The amount to be recovered from the lecturers of the University of Moratuwa who violated the agreements and bonds is Rs. 51,649,961 – COPE reveals

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The COPE has revealed that 35 university lecturers who went abroad on study leave at the University of Moratuwa alone were found to be in arrears of Rs. 51,649,961 as at 31 December 2021 due to breach of contract and bonds. It was also revealed that the amount due from 16 lecturers who had breached contracts and bonds for 8 years was Rs. 23,190,595.

Referring to the recovery of bond values from lecturers who breached contracts and bonds, the Vice Chancellor said that 05 of the above numbers have already been recovered and 12 will be recovered in installments. He also said that legal action has been taken against 11 persons.

These facts were revealed when the COPE met in Parliament recently (08) under the chairmanship of the Hon. Prof. Charitha Herath. The auditor general's reports for the years 2019 and 2020 and the current performance of the University of Moratuwa were examined at this committee meeting.

The Vice Chancellor said that the University of Moratuwa offers only degree programs based primarily on Mathematics, Science, Engineering and Technology.

The Vice Chancellor said that students of the Medical Faculty of the University of Moratuwa are currently studying for the next two academic years but no building has been constructed for the faculty so far. The Vice Chancellor also requested that the academic staff of the Medical Faculty be provided for the third and final academic year.

He said that although it has been decided to set up a professorial unit at the Nagoda Hospital, no allocation has been received for the acquisition of the 15-acre Nagoda land in Kalutara which has been selected for the construction of the required buildings. He said that the government has instructed to obtain a bank loan for this purpose and that action is being taken accordingly.

The COPE Chairman instructed the Secretary to the Ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission to look into the matter and take immediate action.

The COPE chairman also said that the appointment of non-academic staff to universities at the discretion of the political authorities has become a big problem.

The Committee inquired into the fact that a company called ‘Uni Consultancy’, which operates within the University, has not yet obtained Cabinet approval and the Vice Chancellor stated that the necessary documents have been sent to the University Grants Commission. The Chairman expressed his displeasure over the delay in the process and directed that the process be expedited.

In addition, discussions were held regarding the ‘LK Domain Registry’, a company established under the University of Moratuwa. There was a lengthy discussion on the loss of ownership of this company which was registered as a company owned by the University of Moratuwa on 05.03.2004. COPE Chairman recommends that ‘LK Domain Registry’ be treated as a National Value Institution and that

its ownership be transferred back to the University of Moratuwa.

The COPE Chairman also pointed out the importance of strengthening the legal framework of such companies affiliated to the universities and recommended to the Secretary to the Ministry to obtain Cabinet approval for 'Uni Consultancy' company and to submit a report on the 'LK Domain Registry' and 'LEARN' companies within three months.

The Chairman also pointed out the importance of developing a general set of guidelines for university affiliated consulting firms to cover the entire university sector.

The COPE Chairman commended the University Governing Body for the timely presentation of the University's Procurement Plan, the presentation of Annual Reports to Parliament and the holding of Audit and Management Committee meetings.

Members of Parliament Hon. Rauf Hakeem, Hon. Jagath Pushpakumara, Hon. Jayantha Samaraweera, Hon. Eran Wickramaratne, Hon. Major Sudharshana Denipitiya, Hon. Premnath C. Dolewatta and Secretary to the Ministry of Education Mr. M.N Ranasinghe, Vice Chairman of University Grants Commission Prof. Chandana Udawatte, Chairman of University Grants Commission Prof. N.D. Gunawardena and a group of officials were present at the committee meeting held.