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Press Release

Little Aid: Libraries for Jaffna's Osmania Muslim College and St Roche School

Little Aid, a London-based charity by Sri Lankan well-wishers, has formally gifted two libraries, one at Osmania Muslim College in Jaffna and St. Roche School in Kurunagar, Jaffna.

Celebratory functions were held on 8th November 2011. Both libraries were formally opened by Little Aid's project coordinator Mr. Tarrin Constantine. The functions were presided over by the two beneficiary schools' principals, Mowlavi Mubarak and Mr Kenneth Marian. Mowlavi Mubarak elaborated at the function on plans to grow Osmania College from its current strength of 390 children to 1000 by next year to accommodate the resettlement of Muslims who were driven out of Jaffna in 1990. He also stated that in the Jaffna community both Muslims and Tamils have lost 20 years of their life and stressed the need to catch up. He pointed out that a whole generation of Muslims in Jaffna had been deprived of their education due to ethnic cleansing.



Library opening ceremony – Osmania Muslim College, Jaffna

Mowlavi Mubarak was concerned about the lack of job opportunities in the North. He laid out his vision to change the mindset of Muslim children and divert them into different job markets. He stated that the majority of Muslims go into same kind of business which, he believes, will not help the community intellectually or the country in the long run. Mowlavi Mubarak emphasised that history has taught us all that burning down the Jaffna Library or the Muslim College never can wipe out the communities or their heritage. Our values, the history of our communities and human kindness are far greater than bricks and buildings, he pointed out.

Mowlavi Mubarak, speaking further, stated that there are five mosques now functioning in the Jaffna area and they are the foundation of the Muslim community and that these mosques are resolving the internal and family issues without been relying on the state or police. He said that these mosques in the Jaffna area are working closely in harmony with the Tamil community.

He praised Little Aid for setting an excellent example to other organisations in working without boundaries, purely motivated by human kindness.

Mr Kenneth Marian thanked Little Aid for providing first the Computer Centre (opened 4 April 2011) and now the library. He pointed out that the Kurunagar area is the most economically deprived part of Jaffna where most children come from poor families whose parents are mainly employed by the Jaffna Municipality as city cleaners.



Library opening ceremony – St. Roche School, Kurunagar, Jaffna

Books for the library were donated by the Scotland-based charity *Books Abroad* and furniture and fittings by Little Aid's donors. The project was coordinated in its entirety by Little Aid's field worker in Jaffna Mr Ananthan Uthakumar. More books from *Books Aboard* were also gifted to the Sillalai Roman Catholic School, to Gonsalves Maha Vidyalaya, Pamunugama, Ja- Ela and to St. Anthony's College, Kayts. *Books Abroad* had donated over 3000 books through Little Aid in the year 2010.



Books donated by 'Books Abroad' were also donated to Sillalai Roman Catholic School, Jaffna – Gonsalves Maha Vidyalaya, Ja-Ela & St. Anthony's College Kayts

Little Aid generates its funds by conducting special events in the UK and donations from its circle of friends worldwide.

Thank You