



**NARRATION OF THE HISTORY OF OUR
PROUD ANCESTRAL (ORANG JAWA)
HERITAGE.**

BY

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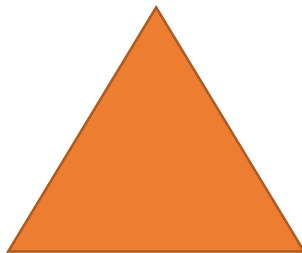
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NARRATION OF THE HISTORY OF OUR PROUD (ORANG JAWA) ANCESTRAL HERITAGE.

Preface.

The aim of this book is to remind the Sri Lankan Malays on whence and how their ancestors arrived in Sri Lanka. It is also meant to re-ignite; reminisce and hopefully resuscitate the Language (Bahasa Ibu); Customs & Traditions of our Ancestors (Adat Istiadat Nenek Moyang Kita) and a few of the Recreational Activities (Kegiatan Rekreasi Tradisional) that our Malay Ancestors brought along with them, when they arrived in **Sailan** (now Sri Lanka) from **Batavia** (presently called **Jakarta**).

TO RE-KINDLE
(MENGHIDUPKAN)



TO REMINISCE
(MENGINGATKAN)

TO RESUSCITATE
(MEMBANGKITKAN)

The book is written primarily as a service to the shrinking Malay Community in Sri Lanka; and whoever wishes to learn about the Malays in Sri Lanka. The main objective is to ensure that our younger generation and the future generations will be aware of our Malay History/Heritage; lest it be forgotten. The period covered is the period in which the majority of our Malay Community arrived in Sri Lanka with the Dutch Armies, from Batavia (Presently known as Jakarta).

The information contained in this book is mainly based on the memory of the author which dates back to the late 1930's/Early 1940's; and the subsequent research done into the past to further clarify in what it was in the yesteryears; to what it is in the present day. It is by no means a complete compilation of our proud ancestry; but hopefully gives the Readers a deeper and explanatory insight into what it was and what it is, in the present day.

Noor Rahim

June 2016.

(Some photographs and material have been extracted from Google & Wikipedia)

CHAPTER 1.

Background Information (Informasi Latar Belakang).

1.1 Background Information (Informasi Latar Belakang).

Before reminiscing into our glorious past it is wished to give the Readers a brief insight into the background of how and why our Ancestors arrived in Sri Lanka and settled down to be **now** known as The Sri Lankan Malay Community.



Our history starts off from the time of the Dutch conquest/occupation of the “present” Indonesian Archipelago.

- The “present” Indonesian Archipelago was invaded and occupied by the Dutch East Indies Company or the Dutch VOC (Veeranigde Oostindische Compagnie) as they were called (acting on behalf of the Netherlands Government) in the 17th Century. The conquest and occupation of the Archipelago was for the purpose of taking over the lucrative spice trade; which was the most sought after commodity in the European World at that time; similar to what the oil industry is to the world today. **The Archipelago was called the DUTCH EAST INDIES.**

The best spices came out of the Archipelago; and the finest from the Maluku Islands; of which Ambon is one of its Provinces. The Maluku Islands is also known as the Moluccas or the Spice Islands, lying between Sulawesi and Papua. These Islands were initially under the control of the Portuguese; and the Dutch wrested the control of the Island by defeating them in 1602.

The whole Archipelago consists of 17,500 islands of which 6,000 are inhabited. The islands stretches 2,300 miles from East to West. There are 250 to 300 distinct Cultural Groups; and as many as 700 Languages/Dialects among the Ethnic Groups of the archipelago.

Appended below are some of the major ethnic groups based on an area basis:

Sumatra	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acehnese• Minangkabau
Java	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Betawi• Cirebonese• Javanese• Madurese• Sundanese
Kalimantan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Banjarese• Dayak
Sulawesi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buginese• Toraja
Papua	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Melanesians• Papuan

Lesser Sunda Islands

- Balinese
- Manggarai
- Sumba
- Sumbawa

Maluku islands

- Moluccans /Ambonese

1.2 Batavia – The Administrative Centre & Central Hub of Commerce:

Batavia was founded and established as the central hub of commercial trade; and the principal administrative center of the Dutch East India Company in the Dutch East Indies Archipelago. Now of course it is called the **Indonesian Archipelago (Nusantara Indonesia)**. The name “INDONESIA” meaning “INDIAN ISLANDS” was coined by an Englishman named J. R. Logan in 1850. It was derived from the “GREEK” words “INDOS” (INDIA) and “NESOS” (ISLAND). A German Geographer named Adolf Bastian used this as a title to his book “INDONESIEN” in 1884; and in 1928 the Nationalist Movement called “The Congress of Young People” adopted it as the name for their “**Hoped for Future Nation**”. Furthermore they drafted the famous “**Sumpah Pemuda**” (Young People’s Vow) declaring Bahasa Indonesia as “The Language of National Unity”.

Batavia is the Latin word for **Holland**; which replaced the indigenous name of **Jayakarta**; as it was called, before the Dutch conquest of the Indonesian Archipelago.

Due to Batavia being the Central Hub of Commercial activities in the whole area, in and around the Archipelago, it naturally became a very busy meeting place of all the various peoples in the Dutch East Indies and its surrounding countries.

It so happened that the peoples that converged into Batavia lived in “Kampongs” in and around the capital city of Batavia; keeping well within their own ethnic groups. For the purpose of communication they very unintentionally and through necessity created a “Bahasa Campuran” (Mixed Language) or “Melayu Bazaar” (Bazaar Malay or Market Malay). I believe this is the fore runner to **Bahasa Indonesia**, which encompasses words from the various dialects and languages that

abound in the Archipelago; as well as Languages of other Nations that came to trade in this key City.

1.3 Invitation to the Dutch VOC Authorities by the King of Kandy:

History has it that in the early 17th century, Sri Lanka was partly ruled by the Portuguese and was constantly battling the Sinhala Kingdom. Although the Portuguese dominated the "low country" (mainly the coastal areas) they were nowhere close to conquering the Kandyan Kingdom. Their rule of the "low country" was rather very iron fisted, ruthless and oppressive to the local populace of those areas, controlled by them. Hence the Sinhalese King Rajasinghe II (the King of Kandy) invited the Dutch to help defeat and get rid of the Portuguese; under the Kandyan Treaty of 1638. The Dutch grabbed this opportunity as Sri Lanka could give them control of the "Spice Route (Sea Route)" in their sought after quest to control the seaway from West to East.

CHAPTER 2.

**Our Ancestors Arrival and Domicile in Sri Lanka (Tiba dan
Tinggal).**

2.1 Our Ancestors Arrival and Domicile in Sri Lanka (Tiba dan Tinggal).

Well over 95% of our Ancestors arrived in **Sailan** (Sri Lanka), or **ZEYLAN** (as the Dutch called the Island), from Batavia (presently called Jakarta), with the Dutch Troops (1640 - 1796).

It is a known fact that our Malay Ancestors arrived in Sailan (now Sri Lanka) with the Dutch VOC (*Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, **VOC**, "United East India Company") in the year 1640. Most of them as part of the Dutch Army that overthrew and got rid of the Portuguese from the Island. This resulted/enabled the Dutch to keep the so called and very important "**SPICE ROUTE**" (Sea Route) connecting the seaway from West to the East for their own dominance and

International trade purposes.



It was in the year 1658 that the Dutch Authorities in the Dutch East Indies decided to make Sailan a place for their exiles, comprising of dissident Royalty and Politicians; their retainues; supporters and other dissidents that they deemed were a threat to their security. In this article only those exiles that have left or created known and recognized and documented achievements are mentioned.

In addition to their fighting prowess, loyalty and dedication, our ancestors brought along with them, their own Language; Traditions & Customs; Culinary Prowess; Forms of Recreational Activities (inclusive of sports & martial arts); Arts & Craft; and their “easy going way of life”. There were many Malays who attained Sainthood and are enshrined in Sri Lanka. These will be expanded upon in detail later on.

2.2 Colonial Forts/Fortresses and Garrisons:

Having wrested control of the Island from the Portuguese, the Dutch soon occupied the Forts, Fortresses and Garrisons that were captured. These establishments were further fortified and improved upon and covered the coastal regions of the island. Most of these fortifications have now been destroyed, neglected and left to ruin except the ones in Galle, Matara, Jaffna, Trincomalee and Batticaloa which remain in good condition; and are currently tourist attractions.

The British inherited and took control of these Forts that were built by the Portuguese/Dutch, on the Dutch hand-over of the Island to the British. In addition they created and manned many Garrisons in and around the Island. The only Fort they built was in Matale; which was named after Major-General Hay McDowell, called Fort MacDowell, which is now totally destroyed. Only the cemetery remains as a landmark. They also constructed an observation tower in Hambantota at an outpost that was earlier manned by the Dutch Forces. The observation post served as a lookout Post for the observation of the “Sea Route” from West to East and defence of the coastal area in the south of the Island. This Observation Post is also no longer in existence.



(Map showing the Forts ringing the Island of Sri Lanka during Colonial Rule.)

2.3 Pictures of some of the Forts that are still intact:

Presently in Sri Lanka only a few of these Forts remain in nearly pristine condition; some dilapidated and yet others destroyed or in a bad state of repair. Some of the Forts that are now tourist attractions are pictured below.



Galle Fort



Batticaloa Fort



Jaffna Fort



Hammenheil Fort



Trincomalee Fort Frederick



Star Fort Matara

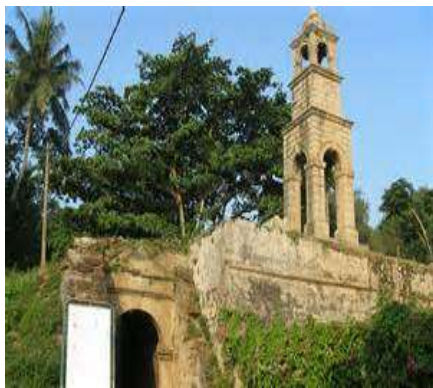
2.4 Pictures of the Forts that are in a bad state of repair/dilapidated:



Mannar Fort



Kalpitiya Fort



Negombo Fort.



Remains of a Fort in Kayts.

2.5 The domicile of the soldiers & their families:

It was all but natural for the families of the soldiers to live with them at the Forts, Fortresses and Garrisons; or near its vicinity. They either brought their spouses from back home or some even inter-married from the local populace; especially women-folk that followed the Islamic faith. If one should have the opportunity of visiting these places, one will still find the progeny of the soldiers in these areas. Albeit they are in most instances unrecognizable as Malays; as they have blended with the local populace. Not unless they tell you that they are Malays will you be able to recognize them as such. They have almost totally lost their identity and their language – even their features so to say.

These Malay soldiers (most of them) followed the Islamic Faith and are credited with having built places of worship near the Forts or Garrisons that they served in. Only a very few of these Places of Worship remain; and are recognized. These mosques (that remain and are well recognized) are covered later on in this book. There may be many more; especially near the neighbourhood of the garrisons and Forts that may have existed during their time. However, there are no established information as such.

2.6 Hand over from Dutch to the British:

The Dutch ceded/handed over control of Sialan (Ceylon) to the British HEIC (Honourable East Indies Company) in 1796, under the DeWitt Agreement (Also called the KEW Letters of 1795). For a very short period from 1798 to 1802 the Dutch and British worked under a “Dual Control” concept. Finally under the “PEACE OF AMIENS ACCORD” the Dutch handed over total control of the occupied areas of the Island to the British in 1802.

It is believed that the Dutch Authorities in Java ordered their Administration in Colombo to withdraw back to Batavia; but to leave the Javanese troops in Sialan as they feared that they would create a security problem if returned to Batavia. Hence 5 Companies of Malays were transferred into the British Army by the Dutch; which led to the formation of the Malay Rifle Regiment to be later renamed as The Ceylon Rifle Regiment. The Regiment fought in two Kandyan Wars; the Uva Rebellion; and the Matale Rebellion before the Regiment was finally disbanded in 1873.

2.7 Our Malay Ancestors Military Service with the British Administration:

In 1795 Five Companies of the Dutch Army comprising Malay soldiers were transferred into the British (HEIC) Service.

In 1801 there was an increase in the troop complement to raise it to ten Companies with Dutch Malay mercenaries; and re-named as “The Malay Regiment”

In 1802 the Regiment was presented with the King’s Regimental Colours (King George III 1760-1820). The first Colonial Regiment to receive this award in Asia.

In 1807 the Regiment was re-designated as the 1st Ceylon Rifle Regiment.

In 1812 more Javanese troops were recruited into the Army.

In 1818 re-named as the 1st Ceylon Rifle Regiment (Light Infantry).

In 1822 designated as Ceylon Rifle Regiment.

Finally in 1873 the Regiment was disbanded.

2.8 The First Kandyan War – 1803:

The first Kandyan War was waged during the year 1803. The war was launched on the instigation and conspiracy of the one of the Kandyan King’s Ministers, Pilmatalawe, who defected to the British. The British sent troops from Garrisons in Colombo and the Garrisons in Tricomalee to wage war. The troops comprised of one Regiment of Malays; One of mixed Malay and Sinhalese; and another comprising wholly of Sinhalese soldiers. However, the British were thwarted in their attempts, due to the support of the Native Nobility; who backed the Kandyan King. One of the contingents of the Kandyan King’s Army was commanded by a **Malay Prince** named Sangunglo. He was however killed by the British Forces in the battle.

The British forces retreated in defeat; suffering huge casualties in Battle and also through the hardship endured in the very rough terrain encountered. In addition sicknesses (malaria etc.) too added to the toll in casualties. It is also known that

many of the troops deserted; and amongst them was **one** Malay soldier (a native of Ambon) named Odeen (also known as William O'Deen). He was to be later apprehended at the end of the 2nd Kandyan war in 1815; charged for treason and sentenced to be executed. However the sentence was not carried out and instead he was exiled to a Penal Colony in New South Wales. Australia.

It was also during this retreat that the Kandyan forces besieged a garrison manned by the British forces. The garrison under Major Adam Davie was compelled to surrender by the Kandyan forces with promise of safe conduct out of the region. But this was not to be. Major Davie was soon to be executed and the personnel of the garrison massacred. During the surrender two Malay soldiers namely Captain Noordeen and his brother Karaeng Sapinine were summoned by the King of Kandy and invited join the Kandyan forces. They refused stating that they had sworn allegiance to the British Crown and wouldn't renege on this vow. A few days later they were again given the opportunity to serve the King; which was turned down. The King was angered; and had them executed. This act of the two brothers no doubt speaks well for the integrity, loyalty and bravery of our Malay ancestors.

2.9 The Second Kandyan War – 1815:

Over ten years lapsed since the 1st Kandyan War and the Kandyan Kingdom was having a growing rift between the Native Nobility and King Rajasinghe; which led to the virtual invitation by the Nobility for the British to invade the Kingdom. In 1815 the British Expeditionary Forces invaded the Kandyan Kingdom and captured the King. The deposed King Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe was exiled to Vellore in South India; where he died 17 years later.

In March of 1815 the British signed a Treaty called the “Kandyan Convention” with the Nobility of the Kandyan Kingdom; which was in fact an “Agreement of Annexation”, with other stipulations in keeping with the governance of the land. With the signing of this “Convention” the British were ultimately able to take control of the whole Island of Sri Lanka which had eluded the two earlier Colonial Powers that were unable to do so; and were only able to only control the Low Lands and coastal regions of Sri Lanka. One never knows if the British could have achieved their goal of capturing the Kandyan Kingdom if the Native Nobility had not conspired with them?

One of the most important points in the Agreement was: “The religion of Buddhism was declared inviolable and its rights to be maintained and protected”. This was one of the reasons for the “Uva Rebellion” of 1817 – 1818; which was also called by some as the 3rd Kandyan War.

2.10 The Great Rebellion of 1817 – 1818 aka The “Uva–Wellasa Uprising”:

It was not long before the Native Nobility realised that the changes in the British Administration was contrary to their expectations; and to that which they were accustomed to, under their old Monarchy System. Not conducive to the administrative changes; and the realisation that the British was not adhering to the most important agreement in the “Kandyan Convention” of “The religion of Buddhism was declared inviolable and its rights to be maintained and protected”. This saw the onset of the “Uva-Wellasa Uprising” in the Province of the same name; that was a part of the Kandyan Kingdom. Further aggravation was the fact that a Malay named Hadji had been made a Muhandiram for the Kandyan District by Major Wilson, the Resident Authority in Badulla.

A Sinhalese by the name of Keppetipola Dissawe was dispatched by the British, with some troops, to quell the Rebellion. Instead Keppetipola joined the rebels as their Leader.

Major Wilson sent in a Battalion under Muhandiram Hadji and commanded by his brother to suppress the rebellion. Keppetipola was apprehended from his place of hiding; brought to trial and was executed.

Subsequently Muhandiram Hadji was captured by the people of Uva; and after trial beheaded.

2.11 The Matale Rebellion of 1848 aka Rebellion of 1848:.

This was an uprising against “Colonialism”; and for Independence from the British. One of the Leaders of this uprising was Veera Puran Appu, a nephew of the First Sri Lankan Procter practicing in the Uva Province. He was apprehended by the British; tried for treason and subsequently executed. Another Leader was Gongalegoda Banda. He too was apprehended and tried for treason and sentenced

to receive 100 lashes; and thereafter deported to Malacca in Malaya (Presently Malaysia).

2.12 The effects of disbanding of the Malay Regiment:

Mention has to be made that on the disbanding of the Regiment the Malay Servicemen were absorbed/joined the Police Services; The Prison Department; The Fire Brigade; The Railway Department – to name some of the “high risk” occupations that our ancestors thrived on.

2.13 Sacrifices & Bravery of the Malays serving in the Armed Forces & Police:

It has been documented that on 21 March 1864 the famous Bandit called Saradiel was surrounded in his hideout by a posse of Policemen led by Sergeant Ahamath (aka Sergeant Mahath by some). During the gunfight a Malay policeman, Constable Sabhan (aka Saybhan) was killed by Saradiel’s friend Mammala Marrikar, a Moor. Sergeant Ahamath kept the bandits covered until reinforcements arrived from Kandy with the Assistant Government Agent F.R. Saunders.



Above is the memorial put up near the place of the skirmish, at the roadside, at Mawanella on the Kandy Road. Constable Sabhan is the first Policemen to lay his life in the line of duty. Another example of valour demonstrated by our Malay ancestors.

In the 1971 JVP Uprising we had Lieutenant Bahar of the Sri Lanka Navy killed in action. This Malay Officer is said to have sacrificed his life to save the lives of the personnel he was leading in a firefight with the insurgents.

The Sri Lankan War against the Tamil separatist group called The Tamil Tigers of Eelam (July 1983 – May 2009) too saw many of our Malays killed in the line of duty. They served in the three armed services (Army; Navy and Air Force) and in the Sri Lanka Police Force with valour and bravery; for their Motherland.

Chapter 3.

Legacy of our Ancestors:

3.1 Legacy of our Ancestors:

Our ancestors were renowned for their fighting prowess, bravery, loyalty and dedication - which their progeny continue to exhibit and contribute to their land of adoption even to this day. They brought their own Language; Traditions & Customs; Culinary Prowess; Forms of Recreational Activities (inclusive of sports & martial arts); Arts & Craft; and their “easy going way of life”. In addition there were many Malays who attained Sainthood and are enshrined in Sri Lanka. One of the Saints bodies was exhumed and re-interred in Surabaya, Indonesia.

Our ancestors were locally called “*Ja Minissu*” by the Sinhalese; and as “*Ja Manithan*” or “*Ja Manissar*” or “*Javakar*” by the Tamils; during the Dutch rule; meaning the “People from Java”. In addition there were many places in Sri Lanka that were named after our ancestors. The following are some of the names that still remain and yet others that had partial changes are also mentioned:

Ja-Ela (Town and tributary of the Kelani Ganga)

Java Lane (where one of the last vestiges of the Malay Regiment, The Malay Military Mosque, remains intact)

Chavakachcheri (which was originally Java Kachcheri)

Samanturai (which is believed to have derived from Sampan + Turaimugam)

Hambantota (which is believed to have derived from Sampan + Tota)

Akbar Town (where a large Malay Community dwells)

Malay Street (believe this was named under the British rule)

Jawatte (road as well as a burial ground in Colombo 7.)

Japilawatte in Kandy (A large piece of land granted by the British; for the building of the Malay Military Mosque at Bogamabara)

There is a belief among some quarters that Jaffna was originally Java Nagar. It stands to reason that this **maybe** so; as the Tamils call it “*Yaarlpanam*” and the Sinhalese call it “*Yaapanay*” or “*Jaapanay*”. This I believe is speculative and perhaps gives room for thought and further investigative research. This belief may be corroborated in the reference by Ed. A. J. W. Marambe (1926) who quotes that in the Sinhala Kadaimpol (Boundary Book) of the Phitirata (Rajarata Province) there is reference to “*Javagama*” which likely refers to Jaffna.

Though it is not the intention to cover the period before the Dutch invasion it is believed that mention must be made of Chandrabanu, a “*Javaka*” Chieftain, who invaded Sri Lanka in the year 1247. He was defeated by King Parakrama Bahu II and fell back to the North to secure the Tamil Throne around 1255. In 1258 he submitted to the Pandyan forces from India. Chandrabanu was subsequently killed in battle. Hence some of the Malay names in the Jaffna area may have originated from that era.

It was under the British rule of the Island that the concept of naming our ancestors as Javanese ceased and were lumped under the race of Malays. This also ended the recording of the ethnicity of the original races from which our ancestors emerged. Perhaps this was done to simplify the administrative processes of the British Administration System. We are now referred to or fall under the generic term “Malays”. Thus there is a turnaround in that we have lost sight of our original country of origin and our ethnicity. Our language too changed during the British rule that saw a drastic change in grammar – though not due to or through their making.

3.2 Religious Following:

Almost all of our ancestors followed the Islamic (Sunni) Faith. They were moderate in their concept and in keeping with their easy-going way of life and life style. I’m sure that they followed the main principles of the Religion closely with divinity and purpose *sans* the Middle East Culture which is prevalent today. They built mosques wherever they were stationed in the Forts and Garrisons or in its close vicinity. It was the late Saybhan Samath who wrote an article in the Sri Lankan newspapers called – “Malays are either in the Tavern or in Heaven”. A copy of his article appears as Appendix “A” to this book. As a tribute & memoriam to Saybhan; a very talented Musician who gave up his God given gift to devote his passion for the Faith he so loved.

3.4 Some of the well-known mosques built by our Ancestors:

Java Lane Masjidul Jamiah (Malay Military Mosque aka the “Rupee Fund Mosque”).





This Mosque stands as a “sentinel” and a monument to our proud ancestors of the Malay Regiment. The Mosque was built in 1864 adjoining the Malay Garrison; with funds from the Soldiers Pension Fund as well as the contribution of a Rupee made by the soldiers towards the construction of the Mosque.

There was a very vibrant Malay Community that surrounded the Mosque and regrettably it no longer exists; as their homes have been razed to the ground for “economic” reasons about 2 years ago. One wonders if the name of the lane – “Java Lane” which has been demolished will be retained after the “economic” rebuild of the area. Even the adjoining “Malay Street” has been demolished. Quite mercifully the Mosque has escaped the “wrecker’s ball” and will remain a perpetual memory to our ancestors.

It is firmly believed that the only vestige of this great Regiment is the Java Lane Masjid-ul-Jamiah mosque that was built with the pension fund of the Malay Soldiers.

The following photograph depicts the Mosque with the surrounding houses and buildings demolished around it. The “blue balloon” at the top (near the two white rectangular structures) indicates the location of the mosque.

who was himself exiled along with his Mother, by the Dutch in 1772. They hailed from Kalimantan Barat. Sabu Latif married Raden Framana; daughter of Kapten Arnfus Camaldeen of the Malay Regiment. The land where the Mosque is situated was also an old cemetery. While clearing the area for the construction of the mosque they came across the body of a Lady Saint; now enshrined in a tomb approximately 25 yards from the Mosque. Auliya Hussein Bibi Rali is considered the Patron Saint of Slave Island and is believed to be of Pathan origin. But considered by some Malays as a Malay Saint – Ossen Bi Auliya.

The mosque is under the Trusteeship of the descendants of Katheeb Sabu Latif.

Grand Mosque at Old Moor Street, Colombo.



In 1790 it is recorded that 178 political prisoners consisting of 23 families were exiled to Sialan by the Dutch.

Among the 23 families were the Sultan of Goa from South Sulawesi named RAJA GUSMAN and an Officer/Minister/ADC named HULU BALANG KAYA.

They lived at Moor Street where the Grand Mosque is located. At that time the mosque was a very small one that was built during the Portuguese time by Indian Muslims.

HULU BALANG KAYA had a son named MUHAMMAD BALANG KAYA.

TUAN BAGOOS KRAVAN BALANG KAYA, the youngest son of MUHAMMAD BALANG KAYA became the Khalifah of the mosque in later years.

MOHAMMAD BALANG KAYA, a self-taught architect, designed and rebuilt the mosque with his own funds and that of a few Moor supporters.

His work was commended by the Governor General Sir Edward Barnes as outstanding.

Masjidul Akbar Jumma Mosque.



This mosque was founded by a Trader, TALEP AKBAR, in the year 1859. The mosque was built with contributions made by the local Muslim populace. The mosque is said to have been surrounded by the lake during its establishment.

One of his Grandsons was Justice Maas Thajon Akbar, member of the Legislative Council; and the first Muslim to be appointed a Judge on the Supreme Court Bench.

Malay Jumma Mosque – Kurunegala (Originally called “MASJID MELAYU MILITER”).



This Mosque was built in 1854 by the Malay Troops during the British Regime.

Malay Military Mosque in Kandy aka Line Mosque in Bogambara.



This mosque was built during the British rule. Please note that it is almost adjoining the Bogambara Prisons. The Malays soldiers were known to build mosques near the Garrisons where they served; and it is very likely that the Prison that was built in 1876, is on the site of an old military garrison.

The mosque was built by the Malay soldiers with the help of local Muslims of the area on the land given to the Malay Regiment; on representation made by a Malay soldier named Tuan Tengku Hussain.

3.4 Malays that attained Sainthood:

It must also be mentioned that we have many Malay Saints enshrined in various parts of the country.

The best known is Tuan Bagoos Krawan Balankaya whose shrine is at the Grand Mosque in New Moor Street, Colombo.

The Saint's father the son of Hulu, Minister to the Rajah of Goa, Mas Mahkotha Ranthay Pathola Mohammed Shabdeen, who along with other Princes and Noblemen, with their families were exiled to Sri Lanka by the Dutch in 1723.

His son too attained Sainthood and is enshrined in a hamlet at Palawa Turai, close to the Kochchikade Railway Station.

Another well-known Saint was Tuan Pangeran who was a Royal exile. His Mausoleum was at Peer Saibo Street in Hultsdorf.

A delegation from Indonesia exhumed the Body which was undefiled by the elements; with the permission of the Governor, and with full Military honours was taken by the Dutch under escort, for re-internment in Surabaya, Indonesia.

The details of these Saint except for the Lady Saint Auliya Hussain Bibi aka "OSSENBI" Auliya by the local populace, can be found in the document written by the late Saybhan Samat named "Malays are in Heaven or in the Tavern". This article appears as Appendix A. to this book; as it is very factual and of great interest and importance to our Community. It is also a tribute to a very talented and renowned Musician who renounced these talents for an Islamic Spiritual way of life.

Relevancy must be made to the fact that a Lady Saint remains enshrined in the Mausoleum within the compound of the Wekande Masjid (Mosque) at Slave Island. She is believed to be of Pathan origin; and by some as of Malay origin.

The readers must also be made aware of the fact that the area in front of the mosque was a former Muslim Burial grounds. It was while clearing the burial grounds to construct the Wekande Mosque that led to the discovery of the Shrine.

The shrine of Tuan Tengku Hussain lies at the Malay Military Mosque (aka as Line Mosque), near Bogamabara Prison in Kandy. Tengku Hussain served as a Jamindar (Military Rank) in the Malay Regiment.

The mausoleums of 3 Malay soldiers, As-Seyed Mohammed Ibrahim Oliyullah; As-Seyed Mohammed Usuph Oliyullah and As-Seyed Usuph Oliyullah, believed to be brothers are at Kirinde, Magama and Palatupana respectively.

Two daughters of Tunku Raden Ousmand (Putrie Noorani & Putrie Noorathi) of Nuwara Eliya lie interred at Edinburgh Estate, Nanu Oya and Summerhill Estate, Kandapola respectively. (Also known popularly as the “Miskin” sisters). Putrie Noorani was married to Tunku Raboo of Aceh who carried the Coat of Arms of Java. Puthri Noorathi was married to Dain Dawood.

Chapter 4.

Language of our Ancestors (and its erosion).

4.1 Language of our Ancestors (and its erosion).

The Indonesian Language that our Ancestors brought with them belongs to the Austronesian group of languages; which envelopes the islands of Southeast Asia and the relevant Pacific regions. The main differences between the Indonesian and Malay (as spoken in Malaysia), in practice, exist in the pronunciation, vocabulary, and accent. Differences between the two languages are assumed to have developed from the influences of the Dutch and Javanese languages; along with other Indonesian dialects and several other alien languages that influenced the Indonesian language. One must remember that there are over 300 distinct ethnic groups in the Indonesian Archipelago.

In addition, the Malay Language has various regional dialects that are established and widely practiced in the respective regions. But beyond these, Malay spread through inter-ethnic contact and trade across the Malay Archipelago for as far as the Philippines where the Language of "Tagalog" is spoken. This contact or *communication process* resulted in the creation of "Bazaar Malay" or "Market Malay" ("Melayu Pasar"). A language influenced greatly by contact and mingling among Malay, Arab, Indian, Chinese, Portuguese, British and Dutch traders.

In Sri Lanka we have had the additional strong impact of the Sinhalese and Tamil Languages influencing our "Bahasa Ibu", due to our weak vocabulary; thus requiring us to substitute Sinhalese and Tamil words to make ourselves understood - the same as the "Bazaar Malay" used in the Malay countries from whence it emanated.

Currently Mother Tongue (*Bahasa Ibu*) of the Sri Lanka Malays is in peril of extinction; and in this article one can only try to keep the dying ember alive by blowing on it with ones breath of knowledge. In order to get the flame to grow and glow brighter and cast an eternal light on the subject one can only implore on all those who know and have knowledge of the subject to join a Malay organization and contribute towards the resuscitation and advancement of our native *Bahasa Ibu* for posterity (*untuk abadi*). One must remember the old saying of "Schooling begins at Home". Hence it is imperative that Malay parents must take the

responsibility of teaching their children their Mother Tongue (*Bahasa Ibu*) and in addition Malay Customs and Traditions (*Adat Istiadat*) of their ancestors.

It is of course a known and given fact that the Ceylon Malay Language is not Universal; and that for economic and present day fashion consciousness one may find it disadvantageous. But always remember that one's *Bahasa Ibu* is part of the rich Malay cultural heritage (*warisan kebudayaan*). Hence to call oneself a Ceylon Malay; one must also be proud to say that one speaks the language of a Malay. If we do not nurture and revive our *Bahasa Ibu*; it will simply fade away and die; to be forever lost to our community/society (*masyarakat*).

In order to better understand the subject matter we must be reminded that the major influx of the Javanese (Malays) to Ceylon was during the period of Dutch rule of the island. Most of them were soldiers and a considerable number of exiles from their native land (*tanah air*) Batavia which is now renamed as Jakarta. Their *Bahasa Ibu* was *Bahasa Jawi*. The Javanese language at this time was written in a derivation of the Arabic script (*tulisan tangan*) without the accentuation marks on the top and bottom of the letter (*huruf*). Hence the script was called *Pegon* or *Gundul* (bald). It was also called *Huruf Botak* (bald letters).

Generally the language was merely a spoken language and only a very few of our ancestors did know to read the *Jawi* script. This was what led to the deterioration of the language with the passage of time. The loss of words led to the import of foreign words into the spoken Malay – particularly the language of the ethnic population of Sinhalese; Tamils and also English words.

One could say it gave birth to evolution of a local Malay “*Bahasa Campuran*” (Mixed Language) or *Perkataan Sehari-Hari* (Colloquialism). Due to the loss of words (with time) our vocabulary got depleted and we used words in different meaningful capacities.

Often have we heard our Malays calling a Festival Day as “*PERNAAL*” which is a Tamil word “*PERIYA NAAL*” meaning a “big day”. Whereas our Elders called it “*LEBARAN*”. Even the ethnic foods that our ancestors brought to the land of their adoption are called by names other than their ethnic Malay names.

Other examples are: *Konjong berhentilah*. Meaning – won't you stay awhile. *Konjong* is a Tamil word for “a little”; and *berhenti* in the *Bahasa Indonesia* means “stop”. We also use *berhenti* to get a person to stand-up. Thus you will see that we

use this one word *berhenti* with 3 different meanings. The proper way of saying to **stay awhile** would be: *Tunggu Sebentar*.

The greatest disaster to the language emerged after the British took over the reins of the Island from the Dutch. Our language suffered most when we started direct translation of the English sentences into our *Bahasa Ibu*. From the simple grammar we used – that of the subject or objective followed by the elaboration of the subject or objective we followed the English way of saying things. For example: We used to call a white man *Orang Putih* or *Kulit Putih*; this is now spoken as *Putih Orang*. Eyeglasses that were referred to as *Kaca Mata* became *Mata Kaca*. This has quite a difference in meaning; as *Kaca Mata* means eyeglasses and *Mata Kaca* means eye made of glass. Hence you can get into unwarranted situations if you changed the way of speaking the *Bahasa* in a Malay speaking country. Yet another example in which we can see the difference in grammar and usage of words is in the following sentence: *Lorang, mana ara duduk?* In translation: You people, where are you living? Now, the word “*duduk*” means sit. For the lack or for the loss of a proper word (Forgotten of course) we use the word *duduk* for sitting and also place of living. The sentence also follows a direct translation from the English – where are you living? The proper way of saying this in *Bahasa* would be: *Anda, Tinggal di mana?* Also note the word *Lorang* in the sentence. It is an acronym/abbreviation of two words – *Lu* and *Orang*. *Lu* is a colloquial word that is used in Jakarta for “you” and *orang* is “Man” or “People”. We Malays use a lot of acronyms when we speak the little bit of *Bahasa* that we can remember of. But do not fret; for acronyms are frequently used in Malay speaking countries and you wouldn’t be able to refer the meaning or find the word in a regular Malay dictionary.

It is almost certain that there maybe people in some parts of Indonesia that speak our *Bahasa* the way we speak it. Words maybe the same but the grammar would be different. Being neither an expert linguist nor a historian I cannot comment on the way we speak the *Bahasa*. But if one should contribute towards the reclamation of our *Bahasa Ibu*; one could do so by starting firstly in cleansing the vocabulary by finding Malay words to replace the foreign elements that have crept into the *Bahasa* and changing the grammatical manner of speaking the *Bahasa*. Most importantly speak the *Bahasa* within the family circles and the *masyarakat*. One can only implore the seniors and other knowledgeable individuals to promote the use of our very limited (at this time) knowledge of our *Bahasa* and cultural traditions; and to contribute their experience and knowledge to the efforts of any

one of our very own Malay Organizations or to any other interested organisations; and also by channel their wealth of knowledge to the younger generation and generations to come; thereby kindling the ember into an everlasting and brilliant flame that will last *untuk abadi*.

In conclusion it must be brought to light the efforts made by our esteemed elders who tried to keep the *Bahasa Ibu* flame alive and burning. We had Malay *Khatibs* (Preacher/Mosque Official/Orator) and Registrars of Marriages who conducted regular religious services including sermons in leading mosques in Ceylon, in *Bahasa Ibu*. The marriage vows and registration of marriage was also conducted in *Bahasa Ibu*. These services are continuing to be followed through by the successor of a well-respected and renowned *Khatib* in Slave Island. It is encouraging to note that on the completion of a funeral service this *Khatib* goes the extra mile and gives a homily or sermon in *Bahasa Ibu*. We have also had radio programs that highlighted Malay talent in singing Malay songs in addition to basic Malay classes. In the late 40's and 50's we had a Malay gentleman who tried to promote the Jawi language (Bahasa Jawi) by producing a newsletter in the *Huruf Jawi*. Unfortunately this was not a success. Perhaps this was due to the influence of economics. Why learn this language if there are no economic benefits and the circle of communications in this language is limited? This perhaps was the reason for its demise. We also had another cultural drop-out in the early 50's. It was customary for elders to sing Malay *Pantun(s)* (Poems) at festive occasions. This practice is also far gone. We also had Malay Town Criers who would go from lane to lane and from *Kampong* (village) to *Kampong* crying out about events – especially obituaries. And finally I must mention a cultural event that was practised by the Malays until it was stopped in the 50's; and that is worth mentioning. It was called a *Panja* Religious Ceremony. *Panja* is an abbreviation for *Pancha Jari* (Five Fingers). The symbol of the Hand is carried around in procession around the streets with the chanting of prayers and on the seventh day there is much revelry and the festivities are concluded with a fire-walking ceremony. The significance of this was to invoke the blessings of God, to ward off all calamities and for the safeguarding of the Community. It is believed that this Ceremony is still practised at the Tabut festival in Indonesia. Though this is not necessarily a part of the subject on *Bahasa* I mention this ceremony as a long lost cultural event and shouldn't be forgotten. "Panja" appears as a separate chapter in this book.

Chapter 5.

Ethnicity of the Sri Lankan Malays.

5.1 Ethnicity of the Sri Lankan Malays.

Our ancestors came from various parts of the Indonesian Archipelago of over 17,500 Islands (of which over 6,000 islands are inhabited) covering an area of over 741,100 square miles. There are over 300 ethnic groups in the Archipelago.

Appended below are some of the major ethnic groups:

- Acehnese
- Minangkabau
- Betawi
- Cirebonese
- Javanese
- Madurese
- Sundanese
- Banjarese
- Dayak
- Buginese
- Toraja
- Melanesians
- Papuan
- Balinese
- Manggarai
- Sumba
- Sumbawa
- Moluccans /Ambonese

Though a very few families may know their ethnic roots; it is certain that most of us belong to one of the above Groups. It is a fact that the British in their infinite wisdom or for easy reference classified all of our ancestors under the term "Malay". So now we do not know our Ethnicity; which is part of the erosion of our Proud Heritage. In addition, we were classed as "*Malay Minissu*" by the Sinhalese and "*Malay Manissar* or *Malay Manithan*" by the Tamils. Very few now call us "*Ja Minissu*" or *Ja Manissar*" as popularly addressed during the Dutch regime.

Furthermore there is more erosion in our small Community due to neglect and non-recognition; caused by years of dissipation or the spreading out of our proud community into small pockets around the Island Kingdom of Sailan (Sri Lanka).

If one should venture around the country, especially in the coastal area and regions where there were old Military Bastions and Forts, one will come across peoples of Malay origin still domiciled in these areas. Most of them have blended with the local populace and many of them are not recognizable as Malays (on first sight) nor do they speak the Malay Language. Inter Marriage with other races too has taken its toll on our Proud Malay Community. Here one is reminded of our Elders who would always say - "Marry out of the Community and you will not have a Malay Community anymore (in the future)". I guess in these modern times this is inevitable; due to various circumstances - as they would say "For better or for worse".

One can only say or sing the song "Que Sera Sera" under these circumstances.

Some elders used to say - "*Jadi atu henti jadi jo*" (What will be will be) which means the same as "Que Sera Sera".

Chapter 6.
Wedding Customs of the Sri Lanka Malays.

6.1 Wedding Customs of the Sri Lanka Malays.

This chapter is written based on the traditional wedding customs that were practiced by our ancestors; that landed in Ceylon during the Dutch conquest of the Island. Regrettably these customs have seen a steady decline (in practice) in the last few decades; with many of the traditions and customs being replaced by Western & Indian customs/practices.

The Malays were predominantly of the Islamic Faith and hence followed the Islamic Muslim marriage rites, coupled with their cultural and traditional customs.

Following are the procedures that were/are followed from the time of proposal to the complete wedding ceremony:

Proposal of Marriage.

The wedding can be by mutual agreement between the parents of the intended bride and bridegroom (*an arranged marriage*); or in the case of a girl and boy who wishes to get married of their own accord they could get their respective parents to arrange for their marriage (*love marriage*). By tradition, if the latter was to take place, it is customary for the girl's parents to visit the boy's parents seeking the hand of their son in marriage to their daughter and *vice versa*. At this juncture wedding plans are mutually agreed upon. A ***Registration of Marriage Date*** is agreed upon. An ***Engagement date*** is optional; and rings may be exchanged at any one of the two dates or as mutually agreed upon. Mention must be also made of the existence of marriage brokers/match makers (mainly female marriage brokers/match makers) in this field as was very common in the decades gone by; and is now believed to be almost non-existent.

Invitations.

Invitation to the wedding or other related matters/ceremonies is done by personal visits to the other family members; relatives; close friends and neighbours.

Currently due to the modern postal systems and the advent of e-mail facilities it is known that, other than personal visits to close relatives and friends, invitations are sent using the aforementioned forms of communication. One of the most important concepts at a Malay Weddings is based on: "The more the Merrier". Weddings are also considered as an important social event - a time for the meeting of friends and relatives. Presence of all invited kith and kin are considered mandatory and the

same goes for close friends. Fall-Outs are known to occur among family members and friends on their non-attendance at the wedding.

Gifts to the Bride (*Dulang Hantaran*)

The custom of sending gifts in an official manner is no longer believed to be in practice. The elders of the community may, however, remember the sending of gifts from the intended Bridegroom to the intended Bride. *Dulang Hantaran* means the sending of gift trays. There are 5 basic trays (*dulangs*) that are sent to the intended Bride, prior to the wedding. It comprises of:

1. *Dulang Persalinan* - Tray containing clothes for the bride.
2. *Dulang Buah* - Tray containing Fruits.
3. *Dulang Manisan* - Tray containing Sweets.
4. *Dulang Cincin* - Tray containing a Gold Ring.
5. *Dulang Duit Hantaran* - Tray containing cash.

The affluent did send 5 separate trays but it was normal to send all the above in one tray by the not so affluent. The intended Bride's side too would reciprocate the same way.

Pachar Ceremony.

On the day of the wedding a special ceremony takes place for the Bride; either at the Bride's home or at a convenient location. Invariably the location is at the place of the wedding but held away from the main reception hall, at that location. All female members and relatives attend this ceremony. Close friends may be invited. The ceremony is called a "**Pachar Ceremony**"; which translated means a "Bride's Ceremony"

The Bride is dressed in a traditional wedding attire (which is optional). The Malays in Sri Lanka have in most instances adopted the colorful and richly adorned sari; to be worn on the occasion or opted for a Western style Wedding Dress.

The Bride is seated on a richly adorned seat and the Bride's party would chant prayers from the Holy Koran invoking the Blessings of the Almighty for the Bride's happy wedded life. At the end of the prayers all the women folk present will smear perfume on the palms of the Bride as a symbolic gesture of congratulations and well wishes to the Bride. The perfume symbolizes that the path

be as fragrant. A veil is then drawn over the face of the Bride by the mother of the Bride; prior to being led from the room to the main reception hall, at the auspicious time.

Wedding Reception (Resepsi Pernikahan).

The Wedding and the reception were customarily held at the Bride's home with a "Home-Coming" ceremony being held at the Groom's home a few days later. But in present times this has changed and very elaborate weddings/receptions are held at the Banquet Hall of leading Hotels and at Community Centres, depending on the affordability of the parties concerned.

The Bride and the accompanying Bridal Party is met at the entrance to the reception hall by the Bride's father and elderly relatives. A simple ceremony is conducted called an "Alathi Ceremony" by an elderly female relative. It comprises of two dishes - one with milk and a betel leaf (*daun sirih**) in it - signifying prosperity; and the other with liquid tumeric solution and a betel leaf - signifying health and purity. Each of the dishes is waved over the head of the Bride along with prayers of blessings. The Bride is then led to the Wedding Throne (*istahal* or *pelaminan* chair). The wedding throne is very elaborately decorated; and either side sits two large vases - one vase has a pure white cloth decoration in the form of a fan - signifying purity; and the other has a freshly cut coconut flower and frond - signifying fertility.

Above the wedding throne is also a structure akin to an umbrella - signifying protection for the couple from any external evil force.

The Bride is walked to the throne by her Father and the accompanying party (colloquially called the *Thorthar Party* (I believe this is a Tamil word)).

Once the Bride is seated on the throne; the accompanying party take their appropriate places in the Hall and await the arrival of the Bridegroom.

**Daun Sirih - The betel leaf is venerated and revered by Asian communities in the South and South Eastern parts of the world. Offerings are made at the temples on betel leaves; and also to welcome dignitaries at social events. In addition the betel leaf is also used for various medical purposes. Hence the significance of the betel leaf in the two aforementioned plates of "alathi".*

Nikah Ceremony (Wedding Ceremony).

Almost all present-day Bridegrooms no longer wear traditional dress at their wedding. They follow the Western or Indian attire. The only traditional piece of attire would be the “*songkok*” (*headgear*). For purpose of reminding the readers there was a variation in the headgear worn and was known as “*setangan kepala*”. I believe that many of the elders in the community will remember this form of headgear that was made with a large scarf rolled and formed into the shape of the “*songkok*”.

The Nikah Ceremony which is performed by a Muslim Registrar of Marriage is attended by the Male family members of the Bride and Bridegroom. The marriage vows are taken by the Bridegroom; and as per Islamic Rights the Bridegroom will have to pay a “**Mahar**” to the Bride. “*Mahar*” is an Arabic word for “Dowry” (“*Mas Kawin*” in Malay). Paying of “*Mahar*” is compulsory; without which the marriage is not valid. It is usually the Muslim custom that the father of the Bride signs on behalf of the Bride. On conclusion of the Nikah Ceremony the Bridegroom is led to the Reception by Bridegroom’s father and retinue. They are met by the elderly at the entrance and the “*Alathi Ceremony*” is repeated and the groom is led to the Throne. The Groom stands at the throne and makes a general greeting to those present. Prayers are chanted at his moment for the well being of the couple and their future. In the meantime the Bride is handed two sheafs of betel leaves (*daun sirih*) in each hand by an elderly lady from the Bride’s side. The Groom will then raise the bridal veil off the Bride’s face, take the two sheafs of betel leaves and throw it over the head of the Bride. A gold chain is tied around the Bride’s neck called a “*Thali*” (*an Indian custom*). These two steps denotes that he has accepted the responsibilities of married life and the acceptance of the Bride as his wife.

Once the couple are seated it was customary for an elder/s to sing “*Pantun*” (Poems) pertaining to the couple. This practice is now long gone and is now replaced by the cutting of wedding cakes *a’la Western style*; *much speech-making and “toasting the newly wedded couple”*.

Cutting of the wedding cake is a Western Custom that is followed by many. The couple will then feed each other; which is symbolic that they will always stay together. Photographic sessions would follow at this point at the Hall with parents,

kith & kin and friends; and/or the couple and the wedding party could also leave to have this session at an outside location and will return to the Hall to resume their wedding celebrations.

This would conclude the official marriage ceremony; and the guests are treated to a feast of food and entertainment. There would be the customary after dinner speeches made and toasts to the well-being of the couple and perhaps dancing and merry-making to the “wee” hours of the morning; or until the newly wedded couple leaves the Hall.

It is customary for the Bride and Bridegroom to greet each guests in a long receiving line either before the reception festivities begin or after the partaking of food. They may even go from table to table to greet each guest.

Once the guest start leaving the hall; they are given a piece of wedding cake/souvenir in a “Favour Box” (“*Kenang-kenangan*” - souvenir) as a token of appreciation and thanks for having graced the occasion - from the newly wedded couple and their respective kith & kin.

A “*Home-Coming*” ceremony, a few days later, is also a custom that is followed when the couple return to their parental home/s after the wedding.

Conclusion.

Modernization of society and the convenience sought after, in getting things done, have taken a great toll on the customs and traditions hitherto adhered, enjoyed and venerated by our community.

Finally it is wished to conclude this article by highlighting 3 other additional practices that were followed (not included in the text above) by our ancestors just before/after the turn of the century. They were:

- Preparation of sweet meats like “*Dodol*”, “*Cucur*”, “*Dosi*” and little sugar tid-bits (Called colloquially by the Tamil term - “*sillaray*”) a few days before the wedding, by family and relatives. These were treats offered to visitors to the Home; and to the guests at the wedding.

- The bathing ceremony for the Bride that was conducted by the Mother or very close relative/s (as the situation may require).

- The beating of a large “rebbana” (drum) by a group of ladies to herald the entry of the Bride to the Reception Hall, after the “Pachar” ceremony; and the beating of the “rebbana” once again; along with the lighting of fire-crackers to herald the entry of the Bridegroom to the Hall of the Bride’s Home (The lighting of firecrackers is to symbolize the driving away of evil spirits). This procedure is virtually the forerunner to the present day Disc Jockey and/or Dance Band playing “Here comes the Bride” and other appropriate music to herald the entry of the Bride/Bridegroom to the Reception Hall.

It is possible that these traditions are still being practiced amongst the orthodox or rural Malay communities.

This chapter is written so that the new generations and the generations to come will get an idea of our past wedding customs and traditions; as was celebrated and enjoyed by our ancestors.

Typical Pictures of a traditional Malay Wedding are shown hereunder:



Malay Wedding – Dulangs.



Malay Wedding – Nikkah Ceremony.



Malay Wedding – Nikkah Ceremony. Malay Wedding – Nikkah Ceremony (Vows)



Malay Wedding – Blessings from guests. Malay Wedding Throne –(Isthaal).

Chapter 7.
Religious Ceremony called "Panja".
(Panja* Ceremony in Ceylon).

(*Panja – abbreviation in the Indonesian Language for 5 fingers – panca jari; and in this instance referring to the symbolic “hand”)

7.1 Religious Ceremony called "Panja".

In relation to the the Panja Ceremony that was held in the Colombo area - in and around the Slave Island area to be precise; I'll try and relate whatever I experienced when these ceremonies took place in the early 1940's. This ceremony was brought to Ceylon by the Indonesians (Batavians) that arrived with the Dutch invading forces. There were only 2 or 3 locations at which these ceremonies were conducted; and they were in the City of Colombo. It so happened that one of the sites was located in very close proximity to my house; just across the narrow road, at a small playground called De Soyza Playground in Slave Island. This playground is no longer in existence.

The solemnity to mark the martyrdom of Imam Hussein Ibn Ali were conducted on the first month of the Islamic Year know as Muharram.

The ceremony commenced with a flag raising ceremony and the exhibit of the figure of the Hand and the five fingers on an elaborately designed shield along with other significant religious paraphernalia. At the flag ceremony many devotees would bring their flags depicting Islamic symbols (some with the Panja symbol) in traditional green and white colours to fulfil or make vows along with donations of cash and kind. On conclusion of this ceremony there will be chanting of prayers for ten continuous days. I'm not sure if the hand had any engraving on it as I was too young to grasp the significance of such embellishments. Every evening the shield was donned by an unmarried youth or boy and paraded around the streets; preceded by a retinue of colourful personnel bearing colourful flags and other trappings, accompanied by a troupe of Drummers and Percussion Players. There was also a display of mock battles re-enacting battles in commemoration of the Battle of Karbala, with displays of the Martial Arts called colloquially "China Footing"; and I believe it was a form of Indonesian martial arts called "Silat".

The procession stopped at all major intersections with much incense burning, lighting of fire crackers and chanting of prayers. The procession would return to its Base and the continuance of prayers would culminate at night. This process is continued until the end of the tenth day. The culmination of this festivity and sanctity of prayers ends with a "Fire-walking" ceremony with the participation of the Shield Bearers and volunteers that may have made vows to do so; on fulfillment of their vows. For this purpose a large deep pit is dug and firewood is burned to a glowing ember in which the "walk" took place. There were very large

gatherings that watched this ceremony. Of course there was no "Tourism" to talk of during those days; other than the "locals". It was customary for people to throw coins into this pit to make vows or for fulfilled vows. The next day, the monies thrown into the pit are collected as funds to be used at the next year's Ceremony. The ashes too are collected and mixed with sugar in small packets; and doled out to visitors and devotees at the next annual event. "Sponsorships" were never heard of in those days and only the monies collected from the donation "Tills" and the few volunteer donations were used. All participants in the ceremony and the organizers worked purely on a voluntary basis.

The martyrdom of Imam Hussain Ibn Ali, Grandson of Prophet Muhammed is commemorated, in prayers, during this period and culminates on the tenth day; and is known as "Ashura". Though it is a Shite Muslim Tradition to commemorate the "Battle of Karbala" during which the Imam was martyred; it is nevertheless followed by many of the other sects of Islam. It is believed he was killed whilst praying and his body was dismembered. The performance of this ceremony was unique to the Malays in Ceylon.

It is also believed that under the "Treaty of London" of March 17, 1829 between the British & Dutch; Ceylon was seceded to the British; and Sumatra handed over to the Dutch. It is possible that the Bengali Sepoys Regiments were brought to Ceylon by the British rendered further influence and impetus to the existing Shiite Teachings and Customs in Ceylon.

The Malays also called the Panja Ceremony "JAUSEN"; & and also colloquially called "HASSEN HOSSEN" – which is derived from the chanting of Yaa! Hassen, Yaa! Hossen, by devotees, at and during these religious events.

This ceremony was to meet its demise in the early 1940's when the Muslim clergy along with the local Muslim politicians including Malay politicians (who represented the majority Sunni Sect) denouncing it as idol worship and was in contravention of the teachings of the Holy Quran. Almost all Malays in Sri Lanka follow the Sunni Sect of Islam.

Amongst the various beliefs in the significance of the "Panja"; the popular belief of the hand symbol was that this represented the dismembered hand/fingers of the Imam. On arriving in Canada well over 20 years ago I noticed that most of the Lebanese owned shops had the symbol of the "Hand" with an "eye" in the middle of it. On inquiring about the significance of the "hand" I was told that it was to

ward off "evil eyes"; and in addition as a symbol of good luck and harmony. Thinking back on the "hand" symbol and the stopping of the procession with chanting of prayers and lighting of fire crackers gives me the notion that this was done to ward "off" evil eyes and evil spirits from the area; in addition to the significance of Muharram and the commemoration of the martyrdom of the Imam. There are many interpretations on the "Hand" symbol. May I suggest you access the website under "Tabuik" in WIKIPEDIA; and the other sites that are available on this subject inclusive of the "Panja".

History has it that this religious (traditional) ceremony was imported into West Sumatra (Sumatera Barat in the Indonesian language) by the Indian Sepoy** (soldiers), mostly of Bengali descent (Shiite Muslims) brought in by the British when they occupied Sumatra. This ceremony has now become a Tourist attraction but there is no mention of a "Hand" symbol. They commemorate the symbolic collection of all the dismembered body of the Imam and its veneration.

(Sepoy**- derived from the Hindi word sipahi meaning soldier)

The Minangkabau People of West Sumatra who commemorate Muharram, particularly in the City of Pariaman call it TABUIK. The ceremony is now a great tourist attraction in Sumatra.

Extract from Wikipedia: A festival named Tabuik is held annually in the city every 1-10 days of Muharram, to commemorate the Day of Ashura. The festival commemorates the death of the grandsons of Muhammad, Hasan and Husen. A mythical creature called a Bouraq - a winged horse with a human head - is said to have carried their souls to heaven. In the festival, two effigies of the Bouraq called Tabuik are carried through the city. The tabuik, named Tabuik Pasa and Tabuik Subarang, are swayed accompanied by tambur music and tasa drums. In the afternoon, both Tabuik are moved to the coast and before sunset they are immersed into the sea.

(Check the website for a detailed description of the "Tabuik" ceremony.)

One will find "Panja" referred to in the Bahasa Indonesia Kamus Umum (Indonesian-English Dictionary) written by Professor Drs. S. Wojowasito and printed by C.V. Pengarang; and he defines "Panja" as: A ceremony at the TABUT Festival in which a "Hand" is carried around.

Conclusion.

Thereby ended one of the religious and very colourful ceremonies/practices that was imported/brought to Ceylon; by our Indonesian forefathers who appear to have been influenced by the Bengali Sepoys.

One can only in hindsight think back and wonder if it was a political; religious or radical extremist decision that caused this demise.

It is a great pity that all practices inclusive of the language and customs of the Sri Lanka Malays is fast eroding and disappearing into the sunset.

History Books will only shed light on what's on the surface. It would be up to people at the "grass-root" levels to come out with their experiences in order that one may re-live what really transpired in the daily lives of our elders – their way of life; their achievements; their hardships and tribulations encountered, if any?

Notes:

Following are the explanation on the Islamic explanation on "Lamentations and Mourning".

(Excerpt from "Namaz-Asia")

Lamentations and Mourning

Another wrong practice related to this month is to hold the lamentation and moulming ceremonies in the memory of martyrdom of Sayyidna Husain, Radi-Allahu anhu. As mentioned earlier, the event of Karbala is one of the most tragic events of our history, but the Holy Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, has forbidden us from holding the mourning ceremonies on the death of any person. The people of jahiliyyah (ignorance) used to mourn over their deceased through loud lamentations, by tearing their clothes and by beating their cheeks and chests. The Holy Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, stopped the Muslims from doing all this and directed them to observe patience by saying "Innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilayhi raaji'oon". A number of authentic Ahaadith are available on the subject. To quote only one of them:

"He is not from our group who slaps his checks, tears his clothes and cries in the manner of the people of jahiliyyah." (Sahih Bukhari)



Flag Raising Ceremony



Panja Procession



Enactment of Battles

Chapter 8.
The Culinary Prowess of our Ancestors.

8.1 The Culinary Prowess of our Ancestors.

Our ancestors brought their culinary expertise from their Motherland. It is disheartening to know that most of the Malays have forgotten the Malay names and are proudly using names in other languages. **This chapter is written as it is part of the Malay heritage and is on the verge of being forgotten; hence its inclusion in this book.**

Tabulated hereunder are most of the Malay culinary dishes of our ancestors:

Malay Desserts & Sweetmeats:

Malay Name	Brief Description	Now known by the Malays as
SERIKAYA	Steamed egg & coconut milk pudding	Wattalapam (Tamil) Wattalapang (Sinhalese)
DODOL	A soft oily cake made of rice flour, coconut milk and palm jaggery/sugar	
KUEH SEGU (SEGU PUDDING)	Segu, coconut milk, jaggery/sugar & cardamon	Sauh Kanji (Tamil)
CUCUR	Oil cakes	Kawung (Sinhalese) Panniyaram (Tamil)
KOKIS	Deep fried flour batter; in a mould	
KUEH CHEENA	Small glutinous cup cake; eaten with coconut scrapings	
CUCUR KACHANG	Rice flour, green gram, sugar & cardamon	Mung Ata Kawung (Sinhalese)
DOSI DONDONG	A preserve made of amberella fruit boiled in sugar syrup	
DOSI NANNAS	Preserve made with pineapple	
DOSI MANGGA	Preserve made of mango	
BIBIKKAN	Rice based cakes made of rice flour, sugar, coconut, Pounded green gram & sweet cumin	

KOSPANG	Mix of cooked scraped coconut, sago, jaggery rolled and steamed in a stringhopper	Lavariya (Sinhalese)
PISANG GORENG aka PILUS also CUCUR PISANG	Fried bananas, sugar and coconut milk mixture	
BELINGAI SANTAN	Wood apple, jaggery and coconut milk	Divul Kiri (Sinhalese)
DADAR GULUNG	Stuffed pancake with grated coconut, sugar, cinnamon stick	Surut Appam (Tamil)
SILLARE	Sugary tid bits of flour batter fried & dipped in sugar	
EMPING aka UMPING	Roasted and pounded (flaked) rice mixed with coconut scapings and jaggery	Habala Pethi (Sinhalese)
FIRNI or PIRNI	Custard Pudding	
BUBUR KACANG HIJAU	Sweet green gram porridge	Kichchadi (Tamil)
BUBUR MANISAN TUJUH	Porridge made of 7 ingredients	Ealu Kanji (Tamil)
SANJU aka SANJA	Sweet made of seaweed strands, coconut milk and sugar	

Main rice/savoury dishes:

Malay Name	Brief Description	Now known by the Malays as
NASI PUTIH	Boiled plain glutinous rice	
NASI GORENG	Fried rice; served with vegetable garnishing & fried egg	
NASI TUMIS	Usually left over rice that is stir fried with	

	condiments; onions; chillies and bits of maldivian fish	
NASI KEBULI	Rice cooked in ghee or butter and served with side dishes	Dungthel Buth (Sinhalese) The Burghers have adopted this dish and call "Lamprais"
NASI KUNYIT	Nasi kebuli with turmeric for colouring	Kaha Buth (Sinhalese)
NASI SANTAN	Rice cooked in coconut milk	Pachor (Tamil) Kiri Buth (Sinhalese)

Other Dishes:

Malay Name	Brief Description	Now known by the Malays as
AAPE AAPE SANTAN AAPE TAYER AAPE AYER AAPE TELUR	Rice flour and coconut milk	Bittara aaper (Sinhalese) Muttai appam (Tamil)
LAKSA	Flour mixture	Iddi appam (Tamil) Indhi appa (Sinhalese) String hoppers (English)
PUTTOO	Mix of flour and coconut scrapings – steamed in a bamboo utensil	
PASTOL or PASTEL	Meat pie made of flour, coconut and eggs pastry with stuffed pieces of cooked meat	
BABAT & PERUT	A spicy curry made of cooked tripe	
DAGING GORENG	Deep fried meat	
DAGING CUKA	A meat stewed in vinegar and condiments	Bistake (Sinhalese)
DENDENG GORENG	Fried piece of dried meat. Usually the lungs	Tenteng goreng
ACAR MELAYU	Malay pickle	Achcharu (Sinhalese)
BELACAN		Shrimp paste
SATAY	Barbecued strips of meat	

GULAI	Curried dishes with gravy	Kuah (SL.Malay)
SOP	Soups	
TERONG BELADA	Eggplant curry	Terong goreng (SL. Malay)
RENDANG	Spicy beef curry in thick gravy	
KOLAK KARI	A stew of many vegetables	
CUCUR BADAQ	A small vegetable cutlet served with rice	
KALIYA	Curry made of brinjals, chopped liver and other condiments	

Chapter 9.
Recreational Activities & Pastimes.

9.1 Recreational Activities & Pastimes.

Following are a few of the recreational activities and pastimes that were brought down and practiced by our Ancestors:

- a. Sports (Olah Raga).
- b. Martial Arts called "Silat" (Known locally as Cheena Adi or China Footing).
- c. Weaving Lace (Menganyam renda) aka Crochet.
- d. Coffee Meetings.
- e. Indoor Board Game.
- f. Children's outdoor game.
- g. Narration of Folk Tales.

a. Sports (Olah Raga).

The Sri Lankan Malays of either sex were renowned for their prowess and sportsmanship in every sport that they participated in; bringing accolades and honours to their Motherland Sri Lanka. Unfortunately there does not appear to be a record of these feats; except for a very few. This indeed is a serious shortfall in our Community.

It is not the intention to highlight all the sports that our Community participated in except to rekindle the one sport that is no longer being practiced or indulged in by our present generation.

SEPAK RAGA.



The game of Sepak Raga was brought to Ceylon by the ancestors of the Sri Lanka Malays; on their arrival with the Dutch invasion of Ceylon in the late 17th/early 18th century A.D.

This was a very popular game among the poorer Malays; and indeed very enthusiastically played in the Slave Island area. You would find them playing in any available open space. It consisted of a team leader standing in the centre of a group of players (with a maximum of 6 other players) and controlling the game them within a marked circle. They conducted competitions at the City Football League grounds in Colombo/Slave Island and was indeed a very colourful event/competition. It had much artistry and innovation; and the audience was treated to a display of much skill and entertainment. They called it "RAGAY". It is a name derived from the RATTAN BALL (as depicted in the picture). The size of the ball was nearly the size of a regular football or slightly smaller in dimension. In Bahasa Indonesia RAGA means woven ball out of rattan. SEPAK RAGA is the name of the game. In contrast SEPAK BOLA is the name given to the game of football or soccer. I believe SEPAK TAKRAW is a Malaysian innovation and they use a net, like in the game of Badminton between the two opposing teams; with rules akin to that of Volleyball. They use their feet to get the ball across the net in this game. This is one of the Malay Heritage of our ancestors that is now long forgotten. Perhaps this article will rekindle our Proud Ancestry. The same can be said of the demise of the religious PANJA CEREMONY that was practiced by the Malays in Sri Lanka and is long lost, remaining just a memory; if not forgotten altogether and forever. So Dear Readers please remember these heirlooms of our Ancestry.



Further on my above comments; I feel I must complete my brief on the above with a full description of play and rules of play. Up to 6 players stood in a demarcated circle with the Leader (the seventh player) standing in the middle. The play starts with the leader kicking the ball towards a player standing on the periphery and within the circle. **THE PLAYER WILL KEEP THE BALL AFLOAT AND SHOW HIS PROWESS IN VARIOUS WAYS WITHOUT DROPPING THE BALL ONTO THE GROUND.** The player may use any part of his limbs or torso or head to keep the ball afloat; except hold the ball with his palms or fingers. When done with his skill and showmanship he is required to kick the ball back to the leader at the centre; who in turn will show his prowess with the ball and kick it to the next player. This goes on until the game ends with the ball being dropped on the ground for the third time; or the allotted time has ended. Points were awarded for the length of time the ball was aloft and ended with the third drop of the ball or timed out as per regulations; and in addition points allotted for the individual and collective prowess shown. The person with the ball is permitted to leave outside the circle provided he still had the ball "in the air"; got back again into the circle and kicked the ball back to the leader in the centre. The talents and prowess in ball control was always amazing. The ingenuity of the players were really outstanding and entertaining. I often wonder if we could resuscitate this game. It only requires a Ball made of rattan. I often wonder if this game is still being played in Indonesia or any of the other Malay Countries.

b. Martial Arts called "Silat" or "Pencak Silat".

(Known locally as Cheena Adi or China Footing).

This form of Martial Arts is called "Pencak Silat" in the Indonesian language. In Sri Lanka this art was colloquially called "Cheena Adi" which is a Tamil term meaning "China Footing".

Pencak Silat is characterized by fixed hand and leg positions and is often thought of as a slow dance-like art by the participants and non-participants. The art encompasses agile and graceful movements of great versatility which includes diverse use of high kicks, jumps and agile maneuvers bordering around classical dance movements.

The display of this art was very common as a part of the processions preceding the "Panja Ceremony" that was practiced by our Ancestors in the years gone by.

It is also the belief that the Art of Silat was incorporated into the Classical Malay Dance Routines enacted and promoted by the Famous Malay Dancers Bapak Rufin Saldin and his son, Rufin Saldin Jnr..



c. Rattan Weaving and Batik Printiing.

Our Ancestors were experts at rattan weaving and well renowned for their Batik printing; which expertise they brought along with them to the land of their adoption.

d. Weaving Lace (Menganyam renda) aka Crochet.

Crochet is a process of creating fabric by interlocking loops of yarn, thread, or strands of other materials using a crochet hook. The name is taken from the French word "crochet", meaning *small hook*.

The first substantive evidence of crocheted fabric relates to its appearance in Europe during the 19th century.

One of the favourite pastime of our elders was the weaving of embroidery lace for the embellishment of their clothes; and for that of their kith & kin including friends.

The crochet was undertaken by the use of a crochet hook or by use of a Bobbin manual lace making tool. Please see pictures below.

To my knowledge our Ancestors did not have any written instructional guides or pattern books for the weaving of lace. But their creations were of a very high standard and quality.

Weaving was also attributed to social gathering among our elders who used to sit around, talking away and weaving simultaneously; while their husbands were away at work.

With the advent of technical advancement and machinery this practice is no longer in vogue; and except for the ardent enthusiast it is no longer a common or garden practice. Here again we have lost a wonderful practice and pastime of our ancestors. Why waste time and effort in weaving when all varieties of crochet and embroidery are available readily and cheaply in the shops and boutiques. As the old saying goes - "Why buy a cow, when milk can be easily purchased in the grocery store".



e. Coffee Meetings.



Our elders were known to gather in a friend or relatives home for a chat and coffee as and when it was possible or as necessitated. They would sit in a circle and chat away merrily while the children had their own agendas. The coffee served is always the brew from homemade coffee powder. It was normal for the elders to roast the selected coffee seeds and grind them in a "mortar & pestle" (Called "**Alu dan Lumpang**" - Note the Javanese words used by our ancestors: **Alu** meaning

Pestle and **Lumpang** meaning Mortar). There were no mechanical or electric grinders in those days. Furthermore not many houses had electricity. But the elders did grind their own coffee with great pride. The joy was in serving this coffee to guests. The coffee was served in cups and not the huge mugs as is the practice in these modern days. The coffee was taken black with or without sugar; and sometimes served with a piece of **Gula Aren** (Palm sugar/Juggery).



The coffee meetings at times could start off or culminate with a "Sirih Pinang" (betel leaf and areca nut) chewing session. The sirih penang also included "Tembaku" dan "Kapur"(tobacco and lime).

Another practice they indulged in was the sniffing of home-made snuff (pulverized tobacco).

While the elders were occupied by their "chit chat"; the children were permitted to go out and play with the other children. In keeping with the old saying of - "Children should be seen and not heard".

f. Indoor Board Game.

"CONGKLAK" (aka - "MANCAY" or "PANCAY")

(A "sowing" game, or "count-and-capture" game.)

While their mothers were having their "Tete- e-Tete" the older children indulged in a popular table game called "Congklak".

Pallan kuli. is the Tamil word used by us folks. They also called it "MANCAY" derived from the name "MANCALA" which is how it is called in India. However in Indonesia it is called "CONGKLAK". It was a very popular "board game" especially during the Muslim Fasting season; among the ladies. PILLAN KULI or PALLAN KULI means "excavation plans".

The "Board" normally carved out of wood comprises of seven recesses on opposite side of the "Board; and at either end there are two reservoir or "stores" to

accumulate the shells that are contained in the seven small recesses. At the commencement of the game each recess contains seven small sea shells in each; except the reservoir which is empty. Instead of seashell even marbles or large beads may be used.

In other words the player can start off by picking up any of the seashells in one of the recesses and keep adding each one consecutively into the recesses on the left; one shell at a time., inclusive of the large recess (reservoir) at the end. His/her turn ends if they end up in an empty recess; however, if your last shell falls into a recess containing shells you add your last shell to the contents and continue around the board.. The aim being to amass as many of the shells on his/her side of the large recess. Takes a lot of thinking as to how you would "plunder" the shells from the opponent's side. Looks simple; but needs thinking or you end up the loser. Planning ahead is essential to victory in board games like Mancala. Try to plan two or three moves into the future.

At the beginning of a player's turn, they select a hole with seeds that will be sown around the board. This selection is often limited to holes on the current player's side of the board, as well as holes with a certain minimum number of seeds.

In a process known as *sowing*, all the seeds from a hole are dropped one-by-one into subsequent holes in a motion wrapping around the board. Sowing is an apt name for this activity, since not only are many games traditionally played with seeds, but placing seeds one at a time in different holes reflects the physical act of sowing. If the sowing action stops after dropping the last seed, the game is considered a *single lap* game.

Multiple laps or *relay sowing* is a frequent feature of mancala games, although not universal. When relay sowing, if the last seed during sowing lands in an occupied hole, all the contents of that hole, including the last sown seed, are immediately re-sown from the hole. The process usually will continue until sowing ends in an

empty hole. Another common way to receive "multiple laps" is when the final seed sown lands in your designated hole.

Congklak Playing Board.

The playing board is made from wood, with variations from island to island in the number of holes on each side, either 5, 6, 7 or 9 holes. All the boards have two 'store house' holes, one on each end. The design varies from simple, unadorned woods, to boat-shaped boards, to highly decorated playing boards. In Central Java, elaborate designs utilizing the Javanese naga (dragon) are common. Dragons face out from both ends, with their tails decorating the side of the boards and legs suspending the board up off the floor. Congklak boards can be elaborately carved and painted, with gold and red being popular colors. Most, however, are made of relatively plain wood.

As in the archaeological find in Jordan, diggings in Mojokerto, Lamongan and Bondowoso in East Java have unearthed Congklak 'boards' with holes carved into large stones. These were found along with the broken pieces of temple stones and other archaeological remains of earlier times.

In Lampung, village children often play without a board, but instead create their own playing area by scooping out holes in the ground and collecting stones or seeds each time they want to play.



g. Children's outdoor game.

The very young kids ended up in the garden playing a game of "seek and find" as follows:

The game starts off by the designated Leader chanting "**Akan- Akan Buru**" (often pronounced as '**Kan 'Kan Buru**') meaning "will be rushed".

The response from the gathering would be "**Cincin ronde**" (locally pronounced as **Cincin Norey**) .

The Leader would give them a task - "**Lari lari pii dan bawa satu bunga putih dari kebun**" meaning Run! Run! and fetch me a white flower from the garden. (The word **Pii** means "**pergi**" in the Ambonese dialect)

The winner is the first to hand over the flower to the Leader; and the game continues with other tasks being given as the day goes on.



Very unfortunately these games are now non- existent due to various electronic games. The children of today seem to be glued to their electronics and are now confined to their "couches". The fun of joining others in friendly frolic and inherent exercising is apparently a thing of the past.

h. Narration of Folk Tales.

Another vista of the past was the relating of folk tales by our "Nenek-Nenek" (Grandmothers/Elderly). One of the stories that I can remember; is my Great Grandmother asking me -

"Tahu sih kenapa gajah mempunyai dua mata kecil dan dua kuping yang sangat besar?"

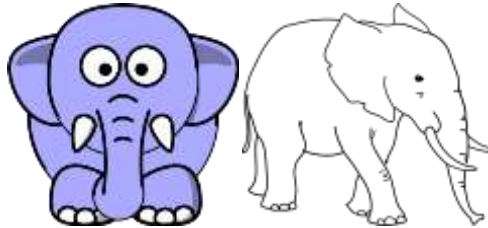
Oleh karena itu binatang tidak boleh mengetahui dia kuat dan besar.

Hari kuping ber jatuh adalah hari yang dunia dibinasakan".

The above in the English Language means:

Why does that big animal called an elephant have teeny-weeny eyes and very large ears?

God made them so; so that they may never know how big they are. The day their ears drop will see the end of the World.



The second story relates as follows:

A Ghostly Encounter.

Setelah bekerja keras di sawah seorang petani berangkat ke rumah. Di jalan ke rumah dia tiba-tiba bertemu suatu hantu yang menakutkan.

Hantu ini menuntut - "Aku mau makan barang-barang kemaluan".

Petani berkejut dan heran sekali.

Tetapi dia pandai dan membalas - "Aduh! Tuan Hantu itu belum matang. Besok lusa itu bisa makan dan saya janji saya datang ke sini dan bertemu dengan anda".

"Jangan lupa aku tunggu di sini besok lusa" berkata Hantu.

Di rumah petani dia harus membuat rencana mengatasi soalnya.

Hari yang ke dua dan menurut janji dia mengirim Bininya pengganti mempertemukan dengan hantunya.

Tiba hantu - "Saya lapar mana itu?"

Petani membalas - "Ayuh! Ma'af Tuan Hantu, kemarin itu buah jadi matang dan jatuh. Jadi rusak dan saya buang itunya".

The English translation is as follows:-

After working hard in the fields of a farmer leaving for home. On the way home he suddenly meets a scary ghost.

The ghost demands - 'I want to eat your privates '.

The Farmer was surprised and shocked but cleverly responded - "Oh! Mr. Ghost it is not yet ripe. It will be the day after tomorrow and I promise I'll give it to you then".

"Do not forget I'll be waiting here the day after tomorrow" said the Ghost.

Reaching his home he planned on how he could get out of his dilemma.

The designated day arrived and he dressed his wife in his clothes and sent her to meet the ghost.

The ghost came out yelling - "I'm hungry where is it?"

She responded - "Oh! Sorry Mr. Ghost the fruit got over-ripe and fell off yesterday and I disposed it."



Modern times and advancement in Technology have really taken a toll on the "normal lives" and "stress-less lives" of ours. The above practices are now almost or has altogether become extinct. Electronic gizmos; Television Sets; Movies and Fast Foods have taken over; and rule most of our lives.

Chapter 10.

Conclusion.

10.1 **Conclusion.**

Described in the above Chapters are some of the long lost customs, traditions and practices of our Proud Ancestral Heritage. Chapter 8 contains a list of the ethnic foods that were brought across by our ancestors. Though it would appear that it is out of place in a book relating to history; it is done so as we (the Malays) are losing sight of this important aspect and calling these dishes by names other than the ethnic Malay names. There is no doubt there are more. This book is only the tip of the iceberg. What we see in History Books and articles/theses written are just scratches on the surface. One may call it a general overview of the subject; and never really divulges what happened at "grass root" levels. A lot will remain buried; a lot of personalities will remain forgotten. Hence I implore those in the know-how to put it down on paper to enhance and perpetuate all matters pertaining to our Community.

I would be failing if I did not mention two iconic figures in our Community that remain or will soon be forgotten by our Community. They are the Kathib and Imam of the Java Lane Malay Mosque, the late Guru Burrow (pardon me if my spelling is wrong). He conducted the services in Javanese inclusive of the Friday and Id sermons. The other being the late Guru Ameer of the Wekande Malay Mosque whose son (deceased) followed him and his grandson now following his footsteps.

There are hundreds of Malay Sportsmen/women and Professionals in various fields; as well as others who have contributed in various ways to make our Community proud. Most of them will remain in the shadows and forgotten. As is human nature it appears that only the elite of elites will be venerated and spoken of. Hence it is time for us to gather whatever information we have and perpetuate the memories and feats of our ancestors regardless of their status.

While speaking on this subject; it reminds me of a story that I read in the very early 1960s.

The members of a Military Base were invited by the Residents of the adjoining Village to attend a Village Fiesta. The requirement was for each attendee to bring a bottle of White Wine. On the day of the Fiesta the bottles brought by the attendees were filled into a large cask. When they filled their glasses it contained only water. So the moral of the story is do not depend on others; please come out with whatever you know about the Community - share and let someone with writing

talents document the happenings of the past. Only then will our cup overflow with the goodness of the knowledge borne therein.

Definition of Grandparents; Parents; and Learned Elders .

"They are the Knowledge of the Community - Learn from Them

They are the wealth of the Community - Treasure Them"

- Noor Rahim

2012

With this I leave you, the learned & understanding Reader/s to give some thoughts and rekindle your memory. I do hope you like this book and are motivated; the way I was motivated to write it and took great pride in putting it down on paper.

Before I conclude there is one question that is incomprehensible and always eludes me. That of the Malay Countries that do not accept us, as their long lost Sons & Daughters; whilst the Western World welcome Sri Lankans with European descent with "open arms", into their countries.

And in conclusion we need our Community to "Rekindle; Resuscitate; & Resurge/Reminisce" our Proud Malay Community - Now and into the Future.

Untuk kemajuan Bangsa Melayu Sri Lanka selalu.

Noor R. Rahim

June 2016

Appendix "A" - "Malays are in Heaven, or in the Tavern".

This article by the late Saybhan Samat is included in this book as a tribute and to perpetuate his memory; and record one of his contributions to the Community.

"Malays are in Heaven, or in the Tavern".

There is a very amusing description of the Malays very well known to their Moor co-religionists in Sri Lanka. The Moors always remind the Malays of their extreme positions as regards their commitment to Islam. They often remind Malays that if wrongly guided, they end up in the tavern, but if rightly guided, will certainly end up in heaven. The two alternatives are tavern or heaven. Although the rather proverbial statement sounds a little odd, it is the true characteristic of the Malays. Many Malays at some time of their lives become perverse alcoholics, consequently disrupting their own lives, but for some strange reason they suddenly change course to sometime end-up becoming saints or extremely God fearing, humanistic and having individuals intent upon doing good and maintaining peace.

Sri Lanka has a rich tradition and heritage of well-loved Malay saints evidenced in the number of Malay shrines that abound in the Island. The best known among Malay saints is Tuan Bagoos Krawan Balankaya whose shrine is situated in Colombo's premier mosque, the Grand Mosque in New Moor Street in the Hutsdorf area in Colombo 12.

The tragedy is that many ignorant Malays are not aware of this. The saints father Balankaya was the son of Hooloo, Minister to Rajah of Goa, Mas Mahkotha Ranthay Pathola Mohammed Shabdeen who, along with other princes and noble men and their families were exiled to Sri Lanka by the Dutch in 1723.

Being a devout Muslim, Balankaya (Snr.) devoted himself to the religious and social upliftment of the Muslims. By his Sri Lankan Moor wife, Sithy Ummu Khadijah, he had nine children, the last of whom was Tuan Bagoos Krawan Balankaya who was born on 28th January 1827.

This Malay saint whose mausoleum is in the Grand Mosque Colombo was Khalifa to Kottar Sheik whom he later succeeded. He resided for a time in a hamlet at Palawa Tura, half a mile from Kochchikade railway station. He relentlessly

ministered to the spiritual and social needs of the Muslim. This saint died young aged only 35 years on October 29, 1862.

Another Malay saint that is well known is Tuan Pangeran who was a royal exile and whose mausoleum was in Peer Saibo Street, in the Hultsdorf area. This saint had requested a descendent of his in a dream to bring his body home from Sri Lanka. So a delegation from Indonesia exhumed the body with the permission from the Governor of then Ceylon and found the body undefiled by the elements. With full military honours to a saintly prince, the body was taken by the Dutch under destroyer escort for re-internment in Surabaya (Jakarta).

The mausoleums of three Malay soldiers, believed to be brothers, who served under the British and attained sainthood, As-Seyed Mohammed Ibrahim Oliyullah, As-Seyed Mohammed Usuph Oliyullah and As-Seyed Mohammed Usuph Oliyullah are at ivinde, Magama and Paltupana respectively.

There is also Tuan Tengu Hussein whose shrine is at Line mosque near Bogambara prison in Kandy, many Malays and Moors visit his shrine to seek intercession to obtain their favours from God. In addition the remains of two Malay sisters of the Miskin Family of Nuwara- Eliya who attained sainthood, lie interred at Edingburgh Estate Nanu Oya and Summer Hill Estate Kandapola.

Besides these saints Malays claim that there are many more Malay saints which abound in Sri Lanka whose site of shrines are unknown. Malays rose to their peak in all their activities when they possessed religious zeal. The Malay Regiment under the British was awarded King's Colours in 1801, the first Asian regiment to receive this honour. On disbandment of this regiment the Malays formed 75% of the Police Force, 90% of the Prison Services, 100% of the Colombo Fire Brigade. They also found employment in the plantations, government departments, the business sector and became skilled artisans in rattaning and masonry.

Today, despite having 23 Malay associations, they are unable to mobilize themselves to demand a Malay representative into parliament. The majority of Malays are poor, unemployed and marginalized. A few elite among the Malays form associations to boost their ego and indulge in social climbing. Extravagant rallies are held with a carnival like atmosphere, Malay girls exposing their mid-riffs dance, all have a jolly good time but there is no alleviation of the poor Malays. Just like our fore-fathers, Malays should recapture their zeal for Islam

only then will God restore their past glory and assure them heaven in the Hereafter, otherwise they will lose their selves and be forgotten just like the South African Malays.

Saybhan Samat

Rajagiriya

18-12-2009

Appendix "B" - "Our Proud Malay Heritage".

"Our Proud Malay Heritage".

Sailan* was the place the Dutch brought our ancestors to - from Batavia**

Lamentably a vast majority were exiled from their Homeland - Java

As they were troublesome to the Dutch who occupied their Motherland

Most of them were leaders & warriors in their own realms in the distant land

Astute and with great courage did they always conduct themselves

Today, we seem to have lost sight of our glorious beginnings

Unless we make a united & conscientious effort to restore our rich heritage

None of us shall be able to remember our culture or language

Insignificant, by numbers, we were in the foreign lands we lived in

Though our contributions have always been very significant therein

Essential it is to learn from our elders and continue our traditions & customs

Dear Saudara/i don't be a "no name" product - Be proud of your heritage & ancestral beginnings

Noor R. Rahim

November 2008.

(*British renamed - Ceylon **Presently called Jakarta)