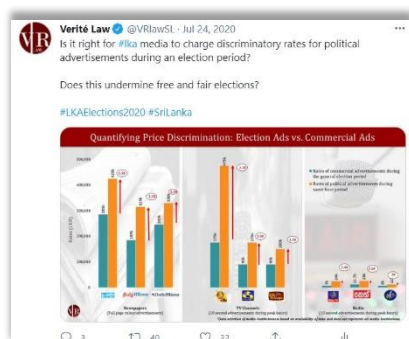
## Legal Team Initiative:



**Verité Law**

News and analysis on legal issues in Sri Lanka and elsewhere. Curated by the Legal Research Team

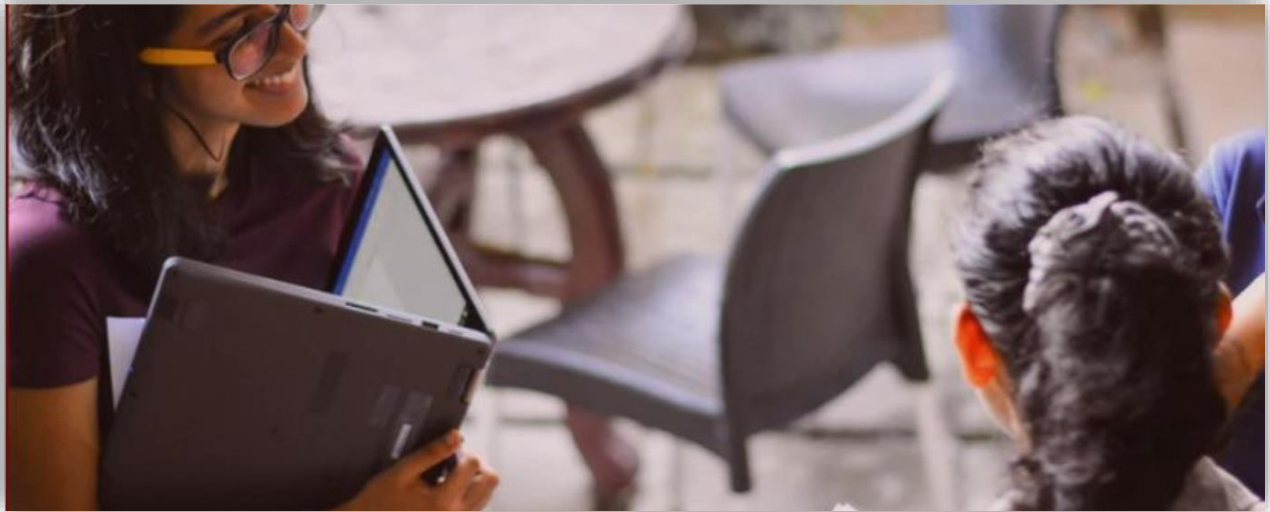
For more information, visit: [@VRLawSL](https://twitter.com/VRLawSL) / [Twitter](https://twitter.com/VRLawSL)



## Team publications

1. <https://www.veriteresearch.org/publication/fair-recruitment-of-migrant-workers-in-sri-lanka/>
2. <https://www.veriteresearch.org/publication/hill-country-tamils-analysis-of-legal-and-policy-issues-affecting-labour-and-governance-structure/>
3. <https://www.veriteresearch.org/publication/20a-brief-analysis-sri-lanka/>

## HOW TO APPLY



### Interested in Joining us?

We are always on the lookout for driven and curious individuals like you! Apply today and tell us what you would like to do.

**Apply:** Send in your CV, writing sample and cover letter to [work@veriteresearch.org](mailto:work@veriteresearch.org)

A typical internship at Verité Research will consist of the following:

- **Supporting ongoing research projects by**
  - doing literature reviews
  - collecting and analyzing data (both primary and secondary)
  - writing draft reports
  - developing infographics
  
- **Other opportunities**
  - participate at high level brainstorming sessions on research assignments they are involved in where floor is open to provide inputs regardless of the level of seniority.
  - participate at numerous internal and external seminars organised by VR
  - participate at online social activities (we try to make it fun by having various social activities/games that the team can join online)
  - learn how a think tank functions (the interns do get an opportunity to participate at organisation level meetings such as team meetings, staff meetings the provides them an opportunity to understand think tank admin side as well)

## HEAR WHAT OTHERS HAD TO SAY...



**Johan van der Ploeg**  
*Zuyd University of Applied Sciences Maastricht, the Netherlands*

The reason that I applied to Verite Research was for me to gain practical experience in economic policy analysis in a think tank. The work thus far already made me better at data analysis, research writing and critical thinking. What I highly value from Verité Research is that the work does not stop after the research is finished. After the analysis, we have to get our message across by stripping our research of unnecessary technical jargon to get the impact we want, informing the wider public on evidence-based policy.

Currently, I am mainly focused on trade relations between the EU and Sri Lanka. The team values the knowledge I bring from my background, studying European Studies. What I value in return from my colleagues is the broader perspective they give me on the impact EU policy has on not only Europe but what it can have even in a smaller garment factory in inland Sri Lanka. I believe that especially Verité Research is valuable to give me these insights as it is not an international organisation with an eagle view of policy issues, but a national organisation deeply rooted in Sri Lankan society. When I converse with newly made friends whom I meet along my travels through Sri Lanka I notice that they are aware of Verité's work and value it, making me proud to work for Verité Research.



**Hana Rajap**  
*Psychology And Political Science, University Of Chicago*

I interned with the politics research team at Verité during the summer of 2017. Over the course of my internship I had the opportunity to assist the team on a number of primary and secondary research projects, drafted research briefs on the findings of said projects, gained insight into the methodology behind 'The Media Analysis', and carried out data analysis for Manthri.lk. All in all, the internship was a truly rewarding experience.



**Shalini Corea**  
*Political Science and Theater, NYU Abu Dhabi*

Working at Verité Research provided me with the ideal balance of stimulating research and learning the ropes of the work environment. As an intern, I greatly appreciated the trust placed in me, the interest shown in mentoring me and the extremely knowledgeable, yet approachable people I had the opportunity to interact with.



**Matteo Busto**  
*Prism Division, European External Action Service, Brussels*

Verité is a highly dynamic environment: working closely with colleagues in the politics research team, I learned about Sri Lanka's parliamentary dynamics, security structure and media landscape, among other issues, from a privileged angle. The time at Verité has truly strengthened my passion for international affairs.





**Taryn Gehman**  
*Anglophone Modernities, Universität Potsdam, Germany*

Working for Verité Research was one of the most intellectually growing experiences in my professional career. The Verité cohort provide the space for people from all different backgrounds to learn and share their ideas in order to produce informed research. I learned so much from their commitment to collaboration, collegial spirit and wickedly smart team members.



**Laura Érsek**  
*Economics, University Of Surrey, UK*

My internship at Verité Research gave me a rich experience from many aspects. It let me accumulate work experience which required great precision and responsible attitude. It also allowed me to get insight operation of the institute, and take part in all kind of events: meetings, presentations and team building day. Colleagues at VR were keen to introduce me to their country and learn about their culture.