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THURSDAY - 28 SEPTEMBER 2017

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ISSUE 1347

1,000's of SL babies sold in Europe during the 80's

(DailyMirror.lk) - Sri Lankan authorities have admitted in a Dutch documentary that thousands of babies born there were fraudulently sold for adoption abroad in the 1980s.

Up to 11,000 children could have been sold to Europe, with both parties being given fake documents.

Some were reportedly born into "baby farms" that sold children to the west.

Sri Lanka's health minister told the Dutch current affairs programme Zembla he would set up a DNA database to help children find their birth mothers.

About 4,000 children are thought to have been relocated to families in the Netherlands, with others going to other European countries such as Sweden, Denmark, Germany and the UK.

One adoptee called Rowan van Veelen, told the BBC earlier this year that he had travelled back to Sri Lanka to try and find his birth mother 27 years on.

He was part of a Netherlands-based social media network that tried to match Sri Lankan birth mothers to their estranged adopted children.

"The adopted children and the mothers got the wrong information, which makes it really hard," he explained.

"We want to make a DNA bank with all adopted children from [the] Netherlands who can search if we have siblings there.

"Then we could ask other countries like Sweden, Denmark and Germany to give their DNA also in the bank too."

The Dutch filmmakers from Zembla started looking into the allegations after the Dutch Council for the Administration of Criminal Justice and Protection of Juveniles advised the government in November 2016 to consider banning foreign adoptions because of unethical practices in some of the children's origin countries.

Norbert Reinjens, a researcher for Zembla, told the BBC that they had found evidence that all

kind of documents were falsified by adoption

authorities - including birth certificates, the names of children and the identity of biological parents.

"In some institutions there were 'acting mothers' who were paid to pretend to be the biological parents while handing them over," he said.

In the documentary locals allege that some hospital workers

worked alongside the networks. Some new mothers at a hospital in Matugama, western Sri Lanka, were reportedly told their children had died, when they were actually sold abroad for adoption.

One woman told the documentary makers she was paid 2,000 rupees (£23; \$30) by someone connected to the hospital to act as a baby's mother.

Sri Lanka temporarily banned intra-country adoptions in 1987 when one "baby farm" was raided, and 20 newborns were found inside. Reports from the time said the women there were being held in "prisonlike conditions", surrounded by a 10 ft (3m) wall.

Sri Lankan Health Minister Rajitha Senarathne denied the government held any responsibility or knowledge of the networks.

But in an interview with the documentary makers he said he would look into setting up a special office to try and match the children involved. "It is very wrong, it is against human rights of those families - so that has to be investigated. I myself will take the responsibility for that investigation."

One mother, Renuka Abeysinghe,

told the BBC that her daughter was taken in 1992. "I will be very happy if I meet her again. I gave her for adoption because we were poor and we didn't have a way to live.

"They told me they took her to Germany but we had no information after that."

Another, Ms Sirimavathi said she was alone when she gave up her daughter.

"I don't have parents, and all my close relatives were abroad when I got my child. I didn't have anyone. I didn't have a place to stay," she said.

"I cried a lot when giving away the baby, still I am crying.

"My wish is to see her once, I don't want anything from her."

The Dutch State Secretary for Security and Justice confirmed to Zembla he was looking into the allegations. (BBC)



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Methodist & Wesley river Cruise



SLIA celebrate 45th anniversary



Krishna Jayanthi celebrated in Crawley

Trico offices and warehouse destroyed in massive North London fire

The offices and warehouse of Trico were destroyed in a massive fire last week.

Over 120 firefighters fought the huge blaze at the White Hart Lane industrial estate. Ashoka Wijesinghe, Managing Director, has sent us the following notice:

Dear Customers

We are sorry to report that on the night of Monday 18th of September, our offices and warehouse, on White Hart Lane, were destroyed by fire.

Many will have seen on television and online news in the UK, "A huge fire at an industrial estate in White Hart Lane, North London".

All business suffered severe damage. We have not been able to return to the site as fire brigade and police are still investigating the site.

The office and warehouse been moved to a temporary site and we remain open for

business.

We are committed to maintaining our efficient and reliable service to whatever the destination you want to ship your goods to.

Customers can contact us in the normal way:

Tel: 020 8888 8787,

E-mail: info@tricofreight.co.uk

The new address to bring all your goods to is:-

Safe Store Wood Green, 105 Mayes Road, Wood Green, N22 6UP

If you think your goods have been affected by the fire please send an email to the following address:

claims@tricofreight.co.uk

Please ensure to include: date of collection, your invoice no, sender/receiver details, detailed packing list with value of your goods.

After 40 years of service in the UK to many ethnic communities (Sri Lankan/

Pilipinos /Indonesian / Malaysian), this has been our worst moment but we are continuing to operate as before. This has been very difficult week and our thoughts are with those who may have lost their goods in the fire.

We appreciate your patience while we try to find our feet again during this difficult time and we value as ever the continued support of our loyal customers.

Ashoka Wijesinghe, Managing Director.



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