

Community-based Application for Sri Lankan Comic Enthusiasts Towards Building a Sri Lankan Comic Culture

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Abstract – *The landscape of comics in Sri Lanka has a rich history dating back to the 1950s when comic strips were immensely popular. However, in the early 2000s, the industry encountered a significant shift with the advent of digital entertainment, causing a decline in the production and popularity of comics. This transition period lasted for about 17 years, during which the industry grappled with adapting to the digital era. Webcomics emerged as a global trend, leading Sri Lankan comic artists to embrace this digital shift, albeit with challenges. Presently, the Sri Lankan comic industry comprises three primary stakeholders: comic artists, writers, and fans. Despite the transition to webcomics, the annual production drastically decreased from around 100 to only 20, with more than 40% of these discontinued after 2020. The decline in the industry is attributed to the lack of networking and collaboration among the identified stakeholders. Without a strong community base, the sustainability of the industry is compromised. The core objective of this project is to establish a platform that facilitates networking among comic enthusiasts, fostering a vibrant community. While Sri Lankan comics have a longstanding legacy, recent developments in digitalization have reshaped the landscape. Despite a budding graphic novel industry and the influence of notable comic artists, the lack of collaboration among creators and a platform connecting them with their audience has hindered the industry's growth. This project aims to scrutinize the reasons behind this decline and identify the existing gaps within the industry. By creating a space for comic enthusiasts to network and build a community, this initiative seeks to reinvigorate the Sri Lankan comic culture and propel it towards sustainable growth.*

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