

## **What relevant authorities can do for the survival of traditional jewellery craftsmen in the Kegalle district**

The district of Kegalle has been well known over a period of time for its traditional jewellery craft. At the beginning of the Kandyan period of the history of Sri Lanka, kings setup jewellery villages in Kegalle and people belonging to a particular caste engaged themselves in this craft. Their duty was to produce jewellery for the royalty.

Due to prevalent situation the traditional craftsmanship is much in abeyance as this mode of craftsmanship is not in vogue. The objectives of this study was to understand the fundamental reasons underlying for their problems and to find necessary solutions and to present them to the relevant authorities for whatever necessary action. For this study 80 traditional jewellery

craftsmen were randomly selected from the district, and data collected in the form of an interview coupled with a given questionnaire. This study was conducted during 01.06.2001 to 31.07.2001.

The innumerable problems these traditional jewellery craftsmen face as at present can be categorized as listed below.

1. Inadequate supply of gold and inferior quality of gold available in the open market.
2. Escalating costs of gold and other precious metals and chemicals which are needed for the jewellery craft.
3. Difficulties in selling their finished products.
4. The competition created by the imported and machine made jewellery.
5. Lack of knowledge in modern technology modern fashions and current market trends.
6. Difficulties in obtaining loans from banks.

The relevant authorities have to act fast to help and assist in the survival of the traditional jewellery craftsmen and preserve this indigenous craft for posterity.