

A COMMUNITY BASED INITIATIVE IN SRI LANKA TO KEEP OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CLEAN

Thalangama Wetland Watch

ANCIENT

LAKE HISTORY

It is believed that the ancient Thalangama tank was built by King Parakramabahu VI during his reign from ca. 1412 to 1467 AD for the elephants of the royal army, and serves until today irrigated paddy cultivation, grazing water buffaloes, and flood water. Thalangama is said to derive from the word 'Thadaka Gama' or 'village of ponds'.

Two medium sized irrigation canals starting from the tank, feed nearly 250 acres of paddy cultivated between Akuregoda and Battaramulla. Between these two canals, fertile paddy land stretches as far as the Kaduwela Road in Battaramulla. According to the villagers, the land has been cultivated for hundreds of years dating back to the times of the Kotte Kingdom. The field that provided paddy to the Kotte Perumuttetuwe Kumbura, a six-and-a-half-acre field, is still being cultivated.

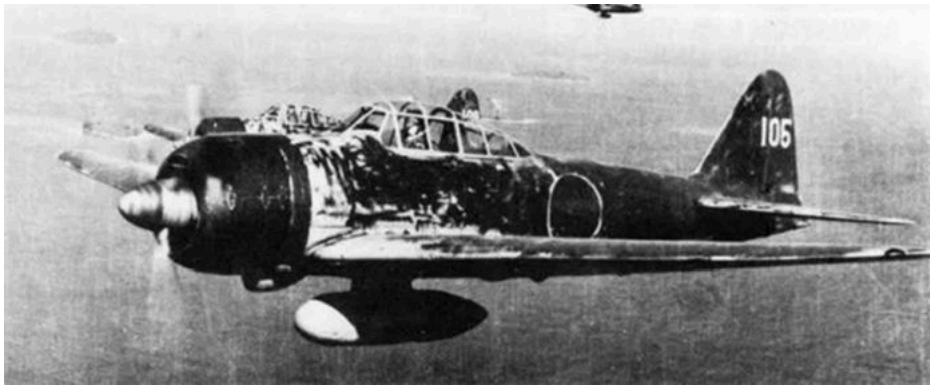
The Thalangama tank and its environs were declared as an Environmental Protection Area (EPA) under the National Environmental Conservation Act ([Extraordinary No. 1487/10, dated 5th March 2007](#)). The Gazette was [amended](#) in 2021 to allow an elevated highway passing through the smaller and more recently constructed Averihena tank.

To improve its water storage capacity, the Thalangama lake underwent the last major dredging and spill-level adjustment (including the construction of the circular spillway, and drain linking the tank with the Averihena lake and eventually Kelani river), and in 2017-2020 significant areas overgrown by invasive Wel Atha trees were removed and a new [on demand] water outlet at the main bridge and circular spillway constructed.

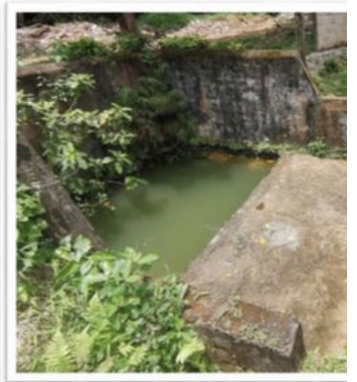
In the early nineties, when all water was released, local residents recovered the engine of a Japanese aircraft which crashed [Sunday Raid on Colombo](#) on 5th April 1942 from the bottom of the lake. Already much earlier on, most metal parts were (illegally) sold as scrap metal.

Japanese Mitsubishi A6M 'Zero' as used in 1942.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A6M3_Model22_UI105_Nishizawa.jpg



Public and private bathing areas at the Thalangama Lake



This public bathing place at Lake Road remains in daily use. It receives its ground water from the lake opposite the road. The installed when the new circular spillway was constructed in about 1990. An earlier well used for bathing existed since at least



This shallow formerly public bath at the Northern end of the lake is known for its cool water. The pond has been forgotten overgrown by plants. It has been reported as in active use in 1930 to at least 1970. The pond receives its water from a spring lake. Several water monitors live in this area, which is private land and deserves protection. In a joint effort with local residents cleaned from rubbish and selected undergrowth. Unfortunately, the landowner has other plans for the plot as we learned re



A private well with a concrete ground as bathing area behind Villa Talangama in the southern part of the lake.

[Financial Statement: 2023-2024](#)

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