



Last four months....

The first batch of students of the vocational training program completes the course successfully...

Recruitment for the 2009 batch is underway...

Pahansila General Committee member visits the Sarana Sevana children's home...

Pahansila-Davis Project benefactor visits Sarana Sevana children's home and Polgollawatte School to observe the progress of projects...

More books donated to Polgollawatte School library...

PAHANTHARU...

The Vocational Training program which was launched last year is a huge success. This project was conducted for the benefit of students who completed GCE (O/L) exam, to provide them with career skills enabling them to improve their marketability in the competitive job market. Selected students attended technical courses offered by the National Youth Council, Polgolla (Kandy), under the Ministry of Youth Affairs. The courses included highly sought after fields like surveying, beauty culture, landscaping, bakery & hotelier, refrigeration, electrical, and electronic studies. As the Sri Lankan education system is mainly knowledge oriented rather than skill oriented, this venture is increasingly gaining popularity among the contingent of students who are not lucky enough to secure a University position.

16 students were selected for the inaugurating batch to follow the classes. The Principal of the Polgollawatte School Mr. Nishantha Tennakoon was appointed as the supervisor of the project and Pahansila sponsored the full cost of the course fee. It was a huge commitment by Pahansila as the course fee varied between Rs.3,000 to Rs.14,000 depending on the course which were of 3 months to 1 year duration. Each student was assessed halfway through the course to decide the continuity of the scholarship. They were assessed on several criteria including attendance and performance in order to clarify the commitment of the student to his chosen stream of studies, thus providing a guideline for the decision to continue or discontinue the scholarship.

Pahansila is very proud to announce that the first batch of students given their trade training through this program successfully completed their courses this year. The fact that the first batch graduated with good results further fortified the value of the scholarships they were provided with. It is with great pride that we announce that most of the student who completed these courses were able to easily and successfully gain entrance to the very competitive employment market. This was most prominently seen in the hospitality stream, mainly in the hotel trade, where all of the students managed to secure good positions in good hotels.

Pahansila has decided to continue this project annually providing support to new batches of students to gain career training. The 2009 batch is currently being recruited under the supervision of the Principal of the Polgollawatte School. We are looking into the options of providing financial assistance for the students who wish to have their own businesses. We are grateful to our donors and volunteers for their commitment and service.

General Committee member visit Sarana Sevana children's home

Pahansila General Coordinating Committee (PGCC) member Dr. Chandana Karunathilake along with the Pahansila Davis Project administrator Mr. V. Subramaniam and Prof. Jude Fernando - long time donor of Pahansila Arizona chapter, visited the Sarana Sevana orphanage in July. They supervised the projects conducted at the facility and had the opportunity to meet the matron Ms. Padmini Vidanapathirana and discuss the problems they face. At the orphanage Jude donated several sanitary and emergency equipment including an re-chargeable emergency light, toothpaste, toothbrushes, detergent, soap etc. He also donated several sports equipment including cricket bats and tennis balls. Later the children of the orphanage were provided with a sumptuous meal by Chandana and his family. PGCC wishes to thank Jude for his generosity.

Pahansila-Davis Educational Project site visits 2008

The co-benefactor of Pahansila-Davis Educational Project Mr. Kelly Davis was again in the Island for the fourth time for a short visit. He was keen to see the progress of the projects run under the scheme which were initiated at the beginning of the year. He was met and warmly welcomed by the Pahansila volunteers. Then they proceeded to visit the Sarana Sevana children's home and the Polgollawatte School. The Principal and the teachers of Polgollawatte School met the delegation and updated them on the progress of the projects. At Sarana Sevana, Mr. Davis held discussions with the teachers and the representatives from the Board of Management. A big applause to the Kandy volunteers, teachers, the officials at the institutions, and for the Davis family for their dedicated work. More details about this visit will appear on the next newsletter.

Pahansila donor donates books to Polgollawatte School library

A long time Pahansila donor Ms. Aruni Shapiro (Tennessee, USA) and Ms. Champika Karunadasa (Kandy, Sri Lanka) donated several Sinhala and English books, including some written by themselves to Polgollawatte School library. There were over 25 books. Pahansila General Committee member Dr. Chandana Karunathilake recently handed them over to the Principal of the school. Pahansila Committee is grateful to Aruni and Champika for their donations.

Pahansila Statistics....

Scholarships - 117

**Disbursements per month
- Rs. 110,650.00**

Donors - 89

Supervisors - 60

**Distribution of recipients
- 17 districts**

**Distribution of donors
- USA, Taiwan, Canada,
Australia, Sri Lanka,
UK**

Special feature.... PAHANTHARU

Sampath is a good example of what courage and determination can achieve in life. He was born to a family where his father was earning a small income and the mother suffering from several medical conditions. But these facts of life did not make Sampath deviate from his chosen career path. He did his studies extremely well at school and gained access to Department of Medicine at the University of Peradeniya in 2002.

Because of the financial situation of the family Sampath's father made a public appeal through the local radio channel for help to support his son through University. At that time a student of the University of Tokyo, Japan, Inaba Koichi contacted a Sri Lankan internet forum expressing a wish to help a deserving Sri Lankan student with his or her studies. Through this contact Dr. Ishika Lokuge of the Pahansila General Coordinating Committee was able to arrange a scholarship to Sampath which gained much needed financial support for his education. In fact this lead to forming of Pahansila Scholarship Project in late 2002.

Inaba continued his commitment till 2004, after which Mr. & Mrs. Peiris from Maryland took over the scholarship donation. Sampath's good relationship with his donors prompted them to offer support to his brother and sister in their education as well. Mr. Nandasena Perera supervised the project.

Sampath graduated in 2007 and got an appointment as a doctor. At present he is engaged in a research project conducted by the Department of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.

When Sampath graduated, Pahansila has facilitated a sum of nearly Rs.100,000.00 in total for his education. Sampath was very appreciative of the support given to him and his family by Pahansila. He addressed the first Pahansila meeting held in Kandy encouraging all the young students who attended it. Sampath did not stop there. Now Sampath himself is a Pahansila donor and sponsors a student through the Sri Lankan Chapter. Furthermore he volunteered to become a Pahansila administrator as well.

Editor's note: Certain details have been changed to protect the privacy of the person's involved.