

Kumana Village



Raavya Sashri Weerasekera

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Other books of the author

Collecting Feathers as a hobby, Fairey wren and Possum, Australian
Aboriginal culture

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To
My Grade One Class Teacher
Mrs Wasana Kumari Wijekoon
Without whose devoted
Encoragement and assistance
This book would have never been
Completed.

Foreword



In an increasingly complex global future, the "Hemamala Upahara" book project, led by Mahamaya Girls' College, stands as a turning point in girls' education. Over a decade, it has successfully nurtured thousands of children to become young authors.

This year, by collaborating with other schools, we aimed to provide students with a wealth of new experiences. The goal was to develop multi-faceted skills, including communication, values, and creative growth. As a result, children have written books that pay tribute to Princess Hemamala, who brought the Sacred Tooth Relic—the supreme symbol of the Buddhist world—to the Hill Country (Kandy).

I extend my gratitude to everyone involved, including the students who contributed their creativity and the teachers who guided them.

Shashikala Senadhira

Principal

Mahamaya Girls' College

Congratulatory Message

It is a great honor for me, as the Governor of the Central Province, to send a congratulatory message for the launch of the books created through the Hemamala Tribute Book Creation Project initiated by Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy.

Education is the fundamental foundation for the progress of society, and it is further strengthened through books and literary creations. It is clearly commendable that students' talents, creativity, and intellectual abilities are emerging through projects such as this.

I believe that this book creation project will provide valuable knowledge and a precious literary contribution not only to the students but to the entire society. Furthermore, I hope that through such efforts, future writers who will bring pride to Sri Lanka will emerge.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation and blessings to the Principal, the academic staff, the students, and everyone involved who dedicated themselves to this successful endeavor. I wish this project and the book launch ceremony great success.

Sarath B.S. Abeykoon

Governor, Central Province

Emeritus Professor, University
of Peradeniya

2026-05-10

Congratulatory Message

I highly appreciate the noble and outstanding effort of the Principal and the academic staff of Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy, the student daughters, the students of other participating schools, and everyone who dedicated themselves to plan and implement this book publication project. The project was organized under the leadership of Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy, with the participation of other schools in the Kandy Zone, with the aim of encouraging children toward book creation within the current school system, as a tribute to Hemamala Kumariya who brought the Sacred Tooth Relic to Sri Lanka.

For several decades, Sri Lanka has been committed to providing free, compulsory, quality, and equitable education to all children, thereby producing a future generation of intelligent and skilled citizens. In such a context, this book creation program for school children helps develop creative ability, critical thinking, and other positive qualities for a balanced and well-rounded personality, and contributes to building a future knowledge-based society.

May all activities of the Hemamala Tribute Book Creation Project be successful through the blessings of the Sacred Tooth Relic.

Pradeep Nilanga Dela

Diyawadana Nilame,

Sri Dalada Maligawa.

2026.05.10.

Kumana Village

Kumana Village was a small village in Sri Lanka. It was inside Kumana National Park. It was very special because it was the only village inside a national park in our country. Today, no one lives there. The village was abandoned in 1991.

Long ago, in 1817–1818, Sinhalese people came to this area. They traveled along the Kubukkan River. They came by boats and by walking through the forest. They liked the land near the river. So they decided to build their homes there. That is how Kumana Village began.

Kumana Village was near the place where the Kubukkan River meets the sea. There was also a lagoon nearby. The land was good for farming. The river gave them water. The forest gave them wood and other things they needed.

About 20 families lived in the village. The houses were small mud houses. The roofs were made from leaves and grass. The people lived simple lives. They

woke up early in the morning and worked hard every day.

The main job of the villagers was paddy farming. They grew rice in their fields. They also did chena cultivation. They grew vegetables, corn, and grains. Because they lived close to the lagoon and the sea, many villagers were fishermen. They caught fish for food and sometimes to sell.



**Present status of the Village School in
Kumana Village**

There was one small school in the village. The school was started in 1947. The first student was the village headman's elder daughter. Her name was Podinona. She studied very well. Later, she became a teacher in the same school. The villagers were very proud of her.



Podinona, Teacher was in the Kumana village School

Today, the old school building is still there. It is empty and old. Sometimes, a leopard comes and stays inside the building. Wild animals now move freely around the village.



Sometimes, a leopard comes and stays inside the building

There was also a small shop in the village. It was owned by a man named Piyadasa. His wife was Julli Nona. They sold food and other small items to the villagers.

On Poya days, which are full moon days, Julli Nona observed Sil. A monk visited the village on Poya days.



A monk visited the village on Poya days

The villagers listened to Bana and prayed together. There was a small shrine in the village. Even today, we can see the remains of that shrine.

Many men in Kumana Village worked as trackers in the Wildlife Department. They knew the forest very well. They could follow animal footprints and find wild animals.



Garuwa and Wasthuwa. Garuwa is the one armed tracker

Two famous trackers were Garuwa and Wasthuwa. Garuwa was a brave man. One day, he was attacked by a sloth bear in the forest. The bear bit his arm badly. Doctors had to remove his arm to save his life. Even after that, he stayed strong and brave.



Garuwa Fighting with a Sloth Bear

There was also a man named Simon. He brought essential items from Pothuvil to the village. He used a bicycle to carry goods. It was a long and hard journey. Simon had only one good eye because the other eye was blind. But he worked very hard for the people.

Later, in 1969, Kumana was declared a national park. The government wanted to protect the forest and animals.



Kumana National Park

They offered better houses to the villagers. At first, the villagers did not want to leave their homes.

In the early 1990s, because of the war in the country, many villagers left the area. Even the President of Sri Lanka at that time, Hon. Ranasinghe Premadasa, advised them to leave for their safety. Slowly, the village became empty.

Today, we can still see the tombs of Piyadasa and Podinona in the village land. The old houses are broken. Trees and plants are growing everywhere. Nature has taken back the land.

Now, wild animals live where people once lived. Leopards, birds, and other animals move freely. The village has become part of the forest again.

Kumana Village is an important part of Sri Lanka's history. It teaches us how people lived close to nature. It shows us bravery, hard work, and simple village life.

Even though no one lives there now, the story of Kumana Village will always be remembered.

The End

Afterword

With the approval of the Ministry of Education, this research-based project has empowered thousands of student authors for over ten years. Educationists recognize it as a program that significantly enhances the quality of school education.

In alignment with modern educational reforms, encouraging students to author a research work is a milestone in this journey. In this digital age of "Smart" technology, the modern school must demonstrate through research that books and technology should be used together. This is because the unique joy a child receives from a book cannot be replaced by anything else.

To prevent children from drifting away from books—which remain our primary educational tool and storehouse of human knowledge—Mahamaya Girls' College has spearheaded the "Hemamala Upahara" project for many years. Its primary objectives are to foster academic discipline, promote values, and pay tribute to Princess Hemamala, who fulfilled a historic mission to empower women.

We express our gratitude to the Principal, teachers, parents, alumni of Mahamaya Girls' College, representatives of other schools, the Diyawadana Nilame, and the staff of the Sri Dalada Maligawa (Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic) for their support.

Seneviratne Mahalekam

(Project Creator)



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