

A Historical Record OF



KAYTS ISLAND



(LEYDEN)

Raymond Rajabalan



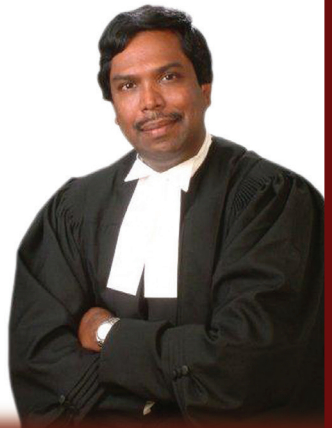
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A HISTORICAL RECORD OF KAYTS ISLAND (OORKAVALTHURAI)



S.Raymond Rajabalan

DEDICATION

To the hundreds of devoted Catholic priests, nuns, Christian brothers and scholars from various religions who have toiled hard to maintain the glory of the beautiful Island.

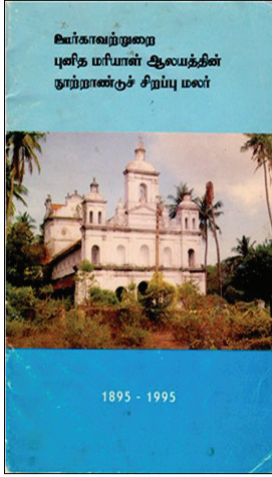
PREFACE

Recently, I read the centenary souvenir of Kayts St. Mary's Church, produced in 1995 by Mr. S. M. Joseph, a retired teacher and a veteran journalist from Karampon. It contained lots of valuable information about the introduction and spread of Catholic religion in the island of Kayts. The information included in that booklet were very valuable and I felt they should be translated into English so that those historical facts will become a permanent record. In fact Mr. Joseph, the author of that souvenir too emphasized in the preface the need for recording of the past history of Kayts.

The souvenir created in me such a great interest that I spent many hours researching various sources in order to update the variety of information included in that book. However, it is very unfortunate that due to the frequent displacement of people during the civil war in 1990, so much valuable materials regarding the past history of the island of Kayts has been lost forever. In this context the articles in this souvenir written by a number of teachers from Kayts and Karampon such as Messrs. S. M. Joseph, J. F. Jegarasingham, C. J. Stanislaus, S. A. Gnanaratnam and late Ms. Jacintha Saverimuthu has become a very valuable source of information.

Mr. Joseph also acknowledged the great help rendered to him by Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Savundranayagam, retired Bishop of Jaffna, Rt. Rev. Dr. Kingsley Swampillai retired Bishop of Trincomalee, Nuns of the order of Holy Family Convent and the Nuns of Holy Cross in compiling the information about the various parishes of Kayts kept recorded at the Bishops House in Jaffna.

Meanwhile, I discussed this idea in great detail with Rexi Anton, a former teacher of Kayts St. Antony's College and with one of my class mates Thadchanamoorthy (Veerakesari Moorthy), a free lance



writer also residing in Canada Both of them whole heartedly encouraged me to go ahead with this project. In addition I wish to point out that Mr. Rajakulendran of kayts East was also very actively involved in this project from the very beginning. In fact if not for his continued help and encouragement, this book would not have been a reality. In addition I must also like to acknowledge that one of my former students Charvananthan has also provided us with a wealth of information about his birth place Naranthanai.

After discussing about this project with some of my former class mates from Kayts, Karampon, Naranthanai and Suruvil, Rexi and I decided to embark on this project without any further delay. We realize that this work is not going to be error free since much time has passed without most of the facts being recorded. For example the great contribution made by the residents of Karampon and Kayts for the shipping industry has not been properly recorded. Thus the information regarding the old glory of Kayts harbour has become a distant memory. As such, whatever information available about Kayts needs to be revised by any one from Kayts, living throughout the globe and record them as accurately as possible. In this context, any suggestions for improving the contents of this guide book are greatly welcome.

S. R. Rajabalan B.Sc (Hons) (Ceylon)
Canada
May 2017

FOREWORD



I am pleased to provide a foreword for a valuable book written about the history of the island of Leyden by a former student of mine Mr. Rajabalan, residing in Canada. As a teacher who taught the subject of history for thousands of students at my Alma Mater, it has been one of my dreams to record the history of this birth place of mine.

However, due to a variety of reasons including the 30 year old civil war, I was unable to get this done. Now that I am retired, I had long given up my idea. Meanwhile, it was a pleasant surprise when another student of mine Anton Rexi gave me a draft copy of a book titled "A Historical Record of Kayts Island" I breathed a sigh a relief to note that at last one of my student has achieved what I had intended to do.

History may be compared to a river since it moves along with time. Therefore it is important that it is vital to record events as and when happens. However, it is unfortunate much of the history of this island has never been recorded. Even if it may be incomplete regarding some aspects, the present generation has taken great efforts to record the available information and it is that realization that led to the birth of this book. The effort to record the special features of the history of the island of Kayts is creditable and is very commendable. This worthy effort will promote among the people of Kayts patriotic feeling towards their birthplace, help them learn about its ancient history and will help them contribute to the growth of this island.

This island has many famous schools, social organizations and places of worship. For the benefit of the future generations this very valuable book titled "A Historical Record of Kayts Island" has been compiled to include all available information about this island and I believe that this great effort will benefit not only the residents of the area but also the people of the adjoining areas.

While going through this book I am amazed to note the great efforts involved in producing it. Living far away for nearly four decades, it is a great achievement by the author to have compiled so many facts and arranged them in an easily readable format. As the author has stated that in the absence of organized records about this island, it was tough job to produce this book. Now that a book has been produced about this island, anyone else interested in improving this book should come forward to provide any further information

It is my hope that anyone who would like to know about this island in detail, this book will serve as a record of at least some vital information. I wish to thank all those involved in documenting such valuable information and I pray to almighty God that many people will benefit from this valuable documentary record.

**A. Sabaratnam B. A. English Secondary Trained,
M.A (H.D)**

*Retired Principal, Karampon Shanmuganatha
Vidyalayam, 33 Years teacher at St. Antony's College,
Kayts.*

***Message from Emeritus Bishop of Jaffna
Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Thomas Savundranayagam***



It has been long awaited desire to write about the beautiful Island of Kayts and its people. Now I am very happy that long awaited desire has been fulfilled and printing of the book has been completed. I congratulate the writer and all the coordinators and collaborators for this work of lasting value. I hope all the educated people from Kayts and Jaffna will obtain this book and keep it at home for their children to read and to know the glory of the island. The people of future generation connected with island of Kayts will appreciate and treasure this book. Once again I congratulate the producers of this book about the Leyden Island.

Bishop Thomas

CONTENTS

1. Etymology of places in the Island of Kayts
2. Propagation of Catholic religion in Kayts
3. Growth of Catholicism in Kayts
4. A. History of Catholic Churches in the island of Kayts
B. History of Hindu temples in the island of Kayts
C. History of the Mosque in Kayts Island
5. Parish Priests who served in Kayts Island
A. Kayts
B. Karampon
C. Naranthanai
6. Priests and Nuns from Kayts Island
A. Kayts
B. Karampon
C. Naranthanai
D. Eluvaitivu
7. Bishops from Kayts Island
A. Kayts
B. Karampon
C. Naranthanai
8. Educational Institutions in Kayts Island
A. St. Antony's College
B. Velanai Central College
C. Little Flower Convent, Karampon
D. Shanmuganatha Vidyalayam, Karampon
E. Naranthanai R. C. School
F. Ganesha Vidyalayam-Naranthanai
G. Thampaddy Mixed School - Naranthanai
9. Prominent people from Kayts Island
10. Artistes of Kayts
11. The People of Kayts and their role in shipping industry
12. Forts in Kayts
13. Romantic Ceylon
14. Some important events during the past history of Kayts island
15. Bibliography



Natural Beauty of Kayts



KAYTS NEW BUILDINGS

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Islands off Jaffna Peninsula

Orra-tota or modern Kayts attained importance as a port of maritime commercial activity especially during the time of the Polonnaruwa kings. The Nainativu Tamil inscription datable to the reign of Parakramabahu I, suggests that foreign vessels laden with merchandise arrived at the port of Uraturai(Kayts). This edict, besides proclaiming that foreign traders should be given the due protection, contains regulation regarding wrecked ships which brought in merchandise.

A Chola inscription datable to 1178 A.D. refers to the building of ships and the assembling of troops at Uraturai by Parakramabahu I during his South Indian campaigns. Both Jambukolapattana (Kankesanturai) and Uraturai (Kayts) would have continued as important ports connecting South India and Jaffna even in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries A.D. as rulers of Jaffna maintained close contacts with South India.

Etymology of places in the Island of Kayts

Kayts Town

Uraturai (Kayts) is also referred to as Oorkaaval-tu'rai. The etymology of the place name Oorkaaval-tu'rai (in 19th and 20th century Tamil records) has evoked much controversy.

The place was an important harbour in the North in colonial and pre-colonial times. Strategically located at a narrow entrance to the Jaffna Lagoon, the port was commanding the sea routes through the Palk Bay in all directions. It was guarding the fort and the city of Jaffna as well as Nallur the capital of the kingdom of Jaffna. In the past, capturing this port was always a prerequisite to control the Jaffna Peninsula.

The Portuguese and the Dutch built two forts (Fort Eyrie and Fort Hammenhiel) on either side of the lagoon entrance of this port to guard it as well as to guard the entrance into the Jaffna Lagoon.

In British times, a causeway to the Kaaraitheevu (Kaarainagar) Island, from Punnaalai in the Jaffna Peninsula was laid in 1869, essentially to link the Oorkaaval-tu'rai port by land with the rest of the island, from the side of Kaaraitheevu.



Location of the port of Kayts at a narrow entrance to the Jaffna Lagoon

The strategic importance of the port continues to this day, as a major naval base of Sri Lanka located at this port on the side of Kaaraitheevu (Kaarainagar).

Some Tamil writers have argued that Oor-kaaval-thu'rai, meaning 'the port guarding the country' in Tamil, is the original form of the place name, which became Ooraathu'rai. But there are other arguments:

The Pali chronicle Poojavaliya, compiled in the 13th century, notes the name of the port as Oora-tota.

The 17th century chronicle Rajavaliya, notes the name

as Hooraa-tota and also comes out with a mythical story that the port got the name because of the landing of a mythical boar at this place. Ooraa (Ooroa, plural) means, boar, hog, pig, swine etc in Sinhala. The second part of the Pali chronicle Culavamsa, which was finally compiled in the 18th century, while narrating the events of the 13th century, writes the name of the port as Sookara-tittha (Tittha in Pali means port, ford, landing place etc). Hence there was the argument that the name of the port has come from Sinhala. The form Oorkaaval-thu'rai seems to be a late 19th or early 20th century Tamil standardization that probably came by a conflation of the place name with the idea of the strategic importance of the port.

If we stick to objective written records for the etymological study of the name of the port Ooraathu'rai, the earliest available records are two inscriptions in Tamil, both are dated to the 12th century common era (CE).

One was issued locally, probably at the port itself, by a Sinhalese king Parakrambahu I, who was occupying the port at that time and had his army stationed there, and a Chola king, Rajadhiraja II, who made an expedition to capture the port issued the other inscription. The first one is now found in the temple at Nainatheevu Island (Nagadipa) and the other is found at Thiruvaalangkaadu in Tamil Nadu.

Both the inscriptions very clearly depict the name of the port as Ooraath-thu'rai.

An etymological explanation through Tamil, Malayalam and Sinhala, that seems to be appropriate to the context, is the possibility of the prefix of the place name coming from the Tamil / Malayalam Uru or Uruvu meaning a ship, schooner etc and Oru/ Oruwa in Sinhala meaning a boat or canoe.

Ooraath-thu'rai therefore could have simply meant 'the port of call for ships' or schooners, dhonis etc. The Tamil, Malayalam and Sinhala words cited above come from Dravidian etymology (DED 659), and are related to the verb root Oor that means to move slowly, sail etc (DED 749). Oorthi (vehicle) and Oorthal (moving slowly, sailing) are other related words in Tamil.

Uru is not a popular word in written Tamil to mean a ship. But it is prevalent in colloquial Tamil, meaning a schooner, sloop or a small vessel (Madras Tamil Lexicon). In Malayalam, Uru or Uruvu means a ship. Oru (Oruwa in singular) is a popular word in Sinhala to mean a boat, especially an out-rigger canoe with sail.

Kayts during Portugese and Dutch period



The Portuguese gave the name Cais to the port of Ooraath-thu'rai. The fort they built there was called Fortalaza do Cais. In Portuguese language Cais means a platform, landing place, pier, wharf or harbour. The place name Cais later became Kayts in Dutch and in English renderings.

Kayts Island

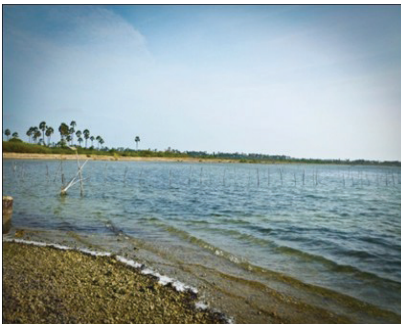
Kayts is still the popular name for the port of Ooraath-thu'rai as well as for the island where it is located, especially among non-Tamils. It should be noted that the entire island of Kayts was named Leyden by the Dutch rulers.

Pa'n'naithu'rai was the port of the Jaffna Fort. Until 1950s, Pa'n'naithu'rai was used for boat communication to the islands off Jaffna, especially to the Kayts Island. The port went into disuse when a causeway was built in the 1950s linking Kayts with Jaffna city. The suffix of the place name, Thu'rai (port) is lost today and only the prefix Pa'n'nai survives in the name of the causeway, as Pa'n'naip-palam.

The port town, **Ooraath-thu'rai or Kayts** is the Divisional headquarters of the Islands Division of the Jaffna Peninsula.

Three of the major islands - Kayts, Karaitivu and Punkudutivu - are joined to the mainland by causeways over the shallow waters around the peninsula. Close to the town of Kayts, at the northern tip of Kayts Island, stands the island fort of Hammenhiel, which used to be accessible by boat from Kayts. The name means 'heel-of-the-ham' and relates to the Dutch view that Ceylon was shaped rather like a ham.

Varaatimunai (Port)



This ancient port is located in close proximity to the Kayts harbour. It was a small natural harbour many centuries ago. It is located close to shallow sea and close to its tip there is a land mass

of approximately 80 metre long and 10 metre wide and this land mass has been a natural protective barrier.

Historical records indicate that many centuries ago, this small harbour served as the shipping point for Elephants and Horses. The place where the horses were kept prior to export is still referred to as **Maavadaikkaadu**. It was the traders of Chetty community who were involved in the export of these animals and still today there is a street named **Chettiyar Thotta Veethy** and a land named **Chetty Valavu** to refer the place where these traders resided. These animals were also shipped from Kayts harbour. However there is evidence to indicate that this business could have been conducted from Kalapoomy harbour located directly opposite to Varaatimunai.

It is possible that Elephants captured in Wannu area could have been transported through Elephant pass, Anaipanthu etc first to Araalithurai area in Kayts island then to Maavadaikadu and then exported from the nearby Varaatimunai. A few years ago people from Kayts Island had walked through the sea from Araalithurai to reach the mainland in Jaffna. As such it is possible that 500 years ago this stretch of sea would have been much shallower and it would have been easier to walk these animals through the sea.

Since the distance from Elephant pass to Varaatimunai is about two and a half times more than the distance from Elephant pass to Kalapoomi, it is quite possible to believe that these animals would have been shipped from Viratimunai.

In addition, there is definite proof that the non-perennial Valukki River that cuts across Araali was very deep in the olden days and people travelled through this area up to Kantharodai. This is yet another indication that it

was easier to transport these animals to Varaatimunai than moving them across deep and muddy Valukki river.

Since the bottom of the sea in the harbours in Kalapoomi and Kayts were sandy and had pebble stones, Varaatimunai with heavier stones in the seabed was more suitable for shipping heavy animals such as elephants.

Since no cement was available those days whenever there was a need for a strong floor, heavy stones were planted in the land or sea. However since there is no evidence of any artificial floors being constructed In Kayts or Kalapoomi one can be certain that there would not have been any export businesses being operated from these harbours.

It is also believed that Elephants and horses were brought from Pooneryn area up to Mandaitvu and then transported to Vratimunai before being shipped abroad.

During British rule, tobacco cultivation flourished in this area and varati cow dung needed for the cultivation of this crop were being brought from Wannai through this harbour to be used in Naranthanai, Saravanai and Velanai. As such this area came to be known as Viratimunai. It is believed that this area was earlier called Kokkilamandai because from a distance this area appeared like the head of the long beaked bird called Crane (Kokku in Tamil).

A. Sarvanathan
London

Tamil Christian epitaph of significance found in Kayts

Early 19th century Tamil epitaph found on a tomb in Kayts in 2009, evidences the usage of the word 'Aariyar' in Christian context, says Professor P. Pushparatnam, Head of the Department of History of the University of Jaffna, who brought the epitaph to notice and read it. According to local media reported his finding, the tomb of one Ales Francis Cruz, died in 1827 was found behind the old customs building at the Kayts port.



The tomb located near the old customs building of Kayts port.

The text of the epitaph, which is in Tamil and read by Prof. Pushparatnam follows :1827 (in Tamil numerals) Thai month 27th date (in Tamil numerals and symbols for month and date) Naakapad'nam Aariyar Ales Piraagnchis Kurus" It was a tomb of a Christian, Ales Francis Cruz, from Naakappadinam in the Cormandal Coast of Tamil Nadu who died on the 27th date of the Tamil month Thai (Jan-Feb) of the year 1827.



The Epitaph found on the tomb.

According to Tamil dictionaries made in the 19th century, one of the several shades of meaning for the word Aariyar (Arya in Sanskrit) is a foreigner or a person of a foreign faith.

The epitaph comes out with the title 'Aariyar' for the deceased probably to indicate his Christian faith, priesthood or to indicate that he was a Christian of foreign (Europe even though coming from Naakappaddinam. Cruz is a common title even today, especially among the Catholics of Mannaar.

Following the old tradition of Tamil writing, as seen in inscriptions and palm leaf manuscripts, dots on consonants are avoided in the epitaph.

The location of the tomb is believed to be a burial ground for war or epidemic victims of the by-gone centuries, as locals remember seeing large number of skeletons in collective burials when the place was cleared sometimes back, Dr. Pushparatnam said.

Kayts, Oorkaavat-tu'rai or Ooraath-thurai was an important harbour in ancient and colonial times. The celebrated Saint, Francis Xavier, visited the harbour in mid 16th century and introduced the faith, according to Catholic traditions.

The Port of Kayts

Due to the natural environment, in the course of time Kayts developed into a busy port for sailing vessels to foreign lands prompting import and export trade with India. Bangaledesh, Burma and many other Asian countries. During the British period, the customs revenue of Kayts port was only second to that of Colombo. This is an indication of the volume of trade that Kayts port was handling during the period of British rule.

The Northern Province has many sea forts, named with ending "thurai". Kayts with Tamil name Oorkavalthurai is one of them. Others are Valvettithurai, Kankesanthurai and Paruthithurai.

These ports have communities which had made sea faring or sailing in ocean going vessels as their profession .This



lends validity to the existence of a clan of famous Tamil mariners. They had weathered many seasons and seen many foreign lands and their cultures. Consequently the people of Kayts were successful tradesmen and businessmen over the years. The British rulers, to whom naval service was honourable, granted due recognition to these navigators from Kayts.

The harbour was very active till early 1940's. Every time a ship returned to the harbour especially from Burma , it was a time of great joy to the residents of this town since the sailors in the ship brought with them valuable goods. The church festivals and family functions were usually reactivated by the arrival of the ships and their crew.

However, by late 1940.s the situation changed as some of the ships were lost in the Bay of Bengal due to Japanese bombing during World War 11. Many other ships were sold to other countries while some of the ships became sea unworthy. As a result, the prosperity enjoyed by the residents of Kayts was gradually being reduced and consequently this prompted them to seek employment outside of Kayts, in Colombo as well as in other parts of the country.

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Villages adjoining Kayts Town

Karampon

Karampon is a large village and is in the Northwestern part of the Kayts (Oorkaavattu'rai) Island. It became a prestigious settlement of affluent people even in the past, because of its location adjacent to the Kayts harbour. Kayts was a flourishing ancient entrepot, continued into the times of the Portuguese and the Dutch. It survived at least as a port of some importance in foreign trade under the British rule but it became a ghost port with the independence of Ceylon and India.

Karampon is either a variation of the word *Karampai* or a combination of the words *Karampu* and the suffix 'An'. Either way the meanings are the same.

The words *Karampai* and *Karampu* primarily mean a barren land. Often such barren lands are arid, alkaline terrains, found with scanty grass and thorn scrub. Some of the thorny shrubs and types of grass also seem to have been attributed with the term *Karampai* because of their association with the *Karampu / Karampai* landscape.



Karampai or *Perung-ka'laa*: *Carissa carandas*, ripe and unripe fruits.

The root word *Kara* or *Khara*, in many of the South Asian languages stands to mean rough, hard, harsh etc. Interestingly these words also stand for certain thorny shrubs and types of grass in these languages.

The thorny plants and grass that are identified by these terms are also largely the same between Tamil and Sinhala.

Karamba in Sinhala is a shrub of two species, *Mahaa Karamba* (the big *Karamba*) and *Hin Karamba* (the small *Karamba*). The Botanical terms for them are *Carissa carandas* and *Carissa spinarum*.

Ka'laa is an alternative term, found in Tamil and much used in literature, for this shrub. This is a thorny shrub that bears edible black fruits. The word *Ka'laa* itself means black in old Tamil (*Kalu* in Sinhala).

Like in Sinhala, the *Ka'laa* has two varieties:

Perung-ka'laa and *Chi'ru-ka'laa*.

The word *Kara* in Sinhala has a shade of meaning for the thorny shrub of *Canthium parviflorum*, which is *Kaarai*, *Chi'ru-kaarai* (the small *Kaarai*) or *Cheng-kaarai* (the reddish-*kaarai*), one of the varieties of the shrub known as *Kaarai* (*Webera tetrandra*) in Tamil.

A type of grass called *Andropogon serratus* or *Sorghum nitidum* is also identified by the word *Khara* in Sinhala. This species or a related species is a special feature in the islands off Jaffna. It is found in abundance in the alkaline stretches of Kachchatheevu and Paalaitheevu.

Suruvil

Suruvil is a village in Velanai West of the Kayts Island of Jaffna district. The place must have got the name from the name of a muddy pond in the locality. Presently there are two ponds at Suruvil and both are called *Va'n'naan-ku'lam*. *Suru-vil* means the muddy pond. The prefix *Suru*, as could be seen from other examples

of place names, is from the Eezham Tamil usage Churi, which means mud, mire, slush or slime.

Charava'nai



***Charava'nam/ Naa'nal
reed found along a
source of water***

Charava'nai is the name of a large segment of the Kayts Island. This part of the island has a number of ponds and paddy fields.

Charava'nai means the locality of Charava'nam reed or the locality of the pond having the Charava'nam reed. The common Tamil word for the reed is Naa'nal. Different kinds of tall reeds that grow near sources of water such as ponds and rivers are known by this name. The botanical terms of the reed are Saccharum spontaneum, Saccharum sara, Saccharum arundinacea etc.

The word Charava'nam corresponds to the Sanskrit word S'arava'na that means a thicket of reed. S'ara in Sanskrit means a reed that is used in making arrows as well as an arrow.

Allaippiddi

Allaippiddi is a village within the Kayts Island and is strategically located on the causeway from Jaffna towards islets of Velanai and Kayts through Pannai bridge. Most of the residents in this village are Roman Catholics.

Washerma African Art found in Allaippiddi

[TamilNet, Sunday, 04 March 2012]

Head part of a metal sculpture showing features of African Art, discovered while digging a well at Allaippiddi in the Kayts Island off Jaffna, have been brought to the notice of professionals in archaeology by the efforts of a local teacher Nadarajah Vakeesan of Bharathi Vidyalayam. The artifact, found in the Palk Bay side of Kayts, an ancient as well as colonial harbour island, where pottery dating from pre-Christian centuries, a hoard of Chola artifacts and a cargo of Chinese ware dated to 12th century CE have been found earlier, and where some early Islamic and European colonial monuments are also located, now shows its Black African connections too, academics said.



The piece of African art found at Allaippiddi in the Kayts Island of Jaffna

The sculpture, 14cms in height and 12cms in width is yet to be ascertained of its metal content, said Prof. P. Pushparatnam of the University of Jaffna, talking to media on the artifact acquired by archaeology field officers P. Kapilan and S. Manimaran.

Prof. Pushparatnam was citing the protruding jaw, thick lips, receding forehead, stylized curly hair, the back of the head and the long neck, in linking the sculpture to African Art.

Many African communities, especially from the Horn part of East Africa and Northern Africa in the ancient and medieval times, and many other Africans during the colonial times, were in contact with southern parts of maritime South Asia due to mercantile, mercenary, religious and labour reasons.



The inner side of the moulded half of the figure

The long neck depicted in the sculpture is considered a sign of beauty by many African peoples. The finish just at the shoulder probably means that the sculpture was originally designed like that. But, what has been found is only one halving of the moulded image, as could be

seen from the photo of its other side. The two perforations on the face and another attempted one are deliberate.

In the absence of context and typological studies it is difficult to say when and from which part of Africa the sculpture had come to Jaffna, but, there are strong literary and folk evidences available in Jaffna for the peninsula's contacts with an African people identified by the name Papparavar, at least in the times of the Kingdom of Jaffna, academics said.

Papparavar is a mercenary soldier community that had come to Jaffna, according to historiographical literature Vaiyaapadal that was written in the times of the Kingdom of Jaffna. It seems later they took to fishing.

The land where the Nayinaa-theevu Amman temple stands today is known in its land deeds as Papparavan Challi (meaning the shelly land of a Papparavan). The temple is located in an archaeological site. Nayinaa-theevu, which is an adjacent island of Kayts was also sometimes called as Papparavath-theevu.

Another related place name is Papparavap-piddi (the coastal high ground of Papparavar), north of Chaalai in the sand bar that links the Jaffna Peninsula with the main island. This is also an archaeological site.

Pappara-theasam and Papparavar are general references to Africa and its black people in the Tamil lexicons and as implied through corroborative evidences available in the neighbouring languages. In Sanskrit, Babhroo is a country associated with people of curly hair and deep brown colour. Related terms Barbar in old Greek and Arabic and Berber in later European languages, referred to people of the Berber territory of the Western part of North Africa, i.e., Morocco.

Morocco played a significant role in trade, geographical

Kayts Island

voyages, Islamic missions and mercenary soldiers in the pre-European medieval times of maritime South Asia. Ibn Battuta, who met the king of Jaffna during his travels in mid 14th century, had come from Morocco. Many of the early missions of maritime Islam of a particular mystic school associated with Dargahs that had come to South India, Maldives and to the island of Sri Lanka, originated from Morocco.

The Village of Ma'nkumpa located near Allaippiddi in Kayts and the Nayinaatheevu Island have some early Muslim monuments associated with the Dargah tradition. However, the sculpture of African Art found at Allaippiddi, could neither belong to Islam nor to the hybrid Arab cultures of North Africa. It is Black African, academics said.

Vaiyaapaadal makes a differentiation of Papparavar and Choanakar—whether Muslims or not— and mentions them with separate identity, when it lists out the mercenary soldier groups that had come to Jaffna. Choanakar are generally the Arabs.

The Kayts Island, due to its location facing the Palk Strait and guarding the entrances into the Jaffna Lagoon, was in the hub of maritime contacts since very early times.

Pre-Christian pottery sites, probably of protohistoric period, have been found in the island at Chaaddi and Kumpu'rup-piddi (Ragupathy 1983, Pushparatnam 2004). In the 1960s the then curator of the Jaffna museum, Mr. M.P. Selvaratnam acquired a hoard of Chola artefacts found at Naaranthanai in Kayts. In 1971, Prof. K. Indrapala discovered a Chola inscription at the fort off Kayts and in 1977 Prof John Carswell found a cargo of Chinese ware at Allaippiddi.

Kayts got its name from the Portuguese Cais, meaning harbour. The Tamil name of the harbour, Oraath-thurai (as found written in the Tamil inscriptions of 12th century CE and as used in the speech of the local people), means the harbour of a particular type of sail-ships.

Chaaddi

Chaaddi is a place name for a coastal area in the Allaippiddi - Veala'nai stretch of the Kayts Island, off Jaffna.

Etymologically the word *Chaaddi* can be interpreted as a land that has been ploughed (*Chaadu*: the act of tearing the surface of earth by a plough in which the earth is heaped on either side.)

Kathiraiver Pillai's dictionary is of much help in getting words and shades of meaning of the Eezham Tamil dialect.

He explains *Chaaddith-tharai* (the *Chaaddi* land as *Payir ceytha tharai*, which can either mean a cultivation land abandoned or a land once cultivated. Literally it means the land that was once ploughed (*Uzhutha-nilam*). This explanation suits the context of *Chaaddi*, which was abandoned as a settlement one or two centuries ago.

The place, located along the coast south of the Ma'nkumpaan mosque and adjacent to cultivation fields on its eastern side, display a number of filled-up wells, perhaps the remains of the last habitation. The desertion of the place is still in the memory of the people of the island.



A View of Chaaddi beach

The place might have gained the name because of the abandoned cultivation plots of the settlement. However, the locality presently called Chaaddi was also the site for one of the early settlements of Jaffna Peninsula. Pre Common Era as well as medieval pottery has been found in significant quantity in this place (Ragupathy 1987, Pushparatnam 2005)

Naranthanai

Naranthanai - A historical view

Narayanan was the regional king during Great King Sankilian's reign of the Yallpanam Kingdom. King Sankilian appointed Narayanan as the 'Commander in Chief' for all his forces in the eight islands situated to the south of the Jaffna peninsula. This record can be found in the Yallpanna Vibavamalai. In order to monitor all the islands he settled with his army in his own area because this area provided a good vantage point in Kavaltheevu (Oorkavalthurai). Within Kavaltheevu there

was a momentous location from which he could observe the sea route on both sides (North & South) of the island and prevent enemy invasions of the Jaffna Kingdom. This place was called Naranthanai.

The etymology of Naranthanai (நாரந்தனை) suggests that it was historically called Naranthaanai (நாரந்தானை). This was derived by unifying the two words Naran and Thaanai. Naran named after the name of its ruler Narayanan and Thaanai; which in Tamil means army (Soldiers). Hence, Naranthanai was named as the place of Narayanan's army. We can assume that eventually Naranthaanai (நாரந்தானை) was shortened phonetically to become Naranthanai (as it is known today) in which the original letter "தா" "Thaa" became "த" "tha". And the name grammatically customized and called (நாரந்தனை) Naranthanai.

Before this period, it is not known what Naranthanai was known as or indeed if it had a name at all. However, there is archaeological evidence in the north coast of Naranthanai (Thaanthoontri Amman Temple history) which suggests that a name for this area must have existed long before the last king Narayanan. It is widely believed that Narayanan's heritage is linked to Veera Narayanan and his kingdom.

In 200 AD, The Great King Veddiasan (வெடிஅரசன்) ruled the areas Neduntheevu and Nagatheepam. The king's brothers Veera Narayanan ruled the surrounding islands alongside with other brothers Vilankutheavan, Poorveerakandan and Earelankuruvan as small kings. Veera Narayanan's connection to Naranthanai can be still found today in Naranthanai as Veeran Kal (வீரன்கல்). The name suggests that the people of Naranthanai erected a stone in memory of Veera Narayanan and paid respect to it.

memory of Veera Narayanan and paid respect to it. However, this was destroyed either by Portuguese or by Dutch, during their control in Jaffna. This stone was a monument in Naranthanai and though the stone no longer remains, the name withstood the test of time as the land in an area is still called Veeran Kal. Hence, we assume the existence of the name Naranthanai dates back to 200 AD.

A. Sarvanathan BA

London



Paddy Field at Naranthanai

Naranthanai

Naranthanai is a large place of four Grama Sevaka areas in the Island of Kayts.



Naarai
Northeast Sri Lanka

Naarai is a water bird, found frequently mentioned by that name, in the *Changkam* literature. (*Akanaanooru*, *Pu'ranaanooru*, *Aingku'runooru*, *Ku'runthokai*, *Nati'nai*, *Kaliththokai*, *Pathittuppaththu*, *Porunaraattupadai*, *Chilappathikaaram*)

There were many varieties of them: *Karu-naarai* (the black *Naarai*); *Cheng-kaal-Naarai* (the red legged *Naarai*); *Naththai-kuththi-Naarai* (the *Naarai* that pecks snails or molluscs); *Ve'n-naarai* (the white *Naarai*); *Peru-naarai* (the big *Naarai*); *Chaampal-naarai* (the gray *Naarai*) and *Koy-adi-naarai* (the *Naarai* of twisted legs or feet)

Many of them are migrant birds that used to frequent the southern parts of South Asia during winter from the Arctic and the Himalayas. Awareness of their migrant habits is evident from the Messenger-poetry in Tamil such as the well-known verse '*Naaraay, naaraay, Cheng-kaal-naaraay*' by Chakthimuttap-pulavar. With its abundant water resources, Sri Lanka has a vast number of places where these birds nestle.

Kokku is another word, found widely used in the *Changkam* literature for the water birds. Even though *Naarai* and *Kokku* are used as synonyms, they are sometimes differentiated. *Naarai* mostly stands for the migrant bird, crane or flamingo of the long beak.

Propagation of Catholic religion in Kayts Island

A Historical Account Poet G. M. Selvaraja (Kayts East)

The catholic religion began to spread after the capture of Jaffna Kingdom by Portuguese. In order to spread their religion in the North, Portuguese brought down European priests and arranged them to reside in a monastery built within the Jaffna Fort.

Fr. Francisco de Oriente was the first priest sent to spread Christianity in Kayts island. He planted a Crucifix in the vicinity of Kayts harbour and began his great service and many people in the island were attracted by his devoted preaching.

King Pararajasegaram who ruled Jaffna between 1591 and 1616 was enraged to hear the spread of Christianity in Kayts and sent his soldiers ordering them to take effective steps to stop the spread of Christianity. According to legend when the soldiers tried to pull out the cross the priest embracing the cross cried out "Oh Holy Cross ! Let me shed my blood holding this cross and lay down my life". The soldiers noticing the great faith of the priest left the place without causing any harm to him. As a result of this, more people began to listen to the preachings of this priest and began to get baptized.

A few years later Rev. Fr. Pedro De Petancour laid the foundation in 1614 for a church named St. John's church at the present location of the Kayts Rest House, while the foundation for a seminary was laid near Kayts Harbour at the Customs building. The construction of both buildings was completed around 1625.

Apart from this Catholic Church, in Kayts there was another Church named Our Lady of Good Health in Velanai while in Allaipiddy there was a church built in honour of St. Joseph.

Arrival of Dutch

In 1658 the Dutch invaders captured the North chasing out the Portuguese and they began to destroy the catholic places of worship and chased out the catholic priests from Kayts and other parts of Jaffna. In addition the Catholics were subjected to various forms of torture including sentencing many of them to death. It was a great shock and a heavy blow for the devoted Catholics. All the churches in Kayts as well as the seminary were completely demolished. This situation continued until the arrival of Fr. Joseph Vaz (made saint in 2015) and a number of priests from Goa.

Later towards the end of their reign, the Dutch rulers slowly released their grip and Catholic religion once again began to spread. With the arrival of British, complete freedom of religion was allowed resulting in the rapid growth of Christianity throughout the North. Meanwhile a number of priests from Europe began to arrive and a golden era for the spread of the different forms of Christian denominations including Roman Catholic religion began.

*(Revised and translated from an article in karampon
Our Lady of Velankanni Souvenir published in 1975
by Kavaloor Poet G. M. Selvaraja)*

**Congratulations
and
Best wishes**

Mr. & Mrs. Emanuvel Nicholapillai

CONGRATULATIONS

AND

BEST WISHES



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Growth of Catholic religion in Kayts

1614	The planting of seeds for Catholic religion in Kayts island were begun by a Portuguese priest Fr. Pedro De Petancour who was the pioneer of preaching catholic religion in Kayts Island laid the foundation for a catholic church dedicated to St. John in the near vicinity of Kayts harbour. He also laid the foundation for a Seminary of Franciscan Missionaries in close proximity of the church.
1658-1687	The churches in Kayts island were demolished by Dutch
1687	Once again there was a resurgence of Catholic religion in the island.
1780	Rev. Fr. Leonardo Rebeira, a Goan priest began work in building of St. Mary's Church.
1815	Rev. Fr. Dalgodo, another Goan priest laid the foundation for St. James Church in Kayts.
1820	The Construction of St. Antony's church was completed
1842	Goan priests began their service in Kayts
1849-1857	During the period of Very Rev. Orazio Bettachini, Jesuit priests from South India arrive in Kayts
1850	Priests of the Order of Oblate Immaculate (OMI) began their service in Kayts
1857	A great retreat was organized at St. Antony's Church by Bishop Very Rev. Semeria in order to bring reconciliation between Padroadites and Propganda

1872	Kayts St. Antony's college was established by Fr. Boisseau
1896	Brothers of the order of St. Joseph were brought to Kayts
1898	Holy Cross nuns began their services in Kayts to spread Catholic religion
1900	Cholera spreads in Kayts. Bishop of Jaffna Very. Rev. Henri Joulain visits Kayts and arranges for the statute of St. Antony to be taken in procession around the church. Miraculously, within a short time, the spread of the disease stops.
1907	Fr. S. J. Stanislaus, the first priest from Karampon ordained. He was the first priest from the entire Kayts Island
1920	Catholics of Middle street , Kayts began to establish a new church in the name of St. Joseph
1921	Centenary celebration held at St. Antony's Church. Fr. L. Augustine from the parish of St.Mary's church was ordained as priest. This was the first ever ordination of a priest in Kayts
1930	Holy Cross nuns arrived to start their services at Kayts Hospital
1932	700th death anniversary of St. Antony commemorated in Kayts
1938	Karampon was declared as a new parish
1944	Consecration of Kayts St. Mary's church
1970	150th Anniversary of Kayts St. Antony's church
1972 July.07	Bishop of Jaffna Very Rev. Jerome Emilianuspillai passes away

Kayts Island

1981	Rev. Fr. Thomas Savundranayagam consecrated at the Madhu shrine as the first Bishop of Mannar diocese.
1983	Rev. Fr. Kingsley Swampillai consecrated at Rome as Bishop of Trincomalee - Batticaloa diocese
1990 Aug. 22	The people of Kayts island got displaced due to the activities of Sri Lankan Army
1990 Oct. 28	Sri Lankan army personnel returned to Kayts once again and there was further havoc.
1991 April	The residents of the island move to mainland Jaffna
1992	Bishop Deogupillai retires and Very Rev. Dr. Thomas Savundranayagam succeeds him as the new Bishop of Jaffna
1995	175th Anniversary of St. Antony's Church 100th Anniversary of St. Mary's Church
2003 Apr. 25	Bishop of Jaffna Very. Rev. Dr. Bastiampillai Deogupillai passes away
2006	Silver Jubilee of Bishop Thomas Savundranayagam of Jaffna celebrated at St. Antony's church
2012 Dec.03	Bishop of Trincomalee- Batticaloa Very Rev. Leo Rajendiram passes away
2015 June.03	Bishop of Trincomalee Kingsley Swampillai retires, Fr. Christian Noel Emmanuel appointed as new Bishop
2015 Oct.13	Bishop of Jaffna Rev. Thomas Savundranayagam retires. Vicar General Fr. Justin Gnanapiragasam appointed as new Bishop
2015 Nov. 28	Rev. Fr. Justin Gnanapiragasam Consecrated as the new Bishop of Jaffna

History of Churches in the island of Kayts **St. James Church - Kayts**

This is one of the oldest of the churches within Kayts town but its history is not known in detail. However it appears this would have been built by Spanish priests. According to the records of Rev. Fr. Gnanapragasiar of Nallur, originally there was a small church built with mud at the present location.



Later the foundation for the present church was laid on Jan.01, 1815 by a Goan priest named Fr. Dalgoda and the facade was completed in 1854 during the period of

Rev. Fr. Sylvanus Lorenz. Around the same period, Fr. Vistarinii, affectionately known as "Angel Priest " erected a cross in front of the church. The construction of the new altar was begun in 1880 and work on constructing the walls of the main church was completed during the period of Rev. Fr. A. Dora. Around 1911 the roofing of the church with tiles was done and the construction of living quarters for the priests was also completed.

When Fr. Sandrasegar was serving as the parish priest during 1877-1894, a statue of St. Mary was taken from this church and was erected at the Sinna madhu church in Saravanai.

(Translated from the 200th Anniversary Souvenir produced by the Parishioners of Kayts St. James Church 2016)

Historical events of St. James Church, Kayts

1. A Goan priest Rev. Fr. Dalgado laid the foundation stone for the church on January 1 st 1815.



2. The construction of the church facade was completed in 1854 during the period of Fr. Sylvanus Lorenz.
 3. Rev. Fr. Visthirini (alias Angel Priest) erected a cross in front of the church in 1854.
 4. Building works of the altar of the church was started in 1890.
 5. The construction of the center walls of the church building was completed between 1902 and 1907 during the period of Rev. Fr. J. Dora
 6. Work on the roof of the church was completed in 1911.
 7. Priests' residence was also built in 1911.
 8. Church building work was completed in 1936.
 9. The Belfry was constructed in 1955 with the funds donated by late Mr. K. Sebamalai .
 10. The church roof damaged by ethnic war was completely renovated in 2004 during the period of Rev. Fr. Antony Gnanapragasam.
 11. In 2010 an open air stage was constructed within the church premises.
 12. Major renovation work for the church was begun on 22 March 2015 and completed on 31st October 2015 during the period of Rev. Fr. P. F. Rajasingham.
- Renovation of the sanctuary and installation of a new granite altar.
 - Rebuilding of the side portion of the church destroyed by naval shelling.

- Construction of new Sacristy.
- Replacing Main floor of the church with terrazzo tiles.
- Renovation of the verandahs and the walls.
- Fixing New electrical fittings, fans and loud speakers

(Source : Jubilee souvenir published in 2016)

St. Mary's Church - Kayts



St. Mary's church stands majestically in the centre of Kayts surrounded by a number of coconut palms and is bordered by Mankuli road and Suruvil road, According to the records provided by Rev. Fr. Gnanapragasiar , this is the oldest of the churches in Kayts.

The foundation for the church was laid by a Goan priest Rev. Leonorado Riberia in 1780. A century later the old church was demolished and the construction of the new church commenced in 1888 and the facade was completed in 1895 by S. M. Rajakariar, a devoted parishioner. The main part of the church was completed between 1907 and 1910 when Fr. Delojes was the parish priest. The altar and transepts of the church were completed by architects from South India between 1907 and 1910. In 1920 May, one evening during novena a fire is said to have broken out near the altar but miraculously the statue of Mary was saved.

The statue of St. Mary located above the altar of this church was carved out of a tree by a South Indian architect and it is believed that there is no other statue like this in the whole of Sri Lanka.

The consecration of this church was done on 17th October 1944 by the then Bishop of Jaffna Very Rev. Jean. A. Guyomar during the period of service of the parish priest Fr. J. A. Rajanayagam.

The first sacristan of the church was Mr. Manuelpillai Bastiampillai. From 1928 till 1958 Mr. Jacopillai Saverimuthu served in the same role. After that Moopar Anthonipillai and then his son A. Pedrupillai did a great service in managing the church. The residence of the parish priest was built by Saverimuthu Manuelpillai (Sana Mana) due to the efforts of Rev. Fr. J. Francis of Karampon.

It should be noted that the ancestors of St. Joseph's church were at one time partners of the church Board

*(Translated from Article by: **Late Ms. Jacintha Saverimuthu** - Karampon - 100th Anniversary Souvenir of Kayts St. Mary's Church Year 1995)*

St. Joseph's Church - Kayts



This is the church that was built in Kayts in the most recent times. Originally a cadjan leaf roofed church was

built at the present site and the very first mass was celebrated in a grand scale in 1920 on March 17th.

The foundation for the present day church was laid by late Bishop of Jaffna Very. Rev. J. A. Guoyamar in 1925. The construction of transepts of the church was completed during 1927-1930 when Fr. S. G. Hilary was the parish priest of Kayts. The construction of the nave part of the church was begun in 1936 and continued by Fr. P. Nicholas, the assistant parish priest of Fr. Aseerwatham in 1937. Fr. Aseerwatham had been parish priest earlier during 1919-1921. When he was reappointed he took very keen efforts in continuing the construction of this church.

In 1948 the construction of the roof of the church was completed when Fr. William Jesuthasan was serving as parish priest during 1947-1948. Cementing of the floor of the church was done in 1952 while Fr. Philip Ponniah was serving as the parish priest. In 1967 while Fr. M. J. Mariampillai was the parish priest, the cement walls of the transepts of the church was completed.

The new altar was constructed in 1971 during the period of service of Rev. Fr. Benjamin Alfred.

(Translated from Article by late S. A. Gnanaratnam (Retired Principal - 100th Anniversary Souvenir of Kayts St. Mary's Church - Year. 1995)

St. Antony's Church - Kayts

St. Antony's Church in Kayts, located facing St. Antony's College was constructed in 1820 during British rule soon after the departure of Dutch rulers. From the recorded history of this church, it is clear that this church has played an important place in the history of Catholics of Kayts. For a very long period, this church functioned as the administrative centre for the Catholics of not only for the whole of Kayts as well as for the adjoining islands in the archipelago. There are a large number of documents still available at the church to prove this.

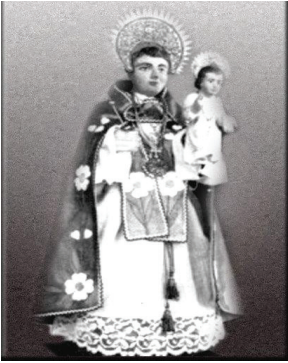


From the historical reports of Fr. Gnanapragasiar of Nallur it is known that initially a church for St. Thomas was constructed at the present site.

When Dutch were ruling the island they were bent on destroying Christian churches. Yet during that period, many devotees risked their lives and hid the statues in wells and in adjoining lands. According to legend there was a piece of shrub land in the vicinity of this church and a wood cutter while felling a tree found a statute of St. Antony hidden within a large cavity of a rotten tree. The wood cutter then informed this to the parish priest who rushed to the spot and placed the statue in the church. Soon the devotees began to venerate the statute of St. Antony. Very soon, a number of miracles attributed to the power of St. Antony's began to take place and the fame of this saint began to spread everywhere. As a result, St. Thomas Church was renamed as St. Antony's Church. The facade of the church originally built according to Portuguese architecture was later modernized during 1975.

In 1921, the centenary celebrations of this church was held in a grand scale and the centenary special mass was celebrated by Bishop of Jaffna Very Rev. Jules - Andre Brault.

The Belfry at St. Anthony's church, Kayts was erected



by Mr. & Mrs. Anthonipillai, Retired Post Master and handed over on 12-06-1931 in remembrance of their son Henry Julain. It was renovated in the year 2006 with the help of Capt. Fatimanayagam Xavier.

In 1970, Rt. Rev. L. R. Antony, Auxiliary Bishop of Jaffna officiated during the

150th anniversary celebrations of this church. However, in 1995 it was not possible to conduct the 175th anniversary celebrations due to the civil war in the country.

Grotto of our lady of Lourdes

(Located within the premises of Kayts St. Antony's Church)



The grotto of our Lady of Lourdes at Kayts located within the premises of St. Antony's church has an inscription "I am the Immaculate Conception" (Worded in Tamil) above the statue. Mr. & Mrs. Varapiragasam Emmanuel, the parents of the recently retired Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Thomas Savundranayagam built it in the year 1936 as an act of thanksgiving to our Lady for

answering their humble petition for the gift of a baby. As an answer to their constant prayer a baby girl was born and was named Lourdes.

The parents were overjoyed and they realized that the best way to give tribute and testimony was to build a Grotto to spread the devotion to Mary and to make known to the people the maternal comforting touch of the Blessed Mother and the mercy and goodness of God our Father.

The parents did not have a blueprint for the construction of the Grotto. However with the help of the parish priest they found a mason from Jaffna who was a Hindu. After explaining him how the Grotto has to be constructed, the present Grotto was completed to perfection.

Historical facts about St. Antony's Church

It is worthy of mention that Very. Rev. Henri Joulain (1852-1919) and Very Rev. Andre -Theophile Melizan (1844-1905) both former Bishops of Jaffna at one time served as parish priests in Kayts and were residing in the priest's residence in this church.

Jesuit priest in Kayts

In March 1849 Bishop Orazio Bettachini decided to hand over the missions of Kayts and Mannar to Jesuits. Thus two Jesuits were sent by Bishop Canoz, Bishop of Trichy to the mission of Kayts in May 1849. They were Fr. Frédéric Rapatel, S.J., and Fr. Vuillermet, S.J.; but they remained in this mission only till the end of August 1849. Another two Jesuits who came to replace them on 27 August 1849 in the mission of Kayts were Fr. Frederic Maria Cortes, S.J. and Fr. Silvain Laurent, S.J. Some others also came later but served only for short time until 1852 when the Jesuits withdrew all their men from the Vicariate of Jaffna. Fr. Giovanni Vistarini, an Italian secular priest, was then assigned to the vacant mission of Kayts.

Conflict between Padroadites and Propaganda leads to schismatics

In the mean time in August 1855, Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Orazio Bettachini made a proposal to Fr. Stephen Semeria, the Superior of the Oblates, to divide, so to say, the vicariate of Jaffna into two parts and to entrust the Northern and the Eastern Provinces exclusively to the Oblates, while the non-Oblate missionaries would have the charge of the missions of the North-Western Province. In this arrangement the Vicar Apostolic would retain the high supervision over all the missions of the vicariate, but in the two provinces entrusted to the Oblates they would be governed by the Oblates. The superior of the Oblates would be free to dispose his men as he thought best and to obtain the new missionaries at their own expense. But, Fr. Semeria, the superior of the Oblates, was not in favour of this suggestion since he felt that it would bring division among the missionaries. However Fr. Semeria was given the responsibility to assign his men as he thought best in the missions of Northern and Eastern provinces.

In the Northern Province except the mission of Kayts all other missions were in the hands of the Oblates in 1855. Thus, Fr. Constant Chounavel, OMI, was assigned to the mission of Kayts in August 1855 replacing Fr. Giovanni Vistarini. He was the first Oblate to join this mission. But soon Fr. Joseph Vivier, O.M.I, fell ill at Mantotta and he needed a change of climate. So, Fr. Vivier was assigned to the mission of Kayts, and Fr. Constant Chounavel was sent to Mantotta in the same month. Yet Fr. Vivier finally had to leave the country at the end of 1856.

In **1857** Fr. Jean Le Bescou, O.M.I, went to the mission of Kayts, where he had to face many difficulties on account of the schismatics. Kayts was an important base of the schismatics in Jaffna. Some of the Padroadite Goanese priests did not accept the transfer of the Church of Sri Lanka from the Padroado system

to Propaganda by Pope Urban VIII and establishing it as an Apostolic Vicariate, detached from Cochin and coming under the direct jurisdiction of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide.

The conflict between Padroado and Propaganda developed into a Schism in Sri Lanka and did immense harm to the Catholic Church. Some of the Padroadite Goanese Priests returned to their country but some others remained and gave endless troubles to the missionaries sent by the Propaganda. Rev. J. V. Viegas was a resident schismatic priest in Kayts with his group since 1852 but just left the place only few years before.

Parish Grand Mission and retreat of 1857

When Bishop Rev. Jean-Etienne Semeria after his consecration on 17 August 1856 as Coadjutor Vicar Apostolic of Jaffna began conducting Missions in the chief centres of the Northern Vicariate, Fr. Le Bescou joined him and played an important and fruitful role.

Bishop Semeria first chose some centres where there was more urgent necessity for such Missions, especially those centres that were badly hit by schismatics in his vicariate.

Bishop Semeria described his concern in his diary as “the needs were everywhere pressing and I had with me just two Missionaries to accompany me and to help me in so difficult a work. Common sense told me that I must begin with the place where the needs were the most pressing for it is those who are the most sick who need the physician very badly and immediately. Therefore I preferred the mission of Kayts to others. Since a long time this poor mission was in a truly deplorable state. The schism, which had found its way here and had lasted for one and a half years, had left in its trail very clear and profound traces. In spite of the departure of the schismatic priest, some of his adherents had not yet given any proof of a sincere conversion of heart. There was something more to

develop and another schism seemed imminent. The Catholics were divided into two hostile camps.”

During this period, the OMI Priests faced a great task of unifying the various groups in the parish. The Mission began on 19 September 1857. The people enthusiastically welcomed missionaries; but the following day people did not show much interest in the proceedings. However, the missionaries did not lose heart; they accelerated it more. The Mission lasted full forty days, from 19 September to 29 October 1857. During this holy period, Holy Communion was distributed to more than 1200 grown-up persons; about a hundred children received First Communion while 350 persons of all ages were confirmed by Bishop Jean-Etienne Semeria. The greatest work of the Mission was the mutual reconciliation of the two hostile factions at Kayts. A list of regulations concerning the affairs of the various churches of the district was read out on the order of the Bishop and then all the people signed it in front of a Crucifix and the Holy Bible, which they invoked as a pledge of their fidelity. As a monument to the triumph of Faith and of grace a great Mission Cross was planted in front of the church. On the one side of the pedestal were engraved the words “Mission of 1857” while on the other side there was just one word “Pax”. Rev. Fr. Ernest Christopher Bonjean (1823-1892) who later became Bishop of Jaffna also participated in this prayer meeting.

Fr. Le Bescou was succeeded by Fr. Jean Pouzin, OMI, began his long missionary career in the mission of Kayts in 1859. The mission of Kayts was then comprised of Kayts, Karampon, Mandaitivu, Naranthanai, Allaipidy, Punkudutivu and Delft. Even though there had been a Parish Mission preached in Kayts by the Oblate Fathers in the previous year, with very good results, the grace of God had found resistance in some places. Fr. Pouzin visited those places first won their hearts and brought them back to God. Among the other pastors in this mission Fr. Marie - Louis Boisseau, OMI,

Kayts Island

was remarkable. He was sent to the mission of Kayts in 1871. When he was at Kayts, he put up a residence for Brothers of St. Joseph to take charge of the school at Naranthanai in 1873. In the same year, he also built the presbyteries at Allaipiddy and Mandaitivu.

In **1900** Cholera disease was prevalent in Kayts causing the death of hundreds of people. According to church records Bishop of Jaffna Very Rev. Henri Joulain on hearing about this epidemic rushed to Kayts, genuflected in front of the statue of Antony, and prayed. The statue of St. Anthony was taken in procession around the church and soon the disease stopped spreading. Further, the Bishop also sent two boatloads of relief materials to Kayts parish.

In **1905** Msgr. Seleski, the papal representative paid a visit to Kayts and was accorded a grand welcome at St. Antony's Church.

The Golden anniversary of the 1857 retreat was celebrated in **1908** in the presence of the Bishop of Jaffna, Very Rev. Henri Joulain.

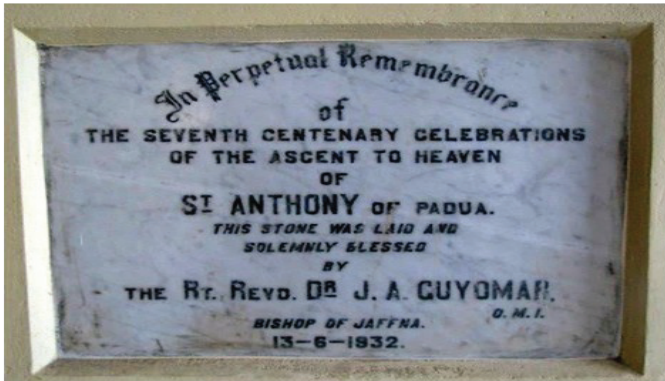
During the period 1911-1913, Rev. Fr. Owen William was the Parish Priest of Kayts and he was instrumental for constructing a residence for the priest adjoining the church.

In **1913** during a visit to Kayts by Superior General of O M I Very Rev. Denton, the papal blessing was imparted to the entire island of Kayts.

In **1921**, Rev. Fr. L. Augustine from Karampon was ordained as priest by Bishop of Jaffna Very Rev. Jules-Andre Brault. This was the first ever ordination held outside of Jaffna St. Mary's Cathedral.

In **1932**, Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Dr. Guyomar visited Kayts and laid a special plaque on the wall of St. Antony's Church to mark the occasion of seventh centenary celebration of the ascent to heaven of St. Anthony of Padua.

On 30th July 2006 Papal delegate (Nuncio) Arch Bishop



Mario Cenari visited Kayts to attend the Jubilee Celebration of Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Savundranayagam Bishop of Jaffna held at St. Anthony's Church. Bishop of Trincomalee Rt. Rev. Kingsley Swampillai, Bishop of Mannar Rt. Rev. Rayappu Joseph, Monsignor Camillus Nimalan from Vatican graced the occasion. Also a large number of priests and nuns attended this function.



Ancestry of parishioners of Kayts East

From ancient records of the church it appears that the people of Kayts East are the descendants of the

Kayts Island

martyrs of Mannar. They initially settled in Chaddi, got involved in farming and became very wealthy. Later, they gradually moved to Naranthanai and Velanai. When the Kayts harbour began to gain prominence and sea trading began to develop, the people in this area were attracted towards shipping industry resulting in many highly qualified captains, Marine Engineers and Tug masters being produced from Kayts East. Many others were able to obtain high-ranking positions in Navy and Customs. A large number of them also became well educated and are at present holding very prestigious positions in various fields throughout the world.

(Revised and Translated from Article by:

J. F. Segarajasingam *Kayts East - 100th Anniversary Souvenir of Kayts St. Mary's Church .Year.1995)*

St. Sebastian's Church - Karampon



According to records maintained by Fr. Gnabragasiar of Nallur ,originally there was a small church built at a place in Karampon still referred to as "Kovil Valavu".It was moved to the present site approximately 240 years ago. Construction of the altar and dome of this present church begun by Mr. Manuelpillai from this area in 1897 was completed in 1908. The consecration of the altar was performed on Feb.8th 1913 during the visit of Very Rev. Denton, Superior General of Oblates of the Order of Mary Immaculate.

When Fr. S. G. Hilary was the parish priest of Kayts, he



ordered two bells one for Kayts St. Antony's church and another one for St. Sebastian's church to be brought down from Germany. The cost of the bell for St. Sebastian's church was borne by Mr. P. Manuelpillai, a famous businessman from Karampon East who also built the belfry for the church.

The bell was blessed by the Bishop of Jaffna Very Rev. Guoyamar on July.14th 1932 on the day of the feast of St. Sebastian. In the same year Rev. Fr. Hilary also arranged to import a life size statute of St. Sebastian from Italy.

Karampon was part of Kayts parish until 1938 and then it began to function as a separate parish.

The basic plan for building of this church was drawn during 1938-1946 when Fr. B. Abraham was the parish priest of Karampon. In addition, the foundation for this church was laid in August 1948-.The work was continued by Fr. P. Nicholas who took very keen interest in the construction of most of the work of the church building. Fr. A. S. Singarayer continued the construction of the interior of the church. The cementing of church verandah was done during the period of Fr. A. J. Vethanayagam. During Fr. Nalliah's period of service as parish priest cementing of the church floor was done. The construction of the church building was continued by Fr. Peter. He also continued the work on the transept of the church and the painting of the entire church .The construction of the main church was completed by 1964. The work on the altar and laying of the marble floor was completed during the period of service of Fr. S. E. N. Gunaseelan who served in the parish from 1966 until 1971.

Velankanni Church - Karampon



This church is located near Karampon along Suruvil Road. Many devotees attend the services held in this church.

This church was originally made of cadjan hut in 1969 by late Mariampillai Master and his wife Lourdhammah. At that time it was not recognized as a church by the then Bishop of Jaffna. In 1972 the cadjan hut was demolished, a new building was constructed, and in the same year reciting of rosary was begun at the church. At that time one Mr. Bastiampillai who was also a Teacher formed a Society in the name of Annai Velankanni Devotees Society in 1976 and continued it up to 1989.

In 1976 February 02nd Velankanni Statue was blessed by the then Parish Priest of Karampon and brought to this Church.



In 1981 the church was officially handed over to the Bishop of Jaffna by Mr. Devasahayampillai Emmanuelpillai of Karampon and on 31st. May 1982 Rt. Rev. Dr. B. Deogupillai the then Bishop of Jaffna visited the Church, Blessed and celebrated the 1st. Mass.

Church of Christ the King - Melinchimunai



The residents of Melinchimunai village were at one time the parishioners of Karampon St. Sebastian church. However in 1950, they decided to have their own church. At present they have their own church named Christ the King Church and it is under the administration of the parish priest of Karampon.

The village was established in 1950 with 45 families. The area at that time was a barren land with overgrown bushes but due to the united effort of the people the area has become reasonably well developed. In 1951 a school was begun by Rev. Fr. A. S. Singarayer, the parish priest of Karampon. Later when Rev. Fr. S. J. Vethanayagam was the parish priest, a new school was built in 1956 and initially there was only one teacher serving the school. It has now grown very large with many teachers and a large number of students.

Meanwhile due to the efforts of Mr. Vaithyanathar, the president of Karampon West Developmental Society (KWDS), Mr. Antony Lucas of this village was made a member of this society. Together with the support of KWDS and the untiring efforts of Antony Lucas and

with the generous help of Alfred Thambyayah, MP for Kayts, Melinchimunal Developmental Scheme was inaugurated and the Government allocated Rs.75, 000 for Housing Scheme in the area and a large number of houses were built within the next five years.

In 1956, on the advice of Karampon parish priest Fr. Singarayer, a small prayer room was established in the old library building. Fr. Soosaitasan Nalliah said the first mass in that room on June.22, 1957. It was due to his foresight, the foundation for the new church was laid.

Fr. Peter who succeeded Fr. Nalliah took great efforts to initiate the building of the new church and succeeded in building it to completion and this beautiful church stands as a great edifice in the centre of this coastal village.

Fr. Gunaseelan who succeeded Fr. Peter worked hard for the welfare of the people of this hamlet. He was instrumental in revitalizing the Melinchimunai Fishermen's Cooperative Loan Assistance Society that was inactive for many years. Fr. Gunaseelan also was instrumental in establishing a primary school for the benefit of the children of this village and arranged for Nuns to be appointed as teachers in this school. In 1971, he also established a Women's Welfare Society and was responsible for the construction of New Melinchimunai Road.

St. Mary's Church - Suruvil

This church was originally built around 1850 as a small shed at a location quarter mile north of the present day church. Later Mr. Swampillai Saverimuthu of this area began taking the responsibility of constructing a new church at the present location. After his death in 1854, the construction of the church came to a halt. However many years later the construction was restarted in 1892



St. Mary's Church-Suruvil

by another devotee Mr. Thomaspillai Soosaipillai. He passed away in 1904 and the work was continued by S. Nicholapillai, moopar of the church. The facade of the church was completed by him in 1921 and the following year a residence for the priest was constructed.

The statute of mother Mary kept in this church has an interesting history. It was made by a famous sculptor in France and was kept in a church owned by Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI). Eugene de Mazenod, the founder of this order gave the statute as a gift to late Bishop of Jaffna Very. Rev. Jean Etienne Sameria OMI. For a short period of time this was kept in Jaffna at a chapel belonging to OMI priests. Many years later when the Bishop of Jaffna Very Rev. Andre - Theophile Melizan visited Suruvil saw the altar without any statute and promised to donate a statute for this church and within a short while he donated the statute that was kept in his room at the Bishops House.

When Fr. Peter was the parish priest of Karampon (1960-1965) the renovation of the church was begun and the altar was reconstructed. In 1968, when Fr. S. E. N. Gunaseelan was the parish priest of Karampon the entire church was reconstructed with the financial assistance provided by Mr. M. S. Manthiry, a famous business person from Suruvil. Another businessperson Mr. S. P. Muthiah also from Suruvil donated a new altar

constructed with marble stones. In 1960 a belfry was constructed with the financial assistance provided by Mr. M. S. Manthiry.

The annual festival of the church is celebrated on June 1st in a grand scale attended by thousand of devotees from the adjoining villages.

St. Anne's Church – Thanuvil

Thanuvil is an area of bare land located in between the end of Oluvil Road and the west boundary of the village of Suruvil. During those days, people were scared to travel in the night in this area and as such, they wanted to build a church in the name of St. Anne in order to allay their fear.

In 1957 the Bishop Jaffna, Rt. Rev. Dr. Jerome Emilianuspillai agreeing to the request of the locals in the area granted permission to build a church at Thanuvil. Consequently, late Mr. S. P. Sinnathurai, a businessperson from Suruvil donated his own land to the church and he himself bore the expenses regarding building of the church. The devotees in the area immediately started construction of the church and completed the work in 1958. With the donation contributed by Mr. Anthonypillai of Karampon Parish, the altar side of the church was extended towards Westside.

On 23rd of July 1958, Rev. Fr. M. S. Nalliah, Parish Priest of Karampon brought the statue of St. Anne in a procession from St. Mary's church Suruvil



St. Anne's Church – Thanuvil

and installed it at the newly constructed church in Thanuvil and said the first mass. From that day onwards, devotees started gathering at this church every Saturday to recite holy rosary to honor Mother Mary.

Every year the church feast is celebrated in the month of July. The Novena starts on 17 July and the feast is celebrated on 26 July.

St. Peter & Paul Church - Naranthanai

From 1893 to 1908, Kayts parish had included Naranthanai with a few of its neighbouring Churches while the churches in Mandaitivu and Allaipiddy formed a separate parish under the name of Mandaitivu. From 1898 to 1908, Kayts parish and Mandaitivu parish were amalgamated into one.

In 1908, Naranthanai was detached from Kayts parish and combined with Mandaitivu parish. Since then the new parish consisted of nine churches including St. Peter and Paul Church - Naranthanai under Rev. Fr. E. Volander as its Vicar.



St. Peter & Paul Church - Naranthanai

An old catholic Community incorporating several settlers from Pandatheruppu existed in Naranthanai since the time of Portuguese. During early Dutch rule a double square house of one Pranjari, about half a mile northeast from the present Church served as a secret chapel. Around 1730 there lived in Naranthanai a person named Don Soosai Kanakkar. He was an illustrious Catholic. Later on a temporary church was built at a site near the convent of the sisters. The construction of the present church was begun in 1836. By 1856 Fr. Vistarini did a great job in continuing the construction while he also gave the coup de grace to an incipient schism in the village headed by Santiapillai, the grandson of Don Soosai Kanakkar. When Fr. Vistarini refused to grant permission to Santiapillai to build a church for Philip Neri for his faction, he brought a Pentecostal Minister from Vaddukoddai. However, when Cholera broke out in the area in 1854 that Minister fled from the area and that was the end of that church.

Meanwhile there were many improvements done in the church since 1893 including the construction of the facade (1908-1909), a votive offering of a Merchant named Andrew Bastiampillai from the area. He also donated tiles for the church. Later the priests' residence already constructed during the time of Fr. Vistarini was renovated during the time of Fr. Sandrasegara .Then later during the time of Fr. Daurat a comfortable residence for two missionaries was completed. Meanwhile the construction of a convent in Naranthanai begun few years earlier by Fr. Vorlander was completed during 1910 - 1913.

Sacred Heart of Christ church Naranthanai



In 1949, a church by the name of St. Philomena was established as a small shed on a piece of land in Naranthanai North donated by a devotee named Santiago Mariai.

Many years later in 1962 the church was rebuilt at the same spot by some devotees of the area including Alex, Caspar, Pavilu and Croos who were financially assisted by the Government employees from this village working in Colombo and the new church was renamed Sacred Heart of Christ Church.

Then a well was dug in the vicinity by a group of devotees including Saverimuthu, Rajendiram and Manuel. Later, a flag pole donated by the Catholics of the nearby village of Ampalappulam was erected in the church compound on 17 - 02 - 1970. Around the same time ,the church boundary wall on the northern side was constructed with the donations of people from the same area while the remaining part of the church wall was erected by the devotees residing in vicinity of the church. In 1988, a residence for the priest was constructed by the family of Victor.



In 2014, a belfry was constructed by the family of Zachcharias in memory of their son Dilison. The following year , a prayer hall was constructed on the northern side of the church by the family of Jesuthasan in memory of Saverimuthu and Thresamma.

The altar of the church was renovated in 2014-2015 by Catholics of the area residing abroad. At present ,the church façade is being constructed by the Rayappu Marcus Anton while the church entrance on the North side is being built in memory of late Rasiah by the families of his nephews Desmond and Sahayarasa.

Grotto of Our lady of Lourdes Naranthanai North



This church was built in 1936 by Mr. Michaelpillai and Mrs. Arulamma Michaelpillai (known as Ponnachchi) in a piece of land owned by them. The first mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Sebastian, the parish priest of St. Peter and Paul.

The annual festival is conducted in February and both Catholics and Hindus residing in the area participate in the celebration. In fact many of them are closely related and for many years, one of the festive days was celebrated by Mr. Sivaguru, owner of a restaurant and a Hindu resident of the area

In 1960 a street light was donated by Mr. Nadaraja, the manager of the cooperative store and the light was installed on the South side of the church. The church had a cadjan leaf roof until 1968. In 1969 the church was widened, a new roof was laid, and the spacious church was blessed by Auxiliary Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Dr. L. R. Antony and celebrated mass.

In 1980 a local resident Mr. Anandarasa donated a belfry for the church.

Our Lady of Rosary Church - Sinnamadhu Saravanai



The seeds of propagation of Catholic religion in Saravanai were sown during 1852-1855, when Fr. Vistarini was in charge of the Catholic mission in the island of Kayts. Initially a few Hindus from the area became converted to Catholicism but since there were no churches in the area, within a brief period they once again reverted to their original religion.

Meanwhile Fr. Sandrasegar, the parish priest of Kayts took over the responsibility of looking after the needs of Naranthanai parish and then visited Saravanai in order to compile the list of those who had been baptized earlier by Fr. Vistarini. However Fr. Sandrasegar was very disappointed to note that all of them had given up their catholic tradition. He soon decided that there was an immediate need to put up a school and construct a catholic church in the area. Consequently, Fr. Sandrasegar sought the help of Nicholopillai Pedrupillai, a reputed native physician and Government Registrar from Naranthanai to purchase a 10-acre land in Saravanai. A suitable land was soon purchased followed by the construction of a school in 1894 and

Pavilupillai from Mathagal was appointed the very first principal.

Very soon efforts to construct a small church was begun and a small shed with cadjan roof was established at a site north of the present day church. Since there was not enough time to construct a statute of Mary, it was decided to bring a statute from Kayts St. James church. Therefore, the parish priest along with Annavi Manuel from Kayts West approached Mr. Thomaikuddy a wealthy businessperson also from Kayts West street to request permission to take a statute from St. James Church. Thommaikuddy readily agreed and then the parish priest approached Jacobpillai, the moopar of St. James and Adaippanar Bastiampillai to get their permission.

Having obtained their unanimous support, the statute was taken to Saravanai by the parish priest along with Annavi Manuel and Thommaikuddy. At Naranthanai they took with them Nicholaspillai Pedrupillai who had previously helped them to purchase the land to build the school as well as the church. Then in the presence of all of them and a few devotees the statue was placed on the altar by Fr. Sandrasegar.

The first mass was celebrated on 14th July 1895 and in the same year. The second mass was celebrated in the very same year on Aug.04th and according to church records, 33 Hindus from the area were baptized and became Catholics.

Since many miracles began to happen at this shrine, the fame of the church began to spread and people from various parts of the province started visiting the church, especially on Saturdays. At the beginning only the people from Naranthanai and neighbouring villages such as Chaddy, Allaipiddy, Suruvil and Karampon and

Kayts Island

Kayts began attending the religious services at this shrine. However since 1896 people from far away villages such as Sillalai, Ilvalai, Pandatherippu, Navanthurai and Jaffna started visiting the shrine.

Since 1896 the feast of this shrine began to be celebrated on Aug.05 and year after year the number of devotees began to increase rapidly. Within a short time, this holy shrine became famous like the shrines of Periya Madhu and Talawillu. As a result the devotees used to refer to this shrine as Sinna Madhu. Consequently in 1909 Bishop of Jaffna Rev. Joulain approved this shrine as a site of Holy pilgrimage.

The construction of the new church begun during the time of Fr. Dora was completed during the time of Fr. Volander. A native physician named Innasaithamby from Sillalai donated the wooden altar of the present day church.

Meanwhile a residence for the priests was also constructed. Soon after a pilgrims centre was built with the financial assistance of Mr. S. C. Ponniah who was employed in Malaysia.

The church is being administered by Naranthanai parish since 1908.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Good Voyage (Sinthathirai Maatha) – Chaddy



The church of Our Lady of Good Voyage (Sinthathirai Maatha) is located in a village called Chaddy, Velanai. The origin of existence of this historic shrine dates back to Portuguese regime.

It is said a Portuguese vessel lost its direction in the Indian Ocean and found it difficult to reach the shore. The Captain of the vessel a firm believer of Blessed Virgin Mary prayed for their safety and by the miraculous act of Blessed Virgin Mary the ship and its crew safely reached the shore of Chaddy.

History records that the Portuguese took possession of the place and built a Fortress in Chaddy with a chapel inside and placed the miraculous statue of Mother Mary and venerated her with piety and propagated her devotion among the inhabitants.

Later, Portuguese missionaries came to Jaffna in 1544 to propagate Christianity and built few churches in the peninsula and the church built at Chaddy was dedicated to our Lady of Good Voyage. When Dutch conquered and ruled Ceylon they destroyed all the places of worship and churches built by the Portuguese and persecuted the Catholics. It is believed that when the Dutch vandals burnt this church, the Catholics of the area removed the miraculous statue of Mother Mary and hid it in the nearby well for safety. After a long period of abandonment a devotee learnt in her dream the presence of this miraculous statue and by the act of grace found the statue in the well. This is a unique Well, which never goes dry and it supplies drinking water during the drought season to the Leyden island. The Catholics of the area built a cadjan shelter for worship and placed this miraculous statue of Mother Mary and venerated her with piety. The Catholics

around the neighbouring villages learnt the presence of this miraculous Mother Mary and flocked to pay their homage and seek her blessings.

The then Bishop of Jaffna late Rt. Rev Dr. Guyomar realizing the need of a church for the growing Catholics in this area, rebuilt this church in 1928 with the help of the devotees and well-wishers and placed the miraculous statue of Our Lady of Good Voyage on a beautifully carved wooden altar and venerated with much piety and devotion. He also appointed a Parish Priest to look into the spiritual needs of the Catholics of Allaipiddy, Mandaithivu, Mankumpaam, Naranthani and Chaddy.

During ethnic disturbances, this church served as a place of worship and became the centre of refuge for the displaced. This historic shrine with rare scenic beauty and environment has become a famous pilgrim centre in the peninsula and draws in many pilgrims from all parts of the island. The environment with soft sand and calm sea with shallow water nearby and Palmyra palms around the church enables the pilgrims to spend more days to enjoy their stay with prayers and relaxation. Rev. Fr. S. Emmanuel OMI the then Parish Priest by his untiring efforts renovated the entire church which was damaged by the ethnic war and colour washed and beautified the surroundings. The church of Our Lady of Good Voyage is dedicated and declared as the Pilgrim Centre in the Jaffna diocese having a permanent Parish Priest with public transport up to the shrine.

Our Lady of Good Voyage is called in Tamil Sinthathirai Maatha. The statue portrays Blessed Virgin Mary having child Jesus on one hand and a ship on the other. Blessed Mother of Good voyage is popularly known as the Mother and Protector of Navigators and many invoke her for their safe voyage.

The Church feast of Our Lady of Good Voyage also called "Chaddy Sinthathirai Maatha" is celebrated annually on September 24. After the Holy Mass, the statue of Our Lady of Good Voyage is placed on a gaily decorated Chariot and taken around the church in a colourful procession singing hymns "Veruththam" in Tamil and reciting prayers.

Until 2003 this shrine was administered by Naranthanai Parish. However, from 2003 this shrine is being administered by Oblates of Mary Immaculate priests. The following priests have served here from 2003 until now.

1. Fr. Emmanuel OMI 2003 - 2005
2. Fr. S. Philip OMI 2006 - 2013
3. Fr. Lambert OMI 2013 - Jan.15, 2017
4. Fr. A. F. Loshington OMI Jan. 2017—To date

St. Thomas church - Eluvaitivu (Kayts Parish)

Historical Account of the church

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1902 - 1911 | The church was under Delft parish. |
| From 1911 | The church was a substation of Kayts parish. |
| 1950 - 1975 | Extension for the church was made. |
| 1964 | Both Wings of the church were built. |
| 1985 - 1991 | Parish House was built by Rev. Fr. Kirubananthan. |
| 1995 | Renovation of the church was done. |
| 2006 | The marble works of the altar was done by Rev. Fr. W. X. James |
| 2007 | The marble works inside the church and for the both wings were completed by Rev. Fr. W. X. James |

The annual feast is celebrated every year on 21st of December

Bishops from Kayts Island



Bishop J. Emilianuspillai



Bishop B. Deogupillai



Bishop Aloysius Vendarikon



Bishop L.R. Anthony



Bishop T. Savundaranayagam



Bishop Kingsly Swampillai



Bishop J. Gnanapiragasam





ST.MARY'S CHURCH
FEAST



ST. JAME'S CHURCH
FEAST



ST.ANTHONY'S CHURCH
FEAST



KARAMPON ST. SEBASTIAN'S
CHURCH FEAST



ST.JOSEPH'S CHURCH FEAST



NARANTHANI ST. PETER PAUL
CHURCH FEAST



CHATTY MATHA CHURCH
FEAST



SINNAMADDU MATHA
CHURCH FEAST

Hindu Temples in the island of Kayts

(The publishing team took great efforts to compile the history of all the temples in this historic island. However, the history of only a few temples were actually available. The information of only those temples are included in this book - Author)

Kannakai Amman Temple - Karampon



This temple is located close to the sea shore in Karampon. After a lapse of many years once again the annual festival of the temple has resumed and is being conducted by South Karampon Development Association. There is a mooring point near this temple for anchoring the boats travelling to the nearby islands of Eluvativu and Analaitivu.

Sri Murugamoorthy Temple - Karampon West

This beautiful temple is located very close to Shanmuganatha Vidyalayam. A number of festivals are regularly conducted in this temple. Kanthasisdy festival is celebrated in October, Thiruvembavai festival in December and Maha sivarathiri



festival is conducted in March. Musical programs and fireworks shows are held during important festivals of this temple.

Mr. Arasaratnam, a retired government servant residing beside the temple, was effectively involved in the temple management for many years. In addition, Mr. Nadarajah from Karampon South who was a businessman in Colombo together with his wife Thaiyalnayaky of Karampon West provided financial assistance to construct a large "Vasantha Mandapam" for this temple in 1955. During the festival times, the temple authorities keep the bronze statue of Lord Aaru Mukan together with Valli & Theivanai in this Vasantha Mandapam and perform poojas. At present, the devotees are able to have a clear view of Lord Aaru Mukan because of this Vasantha Mandapam rather than in the "Moolasthanam" - the main stage situated in the dark end of the temple. During the annual "Kantha Sasty" festival in the month of October, the entire population of Karampon West village is in a happy festival mood. Most of the people who are employed in Colombo also come on vacation during this period and participate in the temple festival. In addition famous Drums & Nathasvara groups are specially hired for the entire festival period. Fire works shows are held to add colour to this annual festival.

Naranthanai



Map of Naranthanai

Thanthonri Amman Temple -Naranthanai North

This was one of the hundreds of Hindu temples destroyed by Portuguese military captain and the first governor of Jaffna Phillippe de Olivlera. The original temple has since become submerged in the sea. Yet the practice of transporting the statue of Amman to the location of the original temple is being continued to this day.

There was another temple located on the coast of Karainagar opposite this temple in the northwesterly direction. The Portuguese rulers destroyed that too and used the stones of that temple to construct the sea fort Hamenheil. The stones from the original Thanthonri

temple would have faced the same fate since there are no visible remnants of the original temple walls. Since the sea is only 4 to 5 feet deep in this location, if the temple had been just destroyed heaps of stones would be visible. Since no such stones visible, one has to conclude that the temple stones would have been removed to build the sea fort. Since rectangular coral



stones were used in construction, it would have been useful for the Portuguese to dig out these stones with ease.

One cannot be certain about the time of destruction of this temple but it is possible to guess that it would have happened in 1619 or after. The reason for the great atrocities committed in Naranthanai could be an act of revenge for the defeat of Portuguese army by the army of Narayanan a few decades earlier. The location of the defeat of the Portuguese army could possibly be at this location because since the Amman temple was located near a deep canal the army led by Olivera would have assumed that Narayanan's army would be concentrated in this area. The location of this battle in North Naranthanai is still referred to as Sandaikkaadu (Jungle of War).

Since the construction of the Sea fort in Kayts began in mid 1600s, one can assume that this temple too was destroyed around that time. When this temple was

destroyed in 1619, the administrators removed the statue of Amman as well as the gold jewels and coins, buried them in a jungle area southeast of the temple, and covered them with stones. They had planned to start religious services in the temple but it never materialized because either they were killed or were forcibly converted to Christianity. Later on the Dutch invaders who captured Jaffna threatened the residents and forced them to be Christians. However, most of those who were forcibly converted continued to practice Hindu religious activities in their homes.

The place where the Amman statue was buried was at a location one kilometer from the sea and it continued to be there for the next three centuries. In 1951 March when new roads were constructed, Mr. Thuraisamy, the subcontractor was trying to break a heavy rock with the use of dynamite and all of a sudden, he found a Golden statue, jewellery and coins being scattered from that area. it was later learnt that the coins were of the Chola period. On a close examination, it was evident that the statue was that of Amman lost many years ago. This was informed to the nearby residents and all of them gathered and offered their prayers. In the same year, it is said that Amman appeared in a dream to Mr. M. Kandiah of Naranthanai north and pointed at the location where a stone statue of a five-headed cobra was submerged in the nearby sea .Then the stone statue was brought to the shore, placed in the temporary shed and religious services were begun in 1954 the construction of the new temple commenced on a 3.5 acre crown land donated by the local government and the building was completed in 1959 on Aug.20.On 6thSeptember, on the 10th day of the annual temple festival a newly constructed chariot was drawn along the streets.

Muthumari Amman Kovil - Thampaaddy

This Temple is located in an area called Nunipuram in the hamlet named Thampaaddy. It is said that in the olden days, there was a temple named Aathivairavar Kovil in this area and the temple festival was being celebrated in a grand scale every year in April.



Muthumari Amman Kovil -Thampaaddy

Before Thaanthonri Amman temple was established, the Hindu residents of this area worshipped at Amman kovil located in Palaavodai area in Karainagar. However since the people of Thampaadi belonged to the fishing community they were not admitted into the Amman Kovil and as such they established an Amman kovil for their own worship at a place called Kalliyadi and celebrated Pongal festival each year. Later with the establishment of Thanthonri Manonmani Amman kovil in the nearby hamlet of Pandaarapulam, the people continued to pray at this temple too for a few years.

Later due to a difference of opinion among the devotees, Kalliyadi Amman kovil was established. Meanwhile, people came to know of an abandoned ancient temple at a place north of Nunipuram Aathivairavar kovil and decided to renovate it. As a result, Mr. Ponnusamy Kumaraswamy of this area brought an architect from South India and began the construction of a temple in 1970 under the supervision of another devotee Mr. Kathiravelu. The construction of the new temple was completed in 1980.

This temple had to be abandoned during the civil war for few years and it has once again become active since 1996.

Mahamari Amman Kovil Seruthanaipathi - Puliyanhoodal



This temple is located along Suruvil road in Puliyanhoodal area .This beautifully constructed temple is located amidst vast acres of paddy fields and its entrance faces to the East. Many miracles are said to have occurred at this temple. Many years ago there was no electricity in the island of Kayts.

Meanwhile, a few years ago one of the devotees, a wealthy trader had prayed at this temple and had made a vow to Amman promising to supply electricity to the temple if the fraud case against him is dropped. Since he won the case, he kept his promise and arranged for separate electric supply for the temple.

Perunkulam Muthumari Ambaal Kovil Velanai

This is one of the oldest of Hindu temples in Sri Lanka. Lord Parasakthi is worshipped in a variety forms such



***Perunkulam
Muthumari
Ambaal Kovil
Velanai***

as Kaali, Thurkkai and Eeswari. Devotees also worship Muthumari Amman in order to protect themselves from infectious disease, famine and drought. There are no clear records of when this temple was established. However, records indicate that this temple was in existence during the days of Tamil kings but then it disappeared during Portuguese rule. According to legend, during the period of Dutch rule, Kaddamathan, a devotee from Vellala community in the area while strolling along the northern coast of Velanai Perunkulam area found a statue of Muthu Mariamman. He along with some others from the area took that statue, put up a shed in a piece of land called Nedunkenil and installed the statue at this location. Later it was moved to the present location. A devotee named Kasithamby from nearby island of Pungudutivu wished to construct a larger temple and at the beginning of 19th century; he donated a 60-acre land and built a temple made of china and concrete. He then placed a statue of Amman for veneration.

Then during 1885-1890, a devotee named Yathavarayar Ramanathan wished to build a larger temple. As such, he replaced the earlier temple together with spacious building. Then another devotee named Kathirgaman Arumugam constructed a flagpole and a hall for conducting Yaga. Meanwhile some devotees from Velanai came forward and built a Hall for Ambaal. Then

the people of Cheddipulam joined and completed the construction of the wall surrounding the temple. Then a devotee named Kanthar Vairavanathar donated a Chariot for the temple. In 1910, another devotee named Iyampillai Karthikesu constructed a temple for Lord Subramaniam and another temple for Saneeswarar adjoining it. In 1915 he donated a land named Aalampulam in order to provide steady income for the temple.

In 1930, the people of the area decided to renovate this temple. As such, some devotees from the area collected funds and then the old temple was demolished. Later a new temple with a new sanctuary altar and prayer halls were constructed.

In 1940, a devotee named T. Sivagurunathan built a chariot and in 1950, a businessperson from Jaffna Mr. Kasilingam constructed an outside hall.

In 1973 a devotee named Seevaratnam constructed a beautiful chariot and took it in procession around the temple. Around the same period he constructed a hall in the north road to the area to serve food for the Devotees.

Periyapulam Mahakanapathypillyar Temple Velanai West

This temple is also known as Mudipillayar temple. According to tradition, a devotee named Poondi Mudali from Chola region in India established this temple in 17th century. Later a person named Subramaniam from Periyapulam area brought a Pillayar statute from Mullaitivu and placed it in this temple. In 1920, the old temple was replaced by a temple made out of granite rocks. In 1950, a temple chariot was constructed by



Periyapulam Mahakanapathy Pillayar Temple Velanai West

Mr. Kumarasampillai who spent many years in maintaining this temple.

Mosque in Velanai

History of Mosque in Mankumban

The Mosque at Chaaddi, Velanai was built in 1553 in memory of the venerated Muslim saint Sultan Abdul Cader, India. M. R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen a Sufi Mystic who believed in going beyond the separations of religions completed construction in the early 1980's with the help of Sri Lankans and western devotees.



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Kayts Parish

For nearly 400 years beginning from Portuguese rule, Franciscan priests served in Kayts. Then for many years prior to that the Kayts parish was administered by Goan Priests until 1849.

During the period of Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Orazio Bettachini (1849-1853) the parish was administered by Jesuit priests.

- Until late 18th century, Karampon, Naranthanai, Allaipiddy, Mandaitivu, Delft, Kayts Town area, Eluvaitivu and Pungudutivu were all under the Administration of Kayts Parish.
- Mandaitivu became a separate parish during the period of Bishop Henri Joulain (1893 - 1898).
- 1908 Naranthanai and Delft were separated as two different parishes. Mandaitivu and Allaipiddy were combined into a separate parish.
- In 1911 Eluvaitivu was annexed with Kayts parish.
- Karampon became a separate parish in 1938.
- Based on the records of 1990, **Karampon** parish included Karampon, Suruvil and Melinchimunai **Naranthanai** parish included Naranthanai, Sinnamadu and Pungudutivu. Meanwhile Kayts, Analitivu and Nainativu were administered by **Kayts** parish.

Priests who served in Kayts Parish (1815-2017)

Year	Name
1815	Fr. Dalgado (Goan Priest)
1816 - 1842	Fr. Sebastiangunu Fr. C. Salvadore Piyathisu

**Priests who served in Kayts Parish
(1815 - 2017) Cont...**

Year	Name
1816 - 1842	Fr. LavusThithe Fr. Philip Nerri Fr. Constantine Gomez Fr. Cajetan Thiyes Fr. C. C. Joseph Pedro Fr. C. C. Pedro Govinju Fr. Franciscu Thiyesu
1842 - 1849	Details not available
1849 May - 1849 Aug	Fr. Frédéric Rapatel, S.J. and Fr. Vuillermet, S.J
1849 Aug 27 - 1849	Fr. Frederic Maria Cortes S.J.
1850 - 1852	Fr. Sylvanus Lorenz
1852 - 1855	Fr. Giovanni Vistarini OMI
1855 Aug	Fr. Constant Chouvanel OMI
1855 Aug - 1856	Fr. Vivier
1857 - 1859	Fr. Le Bescou OMI
1859 - 1871	Fr. Jean Pouzain OMI
1871 - 1874	Fr. Marie -Louis Boisseau OMI
1877 - 1893	Fr. X. N. Sandrasegar
1894 - 1902	Fr. E. Volandar
1902 - 1907	Fr. A. Dora
1907 - 1910	Fr. E. Delojés
1910 - 1911	Fr. N. Perero

**Priests who served in Kayts Parish
(1815 - 2017) Cont...**

1911 - 1913	Fr. Owen Williams
1913 - 1913 Oct	Fr. F. Dora
1914 Oct - 1918 Dec	Fr. Owen Williams
1919 Jan - 1921 Apr	Fr. S. Aseerwatham
1921 May - 1923 Oct	Fr. Brussel
1923 Sep - 1924 Jan	Fr. S. R. Martin
1924 May - 1927	Fr. A. Dora
1927-1930	Fr. S. G. Hilary
1931 Aug - 1931	Fr. B. A. Mariselyn
1931 Oct - 1932 Aug	Fr. S. P. Alfred
1932 Oct - 1935 April	Fr. A. Brown
1935 May - 1935 Oct	Fr. S. Gomez
1935 Nov - 1939 Oct	Fr. N. Joseph
1939 Aug - 1941 Aug	Fr. S. Aseerwatham
1941 July - 1947 Mar	Fr. J. A. Rajanayagam
1947 Mar - 1948 Sep	Fr. William Jesuthasan
1948 Oct - 1950 July	Fr. N. A. Benedict
1950 July - 1953 April	Fr. Philip Ponniah
1953 July - 1960 Mar	Fr. V. R. Tarcicius
1960 Mar - 1963 Dec	Fr. S. A. Gnanapragasam

Priests who served in Kayts Parish (1815 - 2017) Cont...

1964 Jan - 1964 May	Fr. Victor Cruz
1964 June - 1965 Aug	Fr. Lawrence Xavier
1964 Aug - 1967 Aug	Fr. M. J. Mariampillai
1967 Aug - 1969 Dec	Fr. S. A. Swampillai
1970 May - 1971 Apr	Fr. Tarcius Fernando
1971 May - 1972 July	Fr. Benjamin Alfred
1972 Dec - 1974 Mar	Fr. S. J. Francis
1974 Mar - 1978 Mar	Fr. Lawrence Xavier
1978 May - 1983 July	Fr. A. Francis Kulas
1983 Aug - 1985 Apr	Fr. N. Peter
1985 May - 1991 May	Fr. S. Kirubananthan
1991 April - 1996	Fr. Eugene Francis
1996 - 1998	Fr. Antony Bala
1998 - 2001	Fr. J. A. Jesuthas
2001 - 2005	Fr. A. Gnanapragasam
2005 - 2010	Fr. X. W. James
2010 - 2015	Fr. C. J. Jeyakumar
2015 -	Fr. P. F. Rajasingham

Priests who served in Karampon Parish (1938 – 2017)

Karampon became a separate parish in 1938

Date	Name
01.02-1938 - 5.06.1946	Fr. B. Abraham O.M.I
05.06.1946 - 26.02.1947	Fr. William Jesuthasan O.M.I
27.02.1947 - 20.07.1950	Fr. P. Nicholas O.M.I
21.07.1950 - 27.02.1954	Fr. A. S. Singarayer O.M.I
27.02.1954 - 03.10.1956	Fr. J. Vethanayagam
03.010.1956 - 30.03.1960	Fr. M. S. Nalliah O.M.I
01.04.1960 - 04.11.1965	Fr. S. Peter O.M.I
05.01.1965 - 02.03.1966	Fr. M. J. Mariampillai
09.03.1966 - 10.05.1971	Fr. S. E. N. Kunaseelan
10.05.1971 - 1975	Fr. S. A. Swampillai O.M.I
1976-1980	Fr. Anton Rajakariar O.M.I
1980-1988	Fr. Lawrence Xavier O.M.I
1988-1991	Fr. Rueben Mariampillai
1994-1996	Fr. Francis Eugene
1997-1999	Fr. C. J. Antony Bala
1999-.Dec.2000	Fr. A. Jude Nickson
Jan 2000- Dec 2002	Fr. A. Gnanapragasam
Jan 2003- April 2009	Fr. A. Jesuthasan
May 2009 - Oct.2010	Fr. A. Christopher
Nov.2010 - Nov.2011	Covered by Rector Rev. Fr. K. James Singarayar and Parish Priests

Priests who served in Karampon Parish (1938 – 2017) Cont...

Dec.2011 - Mar. 2012	Fr. Chandrabose Crooz OMI
April 2012 - Jan. 2016	Fr. E. S. C. Mariathas
Jan. 2016 —To date	Fr. P. Pathinathan

Parish Priests who served in Naranthanai (1908 - 2017)

Year	Name
1891 - 1892	Fr. Chandrasekar
1893 - 1898	Naranthanai was under Kayts Parish during this period
1908	It was declared as a separate Parish. Fr. Doret was appointed the first Parish priest.
1908 - 1943	No records available
1943 - 1944	Fr. Celastin
1944 - 1946	Fr. Veimer OMI
1947 - 1949	Fr. Lebon OMI- Fr. Omlo , Fr. Dewiet, Fr. Jean Larzon (These 4 Priests were at the Parish during this period)
1949 - Sep.1950	Fr. S. Emmanuel OMI
Oct.1950 - 1955	Fr. Conshouren OMI
1956 - 1958	Fr. William Jesuthasan OMI
1958 – 1963	Fr. L. Anthonipillai OMI
1963 - 1966	Fr. L. J. Augustine OMI
1966 - 1967	Fr. L. R. Anthony (Former Bishop of Trincomalee

Parish Priests who served in Naranthanai (1908 - 2017) Cont...

1967 - 1971	Fr. K. Singarayar OMI
1971 - 1975	Fr. S. Villavarasingham
1975 - 1980	Fr. C. S. Croos OMI
1981 - 1982	Fr. Regis Rajanayagam
1982 - 1985	Fr. Gnanapragasam OMI
1985 - 1990	Fr. Chandran Jesuthasan
1990 - 1997	Displacement of people due to ethnic conflict
1997 - 2000	Fr. G. J. Moulish
May 2000—2001	Fr. S. Sebanesharatnam
Nov 2011 - 2002	Fr. Eric Roshan
2002 - 2003	Fr. Stalin
Nov. 2003 - May 2007	Fr. Peter Thurairatnam
2007 - Dec.2011	Fr. J. A. Aruldasan
2012 - Jan.2017	Fr. G. Peter
Jan. 2017—To date	Fr. S. M. P. Anandakumar

4. Priests and Nuns from Kayts Island Priests from Karampon (1938 - 2015)

Fr. S. Soosainathar
Fr. X. S. Thaninayagam
Fr. Victor Rajanayagam
Fr. B. Deogupillai
Fr. M. J. Mariampillai
Fr. B. Soosaipillai
Fr. L. R. Antony
Fr. M. Emmanuel OMI

Priests from Karampon (1938-2015) Cont...

Fr. B. Mary Joseph
Fr. Kingsley Swampillai
Fr. S. L. Marianayagam S. J
Fr. Emmanuel Pius
Fr. Don Bosco Mariampillai
Fr. J. Anton Dominic
Fr. S. F. Boniface Rajadurai
Fr. Justin Gnanapiragasam
Fr. M. Gnanapiragasam
Fr. R. H. Sahayanayagam
Fr. E. J. Arumainayagam
Fr. Jero Selvanayagam
Fr. Camilus Nimalan
Fr. Jayaseelan Robert
Fr. J. Sylvester
Fr. Roy Ferdinand Sebastian
Fr. Leo Armstrong
Fr. G. Luxman
Fr. I. Selva Vijendran O.M.I
Fr. Raj Clarie O.M.I

Priests from Naranthanai (1908-2015)

Fr. P. J. Jeevaratnam O.M.I
Fr. Micheal Soundranayagam
Fr. P.M.Emmanuel
Fr. Ravichandran
Fr. Vijintas
Fr. James
Fr. Thomas
Fr. T. A. Mathuranayagam
Fr. Bennet Constantine
Fr. J. B. Jerome
Fr. Gabriel Arulnesan

Priests from Suruvil

Fr. Arumai Iyathurai
Fr. Guy De Fondgaland

Priests from Kayts

Name	Birth	Ordination	Parish Church
Fr. S. J. Stanislaus	02-03-1980	24-01-1907	St. Mary's Church
Fr. J. Francis OMI	04-07-1879	31-01-1909	St. Mary's Church
Fr. L. J. Augustine	08-04-1882	31-01-1921	St. Mary's Church
Fr. M. S. Nalliah OMI	09-12-1893	28-01-1924	St. Mary's Church
Fr. S. S. Soosainathar	17-12-1906	12-12-1933	St. Mary's Church
Fr. X. Thaninayagam OMI	01-08-1913	19-03-1938	St. Mary's Church
Fr. M. Emmanuel OMI	27-07-1927	06-08-1950	St. Mary's Church
Fr. J. Kingsley Swampillai	9-12-1936	20-12-1961	St. Mary's Church
Fr. B. Mary Joseph	18-05-1930	15-06-1971	St. Mary's Church
Fr. S. I. Marianayagam S.J	21-05-1937	06-04-1970	St. Mary's Church
Fr. M. Gnanapragasam	17-11-1947	11-08-1984	St. Mary's Church
Fr. Justin Gnanapragasam	13-05-1948	24-04-1974	St. Mary's Church

Priests from Kayts Cont...

Name	Birth	Ordination	Parish Church
Fr. J. Camillus Nimalan	15-03-1958	18-04-1983	St. Mary's Church
Fr. Victor Emmanuel Rasanaygam	1916	28-12-1942	St. Antony's Church
Fr. Thomas Savundranayagam	13-07-1938	12-12-1963	St. Antony's Church
Fr. Julius Rasiah	20-11-1922	02-03-1985	St. Joseph's Church
Fr. Jeyraj Rasiah	09-07- 1958	26-05-1991	St. Joseph's Church
Fr. Hilary Jebanesan	17-09-1934	01-09-1962	St. Jame's Church
Fr. Charles Collins	25-05-1962	31-07-1990	St. Jame's Church
Fr. Jude Anjelo Amirthanayagam OMI	04.01.1965	07-08-1998	St. Anthony's Church
Fr. Sylvester OMI	17.10.1969	19-10-2002	St. Anthony's Church
Fr. Joseph Raj Claier OMI			St. Jame's Church
Fr. Sathiyaseelan Vimalasakaran			St. Jame's Church

Priests from Eluvaitivu (Part of Kayts Parish)

Rev. Fr. Kithapongalan Luxman

Date of birth : 12 - 10 - 1979

Date of Ordination: 18 - 05 - 2011

Date of Death : 14 - 11 - 2012

Rev. Fr. Thiruchelvam Queenson Fernando

Date of birth : 19 - 01 - 1983

Date of Ordination: 24 - 05 - 2012

Nuns from Kayts parish

Name	Order	Parish Church
Sr. Mary Stella	Holy Family	St. Mary's Church
Sr. Bernadette	Holy Family	St. Mary's Church
Sr. Angelmore	Holy Family	St. Mary's Church
Sr. Bergmans	Holy Family	St. Mary's Church
Sr. Seraphine	Holy Family	St. James Church
Sr. Valentine	Holy Family	St. James Church
Sr. Benigna	Holy Family	St. James Church
Sr. Thecla Chrystotom	Holy Family	St. James Church
Sr. Helen Mary Ponniah	Holy Family	St. James Church
Sr. Dorothy	Holy Family	St. James Church
Sr. Everesta	Holy Family	St. Joseph's Church
Sr. Mary Stella	Holy Family	St. Mary's Church
Sr. Christa Mariathas	Holy Family	St. James Church
Sr. Neyomy Rajanayagam	Holy Family	St. Anthony's Church
Sr. Monica	Holy Family	St. Mary's Church
Sr. Felicita Fernando	Holy Family	St. Joseph's Church
Sr. Mary Kamala Sri-nathan	Good Shepherd	St. Anthony's Church

Nuns from Kayts parish Cont...

Name	Order	Parish Church
Sr. Frigida	CMS	St. James Church
Sr. Jean Judesala Jude	CMS	St. James Church
Sr. Mary Jacqueline Aseervatham	CMS	St. James Church
Sr. Nirmalin Stanislaus	CMS	St. James Church

Nuns from Karampon parish (1938-2017)

(Complete details not available)

Name	Order
Sr. Emiliana Thambithurai	Holy Family
Sr. Renee Saverimuthu	Sister of Charity
Sr. Christa Rasiah	Holy Cross
Sr. Maria Grotti Sinnadurai	Holy Cross
Sr. Angelina	Holy Family
Sr. James	Carmelite
Sr. Lourdes	Holy Family
Sr. Faustina	Holy Cross
Sr. Daniela	Holy Family
Sr. Antonette Manuelpillai	

Nuns from Naranthanai Parish (1908-2015)

(Complete details not available)

Name	Order
Sr. Baptist	
Sr. Mary Pricilla Paul	
Sr. Ancilla James	Holy Family
Sr. Victorine James	Holy Cross

Kayts Island

Nuns from Suruvil Parish

Sr. Canice Philomina Michalpillai
Sr. Agnes Joseph (Holy Cross)

Nuns from Eluvaitivu (Part of Kayts Parish)

Sr. Francis Manoharan Maria Vithushika (AC)

Date of First Vow : 09 - 01 - 2010

Date of Birth : 30 - 11 - 1985

Sr. Thomas Ida (Holy Cross)

Date of Birth : 10 - 10 - 1945

Date of First Vow : 11 - 02 - 1968

Date of Final Vow : 11 - 02 - 1973

Sr. Soosaipillai Maristella

Date of Birth : 24 - 09 - 1966

Date of First Vow : 01 - 06 - 1991

Date of Final Vow : 14 - 04 - 1998

Bishops from Kayts Island

Kayts

Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Savundranayagam (1992-
Retired Oct.12.2015)

Karampon

Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Jerome Emilianuspillai (1901 -
17.07.1972)

Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Jacob Bastiampillai Deogupillai
(09.04.1917 - Apr.25.2003)

Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Leo Rajendram Antony
(19.04.1927 - Dec.03.2012)

Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Kingsley Swampillai (7.03.1983 -
Retired June.03.2015)

Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin Bernard Gnanapiragasam
(13.05.2015 -

Naranthanai

Archbishop Dominic Aloysius Vendargon (1909 - 2005)

Profiles of Bishops from Kayts Island

Emeritus Bishop of Jaffna - Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Thomas Savundranayagam



Bishop Emmanuel Thomas Savundranayagam was born on July 13, 1938, in Kayts. His parents were Marisal Saverimuthu Varapiragasam Emmanuel and Mrs. Thomas Saviriaachi.

He had his early education at St. Anthony's College, Kayts. It was Fr. Philip Ponniah who while serving as the parish priest in Kayts at that time noticed the talents of young Savundaranayagam and planted the seeds for him to become a priest. He continued his studies at St. Patrick's college, Jaffna and then gained admission to St. Martin's Seminary Jaffna in 1953. Later he joined the National Seminary at Ampitiya, Kandy, where he studied philosophy and Theology from 1957-1964. Late Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Dr. M. J. Emilianuspillai at St. Mary's Cathedral Jaffna ordained him a priest on Dec. 21 1963.

From 1964 till 1973 Fr. Savundaranayagam served in various parishes in the north including Nallur, Periyavilan, Naanadaan, Vankalai and also has been the parish priest at St. Mary's Cathedral, Jaffna.

In 1973, he obtained his Diploma in Catechetics at Bangaore in India.

He served as the Director of Catechechetical Centre from 1973 until 1977. Between 1977 - 1981, Bishop Savundranayagam completed his Doctorate in Sacred Theology at the Pontifical Urban University in Rome.

His Episcopal ordination was on July 31, 1981, at Madhu church at Mannar. He was officially appointed Bishop of the newly created diocese of Mannar on 1981 Aug.02. After serving in Mannar for a decade, on the retirement of Bishop Deogupillai he became Bishop of Jaffna in 1992. He celebrated his Episcopal silver jubilee on July 30, 2006.

Bishop Saundranayagam tendered his resignation in early October .2015 and Pope Francis has announced the appointment of Vicar General Rt. Rev. Justin Gnanapragasam as the new Bishop of Jaffna effective Oct.13th.2015.

Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Jerome Emilianus Pillai, O.M.I.



The Fifth Bishop of Jaffna (first native Bishop) Bishop Jerome Emilianus Pillai, O.M.I was born on 20 July 1901 in Wennappuwa, Chilaw. His parents were Jacob and Annappillai from Karampon. His father was the head master of the parish school at Ulkhetiyawa, Wennappuwa.

Emilianuspillai had his early education at St. Anthony's College and at St. Patrick's College, Jaffna. He had his secondary education at St. Benedict's College, Colombo and at the Ceylon University College where he obtained his B. Sc degree.

After completing his University Education, he joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1924 made his Novitiate at St. Francis Xavier's Novitiate, Bampalapitiya. On completion of his Novitiate Formation he was sent together with Thomas Cooray (who later was elevated to the position of Cardinal) for their philosophical and Theological Studies to the Oblate International Scholasticate

in Rome. In Rome Fr. Emilianus obtained PH.D and D.D from Angelicum University.

Emilianuspillai was ordained Priest of Oblates of Mary Immaculate 7th July. 1929 at Roviano, Rome. After he returned to Sri Lanka in 1930, he was assigned to the Diocese of Jaffna and appointed as the Rector of St. Joseph's college Anurathapura where he served for a very brief period of three months .Later he was made the Rector of St. Joseph's English school, Mathagal.

After gaining some experience and practical knowledge in parishes and schools, he was appointed as the first Priest Principal of the Teachers Training College at Columbuthurai in 1935. In 1936, he was appointed General Manager of Schools of Jaffna Diocese. In 1937 Bishop Guoyomar called Fr. Emil to serve as the Vicar General of the diocese. He also served as the administrator of the Diocese when the Bishop was away in Rome in 1946.

It was when Fr. Jerome Emilianuspillai was the Principal of St. Henry's College, Ilavalai on 10th March 1949 when the bells of the church announced his appointment as Titular Bishop of Bladia and as Coadjutor Bishop of Jaffna, with the right of succession.

The consecration of the first Tamil Bishop took place at St. Mary's Cathedral on 22 May 1949. On 18th July, 1950 on the retirement of Bishop Alfred Jean Guoyomar, Fr. Emilianuspillai was officially installed as the Bishop of Jaffna .His episcopate lasted 22 years.

The episcopate of Bishop Emil was a very difficult one. It coincided with the period of political and social changes in the country. It was the time when Sri Lanka gained independence from the British. Further, Vatican Council 11 brought in new thinking, new attitudes new values, and new liturgical and administrative changes in the church in the period. To be at the helm of a large

ecclesiastical institution was not an easy task but Bishop Emil was equal to the new and heavy responsibility. He steered the church in Jaffna through this troublesome period smoothly with his efficient administrative talents.

Bishop Emil's chief attention during his 22 years of episcopate was devoted to the development of the Missions lying outside the peninsula, in the periphery of the diocese. Kilinochchi and Cheddikulam formed the centers of this new development. New churches and schools were built in a number of these distant outposts in Vanni in order to renovate the faith of these unfortunate people and to give their children every facility for their education.

Another of Bishop Emil's great achievement was the development of a good diocesan clergy. New parishes were created to cope with the increasing population of the diocese and more priests were urgently needed to look after the new parishes. Therefore, Bishop Emilianuspillai concentrated much in recruitment of young men to the Seminary and training them to the priesthood. St. Martins Seminary was made the Minor Seminary only for the aspirants to the Diocesan clergy. He sent them for training to theological colleges in places such as Rome, Canada, Pune, Bangalore, Madras and Trichy. As a result, the number of diocesan clergy increased with every passing year and at the time of Bishop's death, he left behind a diocese well disciplined and established in traditions, well provided with a clergy drawn from the sons of the soil and well able to handle the needs of the diocese.

Another achievement of Bishop Emilianuspillai was the development of the sylvan shrine of Madhu into a national place of pilgrimage. He took great efforts to develop the shrine. He also arranged to provide efficient transport and health services for the pilgrims. Having served the Lord for 66 years, he was called to rest on 17 Jul.1972.

Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Jacob Bastiampillai Deogupillai

Bastiampillai Deogupillai, son of Mariampillai Bastiampillai and Anthonipillai Innasiapillai was born on Apr 9 1917 in Karampon.

Bishop Deogupillai had his early education at Kayts St. Anthony's College and later he continued his studies at St. Patrick's college, Jaffna. He then been admitted to St. Martin's Seminary in 1929 to study for priesthood. He studied at St. Patrick's College until he finished Inter Arts in 1935.



It was about this time that certain changes were taking place in the general administration of the diocese of Jaffna. There was a demand from certain influential quarters that at least a few seminarians be sent to the Major Seminary to become priests of the diocese. Deogupillai was one of the young men destined to become a diocesan priest. He was also one of the two selected to go to Rome for Theological studies. He went to the Propaganda Fide College in Rome where he made his mark as a brilliant student, active sportsman and a pious candidate for the priesthood. His Eminence Cardinal Fumasoni Biondi ordained him priest at the Propaganda Fide College on 22 December 1941. On the day of his ordination, the newly ordained Fr. Deogupillai spoke in Tamil over the Vatican Radio and imparted his first blessing to his parents and relatives in Ceylon. Since he could not return to the Island due to the Second World War, he continued his sojourn in Rome where he obtained a doctorate in Sacred Theology.

Later on, he completed his BA (London) degree and then Diploma in Education (Sri Lanka) from University of Ceylon.

Between 1945 and 1967, Fr. Deogupillai served in various capacities in many parishes and educational institutions. From 1945 till 1946 he served as Assistant Pastor at St. Mary's cathedral, Jaffna and in May 1946 he was appointed Rector of St. Joseph's College Anuradhapura where he served till July 1951. From 1951 till July 1953 he served as the Rector of Sacred Heart College, Karaveddy.

In August 1953, he was appointed acting Rector of St. Henry's college, Ilavalai in which position he continued until Feb 1954. Immediately after he was appointed Rector of this great educational institution. Fr. Deogupillai then decided to accept the post of Principal St. Joseph's Teachers Training College, Columbuturai.

After serving many years in a number of educational institutions, in 1963 May he became the parish priest of Ilavalai where he served until March 1967. Simultaneously he also served as Vicar Forane of Ilavalai District.

While serving as the parish priest of Ilavalai, Fr. Deogupillai was nominated Auxiliary to the Bishop of Trincomalee - Batticaloa Mgr. Ignatius Glennly S.J. on February 9 1967, and was ordained as Bishop of Trincomalee on the 11th May 1967. He thus became the first Tamil diocesan priest in Sri Lanka to be elevated to the rank of a Bishop.

After serving for five years in Trincomalee diocese, he was appointed the Bishop of Jaffna on December 18th 1972. During his Episcopal ministry in Jaffna, there was a remarkable growth of the Church in the North in many fields. It was for his credit that a large number of priests went abroad for higher studies. It was during his period that a Major Seminary was started at Colombogam to impart priestly formation in a local setting. During the

same period, serious attempts were made to establish creative and meaningful encounter between the Catholic Church and Tamil culture especially in the fields of arts and literature.

Realizing that the diocese was too extensive for better pastoral care, he advocated the birth of new dioceses, first in handing over the Anuradhapura region to the Oblates under the leadership of Bishop Joy Gunawardene OMI and then creating the Mannar diocese with sufficient clergy and its first Bishop - Bishop Savundranayagam. Bishop Deogupillai served as Bishop of Jaffna until 1991. On his retirement, Bishop Savundaranayagam succeeded him.

In addition to his many pastoral duties, Bishop Deogupillai continued his literary apostolate. His book on Catechetical Religious Education published in the sixties gained fame for its clarity, precision and comprehensive presentation of the Christian doctrine in Tamil and was chosen as the textbook for Christianity (R.C.) for the G.C.E. A/L examination.

He founded a monthly magazine called Thondan and contributed many enlightening articles on Christian Tamil Literature, especially of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He researched into such works as Gnanapallu, Yagappar Ammanai, Thiruchelvar Kaviyam, Thiruchelvar Ammanai etc. and wrote learned articles on their dates of composition and authorship.

He also published several liturgical tracts and prayer manuals, theological glossaries and other treatises on Christian education. He is a historian of great distinction. His notes on Bettacchini, collected over a period of several years served as resource material for a priest of the diocese to write "The life and times Orazio Betacchini". It was due to his untiring efforts that the Jaffna diocesan archive was systematically arranged.

Above all, the shining example of the towering personality will be remembered as the leading light of his Episcopal ministry in Jaffna. He was a man par excellence and a wise leader of immense stature. The people of the North and East have been fortunate to have had a religious leader who was a man above men and whose measured words and calculated silence mirrored the immense sufferings of his people and sent ripples of anguish throughout the civilized world. Having served the Lord as a priest for 61 years and as Bishop for 36 years, Bishop Deogupillai passed away into God's hands on Apr.24.2003 at the age of 86.

May his soul rest in peace. Bishop Deogupillai is gone out of sight, but his clarion call to a life of faith and courage will continue to ring loud and clear among a people still struggling for the light of the day.

Bishop Rt. Rev. Leo Rajendram Antony



Born in Karampon village in Jaffna district on 19.04.1927, Bishop Emeritus Antony is the last in the family of four of Mr. Leo Rajendran and Mrs. Mariapillai.

He had his primary education in Karampon Holy Family Convent and secondary education at Kayts St. Antony's College. Later he followed higher education in Jaffna St. Patrick's College.

He entered the priesthood on 7 December 1954. He was nominated as the Auxiliary Bishop of Jaffna diocese on 21.11.1968. On 03.08.68, he was appointed Titular Bishop of Fissiana. In 1972, His Lordship Antony

was appointed Coadjutor Bishop of Trincomalee – Batticaloa.

He was appointed Bishop of Trincomalee - Batticaloa Diocese in 1974 succeeding Bishop Dr. B. Theogupillai who was appointed to fill the vacancy created by the death of the first Tamil Bishop of Jaffna diocese Dr. Emilianuspillai.

Minor Seminary: 8th. January 1940 (Age 13) St. Martin's Minor Seminary, Jaffna.

Priestly Studies: 1948 - St. Bernard's Major Seminary, Borella, Colombo.

Philosophy & Theology: Propaganda College, Rome.

Ordination to the Priesthood: 7 December 1954 in Rome.

Ordained by: Archbishop Sigis Mondì.

Priesthood: in Jaffna for a few years.

1958: Secretary to Bishop Glennie, sj. Diocese of Trincomalee

1962: Spiritual Director of the Rosarians at Tholagatty & Pastor of Vasavilan.

1966: Parish Priest of St. Mary's Cathedral, Jaffna.

1968: Appointed Auxiliary Bishop to Bishop Emilianuspillai.

When Bishop Emilianuspillai died, he was made the Administrator of the diocese of Jaffna.

1973: Appointed co-adjutor for the diocese of Trincomalee - Batticaloa.

1974: Appointed Bishop of Trincomalee - Batticaloa.

1983: Voluntary Retirement on the grounds of ill health.

His Lordship Bishop Leo Rajendram Antony marked the 50th anniversary of his priesthood on 7th December 2004. Popularly known as the 'People's Bishop', Dr. Antony retired after serving his flock in the Trincomalee- Batticaloa diocese for several years.

Anthony had his primary education at the Holy Family

Convent school at Karampon and his secondary education at St. Anthony's College, Kayts and at St. Patrick's College, Jaffna.

While at St. Patrick's, obeying the words of Jesus, "Follow Me" (St. Mathew 9-9), he chose his vocation and joined St. Martin's Seminary, Jaffna. Following a seven-year study at St. Martin's and in Rome, he was ordained a priest in the Marian Year of 1954 on 7 December. Fr. Antony said his first mass at St. Peter's Cathedral. After a pilgrimage to Lourdes and Assisi, he returned home in 1955.

On his return his first parish was Nallur, which was followed by St. Mary's Cathedral, Jaffna, where he was appointed assistant parish priest. He later became the parish priest at the Jaffna Cathedral and then at the Naranthanai parish. Wherever he served he earned the love and affection of the parishioners. In 1958 Fr. Antony was appointed secretary to Bishop Ignatius Glennie for a brief period.

A high point in his spiritual career came in 1962, when Fr. Antony was appointed head of the monks of the Holy Rosary at the Tholagatty Ashram, which was known for its strict code of discipline.

Bishop Antony was instituted as the Auxiliary Bishop of Jaffna on 21st November 1968. When, in 1973 His Lordship Dr. B. Deogupillai, who had been the Bishop of Trincomalee - Batticaloa, became the Bishop of Jaffna, following the passing away of His Lordship Dr. Emilianuspillai, Dr. Antony became the Bishop of Trincomalee - Batticaloa.

After a fruitful period of several years as the People's Bishop in the eastern diocese, Bishop Antony retired due to ill health.

His Lordship Bishop L. R. Anthony was called to Eternal rest in the Lord on 3 December 2012.

Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Kingsley Joseph Swampillai

Emeritus Bishop of Trincomalee - Batticaloa



Bishop Joseph Kingsley Swampillai son of Antonia Swampillai and Anthonipillai Swampillai was born on Dec 9, 1936 in Karampon. His father Swampillai taught at Roman Catholic Tamil School at Kayts under SSJ Brothers.

Bishop Kingsley had his early education at Kayts St. Anthony's College and it is an interesting coincidence that he and Emeritus Bishop Thomas Savundaranayagam were class mates.

Kingsley then continued his studies at St. Patrick's college, Jaffna and was later admitted to St. Martin's Seminary In 1955 to study for priesthood. After his SSC Examination, he joined National Seminary, Kandy in 1955 to pursue his Philosophical studies.

Soon after completing his studies at the National Seminary in 1958, he was sent to Rome by the then Bishop of Jaffna, Bishop Jerome Emilianuspillai to study Theology at the Propaganda College (New Urbanian University). Fr. Kingsley completed his theological studies in July 1962.

During his theological studies, Cardinal Gregory - Peter Agagianian on 20th Dec 1961 ordained him priest in Rome.

Between 1962 and 1969, Fr. Kingsley served in various capacities including as assistant parish priest (Killino-chchi, Kayts, Mullaitivu, Puthukudiyiruppu and Navanthurai), Assistant Director of Farm School,

Kayts Island

Kilinochchi and also as Assistant administrator of Madhu Shrine.

Training to be an administrator

In 1970.Fr.Kingsley was made the private secretary to his Lordship Jerome Emilianuspillai and he served at this post till the untimely death of the Bishop. It was during this time that all his talents blossomed as an able administrator. Soon he was made the Diocesan General Secretary and was put in charge of Roman Catholic Schools, Chancellor and General Manager of the lands and Estates.

When the post of National Director of the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies fell vacant, in 1974 he was chosen by the Bishop's conference to head this office, a post he continued to hold until he was appointed Bishop of Trinco - Batticaloa.

Nomination to the see of Trincomalee - Batticaloa

After 22 years of serving as priest, he was appointed Bishop of Trincomalee - Batticola on 17 Mar1983. He was consecrated in Rome on 7 May1983 by Cardinal Angelo Rossi as the fifth Bishop of Trincomalee - Batticola.

As a Bishop, he brought along with him the rich pastoral experience as well as his long years of efficient administrative service in Jaffna. During his episcopacy he had to face the brunt of the ethnic war in the eastern province and the numerous internal displacements. Soon after taking charge of the diocese, the infamous communal riots erupted, in 1983 July causing a refugee crisis when hundreds of displaced persons were forced to flow into his diocese. He bravely faced the humanitarian problems that resulted and was able to provide the basic amenities to the displaced.

As the war situation and the conflict between the Sri Lankan armed forces and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) gained momentum, an unexpected situation arose with the arrival of Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) in Trincomalee in 1987. As a result, the situation in the East became increasingly complex. Amidst all trying circumstances he had to deal with pluralistic and diverse communities in East. He had to be all things to all people and with divine guidance, he was able to do his best under such difficult circumstances.

A few years later, in 2004 December he was called to face the devastating consequences of the Tsunami Tidal Wave disaster. Thus, he had to face immense difficulties all throughout his episcopacy the loss of civilians, priests, churches, schools etc.

In all such critical moments his long -range vision led him to gather all institutions and agencies and move forward as a united force.

He has already served as a priest for 53 years including 32 years as Bishop. Bishop Kingsley Swampillai submitted his resignation on June.03.2015 having reached the age limit. Pope having accepted the resignation has appointed Father Christian Noel Emmanuel as the new Bishop of Trincomalee.

While Bishop Swampillai was in retirement, the Bishop of Mannar Rt. Rev. Joseph Rayappu became ill and submitted his resignation in early Jan.2016. Because of this sudden turn of events, Emeritus Bishop Swampillai was called to serve as Apostolic Administrator for Mannar Diocese until the appointment of a new Bishop.

Archbishop Rt. Rev. Dominic Vendargon
Emeritus Archbishop of Kula Lumpur

Born Aug. 29, 1909, in Naranthani, Sri Lanka, Dominic Vendargon and his mother joined his father who was



employed as a surveyor in the Federated Malay States, in 1910.

They returned to Sri Lanka with the family's three other children in 1915 after the outbreak of World War I, and Vendargon became a boarder at Oblate-run St. Patrick's College in Jaffna.

In 1919, after the war, they rejoined his father in Seremban where he attended St. Paul's Institution. In 1923, they transferred to Malacca, where Vendargon passed his senior Cambridge exam at St. Francis Institution in 1923.

Overcoming objections from his father, who wanted him to be a doctor, Vendargon entered St. Francis Xavier Seminary in Singapore in 1925, moving to the College General in Penang in 1927. He was ordained a priest Dec. 8, 1934.

Appointed Vicar for Indians in Negri Sembilan, then Father Vendargon made pastoral visits to Catholic families on rubber plantations in the state until he was reassigned to Kedah in September 1941, just prior to World War II.

His home was briefly occupied by Japanese soldiers who destroyed all books and records. He spent the war years going throughout Kedah and Perlis, mostly by bicycle, ministering to families, also visiting Kelantan and Trengganu.

After the war, he taught at College General in 1948, became Vicar for Indians in Johor Baru and at Singapore Naval Base in 1949 and Teluk Anson in 1950, and was Vicar of St. Anthony's Church in Kuala Lumpur in 1951-1955.

Pope Pius XII appointed him Bishop of Kuala Lumpur when it and Penang were established as suffragan

dioceses of the Archdiocese of Malacca-Singapore in 1955.

Then Bishop Vendargon attended all Second Vatican Council (1963 - 1965) sessions and was named an archbishop in 1972 by Pope Paul VI.

Besides church organizations, Archbishop Vendargon also served on the Association for the Promotion of Higher Education Malaysia, the Guild of Catholic Assisted Schools Malaysia and Malaysian Inter-Religious Association.

He was also the first president of the Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism, which seeks to represent common interests of the major non-Muslim religions in Malaysia.

Bishop Dominic Vendargon passed away at the age of 96 - just 20 days before his episcopal golden jubilee.

Bishop Rt. Rev Dr. Justin Gnanapragasam



Pope Francis has appointed a new Bishop to the Diocese of Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka. Monsignor Justin Bernard Gnanapragasam, the Vicar General of the diocese is the new Bishop of Jaffna with effect from Oct.13th.2015.

The 67 year old priest takes over from Bishop Thomas Savundaranayagam, who has stepped down having reached the retirement age of 75 two years ago.

Born, May 13, 1948, in Karampon, Kayts, in the Diocese of Jaffna, Msgr. Gnanapragasam had his primary education at Kayts St. Anthony's College. He entered the minor seminary of Jaffna and continued his secondary

school at St. Patrick's College. After his further studies in philosophy at the National seminary of Kandy and theology at the Papal Seminary, Poona in India, he was ordained to the priesthood on April 24, 1974.

After his ordination, he has served in various capacities:
1974-1975:Assistant parish priest of Kilinochchi and Valaipadu.

1975-1976:Assistant parish priest of Uruthirapuram.

1976-1979:Assistant parish priest in St. Anne's Church, Ilavalai.

1986-1989:Followed postgraduate studies at Southampton, UK.

1990-1994:Director of a group of state schools and Rector of St. Henry's College, Jaffna.

1995-2002:Dean of the Ilavalai Deanary comprising 9 parishes of Jaffna.

1992-2006:Visiting Professor of the major seminary of Jaffna.

2002-2007:Rector of St. Patrick's College, Jaffna.

2002:Examiner of Doctoral theses, Jaffna University.

2007-2015:Vicar General of Jaffna.

2008:Director of Jaffna press.

Biography - Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin Bernard Gnanapiragasam B. Th, MA, Ph. D

Education

- University of Southampton, England ,Doctorate (Ph. D) in Education (1986-1988)
- University of Hull, England/Irish School of Ecumenics, Masters Degree (M.A) in Ecumenical Theology (1979-1980)
- Pontifical Atheaneum, Poona, India ,Bachelor of Theology (B. Th) (1972-1974)
- Seminaries- Pontifical Athenaeum, Poona, National Seminary, Kandy and St. Martin's Minor seminary , Jaffna

- Secondary Education - St. Patrick's College , Jaffna and St. Anthony's College, Kayts

Appointments

- Member, University Council , University of Jaffna (1998 - 2014)
- Evaluator and examiner of M Phil and Doctoral theses, University of Jaffna (2002 onwards)
- Chairman , Student Discipline Committee , University of Jaffna (2003 - 2011)
- Attained Class 1 Grade in Sri Lanka College Principals' Service (1991)
- Cluster Principal for a group of twelve Government Schools (1990 - 1994) during Rectorship of St. Henry's College Ilavalai
- Rector of St. Henry's College, Ilavalai(1989 - 2002) and previously Vice Rector (1976 - 1989)
- Visiting Lecturer in Christian Civilization at University of Jaffna (1982 - 1984)
- Assistant Director , Long Technical Institute, Kilinochchi (1975 - 1976)

Diocesan and Parish Assignments

- Vicar General - Jaffna Diocese (2007-2015)
- Manager - Catholic Press, Jaffna (2008-2015)
- Rector St. Patrick's College , Jaffna (2002-2007)
- Member, Diocesan Episcopal Council(1994-2002) (2007 Onwards)
- Dean (Vicar Forane) Ilavalai Deanery consisting of nine parishes (1994-2002)
- Chairman , Diocesan Commission for Education (1992-2002)
- Visiting Lecturer in Philosophy of Education at St. Xavier's Major Seminary, Jaffna (1992-2006)
- Chairman, Diocesan Commission for Ecumenism (1981-1988)

- Parish priest, St. Jude's Church, Ilavalai (1989 - 2000 during Rectorship at St. Henry's College
- Parish priest, Mareesankoodal Mission, Ilavalai (1980-1985 during Vice Rectorship at St. Henry's College)
- Assistant Parish priest, St. Anne's Church, Ilavalai (1976-1979 during Vice Rectorship at St. Henry's College)
- Assistant Parish priest , Uruthirapuram Mission and Orphanage, Vanni (1975-1976 during Long Technical Institute Asst Directorship)
- First appointment after ordination - Assistant parish priest Kilinochchi and Valaipadu Missions (1974-1975)

Research and Publications

- Catholic Education in Sri Lanka during its first century as a British Colony, 1796 - 1901 (Unpublished Ph. D thesis, University of Southampton, England, 1988)
- The concern for the poor as seen in the life of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World council of Churches (Unpublished M A Dissertation, University of Hull , England, 1980)
- A caring Education for our children (University of Jaffna Journal , Jaffna, Srilanka, 2000)
- Thoughts on Catholic Bishop's Social Teaching in the context of United Kingdom General election 1987 (department of Education, University of Southampton, England. 1987)

Educational Institutions in Kayts Island

The History of St. Anthony's College, Kayts (1872 - 2015)



The phenomenal progress of the residents of the islands is intimately linked with St. Antony's College, Kayts. The College is located in natural surroundings in the midst of the town flanked by two arms of the Jaffna lagoon on the western and northern sides. Fresh air blows over the college providing a soothing environment. The ancient harbour, numerous catholic churches, the convent and presbytery, the market, the bank and many government offices are all situated in close proximity to the College.

The name of Rev. Fr. Boisseau (OMI) is permanently etched in the memory of all Antonians as a pious and dedicated priest .With far sightedness he founded the college and built it adjoining Kayts St. Antony's Church in 1872. As a Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Boisseau, with a dream of providing the children of his Parish the benefit of English education he established the College with

the blessings of the extremely understanding and fully cooperative Episcopal Superior, the Vicar Apostolic of Jaffna, Rev. Fr. Christopher Bonjean (OMI).

This was in fact the very first Anglo-vernacular school established outside Jaffna peninsula by the catholic mission. The people of Kayts supporting this enthusiastic educationist magnanimously donated six acres of land for the school building and playground.

Rev. Fr. Boisseau's original idea, it would appear, was to entrust the administration of his School to the Brothers of the Society of St. Joseph (SSJ), an indigenous teaching order founded in 1864. However, the non-availability of these brothers in sufficient number compelled him to place the school on the hands of a pious layman Mr. M. Swampillai from a nearby area as one of the main promoter of the educational movement here. His son Fr. Stanislaus OMI, was the first priest to be ordained from the island.

After many vicissitudes, in 1896, the Parish Priest of the Islands Division, Fr. J. N. Sandrasegara, prevailed upon his Bishop, late Rt. Rev. Dr. Henry Joulain (OMI), to hand the school over to the Josephian fraternity. By the time, the school was a small vernacular school but the Brothers soon brought it to footings of efficiency, and registered it as an Anglo Vernacular school in 1907. The people of the area very much appreciated the rapid growth of the college under the guidance of the SSJ Brothers. The brothers earned a very high reputation among the people for their great service. Remarkably, the brothers acquired a ten- acres plot of land adjoining the college premises where they built a commodious house and planted a number of coconut trees.

The memories of great principals such as **Br. Pakyanathan, Br. Simon and Br. Cyril Ferdinand** are still fresh in the minds of the past students who had the

privilege of being taught by them. In 1907, the college was registered as the English school and the school building was extended in 1909. The total numbers of the students increased and number on roll in 1918 was 250.



Year 1921 witnessed the division of the school into an English and Tamil section. The extended school building housed the Tamil class. The Tamil school was headed by Br. Peter with Mr. Gnanapragasam and Mr. Rasaiah as his assistants. Br. Peter Paul was appointed headmaster of the English school and among the lay members of the staff were Messrs. Gnanapragasam, Rayappu and Arulanandam. The main building of the college with its beautiful portico facing St. Anthony's Church and the historic Kayts harbour was completed during the administration of Br. Pakyanathar as the principal. Among the SSJ Brothers **Br. Philip, Br. Linus, Br. Simon, Br. Pedrupillai, Br. Titus and Br. Alexis** are also well remembered as the educationists who served at St. Anthony's until 1938.

The late thirties brought a new era into the history of the college. That was the handing over management of the college from SSJ Brothers to the Priests during the period of the then Bishop Rt. Rev. D. R. Guyomar.

Change of Administration

Rev. Fr. A. S. Joseph, the first Priest Principal of the new era had a magnetic personality. He was one of the three young priests handpicked by Bishop Guyomar for university education in U.K. Fr. Joseph, born in Sillalai was a saintly a man of sterling qualities and stern disciplinarian. He was a man skilled in administration. He served for ten years until he died in 1948.

After his untimely death, **Fr. William Jesuthasan** took over and served as the Rector until 1950. **Fr. Arulnesan** continued his good work with equal vigour and dedication and served till 1952. It should be noted that Fr. Arulnesan, was responsible for the initiation of the science laboratory. He was transferred to St. Patrick' s College and then **Fr. A. J. Karunaharar**, his successor completed the building of the science lab. He also put up the Karunakarar block.

Fr. Karunaharar served as principal for the next four years .He was succeeded by a very active and strict disciplinarian **Fr. P. J .Jeevaratnam** from Naranthanai who became the principal in 1956 .He put up another new office block, known as Jeevam's Hall. During his period, he promoted science education by the recruiting Indian science graduates for the teaching of Physics, Chemistry, Botany and Zoology. As a result, the College was hailed as a leading institute for science education throughout Northern Province. Fr. Jeevaratnam was transferred to St. Patrick's College in 1960.

Change in the administration of Private schools

In 1961, a drastic change in the administration of the private schools was brought in the country and private schools administrated by the various denominations except grade 1 and grade 11 schools were taken over

by the state. His Lordship the Bishop of Jaffna opted to retain five schools including St. Anthony's College, Kayts among the 186 schools that were being administered by the Catholic mission.

In the period of 1961 **Rev. Fr. F. J. Stanislaus** became the Rector of the school. He was a dynamic priest full of enthusiasm and he was able to create a new era of participation in almost all extracurricular activities of the school including athletics, physical education, soccer, and basketball were distinguished activities. The school teams won a number of awards in various competitions in local as well as district level. Fr. Stanislaus left the school to take up the Rectorship of St. Henry's College, Illavalai in 1964 and **Rev. Fr. M. J. Mariampillai** succeeded him. His stewardship was marked by religious activities, literary pursuit and social work.

In 1969 **Rev. Fr. Alfred Benjamin** accepted the stewardship of the college. He was a pious and mild mannered priest. He was destined to celebrate the centenary of the college in 1972. It was he who promoted the OBA, Kayts and the OBA, Colombo branch. He also established the Emilianuspillai Technical Institute to promote technical education for the students of the area.

During this period, the sudden death of His Lordship Bishop Emilianuspillai, the proprietor of the school, occurred. It was a severe blow since this posed new problems in maintaining the school as private. In 1973 Rev. Fr. F. J. Stanislaus returning from his higher education in U. K. once again became the Rector of the school. His stay however was very short.

Rev. Fr. B. Soosaipillai was appointed Rector after him. The Advanced Level Classes in Arts, Commerce and Science were introduced in 1974 and female students were admitted to the GCE A/L classes in

response to the requests of their parents. Fr. Soosaipillai left the school in 1976. Fr. B. Soosaipillai took great efforts to equip the laboratory and Mr. Rajabalan a science graduate fresh from University joined the staff in the same year and modernized the science lab together with the help of another fresh graduate, Late Mr. Edward. In the same year because of the appeal it his Lordship by the parents, girls were also admitted to the Advanced Level classes of the college. Ladies were also appointed to the teaching staff for the first time. Fr. Soosaipillai left the school in 1976.

Appointment of a layman as Principal

The period beginning in 1976, in many ways was a remarkable one. After many decades of being run by priests, the administration of the school was given to a layman, Mr. S. A. E. Ratnarajah. He served as principal of the school for the next 19 years with great dedication.

Handing over of the college to the state



On the 1st of February 1978, the college was handed over to the state and became a director-managed school. On the occasion of the handing over of the college, the then bishop Rt. Rev. Dr.

B. Deogupillai in a letter he wrote to the government insisted that St. Anthony's College, should always be maintained with all facilities as in the past and it should be primarily for the catholic children of the areas. He also stressed to the Ministry of Education that

the principal of the school should always be a Roman Catholic and a good number of catholic teachers in the staff should always be maintained. He also emphasized that the school premises should be used for the purpose for which they were intended. Otherwise, they were to revert to the present proprietor.

In 1979, in a remarkable event, St. Anthony's College was upgraded as a 1AB school. With that status in the Kayts A.G.A division, it was declared as a popular school of the Islands. With the introduction of the cluster system, the Kayts cluster was founded in 1986. St. Anthony's College was as the core school of the cluster and the neighbouring ten schools joined it.

Civil War and its effects on the administration of the College

In June 1990, as the civil war started in the North and East of the country, the people in Kayts vacated their residences and the school was closed. On 6 August when the Air force bombers bombed Kayts town, a bomb fell on the college administrative block and it was destroyed. As most of the displaced people were temporarily living at Suruvil, St. Anthony's College was reopened there in a private house with a good numbers of students and teachers in November. While the school was functioning here, students from other cluster schools were also admitted. On 26 April 1991 when the army operation started towards Saravanai, the people were once again displaced, this time to Jaffna.

In Jaffna, St. Anthony's College started functioning at Jaffna Central College as an afternoon school together with students from other cluster schools. In January 1992, with the good will of St. John's College management St. Anthony's College moved into St. Johns Academy at Chundikuli, Jaffna. All cluster schools students had full day classes. There the students continued their educa-

tion successfully and achieved remarkable success in many fields.

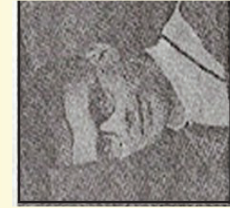
In May 1995 on the retirement of Mr. S. A. E. Ratnarajah, **Mr. K. Ratnasingam** was appointed as principal. In November 1995, when the Sri Lankan forces occupied Jaffna, the college had to face yet another displacement and it continued to function as a displaced school at Ushan Ramanathan M.V. for a very short period.

In May 1996, people were permitted to get back to Island but since the college buildings had been so severely damaged it were not possible to conduct classes. Therefore, the College was reopened at the primary section of the Little Flower Girls M.V at Karampon. In March 3 1997, with temporary repairs made to the badly damaged college buildings, St. Anthony's College put its foot back on its soil to celebrate its 125th year celebration with colour and pageantry. This date is remarkable in another way since the college, which was managed by the clergy for more than a century, got a priest in its teaching staff. The college buildings, which were badly damaged, were rebuilt to its former architectural beauty with the assistance of the G.T.Z., which selected St. Anthony's College, Kayts as one of the eight schools selected for the rehabilitation in the first phase.

Few people know that this was due to a chance encounter between a member of the GTZ team and Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Savundranayagam was the reason for St. Anthony's being selected for rehabilitation. Incidentally, the name of the member was Bishop. What a pleasant coincidence! The Antonian family will always be grateful to the foreign aid given by the German government through the G.T.Z organization for the rehabilitation of their Alma Mater.



Rev. Br. S. Phillips



Rev. Fr. N. Arulnesan



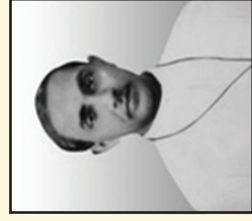
Rev. Fr. A. J. Karunakarar



Rev. Fr. P. J. Jeevaratnam



Rev. Fr. F. J. Stanislaus



Rev. Fr. Alfred Benjamin

Rectors & Principals of St. Anthony's

<u>Period</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Name</u>
1872	Mr. A. Swampillai	1938	Bro. Alexis
	Bro. Pakyanathan		Bro. Bernard
	Bro. Simon	1949-1950	Rev. Fr. A. S. Joseph
1921	Bro. Cyril Ferdinand	1951-1952	Rev. Fr. William Jesuthasan
	Bro. Peter		Rev. Fr. Arulneson
	Bro. Peter Paul	1952-1956	Rev. Fr. A. J. Karunakarar
	Bro. Philip	1956-1960	Rev. Fr. P. J. Jeevaratnam
	Bro. Linus	1961-1964	Rev. Fr. F. J. Stanislaus
	Bro. Simon	1964-1969	Rev. Fr. M. J. Mariyampillai
	Bro. Pedrupillai	1969	Rev. Fr. Alfred Benjamin
	Bro. Titus	1973	Rev. Fr. F. J. Stanislaus



Rev. Fr. M. Mariampillai

Period

1973 - 1975
1976 - 1995
1995 - 2000
2000 - 2009 Jan.
2009 - Todate



Rev. Fr. B. Soosaipillai



Mr. S. A. E. Ratnarejah



Mr. K. Ragtnasingham



Rev. Fr. J. A. Jesuthas



Rev. Fr. K. James Singarayar

During 1997-1999 the principal Mr. Ratnasingham took great efforts to bring back the school to its former glory. The newly renovated school was reopened on Feb.10, 1999 by Mr. P. Wigneswaran, the Director of Education.

On Apr.26th.2000, Principal Mr.K.Ratnasingam was promoted as the Assistant Director of Education to the Kayts Divisional Education Office. Consequently Fr.J.A.Jesuthas who had joined the staff in 1997 and serving as the Deputy Principal, took over the college as the Rector. It should be recorded that after a period of 25 years of layman leadership the college was once again headed by a priest to lead the Antonian family to gain its lost fame and glory in the 3rd Millennium.

After serving the college with great dedication for nearly a decade, **Fr. Jesuthas** proceeded to St.Henry's College, Ilavalai on mutual transfer and **Fr. James Singarayer** took over as the Rector of St. Anthony's and the school is continued to be acknowledged as one of the leading educational institutions in the North.

In 2011 an orphanage named "Annai Illam" was built within the college premises to look after 70 children who lost their parents during Mullivaikkal massacre.

Compiled By: J. F. Jegarajasingham (2002)



Kayts Island

Best Wishes & Photo Courtesy Dr. Elias Jeyarajah From Naranthanai
We pay tribute to our wonderful Teachers at Kaavaloor St. Anthony's College, Kayts
(This portrait was taken in 1961)



Standing: (L to R) S.Kathirgamaathby, A. Sabaratnam, T.A.Vethanayagham, V.Ambalavananathan, M.Victor Philip
T. Sundaralingham, C.Stanislaus, S.A.E.Ratnarajah, S.Anthonymuthu, S.Elias, M.Nadarajah, G.Nicholas, V.B.Rajaratnam, C.M.Joseph
Seated: (L to R) T.S.Arulananatham, S.A.F.Thuraisingham, B.Manuelpillai,George Manuelpillai, Rev.Fr.J.Stanislaus (O.M.I.),
B.E.Marianayagham, A.R.Nicholas, V.A.Philipupillai, S.James, V.Bastiampillai



Traditional Competitions



Priests Produced by St. Anthony's College, Kayts

No.	Name	Date of Birth	Date of Ordination
1	Rev. Fr. S. J. Stanislaus O.M.I.	Mar. 2 nd 1880	Jan.24 th 1907
2	Rev. Fr. J. Francis O.M.I.	Jul. 4 th 1879	Jan.31 st 1909
3	Rev. Fr. L. J. Augustine O.M.I.	Apr. 8 th 1892	Jan.31 st 1921
4	Rev. Fr. M. S. Nalliah O.M.I.	Dec. 9 th 1893	Jan.28 th 1924
5	Rev. Fr. Jerome Emilianuspillai O.M.I.	Jul. 20 th 1901	Jul. 7 th 1929
6	Rev. Fr. S. S. Soosainathar O.M.I.	Dec.17 th 1906	Dec.12 th 1933
7	Rev. Fr. X. S. Thaninayagam O.M.I.	Aug. 1 st 1913	Mar.19 th 1938
8	Rev. Fr. T. A. J. Mathuranayagam	Apr. 6 th 1916	Mar.26 th 1940
9	Rev. Victor Emmanuel Rajanayagam	1916	Dec. 28 th 1942
10	Rev. Fr. B. Deogupillai	Apr. 9 th 1917	Dec. 22 nd 1941
11	Rev. Fr. M. J. Mariampillai	Jun. 26 th 1917	Mar.25 th 1941
12	Rev. Fr. Julius Rasiah	Nov.20 th 1922	Mar. 2 nd 1985

Priests Produced by St. Anthony's College, Kayts Cont...

No.	Name	Date of Birth	Date of Ordination
13	Rev. Fr. B. Soosaipillai	May 4 th 1923	Mar. 16 th 1951
14	Rev. Fr. L. R. Anthony	Apr. 18 th 1927	Dec. 7 th 1954
15	Rev. Fr. M. Emmanuel O.M.I.	Jul. 27 th 1927	Aug. 7 th 1950
16	Rev. B. Mary Joseph C.R.	May 18 th 1930	Jun. 15 th 1971
17	Rev. Fr. S. Hillary Jebanesan	Sep. 17 th 1934	Sep. 1 st 1962
18	Rev. Fr. Kingsley Swampillai	Dec. 12 th 1936	Dec. 20 th 1961
19	Rev. Fr. S. L. Mariyanayagam S.J.	May 21 st 1937	Apr. 6 th 1970
20	Rev. Fr. M. Emmanuel Pius	Mar. 4 th 1938	Dec. 20 th 1961
21	Rev. Fr. Thomas Savundranayagam	Jul. 13 th 1938	Dec. 12 th 1963
22	Rev. Fr. Peter F. Getendran	Nov. 7 th 1943	Dec. 21 st 1970
23	Rev. Fr. Don Bosco Mariampillai	Aug. 29 th 1944	May 22 nd 1973
24	Rev. Fr. J. Anton Dominic	Oct. 23 rd 1946	May 22 nd 1973

Priests Produced by St. Anthony's College, Kayts Cont...

No.	Name	Date of Birth	Date of Ordination
25	Rev. Fr. S. F. Boniface	May 14 th 1947	Oct. 26 th 1977
26	Rev. Fr. Justin Gnanapragasam	May 13 th 1948	Apr. 24 th 1974
27	Rev. Fr. M. Gnanapragasam	Nov. 17 th 1949	Aug. 18 th 1984
28	Rev. Fr. R. H. Sahayanayagam	Sep. 6 th 1950	Apr. 12 th 1978
29	Rev. Fr. E. J. Arumanayagam	Apr. 3 rd 1954	Jul. 20 th 1979
30	Rev. Fr. M. Jero Selvanayagam	Jan. 25 th 1958	Aug. 6 th 1985
31	Rev. Fr. Camilus Nimalan	Mar. 15 th 1958	Apr. 18 th 1983
32	Rev. Fr. Jeyarajah Rashiah S.J.	Jul. 9 th 1958	May 26 th 1991
33	Rev. Fr. Gabriel Arulnesan	Mar. 17 th 1960	Mar. 2 nd 1994
34	Rev. Fr. Charles Collins	May 21 st 1963	Jul. 31 st 1990
35	Rev. Fr. Jeyaseelan Robert	Mar. 19 th 1969	Apr. 21 st 2007
36	Rev. J. Sylvester	Oct. 17 th 1969	Oct. 19 th 2002

Priests Produced by St. Anthony's College, Kayts Cont...

No	Name	Date of Birth	Date of Ordination
37	Rev. Fr. Roy Ferdey	Dec. 14 th 1971	
38	Rev. Fr. Leo Armstrong	Feb. 21 st 1972	
39	Rev. Fr. Raj Clarie O.M.I	Sep.20 th 1980	
40	Rev. Fr. I. Selva Vijendran O.M.I.	Apr. 28 th 1980	
41	Rev. Fr. G. Luxman	Oct. 12 th 1979	



J/St.Anthony's College, Kayts
All Island Second Runner up
in Physical Training 2016



J/St.Anthony's College, Kayts
National PT Champions 2015



J/Karampon Little Flower's Girls' M.V.
National Level Physical Training Competitions
1st Runner up in 2016



St. Mary's Convent - Kayts



This school was established in 1872 in a piece of land located opposite St. Mary's Church and was maintained by teachers supervised by Fr. Loison. Since 1908 the convent was initially run by two nuns and around that time suddenly the building caught fire and was burnt down. In 1930, the convent once again started functioning under the guidance of a few devoted nuns including Marthina, Sandona and Angel Botha from grade 1 up to Grade 7 with about hundred students in a school concrete building. In 1946 Grade 8 classes were introduced and few years later in 1950 Grade 9 was introduced. By 1968 GCE O/L Classes were added and the number of students started to increase. The students began performing well in public examinations and sports competitions. As a result, the school received financial assistance from various sources.

Around the same period, boys were admitted from grade 1 to 5. Meanwhile, the Grade 9 and 10 were removed from this school and moved to Karampon Little Flower Convent in order to upgrade that school. However, by 1971, these classes were once again reintroduced into St. Mary's Convent and the students once again began performing well in the public examinations.

In 1977 a new building was constructed for conducting music classes Ten years later a new office for the Principal was constructed.

During 1987, the school has to face great difficulties due to the civil war and it began to function as part of a cluster schools headed by St.Antony's College. Around 1990 Sr. Claire, Sr. Alex and Sr. Vittuwa joined the teaching staff. On March 13th 1998 the school celebrated its 125th Anniversary in a very grand scale. There were nearly 150 students and six teachers at that time

From Aug.28. 1997 the school began to function independently. In 2000 a science laboratory and an additional building with classrooms were constructed for the School with government funding.

Rev. Sister Thresa Silva was appointed principal and she served until 2004.

Rev. Sister Elizabeth who took over from her did great service for the next 10 years until Feb. 2015. Rev. Sr. Grace Mary became principal from March, 2015.

In 2011 ICT information Technology room was built and since then the standard of the school has started improving greatly.

Little Flower Convent - Karampon

History of Little flower Convent - Karampon

1916 -The school was started at a location west of St. Sebastian's Church and Vairavanathar Ferdinand became the first Head Master and he served for the next 10 years and laid the foundation for the establishment of a great educational establishment for girls of this area.

1926- A primary school for girls was inaugurated and



Little Flower Convent - Karampon

named little Flower English School for girls. Rev. Sr. Maria was appointed principal and she served for the next two decades and did a great service.

1942-The government renamed the school as Roman Catholic English school for girls and Sr. Maria continued to serve as Principal.

1946-Rev.Sr.Lourdes appointed Principal

1947- The convent was upgraded as Grade 3 School.

1949 - The school was relocated to the present location (Palakaadu Junction) and named Little Flower English School for girls.

1952- The construction of new buildings for the school was completed and the convent was further upgraded to the level of Maha Vidyalayam.

1955 - Rev. Sr. Lucilla, a London University graduate becomes the Principal.

1961-The school was taken over by the government but it was agreed that the school will continue to be administered by nuns.

1967- Rev. Sr. Collette appointed new principal.

1969- Rev. Sr. Carmelita was appointed Principal and she served till 1979.

1971 A primary school that was functioning near St. Sebastian's Church was annexed to Little Flower convent and the convent was elevated to Grade 1C School with classes from Grade 1 to 11.

1979-1980 Rev. Sr. Bonaventure served as acting Principal.

1980- 1989 Rev. Sr. Leena becomes principal in 1980 and served for nearly a decade. During her period of service, for the very first time in the history of the convent the students from the convent appeared for GCE A.L Arts examination.

1985 A two-storey building for the convent was completed due to the untiring efforts of Rev. Sr. Leena.

1988 The Government donates Band musical instruments to the school.

1989-1995 Rev. Sr. Pascal served as the principal

1990 - Due to civil war, the convent had to be relocated to Jaffna.

1991 -The convent continued to function at Jaffna central college as an evening school.

1992 -The convent continued to function as a full time school at St. John's Academy.

1995-2000 Rev. Sr. Calista Francis served as the Principal. Soon after her appointment, the school had to face relocation for the second time in 1995.

1995 -The school continued to function at Mirusuvil Usan Maha Vidyalayam.

1996 - The school once again started functioning at the original location and the convent became a leading school due to the untiring efforts of Rev. Sr. Calista who toiled very hard to get the school renovated. As a result, the convent became one of the leading schools in the island division.

1997- A grand exhibition was held at the convent.

2000-2008 Rev. Sr. Thayanayagi Sebamalai served as the principal. During her period of service each year, the school obtained first place in physical exercise competition at zonal level. In 2005, the school became second in District Level.

2008. May.28 Rev. Sr. Sahayanayagi Bastiampillai appointed principal. She continues to serve to date with great efficiency.

2009 A computer education centre with 13 computers was established. Fourteen students chose to learn ICT for their course of study and 9 of them were successful. Apart from this, two of the students gained admission to Batticaloa University for the faculty of Fine Arts.

2010 Students got first place in the drama competition for primary school children. In the same year three students were successful at the GCE A/L Exam .Two were selected for the faculty of Fine Arts and one was selected for College of education.

2011-One student of the convent participated at the Social Science competition at the National level and achieved first place. A science laboratory was opened by the Minister of Transport. Three students were selected for University this year.

2012-Students obtained first place at provincial level in the drama competition for children .Two students were selected for University in this year. Miss. Tharsika brought great fame to the convent by obtaining 6A, 1B , 1C and 1 S at the GCE O/L Examination

2013- One student was selected for University in this year. In the same year Yarlina Sivarajan brought fame to the school by obtaining 6A, 1B and 1C at the GCE O/L Examination.

2011-2013 All the students from the convent who sat for GCE A.L examination were successful.

2014- One student - Miss. Densya was selected for

University of Jaffna this year.

2015-The school team was placed 3rd at the District level and 6th at National level

In Bible quiz competition, the intermediate students from the convent were placed 1st in the Jaffna Archeodiocese while the team was placed 3rd at the National Level.

In grade 5 Scholarship Examination, 4 students exceeded the cut-off point while all the students received over 70 percent. As a result, the school received the certificate for the best school as well as a shield of honour.

Shanmuganatha Vidyalayam - Karampon West



Shanmuganatha Vidyalayam in Karampon established by Mahadeva Swamigal began functioning in 1917 in a 10 acre land donated by a lady named Kunchari Ammal. Already on the initiative of Mahadeva Swamigal funds were being collected from the natives in the village by a group of people including Messrs. A. Somasunderam, V. Thambipillai, Kurunathar Ponniah, Seenimuthu Murugupillai and Ambalavanar. They regularly visited every house in the area and were able to collect adequate funds to begin the school. The original building of the school

had a cadjan roof and in 1921, it was replaced with tiles. In addition, a businessperson named Vaithilingam from Batticola donated Palmyra rafters while many people from the area donated their time and energy to construct the school buildings without receiving any wages.

Swami Sarvanantha from Ramakrishna Mission laid the foundation for this school and declared open the school. Until financial aid for the school was received from the government all teachers in the school taught for nearly six years as volunteer teachers.

Some of the teachers who taught at the beginning included Messrs. A. Somasunderam, Velupillai, Sinniah of Kantharmadam, and Rasiah from Allaipiddy. Meanwhile Swami Sarvanantha taught Arithmetic and Hinduism. Swami Sarvanantha also introduced Koladdam, Kili Thaddu etc in the school. He also brought down many Hindu religious leaders from various parts of the province to provide lectures in the school on various aspects of Hinduism. Those who visited the school included Sir Ponnampalam Ramanthan, Swami Sarvanantha from Ramakrishna Mission in Calcutta, Swami Vipulanthar, Senior Hindu preacher Sivapathasuntharanar, Thirugnana-sampanthapillai, Editor of Hindu Sathana, Masillamani, Editor of "the National Patriot ", S. Eliyathamby Editor English version of Hindu Sathanam etc.

The school is now functioning with a large number of students and many qualified teachers.

Naranthanai R.C Maha Vidyalayam

Based on the records held in Jaffna Bishops office, this was begun as a Christian school probably in 1873 with 60 students and the number rose to 87 in 1878.

In 1910, a separate school for girls was started in a house near St. Peter and Paul's church and moved to a separate building located on the right side of the church in 1914. Priests and nuns from Ireland served in this school for many years. A boy's school was started in 1917. From 1945 up to 1969, the school had classes



Naranthanai R. C. Maha Vidyalayam

only up to fifth standard. Due to the efforts of the Headmaster Mr. Singarayer classes up to grade, nine were added. Today the school has classes up to grade eleven and there are 14 teachers serving in this school.

Velanai Central College - Origin and Growth

Ever since it was established, Velanai Central College has functioned as a gateway for the development of educational, cultural, and scientific features for the residents of the Islands, southwest of the Jaffna Peninsula. Due to this fact, it is also called the Golden Temple of the islands. Its former name was Velanai Madya Maha Vidyalayam and it is also known as J/Sir Vaithilingam Duraiswamy M.M.V. Velanai. The college has completed seventy successful years despite facing many unexpected problems due to the civil war.

INITIAL STAGE

During the 1940's, the late Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara (Minister of Education, best known as the father of the free educational system) the idea of establishing a central college for each electorate. In accordance to that, Sir Vaithilingam Duraiswamy (the speaker of parliament) took action to establish a central college for Kayts electorate at Velanai. On the request of Sir Vaithilingam Duraiswamy, the Minister of Education declared the college open on Nov 01 1945, and at the beginning, the

college started functioning with only five teachers and fifty students. The foundation for the present beautiful building was laid in 1952 by Lord Soulbury, the Governor General of Ceylon. Sir John Kotalawela, the Prime Minister of Ceylon in 1954, later dedicated it to the public. In memory of this occasion, a beautiful *Melia dubia* (Malai vembu) tree was planted in the premises. Furthermore, many more buildings were constructed from time to time to accommodate the increasing number of students. More than these, student hostels for boys and girls were also built simultaneously along with the main building.



Velanai Central College

ACTIVITIES

Mr. A. K. Kandiah assumed as the first principal of the college in 1945 and served there until 1950. Mr. Kandiah the founder principal coined the lofty college motto "lead kindly light". During his career, he introduced plans for the development of the College and Mr. V. Thampoe his successor who held the office from 1950 to 1963 fulfilled these. He was an excellent administrator and academician who selected the new site for the college, laid foundation and opened new buildings, introduced the G.C.E. A/L classes, and helped with activities in sports and cultural competitions. Mr. Thampoe and Vice Principal Mr. Sivagnanam visited each house in the surrounding areas to ensure the betterment of the College. Informal education on textile, car-

penry and agriculture was introduced during this period and inter-house sports meets were held regularly along with inter-college matches between Jaffna based schools.

The proudest achievement of this young institution within the 10 years of its establishment was being able to appoint a great number of its old students who, after graduating, were welcomed back to the school as proud staff members. Some of the most outstanding of them were Mr. S. Shanmuganathan, Mr. P. Ketharanathan, Mrs. T. Ketharanathan, Mr. E. K. Nagarajah, Mr. K. Gopalapillai, and Mrs. T. Sothivetpillai, Ms. T. Sivanapillai and Mrs. V. Shanmuganathan, all of whom greatly benefitted the school and the students they taught. With the passing of time, more graduates returned to serve their Alma Mater and the Principal was very happy when more students entered University from the College during his time. Late Prof. S. Balachandiran (Former Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Jaffna) and Mr. V. Sivanathan were the very first students who entered University directly from the college in 1963 and this trend has continued since then. Mr. Thampoe's period could be considered as the 'Golden Era' in the history of the College.

The next two Principals Mr. A.T. Sabaratnam (1963) and Mr. K. Sivasithamparam (1965-1967) who followed Mr. Thampoe also worked hard to maintain a very high standard for the school during their periods of administration. Mr. Sabaratnam initiated some bright ideas to increase the number of students entering University. From 1967 to 1971, Mr. J. S. Ariyaratnam served as Principal and during his period, he made plans to conduct the 'Silver Jubilee' celebration. Unfortunately, however it was unsuccessful due to the political problems prevailing at the time. Meanwhile, for a few months, Mr. V. Ponnuthurai became the Principal. After his retirement, Mr. C. Rajanayagam was appointed as Principal and he served from 1971 to 1973. When his term was over, Mr. S. Thiyagarajah took the office for a few months and by then the number of students who entered University had increased greatly from 1963. The number of students at this time was about 1700 and the staff about 60. In 1974, Mr. C. Gunabalasingam was

appointed Principal, and following the footsteps of his predecessors, he upgraded the academic and administrative standard of the college. A new playground and a new building for the library was constructed and the name of the college was changed as Sir Waithilingam Duraiswamy Madya Maha Vidyalayam, Velanai in memory of former speaker who was responsible for the establishment of this great school. After Mr. Gunabalasingam, Pundit Mr. K. Rasiah took the office as Principal from 1982 to 1983. He was a distinguished teacher, a Tamil Pundit and one of the senior most teachers of the school. He had already served as a Vice Principal for a long time and was head of the Tamil Department as well. After him, Mr. M. Sivarajaratnam served as principal until 1987. At the end of his term as Principal, Mr. S. Shanmuganathan was appointed as the next principal and during that, time the cluster system was introduced in the educational administrative set up and he became the cluster principal as well. Unfortunately, ethnic war began and as a result, the country was in chaos .Yet he managed to run the College and the cluster schools. In 1989, Mr. P. Ketharanathan was appointed Principal as well as cluster Principal.

DISPLACEMENT

By 1990, the civil war had restarted and finally in October 1991, the students, academic and administrative staff of the College and 99% of the public had displaced to the Jaffna Peninsula. Even though all this, Mr. Ketharanathan managed to run the College at Nawasivayagam Vidyalayam of Koddady, Jaffna and Vaitheeswararan Vidyalayam with a few hundred students. Parents, old students, and well-wishers made great financial contributions to keep the College running. He was instrumental in the formation of Old Students Associations in Colombo, Sydney, Melbourne, France, and Canada. Today, the OSAs are functioning well and helping to the school with their capacity due to the enthusiasm shown by Mr. Ketharanathan and his hard work.

Mr. S. Kalatharan took the office as Principal in 1993 after Mr. Ketharanathan retired. During his term, the College found a new site at Kantharmadam, Jaffna, where the classes were conducted in temporary cottages.

Mr. Kalatharan's period was a glorious one for the displaced students of the College, all of whom were able to continue their studies even while under such dire circumstances. During October in 1995, the entire public was once again displaced to the Thenmaradchi and Vanni regions.

RESTART

In 1996, many people returned to their own land and schools were restarted. A few schools including Velanai Central College began to function again and in the beginning, the school was functioning at Velanai East Maha Vidyalayam, under the co-ordination of deputy Principals, Mr. Pon Easan and Mrs. V. Sivapalan. In the meantime, many attempts were made by the deputy Principals and senior teachers to run the College on its own. However due to the fact that the permanent buildings of the College was under the custody of Sri Lankan security forces, it was decided that the College was to be run at Saraswathy Vidyasalai of Velanai. Mr. K. Ganeshalingam was appointed Principal in 1997, and it is noteworthy to remember that Mr. S. Ratnarajah (former Zonal director of Education) and Mr. S. Ratnam (Former Assistant Govt. Agent of Velanai) provided valuable efforts in trying to restart the College at its original campus.

AGAIN IN IT'S OWN PLACE

Beginning in August 1998 the College once again began functioning properly at its permanent buildings with a small number of teachers and one hundred and fifty students, even though the Sri Lankan security forces were occupying the nearby hostels and the playground. As the hostel buildings and the playground were in occupation by the Navy, the smooth function of the school was thoroughly disturbed. The bus service along the road where the school is situated had been already stopped by the navy because of the security reasons. The student and the teachers had to leave their push cycles (bicycles) at the navy check point which was about 1 km away from the school premises and proceed to walk up to the school, after undergoing body check at the check point. The students and the teachers were compelled to walk to and from the school

even in the scorching sun and rain. The checkpoint was located at the eastern side of the school premises but the western side of the road was completely closed. The students and the staff who come from the western side of the school had to deviate from their normal route and gain entry only by the eastern side, after having walked many kilometers. Some parents stopped sending their children to the school because of the non-availability of transport facilities. The students who continued to attend began to get tired due to the long walk. The names of the students and the staff with their national identity card numbers had to be forwarded to the security officers by the Principal in advance to enable them to gain entry to the school. Because of this system, the education department staff as well as the parents could not visit the school as and when they wish to do so. Because of this restriction, the development work of the school could not be carried out by the education department or by the school development society. The school children were debarred from taking part in the inter school athletic meet and other extracurricular activities of the school. Various diseases such as malaria affected some students. Under the above circumstances, it was obvious that our school could not function like any other school in Jaffna district. However, The Principal, Mr. K. Ganeshalingam and the academic and administrative staff continued to serve the school as best as they could in the face of the many hardships. The principal started a nutritious lunch program for the students with the financial aid from Velanai Central College OSA - Canada in 1998 and continued it until 2000. Due to this vital program, the number of students considerably increased from 150 to 500 during the next three years. In 1999, G.C.E A/L classes were conducted with 70 students, and the prize-giving day was held on November 1st together with the Golden Jubilee celebration of the college. Prof. S. Balachandiran (Dean, Faculty of Arts, and University of Jaffna) honoured the event having been the chief guest. Two of the past principals Messrs. Rasanayagam and Gunabalasingam honoured the event being present at the occasion as special guests. An inter-house sports meet was held on March 21st 2000 after nine years and Mr. K. Balakrishnan (Director of planning, Jaffna) was the chief guest. The newly used an amplifier system

that has been recently donated by OSA-Canada was used during that function.

In 2002, Mr. P. Arunagirinathan was appointed as Principal. He sincerely toiled for the success of the grand design of The Kandiah-Thampoe era. He is being remembered as one of the best Principals of the college. He left the school in 2011.

Present Situation

The Present Principal, Mr. S. Kirupaaran was appointed in 2011. He and his academic and administrative staff are working hard to bring the school into a high standard . The hostels have started functioning with minimal facilities. The number of students is estimated around 835 including almost 200 in the G. C. E A/L classes. The prize giving day of year 2014 was held on Nov 01, 2014. In this hour of grave need, all of us should work hard towards our common objective of bringing back our "Alma Mater" Velanai Central College to its pristine glory.

"Lead kindly light"

S. Elancheliyan, B. Sc. (Jaffna), B. Eng (Canada)

Prominent personalities from Kayts Island

It is natural to claim the greatness of a place by the men and women that place had produced over the years. The general standard for evaluation of such personalities is by the height they have reached in many fields and acclaimed by outside authorities. Sons of this island are not the least among them and a list of some prominent people are recorded here as a matter of record for the future.

- **Religious Personnel**

Fr. Peter Pillai
Fr. Xavier Thaninayagam
Mahadeva Swami
Monsgr. Nimalan Camillus

- **Politicians**
Alfred Thambaiyah
V.A.Kandiah
V.N.Navaratnam
K.P.Ratnam
Vaitilingam Duraiswamy
- **Writers/Artistes**
Sivaspathasunderam
Kavaloor Rajadurai
Virakesary Moorthy
S.M.Joseph
Poet G.M.Selvarajah
A.Sabaratnam
J. F. Jegarajasingam
- **Legal luminary**
Chief Justice Suppiah Sarvananda

Religious Personnel

Rev. Fr. Peter Pillai-Apostle of Social Justice



Peter Alcantara Pillai was born on 19th October, 1904 at Wenappuwa. His parents Jacob and Anna Pillai, school teachers hailed from Kayts, Jaffna.

His schooling began in his mother tongue Tamil in the school where his parents were teachers. Later he joined St. Benedict's College, Kotahena, Colombo at the age of nine years. In 1918 he passed the

Cambridge Junior with eight distinctions. He was then only 14 years.

He passed the Cambridge Senior at the age of 16 years in 1920 also with eight distinctions becoming the first in the whole of the British Empire. Subsequently he became an undergraduate of the then University College of Colombo and obtained the BSc degree with a first class

in 1923. In the next year, 1924, he also got through the B Sc Hons Mathematics in the first division.

Peter Pillai was most deservedly fortunate to win the annual government scholarship in science awarded to the best student and proceeded to the University of Cambridge where he obtained his BA and MA (Cantab). Thereafter he passed the M Sc (London) quite easily. He could have entered the much lucrative CCS (Ceylon Civil Service) – the plum of government service or got an academic part in the University. However, he opted to become a Catholic priest to serve his God and man. His elder brother Fr. Cadjetan Pillai, a teacher at St. Joseph's College died of plague whilst administering to the sick.

His two other brothers too had already joined the clergy. One was the late Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Dr. Jerome Emilianuspillai while the other was his elder brother Rev. Brother Luke, former Director of St. Benedict's College and later of St. Xavier's College, Mannar.

Armed with PhD and DD (Doctorate in Divinity) – Rome Fr. Peter Pillai was ordained in 1934. On his return to the motherland, he was appointed to the staff of St. Peter's College, Bambalapitiya and warden of Aquinas Hall, the University Student's Catholic Hall. No other Sri Lankan educationist had such high qualifications.

To fight against the twin evils of the day – 1930s – namely, injustice and exploitation, he created two journals, 'Social Justice' (English) and 'Samaja Samaya' (Sinhala). His campaigns and untiring efforts resulted in the enacting of the Shop and Office Workers' Ordinance, Wages Boards Ordinance, Employees Provident Fund Act, Industrial Disputes Act etc. all in the field of Labour or Industrial Law.

He also advocated and expounded the theories of worker participation in management, profit sharing, better housing and living conditions for the working class. In 1940, Rev. Fr. Dr. Pillai was appointed as the first Sri Lankan Rector of St. Joseph's College, Colombo, the premier Catholic Collegiate School in the island which post he held with great acceptance and distinction for 21 years until 1961.

Highly concerned with moulding the character of youth besides serving in some government commissions, he was the president of the Headmasters' Union, member of the University of Ceylon Senate, founder of the Catholic Students' Federation, the Graduate Federation, the Catechetical Institute, the Xaverian Movement – and the Aquinas College of Higher Studies.

Further, because of his championing social reforms, it resulted in bringing to statute books such welfare legislation as the National Housing Act, Debt Conciliation Board Ordinance and Land Redemption Act.

An extrovert, a great trait of his character was that he was not at all a racist or communal minded – in that; he treated Sinhala, Tamil, Moor, Malay, Burgher students alike. He was not only a tower of strength to Catholic students, especially Josephians but also equally to Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic (Muslim) students aspiring for higher studies.

When he passed away untimely in 1964, he was only 60 years of age, 10 years short of the psalmists span of life – three score and ten, which means 70 years. He lived exactly like three score years – 60 years due to ceaseless, unfatigable exertion of his strength in the service of humanity. His excellent services to the country are immemorial.

Rev. Xavier Thaninayagam



Reverend Xavier S. Thani Nayagam (2 August 1913 - 1 September 1980) was a Tamil scholar known for setting up the International Association for Tamil Research (IATR) and organizing the first World Tamil Conference. He is praised as the "Roving Ambassador for Tamil".

Biography

Born as Xavier Nicholas Stanislaus, he later was named "Thaninayagam Adigal". He was born in Kayts. His parents were Naganathan Stanislaus and Cecilia Bastiampillai. He chose the surname Thaninayagam (literally "lone hero") after becoming a Roman Catholic priest. During 1920-22, he studied at St. Patrick's College, Jaffna. In 1934, he obtained his BA in Philosophy from St. Bernard's seminary, Colombo. Though he was a Tamil by birth, he did not learn the language until he was much older. During his younger days, he learnt and became fluent in many European languages such as English, Latin, Italian, French, German, Spanish and Portuguese.

He first learnt Tamil while working as a teacher in St. Theresa convent, Vadakkankulam in the Tirunelveli District. In 1945, he enrolled in the Annamalai University to study Tamil literature. His Master's thesis was on Sangam literature and was titled "Nature in ancient Tamil Poetry". After finishing his studies, he embarked on a worldwide tour to promote Tamil language and literature. He lectured on these subjects in Japan, Chile, Brazil, Peru, Mexico, Ecuador and America. During his tour, he searched the European libraries for medieval Tamil manuscripts and identified several early Tamil printed books. Cartilha (1556), Tambiran Vanakkam (1578), Kirisitiani Vanakkam (1579) and the first Tamil-Portuguese dictionary, compiled by Antem de Proenca are a few of them. He founded a quarterly academic journal called Tamil Studies and ran it until 1966. During 1961-66, he served as the Dean, Faculty of Arts and as head of the Indian studies department at the University of Malaya.

In 1964, Thaninayagam along with Kamil Zvelebil and V. I. Subramaniam convened a meeting of Tamil scholars attending the Oriental scholars' conference at New Delhi and formed the International Association for Tamil Research (IATR). He was also instrumental in organizing the first World Tamil Conference at Kualalampur in 1966. IATR went on to become the primary body directing research in all fields related to Tamil and has since organized seven more such conferences. Leaving Malaysia in 1969, Thaninayagam taught at the universities of Paris

and Naples before retiring and returning home to Sri Lanka.

Thaninayagam died in 1980. The University of Jaffna conferred an honorary doctorate on him after his death.

Mahadeva Swamy - a pious Scholar

Vaithilingam, who later came to be called Mahadeva Swami-gal was born in Karampon on Friday Aug.21, 1874 as the eldest son of a respected couple Narayanar Ramanathan and Annapoorani.



In those days, there were no Hindu schools in Karampon and as such, Muthukumaraswamy began conducting classes for the youngsters in Tamil language, Tamil literature and Hindu religious principle in the verandah (in Tamil "Thinnai") of his residence.

This place was originally known as Upaathipulam and later called Paathipulam. Vaithilingam who was later known as **Mahadeva Swamy** also learnt the basic education from Muthukumaraswamy. In addition, he listened to the speeches of Hindu religious leaders who occasionally visited Muthukumaraswamy and with their guidance the young Vaitilingam cleared his doubts about Hindu religious principles. He then proceeded to Vaddukodai Jaffna College to learn English. However since he found that, the Christian missionaries at the school were keen on converting the Hindu students to become Christians he left the college.

During those days, Kayts harbour was a hive of activity since there were much export and import activities. A large number of schooners were plying between Kayts and the harbours of many far-flung countries. Meanwhile a pilgrim's centre was built in Oorundi in Paruthiyadaippu area for the Indian traders to rest and Sithamparanathan Chettiyar maintained that centre. During that time, a businessman named Vaitilingam who was running a business in Batticaloa used to visit Kayts very frequently. Consequently, he developed a very good friendship with Sithamparanathan Chettiyar. Meanwhile many scholars and Hindu religious leaders also used to visit Kayts and stay in this pilgrims centre. Meanwhile, the

young Vaithilingam used to visit this pilgrims centre in order to meet the religious leaders. During this time Sithamparanatha Chettiyar, the keeper of this centre began to develop a very good impression about this young man.

Once when the businessman Vaithilingam requested Sithamparanatha Chettiyar to recommend him a reliable person to serve as his accountant, without any hesitation Chettiyar recommended his namesake the young Vaithiligam (later called Mahadeva Swamy). Vaithiligam was immediately impressed by the intelligence and humble nature of the youthful Vaithiligam. Later while working as accountant he also got into meaningful discussions with the religious leaders who used to visit the Ashram and was able to further improve his knowledge of Hindu religious principles.

The businessman Vaithilingam in addition to his business interest was also interested in social activities. At one point he was interested in establishing a pilgrim's centre in Keerimalai for the Hindu devotees and he gave his accountant Vaithiligam the responsibility of constructing this Ashram. While involved in the construction of this pilgrims centre the young Vaithiligam simultaneously used the opportunity to develop a close relationship with many religious leaders and develop his knowledge of Hindu religion. During this period he had the opportunity to develop friendship with Kanagaratnam Swamy from Kantharmadam. Noticing the talent and intelligence of youthful Vaithilingam, Kanagaratnam swamy conferred the title of Mahadeva Swamy on Vaitilingam. From that day, Vaithilingam started accepting Kanagaratnam Swamy as his Guru and began wearing saffron coloured dress and began to actively get involved in religious activities.

At this time, Mahadeva Swamy felt the urgent need for establishing a school in Karampon to provide education and teach Hinduism since he felt that the small school being maintained by Muthukumaraswamy in Karampon West was inadequate to meet the needs of the children in the area. Since the residents in the area were not wealthy at time, Mahadeva Swamy initiated a novel idea to collect funds .He made small bags ("Umal") out of palmyrah leaves and distributed to every house in

the area requesting the residents to set aside a handful of rice every time they cook a meal, promising to sell the rice and use the funds to construct a school. True to his word, he built a small school in a place named Uppathypulam in Karampon west in a 10 acre land donated by an old lady named Kunchary Aachy. The original school was a small shed with the roof made out of palmyrah leaves. The people in the area were pleased by this development and they offered the palmyrah palms in their lands to be felled in order to get the rafters from the palms to be used for further construction of the school named Shunmuganatha Vidhiyasaalai. As a result, the small shed constructed in 1917 developed into a large building within the next few decades.

In 1920, when Kanagarathinam Swamy, the Guru of Mahadeva Swamy travelled to India, he took Mahadeva Swamigal along with him. Both of them visited a number of holy shrines in places such as Sithamparam, Vethariniyam, and Thiruperunthurai etc and met many religious leaders. During this holy pilgrimage, Mahadeva Swamy completely dedicated himself to his Guru. As a result, Kanagaratnam Swamy blessed his disciple and accepted him as a fully-fledged Holy man at the holy shrine in Thiruperunthurai. From that day, Mahadeva Swamy stayed in India for about a year and then returned to Srilanka. After his return to Srilanka he began to fully devote himself for religious activities and period he began visiting his guru Kanagaratnam Swamy in Kantharmadam and began his religious activities. During this period, Mahadeva Swamy began to be deeply involved in religious activities in a shed located at a place called Udaichi Walavu located in Kanthapurana lane where Kanagaratnam Swamy was residing.

When the need to expand the place arose, Sivagurunathar Kumaraswamy, a famous cigar merchant at that time chose a place called Chemman kidunkady, presently called Kumaraswamy Road in Kantharmadam. In 1922, Mahadeva Swamy established Sri Sivagurunatha Peedam- Vethantha Madam and Kanagaratnam Swamy functioned as the first preacher at that centre for a short period. Then Kanagaratnam Swamy appointed Mahadeva Swamy as his chief disciple and passed

away on Thursday Sep.14, 1922 .The following day his mortal remains were entombed (“Samathy”) in the centre.

After the demise of Kanagaratnam Swamy, Mahadeva Swamy wished that this centre should continue its activities without any interruption and with this in mind in 1927, he established a Guru Peedam in a land of paddy field, at a place named vilavely, two miles from Nunavil Junction.

Further as per the request of one his disciples, Vadivel Swamy, he established Mahadeva Ashram at Uruthirapuram Jayanthi Nagar. Later the students of Mahadeva Swamy too followed this tradition and were involved in establishing a number of schools in various locations in the province. For instance as per the request of a scholar named Ponniah from Inuvil, in 1930 Mahadeva Swamy laid the foundation for Inuvil Saiva Mahajana Vidyalaya and on completion of the construction of this school, he himself inaugurated the opening ceremony of the school. Similarly, on the request of Kandiah Swamy of Kondavil, he laid the foundation for Annangai Saiva Vidyalam in 1933 and when the construction of the school was completed, he himself ceremoniously inaugurated the school. Similarly as per the request of the residents of the village of Kaddaivaely, he laid the foundation for Gnaasiriyar College on March.07.1935.

During those days, people such as Sir Pon Ramanathan, S. Rasarithnam together with Mahadeva Swamy established the Hindu Board of Education in order to maintain the 161 Hindu schools and the Teachers training college functioning in the North at that time.

Later, Mahadava Swamy established another Ashram in Jeyanthi Nagar- Kilinochchi and one of his chief disciples Vadivelu Swamy from Inuvil maintained it.

After a very long dedicated religious service up to his 68th year, Mahadeva Swamy fell ill in October 1942 and after a few days breathed his last around 7.00 pm on 30th October and attained Samathi. His mortal remains were interred in Sivagurunatha Peedam in Kantharmadam.

Virakesary Moorthy

Monsignor. Fr. Camillus Nimalan

Congregation for Evangelization, Vatican

Fr. Camillus Nimalan was born in Karampon on March.15th, 1958. His parents were Anthonipillai Johnpillai and Violet Jayamanie. He had his early education at St. Mary's R.C. School, Kayts and also St. Anthony's R.C. School, Kayts. He continued his studies at St. Anthony's College, Kayts and then at St. Patrick's college, Jaffna.



Camillus Nimalan joined St. Martin's Seminary Jaffna in 1970 and later joined the National Seminary at Ampitiya, Kandy, in 1975 where he studied philosophy until 1978. He then continued his studies in Theology at the Institute of Theology at St. Paul's Seminary, Trichy in South India since 1979 until 1983.

Late Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Dr. B. Deogupillai at

St. Mary's church, Kayts, ordained him a priest on Apr.18th 1983.

From 1983 until 1984 Fr. Camillus Nimalan served as assistant pastor at St. James Church, Gurunagar and was a visiting professor of Theology at St. Francis Xavier's Major Seminary Columbuthurai. From 1984 until 1986, he served in the parishes of Mandaitivu and Allaipiddy. From 1986 until 1990 he served as bursar as well as professor at St. Francis Xaviers Major Seminary, Columbuthurai.

In 1990, Fr. Camillus Nimalan went to Rome where he studied Systematic Theology at the Pontifical University of the Holy cross and obtained his doctorate with the excellent grade "Summacum Laude". Soon after he was appointed as an official of the Congregation for Evangelization, Vatican City.

Rev. Fr. Camillus obtained his Licenciante in canon law at the Pontifical University of the Holy cross during the

period 1998-2000. In 2000 Fr. Camillus was appointed class 1 officer at the Congregation for Evangelization.

In 2003 Rev. Fr. Camillus Nimalan was conferred the title of Monsignor (title of honour) and is looking after the countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brunei, Burma East, Timor, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand comprising nearly 100 Dioceses and Apostolic Vicarates.

Politicians

Alfred Leo Saverimuthu Thambiayah

Alfred Leo Saverimuthu Thambiayah, born 8 November 1903 was a Ceylon Tamil businessman politician and Member of Parliament.



He had his early Education at St. Anthony's College Kayts. He continued his studies at St. Patrick's College, Jaffna and later in Colombo St. Benedict's College as well as at St. Joseph's. He then proceeded to London to study Law.

Career

Thambiayah began his business career aged 21 by leasing the Olympia Cinema. He then went into business with Colombo based businessman Chittampalam Abraham Gardiner, establishing the successful Ceylon Theatres Ltd. Later on Ceylon Theatres bought Cargills & Millers and Thambiayah served as Chairman/Managing director of the latter. Thambiayah acquired Cargo Boat Dispatch Company, a shipping company, in 1936 from Harry and John Cosmas. The company grew to control the majority of the business out of the Port of Colombo. Alfred Thambiayah, a strong supporter of United National party contested in Kayts electorate during 1947 parliamentary election as an Independent candidate. After a very close competition, he managed to win by defeating his closest rival Tamil Congress candidate A. V. Kulasingham by 322 votes. Alfred Thambiayah later contested in 1952 election and was elected by a

majority of nearly 4000 votes.

Politics and association with UNP

In 1955 when his close friend and Prime Minister John Kotalawela visited North, Mr. Thambiayah arranged for a rousing welcome for the Prime Minister in Delft Island

Overwhelmed by the welcome accorded to him by the Tamils in North the PM speaking in Kokuvil during a grand reception for him said that the policy of his Party was to grant equal status to both Sinhala and Tamil Languages.

Prime Minister John Kotalawela never imagined the uproar in the South that was about to ensue in the near future. Meanwhile realizing that election was around the corner, the leader of opposition S. W. R. D. Bandaranayke began his election campaign saying that if he wins the election he will make Sinhala as the official language within 48 hours of taking power. As a result there was much opposition for John Kotalawela within the party and during the UNP party convention held in 1956, it was decided that Sinhala will be the only official language. Consequently all Tamil supporters led by Alfred Thambiayah staged a walk out. This courageous action indicated how much Mr. Thambiayah respected the feelings of Tamil community.

1956 elections Alfred Thambiayah was defeated by Federal Party candidate V. A. Kandiah though he lost the election, his magnanimous nature was evident during the communal riots that began on May.23.1958.

While hundreds of Tamils were massacred, a number of residences and business establishments of Tamils looted and then set on fire. Prime minister Bandaranaake did not take any action to protect the Tamils but he promoted violence siding with the Sinhala hooligans while realizing the gravity of the situation, it was

Mr. Thambiayah who led a delegation of prominent Tamils to the official residence of Governor General Sir

Oliver Goonetillake and insisted that the safety of Tamils was vital at this moment of crisis and immediate action has to be taken to assure their safety.

Thamiayah offered his three ships and ten other shops of his business colleagues to transport the Tamils to their traditional homeland in North and East. Though the Governor General agreed their request and accepted their offer, the Prime Minister Bandaranayake was against this move pointing out that there was no special sea route available to transport the civilians to North and also foreign ships cannot be allowed to sail in the sea around the island without the permission of Government. Thambyayah quickly contacted the famous criminal lawyer Mr. G. G. Ponnampalam who pointed out that there was provision for transport of civilians by ship during emergency situations

emergency situations and proved that Prime Minister was absolutely wrong. Consequently the P M who was Instrumental in promoting the violence was effectively dumb founded. Meanwhile thirteen ships were made ready to transport the affected Tamils to safety and a France luxury cruise ship named S. S. Laos move into the pier to lead the 13 ships.

Thambiayah then quickly contacted wealthy business men in Colombo and arranged for immediate delivery of dry rations to feed the affected Tamils travelling in these ships. After 4 days of travel, the ships reached north and thus lives of 3000 Tamils were saved.

Thambiayah contested Kayts electorate for the fourth time in 1960 and once again but had to face defeat because of the continued rising popularity and dominating influence of Federal party. Mr.Thambi ayah never contested in any elections after 1960 but yet continued to help so many people providing employment opportunities. Thambiayah was instrumental in the construction of road links from Jaffna peninsula to Kayts Island and

Pungudutivu. He also helped build schools, hospitals, roads, dispensaries and post offices in the island.

May his soul rest in peace.

V. A. Kandiah

Velupillai Ambalavanar Kandiah (3 September 1891 – 4 June 1963) was a Ceylon Tamil lawyer, politician and Member of Parliament.

Early life and family

Kandiah was born on 3 September 1891. He was from the island of Kayts in northern Ceylon. He was educated at Jaffna Hindu College and St. Joseph's College, Colombo. After school, Kandiah joined the Ceylon University College, graduating in 1922 with a B.Sc. degree.



Career

Kandiah taught science at St. Joseph's College, Colombo for about eight years before joining

the legal profession and becoming an advocate. He practiced law in Colombo.

Kandiah stood as a candidate in Colombo Central at the 1947 parliamentary election but was unsuccessful. He was the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi (Tamil Federal Party)'s candidate in Kayts at the 1956 parliamentary election. He won the election and entered Parliament. He was re-elected at the March 1960 and July 1960 parliamentary elections.

Following the 1958 riots, both ITAK and the Jathika Vimukthi Peramuna (National Liberation Front) were banned. ITAK's leaders, including Kandiah, were arrested on 4 June 1958 in the premises of the Parliament and imprisoned.

Kandiah played a leading role in the 1961 Satyagraha campaign organized by ITAK. Early on, the morning of 20 February 1961 a group of 55 to 75 persons staged a

Satyagraha at the Jaffna Kachcheri in Old Park. Among them were ITAK MPs A. Amirthalingam, S. J. V. Chelvanayakam, V. Dharmalingam, V.A.Kandiah, E. M. V. Naganathan, V. N. Navaratnam and K. Thurairatnam. A large group of police officers arrived in riot gear, wearing helmets and carrying batons and shields. The police started removing the protesters by lifting and carrying them away. Those who resisted were dragged away. Later, as Government Agent M. Srikantha and Superintendent of Police Richard Arndt tried to leave Old Park in a jeep the protesters blocked their way. The police reacted with brutality, beating the protesters with batons and pulled them out bodily. Five ITAK MPs were amongst the protesters blocking the jeep. Kandiah was carried out and dumped on the ground; Dharmalingam and Thurairatnam were dragged out whilst Amirthalingam and Naganathan were baton charged.

Kandiah was a founding member of the Hindu Educational Society. He died on 4 June 1963.

V. Navaratnam

A man ahead of his time

*A tribute by S. Raymond Rajabalan
Monsoon Journal, January 14, 2007*



V. Navaratnam, former Member of Parliament for Kayts, passed away in Montreal on Dec. 22nd 2006 at the age of 97, creating a void in the midst of Eelam Tamils at this hour of need.

Navaratnam, born in Karampon in the island of Kayts on October 1910, was educated at Ananda College, Colombo and Ceylon Law College. He was a successful civil lawyer for more than fifty years. He was the only living founder member of Federal Party (Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi)

which provided political leadership for Tamils for over thirty years after independence.

A man with a prophetic vision, in 1949 Navaratnam, along with some other members of the Tamil Congress, opposed the Ceylon (Elections) Amendment Act, which deprived the voting rights of Plantation Tamils. This resulted in the formation of Federal Party under the leadership of S. J. V. Chelvanayagam.

A political activist and writer with a sharp intellect and strategic thinking, he was the brain behind the Federal Party's peaceful campaigns. In 1956, when the government of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike enacted the Sinhala Only Act, Navaratnam was the brain behind the planning of the Satyagraha (peaceful protest) campaign at Galle Face Green protesting the passage of this act.

He was a parliamentarian who refused to compromise the rights and interest of his people for political expediency. Hoping to win the rights by peaceful means, he participated on behalf of the Federal Party for more than a decade. However, he was disillusioned by repeated failures of each set of talks.

When the government led by Srimavo Bandaranaike declared in 1960 that Buddhism was to be elevated as the state religion, followed by legislation making Sinhala the language of the courts, the late Navaratnam spearheaded the civil disobedience campaign in the North and East. He was also the brain behind running a parallel postal service during this campaign, a unique event that made him a legend in the annals of the history of the freedom struggle of Eelam Tamils.

Navaratnam, contesting in the Kayts electorate during the 1963 August by-election, resulting from the death of V.A. Kandiah, won by more than 9000 votes. He again won the subsequent election in 1965.

Soon after the 1965 elections, when Dudley Senanayake formed a "National Government", the Federal Party as well as the Tamil Congress extended their support.

When the Shrima-Shastri Pact (1964) and the bill associated with the implementation of the Indo-Ceylon Agreement were introduced by Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake, Navaratnam decided to defy the government Whip, speak, and vote against it. However, on the request of his leader S.J.V. Chelvanayagam, he agreed not to express his opposition on the floor of the parliament. However, Navaratnam's opposition to the Indo-Ceylon Act was a matter of public knowledge.

In 1967, the government in power introduced an Act relating to the Registrations of Persons Resident in Ceylon. The Act proposed a law under which every person in the island, 18 years of age and over, was required to register himself with the Department of Persons and obtain a photo identity card. This was the proverbial last straw to break the camel's back.

In 1968 when the White Paper for the establishment of District Councils (DC) was submitted in the parliament, Navaratnam vigorously opposed it and made a clarion call to the Tamil youth to come forward to reach the ideals of achieving Tamil Eelam. When even this worthless DC bill was dropped due to anti-Tamil riots organized by Srimavo Bandaranaike, the Federal Party quit the government. Navaratnam was proved right once again.

This was how a soft-spoken politician changed his way of thinking when every peaceful means ended up as failure.

In 1969, Navaratnam's patience worn out thin, Navaratnam finally decided to have his own way and quit the Federal Party.

He was a man ahead of his time .However, because of the dominating influence of the Federal Party among Tamils; Navaratnam's voice was swept away as a voice in the wilderness. He was a Moses denied the opportunity to lead the Tamil-speaking minorities, though he never aimed for fame or power.

Having realized the uncertainty of finding a political

solution through long years of experience gained by short-lived meetings with the Sinhala leadership, on Aug. 1969, Navaratnam launched his own party, the Tamil Self Rule Party (*Tamils Suyaadchchi Kazahagam*). In fact, he was the man who planted the seeds of the freedom struggle, which took a different dimension in the late seventies.

After losing the 1970 elections, Navaratnam faded away from politics, but continued to keep himself informed about the developments in the country. His views, however, were continued to be sought by politicians as well by newspaper editors.

Events of the past three decades have proved beyond doubt that Navaratnam was a man with a vision and foresight. From time immemorial, the value of many are realized long after they are gone, a case in point being the late Mr. Navaratnam, a soft - spoken peace – loving man who, after numerous dialogues with many Sinhala leaders, realized very early the folly of continuing peace talks.

A man of honesty, who initially believed that peaceful means would bring an end to the political inequality, was finally reluctantly compelled to advocate alternate means.

May his soul rest in peace.

K. P. Ratnam

Karthigesar Ponnambalam Ratnam (10 March 1914 – 20 December 2010) was a Sri Lankan Tamil academic, politician and Member of Parliament.

Early life and family

Ratnam was born on 10 March 1914 in Velanai on the island of Kayts. He was educated at Velanai Anglo-Vernacular School and Union College, Tellippalai. He excelled in Tamil language and Tamil literature at school. He became a pundit in 1933 and Vidvan in 1942.

Ratnam received BA (Hons) degree from the University of London in 1945. He later received a Bachelor of Oriental Languages degree and MA (1952) degree from the University of Madras.



K. P. Ratnam

Career

Ratnam joined the teaching profession and served as headmaster of the Moolai Senior Secondary School between 1934 and 1940. He becomes assistant master at Kopay Teacher Training College in 1941. In 1942, he was appointed Inspector of Schools. Between 1943 and 1956 he was a lecturer in Tamil at Ma-

haragama Training College. Later he spent eight years as a Research officer in the Official Languages Department in Colombo. He was a visiting lecturer at Navalar Hall, Colombo from 1958 to 1963. He then joined the University of Malaya in 1964 as lecturer in Indian Studies.

After retirement, Ratnam entered politics. He stood as the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi (Federal Party)'s candidate in Kilinochchi at the 1965 parliamentary election. He won the election and entered Parliament. He stood as the ITAK's candidate in Kayts at the 1970 parliamentary election. He won the election and re-entered Parliament.

On 14 May 1972 the ITAK, All Ceylon Tamil Congress, Ceylon Workers' Congress, Eelath Thamilar Otrumai Munnani and All Ceylon Tamil Conference formed the Tamil United Front, later renamed Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF). On 21 May 1976 Ratnam was delivering leaflets along with other leading Tamil politicians (A. Amirthalingam, V. N. Navaratnam, M. Sivasithamparam and K. Thurairatnam) when they were all arrested on government orders. Only Sivasithamparam was released but all the others were taken to Colombo and tried for sedition. All the defendants were acquitted on 10 February 1977 after a famous trial at bar case in which around 70 leading

Tamil lawyers, including S. J. V. Chelvanayakam and G. G. Ponnambalam, acted for the defence.

Ratnam was the TULF's candidate in Kayts at the 1977 parliamentary election and was re-elected. Ratnam and all other TULF MPs boycotted Parliament from the middle of 1983 for a number of reasons: they were under pressure from Sri Lankan Tamil militants not to stay in Parliament beyond their normal six-year term; the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka required them to swear an oath unconditionally renouncing support for a separate state; and the Black July riots in which up to 3,000 Tamils were killed by Sinhalese mobs. After three months of absence, Ratnam forfeited his seat in Parliament on 22 October 1983.

Later life

Ratnam was president of Colombo Tamil Sangam (1958–61), Ulaka Tamil Marai Kallakam and editor of the Tamil World (1965). He was also a vice-president of the TULF. He represented the All Ceylon Tamil Writers' Association at the Asian Writers' Conference held in 1957 in New Delhi; attended the 25th International Congress of Orientalists held in Moscow in 1960; and the 26th Congress of Orientalists held in New Delhi in 1964. He has written more than 12 books and contributed numerous articles on literary and cultural topics.

Ratnam moved to India in 1985. He returned to Sri Lanka in 2003 and lived with his children in Wellawatte, Colombo. He died on 20th December 2010 at his home in Colombo.

Sir Vaithilingam Duraiswamy

Sir Vaithilingam Duraiswamy (8th June 1874 – 12 April 1966) was a Ceylon Tamil lawyer, politician and speaker of the State Council of Ceylon.



Early life and family

Duraiswamy was born on 8 June 1874 in Velanai. He was the son of Ayampillai Waithilingam, an engineer from Malaya. He was educated at Jaffna College and Jaffna Central College. After school, he joined University of Calcutta, from where he graduated with a double honours degree. He then qualified as an advocate from the Ceylon Law College.

Career

After qualifying, Duraiswamy became a crown advocate and leader of the Jaffna Bar.

Duraiswamy contested the 1921 Legislative Council election as a candidate in Northern Province and was elected to the Legislative Council. He contested the 1924 Legislative Council election as a candidate in Northern Province West and was re-elected unopposed. He was a leading member of the Jaffna Youth Congress, which advocated the boycott of the 1931 State Council elections. The boycott ended in 1934 but Duraiswamy did not contest the ensuing by-elections. He did however contest the 1936 State Council election as a candidate in Kayts and was elected to the State Council unopposed. Duraiswamy was elected Speaker of the State Council on 17 March 1936. He held this position until the State Council was replaced in 1947. Duraiswamy was knighted by King George VI in London in May 1937.

Duraiswamy contested in Kayts at the 1947 election but failed to be elected to the new Parliament since a wave of Tamil nationalism represented by the Tamil Congress had swept away the old legislative guard at this election.

Duraiswamy was one of the founders of the Hindu Board of Education and served as its president in 1923. He helped establish more than 150 Hindu schools. He was a founder and president of the Tamil Union. He was also president of the Vivekananda Society and a leading member of the Saiva Paripalana Sabha.

Sir Duraiswamy died on 12 April 1966. A commemorative postage stamp in honour of Duraiswamy was issued on 14 June 1982 by the Government of Sri Lanka.

Congratulations
on successful completion
of this worthy publication

A.F.A.A. Rajakulendran

Justice of Peace Colombo
Patriotic son of East Street, Kayts.

Best wishes



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Gospel Fellowship***

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Writers and Artistes

S. Sivapathasuntharam - Radio Announcer



Sivapathasuntheram, the famous radio announcer at Ceylon Broadcasting was born in Karampon 1912 as the son of Somasuntherampillai. He had his early education At Jaffna Central College and later graduated from

University of Ceylon. Since he had a very good knowledge of Tamil, English and Sanskrit he also obtained a degree from Colombo Law College .In 1930 he joined Eelakesari newspaper and after serving for 5 years as its editor he joined Radio Ceylon in 1941.

Meanwhile after the Second World War, Sivapathasunderam was invited by British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 1947 to strengthen the Tamil service. The following year after discussion with Coomaraswamy of the Ceylon high Commllsion in London and Parthasarathy of Indian Embassy, Sivapathasunderam decided to conduct the Tamil service as a Journal and named it Tamilosai which soon became BBC'S hit Tamil programme. After three years he returned to Ceylon where he was a much sought after free lance writer and radio programmer.

He attempted to introduce a number of changes but he was prevented from doing so because of racist policies of the administrators of Radio Ceylon. Disappointed by the situation he left radio Ceylon and joined Lever Brothers as an Advertising director and served there for nine years.

Later by 1950'S, the Tamil problem was hotting up and he decided to leave the country and move to India with his wife and three children .Settling in Madurai, he became an Indianan citizen and began to concentrate

on his writing and taking greater interest in Tamil studies. But there was always the call of radio. He was particularly good at live commentary and answered All India Radio's call for this many times including agreeing to do the commentaries during the final journeys of former Tamil Nadu chief ministers Annadurai and Kamaraj.

He moved to Madras around 1980 but then he was well-known in Tamil circles for work at different levels. His first book was a travelogue that came out in 1947. **Manickavasagar Adichuvatil** ("in the foot steps of Manickavasagar ").Then came a book in Tamil on **The art of broadcasting**. Rajaji, Late Governor General of India in his Foreword for the book suggested it would have been better named Radio Vathiyar. In 1960 Sivapathasunderam was following the footsteps of Lord Buddha and in 1978, in those of Sekkizhar in two well-received travelogues .But from the mid 1970s his greater focus was working with ' Chitti' Sundarajan on two books that are classic surveys of Tamil language. These magnum opuses looked at **100 years of the Tamil novel (1977)** and **the history and development of Tamil short story**. Today, they are the foundations for any research in either field.

With two of his children settled in London, he decided to spend his last years with them and moved from Madras. Sivapathasunderam slowed down and in his last ten years, when he lived in London, he spent more time reading than writing.

He passed away in London on Nov. 08, 2000.

Kavaloor Rajadurai - Writer

Late Mariampillai David Rajadurai popularly known as Kavaloor Rajadurai was a famous Tamil writer born in Karampon in 1932 Oct.13th. He had his early education at Kayts St. Antony's College and after completing his GCE Ordinary Level exam he was employed in Central Bank, Government food department and also in Tamil Division of Publicity Department of Shell Company.



He was a well known short story writer between 1950s to 1960s. He became prominent because of Thinakaran newspaper. His first publication Kulanthai Oru Theivam was published in 1961. It was a collection of short stories and it included ten short stories written by Rajadurai.

After a long interval of 15 years, his second book was published by cooperative press of Srilankan Tamil writers. This publication included 11 short stories written between 1954 and 1973 in various Tamil newspapers. Meanwhile Rajadurai also released a book titled "Veedu Yaarukku"- a short novel serialised in Thinakaran newspaper. It was also staged as a play in Lumbini Hall in Havelock Town, Colombo.

By 1970, He joined Ceylon Broadcasting Corporation as a program coordinator and was primarily involved in a program named Kirama Valam. He travelled to various villages and remote areas to produce a variety of lively programs based in various rural locations and as a result this program became very popular.

Kavaloor Rajadurai then became friend with Sillvayoor Selvarajan, the famous Radio Broadcaster and Programmer and the duo were responsible for the

popularity of the Commercial Service of CBC for a few years. In addition to writing short stories Kavaloor Rajadurai also published a book titled **Advertising**. Kavaloor Rajadurai later produced a film titled Ponmani and all the songs in that film were written by Silayoor Selvarajan and his wife Kamalini .This film was based on a story serialized in Mithiran newspaper.This film was screened at the International Film Festival held in Chennai in 1978.

By late 70s he left CBC and started an advertising firm Named Vaseekara Advertising and ran it as a very successful venture for many years. It was also broadcasted In Ruphavanini TV in 1984 and 1985.

Rajadurai later moved to Sydney, Australia where he passed away in 2014 on Oct.14th.

Sellathurai Thadchanamoorthy **Writer and Journalist**

The talented writer and journalist Thedchanamoorthy was born in Karampon West as the fifth son Sellathurai Rathinam. He had his early education at Karampon Shanmuganatha Vidyalayam and then completed his education at Kayts St. Antony's College.



Since he was from Melaikkarampon area, he first used to write under the pen name Megamoorthy but later changed it to VirakesaryMoorthy.

He began writing short stories when he was just 20 and has continued his career very successfully for the past 50 years. During the past five decades, he has written hundreds of articles in a variety of newspapers in Srilanka and then continued his interest ever since he moved to Canada.

His first short story Ninmmathy Eathu was published in 1967 in the weekly newspaper Jothy published by Colombo based Mithiran publications. He also wrote a

number of short stories in Thinapathy newspaper and in magazines such as Mallikai and Nudpam.

He joined Virkesari newspaper as sub editor in 1972 and with his previous experience as storywriter, he began to develop his skills in various fields. He soon began to get involved in interviewing prominent Bharathanatiya dancers such as Anandavalli Satchithananthan , Ranga Vivekananthan etc. He also wrote reviews for various plays staged by Kaneshapillai and Balendra. Simultaneously he also began writing stories for children in the week-end issues of Virakesary. In 1980, when Aalikumaran Anandan swam across the Palk strait Moorthy along with Bama Rajagopal of Eelanadu newspaper accompanied Ananathan in a boat. After the event was over, he first wrote about it as a news item and then he wrote a series of articles describing the entire event. As a result, he soon became very popular and ever since he is being referred to as Virakesary Moorthy.

Meanwhile, because of the unfortunate situations developing in Sri Lanka, Moorthy decided to leave Sri Lanka for personal safety. He arrived in Canada in 1983 and for a short time functioned as the Editor of a monthly journal named Tamil Eelil published by Quebec Eelam Tamils Federation. Later he moved to Vancouver and worked there for a few years. Then he finally decided to settle down in Toronto.

In 2011 he released, a book of 18 Short stories titled "Suthanthiramun" published by Manimekalai Publishers, The short story Suthanthiramun won the prize for the best short story in a competition held by Venmathy publishers of Chennai.

He has written a number of articles and short stories in various Toronto based Canadian Tamil newspapers such as Senthamarai, Thnagatheepam, Eelanaadu, Mulakkam, Kathir Oli etc under the pen name Virakesari Moorthy. His stories are based on the problems facing the Tamil community and the baseless beliefs prevailing among Tamils.

He has also functioned as the vice president of the past students association of Karampon Shanmuganatha

Vidyalayam and is also a member of the publishing committee World Tamil cultural Movement.

S. M. Joseph - Writer and Journalist

Hailing from Karampon, Mr. Saverimuthu Joseph has been a prolific writer for the past five decades.

Having had his early education at Kayts St.Antony's college he preceded to Jaffna where he continued his education at St.Patrick's College and completed his S.S.C.



Soon after he completed his studies, he got a teaching appointment in his hometown of Karampon. Later he began his writing career in late 1950's by contributing articles to the Jaffna based Catholic Newspaper Sathya Vetha Pathukavalan. Meanwhile Mr. Joseph joined Columbuturai teachers training College where the late Bishop Deogupillai was

the principal of the training college and the administrator of Pathukavalan newspaper. At that time the government was involved in taking over the private schools and a number of articles regarding the protests by the public against the takeover were being published in Colombo based Catholic Messenger. The Bishop used to provide the summary of those articles in Pathukavalan .Mr. Joseph offered to translate those articles in Tamil, sometimes foregoing his holidays. This experience helped him to become a very good translator and a prolific writer in the later years.

After he got a teaching appointment in Nuwaraeliya he became very actively involved in Journalism and he expanded his career by contributing a number of articles in leading Tamil newspapers such as Thinakaran, Virakesary etc. He translated a number of interesting articles about a variety of topics from Readers Digest and published them in Virakesari. Further, he also was involved in

producing many valuable booklets detailing the history of a number of Catholic churches in the Island of Kayts. Some of the books include Karampon Pangu malar (1972), Souvenir for the centenary celebration of Kayts St. Mary's church (1995). This souvenir is an excellent documentary that has included a wealth of information about the propagation of Catholic religion in Kayts and neighbouring Islands.

He has been a devoted teacher for nearly four decades and at present, he lives in Negombo.

J. F. Jegarajasingham - Writer and Journalist



J. F. Jegarajasingham, affectionately known as Jega, is a multitalented human being with many unique virtues.

He had his early education at St Anthony's College, Kayts (previously known as Kayts St. Anthony's Tamil School during the time of the Brothers of the Society of St. Joseph). After finishing his middle school education, his parents enrolled him at St. Benedict's College, Colombo. The move to

Colombo provided him with greater exposure and helped make a quantum leap in his learning.

After completing his London Matriculation, his desire was to become an electrical engineer. However, his plans to enter the Ceylon Technical College did not come to fruition due to organizational changes that took place at that institution. During that time, he moved to Trincomalee where his brother Capt J. F. Xavier was a Senior Tug Master with the Royal Navy. Because of his interest in electrical engineering, Jega too joined the Royal Navy as an apprentice. His superiors admired Jega because he spoke flawless English with an excellent vocabulary.

Later on, Jega became an English teacher in a small school in Mutur near Trincomalee. At about the same time, he became a correspondent for the prestigious Times of Ceylon newspaper and his news reports were regularly published. Although he received many rejection slips at the beginning, he was determined to succeed and within a short while, he became a successful free - lance journalist. The first article published in the Daily News of Ceylon was on "Cheettu", the chit system widely practiced locally .The financial editor of the newspaper Alan Chalkly was very impressed with his article. After the publication of this article, Chalkly enquired about Jega from his fellow journalists. They had the impression that Jega was a retired civil servant, but he was actually in his thirties at that time. Eventually, Chalkly met Jega and he was pleasantly surprised by his journalistic talent at such a young age.

Over the years, his articles were published in several newspapers in Ceylon. He was very keen on becoming a full-time journalist, but was advised against it as it had a limited scope. He therefore sat for the entrance examination of the Teacher Training College at Maharagama and was selected for the program. At the end of the training course, he came out with flying colors. While all other students burnt the midnight oil to study at weekends, Jega used to spend his spare time writing articles for newspapers under the pen name "Student Teacher." He never bought any textbooks but continued his studies by borrowing textbooks from his fellow students. He had a photographic memory and had the asset of quickly absorbing the lectures to understand their essence.

After leaving the Training College, he joined St. Benedict College, Colombo as an English teacher where he also taught mathematics, science and arts subjects. Within a short period, he became a competent and greatly sought after teacher He had the rare gift of simplifying the language to make students learn it with ease. This coupled with his generous sense of humour made him very popular with students.

Jega did not value the common luxuries of that era such as wrist watches and other ornamental trinkets -

his early material acquisitions of significance were his precious 'Minolta' camera and 'Underwood' typewriter, both of which he put to good use to further his journalistic endeavours.

During most his long 33 year stint as a teacher at St. Benedict's College, Jega was the 'official' photographer and chronicler of activities of St. Benedict's College. With his journalistic skills and love of photography, he revived the well-illustrated College Magazines and was instrumental in producing the epic 'Centenary Souvenir' on the occasion of St. Benedict's Centenary in 1965. In the 1960s while teaching at St. Benedict's College, he undertook and completed an assignment for the 'Daily Mirror – the 'Our Town' series of investigative articles on 50 towns in Ceylon as Sri Lanka was then known. The project was completed over a two-year period and was executed under the pen name 'Investigator'. After retirement, he became the editor of a monthly magazine named Taprobane. It was a very popular magazine, but it went out of publication due to the lack of interest on the part of the publishers.

Jega was a prominent member of societies associated with his early life. When Kayts St. Anthony's College Past Pupils Association was revived in 1999 at a General Meeting held at St. Benedict's College Jega was elected as the Secretary of the Society and did a great service to his alma mater. He was also the Editor of Kayts Anthonian newsletter for many years. Apart from this, being a devoted parishioner of Kayts St. Antony's Church he served as the President of Kayts St. Anthony's Church Community Welfare Society, Colombo Branch for quite a long period.

He is a well-read human being of the English and world literature. In a nutshell, he has a profound knowledge of literature and philosophy. As a scholar, he has a liberal attitude to life. His motto is "We should live for others". In English literature, he became familiar with the writings of leading authors and novelists like William Shakespeare, John Milton, George Bernard Shaw, H.G Wells, George Orwell, William Blake, Oliver Goldsmith and many other authors and poets. He also familiarized himself with the work of Greek philosophers like Socrates, Plato and many other

philosophers and thinkers of the East and West. Another favorite motto of his was 'Plain living and high thinking'.

He demonstrates the art of talking with diplomacy, tactfulness without hurting anyone, whether they were academics, commoners or scholars. He commands respect without demanding it. He is blessed with the innumerable human values in understanding the human follies and idiosyncrasy. His belief in the dignity, honour and respect of all human beings is easily apparent.

At 88 years of age, though partially disabled following a stroke, he has not lost his wit – anyone visiting him rarely goes away without being treated to one or more of his jokes.

Linus Aloysius

U. K.

Teacher, Author and Hindu Scholar Sabaratnam honoured by Jaffna University with a Masters Degree



Mr. Sabaratnam, a very respected and dedicated teacher of Kayts St. Anthony's College born in Naranthanai was the youngest son of his devoted parents Arumugam and Anamma. After his elder sister got married in Karampon later on Sabaratnam too got married there. Ever since he joined the staff of St. Anthony's he began residing in Karampon. After many years of

service at St. Antony's college he joined Karampon Shanmuganatha Vidyalayam to serve as Principal.

He always took great interest in his students and helped many students in various ways. He wrote history books for grade six to twelve, which were highly appreciated by teachers as well as students throughout the island.

In 2003, University of Jaffna awarded him an honorary

M.A Degree for his exceptional service in the field of Education.

Following is the text of the introductory speech made by Prof. Gopalakrishnan, Dean of the Faculty of Arts at that occasion.

Today University of Jaffna has honoured Mr.Arumugam Sabaratnam by awarding an honorary Masters degree in appreciation of his great knowledge of Hindu Philosophy and Comparative religion.

Sabaratnam was born in the village of Naranthanai in the island of Kayts on 30.10.1928 and had his early education at Naranthanai Ganesh Vidyalayam, Sanmarkka Pothana School and then at St.Anthony's College.

After completing his studies at St.Anthony's College, he joined Maharagama Teachers Training College. After graduation he continued to serve at St.Anthony's College. After many years of service at his Alma Mater, he gained admission to University of Peradeniya in 1964 where he successfully completed his BA Degree with Tamil, Sanskrit and History.

He developed contact with scholars such as Pundit. C. Kanapathypillai and Prof. P. Kailasapathy and with their guidance, he was able to develop his knowledge of Hindu philosophy. Later on, he was able to travel frequently to India where he had the opportunity to associate with great scholars and thus he was able to gain deeper knowledge in literature and religion.

Sabaratnam wrote a number of books that were very helpful for the younger generations. Between 1980 and 1993 he wrote many literary articles and as such he was able to introduce western literature to the students in the country.

During 1989-1990, the authorities in Sweden Uppsala University invited him as a visiting researcher and Sabartnam joined the scholars of that University where he did great service by compiling a list of Books about the religions in Jaffna. He also used this great opportunity to deliver lectures in University of Stockholm and University of Lund in order to enlighten the western scholars the values of Hindu philosophy. In

fact, he also submitted a research article about Hindu and Christian religions in Jaffna at a conference in Sweden organized by a religious group.

While he was in charge of the Tamil section of the weekly newspaper "Saturday Review" he translated the Articles of Capri Marcel and published them in 1986 in the Tamil weekly edition of that newspaper.

Sabaratham joined with Jaffna University Prof. S. Suseentharaja in compiling a book titled "Thoughts of P.Kailasapathy". This book was released in 1964 as a publication of University of Jaffna. This book was used for research in MA degree course in Hindu Civilization and in addition this book was the source for a book titled " Kailasabathy Smirithy towards Hindu Philosophy" authored by Dr. Pandithamany M. Kandiah. This too was a publication of Jaffna University. In 2002 an undergraduate following a Tamil Special Degree course presented an article titled "Literary services by A. Sabaratham "describing in detail his interest in literature.

Mr Sabaratham has an attitude to help young researchers. He also serves in a number of literary and social organizations and performing social service. Since 1980, he has been serving as the President of Karampon literary Circle. He also serves as the coordinator of Saraswathy Birinthavanam Trust Fund. In addition to his above responsibilities, he is also serving as the secretary of P. Kailsapathy Centenary memorial group.

Sabaratham has gained fame for his great knowledge on Hindu Philosophy, Comparative Religious study and many other social fields. He is well respected both in this country and abroad. We wish that his literary services should continue for many more years.

G. M. Selvarajah - Author & Poet

Late poet Selvarajah was born in 1914 in Kayts East. He had his early education at Kayts St. Antony's College when brothers of St, Joseph's Society, were administering it. His interest in Tamil language was due to the excellent training by the brothers especially Br. Simon.

Selvaraja contributed numerous excellent articles for newspapers such as Thinakaran Virakesary, Suthanthiran etc and they were very well received by the readers. In 1947 soon after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, Poet Selvaraja wrote a poem in Thinakaran newspaper in Ghandhi's memory and as a result, his name began to be well known throughout the country.



He rewrote the script for historical dramas such as Gnanasounthary , Pandaravanniyan. etc In addition he wrote the script for plays about St. James, St. Sebastian as well as Annai Velankanni.

Though being a catholic, he not only wrote about the history of many churches but but also about many Hindu temples located in Kayts.

Following is a list of some of the books authored by Poet

- Sinthaakula Maalai
- History of Our lady of Perpetual Succour
- History of the church of Our Lady of Miracles - Jaffna
- History of the church of Our Lady of Rosary, Sinnamadhu, Saravanai
- History of the church Our Lady of Madhu
- History of Thanthonri Amman temple, Naranthanai North
- History of Nageswary Amman temple, Nainativu
- A Tribute to Ghandhi
- A Tribute to Jawaharlal Nehru
- Hymn for Nallur Kanthan
- Hymn for Sannathy Temple
- History of Melaikkarampon Srimurugan Temple
- Gnanasounthary - Folk Drama
- Pandaravanniyan—Folk Drama

The talented poet passed away in 1987 on June 17th at the age of 73.

Legal Luminary

Suppiah Sharvananda - Chief Justice

Suppiah Sharvananda was a Chief Justice of Sri Lanka and the first Governor of the Western Province.

Early life

Sharvanda was born on 22 February 1923 in Karampon-Kayts, Jaffna District. He attended St. Anthony's English School in Kayts before transferring to Jaffna Hindu College at Grade 6. After completing his secondary education, he studied at Colombo Law College, qualifying as a lawyer in 1946. During his time at the Law College, he also obtained a BA degree from the University of London.



Legal career

As a lawyer, Sharvanda worked on civil cases and served under such eminent lawyers as Dr. H. W. Thambiah QC, S. J. V. Chelvanayakam QC, and H. V. Perera QC. He was appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka in 1974. In 1984, he succeeded Neville Samarakoon as Chief Justice, the first Tamil to hold that position. He made a number of landmark judgments during his Supreme Court tenure, including the 13th Amendment to the constitution. He retired from the Supreme Court in 1988.

Later life

After his retirement, President J.R. Jayewardene appointed him the first governor of the Western Province in 1988. He held this position until 1994. In 2001, President Chandrika Kumaratunga appointed him as the Chairman of the Presidential Truth Commission on ethnic violence between the period of 1981 and 1984.

**A book of this magnitude was long overdue.
Congratulation on your great effort.**

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The Artistes of Kayts Island

The Island of Kayts has produced many talented artistes who were well - known for their outstanding abilities in various fields such as folk song singing, acting, music, directing passion plays, moulding, craftsmanship, boat building etc. The present generation is unaware of the fact that most our artistes were nationally honoured for their outstanding capabilities. Until a few decades ago, people from nearby islands as well as various parts of the peninsula used to visit Kayts to watch Naadukkoothu (A famous folk dance form of storytelling), Passion Plays etc.

Sometimes the neighbouring villagers used to invite our artists to perform Passion Plays, Naadukoothu etc in their own places. Artiste Muthukkudiyar of Kayts East and his sons Periya Vithanaiyar Thioguparananthu and Emmanuel Mastiriyaar were some of the artistes who were invited to perform in the nearby towns. Both Muthukkudiyar and Emmanuel were experts in sculpturing statues of saints for churches. Muthukkudiyar was a famous sculptor known throughout Sri Lanka, especially in the southern parts of the country. The statues portraying Jesus Christ after his death carved by Muthukkudiyar are still kept at St. James' Church, Mutuwal, Colombo and St. Joseph Church, Alawai. These are the real proof of his special talent. He is the great artiste who achieved great fame by creating an image of our Lord on Cross capable of opening and closing of eyes to be used during passion play.

Muthukkudiyar's son Emmanuel was also an expert in making statues. He made statues of Jesus Christs' for the churches in various places including Ilavalai, Pungkudutivu and Mandaithivu. He also carved the statue of Jesus Christ at St. Joseph's church, Kayts. The statue of St. Antony constructed with cement and kept



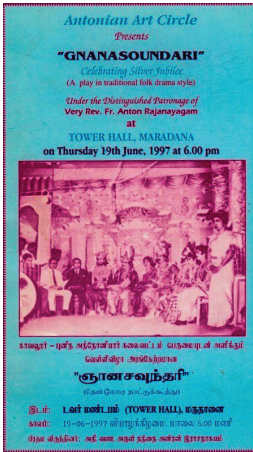
on the facade of the left transept of St. Antony's church facing Velanai road, is yet another example of the sculpturing excellence of Muthukuddiyar.

In addition, there were many classical musicians in Kayts who excelled handling various musical instruments. One of them was Miruthanka Viththuvaan S. P. Thampapillai of Kayts East who was a well - known player of the percussion instrument called Miruthangam. People used to call him Kodaiyidi Thampapillai because of the special effects he produced during his stage performances. Many Miruthanga artistes including Miruthanga viththuvaan Innuvil Mylan and Miruthanga viththuvan Karainagar Murugan were both the students of Kodaiyidi Thampapillai. Mr. Thampapillai was an actor and drama director too and he was very popular in many parts of the country including Trincomallee, Mullaithivu and Mannar. He performed a great literary service by collecting poems written by the local poets from Karampon, Naranthanai and Kayts in order to encourage them. He was very popular in singing the catholic songs in cinema style and was well respected by late historian priest Rev. Fr. Gnanapragasiar of Nallur.

Sellathurai alias Udaiyar of Middle Street Kayts was a well known harmonium player. Both Kodaiyiddi Thampapillai and Harmoniya Viduvan Sellathurai were very popular in those days. Udaiyar Sellathurai was also an expert in metal works. Udaiyar Sellathurai's father Mariampillai alias Pakka Marian was also an artist. Pakka is a nick name given for his perfection. Pakka Marian was good in boat building and also had the ability to salvage any ship that got wrecked. In addition, he was also good at moulding church bells.

Bastiampillai Saverimuthu alias Kirakam of St. Mary's church parish was also a good director of Passion Plays staged during Lent Season. He organized many such shows in Kayts and Karampon. The costumes used in passion plays, made by Kirakam were stored at St. Mary's church for a long period until 1980.

Marianthamby Masthiriya of Kayts West and Sebastiampillai of Ampulapulam also directed Passion Plays in Kayts and they staged these shows in Kayts until 1990. The people of Kayts, Karampon and Naranthanai still remember the scenes of Carrying of the Cross enacted by the devoted parishioners during Lent season.



Kayts is also the birthplace of a poet who did a great service for nearly half a century. G.M.Selvarajah of Kayts was a poet who had wrote many books, dramas, poems etc. Gnanasavundari, Pandara Vanniyar, Annai Velankanni, St. Anthony, St. James, St. Sebastian were some of Naddukoothu dramas written and staged by poet Selvarajah during the period between 1960 and 1985.

Out of these, Gnanasoundari was the best and it was staged in many parts of Sri Lanka. Poet Selvarajah was honored by many popular personalities including Late S.J.V.Selvanayagam (Thanthai Selva) and late Professor S. Vithiyananthan (Vice Chancellor of University of Jaffna). Arulappu Annaviyar of Naranthanai was the director of Gnanasavundari Naaddukoothu as well as Pandaravanniyar Naddukoothu. Arulappu Annaviyar was a good actor and a folk song singer too. Late Mr. A. L. Thambiyah ex M.P. of Kayts honored him and gave him the title “Amirthakaana Arulappu Annaviyaar”. All round musician Masillamany Mariampillai alias Suthy Marian of Naranthanai played harmonium for Gnanasoundari Naadukoothu and Thamparty Kathiravelu played Miruthankam.

Former Principal of St. Anthony's College, S. A. E. Ratnarajah took an important role as St. Sebastian in "Sebasiyaar Nadakam" written by Kavaloor Kavingnar.

Bastiampillai, father of Late Bishop of Jaffna, Very Rev. Deogupillai was another well known actor from Karampon. He was popularly nicknamed "Esthaki" because of his splendid character-act as Esthaki in a popular play "Esthaki Nadakam".

In his memory his grand children running a film company "Esthaki Films" in U.K.



Former Principal of Kayts R.C.Boys school Juvakeempilai Master alias Karampon Juvan was a well-known poet who has written a number of Viruthams, poems etc. The poem "Punniya Ponoor" about Karampon village, published in the book titled "A Genealogy of Catholic Families of Karampon" is a good example to prove his excellent knowledge of Tamil Literature.

Parithyaddaipu is a village situated on the west side of Kayts. Though the people of this village are Hindus, they maintained a mutual relationship with the neighbouring Catholics. As some of them were seafaring merchants, they got the opportunity to have close relationship with south Indians and were able to learn the Indian cultures. Paruthiyaddaipu had produced a number of musicians, vocalists who have performed programmes in Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation for many decades.

The above is only a brief account based on the very little recorded information available. It is obvious that there would have many great artistes during the past centuries and these unsung heroes would definitely have done great service and brought fame to Kayts.



Gnanasundari Naddu Koathu



"Shanthy"

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Talented residents of Kayts Tamils who set sail in the sea of Bengal

- Kavaloor Poet G.M.Selavarasa

One can never say with certainty from where did the residents of Kayts originally arrived in this island. However, it is possible to assume that at least some of the original inhabitants of this island emigrated from south India and initially settled in Mannar and then from there they moved to various places such as Poonery, Jaffna, Vannarpannai, Kovalam, Navanthurai, Chatty, Allippiddy, Naranthanai and Kayts.

All those people who originally settled in the island of Kayts were Hindus. It was only around 1600 that the Catholic Religion was introduced to this island. Even after the seeds of Catholic religion was planted in various parts of the island of Kayts, many of the Hindus continued to practice their religion with great vigour. Two of the strong Hindus who lived at that time were Aandyambalar and Iyappan. The entire area of Kayts presently known as Ampalapulam at one time belonged to Aandyampalar and was originally known as Ampalarpilam. Further Iyappan owned lots of lands at one time and even now there is a land in Kayts known as Iyappanthoddam. Iyappan's son got baptized by a Catholic priest named Pedro Petracone and was named Mathias. Later he got married in West street and it was the first matrimonial relationship between Ampalapulam and Kayts West Street. Even today there is a little stream is called as Mathias Stream.

Further a section of the people who settled in Kayts got married among Portugese and were called Burghers. Some of the women in this area practised the trade of weaving. Since in those days cotton used to grow in abundance in Kayts and since they had the support of Portugese they were able to do very well in continuing the weaving business.

Later on, they also learnt to dye sarees using chaya root and those who practised this for their living were called root dying (Vaer Kuththum) Burghers. They became experts in digging up large quantities of chaya

root in the islands of Delft and karaitivu and soon this occupation became their trade.

Many of the people of this community also lived in Delft and Pungudutivu. The chief of those people was Veerasinghamudali. During those days, the people from this community owned most of the land in Kayts West and some lands are still referred as Parangi Thoddam and Parangi Valavu. The owners of such lands were called Burghers and they were the descendants of Veerasinghamudali.

Original Trade

The people who originally settled in the island of Kayts were involved in not only fishing or shipping. Instead, they were mostly involved in business and farming. When they settled in Naranthanai, they were first rearing goats. Later they used the ships loaned to them by Indian traders and travelled in groups to transport herds of goats to places such as Puttalam, Colombo and Galle. Later they developed interest in shipping industry and moved towards the areas around Kayts town.

Then they stopped selling goats and changed to selling sea shells and conches. Meanwhile they also brought Muslims from places such as Paampan, Akka madam, Thankachchimadam etc..

Since the people of Kayts began travelling abroad to continue the trade they gradually developed good relationship with Portugese. As result they began to concentrate on shipping industry.

Shipping Industry

Since people of Kayts were involved in trading across the seas and also developed very good relationship with Portugese rulers and Muslims from Kerala (called Thulukkar) they were able to learn about maritime trade. Since they were very close to the Portugese they adopted their culture and religion. They also learnt from the art of decorating the churches, sculpturing of statues, art of ship building etc.



Chettys and Trade

After the rule of Portugese and Dutch came to an end, British rule began and it was during British rule shipping industry flourished in Kayts. As a result the shipping industry between India and Sri Lanka was under the control of sailors from Kayts. During those days there were no reputed sailors in the rest of the North or even among Sinhalese. I can say with all certainty that the first ever sailors in Ceylon were definitely from Kayts island. Mr. Seenithamby from Naranthanai was a very famous sailor who worked as the Captain of a ship in London.

Meanwhile many from Chetty community and many businessmen from India began arriving in Sri Lanka from places such as Seerkaali, Sithamparam, Thevakottail, Puthukottail, Naaddddrukottai for trade and handed over their trading vessels to the experienced boat people of Kayts. The sailors of Kayts used the schooners handed over by Indian traders and began to bring Salt, Tiles, Paddy from places such as Kollam, Kochchi, Aalappalai, Mangalapuram. Further they brought Rice, Pepper, Red chilly etc. from places such as Athiraampattinam, Muthuppattanam, Vethariniyam, Parangippadda They also brought seed Paddy, Teak etc from places such as Calcutta, Saddyakaamam, Karachchi, Arakkan, Akkiyaoorr, Mormong and Singapore.

Ships harboured in Kayts till 1950

Untill 1950, the ships listed below were harboured in Kayts

Saminathapuravi, Veeeraluxmi, Victoria, Neelathaachchi, Ameenboat, Subramaniapuravi, Kathiresan Pachchaikappal, Jebaraalam, Saanthalenaal, Meenadchisunderam, Kasiannthapoorani, Visalaadchi, Thaara, Star of Calcutta, Kesavaada, Chikaarza, Kanaganthurakka, Pathuraima, Pakiyaluxmi, Sivagami, Aananthavalli, Kuthupaalam, Sathurkuthupthaari, MummyShip, Srialuxmy, Thirugnanasampanthapuravi, Saarangapaani, Selvanayagi, Mariyapavulina, Regina, Mary Josephinaa, Emmanuel, Kiththanaa, Veeeraluxmi, Kanthasampuravi Monister, Dukesan. Arawalathamman, Josephinaa, Paattiyapoddu, Pemaly, Velauthapuravi, Veercha maria Kongarreen, Arabia, John Mary, Mammathusavuthaani, Ahamathu Savuthaani, Uppu Saththiram, Theivanayagi, Kechcy, Soomara Viyajan, Piraivanthamaria, Rasam Boat, Kodipudungi, Thayrialedchumy, Manikkathiyar, Alagyanayagi Seyathu Mammathubass, Paripoorana Kalyanaluxmi, Vellanaadaanuru etc.

There were many more ships were under the control of Sailors from Kayts and were used for trading across the seas. I wish to list below the names of some of the sailors who captained these ships. The Descendants of Veerasingha Mathew Muthali who settled in Kayts were very good not only in weaving and Farming but also excelled in sailing.

Following is a list of ships that were under their control and the names of the captains who served in those ships.

Those days there was a famous physician named Anthony Santhio in East street and he owned two ships. Savery Seenimuthu and Manuel were captains Of these ships.

Name of Captain	Name of Ship
Sanjuan Anthony	Maripavulina
Mariansanchuvaan	Regina
Yuwakeen Daniel	Mariajosephina
Yuwakeen Fernando	Emmanuel
Anthony Gabriel	Kiththanaa
Anthony Savery	Veeraluxmy
Anthony Savery	Kanthasampuravi
Ignai Daniel	Monister
Ignatius Nazareth	Duksean
Phillippu Mariselen	Aravalaththamman
Bastian Seenimiuthu	Josephinaa
Augustine Thomman	Mariayapuravi
Yuwakeen Manuel	Kathiresan
Savery Anthony	Paattya Potty
Jacob Gabriel	Velauthapuravi
Anthony Thiagu	Veercha Maria
Pedro Cruz	Veercha Maria

Sailors and their talents

People from Karampon too were working as sailors. Some of them were Chellappah, Thamothiry, Bastiampillai, Saviri, Muthuthamby, Mariampillai, Thambiah. They travelled to many foreign countries. It is noteworthy to mention that Bastiampillai also served at Port Commission as the head officer overseeing 300 clerks. Further more Thambiah travelled to various countries such as USA, Australia, Germany, France, Italy, Singapore and Malaysia. He also had worked as Master in a ship owned by Shell company.

The traders from foreign countries who owned ships had great faith in the talent of Sailors from Kayts than those of other parts of Ceylon and this why people from Kayts were able to continue to serve as captains Deck hands and Able seamen.

For example the ship named Kanthaswamypuravi owned by Vellayappapillai, Monister owned by a Burgher Captain Jumbo, Pemily owned by Kos Mammathu of Kayalpatinam, Veecha Maria owned by A. S. Mudalali, Sathkkulputhar and Sebaluxmy owned by another Burgher Vanaathusan Kuththupalan and Santhalna owned by Thampipillai Mudali of Navaly, Meenadchisunderam owned by Charlis Perira, Star of Calcutta owned by Kasthuri Nayakkar, Annapoorny owned by Rengasamy. Further many other ships owned by Naatukottai Chettys were under the control of people from Kayts until later on these sailors lost interest in shipping industry. Adaippanaar, Thommaikuudy, Constantine, Katuvalpillai, Sethupillai, Soosaipillai Udayar, Thambiayah, and Overseer Anthonypillai were some of the notable sailors from Kayts.

Charlis Pereira and Meenadchisunderam

Among the Sinhalese who owned ships in early 19th century, the most famous were Babosingo Ventanaar of Moratuwa and Charlis Perira of Beruwela. Of these two, Charlis Pereira was more famous. He was originally a Buddhist and later he became a catholic when Antony Coudert was the parish priest In Beruwela. Fr. Antony Coudert later became the Archbishop of Colombo (1905-1929). When Fr. Antony was the parish he had promised Charlis Pereira that he will officiate at his daughter's wedding and he kept the promise even after he was appointed as the Archbishop.



Charlis Perira owned a ship named Meenadchisunderam. Even though he was very wealthy enough to employ a captain from Kerala or Britan, yet he handed over the responsibility of captaining the ship to Sinnamuththar Rasampillai of Kayts East.

Employment in other places

People from Kayts were involved not only in sailing but also worked as commission agents, Teachers, Contractors etc. For example when Chetty community in Nagapatinam needed a teacher they employed Mr. Pasqual from Kayts East and he worked there for many years. Furthermore Mr. Bastiampillai from Kayts East worked as a commission agent for export and import business. Further Mr. Mathiarasar from Kayts East was involved in leasing work in places such as Singapore, Penang, Nagapattinam and Saddykamam. He also had a cigar business in Avisawela.

Generally people of Kayts were prosperous till second world war began. Kayts harbour then gradually began to lose its importance

(The above is a translation of articles that appeared in the first and second issues of the monthly newspaper named " Theevaga Jothy")

Forts of Kayts

Fort Hammenhiel



The Fort of Hammenhiel was built by the Portuguese in mid 17th century of quarried coral and was named Fortaleza Real (Fort Royal). The Dutch named it as Hammenhiel (Heel of the Ham) and rebuilt it by 1680. The Fort is built around a small island between the island of Kayts and Karaitivu of Jaffna Peninsula.

The April 1940 Journal of the Dutch Burger Union of Ceylon has a detail description of the Fort.

The strange serenity of the little Dutch water - fort, Hammenhiel, invests this memorial with a sense of departed usefulness, which is most striking. It stands on a rock at the entrance to Jaffna lagoon, and is surrounded by sea on all sides. In those forgotten days of tumult, Hammanhiel served on the north, like Mannar Fort in the south, to guard the passage by water to the Castle or Key Fort at Jaffna.

The fort is octagonal in shape and the base of the ramparts is washed by the surf. It would appear that the walls were originally raised and the place was fortified on the orders of the Portuguese Governor of Jaffna, Antonio do Amaral de Menezes, a few years before the



arrival of the Dutch. The historian Baldaeus, who accompanied the Dutch army to the assault on Jaffna, gives a brief description of the blockade, and the attack on Hammenhiel by the fleet, before Jaffna was captured by Dutch in 1658. The Portuguese only held out for a fortnight and were obliged to surrender for want of water.

Profiting by the error of their predecessors, the Dutch took special pains to ensure a satisfactory water supply. On the northern side of the fortress, they built a huge reservoir, paved with “Dutch Bricks” to collect and preserve the rainwater. This reservoir had, however, been built so high that it reached above the parapets and was, therefore, exposed to the fire and possibility



of ruin by the enemy. The defect was pointed out repeatedly at subsequent inspections of the fortress, but since it was a new work, it was allowed to remain until alterations could be effected. It nevertheless stands as originally constructed and to this day conserves a supply of clear, fresh water.

The Portuguese had built the ramparts hollow, and had roofed them with beams, which supported a floor of stone and chunam, with a view to the space being utilized for storing provisions and ammunition. Since the beams were liable to decay, and the floor had to support the weight of the cannon without fear of its giving way when the guns were moved about and turned round, the Dutch considered this a mistake and they replaced the roof by an entire stone vault.

When the Dutch occupied the water-fort they found that the sand bank on which it was built had been undermined by the storms of the north-east monsoon. They remedied this by piling up a breakwater of stones.

A low vaulted gateway, not more than seven feet in height, is the only entrance to this water-fort. The living quarters consist of three or four rooms in the courtyard. The vaults under the ramparts were doubtless used as storerooms. The Dutch invariably maintained a garrison of thirty men under the charge of a Lieutenant or Ensign on the spot, and the early Dutch Governors make very special mention in their memoirs that Hammenhiel must be carefully

guarded, "non but Dutch being stationed there" Not the least of, the many appealing features of Fort Hammenhiel and its pleasant surroundings, is the popular theory how it got its name. The Dutch, when they pictured the shape of Ceylon, saw in it a resemblance to a smoked ham. Ham-



menhiel means “the hell of the ham”, and with a little imagination, the picturesque little water-fort might very well be placed at the point where the shank bones projects. The fort was surrendered to the British in 1795.

Oorundi Fort

Prior to the arrival of Portuguese, Kayts was said to be a deserted place and around that period, there was a famous harbour in Karampon West very near Kannaki



Amman temple. This is proved by the presence of two forts in that area one on the land and another in the sea.

The first fort was constructed in Karampon West on the land in a place named Oorundi. Though it is referred to as a Fort, actually it is said to be castle meant to be the residence for Lords. It was named Fort Eyrie and was referred to as Fort of the Ape because it was used as a place for torture of convicted criminals. There was place of worship in this fort and there are still remnants of a church of St. Mary.

Later Portuguese constructed a second fort, called Fort Hamenheil in the sea.

Romantic Ceylon

The islands

(Excerpts from a book by R. H. Basett)

The Dutch followed the Portuguese (1505 -1658) in the occupation of the Jaffna district and were struck by the resemblances of the Jaffna islands to their own home Archipelago. They therefore called them by their European names (given in brackets), following as nearly as they could the same geographical order.

Karaitivu (Amsterdam) **Kayts (Leyden)**, Pungudutivu (Middleberg), Nainativu (Harlem) Analaitivu (Rotterdam) Neduntivu(Delft), Iranativu (Hoen or Enkuseen)

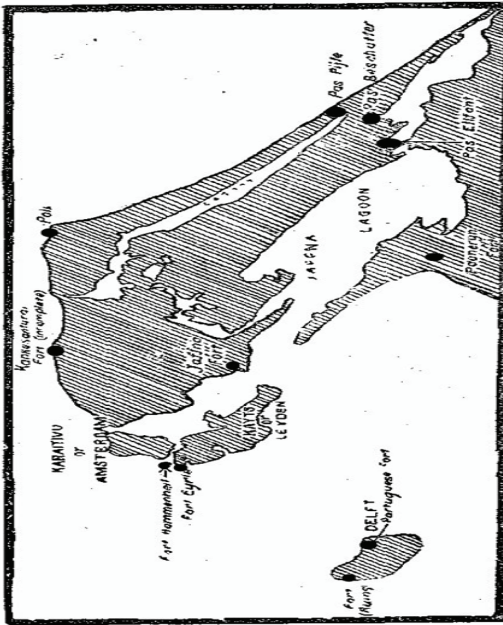
Punnalai causeway leads from the mainland Karaitivu (Amsterdam). There is little doubt that all along the west coast of Karaitivu there has been from ancient times small ports and landing places.

Kayts is said to be the old port of Kala described by historical writers and is yet larger port while quite near on Karaitivu is a place called Kalabhoomi.

Near the present jetty at Karaitivu west is the site of the elephant Quarry, a place where according to Rev. Baldeus, the Dutch Minister and historian "elephants are embarked by means of a bridge and transported to Coramandel and Bengale. This is the original site of the port that shifted in Dutch times to the other side of the roadstead, called Kayts a modifications of the Portuguese Caes and Dutch Cayes. The actual position of the Elephants Quay is yet known by the exact Tamil equivalent Anai - Palam but it appears the whole strip of coast along the eastern side of Kayts was known a century ago by this name.

In the sea about five hundred yards from the south west point of Karaitivu and in the mouth of the Jaffna lagoon, is a small isle, on which strategical position the Portuguese built a fort called by them either Fortaleza Real or Fortaleza do Rio (ie) Fort Royal or Fort of the River - and later named Hamenheil by the Dutch. In 1658, the Dutch captured this fort after a fortnight siege

Map of North Ceylon



Showing Forts and Redoubts of Portuguese and Dutch times.

Block by kind courtesy of the Editor, Ceylon Daily News.

vividly described it in by Rev. Baldeus's contemporary description of Ceylon:

"The better to straighten the castle of Jaffnapatnam and take away from the Garrison all hopes of relief, it was thought to attack a certain Outwork or Redoubt built upon a small isle in the middle of the river not far from the entrance which it commands, this fort was built by Anthonio, Amiral de Menezes and my justly be called the key to Jaffnapatnam. Accordingly, we dispatched a good body of men to Kayts in order to attack the said Fort, which, at that time was under the command of one Hieronimo de Paiva with a good Garrison. The isle of Kayts was lying at some distance from this water fort and we were forced to raise our Batteries against it upon the isle of Karaitivu. But finding that by reason of distance between us and them by strength of the Wall we could make no breach in, it was resolved to assault the place with Breastworks and Canon. But before we thought of fit to venture such a desperate, it was resolved to send the following summons to the Commander of the Fort.

"It having pleased Almighty God to bless our arms with success ,there is no possibility left for you to resist us or to defend yourself against our attacks. It is therefore we thought it is fit to let you know (as is usual upon such occasions) that we are come to summon the Fort of Cays in the name of the State General of the United provinces,..... As by these Presents I Summon the said fort , not questioning that after showing sufficient Proof your courage you will now consider how you are unable to resist our Force. Don't therefore obstinately resist God's will and our Strength..... in case you will be obstinate ...we protest - that we are innocent of all the fatal consequences and Miseries that are likely to fall upon you. You have given Sufficient Proofs of your courage to admiration it is time therefore that you should act with prudence, and Consult your safety. We expect your positive answer within three hours through the bearer of this.....

Subscribing myself (as you think fit) your Friend or Enemy

Admiral and General of the Dutch Forces, both by Sea and Land

From the Camp, 10th April 1658

This letter being translated was sent into the Fort, the Commander whereof sent the following Answer.

"That the Fort belonging to nobody but to the king of Portugal his master, he was obliged to maintain the same for his Majesty to the last drop of blood. That he could do no more than what pleased God to permit him, but neither he nor his men be terrified by threats."

'This bold answer made nothing for us to think nothing else but of Force, so that we preparing everything for an assault which would have cost us many a brave Fellow , had not the want of fresh water obliged them to come to Capitulation. They were glad to accept such Articles we were willing to give them, which, however were honourable, the soldiers being allowed to march out with all the Marks of Honour and be transported to Europe.....The 28th of August I preached the thanksgiving Sermon for this Surrender, upon the text of Psalm.Ver.8

Having taken the Hammenheil, the Dutch demolished the old works and rebuilt them on their own model, the coral stone being passed from hand to hand by a chain of men, a yard apart from Chankanai, 8 miles distant with such speed that the walls were raised in six days.

The name Hamenheil originated from the fact that the Dutch saw in the shape of Ceylon a strong resemblance to ham, at whose heel stood this fort. It is a work of fourteen angles occupying the whole area of the island with embrasured battlements and a fire - step for musketeers, while an unusually big gun ust has been mounted towards the center of the fort on a circular emplacement.

Some important events in the history of the island of Kayts

1794 - Fr. Leonard Rebeiro - A Priest from Goa appointed first parish priest of St. Mary's Church

1854 - The case instituted by Fr. Laurent Re: Kayts cemetery decided and declared closed

1872 - Fr. J. Boisseau - Director of Colombogam

Orphanage transferred to Kayts

1876 - Blessing of the Catholic Cemetery at Kayts

1877 - Jan.10 Cholera breaks at Kayts, Paasaiyoor and Navalay

1908 - Ferry service between Karainagar and Kayts begins

1908 - Jan.15 - Port of Kayts closed due to outbreak of plague

1918 - May - Old reredos (decoration behind the altar) of Kayts St. Mary's church caught fire and was destroyed.

1920 - new church of St. Joseph's church blessed by Rev. Fr. Aseerwatham

1927 Nov. 27 - Mahatma Gandhi visited Kayts on his way to Victoria College, Chulipuram.

The Mahatma's party consisted of Shri Mahadev Desai, Kaka Kalelkar, Shri Pyarelal, Shri Jamnadas Gandhi, Shri C. Rajagopalachari, Miss. Lakshmi Rajagopalachari

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*Warmly welcome
this publication
about the glory of
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Reggie S. Thambirajah

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Bank of Ceylon, Sri Lanka

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After completing his Honours Degree in Botany, he taught in a number of Colleges in Sri Lanka including St. Antony's College, Kayts, St. Anthony's College, Kandy, Akurana Central College and St. Peters College, Colombo. While serving at St. Peters College he was simultaneously appointed as Additional Chief examiner for G.C.E A/L Botany. Immediately after that he was appointed as a translator of English text books in Biology by the Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka.

In 1981, he was selected by the Civil Service Commission of Sokoto State of Nigeria to teach Biology. During his five years of service in Nigeria in addition to his normal duties he was also appointed as Marking Examiner for Biology exams conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC).

After moving to Canada in 1986, he changed his career to Accounting and obtained Diploma in Accounting from Centennial College. He served in a couple of leading business institutions before retiring in 2014.

He is a freelance journalist and has contributed hundreds of articles on a wide variety of topics to Canadian Newspapers such as Monsoon Journal, Tamil Mirror, The Anchorman, Siragu and Uthayan