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Moragahakanda: Lanka's largest investment in irrigation

Uditha Kumarasinghe

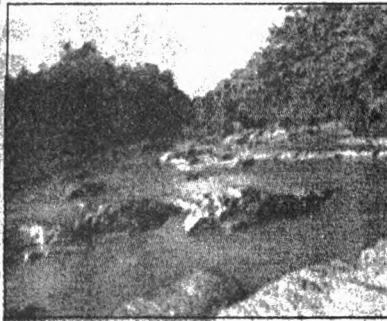
COLOMBO: History will be made in the country's agricultural sphere with the launch of its largest ever irrigation reservoir on Thursday which also marks the end of the accelerated Mahaweli programme, bringing large tracts of land under cultivation.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa together with Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa will ceremonially inaugurate work on the Moragahakanda-Kaluganga project at Elahera on January 25.

It will be the biggest ever development drive launched by the President. The project estimated at Rs. 40,000 million is also the largest ever investment made on a single irrigation project in Sri Lanka.

The project is a fulfilment of another pledge given to the country in the *Mahinda Chintana*.

According to Agriculture, Irrigation and Mahaweli Development Minister Maithripala Sirisena amidst numerous feasibility studies and reports, construction work on



**Moragahakanda
inauguration
on January 25**

the proposed Moragahakanda-Kaluganga Development Project was delayed over the past four decades.

However due to President Rajapaksa's commitment the Government has been able to commence this project.

"This will be the final reservoir project to be constructed under the Mahaweli Development Programme. As a special feature, the project has given priority to ensure

water requirements for agriculture. Therefore this will be the largest ever agriculture development project to be established in Sri Lanka by the Government," the Minister said.

The mega-irrigation scheme will uplift the economic conditions of farmers and boost the country's national economy. All other projects implemented under the accelerated Mahaweli development programme were given priority to power generation. As a special feature, the Government will implement the Moragahakanda-Kaluganga Development Project entirely focusing to cater to the irrigation requirement in the agriculture sector, the Minister said.

The Moragahakanda reservoir's capacity will be 569.9 million cubic metres while the land area that will be submerged is 29.5 square kilometres. The entire capacity of the Kaluganga reservoir is 265.6 million cubic meters. A total of 8.4 square kilometres of land will be submerged by the Kaluganga reservoir.

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Moragahakanda reservoir will generate 21.6 MW power. A total of 1999 families displaced by the construction of the Moragahakanda project and 458 families displaced by the construction of the Kaluganga reservoir will be resettled. The President has instructed to make all resettlements without causing any hardships to these families. The Government has decided to provide compensation and alternative land to all these families.