

**THE SIGNIFICANCE AND POTENTIAL OF THE CANALS
IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE COLOMBO METROPOLITAN REGION**

A Dissertation

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University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka



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S Y N O P S I S

At present the canals in and around the city of Colombo are not properly maintained and they are either under-used or mis-used. Since of late with the unprecedented developments taking place, the importance of the canal network for drainage, reclamation, transport, tourism, recreation etc. has become a vital necessity for economic and social development of the region.

So far no attempt has been made to do a comprehensive study covering the entire system of canals for multi-purpose use with a view to enhance the quality of life of the people.

The objectives of this dissertation is to identify the canal system in and around the city of Colombo and to determine the extent of potentials and constraints in the prevailing system and to make recommendations on the use of canals for the planned development of the region. The constituent parts of the dissertation are in seven Chapters.

1. This Chapter deals with the development of Colombo and its problems and the importance of the canal network for the planned development of the Colombo Metropolitan Region.
2. The historical background of the canal network in and around Colombo and the trends of development from pre-colonial period up to the year 1970 have been dealt with in Chapter 2.
3. Thereafter a comprehensive study of the existing literature relevant to the canal network for the

period 1970 to the present time (1980) had been made. The aspects of transport, drainage and reclamation, and pollution being the only literature available pertaining to canals in the study area, have been dealt with under separate sections in this Chapter.

4. Having studied the published and unpublished material relevant to canals a general field survey was carried out in the whole study area with special attention to the more important and problematical canals. After discussions with experts for institutions in canal maintenance and connected authorities present physical situation of each canal is dealt with in detail. The social, environmental and institutional aspects too have been dealt with in detail taking the canal network as one system.
5. This chapter has tried to identify the present trends of development with its linkages to the canal network and the importance of the integrated planned development of the canal network.
6. With the preceding background information an overall evaluation of the potentials and constraints of the prevailing canal network for the integrated planned development has been discussed in this Chapter with due consideration to the multi-purpose use of canals.
7. The final Chapter by way of proposals and recommendations has given solutions to overcome the constraints and to maximize the potential uses of the canal network in the preparation of an integrated plan for development.

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