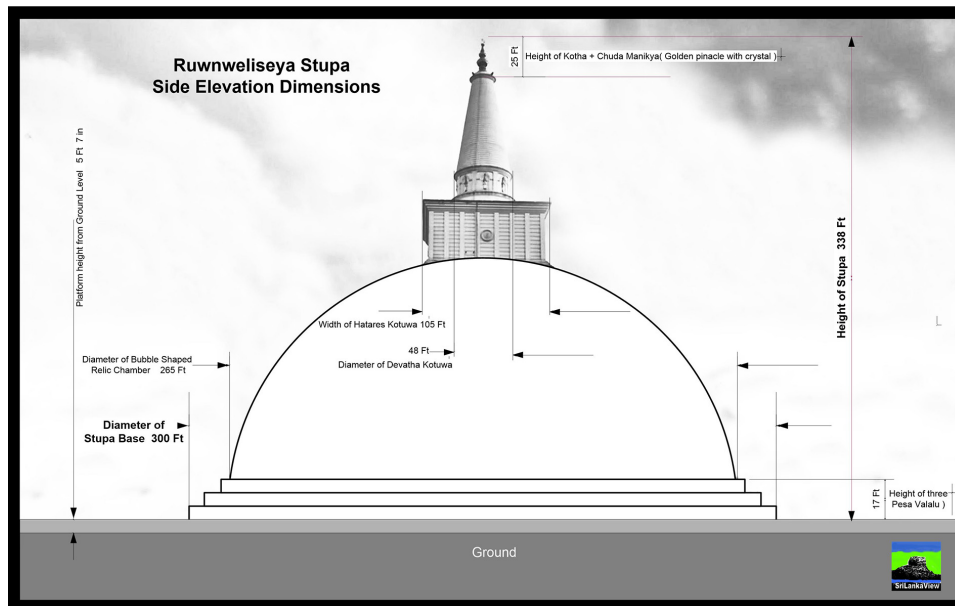




MAHA STUPA

RUWANWELISEYA DAGABA



Ruwanveli Maha Seya – History, King Dutugamunu, Wandana Gathawa

Ruwanweliseya, Maha Stupa History and Details

Ruwanweliseya was built during the ancient Anuradhapura period, whose history dates back to the 3rd century BCE. It was constructed to enshrine and honor relics of Lord Buddha. Ruwanweliseya was built by King Dutugamunu in 140 BC. However, due to various factors such as natural disasters and invasions, the stupa fell into disrepair. It was later restored and expanded by subsequent kings and rulers, with renovations taking place throughout different periods.

The Stupa size of Ruwanwelisaya is quite large and impressive. Today it stands at a height of approximately 338 feet (103 meters). The diameter of the stupa's base is around 300 feet (91 meters). The Stupa is constructed using brick and has a hemispherical shape called Bubbulakara or Bubble shape with a Spire, representing the Buddhist concept of reaching spiritual enlightenment

Ruwanveli stupa holds a distinguished position as the most celebrated stupa in Sri Lanka, and its rich history is documented extensively in the Mahavamsa, a significant historical chronicle of the island. While not the largest or oldest among the stupas constructed in Anuradhapura, it surpasses them all in terms of significance. This is primarily due to the fact that it enshrines a remarkable collection of relics associated with Gautama Buddha, surpassing any other stupa on the island in this regard.

The presence of such esteemed relics within the Ruwanveli dagaba has made it a site of exceptional sanctity and reverence among Buddhists. Throughout the ages, it has been cherished as a monument of unique importance, symbolizing the spiritual essence of Buddhism. Even today, the stupa continues to inspire profound veneration and respect from devotees, maintaining its status as a cherished object of devotion.

Ruwanveli stupa stands as a testament to the enduring spiritual legacy of Sri Lanka and serves as a powerful reminder of the profound

teachings and presence of Gautama Buddha. Its historical significance, combined with the sanctity associated with the relics it houses, has solidified its position as an iconic symbol of reverence for Buddhists and a source of inspiration for all who encounter its grandeur.

As visitors behold the Ruwanweli dagaba, they are captivated not only by its physical magnificence but also by the rich spiritual heritage it represents. It stands as a timeless beacon of faith, inviting all who approach it to contemplate the wisdom and compassion of Gautama Buddha and to find solace and inspiration in the teachings of Buddhism.

The location of the Ruwanweliseya Stupa is in the Sacred City (අනුරාධපුර පුරාණමය) of Anuradhapura. Anuradhapura, including Ruwanweliseya, is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site due to its historical and cultural significance. It is also recognized as an outstanding example of ancient urban planning and religious architecture.



The earlier Crest Gem (Chuda Manikya) of the Stupa - for 80 Years

Gothama Buddha Statue at Ruwanweliseya
Image house





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## Ruwanweliseya Dagaba Details and Information

The exact date when the construction of the Ruwanweliseya stupa began is not recorded, but it is known to have commenced after the completion of the Mirisweti dagaba around 158 BCE. King Dutugamunu, the ruler at that time, initiated the construction of the Ruwanweli stupa following his previous monumental project, the "Lowamahapaya," a nine-story monastery that was 100 cubits (1 cubit = 1.5 feet )square and high.

The building of the Ruwanweliseya stupa spanned the remaining years of King Dutugamunu's reign. Unfortunately, the king passed away in 137 BCE, and at that point, the construction of the dagaba remained incomplete. However, his brother and immediate successor, King Saddhatissa, took charge and ensured the final stages of the construction were carried out. Thus, it can be inferred that the construction of the Ruwanweli dagaba spanned approximately twenty years from start to finish.

During this significant period, the stupa gradually took shape, becoming a testament to the remarkable vision and determination of King Dutugamunu and his successors. The completion of the Ruwanweli dagaba marked a momentous achievement, solidifying its status as a revered monument of immense religious and cultural significance. Though the specific details of its construction timeline may not be extensively documented, the enduring presence of the Ruwanweli dagaba stands as a testament to the devotion and grandeur of its creators. Its construction over two decades exemplifies not only the commitment of the ancient Sri Lankan rulers to their religious beliefs but also the remarkable architectural and engineering prowess of that era.

The significance of the site where the Ruwanweli stupa stands is mentioned in the "Mahavamsa" as a place made sacred by the presence of the four Buddhas of the present "kalpa," which refers to the duration of the world in each of its regenerations. Centuries before the construction of the dagaba, the Mihindu Thero prophesied its location to King Devanampiya Tissa. Together, they visited the spot where the magnificent Ruwanweli dagaba would later be built.

During their visit, Arhat Mihindu Thero recounted the visits of the previous Buddhas to the sites of future sacred buildings, including the spot where the Ruwanweli dagaba would stand. He addressed the king, describing it as a consecrated place by the four preceding Buddhas. He prophesied that in the future, a dagaba, named "Hemamali" or "Ruwanweli", would be erected there. It would enshrine a "dóna" of sacred relics obtained from the body (1/8th part of relics) of Gautama Buddha, and it would reach a height of 120 cubits (180 feet).

In response to the thero's prophecy, the ruler expressed his intention to personally undertake the construction. However, Mihindu Thero advised the king that he had other important tasks to fulfill and that a descendant of his would eventually carry out the construction. The thero foretold that Yatalatissa, the son of the king's younger brother, Mahanaga, would become a ruling sovereign. Yatalatissa's son, Gothabaya, would also ascend the throne, followed by his son Kakawanna. The great monarch predicted by the thero, named Abhaya, would be a conqueror renowned as Dutugamunu, gifted with supernatural powers and wisdom. It was Abhaya who would ultimately construct the dagaba at that very site.

To commemorate the prophecy, the monarch had the words of the thero engraved on a stone and erected a monument to mark the spot. This stone monument served as a testament to the sacred significance of the location and the future fulfillment of the prophecy. The account reveals the deep spiritual connection and prophetic foresight associated with the site of the Ruwanweli dagaba. It highlights the belief that this particular place was destined to become a revered sanctuary, housing sacred relics and embodying the power and wisdom of Buddhism through the generations

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Architectural Remains -Anuradhapura-Ceylon~~~~~ by James.G. Smither

Stone carved Elephant figures at Ruwanweliseya Vahalkada

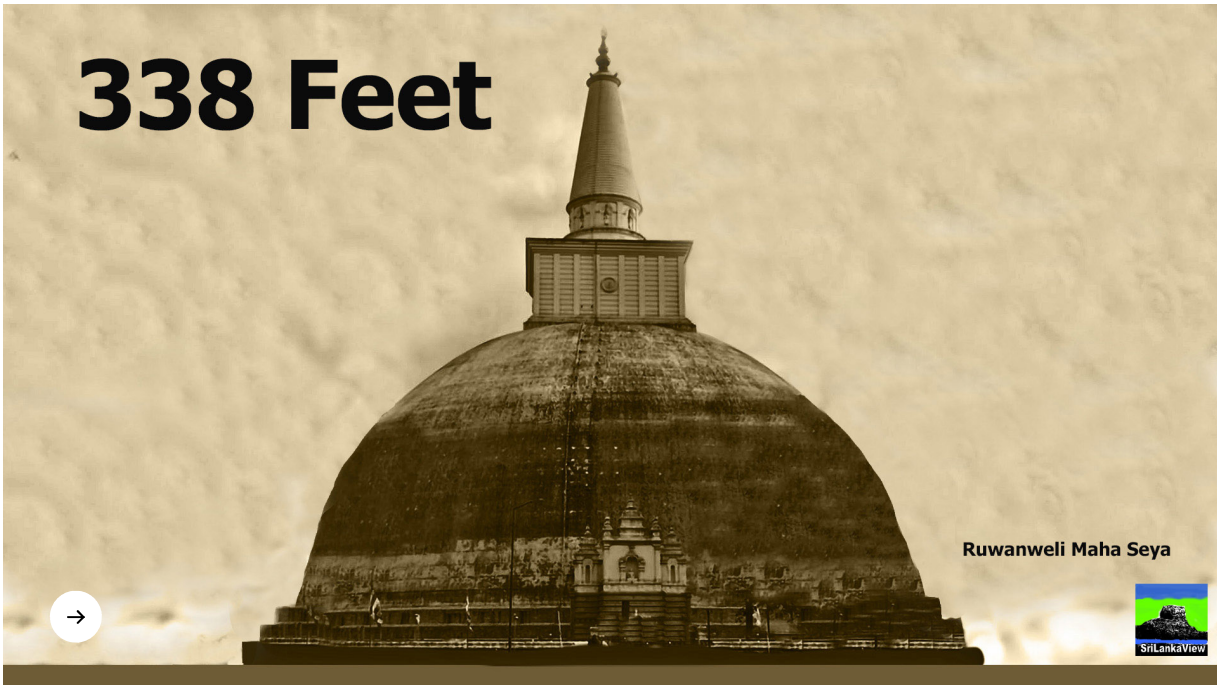


Brief History of Ruwanweliseya in Sinhala

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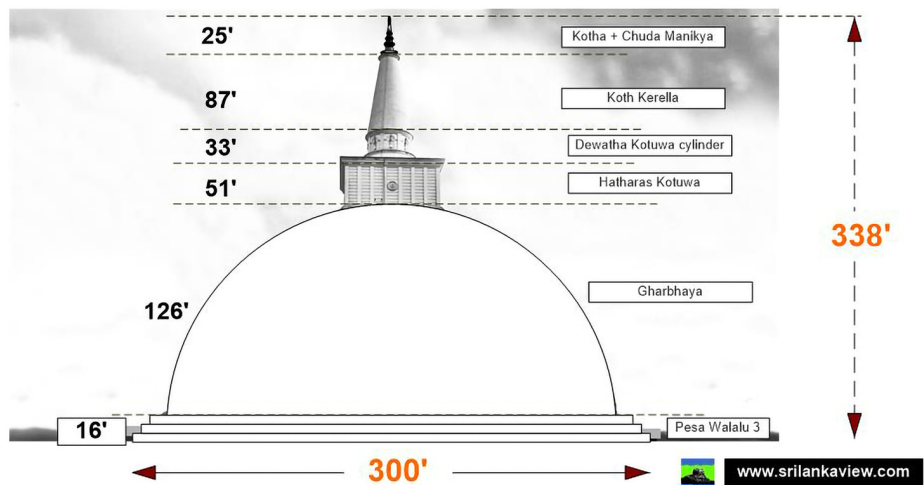
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### Ruwanweliseya Height and Dimensions



## Ruwanweliseya Dimensions

Conjectured  
Measurements  
in Black color





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**Ruwanweliseya Dagaba**

Ruwanweliseya

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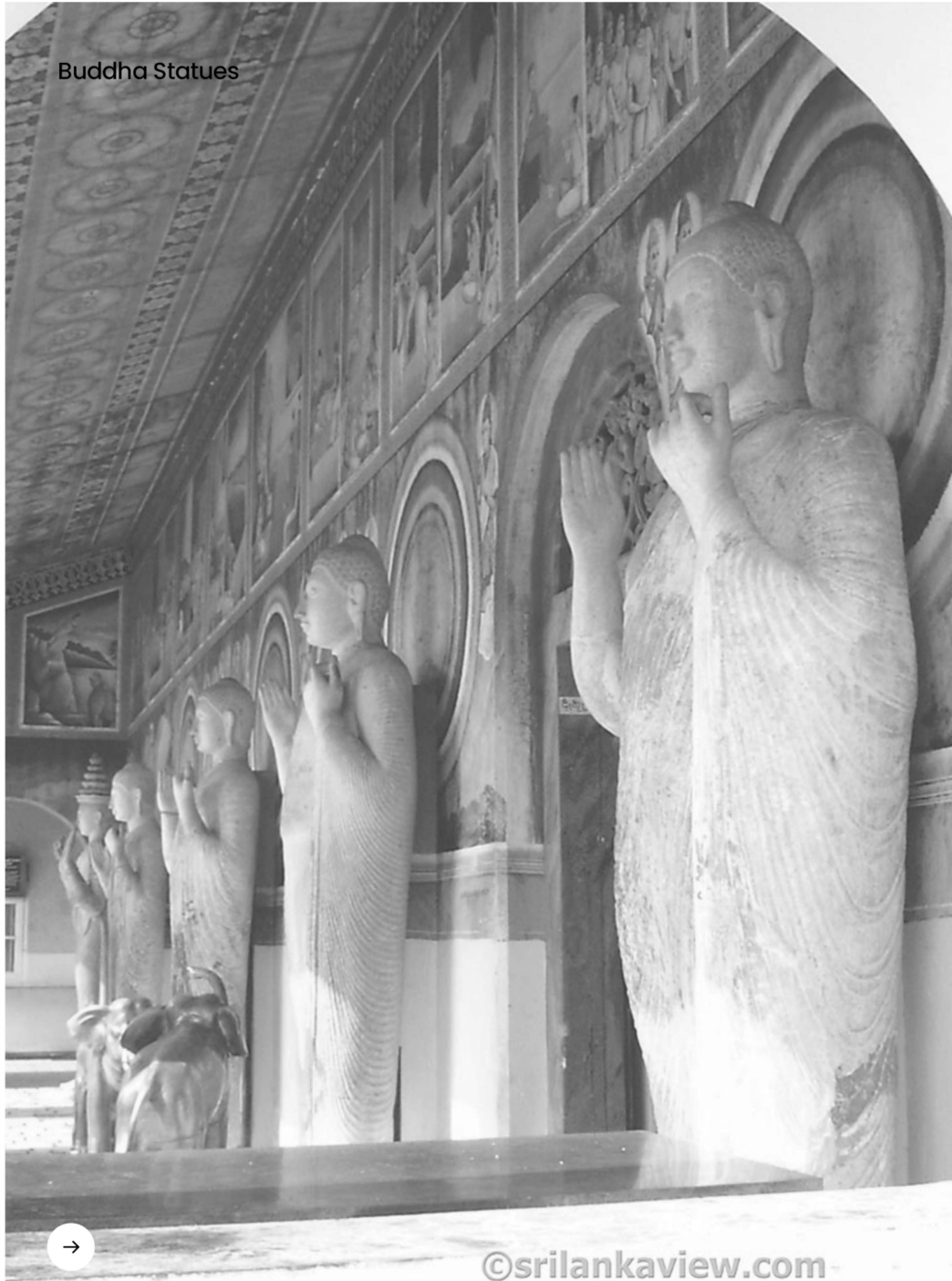
King Dutugamunu



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Buddha Statues

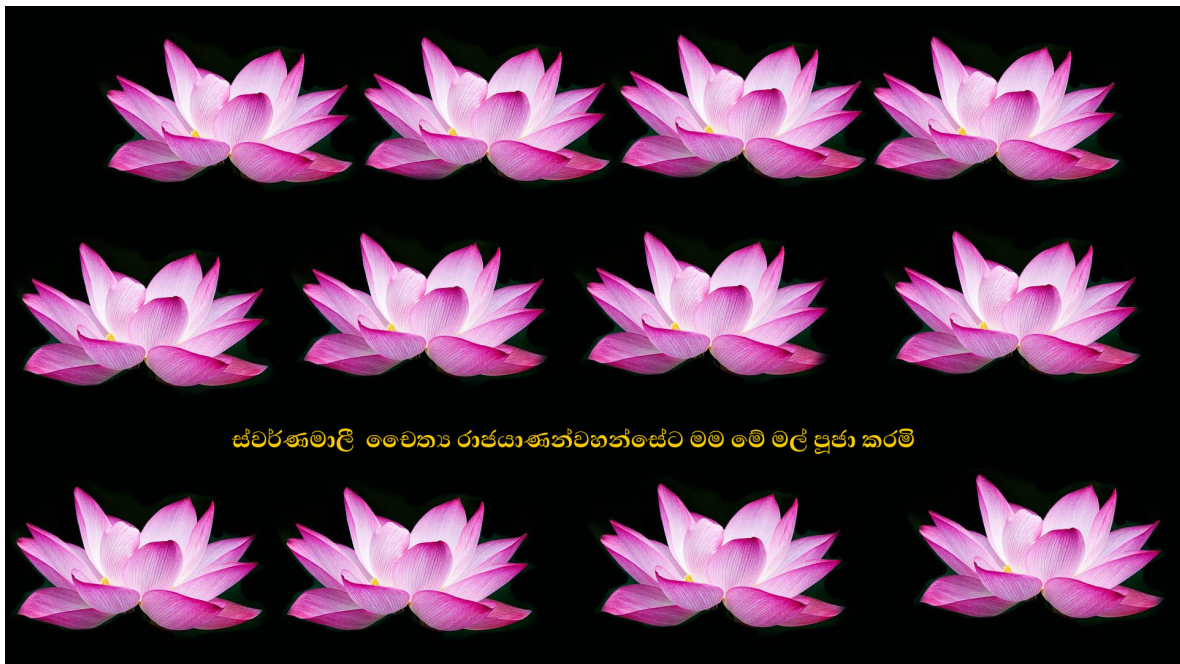


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A Dhamma Gift