



INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF MORATUWA

ITUM NEWS

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The newsletter of the Institute of Technology University of Moratuwa,
“ITUM News” is a bi-annual electronic publication which carries news of academic, cultural and communal life of
the Institute of Technology University of Moratuwa.

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Feature Article

Engineering Technology Education: Challenges

Western knowledge-based technical education in Sri Lanka dates back to the times of the Maradana Technical College established in 1893. The contributions of those who received technical education, especially during the early to mid times are well recorded. Visible among those are well known projects as well as routine maintenance work.

Over the last few years, the contribution of the industry sector to the annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Sri Lanka has been stagnant at around 26% compared to that of the service sector (56%). As a result, the per capita income of Sri Lanka is around \$4000 whereas the per capita income of Singapore is at \$64,000 (The Central Bank of Sri Lanka – Economic & Social Statistics of Sri Lanka 2020, p.2). In this backdrop, with a view to boosting the industry sector of the country successive governments have introduced new policies to uplift the economy including the policies to improve the engineering technology education.

Engineering Technology education is a vast, multi-faceted subject area. A snapshot of the current status of the engineering technology education in Sri Lanka is herein presented with a special reference to the mid-tier education programmes such as the National Diploma in Technology (NDT), their contribution to the industry, and the challenges that lay ahead of them.

Who is a mid-tier engineering professional?

The employment levels/positions in the engineering industry are traditionally categorized into three tiers: the chartered engineers in the top tier, the incorporated engineers (i.e. Engineering Technologists) in the mid-tier and the engineering technicians in the bottom tier. These categories denote statuses that one can achieve with experience accumulated on relevant theoretical knowledge.

The practitioners in the engineering industry are accredited by three international accords of the International Engineering Alliance (IEA), namely the Washington Accord, the Sydney Accord and the Dublin Accord. These accords were initiated to facilitate the mobility of practitioners around the globe. The Washington Accord signed in 1989 accredits chartered engineers and the accords for incorporated engineers and engineering technicians were signed in 2001 and 2002 respectively. However, the three groups are no longer identified in a hierarchy as in the past where both technologists and technicians had to work under a traditional 'engineer'. Particularly, engineering technologists or incorporated engineers are now considered to have the ability to function on their independent judgement.



Dr. Bhadrani Thoradeniya
Senior Lecturer (Gr. I)
Division Of Civil Engineering
Technology

The National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE), USA (2011) explains the dichotomy between engineering and engineering technology as follows.

“The distinction between engineering and engineering technology emanates primarily from differences in their educational programs. Engineering programs are geared toward development of conceptual skills, and consist of a sequence of engineering fundamentals and design courses, built on a foundation of complex mathematics and science courses. Engineering technology programs are oriented toward application, and provide their students introductory mathematics and science courses, and only a qualitative introduction to engineering fundamentals. Thus, engineering programs provide their graduates a breadth and depth of knowledge that allows them to function as designers. Engineering technology programs prepare their graduates to apply others' designs” (5th paragraph).

The IEA prescribes 4-5 years of professional education for chartered engineers while incorporated engineers require 3-4 years of engineering technology education. Engineering technology education which produces incorporated engineers has been in existence since 1946 in the United States. The earliest known similar level education programme in Sri Lanka was the Junior Technical Officers (JTO) programme which commenced in the 1940's at the Maradana Technical College, and later shifted to the Institute of Practical Technology (IPT) at Katubedda, the current location of the University of Moratuwa. In 1967, the JTO programme was converted to a 3 year full-time diploma programme known as the National Diploma in Technology (NDT). The National Diploma in Engineering Sciences (NDES) and the Higher National Diploma in Engineering (HNDE) were thereafter established in 1985 and 1987 respectively. Over the years, these programmes have been producing top-notch mid-tier engineering professionals. The majority of diploma holders with or without further education in engineering have been able to climb the upper echelons of their career pathway or become entrepreneurs of repute which reflects suitability and success of these time-tested programmes.

Current Status

The Institution of Engineers Sri Lanka (IESL) possesses provisional signatory status for the Sydney Accord. As such, any educational programme in engineering technology seeking recognition / accreditation needs to obtain the same through the IESL. Accordingly, any engineering programme should meet the 10 Programme Outcomes (POs) stated in the accreditation manual of IESL that had been developed based on the 12 graduate attributes prescribed in the Sydney Accord.

Recently, technology stream was introduced to the GCE (A/L) subjects as a government policy for developing higher education. This has resulted in the introduction of the Bachelor's Degrees in Technology in a number of state universities.

The other major milestones achieved during the last two decades are the development of two national qualifications frameworks: The National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) framework and the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF).

Challenges

The 21st century has brought novel yardsticks for measuring engineering technology education in the form of international accords and qualifications frameworks. New programmes can be tailor-made to suit these yardsticks. However, fitting the existing time-tested education programmes to these yardsticks has become challenging in many aspects. Some of the major challenges are as follows.

- Non-existence of a macro level framework that covers the full spectrum of engineering education has created a multitude of issues for the industry and its workforce. Without proper coordination and insight, different institutions having their own objectives contribute to Engineering Technology Education. It is expected that the recently established Engineering Council of Sri Lanka will fill this gap.
- Neither the SLQF nor the NVQ framework covers the full spectrum of education and training programmes in the workforce, be it engineering, medicine or any other sector. For example, medical practitioners (Doctors) or Engineers are not covered by the NVQ framework, while SLQF levels 1 and 2 (equivalent to the GCE O/L and A/L respectively) are not awarded to tertiary education. In this scenario, where should Engineering Technology programmes be placed within these frameworks and their levels?
- Attempts at degrading diploma programmes to the Dublin Accord status based on the face-value, i.e. on the basis of the title 'diploma', without considering entry qualifications, curriculum content and the competency of diploma holders.
- Maintaining continued attraction of the GCE (A/L) mathematics stream students for technology education is of paramount importance. Paying sufficient attention to the socio-economic aspirations of students and parents is a prime requirement for attracting capable students.
- Establishing and expanding upward mobility paths for engineering technologists passing out from diploma programmes towards the chartered engineer status and the senior management levels.

Concluding Remarks

Introducing new measures to solve the existing issues in a haphazard manner has been a common occurrence in the engineering technology education sector which has created unwarranted issues for the workforce. A major contributory factor for this recurrent mistake may be due to the lack of involvement of stakeholders such as workforce representatives, academics or student representatives of the existing programmes in the initiation and development of new measures. Further, prejudice and self-centeredness of policy makers, educators and professionals have also proven to be disastrous. The solutions should be economical, justifiable and should contribute to the growth of the industry and the country while fulfilling desires and the socio-economic aspirations of students and parents.

Academic Events & Services

Online Academic Work

The orientation programme for the newly registered students could not be held this year as planned due to the Covid - 19 epidemic. This however, did not deter the relevant staff members from conducting the Pre-academic English course for the students online, from May to August 2020 using the Institute's Learning Management System based on the Moodle Learning Platform.

From August onwards, the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies was able to conduct all the 1st and the 3rd semester modules online. The 4th semester academic work started soon after the end of the 3rd semester lectures and the lectures are progressing successfully, online at the moment.



Webinar Series for IT Students

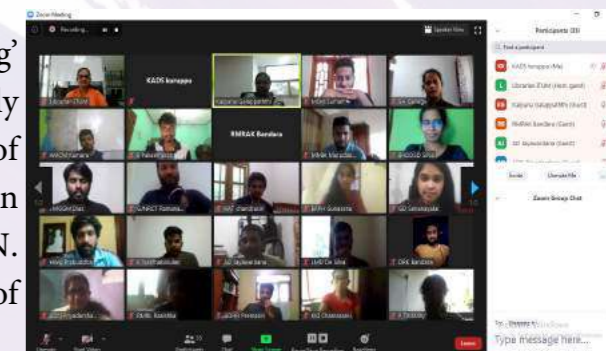
IT students actively participated in a hands-on webinar series conducted in four technical sessions on 19th, 20th, 22nd, and 23rd October 2020 by 99x. The sessions covered an introduction to open source, Agile and the basics of angularJS and reactJS



Mr. Sanara Premarathne, Trainee Software Engineer together with Mr. Niveditha Karmegama, Mr. Sachith Sujeewa, Mr. Obhasha Priyankara, and Mr. Lakindu Gunasekara attached to 99x, shared their expertise with the students. The academic staff members of the Division and the students extend their gratitude to 99x for conducting the webinar series successfully.

Online Sessions on 'Plagiarism and Referencing' & 'Reference Management Tools'

User education programs on 'Plagiarism and Referencing' and 'Reference Management Tools' were conducted virtually for the second year students attached to the Division of Information Technology. The sessions were conducted on 19th and 26th November 2020 by Dr. (Mrs.) G. D. M. N. Samaradiwakara who is covering up duties in the post of Assistant Librarian at ITUM.



Short Course on Total Stations

The Division of Civil Engineering Technology conducted a short course on Total Stations for the third consecutive time successfully. Eng.(Mr.)A.U.V.B. Bulathsinhala initiated this short course in 2019 under the guidance of the former Head of Division, Dr. (Mrs.)W.B.M. Thoradeniya with the objective of producing competent technologists equipped with advanced surveying knowledge. This course which spanned 6 full days, covered the theoretical and practical aspects of the use of total stations. So far, approximately 45 participants have successfully completed the course.



IT Industry Awareness Workshop

With the objective of educating the students on career development and the opportunities available in the IT industry, The Division of Information Technology organized a workshop on 21st February 2020 at ITUM. This workshop was conducted by 99X, a leading software company in Sri Lanka.

It was a very informative and interactive session that covered an array of topics. The workshop started with an introduction to 99X. Then, the students were briefed on different job roles, industry expectations, online presence and CV writing tips. The workshop concluded with a Q&A session followed by an experience-sharing session carried out by two interns who had completed the industrial training period at

99X. Mr. Yasas Sri Wickramasinghe, Senior Software Engineer at 99X along with Ms. Wasana Panagoda, the QA Lead, and the software engineers, Mr. Isuru Edirisinghe and Mr. Chathura Devinda were the resource persons who shared their knowledge.



Workshop Projects

- Manufacturing Simple Exercise Machines and Baby Vices

In partial fulfilment of the modules, Manufacturing Engineering and Advanced Workshop Technology, the students completed their design projects successfully on 28th September 2020. Under the supervision and guidance of Eng. K.M. Ranasiri, Senior Lecturer attached to the Division of Mechanical Engineering Technology, the mechanical students manufactured simple exercise machines and the marine students designed baby vices. At the completion of the projects, the students gained hands-on experience on the application of tolerances for different types of engineering products and the ability to design a component to meet desired needs limiting to realistic constraints such as economic, environmental and safety, manufacturability and sustainability.



- Manufacturing Steel and Wooden Chairs

Semester 1 and semester 2 students manufactured wooden dining chairs and steel chairs with immense support of Mr. K.M Ranasiri, the Lecturer -in- Charge of 'Workshop Technology', module. The steel chairs will be donated to schools and the wooden dining chairs will be donated to the newly established library of the Division of Maritime Studies.



Training programme on Development and Optimization of Dipped Products Manufacturing Process

A one-day training programme on 'Development and Optimization of Dipped Products Manufacturing Process' was successfully conducted on 15th February 2020 at ITUM by the academic staff of the Division of Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology for the executives at eDipped Product PLC.



This programme covered the theory and practice on glove manufacturing process, vulcanization of NRL/XNBR, characterization of materials using FTIR, DSC and TGA techniques, process control and instrumentation of the glove manufacturing process and the technology concerning green environment, materials and energy balance.

Field Visit to the National System Control Centre

The Electrical Engineering Technology students along with the academic staff of the Division went on a field visit to the National System Control Centre of the Ceylon Electricity Board on 9th January 2020.



Field Visit to Mattala International Airport



The second year students attached to the Division of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering Technology and the academic staff of the Division went on a field visit to Mattala International Airport on 4th January 2020.

Field Visits to Rubber Factories

The first year students who are studying Polymer Technology visited Dipped Products PLC and a small scale rubber industry located in Hanwella, Lankem Rubber factory and TSR factory at Gatahatha on 13th February 2020. At these factories, the students were exposed to the different types of rubber products and the rubber production processes. The Head of Division, Dr.(Mrs) M.C.W. Somarathne, the academic staff members and the students of the Division participated in the event.



Field visit to Laugfs Corporation (Rubber) Limited

The Division of Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology arranged a field visit to Laugfs Corporation (Rubber) Limited at Millewa and Camso Loadstar (Private) Limited in Ja-Ela on 9th January 2020 and 7th February 2020 for the second year students.



Field Visit to Observe Hotline Maintenance by CEB

The second year students who are attached to the Division of Electrical Engineering Technology and the academic staff of the Division went on a field visit to observe hotline maintenance of transmission lines carried out by the Ceylon Electricity Board on 16th January 2020.



Innovations During the COVID -19 Pandemic

Mr. L.A.S.D Silva, a third year student of ITUM attached to the Division of Electrical, Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering Technology, innovated a multifunctional robot that can diagnose and take care of COVID - 19 patients remotely. This robot which was designed to deliver medicine, is controlled by using a mobile phone. It was donated to the General Hospital in Kandy on 17th April 2020.

Mr. H.M.U.U.K. Herath, a student attached to the Division of Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology Division in collaboration with his group members designed a sanitising chamber that sprays sanitiser in proportion to the weight of a person. This sanitising chamber was donated to the Mahawa CO-OP shop on 6th May 2020.

With the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic, as a solution to the increasing demand on face masks Mr. H.P.P.I. Sandanayaka, a third year student of the Division of Textile and Clothing Technology designed a special reusable face mask with a breathable material. According to him, this face mask filters out particles containing the virus as the middle sewing of the face mask contains a glue tape and some gargle wash.



Launch of POLYMERTECH 20 Magazine

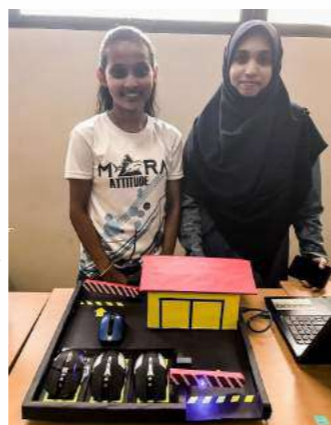
The Division of Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology in tandem with students, academics and industrial collaborators launched the magazine, "POLYMERTECH 20" on the theme "Sustainability through Innovations" on 13th March 2020. This could be considered the relaunch of the magazine, "RUBTECH 80" which had been published 40 years ago by the students who followed the National Diploma in Rubber Technology. The magazine consisted of articles by international and local academics, industrial representatives and researchers, covering a wide area including advances in polymer technology, technological quality management, emerging trends, energy and environmental management, industry reviews, personal experiences concerning the polymer industry etc.



Mini-Exhibition



The Division of Information Technology organized a mini-exhibition to provide students with the opportunity to showcase the knowledge gained from the module, Digital Electronics. This mini-exhibition was held on 19th February 2020. The students designed and implemented circuits for real-time problems they had encountered.



Visual Arts Exhibition

A visual arts exhibition was organized by the students on 19th February 2020 at ITUM premises with immense support of the Lecturer -in- Charge of Aesthetic Studies, Ms. Lakni Kumarasiri and the guidance of Mr. Lalith Manage, and Ms. Kalani Dodantenna.



Book Donations

The library committee and staff acknowledge Dr.(Mrs.) W.P.S.K Perera, Eng. (Mr.) Anton Peiris, Mr. Samitha Nanayakkara, Mr. H. Tarindu Wickramarathna, Mr. P.N.P. Jayathilaka, Mr. Ananda Dandeniya and Mrs. S.D Alles for bestowing valuable books to the ITUM library. A special gratitude goes to Eng. (Mr.) Gamini D. Nanayakkara for donating textbooks which are in high demand among ITUM students.



Activities of the Committee of Research on Ragging & Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

"A Simple Method to Eradicate Ragging from ITUM / Universities", an article by Mrs. Padma Yatapana, the former Chairperson of the Committee of Research on Ragging and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) was submitted to the Unit of Combatting Ragging and Prevention of SGBV at the UGC, the Vice-chancellors of the University of Moratuwa and the University of Ruhuna, the Director General, NSF and the Director of the ITUM.

This article together with a summary of the article presented in a narrated PowerPoint presentation was circulated among all the academic staff of ITUM, the students' counsellors of the University of Moratuwa, the academic staff of the University of Kelaniya and the Open University. An online brainstorming session on "How to Identify Warning Signs of Destructive Groups" was conducted on 8th May 2020.

The new chairperson of the committee, Dr. S. Mathugama and the members of the committee greatly appreciate the initiatives taken by Mrs. Yatapana and the services rendered by her to the committee as well as to the ITUM.



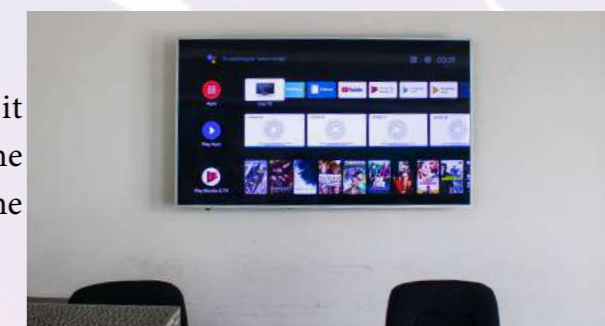
Mini-Bindery in the Library



A mini-bindery had been a long-felt need, was installed in the library in August 2020. Now, the library has the capacity to bind books, preserve and conserve materials.

Digital Display Unit

The newly formed IT Facility Development Unit installed a digital display unit in the reception area of the administrative building to display short videos about the divisions of the Institute and other important news.



Personal achievements, Appointments & Staff Development

Congratulations to the following ITUM staff members on their research publications.

1. **Dr. D.D.G.A.D.S.Saparamadu** attached to the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies published a paper titled *“Assessing factors affecting university students’ preference of walking; comparing University of Moratuwa & University of Sri Jayewardenepura”* at the 13th FARU International Research Conference organized by the Faculty of Architecture Research Unit of the University of Moratuwa.

URL : <https://faru.uom.lk/Documents/FARU%20Proceedings%202020.pdf>

2. **Dr.(Mrs.) G.K. Jayatunga** attached to the Division of Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology published an article titled *“Drying kinetics, quality and moisture diffusivity of spouted bed dried Sri Lankan black pepper”* in the Journal of Food Engineering.

URL : <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfoodeng.2019.05.023>

3. **Mrs. V.G.P. Pabasara** of the Division of Textile and Clothing Technology presented a paper titled *“Use of Unannounced Quizzes as a Formative Assessment Tool to Improve Engineering Technology Student Attainment”* at the 2020 SLAIHEE Conference.

URL: <https://www.slaihee.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Proceedings-of-the-16th-Annual-SLAIHEE-Conference-2020.pdf>

4. **Mrs. R.L.P. Ramasinghe** of the Division of Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology presented a paper titled *“Use of Unannounced Quizzes at lectures to enhance academic performance, alongside increased lecture attendance in a second year Engineering course”* at the 2020 SLAIHEE Conference held on the theme *“Developing and Sustaining Teaching and Learning Practices to meet Higher Education Needs”*

URL : <https://www.slaihee.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Proceedings-of-the-16th-Annual-SLAIHEE-Conference-2020.pdf>

She presented a second paper on *“Use of Acrylic Polymer Modified Hydrophobic Nano-Silica in Reinforcing of XNBR Nano-Composites”* at the Moratuwa Engineering Research Conference (MERCon).

URL : <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/9185353>.

5. **Ms. J. A. S. D. Bandara** attached to the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies presented a paper titled *“An analysis of the relationship between anxiety and coaching behaviour of national level contact and non-contact sports male athletes in Sri Lanka”* at the 7th International Conference on Multidisciplinary Approaches 2020 (iCMA 2020) held on 8th and 9th December 2020.

6. **Ms. W.E. Iroshani** of the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies presented a paper titled, *“A Case Study of Undergraduates’ Perception on Generic Skills Acquired from the University Education”* at the 2020 ICACT.

7. **Mrs. Lakni Kumarasiri** of the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies presented a paper on the topic *“Comparative study between objective and expectation of performing dancing items in Sabaragamuwa dance tradition and Vedda’s dance tradition”* at the 2nd International Conference on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICICH 2020).

She presented a second paper on *“Psychotherapeutic aspects of Arudhaya in the Vedda’s dance”* at PATOC 2020 (Performing Arts In Time Of Corona) online research symposium.

8. **Mr. Manjula Wickramathilaka** of the Division of Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technology presented a paper titled *“Non-Intrusive Load Monitoring: Recent Developments and Challenges”* at the International Conference on Advances in Computing and Technology (ICACT) – 2020.

URL: <https://fct.kln.ac.lk/media/pdf/proceedings/ICACT-2020/E-9.pdf>

9. **Mr. L. G. Chamath** of the Division of Mechanical Engineering Technology recently presented a paper on *“The effect of alkaline concentration on the surface properties of coir fibers”* at the National Engineering Research Symposium 2020 (NERS 2020).

Conferences and Workshops

The academic staff members who participated in several conferences and workshops shared their views and experiences.

1. 16th Annual SLAIHEE Conference

Dr. (Mrs.) Samanthi Mathugama, of the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies participated in the 16th Annual SLAIHEE Conference on Higher Education in Sri Lanka which was conducted online on 24th July 2020 on the theme “*Developing and Sustaining Teaching and Learning Practices to meet Higher Education Needs*”. This conference showcased the findings of research carried out by the university academics on teaching, learning and assessments. Research areas included the issues related to collecting students’ feedback, handling mix-ability students through teamwork, blended learning, plagiarism and measures to improve attendance at lectures.

2. Continuous Discussion on Ideas from Prof. Graham Gibbs’ “ideas collection”

This discussion series was led by Prof. Suki Ekaratne and Dr. Iroja Caldera and organized by the Sri Lanka Association for Improving Higher Education Effectiveness (SLAIHEE). The areas covered the measures to boost up higher-order thinking and active participation at lectures. Mrs. V.G.P. Pabasara of the Division of Textile and Clothing Technology participated in the first discussion on “why do transferrable skills rarely transfer?” and Dr. (Mrs.) Srimala Perera attached to the Division of Textile and Clothing Technology participated in the 2nd session on 18th December 2020. The discussion was on “What students did to get OUT of studying or to get INTO studying at University?” Dr. Perera sharing her knowledge explained, “with the use of menti.com tool we (teachers) can orient ourselves (different techniques we can use) to reorient such behavior of students to get the best out from any program”.



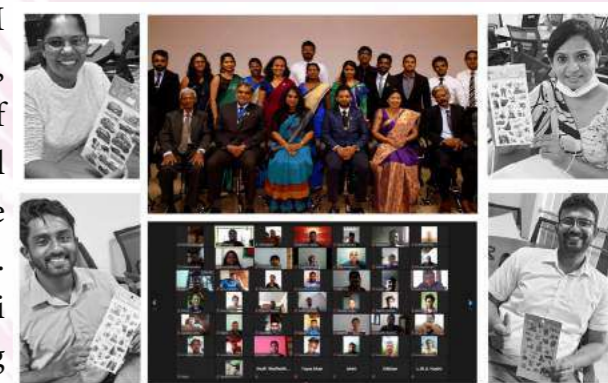
ITUM Toastmasters Club Achieves New Heights in 2020

ITUM Toastmasters Club from its inception on 30th June 2018 has made its journey to be one of the top performing university clubs in Sri Lanka being a Distinguished Club in 2018-19 and a Select Distinguished Club in 2019-20. Over the years, members have shown a remarkable improvement in public speaking, leadership, networking, and emotional IQ.

In 2020, our Toastmasters achieved educational awards in Toastmasters’ pathways. Our Charter President TM Manjula Wickramathilake and TM Imesha Samarathunga achieved Level 1 while reading for PhD and MPhil degrees respectively. TM Chandani Somaratne and TM Suhani Maheepala also accomplished Level 1. Besides, TM Sandaruwan Jayalath and TM Lakmali Chathurika completed Level 3.

Reaching the highest level in a single pathway, Toastmasters TM Lalith Manage and TM Wathsaridu Karunarathna achieved Level 5 with a Triple Crown Award. On top of that, TM Lalith Manage was awarded “Excellence in Leadership” award by the Toastmasters International District 82 in 2019-20 and 2020-21. He is currently one of the few mentors in Sri Lanka with a Club Mentor Award for Excellence.

In 2020, many Distinguished Toastmasters visited ITUM Toastmasters Club including DTM Sharma Mahalingam, Past District 82 Director cum the Managing Director of My Cola Beverages (PVT) Ltd. who conducted a special educational session for the members of the club. In the coming year the club is aspiring to achieve new heights. Thus we invite members of staff, their families and alumni to join the club to start your journey towards transforming yourself into a better you.



Appointments

Competent Authorities



Professor S M A Nanayakkara

Professor S M A Nanayakkara served as the Competent Authority of ITUM from 1st July 2020 to 30th September 2020. Professor Nanayakkara is a professor in Civil Engineering attached to the Building & Structural Engineering Division of the Department of Civil Engineering of the University of Moratuwa.



Dr. Sujeewa Lewangamage served as the Competent Authority of ITUM from 1st October 2020 to 15th February 2021. He is a Senior Lecturer attached to the Department of Civil Engineering, University of Moratuwa and a practising structural engineer.

Dr. Sujeewa Lewangamage

New Heads of Divisions



Dr.(Mrs.) G.K. Jayatunga was appointed as the Head of the Division of Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology for a period of three years with effect from 01st November 2020.

Dr.(Mrs.) G.K. Jayatunga



Dr. (Mrs.) Shamein Saparamadu, Senior Lecturer in Mathematics & Statistics, assumed duties as the Head of the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies with effect from 1st August 2020.

Dr. Shamein Saparamadu

New Recruitments

The **Division of Information Technology** is pleased to welcome the following new probationary lecturers recruited in 2020.



Mr. M.I.M.Amjath

Mr. M.I.M.Amjath - B. Sc. (Hons), The Vavuniya Campus of the University of Jaffna

Specialisation: Internet of Things, Machine Learning and Computer Vision



MS. M.V.P.Thilini Lakshika

Ms. M.V.P.Thilini Lakshika - B. Sc. (Hons), The University of Uva-Wellassa

Specialisation: Natural Language Processing, Data Mining, Machine Learning, eLearning, Information Systems Design and Management.



Ms. D.A.S. Ruwanmini

Ms. D.A.S. Ruwanmini - B. Sc. (Hons), The University of Colombo The School of Computing

Specialisation: ICT in Education , Natural Language Processing Software Architectural Concepts, Management Information Systems and e-Learning



Ms. Hansinie M. Jayathilake

Ms. Hansinie Madushika Jayathilake - B. Sc. (Hons), General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University

Specialisation: Data Mining, Natural Language Processing, Big Data Analytics and Machine Learning

The **Division of Interdisciplinary Studies** is pleased to welcome the following new probationary lecturers recruited in 2020.



Ms. A.K.D.K. Chaturangi - B. Sc. (Hons), The University of Colombo

Specialisation - Applied Statistics and Mathematics

Ms. A.K.D.K. Chaturangi



Ms. H. A. L. S. Amarasinghe - B.A (TESL) (Hons) The University of Sri Jyawardanapura

Specialisation– Teaching English as a Second Language

Ms. H. A. L. S. Amarasinghe



Ms. W.E. Iroshani - B. Sc. (Hons), The University of Sri Jyawardanapura

Specialisation–Statistics and Statistical Modelling

Ms. W.E. Iroshani



Ms. J.A.S.D. Bandara - B. Sc. (Hons), The University of Sri Jyawardanapura

Specialisation–Sports Science, Sports Psychology and Martial Arts

Ms. J.A.S.D. Bandara

Retirement

The Division of Interdisciplinary Studies bid farewell to Mrs. P.S. Yatapana, Senior Lecturer in Mathematics & Statistics, who retired after 35 years of dedicated service to the University of Moratuwa and ITUM on 30th September 2020.

Mrs. Yatapana was one of the former Heads of the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies and served ITUM in many capacities such as being the Senior Student Counsellor and the Chairperson of the BOS standing committee on research. We appreciate her service to the Division and to ITUM and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.



A token of appreciation of her services was presented to her by Prof. S. M. A. Nananyakkara, the Competent Authority of ITUM at the Board of Studies meeting held on 30th September 2020.

Workshop on “Stress Releasing through Aesthetics”

The Staff Development Unit of ITUM organized a one-day workshop on “Stress Releasing through Aesthetics” for the academic staff of ITUM on 26th September 2020. Renowned teacher and trainer in the areas pertaining to cultural studies and transformative education, Dr. Sunil Wijesiriwardena conducted the workshop and demonstrated to the participants how and why artistic creativity and association with arts may work as a wonderful stress reliever that can provide a catharsis for difficult emotions, and help in getting into a state of “flow” that can be restorative in many ways. Dr. Wijesiriwardena said that he wanted the participants to recognize the crucial role played by arts in the evolution of humanity and said that he focused on social functions of arts from a broader perspective.



He further added that he was quite impressed by the energy and devotion of the participants and that he thoroughly enjoyed the day and found it to be one of the “best inspirational moments he had been in, for some time as a teacher”. All the participants rated the session as “excellent” and said that it was a meaningful, inspiring, and motivating workshop that they had enjoyed greatly.

Cultural Events

Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology Division Celebrates the New year

The academic staff of the Division of Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology organized a tea party to celebrate the dawn of 2020 together with the students in the Division.



Digital Vesak Celebrations

The temporary closure of Higher Education Institutes due to the Covid-19 did not deter the NDT students' union from celebrating the Vesak festival. Although the students could not illuminate the premises as usual with colourful and decorative Vesak lanterns this year, thinking out of the box, the students' union organized a Digital Vesak Zone on the ITUM Facebook page from 10th May to 13th May. This was organized as an open competition which included creative Vesak lanterns, Vesak 'Bakti Gee', Vesak thoughts, Vesak cards, graphical creations and Vesak photography. Many students including undergraduates from other universities participated in the competitions virtually. The winners were selected contingent on the number of Facebook likes and prizes were also awarded to the winners.



“Premayanam...” - Online Programme

The Literary Arts Society held successfully 'PREMAYA NAM', an online programme on 6th December 2020. Well-versed authors, Ms. Shanthi Dissanayake, Ms. Suharshani Dharmarathna and literary critic and Attorney-at-Law, Mr. Samantha Herath were the resource persons.



Sports News

Appointments

Marking yet another victorious year in the history ITUM, our sportsmen and sportswomen made ITUM proud with a gamut of achievements. To applaud their true spirit of sportsmanship and perseverance, ITUM sports association appointed these energetic champs as captains / vice captains for the year 2019 /2020.

A.L.A. S.L Liyanaarachchi, an awardee of the university colours who had been crowned as the second runner up at the 15th Asia Pacific Shitoryu Karate Do Federation held in Indonesia, was appointed as ITUM Sports Captain and the Vice- captain of the University of Moratuwa karate team. He has also won several national-level karate competitions organized by the Sri Lanka Karate Do Federation and the Sri Lanka School Karate Do Association from 2012 to date.



J.P Theekshana Nuwan who had been awarded the university colours in 2020 for securing many accolades in track and field events, was appointed as the Vice- captain of the University of Moratuwa road race team. He secured the second place at 100 X 4 Freshers' Athletic Meet in 2018 and became second in the annual road race organized by the University of Moratuwa in 2019. Sandani Abeywikrama is yet another champion who has made the University of Moratuwa proud. She secured the 2nd and 3rd places at the All Island School Table Tennis Championship in 2012 and 2013 respectively.

H.P.P.I. Sandanayaka, an awardee of colours in 2019, was appointed as the Vice-captain of University of Moratuwa Volleyball team and W.M.T.N.Kumara who secured many provincial and national-level achievements at the Sri Lanka University Games including 2nd place in javelin throw, 4th place in discs throw and 6th place in shot-put in 2019, was appointed as the Vice-captain of the athletic team.



A.K Sandeepani who won several volleyball championships at provisional and national levels including Deyata Kirula Volleyball Championship, Munchee National Volleyball Championship 2011/12, DSI Super Sports School Volleyball Championship in 2012 and 2013, Milo Netball Championship (A- Division) in 2012, was appointed as the Vice-captain of the University of Moratuwa women's volleyball team.

University Colours Awarding Ceremony 2020

At a prestigious Colours Awarding Ceremony organized by the University of Moratuwa in 2020, 29 ITUM sportsmen and sportswomen who showcased dedication, hard work and passion for sports received colours.

NAME	SPORT
A.L.A.S.L.Liyanaarachchi	Karate
W.M.S.Wijesinghe	Karate
R.W.A.B.D.Jayasekara	Athletics
W.M.T.N.Kumara	Athletics
J.P.T.Nuwan	Athletics
W.A.P.D.Wanigasuriya	Athletics
B.M.A.Bandara	Athletics
H.A.K. Niwanthaka	Athletics
D.G.Chamila Mihirani	Athletics
H.P.P.I Sandanayaka	Volleyball
K.P.A.S.R.Keppitipola	Volleyball
H.L.Y.Yasanga	Volleyball
S.M.S.D.Semasinghe	Volleyball
R.A.U.S.D.Ranasingha	Volleyball
J.H.S. Rashmika	Volleyball
A. K. Sandeepani	Volleyball
N.K.N Nawarathna	Volleyball
M.M.K.S.Maheepala	Volleyball
D.J.S.Fernando	Volleyball
H.A.I.S.Hettiarachchi	Elle
S.A.Abewickrama	Elle
K.T.S.Rasara	Elle
P.S.M.Harshani	Elle
E.K.P.A.Dilmira	Elle
A.R.L.Fernando	Taekwondo
K.H.K.S.Wijesekara	Carrom
D.U.A.U.Silva	Rugby
R.D.Shamal	Badminton
C.A.B Pallegedara	Baseball



Communal & Other Events

Welcome Program for 2019/2020 Intake

A welcome program for the 2019/2020 batch of the National Diploma in Technology was held on 5th October 2020 at the Institute of Technology University of Moratuwa. Eight hundred students were registered in the 2019/2020 cohort. The event was held adhering to the health guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health. The occasion was graced by Dr. C.S. Lewangamage, the Competent Authority of ITUM, heads of academic and administrative divisions, academic and non-academic staff members and past students.



Paving Rubber Blocks over the Slippery Bridge between the Hostel and the Canteen

At the request made by Dr. C.S Lewangamage, the Competent Authority of ITUM, the General Manager of D. Samson Industries, Mr. N.A. Nandasena volunteered to pave rubber blocks over the slippery bridge joining the canteen and the hostel. ITUM extend gratitude to Mr. Sunil Mendis, the Managing Director of ATG Group of Companies for providing funds for materials and Mr. N.A Nandasena and Mr. Kamalanath Jinadasa, ITUM Training Engineer for their financial assistance. The Head of ITUM Facility Management Unit, Mr. A.U.V.B. Bulathsinhala and Mr. Kamalanath Jinadasa coordinated and supervised the task on behalf of ITUM. The ITUM Facility Management Unit expresses thanks to Mr. Lasantha Jayaweera and Mr. Ajith Stanley for their assistance.



Donations from Matro Engineering & Construction (Pvt) Ltd.

At the request made by the Competent Authority, ITUM, Dr. C.S. Lewangamage, Matro Engineering & Construction (Pvt) Ltd. donated a canopy structure at the expense of Rs. 325,000. This canopy structure which connects the main building and the Division of Mechanical Engineering Technology will provide shelter during rainy days. ITUM expresses heartfelt gratitude to Matro Engineering & Construction (Pvt) Ltd.



Felicitation Ceremony to the Staff from Semester 4 Electrical Engineering Technology Students

The students attached to the Division of Electrical, Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering Technology organized a Felicitation Ceremony for the academic and non-academic staff of the Division on 27th February 2020 at the Division.



Farewell to Semester 4 Electrical, Electronics and Telecommunication Students

The Division of Electrical, Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering Technology bid farewell to semester 4 students who were ready to go on training on 26th February 2020 at the Division. A farewell lunch was organized by for the students by the academic and non-academic staff of the Division.



Planting 1000 Trees at ITUM

With passion in his eyes and vision in his mind, Eng. Gamini Nanayakkara, the Head of the Division of Electrical, Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering Technology initiated a tree planting programme to plant 1000 saplings on the premises of ITUM on 8th January 2020. Dr. Sunil Jayantha Nawaratne, former Competent Authority, ITUM, the academic and non-academic staff and the students gave a helping hand in organizing this event. Currently, a voluntary group of staff and students are taking care of the plants.



Donations to the Automobile Lab

Maga Engineering donated valuable automobile engine parts and hydraulic machine components.

Automobile engine parts were donated in memory of the late Mr. Bonnie Fernando, the Managing Director of Multi-Technical Services, Kandy by his wife. ITUM gratefully acknowledge their valuable donations to the automobile lab.



The Division of Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology Initiated a Hand Sanitiser Manufacturing Project

The Division of Polymer and Chemical Engineering Technology initiated a project to manufacture hand sanitiser to be used by the Institution. Preparation of Hand sanitiser was carried out in compliance with the standards set by the World Health Organization. The first batch of hand sanitiser was officially handed over to ITUM in the presence of the Competent Authority, Dr. C.S. Lewangama, the Deputy Registrar, Mr. N.D. Kuruppuarachchi and the Assistant Bursar, Mrs. P.J. Weerakkodiarachchi by the team who were engaged



in the hand sanitiser manufacturing project, pioneered by Dr.(Mrs.) G.K. Jayatunga on 8th December 2020. The team included Dr.(Mrs.) M.C.W. Somarathna, Ms. T. Thathsara, Ms. A.D. Weerakoon, Mrs. I.R. Samarathunga, Mrs. N.D.I. Kumarage, Mrs. T. Thilakarathne, Mrs. S. Ranawala, Ms. L. Chathurika, Mrs. N. Premaratne, Mr. S. Hemachandra, Ms. K. Samarasinghe, Ms. N. Gamhewage and Mr. N. Gemunu.

Tribute to Minor Staff

17/18 NDT batch organized a programme on 14th February 2020 to appreciate the services of the janitorial staff members and the security officers of the Institute. This moment was an emotional as well as a memorable moment for them all. They were thrilled to receive gifts which were given to acknowledge their services to the Institution.

Quarantine Centre at ITUM

ITUM took immediate measures to hand over ITUM hostels to run a quarantine centre on 27th March 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. This was an exemplary and timely action taken during temporary closure of the Institute during this time.



'Athwela' 2020

'Athwela' is an educational program conducted by NDT students with the aim of empowering students studying in the rural areas in Sri Lanka. Every year several schools in rural areas are selected and mathematics and science lessons are conducted for grade 10 and grade 11 students. This year as an extension to the 'Athwela' programme, a new programme was launched - 'Athwela Online' on 12th April 2020. This new program enabled NDT students to reach a wider student community.

A series of free video lessons prepared by NDT students were also diffused through the NDT official YouTube channel, the 'NDT Voice'. The videos included the GCE O/Level mathematics and science lessons and the GCE A/Level mathematics lessons. Shortly after the launch of 'Athwela Online', the program received positive responses. The NDT students' union appreciates the dedicated team who are behind the official NDT Facebook page, the 'NDT Voice', YouTube channel and those who dedicated their time and effort to create video lessons.



Article

Empowering Diplomates through 'Bodily Learning'

Empowering undergraduates through 'Bodily Learning' is considered one of the key requirements of university education in Sri Lanka. Even though the 'competition-based sports' are included in the calendar of any university, the university student population who participate in such events is limited in number. Having realized the importance of addressing this issue, ITUM designed a carefully-crafted bodily learning process.


Thus the ITUM aiming at developing personality, leadership and teamwork skills, introduced a compulsory module, 'sports studies' to first year students in 2018. Besides, the module keeps students abreast of the fitness training methods and the relaxation techniques. The sports tournament which is held bi-annually at the end of each semester, provides the students with the opportunity to participate in team events such as volleyball, netball, badminton, cricket and football and win prizes and trophies.


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