



Priyanga Hettiarachi and Australian Latin Jazz singer Jeremy Meltzer in Sri Lanka.

N49ME212

Song for tsunami orphans

By Maria Bervanakis

A NEW charity for children left orphaned in Sri Lanka after the Boxing Day Tsunami is being launched at Manchester Lane next week.

Melbourne lawyer Priyanga Hettiarachi has set up The Jasmine Foundation to raise money for Sri Lankan orphanages after experiencing the devastation first-hand.

Mr Hettiarachi was on holiday in Sri Lanka with his friend, Australian Latin jazz singer Jeremy Meltzer, when the tsunami hit. The two stayed and helped in the relief camps that were created in the weeks following the tsunami and brought blankets,

medicines and milk powder to give to needy children.

Mr Hettiarachi said money raised by the foundation would be distributed to the St John's orphanages in Batticaloa, eastern Sri Lanka.

"There were six such homes spread across a 50km or so stretch along the east coast. One of them was destroyed by the tsunami, which left five very overcrowded ones," he said.

"And of course there were children in that area who lost parents as a result of the tsunami."

Initially money raised will go towards buying essentials: beds, mattresses and linen and basic toiletries, he said. Longer term it will go towards

buildings and programs to educate and train children, he said.

Mr Meltzer has been living in the US for the past five years but has returned to Melbourne to give two performances at Manchester Lane on June 9 and 16 to launch the charity.

All money raised from ticket sales will go towards the foundation.

Cost: \$75, includes dinner and show or \$35, show only. Bookings essential: 9663 0630.

Donations can be made to The Jasmine Foundation, 18 Hodgson Terrace, Richmond, Melbourne 3121. For more information telephone 9651 2105 or visit jasminefoundation@hotmail.com