

A review of giving of tulābāra dāna by kings of ancient Lanka

W.A.Hiranya Jayathilaka
Department of History, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Abstract

The means of the donation of equivalent fraction (*tulābāra dāna*) is, to donate wealth to the people to match the weight of a person. In brief, it is a donation of wealth, equal to one's weight measured by a weighing scale. The kings became popular owing to this practice. The donations were done in various ways. Among them the *tulābāra dāna* was a special kind of giving. The objective of this research is to evaluate the donations made by the rulers who lived in Anurādhapura and Polonnaruwa kingdoms. (6 B. C.-1215 A. C.)

In India too, records show the showering of wealth according to weight of a person. This is evident from the *Jātaka stories*. It is mentioned that they have donated wealth, equal to the weight of their animals, too. Furthermore in this research I expect to identify the items which were given as *tulābāra dāna*. Even though it was done by the King personally, later it facilitated welfare for the people. As the methodology of this research I have studied part II of *Mahāvamsa* and Epigraphy as primary sources.

The method of donation was changed after the kingdom of Anurādhapura. King Nissankamalla was a great practitioner of this art of giving. The existence of the above practice cannot be seen after the Polonnaruwa Period. The *tulābāra dāna* was practiced in a ceremonial way, according to ancient rituals.

Keywords : *tulābāra dāna*, Welfare, King Niśśankamalla, Weighing Scale