Life Surrounding Kanchikudicharu

Posted on

Kanchikudicharu reservoir supports the livelihood of more than a thousand farming families.

Nestled in the eastern district of Ampara, Kanchikudicharu has emerged from solitude to reflect a vibrant village life where man and the wild live in harmony.

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Photographs Menaka Aravinda.

A green sign along the Pottuvil-Thirukkovil Road indicated the turn to Kanchikudicharu, and we had ten more kilometers to go. The massive tree with its branches spread across the canal was an indication that our journey would indeed be an interesting one.

The sides of the gravel path were bordered by lush green paddy fields spread across far and wide, laden with golden rice kernels. The receding sunlight provided a beautiful setting for a lovely evening. Suddenly amidst the tall stalks of the paddy fields, there was a movement, and a large jackal came into our view. As we moved

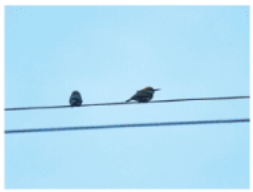
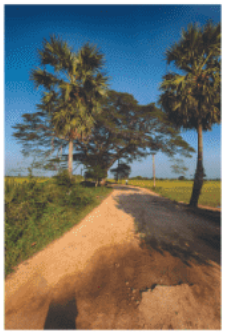
farther along the path, he too, stopped and would almost accompany us along the way, looking back as he ran into the distance.

Village life was evident, with make-shift farmers' huts placed sporadically in the paddy fields. Elephants are known to roam the area, yet, as the rains had provided plenty of water within the jungles, the giants of the land were not out on that day. We passed a smaller reservoir, the sun creating a perfect reflection on its surface. We journeyed on, bumping on the unpaved road. A tractor full of smiling faces waved at us curiously, wondering who the visitors were.

Soon we reached the bund of the great Kanchikudicharu reservoir.
We scaled the slope to reach the top, and the view was magnificent. It was almost like a painting with a mountain range in the distance creating a surreal setting. Fishermen were on their evening round, boats gliding on the water.
The reservoir was full: waters of Kanchikudicharu are directed to agricultural land and paddy fields around the area, sustaining the lives of the villagers and wildlife alike. Along the bund we walked, our eyes wide open in search of any crocodiles. On the banks of a smaller water hole which was on the opposite side of the reservoir, the swishing tails of two massive crocodiles were seen, but our excited shouts to take photographs startled the crocs, and they quickly dived into the water.

Kanchikudicharu is a solitary village in the Ampara district.

We returned to the jeep to continue on our excursion. As we drove through the village, we passed small home gardens with almost human-like scarecrows guarding the goods. In another plot, a group of ladies was seated on the ground with stacks of peanut plants on their sides. One by one they stripped the peanuts into large tubs. As the peanuts were fresh and not yet dry, it had a creamy flavor and texture. Driving along, numerous birds caught our attention; a couple of Indian Rollers, a Shikra and bee-eaters seemed to relax as the sun set and the dusk settled in.

Kanchikudicharu had given us an insight into the life that surrounded it. If darkness had not approached, we would have stayed longer as the tranquility was almost entrancing. There was no doubt we would return soon as there was more to be

discovered in Kanchikudicharu.