

THE INVESTIGATION IS BEING CONDUCTED ON WHETHER THE TWO BEHETH ORUWA IDENTIFIED IN MIHINTHALE WERE USED FOR ARAGAHA SWEDA

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There are matters regarding historic hospitals mentioned in stone inscriptions and mahawansa in Sri Lanka. According to them kings and other individuals had patronized medical services. Among those, a few main items are installations of hospitals, dispensaries, avenues of revenue for hospitals, supply of medical equipment and medicine, wages and allowances for doctors, etc. It is mentioned that there were hospitals for bhikkus as well as for other people. The hospital that was established near the temple complex of the Mihinthalaaya divulged important information regarding medical services that were available in ancient Sri Lanka. The king 2nd Sena 853-887 AD and the king 4th Mihindu 952-972 AD were the kings who maintained the hospital. The hospital site is good evidence of the medical system prevailed at that time. Among these items, the Two “beheth oruwa” (medicine bath bed) is one major item. It is a type of fomentation method according to the Ayurveda medical system. The 14th chapter of Charaka Samhita sutras Tana explains in detail about sweating therapy. Avagaha Sweda is one of the sweating therapies among the sweating therapy. It is used for improving sweating in the body. After sweating body becomes light removing poisons from the skin. Not only that, after sweating treatment, it reduced body fat also. Avagaha means submerged or body sink in the medicated liquid. It may be medicated oil, or medicated herbal decoction like that. Special Beheth Oruwa is needed for this treatment. The size of Beheth Orwa and the use of liquid depends according to the patient’s health condition. Physicians should choose the type of liquid and size of the tub. Patients can lie down or sit to take this treatment. This treatment should stop as soon as perspiration to avoid dehydrating the patient. Avagaha Sweda is commonly described for the treatment of vata-related diseases (neurological diseases) and the person who is to be given Avagaha Sweda is given a massage with herbal oil. After applying the oil, the body should be kept in the liquid portion. As mentioned in Ayurveda a wide range of medicated liquids used in Avagaha Sweda Vata Shaman or pain-reducing herbal decoction can collect for Beheth Oruwa. According to diseases such as back pain paralysis conditions or any neurological problem, utility liquid may be changed. We can believe that the two medicinal Beheth Oruwa seen in Mihintale may have been used for such treatments.

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