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PROBLEMS IN DEVELOPING KANDY CITY AS A WORLD HERITAGE CITY

A.S.M. NAWFHAL

Department of Geography, Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

The city of Kandy, while functioning as a political, economic and cultural core, it evolved through a long process of urbanization and formed the present landscape of Kandy. The historical perspective of cultural heritage of the city is depicted by the monuments and master pieces of structures erected during the Sinhalese kingdom and during the colonial period.

Kandy had undergone several disastrous political violence and destruction caused by Portuguese, invaders and succeeded to install a host culture and missionaries. Proportionately, most of the buildings that were build during 1815-1949 have mixed Kandyan, European and Indian architectural designs. Gradually, the city was influenced by British, Italian, Middle-Eastern, American, Japanese cultures and some regional characters distorting the core theme of Kandyan Architectural design.

The heart of the Cultural Heritage still remains as Temple of Tooth relic as it encompass the sacred tooth relic and its peripherals. The four Devalas or Shrines rooted at close proximity to Maligawa were the oldest structures in the city so far known or established by historians. The model and the image of a cosmic dynasty created by the last king still remains symbolic.

The problems identified are as follows; Definition of the heritage in the context of Kandy, conservation issues – what to preserve and how to preserve, urban security, high magnitude of competitive commercial forces, housing issues, infrastructure development, insufficient co-ordination among institutions involved in construction, population dynamics, environmental hazards, misconceptions, activities of social forces and urban politics.

The possible solutions identified are:

- a. Development of a master plan for the city based on a proper land-use and zoning plan and possible areas of community development plans.
- b. Greater Kandy plan to regulate and ease the congestion's and decentralize certain activities while controlling some activities within the city.
- c. Short term plans and long term plans combined with day to day upgrading, (ward development).
- d. Developing modes of co-ordination among private developers, RDA, UDA, SLT, CEB, KMC, Department of Archaeology, Housing Authority, Water Board and Ministries such as Irrigation, Health, Justice, Defense, Education and Cultural and Religious affairs.
- e. Forming a steering committee.
- f. Creating an awareness among the public.
- g. Incorporation of Heritage city Fund.
- h. Strengthening legal measures.