APRIL

NEWSLETTER

2024

HELP-O
SRI LANKA

www.helpo-srilanka.org

EDITORIAL

HELP-O is a Non-governmental Organization (NGO) established in 1992 by a team of professionals with commitment to making Sri Lanka a better, happier place to live in harmony with nature.

HELP-O has the following vision: "Equitable Economic Development, Social Justice, and a Safer Environment for All

Its mission is "To identify the need of risks confronted by Sri Lankan communities and implement effective solutions through proven integrated approaches with the participation of stakeholders". The five strategies HELP-O adopts in achieving its mission include, empowering the marginalized community socially and economically, accepting the importance of community participation and leadership, dedicating for protect the environment through an integrated process, protecting human rights and justice, and ensuring sustainable development.

Mission related programs and projects launched by HELP-O focus on the following spheres:

They are Community empowerment, rehabilitation, relief assistance, and protecting human rights, community participation in local governance, community financing, livelihood development, economic resource mobilization, nurturing biodiversity, mitigating the impact of climate change, pollution prevention, waste management, and optimal utilization of marine resources and optimal utilization of forest products.

Overall, HELP-O is an organization dedicated to bringing about a sustainable positive impact on the environment and the lives of people in Sri Lanka through a series of interdependent activities.

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WASTE MANAGEMENGT

GALLE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ADOPTS GROUNDBREAKING SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT BY-LAW

On April 30, 2024, the Galle Municipal Council and the HELP-O organization finalized the Solid Waste Management By-law, a significant step towards cleaner and more sustainable waste management. This milestone was achieved through the "Let's Make Galle a Clean City" waste management cooperation project, which received financial support from the Clean Cities Blue Ocean Program under United States Development Assistance.

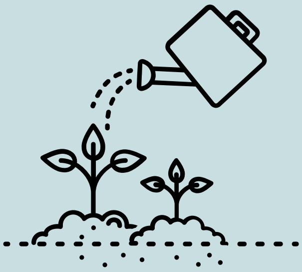
It marked an important moment in Galle's ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship. The venue for the discussion and finalization of the by-law was the "Dakshinapaya" (conference hall belonging to the Ministry of Local Government) Precinct Auditorium. The attendees included public officials from the Galle Municipal Council, HELP-O representatives, legal experts, and project advisors.

Mr. Chatura Welivitiya, the CEO of HELP-O, delivered the opening remarks and emphasized the organization's commitment to supporting initiatives that promote environmental conservation and community welfare in line with recently introduced strategic management action plan. The program, led by the Municipal Commissioner, highlighted the dedication of all parties involved in addressing Galle's waste management challenges.

The Legal Officers, Deputy Commissioner and Consultant Lawyer Mr. Sampath Ratnapura provided legal insights and expertise to ensure the strength and enforceability of the by-law. The program provided a platform for all participants to engage in constructive dialogue, addressing concerns and refining the proposed by-law to align with the city's goals and aspirations.

Public officials, community leaders, and environmental activists expressed their support for the initiative, recognizing the importance of collective action in combating waste pollution. Project advisors Dr. Rohana Ratnayake, Mr. Padmasiri Moonamale, and vice Chairman of HELP-O, Mr. Deshapriya, shared their extensive experience, offering valuable insights that guided the council in developing a comprehensive by-law tailored to Galle's specific needs. HELP-O officials facilitated the collaboration between the council and various stakeholders, ensuring a holistic approach to waste management.

The finalized Solid Waste Management By-law provides clear guidelines for waste collection, segregation, recycling, and disposal, along with penalties for non-compliance. It reflects a comprehensive approach that balances environmental protection, public health, and economic viability



By adopting this by-law, the Galle Municipal Council sets an example for other municipalities, demonstrating its commitment to creating a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable city for future generations.

The collaboration between the council, HELP-O, and other stakeholders showcases the power of partnerships in driving meaningful change. As Galle embarks on its journey towards becoming a clean city, this milestone serves as a testament to the collective efforts of all involved, paving the way for a brighter, greener future.

Written by - Chathura Rajitha

(Project Officer - HELP-O)

Revolutionizing Waste Management in Mohideen Watta: The Bokashi Composting Initiative

In an effort to address the growing waste management issues in Mohideen Watta settlement, the HELP-O organization successfully implemented a groundbreaking program, taking a significant step towards a cleaner and more sustainable future. The program, called "Let's make Galle a clean city," was made possible through the generous financial support of the Clean Cities Blue Ocean Program under the United States Development Assistance. It consisted of a two-phase waste management cooperation project, with the latest phase taking place on April 3, 2023. During this phase, Bokashi household compost bins were distributed to households, following an initial distribution of Bokashi household compost bins and plastic bins to 73 houses on February 15.

This ambitious initiative aims not only to effectively manage organic waste but also to introduce innovative solutions for urban agriculture and address non-biodegradable waste such as plastic, glass, and tin.

Biokings Company, leveraging Japanese technology, is at the forefront of this effort, providing expertise in Bokashi indoor composting systems.

The Bokashi composting method offers a sustainable alternative for organic waste disposal. Unlike traditional composting, Bokashi composting is an anaerobic process that utilizes beneficial microorganisms to ferment kitchen scraps and other organic materials. This method is particularly well-suited for urban settings as it can be done indoors, minimizing space requirements and odors.

By distributing Bokashi household compost bins, Mohideen Watta residents are empowered to efficiently manage their organic waste, reducing the pressure on landfills and producing nutrientrich compost for their gardens. This not only contributes to a cleaner environment but also promotes self-sufficiency and community resilience. Furthermore, the project has broader implications for urban agriculture.

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By encouraging households to compost their organic waste, project aims to lay the foundation for urban farming initiatives within the settlement. Residents can utilize the compost produced from Bokashi bins to grow fresh produce, fostering food security and promoting a healthier lifestyle.

Additionally, the initiative goes beyond organic waste and envisions a holistic approach to waste management, which includes the recycling of non-biodegradable materials. By introducing a market for plastics, glass, and tin, the project aims to incentivize recycling and reduce the environmental impact of these materials.

The success of the Bokashi composting program in Mohideen Watta serves as a model for sustainable waste management in similar communities. It emphasizes the importance of community involvement, innovative technology, and strategic partnerships in addressing pressing environmental challenges.

As Mohideen Watta strives to become a cleaner and greener settlement, initiatives like these pave the way for a more sustainable future, not only for the residents but for the entire city of Galle. With continued support and collaboration, the vision of a clean and thriving city is within reach.

Written by - Yasitha Iresha

(Project Officer - HELP-O)

Empowering Communities through Sustainable Horticulture: Galle's Green Initiative

In an effort to transform Galle into a cleaner and greener city, the collaborative project "Let's Make Galle a Clean City" has been making significant progress in waste management. This initiative, funded by the "Clean Cities Blue Ocean Program" under the United States Development Assistance, aims to revolutionize waste management practices while promoting sustainability.

One important aspect of this project is the implementation of sustainable horticulture practices in the Bombay Castle Estate and Salamia Estate settlements. The Southern Provincial Ministry of Agriculture has provided technical support to introduce an urban planting system in their limited land blocks. As part of this endeavor, the project has introduced innovative methods to effectively utilize organic waste. Manure collected from bokashi bins is being repurposed to enrich the soil and promote environmentally friendly gardening practices.

By reducing waste and encouraging recycling, the project not only aims to clean up the city, but also to foster a culture of sustainability within the community. On April 27, 2024, a significant milestone was achieved with the launch of a vegetable plant distribution program in these settlements. The program aimed to empower local residents and encourage their involvement in sustainable practices. Three types of vegetable plants – eggplant, chilies, and green chilies were distributed to inspire residents to grow their own produce.

The event saw active participation from residents and officials, highlighting the importance of community engagement in sustainable agriculture and waste management. Among the attendees were Mr. Chathura Welivitiya, Chief Executive Officer of HELP-O, and an Agriculture Instructors from the Southern Provincial Department of Agriculture.

Their presence underscored the significance of collaborative efforts in driving positive change. Through the distribution of vegetable plants, residents were not only given the means to grow their own food, but also provided with the knowledge and tools to adopt sustainable horticulture practices. This initiative acts as a catalyst for promoting self-sufficiency, reducing dependence on external food sources, and encouraging a healthier lifestyle within the community.

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By involving residents in activities that promote environmental stewardship, the project aims to create a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the city's cleanliness and sustainability. Beyond the immediate benefits of waste reduction and food production, initiatives like these contribute to the development of resilient and environmentally conscious communities.

Moving forward, the "Let's Make Galle a Clean City" project will continue to implement innovative solutions to address waste management challenges while actively involving residents in sustainable practices. Through collective action and community participation, Galle is on its way to becoming a shining example of environmental sustainability and resilience.

Written by - Chathura Rajitha
(Project Officer - HELP-O)

P Litter CCTV

Rivers are one of the major pathways of plastic debris into the ocean. These plastics in the rivers may be disposed of through direct dumping into the river flow, catalyzed by the rain and exacerbated by the flooding events.

The estimation and flux monitoring of floating plastic in the river requires stationary cameras for continuous image capturing at locations with recording evidence of floating plastics.

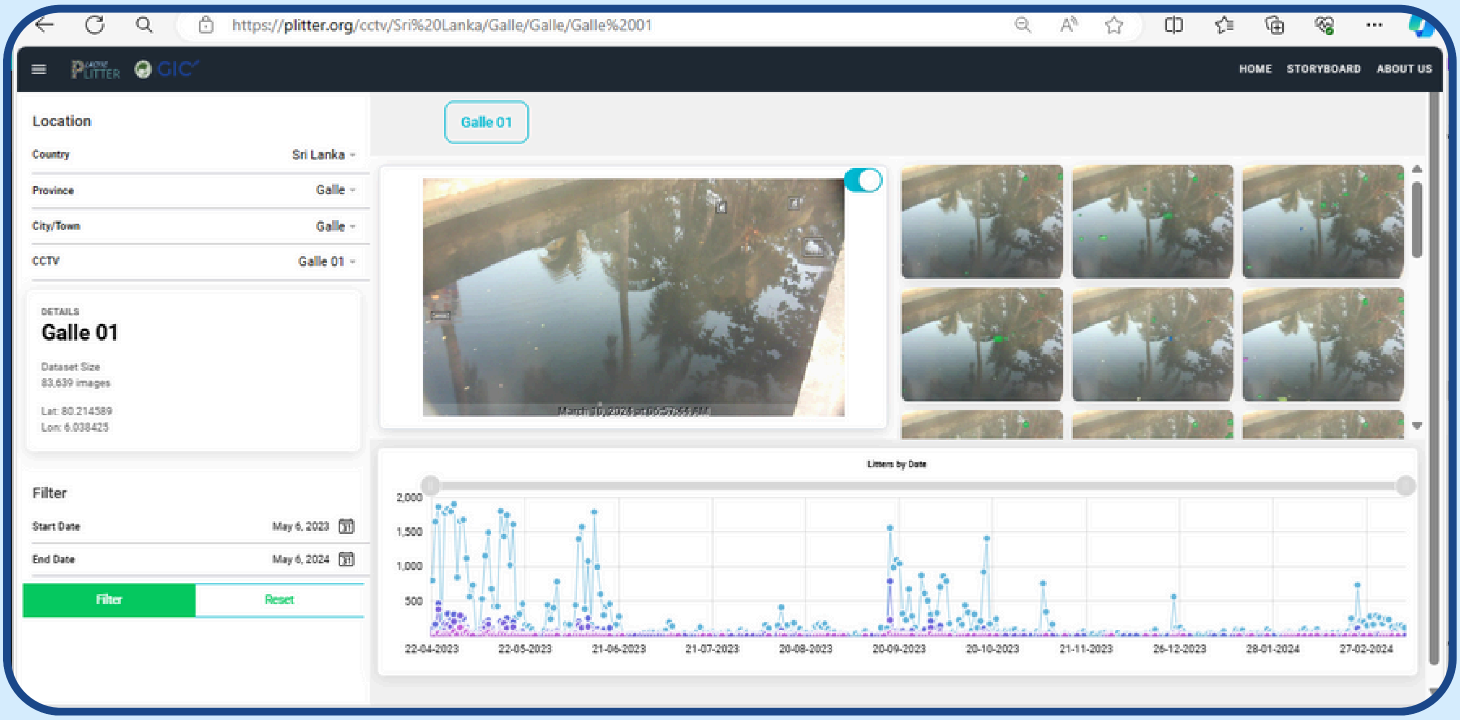
We installed multiple cameras on the Mekong River near the Golden Triangle in Chiang Rai Thailand and our cameras have been in continuous function from November 2021 to till date. The advantage of our camera is AI-enabled to automatically detect floating plastics and have low cost.

P Litter Plastic Detection Galle so far [2023 April 22 - 2024 April 31]

Plastic - 528,131
Plastic Bottles - 15156
Straws - 56320
Trash Bag - 1447
Styrofoam - 7585

Norad IGES

We can get a detailed anlysis through www.plitter.org website.



Success Stories of e-Sabha

We received the e-Sabha app from HELP-O, and training sessions were conducted by Aqasoft. This mobile application is highly useful and important for us as it serves as a data management system. Previously, we faced challenges in accepting digital complaints, but the e-Sabha app provides a systematic and easy method for complaint resolution. Through this app, we can maintain direct communication with customers and easily receive their feedback on our service. Additionally, it stores data systematically, enabling us to access previous records efficiently

Mr. Sawmar Adil
chief community development officer
Galle Municipal Council .

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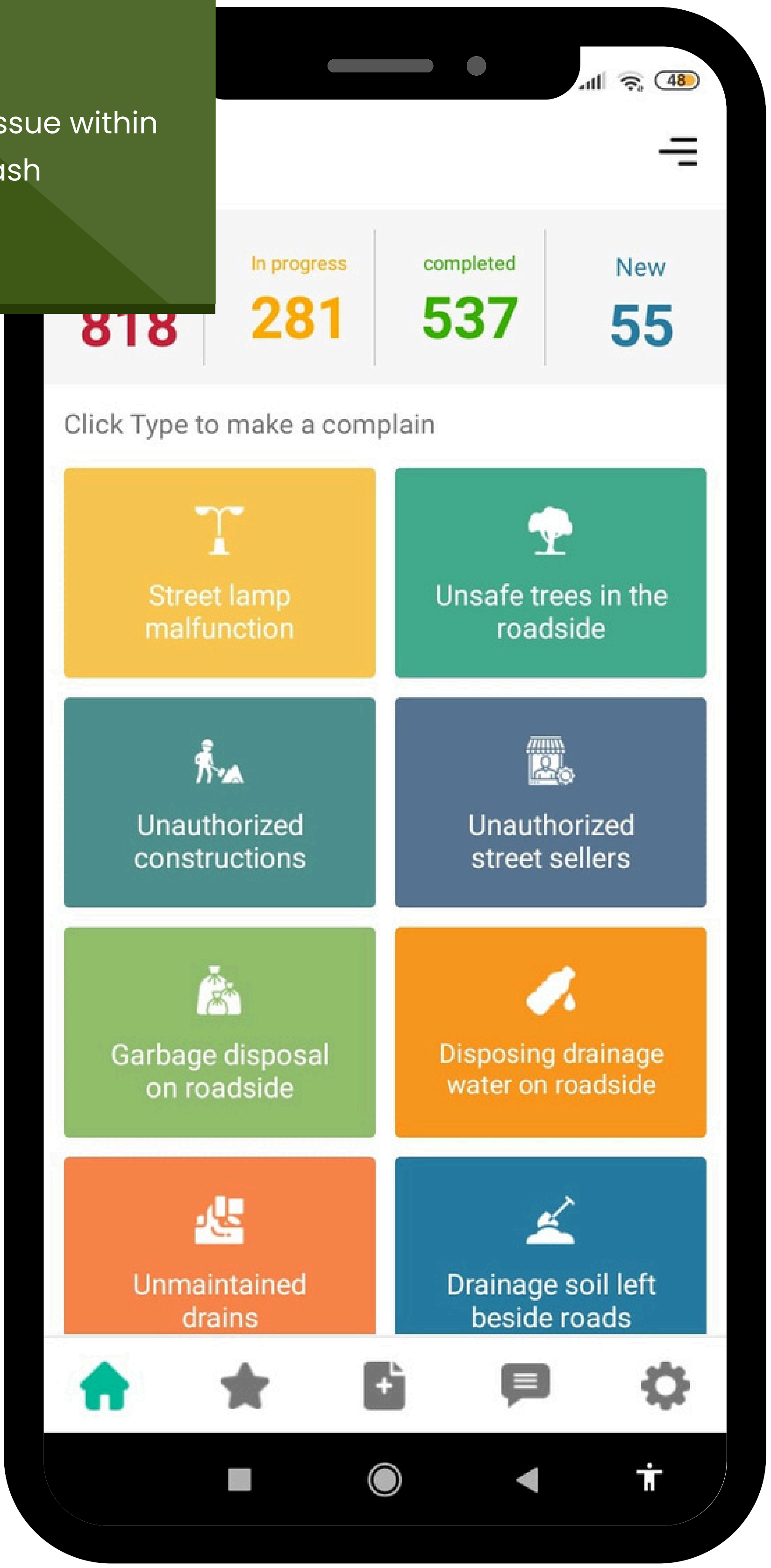
e-Sabha

Now you can send your public issue within your area to the councils in a flash



Easy To Use

To register visit Aby your mobile and download eSabha App

User Friendly

Our app is designed to be easily navigable for users.

Now you can visit the app and send your problem with related photos

GET IT ON Google Play

DOWNLOAD NOW

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NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Read e-Paper - [CLICK](#) **2024.04.09**

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Aruna Newspaper article English translate

In addressing common issues like malfunctioning public utilities or other defects in villages and cities, traditional methods of reporting to local authorities often took time and sometimes went unnoticed. However, to streamline this process, a mobile application named 'e-Sabha' has been introduced, allowing residents to report problems directly to relevant authorities.

Initially piloted in Galle district, 'e-Sabha' has now expanded its reach to several local government agencies in the southern province. Developed by HELP-O Galle, this app allows users to notify authorities about various issues through photos, either nominally or anonymously, in Sinhala, Tamil, or English.

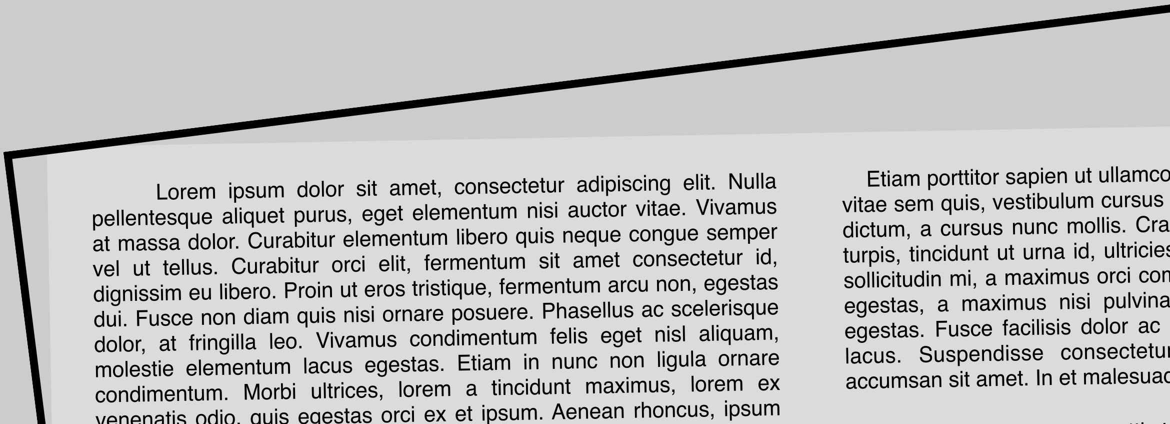
Chatura Welivitiya, the president and CEO of HELP-O, stated that the idea for 'E-sabha' stemmed from the observation that many people felt disconnected from local government services. They often only associated local councils with tasks like road construction and streetlight installation, while failing to report issues such as burnt-out street lamps.

To bridge this gap, 'e-Sabha' was launched three years ago in collaboration with ten local government agencies in Galle district. The app enables users to send photos and videos of the issue along with the location and a brief description. Once a complaint is submitted, users receive a confirmation message. Local authorities have received over a thousand complaints through the app, with 487 already resolved.

Here's how the process works: When a user spots an issue like a burnt-out street lamp, they take three photos using the app, which automatically tags the location. The user then selects the district and relevant local authority and submits the complaint with a brief description. This information is then forwarded to the respective department officials. After the complaint is resolved, the user receives a notification. Additionally, the app allows local authorities to send photographs of the resolved issue if necessary.

Complaints forwarded through 'e-Sabha' are not limited to the user's residential area. For example, if a complaint about a Galle Municipal Council area issue is sent to Hikkaduwa Municipal Council, it will be forwarded accordingly. Complaints unrelated to local government agencies are directed to relevant government agencies for resolution.

The success of 'e-Sabha' has led to plans to expand its coverage to all local government bodies in Galle district. The app is already operational in five local government bodies in Hambantota district, five in Matara district, and in Puttalam Municipal Council, Halawatha Municipal Council, Arachchikattuwa, and Kalpitiya local councils in Puttalam district. Currently, over two thousand people are using the app to report issues, including sending photos and videos for better clarity.



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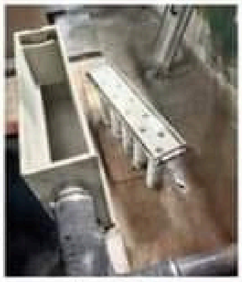

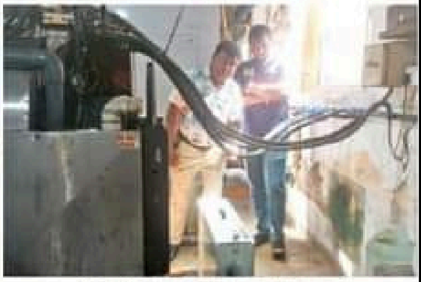

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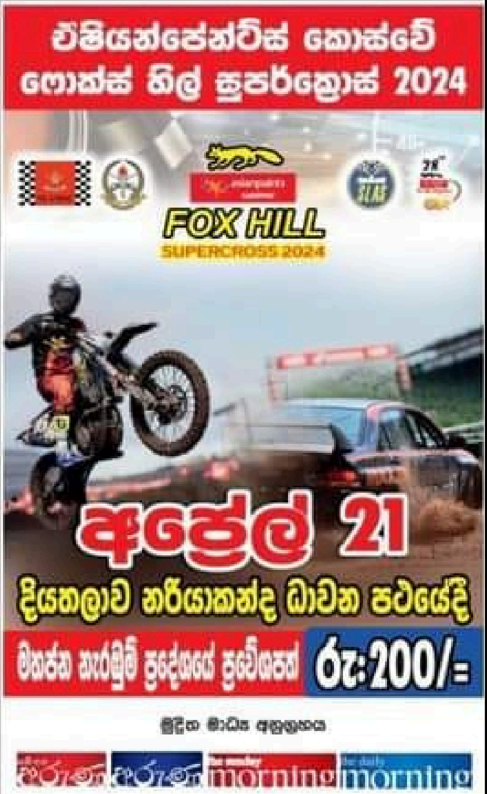

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"Galle HELP-O Welcomes the New Year with Enthusiasm!"

" Galle HELP-O kicks off the New Year with enthusiasm! Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Chathura Welivitiya, and Board Member, Mr. Ranjith Dharmasiri and all HELP-O Staff joined in the inaugural activities, radiating positivity and determination. "

An annual New year festival was held at HELP-O premises with the participation of HELP-O staff and board members. For this, several cultural elements and annual games were included. Valuable gifts were given to the winners by the organization.

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HELP-O SRI LANKA

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