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## RESTROOM ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE) NEWSLETTER – May 2004



Attend the WORLD TOILET SUMMIT 2004 from 17 to 19 November 2004

The 4<sup>th</sup> World Toilet Summit will be held in Beijing, China. The topics include *A global perspective on the relationship between Toilets and quality of life; world class tourism and toilets; social and economic returns in investments for Toilets; catering to the diversity of culture – toilets for different cultures etc.* International speakers on Tourism, Design, Maintenance and Environmental Sanitation will share their views on these and more. For more information, please visit [www.worldtoilet.org](http://www.worldtoilet.org)

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### Graduation of Si Ling Primary School's Toilet Ambassadors

A wonderful 'graduation' was in store Si Ling's Toilet Ambassadors, being the official opening of the new school campus at Woodlands Avenue 1. For the past 10 weeks before 27 May 2004, the students from Primary 5 decorated the school's 16 toilets with themes like Sunflowers, Harmony, Cows, Space, Sea etc. This was the result of inculcating graciousness, social responsibility and proper toilet hygiene among the staff and students.



During the unveiling of the new school campus, Mr. Hawazi Daipi - Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education & Ministry of Manpower - on 27 May 2004, took a guided tour in one of the toilets and gave out the best decorated Happy Toilet award.



The Toilet Ambassadors also inspired other schools students from all levels to adopt a toilet theme for their school subjects. These subjects included:

- English – write essays about the proper use of toilets to demonstrate the school's core values
- Math – draw graphs based on the results of survey such as the frequency of usage of the school toilets
- Science – explain what are the functions of the toilet bowl
- Social Studies – highlight the differences in toilet culture
- Arts – paint / draw and use recycled materials to decorate the toilets
- Music – compose toilet songs\* based on familiar tunes

Through all these, the students have acquired knowledge and exposure to appreciate the need to keep toilets clean after use, and to adopt good toilet hygiene habits. With help from supporters / sponsors like Ministry of Education, North West CDC, Sinn Singapore (Waterless Urinal) and Reckitt Benckiser (Harpic), the Happy Toilets in Si Ling indeed brought smiles to those who helped.



The celebration also saw 1,400 students from Primary One to Primary Six putting up various performances around the theme 'In Harmony'.

## News Bites

### *Office loo source of sickness*

Australia - If you are sick of work, the office may be to blame. Research shows the workplace could be a significant source of illness, with dodgy canteens, a lack of handwashing and "tight buildings" contributing.

The Food Safety Information Council says more than 30 per cent of Australian men do not wash their hands after going to the toilet, compared with 8 per cent of women.

Of those who wash their hands, 80 per cent of women and 93 per cent of men do not wash them properly.

Food safety council statistics show that one in four cases of food poisoning can be traced to work sources, including canteens.

And experts say open-plan offices and tight use of building space mean that what's produced in the building, stays in the building exposing workers to a range of nasty bugs.



In the handwashing stakes Australians fare better than the British, with half of men and a quarter of women in the UK failing to wash their hands after using the toilet.

Foodlink in the UK says bacteria such as e-coli can exist in washrooms for up to eight days, longer than the average stomach upset. And simply flushing the loo distributes bacteria into the air and into workers' lungs, similar to the effect of a sneeze.

Curtin University public health expert Dr Vijay Jayasena said many bugs picked up in toilets did not make people sick immediately but could take weeks or longer to affect their health.

An Australian survey had shown bathroom door handles were a haven for dangerous bugs, some of which could survive for months.

"People who wash their hands after using the toilet still have a very high chance of contamination from the door handle," he said. "This would not be the case if everyone washed their hands."

The chance of contamination in the workplace was high because of time pressures. "Everyone is in a hurry," he said. "But it is a serious issue that needs to be taken much more seriously than it is." Source: The Sunday Times. This report appears on NEWS.com.au. By Fiona Adolph May 23, 2004

### *Talking toilet inventor flushed with success*

Germany - A German inventor who developed a gadget that berates men if they try to use the toilet standing up, has sold more than 1.6 million devices, his business manager says.



German women fed up with a man with a poor aim can turn to the ghost-shaped gadget which lurks under the toilet rim, and if the seat is lifted, declares in a stern female tone: "Hello, what are you up to then? Put the seat back down right away, you are definitely not to pee standing up... you will make a right mess".

Alex Benkhardt, 46, invented the "WC Ghost" and its creators are in negotiations to market it in Britain, Canada and Italy. Source: Reuters

### *NVPC Signature Events 2004*



The Non-Profit World has never seen a more exciting time than 2004 with red-hot debates in the public, private and people sectors on fundraising, informed giving, and volunteerism.

The National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) presents two signature events that moves volunteerism and philanthropy forward to the next level.

#### 1) The National Volunteerism & Philanthropy Awards

New Awards categories are up for grabs - Nominations now open! The National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) is introducing a new set of Awards to replace the prestigious National Volunteerism Awards introduced in 2001. The new Awards goes beyond best practices in volunteer management to include best practices in philanthropy.

The pinnacle Awards will be presented by President SR Nathan at the Istana

on 23 Nov 2004. The five new award categories are Corporate Citizen, Non-Profit Organisation, New Non-Profit Initiative, Innovative Fundraising Initiative and Special Recognition

Nominations close 22 July 2004.

## 2) The National Volunteer & Philanthropy Conference

The Conference of the Year for fundraisers, volunteer hosting organisations, donors and corporate givers!



NVPC's fourth annual conference turns the spotlight on philanthropic giving in Singapore. The two-day conference looks at changing attitudes towards giving from the perspectives of corporates, foundations and grant makers, philanthropists and the man on the street. 'Giving' issues that matter will also be examined : from informed giving to best practices in strategic, sustained and structured giving, to corporate giving, and professional and innovative fundraising practices.

Register by 30 June for an Early Bird Discount. If you're from a non-profit organisation, apply for the Non-profit sector Training Grant and receive a 70% reimbursement.

You can also contact NVPC at tel : 63250965, fax: 62210625 or visit [www.nvpc.org.sg](http://www.nvpc.org.sg)

## Flushing MAD Day



Our youth makes a difference by teaming up to wash their schools' toilets. Planned by teams of youths from Kuo Chuan Presbyterian High School and Tanjong Katong Girls School, some 2000 youths will be invited for this special project that aims to raise funds for youth development work. RAS is a strategic partner.

**HEARTWARE**  
volunteer  
Joining hands  
Gathering hearts  
Promoting hope

**ALL PROCEEDS GO TO:**

- Developing youth leadership skills and TTS persons in planning and executing community service projects
- Developing future Community Safety and Security through the involvement of youths in addressing drug abuse issues
- Making a Difference (MAD) Movement to collect uniforms, books and school supplies for underprivileged children
- Building a residential Youth Hub to help provide a safe haven for more than 200 disadvantaged youths from local schools

**WHAT CAN I LEARN AND DEVELOP?**

- Opportunities to be involved in online CSP project with other youths from various schools
- Opportunities to be involved in a range of part-time business opportunities during holidays with community partners such as RAS, SBS, DSS, etc.
- Opportunities for outstanding youths to be nominated and selected to represent the school in various national and international competitions

**NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_**

Total amount collected: \$18

Not only to wash the toilet, but also to make a difference

For Gaudi's bags  
The smiling drivers  
Just great education and achievement

... it is not just the heart, it is not just the mind ...

Some of the highlights of this event are:

- Youths will get a chance to work with motivators from various tertiary institutions who will guide and mentor them.
- Unique experience for volunteers as they will not only get to do flag day but also learn how to clean restrooms.



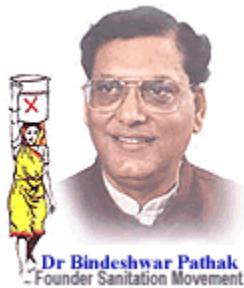
- Volunteers having gone through service-learning demonstrations will thank donors sincerely for Making A Difference (M.A.D.). In this way the public will be shown that their donations are valuable and have the ability to impact the community.

Heartware Network is a charitable Youth Organisation that is tax-exempt under National Youth Council's Central Youth Fund. Their mission

is to promote active citizenry by networking both individuals and organisations to be involved in meaningful community service out of their hearts' passion. They emphasise the importance of building social "heartware" through community collaboration.

## **Spotlight on World Toilet Organisation member – Sulabh International**

### *Introduction*



The Sulabh International Social Service Organisation founded by Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak in the year 1970 in India. It is the largest nationally and internationally recognised pan-India social service outfit with 35,000 volunteers on the rolls who work to promote human rights, environmental sanitation, health and hygiene, non-conventional sources of energy, waste management and social reforms through education, training and awareness campaign.

### *Human Rights through Toilets*

Sulabh International Social Service Organisation is a leading non-governmental organisation which takes up liberation of scavengers by conversion of dry/bucket privies into Sulabh Shauchalaya and training and rehabilitation of liberated scavengers and their wards.



Sulabh organises programmes to train them in various vocations such as driving, mechanics, tailoring, typing, computer, cane work, carpentry, leather work, masons etc. they are also educated on health, sanitation and personal hygiene. Sulabh established the training institutes exclusively for scavengers at Patna and Mahavir Enclave, New Delhi. It has also established such an institute at

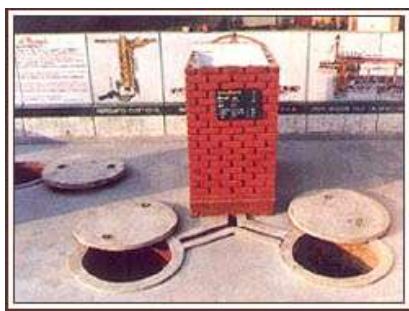
Jambol Distt., Thane, in collaboration with the State government and is running it successfully.

Through 'social upgrading' of the people in the lowest caste, the liberation of scavengers and their rehabilitation in other professions is not enough; no less important is the upgrading of their social status so that they can be absorbed into

the mainstream of the society. Towards that end, Sulabh has persuaded a large number of eminent persons including judges, politicians, ministers, journalists and social workers to "socially adopt" one scavenger family each and help them to get jobs and other benefits permissible under the law. The adoptor visits the adoptee (and vice versa) openly so that they can get the social respectability. This programme is getting a very encouraging response.

The Sulabh technology has liberated so far 37,500 scavengers from the demeaning practice of physically cleaning and carrying human excreta. Sulabh has set up more than 3,100 pay-&-use community toilet complexes and about 800,000 Shauchalayas in private houses which together are being used by more than ten million people every day. This novel self-sustaining system has also helped in ending the uncivilized practice of open-air defecation and keeping the urban life clean and livable, creating enormous impact on the environment and life of the people, specially those living in squatter colonies, the houseless and the people on the move or those at places of congregation. Sulabh is also producing and using biogas from human excreta from its 68 plants which is again an innovation in the areas of non-conventional energy.

#### *Liberation through Toilet technology*



It has also developed a scavenging-free two-pit pour flush toilet (Sulabh Shauchalaya); safe and hygienic on-site human waste disposal technology; a new concept of maintenance and construction of pay-&use public toilets, popularly known as Sulabh Complexes with bath, laundry and urinal facilities being used by about ten million people every day and generation of biogas and biofertiliser produced from excreta-based plants, low maintenance waste water treatment plants of medium capacity for institutions and industries.

It has set up an English-medium public school in New Delhi and also a network of centres all over the country to train boys and girls from poor families, specially scavengers, so that they can compete in open job market. Sulabh has thus set up a modern, humane social order based on goodwill and mutual cooperation. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements has recognised Sulabh's cost-effective and appropriate sanitation system as a global 'Urban Best Practice' at the Habitat-II conference held at Istanbul (Turkey), in June, 1996. The Economic and Social Council of United Nations has granted Special Consultative Status to Sulabh in recognition of its outstanding service to mankind.

For more information, please visit <http://www.sulabhinternational.org/>