

Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment of the Colombo Port City, Sri Lanka

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Introduction

Colombo port was established as one of the main trade centres in Sri Lanka under different reigns for a period of over 500 years. Today the Colombo port has become a major harbour in Asia. Although the Colombo Harbour is the main port of Sri Lanka, there are still some limitations. Because of that it needs to be developed with new technology and infrastructures. The current extension of the harbour is no longer sufficient for the comprehensive trade being functioned. Large scale cargo ships are unable to enter the inner harbour. Moreover, the harbour also needs to be developed with an adjoining city for fulfil its infrastructures. Considering these confines, the current government of Sri Lanka has proposed of developing a port city and Sri Lanka Port Authority (SLPA) was assigned to commence a New Colombo Port City Development Project (NCPCDP). The area covered by this project is directly in between south of the Colombo Port Expansion Project (CPEP) or Colombo South Harbour (CSH) and the northern side of the Galle face (Fig. 01). It consists over 500 acres of the sea area which has been reserved to build office and residential blocks, shopping complexes, cafes, restaurants and hotels, leisure areas and public view points after filling the sea bed under the NCPCDP.

Since development always goes hand in hand with destruction, the project proponent has to consider the impact on the environment on a large scale before initiating development activities. Hence, before the area undergoes development, its direct and indirect impact on the traces of past human activities of the proposed area as a part and parcel of

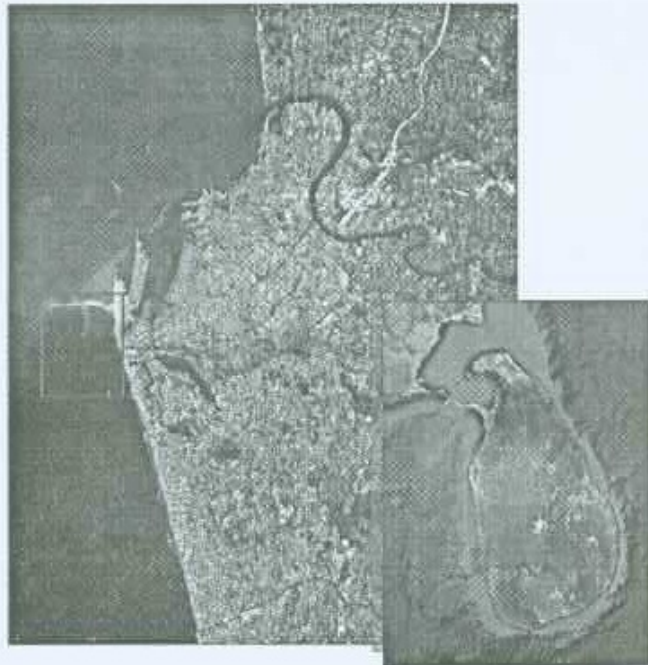


Fig. 1: Map of Sri Lanka showing the location of proposed NCPCDP area on the Western coast

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