



Pahansila collaborates with United Nations Association of Sri Lanka

Pahansila is now a multinational organization with chapters in several countries. Since its inception in 2002, Pahansila has been expanding its services to deserving students in Sri Lanka. As a result Pahansila gained recognition of the United Nation Association of Sri Lanka (UNASL) and started collaborating with them to provide scholarships to several deserving students. The first phase of the program was started by helping six tsunami affected students recommended by UNASL from the study circles they conduct in Southern Province Schools in Sri Lanka. Two students each were selected from Sri Dhammasara Piyarathana School - Dodadanduwa, Kumaratunge Munidas School - Dickwella, and Mirissa Central College - Mirissa. In the next phase we started assisting students selected from other parts of the country recommended by UNASL. In total seven scholarships have been provided, among which two have already been completed. Since then Pahansila has been operating together with UNASL to uplift the living conditions and educational standards of Sri Lankan children.

Last October UNASL celebrated UN Day at Dharmaraja College, Kandy. Pahansila was invited for this occasion and two of our administrators represented Pahansila. This is the second time we participated in UN Day celebrations in Sri Lanka. We wish to thank the Chairperson (UNASL) Brig. Granville Elapata and Secretary General (UNASL) Mr. Kumaran Fernando for facilitating this collaboration

Sarana Sevana Children's Home

Sarana Sevana children's home is an orphanage located at *Mawilmada*, a suburb of *Kandy*. This facility is funded by Sri Lankan Government under the Social Service Ministry. According to the information we have, ministry allocates only Rs.10 for each student per day. Therefore the orphanage mostly depends on the sponsorships and donations received from private parties. Pahansila has been actively involved in charitable work at this facility since 2005 and it is the first project started under the Pahansila-Davis Educational Program. This program was exclusively sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Kelley and Sara Davis of Indianapolis, USA and Mr. Kyle Davis of Wimbledon, UK. Initially we started helping the students by conducting free English and mathematics classes twice a week. We are proud to say that 2009 brings us to the fourth consecutive year we have been running these classes. Subsequent to site visit by Mr. Kelley Davis in August 2008, two main areas of the orphanage were targeted for review during the past four months. Namely, educational aspect of the children with an accent on aesthetic studies and infrastructure developments to the facility.

Music classes for the children

Under the Pahansila Davis Educational Project we are constantly looking for means of improving the living standard of children at Sarana Sevana children's home. Opening the world of aesthetics to the children we started teaching music lessons. We bought several musical instruments including a keyboard and several flutes. The classes commenced in October and are being held once a week. Along with the music classes we also started teaching traditional dancing for students. In 2009 we are planning to expand the program by teaching violin lessons and traditional drumming lessons to the children.

Children's big day out

The entertainment side is one of the main things lacking in many of Sri Lankan orphanages. It is mostly due to the lack of funds rather than lack of enthusiasm. These two key elements were brought together by the Pahansila-Davis Educational Program on September 20th, 2008. The children were taken to see a popular children's movie and for some, it was the first time in their life. Some volunteers of Pahansila kindly donated their time to participate in this event to help the administration of the orphanage. Pahansila provided snacks for the children during the movie and dinner afterwards.

Last four months....

- Pahansila represents UN Day celebrations in Sri Lanka...

Sarana Sevana orphanage:

- New music lessons...

- Music instruments donated...

- Children have a big day out...

- Kitchen appliances upgraded...

- Kitchen gets a new chimney...

PAHANTHARU...

Sarana Sevana children's home gets kitchen appliances

Recently Pahansila received an appeal from the matron of the establishment requesting a new rice cooker and a blender. The co-sponsor of the program, Mr. Kelley Davis considered this request and provided them with a large rice cooker and a high performance blender along with several cooking woks, at a cost of Rs.20,000.

Repairs to the kitchen

During a recent visit made by the Pahansila donors and volunteers they noticed that the kitchen at the orphanage needed some urgent repairs. The most immediate need was repairing of the chimney. Due to poor maintenance the chimney was leaking, letting a lot of smoke back into the kitchen making working conditions very hard. Problem worsened during rainy season when the chimney started leaking profusely – this time letting rain water into the kitchen. A site visit showed that the chimney and the roof around it were both in need of urgent repairs. This was quickly renovated out of the funds provided by the Pahansila-Davis Educational Project.

Pahansila Statistics....

Scholarships - 119

**Disbursements per month
- Rs. 112,450.00**

Donors - 89

Supervisors - 56

**Distribution of recipients
- 17 districts**

Special feature.... PAHANTHARU

Pathmika Dilangani Dharmasena was in grade 9 when we identified her as a beneficiary of Pahansila Scholarship Project. She came from a very poor family of four, the father being the only breadwinner. He was a casual employee digging sand from the Mahaweli river. Although employment is regular during the dry months, during monsoon when the water level in the river rises, he has to find alternative employment to keep the home fires burning. All he could give his family was their bare necessities. Education to his children was not in his scheme of things.



Towards Success... When we stumbled upon Pathmika, we came to know that she was a very studious girl and had in fact passed her Grade 5 Scholarship exam with flying colors but was unable to go to a better school due to poverty. She continued in the same school, where she not only excelled in her studies but also took active part in other activities in the school and was also elected a school captain. We identified her as suitable beneficiary of the scholarship program and funding started in April 2004. Her scholarship was funded jointly by Chandana Karunatilaka, Varuni Subramaniam, Sujeewa Perera, and Asha Rajapakse at Tucson, Arizona, USA. As we would learn later through a number of her letters to the sponsors, the money was a great boost not only to her but to the family as well. With Pahansila funds the family was relieved of the burden of spending for her education. She kept up her performance and sat for her G.C.E. Ordinary Level exams at the end of 2005 and she has passed the exam with 8 distinctions and 2 credit passes.

The star continues to shine... Pathmika sat her G.C.E. Advanced Level examination last August in the management and accounts stream. While she was awaiting results she started following a computer course. She is also studying for her foundation year examination in Chartered Accountancy. Both programs are being solely sponsored by Pahansila General Coordinating Committee.

Dark clouds... While Pathmika was flying high in her world, in the real world more disaster struck. The job her father was doing earlier as an excavator of river sand was unexpectedly terminated as the authorities clamped a ban on river sand excavation which was the livelihood of several like him. All of them had to seek other sources of income in their neighbourhood which is not easy.

The star shines bright as ever.. A few days ago Pathmika received a perfect score of three As for her G.C.E. Advanced Level examination. When we met her she was bubbling with confidence. It is evident that she has her goal in sight and is striving to get there with sheer grit and determination. Yes, grit and determination is all what she has at the moment because the wherewithal to get to her goal is not within her.

Editor's note: *Pahantharu December 2008 edition is an edited version of an abstract submitted by Arizona Chapter administrator, Mr. V Subramaniam.*