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Development could be defined in different ways in different concepts. For me, development is the enhancement of the quality of life. It could be the combination of external physical development as well as internal personal development. For most, development means the development of infrastructure only. But I think to achieve sustainable development we should have the infrastructure development as well as development of attitudes of the people.

When we consider the ongoing infrastructure development works, I think my institution, the Sri Lanka Ports Authority is playing a leading role. At present SLPA is involved in four mega Port development projects simultaneously with the total investment of more than 1.7 billion US Dollars. This is the first time in port history such a big investment has been made in the port sector.

The development projects are given below:

- Hambantota Port Development Project,
- Colombo Port Expansion Project,
- Olivil Port Project
- Galle Port Development Project

Hambantota Port Development Project (Phase 1)

We were able to commence the construction works within a very short time compared to other projects.

Project Features:-

Vessel Size 100000 DWT, Breakwater 920m width at 16m depth, Turning Circle 600m diameter at 17m depth, Service vessel Berth 105m long, Oil Terminal Berth 310m long at 17m depth, Quay wall (General Cargo) 600m long at 17m depth.

The present progress of the construction works of the Phase 1 are ahead the schedule and we hope to



Hambantota Port Development Project

complete the work by the end of next year.

I will briefly indicate the development activities of other projects which have been undertaken by the Ports Authority.

Colombo Port Expansion Project

Project Features
Break Water
Length 6.83 km
Quarry Material
5.6 m Cu m

Dredging

Volume
15.5 million Cu m
Basin
285 Ha at -18 m depth
Cost - US \$ 345 million
Funded by -
ADB & SLPA
Commencement -
Apr 2008
Completion - Apr 2012

Present Progress

Breakwater construction work in progress and reach more than 1000 m Dredging

and reclamation works too in progress

Olivil Port Project

Project Features
Vessel capacity 5000
DWT - STAGE I 16000
DWT - STAGE II
Break waters 1215 m
Quay Wall For Cargo
Handling 330 m
Port Access Road
Fishing Quay wall and
Other Facilities

Construction work in progress

Galle Port Project
Key Features
200m long, 14m deep
Passenger Berths, Yard
area of 27 ha. (Reclamation), Yacht Marina and
Other Facilities, Yacht
Repair Facilities, Apart
from port sector, government has commenced a
large number of development projects in right
round the country in all
sectors. Here I have listed

some of those. Southern Highway Project: Upper Kothmale Hydro Power Project, Norochcholai Coal Power Project, Moragahakanda Irrigation project, Outer Circular Road Project, Flyover Project, All Island Road Development Projects, Hambantota/Katunayake Airport Projects, Railway Extension Project, North East Rehabilitation Project, Kerawalapitiya Fisheries Harbour Project, Refinery Expansion Project.

The total investments in all these projects are over billions of dollars.

The people who are responsible in all these projects are the Engineers.

It is the responsibility of engineers to ensure that the projects will be completed in time, in good quality and within the given budget. So the role of the engineers is important.

Role of Engineers in development

by the terrorist activities in all aspects, infrastructure, health, education and cultural. The leading part belongs to the engineers. While the infrastructure development takes place all other professionals could get involved in the development process.

A current fundamental problem among the engineers is the underlying assumption that in order to undertake the major development work, services of foreign consultants and contractors are essential. This outdated assumption took the entire engineering profession in Sri Lanka few decades back.

It is the duty of the engineers today, to be ready to undertake as many tasks as possible without the assistance from foreign consultants and contractors. We should come forward. I am sure we have the required knowledge and expertise, only thing that we did not get was an opportunity in the past, but today with the policies of the Government we have got an opportunity to play a major role in development.

So we must use this opportunity to use our initiative skills in development process. It helps the country in number of ways; such as saving a large amount of foreign currency, we can get the things done the way we want.

Most of the time when foreigners are invited in these projects we do not get what we really require, other than repeating the same thing they had done in other countries.

We thought on these lines even before the worst period of the war in 2006, we initiated action by involving the design works of major Hambantota Port Project with the assistance



Dr. Priyath B Wickrama makes keynote presentation

of our own engineers at SLPA, Officials at LHI and engineers at your institution.

We completed the designs jointly with the contractor and commenced the works and now the construction supervision works too is fully undertaken by our engineers. By this we saved a large amount of money - US \$ 20 million and to develop a well-experienced set of engineers, technical officers who could undertake and carry out similar projects independently in future.

Sometimes you have to get the foreign consultant services and it is compulsory when you get the financial assistance from donor agencies. But we should always try to minimize these or else we must actively involve in their consultancy work.

We too have some bad experiences in using foreign consultancy services. I do not think this is a good forum to disclose those.

The second important factor of today is context is the low involvement of engineers in research activities. For a country like ours, university research and development should mainly be application ori-

ented and directly focused to meet the requirements of the country.

It has been a serious mistake not to give due consideration to develop the country's education system beyond undergraduate level. It is only recently that the postgraduate level research-based education has received some attention. This has caused a massive gap between our country and many other countries in terms of home-grown technology.

University-Industry Cooperation should be one of the strategic directions for the country's higher engineering education reform. National universities, industries, external research institutes and Government development agencies should be closely connected to and cooperate with each other rather than separate from each other, for the common goal of pursuing social development.

This is the only way, intellectual resources of universities could be used to better serve the society, improve the innovation system in research and industrial practice and then, greatly promote the development of country's productive forces.

It is time that the country's development strategies are planned. The Faculty of Engineering of the University of Moratuwa can make a difference by contributing, their expertise.

It is a common now, for the young engineers not to work in real practical sites, workshops, yards, but prefer to work in an office. My strong belief is that you cannot become a good design engineer without having practical experience in a construction site.

We have good examples, Dr. A.N.S. Kulasinghe, D.J. Wimalasurendra and Mr. Rampala who devoted their entire life to develop the country.

They were practical engineers. So what the country needs today a similar practical engineers, not one or two, but by the thousands. Therefore, all engineers should be far more practical.