



Editorial



May 12, 2010 was a special date in the calendar of the University of Colombo as the inauguration of the Annual Research Symposium took place on this date. The theme of the symposium was “Knowledge Economy and Higher Education”. Engaging with the symposium theme in his keynote address, HE Ashok K. Kantha, High Commissioner of India, stated that India is rapidly emerging as a “knowledge hub” for the global economy in areas such as ICT, life sciences, space technology, research & development, and design & innovation. HE Dr. Choi Ki-Chul, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, in his inaugural address said “Knowledge economy essentially recognizes knowledge itself as the driving force of productivity leading to new and enhanced technologies.” He illustrated the Korean Government’s commitment towards strengthening the R & D sectors in order to achieve new and enhanced technologies. It was stated that Korea did not possess an abundance of natural resources to increase R & D investments except in one area: Human Resources. The effort to develop human resources, especially in the area of science, technology and innovation has been one of the most significant cornerstones of the Korean economy. These well-trained people were the primary source of the rapid economic growth in Korea. During his discussion Dr. Ki-chul said “what is necessary for the Sri Lankan government is to identify the aspects of proper knowledge economy for Sri Lanka, in a Sri Lankan context for the next five or ten years.”

HE Ashok K. Kantha, and HE Dr. Choi Ki-Chul at the symposium.

The 2010 symposium and the presentations were especially important to the University of Colombo at this juncture as revisions are being made to the corporate plan to go in line with the new World Bank project “Higher Education for the Twenty First Century” (HETC). The objective of this project, according to the World Bank website, is to enhance the capacity of the higher education system, institutions and human resources to deliver quality higher education services in line with equitable social and economic development needs. The HETC project has four components: institutionalizing norms for the Higher Education sector, promoting quality teaching, learning and research, strengthening alternative higher education and human resource development, monitoring, evaluation, studies, coordination and communication.



Inauguration of the Annual Research Symposium 2010

The objective of the second component of this project is to improve the quality and economic and social relevance of the services that Sri Lankan universities offer. In order to achieve this objective, the HETC project has established two complementary grants, a University Development Grant (UDG) and a Quality and Innovation Grant (QIG). Although it is a soft loan, as Sri Lankans we should be glad to receive funds under such a well thought-out scheme to propel the higher education sector towards a positive direction. The total amount allocated under the UDG for all the universities in Sri Lanka is Rs. 1500 million. Unfortunately or fortunately, the activities that a university can undertake under the UDG are prescribed. A university can utilize these funds to enhance ICT skills, improve English language skills, strengthen soft skills of the students and to promote ethnic cohesion among students and staff. No doubt, these activities will enhance the marketability of our students, placing them in a better position to secure a job either in the private or public sector. Would the prescribed activities under the UDG in any way promote dynamic economic development in the country? Would the successful implementation of these activities under the UDG help us to respond to the needs of a knowledge economy? One can argue that there is ample room to cater to the needs of the knowledge economy under the competitive component, the Quality and Innovation Grant. Today, universities around the globe are embracing an entrepreneurial dimension and we certainly could utilize these funds creatively to facilitate innovations. However, the guideline limits the ceiling of one QIG grant to a mere Rs. 30 million. We will let you ponder on the question as to why more weight is given to the UDG. We certainly cannot afford to reject this well thought-out HETC project. However, in the years to come, the country may have benefitted more had a greater amount of funds been allocated under the QIG.

HISTORY OF THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) of the University of Colombo was established under the Faculty of Graduate Studies Ordinance No. 03 of 1987.

The need for a separate faculty to handle graduate studies in the university system in Sri Lanka was recognized by academics as well as policy makers in the 1980s and this idea was taken up as a policy matter by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in the late 80s. The proposal was formalized by amending the Universities Act and with a substantial debate and discussion and consequently some universities made arrangements to establish a faculty of graduate studies.

Professor R. S. Ramakrishna was appointed as the founder Dean of the faculty at the University of Colombo, by the University Grants Commission with effect from 15 August 1988, according to the FGS ordinance, with a skeleton staff. At the initial stage, FGS's role was limited to providing services such as management of financial accounts, procurement of supplies, lecture room facilities and library back up for postgraduate courses conducted by other faculties.

Towards the end of 1990, action was taken towards establishing the requisite infrastructure for introducing multidisciplinary academic programmes in Labour Studies and Women's Studies contemplated by the faculty. The faculty was also enriched by resources received from ILO, ARTEP, FAO, UNU-WIDER and the Fredrich Ebert Stiftung for its activities.

There was no provision however for permanent cadre positions. Hence, the FGS was expected to obtain the services of resource personnel required to carry out academic programmes from other faculties on a visiting basis. The position of the faculty vis-à-vis other faculties was such that the academic programmes presented were to be 'multidisciplinary' in nature. The Senate in 1991 approved the two research degree programmes in Labour and Women's Studies. In addition, the faculty also proposed a Diploma in Devolution and Local Governance with the collaboration of Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration.



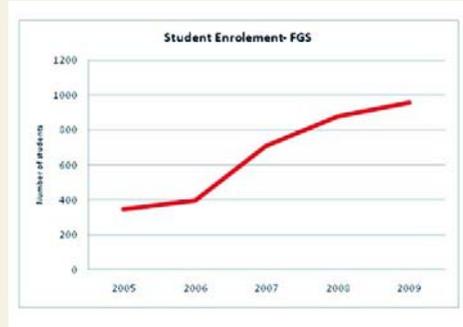
In its first year of teaching which was 1992, the faculty had 251 students (including students registered for the Masters Degree in Business Administration and the Executive Diploma in Business Administration at the Faculty of Arts, that were transferred to FGS). The faculty had 54 students registered in its own three programmes mentioned above.

The faculty developed its programmes gradually by introducing postgraduate diploma and masters courses, restructuring and discontinuing certain existing programmes after evaluation, to become an important faculty by the year 2000. The structure of programmes offered were as follows: executive diplomas at the lowest level, postgraduate diploma and Masters Degree programmes at the middle and M. Phil /Ph. D at the highest level. The faculty conducted 15 postgraduate programmes by 2005 with about 400 students.

Current Position

Currently the FGS of the University of Colombo is one of the leading postgraduate degree awarding institutions in Sri Lanka, offering 27 programmes with over 900 students.

Growth of Student Enrolment



The faculty embarked upon its most innovative and technologically advanced study programme in 2008, the Executive Diploma in m-learning programme. This online programme was designed for people who are on the move such as marketing executives who travel extensively to follow a study programme while in the job through internet, mobile devices with exclusive facilities. The programme that commenced with the technical support of SLT Mobitel was extended to the Maldives drawing students from that country to learn online in 2010. The programme was successfully launched in the Maldives in April 2010 and the faculty expects a good demand from Maldivian students for the Executive Diploma in Marketing by m-Learning.

The other important development was the introduction of a re-structured M Phil/ Ph D programme in 2009 for the benefit of students interested in multi-disciplinary studies.

The FGS conducts 02 Executive Diplomas and 11 Postgraduate Diploma programmes and 12 Masters programmes. Postgraduate Diploma/ Masters in Regional Development and Planning was the latest addition to the FGS programmes which commenced in June 2009. The Faculty continued its M Phil in Clinical Psychology programme. Due to the increased demand for admission to the Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management (Pg D. BM), Masters in Business Studies (MBS) and Postgraduate Diploma in Development Studies (PgD.DS) programmes, the Faculty took steps to enroll two batches of students (weekdays and week ends).

The future

The FGS has already taken initiatives to introduce several new programmes in the future. An Executive Diploma in IT and management, Postgraduate Diplomas leading to a Masters in Public Management and Public Administration leading to Masters Degrees are already proposed. These programmes are expected to begin this year.

Quality enhancement is one of the key priorities of the faculty and three strategies have been adopted to realize this objective: a) curriculum development b) provide knowledge inputs through well qualified staff drawn from the university and industry and c) external evaluation. This strategy also strengthens the linkage between university and industry. In 2009, the FGS managed to maintain its student enrolment levels in spite of the economic downturn both at global and domestic level. Action has already been taken to construct a new building for the FGS.

OUR STRENGTHS

National Institute of Library and Information Science (NILIS)



Introduction

The National Institute of Library and Information Science (NILIS) was established in 1999 by the NILIS Ordinance. The purpose of the institute is to provide postgraduate and general training facilities in the Library and Information Science field with special attention to school/teacher librarianship. The establishment of the institute was a result of the World Bank funded General Education Project 2, (GEP 2). Under the project 4,000 school libraries were developed. During the project the World Bank mission worked in close co-operation with the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB), which was the local counterpart of the School Library sub sector and the proposal to establish a training institute to support the school library development programme was first made by the NLDSB during the latter part of the project. The proposal was accepted and the World Bank advisory team of the project invited the NLDSB to submit a suitable proposal for consideration. Thereafter, the NLDSB developed the NILIS project proposal with the help of a local consultant (Prof W B Dorakumbura). The initial UGC Inter University Committee of Librarians (IUCL) proposal to establish a Postgraduate Institute in Library and Information Science was used as a guideline and a new proposal designed to meet the special requirements of the school library sector and LIS sector in general with special attention to the objectives of the GEP 2 Project was prepared. This proposal was accepted by the authorities and became the foundation of the NILIS.

Objectives

The primary objective of the institute is to train the human resources required for the country's school library sector. In addition, the institution has been empowered by the NILIS Ordinance of 1999 to conduct other postgraduate programmes in the Library and Information Science (LIS) field and, to thereby produce the necessary high quality human resources to universities, research institutes, government departments, local government authorities and other library and information sectors in the country. Another major objective is to develop continuing professional development (CPD) programmes for LIS professionals to update and upgrade their knowledge and skills.

Management

The Board of Management of NILIS comprises of representatives of the Ministries of Higher Education, Education, Science and Research, the University Grants Commission, the Standing Committee of Library and Information Services (SCOLIS) of the UGC, the University of Colombo, the National Library and Documentation Services Board and the Sri Lanka Library Association. The Academic Committee and the Higher Degrees Committee oversee

the academic programmes of the institute. The Director is the chief administrative and academic officer of NILIS.

Postgraduate Programmes

The Postgraduate Diploma in Teacher Librarianship (PGTL) and the Masters in Teacher Librarianship (MTL) were commenced in 2000. The Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information Science, a part time programme, facilitates working librarians to pursue their higher studies.

The Masters in Library Science (MLS) programme conducted by the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Colombo was transferred to the NILIS in 2006. This two year Masters programme, with its one year research component, is especially designed for library staff of the national library sector, universities and research institutes. An MPhil/PhD programme was started in 2007 and it is the first MPhil/PhD programme in the field of Library and Information Science in the country.

Diploma/Certificate Programmes

Diploma in Teacher Librarianship (DTL), Diploma in Library and Information Management (DLIM), Preliminary Certificate in Library and Information Management (PLIM), Intermediate Certificate in Library and Information Management (ILIM), Certificate of Public Librarianship (CPL), Certificate in School Librarianship (CSL) and Certificate in Library and Information Science (CLIS) provide a range of opportunities for students.

Special short courses are conducted to improve the LIS and information literacy skills of professional, para-professional and support staff in the LIS field. Similarly, short courses are conducted to improve office management skills and information technology skills of clerical grade officers, administrative assistants and computer application assistants in public and private sector organisations.

Information Literacy Programme – Empowering Eight (E 8)

Information Literacy (IL) skills help students and researchers to master information searching techniques. NILIS has developed its own Information Literacy Skill programme titled Empowering 8. This model was developed at a workshop jointly organized by IFLA-ALP and NILIS. Today both NILIS and the Ministry of Education use the Empowering Eight programme to improve information skills among students, teachers, teacher librarians, administrators and other groups engaged in the education and other sectors.

NILIS Annual Symposium

The NILIS Annual Symposium was inaugurated in 2009. The purpose of the symposium is to provide opportunities for postgraduate students of NILIS and other institutions to share their research work with others.

Sri Lankan Journal of Librarianship and Information Management

Sri Lankan Journal of Librarianship and Information Management is the professional journal published by NILIS. This bi-annual journal is published both in print and electronic formats.

As its long term goal, NILIS is determined to become a high quality postgraduate institute in the LIS field in Sri Lanka and thereby contribute towards the image that the University of Colombo enjoys as a provider of quality education at both undergraduate and graduate level.

PROF. B. A. ABEYWICKRAMA

Vice- Chancellor, University of Colombo, Ceylon, 1969-1972
Vice- Chancellor, University of Sri Lanka, 1972-1974



Born on 11th March 1920, Prof. Bartholomeuz Aristides Abeywickrama had a brilliant school career firstly at St. Aloysius College, Galle and later at Royal College, Colombo, where he won many academic honours. Thereafter, he showed exceptional merit at the Ceylon University College, Colombo, from 1937 to 1941 as an undergraduate where he won a Cambridge Studentship, an Entrance Scholarship in Botany, and the Sir Marcus Fernando Scholarship. While still an undergraduate, he was appointed as an Additional Assistant Demonstrator in Botany by the Ceylon University College in 1938 and this marked the beginning of a long, dedicated and loyal service to the University system in Sri Lanka which is hard to match.

After graduation from the University of London in 1941, having been a student of the Ceylon University College, he was appointed by the University College in 1942 as an Assistant Demonstrator in Botany. He proceeded to Cambridge, UK for postgraduate studies on a Government Science Scholarship in 1946 and obtained his Ph.D Degree in 1949. He returned to Sri Lanka and served the University of Ceylon as a Lecturer until his appointment as the Professor of Botany of the University of Ceylon in 1965.

Professor Abeywickrama's contribution to the University system in Sri Lanka in general and to the University of Colombo in particular is without parallel. He served as the Dean of the Faculty of Science, University of Ceylon, from 1966 to 1969. In 1967, he served as a member of the Academic Advisory Committee for the proposed University of Colombo. He served as the Vice- Chancellor of the University of Colombo, Ceylon from 1969 to 1972. With the bringing together of all Universities in Sri Lanka under one University, namely the University of Sri Lanka, Professor Abeywickrama had the singular honour of becoming its first Vice- Chancellor in 1972, which position he held until 1974.

Professor Abeywickrama's contribution to the advancement of Science in Sri Lanka is equally praiseworthy. He has held positions in many Scientific Associations and Statutory bodies. He was the Chairman of the International Biological Programme Committee for Sri Lanka from 1968 to 1973, the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Committee from 1974 to 1983, the Coconut Research Board from 1977 to 1983, Coconut Cultivation Board from 1977 to 1979, the Research Committee of the Sri Lanka Tea Board in 1989, and NSC Sri Lanka Flora Revision Advisory Committee from 1990 to 1998.

He held the post of President of the Ceylon Natural History Society in 1961, the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science in 1968, the Sri Lanka National Academy of Sciences from 1980 to 1981 and the Sri Lanka Institute of Biology from 1983 to 1984. He has also served as a member of the UNESCO Advisory Committee to the Director General on Humid Tropics Research from 1952 to 1964, the Fauna and Flora Advisory Committee from 1958 to 1981, the Sri Lanka National Science Council from 1968 to 1977, the Council of Association of Commonwealth Universities from 1972 to 1973,

the Agricultural Development Authority from 1978 to 1979 and the Palmyrah Development Board from 1978 to 1980.

Professor Abeywickrama is a renowned authority on Plant Taxonomy and Ecology and more recently he has shown a great interest in conservation. He has participated in many international conferences by invitation or as the official Sri Lankan delegate. He has over fifty publications to his credit; a true indication of his scholarship.

Professor Abeywickrama retired from University Service in August 1985. In appreciation of his 47 years of active and dedicated service to the University system in Sri Lanka, the Senate of the University of Colombo conferred on him the title of Professor Emeritus in September 1985. Professor Abeywickrama continued to assist in the teaching and research programmes in the Department of Plant Science (Botany), University of Colombo, even after his retirement for many years; an indication of his dedication to the University and to Science.

Professor Abeywickrama is a great scholar and an academic of the highest calibre. In recognition of his long and dedicated service to the University system in Sri Lanka in general and to the University of Colombo in particular, and in recognition of his invaluable contribution to the advancement of science and research in Sri Lanka, the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, conferred on him the Degree of Doctor of Science (*Honoris Causa*) at the Convocation held in Colombo on 14 December 1985. The conferment of the Honorary degree was considered as a fitting honour bestowed on a distinguished scholar and an academic of the calibre of Professor B.A. Abeywickrama.

The University of Colombo wishes him the best of health and long life.

Source: Citation for the Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Science (*Honoris Causa*) on 14/12/1985.

The University of Colombo- Annual Research Symposium

The University of Colombo Annual Research Symposium was held on 12 and 13 May, 2010 at the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) auditorium and other faculty premisses. The theme of the symposium was "Knowledge Economy and Higher Education". The Inaugural sessions were held at the FGS auditorium under the patronage of the Vice- Chancellor, Prof. Kshanika Hirimburegama and the Chairman of the University Grant Commission, Prof. Gamini Samaranyake.

The Inaugural address was delivered by HE Dr. Choi Ki-Chul, the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Sri Lanka. The Keynote address was delivered by HE Mr. Ashok K Kantha, the High Commissioner of India in Sri Lanka on the theme "Knowledge Economy and Higher Education- India Education". Prof. HR. Senaviratne, the chairman of the symposium committee and the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, delivered the vote of Thanks. Prof. WD Lakshman, Dr. Upali Sedara, Mr. K. Kanag- Isvaran, Dr. Nimal Sadaratne, Dr. Palitha Abeykoon and Prof. Lakshman Ratnayake representing the faculties of Arts, Education, Law, Management & Finance, Medicine and Science gave presentations. The Faculty of Graduate Studies conducted a panel discussion on "Public Private Partnership in Higher Education in Sri Lanka". Prof. ADV. de S Indraratne, Emeritus Professor of Economics, Dr. Anura Ekanayake, President, Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and Dr. Nihal Samarapuli, Executive Director, Board of Investment had participated in the panel discussions. The technical sessions were held on 13 May 2010 at the faculties of Arts, Education, Law, Management & Finance, Medicine and Graduate Studies and altogether 77 papers were presented.

APPOINTMENTS



Professor Gihan Wikramanayake BSc (Col), MSc (Cardiff), PhD (Cardiff), MCS(SL), MBCS, MIEEE, CITP was appointed as the new Director of the University of Colombo School of Computing (UCSC) on 23 May 2010.

He was a student of the University of Colombo from 1981 to 1984 and joined the

Computer Centre of University of Colombo in 1984. He worked for the Department of Statistics and Computer Science from its inception in 1985. Prof. Wikramanayake was the first Head of the Department of Information Systems Engineering of UCSC (2002-2005), Deputy Director of UCSC (2004-2007), Acting Head of the Department of Communication and Media Technologies of UCSC (2007-2008) and is the 3rd Director of the University of Colombo School of Computing.

PUBLICATIONS

University of Colombo Review

The third issue of the University of Colombo Review (New Series) was released in 2010. The Issue, Volume 2, No. 1 contains six original peer-reviewed research articles in the areas of Ethnic Segregation in cities, Classical Indian Dancing in the formation of National Culture, Unmaking modernity and modernization, Modern and Ancient Vision of Citizenship and Politics, Corporate Governance, and Sexual and Reproducing Behavior etc.

	Per Copy	Per Year
Sri Lanka	Rs. 600.00	Rs.1,150.00
SAARC Countries	US\$ 30	US\$ 55
Others	US\$ 40	US\$ 75

Articles for publication in the Volume 2, Number 2 are invited from Researchers. **Email :- acpb@admin.cmb.ac.lk**

Book Donation

Professor Dayanthi Nugegoda, Professor of Ecotoxicology, RMIT, Australia and an alumnus of the Faculty of Science and the Department of Zoology, University of Colombo visited the Department of Zoology on 1 June 2010. She presented a copy of her newest text book, *Climate Change and Chemicals* and had discussions with the academic staff of the department about a collaborative programme of work on ecotoxicology with her institution and the Department of Zoology. She also had a meeting with the Vice Chancellor, Professor Kshanika Hirimburegama and in her capacity as the vice president of the Alumni Association of the University of Colombo, Victoria, Australia, informed the Vice Chancellor of the progress of the association.

Population of Sri Lanka: Increasing Fertility and Challenges for Development

People around the world observe World Population Day, which is celebrated on 11 July every year in different ways. This is to bring attention to population issues of the world. To celebrate this day, the book *Population of Sri Lanka: Increasing Fertility and Challenges for Development* authored by Prof. Indralal De Silva, was launched in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Family Planning Association. This publication contains detailed information about the Sri Lankan demographic transition and the availability of 'Demographic Bonus'. As highlighted in the publication, 'Demographic Bonus' is a period that every country could receive through the demographic transition. Therefore some population scientists have labeled this period as a 'Window of Opportunity'. During this short span, dependency levels prevail at a minimum level. If savings, productivity and investment could increase rapidly, it paves the way to propel an economy to a higher elevation. Many of the East Asian countries, including South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong, have developed in the middle of experiencing this Bonus. The 'Demographic Bonus' was opened to Sri Lanka from 1991 and is projected to prevail until 2017. However, 'Demographic Bonus' is fading sooner than we have projected, due to the observed increase in fertility in the early years of this new millennium. This publication provides information on and suggestions for relevant authorities and planners to safeguard the 'Demographic Bonus' and utilize effectively this golden opportunity in order to develop our nation.

NEWS & EVENTS

Career Guidance Programme on "Stand On Your Own Feet"



The Career Guidance Unit concluded the "Stand on your own feet" programme for the third batch of students and the award ceremony was held on 1 July 2010. The programme was conducted by the BDS Consultancy with the sponsorship of Friedrich Naumann Foundation. The programme aims to enhance several areas of career skills including entrepreneurial skills, team skills, time management, leadership, communications skills, attitudinal and personality development. A batch of fifty students were provided with ten participatory workshops over a period of ten weeks during weekends. The programme included an outward bound training programme held in Pitabeddara, Deniyaya.

Entrepreneurship Programme for the Arts Faculty undergraduates

The University of Colombo has been planning to start an Entrepreneurship Programme for the Arts Faculty undergraduates to create an Entrepreneurship Culture in the University of Colombo. The initial discussion was carried out with Chamber Of Young Lankan Entrepreneurs (COYEL) recently to start a programme for the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo.

NEWS & EVENTS CONTINUED

Activity-Based Workshops on Attitudinal Progression Process for Non-Academic Staff

A series of workshops in Sinhala on Attitudinal Progression Process were organized by the Bursar on the advice of the Vice-Chancellor, for non-academic staff in the clerical, technical and minor grades of the University during the months of April and May, 2010, under the auspices of the IRQUE Project. The workshops were conducted by Mr. Sanath Gamaghe, a renowned Human Skills Development Specialist and a Personal Success Trainer. Over 350 members of staff in the above-mentioned grades participated at these workshops.

Initially two 3-hour Introductory Workshops were held on the 6 April 2010 and the Vice-Chancellor addressed the participants at the commencement of these workshops. Subsequently 8 full-day workshops were held on the 20, 21, 22, 23, 29 and 30 April and 3rd and 4 of May 2010. Each participant had to attend one Introductory Workshop and two full-day workshops.

After completion of all 8 full-day workshops, a closing ceremony was held on the 6 May 2010. Prof. Kshanika Hirimburegama, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Lakshman Ratnayake, Project Director, IRQUE Project, and Dr. Senaka Rajapakse, Director/LTS addressed the gathering, followed by Mr. Sanath Gamaghe who conducted the workshop. Prof. Indralal de Silva, the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Prof. S. Sandarasegaram, the Dean, Faculty of Education, too graced the occasion. The participants were given a chance to express their views on the workshops and all those who did, stressed the importance of having such workshops for the benefit of the staff and requested the University to conduct such programmes in the future as well. Mrs. K.S.T.S. Jayasooriya, the Bursar, thanked all those who contributed to make the workshops a success.

Workshop on Procurement Procedures for Non-Academic Staff

A full-day workshop on Procurement Procedures was organized by the Bursar on the advice of the Vice-Chancellor, for the non-academic staff of the University on 26 May 2010, with funding received from the IRQUE Project, in order to acquaint staff with correct procurement procedures and guidelines.

The resource person was Mr. Jayantha de Mel, a National and International Consultant on Procurement and Construction Management, who has also worked as a Procurement Specialist of the World Bank in addition to serving in other Government and private sector agencies. He has been involved as a resource person in drafting a number of documents including the current Procurement Guidelines and the Procurement Manual used in the Universities.

Over 80 participants from all the Faculties and Branches of the University including Sri Palee Campus attended the workshop and they were addressed by the Vice-Chancellor as well. All the important areas of procurement procedures were covered and the workshop was very interactive.

The evaluation conducted at the end of the workshop showed that the participants were satisfied that they were able to gain and update their knowledge on procurement procedures and that they were able to clarify their doubts on procurement matters.

Expansion of Faculty of Science, University of Colombo



The Science Faculty of the University of Colombo has been requested by the Chairman of the University Grants Commission to expand its academic activities due to the great demand from students to pursue studies there. Therefore, the site and buildings occupied formerly by the Faculty of Applied Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University, at Buttala are being considered for such an expansion. Based on the offer made to the Faculty of Science, a team comprising the following academic and administrative staff visited the Buttala site on 12 and 13 July 2010 on an initial feasibility visit: Prof. TR Ariyaratne (Dean/Science), Prof. DUJ Sonnadara, Dr. S Ranwala, Dr.N. Pallewatta, Dr. SSN Perera, Mrs. A Karunaratne, Mrs. RM Gunaratne (SAR/Science), and Mr. Nagahapitiya (SAB/RMU).

Based on their observations the team felt that there is significant potential to expand to this region but that it should be approached in a manner somewhat different to that of the existing curricula of the Colombo Science Faculty. Specifically, the needs of the region should be catered to and the emerging opportunities of this large and fast developing area should be made use of to the benefit of the Faculty of Science, the region and the country at large. The team felt that a curriculum that emphasizes technology including information technology that offers a wide range of courses at undergraduate, certificate course and postgraduate level should be put in place. At Buttala, there is a very great opportunity for those engaged in field based studies in Biodiversity of Sri Lanka and associated areas of study. This location is in a key position with respect to major national parks in the southern and eastern lowland, ecosystems of the dry and intermediate zones of the country and has large areas of relatively undisturbed wilderness. It is also within easy traveling distance of the central mountain ranges including the Knuckles Conservation Forest and the Horton Plains National Park. It is possible to conduct already existing courses that have field based practical components so that students can benefit from the biodiversity of the Buttala area.

The Multimedia Production Centre at the Faculty of Medicine

The Multimedia Production Centre which was funded and furnished by the IRQUE Grant was declared open by the chief guest, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo, Prof. Kshanika Hirimburegama, on the 6 April 2010. The lab contains 5 high end computers with the latest necessary software, a scanner and a laser printer to fulfill the needs of the lecturers to produce the learning materials for the undergraduates of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo.

NEWS & EVENTS CONTINUED

The UOC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION–US CHAPTER

The UOC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION–US CHAPTER was launched by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo on May 16, 2010 during her short visit to Michigan State University, USA. Professor Kshanika Hirimburegma visited MSU as a member of a honorable delegation which comprised of the Vice Chancellor of the University of Jaffna, Prof. N. Shammugalingam, Director of AEU, University of the Peradeniya, Prof. B. Marambe, and Prof. Rohan Rajapakse Acting Vice Chairman of the UGC, who were invited to MSU by the Institute of the International Agriculture (IIA). Dr. Karim Maredia and Dr. Cholani Weebadde, also a UoC alumnus from MSU-IIA, coordinated their visit.

The official website for UOC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION–US CHAPTER was launched at a grand welcome reception organized by the MSU SRI LANKAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION. This inauguration comprised of around 80-100 distinguished guests and chairpersons representing several departments, the Michigan Sri Lankan community and UoC alumni from several nearby states and cities. The event started with the lighting of the traditional oil lamp and the singing of the Sri Lankan national anthem. Professor Hirimburegma and the guests were welcomed by the Director of the Office for International Students and Scholars, Mr. Peter Briggs and by the president of the Sri Lanka Student Association, Ms. Desmi Chandrasena, another UoC Alumnus. Several other speakers addressed the gathering and welcomed the guests to MSU including past students of UOC. The guests enjoyed the tasty Sri Lankan cuisine while networking with old colleagues from the same Alma mater. Among the distinguished UoC alumni present were, Prof. Sarath Amunugama, Vice Chancellor of University of Kelaniya and Prof. L.M. V. Tillekeratne, who was a former Dean of the Faculty of Science UOC. Both travelled from the nearby state, Ohio for this important occasion.

Mr. Prabode Weebadde, CEO of venturit.Inc., created the official website for UoC alumni association–us chapter. The US Chapter was established with the mission to provide a communication platform for UoC alumni currently residing in the United States. This website will serve as the primary hub for communicating among UoC professionals in Sri Lanka and in USA and to create new ventures, share professionalism and ideas for a small annual membership fee.

A Facebook group that was created along with this website launch by MSU-SLSA currently has 122 UoC alumni members who are distributed around the US. This group can be accessed at <http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/group.php?gid=116945004999923&ref=ts>

Research Grants - 2010

The University of Colombo with the main objective of inculcating a research culture in the University has decided to grant seed money to commence research by the Academics.

The application forms and instructions to Research Grants are available in the office of the Deans and in the Academic & Publications Branch. You may also download the form and instructions from the University website at <http://www.cmb.ac.lk>

Applications should be handed over to **the Acting Registrar**, University of Colombo **on or before September 01, 2010**. The Research Consultancy & Ethics Committee will evaluate and monitor the research proposals and research.

6th Joint SDC–SLAIHEE Conference 2010

The 6th Joint Conference of the Staff Development Centre, (SDC) University of Colombo and Sri Lanka Association for Higher Education Effectiveness (SLAIHEE) was held in the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Colombo on Monday 5 April 2010 from 9 am to 4.30 pm.

The theme of the conference was “Challenges in sustaining best practices in higher education”. The SDC and SLAIHEE are both committed to improving life skills and performance capabilities of university teachers and students. SLAIHEE embodies the vision of transforming higher education in Sri Lanka to empower individuals to become socially effective as productive, accountable and caring citizens.

The Chief Guest was Prof. P. L. Ariyananda, Professor of Medicine, University of Ruhuna whose key note address sensitized the participants to some ailments that have befallen the curricula of higher educational institutions which as a physician, he aptly named curricular sclerosis rather than a curriculitis, since they are more chronic in nature. He also recommended suitable remedies for such ailments.

The participants were honoured by the presence of Dr. Suki Ekaratane, the pioneer who almost single handedly initiated SLAIHEE way back in 2004-2005, who has been a continuing source of encouragement to the Executive committee and the membership of SLAIHEE. The inauguration was concluded by Ms. Shrinika Weerakoon, Acting Director, SDC, University of Colombo.

A total of 14 scientific papers were presented by several university academics. Two parallel sessions were held each accommodating seven papers. The abstracts were peer-reviewed and were in line with the conference theme based on experiences supported with evidence. The presenters are congratulated for believing that they are committed to evidence based improvement of higher education in Sri Lanka.

The Annual General Meeting of SLAIHEE followed the presentations for registered members only. Two new members were appointed to the executive committee; to the post of treasurer and a committee member. This was followed by lunch.

Dr. Suki Ekaratane conducted a workshop on “Managing Change to ensure sustainability of Best Practices in Higher Education” for the registered participants of the conference in the afternoon in the SDC seminar room with the active participation of 65 academics.

Abstracts of previous conferences and the 2010 conference could be viewed at the SLAIHEE website. (www.slaihee.org)

Kalai Vizha 2010 by Hindu Society – University of Colombo



The Hindu Society of the University of Colombo has been functioning for many years in a way that clearly demonstrates its cultural value and harmony with other religions. “Kalai vizha” is an annual event organized by this society. “Kalai Vizha 2010” was held at “New Kathiresan hall” Bambalapatiya on 12 June 2010. The event included numerous cultural programmes. Around 500 people attended the event including around 300 University of Colombo students, 25 University staff, 25 award winners and around 150 people from the general public.

The University of Colombo Alumni Associations are global now!



The Inauguration ceremony of the UoC Alumni Association-US Chapter

The Inauguration of UoC Alumni Association-US Chapter, took place on May 16, 2010 at the Michigan State University, USA. Meet the Facebook of UoC alumni in USA at <http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/group.php?gid=116945004999923&ref=ts>



The out-door activity and the fund raising campaign organized the University of Colombo Association of Canada (UCAAC) on 24 July 2010 was badly affected by a severe thunder storm.



Committee members of Colombo University Alumni Association of Victoria (CUAAV)



The banner of the CUAAV was presented to Dr. Kevin Seneviratne of the association by the Vice Chancellor on 13 July 2010

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