

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

2025



**HELP-O
SRI LANKA**





ABOUT US

HELP-O is a non-governmental organization (NGO) established in 1992 to serve the local community by making it a better, happier place to live in harmony with nature.

The vision of the organization is "Equitable Economic Development, Social Justice, and a Safer Environment for All," while the mission is "To identify the 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, recognizing the importance of community participation and leadership, dedicating efforts to protecting the environment through an integrated process, safeguarding human rights and justice, and ensuring sustainable development.

Our programs and projects mainly focus on community empowerment, rehabilitation, relief assistance, 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, optimal utilization of marine resources, and optimal utilization of forest products.

Our organization is dedicated to making a sustainable positive impact on the environment and the lives of people in Sri Lanka through a multisectoral approach in different sectors.

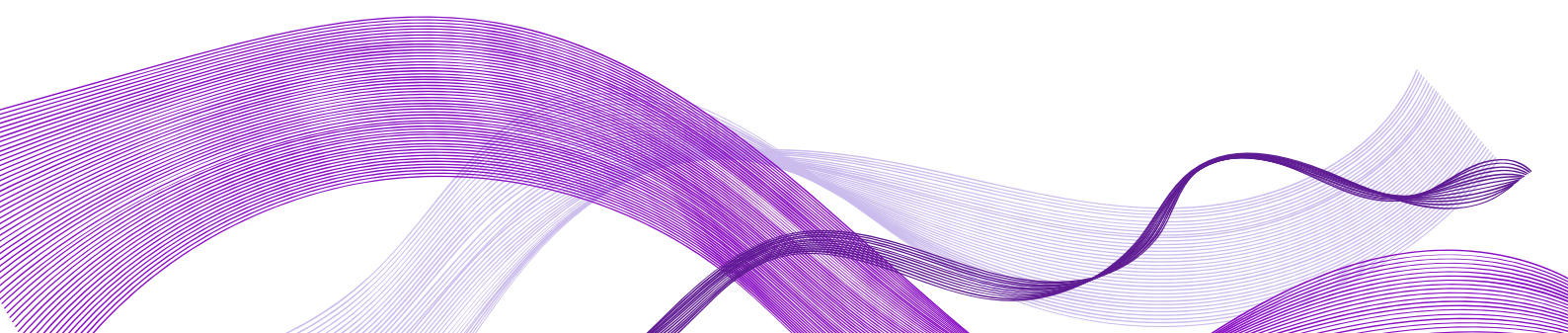


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The Year-End Pirith Ceremony of HELP-O



The year-end Pirith chanting ceremony of HELP-O took place on December 31, 2024, at the institution's premises, bringing together religious and community leaders to invoke blessings for the coming year. The solemn event was graced by the Maha Sangha, led by esteemed Buddhist clergy, creating an atmosphere of spiritual harmony and devotion.

The religious observances were presided over by the Chief of the Galle Kaluwella International Buddhist Center, the Maha Nayaka of the Sri Saddhamma Yukthika Parshana of the Sri Lanka Amarapura Maha Nikaya, the Most Venerable Kanumuldeniye Chandavimalabhidhana Maha Thero. Accompanying him was the Chief Judicial Sangha Nayaka of the Amarapura Sri Saddhammawansa Maha Nikaya and the Chief Judicial Sangha Nayaka of the Galle, Matara, and Hambantota three-districts, Pallawela Sumedhawansa Na Thero. Their presence added immense spiritual significance to the event, as they chanted sacred verses and bestowed blessings upon the attendees.

Representing the lay community, several distinguished guests attended the ceremony. Among them was Hon. Thilanka U. Gamage, Member of Parliament for the Galle District. Also present was Acting Magistrate and Chairman of HELP-O, Mr. Mapalagama Wimalaratne Godagama, whose leadership has been instrumental in the organization's success.

The event was further honored by the participation of Dr. Chathura Welivitiya, Founder and CEO of Help-O, alongside the Vice Chairman of HELP-O, former Ministry Secretary Dr. Sirisena Deshapriya, and the Project Advisor of HELP-O, former Ministry Secretary Dr. Ashoka Siriwardena. Their presence underscored the organization's commitment to community welfare and spiritual enrichment. Additionally, members of the Board of Directors and dedicated staff members gathered to mark this auspicious occasion.







Highlights of the morning Almsgiving of the New Year 2025





Television Programme for e-sabha Mobile Application



The Ayubowan Sri Lanka TV program, aired on Swarnawahini on December 20, 2024, featured an insightful discussion on how to use the eSabha mobile application in local government institutions.

This episode brought together key experts to share their knowledge and experiences.

- Dr. Chathuru Welivitiya – CEO of HELP-O
- Mrs. Manjula Dahanayake – Secretary of Akmeemana Pradeshiya Sabha
- Mr. Jayasekara – Secretary of Katuwana Pradeshiya Sabha

The discussion focused on the importance of digital transformation in local governance, highlighting how the eSabha app enhances efficiency, transparency, and accessibility in administrative processes.



[Television Programme Link](#)

Establishment of Community Based Organization Forum of Bentota Pradeshiya Sabha

The Community Forum under the Hadata Manala project was officially established in January 6, 2025 at the Bentota Pradeshiya Sabha meeting hall. This initiative aims to strengthen community engagement and local development within the Bentota Pradeshiya Sabha area.

The event saw the participation of key stakeholders, including the Secretary of the Bentota Pradeshiya Sabha, the Community Development Officer, and Mr. Lahiru Udumalagala, Project Manager of the 'Right to Voice' initiative representing Help-O. Leaders of various community organizations also attended, underscoring the collaborative effort to enhance local governance and civic participation.

The forum is expected to serve as a platform for community discussions, addressing local issues and ensuring that the voices of residents are heard in the decision-making process.



Newly Elected Leadership of Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Briefed on e-Sabha Mobile Application

On January 10, 2025, at 3:30 PM, the newly elected Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha, along with its members, participated in an informative session on the e-Sabha mobile application under the "Right to Voice" project. The event was held at the Wakwella Management Development and Training Center and was aimed at familiarizing local government representatives with the digital platform designed to enhance administrative efficiency and public engagement.

The briefing session was conducted by representatives from HELP-O, a leading organization dedicated to sustainable community development and governance transformation. Prominent figures in attendance included HELP-O CEO Dr. Chathuru Welivitiya, Project Advisor and Former Ministry Secretary Dr. Ashoka Siriwardena, and Project Manager Lahiru Udumalagala. Their insights and expertise provided valuable guidance on the functionalities and benefits of the e-Sabha mobile application.

During the session, participants engaged in discussions on the potential impact of the e-Sabha application, addressing concerns and exploring ways to maximize its effectiveness. The session highlighted key features such as citizen complaint management, digital document processing, and seamless communication channels between officials and residents.



The Monthly Meeting of the Karandeniya "Right to Voice" Community-Based Organization Forum

The monthly meeting of the Karandeniya "Right to Voice" Community-Based Organization Forum was held on January 17th at the Pradeshiya Sabha Community Center. This important gathering saw the participation of Karandeniya Pradeshiya Sabha Secretary, Mr. Ravindra Lasantha, and Community Development Officer, Mr. Pubudu Priyantha, along with representatives of various community organizations and local residents.

The meeting served as a platform for discussing pressing community issues, sharing development plans, and strengthening the collaboration between local authorities and grassroots organizations. Mr. Ravindra Lasantha emphasized the significance of community-based forums in addressing social concerns and ensuring the voices of the people are heard in governance and decision-making processes.

The "Right to Voice" Community-Based Organization Forum continues to serve as a vital space for local participation, fostering transparency and active civic engagement in the Karandeniya region.



Installation of Esabha Billboards Local Government Institutions in the Southern Province

The installation of Esabha billboards is set to take place across 20 local government institutions in the Galle, Matara, and Hambantota districts. This initiative aims to enhance public awareness and civic engagement by providing vital information to local communities. Each local government institution will receive one billboard, with the flexibility to secure additional sponsorships and install more billboards at their discretion.

The project is being implemented under the guidance of the HELP-O organization, a well-established entity committed to sustainable community development. The initiative is further supported by Pact-BCS-USAID as part of the 'Right to Voice' project, which focuses on strengthening democratic governance and ensuring that citizens are well-informed and empowered to participate in local decision-making processes.

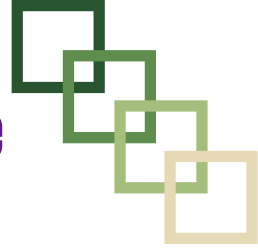
Purpose and Impact of the Billboards

The installation of these billboards serves multiple purposes:

- **Public Awareness:** The billboards will display important civic information, government notices, and updates on local governance matters, ensuring transparency.
- **Community Engagement:** By providing easy access to crucial information, the initiative encourages public participation in governance.
- **Sponsorship Opportunities:** Local councils have the option to seek additional sponsorships, allowing for further expansion of the initiative and customization of billboard content to meet community needs.



Television Programme for e-sabha Mobile Application



The Ayubowan Sri Lanka TV program, broadcast on Swarnawahini on Friday, January 10, 2025, at 9:45 AM, featured an insightful discussion on how individuals with special needs benefit from the eSabha app and how local government institutions respond to its impact.

This episode highlighted the role of technology in promoting accessibility and civic engagement for people with disabilities. Viewers had the opportunity to meet and hear from key individuals involved in this initiative:

- **Mr. Nandasena Wanigasinghe** – Honorary Chairman of the Tangalle Hadata Manala Community Organization Forum and the Hambantota Special Needs People's Self-Help Organization.
- **Mr. Lalith Gamini** – Secretary of the Poddala Pradeshiya Sabha, Galle.
- **Mr. Lahiru Maduranga Udumalagala** – Project Manager of HELP-O's Right to Voice initiative.



[TV Progame link](#)

The discussion explored how the eSabha app enables individuals with special needs to access local government services more efficiently, voice their concerns, and participate in decision-making processes. Additionally, government representatives shared their perspectives on adapting policies and services to be more inclusive.

This episode underscored the importance of digital solutions in bridging gaps between communities and institutions, fostering a more inclusive society for all.

Technical Consultation Meeting on Food Loss and Waste Prevention



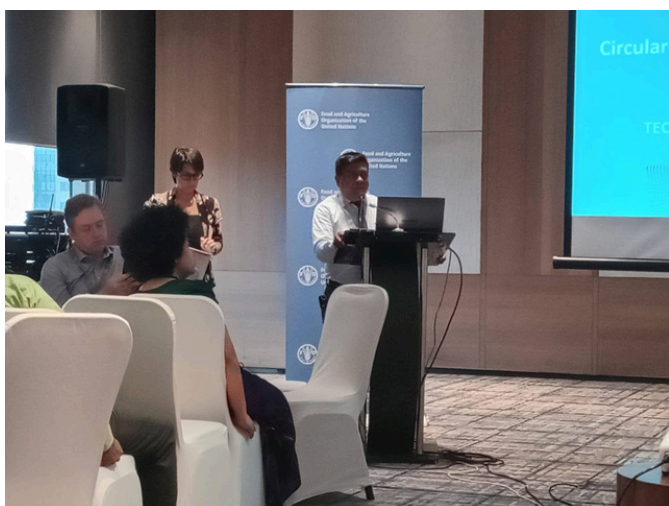
The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) invites experts to participate as resource persons in a technical meeting focused on food loss and waste prevention and management. This important event will bring together professionals from various sectors to explore innovative solutions and challenges in adopting circular economy practices in Sri Lanka.

As a key platform for knowledge exchange, the meeting will provide valuable insights into effective strategies for reducing food waste and promoting sustainable practices. Your expertise and contributions will be instrumental in shaping discussions and driving impactful change in food loss prevention.

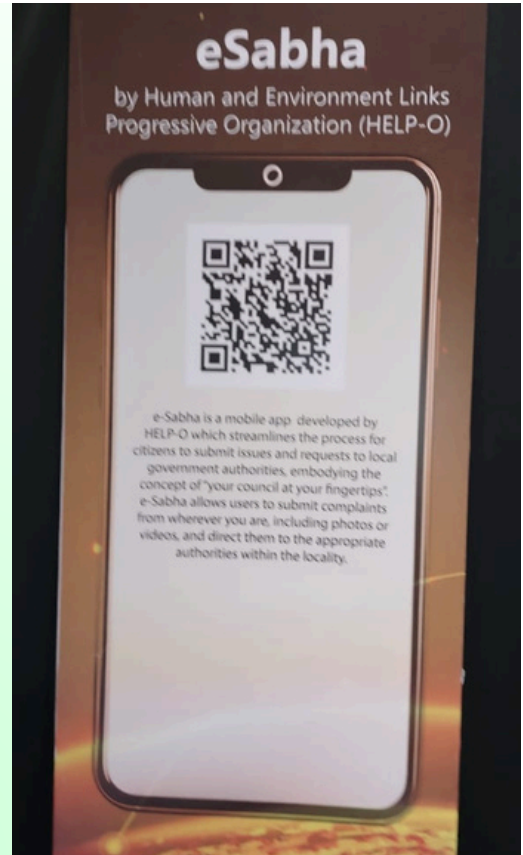
We look forward to your participation in this critical conversation.

Website Link : <https://www.helpoecogreen.lk/>

Facebook Page Link : <https://www.facebook.com/HelpoEcogreen>



Project Closure - South Asian Grant Programme Of The Asia Foundation





Success Stories

Integrating Community Complaints into the e-Sabha App at Akmeemana Pradeshiya Sabha

The Akmeemana Pradeshiya Sabha has taken a significant step towards enhancing citizen engagement and improving complaint management by integrating all community complaints into the e-Sabha app. This initiative ensures that every complaint, whether submitted traditionally or via the app, is addressed efficiently, fostering a more transparent and responsive local governance system.

Addressing the Challenge

Despite the e-Sabha app's effectiveness, many community members continued to submit complaints through traditional methods such as written letters and in-person visits. This fragmented approach led to delays and inconsistencies in complaint resolution. Recognizing this challenge, the Akmeemana Pradeshiya Sabha sought to centralize all complaints within the e-Sabha app to streamline processes and improve service delivery.

A Comprehensive Integration Strategy

To achieve full integration, the Pradeshiya Sabha implemented a structured approach, including:

- **Staff Training:** Employees were trained to input manually submitted complaints into the e-Sabha app, ensuring that all concerns were documented and addressed.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Community outreach efforts, including meetings, brochures, and social media engagement, educated citizens on the benefits of using the e-Sabha app.
- **Dedicated Complaint Management Team:** A specialized team was formed to oversee the integration process, ensuring timely follow-up and resolution of all logged complaints.

Implementation and Impact

With the integration in place, all complaints are now systematically entered into the e-Sabha app, providing real-time tracking and streamlined resolutions. Key benefits include:

- **Improved Response Times:** Centralizing complaints has enabled quicker resolutions, enhancing community trust.
- **Greater Citizen Participation:** The initiative has encouraged more residents to engage with the app, reinforcing confidence in the local government.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** The collected data allows the Pradeshiya Sabha to identify recurring issues and allocate resources effectively.

A Model for Future Governance

The success of this initiative serves as an exemplary model for other local councils aiming to improve citizen engagement. By embracing technology, the Akmeemana Pradeshiya Sabha has fostered a culture of transparency, accountability, and efficiency in service delivery.

Conclusion

This initiative demonstrates the transformative potential of digital solutions in governance. By ensuring that all complaints are captured and addressed through a unified platform, the Akmeemana Pradeshiya Sabha is empowering citizens and paving the way for a more connected and engaged community.





Experience Seamless Local Governance with the e-Sabha App

The Galle Nagoda Pradeshiya Sabha has earned special recognition from the community for its exceptional service through the e-Sabha application. This innovative platform allows residents to engage directly with their local authority, making communication more efficient and transparent.

Take advantage of this convenient service by downloading the e-Sabha app today from the Play Store or App Store. Stay connected, voice your concerns, and be a part of improving your community!



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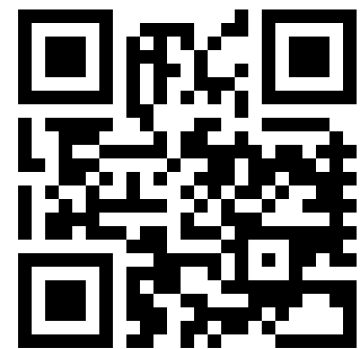
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