

Role of Gama Neguma Programme in Rural Development: A Study of Navithanveli Divisional Secretariat Area of Ampara District

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ABSTRACT. The concept of rural development is used to denote the actions and initiatives taken to improve the standard of living in non-Urban villages. It mostly aims at the social and economic development of the areas. Many of the developing countries have adopted number of rural development programs. In Sri Lankan context, the village reawakening and development program Gama Neguma started by President Mahinda Rajapaksa under the Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development Ministry in 2006. The prime objective of the 'Gama Neguma' programme is to establish economically stable villages, consisting of communities which upholds moral values. It is expected to build up villages with infrastructure facilities such as roads, electricity, irrigation, water supply and other community services.

The government has spent Rs. 6.37 billion for development of the rural economy through the Gama Neguma programme in 2010. The expenditure covered for implementation of 32,526 projects in 10,567 Grama Niladhari Divisions throughout the country. It includes 559 projects in the Ampara District at a cost of Rs. 317.7 Million in 374 GN Divisions. Navithanveli divisional secretariat area is one of the areas in Ampara District in where Gama Neguma program implemented since that program initiated in 2006. Rs. 11.37 Million had allocated under the Gama Neguma programme for 29 villages in Navithanveli Divisional Secretary area.

In this backdrop, this study is to endeavor to indentify what kind of works undertaken under the Gama Neguma program in the study area. The study also analyses what challenges are posed to the rural development of the area under Gama Neguma Programme. This study is based on qualitative and quantitative method. The primary data is used mostly.

Major finding of this study is that the expectations of the program have not yet been achieved completely in the area and works under the Gama Neguma Program is not successful due to various reasons such as corruption and lack of people participation etc. This study concludes with the recommendations to uplift the situations.

Key words: Rural Development, Gama Neguma.

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