

C-04 Sengal Oya, development scheme

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Sengal Oya is a small stream which begins at Pallama Puliyankulama near the great bend of Deduru Oya. The catchment of Sengal Oya receives water from Deduru Oya when it is in spate. This scheme identified in chronicles as Potta Baddara, was developed in the Polonnaruwa area. In the lower reaches of Deduru Oya, water is available during the rainy season to excessive levels, but when the crop requires water, Deduru Oya runs dry. Both alternatives are not conducive to paddy cultivation.

Hence farmers used to do OFC cultivations from the beginning, Sengal Oya was earlier tapped by a small anicut and water was allowed to flow into 7 tanks in the down stream and one tank in the upper reaches, Andanankattuwa anicut diverts water to the upper tank. The 7 tanks were fed by Rathabala Oya anicut canal. This was again augmented by Sengal Oya waters. Maiyawa and Suruwila are the 2 big tanks with old settlements. Wellawela, is a smaller tank. Pinkattiya is one tank which is closer to the lagoon and part of the command area is now under prawn farms. These tanks were breached in the 1995 floods.

The major design of the project is to deepen Sengal Oya by 5 ft and allow the base flow of Deduru Oya to enter Sengal Oya and feed 150 acres of OFCC along a 11km stretch and finally drain this water through Sakkiliya canal from the newly constructed Sengal Oya anicut to the Rathabala Oya anicut and finally to Maiyawa, Suruwila, Pinkattiya, Wellawela etc.

The Andanankattu anicut was modified to cater to its early function with the new depth of the Sengal Oya. The intake at Deduru Oya was gated to cut off high flood waters. This exercise may increase floods to the 7 tanks as well as draw down the ground water level of 11km length of Sengal Oya. The bridge across the main road and other village roads are to be developed in the same period. The Deduru Oya cannot be raised by 1 ft at least as it inundates villages in the upper region.