Orion City Driving the future

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It is a city within a city – sleek, modern buildings that hum with energy and industry, alongside a variety of facilities that inspire a spirit of high performance. Located in the hub of the metropolis of Colombo yet with a distinctly tranquil ambience, the Orion City IT Park is fast reaching its goal to make Sri Lanka one of the most sought after IT destinations in theworld.

Words Ayesha Inoon

Apart of the St Anthony's group of companies, Orion City was founded by its CEO, Jeevan Gnanam upon his return from the USA five years ago. Realising that Colombo lacked the necessary infrastructure required for the development of IT and BPO services at the time, he had a vision to establish a self-sufficient IT Park located in Colombo that offered end-to-end IT-based infrastructure solutions at one location. The goal was that it would also include the BPO and service industry organisations, enabling clients to focus on their core businesses without having to think about ancillary support, maintenance and services.

“This whole area is about 16 acres of prime land in the periphery of Colombo,” says Hariharan Padmanaban, Business Development Manager, Global Markets at Orion City. “Being close to the city centre it is ideally located for BPO, with easy access to transport facilities. This is a people driven industry so we need to look into the needs of workers.”

The Park’s main objective is to provide the infrastructure and facilities for enterprises

Today, with 16 companies having taken root within the Park, with many more to come and having reached 500,000 sqft of its projected three million, Orion City is well on its way to taking the country to the next level of technological advancement. “We intend to have a yearly growth of 200,000 sqft,” says Padmanaban, adding that the IT and BPO industry of Sri Lanka have been exporting close to 400 million USD up to now and are looking at increasing to a billion USD in the next few years, which will require enormous effort by both the companies as well as the Park.

The Park’s main objective is to provide the infrastructure and facilities for those looking to set up their enterprises. Smaller organisations are given the opportunity to ‘incubate’ and, when their operations take off, to relocate to a larger space within the Park. A ‘plug and play’ model allows these organisations to set up with just the most basic of amenities while the Park takes care of all the passive components of setting up the business, thereby greatly reducing their burden.

“Since cost is a major driver for any company’s growth, we try our best to assist them by reducing it in whatever way we can,” explains Padmanaban, adding that the Park is eventually transitioning into the green building sector, already having two buildings that are LEED certified with energy efficient systems. “At the end of the day our goal is to give the best kind of spaces – in terms of design, layout and comfort – to clients at the lowest cost.”

With a view to meeting all the day to day needs of clients, we are also in the process of setting up multiplexes in terms of retail and commercial property, including mini banks, ATMS, a food court and gymnasium.

With large organisations such as Virtusa, Mphasis, WNs, SriLankan Airlines and Pearson having made the Park their Operational hub , Orion City is looking at attracting more global giants to setup in Sri Lanka.

“In recent years we have seen a lot of organic growth happening within the Park,” says Padmanaban, adding that having this kind of community centered within a single location enables a lot of knowledge sharing and cooperation between companies and individuals. “The vision of our CEO was to have it add value, not just to the company but also to the country. We believe we are achieving this and we are proud to be a part of Orion City, the first of its kind,” he says.

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