



ACTIVITY REPORT

1ST April 2010 to 31 March 2011

8th December 2010: Widows Voice Charity Dinner held at the Willingdon Club, Mumbai

The Loomba Foundation hosted a Widows Voice Charity Dinner in Mumbai, which was attended by the Foundation's President, Cherie Blair. The dinner was also attended by Mr. Aditya Puri, CEO of HDFC Bank, Dr. Vijaypat Singhania, Chairman, Raymond Group, Bollywood actresses Poonam Dhillon and Devika Bhojwani, amongst over 200 high profile guests who attended the dinner.

The Loomba Foundation, which is currently educating 100 children of poor widows in Mumbai, unveiled its new initiative to increase the number of the beneficiaries to 1,000. The Foundation is providing education to over 2,000 widows' children throughout India.

The overall amount raised at the dinner was INR 4,000,000

1st November 2010: Diwali Dinner at the Jumeirah Essex House, New York

As the United Nations discussed a proposed Resolution recognising the plight of more than 245 millions widows worldwide, Cherie Blair and the Loomba Foundation hosted their annual Diwali Gala dinner at the Jumeirah Essex House. Guests included Loomba Foundation's Patron Joanna Lumley OBE, International Ambassador Preity Zinta, and humanitarian activist Yoko Ono. The 5th annual Diwali Dinner honoured entertainer Cilla Black.

Mrs. Blair, President of the Loomba Foundation, spoke of the daily struggles of widows worldwide: "Prejudice and abuse against widows takes many forms and is not limited by race, religion, or geography. These women find themselves excluded from society, deprived of property rights, expelled from their own homes and households. They struggle under extreme conditions of poverty and stigma, and find themselves forgotten at best, neglected, abused and exploited at worst."

"Shedding light on the existence of such widespread mistreatment of women must be our top priority," said Mr. Loomba. "We are confident that with more awareness will come resolute action."

Ms. Black has long been a supporter of the rights of widows, particularly being a widow herself. The Loomba Foundation honoured her philanthropic efforts on the evening by presenting her with the Loomba Leadership Award.

"I must say that widowhood is such a solitary experience, that to be among you seems almost like a global support group," said Ms. Black. "It is wonderful to know such a movement exists for the millions of women who lose literally everything--including their rights and self-worth--once their husbands die."



Cilla Black, Raj Loomba CBE, Cherie Blair, Preity Zinta, Veena Loomba and Joanna Lumley OBE

29th October 2010: British Indian Diamond Jubilee Banquet at the Guildhall in London

The Loomba Foundation held the British Indian Diamond Jubilee Banquet at the historical and prestigious Guildhall in London on Friday 29th October 2010 which celebrated the 60th anniversary of India's Republic and Diwali, the Indian festival of lights. It was attended over 400 high profile guests including senior politicians, diplomats and business leaders from both the British and Indian communities in London.



From left to right: Alastair Stewart OBE, His Excellency Nalin Surie, High Commissioner for India, Mrs. Surie, Lady McNally, The Rt. Hon. Lord McNally, Minister of State - Ministry of Justice, Preity Zinta, Lord Dholakia of Waltham Brooks, OBE, DL, Veena Loomba, Raj Loomba CBE, Mrs. Burt and Mr. Alastair Burt, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State.

The Founder and Chairman, Raj Loomba CBE and Lord Dholakia OBE DL, Trustee of the Loomba Foundation, welcomed the Guest of Honour, His Excellency Nalin Surie, High Commissioner for India, The Rt. Hon. Dominic Grieve MP, Attorney General, The Rt. Hon. Lord McNally, Minister of State – Ministry of Justice, Mr. Alistair Burt, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Sir Paul Stephenson QPM, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, and the Rt. Hon. Patricia Hewitt to the banquet.

The Loomba Foundation's International Ambassador, Preity Zinta, and the famous Bollywood star, travelled especially from Mumbai to support the charity.

The President of the Loomba Foundation, Cherie Blair, who was unable to attend the banquet as she was in Brazil on that day, addressed the audience through a video message. Goodwill messages from HRH the Prince of Wales and the new Leader of the Opposition, The Rt. Hon. Ed Miliband MP were read on the evening.

Raj Loomba CBE thanked the corporate sponsors for their generous support; ABN AMRO Bank, Alpesh Patel Ventures Limited, AVK-SEG Ltd., Barclays, BDO, Clariden Leu, Clegg Gifford & Co., Close Technical Services, Commonwealth Business Council, Crookes Walker Consultancy, Deutsche Bank, Duncan Lawrie Asset Management, E&I Engineering Ltd., Farebrother Limited, Holyrood ApartHotel, HSBC, India Tourism, Jaguar, J. Fletchers Engineers Ltd., KPMG, Mardix, Metropolitan Police Services, The Old Waverley Hotel, Punjab National Bank, PV Energy, Rajeev Dhillon, Rational Foreign Exchange, Rinku Group, Shiraz and Shamin Lalji, Sheetal and Ricky Kapoor, Singhanian & Co. LLP, State Bank of India, TATA Consultancy Services, TelecityGroup, Torch Partners, Trade Aid UK International, University of East London and Virgin Atlantic. The evening raised over a quarter of a million pounds which will go to educating children of poor widows in India.

21st October 2010: Shades of Autumn Charity Social, New York

A fundraising event was held at the Stone Rose Lounge, Time Warner Centre, where the Loomba Foundation showcased work from the series 'Widow City' by international documentary photographer, Radhika Chalasani. A raffle was held to raise money for the work of the Loomba Foundation.

4th October 2010: Cherie Blair launches The Loomba Foundation in Canada

Toronto, 4th October: The Loomba Foundation was launched officially in Canada by Mrs. Cherie Blair, President of the Foundation and Raj Loomba CBE, Founder Chairman and Trustee at a dinner in Toronto, which was hosted by Dr. Ruby Dhalla, Toronto Member of Parliament for Brampton-Springdale and Frank McKenna, Deputy Chair of TD Bank Financial Group. The Trustees Lord Dholakia of Waltham Brooks OBE, DL from London and Mr. Balbir Singh Kakar from India attended the launch.

At the dinner Mrs. Blair talked about the Foundation's efforts to raise awareness of the plight of widows around the world and promoting equality, education, human rights and freedom of these unfortunate people.

Dr. Dhalla said "The work of the Loomba Foundation has given hope to thousands of widows throughout the world. By placing education at the heart of its efforts the Loomba Foundation has empowered children of widows with the tools and resources they need to succeed." She added that she looks forward to working with the Loomba Foundation.

"Mrs. Blair is an integral part of the success of the Loomba Foundation and plays a key role in the Foundation's great strides to help widows and children receive the care they need." said Mr. Loomba. "We are committed to helping widows worldwide and appreciated the continued support and help given by both Lord Dholakia and Mr. Kakar as part of our ongoing efforts to promote fundamental freedoms and human rights for all."

In his speech, Mr. Balbir Singh Kakar, said "Widows face prejudice and suffer in silence all over the world. Sadly, no one has addressed it up to now despite the fact that there are Over 245 million widows around the world. He added "I am truly pleased and proud to be part of the Loomba Foundation which is now working in 13 countries, including Canada – my home country.



Balbir Singh Kakar, Raj Loomba CBE, Dr. Ruby Dhalla MP, Frank McKenna, Cherie Blair, Veena Loomba and Roma Loomba

30th June 2010 : International Widows Day in Rwanda

Rwanda, 30th June 2010: A meeting took place at Centre Pastoral Saint Paul in Rwanda which was co-organised by UCODIP and Duterimber Asbi with the support of the Loomba Foundation through Oxfam GB to mark the importance of International Widows Day in its 6th anniversary year which is celebrated on 23rd June.

The Executive Secretary of Kigali City, who represented the Mayor of Kigali as Guest of Honour, attended this meeting along with the Director General of MFI, the Country Director of Oxfam GB and Programme Officer, the Executive Secretary of Duterimber Asbi and her staff and members of the UCODIP, amongst others.



23rd June 2010 : International Widows Day celebrated in 9 countries around the world

UK, London, 23rd June 2010: The Loomba Foundation, a global UN accredited NGO, held an evening reception in the Map Room at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, to mark the 6th anniversary of International Widows Day on 23rd June. The event was chaired by Mike Tobin, Chairman of the Friends of the Loomba Foundation and was attended by high profile Patrons and supporters of the Foundation's work including Lord Blair, CBE, QPM, Lord Mackenzie of Framwellgate OBE and Alastair Stewart OBE, to mention but a few.

Lord Dholakia of Waltham Brooks, OBE, DL, Trustee of the Loomba Foundation, spoke of the importance of the Loomba Foundation's work and their campaign for the United Nations to recognise 23 June as International Widows Day. He mentioned that the Foundation had been organising events in many countries since International Widows Day was launched in 2005 to raise awareness of the plight of poor widows around the world. This year was no exception as the Foundation had organised events in London, Birmingham, New York, New Delhi, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Syria, Nairobi, Kigali and Johannesburg.

Mike Tobin, Chairman of the 'Friends of the Loomba Foundation', spoke of his continued support of the important work of the Foundation. He also talked of the initiative 'Friends of the Loomba Foundation' which was set up to educate children in India. For as little as £100, it can provide a child with school fees, uniform, books, stationery, school lunches, nutrients and healthcare for one whole year.

The vote of thanks was given by Rinku Loomba, Trustee of the Loomba Foundation.



Lord Dholakia of Waltham Brooks OBE, DL, Mr. Alpesh Patel,
Lord Karan Bilimoria CBE, DL, Mrs. Veena Loomba,
Mr. Rinku Loomba, Mr. Sheetal Kapoor and Mr. Michael Tobin

UK, Birmingham, 23rd June 2010: The Lord Mayor, Councillor Len Gregory marked the 6th International Widows Day on 23rd June, 2010 by releasing balloons outside the Town Hall in Birmingham at 12.30pm with local school children. The Lord Mayor of Birmingham was joined by Dr. Didar Singh, Secretary of the Ministry of the Overseas Indian Affairs, the Rt. Hon. Khalid Mahmood MP, and the Counsellor General for India Mr. Rao.



The balloon releasing ceremony was followed by a lunch at Asha's restaurant in Birmingham at which several high profile guests were present. The Lord Mayor gave a welcome speech and Dr. Didar Singh gave an address which was followed by a vote of thanks by Mr. Rao.

The Loomba Foundation's Founder and Chairman Trustee Mr Raj Loomba CBE said that "he was delighted that Romi Kanungo had supported the Foundation by organising this event in Birmingham."

India, New Delhi, 23rd June 2010: The Loomba Foundation held an evening function at the India Habitat Centre to mark the 6th anniversary of International Widows Day, which was attended by over 175 high profile guests, including several dignitaries. Mrs. Rinni Khanna, who was the compere for the function, presented flowers to all of the dignitaries followed by the lighting of the lamp.

The Chief Guest, Mrs. Oswal, a Trustee of the Loomba Foundation, spoke about the work of the Loomba Foundation and its focus against the discrimination of widows. She called upon the guests to assist this weaker and helpless part of society by caring for them, and in particular the education of their children.

Mr. Lalit Mansingh, a Trustee of the Loomba Foundation then spoke at length about the discrimination that is taking place against women, particularly widows, who through no fault of their own have lost their husband. He spoke about some of the reformers such as Mr. Ram Mohan Roy who had done some tremendous work on subjects such as remarriage of widows. He also showed a video message from an International Widows Conference held in 2006 in the UK, by the then Senator Hillary Clinton, who is now the current US Secretary of State, whose message is as strong today as it was then in support of the work of the Loomba Foundation.

The Chief Guest, Prof. Walia, delivered the keynote address and spoke at length about the issues widows face. This was followed by Mrs. Ravinder Kaur, a beneficiary of the Loomba Foundation, who talked about the support she had been given by them over the years and how grateful she was and what a difference it had made to her life.



This was followed by certificates and prize money being given to the first, second and third prize winners of an essay and drawing competition, which was entered by many of the children supported by the Loomba Foundation from the Delhi Primary School. Cash prizes of Rs200 for 1st prize, Rs1500 for 2nd prize and Rs100 for third prize were presented by the Chief Guest and the Trustees of the Loomba Foundation. A consolation prize of Rs1000 was also awarded.

Bangladesh, 23rd June 2010: In Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Youth Enterprise Advice and Helpcentre (B'Yeah) organised an event which paid tribute to widows in the country, where they face daily challenges and adversities that come with a male dominated society and yet manage to support their

children and families on their own. Ten widows, two of whom are direct beneficiaries of the Loomba Foundation, were invited to take part in the event.

The B'Yeah organised session was led by a panel of prominent social workers with extensive experience working with distressed women in Bangladesh. One of the panellists, Ms. Tanjima Mazumdar, mentioned in her speech that although she had been working with distressed women for many years, no special focus had ever been given to widows who face multi-faceted challenges in the society. Ms. Mazumdar thanked Mr. Raj Loomba and B'YEAH for highlighting the need to work especially with Bangladeshi widows and mentioned that she would from now on collaborate with B'YEAH to work with young widows.

Ms. Nasima Akhter Jolly delivered a very heart warming and encouraging speech which highlighted the options that young widows in Bangladesh have to make an honest and profitable living. B'Yeah board member Mr. Murad encouraged the widows to work with them by drawing examples of the organisation's existing Loomba Foundation beneficiaries and their success.

One of the Loomba Foundation's Fund beneficiaries, Ms. Amena Begum, told participants how she thought she would have to beg on the streets to feed her children when her husband died a year ago. However, thanks to Mr. Loomba, today Ms. Begum not only runs a successful tailoring business from her home, but also employs four other struggling women in her community. B'Yeah awarded two of its Loomba Foundation beneficiaries with a cash prize and Ms. Begum with the "B'Yeah Entrepreneur of the Year" award.



Caption: Amena Begum receiving a cash prize for her efforts

Sri Lanka, 23rd June 2010: The fourth consecutive International Widows Day event in Sri Lanka was celebrated in Hambantota and organised by the Hambantota Youth Business Programme (HYBP), part of Youth Business Sri Lanka, in collaboration with the Women Development Federation (WDF). The day consisted of a parade of women from WDF to Hambantota District Chamber of Commerce (HDCC), a release of balloons and pigeons at HDCC and a meeting at the Nimbarama Temple in Hambantota where plants were distributed among the 150 widows who participated.

Ms. Kumarini Wickramasooriya, Chairperson of Nawajeewana and Ms. Vidyani Hettigoda, Chairperson of the Women's Chamber of Industry and Commerce and a member of the Youth Business Sri Lanka (YBSL) Trustee Board, participated as the Chief Guest and Guest of Honour respectively.

As a social responsibility and contribution to the economic development of the district, HDCC manages the Hambantota Youth Business Programme which is part of Youth Business Sri Lanka, an organisation which helps young people and members of female-headed families who otherwise would not have the necessary resources to develop their self-confidence and achieve economic

independence through self employment. With support from the Loomba Foundation, Hambantota Youth Business Programme has provided financial and mentoring support to 48 underprivileged members of female-headed families in order to start and develop activities to improve their livelihood.



Kenya, 23rd June 2010: The Kenya Youth Business Trust (KYBT) International Widows Day event focused on sharing personal experiences as widows, single mothers and children of widows, and overcoming challenges using available opportunities and resources. The widows in attendance were taught about their rights and how to stand up and fight for them using various government institutions, human rights organisations and the legal system and there was audience participation in the form of questions and debate on the various issues discussed.

Dave Muumbi, Kenya Youth Business Trust's CEO gave a motivational talk and explained the relationship between YBI, KYBT and the Loomba Foundation. He challenged the guests in attendance to start contributing Kshs.100 (US\$1.25) a month support the Foundation. The young entrepreneurs were also encouraged and challenged by Muumbi to take advantage of the various opportunities available at their disposal.

Guests in attendance were Loomba Foundation beneficiaries, friends of the beneficiaries and Sisters from a neighbouring catholic church. Speakers included widows Ruth Were and Florence Karue, who are involved in championing the rights of widow through raising awareness in the local media. Four media houses were invited to cover the occasion including Citizen Radio, Nation Media, Radio Africa and KTN.

Young entrepreneurs were interviewed by a local radio station, sharing their personal experiences since receiving loans from the Loomba Foundation and what differences they have made in their communities through their economic independence. Their stories captivated the interviewer so much that they were invited to participate in a Citizen Radio talk in the near future. The function ended with food gift bags to the Loomba Foundation's beneficiaries to show continued support to them and encourage them to keep up the good fight.



Nepal, 23rd June 2010: A large rally with over 250 people was organised by Nepal Youth Business Foundation (NYBF), Rotary Club of Bhaktapur and Nepal Single Women’s Empowerment Forum in the cultural city of Bhaktapur to mark International Widows Day.

It was inaugurated by Chief Guest Mrs. Anita Adhikari, the District Women Development Officer. Participants carried plaque cards with slogans about rights of single women and widows as they marched around the city, which ended in a meeting at the historic Bhaktapur Durbar Square. The gathering focused on how organisations could work together to empower single women and widows. Mr. Raj Kumar Suwal, Legal Advisor of Nepal Single Women’s Empowerment Forum (NSWEF) spoke on the importance of celebrating International Widows Day and the importance of the Loomba Foundation.

Social activist, Mr. Bal Mukunda Suwal, spoke about gender equality and encouraged everyone to work in united efforts. Director of Nepal Youth Business Foundation (NYBF), Mr. Dilendra Raj Shrestha, highlighted the grant provided to NYBF by the Loomba Foundation through YBI to help widows, single women and youths of single female-headed families to start their own businesses. Forty women are currently benefitting from the programme.



Constituent Assembly Member and Member of Parliament, Mr. Satya Lal Mul and District Women Development Office and Chief Guest, Mrs. Anita Adhikari also spoke on the importance of empowering women to empower society at large. Mrs. Nuchhe Maya Naga, President of NSWEF, expressed her gratitude to the Nepal Youth Business Foundation and the Loomba Foundation for their support in organising this event and also for initiating the project which provides seed capital to their members.

Syria, 23rd June 2010: Youth Business International’s network member in Syria, BIDAYA, celebrated International Widows Day by planting a tree in the SEA’s botanical garden near the Damascus Citadel as a common symbol of hope. In accordance with the Loomba Foundation’s initiative, BIDAYA seeks

to support single mothers, orphans and young people from female-headed households to realise their entrepreneurial ambitions and establish their own businesses.



South Africa, Gauteng Province, 23rd June 2010: On behalf of The Loomba Foundation, the Starfish Greathearts Foundation visited Helping Hand. They arrived with 300 orange helium balloons to give to the children to release them into the air, to mark International Widow's Day. The children were so excited to receive the balloons; and letting them go and watching them fly away brought much laughter and squeals of delight.

Helping Hand started in 2001 as a home base care project, caring for and addressing the needs of sick people who were unable to help themselves; HIV/AIDS is prevalent in this community. During these home visits many children were identified as vulnerable as they were caring for their sick parents and/or guardians, some were orphaned and left to care for themselves and their siblings. Helping Hand addressed this problem by creating an early childhood development (ECD) section to their project as well as creating an after school programme, to help those who are at school with homework, counselling, life skills, etc. This project also provides food parcels to various families within their community.



22nd June 2010 : The Loomba Foundation launches a Research Study Book at the United Nations

The first edition of a comprehensive research study laying out the global crisis of widows – 'Invisible, Forgotten Sufferers : The Plight of Widows Around the World', was presented to the UN Secretary General, H.E. The Hon'ble Mr. Ban Ki Moon by the Loomba Foundation's President, Cherie Blair, and Founder and Chairman Trustee, Raj Loomba CBE. They were joined by Shri Balbir Singh Kakar, a Trustee from India and Dr. Peter Rajsingh, a Trustee from the USA. The Research Study was

commissioned by the Loomba Foundation and called for UN recognition of 23rd June as 'International Widows Day.'

The book presentation was followed by a dinner to mark the 6th anniversary of International Widows Day, which was held at the Delegates Dining Room at the United Nations, and was attended by 27 UN Permanent Representatives, including H.E. Ambassador Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations.



Dr. Peter Rajsingh, Valerie Karr, Cherie Blair, H.E. Ban Ki Moon, Raj Loomba CBE and Balbir Singh Kakar

27TH May 2010 : Reception at Mayfair Hotel to introduce the Loomba Foundation's Campaign for The UN recognition of International Widows Day

His Excellency Mr. Nalin Surie, High Commissioner for India, was the Chief Guest amongst no fewer than 30 High Commissioners and Ambassadors at a reception held by the UN accredited charity, the Loomba Foundation, at the Mayfair Hotel in London.

Sir Paul Stephenson QPM, Metropolitan Police Commissioner and a Patron of the Loomba Foundation, spoke at the event to lend his support for the UN campaign. He said "During my last visit to India I was able to meet some of the Foundation's beneficiaries at India Gate in Delhi while they were celebrating the 'Children Day'. It was a sheer pleasure for me to release balloons together with them and they just looked so happy ", added the Commissioner.

Cherie Blair, President of the Loomba Foundation, hosted the reception to introduce the Foundation's campaign for UN recognition of International Widows Day. The Loomba Foundation launched International Widows Day in 2005, as a global focus day to raise awareness of the plight of widows and their children around the world.

According to a research study, commissioned by the Loomba Foundation, out of 245 widows estimated worldwide, over 100 million widows live in poverty struggling to survive. The research has also revealed that many of these women and their children are malnourished, exposed to disease, and subjected to slavery. They also face horrors such as child marriage, illiteracy, loss of schooling, forced labour, human trafficking, homelessness, and rape. The report adds that 1.5 million widows' children in the world will die before their fifth birthday.

"Widows around the world suffer from lack of income and opportunities," said Cherie Blair, President of the Loomba Foundation. "But so much of the hardship faced by widows in developing countries is the direct result of customs and attitudes. The Loomba Foundation and its partners can and do bring help to thousands of widows and their children in South Asia and in Africa – educating widows' children in India and helping African widows become self-sufficient in business – but the first step in eradicating the problem is to raise awareness and change attitudes."

Founder and Chairman Trustee, Raj Loomba CBE, the British Indian entrepreneur who established the charity 13 years ago having seen the indignities faced by his own widowed mother, explained the reasons for undertaking the study. "There's widespread ignorance about this problem," he explains. "This is why the Foundation has supported this research, which is being presented to the United Nations next month, and this is why we are campaigning for UN recognition of International Widows Day as a way of getting our message to all those who need to hear it all over the world. Widows are the poorest of the poor, and the reason they are is because they are invisible and forgotten sufferers. They're depending on us to change that situation."

set up businesses.