

## **AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFECTS OF THE MORAGAHAKANDA-KALUGAGA WATER PROJECTS ON PEOPLE'S LIVES**

**(A Study based on Kongahawela and Hettipola divisions on Matale District)**

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Moragahakanda-Kalu Ganga Development Projects can be introduced as one of the biggest irrigation projects in Sri Lanka. Belonging to the Matale district, the construction work started on January 25, 2007 and after the completion of the work, the first water was released on January 8, 2018. It spreads over 8.4 square kilometers and contains a total water capacity of 265.6 million cubic meters. The amount invested in this project is 4500 lakh US dollars. Although the Moragahakanda Multi-Purpose Water Scheme has the potential to benefit many sectors such as improving irrigation, providing clean drinking water, generating hydropower, improving freshwater fisheries, and promoting tourism, the results are unfavorable for the villages around Moragahakanda. In this study, it is hoped to investigate the adverse effects on the lives of the people living in the villages of around Moragahakanda Kalugaga water projects as well as on their agricultural activities. A random sample was selected from the people living in Kongahawela and Hettipola villages around Moragahakanda through questionnaires. Analytical study of the data and conclusions were reached. Most of the people of Kongahawela and Hettipola villages are of the opinion that with the initiation of the Moragahakanda water projects, they are facing a lot of pressures such as a decrease in the productivity of their crops, as well as the invasion of wild elephants into the village, and various changes in the climate. The result of this study is that due to climate change caused by the Moragahakanda-Kalugaga water projects, the productivity of many commercial crops including pepper, nutmeg, coffee is at a very low level. Due to lack of water etc. the people of these areas can see how they are doing their daily activities in the face of severe difficulties. Measures needed to maintain people's lives by minimizing these difficulties and introducing crops suitable for the new climatic conditions should be done urgently.

**Keywords** - *Moragahakanda-Kalugaga water projects, Climate change, Crop yield, Irrigation project, Agricultural activities*

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