

MULTIPURPOSE BUILDING PROJECT
AND
'SARANA' – DEVI HOSTEL

MULTIPURPOSE BUILDING PROJECT:

Devi Balika did not start with all facilities which should be there in a school. It was housed in a building which was used for the World War II in 1953, with minimum facilities. The buildings one can see today were constructed from time to time on growing requirements of the school itself. Amidst various difficulties Mrs. Kalyani de Zoysa (a former principal of Devi Balika Vidyalaya) understood the necessity of a school auditorium. Making the first contribution, she started the 'School Auditorium Fund' with several past pupils – Mrs. Sudharma de Silva, Miss Lanka Hathurusinghe, Mrs. Yamuna Hettiarachchi etc. The very active participation of the Past Pupils' Association, parents, staff members, students and other well-wishers provided their fullest co-operation in swelling the funds for the project.

Later Mrs. Jayanthi Pinnagoda as the principal was able to get a grant amounting to half the cost of the project from the ministry of education in 1988. In March, 1995 the construction of this Multi Purpose Auditorium was launched by the then minister of education Mr. Richard Pathirana. The Civil Engineering constructions were handled by the State Engineering Corporation.

Mrs. Kalyani Lakshman, who was appointed as the principal in June 1995, had to face a big challenge in constructing this Hall. By that time the construction costs had considerably escalated. A continuous effort was made to raise the funds required to make this massive project a success.

Making the 'Multi Purpose Auditorium of Devi Balika Vidyalaya' a reality was not a result of a single person's effort. It was due to the unity of all members who supported in this massive project. Special thanks must go to Mrs. Karuna Thenuwara who supported in architectural aspects free of charge, Late Dr. B.M. Balasooriya and Eng. B.A. Dayananda for assisting in various engineering tasks free of charge, and Mr. J.T. Wijerathna and late Mr. P.B. Dharmadasa for the support given in electrical installations at no cost.

The task is not over. To maintain the Auditorium a 'Maintenance Fund' is required. It is your duty and responsibility to support us in raising this fund. The facilities available today in the school are the fruits of the co-operation received from many.

'SARANA' – DEVI HOSTEL:

A hostel for Devi Balika was a strongly felt need from its inception. Students even at that time had to live in private boarding houses in the neighbourhood. As many as six to eight girls lived in one room all because they came from distant areas and had to find accommodation in the neighbourhood – preferably within walking distance to the school. The security of the boarders was at stake and several problems had to be faced.

A suitable spot for a hostel in Colombo was hard to find. It was a challenge with all types of obstacles. The untiring efforts of a group of Past Pupils struggling with

determination facing all obstacles with courage, and overcoming all opposition made this 'Devi Hostel' a reality. As the principal of Devi Balika Vidyalaya, Mrs. Kalyani Lakshman gave her fullest co-operation for this endeavour. Thanks to Mrs. Pushpa Hewavitharana, the Devi PPA - especially Ms. Dharmalatha Piyasena, Mrs. Venitia Gamage, and Mrs. Kalyani Lakshman, the 'Daya Hewavitharana Trust' by whom the 'Sarana' Home was run, happily agreed to see it as the premises as a Hostel for Devi Balika Students. Finally this premises was legally approved of the premises utilised as 'Sarana' – Devi Balika Hostel by the ministry of Education.

This building was renovated at a cost of Rs. 1, 500, 000/- which was all 'the hostel fund' had. In September 1997, the Devi PPA was able to provide a 'Home Away from Home' for 35 students of Devi Balika Vidyalaya. Today we are happy to say that there are more than 250 Devi students who receive shelter and security at SARANA – Devi Hostel.