

**Impact of Summer Camp Programme on International Relations with special reference to Training conducted by Yunnan University of Nationalities in China and Confucius Centre, University of Kelaniya in Sri Lanka**

*Weerarithne, W. <sup>1</sup>*

The Summer Camp Programme was organized by the Confucius Institute at University of Kelaniya in-collaboration with the Yunnan University of Nationalities in Kunming, China from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2010. This study programme was designed to educate the participants on the academic and learning of Chinese Language in an environment conducive to the achievement of a better understanding of the economic and socio-cultural aspects of China. A short term academic programme for foreign participants affiliated to Confucius Institutes in other countries which is also held every year during summer in China.

A group of staff members representing the Faculty of Social Sciences, Humanities, Commerce & Management and students attached to the Confucius Institute of University of Kelaniya participated at this summer camp along with several members of Sri Lanka and China Journalists' Association.

The objectives are to assess the effectiveness of the Summer camp conducted by the Confucius Institute affiliated to Yunnan University of Nationalities in Kunming, China enhancing the capacity building of participants and to highlight the impact of the teaching methods adopted through the awareness programmes conducted in house classes and the field trips conducted by the centre.

It is important at this stage to provide a basic understanding of the culture and the life of Chinese people. Vast improvements have been observed from the dynamic changes made with respect to social, cultural and

economic habits particularly during the latter part of nineteenth century. These events had a significant impact transforming it into a developed country. Such achievements of economic development in the post-revolutionary era were clearly evident from the uplifting of general life standards of people through the advancement of science and technology. The study attempts to find the relevance of its programmes especially to a country like Sri Lanka of which the population is half of Yunnan Province.

Information and data were gathered from following sources: workshops conducted by the academics and professionals at the Yunnan University of Nationalities and the Confucius Centre Kunming, China, field trips attended in different locations in Yunnan Province, books and news items on China.

Lessons learned during the summer camp have broadened our outlook on aspects and changed our mind set on matters relating to China. The participants were able to build good relationships with academic staff of Yunnan University and other university staff and the Confucius Centres in China. They could also promote the exchange of training programmes for academics and students to upgrade their language abilities. The importance of educational programmes on socio-economic and cultural affairs on China was equally highlighted. For example, forums such as ‘China Study Circle’ will be able to pursue its potentials in full to provide opportunities to Sri Lankan academics as well as professionals to conduct joint research programmes with China in the future.

**Keywords:** summer camp, Chinese language, regional cooperation

<sup>1</sup>*Executive Officer, Alumni Association, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.  
weeraraw@slt.net.lk*