

# Maha Vijayabahu, a must read

**Maha Vijayabahu / Amaraneeya Narapathi**

**Author – Dr. P. G. Punchihewa**  
**Reviewed by Dr. Namel Weeramuni**

**T**he Great Vijayabahu/The Un-forgotten Great Leader is a heavily researched penning by Dr. P. G. Punchihewa. It is an incredible, a sensible, and valuable compilation. It's a must read.

It is a vast scholastic publication. It is regarding a highly significant great monarch. Mahavansa has not given much importance to this monarch as much as it has dedicated to Dutu Gamunu and Parakramabahu the Great. It appears that the greatness of Wijayabahu had been hidden and not discovered until the bronze plate of Panakaduwa emerged in 1948.

Professor Paranavithana deciphered pronouncing it "if great monarch Wijayabahu was not there it would have been a possibility that we would not have had in Sri Lanka

a Sinhala Nation." On this evidence Dr. Punchihewa implies that "Great Wijayabahu" is the greatest monarch that we ever had. Punchihewa analyses that the Great Wijayabahu was honest, simple, courageous, strict, and humane. He was determined to free the country by pursuing on the Cholas. He succeeded in it during the tenure of his kinship which ran since 1035 until he attained the age of 73.

## Tactical monarch

He was a tactical monarch. He adopted the guerrilla technique for the first time in history. He did this fighting the Cholas.

Dr. Punchihewa signifies important materials in his Preface. They are absolutely noteworthy for the readers of this great anthology.

He states in "Mahavansa" there are 10 chapters for King Dutugamunu and 13 chapters for Great Parakramabahu, while only five chapters have been dedicated to Great Wi-

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jayabahu. His greatness was revealed only by the above referred to the relevant bronze plate in 1948. The modern scholar Dr. Punchihewa applies a sustainable stand, showing that Monarch Wijayabahu is much greater than the two Monarchs Mahawansa authors enumerated taking into account Professor Paranavithana's interpretations.

In the Preface, Dr. Punchihewa also reckons that Monarch Wijayabahu cannot be undermined because the Monarch had undergone many hardships in life having inordinate courage and exorbitant determination to defeat the Cholas and expel

them from the country. After the great successes he gained, he also spent his time doing humane and social activities too. These appear to be the most significant factors that endowed to him to crown greatness. Hence Dr. Punchihewa records accordingly the greatest Monarch that ruled Sri Lanka is Wijayabahu.

## Hinduism

It is recorded that Cholas during their time of occupation destroyed the Buddhist monasteries. Instead in its place they planted Hinduism and took tremendous pains for its popu-

larisation among the populace.

The most salient feature in this book is the manner how Dr. Punchihewa records history from the very beginning to the very end sorting out each and every interesting historical development in the country.

This expands from the time of the early pre-Christian period of the 6th century.

In relation to this fact, he deals firstly with the geographical composition of the island and how the Cholas occupying the country became the long standing settlers as foreigners plus controlling a number natural sea ports, the main being Matotta.

The author also deals with different named occupiers, commercial connections it had with the outside world. Besides, he greatly records so many other facts also implying how great an island Sri Lanka had been.

