

Heritage management and tourism development in Dambadeniya

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ABSTRACT

Dambadeniya was a capital city and main religious center of ancient Sri Lanka during 13 CAD. The archaeological site comprises from ancient fortress, Vijayasundararama monastery and Vaduvaketugala.

Relevant site is situated close to the Dambadeniya town and modern settlements of the area are expanded rapidly. Construction of factories, roads and houses, renovations of the monastery, other anthropogenic factors and environmental factors badly affected to the archaeological heritage. There are problems and lapses pertaining with site maintenance, tourist facilities, tourist guidance and advertising.

In these circumstances, it has become essential to manage heritage combining with modern development strategies. Due to the richness of archaeological and religious heritage which is fuel for cultural tourism and availability of well developed road network there is a huge potential for development of tourism.

In the process of heritage management, conservation, new research programmes, proper maintenance procedure and public participation are crucial factors. A structural body is proposed to be formed named Dambadeniya heritage committee in hope of taking community participation for archaeological works and heritage management. It must comprise archaeology officers, chief incumbent of the monastery, gramaniladari officer, chief officer of the police station, principle of the Dambadeniya maha vidyalaya, business community of the town and president of Dambadeni heritage protection organization. This will function as coordinating, relationship development and fund raising body.

The tourism development programme must be designed with special emphasis on improvement of tourist facilities, guidance and promotion activities. Developing adventure tourism at Vaduvaketugala and attraction of Buddhist religious tourists from East and South East Asian countries can be identified as possible programmes.

Key words: Dambadeniya, Heritage management, Tourism development