

CELEBRATION TO MARK 50 YEARS OF SUBUD IN SRI LANKA 27 – 28 December 2007

It was a beautiful day as we flew over the Indian ocean from Singapore. The aircraft was dropping as we came over the stunning landforms of the mythical island of Sri Lanka. Small settlements dotted the folded green of the countryside amid forests, the north disappearing in a blue haze.

Appearances are deceptive, ruefully commented the Sri Lankan businessman sitting next to me, the country has been in a civil war for over a generation. Certainly there seemed to be many armed soldiers and uniformed personnel around the airport and public buildings as I was driven through Colombo. We zigzagged through the humming traffic of the busy asian city, it wasn't long before we turned down the narrow Frankfurt road at the end of which is the impressive new building of the Subud House.



Is this it? I looked around anxiously, at what looked like an ultra modern, glass doored, polished granite floored, bank or embassy. Yes! I spotted the Subud symbol and sign high up on the wall, here we are. I was welcomed in and shown around. Pak Haryono and Ibu Ismana had also arrived and were staying over the road.

The formal opening of the Celebration was scheduled for the evening of the 27th.

The members were gathered in solemn silence as a ceremonial lamp was lit, beginning with the members who had been opened all those years ago. In the main hall we heard reminiscences of those early days and a bit of the history of Subud Sri Lanka from Robert Goonetilleke. We shared a delicious evening meal and had Latihan.



The next morning, still on New Zealand time and unable to sleep, I sat on the open terrace facing the sea and watched the light come. The quiet road below filled, at first with walkers and joggers, then more and more traffic, the trains racketed past with commuters, some of whom were hanging out the doors to catch the fresh breeze. I reflected that the Subud house is marvellously well placed for a business or café, the third floor already being rented to the Sri Lanka jewellery association.

Our festivities continued, members old and young gathered in the main hall to hear an address by Pak Haryono and Ibu Ismana and their daughter Isti, very generously shared their experiences of living and travelling with Bapak in the early days of Subud. They kindly and patiently answered lots of questions from the members, we owe them a debt of love and gratitude for the very long service they have given Subud.

In the evening, and I can't quite remember the order, we had music and singing, led by Barney Wijesinghe, Latihan with some testing, a special birthday cake and song for the group, a brief talk about the next world congress preparations and another fabulous meal. People enjoyed each others company with lots of laughter and this visitor felt very warmly included in the group.

It too soon was time to take leave from new friends, it was a long travel and a short visit but I returned home absolutely restored in mind and spirit. Many thanks and love to Subud Sri Lanka for their warm hospitality.

Renata Peek (Zone 1&2 Representative)

