

2.53 Historical significance of the kingdom of Dambadeniya

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ABSTRACT

Dambadeniya is the third kingdom of ancient Ceylon. It was situated in the Udukaha Western Korale of the Dambadeni Hatpattu in the Kurunegala district. As a result of the invasion of Rajarata by the Indian invader Kalinga Magha, the natives of the country were confronted with an unstable political atmosphere. Under the political upheaval in the regional administration there sprang up a novel political hegemony centralizing at Dambadeniya in the Mayarata. At first this place was chosen as a centre to establish his hegemony by Vijayabahu III in 1232 A.D. Parakramabahu II, Vijayabahu IV and Buwanekabahu I were the successors of Vijayabahu III who ruled from Dambadeniya All these rulers belonged to the Dambadeni dynasty.

Though Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa kingdoms survived for a long period of time, Dambadeniya was held as a kingdom only for about forty years from 1232 to 1272 A.D. Even within this short epoch Dambadeniya acquired a prominent place as a centre of royalty. Dambadeni rulers were able to confront successfully all three foreign invasions carried out respectively by Kalinga Magha from South India, Chandrabanu from East Asia and Pandya from South India. As a kingdom associated with a number of important occurrences of the country's history, it is important to study the historical significance of the Dambadeniya Kingdom.

This inquiry was based on primary and secondary sources as well as on archaeological surveys. The facts explored from the primary and secondary sources could be established through the survey. All these facts and figures clearly testify that Dambadeniya kingdom acquired an important place in Sri Lankan history.

Key words : Invasion of Rajarata, Political atmosphere, Kalinga Magha, Chandrabanu