

History of Medicine in Northern Sri Lanka Collection

Project Title	History of Medicine in Northern Sri Lanka Collection
Project Number	NF/PG/2024/0002
Place	Sri Lanka
Project Duration	2024 January - 2025 December
Reporting duration	2024 January - 2024 December
Executive Organization	Noolaham Foundation
Project Budget	1,199,461 Rupee.

Project summary

Jaffna is situated in Sri Lanka's northern region. It is the provincial capital for the north and for many years was the capital of a Tamil kingdom. It contains the vast majority of Tamils. Jaffna is known as a center of Tamil culture because of its diverse cultural and historical legacy. Jaffna culture is rich in customs and rituals that have been passed down from generation to generation. Jaffna culture has unique knowledge, beliefs, artistic expression, morality, poor intellectual capacity, customs, and medical procedures.

Jaffna's medical system evolved into one of history's most challenging periods, and Jaffna medical practice is an important component of Jaffna culture. The people of Sri Lanka have the most precious traditional medicinal practices and sources. Sri Lanka's Tamil population has its own set of medical practices. Tamil populations in the northern and eastern provinces, in particular, practice Siddha medicine. Before the colonization of the Portuguese, Dutch, and British, the Jaffna people used indigenous healing techniques. People in Jaffna now use both

English and traditional medicine, however the majority of them use English medicine for their health problems.

Every colonial period saw changes in Jaffna medical practice, including the introduction of new western medical concepts and the advancement of existing ones. During British colonization, Jaffna's medical structure underwent many positive changes, such as Dr. John Cudder's establishment of the first Western medical hospital in South Asia in the Pandatharippu area of Jaffna in 1820, and Dr. Pisco Green's establishment of a medical college in Manipay in 1948.

Jaffna district has well-established medical practices that are organized into western and traditional medical practices. Jaffna's medical system is now well established and at a high level of quality within the national medical structure. Jaffna Teaching Hospital and Jaffna University's Medical Faculty play critical roles in the medical strength of the Jaffna Medical System. We are now looking at a well-established system and need to know how it is evaluated. We do, however, have a responsibility to document and expose Jaffna medical history. The systematic endeavor will attempt to document Jaffna medical history.

Objectives

Main Objective

To Document the History of Medicine in Northern Collection Sri Lanka: The Noolaham Foundation aims to digitize and categorize the 180 documents based on the portal topics, and record 36 oral histories from medical related Professionals, 36 Photographs of places and features related to medical history.

Sub Objectives

- To expose the value of the Medicine Collection in Northern Sri Lanka.
- To collect the primary and secondary data sources related Medicine Collection in Northern Sri Lanka
- To motivate the researches in field of Medicine Collection in Northern Sri Lanka by providing data supports

Activities

The activities of the project can be divided into three parts.

- Preliminary preparation for the project
 1. Conduct a virtual meeting with key informants in the field of Medicine Collection in Northern Sri Lanka
 2. Portal Design and Categorized Topics

- Field related works
 3. Collect textual records pertaining to Medicine Collection in Northern Sri Lanka
 4. Gather and document non-textual and multimedia records on Jaffna's medical history
 - Oral History
 - Photographs and videos

- Digitalization and metadata related works at office
 5. Digitalization and quality assurance
 6. Create or write metadata for the digitalized document and upload it to the Noolaham website.
 7. Categories of identified documents from the field, the Noolaham website, and other online sources
 8. Writing Personals

Achievements

Activities	Achievement
Identified Documents	157
Digitized Documents	21
Categorized Documents	157
Oral history	15
Organization	7
Alumaikal	8
Photographs	11

Metadata	157
Uploaded Documents	138
Audio	3

Challenges and Overcoming Strategies

Challenges

- Unable to contact or lack access to medical institutions and personnel.
- There are in difficulties in obtaining data from the community people because of lack of awareness of value of the history
- The above challenges will take more time for the field officer to collect the materials than usual.
- The field officer is not allowed to bring the documents to the Noolaham Foundation.

Overcoming Strategies

- The field researcher will establish a strong network connection with the Jaffna Medical Community, so they could assist the field research by providing contacts and help when needed.
- The field researcher provides clear awareness to the public through Noolaham Foundation networks in the community.
- The field researcher will digitalize the documents at the custodial place when the documents are not allowed to be brought to the Noolaham Foundation office.
- Having an assigned mentor who can communicate with the field researcher at any moment ensures that the project runs smoothly and consistently. The mentor will support the field researcher at challenging times in the field and at the office. The mentor also helps to increase the project's monthly goal.