



# THE RAHULA TRUST

## REPORT 2001-2002

*Dear Supporters*

*You will be happy to know that the Rahula Trust has had a very successful year. We have included 47 more children in our sponsorship programme. We are now sponsoring 157 children altogether. Also we were able to raise over £30,000 last year.*

*The secretary of the trust, Ven. Bandula, has visited Sri Lanka and met over 50 children in different areas such as Anuradhapura, Dehiattakandiya, Mahiyanganaya, Badulla, Bandarawela, Ratnapura, Kalavana, Galle, Elpitiya, Baddegama, Rambukkana, Kurunegala. Meeting the families and children, looking at their living conditions, and checking their school reports and expenditures showed the success of the sponsoring programme. We have received letters and school reports from the children we are sponsoring. Most of them have been able to show progress in their studies. Some have been successful in the 5th grade scholarship, and some have passed their GCSE examinations.*

*We have widened our sponsorship programme to Nepal. We are now sponsoring 13 children from the Kathmandu area and according to the availability of funds we shall increase this number.*

*From last June we arranged extra classes for the children who are living in the Anuradhapura area in Sri Lanka where children cannot achieve higher grades due to the poor quality of schooling available. Our local representative Mr. Jayasekara has written a report about this project in Tantrimale.*

*As mentioned in last newsletter, we were able to donate an overhead projector and slide projector to Nyumbani, Kenya, the orphanage for HIV-infected children.*

*Our success is thanks to friends like you. I want you to know just how important your support is to us here at the Rahula Trust, and how grateful we are for your kindness.*

*Miss Kanchana Rajarathna ran the Flora London Marathon 2002 in aid of The Rahula Trust and she raised over £5,000. We give our thanks to her and all the supporters who sponsored her. It was a great effort!*

*As a fund-raising project the Rahula Trust has produced a CD of paritta chanted by the resident monks at the Vihara. The project was co-ordinated by Miss Linda Johansson and some of her friends. We are most grateful to them for all their hard work. This unique CD was launched successfully on 3rd November. So far we have been able to raise over £1000 for the Rahula Trust. If you buy a CD it will help the activities of the Rahula Trust.*

*Wishing you the best of health, happiness and success for this New Year and the years to come.*

*Ven. Dr. M. Vajiragnana*

*Chairman*

## SECRETARY'S VISIT

*In his last visit to Sri Lanka in January, Ven. Bandula tried to meet many children sponsored by the Trust. Over 50 children were visited. Our local representative, W.B.A. Jayasekera, accompanied him to Tantirimale in Anuradhapura district, where they met 20 children in that area. After that he visited different parts of the country inspecting the children's progress, their living conditions and learning about the problems they are facing in their studies. There are about 12 sponsored children in Ampara District. This picture shows the Assistant Education Director, Ven. N. Buddharakkhita Thera, who represents the Trust in this area, at a meeting with all the children at the Zonal Education Office, Dehiattakandiya, Ampara District.*

# Progress report on the Trust's project for the Tantirimale Children conducted at Jayanthi Viharaya at Anuradhapura

*from Mr. W.B.A. Jayasekera*

**Project:** Upgrading the standard of education of children in Tantirimale and in the environs of Anuradhapura.

**Duration:** Six Months.

**Background:** Although Tantirimale is steeped in history dating back to the days of the introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka, it is now a neglected area. This is a border village and over the last two decades there was an influx of Sinhala refugees from Vavuniya and other adjoining areas to escape the attacks of LTTE terrorist groups. In addition, schools lack resources - no equipment, no teachers - and the children have to suffer as a result. The standard of education is at a low level and these children find it impossible to enter a better school to continue with their education due to this poor standard.

**Objective:** In order to rectify this situation The Rahula Trust decided to conduct special classes for these children, particularly the beneficiaries of the Trust, to enable them to make optimum use of the assistance.

**Methodology:** Initially parents were invited to an awareness programme and the objective of the programme was set out. They were very pleased about the initiative which they could not have afforded due to their financial circumstances. Convenient days and times were decided on and the classes commenced on 15th June 2002.

**Procedure:** 5 competent teachers were selected from Anuradhapura through the courtesy of Mr U.W.M.S. Udukumbura - a director of education. The subjects focussed on were English, Sinhala, Mathematics, Science and General Knowledge where they were weak and which were in the curriculum. Although we were targeting Tantirimale there were others who came from Eppawela and Mihintale.

Of the 23 children from the area, one child is presently attending a school at Eheliyagoda. Another child was sitting the G.C.E. (O Level) in December and we did not want to disturb her plan. 21 children were expected to attend and of these, one child attended only 2 classes, while another did not attend a single one. The attendance of the other children was good considering the environment in which they live.

The reports I have got from the teachers were encouraging and the response of the parents whom I met at regular intervals is that the children are keen and interested.

I have asked the parents to get the children admitted to a better school in the New Year now that they have reached a reasonable standard.

**Conclusion:** The Rahula Trust has devoted a considerable amount of resources towards uplifting the educational standard of its beneficiaries. According to the teachers and parents, the children who attended the classes regularly have improved a great deal. Those who did not will have to show a satisfactory progress report as proof that they could perform well despite not attending these classes. However, if the progress reports are not satisfactory some serious note has to be taken about those children who did not attend the classes.

A request has been made to conduct English classes for a little longer.

**Acknowledgement:** *Our sincere thanks are due to the Ven. Nayaka Thero of Jayanthi Viharaya in Anuradhapura for providing the temple*

*premises free of charge to conduct our classes and to S.B.Ranawarana and M.B.Weerasinghe for helping me to conduct these classes.*

## **CHILD SPONSORSHIP IN NEPAL**

We are happy to announce that we have started sponsoring 13 children in Nepal this year. Inauguration of this sponsorship was marked by a ceremony held on 15th June 2002 at Balambu, Kathmandu in the presence of a large gathering.

The event was presided over by Ven. Kumara Kassapa and Prof. Swarna Sakya; local government representatives and some other distinguished guests were present. On behalf of the Rahula Trust this sponsorship has been organised by the Samyak Youth Group under the leadership of Ven. Saddhatissa and Ven. Kolitha. The children were presented with some educational necessities, and each month monetary assistance is given to the selected children.

If you are interested in sponsoring a child in Nepal please contact the Rahual Trust secretary for further information.

## **When I met the Children**

I had long been thinking about sponsoring a child as children in need is one of the things that lies close to my heart. Having had the privilege of an education has enabled me to follow and pursue my dreams. I wanted to help give someone else a chance to help themselves and their family out of the poverty trap. In this country we take education for granted and even skip lessons that are of lesser interest to us, that is a luxury millions of children all over the world can't afford.

I first heard about the Rahula Trust after coming to the London Buddhist Vihara. Apart from the very reassuring fact that it's run by the Vihara I also liked the fact that they don't spend a lot of money on advertising and staff. It is important to me that the money goes to the children, as there are little or no administration costs.

In August 2002 I went to Sri Lanka on holiday and one of the highlights of the trip was to visit Nimesh and Muhudu, the two children I sponsor on a monthly basis. It was one of the most humbling experiences of my life. A serious reality check.

My Sinhalese friend Ramila, who acted as interpreter, our tuk-tuk driver Bundala, my friend Zoe and I set off from Unawatuna at the crack of dawn on a Saturday. After passing through the historical town of Galle, we drove along endless palm tree lined beaches before taking a turning inland. Here we embarked on a bumpy 90-minute journey passing coconut plantations and paddy fields before we arrived in Elpitiya where Nimesh, 12, lives with his family. It took us a good half-hour to locate his house as the postal address took us to his grandmother's house rather than Nimesh's. When we finally found someone who could direct us to Nimesh's house via a rocky slope normally only accessible on foot or, in our case, a very ambitious three-wheel driver like Bundala, we were warmly welcomed. Venerable Bandula, Secretary of the Rahula Trust, had written a letter to let them know what day I was to come and visit so the family was expecting us. After the introductions were made we sat down and had something to drink. Nimesh showed me his schoolbooks and told me about his studies and ambitions. He is very interested in technology and has been accepted at a better school in a town a couple of hours away. Nimesh is also very good at arts and proudly showed me his drawings. He is very inspired to learn more English as he's going to be pen pals with my friend Susie's son, Archie, who is the same age as Nimesh and lives in London. Both boys are excited about learning about the other's culture and hobbies.

The family was extremely thankful to the Rahula Trust as the contributions will enable them to send Nimesh to the better school. When asked what he wished to achieve in the future Nimesh said that he wanted to study to be able to get a good job and then he'd have a toilet built in the family house. After saying our good-byes we set off to visit Muhudu in her village of Batapola.

After another bumpy ride through more amazingly beautiful countryside we arrived in Batapola an hour later. It was easier to find Muhudu's house as it was in the middle of the village and next to the school, consequently about 15 children followed us to her house. They were all friends of hers who had heard about our forthcoming visit.

Muhudu lives with her parents and two brothers in a one-room house. Her dream is to become a maths teacher as she's got straight A's in maths and chemistry. Muhudu's father tragically fell down from a tree and is paralysed from the waist down and this has put the family under such financial strain that they thought that they wouldn't be able to send any of the children to further their education. Muhudu's mum told Ramila, who acted as interpreter, that Muhudu's acceptance by the Rahula Trust had been a blessing. At the top of Muhudu's

agenda is buying a dictionary and an encyclopaedia, that way she can study all subjects in her spare time.

It was amazing to meet these very ambitious and talented children and their families and to see what a big difference ten pounds can make to a family. I hope that more people will consider sparing as little as £10 pounds per month and thereby giving a young person the chance to change their future prospects.

Linda Johansson

## NYUMBANI, KENYA

In June 2002 the Rahula Trust donated a slide projector and an overhead projector to Nyumbani Children's Home in Nairobi. They will be used in their own small school and also to educate the general public about HIV/AIDS. There are now 83 orphaned children at Nyumbani, and another 460+ are cared for in the community through their Leatoto outreach programme. They have many more children on their waiting list, whom they are unable to care for due to lack of funds.

They are also launching an entirely new programme to build a "Village of Hope", also in Nairobi. The idea is to bring together the elderly who have lost their grown up children to AIDS, and children who have lost their parents to the same disease. The village will enable the two generations to live together and support each other. It is hoped that this will become a model for similar projects in many other countries.

**Child Sponsorship at Nyumbani, Kenya** *If anyone would like to sponsor a child through primary education, the cost is approximately £200 per year. To support a child for medicines costs approximately £100 per month. The cost of school fees is relatively high; because of their HIV status the children are not generally accepted in government schools, so they have to go to independent schools where the fees are relatively high. Please contact the Rahula Trust secretary for further information.*

## CD LAUNCH!

In aid of the Rahula Trust a *paritta* chanting CD has been produced and launched at the Vihara on 3rd November 2002. Apart from the traditional chanting by the resident monks, there are additional tracks enhanced by musical accompaniment. The production was co-ordinated by Miss Linda Johansson, assisted by some of her close associates. The production team has generated the music performed on the CD, as well as handling the graphic design for the wrapper and the technical aspects of the production. This is the first ever CD of "*Pirith*" chanting by the resident monks.

Proceeds from the "*Paritta* Chanting" CD are to be utilised exclusively for the aims and objectives of the Rahula Trust. The CD is priced at **£8.00** and available from the London Buddhist Vihara, or by post. Please add £1.00 for post and packing. Cheques or postal orders should be made payable to The Rahula Trust.

<b>The Rahula Trust Summarised Accounts</b>				
<b>Year ending 30th September 2002</b>				
	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total 2002</b>	<b>Total 2001</b>
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>				
Donations	14,631	15,684	30,315	18,705
Investment income	684	0	684	636
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>15,315</b>	<b>15,684</b>	<b>30,999</b>	<b>19,341</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>				
Costs of generating funds	28	215	243	224
Charitable expenditure	1,581	12,036	13,617	7,950
Management and administration	8	62	70	60

<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>1,617</b>	<b>12,313</b>	<b>13,930</b>	<b>8,234</b>
<b>Net incoming resources</b>	<b><u>13,698</u></b>	<b><u>3,371</u></b>	<b><u>17,069</u></b>	<b><u>11,107</u></b>
<i>The financial information has been extracted from the annual accounts. For further information please ask the Secretary for the full annual report and accounts and examiners report.</i>				

**Editor: Ven. Tawalama Bandula**

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Revised: 23 May 2007