



[www.rainbowcentresrilanka.com](http://www.rainbowcentresrilanka.com) - UK Registered Charity Number 1114933  
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Patrons: Her Excellency Shiranthi Rajapaksa and Mrs Jane Chilcott

## April 2009

*The Rainbow Centre provides daily welfare, education and loving support to children living in extreme poverty in South Western Sri Lanka*



### Our Valuable Work

The Rainbow Centre is a haven for more than 100 children who live in appalling conditions. Its aim is to equip children with the skills to break free from poverty. The Centre operates vocational training programmes, a school, pre-school and nursery. It runs a full medical programme. It ensures that children do not go hungry by providing two nutritious meals a day. It works to ensure, when possible, that children can enter into the mainstream school system. The Rainbow Centre is the only facility in this area for these children to turn to. It has been praised highly at national and local levels for its high standard of care. This work is made possible thanks to the support of AdoptSriLanka, one of the country's most dynamic and effective charities, an international partnership of Rotary clubs and individual and corporate donors.

## Medical Clinic held for all Rainbow Centre children and their parents



In March 2009, a mass medical and dental clinic run by government doctors was held at the Rainbow Centre as part of an ongoing programme to improve the children's health. Meanwhile, 56 parents were taken by the Rainbow Centre's bus to a local hospital for blood tests, a general health check and well woman clinic. Six children were found to have heart conditions, five were in need of dental treatment and many had respiratory problems and skin infections associated with their terrible living conditions. In addition, there were very many cases of lice (even in eyelashes). The doctors were impressed by the Rainbow Centre's facilities but shocked by the problems that the children face at home. A follow-up clinic is planned. The programme was made possible thanks to the generosity of the Regional Medical Director, Dr U Piyaseeli, and the dedication of the Rainbow Centre's nurse, a retired Matron, Indrani Cooray.

## Huge Thanks to AdoptSriLanka

The Rainbow Centre continues to depend significantly on the support and guidance of one of Sri Lanka's most dedicated and effective charities, AdoptSriLanka. It is extremely grateful for the recent increase in the level of support and the direct impact that this will have on the health, welfare and education of more than 100 children. In addition to a general increase in funding AdoptSriLanka has donated a milk fund. The Rainbow Centre provides two nutritious meals a day to each child, which is often the only food that the child will get. The Rainbow Centre is now able to provide a daily cup of milk, an expensive commodity in Sri Lanka, to all of the children before they leave the Centre in the evening.



## Sri Lanka's leading Specialist to Head New Child Abuse Programme

Professor Harendra de Silva, one of Sri Lanka's most eminent paediatricians and a famous crusader against child abuse is to head a new programme to treat those children at the Rainbow Centre considered to be at high risk of abuse. Professor de Silva was instrumental in the set up of the National Child Protection Authority. As its first director, he pioneered work to prevent and increase awareness of child abuse. He also acts as a consultant to the Rainbow Centre.

## Rainbow School Highlights



- Congratulations to Renuka (above left) and Shashikela (centre) who again came top in their end-of-term exams at mainstream school, scoring 100% in several of their papers. This is highly impressive as the two girls are from particularly troubled families. The girls are taken to and from school by the Rainbow Centre's bus and return to the centre for afternoon classes.
- Harry Barron (right), a retired English teacher, has returned to the Rainbow Centre as a volunteer teacher. His English classes are very dynamic, involving the use of songs, games, dances and storytelling. As a result, the children's ability to communicate in English continues to improve.
- The new intake of pre-school children aged three-four continues to adjust well to the Rainbow Centre's education and welfare. A follow-up survey of their home situations has revealed the extent of the poverty that they were living in: one child sleeps in a hut with only half a roof; another (the fourth of five children) depends on his partially sighted father who struggles to find work as a labourer; a frail little girl struggles with depending on the erratic care of her grandmother; as her father committed suicide and her mother, who is working abroad, is not being paid properly. They are joined in the pre-school with graduates from the Rainbow Centre's day-care facility, who also suffer extreme deprivation at home. Thanks to the Rainbow Centre, all these children will be able to enter the mainstream school system, in contrast to many of their older siblings.



## Birth and Identity Certificate Programme making Good Progress

An additional ten parents have been issued with the forms necessary to apply for birth certificates and identity cards in a special programme arranged with the local government Registrar. Identity cards provide them with the entitlement to apply for the status of being a permanent employee rather than only a poorly-paid casual worker. The obtaining of birth certificates for parents enables their children also to obtain birth certificates. However, the process is very difficult and time-consuming and requires extensive travel to source information from remote government offices and hospitals. In one extreme case a severely alcoholic widowed mother was unable to remember the name of the hospital or the year in which she gave birth to one of her children.

## Sinhala and Tamil New Year Festival and Sports Day



The day began with a re-enactment of a traditional celebration of the New Year with the children learning about the traditions associated with the festival. It was followed by a sports day with cricket, running and sack races as well as games for the very young. It ended on a high with the distribution of more than 100 gift packages, donated by an Isle of Wight Rotary Club and shipped to Sri Lanka. Each beautifully-wrapped package contained a generous and thoughtful combination of gifts and practical supplies tailored to the age and sex of each child. The children were thrilled with their presents.



## Fact List

*The Rainbow Centre currently provides daily education, medical care and welfare to more than 100 children who live in extreme poverty, on the street, in slums and in conditions that threaten their survival.*

- The Rainbow Centre opened in December 2005 and has grown very quickly.*
- The Rainbow Centre runs: a nursery; an early-learning centre; a pre-school; and, a day-school. In addition, it provides vocational training programmes, after-school tuition, scholarship schemes and employment schemes for mothers. It operates medical and welfare programmes for all of the Rainbow Centre's children and their families.*
- It is run from rented premises in Bentota, with easy access to the main Colombo to Galle Road. The children are brought to and from their homes by the Centre's own coach.*
- It benefits greatly from the support of AdoptSriLanka, one of the country's most dynamic and effective charities specialising in long-term community projects.*
- It also benefits from the generous funding, expertise and practical assistance of numerous private individuals.*
- In addition, we would also like to extend our thanks to the following organisations for their funding, assistance and support: The Rotary Club, both within Sri Lanka and internationally; Boyer Allan Investment Management LLP; B and I Capital AG; Suntel Relief Fund; Brandix Lanka Ltd; Hemas Holdings; Mount Lavinia Hotel; Favourites Group; The British High Commission in Colombo; LINE Communications; Kingsley Napley; Passion Pictures Limited; Pembridge Hall School; Westminster Under School; Downe House School, Wycombe Abbey School; Stephen Byfield; Elizabeth Meyer; Clare Allen; Hugh Sansom, Judith Sheard, Deborah Nadel, the MacKay, Burnett, Desai, Duncan, Higgins, Grove, Durant, Lea and Blair families.*

## Please help us to continue our valuable work

If you would like to support the Rainbow Centre, please set up a standing order or donate by contacting <http://www.justgiving.com/rcsl/donate>. Donations for the Rainbow Centre Sri Lanka through [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com) are automatically entitled to UK gift aid.

Or, please make cheques payable to: "Trustees of the Rainbow Centre Sri Lanka" at 26 Campden Grove, London W8 4JQ. Alternatively, please make direct bank transfers or standing order payments to: Trustees of the Rainbow Centre Sri Lanka, a/c no. 71647431, sort code 40-04-09, HSBC Bank, 16 King Street, London WC2E 8JF.

