



WINTERFEST

JANUARY 2025

Experience the heart of leadership, service, and growth in this edition.
Stay inspired, stay engaged, and keep making a difference!



ABOUT US

The **Leo Club of Kolonnawa** is a vibrant and dynamic community of **young leaders**, united by a shared commitment to **service, leadership, and personal growth**. As proud members of the **global Leo movement**, we stand firm in embracing the values of **Leadership, Experience, and Opportunity**, channeling our **boundless energy** into initiatives that **inspire change, uplift communities, and create a lasting positive impact**.

From tackling **social challenges** to protecting **our planet**, every project we undertake is a testament to our dedication to **building a brighter, more inclusive future**. Whether it's **empowering the next generation**, lending a **helping hand** to those in need, or raising awareness about **environmental sustainability**, we are driven by a mission to **make a difference**. **Each step forward is powered by teamwork, innovation, and an unwavering sense of purpose**.

But we are more than a service club – we are a **family of changemakers, bound by the belief** that we grow stronger when **we lift each other up**. With the guidance and mentorship of the **Lions Club of kolonnawa**, we continually seek opportunities to **lead with integrity, learn through experience, and innovate with courage**. We celebrate every achievement as a milestone in our shared journey of growth.

At Kolonnawa Leos, we **serve with compassion, grow with experience**, and create **ripples of change** that extend far beyond our local community. Together, we **dream big, act boldly, and inspire others** to join in our mission to **shape a world where kindness and service prevail**. Let's make every step count—because **change begins with us**.

This revised version is approximately 1,558 characters. Let me know if you'd like further tweaks!

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PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Dear Leos, Lions, and Fellow Readers,

Happy New Year! As we step into **2025**, I extend my heartfelt wishes for a year filled with **success, joy, and new opportunities**. May this year bring us **closer to our goals** and inspire us to serve with even greater passion and purpose.

With the dawn of a new year, we embark on another chapter in our **Leo journey**—one that is brimming with **potential**. The past year has been a testament to our **strength, unity, and unwavering commitment to service**. Each project we undertook, every challenge we overcame, and all the lives we touched stand as a **powerful reminder** of what we can achieve when we work together.

I would like to take this moment to express **my deepest appreciation** to every **Leo of Kolonnawa** for your dedication and hard work. Our **legacy of 26 years** continues to thrive because of your collective efforts. I am also incredibly proud to share that **our club was ranked among the Top 10 Leo Clubs during the Mid-Year Review**, a remarkable achievement that reflects our unwavering commitment to excellence.

Special thanks to **Leo Sanidi Rovinya** for bringing this newsletter to life with **her creativity and passion**, ensuring that our stories and milestones are shared with the world. The Witness stands as a **testament to our journey**, capturing our spirit and dedication in every edition.

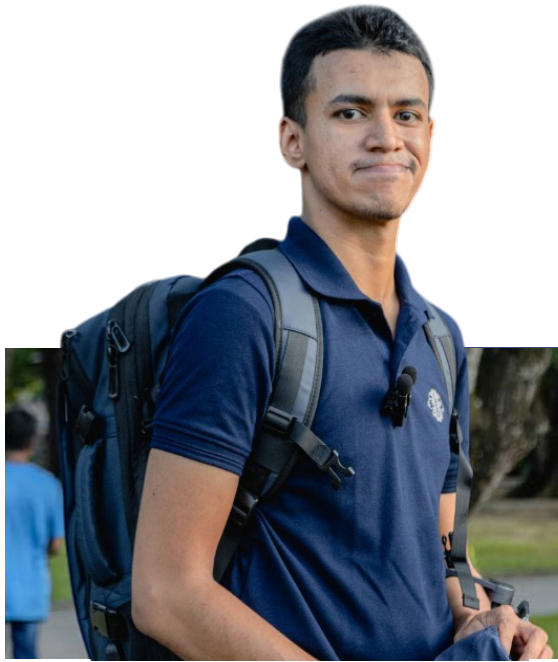
This year, let us aim **higher, dream bigger, and serve stronger**. We have exciting projects ahead, including the much-anticipated launch of **kolonnawaleos.org**, which will serve as a **beacon of our club's impact** and a platform to connect with a **wider audience**.

As we step into this new chapter, let's remember that **Leoism is not just about service**; it is about **making lasting connections, growing as leaders, and inspiring others**. Let's make **2025 a year of greater impact, stronger unity, and remarkable achievements**.

Thank you for your continued **support and enthusiasm**. Let's make this year one to remember!

Yours in Service,

Leo Nandeeshha Geeganage
Leo Club of Kolonnawa



VICE PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Dear Fellow Leos, Lions, and Readers,

It is an **honor** to address you all through this **creative masterpiece**, *The Witness – January 2025 edition*. This newsletter is more than just words on a page—it is **a true testament to the opportunities that the Leo Club provides**. It is **a platform for expression, a voice for our experiences, and a reflection of our shared journey**. Through these pages, we celebrate **our achievements, our challenges, and the incredible spirit of service that unites us all**.

One of the greatest strengths of the Leo movement is its ability to **bring out the best in people**, encouraging us to step outside our comfort zones and push ourselves toward greater heights. Each edition of *The Witness* serves as a reminder of how far we have come, but also of how much more we can accomplish when we work together with passion and dedication.

I want to take a moment to **appreciate the heart and soul** behind this publication—our **Editor-in-Chief, Leo Sanidi Rovinya**. With each edition, she pours her **creativity, dedication, and vision** into making this newsletter a reality. She is truly the **creative soul of our club**, bringing fresh ideas and artistic energy that continue to **inspire and uplift us**. I could not be **prouder** of her work, and I know I speak for all of us when I say that her contributions make *The Witness* something truly special.

As we step into **2025**, I wish each and every one of you a year filled with **growth, purpose, and new opportunities**. May this be a year where we **push boundaries, uplift one another, and leave a lasting impact through our service**. Let us continue to **innovate, collaborate, and strengthen our bonds**, ensuring that our legacy as Leos grows stronger with each passing day.

Let's make **2025 a year of ambition, unity, and unstoppable momentum!** Wishing you all a year of **success, fulfillment, and meaningful connections**.

Yours in Service,

Leo Dylen Wolff
Leo Club of Kolonnawa



TOGETHER WE STRIDE, TOGETHER WE RISE

LEO STRIDE 2024

STRIDE TO
EMBRACE

LEO STRIDE 2024 – A CELEBRATION OF UNITY AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

As I reflect on the unforgettable experience of **Leo Stride 2024**, it's clear that this wasn't just another event. It wasn't just about the walk or the run. It was about coming together as a community—a vibrant, powerful, and united community that embodies the spirit of Leos in Sri Lanka.

The journey to Leo Stride didn't begin on the morning of **December 15th, 2024**. It began long before that, as **Leos from District 306 C1** rallied to prepare for the event. The real excitement kicked off on **December 14th**, when Leos gathered at our **District President's house** to finalize decorations. Amid laughter and shared efforts, it was evident that this was more than an event—it was a moment to celebrate the strength of our greater Leo family.



THE BIG DAY: TOGETHER WE STRIDE, TOGETHER WE RISE

The day began with the energetic run, followed by the much-anticipated walk from **Independence Square to Viharamahadevi Park**. Every step we took echoed the theme of the event: **"Together We Stride, Together We Rise."** The Blue Army—our spirited District 306 C1—stood out, marching with pride and determination, showcasing our commitment to leadership and camaraderie.

At the **Viharamahadevi Open-Air Theatre**, the celebrations continued with an awards ceremony recognizing Leo districts for their exceptional efforts in participation, publicity, and more. The atmosphere was electric, filled with applause, pride, and the unshakable Leo spirit. As the sun began to set, the event culminated with a lively musical performance, bringing everyone together in celebration and fellowship.



#BLUEARMY



BEYOND THE STRIDE: A DAY TO REMEMBER

The day wasn't without its light-hearted moments. As the event wound down, social media was abuzz with jokes about Leos being "stranded without a way home." Yet even in these moments, laughter and joy prevailed. It was a testament to the enduring spirit of Leos—finding camaraderie and happiness in every situation. More than just a walk or a run, **Leo Stride 2024** was a celebration of our shared values, our commitment to community, and the power of youth to create change. It brought together Leos not just as club members but as a united force across the district, reminding us of the greater community we are all part of.



THE LEGACY OF LEO STRIDE 2024

This event demonstrated the transformative power of **youth empowerment and leadership development**, offering opportunities to build connections, share experiences, and strengthen bonds across Leo Clubs. It was a celebration of fitness, fun, and friendship—an embodiment of what it means to be a Leo in Sri Lanka.

As we walked, ran, laughed, and celebrated, we created memories that will inspire us to keep striving for greatness, together. **Leo Stride 2024** wasn't just an event—it was a milestone that highlighted the collective strength and spirit of Leos across Sri Lanka.





LEO SERVICE WEEK

A TESTAMENT TO YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

In December, Leos around the country united under the banner of **Leo Multiple District 306** to participate in **Leo Service Week**, a powerful initiative designed to make a lasting difference. This **multiple district project** brought together Leo Clubs from Sri Lanka and the Maldives to address critical challenges in line with the **8 Lions International Global Causes and several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

This initiative demonstrated the **strength of collaboration and the transformative potential of youth-driven service projects**, highlighting how collective action can bring about meaningful change.

ADDRESSING THE 8 LIONS INTERNATIONAL GLOBAL CAUSES



1. DIABETES:

Leos around the country conducted **awareness campaigns and support programs**, addressing the growing concern of diabetes and helping individuals manage their health. **(Good Health and Well-Being - Goal 3)**



2. ENVIRONMENT:

With **tree-planting initiatives, clean-ups, and education on sustainable practices**, Leos took significant steps toward fostering environmental responsibility. **(Climate Action - Goal 13)**



3. HUNGER:

Food drives organized by Leos targeted underprivileged communities, ensuring no one went to bed hungry. **(Zero Hunger - Goal 2)**



4. CHILDHOOD CANCER:

Leos extended care to children battling cancer, providing them and their families with **donations, care packages, and emotional support**. **(Good Health and Well-Being - Goal 3)**



5. VISION:

By organizing **eye-screening programs and providing support for visually impaired individuals**, Leos enhanced access to vision health resources. **(Good Health and Well-Being - Goal 3)**



6. YOUTH:

Through **mentorship and leadership workshops**, Leos empowered young individuals with the skills and confidence needed to create change in their communities. **(Quality Education - Goal 4)**



7. DISASTER MANAGEMENT & PREPAREDNESS:

Leos held **training sessions and implemented emergency response projects**, ensuring communities are better equipped to handle disasters. **(Sustainable Cities and Communities - Goal 11)**



8. HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT:

By delivering **targeted aid to marginalized communities**, Leos addressed unique needs and challenges, fostering inclusivity and equality. **(Reduced Inequalities - Goal 10)**



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PIONEERING A CLEANER, GREENER FUTURE

Imagine a Sri Lanka where every street shines clean, every corner blooms green, and every community thrives in harmony. This vision is not just a dream—it is the driving force behind “**Lassana Sri Lanka**,” an initiative spearheaded by **Leo District 306C1** to reclaim the natural beauty of our nation and foster a sustainable tomorrow.

Lassana Sri Lanka is not just a project; it’s a **movement of transformation and empowerment**. With a mission to raise public awareness, encourage community involvement, and promote sustainable practices, this initiative is taking bold steps to tackle one of Sri Lanka’s most pressing challenges: waste management.

A MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE

The mission of Lassana Sri Lanka is clear and ambitious:

- **Reduce garbage piles by 80%**
- **Enhance environmental health**
- **Encourage sustainable waste practices**

Through **educational campaigns** and **community engagement**, Lassana Sri Lanka is fostering a culture where environmental stewardship becomes second nature. By promoting **5S principles**—a systematic methodology for cleanliness and efficiency—and targeted waste management strategies, the initiative is turning vision into action.

This movement extends its reach to **educational institutions, workplaces, schools, and the general public**, ensuring that every sector of society is equipped with the knowledge and tools to make a difference.

STEPS TOWARD A BEAUTIFUL SRI LANKA

Lassana Sri Lanka began with impactful **waste management campaigns** that highlighted the importance of clean and sustainable living. Leos from across the district have taken the lead, demonstrating the **power of collective action** to tackle issues such as improper waste disposal, lack of awareness, and environmental degradation.

One of the standout efforts included a visit to the **Clean Tech Factory**, where Leos witnessed cutting-edge recycling techniques and learned about the transformative potential of waste management technology. This visit reinforced the critical role industries play in creating a **circular economy**, where waste is minimized and resources are reused efficiently.

OUR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Lassana Sri Lanka's mission is not just about cleaning streets; it's about fostering a **mindset of sustainability** that will endure for generations. By reducing waste and enhancing environmental health, the initiative aligns with global efforts to combat climate change and promote a healthier planet.

Leos are leading by example, showing that small, consistent actions—such as proper waste segregation, community clean-ups, and educational outreach—can create **lasting change**. As public awareness grows, so does the movement's impact, inspiring communities to take ownership of their environment.

A BRIGHTER, GREENER FUTURE

Lassana Sri Lanka reminds us all of the beauty that lies in a cleaner, greener nation. It is a call to action for every citizen to take responsibility for their surroundings and to contribute to a sustainable future. With goals that are bold yet achievable, this initiative is not just cleaning up streets—it is shaping a brighter tomorrow for Sri Lanka.

Through unity, action, and unwavering commitment, Lassana Sri Lanka is proving that together, we can make a difference. Let's treasure the beauty of our nation, work for a garbage-free Sri Lanka, and step into a cleaner, greener future.





A VISIT TO CLEAN TECH FACTORY

A TESTAMENT TO YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY IMPACT



In our collective journey toward a greener and more sustainable future, the Leos of District 306 C1 took a pivotal step through a site visit to the **Clean Tech Factory in Wattala**. This inspiring event, held as part of the district initiative “**Lassana Sri Lanka**,” provided a first-hand look at the power of innovation in waste management and recycling.

Clean Tech, a leader in waste management and plastic recycling, exemplifies the transformative potential of cleantech solutions. With a vision to tackle pressing environmental challenges, Clean Tech employs **cutting-edge recycling techniques** that turn waste into valuable resources, reducing landfill dependency and conserving natural materials. This visit emphasized how **innovative technologies** can pave the way for a cleaner, greener tomorrow, aligning with global efforts to combat climate change and promote sustainable living. By bridging the gap between waste generation and resource recovery, Clean Tech embodies the principles of **circular economy and sustainability**—key elements in building a Lassana Sri Lanka.

On **Tuesday, 17th December**, Leos from across District 306 C1 gathered at the Clean Tech Factory to explore the future of sustainability. From the moment we stepped into the facility, we were introduced to the intricate processes behind professional waste management. Leos witnessed how discarded plastics undergo sorting, cleaning, and reprocessing to be transformed into reusable materials, contributing to **sustainable production and consumption (Goal 12)**. We also observed how Clean Tech ensures that waste is managed efficiently, reducing environmental harm while optimizing resource recovery. Experts from Clean Tech shared their knowledge on the importance of responsible waste disposal and how community involvement plays a crucial role in sustainability efforts.

This site visit was not just an educational experience—it was a call to action. The initiative **Lassana Sri Lanka emphasizes** creating a cleaner, greener nation, and the insights gained from this visit equip Leos to become proactive leaders in this mission. The visit also fostered collaboration and teamwork, as Leos across clubs joined forces to learn, share ideas, and inspire one another. By understanding how industries like Clean Tech operate, Leos can bring these lessons back to their communities, amplifying the impact of local efforts.

The field visit to Clean Tech Factory was more than just an excursion—it was a **reminder of the responsibility we all share toward building a sustainable future**. Clean Tech’s innovative practices showed us the power of technology, commitment, and community in driving environmental change. As part of **Lassana Sri Lanka**, the Leos of District 306 C1 are dedicated to taking these lessons forward, ensuring that the knowledge gained is translated into meaningful action. Together, we strive to inspire others, reduce waste, and lead by example in creating a nation that values sustainability.



CLEANTECH (PVT) LTD:

LEADING THE WAY IN ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS

CleanTech (Pvt) Ltd. has been solving environmental problems in Sri Lanka since 2002. **The company started by helping municipal councils manage waste** and has grown into a leader in environmental solutions. Today, CleanTech addresses waste challenges with practical, sustainable methods that benefit both people and the planet.

The company focuses on **transforming waste into useful resources**. Instead of letting waste pollute the environment, CleanTech finds ways to reuse or recycle it.

They handle solid, liquid, organic, and electronic waste, ensuring each type is managed responsibly. By doing this, CleanTech reduces pollution and supports healthier communities.

CleanTech takes a systematic approach to waste management. They don't stop at collecting and disposing of waste; they work to reduce the overall environmental impact.

Their methods meet international standards, including ISO 14001:2015 for environmental management.

This certification shows their commitment to preventing pollution and improving environmental practices.



The company also believes in the power of people. **CleanTech trains its employees to understand the importance of their work** and how it contributes to a cleaner world. With over 2,000 skilled workers, they focus on creating solutions that last.

This approach builds trust and encourages others to follow sustainable practices.



CleanTech's solutions extend beyond waste management. They are involved in **renewable energy and city beautification projects**, helping create cleaner, more livable spaces. They aim to make a lasting difference by combining practical solutions with forward-thinking ideas.

By focusing on sustainable practices and innovative solutions, CleanTech shows how businesses can tackle environmental challenges effectively. **Their work proves that protecting the environment is not just a responsibility but also an opportunity to improve lives.**

CleanTech's journey serves as a reminder that solving environmental problems starts with action. Through their commitment to sustainable solutions, they inspire others to take steps toward a greener, cleaner future.

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As part of the **District Initiative Lassana Sri Lanka**, we, the **Leo Club of Kolonnawa**, proudly took the lead in the inaugural phase of **Lassana Kolonnawa**. This impactful initiative focused on the **Gothatuwa Wetland Park**, a vital ecological treasure, aiming to restore its beauty and promote environmental sustainability.

The cleanup drive, held on **14th December 2024**, brought together enthusiastic Leos, community members, and key collaborators. With the support of the **Lassana Kolonnawa Youth Network** and the **GEF Small Grants Programme, implemented by UNDP**, we showcased the power of collective action in safeguarding natural spaces for future generations.



Starting at **8:00 AM**, we gathered at the Gothatuwa Wetland Park, armed with gloves, tools, and determination.

The event began with a briefing on the park's ecological significance, emphasizing the need to protect its biodiversity. Together, we worked tirelessly to remove waste, clear debris, and ensure the wetlands were free from pollutants.

During the visit, we learned valuable insights about the park's **delicate ecosystem**. One of the most intriguing lessons was how the **park authorities** manage invasive species.



They explained their active efforts to let invasive species die off or remove them to maintain the natural balance of the ecosystem. These invasive species, if left unchecked, pose a significant threat to native flora and fauna, disrupting the wetland's biodiversity and ecological functions.



The cleanup drive was more than just a physical effort—it became a platform for us to raise awareness about the **importance of wetlands** in combating climate change, preserving biodiversity, and supporting local ecosystems. By restoring this green space, we contributed to the **Lassana Sri Lanka** vision of a cleaner, greener nation.

The support we received from the **Lassana Kolonnawa Youth Network** and the **GEF Small Grants Programme** was instrumental in making this initiative a success.

Their expertise and resources allowed us to maximize the impact of this cleanup drive, highlighting the importance of partnerships in achieving environmental goals.

Phase 01 of Lassana Kolonnawa is just the beginning. This initiative has inspired further action within our community, encouraging locals to take pride in and responsibility for their surroundings.

We are committed to continuing this journey, ensuring that the Gothatuwa Wetland Park remains a thriving ecological haven for generations to come.

By aligning with the **Lassana Sri Lanka initiative**, we demonstrated the value of youth-led efforts in driving environmental change. The success of this project serves as a reminder that every small step can make a significant difference.

We invite everyone to join us in this ongoing journey toward a cleaner, greener Kolonnawa. Together, we can protect our natural heritage, ensure the sustainability of our environment, and contribute to the broader goal of creating a **Lassana Sri Lanka**.

Let's continue to work as a community, building on the momentum of **Phase 01** and ensuring that the Gothatuwa Wetland Park shines as a symbol of environmental restoration and sustainability.



DID YOU KNOW?



THE THREAT OF SUCKERMOUTH CATFISH

(TANK CLEANER FISH) TO SRI LANKAN ECOSYSTEMS

THE **SUCKERMOUTH CATFISH**, ALSO KNOWN AS THE **TANK CLEANER FISH**, **PLECO**, OR **ALGAE EATER**, IS AN **INVASIVE SPECIES THAT DOES NOT BELONG IN SRI LANKA'S ECOSYSTEMS**. THESE FISH ARE NOT NATIVE TO THE COUNTRY AND WERE **IMPORTED FROM ABROAD**, PRIMARILY FROM REGIONS LIKE SOUTH AMERICA, AS POPULAR ADDITIONS TO HOME AQUARIUMS. WHILE THEY ARE VALUED FOR THEIR ABILITY TO CLEAN ALGAE IN FISH TANKS, THEIR PRESENCE IN SRI LANKA'S WETLANDS POSES A SIGNIFICANT THREAT.

UNFORTUNATELY, MANY PET OWNERS ABANDON THESE FISH INTO WETLANDS, LAKES, AND RIVERS DUE TO VARIOUS REASONS. SOME MIGHT RELEASE THEM WHEN THE FISH OUTGROW THEIR TANKS,

AS SUCKERMOUTH CATFISH CAN GROW QUITE LARGE, OFTEN EXCEEDING THE CAPACITY OF HOME AQUARIUMS. OTHERS MAY RELEASE THEM UNDER THE MISTAKEN BELIEF THAT THEY ARE "SETTING THE FISH FREE" WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING THE ECOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES.

WHATEVER THE REASON,

ABANDONING THESE FISH INTO SRI LANKA'S WETLANDS HAS SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS FOR NATIVE ECOSYSTEMS.



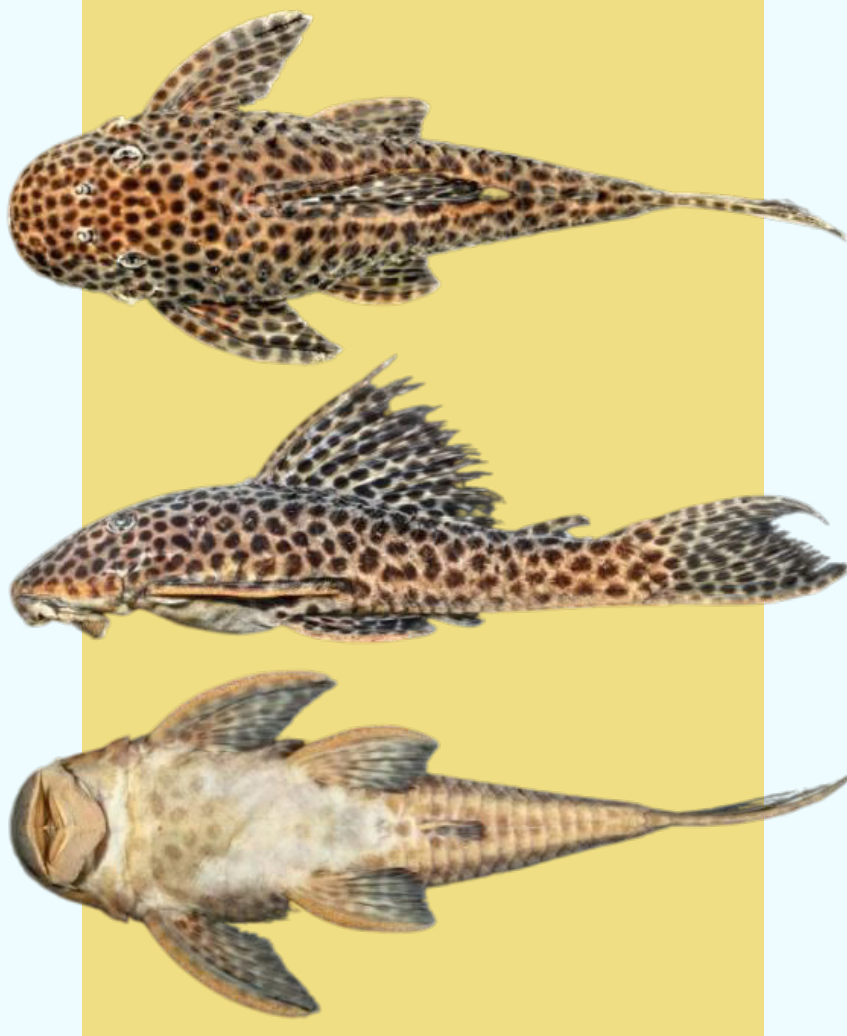
SUCKERMOUTH CATFISH ARE HARDY AND ADAPTABLE, OFTEN OUTCOMPETING NATIVE SPECIES FOR FOOD AND HABITAT. THEY FEED ON ALGAE AND ORGANIC MATERIAL, BUT THEIR FEEDING BEHAVIOR CAN DISTURB SEDIMENT LAYERS IN WETLANDS,

REDUCING WATER CLARITY AND AFFECTING PLANT GROWTH.

THIS DISRUPTS THE DELICATE BALANCE OF WETLANDS, WHERE NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS RELY ON STABLE CONDITIONS TO THRIVE. ADDITIONALLY,

SUCKERMOUTH CATFISH DO NOT HAVE NATURAL PREDATORS IN SRI LANKA'S ECOSYSTEMS,

ALLOWING THEIR POPULATIONS TO GROW UNCHECKED AND CAUSING FURTHER IMBALANCES.



THE INTRODUCTION OF INVASIVE SPECIES LIKE THE **SUCKERMOUTH CATFISH** CAN ALSO **LEAD TO A DECLINE IN BIODIVERSITY**. NATIVE FISH, AMPHIBIANS, AND PLANTS MAY STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE AS THESE FISH MONOPOLIZE RESOURCES. OVER TIME,

THIS **CAN DEGRADE THE WETLANDS' ABILITY TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES** SUCH AS WATER FILTRATION, FLOOD CONTROL, AND ACTING AS HABITATS FOR DIVERSE SPECIES.

TO PROTECT SRI LANKA'S UNIQUE ECOSYSTEMS, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO CREATE AWARENESS ABOUT THE DANGERS OF RELEASING EXOTIC PETS INTO THE WILD. AUTHORITIES SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER STRICTER REGULATIONS ON IMPORTING AND SELLING INVASIVE SPECIES.

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES IS CRUCIAL TO PRESERVING THE HEALTH AND BALANCE OF WETLANDS.

BELOW IS A DEAD SUCKERMOUTH CATFISH WHICH FOUND AT THE GOTHATUWA WETLAND PARK DURING THE LASSANA KOLONNAWA PHASE 01.



PHASE 02

DISCOVERING THE HIDDEN PARADISE OF GOTHATUWA WETLAND PARK



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As part of Project Lassana Kolonnawa, we, the Leo Club of Kolonnawa, embarked on the second phase of our mission to revitalize and celebrate the Gothatuwa Wetland Park. On Sunday, 22nd December 2024, we hosted a guided tour of this ecological treasure, inviting the community to explore the park's beauty, learn about its unique ecosystem, and understand the critical role of wetland conservation.



This initiative, supported by the Lassana Kolonnawa Youth Network, aimed to deepen appreciation for the wetlands while promoting collective responsibility for protecting these natural spaces.

The Gothatuwa Wetland Park, often described as a hidden paradise, provided the perfect backdrop for an immersive and educational experience.

Starting at 3:30 PM, participants joined us for an enriching journey through the park's lush greenery.

As we ventured into its serene pathways, we discovered the delicate balance of its ecosystem, spotting diverse wildlife and observing how the wetlands support various forms of life.

From vibrant birds to delicate butterflies, the park came alive, showcasing its role as a sanctuary for biodiversity.

Throughout the tour, we emphasized the importance of wetland conservation. These ecosystems are vital for mitigating climate change, preserving water quality, and providing habitats for countless species. We shared insights into how the community can contribute to their protection, including reducing waste, avoiding pollutants, and advocating for sustainable practices.





One of the most rewarding aspects of this phase was fostering a connection between the participants and the wetlands.

By experiencing its natural beauty first-hand, attendees left with a renewed sense of responsibility and a deeper understanding of why these areas must be preserved.

Phase 02 of Lassana Kolonnawa was not just about showcasing the park but about inspiring action.

By aligning with the broader goals of Project Lassana Sri Lanka, we demonstrated how community engagement and awareness can drive meaningful environmental change.

We are proud of the steps we've taken together and are excited about the future phases of Lassana Kolonnawa.

The Gothatuwa Wetland Park stands as a testament to what can be achieved when we unite to protect and cherish our natural heritage.

Together, we can ensure that this hidden paradise remains a thriving haven for generations to come.





KOLONNAWALEOS.ORG

A HUB FOR INSPIRATION, COMMUNITY, AND LEOISM

Welcome to **Kolonnawaleos.org**, the official online platform of the **Leo Club of Kolonnawa**. Our website is more than just a digital space—it's a **portal to connect, inspire, and inform**.

Whether you're a member of our community, a prospective Leo, or someone who wants to learn more about the transformative power of Leo Clubs, our website is here to guide you.



WHY KOLONNAWALEOS.ORG?

Our primary goal for Kolonnawaleos.org is to make it a **central hub for our community**. Through this platform, we reach out to like-minded individuals who share our passion for service and leadership. We want to showcase how Leo Clubs are special and the many **opportunities we bring to the table**.

It's not just about recruiting members to our club; it's about **inspiring people to take action**. We aim to motivate individuals to join their own community Leo Clubs, amplifying the impact of our movement. By doing so, we hope to create a ripple effect of service, collaboration, and change throughout Sri Lanka and beyond.



A HUB FOR ALL LEO THINGS

Kolonnawaleos.org is designed to be a **comprehensive resource for Leos** at every level. While we proudly feature the initiatives and projects of our club, the platform goes beyond that.

We highlight **district and multiple district initiatives**, offering insights into how Leo Clubs across regions contribute to meaningful causes. Our vision extends even further, with plans to include initiatives **beyond our multiple district**, showcasing the incredible work of Leos worldwide.

From community projects to leadership opportunities, Kolonnawaleos.org provides a **place to get to know everything Leo**, making it a go-to destination for members, prospects, and anyone curious about Leoism.

SUPPORTING NEW AND PROSPECTIVE LEOS

Understanding the needs of new and prospective members, our website also serves as an **informational guide**.

It addresses common questions about joining Leo Clubs, the benefits of membership, and how individuals can contribute to their communities through service.

By providing clear and helpful answers, Kolonnawaleos.org ensures that every visitor feels empowered to take the next step.



Leoism

The Leo Club movement empowers young people to lead and serve through **Leadership, Experience, and Opportunity (L.E.O.)**. Sponsored by Lions Clubs International, it aims to create a positive impact in their communities while building essential skills for the future.

Guided by the motto, **"We Serve"**, Leo Clubs challenge the boundaries of education and environmental conservation, all while fostering teamwork, compassion, and leadership. It's a global network where young changemakers grow, connect, and create meaningful change.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITY

Latest Projects



Latest Projects
Leo Youth Camp 2025 Action
Brigade 4-6



Club Projects
Lansana Kolonnawa Phase 02



Most Recent Projects
Leo Stride 2024



THE VIRTUOSO

Special thanks to our **Vice President, Leo Dylen Andrew Wolff**, for taking on the responsibility of building the website from the ground up.

Your unwavering dedication and timeless efforts have brought this masterpiece to life.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Kolonnawaleos.org is more than a website—it's a **gateway to a movement that inspires change**.

Whether you're exploring ways to serve your community, looking to connect with passionate individuals, or simply curious about what makes Leo Clubs unique, this is where your journey begins.

Check out **Kolonnawaleos.org** today and discover how you can be part of a global community dedicated to making a difference.

Let's work together to build stronger communities, foster leadership, and create a brighter future for all.



THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND SOCIAL ENGINEERING:

Stories from the Victims

Let's see what the victims were thinking in each scenario, and how scammers exploited their emotions to manipulate them. Each story shows a different psychological tactic used to deceive and trap people.



JAKE'S STORY: The Urgency Trap

Jake received a text message while at work: **"Your package has arrived. Click here to schedule delivery. Act now or your order will be canceled!"** He didn't remember ordering anything, but he clicked the link anyway. He didn't want to miss out if it was something important. Little did he know, he'd just given away his personal information to a cybercriminal.

Later, his bank called to inform him that his credit card had been maxed out in foreign transactions.

WHAT WAS JAKE THINKING?

Jake fell for urgency. The pressure to act fast shut down his critical thinking, and he didn't take the time to verify whether the message was legitimate.



SARA'S STORY: The Power of Fear

Sara was having a normal day when an urgent email appeared in her inbox: **"Your bank account has been compromised. Transfer your funds now to prevent loss!"** Panic set in immediately. The thought of losing all her savings was too much to bear. Without a second thought, she clicked on the link and entered her bank details, desperate to fix the problem.

It wasn't until she checked her balance hours later that she realized her mistake. The scammers had stolen everything.

WHAT WAS SARA THINKING?

Sara was overwhelmed by fear. Her survival instincts kicked in, and she made a quick, irrational decision to protect herself, falling into the scammer's trap.



TOM'S STORY: The Trust Betrayal

Tom was scrolling through his emails when he saw a message from his boss. "I need you to wire \$5,000 to this supplier immediately. I'm in a meeting and can't explain, but it's urgent," the email read. Without hesitation, Tom completed the wire transfer, trusting that it was indeed his boss.

Later, Tom learned his boss had never sent the email. It was a phishing scam, and he had unknowingly sent the money straight to a criminal.

WHAT WAS TOM THINKING?

Tom's trust in a familiar figure was exploited. Scammers used his boss's identity to trick him, and his natural assumption that a message from a superior must be genuine led him to make a costly mistake.



EMILY'S STORY: The Reciprocity Trick

Emily received a call from a man claiming to be a tech support agent. He helped her fix an issue with her computer, walking her through the steps to resolve it. After the problem was fixed, he asked for a small payment for his service.

Feeling grateful, Emily gladly paid. However, what she didn't realize was that the "help" she received was part of the scam. The tech support had actually installed malware on her computer to steal her data.

WHAT WAS EMILY THINKING?

Emily was caught by reciprocity. The scammer did her a "favour" by helping her, and she felt obligated to repay him—even though it was part of the con.



MARIA'S STORY: The Power of Fear

Maria was startled when she received a phone call from someone claiming to be from the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB). The caller told her that her electricity bill was overdue and that her electricity supply would be disconnected within the hour if the payment wasn't made. "This is an urgent matter, and if you don't settle it now, we will cut off your electricity," the voice warned.

Maria, fearing she'd lose power in the middle of the day, quickly transferred the requested amount to the bank account the caller provided. Only later did she realize she had been tricked when the actual CEB sent her a legitimate bill, showing no overdue payments.

WHAT WAS MARIA THINKING?

Maria was overwhelmed by the pressure from an authority figure. In Sri Lanka, receiving a call from the Ceylon Electricity Board feels legitimate because people often fear sudden disconnection notices. Scammers used her respect for authority and fear of losing electricity to get her to act without thinking.



DAVID'S STORY: The Scarcity Illusion

David saw a pop-up ad online: "Only 3 hours left to claim your prize! Click here to receive a free smartphone." Excited at the thought of a free gift, David clicked the link and entered his details. He didn't want to miss out on such an incredible deal.

Weeks later, his inbox was flooded with spam emails, and his credit card was charged for purchases he never made. The free smartphone? It never existed.

WHAT WAS DAVID THINKING?

David fell for scarcity. The fear of missing out on a limited-time offer clouded his judgment, and he acted without thinking through the consequences.



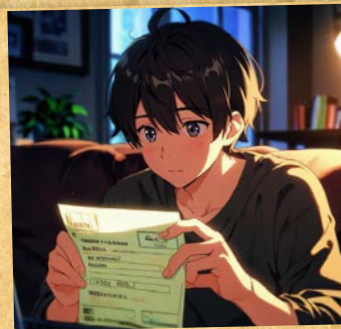
LUCY'S STORY: The Social Proof Trap

Lucy received an email promoting a new investment opportunity: "Thousands of people are doubling their money with this one simple trick!" The email included glowing testimonials and success stories from other "investors." It looked legitimate, and Lucy didn't want to miss out on such a successful venture.

She invested her savings into the scheme, only to realize later that it was a scam. The testimonials were fake, and the money was gone.

WHAT WAS LUCY THINKING?

Lucy was influenced by social proof. Seeing that others were supposedly benefiting from the opportunity made her feel it was safe. She followed the crowd, and it cost her dearly.



ADAM'S STORY: Compassion Exploited

Adam got an email from a friend saying they were stranded abroad and needed money to get home. "I've lost my wallet, and I'm scared. Please help!" the message said. Without thinking twice, Adam wired the money to the account in the email, eager to help his friend.

Later, Adam discovered his friend's email had been hacked, and the plea for help was a scam.

WHAT WAS ADAM THINKING?

Adam's compassion was exploited. His desire to help a friend in need overrode his usual caution, and he didn't stop to question whether the message was real.



NINA'S STORY: The Commitment Trap

Nina received a survey from a company she had shopped with before. They offered her a discount in exchange for answering a few simple questions. As she completed the survey, they asked for more information—her full name, address, and credit card details for the discount.

Without realizing it, Nina had handed over sensitive information to a scammer posing as a legitimate business.

WHAT WAS NINA THINKING?

Nina fell for consistency. After making a small commitment by answering a few questions, she felt compelled to continue and provide more details. Each step felt harmless until it was too late.

CONCLUSION:

Awareness is the Key

Each of these victims was caught by a psychological trick—fear, urgency, trust, authority, compassion, and more. Social engineers are experts at exploiting human behaviour, and the best way to protect yourself is by being aware of these tactics.

The next time you receive an urgent email or an offer that seems too good to be true, remember these stories. Don't let the scammers win.



HACKED?





SECRETARY'S NOTE

Dear Leos,

As we step into a **new calendar year**, we also embrace the **second half of the Leoistic Year 2024/2025**—a time to **reflect on our journey, celebrate our achievements, and set new goals** for the months ahead. It has been an **incredible journey so far**, and I am truly **honored** to serve alongside such **dedicated and passionate individuals**.

One of the most **remarkable milestones** we have achieved is being **recognized among the Top Ten Leo Clubs at the District Mid-Year Conference**. This accomplishment is a **reflection of the collective dedication, hard work, and commitment of our members**, who continue to embody the **true spirit of Leoism**. It is **not just a title** but a **testament to the impact** we have made through our **service, leadership, and teamwork**.

As we move forward, let us **carry this momentum** with us. The road ahead is filled with **new challenges and exciting opportunities to serve, grow, and inspire**. Our journey is not just about the **projects we complete** but also about the **values we uphold, the lives we touch, and the change we create**. Each one of us plays a **vital role** in shaping the **future of our club**, and I am confident that **together, we will continue to make a meaningful difference**.

I extend my **deepest gratitude** to every member of our club for their **unwavering support and enthusiasm**. Let's continue to **strive for excellence, embrace new opportunities, and make this second half of the Leoistic year even more remarkable**.

Wishing you all a year filled with **success, service, and fulfillment!**

Yours in Leo Spirit,

Subhani Embuldeniya
Leo Club of Kolonnawa



EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Gentle Reader,

Happy New Year! With great joy, I bring you the **4th consecutive edition** of the Leo Newsletter, The Witness – January 2025 edition. As we step into this brand-new year, let us embrace it with **renewed enthusiasm, fresh ideas, and an unwavering spirit of service.**

Reflecting on our journey, I am immensely grateful for the **dedication and passion** of our Leo members, who continue to bring this newsletter to life. Their efforts, **both seen and unseen**, turn ideas into reality, and for that, I extend my deepest appreciation. This newsletter would not be possible without the commitment of each and every contributor, and I thank you all for your invaluable support.

As we welcome **new beginnings**, let us also recognize the **importance of innovation and collaboration.** Each edition of The Witness is more than just a collection of articles; it is a **testament to our shared experiences, achievements, and aspirations.** It serves as a platform to celebrate our progress, learn from one another, and inspire future endeavors.

To everyone who contributed articles, photos, and creative content—**thank you.** Your contributions are the **heartbeat of this publication**, and I encourage all readers to **engage, share feedback, and offer ideas** for future editions. Your involvement is what keeps The Witness thriving, ensuring that it remains a true reflection of our club's spirit.

As we embark on this journey into **2025**, let this be a reminder that Leoism is fueled by **creativity, unity, and innovation.** Let's continue to explore **new possibilities, break boundaries, and leave a lasting impact** through our stories and service.

Thank you for your continued **support and enthusiasm.** Let's make every edition of The Witness a **celebration of our shared journey and mission to make a difference.** Here's to another year of **growth, service, and meaningful connections!**

Yours in Service and Creativity,

Leo Sanidi Rovinya
Leo Club of Kolonnawa

WITNESS



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