



FOMSO Affiliate Visit to Persatuan Ceylon Pahang (PCP) cum Deepavali Get-together organised by JCS Kuantan 20-11-2011

On the 20th November 2011, FOMSO members comprising Deputy President Mr Gnanarajah, Vice President Mr Satgunarajah, Vice President Mr Logarajah, Chairman - Sports Bureau Mr Rasanayagam, Hon Treasurer Mr Dhanesh, myself - Networking Chairman, my wife Ms Thana, my daughters Ms Shalini, Ms Kharishma, Ms Vishaini and a Board Member of JCS - Ms K Parimala visited our affiliate in Kuantan. President Dato S. Kulasegaran, could not join us as he was in the Toronto - Canada, but he was kind enough to send his driver Mr Kamal to drive us to Kuantan.

We were invited by the Chairman of JCS Kuantan District - Mr R Y Hunt to join their Deepavali get together organised by JCS Kuantan District. Though this event was organised by JCS Kuantan, the event was held at the PCP building which is their own premises, and most if not all members of JCS are members of PCP as well. The ground floor of the building

is rented out and they use the first floor for their activities and as meeting venue. It appears to be recently renovated, very spacious, well equipped and has all the facilities required by an association/organization.



Since the event in Kuantan was scheduled to be held from 4.00 pm to 8.00 pm, we decided to leave early and drop by at Maran Temple (Sri Marathandavar Temple, Kuantan). We left Kuala Lumpur at around 10.00 am and arrived there close to 1.00 pm. We had a peaceful prayer, as the temple was not at all crowded as we expected it to be, being a Sunday.



The weather was breezy and cool. Soon after the short prayers, we adjourned for Lunch offered by the temple. It was nice to note that they are so organised now as compared to how it used to be in the good old days. They no longer charge for meals (meal coupons sale has been done away), however they have a collection box, for those who wish to contribute can do so by donating any amount they are comfortable with.

We had a wonderful vegetarian lunch; they even had payasam (South Indian Kheer) for dessert, needless to say how filled up we were!. After lunch we walked around the temple a bit (for digestion!), took some photos and continued our journey to Kuantan, thanks to Kamal.

We arrived in Kuantan at around 3.30 pm and met up with other JCS members from KL at the Shahzan Inn Hotel. All of us assembled at the Hotel and went together to the PCP building. Upon our arrival, we were welcomed by JCS District Chairman Mr Hunt and PCP Deputy President Dato Dr K Paramanathan and their committee members

All of us were invited to have tea and some light snacks with them and shortly after this the official event began at around 4.30 pm.

Chairman of PCP Mr Hunt began with his welcome address followed by JCS President Mr Satgunarajah, Deputy President of FOMSO Mr A Gnanarajah and JCS District Secretary Mrs Sakunthala Sundram.



In the welcome address, Mr. Hunt requested all of us to rise and observe a minute of silence for Mr Sandra Segaran who departed recently (brother of Dr S Sandra Prakash - President of PCP). President Dr S Sandra Prakash was not present at the event as he had to prepare for the daily evening prayers for his brother, he sent his apology through his Deputy Dato Dr Param.



In Mr. Gnanarajah's speech, he spoke extensively about FOMSO's activities and how it was busy in the last two years assisting displaced people in Sri Lanka. He also mentioned, that FOMSO managed to raise close to RM 1.1 million in cash and kind for humanitarian aid to be provided for the displaced people. He mentioned how the Sri Lankan High Commission gave their fullest support in facilitating and assisting FOMSO to carry out its humanitarian works in Sri Lanka. He specially thanked the then High Commissioner Dr DD Ranasinghe and His Deputy Major General Udaya Perera who were instrumental in assisting us in all the 6 Humanitarian trips. He also touched on the assistance provided for the refugees from Sri Lanka who are



here in Malaysia. At this juncture he invited Mr Logarajah as he is the task force Chairman - Humanitarian Aid. Mr Logarajah gave a detailed explanation on how and what has been done so far and currently being done. He also touched on how he as the President of Kalavirthy Sangam has used his Sangam's building located in Jalan Imbi, KL to house the refugees who arrived from time to time and sometimes in large numbers.



The Deputy President of PCP Dato Dr Param, raised a question to Mr Gnanarajah, asking why has the Sri Lankan Government decided to charge for the visas and requested if special privileges be extended to descendants of those who came from Sri Lanka to Malaysia in the early days. Mr. Gnana replied, the visa charges are bare minimal compared to what India is charging and continued to say that he too only came to know about it a day ago when he saw it in the news papers. He added by saying, that he will bring up this matter to the Sri Lankan High Commission and find out more in detail.

In Mrs Sundram's speech, which was short and sweet, she was full of praises of her Chairman Mr Hunt. She said that the Chairman is extremely supportive in all matters. She went on to say, that he never says "No" to any request made by her or the committee members for the benefit of the members. And if funds are required to carry out a certain project or event, he will just ask how much and he will reach out to his pocket to take the cash and handover! She said it so naturally, which got everyone laughing.



Soon as this official part was over, the entertainment and the games began. Three cultural dance performances were performed by Ms Sureka Sudesan from Leela Suria Dance Academy, followed by two games 1) Passing the box game and 2) Couples game followed by song performances by their own members.



Passing the box game was broken up to two parts, first part was for the women and the second part was for the men (everyone present were allowed to participate). A box wrapped with several layers with instructions in each layer is passed around with music being played. When the music stops, whoever is holding the box has to follow the instruction when the layer is torn open, so they either get a forfeit or a runners up gift (3 runners up). They had about six rounds with the women and similar with the men. The pleasant thing was all the participants were extremely sporting. When it is their turn for a forfeit, they were given a choice to either sing or dance or do whatever they are pleased to do. Most of the Kuantan members chose to sing! Trust me, they are all good singers, without feeling shy considering the fact they are all senior members, they walked up to the front and sang, and they sang the full song!, all old Tamil songs which brought us all back to memory lane. Three members from Kuala Lumpur got the forfeit 1) Mr Rasanayagam - who chose to speak about his sports bureau. 2) Ms Parimala - who chose to



speak about her role in JCS as a board member and the youngest member of FOMSO Mr Dhanesh (he is single as well) - he chose to dance. He is a good dancer as well (have a look at the picture below). And this game came to an end.



Now the couple's game:-

Five senior couples were chosen (this game was meant only for JCS Kuantan Senior District members). As you can see in the picture, they were seated in a row facing their spouses. A sheet of paper with questionnaires about their spouses was given to the men, they had to write down the answers



on the questionnaire and return it to the MC. The MC will then cross check the answers provided by the husbands with the spouses one by one. It was really fun as some of them who have been married for 35 to 40 over years, could not remember what they got each



other for their first wedding anniversary. The best part of it all is, their willingness to participate with a smile in their faces, they were all so very sporting and completed the game well. I am sure this game would have brought the participants and all present the nostalgic feelings. (be prepared if you are called in to participate in a couples game!)



The song performances continued after the games, the senior members sang solo and melodiously, it was a moment of joyous occasion to which all present gave a thundering round of applause.

Soon after the song performances were over, Mr Gnanarajah wanted to make an announcement. He mentioned that since this is FOMSO's first visit since its inception, we wanted to donate RM 1000.00 to PCP to carry out their noble activities.

He gave the donation to Dato Dr Param, it was well received by them. The fund for this donation was raised amongst a few EXCO members as a gesture of goodwill.



Then came the prize giving time, they had gifts for all the participants. They had special prize giving session for high scorers (for children of members). Soon as this was over, the event ended at around 8.15 pm. We were invited to have dinner with them at their premises. They catered the food and the selection was good, they had a fine selection of typical Sri Lankan food, we had dinner whilst mingling around with their members. This is when I had a chance to meet one of Mr Gnanarajah's sister and his brother in law. This is the second time I am meeting his family members, on an affiliate visit, the first being in down South, Muar - Johor, where I met one of his sisters as well. We left Kuantan close to 9.00 pm arriving in Kuala Lumpur at around 11.30 pm.



It was a wonderful trip, though tiring since we began our journey fairly early, but it was so nice having met our affiliate members. They too were extremely pleased in having us with them and they have requested us to make this a yearly affair.

We took two group photo's to accommodate all present.

