



The Thalawakelle Housing Scheme which comprises 133 housing units located above the Kotmale Oya valley. It is one of the six housing schemes for the resettlement of nearly 500 families displaced by the project.



The construction site of the proposed dam across Kotmale Oya, near Thalawakelle Town, is one of the major civil construction works with heavy machinery buzzing, excavating the dam foundation.



The workers at a section of 33 km long, B 412 Thalawakelle - Thawalantenne Highway which would be upgraded under the project. The highway with one large bridge, 15 single span minor bridges and 150 box culverts connects Thalawakelle Town with the Colombo-Gampola-Nuwara Eliya highway at Thawalantenna via Pundaloya and Niyangamdora where the power house will be constructed.

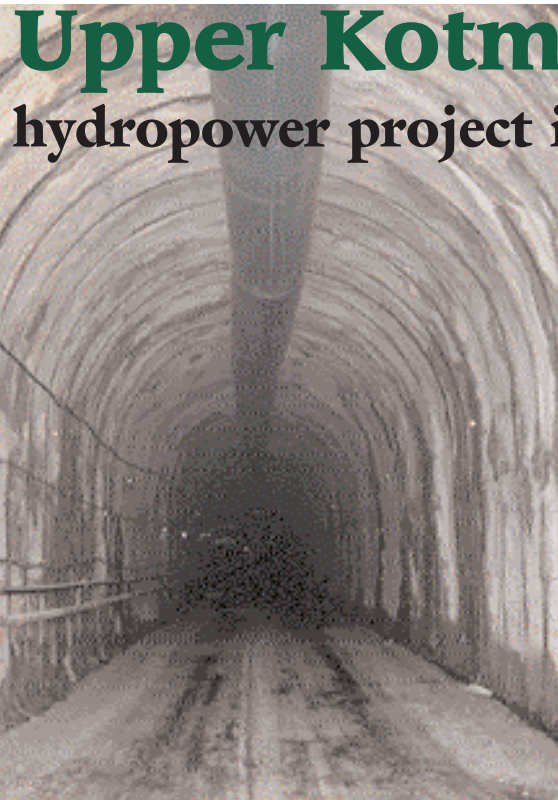


A backhoe shaping the inside of one of the access tunnels carved into granite rock. The access road facilitates the construction of a 12.5 km long main tunnel or the head race tunnel which carries water from the reservoir at Thalawakelle to the power house at Niyangamdora in Kotmale.



A heavy vehicle and the huge ventilation tube at the entrance of the access tunnel to the head race tunnel at the dam site in Thalawakelle.

# Upper Kotmale hydropower project in progress



At the main access tunnel to the Power House cavern in Niyangamdora in Kotmale. The underground Power house which is 36.5 m high, 50 m long and 20 m wide will be carved into solid rock and has three main tunnels; the main access tunnel, ventilation and cable tunnel and the tail-race tunnel carry in water back to the Kotmale old reservoir after producing electricity.



The new main bridge across Kotmale Oya close to Thalawakelle town constructed under the project.

The Upper Kotmale Hydro Power project has finally started and is progressing well to supply the nation with much needed electricity. According to Power and Energy Minister W.D.J. Seneviratne the project would be the last of mega hydropower projects which has the capacity to generate 150 MW of electricity and an annual energy supply of 409 GWh. The project would be completed by 2011 while the basic project cost would be US\$ 254 million. It is mainly funded by the Japanese Government.

Pictures by Palitha Gunasena.



Waters of Kotmale Oya enters the 300 m long diversion tunnel at the dam site.



The waters of Kotmale Oya after producing electricity meets the upper reaches of the existing Kotmale Reservoir at Niyangamdora power house site.



A Japanese engineer at work.

