

A RENOWNED ACADEMIC'S APPRECIATION

VIEWS FROM ACADEMIC GOVERNING COUNCIL

PROF. SAMPATH AMARATHUNGA

VICE CHANCELLOR - UNIVERSITY OF SRI JAYEWARDENEPURA

Professor Sampath Amaratunge, the visionary and builder of organizations, astute university administrator, academic par-excellence, renowned business consultant and humanist is back in the straddle as Vice Chancellor, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, for a second consecutive

term in office. Professor Amaratunge, BA (Hons.) in Economics from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, MA in Economics from the University of Colombo, MSc. in Economics of Rural Development from Saga National University and Ph.D. from Kogoshima National University in Japan, counts over 27 years' service

in the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. An authority in Rural Economic Development, Professor Amaratunge has won several awards including the prestigious Research Excellence Award (2002) of the Kyushu Society of Rural Economics, Japan. He has over 75 refereed publications to his credit, both locally and internationally.



What is your perspective of NSBM, better than you imagined it would be or exactly what you expected?

I see NSBM as a competitive management school in its booming stage. The massive and unmatched infrastructure of NSBM should be highly appreciated. I will say that my imagination regarding a green university at an international level has exactly been met by the first ever green university in Sri Lanka, NSBM. I will specifically

emphasize the absence of red tapes in the decision-making process within the university. I admire the degree of freedom which prevails within the university culture.

Tell me about the role you played in the journey of transformation from city campus to mammoth Green University.

The way that NSBM has shifted from the city campus concept to the university village concept should be highlighted. I should give emphasis to the advantage of the location that NSBM can

enjoy. Though NSBM has challenged the city campus concept and shifted to the green university concept, as it locates in a suburb area of Colombo city, it can freely enjoy the benefits from both aspects.

Where do you see NSBM headed? On international land and beyond?

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My special appreciation should go to the strong leadership which is given by the Vice Chancellor, Dr. E.A. Weerashighe. One of my concerns is on the freedom on selection of the students for the university, which is impossible in state universities. Therefore, you must concern to select academically excellent students and students who outperform in extracurricular activities under special conditions so that the university can gear up to a much better level than now. If NSBM can reach student markets in other countries such as Maldives, I believe that NSBM will get a good number of international students than now. Overall, I believe with the correct blend of the board of management, committed staff and a sort after student base, NSBM will be a leading business school in Sri Lanka with an admirable basis of international students.



E.A. Weerashighe. One of my concerns is on the freedom on selection of the students for the university, which is impossible in state universities. Therefore, you must concern to select academically excellent students and students who outperform in extracurricular activities under special conditions so that the university can gear up to a much better level than now. If NSBM can reach student markets in other countries such as Maldives, I believe that NSBM will get a good number of international students than now. Overall, I believe with the correct blend of the board of management, committed staff and a sort after student base, NSBM will be a leading business school in Sri Lanka with an admirable basis of international students.

Any recommendations for further improvement?

My first most concern is the inadequate number of qualified lecturers. I'll advice to upgrade the qualifications of the lecturers to uplift the quality of the course content delivery for the students. Or else NSBM must recruit qualified lecturers, so that the portion of the highly qualified lecturers will dominate. I explicitly recommend having visiting lecturers from the industry, so that the students will feel what the industry requires from them.

Message to students and staff

I'll request all the students to get the best out of the facilities at NSBM. I extend my message for the students by requesting them to enjoy the extracurricular activities while giving due care for the academics. I'll urge the necessity of following professional



courses during their undergraduate life. This is because, I thoroughly believe the huge demand in the industry for multi-qualified graduates.

For the staff, I should request them to be a well-read lecturer who has a challenging knowledge. I'll further ask them to study case studies on their higher studying courses as well. I should reveal the necessity of having foreign exposure as a lecturer is also a crucial factor to build-up as a strong lecturer. Continuous attendance on research and publications should also be highlighted in passing my message to the academic staff. I request to create a very friendly culture with the students, the academic and non-academic staff as well.

Prof. Sampath Amarathunga concluded his discussion by sending his warm wishes to NSBM.

