



# Food to Tea-Estate Workers in Galaha



To celebrate the New Year, Buddhist Relief Mission distributed food packets to 60 needy families on a tea estate in Galaha. For the occasion, Lily led a group from the Ayappa Society to the village about 25 kilometers from Kandy. The last leg of the journey was through the jungle without a discernable road. Lily was told that no one ventures out at night for fear of wild animals.

Conditions for most estate workers are difficult. They live in row houses, with little privacy and minimal sanitation. The daily wage is only 950 rupees (\$3). Many estate schools are only primary level, and few students continue to high school. Only about 1% go to university.



Some of the pickers said they had so little money that they were having to skip meals and felt forced to send their children to work.  
"If we work 22 or 23 days, because of all the cuts we only get about 15 or 16 days' worth of pay"  
- *The Guardian*, 23 May 2023  
<<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/may/23/we-give-our-blood-so-they-live-comfortably-sri-lankas-tea-pickers-say-they-go-hungry-and-live-in-squalor>>



The situation throughout the country remains dire. Many families are dependent on food aid to survive. Buddhist Relief Mission is determined to continue helping as many as we can for as long as we can.



**A year of cost cutting and starvation predicted for 2024**  
*Daily Mirror*, 29 December 2023

- Although the budget for Agriculture was recently discussed in Parliament, the government overlooked the proposals from the opposition concerning food security.
- According to the data provided by the Department of Census and Statistics 5.7 million people in Sri Lanka require humanitarian aid for their survival.
- The monthly income for 40% of Sri Lanka's population is 29,600 rupees, for 20% it is 17,500 rupees. [*Estimated monthly food expense for one person is 30,000 rupees.*]
- Parents are finding it challenging to prioritise their children's nutrition.
- With the VAT hike, rice is projected to rise to Rs 300 per kg. [*50% increase*]
- According to current data available regarding weather, the country is expected to experience a drought in 2024.

<<https://www.dailymirror.lk/news-features/A-year-of-cost-cutting-And-starvation-predicted-for-2024/131-274016>>



Your donations will help Buddhist Relief Mission provide food, medicine, and other essentials to families, students, schools, monasteries, hospitals, and other institutions in Sri Lanka during this economic crisis. Thank you for your generous support!



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