

Campus

ASIA e University (AeU) and the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) co-hosted a two-day International High Level Roundtable Conference for Open Distance Learning Institutions.

A total of 31 dignitaries, industry global leaders, policy-makers and academic practitioners from 20 countries, took part in the conference.

Besides North America, Europe and the Oceanic countries, the majority came from Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa countries.

Distinguished delegates from the Commonwealth of Learning are president and CEO Prof Asha Singh Kanwar and Higher Learning education specialist Prof Romeela Mohee.

The conference included a lead-

Strengthening open distance learning

ership workshop and information sharing to explore strategies, solutions to challenges and networking.

Participants shared about the advancements and their impact on Open distance and Lifelong learning.

Asia e Learning Sdn Bhd director and board of governors chairman Tan Sri Dr Syed Jalaludin Syed Salim in his opening speech, said: "AeU is now embarking on becoming a digital university, leveraging on artificial intelligence, big data analytics and mobile platforms."

"AeU plans to offer a completely new learning experience using the

latest education technologies to launch its first completely mobile global MBA together with Oxademy of the United Kingdom.

"It is an affordable MBA requiring minimum investments. I urge the Open Universities here to venture into new opportunities to increase international collaborations," he said.

Prof Asha, in her keynote address, spoke about "Leadership and Innovation for the Future of Open Distance Learning (ODL)" and "ODL as Disruptive Innovation".

She elaborated that people and institution culture are critical to

drive innovation. The way forward is to invest in the 3 Ps: Philosophy, People and Processes.

The first session started with each delegate sharing one story of best practices he/she has introduced in his/her respective institution. There were other key presentation sessions including "Leading with Influence and Power", "Strategic Planning" and "Motivating Teams towards Delivering Results".

The speakers included Leaderonomics Sdn Bhd founder/CEO Dr Roshan Thiran, University of South Africa vice-chancellor Prof Mandala Stanley Makhanya and

Syed Shazad from Oxademy Business School, UK.

At the end of the sessions, AeU president/CEO Prof Datuk Dr Ansary Ahmed, in his closing speech said: "There's little difference now between ODL universities and conventional universities with various modes of programme deliveries."

"ODL institutions, being the early disruptors to conventional learning are now being disrupted. It is imminent that to stay competitive, one must continuously innovate and tap into the latest technologies to reduce cost of education," he said.