

**ANCESTRY OF MUSLIMS IN ANURADHAPURA DISTRICT: A HISTORICAL VIEW**Ameer Rushana¹, MHM.Nairoos²

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Abstract

Anuradhapura district possesses 860,575 population. From that total quantity, minority Muslims represent 8%. 70,692 Muslims reside in 114 Muslim villages in Anuradhapura district. It is noteworthy that Muslims reside as a majority at Kekirawa, Kahatagasdigiliya, Horowpothana, Nachaduwa and Ikkirikollawa. It is pathetic that Sri Lankan Muslims' history has not been compiled and analysed systematically compared to other communities. It is a major shortcoming of the Muslim community. So the objective of the research is to define the accurate history of Muslims in Anuradhapura district. In order to carry out the research effectively, data have been received from tales and statements of 15 forefathers who reside at Anuradhapura town, Horowpothana, Kekirawa, Ganewalpola, Kahatagasdigiliya, Medawachi and Mihintale. Results were found based on the analysis of interviews which belong to the category of qualitative and secondary data. According to historical books, the history of Muslims in Anuradhapura is related to the late king 'Pandukabaya's' reign. The Arab folks, those who came from Arab countries to Sri Lanka, reached Chilaw, called as 'Chilawathurai' through Anuradhapura road. Information received from interviews indicates that those who came from Chilawathurai paid visits to hill countries through Thanthirimalai, Thisawewa Gama, Aamanna Rathmala, Endhagala and Kalawewa. At the same time, those who came from Puttlam and Katpity paid visits to hill country through Anuradhapura, Galagethara, Madige, Negama and Kalawewa. Also 'Ottuppallam Dharga' or the tomb of 'Sheih Sikkanthar Valiullah' is considered as an important remnant of Anuradhapura Muslims' origin. Through this research, it is identified that Sheih Sikkanthar Valiullah was an Islamic scholar who came from India for the sake of spiritual duties and resided in Anuradhapura.

Key Words: Sri Lanka, Anuradhapura district, Muslims, Ancestry

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