

## 2.28 Havanvela: a Megalithic Cist Burial Site from the Matale District

Melathi Saldin<sup>1</sup>, Gamini Adikari<sup>2</sup> & Prishanta Gunawardhana<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya

<sup>2</sup>Post Graduate Institute of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya

---

### ABSTRACT

The megalithic mortuary complex of Sri Lanka falls primarily within the proto-historic period whose earliest manifestation in Sri Lanka is dated to 1000- 800 BC at Anuradhapura and Aligala shelter at Sigiriya (Deraniyagala 1992: 709-29, Karunaratne and Adikari 1994: 58). The megalithic burial tradition is one of the main features of this period although there is evidence of its survival to later periods as well (Seneviratne 1984).

Havanvela is situated in close proximity to Galewela of the Matale District in the intermediary transitional eco zone. Preliminary investigations have revealed that Havanvela is a megalithic cist burial site. It is interesting to note that this burial is located in the Upper Kala Oya Region in close proximity to the cist burials of Ibbankatuva, Yatigalpotta and Anakatava. Of these sites Ibbankatuva is the only one to be assigned a radiocarbon range of 750- 400 BC. Hence it would be interesting to research the possibility of these sites being contemporary to each other especially considering the similarities in grave architecture.

The Havanvela site is currently in danger of being destroyed due to the site being used as a general cemetery in modern times. The aim of this paper is to present a plan to protect and manage the heritage of this site in order to protect it from further destruction.

### References:

- Deraniyagala, S. 1992            *Prehistory of Sri Lanka*, Department of Archaeology, Colombo.
- Seneviratne, S. 1984            "The archaeology of the Megalithic Black and Red Ware complex in Sri Lanka" *Ancient Ceylon* Vol. 5 pp 237-307.
- Karunaratne, P.  
& G. Adikari     1994            "Excavations at Aligala prehistoric site" in S. Bandaranayake and M. Mogren (Eds.) *Further studies in the settlement Archaeology of the Sigiriya- Dambulla region*, Post Graduate Institute of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka pp 55-62.