

# Sampath Bank Hands Over Restoration Project - 'Pubbiliya Wewa'

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*Dr. Lalith Weragoda, Chief Human Resource Officer, Sampath Bank and Kiribandiya, President, Farmers' Association, Pubbiliya opening the sluice gate. Sampath Bank handed over-restored Pubbiliya Wewa, a 45- acre tank in Pubbiliya, Kurunegala District, at a ceremony attended by bank officers, members of the executive committee of the local farmers association, villagers, and officials from the Department of Agrarian Development's Kurunegala District Office.*

This project involved restoring the tank spill and removing layers of accumulated sludge built up over decades of neglect. Pubbiliya Wewa, located about six kilometers northeast of Kobeigane, will irrigate over 210 acres of prime paddy lands. Over 160 farming families, comprising of more than 500 men, women and children, stand to benefit directly. Additionally, the ripple effects of the

restoration will bestow economic benefits on five neighboring villages.

The Pubbiliya Wewa Restoration Project is part of the 'We- wata Jeewayak' (Life to Tanks), Sampath Bank's flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.

Begun more than twenty years ago, 'Wewata Jeewayak' is a committed, coordinated effort to rebuild and restore the traditional irrigation network and thus ensure a dependable water supply for dry zone farmers to cultivate their paddy lands and reap the harvests of both the Yala and Maha paddy seasons. 'Wewata Jeewayak' is congruent with what business schools call the triple bottom line.

At the handing-over ceremony, Sampath Bank officers thanked the Pubbiliya Govi Sanvidhanaya (farmers' association) for their wholehearted contribution. The Bank also thanked the representatives of the Department of Agrarian Development's Kurunegala District Office for their invaluable technical support.

"Restoring the Dry Zone's water-dependent ecosystems mean that farmers can cultivate paddy in both the Yala and Maha seasons and contribute to the nation's food security. This is very much a topic of concern in the present day. Tank restoration enriches the country's biodiversity profile as well when regional fauna and flora start flourishing again. So, the benefits are truly multifold", said Ajantha De Vas Gunasekera, Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer, Sampath Bank.

"It's very gratifying to see a bank taking an interest in the agricultural economy and getting actively involved in restoring ancient tanks," said Kiribandiya, President of the Pubbiliya Govi Sanvidanaya. "Speaking as farmers, we understand how important it is to make the country self-sufficient in food. Committed long-term efforts such as Sampath Bank's Wewata Jeewayak program will help us accomplish that goal."



*Dr. Lalith Weragoda, Chief Human Resource Officer, Sampath Bank and Dushani M Weerawansa, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Agrarian Development, District Office, Kurunegala unveiling a commemorative plaque.*