

# **DIMO Unveils Pela Batta**

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DIMO, through its agricultural arm DIMO Agribusinesses, introduced the country's first and only paddy transplanting machine capable of maintaining an 8-inch gap between seedling rows, aptly named 'Pela Batta'. DIMO has always been at the forefront of introducing innovative and affordable agri machinery to the local farming community to drive mechanization in the nation's agriculture sector.

The current machinery available for rice transplanting in the Sri Lankan agriculture sector can maintain 11 to 12 inches between rice seedling rows when planted. In comparison, the Pela Batta can reduce it to an 8-inch gap. It also ensures a 5-to-6-inch gap (variable as per requirement) between each seedling in a given row. Research has shown that this new machine will lead to an increase in agricultural yield by 20 percent to 30 percent as a result of the more consistent spacing being maintained between seedlings. Additionally, the number of seedlings planted can also be increased. The traditional process of planting rice seedlings is significantly labor intensive, and specific methods do not maintain a level of consistency. The Pela Batta addresses both these concerns and delivers economic benefits as a result. It can plant an area covering 3 to 3.5 acres per day, effectively increasing the efficiency of the planting process in rice cultivation. Furthermore, the consistent space between the rice plants will make the process of weed and pest control relatively convenient. It must be particularly noted that this machine successfully planted 100 acres of land during this year's Yala season.

The 4-stroke engine, the simple design, and the reduced weight of the Pela Batta machine make it easily operable by anyone. The overall robustness, ease of maintenance, and low maintenance costs make it highly beneficial for the user.

Rohana Thilakasiri, Principal Agriculturist (Paddy) of Rice Research and Development Institute at Bathalagoda, stated, "The existing paddy transplanting machinery are mainly used in countries such as China, Korea, and Japan, where the paddy varieties are long-term and tall, allowing the distance between seedling rows to be up to 12 inches. However, Sri Lanka uses short-term varieties of paddy, which are short in height and usually harvested within 3-3.5 months. As a result, it is not viable for Sri Lankan farmers to use such machinery simply because they suit other

nations. When paddy transplanting is carried out with a 12-inch distance between the rows, this large gap creates difficulties in managing weeds' growth. We believe the 8-inch gap is ideal for our farming communities and will provide much better yields, especially considering the rice varieties we cultivate."

Rajeev Pandithage, Director of DIMO, who also oversees the Agri Machinery business of the Group, commented: "Fueling the dreams and aspirations of the farming community of the country, DIMO constantly promotes agriculture mechanization. The newly introduced Pela Batta will help realize that objective, and coupled with over eight decades of DIMO trust and engineering excellence, unwavering DIMO warranty, and the invaluable after-sale service through an island wide branch network, we firmly believe that this machine will be in high demand among the Sri Lankan farming community."

