

## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL HEALTHCARE FACILITIES DURING THE DONOUGHMORE PERIOD IN SRI LANKA**

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The Donoughmore Constitution was introduced to Sri Lanka with the universal franchise and the State Council in 1931, as main changes of the constitutional reforms. Under these reforms members of the State Council were elected by people using their voting rights. Unlike in the past, members who were elected to the State Council turned to the social and economic requirements of the society. Then universal franchise became the main weapon to fulfill social requirements of the general public for the first time in our history. As a result of that, it can be seen that many bills related to socio-economic needs of the society and social welfare activities were passed in the State Council and implemented under each Executive Committee of the government. During this period, education, health and sanitary, irrigation, land developments and women welfare schemes were initiated both in the urban and rural areas of the country more than before. Providing of health and sanitary facilities can be identified as major projects that were beneficial to the people of the time. This research focuses on steps taken to improve the health condition of school children in the Donoughmore era and government's efforts to enhance the health condition of the society. The main objective of this research is to identify and analyse healthcare activities implemented under the Executive Committee of the Health and Sanitary to uplift health standards of school children during the Donoughmore period. The research problem addresses the extent to which these initiatives uplifted the health condition of School Children in Sri Lanka during the period 1931-1947. The historical methodology used in this research is to gather and analyze data collected from primary and secondary sources, especially as main sources the annual Hansard reports of the debates in the State Council and annual Administrative Reports published by the government during the Donoughmore period. According to historical evidence, from 1931 the government introduced healthcare and hygiene practices among school children. The use of toilets and refrigeration became more successful around the late 1930s. The hookworm disease which was very common at that time, must have occurred mainly due to the unawareness of healthy hygienic practices among school children. The counter measures, against this disease, which were taken by the government, were very important. Both school and government officials created awareness and hygienic practices amongst school children. This positive trend became an important step in preventing future diseases. Through good health education programmes, both school children and teachers were made aware of health and hygiene. By the mid-1940s, the government was mainly focusing on health education, and all these activities helped to improve the well-being of the people.

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