

The Ultimate Salute from South Africa

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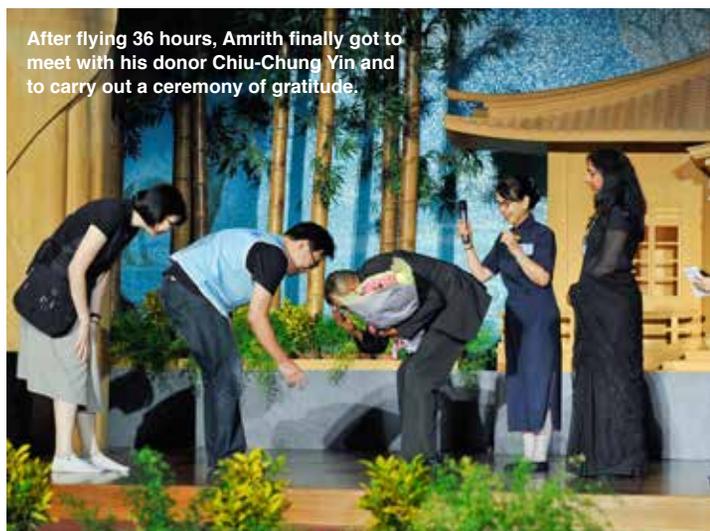
“For me, it’s a miracle to have an African and Asian match,” said Amrith Prithraising of Johannesburg, South Africa. “I am truly thankful for all the people that helped with my rebirth. The fact that I was matched and received transplant from Taiwan demonstrates there are no ethnic, size, or age differences in the human race. We are all one family on this planet.”

Seeing Hope in Taiwan at the Second Match

When he became ill in 2003, Amrith immediately sought help from the World Health Organization. Soon after, he learned that his illness would require a bone marrow donation. Fortunately, a 100% match was found with a donor from Thailand. However the donor pulled out of the opportunity to help. With this loss, Amrith felt like he was falling from heaven to hell. His doctor, however, advised him to “look to other countries”. Two months later, another donor was

found in Taiwan. Although the match was only 70%, it nonetheless ignited a ray of hope.

In the ten years since the bone marrow transplant was performed, Amrith has remained healthy. When asked what differences he feels, he shrugs and grins: “I am not sure if it was the donor or the illness that has made me more appreciate of life.” Before the transplant, he was unadventurous and a methodical thinker. Now, however, he is more open and is often heard saying “OK”.



After flying 36 hours, Amrith finally got to meet with his donor Chiu-Chung Yin and to carry out a ceremony of gratitude.



September 19, 2013, Amrith Prithrajsing, of Indian heritage, gets to experience love and charity from Taiwan, thanks to the bone marrow donation that he received.

In August 2013, Tzu Chi South Africa volunteers invited Amrith and his wife to Taiwan for a donor/recipient reunion. Only then did the couple learn that Taiwan is not the same country as Thailand. At the reunion, Amrith's wife wore a special traditional dress to express their sincere gratitude and respect for Amrith's donor.

The Ultimate Salute: Prostrate, Touch the feet, and then the Forehead

It took Amrith and his wife thirty six hours to fly to Taiwan. His wife said, "We were greeted by Tzu Chi members' humility and kindness when we stepped off the plane." They were also amazed by the exhibitions of Tzu Chi's activities and footprints all over the world in the Jing Si Hall.

Since the transplant, Amrith had often imagined that his donor was a man in his forties, with slightly curly hair, and about 5' 10" tall. When he first met his donor Chiu-Chung Yin, he was happy

to see that Mr. Yin is indeed tall and handsome. After initially hugging tightly, Amrith closed his palms, bowed to the floor, touched Chiu-Chung Yin's feet and then his own forehead – the highest salute one can give to the elderly and benefactors in Indian tradition. His wife, after wiping her tears, then performed the same salute. In response to the couple's ceremonial gratitude, the quiet Chiu-Chung Yin repeatedly said that what he had done was nothing fancier than donating blood.

Chiu-Chung Yin's wife is a member of Tzu Chi Youth. She became attracted to, and married him because of this marrow donation. She felt that a man willing to donate his bone marrow must be a man with a good heart.

During the two days of getting to know Tzu Chi in Taiwan, Amrith and his wife shed many tears and were left with a memory of a lifetime. Amrith's wife said that upon their return she will visit her local Tzu Chi and contribute to the society.