

# ALLIANCE NEWS

2021 | ISSUE 02

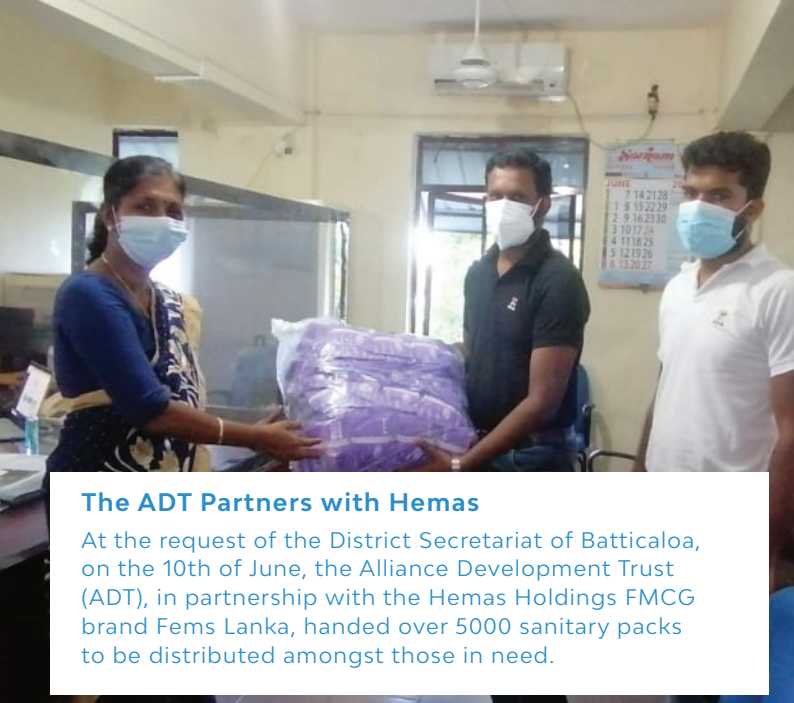
The NCEASL continued its COVID-19 relief efforts in 2021. With the travel restrictions being lifted during April our Nation experienced a surge and rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus. From January to June, the NCEASL reached out to 2529 people especially to those living in isolated areas where the incidence of the infection was high. The NCEASL distributed essential relief packs to these beneficiaries across the island along with cash grants and vouchers to those who had no access to their livelihoods and day to day essentials.



Supported

# 2529

beneficiaries this year



#### The ADT Partners with Hemas

At the request of the District Secretariat of Batticaloa, on the 10th of June, the Alliance Development Trust (ADT), in partnership with the Hemas Holdings FMCG brand Fems Lanka, handed over 5000 sanitary packs to be distributed amongst those in need.

In the 04th week of April, the ADT shared COVID-19 health awareness messages through their interfaith network.

# 16,922

People Reached

#### Palan Project Continues

In 2020, given the crisis at hand the ADT initiated a new agri-programme called 'Palan Project', which in the Tamil language translates '*to yield*'. This project was implemented in the Northern Province to encourage families that struggled during the pandemic to sustain themselves through a small scale home gardening project. The Department of Agriculture monitors and also provides technical support to the beneficiaries. This year, the ADT distributed a batch of seedlings to **1300 families** in the North.



The Religious Liberty Commission (RLC) produced an educational video resource titled '*Hate Speech*' - a child-friendly animation addressing the issue and its implications. Character design and story development were based on the comic book story '*Hate Speech*' published by MinorMatters in 2020. This video is to be included on the e-thaksalawa platform - an online learning tool developed by the Ministry of Education.

21ST APRIL 2019



# UNFORGOTTEN

In remembrance of the Easter Sunday tragedy in 2019, MinorMatters launched 'Unforgotten' - a series of stories of several families whose lives drastically changed on that fateful day. These stories brought light to these individuals' challenges as they rebuild their lives and face the future with admirable resilience and hope.



## #MINORMATTERS e-Learning



Hi, Welcome to

### #MINORMATTERS

MinorMatters is a public movement dedicated to fostering religious harmony and protecting the freedom of religion or belief in Sri Lanka. We support efforts to advance reconciliation, counter religious extremism and promote national coexistence. In 2019, MinorMatters was a recipient of the Intercultural Innovation Award by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and the BMW group for our work to build a virtual museum integrated with an e-Learning platform to promote FoRB in Sri Lanka.

More



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## THE INTERCULTURAL INNOVATION AWARD

2019 RECIPIENT

A partnership between  
United Nations Alliance of Civilizations & BMW Group



## Know the latest

Show all >

### The State of FoRB in Sri Lanka

This course discusses the history and contemporary dynamics of the freedom of religion or belief in Sri Lanka and explores how FoRB intersects with other freedoms.

Ongoing : Scheduled



### Addressing issues in the Digital Space: Freedoms and Democracy

This course provides an overview of the digital space and an introduction to key elements such as algorithms, datafication and surveillance capitalism. The course also discusses issues of FoRB as it relates to the digital space in Sri Lanka.

Ongoing : Scheduled



### Understanding Religious Extremism in Sri Lanka

This course analyses the historical and contemporary dynamics in relation to religious extremism in Sri Lanka. The course also discusses the different drivers of and strategies to counter religious extremism.

Coming soon : Scheduled



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Email \*

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MinorMatters launched an informational video based on the 'Penal Code Offences Relating to Religion' in Sri Lanka.



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MinorMatters officially launched their e-Learning platform to foster greater Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) literacy in the country. This is the first-ever online course on an Introduction to FoRB and the project's main target audience is youth. With the registration of over 100 youth professionals and those spearheading human rights work in Sri Lanka, the first batch commenced on the 21st of May. The course was conducted by Professor Harshana Rambukwella. The second course themed on Digital Citizenship began on the 22nd of June 2021 conducted by Niyanthini Kadirgamar. The course had over 50 registrations.

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# Law and Church

The Missions Commission together with the RLC held a series of advocacy and legal seminars based on the topic of 'Law and Church'.

On the 14th of April, a session was held at Sanctuary House with a participation of 50 pastors from the Chilaw Pastors' Fellowship.

Further to this event, there were online sessions held for the Hambantota and Ampara Pastors Fellowship on the 31st of March and the 05th of April respectively. Altogether there was a participation of 20 pastors from these fellowships.



## Colombo Theological Seminary Webinar

The Colombo Theological Seminary (CTS) invited the NCEASL to conduct an online session for their past alumni and students. At this event held on the 7th of April, the RLC spoke on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB), where the students actively engaged in group discussions. Further, our Missions director Mahesh De Mel shared the historic background of missions in Sri Lanka along with a tutorial on carrying out missions-based activities in the country.



**On 14th and 15th April 2021, the Missions Commission organised a two-day camp for 50 pastors from the Muthupura Pastors' Fellowship. The purpose of this camp was to encourage and motivate them through the word of God. The guest speakers at this event were Pastor Vernon and Pastor Shaun.**

# ADT Livelihood Trainings

## Discipleship Evangelism Course

This course is designed to enrich and empower pastors in their spiritual walk with God. This encourages them to mentor their church community, who in turn would be a positive influence on the community beyond the church. The inaugural course over a period of 04 months was done in Tamil via Zoom with a participation of 19 pastors. The sessions were facilitated by Pastor Anthony Alexander. This course was done in partnership with Charis Lanka.

## Financial Management Course

This is a five week course for pastors who have applied for grants to commence their livelihood ventures. The purpose of this course is to mentor these pastors to be good stewards of their finances, while equipping them to build sustainable livelihoods; ensuring a steady income that will also enable them to carry out their ministry successfully.

Over 100 pastors around the country have benefitted from this course. This training is facilitated by two Partners Worldwide trainers, Mr. Paul Navamani and Mr. David Benjamin. With their combined teaching methods and personal experience in business, these pastors get a first-hand experience of a successful venture.

***Sister Christina is one of the participants of the Financial Management course. Read on to see how it impacted her life.***

Sister Christina, a mother of five faces numerous challenges as her husband Pastor J. Sayagamani is unable to walk for the past 9 years due to an accident. As a result she carries out the entire responsibility of her husband's ministry whilst facing the daily struggles of bringing up her children and providing for their needs; especially their education. Bravely she manages all this whilst carrying out their ministry at St. Thilias, a small village in Hatton. "I want to do my best for the ministry God has entrusted me with. So I started a small business which would enhance my ministry work as well as uplift our family from poverty", said Sister Christina explaining that her only form of income was through rearing 03 goats and 06

chickens. Due to the lack of space and following a proper process she struggles to rear her animals. Sister Christina was one of the participants at the Financial Management Course for Entrepreneurs held by the ADT through Zoom for the pastors of the Hatton Fellowship, on the 09th of July. "I attended this course so that I could gain more knowledge to improve and run a more efficient business." "The lessons that were taught were very useful for me especially as they taught us on the sound foundations of doing business, explaining with relevant examples which were clear and easy to understand."

***"I am now confident that I can run my business more effectively and manage my time between my ministry and family."***



CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD:  
FOUNDATIONS FOR MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD  
IN THE CHURCH



On the 27th of May, from 7 to 8.30pm

 **DM for Link!**



The Youth Evangelical Alliance (YEA) conducted a webinar titled 'Created in the Image of God: Foundations of Manhood and Womanhood in the Church' on the 27th of May via Zoom. This event featured a discussion between Dr. Dinesha Samararatne, Pastor Nathan Somanathan, and Pastor Dinusha Bulathsinghala and was moderated by Moses Hoole.

They spoke about what it means to be made in the image of God and Christ-exalting manhood and womanhood in the church. If you missed out on the session you can visit the YEA's Facebook page to watch the discussion.

## Esara YouTube Series



ACT NOW initiated a series of YouTube videos in Sinhala and Tamil titled 'Esara'. These episodes consist of puppet shows that discuss various social issues relating to the pandemic. They focus on topics such as public attention to the democratic situation in Sri Lanka, the importance of a social security system, the difficulties students face nowadays with online education and the government's responsibility.

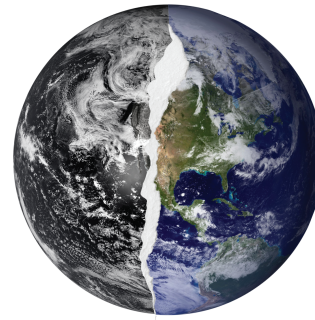
# ACT NOW



ACT NOW conducted two 06-day virtual training programmes for a selected group of young people across the island. The youth were trained in-depth on good governance, the Right to Information Act, gender in governance and digital democracy. Further, the youth were encouraged to identify issues in local-level governance in their areas and given an opportunity to come up with action plans. Thirty-three youth registered for the 01st phase of the programme.

# Social Media Initiatives

## EARTH DAY



The **ADT** carried out a campaign in commemoration of Earth Day which was on the 22nd of April 2021.

### The Hotel will keep being Constructed. But:

#### 1. You can choose not to go.

Watch this space, and watch the hotel which comes up. Keeping in mind the path that led to its construction, you can simply choose whether or not to go here.

#### 2. Watch who tells you to go.

Hotels like this, built without the necessary permits are bound to be well-financed. And with this financial backing, Influencers, Travel bloggers, and people just generally popular on social media are going to get invited here to do "Giveaways" with free stays here. Keep your eyes open, and let them know what went into its construction. They might genuinely not know.

#### 3. Spread awareness

It's always best to keep as many people as you possibly can informed about issues like this, which receive little to no mainstream media coverage. Send it to your friends, tag your influencers, spread the word.



## Hotel Sinharaja ?

BLOG IT.



According to the gazette notification 772/22 issued under the **National Environmental Act, no 47 of 1980;**

- An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has to be carried out when engaging in development activities over a hectare.
- An EIA has to be conducted when any development activity is carried out within 100 metres of a protected forest area.

**But NEITHER of these hotels have obtained any environmental approvals.**



**Paankade** carried out a social media campaign surrounding the construction of a hotel along the Menikkawatta, Bowitiatenna elephant corridor, which elephants use to travel from the 'Morning Side', a part of the Sinharaja Forest Reserve. This is a story that has got very little media coverage and has now been brought to light. Paankade illustrated some individual actions one could take regarding this situation, and encouraged the audience to keep up-to-date with this matter.



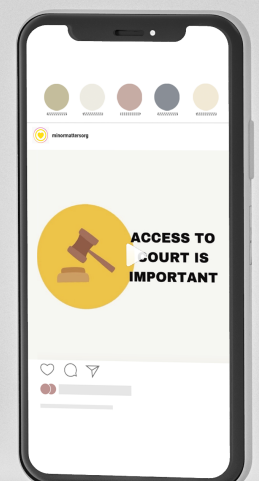
## CYBER ATTACK

The **Digital Citizen** platform highlighted the cyber-attacks on governmental institutions' websites, on their Instagram page.

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**MinorMatters** carried out a social media campaign on NCEASL's report 'Sri Lanka's public health response: law, executive action and minority rights'.



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**NATIONAL CHRISTIAN  
EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE SRI LANKA**  
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இலங்கை தேசிய கிறிஸ்தவ சமீபேஷக ஐக்கியத்துவம்  
(Established in 1952)

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