



Ravana's Aviation Route: Sri Lanka

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Why in News

Recently, the **Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka** has sought relevant documents and literature from the public to study the mythological character **Ravana's "aviation routes"**.

Key Points

- **Description:** The Civil Aviation Authority will lead a **research project** titled "King Ravana and the ancient domination of aerial routes now lost".
The project aims to bring out an **authoritative narrative about King Ravana** as there are many stories about Ravana **flying aircrafts and covering** these aerial routes.
- **Significance:**
 - According to the civil aviation authority, it was Ravana who used a flying machine called "Dandu monara" to fly not only within the country, but also in the South East Asia region.
 - **Tourism:** Sri Lanka's tourism sector promotes the '**Ramayana trail**' for visitors from India — one of Sri Lanka's largest tourism markets.
 - **Sinhala-Buddhists Community:** The majority **Sinhala-Buddhists community** hail the King Ravana.
The group calls itself **Ravana Balaya**.
 - **Linkages with India: Dravidian parties** in Tamil Nadu acknowledge Ravana as "the brave king" similar to the Buddhists community of Sri Lanka.
 - **Satellite:** Sri Lanka named its first satellite **Ravana-1** launched in June 2019.

Sinhala-Buddhists Community

- The community focuses upon **Theravada Buddhism**, which is the majority belief system of most of the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka.
- Sinhalese are the **largest ethnic group on** the island.

- It mostly originated in reaction to the **colonisation of Sri Lanka by the British Empire** and became increasingly assertive in the years following the independence of the country.
- The **ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka** is rooted in the discrimination against the Tamil minority by the Sinhalese majority after the end of British colonial domination in 1948.

Theravada Buddhism

- It is the most **ancient branch of extant Buddhism** today.
- It remains closest to the original teachings of the Buddha.
- Theravada Buddhism **developed in Sri Lanka** and subsequently spread to the rest of Southeast Asia.
- It is the **dominant form of religion** in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.
- In India, this strain of Buddhism is represented by the followers of **Dr B.R. Ambedkar**, known as the **Ambedkar Buddhists**, who are exclusive to India.

Source: TH