

Access to Safe Drinking Water a Priority for National Development - AmCham SL & Partners Donate R/O System to Palai Central College in Commemoration of World Water Day 2023

22nd March 2023:

The American Chamber of Commerce in Sri Lanka, together with its members, global partners, donors, and well wishes commissioned on 17th March 2023 in commemoration of **World Water Day 2023**, which is celebrated on 22nd March each year, a Reverse Osmosis plant to provide safe drinking water to over 700 students, of the Pallai Central College, Pallai, in Kilinochchi.

Dysfunction throughout the water cycle undermines progress on all major global issues, from health to hunger, gender equality to jobs, education to industry, and disasters to peace. Billions of people and countless schools, businesses, healthcare centers, farms, and factories are being held back because their human rights to water and sanitation still need to be fulfilled, and in 2015, the world committed to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 as part of the 2030 Agenda – the promise that everyone would have safely managed water and sanitation by 2030. World Water Day 2023 is about accelerating change to solve the water and sanitation crisis, and as a leading private sector organization, AmCham SL and partners intend to catalyze action in this space.

Commenting on the initiative, President of the AmCham SL, Lakshan Madurasinghe stated ***"The American Chamber of Commerce in Sri Lanka, together with our donor partners are truly delighted to be able to provide the Pallai Central College access to safe drinking water which is essential not only to the present students but those to come in the future. Scaling of support in this space is vital and we welcome our member companies to join hands to make a difference to more schools across Sri Lanka."***

The Assistant Principal of Palai Central College, Mr. Sujitha Sugunenthiran, noted ***"Life is not easy in a rural community like this where we have fewer infrastructure resources, and one of the biggest issues for us is the access to safe drinking water. Seven hundred students and seventy staff are getting purified water because of this initiative. We are extremely grateful to you all for your contributions to make this happen. It's moments like this that remind us to hold on to the good things"***

"I have no water to cook rice for my family " a lady told me when we handed over a water plant to the village of Motiyakulam, this statement shocked and rattled me; but at the same time reminded me that this is the reason why we at APPE LANKA perceive in our quest to make sure that no one goes thirsty, that people have water to cook their food, and wash and bathe something we tend to take so much for granted. APPE LANKA initiated "Let them bloom give them water" in 2018 and to date 40 RO plants providing safe water have been installed in Villages and schools in Poonakary and Pachichiapalai. As we celebrate World Water Day, they let us be thankful that Sri Lanka is blessed with so much greenery, fertile soil, water but let us together ensure that we walk the extra mile, leave our comfort zone and ensure

that everyone in Sri Lanka has safe usable water every day all the time" said Appe Lanka founder Shaan Corea.

The project, undertaken as part of the AmCham Gives Back initiatives for 2022/23, was supported by AmCham SL members, as well as the members of the USA-Sri Lanka Chamber of Commerce based in NY, USA, and was facilitated by Appe Lanka, a rural development project initiated by Awakening Lanka, to empower 06 districts in the North & East beginning in Poonakary to initially give safe drinking water to 22 schools in the district.

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