


DAFTHER JAILANY



*A Historical Account of the
Dafther Jailany Rock Cave Mosque*

M.L.M.ABOOSALLY

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26-12-2002

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**A Brief Account of the Dafther Jailany Rock Cave Mosque in
Balangoda, Sri Lanka**

First Published in 2002

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**This book is dedicated to the memory of my parents
and to my wife and daughters**



Dafther Jailany
(Courtesy: Lathifa Ismail)



Jailany (Courtesy: Dominic Sansoni)

INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, most gracious, most compassionate, all praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, Creator of both man and jinn. Peace and blessings be on the Prophet Mohammed (sallallahu alaiva sallam, peace be upon him), who was sent as a mercy and guide to all creatures.

“Compassion of Allah descends when the deeds of the good are recited” (Hadith Sharif).

In pursuance of the above hadith, I have taken the liberty of writing about the sojourn of Ghauzul Azam Abdul Qadir in Dafther Jailany in Sri Lanka.

I first became interested in the Sheikh Abdul Qadir from the stories that my mother often repeated to me at bedtime when I was very small. In later years, I visited Dafther Jailany many times and then became closely associated with its preservation and development.

As a Member of Parliament for the area, I had the opportunity of studying the history of the place and had the privilege of obtaining the assistance of many learned and eminent scholars to whom I am deeply indebted.

However, the idea of a book detailing the history of Dafther Jailany came to me from my immediate family and a few friends. I am ever thankful to them although as a result, I had to burn the midnight oil for many months to collect and record the material, check the facts and collate them into a readable form!

I am aware of the shortcomings of this book and I sincerely hope I will be excused for any lapses. I also hope this small book will inspire others to inquire further into the Arab and Persian influence in Sri Lanka. If this can be done, this book would have served a major part of its purpose.

All proceeds from the sale of this book shall go towards a fund for Dafther Jailany.

M. L. M. Aboosally
Balangoda

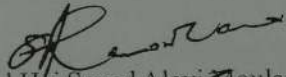
FOREWORD

I have great pleasure in writing the foreword for the book, Dafther Jailany, which I have no doubt will be a useful book for generations of future Sri Lankan Muslims to know the background and history of the visit to Dafther Jailany by Sheikh Muhiyadeen Abdul Qadir Gilani.

I have visited this jungle shrine in Kuragala, Balangoda and have been impressed by the preservation and continuance of tradition that is evident in Dafther Jailany.

I have known the author, Mr. Aboosally, for a long time - he is a personal friend - and I congratulate him for his work in writing this book.

I am sure the book on Dafther Jailany will bring about greater understanding of the country's culture and history among Muslims and non-Muslims alike and help contribute to tolerance and understanding between all communities in our island home.



Al Haj Seyed Alavi Moulana
Governor, Western Province
Colombo, 2002

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Several people have helped me in my task of writing this book although it is not possible to mention all of them by name. However, I cannot fail to mention my daughter Sharmila Aboosally to whom it fell to read my several drafts and put them into a readable order. She also had to double check all the authorities quoted and type in the manuscript and all the numerous revisions as well as handling the photography and printing of the book. She has done a wonderful job.

The Quranic quotations were checked by Moulavi Z.L.M. Mohamed, President, Supreme Council of Tareeqas of Sri Lanka. He was also instrumental in having the Sinhala and Tamil translations done. His kind assistance enables this account to reach a wider audience and I hope, create understanding and interest in Dafther Jailany. My sincere thanks.

Others, who willingly gave of their time and knowledge and to whom I owe thanks, include: Mrs Jezima Ismail; Mr Denis Fernando, B.Sc, M.Sc; Prof. Osmund Bopearachchi, Sorbonne University; Professor Dennis McGilvray of the Department of Anthropology, University of Colorado, Boulder; Mrs Vijita Fernando; Mr Ameen Suby; Mrs Lathifa Ismail and several others who voluntarily found the time to help me. I appreciate their assistance and advice.

Sincere thanks to Dominic Sansoni for the contribution of his photographs of Dafther Jailany. Thanks also to my brother, Nizam, and his two sons, Naufal and Ramzi, for their assistance with the pictures of the inscriptions at Dafther Jailany.

I wish to thank the Board of Trustees of the Jailany Mosque for their unstinting co-operation. I have taken the liberty of quoting from many books and I am grateful for the contribution and inspiration these books provided. Thanks also to M.A.M. Manaf for his help and to my secretary, Sugathe Doundasekera for typing

and re-typing my manuscript.

I also take this opportunity to thank the many people who have assisted in the management and preservation of Daffther Jailany through its long history .

Al Haj C.L.M. Marikar J.P. the main architect in protecting and preserving the shrine for posterity, must be remembered when recording the history of Daffther Jailany.

Last, but not least, I must thank my wife Salma for her critical analysis of my work, for reading the Tamil texts, and for keeping late nights with her usual charm and cheerfulness.

INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR

M.L.M. Aboosally was educated at Zahira College, Colombo and the University of Ceylon and has been known throughout his life as a social worker and politician. He was President of the Balangoda Co-operative Union and the Co-operative Bank of Ratnapura, and the Vice-President of the Co-operative Federation of Ceylon.

Mr Aboosally was the Member of Parliament for Balangoda from 1977 to 1994, representing a 96% Sinhala electorate, and has been the longest serving MP from Balangoda from the period 1931 to 2001. He began his career in politics when he was elected as Chairman of the Balangoda Urban Council and has since been an independent candidate as well as a member of the United National Party for over 50 years. Subsequently, he served as District Minister for Ratnapura (1977 to 1982); Deputy Minister for Mahaweli Development (1982 to 1988); State Minister for Plantation Services (1990 to 1993); and Cabinet Minister for Labour and Vocational Training (1993 to 1994).

The eminent historian, K.M. De Silva, says: in his book, *The History of Ceylon*, "And the most remarkable case of all is the case of M.L.M. Aboosally, MP for Balangoda, a seat he won against the powerful family interests of the Ratwattes. The Muslims constituted just 2.75% of the total votes."



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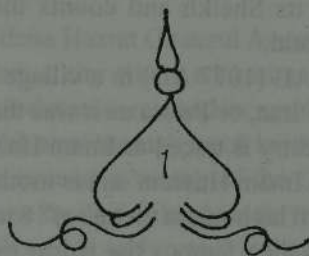
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GLOSSARY

| | |
|----------|---|
| Amir | : Leader or commander |
| Dana | : Food offered to Buddhist priests |
| Dua | : A prayer or invocation |
| Fakir | : Mendicant |
| Fathiha | : The first prayer in the Quran |
| Fiqh | : Understanding, comprehension, knowledge and jurisprudence in Islam |
| Hadith | : Sayings and traditions of the Holy Prophet (SAL) or what he witnessed and approved |
| Jinns | : Supernatural beings, both good and bad, which inhabit the world and are accountable to Allah |
| Kaaba | : First house of worship built for mankind and in which direction Muslims must face when at prayer |
| Kandoori | : Tamil word meaning a feast in memory of a Saint with community participation |
| Katub | : Chief of the Saints |
| Khalifa | : Successor or representative of the Holy Prophet (SAL) or to one of his successors; Head of State for the Muslim Ummah |
| Masthan | : Hermit (a Tamil word) |
| Mihrab | : Recess in the mosque indicating the direction of the Kaaba |
| Mowlana | : Religious man, a descendant of the Prophet (SAL) |
| Mowlood | : Tamil word meaning religious feast |
| Mureeds | : Followers |
| Murideen | : Follower |
| Niyath | : Intention |
| Ratheeb | : A recital comprising of Holy Quran verses, Salawath, Zikr, Dua etc recited in an orderly |

manner or as prescribed by a particular Sheikh of a sect (Thareeqa)

| | |
|------------|--|
| Salaams | : Greetings |
| Shariah | : Islamic law, of divine origin |
| Sheikh | : Title or name for an elderly person or religious leader in a community, also given to a wise person |
| Sufi | : Person, religious in intent, whose sole concentration is on Allah ("A man who possesses nothing and desires less") |
| Sura | : Chapter / Verse in the Quran (one of 144 chapters) |
| Thakiya | : Muslim prayer room |
| Thangal | : Religious leader |
| Wakf Board | : Board in charge of all matters pertaining to mosques, including lands, trusts, and administration of mosques |
| Wazir | : Prime Minister |
| Ziyaram | : Tomb |



Chapter One

THE GREATEST SAINT IN ISLAMIC HISTORY

The history of Dafther Jailany will not be complete without a short account of one of the greatest saints in Islamic history, namely Sheikh Mohiyadeen Abdul Qadir Gilani. The Saint and Dafther Jailany are linked by more than a name - the Saint Qutub Muhiyadeen Abdul Qadir meditated at Kuragala, the site of the historical rock cave mosque, for a period and there are many stories about his visit and his impact on that sacred place.

Abdul Qadir Jailani's adherents know him as Ghouse Ul Azam, which means 'The highest among the saints'. His full name to his mureeds, or followers, reads, "Maha Boobul Subhani Kuthubur Rabbani Al Ghousus Samadani Mahsooki Rahamani Kuthubul Akthab Abdul Qadir Ul Jilani (Kaddassallahu Sirrul Azeez)".

The Saint, revered for his learning, piety, humility and his miracles, founded the most broad-based order in Islam, the Qadiriya Order¹. This order is a school of Sufic mysticism based entirely on the principles of the Shariah that accepts Saiyidena Ghauzal Alam as its Sheikh and counts the largest Muslim following in the world.

Born in 470 AH (1077 AD) in a village called Naif in the District of Gilan in Iran, or Persia as it was then known, Sheikh Abdul Qadir's ancestry is traced to Imam Hazrat Hassen on his father's side and to Imam Hussein on his mother's side².

The Sheikh left his home at the age of 18 to study in Baghdad in Iraq, which was then famous the world over as a centre of learning. His teacher was the great philologist Tibrizi and he studied Sufism in the Al Khair Mohamed School. He received his Sufi mantle from its leader, Qazi Abu Said Mubarak, head of the Hambalite School of Law in 1134 AD.

The Sheikh's years in Baghdad followed a significant period in that city's history - the years between 1072 to 1092 AD when Baghdad was ruled by Malik Shah. Malik Shah had as his prime minister, or Wazir, the famous Nazim Ul Mulk, who has been described as one of the ornaments of the political history of Islam.

Seyed Ameer Ali, M.A., Judge of the High Court of Bengal and author of the books, *The Spirit of Islam*, *Ethics of Islam*, and *A Short History of the Saracens* said of Nazim Ul Mulk: "He was the most able minister and administrator Asia has ever produced."

During the reign of Malik Shah, peace and prosperity prevailed throughout the domains, extending from the borders of China in the East to the Mediterranean on the West, and from

¹ In simple utterances of sacred Islamic formula, the Qadiriya Order invokes divine aid for the devotee for the deliverance of his soul towards realising the truth. This order provokes no animosity towards any other order and it eliminates dissension among various schools of Sufism.

² Sheikh Abdul Qadir's father was Hazrat Abu Saleh Zangi Dost, a direct descendent of Imam Hassen, and his mother was Umul Khair Fatima, daughter of Abdullah Sawmai, a Sufi saint and a direct descendent of Imam Hussain

Georgia in the North to Yemen in the South. It is during this period that the renowned Nizamiah Madrasah was founded in Baghdad. The famous philosopher Al Ghazzali was a teacher at this institution and Omar Khayyam was a prominent figure at this time in Baghdad.

When Saiyidena Hazrat Ghauzul Azam Abdul Qadir Jilani studied in Baghdad, a city where education was given pride of place, learning and education reached its zenith during this period. Although the Sheikh went through much hardship during his early years of study, he became a master of the Quran, Fiqh, Hadith and Arabic literature by dint of hard work.

One story about his early years is that when Abdul Qadir Jailany left his home in Persia to pursue his studies in Baghdad, his mother sewed 40 dinars into his garments and her parting words to her son were that he should never tell a lie under any circumstances. During the young man's travels, at a place called Namadan, the caravan was attacked by a band of robbers who plundered the merchandise. When they asked the lad if he had any money, he said: "Yes, 40 dinars". The robbers took it as a joke but informed their chief who ordered that the lad be searched. When the 40 dinars were found, the lad told the robber chief about the promise he had given his mother. Shocked into repentance, the chief and his band returned the booty, converted to Islam and gave up their thieving ways.

As time passed, Sheikh Abdul Qadir was made head of the Mubarak Al Mukharimi School and his fame as a scholar and theologian spread far and wide. Muslims and non-Muslims alike sought his opinion on religious and legal problems; many rulers and high officials venerated him for his simplicity, knowledge and deep humanity. Most importantly, he treated all alike and prayed for all mankind without distinction of race or creed.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir is the patron saint of the Kurds and is also held in great veneration by the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan

subcontinent, Afghanistan, Central Asia, China, Java, Malaysia and Sumatra. He was the author of several books: one, *Futuh Al Ghayb*, is considered to be one of the best pieces of Islamic literature. Other well known works are: *Ghuniat Al Taliban*, a religious treatise; *Futuh Al Rabbani*, which contains 68 sermons; *Bahjat Ul Asrar*, *Qasidate Al-Ghausia*, *Fatah-al-Ghaib*, and *Rad-ul-Rafzia*.

After completing his studies, the Sheikh retreated to the fields of Khrakh, close to Baghdad, and stayed in the ruins of Madain, living only on vegetables. At this stage, many people considered the Sheikh to be simple-minded and even went so far as to label him insane.

The Sheikh travelled alone in the desert for about 25 years. During this period he was lost to the world for 11 years. He is said to have lived in a tower known as Buraj Ajami as well as other mountains. It is also said that at times he would disappear and find himself in distant places. Once he was found far away from Baghdad at a place called Shuster in Iran.

As Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jailany himself clearly states in his famous work, *Sirr-Al-Asrar*, or *The Secret of Secrets*, (interpreted by Sheikh Tosum Bayrak Al Jerrahi Al Helvati, the Islamic Texts Society): "I stayed in seclusion for 11 years. I promised my Lord that I would neither eat nor drink until I reached spiritual perfection."

After this period of meditation, whether His Holiness Qutub Muhiyadeen Abdul Qadir was spirited away to Baghdad by divine power or whether he travelled by ship to Basra from the subcontinent is not known. However, it is probable that the Sheikh travelled physically or metaphysically at this time for there are many stories of his travels and the impact he made in far away places such as South India and Sri Lanka.

Following extensive research in Tamil Nadu, India, Susan Schoenburg, research scholar at Harvard University in the United

States, stated to the author that it is believed that the Saint Abdul Qadir had spent 40 days in meditation at Kilakarai in South India after his visit to Adam's Peak and Dafther Jailany in Sri Lanka. (In fact, the story persists that the people of the Maldiv Islands were converted to Islam by Sheikh Muhiyadeen Abdul Qadir in the 6th Century AH³.)

It is probable that his visit to the historic rock cave of Dafther Jailany in Kuragala, Balangoda coincided with his visit to the Indian subcontinent. Stories have endured for centuries of how His Holiness had sought asylum for meditation on the ledge at Kuragala in Balangoda, after a pilgrimage he had undertaken to Adam's Peak.

Kuragala and Hituwangala are two rock formations at the edge of the Balangoda plateau in the Ratnapura district. These two rocks are commonly known as Dafther Jailany, a mountain retreat on the ancient road from Galle to Ratnapura and Adam's Peak⁴. Rock carvings, Arabic inscriptions, writings, tombstones and legends lead us to believe that the Saint had spent a part of his meditation at Kuragala (Jailany).

The legends surrounding his stay in Kuragala extend also to the way he is supposed to have left the place. A detailed account of the visit of the Saiyedena Abdul Qadir Jailany to Sri Lanka is given in the book, *Shathura Shankaram*.

The book states that the Saint Abdul Qadir Jailany came to Adam's Peak in Sri Lanka to pay his respects to the first prophet Adam and then travelled to Dafther Jailany where he stayed 12 years fasting and in meditation. In this book, a detailed description of a mosque and its mysteries are given. In this book, it is said

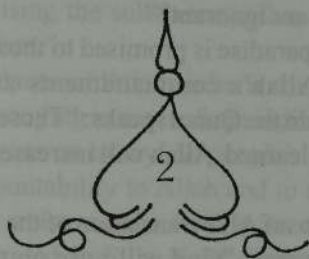
³ The Maldivian Department of History states that in 546 AH (1153 AD) the Saint Abul Barakaat Ul-Barbari of Morocco converted the Buddhist ruler and his subjects to Islam.

⁴ Adam's Peak, the well-known mountain in Sri Lanka, is sacred to many faiths including the Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and Christians. Muslims believe that the faint impression of a foot in a rock belongs to the Prophet Adam – one of his feet landed on this peak when he was expelled from heaven, the belief goes.

that if one has faith and recites the prayers mentioned, one can see in one's mind's eye, the road leading to a Mosque where one can meet many saints in prayer.

R.N. Thaine, Government Agent Ratnapura, wrote in his official diary in 1914: "Abdul Qadir was seeking the way to Heaven. One day, he placed his hand on the rock which opened. He passed through the aperture. The rock closed and he has never been seen again. Hence the practice of pilgrims imprinting their hand marks on the rock."

This link with one of Islam's greatest saints along with vows and wishes fulfilled, of Muslims and non-Muslims alike, or miracles as some would deem them, may be the reason that crowds flock to this jungle shrine each year – and the numbers are steadily increasing.



Chapter Two

THE MIRACLES OF THE SAINT

Of all the Saints of Islam, the miracles of Hazrat Ghaus Ul Alam were more numerous than that of any other.

Spirituality, grace, the ability to transcend what is perceived as normal – these areas are subject to much debate. However, as regards miracles and supernatural powers, the reader will do well to remember what Shakespeare, with the intuition of a true genius, wrote: “There are many things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

Sir Oliver Lodge, British physicist and professor, who was prominent in psychic research, is quoted in *The Saint of Jilan* as saying: “The basic conclusion to which I have been led is that a spiritual world is a reality. That there are many orders and grades of beings. That the human spirit continues. That there is no

inseparable barrier between different orders of existence and that under certain conditions, inter-communion is possible.”

The Quran itself speaks of different strata of human beings, when it asks in Sura – Zumar (39-9): “Are those who are learned equal to those who are ignorant?”

It is true that paradise is promised to those who simply and sincerely follow Allah’s commandments and the Prophet’s instructions, but again the Quran speaks: “Those who are believers among you and the learned, Allah will increase their rank.” (Sura Mujadila (58-11).

In Allama Yoosuf Ali’s translation of the Quran, he is more explicit about this verse: “God will raise up to (suitable) ranks (and degrees) those of you who believe and who have been granted (mystic) knowledge and God is well acquainted with all you do.”

His commentary of the above reads: “Faith makes all people equal in the Kingdom of God, as regards the essentials of citizenship in the Kingdom. But there is leadership and rank and degree, enjoined with greater or less responsibility and that depends on knowledge and insight which mystics seek everywhere for advancing their service and responsibility in the Kingdom of God.”

Therefore, honour comes with merit, which is not easily gained.

Sura Waqia (56-7 to 11) emphasises this further. The sura shows that the ultimate division of humanity will be into three categories and not just two: People bound for hell; people bound for Paradise; and out of the latter, people closest to Allah. Those closest to Allah will be in exalted bliss, the companions of the right hand in bliss and the companions of the left hand in misery.

Syed Ali Ashraf, Director of the General Islamic Academy in Cambridge writes: “In the final reckoning, those who have striven and been blessed with knowledge of themselves and their Lord will have a higher rank. For this knowledge increases one’s

love of Allah and the Prophet (SAL), and the more one loves, the closer one can draw to Allah. With such knowledge one understands that the practices of religion are the form of wisdom and by accepting the form, one realises the substance. The ways and means of realising the substance within the form make up what is called Sufism."

The descendants of Adam inherit this endowment as a potential capacity, varying in nature from individual to individual, Seyed Ali Ashraf goes on to say. As people's gifts differ, so also their range of accountability to Allah and to the particular form their vice-gerency must assume. This is so even at the highest levels, as is illustrated in Sura Kahf (Sura 18, 60-82) by the different roles played by Moses, the embodiment of moral righteousness, and Khider, the demonstrator of mystical insight. But the supreme vice-gerency, universal and comprehensive, was manifested in the Prophet Mohammed (SAL).

When Allah created Adam, He made him superior to Angels. He endowed him with the essence of the entire creation together with Allah's attributes and qualities. Adam was the first man, the first Muslim and the first prophet. Allah sent him within the world to serve as His vice-gerent. Sura Baqara, Sura 2, 30 to 34 reads: "And when your Lord said to the Angels, I am going to place in the Earth a vice-gerent...and he taught Adam all the names... and when We said to the Angels... make obeisance to Adam, they did obeisance."

One must understand this gift – only then can one realise the true meaning and significance of the divine ordinances brought by the Holy Prophet (SAL). Without this understanding, religion will remain only an external dress to be observed outwardly. When this happens, the practice of religion will fall into a rule of customs and conventions. Then the presence of Allah within the heart is not realised.

Throughout the history of Islam, Hazrat Ghauzal Alam has been recognised as one of the greatest Sufis. Imam Abul Hassen Al Shazuli always sought spiritual help and guidance from the Hazrat. Al Sheikh Abu as Salam bin Mushaish said that the highest in rank and dignity was Hazrat Ghauzal Alam Abdul Qadir Jilani – he was “Kutub Uz Zamam”. Moulana Abdul Rahman Jami has stated that Hazrat Kwaja Moinuddin Christi of Agra was a great devotee of Hazrat Ghauzal Alam.

During the 25 years that Sheikh Abdul Qadir roamed the deserts and ruins, he is said to have visited Baghdad barefoot, in the year 511AH (1118 AD). On the way, a sick person had conveyed his salaams (salutation). The Sheikh had responded. The person had then requested the Sheikh to help him get up. This too the Sheikh had done. The person had then grown to enormous proportions and told the Sheikh that he was the religion of his grandfather and that the person had grown sick, but God had revived him on account of the help of the Sheikh.

After that incident, the Sheikh proceeded to the Jamia Mosque where a person had presented the Sheikh with a pair of shoes and addressed him as “Mohiyadeen”. After the prayers, that same person had come to the Sheikh again and had kissed his hands and called him “Hazrat Mohiyadeen” – this was the first time the Sheikh was addressed by that name.

In 521AH (1128 AD), when the Sheikh was 51 years old, he took over the Madrasah Abu Said Mukharani, situated in an area called Babul Ajaz. Soon this mosque was crowded with people who flocked to hear the Sheikh’s sermons and the Hazrat delivered sermons thrice a week to huge crowds and continued to do so for 40 years until his death in 561 AH (1168 AD).

The Hazrat preached without fear of Caliphs or Kings. His audience included doctors of religious law, Sheikhs (or Saints), Amirs, High Officials and it is said, Rijal Ul Ghaib (persons who fly in the air and live in the mountains of Qaf), Jinns, Angels, and

the souls of the departed. Many Christians and Jews embraced Islam after listening to the Hazrat's sermons and it is said that an audience of 70,000 persons could hear his sermons when he preached.

One of the many miracles of the Sheikh as stated in the book, *The Secret of Secrets*, (interpreted by Sheikh Tasum Bayrak Al Jerrahi Al Halvati) is recounted here:

"There was a very wise and influential priest in Baghdad who had many followers. This man had vast knowledge not only of the Judaic Christian tradition but also of Islam. He knew Islam and the Holy Quran and had a great love and appreciation for the Prophet Mohammed (SAL). The Caliph respected the priest and hoped that he and his followers would become Muslims one day. The Priest was ready to accept the religion as his own except for one fact. This one fact was that he could neither accept nor understand the physical ascension to Heaven of Prophet Mohammed (SAL) during his lifetime.

"The Ascension took place when one night, the Prophet (SAL) was brought body and soul from Mecca to Jerusalem and from there to the seven heavens, where he was witness to many things. The Prophet (SAL) visited Paradise and Hell and went beyond these to meet his Lord, who spoke ninety thousand words with him. He returned before his bed had cooled and before a leaf that he had touched in passing had stopped trembling.

"The mind of the priest could not accept the Ascension of the Prophet (SAL) and his return to tell his followers about it all. Indeed when the Prophet (SAL) himself declared it the day after it happened, many Muslims did not believe this story and some left the religion. This then is a test of true faith for the mind cannot conceive of such a thing.

"The Caliph introduced all the wise men and teachers of his time to the Priest in order to eliminate his doubts but none of them succeeded. One evening the Caliph sent word to Hazrat

Abdul Qadir, asking if he could convince the priest of the truth of the Ascension.

“When Hazrat Abdul Qadir came to the palace, he found the Priest and the Caliph playing chess. As the Priest lifted a piece to move it, his eyes met those of the Sheikh. He blinked his eyes and as he opened them again, he found himself drowning in a rapidly running river. He was shouting for help when a young shepherd jumped into the water to save him. As the shepherd held onto the Priest, he realised that he was naked and had been transformed into a young girl.

“The shepherd pulled the young girl out of the water and asked her whose daughter she was and where she lived. When the priest mentioned Baghdad, the shepherd said they were a few months’ journey from Baghdad. Meanwhile, the shepherd honoured the girl, protected and kept her but eventually as she had no place to go, he married her. They had three children from the union who grew up.

“One day as the girl was washing laundry in the same river where she had appeared many years ago, she slipped and fell into the river again. When she opened her eyes, she found himself sitting across from the Caliph holding a chess piece in his hand and still looking into the eyes of Hazrat Abdul Qadir, who said to the priest, “Now, Venerable Priest, do you still disbelieve?”

“The priest unsure of what had happened to him and thinking it was a dream responded with the words, “What do you mean?”

“The Sheikh replied, “Perhaps you would like to see your own family?” and as he opened a door there stood the shepherd and the three children.

“Seeing this, the priest believed. He and his congregation, who numbered about five thousand Christians, became Muslims, by the hand of Hazrat Abdul Qadir.”

This is not all – in fact, there are many miracles attributed to the Saint for he had achieved what is known as a state of “Kun

Fayakun” or “Be, and it is done”. The book, *The Saint of Jilan*, by S.A. Salik, records the miracles of the Saint and some are reproduced below:

Sheikh Muzaffar b Mansur narrated: “In my youth, I saw Saiyidena Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jailany in the company of a large number of persons. When we sat down, I had a book with me on spiritual subjects and philosophy and the Hazrat without seeing the book questioned me about it and said: “The book is not a good companion for you, please get up and wash it.” I did not like to wash the book as I had a love for it. At the same time I did want to incur the displeasure of the Hazrat by keeping it with me. I thought of keeping it somewhere else and not with me. With this in mind, I attempted to get up but I could not do so because I felt as though I had been chained to the ground. The Hazrat then asked me to show the book to him. I took it in my hand and opened it. I saw it was a blank book. I gave it to the Hazrat. His Holiness passed his hand over it and said: “It is Ibn Zaris Muhammed’s book, named “Fazail-Ul-Quran” and returned it to me. I opened it again and I saw that it was “Fazail-Ul-Quran” written in a very good hand. But the writing in the book on spiritual subjects and philosophy had disappeared. I had learnt by heart many portions of the book. The Hazrat asked if I would repent for what was in my mind though not on my tongue. I replied that I would certainly repent. At this the Hazrat asked me to get up. When I got up, I found that I did not remember a single portion of the book.”

Another story goes thus: “One night, Khalifa Almustanjid Billah came to the Madrasa of the Hazrat with the object of seeing him and sat down respectfully. His object was to receive some wise advice from the Hazrat. He brought with him ten bags filled with gold and silver coins and presented them to the Hazrat for the favour of his acceptance. The Hazrat took two of the best bags with his holy hand and pressed them. Blood came out of the bags. The Hazrat then said to the Khalifa, ‘You had realised the

money by oppressing the people and brought it to me for my acceptance. It really represents the blood of the people and hence I refuse it.' Hearing this, the Khalifa fainted."

Sheikh Omro Othman Sayrifini and Sheikh Abdul Huq Harimi stated: "We were present before Saiyidena Hazrat Ghaus Ul Azam in his madrasa on Sunday, the 3rd of Safar of 555 AH (1162 AD) when the Hazrat got up with wooden sandals under his feet and performed ablution. He then performed two rakats of prayer when with a loud shout, he threw one of his sandals in the air which disappeared out of sight. With another shout, His Holiness threw another sandal into the air, which also disappeared. None of those present dared question the Hazrat about the incident. But thirty days after this incident, a caravan came to Baghdad from Ajam and said they had with them some presents for the Hazrat. We asked for the orders of the Hazrat who permitted us to take the presents. They then gave silk cloth and another variety of cloth and some gold and also the pair of sandals, which the Hazrat had thrown into the air. They said: "On Sunday, the 3rd of Safar, when we had been travelling, we were attacked by a gang of Arabs, under two leaders, who plundered our goods, and murdered some persons of the caravan. They then entered the jungle and began to divide the booty. We also hid in the outskirts of the jungle and said that it would be a good thing if we were to solicit the help of the Saiyedena Hazrat Ghaus Ul Azam and resolve to give presents to the Hazrat provided we return home safe. At this time, we heard two loud shouts, which reverberated throughout the jungle. We thought a stronger gang of Arabs had attacked the first gang. Some members of the first gang came to us and said that a calamity had befallen them and requested that we take back all the goods they had plundered from us. We went to the place that the booty was being divided and saw the two leaders lying dead and a sandal was lying near each of the leaders. It was evident that the Hazrat, being moved by the sincere solicitation of the caravan, had decided

to help them and hence thrown the sandals at the two leaders who were killed.”

Sohail B. Abdullah Tsutari said: “Once, Saiyidena Ghaus Ul Azam had disappeared from the sight of the men in Baghdad. On enquiry it was learnt that His Holiness had been seen proceeding towards the Tigris. People proceeded in that direction in search of him. I saw His Holiness walk over water and come towards us. I also saw fishes come in large numbers to the surface of the water and kiss his feet and heard them say to him, “Peace be unto you.” It was the time of the midday prayers. I then saw a carpet that spread itself in the air like a Takht (plane) of Hazrat Sulaiman. It was green in colour and embroidered with silk and gold. After the carpet spread itself, I saw a large number of people come and stand on the carpet. The persons appeared to be brave but all were weeping with their heads bent down and all of them were quite silent. The appearance of one of the crowd was awe-inspiring and majestic. When he read out the Takbir, Saiyidena Ghaus Ul Azam stepped forward and led the prayers. The crowd and the men of Baghdad offered their prayers under the leadership of His Holiness. Whenever he said Takbir, the inhabitants of Arah also repeated it.”

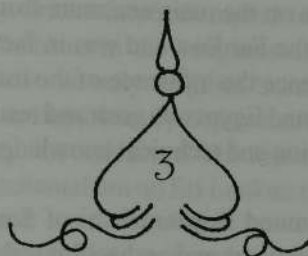
Sheikh Al Arabi of Spain had no children. He approached Hazrat Ghauzal Alam for his blessing for a son. The Hazrat said: ‘I have one more son unborn in my destiny. I give it to you. Rub your back against mine and name him Mohamed Mohiyadeen – he will grow up to be the kutub of his time.’ As predicted, a son was born and grew up to be the great Ibn-Al-Arabi.

Another story goes: “A relation of the Khalifa Mustanjid Billah was once taken to Saiyidena Hazrat Ghaus Ul Azam. He was suffering from dropsy and in consequence his stomach swelled enormously. His Holiness passed his hand over his stomach, which contracted to its normal size as if he had not been ill at any time.”

According to Islam, all miracles come about by the will of Allah. People are only instrumental in making them a reality. As such, all Prophets (SAL) and Messengers of Allah have been assisted in this manner.

It is in this context that all of the Hazrat's miracles must be seen for they stemmed from the Almighty and the Hazrat gave great pride of place to Allah in all his sayings. For example, the Sheikh's parting admonition was: "It is incumbent on you to fear God and not to fear anyone else excepting Him and not to hope for anything from anyone else excepting Him. Entrust all your needs to him and do not rely on anyone excepting Him. Ask everything you need from Him and do not place your faith on anyone else besides Him."

From this it can be seen that in his teaching and his service to mankind, the Hazrat applied the qualities that he inherited from the Highest.



Chapter Three

SRI LANKA, ISLAM AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Ceylon, or Sri Lanka, is a country steeped in history, myth and legend – known to many travellers by names as diverse as Taprobane, Serendib, Tambapani, Simudu, Singhala and Ceilan. Among the countries with long historical links to Sri Lanka are those in the Middle East and the Fertile Crescent.

The many historical references made by countless scholars and others to Sri Lanka, to its beauty, its gems, spices and other treasures, is understandable when you consider that Sri Lanka was for the better part of man's history (and before the discovery of the Americas), the centre of the world. Being a vital part of the major trade routes, traders, seafarers, pilgrims, holy men and others found it a place of interest. A brief summary of some significant

visits and references to Sri Lanka that records the country's long historical ties with the Middle East and underlines the veracity of the facts associated with Dafther Jailany and its association with Abdul Qadir Jailany is recounted in this chapter.

Sri Lanka lies on the main sea route from the Middle East to Indo-China and the Far East and was in fact, the hub of these great sea routes. Hence the influence of the mariners and traders from Persia, Arabia and Egypt was great and resulted in the transfer of scientific, irrigation and technical knowledge from the Middle East to Asia.

Professor Osmund Bopearachchi of Sorbonne University writes: "Historical sources and archaeological evidence confirm the important role that Sri Lanka has played as a great trade centre of long distance maritime trade. This was a result firstly of its central position in the Indian Ocean, astride the sea routes between East and West. It provided a link between the shores of the Persian Gulf, Red Sea and Southwest Asia and those of Southeast Asia and the Far East. Secondly, its numerous bays, natural harbours, estuaries and navigable rivers facilitated both sea borne and inland trade. Thirdly, it had its own products of high export value, such as precious stones, pearls, ivory, tortoise shell, elephants, valuable woods, textiles and especially spices (cloves, pepper and cinnamon)."

The main source of Sri Lankan history is the Mahawamsa. The Mahawamsa was written by Buddhist monks only in the 5th century AD – that is 300 years after Ptolomy wrote about Sri Lanka and 1,000 years after Sinhala history is said to have originated with the legends of King Vijaya.

Although the history of the settlers from Arabia in Sri Lanka is shrouded in mystery, it extends far back into pre-Islamic times. One of the earliest authorities is Cosmos Indicoplentes who gives an account of Arab trade with Malabar and the Eastern Archipelago while Ananda Coomaraswamy in his *Medieval Sinhala Art*

mentions the tribe of Yamano who provided iron and steel technology to Sri Lanka. (The actual term for settlers from the Middle East before the advent of Islam was Yonaka distinguishing the Yemenis.)

While many writers have attempted to identify the Arabs and Muslims with Islam in the religious context, the Muslim impact or influence is not only religious but socio-cultural where the Arab tradition is significantly dominant. It is also in the pre-Islamic setting that the impact of the Arabs and other diverse groups of the pre-colonial era on Sri Lankan tradition and culture have to be measured.

Moreover, the Arabs, or possibly the Yemenis and the Persians, were well received by the Singhalese as they were traders by profession and did not interfere with the internal politics of the island. They were also welcomed because they were artisans, had used iron and steel technology, and had a good knowledge of controlled water devices like the controlled water issues in their "khanats" and "flages" (irrigation channels) of Persia and Arabia.

Dr Nissanka Wijeratne, former Minister of Justice, said (in a lecture delivered on November 17, 1982 under the auspices of Professor Senerat Paranavithane Memorial Trust): "A few centuries before the arrival of the Portuguese in the western seas of Asia, an Abyssinian naval stronghold existed near Colombo, under the Wazir Jalastri. Arab dhows traded with Sri Lanka and Chinese annals record that Ching Ho, a Chinese Muslim eunuch admiral, had reached Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. Our history too records that this same admiral raided Raigama and took the King of Sri Lanka captive.

"The evolution of civilised life in Iran influenced the entire known world at that time.... A feature of Iranian administrative life was the development of its seals. One such, or a local variant of them, was discovered in Anuradhapura by Biddel, a retired British official. It is also of interest to note that a flag similar to

our own national flag with a rampant lion bearing a sword was adopted by the Pahlevi dynasty of Iran.”

Dr Wijeratne continued: “I wish to refer to the field of irrigation and draw your attention to Yemen. Up in the mountains, at a height of over 3,000 feet, are massive complicated irrigation works that perhaps ante-date irrigation works in Sri Lanka. It is worthwhile to examine whether it was not on known and much traversed seas routes that a movement of specialists occurred, contributing to developments in other countries.”

The discovery of the ancient Maduru Oya Sluice Gate by Denis Fernando, archaeologist, and Canadian engineers working on the project during the Accelerated Mahaweli Project in 1983 is interesting. A Carbon 14 test carried out in Washington D.C. on a wooden sample taken by Fernando from the lower gate revealed that the structure was 4,000 years old. This could mean that this irrigation structure predates Vijaya's advent by 1,500 years and that Sri Lanka's civilisation predates the timelines set by the Mahawamsa.

This evidence links Sri Lanka with the early civilisations, especially those in the Fertile Crescent that had settled farming. Settled farming began in the great river valleys of Mesopotamia (Persia) and Eastern Mediterranean, Rome, Greece and Egypt in 6,000 BC. Irrigation technology would have been common knowledge 2,000 years later in 4,000 BC and the technology could have been transferred at least in an elementary form to Sri Lanka, where the locals had clearly developed it.

The wonder was that the tracing of the channels done by the Canadians and other consultants, with the most modern instruments, coincided exactly with the tracing of the channel done over 4,000 years ago, possibly with technology brought by the Persians and others from the Middle East.

Another connection that the Arabs had with Sri Lanka, especially Balangoda (a town near Kuragala), is that Balangoda

was known to produce the finest steel for swords for the Islamic world – especially from the Belihuloya area. This is according to research by Dr Gill Juleff at the Sabaragamuwa University in Belihuloya (in which she cites the book, *Persian Metal Technology 700 to 1,300 AD*, written by J.W. Allan).

Juleff's work, *Early Iron and Steel in Sri Lanka – A study of the Samanlawewa Area*, states: "The period assigned to the four survey sites are based on the periodisation set out by Deraniyagala (1992). Taken together the dates evince a long history of settlement and metal working activity in the Samanlawewa area spanning from the 4th Century BC to the present day."

Juleff continues: "...The smelters or Yamannu receive very little mention in the social history literature of the island, a situation which invites discussion in itself, but Ryan in his review of his castes refers specifically to Yamannu communities in the area east of Balangoda (1953-127). He states that the Yamannu are an occupational sub-group (not a sub caste).

"In the same manner the "Sarendibi" or Sri Lankan steel described in the 9th century by Al-Kindi (Allen 1979, Bronson 1986) can now be interpreted as furnace steel derived from west-facing (wind) technology (of Samanlawewa) because Al Kindi describes Serendib steel in the context of sword making.

"The important elements of Al-Kindi's treatise include the description of Sarendibi steel which were utilised at sword making centres in Persia (Khorasan and Fars) and Arabia (Yemen) and Sarendib made swords in use in the Islamic world. Both the Sri Lankan steel and the Sri Lankan made swords gave the Damask patterned surface and were "Muhaddath" or modern.

"Trade in high carbon steel between Sri Lanka and the Islamic world flourished in the 9th century. It is reasonable to assume it had earlier origins... The first Islamic reference to high quality steel occurs in the 6th century and early 7th century."

Samanalawewa archaeological surveys undertaken by the Archaeological Department in collaboration with British assistance in Belihuloya have identified nearly 150 iron smelting sites spanning 2,000 years or more. The investigation of iron smelting technology indicates that steel was produced directly and in substantial quantities in sophisticated smelting furnaces driven by wind pressure – in fact, the fine quality of steel associated with Damascus swords.

This was a technology of the Yemenis and Ananda Coomaraswamy in his *Medieval Singhalese Art*, describes iron smelting at Hatarabage and Alutnuwera, close to Belihuloya, by a sect of people called “Yamannu” (probably people of Yemenese origin, who may have brought the technology with them. Steel had also been made by the sect known as Navandanno, also at Balangoda). One such sword made in Sri Lanka for the Saracens and taken by the Crusaders in battle is now said to be in the possession of Mr Christopher Ondaatje of Canada (according to his nephew as stated to the author).

This shows the close links that existed from ancient times between Arabia, Yemen (known as the Gateway to the Red Sea), Persia and Sri Lanka, not only in trade but also in other respects such as culture, technology and irrigation.

In 300 BC, Alexander the Great, also known to the Arabs as Al Iskanda, having conquered Persia and ascended the Peacock Throne of Persia, pushed eastwards to India. It is said that his forward intelligence troops had reached Sri Lanka and accounts of Sri Lanka appear in the great literature of the 3rd and 4th century BC. Adam’s Peak, the sacred mountain peak in Sri Lanka, was known even then. Alexander’s men had reached Kataragama and it is said that the temple at Kataragama was dedicated to Iskander, the name being shortened later to Skanda.

Legend has it that the iron chains on the road to Adam’s Peak were fixed by Alexander’s men when they climbed the sacred

mountain and that they passed through Kuragala on their way from the south to Adam's Peak. James Emerson Tennent in his *Ceylon*, Percival in his *Account of the Island of Ceylon*, as well as by Ashraf, a Persian poet, and Marco Polo refer to this legend. Ibn Batuta speaks of coming to the "Ridge of Alexander" on his way to Adam's Peak.

Accounts of Sri Lanka are found in the writing of Onescritus, the Chief Admiral of Alexander the Great, and by Megasthenes, Greek Ambassador to the Indian court of Chandragupta. Aristotle in his treatise, *Des Mondo*, quotes from the memoirs of Onescritus and others about the size and merchandise in Ceylon.

In 65 AD, Pliny the Greek historian refers to: "The harbour in Southern Ceylon where the king was dressed like Bacchus of old and the citizens dressed like Arabs." Pliny also refers to the Arabs as having settled in Sri Lanka at the start of the Christian era.

The great astronomer, Erastosthenes, as well as Claudius Ptolomy in 150 AD and Fa Hsien in the 4th century AD have all referred to Sri Lanka in their writings, with particular reference to Adam's Peak.

Egyptologists have found jade artefacts in the pyramids of 2000 BC and it was their conclusion that Yemenese/Arab traders, who were well-known sailors, had commercial trade with China and the Middle East – possibly using Sri Lanka as a transshipment point. The adventurous Phoenicians from the Red Sea ports piloted the ships of Solomon and Sheba in search of the treasures of the East, which included gemstones from Sri Lanka. (In fact, the Arabs were the first to make a complete study of the monsoons and established the sea route across the Indian Ocean from Yemen to South India and Sri Lanka.)

Tennent's *History of Ceylon* states that on the authority of Agathacides that trade between India and the ports of Sabea were entirely in the hands of Arabs two centuries before the Christian era.

Sri Lanka's links with the Middle East were not only trade-based but also extended into a long history of settlements from the Middle East in Sri Lanka.

The Mahawamsa states that a suburban area of Anuradhapura was allocated to the Yonakas who had established settlements as early as the 4th century BC. Archaeological excavations made recently in the vicinity of Anuradhapura have unearthed ornaments worn by Arabian women. This confirms the assumption that Arabs have settled in Sri Lanka with their families long before the dawn of Islam.

Dr Denis Fernando confirms the fact that there were persons of Persian and other stock resident in Sri Lanka long before the advent of Vijaya, in the preface to the book, *The Ethnological Survey of the Muslims of Sri Lanka*.

This link is further borne out through the writings and maps of Ptolemy in 150 AD that indicate the existence of ancient Persian, Arab and other settlements in Sri Lanka long before the landing of Vijaya in Thambapani (for example the Yakkas and Nagas).

The Mahawamsa says that the major tribes inhabiting Sri Lanka were called yakkas and nagas and states that the Sinhala kings constructed many of the ancient irrigation works with their help. In fact, this could be linked with the transfer of technology from the great works at the Tigris and Euphrates to the rivers of Sri Lanka.

Mention of pre-Islamic Arab settlements in Serendib (Sri Lanka) is made by Dr Takya Shuayb Alim in his book, *Arabic, Arwi and Persian in Serendib and Tamil Nadu*. Dr Alim writes: "From time immemorial, Arabs have been acquainted with Serendib. Among the factors that attracted them was Adam's Peak, spices and gems. Such contact was well established about 2,500 years ago." Alim cites an article by Nafis Ahamed, *The Arabs' Knowledge of Ceylon*, where it is stated that trade between Sumatra and Madagascar via Serendib existed in 310 BC.

Van Sanden in his work, *Sonahar*, speaks of an ancient Arab kingdom around Kalah or Galle around 200 BC. He also cites a contribution to the Royal Asiatic Journal in 1881 by Hugh Neville, who was in the Ceylon Civil Service – referring to an earlier period than that of Cosmos, in which the Maharajahs of Zbedj ruled Kalah (Kaly) from 100 BC to 700 AD. Sri Lanka's port city of Galle is also known as Kalah (or Kaly in Tamil).

When describing the Arab and Muslim influence in Sri Lanka, it must be mentioned that there has been (at least) one king of Sri Lanka who has been a Muslim. He was the famous Gale Bandara, son of King Buwanaka Bahu (1272-1284 AD) by a Muslim queen. Gale Bandara, also known as Wathimy Bandara, ruled for three years from Kurunegala.

According to K.D. Jayasekera in the book, *Arabic Arwi and Persian in Serendib*, the Buddhist monks in Gale Bandara's kingdom conceived a plot to kill him during a pirith ceremony. The unfortunate king's grave is at Kurunegala and Muslims and Sinhalese alike hold him in high esteem.

Another reference to this incident is in Van Sanden's book: "A Mohammedan Prince, Vasthimi Kumaraya, did reign with great popularity in Kurunegala. His romantic story is a local tradition in that town. He is said to have been treacherously murdered by the Buddhist monks of the temple of Etagala. They invited him to be present at a religious ceremony and suddenly pushed him over the precipice."

There is mention of another Muslim king who had been installed probably in Puttalam or Mannar by Sultan Thaqiyuddin, the Ruler of Keelakarai in Tamil Nadu after the defeat of King Parakrama Bahu the Third (according to the Indian historians, K.A. Neelakandan Shastri and K.V. Subramaniam Ayer). The king, Ariya Chakkrawarthy, ruled at Puttalam or Attala during the visit of Ibn Batuta. (However, Ibn Batuta refers to him as an infidel who normally attacked and killed Muslims but allowed Ibn Batuta

to visit as he was a friend of the King of Malabar, who was greatly respected by Ariya Chakkrawarthy).

The truth appears to be that there were Arabs in Sri Lanka before the earliest date in popular conjecture. From these accounts, it is clear that from ancient times, Sri Lanka was an international entrepot and had close links with Arab and Persian mariners and sailors who dominated the trade of the Indian Ocean and the seas east of the Cape of Good Hope. This becomes even more evident when one examines the ancient sea routes from the Middle East to the Far East (refer appendix). Even before the advent of Islam in the 7th century AD, there was trade between the Middle East and Sri Lanka and links may have existed as far back as the 4th century BC, as evidence at Maduru Oya proves. The connections between the island nation of Sri Lanka and trading nations of the Middle East continued for many centuries until the advent of the Portuguese in the 16th century AD.

The Sacred Mountain

If Sri Lanka was well known among the Arabs, and even to Al Iskanda in 300 BC, it is also true that Adam's Peak was as well known to the same sailors and travellers of the Middle East and has been often mentioned in their writings.

Muslims believe in Adam as the first man, as the first Muslim, and as the first prophet of Allah. The Hadith (traditions and sayings of the Prophet Mohammed (SAL) such as, "As Sahih Ul Buhari" and Quranic commentaries of Tafsir Baizavi and Tafsir Khazin have stated that Adam descended in Serendib upon a mountain called "Nood".

This was the reason why the early Arabs and Muslims made the hard and arduous journey to Adam's Peak in Sri Lanka and why it is probable that Abdul Qadir Jailany visited Sri Lanka and Dafther Jailany (one of the established routes to Adam's Peak is through Kuragala).

References to the sacred mountain of Sri Lanka are many. Tabari, the Arab writer born in 838 AD, mentions Adam's Peak: "...the whole world does not contain a mountain of greater height." Van Sanden writes of the famous Arab sailor, Seleyman, who made many voyages to Sri Lanka and the Far East in the 9th century AD, and who refers to the sacred peak as "Al Rohoun". (Ruhuna, it may be noted, is the ancient district to which Adam's Peak belonged). Van Sanden also writes of Abu Zayd, an Arab traveller in 910 AD, who describes the country and its people and makes reference to the port of Galle, as an entreport, where goods from China and the Far East were traded for goods from the West and the Middle East.

The Arabian geographer Edirisi in his geographical work of 1150 AD refers to Adam's Peak as Gebel Al Rahoun, the holy mountain of Ceylon, and speaks of its gems and other treasures. In the next century, Kazwini of Baghdad gives particulars of Ceylon as known to travellers of his day.

In *Voyages of Two Mohammadans*, written in 851 AD to 911 AD, it is written: "It is thought that Adam left the print of his foot in a rock, which is seventy cubits in length."

Sir W. Ousely, in his *Travels*, quotes from a Persian manuscript called *Berhan Kattea*: "Serendib is the name of a celebrated mountain where the venerable Adam descended from Paradise."

However, one of the most famous Arab travellers to Adam's Peak is Ibn Batuta, the Moor from Tangier, who visited the Peak in 1344 AD. Ibn Batuta had also visited the tomb of the Saint Abu Abdl Alllah in Shiraz in Persia and says in his writings that it was this saint who led many pilgrimages to the sacred mountain of Adam's Peak in Serendib. Ibn Batuta writes that on one of the loftiest points of Adam's Peak, in a hollow where pilgrims drop their sacred offerings of gems and gold, is the sacred footprint of the first man, Adam.

When Ibn Batuta climbed the peak, the route to the mountain was from Attala in Mannar (or Puttalam) to Kurunegala and thence to Ruwanwella and Ginigathena by what was called the Kadiligama Highway, or “Babapath”, and the descent was by the “Mamapath” through Palabaddela and Ratnapura to the town of Dinewar, or Devi Nuwera. The road to Devi Nuwera is through Balangoda, Kuragala, Kaltota, across the Walawe Ganga at Kongahamankada to Devi Nuwera. Having reached Devi Nuwera, Ibn Batuta describes a temple with a golden statue. From here, he had left for Galle where he had stayed in a house of a shipping magnate known as Ibrahim and then travelled to Colombo and then back to Attala or Puttalam¹.

In his writings, Ibn Batuta speaks of many famous Muslim shrines on the way to Adam’s Peak – both on the “Babapath” and the “Mamapath”. He also mentions: “A Muslim ascetic who had lived on the road to the peak at a point in those days which was a recognised halting place for pilgrims and wayfarers.” (According to Van Sanden in his book, *Sonahar*, this Muslim shrine is said to have been sanctified by one Khader or Khider through his visit.)

Sir James Emerson Tennent in Volume One of his *History of Ceylon* writes on Ibn Batuta’s journey to Adam’s Peak: “In descending the mountain through the village of Kalanga (Balanga or Balangoda) near which was a cenotaph in honour of Abu Abd Allah Ibn Khalif.”

The ancient road from Galle to Ratnapura (an attraction because of its precious stones) and then to Adam’s Peak would have been the same route taken by Ibn Batuta from Adam’s Peak to Dewi Nuwera². A map showing Ibn Batuta’s route to Adam’s

¹ There are various versions as to where Ibn Batuta came ashore. Some believe it was at Puttalam while others say it was at Attala, north of Puttalam.

² The Arabs had found a way to Adam’s Peak from Belihuloya via Ihala Galagama, Landuyaya, Bogawantalawa to Masekeliya and then to Adam’s Peak. This route is still used by villagers, almost the exact roadway used by the early Arab travellers. To get to Belihuloya from Galle, the road is via the escarpment of the Balangoda Plateau through Kuragala, where Dafther Jailany is located. Incidentally, traces of this route still exist and the route to and from the Kaltota Plains to Balangoda through Kuragala is still used by villagers.

Peak made in 1344 AD, including the Kuragala route, is reproduced courtesy of Denis Fernando.

History records that King Walagamba, while travelling from Anuradhapura to Ruhuna, had travelled through the same route. (King Walagambahu ascended the throne in 104 BC but was almost immediately forced to abdicate by the Malabar invaders who captured Anuradhapura – the King was driven into hiding in the mountains near Adam's Peak and the South.) Hence the Kuragala route was a well-established route from the coast to what is known as the Kandyan Kingdom as well as to Ratnapura and adjacent gem bearing areas.

Therefore, this established route to Adam's Peak through Kuragala is one reason for the legends of Abdul Qadir's visit and stay in Dafther Jailany. In linking Abdul Qadir Jailany to Sri Lanka, it must be remembered that one of the great port cities in the Middle East from which Arab sailors and traders launched their expeditions is Basra, situated in the confluence of the two great rivers of the region, the Euphrates and the Tigris. It is from here that most ships sailed to India and the Far East. Almost all the ships that sailed to the East made port in Sri Lanka, at either Mantivu (close to Mannar, famous for its pearl fisheries), or at Galle, also known as Kalah (or Kaly in Tamil).

Many Muslim saints and mystics resided in Basra, which was also famous for its learning and as a centre of Muslim mysticism³. The lure of Basra for many Muslims of that age was not only commerce but the search for the great Sufis and saints who adorned the city.

During the period that Sheikh Muhiyadeen Abdul Qadir Jailany was travelling in unknown places and lost to the world,

³ One such saint was Hassan of Basra (Al-Hassan Ibu Abi Il Hassan), born at Medina in 642 AD. One of the more famous Muslim saints, he is revered as one of the greatest mystics of early Islam. Others were Malik Ibn Dinar Al Sami, a disciple of Hassan of Basra. Habib Ibn Mohamed Al Ajami Al Basri, was another great Sufi saint who settled in Basra. Rabea Al Adaviya, a woman, born poor and sold to slavery, also settled in Basra and later attained great fame as a mystic and a preacher. In this manner, many of the greatest figures of Islamic mysticism were born or domiciled in Basra.

he is said to have visited Basra in search of knowledge. Once in Basra, any Muslim would be enthralled with tales and stories of travellers who spoke about, no doubt, the wonders of the island of Serendib. Foremost among these legends must surely be that of the sacred mountain where the first Muslim and Islam's first prophet, Adam, is said to have left his footprint.

With the long history of Arab links to Sri Lanka and Adam's Peak, it is easy to give credence to the belief that Abdul Qadir Jailany visited and spent time in Dafther Jailany – drawn to this island by established travel routes and the sacred mountain of Adam's Peak.

The famous scholar Seyed Mohamed Ibnu Ahamed, popularly known as Immamul Arus or Mappilai Lebbe Alim, in his monumental Arabic work, *Minhatu-Serendib*, written in 1855, speaks of Arabs who came to Sri Lanka to perform pilgrimage to Adam's Peak. He also speaks of the island's famous spices and gems, which may have been another attraction.

In the book, *Arabic, Arwi and Persian in Serendib and Tamil Nadu*, Immamul Arus speaks of visits made to Adam's Peak by Prophet Ilyas and "Khider". Immamul Arus also wrote a panegyric on the great saint Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jailany, where he mentions the names of the two cities, Anuradhapura and Puttalam.

In Kuragala, ancient Arabic writings, Arabic carvings, tombstones dating back to Hijri 300 (907 AD) and the Mihrab (a sign in a Mosque indicating the direction of prayer, or the kaaba) engraved in the rock facing the Kaaba prove that even before the birth of Qutab Abdul Qadir Jailany in 470 AH (1077 AD), Muslim pilgrims had used Kuragala as a resting place and later on as a place of prayer.

With this context and background and the lure of Adam's Peak to the Muslims, there is strong belief that the Saiyidena Qutub Mohiyadeen had travelled from Iraq to Sri Lanka and had visited Dafther Jailany during his travels and had spent part of his time

in Sri Lanka in seclusion in Kuragala, meditating at Kuragala – a more ideal place for peace and seclusion is hard to imagine.

Further proof of the age-old links between Kuragala and Islam's foremost mystic was discovered in 1922 in Kuragala when excavating to build a mosque. A tombstone was found, about 10 feet below a mound of earth, with the words, "Darvesh Mohiyadeen Darvesh", dated Hijri 715 (1322 AD) - the words mean "Disciple of Mohiyadeen". Evidently this is the grave of a murideen (a follower of a particular Sufi order, in this case of Abdul Qadir Jailany) who had died at Jailany, years before the Portuguese had arrived in Sri Lanka and ended the lucrative trade of the Arabs and also the use of the Kuragala route.

For a tombstone to be engraved in 715 AH, that is about 154 years after the death of Abdul Qadir Jailany, there must have been a significant link between Dafther Jailany and the revered saint⁴.

* It is well known that Islam had spread rapidly more due to Saints such as Abdul Qadir Jailany than to the power of the sword or money of the rich or power of kings. Some of the great pioneers of spreading Islam are the great scholar saint, Hazrat Khawa Moeenudin Hassen Christi of Ajmeer, 530 AH to 627 AH (1137 AD to 1234 AD), who was himself a great devotee of Hazrat Ghousal Alam and Abdullah Ibn Khaff whose tomb is in Shiraz, Iran – which Ibn Batuta visited (see *Travels in Asia and Africa*, 1325 to 1354, translated by H.A.R. Gibbs). Saints associated with Sri Lanka include:

1. The Saint Shaul Hameed Meera Sahib of Nagore, who visited Dafther Jailany
 2. The 180-year-old shrine at Dematagaha Mosque, Lipton Circus is the resting place of the saint, His Holiness Seyedina As-Sheikh Usman Siddique Ibn Abdurrahuman from Arafat in Arabia. He visited Adam's Peak and Dafther Jailany shrine at Balangoda (see *Muslim Saints and Shrines* by M.M. Thowfeek)
 3. Sheikh Hassen Bin Osman Mahddoomy whose shrine is in Alutgama
 4. Saint Seyyad Shihabudeen Oli-Ullah, buried in Kandy
 5. Sheikh Ibnu Omar Baadheeb Yamanee Oli-Ullah who was buried in 1892 at Kahataowita, close to Horagolla Walawwe
 6. Seyed Saadaash Fakir Muhiyadeen from Baghdad who is buried in Pooruwa near Akuressa
 7. Seyed Ahamed Musthafa Macky whose shrine is in Ratnapura
 8. The Saint Sheikh Seyed Ahamed Ibn As-Sheikh Seyed Mohamed whose shrine is on the roadside at Ganetenna in Hingulan.
 9. Zainul Abdeen Moulana of Akkraipattu
 10. Abdus Samad Moulana of Akkraipattu
 11. Yehiya Appa Moulana of Matara
 12. Abdul Qadir Moulana of Kattankudi
 13. Zain Moulana of Mavadipalli in Kalmunai
 14. Askola Auliya of Sainthamaruthu
 15. Zinda Madrasha Voliulla of Puttalam
 16. Seyadina Sabath Sheikh Gani Wahaddeen of Pallimullai and several others in Sri Lanka
 17. Sheikh Asheek Ilahi Abdul Wadood Qualandari Shathariyathul Quadiri, a khalcefa of the Sufi order of Saint Shahul Hameed Meera Sahib, having meditated in South India and the Himalayas visited Dafther Jailany and his shrine is in Thalghapitiya, Katiyakumbura.
- Finally, Hassen of Basra, Rabee Al Adaviya, Habib Al Ajami, Al Hallaj, Al Termedhi, Abu Baker Al Kathami and Al Shebli are some of the mystics and saints who were responsible by their ways and manners, lectures and sermons, for the rapid spread of Islam.



Steps leading to Dafther Jailany



View of the Kaltota Plains



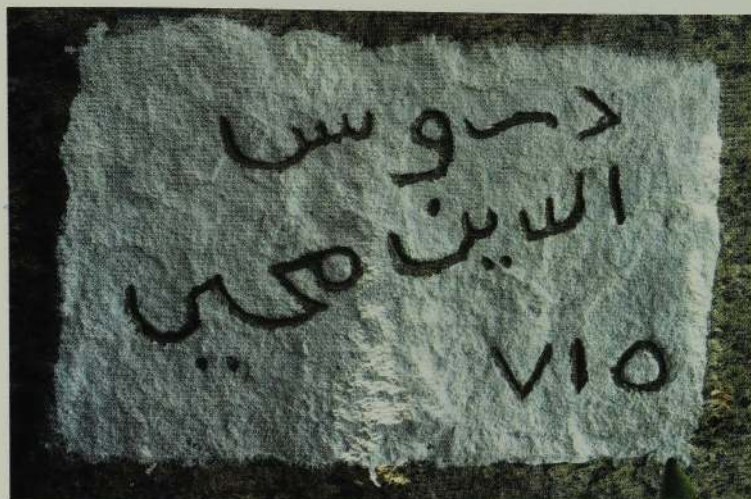
Pilgrims during the flag hoisting



Inscriptions: Sheikh Muhammed 1318 (AH)



Inscriptions: Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem Nasrum Minnallah (Victory for Allah)



Inscriptions: Darvesh Mohiyadeen 715 (AH)



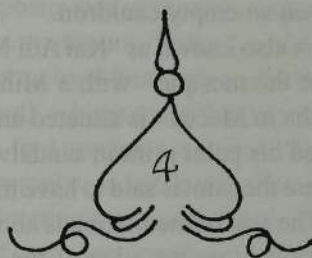
*Inscriptions: Rookeetam Roohullah 883 (AH) (Spirit of Allah)
– a distinctly Shia saying*



Tomb of disciple with tombstone stating, "Darvesh Mohiyadeen Dervesh Hijri" - 715 (AH)



Author and family near sluice gate at Maduru Oya (excavated in 1984)



Chapter Four

DAFTHER JAILANY

For over 800 years, Muslims in Sri Lanka have recited a mowlood or ratheeb (a recital of the life history of the Prophet Mohammed (SAL)) in honour of the greatest saint in Islam, namely Seyd-Us-Sheik Muhiyadeen Abdul Qadir Jailany, popularly known as Ghauzal Azam. Tens of thousands of Sri Lankans are adherents of the Qadiriya Thariqa (Order) that the Saint founded.

One of the areas in Sri Lanka particularly associated with the Saint is the jungle retreat of Dafther Jailany - on the edge of the Balangoda Plateau and between two rock formations known as Hituwangala and Kuragala - where the saint is said to have prayed and meditated.

Kuragala is also known as "Soronga Malai" (Mountain of the cave) or as "Kaal-Adi Malai" (Foot print rock), so called because a faint impression of a foot appears below a large boulder. If you tap the rock below the boulder, one hears a hollow sound as if one is tapping on an empty cauldron.

Hituwangala is also known as "Kai Adi Malai" (Palm print rock). This is where the mosque - with a Mihrab carved on the rock facing the Kaaba in Mecca - is situated and where the Saint is said to have placed his palm print in sandalwood paste.

Kuragala, where the saint is said to have meditated, is higher than Hituwangala. The seat of meditation is about six feet by four feet, perched precariously on the edge of the cliff, with a huge boulder that serves as a natural roof sheltering the seat from rain and sun.

The platform can be reached through a narrow passage that is between two rocks. The platform overlooks the Kaltota Plains and faces the southern seacoast, which is visible on a clear day. One can trace the Walawe Ganga meandering through the jungle to meet the Uda Walawe Tank. Fertile paddy lands are now seen where once thick jungles existed. The Uda Walawe Tank can also be seen from the Kuragala Rock.

Close to the ledge where the Saint meditated, is a cave that can be negotiated for about 200 feet. Inside is a light that appears from a crevice - no miracle but the sun light filtering in from below as this cave is at the top of the Balangoda Plateau and overlooks the Kaltota Plains about 500 feet below. (A large python had its abode in this cave for many years and bats too are to be found inside.)

In *Romantic Ceylon*, R.H. Bassett describes the Kuragala cave: "The cave itself is a most interesting place. It is entirely natural, bearing no signs of artificial excavations or of ritual adornment. The entrance is situated in the face of a cliff a short climb down from the summit where on entering there is a large

“hall” from which two passages lead off on either hand. The right hand passage is seen to extend for at least 50 yards into the depths of the earth before merging into the general darkness of the shadows.

“On the opposite side of the entrance hall, a narrow passage leads out on to the meditation “ledge”, a niche in the sheer side of the cliff, some 6 foot by 4 foot with an overhanging roof of rock. Here seated beneath a huge mass that towers fifty feet above on the edge of a 600-foot precipice, a hermit can find solitude indeed and food for contemplation in the unbroken ocean of trees spread out below him. Entering from a small hole in the rock, at the back an atmosphere of complete detachment pervades the occupant of the tiny ledge. Earthly considerations lose their importance before the uncomplicated immensity of the colossal landscape and the fatality of the sheer abyss.”

It is on this platform that Saint Abdul Qadir Jailany is said to have meditated during his stay at Jailany undisturbed by man or beast. It is said there was no water in this mountain retreat, but when the saint felt the need for water, he had only to scoop the earth and water had started flowing from that spot. Today, a stream still continues to flow – now a well has been built by a philanthropist for the convenience of pilgrims at this very spot (and the flow of water still continues!)

Another miracle attributed to the saint is the “Uppu Kolam” or salt-water pond, below the ledge where the saint is said to have sat and meditated - the water from this pond is said to have healing properties.

A small mosque was constructed under the Hituwangala rock in 1922. The mosque needed no roof as the rock itself is shaped like a cobra hood and is a shelter from the sun and rain. There are several writings in Arabic and the direction of the Kaaba (kibla) is shown in the form of a mihrab cut into the rock.

The tombstone, with the words “Darvesh Mohiyadeen Dervesh”, and the remains found when excavating to build the mosque, were laid to rest on the southern side of the mosque. The date Hijri 715 is clearly visible on the tombstone.

Close to the grave is a stony stairway - this leads up to the meditation room once used by Shawal Hameed Nagoor Meera Saibo Rali Ullah when he visited Dafther Jailany about 400 years ago¹. The saint is said to have placed his palm print in sandalwood paste on the rock above the shilla room. (Also, there are many Arabic inscriptions and writings on the rock).

During the Jailany festival, the room where the Saint meditated is used to prepare the main flag for the flag hoisting on the first day of the month of Rabi Ul-Akhir. After recital of Zikr and Fathihas, the flag is sanctified by placing on it the palm prints of the learned men who prepare the flag. The palm prints are placed in sandalwood paste mixed with scents – this is in remembrance of the palm print placed on the rock by Saint Abdul Qadir Jailany and Saint Nagoor Meera Saibo when they visited Dafther Jailany.

The anointed flag is carried down to the main mosque and hoisted on that mosque's flag post. The flag hoisting is down at sunset on the first day of Rabi Ul-Akhir, followed by the recital of dua and the Mohiyadeen mowlood. Niyath (usually of dates or other sweets) is distributed.

On the way to the mosque is a third rock called “Jinn Malai”. It is here that the stone with the Arabic carving “Ya Allah Hijri

¹ Professor Dennis Megilvray of the University of Colorado in Boulder writes: “The Saint Shawal Hameed retraced the steps of the Saint Abdul Qadir Jailany all the way from Baghdad to the Maldives and then to Galle and Dafther Jailany”. (He received the title “Kuthub” in Jailany.)

The Saint Nagoor Meera Saibo visited Dafther Jailany accompanied by Saint Seyed Shihabudeen Voliullah. After his visit to Dafther Jailany, Saint Seyed Shihabudeen had visited Kandy. He had died there and his tomb at the famous Meera Maccam Mosque in Kandy.

In the book, *Kanzul Karamath*, it is mentioned that one day after Isha prayers, Saint Shaul Hameed Meeran Sahib had seen Prophet Hiller (Alaihi salaam) who had requested Saint Shaul Hameed to accompany him to Dafther Jailany in Sri Lanka. It was Allah's wish to show this sanctified abode to Saint Shaul Hameed Meeran Shabhib.

The Saint travelled from the Maldiv Islands to Galle with his son, Saint Seyed Mohamed Yoosuf and several of his murudeens. Meera Majid in Galle town stands testimony to the Saint's visit. It is at Dafther Jailany that the Saint Meera Sahib was awarded the title “Kuthub” (reference *Kanzul Karamath*, Tamil edition, page 355, and in *Mawahibul Majeed Fee Manakibee Shaul Hameed*, (Arabic edition).

300" (907 AD) was found – the stone is still in the very place it was originally found. (Unfortunately no attempt has been taken by the Archaeological Department to preserve this stone – although this area is under the Department)

This stone inscription dates to a period long before Saiyidena Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jailany was born, proving that this route and the place had been a place of Muslim worship to Arab traders even before Saint Abdul Qadir was born. In fact, it is highly probable that the Persians, Arabs and others used this route in pre-Islamic times.

Another inscription found here dates back to the 2nd century BC – written in Brahmic characters reading: "Da-ta-ha-sa-puda-ha-lena" which translates as: "The Dedicated Cave of Dataha".

These inscriptions were first reported by Collins in 1932 – he remarked that the Ratnapura District has generally been considered to be barren of archaeological interest. He also stated that some were religious and some secular sites.

The freezes and the translation of the two carvings made by Professor Senerath Paranavithane are given below.

Senerath Paranavithane (1970):

DATAHA SAMUDAHA LENE

"The cave of ———Datta (and) Samudda"

PARUMAKA SUMANAHA

"of the Chief Sumana"

PARAMUKALA SUMAYA

"Of the Chieftainess Summa"

PARUMAKA SONA PUTASA

"The Cave of the Lord Punasaguta"

BALA PUNSEGUTASA LENE

"Son of the Chief Sona"

The last two inscriptions are found on another rock.

An entry made in 1914 in the official dairy of R.N. Thaine, Government Agent Ratnapura, on the status of Kuragala states: "I understand that this mountain is known to the Mohammedan world as Dastur or Dakmar".

One interpretation is that Dastur, Dakmar or Dataha may well have been one of the pre-Islamic Arab traders. Another interpretation is that the inscription could be from one of the chiefs of the region at that time dedicating this place to the Arab traders who used it as a resting place after the climb to the top of the plateau. (The chiefs of the region would have been the beneficiaries of the Arab traders - each would have benefited from the other and as Van Sanden in his book, *Sonahar*, states: "As for the wealthier classes of Singhalese feudal chiefs of the interior, they were satisfied to receive their supplies of salt and silk from the coast and such luxuries and articles of daily use which the Moors brought.")

The names of two chiefs - Chief Sumana and Chief Lasama - have been carved in Brahmic characters on the Hituwangala rock where the present mosque is situated. It is also on this mosque that the direction of the kibra is carved.

In the 1960's, vested interests claimed that Kuragala was a place for meditation of Buddhist monks. While not disputing this claim - although no proof can be adduced - the other version held by the Muslims cannot also be disputed. The trade links with the Middle East, the many references to Adam's Peak and the ancient roadway through Kuragala from the South, Arabic writings and carvings, tombstones, historical facts and the connection between Sri Lanka and the Middle East from early times, vindicate this view.²

In fact, maps printed in 1901 and 1928, as well as earlier, refer to Kuragala as a “Mohammedan shrine”. However, the one-inch to a mile map of Sri Lanka was revised after independence and this identification had been omitted in the 1971 revision. The 1971 version depicts the area only as a Buddhist monastery of the 2nd century BC (the only evidence of which is a board placed by the Archaeological Department in 1972, the details that led to this incident being given elsewhere in this book).

On a positive note, many changes have been made to make Dafter Jailany more accessible to all. Today, it is easy to reach Dafter Jailany Rock Cave Mosque by vehicle (up to almost 300 yards of the mosque) although it was not so in years gone by. Then one had to travel by foot almost from Lanka Barana village, two miles from the present Balangoda town and walk the balance 14 miles through elephant infested jungle. In the early days, pilgrims walked the jungle road reciting “Muradiya Muradiya Sheikh Mohiyadin Muradiya” as loud as possible – probably so that the loud chant would scare away any animals. Today this chant is hardly heard except at the time of the flag hoisting.

Rest halls built close to the mosque are a donation by Mr. P. M. Abdul Cader (Pana Muna) a well-known philanthropist from Colombo.

Over the years, development saw the road to Kaltota being extended to Rajawaka and then to Molamura and finally to Tanjantenne. In 1962, the road from Tanjantenne was extended by a mile to the stream called Gonakandura Oya. At this stream is

² Even more significant is the fact that while in all other caves in the area where Brahamic inscriptions are found, it is clearly mentioned that the cave has been dedicated to the Sangha, this is not the case in Kuragala. Examples include:

Galpaya: GAMIKA-SIVA-KULASA DARE SAGASA – “Gift to the Sangha of the family of the village councillor Siva”

Diyaenna: HA LENA AGATA – ANAGATA CATU-DISA-SANGHA – “The cave of—is given to the Sangha of the four quarters, present and absent”

Pollmura: SAGASA PARAMULA PUSA PUTA PARAMUKA SUDAVAKA LENE – “To the Sangha, the cave of Chief Sudeva, son of the Chief Phasia”.

This is also the case in Handagala, Kirimakulgalla, Bambaragala, Pilimalena, etc.

a small Muslim village settlement and a mosque. Opposite the mosque six acres of land had been obtained from the Government on long lease to be used by the pilgrims as a car park.

In 1964, a footbridge was built across the oya by D.L.M. Mohamed and his children. The footbridge was replaced by a concrete bridge and the motorable road has been extended by the Trustees to the flat rock on which stands the Minaret or Gateway, donated in 1982 by a Muslim philanthropist from Chilaw. In an emergency, one could motor up to the mosque itself in a four-wheeled drive vehicle with the permission of the Trustees.

Electricity has been installed and a special line taken to the Mosque area from Tanjantenna, a far cry from the days when pilgrims would go through pitch dark jungle, sometimes in danger from wild animals.

On the way to the mosque area, the Trustees have recently erected rest rooms for pilgrims, with funds from the pilgrims. However, as the pilgrims increase in number, there is also the problem of providing accommodation and sanitary facilities especially with the restriction placed on new buildings in close proximity to the Mosque. In this light, a practical solution would be a shorter walk to the vehicles to ease the congestion.

Another difficulty is providing food to the thousands who visit the Mosque on the final festival days when many bags of rice have to be cooked for each meal. In case of rain, accommodation for the thousands of pilgrims is a major problem. Even on the days when the weather is fine, thousands of people, both rich and poor, young and old, sleep under the trees as the buildings and the temporary sheds provided are over crowded.

An important development is the extension of the road to close proximity of the mosque to ease the difficulties of the old and infirm who wish the walk to be as short as possible. However, others fear that the sanctity of the place will be lost and that in time, Dafther Jailany may become a place for picnics and not a

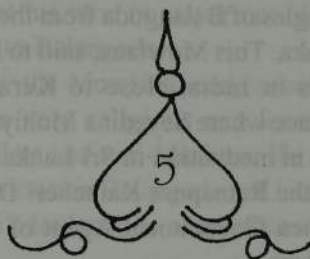
place of meditation or religious worship. This is a dilemma faced by the Trustees and is similar to what has happened to holy places like Adam's Peak and Kataragama.

One way to avoid this development is to accommodate pilgrims away from the mosque and areas of archaeological interest. The Trustees have obtained 20 acres around the Mosque and six acres near a stream, the latter for a car park and the 20 acres to be used to build rest rooms and other facilities for the thousands of pilgrims who visit Dafther Jailany. The intention of the Trustees is to conserve the present mosque and cave areas for prayers and meditation and the permanent buildings within the Mosque areas to be used for an Arabic School and for Mosque officials.

Although a good site for religious purposes, Dafther Jailany was abandoned for centuries. The British, who took control of Sri Lanka by the 17th century, did not know of its existence and Adam's Peak and its shrine, which had been a place of pilgrimage for Buddhists, were the only religious sites known to them. Incidentally there were no Muslims in Sri Lanka until the arrival of Dafther Jailany, or even in Ceylon, as a result of Portuguese and Dutch rule in the 17th century.

Until about 1850, Dafther Jailany was a very remote place. Few Muslims had ventured into the hills, and those who did carried the signs of it was infested with wild animals, especially elephants.

(Lanka, according to the Tamil Muslim, Tamil and Sinhala, was known as Lanka until 1820 and 1850.)



Chapter Five

RE-DISCOVERY

Although used as a resting-place for centuries, Dafther Jailany was abandoned sometime after the occupation of the coastal areas of Sri Lanka by the Portuguese and the Dutch. Muslim traders ceased to use the roadway through Kuragala to Ratnapura and Adam's Peak and in time, Dafther Jailany was abandoned. Incidentally there were no Muslim settlements in or around Dafther Jailany, or even in distant Balangoda, until about the early 19th century.

Until about 1850, Dafther Jailany was known only in name. Few Muslims had ventured into the thick jungles that surrounded the area as it was infested with wild animals, including elephants¹.

¹ However, according to the book *Muslim Saints and Shrines*, two Saints had visited Dafther Jailany in 1820 and 1847.

However, Dafther Jailany's reputation was known among the Muslims of South India and other Muslim countries as a place sanctified by the visit of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jailani. One such learned Mowlana had made inquiries about a place sacred to Muslims in the jungles of Balangoda from the authorities and his contacts in Sri Lanka. This Mowlana, said to have been from the Laccadive Islands in India, close to Kerala, was evidently interested in the place where Seyedina Mohiyadeen Abdul Qadir had spent his days in meditation in Sri Lanka.

A record in the Ratnapura Kathcheri Diary made in 1857 by Moyarts, the then Government Agent of Ratnapura District confirms this incident.

Twenty-five years later, in 1875, a nephew of this mowlana, As Seyed Musthafa Seyed Abdul Rahuman Ibnu Idroosiyathul Hasheemiya, had made a trip to Balangoda in search of the place where Saiyidena Mohiyadeen Abdul Qadir Jailany had spent his days in meditation. He had heard from his uncle about the place and how inaccessible it was.

The Mowlana wished to fulfil his life long ambition of finding the forgotten meditation spot of the Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jailany and requested help from the chief of the Muslims in Balangoda, Sinne Lebbe Cassim Lebbe. While his request for help was readily acceded to, he was told that no one knew the way to this lost place.

However the mowlana was not ready to give up his quest easily and requested some one to accompany him to help him as he did not know the language of the area (Sinhala). He said he was confident of finding the way to Dafther Jailany.

A retinue was arranged and the mowlana set off on foot. There was a footpath up to Bowatta, a village about five miles from Balangoda. But beyond that one had to go by jungle path. It is said that when the party reached Bowatta, the road ended and suddenly a dog had appeared and led the party to Hituwangala

where the mowlana found the rock cave and the abandoned place of prayer used by Muslims and Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jailany. He also found many palm prints and writing in Arabic on the rock. The mowlana and the party stayed several days at this cave. The mowlana had spent his time in prayer until lack of food forced the party to return to Balangoda.

Subsequently the Mowlana made several trips to Dafther Jailany. He was a very religious and learned man and well respected by Muslims and non-Muslims. He married one Beebe Umma and settled down in Balangoda and had by that marriage a son, Seyed Buhari Moulana; he also adopted a girl called Sithi Musalima.

It is interesting to note that the mowlana predicted the time and date of his death. He had called a few Muslims to his bedside after his evening prayers and indicated to them that he would die before midnight. He also told them to bury him at a certain place close to the mosque at Gorokgahamada. When asked how they would identify the exact place where he wished to be buried, the Mowlana said that they should go to the mosque at the time of the call for prayers in the early hours of the morning. At that time, small boy would be found standing naked on the road close to the mosque. They should then measure 40 feet from where the boy was standing in the direction of the Mosque and have the grave dug there.

As predicted, the mowlana had died that night and early the next morning at the time indicated, a boy was found standing naked as predicted. (The boy was Noordeen Bhai's brother Sheikh Shila Bhai). The Mowlana died in 1908 and his grave is known as Bawa's Ziyaram (tomb of a saint). This Ziyaram is on the way to Dafther Jailany. Many pilgrims who travel to Jailany visit the Ziyaram. Both Sine Lebbe Cassim Lebbe and his son, C.L.M. Marikar Hajiyyar, are buried beside the mowlana's grave.

The enthusiasm and interest of the mowlana resulted in the Muslims of Balangoda restoring Dafther Jailany at Kuragala and holding religious functions regularly. Muslims from far off places in Sri Lanka as well as Asia and India visited Dafther Jailany after its re-discovery.

C.L.M. Marikar Hajiya in particular took great interest in Dafther Jailany and had great dedication to preserve and protect the shrine.

In 1890, the Muslims of Balangoda, under the guidance of the Mowlana recited a mowlood in the lunar month of Rabi Ul-Akhir - this has been done every year without interruption to this day, for more than 100 years. In 1898, the Ratnapura Government Agent had indicated by letter his intention of visiting the mosque and the place sacred to Muslims at the request of the mowlana and all the Mohammedan inhabitants of Balangoda².

The Muslims of Balangoda

Many of the members of the small Muslim community in Balangoda first came to the area with the Chieftains of the Kandyan army. The chieftains were sent by the Kandyan Kings to defend the outer perimeters of the Kandyan Kingdom - in this case, Kaltota, Diyawinna, Handagiriya, Lendora, Kottimbul Wala, Sankapala, Galpaya, Mailgatenna, Gal Bokka Yaya, Panamure, Maduwanwala, Pollamure, Imbulamure, Molamure and other areas. The history of the Muslims in Balangoda is linked with these communities.

The passes to the Kandyan Kingdom were defended at strategic areas such as Molamure, Pollamure, Imbulamure, and Panamure. "Mura" in Sinhala means watch post, in this case to guard the passes into the Kandyan Kingdom from invaders. To man these posts came the Kandyan chieftains with their army

² This letter dated 23-04-1898 is produced as an annex.

and their retinue of families, engineers, physicians and others who made up the settlements. In fact the chieftains established a village in these areas where they settled and often took the name of the area as their own. Some of the descendants of these chieftains are the Mahawalatenna, Maduwamwala, Elapata, Weragama, Delgoda families of the present generation.

The Mahawalatennes settled in a village close to Balangoda and established their walawwa and head quarters at Mahawalatenna.

In 1820, His Excellency, General Sir Robert Browning had conferred on Mahawalatenna Wickramasingha Chandrasekera Senaviratna Mudianse a royal favour as well as granting lands in the village of Morahela. This was after the British conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815 when the whole country came under the rule of the British and some of the Sinhala chieftains were absorbed into the British administration. Mahawalatenna Dissawa was succeeded by his son-in-law, Barnes Ratwatte, as the Dissawa of the area. Barnes Ratwatte was later made a senator and he is the father of Madame Srimavo Bandaranayake, the former Prime Minister, and the grandfather of Her Excellency Chandrika Bandaranayake Kumaratunge, President of Sri Lanka.

The Muslims who accompanied the Kandyan chieftains were famous physicians of the Kandyan Kingdom who had lived close to Kandy, mainly in Velanboda, Aranayaka, Porabage, Madul Bowa and Hematagama in the Hatara Korale, close to Kandy. Some of these Muslims came along as physicians to the Kandyan Chieftains who came from the Kandy Uda Rata.

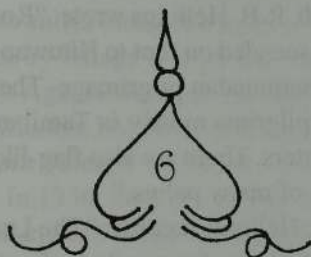
One such famous physician and his retinue, his assistants, workers and their families accompanied the Kandyan chieftains and were given a place to settle down close to Balangoda in a village known as Werahunna. The land allocated to the mosque at Werahunna is still marked on the government map. The Muslims had built their mosque and settled down in that area. A descendent

of this group was the famous physician, Sinna Lebbe Cassim Lebbe, also known as “Kottasa Mahatmaya”.

This gentleman was a descendent of the physicians from Madul Bowa, close to Hemmatagama in the Kegalle District. The Muslims, as they increased in number, became traders and artisans. They shifted to a place called Tenna Hena, close to Werahunna, and then to Ellepola, two miles from the present Balangoda town, and finally, to Balangoda itself.

During the British period, a mosque existed in Balangoda town, where now stands the JF Theatre and the Muslim burial ground was on the hill where the present Balangoda Rest House is situated – a tombstone found there is now kept at Dafther Jailany.

Sinna Lebbe Cassim Lebbe was resident in the row of houses below the present Balangoda Co-operative Mandiraya. His house today is a “Thakiya” (a Muslim prayer room). Sinne Lebbe Cassim Lebbe’s eldest son was C.L.M. Marikar Hajiyyar J.P. The author, M.L.M. Aboosally, is Sinna Lebbe Cassim Lebbe’s eldest grandson and is the Head Trustee of Dafther Jailany. Sinna Lebbe’s second son was C.L.M. Jamaldeen who became the town headman of Balangoda under Barnes Ratwatte Dissawa. Jamaldeen’s son, J.D.M. Shaheed himself became town headman in the 1960s.



Chapter Six

VISITORS AND REPORTS

The first official record of Dafther Jailany as a place of Muslim worship is a letter dated 23-4-1898 from the then Government Agent Ratnapura informing the Muslims of Balangoda that, in response to their petition, he would visit Kuragala.

Dafther Jailany as a Muslim place of worship is recorded in the Government Agent's diaries in the Ratnapura Katcheri:

By H. Mooyarts GA dated 13-1-1857

By H. Wace – GA – dated 20-3-1887

By R.B. Hellings – GA – dated 12-2-1910

By G. Cookson – GA – dated 12-1-1911

By R.N. Thaine – GA – dated 26-3-1914

By C.H. Collins – GA – dated 1922 and 1929

By N.J. Luddington – GA – dated 1935

Some of the dairy entries are worth recording:

R.N. Thaine writes on 26-3-1914: "I understand this mountain is known to the Mohamedan world as "Dastur" or "Dakmar Seylan".

On 12-2-1910, R.B. Hellings wrote: "Rode to Tanjama, two hours, and thence ascended on foot to Hituwangala and Kuragala. Two places of Mohammedan pilgrimage. The walls are covered with the names of pilgrims mostly in Tamil and some in Arabic and Sanskrit characters. There are also flag-like texts in red paint and the impression of many palms."

In 1910, R.B. Hellings records: "The Ledge: You scramble over the side of the cliff a few yards to the mouth of the cave. Entering this you find on the right a gallery too low to explore. On the left, is a narrow chimney rather like a shaft inside the Great Pyramid, down which you crawl until you emerge upon the Porch of Penitence (Ledge). This is a lofty loophole or ledged window in the side of the precipice, overhung by an immense boulder and opening on the sky and the plain below. It is a dizzy spot. The window sill or platform is barely six foot by four foot and the drop must be a sheer 500 feet. Lamp niches have been cut in the walls in very perilous positions and there are, as in Hituwangala, inscriptions and palm prints on the stone."

12-1-1911, G. Cookson writes: "The Mohammedans say that if one's eyes were morally clear you should see in this rock and its cavernous shaft and galleries, the gateway to heaven and hell."

In 1914, R.N. Thaine continues: "The shaft (ledge) it is said that many years ago, Abdul Cader, a sainted Arab lived here until one day he found the way to heaven. On the right is the cave with the narrow entrance. It is in pitch darkness. My guide told me that pilgrims entered the cave and said their prayers. Abdul Cader was seeking the way to heaven. One day he placed his hand on the rock, which opened. He passed through the aperture. The rock

closed and he was never seen again. Hence the practice of the pilgrims of imprinting their hands upon the rock."

In 1887, the Ratnapura Government Agent H. Wace records in the diary maintained by the Ratnapura kacheri: "Walked from Balangoda for two miles along the main road to Lanka Barana Village and thence by village foot path to Tanjama."

Government Agents were not the only visitors to Dafther Jailany - several Muslim holy men had visited this famous rock cave mosque from foreign lands, as is evidenced from the following report. In 1930, then Government Agent C.H. Collins visited Dafther Jailany and writes: "...Delightful gentleman from Lahore who was in one of the caves of Kuragala. This gentleman from Lahore had gone up the rock for three months of meditation and retreat."

A masthan sahib by the name of M. Abdul Caffor from India resided in the Shilla Room for many years. He passed away in 1965 and is buried close to where the fakirs hold their Refai Ratheeb every year in the month of Rabi Ul-Akhir.

When the two Muslim saints Shawul Hameed Meera Sahib of Nagoor, India and Hayath Nabi Raliullah had visited Dafther Jailany, they too had resided in this very room. They reported that rose water perfumed with sandalwood paste had appeared in a container and a mysterious voice had commanded them to make a palm impression on the face of the rock just below that of the Saint Abdul Qadir Jailani. The palm prints can be seen to this day on the rock high above the Shilla Room.

Distinguished visitors to Jailany continue. In October 1950, Sir John Kotalawela, then Minister of Transport and Works, organised a pilgrimage to Dafther Jailany Mosque in a convoy of 10 buses from Colombo. The pilgrims were met at the house of C.L.M. Marikar. Two members of Parliament, Dr M.C.M. Kaleel and E.W. Mathew accompanied the pilgrims to the Mosque. Hon. W. Dahanayake, then Minister of Home Affairs, visited Dafther

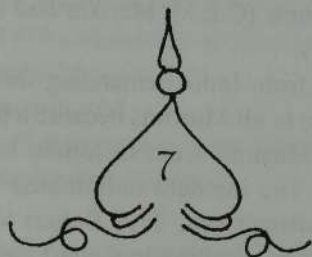
Jailany with a large delegation of Muslims from Galle.

In November 1961, Iran's ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Abdul Kadir Al Geylani (a descendant of the Saint) visited the mosque and was the guest of C.L.M. Marikar Hajiyyar. In April 1977, the ambassador of Pakistan in Sri Lanka, H.E. Abdul Rauf Khan visited Dafther Jailany.

Another famous Muslim politician, Al Haj Badi Ud Din Mahmud had spent two days in Jailany after he retired from politics.

Al Haj Seyed Alavi Moulana, Minister of Labour, visited the Mosque and opened the new building complex in 1998.

Dr. Tayka Shu'aub Alim, author of the book, "Arabic, Arwi and Persian in Serendib and Tamil Nadu" visited in August 2000.



Chapter Seven

TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE

Revered and sacred as Dafther Jailany is, protecting it as a place of peace, faith, spirituality and worship has not been an easy task. The task of protecting Dafther Jailany has been carried out mainly by the Trustees of the Mosque, sustained by the support of all communities in Balangoda and the greater Muslim community in Sri Lanka.

The first case of litigation associated with Dafther Jailany was in 1922, when a Masthan, or hermit, from South India called S.M.K. Mohamed Ali Masthan Saibo visited Dafther Jailany and took up permanent residence at the shrine. He then started charging a fee from visitors and pilgrims to the sacred place. At this time, a weekly newspaper called *The Muslim Nation*, published by Sheriffdean of Dematagoda Colombo, gave prominence to the

significance of this jungle shrine.

Ali Masthan then started demanding money even from the residents of Balangoda who had by the early 20th century taken great interest in the shrine and conducted mowloods and ratheebs regularly at the shrine. (C.L.M. Marikar had by this time built a mosque at Jailany.)

An outsider from India demanding money to a common place of pilgrimage to all Muslims became a bone of contention. When well-to-do Muslims from Colombo became involved, a dispute resulted¹. The incident culminated with Ali Masthan assaulting the Moulana's son, Seyd Buhari Moulana, causing a fracture in his leg and resulting in a court case (Police Case No 22494 of 1922).

As no amicable settlement was possible, even after several years of litigation, the Ratnapura District judge V. Joseph referred the matter to Justice MT Akbar, SPJ, in DC 56/35. Justice Akbar after hearing both parties decided in favour of the Muslims of Balangoda and referred the matter back to the District Court Ratnapura.

On August 31, 1936, M.A.W. Gunasekara, lawyer representing the petitioners in this case, namely O.L.M. Abdul Lebbe, A.L. Hassan Marikar, A.L.A. Majeed, C.L.M. Abbas Marrikar and I.L. Abdul Lebbe of Balangoda moved the District Court to grant the petitioners leave to make an application under section 16 of the ordinance No 10 of 1931 for the purpose mentioned in the draft petition along with the copy of the order made by Justice Akbar in DC Petition No 56/35. The matter came up for inquiry under DC No 141 (Special) at the District Court of Ratnapura.

On September 3, 1936, Additional district Judge Ratnapura, A.R. Hallock granted the application made under Section 16 of

¹ Some of the Colombo Muslims who became interested in the mosque at this time were the late M.I.M. Khalid, M.Y.M. Jawfer, A.L.M. Amcem, Proctor, A.H.M. Fuard, A.H.M. Abdul Cader, S.A.C.M. Jawath, M.I.M. Mohideen, M.I.M. Naecm, D.L.M. Mohammed and several others.

the above ordinance to

1. Appoint the petitioners and C.L.M. Marikar Hajiyyar of Balangoda as trustees of the mosque.
2. A scheme of management of the said trust as approved by the Hon M.T. Akbar Puisne Justice in terms of his finding dated 8-8-1936 and entered of record in the District Court Petition No 56/35.
3. Appoint Trustees and
4. A scheme of management also approved by Hon. M.T. Akbar on September 29, 1936.

When the Wakf Act was enacted, the mosque and the shrine were registered under the Act, and the mosque is administered in accordance with the above order.

In the 1940s, Land Settlement Officers were settling land in the Balangoda area and the Muslims held out a claim to lot 179 in FVP 810 in Tanjantenna, Balangoda where the mosque is situated. The Board of Trustees of the mosque made a formal claim to declare the area where the mosque is situated as private. This claim was made to N.W.P. Abeykoon, the settlement officer stationed in Balangoda. The claim was supported by Hon. M.S. Ismail, Speaker of the House of Representatives and Sir Razik Fareed MP. The Government Agent Ratnapura suggested that the Muslims be granted a preferential lease of Lots 179 and 181, 185 in FVP 810 in Tanjantenna.

The Muslims stated that it was wrong to obtain a lease of a Mosque land that had been in existence for over 800 years. The Wakf Board (Board set up by statute to administer religious places of worship and properties dedicated to these places) too recommended to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Irrigation and Power that it was contrary to the Muslim religion to take a lease of a Mosque land. The Trustees offered to buy the land in question. A letter on this issue was

written by Gate Mudaliyar M.S. Kariappan MP to the Minister in charge, Hon. W. Dahanayake.

The area referred to is Dafther Jailany in Kaltota, Balangoda. It was taken up for settlement under FVP 810 in Tanjantenna Village in 1950, M.W.F. Abeykoon agreed to settle the area of interest to the Muslim pilgrims in favour of the Board of Trustees of the Mosque. Accordingly the area was surveyed in 1953 on 6-8-1959 and 2-9-1959. The settlement officer informed the trustees that the land containing the mosque and shrine had been earmarked to be given on preferential lease to the Muslims.

The land set part was four acres, two roods and nine perches in VF 810 Topo PP5 Uggal Kaltota

| | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Lot 179 | 0.3.06 |
| Lot 181 (sub-lot 349) | 1.2.03 |
| Lot 185 (sub-lot 35) | 0.1.29 |
| Lot 3 | 1.3.11 |
| Total | 4.02.09 |

It is relevant to record that in a report made in 1935 to the District Court of Ratnapura in Case DC 141 (Special), Mr Barnes Ratwatte Dissawa stated inter alia that: "Muslim pilgrims from all parts of Ceylon visit this place during a certain season. The practice from time immemorial had been for the pilgrims who come from distant places to take the mowlana from the Balangoda Mosque to Kuragala to minister to their religious rights."

Discussion on this issue went on until 1962. Evidence by the Muslims was produced and several inspections made.

As mentioned earlier N.W.P. Abeykoon, the Settlement Officer, had held his inquiry at Rajawaka in Balangoda on 9-6-1950. On behalf of the trustees, M.A.W. Gunasekera, Proctor, formally claimed the mosque land on behalf of the Muslims.

C.L.M. Marikar Hajjiyar, the Chief Trustee, and K.M. Mohamed, his wife Musalima, and his mother-in-law Mrs Beebi

Umma, wife of the moulana Seyad Musthafa Seyed Abdul Rahuman, were made parties to this claim to show the continuity of possession by the Muslims from the time the place was re-discovered by Seyed Musthappa Ibnu Seyed Abdul Rahuman Mowlana in 1875 to the time the Muslims claimed the land. This was a continuous period of nearly 85 years until 1960.

As a result of these representations, the settlement officer agreed to set apart the four acres to the Muslims and ordered the surveyor, Mr. Kekulandara, to survey the land in question. The survey was done in May 1953.

The claim of the Muslims was accepted by the Government and on February 18, 1958 the Government Agent sent the draft to the Trustees to bring the Dafther Jailany Annual feast under the Pilgrimage Ordinance.

Subsequently, for unknown reasons, the Government changed its mind and decided to give the four acres claimed on a preferential lease (Letter dated 12-10-1959). This was further confirmed by the Government Agent too on 11-2-1960. The Lots were 179, 181 and 185 in FVP 810.

On 2-9-59, B.K. Abeyratne by his letter further confirmed that Lot 3 in Inset Topo PP 5 Sab Uggall Kaltota too has been marked out to be leased to the Dafther Jailany Trust. This lot is 1A. 3R.11P in extent.

A draft of the proposed special grant under Section 6 of the Crown Land Ordinance No 8 of 1947 was also sent to the trustees in December 1960.

Another conflict arose when vested political interests became involved and a claim was made that Kuragala was a place of Buddhist importance.

At this time, when Dr Nissanka Wijeratne was the Secretary to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the Archaeological Department started building a new dagoba at Dafther Jailany. The Archaeological Department constructed the dagoba to a height of

two feet in 1971 and tried to maintain that it was 2,000 years old until it was pointed out that the dagoba was being built of local bricks and Kankasanthrai cement, manufactured in Jaffna. The cabinet ordered that the construction of the structure be stopped at two feet. Note that Lot 179, 181 and, 185 in FVP 810, where the mosque and cave are situated was only declared an Archaeological Reserve after this incident in 1971. The Archaeological Department then placed a signboard saying that there was an ancient Buddhist monastery at this place.

It is at this stage that Rev Kiriella Gnanawimala Priest came into the scene. It is of interest to note that this monk was from Ratnapura. Until this time, no monk from the temples in Balangoda, numbering over 80, objected to the Muslims having their customary and long standing religious ceremonies at Dafther Jailany, Kuragala. The Muslims had no objection whatsoever to the Buddhists visiting the place but objected to the Buddhists having sole monopoly of the place.

Ironically, the fact that there was no dagoba at Kuragala was further confirmed by Rev. Kiriella Gnanawimala in an article published in January 21, 1971 in the Davasa paper. He said that he had visited Dafther Jailany on five occasions and inspected the area fully with Charles Godakumbura, the Deputy Archaeological Commissioner, but found no trace whatsoever of any Buddhist ruins in the area. This evidence was important as the hastily built dagoba by the Archaeological Department was the cause of dispute². When the construction was stopped by a cabinet order in 1972, the Commissioner was directed to send out a circular in all three languages to the effect that the rights of the Muslims of Kuragala (Jailany) would not be affected.

² It may be of interest to mention here that the steps cut on the rock where the gateway to the mosque area is built was done by a mason from Haldamulla in 1984 at Rps. 400 per step on the instructions of the Trustees of the mosque. It is possible that 30 years from today, someone might claim that the steps were cut in 200 BC!

In 1971, tension was running high when the Government got involved mainly through Nissanka Wijeratne, Mr Godakumbura and Rev Gnanawimala making representations for Government involvement. This led to the Government of Srimavo Bandaranayake requesting the then Hon. Minister of Cultural Affairs, Hon. Kulatilaka to visit the Mosque with officials and submit a report. The police and the army were called in to keep the peace as tensions were very high.

When the date of the inspection became known, Muslims from many parts of Sri Lanka, mainly from Colombo, were prepared to come in force to the mosque. The author, a trustee of the mosque, then made an appeal to the Muslims not to visit Dafther Jailany mosque or its vicinity during the Minister's inspection. An appeal was also made at the Balangoda mosque on a Friday just before the Minister's visit for all Muslims to restrain themselves and not to visit the mosque in order to prevent any incidents.

The author undertook to go alone on the day of the inspection and make representation on behalf of all Muslims. This was timely because about 30 to 40 Buddhist monks with their supporters had gone to Jailany on the morning of the Minister's visit – the author went with two others, spoke to the monks and arranged for their dana (the Minister who was expected to arrive at 10am, did not arrive until 12:30pm).

The Minister had come with the MP for Balangoda at that time, Mallika Ratwatte, the Archaeological Commissioner, Roland De Silva, the Government Agent Ratnapura, the AGA and other officials. There were over 50 to 60 people in all. The army had also taken up position expecting trouble.

As the Minister arrived at the mosque, Mrs Ratwatte wanted the author to keep away from the Mosque to which the author replied that no one could keep him away from the mosque. The Minister then intervened and a crisis was averted.

Following the inspection, the Minister was to make a report to the Cabinet. The only Muslim minister in the cabinet at that time was the Hon. Minister of Education, Badi Ud Din Mahmud. As such, the Trustees felt they could best represent their side of the case through him and two lawyers (from Galle and Colombo) and the writer met the Hon. Badi Ud Din Mahmud.

The Hon. Minister listened to the case and wanted to know what documentary proof was available. These were given to him within 24 hours. The meeting with the Minister was on a Monday evening – the Cabinet meeting was on a Wednesday, when the Hon. Kulatilaka's report was to be taken up.

Armed with the facts and thanks to the intervention of Hon. Badi Ud Din Mahmud, the Cabinet agreed to leave the place in the control of the Muslims. The other communities were free to visit Kuragala. The dagoba, which the Cultural Ministry was building, was to be stopped at the height at which it was then built to. The Trustees agreed on their part to co-operate with the Government and not to erect any more buildings without the consent of the Department of Archaeology.

The Archaeological Department agreed to issue a notice in all three languages to the effect that: "The Muslims who have been using Kuragala as a place of worship will not be affected by any conservation work." This notice was issued on September 13, 1972. Since then the relationship between the Muslims of the area and the Archaeological Department has been very cordial.

On August 12, 1971, the area where the cave is situated was gazetted under the Antiquities Ordinance.

The cabinet order was filed in the Supreme Court case that by this time had been filed by the Commissioner of Archaeology for renovating a building used by a mendicant named Trinco Bawa (Case No S.C. 189/75/MC 70167)

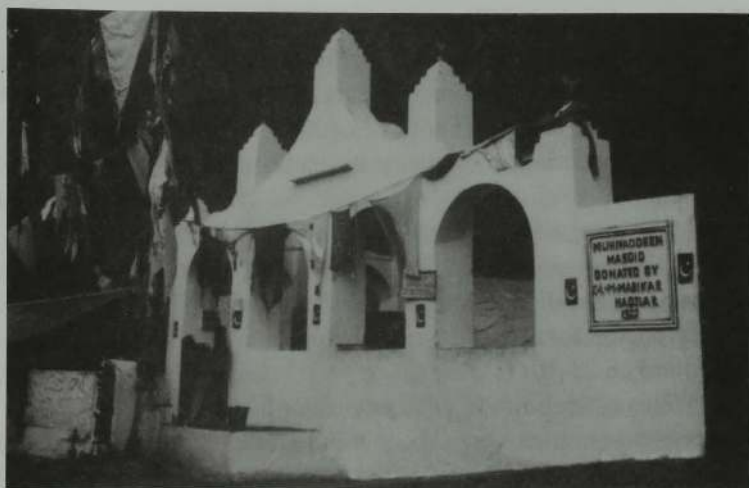
The mendicant, Cassim Mohamed Cader Bawa, known as Trinco Bawa, was charged in October 1971 in the Balangoda

Magistrate's court in Case No 70167, the charge being: "That between 20-8-1971 and 5-9-1971 at Kuragala did erect a building at a place 200 yards from an ancient monument in breach of Regulation 29 under Section 47 of the Antiquities Ordinance, thereby committing an offence punishable under Section Four of the Act."

The case went up to the Supreme Court under SC 189/75/MC 70167. Azad Rahim Proctor, A.L.M. Junaideen Proctor, Roshana Aboosally, Chandra Seneviratna and H.W. Jayawardena appeared for the Trustees in the Supreme Court. Cader was acquitted on 23-10-73.

This case shows to what extent some officials go to create unnecessary problems to the people and the Government in power. Also apparent in this case is the fact that the Archaeological Department appears to be only interested in Sinhala and Buddhist Archaeology. For instance when Mr. Godakumbura was asked to record and decipher the Arabic writings at Dafther Jailany Mosque, especially on the Hituwangala Rock, his answer was that it was of no relevance, especially as one cannot say how old these carvings were because Arabic writing had not changed in style. However, the point of the Trustees was that the Arabic inscriptions and their contents could be recorded. Discrimination such as this is one of the causes for communal tensions in the country.

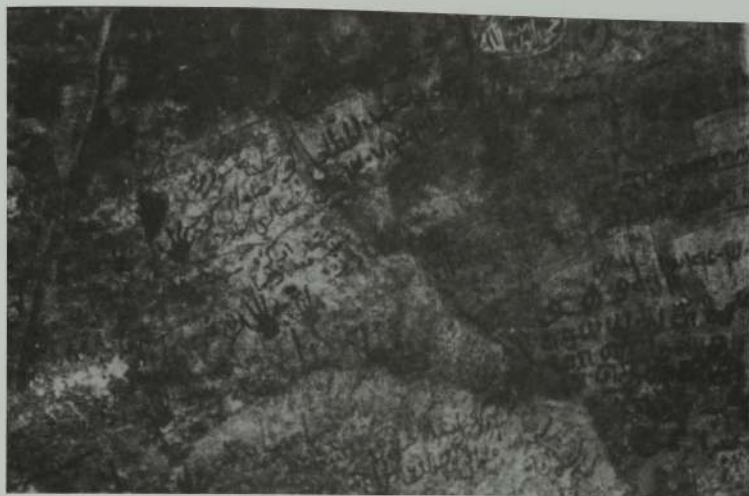
After this case, there were no more problems at Dafther Jailany. Both parties have so far adhered to the cabinet decision.



Mosque at Dafther Jailany



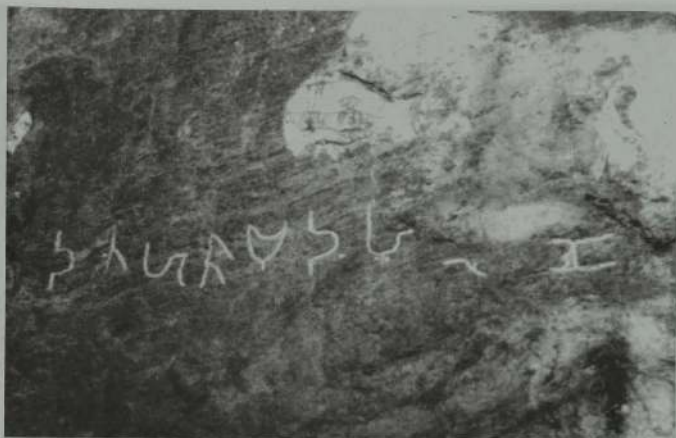
Entrance to Rock Cave



Inscriptions and palm prints on the rock face



Inscriptions: Ya Allah Hijri 300 (907 AD)



Rock Carving: "The Dedicated Cave of Dataha"



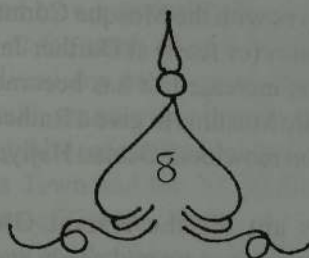
C.L.M. Marikar opens bridge to Dafither Jailany (1961)



*Visitors: Hon. Dahanayake, Minister of Home Affairs,
with the author and his father,
C.L.M. Marikar (1960's)*



Visitors: Al Haj Seyed Alavi Moulana, Minister of Labour (1998)



Chapter Eight

THE JAILANY FEAST

Since 1876, when the place was re-discovered by Seyed Musthafa As Seyed Abdul Ruhuman, the Muslims have held religious ceremonies in Dafther Jailany, especially during the months of Rabi Ul-Akhir. From 1890, the feast, or mowlood, and ratheeb became an annual event. The feast at Dafther Jailany has been held annually in the Arabic month of Rabi Ul-Akhir from 1890 onwards until today.

By 1900, the Muslims of Balangoda had formed an association to maintain and safeguard Dafther Jailany. It is said that during the 1915 riots, some Muslim families had taken up residence at Dafther Jailany. After the riots, one or two families had continued to stay on and eke out a living depending mainly on the pilgrims (mostly from Colombo) who visited Jailany

regularly.

The Muslims of Galle under the guidance of A.R.H. Barrie Proctor SC also held an annual religious function in this month. From 1960, the Muslims of Galle, Aluthgama and Dharga town associated themselves with the Mosque Committee and took part in the annual kandoori (or feast) at Dafther Jailany. Gradually as the flow of pilgrims increased, it has become a practice for the Aluthgama and Galle Muslims to give a Ratheeb, and the Mosque Committee, the noon mowlood. Osman Hajiyyar contributes to the main mowlood.

The feast is apt for the Hazrat Ghauzal Azam was compassionate towards the poor and needy and once said: "I have explored the weight of every human action and have finally come to the conclusion that the feeding of the poor and hungry is the most virtuous of all actions."

Also, on the last day of Rabi Ul-Akhir, ladies conduct the Thalai Fathiha, the men recite Idroosiya Ratheeb Marshaik Ratheeb and the Kuthudiyath in addition to Subhana Mowlood, Shaul Hameed Mowlood and the Mohiyadin Mowlood.

The Muslim year begins with the month of Muharram, followed by Safar. It has become a tradition among the Muslims of the area to hoist a flag in the name of the Saint Hiller Nabi also known as Hayath Nabi on the first moon of the month of Safar. (Hayath Nabi is said to be the guardian saint of the jungle.) This flag is not hoisted at the main mosque but at the flag post near the Shilla Room facing the Kaltota jungles across the Walawe Ganga and the Weli Oya. The Muslims of the area go to great extent to observe the day with religious fervour. They bring all kinds of sweet meats, rice and other food to be shared after the Dua (recital or supplication), that follows the flag hoisting. This practice has gone on uninterrupted for over 60 years.

The Refai Ratheeb

An annual event at Dafther Jailany during the annual mowlood and ratheeb in the month of Rabi Ul-Akhir is the Refai Ratheeb, conducted by a group of fakirs. They have a separate room by the side of the tomb of M.R. Abdul Gaffoor Sahib, a mendicant who lived for many years in the Rock Cave at Hituwangala, spending most of his time in meditation.

The main organizer of the Ratheeb was the late O. M. Ziyad Hajiyyar of Dharga Town and Mr. M. Wadood Hajiyyar, a well-known businessman of Gintota, Galle.

The ceremony by the fakirs is held in honour of the 12th century Saint of Iraq, Sulthanul Arifeen as Seyed Ahamed Al Kabeer Hassanur Riffayee, himself a disciple of the Saint Saiyidena Abdul Qadir Jailany. The head of this sect is His Holiness P. Yoosuf Koya Thangal of Androth Island.

The Refai Order originated in the delta of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Iraq in the 12th Century AD. Bawas or fakirs are Sufi mendicants who visit Muslim villages beating tambourines and reciting devotional songs – they wear turbans and beads around their necks and carry begging bowls. They are organised into chapters with a leader known as a “khalifa”. In Sri Lanka, they are concentrated in Eravur, Sainthamaruthu, Akkraiapattu, Kalmunai and Ottamavadi. They have a secretary (nakiban), sergeant-at-arms (Kottu Waal), commissary (pandari) etc. The Refai tradition of ecstatic devotion is performed in Kerala, Gujarat, Java and even in Macedonia.

The Ratheeb starts with the recital of the Fathiha (recital), the Thangal, or the Kaleefa, (religious dignitary) leads the recital of Ratheeb facing rows of devotees seated on mats, some with rabans (or tambourines).

The Saint's name is invoked during the recital with frantic cries of “Ya Sheikh” and the fakirs slash at parts of their bodies as

a part of the recital. The ratheeb proceeds well into the night. The fakirs grow more frenzied as the recital and beating of drums rise in crescendo. It is an interesting sight to see the recital of the Fathiha and the formative invocation of "Lil Assike Fil Hawa Dala hil, La Yasmahu Minkala Mihadil" to the frenzied "Hoo Allah, Hoo hoo Allah" towards the end.

Dennis McGilvray writes: "Perhaps the most dramatic gesture I have witnessed during the Refai Ratheeb or Sufi Zikr sessions is the pounding of a distinctive spherical steel spike decorated with dangling hair-like chains into the top of one bawa's skull, sufficiently deep for it to remain upright while he danced around the enclosure. Other acts include the piercing of both cheeks with a single long steel needle, the attempted laceration of the torso with daggers and swords and the perforation of the skin on the back with hooks and barbs."

After seeing the Refai Ratheeb, Dr R.L. Spittel, testifies in his book, *Far Off Things*, that the act is a form of self-torture while in a state of spiritual ecstasy. "There is no fake whatsoever about them. I closely examined the injuries afterwards. I must confess I would have never believed some of them possible had I not seen them myself," he wrote.

Refai Zikr Ratheeb without the practice of self-mortification is also common. This is performed by Muslim Sufi laymen under the leadership of a Sheikh. This is with two rows of men who sit facing each other and respond to the call of the leader, fervently singing devotional verses in unison, punctuated by sharp beats of their tambourines and executing movements of their head and torso.



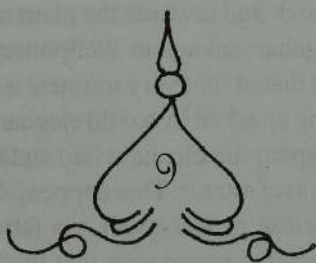
Pilgrims (Courtesy: Dominic Sansoni)



Tomb (of Abdul Gaffoor Masthan) near which the Refai Ratheeb is performed



Fakirs who perform the Refai Ratheeb



Chapter Nine

LEGENDS OF DAFTHER JAILANY

A place wrapped in antiquity as Dafther Jailany has its share of legends and stories – in this case, many of the incidents are spiritual and strongly believed to be miracles by some of the pilgrims who visit this sacred area.

Here are some of the other stories and legends associated with Dafther Jailany and the surrounding area.

The Mal Madara Tree

Like the famous saint of Nagoor in India, Shaul Hameed Rali Ulla, another famous Muslim saint, Sheikh Madar Oli Ullah, had spent several days in retreat at Dafther Jailany in Kuragala.

The popular belief is that one morning the saint Sheikh

Madar was brushing his teeth with a twig commonly called "Mishwak". While standing on the Kuragala rock which commands a magnificent view over the low country and the Kaltota plains below, the Sheikh had suddenly thrown the twig in to the air, over the rock and towards the plain and it had landed at a place called Kongahamankada in Welipothayaya.

Legend has it that at that very moment a Sinhala woman of this village was being attacked by a wild elephant. However before any harm could happen, the elephant had suddenly trumpeted in agony and made a hasty retreat. This happened in a village called Kongahamankuda close to Kanapoth Ara (stream) which flows into the Walawe Ganga. Legend says that the twig had fallen on the elephant which had left the woman unharmed and fled. This twig or Mishwak had grown into the famous Mal Madara tree in Kongahamankada.

On his return journey from Adam's Peak, Ibn Batuta writes: "We halted in succession at several villages, all these stations are on the mountains. Near the base (of the mountain) on the same path is the derakht (dirakht) rewan or the walking tree of great age, not one of whose leaves falls. I have seen at this place a band of Djoguis (yogis) waiting for a leaf to fall – because whoever eats the leaf recovers his youth."

This tree of miracles could well be the Mal Madara tree – because the last resting place on the mountains is Kuragala and it is at the base of Kuragala that the Mal Madara tree is found (at Kongahamankade). In fact, "mankada" is a ford or crossing usually over a river and there is such a crossing near the Mal Madara tree on the way from the mountains to the south (to Galle, Matara and Ambalantota).

C.H. Collins says in the Royal Asiatic Journal (Volume 32): "Near Kongahamankada in the jungle is the celebrated Mal Madara tree, the wood of which is endowed with wonderful properties, particularly the power of keeping wild elephants away."

Indeed the famous Mal Madara tree is the only flowering Mal Madara tree found in Sri Lanka and is popularly believed to have the power to keep away wild elephants and other animals at bay.

The Mal Madara tree (*Celeistanthus Collinius*) belongs to the order Euphorbiace. It is one of the rarest trees in the world. There is a legendary belief that elephants both wild and tame respected and even worshipped this tree.

The powerful chieftain and Rate Mahathmaya of Kolonna Korale was the accepted authority on elephants during his lifetime. This chieftain, the late Maduwanwala Rate Mahatmaya, although diminutive in build, was credited to have confronted even charging wild elephants, armed with only a walking stick made from the Mal Madara tree. In his lifetime the Rate Mahathmaya held several elephant kraals in Panamure in Kolonna.

Sir Richard Aluvihara, Inspector General of Police in 1957, when he visited the house of C.L.M. Marikar JP to lunch, despatched a police team to bring a branch of this tree for a walking stick.

This famous tree is said to be over 700 years old. The tree had fallen victim to vandals, souvenir hunters and talisman seekers because of the belief that a piece of the Mal Madara tree carried on one's person was sufficient to render immunity from snake bites and wild animals.

A branch of the tree had been propagated at the Wikiliya Mudalindaramaya temple by Rev. Wikiliya Narada Thero, the High Priest of the temple. In 1988, when the author was the Deputy Minister of Mahaweli Development, he and the Reverend monk had re-planted a sapling of the Mal Madara tree at the same place where the original tree existed. The area was fenced and the tree is said to be growing well.

Neela Maha Yodaya

A quaint legend about a giant is connected to the dry environment in the area. Legend has it that Neela Maha Yodaya was the first irrigator of the Kaltota paddy fields – it was he who built an anicut across the Walawe River. He had chosen two rocks near the present anicut, cut sockets in them (which can still be seen) and affixed huge beams to form a dam across the river, known as the yoda-bemma. He had decided the direction of the flow by noticing an ‘uk’ (sugarcane leaf), one end of which had been caught to a rock, which indicated the flow. He had dug the channel in the direction indicated by the leaf. The trace is still in use and Kaltota carries the name “Uggal” Kaltota to this day!¹

Also, Neela Maha Yodaya made a heap of the paddy harvest so large that if one stands on it, you could have seen the sea. However, legend goes on to say that Neela Maha Yodaya had kicked over the heap of paddy and broken the anicut because his son had disputed his claim that the sea could be seen from the top of the paddy heap. (This the son had done on the instructions of his mother – her motive was that she wished to goad her husband to perform still greater feats of irrigation and cultivation.) However, from that time onward, the Kaltota fields lay bare and barren until they were restored in 1885.

O Vedda

The Walawe River, at the spot where Neela Maha Yodaya constructed the anicut, is guarded by a giant called O Vedda, which is a short way of saying “Oya Vedda” or “River Hunter”, legend says. He was said to have been a rather kind person whose only objection was to people fishing in the river in the night. He had

¹ The modern irrigation channel was reconstructed in 1885 by H. Wace, Government Agent Ratnapura, and Fred Lewis along the very same trace to irrigate 800 acres of paddy in Kaltota Puranagama. In 1954, the area under paddy was extended to 3,000 acres. These fields can be seen from Kuragala – one long stretch of paddy where once stood virgin forest.

one special peculiarity and that was that he was so interested in weather conditions that he placed a great yellow daub of colour on a rock when the weather was going to be fine, and of red, when it was to be inclement. At times, these colours disappear from the rocks but reappear on another rock some distance away! The author has himself seen these colours on rocks at the Walawe Ganga. However, the explanation for this remains a mystery.

Kalu Nika

Kuragala, seen from the plains below, has a splendid magnificence. R.H. Basset in his book *Romantic Ceylon* writes:

“This aspect of the cliff has an added interest in that a dark patch of vegetation growing about half-way up the face of the precipice is said to be a bush of the famous “Kalu Nika” – of which the twig brings good health and fortune. It is quite inaccessible, a characteristic of the tree that renders it a great rarity, not to be compared to the Madara in that respect but sufficiently uncommon to attract numerous legends about the magic properties. Whenever the “Atikukula” (jungle crow) is able to find a stick of this tree, it builds it into its nest knowing full well its value as a charm against evil influence.”

Bassett says that to separate the kalu nika twig from the nest of the atikukula, one has to throw the nest twig by twig into running water until one twig is found to float upstream – and that will be the kalu nika.

A Modern-Day Miracle

As the numbers that come on pilgrimage to Jailany increased, the supply of water became a problem. In one year, 1983, there was a severe drought and there was little water at the mosque – which instead of being unfortunate, actually led to a modern day miracle which helped demonstrate the amity that can

exist between different communities.

In 1983, there seemed to be no possibility of celebrating the annual Ratheeb and the feast. Some suggested that the Trustees place a notice in the papers stating the cancellation of the ratheeb and the feast. After 92 years of uninterrupted celebrations of the annual feast, this would have been a sad occasion. To the relief of all, the Sinhala farmers of Tanjantenna, Godacumbura, Molamure and Inbulmure and the surrounding areas would have none of it. They rallied around the Trustees, transported several of their water pumps and two inch alkathene hoses and decided to pump the water to the mosque in relays. L.K. Gunasekera and Jayakody played a leading role in ensuring that water was made available to the pilgrims. Water was pumped round the clock for four days in relays from a distance of one mile from the river to the mosque and none of the Sinhala villagers would take any money for their efforts.

This incident cemented the bond between the two communities further and indicated the close harmony between the villagers in the countryside and the Muslim minorities in these areas.

Subsequently, the trustees decided to install a large water pump on the Gonakandura Ara about a mile from the mosque. The height was over 500 feet. The Trustees consulted Jinasena and Co Ltd and this company decided to manufacture a special pump for this purpose. When the well was built, it was discovered that a natural spring had miraculously appeared. Even when the river runs dry, this spring has never failed to supply all the water needed to the mosque and the villagers.

The Power of Faith

Many pilgrims to Dafther Jailany have had their wishes answered and many have felt the presence of a spiritual force in this hallowed place.

From the 1930s to the 1940s, when there were no buildings, pilgrims sleeping at Hituwangala have clearly heard the recital of Quranic verses in measured tones coming from the Kuragala Rock area. The author's mother has heard this recital on more than one occasion.

In Jailany too, one must always meditate on one's thoughts and speak mindfully and with thought. For example, in the early 1930s, Justice M.T. Akbar, PJ and N.D.H. Abdul Caffoor Hajiyyar accompanied by the author's father, C.L.M. Marikar, A.L.A. Majeed, A.H. Batchamiya and a few others were walking the two miles from Tanjantenna to Jailany and had rested half way on the flat rock (where a gateway has now been erected). Abdul Caffoor Hajiyyar had jokingly said that there were no wild animals here to be scared of when a wild buffalo had charged across the rock, almost brushing past Caffoor Hajiyyar, much to that gentleman's shock!

At a much later stage, the author is aware of a couple from Colombo who brought their child, who could not speak, to Jailany – the child was brought to Jailany as a last resort after many unsuccessful attempts to help him. The child was kept for three days in the Mosque and on the third day as the child's father was praying, the child had approached him and spoken to him.

One of the most miraculous incidents to date at Dafther Jailany is the rescue of a small child who had fallen about 250 feet through a crevice into the cave near the location where the Saint had meditated. Rescue efforts were in vain until two days after the day the incident took place when two youths, Harid and Muthalif, from Dehigastalawa, Balangoda volunteered to go down the crevice holding on to a rope. They found the child resting on the edge of a rock, fast asleep, and unharmed. The child said that a man dressed in white had comforted him and fed him with milk, before he disappeared.

It is said that faith can move mountains and this appears to be the case with many of the stories associated with Dafther

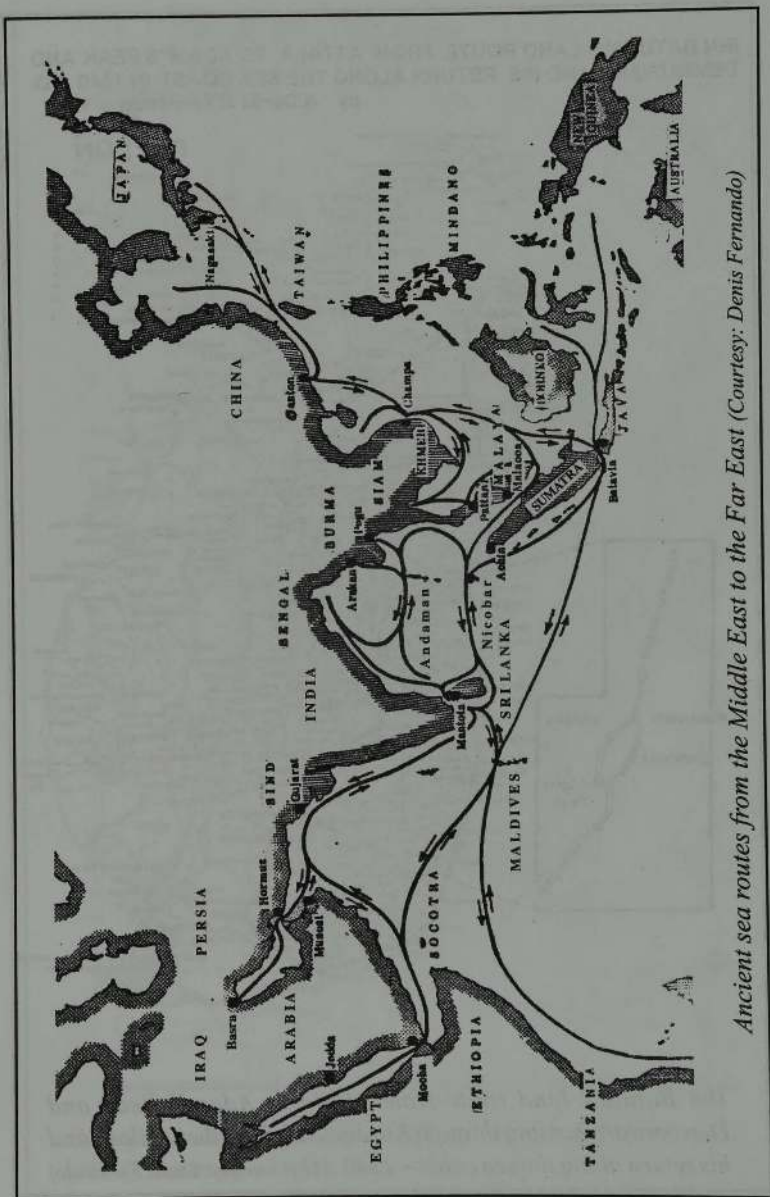
Jailany. The famous theologian, Al Gazzali, says that the key theme of religious identity is 'Iman' or faith and the one who possesses it is the Mu'min or believer. Faith is one of the major topics of the Quran and is mentioned over a hundred times.

"The outstanding religious scholars of Mecca, Medina, Baghdad and other great Islamic cities were intimately engaged in what we today call Sufism. Veneration of the prophet and the Sufi saints is found as a major theme in every Muslim country. Millions have sought initiation in the multiple Sufi orders which trace back a tradition in sacred teaching, generation after generation, all the way back to the Prophet Mohammed, (SAL)" (Shambala Guide to Sufism).

In Sura 4 Verse 64 (Nisaa), the Quran says: "We sent not an apostle but to be obeyed....If they had only come to Thee and asked God's forgiveness and the Apostle had asked forgiveness for them, they would have found God indeed oft returning, most merciful."

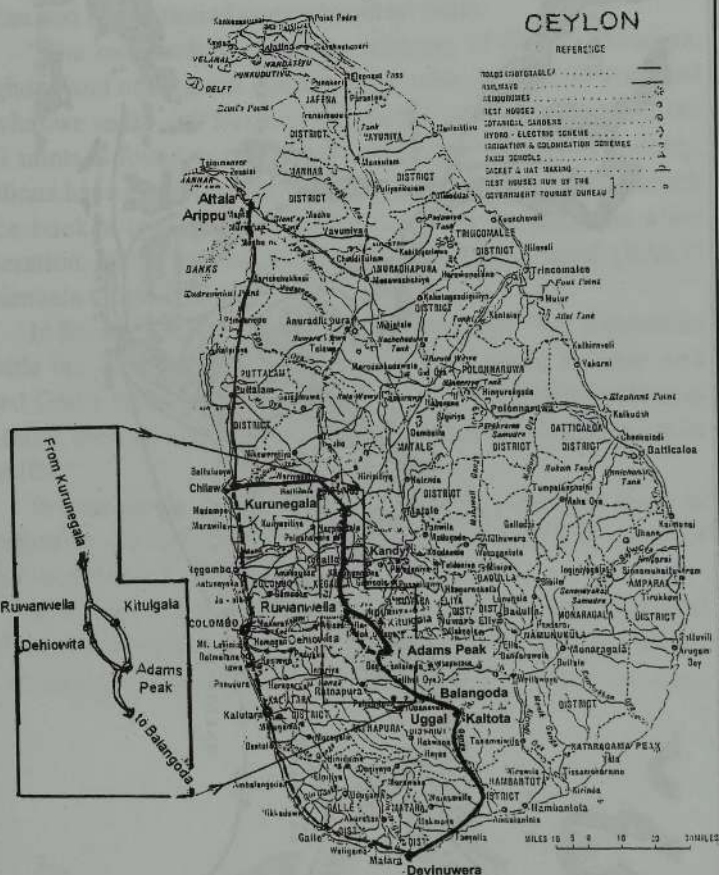
In conclusion, one has to bear in mind that faith, or Iman, is common to all major religions. Faith is the universal spirit of mysticism that is at the heart of all religions.

In this spirit, this account seeks to help preserve the historical and anecdotal facts and legends associated with Dafter Jailany, and to safeguard this sacred jungle shrine for generations to come.

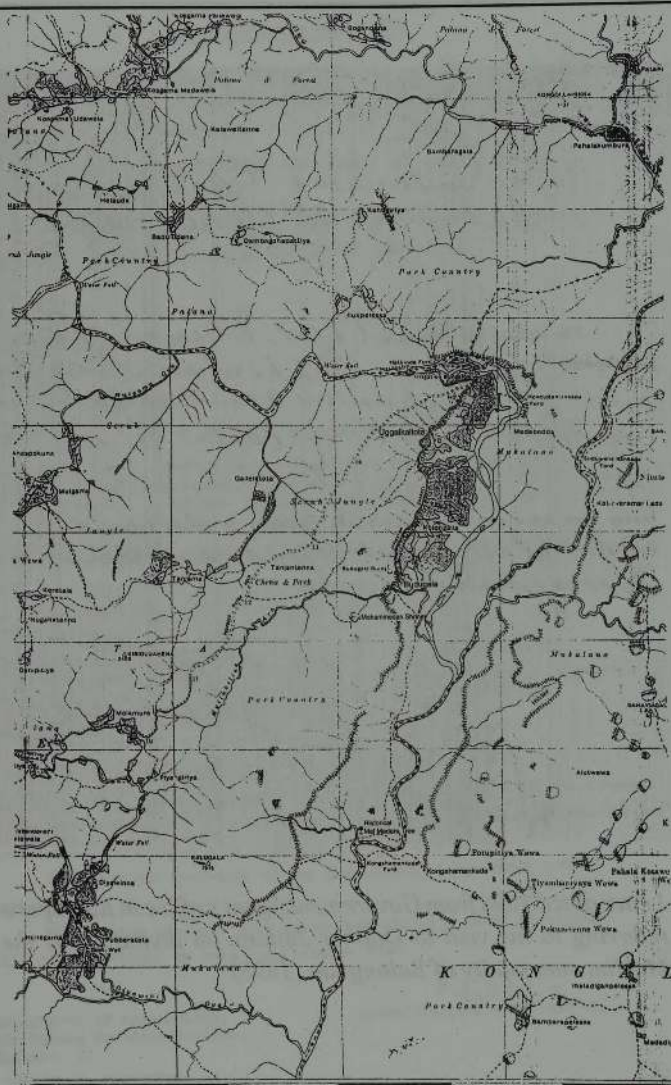


Ancient sea routes from the Middle East to the Far East (Courtesy: Denis Fernando)

IBN BATUTA'S LAND ROUTE FROM ATTALA TO ADAM'S PEAK AND
DEVINUWARA AND HIS RETURN ALONG THE SEA COAST IN 1340 A.D.
by A.Denis N Fernando 1998



Ibn Batuta's land route from Attala to Adam's Peak and Dewinuwara passing through Kuragala and Dafther Jailany and his return along the sea coast – 1340 AD (Courtesy: Denis Fernando)



Survey map depicting Dafther Jailany as a Mohammedan shrine (1901) (courtesy : Denis Fernando)

No 94

General St
(P)Government Agent's Office
Ratnapura 23rd April 1898

The Petition of Musafar Esmat Sarod
 praying that Abdur Rahim and Adarwan
 and all Mohammedan inhabitants
 of Balangoda (Balangoda) be reinstated

having been taken into consideration, the Petitioner is hereby informed
 that the Government Agent will visit
 Kooragala.

Respectfully
 Govt. Agent

Recd
 6/5/98

Letter dated 1898 from Government Agent's office in Ratnapura referring to his visit to Dafther Jailany on invitation by the Muslim community of Balangoda (1898)

LIST OF SUFI ORDERS

| Order | Founder |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. Muhammandiyya | Prophet Mohammed (SAL) (d 632) |
| 2. Siddiqiyya | Abu Bakr Al Siddiq (d 634) |
| 3. Uwaysiyya | Uways Al Qurani (7 th Century) |
| 4. Junaydiyya | Junayd al Baghdai (d 910) |
| 5. Hallajiyya | Al Hallaj (d 922) |
| 6. Qadiriyya | Abd Al Qadir Al Jilani (d 1166) |
| 7. Madyaniyya | Abu Madyan (d 1182) |
| 8. Rafaiyya | Ahmad Al Rifai (d 1182) |
| 9. Urabiyya | Umar ibn Muhammad Al Urabi (16 th century) |
| 10. Hatmiyya | Muhyi al Din Ibn Arabi (d 1238) |
| 11. Suhrawardiyya | Abu Hafs al Suhrawardi (d 1234) |
| 12. Ahmadiyya | Ahamed al Badawi (d 1276) |
| 13. Shadhiliyya | Abu al Hassan al Shadhili (d 1258) |
| 14. Wafaiyya | Muhammad Wafa (d 1358) |
| 15. Zarruqiyya | Ahmad al Zarruq (d 1494) |
| 16. Jazuliyya | Muhammad all Jazuli (d 1465) |
| 17. Bakriyya | Abu Bakr al Wafai (d 1496) |
| 18. Malamatiyya | Abu Yazid al Bistami (d 874) |
| 19. Khalwatiyya | Umar al Khalwati (d 1397) |
| 20. Kubrawiyya | Najm al Din Kubra (d 1221) |
| 21. Hamadaniyya | Ali Hamadani (d 1384) |
| 22. Rukniyya | Ala al Dawla Simannani (d 1336) |
| 23. Nuriyya | Nur al Din Isfaraini (d 1317) |
| 24. Naqshabandiyya | Baha al Din Naqqshbandi (d 1389) |
| 25. Shattariyya | Abd Allah Shattari (d 1438) |
| 26. Ghawthiyya | Muhammad Ghawth Gwaliyari (d 1563) |
| 27. Ishqiyya | Abu Yazid al Ishqi (14 th century) |
| 28. Mawlawiyya | Jalal al Din Rumi (d 1273) |
| 29. Jahriyya | Ahmed al Yasawi (d 1288) |
| 30. Burhaniyya | Ibrahim al Dasuqi (d 1288) |
| 31. Hafifiyya | Ibn al Khafif (d 982) |
| 32. Khawatiriyya | Ali ibn Maymun al Idrisi (d 1511) |
| 33. Aydarusiyya | Abu Bakr al Aydarus (1509) |

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 34. Mushariyya | Sufyan al Thawri (d 778) |
| 35. Qushayriyya | Abu al Qasim al Qushayri (d 1074) |
| 36. Kharraziyya | Abu Sa'id al Kharraz (d 890) |
| 37. Chishtiyya | Mu'in al Din Chisti (d 1236) |
| 38. Madariyya | Badi al Din Shah Madar (d 1437) |
| 39. Qalandariyya | Jamal al Din Savi (d 1233) |
| 40. Suhayliyya | Muhammad al Suhayli (16 th century) |

EPITHETS OF SAIYIDENA HAZRAT GHOUS-UL-AZAM JILANI

| | | | |
|--------------|------------|----------|-------|
| 1. Al-Saiyid | Muhyiuddin | Amr | Allah |
| 2. Al-Shaikh | Muhyiuddin | Fadl | Allah |
| 3. Awliyah | Muhyiuddin | Aman | Allah |
| 4. Miskeen | Muhyiuddin | Noor | Allah |
| 5. Sultan | Muhyiuddin | Saif | Allah |
| 6. Khwaja | Muhyiuddin | Farman | Allah |
| 7. Makkhdoom | Muhyiuddin | Burhan | Allah |
| 8. Darvesh | Muhyiuddin | Ayat | Allah |
| 9. Badshah | Muhyiuddin | Ghous | Allah |
| 10. Faqir | Muhyiuddin | Mushahid | Allah |

TRUSTEES OF THE DAFTHER JAILANY ROCK CAVE MOSQUE – 1890 TO 2001

1890 Seyed Musthafa Syed Abdul Rahuman
Sinna Lebbe Cassim Lebbe

1916 C.L.M. Marikar
A.L. Majeed
O.L. Abdul Lebbe
A.L. Hassen Marikar

1936 C.L.M. Marikar Hadjiar, JP
O.L. Abdul Lebbe
A.L. Hassen Marikar
C.L. Abbas Marikar
A.L.A Majeed
I.L. Abdul Lebbe

1962 C.L.M. Marikar Hadjiar, JP
O.L. Abdul Lebbe
A.L. Hassen Marikar
C.L. Abbas Marikar
A.L.A Majeed

1966 C.L.M. Marikar Hadjiar, JP
A.L. Hassen Marikar
C.L. Abbas Marikar
A.L.A Azeez
M.L.M. Aboosally

1975 C.L. Abbas Marikar
M.L.M. Aboosally
A.L.A Majeed
A.L.A. Azeez

- A.H. Batchamiya
A.L.M. Thahir, JP
- 1981 C.L. Abbas Marikar
M.L.M. Aboosally
A.L.M. Thahir, JP
A.R.M. Asdeen
A.C.M. Ansari
- 1987 A.L.M. Junaideen
M.L.M. Aboosally
A.R.M. Asdeen
A.L.M. Thahir, JP
A.C.M. Ansari, JP
J.D.M. Saheed
- 1999 M.L.M. Aboosally, JP
A.L.M. Junaideen, JP
A.C.M. Ansari, JP
A.R.M. Asdeen
M.L.M. Abdul Salam
M.L.M. Cassim
A.A.M. Iqbal
M.A.M. Manaf
A.C.M. Fahir
- 2001 M.L.M. Aboosally, JP
A.L.M. Junaideen, JP
A.C.M. Ansari, JP
M.L.M. Abdul Salam
M.L.M. Cassim
A.A.M. Iqbal
M.A.M. Manaf
A.C.M. Fahir
Anwar Doole

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Courtesy: Dominic Sansoni

Dafther Jailany, at the edge of the Balangoda plateau in the Ratnapura district, is a mountain retreat on the ancient road from Galle to Ratnapura and Adam's Peak. The rock cave mosque at Dafther Jailany is associated with one of the greatest saints in Islamic history, namely Sheikh Muhiyadeen Abdul Qadir Gilani.

The Saint and Dafther Jailany are linked by more than name - rock carvings, Arabic inscriptions, writings, tombstones and legend indicate that the Saint meditated at Dafther Jailany for a period - and there are many stories about the Saint's visit and his impact on Dafther Jailany. Today, Dafther Jailany is the main focal point for Sufism in Sri Lanka, and this is the story of this sacred rock cave mosque.