



International Medical Health Organization (IMHO)

Issue: #7

September 2009

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IDP Amputee Project Report & Appeal

IMHO has currently lent its support to a project to fully rehabilitate war victims in Northern Sri Lanka left disabled from this year's violence. The IMHO, in collaboration with a partnering local nonprofit organization, Survivors Associated, will be supporting the psychosocial and physical rehabilitation of 125 amputees initially. These persons are currently living in various IDP camps. They will have corrective surgeries done on their amputated limbs, be fitted with artificial limbs, receive both pre- and post-op physiotherapy, and benefit from counseling and other support.

In the general confusion of caring for approximately 300,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) recently displaced in Sri Lanka, the plight and needs of persons left disabled due to amputation, nerve damage, muscle damage, swelling of joints, and other trauma had to be overlooked until the major needs of shelter, food, water, toilet facilities, etc. had been met. During the conflict, there was such an influx of patients and lack of trained professional that many non-surgical medical officers performed improper amputations. Many of the amputees now need surgeries to correct and repair stumps and close flaps before being fitted with artificial limbs. Many children are walking around with "claw hands" due to radial

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artificial limbs. Many children are walking around with "claw hands" due to radial nerve palsies. Other nerve damage was also done to many patients, requiring splints and corrective surgeries for nerve injuries. While major improvements have been made in the quality of life in the IDP camps throughout Northern Sri Lanka, those left disabled by the war continue to suffer from physical and mental trauma, lack of occupation, discomfort, and lack of mobility, all of which must be addressed urgently.

IMHO is searching for partners and supporters who are willing to get behind this effort. We have appealed to several other NGOs and groups for help in obtaining the remaining funds needed, beyond the \$25,000 initially committed by IMHO. If you can help connect IMHO to any NGO, foundation, corporation, or other group that might be interested, please let us know. Or if you would like to contribute to this very important effort, please contact us directly. Thank you.

Appeal for Sponsorship of Orphans at Sivan Arul Illam in Mannar, Sri Lanka

Sivan Arul Illam is a registered charitable orphanage in Mannar, Sri Lanka that has recently taken in over 70 orphans from the recent violence in Sri Lanka. Sivan Arul Illam is a home for destitute children located on the premises of Thirukketheeswaram Temple in Mannar, which formed in response to humanitarian needs in the area after the tsunami disaster of 2004. It has been given full consent by the Department of Social Services to undertake full responsibility for some children recently orphaned by the war.

IMHO is seeking donors for 30 orphans at Sivan Arul Illam to be supported for one year at a cost of \$40/month per child. At this time, we cannot match donors with specific names of the sponsored children, but we can connect donors with the coordinating agency. IMHO is functioning as a facilitator organization for this defined period of time, so that we can ensure help gets to these needy children in a timely manner. If you are interested in supporting an orphan(s) or in spreading the word about this project, please contact the IMHO Programs Coordinator at coordinator@theimho.org and/or the IMHO Treasurer at treasurer@theimho.org.

IMHO Semi-Annual Meeting to be Held in Baltimore, MD on October 3rd

IMHO is holding its 6th Semi-Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Maryland on Saturday, October 3rd at the Hilton Garden Inn from 8:00am-1:00pm. There is no fee to attend and all are welcome. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Speakers will touch on the current needs of the IDPs in Sri Lanka and the need to rebuild health services in the areas affected by war. IMHO will also present a report covering its efforts in the months following the Annual Convention in San Jose, CA and its plans for moving forward. We are very pleased to announce that a volunteer doctor who worked with **Medecins San Frontiers (Doctors Without Borders)** in the **Menik Farms IDP Camp** will be presenting on her experiences working in the camps, which is sure to be a very telling and moving presentation.

Rooms can be booked under a special group rate (group code: IMHO) for Friday night. Please RSVP to imhoconvention@gmail.com to reserve your spot. To view our event flyer with more details about the venue and how to get there, please visit the event posting on our website: <http://www.theimho.org/events/upcoming-events/details/25-semi-annual-2009>

Recent IMHO Contributions

One of IMHO's greatest strengths is the organization's ability to network with doctors, health workers, and locally-based organizations in Sri Lanka and to respond directly to the needs identified by them as they arise. Since our last e-newsletter, IMHO has given **\$10,000** to the Kalmunai Mental Health Society to support their efforts at providing mental health services and livelihoods support for patients there. IMHO also gave **\$6,500** to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital to help build and develop a recovery room. Meanwhile, the school feeding/nutrition program commenced by IMHO at Point Pedro has continued (see picture below).



IMHO Responds to False Allegations

IMHO has recently come under fire from a series of blatantly false and dangerous accusations by a so-called "journalist", Hassina Leelarathna of Los Angeles, California. These allegations were self-published in her journal, the Sri Lankan Express, and her most recent articles were reproduced in print and online by several media outlets, including Sinhale Hot News, The Sunday Observer, The Island, and Ceylon Daily News. The disturbing allegations raised by the author are presented with no evidence, and IMHO categorically denies each and every false and libelous allegation presented.

As our friends and supporters, you know our work and our principles, and we want you to know that we are doing everything possible to redress this very sad and disturbing situation, including possibly taking legal action, if need be. We have sent letters to the editors of the Sunday Observer, The Island, and Ceylon Daily News, as well as Sri Lankan Express itself, asking them all to retract their articles and print our letter. There has been no response from any of these papers so far.

IMHO is a humanitarian organization whose sole aim is to improve the health and nutrition of civilians caught in conflict and natural disaster. It was founded by concerned Americans and Sri Lankans living in the United States, most of whom are doctors. The group has always focused on the victims of the conflict in Sri Lanka because of the serious healthcare crisis in the conflict zone. Since its inception, IMHO has always been strictly **NON-POLITICAL**, as its mission is only

inception, IMHO has always been strictly **NON-POLITICAL**, as its mission is only **HUMANITARIAN**.

To read on or to view/download the letter we sent to the Editors-in-Chief of The Sunday Observer, The Island, and Ceylon Daily News, please visit our website here: <http://theimho.org/blog/18-event-category-in-blog/196-response-false-allegations>

IMHO Past Events

*****G-Vo Concert Brings People Together in Pasadena, CA for IDP Relief*****

A truly exceptional event was held on Saturday, August 22nd at the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, California with the goal of helping IDPs in Sri Lanka. Turning his album release party into a benefit concert for IMHO, "[G-Vo](#)" (Rajeev Nandakumaran), put on an incredible show that raised over \$20,000 for IDP relief efforts. G-Vo's newest album, "[Zero and One](#)", features original work by this aspiring young artist. We are particularly grateful to the team of young volunteers who came together to plan, sell tickets, and implement this event. They sold 1,300 tickets--the maximum capacity of the Ambassador Auditorium.

During the concert G-Vo performed the tracks on his new album. He was joined on-stage by a whole host of talented musicians, singers/back-up singers, and string quartet. He also had special guest singers and dancers join him for various tracks. Toward the end of the performance IMHO representatives made a presentation about the situation facing the IDPs in the camps in Jaffna, Mannar, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya today, as well as highlighted the efforts of the IMHO to-date in response to this ongoing humanitarian situation. The crowd was genuinely moved by the performance and the significance of this event in bringing people together to help those in need in the IDP camps.

*****West Virginia Dinner & Presentation*****

The first IMHO event to take place in West Virginia happened on Saturday, September 19th at the India Center in Charleston, West Virginia. Put together by a small group of committed organizers who wanted to share the work of IMHO with others, especially given the current IDP situation in Sri Lanka, the event was a great introduction for IMHO to the community in West Virginia.

The event commenced with one of the volunteers recalling his experience in the refugee camps when he was five years old and then again when he was twenty-five years old, relaying the thoughts and the emotions that go along with having to endure such a traumatic experience, and informing others of the very poor, often pathetic, conditions for refugees who are thrust into such a situation. Dr. Raguraj, IMHO President, then told about the genesis of IMHO, its past and present international activities and its future goals. He recalled how, within a period of three months, the organization provided health and humanitarian services to the affected Sri Lankans after the tsunami of 2004 and how it is providing humanitarian services now with the mechanism set up after the tsunami. A lively discussion among the audience and Dr. Raguraj was the highlight of the event. About forty people attended the event. Donations collected thus far have amounted to \$3,161. Thank you to the team of volunteers who put this together and gave IMHO such a warm welcome to West Virginia!

*****IMHO Presents at ATMA Convention in Atlanta, GA & IMHO President is Honored with Humanitarian Award*****



The American Tamil Medical Association ([ATMA](#)) held its 5th annual convention this year from September 4th-7th at the Hilton Atlanta Airport Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. IMHO operated a booth and presented about efforts to help those in need in Sri Lanka, with a focus on the current needs of IDPs who remain in the camps. Later, Dr. Raguraj, Founding Member and President of IMHO, was honored with a humanitarian award for his service helping those in need in Sri Lanka over the years. ATMA made a generous commitment of \$4,500 at the meeting as well.

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Difference.
Save a Life
with just
\$15/month.
DONATE
TODAY!**

onate

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 segments of society, we need YOUR HELP now more than ever. With **just \$15/month** you can meet the nutritional needs of 1 IDP (internal refugee). 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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