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Dear Readers,

*First and foremost, my sincere apologies for the long delay in publishing this important volume of the newsletter. As most of you who attended the conference in September would know; PMI CC set a precedent in the Project Management space not only in Sri Lanka, but in South Asia too, by successfully hosting the first Project Management Conference in the region. This is no mean feat by anyone's standards. With very little time and not nearly enough support, the chapter and its committed team of individuals surpassed all expectations to grit their teeth against all odds and unpleasantness to carry out this historic event.*

*We have a first-hand extract of the event from a willing participant who attended the conference on all three days, I beg to defer you to this article on Page 2 of this volume, for a completely un-biased viewpoint of the events that unfolded and perhaps some learning points for the next conference.*

*As we all know daily life is full of uncertainty and the challenges we face as effective project managers is to minimize unpleasant surprises and to keep focused on what you need to achieve with the best interests of the project at heart. What then would you do, when Murphy's law strikes you from every side, leading up to a project that has not only your own name, but perhaps the chapter, the PM profession and even the country's reputation at stake? Keep your cool, believe, believe, believe in everyone and everything and focus on the task at hand. I learnt a lot from the way this conference was handled and I take this opportunity to give a heartfelt thanks and loud applause to the current President, Vice President and the team of the PMI Colombo Chapter.*

*'Economic Development through the best practices of project management'. This PM conference could not have happened at a more opportune moment for the country.*

Thank you  
The Editor

For Comments and feedback please contact [editor@pmicolombo.org](mailto:editor@pmicolombo.org)

## PMI Member Forums 2010:

The PMI member forums are a monthly event focusing on knowledge sharing, networking, team bonding and awareness building about the potential, the scope and the dire need of experienced and certified project managers in the post-war re-construction phase in Sri Lanka.

These member forums are also an opportunity for those already certified to accumulate their PDU's and those with simply an interest to gain more insight to the value of a career in this field.

### October 2010

*Project Management in the Sri Lankan Context.*

**By: Mr. M. Jeyachandran**

*Director, Ministry of Construction, Engineering Services and Housing and Common Amenities*



Mr Jeyanchadran provided an illuminating insight into the challenges of project execution in the government sector. He deferred to an interesting analogy of the dangers of 'cow-paths' that many tend to blindly proceed on for the simple fear of 'change'.

## The SAARC PM Conference....as it was!

**By: Charaka Gunathilake, PMP**  
**Manager – PMO, Navantis IT (Pvt) Ltd.**

Let me start by saying that the event, considering its magnitude and the fact that it was a first in the SAARC region, was a significant success.

The opportunity created through the cocktails on the first night to meet fellow project management practitioners, PMI officials and speakers of the event, was enjoyed by everyone. For some of us the occasion meant that we could engage in a bit of networking as well as friendly dialogue with fellow participants.

Saturday's opening session where the Hon. Prime Minister spoke about the economic development and Project Management was an eye opener for us and gave an indication of how, not just the private sector, but the public sector too was placing a lot of emphasis on Project Management. Mr. ReshanDevapura's speech on the government's IT and other initiatives and how important a Project Manager's role is in carrying these forward as well as Mr. Vijay Prasad's thought-provoking speech on the value of Project Management were well received by the participants. Dr. Priyanth Wickrama spoke about the Port development and related projects in Sri Lanka and, Mr. Balraj gave us an account of how communication and social skills development of rural youth in Sri Lanka was treated as project and how Project Management best-practices were applied.

Parallel sessions on both the days were categorized as industry, program management and professional. The first day's parallel sessions posed the biggest challenge as all three categories provided opportunities to learn and share thoughts on many interesting topics and selecting and sticking to one category was not an easy task. Mr. Ajith Kolonne's session on Project Chaos Management, for example, generated a lot of hype and the attendance was well over what was anticipated. Interesting speeches on Project Management best practices, procurement management and results based project management were delivered by many well-known personalities in their respective industries. The manner in which most of them related their real life experiences to the principles they were trying to explain kept the audience interested throughout the post-lunch sessions.

The second day's (Sunday) main session, with Mr. Raj Kaladay, Mr. Leroy Ward and Mr. Upendra Giri delivering speeches on PM good governance product strategy and management and program management was a useful start to a day that turned out to be a fruitful one for us Project Management practitioners. Mr. Nihal Somaweera's keynote message on behalf of the Minister of Economic Development went on to further prove how all the sectors of a country have recognized the importance and need for practicing proper Project Management.

Parallel sessions on the second day complemented what was shared with the audience on the first day perfectly. For some of us who were not involved in aspects of projects such as project funding, certain sessions provided valuable insight into how such practices were carried out in the real world. We got to know about tools that fellow Project Managers use in their organizations and how they evolved over time, how finance methodologies apply to project management in real life and how projects are combined and executed as programs in non-government organizations – all by attending these parallel sessions.

In a nutshell, sessions and the conference as a whole was organized and executed in a commendable manner. Participants were very well taken care of and the support staff, volunteers and everyone from the PMI CC contributed generously even during the conference to make it a success. Being a keen observer of the conference and how each event unfolded, as the first SAARC conference and as the first event of this caliber for the Chapter, I was impressed by the manner in which the organizing committee and the support staff resolved issues they faced during the course of the conference in a smooth manner minimizing the effect on the participants.

All in all, it was a conference worthy of attendance while presenting a multitude of learning points and new acquaintances.

Great job PMI CC and I look forward to attending more such events in the coming months!

## PMI CC - CHAPTER UPDATE

### **SAARC PM CONFERENCE–APPRECIATION**

- ***PMI CC Felicitates the SAARC PM Conference Speakers and Sponsors.***

The PMI Colombo chapter held a ceremony at the Cinnamon Lake Hotel, Duke's Court on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November, 2010, to appreciate and recognize the participation and assistance rendered towards the first PM Conference held in Sri Lanka in September this year.

Several of the local speakers were present to mark this follow up event and the sponsors who couldn't attend personally had sent representatives.

This ceremony was the chapters way of extending a heartfelt thank you to the many industries and

corporations and companies in Sri Lanka who recognized the value that PMI CC can bring to this island nation as it wakens and unfolds its wings in the light of all the developments currently underway all over the county.

This ceremony marked the conclusion of the very first SAARC PM Conference in Sri Lanka amidst much appreciation from companies in a wide variety of industries.

There were several representatives and speakers from the Agriculture, Government and Construction industries and Financial organizations, not to mention the presence of several key regional heads from other chapters in the region.



Some of the sponsors, speakers and participants at the SAARC PM Conference and PMI CC Board and members after the felicitation ceremony on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2010; at Cinnamon Lake Hotel.

## PMI CC - CHAPTER UPDATE



Please mark your calendars for the December member forum

**Topic and Speaker:** Will be informed to all members via e-mail

**Location:** Garnet Room – Ceylon Continental Hotel, Colombo

**Date and Time:** Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 @ 5:00pm

For reservations contact PMI CC on 011 4362638 or email [info@pmicolombo.org](mailto:info@pmicolombo.org)

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The PMI Colombo Chapter has commenced training programs on PMP and CAPM examinations for the September 2010 and December 2010 examinations.

The Chapter is also available to assist with the registration procedures and any assistance you might require.

Please visit the website for details on lecture dates and times.

### NEW TIMES, NEW IDEAS, NEW PEOPLE - PMI CC REQUESTS ITS MEMBER COMMUNITY TO TAKE THE CHAPTER FORWARDS.

The PMI CC are requesting interested parties to join the chapter as committee members to take the chapter to new heights and new directions.

The structure of authority per the PMI constitution states that a member needs serve as a committee member only a short space of time for them to be inducted as directors of specific roles and proceed onto VP levels.

Right now, the chapter is saturated with professionals from the information technology space and the need for new ideas from different industry verticals is apparent.

Sri Lanka has many professionals from industries where project management plays a key role; take this opportunity to serve your country locally, whilst gaining recognition and reputation, globally.

Visit the PMI Colombo Chapter website for further details.

### UP COMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS FROM PMI CC

**NEXT PMP EXAMs ARE SCHEDULED FOR  
4<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2010**

# THIS IS YOUR SPACE

This space in the PMI CC monthly newsletter is for you to share your thoughts and ideas. Send us something you or your organization has done that you would like the PM community to know about.

Have you made a speech about Project Management? Do you have a new idea? How did you manage a particularly complex or large project through to completion?

If you have a tale to tell, We want to hear from you!

Please be kind enough to limit entries to this section to a maximum of 500 words; please include your full name and organization. Send all entries to [editor@pmicolombo.org](mailto:editor@pmicolombo.org) with subject titled 'THIS IS YOUR SPACE'.



### *The Project Managers Joke Corner!*

#### ***The Manager on the Farm.***

The manager of a large corporation got a heart attack, and the doctor told him to go for several weeks to a farm to relax. The guy went to a farm, and after a couple of days he was very bored, so he asked the farmer to give him some job to do.

The farmer told him to clean the shit of the cows. The farmer thought that to somebody coming from the city, working the whole life sitting in an office, it will take over a week to finish the job, but for his surprise the manager finished the job in less than one day.

The next day the farmer gave to the manager a more difficult job: to cut the heads of 500 chickens. The farmer was sure that the manager will not be able to do the job, but at the end of the day the job was done.



The next morning, as most of the jobs in the farm were done, the farmer asked the manager to divide a bag of potatoes in two boxes: one box with small potatoes, and one box with big potatoes. At the end of the day the farmer saw that the manager was sitting in front of the potatoes bag, but the two boxes were empty.

The farmer asked the manager: "How is that you made such difficult jobs during the first days, and now you cannot do this simple job?"

The manager answered: "Listen, all my life I'm cutting heads and dealing with shit, but now you ask me to make decisions

Source: <http://jokes4all.net/managers.html>