

# Quarterly Tours



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**NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA**

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*The First Quarterly Tour has been arranged to cover places of historical  
and cultural interest in Wellawaya area.  
This is the first Two-day tour organized by the National Trust - Sri Lanka*

*The Tour will be led by Prof Nimal de Silva  
Chairman - National Trust Sri Lanka*

*Credits:*

*Photographs and some of the information-*

*[www.amazinglanka.com](http://www.amazinglanka.com)*

*and*

*world wide web*



## Yudaganawa temple

Yudaganawa temple is situated near Buttala on the Wellwaya to Buttala Road. The temple complex consists with colossal stupa with a circumference of 317 meters that dates back to 2nd Century BC. According to chronicles this is the place where two brothers known as Prince Gamini and Prince Tissa were to meet at the battle between them after the demise of their father the King. After being defeated, Prince Gamini was fleeing from the battlefield when Prince Tissa was blocked by the Mahasanga intervening to his chase.

Until recent times this stupa was believed to be a Kota Vehera as it is seen with a small stupa (or earth mound) resting on top of the large podium formed by the main stupa. Recent research revealed that it was a complete stupa locally popular as Kinkini Cetiya.

In the vicinity of this great stupa, there is a small stupa known as Chulangani Vihara and an image house known as Yudaganawa temple located at certain distance. They are known as ruins of the same complex but belong to different periods.



## Biso Pokuna at Galabedda

This interesting pond with sluice gates from four sides erected out of dressed stone slabs together with other remains of a palace building surrounded by a moat and a rampart is believed to have belonged to Sugala Devi, a local princess of 12th Century AD.





## Dematamal Vihara

The temple is situated on Buttala – Okkampitiya road 4 km away from Buttala Town. The history of this temple complex runs back to 3rd Century BC. The legend is such after the death of the King Kavantissa, there had been two battles between two brothers, Gamini and Tissa. Although the first battle at Yudaganawa was won by Tissa, the second battle was won by Gamini and as a result Tissa did not have enough time to flee further away from the battleground and therefore, hid in this particular temple complex. It was with the impression that his brother surely will not violate rules in the temple even if he

gets caught. But Prince Gamini who was chasing him realized that his brother had entered there and asked the chief priest whether Tissa is inside the temple. The chief priest tactfully avoided answering him to avoid lying and brought peace among the two brothers.

The name of the temple “Dematamal” also has its own legends. One legend says this area was called Dutu-mal meaning “I saw (found) the brother”, which happened at the temple site. And later became Dematamal.



Another legend says that once peace was made among the brothers, prince Tissa was in charge of the area and he cultivated the land and it was very rich in harvest. During this time Prince Gamini (then known as King Dutu Gemunu) was getting ready for the final battle with the South Indian invader King Elara who was ruling the Sri Lankan capital Anuradhapura. Seeing the prosperity of the area

King Dutu Gemunu said to his brother "Govithen kala ethi male". Meaning "We have done enough farming now, brother" Because of this statement this area was called Ethi-Male which with time became Dematamal.

In addition to the peaceful and serene location, the temple ruins include pillars, guardstone , stone steps, an image house and a series of meditation cells.



## Maligawila Buddha Statue

Maligawila Buddha statue was a restored giant standing Buddha statue carved out of a single piece of limestone rock. The restoration was carried out to combine and erect the statue which was lying on the ground after turning into many pieces by treasure hunters and raiders. The restoration of 1980 brought back its glory. The statue is the tallest free standing Buddha statue in the ancient Sri Lanka of

which the height is 14.5 meters approximately.

According to Culavamsa, the making of this massive statue goes back to 7th century BC by a Prince named Aggabodhi who came from Ruhuna. It further mentions that he had constructed an image house. The ruins around the statue evidenced the existence of such a large image house giving shelter to this particular statue.



## Dambegoda Bodhisattva Statue

There lies another interesting and attractive image of 9.8 meter tall, carved out of a single piece of rock about 500 meters away from the Buddha statue, depicting Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva also known as Maithri Natha Bodhisattva. This statue is popular among locals as Dambegoda statue. This is also a restored piece of art in 1990 joining many pieces scattered on the ground with undamaged face

lying on the ground upside down due to the result of fall and later due to blasts by treasure hunters.

In vicinity of the Statue there is a pillar inscription protected by a recent shelter. This inscription is said to be placed by King Mahinda IV, (956-972 AD) in his tenth year of reign describing the services rendered by him for the development of Buddhism and also further inscribing some rules for the better administration of Buddhist sites.





## Buduruwagala

The name Buduruwagala means the "the rock with the statue of Buddha". The rock itself is seen as a kneeling elephant and is situated 5 km away from Wellawaya towards Thanamalwila. There are seven carved figures of Bodhisattva and female deity figures with the tallest figure of the Buddha at the centre of the face of the rock.

The massive Buddha statue is 17 m tall and depicts Abhaya Mudra. These statues are belong

to Mahayana style going with Pallawa tradition.

The figure depicting Avalokitheshvara Bodhisattva still carries its ancient plastering and paints for one to visualize the ancient glory of the place.