

## IN A NUTSHELL

- **Volunteers and Staff participate for New Year Festival at Malamulla**
- **Medical camp at Keselwatta- A great success**
- **Projects Abroad gives hands to orphanages- New placements for upcoming volunteers**

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## PROJECTS-ABROAD VOLUNTEERS CONDUCT A MEDICAL CAMP IN KESELWATTA TEMPLE-AN ANOTHER GREAT SUCCESS

Projects Abroad Sri Lanka along with the Medical and Care Interns conducted the April Medical Camp at a beautiful temple in Keselwatta on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April with the participation of the Projects Abroad medical interns and staff. The event started at 8:30 and by that time there were more than 150 patients who had registered. They were firstly directed to check their blood pressure and blood sugar level. There



The organizing team with the chief monks



Rianne, a nursing volunteer in action

was a long queue for blood sugar and blood pressure. The Projects Abroad medical interns hastened the process of checking them so the fasting patients could get their blood sugar tested quickly.

After the initial checkups by the Pro-

jects Abroad Sri Lankan volunteers, the patients were directed to the doctors. The doctors also gave their fullest support for the volunteers by demonstrating how to do checkups and some doctors explained about the conditions of the patients to the medical interns.



Peter checks a patient

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## Editor's Note— by Manjula Meemange (Information Manager)

### WELCOME TO THE APRIL NEWSLETTER:::

It is wonderful to welcome you to the April newsletter! This month was very important to Sri Lankans as they celebrate their new year. Our pre-schools conducted several New Year festivals with the volunteers. I was lucky to be part of one of these festivals held at Malamulla Pre-school. It was aiming at teaching the children about the traditions of Sri Lanka and at the same time a play time for the children. There will be several

photos of this occasion in this newsletter.

A medical camp was also conducted on Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup>. We provided free medicines and sponsored for pharmacists and three doctors for the event where around 320 people were consulted and given medicines. Out of that 25 new diabetic patients were identified.

Coming back to the newsletter, we encourage everyone to join us in making it interesting and

exciting by sending in your own written articles and pictures of your experiences with us. These will help others to understand and learn more about Sri Lanka.

As always, we highly appreciate the time and effort you have extended to us by sending your stories and photos. I am looking forward to receiving more articles for the next issues at

manjulameemange@projects-abroad.org

## Belgium student practices midwifery as a medical intern in Sri Lanka — Salwa El Kasmioui

"I wanted to help people with midwifery and I loved travelling in Asia. So Sri Lanka stood up as a good combination of them as well as to complete my internship". With that inspiration, 26 year old Salwa El Kasmioui, a Belgium student volunteered in Sri Lanka with Projects Abroad.

Salwa was placed as a midwifery intern at a labour room and obstetric unit at Sri Jayawardenapura Hospital near Colombo. The hospital is a semi-government hospital which has modest facilities. She adapted to these different condition so well though.

Some of Salwa's daily tasks included observing the doctors, checking the heart beat of the unborn babies, observe the different techniques for varied conditions, and she was able to participate in for many cesarean deliveries.

"The experience at the leabour room was so different from what I see in my country; Belgium. Especially how you treat the patient, using various different tools and technology. However, I learned so many new things that I did not even know after coming here. Its amazing how they do this with lesser facilities and lesser cost. Besides, I was able to observe the operations so closely." Salwa said happily.

"It is sometimes hard to see the pregnant mothers were in labour pain. When I saw them, I massaged them. That helped. I am happy to tell that the nurses also followed that. But after all this, it was a great moment to see the mothers taking their newly born babies into their own arms" Salwa said with a smile.

Salwa also had a great experience at the medical outreach programs organized by Projects Abroad Sri Lanka. "The medical camps were so great that

I could interact with many patients within a single day checking the blood sugar level and blood sugar level. Those usually took place in remote villages. I am glad I could help with" Belgium volunteer also stated.



Salwa at a medical camp

Talking about the cultural difference she said, "It was very different to my country. The people were very friendly, smiling and helped each other very much. One thing I noticed and surprised was that the women in Sri Lanka were so powerful even more than I expected and I felt they are the center of a family."

"I believe everyone should come with an open mind to volunteer in Sri Lanka. Be open to learn everything, ask questions and keep smiling. Things will come in your way." Salwa concluded with a smile.

Salwa seen here with the other volunteers at a medical camp





In Sri Lanka, New Year is celebrated normally on the 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> of April. However the 14<sup>th</sup> is considered as the first day of the New Year. During the New Year time, people tend to go to their own homes and stay with their relatives to perform rituals.



Kids at a drinking game –In Malamulla Pre-school

There are auspicious times for every domestic work in a home. For example, lighting the kindle, Cooking milk rice, eating and applying the oil on the head (it is a traditional oil prepared with the herbs and meant to give a healthy life in the year) and leaving for work for the first time for the new-year etc, in such a manner that everyone in the country does those at the same time.

After the rituals there are games organized in the villages to take part in. All those

*“ doing this new year festival is a always a pleasure to the children here. They all loved the new year games” -One pre-school teacher*

games are so much fun!

The New Year sweets are so lavish at every home. Most of them are prepared only in the New Year times so it is special. One of the important events is visiting relatives and neighbors.

It is a tradition that Sri Lankans visits their relatives' homes and get together for New Year parties. During the

*“I think you travel to search and you come back home to find yourself there.”*

— Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie .



Teacher cooks milk rice

New Year, gifts are also shared among the relatives. Children worship their parents with a sheaf of

betel leaves and gifts every year and that is to show our respect to the parents and elders. Projects Abroad Sri Lanka arranged several New Year festivals in some years and this time we helped to conduct a new year at a pre-school in Panadura. Volunteers also helped in many ways to make the children happy.



Volunteers provided gifts for the kids



Traditional Sri Lankan new year sweets– So lavish!





## Some actions at the Medical camp at Keselwatta Temple





**YOUR STORIES TRAVEL THE WORLD  
BE SEEN, BE READ, BE VIEWED...**



### NEWSLETTER

The Sri Lanka newsletter "Ayubowan Sri Lanka" is released once a month. This is where we share info about what has happened during the month as well as exciting news about our project partners and special events. Here is the link to the newsletter section. <http://www.projects-abroad.co.uk/volunteer-destinations/sri-lanka/newsletters-from-sri-lanka/>

### MYTRIPBLOG.org

The My Trip Blog website is a place where you can create your own personal blog. You can share photos, stories and even videos so that your family and friends can keep in touch with you while you are in Sri Lanka. Ask your supervisor if you do not have a login details. Here is the link to it. <http://www.mytripblog.org/pg/groups/3070/Sri%20Lanka>



### UNIVERSITY/SCHOOL

Schools and Universities love to celebrate the achievements of their current and graduated students. We have had many volunteer stories appear on school/ university websites, magazines, and newspapers.

### LOCAL MEDIA

Share your story with us and have it printed in your hometown newspaper or magazine so that everyone can see how you were able to make a difference while

### PROJECTS ABROAD Youtube channel

We frequently make videos of our volunteers featuring in while they are in action at the placements. These videos give future volunteers a closer look at the routines and life in Sri Lanka. It's also a great way to look back and reflect on your experience. Contact your information manager if you like to make your own video. Here is the link to our Youtube channel <http://www.youtube.com/projectsabroad>



### Join us on our Facebook group

Projects Abroad Sri Lanka maintains an official facebook group where its members can interact with the other members. It is a platform to upcoming volunteers to ask your questions from the volunteers who actually did or if you already completed your program, you can share your insights. As of now we have more than 1000 members. Join with us here [www.facebook.com/groups/projectsabroad.srilanka](http://www.facebook.com/groups/projectsabroad.srilanka)

### Follow us on Twitter

We frequently make videos of our volunteers featuring in while they are in action at the placements. These videos give future volunteers a closer look at the routines and life in Sri Lanka. It's also a great way to look back and reflect on your experience. Contact your information manager if you like to make your own video. Here is the link to our Youtube channel <http://www.youtube.com/projectsabroad>



## Medical camp continued....

The hospitality of the villagers was so commendable as we were given so much food for our breakfast and tea times. The women society attached to the temple played a key role arranging this camp and informing people about it.

At the end of the day, 320 patients were treated and that was way more than expected. However volunteers, doctors and women society in the temple handled it so well that we could finish it off in time.

Projects Abroad sponsored for all the medicines, pharmacists, and doctors. The reports indicate that there were 25 newly identified diabetic patients at the camp and directed to the hospi-



tal clinics. We must also mention that the support and advice from the monks at the temple. It was so helpful. What a great day for everyone :)



Gerda checks a patient

*"Travel brings  
power and love  
back into your  
life."*

— Rumi

## We are Projects-Abroad-Sri Lanka....

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Projects Abroad is the leading global organizer of overseas voluntary work placements. Our wide range of projects, including Teaching, Care, Conservation & Environment, Medicine & Healthcare, Sports, Culture & Community projects and Journalism, are designed specifically for the needs of the communities in which we work, whilst giving our volunteers the very best experience of volunteering abroad.

In Sri Lanka you can join one of our care, medical electives, IT projects, Nursing electives, language or teaching projects or a combination of them. If any of are interested in volunteering in Sri Lanka with Projects Abroad please log on to:

<http://www.projects-abroad.co.uk/volunteer-destinations/sri-lanka>