

# COMMUNITY CANVAS



Sri Lanka's First Community News Paper



www.phdt.org

## Building Dreams at Diyaluma Estate: Laying the Foundation for a Brighter Future



The foundation laying ceremony for the IHP Housing Project was successfully held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026, marking a significant milestone in improving housing facilities and living standards within the estate community.

Cont. to Page 02...

## Re-roofing Programme Inauguration at Liyangahawela Estate on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026



The Re-roofing Programme was successfully inaugurated on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at Liyangahawela Estate, marking a significant step toward improving housing conditions within the estate community.

## Radiating Excellence: The Ray of Hope Certificate Ceremony (Phase 1) - Kandy Region



The Ray of Hope English Class at Craighead Estate successfully completed one year of continuous academic engagement from 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2025, marking a significant milestone in enhancing English language skills and building confidence among estate children. The certificates awarding ceremony was held on 14<sup>th</sup> of February 2026 with the participation of the Director General of Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT),

Cont. to Page 02...

## Excellence through Leadership and Motivation



A comprehensive leadership training programme titled "Excellence through Leadership and Motivation" was successfully conducted by M.K.L.A. De Silva, Retired Major General of the Sri Lankan Army, for Regional Directors and members of the Senior management team on the 9<sup>th</sup> Monday of February 2026. The programme was designed to strengthen leadership capacity while inspiring participants to reflect on their roles as drivers of organizational growth and transformation.

Cont. to Page 02...

Cont. from Page 01...

### **Building Dreams at Diyaluma Estate...**

The event was graced by the Hon. Minister of Plantation and Community Infrastructure, Mr. Samantha Vidyaratna; Badulla District MP, Mr. Ravindra Bandara; Mrs. Ambiga Samuel, Chairman of Janatha Estate Development Board (JEDB); the Regional Director of Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT) Badulla; the District Manager of National Housing Development Authority (NHDA); and the Manager of Diyaluma Estate.

The ceremony symbolized the commencement of a vital housing initiative aimed at enhancing infrastructure and ensuring improved well-being for estate families. This project reflects the continued commitment of all stakeholders toward sustainable estate development and community upliftment.

Article By: A. M. C. P. Kumara

---

### **Re-Roofing Programme at Liyangahawela Estate...**

The event was graced by the the Hon. Minister of Plantation and Community Infrastructure, Mr. Samantha Vidyaratna; together with the Regional Director of Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT) Badulla Region and the Estate Manager. This initiative reflects the continued commitment to enhancing the safety, durability, and overall living standards of estate families, contributing to improved quality of life and sustainable community development.

Article By: A. M. C. P. Kumara

---

### **The Ray of Hope Certificate Ceremony (Phase 1)...**

The Regional Director – PHDT Kandy, senior PHDT officials, and the Estate Management teams of Craighead Estate and Galamuduna Estate. During the 2024/2025 Phase I, 45 students successfully completed the programme, with 45 classes conducted throughout the year. All students were awarded certificates, and 15 students achieved marks above 75. A special award was presented to Miss.T.Gopika who attended 43 out of 45 classes and obtained an outstanding score of 97 out of 100. The 2025/2026 batch has already commenced with 43 students, continuing the shared vision of PHDT, Colombo Tea Traders Charity Trust (CTTCT), estate management, parents and resource persons in empowering children through education. The programme stands as a testament to collective commitment and dedication towards creating brighter opportunities for the children of Craighead Estate.

Article By: Dilushi Kurukulasooriya

### **Excellence through Leadership and Motivation...**

The session commenced with an overview of fundamental leadership principles, introducing participants to key definitions and concepts that form the foundation of effective leadership. These theoretical perspectives were gradually reinforced through practical illustrations and real-life experiences, allowing participants to clearly understand how leadership directly impacts team performance, workplace culture, and overall organizational success.

Throughout the programme, emphasis was placed on the responsibility leaders carry in shaping attitudes, motivating teams, and setting standards through personal conduct. Participants were encouraged to assess their own leadership styles, decision-making approaches, and communication practices. Special focus was given to accountability, discipline, clarity of purpose, and leading by example: qualities highlighted as essential for building trust and sustaining high performance within teams.

The training also explored the critical role of motivation in achieving excellence. Through interactive discussions and experiential learning, participants gained insights into how inspired employees contribute more effectively to organizational objectives. Strategies for fostering teamwork, managing challenges proactively, and aligning individual responsibilities with broader institutional goals were discussed in detail, providing practical tools that could be applied immediately in the workplace.

Live examples drawn from professional and military leadership experiences added depth and relevance to the session, enabling participants to relate lessons directly to their daily operational realities. These illustrations highlighted the importance of resilience, adaptability, and people-centered leadership, particularly in demanding environments where leaders must balance performance expectations with employee well-being.

The programme further underscored the importance of continuous self-improvement and reflective leadership. Participants were reminded that effective leaders are lifelong learners who remain open to feedback and committed to personal development. By cultivating empathy, consistency, and clear communication, leaders can create positive work environments that encourage initiative, loyalty, and shared responsibility. The engaging delivery and practical orientation of the programme were well received by Regional Directors and Senior management, who expressed appreciation for the opportunity to gain fresh perspectives on leadership and motivation.

Cont. to Page 03...

Cont. from Page 02...

## Excellence through Leadership and Motivation...

The session provided renewed energy and inspiration, equipping participants with enhanced confidence and clarity to lead their teams more effectively. Overall, “Excellence through Leadership and Motivation” served as a powerful platform for professional growth and organizational alignment. The programme concluded on a highly motivating note, reinforcing the vital role leaders play in shaping culture, driving performance, and achieving sustainable success through committed and empowered teams.

Article By: Madawa Gunaratna

## Awareness for Regional Plantation Company (RPC) Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) Paving the Way for Empowered Estate Communities - The Commencement of Indian Housing Programme (IHP) -4700 Housing Units



The launch of IHP-4700 for plantation company Chief Executive Officers was held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February, at the Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT), bringing together industry leaders in a collective effort to uplift plantation communities across Sri Lanka.

The discussion, led by the Director General (DG), proved to be an overwhelming success, marked by his clear vision and compelling presentation of the project’s goals. CEOs, senior managers, and Company representatives participated actively, reflecting strong sector-wide support for the initiative. Addressing the gathering, the DG explained in detail the scope of IHP-4700, highlighting its focus on improving living standards while fostering dignity and wellbeing among plantation workers and their families. He stressed that the program represents more than a housing project—it is a long-term investment in people and communities. A central message of the session was the vital role of estate managers. The DG called on them to remain vigilant and supportive, noting that on-the-ground leadership will be key to the project’s success. He said that Effective coordination between head offices and estates, he said, would ensure timely implementation and meaningful outcomes. Participants shared insights and practical

considerations, with many CEOs expressing confidence in the project framework. They acknowledged IHP-4700 as an opportunity to strengthen relationships with employees while contributing positively to national development objectives. The DG also emphasized transparency and accountability, encouraging regular progress reviews and close collaboration with PHDT. Such measures, he explained, would help overcome challenges and keep the project on track.

With improved housing expected to positively influence health, education, and productivity, IHP-4700 promises far-reaching benefits for plantation regions. The event concluded on an optimistic note, with leaders reaffirming their commitment to the initiative. Backed by strong institutional guidance and industry participation, IHP-4700 is set to become a transformative program—demonstrating how collective leadership can drive inclusive growth and create lasting change within Sri Lanka’s plantation sector.

Article By: Madawa Gunaratna

## Watershed Conservation Programme Initiated at Adawatta, Sarnia & St. James Estates on 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> February 2026 in Badulla Region



As part of ongoing efforts to promote sustainable environmental management and protect vital water resources within plantation communities, the Watershed Conservation Programme was successfully initiated at Adawatta, Sarnia, and St. James Estates on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> February 2026. The programme visits were attended by the Country Representative of Rainforest Alliance (RA) Sri Lanka, Mr. Jehan Canagaretna, together with the Programme Coordinator, Ms. Vimansi. Representing Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT) Badulla Region were the Engineering Assistant, Manager – Health, and Community Development Officer.

### Adawatta Estate

At Adawatta Estate, the Estate Manager and Assistant Manager presented details of the WaSSIP project, outlining its objectives, current status, and anticipated benefits to the estate community. Discussions focused on strengthening watershed protection mechanisms and ensuring long-term sustainability of water sources.

Cont. to Page 04...

Cont. from Page 03...

## Watershed Conservation Programme...



### Sarnia Estate

During the visit to Sarnia Estate, the management team guided the delegation to the water catchment area. On-site observations were carried out to assess conservation needs and identify practical interventions. Constructive discussions were held on protecting water sources, improving infrastructure, and enhancing community participation in environmental conservation efforts.

### St. James Estate

At St. James Estate, the Estate Manager and Assistant Superintendent presented the WaSSIP project and highlighted the importance of safeguarding watershed areas. Discussions were held on implementing effective conservation strategies and promoting responsible water management practices within the estate.

The Watershed Conservation Programme reflects the continued collaboration between PHDT and its partners in strengthening environmental resilience, ensuring water security, and improving living conditions for plantation communities in the Badulla Region. Through coordinated action and community engagement, this initiative aims to create sustainable and long-lasting benefits for present and future generations.

Article By: R. M. C. D. Rathnayake

## WANISA District Coordinating Committee Meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026



The WANISA District Coordinating Committee Meeting was successfully held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at the Training Centre of Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT), Badulla. The meeting was attended by the District Officer, HQI, and Development Officer of the Cooperative Department – Badulla, RPC Representatives, and PHDT

officials including the Regional Director (RD), Regional Accountant, Community Development Officer (CDO), and Project Assistant (PA).

A total of 15 participants took part in the session.

The meeting focused on reviewing WANISA-related activities, strengthening coordination among stakeholders, and enhancing the effective implementation of cooperative initiatives at district level. The session was facilitated by PHDT Badulla Region.

Article By: N. Sarojini

## SMART PHDT Training Programme Successfully Conducted at Elpitiya Estate of Elpitiya Plantations PLC



The SMART PHDT Training Programme was successfully conducted on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at Elpitiya Estate, organized by the Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT) – Galle Region. The programme commenced with a welcome speech and introduction delivered by Mr. Gihan Herath, Regional Director – PHDT Galle. In his address, he emphasized the importance of digital transformation in estate welfare management and highlighted how the SMART PHDT system will enhance efficiency, transparency, and accuracy in data management.

The event was graced by several distinguished invitees, including Mr. L. M.C.P. Liyadipita, Senior General Manager – Low Country; Mr. S.M.D. Thalgaswatte, General Manager – IT; and Mr. W.G.K.M. Rajapaksha, Manager – Elpitiya Estate. Their presence reflected the strong institutional support for the digital advancement initiative. The target group for the training was the Plantations Family Welfare Officers of Elpitiya Plantations PLC. The programme aimed to introduce and familiarize participants with the SMART PHDT IT system and its practical applications in estate administration.

The main objective of the programme was to digitize estate population data comprehensively. This includes maintaining detailed family profiles, housing conditions, infrastructure facilities, health status, and systematic records of welfare activities. By implementing this digital system, PHDT seeks to improve data accuracy, streamline reporting processes, and support evidence-based decision-making for estate community development.

Cont. to Page 05...

Cont. from Page 04...

## SMART PHDT Training Programme...

The training sessions were conducted by Mr. Diluk Priyantha, Manager – IT, PHDT, together with officials from Apps Technologies. The trainers provided hands-on guidance, system demonstrations, and practical insights to ensure participants gained a thorough understanding of the new digital platform. The SMART PHDT Training Programme marks a significant step toward modernizing estate welfare management and strengthening community development initiatives within the plantation sector.

Article By: T. R. Wickramathilaka

## Awareness Programme Strengthens Governance and Audit Compliance of Estate Workers' Housing Cooperative Societies



An awareness programme for Chairmen of Estate Workers' Housing Cooperative Societies (EWHCS) was successfully held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at the PHDT Regional Office in Galle. The programme focused on updating audits for the 2024/2025 financial year, strengthening cooperative governance, addressing audit-related issues, and resolving matters concerning inactive societies.

The event brought together key stakeholders, including officials from the Cooperative Development Department of the Southern Province, District Audit Officers from Galle and Matara, Senior Management representatives of RPCs, Estate Managers, EWHCS Chairmen, Plantation Family Welfare Officers (PFWOs), and officers of the Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT).

The programme commenced with a welcome address by the Regional Director of the Plantation Human Development Trust, who outlined the objectives of the session and emphasized the importance of proper governance within Estate Workers' Housing Cooperative Societies.

In his remarks, the Regional Director highlighted that insufficient awareness regarding governance structures and by-laws often lead to internal conflicts within societies. He stressed that all activities must be carried out transparently, adhering strictly to financial control measures and audit requirements.

An appreciation was extended to the Commissioner of Cooperative Development, Assistant Commissioners, and Audit Officers for their continued support in ensuring the

smooth functioning of societies. It was reiterated that although plantation companies and Housing Cooperative Societies function as separate entities, both operate under the authority of the Estate Superintendent, who serves as Chairman of the respective society.

### Presentation on Cooperative Structure and Progress

- The Community Development Officer of PHDT – Galle Region delivered a comprehensive presentation covering:
- The establishment and objectives of Estate Workers' Housing Cooperative Societies
- The role and responsibilities of PHDT
- Functions and governance structure of Housing Cooperative Societies
- Appointment and responsibilities of officers, including the Chairman
- Powers and objectives as defined by the by-laws

An overview of the current status of EWHCS in the Southern Province was also presented. A total of 32 societies operate under five plantation companies, with 17 societies in Galle District and 15 in Matara District. At present, two societies remain inactive. Discussions focused on increasing active membership and addressing audit-identified shortcomings through timely corrective measures to ensure sustainable operations.

### Future Plans and Strategic Proposals

Several key proposals were discussed to enhance operational efficiency and governance:

- Recruitment of a Bookkeeper for each Housing Cooperative Society.
- Provision of basic accounting and bookkeeping training for society staff.
- Implementation of awareness programmes on cooperative governance and legal aspects for Board members.
- Introduction of a standardized accounting software package for all societies.
- Establishment of a uniform grading system for societies.

Additionally, it was instructed that monthly reports detailing active membership, assets, and liabilities must be submitted to PHDT on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, certified under the supervision of the respective Chairman. Emphasis was also placed on maintaining accurate accounting practices and timely submission of required documents. It was noted that financial irregularities identified during audits may lead to prosecution under the Public Property Act. Furthermore, failure to submit audit documentation on time could result in legal and administrative action by the Department of Cooperative Development.

Cont. to Page 06...

Cont. from Page 05...

## Awareness Programme Strengthens Governance and Audit Compliance...

### Key Directives from the Assistant Commissioner

The Assistant Commissioner of Cooperative Development Southern Province clarified several regulatory and governance requirements:

- The Chairman bears primary responsibility for maintaining proper accounting records.
- Changes to bank signatories cannot be effected solely through committee or general meeting decisions. The Signature Card must be certified by the Commissioner of Cooperative Development before submission to the relevant bank.
- Societies must maintain the minimum required membership to remain operational.
- Establishment of an Internal Audit Committee is mandatory.
- Necessary resources will be provided to facilitate bookkeeping training and governance awareness programmes.
- Preparations are underway to introduce a suitable accounting software package.
- Societies will be graded according to criteria prescribed by PHDT.

### Conclusion

The programme concluded with a collective commitment from all participants to strengthen audit compliance, enhance governance standards, and implement timely corrective actions. It was mutually agreed to review progress after six months to ensure that Estate Workers' Housing Cooperative Societies operate efficiently, transparently, and in full compliance with regulatory requirements. The awareness programme marked a significant step toward improving financial accountability, institutional governance, and the overall sustainability of cooperative societies within the plantation sector of the Southern Province.

Article By: B.M. Maduka

## Successful Completion of the Balance Work Housing Project at Mahavila Estate - Kandy Region (NLH 2021)

The Balance Work Housing Project, carried out by the Ministry at Mahavila Estate in the Mahavila Division (NLH 2021) under the Janatha Estate Development Board (JEDB), has now been successfully completed, delivering 14 housing units. The initiative has significantly elevated living standards by improving home safety, comfort, sanitation, and overall well-being, while also strengthening social cohesion, enhancing community resilience, and expanding



livelihood opportunities. Its successful completion reaffirms the Government's steadfast commitment to sustainable and inclusive development, social advancement, and the overall upliftment of estate sector communities.

Article By: Charaka Kulathunga

## Strengthening Childhood Nutrition and Community Empowerment through Capacity Building of Child Development Officers under the Nutrition Improvement Plan 2026



### Background

Recent nutritional surveillance in Sri Lanka reveals stark disparities: while national underweight prevalence among children is 16%, rates in plantation communities rise to 25%. This underscores the urgent need for targeted, community-centered interventions.

### Capacity Building of Child Development Officers (CDOs)

To address this challenge, two training programmes under the Nutrition Improvement Plan 2026 were conducted with support from **Ahmed Tea**—on 13<sup>th</sup> January in Galle (28 participants) and 21<sup>st</sup> January in Rathnapura (29 participants). The objective was to strengthen CDOs' capacity to improve childhood nutrition through evidence-based approaches and community empowerment.

### Focus and Methods

Training emphasized nutrition for children under five, maternal health, and community influences. Participatory learning and group work highlighted determinants of undernutrition, including maternal undernutrition, low birth weight, poor breastfeeding practices, poverty, food insecurity, and limited caregiver knowledge. Special attention was given to barriers in Child Development Centre (CDC) attendance.

Cont. to Page 07...

Cont. from Page 06...

## Capacity Building of Child Development Officers...

### Community Empowerment

A central principle was enabling communities to identify challenges, make informed decisions, and take collective action, fostering ownership of solutions rather than reliance on external aid.

### Growth Monitoring

Sessions reinforced routine weight/height measurement, accurate record keeping, BMI assessments, and early identification of growth faltering, with hands-on practice to strengthen skills.

Strategic Priorities of the Nutrition Improvement Plan 2026

- i. Improving nutrition among girl children and women before pregnancy
- ii. Strengthening maternal nutrition and optimal feeding practices for children under five
- iii. Promoting exclusive breastfeeding, timely complementary feeding, dietary diversity, and home gardens
- iv. Enhancing caregiver knowledge through education, cooking demonstrations, and responsive feeding practices
- v. Ensuring hygiene, sanitation, micronutrient supplementation, and regular growth monitoring

Cont. to Page 12...

## New Life Housing Project 2025 Handed Over to the Estate - Vincit Estate - Kegalle Region on 28-01-2026



The NLH Project 2025 at Vincit Estate, managed by Malwatte Valley Plantations PLC, was successfully completed and officially handed over to the Estate. This important housing initiative was implemented under the funded guidance of the Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure through the Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT). The project aims to uplift the living standards of plantation communities by providing safe, comfortable, and permanent housing facilities.

Under this project, 20 new housing units were constructed

for selected estate families of Vincit Estate. The houses were built with improved facilities, ensuring better sanitation, ventilation, and overall living conditions. The NLH Project represents a major step towards enhancing the quality of life of plantation workers and their families.

The completion of this project reflects the strong collaboration between the Ministry, PHDT, and Malwatte Valley Plantations PLC. Their collective efforts demonstrate a continued commitment to social development and sustainable community empowerment within the plantation sector.

Article By: *Dileesha Madushani*

## Visit Model Estate Development Programmes



The Model Estate Development Programme was organized by the Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT) - Kegalle Region and conducted in the following estates:

- Ruwanwella Estate - Malwatte Valley Plantation PLC - 22<sup>nd</sup> January & 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026
- Udabage Estate - Lalan Rubbers Pvt Ltd - 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026
- Kiriporuwa Estate - Kelani Valley Plantation PLC - 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026

### Purpose of the Programme

The programme aims to improve the health, behavior, and living standards of plantation families, especially children, adolescents, and youth.

### Main Objectives

1. Child Health & Nutrition
  - Monthly monitoring of weight gain of children under 5 years
  - Improve the birth weight of newborn babies
  - Reduce malnutrition among children under 5 years
  - Improve CDCs to A & B category
  - Plan activities for the total development of children
2. Healthy Family Environment
  - Reduce alcohol and tobacco consumption
  - Reduce domestic violence in families
  - Promote peaceful and supportive homes

Cont. to Page 08...

Cont. from Page 07...

3. Adolescents & Youth Development
  - Encourage healthy behaviors among adolescents and youth
  - Increase awareness about MSM practices
  - Develop life skills and decision-making abilities
  - Encourage collective action and community participation
4. Economic Improvement
  - Improve household savings habits
  - Encourage better financial management in families

**Overall Goal**

To create a healthy, safe, and economically stable plantation community by improving child development, youth behavior, family wellbeing, and financial stability.

Article By: Dilesha Madushani

**Morning Meal Start-Up Fund Cheque Distribution & Training of CDOs on Start-Up Funds and Determinants of Under Nutrition - PDHT Nuwara Elia**



The Morning Meal Start-Up Fund Cheque Distribution and Training Programme was successfully held at the PHDT, Nuwara Eliya, on 02<sup>nd</sup> February 2026, with the support of Ahmed Tea.

**Objectives**

- strengthening the implementation of the Morning Meal Programme and enhancing nutrition-related activities at Child Development Centres (CDCs).
- The programme focused on improving service quality and promoting the overall well-being of children through effective nutrition interventions.

**Key highlights**

- Awareness sessions were conducted on programme guidelines, sustainability, early childhood nutrition, parental support, and growth monitoring.
- As a key component of the event, start-up fund cheques were distributed to selected Child Development Centres to support the effective implementation and sustainability of the Morning Meal Programme.
- Several expert-led training sessions were conducted during the programme. The Health Manager - PHDT, facilitated a discussion on start-up fund utilization and sustainability strategies.
- Training on parental support for nutrition development was delivered by the Director Health, PHDT.
- Additionally, the Medical Officer Plantation, PHDT, conducted a session on nutrition in early childhood.

The programme also included training on quality development of Child Development Centres, introduction to new trends, and a practical session on growth monitoring, which covered measuring children’s height and weight accurately.

Overall, the programme contributed significantly to strengthening the capacity of Estate Managers and Child Development Officers, ensuring improved Nutrition services.

Article By: K.B. Gihani Maheshika

**Be an Angel Programme Brings Joy to Estate Children**



The Be an Angel Programme was successfully carried out on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2026 across five estates under Maturata Plantations PLC, namely High Forest, Liddesdale, Kabaragala, St. Leonards, and Ragalla. The programme was hosted at Adhira Tamil Vidyalayam, High Forest Estate, and the Training Centre at Liddesdale Estate.

During the programme, approximately 300 gifts were distributed among preschool children, bringing happiness and excitement to the young beneficiaries. In addition, 1,030 stationery packs were provided to school children with the objective of supporting their educational needs and motivating them in their academic journey. This initiative clearly reflects a strong commitment to the welfare, development, and empowerment of children within the estate communities.

The event was attended by the Regional Director of PHDT, the Deputy General Manager of MPL, representatives from the HEMAS Outreach Foundation, including Mrs. Shiromi, Mr. Mindika, and Mr. Dissanayaka, along with Estate Managers of MPL, the Health Manager and Regional Staff of PHDT, and Estate Health Staff of MPL. Their presence highlighted the importance of collaboration and collective responsibility in uplifting community well-being.

The Be an Angel Programme stands as a meaningful example of partnership-driven social responsibility, aimed at nurturing the next generation and strengthening community development efforts.

Article By: V. Abinajah

## Awareness programme on importance of early Childhood Education - Niriella Estate



### Introduction

An awareness programme on the importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE) was successfully conducted at Niriella Estate with the objective of educating parents, guardians, and community members about the vital role of early learning in a child's overall development. The programme emphasized that the early years of a child's life from birth to five years form the foundation for lifelong learning, behavior, and health. This initiative aimed to strengthen community understanding of preschool education, encourage school readiness, and promote active parental involvement in children's early learning experiences.

### Objectives of the Programme

The primary objectives of the awareness programme were:

1. To educate parents about the significance of early childhood education.
2. To highlight the cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of children during early years.
3. To encourage enrolment in preschool programmes within the estate.
4. To promote a supportive home learning environment.
5. To strengthen collaboration between parents, teachers, and the community.

### Importance of Early Childhood Education

During the programme, resource persons explained that early childhood education plays a crucial role in:

1. **Cognitive Development**
2. **Social and Emotional Development**

ECE helps children learn sharing, cooperation, empathy, and communication. They gain confidence and independence while interacting with peers and teachers.

3. **Physical Development**
4. **Readiness for Schooling**

Special emphasis was placed on:

- Equal educational opportunities for all children
- Encouraging mothers and fathers to actively participate in their child's learning
- Addressing challenges such as limited resources and lack of awareness

### Challenges Discussed

Several challenges faced by families in the estate were discussed, including:

- Financial difficulties
- Limited access to quality preschool facilities
- Lack of awareness about developmental milestones
- Outcomes of the Programme
- The awareness programme achieved positive outcomes:
- Increased understanding among parents about early childhood education
- Greater willingness to enroll children in preschool
- Strengthened relationship between teachers and families

### Conclusion

The Awareness Programme on the Importance of Early Childhood Education at Niriella Estate was a meaningful and impactful initiative. It reinforced the idea that investing in early childhood education is investing in the future of the community. Continued efforts of this nature will ensure that every child in Niriella Estate receives a strong educational foundation, paving the way for lifelong success and community development.

*Article By: Dimali Chandrasena*

## Estate Worker Housing Cooperative Society – Coordinating Committee Meeting - PHDT Ratnapura



The Coordinating Committee meeting of the Estate Worker Housing Cooperative Society (EWHCS) was held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026. The meeting was attended by the Assistant Commissioners of the Department of Cooperative Development of Colombo & Ratnapura and their teams, representatives from the Regional Plantation Companies (RPCs), and the Regional Director of the Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT) Ratnapura Region, together with the Community Development Officer and team.

*Cont. to Page 10...*

Cont. from Page 09...

## Estate Worker Housing Cooperative Society – Coordinating Committee Meeting

### Purpose of the Meeting

The main goal of the meeting was to:

- Review current activities
- Identify common issues faced by societies
- Plan future actions for Estate Worker Housing Cooperative Societies

Special attention was given to improving management systems, financial practices, and the smooth implementation of new housing projects.

During the meeting, members highlighted the importance of:

- Proper administration and documentation
- Maintaining clear and up-to-date financial records
- Following approved guidelines when using project funds

EWHCSs were reminded to:

- Keep their accounts updated
- Submit reports on time
- Follow standard audit requirements

### Progress Review

The committee reviewed the progress made since the last meeting. Officers were encouraged to complete all pending documents and reports within the given deadlines. The importance of accurate and regularly updated membership records was also emphasized.

### Governance and Capacity Building

The group also discussed ways to strengthen governance and improve daily operations. This included:

- Proper appointment of office bearers
- Clear division of responsibilities
- Better internal controls and record keeping

Members stressed the value of training and technical support for society officers. New training programs and support activities were proposed for the coming months.

### Moving Forward

All participants agreed to extend their fullest cooperation.

- Transparency

- Accountability
- Recordkeeping
- Overall management standards

The committee reiterated its commitment to supporting all Estate Worker Housing Cooperative Societies and ensuring steady progress in housing development activities.

Article By: Priyanthi Jayanath

## SMART PHDT – Training Programme - PHDT Hatton



The **SMART PHDT Training Programme** was successfully conducted on 12.02.2026 at the **PHDT Training Center – Strathdon**, with the participation of staff members from **Madulsima Plantation PLC** and regional stakeholders.

This structured training initiative was designed to ensure users quickly adapt to the newly introduced online data entry system with accuracy, speed, and confidence. The program supports operational efficiency across the Plantation sector, covering Population, Workforce, Health, and Construction data management.

### Programme Objective

To equip estate and regional officers with practical knowledge and hands-on experience in navigating and managing the SMART PHDT system effectively, ensuring smooth digital transformation within the plantation sector.

### Topics Covered

- Login and User Role Permissions - Understanding access levels and user responsibilities.
- Dashboard Overview - Navigation of the system interface and monitoring tools.
- Data Categories - Population, Workforce, Health, Construction
- Field Data Collection Workflow - Step-by-step process from field-level data entry to centralized reporting.

### Training Outcome

Participants gained a clear understanding of:

- System navigation
- Role-based data entry procedures
- Reporting flow and data validation
- Efficient digital record management

Cont. to Page 11...

Cont. from Page 10...

### SMART PHDT – Training Programme...

The session ensured that users are confident and capable of maintaining accurate and timely data within the system.

#### Estate Representatives

- Kew Estate – CDO & Co-operative Clerk
- Kirkoswald Estate – PFWO/CDO
- Theresia Estate – PFWO/CDO
- Venture Estate – CDO

#### Apps Technologies Representatives

- CEO – Apps Technologies

#### PHDT Representatives

- Regional Director - Hatton, Manager Information Technology, Asst. Manager Information Technology, Manager Health & Mobilization, ICTO, Community Development Officer, Project Officer Health

Article By: S. Linton

### Together for Child Nutrition - Morning Meal Programme



Morning meal starts up fund cheque distribution & Training of CDOs on start-up funds and determinants of under nutrition

The Morning Meal Start-Up Programme, funded with the generous support of Ahamed Tea, was successfully implemented on 03.02.2026 at the PHDT Training Centre, Hatton Region, together with training for Child Development Officers (CDOs) on Nutrition and Early Childhood Development (ECD).

#### Objectives of the programme

- Strengthen the CDC Development Fund to continuation of the meal programme
- To improve the nutritional status of children under five years of age.
- To enhance awareness among Child Development Officers (CDOs) and management staff on the effective utilization of start-up funds to ensure the sustainability of the Morning Meal (MM) Programme.
- To improve attendance at Child Development Centers
- To strengthen community empowerment and participation.
- To improve the analytical and reporting skills of CDOs related to children's nutritional status and CDC attendance.

The Start-up Fund was explained in detail. Cheques were distributed to 49 CDOs to strengthen the CDC Development Fund and to support the continuation and expansion of the Midday Meal Programme (MMP) in plantation areas.

#### Key areas addressed:

- Training on Nutrition in Early Childhood by Medical officer Plantation, PHDT
- Training of Parental Support to Nutrition Development by Director Health, PHDT
- Training on Quality development of CDCs and new trends and Practical session on growth monitoring (measuring children's height and weight)
- Start-up fund cheque distribution to Estate managers and CDOs

#### RPC Representatives:

- HPL PLC – Mr. M.D Manick Weerasinghe – Director Plantations-Tea of Horana Plantations PLC
- BTEL PLC – Mr. Robin Winter – General Manager of Bogawana
- KVPL PLC – Mr. A.M.C. Budhika Attanayake – Deputy General Manager of Annfield
- MPL PLC – Mr. I.A. Bogahawatte – Deputy General Manager of Venture estate
- MKPL PLC – Mr. D.D.M.C. Gunasinghe – Manager of Glentilt Estate
- HTN PLC – Mr. T.C.N. Fernando – Senior Manager of Dickoya estate
- KPL PLC – Mr. A R Sandakalum – Manager of Stonycliff estate

Organized by: Team PHDT – Hatton Region

Article By: S.Anjalika Kumary

### Ministry Reroofing Programme Brings Comfort and Safety to Estates



The Ministry Reroofing Programme has been successfully completed in Galphilla (SLSPC) and Mahaousa (UPL), improving housing conditions and enhancing the comfort and safety of estate communities. This milestone reflects the contribution of the Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure and Estate Management to support residents and foster stronger, healthier communities.

Article By: U. S. Karunaratne

## Capacity Building of Child Development Officers...

Cont. from Page 07...

**Community Support and Sustainability:** Engagement of volunteers, mothers, Public Health Midwives, and local leaders was emphasized. Regular weighing sessions and caregiver awareness programmes were encouraged to sustain impact.

### Conclusion

The training reaffirmed the pivotal role of CDOs as change agents. By empowering communities, strengthening monitoring systems, and promoting practical, locally relevant interventions, the Nutrition Improvement Plan 2026 seeks to break the cycle of malnutrition—ensuring healthier children, empowered mothers, and resilient communities.

Article By: Dr. Paba Palihawadana

## Talent Corner

### “Sithroo” Art Exhibition 2025 Organized By PHDT Kegalle Region - 2025



1<sup>st</sup> Place

Name: S. Swetha

Age group: 03-05

Estate: Kelani

RPC: Kelani Valley Plantations PLC



2<sup>nd</sup> Place

Name: P. Darvin

Age group: 03-05

Estate: Parambe

RPC: Kegalle Plantations PLC



3<sup>rd</sup> Place

Name: S. prathini

Age group: 03-05

Estate: Kelani

RPC: Kelani Valley Plantations PLC



## INTER PLANTATIONS CRICKET TOURNAMENT - 2025 RATNAPURA REGIONAL WINNERS - PUSSELLAWA PLANTATIONS LTD

### UPCOMING EVENTS.....

- Be Angels Programme - Distribution of school items and gifts to children in Mathurata area
- PHDT AGM - 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Edited by: **R. V. A. N. P. Wijeratne  
Madawa Gunaratna**

Designed by: **Dhanushka Tharanga**