

## **The impact of social caste system on traditional drum players: A case study based on the Anuradhapura region**

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The present study focuses on identifying and analyzing the socio-cultural impact faced by the traditional drummers of the mainstream community in the region of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka. It is apparent that the drummers (tom-tom beaters) played a vital role in Buddhist religious ceremonies and rituals in the central administrative region of Anuradhapura throughout the history. However, the society classifies them as 'low caste' people; namely the 'Berava kula.' Due to the distinctive identification and the social categorization, the younger generation of these drummer families hesitate to continue their hereditary art. The factual basis for their abandonment is the social caste system that has relatively made an impact on the regular life style. Thus, the present study aims to analyze the social stratification of traditional caste system that has influenced the traditional drummers in Anuradhapura region. The study involves both a literature and a field survey that include face to face discussions and communication with the community, carried out by the author.

**Keywords:** Traditional drummers, Anuradhapura, Low caste, Caste system, Social stratification, Hereditary art