

## Completing Distribution on the Tea Estate

On November 12, just two days before her cataract surgery, Lily and her family accompanied a delegation from the Ayappa Society in Kandy to deliver rice and dry rations from Buddhist Relief Mission to the remaining 150 families on the tea estate in Nuwara Eliya. The event was organized by the priests of the Hindu temple on the estate. As you can see from the smiling faces, everyone rejoiced in sharing merit with the donors from around the world.

Sadhu! Sadhu!! Sadhu!!! to all who made this joyous occasion possible! As we receive more donations, the distribution will continue.

### According to a recent UNICEF report on Sri Lanka:

5.7 million people, including 2.3 million children, are in dire need of food support

15.7 percent of children under 5 are suffering from malnutrition.

children could face severe stunting and death because their families are starving

malnutrition in Sri Lanka is the second worst in South Asia and the tenth worst in the world

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# A New Donation of Food to Blue Rose Special School and Training Centre



Several months ago, Buddhist Relief Mission donated a parcel of dry rations to the family of each student of Blue Rose School in Kandy. Recently, we contacted the Principal, and she informed us that the school had begun serving lunches to the students. After receiving the list, we were able to provide two three-wheelers full of provisions. Here is an excerpt from the letter of appreciation we received:

Due to the Covid pandemic and the economic situation in Sri Lanka, in which parents began to find it difficult to provide lunch packets for students to bring to school, attendance dropped from 60 students per day to an average of only 20. One of our donors suggested providing a mid-day meal. Initially, this was a very big challenge as the food prices were skyrocketing and labour fees were high. We wondered whether the cooking could be handled by the Vocational Training Unit (VTU), and this has been successful. Since August, the VTU (2 staff members and 15 students) have been preparing simple but nutritious and healthy meals 3 days a week—Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. (Due to the high cost of transport we keep the school closed on Wednesdays.)

As a result of this mid-day meal program, we have seen very interesting changes in the school. Student attendance improved to an average of 40 students a day. Some parents got together and offered not only to provide food for Friday, but also to cook. The VTU students have received a little pocket money for their input into the program. Adult students feel valued and enjoy being part of everyone's meal preparation. Autistic students, who depended on specially prepared meals from home, enjoy the meals provided by the school. The VTU Students have increased their skills in preparing snacks and are encouraged to prepare their own snacks. Finally, many well-wishers have decided to celebrate their birthdays or special days by contributing to the midday meal.

When the program began the cost per day for a simple meal for all the students was Rs. 5000, but it has increased to Rs.12,500.



The hunger crisis in Sri Lanka is worsening every day. Buddhist Relief Mission is working through a growing network of volunteers to provide much-needed food and medicine to as many communities and institutions as our funds allow. Donations, large and small, are greatly appreciated. 100% of every donation goes to charity. There is no overhead. BRM is a 501(c)3 organization, and all USA donations are IRS tax-deductible.



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# A Marvelous Community Youth Initiative



Several years ago, a university student, Manjula, contacted Buddhist Relief Mission for assistance. The temple in his village, near Kurunegala, was badly in need of repairs. We visited the community and met the school principal, other local officials, and the monks of the temple. We were told that villagers would do all the work. Happily, we could provide the funds, and the job was successfully completed.

We kept in touch, off and on, and Manjula finished his studies. The community was affected by Covid, of course, and local plantations were severely impacted by the government's fertilizer ban and the economic collapse.

Last month, Manjula again took the initiative and asked whether BRM could provide food parcels for one hundred distressed families. Given fuel shortages and the high cost of transportation, we asked him to find out what was possible locally. He readily agreed, and we were able to transfer the funds. This is his report:




To ensure that the one hundred neediest families received the dry ration parcels you gave us the money for, I personally checked the list of recommended families which I had gotten from village community heads or Grama Sevaka. Then, to reduce the cost, we went to local wholesale shops who gave us low prices for buying rice and beans in bulk. Likewise, we went to a local coconut mill with recycled bottles to buy coconut oil. The cloth bags were purchased from a small sewing business. In this way, we were able to reduce the cost for each dry ration pack without losing any quality. Also, this helped to support our local businesses which are facing great difficulties in these hard times. We had free transportation support, thanks to friends and community members, who volunteered their own vehicles.



All the parcels were distributed in a remarkable ceremony in the community center. Manjula and his friends made sure we were able to attend the ceremony via ZOOM. It was extremely well-organized, and the distribution was beautifully managed. Congratulations and much thanks to Manjula and his friends!



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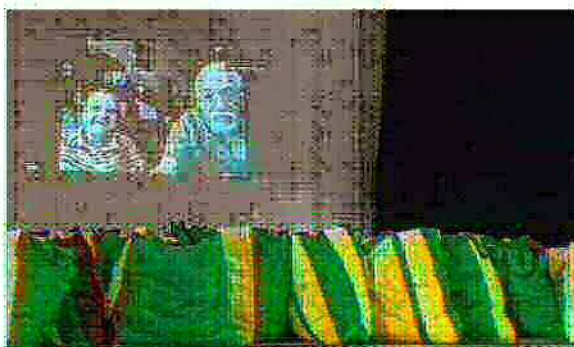
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## Buddhist Relief Mission

# Holiday Cheer for Orphans in Kandy



On December 23, Buddhist Relief Mission delivered cake, fruit, yoghurt, vegetables, dry rations, baby formula, diapers, cough syrup, coloring books, crayons, and many stuffed animals to Tikiri Sevana, an orphanage in the hills of Kandy, for the twenty children there.



Please help support our distribution of food and medicine to families and institutions suffering from severe shortages during this economic crisis in Sri Lanka.



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# Cooperation and Sharing Merit in Distribution of Food in Kandy



## Tourist Police

Buddhist Relief Mission was happy to cooperate with Kandy Tourist Police in distributing parcels to twenty-six needy families in Kandy. We received this letter from the representative.



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Dear Buddhist Relief Mission,  
The people of the Kandy Charity Project extend their heartfelt wishes. All the families are very grateful for your donation. May you and all your donors prosper and be happy and healthy.

Sincerely,  
G. T. Indrajith

An acute economic crisis since early 2022 has caused severe food insecurity in Sri Lanka, and the situation is predicted to deteriorate between October 2022 and February 2023. An estimated 6.2 million people (28 per cent of the population) are moderately acute food insecure, while 66,000 people are severely acute food insecure. Two in five households (41.8 per cent) spend more than 75 per cent of their expenditures on purchasing food, leaving little to spend on health and education. Many families have exhausted their savings and are struggling due to crippling inflation. -From a UNICEF report in December 2022

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## Medical Equipment

In addition to distributing food and providing medicine, Buddhist Relief Mission has purchased a bedside commode, a wheelchair, and a walker, which we lend out for as long as they are needed. We hope to expand this program, as well.



## Lighthouse Church

Several times, the Pastor of Lighthouse Church in Anniwatte has identified needy families and helped us distribute numerous parcels of dry rations. We are grateful for the cooperation of local organizations. We sincerely believe that, in carrying out this project, we can all be STRONGER TOGETHER!



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# Food Parcels for One Hundred Fifty Families in Monaragala



In celebration of the New Year and in memory of the President of the Ayappa Society of Kandy, who passed away in December, Buddhist Relief Mission donated parcels of dry rations to 150 families in a poor village in Monaragala, Uva, Sri Lanka. The parcels were distributed by members of the Ayappa Society on January 5.

Buddhist Relief Mission has worked closely with the Ayappa Society and other organizations in identifying needy families and distributing food parcels and medicine. The need is great throughout the country.

Donations are deeply appreciated.



About one in four households have adopted crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies, such as selling productive assets, reducing essential healthcare expenses, and withdrawing children from school.

More and more Sri Lankans are eating less—and eating less nutritious food—as the island nation shrinks further into poverty. Experts say the unending economic crisis has sharply upped the poverty graph in a country once compared with Singapore.

One of the regions most severely affected is Monaragala in Uva Province.  
—www.thefederal.com



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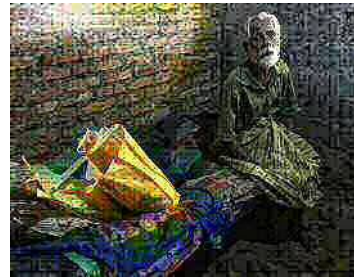
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# Distribution of Dry Rations in Memory of Ven. Vimala



On February 3, 2023, Buddhist Relief Mission offered parcels of dry rations to 79 families in memory of Ven. Vimala, who died January 3 at the age of 79. 49 parcels were given out at the Kandy Tourist Police Station. Parcels were delivered to the homes of 30 families in a village in Halloluwa, across the river from Kandy. Here is the link to a short video showing the difficult trek to some of the houses.

<https://www.brelief.org/support/Halloluwa.mp4>

In Memory of Ven. Vimala, dry rations were also given to Ven. Nanda Theri, the Mother Teresa Center for the Handicapped, and an elders' home in Kandy.

The economic crisis is worsening every day, and more and more families face dire food insecurity. As long as donations are received, Buddhist Relief Mission will continue to distribute food parcels to the needy.



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# Providing Lunch for OPD Cancer Patients in Kandy

Kandy National Hospital treats many cancer patients every day. Patients from out of town often leave home without breakfast. Furthermore, many cannot afford the time or money to buy lunch while being treated. During chemotherapy treatment, it is important for patients to maintain a healthy diet. Treatment on an empty stomach may actually increase nausea and other side effects. The Kandy Cancer Society is distributing nutritious lunch packets to these OPD patients. This is particularly critical during the current economic crisis in Sri Lanka with skyrocketing inflation. This program requires only 15,000 rupees (US\$42) per day, but even this amount is beyond the Society's budget.



Buddhist Relief Mission is supporting this program and invites you to join, perhaps in honor of a loved one or a special occasion. All donations, large and small, will be greatly appreciated and will be of great benefit to vulnerable cancer patients.

Thank you for your generosity.



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You may also make a general donation for food and medicine relief to families during the crisis in Sri Lanka.

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## Delivering Food to 200 Families on a Tea Estate in Kotagala



The Tamil tea plantation workers are among the most deprived sections in the country in terms of economic, social and political rights. The on-going economic crisis in Sri Lanka, though it has affected people of all races and places, has hit these people the most, not least because for many years these people have been increasingly marginalised in the country with a steady decline in rights. Ironically, it is these hill country people who are the backbone of Sri Lanka's economy — more than 50% of the foreign exchange earned by the country is from tea and rubber production and exports.



Even before the economic crisis there was 35% malnutrition among the hill country people. Following the crisis, UNICEF has reported that Sri Lanka has the highest malnutrition among children in the whole of southeast Asia. No doubt the malnutrition has increased further in the hill country, too.

(Adapted from [innathi.com/2022/08/10/plantation-famils-of-sri-lanka-face-a-mourtain-of-tribles/60428/](http://innathi.com/2022/08/10/plantation-famils-of-sri-lanka-face-a-mourtain-of-tribles/60428/))



On March 18, Buddhist Relief Mission, in cooperation with the Ayappa Society of Kandy, was able to send a truck to a plantation in Kotagala, near Hatton, and deliver parcels of dry rations to 200 families, our largest donation to date. It was an extremely well-organized and joyous event.



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Click this photo to watch a dance performed in celebration of the donation.



**Buddhist Relief Mission**



# One Hundred Families in Hatton



In February 2023, in cooperation with the Kandy Ayappa Society, Buddhist Relief Mission delivered food to 100 families on a tea estate in Hatton. These workers have been hit particularly hard by the economic crisis in Sri Lanka. Sadly, much more relief is needed throughout the country. In March, food will be delivered to 200 more families in another village nearby. Sadhu! Sadhu!! Sadhu!!! to all of our donors who make this work possible!



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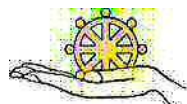
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