



# International Medical Health Organization (IMHO)

Issue: #11

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## Heart Treatment Complex at Jaffna Teaching Hospital Opens!



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We are very excited to share with you news out of Jaffna, where the Jaffna Teaching Hospital Heart Treatment Complex was officially unveiled this week, thanks to the hard work and commitment of Jaffna cardiologist Dr. Lakshman. IMHO was proud to be a part of a large collaboration between various NGOs, aid agencies, and local doctors in making this project a reality. As many of you may remember, IMHO committed a significant amount of time and resources over the past 2 years towards helping to establish a cardiac catheterization lab at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital. We first brought this issue to the attention of supporters like you in 2008 and shared the need for enhanced cardiac care facilities at the hospital, which directly serves an area of 500,000+ persons and indirectly serves millions through the Northeast. We chronicled these needs in our appeal, which appeared on our website back in December 2008 (<http://www.theimho.org/field-news/reports/134-jaffna-cardiac-care-and-cath-lab>). Through continued networking and helping local doctors to leverage funds from other sources to the maximum extent, this project was able to come to fruition.

With this in mind, we are thrilled to announce that on Tuesday morning, February 9th, the Canadian Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Mr. Puce Levy, officially opened the newly built Heart Treatment Complex

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Pruce Levy, officially opened the newly built Heart Treatment Complex at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital (JTH). The new complex was funded and constructed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) under the UN Development Programme (UNDP), with early support and attention being drawn to this need by Dr. Lakshman and IMHO. This building will soon house a state-of-the-art cath lab unit, the equipment for which is soon to be donated by the aid wing of the French government. It also sets the foundation for starting a cardiothoracic unit at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital where open heart bypass surgeries may be performed in the future.

IMHO is constantly in touch with visionary leaders on the ground like Dr. Lakshman, who are able to push important projects like this forward. Jaffna Government Agent K. Ganesh, who spoke at the event, said that the long standing need for a heart treatment facility is being met with the opening of the new complex. The Director of the Jaffna Teaching Hospital and many others participated in the opening.

On behalf of all of us at IMHO, and all of those in Sri Lanka who will benefit from this new cardiac treatment center in the many years to come, we thank you for your support and commitment. What an important milestone this is! IMHO was happy to play a small but important role in this effort.

## Outdoor Wheelchairs Support for Disabled Patients in Mannar



40 outdoor wheelchairs, along with other equipment, are being provided to disabled persons in the Northeast through a collaborative effort by the Motivation Charitable Trust (based in Bristol, UK) and OfFER (Sri Lanka). This effort will help to return patients to mobility and enable them to find a sense of normalcy in their lives. The wheelchairs were purchased at a cost of US\$210/wheelchair, with a total amount of \$8,400 contributed by IMHO, due in large part to a

total amount of \$8,400 contributed by IMHO, due in large part to a matching donation of \$4,200 given by a very generous and thoughtful private donor.

Motivation Charitable Trust is an international disability and development charity and a worldwide supplier of wheelchairs to those with disabilities in low-income countries. In this project, Motivation is responsible for ordering the wheelchairs and arranging shipment to Sri Lanka, while local organization OfERR Ceylon is responsible for delivering the wheelchairs through their wheelchair service. The objective is to deliver outdoor wheelchairs to those left physically disabled from the current conflict in Sri Lanka. The Worldmade Rough Terrain wheelchair is the most suited for these patients and will be adjusted according to each patient's size, fit, and particular requirements.

Much work remains to be done, though. Most of those left physically injured from the war, the majority of whom are farmers, day laborers and fishermen, are in need of some form of a mobility device. Those who are paralyzed need an outdoor wheelchair. Those on artificial legs also need a wheelchair to travel long distances. The local availability of physiotherapy will help a considerable number of people to regain their strength and gain some sort of mobility. However, many patients are still in need of re-amputations, many still have shrapnel in their bodies, and many have



visible signs of depression, requiring additional counseling and support. Many cannot return to work until such issues are addressed. Handicapped toilet facilities are also a necessity. The project partners, including IMHO, are committed to serving as many of these patients as possible and responding to their vast and abundant needs. This is all the more reason we need YOUR support. Only through YOU, is this work possible...

### **Vanni Amputees Get Assistance; Planned Rehab Centers in the Works**

The UK-based Meththa Foundation received support from IMHO in the amount of £5000 (\$7,900) for their continued efforts to provide artificial limbs and other equipment to amputees and others with disabilities in the Vanni. This support will help to continue the ongoing work of the organization for the next 6 months. The foundation has also been raising funds from a few private donors in the UK, but there is still a long way to go before the project will fully take off.



In July 2009, realizing that there might be a large number of amputee people in the Vanni as a result of the escalating hostilities, the foundation submitted a proposal to the local health authorities and the Colombo Friend in Need Society to start a project to urgently provide artificial limbs to needy people and to establish a permanent facility for long-term management of these people. Independently and simultaneously, partners at the Mannar District General Hospital made an appeal to the Health Ministry for help with rehabilitation of more than 50 amputees in that hospital. As a result, the two partners jointly started this project using funds raised by the Meththa Foundation and the Sri Lankan Medical and Dental Association in the UK.



Using these funds, a modern prosthetic and orthotic facility has now been established at the District General Hospital in Mannar within ward space that was specifically set aside by the Regional Director of Health Services. The Meththa Foundation has since provided approximately 200 modern artificial limbs since July, while the Colombo Friend in Need Society has provided nearly 350 artificial limbs of a slightly different kind. Patients have been managed predominantly by a retired British prosthetist who has previous experience in working with the organization. During the peace accord, he established artificial limb workshops at Kilinochchi and Batticaloa. His work has been supported by two very experienced rehabilitation consultants from the UK. The team is awaiting 3 locally trained prosthetic technicians earmarked for employment at the Mannar Hospital.

With additional support from the West Midlands Rehabilitation Centre, also in the UK, where several key professionals are involved in the effort, the project partners have grand plans for establishing more rehabilitation facilities in the Vanni and serving many more physically disabled patients. Additionally, they hope to develop the existing rehab center in Mannar into a premier facility. IMHO is engaged in this effort in helping to seek support from various funding sources and contributing to the overall vision and plan as much as possible. This is a major focus project for IMHO, and we hope to report much more progress in the months to come.

### **New Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit Opens in Kalmunai**

The Mental Health Unit at the Kalmunai Base Hospital achieved yet another milestone recently with the opening of a new Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit, which was made possible in part by contributions from IMHO. IMHO gave funds in the amount of \$5,500 to help with the infrastructure development, including furnishings, architecture costs,

infrastructure development, including furnishings, architecture costs, and other materials. In yet another collaboration, the project was co-funded by the World Health Organization (WHO). The new day clinic, which is part of a step down system of treatment, will serve mental health patients on an out-patient basis. Staff at the new clinic hope to soon add an outdoor garden park where patients can go and peacefully relax to the sounds of waterfalls and nature.

## 7th Annual IMHO Convention & Upcoming IMHO Events

### **\*\*\*7th Annual IMHO Convention in Boston, MA\*\*\***

**WHEN:** Friday, April 30th & Saturday, May 1st, 2010

**WHERE:** Hilton Boston/Woburn, 2 Forbes Road, Woburn, MA, 01801

**WHAT:** 7th Annual IMHO Convention with guests from Sri Lanka, U.K., Australia, and U.S., with a focus on mental health and physical rehab in Sri Lanka

It's that time of year again...the 7th Annual IMHO Convention is being held this year in Boston/Woburn, Massachusetts on Friday, April 30th and Saturday, May 1st. The convention is being held at the Hilton Boston/Woburn at 2 Forbes Road, Woburn, MA 01801. This year we are welcoming several of our esteemed colleagues and partners from Sri Lanka and elsewhere. The focus of this year's convention will be on mental health & psychosocial rehabilitation for IDPs and resettled IDPs, as well as physical rehabilitation for amputees and others left injured by the war. Our scheduled agenda is as follows:

#### **Friday, April 30th**

6:00-7:00pm: Welcome Dinner

7:00-9:00pm: CME Activities

#### **Saturday, May 1st**

8:00am-12:00pm: Workshops on mental health and physical rehabilitation, featuring several speakers visiting from Sri Lanka and representatives from other NGOs

12:00pm-1:30pm: Lunch

1:30-5:00pm: Afternoon Break, Youth Forum, Women's Forum

5:00-9:00pm: Keynote Speaker, IMHO Presentations, Chief Guest, and Dinner

You can view and download the event flyer and Youth Forum flyer from our website here: <http://www.theimho.org/events/upcoming-events/details/28-7th-agm>

Hotel rooms are now available for booking by phone at 781.932.0999. For reservations by phone, group nightly rates are \$129/night, which includes continental breakfast. Please ask for the group rate for the International Medical Health Organization (IMHO). For those who will be flying in, we recommend flying in and out of Boston Logan Intl. Airport.

**Please RSVP** to the IMHO Programs Coordinator at [IMHOConvention@gmail.com](mailto:IMHOConvention@gmail.com) to confirm your space, and notify us if you have a particular preference for vegetarian or non-vegetarian meals. We look forward to seeing you this spring in Boston!

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**\*\*\*2nd Annual IMHO Ohio Golf Tournament\*\*\***

**WHEN:** Monday, May 17th, 2010 at 12:30pm

**WHERE:** New Albany Country Club, 1 Club Lane, New Albany, OH, 43054

**WHAT:** 18-hole scramble at the Jack Nicklaus Championship Golf Course

**HOW MUCH:** \$300/player or \$1,000/team of 4

Please register yourself or your team early to ensure your spot in the tournament. You will have the chance to win a car at the hole-in-one hole sponsored by Liberty--Dodge, Chrysler, Jeep. For more information or to view the event flyer, please visit our website:

<http://www.theimho.org/events/upcoming-events/details/27-ohio-2nd-golf-tourney>

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During this crucial time in Sri Lanka and around the world, as we face monumental challenges in providing better access to quality medical and health care for those most at-risk populations, we need YOUR HELP now more than ever. With **just \$10/month** you can help save and improve lives in Sri Lanka and elsewhere. Please consider making a donation to IMHO today. You can **donate online via PayPal as a one-time or recurring donation** (the amount & frequency of which are up to you).

You can also **donate via mail** by sending a check made out to "IMHO" to the following address:

**IMHO Treasurer  
PO Box 61265  
Staten Island, New York 10306  
United States**

All donations are tax-deductible (tax ID code #59-3779465)

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