



Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

No. 80, Galle Road, Colombo 03 Sri Lanka

Tel : +94 112426900, 2437055/59/60

Fax : +94 11 2436321

Email : info@srilanka.travel

Web : www.sltda.gov.lk

Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau

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Tel : +94 112426900, 2437055/59/60

Fax : +94 11 2440001

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LESSER KNOWN ATTRACTION PROJECT – SRI LANKA TOURISM

Udana Wickramasinghe

Director ICT

Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

No. 80, Galle Road, Colombo 03.

Telephone : (General) 0112 2437055/59/60, (Direct) 0112 436321

Fax : 0112 436321

Web : www.srilanka.travel/lesserknown

E- mail : webmaster@sltda.gov.lk

Coordinator : Chandana Munasinghe

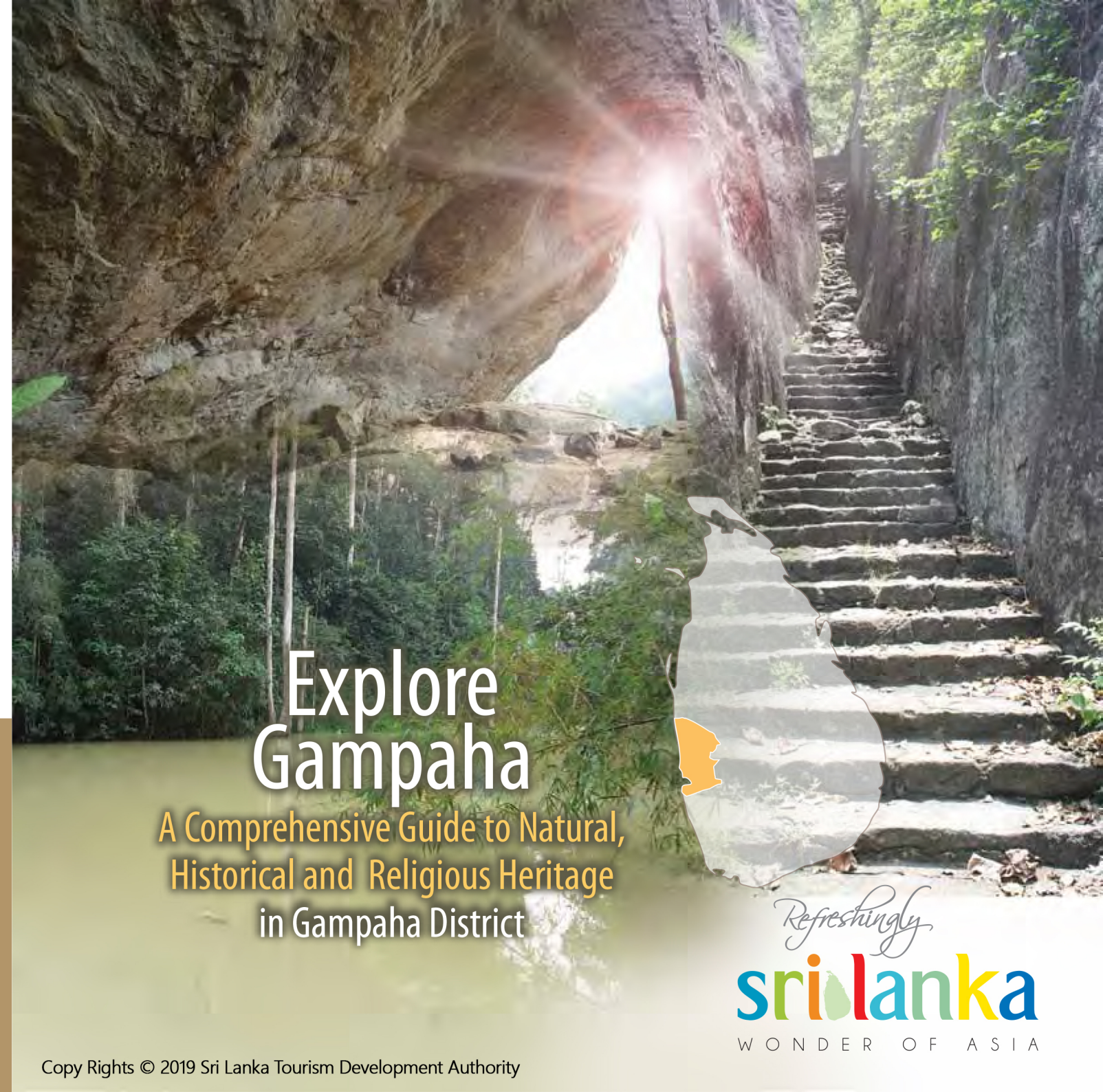
Te : (General) +94 11 426982, (Mobile) 0+94 770 500856

Email : chandanam@srilanka.travel

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Tell us about your tourist destination in your neighbourhood, village, town

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Explore Gampaha

A Comprehensive Guide to Natural,
Historical and Religious Heritage
in Gampaha District



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Gampaha District



With the country's main international airport, three free trade zones, a leading university, a "Little Rome" and a temple of great reverence as old as the history itself tucked inside its little space, Gampaha is a vibrant potpourri of cultures, religions and races.

Its coastal positioning and abundance of waterways had added to its vividness with the population of Gampaha being employed in traditional farming, heavy industry, fishing, pottery, brick cutting and sand harvesting.

Bound by Kurunegala and Puttalam districts from North, Kegalle District from East, Colombo District from South and by the Indian Ocean from West, Gampaha is a comparatively a new district in the Sri Lankan map. Established in 1978, the exact margins of the district are Ma-o-ya River from North, Kelani River from South and 1000ft contour line from East.

In the coastal lines of Gampaha District are the fisher folk of mixed Sinhala and other Ethnicities with a touch of Portuguese and Dutch genes. Negombo, the central city of coastal Gampaha is known as the "Little Rome" with many old Roman Catholic Church peaks kissing the sky line. The churches, the fort and the Hamilton canal are the structural remnants of a once vibrant merchant city while Baila and Kaffringha music, nativity plays and passion plays make a diversified and heavily colonized culture.

As the sea disappears in the horizon with it vanishes the colonial effect opening doors to a very different Gampaha of Buddhist roots and of traditional agricultural and industrial means. The Kelaniya Raja Maha Viharaya, having derived its sanctity nearly 2700 years with the visit of Lord Buddha and five hundred arhants on the invitation of King Maniakkikha, the leader of Naga tradition in Kelaniya had continued to be among the most revered sites in history of Buddhism.

The bio diversity in Gampaha District boasts of 40 species of fish, 14 species of reptiles, 102 species of birds and 22 species of mammals. Among the total number of vertebrate species documented 17 are endemic while 26 are nationally endangered. Among the invertebrates documented 48 species are butterflies and 22 species are dragonflies.

The Muthurajawela Wetland Reserve and the National Aquatic Research Authority (NARA) Mangrove Sanctuary in the Gampaha district are two of the main coastal wetland reserves in the country while Horagolla Forest Reserve is the smallest forest reserve in the country.



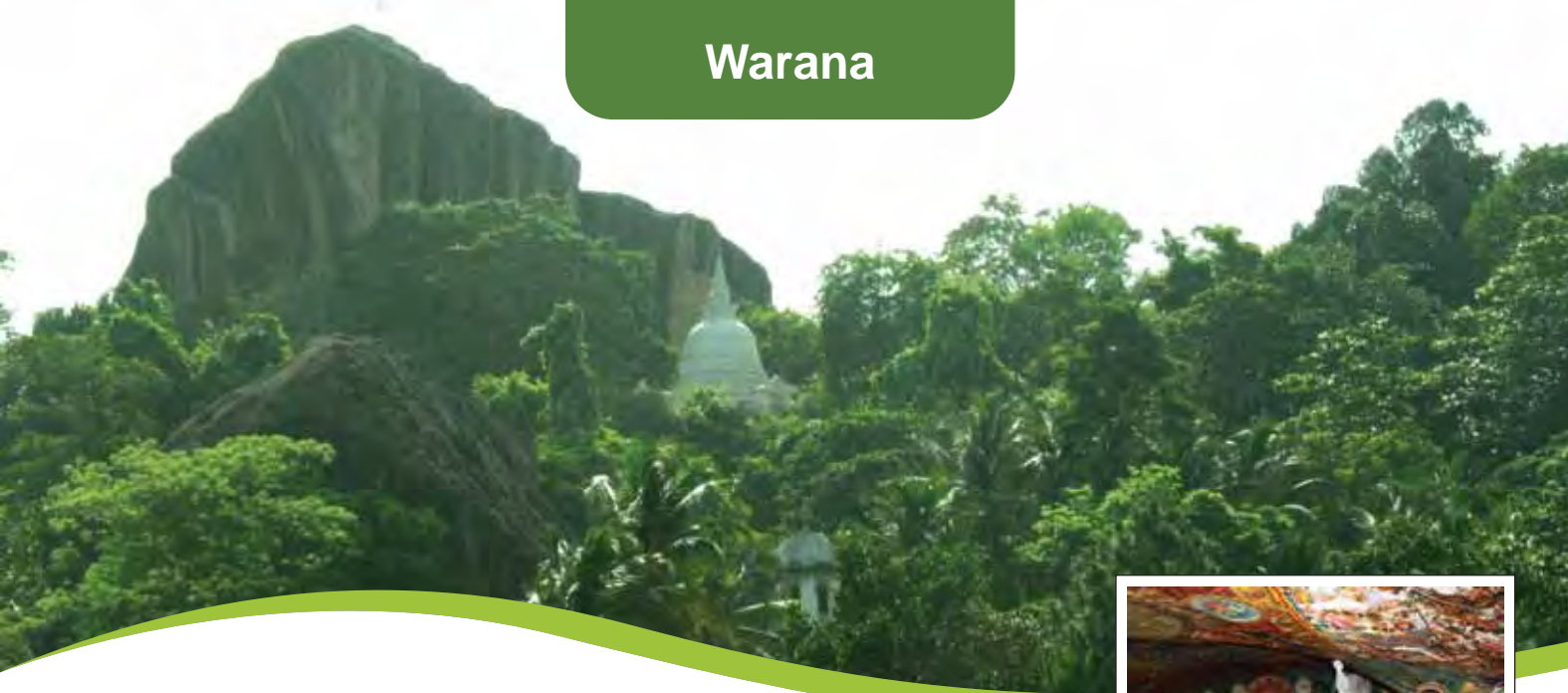
Ledgen

- Main Road
- Minor Road
- Forest
- Ela
- Marsh

1. Warana
2. Pilikuttuwa Raja Maha Viharaya
3. Attanagalla Raja Maha Viharaya
4. Pettagankanda
5. Kelaniya Temple
6. Jogging Track
7. Water World
8. Maligathenna
9. Preethipura Beach
10. Thewatta Basilica Church
11. Nara Mangrove Garden
12. Dathukanda Temple
13. Ketawala Anicut
14. Muthurajawela Wetlands
15. Henarathgoda Botanical Garden
16. Pine Apple in Belummahara
17. Wickramarachchi Ayurveda Hospital
18. Kanduboda Meditation Centre
19. Dadagamuwa Raja Maha Viharaya
20. Horagolla National Park
21. Kadjugama
22. Indigolla Church
23. Hamilton Canal
24. Angurukaramulla Temple
25. Antiquities Replica Centre
26. Alawala Pothgul Lena & Alawala Devin Pen – ne Ela
27. Bopagama Waterfall
28. Walbothale Raja Maha Viharaya
29. Weweldeniya Cane Crafts
30. Negombo Fort & Fisheries Harbour
31. Nissaranaya Wanaya & Meditation Centre
32. Keragala Padmawathi Pirivena
33. Pirisyala Senanayake Mudalindarama Maha Pirivena
34. Asgiriya Ancient Temple



Warana



Significance: The mountain hermitage of two brothers

Activities: Cave Tourism, Pilgrimage, Hiking, Photography

The temple is built on three levels and a climb of fifty steps brings the pilgrims to the first level, which consist of monks abode and hall of preaching. Another climb leads to the middle level or the Mada Viharaya where stands a 800 year old Stupa and a shrine room of immense splendor. The final climb of 150 steps leads to the top of the rocky mountain and the third level of the temple opening great vistas to behold. The third level holds a Stupa built in the last century and the remnants of the original monastic meditation complex of 12 caves fashioned into chambers for meditating monks.

Location: Warana **Divisional Secretariat:** Gampaha

How To Get There

> Colombo (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Yakkala - Thihariya Junction - Turn left (2km)
(35.9 km – 40 min)

> Katunayake (Uggaaloda Road) - Kehelbaddara - Kalagedihena Junction -
Thihariya Junction - Turn Left (2 km) (28.5 km – 30 min)

Nearby Attractions: Pilikuththuwa Raja Maha Viharaya, Pettagamkanda

HOTELS

- **Ranathisara Hotel**
51, Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033 – 2287309
- **Apsara Resort**
Kandy Road, Malwatta, Nittambuwa. 033-2292564
- **Hotel Rosilu**
60/5/A, Kandy Road, Thihariya, Kalagedihena. 033-2295606



Pilikuththuwa Raja Maha Viharaya



Significance: The monastic cave complex of ancient Lanka

Activities: Cave Tourism, Hiking & Camping, Filming, Nature Study, Historical Study, Photography, Meditation

In the lowest levels of the temple is the ancient stone pond, Bodhi tree, Vihara Lena or the cave that houses the shrine and the Chaithya Lena or the cave with the Stupa. Archaeologists believe that these cave were initially constructed with the distinct drip ledge to house the meditating monks and were later converted into a shrine room and a house for Stupa with the decrease of number of meditating monks at the temple. The image house is unique for its use of two drawings of Portuguese soldiers to guard the doorway in the place of Doratupala statues as in the early periods, suggesting the shifting of powers and the era of renovation. The ceiling of the rock cave is decorated with the typical Kandyan art decorations of elaborate lotus flowers while the reclining and sitting statues are of Polonnaruwa period.

Location: Pilikuttuwa **Divisional Secretariat:** Mahara

How To Get There

> Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Kadawatha - Belummahara - Miriswatta - Turn Left
Wathurugama Road (4km) (32.6 km – 40 min)

> Colombo - Kaduwela - Biyagama - Weliweriya - Belummahara - Miriswatta - Turn Left
Wathurugama Road (4km) (34.8 km – 45 min)

> Katunayake - Kotugoda - Ekala - Gampaha - Yakkala - Pilikuttuwa - (29.2 km – 35 min)

Nearby Attractions: Warana Rajamaha Viharaya, Pettagamkanda

HOTELS

- **Silver Ring Village Hotel**
52/1, Kidagammulla, Gampaha. 033-2224534 (www.silverringvillagehotel.com)
- **Oasis Green Garden**
Udugampolawatta, Pahalagama, Gampaha. 033-2224055
- **Momento Guest House**
24, Vijaya Road, Gampaha. 033-2222543



Attanagalla Raja Maha Viharaya



Significance: Immortalizing the pious King of Lanka

Activities: Pilgrimage

Believed to have been built by King Gotabhaya (249-262 AD) to immortalise his senior brother King Sri Sangabo (247-249 A.D.) who is asserted to have donated his head to a passerby, who shared his lunch with him. Attanagalla Raja Maha Viharaya had been the main monastery of a monastery complex spread around the area. The legend holds that King Sri Sangabodhi, the pious king of Sri Lanka was hiding at the location of the temple after having escaped the invading armies of his brother, Prince Gotabhaya. The King had left abandoned his kingdom and throne in favour of a monastic life not wanting to fight the prince and endanger the lives of the citizen, a move which left Prince Gotabhaya insecure and unpopular among the populace.

Location: Attanagalla **Divisional Secretariat:** Attanagalla

How To Get There

- > Colombo – Kiribathgoda – Yakkala – Nittambuwa – Attanagalla (45.9 km – 50 min)
- > Colombo – Kaduwela – Biyagama – Weliveriya – Radawana – Urapola – Attanagalla (51.3 km – 1 hour)
- > Katunayake – Minuwangoda – Veyangoda – Nittambuwa – (Ruwanwella Road) – Attanagalla (34.3 km – 36 min)

Nearby Attractions: Pettagamkanda, Dathukanda Raja Maha Viharaya

HOTELS

- **Ranathisara Hotel,**
51, Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033 2287309
- **Apsara Resort,**
Kandy Road. Malwatta, Nittambuwa. 033-2292564
- **The Haven,**
26th Mile Post. Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033-2285609



Pettagamkanda & Pettagangala



Significance: The mystery of the unique box shaped rock

Activities: Photography, Hiking, Meditation, Filming

Pettagamkanda is a stony mountain with a unique shape and history. Shaped as a pettagam or a huge box it gives the onlooker an impression of fragile positioning despite having stood its ground since eternity. The single Buddha statue which rests in a cave under the huge box shape stone and the white washed Stupa on the rock reflects the tranquil atmosphere while the top of the mountain unfolds great vistas of Varana, Pilikuttuwa and Maligatanna, three historical cave temples of Sri Lanka. The rock with a secret cave and yet to be explored and tunnel complex once provided sanctuary to King Walagamba in the 1st century BC but is the home to a family of foxes and a horde of bats today. The forest around too comprises of monkeys, wild boar and fishing cats. A left turn from the Dikkanda junction on the Yakkala-Kirindiwela Road and a steep climb leads to 'Isiwaru Thapowanaya', a monastic meditation centre which has spread over the 'Pettagam Gala' mountain and its surrounding forest. The rock is visible almost just after the turn and presides majestically over the road leading to the monastery and mountain.

Location: Pettagamkanda, Galboda **Divisional Secretariat:** Dompe

How To Get There

- > Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Kadawatha - Belummahara - Miriswatta – (Kirindiwela Road) – Dikkanda Junction – (Urapola Road) – Galboda Junction – Galboda (32.9 km – 45 min)

Nearby Attractions: Attanagalla Raja Maha Viharaya, Warana Raja Maha Viharaya, Alawala Pothgula Lena

HOTELS

- **Silver Ring Village Hotel**
52/1. Kidagammulla, Gampaha. 033-2224534 (www.silverringvillagehotel.com)
- **Oasis Green Garden**
Udugampolawatta, Pahalagama, Gampaha. 033-2224055
- **Momento Guest House**
24, Vijaya Road, Gampaha. 033-2222543
- **Hotel Gayani**
Rukmale, Ruwanpura



Kelaniya Temple



Significance: Graced by the shadows of Buddha

Activities: Photography, Pilgrimage

According to legend the temple and Stupa in Kelaniya dates back to the pre-Buddhist era in the country, when Lord Buddha visited the area and preached Dhamma to the Nagas, who then lived in Kelaniya. King Maniakkikha had built a Stupa enshrining the seat and location Lord Buddha sat and had also included a handful of hair gifted by Lord Buddha himself. However the original Stupa and the temple built by the ancient kings of Lanka is no more as it was wrecked and plundered by the invading Portuguese, who according to Portuguese historians used the bricks to build a church nearby. Gold and gems were plundered from the temple and were kept as loot while Portuguese confiscated the land belonging to the temple and prohibited the devotees worshipping at the site. The temple was left under rubble and in destruction until permission was granted by the Dutch, who took over coastal areas of Sri Lanka following the Portuguese, to the Kandyan King, Keerthi Sri Rajasingha to renovate the temple, once ever so precious to the Buddhists. More contribution was made to the revival of Kelaniya to its old glory by Buddhist philanthropist Helena Wijewardhana, who initiated the reconstruction of the temple at the end of the 19th century.

Location: New Bridge, Biyagama Road, Kelaniya. **Divisional Secretariat:** Kelaniya

How To Get There

- > Colombo - Peliyagoda - Kelaniya (10.8 km - 20 min)
- > Katunayake - Ja-ela - Welisara - Dalugama - Peliyagoda - Kelaniya (31.5 km - 35 min)

Nearby Attractions: Water World

HOTELS

- **Hotel Clarion**
103, Kandy Road, Kiribathgoda. 011-2911579 (www.clarionlk.com)
- **Monrepo Guest House**
107, Kandy Road, Gala Junction, Kiribathgoda, Kelaniya. 011-2912847 (www.monrepo.com)
- **P.T. Gardens**
540A/4, Samurdhi Mw, Walgama, Malwana, Biyagama. 011-487575 (www.ptgardenhotel.com)



Jogging Track



Significance: A jog between rivers

Activities: Photography, Bird Watching, Nature Walks (and Jogging)

The jogging tracks along the banks of OoruwalOya and AttanagaluOya from KaluPalama to Belummaha-raare an experience combining the scenic beauty and state of art technology. Defined by the flowing water of two rivers the tracks are connected with butterfly bridges and shaded by many trees of aesthetic and medicinal value the tracks are lit with lamps powered by independent solar power units, a breakthrough in the country. A walk along the tracks also provides the occasion to do a spot of bird watching or to catch few otters at play, allowing indulging in nature watching and jogging before breakfast every day. More Jogging Track could also be found in Mahara, Ragama and Kiribathgoda

Location: Gampaha **Divisional Secretariat:** Gampaha

How To Get There

- > Colombo – (Kandy Road) – Kiribathgoda – Kadawatha – Ganemulla – Gampaha (29.6 km – 40 min)
- > Katunayake - Kotugoda - Ekala - Gampaha (23 km - 30 min)

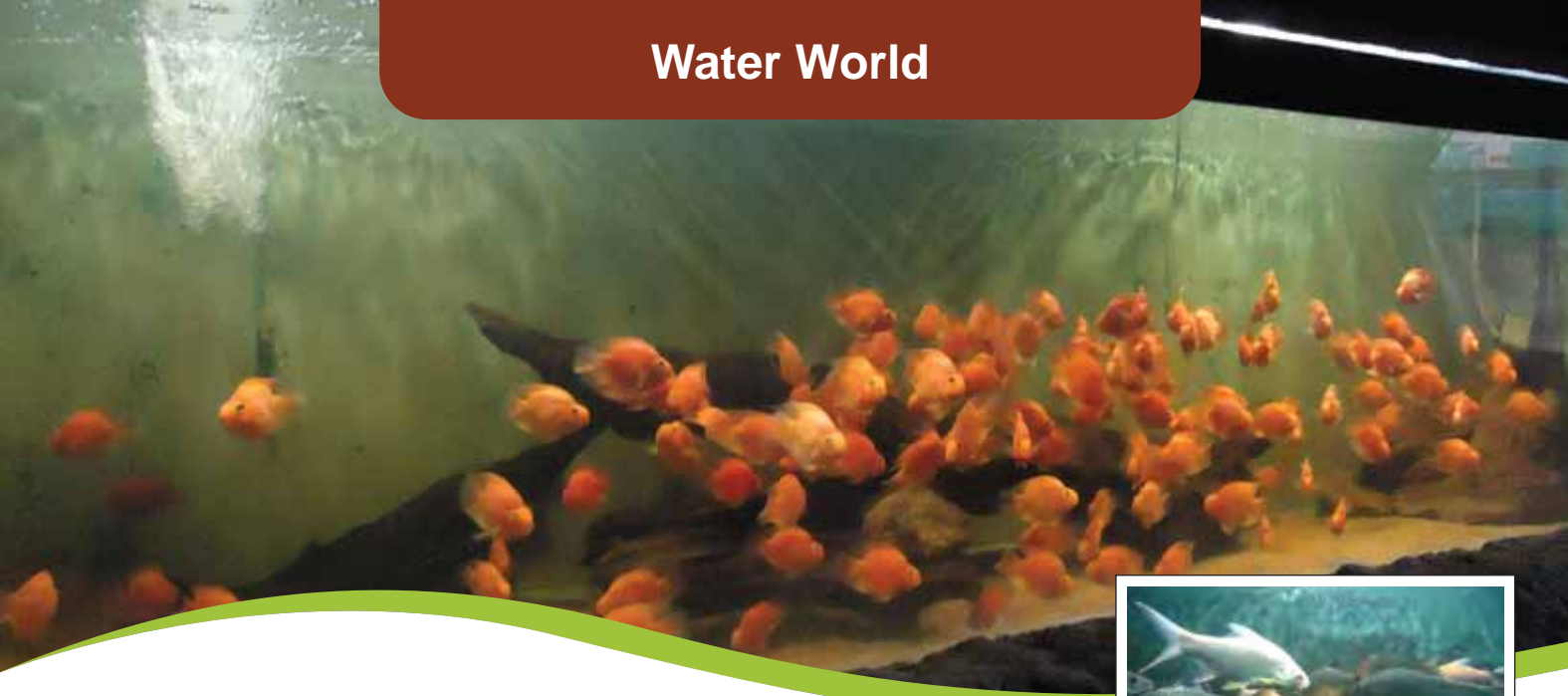
Nearby Attractions: Henarathgoda Botanical Garden, Ketawala Anicut, Asgiriya Ancient Temple

HOTELS

- **Silver Ring Village Hotel**
52/1, Kidagammulla, Gampaha. 033-2224534 (www.silverringvillagehotel.com)
- **Oasis Green Garden**
Udugampolawatta, Pahalagama, Gampaha. 033-2224055
- **Momento Guest House**
24, Vijaya Road, Gampaha. 033-2222543



Water World



Significance: Sri Lanka's first private aquarium

Activities: Exotic Fish, Bird Park, Biological Study

Water World aquarium and the bird park are located in Kelaniya. The bird park is relatively small but the aquarium has large varieties of fish. This attraction suits both children and adults. The Water World is a better place when compared to the aquarium in the Dehiwala zoo. This has several sections for both local and foreign species. According to them, there are more than 10,000 of them. Visitors can walk through the tunneled enclosure and fish tanks are located on both sides. The shark tank is the largest tank and is ideal to view them during feeding time.

Location: Thalwatta, Gonawala. **Divisional Secretariat:** Biyagama

How To Get There

- > Colombo - Peliyagoda - Kelaniya (10.8 km – 20 min)
- > Katunayake - Ja-ela - Welisara - Dalugama - Peliyagoda - Kelaniya (31.5 km – 35 min)

Nearby Attractions: Kelaniya Temple, Preethipura Beach, Thewatta Basilica Church

Tel: +94 11 5555434

Web: www.waterworldlanka.com

HOTELS

- **Hotel Clarion**
103, Kandy Road. Kiribathgoda. 011-2911579 (www.clarionlk.com)
- **Monrepo Guest House**
107, Kandy Road. Gala function, Kiribathgoda, Kelaniya. 011-2912847 (www.monrepo.com)
- **P.T.Gardens**
540A/4, Samurdhi Mw, Walgama, Malwana, Biyagama. 011 2487575 (www.ptgardenhotel.com)



Maligathenna



Significance: A refuge of sacred relics and Kings

Activities: Photography, Historical Study, Hiking, Biking

The caves are spread on different levels amongst the forest and each level could be reached through a stone stairway, the one leading to the top of the mountain being the most unique and celebrated. Some of the original meditation caves had been converted to shrine rooms during the time of King Walagamba with murals on the walls and on roof and a 18 ft reclining Buddha statue. The ground level which is reached after a small and steady climb consists of the main temple and the majority of the caves are found on this level, the largest being the meditation hall. Another large cave had been converted into the main shrine room while the Stupa in the ground level had been built during the last century.

Location: Wathurugama **Divisional Secretariat:** Mahara

How To Get There

- > Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Kadawatha - Belummahara - Miriswatta - Turn Left Wathurugama Road (4km) (36.6 km – 44 min)
- > Colombo - Kaduwela - Biyagama - Weliweriya - Belummahara - Miriswatta - Turn Left Wathurugama Road (4km) (34.8 km – 45 min)

Nearby Attractions: Pettagamkanda, Attanagalla Temple



HOTELS

- **Silver Ring Village Hotel**
52/1, Kidagammulla, Gampaha. 033-2224534 (www.silverringvillagehotel.com)
- **Oasis Green Garden**
Udugampolawatta, Pahalagama, Gampaha. 033-2224055
- **Momento Guest House**
24, Vijaya Road, Gampaha. 033-2222543

Prithipura Beach



Significance: Family fun under the sun

Activities: Photography, Scenery,
Preethipura Beach, a well-known beach resort in Hendala, on the South-East coast and North of Colombo, attracts hundreds seeking the sun, the sea, the sand every day, including locals and tourists who come in search for a dip in the sea and tumble on the shore.
The beach is scattered with benches and a breakwater keeps the rough waves away making it an ideal spot for picnics and family day outs. Volunteer lifeguards trained by Sri Lanka Life Saving Association on the beach on the weekends and on holidays to prevent drowning and related accidents, which used to be reported frequently from Preethipura.

Location: Prithipura, Halliyawatta **Divisional Secretariat:** Wattala

How To Get There

- > Colombo – Peliyagoda - Wattala - Turn Left - Palliyawatta Bridge - Turn Left
Palliyawatta Church (750m) (10.7 km – 20 min)
- > Katunayake - Ja-ela - Welisara - Nayakakanda - (Handala Road) - Turn To Canal Road
Palliyawatta Road (750m) (27.8 km – 30 min)

Nearby Attractions: Muthurajawela Wetlands, Kelaniya Temple, Water World

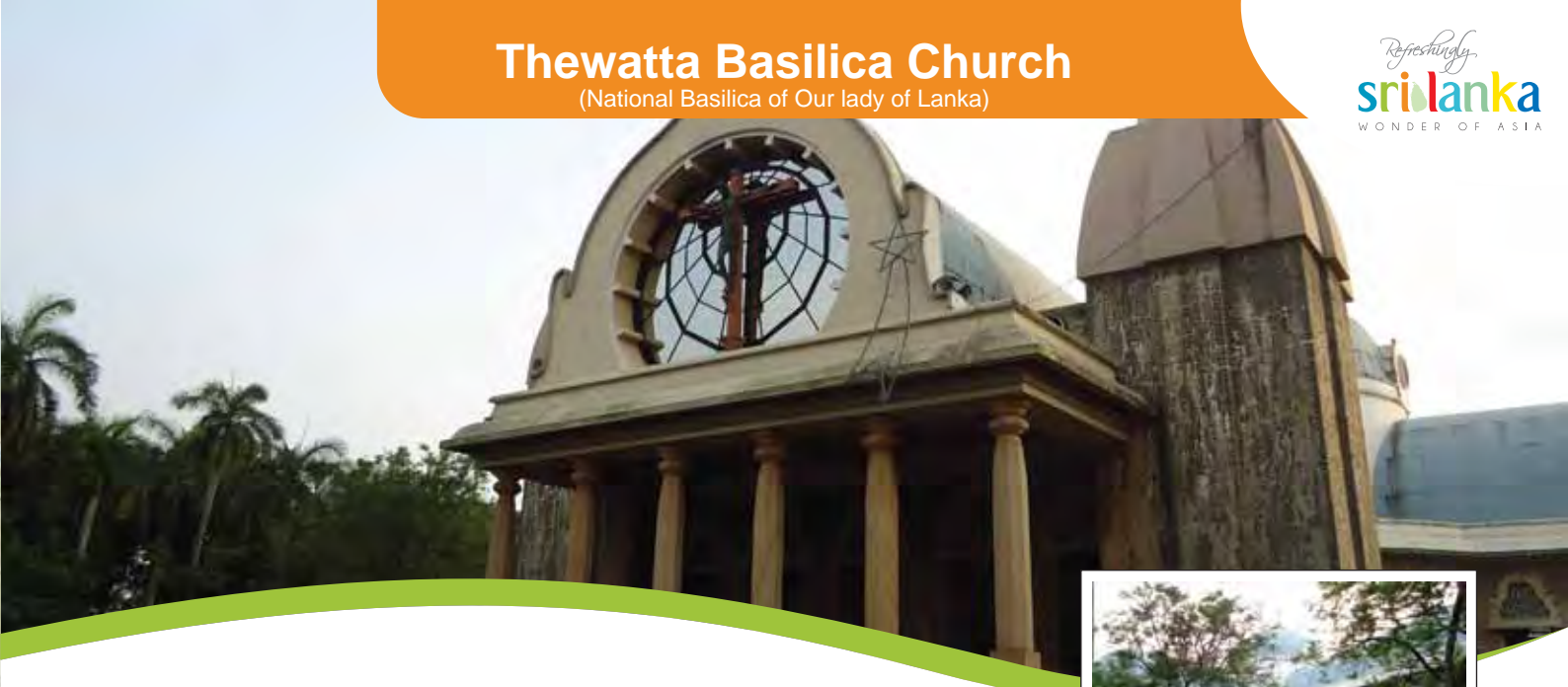


HOTELS

- **Pegasus Reef Hotel**
St.Maria Mw, Hendala, Wattala. 011-2930205/9
- **Aubrona Hotel**
81, New Road, Hunupitiya,Wattala. 011-2932156 / 011-4812888
- **Durga Guest House**
11, Wewelduwa Road, Hunupitiya, Wattala. 011-2948448

Thewatta Basilica Church

(National Basilica of Our lady of Lanka)



Significance: Built to keep a promise of faith

Activities: Pilgrimage, Photography
The Statue had received the adoration and worship of the late Pope John Paul the 6th in the form of a gold rosary. The Basilica's high alter is a solid white marble enclosing the holy relics while the communion table or the altar is made to resemble the Ark of the Covenant and above is a historical 17th century cross from Puttlam. The undercroft of the Basilica contains three burial vaults and another containing the remaining of the late Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Cardinal Cooray. Nearby, a man made reservoir amongst two mountain tops and a stream rushing along the forest adds to the charms of Basilica and provides a well earned respite to the clergy and faithful who flock to the Basilica for prayer and worship.

Location: Thewatta, Ragarna **Divisional Secretariat:** Ja- Ela

How To Get There

- > Colombo – Welisara – Ragama - (Ragama -Galwala luction) - (1.5 km) (18.9 km – 30 min)

Nearby Attractions: Prithipura Beach, Indigolla Church, Horagolla National Park



HOTELS

- **Pegasus Reef Hotel**
St.Maria Mw, Hendala, Wattala. 011-2930205/9
- **Misuki Plaza**
309, Colombo Road, Nagoda Junction, Welisara, Ragama. 011-2238407 (www.plazahotel.com)
- **Horizon Hill Hotel**
No.33, Gotabaya Mawatha, Hunupitiya, Wattala. 011-2931453

Nara Mangrove Garden



Significance: The secret life of mangroves

Activities: Photography, Bird Watching, Boat Riding, Nature Study
Managed and owned by the National Aquatic Research Authority (NARA) the 14 hectare mangrove path is a research heaven for environmental scientists and ecologists in the region. The reserve serving as a green lung for the city records 29 species of mangroves and 33 other types of vegetation and its living creatures include 14 species of reptiles, 102 species of birds and 22 species of mammals including fresh water prawns, giant mud crabs, fishing cat, Chestnut Bittern, Black-headed Ibis, Asian Open-bill, Little Grebe, Lesser Whistling Teal, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, White-breasted Water hen, Purple Swamp Hen, Water Cock and Common Moor Hen. Among the invertebrates documented 48 species are butterflies and 22 species are dragonflies. The reserve also maintains a hatchery for giant fresh water prawns and a demonstration cage system for culture of brackish water fish species, with a view of assisting small scale aqua culture farmers in the country.

Location: Kadol Kele **Divisional Secretariat:** Negombo

How To Get There

- > Colombo - Welisara - Ja-Ela - Katunayake - (Aluth Para) 500m - Dutugemunu Viharaya
Turn Right (100 m) (38.9 km – 45 min)
- > Katunayake - Kurana - Negombo - (Aluth Para) 500 m - Dutugemunu Viharaya
Turn Right (100 m) (11.9 km – 15 min)

Nearby Attractions: Dutch Fort, Angurukaramulla Temple

Tel: +94 31 2222479

HOTELS

- **Blue Oceanic Beach Hotel,**
Lewis Place, Negombo. 031-2279C00 (blueoceanic@sltnet.lk)
- **Paradise Holiday Village,**
154/9, Poruthota Road, Palagathure, Kochchikade, Negombo. 031-2274588



Dathu Kanda Temple



Significance: A milestone on a Royal journey

Activities: Hiking, Pilgrimage, Photography

It is another temple built around the legend of King Sri Sangabodhi, the pious King of Sri Lanka. Alleged to have been built by a minister of the King Gothabaya named Diyamottawa, the temple rests on the top of a rocky mountain affording a look over the Gampaha district and beyond. The legends surrounding the temple holds that a man made vessel in the rocky mountain was used to store the sacred relics for the Stupa of the Attanagalla temple, which was built in memory of King Sangabodhi, who donated his head to a passerby nearly 1700 years ago. A man made perforation had been found on the top of the mountain by archeologists during the last century and was assumed to be the container of the relics. The vessel, which was about two feet deep and sixteen square feet in area, had been dug into the stone and had a lid, which was lost eventually. Today a Stupa had been built around the hole revering the memory of the relics but preventing further archeological investigation. Many artifacts, including broken moon stones and Korawakgala or the stone hand rails, found in and around the temple strengthen the legend around the temple while many villages still hold names relating to the tale.

Location: Kalalpitiya, Pasyala. **Divisional Secretariat:** Attanagalla

How To Get There

- > Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Yakkala - Nittambuwa - 4th Mile Post- Kalalpitiya Sub Post Office - Turn Right (250 m) (40.5 km – 45 min)
- > Katunayake - Minuwangoda - Veyangoda - Nittambuwa - 4th Mile Post- Kalalpitiya Sub Post Office - Turn Right (250 m) (30.9 km – 33 min)

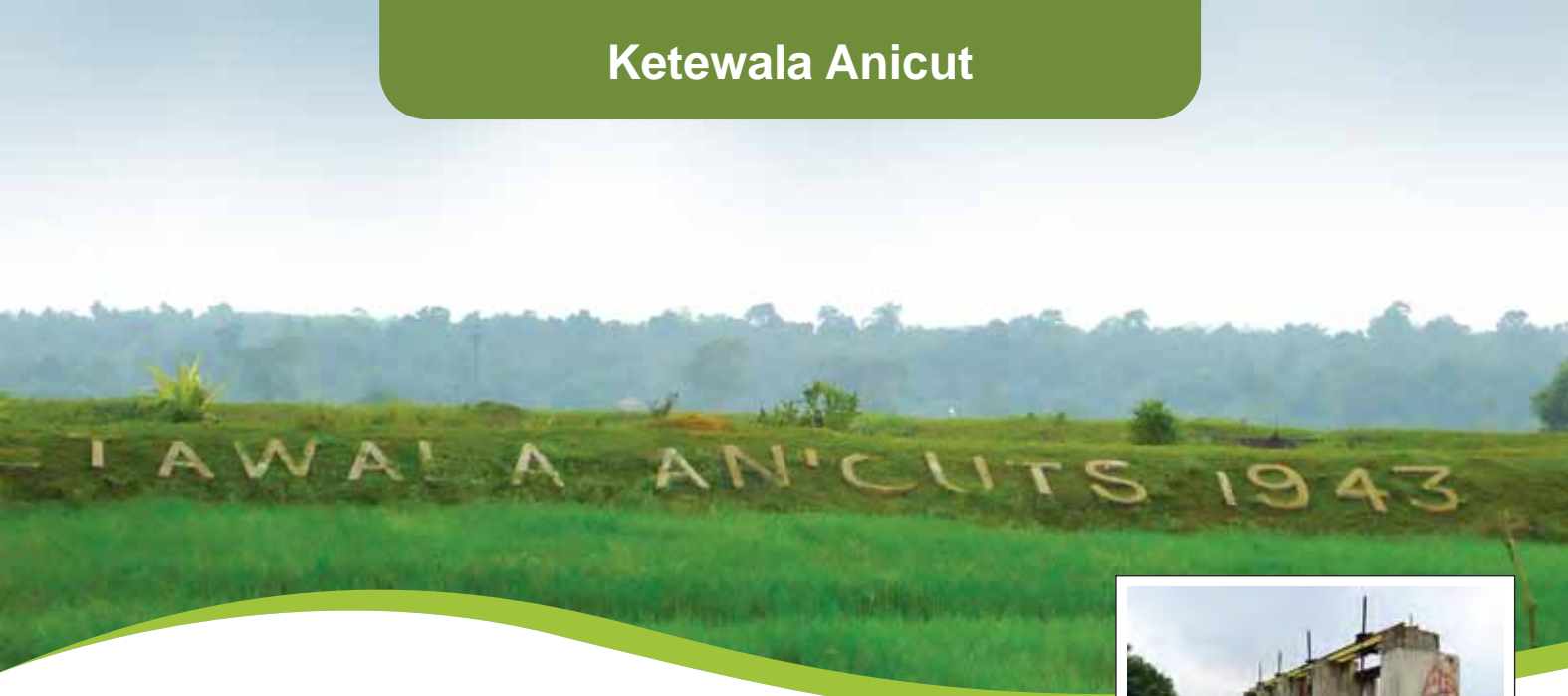
Nearby Attractions: Horagolla National Park, Wewaldeniya Cane Craft

HOTELS

- **Ranathisara Hotel**
51, Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033 2287309
- **Apsara Resort**
Kandy Road. Malwatta, Nittambuwa. 033-2292564
- **The Haven**
26" Mile Post. Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033-2285609



Ketewala Anicut



Significance: A picture of nature

Activities: Photography, Filming, Scenery

A left turn near Gampaha Bandaranaike College on the Gampaha-Yakkala road leads to a page out of a nature lovers' book. In the midst of an expanding paddy field and across the Attanagalu Oya River stands the Ketawala Anicut, the main attraction. Built to provide water to nearly 1500 acres of paddy land, the Anicut is a magnet to many local tourists who flock the area for a dip in the lake at the foot of the dam and to absorb the natural beauty surrounding the area.

Location: Ihalagama, Gampaha **Divisional Secretariat:** Gampaha

How To Get There

> Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Miriswatta - Gampaha - (Yakkala Road)
Bandaranayake Vidyalaya - Turn Left (1 km) (30.5 km – 45 min)

Nearby Attractions: Henarathgoda Botanical Garden, Maligathenna Raja Maha Viharaya



HOTELS

- **Silver Ring Village Hotel**
52/1, Kidagammulla, Gampaha. 033-2224534 (www.silverringvillagehotel.com)
- **Oasis Green Garden,**
Udugampolawatta, Pahalagama, Gampaha. 033-2224055
- **Momento Guest House,**
24, Vijaya Road, Gampaha. 033-2222543

Muthuraja Wela Wetlands



Significance: A hot spot for flora and fauna

Activities: Bird Watching, Photography, Boat Riding, Scenery, Nature Study

Spread over 6230 hectares, the Muthurajawela Wetland runs parallel to the western coastline of the country and together with the contiguous Negombo lagoon which forms an integrated coastal wetland system of high biodiversity and ecological significance. It is listed as one of the 12 priority wetlands in Sri Lanka, and in 1996 in recognition of its high ecological significance, the Northern section of Muthurajawela was declared a Wetland Sanctuary. The Sanctuary contains a high diversity of both flora and fauna, including several endemic and nationally threatened species, and also provides a safe abode for migratory birds. Nearly 200 species of flora belonging to seven major types are found in Muthurajawela Wetland zone including one endemic species, Arecacea or Phoenix Zelanica.

Location: Delathura, Ja - Ela **Divisional Secretariat:** Wattala

How To Get There

> Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Kadawatha - Ganemulla - Asgiriya (29.6 km - 40 min)
> Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Miriswatta - Gampaha - Asgiriya (33.3 km - 50 min)

Nearby Attractions: Prithipura Beach, Negombo Fort and Harbour



Photography by Dr. A. Dissanayaka

HOTELS

- **Ramada Katunayaka**
842/2, Negombo Road, Seeduwa. 011-2258430
- **Pegasus Reef Hotel**
St. Maria Mw, Handala, Wattala. 011-2930205/9

Henarathgoda Botanical Garden



Significance: The cradle of rubber revolution

Activities: Scenery, Photography, Environmental Study

In 1876 the first seedlings of Brazilian rubber trees ever planted in South Asia, grew and prospered in Henarathgoda Botanical Gardens. The seeds smuggled out of the Brazilian Amazon by Sir Henry Wickham and nurtured at London's Kew Gardens led to an economic boom in the region and revolutionised the world. Situated 30 km from Colombo and just 5 km from Gampaha, the Henarathgoda Botanical Gardens is often overlooked for more celebrated botanical gardens in Peradeniya and Hakgala, yet is celebrated for its collection of tropical trees including the first batch of para rubber trees, the originals that sired the rubber industry throughout South-East Asia in Malaya, Indonesia and South India as well as in Sri Lanka.

Location: Henarathgoda, Gampaha **Divisional Secretariat:** Gampaha

How To Get There

- > Colombo – (Kandy Road) – Kiribathgoda – Kadawatha – Ganemulla – Asgiriya (29.6 km – 40 min)
- > Colombo – (Kandy Road) – Kiribathgoda – Miriswatta – Gampaha- Asgiriya (33.3 km – 50 min)

Nearby Attractions: Wickramarachchi Ayurvedha Hospital, Indigolla Church

Tel: +94 33 2222316

Web: www.botanicalgardens.gov.lk

HOTELS

- **Silver Ring Village Hotel**
52/1, Kidagammulla, Gampaha. 033-2224534 (www.silverringvillagehotel.com)
- **Oasis Green Garden**
Udugampolawatta, Pahalagama, Gampaha. 033-2224055
- **Momento Guest House**
24, Vijaya Road, Gampaha. 033-2222543

Pineapple in Belummahara



Significance: The Pineapple is a universal symbol for hospitality

Activities: Visits to Pineapple Plantations, Agricultural Study, Agro Tourism

This traditional cultivation, which has a history of over six centuries, has now become the livelihood of nearly 500 families in the areas of Gampaha, Kotugoda, Udugampola Meerigama, Kirindiwela, Kuliypitiya, Radawana,, Nittambuwa and Pasyala. Although pineapple plantations are located in Gampaha and surrounding areas, pineapple traders do their cultivation at Imbulgoda, Balummahara and Mudungoda areas which are along the Kandy Road. Over 400 families depend on pineapple business and the Government's assistance is highly needed to expand their business activities. The Sri Lanka Tourist Board and other private company tour groups stop at their stalls to enable tourists to support their cause.

Location: Belummahara, Mudungoda **Divisional Secretariat:** Gampaha

How To Get There

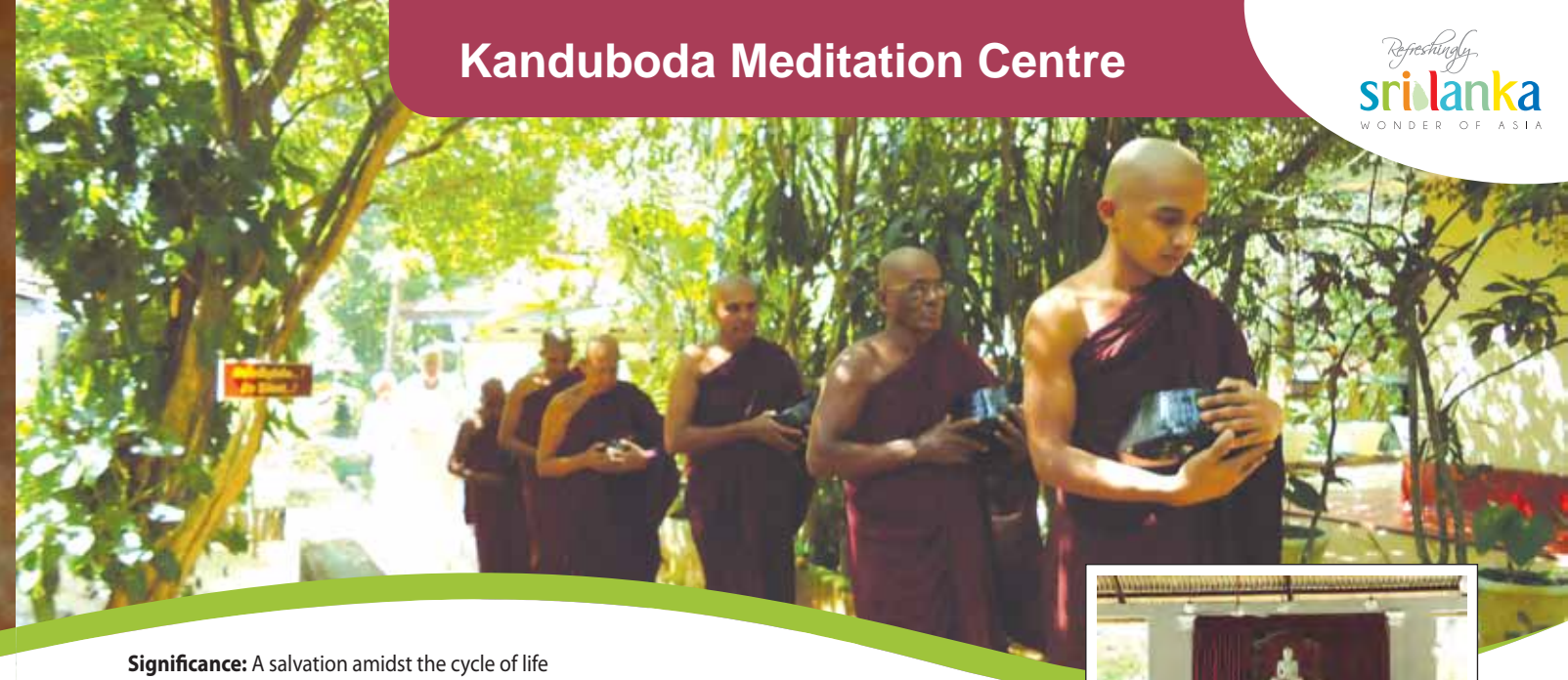
- > Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Kadawatha - Belummahara (25.8 km – 30 min)
- > Colombo - Kaduwela - Biyagama - Weliveriya - Belummahara (34.5 km – 45 min)

Nearby Attractions: Henarathgoda Botanical Garden, Pilikattuwa Raja Maha Viharaya



HOTELS

- **Hotel Chatumadura Village Inn**
No.258/1, Ihala Yagoda, Imbulgoda. 033-2262652 / 0777950232
- **Silver Ring Village Hotel**
52/1, Kidagammulla, Gampaha. 033-2224534 (www.silverringvillagehotel.com)
- **Oasis Green Garden**
Udugampolawatta, Pahalagama, Gampaha. 033-2224055



Significance: Conveying secrets of life

Activities: Visits to Ayurveda Treatment Centres , Ayurvedha Study

Located in Yakkala, nearly 30 km from Colombo, Gampaha Wickremarachchi Ayurveda Institute was established in 1929 as the Siddharyuveda Vidyalaya to disseminate the then lesser known information on Ayurveda, a traditional medicine system native to India and Sri Lanka. Pioneered by late Panditha Gabriel Perera Wickramarachchi whose dream was to establish a Ayurveda training school in Sri Lanka similar to his Alma Mater, prestigious Jamini Bhushana Ashtanga Ayurveda Institution in Calcutta; the Ayurveda Institute was a humble school of Ayurveda funded and taught by Wickramarachchi and a group of like minded ayurvedic doctors in the area. The students were taught free of charge and were many a time assisted with lodging by the philanthropic well-wishers and teachers.

Location: Yakkala, Gampaha **Divisional Secretariat:** Gampaha

How To Get There

- > Colombo - Kiribathgoda - Kadawatha - Yakkala (31 km - 35 min)
- > Katunayake - Kotugoda - Ekala - Gampaha - Yakkala (25.8 km - 30 min)

Nearby Attractions: Henarathgoda Botanical Gardens, Pilikattuwa Rajamaha Viharaya

Tel: +94 33 2222748

HOTELS

- **Silver Ring Village Hotel**
52/1, Kidagammulla, Gampaha. 033-2224534 (www.silverringvillagehotel.com)
- **Oasis Green Garden**
Udugampolawatta, Pahalagama, Gampaha. 033-2224055
- **Momento Guest House**
24, Vijaya Road, Gampaha. 033-2222543

Significance: A salvation amidst the cycle of life

Activities: Meditation Programmes for Foreigners and Locals, Buddhism Education, Photography

Created and developed to commemorate the anniversary of Buddha, the Kanduboda Siyane Vipassana Meditation Centre was a brainchild of the then Burmese Ambassador to Sri Lanka U Ba Lwin, who promoted insight meditation as the ideal way to honor and celebrate Buddha. A 25 acre land amidst a forest patch in Kanduboda, a serene suburb 25 km from Colombo was chosen as the ideal location. The centre was formerly constructed and managed by the Lanka Vipassana Bhavana Samitiya or the Sri Lanka meditation Society, which was a joint effort between the Sri Lankan and Burmese governments to promote meditation under the guidance of venerable Mahasi Sayadaw U Sobhana, the chief incumbent of the Thathana Yeiktha meditation centre in Burma.

Location: Kanduboda, Delgoda **Divisional Secretariat:** Kelaniya

How To Get There

- > Colombo - Kaduwela - Biyagama - Delgoda - (Pugoda Road) (25 km 30 min)
- > Colombo - Peliyagoda - Biyagama - Delgoda - (Pugoda Road) (25.9 km 34 min)
- > Katunayake - Ekala - Gampaha - Belummahara - Weliweriya - Delgoda (Pugoda Road) (37.2 km - 40 min)

Nearby Attractions: Kelaniya Raja Maha Viharaya, Water World, Keragala Padmavathi Pirivena

Tel: +94 11 240 2306

Email: siyanevipassana@yahoo.com

Web: www.insight-meditation.org

HOTELS

- **Hotel Clarion**
103, Kandy Road. Kiribathgoda. 011-2911579 (www.clarionlk.com)
- **Monrepo Guest House**
107, Kandy Road. Gala Junction, Kiribathgoda, Kelaniya. 011-2912847 (www.monrepo.com)
- **P.T.Gardens**
540A/4. Samurdhi Mw, Walgama, Malwana, Biyagama. 011 2487575 (www.ptgardenhotel.com)



Dadagamuwa Raja Maha Viharaya



Significance: A remnant of ancient architecture

Activities: Pilgrimage, Filming

Built during the Kandy era, Dadagamuwa Rajamaha Viharaya is a picture of serene beauty despite its extreme proximity to the hustle and bustle of city life. It was built by a provincial leader, Prince Sumitta, who received the vast paddy-fields and the nearby villages as a gift from King Devanampiya Tissa, the first Buddhist King of Sri Lanka. However the temple, which had been left to ruin and decay had been revived during the Kandyan era and most of the buildings found on site including the unique, watadageya portrays Kandyan architecture. The Watadageya or the structure surrounding the Stupa is built adjoining the reservoir and is a breathtaking sight.

Location: Dadagamuwa **Divisional Secretariat:** Attanagalla

How To Get There

- > Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Yakkala - Kalagedihena Junction - Turn to Veyangoda Road(1 km) - Dadagamuwa Junction - Turn Left (500 m) (38 km – 45 min)
- > Katunayake - Minuwangoda - Wataddara - Dadagamuwa Road (24.8 km – 30 min)

Nearby Attractions: Pilikuththuwa Rajamaha Viharaya, Horagolla National Park



HOTELS

- **Hotel Rosilu**
60/5/A, Kandy Road, Thihariya, Kalagedihena. 033-2295606
- **Hotel Punsisi**
No.207/4/A, Meeambewatta Road, Thihariya, Kalagedihena. 033-2288626
- **Ranathisara Hotel**
51, Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033 2287309

Horagolla National Park



Significance: An urban hideout of flora and fauna

Activities: Bird Watching, Nature Study, Biking

The only wildlife found at the park include Fishing Cat, Sri Lankan Spotted Chevrotain, Golden Jackal, Grizzled Giant Squirrel and an abundance of birds making it an ideal spot for bird watching and adventure. The Horagolla National Park boasts of 68 bird species including Parakeets, Black-crested Bulbul, Barbets, Asian Koel, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot, Layard's Parakeet and Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher. The rare Clipper, Ceylon Birdwing and Blue Mormon are butterflies that flutter in the park while an occasional cobra or a python is reported or observed. The summer house by the canal scattered with aquatic birds is an ideal spot for respite and solitude after a long walk and an afternoon well spent at Horagolla.

Location: Horagolla **Divisional Secretariat:** Attanagalla

How To Get There

- > Colombo - Kiribathgoda - Yakkala - Nittambuwa - Attanagalla (45.9 km - 50 min)
- > Colombo - Kaduwela - Biyagama - Weliveriya - Radawana - Urapola - Attanagalla (51.3 km – 1 hour)
- > Katunayake - Minuwangoda - Veyangoda - Nittambuwa - (Ruwanwella Road) Attanagalla (34.3 km – 36 min)

Nearby Attractions: Attanagalla Raja Maha Viharaya, Alawala Dewin Penna Ela, Dathukanda Temple.



HOTELS

- **Mandara Royal Resort**
253, Horagolla, Nittambuwa. 033-2297455
- **Ranathisara Hotel**
51, Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033 2287309
- **Apsara Resort**
Kandy Road. Malwatta, Nittambuwa. 033-2292564

Kadjugama



Significance: The mile of smiling damsels

Activities: Taste different tastes of Cashew

Kadjugama is one of the highlights on a journey to Kandy from Colombo, miles and miles of damsels clad in traditional blouse and cloth displaying their best smiles for customers and selling organic cashew for a price that couldn't be beaten. The sellers, hailing from generations of kadju or cashew sellers provide eye-candy and a delicious snack to many a visitors heading towards Kandy. Having brought cashews from the growers the families process and pack them, selling them in small packets or in large quantities. However usual business had not been profitable lately with the price of 1 kg of cashew reaching over US\$ 12, a price quite too far for many locals and the cashew trade in Kadjugama is heavily dependent on foreign travelers today.

Location: Kandy Road, Kadjugama **Divisional Secretariat:** Mirigama

How To Get There

> Colombo (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Yakkala - Nittambuwa - Pasyala - Bataleeya (40 km – 50 min)

Nearby Attractions: Antiquities Replica Centre, Dathukanda Temple



HOTELS

- **Hotel Jasmine Lanka**
Mirigama Road, Pasyala. 033-2285778
- **Prasada Guest House**
181/A, Kandy Road, Pasyala. 033-2285139
- **Hotel Rehans, Kandalama**
Mirigama. 033-2276670

Indigolla Church



Significance: Salvation for the lost and destitute

Activities: Pilgrimage, Photography

Having roused from a small church which could house only 180 devotees and built in 1952, the shrine has a comparatively short history through which the shrine developed into its glorious present today. The old shrine which was blessed and initiated by the late Most Revd. Dr. Thomas Cardinal Cooray, the first Sri Lankan Archbishop as well as the first Cardinal of Sri Lanka and its construction were completed within a period of three years due to the attempts by Father Philip Dissanayake. The church and its activities were given a new boost with the involvement of five priests from the Carmelites church and their activities helped to spread a message of St. Jude among villagers. However the new church, which stands on the grounds today were blessed by Most Reverend Oswald Gomis in 2003 and was initiated by Father Elmo Dias in commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of the church. The new church can house nearly 1000 devotees and was constructed within just two years, reflecting the Catholic faith and Sri Lankan heritage.

Location: Indigolla **Divisional Secretariat:** Gampaha

How To Get There

Colombo (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Miriswatta - Yakkala - Indigolla Temple - Turn Left (33.5 km - 45 min)

Katunayake - Ekala - Gampaha - (Yakkala Road) - Indigolla Temple - Turn Left (25.4 km - 30 min)

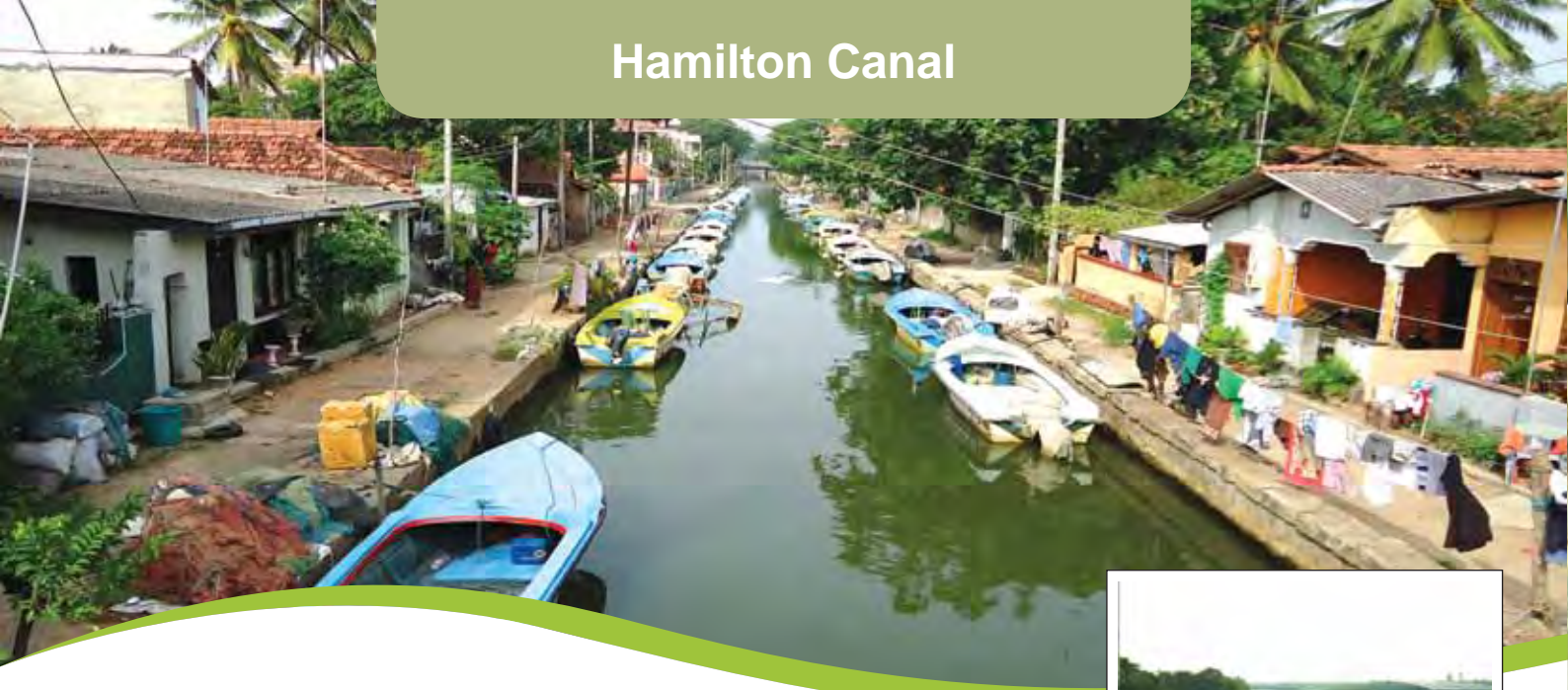
Nearby Attractions: Pilikuththuwa Rajamaha Viharaya, Henarathgoda Botanical Gardens



HOTELS

- **Silver Ring Village Hotel**
52/1, Kidagammulla, Gampaha. 033-2224534 (www.silverringvillagehotel.com)
- **Oasis Green Garden**
Udugampolawatta, Pahalagama, Gampaha. 033-2224055
- **Momento Guest House**
24, Vijaya Road, Gampaha. 033-2222543

Hamilton Canal



Significance: The canal of spice and riches

Activities: Boat Riding, Photography, Filming

Contradictory to the popular belief Hamilton Canal was not a creation of the King of Kotte nor the Dutch but was a later addition by Garvin Hamilton, British Agent of Revenue and Commerce in 1802, who constructed a new canal to the East of the canals created by a Sinhalese King and the Dutch. The canal was designed to connect the Dutch canal by a series of parallel canals and was designed to drain the already damaged Mutturajawela but caused the opposite to occur as the high tide brought salinity not only from Negombo lagoon but also the Kelani river. An incident which led to the canal been baptized as the Hamilton's folly or the fool's canal.

Location: Negombo **Divisional Secretariat:** Wattala

How To Get There

> Colombo - Peliyagoda - Wattala - Hamilton Canal (Canal Road) (12.7 km - 20 min)

Nearby Attractions: Prithipura Beach, Muthurajawela Wetland



- HOTELS**
- **Pegasus Reef Hotel**
St.Maria Mw, Handala, Wattala. 011-2930205/9
 - **Misuki Plaza**
309, Colombo Road, Nagoda Junction, Welisara, Ragama. 011-2238407 (www.plazahotel.com)
 - **Horizon Hill Hotel**
No.33, Gotabaya Mawatha, Hunupitiya, Wattala. 011-2931453

Angurukaramulla Temple



Significance: A portrait of colors, faith and history

Activities: Pilgrimage

Bhodhirajarama Maha Viharaya better known as the Angurukamulla temple in the heart of Negombo town is a palette of colors and a connotation of Buddhist architecture seasoned with colonial influence. Despite its vivid colors and strong and gaping design unusual for a Buddhist temple, Angurukamulla Temple is a treasure trove to the visitors waiting to be unearthed. Hidden among its glaring decorations and modern sculptor are the intricate wooden and stone designs of ancient times. Window frames and moon stones created nearly three centuries ago. A library building of grand beauty, which belonged to the British periods and was declared open by a former governor Sir Andrew Caldecott in 1941 now stands overlooked and neglected.

Location: Angurukaramulla **Divisional Secretariat:** Negombo

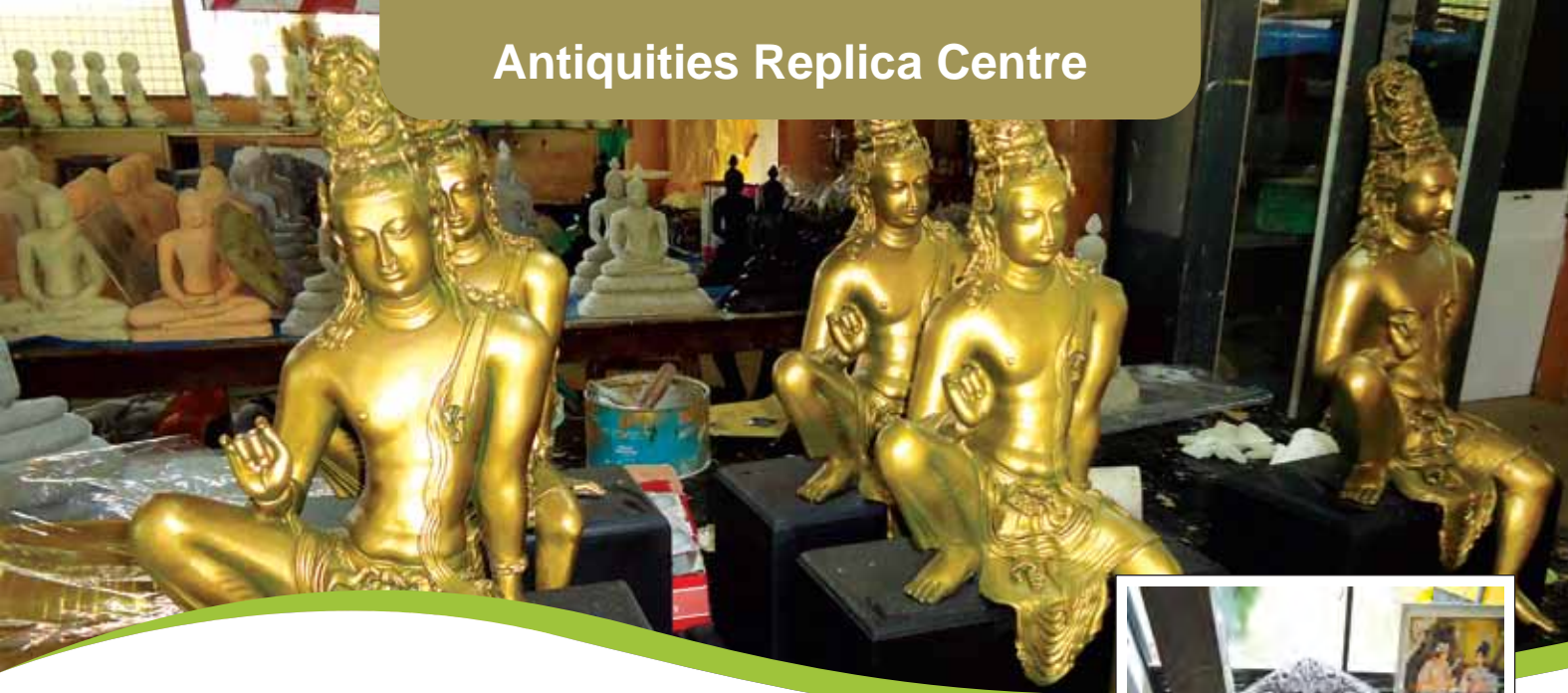
How To Get There

Colombo - Welisara - Ja-Ela - Katunayake - Negombo (36.4 km – 40 min)

Nearby Attractions: Negombo Fort, Prithipura Beach, Muthurajawela Wetland



- HOTELS**
- **Oasis Beach Hotel**
10/26, Porutota Road, Negombo. (031-2277494)
 - **Sanas Beach Guest House**
212, Lewis Place, Negombo. (031-2238272)
 - **The Palace**
No.140, Lewis Place, Negombo. (031-2227028)



Significance: Replicating the legends of History

Activities: Buy Replicas, Study Artwork

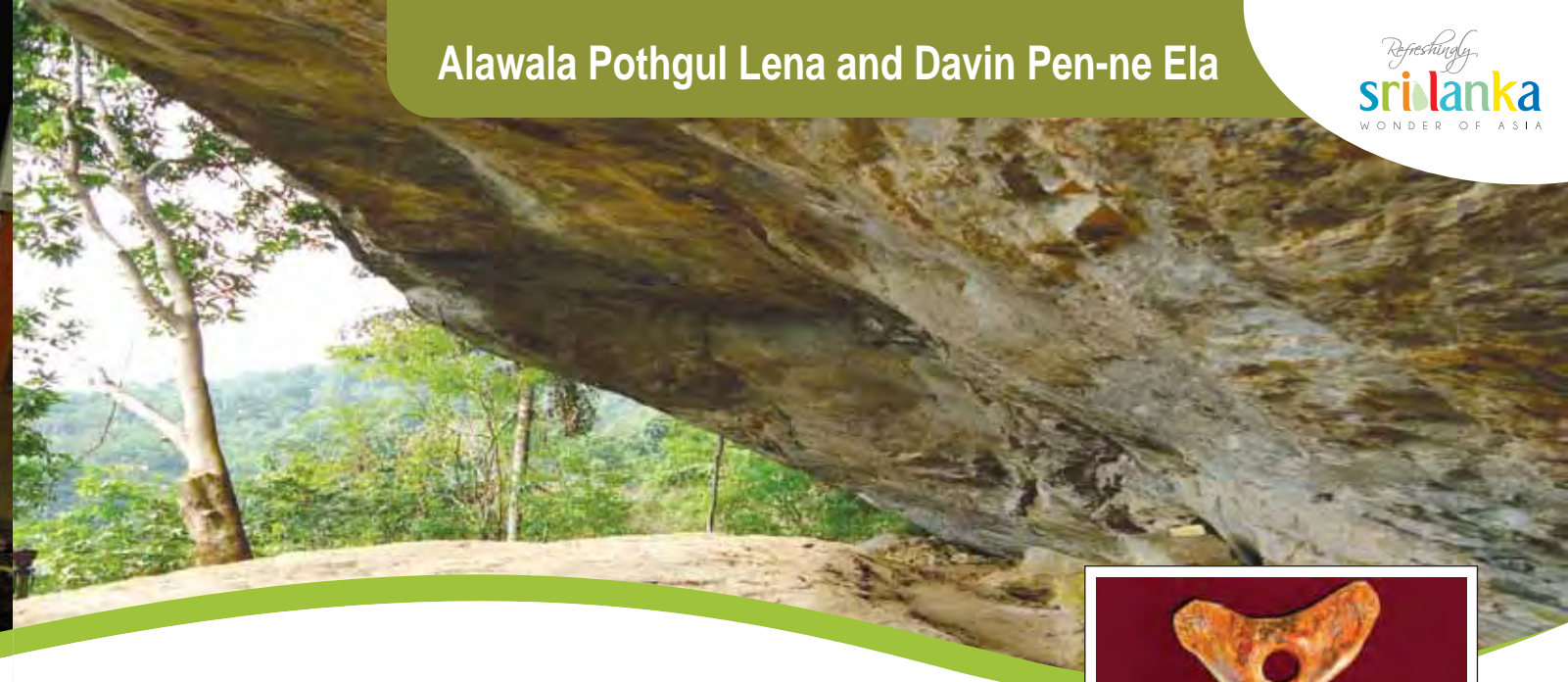
Creating replicas of beloved ancient landmarks, statues and art are in cement, fiberglass, terra-cotta, brass, bronze, ceramic, wood and stone to match its original and is the responsibility of a selected group of artists at the Antiquities Replica Centre at Bataleeya, Pasyala. May it be a row of elephants, a scene of deva-aradhana from the Polonnaruwa era or a Buddha statue from the Anuradhapura era; the artists at the Antiquities Replica Centre fondly known as ARC have produced a replica closest to the original thus preventing looting and destruction of artifacts by mercenaries and tourists looking for a souvenir. Feats of this calibre certainly demands special training and the training is provided at the academic unit of the ARC.

Location: Bataleeya, Pasyala **Divisional Secretariat:** Mirigama

How To Get There

> Colombo (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Yakkala - Nittambuwa - Pasyala (2.5 km) (44.3 km - 50 min)

Nearby Attractions: Kadjugama, Walbothale Rajamaha Viharaya



Significance: A gateway to the prehistoric Sri Lanka

Activities: Cave Tourism, Hiking, Archeological Study

The Viharalena, situated closest to the temple carries two eras worth of Buddhist history in its shelter. Along its length rested a reclining Buddha of the Kandyan Era, which was reconstructed following the damages caused by treasure hunters. On either side are two seated statues, one belonging to the Anuradhapura era (377 BC) and the other to the Kandyan era (1500s AD). A special feature of the cave is its murals. Aged illustrations of the Buddha have been drawn on a polished rock surface. The second cave or the Pothgul Lena carries much mystery at its heart, but to reach it is no mean task. A detour across a stream to another isolated footpath leads to the second cave.

Alawala Davin Pen-ne Ela - Named to remember a queen who leaped her way down to death, the stream is steeped in history and tangled in folklore. King Vijayabahu III (1232 AD- 1236 AD) of Dambadeniya era is believed to have sought refuge in two of the caves scattered near the stream while a deep pond nearby is called 'Alipalwalla' or the pool used to bathe elephants in the days gone by. However the stream today holds no royal connection and serves as a picturesque tracking destination to visitors far and near.

Location: Alawala **Divisional Secretariat:** Attanagalla

How To Get There

> Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Yakkala - Nittambuwa - Attanagalla - Alawala Road (47.5 km - 1 hour)

Nearby Attractions: Alawala Devin Penna Ella, Attanagalla Raja Maha Viharaya

HOTELS

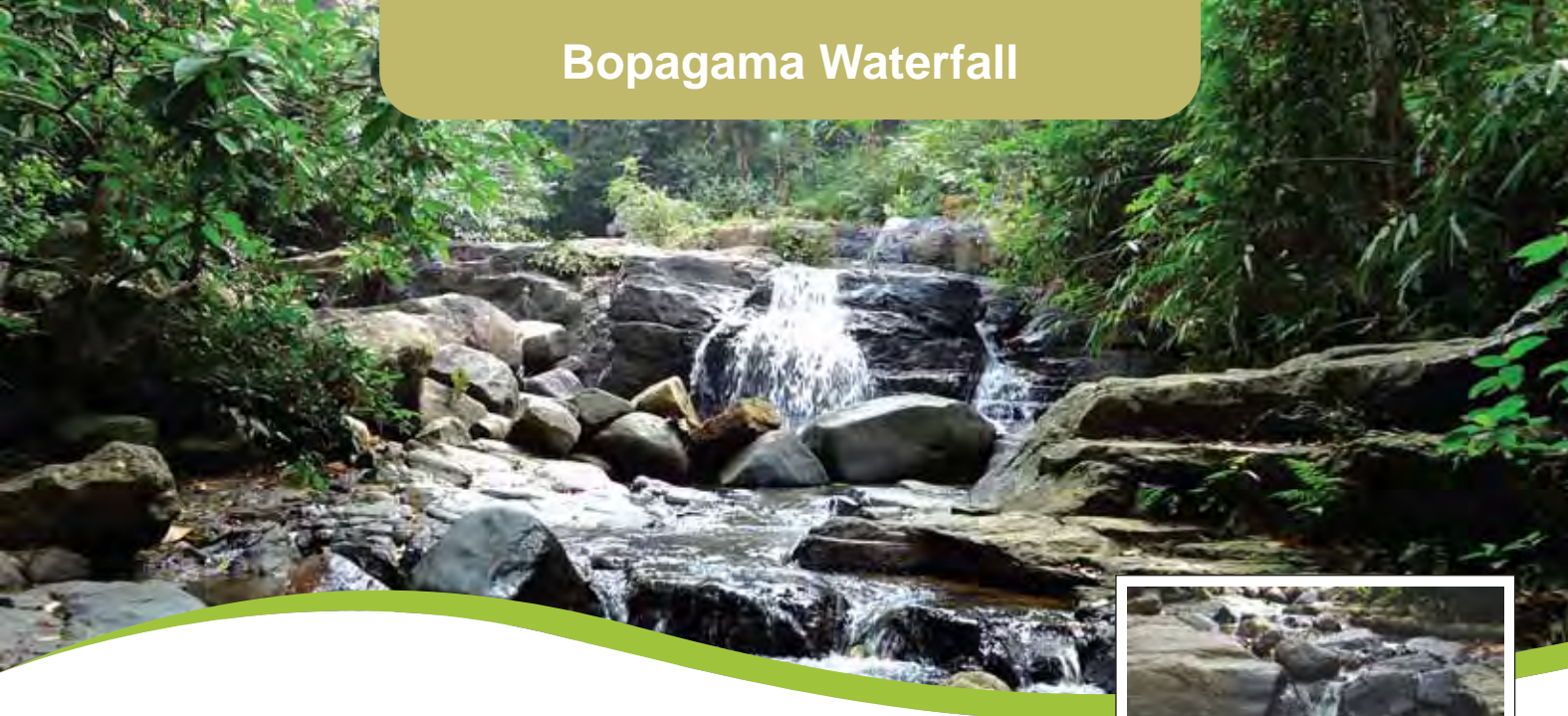
- **Ranathisara Hotel**
51, Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033 2287309
- **Apsara Resort**
Kandy Road. Malwatta, Nittambuwa. 033-2292564
- **The Haven**
26" Mile Post. Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033-2285609



HOTELS

- **Hotel Jesmine Lanka**
Mirigama Road, Pasyala. 033-2285778
- **Prasada Guest House**
181/A, Kandy Road, Pasyala. 033-2285139
- **Hotel Rehans**
Kandalama, Mirigama. 033-2276670

Bopagama Waterfall



Significance: A waterfall amidst the shaded groves

Activities: Photography, Biking

Situated nearly 1.5 km from the Bopagama junction on the Attanagalla –Kirindiwella road the Bopagama waterfall is a 4 meter cascade ideal for pleasure and bath. Initiated from the Aquifers of Kandalande Estate, the stream is strengthened by the Nagas Canal and cascades from two rock boulders to create the Bopagama falls; then flowing across paddy land to join the Attanagalu tank. The towering trees of the surrounding forest casts a gentle shadow over the waterfall while the downstream thrives with local fish such as Galpadiy, Pethiya and Dandiy.

Location: Bopagama, Attanagalla **Divisional Secretariat:** Attanagalla

How To Get There

> Colombo (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Yakkala - Nittambuwa - Urapola - Avissawella Road (4 km)
(51.6 km – 50 min)

Nearby Attractions: Alawala Devin Penna Ella, Alawala Pothgul Viharaya, Attanagalla Rajamaha Viharaya

HOTELS

- **Ranathisara Hotel**
51, Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033 2287309
- **Apsara Resort**
Kandy Road. Malwatta, Nittambuwa. 033-2292564
- **The Haven**
26th Mile Post. Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033-2285609

Wal Bothale Raja Maha Viharaya

(Gotabhaya Raja Maha Viharaya)



Significance: The temple of the mythical Bodhi tree

Activities: Pilgrimage

Built nearly 1700 years back by King Gothabaya, Bothale Sri Gothabaya Rajamaha Viharaya is known for its ancient Bodhi tree believe to be a sapling of the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi in Anuradhapura and centuries old monuments scattered around the temple. The legend holds that King Gothabaya of Anuradhapura era, who was travelling in procession to Attanagalla, the place where his brother the former King Sri Sangabodhi offered his head to a passerby, camped for the night at the site of the temple. The King was planning to build a temple at Attanagalla and in his possession was a sapling of the sacred Bodhi tree at Anuradhapura. However the next morning the King found that the Bodhi sprout had taken root at the location. The King ordered the building of a temple around the new Bodhi tree and established villages comprising all the casts to serve the Bodhi tree.

Location: Bothale, Danowita **Divisional Secretariat:** Mirigama

How To Get There

> Colombo (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Yakkala - Nittambuwa - Pasyala
Danowita - (Mirigama Road) - Bothale (58 km - 1 hour)

Nearby Attractions: Kadjugama, Weweldeniya Cane Crafts

HOTELS

- **Hotel Jesmine Lanka**
Mirigama Road, Pasyala. 033-2285778
- **Prasada Guest House**
181/A, Kandy Road, Pasyala. 033-2285139
- **Hotel Rehans**
Kandalama, Mirigama. 033-2276670

Weweldeniya Cane Crafts



Significance: A piece of tradition

Activities: Buying Cane and Rattan craft

On the road to Kandy from Colombo is a small township with a line of boutiques selling cane and rattan furniture to the local and foreign passersby. Known as Wewaldeniya for its use of "wewal" or cane for manufacturing household containers to furniture and ornaments, the village is a haven for useful utensils and tidbits for a home. May it be a cane garden chair set, a flower vase, kitchen baskets, a picnic basket or a pouch swing; Wewaldeniya has the product in your mind intricately and carefully woven and produced in rattan and cane. The boutiques also display traditionally woven and colored mats, coir and ekel based products and pottery of fine quality made according to an age old tradition. Created by traditional industrialists from the cane brought from Manampitiya, Bibile and Trincomalee or imported from Malaysia, the prices of the products had increased during the last few years due to the scarcity of the raw materials and the shift of market from small scale manufacturers to large scale producers.

Location: Wewaldeniya **Divisional Secretariat:** Mirigama

How To Get There

> Colombo (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Yakkala - Nittambuwa - Pasyala
Wewaldeniya (50.5 km – 50 min)

Nearby Attractions: Kadjugama, Walbothale Rajamaha Viharaya

HOTELS

- **Hotel Jesmine Lanka**
Mirigama Road, Pasyala. 033-2285778
- **Prasada Guest House**
181/A, Kandy Road, Pasyala. 033-2285139
- **Hotel Rehans**
Kandalama, Mirigama. 033-2276670



Negombo Fort & Fisheries Harbour



Significance: Little Rome of Lanka

Activities: Photography, Historical Study

Negombo's history dates back as far as the 13th century as a port town used by the Moors and Sri Lankans to trade cinnamon and other spices, the quality of which attracted the Portuguese who ousted the Moors in the late 16th century with the might of their swords. Having expelled the Moors in the 16th century, the Portuguese went ahead to build a fortress and convert almost all the fishermen of Karawa clan to Christianity. In 1640 Negombo changed hands with the new Colonial power, the Dutch gaining its hold. The Dutch continued to harvest the benefits of cinnamon trade and then hailed as the 'the very best in the universe as well as the most abundant'. The Dutch Fort which was constructed in 1672 remains to this day, along with a number of other Dutch buildings and a intricate canal system that runs 100 km from Colombo in the South to Puttalam in the North, used in the past by the Sinhala Kings and colonial powers to transport spices and other goods from inland to the port and today by fishermen and sightseers who travel the canals in outrigger canoes and modern watercraft. However nearly 400 years since its heyday, Negombo is a Catholic majority fishing town with an economy heavily dependent on fishing, tourism, cinnamon, ceramics and brass ware production.

Location: Negombo **Divisional Secretariat:** Negombo

How To Get There

> Colombo - Welisara - Ja-ela - Katunayake - Negombo (38.3 km – 45 min)

Nearby Attractions: Hamilton Canal, Nara Mangrove Garden, Angurukaramulla Temple

HOTELS

- **Oasis Beach Hotel**
10/26, Porutota Road, Negombo. 031-2277494
- **Sanas Beach Guest House**
212, Lewis Place, Negombo. 031-2238272
- **The Palace**
No.140, Lewis Place, Negombo. 031-2227028



Nissarana Wanaya & Meditation Centre



Significance: Forest Hermitage of Meethirigala

Activities: Meditation Programmes for Foreigners and Locals, Bird Watching, Photography, Biking

Initiated in 1968 by Asoka Weerathna, the founder of the German Dharmaduta Society and the Berlin Buddhist Vihara in Germany, who equipped the monastery with all the facilities required to the meditative life. He also found an accomplished meditation master, Ven. Matara Sri Gnanarama Mahathera the author of 'Seven stages of Purification' and 'Seven Contemplations', to direct the meditation training. Having accomplished his mission, Weerathna himself entered the Buddhist order under the name Meethirigala Dhammanisanthi. The present incumbent of the hermitage and the chief meditation teacher Venerable Uda-Iriyagama Dhammajeewa Thera is an articulate teacher in English and Sinhala. Apart from the years of training under Ven. Matara Sri Gnanananda Thera, he had been training several years under Sayadaw U. Panditabhiwansa in Burma. Ven. Thera has travelled extensively to Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Singapore, Burma, United States, Germany and Canada teaching the practical path to Nibbana.

Location: Meethirigala **Divisional Secretariat:** Dompe

How To Get There

- > Colombo (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Kadawatha - Kirillawala - Radawana - Kirindiwela - Amithirigala Nakkawala Junction - Meethirigala Road (Via Palleanugala) (53.5 km - 1 hour 10 min)
- > Colombo - Kaduwela - Avissawella - Amithirigala - Nakkawala Junction - Meethirigala Road (Via Palleanugala) (60 km - 1 hour & 10 mins)

Nearby Attractions: Attanagalla Raja Maha Viharaya

Tel: +94 33 3339193

Email: nissaranavanya@gmail.com Web: www.nissarana.lk

HOTELS

- **Ranathisara Hotel,**
51, Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033 2287309
- **Apsara Resort,**
Kandy Road. Malwatta, Nittambuwa. 033-2292564
- **The Haven,**
26th Mile Post. Kandy Road, Nittambuwa. 033-2285609



Asgiriya Ancient Temple



Significance: A Monastery wrapped in history and legend

Activities: Pilgrimage, Historical Study

Built by King Walagamba in 103 BC as a sanctum for the meditating Arhants, Asgiriya Raja Maha Viharaya is a cave monastery, which had been converted into a cave temple complex at a later stage. Spread amidst a forest and a rocky mountain known as the Asgiriya, the temple premises had provided salvation to the escaping King and his royal entourage. The roofs of the caves are carved with the unique edges to drain away the rain water and the interiors are smoothed for occupancy first by the royalty and then by the meditating monks. At the top of the long flight of steps is a wattle and daub construction with a tiled roof and a huge rock behind, leading to a room under the rock itself. This cave temple, built by King Sakala Kala Wallabha in the 15th century AD, is covered with ancient murals of Kandyan era. An eternal hush hangs over the murals depicting images of the Buddha, done in lighter shades of red, yellow and black, characteristic to the Kandyan era.

Location: Asgiriya **Divisional Secretariat:** Gampaha

How To Get There

- > Colombo - (Kandy Road) - Kiribathgoda - Kadawatha - Miriswatta - Gampaha Asgiriya (33.2 km - 40 min)

Nearby Attractions: Wickramarachchi Ayurvedha Institute, Indigolla Church, Ketawala Anicut



HOTELS

- **Silver Ring Village Hotel**
52/1, Kidagammulla, Gampaha. 033-2224534 (www.silverringvillagehotel.com)
- **Oasis Green Garden**
Udugampolawatta, Pahalagama, Gampaha. 033-2224055
- **Momento Guest House**
24, Vijaya Road, Gampaha. 033-2222543

Keragala Padmawathi Piriwena



Significance: An ancient fountain of Knowledge and Discipline

Activities: Buddhism Study

Built in the 13th century by two ministers of the King Wijayabahu the 4th known as Arthanayaka and Dalasengamu for Princess Padmawathi, who was the wife of Dalasengamu and the sister of a provincial ruler Alagankonara the Padmawathi Piriwena in Keragala is an ancient seat of Buddhist education. The Buddhist tradition of reasoning supported scholarship and learning and Padmavathi Pirivena was among the four main Pirivena or temple based educational institutes which distributed education on Buddhism, Sinhala Language and Literature, Ayurveda medicine and Governance in the Kotte era. The main contributor to the rise of these seats of education was King Parakramabahu IV, the King of Kotte of the 15th century, who made an immense contribution to the development of Sinhala literature and Pirivena based education.

Location: Keragala **Divisional Secretariat:** Kelaniya

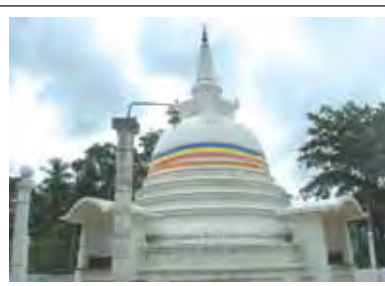
How To Get There

- > Colombo – Kaduwela – Biyagama – Delgoda – (Pugoda Road) – Keragala (33.2 km – 40 min)
- > Colombo – Peliyagoda – Biyagama – Delgoda – (Pugoda Road) – Keragala (32 km – 40 min)

Nearby Attractions: Kanduboda Meditation Centre, Water World, Kelaniya Temple

HOTELS

- **Hotel Clarion**
103, Kandy Road. Kiribathgoda. 011-2911579 (www.clarionlk.com)
- **Monrepo Guest House**
107, Kandy Road. Gala function, Kiribathgoda, Kelaniya. 011-2912847 (www.monrepo.com)
- **P.T.Gardens**
540A/4. Samurdi Mw, Walgama, Malwana, Biyagama. 011 2487575 (www.ptgardenhotel.com)



Senanayake Mudalindaramaya

(largest reclining Buddha statue in the country)



Significance : A temple of Freedom Fighters

Activities: Pilgrimage , Photography

Offered to the Maha Sanga to celebrate the birth of his first grandson Dudley Shelton Senanayake on PosonPoya day of June 19, 1911,'Senanayake-Mudalindaramaya' in Ambepussa is a glorious Buddhist seat of learning today.Don Spater Senanayake, a landed proprietor, a plumbago magnate and the father of first Prime Minister of Sri Lanka D.S.Senanayake gifted one of his abodes, 'ThiruwanaWalauiwa' with all its furniture and fittings to the Ven. Kokaliyagollewe Sri Bharathananda Thera in celebration of a grandson, who ultimately became the Prime Minister of the country four times. Thera had also instructed the Senanayake brothers in their Sinhala proficiency and had later encouraged the first premier of Sri Lanka to uplift the lives of poor farmers with the renovation of ancient waterways and reservoirs. Subsequent to the independence of Sri Lanka from British rule in 1948, a Pirivena or a Buddhist seat of learning was established at the temple premises with a view to provided much needed Buddhist education to the clergy and lay Buddhists in the area. Today the temple is the house to the largest reclining Buddha statue in the country built to commemorate the 2600 anniversary of Buddha.

Location: Pirisyala, Meerigama **Divisional Secretariat:** Mirigama

How To Get There

- > Colombo - (Kandy Road) – Kiribathgoda - Yakkala – Nittambuwa – Pasyala (Giriulla Road) –turn left – Kandalama Junction –Turn Right –Warakapola Road -3KM –Prisyala-(61.0KM 1 hour 5 mins)
- > Katunayake – Minuwangoda- Diwlapitiya –Meerigama- Giriulla Road –Kandalama Junction –Warakapola Road – 3Km –Prisyala (63.5Km 1 Hour 11 mins)

Nearby Attractions: Kadju Gama, Weweldeniya Cane Crafts, Wal Bothale Raja Maha Viharaya

HOTELS

- **Hotel Jesmine Lanka**
Mirigama Road, Pasyala. 033-2285778
- **Prasada Guest House**
181/A, Kandy Road, Pasyala. 033-2285139
- **Abepussa Rest House**
Abepussa 035-2267299

