The Gushing Sounds of Deduru Oya

Posted on



The glistering waters of Deduru Oya reflects the beauty of nature

In the Wayamba Province, providing the lifeline of agriculture to thousands of acres of land, the resplendent Deduru Oya glistens in the afternoon light.

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Turning-off from the main road, we drove along gravel paths and canals full of water, lush greenery lining either side. A few more bends and we were scaling a precipice to reach the bund of the vast Deduru Oya reservoir.

Aquatic birds frolicked in the water creating a picturesque setting, while the sun created shadows on the reflecting reservoir. The beautiful shades of green of the paddy fields and trees spread as far as the eye could see.



Vast and endless views extend as we drove on the bund

Deduru Oya is said to be the sixth largest river in Sri Lanka and with the building of a dam across this massive water body, it provides water for irrigation and agriculture to over 27,000 acres of land in the Kurunegala and Puttalam districts. The towers of the sluice gates stand tall similar to guarding sentinels. From the bund, on a small gravel path, we reached the ground level and watched as water poured out of the open sluice gates. The sounds of the gushing waters were soothing and relaxing.

According to the annals of history, it is believed that during the period of King Parakramabahu I (1153-1186 AD), an irrigation system was developed focusing on the Deduru Oya. Remnants of a glorious ancient past remain with the archaeological findings of the Katuwannawa Asanagharaya, which is a short distance away from the reservoir and is believed to have been built in the third Century BC.



The gushing waters through the sluice gates created soothing sounds

Another interesting place in the vicinity is the Ridi Bendi Ella Dam. This would be about a 30-minute drive from the Deduru Oya reservoir and takes you through picturesque rural environment with water filled canals running parallel to the road. Amidst a grove of trees, the charming Ridi Bendi Ella Dam stands.

> The Ridi Bendi Ella Dam, a 30-minute drive from the Deduru Oya reservoir takes you through picturesque rural environment with water filled canals running parallel to the road.

Smaller in size, a short flight of steps takes you to the top. With beautiful green surroundings, it is peaceful and tranquil. The Ridi Bendi Ella Scheme was initially built during the reign of King Mahasen (277-304 AD) and was thereafter reconstructed by the Irrigation Department during the period of 1937-1942 under the then Minister for Agriculture D S Senanayake. The mechanisms used to this day are from 1939 made in Ipswich, England.



The flowing water enriches the surrounding agricultural areas

Drawn by the sounds of gushing water, we continued our walk to be momentarily stopped by a monitor lizard lying like a statue across the path. A hop and a jump later, we reached the massive Deduru Oya and from above we watched mesmerized. The water was moving at a rapid speed over the spillway. Interestingly fishermen were standing on the spillway casting their nets to catch fish in the afternoon light.

Totally away from the busy hub of the outside world, we reflected on the beauty of nature and decided to return on another day to enjoy again the gushing waters of the Deduru Oya.



A moment captured – lush green paddy fields.



The tranquil environs surrounding the Ridi Bendi Ella Dam.



The path shaded with trees lead to the Deduru Oya reservoir.



Standing on the spillway, a fisherman casts a net, expecting a catch.