

Environmental Management: A Lesson from Giants of the Corporate Sector in Sri Lanka

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Sri Lanka is an agricultural economy base country. Ancient people protected the environment since their economy (farming activities) was totally depended on the healthy environment. Therefore, people themselves voluntarily contributed to protect the physical environment of the country. However, this situation was adversely affected by the commercialization of agriculture activities, basically tea, rubber and coconut plantations introduced after the colonialisation. In addition, increasing trend of population and the continuing effort to improve their living have created a tremendous pressure on the natural environment of the country. Therefore, relazing this adverse impact, even the colonial government imposed various acts/ordinances in order to protect physical environment of the country. However, provisions of these acts were not enough to control declining trend of the physical environmental of the country. Later on, this situation was further accelerated with the liberalization of economic activities in late 1970s. Then, the major challenge faced by the country was the imperative of harmonizing economic and social development with environmental management.

Government and public concern on conservations of natural resources and physical environmental issues have been dramatically increased during the last few years. As a result, the government has taken various steps to minimize such environmental pollution, which resulted mainly from industrial activities. Meanwhile, some leading business organizations have voluntarily introduced their own environmental management polices to achieve sustainable development through the protection of the physical environment of the country.

The study is designed to assess the environmental management practices and contribution of leading business organizations as a lesson to other entrepreneurs. This study is based on two leading business entities in the country and it is found that both those entities have introduced excellent environmental practices. If other entities follow such type of environmental management practices it will be easy to overcome environmental problems in future.

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