

# King Vijaya (B.C. 543-504) and his successors

(Source: A SHORT HISTORY OF LANKA by Humphry William Codrington)

The traditional first king of Lanka is **Vijaya**. His grandmother, Suppadevi, according to the legend was the daughter of the king of Vanga (Bengal) by a princess of Kalinga (Orissa). She ran away from home and in the country of Lala or Lada, the modern Gujarat, mated with a lion (sinha); hence the names of her children and ultimately that of Sinhala, the designation of Lanka and of the Sinhala. At the age of sixteen her son Sinhabahu carried off his mother and his twin sister to the haunts of men; the lion in his search for his family ravaged the country, and for the sake of the reward offered by the king of Vanga was slain by his own son. The king dying at the time, Sinhabahu was elected as his successor, but abandoned Vanga and built the city of Sinhapura in his native country Lada. His son Prince Vijaya and his boon companions committed such outrages in his father's capital that the king was compelled by popular clamour to drive them forth.

They set sail and, touching at Supparaka, a famous port on the west coast of India (Sopara, north of Bombay), ultimately arrived at Tambapanni. Vijaya is made to land at Tambapanni on the very day of Buddha's death. Here they found the country inhabited by Yakkhas or demons, and one of them Kuveni, entrapped Vijaya's followers, but was compelled by the prince to release them. She then became Vijaya's mistress, and assisted him to exterminate her fellow-demons, whose chief seats are given as Sirivatthu and Lankapura. These were identified later with the hills Loggala and Laggala, though it is clear from the narrative that Sirivatthu was quite close to Vijaya's landing place, as he heard the noise of the wedding festivities, of which he took advantage to attack the Yakkhas. Vijaya now settled at Tambapanni, a port on the south of the river, perhaps the Malwatu Oya, and his followers formed various villages in the neighbouring country: these were Anuradhapura on the banks of the Malwatu Oya; Upatissa, seven or eight miles further north; Uruvela, a seaport to the west of Anuradhapura, perhaps at Marichchikatti; Ujjeni and Vijita. His followers now wished Vijaya to assume the crown, and dispatched an embassy in search of a queen to the Pandyan king at Madura. The princess and her retinue landed at Mahatittha (Mantota); she espoused Vijaya and her women his companions, while the discarded Kuveni with her two children wandered to Lankapura, and was slain by her enraged kinsfolk. The children fled to Adam's Peak and became the ancestors of the Pulindas (hill-men or Veddas).

Shortly before his death, Vijaya, who was without an heir, sent a letter to Sinhapura, asking that his brother Sumitta should be sent to succeed him. Sumitta, however, was now king in his father's place, and dispatched his youngest son, **Panduvasa**, who in due course arrived in Lanka and reigned at Vijitapura.

A late legend tells how the perjury of which Vijaya had been guilty in repudiating Kuveni was visited on his nephew, and how the god Sakra, to whom Lanka had been entrusted by Buddha, obtained his cure. Isvara instructed by Sakra called upon Rahu, who, turning himself into a boar, ravaged the garden of Mala Raja. The last named summoned his men to surround the garden and beat the jungle; but the boar

escaped, and, pursued by Mala Raja, leaped into the sea at Tuticorin, and swam, still pursued, across to Uratota ('Boar landing-place,' or Kayts) in Lanka. When Rahu had enticed Mala Raja into the heart of the country he disappeared, leaving in his place a rock at which Mala Raja stood gazing in wonderment. Sakra now appeared and bade him cure the king, which he did.

Panduvasa married the daughter (Buddhakachchana) of the Sakya Pandu, the first cousin of Buddha, who was followed to Lanka by her brothers. To them also is attributed the foundation of Anuradhapura, Uruvela Vijitapura, as well as of Dighayu and Rohana, identified later with Magama in Hambantota District.

Panduvasa was succeeded by his son **Abhaya**, and he in turn after an interregnum of seventeen years by his nephew **Pandukabhaya**, who made Anuradhapura his capital. Here he constructed the Abhaya tank, now called Basavakkulam, and also established two Yakkha princes, one of whom sat on a throne of equal eminence with the king's. From this it is clear that the Yakkha or aboriginal population was not treated as a conquered race. Vijaya's followers espoused Pandyan women, and it seems probable that in course of time their descendants married with the people of the country, on whom they imposed their Aryan language. Further dilution of the original Aryan blood undoubtedly has taken place in later ages, with the result that, though the Sinhala language is of North Indian origin, the social system is that of the south. In the twelfth year of his reign Pandukabhaya 'fixed the boundaries of the villages in all parts of Lanka.' He was succeeded by his son **Mutasiva** (276-50 BC).

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# Ummadha Citta & King Pandukabhaya

Prince Panduvasudeva and Princess Buddhakachchana (daughter of a King named Panda, from an ancient Royal family, a cousin of the Buddha) were married and duly consecrated as the second King and Queen of Lanka.

The King had ten sons, the eldest named Abhaya, and one daughter names Ummadha Citta.

A court Brahmin (learned astrologer) predicted that the son who will be born to Princess Citta will destroy his uncles. The sons of King Panduvasudeva held a meeting led by the second son Tissa and planned to kill their sister, Princess Citta. The eldest son, Abhaya, did not approve of such an extreme and cruel action, and with the consent of his father, the King, ordered her to be placed in solitary confinement. She was placed in a chamber adjoining the King's own private chamber and the Queen's personal maid, Cetiya, was entrusted with the task of taking care of the infant princess.

As the years went by Princess Citta grew into a beautiful woman. Shortly after her sixteenth year she was looking down at the garden from her chamber window and saw her brother Prince Tissa talking to a stranger under a tree. She asked Cetiya, her maid, who this man was and was told that he was Prince Dighagamini, the ruler of a neighboring state. The princess expressed her desire to meet this Prince and the maid Cetiya arranged this and a meeting took place between them. Soon, it was discovered by Citta and Princess Cetiya that the Princess was pregnant. Princess Citta confided this situation to her brother Prince Abhaya and he then learned that the person responsible was his own cousin Prince Dhigagamini.

Abhaya told his father the story and persuaded him to marry the princess to Prince Dhigagamini. The King agreed. Abhaya next told his brothers who were all furious with anger. Tissa proclaimed that if Citta's child was a boy he would kill him immediately. Citta, in her attempt to protect her child should he be a boy, planned to substitute a female newborn child in the place of hers if her child was a boy which was the case. Her new born son was smuggled out of the palace and a new born female child was substituted in his place. Her mother the Queen and the maidservant Cetiya, both, agreed to help in this caper. The newborn son was spirited away into the safe and secluded territory of the Ruhuna (south of the Island). A female newborn child was substituted in his place by the side of Citta. The King was overjoyed at the birth of his granddaughter and named her Canna, after her grandmother.

The boy, now growing up in distant Ruhuna, was named Pandukabhaya, a combination of the names of Citta's father, Panduvasudeva, and her eldest brother Abhaya, who had been her lifelong friend and savior.

Princess Ummada Citta's cunning plan to conceal her son from her wicked brothers did not remain a closed secret for very long. They tried hard to seek him and kill him but failed. King Abhaya was accused by his brothers for having connived and helped

their sister protect her son Pandukabhaya. Thus he was deposed and the second son, Prince Tissa, was given the throne.

Second son of King Panduvasudeva, younger brother of King Abhaya – He was appointed the regent by his eight younger brothers after the deposition of the oldest brother, King Abhaya, from the throne. Tissa claimed that he would be consecrated king only after he had finally defeated his nephew Pandukabhaya. This, however, was not to be as Pandukabhaya swept on triumphantly. Tissa was slain in battle along with all his eight younger brothers. Abhaya was spared. Pandukabhaya, the undisputed victor, called upon his uncle Abhaya to take up the throne again. Abhaya declined.

Grandson of King Panduvasudeva, Son of Princess Umaddha Citta, Nephew of King Abhaya and Prince Tissa – Umaddha Citta had entrusted the education of her son, Pandukabhaya, to a Brahmin by the name of Pandula. This Brahmin made his own son, Canda, the fellow student of the Prince and the two became good friends. Pandukabhaya married a beautiful princess named Swarnapali (Pali), daughter of Girikandasiva, an uncle of his who was governing the territory of Girikandaka. They were consecrated King and Queen of Lanka. Pandukabhaya founded the city of Anuradhapura and the seat of government was moved to the new city. He appointed his friend, Canda (son of his Brahmin teacher), to the office of Adigar (Minister). He also appointed his uncle Abhaya, Mayor of the city. To his father-in-law Girikandasiva he restored the city of Girikandaka. He devoted much of his time to the adornment and civil government of the new capital city of Anuradhapura. Agriculture too received his due share of attention. He constructed the Jaya Wewa and Gamini Wewa. Magnificent was the tolerance and encouragement of all religious systems during this period of Lanka's history. He also built a special palace for his mother, Umaddha Citta, at Anuradhapura. He died after having reigned for seventy years.

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# King Dutugemunu (161-137 BC)

[Contemporaries: Meander (Milinda) - Indo-Greek Ruler, Sunga Dynasty - India, Maccabean Rulers - Palestine, Tiberius & Caius Gracchus - Rome, Marius - Rome, Cato - Rome]

In the 2nd century BC, a king by the name of Devanampiyatissa reigned over the west of the island from his capital at Kelaniya. **Devanampiyatissa** suspected a monk of being involved in an intrigue between the Queen and his brother. When the king had this monk put to death in a cauldron of boiling oil, both his ministers and subjects were horrified. Furthermore, the gods were annoyed and caused the ocean to flood the land.

Overcome with remorse, the king decided to atone for his sacrilegious act by making a sacrifice that would impress on his people the sincerity of his repentance as well as appease the gods. Accordingly he built a boat of gold, provisioned it with enough supplies for one person for one month - and placed in it his eldest daughter. The boat was then cast adrift, with an inscription to inform anyone who should come across it that aboard was a princess.

Days later a lone fisherman spotted the strange looking craft as it drifted off Dovera, near Kirinda. Drawing closer he read the inscription and carried the news to the King of this southern region, Kavantissa, who resided nearby. The princess was rescued, brought before the king, and given a warm welcome. Eventually Kavantissa married her and named her **Viharamahadevi**. She bore him two sons who were to become national heroes. The eldest, Gemunu, became King Duthugemunu (161 - 137BC), who united the Sinhalese for the first time after defeating the Tamil king **Elara**.

## How Gemunu became Dutugemunu

Prince Gemunu wanted to launch a battle against Elara. With this idea in mind he decided to set out with his forces and marched to Kasatota. He remembered what his father, King Kavantissa had told him - that he should not war with Elara because the time was not right.

After reaching his destination Prince Gemunu thought he will force his father to start an attack against Elara. So, he sent a message to his father. He wanted his father's permission to cross over to the other side of the Mahaweli river. When King Kavantissa heard what his son had done, he was alarmed.

He sent a message to his son saying that Elara had a strong army with over a million soldiers. After reading the message, the Prince sent a message back to his father ridiculing him and calling him a woman for not allowing him to go ahead with the war. Together with this message he sent his father a pair of bangles and a dress. The King was angry. He ordered his men to arrest the Prince and to bring him back.

He ordered a golden chain to bind and keep his son prisoner. After hearing this, the Prince fled to Gilimale (close to Ratnapura) and went into hiding. In disguise he made his way to Kotmale and lived with a farming family. The behavior and disobedience of the King made the people call him Dutta Gamini (Dutu Gamunu or wicked Gamini) Prince Tissa was then put in command of the King's army.

## The Ten giant warriors (Dasa Maha Yodayas)

King Kavanatissa knew that the task of getting rid of the invaders would not be possible in his lifetime. He was getting old and weak. However he started building an army for the future war with invaders with a band of warriors who proved themselves to be brave. Ten giant warriors (Dasa Maha Yodayas) were recruited and they spent their time practicing martial arts. They were joined by the two brothers Princes Gemunu and Tissa. They had their training in archery, swordsmanship and in riding horses and elephants. King Kavantissa's call to arms began with the recruitment of 10 young men. They were summoned before him and asked to find ten warriors. Within a short time there were a 100 able soldiers. In this manner 1000 were taken in. They raised a formidable army of 11 110, men within a short time. They came from various parts of the country with the aim to drive away the Cholas. Soon the army was ready at the capital Mahagama. The men were asked to equip themselves with horses, elephants, chariots and food. The King then sent Prince Tissa with soldiers and chariots to Dighavapi to guard the country.

The first giant warrior was **Nandhimitra**, a nephew of a Sinhalese general in Elara's army. He lived in the South of Anuradhapura. He was named Mittha after his father. It is said that when his mother went to the well to fetch water she was in the habit of tying a rope or strap around his body and fastening it to a grinding stone, so that he would not stray outside. One day when the mother was away, he dragged the heavy stone after him and later broke the rope and freed himself. Thus, he became known as Nandhi- mittha.

There was a headman named Samgha who had seven sons. Nimala was the youngest who was known for his idleness. King Kavantissa was looking out for young men to join his army. When this message came to their village, six of Nimala's brothers thought that he should join the army. But his parents thought otherwise. Their pet son Nimala was angry when his brothers made fun of him and decided to join the army. With much regret his parents gave him permission. The day he was to leave he rose early and ate rice from his mother's hand. He worshipped his parents and left for Kasatota. This was about 30 miles from his home. By sunrise he had reached his destination and presented himself before the Prince. Later he was known as **Suranimala**.

In the village of Hundarivapi there lived a man named Tissa, who had eight sons. The youngest was named Sona and later became known as Maha Sona. It is said that when **Mahasona** was seven years old, he had the strength to tear young palms with his bear hands. When he was ten, he could uproot palm trees. The King who was looking for brave young men for his army, heard of the this young boy's strength and sent his men with gifts to his parents, requesting them to send their son to the royal court. After seeing him, the King enlisted him into the service of Prince Gemunu who was building up his army.

**Theraputtabhya**, a Buddhist monk, disrobed and joined King Dutugemunu's army and became one of the 10 famous generals who fought the war. Upon victory he left the King's army and re-ordained himself and as the story goes became an Arhath in the end.

**Bharana** was the son of Kumara. When he was 10, he used to go to the jungle with the other boys to chase hares. He was also one of those whom the king requested should serve the prince's army.

There also lived a man called Rohana in a village close to the Kota mountains. **Gothabaya** was his son. One day Rohana decided to give up his lay life and become a monk. The King was told about this and was asked if his son could become the village headman in his place. His son was known as Abyaya, the son of the thera. He was very strong - so much so that when he was a child he could lift huge stones that would take four to five men usually. The king heard about this and he too was recruited to the army.

In the village of Nitulvita there lived a man named Mahanaga who had several sons. The youngest was Gota who was short and lazy. One day his brothers left home in the morning to clear a jungle patch for cultivation. They worked throughout the day in the hot sun, leaving a small portion before they returned. They told their father that they had worked hard but left a portion to be done by their youngest brother. Gotaimbara was hurt with what his brothers said. He went to the field where there were Imbara trees. He immediately uprooted all Imbara trees and made a field without wasting anytime. Then he went home and told them that he had uprooted all the Imbara trees and prepared the field for cultivation. His brothers laughed at him and went to see what he had done. When they got there they were surprised to see the work done by Gota. They called him Gota Imbara which became **Gotaimbara** because he uprooted all the Imbara trees

**Vasabha** was the son of Matta. His body was well framed and had the appearance of a handsome young man and was called Labhiya Vasabha. He was very strong. When he was 25 he was given work that took some men to complete. One day he began to build a vewa and he did this within a short time. King Kavantissa hearing this sent for him.

**Velusumana** was the chief warrior of King Kavan Tissa. He was the son of Vasubha who lived in the district of Giri. Vasubha was well respected by the people. On the day his son was born two friends of his, Vela a neighbour, and Sumana the governor of the district, came to visit him with gifts. The boy's father gave his son the name Velu Sumana combining the names of his friends. When the boy grew up the governor of the district Giri asked his friend Vasabha to make him stay with him. The governor had a horse that could run fast and was known as Sindhu, who did not allow anyone to mount him. But he allowed Velusumana and the people who saw this were taken up by him. He was known as the greatest horseman in the country. The king heard of this and requested the governor to send Velusumana to serve the King's army as a horseman.

**Phussadeva** was the 10th giant warrior in the army who was known for his marksmanship

## Death of King Kavantissa

The death of King Kavantissa saw internal conflicts within the kingdom of Ruhuna. It was during this time that Queen Vihara Maha Devi removed the King's body in a horse-driven carriage to Tissamaharama.

The venerable monks were consulted regarding the cremation of the dead king. Prince Tissa, after receiving this news, hurried from Dighavapi (Digamadulla) and attended to the funeral rites of his father. Prince Tissa returned to Dighavapi before the arrival of his brother Dutugemunu.

While these were happening, ministers of the late King met in consultation to decide over the successor to the throne. They decided on Prince Gemunu. A message was sent to the ministers of Dutugemunu who was in Kotmale to return to Magama and take over the kingship. Dutugemunu arrived. Prince Dutugemunu held a consecration ceremony and was declared as successor to his father.

After King Kavantissa's death, the struggle for power began between his two sons Dutugemunu and Tissa, each claiming the right of ownership of the royal tusker Kandula and the queen mother Viharamaha Devi. Dutugemunu realised the danger from his brother Tissa who was in Dighavapi.

He then marched with some of his soldiers to prevent sudden attacks. Guttahala was the centre between Mahiyangana and Magama. It was considered a vital spot for security. He stationed some soldiers to guard the area in case of a sudden attack. Soon afterwards messages were sent asking his brother Tissa to send his mother and the elephant Kandula to

Magama. The requests were ignored. Prince Dutugemunu marched with his soldiers to compel him to hand over them as requested. The two brothers met each other close to Guttahala in the direction of Dighavapi. They were getting ready for a battle. It resulted in two battles in which one was won by Prince Dutugemunu and the other by Prince Tissa.

The legend relates how Prince Tissa lost and fled to Dematamal Viharaya where the chief incumbent Ven. Gonashanka Tissa Thera who saved the life of the prince. Prince Dutugemunu it is said, after entering the vihara premises, inquired from the chief incumbent the whereabouts of his brother who at that time was hiding underneath the bed of the Maha Thera.

Prince Dutugemunu realized what happened and politely asked the Thera for his brother. The Venerable Thera was not willing to accede to his request and remained silent. The prince thereafter placed his soldiers in vulnerable places to prevent the hiding prince from escaping.

Prince Tissa stayed within the viharaya for some days and a plan was drawn up for him to escape. Accordingly he was carried on a bed in the guise of a dead monk. The samaneras carried the bed, on seeing this act it was said, Prince Dutugemunu remarked, "Tissa, never get carried on the shoulders of monk." Later the chief monk brought about unity between two brothers and this unity remained throughout their life time.

Dutugamunu recieved a warm welcome from his people on his return to Mahagama. He offered alms to the sangha who offered him advice and was helped by his mother.

## Defeat of Elara

Dutugemunu with his ten generals took over and occupied the well protected fortress of Elara called Vijithapura. The Sinhala army went along the road from Dambulla to Anuradhapura attacking another fortress. Before long Mahela Nagara was also captured by Dutugemunu. Then Dutugemunu decided to attack Anuradhapura where Elara was. Dutugemunu realised the danger of fighting inside the city and wanted to avoid it. So he waited outside the city, watching the movements of his enemy.

During this time, he built a wewa and treated the wounded soldiers. He collected many strong men to increase the number of his army for the final battle.

Meanwhile Elara was distressed with the news of the number of fortresses that were conquered by Dutugemunu.

He wanted to consult his ministers and generals and get their advice as to what should be done to stop the advancing of Dutugemunu's army. They advised Elara about the danger of fighting inside the city walls. It was then decided to meet Dutugemunu in an open battle. There were 30,000 men who were on Elara's side, ready to confront Dutugemunu's army.

At this stage Elara decided to fight alone with Dutugemunu. Dressed in full armour, he got on his elephant **Mahapabbata**, and together with 20 warriors who were his bodyguards, marched towards Dutugemunu who was waiting for him. Dutugemunu hurriedly consulted his mother Vihara Maha Devi and summoned his ministers to get their advice. It was then decided to meet Elara and his army. The giant called Nandimithra stood on the right of Dutugemunu, and the giant called Suranimala on the left. Both sides advanced and met in battle. At the beginning Dutugemunu lost some of his men. Elara's army was very powerful, and to prevent a further loss of his men, Dutugemunu's army stopped moving forward. The fight raged on. Dutugemunu was surrounded by Elara's men who saw the weakness of Dutugemunu's men.

Elara's general **Dighajantu** made his way to fight with Dutugemunu. He was getting nearer to the place where Dutugemunu stood.



Suranimala sensed the danger ahead and challenged Dighajantu. Dighajantu gave up rushing towards Dutugemunu. Instead he turned towards Suranimala with his sword. He raised the sword and brought it down with a powerful force on Suranimala who avoided the blow by holding out his shield. The sword slipped and fell to the ground. Dighajantu was injured. There was pain on his face and Suranimala was coming towards him. Quickly, Dighajantu bent down to pick up the fallen sword. With a lightning speed Suranimala held the sword tightly and with a mighty stroke, dealt Dighajantu a blow. Dighajantu could not avoid the blow and fell with a loud cry that was heard throughout the battle front.

Elara's brother **Bhalluka** was advancing towards the capital city Anuradhapura from the day he landed on the shores of Lanka. On hearing this, Dutugemunu decided to meet him before he reached the city gates. After consulting his ministers on what action to take, Dutugemunu mounted his favourite elephant **Kandula** with Phussadeva who was known for his marksmanship. They saw that Bhalluka was advancing at the head of an army of soldiers.

Suddenly King's favorite elephant kanduala started retreating. Dutugemunu was surprised and alarmed. He thought for a while and addressed his faithful general, "Before this, in twenty eight battles, Kandula never retreated; what does this mean Phussadeva?" Phussadeva thought of re-assuring the King. He knew that the King was superstitious to believe that Kandula's unusual retreat was a sign of defeat. Phussadeva then addressed the King: "O King, look for the place of victory where the elephant drew back. At the place of victory he will halt. Let us take one stand where Kandula stood". There was no alternative for Dutugemunu but to fall back

Bhalluka, in his shining armour came forward to meet Dutugemunu. He did not act in haste, but looked straight at the King and addressed him in a mocking manner. On hearing the insulting words, Dutugemunu covered his mouth with the blade of his sword and replied Bhalluka. Bhalluka grew angry and said, "I will send an arrow into your mouth". Saying this, he drew his bow and arrow and shot an arrow at Dutugemunu. Instantly Dutugamunu held his sword in his mouth and prevented the arrow striking his face. It struck on the blade of the sword and fell on the ground. Bhalluka thought his arrow had struck Dutugemunu in the mouth, and cried out joyfully. It was then that Phussadeva, who was seated behind Dutugemunu, shot an arrow into the mouth of Bhalluka. The arrow flew close to Dutugemunu's ear-ring before hitting Bhalluka. Bhalluka fell to the ground in pain with a loud cry and at the same time, a loud shout of victory was heard from those who were watching. That evening, the King's palace was decorated brightly and lit up with lamps. The sweet smell of fragrance drifted around. There was dancing and rejoicing throughout the night, over the victory.

Although Dutugemunu had his mighty warriors, the dravidians were well fortified in a large and strong fortress which kept the Sinhala army at bay. Kandula, then set the Herculean task of crushing down the fortress, had charged with such fiery force and power which crumbled the fort and brought out the Dravidians, who were no match for Dutugemunu's army.

King Dutugemunu in his historic war with King Elara had an army consisting of Eth, As, Riya and Pabala (elephants, horses, chariots and soldiers). It is said that the elephant army consisted of over 1000 tuskers.

### **Dutugemunu unites Anuradhapura**

After the victory, Dutugemunu became the undisputed King of Lanka. He united the country after defeating the invaders who occupied the seat of government in Anuradhapura. All his warriors were richly rewarded according to their ranks.

But there was one warrior, Theraputabhaya did not accept what was offered to him. The King summoned him and asked him what was wrong. He answered, "O King! The war was won. Now, there is one country after defeating the invaders". What do you want to do?, the King

then asked. Theraputtabhaya respectfully said, "I will fight against the passions. It is difficult to win against such forces". The King tried to restrain him but found it difficult. With the permission of the King, Theraputtabhaya took to robes and went to live with 500 monks.

After celebrating the victory for a week, the consecration ceremony was held with pomp and pageantry, which ended with the water festival held at Tissa Weva.

It was on the Esala full moon day in BC 149 (i.e. 2,147 years ago), that the foundation stone was ceremonially laid for the building of the Maha Thupa (Ruwanveliseya) in Anuradhapura, by king Dutugemunu (161-137 BC) in the fulfillment of his religious zeal towards Buddhism. With the ascendance of King Dutugemunu to the throne in the second century BC, he built Mirisavatiya, Ruvanvaliseya stupas and Lovamahaprasada (Brazen Palace).

**Lovamahapaya** or Lovamahaprasada was built by King Dutugemunu in the Second Century BC. The building was called by that name because its roof was covered with brazen tiles. This nine storied building stood on stone pillars and had thousand chambers to house Buddhist monks who gathered to perform uposatha - to decide on incidents when monks violate vinaya rules. Lovamahapaya was the tallest building in Anuradhapura. It was 200 feet tall and 200 feet wide and resembled the palace of goddess Barani. It was here that monks assembled and had discourses on Dhamma. (Saddhatissa who succeeded his brother King Dutugemunu, rebuilt this building when fire destroyed it. The building was reduced from nine stories to five by King Saddhatissa. The kings who succeeded him Tullatthana, Sirinaga 1, Sena 1 and Parakramabahu 1 renovated Lovamahapaya and made it an important part of Maha Vihara.)

The story of Dutugemunu is familiar but many may not be aware that he married the daughter of a rebel chieftain who continued to pay tributes to the Tamil King Elara. **Ran Etana**, the chieftain's daughter who went against her father's wishes, joined Dutugemunu, personally leading an army of stalwart youths and maidens to help him conquer Elara.

### **Saliya & Asokamala: Crime of Love**

Their son **Saliya**, who married a beautiful maiden of the scavenger caste( Chandala) and thereby disqualified himself from inheriting the throne.

Mahawansa says "In the time of king Dutugemunu, the people were rejoiced. He had a son named Saliya who was virtuous and he indulged in a life with constant meritorious deeds. He had an affair with a low caste girl who had been connected with him in his past lives. She had enchanting beauty and Saliya liking her forgot the kingdom....." (Mahawansa - chapter 33)

Once the King visited the area and **Asokamala** has sent him a curry made of a delicious herb called, Raththampala, the king was really happy to see the dish and inquired from where it came from. The servants replied, "Your honor, it is from Ashokamala." The king glistened with rage and slammed the dish on the wall. The time passed, the king's granite heart never softened towards the son, just like his giant stone buildings in the Anuradhapura. Once he had a wound in his leg caused by a small blister. It was so painful and the royal doctors were summoned. They did their best but the wound got worsened. The final prescription needed Raththampala but it was nowhere to be found. One servant remembered the pulp dried in the wall and immediately a royal guard was sent to scratch it. Soon the medicine was made and the wound was cured. Then the king enquired from where they got Raththampala. The servants amidst utmost fear related the story and the king felt very sorry for Ashokamala. Soon the couple was summoned to the palace and an official wedding was arranged. The king became very happy seeing the pretty Ashokamala and they were pardoned for the crime of love.

## Death of King Dutugemunu

According to legends, King Dutugemunu died when he was stung on his head by a Naga who had transformed himself into a cobra and lay in waiting in a coconut pandal.

King Dutugemunu was succeeded by his brother **Saddhatissa** who completed Ruvanvali Saya and Lovamahapaya built by King Dutugemunu. His son Valagamba succeeded to the throne. There was an invasion of Anuradhapura by the Pandians and the king had to live in exile for 14 years. King Valagamba also known as Vattagamini Abhaya built Abhayagiri viharaya. Thus there came into existence two main viharayas namely, Mahavihara and Abhayagiri.

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# A new facet of our history buried with the copper plate of King Codaganga

(Dr. Malini Dias, Archaeological Department)

A buried element of our heritage was uncovered by the sudden discovery of a rare piece of evidence that was brought to the Archaeological Department from Kurunegala by the ASP Kuliyaipitiya, Mr. Rohan Fernando. Four Copper Plates with writing on either side of each plate had been inscribed in the Polonnaruwa period during the reign of King Codaganga (1196-97 AD).

The chronicle Culavamsa reveals that king Codaganga had been a nephew of King Nissankamalla (1187-1196 AD) who preceded him as the ruler of Sri Lanka. Though the reign of King Codaganga was very short, this epistle brings to light a Cola invasion from South India, which was successfully repulsed during this period of reign. The script in these copper plates shows a resemblance to the script of the Panakaduwa copper plate of King Vijayabhahu I (1056-1110 AD) and the script of the Devanagala Rock inscription of King Parakramabahu I (1153-1186 AD).

Similar panegyrics on the achievements of the Kings, frequently found in the stone inscriptions of the twelfth century are found in this copper plate as well. With minor variations from those of King Vijayabhahu I, King Parakramabahu I and King Nissankamalla, the eulogy of this copper plate confirms the regency of King Codaganga.

The copper plate mentions the prevalence of rival invasions during this period. This is all the more important as it mentions a foreign invasion Sri Lanka had experienced. The copper plate states that the leaders who repulsed the invading Army of Cholas (who are identified as Tamils, who had landed at Mavutu Tota) called Mantota today and Mantai in Tamil had been gifted with titles and with farm lands.

By having placed the country on a war footing during his reign, Parakramabahu I was successful in countering foreign invasions and waging war with success against foreign countries. The Devanagala Inscription, dated in the twelfth year of King Parakramabahu, records a grant of lands to Kit Nuvaragala, a Commander of the Army who won success in the Myanmar expedition. The loss of human resources and the depletion of the coffers due to these costly wars resulted in the inability of the kings who ruled after him to stave off foreign invasions.

The undue prominence given to the wars by King Parakramabahu I resulted in some of his generals crowning puppet rulers and ruling the country according to their whims and fancies after his demise. The underlying factor emerging from the incidents mentioned in the copper plate is that a certain general with the intention of deposing King Codaganga from the throne and foist an aristocrat of his choice on the throne had been instrumental in bringing a Chola army from South India which was summarily routed by the King.

The copper plate mentions how the Colas, with the "four armed forces" stormed Mavutu Tota, took over the harbour and subjugated the people whilst making incursions inland. The description also adds that two hours before the dawn of the fifth day, the Cola invasion was quelled. The King elated by the rout of the Cola Tamil army by a general named Kilingam Minalnavan, who exhibited his valor at war is said to have bestowed him with titles and lands. The lands were located in the kingdom of Maya. These gifts are termed as "Pamunu Deemana" and the presentation of these were to be considered perpetual by the fact that it was done by the king with an entourage of queens, ministers and generals. The title Lanka Adhikari mentioned here and in some of the inscriptions of this period was generally given to the Prime Minister or the Chief Minister.

A general by the name Lolupelakulu Kitalnavan, mentioned in this copper plate and in Doratiya Sannasa of King Nissankamalla could be one and the same person. The copper plate describes how King Codaganga with his chief queen and queen Ratnavali accompanied by the heads of the royal assembly including the ministers met the general and bestowed on him the Pamunu Deemana of paddy fields and other properties. An exceptionally important feature is that the chief queen and queen Ratnavali are mentioned in this function. The significance of Pamunu Deemana is borne out in the Doratiyava Sannasa that the head queen Subadra and queen Kalyanawathi of King Nissankamalla too had taken part in similar presentations.

Another significant discovery is that the engravings found in the copper plates are very lucid and the script is engraved in a series of minute punch marks. This method of engraving has hitherto not been discovered in any inscription either on plate or on rock. This copper plate could be grouped in the same category of rare copper plates as the allai Kantale and the Panakaduwa copper plates. The moon and the sun engraved in the first of the four copper plates signify that this Pamunu Deemana should not be revoked until the sun and the moon continue to exist.

Though a number of copper plate inscriptions have been discovered in India, only three have been discovered so far in Sri Lanka. These copper plates have undergone deterioration by the fact that they had been buried in the soil for a considerable period of time. They should all be treated chemically, deciphered, published in the Epigraphical series and thereafter placed on public view.



# **Dona Catherina: the last empress of Lanka**

(By A. Denis N. Fernando, Former President of the Royal Asiatic Society/The Island)

1. The Kingdom of Kotte was established by Parakrama Bahu VI (1473-1480) who was also Emperor of Ceylon. The Kingship devolved on King Dharmapala (1557-1597).
2. The Kandyan Kingdom was established as an autonomous Kingdom in 1474 under Vickrama Bahu VI, King and Emperor of Kotte. Vickrama Bahu broke away and established himself as King of Kandy. Vickrama Bahu gave his daughter in marriage to Kiravilla the brother in Law of the King of Kotte. Kiravilla's son Karaliedde Bandara was also known as Mahaadasin to the throne of Kandy.
3. The Portuguese first made contact with Ceylon accidentally when in 1505 Admiral Lorenzo De Almeida landed here by strong monsoonal winds but did not enter into any formal treaty. However, about 5 decades later the Portuguese came here to establish a factory in Colombo in the time of King Dharmapala.
4. With the coming of the Portuguese the King of Kotte, nobles and warriors were converted to the Catholic faith and adoption of Portuguese, titles and names after conversion. Dharmapala was baptised as Don Juan Dharmapala.
5. Mayadunne and Rajasinghe I of Sitawaka raised a rebellion against the Portuguese.
6. Mahasin, Karaliadde Bandara the father of Kusumasena Devi fled Kandy with his wife and child as well as his nephew Yamasinghe Bandara for safety to Trincomalee as there was an attempt to capture his Kingdom by Rajasinghe I. It is said that at Trincomalee he and his wife was affected by smallpox and died. Both Yamasinghe and infant Kusumasena Devi were advised to beseech the aid of Catholic Nuns in Mannar for succour. Yamasinghe was baptised as Don Phillip and Maha (pata) bandige Kusumasena Devi was baptised as Dona Catherina.
7. Rajasinghe I together with his General Wimala Dharmasuriya (Sn) conquers Kandy and appoints his General Wimaladharmasuriya (the father of Konnappubandara) as Governor of Kandy.
8. Subsequently King Rajasinghe I who was a diehard convert to Hinduism had ordered the Governor of Kandy to destroy the Buddhist Monks in Kandy. He did not carry out the orders and he knew what would happen to him, so he sent his wife and son over to the Portuguese in Mannar. And reported to Rajasinghe I Sithawaka, where he was martyred by Rajasinghe I by stoning him to death for not carrying out his orders. (see Pg 669 Baldeus
9. General Wimaladharmasuriya's son who was known as Konnappubandara' was baptised as Don John of Austria.
10. Both Don Phillip and Don John were trained in warfare in Goa by the Portuguese while Dona Catherina was named in the niceties of Royal etiquette and court craft.

11. The Portuguese decide to Conquer Kandy with Don Phillip to be installed as King with Don John as his General, who were both expected to marry Portuguese wives, so that they could have a control over them and were taken to Mannar for the expedition.

12. The Portuguese advanced an expedition to Kandy to conquer it with Portuguese General Pedro Lopenz and conquered Kandy and Don Phillip was installed as King, when after a while he was poisoned by his General Don John of Austria who took over the reigns as King of Kandy better known as Wimaladharma Suriya I uses the Portuguese Captives to reconstruct his Fortress in Kandy and his palace.

13. Rajasinghe I attacks Kandy but is routed by Wimaladharma Suriya 1 (Don John of Austria) and returns to Seethawaka and dies. Jayaweera Banda the Treasurer of Rajasinghe I declares himself King of Seethawaka.

14. Jayaweera Banda conspires with the Portuguese to conquer Kandy, with the hidden intention of marrying Dona Catherina and become undisputed Emperor.

15. Dona Catherina leaves Mannar with the Portuguese General Pedro to be installed as Empress of Ceylon in Kandy. The pole of the Palanquin in which Dona Catherina is carried breaks. This is considered as a bad omen by Donna Catherina, but General Pedro Lopes with her not to be superstitious and they decide to proceed to Kandy on the Expedition.

16. The joint forces of the Portuguese and Jayaweera Banda takes over Kandy which was tactfully deserted by Wimaladharma Suriya and installs Dona Catherina as Empress.

17. There are strained feelings between General Pedro Lopes and Jayaweera Banda as Pedro Lopes refuses to give into the intentions of Jayaweera Banda to marry Dona Catherina.

18. Wimaladharmasuriya I adopts Guerrilla Tactics and attacks Kandy, with the support of disgruntled Jayaweera who is promised by Don John to give him the lower Kingdom.

19. The Portuguese are routed and Dona Catherina captured and Wimala Dharma Suriya I marries her and becomes the undisputed Emperor of Ceylon with Empress Dona Catherina as Queen.

20. Jayaweera Banda is murdered by the Portuguese.

21. Dona Catherina begets by King Wimala Dharma Suriya I three children, namely a son Mahaasstane (the legal heir to the throne), two daughters Sunya Mahadasin and Cathan Adsain and lives in the old Palace in the premises of the present Kataragama Devale where the Palace Complex was within inner Fortress as indicated in the old Portuguese Maps as well as the French but copied mirror reversed by Spilbergen in 1602, (see Map)

22. The well known Perahera of the four devales of Kataragama, Vishnu, Natha and Pattini was established at that time.

23. Demise of Wimala Dharma Suriya I and Dona Catherina takes over as regent to her son Mahaastenne who is heir to the Kingdom.

24. Senerath Marries Dona Catherina and begets three sons namely Prince Wijepala. PRINCE Kumarasinghe and Mahadasin.

25. Death of Hereditary Imperial Prince Mahastenne on 23rd August 1612. Dona Catherina suspects Senarath of Murdering him.

26. Cremation Scene of Mahastenne at Mahiyawa (it is said the ashes of Mahastenne was brought by Dona Catherina to Welimantotta (in Kegalle) where the urn was kept within the Palace, which the Archaeology Dept. had found in the excavation of the Palace.

27. During this time she was also carrying another child by Senarath, However during her visits to Kandy she is reputed to have stayed in the Guest House in the Centre of the Present Kandy Lake (in the days of Senarath it was a paddy field)

28. While at Welimantota she fell deliriously ill and summoned Prince of Migonne (Marcellus de Boschhouwer) and the Prince of Ouva (Kuruwitarala) and gave special custody of all her children and died, while incanting Catholic Prayers on 20th July 1613 at the age of 35.

29. Donna Catherina was buried on 21st July 1613 with all Honours due to an Empress with Roman Catholic rites at her Palace Premises at Welimantota. It is believed that she was buried dressed in her Royal Regellia including a Pearl Rosary round her hands and the Bible beside her. The Moseleum was built by the Prince of Ouva (Kuruwitarala) entombing herein a masolieum and a oil lamp was lit perpetually in her memory till recently.

30. Senarath falls sick and summons the Council to decide on the Succession. Prince of Migonne (Marcellus de Boschhouwer) and the Prince of Ouva (Kuruwitarala) appoints Regents of Cumarasinghe Hereditary Prince during his minority with full authority (pa 694) to govern the realm and chosen for so great a task. In case of his death other princes to follow according to custom.

31. Battle of Randeniya Commanded by Prince Wijepala and others against the Portuguese. Portuguese Governor Constantine de Saa falls in battle, when the Negombo troops under Constantine de Saa went over to the King of Kandy on a prearranged signal and the Portuguese were routed. There is a Memorial to this event. (Incidentally when I gave the road trace for the construction of the Ella Wellawaya Road I made it a point to see that this road passes through this historical site)

32. Senarath Dies in 1632 and left the Empire between his three sons. Ouva to Vijayapala his eldest, Matale to Kumarasinghe and Kandy to Mahastane the youngest who later became King under the imperial name of Rajasinghe II.

33. Vijapala dies and Rajasinghe II takes over the entire Kingdom.



34. It is in this background that Fr. Joseph Vaz was allowed by Wimaladharmasuriya II to build a Church in Kandy where Fr. Joseph Vaz was subsequently buried in the time of Narendrasinghe. Later the Church was destroyed in 1745 but his remains lie there yet as the ground where he was buried was not disturbed.

35. Using old Portuguese Maps and field research I was able to locate the Ancient Fortress of Wimaladharmasuriya I till the time of Narendrasinghe which also indicates the Guest House where Donna Catherina used to occupy when she had strained relations with King Senarath which was in the centre of a paddy field which has now been converted to the Kandy Lake. While during my research visits to Kandy in 1990 I was fortunate to get to the level of the old Bogambara Wewa and with further soil brings I was able to determine its level as 1320 ft m.s.l. from which I determined the level of the old Bogambara wewa and was able to determine the site of the old church of Fr. Joseph Vaz.

36. Regarding the Burial Site of DONA CATHERINA. This site of 7 Acres was declared an Archaeological site by H. C. P. Bell the first Archaeological Commissioner and is mentioned in Bell's Kegalle Report. Unfortunately the subsequent head of the Archaeological Department has in his ignorance or in their endeavour to please certain influential parties had decided to declare only a small part of it of about half an acre or 80 perches, as an Archaeological Site even at the protests of not only the then Government Agent Mr. L. U. C. Kuruppu and the citizens of Kegalle. Now it appears persons are allowed to encroach and build on this SACRED BURIAL SITE of our Last Empress of Sri Lanka. This is a National Calamity, sacrilege and desecration and deserves the Condemnation of all Citizens of the Country as it is the heritage of our Country.

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## **Dona Catherina was not an "Empress"**

(By B. P. Aryatilake/The Island)

On reading the article by Dr. K. D. V. D. Fernando, a doctor of medicine, on Dona Catherina I get the impression that he is mixing up history and medicine to a lethal dose. Mr. Dennis N. Fernando (a geologist) is admittedly a well-informed amateur on the subject. But he has over stepped his territory.

If you require reliable knowledge on the period in which Dona Catherina lived, read authorities that have done the laborious work of ploughing through the original sources. The researches of the late Prof. Tikiri Abeyasinghe are essential reading for this purpose. The article on Dona Catherina in the Sinhala Encyclopaedia (Vol. VII, Fascicle 3) would provide a quick overview. We have to challenge the two articles referred to above because they are much in the trend of creating a new sociology of knowledge to suit the agendas of the proselytising NGOs.

Dona Catherina cannot be characterised as an "Empress" by any extent of imagination. The term "Emperor" was used by foreign invaders to flatter and exact favours and privileges from local rulers having sway only on a small part of the country and to set up one against the other. Catherina existed only as cover for Portuguese occupation of the Kandyan Kingdom, lasting only for four months with

Lopez de Souza, the Portuguese Conquistador on her side. The latter was killed at the battle of Danture (1594). The Portuguese completely routed, Catherina fell into the hands of Konappu Bandara who married her to strengthen his claims to the Kingdom of Kandy.

The first and the foremost qualification for kingship in Sri Lanka was the possession of the Dalada (The Sacred Tooth Relic). Since the time it was brought to Sri Lanka during the reign of Kirti Sri Meghavanna (310 CE), kings guarded it jealously building a special shrine (the Dalada-ge) within an arm's reach to their palaces. Special guards and monks were appointed to remove it to a place of safety during turbulent times. When the capital shifted from Anuradhapura to Polonnaruwa and thence to Dambadeniya, Yapahuwa, Kurunegala, Gampola, Kotte and Kandy the Tooth Relic went with the royalty. It was the sceptre of Sri Lanka's sovereignty.

Konappu Bandara, a Kandyan aristocrat who had mastered Portuguese military skills by feigning to have become a Christian became the king of Senkadagalapura (Kandy) in the year 1592. He deposed, (1592) the Portuguese puppet Don Juan, set up by them. Konappu Bandara assumed the name of Vimaladharmasuriya I, (1592-1604) marrying Dona Catherina and thereby strengthening his claim to the throne. He brought the Tooth Relic from the Delgamu Raja Maha Vihara where it had been hidden under a stone grind during the turbulent times of Rajasinha I. The country shed a sigh of relief from the rapacious Portuguese invaders. To become king or Emperor one had to possess the Dalada. Otherwise rebellion quickly and necessarily followed. Don Juan Dharmapala, (1541-1593) Don Philip (1592) and Dona Catherina were either pawns or puppets of the hated foreigner. They did not represent either the people or the heritage and the culture of this country inextricably entwined with the country's religion Buddhism.

Dona Catherina was for all running through her veins practical purposes a foreign lady with Portuguese culture. From the tender age of three she was brought up by the Portuguese Her childhood conditioning in a Portuguese convent in Mannar couldn't have produced anything different. Fundamental beliefs and prejudices are implanted in childhood.

She suited ideally the scheming plans of Lopez de Souza, the Conquistador General, chaperoning and protecting her from public view. He planned to marry her off to a Portuguese prince and was marking time in Kandy with his "Empress" he had so even installed, till a suitor of his specifications was brought there from Portugal. He dismissed all young men who made a claim to hold the hand of Catherina as this would be an impediment to the plans of the Portuguese to assume sovereignty over the Whole Island. This they claimed by virtue of the deed granted to the Portuguese by Don Juan Dharmapala of Kotte (1541-1591) as his inheritors to the Island.

If this ever happened Sri Lanka would have been fully Catholic country today by operating *cujus regio, ejus religio* - the principle that the established religion should be that of the sovereign. What is wrong with that? I could hear someone ask. The answer is; the change would have been a regress in our island civilisation. Sri Lanka produced its own unique civilisation and is as old and as valuable as any other. Who would want a mild, tolerant liberal religion that has a proven record of bringing love, peace and tranquillity to the nations of Asia, be replaced by an authoritarian and a militaristic one. Just take the case of South America. Sixteen million indigenous people died there during the same period in wars the aim of which was to convert

"heathens" to Christianity. It was Pope Alexander VI (Borgia) who gave the Spaniards to do so.

Dona Catherina had no interest in kingship and had no political ambitions. She could have hardly spoken the language of the people and was obliging with only the interests of the Portuguese in whose company she found herself secure. In fact some time after her second marriage to Senarat, step brother of Wimaladharmasuriya, she wrote to Azevedo, the Portuguese Captain General (1594-1612) requesting permission to come and settle down in Malvana. This very same Azevedo according to the Culavamsa (Pt. II. 9S) Ch. "broke into the shrines and monasteries, destroyed image houses, Bodhi trees, Buddha statues and so on, and did great harm to the laity and the order". Her desire was to come back to this hated enemy of the Sinhalese. "Empress" Catherina indeed deserves a monument! What about a monument to Rajasinha I of Sitawaka who kept the Portuguese on the run, confining them virtually to the limits of Colombo?

Dr. K. P. V. D's agenda to construct a memorial to Catherina is unnecessary and would be a waste of public funds. The erection of statues, monuments and memorials are recent practices to bolster the egos of bloated potentates. Anicca vata samkhara (All component phenomena are transitory). I am quoting the right thing at the right place with the right transcription if Dr. K. P. V. D. wants to understand what it means. Practically all the great Emperors of India, including the greatest of all, Asoka, were Buddhists. No monuments were built in their honour. This rule applies also to the great monarchs of Sri Lanka, who were all Buddhists. A statue to a mortal being is inconsistent with the concept of anatta (no soul). In Myanmar where the Theravada tradition is live and kicking no statues are built to any potentate. A policy of wisdom - pure wisdom.

It is deplorable that a piece of land allotted for the historical commemoration of Dona Catherina has been occupied and encroached. This has been due to the neglect by authorities. But it must be said that the ulterior motive of some is to use the name of Queen Kusumasana Devi as a pretext to impose, inappropriately, Christian iconography and other structures on this nation. What could be conceded is, that a memorial stone be installed without any religious symbols at the place where Catherina died. She after all is a part of the history of this country and the mother of Rajasinha II, a great king who did much to stabilise the social and economic conditions of the country.

Dona Catherina, the tragic character in Sri Lanka's history, was only a pawn in the true sense of the word. - Not an Empress. We have no reason to erect monuments to persons who voluntarily or involuntarily did a great disservice to the religion and culture of this country allying themselves with our enemies and intruders for their pure egoistic glorification. Dona Catherina was an involuntary player in that game. To designate her as a heroine and as a great Catholic Empress of Sri Lanka would be a gross distortion of our history.

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# The Kingdom of Sitavaka 1521-1594

## KINGS OF SITAVAKA

Mayadunne	1521-1581
Rajasinha I	1554-1593
Rajasurya	1593-1594



Sitavaka came into being on the failure of a conspiracy to deprive the throne to the legitimate heirs of Vijayabahu VI of Kotte (1513- 1521).

A century earlier, Kotte had Parakramabahu the VI (1411-1466), the last great ruler of the island. He was king emperor not in its just de jure concept, but as a most powerful de Facto ruler.

As it often happens after the reign of a powerful ruler, the period after Parakramabahu, saw the commencement of the gradual decline of the kingdom. It began with the ascent of Parakramabahu's grandson to the throne, as Jayavira Parakramabahu (1466-1469). That accession was contested by Sapumal Kumaraya, Parakramabahu's brother, who marched from Yapapatuna - which he had subdued and was ruling there-dethroned

Jayavira, did him to death, and ascended the throne as Buvanekabahu the VI (1469-1477).

The dethronement of Jayavira, accentuated the factions within the kingdom, and led to an uprising known as the Sinhala Sange or Sinhala Peraliya. It is thought that one cause for the uprising would have been the influx of many Tamils who would have come with Sapumal from Yapapatuna, and occupied responsible positions in Kotte. The Sinhala Sange was put down by Ambulugala, Buvanekabahu's brother, and thereafter the king diplomatically placated the rebels, as a means of keeping his kingdom secure.

The succession after Buvanekabahu too created problems. The ascent to the throne of his son, or as said, his adopted son, known by the throne name of Pandita Parakramabahu (1477), was immediately contested by Ambulugala Raja, the then Yuvaraja, or heir apparent. That contest led to the death of Pandita, and the ascent of Ambulugala Raja, as Vira Parakramabahu VIII (1477-1489).

As far as succession contests were concerned, it ended for the time being with Vira Parakramabahu's accession. He had 5 sons from 2 queens, namely, Buvanekabahu, Sri Rajasinha and Vijayabahu from the chief queen and Sakakalavalla and Taniyavalla from the second queen.

Thus, after Vira Parakramabahu, his eldest son Buvanekabahu ascended the throne as Dharma Parakramabahu IX (1489-1513) After him, Vijayabahu ascended the throne as Vijayabahu VI (1513-1521), as his elder brother, Rajasinha, had died, and Sakakalavalla had refused the honour.

Brothers, Rajasinha and Vijayabahu, when at Manikkadavara, had cohabited with Anula Kahatuda, later, known as Kiravalle Maha Biso Bandara. She had begotten them four sons, namely, Maha Rayigam Bandara, Buvanekabahu, Pararajasinha and Mayadunne.

After the death of Maha Biso Bandara, Vijayabahu, new king of Kotte, had contracted a second marriage from the same Kiravalle family; she was known as Kiravalle Biso Bandara. With her, had come a little boy -her son- named Deva Rajasinha, who, unknown to him, would be the cause of a major calamity in the kingdom.

With the death of Sakakalavalla, Vijayabahu's half-brother, who was the Yuvaraja at Udugampola, the second queen desired to make Deva Rajasinha, still seven years, the Yuvaraja i.e. heir apparent.

### **A delicate situation**

With that request arose a delicate situation. The sons from the first queen -Kiravalle Maha Biso Bandara- were now of age, and were the natural successors to that position. But, Vijayabahu, apparently under pressure, acquiesced to make Deva Rajasinha, the Yuvaraja.

To that end, there was only one way out. The legitimate heirs to that position had to be eliminated. The matter was highly explosive, and had to be carefully worked out. The king and queen conspired with two officials, Kandure Bandara and Ekanayake Mudaliya to plan the strategy.

Going against custom, and hatching a diabolical plot in secrecy, was not a sure recipe for success. The three brothers, having come to know of the plot, first fled to the Kelaniya temple, and then through Boralessa to Migomuva or Negombo. From there, Mayadunne, the youngest, went to Uda Rata, and sought the help of Jayavira (1511-1552) to foil the plot of their father, the king, to gain their rightful place.

Jayavira, who had succeeded Senasammata Vikramabahu (1474 — 1511), had married Mayadunne's cousin, i.e. Kiravalle Maha Biso Bandara's brother, Kiravalle Maha Palahamy's daughter. Further, Jayavira too, surreptitiously, and as and when opportunity arose, was carving out his power base in the Uda Rata. Thus, with blood relationships on the one side, and sensing an opportunity to weaken Kotte, on the other side, he readily obliged, and provided an army from the Four Korales.

With that support, Mayadunne, on his way to Kotte, camped at Kelaniya until the arrival of his brothers. There at messengers were received from Kotte seeking peace

and direct talks with the king. The brothers agreed to negotiate, but on condition that Kandure Bandara and Ekanayake Mudaliya, the accomplices to the plot are surrendered. There being no alternative, the demand was acceded to.

The brothers, after seeing that Kandure Bandara paid the highest penalty for his crime - Ekanayake Mudaliya having escaped and fled to safety - went to the palace, as per agreement for negotiations with the king, their father.

In the meantime, the king had placed guards in hiding at the palace, with instructions to bar the doers after the entry of the princes - his own sons- to ensure their final disposal. But, as fate would have it, the 7 year old Deva Rajasinha, in his innocence, informed Mayadunne, of the soldiers in hiding.

On hearing what the young prince had said, the three brothers stormed out of the inner city 'Etul Kotte', and immediately thereafter, ordered the army to invade the palace and loot it. The king's forces too, not with the king, joined the rest in the ransacking. The king and queen who were upstairs in the palace, were held prisoners there.

The decision was taken: the king had to die. It is said, that no Sinhalese would execute the deed, and thus, it was a man named Selamba, of unknown identity, or a Salman, a Moslim trader, who had come forward to see the end of Vijayabahu. The conspiracy having failed, the king paid for it with his life. It is that event which has come to be known as the 'Vijayaba Kollaya'.

After the death of Vijayabahu, people acclaimed, the eldest, Buvanekabahu [VII], as king at Kotte (1521-1557). Pararajasinha, was assigned Rayigama, Walallawiti and Pasyodun Korales, and Mayadunne was given Sitavaka, Denavaka and the four Korales. Nothing is known of the fate of Prince Deva Rajasinha, or of Kiravalle Biso Bandara.

Thus, in 1521, came into existence the principedom of Sitavaka destined to write a brief and inconclusive, but a proud chapter in the long annals of Sri Lankan history.

Mayadunne (1521-1581), now of Sitavaka, was the ablest of the three brothers. He soon aspired to the overlordship of the island: i.e. to be king of Kotte.

The political scenario at the time had seen three other centres wielding power. They were, the nascent power base of Senkadagalapura in the Uda Rata, Yapapatuna in the North, exercising a limited jurisdiction in the peninsula since about the 13th century, and the Portuguese in the just established (1518) fortelessa in Colombo.

Buvanekabahu's main concern on his accession, was to watch the Portuguese, the new and dangerous arrival in the scene, and to see that Senkadagalapura was kept in check. That would be the concern of Mayadunne as well.

In pursuing his ambition, Mayadunne, not only started harassing Kotte but also threw his attention on the Portuguese at Colombo. But, the Portuguese, were different from the inland rivals. They not only had their gun-power and trained soldiers in warfare, but also could draw support from their possessions in the south of India. Additionally, they were the naval power of repute at the time.

Within the immediate confines of the Kotte kingdom, Sitavaka made use of an early opportunity to enlarge its territory. That happened when it unilaterally annexed the territory of Rayigam Bandara, on his untimely death in 1538. Buvanekabahu, acknowledging a *fait accompli*, formally assigned that principedom to him, and averted a conflict.

On Sitavaka harassing Kotte, Buvanekabahu allied himself with the Portuguese. That was the beginning of its later alienation with the populace, and the prelude to foregoing its legitimacy as the acknowledged sovereign of the island. The beneficiary of it would be Sitavaka.

In the alienation of Kotte, the role of the missionaries was significant. They spared no pains or means in seeking converts to their faith, for the greater glory of their God. The adverse repercussions of such conversions in the country was not seen only by those who benefited by such action. The constant pressure they brought on Buvanekabahu himself to adopt Christianity, was only adding fuel to the fire.

All this made Sitavaka the centre de resistance, not only for the political salvation of the country, but for the survival of its culture and civilization as well.

As the picture unfolds, the energies of Sitavaka were at first directed against Buvanekabahu, and then against the Portuguese. Sometime around 1526, on the seizure of two Mocrish vessels by the Portuguese, and the killing of some Moors with the assistance of a Salappu Arachchi, the Moors on land sought and received refuge at Sitavaka. Thus he befriended an ally, who would be useful to him in the future.

Accordingly, in 1536, Mayadunne, together with the assistance received from the Samorin of Calicut, directed his first attack on Colombo. The inconclusive result of that attack, would be repeated many a time during Sitavaka's existence.

Inter-domain, Sitavaka's relations with Kotte deteriorated further, when Buvanekabahu gave his daughter, Samudra Devi, in marriage to Vidiye Bandara of Madampe, a man of repute and ability, and a grandson of Sakalalakawalla. As far as Mayadunne was concerned, the consequences of that marriage became further aggravated, when Buvanekabahu nominated Dharmapala, the elder son from the union between Vidiye Bandara and Samudra Devi, as his successor.

Buvanekabahu, fully aware that his nominee will be contested on accession, sought the help of the Portuguese, to provide him with the necessary military support. To that end, he got a golden effigy of the prince sent to Portugal, to be crowned as his successor, thus assuring that military support would not fail in time of need.

The image of Dharmapala sent to Portugal, was crowned in 1541, in Lisbon, with great pomp and pageantry. With that the chance of Mayadunne, legally succeeding Buvanekabahu was sealed. To all concerned, it would have been apparent, if not certain, that, Dharmapala would be a puppet in the hands of the Portuguese.

Now, matters turned in a devious way. The activities of the ambitious Vidiye Bandara led to a curious alliance between Mayadunne and the Portuguese. And, their combined forces, i.e. Mayadunne's and that of the Portuguese, battled Vidiye

Bandara on two occasions, namely in 1548 and in 1555. Such alliances between the Sinhalese and the Portuguese, were hastily made and hastily abandoned.

Even in the midst of animosity, Vidiye Bandara, had been a desirable son-in-law to any king. Thus, on the death of Samudra Devi, Mayadunne, gave in marriage his widowed daughter Maha Tikiri Bandara, to Vidiye Bandara. But the cordiality thus established, was short lived. Although in 1550 Buvanekabahu and the Portuguese had razed the capital city of Sitavaka, Mayadunne, allied with the Portuguese in 1555 to attack his stronghold at Pelenda, which he had established after his union with Maha Tikiri Bandara.

It was at that battle, that the young 'son' of Mayadunne, called Tikiri Bandara or Tikiri Kumaraya, had first distinguished himself in the battlefield, and was called 'Rajasinha'.

It is said, that Tikiri Kumaraya or Rajasinha, was fathered by Petiyagoda Patta Mestri Sinhala Kirti Rajapakse Bhatirajja Vanniyar Mudiyanse Disava, residing in the palace, and was begotten by Sumana Devi, the Chief Queen of Rajasinha. It is also said that it had been a known fact, as much as his physique, ability, military prowess, intellect and bravery.

Thus, at Pelenda, Vidiye Bandara, had met his match. In the face of defeat at the hands of young Tikiri, he withdrew - from the battlefield, and taking a circuitous route reached Udarata, where he was 'politically' welcome by Karalliyadde Bandara (1552-1582), who had succeeded Jayavira (1511-1552).

From there, he twice attacked Sitavaka, but at the last engagement at Mudukondapela he once again deserted the army, and fled the battlefield. Soon after he ended up at Yapapatuna, and it is said, that at the Nallur kovil where, some gun-powder had been accidentally set alight, being mistaken for gun-shots, or as Trindade says, due to the riches he had, a fight ensued, and, both he and his younger son Wijayapala, was killed at that place.

In the meantime, the Portuguese had successfully converted Jayavira, the first among the Sinhala kings to succumb to politico- missionary pressure. Thereafter, in 1557 they succeeded with Dharmapala (1551-1597). Thus, what they failed with Buvanekabahu, they achieved with his grandson. On baptism, Dharmapala, not only took the name of Don Joao, but also confiscated all temple land and gave them to the Franciskans; that included the Daladage at Kotte and the Maha Vihare at Kelaniya. The alienation of the reigning Sinhala king with his people, was complete. In popular acceptance, Mayadunne became the King of the land.

Between 1557 and 1565, Mayadunne and his son Rajasinha besieged Kotte several times. The Portuguese, unable to depend, both Kotte and Colombo, abandoned Kotte in 1565, and Dharmapala, moved with all his valuables and retinue to Colombo. For all practical purposes the suzerainty of Kotte had come to an end. Sitavaka became the acknowledged capital of the people.

Now, Sitavaka concentrated on two fronts: one on Colombo, and the other on Senkadagalapura. With that, diplomacy and treachery, came to work at its optimum against Sitavaka, in concert with Kandy and Colombo.



Queyroz, as well as Sinhala records state that Mayadunne abdicated in May 1578/1580 in favour of Rajasinha (1580/1593), and thereby, the latter became the de facto successor, to the Kotte kingdom. But, the de jure position remained with Dharmapala in Colombo, by virtue of the nomination of the latter by Buvanekabahu, and supported by the alien Portuguese power in the island.

The Chulavamsa statement that Rajasinha was a parricide is contradicted by Queyroz, and other contemporary Sinhala works, and has also been effectively disproved by all scholars of this period.

On Rajasinha's accession to Sitavaka, he continued to lay siege on Kandy. If Dharmapala had alienated his position of being the rightful ruler of the land, by his conversion to Catholicism, Karalliyadde, a grandson of Senasammata Vikramabahu, was in the same plight after his conversion, which is dated to sometime between 1562 and 1564. Thus, when Rajasinha invaded Kandy in 1582, Karalliyadde fled his kingdom.

Sitavaka was now at the apex of its power. It had taken over the territory of Kotte, and now of Senkadagalapura. Only Colombo, the seat of the Portuguese, and of Dharmapala, lay between his virtual possession of the Kotte kingdom and his aspiration for the overlordship of the island.

Thus, Rajasinha, after his expedition against Colombo in 1579- 1581, once again mounted an attack between 1587 and 1588. Brilliant as these campaigns were, yet they failed to achieve their objectives. Portuguese succour from its Indian possessions, and Rajasinha's inability to control the seas, and perhaps the better trained soldiery of the Portuguese against that of his, led to his disappointment. In both occasions he nearly succeeded, but unfortunately, success eluded him.

If the Kandyans were piqued by Karalliyadde's embracing of Catholicism, Rajasinha's acceptance of Hinduism and his ravage of Buddhist temples and its clergy, together with his latter day intemperate behaviour led the Kandyans to seek another ruler for themselves. That desire of theirs was strangely enough, fulfilled with the aid of the Portuguese. They, with Kanappu Bandara as Commander-in-Chief of their force sent another Catholic prince, Don Philip Yamasinghe Bandara, a nephew of Karalliyadde, and placed him on the throne.

Due to that Portuguese intervention in Kandy, which received support from some sections of its people, Rajasinha, in 1593, once again invaded Kandy. If Vidiye Bandara had met his match in Rajasinha, Rajasinha met his match in Konappu Bandara, at the Balana pass. The latter successfully defended the entry to Kandy, and Rajasinha retired.

Konappu Bandara or Dom John of Austria, who turned tables on the Portuguese and became Vimaladharmasuriya, was a son of Virasundara Bandara, who had been done to death by Rajasinha. To his innate ability, he had added the experience in war and strategy under the Portuguese. In time, he will be another name to reckon with in the lineage of Sinhala kings.

Thus, Rajasinha's attempted invasion of Kandy was to be his last military expedition. As disunity among the Sinhalese would have it, his last battle was against another Sinhala centre of power. And, Rajasinha failed. On his retreat, it is said that he had

the misfortune of a bamboo splinter pricking his foot at Petangeda, and shortly after, he breathed his last.

If Rajasinha's birth is seen to have had a fault, his end is certainly seem to be tragic. According to the Sitavaka Rajasinha Rajakalaya (1599) Rajasinha's daughter Menik Bisso Bandara from his chief queen Dedampegei Malvati, had a son named Rajasuriya, by a Cola prince.

According to the above source, the wound in the king's foot was caused by a blow from the followers of Rajasurya, and in the guise of treating the wound, Dodamvela Ganitaya, through his accomplice named Peduru, had poisoned it. The background to it, is said to be that Rajasurya was having an affair with Dodamvela Ganitaya's daughter, and hastening the death of Rajasinha, would benefit both Rajasurya and the Ganitaya.

Whether the wound was caused by a blow, or as is better and popularly known by the pricking of a bamboo, its poisoning is seen to be the cause of death.

If Sitavaka had commenced on a note of conspiracy and tragedy, its end is seen to be in defeat and remorse, and the repetition of conspiracy and tragedy.

During its brief existence of a little over a three quarters of a century, it forcefully stamped its presence in the island, due to the brilliance of its two rulers. The dominating factor seen during the period was the machinations of the Portuguese in the affairs of the three centres of power, i.e. Kotte, Kandy and Sitavaka. With sword and bible in either hand, they were willing accomplices in the internal power struggle among the Sinhalese. Supporting one or the other, as it would suit them best, the Portuguese fulfilled the wishes of their king and Church with territorial acquisitions, and conversions in both Kotte and Kandy! they failed only in Sitavaka.

Only if the fractured parts of the Kotte kingdom, could have acted in concert with the one purpose of getting the Portuguese intruder out, the country would have been saved of all the diabolical things that Queyroz, their own historian, had to record of their misdoings in this island. But that was not to be. Disunity amongst the Sinhalese, and the dominant ambitions of its rulers, with self before country, is seen as a recurring factor in the history of this island.

### **History of its two kings**

The history of Sitavaka is the history of its two kings, Mayadunne and Rajasinha I. They were the only two rulers, who fought with grim determination to expel the Portuguese from the island, but personal glory, internecine warfare, inter and intra domain intrigue, vacillation and love of lucre among its fighting forces, the lack of better artillery for siege warfare, the lack of a naval power, and the latter day intemperance of Rajasinha, prevented them from achieving their objectives. Yet, in their hey-day, they were looked upon with awe and admiration by the Sinhalese, and even by their bitter enemies, the Portuguese.

With the death of Rajiasinha, the final obsequies of Sitavaka, was done in quick succession by Rajasurya and Nikapitiye Bandara, and was concluded by Don Joao at

Colombo alias Dharmapala of Kotte. And, with that, Sitavaka passed into history: glorious, it could have been, but it was not to be.

[Some sources and publications: Chulavamsa, Rajavaliya, Mandarapura Puvata, Alkesvara Yuddhaya, Documents published in Aitihāsika Sitavaka by Risiman Amarasinghe, Ceylon: The Portuguese Era by P E Pieris, The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon by Queyroz, A Short History of Ceylon by Cordrington, Political History of Kotte by G P V Somaratne, Ceylon and her People by N. E. Weerasooria, The Kandyan Kingdom by L S Devaraja, Fidalogs in the Kingdom of Kotte by O. M. da Silva Cosme, Mahanuvara Rajadhaniya by Abhaysinghe, Devaraja and Somaratne, and University of Peradeniya History of Sri Lanka Vol. II, ed K M de Silva.]

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# The Kandyan Kingdom

## Conspiracies and assassinations

### KINGS OF KANDY

Vimala Dharma Surya I	1590-1604
Senarat	1604-1635
Rajasinha II	1629-1687
Vimala Dharma Surya II	1687-1707
Narendra Sinha	1707-1739
Vijaya Rajasinha	1739-1747
Kirtisri	1747-1781
Rajadhirarajasinha	1781-1798
Sri Vikrama Rajasinha	1798-1815

There had been a number of conspiracies and assassinations during long years of Kandyan Kingdom. The ruling King closely guarded his kingdom and all subjects had to get permission to travel out of the Kingdom. King's officials were given large land grants and they in turn gave this land to villagers for the purpose of farming.

The conspiracies to assassinate kings in general came mostly from his own nobles and high priests of the temple. We also find times where they were threatened by foreign powers that had come to attack the Kandyan Kingdom.

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The Kandyan kingdom lasted for more than 400 years before falling in to the hands of British in 1815. They banished the Kandyan King to Madurai and established their rulership. After a period of three years Kandyan nobles realizing that they had been badly tricked attacked a British Garrison at Uva. This was known as the Uva rebellion. Using this situation to their advantage the British confiscated the lands of Kandyan chiefs who were against them. Some chiefs were executed and others were banished to Mauritius and India. Soon after this rebellion the Post of Maha Adikaram and several other senior posts were given to Molligoda family.

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### King Rajasinha the Second (1629-1687)

Rebels from Alawwa surrounded the Nillamba castle during King Rajasimha II's time. To safeguard the life of the King the ever faithful Matale Aluwihare Wanigasekara Bandara acted as a double for the King risking his life. He wore royal robes and slept in the king's bed covering his face. Rebels believing he was the king, stabbed him to death. Then they started looting the royal treasury shouting that the King is dead. After some time they found Aluwihare Bandara missing among the nobles. Then they suspected that they might have killed the wrong person. It was well known that Aluwihare resembled the king but was completely toothless. They force opened mouth of the imposter now dead, and found he was completely toothless. They panicked and wanted to kill rebel leaders who promised them that the king would be an easy prey for

them. Now they knew that they have lost valuable time plundering the royal treasury. By this time the king had gone to a safe hideout. The timely action of Aluwihare had not only saved king's life but also gave him time to call for his loyal forces and capture the rebels. When the King went to his royal chambers he saw what had happened to Aluwihare. He started to cry not being able to bear the death of his kinsman.

He bestowed the rank and name to Aluwihare's son. This young Aluwihare served the king and his son King Wimaladharmasuriya II (1687-1707) very faithfully in time to come.

Robert Knox reports a rebellion in 1664 by Ambanwela Rala and he was soon captured. He was sent to the court of Rajasingha II for punishment. King was so angry and could not think of a suitable punishment. King was advised by his ministers to send him to the Dutch for his punishment. Cunning Ambanwela Rala made friends with Dutch agreeing to provide them with all the information that they required about the Kandyan kingdom. He was given a large land grant from Kollupitiya. He became a very rich coconut planter and was given an official burial when he died at a ripe old age. Name Kollupitiya came in to use after Ambanwela Rala meaning "land that Rala cheated from the Burghers".

### **King Wimaladharmasuriya II (1687-1707)**

Young Aluwihare Bandara was very loyal to the king at all times. It is said that King Wimaladharmasuriya II son of King Rajasingha II wanted to bring a queen for him from Madurapura. This task was given to Aluwihare Bandara. While she was being brought she fell from the palanquin in to the water at a seaport while being ferried. Young Wanigasekara Bandara saved her life by jumping in to the water and catching hold of her by her long hair. She showed her displeasure for being touched by a person who did not have noble blood. Because of this Queen refused to speak to the King when she was brought to the Castle. King took Aluwihare's side and fully exonerated him for touching the queen. It is said that Aluwihare then cut his own finger as a self-inflicted punishment for touching the queen, even he did with an idea of saving her life.

### **King Narendrasinghe — (1707-1739)**

King Sri Weeraparakrama Narendrasinghe (1707-1739) was known to be a person who did not take his royal responsibilities seriously. He was called "Sellan Rajuruwo" or literally as "the king who loves to play". Once when he was residing in Nillamba he used to swim and dive to a water tank specially kept for him near the Mahaweli River. One day just before he jumped king saw a kingfisher sitting on water. He got his guards to investigate and found several sharp spikes fitted to the waterbed to instantly kill him when he dived. During the night the water level had dropped and one of the spikes had been jutting out making it possible for the kingfisher to sit upon it.

### **King Vijaya Rajasingha (1739-1747)**

Sri Vijaya Rajasingha ascended the throne of Kandy and sought a wife from South India. For this purpose he sent messengers to Madurai in 1739. Since the Nayaks had now lost the power and prestige they enjoyed in the days of Vijayaranga Cokkanatha, the members of the family thought it advisable and even desirable to accept the offer from the king of Kandy.

Two brothers Rama Krishnappa Nayaka and Narenappa Nayaka, who were kinsmen of Bangaru Tirumala Nayaka made their way to Ramand to meet the Kandyan envoys. Narenappa had a daughter of marriageable age. The brothers now dispossessed and landless, agreed to the Kandyan request and with their families, they accompanied the envoys to Ceylon. There was little to hope for in South India, and once Narenappa Nayaka came over to Ceylon for his daughter's nuptial, he showed no wish to return but settled instead in Kandy with his kith and kin. He was destined to be not only the father-in-law of one king, but the father of the next two kings of Kandy; for his two sons, the one five or six years old in 1740, and the other still an infant were successively to succeed Sri Vijaya Rajasingha.

The process of linking Kandy with Madurai did not stop here for seven years later in 1747, Sri Vijaya Rajasingha married another Madurai princess.

The king, however, died childless soon after, having nominated as his successor, his eldest brother-in-law who had been living in the court ever since his sister had married the king. Thus by this peculiar mode of succession the son of Narenappa Nayaka who claimed kingship with the ruling Madurai Nayak family now ascended the throne of Kandy as Kirti Sri Rajasingha. (1747—1781).

### **King Keerthi Sri Rajasingha (1747-1781)**

Maha Adigar of the King Keerthi Sri Rajasingha conspired with priests at Malwatta Viharaya and tried to assassinate the

king. They tried to make him fall in to a pit fitted with spikes dug at Malwatta Viharaya in 1760. But fortunately king was warned in advance by Galagoda Dissawa and priest Hulangamuwe Buddarakkitha. Complete details of this conspiracy was published in 'The island' on 27th November 1999.

### **King Rajadi Rajasinghe (1781-1798)**

King Rajadi Rajasinghe used to visit his Queen "Siriymmal" at Malwatta. He used to go there without any escort, during the night on horse back. His Maha Adigar Pilimatalawe was also permitted to go to Siriymmal's palace as he was managing the place and looking into their daily requirements. After some time Queen and Maha Adigar developed a strong desire for each other. It is said that he is the father of Queen's son Kannasamy who later became the king. Subsequently as the king had a strong suspicion as to what was going on he gave an order that Pilimatalawe must not go to Malwatta hereafter, where the queen resided. As a further precaution, King also gave his royal sword to his younger son Kannasamy and gave him authority to kill any intruder to the Queen's chambers. After few days king went there in the night as usual. When Kannasamy challenged him in the dark, king could not utter any word as he was suffering from a severe cold. Young Kannasamy killed the king by mistake thinking he was an intruder. When Adigar Pilimatalawe was informed they staged that king has fallen from the horse and cut his own head accidentally. He used his power as the Maha Adigar and strategically made Kannasamy the king and covered up the whole story.

### **Last King Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe (1798-1815)**

Young Kannasamy who became the last king had to face a lot of conspiracies. First he had to execute Chief Adigar Pilimatalawe for attempting to murder him. This was followed by a series of executions ending with the family of Ehalepola. This happened when Adigar Ehalepola escaped and joined the British and failed to surrender after 3 weeks of notice. With Ehalepola sending secret letters to remaining leaders British were able to invade and capture the fleeing king. King was banished to Madurai and died as a royal prisoner. He was living on a small allowance given to him and his two queens by the British Government. It is claimed that this allowance was paid to his next-of-kin for next 156 years and stopped only when Sri Lanka regained its sovereignty.

In his letters written to Kandyan leaders in 1813, two years before the fall of kingdom, Ehalepola confirms that British had agreed to hand over Kandyan kingdom back to Kandyans within twenty-five years. He was much heart broken and refused the Maha Adigar post offered to him under the British. The Kandyan dynasty ended in 1815 when the entire country fell into the hands of British due to the power hunger and envy among our Sinhalese leaders.

**References-Kandyan Kingdom — By Dr. Mrs. Lorna Devaraja PhD Madyama Lanka Purawrutha — By Rajakeeya Panditha Nawulle Dhammananda.**



## Vimala Dharma Suriya I of Kandy



Reception of Admiral Joris Spilbergh (left) at the court of the Maharaja of Candia (Ceylon) (Center with hat in hand ) July 1602 (Museum voor Land en Volkenkunde Rotterdam)

In 1582 Virasundara Bandara a Kandyan Chief assisted Rajasinha I of Sitavaka (Sitavaka Rajasinha, it was at his hands that the Portuguese suffered their first major military defeat in Asia, and later he besieged the Portuguese in their Fort in Colombo) in his successful war against the Kandyans. Later as a result of an uprising by the Kandyans in favour of Virasundara Bandara he was put to death by Rajasinha.

Virasundara Bandara's son Konappu Bandara escaped to the Portuguese and was baptised a christian and renamed Don Juan. In 1592 the Portuguese marched on Kandy with Don Juan and occupied it. The same year Don Juan who was a Kandyan was approached by the

Kandyan chiefs and turned tables on the Portuguese, ordering them to quit their posts or expect no quarter. They had no option and capitulated.

In 1592 Konappu Bandara baptised as Don Juan, abandoned Christianity and was crowned by the Kandyans, Vimala Dharma Suriya I of Kandy. He married Princess Kusumasana ( who had also been baptised as Dona Catherina) the daughter of the former king of Kandy, Karaliadde Bandara.

Vimala Dharma Suriya I as all the other Kandyan rulers controlled the East Coast with Trincomalee and Batticaloa the chief ports of the Kandyan Kingdom.

On 2nd June 1602 Admiral Joris van Spilbergen came on land at Santhamuruthu in the East coast and was met by the Kings Dissawa. In July the above meeting took place between the Admiral and Vimala Dharma Suriya I of Kandy. The king and the Kandyan court spoke Portuguese and Spilbergen records that he was welcomed the Portuguese, not Sinhalese fashion.

In November 1602 three Dutch ships came to anchor in Batticaloa. These were part of the combined fleet of fourteen ships under the command of Admiral Wijbrand van Waarwijk. The Vice Admiral, Sebald de Weert, went ashore



King Vimala Dharma Suriya with Joris van Spilbergen, the first Dutch envoy to Ceylon

at Batticaloa where he was well received by the local King and from whence he proceeded to Kandy to see the King who greeted him with much honour and friendship.

The Vice Admiral, Sebald de Weert, returned to Ceylon in April 1603. The Kings ambassador, Mudaliyar Emanuel Dias who had accompanied the Vice Admiral from 1602 to 1603 informed the King that Sebald de Weert had, against his advice released some Portuguese who had been captured when the dutch had seized four Portuguese vessels. The King who was in Bintenne at the time, was furious and made his way to Batticaloa.

During a meeting between the King and De Weert in Batticaloa, De Weert's behaviour was seen to be insulting to the King. The King rose immediately and seething with anger called to his men " Bandapan Mae Balla " ( bind this Dog ). In the ensuing struggle the Prince of Uva gashed the Vice Admirals Head with his sword, killing him instantly.

Extract from Dr. R.K.De Silva's "Illustrations and views of Dutch Ceylon 1602 - 1796"

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# Rajasinghe-II of Senkadagala

by S. B. Karalliyaade

(The Island) Sixth December marks the 313th death anniversary of yet another monarch of the Kandyan Kingdom, a war hero and a fearless fighter who waged several wars to free the country from Portuguese and Dutch domination. Like Rajasinghe 1 of Sitawaka, Rajasinghe II of Senkadagala too has left many an indelible marks in the history of this land. His services to Buddhism, Sinhala race and culture and the language is unparalleled in the history of the nation.

Having ascended to the throne in 1635 at the age of 27, he ruled for 52 years, and died at 79 years on 6th December 1687. The Senkadagala Kingdom established in 1463 by its founder Sena Samanatha Wickramabahu, had as its last Sinhala Monarch Narendrasinghe up to 1739. The period beginning from 1592 up to the time of the enthroning of Wimaladharmasuriya, was a period of turmoil and constant wars in the Kingdom. There were threats to peace in the country, both from Rajasinghe of Sitawaka and the Portuguese, as a result of which the people of the Kingdom had to spend most of their time in the battlefield. It was natural in this background for any creative work - art and literature - to be retarded in its progress. Even Buddhism was gradually losing its prominence in the Sinhala society. Educational Institutions in the Kotte era such as Totagamuwe, Vidagama and Keragala monasteries were gradually fading away, and when it came to the period of Senkadagala Kingdom there were no educational Institutions to improve the knowledge in arts, religion and other fields.

Even Senerath who succeeded Wimaladharmasuriya had to spend most of his time in the battlefield warding off Portuguese encroachment. It was in this background that Rajasinghe 11 had to face Azavedo in the battle of Randeniwela and show his valour as a soldier. Arts and literature in the Kandyan kingdom received a boost during the period of his reign from 1634 to 1684 for nearly half a century. It was during this period that a separate Department for state correspondence was set up. The seven types of documents that were preserved in the custody of this department were Sannas, Tudapath, Seettu, Divi Seettu, Watoru, Vittipoth and Thalapath. Hence it is observed that it was during this period that the practice of documentation and keeping records of important national events commenced. The king had to devote most of his time to preserve the territorial integrity of the kingdom and arts and religion had to take a back seat. The famous Sinhala poet Alagiyawanna Mukaveti lived during this period and some of the best creations of Sinhala literature saw the light of the day during this period. Subasitaya, Sevul Asna (^iejq,a wiak) & Kusajathakaya, Parangi Hatana are some of these works. The king himself was a lover of literature and a poet who encouraged writing. Viridu recitals were introduced to Sinhala literature during his rule.

Another poet, Kirimatiyawe Mohattala who lived during this time introduced "Viridu" to Sinhala literature. The king was so fond of poetry that poets were readily accommodated in his royal court. He gave them land as royal grants. Satan Kavi, Nelum Kavi, Pel Kavi were added to the Sinhala literature during this period. The king was conversant in both Portuguese and Dutch languages and encouraged the writing of books. The king had a habit of travelling in the country in civilian garb to see for himself how his subjects were faring. On such a visit to Talagune in Uda Dumbara, he saw a village damsel and recited a poem impromptu.

It was during this reign that Buddhist Jataka Stories were recited in the form of Sinhala poems. Kusa Jataka was one such story. This Sinhala poem is still in the memory of the Sinhala masses.

The king was fond of wild animals and he had a zoo in Senkadagala. It is said that the king often visited Bintanne in search of animals for his zoo. He got these animals through Veddas in Bintanne. The king maintained a stable of horses brought from Arabia. The Dutch dominated trade in the sea coast, in terms of an agreement signed with king Senerath. The Dutch had the intention of monopolising the trade activities in the eastern coast too. The Portuguese General Constantine De Saa who was in Ceylon was planning to break the trade monopoly of the Dutch. De Saa was interested in the Trincomalee Harbour as they could survey all ships coming to the Eastern coast from their fortress on the Koneswaram Hill. The king attacked the fortress in 1622, and annexed Trincomalee to the Kandyan kingdom.

Constantine De Saa who anticipated attacks when his forces were sent to Badulla through Balana decided to march through Wellawaya. The Portuguese set fire to the city of Badulla, and on their return they were confronted at Randeniwela where fierce fighting took place. De Saa who was shot with an arrow by a Sinhala soldier, had his head severed. His head was brought before the king and displayed. The Portuguese retreated after this battle and four Lascarin chiefs of the battalion, Don Alexio, Don Thiodisgo, Don Cosmo Kulatunga and Don Balthasa joined the Sinhalese troops. It was difficult for the Portuguese to find a suitable successor to De Saa for some time, and finally they sent Diago De Mello. De Mello took in to his custody an elephant belonging to the king, and the king was so angry over the incident that took by force two horses belonging to De Mello. De Mello asked the king to return his horses but the king asked Mello to bring his elephant to Kandy and remove his two horses. De Mello, dissatisfied with the order of the king, challenged the king to war with him and engaged a kafir troop to battle for him. Fierce fighting broke out at Gannoruwa on 28th March 1638 and all the troops except 33 Portuguese soldiers were killed in the battle. The remaining Portuguese also joined the Sinhalese. The heads of all who died in this battle were heaped together making it difficult to identify the head of De Mello. Only his sword was identified. The king was overjoyed at this victory and offered his golden throne and sword to Dodanwela Devalaya. After this battle the Portuguese never set eyes on the Kandyan Kingdom. Like Rajasinghe 1 of Sitawake, Rajasinghe 11 of Senkadagala is also recorded as a great fighter in the annals of the history of our country. Rajasinghe 11 with his father Senerath and cousins Kumarasinghe and Wijepala fought the Mulleriyawa battle in 1624, Battle of Jaffna in 1628, battle of Randeniwela in 1630 and the Gannoruwa battle in 1638 according to record, to free the land from foreign domination.

Strict security measures were introduced to guard the kingdom. It was during his regime that guards were placed at the entrance to the kingdom. Nalanda, Rattota, Kaikawala, Hulangamuwa, Kadawathgama, Balakaduwa, Girihagama, Kadawatha, Avissawella, Ulapane, Kadugannawa were some of the posts known as "Kadawatha". A toll was collected from outsiders entering the kingdom. This toll fee was known as "Madige Badda". Those entering through Kadawatha had to go through the Totamunas at Gatambe, Paranagantota, Meewatura, Gonawatte. After Totamuna was the Wahalkada or gate. The eastern Wahalkada was at Buwelikada, the western one near Kataragama Devale, Northern in Trincomalee street near the present Municipal office and the Southern gate near the present Katukele Gana Devi kovila. Those in charge of Totamuna and Wahalkada were known as Katupulle troops. Those in

charge of Kadawath were known as Atapattu troops. These troops were in charge of the Prime Minister. The Adigar of Pallegampaha was the Prime Minister. The king was able to annex the Portuguese ports of Batticaloa, Negombo and Trincomalee to his kingdom. In 1641 he also annexed the Galle port having chased the Portuguese away. It was during his regime that the Portuguese were driven away and the Dutch invited to the country, on account of which the popular proverb "ආරාධනා කොට දුටු" came into usage.

The king was not only a warrior and an able administrator but a hunter well-versed in the use of bow and arrow, a poet and a nature lover and above all a ruler who personally visited the villages to observe their living conditions.

One day the king was going to the Nilambe area through a path frequented by a wild buffalo. A man who saw the king advised him not to take that path. The king smiled and walked forward. Just then they heard the wild buffalo approaching the king. The man hurriedly climbed a Kitul tree and covered his eyes. The king used his bow and arrow and struck the animal down in one shot. The man on the tree looked below to see what had happened to the king. To his surprise he saw the wild buffalo dead on the ground and the king standing near the buffalo. When the man walked up to the king, the king removed the pair of buffalo horns and asked the man to bring it to the palace the following day. It was only when he went to the palace that he realised that the man he saw was the king himself. The king granted him a village and an honorary title "Angamma Ranpathhida Divakara Mudiyanse". The village Angamma in Kandy district Uda Palatha Kandukara Pahala Korale.

The king was a short stout person who grew a beard, who had little hair on his head. He was a fearless warrior. The famous astrologer Diyakelinawala who cast his horoscope has predicted that he would be a brave and illustrious ruler of Ceylon. He was also known as Bintanne Deviyo as he was believed to have been born in Devamedda in Bintanne. When there were threats to his life, he left his palace in Nilambe, to Hanguranketha and Medamahanuwara to escape from the enemy. His illustrious and colourful life ended after a rule of 52 years on 6th December 1687. The nation is indebted to him for freeing the country from Portuguese and Dutch invaders. (@ The Island)

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# Kandyan Kingdom - King Keerthi Sri Rajasingha and British Envoy John Pybus

(@ The Island; by Deepthi Anura Jayatunge)

## Summary

**John Pybus** writer of English East India Company Met King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe in 1762, as the King wanted to expel the Dutch with the assistance of the British. John Pybus gives a comprehensive description of the King. The golden State sword seen by Pybus possibly is the one now displayed in Rijks Museum in Netherlands, and the King's garments could now be seen at the Dalada Maligawa museum. This article also gives an overview of sound foreign policy adopted by the of the Kandyan kingdom during 1762 British Negotiations.

King Narendrasinghe (1707-1730) of Kundasale was the last Sinhalese King to rule Kandy. He married Malabar queen Udumulle Devi who was the elder sister of Sri Wijaya Rajasinghe (1739-1747) who ruled from Hanguranketha. King Wijaya Rajasingha was married to the elder sister of King Keerthi Sri Rajasingha (1747-1782). King Keerthi Sri Rajasingha's own brother, Rajadi Rajasinghe (1782-1796) ruled Kandy after him.

In 1796 King of Kandy, Rajadi Rajasinghe was deposed and Kannasami, son of a sister of one of his queens was raised to the throne by first Adigar Pilimatalawe under the name of Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe. The new king was but eighteen years old. This misdeed cost Adigar Pilimathalawe his head and Adigar Ehelepola his honour. Many other Kandyans who got caught in this power struggle lost both.

## **Mutthusami executed in 1803**

Main while the rival element to the throne Mutthusami or Buddasami, whose three sisters had married the disposed King, fled to the British territory and was accorded a residence in Jaffna. British Governor North put the Mutthusami on the throne when he took Kandy in February 1803. Subsequently Captain Davis and his troops surrendered to army of King Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe and Mutthusami was executed along with his brother in 1803.

## **Mampitiya Wahala Bandara executed in 1812**

King Keerthi Sri married the two daughters of the grand son of the King of Tanjore and had four children (three daughters and one son). He also married the daughter of Mampitiya Disawa and had five children including Mampitiya Wahala Bandara who was subsequently executed by King Sri Wickrama in 1812, at Hunukotuwa near Gatambe, claiming that he may usurp the Kingdom. Mampitiya Bandara who lived in retirement at Mampitiya was brought to Kandy few years ago and became Diyawadana Nilame of Maligawa. He was accused of writing secret letters to

Ehelepola at Sabaragamuwa (Rathnapura). Another crime which he was charged was incest with his sister of which the King had before warned him, but he did not desist.

### **Marumakkathayam law of Malabar**

The throne passed almost always from father to the son born to a Maheshi, or from brother to brother. But in Sri Lanka it so happened that the throne was passed over to the brother-in-law who earlier had no claim to it. But this happened only when the King did not have any legal heirs to the throne.

According to Dr Devaraja, Professor of History, the choice of the brothers-in-law (Sri Wijaya and Keerthi Sri Rajasinha) was influenced by Marumakkathayam law prevailing among the Nayaks settled in Malabar. Here fathers were practically ignored in the law, and descent was traced entirely through the mothers. This law allowed nephews or elder brother or a kinsman of the female side to succeed to the leadership.

### **East India Company founded in 1600**

The English East India Company Founded by charter in 1600, was granted a monopoly of trade in the East Indies. In 1635 Courteen Association or "Assada Merchants " were also granted, for financial consideration, a license by Charles 1, to participate in the Eastern Trade. This rivalry followed by the troubles of the English Civil war 1642-48 was disastrous to the interests of both companies. When the commonwealth was established the exclusive rights of the company had virtually disappeared and what little was left was lost in the war with Dutch. In 1657 after this war Cromwell brought about a new company with a fresh charter. The Company was recognised on a joint stock basis and vested with monopoly of the Eastern trade. The 1657 Charter and the five charters, which were subsequently granted by Charles 11, laid the foundation of the Company's fortunes in India. The latter half of the seventeenth century in particular was a period of unprecedented prosperity.

Since the Dutch were well established in the East Indies, English efforts from the beginning were centred in India. Fort St. George (Madras) was founded in 1639, while Fort William , was subsequently to grow up in to the city of Calcutta, was founded near the mouth of the Ganges in 1651. In 1661, Bombay was acquired, by the English from Portugal.



The statue of King Keerthi Sri wearing his crown, manthe, shirt and saravalya at Dambulla Temple

### **Governor of Fort St George, George Baron Pigot (b 1719-1777)**

George Pigot, Governor Fort St George Madras was requested to send a person from there to Kandyan court by King Keerthi Sri for assistance against his enemies, the Dutch. King has appointed a Council of Adigars and Dissawas to meet and negotiate with Pybus. Main idea of British had been to obtain the monopoly of trading in Cinnamon, Pepper, Beetle Nut (puwak) from Kandyan Kings and in the course to expel Dutch from their fortifications.

George Baron Pigot (1719-1777) became the Governor and Commander in Chief in 1755. He stoutly defended Madras against French (1758-1759). He was arrested and deposed by his counsel in 1776 and died in Madras.

### **John Pybus**

John Pybus was born in 1728, and served in the East India Company as a writer, and met King Keerthi Sri Rajasingha in 1762. He was 34 years old and was described as a man of tolerable stature, reddish in complexion and very brisk in his movements.

### **Reason to call on British for assistance by the Kandyan King in 1762**

After the treaty of Paris, the Dutch were able to pour troops into Sri Lanka. They were bent on capturing Kandy from six directions (1764). And anticipating such a scenario King Keerthi Sri Rajasingha had sent an envoy to the English Governor of Madras to assist him to expel Dutch.

### **Kandyan envoy in Madras**

This envoy, a junior Kandyan Official in military service (person commanding around 60 men), did not carry any letter for fear of it falling into Dutch hands, and the English responded by sending their councillor Mr Pybus. The English declared that King Keerthi Sri Rajasingha was an independent Sovereign, with the right to negotiate with whomever he thought fit.

The Dutch had placed spies in Kandy and they were kept informed of all the movements of the English man since his arrival in Trincomalee harbor. The English had sailed in five ships and the Kandyan Mohandiram had a suite of about 200 men and as a result the Dutch could not use any force to capture him even on his return trip from Kandy. Dutch Commander Rein in Trincomalee reported to Governor Van Eck that his spies informed him that the court dignitaries were disinclined to negotiate with him (Pybus) but the King was favorable to his propositions.

### **Route Taken by John Pybus to Kandy**

A British vessel brought Pybus to Trincomalee on 5th May 1762. Early morning he set foot at Muttur, and travelled through woods to Periaveli, Malikaturu, Menakam

and Kilivedi and halted for that day. On the next day he reached the banks of Mahaweli ganga and crossed over to Sungaveli. He went past Giritale, Padupitiya, Minneriya and crossed Kirioya at Notchiyakulan and then to Gonawa. From there he went to Naula and Nalanda on 15th May. He was taken to Palapathwela, and entered the Kandyan Country and was first housed in Gannoruwa. Then in Kandy, On 24th May 1762 he was brought ceremonially before the King. After several discussions with the King and palace officials such as Adikaram and Dissawas he left Kandy on 21st June 1762, without making any conclusive promises claiming that he has no such authority but will place the request made by the king before the Madras Council.

The King gave him a ring, sword, a gold chain with breast jewels and left the country crossing the river at Puttalam Pass. He came to Cottiar, Trincomalee on 3rd July 1762 and went aboard "Falmouth" to return to Madras. The Dissawa who accompanied "Pybus" presented the ship's commander "Admiral Cornish" a gold chain and a ring in the name of King "Keerthi Sri Rajasinha".

### **Attack On Dutch Forts by King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha**

In 1761 King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha attacked the Dutch garrisons and forts at Matara, Katuwana, Tangalle, Marakade and Urubokke, completely destroying them, and killing Dutch prisoners surrendered.

In order to revenge the humiliation, the new Dutch Governor Van Eck (1762-1765) had immediate plans to attack Kandy, which he did in 1764 and in 1765. His army was under the command of Colonel Jan Jurgen Feber and with Van Eck, he being in supreme command.

Following the attack on the Dutch forts in 1761, the weakness in fortification and garrison forbade the use of force by the Dutch. Hence, in the early part of 1763 the Dutch were only consolidating their positions and gradually expelling Kandyans from the territories taken over from the Dutch. Throughout 1763 the King continually sought peace and sent his envoys to discuss terms. The Governor wished the King to cede the three, four and seven Korales and Puttalam and hand over the entire coastline of the island to the Dutch. The King was not agreeable to any demand that diminished his sovereignty and was deliberately delaying a settlement hoping for help from the English after his discussion and negotiations with John Pybus (1762).

### **Spices - Cinnamon**

Pybus also reported that valuable spices grow mainly in Colombo and Matara area. In the year 1761 Salagama people were ordered by the King to destroy all the cinnamon they had collected and come up to Kandy and now employed in paddy plantation. Peeling cinnamon was considered a very dangerous job because of the attacks of elephants, wild buffaloes, and tigers and the other beasts roaming in these areas.

### **Elephants**

Dutch also traded in elephants and exported them with much profit. But as the King reserves the sole prerogative of catching these animals, the Dutch was obliged as a matter of formality to make application to the King annually for his permission, which

always granted to them, under a restriction not to exceed such a number, generally limited between 20 and 30.

Little regard was however paid to this restriction and Pybus was informed that the Dutch do not catch less than 150 some times 200 in one year from Mathra, Colombo & Jaffna areas where the animals are caught mainly. Dutch paid for the people for the trouble in catching them at the rate of 50 Rijkx Dollars for Tuskers and 25 for the elephants.

### **Kandyan King**

The country has plenty and great variety of timber with great height and size for natives to make buildings from this timber. The King still maintains the authority of a free and independent Sovereign prince and does actually exercise such authority in most absolute manner in every other part of his dominion.

### **Imports to Kandy in 1762**

Kandyan people needed few imported items like silk, tea, sugar, candy, chinaware, and Japanese copper from Batavia, Iron and steel for knives, mamootys, musket barrels, and lances. For items imported from Bengal, cloth etc. The Dutch had imposed an import duty of 15%. The Ceylonese had little money and barter system prevailed mostly.

Dutch further did pearl fishery on the Bay of Trincomalee and dug for precious stones such as sapphires, topazes and rubies at Matara and Colombo. They also sold arrack according to John Pybus thus completing the systematic destruction of this paradise Island.

### **King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha**

Pybus claims that the present king (1762) has three daughters and a son, is the first of four succeeding ones who had had any issue, in default queen's brother or nearest relation succeeds to the throne. It is a custom among them to have the Queen from some part of the coast of Coromandel and of Gentoo caste (Telugu speaking Hindus) and brought from Madras, Tanjore, or Mysore. King is between thirty and forty years of age, and has three wives all from the coast, whose father, the brother and relations came as usual; but the brothers have since been sent back to their own country, on the discovery of a plot laid against the Kings life by the father of one wives, in favour of his son. The present king is from Madura country and when as a child of four years of age came over with his father mother and other relations, at the time his sister came to be married to King Vijaya Rajasinha.

### **Guns and gun powder**

Kandyan's had Harquebusses and Pedrero or mounted gingals (small cannons) for firing 4 to 8 ounce balls and King had two carriage mounted cannons at his palace. They manufacture gunpowder with saltpeter near Matale from dung of certain bats and human urine, but brimstone must be imported.



## War with Dutch

Pybus was amazed as to how the kandyans had managed to fight a war with Dutch and had captured Matara Dutch Fort. He wrote that "They had put every European to the sword except two officers who are now prisoners of the country."

"The Galagoda adigar who captured Matara thinking himself very formidable with number of great guns he had found in fort, and that he can maintain his grounds posted himself on the sea coast with few rebels of Matara. He was surprised by a detachment of 200 Europeans, which were landed in the night from some ships sent from Colombo captured back all his cannons. at present Dutch are confined with in their forts being continuously harassed by the Sinhalese."

In his report to George Pigot pybus confirms that " I avoided thought with much difficulty making any conclusive promises engagements or agreements subjecting every proposal of mind and demand of theirs to your resolution and determination. I found they expected in return for my any indulgencies or privileges granted to us , that we should assist them both by sea and land against Dutch, which was not only contrary to your declared intention, but in consistent likewise with in the treaties subsisting with in the two nations. He also observed that King himself entertains an implacable enmity against the Dutch and would almost agree to any term to induce us to drive Dutch off the island.

### Report of Dutch Commander Rein of Trincomalee

On the 1 st of May 1762, the English Admiral Cornish arrived at Trincomalee with five ships and asked permission to enter the inner bay since some of them needed repairs, which was granted by the Dutch. Soon they learnt that a Kandyan Envoy had come with them from Madras and had gone towards Kandy with an Englishman. The Dutch set guards on the shores and a small vessel to prevent any small boat leaving the bay. However, Rein did not believe these reports from the spies as Admiral Cornish had been a stern commander and been very friendly towards the Dutch and refusing to entertain any request from Sinhalese.

Very soon Rein was informed, from Nagapatam, that the British Envoy had now reached Gannoruwa and had not had an audience yet with the King; and this made him double his guards. However, Admiral Cornish entirely denied the report when encountered. On the Englishman's return from Kandy, the spies informed Rein that an English long boat had left the Trincomalee inner bay heading for Coetjaar possibly to pick the English man. Admiral Cornish was advised not to land there as the Dutch Company had exclusive possession of the Island. Cornish replied that he must seek provision for his men and if the Dutch would supply them he would abandon this project. To this, Rein made a protest in writing understanding his weakness in fortification and garrisons that stops him from using any form of force over the English.

Since then, Rein received reports that three mast English vessels were sighted and the `ECFalmouth` EC with Cornish on board had sailed to meet them, and then anchoring near Coetjaer. An Englishman had then come to Coetjaer and had embarked in one of the ships , been accompanied and seen off by the Dissawa ( Governor of a Kandyan Province ) of Thamblegam. The vessel Falmouth was a 499

toner in service between 1752 to 1764 and finally completed 5 voyages for the East India Company.

Protest Made by Van Eck ( 1762-1765 ) Dutch Governor to George Pigot of Madras

Immediately the Dutch Governor Lubbert Jan Van Eck ( 1762-1765 ) protested to George Pigot, the English President and Governor of Madras, and informed him that no English vessel will be permitted to enter Trincomalee Bay until the States General decides on the matter. However, Van Eck sent separate orders to Rein at Trincomalee that this order obviously does not apply to English ships in distress.

Van Eck further complained that Admiral Cornish, who stayed in the Bay of Trincomalee for more than two months and received all possible assistance from Dutch, took advantage of his indulgence and facilities to set an English envoy ashore.

Reply given by English to Van Eck

On this threat, the commissioners of the English Company admitted ( to Van der hoop at Amsterdam ) that they had sent someone to the king. Obviously they have refused his first invitation to do so, until the King had declared that if they would not come, he would call in someone else. After they sent someone, they found that the King desired their help against the Dutch, and therefore he broke off all negotiations with the King. And further their envoy has now left the Kandyan court.

Further Protests of Van Eck 1763

Van Eck`EDs protests also reached Mr Doreen of East India House who advised the Earl of Sandwich, in a letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1763 stating that `EC It is very extraordinary that the Dutch Company should desire us to send further orders to prevent acts of Violence in India. We do positively order and direct that you do not commit any hostility or act of violence against Dutch Company agents: on the contrary, you are to use your best endeavors to cultivate, a good understanding with them. It being our sincere desire, and intention that the Dutch Company shall enjoy Freedom of Trade, Safety and Protection equally with ourselves.`EE

This matter concerning the negotiation between English and Kandyans even reached the attention of His Highness the Majesty. The Lord XVII has advised H.H.M. who instructed his minister at the British Court to make the necessary representations, and that the Majesty has the hope that no further support will be given to the Kandyan court , at least openly, since the Directors of the English Company have declared that they have ordered Madras to abstain from all further negotiations with King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha ( 1747-1782 ).

Attack on Kandy By Van Eck ( 1764 )

It seems that Dutch Governor Van Eck took all possible precautions and assurance from the English in order to embark on his attack on Kandy in 1764. His campaign failed miserably as the Dutch Garrison could not reach even Kandy. However he kept a garrison at Gonavila, which he intended to use as a base for future operations. The first Adigar Galagoda who was the Dissawa of Seven Korales in which Gonavila lay

was especially interested to ensure that the place be evacuated. But Major Pierre Duffo who was in Command successfully repulsed him.

#### Second attack on Kandy by Van Eck 1765 AD

Van Eck, on his second campaign, reached Katugasthota and the King sent a delegation headed by newly appointed First Adigar Pilimatalawe for negotiations. The ambassador was received with royal honors but any self-respecting monarch could not agree to the demands made by Van Eck. The Governor felt that the King was dragging the negotiations and ordered the looting of the city. The booty was so rich and consisted of finest linen, precious stones, gold, silver, jewels etc. Van Eck even looted the riches that the pious devotees had offered Dalada Maligawa. Buried behind the palace was the silver covering of the relic casket weighing 210 pounds. The Governor melted the casket and distributed this silver among his soldiers , after carrying this to Colombo. He also took the golden state sword ( seen by Pybus ) from the palace and this is now in display at Rijkx museaum in Netherlands stating that gold sword acquired by Van Eck in his 1765 campaign owned by King of kandy Keerthi Sri Rajasinha.

#### Death of Van Eck

Van Eck was soon to pay the price for his victory and plunder and soon died as a very unhappy man. As the king had gone to Uva , Van Eck now had to return back to Colombo and his retreating army was attacked at Vishnavaya and Gonavila. It is said that the disappointment had more to do with his death than his illness. The Chulavansa says `EC Van Eck left Kandy, fled with out prestige and landed in the fire.`EE

#### Original Letter brought by Pybus ( 1762 )

When Van Eck took Kandy in 1765 the original letter from Madras brought by Phybus was found in the looted palace. This letter stated that Mr Phybus on his arrival would inform duly whatever the proposals that the English had discussed with Mohandiram Oedejaar (Junior Kandyan Official) at Madras.

Pybus proposed the following articles to the King, for his determination and requiting permission for :

English East India Company to establish a settlement in Ceylon ,

English to buy cinnamon on same conditions as Dutch did ,

Pepper & Betel nut to be sold only to British here after ,

The King's subject be given have authority to sell their goods to British

That they be prohibited to trade with other merchants ( Dutch , Muslims )

Kings approval for English to buy timber, and employ local labor for construction of their forts.

Construct or demolish any building that they may require at any place as they wish to build their fortifications,

Deserters or run-a ways from English Settlements to be returned back to British (relating mainly to runaway criminals and slaves.)

That English Law prevails at English settlements

Provisions & Transportation ( carriage Bullocks ) to be provided to British for Troops that are deployed by King for his services

Kings approval for British Officers to travel on horseback or in Palanquin when traveling with in the country.

Batta to be paid to them ( when they are in kings services) based on amounts paid to them while in field as allowed to them in the coast of Coromandel , India.

Any military stores broken or lost in the King` EDs services to be paid up by the King.

Some Districts in Ceylon to be given to British to cover their military expenses relating to their fortifications etc, by taxing the inhabitants.

Reply Given by the King to 14 articles submitted by Pybus

For this King Replied as follows, and his letter was dated 24 June 1762,

No answer was given regarding the English Settlement to be established,

King stated that English should employ Kandyan peelers at one pagoda per month. He also explained that Dutch employed cinnamon peelers who made it a practice to steal the cinnamon and to complain to Dutch that Kandyans molested them.

King agreed that pepper & Betel should be freely traded with British

Kings subjects were permitted to freely trade with British

Reply did not mention regarding trade embargos with others traders,

English to buy timber & employ local labor to construct their fortifications.

They were permitted to construct or demolish any building in this process,

Deserters to be returned (both ways)

English Law to Prevail at English Settlements that are to be established,

Provisions & Transportation to be provided by the King to English troops when deployed on Kings orders,

British officers to travel on horse back or palanquins as they wish,

Article on batta payment to troops was not mentioned in the King`EDs reply

This article to compensate for military losses was refused by the king as the English will be given all,( once the Dutch are expelled, ) Dutch forts , Guns , Arms , Treasures and some districts for the use of fort Trincomalee,

District to cover British military expenses was refused, as their normal trading hence permitted should cover these expenses,( from their trading profits.)

Further Proposals of Kandyans

The Kandyans further proposed the following clauses for British for implementation once the Treaty is finalized,

Joint action against all invaders in future

Joint investigation of disputes in frontiers both British & Kandy,

Kandyan ships , to be assisted at English Settlements

Criminals who are taking refuge in English Settlements to be returned back to Kandy

The English to Import goods that are needed by Kandyans

( Mutilated )

The English to send yearly embassy to Kandyan King with presents

The Kandyan court to have their agents in English settlements

1602 AD and 1638 AD Dutch treaties with Emperor Senarath & King Rajasinghe

Pybus requested that he be furnished with the original treaties with Dutch or copies of them and these treaties were read to him. Dutch treaties concluded earlier was on similar lines and 1602 AD treaty had 45 articles and the important ones being,

They should faithfully help each other against all enemies especially against Portuguese.

Others were mainly on permission to built fortresses, Dutch to have their agents in Kandyan Court , Permission to trade with Dutch , Permission for Kings subject to trade with Dutch , King to provide wood for building of their ships , to release all Dutch prisoners held by the King , that Dutch law prevails at Dutch Settlements , pearls only to be sold to Dutch , Emperor Senarath should only mint money and no one else , any counterfeiters to be punished by the pain of death etc.

This treaty was then sent to Batavia for ratification through Marcellus Boschhouvers ( Styled great prince of Negambo ) but he died in the return journey in 1618. He was unable to obtain the concurrence of Dutch for this treaty but managed to negotiate

with Danes and floated the Danish East India Company of Copenhagen , arriving in Ceylon in 1620 with six ships after great hardship and major loss of life.

King Senarath refused the honor the Boschhouvers contract with Danes ( on 30 th March 1618 ), after learning of his death , as he had already made peace with Portuguese in 1617.

### **Treaty Concluded with by Dutch with King Rajasinha on 23 May 1638**

Dutch made a treaty again with King Rahasinghe in 1638 in the name of Prince of Orange and had all most similar articles. This treaty was sent to Batavia for ratification accompanied with two Kandyan Chiefs and was brought back with the required certification.

### **King of Kandy Keerthi Sri Rajasinha**

The British Envoy John Phybus met the Kandyan King on 24 th May 1762 and he describes in detail the garments, belts and jewels worn by King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha. In the Dambula rock temple there is a statue of King Keerthi Sri constructed during his lifetime ( larger than life ) and this clearly matches with John Pybus` EDs description of the King and garments he wore.

The King wanted Pybus to sit in such a manner as was most easy to him. He writes `EC I had but a very indifferent view of the King, to distinguish his dress ; but the upper Garment seemed to be an open Robe of Gold Tissue, with a close vest underneath, and broad belt richly embroidered with gold round his waist. He had upon his head a cap of scarlet cloth embroidered with Gold, much in the form of an American Cap, upon the top of which was a small crown set with precious stones ; several rings in his finger: a short dagger in his left hand , the hilt of which was of Gold set with Precious stones; and on his right side was a large broad Sword , not Grit upon him but resting against the chair of state: it` EDs hilt likewise was of Gold richly set with Precious Stones. His shoes were made in the manner of the Chinese Sandals, of crimson Velvet embroidered with Gold, and a plate of Gold seems to run round the outside of the shoe` EE.

#### **Gold State Sword**

Van Eck took the above-mentioned gold state sword at the time he looted Kandy in 1765, and presently in display at the Rijks Mesueam in Netherlands. Professor P H D H De Silva who had examined this sword states that this has a gold handle, 81 centimeters long and studded with 136 precious stones.

#### **Dress of King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha**

Several garments worn by King keerthi Sri on such occasions could now be seen at the Sri Dalada Maligawa Museum and they are described as follows:

#### **Head Cover**

Kings head cover was prepared out of cloth, with golden embroidery work. The King used this on occasions, such as giving audience to special Invitees and dignitaries except at times he wore the crown.

#### Manthe

The chest piece worn over the upper garments around the neck is known as "Manthe."

#### Karavaniya

The Cotton Cloth about 8 `9E feet long having embroidery with gold thread and King wears this over the Trouser ( Sarvalaya ) and known as " Karaweniya ".

#### Shirt

A Cotton shirt was worn covering the upper front of the body. Over this shirt the King used to wear a jacket over which the " manthe "was worn.

#### Saravale

The King wore a trouser covering the lower part of the body. It had been prepared in fine cotton with floral embroidery work.

#### Handkerchiefs

Different handkerchiefs were used during special Occasions, such as carrying in hand , offering alms to the sacred tooth relic, wearing around neck when the King carried the golden pongo, and a special handkerchief was used by the King when kneeling down and worshipping.

#### Out Come of Pybus Embassy 1762

As English did not want to enter in to a direct conflict with Dutch , they broke off all negotiations with him after they found that King desired their help against Dutch both by sea and land. The Directors of English Company declared that they have ordered Madras to abstain from all further negotiations ( October 1764 ) with King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha paving way for Dutch Governor Van Eck to attack Kandy unchallenged destroying the heritage of a proud nation.

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-T he Pybus embassy to Kandy, 1762 by Major R Ravan-Hart edited by P E P Deraniyagala

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- Museum at Dalada Maligawa

#### Summary

John Pybus writer of English East India Company Met King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe in 1762, as the King wanted to expel the Dutch with the assistance of the British. John Pybus gives a comprehensive description of the King. The golden State sword seen by Pybus possibly is the one now displayed in Rijkx Mesueam in Netherlands, and the King`EDs garments could now be seen at the Dalada Maligawa museum. This article also gives an over view of sound foreign policy adopted by the of the Kandyan kingdom during 1762 British Negotiations. ([Kandyan Kingdom - King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha and British Envoy John Pybus \( 1762 AD \)](#) by Deepthi Anura Jayatunge)

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# Last King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Raja Singha

(by S. B. Karalliyadde)



[Sri Wickrama Raja Singha](#)

Dumbara is the land where several of our illustrious kings hailed from and it is a strange irony of fate that the last king of Sri Lanka was taken captive in this land.

Siri Sangabo (251-253 AD), the budding Buddha king, was born in Minipe now known as Uda Dumbara.

The last of these three brothers was Gotabaya (253-266). The two sons of this king were Jettatissa I (266-276) and Mahasena (276-303) who was also known as "Minneriya Deiyo". One son of Mahasena was Kithsirimevan alias Keerthi Sri Megawarna who ruled for twenty eight years from 303 to 331 AD. It was during his reign that the sacred Tooth Relic was brought by Hemamala & Danta. Dumbara occupies a

glorious place in annals of the history of our land as yet another king, the son of Jettatissa

II (331-340 AD) who was the 66th in the line of kings - Budhadasa (340-368) was a world renowned physician. The other sons of the soil gifted to the nation are great kings in the calibre of Wimaladharmasuriya I who freed us from Portuguese domination and brought our land under one flag and his step son, the great warrior King Rajasinghe II. What a cruel fate befell the people of Dumbara who led many a war for the unity of this country fighting with Cholas and the British? But as history unfolds subsequent events will show that none from Dumbara participated in this operation to capture the king. This article is an attempt to draw the attention of the public on the 188th anniversary of the episode.

Kannasamy, the 18 year old young Nayakkar youth was in Hanguranketa in-charge of the Royal treasury.

After the unexpected and sudden demise of Rajadi Rajasinghe (1782-1798) he was brought to Kandy and it was Pilimatalawe Adigar who later had to face a catastrophe who was responsible for crowning him as Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe. This tragic death of Rajadi Rajasinghe was on Monday 16th July, 1798 and the crowning of the new king was the following day with all the royal rituals observed. Pilimatalawa expected to succeed to the throne after this novice youth was expelled. This was the last Nayakkar king who ruled exactly for sixteen years, seven months and a day upto the Sunday 18th February, 1815.

This event marks the end of 2298 years beginning from Vijaya in 483 B.C. with a unbroken chain of kings who ruled our land. It was this heritage that we lost on this date. If we count on George III from Hanover dynasty who succeeded the Nayakkar and upto the Queen Elizabeth II we would have a continuous rule of 2455 years by kings.

By then Britain had become powerful in Europe. In 1803 Admiral Nelson defeated the French in the battle of Trafalgar. The defeat of Napoleon in the battle of Waterloo also gave the British a prominent place as a powerful nation. Added to these the British had a strong sea power.

In the meantime on 31st January, 1803 Major General Hay Macdowell led a troop of British soldiers from Colombo to capture Kandy. But this expedition was unsuccessful as it was attacked by the natives. In January 1815 the king of Kandy attacked the British garrison stationed at Sitawaka. This incident provoked the British to declare war against the Kandyan Kingdom for the second time. The British were able to win the support of Ehelepola who was Disawa of Sabaragamuwa.

Molligoda Maha Adikaram and several other leading Kandyan Chieftans. The British once again declared war against the Kandyan Kingdom on 10th January, 1815.

The British troops were joined by the chiefs who were ill disposed towards the king and the people of the Disawans under their leaders. Troops from all the areas marched surrounding Kandy. The British waited for an opportune moment to muster the support of the Sinhalese who were unhappy with the Nayakkar rule.

The atmosphere was created for the attack as the people waited for vengeance from the king for beheading Pilimatalawe (1812) who placed the king on the throne, the massacre of Ehelepola family, killing of 42 leading supporters of Ehelepola from Sabaragamuwa, killing of 70 leading persons from Hatkorale and various other instances of abuse by the king. By now the supporters of Ehelepola, Ekneligoda and Kodituwakku Nilame distanced themselves from the king.

On 10th February, 1815 the British entered Kandy city which was deserted by then. On the 19th D'Oyly wrote to the Governor Brownrigg.

'Dear Sir,

"I have the sincerest joy of reporting to your Excellency that the object of your anxious wishes is accomplished and the king of Kandy a captive in our hands in the precincts of Meda Maha Nuwara and taken an hour before dark in the house of Udupitiye Arachi at Galleyhewatte a mile beyond Meda Maha Nuwara with 2 of his queens".

"Ehelepola, Ekneligoda, Molligoda, Pilimatalawe Delwala Mahawelitenna joined in this expedition. Don Soloman Dias Bandaranayake Mudliyar of Siyane Korale assisted as the interpreter and Don Adrian Wijesinghe Jayawardhana Mudliyar of Chilaw accompanied as a guide. The king was taken to Colombo from where he finally sailed in a warship "Convallis" to Madras on 24th January, 1816. Sri Wickrama a man of dark complexion with a strong build and six feet two inches in height breathed his last on 30th January, 1832 at the age of 52 years.



# Queen Rengammal: Last Queen of Lanka

*(By Padma Edirisinghe)*

Destiny is very strange. Our last queen, Queen Rengammal hangs in a gilt-framed glass case adjacent to a drawing of the last king of Lanka, Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe and just behind the king's ornate throne and crown, proudly displayed to visitors to the Colombo Museum sited in an enviably green-carpeted vast land expanse in the "elite" area of the commercial capital of Sri Lanka. And in another large case in the proximity of these objects is exhibited "The queen's jacket". Both the queen and the queen's jacket are associated with a tale of much historical significance that reveals the high drama that tragically ended one of the longest running monarchies of the world.

Henry Marshall, an eye-witness Britisher to these events of the 19th century writes, that the news of the capture of the last king of Lanka and his family made the then British governor very emotional. In fact, Marshall had been having dinner with Governor Brownrigg at the Governor's House in Colombo when the news of the capture was brought in. On hearing this news Brownrigg had stood up with tears rolling down his cheeks. Why the emotion? To quote yet another English writer, "From this day we may date the extinction of Ceylonese independence, an independence which had continued for 2357 years."

Sad to say, it was a very ignominious end for such a long running monarchy whose kings included such illustrious personage as Dutugemunu, architect of Swarnamali Chaitya, empire-builders as Parakramabahu I who even defied mighty Indian powers. The tale of the capture of the king by the British and the intricate whirl of events leading to it, could form a separate essay and hence those facts are marginalized here, giving priority to the sad tale of Queen Rengammal.

Rengammal! Not a very familiar name, you would say. You are correct. She was not ethnically a Sinhalese and nor was the king, for that matter. That the last four kings of Lanka all hailed from the Malabar coast of India is well-known information. But the women of the Kandyan Court seem to have infiltrated into it even earlier from South India. The practice of bringing consorts from South India for the reigning princes of Kandy seems to have begun somewhere during King Rajasinghe II's time (1635-1687) and continued almost unbroken. In fact, when the last Sinhala king, Vira Parakrama Narendrasinghe was heirless, the South Indian queens' faction had grown so numerically strong as to enforce a new rule of dynasty that the throne should now pass to the queen's brother, ultimately making the kings too South Indians!

But those four kings were very tactful and had no ambition of projecting a South Indian identity here. They embraced Buddhism, took on Sinhala names and became the most ardent patrons of Buddhism and Sinhala literature, thus endearing the subjects to them till the estrangement between the last ruler and his subjects began. They seem to have been very fluent in Sinhala too, King Rajadhi Rajasinghe even authoring Sinhala books. But not the queens. In fact, when the leaders of the Sinhala faction who rose against them began harassing the queens at Meda Maha Nuwara,

records show that they clung to Mr. C.V. Dias, an ancestor of the Bandaranayaka family who had gone with the British party piteously crying out their sentiments and pleading for help in Tamil.

Meda Maha Nuwara off Teldeniya surrounded by rings off mountains was where our last king fled with his queens when he heard of the British advancing on them. Bitter internal politics had alienated his subjects, especially after the cruel massacre of the Ehelapola family. The whole royal family took refuge in a house belonging to one Bomure Udapitiya Arachchie at a time of fierce thunder and storm. The Sinhala faction headed by Eknaligoda Nilame and egged on by Ehelapola Maha Adikaram was too smart for them and soon the house was surrounded and the family subject to much ignominious treatment. The king had been stripped almost naked, abused in filthy language, kicked, spat upon and finally attempted to tie like a pig (all fours, hands and legs to be tied to a pole). Meanwhile the poor queens too were abused and their jackets torn off. It is Queen Rengammal's jacket deposited in a chest in a house of one Kiriporuwe Mudianse, a member of the faction who seethed with fury at the king's cruelty, that ultimately found its way to the Colombo Museum. A headmaster of the area, one Chandrasena had been instrumental in getting this jacket into the museum. Its authenticity has been proved by academic personnel due not to the particular texture of the jacket (of the related period) but due to the stain of human blood on the jacket. It is recorded that captors tore off the queen's jewellery and the stain has been caused by the dripping blood.

Two fifth or sixth generation descendants of two families closely connected to these events, the Eknaligoda family and the Rajapakse family, testify to a fierce vendetta to be orchestrated on the royal family. As a punishment for Ehelapola Maha Adikaram's desertion to the English, King Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe had massacred the Adikaram's children and later commanded Ehelapola Kumarihamy to slay her own infant which she refused to do. The king then had her and a relative of hers drowned in the Bogambara Lake.

*"The waters of the lake are blent with blood no more  
Its lovely banks are no more stained with crimson gore  
No wretched queen with sword her dear-loved children slay  
No more she tracks her doom upon the watery way"*

*From "The life of Ehelapola" by Pohath Kehelpannala*

Now the plan by Ehelapola Maha Adikaram and Eknaligoda Diswawa and their faction had been to stage a fierce "Eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" vendetta using the queens. They were to be stripped to the bare minimum like Chandalee women, marched to Kandy all the way from Meda Maha Nuwara in that disgraceful state and drowned in the very Bogambara Lake where the Kumarihamy was drowned.

However, before further ignominy could be orchestrated, John D" Oyley and his party had arrived on the scene and rescued the royal party. They were then taken to Colombo via Negombo (a secret route) and kept as prisoners in Fort till they were finally deported to Vellore where they remained till their death. In 1934 during Governor Stubbs's time the regalia confiscated by the British in 1815 and taken to

England were returned to our country in the ship Sussex. In 1936 a beautiful portrait of Queen Rengammal had begun to adorn the wall calendars. (It is the same portrait that is displayed at the Colombo Museum). She is fully dressed here, in a strangely attractive blend of Western style gown and Eastern shawl and robe. According to certain historians whose ancestors had been eye-witnesses to the famous drawing of the queen, it had been done by a white artist (while his wife fussed about Rengammal adjusting frills and drapes) during the time of the queens" imprisonment in the Fort in the vicinity of the Beira Lake. This lake covered Colombo with its waters more generously than now. (Since those times much land from Beira Lake has been reclaimed for putting up buildings in land-hungry Colombo).

Maybe as Queen Rengammal posed on the picturesque banks of Beira rather unwillingly for the portrait in a full fastidious dress designed by Dutch seamstresses of Pettah (according to a descendant of the Rajapakse family of Maradana in whose Walauwa or mansion the dress had been made), she remembered with horror that terrible day in Medamahanuwara at the base of Uragala hills when she was near naked as her captors tore off so cruelly the jacket that covered her beautiful bosom. Women paying for the foul deeds of their male counterparts? Rengammal clearly belongs to this category and also belongs to Sri Lanka"s colourful and turbulent pas

(Source: [Explore Sri Lanka](#))



# Capture and last days of Sri Vikrama Rajasinha

(@ The Island; by M. B. Dassanayake)

**Reigned for 17 years from 1798-1815. Deported to Vellore on January 24, 1816. Lived as a captive for 17 years. Died on January 30, 1832**



Sri Vikrama Rajasinha who reigned for seventeen years from 1798-1815 A.D., as the last monarch of the Kandyan Kingdom was taken prisoner on the night of February 18, 1815, by an armed party of Ehelapola Disawe's adherents headed by Ekneligoda Dissawa and accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel Hook.

The monarch had taken refuge near Medamahanuwara gap, after evading Kandyan and British troops. He was accompanied by two of his wives and a few loyal followers who were prepared to defend him to the end. One or two men were killed on both sides and finally when the wall of the house where he was concealed was broken down he was exposed to all. Hated by his subjects as a tyrant, it was a new and painful experience for him to see an angry mob in the full glare of torchlight watching the proceedings with delight and rejoicing in the capture of the man who had watered the land with the blood and tears of the people.

He was bound with ropes and dragged to the nearest village by his own subjects. His subjects showed their contempt by upbraiding him, and by general insulting behaviour.

On the following morning, John D'Oyly (afterwards Sir John) called on the fallen monarch and found him surrounded by his old mother and wives, with their families. They were in a pitiable state of mind through having heard a rumour that they were to be treated as the King had been accustomed to treat the women of his foes, and that the King himself was to stand trial before the British Government. Mr. D'Oyly was able to pacify them with assurances that not only would the King and his families be safe, but that they would be treated with every respect due to their station.

The King was silent and sullen, but upon receiving this assurance, he was deeply stirred. Taking the hands of his mother and the wives in turn, he presented them to Mr. D'Oyly and commended them solemnly to his care.

Major Willeman, one of the Governor's staff, now appeared on the scene, and was introduced to the King. The monarch spoke bitterly of the treatment that had been meted out to him by his subjects, and, pointing to the bruises on his arms caused by the ropes, asked if that was considered fit for a King. The major expressed sympathies on behalf of the Governor, Sir Robert Brownrigg and the King declared that he regretted that he had not thrown himself on the generous protection of the British. All his wounds and insults were received from his own people.

Considering the spirit of the Kandyan unsafe, and deeming it inadvisable to rush taking him through Kandy, he was removed under a strong escort, mostly for his own protection, to Colombo.

### **In Colombo...**

The royal prisoner was entrusted to the care of Major Hook, and was taken with his wives to a large house in the Fort, which had been prepared for him. (This house I understand, was closer to the former military barracks).

Arriving in Colombo on March 6, the King and his wives were conveyed to their new residence where they were received with the greatest courtesy by Colonel Kerr, the Commandant.

The spacious house had been fitted up handsomely for the occasion. In the middle of the largest apartment was an ottoman, covered with scarlet cloth, upon which His Majesty, immediately on his entrance, sprang with great agility, and, seating himself in a most unkingly attitude, with his legs drawn under him, looked around the room, which he surveyed with great complacency. He was evidently both pleased and surprised at the apparent comfort of his new place of abode, contrasting, perhaps, the treatment he was now receiving from the British Government with that which our countrymen had received at his hands not many years ago. He instantly said, "as I am no long permitted to be a King, I am thankful for the kindness and attention which has been showered upon me."

Sri Vikrama Rajasinha was a handsome man. He was tall, corpulent and muscular in appearance, but he was absolutely devoid of humane feelings. He was witty, and was good humoured when it suited him, but the calm and quiet way in which he related some of his-murderous anecdotes, was as surprising as it was revolting. Murder and torture were apparent sport to him, and he could not understand why the British looked with abhorrence on the cutting of heads; flogging to death; impaling alive; tearing by elephants or pounding heads in a mortar.

### **The throne and sceptre...**

The King's throne and sceptre were found on the day that he was taken prisoner. The following is the description given by a British official.

"The ancient throne of the Kandyan sovereigns, for the last century and half, resembles a large old fashioned armchair such as is frequently seen in England. It is about five feet high at the back, three in breadth, and two in depth; the frame is of wood, entirely covered with thin gold sheeting (studded with precious stones), the exquisite taste and workmanship of which does not constitute the least of its beauties, and may vie with the best modern specimens of the works of goldsmiths.

The most prominent and striking features in this curious relic are two golden lions or sphinxes, forming the arms of the throne or chair, of a very uncouth appearance, but beautifully wrought - the heads of the animals being turned outwards in a peculiarly graceful manner. The eyes are formed of entire amethysts, each rather larger than a musket ball. Inside the back, near the top, is a large golden sun from which the founder of the Kandyan monarchy is supposed to have derived his origin; beneath,

about the centre of the chair, and in the midst of some sunflowers, is an immense amethyst, about the size of a large walnut; on either side is a female deity in a sitting posture, of admirable design and workmanship; the whole encompassed by a moulding formed of bunches of cut crystal set in gold; there is a space around the back (without the moulding) studded with large amethysts on each side, and six more at the top.

The seat inside the arms, and half way up the back, is (or rather was) lined with red velvet, all torn or decayed. The foot-stall is also very handsome, being ten inches in height, a foot in breadth and two feet and half in length; the top in crimson silk worked with gold; a moulding of cut crystals runs around the sides of it, beneath which in front are flowers (similar to those on the back of the chair) studded with fine amethysts and crystals.

It should be observed that the throne behind is covered with the finest wrought silver; at the top of a large embossed half-moon of silver, surmount the stars, and below all is a bed of silver sun-flowers.

The sceptre was a rod of iron, with a gold head, an extraordinary but just emblem of his government."

### **Departure...**

On the January 24, 1816, the last King of Kandy, with his family, embarked on board the HM Cornwallis, under command of Captain O'Brien for Madras, and very large number of people assembled to witness the departure.

Leaving the shore late in the afternoon, in the boats of the "Cornwallis", the King with his wives and mother-in-law left in the captain's barge in the care of Mr. Granville. The attendants followed in another with Captain Kerr and Mr. Sutherland, Secretary for Kandyan Affairs, accompanied by Captain O'Brien in a third. The strictest observance was paid to the etiquette of receiving the women of a high rank aboard, and spacious accommodation was allotted to the royal family.

After the King had become a captive, all hostile feelings ceased and his wishes were granted as far as possible. He was taken to the water's edge in the governor's carriage, and his wives were carried in palanquins. They were closely veiled. The King was handsomely dressed, with pantaloons fastened tightly round the ankles, and took his place in the boat.

The weather, however, was rough and they were severely tossed about before the ship's side in a chair. The King it is said, "behaved like a man", and showed dignity and firmness of mind. What his feelings were can never be known, but, no doubt, he realised that he escaped torture and death when he fell into the British hands.

Mr. Granville accompanied the royal family to Madras and delivered them to the care of the government. The captives landed on the North Beach on the evening of February 22, and were immediately conveyed in palanquins to the tents pitched for their reception.



Here the Town-Major, Captain MacDonald and Mr. Marriott were introduced by Mr. Granville as the gentleman were ordered to receive him by the Royal Honourable the Governor. The Town-Major delivered a complimentary message and retired, leaving the King in charge of Mr. Marriott. A guard was placed around the tent, and native sentries were posted to keep off the crowds of people who were anxious to see the royal prisoner.

The baggage of the prisoners were placed on bandies, and carried by coolies, and between four and five o'clock the following morning the King and his family were carried in palanquins to Conditoor, where they were again lodged in a tent, and, with daily marches, finally arrived at Vellore.

### **Life in Vellore...**

The King and his family were supplied with everything that they desired, and amongst the long lists of requirements was a list of oils of various kinds, twice monthly, for the use of himself, his wives and his mother-in-law.

To the end of the official year 1817-1818, the Government of Fort St. George estimated that the expenses likely to be incurred on account of the captive King and his family would be 9,977 star pagodas, with a further hundred pagodas for arrears of salary due to the officer in charge of the King.

A daily list of the King's household expenses was published, which amounted to nearly Rs. 30 per day, bed-room perfumery to Rs. 10/50 whilst the servants employed for his service cost over One hundred and twenty-six star pagodas.

In addition, the government supplied clothing, jewels and workmen for making ornaments for the ladies.

Notwithstanding their dependence upon the government, almost all the prisoners became heavily in debt, and in July, 1874, the Ceylon Government sanctioned Rs. 8,000 to liquidate the debts incurred by the third queen of the King.

The King lived for 17 years in confinement, and died of dropsy January 30, 1832, aged fifty-two years.

One cannot but compare the character of the last King of Kandy with some of the predecessors and other pious kings of the earlier period, and comparisons convince that King Sri Vikrama Rajasinha was degenerated, pampered and spoiled, suspicious of his people, and ever on the probability that nothing but tyranny would keep him in safety.

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# Pilimatalavuva Maha Adikaram

## Chieftains of the Kandyan Kingdom

"Although Kanda Uda Pas Rata or the city of Senkadagalapura was founded by Senasammata Vickramabahu (1469-1511) in the later phase of the fifteenth century, the real story of the Kandyan Kingdom opens with the absorption of the Kingdoms of Kotte and Sitavaka by the Portugese and the ascendancy of Vimala Dharma Suriya (1591-1604) in Kandy in about 1592.

After King Vimala Dharmasuriya I (1591-1604), Senarath (1604-1635), Rajasimha II (1635-1687) and Vimala Dharmasuriya II (1687-1707), we come to Narendrasimha (1707-1739) popularly known as Kundasale Deviyo and fondly remembered as Sellan Nirindhu, the playful King. Keeping with immediate past practice he too married from South India and died without a royal heir. He had left a son Unambuva Bandara by a Kandyan concubine but jealousy and disunity among the ruling families prevented him from succeeding the throne. Narendrasimha anticipating such an eventuality, before his death nominated his brother-in-law a South Indian Vaduga of Nayakkar extraction to succeed him at the instance of his Mahesi Rammaloka the Adigar and Saranankara who had been his teacher and saw an ideal opportunity to promote Buddhism through him, even though it was something unprecedented in Simhale. Thus ended the long line of Sinhala Kings; and the later Kandyan story really begins with the advent of this Telugu Vaduga Nayakkar. Their dominance saw a regular influx of their relations into the court as aspirants to trusted office, inter marrying with the leading Kandyan (Radala) families and being absorbed by them and accepted by the people. "

" Next to the King, the last two Pillimatalavuvus, were the most dazzling personalities during the final years of the kindgom. As 'King Maker' Pilimatalavuva Maha Adikaram III raised Kannasamy, an uneducated youth of about eighteen years to the Sinhalese Throne of Kandy in 1798, under the sonorous Sinhala name of 'Sri Wickrama Rajasimha', in the process over looking the more patent chance of Muttusamy, whom he imprisoned. But by Sinhala stand point both really had no such claim. Little did Pilimatalavuva suspect or realise at the time that this nominee whom he elevated to supreme power as King would very soon use that very power to have him beheaded.

Though the chieftains and the people did not approve of this awkward and unprecedented selection, none could exercise any restraint over this all powerful autocrat nor understand or appreciate his albeit noble objective underlying beneath this whole programme.

Outwardly, his act appeared treacherous, but just as all the citizens and Kandyan Courtiers lamented the tragedy of transferring the ancient Sinhalese Throne to the South Indian Vadugas, Pilimatamavuva too did not fail to realise this recurring tragedy. Therefore he intended quite manifestly to make a puppet of this youth on the Throne and to overthrow him at the earliest opportunity and rescue the Throne from an alien power, precisely as the historian Dr Covin R de Silva points out that "he aimed at the Throne himself intending thereby to expel the Nayakkaras and to re-establish a Sinhala Dynasty". "

### © "Pilimatalavuvus In The Last Days Of The Kandyan kingdom" by Ananda Pilimatalavuva



Pilimatalavuva Maha Adikaram was the third son of a family of Kandyan Chieftain who descended from an old established family which served the Sinhalese Kings from ancient times on one side and revived and restored by the assimilation with Royal South Indian nobility who arrived in the Kandyan Kingdom during the reign of Sri Vira Parkrama Narendrasinha of Kundasale. His full name was Pilimatalavuva Vijesundera Rajakaruna Senaviratne Abhayakoon Panditha Mudiyanse alias Urulevatta Agra Senadhipathi alias Arave Pallegampaha Maha Adikaram III. His father and elder brother also served as Maha Adikaram before him.

He assumed office as second Adigar in 1787 and was elevated to the post of First Adigar of Pallegampaha Maha Adikaram in 1790 by King Rajadhi Rajasimha. On the death of this King he used his power and position to enthrone Sri Wickrema Rajasimha as King even though he was not in the line of succession with the patriotic motive of re-establishing a Sinhala dynasty later.

During the time of King Kirthi Sri Rajasimha he built the inner sanctuary of the Sri Dalada Maligawa which an invader had left in ashes, and then in 1801 built the Asgiri Aluth Vihare also known as Vijesunderamaya after him, close to the Parana Vihare (Meda Pansala) built by his father. He has been described as 'portly and well looking man of great power and intrigue by Robert Percival and by Tennent as 'One of the most illustrious nobles boasting their descent from the Royal line of Ceylon'.

@ *The Island* - 1st March 1993

*"Pilimatalawa undoubtedly one of the ablest and shrewdest leaders with unsurpassed negotiating skills, in the country's history, out witted and out manoeuvred North at every turn"*

*"North and British writers never forgave Pilimatalawa for preventing them from capturing Kandy and therefore described him in opprobrious terms such as 'teacherous, perfidious, profligate and unprincipled.' True, he was ready to betray his King, but not the Kingdom".*

*"When Pilimattalawa saw that the British had different designs and would not fall in with his, he decided to act alone - bribing the mercenary soldiers to assassinate the King. His resolve to free the country of Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe's misrule was so indomitable that he preferred execution rather than taking an oath not to work against the King again and be pardoned" "*

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# Galagoda Adikaram - Chief Minister of King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe

(By Deepthi Anura Jayatunge)



Galagoda Dissawa (Adikaram's brother) in the Royal Service of King Keerthi Sri Rajasingha (1747-1781). Recipient of the second and third Land grants in 1760 AD & 1772 AD (Wall painting from Talawa Temple at Marassana)

Galagoda Adigar was in the royal service of King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe (as the Chief Minister) during the Golden era of the Kandyan Kingdom. During this period Kandyans constructed a large number of places of religious worship, and stood against the Dutch invaders and they even managed to destroy several Dutch forts.

His descendants served the Kings faithfully and, received several large land grants for their royal service. Dr. Mrs. Lorna Deveraja in "Spolia Zeylanica" published several of these Sannasas.

Once Kandy declined, under British rule his grand children were executed and deported for taking part in the Uva rebellion in 1818. The last family member to lay down his life in royal duty was Galagoda Nilgala Korale, who died in early 19th century, while trying to arrest the murderer Tissahamy. Korale knew Tissahamy well, but he shot Korala (mistaking him for a Policeman) as he was covering his head with the coat of a police officer while the rain was drizzling. Two expensive rings studded with rubies, worn by Korala were taken by his killers, but thrown away subsequently fearing identification.

This family history is well documented for the family hardships they had to endure whilst trying to preserve or to regain Kandyan sovereignty.

The name of the Galagoda family is not mentioned in the recent Kandyan history (under British rule) as several family members took part in the 1818 Kandy Rebellion against British. They were either executed, deported or had their lands confiscated. As unbending Kandyans they paid the supreme price of fighting for the freedom of their motherland.

This family had served as the Chief Minister or the "Maha Adigar" to the King (1745) and at the same time Galagoda's brother held the post of Dissawa of Uva and Nuwarakalaviya (modern Anuradhapura).

## Mathra Katuwana Hatana

Between Galagoda Adikaram and his brother they planned the war against the Dutch in 1760 destroying several Dutch forts Mathra, Katuwana, Marakade. This was the last successful rebellion against any foreign invader.



Galagoda Adikaram in the Royal Service of King Keerthi Sri Rajasingha. Recipient of the first land grant in 1750 AD - (Wall painting from Talawa temple- Marassana).

## **Nilgala Korala**

In the same tradition, late in the 19th century one of their descendants — Galagoda Korale of Nilgala laid down his life while trying to capture the murderer Thissahamy in Ambilinna.

## **Family History**

This family could thus be traced back to 1600 AD, according to Dr. Mrs. Lorna Devaraja, who has published details of several land grants given to this family by Kandyan Kings. Their bloodline has been traced up to the 19th Century based on documents found in British Museum and in the National Archives. Definitely, this covers a much wider time period than the bestseller "ROOTS" which was published in America.

The Galagoda family had a tradition of military service dating back to 1600. They are from Megodathiha Hewahata. They were in the Royal Service of King Senarath (1604-1635). A Galagoda Dissawa was decorated in the battle of Randeniwela (1630). He also mobilized troops for the battle of Gannoruwa (1638) defeating the Portuguese. For this he was awarded the Governor ship of Hewahata by Rajasinha 11 (1629-1687), thus consolidating his roots in Hewahata.

Another Galagoda served under King Vimaladharmasooriya (1687-1707). The King Sri Vijaya Rajasinha (1739-1747) had a member of the family serving in the provincial administration. The king Keerthi Sri Rajasinha (1747-1781) selected from, their descendent two brothers; one to be his Maha Adigar & the other was given the next highest rank of Dissawa.

During the period of King Rajadhi Rajasinghe (1781-1798) both Kandy and Anuradhapura dissawa posts were held by two Galagoda brothers.

It is said in the "Mandampura Puwatha" that the poem was brought up to date in 1702 AD, at the request of Galagoda Dissawa in the royal service of King Vimaladharmasooriya (1687-1707).

Galagoda Adigar hated the Dutch & made no secret of it. A grant of kind signed by the Adigar Galagoda was made to Mulkirigala Vihara in 1761. He was the first Adigar, Basnayaka of Patthini Devalaya, chief of sword bearers, stables, elephant corals, palace dancers, palace potters, Dissawa of Putlam and Sabaragamuwa and Attapatuwe Lekam.

## **The Adigars**

The Kings principal officer was the Adigar and they acted as advisors to the king, as chief justice and military chief or as the commander in chief. He had to lead the army to battle. The Adigar signed all land grants made by the King.

The honours due to Adikaram were, second only to those due to the King. He was preceded by numbers of men cracking whips. All on the road had to make way for him. The Adigar could hold his office as long as the King wanted. He had to pay king five hundred "Silver Coins" on appointment, and a similar sum every new year

(dakum). The Adigars in turn appointed junior officers & received around 10 silver coins per year from them. Adigar further received a portion of fines collected, income from ferries operated, and from liberated prisoners.

Galagoda Adigar was succeeded at his death in the Disavary of Kandy by Pilimathalawe and, to the latter's death by Angamma

### **Last Signature In The Kandyan Treaty (1815)**

The last signature in the Kandyan Treaty of 1815 belongs to Galagoda Maha Adigar's son Galagoda Nuwarakalawiya Dissawa who refused to sign the treaty for two days- and so did only after the English Governor promised to safeguard Buddhism & Kandyan traditions.

Four Land Grants Received by the Family (1750-1760-1772-1806 AD)

King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha and the last Kandyan king Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe gave this family several land grants. The first grant was in 1750 and a palm leaf copy of this could be found in the British Museum. It was given to recognize Adigars loyalty to the new Waduga king, who came to the throne after ruling the country for 3 years, without being crowned due to fears of an uprising.

### **Second Land Grant of 1760**

The second land grant was given to the Adigars brother in 1760 for the gallantry shown in "the Mathra Katuwana war" and after destroying several Dutch forts. This war against the Dutch was master minded by these two Galagoda brothers. They killed all the Dutch prisoners who had surrendered, and destroyed the forts.

They also fought against the armies of the Dutch governor Baron Van Eck in 1765 and defeated him on his way back to the coastline. The first targets were the drummers who conveyed orders over long distances and the conspicuously clad officers, who could be easily spotted.

### **Third Land Grant of 1772**

Adigars brother Dissawa again received a third land grant in 1772 for the faithful service rendered to King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha and a copy of this can be found in a copper plated sannasa kept in the British Museum.

### **Fourth Land Grant of 1806**

The fourth land grant was given by King Sri Wickrama Rajasinha to Galagoda Karawile Mudaliya, for his gallantry shown against the British in 1806. This is possibly for service against the army of Lt. Colonel Arthur Jonstan (19th regiment) that invaded in Kandy (in 1804).

Capt. Jonstan had a strong body of 300 troops & scaled the mountains from the Uva Mahiyangana side to reach Kandy. His entry to Kandy was a psychological shock to Kandyan nobles as he had taken a secret path neglected by them. He had to get back to Trincomalee with a loss of 38 troopers as Kandy was abandoned. The

villagers, going to worship at Mahiyangana Temple during the festival season, used the path made by him which is known as 1000 steps for a long time.

### **Galagoda Adigar**

Galagoda was made the first Adigar as he saved the king from an assassination plot planned to make the King fall in to a pit fitted with long spikes near Malwatta Temple. The Malwatta priest in connivance with Samanakody Adigar (who was subsequently executed), tried to install a Siamese Prince in the Kandyan throne. This famous Galagoda Adigar was the grand son of Mumwatte Bandara — a poet and a very learned man a favourite in the Kandyan Court — whose name appears in the sannasa (official document) handing over the first land grant.

After the assassination plot, the position of Galagoda became much stronger. He was now the first Adigar and had ten other offices given to him. Two of his brothers were made provincial chiefs; One was made the Dissawa of Uva and other the Raterala of Harispatthuwa.

With King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe's blessings, Galagoda Adigar built and renovated a large number of Buddhist-temples and was much respected by the Dutch. During his reign the Siamese priest "Siam Upalee" head of famous "Siam-O-Palee-" maha nikaya brought the long lost "Upasanpadawa" to Ceylon.

One of the first monks to be ordained at the hands of Siyam Upali was the monk Kobbakaduwa and he was the son of Galagoda Kumarihami who was in turn the daughter of Galagoda Dissawa of Uva.

### **The Golden Era**

This period is known to be the golden era of the Kandyan kingdom. A large number of Buddhist Shrines were completed. The people looked up to the King, as their saviour and they were able to rise up against the foreign invaders.

### **Portraits of Galagoda Adigar & Dissawa**

Portraits of Galagoda Adikarama & his brother Galagoda Dissawa (who master minded the Mathara Katuwana Hatana) can be seen even today in Talawa Rajamaha Wiharaya at Marassana near Kandy.

### **Statue of King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe (1747-1781)**

There are very many life-size portraits of King Keerthi Sri Rajasinha in all the temples he renovated & built. But the most famous are the four " Life sized wooden statues of the king today, two of them can be seen at Dambulla Temple & at Malwatta Temple in Kandy.

### **Descendents of Galagoda Adigar**

Galagoda Adigar & his brother Dissawa had three children. The Dissawa of Uva & Nuwarakalaviya, Dissawa of Kottegododa, & Wahala Mudiyanse posts were held by them at some time.



## **Adigar's son Nuwarakalawiye Dissawa**

Galagoda Dissawa of Nuwarakalawiya, (who signed the Kandyan treaty of 1815) had 6 children. Four of them suffered severely under British rule for taking part in Uva Uprising in 1818. Galagoda Wellasse Dissawa, the eldest, was executed for treason by the British (in 1818) along with his grand son Ratemahanthaya.

His second son — Galagoda Aspanthiye Nilame had his lands confiscated. His third son Galagoda Peradeniya Dissawa died in the Uva Rebellion (1818).

Peradeniya Dissawa was banished by the Kandyan King, but managed to come back to Kandy after 18 years and got his lands restored. He died in the 1818 rebellion. The fifth son, known as Kotte Dissawa, had his lands confiscated & deported to Mauritius.

Kotte Dissawa & his son Tikiri Banda A.k.a (Kiri Banda)

This Kotte Dissawa — who was deported to Mauritius — had 3 children. His second son Tikiribanda Galagoda had one son named Galagoda Loku Banda.

This Kotte Dissawa had his name engraved on an iron ring fastened on to a slave which was given to him by another Dissawa, according to John Doyly.

## **Galagoda Loku Banda**

This Loku Banda had petitioned the British government several times claiming ownership of land at Atimole by way of a sannasa (forth grant Karawile Sannasa) given by King Sri Wickramarajasinghe. The British entertained this claim & there is an entry to this effect confirming the ownership in the Land Kachcheri dated 1870.

## **Nilgala Korale**

Galagoda Loku Banda had five children. One of them was the Abayasingha Bandara Galagoda; a famous Korale who died trying to capture Tissahamy at the young age of 34. He was a direct descendent and a fifth generation grand child of Galagoda Maha Adikaram who masterminded the famous Mathra Katuwana war against Dutch in 1760.

## **Financial Value of Sannasas**

The financial value of each sannasa would have been immense as several villages were given to the beneficiary under each land grant. These grants of "Paraveni" land gave their heirs the right to inherit them.

The first land grant was from "Megodathiha-Hewahata" Unantanna village and the second grant is from "Udunuwara-Ellepalewela" (now donated to Dalada Maligawa). The third kind grant was from "Hewahata-Karandegama", and the forth was from "Atimole-Karawila Pallegama" from Uva District.

This family is well documented for the hardships they had to undergo trying to preserve or to regain Kandyan Sovereignty,

## List of Family Names

- (1) Galagoda Dissawa in the royal service of king Senarat (1604-1635)
  - (2) Galagoda in the royal service of King Vimaladharmasooriya (1687-1707)
  - (3) Galagoda provincial Administrator under King Vijaya Rajasinghe (1739-1747)
  - (4) Munwatte Bandara — Grand father of Galagoda Adikaram
  - (5) Galagoda Adikar & Galagoda Dissawa in the royal service of King Keerthi Sri Rajasingh (1747-1781)
  - (6) Galagoda Dissawa of Nuwara & Anuradhapura (signed Kandyan treaty) under Rajadhi Rajasinghe (1781-1798) and under King Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe (1798-1815\*)
  - (7) Galagoda Wellasse Dissawa executed by British (1818)
  - (8) Galagoda Rate Mahaththaya executed by British (1818)
  - (9) Galagoda Aspoathiye Nilame had his lands confiscated by British (1818)
  - (10) Galagoda Peradeniya Dissawa died in Uva rebellion (1818)
  - (11) Galagoda Kotte Dissawa deported to Mauritius in 1818
  - (12) Galagoda Rajapaksha Panditha Wahalamudiyanselage Kiribanda (1850)
  - (13) Same — Loku Banda Korale Mahathya of Mathurata (petitioned British government in 1897 claiming ownership of land at Atimole — from 4th Karawile-Sannasa)
  - (14) Same — Korale-Abayasinghe Bandara Galagoda died arresting Tissahamy (1928)
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# Maduwanwala Rate Mahatmaya

(@Andrew Scott/Sunday Observer)

In this article I propose to deal on the life and activities of a unique Kandyan Chieftain, Maduwanwala Rate Mahatmaya (R.M.) of Kolonne in the Ratnapura District, whose real name was Molamure. There are many popular tales about this unique personality and his heroic deeds during the British Raj.

One of the earliest writers who admired his friendship and wrote about him was Dr. R. L. Spittel, the well known doctor and writer of yesteryear who immortalised this rare personality in his wildly read jungle book "Far Off Things" first published in 1933, more than half a century ago. Dr. R. L. Spittel had been a distinguished visitor and the family doctor of the Maduwanwala household in its heyday.

Introducing this majestic personality Dr. R. L. Spittel says: "The old Sinhala chieftain, whose home lay in the roadless forests of Kolonne, had long intrigued me:



many were the tales I had been told of his hospitality and proud independence.....I longed to see him before he died, since he was now very old and decrepit and had not left his forest home, as he was periodically wont to do, for years."

Who was this Maduwanwala Rate Mahatmaya? Maduwanwala R.M. received his education at St. Thomas' College, then in Mutwal. His real name was Molamure, the name of highly respected clan in Ratnapura. He adopted his mother's name Maduwanwala on coming into possession of a vast ancestral wealth. He inherited an incredible eighty two thousand acres in two 'nindagamas' granted to his ancestors by the Sinhala kings.



The Panamure nindagama consisted of 54,000 acres and the Maduwanwala nindagama consisted of 28,000 acres. Maduwanwala R.M. ruled this forest covered primitive area (at that time) with glamour and dignity in the same fashion as an ancient king.

When Maduwanwala R.M. was seriously ill his family members graciously called upon Dr. R. L. Spittel to attend on him. It was really then that he was able get more intimate details about Maduwanwala R.M. When Dr. R. L. Spittel met him Maduwanwala R.M. had been 87 years old and had been a resident of Kolonne all his life and was a hard drinker of champagne.

Describing the Maduwanwala Walauwe the writer says: "We entered the garden through a carved stone gateway now janitorless. Proceeding along a neglected drive, flanked at short intervals by broken lamps that toppled on their pedestals, we reached the house which stood in a clearing at the foot of a wooded hill.

From here came even as we entered, the startled bell of a sambhur followed by the hungry roar of a leopard....We entered the house by a narrow door-way and came to a small square courtyard open to the sky with a marble statue in this centre.

Bonding the court-yard was a square verandah, on to which gave the doors of dark rooms.

In a recess of the verandah, all huddled up on the antique wooden bed on which he had been born, lay the wizened old chief. Cobwebbed bottles of champagne stood on the ground by the wall. He was in high fever and his leg was swollen."

Describing the Walauwe in great detail Dr. Spittel wrote: "It was rather a rambling structure of no set design. The original part of it was very old and considerably obscured by later renovation.

A satin-wood door three inches thick, showing the dents of Dutch bullets, and a wooden pillar with scorched base were evidence of siege and arson the old house had sustained in the days of the Dutch, whose outposts the chiefs of Maduwanwela continually harassed.".....Ancient swords, spears, daggers, ornaments and china, lay side by side with crude clay figures and modern garish stuff.

Rare prints of autographed photos of distinguished personages hung on the same walls.....There were massive and elaborately carved pieces of furniture of ebony, tamarind, calamander and satin-wood. The top of one great table was fashioned from the disc of a vast jak tree; it was inlaid around its edge with ebony."

Dr. Spittel mentioning about the large and expensive collection of antiques at the Maduwanwela Walauwe writes: "There were heirlooms there that would have made the eyes of the collector sparkle with envy; the most valuable part of it being loot from the last king of Kandy, the Tamil tyrant Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe whom Maduwanwela's maternal great uncle, Ekneligoda, helped the British to capture. There were the king's silver plates, cups and saucers and gold betel box.

An Alexandrite pendent, the size of a halved hen egg and the staff of Ehelepola Adigar, whose children's decapitated heads the cruel king had made their mother pound in a mortar." One can only wonder where these valuable heirlooms are lying today!

Maduwanwela R.M. was easily the richest Sinhala chieftain during his time and he owned very large extent of land in the Sabaragamuwa Province. Describing how he amassed such a great wealth Dr. Spittel says: "The manner in which a single person came by such a vast acreage is of interest. The nindagama of Panamure consisting of 54,000 acres was gifted to Maduwanwela's great grandfather by king Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe....

The nindagama of Maduwanwela, 28,000 acres in extent, was a gift to his ancestor from Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe.

Maduwanwela R.M.'s hospitality had captured the attention of Dr. R. L. Spittel who says: "He was a perfect host and always fond of good company. When coffee was in its glory, every week-end the planters would ride down to his place for tennis, racing

and bibulous merriment. A great friend of the old planters, he helped them many a time to open their lands, by drafting to their service at sudden notice a labour force of even five hundred men."



# Ehelapola the great

(@by Dr. Mirando Abeysekere/The Island)

Ehelapola Maha Adigar or Ehelapola the Great was the leader of the successful coup against the despot King Sri Wickrema Rajasingha (1798 - 1815). He planned to overthrow the king because he ruled as a despot and he was a cruel tyrant. Although the people hated him they were powerless as the king was well guarded by foreign mercenaries.

Ehelapola, was a pure bred Brahmin and a very devout Buddhist. In addition to that he was a very loyal, efficient, leader who served the country and the people faithfully.

He offered his Walawwa to the Maha Sangha and he settled down in Kandy. Now it is a famous temple situated at Mahawela, Matale. He was a militant chief. This was partly due to his noble birth and ancestry. His father and all his paternal ancestors had been devout Buddhists and had served the armies as leaders. It is very relevant to discuss the illustrious background of Ehelapola Maha Adigar. Hence, I would give a brief history of his ancestors and close relatives.

Mudaliyar Nandiris Wijesekera of Brahmana Watte Walawwa - Welitota was the father of the illustrious and brave leader Don Cosmo Wijesekera - Mudaliyar of the Portuguese Army. According to the records of the Portuguese and Dutch Mudaliyar Don Cosmo Wijesekera was a key figure in the Portuguese Army. He was almost the general. His step sister Edanduwawe Gehenu Dissawa - female Dissawa of Edanduwawe alias Galagoda Swarnapali Kumarihamy was a Dissawa under king Rajasingha II.

Therefore Don Cosmo had an underground friendship with King Senarath (1604 - 1627). This was because he did not condone the cruelties inflicted on the Sinhalese by the Portuguese. Although he served as a General in the Portuguese Army inwardly his objective was to liberate the country from the Portuguese. He knew all the tricks of the Portuguese militia.

## The lion of Randenigala

It was a decisive day for the Sinhala forces of King Senerath. The King sent a secret message to Don Cosmo through the step sister of Don Cosmo, Edanduwawe Kumarihamy asking him to help the Sinhala forces. This message was sent for the sake of Buddhism and the country. Mudaliyar Don Cosmo accepted the king's request and did his duty as promised.

When the battle started at Randenigala all the regiments under Don Cosmo fought against the Portuguese. Constantine de Zaa, the leader of the Portuguese army was beheaded by Don Cosmo himself and his head was sent to king Senerath as proof of loyalty to the King. The chief reason for the victory of the Sinhala army was the brave and gallant leadership given to the Sinhala forces by Don Cosmo.

King Senerath was so overjoyed with the victory that he hosted the leaders of the Sinhala army to a grand reception. Don Cosmo was of course greeted as a hero by the entire Sinhala population of the country.

Prince Rajasingha, the son of King Senarath embraced the hero Don Cosmo and exclaimed, 'Don Cosmo! you are more than a brother to me! You had really shown the calibre of your Brahmin nobility. You have brought honour to all your Brahmin ancestors.

Thereafter the grateful people of Uva erected a Manor House in the village of Katugaha and Don Cosmo had two children - a son and daughter. The son Mudaliyar Theodore Wijesekera married Maria Corea and lived at Rassaya Muna Kanda Walawwa, Mutwal, Colombo. Theodore Wijesekera's only daughter Catherine married Kumara Bandara alias Juan Mirando of the Murunda Dynasty. Don Cosmos' only daughter Helena Swarnapali married Wijesundera Brahmana Mudiyanse, the Royal Astrologer of King Rajasinha II. Wijesundera Brahmana Mudiyanse the Royal Astrologer and his wife settled down at Katugaha Walawwa as it was given for their dowry by Mudliyar Don Cosmo.

Ehelepola the First Dissawa of Matale was the son of Wijesundera Brahmana Mudaliyar of Katugaha Walawwa. Wijesundera Mudiyanse's daughter, Kumarihamy married Bandaranayaka Mudiyanse of Chilaw and settled at Katugaha Walawwa after contracting a Binna marriage. The famous Katugaha Bandara-nayaka Mudiyanse Dissawa of Uva was his son.

So, Ehelepola alias Chandrasekera Mudiyanse migrated to Matale for Public Service and settled down at the village of Ehelepola. His ancient Walawwa built at Ehelepola village is known as 'Nekathge-dera' because he too was an astrologer like his father. This identical Ehelepola the First had a few children and one daughter got married to Monarawila Disava a direct descendant of Mona-ravila Danta Brahmana Mudiyanse.

The elder son of Ehelepola the First, Chandrasekera Amara-koon Mudiyanse became the Ratema-hatmaya, Dissawa and the chief of the Army respectively. He was known as the 'Padikara Mudiyanse' of Ehelepola. Chandra-sekera Amarakoon Mudiyanse too followed the footsteps of his parents., married Kosshinna Kumari-hamy of Kosshinna Brahmana Family. He died of cancer in the jaw. Chandrasekera Amarakoon Mudiyanse was the father of Ehelepola Maha Adigar or Ehelepola the Great.

Ehelepola the Great was a very versatile person having a sound knowledge of English, Pali, Sanskrit and Tamil. He was educated at a Buddhist Pirivena and he became a Rate Mahatmaya in his youth. At the King's Palace he had a militant look.

According to some historians Haggard, D'Oyly and Donald James the young and handsome Ehelepola had many clandestine affairs with the concubines in the King's harem. One day he was caught red handed by the King at the residence of Alutgama Biso Menike, a woman of the King's harem and the King ordered six strokes to be delivered with a whip on the back side of the accused. But when the King's henchmen came to execute the order they were mercilessly assaulted by Ehelepola.

Ehelepola Kumari-hamy was his cousin and he began to love her when she visited her uncle's Walawwa . The view of the astrologers was that anyone who married her would be king as her horoscope was very good and powerful. Her uncle Chandrasekera Mudiyanse used his good offices and saw to it that she married the daughtly warrior Ehelepola.

True to the astrologers' predictions Ehelepola got promotion after promotion and after the demise of Pilima Talauwa, Ehelepola was promoted to the highest rank of Maha Adigar. Pilimatalawas, Lewkes and Ratwattas were high class Brahmins.

The King Sri Wickrama Rajasingha being a Waduga by birth always suspected the noble families and began to eliminate them either by killing them or by forcing them to flee the Kandyan Kingdom.

The Rev. Paranatala Anunayaka Himi of the Malwatta Chapter, Lewke Nilame, Halangoda, Aluvihare Bandara, Ratwatte - Devamedde Dissawa, Pilimatalawa Maha Adigar etc. were all killed on the orders of the despot King.

However Ehelepola remained loyal to the King. But the king lived in fear of Ehelepola as he was a talented warrior and he feared that one day he might usurp the Kingship.

During this period the killing of excessive children especially female children was very common in the Kandyan Kingdom. Ehelepola issued an order that no child should be killed on that account and that if any family felt that they could not bear the burden of these excess children that he would help. (PP. 217 - Sinhala Social Organization).

During a certain period he was the Dissawa of Sathkorale and later on Sabaragamuwa. When the King's cruelties increased Ehelepola planned a liberation struggle against the despot. At the preliminary stages he had discreet discussions with his relations in the maritime provinces those living in Kalutara and Balapitiya.

They were the Mudaliyars of Carlo Walawwa, Mutwal, Nagoda Walawwa, Kalutara and Maha Kappina Walawwa at Balapitiya. He knew that through the good offices of his relatives he could obtain the support of fiery Brahmin warriors of southern province. His chief aim was to liberate the country against Nayakkar rule. Unfortunately for Ehelepola the King's spies came to learn of this conspiracy and they secretly informed the King.

### **'Wal Raja'**

The King was not only a despot and cruel tyrant but he was also a highly lecherous sex maniac. He was popularly known as 'Wal Raja'. No pretty woman was safe from his lecherous advances. Through fear of reprisals by the King many women gave in to his advances.

The King now made an order for the arrest of Ehelepola. He was in a frenzy but he knew that it was a very difficult task as Ehelepola was also influential and powerful. The Maha Adigar went from place to place incognito and finally he sought refuge in the low country. Gradually the British too came to know of the presence of the Maha Adigar in their territory. To make things easy for him Maha Mudliyar Adrian de Abrew Rajapaksha of Maha Kapina Walawwa, Welitota introduced him to the British. (\*ola manuscript of Nilgalle Walawwa)



When the king found that he could not have Ehelepola arrested, he arrested his wife, children and sister. He told the wife and sister that unless both of them agreed to have sex with him they would be killed. They refused and they were killed.

The ideology of the the Kandyan Convention was conceived at the discussion between Ehelepola, Brownrigg and Maha Mudaliyar Rajapaksha at the premises of 'Carlo Walawwa' in Mutwal. According to the reports of J. Campbel and A. C. Lawrie the British Governor had promised to appoint Ehelepola Maha Adigar, as Sub King of Kandy, but the British who were experts at the policy of 'divide and rule' offered the same post to Ehelepola.

After the deportation of King Sri Wickrema Rajasingha and the signing of the Kandyan Convention the entire island came under the rule of the British. The hero and the mastermind behind all these machinations was none other than Ehelepola the Great.

Col. John Davy had stated that Ehelepola was promised several honours and titles but he wanted none other than the Sub Kingship of Kandy. The Uva rebellion of 1818 which was a spontaneous rebellion erupted as a result of the cruelties inflicted by the British rulers on the people. Ehelepola appointed his brother-in-law Mona-ravila Keppitipola to be in charge of the area under rebellion but as history reveals he joined the rebels and became their leader. The rebellion was doomed to fail as it was badly organized and was no match for the modern arms of the British.

Although Ehelepola helped the British to oust the despot king the British were always suspicious of him because he was very clever. They thought that after ousting the king he might try to oust the British from Kandy and become King. Ehelepola had all the qualifications and the intellect to be the king but the British were not even willing to make him the Sub King.

It was a convention and a privilege that if there was no suitable person to be the King a Brahmin was appointed. That is how after the demise of King Vijaya (543 - 505. B.C.) Saligrama Brahmin Upatissa became king.

Ehelepola the Great, former Maha Adigar, a pure bred Brahmin Buddhist overthrew the cruel and despot King and tried to restore peace in Kandy with the help of the British. Naturally he also wanted a due place and wanted to be the Sub King but the British who secretly had other ideas did not give him his due place. As the people were disunited and disorganized he was unable to achieve his final objective of overthrowing the British and restoring the Kandyan Kingdom to the rightful owners - the people.

Ehelepola was banished to Mauritius and passed away on the 5th of April at Pampla Mousasou in the year 1829. Ehelepola was a hero and a martyr and Lanka should be proud of him.

May his name live for long years to come and may he attain the Supreme Bliss of Nibbana.

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## ***The Fall of Sri Wickrema Rajasinha and The Kandyan Convention***

*by Aryadasa Ratnasinghe*

"Let by the invitation of the chiefs and welcomed by the acclamations of the people, the forces of His Britannic Majesty, have entered the Kandyan territory and penetrated to the capital. Divine Providence has blessed their efforts with uniform success and complete victory. The ruler of the interior provinces has fallen into their hands and the government remains at the disposal of His Majesty's Representative".

### **Official Bulletin No. 1**

On March 2, 1815, a conference was held in the Audience hall of the Palace of Kandy, between the Governor Sir Robert Brownrigg and the Principal chiefs of the Kandyan provinces and other subordinate headmen from different provinces, amidst a great concourse of people.

A public instrument of treaty embodying the Official Declaration of the Settlement of the Kandyan Provinces, known as the Kandyan Convention, was produced and publicly read in both English by Jas Sutherland, the Deputy Secretary to the Governor, and in Sinhala by the Mudliyar Abraham de Saram, and was unanimously assented to.

The British flag (Union Jack) was then, for the first time hosted and the establishment of the British dominion in the interior was announced by a royal salute from the cannon of the city. Attention was drawn of the British garrison, and all troops were under arms on the occasion of this historical and important event. This important document was listened to with profound and respectful attention by the chiefs with marked expression of cordial assent.

The Portuguese ruled the maritime settlements of Sri Lanka for 153 years (1505-1658), the Dutch for 138 years (1658-1796) and the British for 19 years (1796-1815).

Thereafter, with the annexation of the Kandyan kingdom by the Convention, the British became the sole rulers of the island, and administered the country for 133 years, until Independence in 1948.

Since 1739, for 76 years, the Kandyan kingdom was ruled by the Nayakkar kings from Malabar in South India, the last in the line was Sri Wickrema Rajasinha, who in his childhood days was known as Prince Kannasamy, the son of Venkata Perumal, who was the Chief Priest of the Rameshwaram Hindu Temple in the Gulf of Mannar. The antagonism of the Kandyan chiefs towards the Nayakkar kings paved way for their unpopularity. On the other hand, the king and the chiefs struggled for supremacy.

The main reason for the fall of the Kandyan kingdom was the disunity between the king and his chiefs. While the king tried to curb the growing power of the chiefs, the chiefs, in their turn, attempted to work out their plans for the destruction of the king.

The people harassed by the chiefs, put the blame on the king and wished that the British would come to their rescue. The king harassed by the complaints of the people, treated the chiefs with severity which began to increase their hatred towards him. Thus the chiefs, accused by the people and punished by the king, turned to the British.

John D'Oyly, the British agent of revenue, seizing the opportunity, fanned the flames of discontent between the king and the chiefs in order to reduce the Sinhala kingdom and to accept the terms of the British.

The Maha Adikaram Pilimatalawwe Wijeyesundera Rajakaruna Seneviratne Abayakoon Panditha Mudiyanse, who was elevated to the Prestigious position of Maha Adikaram in 1790, by king Rajadhi Rajasinha, when he was under the zenith of power, approached the British to work out his plan to secure the throne.

But, the crown was still beyond his grasp. He, therefore, wishing to secure it for his son, arranged that he should marry the natural grand-daughter of the late king Kirti Sri Rajasinha (1747-1780).

This was more than what the king could stand. He, accordingly, summoned the Maha Adikaram to appear before the 'maha naduwa' (the great case), accused him of being the author of all the cruel and unpopular activities of his reign, and deposed him from his office and imprisoned him. However, he was later set free and allowed to go home.

In kandy, there had never been an ex-Adikaram, for good reason, either died in harness during imprisonment, or was executed when deposed. But, in reality, the king was apprehensive to offend the most gracious family of the Maha Adikaram, and so spared his life.

The fallen chief Pilimatalawwe, in his rage for retributive justice, now planned to assassinate the king. He bribed the Malay Muhandiram and told him to enter the king's bedroom and stab him on a given day.

The plan did not materialise as he was caught while inside the bedroom. After enquiry, those involved in the incident were arrested, along with Pilimatalawwe, his son and son-in-law, and all were condemned to death. Pilimatalawwe and his accomplice Ratwatte Wijeyewardena Seneviratne Pandita Abayakoon Mudiyanse were beheaded, but the son was spared at the intercession of some chiefs who were in the good books of the king.

Having been placed on the throne by the king's professed benefactor Pilimatalawwe, when the prince was 18 years old, the king could not condemn him to death so easily as others. But, the turn of events compelled him to do so for high treason.

Pilimatalawwe was, in reality, an inveterate and an intriguing enemy, a faithless minister, a hostile neighbour and a powerful and an ambitious person, who was

always ready to encourage traitors to achieve his own ends. Under these circumstances, the throne was surrounded by the most embarrassing perplexities and complexities, which would have, doubtless, required a person of great talent and patience to surmount.

Terrified by the past and apprehensive of the future, and intent of his own security, regardless of consequences, the king showed himself a perfect tyrant, destitute of religious feelings and without moral principles, either human or divine. The episodes of his womanizing, drinking and debauchery disclosed his way of life caused mostly by mental distractions.

After the transfer of power with the surrender of the Dutch in Colombo, Frederick North (Earl of Guildford), arrived in Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) in 1798, as the first British colonial governor of the maritime settlements, displacing Brigadier-General Pierre Frederic de Mauron, who was a military governor.

The Maha Adikaram Pilimatalawe, the most powerful chief of the Royal Court, who secretly aspired to wear the crown, by deposing the king, had an interview with the Governor North at Sitawaka (now Avissawella) and requested the British to take possession of the Kandyan kingdom and uphold him in the throne, after deposing the king, in return for liberal trade concessions.

Governor North, sensing what was boiling in the political pot, and not particularly interested in internal warfare, indignantly refused to accept the offer for territorial aggrandizement, broke off dealings with the Maha Adikaram, but in the courses of subsequent interviews with the Governor's Secretary, he understood that the British were ready to undertake and protect the kingdom and uphold him in power, provided that the king's life and dynasty were preserved inviolate and that the British given the effective control of trade and military administration of the provinces.

When the king became aware what was going on between the Maha Adikaram and the British Governor North and the plan to dethrone the king, he began to chafe under restraint and tried to break away from the intriguing chief.

In the meantime it was resolved that Gen. Hay Macdowall should proceed on an embassy to meet the king, ostensibly to congratulate him on his accession to the throne, but in reality, to obtain his consent to the terms suggested in making the Kandyan kingdom a British protectorate. But it turned out to be a flop.

On March 11, 1812, Lieut-Gen. Sir Robert Brownrigg assumed duties as the Governor, and his regime was noted specially for the annexation of the Kandyan kingdom to the British Crown and making the whole country a crown colony.

The confusion and disorder in the city of Kandy seemed to Brownrigg and D'Oyly a suitable opportunity to carry out their policy of territorial expansion. Accordingly, the Governor Brownrigg received Ehelepola Wijayasundera Wickremasinghe Chandrasekera Amarakoon Wasala Mudiyanse (who succeeded Pilimatalawe) alias Ehelepola Maha Adikaram at the Governor's residence in Mount Lavinia.

On this ex-parte representation of Ehelepola who rebelled against the king, the Governor promised him his favour and protection. The idea of sending an expedition to Kandy now seemed feasible.

The Maha Adikaram worked out the plan of operation and the Governor hastened to prepare and equip the forces in readiness to warfare. War was declared against the king of Kandy on January 10, 1815.

On February 14, 1815, a British division entered Kandy and took possession of the city and Ehelepola as sent to capture the king who had by then fled the city for safety. His hiding place was soon discovered at a place closer to Meda Mahanuvara in Kandy.

The party consisted of John D'Oyly, Capt. Hardy, Major Lionel C. Hooke, Ehelepola Nilame, Pilimatalawe Dissawa, Don Andryas Wijesinha Jayawardena Tamby Mudaly, Mudaliyar Dias Abeysingha, Ekneligoda Nilame, the Mohottalas Kawdumune, Kurandumune, Torawature, Delwala, Mahawalatenna and others.

Four days later, the unfortunate king was bound, plundered of his valuable as well as those of his consorts, and as dragged away with the greatest indignity by the supporters of Ehelepola, and was brought to Colombo for deportation to Vellore in South India, where his consorts and other kith and kin of the Malabar dynasty were interned in the beautiful mansion of Tippu Sahib, the Sultan of Mysore, acquired by the Indian government.

The Official Declaration of the Settlement of the Kandyan provinces expressly declared the principles of which the future government of the island under the British Crown would be based.

It consisted 12 clauses, viz: 1. Sri Wickrema Rajasinha, the Malabari king to forfeit all claims to the throne of Kandy. 2. The king is declared fallen and deposed and the hereditary claim of his dynasty, abolished and extinguished. 3. All his male relatives are banished from the island. 4.

The dominion is vested in the sovereign of the British Empire, to be exercised through colonial governors, except in the case of the Adikarams, Disavas, Mohottalas, Korales, Vidanes and other subordinate officers reserving the rights, privileges and powers within their respective ranks. 5. The religion of the Buddha is declared inviolable and its rights to be maintained and protected. 6. All forms of physical torture and mutilations are abolished. 7.

The governor alone can sentence a person to death and all capital punishments to take place in the presence of accredited agents of the government. 8. All civil and criminal justice over Kandyan to be administered according to the established norms and customs of the country, the government reserving to itself the rights of interposition when and where necessary. 9. Over non-Kandyans the position to remain according to British law. 10.

The proclamation annexing the Three and Four Korales and Sabaragamuwa is repealed. 11. The dues and revenues to be collected for the King of England as well

as for the maintenance of internal establishments in the island. 12. The Governor alone would facilitate trade and commerce."

The Kandyan Convention was forthwith proclaimed with an eye to the public outside Kandy. The British government had to justify to the world that they had no intention for territorial aggrandizement in seizing a neighbouring kingdom.

For this justification, it was necessary to show to the public that the British had only acted on the pressing needs of the public, who wished a change in the government to overcome the oppressive behaviour of the tyrant king.

Accordingly, the king's enormities were recounted with emphasis and the unanimous invitation of the British by the people and the chiefs was expressed in no exaggerated language, reminding one of the letters in which Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), the French General, Consul and Emperor, announced to King George III (1738-1820) of Great Britain and Ireland, his assumption of the throne of France after the Battle of Waterloo.

The news of annexation of Kandy to the maritime provinces of the island reached England on the same day as the news of the Battle of Waterloo and as a consequence passed unnoticed.

The British, as a matter of policy, did not carry out proselytising campaigns to convert Buddhists to Christianity, as their Portuguese and Dutch predecessors had done.

The laying of the railway, the opening of coffee and tea plantations, road development schemes, establishment of hospitals and maternity homes throughout the island, were some of the major works undertaken by the British who ruled Sri Lanka.

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