

## **Relationship between Elephant Figure and Hydrostatic Principle of Eth Pahana in Dedigama**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Eth Pahana* or Elephant Lamp in Dedigama belongs to the 12th century A.D. Two of these lamps similar in design were found buried in the relic chamber of the *Sutighara Cetiya* in Dedigama. A figure of an elephant carrying a rider on its shoulder predominates the oil receptacle. The hollow of the elephant's stomach serves as a vessel and a reservoir for the oil, while one of the elephant's forelegs serves as a funnel for pouring in the oil. The elephant figure stands in the middle of a basin which can also be filled with oil. When the level of the oil in the basin goes down below the level of the hole in the foreleg of the elephant which serves as a funnel, a mechanical device based on hydrostatic principles causes the oil to flow into the receptacle through the genital organ of the elephant and the flow automatically ceases when the oil again reaches the level of the elephant's feet.

**Key words:** *eth pahana, elephant lamp, elephant figure, oil, hydrostatic principle, Dedigama*