

## Abstract No 40

# The Great Epic *Ramayana* and its impact in Sri Lanka

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The *Ramayana* is one of the great Indian epic written by *Valmiki*. In Sanskrit literature it is known as *Adi-Kavya* and the writer *Adi-Kavi*. This *Ramayana* contains the history of *Rama* and royal tradition in 24,000 verses and in seven *Kandas*. In these seven *Kanda* the *Sundara Kanda* and *Yuddha Kanda* describes the incidents that took place in Srilanka. There is a special bond between India and Srilanka geographically, historically, culturally and spiritually- The *Ramayana* is one such link. It is learnt from *Ramayana* that *Sita* who was separated from *Rama*, was brought to Srilanka that the country was ruled by king *Ravana*. *Ramayana* links up India and Srilanka within one spiritual compass, it also emphasizes the basic commonness of the two major cultures of Srilanka- Sinhala Buddhist culture and Tamil Hindu culture. The connection between Srilanka and *Ramayana* are depicted through the illustrations such as *Hanuman's* search for *Sita* in Srilanka and the construction of *Rama* Bridge from Rameswaram by monkey forces. Further, evidence for this relationship can be noted from instance such as *Asokavanam* is located in Srilanka; the places *Asokavanam*, *Sitaelliya*, *Ravana ella* ; where *Sita* is believed to have lived; *Hanuman* worshiped; and *Vibishana's* coronation. *Ramayana* is a great epic at the same time first literature in Sanskrit literary tradition. Influence of literature have impact on Srilankan literary tradition they are *Arasakesari's Raguvamsa* in Tamil and *Kumaradasa's Janakiharana* in Sanskrit. The Impact of *Ramayana* could also be seen in the personal names Srilankans have. Similarly, various literary traditions, uniqueness and spiritualities are continuously found in Srilankan history and connected to *Ramayana* as impact and as story tradition. This research is based on the original text of *Ramayana* and research is carried out through the descriptive and literary research methodology.

Keywords: *Adi-Kavya*, *Adi-Kavi*, *Epic*, *Kanda*, *Sri Lanka*