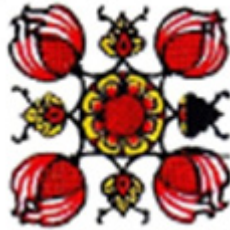


# Quarterly Tours



Jayatissa Herath

**NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA**

02 nd Sept 2017

# QUARTERLY TOUR 2017

## Historic Magama Settlement - Tissamaharama

### Tour Leader

Prof. Nimal de Silva, President of the National Trust Sri Lanka.

### Tour Coordinator

Ms. Neranjana Gunetilleke participating in the tour (0773879947), has volunteered to assist in organizational aspects, where required.

### Route

By Bus : Colombo – Matara – Hambantota – Expressway/  
Highway to Tissamaharama.

### Itinerary

4.30 am	Meet at PGIAR and leave at 5.00 am
7.00 am	Stop for nice self paid buffet breakfast at Lucky Yoghurt, Matara
10.30 am - 1.00 pm	Explore sites of heritage interest at Tissamaharama  (Manik Vehera Complex, Yatala Stupa and the monastery, Sandagiri Stupa and the monastery and Tissa Stupa)
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch at Lake Wind Resort, Tissamaharama
2.00 pm - 5.00 pm	Continue to explore sites of heritage interest at Tissamaharama  (Magama ancient city, CCF's artifact collection and if time permits, Nadigamvila Stupa)
5.00 pm	Leave for Colombo with one stop en route
9.30 pm	Arrive at PGIAR

*The itinerary planned may change depending on factors such as time and weather. **Please refer last page for more informations on the tour.***



## **Manik Vehera Complex**

*Manik Vehera* is not a very large stupa in size. It is believed that the stupa was constructed by King Dutugamunu although sometime it is attributed to King Mahanaga. The stupa was renovated to its original shape during British rule and new buildings were also added to the complex for religious activities. There are many ruins and evidences of stone pillared buildings around this stupa. This would have been a highly developed religious centre during ancient times. There is also a stone pillar which is believed to be used for tethering tusker “Kadol” during the period of Dutugamunu.



## Yatala Vehera

Yatala dagoba / stupa was believed to be constructed by King Mahanaga during 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC on the ground where his queen has given a birth to his son. The stupa is now a completely restored one leaving a small gap to see the previous phases of construction. Large number of relic caskets were found enshrined in the stupa but it is unknown what was enshrined in this stupa.

Some believe that this would have been a much larger stupa due to the size of the granite pinnacle. This stupa is surrounded by probably the oldest Elephant wall (*Eth Pavura*) in the country.

There are large number of ruins of various image houses found in the surrounding. One image house contains a fairly large granite carved image of Buddha and another image house is reserved for a finely carved stone statue of *Awalokitheshwara* bodhisattva.

## Museum

There is a fairly rich collection of artefacts, models, pictures and paintings to reflect the cultural and natural heritage of the Ruhuna region in this museum.



## Sandagiri / Sandagiriseya Monastery Complex

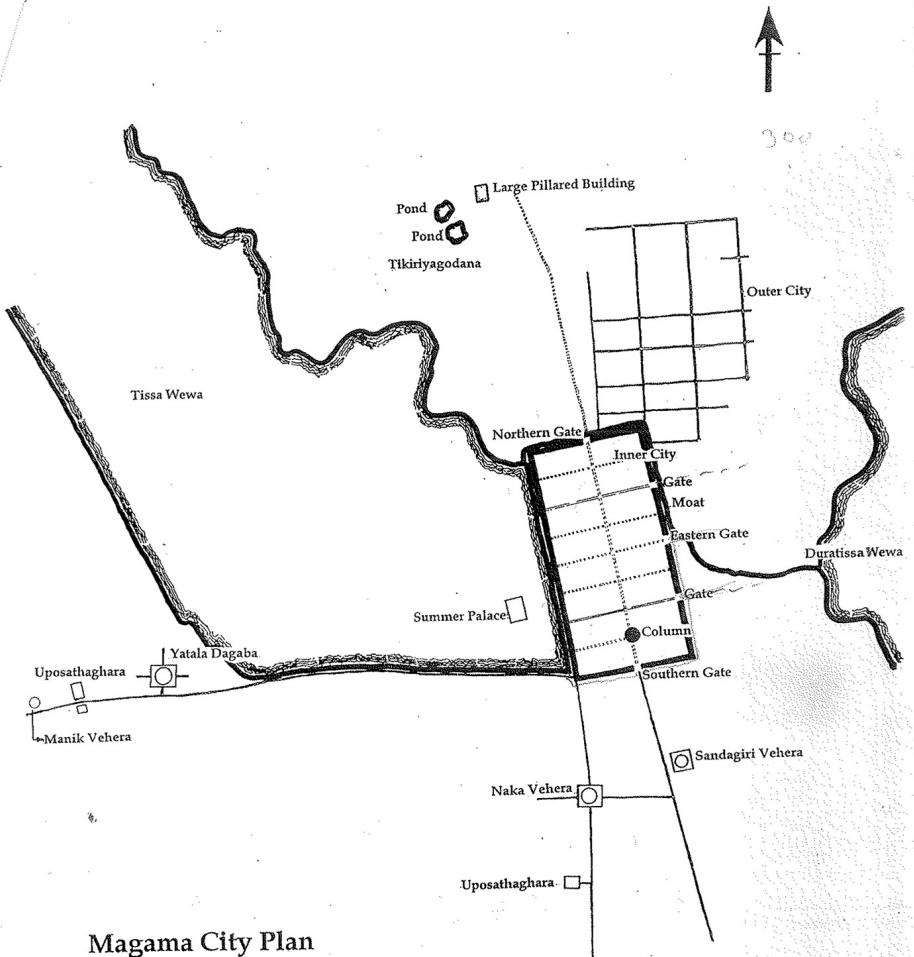
*Sandagiri gama* also earlier known as *Chandana Grama* was believed to be established by the members of the clan participated in the celebration of arrival of the Sri Maha Bodhi to Anuradhapura by Reverend Theri Sangamitta. It is also believed that King Mahanaga built this stupa in 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC enshrining the relics including a rear conch shell given by King Devanampiyatissa (250-210 BC) out of the many relics received as gifts from King Dharmashoka. Mahanaga is the brother of Devanampiyatissa who also happened to be a regional king in Ruhuna. This stupa is believed to be the oldest stupa in the Southern part of Sri Lanka. It is also believed that the rear conch shell was later enshrined in the Tissamaharama stupa.

There are flower altars at four cardinal points and in the north is remarkable piece of stone carving. There is also a ruined Bo- tree shrine to the Southwest. A large granite *Yupa kanuwa* and stone *chatra* provide evidence to understand how stupas were constructed in ancient time before *hathareskotuwa*, *kothkerella* and *kotha* were introduced. There are many ruins, architectural works and features, inscriptions on stone in this monastery complex giving a glimpse of the ancient glory of the place.

## **Historic Magama Settlement**

The history of a kingdom in Ruhuna dates back to 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC. King Deanampiyatissa's younger brother Mahanaga had to leave Anuradhapura to avoid an assassination attempt and moved to Southern area of the Island and later became the ruler of the Southern Province. Mahanaga is regarded as the first King of Ruhuna and established Magama (today known as Hambanthota) as the capital. King Mahanaga has done a great service to the people of Ruhuna by developing agriculture and making a prosperous civilization. He was succeeded by his son Yatalatissa. After Yatalatissa his son Gotabhaya became the king of the Province. Kavantissa the son of Gotabhaya succeeded thereafter. By that time the kingdom of Ruhuna was well established and developed. King Kavantissa is recognized as the founder of many Buddhist monasteries in Southern Sri Lanka. King Kavantissa had modified the Tissa Wewa (Tissa tank) to cater the water demands of the resident monks in Tissamaharama monastery as well as the agricultural community therein.

The Tissa Wewa is one of the four large ancient irrigation tanks in the area and is believed to be constructed during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC by King Yatalatissa, or regional king Mahanaga. Tissa Wewa is also an engineering marvel of the Sri Lanka's ancient tank building technology. The dam built across Kirindi Oya to divert water to Tissa Wewa is the first known oblique dam in the world which proves the level of knowledge that the Sri Lankan Engineers had on handling large bodies of water.





## **Tissamaharama Raja Maha Vihara**

Tissamaharama monastery was one of the major ancient Buddhist monasteries established during Ahuradhapura period after the arrival of Arahant Mahinda Thero. It is believed that the site of Tissamaharama Raja Maha Vihara was consecrated by Buddha himself during his third visit to Sri Lanka. The Monastery was recognised as one of the important Buddhist educational centres in Southern part of the island during 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC to 11<sup>th</sup> Century AD.

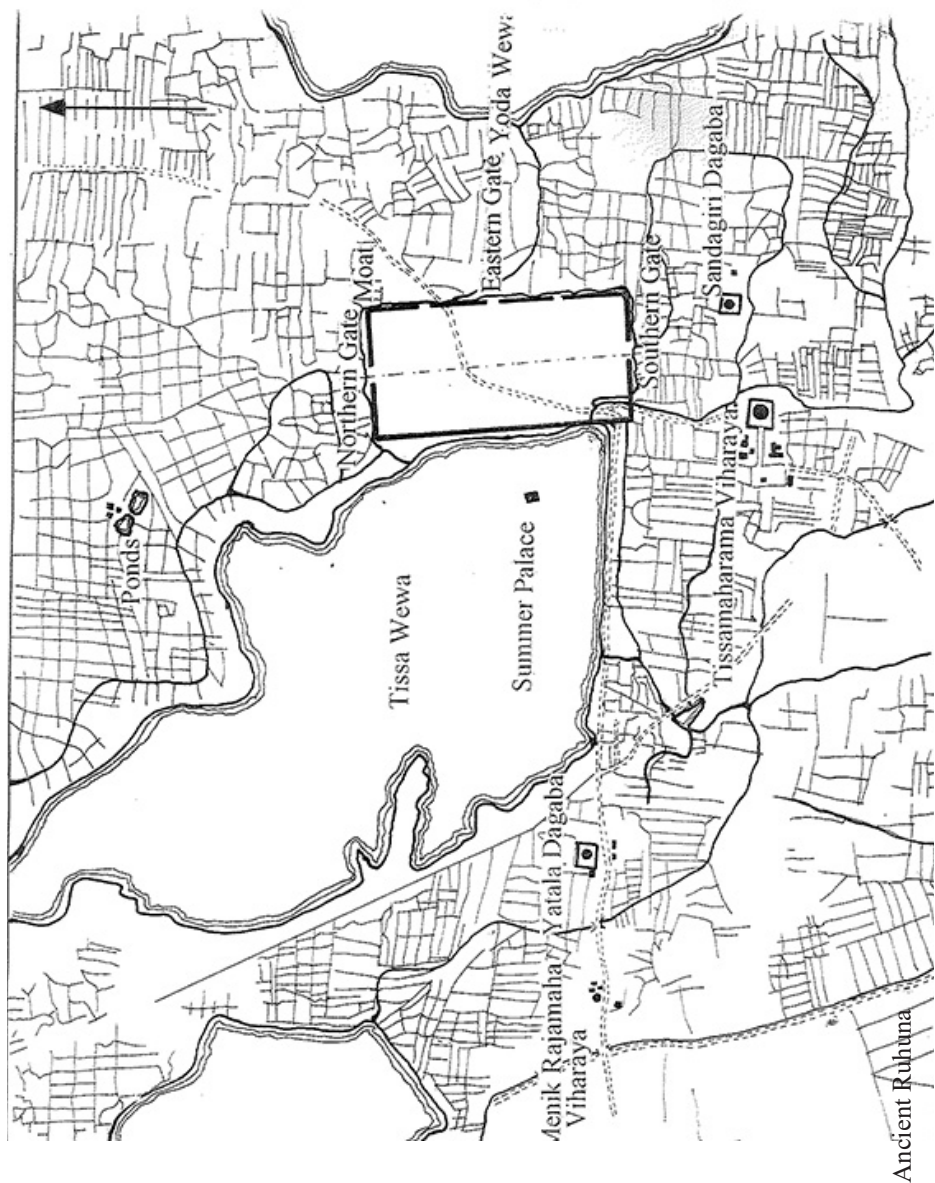
Tissamaharama Stupa, one of the largest stupas in the island is also located in the monastery complex. The stupa was built to commemorate lord Buddha's visit to the area, at the same place where Buddha spent time in meditation with 500 arahant Buddhist monks. According to Mahavamsa the frontal bone relic (Lalata Dhathu) was enshrined in Tissamaharama stupa as the main relic. However some believe that the frontal bone relic of Buddha was temporally enshrined in this stupa but later removed and was enshrined in the Seruvila Stupa.

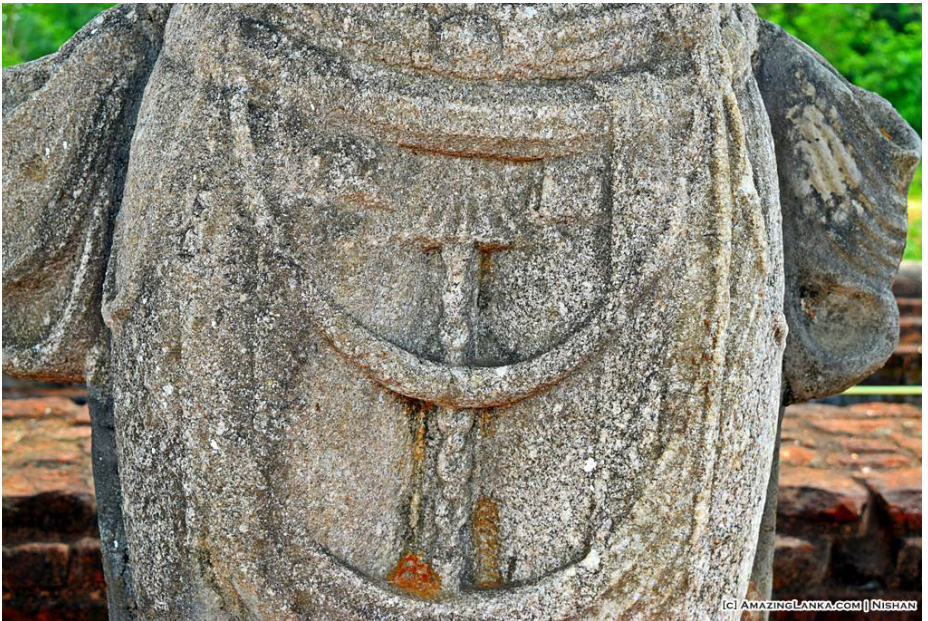




According to great chronicle, the temple's history runs back to 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC and then it was known as Silapassa Parivena. It is said to be built by King Kavantissa (186 – 161 BC) of Ruhuna. Later the temple complex was expanded and renovated during the reign of King Ilanaga during (38-44 AD). But some historians believe that the temple was originally built by King Mahanaga in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century and developed into a major temple by King Kavantissa in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC. King Voharakatissa (215-237 AD) in 3<sup>rd</sup> C AD and Prince Mahanaga in 560 AD, King Vijayabahu during 1055-1110 AD had also renovated the stupa. The temple had undergone some disturbances during Kalinga Magha in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century AD.

The latest renovations on the stupa were handled by the Department of Archaeology with the help of State Engineering Corporation and were concluded in 1998.





Nicely carved Awalokiteshvara Bodhisattva statue at Yatala Vehera

*Credits:*

*Photos and information*

<https://wikipedia.com>

<http://trips.lakdasun.org/visit-to-the-ancient-kingdom-of-ruhuna-to-see-some-of-the-archeological-buddhist-and-historical-sites.htm>

<http://amazinglanka.com/wp/>

Plans and layouts:-

<http://amazinglanka.com>

Google Maps

## **Meals**

Breakfast should be whilst travelling. Each participant is requested to bring their own breakfast or could have self paid breakfast at Lucky Yoghurt, Matara.

A simple Sri Lankan lunch has been organised to accommodate both veg and non veg meal preference.

A pack of fruit juice will be provided on board.

Bottles of water are available on board.

This booklet is a free issue