

THE DIARY OF MY MISSION WORK IN  
SRI LANKA

Part Eight

Date: *1st – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2009.* Pages: 1 - 15

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2009.

Disappointment today, we expected more of the old guru lads who had come for the weekend to attend the morning service, but only a few had turned up, most were back beside the pool side still tired from the night before.

After morning service all were invited back to the dining hall for breakfast. The two students from Sherborne and myself went into town to check out our emails and do shopping. One of the old guru lads gave us a lift in on his way back so we did not have to get the crazy bus.

In the evening more chips, but now I am been careful. I am beginning to get misled with all this English stuff by the students from Sherborne which I had I thought I had got over all my old English habits of English food and drink.

Again had a quick dip into the pool but otherwise than that nothing else interested happened today. I had evening meal at the Keble College.

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009.

Today it was a bit quiet still no pupils and no Morning Prayer, we do not have Morning Prayer in the holidays. Had breakfast at the village Curry House. Sounds mad but it is only mild with beef and nan breads and potato pastries so not so bad even for breakfast.

I got hold of some good fencing cheap so decided to buy it and put a new fence round the small rose garden they have next to the dorm outside the entrance at the Keble College, it was just a right mess the old fencing, bits of sheets tied together and in parts no fencing, it took 40 metres of fence. It looks great now. So spent most of the day building the fence.

The chap from the village who has the hardware shop helped me a bit and lent me his hammer, tape and pliers.

All of the young boys and a couple of girls who had returned early to College from half term, enjoyed helping me, even so half the time they were just falling over me getting in the way.

It was a very hot day. The rest of the day was just chilling out, drinking

loads of cold drinks, eating biscuits that the Keble pupils kept bringing out for me and preparing the servers rotas for March and April.

I was supposed to have gone to a deanery meeting today, but the headmaster went in place, he still is concerned about my health and wants me not to do too much at the moment.

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009.

Had breakfast at the Keble College and then had Morning Prayer to take. This was followed by outside assembly, where again the headmaster gave instructions about pupils going into the pool with out teachers been present.

Yesterday most of the Children were coming back, because officially today term starts, but still all were not back and some were still coming back to day. That is the way things happen in Sri Lanka.

After the assembly the headmaster told make to make an inventory of the Chapel and its goods sometime today.

Went back to the Chaplains House after showing the two new Sherborne students who are here for a couple of weeks around the classrooms and introducing them to the staff and children. 10am.

I suddenly felt very ill with chest pains and breathing difficulties and went to bed feeling very faint did not get up till 3pm with dizziness.

I then tried going to the Chapel to do the first part of the inventory but felt so ill had to come back. Went to bed for an hour. After that just sat in the playground with the children and spoke to them during their free period. In the evening I went to prep lessons for the girls between 6-7pm then went to Chapel to take Compline for 8pm I then came back made some chips (yes naughty chips) for the two students from Sherborne School who are staying with me.

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Today belongs to our hero 'Scooby Doo' one of our horses at the College, 'Scooby Doo' won first prize in two events in some Sri Lankan Horse competition, giving the College two cups and lots of money. After breakfast we first had a staff meeting in the library at 7am followed by an out side assembly next to the Main Hall (Foster Memorial Hall) so that 'Scooby Doo' could join us and be congratulated.

The rest of the day 'Scooby Doo' was walked around the fields and all the

girls and younger children spent most of their spare time tending 'Scooby Doo' treating him like a hero.

Had to go into town Welimada to get some pills from my prescription, this is costing me a lot of money, you have to buy your pills here. No wonder my sponsor money I have aside is going down quickly.

Went with the two students from Sherborne, at the same time we checked our emails also when in town I got some coffee etc.

After returning home on the crazy bus, as I now call it, I had to see the headmaster for up to date news and reports for the College, I also managed to grab a half hour swim and later went into the village to get some eggs and have a curry.

Again in the evening first went to prep lesson to help the girls with their English, which they have no tutor for, then took Compline and finished off with supper back at the Chaplains House with the two students from Sherborne.

Gave all the students at Keble College including the girls book markers which were sent to us by some Christian organisation during the day, we get stuff like that to give out.

Again I am feeling very weak with neck pain and swollen glands. I must admit I am feeling a little worried, also the last few nights had bad sleep most because of bugs and mosquitoes etc.

To day it was announced that the headmaster and I will be going to St. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia for the weekend. We will be celebrating our founding of the College here 65 years ago at Mount Lavinia, our sister College like we did here a couple of weeks ago. We are going down on the Friday night, the headmaster will be stopping at the Cathedral, I have been invited to stop at Mount Lavinia College with the Chaplain.

The College which I mentioned is our sister College, where I gave a little background about its history but it is worth looking up the website for the College.

At the same time the headmaster and I will have other events to deal with in Colombo. I will support our dance group who is in a competition on Sunday. I will return on Sunday night but the headmaster will return on Tuesday.

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Today was a quiet day started off by conducting 730am Morning Prayer, then breakfast in the Keble College. I then did some more work in helping

the headmaster prepare for the weekend ahead at Mouth Lavinia. In the morning and afternoon I had the job of distributing the Bibles left by the Gideon's which were left to us the other day, they left them in three languages, some had been already given out but the giving out of the rest had to be done, I will also have to count up and perhaps order some more in Sinhala. Ended the day with helping the girls with their prep work at Keble College before having supper and going to bed.

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Started the Morning by making sure all the girls and Keble boys had got their Bibles and that I had a order list for the rest of the College during breakfast. Then I took Morning Prayer in the Chapel.

When I conduct Morning Prayer I usually start with the opening prayer, then read a Bible passage from one of the Gospels followed by a short sermon based on that passage which would also correspond with our day to day life as students in the College, I then finish with the basic intercessions and closing prayers. Remember we only have 15 minutes for Morning Prayer.

At Bishopthorpe I regularly took Morning Prayer and assisted in other services, here I have at least two services a day with all my other duties to fit in for the day. This means preparing the services also, so as you can imagine like other parish ministers, it is hard work and tiring not easy.

After Morning Prayer I had to rush into Welimada on the crazy for several reasons and be back by 1pm for the latest to set of Mount Lavinia College (College) at approx 2pm. Went with the two students from Sherborne.

Got back at 1230am but as always we set of from College for Mount Lavinia not on time but 2 hours later at 430pm.

We all met at the Headmasters House at 230pm, that is I one other person the headmaster, his wife, his young 8 year old son and the youngest dog the headmaster has.

We had everything packed ready but the excuse was that the mini bus was at the garage getting checked by the driver because it was not running well and you can already guess nothing is never in a rush.

The headmaster who like me is keen on time keeping was getting angry. He was also supposed to be meeting his daughter at Colombo who is at boarding school there.

It was fun travelling down, we had the 12 seat mini bus to our self driven

by the headmasters driver. The headmasters puppy was sick over him twice on the way down.

Half way there we stopped at this this posh roadside café which the headmaster knows well, and I had the best Sri Lankan food I had ever had including egg hoppers, I will describe some time what they are.

We arrived in Colombo at 1030pm where I was dropped off at the Chaplains House in Mount Lavinia and the headmaster and his family went on to the Cathedral where they were stopping. I then went to bed after having a cup of tea and some words with the Chaplain.

[Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2009.](#)

Got up early and had breakfast with the Chaplain of St. Thomas' Mount Lavinia and her husband (yes that is correct) she is female. Even so Becky is a priest which as you know I do not agree with women priests she and her husband are wonderful people and naturally as both Becky and myself been Chaplains to the sister Colleges we work together well, even so I will not accept communion from her unless it as been jointly consecrated by a male priest, which is usually done over here.

Her husband is Indian but spent a lot of time in England working and studying religion and theology even so he is not ordained. He speaks fluent English.

We started off with High Mass in the Chapel at 930am for the celebration of the 65 anniversary of the formation of the College here of St. Thomas' College Gurutalawa for all the past students of the College. This time not like the anniversary at the College at Gurutalawa a couple of weeks ago, it was mostly the older past members those in their 50s plus. Other important people in high positions turned up.

The Rural Dean of Colombo also preached.

The beautiful Chapel which I hope you will look up on the St. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia, is like a Cathedral with full choir and fine organ.

We celebrated High Mass with incense and all the other works.

Becky (Chaplain of St. Thomas' Mount Lavinia)

Myself assisting (Lay Chaplain of St. Thomas' Gurutalawa)

Marc (Headmaster of St. Thomas' Gurutalawa)

Celebrated the Mass, the Rural Dean of Colombo just preached the sermon.

After the service outside the Chapel there was a buffet laid on, and it was a nice spread, after the buffet we all went across the green where we

officially opened the new 'Hayman Foundation Trust' This was opened by the headmaster. I was supposed to give prayers but for reason we did not get round to the prayers.

Mr. Hayman who was formerly a tutor at Mount Lavinia and later was the founder and first headmaster of St. Thomas' Gurutalawa which was founded in 1944. I have already explained the reasons for this and the history of the College. Hopefully you too have seen the St. Thomas' College Gurutalawa webpage, explaining a little more about the history. Mr. Hayman dedicated the rest of his life at St. Thomas' Gurutalawa until he retired as headmaster in 1962 and went back to live with his wife in Bournemouth, England until his death. His wife also dedicated her whole life to the work of the College they both returned frequently after their departures until their deaths, Mrs Hayman only died two years ago. They both left considerable amounts of money and other gifts at their deaths to the College.

The Hayman Foundation Trust is to raise money and collect gifts and donations toward the improvement of the College here at Gurutalawa. Five trustees were appointed and signed the papers at this ceremony. To be a life member you must donate SR.100,000 but any other gifts may be given under that amount, only the interest of the money in the account will be used.

The Headmaster then left for other functions while I went back to the Chaplain's House where I was the guest of the Chaplain and her husband. We had lunch, the Chaplain cooked me a perfect English dinner, fresh white fish from the pan done with butter and homemade parsley sauce with mashed potatoes, beans, cabbage and carrots in the perfect English way, not one speck of spice, remember she too is English.

The Chaplain's Husband and I went to the main supermarket in Colombo and I got a lot of English stuff which you can not get from anywhere else, like Salad Cream, Brown Sauce, Mint Sauce and other stuff. But they were very expensive as they were imported from England, that is why no other shop will buy them in and try and sell them.

But Cheese sauce and Parsley sauce are not available, you can not buy cheese at all, only those triangle spreading cheese, so no hard cheese not even from overseas.

After lunch I went down to the Mount Lavinia Hotel beach, This is one of the most expensive and luxury hotels in Sri Lanka. You usually have to pay to get on to the beach here but I got in free, there is an outside pool with all the thatched bars and snack bars along the beach, very tropical but

expensive, a beer was £3.90 a very expensive beer in Sri Lanka when you can buy a large bottle for 60p.

I returned to the Chaplains House at about 6pm, We were all supposed to be going to the requiem at the Cathedral but I was just exhausted so I just stayed behind and rested while the rest went. I later ordered a take away which was a nightmare, I will explain later.

### Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Our dance group from St. Thomas' Gurutalawa were taking part in a big competition near to Mount Lavinia, so they turned up at St. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia the night before where they stayed as guests. I met them for breakfast in the College canteen at 6am before they left for the competition nearby. They were 27 boys and 3 teachers the headmaster asked me if I would represent and support them as he had other business. After breakfast we all got into the coach and went to Manadana where the competition was to take place. The boys were given a changing room so that they could change into their Egyptian costumes for their dance.

They were 42 dance groups taking place on the stage, all from different schools and colleges and both boys and girls.

We came second, last year we came third. There were a lot of good dancing groups all types of dancing in there different coloured outfits.

Afterwards we all had curry before leaving back to College at 130pm. On the way back lads continually played their drums to a beat and sang their songs which they sang for the competition and other Sri Lankan songs which they all knew. All the way back the boys wanted to stop every time they saw a decent shop to buy cake, fruit, drink or pastry. At long last after doing a long rounded trip we arrived back to College at nearly midnight.

### Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Not too well, the climate in Colombo is dusty, hot and clammy and does not do me justice, just like it did not when I was there at Christmas. With my illness it makes me very weak and ill, I even lost my hearing for most of Sunday afternoon.

Managed to get out of bed for breakfast at Keble College before taking Morning Prayer in the Chapel. Not much on today for a change.

Helped the assistant matron take the inventory for the Keble College because she could not understand how to do it properly, which reminds me

I must complete mine for the Chapel. The girls are doing very well in there prep and are very keen in learning their English, that is one of the reasons I was sent here so that the pupils pick up English when I speak to them. I am now picking up Sinhala pity well, I can understand the language better than speak it. It is the same in their case, they can understand what I am saying but find it difficult speak it.

Two of the girls have asked me if they can put their names down for reading the lessons on a Sunday morning, this is very impressive because we have no girls on the list for anything at Chapel, I am trying to get the girls involved more at Chapel rather than just turning up for the services. I am even hoping to get some of the girls trained up for serving.

I had evening meal at Keble College after prep with the girls who need help in their prep with English.

I ended the evening by taking Compline in the Chapel at 8pm, bad attendance only 40 turned up.

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Wow, another Bank Holiday/Public Holiday. The College students are not aloud home but do not have to wear uniform or go to lessons, they just have two hourly prep periods, they spend most of the day washing their clothes, in the garden or playing sport or just hanging out casually, or watching videos. Some of the parents come and visit which is OK providing they do not distract the children too much.

To day there as been more bombings and shootings at Kandy the nearby town, 11 killed and many injured, there is now a lot of concern because there as been a lot of different bombings and shootings recently in Sri Lanka causing many deaths.

Today a couple of boys have been really bad in Keble College causing great upset, I have had to go across a few times during the night to order discipline. I will have to discuss the matter with the headmaster. Finished the evening with taking prep then had supper at Keble College and then taking Compline in the Chapel at 8pm.

I am supposed to be going to Colombo again this weekend, but I have so much on here to do and also it seems that every time I end going to Colombo I get exhausted because of the heat/climate which is so different than here at Gurutalawa, I also seem to worry about things getting done here as well when I am away. The travel is about 6 hours each way also which is to much for me.

The headmaster also seems to think that I should stay here and relax, recently I have been wearing myself down and feeling very weak with everything I have been doing recently. My work is very exhausting, especially with the position I hold which in some cases is very demanding.

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Very weak this morning, no assembly today which they normally is and no staff meeting, but no one is told until the last minute which is no surprise. So a period of madness arises, trying to get the children into Chapel for Morning Prayer instead which we do not normally have on Wednesdays because of assembly. To my surprise 99% were already there waiting for me which is a shock, we started 5 minutes late so I just conducted intercessions. Seeing that it was no ones fault that was OK, normally I will not even allow one minute late.

I had to go into Welimada again for several reasons so went as early as possible to avoid getting behind on work, Only spent one and half hours there, shopping and back which is good.

Met Fr. Saman who wants us both to start additional English classes for students who really need them, the College here is well known for its teaching and standard of English.

I agreed I would help providing it was no more than a two hour lesson and only once a week, for time purposes, I will have to make an agreement with Fr. Saman when we can fit it in, my diary is pity full.

The headmaster's wife who is also a teacher for grade 1-5 has also asked me help teach some of her pupils privately for English who are struggling a little.

Ended the day with supper at Keble College then Compline in the Chapel at 8pm.

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Today spent most of the day at Keble College due to problems with the boys. For some reason they just would not behave themselves. I had to hand out punishment severely and file some reports on the behaviour of the boys. I have been told by the headmaster that the main ring leaders are going through difficult times with family problems, so it is quite understandable of the behaviour they are going through but still we must keep to discipline for the sake of the rest of the pupils.

The girls do not seem to misbehave, if they do it is very minor. Then they tend to burst out in tears because they had been naughty.

I was hoping to get other things done today but because of my time at Keble College I got a little behind, but did get some bits of this and that done.

I must admit the potato curry and special fried rice for supper at Keble College made up for it all.

I had to ring up and order some more Bibles today because we were short of Sinhala copies.

Ended the evening by taking Compline in the Chapel at 8pm.

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Well what a day (Friday 13<sup>th</sup>) I knew this meant trouble brewing.

Was meant to go to Colombo today but not too well and have a lot to work on this weekend, so stayed behind and the headmaster went to Colombo.

Started the day with breakfast and then taking Morning prayer at 730am.

After Morning Prayer I then bumped into the headmaster and we both walked down to the senior College in our white cassocks to join in the seniors in singing the National Anthem. We then both walked across the College nearly a mile to the other end to Keble College.

The boys this last few days at Keble College have been bad, normally I deal with the situation and give punishment, but the headmaster wanted to investigate this morning. So we called all the pupils together and he gave severe punishment out. It is the dorms that the trouble seems to be the problem, they can not seem to settle in the dorms just run about and fight. Also it does not matter how many times you tell them or even punish them, they just seem to always climb the fruit trees, I think the solution is to borrow an air gun or put a mine field around the tree that will soon sort the problem - only joking.

The boys seemed to be like little angels today, completely different to yesterday, but how long will it last, let's see.

The rest of the day I had so much work to do throughout the College, seeing a couple of students who wanted to talk to me about problems and other preparations for Chapel to do.

I managed to get everything done including getting into Welimada on the crazy bus to check my emails and sort some postage out.

Got back in time to take prep for the girls at 6pm. No Compline on Friday night, so managed to get back for 8pm and sneak a quiet beer in before

going to bed.

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Well what a surprise the boys started of with a quiet morning but got noisy again. The main trouble today is that the grade 6 and 7 decided to invade the Keble College and cause trouble, they have been barred by the headmaster from going into Keble College, and its grounds.

They just climb the fruit trees, annoy the Keble boys grade 1 - 5 and upset the girls who just enjoy the peace and quiet in the grounds. I am not going into the full details but it caused a few problems.

Saturday is a quiet day for me in a way, so I just spend most the day relaxing, preparing for the week and helping individual students who need help and English lessons.

The College here is very well known for its English and sports.

I ended the day by just talking to the students at Keble College and having supper before going to bed.

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Father Goodchild the retired Chaplain and myself conducted this morning's Service at 9am. I preached the sermon based on 'Neighbourly love' which I think most of our students need at the moment, always fighting and arguing for some reason.

After Service managed to get a dip into the swimming pool, but at the moment it seems a bit gritty, needs a clean. In fact at the moment it is that bad I have stopped taking my shampoo down and having my morning baths in it and even stopped washing my clothes in it, come to think about it perhaps that is why it may be a bit gritty in the first place, or perhaps it might be the sand I put in now and again. - please, come on, you must know I am only joking about having my bath and washing my close in the pool or even putting sand in.

After lunch at Keble College which I struggled with eating I decided to make some more wonderful chips, O glorious English grub. The evening meal at Keble was quite nice, chicken curry.

The Keble Children including the girls to my surprise have been bad, so have been suspended watching afternoon films and given punishment of prep instead. The boys do not seem to care, it is now a thing to them, they are always bad and been punished at the moment. But when I went to

check on the girls doing prep in the canteen they were many tearful eyes. The girls are never hardly bad and when they are bad which is rare they suffer because they feel guilty and do not like been bad.

Tonight, they were many tears and my Cassock was wet with tears, they said 'we are not really bad brother please tell miss we are really good.' with tears and crying.

When I had investigated the girls had been bad shouting and drawing instead of washing their clothes properly. The boys well they are just hard work all the time.

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Days Holiday so no report.

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Days Holiday so no report.

One of our female teachers from Keble College, father died this week. Her family live in Hatten and she resides here as a resident teacher. Her father had been ill for some time. She had now gone home. The Headmaster as asked me to conduct prayers at the family home where the body is lying before burial tomorrow. The two College mini buses with College staff of 25 and myself travelled the 3 hour journey to the teachers family home to visit the family and other people who are mourning to say the short office of service at home before the funeral, which I conducted stood round the corpse which was laid upon the bed, which is tradition here in Sri Lanka. There were about 50 plus stood round the bed for the service. The headmaster will travel down and conduct the funeral and burial tomorrow morning.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Days Holiday so no report.

Led prayers and attended the staff meeting, before going into the village to get some vegetables. Otherwise just happily snored away for the rest of day.

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

‘Bad Br Michael’ been summoned by the headmaster.

There are still things I have to learn in Sri Lanka, their culture and views are taken so seriously different to ours, especially in religious matters.

For example here wearing cassock is taken very seriously, you are given much respect by people when wearing cassock. Not like here in England where we wear it for services only and no one even notices. Here it is worn on many occasions and worn most of the time, (otherwise all the time) so great dignity has to be shown in respect.

I got into trouble for lifting up my cassock to get my keys and change out of my trouser pocket when I went to the village shopping; here that is a great offence. The public do not like it, it is just not acceptable, misusing your cassock in the wrong manner. Even if you slightly lift your cassock to walk through a puddle or moody patch is not in order, they expect you to just to walk through normally and get your cassock dirty.

I even get complaints if I wear my black cassock. Religion here is taken so serious and with great pride and respect, and all ministers are watched very carefully.

Also the Sri Lankan sense of humour is so different, things I say or even do with a sense of humour where the British would love it is a great offence here, so you have to be really careful. Even things which you feel are right are wrong here.

So the headmaster just reminded me to be careful, he joked even he has to watch himself because people moan about him.

It is also a great offence for any minister to have a beer in public or private here in Sri Lanka. In England even the bishops gather in pubs for a drink. Here the bishop and headmaster at first gave me permission to have a drink provided that I just have one in private in my own room, but in the end that even caused problems, I was caught buying a drink from the shop to take back, because here everyone knows everyone’s business and likes gossip and to make things worse than they can (Sri Lankan’s) it causes great scandal.

But that is the gossip here you have to be careful of here they always add things to stories to make it more scandal.

Otherwise everything was normal today, just walking around like a little puppy with its tail between its legs feeling very naughty. It hurts especially with a person in my position when people can cause so much harmless unnecessary gossip to cause trouble, I just feel sorry for them and pray for

them.

The pool is now getting cleaned but still have to wait for my swim.

I am just waiting for the day when I can be a hero and jump in and wrestle a crocodile to impress the kids that I am like Tarzan.

At least the kids here have a sense of humour and find me funny, they are also very convincing. I convinced them we had three legged chickens in England so we got more legs to share out for dinner, they believed me until I told them the only problem was that it caused them to lay square eggs, they didn't fall for that so easy.

So today just still keeping low and licking my wounds and doing much as possible under cover.

But it is also a serious matter, not to upset people even so here you do not mean to or even know that you are upsetting people because even the smallest thing which you feel is funny or harmless is a great offence.

I ended the day again in disaster, by putting the chip pan on fire (again) this time not in the company of the headmaster like last time but a group of five other students. The kitchen actually nearly went up.

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Took Morning Prayer. When waiting at the lectern to conduct morning prayer I noticed the bell had not been rung so before I started I went to the back of the Chapel to see why the boys were not ringing the bell, they just looked at me and said nothing so I just grabbed the rope and rang it myself, the clapper fell out and the boys just ran into Chapel sniggering sitting innocently if nothing had happened. Either the boys had noticed the rope lose and waited for me to ring it so that it looked like I had broken it or whether they had rigged it up for me.

So had to explain to the headmaster that I had pulled the clapper out of the bell to the boys amusement.

Today must prepare for a meeting on Sunday about re-arranging the Morning and Evening services during the weekday. My Sinhala is still not strong and my Tamil, well I just do not even know the meaning of the word Tamil. Would not know where to start with the language.

Must try and get some help in conducting the services in Sinhala and Tamil. The Headmaster tries to help me a little in Sinhala but as very little time, and he does not really know Tamil.

Yesterday we also had a meeting to discuss extra tuition for students who want help with their English. This will now be planned and discussed later when arranged.

I seem to be concerned with the Children and their behaviour with each other in been Tamil or Sinhala. There never seems to be any real problem in my eyes of the students having problems with their different religions, but when it comes to Sinhala and Tamil they seem to be some fiction now again and it in some cases been serious.

But religion is so different between the students they do not seem to have problem with that. Even the village of Gurutalawa just outside of the College gates which is a Muslim Village respect the College very much even I get respected, the Village respect me so much even as a Christian and even offer me coffee and we have good chats. They are good people. Even the Children if they are out in their Muslim School grounds which is the main building in the village they wave to me or even come out and talk to me.

So opinion of religion here is not really a concern, it is seems to be down to whether you are Sinhala or Tamil.