

EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF DRUG STORAGE METHODS OF AYURVEDA MEDICINE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO STONE VESSELS

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Ayurveda medicine is a science that sources a wide range of pharmaceutical formulas, with detailed rules and procedures, covering from the collection of raw materials to the storage of the finished product. According to traditional and Ayurveda texts, storage vessels such as gold, silver, copper, glass, clay, bronze, and iron are specific to certain formulas, ensuring the quality, safety, and efficacy of the medicine. During a field visit to a traditional Orthopaedic and General physician Dr. K.M.P.S.B. Kangara in Ukuwela, Matale District, Sri Lanka, the researcher observed and documented two stone vessels used to store medicinal oils. They depict a rare methodology found in the ancient Ola Leaf texts in the aspect of preservation and maintaining the efficacy of medicinal preparations for a long time. The stone vessels are oval, measuring approximately 30 cm in height and 20 cm in diameter. The front external surface is engraved with *Brahmi* letters from the 1st century AD. Each vessel is topped with a stone lid about 10 cm in height and 20 cm in diameter. Inside, the vessels have a cylindrical container carved to about 15 cm in depth and 10 cm in diameter. According to the *Brahmi* letters, the herbal oils contained are *Raja tarangani* and *Henaraja* oil. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how traditional Ayurveda drug storage methods contribute to the authenticity, safety, and sustainability of Ayurveda medicinal practices. The study was done under the coordination of Dr. H.M.J.B. Herath, Commissioner of the Central Province Ayurveda Department.

Keywords: drug storage, Ola Leaf, Brahmi letters, pharmaceutical formulas, *Raja tarangani*