



1995 MOUNTBATTEN MEDAL – Yasith De Silva

Each Sunday afternoon, Ananda College Life Saving Association carries out lifeguarding duties on Mount Lavinia Beach, Colombo, Sri Lanka. Yasith De Silva, a holder of the RLSS Bronze medallion, is the Captain of that Association. On Sunday 15th October 1995, he was the only lifeguard on duty and there was a strong current running out to sea.

At about 4.45pm, he heard shouting coming from a point some 50 metres offshore and saw that six people appeared to be in difficulty in the water with four of them being dragged by the current into deep water.

Yasith immediately ran into the water and swam towards the casualties. When he reached them he could only see three above the water. He allowed the three to take hold of his right arm and began to kick out with his legs to take the casualties back to safety on the beach. On doing so, his foot struck the head of the fourth casualty who was under the water. He recovered that person from the seabed and then began towing all four, who were adults, back to the shore. This was an extremely difficult operation.

He eventually landed all four casualties safely and successfully administered expired air ventilation to the person who had been submerged. Two of the casualties required hospital treatment but all made complete recoveries.

Bystanders on the beach assisted the two remaining persons to get ashore.

For his quick thinking and courageous rescue of four persons in very treacherous sea conditions. Yasith De Silva was awarded the 1995 Mountbatten Medal.