

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT ON THE SETTLEMENT

CATEGORIZATION OF SRI LANKA:

Case of the Nuwara Eliya District Estate Settlements

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DECLARATION

Hereby, I, P.W.N.M. Paranagama, declare that this is my own work and this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any other University or institute of higher education and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

Settlements are categorized as urban and rural and various methods are used to define urban settlements and thereby to measure the level of urban in a particular country or city. Sri Lanka adopts a single criteria based on administrative approach and defines all Municipal Councils and Urban Councils as 'urban areas'. In addition to the two categories; urban and rural, Sri Lanka defines another settlement category named 'estates' to identify plantations which are 20 acres or more in extent and with ten or more resident labourers. 30% of estates in Sri Lanka are located in the Nuwara Eliya District and 53% of its population belongs to estate sector. Although, estate communities lived in isolation and totally depended on the estate management for nearly a century, this situation began to change in late 1950s. By the end of 20th century, estate communities well mixed with other sector communities and had begun to move out from estates to town centers. Although, many new town centers are emerging within Nuwara Eliya District, and more of its estate communities now enjoy urban facilities and contribute to urban activities, its urban level was declined from 6.1% in 2001 to 5.6% in 2012. These figures are contradictory to what's observed in ground.

There is indeed an issue with the current definition of 'urban' in Sri Lanka, thus it is the intention of this study to propose a new set of criteria to measure 'urban' and apply it to selected areas in Nuwara Eliya district to measure their actual urban levels. A framework of criteria based on four mandates lifestyle, access to facilities, aspirations and physical setting, was introduced. The application of the proposed criteria revealed that existing estate areas; Maskeliya, Ragala & Kotagala and Bogawanthalawa indicate a higher urban level than that of Thalawakele UC; which is an officially identified urban area

Key words – *estate settlements, urban level, framework of criteria*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UDA	Urban Development Authority
NEMC	Nuwara Eliya Municipal Council
GN	Grama Niladari
UC	Urban Council

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