

**Relationship between Traditional Communities and Knuckles Reserve
(With Reference to Meemure Village)**

R.A.Dhanushka Ranaweera & E.G.Mangala Jayarathna

Department of Geography
University of Kelaniya

ukdhanu@yahoo.com, mdmawodanu@gmail.com

Introduction

The Knuckles is a mountain tropical rain forest. It was declared as a world heritage natural site in 2009, which has a long historical significance. Knuckles forest area is situated in the central hills of Sri Lanka between Kandy and Matale Districts covering about 21,000 hectares spreading towards highlands and minor mountain ranges. The knuckles mountain range consists of 35 individual ranges of which the height is over 900 meters each. This mountain range is identified as the most attractive range of hills which cannot be seen in anywhere in Sri Lanka with innate special characteristics.

Knuckles range depends on the 30% watersheds provided by the mahaweli catchment areas. Similarly a wide climatic and landscaping diversity could be observed in the whole area of knuckles range of mountains. Attractive biodiversity conditions are a specialty endemic to the knuckles range. Further a number of rare species of Flora & Fauna could be seen with rich ecosystems throughout the whole forest range. Areas of over the height of 1500 meters in the knuckles range of mountains were declared as climatic reservations in 1870 and in the year 2000, 17,000 hectares of the mountain range was declared as forest conservation. It is also a special occurrence that knuckles reservation was declared as a natural heritage of Sri Lanka. As such, this mountain range is identified

as a rich ecological system not only in Asia but also in the whole world.

This mountain range which consists of rich ecological values and such values stretches towards a bio-cultural diversity of native communities and the villages around. The villages together with about more than 2500 years old indigenous community of knuckles mountain range from a unique bio-cultural landscape. Memure, Kaikawala, and Galamuduna are few villages out of 37, which can be found in this area. Indigenous community in this area has always interacted with and depend upon the knuckles frosts and this association goes as far back as times. The day to day lifestyle of this community are very simple and their main income generating sources are farming, cultivation of paddy, and Hena and cardamom. In addition handicraft production, extract gem and many other income generating sources. the knuckles range of mountains depend on endemic medical treatment systems. these villagers rely on cattle for transporting good between villages and sub urban areas and this is referred as pack Ox. The traditional villagers in this area maintain the rich cultural diversity associated with unique natural landscape of knuckles. the cultural heritage which has been passed down through generation have been well preserves in these remote villages and been isolated from the rest

of the world is one of the main reason for this.

Research Problem

Is this research ascertain as to whether the cultural relationships existed in the past among the native villages and communities do exist still or whether any changes have taken place with the passage of time.

Objective

The main objectives of this research is to ascertain as to whether the cultural relationships existed in the past among the native villages and communities do exist still or whether any changes have taken place with the passage of time. In addition hope to describe the topography and edaphic conditions.

Research Methodology

This study has been used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected form interview, questioners and observations. In addition secondary data was collected from motor forest report, other research, new paper, books, and internet etc. I used Geographical information system (GIS) for created location map. data was analyzed by table, graphs and maps etc. According to the collected data, it can be concluded the approach for various discussion and also that is possible to find out.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions could be arrived at the end of this research. It could be identified that there is a closer relationship between the knuckles reservation and the native communities of the villages around even at present. It could also be identified that the communities of these native villages do follow and practice a culture endemic to those villages. Further, they are following the traditional methodologies

in connection with their agriculture patterns and in other cultivation functions. But it was observed that their domestic economic position is not satisfactory. Similarly practicing of the endemic medical treatment methods could be observed even at present. It can be recommended the responsibility of traditional communities to take necessary action to protected Knuckles reserve in Sri Lanka. As well as must be action to protected endemic medical treatment systems and built up cultural heritage.

References

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