

# MMI London Moves!

The Corporate Newsletter of the MMI Group  
Issue No. 01/05

# explore





## From the Editor

In line with the slogan for this year's National Day Parade, "The Future is Ours to Make", the Modern Montessori International Group is certainly taking a huge step forward in shaping our future.

For starters, the inked letters of

agreement between MMI and Sri Lanka's Ceylinco Group have finally been exchanged to much fanfare and media coverage (see article and reports below).

Thailand's MMI Pre-School has also officially opened. This is in addition

to our two new centres that have recently opened in Singapore.

For more updates and developments, check out the upcoming issues of **EXPLORE!**



## A Done Deal!



▲ Handshake of Success: Dr. Kotelawala and Mr. Chandroo (centre) look forward to a fruitful partnership.

Press members from nine television stations and 25 newspapers gathered in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on April 20, 2005, to witness the historical exchange of joint venture agreements between local commercial giant Ceylinco Consolidated and Singapore's Montessori leader, the MMI Group.

Representing Ceylinco is Honorary Chairman Deshamanya Dr. Lalith Kotelawala, appointed Consul General for the Republic of Singapore in Sri Lanka, and representing MMI is Group Chairman/CEO Mr. T. Chandroo.

Here are some extracts from two local newspapers – **Sunday Observer** and the **Daily News**:

**DEPUTY CHAIRMAN** of the Ceylinco Education Group Jagath Alwis, under whose purview this company will function, said that the launch of Ceylinco Modern Montessori Ltd completes Ceylinco's presence in the Sri Lanka's education sphere.

"We have been actively engaged in primary to post-graduate education for quite a while. This launch completes the cycle."

Chairman/CEO Modern Montessori International Mr. T. Chandroo said he was proud to welcome

Sri Lanka to a growing number of countries in which the Company has branches. "Our aim is to offer affordable and quality education on par with international standards", he added.

**Sunday Observer**

Sri Lanka's English newspaper with the largest circulation

**CEYLINCO CONSOLIDATED** tied up with Modern Montessori International UK to launch their latest company, Ceylinco Modern Montessori Ltd last week to provide early childhood education at an international level.

Chairman Ceylinco Consolidated Dr. Lalith Kotelawala said that this tie up was yet another milestone in the history of their group as they diversi-

fied into an unexplored area, early childhood education. "The greatest gift for a child is education," he said.

Ceylinco Modern Montessori Ltd hopes to open around 20 schools in Colombo and in the main cities by the end of October.

"Thirty teachers would be initially trained from June under foreign teachers," said Deputy Chairman

Ceylinco Education Group, Jagath Alwis. Day care centers too would be set up.

Chairman Modern Montessori International Chain, T. Chandroo said that Sri Lanka is a land of opportunity and this was the main reason for them to launch this concept in Sri Lanka.

**Daily News**

The daily English daily with the largest circulation in Sri Lanka



# MMI Takes Thailand

On May 2, the MMI Group and Thailand's Horizon Resort Group unveiled the masterpiece of their first partnership - the Modern Montessori International (Thailand) Pre-School.

Located in the heart of Sukhumvit, Bangkok's prime shopping and entertainment district, the double-storey, 1,900-m<sup>2</sup> campus is fully furnished with the following facilities:

- Large air-conditioned classrooms with the capacity to accommodate 140 students
- Library providing a full range of up-to-date resource materials
- Computer room with e-mail and Internet access
- AV room with high-tech multimedia equipment
- Swimming pool, indoor and outdoor gym, garden and music room for leisure purposes

In addition, the school has an infirmary should the children fall sick, a kitchen where meals are prepared, and an administration office.

Here is a peek into the spanking new MMI (Thailand) Pre-School, which will be in operation by July 2006.

### Modern Montessori International Pre-School (Thailand)

14 Soi 34 Sukhumvit Road  
Bangkok 10110, Thailand  
Tel: 66-2-665 6215  
Fax: 66-2-665 6216  
E-mail: [mmi@mmi-thailand.com](mailto:mmi@mmi-thailand.com)





## We Are Open!

MMI Singapore proudly announces the grand opening of two more Montessori pre-school centres at Robinson and Alexandra.

### MMI @ Robinson

14 Robinson Road #05-01  
Far East Finance Building  
Singapore 048545  
Tel: 6222 1393  
Fax: 6224 6297



### MMI @ PSA

460 Alexandra Road  
#03-02 PSA Building  
Singapore 048545  
Tel: 6272 7618  
Fax: 6272 7274





# Welcome Onboard!

On February 14 – yes, Valentine's Day – MMI Corporate HQ officially appoints Mr. Simon Tay as the Personal Manager to the Chairman/CEO of the company, Mr. T. Chandroo.

Here is EXPLORE's short interview with the 'Man With A Plan, the 'New Kid On The Block'.

### **Please tell us more about yourself.**

I am 46-years-old and married with two children. I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries & Administrators (ICSA). This is a professional qualification with a designatory title of ACIS (Academic Computing & Information Services). I had worked in various organisations as Finance Manager and in others as Accountant. I have been in the management position for over 22 years – 7 of which were in strategic (top) management.

### **How is it like working with the Chairman/CEO?**

My appointment is Personal Manager to Chairman/CEO. Some mistook me for the Personnel Manager of MMI.

Our Company has a bold Mission Statement as well as endearing Core Values that spell 'B-NICE'. Working with Mr Chandroo is a huge challenge, and keeping up with his vision of expansion is a tough job. I am also entrusted with the reviewing of our International Businesses in Malaysia,

Thailand, India, Sri Lanka and many more countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

I am privileged to be here at MMI and in the Chairman's Office. I am learning from him every day despite my experience. My mind has to be tuned to his as an enterprising entrepreneur and not just another manager in his charge.

### **What do you think can be your greatest contribution to the MMI Group?**

Looking from a personal perspective, I see a dynamic organisation that is changing every day. Change is important to any organisation; management and staff need to work together to fulfill our Mission Statement.

With continual support from our staff, I hope to see our Company listed on the SGX (Singapore Exchange) within the next five years.

### **Any parting words?**

Thank You.



“Looking from a personal perspective, I see a dynamic organisation that is changing every day.”

## ISO Renewal



Certificate Reg. No.: QAIC/SG-042

The result of our inter-departmental effort is a brand new corporate-wide Standard Operation Procedure.

In 2002, the MMI Group became the first ever Montessori institution worldwide to be awarded the prestigious ISO 9001:2000. Sound management has always been the hallmark of our company and the ISO certification is the ultimate testimonial for that. As part of the certification's requirement, the ISO accreditation was due for renewal this earlier this year.

To prepare for the ISO renewal audit, all departments – except for the Accounts Department, as they are following a separate system – worked together to review and consolidate all management practices. The result is a brand new corporate-wide Standard Operation Procedure, which includes work instructions in the following

areas: Human Resource managements, Purchasing and Inventory, General Administration, Marketing, Training Centre and Pre-school Centres.

We appointed a new ISO certification company this year in view of extending the certification coverage to our counterparts in the Asia-Pacific region. The audit was carried out over two days from March 21 - 22, 2005. The auditor reviewed all documents and also interviewed staff members in our Corporate Headquarters as well as in our Kee Sun and Kovan branches. At the end of the day, we fulfilled all requirements and successfully retained our ISO certification.

By Steven Kho  
Marketing Manager  
BBA (Hons), NUS



# Career Fair 2005

3rd – 6th March 2005, Suntec City Halls 601/602 Booth 891

Job seekers and fresh school leavers turned out in full force at the annual Career Fair organised by HQ Link. As always, the dynamic MMI team was present to provide expert and professional advice for prospective students looking for a career in early childhood education as well as parents interested in enrolling their young children in our various pre-school centres.

The entire event proved to be very fruitful, indeed, as a good number of students decided to take up our Montessori and Pre-School Teaching courses – another assurance of the premium quality of service and education we provide.



## We'll Be There!

Singapore will be throwing a big birthday bash this coming August 9 to commemorate her 40th year of independence. Not only is this a milestone in the Republic's history, it also marks Mr. Lee Hsien Loong's inaugural National Day as the Prime Minister of Singapore.

The highly anticipated National Day Parade (NDP) 2005 will, once again, emanate from the Padang at the historical City Hall after a four-year hiatus for what promises to be the most memorable showcase of pride and pageantry yet.

This year, MMI has been chosen, after a stringent selection process, by the Executive Council of NDP 2005 to participate in the extravaganza. It is a great honor and privilege for us, especially, as we will be the only private business organisation to be represented by a parade contingent – a solid testament to our achievement and contribution over the years.

# Kidz Connection Exhibition

17th – 20th March 2005, Singapore Expo Hall 5



▲ A Kodak moment for Firdaus (HQ) & Chiu Hsia (West Coast).

A fortnight later, MMI was back on the scene when we returned to Singapore Expo after last November's Asian Children Festival to participate in Unusual Production's Kidz Connection Exhibition.

Over a four-day period, which coincided with the March school holidays and the popular 'Disney On Ice – Princess Classics' performances in Hall 2, a total of 200 people visited our designated booth and some 1000 brochures were distributed.



## On The Calendar...





## DESTINATION africa!

In January, Kindergarten 1 and 2 students from MMI Kovan participated in the 'Passport to Nigeria' project as part of their Term 1 curriculum, which is exploring the continent of Africa.

The project involved setting up a learning corner in the centre's Drama Room and getting the kindergarteners involved in airport procedures and tour guidance. Nursery 1 and 2 children also joined in the fun by playing travelling passengers and tourists.



Boarding pass, please.

Let's do the Fanga!  
(Nigerian Dance of Welcome)



## DOWNTOWN CHINATOWN

Over the two-day Chinese New Year period in February, some 75 kids from MMI Kovan visited Chinatown as part of a heritage trip organised by the centre. Accompanied by their teachers, the children went sightseeing and basically partook in the 'gong xi fa cai' spirit.

Peace & Prosperity: Kovan teachers Ding Ni, Yoges and Fatema posing with their students on the famous Garden Bridge.



## Claymore's Excursion (March 18, 2005)

“ Our trip to the Animal Resort (at Seletar Farmway) was fabulous!

We had a chance to see many different varieties of farm animals like goats, horses, pond life and birds of different sizes; hens, roosters and big ostriches, as well as their eggs and chicks.

We enjoyed feeding the fish, swans and turtles at the pond.”

— Helen Staples, Teacher.

### Info Tidbit

The Animal Resort is made up of the following sectors:

- Boarding (Kennelling)
- Import/Export/Transshipment
- Dog Training
- Educational Tours
- Grooming/Retail
- Event Venue



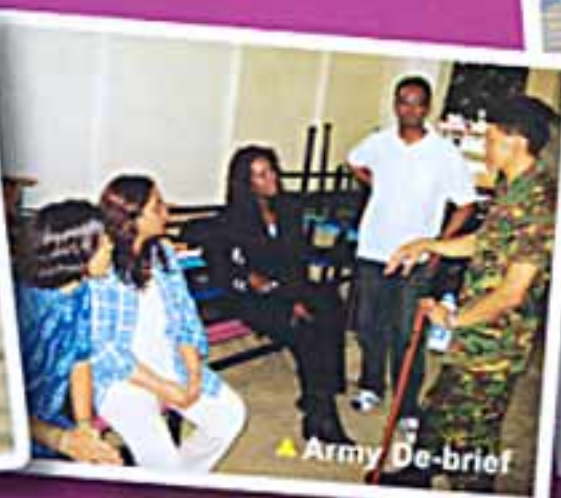


# National Day Parade Rehearsal 1 (April 2, 2005)

In a show of support and display of national patriotism, 100 spirited MMI staff as well as student and even parent volunteers convened at River Valley High for their first NDP rehearsal.

Dressed (mostly) in casual PT attire, the contingent was taught static drill in addition to basic military commands like 'sedia' (stand at attention) and 'senang diri' (stand at ease) by SAF personnel specially engaged for the weekly training.

Below are some 'outtakes' from Rehearsal 1.



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**A**s the old proverb says, "Time flies like an arrow". Indeed, for the curtains have finally closed on the year 2004 – and what a great, eventful year it has been.

Looking back on the past 12 months, the Modern Montessori International (MMI) Group has gone from strength to strength – proudly planting our flag in foreign soils such as sunny Thailand and exotic India.

Our introductory enrichment programme *All The World's A Stage*, a workshop-oriented certificate course in creative speech and drama developed and conducted by resident lecturer Mr. Dean Lundquist (M.A., Theatre Arts), has successfully taken off. The pioneering batch of S&D students graduated in December 2004.

### *Resolutions For 2005*

Looking ahead into the year 2005, several new and exciting multi-million-dollar joint ventures are already in the pipeline for the ever-expanding MMI Group. Among them are state-of-the-art teacher-training institutes and Montessori pre-school centres that will be based primarily in prominent Asia-Pacific countries like Indonesia, China, Australia and New Zealand.

In addition, MMI Singapore also launched the part-time Specialist Certificate In Phonics Methodology & International Phonetics (S.C.P.I.) programme in January and the response thus far has been encouraging.

## MMI LONDON'S NEW LOCATION

**T**he premises of MMI Group's Principal Office in London, U.K., has been relocated from City House on Bow Road to the new two-storey, red-bricked building – the MMI House – along Micham Lane in Streatham, London.

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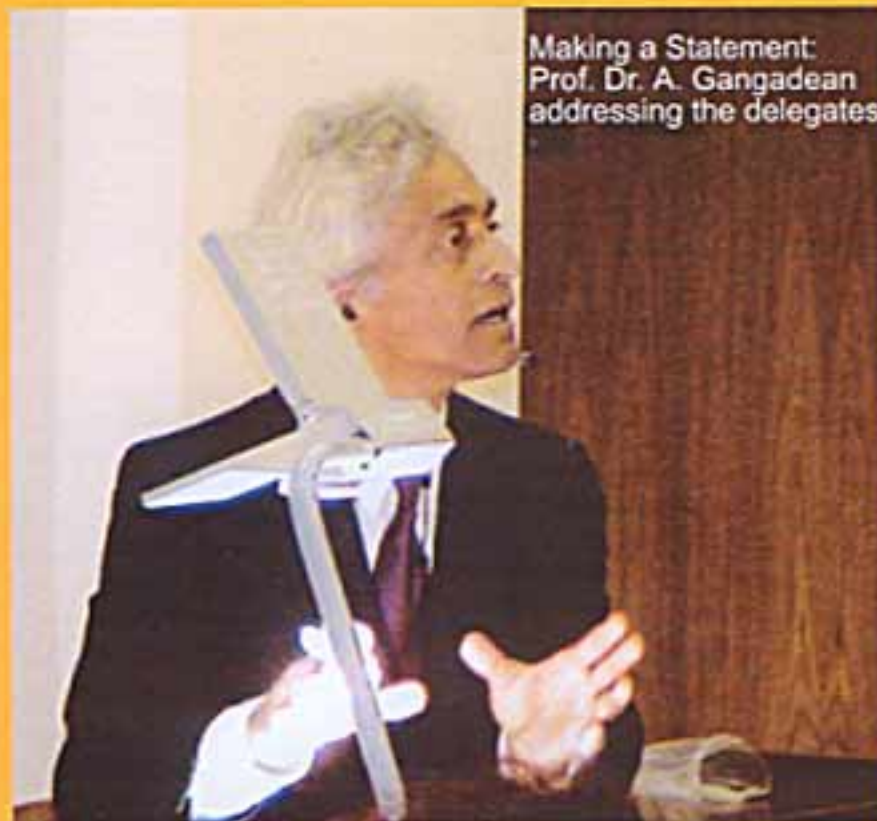
Behind the Bench: The Executive Committee at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members.



**M**ontessori academics, educators and policy makers convened in Prague, Czechoslovakia, for the Declaration of Prague, which is intended to be the basis for national and European initiatives, supporting the rights of children and young people as well as establishing appropriate living and learning conditions for them.



Photo-Op: MMI Singapore's Ms. Sheila Durgude (right) posing with MMI London's Ms. Inger Celion



Making a Statement:  
Prof. Dr. A. Gangadean  
addressing the delegates

The following principles of the Prague Declaration should form the basis and reference point for all educational actions and thinking:

1. Each child and young person has the right to learn in an atmosphere of self-initiated activity and freedom according to his or her stage of development.
2. Each child and young person has the right to fulfill his/her full learning potential by learning autonomously according to his/her phase of development.
3. Each child and young person has the right learn holistically with a constant and consistent interaction between physical and mental activities.
4. Facilitating children and young people in their learning must involve respecting their dignity. Adults are their learning partners.
5. Each adult who is involved education should make a commitment to know and respect the UN Convention for Children's Rights.



# MMI SINGAPORE'S NEW FRANCHISEES



## **Bukit Merah (Childcare Centre)**

167 Jalan Bukit Merah  
#04-15C Singapore 150167  
Tel: 6278 8482 Fax: 6278 8623



## **Pasir Ris (Childcare Centre)**

515 Elias Road  
Singapore 519923  
Tel: 6583 5010 Fax: 6582 5598





## CLASS OF 2004

SPEECH AND DRAMA STUDENTS GRADUATE AND  
THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE WORKSHOP IS BORN

**I**n late December 2004, the initial class of students completed *All the World's A Stage*, MMI's new certificate course in speech & drama. Graduates have learned a great deal about speech and drama while also having a lot of fun. The course helps teachers develop strategies for building better speech and provides them with the tools to use dramatic art in the classroom.

Many students have experienced first-hand increases in their own self-confidence and creativity while making many new friends. As a result of the course's success, MMI has decided to form the MMI Children's Theatre Workshop (CTW). The group will meet weekly to rehearse pieces of children's theatre that will then be performed at various venues around Singapore. It will be comprised of course graduates and current students.

The aims of the workshop are twofold: to introduce children to dramatic art and to give MMI students and graduates the opportunity to work closely with children and apply what they have learned in the course. Look for an upcoming performance by the Children's Theatre Workshop – you won't want to miss it.

As part of *All The World's A Stage*, students take part in performing an original piece of drama. Additionally, students partake in creating elements of dramatic art such as puppets and puppet shows, mask making, costume design, group playwriting and improvisation.



By Dean Lundquist  
S&D Lecturer  
(M.A., Theatre Arts)



Say Cheese: Dean (centre) with members of the graduating class



Whizzes of Arts: S&D students flaunting their creativity



# WORKSHOPS

## BRAIN GYM WORKSHOP (22 – 24 NOVEMBER, 2004)

A total of 38 full-time and part-time teachers from MMI's various kindergartens and childcare centres in Claymore, Kee Sun, Kovan, West Coast and Woodlands participated in the Brain Gym Workshop conducted at the Orchard Towers Corporate Headquarters. The three-day teacher seminar was conducted by Academic Director Mr. Bob Durgude.



## MONTESSORI WORKSHOP (6 – 18 DECEMBER, 2004)

Similarly, 22 students pursuing the Diploma in Montessori Method of Education via the external mode of learning also gathered at Orchard Towers to attend the 11-day workshop, where they were taught the practical aspects of the course.



## PHONICS WORKSHOP (18 DECEMBER, 2004)

Venue: Modern Montessori International (Thailand)  
14, Soi 34, Sukhumvit Road,  
Klongton, Klongtoey,  
Bangkok 10110, Thailand.

## EXHIBITIONS



HQ's Steven presenting our continents set to the children



**M**MI Singapore recently made its presence felt at two major exhibitions organised by the National Library Board and the Media Development Authority. Hundreds visited our booth, inquiring about our pre-school and teacher-training courses as well as purchasing our educational materials such as the phonics set, the phonetic drill cards and the continents set.



FAMILY FESTIVAL (26 – 28 NOVEMBER, 2004) VENUE: SUNTEC SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE HALL 402/403

ASIAN CHILDREN FESTIVAL (18 – 21 NOVEMBER, 2004) VENUE: SINGAPORE EXPO HALL 6



For a Good Cause: MMI representatives Steven (2nd from left), Chelvi, Alan and Dean



**O**n October 15, 2004, MMI's Head of Academic Department, Chelvi Rajahkan and lecturer Dean Lundquist were invited as guest speakers at Pioneer Junior College's Career Day. Representatives from the medical profession, social services, physical therapy, the media as well as MMI were on hand to make presentations about their respective careers. Dean delivered a speech encouraging students to consider teaching as a career path. And both Dean and Chelvi fielded questions about teaching from the audience as part of a career panel.

## ANNUAL MMI GRADUATION CONCERT

**A** day later, on Saturday, 16 October at Singapore Power, parents, teachers and family members were treated to the Annual MMI Graduation Concert. Academic Director Mr. Bob Durgude presented kindergarteners with certificates of graduation as they readied themselves for the transition to primary school.

Following the graduation ceremony, children from all of MMI Singapore's centres commemorated the event with song and dance. Costumed children of all ages and talents performed in teacher-choreographed musical numbers. The performances reflected the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural diversity that is the pride of Singaporean society.





**I**t was all glitz 'n' glamour at the York Hotel on the *Night of The Superstars* as all of MMI Singapore's hardworking staff – along with some V.I.P.s and dignitaries who graced the occasion – took a well-deserved break from their daily duties to indulge themselves in an evening-ful of festivities.



**Send your feedback & contributions to:**

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## MMI To Participate In Singapore's 40th National Day Parade!

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