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MBA in Management of Technology begins at Moratuwa University

The establishment of an MBA course of study in Management of Technology is yet another milestone in the history of the University of Moratuwa. By broad-basing higher education at the University this step will help to meet the needs of industry in our country, said Prof. Dayantha Wijeyesekera, Vice Chancellor of the University of Moratuwa, inaugurating the MBA course of study for 2001-2003. Ambassador of the Peoples Republic of China, Jiang Qinzhen, was the chief guest at the inauguration ceremony on 27 October at the University of Moratuwa.

By taking this giant stride the Moratuwa University has expanded its scope of activities which has been always considered to be only for Architecture and Engineering. This is in addition to the recent developments at the University in the establishment of an Institute of Technology, a Faculty of Information Technology and the Uni-Consultancy Services attached to the University, added Prof. Wijeyesekera.

This is an interview Prof. Ananda Jayawardane, Head, Department of Management of Technology University of Moratuwa gave to Hilary Rajakarunanayake.

Q: What is your vision and your mission in establishing an MBA in Management of Technology?

Prof. Jayawardane: Our vision is to see that Sri Lanka reaches regional best-practised levels of performance in relation to industrial development in our country within the first two decades of this century.

Our mission is to educate and train all relevant sectors of our community to manage the country's technology and the industry base to a level required to successfully compete in the world markets. Our key objective is to develop and introduce Technology Management education and training programs to cater to all technology management needs of the present and future managers of the industry of our country.

Q: Why study Technology Management?

Prof. Jayawardane: To enable students to apply current technology management theory in the organization they are working in and to gain a broad-based technology management skills set. It also enables them to manage and create innovative lines in business. We promote Management of Technology and Innovation as a key to business competitiveness in the emerging information age.

Q: What is the scope of the study of Management of Technology?

Prof. Jayawardane: Management of Technology deals with linking science, engineering and management disciplines to plan, develop and implement technological capabilities to shape and accomplish strategic and operational objectives of an organization. Technology Management is therefore concerned with the decision problems at all levels of a business, related to the creation and utilisation of technological assets, capabilities and their impact on organizations and nations to provide the competitive edge. This could be implemented at three different but still inter-related levels: at the level of a nation, at an industry level or at



Prof. Ananda Jayawardane

the firm level. At the firm level technology management integrates technology change with business strategy to continuously improve business performance and competitiveness. Thus it deals with translating technological capabilities into business opportunities - what we call the link between business and engineering.

Q: How will this new degree help Sri Lankan industry?

Prof. Jayawardane: These new programmes will undoubtedly help the Sri Lankan industry and the policy-makers very much and make our industrial products and services more competitive internationally. We were able to identify strategically important niche areas in management studies and commence this MBA programme.

This course has been carefully designed to suit the industry needs through a process of intense review and dialogue with academia and industry at several stages. The teaching learning model of this MBA is an inductive process which goes beyond the facts and theories of the classroom. Especially student empowerment is the main objective of the teaching model adopted in this course which is considerably different to the traditional way of lecturing. Therefore active and interactive teaching methods will be used with case studies and syndicates through

these methods. Students are exposed to real life situations that are relevant, intellectually and even emotionally engaging and highly interactive. This creates a challenging learning environment that encourages everyone to share opinions and perspectives and learn from each other.

The Teaching Faculty consists of over 30 well-qualified and experienced staff drawn from the University of Moratuwa, other universities and institutions conducting similar programs both local and abroad and the industry. I am confident it will do more than meeting expectations in career advancement.

Q: What outside help have you received to commence this degree program?

Prof. Jayawardane: We have received assistance provided by the Asian Development Bank, OPEC funded Science and Technology Personnel Development Project. We deeply appreciate the role the ADB played in establishing the new

Department of Management of Technology at University of Moratuwa. The ADB and OPEC funded Science and Technology Personnel Development Project, through the provision of equipment, consultants and scholarships for the deserving is assisting the MBA programme.

Further more we have received up to now two months input from Prof. Andrew Tylecote, Professor of Economics and Management of Technological Change from the School of Management, University of Sheffield, UK, to develop the academic programs. Scholarships are also being offered for full-time research students leading to MSc degree in Management of Technology. Split PhD scholarship for one junior staff member and short-term training

abroad for senior staff members at Moratuwa are also on the cards.

Finally I must say it is a great pleasure for me to be associated with the MBA programme in Management of Technology at the University of Moratuwa. It is in fact the first and only Master's level course in Sri Lanka emphasising Technology Management. I am indeed proud that Moratuwa University are the pioneers in Management of Technology in Sri Lanka.

