



# Newsletter

**VISAKHA VIDYALAYA OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION**  
**133, Vajira Road, Colombo 5 [www.visakhav.org](http://www.visakhav.org)**

December 2015



## VVOGA PLANS TO BESTOW SCHOOL BUILDING AS CENTENARY GIFT

Dear Members,

To commemorate 100 years of Visakha Vidyalaya, the VVOGA is preparing to bestow a new building for the school as a meaningful centenary gift.

We have initiated this project primarily to provide adequate classrooms to the primary school as currently, the Grades 3 to 4 are located within the senior school. Once the project is completed, these Grades will be housed within this building. It will also have a pavilion on the ground floor.

The EXCO is brainstorming a name for the building and suggestions are most welcome. Please direct your suggestions to the joint secretaries with your contact details.

The project cost is estimated at Rs. 45 million. The EXCO welcomes donations from members and well-wishers to support this mammoth task and the names of donors of Rs 200,000/- or above will be displayed on a plaque on the building facade.

We once again invite the general membership to join hands in making this endeavour a grand success!

### Joint Secretaries

**Renuka Dharmadasa 0777289389**

**<renukadharmadasa@yahoo.com>**

**Darshi Neelawathura Bandara 0773084142**

**<darshi@adshop.lk>**

## TIME FOR A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE



We tend to accumulate more and more as we go on advancing in life and time. Yet, since we rarely deploy an exit policy for the things that seem to collect in our homes and hearts, we find ourselves stuck in clutter, physically and mentally.

Having more on our plate than we can handle in terms of chores, responsibilities, expectations, household duties and items, peer and family pressure, attachments and choices, our lives are sandwiched between the past and the future.

As days add to our life's journey, more loose ends, twists and turns appear as life after all is not the perfect picture book of our childhood or the adolescent day dreams. So clutter becomes the norm of our lives with the material essentials and non-essentials that we collect, and the mental baggage that we tag along with each passing day, week, month and decade.

Clutter creates chaos and de-cluttering requires discipline. A trick to de-clutter physically is to employ a strategy to donate or throw away one thing at a time. Provided you get started straight away, you will be less 365 things in a year from now.

Once started, it can turn out to be an amusing pastime in itself to decide on what to give away each day and might work wonders as a New Year resolution. On the other side of the coin, what you may take for granted and cast aside nonchalantly could be a rare treat to a less fortunate soul.

Physical clutter leads to stress they say, and mental clutter I would say is 'stress' itself. Be young or middle aged or old, most of us keep a large cabinet of mental drawers stored in the back of our minds. These drawers are filled with what ifs, never agains, mistakes we've made, opportunities we've missed, hurt, pride, guilt, sacrifices, past grievances, fumes of anger, tinges of jealousy, comparisons, fear of failure and the list goes on.

Sometimes we de-clutter our shoe racks but not our heads, because the latter is not so easy. Certainly, not as easy as writing an editorial on it, I admit. Yet addressing the clutter in our life usually opens the door for new and exciting things to happen. It will help us discover what truly matters and enjoy the simple joys of everyday life.

Therefore, let's not sweat the small stuff but dare to 'let go', de-clutter our lives and create a little head space, not forgetting the school motto;

'Paññaya Parisujjhati'

'By Wisdom is one Cleansed.'

And this time is a good one to start.

-Thamarasi-

## CREATING SPACE FOR YOU

***Send your views***

Send your views on "What makes Visakha/VVOGA a great place to be" in one or two sentences to <visakhaoga@gmail.com>  
Don't forget to mention your name & batch as well.

## SWITCHING TO THE E-NEWSLETTER

Save time, save trees, save money and switch to the VVOGA e-newsletter.

Please send your OGA No/Name & Email Address to <oga@visakhav.org> to receive your e-newsletter.

Together we can make a difference.

## LOOKING BACK & LOOKING AHEAD IN 100 WORDS...

*We challenged a few past visakhians to limit their expectations of future visakhians to 100 words & to recollect VV back then, in 100 words & we share with you what they shared with us...*

"This is a mark I see in professionals who are products of our Alma Mater"

Even by late seventies, we still had temporary classrooms with timber planked walls and metal roofing sheets which gave off so much noise that teaching was impossible during rains. Lines of such temporary classrooms stood next to those wonderful spacious buildings finished to highest standards. No one complained. Students took it in their stride; being in temporary timber sheds in some years and being in comfortable well-built classrooms in other years. This is a mark I see in professionals who are products of our Alma Mater; they do their job and do not let the facilities affect the standard of their service.

### **POORNA R RATNAWEERA (NEE DE SILVA)**

1967 Batch

Chartered Civil Engineer

Chief Operating Officer

Northshore College of Business & Technology

"Future Visakhians will continue to be visionaries and leaders because of the core qualities that define us."

Remember, like the many worthy Visakhians before us, we must continue to be:

Strong; speak up in the face of injustice, regardless of what it costs us to advocate for someone without a voice.

Independent; value and delight in family and friends, but also be comfortable in our own company.

Patriotic; love and support our motherland and not silently stand by if it is being plundered.

Hardworking and intellectually curious; knowing that we are as worthy as our efforts and are perpetual students.

Embodying the ideals of Buddhism; tolerant and compassionate towards everyone, equally, regardless of the labels that identify them.

Here's to the next glorious century!

### **NILAKSHI PARNDIGAMAGE**

Head Prefect 2000

Jeremias Dias Best All-Rounder Award Winner

Year 2000 ESU International Best Public Speaker Award Winner at the Buckingham Palace

Yale University (B.A. in Political Science, Distinction)

President of the Yale Center for Buddhist Life

University of Virginia School of Law (Juris Doctor)

Humanity in Action, Senior Human Rights Fellow

Attorney at Quinn Emanuel LLP, New York and Washington, D.C.

"Be a patriotic citizen of our motherland"

Endeavour to make the best use of the excellent education provided at Visakha. Engage in many extracurricular activities available, as this helps to round up your personality. Remember the Latin phrase "Mens sana in corpore sano" – healthy body requires a healthy mind.

Imbibe the Sinhala Buddhist values, customs, traditions and the way of life which is part and parcel of our life at Visakha. Be up to date in IT. Enjoy the arts and music. Grow up to be the ideal Visakhian.

Be loyal and do your best for your school, community and country. Be kind, helpful and generous to the less fortunate. Be a dutiful daughter, an obedient pupil, a loving wife, and a caring mother. Be a patriotic citizen of our motherland.

### **ANULA WIJESUNDERE (NEE SAMARANAYAKE)**

Head Prefect 1968

Consultant Physician

First Hon. Professor, Medicine

Sir General John Kotelawala Defence University

President, Success-Colombo

Vice President, Temperance Association of Sri Lanka

Former President, Ceylon College of Physicians

"Being a Visakhian - now and in the future - is to be an extremely special person"

To be the very Essence of our Nation: Her leading care givers, most outspoken advocates, to partake in engineering and building our nation and educating our people. Visakhians will be the best among equals, as we are taught to be within the hallowed walls of our Alma Mater. To be shining examples of what it means to be learned, powerful and female. To have integrity, be responsible, humble, gracious...intellectually brilliant, athletically formidable and culturally informed. Being a Visakhian - now and in the future - is to be an extremely special person. A good human-being and enlightened Woman of the Future.

### **KISHANI JAYASINGHE-WIJAYASEKARA**

MMus, PGDip-Advanced Opera, LRAM, ARAM, DipRAM, LLB, LL.M (Intl.Com.Law)

Head Prefect 1996

Best All Round Student - Senior (1996) & Junior (1994)

Youngest Recipient of the VV Alumni Platinum Award

President, International Students Union &

Alumni Laureate - University of Nottingham, UK

Asian Woman of Achievement for Art & Culture

Commonwealth Representative for the Arts

International Olympic Academy Youth Representative for Asia

International Opera Singer

International Goodwill Ambassador - South Asia Women's Fund

Founder, Artistic Director & CEO - Colombo Opera Company



## A RECAP OF THE EVENTS IN 2015

### Visakha Avurudu Pola

The meticulous planning and the untiring effort of our old girls paid off as the annual Avurudu Pola which is one of the highest fund raisers for the school, concluded on a hugely successful note on March 28<sup>th</sup> 2015 with a princely sum of profit collected for the OGA coffers. Past Visakhian Ms. Clodagh Fernando was the chief guest of the event.



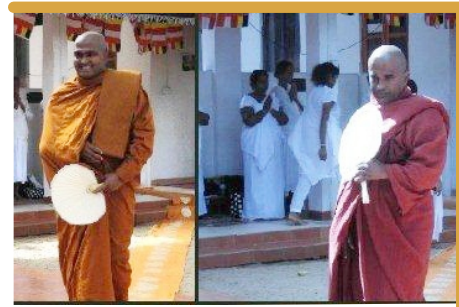
### Vesak Project



The 2015 Vesak Project saw the VVOGA donating a Multipara Monitor worth Rs. 460,000/- to the Premature Baby Unit and eight wheelchairs worth Rs. 360,000/- plus gift packs amounting to Rs. 80,000/- to the Rheumatology Ward of the LRH. A further Rs.400,000/- was donated for providing spectacles and lenses to needy children with visual impairments. A donation of Rs. 100,000/- was also made to an old girl undergoing Hemaedialysis treatment.

### Esala Sil Programme

'Being content with what we have' was one key aspect elaborated in inspiring sermons by eminent Buddhist priests and lecturers at the Esala Sil programme held on 31<sup>st</sup> July at the school bo-maluwa amidst a large gathering of past and present teachers, old girls and students.



### Bathiya & Santhush Concert



The Jeremias Dias Hall came alive with music on June 12, 2015 with Bathiya & Santhush concert organized by the VVOGA Fund Raising Sub-Committee as a musical endeavour undertaken towards raising funds for the new building for the primary school. It was a fun filled evening for all those who attended the event.

### Pulimood Oration

The 25<sup>th</sup> Pulimood Oration took place on July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015 at 5.15pm at the Jeremias Dias Hall with Dr. Hemamala Hettige, the Senior Advisor to the Independent Evaluation Department of Asian Development Bank in Manila, Philippines, delivering the memorial oration on 'Tackling Twin Towers : Taking Steps Towards Inclusive & Sustainable Development'.



## Being Young Again



It looked as if time stood still on May 16, as scores of past Visakhians marched back to school full of vigour and in full uniform. Having met all time favourite teachers and principals and having filled bosom friends in on news of each other, the girls had a time of their lives. In the morning they gathered for assembly in the main hall and later in the school grounds as games got underway, before rushing to catch the school bus just as in those days. Once more the house flags flew high in the air while the school band played the old familiar tunes. The event was a huge success. The turnout exceeded the expectations of the organizers by great numbers. This time travelling venture of old girls, was a first time event in our school, and no doubt it left pleasant memories of a day to be remembered by all those who participated.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### A Note to Membership

The EXCO of the VVOGA wishes to inform the membership that marks for support both in cash and kind extended to the school under the OGA category at student admission interviews, can be gained only if they are routed through the OGA. The involvement in school projects may be done voluntarily, however, in order to receive marks at the admission process such projects need to be ones endorsed by the VVOGA i.e. a service letter inclusive of the relevant OGA project, signed by the Joint Secretaries of the respective year should be produced. Similarly, donations will be counted only when an official receipt of the VVOGA is produced. While it is strongly recommended to channel your support to school through the VVOGA to get the due recognition your contribution deserves, last minute large scale donations are discouraged for obvious reasons.

### Part Time English Teachers For The Primary School

We need teachers preferably those who are qualified or experienced for the Primary English reading project done by the VVOGA to work **during school hours**.

☎ **Sarangi - 0772 443 119**  
<sarap.perera@gmail.com>

### Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are sought to serve in the OGA secretariat & to undertake photocopying duties.  
For more information please contact;

☎ **Punsirini - 0777 222 988**

### Centenary Publication

The VVOGA has undertaken the task of publishing a commemoration volume of the schools' progress in its 100 year journey.

If you have photographs, publications or articles from newspapers that may be of relevance let us know.

The editors would like to hear from you asap especially from the very 'senior' old girls.

We would also like to hear from 5th generation Visakhians.

We need to have the material before 31st January 2016.

### Confirmation of Head Prefects, Games Captains and Deputy Head Prefects -

There are many gaps in our list of Games Captains and Deputy HPs. We require confirmation of the year and names. We request each batch to send in the above information to

<shantagun@gmail.com> as soon as possible.

☎ **Editor - Shanta Gunaratna - 011 2588156**  
**Sports - Keerthimala - 077 5705145**



### Calling Girl Guides of Visakha

Old girls who have been Girl Guides/ Little Friends/ Rangers at Visakha are kindly requested to send news of events and photographs and anecdotes relating to their guiding days in school to be included in the Centenary Souvenir.

**Please email to Anoja Fernando at**  
<anojaf@yahoo.com>

### Up-dating of Details

Help us keep the VVOGA Membership Database up to date by informing your change of address, contact numbers and e-mail address to <thilini7@yahoo.com>



# UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2016

## Bodhi Vandana - January



### Bodhi Vandana to mark the 99<sup>th</sup> B'Day of Visakha Vidyalaya

The Religious Subcommittee will be organizing a special Buddhist sermon and Bodhi Pooja with the initiation of Most Ven. Kiribathgoda Gnanananda Thero to commemorate the 99<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Visakha Vidyalaya on Saturday the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2016 from 4.30 pm onwards at the school bo-maluwa.

Come & join hands to invoke blessings on mother Visakha on her march towards the centenary milestone!

#### For further information!


**Visakha - 0768691555**

**Rashmi - 0773738085**

## Universal Children's Day - January

Universal Children's Day celebrations will take place at the school premises on 30<sup>th</sup> January from 9am onwards. Past hostellers, it's time to come back and inspire the young ones.

Donations too are welcome! Do join us!

 **Harshini - 0777415499**


## Founder's Day Pirith & Dane - March

In memory of the Founder of Visakha Vidyalaya, Mrs. Jeremias Dias, Pirith & Alms giving will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> March at the school premises.

 **Visakha - 0768691555**

## Visakha Avurudu Pola - March/April

Be there to have fun & engage in a shopping spree for the Avurudu season.

 **Renuka - 0777289389**

## Annual Medical Camp - May

The medical camp for past and present teachers of Visakha Vidyalaya which has continued as an annual event for more than 17 years is an opportunity to express the gratitude of the past pupils to their teachers.

The Medical camp to be held on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2016 will provide services related to curative & preventive care, and health promotion related services as well.

 **Indeewaree - 077 3654760**

## Vesak Project - May

If you are interested in providing donations to the meritorious acts undertaken by the Religious Sub-Committee, you can do so by getting in touch with,

 **Visakha - 0768691555**

**Rashmi - 0773738085**

# CONVENERS OF THE SUB COMMITTEES 2015/2016

Sub committee	Convener	Contact details
Archives	Nirosha Tharanganie	tharanganie.nirosha@gmail.com
Cafeteria	Erangi Hulangamuwa	erangihulangamuwa@sampath.lk
Correspondence	Ayomi Kaviratne	ayomi.kaviratne@ndbbank.com
Education	Sarangi Suriaaratchie	sarap.perera@gmail.com
Equipment	Erandi Nanayakkara	erandi387@gmail.com
Fund Raising	Ishani Ariyapperuma	iariyapperuma@yahoo.com
Medical Officers/Sick Room	Indeewaree Liyanage	cool.indi@yahoo.com
New Members	Thilini Aluthweediya	thilini7@yahoo.com
Newsletter	Thamarasi Mahawattage	k.thamarasi@gmail.com
Religious Activities	Visakha Samaraweera	visakhaekv@gmail.com
School Matters	Buddhinie Medawatte	buddhiniemedawatte@yahoo.com
Secretariat	Punsirini Malavi	punsirini@yahoo.com
Social Activities	Harshini Yapa	harshiniy@hotmail.com
Website/Foreign Branches	Thisanthi Kaluarachchi	thisanthi@gmail.com
UK Bursary Programme	Surani Peiris	surani511@gmail.com

# VVOGA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICE BEARERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS - 2015/2016

## President

Mrs. Sandamali Aviruppola

## Vice Presidents

Ms. Sita Siriwardena

Ms. Anoma Perera

## Joint Secretaries

Ms. Renuka Dharmadasa

Ms. Darshi Neelawathura Bandara

## Treasurer

Ms. Sujeenie Gunasekera

## Asst. Treasurer

Ms. Sumudu Abeygunawardane

## Staff Member

Ms. Buddhinie Medawatte

## 60 Years & Above

Ms. Anoja Fernando

Ms. Anula Wijesundere

## 40 to 60 Years

Ms. Chandima Karunatillaka

Ms. Irosha Chandrasekera

Ms. Ishani Ariyapperuma

Ms. Nirosha Tharanganie

Ms. Preethi Manohari

Ms. Priyangani Ratnasekera

Ms. Punsirini Malavi

Ms. Samiddhi Dewapura

Ms. Visakha Samaraweera

## 30 to 40 Years

Ms. Ayomi Kaviratne

Ms. Erandi Nanayakkara

Ms. Erangi Hulangamuwa

Ms. Harshini Madurapperuma

Ms. Harshini Yapa

Ms. Himali Senanayake

Ms. Rashmi Navaratne

Ms. Sarangi Suriaaratchie

Ms. Nirosha Kapurubandara

Ms. Shashikala Perera

Ms. Surani Peiris

Ms. Thamarasi Mahawattage

Ms. Thilini Aluthweediya

Ms. Thisanthi Kaluarachchi

## 30 Years & Below

Ms. Indeewaree Liyanage

Ms. Lathika Athauda

Ms. Sashi Liyanaarachchi

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF VVOGA - 2015/2016



## 1<sup>st</sup> row -Left to Right

Ms. Samiddhi Dewapura, Ms. Anula Wijesundere, Ms. Sumudu Abeygunawardane (Asst. Treasurer), Ms. Darshi Neelawathura Bandara (Joint Secretary), Ms. Anoma Perera (Vice President), Mrs. Sandamali Aviruppola (President), Ms. Sita Siriwardena (Vice President), Ms. Renuka Dharmadasa (Joint Secretary), Ms. Anoja Fernando, Ms. Priyangani Ratnasekera, Ms. Buddhinie Medawatte (Staff Member)

## 2<sup>nd</sup> row -Left to Right

Ms. Ishani Ariyapperuma, Ms. Ayomi Kaviratne, Ms. Indeewaree Liyanage, Ms. Visakha Samaraweera, Ms. Preethi Manohari, Ms. Thisanthi Kaluarachchi, Ms. Erangi Hulangamuwa, Ms. Harshini Madurapperuma, Ms. Thilini Aluthweediya, Ms. Erandi Nanayakkara, Ms. Rashmi Navaratne, Ms. Sarangi Suriaaratchie, Ms. Thamarasi Mahawattage, Ms. Nirosha Tharanganie, Ms. Lathika Athauda, Ms. Shashikala Perera, Ms. Irosha Chandrasekera, Ms. Harshini Yapa, Ms. Surani Peiris

## Absent:

Ms. Sujeenie Gunasekera (Treasurer), Ms. Chandima Karunatillaka, Ms. Punsirini Malavi, Ms. Himali Senanayake, Ms. Nirosha Kapurubandara, Ms. Sashi Liyanaarachchi



## A LADY TO HEAD THE SRI LANKA EDB FOR THE 1<sup>st</sup> TIME & IT'S ONE OF OUR OLD GIRLS



We bring you the proud news of Ms. Indira Malwatte, Vice President of last year's VVOGA EXCO being appointed as the Chairperson of the Sri Lanka Export Development Board with effect from 29th October 2015. Sri Lanka Export Development Board (SLEDB) commonly known as the EDB is the apex state organization responsible for the development and promotion of exports, and Ms Indira Malwatte is the first woman to take office as the head of the EDB. On behalf of the entire membership, we take this opportunity to express heartiest congratulations, and, to wish Ms Malwatte all the very best for her tenure of office.

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**We are open on all 7 days**

Registered at the Department of Posts of Sri Lanka  
Under No: QD/177/NEWS/2015  
**Visakha Vidyalaya Old Girls' Association**  
133, Vajira Road, Colombo 05



To :