

# **Did Nalanda Gedige rescue test have affected its early architectural context; through the construction of Bowathenna reservoir**

W.M.U. Lakmali<sup>1</sup>, G.T.A.M.D. Karunarathna<sup>2</sup>

Archeological Impact Assessment studies are initiated in response to development proposals that will potentially disturb or alter archeological sites. This study examine that the archeological impact assessment of Nalanda gedige whether any damage had been done while construction the Bowathenna reservoir. Nalanda Gedige is situated from one kilometer to the east of the A9 route - 20 Km north of Aluvihare near Mathale. Its former site was located in the center of the Country. This study aims to find whether Nalanda gedige had affected or not to its early architectural context through the construction of Bowathenna reservoir. Both primary and secondary data are used in order to fulfill the objective of this study. The primary data were collected through two steps process. By using simple random sampling with the residents of particular area and walked in the field to observe the data. The secondary data were collected by Central Cultural Fund and Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka. The Nalanda gedige which, based on our study is the first cultural heritage rescue test in Sri Lanka. There are values in any cultural heritage. Emotional value, cultural value and use value are more specific than other values. Accordingly, these cultural values are also present in Nalanda gedige. Due to the inundation of the Bowathenna reservoir under the accelerated Mahaweli development project in the 1970s, Nalanda gedige was removed and reconstructed with the distance of nearly 100 meters. After this rescue test we identified through our observations that archeological structure's identity had not vanished. This study was able to confirm that the aesthetic value of this ancient creation has gone down into a certain extent owing to the constructional activities of Bowathenna Reservoir. Also the alteration of the original view had been affected. However its historical value, documentary value, archeological value and architectural value had not been harmed. Consequently this rescue test was succeeded because of the best management process of archeological impact assessment.

**Key words:** Archeological Impact Assessment (AIA), rescue test, values, Nalanda gedige

---

<sup>12</sup> Department of Environmental Management, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka  
[udaraweerasundara@gmail.com](mailto:udaraweerasundara@gmail.com)