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Children's Resource Centre
• Hambantota • Kataragama
• Eravur • Arugam Bay



YPF  NEWSLETTER

Give a
Gift of
HOPE



APRIL - 2011

Dear YPF Donors, Friends and well wishers,

Looking back to 2010, it was the most successful year of the Youth Progressive Foundation to date. During the last quarter of 2010, the YPF conducted many social and cultural activities for its children, teachers, staff and parents. I would like to take this opportunity to give a summary of the achievements of the Youth Progressive Foundation in the year 2010.

2010 brought about significant achievements in the annals of the Youth Progressive Foundation, such as the opening of 3 new YPF Centers in Kataragama, Arugam Bay and Eravur. Through the establishment of these Centers, we were able to provide a further 500 children with education, life skill coaching, and skills development programs that we have offered in other districts in the past. We felt this was a much needed intervention, since at the conclusion of the civil war in Sri Lanka in 2009, many displaced people especially children, had their education interrupted. Thus we felt that it was very important to provide them with these basic educational skill development and mentoring programs that we offer through the Youth Progressive Foundation.

We have also reached out to many new ethnically diverse communities and begun to build a positive climate of reconciliation and friendship among all in the areas that we operate. This can be seen by the ethnic and religious makeup of our parent-teacher associations as well. We are especially proud of the fact that our work in multi-ethnic and multi-religious districts enables us to bring a diverse group of students together that have formed friendships, and who are now excelling in their studies at schools with the assistance provided by the Youth Progressive Foundation and its staff.

For the many successes of 2010, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to Creatives Against Poverty (CAP) and their Co-founders Neha and Rasitha Leelasena, who along with Mr. Sanjiv Malalasekera, have been instrumental in providing us with valuable and much needed donor funds through their tireless fund raising efforts on behalf of the Youth Progressive Foundation. Through their amazing efforts, we were able to raise a significant sum that enabled

us to establish our two new Centers in the Eastern Province, and also helped facilitate the operation of those Centers for the next year. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our individual donors, too numerous to name individually, but who have been providing most valuable assistance throughout the year with their generous contributions to support the activities of the Youth Progressive Foundation. I would also like to thank our most dedicated and committed staff members, starting with our Chief Coordinator, Manoj Divituragama for all his hard work, energy and ideas. Also thanking Deeptha, Sanjeeva Bandara, Mr. Sachithanandam, Nadeesha and Rev. Kirinde Rathanalankara Podi Hamuduruwo, and all the staff at each individual Center. Thank you for your continued and tireless efforts to increase the capacity of the YPF and making valuable contributions to our communities.

Finally, I would like to state that we are looking forward to the rest of 2011 with many exciting programs for our children. We hope to conduct our 1st Annual Dinner Theater Program on the 29th of April which will be attracting some of Colombo's leading companies and philanthropists. It is hoped that we will be able to get their support to expand activities of the Youth Progressive Foundation. This year we also hope to standardize and improve our curriculum that is being taught in the four Centers and also start a new regional sports center at each YPF site. We are also planning to renovate and upgrade the facilities in the eastern province with funds from CAP. We hope to provide better rest rooms and teaching facilities for our students in Arugam Bay and Eravur. In conclusion, in what has truly been a land mark year for the YPF, we thank each and every one of you for your valued contribution, donation, and suggestions in making the journey of the YPF a successful one in 2010.

We hope that we will bring more joy and cheer to the lives of our children, and may we all come together to work and strengthen the activities of the Youth Progressive Foundation in the year to come.

Thank you,

Ashan Malalasekera
Founder / Chairman
Youth Progressive Foundation

September / December 2010



MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING FOR CHILDREN AND STAFF OF CRC



A specialized resource person arrived from Malaysia to conduct a training programme on mental health for the children of CRC and to train the CRC teaching staff. A lecturer at the University of Utira in Malaysia, Dr. Saralah Devi Mahaendran is qualified in mental health counselling. She arrived in the county on invitation of the Youth Progressive Front and rendered her valuable services totally on a voluntary basis. As a result of this training program, Principle Miss Nadeesha, and English teacher Mr. Lahiru, of the Hambanthota CRC, are now qualified to conduct counselling courses at the other CRCs.

The YPF thank Dr. Mahaendran for her very useful services.

LAUNCHING OUR SERVICES IN THE NORTH EAST



The degree of resources we have lost as a result of the 30 year long internal conflict is incalculable. The biggest loss is that of human resources that could have been used for the development of the country. Young men and women living in these areas have become retrogressive socially and economically, due to the war. The current post war era is a period of transition for the young generation trying to find ways and means for progress. They should be provided with or exposed to development strategies suitable for the present socio-economic conditions.



We trust that these young men and women could accomplish rapid development by correct utilization of abundant natural resources in these localities. The beautiful coast line provides immense possibilities and facilities for developing and expanding the tourist industry. Increased numbers of tourists are visiting these areas and opportunities for generating income through providing accommodation, food and refreshments and selling indigenous handicrafts, and so on are available to a greater extent.

Numerous tourist hotels are being constructed in the area and it is important that these institutions are able to recruit skilled and trained staff to work for them. In order to fulfil this important need we have started a hotel school



in Batticaloa, in the Eastern Province. Courses in this school are free of charge. At the initial stage, training in housekeeping and restaurant services are provided. Well trained instructors and latest equipment and utensils are used for the training courses.

There were 250 applications for the first intake and after careful selection through an interview process, 70 trainees were inducted into the programme. The people of USA have invested approximately Rs. 10 million for this training programme to better the future of youth in these localities. The project is funded by the American Institute for International Development. These funds are utilized for the benefit of the people by DIS Management through operational contribution of the YPF.



We were selected as operational partners for this massive project as a result of the confidence USAID has in us in rendering social services transparently and in a trustworthy manner. YPF has previously had the honour of working with USAID in disbursing funds allocated for the benefit of those in need.

CAP ENSURES MORE FACILITIES FOR THE ERAVUR AND ARUGAM BAY CRC'S

To date the CAP institution based in Hong Kong has provided priceless support for the future development and progress of the children sheltered by CIC centres. CAP is a strong humanitarian organisation in Hong Kong focused on the betterment of needy people, the world over. They have assured total sponsorship for the future development of the destitute children sheltered by the Eravur and Arugam Bay CRC's in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.



We are happy to have CAP members onboard fulfilling the infrastructural shortages of the Eravur and Arugam Bay Children's Centres. They have already funded the upgrading of sanitary facilities, interior layout, electrical lighting system, drinking water facilities and redecorating of the surroundings of the centres.



We extend our heartfelt gratitude to CAP. We assure our firm commitment to utilize these valuable funds for the fullest benefit of the children in need sheltered by these centres.



ANNUAL CHILDREN'S GET TOGETHER: SPIRITUAL AND FRIENDSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2010

The yearly gathering of CRC was conducted in the historical surroundings of Kataragama this year. The objectives of this annual event were to ensure progress of the children of CRC through spiritual development, strengthening interactions and developing relationships.

The programme was conducted under the patronage of the founder of the Youth Progressive Front and island wide CRC centres, Mr. Ashan Malalasekera.

Specific to the programme this year, children and their parents from all CRC's from different parts of the country attended. Approximately 450 children and parents representing Eravur CRC - Batticaloa, Arugam Bay CRC and Hambanthota CRC, were present at the newly renovated Kataragama CRC centre where the event was hosted. An interactive get together of children and their parents belonging to different cultural, religious and communal backgrounds made this year's event more colourful and joyful.

The programme was conducted over 3 days from the 18th - 20th of December, 2010. The principals and the teachers of the CRC centres, officials of the Youth Progressive Front and members of YPF Voluntary Group also joined this festive occasion.



CRC AT THE ELDERS HOME, KATARAGAMA

Another aim of the Annual Get Together of CRC children is to engage them in the betterment of needy and destitute people. This is done with the view to instil good habits at their young age, such as social servicing and looking after elders and the needy. This also helps develop positive attitudes among them, living together and helping each other in inclusive societies. This year the service was rendered to the Elders Home at Kataragama.

CRC children teamed up as one to clean the elders' home premises and prepare their food. The programme was conducted under the leadership of YPF CEO, Mr. Ashan Malalasekera. Director board member Mr. Sanjiv Malalasekera, also participated along with many YFP members.



A HOLY SPROUT OF JAYA SRI MAHA BODHI IS DELIVERED TO KATARAGAMA

The Youth Progressive Front is happy to have been able to deliver a holy sprout of the Sri Maha Bodhi, Anuradhapura, treated by Buddhists the world over with utmost veneration, to Kataragama. Our organization has had this rare opportunity due to dauntless efforts by the chief incumbent of Sri Bodhiraja Temple of Kataragama and the principle of the CRC centre Kataragama, Kirinde Rathanasara Thero.

Our CEO, Mr. Ashan Malalasekera received the holy sprout at the Sri Maha Bodhi, Anuradhapura and carried the sprout in a beautiful pageant to the Kataragama historic pilgrim site on the 20th of December 2010. All the members of our organization participated in this magnificent deed of merit.

The sprout will be planted in the Sri Bodhi Raja Viharaya, Kataragama for the veneration of pilgrims visiting from all parts of the country. It will be a shining symbol of all the social programmes carried out by our organization in this land.



FREE SERVICE CAMP TO ERADICATE DENGUE

The children of the Eravur CRC held a campaign at the school premises to eradicate dengue. Children, with the help of elders, also cleared the surrounding environment and exhibited posters with methods of controlling the dengue menace. The campaign successfully attracted the attention of the locals.



Approximately 80 children participated in this campaign under the leadership of the principal, Mr. G. Sachithanandam. A street drama group to carry out awareness campaigns is also a possibility for the future.



QUIZZ NIGHT

A general knowledge quiz was held at the Arugam Bay CRC for the children. The competition involved two teams of 20 children each. Teams were led by K. M. Sashini and Amaya Muthumala. Mr. Sanjeewa Bandara of the CRC compered the competition while Mr. Cruetz and the teaching staff of the Centre formed the Board of Judges. The team led by K. M. Sashini won the competition and received special prizes organised by the CRC.



January / March 2011

CRC ACTIVISTS ARE EDUCATED ON CHILD RIGHTS AND PROTECTION

A programme is being implemented to educate and train the teachers and members of administrative committees, in enhancing the educational and social development of the children at the Resource Centres.

Save the Children, active in all major districts in Sri Lanka, operates an all district-connecting network to facilitate their child welfare activities. Representatives of our Children's Resources Centres are also connected to this network, and will participate in Save the Children training and education workshops.

In the first phase of the programme, the main activists attached to the Hambanthota Children's Resource Centre network are to be trained and educated on child rights and child protection. In the second phase, members of the Matara District Committee will be trained.

We wish to use these links and opportunities to implement activities of the YPF effectively and efficiently.



MORE COMPUTERS ARE DONATED TO THE CRC'S

The most popular subject at the Children's Resource Centres (CRC) is Computer Education. Many children who cannot afford to study the subject at commercial institutions are given the opportunity to apply to study computer education at the CRCs. We try our best to accommodate them given the limited resources at the centres.

With the expansion of the YPF and the establishment of additional CRC centres across the island, the need for more computers was noted by a member of the board of directors, Mr. Sanjiv Malalasekera, who subsequently donated 05 fully equipped modern computers to the CRCs. Prior to this, he has also donated 03 fully equipped computers to the CRC at Kataragama, during its initiation.

We are grateful to Mr. Sanjiv Malalasekera who bestows yeoman services to the Youth Progressive Front with the help of donors from Singapore and Hong Kong.



ARUGAMBAY CHILDREN AT RELIGIOUS CAMPAIGN

A sil (righteous morality) campaign was held at the Samudragiri Temple organized by the Arugam Bay CRC. Majority of the children at the CRC participated in this campaign of virtue with sincere interest. Venerable Indrasiri Thero of the Muhudu Vihara arrived for an oration. Sinhapura villagers of Pothuvil together with the CRC, organized the alms for the children undergoing the Sil Campaign.

HAMBANTHOTA MOTHERS START LACE-MAKING

A lace making, designing and marketing training programme was held for mothers /widows and mature students at the Hambantota CRC from January to March, 2011. The course was conducted by Mr. /Ms. Mariet and Wim from Germany. The program ran on a voluntary basis and sessions took place on weekday mornings while the centre was free of other programs. About 15-20 mothers participated in the program.



YOUTH PROGRESSIVE FRONT ACHIEVES HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH RAPID DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

During the past few years the Youth Progressive Front was concentrating on expansion of its services and providing optimum services to the public but internal management and the human resources contribution was limited.

The setting up of a voluntary advisory committee with highly qualified resource personnel for weekly evaluation has helped us greatly.

The committee evaluates important specialized responsibilities such as maintenance of our international network connections, daily financial transactions, etc. Due to the invaluable contributions made by Miss Shree, Miss Sandun, Miss Manchu and Mrs Swasha Malalasekera, we have been able to gain a higher productivity in all our transactions and services.

Ladies, we appreciate your presence at weekly evaluations and your contribution towards a better service for the children.



A LITERARY ASSOCIATION AND STREET DRAMA GROUP IS FORMED AT THE ULLA CHILDREN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

The children receiving knowledge, skills and education at the Ulla Children's Resource Centre, are members of very poor families living with minimal facilities. They have inherited poverty at birth, discarded by society, not able to recognise their true potential.

With the establishment of the Children's Resource Centre, the lives of these children were brightened with new hope. Taking into consideration their natural talents, the Arugam Bay CRC is in the process of forming a literary association and a street drama group with the children.

The Venerable Induruwe Upananda Thero stated that the Arugam Bay CRC is not only imparting

quality education to the children but also improving their inborn skills and facilitating them in bringing out their hidden talents at the cultural concerts held every month. Sinnathambi Priyankara, a student at the Arugam Bay CRC and the president of the meeting, says that children look forward to the monthly meeting and concert. Most of the children are eager to present and perform different themes and disciplines.

