



CHRISTIAN BLIND MISSION INTERNATIONAL PHOTO

Ahsram Medical Centre in Kalkudah, Sri Lanka, was badly damaged by devastating tsunamis last week. The centre is one of five facilities on the heavily hit coast operated by Christian Blind Mission International, a charity whose Canadian headquarters is in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Tamil residents fear cash won't reach relatives

BY MIKE ADLER
Staff Writer

York Region Tamils are grateful for Canada's latest South Asian relief pledge of \$40 million, but many worry the aid won't reach their Sri Lankan relatives.

"It's really, really welcome," Nathan Bahirathan, treasurer of the Ganesha Temple in Richmond Hill, said of the new federal promise — increased from \$4 million this week after local South Asian leaders, including temple trustees, pressed Ottawa for more help.

Sri Lanka, one of the countries hardest hit by devastating tidal waves, is long divided by civil war between ethnic Tamils and a central government backed by the Sinhalese majority.

Fear the Sri Lankan government won't distribute aid to Tamil areas on island's north and east coast is one reason many local Tamils are donating directly to the Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (TRO).

It's a group sending about 100 volunteers door to door in Markham and other parts of Greater Toronto to collect cash and cheques.

"Only that will reach the Tamil areas," Mr. Bahirathan said, adding residents have also been sending money to Tamil media outlets, including TamilVision, which sends contributions to TRO.

"Even now, we already have com-

'The whole area has become a cemetery and wherever you go there is a funeral house.'

Rev. Pon Anandarajah
Christian Blind Mission International

plaints very little is being offered to the northeast," Raj Guna-Nathan, president TRO Canada said Thursday.

Despite Canadian government doubts that have, so far, denied the group charity status here, Mr. Guna-Nathan said TRO is independent of the rebel group Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Though it operates with the blessing of the Tamil tigers in rebel areas, no relief money will go to the group, he said.

Christian Blind Mission International, a charity whose Canadian headquarters is in Whitchurch-Stouffville, said five of its 13 medical projects in Sri Lanka were on the island's tsunami-ravaged coast and its Ahsram Medical Centre in Kalkudah was badly damaged.

CBMI is accepting donations to rebuild and offer relief at www.cbmicanada.org or 1-800-567-2264.

"The whole area has become a cemetery and wherever you go there is a funeral house," Rev. Pon Anandarajah, head of the Kalkudah clinic, said last week.

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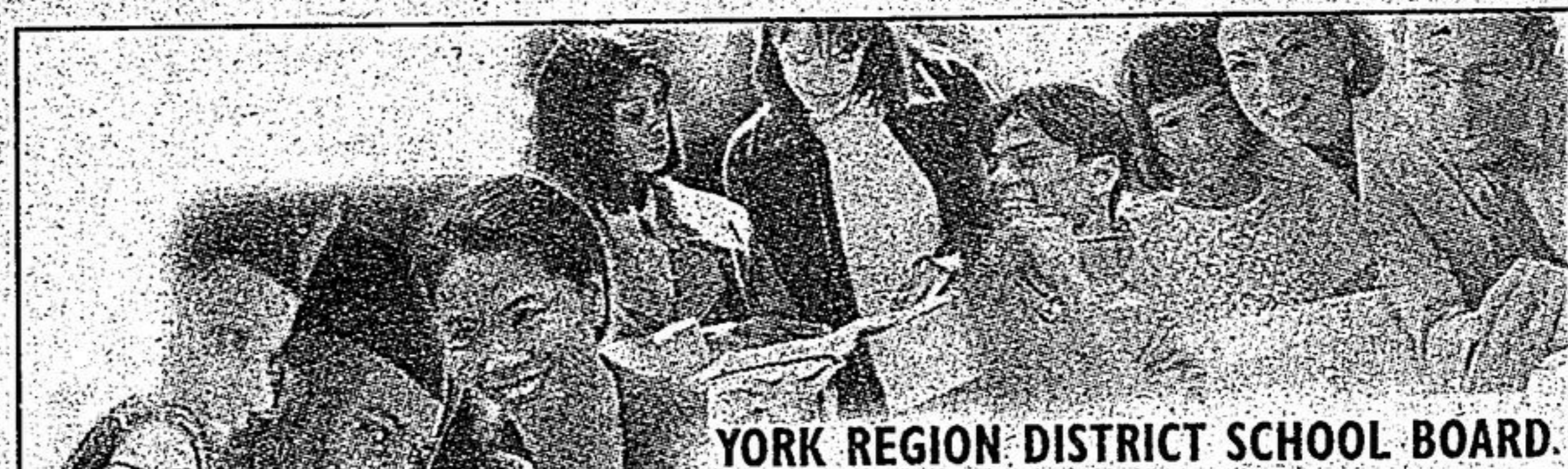
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YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Important Notice

**YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SEEKS CANDIDATE TO REPRESENT
VAUGHAN, AREA 2, WARDS 4 AND 5**

The York Region District School Board is accepting applications from candidates interested in serving as trustee to represent the City of Vaughan, Wards 4 and 5 for the balance of the current term which expires on November 30, 2006.

- Candidates must be:
- a Canadian citizen;
 - a resident of York Region;
 - at least 18 years old;
 - a public school supporter.

Preference will be given to candidates who reside in Wards 4 and 5 of the city of Vaughan. Qualified candidates will be expected to make a brief verbal presentation on their own behalf at a public meeting to be held on Tuesday, January 18, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. at Westmount Collegiate Institute.

If necessary, a short list of candidates may be invited to a second public meeting on Tuesday evening, January 25, 2005 at the Education Centre, 60 Wellington Street West, Aurora. The Board intends to appoint the new trustee at its January 27th Board Meeting.

Persons wishing to be considered for this appointment should obtain an information package from Trustee Services, located in the Director's Office at the Education Centre, 60 Wellington Street West, Aurora. Please submit your written request stating your qualifications, the reasons you wish to be considered for the position, a resume and description of related experience to:

Bill Crothers, Board Chair, York Region District School Board, P.O. Box 40, 60 Wellington Street West, Aurora, Ontario L4G 3H2.

Submissions must be received at the Board Office by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, January 10, 2005. Please note that the Board Office is closed the week of December 27th to 31st and re-opens on Monday, January 3, 2005.

For an information package, please contact:
Lori Barnes, Manager, Trustee Services at (905) 727-0022, (905) 895-7227, (905) 722-6255, (416) 969-7170, Extension 2263.



Bill Crothers
Chair of the Board

Bill Hogarth
Director of Education

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