

**COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES DURING THE PERIOD OF JAFFNA
KINGDOM - A HISTORICAL RESEARCH**Jeromin Arulneshan¹, S. Krishnarajah²

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Abstract

An important mile stone in the long history of the Tamils was the Jaffna Kingdom which was comprising distinct historical traditions. This Kingdom had established and covered the land mostly in the Northern area in Sri Lanka where the Tamils are living at present. Though so far the actual chronological time frame work had not established for its origin of this Kingdom, no one denies the distinctive qualities of this Kingdom prevailed at the time. In the beginning, the state was governed by the officials like Widhanai, Araachchi, Mudaliyars and the petty kings and then during the 13th century A.D., This governed state was grown up as a Kingdom. For that the contributions of the South Indian royal dynasties like the Cholas and the Second dynasty of the Pandya kings played very important role. The kings of the Jaffna Kingdom were promoting the Tamil language and Tamil culture during the period as they were belonging to Tamil Kings. At this background, the Kingdom had comprised with resources and good policy of economy of commercial activities at the time and this had promoted the Kingdom to exist for a long period of time. The export and import trading activities had taken place in the Kingdom of Jaffna. Further, cash as currency notes beside the usage of silver and gold coins also were issued for the transactions of the goods in the Kingdom of Jaffna. With the help of Navy seafaring trade activities were also conducted during the activities of political advancement at the Kingdom. Thus, it is an aim of this research article to explore the main features of trading activities of the Jaffna Kingdom. And also it is an additional aim to explore the network of the root of trade and management in the Kingdom. Having adopted the descriptive analysis, this research article was based on historical narrative with the facts from the primary and secondary material collections. The material collected through interviews are categorized as first hand source and the literatures and other research articles from websites are categorized as second hand resources for this research work. The economic conditions of the kingdom generally had based the oceanic elements and its related activities thus the small industrial developments also rooted at the period of Kingdom. When compared with other kingdoms in Sri Lanka at the time, the Jaffna Kingdom's activity in foreign trade was highest achievements. Due to these reasons and conditions which prevailed for long period here, the westerners who came to Sri Lanka had earned much income from the Northern Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Jaffna Kingdom, pearl trade, Elephant trade, Export economy, Tobacco.

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