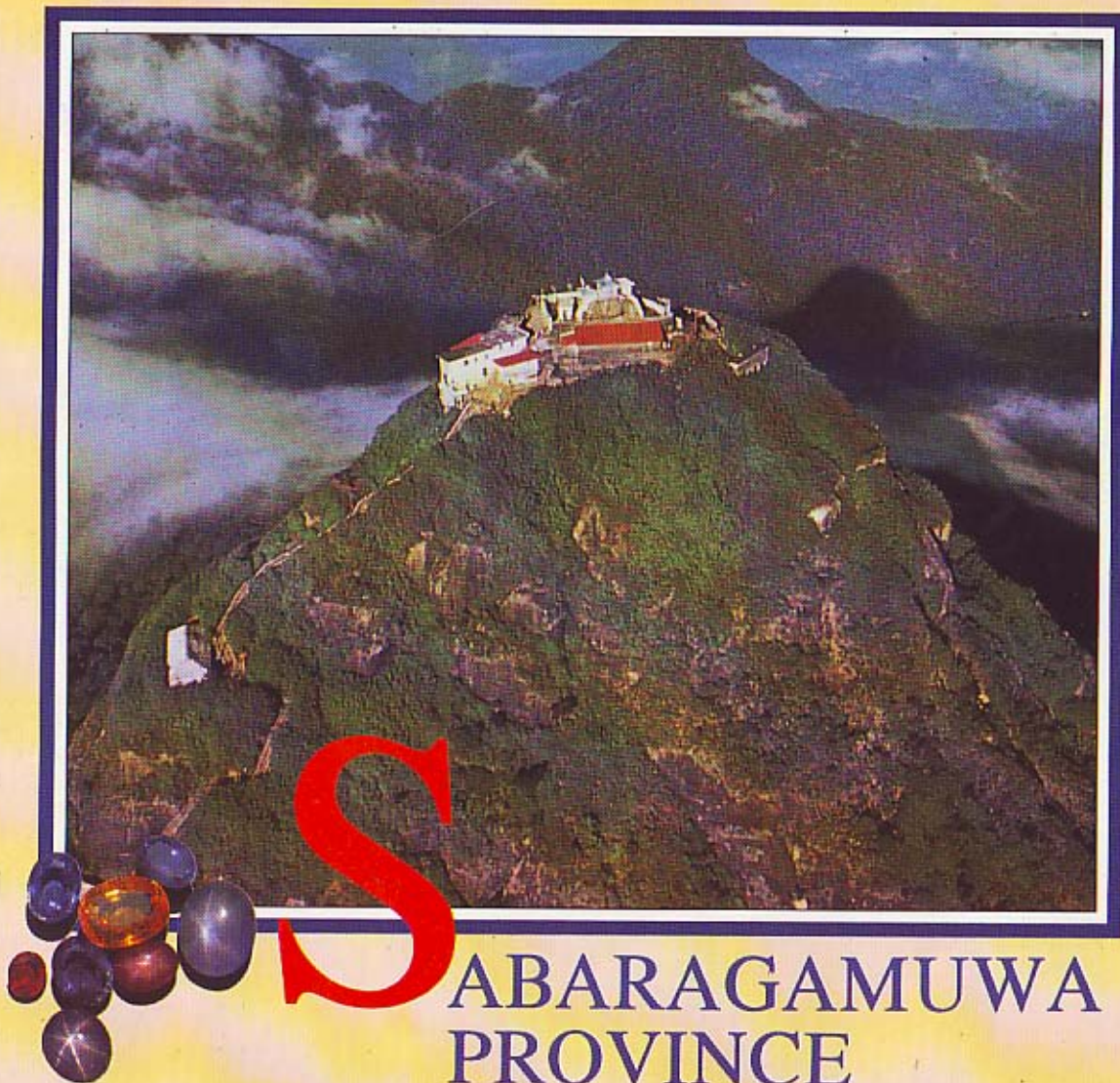


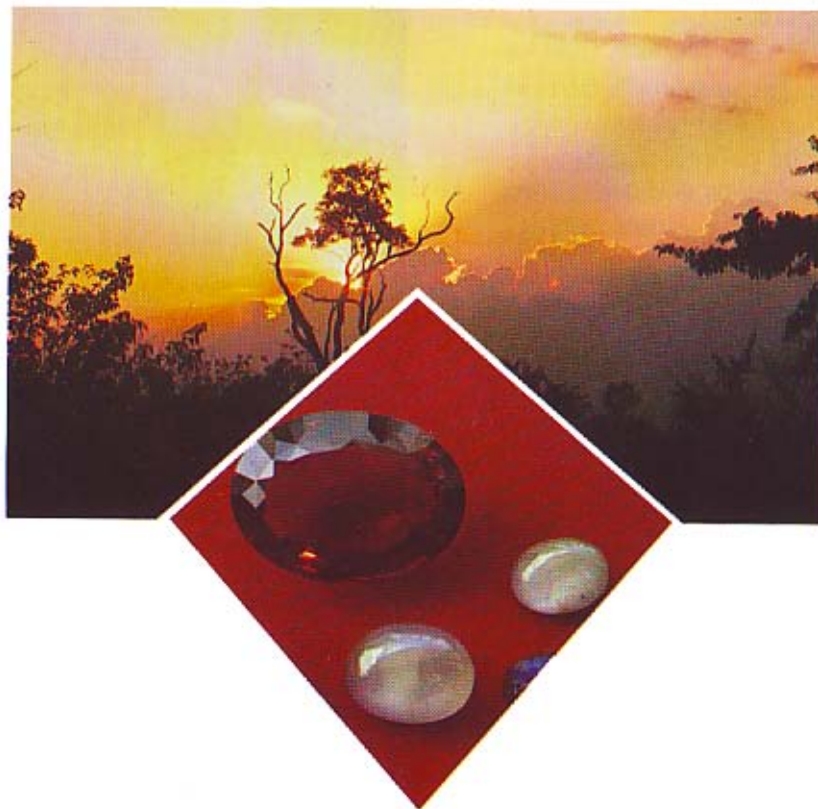
S R I L A N K A





Elephant Orphanage Pinnawala

SABARAGAMUWA



One of Sri Lanka's nine provinces, Sabaragamuwa is located in the south-central region of our island and offers the visitor a plentitude of natural beauty, culture, history, and adventure, found on a variety of terrain.

Sabaragamuwa Province consists of two districts - Kegalle & Ratnapura

GEMS

Sabaragamuwa Province is most famous for its gems ... one of our island's first exports, like elephants and spices ! Certainly most of the people of this province have connections with the gem trade, in its many facets ... either mining, cutting and polishing, making jewellery or selling gems and jewellery !



Mining in a river bed



Traditional Gem Mine

At the centre of this, quite the most beautiful of industries, is Ratnapura (City of Gems). Here you will find stones of excellent quality, lustre and variety ... sapphires, rubies, amethysts, topaz, garnets, tourmalines, cat's eyes, star rubies and sapphires and the mysterious moonstones (feldspar), to name a few.

Craftsmanship is of high quality, all cutting and polishing being done the traditional way, by hand.

There are good gem museums, laboratories and showrooms just a couple of miles away from Ratnapura Town.

FLORA & FAUNA

From one facet of nature to another ... Sabaragamuwa is a place of great natural beauty and many of our island's most famous scenic spots are located within the province.

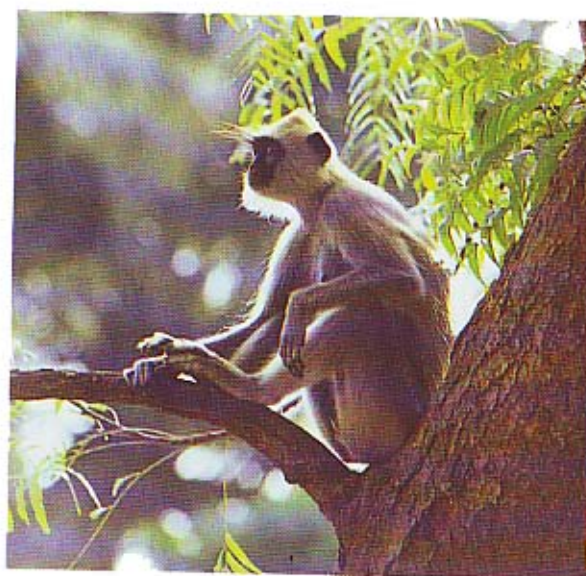
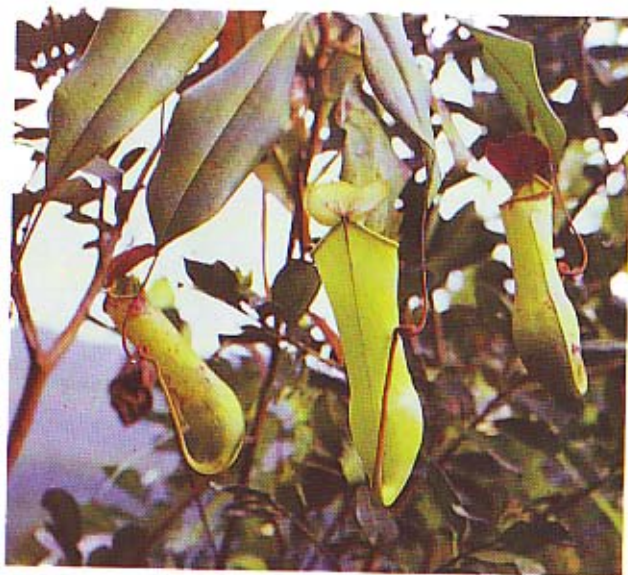
Beginning with primaeval Sinharaja ... one of the few virgin forests left, in the world, Sinharaja covers an area of 8900 hectares within which are found streams, springs, rivers, waterfalls, wild life, rare trees, valuable shrubs and medicinal herbs both indigenous and endemic. This tropical rain forest is rich in interest for the nature lover with an adventurous

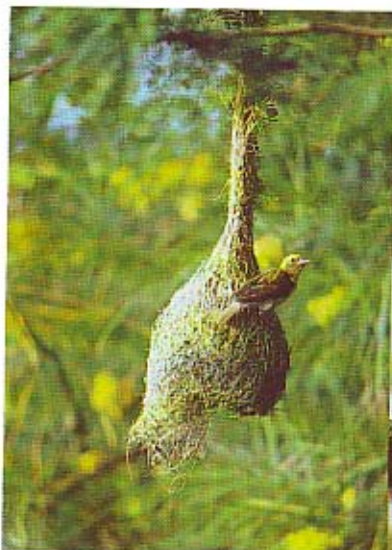




soul. Naturally one cannot drive through, but walking along carefully prescribed paths will discover never - to - be - forgotten sights and sounds. A walk through the Sinharaja may well be the nature tour to end all nature tours !

Then there is Udawalawe National Park which is now more or less synonymous with elephants, seen in all their playfulness, whole herds of them, adults and babies, bathing and playing in the water or feeding ... so many of them they defy counting ... on the tender tree shoots they love.





Dehena Falls



Sinharaja Rain Forest



Bopath Ella

Of course there are other fauna to be seen and enjoyed as well ... leopard, deer, wild boar, crocodile ... and well over 350 bird varieties. And speaking of birds, "Kurulukalay" in Kegalle is the spot for them ... a walk in sanctuary run by the Forest Department ... and Kitulgala, across the river, which is a paradise for the avifauna.

Bulutota Pass is another place worth visiting for its scenic beauty ... a walk through Horton Plains National Park for some of the loveliest, wildest and most tranquil scenery on the face of the earth



Alupola Falls

and the home of the rare Bear Monkey, endemic to Sri Lanka. Belihul Oya Rest House is a lovely spot to base yourself, with the river and its myriad little waterfalls chuckling and gurgling nearby.

On the subject of waterfalls, Sabaragamuwa province boasts of so many that we will have to mention a few of the most famous, starting with Baker's Falls, which rises from Belihul Oya and is named after an Englishman, Samuel Baker, who "discovered" it in the year 1948. Also Surathali Ella, Duvili Ella, Katugas Ella and Bopath Ella.

Adam's Peak is 7,360 feet above sea level and is reached through thick jungle.

Sabaragamuwa Province offers a variety of terrain and vegetation. In addition to the jungles and plains and valleys there are vast areas under plantation, cultivated with tea or rubber or spices. A visit, therefore, to a tea and rubber plantation and to a spice grove would be well worthwhile, providing, apart from the interest, an opportunity to purchase fresh tea and spices !

More of nature's wonders ! If caves and caverns seem mysteriously exciting to you, you must not neglect to visit Wavulpane, yet another of our national treasures. Quite unique in Sri Lanka, the Wavulpane caves are thought to originate from the pre-Cambrian era and are rendered the more fascinating by their formations of stalagmites and stalactites and the fact that a water course (the Halwinna Dola) flows through the cavern, forming a thunderous waterfall and pool.

The caves are also home to thousands of bats, whence the name, Wavulpane, from the Sinhala word for bat: Wavula.



Rubber Taping

Bathalagala, or Bible Rock as the English named it, is a rock which truly resembles one of the fat Bibles one sees in old churches. Rising out of the jungle, it is a dramatic sight.

The Rakwana-Bulutota Pass, on a surprising hairpin bend, gives an amazingly good view across the island, on a clear day.



Tea Garden

Ratnapura's gem pits have yielded more than jewels for ornament. A glimpse into the past, no less, from the numerous fossils (vertebrate) belonging to the pleistocene age. From these, we know that lions, hippopotami and the rhinoceros were found in Sri Lanka in

times past and that our island was inhabited by a race of aboriginals, whose descendants, the Veddahs, live in their own protected areas, maintaining their traditions and ancient way of life, dress, speech; in their way, making Time stand still.

HISTORY AND ARCHEOLOGICAL REMAINS

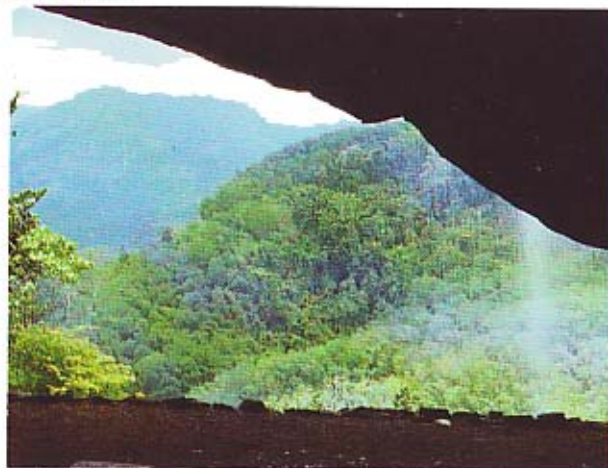
The prehistoric settlements of the Sabaragamuwa Province date back to a very early period, as proved by recent cave excavations as well as those carried out on other sites. The earliest settlement dates back some 29,000 years.

Skeletal remains, micro and macro liths, bone implements, cherts and food remains were found in Belilena (Kitulgala), Alulena (Kegalle), Bata-domba-lena (Kuruwita) and Bellan-bandipelessa (an open air habitation) (Balangoda).

There are more than fifty drawings of animals and other figures, made by prehistoric man, at Dorawaka Kanda-Athlena (near Warakapola) and a dolmen (megalithic tomb), the only one of its kind in Sri Lanka, at Padavigampola.

In the 3rd century, BC, buddhism came to Sri Lanka, making sweeping changes in every aspect of life. Fortunately, bricks and mortar were in use by that time so numerous buildings, murals, drawings and pictures remain in a good state of preservation to tell the tale.

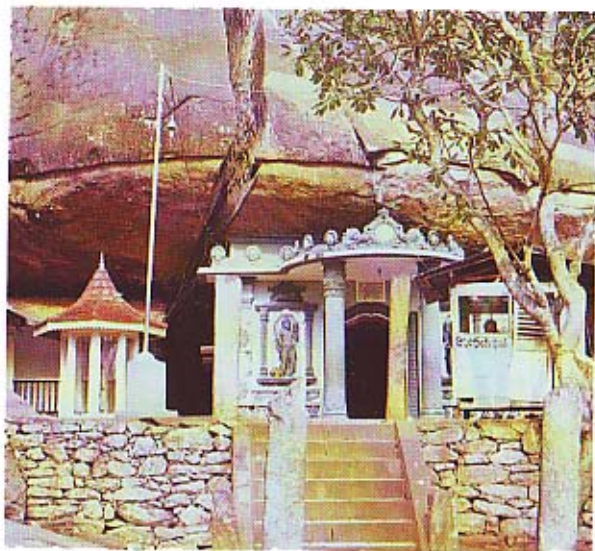
Among the many ancient temples in the province, we must mention the Saman



Belilena
Maha Devale, situated close to Ratnapura town and believed to have been built by the king Parakramabahu II (1236-1270 AD).

The Saman Maha Perahera (pageant or procession) held at this temple in the month of August each year draws large crowds of devotees.

Berendi Kovila, built about the middle of the 16th century by King Rajasinghe I, is located a quarter of a mile from Avissawella town. Opposite the kovil are found the ruins of the old Royal Palace of King Mayadunne, and also used by his son Rajasinghe.



Sankapala Temple



King Rajasinghe supposedly killed 120 Bihikkus by throwing them in the river near the kovil. The people of this area say that on nights of the Poya (full moon), a golden vessel appears, floating on the water, which cannot be taken by human hands.

Close by, is Maniyangama Royal Temple, its cave walls covered with murals.

Sankapala Temple, consisting of three caves containing inscriptions dating to the 2nd century BC, was built by Pussadeva, one of the ten commanders of the army of King Dutugemunu, who ruled over our island from 161 to 137 BC. After the major battles were over, Pussadeva became a Bihikku and meditated in one of the cave,



Limestone Caves

Delgamuwa Temple at Kuruwita is famous for being the hiding-place of the Sacred Tooth Relic of the Lord Buddha for 44 long years. It is said that the temple custodian of the shrine in Kotte where the relic was kept, feared for its safety and swam the Diyawanne Oya (river) to Sitawaka Kingdom, the gem-studded casket hidden in his clothes, and hid it in a large grinding stone which can be seen at Delgamuwa to this day, minus of course the Sacred Tooth Relic, which was taken to the Dalada Maligawa in Kandy in the time of King Wimaladharmasuriya I.

The ancient Aluthnuwara Dedimunda Devale has a history going back to the reign of King Parakramabahu I (1153 - 1186 AD). Built during the reign of King Dapulusena, this is the main shrine dedicated to the god Dedimunda in Sri Lanka and still has the original Vishnu Devale, two inscribed stone slabs, old stone pillars and two rows of uncarved rectangular pillars.

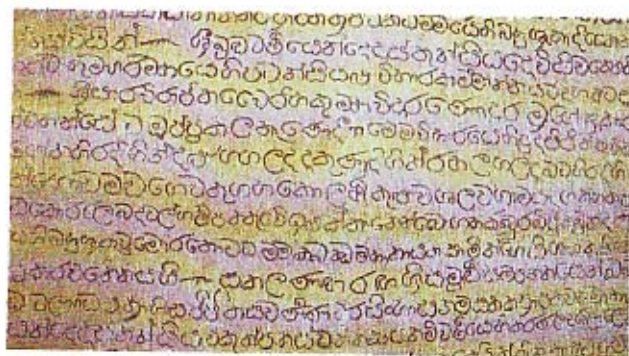
There is an annual festival, held in July/August, featuring perahera, fire-walking and a water-cutting ceremony.



Saman Devale



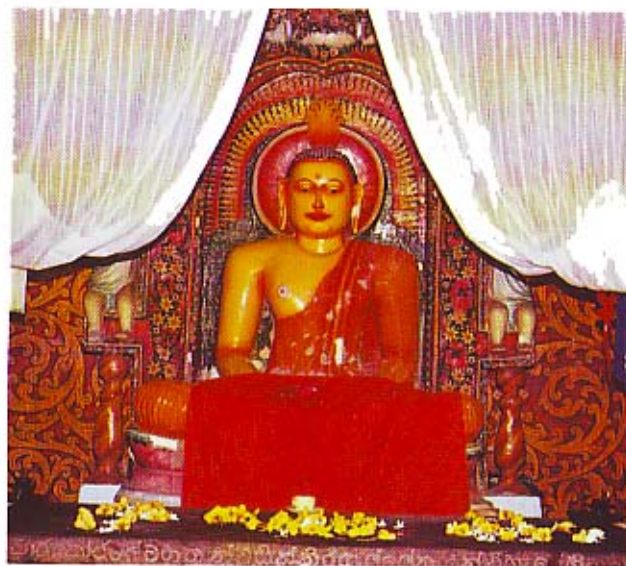
Barandi Kovil



Salawa Stone Script

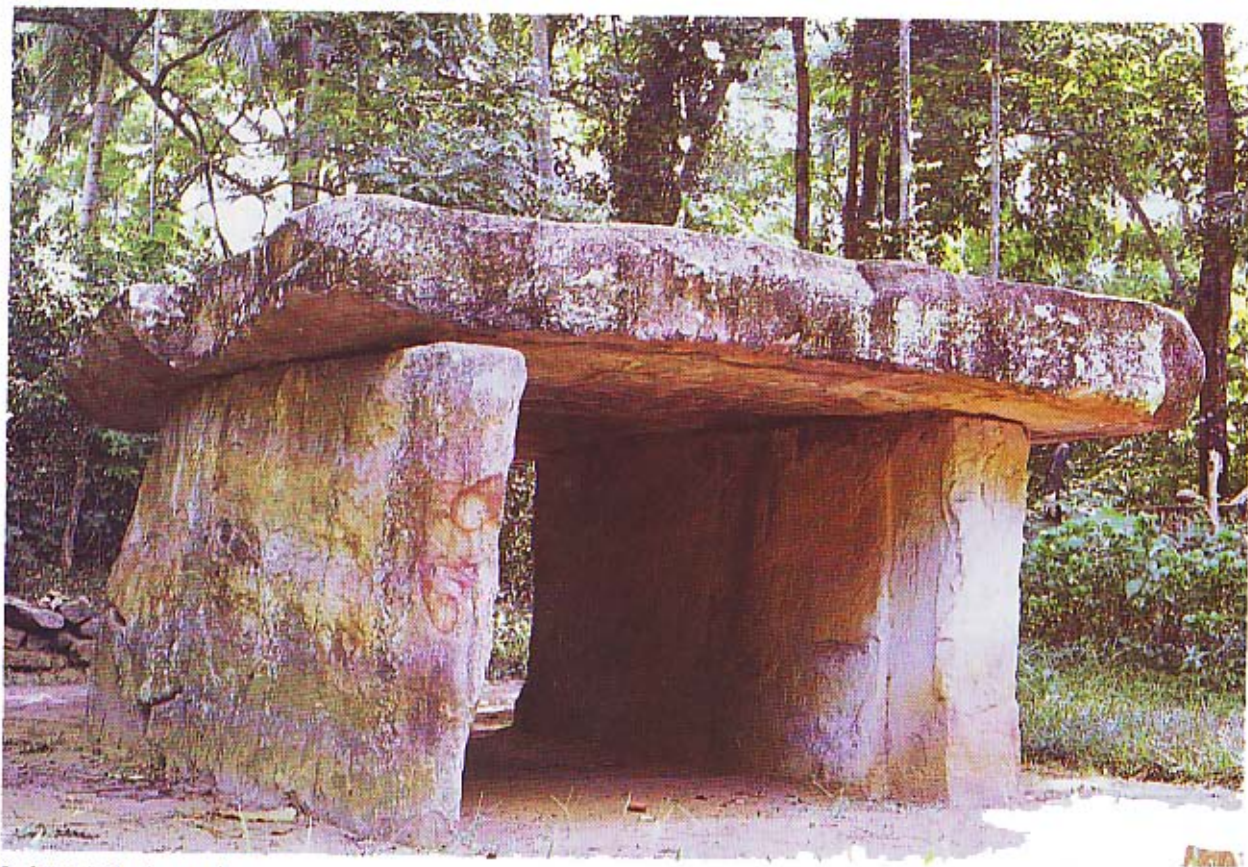
Beligala, so named because of its apparent resemblance in shape to that of a "Beli" fruit ... contains the remains of an old temple of the Tooth Relic where it was once again kept in hiding at the end of the Polonnaruwa period. Nearby is Beligala Temple, which has a beautiful shrine room with murals and a very ancient and sacred Bo tree.

Dadigama Kota Vihara, built by Parakramabahu I (1153 - 1186 AD) at the site of his birthplace is worth a visit, as is the Wattarama Raja Maha Vihara, with ruins dating back to the 2nd century BC.



Dadinunda Devale at Aluthnuwara





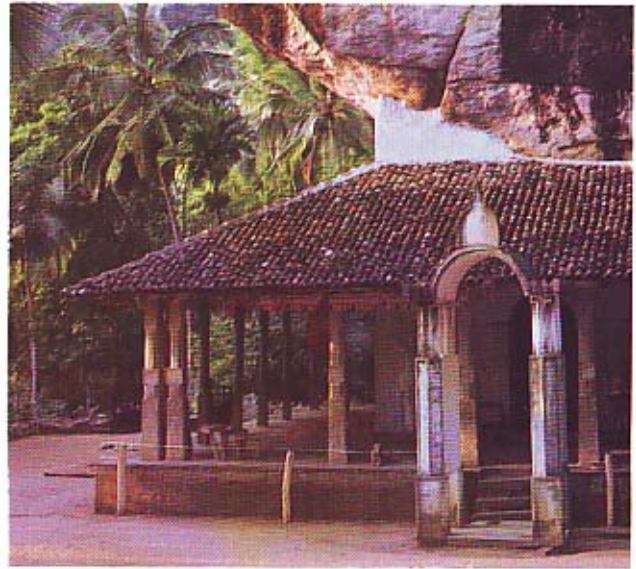
Dolmen Padavigampola

Danakirigala rock temple is one of the oldest in the Kegalle district and was known by the name of "Waddhamanaparwata" in ancient times. since it is built on the summit of a high hill, it commands a spectacular view.

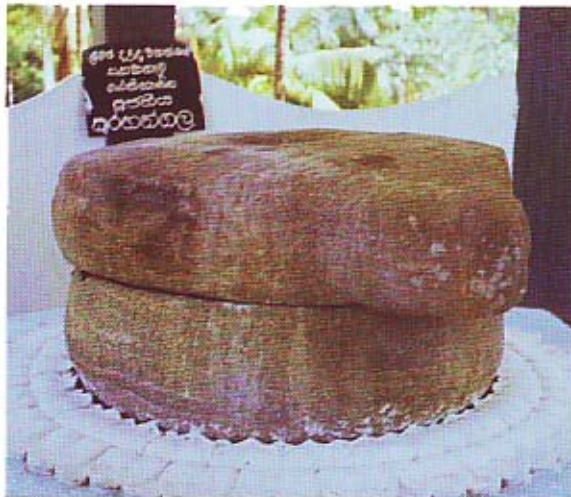
Nikapitiya Pothgulgala temple is situated in a very beautiful location and also worth seeing is Vakirigala temple (Mawanella) a small temple built on pillars, with fine murals in its shrine room.

Salawa temple (Aranayake) is a small temple consisting of three caves, all of them covered inside with murals. It is said that the last King of Kandy spent some time in hiding here, secreted behind the statue of the Lord Buddha.

Devanagala temple at Mawanella is built on a 600 - foot high rock, with a superb view of the surrounding area. There is a shrine room built on pillars and another which dates back to the period of King Parakramabahu I. There is also an inscription which notes the gift of land to the king's commander-in-chief in recognition of his exploits in a war against Burma.



Salawa Temple



Delgamu Temple



Maduwanwala Wallauwa

Ambululena Viharaya, Deliwala Kotavahera, Gallen Viharaya, Lewke Viharaya, Degalakiriya, Makura, Rambukkana Dambulla Temple, Kota Vehara, Muwampitiya, are other temples worth seeing.

The Ratnapura National Museum is open every day of the week, from 9 to 5, except Fridays. It houses a good collection of

archeological, zoological, paleontological, ethnographical and geological artefacts, all unearthed in Sabaragamuwa.

Sabaragamuwa Dance is an artform all its own ... one of Sri Lanka's most ancient, traditional danceforms which has been handed down, retaining its pure state, from generation to generation.



Dedigama Kota Vehera

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Masks and costumes are traditional and show little or no variation through the centuries.

The music -- mainly a drum orchestra, with other percussive instruments, such as cymbals, bells and tambourines, is nothing short of compelling. The deep resonance of the drums and the complicated, repeating rhythmic patterns seem to sing and pulse with one's heartbeat.

The dances, which use masks of various folk characters representing sundry supernatural beings, are colourful, sometimes humorous, often macabre. They are traditionally used as part of curative folk ritual, to invoke blessing, lift curses and heal sickness.

Other locations in this region worth investigation include Sardiell's Rock or Uthwankanda (near Mawanella), a rocky crag which for a time was the retreat of Sardiell, known as "Sri Lanka's Robin Hood", who waylaid and robbed the rich (mostly British Planters travelling by horse-drawn carriage) in order to give to his less fortunate brethren ! It is an interesting hike to the summit for nature and adventure-lovers alike.

Worth seeing, also, a Dutch Fort at Ruwanwella which was later occupied by the British. This currently houses the Police of the area. There are also several other buildings of Dutch vintage nearby.



MEDITATIONS



Sabaragamuwa, with its scenic beauty and tranquil atmosphere, lends itself naturally to the contemplation of life. There are several meditation centres in the region.

"Kurulukalay" at Kegalle, a bird sanctuary, also houses a meditation centre. Salgala Meditation Centre can accommodate 12 bikikkus in insulated caves in a 600 - acre jungle sanctuary.

Nilmalgoda Karundulena Jungle Hermitage, Sinharaja Jungle Hermitage at Rakwana and Budugala Jungle Hermitage are three other famous centres, while the most famous is undoubtedly Kalavati, which is a popular health resort, where traditional ayurvedic

(herbal) medicine is used in a holistic way, with herbal baths, oil massages, applications and infusions serving to cure diseases, relax and invigorate. Situated in Polhengoda Village, Ratnapura, Kalvati Health Centre is a place of great natural beauty.

Undulating mountains, cascading waterfalls, peaceful rivers ... the constant chirruping of birds in untouched forests ... these and the sites of interest, together with the many good hotels, resthouses and guesthouses, make Sabaragamuwa an inviting prospect.

Come visit us !

I N D E X

PLACES OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST

1. Kakuluwa Rajamaha Viharaya
2. Aluthnuwara Devalaya
3. Salawa Rajamaha Viharaya
4. Dewanagala Rajamaha Viharaya
5. Vakkirigala Rajamaha Viharaya
6. Wattarama Rajamaha Viharaya
7. Deliwala Kotawehera
8. Salgala Monastery
9. Dedigama Kotawehera
10. Beligal Rajamaha Viharaya
11. Delgamuwa Rajamaha Viharaya
12. Sankapala Rajamaha Viharaya
13. Maha Saman Dewalaya
14. Sri Pada

WATER FALLS

15. Asupini Ella
16. Bopath Ella
17. Duvili Ella
18. Surathali Ella
19. Katugas Ella
20. Dotalu Ella
21. Puwak Mal Ella
22. Miyunu Ella
23. Mapalana Ella
24. Dehena Ella
25. Alupola Ella

HISTORICAL SITES

26. Ruwanwella Dutch Fort
27. Pethangoda Uyana
28. Film Location of "Bridge on the River Kwai"
29. Maduwanwala Walauwa

OTHER INTERESTING SITES

30. Padavigampola Galmessa
31. Pisinwala Elephant Orphanage
32. Bogala Graphite Mines
33. Dorawaka Caves
34. Belilena
35. Singharaja Forest
36. Batadomba Caves
37. Elephant Kraal
38. Udawalawe National Park
39. Chandrika Wewa
40. Samanala Wewa
42. Dumbura Graphite Mines
43. Singharaja Hermitage
44. Peak Wilderness Sanctuary
45. Ebelepora National Museum
46. Uthuwana Kanda
47. Buluthota Pass
48. Batalegala
49. Vavulpaa



Map Showing Tourist Sites in Province of Sabaragamuwa

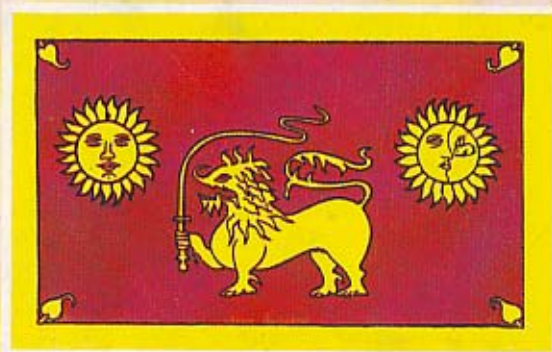
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LEGEND

- Main Road
- - - Other Road
- Railway
- - - Pro/Dia Boundary
- ~~~~~ Reserve
- ⊙ District Capital
- Other Towns
- ③ Tourist Sites



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Tourist information

Further information is available from

Ministry of Local Government,
Youth affairs, Sports & Tourism
Sabaragamuwa Provincial Council
New Town, Ratnapura, SRI LANKA
Tel : 045/3154, Fax : 045/3154

Handy Craft Center
Molagoda, Kegalle
SRI LANKA

Handy Craft Center
Colombo Road, Veralupa, Ratnapura
SRI LANKA

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