

# CHILDREN'S CORNER

## TRIP TO NURAWA ELIYA JUNE 2024

On occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Children's Corner, Chance ev and Mary's Friends funded a two-day trip to Nuwara Eliya.

The trip was arranged to go on Saturday, 15th and return on Sunday, 16th. As it was a holiday on Monday, 17th, children had a day to rest before attending school.

Children and the staff left the CCO on the 15th morning around 5a.m. From the Colombo office RR, a friend of RR, and Kapila also joined the trip, and everyone met at the exit of the highway in Mattala. Everyone had breakfast and continued the journey to Nuwara Eliya.

### Rawana waterfalls.

The first stop was at the Rawan waterfalls. Rawan Ella is a waterfall in the village of Uduhawara, in Badulla District. It is one of the most popular attractions in Ella. This waterfall measures approximately 25 m (82 ft). The falls have been named after the legendary king Ravana, who is connected to the famous Indian epic, the Ramayana. According to legend, it is said that Ravana (who was the king of Lanka at the time) had kidnapped princess Sita, and hidden her in the caves behind this waterfall, now simply known as the Ravana Ella Cave.



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### Dhowa rock temple

The second stop was at the Dhowa rock temple, or Dowa Raja Maha Viharaya. It is a heritage listed rock temple in Sri Lanka, located in the central mountains of the Uva Province. The temple is believed to have been constructed by King Valagamba in the first century BC and is one of many temples built by the king while taking refuge in Uva Province after an army from South India invaded the Anuradhapura Kingdom. The temple dates back over 2000 years. The temple is famous for its large 12 m (38 ft) high unfinished Buddha image, which is carved into the vertical granite rockface.

Children and the staff offered flowers and participated in the religious activities before heading to Nuwara Eliya.



After visiting the temple, everyone continued their journey to Nuwara Eliya. We arrived at the guest house around 2 p.m. After lunch, everyone had a rest after a tiring journey.



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### Visiting New Home of Hope Nuwara Eliya.

A visit to the New Home of Hope Nuwara Eliya (Good Shepherd Convent) was organized as the children at the CCO have not visited another Child Development Center. The main reason to organize the visit was to be aware of the facilities, living standards and arrangement of the Children's home, make new friends, and mostly to take anything that is useful for the CCO.

Children and the staff were welcomed by Sister Priyangika, Sister Anna and the children. Children were given a tour of the Child Development Center and the whole project. Sister Priyangika explained the history of the project, the history of the Good Shepherd congregation, and about Sr. Euphrasia.

Children received delicious afternoon tea with snacks and gifts from the Children at the New Home of Hope. Also, the children performed a dance to entertain the children.

The children at the CCO gave school stationery, biscuits, and sweets to the children at the New Home of Hope and they were very happy to receive them.

It was such a wonderful experience, and the children were very happy to visit the children's home and to meet their new friends.



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### Lake Gregory

In the evening, children visited Lake Gregory to enjoy the evening. As it was a long weekend, Lake Gregory was crowded. However, the children had the chance to enjoy themselves and relax in the garden area.

Lake Gregory, sometimes also called Gregory Lake or Gregory Reservoir, is a reservoir in the heart of the tea country hill city of Nuwara Eliya. Lake Gregory was created during the reign of British Governor Sir William Gregory in 1873.





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The day ended with a lot of happiness, and after dinner, everyone had a good sleep.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> morning, everyone gathers to a local restaurant named Hela Bojun, where the children have the opportunity to experience traditional Sri Lankan food.

### Victoria Park

After breakfast, the children visited Victoria Park. This is a place where most people, especially holidaymakers, never fail to visit and enjoy the beautifully laid-out gardens with the colorful flora and fauna. The park was formally named in 1897 to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria.



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### Sithaamman Kovil

After Victoria Park, all went to Sithaamman Kovil for religious activities.

The kovil is believed to be the site where Sita was held captive by the Rakshasa king Ravana, according to the Hindu epic, the Ramayana. It is believed to be the last location where Sita was held captive by Ravana. It is possibly the only temple in the world to be dedicated to Sita, and is extremely popular amongst the Hindu community, as well as tourists.



### Visiting a Strawberry Farm

As most of the children have not had strawberries, we arranged a visit to a Strawberry Farm. Unfortunately, as it was the end of harvest season, the farm was closed to visitors. But children had the opportunity to enjoy fresh strawberries and Ice cream.





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We stopped at a local restaurant for lunch, stopped before the entrance of the Highway for evening tea, and continued our journey to the CCO.

The children had an enjoyable time, and it was a great experience for them.

We do provide security, education, nutrition, and health for the children while under our care. It is also important that we give them joy and mental happiness for the well-being of our children. Therefore, I recommend that we take the children once a year on a fun/educational tour and allocate a certain amount in the budget for an annual trip.

Below activities are organized at the CCO for the children.

1. Sinhala and Tamil new year celebration
2. Celebrating birthdays once a month
3. Religious activities
4. Christmas celebration.
5. Dancing classes

Thank you for giving a wonderful time for the children.

**Asitha Fernando**  
**Resident Representative**  
**Mary's Friends Foundation.**

**19<sup>th</sup> June 2024**