



tions. How on earth can such a man hope to solve the simplest of problems leaving aside a complicated one such as the university crisis? When one starts with that type of a closed mind, one fails to do a simple exercise in solving problems, i. e. to analyze the problem in order to come to terms with the real issue. That would be the starting point for a person with a vision. In that process one has invariably be open ideas put to him or to her by all interested parties. Causes of the problem could conveniently discovered by analyzing the situation systematically. That analysis requires proper communication, which again involves both discussion and patient listening. This is a very rare commodity among smart managers or leaders. In their view there is no need to listen to others when you know what the ills are and what has to be done.

It is this simplistic attitude that has made a mess of the entire university system in the country. However, it is more difficult to convince a man in power who does not know he does not know, than convincing a wise man who knows his limitations.

The President opening the program of leadership training is reported to have declared that it would be producing global graduates. How wonderful it is to see Sri Lankan graduates competing with the best in the world? No one would grudge that privilege being enjoyed by our won young men and women.

With all that my question still remains unanswered, i. e. Will the new breed of graduates resolve the unsolved problems affecting the Sri Lankan Higher Education Sector? My guess is that they will not. It is for the simple reason that what the Higher Education Sector needs is a systemic cure for a systemic ailment. That is no game for novices, but a serious operation left to expert clinicians and therapists to handle. With all the goodwill and the blessings of parents of these undergraduates (as was broadcast over the media soon after the inauguration) these young hopefuls are going to draw a blank if and when they are entrusted with that job.

What the present undergraduate population requires is first and foremost, recognition and respect as individuals and the certainty that they are being listened to and taken seriously in solving whatever issues they are facing. According to current indications, those in charge do not consider it necessary. When will the authorities come down to earth and see the issues staring in the face?

When will they think it essential to develop a second level of leaders in running the university administration, a responsibility they ought to have realized even before thinking of making undergraduates global leaders? As far as one can see the Higher education lacks a set of administrators competent and confident to cater to the cream of intellectual individuals in the country. Whatever qualifications the current administrators possess, their failure in solving undergraduate problems has no doubt added to the deterioration of university administration and the quality of student life within. The current situation in the strike by lecturers again is proof of this unwelcome tendency. The academic staff is a vital element in any university operation and must be wisely utilized for the good of the institution as well as that of the student population. If the authorities refuse and fail to sit down and discuss the situation with such an important section of higher education sector, how can the country expect the training of newcomers in leadership deliver the goods? I have been too harsh on the minister in my assessment of the current situation in higher education in Sri Lanka. This I do with no malice or ulterior motive. With all my criticism and unkind words about the Minister of Higher Education, I have to admit that he was at one time, a trouble-shooter for the SLFP and later for the UNP of which he almost rose to the position of leader. I still hope that the minister will succeed in his new venture although it would make me look a silly fool, for the simple reason that I like to see the Sri Lankan universities enjoying the prestigious position they rightly deserve.

Good Books to Read

Ishini Edirisinghe
Gr 7 - Melbourne Girls School

Jacqueline Wilson:

I absolutely love how this author takes bad situations and doesn't give them the usual happy endings. She makes it very realistic and I like that! There are much more books of Jacqueline Wilson's like, The Suitcase Kid, Vicky Angel, Girls out late, Girls in tears, Bad girls, Double act and heaps more!

The Cat Mummy By Jacqueline Wilson

Verity, whose mum had died the day she was born, doesn't realise how much she loves her lazy, old, do-nothing cat, Mabel, until she disappears. The family soon starts searching high and low, putting up posters, doing all they could possibly do. But afterwards it seems hopeless. As verity comes to her closet to get something to wear she felt something, some fur. As she carefully pulled it out, holding her breath, she found



Mabel all nestled up on her dressing gown. But there was something terribly wrong with her...

This is a funny but very emotional and touching book and you'll love reading it.

J.K Rowling

As a talented author, J.K Rowling is one of my most favourite! She is best known for her famous Harry Potter series. She has a very large and creative imagination and once reading her books you just can't stop.

the Bard

By J.K Rowling

This book contains five enchanting fairytales written for young witches and wizards and now muggles can enjoy them too. For centuries, these stories have been very popular bedtime favourites, being kept in almost every wizarding household! Now Professor Albus Dumbledore will give you



his professional opinion of each story. Enjoy as you read these short, thrilling tales.

Francis Hodgson Burnett:

This is the author of the Secret Garden. Her few children books include A Little Princess and Lord Faunterley.

The Secret Garden By Francis Hodgson Burnett

After Mary Lennox lost both her parents, she was shipped to Yorkshire Moors to live in her uncle's gloomy mansion where she is very lonely. He has been a very cold man since his wife passed away ten years ago and has never seen Mary before. As she has nothing to do, Mary starts to explore the place. While she is venturing around, she uncovers an old key and is magically led to a hidden door. As the key fits the door, Mary slowly opens it and discovers a place she could never have imagined. Along with finding a 'secret garden', she also discovers many secrets... After today, several lives will change.

LINKING YOU

TO SRI LANKA AT GREAT LOW FEES

SEND FEES FROM AS LOW AS AUD\$15*

CHOICE IS IN YOUR HANDS

MoneyGram
Money Transfer

1800 049 087 www.moneygram.com

Agents available in Sri Lanka at:

* In addition to the transfer fees applicable to a transaction, a currency exchange rate set by MoneyGram or its agent may be applied. ©2011 MoneyGram. All rights reserved.