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Prime Minister's Office

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**Response to Allegations Regarding the Cancellation of the IYSSE Lecture at Peradeniya University.**

The Office of the Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Dr. Harini Amarasuriya, categorically denies any involvement in the cancellation of the scheduled lecture organized by the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) at Peradeniya University. Dr. Amarasuriya has consistently championed academic freedom and democratic engagement, values fundamental to fostering critical discourse in educational institutions.

The allegations suggesting that the Prime Minister and Minister of Education influenced the university's decision to cancel the lecture are entirely baseless and misleading. No directive or instruction was issued from this office regarding the event. The autonomy of academic institutions is a principle that the government is committed to upholding. Universities must remain places where diverse opinions, including critiques of government policies, can be freely expressed and discussed without fear of suppression.

Nevertheless, we express concern about any action that undermines democratic expression and open dialogue within academic spaces. Dr. Amarasuriya reaffirms her unwavering commitment to protecting the rights of students and educators to engage in meaningful and critical discourse. Upholding these principles is vital to maintaining the trust and confidence of the university community and the public at large.

S. Vijitha Basnayake.  
Media Secretary,  
Office of the Prime Minister and Minister of Education.

4<sup>th</sup> January 2025.