



### **Delivering Food** Parcels to Families on a Tea Estate in Kandapola



On November 18, Buddhist Relief Mission delivered parcels of food to 125 families in Kandapola, a village on a tea estate near Nuwara Eliya. The delegation, consisting of Lily, her family, and several members of the Ayappa Society, left Kandy at five o'clock in the morning. The mountain road is quite treacherous, but the group arrived in Kandapola at about nine-thirty. After a brief ceremony at the Hindu temple, the parcels were distributed in the auditorium. As has been the pattern for the last few weeks, it began raining heavily in the late afternoon. On the return trip, in the pouring rain and the darkness, the van had to proceed very slowly. At one point, the road was blocked by large trees which had fallen, both in front of and behnd the van. After about two hours, the police arrived and helped clear the way. The group reached Kandy about midnight.

This distribution was part of BRM's ongoing program of providing needy families and institutions with food, medicine, and other essentials during the economic crisis in Sri Lanka. The program depends on continued donations.

Sadhu! Sadhu!! for your generosity! Thank you!





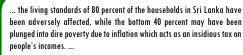
Each family received 5 kilos of rice, a bottle of coconut oil, and a cloth bag containing

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potatoes		chilli pieces
onions		curry powder
dhal		salt
garlic		dry soy meat
sugar		dried fish
flour		chocolate cookies
tea		laundry soap
chilli powder		hand soap

This is about one week's worth of staples.







according to the Department of Census and Statistics an estate sector family earns approximately Rs.46,865 [US\$146]- a month (around a fourth of the cash needed to feed a family of four).

Our people have been pauperised, they can no longer afford to provide their children sufficient food. Our children are malnourished, anemic and their development retarded

From an Editorial in The Daily Mirror, November 6, 2023

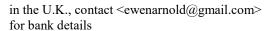


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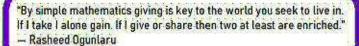




### **Buddhist Relief Mission Assistance Goes On**

Recently, we found a plasticized wall map of Sri Lanka, which we had purchased 15 years ago. We offered it to the director of Blue Rose Special School, and she was very pleased. Then we found a hand-painted Chinese vase packed away in a closet. We wanted to give this to the students, as well, but it needed flowers, something permanent. Ashoka took the vase to an artificial flower shop and asked for an arrangement to match the vase. The result was stunning! What happy gifts for the students! That made our day! (Left)

November 25<sup>th</sup> was the birthday of the owner of the Tamil shop where we buy many of the food parcels for donation. He told his family and friends that, instead of having a party, he wanted to donate food to needy people. We contacted the Kandy Cancer Home and arranged the donation. That day, Mr. Raj packed generous quantities of dry rations, onions, potatoes, and garlic, and Ashoka delivered everything to the home. Everyone was happy! What a wonderful birthday! Wishing him many happy returns of the day! Sadhu! Sadhu!! (Right)











Last week, Ewen and Dennis visited Methasevana Youth Drug Rehabilitation Center, on behalf of Buddhist Relief Mission and Godwin Memorial Fund. They were very pleased to meet the staff, to talk with the residents, to view the vegetable gardens of the agricultural project we are sponsoring, and to discuss plans for future projects. They had a lovely day, and we look forward to future cooperation. (Left)



A few days ago, Amal introduced us to a monk who was collecting money to provide lunches and shoes to pupils of a village school. We were happy to make a contribution. The photos are a joy! BRM hopes to continue to support the monk's work. (Right)

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





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We depend on our network of friends to find those in need of assistance. We are grateful to Ven. Mettajiva for his help in this regard. Often, the parcels we provide are shared by several families in a village. (Left)

Several weeks ago, our local pharmacist called and told us that he had a customer, a monk from Katugastota, who urgently needed medicine, which he could not afford, for a a serious condition. We were delighted to cover the cost. A little later, the monk called from the pharmacy to recite anumodana. (Right)





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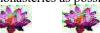
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Ven. Anandajotii just alerted us to a learned monk who had to stop teaching in order to care for the ailing abbot of his monastery in Colombo. They are in dire need of food and medicine. BRM strives to provide assistance to as many monasteries as possible















In cooperation with several other organizations, Buddhist Relief Mission helped spread joy and good will to many families in the Kandy area during the holiday season at the end of 2023.

Dressed as Santa Claus, Indrajith donated parcels of food from Kandy Community Relief to thirty-five families.

Members of the Miracle Church distributed more than one hundred box lunches to individuals on streets of downtown Kandy.

Representing the Godwin Memorial Fund, Ewen presented shoes and other supplies to all the students of a primary school in Hanthana.



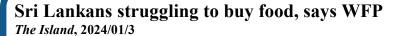












Nearly a half of Sri Lanka's households are adopting livelihood-based coping strategies to buy food, says a recent report published by the World Food Programme.

The WFP's 'Sri Lanka - Household Food Security Survey: Preliminary Findings, December 2023' says that 43 percent of households were adopting livelihood-based coping strategies to cope with the lack of adequate food. Borrowing money to buy food and purchasing food on credit were the most commonly adopted strategies, by 27 and 26 percent of households, respectively, says the report, adding that households vulnerable to future shocks and stresses.

crisis. Thank you for your generous support!



essentials to families, students, and institutions in Sri Lanka during this economic



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### 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.



"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

shttps://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-tive-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.

<a href="features/A-year-of-cost-cutting-And-starvation-predicted-for-2">https://www.dailymirror.lk/news-features/A-year-of-cost-cutting-And-starvation-predicted-for-2 024/131-274016></a>



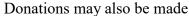




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### **Donating Food in the Cultural Triangle**

When Jagath, Sri Lanka's most knowledgeable and reliable tour guide and tour operator, takes his clients to Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, he delivers parcels of much needed food and medicine to small monasteries and nunneries and impoverished families. Buddhist Relief Mission provides the funds for these donations. Without Jagath's assistance, we would never know about the

need in these remote locations. Furthermore, because he is traveling there on business, there is no fee for transportation. His tour groups approve of and appreciate this humanitarian work. We are so grateful for his invaluable service.





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



May all those who are in pain, in trouble, facing hardship and suffering find relief. May their troubles be over. May they find happiness.





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This year, with the inclement weather and the imposition of a new VAT (sales tax) of 18% on almost all commodities, inflation has soared, leaving poor people in desperation. The price of carrots, for example, has increased from  $300\,\mathrm{Rs}$ per kilo to more than 2000! Many families cannot afford to buy any vegetables at all. [cartoon from *Daily Mirror*, 2024.01.19]





### Buddhist Relief Mission ww.brelief.org -buddhist@brelief.org

















# **Sharing the Joy of Giving**

During the end of January and the beginning of February, in cooperation with good friends, Buddhist Relief Mission has been able to distribute food, medicine, school suppplies, and other essentials to many monks, nuns, students, and families in Sri Lanka. On his tours, Jagath carried quite a number of parcels of supplies to monastics and families in the Cultural Triangle. We contributed to the Kandy Cancer Society's monthly donation to cancer-stricken parents and children and to a prize-giving ceremony at a Dhamma school in Warathenna. Haji, a local three-wheeler driver, alerted us to ten families in Kandy who urgently needed food. Ven. Mettajiva frequently informs us of monks and families who are in need of food and medicine which they cannot afford.

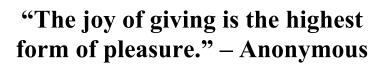
We hope that we never have to refuse these requests. We share merit with of our donors. Let us all rejoice in these meritorious offerings.

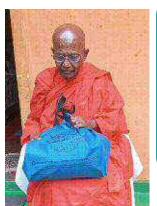
May all beings be well, peaceful, and happy!

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Climate experts warn that, between February and the summer, Sri Lanka will be subject to a serious drought that will put the country's food security at risk, at a time when people are already facing difficulties of the economic crisis.

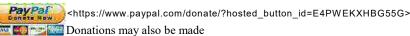
Almost a third of families suffer from food insecurity, and an estimated 70% of the population have difficulty eating regularly and

-Adapted from "Colombo, climate change: food security alert in 2024," by Melani Manel Perera

mbo%2C-climate-change%3A-food-security-alert-in-2024-59767.htm









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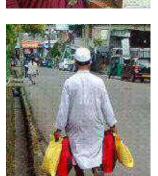


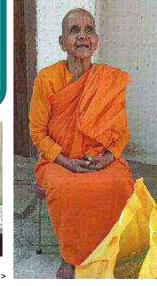












## One Hundred Patients at the Kandy Cancer Home









On the fifteenth of every month, Buddhist Relief Mission offers High Tea to the patients at the Kandy Cancer Home. This month there were a record 100 patients. After spending the morning with us making egg salad sandwiches, Stephanie, our SERVAS guest, accompanied Ashoka and Nimal to the home with the sandwiches, juice, Lily's soup and cutlets, and many kilos of dry rations and Vitagen, a nutritional supplement. We are pleased that we can regularly provide the cancer patients with wholesome and nutritious food. Usually, the staff request that we not take photos of the patients, but one woman approached





Stephanie and asked that she take a photo. She explained that she had completed her treatment, which proved successful, and that that was her last day at the Home. She was very grateful for the care she had received.

At each High Tea, before the patients take their meal they read the list of donors, those suffering illness, and departed friends. We invite our supporters to join, sending donations and names of those with whom they would like to share merit.



#### The Stark Reality of Food Insecurity

With ongoing economic turmoil and the effects of climate change, nearly one-third of households in Sri Lanka are grappling with food insecurity. The challenge is expected to exacerbate as conditions worsen. A diet with less diversity due to high food prices is making millions more vulnerable to micronutrient deficiencies. Approximately half of the Sri Lankan population is already experiencing some form of micronutrient deficiencies, highlighting the urgent need for solutions such as food fortification to help bridge this gap.

<a href="https://bnnbreaking.com/lifestyle/food/sri-lanka-on-the-brink-a-looming-food-security-crisis-in-2024/">https://bnnbreaking.com/lifestyle/food/sri-lanka-on-the-brink-a-looming-food-security-crisis-in-2024/</a>





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This month, we joined Indrajith and Sylvia in celebrating their wedding anniversary by offering food parcels to 20 families. We also provided dry rations to Blue Rose Special School so that the staff could prepare meals for the students.







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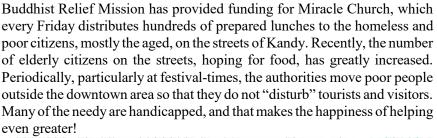






## Offering Lunch to the Hungry in Downtown Kandy





The Buddha said: "If beings knew, as I know, the results of sharing gifts, they would not enjoy their use without sharing them with others, nor would the taint of stinginess obsess the heart and stay there. Even if it were their last morsel of food, they would not enjoy it, without sharing it, if there were anyone to receive it."



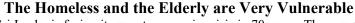












Sri Lanka is facing its worst economic crisis in 70 years. The country is experiencing exponential inflation, and the prices of consumer goods are going through the roof. In a one-month period, food inflation increased from 57.4% to a staggering 80.1%.

This situation has been compounded by a high dependence on imports for essential food, fuel and pharmaceutical items. Because of the collapsing economy, the supply of such goods has become very limited and extremely rationed.

Everyone, including older people, must wait long hours in uncomfortable conditions to obtain essentials like cooking gas, kerosene oil, fuel, and even the most basic food items.

Furthermore, hospitals can no longer obtain imported medical equipment and essential drugs, especially those meant for non-communicable diseases, which mostly affect people in their old age.

Adapted from <a href="https://www.helpage.org/news/the-struggle-for-survival-faced-by-sri-lankas-senior-citizens/">https://www.helpage.org/news/the-struggle-for-survival-faced-by-sri-lankas-senior-citizens/</a>

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Sadhu! Sadhu!! Sadhu!!!



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### Dana at Our Home in Anniwatte, Kandy



On Friday, March 8, 2024, Buddhist Relief Mission held a dana for four Burmese students in the Kandy area, two monks and two nuns. Several supporters and friends who have helped with the distribution of food parcels to the Sangha and needy families joined in the celebration. It was a wonderful day with an inspiring Dhamma lesson; stimulating Dhamma discussion; moving chanting for sharing merit with departed relatives and friends, friends suffering from illness or affliction, and all of our donors; and wholesome fellowship. The menu was truly international-Sri Lankan, Indian, Burmese, Thai, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Japanese, Korean, American, and Continental.

We invite everyone to join in Buddhist Relief Mission's activities and projects.





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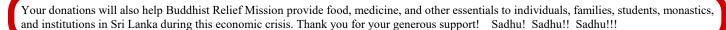












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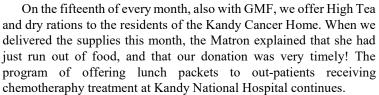
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## Helping as Much and in as Many Ways as Possible



Recently, in response to our inquiry, our local doctor in Anniwatte informed us that families in his village near Kandy were in need of assistance. Buddhist Relief Mission was able to provide the twenty parcels of dry rations he requested.

In cooperation with Godwin Memorial Fund (GMF), we provided lunch packets for a gathering of the young men at Methasevana Drug Rehabilitation Center and their families at the campus of University of Peradeniya. The group visited the temple there and later enjoyed playing games on the campus lawn.



Next month, we will help the mother of a close friend celebrate her eightieth birthday at a local orphanage with an offering of dry rations, medicine, and stuffed toys and art supplies a donor recently brought from China.

How wonderful that these and other projects are possible through the cooperation of a network of friends and organizations. It is proof that we are stronger together and that friendship doubles up our





















The Buddha said, "There are three kinds of people in the world. What three? One who is like a rainless cloud, one who rains locally, and one who rains everywhere

\*What kind of person is like a rainless cloud? A certain person never gives to anyone. He does not give food, drink, clothing, garlands, incense, medicine, lodging, or lamps to ascetics, the poor, or the needy. This kind of person is like a rainless cloud.

"What kind of person rains locally? A certain person gives to some but not to others. Hegivesfood, drink, clothing, garlands, incense, medicine, lodging, and lamps only to some ascetics and to some of the poor and the needy, but not to others. This kind of person rains

"What kind of person rains everywhere? A certain person gives to all. He gives food, drink, clothing, vehicles, garlands, incense, medicine, lodging, and lamps to all ascetics and to the poor and the needy. This kind of person rains everywhere.

"These are the three kinds of people in the world." Itivuttaka 75



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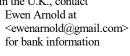
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