



Abayam - Foundation for Health and Education

UK registered charity 1184089

www.abayam.org



Public Launch & Fund Raising Musical Concert

21st March 2020

Oakington Manor School,
Oakington Manor Drive, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 6NF

எட்டுத்திக்கும் அமைதும், மதிச்சிக்கும் பெருகட்டும்.....



பிரித்தானியா நாட்டில் எமது மக்களின் அமைதிக்கும் மகிச்சிக்கும்
சிறப்புற சேவைசெய்யும் நிறுவனங்கள் மற்றும் மக்கள் நல சங்கங்களை உருவாக்கிய
நல்ல உள்ளங்களுக்கும் அதனை போற்றி பாதுகாத்து வளர்க்கும்
சிறப்புமிகு பணியைச் செய்து கொண்டு இருக்கும்
தலைவர், நிர்வாகிகள் மற்றும் உறுப்பினர்களுக்கும்
எமது வாழ்த்துக்கள் கூறுவதோடு
எங்களது பணியை அவர்களோடு இணைந்து தொடர்வதில் பெருமிதம் கொள்கின்றோம்.



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MESSAGE FROM THE ABAYAM COMMITTEE

Welcome to the Abayam Inaugural Public Launch and Fundraising Musical Concert on 21st March 2020.

The Abayam committee sincerely thanks you for giving your time to attend the charity's Inaugural Public Launch and Fundraising Musical Concert today. We are honoured to have two of Sri Lanka's upstanding public figures here today - Dr Aru Thirumurugan as our Chief Guest and Dr Thangamuthu Sathiyamoorthy as our Special Guest. They have advised Abayam since its inception in 2018 and have been pivotal in supporting Abayam projects in Sri Lanka.

Abayam's mission is simply to help our people in Sri Lanka who are most in need, and our whole team in Sri Lanka is vital in identifying these remote and deprived communities and advocating their needs. In addition to Dr Aru Thirumurugan and Dr Sathiyamoorthy, we are indebted to our northern region co-ordinator, Mr Mathuramany Rasiah, our eastern region co-ordinator, Dr Thiyagarajah Thavanesan and Mrs K.K. Pravina.

We are proud to have the opportunity to tell you more about the Abayam projects today. We hope you will be inspired reading the stories of Abayam volunteers who have travelled to Sri Lanka, including those of our next generation, Abayam Youth Foundation. All our volunteers finance their own travel and accommodation, to ensure that the donations to Abayam go wholly into the projects. Please enjoy the talented musical line-up we have arranged for you this evening, and we look forward to seeing you again next year, at Abayam's 2021 fundraising event.

The Abayam committee



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ABAYAM – WHO ARE WE?

Abayam—Foundation for Health and Education is an independent, not-for-profit, non-political charitable organisation.

We are a motivated group of non-medical and medical professionals and charity-minded individuals from Sri Lanka currently living in the UK, Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand and Sri Lanka. We formed the organisation, Abayam-Foundation for Health and Education, for the purpose of helping our hospitals, our schools and our people back home. Abayam (அபயம்) in the Tamil language means sanctuary, last resort or fearless.

Our work in Sri Lanka concentrates on Health and Education.

Our aim is to support the infrastructure, equipment needs and staff training/ education of hospitals and other medical establishments and schools in Sri Lanka, particularly those which are small, remote and under-resourced. Please see details of our projects in this booklet.

Our strength lies in the fact that we know Sri Lanka well and have local representatives and a network of trusted contacts there working in state healthcare and education, as well as from the general population. Moreover, we are able to match projects with willing donors from the UK Sri Lankan expatriate community. We visit Sri Lanka several times each year, to listen to our local colleagues, perform needs assessments, effect change in collaboration with them and then evaluate and follow-up on these changes. As you can see from our web-site, although Abayam-Foundation for Health and Education is a relatively new organisation, we have already completed several projects, raised funds and provided needed equipment and training. However, we cannot continue and expand our work without your support: if you can travel to Sri Lanka to provide training or can support and help us with your time and expertise in the UK or elsewhere, please get in touch.

We also need funds, and are grateful for all donations - please donate, with your name as reference, by direct electronic bank transfer to our U.K. charity bank account:

Santander bank; account name: Abayam - Foundation for Health and Education; sort code 09-01-29; account number 39953494.

If you are able to make a regular donation, please complete our Standing Order and

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF GUEST

DR ARU THIRUMURUGAN

ABAYAM FOUNDER MEMBER AND CHAIRMAN, SIVAPOOMI TRUST, JAFFNA

மண்ணில் நல்ல வண்ணம் வாழலாம்



செஞ்சொற்செல்வர் கலாநிதி ஆறு. திருமுருகன்

(தலைவர் ஸ்ரீ தூர்க்காதேவி தேவஸ்தானம் தெல்லிப்பழை)

(தலைவர், சிவபூமி அறக்கட்டளை - இலங்கை)

(பேரவை உறுப்பினர், யாழ் பல்கலைக் கழகம்)

அவர்கள் வழங்கிய

வாழ்த்துச் செய்தி.

அபயம் அமைப்பு எம்மண்ணில் ஆற்றிவரும் அரிய பணிகளை வாழ்த்துவதில் ஆனந்தமடைகிறேன். மருத்துவப் பணி மகத்தான பணி. மிகவும் அல்லற்படும் மக்களுக்கு ஆதரவு தரும் அபயம் நிறுவனம் கிழக்கு இலங்கையில் மிகவும் பாதிப்படைந்துள்ள பகுதிகளை நாடி மருத்துவ உதவிகளையும் கல்விசார் உதவிகளை தொடர்ந்து வழங்கி வருவது மிகவும் பாராட்டுக்குரியது. வடபகுதியில் குறிப்பாக ஆனைக்கோட்டையில் சிவபூமி அறக்கட்டளைக்குரிய கட்டடத்தில் சென்ற ஆண்டு முதல் இலவச மருத்துவ சாலையை நடாத்தி பலரது பாராட்டைப் பெற்றுள்ளமை சிறப்புக்குரியது. தெல்லிப்பழை வல்வெட்டித்துறை, யாழ்ப்போதனா வைத்தியசாலை போன்றவற்றுக்கு அவசர உதவிகள், மருத்துவக் கருவிகள் வழங்கி வருவதோடு, புலம்பெயர் தேசங்களிலிருந்து வரும் வைத்திய நிபுணர்களை இலவசமாக நோயாளருக்கு வைத்திய ஆலோசனை வழங்க ஏற்பாடு செய்துள்ள சிறப்பைப் பலரும் பாராட்டிவருகிறார்கள்.

அபயம் அமைப்பினர் எம்மண்ணுக்கு மேலும் உதவும் வகையில் நிதியுதவிக்காக லண்டன் மாநகரில் நடாத்தும் விழா சிறக்க இறைவனைப் பிரார்த்திக்கிறேன். இவ்விழாவுக்காக உதவும் அனைவருக்கும் எமது நன்றியையும் வாழ்த்துக்களையும் தெரிவித்துக்கொள்கிறேன். எங்கள் சிவபூமி அரும்பொருட்காட்சியகத்துக்கு அபயம் ஊடாக உதவிய அபய உறுப்பினரின் தொண்டு மறக்க முடியாது. அபயம் உறுப்பினர்கள் தன்னலமற்ற சேவையாற்றி வருவதை யாரும் மறந்து விடமுடியாது.

மனித நலங்காக்கும் அபயம்

மாசற்ற தூயபணி தொடர மீண்டும் வாழ்த்தி அமைகிறேன்

கலாநிதி ஆறு. திருமுருகன்

MESSAGE FROM OUR SPECIAL GUEST

Dr Thangamuthu Sathiyamoorthy

ABAYAM FOUNDER MEMBER AND DIRECTOR TEACHING HOSPITAL JAFFNA

“அபயத்தின் அளப்பரிய சேவைகள் மென்மேலும் வளர்க”!



கடந்த இரு வருடங்களாக வடக்கு மற்றும் கிழக்கில் செய்யப்பட்டு வருகின்ற அபயம் நிறுவனத்தின் கல்வி மற்றும் சுகாதாரத் துறைக்கான சேவைகள் மிகவும் வரவேற்கத்தக்கது. குறிப்பாக பின்தங்கிய பிரதேசங்களில் வழங்கப்படுகின்ற இவ்வாறான உதவிகள் அங்கிருக்கின்ற பொது மக்களுக்கு மிகவும் வரப்பிரசாதமாக அமைகிறது.

போருக்குப் பின்னர் கட்டி எழுப்பப்படுகின்ற வடக்கு மற்றும் கிழக்குப் பிரதேசங்கள் பல்வேறு சவால்களை எதிர்கொள்கின்றன. குறிப்பாக பின்தங்கிய பிரதேசங்களில் வசிக்கும் மக்கள் பல

இன்னல்களை சந்திக்கின்றார்கள். அவற்றை அபயம் நிறுவனம் நேரடியாக சென்று பார்வையிட்டு அங்கு தேவைப்படுகின்ற மிக முக்கியமான உதவியை உடனடியாக தீர்மானம் எடுத்து அமுல்படுத்துவதன் மூலம் பல திட்டங்கள் வெற்றிகரமாக நிறைவேற்றப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன.

ஆனைக்கோட்டையில் இயங்கி வருகின்ற அபயம் மருத்துவ நிலையத்தின் சேவை மிகவும் வரவேற்கத்தக்க ஒன்றாகும் ஏனெனில் பின் தங்கிய பிரதேசங்களில் வசிக்கும் மக்கள் தங்களுக்குரிய நோய்களுக்கான வைத்திய சேவையினை பெற்றுக்கொள்வதற்கு தொலை தூரங்களுக்கு பயணிக்காமல் இலகுவாக சென்று வைத்திய சேவையினை பெறுவதற்கான வசதிகள் ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன. இது தவிரவும் கிராமமாக அங்கே நடைபெற்று வரும் விசேட வைத்தியர்கள் பலரின் சிகிச்சைகள் அப்பகுதி மக்களுக்கு பெரும் உதவியாக இருக்கின்றன. உள்நாட்டிலும் வெளிநாட்டிலும் வசிக்கும் பல வைத்திய நிபுணர்கள் அந்த நிலையத்திற்கு வருகை தந்து சிகிச்சைகளை மேற்கொண்டு வருகின்றார்கள்.

அபயம் நிறுவனம் கடந்த காலங்களில் வட கிழக்கிலே காணப்படுகின்ற சிறிய வைத்தியசாலைகளின் தளபாட உபகரண பற்றாக்குறைகளை ஆங்காங்கே வழங்கி குறைபாடு நிவர்த்தி செய்வதன் மூலம் அப்பகுதி மக்களுடைய மருத்துவ சேவைகள் சிறப்படைந்து உள்ளது என்பதையும் இங்கே நான் கூறிக்கொள்ள விரும்புகின்றேன்.

இது தவிரவும் பலரின் உதவியோடு அபயம் நிறுவனம் கிராமப்புற பாடசாலைகளில் தெரிவு செய்து அப் பாடசாலைகளின் கல்வி மற்றும் ஏனைய வளர்ச்சிக்காக பல திட்டங்களை அமுல்படுத்தி வருகின்றது. அந்த வகையில் அவ்வாறு பயன்பெற்ற பல பாடசாலைகள் இப்போது சிறப்பாக இயங்கி வருகின்றன. ஆகவே அபயம் நிறுவனத்தின் சேவை மேலும் தொடர வேண்டும். பாதிக்கப்பட்ட வடகிழக்குப் பிரதேசங்களில் வைத்தியசாலைகளில் வளர்ச்சிக்கு மென்மேலும் நிதி உதவியும் ஏனைய உதவிகளும் தேவைப்படுகின்றது. அபயம் நிறுவனத்தின் செயற்பாடுகள் பின்னாளில் மேலும் வளர்ச்சியடைய வேண்டும். ஆகவே அதன் வளர்ச்சிக்கு பாடுபடும் உறுப்பினர்களுக்கு மற்றும் நிதி பங்களிப்பாளர்களுக்கு மனமார்ந்த நன்றியை தெரிவித்துக்கொள்வதோடு அபயத்தின் சேவை மென்மேலும் வளர்ச்சி அடைய என்னுடைய வாழ்த்துக்களை கூறுகின்றேன்.

ABAYAM PROJECTS IN SRI LANKA—HEALTH

These projects were supported by Abayam member visits to Sri Lanka ten times since September 2018.

Hospitals—infrastructural projects



Renovation and equipping of the Emergency Department at Tellipalai Hospital, in the name of late Dr Ragupathy (cost SLR 4 million, entirely funded by Abayam)—opened 19th April 2019

Hospitals—donating equipment



Teaching and training medical students, doctors and nurses

Abayam members have conducted many hours of high quality teaching for

medical students, doctors, nursing students, nurses and ancillary hospital staff. The faculty has consisted of local and overseas hospital specialists, general practitioners, junior doctors and a physiotherapist. The topics have included bedside teaching, medical emergencies, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, patients with breathing difficulties, pathology and non-clinical professional development skills.

In addition, Abayam is funding prizes for academic achievement at the School of Nursing, Teaching Hospital Jaffna; in the following year the students of THJ gained the top six ranks, and 26 of the top 100, in national examinations of 800 students.



Abayam has purchased and donated numerous items of medical equipment as requested by small hospitals (including nebulisers, blood pressure machines, oxygen monitors and 3 ECG machines). In addition 2 BIPAP/CPAP machines, which help very ill patients breathe, were funded (cost SLR 0.9 million each) by specific Abayam donors and donated to Point Pedro and Mannar Hospitals.

Abayam also purchased 4 washing machines for Thirukkivil Hospital, at a cost of SLR 306,000. Teaching Hospital Jaffna was in urgent need of a replacement CT scanner, and an ex-patriate Sri Lankan from UK donated half of the cost. Abayam helped to co-ordinate the fund-raising for the remainder, and the new scanner was inaugurated on 12th October 2019 (see the full article later in this booklet).



Abayam Medical Clinic and Medical Education Centre



The Sivapoomi Trust donated land in Annaicodai and Abayam funded development of the site into the Abayam Medical Clinic and Education Centre, at a cost of approx. SLR 12 lakhs, which was opened on 31st March 2019. The clinic is staffed by a receptionist and attendant and evening clinics are conducted by a local doctor, free of charge to patients who cannot afford to pay. Visiting local and international specialists conduct clinics and educational events for the public. The running cost of the centre is approx. SLR 2 lakhs/ month.



Free medical camps

Abayam specialists have joined local teams in conducting free medical camps for patients in remote areas, such as Vakarai and Valachenai.

Providing essential supplies for new mothers

At the request of a local Public Health Midwife in Partallipuram, Abayam has funded a basket of supplies for approx. 50 new mothers, with essential provisions for the women and their babies, at a cost of SLR 7,000 each.



ABAYAM PROJECTS IN SRI LANKA—EDUCATION

Schools—infrastructural projects

Kaddunurivukulam school in Kathiravelly is located 20km inside the jungle, and Abayam funded the building of a tube well so that now the pupils have a supply of safe drinking water.



Schools—donating equipment

Abayam purchased and donated a photocopying machine for Elakkanthai school in Sampur and Kaddunurivukulam School a computer, printer/ scanner/ photocopier and computer table and chair to Sivashathi Vidyalayam in Mutur.

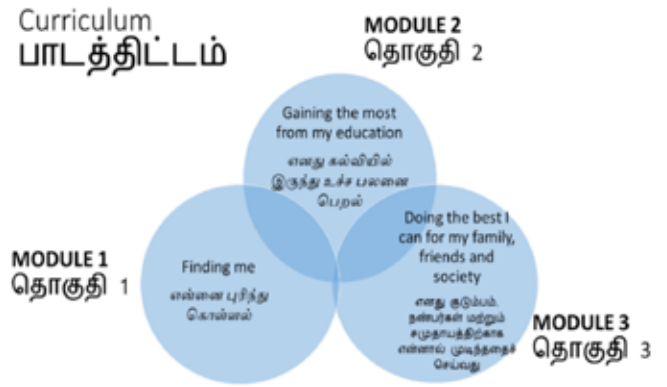
Schools—nutritional support for pupils

At Kaddunurivukulam school in Kathiravelly and Sivashathi Vidyalayam in Mutur Abayam is funding a cooked lunch for pupils. Abayam is providing daily milk for pupils at Elakkanthai school in Sampur, and a 3-month programme of nutrition supplementation with protein-rich food packets for under-10s in Partallipuram.



Abayam School Student Empowerment Programme

The Abayam School Student Empowerment Programme aims to help school students mature their personalities and develop the soft skills and life skills necessary for them to realise their full potential and be an asset to society when they become adults. The curriculum has three modules—Finding me, Gaining the most from my education and Doing the best I can for my family, friends and society. The programme was launched in September 2019 at Nelliady Central College and Kokuvil Hindu College, and in 5 schools in the Eastern Province in November 2019.



MESSAGES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ABAYAM TEAM

- Dr Jasotha Sanmugarajah (Australia)

My husband, Dr Selva Niranjana, and I joined Abayam at its initiation and since then we have travelled to Sri Lanka several times a year, participating in a number of teaching activities. These include teaching soft skills such as communication, leadership, interviewing, and working in team environments, along with time and stress management. This training was done through lectures, discussion and role-playing. We have run several health camps in rural areas of Sri Lanka including one that led to my first encounter with and diagnosis of a leprosy patient in 30 years. Out of all of these undertakings my favourite was teaching high school students about soft skills and inspiring their interest in learning. They are like sponges absorbing all the information you provide to them, and I am so glad that we have been able to influence as many as we have.

On one of these trips my younger son, Nitin, a medical student in Sydney, joined us. He was able to actively contribute to the program doing evaluations, collating materials and data, and arranging role playing scenarios. He was impressed by the amount of patient interaction and physical signs he was able to experience in Sri Lanka, whereas it would have taken weeks or months to gain the same knowledge in Australia. He also was touched by the willingness of patients to be examined and interviewed by medical students. As a parent, his desire to brush up on his Tamil in order to better communicate with the students and patients, was heart-warming to see. For me it was humbling to see how people are living in rural Sri Lanka with limited resources, education and healthcare. These voluntary activities do not involve third parties: whatever we do goes straight to the disadvantaged populations. We feel this approach best serves the needs of those we are trying to help. I encourage everyone to get involved in some fashion or even together as families - there is no requirement to be a doctor or healthcare provider.



MESSAGES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ABAYAM TEAM

Dr Norman Alfret (USA)

I am very happy to write about my visit to northern Sri Lanka to assist the Abayam charity foundation during the third week of November 2019. Our activities were efficiently organised by Abayam, and I had the joy of travelling and working with my beloved friends.

We started our week by meeting with the director of Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Dr Sathiyamoorthy, who welcomed us wholeheartedly. We visited the wards and met with the consultants and obtained consent to review patients' charts and teach the medical students and junior doctors. We started teaching promptly and continued through the week. It was a fulfilling experience throughout my visit.

On the second day of our endeavour, we visited Mannar hospital for a fact-finding visit to explore how the Abayam foundation can help them. Since the visit, I understand that the Abayam foundation has provided the hospital's surgical suite with trollies and is working on getting financial support to renovate accommodations for specialty surgical patients. I believe this is an urgently needed and beneficial project.

During my visit, I was also able to conduct a free medical clinic at Abayam's Anaicoddai clinic. This clinic has amenities including a free pharmacy and adequate medical supplies. It was a wonderful feeling to help the clinic and its grateful patients.

We conducted lectures for medical students, junior doctors and nursing students during our visit. The lectures were well received by them. In addition to all this, I was able to enjoy authentic Jaffna meals every night with friends, which was fantastic.

In total, it was a really satisfying experience for me. It was an opportunity to not only give back to the community and medical college but also meet and engage with old and new friends as well as family. These interactions helped me a lot too.

I definitely appreciate the Abayam foundation for giving me this great opportunity to assist them and give back to the community.

Thank you,



SUPPORTING NURSING EDUCATION AND RECRUITMENT

Mr S. Jeyakumar, Senior Nursing Tutor,
School of Nursing Teaching Hospital Jaffna

அபயமும் கல்விப்பணியும்

அபயம் நிறுவனமானது தாயகத்தின் சுகாதார, கல்வி, வாழ்வியல் மேம்படுத்தலை தனது நோக்காக கொண்டு இயங்கி வரும் தன்னார்வ நிறுவனமாகும். இந்நிறுவனமானது தாதியகல்வி மேம்பாடு, தராதரமான நோயாளர் சேவையை உறுதிசெய்தல் போன்றவற்றில் காத்திரமான பங்களிப்பை செய்துள்ளது. இதன் ஒரு பகுதியாக தாதிய மாணவர்களின் பயிற்சி நெறியில் எம்மோடு இணைந்து பல்வேறு வேலை திட்டங்களை முன்னெடுத்து வருகின்றது. இதன் அடிப்படையில் 2019 ஆண்டிலிருந்து முதலாம் மற்றும் இறுதிப்பரீட்சையில் ஒவ்வொரு பாடத்திலும் முதன்மை பெற்ற மூன்று மாணவர்களுக்கான கௌரவிப்பு நிகழ்வு நடைபெற்று வருகிறது. அத்துடன் தேசியரீதியாக சிறந்த அடைவுமட்டங்களை கொண்ட மாணவர்களினது கௌரவிப்பு நடைபெற்று வருகிறது. சிறந்த அடைவுமட்டமாக 2019ம் ஆண்டு 2015A அணியினர் தமது இறுதிப்பரீட்சையில் தேசியரீதியாக முதல் ஆறு இடங்களையும் பெற்று கல்லூரிக்கும் தாயகத்திற்கும் பெருமை சேர்த்துள்ளார்கள். 2020ம் ஆண்டில் 2016A மாணவி உடலமைப்பும் உடற்கூற்றியலில் தேசியரீதியில் முதலாம் இடத்தை பெற்று சாதனை படைத்துள்ளார். இவை அனைத்திற்கும் உந்துவிசையாக அபயம் நிறுவனம் இருந்துள்ளது என்பதை பெருமையுடன் பதிவிட விரும்புகிறேன். அபய நிறுவன வளவாளர்கள் புலத்திலிருந்து தாயகத்திற்கு வருகை தந்து எமது தாதிய மாணவர்கள் தாதிய உத்தியோகத்தர்களுக்கும் பல்வேறு தெளிவூடல், சமகால உள்வூட்டல்பயிற்சிகள், ஆங்கில மொழியாண்மை வகுப்புகள், வருடாந்த விஞ்ஞான அமர்வு என பல்வேறு வேலைத்திட்டங்களை ஒழுங்கு செய்து நடாத்தி வருகிறார்கள். இவை வடபகுதியில் உள்ள அனைத்து பகுதிகளையும் பிரதிநிதித்துவப்படுத்தி நடாத்தப்படுவது பெருமைக்குரிய விடயமாகும். இந்நிறுவனத்தின் புலம்பெயர்வாழ் தொண்டர்கள், வளவாளர்கள், நிதி வழங்குனர்கள், தொழிநுட்ப உதவியாளர்கள், உள்வூர் செயற்பாட்டாளர்கள் அனைவரினதும் பங்குபணி பாராட்டுதற்குரியது. நன்றியுடன் மதிக்கப்பட வேண்டியது. இவர்களின் தாயகத்திற்கான உதவி மேலும் தொடரவேண்டும் என்பதுவே எமது பேரவா ஆகும்.

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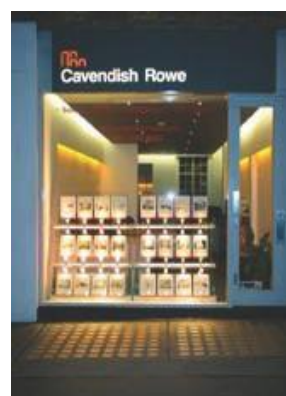
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MESSAGES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ABAYAM TEAM

Dr Devarajah Mutthuvel (New Zealand)

I am very proud to write about my visit to Eastern Sri Lanka to assist and participate in the charity activities during November 2019, arranged by the local and international Abayam team.

The programme started with student empowerment activities in Kiran and Mahiladitheevu schools. The students participated very keenly and learned a lot of information about future career pathways. The programmes were really well organised by our local leaders, Dr Thavanesan and Mr Mathuramani, with great contributions from the respective schools. The same day we visited in Trincomalee District and Partallipuram Hospital, Elakkanthai and Sivashathi schools. The hospital was functioning well with the help of the ECG machine donated by Abayam foundation. We also contributed a lot of materials to pregnant mothers. Elakkanthai School is located in a difficult place and the students are getting help for many things including food, which is a great help for the students to encourage them to attend and study. The Abayam team had long discussions with Sivashathi school staff, who demonstrated how useful the photocopying machine donated by Abayam Foundation was.

On the third day we conducted a medical clinic for Valachani people at the MOH office with help from Dr Grace and Dr Thavanesan. It was an interesting and fulfilling experience to give services to people who were in need. We gave case presentations at Kalmunai Hospital about emergency management of acute cases of Cardiology, Oncology, Respiratory Medicine, Diabetes, etc.

The fourth day visit was one of the most memorable. It was heart touching. We visited Vahari Hospital for half a day as volunteers, and this was followed by Kaddunurivukulam school. The students were struggling without essentials such as food and water. The only doctor available was voluntary visits by Dr Thavanesan at weekends. Abayam foundation funded the building of a water tank and tubewell, to provide clean water.

Abayam had meetings with students and presented a lot of motivational talks to encourage them. Abayam members volunteered to provide scholarships for students. I am very proud of the Abayam members who were instrumental in setting up this project.

On the last day we held Life Support programmes for the doctors and nurses at Mahiladitheevu Hospital. It was really useful for such a small hospital that had limited resources. In the afternoon we conducted an out-patient clinic to give services to the needy people of the area.

Overall it was a great pleasure and a satisfying experience for me to give services to my motherland which gave me everything.

I really appreciate Abayam foundation for giving us this opportunity to be of service to this area which has gone through a lot of hardship. Abayam is doing a great act by providing services for the community.

Well done, Abayam foundation, and I hope you will continue doing greater things.



WORKING WITH ABAYAM IN SRI LANKA —THE EXPERIENCE OF A UK PHYSIOTHERAPIST

Saratha Priya Kugendran

(Abayam Youth Vice-President)



As a UK-born Sri Lankan Tamil, the importance of our heritage, Tamil culture and humanitarian aid was instilled in me from my childhood. After finishing my higher education in the Summer of 2019, I was now free to join the Abayam Foundation visiting team to Sri Lanka with medical professionals from various parts of the world.

For the first time ever, I would be visiting my motherland – Jaffna.

For the first time in 11 years I would be going back to Sri Lanka, only this time it was not going to be a holiday. I was brimming with excitement to explore the towns in which my parents were raised, studied and played with their childhood friends (may I add, this was all squeezed into a single hour of our two-week itinerary)! This excitement to see my motherland for myself twinned with my passion to help those in need, fuelled my agenda in November 2019 when I visited the North and East of Sri Lanka.

I packed my colourful churidar, sandals and sarees. (In hindsight because of the stifling heat, I wished I was seeing patients in shorts and a polo shirt like I am used to.) I was nervous about meeting the rest of the visiting team who I knew were all doctors and consultants at the height of their respective medical fields. However, I was looking forward to getting to work, delivering lectures and devouring some fresh fish kozhambu! I did not realise the days there really begin at 5am with the temple bells ringing, cockerels crowing and all sorts of hustle and bustle outside – I quickly got used to that!

Our first week was spent in Batticaloa district where we visited remote schools and villages, ran medical camps and delivered student empowerment workshops in two secondary schools. I spent time working with physiotherapists from a number of departments across hospitals in the North and East of Sri Lanka but, particularly enjoyed training staff from Batticaloa Hospital and Jaffna Teaching Hospital.

Although being able to fluently speak Tamil, my biggest challenge was completing an entire physiotherapy assessment without using one English word. The patients were amused at my lack of understanding of farming equipment, and I was frustrated at myself for not being able to complete an assessment in a timely manner. They drew pictures and acted out how they became injured and with the help of nurses' interpretation, we got there in the end! As time went on, I became accustomed to hearing similar stories of how patients became injured on paddy fields owing to the repetitive and tiring workload throughout their day. The most enjoyable aspect of the trip was playing kabaddi with school children from GTMS Kaddunurivukulam, channelling my inner Velu from Vijay's Ghilli film.

Fun and games aside, the team worked hard from the break of dawn to 11pm every day - but I would do it all again in a heartbeat!

Upon reflection, I achieved a better understanding of the challenges faced by physiotherapists practising in Sri Lanka, due to a lack of equipment and funding. In addition, there is a misconception as to the role of a physiotherapist by health professionals and patients alike, with patients sometimes expecting “quick fixes” and medication. I was able to expand their knowledge of physiotherapeutic interventions, mostly by making small lifestyle modifications to overcome their injuries. I endeavour to work on improving the understanding of a physiotherapist's role in a multi-disciplinary team, as well as increasing the autonomy of physiotherapists working in public sector hospitals.

On future visits I would love to see more youth members involved with the implementation of upcoming Abayam projects and potentially delivering our own program in accordance with the youth agenda. I am counting down the days till the next trip and I hope you will join me!

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நன்மை கடலிற் பெரியது”

என்ற திருவள்ளுவரின் வாழ்வியலறத்தை அபய உறுப்பினரதும், அவரது நண்பர்களினதும் யாழ் போதனா வைத்தியசாலைக்கான CT இயந்திர அன்பளிப்பு உணர்த்தி நிற்கின்றது.

யாழ்பாணத்திலே பிறந்து வளர்ந்து பிரித்தானியாவிலே புலம்பெயர் வாழ்க்கையினை வாழ்ந்துவரும் தனவந்தரின் சகோதரி மற்றும் மைத்துனர் ஆகியோரின் பிணிச்சோதனைக்காக CT பரிசோதனை மேற்கொள்ள வேண்டிய சூழ்நிலை ஏற்பட்டபோது யாழ் போதனா வைத்தியசாலையின் CT இயந்திரம் பழுதடைந்திருந்தது. இதனால் இப்பரிசோதனை வவுனியா மற்றும் கொழும்பு வைத்தியசாலைகளில் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட வேண்டிய துர்பாக்கிய நிலைமையினை உருவாக்கியிருந்தது. இந்த நிகழ்வு ஏற்படுத்திய கடினமான, கசப்பான அனுபவங்கள் அபய உறுப்பினர் மற்றும் அவரது நண்பர்களை ஏனைய நோயாளிகளின் நிலைமையினை நோக்கியும் சிந்திக்க தூண்டியது. இது “தாமும் வாழ்ந்து பிறரையும் வாழ வைக்கவேண்டும் என்ற பண்பாட்டு வாழ்க்கை நெறி” இவரின் உள்ளுணர்வை தூண்டி விட்டது. அன்றிலிருந்து யாழ்ப்பாணம் போதனா வைத்தியசாலைக்கு ஒரு புதிய CT இயந்திரத்தை பெற்றுக்கொடுப்பதில் முன்முரமாக செயற்படலானார். இதன் முதற்கட்டமாக CT இயந்திரத்தை கொள்வனவு செய்வதற்கு தேவையான 500,000 பவுன்களில் 250,000 பவுன்களை தனது சொந்த நிதியிலும் மிகுதியை நண்பர்களிடமும் பெற்றுக்கொள்ள தீர்மானித்து செயற்பட்டார்.

இந்த செயற்பாட்டு நடவடிக்கையில் அபயம் நிறுவனமும் தன்னை இணைத்துக் கொண்டதோடு, இணைப்பு நடவடிக்கைகளிலும் பங்களிப்பு செய்திருந்தது. இந்த நடவடிக்கைகளின் ஊடாக மிகுதித் தொகையின் ஒரு பகுதி சுவீட்சலாந்து, பிரித்தானியா, அவுஸ்திரேலியா போன்ற நாடுகளில் வாழ்கின்ற தனவந்தர்களினாலும் அபயம் அமைப்பினாலும் பெற்றுக்கொள்ளப்பட்டதின் ஊடாக புரட்டாதி 2019இல் ஒரு புதிய CT இயந்திரம் யாழ் போதனா வைத்தியசாலைக்கு அன்பளிப்புச் செய்யப்பட்டது.

உதவுவதை வாழ்க்கையின் ஒரு பகுதியாகக் கொண்டு வாழ வேண்டுமென்ற வாழ்வியலறத்தை உணர்ந்து செயற்பட்டதன் ஊடாக பெறுமதிமிக்க CT இயந்திரத்தை வழங்கி ஏழை மக்களின் மருத்துவச்சமையின் ஒரு பகுதியினை இறக்க உதவியவர்கள் வேறு யாரும் அல்ல புலம்பெயர் தேசத்திலே வாழ்கின்ற அபயம் உறுப்பினரும் அவரது நண்பர்களும்.

உலகில் பிறந்தது உதவுவதற்கு என்று உணர்ந்து நாம் வாழவேண்டும். உழைத்துச் சேர்ப்பது துன்பத்தில் வாழ்பவர்களின் துன்பத்தை துடைப்பதற்கே என்பதை அறிந்து பிறருக்கு உதவி செய்து அவர்களையும் வாழவைத்து தாமும் இன்புற்றிருக்கிறார்கள் அபயம் உறுப்பினரும் அவரது நண்பர்களும்.

“எத்துணை ஆயினும் ஈதல் நன்று என மறுமை நோக்கின்றோ அன்றே”

REPORT FROM THE ABAYAM EASTERN REGION CO-ORDINATOR

Dr Thiyagarajah Thavanesan

District Medical Officer, District Hospital Mahiladitheevu, Batticalao

I am grateful for this opportunity to write about the work of Abayam in the Eastern region of Sri Lanka. Abayam's projects have concentrated on Education, Health and Community Empowerment (especially the empowerment of women), in the poorest and most deprived communities of this region.

One of my most important roles has been to find these hard-to-reach people, evaluate their needs and decide which projects in the areas of health, education and community empowerment are most likely reach a successful outcome and are therefore worthy of Abayam's support. I also play a major role in implementing the projects and monitoring the outcomes.

Education Projects

Abayam's school projects in the eastern region have improved the accessibility and effectiveness of education for children.

Early childhood programmes and services

Abayam has recently adopted two pre-schools in the Vakarai and Kathiravelli areas in Batticaloa District. These are indigenous communities with low levels of education and persisting child labour practices, due to extreme poverty. Abayam is:

- constructing proper school buildings
- appointing pre-education qualified teachers
- providing meals for the pupils, to improve their nutritional status.



Secondary education

Intrinsic to Abayam's aim to develop Kaddumurivukulam as a model village, is its support to the secondary school. Abayam has:

- constructed a deep bore well, to provide safe drinking water for the pupils and staff
- reduced the school drop-out rate by providing lunch for the pupils and an after-school class
- supplemented the teachers in science, mathematics and English.
- Abayam is also planning to develop an IT Centre to facilitate distant learning.



Primary education

Abayam is supporting two primary schools in Trincomalee District - Sivashathi Vidyalayam in Mutur and Elakkanthai school in Sampoor. Abayam has:

- subsidised school meals, to improve the nutrition of the children
- funded external teachers, to improve the standard of education
- purchased computers and photocopying machines for the schools, to assist in the preparation of teaching material.

Scholarships and financial support

In collaboration with the Zonal Education Departments, Abayam is financing the education and living expenses of ten selected students from the Batticaloa and Amparai districts to continue their education at well reputed schools in the Jaffna District, and is also financing the educational expenses of about fifteen selected students from very poor families in these regions.





Abayam School Student Empowerment Programme

Abayam has launched its School Student Empowerment Programme at Puthukudiirrupu, Thalankuddah, Kirankulam, Mahiladitheevu and Kollanullai schools in the region, and the staff and students have requested a continuation of the programme.

Health Projects

Health Sector Development

Abayam has been helping to support Base Hospitals Kalmunai-North and Thirukkovil in Amparai District, District Hospital Mahiladitheevu and Divisional Hospital Vakaraï in Batticaloa District and Central Dispensary, Partallipuram in Trincomalee district, by supporting infrastructural development and providing medical equipment.



Medical Education and Skills Development



Abayam has conducted regular teaching and training sessions for doctors, medical students, nurses and other health care

workers in the eastern region. The most recent of these have been bedside teaching for the medical students of Eastern University, lectures for doctors and other staff of BH Kalmunai-North and DH Mahiladitheevu. Furthermore, the team has conducted workshops on Basic Life Support skills for medical professionals at DH Mahiladitheevu.

Out-reach and Mobile Clinics



Abayam has conducted out-reach clinics and medical camps in remote areas in Eastern Province. In 2019 these were held in the Valachenai, Vakaraï and Mahiladitheevu areas of Batticaloa district. More camps and clinics are planned for 2020.

Public health pilot - nutritional supplementation for children

Recently Abayam has started a pilot project to support approximately 100 malnourished children in Partallipuram by providing protein-rich nutritional supplements. These children will be monitored by medical professionals to assess the effectiveness of the pilot, with a view to rolling it out more widely.

Supporting pregnant women



With the aim of reducing adverse pregnancy outcomes, Abayam has been providing nutritional supplementation and delivery packs (containing

essentials for the mother and baby) for pregnant women in the Mutur and Sampoor areas of Trincomalee district.



Community Empowerment Projects

Abayam's community empowerment projects have focussed on the empowerment of women, recognising that this is the key to improving the socio-economic status of families and the education of the children.

In conjunction with NEW AROW (Network for Advocating Requirements of Women) Abayam has started a self-employment cashew nut processing project in Batticalao.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Small Industries Abayam is about to establish a factory to make mats from local plant material, to improve the economic status of indigenous women in Kaddumuribukulam village.



ABAYAM YOUTH FOUNDATION

Shortly prior to Abayam's visit to Sri Lanka in November 2019, numerous UK based young adults were inspired to play a crucial role in the launch of a Youth Foundation. So far, we have held 6 member meetings which have helped us to create marketing materials, launch several new social media campaigns and even plan our own fundraising event in the near future. Abayam Youth Foundation has since established a committee consisting of working professionals and students of Sri Lankan descent, the majority of whom were born and brought up in England.

Our 39 members vary in terms of background, from engineers to healthcare clinicians to teachers, but all with a unified goal - developing healthcare and education in Sri Lanka and inspiring more Sri Lankan youth to contribute to their motherland.

The aims of the Youth Foundation revolve around fundraising for projects in Sri Lanka. Our primary aim is to develop mental health education in Sri Lankan communities in both the UK and Sri Lanka. We anticipate working on removing the stigma associated with mental health and improving drug and alcohol abuse awareness via workshops and seminars.

As a newly formed branch of our mother organisation, Abayam Youth hopes to encourage more students and young adults to become involved with the hands-on implementation of projects in Sri Lanka. In addition, we hope to form a wider base of contacts with young Sri Lankans across the world and increase our member numbers and productivity.





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Abayam - Foundation for Health and Education

UK registered charity 1184089

www.abayam.org

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Forename(s):

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Thank-you for your generosity.



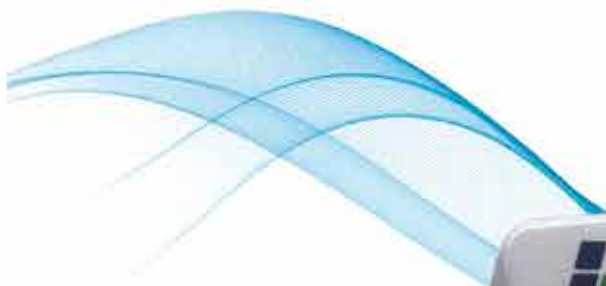
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