

OBA QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2026 EDITION



Zahira College Old Boys' Association

EDITORIAL

A.M.M. Muzammil

MR. FOUZUL HAMEED:

DRIVEN BY VISION, GUIDED BY MISSION

History often shows that institutions rise through the vision and commitment of a single individual devoted to community service. The story of Zahira College is one of collective resolve triumphing over formidable challenges.

Historians describe the four decades under the leadership of the late T. B. Jayah and the late Mr. A. M. A. Azeez as Zahira's "Golden Era", when the College flourished as a centre of Islamic thought and intellectual excellence, distinguished by literary, athletic, and cultural achievements.

Zahira's most challenging period began with the late Azeez's resignation in 1961. Over the next forty-five years, despite changes in leadership, educational standards and discipline steadily declined, eroding public confidence and diminishing enrolment. Yet, as history often proves, renewal follows adversity. That renewal came in the person of Mr. Fouzul Hameed.

Though not an academician, he possessed—like the founder-administrator, the late I. L. M. Abdul Aziz—the rare ability to lead with clarity, determination, and vision. Through his unwavering commitment and remarkable Midas touch, Mr. Fouzul Hameed revived Zahira College, restoring it as the cradle and citadel of Muslim education.

Serving as President of the Old Boys' Association from 2005 to 2013, he led a dedicated team from the OBA and PTA in a focused effort to restore academic excellence and discipline. Since assuming office as Chairman of the Board of Governors in 2006—a role he continues to hold—he has overseen a systematic programme of infrastructure development alongside significant advances in education, sports, and extracurricular activities.

Together with Principal Mr. Trizvy Marikkar, Mr. Fouzul Hameed envisioned a comprehensive revival aimed at positioning Zahira among the island's leading schools. This transformation includes landmark developments such as the Mutuwappa and Al-Maktoom Buildings, the near-completion of the Iqbal Building, the refurbishment of Ghafoor Hall, modern canteens, a fully upgraded library, a Swimming Pool Complex, and a state-of-the-art Sports Complex scheduled for opening on 7 February 2026.

These achievements stand as enduring testimony to nearly three decades of dedicated service—an era-defining contribution to Zahira's illustrious history. Mr. Fouzul Hameed's pursuit of moving Zahira from "good" to "great" has set the institution firmly on course to reclaim the glory of its Golden Era. As Zahira marks its 133-year journey, it is evident that the Founders' vision endures, and an educational renaissance is well underway.

Mr. Fouzul Hameed's visionary zeal has truly restored Zahira to greatness once again. May Almighty Allah, in His boundless grace and mercy, grant him complete Shifa, enduring Aafiya, and a long, blessed life.

A Message From the OBA President Mr. Haaziq Jaleel



It is with great pride and gratitude that I am honoured to release the Second Edition of the Zahira College Old Boys' Association Newsletter at the prestigious Crescent Night – the Annual Zahira OBA Dinner. This publication is more than just a collection of articles; it is a reflection of the spirit, unity and enduring legacy of our beloved Zahira College.

The overwhelming response to our first edition encouraged us to continue this initiative, and this second edition stands as a testament to the collective effort of our Old Boys, past and present, who remain deeply connected to their alma mater. Through these pages, we celebrate our achievements, record our milestones, and strengthen the bonds that unite generations of Zahirians across the world.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all our affiliated bodies, branch associations, batch groups and partner organisations for their continued support, commitment and collaboration. Your dedication plays a vital role in sustaining the growth and impact of the Zahira College OBA.

As we move forward, let us continue to uphold the values and traditions of Zahira College while working together to create new opportunities for our students and our community. May this second edition inspire even greater engagement, pride and service in the years to come.

A Message From the OBA Secretary Mr. Hussain Azad



It is with great pride and honor that I address you through this edition of our OBA Newsletter.

On behalf of the Old Boys' Association, I would like to thank all the stakeholders for their unwavering support and commitment to our alma mater as it excels in all areas.

Releasing a newsletter is an important venture, which connects the college fraternity and keeps the community informed with relevant news. A round of applause must be given to OBA Editor Mr. A.M.M. Muzammil for his effort in initiating this work and compiling the newsletter into a professional format.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge all the OBA-affiliated bodies for their support and dedication in strengthening the OBA in various ways. Let's work together for our mother Zahira to reach greater heights.

Crescent Night 2026: The OBA Annual Dinner

Mr. Shiyan Safferdeen
- Project Chairman



Beneath the celestial glow of a silver crescent moon, the Old Boys' Association cordially invites you to an evening of unparalleled elegance and distinguished fellowship.

On Saturday, the 8th of February 2026, the hallowed doors of The Balmoral Ballroom at The Kingsbury, Colombo, will graciously open to welcome our esteemed fraternity to Crescent Night 2026.

This illustrious evening promises an ambiance of refined grandeur and cultivated camaraderie—a moment suspended in time to honor the paths we have traversed and to raise a toast to the luminous journeys that lie ahead. Your esteemed presence will be the crowning brilliance of the night, illuminating a shared horizon of pride, legacy, and unity.

We extend our deepest appreciation to our main sponsor, Pearl Isle Capital, as well as to our other esteemed sponsors, devoted OBA members, and valued stakeholders. Your steadfast partnership and unwavering support form the very cornerstone of this celebration, ensuring that Crescent Night 2026 stands as a distinguished milestone in the enduring legacy of our Association.

We eagerly anticipate the pleasure of welcoming you to a night of timeless distinction, joyful celebration, and warm fellowship.

Join us without hesitation to partake in an evening of joy, elegance, and unforgettable merriment.



Zahira College Unveils Its Sports Complex



We are delighted to announce the remarkable progress achieved in the development of the Zahira College Sports Complex, a landmark project eagerly anticipated by all stakeholders. This state-of-the-art facility is scheduled for its ceremonial opening on 7 February 2026, marking a proud and historic moment for the Zahira College community.

The Sports Complex has been meticulously designed to accommodate a comprehensive range of indoor and outdoor sporting facilities, reflecting international standards. These include a fully equipped squash court, basketball court, badminton courts, a dedicated boxing arena, and table tennis facilities.



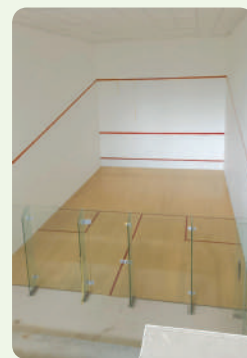
In addition, the complex will house an ultra-modern fitness center, two fully functional meeting rooms, dormitory accommodation with 30 beds, a well-appointed cafeteria, and a spectator pavilion complete with a digital scoreboard, among other modern amenities.

The overarching vision of this initiative is to create a dynamic, inclusive, and inspiring sporting environment that encourages students to challenge their limits, cultivate discipline, and strive for excellence—both on and off the field.

These new facilities will significantly enrich the sporting experience of our students while enhancing the school's capacity to host inter-school, regional, and national competitions and events.

The completion of the Zahira College Sports Complex represents a major milestone in the institution's ongoing journey toward excellence.

It underscores our commitment to fostering athletic distinction, physical well-being, and a culture of healthy living, while offering a lasting platform for identifying and nurturing the sporting champions of tomorrow.





Mr. M.N. Fariz Nilamdeen
- Project Chairman -

The recent devastation wrought by Cyclone Ditwah stands as one of the nation's most severe crises in recent memory. Its fury has displaced thousands of innocent families, casting them into a dire struggle for survival amidst damaged homes and shattered communities. In the face of such overwhelming need, the imperative for collective action becomes paramount, reminding

Flood Relief Project 2025



us that even the smallest gesture of kindness can create a ripple of profound impact.

Responding to this call with compassion, the OBA Executive Committee members moved swiftly into decisive action. Guided by a profound sense of duty and camaraderie, they promptly mobilized the Association's extensive network and resources.

This collective effort culminated in the commendable raising of over LKR 3 million, dedicated exclusively to supporting flood-affected students and fellow old boys. Formally launched as the Flood Relief Project 2025, the initiative was executed by the OBA Executive Committee with strategic foresight, strong coordination, and exemplary operational efficiency.

Relief was distributed in three strategic phases to address both urgent and ongoing needs. The first phase empowered

affected old boys by providing 325 essential packs of cleaning materials, enabling them to begin restoring their homes. Subsequently, the second phase delivered 300 packs of vital dry rations to ensure continued aid.

Finally, reaffirming its steadfast commitment to student welfare, the third phase provided 280 students with vouchers for shoes and socks, enabling them to resume their daily routines with dignity, confidence, and practical comfort.

More than a relief initiative, this comprehensive effort stands as a powerful testament to the strength of community - reflecting the remarkable solidarity, compassion, and unwavering support demonstrated by OBA members when it mattered most.

ZAHIRIAN TECH GENIUS TAKES CENTER STAGE AT INDUSTRY EXPO 2025!

WE ARE INCREDIBLY PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THAT ONE OF OUR VERY OWN TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS OF ZAHIRA COLLEGE HAS BEEN SELECTED TO EXHIBIT HIS INNOVATIVE PROTOTYPE WITH FUTURE POTENTIAL: THE WATER-POWERED BIKE AT THE PRESTIGIOUS INDUSTRY EXPO 2025!

WITNESS THE ZAHIRIAN MARK IN FUTURE OF INNOVATION BY VISITING HIS BOOTH FROM 18TH- 21ST OF SEPTEMBER 2025 FROM 9.00A.M. TO 9.00P.M. AT BMICH






Serendib Education Foundation (SEF) President, Mr. Fazl Amullah, formally presented a cheque for LKR 200,000 to the President of the Old Boys' Association, Mr. Haazik Jaleel, to provide much-needed assistance to flood-affected students of Zahira College, reaffirming the Foundation's commitment to compassion, community support, and educational continuity.



OBA Fellowship Day 2025



Mr. Farzan Sahabdeen
Project Chairman

The much-anticipated “OBA Fellowship Day 2025”, hosted by the Old Boys’ Association (OBA) of Zahira College, unfolded in spectacular fashion, blending grandeur with elegance to create an unforgettable celebration.

Held on October 12, 2025, at the iconic Ghaffoor Hall, the event stood as a masterclass in meticulous planning and flawless execution, offering a dazzling array of activities that captivated participants and delighted attendees alike.

Spanning multiple days, the Fellowship featured an impressive lineup of sporting and recreational events, including Cricket, Rugby, Soccer, Swimming, Triathlon, Table Tennis, “Do You Know” (DYK), Rifle Shooting, Futsal, Indoor Cricket, 8-Ball Pool, Bowling, and Badminton—each organized with precision and care to ensure an exceptional experience for everyone involved.

The flawless coordination of engaging and competitive events reflected not only the dedication of the organizers but also the enthusiasm and camaraderie that define the Zahira spirit. Under the chairmanship of Mr. Farzan, the Organizing Committee worked tirelessly for two months, demonstrating remarkable teamwork and commitment to ensure the event’s resounding success.

Nearly 40 affiliated groups and batches, ranging from the 1970’s to the Batch of 2023, participated with exceptional enthusiasm and a shared sense of tradition. The Fellowship fostered a powerful bond across generations, allowing old Zahirians of all ages to reconnect, reminisce, and engage in spirited yet friendly competition, celebrating their enduring connection to Zahira College.

The tournament showcased spirited yet sportsmanlike competition, as teams competed with passion and determination for ultimate glory across three exciting categories: Youth, Masters, and Grand Masters. After a series of exhilarating contests, the champions emerged with well-deserved distinction and pride, their victories celebrated by all in attendance—an inspiring testament to Zahira’s enduring brotherhood and sporting excellence.

The champions of the Zahira College OBA Fellowship Day 2025 were as follows:

Master Category

- Champion: Batch 2002

Grand Master Category

- Champion: Batch 1990

Youth Category

- Champion: Batch 2009

Overall Champions

- Batch 2002

This year’s OBA Fellowship Day 2025 was spearheaded by the dynamic OBA President, Mr. Haazik Jaleel, who, in close collaboration with me, masterfully orchestrated this momentous event. The OBA Secretary, Mr. Hussain Azad, worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure its execution and outstanding success.

Mr. Nuzri Mansoor, Secretary to the Board of Governors, and Mr. Mushin Arif graced the occasion as distinguished guests, adding prestige and warmth to the proceedings. The finale stood as a truly memorable event — a celebration of achievement, camaraderie, and inspiration that will be cherished for years to come.



Winner of the National AI EXPO 2025

Master Yusuf Farhan has soared to national acclaim, crowned Winner of the National AI EXPO 2025 and honored with the prestigious Inventor Award (School Category) for his award-winning project APOLA AI. This outstanding victory is a testament to Yusuf’s innovative spirit and highlights the rising talent within ZCC, where we champion AI, creativity, and education for the future. Heartfelt congratulations, Yusuf! Your journey of excellence is just getting started.



MF MUHAMMAD SMASHES MATTHEW ABEYSINGHE’S 200M BREASTSTROKE RECORD



Teen prodigy MF Muhammad of Zahira College delivered a stunning performance, slashing three full seconds off the long-standing mark held by double Olympian Matthew Abeysinghe, and smashed the nearly decade-old men’s 200m breaststroke senior national record on the fourth day of the HNB National and Junior National Short Course Swimming Championship at the Isipathana College Swimming Pool in December, 2025.