

The **GOOD FIGHT**

It's not the easiest of jobs in the world, but these men who champion social enterprises, activism, and human rights tell us why they keep doing what they do.

By **Poon Li-Wei and Amanda Soh**

LANDROVER

DEFENDER

PIAA
LED

ART: ERIKSTEN AND WINE PHOTOGRAPHY / JAS ON LINE

RAJ RIDVAN SINGH

Founder of SOLS24/7,
social entrepreneur and
education revolutionist



Why do you think education is so important for the youth? Was there a particular event or turning point that made you so passionate about the cause you are fighting for?

Living in Papua New Guinea, India, Cambodia, and East Timor showed me that the only way out of poverty and hopelessness for the young is through education. It's the single most powerful weapon one can use to break the cycle of poverty and change their circumstances.

What would you say are some of the more difficult obstacles in the work you do?

It's breaking the mentality people develop from having lived in poverty their whole life. They feel low, lesser than others, and have cemented in

their minds the idea that they can't get out of it – it's also difficult to convince parents to allow one to pursue the path of social change and social greatness. In addition, most donors only want to give donations in small sums, but education is a long-term process. It takes time, effort, and the ability to educate community members. In the same way you would educate your own child, you can't expect him or her to become disciplined and brilliant over the course of a weekend transformation conference.

What motivates you to carry on?

Seeing my children, and how blessed they are to have so much in life, also motivates and inspires me to want to do so much more for the very many children who have so little. Lastly, my wife, who's also my partner in the work I do.

The fact that she's also willing to dedicate her life, time and skills to the poor and less fortunate inspires me.

Could you share some rewarding moments?

Seeing the transformation that the students go through after graduating is truly rewarding. Knowing that my team and I have played a part in directly shaping and transforming the lives of the 300,000-plus students we've trained is something money cannot buy.

How can others help you expand or better SOLS 24/7?

They can support our projects directly, volunteer with us, do their internship with us, or even better, work directly with us. All information can be easily found on www.sols247.org.