

**The year 2004 was a very successful one for HorizonLanka. With the opening of the computer lab and our new permanent Internet connection, HorizonLanka is now leaping ahead into the Information Age.**

### **A New Home for Our Computers**

Our computer lab was officially opened in April. Our special guests included Mr. Kumara Badhuge, Mr. Donald and Mrs. Bhadra who all contributed towards the building of the computer lab. The ribbon was cut by Mr. Kumara's father followed by the lighting of the oil lamp. We performed a mini concert for our guests.

### **The IDM Offer**

Dr. Bandu Ranasingha, the CEO of IDM visited us last July. He promised to help us in our computer studies through IDM and the BRED foundation.

### **Presentation to the ICTA**

We received an invitation from Mr. Manju Haththotuwa, the CEO of ICTA to do a presentation on HorizonLanka at their headoffice. The ICTA is the main governing body of e-Sri Lanka program. Five HorizonLanka students went to the ICTA in May. Mr. Aruna Krishanthi, Ruvini, Radhika, Majith and Isuru made presentations at the ICTA. We put forward our ICT plan and explained HorizonLanka's history and operations.

### **World Wide Web comes to HorizonLanka**

Through sheer determination and with many a day's hard work fundraising, HorizonLanka finally achieved its goal of having 24h a day Internet Access in the disguise of a 120 foot tower and utilizing a radio link. Access to the Net has changed the lives of our students immensely. We are greatly indebted to our sponsors, without whom we could not have realized this dream.

### **Recent Arrivals**

We have a new headmaster at HorizonLanka. Mr. Wannu stepped down as headmaster in October and brought us Mr. Ranjith Pushpakumara to replace him. We also have our first volunteer English teacher, Ms. Marissa Copeland, all the way from England. They are both welcome arrivals at HorizonLanka.

### **New Beginnings**

Mr. Thushara, a computer engineer from Microsoft Corporation in the USA was our first financial donor. In September, he was bestowed the honor of laying the first brick for the foundations of our library, giving us new hope for our future education. We are still hoping to raise Rs. 50,000 to complete the library.

### **Welcome Additions**

In October HorizonLanka signed an agreement with the ICTA to make Mahavilachchiya a model e-village. To help us achieve this status, the ICTA donated five brand new Pentium IV PCs. The addition of these computers to our lab has given more students the opportunity to learn computer skills.

### **Developing Our Skills**

The 3 day visit from Mr. Denuwan Wijewardhana and colleagues was a once in a lifetime opportunity for us. They trained us to use Adobe PhotoShop, Adobe Illustrator and Macromedia Dreamweaver, software imperative for graphic and web designing. The skills we learnt will be invaluable. They also donated two PCs and installed a network hub to link all our computers to the internet. We must thank them for their hard work in reorganizing and cleaning our computer lab.

### **Sri Lanka's Tragedy**

Our country has faced many problems after the Tsunami. HorizonLanka helped those affected where possible. Our two teachers, Mr. Aruna Wanninayaka and Mr. Deepal Suriyarachchi went to the Ampara district as relief volunteers. HorizonLanka Cybercafé also gave free Internet services to those searching for missing friends and relatives. We also helped the affected through the HorizonLanka website.

