



*A Publication of the Young Entrepreneurs Group of Asia-Pacific (YEGAP)*

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# **Entrepreneur Asia-Pacific**



## **YEGAP Journeys to Colombo**

### **Chairman's Message**



*Year after year, I take pride in chairing the YEGAP Breakout Sessions which takes us to various countries in the Asia Pacific region. It is truly an honor to sit as Chairman of the YEGAP, and I thank all of you for the trust you have placed in me. For six years now we have worked together amidst the global challenges that are ongoing in order for all member countries to attain global competitiveness.*

*This year, Sri Lanka served as the venue for the 2010 Breakout Session of the Young Entrepreneurs Group of Asia Pacific. The gathering was attended by YEGAP member entrepreneurs from various CACCI member countries.*

*Held in the city of Colombo, the session was an integral part of the program of the 24th Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) Conference, and the Sri Lanka Economic Summit 2010. Delegates discussed trends and developments, concerns, and prospects for growth of entrepreneurship in the region. The participants also explored possible areas of cooperation among CACCI members in promoting entrepreneurship among the start-up entrepreneurs.*

*During the Breakout Session in Colombo, the YEGAP had the privilege to interact and listen to very interesting speakers. Mr. G.M.S. Bandara, Director for Small Enterprises Development of the Ministry of Youth Affairs presented official policies to encourage and support entrepreneurship development in Sri Lanka. Mr. Motoharu Nishii, Chairman of the Young Entrepreneurs Group of Japan, gave an update on the various projects of the group in Japan. Mr. W.K.H. Wegapitaya, president of Laugfs, Holdings, a group of companies ranging from freight to shipping, to manufacturing, presented the status and prospects of entrepreneurship in Sri Lanka. And the young and dynamic Mr. Hendy Setiono, 2009 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur*

*of the Year, shared the secret of his success to being the largest kebab franchisor in Indonesia with other 600 retail shops.*

*I was indeed happy to see YEGAP member countries Australia, Bangladesh, Georgia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, and Turkey in attendance. Also, I welcome new member Iran to the YEGAP.*

*The YEGAP carries an agenda and plan of action for the purpose of encouraging more entrepreneurs from the region to take an active role in various sectors of the society, and also in equal importance, in government, business and socio-economic sectors. It serves as an effective venue to implement suitable programs that are available to young entrepreneurs in Asia-Pacific.*

*It is my fervent hope then that more entrepreneurs will continue to take an active role in the YEGAP as it takes us from journey to journey, year after year.*

**ANNA MARIE PERIQUET**

# YEGAP Session in Colombo Draws Another Big Turnout

Interest among the region's young entrepreneurs in CACCI activities continue to grow as evidenced by the big number of participants that turned out for the breakout session of Young Entrepreneurs Group of Asia-Pacific held on July 5, 2010 in Colombo, Sri Lanka during the 24th CACCI Conference.

Some 70 participants attended the session, composed mainly of representatives from Japan, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, and Turkey.

Chaired by YEGAP Chairperson Ms. Anna Marie Periquet, the session featured invited speakers who shared their perspectives and exchanged views with the delegates on issues pertaining to the promotion and development of entrepreneurship in the region..

Mr. G.M.S. Bandara, Director for Small Enterprises Development of the Ministry of Youth Affairs, presented official policies to encourage and support entrepreneurship development in Sri Lanka. Notably, he mentioned that the government has been very flexible in giving soft loans to SMEs and start-up entrepreneurs through Sri Lanka's government banks. He also informed the body that the Sri Lankan government is very open to foreign investors in areas of infrastructure, education and tourism.

Mr. W.K.H. Wegapitaya, Founder and Executive Chairman, Laughfs Holdings Ltd. of Sri Lanka, gave a presentation on the status and prospects of entrepreneurship in Sri Lanka by expounding on the Sri Lankan experience of starting up and expanding the business. He noted that business incubation facilities have been set up in 3 key cities in Sri Lanka.

These business incubation centers help entrepreneurs in formalizing business plans and raising seed capital. Mr. Wegapitiya also shared his experiences as the founder of Laughfs Holdings whose businesses range from freight to shipping, to manufacturing.

Mr. Motoharu Nishii, Chairman

entrepreneurship subjects in the curriculum.

During the Open Forum, the delegates discussed trends and developments, concerns, and prospects for growth of entrepreneurship in the region. The participants also explored possible areas of cooperation among

CACCI members in promoting entrepreneurship among the start-up entrepreneurs.

Mr. Waqas Masud from Pakistan presented the proposal on the Young Entrepreneur Host Program (YEHP). Said project proposal was duly noted. Ms. Periquet informed the body that YEGAP will fine tune the proposal and circulate among YEGAP members for ad referendum approval.

Ms. Periquet informed the participants of the following matters:

- that the YEGAP will launch its talk show on entrepreneurship and business in the Manila Times Online TV in August 2010. Entitled "Pinoy, Incorporated", the talk show will feature successful entrepreneurs and business leaders from the Asia Pacific region.

- that the YEGAP Column in Manila Times is now on its first year. She encouraged the representatives of YEGAP in the local chambers to invite entrepreneurs to submit their feature stories and articles for the column. Ms. Periquet acknowledged the presence of Mr. Dante Ang II, President of The Manila Times. She thanked Mr. Ang on behalf of YEGAP for his sponsorship and support to the YEGAP. A motion was made for the YEGAP to send a resolution of thanks to The Manila Times.

- that the publication of the YEGAP Book on the State of Entrepreneurship in Asia Pacific will

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*YEGAP Chairperson Ms. Anna Periquet welcomes the delegates to the breakout session.*

of the Young Entrepreneurs Group of Japan, gave an update on the various projects of YEG Japan. He said that one of the main roles of his group is to listen to the various issues and problems of their members and formulate solutions that are forwarded to the Government for their consideration. He also shared the model and structure of the Japan YEG which boasts of a membership base of 30,000 members.

Mr. Hedy Setiono, Founder and President, PT Baba Indonesia; and Board Member, Permanent Committee for Entrepreneur Development, KADIN Indonesia, shared the secret of his success to being the largest kebab franchisor in Indonesia with over 600 retail shops of Kebab Turki and Piramizza. Mr. Setiono, who is 2009 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year - Indonesia, also discussed the Entrepreneur University, a project of the Permanent Committee for Entrepreneur Development, KADIN Indonesia, wherein universities in Indonesia have included

# YEGAP In Colombo Photo Album (1)



# YEGAP In Colombo Photo Album (2)



# Our Journey to Sri Lanka

*In this article, YEGAP members share stories on their journey to Colombo*

## **ANNA MARIE PERIQUET (Philippines)**

I am most fortunate that my business undertakings and government posts take me to far away places where one can only dream of visiting. And with my role as chairman of the YEGAP I am discovering more beautiful destinations and even more friendly faces in the Asia-Pacific region.

My free-spirited nature makes it is easy for me to just pack up and go. I love going on journeys. As I am taken to the farthest corners of the world to experience the ups and downs of an exciting new life, I cannot help but marvel at the wonderful creation of God.

Just like in life, I always believe that we are all in a journey that can be likened to a ship, which docks on a port. It does not rest forever but only to refuel and recharge to prepare for another journey. This is the time to move on. And as I set out on a journey that may bring me far and wide, it is still going back home to my family, friends and those closest to my heart



that I look forward to.

The beautiful city of Colombo served as the venue for the CACCI conference and the Breakout Session of the YEGAP. As always, the CACCI is one such conference I eagerly anticipate every year. Forging old ties and friendships for the last 8 years is most valuable to me. Amidst discussions on trends and developments, concerns, and prospects for growth of entrepreneurship in the region, it is the fellowship and lasting camaraderie that makes every conference a success.

Apart from familiar faces we see every year; we meet new colleagues who fast become friends. Over the last 6 years I have gained a best friend and confidante, Ted Suzuki from Japan.

Our friendship has withstood the test of time and distance so much so that we take turns in visiting each other's respective countries for reasons unimaginable - from wishing one a happy birthday, to savoring delectable fare like the Philippines' famous halo-halo or Japan's mouth-watering sushi, to checking if one or the other is doing well.

During this particular trip to Sri Lanka I gained more friends from the region. I say friends because our exchange of business cards became the gateway for exchange of emails and teleconference calls.

Waqas Masud of Pakistan is one of them. Before the Sri Lanka journey, we communicated via emails only. Imagine this: we were emailing each other for 6 months, never having met or talked and yet we discovered over time that we both shared the same business story and treaded a parallel career path. When finally we met it was as if we were friends for the longest time. I, together with other YEGAP members, had a blast when Waqas showed us

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## **YEGAP Session**

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be delayed pending the submission of materials from the local chambers. She urged the participants to remind their respective local chambers to submit the articles for the proposed book.

- that the 5th Edition of the YEGAP Newsletter has been circulated among the CACCI members. Publication of the 6th newsletter is scheduled in August. She invited the participants to contribute articles for the newsletter.

- that five finalists have been selected for the 3rd Asia Pacific Young Entrepreneur Award - two from the Philippines, one from Russia, and



*Participants pose for group photo after the YEGAP breakout session in Colombo.*

two from Sri Lanka. The awarding ceremony will be held during the Gala Dinner.

Ms. Periquet introduced the newly appointed Director for Program Development of the YEGAP, Mr. Waqas Masud Mian.

She also welcomed new local chamber YEGAP member representatives: Mr. Dante Ang II from the Philippines; Mr. Hendy Setiono from Indonesia, Mr. Edgar Sia II from the Philippines; and Ms. Golzah Salahshour from Iran. ■

**Our Journey**

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photos in his cell phone. It was a compilation that could easily belong to a library of photos!! He even had a photo of his niece's matrimonial bed which reduced us all to tears of laughter.

Another friend whom I got close to was the young Hendy Setiono of Indonesia - the Kebab Turki and Piramizza King of Jakarta. He has got to be the funniest, craziest and bubbliest person I have ever encountered. Loads of fun to be with, I asked him to be my personal tour guide after one plenary session. First stop was the National Museum of Sri Lanka. The museum was very rich in history, tradition, artifacts and stories of yesteryears. The monumental Buddha was simply glorious. At one point, Hendy and I felt as though we were subjects in the museum as students out on a field trip were staring intently at us and not on the museum pieces. Outside the museum, I was mobbed by the students who asked for photos to be taken. My personal photographer, Hendy, amusingly obliged. Next stop: the temple. Beautiful and ornamental statues of buddhas and touching ceremonies were a sight to behold. Hendy and I managed to gate crash a wedding, and we entered barefooted as a sign of respect for the temple. I was in awe with the intricate gown and attire of the bride and groom. It was spectacular, so lavish. Our last stop was the beach situated near our hotel.

Of course, how can I ever forget my newfound Sri Lankan friend, Sujeeva Ratnakumara of Youth Business International. He was so, so hospitable and accommodating. He

was the epitome and true reflection of the people of Sri Lanka. Sujeeva took care of the YEGAP breakout session as though we were in the United Nations. He even found a cameraman - on the eleventh hour - to shoot my Pinoy, Incorporated talk show tapings with CACCI personalities. So hospitable was Sujeeva that he would call me on my cell phone every morning to ask if there was anything I needed, and then he would call in the evening to see if we were all okay. Thank you, my friend, for making our stay in your lovely city of Colombo most pleasurable.

Every journey must come to an end. I boarded the plane at one in the morning en route to Manila, and I brought with me memories of four wonderful days in Colombo as I head on to my next journey.



**TEISUKE SUZUKI  
(Japan)**

First, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have made my trip to Sri Lanka a very fruitful experience. Along with over 20 members of Japan YEG, it was my honor to attend the 24<sup>th</sup> CACCI Conference as Vice-Chairman of the Young Entrepreneurs Group of Asia Pacific (YEGAP). With notable attendance of nearly 100 delegates from various countries around the region, discussions at the breakout session of YEGAP was productive and enriching.

I was delighted to witness an increasing number of young entrepreneur groups and other related

organizations in action at a local and national level. It is my dream for YEGAP to function as a network platform of emerging businessmen and businesswomen in the near future.

Also, the Colombo visit made me realize the long noteworthy relationship between Sri Lanka and Japan. During the precious stay, I was able to visit Kandy. At the Temple of the Tooth, I was immersed in the beautiful architecture, people, and nature. Kandy evoked images of Japan's ancient capital, Kyoto. I reflected upon the grandeur history of Sri Lanka and its culture.



As it was my first sojourn to Sri Lanka, I was initially unacquainted with Sri Lankan cuisine, expecting curry for every meal, but in reality, Sri Lanka offered variety of food selections that I savored very much.



It is great being part of CACCI. My involvement in its activities over the past years has created opportunities for me not only to meet and network with potential business parties from other countries but also to be exposed to and experience the differing exotic cultures and traditions of Asian countries. I am looking forward to attending next year's and future CACCI conferences.



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## Our Journey

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### MIAN WAQAS MASUD (Pakistan)

I have been attending conferences and seminars for many years and invited as guest speaker at different forums at national and international levels. Last year I was at the World Chambers Congress held in Malaysia and that was the first time I heard about CACCI and its Young Entrepreneurs Group of Asia Pacific (YEGAP).

Subsequently, I came to know about the CACCI Conference that was going to be held in Sri Lanka in the month of July 2010. When I browsed through the web of CACCI, I found one name that suddenly attracted my attention - the Chairperson of YEGAP Miss Anna Marie Periquet. I immediately decided to join the YEGAP and to attend the CACCI Conference.

Since I joined YEGAP I have been invited to take part in the activities of YEGAP. The months prior to the conference were very interesting as I began to realize that being part of an international body is quite intriguing.

I got in touch with the Conference organizers for my registration and arrival and other formalities, and I found them very efficient and cooperative.



It was midnight when I reached the Cinnamon Grand Hotel in Colombo and had no trouble in checking in. In the morning, the Conference registration was done in no time.

The breakout session of the YEGAP was held in the morning of the first day of the Conference. There was a big turnout of participants that I did not have time to interact with all of them.

## Entrepreneur Idol

*In the following interview, Mr. Nayana D P Dehigama, winner of the 3rd Asia-Pacific Young Entrepreneur Award presented by CACCI during the 24th CACCI Conference held on July 5-7, 2010 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, shares his ideas, experiences, and advices on starting a business, his mentors and sources of inspiration, and lessons he has learned from his initial ventures, among others. Mr. Dehigama is Chairman/Managing Director of Epic Lanka Technologies (Pvt.) Ltd. in Sri Lanka,*

***What was your first “business venture” and what was the biggest lesson you learned from it?***

Four of my friends and I got together and started a Higher Education Institute to conduct courses and prepare students to sit for London exams in Electronics

Chairperson Ms. Periquet presided over the session and introduced the guest speakers and the YEGAP Vice Chairman Mr. Ted Suzuki from Japan.

In the afternoon a very sumptuous lunch awaited the guests at a very vast lobby especially dedicated for the Conference delegates.

The Opening Ceremony began in the early evening with a traditional Sri Lankan folk dance followed by opening speeches from various dignitaries.

For three days, different breakout sessions were held with a lot of hospitality from the



Engineering. That time I was just an Advance Level Student at Kingswood College, Kandy, Sri Lanka.

***Who is your business mentor, or who had the greatest influence in your business life?***

I have two mentors but no one knows that I follow them – First I followed the foot-steps of my friend Christy (Mr. Christopher Joshua) who started from scratch and became a business magnate in Sri Lanka. Now I follow the

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host organizations, namely, the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka (FCCISL).

I was impressed by the attitude of the general public of Sri Lanka whom I found to be in high spirits after the end of 30 years of war in their country. It was also surprising for me to know that literacy rate in Sri Lanka is the second highest in the world after Japan.

Although I did not find the time to explore the streets of Colombo, I had the opportunity to visit the 144-year old Galle Face Hotel located at a walking distance away from the Conference venue. It was there that FCCISL President Mr. Kosala Wickramanayake hosted a dinner for me and a few other guests in a restaurant facing the sea. The dinner was one I will never forget in my life. In the hotel museum was displayed the first car ever purchased by His Royal Highness King Phillip of England. The car is still in its original color and in immaculate condition. ■

## **Entrepreneur Idol**

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theories and guidelines of the famous management author, Brian Tracy, where I have picked up million dollar hints and advices for business success.

### ***Who gave you the best business advice and what was it?***

There is no specific person who gave me business advice. I pick up lessons from anyone successful and try learning my way to see if they bring success to me too. In addition, the seven previous ventures that I started and subsequently collapsed gave me real-life learning and adequate advice about do's and do not's in business. Especially I learned the 'factors for failures' so I do not repeat them now.

### ***What advice would you give someone starting out a business today?***

Based on my own experience, I would like to give a little advice to young entrepreneurs. I have experienced both success and failures in setting up start-ups.

The first advice that I want to give is, never venture into a business if you do not have substantial knowledge on your core-product. Little knowledge is not sufficient. You should have substantial knowledge on the subject matter or must have the 'passion' to learn. This is my rule No. 1.

Start with a 'dream' that you are passionate to achieve. Your dream must be crystal clear. Fantasize on your dream every moment you get a free time. Believe that you are going to achieve.

Look for niche markets. Identify gaps of market needs and try to bridge them with innovations. Never compete head-on with giants in traditional or conventional markets. Winners are the people who can pick-up 'pockets of niche opportunities' in the market and quickly exploit them with innovative products before the competitor does.

Try to solve a social problem or bridge a gap of customer needs through your products and services. This will give

you a market pulling effect. Adopt outside-in approach rather than inside-out. Offer 'value' to customers for the price you expect them to pay you.

Perseverance is extremely essential. Never say die. Never give-up. Be flexible and be ready to change and adapt to situation. Preparedness and agility is extremely essential.

Follow the basic principles. Stick to your basics. Be aware of what you are investing and what you get in return. Bottom line profitability is 'key' for new start-ups. Do not get lost in the jargons of management theories.

Always operate within the 'financial comfort zone'. What matters is not how much you have invested but what you do with the money you have invested. The amount of money invested is not a success factor.

Never lose credibility. Do everything possible to maintain or improve credibility. It is very important to build network or relationships with reciprocal faith. Credibility plays a major role in building networks. The stronger the network, the higher the probability of success.

### ***Do you have a favorite business book?***

I am not passionate about reading and it may be one of my weaknesses. I am a selective reader. I read substantially on specific subjects when and where necessary but on and off I pick-up books about business success and personality development and specially read them while travelling. All in all, I really enjoyed reading the "Way to Wealth" Series of Brian Tracy.

### ***What principle of entrepreneurship do you wish you knew when you were first starting out?***

I always followed basics. When I started my venture, the only entrepreneurial principle I wanted to know was 'how to make wealth by creating value for others'.

### ***What has been the most satisfying decision you've made as a businessman?***

The best and most satisfying decision I have taken in my business is to create an innovation culture within the organization. It has paid me back substantially.

### ***What was the toughest decision you had to make? How do you go about making tough decisions?***

So far no decision had been tough to me. That may be due to my attitude of relying on basic principles in business. So, all decisions were very simple and clear. However, at the moment I am in the process of taking the toughest decision in my life. I am debating whether I should go public (after 13 successful years since inception) or remain as a privately held company. The decision is tough because I am emotionally attached to my company at one end and I need to source some investments to cater to my expansion plans.

### ***What do you think are the most important attributes of a good and successful businessman?***

As I have learned, Passion and Perseverance are of high importance. Be in sports, the battlefield, profession or business, you can excel only if you are passionate about it. How ever much you are keen in seeing results the world will not be in your favor most of the time and as such perseverance or your ability to remain and retain matters a lot. This is why I always say the true winner is who does not quit trying. For me, I never consider winning as an accident. It requires continuous, conscious and concentrated efforts for which passion and perseverance are respective pre-requisites.

### ***Are entrepreneurs born or made?***

Born as ordinary people and made to be entrepreneurs. It's like you select a good quality rough gem stone and do cut and polish to enable it to glitter. The more the facets you add and quality of finishing, higher the

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## **Entrepreneur Idol**

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opportunities the inherent properties of the stone can show its uniqueness to the world. You have to have the quality human input to make the entrepreneur. Here, an important phenomenon to understand is that every manager should develop entrepreneurial skills to become successful which suggests us born and made are on two extremes of a continuum where a born entrepreneur has to move towards 'made' by acquiring a substantial amount of business related knowledge to succeed.

*Would you recommend to someone starting out a business to attend a business school, or skip the degree and learn along the way?*

Skipping the business school and relying on intuition can take you forward. Yet, one cannot live a couple of centuries to experience everything by himself. So, learning from others mistakes and success will enable you to avoid pitfalls, accelerate your journey and excel. Unlike in natural sciences what we learn by way of theories, concepts and models in business school are others experiences. You may not be bale to localize those theories and at the same time none of them will work. But the knowledge assimilation and its relevance in managing business in the digital world are obvious.

*Is there any difference between your country and the rest of the world in the nature of your industry/business?*

We often talk about integration of markets or globalization. Terms such as borderless world and the flat world we are very much acquainted with also suggest the world is fast shrinking with the technological advancements especially in ICT and transportation. In this context, in terms of technology and market trends I must say that there is no difference in my country and others or even if there is a difference it is quite small. Still, we cannot forget the fact that Sri Lanka is a hostile market

with some issues such as market turbulences, country-specific risks, low purchasing power and immaturity of technology markets in the emerging economies that make entrepreneurs' role more challenging compared to developed economies.

*What's the biggest change you've seen in your business or your industry?*

I can talk about a few important changes I have noticed. The industry dynamism has become increasingly intense in the technology world compared to the time I started Epic. Disruptive Technologies are being introduced more frequently making existing technologies obsolete so you got to be vigilant, adaptive and agile to survive. People are more receptive and faster adaptive to new technology innovations and therefore 'innovations' decide the growth of organizations. "Life-time employment" is in the history and employees are now demanding different values with quick returns. Customers have become more knowledgeable and demanding. They like to 'communicate' than 'commute'.

*What are the challenges facing your industry and how do you manage them?*

My main business is in the ICT industry. The changes in the ICT industry are so fast and if you do not maintain pace with those changes and advancements, your will be in the history in no time. Therefore, Kotler's suggestion to 'run fast to stay' is very much relevant to my industry. At the same time, vigilance, agility and continuous knowledge assimilation have become essential ingredients for survival.

When you are a domain leader in a fast evolving industry you cannot rest. You have to move fast. You got to invest heavily in R&D. Continuous knowledge assimilation becomes mandatory. It is only innovations both in products and processes can keep you at the top. Disruptive technologies can make your star products completely

obsolete in no time. So, you got to keep an eye on technology trends. You must pick-up weak signals in the market and be prepared today to face future challenges. On the other hand, buyers too demand sophisticated products. PLC curves are becoming shorter. Time to market has become a crucial factor.

Given all these challenges the success formula for my organization is our focus on 'speed', 'flexibility' and 'innovations' as the winning factors.

*How has the global economic and financial crisis affected the way you run the business?*

I am happy to say that Epic recorded over 40% growth during the two years of global economic crisis. We adopted different strategies to stay alive and even grow during the crisis time. We did not do much internal changes but enhance our focus on the three winning factors: Innovations, Speed and Flexibility.

In a B2B environment, a financial crisis can make your dreams shatter in no time. When everybody applies brake where affected top lines are to be compensated with massive cost containments to keep the bottom line black, naturally ICT solutions will not be a top priority for any corporate organization. Yet, if your solution addresses this situation and facilitate them to survive in turbulent times and achieve their business goals it can ensure you business even during tough times.

*How do you change the way you manage the business during a downturn?*

Many people make the mistake here. The paradox of stability Vs agility. To explain same just think of a large passenger aircraft with wide wings which is designed for stability and perhaps safety. In contrary, a fighter plane with short wings is designed for agility. You can take sharp turns without compromising safety. In the

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# Sri Lankan Businessman Wins 3rd Asia Pacific Young Entrepreneur Award

Mr. Nayana D P Dehigama, Chairman/Managing Director of Epic Lanka Technologies (Pvt.) Ltd. from Sri Lanka, was proclaimed winner of the 3rd Asia-Pacific Young Entrepreneur Award during the Gala Dinner of the 24th CACCI Conference held on July 6, 2010 in Colombo. He bested four other finalists short-listed for the Award from among the 12 nominees received from six CACCI member countries.

Mr. Dehigama was cited for entrepreneurial and business leadership, contribution to the social well being of the local community, practice of good business ethics, and support of the chamber movement in the region.

## Outstanding Achievements

Mr. Dehigama is an active member of the Chamber of Young Lanka Entrepreneurs (COYLE). Currently, Mr. Dehigama is studying for his doctoral degree at the School of Management at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Thailand.

As a well-known patriotic entrepreneur, Mr. Dehigama is actively engaged in social activities where he mentors deserving entrepreneurs from rural Sri Lanka. Besides his involvement as the immediate Past



Mr. Nayana Dehigama from Sri Lanka receives trophy from CACCI President Amb. Benedicto Yujico shortly after being named winner of the 3rd Asia-Pacific Young Entrepreneur Award.

President of Kingswood Union Colombo Branch, he acts as the psychological skills trainer of Kingswood rugby team.

Mr. Dehigama believes that the university-industry partnership is essential for a nation to succeed, so his company maintains close relations with over six national universities in Sri Lanka regarding cooperation on joint

R & D, technology transfer student placements and promoting innovations, among others. His company also funded and maintains a fully pledged computer training center at a temple in the outskirts of Colombo for school children and adults to receive free IT training monthly.

He is in advisory boards and

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## Entrepreneur Idol

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fast changing business environment the necessity of responding to change is widely accepted. Unfortunately, many tried to respond with stable structures resulting vividly varying results and undesirable consequences. Not only a lean structure but also lean portfolios and focus can make you agile. Another point to note is in a downturn rational or logical thinking is given priority as everybody is concerned about cost cutting, adherence to rule books

etc. Yet, the smart ones use creative thinking during turbulent times and become outstanding. It is a risk for those who are not conversant in the game. But enjoyable and rewarding for the innovative organizations.

### *What's the most important lesson you've learned in business?*

Stick to basics, be focused and passionately create value and wealth to your stakeholders that include the customers, employees, owners,

suppliers, public and state. This is the way to success!

### *What do you do in your free time?*

There is very little 'free time' in my life. I use every minute of my life to deliver responsibilities, may it be towards the business, family, friends or society. Apart from the time I spend on my business, I spend quality time quite often with my family, friends and anybody who needs my help and company. ■

**Sri Lankan Businessman**  
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policy development committees of several state organizations and associations. He is a member of the Advisory Committee on SME policy appointed by the Ministry of Enterprise Development and Investment Promotions, as well as a member of the Executive Council of the Sri Lanka Association for the Software Industry (SLASI).

Mr. Dehigama won the Sri Lankan Entrepreneur of the Year 2008 – Silver Award and also the Entrepreneur of the Year 2008 – Silver Award for Western Province in the Extra Large Category. He was felicitated by the COYLE with the “Achievers’ Award” in 2006 and 2008. The Malaysia Sri Lanka Business Council also recognized his achievements and contribution by awarding the Best Entrepreneur – Gold Award which he secured for two consecutive years in 2007 and 2008. He also received the Outstanding Achievers Award in 2009 at the Sri Lanka Malaysia Business Awards.

**Finalists**

The four other finalists were Mr. Ruwan Edirisinghe, Chairman/Managing Director of RN



*The finalists for the 3rd Asia-Pacific Young Entrepreneur Award with their certificates of achievement (from left to right): Mr. Oleg Pokusaev from Russia; Mr. Edgar “Injap” Sia II from the Philippines; Mr. Ruwan Edirisinghe from Sri Lanka; Mr. Nayana D P Dehigama from Sri Lanka; CACCI President Amb. Benedicto Yujuico; and Chairman of the Board of Judges DR. Mehdi Fakheri from Iran.*

Constructions (Pvt) from Sri Lanka; Mr. Oleg Pokusaev, Head, Board of Founders, New Line LLC from Russia; Mr. Edgar “Injap” Sia II, Chairman/CEO of Mang Inasal Philippines Inc. from the Philippines; and Mr. Jose Victor Paterno, President and CEO of the Philippine Seven Corporation from the Philippines

All the five short-listed finalists

were invited to Colombo for the final selection process on July 5. Members of the Board of Judges interviewed the short-listed nominees to obtain additional information or seek clarification on their achievements. Prior to the interview, each of the shortlisted nominees were given at most 5 minutes to make a summary presentation of his achievements in each of the agreed criteria, and another 10 minutes to answer questions from the Board of Judges.

**Board of Judges**

The Board of Judges for the 3rd Asia-Pacific Young Entrepreneur Award was composed of: Dr. Mehdi Fakheri, Vice President for International Affairs at the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, and Mines, who chaired the final judging process; Mr. Pradeep Kumar Shrestha, Former President of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry; Mr. Kazuo Nishitani, Deputy General Manager of the International Division of Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and Mr. Nathan Backhouse, Manager, Trade and International Affairs of Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. ■



*Members of the Board of Judges following their deliberations to select the Winner of the 3rd Asia-Pacific Young Entrepreneur Award. From left to right Mr. Kazuo Nishitani from Japan CCI; Mr. Pradeep Kumar Shrestha from FNCCI; Dr. Mehdi Fakheri from Iran CCIM; and Mr. Shigeki Taniwaki from Japan CCI.*

# Plan to Deal with Failure

By Anna Marie Periquet

While we focus on increasing the chances of success of new entrepreneurs, we should also plan to deal with failure. Success and failure are two sides of the same coin. Availability of funds at reasonable cost is the first problem that needs to be resolved. It is often seen as either the enterprises are under-funded, or in the case of a problem arising there is no firm control resulting in the premature death of a start-up enterprise.

## Role of Trade Organizations

Besides finance and government support for starting the enterprise, it is important that the new enterprise should adopt modern up-to-date technology. Recently there has been a positive development of ISO 9000 type of initiative which leads to minimum standard of performance. There are various organizations that have been assisting SMEs in the field of technology, energy saving and Quality Improvement. The result of these initiatives has been positive and participating enterprises are able to reduce failures.

For small and medium size enterprises it is not possible to hire different experts to carry out different tasks. One has to learn multi-skills. Therefore, they require training in various aspects of management techniques such as managing manufacturing, human resource, creation of robust supply chain, sales and marketing. These skills can be learned by undertaking management studies.

## Back to school

In the Philippines, universities have also manifested the vibrancy and the active state of entrepreneurship in our country's educational system by creating a culture of entrepreneurship in campuses. The academe plays a pivotal role in the promotion of entrepreneurship. Formal education is, after all, one of the most powerful

tools in shaping thoughts, attitudes and values, and therefore society. Management and entrepreneurship programs carried out for young entrepreneurs should be widely promoted. This will enable them to manage their businesses more successfully by acquiring the requisite skills.

In YEGAP, we have spearheaded programs that cultivate from the young a culture of entrepreneurship by pushing for the inclusion of entrepreneurship subjects in the secondary and entrepreneurship departments in the tertiary level; pushing for the creation of business incubator facilities in universities; and spearheading the creation of entrepreneurship clubs in schools.

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry through its Committee on Entrepreneurship has likewise implemented several programs and activities on Entrepreneurial Development for students. These include the conduct of entrepreneurship seminars in universities for students and the conduct of Best Business Plan Competitions in schools.

These school-based initiatives to promote entrepreneurship ensure the success of graduating students and potential start-up entrepreneurs in dealing with probable failures in business.

## Role of Government

The role of government as a supportive operating facilitator is very crucial. It can involve a wide range of services such as financing, human resource development and entrepreneurship training, market development, and product development advocacy for enabling environment. Strategies and corresponding programs drawn up through extensive and joint efforts between the private business sector and concerned government entities are also very helpful to start-up



entrepreneurs.

Among the programs implemented under the Philippine SME Agenda include the SME Unified Lending Opportunities for National Growth, or the Sulong Program; Local and international trade fairs; the establishment of SME Centers manned by trained Business Counselors; Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP); and the Technology Incubation for Commercialization (TECHNICOM).

In particular, the SME Plan identifies specific programs to promote entrepreneurship to include the Provision of Business Opportunities; Strategic Business Planning, Training and Self-help Packages to Develop Strategic Business Plans; Product Development and Design Services; Support to Start-up Enterprises in Selected Areas; Business Opportunity and Enterprise Creation Approaches; Entrepreneurship Training Camps and Enterprise Development Programs; Business Opportunity Development and Investment Promotion for Innovative Ideas; Institutionalization of the SME Opportunities Caravan Franchising Seminars; and Cooperatives Business Development Program.

I would still prefer to think that given the right exposure, opportunities, training and education, the

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entrepreneurial talents and capabilities of more young Filipinos will surely surface. Our country is going through times and they are not over yet, but we have a long tradition of turning adversity into gold. It is therefore imperative for us entrepreneurs to use the great ability to transform failure into windows of opportunity. As a people, we will not just prevail. We will win big.

### On a Personal Note

Many great companies are born after failing initially.

As an entrepreneur, I am no stranger to failure. What many don't know is that I had to grow into my "success" and that I have faced - and continue to face - all odds in order to achieve my dreams. I always keep my dreams alive because it motivates and inspires me to achieve things even greater than those I imagine. My vast experiences in life taught me to rely on my strengths and abilities, and look beyond my flaws and shortcomings. I learned to believe that however big the obstacle thrown on my path, I can overcome it. After all, we are never given any challenge that we cannot overcome.

I actually saw myself as a total failure following a series of unfortunate circumstances in my business. And yes, many times over I was tempted to throw in the towel. Keeping the faith in the Lord and maintaining a positive attitude and outlook are what sets me out to fulfill the dreams I wove long before I became who I am today. My positive attitude was not limited to my view on failure. Difficult as it may seem, I had to show everyone how positive I was about myself even when faced with so many challenges, tribulations and even pain. I think that this is what is most essential. You must believe in yourself to achieve anything in life. I always had the confidence and faith in myself to look at any challenge straight in the

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# Iran Chamber Submits Two Studies on Entrepreneurship

The Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, and Mines (ICCIM) has submitted to YEGAP, for its members' reference, two studies on the state of entrepreneurship in Iran.

The studies are entitled "A New Entrepreneurial Model for Iranian Incubators" and "Strategies for Creating Entrepreneur University".

The first study was prepared by Fataneh Taghiyareh and Sara Nouri Hekmat, both from University of Tehran. The second study was prepared by Sayeed Raza Salehi Amiri, Esmail Kavousy, and Ali Shah Husseini from the Islamic Azad University. The following are abstracts of the two studies. Members who are interested to get hold of the complete studies are requested to contact the CACCI Secretariat through its Fax No. (886 2) 2725 5665, or its e-mail address at [cacci@cacci.org.tw](mailto:cacci@cacci.org.tw)

### A New Entrepreneurial Model for Iranian Incubators

Technological progress and entrepreneurship are dynamically changing the global economic landscape. These factors force developing countries to change and improve their level of innovation in business development. Among the many solutions proposed, business incubation seems to be one of the most effective means for assisting entrepreneurs during the start-up period.

The weak infrastructure, inadequate state of support, and repressed entrepreneurial attitude leads to provide special services and support for Iranian incubators that not provided by common incubators. Among the most important services are leadership of startups in pre-incubation period; providing projects for tenants through breaking down a major project received by incubators; and financial support through providing loan



and credit services due to lack of venture capitalist in our country.

The study is based on analysis of incubators in countries with similar culture and situations. Advantages

and disadvantages of Iranian incubators have also been considered. The study illustrates the fact that general patterns of incubators must get customized in order to meet the requirement of Iran marketplace.

### Strategies for Creating Entrepreneur University

This study aims to answer the question "Which strategies can change a university change into an entrepreneur university?" After conducting exploratory studies, reviewing the current activities of entrepreneur universities in the world, and interviewing the experts, the study identified the five strategies to be: "entering the investigation field", "expanding the activities of industry offices and universities", "insurance services", "offering services related to credit", and "business activities".

The study was undertaken after considering the following factors: (a) universities can create opportunities for technology and productivity for people, and guide them to use these opportunities effectively, and (b) There is unemployment crisis in the country and hence the necessity of creating jobs.

The resulting outcomes of this research indicate that no difference is seen between the statistical population members' perspectives on the priority of strategies of making the entrepreneur universities. The statistical population believes that the best strategy for making the entrepreneur universities is entering the research field, and after that, the strategy of expanding activities of university and industry offices is more applicable. ■



## Special Feature

# TUGIAD Provides Platform for Turkey's Young Entrepreneurs

The Young Businessmen Association of Turkey (TUGIAD) is the first national and the only international association of young businessmen of Turkey. It was founded in 1986 by Mr. Jefe Kamhi, the current Honorary Chairman., with a vision to become the association of first choice among Turkish young business people who are committed to the development of a culture of excellence, ethics and public service, and a mission to support the comprehensive development of Turkey.

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eye and say, "sure you're tough, but I'm tougher." So even if I have to crawl to get to where I want to be, I keep moving.

The philosophy that has guided me throughout my life and in business comes from the words of one of the bravest men in history, Martin Luther King Jr. He said: "If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl. But whatever you do, keep moving."

Failure does not have to be a bad word. My father once told me, "Failure does not mean defeat. It just means delay." It is really up to us to look at failure positively. And once we make that choice, we get ourselves - and our businesses - back on track, on the road to success. ■

TUGIAD, aiming at contributing to the national and international policies of Turkey as well as monitoring Turkey's negotiations with the EU, is aware of its responsibility to create the "Young Vision" at European level.

TUGIAD aims at maintaining a dialogue with policy makers and other stakeholders in pursuit of the public interest, enhancing the capacities of its members through continuous learning and training; creating business development and networking opportunities for its members in Turkey and abroad.

In order to reach its aim, TUGIAD is carrying out studies at home and in foreign countries regarding both national and international matters, organizing fact-finding conferences, panel discussions, and studies regarding the strategically important issues namely macro economical movements and evaluation reports, among others.

TUGIAD is also cooperating with the other associations which share the same concept and perspective, creating collaborations with the related associations and institutions in terms of view and contribution.

With its 663 members of which 80 are women throughout Turkey,



TUGIAD has a profile of dynamic young businessmen with an average age of 35, representing a considerable majority of the country's population.

TUGIAD members are at present representing an annual turnover of around US\$ 38 billion, thereby playing a significant role in the national economy. TUGIAD members are active in a total of 36 sectors including super construction, construction materials, textile industry, foreign trading, automotive and spare parts, tourism, logistics & services, food, machinery, chemicals, iron & steel and production of other metal products.

The countries with which TUGIAD members are engaged in foreign business mostly, with their annual export of US\$14 billion and annual import of US\$18 billion, are Germany, Italy, England; USA, France, Russia, Spain, eastern European countries, neighboring countries, Turkic Republics, Middle East and Far East countries. ■



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