

## **Myanmar Imperial College (MIC)**

### **Interview with Ms Poht Poht Kyi, Managing Director**

#### **Background**

Myanmar Imperial College (MIC) is one of the leading private institutions in Myanmar. MIC offers programmes in the disciplines of Business, Media and IT with the collaboration of the UK Education Body and universities around the world.

#### **Tell me more about your company/Institute.**

Myanmar Imperial College (MIC) was founded in 2005 under the former name of Unique Life Education center providing consulting services to students to study abroad. It was initially a Myanmar start up and recent years, the college changed its name to Myanmar Imperial College and one of the leading private institutions in Myanmar.

#### **Your college first partnership university was a UK University. Can you tell me what your motives were behind that?**

Whilst studying in Singapore, I was based on the Middlesex University Singapore campus, UK University. According my experience, I believe the UK education system is a good fit for Burmese students as we are familiar with British education. That growing to be my main motive for partnering with the UK University of Northampton, a UK univerisity as my first partner.

#### **What was your experience of seeking your first partner?**

Before we had a formal partnership with the University of Northampton, were accredited by Educational body such as Association of Business Executives (ABE) through the assistance of British Council Burma. In addition, we partnered with Edexcel (Pearson - London Examinations, a multinational education and examination body). They visited Myanmar, met with us to discuss partnership. Follow this discussion, we have taken the initiative to approach Northampton for partnership in 2010.

We encountered several challenges as the Myanmar market was unknown at that time and also there weren't many local colleges were partnership with the UK Universities. We were seen as a pioneer. We reached to around 30 UK universities. We invited to attend education events organized by British Councils, trade fairs which make us easier to connect with the UK universities and businesses.

#### **Are you open to in partnering with UK organization/university?**

Definitely. We welcome all opportunities to partner with organisations and universities in exploring prospective business opportunities or further collaboration. The objective for 2017 is to enhance the capacity of faculty and teachers' training. We look forward to partnering or working with UK Universities for training and development. Our college is now focusing on research development where we have hosted first research conference. I am also a PHD candidate and lunderstand the important of research development for my college which I hope to work with UK universities in the near future. Our college also welcomes international universities to attend our upcoming research conference in taking the chance to understand the local culture. We also host exchange programs for international students in Myanmar.

#### **What was your thoughts on partnering with foreign universities?**

The UK and US has well-respected Higher Education systems. By partnering with universities from those countries, we are able to learn how to develop our own academic curriculum develop, quality assurance

policy and best practice. We spent almost 6 years in learning and finding out the most suitable policy for our college. We also learnt from our partner universities by having schools visit such as how to monitor academic performance and faculty management.

#### What are your criteria in choosing the partnership?

I believe both parties will have a set of criteria when it comes to choosing partners. In my opinion, I believe having mutual understanding, value trust and have commitment on our partnership are just a few which I think is important. We also hope to see our partners are having enough patience in Myanmar education market. Burmese students are longing for good quality education for decades and the market has a huge potential for growth which we expect our partner to work with us together for long term rather than expect the quick win. The Ranking of the university is also important factor for us as well. More importantly, mutual understanding and respect the local culture are some of the criteria we are hoping to see from our potential partners.

#### Any help from BCCM and DIT

We would like the British Chamber to spread the words among their UK network where Myanmar Imperial College warmly welcomes scholars and researchers to do exchange programs in MIC.

#### Any suggestion for UK organization/university while entering Myanmar market?

Myanmar Higher Education market has a huge potential for growth. For instance, our college has 6 enrolment intakes a year with 45 students in each intake. Currently we have 1500 active students. When the University Act is passed, I believe it will encourage the growth of Myanmar education market. It's important UK partners bring trust, commitment and willingness to understand the local culture when they come to Myanmar.

#### Are you looking for partnership with university at the moment?

Currently, we are planning to expand our course into Tourism and Hospitality. We are looking for partners with potential UK Universities. I am also looking at providing customized trainings to the local business community which is an area I am hoping to partner with UK University on as well.

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