

Peradeniya Alumni Association in Victoria launches a Scholarship Scheme

The father's day, 2nd September 2012 was when the Peradeniya University Alumni Association in Victoria had decided to launch its Scholarships program with an outdoor activity. An outdoor event is always a risky affair in Melbourne with its famously fickle weather. A cold miserable end to winter was being experienced in Melbourne during the days leading to the event. The prospect of a fine day did not look too promising. The Sunday was a glorious morning. The Peradeniya alumni and their families & friends got together to fund current students at Peradeniya facing financial difficulties.



The launch on Father's day was a suggestion by the children of the alumni in Melbourne. They had wanted to donate money towards the fund instead of giving the traditional father's day gift to their dads. Some fathers had taken the precaution of receiving their gifts earlier. For the children it did not matter. They realised that they were themselves indirect beneficiaries of the wonderful education their parents had received at the University. They were also aware that they were so much better off than their struggling counterparts back in Sri Lanka and they gave generously.

At the end of the day a total of \$5820 had been donated, \$2,720/ to the Capital Fund and \$3,100/= as sponsorship funds. The outpouring of generosity was evidence that there was a latent need in the Peradeniya community to reciprocate in appreciation of the education they and their families had benefited from. The scholarship scheme provided a means of fulfilling this need. The scholarship fund was launched by Dr. Nimal Nilaweera, the president of the PUAAVIC who welcomed the gathering and invited Dr. Thilak Gunatillake to explain some salient features of the Scholarship Fund. After the speeches, the gathering delved into the wide array of food brought by the donors themselves. Some found the weather too good to be wasted in idle banter and promptly went off together to enjoy a long walk. Soon singing of the much loved melodies of yesteryear broke out to the beat of a drum.

This even invited some of the pet dogs in the gathering to join in chorus. The day ended in late afternoon but the signs were already there that the giving would continue.

