

HISTORY OF
MOSQUES
&
KRAMATS

IN PENANG
1730s – 2012

Mahani Musa

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THINK CITY | 2015 

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABIM	Malaysian Youth Movement
AJK	Committee Members
ICU JPM	Federal Development Office Penang State, Implementation Coordination Unit, Prime Minister's Department
J.P.	Justice of Peace
JAIPP	Penang Islamic Religious Affairs Department
JIAEA	Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia
JKR	Public Works Department (PWD)
JMBRAS	Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
JPM	Prime Minister's Department
KAFA	'Fardu Ain' Class (Personal Obligations, Duties of Islamic Law)
PEMENANG	Penang Malays Association
SHTI	British East India Company
SPPK	Government Staff Housing Co. Ltd
PRCR	Penang Riots Commission Report
UDA	Urban Development Authority
UMNO	United Malays National Organization

GLOSSARY

Azan	Muezzin's call or summon to prayer
Balai lintang	An extension to the verandah of the mosque, usually the space for resting
Beduk	A kind of large drum used in a mosque and surau
Bilal	Muezzin, man who summons Muslims to prayer from the minaret of a mosque
Buang sial	To do something to avert ill luck, danger
Fatwa	A religious ruling made by a Muslim jurist or special committee
Imam	Leader of a mosque who leads the congregation
Jemaah	Congregation
Kadi	Judge in Muslim matters or affairs
Kampung	Village
Kariah	Village where villagers share the same mosque or surau
Katib	Reader of sermons in a mosque during Friday prayers
Kramat	Place of worship associated with hallowed person, thing; tomb of person considered to be holy, place hallowed by reason of events etc. associated with it, shrine
Khurafat	Ridiculous, frivolous beliefs
Madrasah	Small religious school, a place to learn religious knowledge
Makam	Grave; tomb (of a respected or a pious person)
Mandi bunga	Bath water mixed with various flowers; words, formula so chanted believed to cure diseases, avert ill luck or danger or help in getting a spouse
Marhaban	Songs of praise for Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.
Masjid jamik/jamek	Principal mosque
Mihrab	A niche in the wall to indicate direction of Mecca (place where imam stands leading the congregation in prayers)
Mimbar	Pulpit
Mufti	Muslim jurist
Muharam	First month of the Muslim calendar

Nazar	A vow made to achieve what is desired
Nazir	Inspector of a mosque
Pahar	A pedestal tray
Penghulu	Headman of a village
Ratib (beratib)	Recitation of sacred formulas, to repeat a sentence acknowledging Allah
Siak or tok siak	Caretaker of a mosque, usually appointed by the mosque committee
Suluk	Mystical path towards achieving inner self
Sufi	A mystic
Surau	A small place of worship for Muslims other than a mosque. Surau does not have a permanent imam and does not conduct Friday prayers
Syiah	Islamic sect
Tabligh	Muslim missionary
Tahfiz	One who can memorize the Quran
Tahlil	Reciting religious verses “lailahailallah” repeatedly as praises to Allah
Tajwid	Correct pronunciation and intonation for reading the Quran
Tarekat	Path to the truth
Ulama	Theologian in Islamic matters
Wakaf	Donation for religious purposes for the public
Wali	Saint; a person chosen by Allah SWT to get His help by being close to Him
Warak	Pious, having a deep devotion to Allah SWT and religion
Wuduk	To perform ablution before praying
Yasin	The 27th chapter in the Quran
Zikir	The practise of remembering Allah by repeating religious verses such as, astaghfirullah, Allahuakbar orally or at heart

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This book which is about mosques and kramats in Penang, was produced with the sponsorship of a grant by Think City titled “Mosques and Kramats of Penang.” The research for this project was from 1 March 2012 till 28 February 2013. It was based on an earlier one conducted by a group of students from the Malayan Teachers College in 1974. After 38 years, it is time to review the earlier research on the development of mosques especially with the emergence of several new mosques after the 1970s. The research involved several quarters such as, researchers and assistant researchers, Penang Islamic Religious Affairs Department, Penang Islamic Council, Penang Town and Country Planning Department, National Archives of Malaysia, Hamzah Sendut Library, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang State Museum, Penang Public Library, mosque officials including imam, siak, bilal and khatib, inheritors of mosque and kramat, wakaf land donors, original dwellers of a kampung and individuals who inherit stories about a mosque and kramat from their ancestors. This writer would like to express her deepest appreciation to all who were directly or indirectly involved for their cooperation and support to make this project a success. A special thank you goes to Think City for their confidence in the writer to head this project. It is hoped that the outcome of this project will give better understanding to Muslims and non-Muslim communities alike in Penang and generally in Malaysia on how people of different religions and culture share a common space in certain practices like the kramat.

MAHANI MUSA

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Universiti Sains Malaysia

27 May 2013

FOREWORD

Buildings and places speak if you know how to listen to them.

Penang, which has its historic port city of George Town inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage site for its outstanding universal values, is full of such buildings and places. These would, too often, sit silently, locking up within them amazing stories of a multiplicity of culture, ideas, origins and their flows.

One kaleidoscope of such stories are the Mosques and Kramats of Penang. It was fortunate that some four decades ago these stories were documented systematically for the first time. I stumbled upon a copy of the amazing and pioneering study by a team from the Malayan Teachers College located in Gelugor, Penang. The lecturer who guided the team was a certain Mr. W. Williams who had taught me history during my sixth form days at the Penang Free School, a historic educational institution itself which is celebrating two centuries of its initiation in 2016. Mr. Williams was the most dedicated and inspirational history teacher I ever had and molded my own lifelong interest in history. Schools and other institution of learning then treated the subject of history as critical to building the character of young people and inculcate their deep interest in the interaction between soul and society in ways that give meaning to journeys of communities. That study, titled “Historical survey of the Mosques and Kramats in Penang Island” represents all that and I want to name and honour the team led by Mr. Williams with the hope that they may, who knows, link again to celebrate their pioneering work. The six young persons were:

- Abdul Kahar bin Yusoff
- Abu Bakar bin Shariff
- Abdul Razak bin Mohamed Sultan
- Ahmad bin Kasmar
- Joseph Casimer Fernandez
- Sulaiman bin Hassan

When Think City together with its partners Penang Heritage Trust (PHT) and Universiti Sains Malaysia relaunched and expanded the unique Penang Story

Project into a longer term initiative, we thought this story was clearly among those to be told and retold. The story of Islam in Penang and the many Muslim pioneers, traders and thinkers played a critical role in making Penang a shining example of the outstanding universal values that UNESCO has recognized it for and what makes Penang truly Penang.

There has also been a vibrant resurgence of interest in the stories of the churches, temples and clan houses and a stream of publications are emerging, making more and more buildings and places speak of the cultural and local vibrancy of Penang.

Associate Professor Dr. Mahani Musa and her team from the Universiti Sains Malaysia took up the challenging job of revisiting the buildings, peoples and places in the original study and have come up with this updated version. Some mosques had even “disappeared” showing how such history will have to be a continuing project, always a “work in progress”. She and her team have done a truly remarkable job and we congratulate them and also encourage them to continue to keep this project alive through continuing research together with the appropriate authorities.

Think City hopes very much that this study will trigger even greater interest in the stories of the buildings, the places, the people, the thoughts and great philanthropic traditions and sense of community in Penang. The Penang Story initiative is truly enriched by this book and we hope also that it can inspire such initiatives in other parts of Malaysia and elsewhere.

Let more buildings and places speak their stories. Malaysia and the world will be enriched by the vibrancy and the memories they unfold.

Dato’ (Dr) Anwar Fazal

Chairperson, Think City;

Director, Right Livelihood College, Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Penang, Malaysia

21st November 2013

INTRODUCTION

According to Judith A. Nagata, major ports of the 19th century such as Bombay, Chittagong and Penang have witnessed the influx of Muslims of different cultures, schools of thoughts and customs.¹ In Penang, the Muslims came from all over the world particularly Southeast Asia, India and Arabia besides the Malay states especially Kedah. A large part of the *Jawi Pekan/Peranakan*² and Chulias³ who had settled in Penang in 1788 originated from Kedah. Most of them were traders and merchants although some were labourers and clerks of private companies and the government. The Muslims who had converged into George Town are shown in the table below.⁴

POPULATION OF GEORGE TOWN IN 1788

ETHNIC GROUPS	NO. OF SETTLERS	PERCENTAGE
European	19	1.48
Portuguese-Eurasian	197	15.35
Jawi Pekan/Malay	530	41.30
Chinese	537	41.85

The entry of Muslims from the Malay states also took place as a result of war. The Kedah-Siam War of 1821, for instance, brought many people from Kedah (including Perlis which until 1842 was a part of Kedah) and Muslims from south Siam who wanted to avoid Siamese tyranny, to Penang and Province Wellesley (Seberang Perai) in search of a new life.⁵ Unlike other migrants, most of them converged in the rural areas where they could carry on farming just like in their place of origin.

Until 1881, the Penang community developed with the presence of migrants who came from various parts of

the world. The population and its ethnic composition are shown in the census below:⁶

POPULATION OF PENANG IN 1881

ETHNIC GROUP	TOTAL
European and American	674
Eurasian	1,597
Chinese	67,820
Malay	84,772
Achehnese	228
Boyanese	58
Bugis	107
Dayak	1
Javanese	1,342
Jawi Pekan/Peranakan	5,462
Filipinos	7
Bengali and others	1,863
Burmese	198
Parsi	5
Tamil	25,173

¹ Judith A. Nagata, "Heritage as History: Plural Narratives of Penang Malays," National University of Singapore: Asia Research Institute, Working Paper Series No. 173, January 2012.

² This group is the result of marriage between a foreign male, particularly from India who is a Muslim, with a local woman.

³ Tamil Muslims came from south India.

⁴ Nordin Hussin. Trade and Society in the Straits of Melaka: Dutch Melaka and English Penang, 1780-1830 (Copenhagen: NIAS Press & Singapore: National University Press, 2007), Monograph No.100, p. 185.

⁵ For further information, see Mahani Musa, Malay Secret Societies in the Northern Malay States, 1821-1940s, (Kuala Lumpur: MBRAS, 2007), Monograph No. 39, Chapter 2.

⁶ Report of the Census of the Straits Settlements (including the Cocos Islands and Christmas Island) and the Protected Native States of the Malay Peninsula 1891, p. 94.

African	10
Vietnamese	36
Arab	574
Armenian	32
Japanese	4
Jews	32
Persian	1
Siamese	576
Ceylonese	25

The impact of migration is seen, not just in the identity of the local community but also manifested in their socioeconomic and sociocultural activities. Following migration, Muslims have found ways for a better livelihood for themselves and their families while competing with the other races. Needless to say, they also competed among themselves. As Penang had become a diasporic space with a variety of people, researchers such as Anoma Pieries saw many things that were taking place in the Muslim community such as their involvement in secret societies (Malay and Chinese) as a challenge to the cosmopolitan set-up of Penang under British rule.⁷ Despite the competition and challenges, the Muslim community moved on to create its own identity especially in the sociocultural and religious areas.

The two sociocultural and religious legacies associated with the Muslims are the mosques and kramats. Invariably, very often the mosques were closely associated with trade. The rich (usually the traders) bought land and endowed it as *wakaf* property to build mosques, with the hope of getting divine rewards (*pahala*) in the Hereafter, although Helen Fujimoto also sees these as part of individual/group efforts to upgrade their status. Through the *wakaf* and the construction of mosques, the tradition of alms giving and religious study were kept alive. This took place when the madrasah and Quran classes were organized. The Indian-Muslim traders and merchants and *Jawi Pekan/Peranakan* were described by Fujimoto as the

greatest contributors in this aspect.⁸ This is in line with the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974) which indicates that Indian-Muslims and *Jawi Pekan/Peranakan* have surpassed the record for founding mosques and *wakaf*land in the state, as seen in the table below.⁹

FOUNDERS OF MOSQUES IN PENANG

FOUNDER	NO. OF MOSQUES FOUNDED
Indian Muslims	22
Founders' origins unknown or unclear	17
Penang Malays	10
Malays from Perlis and Kedah	8
Indonesians	7
Malays from Perak	1
Malays from Selangor	1
Burmese	1
European	1

Meanwhile, the founding of mosques by those from Kedah and Perlis only occurred after 1821 as a result of Siamese conquest of Kedah in that year. The Siamese invasion caused an exodus of people from Kedah to Province Wellesley and Penang. In Penang, the refugees converged on Balik Pulau.

Besides the spiritual encouragement, the building of mosques was closely related to the existing needs of the Muslim community. With reference to the history of local Muslim community, it is found that the mosque or a small *surau* was always constructed in a particular settlement. Given the minimal attention accorded by

⁷ Anoma Pieries, *Hidden Hands and Divided Landscape: A Penal History of Singapore's Plural Society*, Hawai'i: University of Hawaii Press, 2009.

⁸ Helen Fujimoto, *The South Indian Muslim Community and the Evolution of the Jawi Peranakan in Penang up to 1948* (Tokyo: ILCAA/Tokyo, Gaikokugo Daigaku, 1988), chapter 4.

⁹ *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (Penang: Malayan Teacher College, 1974).

the government of the day coupled with the absence of a ruler as the patron of the religion, all forms of spiritual and social activities were dependent on the Muslim community itself. It was here that the role of Muslim traders became important. The earliest information obtained on the appointment of a kadi was in 1810 when a notice was issued on the appointment of Syed Allie as Khaulle and Cauzee,¹⁰ the highest leader of the Muslim community in the state.¹¹ In the Malay states the sultan was the highest authority in matters relating to Islam. Although further information on Allie was unavailable, it was believed that he was an important individual to the locals in the state.

The freedom given by the administrators of the English East India Company (EIC) had resulted in a hierarchy in the administration of Islam in Penang. J. D. Vaughan, Penang Superintendent of Police (1851-1856), was the earliest person to write on the mosques in the state. According to him, mosques were divided into two categories, the public and private mosques. The public mosque was built with donations from the public. Their management was sponsored by the collection of rentals from those who lived in the vicinity of the mosque. Private mosques were those built by individuals who believed in divine rewards in the Hereafter. Both categories were administered by a group of mosque officials consisting of the *imam*, *khatib*, *bilal* and *siak*. According to Vaughan, in the 1850s there were only two mosques in Penang (names not mentioned).¹² This information is inaccurate as until the 1850s, there were already many mosques in the state.

Rich traders also owned much land and they would *wakaf* the land for the construction of mosques. In fact, there were some Indian-Muslim traders who also built mosques in the village of their origins in India. It is interesting to know that there were cases in which non-Muslims had allowed mosques to be built on their lands, as could be seen in a number of entries. The East India Company was never reluctant to give lands to the

Penang community for religious purposes especially to build mosques or temples. The main problem was the poor management of such lands. This resulted in many cases of mismanagement and the proliferations of unsavory practices among the trustees or children and descendants of the donor.

Consequently in 1905, the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board was formed in Penang. Among others, its function was to register all trustees and managers and to collect rents and revenues from *wakaf* lands.¹³ Since then, the management of *wakaf* land had become more orderly. After being enforced for 44 years, the revenue collected in 1949 totalled \$97,740 while the revenue from various sources was \$123,077. In the same year, there were 20 Muslim *wakaf* and five Hindu endowments which were administered by the state. The Muslim Wakaf consisted of the Kapitan Keling Mosque, Nagore Mosque, Lebu Acheh Mosque, Jelutong Mosque, Alimsah Mosque, Langgar Mosque, Kapitan Keling Private Mosque, Shaik Eusoff Mosque, Khan Muhammad Mosque, Syed Abdul Rahman Bilfakeh, Haji Kassim Mosque, Jalan York Mosque, Abdul Kader Mosque, Kampung Jawa Mosque, Coopee Ammah Wakaf, Nibong Tebal Mosque, Kadershah Tenement Scheme, Syed Kader Wakaf, Syed Hussain Hostel and the Tanjong Tokong Reclamation.¹⁴ After 55 years, all matters pertaining to Islam had become more organized. When the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) and the Penang Islamic Religious Affairs Department (JAIPP) were formed in 1960 it took over the administration of mosques and *wakaf* land in the state.

¹⁰ Meaning 'Khalifa' and 'Kadi'.

¹¹ Prince of Wales Island Gazette, 2 June 1810, Vol 5, No. 223.

¹² J. D. Vaughan, "Notes on the Malays of Pinang and Province Wellesley," JIAEA, Vol. 2, 1858, pp. 153-154.

¹³ Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board, Penang: Criterion Press, 1932.

¹⁴ RCP/Land/1103/50 Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board, Penang for 1949.

Although there were mosques that suffered from low *kariah* members, mosque administrators always seek ways to enliven religious activities within their mosque. Collective efforts in donation drives for mosque repairs or to fund religious activities at the mosque have continued until the present day.

The names of mosques in this research refer to those found on mosque signboards. The names of several mosques seemed to differ from the list of mosques found in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* even though they are actually the same mosques. After the 1970s some of the mosques were accorded new names on their signboards as in the case of the al-Munauwar Mosque (formerly Kelawei Mosque), the Masjid Tengah (formerly Haji Hamid Mosque), the Al-Qadrie Mosque (formerly Ayer Itam Mosque), the Al-Ehsan Mosque (formerly Sungai Pinang Mosque), Al-Idayah Bayan Lepas Mosque (formerly Bayan Lepas Mosque) and others. The new mosques which were recently constructed used Arabic names/words such as the Al-Mukhtar Mosque in Balik Pulau, the Ibnu Al-Khattab Mosque in Bayan Baru and the Al-Jami' Al-Soghair Mosque of Taman Pekaka. These names were chosen to reflect Islamic influences besides commemorating prominent leaders in Islam. The spelling of place names are retained because of their locations. For example, 'Ayer Itam' was used in the research although 'Air Itam' is widely used at present. The word 'Jamek' remains as on the mosque signboards although it is spelt 'jamik' in the *Kamus Dewan* published by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (fourth edition, 2005). The same goes for 'qaryah' which is retained according to official files of the mosques referred to for this research. However, in the entry, the word 'kariah' is used (based on spelling in the *Kamus Dewan*) as reference to an area where residents share the same mosque or *surau*. The difference in spelling/word could not be avoided as until the present time there is no consensus on such matters.

Despite their hidden location (except in particular

cases), kramats had become the connecting element for man who are willing to pitch his hopes on graves, tombs or people whom he had never met. Unlike mosques which are places of worship specifically for Muslims, the kramats are visited by people regardless of religion, ethnicity or class. The kramat is a place where people from various backgrounds, religion, culture and status share the space and interact with one another. This makes kramats relevant until the present time despite the rapid development experienced by Penang and the absence of any form of official promotion by the state.

The practice of praying to kramat was first highlighted by J. D. Vaughan in the 1850s.¹⁵ Like the mosques, kramats had a long history which was closely related to the spread of Islam in the Malay Archipelago since the 7th century. Kramat reflects the influence of Shia and Sufism from Persia and India. Hence, wherever there were Indian-Muslims, as in the ports of Singapore and Penang, there would be several kramats which were closely related to this community.¹⁶ In theory, kramats refer to the grave of a pious individual or the early pioneer of a settlement. However, there were also kramats which were not in the form of a grave but a place or an old site in the jungle or on the hill.¹⁷ Mohd. Taib Osman sees two important aspects when discussing kramat in the Muslim community in this country. First, the kramat as an element of popular Islam and second, the relationship between kramat and the local folk beliefs. The wali is located in the first category, the group that gets most reward or '*karama*' from Allah. Hence the word 'kramat.' But local beliefs tend to elevate a *wali* to someone who has tremendous

¹⁵ J. D. Vaughan, "Notes on the Malays of Pinang and Province Wellesley," p. 164.

¹⁶ For a survey on kramat in Singapore, see, P. J. Rivers, "Kramat in Singapore in the Mid-Twentieth Century," *JMBRAS*, Vol. 76, Part 2, pp. 93-119.

¹⁷ W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic being an Introduction to the Folklore and Popular Religion on the Malay Peninsula* (with a preface by C. O. Blagden and introduction by Hood Salleh) (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1984), p. 62.

healing power because of his piety. The result is the emergence of various *wali* kramat although it is against Islam. According to Mohd. Taib, the kramat in Islam is not necessarily a pious person rather it can come from a variety of individuals such as the founder of a religion, ancestor or leader of a tribe, a prince or a founder of government with some from ordinary background, a past hero, spirit of the jungle, rivers and even animals.¹⁸

There are also several reasons why kramat is continuously relevant not only in the lives of the Muslim community in Malaysia but also in Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, southern Philippines and southern Thailand. The Muslim community's belief in a pious individual who is thought to have extraordinary powers to bring blessings to them is one of the reasons. This is closely related to the widespread belief in the supernatural and invisible powers which have taken root since the pre-Islamic era.

In this context, the kramat has cultivated ties between various races when the Chinese pray at the Malay kramats. In fact there are studies that show the increasing popularity of the Malay kramats among the Chinese following the decrease in the number of Malays dabbling with the kramat following the Islamic revivalism of the 1980s. Those who worship Malay kramats consider them their duty to help look after the kramats because they believe the kramats must never be neglected after being deified. Otherwise, bad luck would befall them and affect the peace of the Malays and the community in general.¹⁹

MOSQUE AND KRAMAT PROJECT IN PENANG

This research is an update of an earlier research titled *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*, which was conducted by a group of history majors from the Penang Teachers' College in 1974. The approach of using interviews and observations coupled with field research to the mosques and kramats were retained. Those interviewed were people who had

connections with mosques or mosque administrators, inheritors of the founders and donors of *wakaf* land where the mosque stand alongside long-time kampung residents and pioneers in the local community. For kramat the interviews involved inheritors of kramat, the caretakers of kramat, graves, tombs and mausoleums, petty traders found in the vicinity of kramat and longtime residents in the kampung or the locality of the kramat. Often we get stories that are different from those found in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*. In such cases, the information obtained were retained. The different versions are unavoidable in any research when information is obtained orally. As much as possible, the interviews involved more than one respondent to ensure their reliability. We also validated the oral information with primary sources which are obtained from the National Archives of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur and its Penang branch and the Penang Islamic Religious Affairs Department. Contemporary newspapers highlight special religious activities that were held at mosques or during the official launching of mosques. These are also consulted for the present study. The internet, too, including blogs, helped in the research, with regard to information involving mosques.

Until February 2013, the research had completed 75 entries on mosques including 11 new ones. However, the Ibramsah Mosque and the Chulia Street Mosque entries could not be filled in. As in the previous research (1974) both mosques were untraceable. In fact, our respondents did not even know about their existence. Twenty-two entries on kramat were completed including two new kramats (not listed in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*). They were the Kramat Alimsah Walley in Chulia Street

¹⁸ Mohd. Taib Osman, *Malay Folk Beliefs: An Integration of Disparate Elements* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1989), pp. 118-122. For further survey on kramat, see R. O. Winstedt, "Kramat Sacred Places and Persons in Malaya," *JMBRAS*, Vol 2, Part 2, 1924, pp. 264-279.

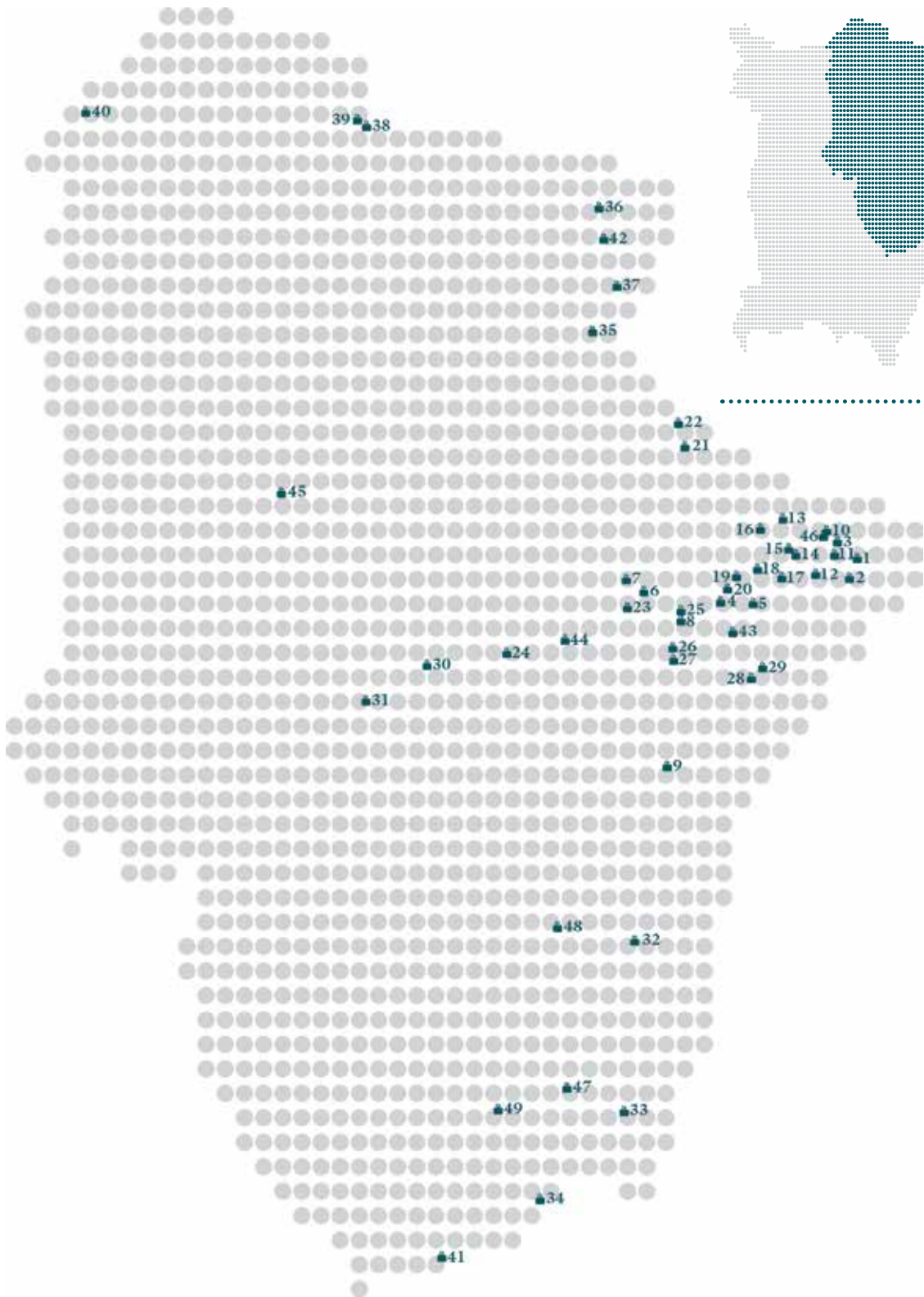
¹⁹ Cheu Hock Tong, "The Sinicization of Malay Kramats in Malaysia," *JMBRAS*, Vol. 71, Part. 2, p. 55.

and the Kramat Maulana Miskin Wali Allah in Jalan Masjid. Although 24 kramats were on the list, the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* had completed the entries on only seven of them. They were the Kramat Tuah, Kramat Shaik Ismail, Kramat Nagore, Kramat Dato Koyah, Makam Mak Amah, Kramat Tuan Guru, and Kramat Panjang. The rest were mere names of kramats without any entry. It was difficult to obtain written sources or respondents who knew about these kramats.

This project managed to fill in many of the incomplete entries but information on Kramat no. 12 (unnamed), Kramat Tok Haji Min, Kramat To' Salleh and Kramat Haji Mohamed which were listed in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*, have escaped our attention. Most respondents did not know about the four kramats mentioned above. In comparison with mosques, the research on kramat was more challenging particularly in locating the oral or written sources. Until the present time there are not many primary sources about kramats. Oral sources were difficult to obtain because the practice of kramat worship is considered unIslamic. As such, not many would want to share their stories. However, the field research was most useful. The frequent visits made to these kramats helped the researchers to dig into their origins.

As every research has its limitations we take full responsibility for the information provided in this research. The information is based on interviews as well as primary and secondary sources. We also stand to be corrected in the future when new evidences are found. Hence, the suggestion to improve or add new information in the future is most welcome. **MK**

**Currency used in this research is Dollar and Ringgit Malaysia. Dollar (\$) being used until 1991 and Ringgit Malaysia (RM) starting from 1992.*



LIST OF MOSQUES IN NORTH EAST DISTRICT

1. Kapitan Keling Mosque,
Pitt Street (Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling)
2. Malay Mosque, Acheen Street
3. Alimsah Walley Jamek Mosque, Chulia Street
4. Haji Kassim Jamek Mosque, Kampung Makam,
Dato Kramat Road
5. Kampung Jawa Baru Mosque,
Kampung Jawa Baru
6. Shaik Eusoff Mosque, Ayer Itam Road
7. York Road Mosque, York Road
8. Khan Muhammad Mosque, Perak Road
9. Jelutong Jamek Mosque, Jelutong Road
10. Benggali Jamek Mosque, Leith Street
11. Pintal Tali Mosque, Pintal Tali
12. Al-Jamiul Azzakirin Mosque, Prangin
13. Hutton Lane Jamek Mosque, Hutton Lane
14. Titi Papan Jamek Mosque, Burmah Road
15. Masjid Tengah, Burmah Road
16. Tarik Air Mosque, Burmah Road
17. Simpang Enam Jamek Mosque,
Macalister Road
18. Pakistan Mosque, Macalister Road
19. Arab Mosque, Seang Tek Road
20. Khairi Mosque, Pahang Road
21. Al-Munauwar Mosque, Kelawai Road
22. Burmah Lane Old Jamek Mosque,
Gurney Drive
23. Kebun Lama Acheh Mosque, Langkawi Road
24. Kampung Baru Mosque, Ayer Itam Road
25. Rawana Jamek Mosque, Perak Road
26. Hashim Yahaya Jamek Mosque, Perak Road
27. Wan Chik Ariffin Mosque, Perak Road
28. Sungai Pinang Jamek Mosque, Jelutong Road
29. Maqbul Mosque, Sungai Pinang
30. Al-Qadrie Jamek Mosque, Ayer Itam
31. Paya Terubung Jamek Mosque, Ayer Itam
32. Sungai Gelugor Jamek Mosque, Gelugor
33. Batu Uban Jamek Mosque, Batu Uban
34. Sungai Nibong Besar Jamek Mosque,
Sungai Nibong
35. Bagan Jermal Jamek Mosque,
Tanjung Tokong Road
36. Tuan Guru Mosque, Tanjung Tokong Road
37. Tanjung Tokong Reclamation Land Mosque
(Madrasah At-Taqwa), Tanjung Tokong
38. Tanjung Bunga Floating Mosque,
Tanjung Bungah Road
39. Tanjung Huma Old Mosque, 10th Milestone,
Batu Feringgi
40. Ar-Rahman Mosque, Batu Feringgi
41. Al-Ittifaq Mosque, Sungai Nibong Kechil
42. Karwa Mosque, Tanjung Tokong
43. Kampung Rawa Mosque, Kampung Rawa
44. Penang State Mosque, Ayer Itam Road
45. Bukit Bendera Mosque
46. Anjuman Himayathul Islam Mosque,
Chulia Street
47. Al-Malik Khalid Mosque,
Universiti Sains Malaysia
48. At-Taqwa Mosque, Taman Brown/
Taman Tun Sardon
49. Al- Jami' Al-Soghbir Mosque, Taman Pekaka

KAPITAN KELING MOSQUE, Pitt Street
(Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling)



The Kapitan Keling Mosque is a significant landmark of the Muslim community in Penang, particularly the Indian-Muslims. Originally, the mosque was small with a thatch roof which was built by sepoy of the English East India Company not long after Francis Light founded Penang. The mosque appeared in the 1798 map of Penang as ‘Chulier mosque’. According to a respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 1), the founder of the thatched roof mosque was Major Nador Khan or more popularly known as ‘To’ Nadok Berkajang Kain’. After several years of using the small mosque, the Indian-Muslim community made a request to their leader, the Kapitan Keling (Cauder Mohudeen)¹ to build a bigger mosque to accommodate the growing congregation. Other than sepoy who settled in Pitt Street, the mosque area was also a business place for jewellers and money changers. Today, it is still a hub for jewellers and money changers.

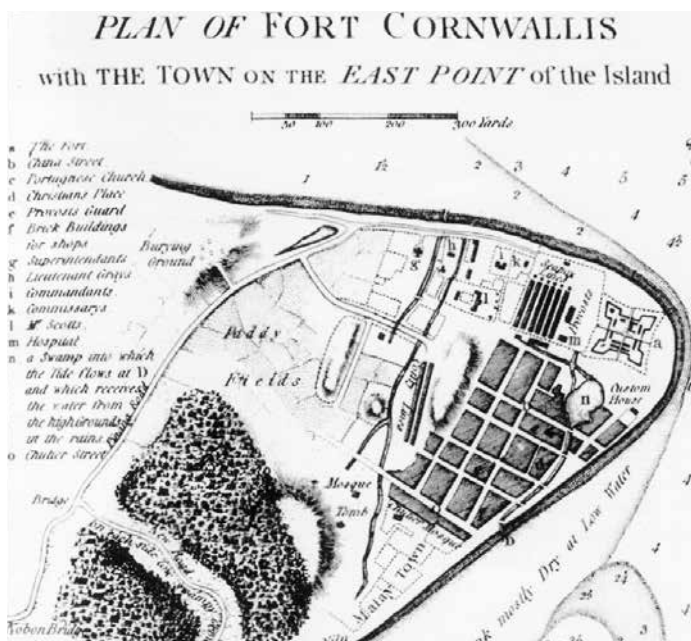
The Kapitan Keling was an influential figure in Penang. He was born in Pondicherry, South India in 1759 from the family of Marakayyar,² who settled in a small village in Port Parangi Pettai (now Porto Novo). Kapitan Keling was believed to have trade relations with Kedah (besides Nagore and Nagapatinam) and Sumatera since the founding of Penang. He was said to have come with Light to Penang in 1786 as a ship crew overseer. His good rapport with Light opened an opportunity for him to start business and eventually he became a very wealthy and influential Chulia³ in Penang. In 1801, he was appointed ‘Kapitan’ for the Chulias, hence he was called ‘Kapitan Keling’. As leader of his community he was responsible for their safety and social welfare. He would attend to their complaints twice a week together with his two deputies. All cases of loans below \$10 were under his authority. He was also responsible to report to the government cases of legal infringements and diseases. He appointed a clerk to register deaths, births and marriage in the community. With his influence and wealth, the Kapitan Keling applied to the government to build a bigger mosque, as requested by the community at the time. After 1806, the post of Kapitan Keling was never heard again but the influence of Kapitan Keling and his wealth lived on till he died in 1834. His wealth at the time of his death was estimated at 50,000 Spanish dollars besides the *wakaf* land, cemetery for his family members in Kampung Kolam and other plots of land in the vicinity.

On 2 November 1801, as a result of his application, Lieutenant Governor Sir George Leith gave Kapitan

¹ Various spellings are used such as, Cauder Moheedeen and Kader Mydin Merican.

² Marakayyar was a group of traders from the Labbai or Illappai class i.e. Tamil-Muslims who lived on the Coromandel Coast. They are said to have originated from Arabia and had lived in the area since 9 A.D. The Marakayyar group was in control of the textile business and was involved with Aceh in the pepper business. When the Dutch monopolized trade in Aceh in the 1880s, the Indian-Muslim trade monopoly began to decline.

³ Chulia was used by the British when referring to Muslims from South India.



(Source: Lim Chong Keat, *Penang Views*, p. 15)

A Plan of George Town by Captain Home Briggs Popham, 1798



Keling 18 acres of land for the purpose of building a mosque and cemetery for Muslims (Grant no. 367 of 1801). The land was situated in the south of Malabar Street. The land could not be sold and the title was not transferable. If it was no longer used for its original purpose, it should be returned to the East India Company. Around 1802, the new mosque was completed with the help of the East India Company and contributions from Muslim traders in George Town. The mosque used expertise brought in especially from India. Building materials like roofing, steel, the dome, wood and lime were imported from India, China, Burma, and Britain while teak from Burma was used. To glue the bricks for the walls, lime was used instead of cement

as lime would last longer. Until the present time, the wooden parts and the walls are still in their original form and have yet to be replaced. The new mosque was named ‘Masjid Kapitan Keling’ (Kapitan Keling Mosque) in commemoration of the ‘Kapitan Keling’ who was also its first administrator. The mosque is believed to be the first *‘jamik’*⁴ mosque in George Town. Probably, the Acheh community under the leadership of Tunku Sayyid Hussain built the Malay Mosque in Acheen Street in 1808 because sermons and announcements of activities at the Kapitan Keling Mosque were in

⁴Jamik (often spelt ‘jamek’ on mosque signboard) means principal mosque for everyone to pray together.

Tamil. Kapitan Keling died in 1834 and his grave is located in Kampung Kolam.

In the historical development of the Kapitan Keling Mosque, it experienced various challenges. The socioeconomic situation in Penang had entered a new phase due to population growth and trade activities, especially after the administration of the Straits Settlements was moved from India to London in 1867, had affected the mosque. One significant change was the shrinking of the mosque area. In the 1890s, the government bought a part of the 18 acres, between the Carnarvon Street police Station, school and the market, for town development. By 1903, the mosque area was left with only eight acres with the rest taken over by shop houses, roads and commercial buildings. When the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Ordinance 1905 was introduced in the Straits Settlements to coordinate the management and administration of *wakaf* land, the Kapitan Keling Mosque was placed under the board's management.

In the management aspect, although office holders were appointed by descendants of the Kapitan Keling, in the following years the appointment of the rightful person to manage the mosque became an issue. Conflicting claims were made by family members of Kapitan Keling and the family of the first 'imam' of the mosque. Problems also arose in the administration of the *wakaf* land in Penang including Kapitan Keling Mosque which was the biggest in town (18 acres) and very valuable (estimated at \$1 per sq. ft.). Apart from that, Kapitan Keling also had his own *wakaf* land with a total area of 53,955 sq. ft which include his grave and the graves of his seven children and wives.⁵ Apart from these graves, there were 18 houses which he had built on the same land. The houses were rented out at \$24 a month.

The survey by the Commission of Enquiry which was formed by the government in 1903 to report on *wakaf* lands in Penang as follow-up to complaints by

Muslims on the matter, found that the Kapitan Keling Mosque did not have a trustee. Rentals on the *wakaf* land were collected by Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar who was appointed Receiver by the court. Ghulam's yearly collection of rentals on the *wakaf* land was estimated at \$35,000 but the wakaf received only \$2,800. The problem of misappropriation of funds and deviation from the owner's original religious objective which surfaced in the management of the *wakaf* land caused the government to introduce in 1905 the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Ordinance. With its formation, for the first time in the history of the nation, all matters of *wakaf* land were managed by a government body. Although Muslims saw it as contradictory to Islamic instruction, the government viewed it not only as an important step to solve problems but also to make *wakaf* land more profitable by improving the collection of rentals. The income from *wakaf* of the Kapitan Keling Mosque, was channeled for education, celebration and the social welfare of the Muslim community in Penang as noted in the Board's Annual Report of 1948.

EDUCATION:

1. Scholarship for Abdul Wahab bin Md. Ariff and Abdul Aziz bin Omar who were furthering their education at the Medical College in Singapore.
2. Continuance of scholarship for Hashim bin Sultan, student at the Medical College in Singapore.
3. Sponsoring tailoring class at Malay School, Kedah Road, for \$35 a month.
4. Paying the salary of religious teacher who was appointed to teach Muslim lepers at Pulau Jerejak at \$25 a month.
5. Paying examination fees \$74 for Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah.
6. Paying a total of \$98 for fees for three students studying at the Penang Free School and one student at the Anglo-Chinese High School who would be taking the Cambridge examinations.

⁵ Kapitan Keling had three wives.

CELEBRATION:

Most mosques under the management of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board provide free food to Muslims in the fasting month of Ramadan. At the Kapitan Keling Mosque, about 400 poor people were given free food during Ramadan.

WELFARE:

1. Income of \$75 a month from *wakaf* of Kapitan Keling Mosque was channeled to the Penang Hospital to supply nutritious food and fare to poor mothers who brought their sick babies to several Infant Welfare Centres in the state.
2. Contribute an average of \$140 a month from the funds of the Kapitan Keling Mosque to the Muslim orphanage in Kampung Baru, Ayer Itam.

Throughout its historical development, the Kapitan Keling Mosque had gone through several phases of repair; 1893- around 1916; 1916; 1916-1928; 1928; 1928-1935. In 1893 to around 1916, the original building was expanded to the south and east. In 1916, for the first time, the mosque went through major renovation and expansion since its existence for more than 100 years with funding from the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board. Building materials were imported from abroad because they were unavailable locally. The architect, N. A. Neubronner, renovated it according to British Moghul design with a much bigger minaret and dome than the original. The houses that were scattered around the mosque were demolished to make way for the minaret. A *madrasah* was also built where children in the area could go for their religious knowledge classes. From 1916 to 1928, restoration work on the concrete water tank for ablution was completed. The water tank was built in 1918. In 1928, there was an application to build a wall, an iron fence and gate based on the plan submitted by Messrs. Stark and McNeill. It is believed that the outer colonnade was built only in 1935.



Between 1928 and 1935, the Kapitan Keling Mosque was renovated into the present shape. The original structure inside the mosque was demolished and replaced with an octagonal dome with stone pillars. The prayer hall was extended and the main roof was raised to allow for better ventilation. A house was built in front of the mosque for the *imam* and mosque staff as it was still on mosque *wakaf* land. The Kapitan Keling Mosque became the State Mosque of Penang until the new Penang State Mosque was built and completed in 1980.

In 2002, the mosque was renovated again. With an allocation of RM 5 million the roof was repaired including adding a path around the roof for easy access when undertaking roof repair. An Information Centre which served as *dakwah* centre, a place to keep religious books and to provide information on Islam, was added in the same year. In 2011, the mosque received contribution from Think City for RM 900,000 to repair the roof, dome, walls and any other small damages. The repair work was done by experts from Australia. MK

MALAY MOSQUE, Acheen Street



According to the *Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board, Penang* (1932) and *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 2), the Acheen Street Malay Mosque was built in 1808 by Tunku Sayyid Hussain Al-Aidid, a wealthy spice trader of Arab descent who was from the Aceh royal family. Most literature state that Acheen Street was opened in 1792. However, based on the agreement between Tunku Sayyid Hussain and Francis Light dated 27

November 1791, it is believed that Tunku Sayyid Hussain, his family, followers and servants settled in the area in 1791. The agreement contained his demands to enforce his own laws on his followers and rights to do business and to trade in tin ore freely in the country.¹

¹ I would like to thank Associate Professor Jelani Harun, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, for providing a copy of the agreement and permission to refer to the agreement.

The development of Acheen Street may be divided into three phases. The first phase (1791-1840) was the formation and establishment of the Acheh community in the area until Tunku Sayyid Hussain's demise in 1840. The second phase (mid-19th century until the mid-20th century) witnessed the rapid economic development of Acheen Street as hub for the hajj pilgrims leaving for Mecca, and for Malay-Muslim intellectuals. The third phase was the period of decline for Acheen Street when ships were replaced by aeroplanes in 1976 for the trip to Mecca.

As a wealthy spice trader who monopolised the trade between Penang and Aceh, Tunku Sayyid Hussain had successfully created good rapport with the ruling class and was appointed community leader for the Malays in the area. Besides his own business, Tunku Sayyid Hussain was the agent for Palmer & Co. whose headquarters was in Calcutta. He owned several ships like the *Futty Salim*, *Kalantan* and *Kota Jawa* which were later used in the operation to take back the Aceh throne. One manifestation of his wealth and influence was a building which served as godown where he kept an office and spices. The Aceh godown was the first four storey building in George Town and was known as '*Rumah Tinggi*' (high house) among the Malays.² With the value of the building at 6,000 Spanish dollars, Tunku Sayyid Hussain was considered as one of the wealthiest man in Penang after Francis Light and his friend, James Scott. His influence in the community was great that the streets stretching from Acheen Street to Lebu Pantai (Beach Street) was known among the locals as Tuan Ilo-Sun Kay meaning 'Tuan Hussain Street.'³ His success in business allowed him to live a life of luxury and he was influential politically. In July 1815, he gave a loan of 50,000 Spanish dollars to the English East India Company government when it faced financial difficulties.

Interestingly, while the focus was on gaining wealth, relation with the homeland was never severed.

Acheen Street was not just an economic territory but also served as political territory to the migrants from Aceh. The Acheh community knew of every development in Aceh. This was not surprising because Tunku Sayyid Hussain was a descendant of the Aceh ruler Sultan Jamal al-Alam. With royal background, he was given the opportunity to actively trade in Riau and Java before moving to Penang. In fact, he was exempted from taxes in Aceh until Sultan Jauhar Al-Alam who ruled from 1802-1823 reimposed the taxes again in 1810. This caused much dissatisfaction to Tunku Sayyid Hussain. So he conspired with Aceh military leaders to overthrow Sultan Jauhar Al-Alam. On the invitation of the Aceh nobles, Tunku Sayyid Hussain sent his son, Saif Al-Alam to be installed as 'sultan' of Aceh in 1815. The new 'sultan' did not last long because Sultan Jauhar Al-Alam was able to retake the throne with British help in 1820. The dispute between the two factions brought great losses to the trade.⁴ After his death in 1840, the trade was continued by his children, Sayyid Abdullah and Sayyid Akil. His children, too, took an interest in the political development of their homeland. Sayyid Akil, for instance, was made the crown prince of Deli after his marriage to a family member of Sultan Deli in 1825.⁵

As local leader of Acheen Street, in 1808 Tunku Sayyid Hussain built a mosque in the area for the benefit of the community. Before that date they prayed at the Kapitan Keling Mosque but the sermon was in Tamil. This prompted Tunku Sayyid Hussain

²'Rumah Tinggi' (high house) was originally a jail.

³"*Bicara Sejarah Acheen Street Pulau Pinang*," sponsored by the Penang Archives, at the P. Ramlee Auditorium, P. Ramlee Complex, Penang, on 8 May 2008.

⁴For further details about the struggle for the throne between Tunku Sayyid Hussain and Sultan Jauhar Al-Alam and the reaction of the British in Penang, see John Anderson, *Acheen and the Ports on the North and East Coasts of Sumatra* (with an introduction by A. J. S. Reid) Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1971.

⁵Salina Haji Zainol, *Hubungan Perdagangan Aceh dengan Pulau Pinang*, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 2005, p.144.

and his trader friends to build a separate mosque in Acheen Street.⁶ In 1820, he endowed a piece of land (Lot 200) with an area of 66,396 sq. ft. for religious purposes. A big mosque was built on the plot of land. Rents were collected from houses number 103,105, 107, 113, 113, 115, and 117 Chulia Street; 49, 55, 57, 59, 77, 79 and 81 of Acheen Street by the mosque *khatib* who handed them over to the family of the mosque trustee. It was the late Abdul Rani who built these houses. Mosque expenses were around \$90 a month.⁷ Tunku Sayyid Hussain died in 1840. His mausoleum is located beside the mosque. In 1883, a house for Malay children was built beside the mosque with an allocation from the *wakaf* of Tunku Sayyid Hussain. A fund to sponsor Malay students at the Penang Free School was also set up.

The Malay Acheen Street Mosque was a landmark of the Muslim community in George Town after the coming of Light. It was also the focus of various activities in the area and within George Town. The activities were not just commerce but also as a place where hajj pilgrims congregated since the mid-19th century when Penang became the point

of departure for hajj pilgrims from Malaya. During the hajj season, Acheen Street and the surrounding area would be busy with hajj pilgrims and their relatives before departing for Mecca. All sorts of business would emerge, such as hajj agents known as *syekh haji*, lodging houses, eating places, hajj paraphenalia stores, jewellery shops, money changers, bookstores, *tongkang* services,⁸ chests makers⁹ and so forth. In short, the joyous atmosphere at Acheen Street was like a festival during the hajj season. The Acheen Street Mosque became a centre to perform religious duties for intending pilgrims and to acquire knowledge while waiting for their departure.

In the mid-19th century, influential Muslim community leaders emerged in Acheen Street. In

⁶ Until then, Friday prayers was held on a rotation basis between Acheen Street Malay Mosque and the Kapitan Keling Mosque.

⁷ This is based on information found in the Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board, Penang, 1932.

⁸ Tongkang services were used to transport the belongings of hajj pilgrims' to ships because big ships could not anchor near the wharf due to the shallow water.

⁹ Wooden chests were used to store the belongings of hajj pilgrims'.



1867, a dispute erupted between secret societies which included two Malay secret societies, the White Flag and the Red Flag which merged with Chinese secret societies, the Ghee Hin and Tua Peh Kong. One witness who was called to give evidence to the Commission of Inquiry in connection with the dispute, claimed to have heard cannon bombardments on the minaret of the Acheen Street Malay Mosque. Acheen Street was believed to be the headquarters of the Red Flag group. As a result, the British directed Sheikh Omar Basheer, the *imam* of Acheen Street Malay Mosque and a prominent religious leader at the time, to issue a decree (*fatwa*) that Malays were prohibited from joining any secret societies. Sheikh Omar's legacy was continued by his children. Haji Yahya (1853-1901) was *kadi* in Penang in 1888. His office was located at 69, Acheen Street, in the precinct of the mosque. His second son, Zakaria (1855-1926) was the state *mufiti*, taking over from his father to spread Naqsyabandiah '*tarekat*'. His youngest son, Muhammad Natt (1862-1910), was appointed *kadi* until his death in 1910.

The Acheen Street Malay Mosque was the main place where Muslims gathered other than the Kapitan Keling Mosque. In fact, the *kariah* was always sensitive to the development of Islam in other part of the world. After the involvement of Tunku Sayyid Hussain in the struggle for the Aceh throne (1814-1820), Dutch infiltration into Aceh became an issue especially the trade embargo which was enforced in 1888. The issue drew the attention of the Acheen Street community. Malay-Muslims, in particular those who lived in the town area, were sensitive towards the success of other Muslim countries. Besides the Dutch in Aceh, developments in the Middle East also were of interest to them. The newspaper, *Bintang Timor*, had reported on Muslims in George Town including Acheen Street, during the 25th anniversary of Turkey's Sultan Abdul Hamid Khan. The paper reported that on 30 August 1900, Muslims in Penang celebrated the occasion with a religious gathering, feast and prayers.

Most Malay shops were closed on that day. Among the mosques which celebrated the occasion were the Kapitan Keling Mosque and Acheen Street Malay Mosque.

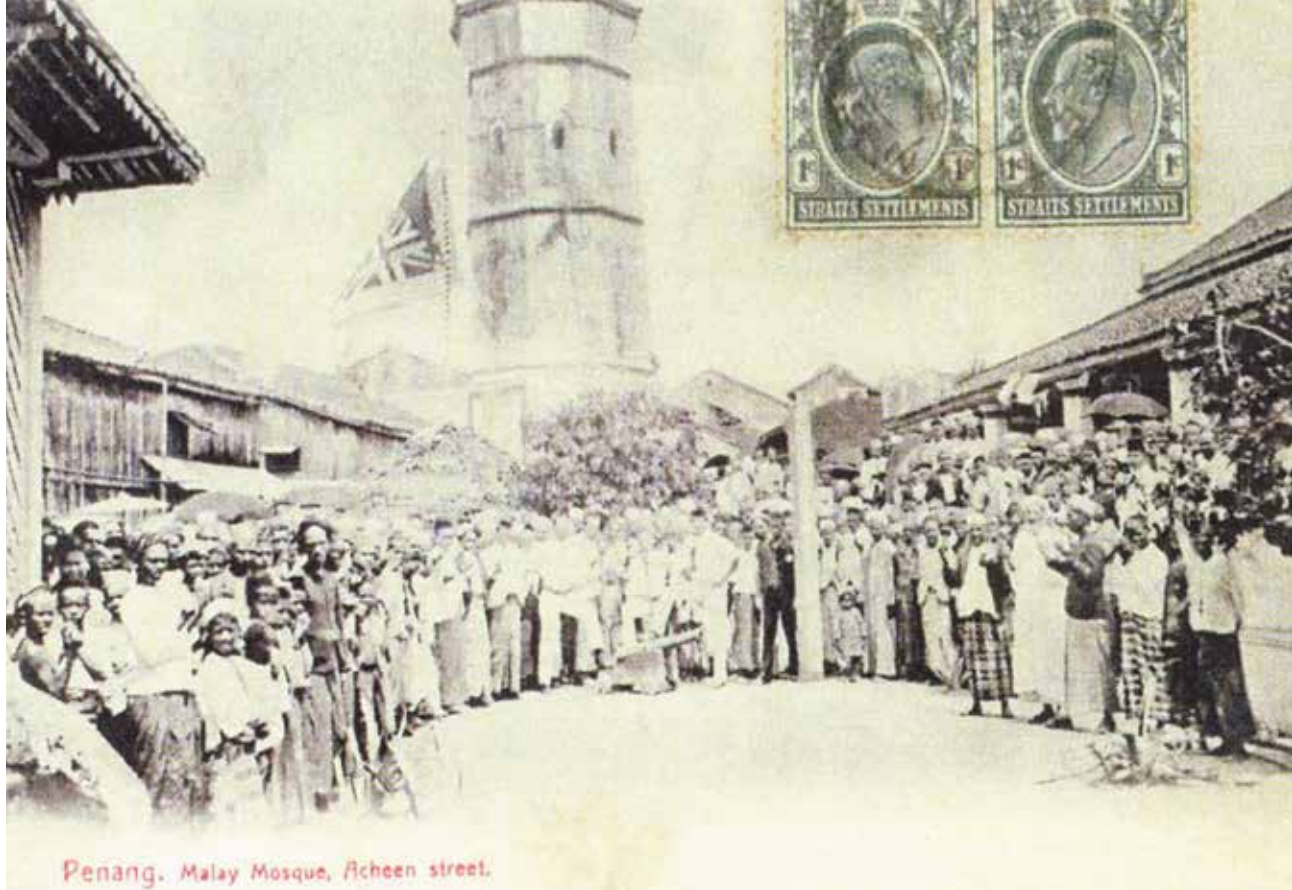
Apart from its interesting history, the architecture of the Acheen Street Malay Mosque is unique as it commensurate the influence and wealth of its founder. The mosque has an octagonal minaret, a cement water tank, well, verandah, toilets and cemetery.

The architecture is classical, a combination of Moorish¹⁰ and Chinese architecture. This is evident in the entrance at the main gate, the small dome on the spine of the roof, horn shaped carvings on the roof, windows and wooden doors with fretwork, classical pillar, carvings on the plaster of the *mibrab* and walls. Chinese influence can be seen on the minarets which resemble a Chinese pagoda.

Since its establishment, the Acheen Street Malay Mosque had been repaired and expanded several times. However, there is no oral or written records on these. According to Mohamed bin Yahaya, a descendant of Sheikh Omar Basheer who still lives in his great-great-grandfather's house at no. 69, Acheen Street, the Malay Mosque went through major repairs and expansion after George Town was recognized as a world heritage site by UNESCO on 7 July 2008. Among its early allocations was a RM2.2 million grant from the state government in 1995 for renovation work to be completed within two years.¹¹ The work was to take place in two phases. The first phase was to repair the roof and Tunku Sayyid Hussain's grave. In the second phase, repairs

¹⁰ The architecture was from North India. This type of architecture reached Sumatera and Java in the 16th century and can be seen in the shape of the minaret of the Acheen Street Malay Mosque.

¹¹ According to Mohamed bin Yahaya, during the restoration work, the Penang Islamic Religious Affairs Department (JAIPP) ordered the mosque to be closed. However, the *kariah* insisted on praying at the mosque. Finally, they were allowed after the French experts confirmed that it was safe to use the mosque to pray but Friday prayers were to be held at the Kapitan Keling Mosque.



Penang. Malay Mosque, Acheen street.

would be done to the building including the roof, walls, pillars, doors, windows, toilets, ablution tank, minaret and *mimbar*. The project was assisted by two French experts on restoration works. The main objective of the restoration work was to maintain the mosque's architectural heritage without jeopardizing its structure and originality. Restoration works done in the first phase were as follows:

1. Breaking open the roof and removing asbestos pieces and the metal roof. A canvas was used to cover the roof to avoid rain water entering the mosque.
2. Identifying and replacing old structures of the roof which were infested by white ants.
3. Fixing the roof with clay tiles and rain water drainage system.
4. Repair and paint the ceiling.

Restoration works – second phase were as follows:

1. Cleaning dirt and moss on walls and the minaret.
2. Repair and replace broken windows and doors.
3. Repair the place where ablution is performed, the verandah, well, and build a new toilet.

4. Scrape old paint on the walls, pillars, minaret and *mimbar*.
5. Plaster the walls and pillars which are broken.
6. Paint the mosque and minaret based on its original colour which was creamy yellow, light blue, green and white.

The restoration work involved 86 local and foreign workers; 11 workers to repair the roof, two to fix the ceiling, 11 to paint, 22 workers to scrape and plaster the walls, eight sculptors to carve flowers on plasters and the top of pillars, nine workers to rebuild the toilet, six workers to lay the floor tiles, eight workers to repair the minaret. The entire project involved nine building contractors. The project engaged two French restoration experts who advised and demonstrated the methods and techniques in restoration works. In 2006, the Acheen Street Malay Mosque received funding from the Department of National Heritage for conservation works on the mosque to be undertaken by experts appointed by the department. In 2006, the Acheen Street Malay Mosque was listed under the Heritage Act. MK

ALIMSAH WALLEY JAMEK MOSQUE, Chulia Street



According to the *Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board, Penang* (1932) and *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 3), the Alimsah Walley Mosque was built in 1811 through the efforts of imam Haji Abdul Qader Alim.¹ He and the Muslim community in the Chulia Street area had bought a piece of land (lot 279) and built the mosque. The Muslim community then gave him the land with a deed dated 3 November 1811. Haji Abdul Qader settled here and was the *imam* of the mosque until his death in 1852. Even the village was known as Kampong Wali Alimsah, in commemoration of Haji Abdul Qader Alim.

On 5 July 1842, Haji Abdul Qader passed the land to the trustees of Shahid Lebby, Muckdoom Sah and Kader Meah to look after it as a place of public worship for Muslims and to ensure that the land would not be sold. However, the trustees were not involved in the management of the mosque. Kader Meah died in 1843 followed by Muckdoom in 1851 and Shahid in 1852.

¹ Spelt Abdul Cauder Alimsah in *Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board, Penang* (Penang: Criterion Press, 1932), p. 4.

Haji Abdul Qader's property was then handed over to his son, Haji Mohamed Sahid Effendi (letter of authority on the inheritance dated 3 August 1853). In 1869, Haji Mohamed Sahid Effendi rebuilt the mosque with money collected from the Muslim community in the area.

In 1883, the mosque land was flooded and became swampy due to building construction in Campbell Street. The problem was solved when the Town Commissioner directed the trustees to fill up the area so that it would not be flooded again.

On 14 December 1906, the management of the Alimsah Walley Mosque *wakaf* land was taken over by the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board. In 1933, a three storey flat with 36 units were built on the *wakaf* land next to the mosque. It was to house the heirs of the Alimsah Walley Mosque trustees and Muslims in the area. During the Second World War, the mosque and the flat were badly damaged. A small *surau* was built to replace the damaged mosque. It was only in 1952 that a new mosque was built with funding from the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board and the public. In the 1960s, the *wakaf* land was taken over by the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP). In 1974, MAIPP issued a notice to the flat dwellers to move out because the building was deemed unsafe. The flat was demolished in the 1980s to make way for a new apartment.

While the new apartment was being built, residents were given temporary rented housing in Sungai Pinang Road (Public Works Department quarters). However, the Alimsah Walley Mosque was not closed. In fact, family members of the inheritors of the *wakaf* land together with some old time residents of the flat returned to the mosque for their daily prayers. Many religious programmes were held at the mosque such as religious talks, *maghrib* lectures, break fasting feasts and so forth. Interestingly, during its closure, the prayer hall was expanded to accommodate the growing congregation. Collection from public donations and family members of the inheritors who were caretakers of the mosque paid for the mosque expansion.

The Alimsah Walley Mosque was expanded and repaired again in 2009. Since then the mosque and its religious activities were better managed after the new mosque formed a *kariah* committee. Before this, there was already a *kariah* appointed by MAIPP in the 1960s after MAIPP took over the administration of *wakaf* land in the state. However, the management of the mosque became disorganised after the mosque area was closed and the nearby apartment was left vacant. This happened as most of the congregant were apartment dwellers and the descendants of inheritors of the *wakaf* land. MK

**HAJI KASSIM JAMEK MOSQUE,
Kampung Makam, Dato Keramat Road**



According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 4), the Haji Kassim Mosque was built on *wakaf* land endowed by Haji Shek Kassim b. Mohamed Haji Mohamed Unnajaree (Haji Kassim) around 1813. Haji Kassim was a pious man who was a trader from north Yemen. He came to Penang in 1800 to open a new settlement after having lived in Aceh. He held religious classes for the children of ‘Pengkalan Haji Kassim’ or Haji Kassim Jetty (now Kampung Makam). In honour of his service to the villagers and as a show of respect for his deep knowledge of the religion, the villagers presented him with 7.424 acres of land. Haji Kassim built a mosque on this land.

The land was registered in Haji Kassim’s name on 21 May 1813 (Registration no. 2971). In 1819, Haji Kassim turned the land into *wakaf* land for religious purposes. In his will dated 6 January 1837, Haji Kassim bequeathed the land to Sheh Ahamad and Sheh Hassan as executors of the property so that his grave which would also be *wakaf* would be properly cared for by his descendants. After he died, his

trustee, Sheh Ahamad, built a mosque as a place of worship for the convenience of local villagers. The mosque had wooden walls and pillars and concrete floor. It was built with public donations and was completed in 1840 for public use. In 1894, the wooden walls were replaced with concrete walls with donations from the villagers and mosque fund. The trustees were from descendants of Haji Kassim who were allowed to collect rents and use the proceeds to pay for expenses of the mosque and the maintenance of his grave.

The Haji Kassim Mosque was expanded several times to make the place more comfortable as a place of worship. The first expansion was undertaken in the 1900s. In 1919, the mosque was placed under the management of the Mohammedan and Hindu Endowments Board in order to coordinate the mosque’s financial matters. In the 1950s, 1970s and 1990s, the prayer hall was expanded to accommodate the growing congregation. In the mid-20th century Quran classes were held at the mosque but they did not last long because of the poor response. MK



KAMPUNG JAWA BARU MOSQUE, Kampung Jawa Baru



Originally the Kampung Jawa Baru Mosque was just a *surau* which was built by Pak Wan Keling in the 1860s. He built it with his own money on a piece of land which he endowed for the building of the *surau*. The *surau* was then expanded to become a mosque to accommodate the growing congregation.

Kampung Jawa was originally a mangrove swamp. The area was named Kampung Jawa (Java) after the Javanese from Indonesia had settled there. They were brought in by the Chinese Smelting Company to work as tin ore smelters. The company was opened in the 1890s. In 1912, the company was taken over by a European firm and was renamed the Eastern Smelting Company.

In 1960, the Eastern Smelting Company built nine blocks of flats for its workers and a new *surau* for its Muslim workers. As a result, many of them stopped going to the Kampung Jawa Mosque. Hence, the mosque became deserted but this situation did not last long because many of them were uncomfortable with the new *surau*. They preferred the old mosque.

In the 1960s, the Eastern Smelting Company faced problem with its workers from Java.¹ To solve the problem, the late Tunku Abdul Rahman who was the Prime Minister then, suggested Eastern Smelting Company to recruit workers from other countries. During this time some Javanese workers returned to their homeland while others moved into new locations

on the island and even out of Penang. This affected the Kampung Jawa mosque as the newly recruited workers did not utilise the mosque. Instead they preferred the *surau* near their flats. As a result the Kampung Jawa Mosque once again became quiet. At times the mosque was not even opened for prayer times.

In the 1960s, the *imam* of the mosque was Ustaz Yunus while Cikgu Ibrahim was appointed mosque *nazir*. The mosque had been quiet for more than ten years. The situation changed in the 1970s when Ustaz Yunus took over Cikgu Ibrahim's responsibility as *nazir* because the latter had shifted to another locality. Ustaz Yunus was a staff of the Eastern Smelting Company. He organised various religious activities for the mosque. Soon after the mosque was once again the centre for people in the area to gather and discuss religious and social matters. He also invited religious teacher, Ustaz Radzi, to teach *Fiqah* and conduct lectures on Islam. Beside Ustaz Radzi, he also invited Ustaz Zamzam to come and teach regularly. People from other areas joined the congregation to listen to these lectures. In the early 1970s, one Che Embi was given permission to live in the mosque. He was made the *siak*. At times he was the *imam* when *imam* Yunus could not come. He also taught the Quran to the village children. By the end of the 1970s, the congregation at the mosque grew at every prayer time.

In the 1980s, Haji Syed Mohamed bin Kadersah was the *nazir*, after taking over from Ustaz Yunus who had passed away. As the new *nazir*, he organised various programmes to attract people to the mosque. He also brought in the *tabligh* group as a way to attract more people from other areas to come and pray at the mosque. It was about this time that the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) required the mosque to pay its own bills. Previously, MAIPP paid the bills. As the mosque did not conduct Friday prayers, it carried the status of a *surau* and *surau*s had to pay their own bills. In 1985, Haji Syed Mohamed requested for an allocation from

the District Office to build a toilet and concrete water tank for the congregation's convenience. Restoration work was done at the end of 1980s. Old wooden floors were replaced with cement floors. However, the wooden walls remained. The original mosque with its wooden carvings reminiscent of Javanese architecture was maintained. The prayer hall was widened to accommodate more people. The renovation still adhered to the original style and architecture using wooden walls. The roof was rebuilt and the wooden carvings restored according to the original so that the mosque would still look like the original mosque but bigger size. The site of the mosque on *wakaf* land was resurveyed to facilitate the building of a fence around the mosque area. Restoration work on the mosque was paid for by the District Office.

In 1994, Haji Syed Mohamed relocated to a new place and Ustaz Ali took over his duties as *nazir*. At that time, the position was known as 'chairman'. Quran classes and religious talks continued until 1998 after which it ceased as Ustaz Radzi had moved to Sungai Petani. The mosque, once again, became quiet because the Eastern Smelting Company (which changed its name to the Datuk Keramat Smelting in 1975 and again as Escoy Smelting Sdn. Bhd. in 1993) had ceased operations in 1998. Although the congregation was getting smaller, the mosque never closed its door. In 2002, the mosque went through another renovation. The prayer hall was extended to the back and concrete walls replaced the wooden walls.

The Kampung Jawa Mosque had also trained *marhaban*, *kompang*, and *berzanji* groups, and they were often invited to perform at weddings and other functions. These classes started in the 1970s under the guidance of Haji Daud and Che Embi. After their demise in the 1990s, the classes were stopped because there were no replacement teachers. There were also fewer invitations to perform at weddings and functions. MK

¹ The problem was not really known.

SHAIK EUSOFF MOSQUE, Ayer Itam Road



There were several opinions as to the establishment date of the Shaik Eusoff Mosque. A respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 6) claimed it was built in 1860. Another claimed it was built much earlier around 1821. The mosque was built on Shaik Eusoff's land with an area of 163,343 ft. sq. on Lot 962 section 3. The mosque is located on Dato Keramat Road, next to Ayer Itam Road. It was said to have been built by Shaik Eusoff. Shaik Eusoff was a well-known businessman who supplied building materials for building constructions in Penang in the mid-19th century.

On 25 July 1890, Shaik Eusoff executed a deed poll (Registration no. 580 in 1890) that stipulated he had bought the land/site of the mosque at Ayer Itam

Road. The land would be *wakaf* land while he, his wife and children were still alive, and that only 21 years after the death of the last of his descendant would the land be turned into a cemetery for him and direct descendants or relatives by marriage. The land was also designated *wakaf* land for the Muslim community and the trustee could use income from the land for mosque management and to pay for the salary of mosque officials. His poor descendants would be allowed to dwell on the land free of charge. In fact, revenue from rents collected could be shared among his poor relatives after he died with the consent of the trustees. Shaik Eusoff had decided that all trustees must be from his descendants. In fact, he entrusted the last trustee to adhere to his decision which was to appoint a trustee for the next 21 years. He died on 23 April 1894.

The Shaik Eusoff Mosque was put under the management of the Mohammedan and Hindu Endowments Board. However, it had its own management committee. In the 1940s, revenue from the mosque *wakaf* was from rents and coconut plantations.

The Shaik Eusoff Mosque still maintain the original main prayer hall although it had been extended considerably. Some of the imported building materials for the mosque are still intact like the flowery carvings around the mosque which were imported from Turkey while the workmen were mostly from India.

In 1972, the mosque extended the side of the prayer hall because the population around Ayer Itam Road and Dato Keramat Road had increased. A few years after that, the main prayer hall was extended again to accomodate the Friday congregation. Funding for this extension came from the mosque fund and public donations.

In the early 1980s, the mosque opened Quran reading classes with four instructors. The classes were conducted daily from Monday to Thursday. Before the 1980s, the classes were held in the instructors' homes until there was a request from the community to hold them in the mosque. The classes were managed by the mosque and are still running at present. These classes and other religious activities organized by the mosque committee enjoy good response leading the committee to open a library and a computer class next to the mosque. The library and the computer class were completed on 2 November 1999 with an allocation from the Public Works Department (PWD/JKR). However, all equipments for the library, computer class and religious class including computers and academic books were contributed by the mosque. In 2008, the Shaik Eusoff Mosque expanded its prayer hall again but without changing the original main prayer hall which is in the centre of the mosque. **MK**

YORK ROAD MOSQUE, York Road



According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 7), the York Road Mosque was built in 1914 by Shaik Ghani,¹ an Indian-Muslim businessman. He was also the first Muslim harbour pilot in Penang before the formation of the Penang Harbour Board. He became wealthy

and owned a big house on Burma Road across from the entrance to Selamat Lane. It has been said that there was a *surau* on the same site, five years before the mosque was built, where people went to pray. Shaik Ghani passed away in 1920. Since then, the mosque's *wakaf* properties were managed by the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board. Shaik Ghani was also the founder of the Pahang Road Mosque but he passed away before he could declare the mosque as *wakaf* property.²

Between the 1930s and the 1950s, there was a place named York Road Village around the mosque. The Boyanese³ also settled in York Road. In fact, there was even a Boyanese *imam* at the mosque during its earlier days.⁴ The mosque became a centre for people in the area to gather and discuss local matters.

In the 1950s, Sheikh Ibrahim was the *imam* and *nazir* of the mosque. When Sheikh Ibrahim passed away in the 1950s, Man bin Ali took over his responsibilities as *nazir* while Haji Ibrahim became the *imam*. Various activities were organized including Quran reading, *marhaban* and *kompang* classes. When Sheikh Ibrahim was the *nazir*, he taught Quran reading at his house which was near the mosque. The class was later moved to the mosque and taught by Haji Ibrahim. Besides Quran reading class he also taught village children the *kompang* and *marhaban*. These classes were well received by the community and its students were often invited to play at functions and weddings.

In the 1970s, Haji Yusoff became the *imam* after Haji Ibrahim had passed away. The job of an *imam* is voluntary and was not paid. Haji Yusoff also continued Haji Ibrahim's duty as Quran, *marhaban* and *kompang* teacher. After his death in the 1980s, there was no one to take over these duties. After Man bin Ali passed away in 1983, his son, Yusoff became the *nazir*. Before his death, Man had requested the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) to help repair the mosque as the roof was leaking but his request was turned down. He was asked to close down the mosque as it was actually a *surau* because it did not conduct Friday prayers. Later, Public Works Department assessed the damage and in the 1980s, repaired the leaking roof. It also built a dome on it and altered the original roof structure.

At the end of the 1980s, many people living in York Road had moved to other areas. Some even sold their houses. By the end of the 1990s, the atmosphere of the mosque was rather gloomy as the congregation had dwindled. In the 1990s, Md. Hassan, who was Yusoff's brother, became the *nazir*. He set up a mosque committee. This was never done before. Firdaus was appointed the chairman while Md. Hassan the treasurer. However, since 2011 the mosque had grown quieter. At times it was not even opened according to prayer times. MK

¹ In the interview with K. A. Hashim Ali (Pahang Road Mosque), the name Shaik Ghani was mentioned as Eusoff Gunny.

² Historical Personalities of Penang (Penang: Phoenix Press, 1986), p. 146.

³ The Boyanese came from Indonesia.

⁴ Interview with Sibly bin Maros, Tanik Air Mosque, Burmah Road, 17 July 2012.

KHAN MUHAMMAD MOSQUE, Perak Road



The Khan Muhammad Mosque had been under the Mohammedan and Hindu Endowments Board since 1926. According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 8), the mosque was believed to have been built by Khan Muhammad, a rich Indian-Muslim trader in the mid-19th century. He was born in India and was involved in providing *tongkang* services, unloading goods from ships to godowns and vice-versa. Khan Muhammad was also a distributor of local foodstuff. His business success enabled him to build a mosque in the 1860s in Perak Road, naming it Khan Muhammad Mosque. He bequeathed a piece of land in Perak Road as *wakaf* for the welfare of the local community. At one time there was a building next to the mosque which housed people who came to Sungai Pinang for the ‘*Mandi Safar*’ celebration. ‘*Mandi Safar*’ (bathing to avert calamity) was practised in the month of Safar, the second month in the Muslim calendar. The building was destroyed during the Japanese Occupation.

The Khan Muhammad Mosque was also known as Rajabee Mosque, in honour of Rajabee who became a mosque trustee after the death of Khan Muhammad. Rajabee was Khan Muhammad’s niece. After Rajabee’s death, another individual, whose name was not recorded, became the trustee. In the 1960s, a person by the name of Ahmad was the trustee. Ahmad was the husband of a descendant of Rajabee. Ahmad was also the *imam* of the mosque. During that time the congregation was made up of local people although the Rawana

Mosque was next door. These mosques are separated only by the Pinang river. After Ahmad passed away, his brother-in-law continued as trustee until the 1970s.

Che Wan Teh was the religious teacher at the Khan Muhammad Mosque in the 1970s. He was believed to have introduced the Muhammadiyah Movement in Penang. With the influence of the Muhammadiyah Movement, Che Wan Teh went on the offensive against keramat worship and ‘*Mandi Safar*’.¹ Che Wan Teh or Haji Wan Teh, whose real name was Haji Ibrahim bin Mohamed Akib, was a religious teacher and *imam* of the Kampung Baru Mosque, Ayer Itam. When he first came to teach at Khan Muhammad Mosque, he was no longer the *imam* at the Kampung Baru Mosque due to conflict among Muslims. During this time an unknown teacher from the Kampung Jawa School took the responsibility of managing the mosque including paying its bills from the mosque fund and public donations. In the 1990s, after the teacher passed away, the mosque became deserted while its congregation had decreased in number. In 2007, the mosque was put under the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP). The latter in turn placed the mosque under the care of the Shaik Eusoff Mosque. Today, Khan Muhammad Mosque is seldom used because there are a few other mosques nearby such as the Rawana Mosque and the Shaikh Eusoff mosque which are patronised by more people. Khan Muhammad Mosque still maintain its original structure while the prayer hall has never been expanded. MK

¹ ‘*Mandi Safar*’ was bathing to avert calamity, which was practiced on the last Wednesday in the month of Safar. The practice is now banned.

JELUTONG JAMEK MOSQUE, Jelutong Road



Until the present time, there are no explicit historical notes on the construction of the Jelutong Mosque. Many believed the mosque was built by Nakhoda Kechil between 1835 and 1845. Nakhoda Kechil's connection with the mosque construction is acceptable but the year of its construction needs further research because the mosque site is part of Grant no. 168 dated 1 January 1797. The Grant was in the name of Nakhoda Kechil who bequeathed it as *wakaf* for religious purposes.

Francis Light mentioned the name Nakhoda Kechil as leader of a group of about 30 Malays whom he had met on the Fort Cornwallis beach after he landed in Penang. Light then paid the people to clear the jungle with the assistance of Malays whom he had brought from Kedah. The respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 9) claimed Nakhoda Kechil was the younger brother of Haji

Mohammad Salleh (better known as Nakhoda Intan) who was the founder of Batu Uban and the Batu Uban Mosque in the 1730s (see Batu Uban Mosque)

Haji Mohammad Salleh's real name was Raja Nan Intan Ibni Almarhum Tengku Pateh Sebatang. He was originally from Kampung Bodi, Payakumbuh, Sumatera and was related to the Minangkabau royalty. He migrated to Batu Uban because of a conflict in Pagaruyung between the group which strictly followed *adat perpatih* and the group which wanted to revert to Islamic teachings. Adhering strictly to the teachings of Islam, Haji Mohammad Salleh together with his brother Nakhoda Kechil, whose real name was Ismail, and a group of followers sailed to Penang.

After settling in Batu Uban, Haji Mohammad Salleh and Nakhoda Kechil had an audience with the Kedah Sultan, Sultan Muhammad Jiwa Zainal Adilin Syah II, to request permission to open a settlement



on the island as Penang was then under the Kedah Sultanate. Sultan Muhammad Jiwa granted the permission and Batu Uban was subsequently opened. It developed into a village and an important port before a new port was built by the East India Company at Fort Cornwallis. In fact, until 1734, the area opened by Haji Mohammad Salleh and his followers developed as far as the '*tanjong*' (cape) area (now George Town).

As Haji Mohammad Salleh focused his attention on Batu Uban, Nakhoda Kechil managed the cape area. In accordance with the change of sovereignty (Malay sultanate to East India Company), Nakhoda Kechil maintained close rapport with Francis Light. He was entrusted to control the coastline and the small markets set up by the Kedah people to sell their goods which they had brought from Kedah as soon as Light settled in Penang. Francis Light chose Nakhoda Kechil to look after the coastline because he knew the

waters well. Light also asked Nakhoda Kechil to block enemies from landing on the island. Light appointed a local because he was short of staff at that time. This relationship was beneficial for Nakhoda Kechil as he was given land and the opportunity to do business around George Town including Jelutong.

Some people claimed the Jelutong Mosque was founded in 1821 by Mohammad Salleh, better known as Nakhoda Kechil, but he was said to be from Brunei. However, based on Vaughan's (1857) notes, it was clear that Mohammad Salleh who was also known as Haji Brunei and Nakhoda Kechil were two different persons. Haji Brunei was the pioneer of Bayan Lepas in 1789. They knew each other as both were pioneers of Jelutong. Haji Brunei was believed to be from Brunei. He came to Penang not long after Francis Light had landed in Penang. Vaughan, the Superintendent of Police in the 1850s had interviewed one of Haji Brunei's children who



told him how Penang was opened based on Haji Brunei's stories. Haji Brunei had met Light when he stopped by Kuala Perai on his way back from Mecca. Soon after, he entered Penang and cleared the jungle and opened the land which was under Nakhoda Kechil's jurisdiction. When the construction of the port at Fort Cornwallis was completed Haji Brunei asked Light for permission to open up another area. Light gave the permission and Haji Brunei together with Nakhoda Kechil went to open up Jelutong. After 11 years living in George Town, Haji Brunei and another person by the name of Long Syed moved to Bayan Lepas. Haji Brunei died in 1837. Based on this information it was believed that Haji Brunei had played a role in founding the mosque. In fact, his descendants had been involved in the affairs of the mosque. One of them was Pangeran Ibrahim, who was said to be Haji Brunei's son; Pangeran Ibrahim managed the mosque in the 1890s.

If the date of the opening of Batu Uban was between the 1730s and the 1830s or 1840s (the period when Jelutong Mosque was founded based on the second view), it would mean that Nakhoda Kecil was more than 120 years old (supposing that

he followed his brother to Batu Uban when he was in his 20s) which cast some doubt. Most probably the Jelutong Mosque was established much earlier at the end of the 18th century based on Grant no. 168.

Around 1900, the site of the mosque was under the control of Syed Akil Mashor. After that, he appointed Abbas, Sulaiman, Che Mat dan Che Awang as mosque trustees. Due to problems relating to the mosque administration, it was placed under the Mohammedan and Hindu Endowments Board.

In 1967, the Jelutong Mosque was renovated. The front part was expanded to accommodate more congregants. Almost the entire mosque was demolished while the walls were replaced with new ones. However, four original pillars were saved and their supports were strengthened. In the 1980s, the mosque was again expanded with a bigger prayer hall. In 2009, the prayer hall was extended to the back while a new toilet and place for performing ablution were added.

Besides the original plot which was turned to *wakaf* land by Nakhoda Kechil, the expansion of the mosque and the Jelutong Mosque cemetery involved several plots of land which were endowed by individuals. Among them were Syed Ali, Syed Amir Aziz Ali Amani and Haji Syed Mohammad. These lands totaled 6,495 sq. metres.

Like other mosques in Penang, the Jelutong Mosque had a Quran teacher. The Jelutong Mosque had 40 Quran teachers who were registered in stages since 2006. The mosque also has a *tahfiz* centre called '*Mahad Tahfiz Fathur Rahman*' located at 407 Perak Road. '*Mahad Tahfiz*' was built in 2010 on the mosque's *wakaf* land and currently has 25 students. The *imam* of Jelutong Mosque, Norhisham Ibrahim, serves as teacher. The mosque has 16 *surau*s in the Jelutong area under the care of the Jelutong Mosque *kariah*. MK

BENGGALI JAMEK MOSQUE, Leith Street



A respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 11) claimed the Benggali Mosque was built in 1803 on Lot 170 Section 19 with an area of 7,377 sq. ft. However, a respondent who was interviewed for this project reiterated the mosque was built in 1845. The mosque came into being because workers of the East India Company (EIC) requested for a place of worship. The area around the mosque used to be the place where East India Company workers from Bengal resided. They requested a piece of land to build a mosque. The Bengalis built a wooden structure and called it Bengal Mosque since most of the of Bengali community resided in the area. Subsequently it was changed to 'Benggali Mosque'. Several rooms were built at the back of the mosque as temporary quarters for workers before they moved to another location or returned to their homeland.

Until the end of the 19th century, the area was still the favoured area for those from Bengal. Benggali Mosque was the temporary place for Benggali people when they arrive in Penang. Among them were missionaries who came to propagate Islam. In fact, the mosque was a focal point of missionaries from outside Penang. In the early years, the mosque trustees were Benggalis. These trustees include the *imam*, *siak* and *bilal* taking over from those who had returned to their homeland or had moved to another location. However, in 1947, a misunderstanding occurred between two groups over the trusteeship. The issue was brought to the court which appointed four trustees. They were Harfiz Ghulam Sarwar, Hamid Khan bin Md. Ibrahim Khan, Abdul Majid Khan bin Abdullah Khan and Subhan Ali bin Maulir Nazir.

In the early 20th century, the Benggali Mosque grew more active when more missionaries arrived

in Penang. They moved around Penang in groups. The missionaries were well accepted by the Indian-Muslim community but not the Malay community because of the language barrier. In 1958, the wooden mosque was demolished and was replaced with a concrete structure. The rooms at the back of the mosque were also replaced with better rooms. The new mosque was officially opened by Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj on 26 September 1958.

To meet the needs of the congregation the Benggali Mosque was repaired and renovated several times. In the 1980s, the side of the mosque and the back of the main prayer hall were expanded. The rooms behind the mosque were replaced with four new rooms. Funding came from donations and the mosque fund. In 2000, prayer space was added by building a double storey structure at the back section of the mosque so that it could accommodate more people. The funding of RM1.5 million came from the federal government that is ICU-JPM. Since 2003, minor repairs and renovations were done to the mosque. Today, the floor space of the mosque stands at 7,875 sq. ft.

The Benggali Mosque is not just a place for prayer but also a place for the propagation of Islam. It is also the headquarters of the Muslim-Benggali Council and Muslim-Benggali Association. The mosque has a *Madrasah Tahfiz* which was built in 1990. The *madrasah* behind the mosque had 20 students. The teacher was Maulana Hj. Ismail from Burma who was specially brought by Haji Habibullah, one of the missionaries who lived in the mosque. All expenses for the *madrasah tahfiz* and the teacher's wage were borne by the mosque. In 1994, the *Madrasah Tahfiz* was relocated to Balik Pulau. Today (2012), the *madrasah* has 120 students with 15 teachers. **MK**

PINTAL TALI MOSQUE, Pintal Tali



A respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 12) claimed the Pintal Tali Mosque was built in 1820. The mosque was built on ‘Rope Walk’, so-called because there used to be many houses along the road where ropes for ships were made. Most of the people who lived there were Muslims. Their contributions both in cash and energy towards the building of the mosque were enormous.

In the 1860s, the two Malay secret societies, the

White Flag and the Red Flag fought against each other. They used mosques as their headquarters. The White Flag used the Pintal Tali Mosque as its headquarters. One of their leaders was Mohamed Kader Houssain but better known as Pah Etam. Pah Etam was a shipping agent who resided in Rope Walk. He claimed to visit the mosque only once a year to celebrate the Muslim new year in the month of Muharam. In 1857, he was a member of the White Flag but left in March 1865. According to Pah Etam at the time when he left the White Flag

recorded 3,000 members. The skirmish between the White Flag and the Red Flag culminated in a riot in 1867 known as the Penang Riots. The riot also involved Chinese secret societies. The Ghee Hin was allied to the White Flag while the Tua Peh Kong to the Red Flag.

In 1921, the government built the Central Police Station for the area which caused many residents to shift to new locations. The mosque was temporarily unused due to its proximity to the construction site. As alternative, the locals prayed at a small *madrasah* located in Nyak Abu Lane which was also close to the police station.

At the time when the mosque was closed temporarily, Muhyiddin, a local, together with a group of 50 men and women, organised various social activities which was against the mosque ethics. This created uneasiness among residents who reported it to the authority. An investigation on the matter was undertaken but was settled when Sheikh Zachariah Basheer J.P. and Mr. Polar, a representative of the Criminal Investigation Department, issued an order for Muhyiddin and his followers to move out of the mosque with immediate effect. Sheikh Zachariah Basheer was the son of Sheikh Omar Basheer, a prominent figure on religious matters in Penang during the mid-19th century. After that a person by the name of Yusoof was appointed the new *nazir* as he was originally from Pintal Tali. Since then, the situation at the mosque had returned to normal. Subsequently, regular congregational prayers were held and many religious activities were organized by the locals.

In 1960, the mosque was demolished to make way for a new mosque on the same site with funding from local residents. It still stands today. At the new mosque Yusoof, who was still the *nazir*, organized various activities, one of which was Quran classes. The instructor was Ustaz Haji Muhammad Nor from

Kepala Batas.

In 1978, Yusof bin Hassan (possibly he was the same Yoosof who was *nazir* since 1921) wrote to the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) requesting for an allocation to renovate the mosque and permission to collect donations for the said purpose. In 1980, permission was granted. With donations collected from 21 October 1980 to 24 October 1981, renovation work on the mosque was undertaken. A hall and six rooms at the back of the mosque were added. The roof was replaced and toilets were built for the convenience of the congregation. Some of the rooms were for rent with one used for Quran classes. At the time, three people were appointed as trustees for the new mosque. They were Haji Fadzil bin Zachariah Basheer, Osman bin Mohd Shariff and Musni bin Mohd Hashim while Ali bin Hamzah was appointed *siak*. In 1981, the mosque was renamed An-nur Mosque. However, the new name did not last and it reverted to its former name, the Pintal Tali Mosque, in 1986.

By the end of the 1980s, the mosque became deserted and often experienced problems especially management problems as many Muslims had moved out to new locations. Since 1984, Ustaz Abu Bakar, a teacher from Kedah, worked tirelessly to restore the mosque to its former glory. Besides being the *imam*, he also taught the Quran to local residents who still use the mosque as a place of worship. However in the early 1990s, despite efforts to bring back its former glory, such as organizing religious activities, the mosque remained quiet. There was no congregation at prayer times although Ustaz Abu Bakar still lived there.

Between 2000 and 2005, the mosque was repaired five times. The whole roof was replaced because it was leaking badly and the toilets were repaired too. The Prime Minister's Department paid for the repairs under the ICU Scheme. Ustaz Abu Bakar still lives within the mosque ground. **MK**

Al-Jamiul Azzakirin Mosque,¹ Prangin



¹ In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island, this mosque is known as Prangin Road Mosque.

The Al-Jamiul Azzakirin Mosque is located near KOMTAR (Tun Abdul Razak Complex) and the Prangin shopping centre. This locality was a vibrant area at the end of the 19th century because of its strategic location as collection centre of goods and barter trading. Many traders, who were mostly Indian-Muslims, started their businesses near the river. The convenience of transportation by boat and on land encouraged shops and houses to be built as well as the establishment of a transportation system. In the mid-20th century, the area became the centre of bus transportation which further accelerated economic growth in the area.

Up to now, no written proof about the Al-Jamiul Azzakirin Mosque is available. According to a respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 13), the mosque was constructed in the 1890s on a piece of land bought by an Indian-Muslim association from a Chinese *towkay*. In 1940, the old mosque was demolished to make way for a new one which was built on the same site. The cost was borne by the local Indian-Muslim community. Another respondent claimed the mosque was built by rickshaw pullers who had their headquarters in front of the mosque site. The mosque was built for their convenience to perform Friday prayers because for some reasons, they were not allowed to pray at the Pintal Tali Mosque which was near their headquarters.

The mosque *kariah* interviewed for this project gave similar information. According to them the mosque was built by a group of Indian-Muslims who came from a village in India. They came to Penang in groups to do business and work as labourers, loading and transporting goods. They settled around the Prangin area, closer to their place of business and work. The area was busy and prosperous because boats anchored here when sending goods.

Workers and merchants collected and saved money

to buy a piece of land from a Chinese lady. They built a small mosque (*madrasah*) which they called 'Khaté khaté mosque' (low mosque) because it had very low roof. The mosque was a wooden structure and was constructed through co-operative efforts. However, in 1940, the wooden mosque was demolished to make way for a bigger concrete mosque on the same site. However, the source of funding for the repair work was unknown except that part of the expenses was paid by donations from the public, in particular, the Indian-Muslim community.

The mosque was used for prayers and other activities such as Quran reading and religious classes for children. However, in the mid and end of the 19th century, the mosque became quiet because many of the Muslim villagers had sold their houses and moved to other places to do business or returned to India. In 1974, when the construction of KOMTAR started, business premises, shop houses and offices in the area were affected. Many residents were prompted to move out.

In 1985, the mosque was renovated giving it a new roof, floor and wall which is joined to a house behind the mosque. After the completion of the renovation, the mosque was faced with the problem of administration. Merchants were blatantly using the mosque as store. Others were using the premises to sell their wares. The mosque fund was improperly managed and the mosque was closed for *subuh* prayers. This forced the Penang Islamic Religious Affairs Department to take over the mosque management until 2001.

In 2001, the mosque was renovated again. Almost the entire mosque was affected except for two original big pillars, two small pillars and the main hall which were maintained. The original roof was raised to allow proper ventilation. Before the 2001 renovation, the mosque did not have a toilet, prayer space for ladies and concrete water tank. **MK**

HUTTON LANE JAMEK MOSQUE , Hutton Lane



There are two different versions about the origin of the Hutton Lane Mosque. According to one respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 14), the mosque was built around 1870 by Haji Sa'ad on two lots of *wakaf* land which was bequeathed by Tunku Mohamed Arshad and Haji Yusoff from Penang. Tunku Mohamed Arshad was related to the Kedah royalty and he resided in Kulim. Another respondent in the same source refuted the account. He claimed it was built by Haji Abdullah who was better known as To' Haji Dollah. However, he did not deny that probably Haji Sa'ad was also involved in the construction of the mosque because Haji Sa'ad was related to Haji Abdullah.

Haji Fathil Basheer, the third respondent claimed the mosque was rebuilt in 1917 with funding from the locals. The original mosque was a wooden structure which was demolished in the same year. The new mosque was renovated in 1961 with funding from the Social Welfare Department and public contributions. In the earlier days the mosque was without a management committee or a trustee. Everything was handled by Haji Abdullah who was the *imam* of the mosque.

Dato' Seri Haji Mohd. Yusoff Latiff provides another version of the mosque. According to him the Hutton Lane Mosque was built by Haji Mohamed Tajudin, the son of a very wealthy man, Haji Mohamed Ariff. Mohamed Tajudin was Wan Chik Ariffin's older brother (founder of the Wan Chik Ariffin Mosque). It is not known when the Hutton Lane Mosque was built but it is believed the early 20th century, long before the Wan Chik Ariffin Mosque was built. The mosque was built on *wakaf* land which was bequeathed by Haji Mohamed Tajudin on Lot 669 and Lot 667 section 14 with an area of 1,405 sq. ft. The *wakaf* was administered by the family and later vested to the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board. Then the Penang Islamic Religious Affairs



Department (JAIPP) took over when the Islamic Council (MAIPP) was established.

Since its inception, the Hutton Lane Mosque was renovated four times. The first took place in the 1950s when the mosque was expanded sideways. In the 1960s, the front and the side of the mosque was widened to accommodate the growing congregation. The following renovation was undertaken in the 1980s when the main prayer hall was expanded. Finally, in the 1990s, the mosque administrators planned to expand the mosque by building three minarets around the mosque and a double storey prayer hall. However, limited fund permitted only the construction of a minaret and the double storey prayer hall. Throughout the renovations, the mosque still maintained the original structure of the main prayer hall. From the outside the mosque still look like the original mosque except that it is bigger.

In the 1980s, a bungalow located behind the mosque became the *imam's* official residence. The *imam* conducted Quran classes which are still running today. 'KAFA' classes taught by the *imam's* wife in the mosque before 2010 were now held at the *imam's* residence so as not to disrupt the congregation who came to pray. MK

TITI PAPAN JAMEK MOSQUE, Burmah Road



This mosque was built in the mid -19th century.¹ The site was originally a swamp. The founder was Haji Mohamed Gumbong who was in the diamond industry. The mosque was built for the convenience of local Muslims with contributions from the Muslim community in the area and the founder's savings. The site was 5,375 sq. ft. comprising Government Grant No. 2633 of 1841 (1 May 1841) and in Lot 114 Town Subdivision XV. The mosque was placed under the authority of the *Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board*.

The mosque was in use for ten years and after that Che Mohamed became its patron. This pious man worked as clerk for Datok Wahab in Ipoh, Perak. He contributed \$2,800 towards strengthening the structure of the mosque. The jeweller, Saiboo Merican, gave \$700 and another \$500 was contributed by the public. Building materials were bought with the money and a concrete mosque was built in place of the old mosque. As the surrounding area was swampy, a *titi papan* (plank bridge) was built for people to get across to the mosque, hence the name Titi Papan Mosque.

On 26 October 1893, Haji Mohamed Gumbong declared himself trustee of the mosque. On 4 November 1893, he bequeathed the site and the mosque be entrusted to the Muslim community for their use. He appointed Zachariah Besar and Mohamad Hashim bin Fakib as trustees. In 1901 when Zachariah passed away, Haji Mohamed Gumbong appointed Haji Pachee bin Shaik Ebrahim, Mohamad bin Mohamad Taib and Abbas bin Haji Mohamad as the new trustees.

In 1904, there was a dispute between Saiboo Merican and Haji Mohamed Gumbong over the authority and management of the mosque. Haji Mohamed Gumbong was adamant that as the founder of the mosque, he should have full authority on mosque management. But Saiboo Merican also



claimed the same right as he was also one of the donors and had contributed significantly in the construction of the mosque.

In 1986 Yusof Latiff was appointed the chairman of the mosque assisted by Osman bin Sultan and Yusof bin Abdullah. Various religious programmes were planned to make the mosque more active including getting official permission to conduct Friday prayers. However, the application was rejected on the basis that there were already too many mosques in the area where Friday prayers were conducted. In 1991, the mosque committee appointed Ali bin Kassim as its new chairman. Ali made another official request to conduct Friday prayers. On 16 August 1991, the application was approved.

In 2001, an application was made to expand the main prayer hall to accommodate more people especially during Friday prayers. The application was approved on 6 October 2001. The mosque was closed down for a year and a half for renovation work. The cost of the renovation was borne by the District Office. MK

¹ According to the list of mosques in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*, this mosque was built in 1860.

MASJID TENGAH,¹ Burmah Road



In the *Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board* (which was later extracted by the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 16), the Masjid Tengah (formerly Haji Hamid Mosque) area was originally 9,403sq. ft. located on Lot 119, Town Sub-division 15, Burmah Road. The mosque was built by Krani Mohamed Meera. However, the exact date of its establishment was unknown. In 1892, Hadjee Abdul Hamid and several others rebuilt the damaged parts of the mosque caused by neglect. At the same time, Abbas, Hamat and Hadjee Hamid were appointed trustees. Hadjee Abdul Hamid was also appointed the *imam*. He built a house on the mosque premises. In 1905, there were three other houses on the premises besides the house occupied by descendants of Krani Mohamed.

In the 1940s, the mosque's original structure was a wooden house as found in a Malay village. At that time, Haji Mahmud who was the *imam*, was the caretaker of the mosque. Haji Mahmud, who was also known as Pak Mat, paid the electricity and water bills as well as paying for any small repairs of the mosque. Additional revenue came from rentals of stalls on the premises which were used to cover mosque expenses. Other than being the *imam*, Haji Mahmud also taught the Quran for free at the mosque to Malay villagers from the Kedah Road area. At the time, the mosque did not have a particular name. It was just called 'Tik Tok' mosque because of a *ketuk* (a hollowed piece of wood) was used to announce prayer times. Within the Burma Road area, only this mosque used the *ketuk* rendering it the Tik Tok Mosque.

In the 1960s, the wooden structure was demolished and was replaced with a new concrete one on the same site. After its completion, a committee comprising of five people was formed with Dato' Seri Yusoff bin Latiff as chairman. The mosque was renamed 'Masjid Tengah' (Centre Mosque) because of its location between Titi Papan and Tarik Air Mosque. After the death of Haji Mahmud in the late 1960s, the mosque committee appointed a new *imam*. The new *imam* was paid \$200 a month with the money collected from mosque committee members. Others who became the *imam* after Haji Mahmud included Ustaz Abdul Malik, Ustaz Osman and Haji Yassin.

The Quran class was discontinued after the demise of Haji Mahmud. The mosque did invite several *ustaz* to give religious instructions but response was poor because there were other bigger mosques nearby. **MK**



¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*, this mosque is known as Haji Hamid Mosque.

TARIK AIR MOSQUE, Burmah Road





In the early days after the founding of Penang, fresh water (*air*) was transported on bullock carts from the hills to George Town through a village. The village was also a place of call for the bullock carts. Hence, the village became known as Kampung Tarik Air (literally; pull water village). The trader, Haji Mohd. Salleh Al-Ashee, believed to have come to Penang from Aceh, had bought a piece of land in Kampung Tarik Air to build a *surau*. It was a small wooden *surau* where people could pray and make it a place of call. As for the date when he bought the land was unknown. The land was later bequeathed by Haji Mohd. Salleh Al-Ashee and became *wakaf* land on which the Tarek Air Mosque stood.

In 1880 the villagers agreed to demolish the wooden *surau* and in its place, build a concrete mosque. Actually the mosque was partly wood and partly concrete. The main prayer hall came in concrete while its side was partly concrete and partly wood. A wooden stage was constructed behind the mosque. Since its inception the mosque's bills were paid by its trustees. In the 1960s, Md. Hassan, who was a descendant of Haji Mohd Salleh Al-Ashee, paid all mosque bills. In the 1970s, the management of the mosque was taken over by Junid bin Haji Puteh or Pak Junid. He lived on the premises. It was left to him to manage the affairs of the mosque beside being the *imam*.

In 1987, the wooden part of the mosque was replaced with concrete because thieves could easily break the wooden walls and windows. In the same year, the main prayer hall was pushed to the back. The District Office paid for the extension. In the same year Pak Junid passed away and Sibly Maros took over as the *imam*. Payment of the mosque's utility bills were paid by the Hutton Lane Mosque committee.

In the 1980s, the Tarik Air Mosque was well received by the congregation. Various programmes were carried out to enliven the mosque including inviting Ustaz Ali bin Md. Isa from the School of Distance Learning, Universiti Sains Malaysia to deliver a talk. In the same year, adult religious classes and Quran recital classes were started with Sibly as the teacher. The adult classes did not survive as many locals in the area had moved out to new locations in the 1990s. However, the Quran recital classes persisted because such a class was seldom held in the other mosques. Today, the mosque is deserted and is only opened for the evening *Maghrib* and *Isyak* prayers as many locals had moved out to other locations. The mosque is now being managed by the Hutton Lane Mosque. MK

SIMPANG ENAM JAMEK MOSQUE,¹ Macalister Road



According to a respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 18), the original Simpang Enam Mosque was a wooden *surau* before it was replaced by a new brick mosque in 1897. The mosque was built on *wakaf* land bequeathed by an unknown Chinese Muslim. Four people were appointed trustees to manage the mosque. They were Shaikh Zachariah [Basheer], Haji Abdul Wahab, Sheikh Mohamed and Tengku Haji Abbas.

Another respondent claimed Haji Abdul Wahab was the one who initiated the construction of the

mosque. This is in line with the more recent view on the founding of the mosque. With the agreement dated 27 July 1887, Haji Abdul Wahab bin Osman acquired a piece of land with the Grant No. 28 Lot 3, 4, 5 (I) and 5 (II) Macalister Road, Penang. At that time, the area was known as ‘District of Tullloh Ayer Rajah’. The lots which were in possession of Haji Abdul Wahab were 1,366, 1,245, 3,363 and 2,799 sq. ft. each. Haji Abdul Wahab was a wealthy trader who owned much property which he acquired during public auctions. Included in his property was

¹ Also known as Haji Abdul Wahab Mosque.

the land on Macalister Road where Simpang Enam Mosque stands today. As a man with much property, Abdul Wahab had bequeathed his property to his wife, Siti Mariam binti Mohamed Shaik and son-in-law, Shaikh Mohamed al-Hasawi. The will was dated 5 August 1915. Haji Abdul Wahab died on 13 October 1915. He had planned to build the mosque which was completed in 1897.

Originally, the Simpang Enam Mosque was located at the junctions of Macalister Road, Dato Keramat Road, Penang Road, Magazine Road and Tek Soon Street hence it was called Simpang Enam or Anam (old spelling). When the construction for KOMTAR started in the early 1970s in Tek Soon Street, the roundabout with six junctions was reduced to five junctions. However, the area remained as Simpang Enam and the mosque as Simpang Enam Mosque.

To ensure his land and building were used only for worship, Haji Abdul Wahab made a will which was registered and certified by solicitor Morrison Allan of Penang. The will was sealed on 26 September 1900 which made Haji Abdul Wahab the only trustee.

He then appointed three other trustees.

They were:

- Tunku Hadji Abbas@Haji Abbas bin Tunku Hadji Kassin, a trader whose address was in Macalister Road;
- Haji Zakariah b. Shaikh Omar whose address was in Acheen Street; and
- Shaik Mohamed Sahib bin Kader Mydin whose address was in Chulia Street.

The will stated among others: "...their executors and administrators and assigns and the executor or administrator of the land of the last successor of them upon trust to allow the same to be used as a place of Muhamedan Public Worship and for no other purpose".

So Haji Abdul Wahab donated his land along Macalister Road for *wakaf* solely for religious purposes.



The Simpang Enam Mosque was constructed reflecting architectural styles of two different centuries. The front part of the mosque stands on the original site. The roof reflects the 19th century architecture while the back part was a modern double storey building that belongs to the 21st century.

In the early 20th century, the mosque was patronised by Muslims who ran businesses along Macalister Road, Penang Road, Dato Keramat Road and Kampung Jawa. Rapid developments in George Town caused the Muslim community to relocate to other areas. Their places were taken over by other races. However, since KOMTAR was built the mosque was once again active as office workers around KOMTAR used it for Friday prayers due to its strategic location.

In 1973, there were certain quarters who were keen to acquire the mosque site and the back part to build a shopping complex. In a letter dated 16 June 1973 and based on the decision of the Fatwa Council, the *mufti* rejected their application as it was against Islamic law to construct the new building as it would still be considered a mosque. As there was still request until the 1990s, an inheritor of Shaikh Mohamed al-Hasawi (son-in-law of Haji Abdul Wahab) obtained a court injunction to execute the trust that the site would remain for religious purposes as stated in the *Wakaf Khas*. After many years, Simpang Enam Mosque was expanded with additional building at the back of the mosque. The new building was officially opened by the Yang Di-Pertua Negeri, Tun Dato' Seri Utama Dr. Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Abbas on 6 Muharram 1425 Hijrah (27 February 2004). **MK**

PAKISTAN MOSQUE, Macalister Road



The *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 19) claimed the mosque was built in the mid-19th century (about 1840) by those who originally came from South-West India. They came to Penang to do business.

In the 1930s, the mosque was managed by several people but all were Pathans. Hence, the name ‘Pathan’ Mosque. Until 1947 the Pathans were trustees of the mosque. With the formation of Pakistan, the administration of the mosque shifted to the *Overseas Pakistan League of Penang and Province Wellesley Association* which was registered in 1948. One of the objectives of the association was to build a new mosque on the site of the original mosque.



Between 1952 and 1954, a piece of land next to the original mosque was bought with donations from the community and Pakistanis living in Penang. Work on the construction of the new mosque started in 1952. In 1955, the new double storey mosque beside the main prayer hall was completed. It was joined with the old mosque. On the upper floor of the new building were several rooms which served as temporary residence for Pakistanis who had recently arrived in Penang. They stayed for free but were requested to make donation to the mosque. In 1960, with the money accumulated, the land next door to the mosque was purchased. A bungalow located on the land was demolished to make way for a visitors’ car park.

The Pakistan Mosque was expanded in 1983 so as to accommodate the growing congregations especially on Friday. A new double storey space for prayer was constructed at the original main prayer hall. The project was funded by the public and the Pakistani community in Penang. A library was built on the lower ground next to the main prayer hall. Books for the library were contributed by the Pakistani community and the congregation while some were paid for by the mosque committee.

The Pakistan Mosque had been a community centre for Pakistanis to acquire religious knowledge and gather for feasts since the early 20th century. This had not diminished today. Mosque expenses are paid with public donations and the congregation who are mainly Pakistanis. Expenses include salaries for *imam* and *bilal*. Other costs and electricity bills (except water bills) are paid by the government. MK

ARAB MOSQUE, Seang Tek Road





Based on the *Deed of Conveyance* dated January 1898 (extracted in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 20), the Arab Mosque was constructed at the end of the 19th century. The founding of the Arab Mosque began when a trader, Sultansah bin Adamsah who lived in Chulia Street bequeathed a part of a land (Lot 325 T.S.XII, part of Grant No. 72, 1794) to build a mosque for the Muslim community living in Kampung Limow Manis (between Malacca Street and Seang Tek Road). When it was actually built was not clear but it was believed to have been built at the end of the 19th century because when the Deed of Conveyance 1898 was issued, the process of building the mosque had already started. Two traders who had settled in Chulia Street, Haji Mohamed bin Hassan and Syed Hussein bin Aboobakar Kareede, were appointed the mosque trustees.

The Arab Mosque was a self-funding mosque since its very beginning. Expenses like salaries for *imam* and *bilal*, electricity and water bills were borne by the mosque itself. Since the 1930s, many descendants of Arabs who had settled in Penang donated towards the management and administration of the mosque. From the 1930s to the 1970s, Syed Omar Al-Syebly was the *imam*. During this period, important mosque officials (designations unknown), often planned mosque activities. Sheikh Ali Bawazir, Sheikh Isa Zubaidi and Sheikh Hassan Badjenid were a few of the names involved.

In early 1962, the mosque was repaired at a cost of \$6,500 with funding from the Social Welfare Department. In 1990, when Syed Mutadhar Aidid was the chairman, the old mosque was badly damaged by a fallen tree. The old mosque was replaced with a new double storey mosque located on the same site. Funding came from the local community who were mostly of Arab descent and Arabs from Arabia. The new mosque was constructed by local artisans. Since the 1930s the mosque had become a gathering place of the Arab community in Penang. This practice continues today especially during *hari raya*. **MK**

KHAIRI MOSQUE,¹ Pahang Road



There are two versions on the construction of the mosque and the year it was constructed. According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 21), the Khairi Mosque was built in 1917 on *wakaf* land which belonged to Muhammad Sheikh Ghani. Muhammad Sheikh Ghani was a businessman from India. The land was endowed for the building of a mosque with funds collected from the public. Muhammad Sheikh Ghani was also known as Shaik Ghani who had built the York Road Mosque. He died in 1920.

However, according to Hashim Ali bin Mohd. Abd. Latiff, a fourth generation trustee of the Khairi Mosque, the construction of the mosque was completed in 1927. In 1921, the site was bequeathed by Haji Eusoff Gunny for a mosque. Haji Eusoff Gunny came from India. Before he died (the year is unknown) he appointed K. A. Hashim Ali bin Kassim Ali and Muhamad bin Mamoo as trustees, to realize his dream of building a mosque. K. A. Hashim Ali was a merchant who was born in Penang and Muhamad Mamoo was his clerk.

In 1921 when construction was about to commence it was found the land area for the mosque was insufficient. K. A. Hashim Ali bequeathed a part of his land which was adjacent to the site. With money collected by the trustees, the mosque was completed in 1927. The architectural design was similar to the Kapitan Keling Mosque. Even the artisans were brought from India. Building material from the Kapitan Keling Mosque like iron lattice with flowery engravings, marbles for the floor and others were utilized.

In 1940, Ustaz Sallahuddin who was from Madras

lodged at the mosque. Later K. A. Hashim Ali invited him to stay at his house which was just next door to the mosque. Eventually he became the *imam* and taught the Quran to children. With his deep knowledge of Islam, many saw him suitable for the job. After K. A. Hashim Ali had passed away in 1941, his son Kassim Ali, was appointed mosque trustee and *nazir*. In the 1960s, Pak Wan Teh, who was then the *imam* also taught religious subjects. He was a modernist and introduced new interpretations of the religion to the congregation. His teachings contradicted the orthodox Islamic teachings. As a result, Kassim Ali gave up his duty as *nazir* but remained as trustee while Pak Wan Teh left the mosque for good and joined the Khan Muhammad Mosque as *imam* and religious teacher.

After this episode the mosque appointed five *nazir* including Ustaz Sallahuddin. The mosque had become quiet as followers of Pak Wan Teh had stopped going there. Religious activities at the mosque were curtailed and the mosque did not have a permanent *imam*.

Despite the small congregation, the mosque was renovated in the 1980s. Although the Khairi Mosque was quieter as more Muslims in the area had moved to new locations, it was still being renovated. The roof was replaced but the dome remained in its original form and place.

In the 1990s, the mosque was renovated again. The iron lattice wall in the main hall was replaced with a concrete wall. The work was paid for by the District Office. In 2003, the mosque went through another renovation with its walls replaced with concrete walls. A new place for taking ablution and toilet were built to replace the old ones. **MK**

¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 21) this mosque is known as Pahang Road Mosque.

AL-MUNAUWAR MOSQUE,¹ Kelawai Road

Based on the information in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 22), the word ‘Kelawai’ was taken from two Malay words, ‘Kuala’ and ‘Awal’. When the two words were pronounced quickly it sounded ‘Kualawai’, which over time became ‘Kelawai’. The two words carried significant meanings. The Kelawai area was a Malay settlement since Penang’s early days. ‘Kuala Awal’ probably referred to the first port of call for fisherman and traders who came to Penang.

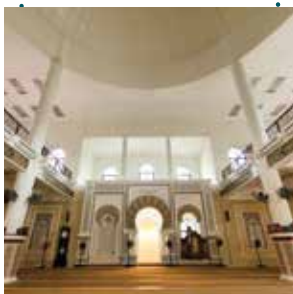
¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*, this mosque is known as Kelawei Mosque.

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According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 22), the Old Jamek Mosque in Burmah Lane was the first mosque to be built in the Kelawai area in the 1800s. However with the growing congregation the Kelawai Mosque was constructed in the 1890s. The mosque was a concrete structure built according to the design of the Old Jamek Mosque of Burmah Lane. It was funded with donations from the local community. The mosque was built on *wakaf* land bequeathed by Haji Safruddin bin Nasarudin. He endowed one out of six lots which were already divided among his five children for the mosque. In the beginning, the mosque was known as ‘Masjid Tengah’ (centre mosque) which probably indicates its location in the original village.



After the Kelawai Mosque had come into being, Friday prayers was conducted on a rotation basis with the Old Jamek Mosque, Burmah Lane. The mosque was not only used by the locals in Kelawai but also by the Kampung Herriot community including those who live on *wakaf* land until it was sold to a Chinese.



In 1972, the mosque was demolished and a new one was built on the same site. It was built with donations from the local community. In 2005/6, the mosque *kariah* agreed to buy the land next to the mosque which belonged to Haji Safruddin’s son, Mustafa.² It was bought and bequeathed as *wakaf* land. The land area was 7400 sq. ft. and sold at RM120 per sq. ft. After that the land was endowed to the Penang Islamic Council as *wakaf* land.



In 2010, the mosque was demolished and a new double storey and bigger mosque was built, using the entire original site and the added land. Construction was fully funded by the Prime Minister’s Department. However, the mosque pays its own expenses like allowances for the *imam*, *bilal* and various bills. The Kelawai Mosque also pays various bills incurred by the Old Jamek Mosque as it is within its *kariah*.

Like most mosques in Penang, the Kelawai Mosque conducts Quran reading classes. One of the teachers was Ustaz Sheikh Ahmad bin Osman Badjenid who taught *tafsir* since the 1940s until his death in 2004 or 2005. He was also the *imam* during that time. The following teacher was Ustaz Ghani and he was replaced by Ustaz Rashid and others who took turn to handle the Quran classes. The Quran classes stopped when the mosque was demolished to make way for the new mosque. When the new mosque was completed its *kariah* organized an Arabic class every Friday. It was conducted by an *ustazah*. There are 20 students mostly females. Quran and *tajwid* classes are also held at the mosque. **MK**

² Asmah, Mustafa’s eldest daughter lived on the land.

BURMAH LANE OLD JAMEK MOSQUE,¹ Gurney Drive

According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 23) the Burmah Lane Old Mosque was built in 1800 by Malays who lived in the area on a piece of land donated by a lady named Mak Manis. Fishermen used to stop by in the area which they called '*Kuala Awal*' (first estuary). Originally, it was a small wooden structure with atap roof. It was called the Old Mosque to differentiate it from the new Kelawai Mosque which was completed in 1890.

In 1890 the old mosque was demolished and a new brick structure was built in its place. A local resident, Haji Pak Chik, paid for the construction of the new mosque with the help of donations from other residents.

¹ In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island, this mosque is known as Burmah Lane Mosque.

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In the early 20th century, many Malay fishermen from Kuala Muda, Kedah and Seberang Perai would stop by and stay temporarily at the mosque because of its accessibility. However, by the mid-20th century, it ceased to be a stopping place because the estuary had become muddy and posed problems for boats and *tongkang*.

In 1970, a shed adjoining the mosque was built to accommodate the growing congregation who came for Friday prayers. The mosque held Friday prayers alternately with the nearby Kelawai Mosque. Officials of the mosque, such as *imam*, *bilal* and *siak* were chosen by the Kelawai Mosque *kariah*. The Kelawai Mosque also oversees the mosque with the help of an elected committee.

In 1980, the mosque drew considerable attention from the community over the issue of the cemetery behind the mosque. The cemetery which is located on Lot 1214 had taken up part of the prayer hall. In 1927, Lot 1214 became the property of a Chinese man. In 1975, the man claimed ownership of the lot, excluding the part that had become part of the Muslim cemetery. The area had been fenced to ensure it would not encroach further. However, in 1980 the problem resurfaced when Lot 1214 was sold to an Indian. The situation became difficult as it involved many parties until the case reached the civil court. On 12 December 1992, the Penang High Court reached a verdict that the cemetery and the part that was added to the prayer hall had been endowed to the mosque.

After the court case, the side and the back of the prayer hall were renovated in 2000 replacing them with concrete without changing the original structure. New toilets and ablution tank were also added. The renovation was funded by the District Office. The roof was also replaced with a new one.

In the 1950s, Quran classes were taught by Pak Mansor who lived in the mosque. After his death, Ustaz Abdullah Bukhari and Ustaz Ahmad Badjenid taught religious knowledge and *tajwid* at the mosque. At the time, both of them were teachers from the Al-Mashoor School. Ustaz Abdullah Bukhari is presently the chief *imam* of the Kapitan Keling Mosque. All religious activities at the mosques are being monitored by the Kelawai Mosque committee. Mosque staff are also paid from the Kelawai Mosque fund. MK

KEBUN LAMA ACHEH MOSQUE,¹ Langkawi Road





The Kebun Lama Aceh Mosque was constructed in the 1860s by a group of traders from Aceh. They came to Penang to find a suitable place to live and conduct business. They came through the Pinang river and stopped for a while in Kampung Kebun Lama, Langkawi Road. The Pinang river was the main waterway for traders from Aceh to transport their goods.

After opening a settlement, the Achenese traders agreed to build a mosque. According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 24), the site of the mosque was bequeathed by Tengku Nyak Itam, a trader from Aceh who sponsored the mosque construction. For many he was considered the founder of the mosque. Before 1962, family members of Tengku Nyak were the trustees of the mosque. They were Nyak Puteh Mohamed, Nyak Din, Nyak Amin Hj Abbas, Nyak Omar and Nyak Hydzir Mansor. After Nyak Hydzir Mansor passed away in 1962, the duty of *nazir* and trustee were given to qualified locals from the village.

After almost 100 years, the mosque was demolished in 1961 to make way for a new one. The walls and floor of the mosque were from red brick and clay, making the structure sturdier. For the roof clay tiles were used. Funding came from donations, the sale of calendars and the Social Welfare Department. In 1988, the mosque was renovated and in 2000, the main prayer hall was expanded. At present the prayer hall could accommodate more people. The cost of the expansion was funded by the Penang Islamic Council and public donations.

Situated behind the Kebun Lama Aceh Mosque are several graves of the early Aceh settlers including the family of Nyak Itam. However, it is not known which grave belongs to Nyak Itam as there are no markers on them. Only the grave of Nyak Hydzir Mansor is identifiable as his name is marked on the tombstone. The shapes of the tombstone here are unlike tombstone elsewhere. It is possible these originated from Aceh. MK

¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* this mosque is known as *Acheh Mosque*.

KAMPUNG BARU MOSQUE, Ayer Itam Road



The Kampung Baru Mosque Ayer Itam had been in existence since the 1860s (like the Ayer Itam Mosque). *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 25) mentioned that the mosque was founded by Pa' Wan Kling, Pa' Haji Hashim and Haji Hussain Kelawai on *wakaf* land bequeathed by Pa' Wan Kling. Another source (respondent was interviewed by researcher for this project) claimed the mosque was founded by Mustan bin Bapoo. He had bequeathed his land (the present site of the mosque) for a mosque. Pa' Haji Hashim was Mustan Bapoo's grandson. A concrete mosque was built in 1906 on the site of the original wooden structure which was demolished. It is possible both Pa' Wan Kling and Haji Hussain Kelawai provided assistance in building the new mosque.

Since its existence, the Kampung Baru Mosque had gone through trying times. In the 1950s, Haji Wan Teh (Haji Ibrahim bin Mohamed Akib) introduced the Muhammadiyah (modernist) Movement when he was the mosque *imam*.¹ This caused misunderstandings between the local modernists and the orthodox group. In one case, the modernist group prevented the orthodox group from organising a feast at the mosque. The situation necessitated police intervention for its settlement. As a result, Haji Wan Teh had to relinquish the post of *imam*. He moved to Kuala Kangsar and was active on the lecture circuit before returning to Penang where he died. Although the mosque was still considered as the Penang headquarters of the Muhammadiyah Movement, after the whole episode public response waned as many had discouraged others from going to the mosque resulting in only 20 people attending the Friday prayers.

After Haji Wan Teh had moved out, Haji Zainol Abidin took over as mosque *nazir*. Soon after the situation in the village returned to normal with Friday prayers held every week. At that time Ustaz Zamzam was the religious instructor. He was a student of Haji Wan Teh. In the 1980s, the main prayer hall was expanded but without changing the original mosque structure. In the 1990s, the mosque made another extension at the back and sides of the prayer hall to accommodate the growing congregation. The original 1906 mosque was still maintained although the main prayer hall had been extended twice. In 2000, the wooden framework of the roof was replaced with an iron one which would be more lasting. MK

¹ The modernist movement was led by Sheikh Muhammad Abduh from Egypt who wanted Islam to be a religion which would survive in a westernized atmosphere that was intruding into the Middle East in the 19th century.

RAWANA JAMEK MOSQUE, Perak Road



Although the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 26) mentioned that the Rawana Mosque was built in 1930, the information obtained for this project claimed that the mosque was built before 1885. The wall of the original mosque was half wood and half concrete with a cement floor. The mosque was situated on the edge of the Pinang river, the busiest river in Penang at that time. The mosque was built by the family

of Rawana Kader Mydin, an Indian-Muslim trader who came from Adiyakkamangalam, in the district of Tharuvarur, Tamil Nadu. Rawana Kader Mydin came to Penang with his two siblings, Rawana Pechaypah and Rawana Mohayiddin to sell Indian ‘pulikat’. They also traded in areca nuts. Areca nuts were found in abundance in Penang at that time. They bought and dried the nuts in Penang before exporting them to India. They also dabbled in properties and accumulated much real estates.

After amassing much property and land, Rawana Kader Mydin, the eldest of the siblings, chose a piece of land on the edge of the Pinang river to build a mosque. The Pinang river was always busy and alive with business activities. The mosque was located on Lot 1904 section 6, with an area of 49,631 sq. ft. In the early years, the mosque did not have a place to perform ablution. The congregation performed ablution in the river. For such purposes, there were steps to facilitate people going down to the river.

After Rawana Kader Mydin died on 24 October 1900, his brother, Rawana Pechaypah, took over the management of his wealth and the mosque. He was also the *imam* until it was taken over by Rawana Mohamed Mydin in the same year. In 1928, the walls were torn down and the mosque was expanded. On the site of the old mosque, a place for performing ablution was added (as it is now). The architect for the construction of the new mosque was brought from India but using local building materials. The new mosque was built with three levels to accommodate more congregant as it is located on the edge of the busy Pinang river which was popular with Muslim traders. The construction was paid for by the family and descendants of the founder.

The Rawana mosque started to use the microphone for *azan* in 1963. Before that, *azan* was called from level three of the mosque. When Rawana Ibrahim was the trustee of the mosque properties in 1969, he expanded the main prayer hall to the front and back to accommodate more people. The expansion was done by breaking the original walls while still maintaining the original structure of the mosque. Funding came from collection of rents and the mosque fund. Around the mosque, there were 15 houses with rentals at \$10 a month each. There are now only five houses left for rent. The rest were demolished to make way for the widening of the road in front of the mosque. In the mid-20th century, the houses for rent were repaired. A few years ago, the rentals were increased from RM400 to RM450 a month. In his will, Rawana Kader Mydin specified that the income from the *wakaf* land, including the rentals must be divided into five parts; two parts for the Rawanas, two parts for the mosque in Adiyakkamangalam in India and one part for the poor of Kampung Rawana. The mosque in Adiyakkamangalam was also built by the family of Rawana Kader Mydin.

Like most mosques, the Rawana Mosque had organized Quran classes since the 1950s. These classes enjoyed good response from the community. More than 100 children had learnt to read the Quran at the mosque from two instructors, Haji Ahmad and Pak Manaf. The classes are still active today and are held every Friday and Saturday.

After the 1969 extension the mosque went through several repairs. In 2011 the electrical wiring for the entire mosque was repaired. The new electrical system was installed with a cost of RM65,000 with the funding coming from the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP). **MK**

HASHIM YAHAYA JAMEK MOSQUE, Perak Road



Based on information in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 27), the Hashim Yahaya Mosque was built on 27 January 1865 and was first used on 3 February 1865. The founder of the mosque was Dalbadal Saiboo Merican. In the *Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board* the name mentioned was Dalbadalsah. Yahaya Merican was the son of Kader Saiboo Merican who bequeathed the land as *wakaf*. Kader Saiboo, a successful spice and cloth merchant in the early 19th century, was originally from South India. His wealth allowed him a life of luxury which was inherited by his three sons; Dalbadal, Zachariah and Yahaya Merican.

Dalbadal and Yahaya were clerks with Messrs. Wm. Hall and Co. They lived in Market Street. They endowed a few plots of land which they inherited for *wakaf* to build a mosque, homes for local villagers, shop houses and cemetery. Another sibling, Zachariah, was made the trustee to oversee the matter. Before that the mosque was known to the locals as Dalbadalsah Yahaya Mosque. When all the brothers passed away (the last being Zachariah who died in 1883), Yahaya Merican's first son, Hashim Nina Merican or better known as Hashim Yahaya Merican, was appointed trustee for the mosque and the 15 acres of *wakaf* land which were known as the Hashim Yahaya Mosque and *wakaf* land.

After the death of Hashim Yahaya, his first son, Mohd. Naina Merican became the trustee and *nazir* of the mosque which he held until his death in 1949. The responsibilities then shifted to Zachariah Merican, the eldest son of Mohd. Naina Merican, until 1970. The next person to inherit the responsibilities was Tuan Haji Yusof Azmi Merican, the eldest son of Zachariah. Behind the mosque is the family cemetery of Dalbadal, Yahaya and Zachariah.

The names of residents of the original house are still kept in the administrative record of the Hashim Yahaya Mosque and *wakaf*land. According to the record, each house had to pay 20 cents per month until the Second World War. Most of residents were from the third and fifth generation of the Hashim Yahaya clan.

According to the mosque committee, there are about 90 houses on the *wakaf*land of the Hashim Yahaya Mosque. The rental of each house depends on its size, between RM10 to RM15 monthly. The present *nazir* and trustee is Haji Yusof Azmi Merican who collects the rentals.

The Hashim Yahaya Mosque was renovated in 1877. The original structure had Indian influence, for example, in the fence (which is now used in the graveyard behind the mosque). The building materials were brought from India. In the 1930s, the mosque was equipped with electricity.

After more than 100 years, the mosque was demolished in 1979 to make way for a new and bigger mosque to be built on the same site. The cost for the construction was \$460,000. The federal government gave \$380,000 for the project with the rest coming from public donations. The new mosque was able to take in bigger congregation, in line with the local population growth.

In 1995, the Hashim Yahaya Mosque was expanded again on the side of the prayer hall and the back of



the main prayer hall. Since then the mosque had only minor renovations to the interior of the main prayer hall, the walls, *mimbar*, electrical equipment and so forth. The repair job was paid for by public donations and *wakaf* purchase. For example, the carpet *wakaf* cost RM10 to RM15 per sq. ft. The public was encouraged to assist the welfare of Muslims through *wakaf* purchase and be rewarded in the Hereafter. Through these efforts, the Hashim Yahaya Mosque was able to accumulate more than RM105,000 which was sufficient for the cost of repairs. Other than the sale of carpet *wakaf*, there were sales of paint for the wall, ceiling and fan.

The establishment of the Hashim Yahaya Mosque paved the way for the opening of a *madrasah* in the 1960s. It was initiated by Haji Karim, the mosque chairman at that time who used Haji Sirat's house in Mak Long Road about 100 metre from the Hashim Yahaya Mosque as *madrasah*. During the early years of the *madrasah*, classes were held every day with Haji Sirat as the teacher. In 2002, the *madrasah* was taken over by the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) which provided three teachers, two male and one female. Classes were held three days a week on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. The *madrasah* was called Daud Al-Islamiah Madrasah and it is located in Kampung Dodol. MK

WAN CHIK ARIFFIN MOSQUE,¹ Perak Road



Based on the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 28), the Wan Chik Ariffin Mosque was built in 1923 by Wan Chik Ariffin bin Mohamed Ariff. Mohamed Ariff was a wealthy Indian-Muslim at the end of the 19th century and early 20th century. He was a descendant of Bapu Alauddin bin Meera Hussain Lebai, the man who was tasked by the Kedah Sultan to accompany Francis Light to Penang in 1786. Bapu Alauddin's wealth was inherited by his descendants including Mohamed Ariff (Wan Chik Ariffin's father), and the subsequent generations. His generation was appointed *pengbulu* in the district of Balik Pulau, beginning with Dato Bahauddin Haji.

Wan Chik Ariffin made his name in the business field as a successful merchant and rice wholesaler in the early 20th century. With his riches he was able to contribute to the welfare of the Muslim society in Penang. He bequeathed his father's land in Perak Road as *wakaf* to build a mosque, named 'Ariff Mosque'. Later the name was changed to 'Wan Chik Ariffin Mosque'. It was situated about 300 metre from the Hashim Yahaya Mosque.² A respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* claimed Wan Chik Ariffin gave \$5 as gift to every person as an incentive to come to the mosque for Friday prayers. This was practised by several other mosques in the Perak Road area as they competed for more congregation.

The Wan Chik Ariffin mosque was special because it was constructed with expertise from Colombo, Sri Lanka. The original mosque also used building material and expertise imported from Colombo. The mosque had not undergone renovation except for repairs when necessary. The first renovation was undertaken in the 1980s when the side and back of the mosque were expanded. It was funded by the inheritor's family and public donations. In 2000, the mosque was repaired to make it more comfortable for the congregation.



In the 1950s, quarters were built next to the Wan Chik Ariffin Mosque to accommodate children for their Quran reading classes. However, the classes were closed in the 1960s because there were too few students. There were many other Quran and *Fardu Ain* (KAFA) classes in the vicinity of kampung Dodol, the Hashim Yahaya Mosque and nearby *madrasah*. The quarters later became the home of Wan Chik Ariffin's eldest son, Zainuddin. In the 1980s, KAFA classes were held at the mosque every Monday. By 2012, the classes were closed because its teacher Ustaz Basaruddin had passed away. **MK**

¹ This mosque is categorized as heritage building.

² The Wan Chik Ariffin Mosque was founded by Wan Chik Ariffin who bought all his siblings' land for a token sum of \$1. The purchase was symbolic to acquire the land and for him as a trustee, to build a mosque and a cemetery behind the mosque. The cemetery area behind the mosque had already existed before the Wan Chik Ariffin mosque was built.

SUNGAI PINANG JAMEK MOSQUE,¹ Jelutong Road



The Sungai Pinang Mosque was founded as a result of the Red Flag and White Flag clashes which led to the Penang Riots in 1867. The riots were a dispute between secret societies (the White flag liaised with the Ghee Hin and the Red Flag with the Tua Peh Kong) which resulted in the destructions of properties while the peace in the urban and sub-urban areas was threatened. The dispute started with business and territorial rivalry. Before the rioting the Malay business and fishing community who lived within the Pinang river estuary area prayed at the Maqbul Mosque which was about 60-80

metres away. The riot caused the community to be separated into two groups, the Red and White Flags. The group which lived on the coastal side of Jelutong Road ceased going to the Maqbul Mosque.

Based on the information in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 29), the Sungai Pinang Mosque was founded in 1880 by Haji Kechil. He was a trader

¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* this mosque is known as Sungai Pinang Masjid Bahru Mosque.

from Aceh. Together with four wealthy Malays, Haji Kechil bought a piece of land, 240 ft. x 20 ft. for \$60 to build a mosque for the Muslim community. A wooden structure with attap roof was built with financial contributions from Haji Kechil.

Seven years later, Haji Kechil decided to demolish the wooden structure with a concrete mosque in its place. A Chinese contractor was engaged to construct it within five or six months for \$1,000. Not long after that, Haji Kechil returned to Aceh and the mosque was entrusted to the villagers for its upkeep. The villagers formed a four member committee comprising the *penghulu*, Ahmad bin Hassan, Haji Salleh, Haji Said and Mohamad bin Abdul Rahman to manage the affairs of the mosque. However, the committee was dissolved due to differences between the *penghulu* and the three other members with regard to mosque development. The villagers entrusted the *penghulu* to look after the mosque.

As the population in Sungai Pinang (old name, Kampung Selut; ‘muddy village’) village grew, the *penghulu* and the villagers agreed to buy the land beside the mosque. At the time, the owner, Hussein bin Abdullah had sold it to a Chinese for \$11,500. However, the *penghulu*, through a lawyer, bought the land by paying the \$3,000 deposit.

In 1964, the old Sungai Pinang Mosque was demolished and a new concrete mosque was built on the same site. Work started when the land purchased from Hussein was completed. The land which cost \$8,000 was bought with financial contributions from Haji Che Amat Hassan, Haji Ariff, Haji Manaf, Haji Ahmad and public donations. The new mosque costs \$150,000. The mosque could accommodate 300 people at one time. At that time, Friday prayers was held on a rotation basis with the Maqbul Mosque. Both the Maqbul and the Sungai Pinang Mosques came under the same *kariah* and religious activities

were organised at both the mosques.

The Sungai Pinang Mosque was expanded in the 1990s to accommodate the growing congregation. Dato’ Abdul Rashid Ismail is the present chairman of the Sungai Pinang Mosque *kariah*. The *kariah* decided to buy the land located next to the mosque for RM1.8 million. It was bought by the state government and the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) turned it into *wakaf* land. The Sungai Pinang Mosque was expanded with financial contributions from the public and the mosque fund. In the same year, *Madrasah* Al-Badar was opened for children Quran classes. After the opening of *Madrasah* Al-Badar, the mosque *kariah* opened religious classes at several locations including the home of *kariah* members, the Sungai Pinang Mosque and *suraus* in the area which were under the administration of the Sungai Pinang Mosque.

In 2005 the Sungai Pinang Mosque was expanded again to accommodate the growing congregation especially for Friday prayers. The original building was demolished and a new double storey mosque was built in its place. The RM1.7 million cost was borne by the Prime Minister’s Department. The work took three years to complete and during that period the congregation used the Maqbul Mosque for their religious activities. On 25 July 2008, the Sungai Pinang Mosque was officially opened by the Penang Governor. The mosque owns five lots of land; Lots 93, 97, 972, 973 and 974. The mosque sits on four lots while Lot 972 is for parking.

The mosque has three *suraus* under its jurisdiction namely the *Al-Falaq surau* which was completed in 2005, the *Al-Qausar surau* which was completed in 2009 and the *Al-Solihin surau* which was constructed in 2011. Other than that the mosque has a kindergarten (TABIKA) and community hall for the Sungai Pinang community. MK

MAQBUL MOSQUE, ¹ Sungai Pinang



Maqbul Mosque is a historic mosque for the Sungai Pinang community. The mosque was originally a platform laid over the muddy area of the Pinang river estuary. Based on information in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 30), in the early 19th century, many Muslim traders came to Penang and stopped at the Pinang river estuary to rest. They built a platform without a roof. Later, a roof made from the *nibong* plant, which were found in abundance on the edge

of the Pinang river, were added. Finally, the walls were added and the mosque was used by traders, who were mostly from Aceh, to store their goods, rest and pray. They would stay at the mosque for a week before returning home after selling their goods. They brought goods like copra, spices, gambier and nutmeg.

¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 30), this mosque is known as *Sungai Pinang Old Mosque*.



In the 1850s, the mosque was demolished and a concrete mosque was constructed on the site. Donations were collected from the public, especially from traders who used to stop there. At that time, the mosque was called the Tuan Guru Mosque in commemoration of Abdul Ghani, a well-known religious teacher from Madura. But theft of goods was a major problem after that. Cases of goods stolen caused the traders much anxiety. One trader from Aceh was called to undertake *zikir* and burn incense in the mosque. As a result, the thief who came to the mosque with the intention of stealing could not find his way out and was caught. The mosque drew much attention from the public who went to the mosque to pray because they believed their prayers would be answered. Eventually, the name changed to Maqbul Mosque since people started calling it the ‘mosque that grants prayers/requests’.

The Sungai Pinang Mosque was built in 1867 as a result of the dispute between the White the Red Flags. In that year the congregation at the Maqbul Mosque was divided into two. Thus there was no reason to expand the mosque. However, in the

1950s the mosque had to expand prayer space because of the growing congregation and people moving into the Sungai Pinang area. Moreover, it was only this mosque that conduct Friday prayers. The *penghulu* and *nazir* of Maqbul Mosque and Sungai Pinang Mosque had requested the villagers to go to both so that the mosques would not be neglected.

In the 1960s, the Maqbul Mosque was repaired to make it sturdier for people to continue using it although the Sungai Pinang Mosque had been expanded to accomodate bigger congregation. Friday prayers was held on a rotation basis at both mosques.

The Maqbul Mosque was repaired in the 1990s and again in 2006. In 2006, the Maqbul Mosque expanded on the inside of the prayer hall and the outside part of the mosque but the front of the mosque and the *imam*'s place were still in the original shape. The main prayer hall was 576 sq. ft. but after renovation it became 1,152 sq. ft. The cost was paid by the mosque funds and contributions from the Sungai Pinang and Maqbul Mosques community. **MK**

AL-QADRIE JAMEK MOSQUE,¹ Ayer Itam



The Al-Qadrie Jamek Mosque was built in 1860 by Syed Hassan bin Syed Haron.² Syed Hassan who was of Yemen ancestry, was an adopted son of Nathaniel Bacon who was the pioneer of the Ayer Itam area (also known as ‘Kebun Haroh’) in Penang early days. The Kebun Haroh area covered the whole of the present Ayer Itam. Ayer Itam was an estate which belonged to Bacon who was secretary/writer to Francis Light. Syed Hassan was Bacon’s personal assistant before he was adopted. When Bacon died in 1830, Syed

Hassan inherited a large portion of his estate. Then he bequeathed part of the inherited land for a mosque and cemetery for Muslims. He built part concrete and part wooden mosque with his own money. The mosque was located close to the Ayer Itam river.

¹ In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island this mosque is known as Ayer Itam Mosque.

² In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island the name Syed Hassan Al Haru was mentioned.

It was convenient for the congregation to perform ablution in the river. Syed Hassan's grave sits next to his wife's grave in the walled-up area near the Sheikh Omar Basheer Mausoleum in Kampung Melayu, Ayer Itam.

In 1870, Sheikh Omar Basheer went to the Ayer Itam Mosque to teach Islamic knowledge. At the same time, he was also teaching at the Acheen Street Malay Mosque. Sheikh Omar Basheer was well-known for his knowledge of Islam and practitioner of *tarekat* Naqsyabandiah. Syed Hassan was also a follower of the *tarekat*. He gave the house he was living in (inherited from Bacon) to Sheikh Omar Basheer. Sheikh Omar Basheer had taught *sufism* and mysticism at the mosque. Hence, the locals called it the *suluk* Mosque.³

Around the 1930s, the old mosque on the river bank was demolished to make way for a new one. The new mosque was built next to the site of the old one away from the river bank. This was to avoid flooding and river erosion. The mosque was bigger than the old one as there were more Muslims settling in the locality. At that time the mosque was known as Syed Hassan Mosque in memory of the mosque founder. Due to an exodus of Muslims to the area during the mid-20th century, the mosque was not able to accommodate the growing congregation. In 1957, the main prayer hall was widened three times the original size by breaking down the wall on its side. The *mibrab* was closed and a new one was built in the middle of the prayer hall. About this time, too, Pak Saad came and stayed at the mosque. He taught the Quran to children of the *kariah* for free in return for allowing him to stay at the mosque.

In the 1940s, the *nazir* and trustee of the mosque was Syed Abdullah, a third generation descendants of Syed Hassan. After Syed Abdullah passed away, the new *nazir* was Syed Omar bin Syed Ali (also known as Syed Omar Al-Qadrie) who was not from Syed Hassan



family. He appointed two new *nazir*, Cikgu Rejab and Cikgu Abdullah. The name of the mosque then changed to the Al-Qadrie Mosque, a name which is still in use today, in commemoration of Syed Omar Al-Qadrie. Since then, every house which was built on *wakaf* land in the vicinity of the mosque including the family home of Syed Hassan, had to pay a monthly rent of \$10.

In 2003, the main prayer hall was extended again on its side and back. The cost for the extension was paid by public contributions and the mosque fund. In 2004, the mosque committee organized Quran classes for children of the *kariah* but this did not last because of the poor response. MK

³ *Suluk* is closely related to *Sufis* and it indicates the nature of their relationship with God.

PAYA TERUBUNG JAMEK MOSQUE, Ayer Itam



The Paya Terubung Mosque was originally a small wooden structure built on a piece of land which belonged to a Chinese man. He allowed the mosque to be built on his land without specifying the size of the land to be used. According to the respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 32), the mosque was illegally built on an estate in Ayer Itam that belonged to the Chinese man. However, he allowed the construction because he wanted to avoid problems with Muslims in the area. Around the mosque were several houses built illegally by Malays. The mosque was built by Che' Aim from Sungai

Gelugor. He was mentioned by the respondent as the leader of a Malay group from Sungai Gelugor who was involved in many quarrels with the people in the neighbouring village (the name of the village was not mentioned). Che Aim's life began to change after he knew that a mosque would be constructed in Paya Terubung. He had worked hard to secure contributions which paid for the mosque's construction in the 1920s.¹ The first *imam* was Abdul Kadir followed Abdul Rahman.

¹ This date was calculated from the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 32).

In 1957, a new concrete mosque was built in front of the old one because the old mosque could not be extended as there were several houses around it. It was funded by public contributions. Six people were involved in the building of the mosque. They were Haji Ayub, Ismail Awang, Haji Rani, Haji Ahmad Yusoff, Daud and Dali bin Chin. They were also the builders. Before the mosque's completion Hassan bin Abdullah served as the leader of the community with Dali bin Chin as *nazir*. Upon its completion a mosque committee was formed with Haji Ayub appointed as *nazir*. The old mosque was turned into a store for the new mosque.

At the end of the 1970s, the main prayer hall of the Paya Terubung Mosque was widened to the back as the congregation had increased. The cost of the

extension was funded by the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP). In 1987, Haji Ismail bin Md. Hussain (better known as Pak Man) was appointed chairman of the mosque. In 2001, the mosque went through another renovation which considerably extended the main prayer hall to the back of the mosque. The renovation was funded by the Penang Islamic Council.

Since the 1960s adult Islamic religious classes had been on-going at the Paya Terubung Mosque. Ustaz Engku Yahaya was the instructor. When he returned to his hometown in Perak, Ustaz Rejab took over. After that Ustaz Zainol Abidin Zamzam was invited to teach at the mosque. He turned out to be the longest serving instructor at the mosque from the 1970s till the present. The chairman of the mosque, Haji Ismail bin Md. Hussain (Pak Man) taught Quran to children and *tajwid* to adults. He is assisted by his two sons as the classes are well-received by locals in the area.



SUNGAI GELUGOR JAMEK MOSQUE, Gelugor



According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 33), the Sungai Gelugor Mosque was built around 1812 by Raruthabtillai on a piece of land which was contributed by David Brown.¹ Raruthabtillai was a wealthy Indian-Muslim trader. It was a semi-concrete mosque. Before this mosque, there was already a wooden mosque on the site. Neither the builder nor its date was known.

In 1812, the original mosque was demolished and a new mosque was built in its place. It was only in the 1970s that it was renovated when the mosque was extended on the side and back of the main prayer hall. Funding for the renovation was unknown. Near the mosque is the grave of Dato Ismail. Dato Ismail was regarded as *wali*; his grave is denoted as *kramat wali*. However, most people in the village were not aware of the *kramat wali*. The grave had been there since about 1882. Local villagers then had regarded it as *kramat* and the public went there to make a vow.



In the 1940s, Haji Hassan was appointed *imam* of the mosque. He also conducted religious lessons and taught the Quran at the mosque. At that time, there was a large congregation because the Marine Base was in the vicinity. In 1956, Haji Yahaya who was from Kelantan assisted Haji Hassan to teach Quran reading to the villagers. In 1957, staff at the Marine base built a house near the mosque for Haji Yahaya to facilitate his visitation to the mosque. Haji Hassan was the mosque's longest serving *imam* beginning from the 1940s until his death in 2000.



The Quran reading classes were extremely popular that they had to be moved to a new location because the mosque could not accommodate the large number of students. In 2000, the class moved to the Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM) building in Kampung Sungai Gelugor 6. Later it was taken over by ABIM to ensure better management.



On 13 March 2012, the Sungai Gelugor Mosque was demolished to make way for a new one to be built on the site of the old mosque. The new mosque was completed in 2013. The suggestion to build a new mosque was put forward by the *kariah* because the old mosque could not accommodate the growing congregation. The construction of the new mosque was funded by the Prime Minister's Department (ICU-JPM) and the Penang Islamic Religious Affairs Department (JAIPP). **MK**



¹ David Brown was a Scot who arrived in Penang in 1800. He came to Penang to assist his friend, James Scott who was a business partner of Francis Light and the largest landowner in Penang at the time. Later Brown became James Scott's business partner. In 1806, Brown developed a spice plantation in Sungai Gelugor (presently the area between Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Pulau Pinang and Universiti Sains Malaysia). The passing of Scott in 1808 enabled Brown to take over the business as a whole under the name Brown & Co. Brown became the biggest landowner in Penang at that time.

BATU UBAN JAMEK MOSQUE, Batu Uban

The Batu Uban Mosque was the earliest mosque in Penang. According to the date on the signboard, it was constructed in 1734. This is supported by genealogical documents of Nakhoda Intan (also known as Haji Mohammad Salleh) and details about the early pioneers of the Batu Uban settlement which are well-preserved through oral history.

The first time Batu Uban was officially mentioned was in the 1850s when J. D. Vaughan, the Penang Superintendent of Police, interviewed Haji Brunei's

children. Haji Brunei was an early pioneer of Bayan Lepas. One of his children said his father had told him Batu Uban was opened by Nakhoda Intan. According to the genealogy of Nakhoda Intan and information in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 34), Nakhoda Intan came from Sumatera. His real name was Nakhoda Nan Intan ibni Almarhum Tengku Pateh Sebatang. He was from the Minangkabau royal family who chose to leave his village because of dispute about customs



and religious practices. Together with his brother, Nakhoda Kechil (his real name, Ismail) and their followers, Nakhoda Intan headed for Batu Uban and opened a settlement in the 1720s. Realising that Penang was then under the Kedah Sultanate, Nakhoda Intan and his brother went to have an audience with Sultan Muhammad Jiwa Zainal Adilin Muazam Syah II (reigned 1710-1778) to request permission to open a settlement on the island. The permission was granted. Since then Batu Uban was developed not just as a commercial port but also a spiritual and social locality.

Nakhoda Intan built a small *surau* in the settlement for the convenience of the newly emerging community. As the population grew a mosque was deemed a necessity. Batu Uban had become an attractive port of call for ships because of its location. It was supplied with fresh drinking water source for the community and for the sailors and traders who stopped by. Other than traders, Islamic missionaries also came to Batu Uban as they were attracted by Nakhoda Intan's piety. People from Province Wellesley (Seberang Perai) and Kedah also came to Batu Uban to acquire religious knowledge from Nakhoda Intan. The harmonious atmosphere of Batu Uban as a settlement, port and religious centre brought about a new mixed community including the Arabs and the earliest community of Arab descendants.

Going back to the 1734 mosque, the structure was a square using '*cengal*' and '*meranti*' wood. The walls were a mixture of egg yolks, brown sugar and gambier which would protect the building from wind erosion. The roof was multi-layered with Bali influence and known as '*Meru*'. This form of architecture was widely used in the Malay Archipelago between the 14th and 18th centuries. Although it had gone through several renovations the original four main pillars and the structure of the dome were spared. Its fresh water well became the main source of drinking

water for villagers, traders and people who stopped by and still in use until today. The mosque premises include the graves of Nakhoda Intan and his family.

The Batu Uban Mosque had experienced several conflicts throughout its existence, just like other mosques in Penang. In the mid-19th century (between 1850s and 1870s), a new mosque was built in the area by the Indian-Muslim, Kader Meah. This caused the community to split into two groups, Nakhoda Intan's group and Kader Meah's group.

The split was related to the influence of the White Flag and Red Flags in Penang which came about at that time. Based on British government official records, Batu Uban was then under the influence of the Red Flag whose leader was Che Oodin. The split had caused clash which was only stopped with British intervention. Since then, the Kader Meah Mosque was neglected and in 1938 it was demolished. A new *madrasah* was built but this was demolished in 1960 to give way to a new *surau*.

When the Japanese occupied Penang they took over the Minden barracks. Batu Uban being near the Japanese headquarters, attracted the Japanese attention. The mosque was violated and used as storage for arms and food. It was even used as a venue for a carnival with the Japanese army serving liquors and 'non-halal' food. The place for performing ablution was turned into a bathing pool. This came to an end when the mosque *imam*, Syaikh Ali al-Khayyat, protested to the commander. As a result, all things belonging to the Japanese army were removed from the Batu Uban mosque with immediate effect.

Ever since the mosque's existence, it had been renovated several times. In 1963, the original roof was replaced and subsequently raised, the original walls were joined at the top to make it level with the new roof. The addition to the walls caused the slope of the roof to change. Four original pillars were clamped



Pah Rani and the public paid for the cost of these extensions.

Before the end of the 1960s, the Batu Uban Mosque did not even have a toilet. Instead the toilet was just a wall of coconut leaves and wooden walkaway on a rock facing the sea. With public donations, a toilet with roof and plywood walls was built but it did not have pipe water. Water was brought from the well located in the mosque premises. The stairways were repaired in several stages. Originally, the stairways and the water tank (where ablution was performed) were just stone slabs which were neatly arranged. Later these were replaced with clay bricks and by the mid-20th century (between the 1950s and the 1960s) the steps and the water tank were made of concrete.



In the 1980s, the prayer space was enlarged. The side and the back of the hall were added. The addition covered the steps and the original water tank which were replaced with wooden steps and proper ablution space complete with pipe water. The prayer space was enlarged to accommodate a bigger congregation. In the same year newer modern toilet was added equipped with pipe water for the comfort of the congregation. Funding came from the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) and public donations.



As mentioned above, the Batu Uban Mosque was a popular place to study Islam since its inception. One of the teachers in the 1950s was Abdul Rashid, better known as Pak Unggai. He taught Islamic knowledge for free to children of Batu Uban village. Pak Unggai was around until the 1970s. In the 1980s, the Penang Islamic Council started a *Fardu Ain* (KAFA) classes next to the mosque. More than 278 years had passed but the Batu Uban Mosque today is still standing strong although the area around it have been rapidly developed. The existence of the mosque was the landmark of Islamic influence in Penang and the Malays. MK

with iron and joined to each other to give them more strength. In spite of the renovations, the original mosque structure was still maintained. The cost of the repairs were borne by a local known as Pah Rani.

From the 1960s to the 1970s, extensions were made to the side of the prayer hall and the back of the mosque. The building's original structure, the wide windows with iron trellis and the thick walls were preserved despite the new additions. Donations from

SUNGAI NIBONG BESAR JAMEK MOSQUE,¹ Sungai Nibong



There are different versions on the establishment of the Sungai Nibong Mosque. In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*, (1974, Mosque no. 35), it was mentioned that the mosque was constructed in the 1860s on *wakaf* land. It was endowed by Kuju [sic], an Indian-Muslim to a local resident Haji Abdul Rahman. Haji Abdul Rahman constructed the mosque with monetary contributions from locals in the area. Thus it could be said that descendants of Abdul Rahman were the prime contributors to the development of the mosque either as trustees or *imam*. After the passing of Haji Abdul Rahman, Haji Mohamed Ali (Haji Abdul Rahman's son) and Haji Mohamed Amin shared the duty of *imam*. Locals considered Haji

Mohamed a saint because of his deep knowledge of Islam and his prowess in preventing his house from attempted burglary and arson by some Chinese and Siamese. They could not even ignite the fire. However, the present *imam*, the 80-year-old Haji Idris bin Abdul Rahman @ Osman (also known as Haji Salleh), has a different story. According to him, the mosque was built by Pak Chin Kuju who came from Aceh. Pak Chin Kuju migrated to Penang in search of a better life. The size of the land which he endowed was 1,343 sq. meter. The mosque was built on this plot by Haji Mak Min with the help of villagers in the 1860s. Haji Mak Min was a trader from India. He was also regarded as an *ulama* because of his knowledge of Islam. He was appointed

the first *imam* of the Sungai Nibong Mosque.

Later, Haji Mak Min's son, Abdul Rashid, became the trustee and also the headman of Kampung Sungai Nibong. Mohammad Daud, a resident of Kampung Sungai Nibong was appointed *imam* based on his credentials. In 1934, Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Ghani was the *imam*, after taking over from Mohamad Daud. Before this Haji Abdul Rahman was the *imam* of the Batu Uban Mosque. A new headman was also appointed. He was Pak Ayub bin Din who took over from Abdul Rashid. In the 1940s, Haji Mak Min's grandson became the mosque secretary before the family of Abdul Rahman, imam of Sungai Nibong Mosque, took over as mosque trustee. Che Teh could be considered as the last mosque trustee from Haji Mak Min's family. After Haji Abdul Rahman had passed away in the 1950s, his son, Hassan bin Abdul Rahman, took over as *imam*. His younger brother, Haji Idris bin Haji Abdul Rahman who was better known as Haji Salleh became the mosque official.

In the 1960s, the mosque was demolished to

make way for a new one.² The fund of \$20,000 for its construction came from the Social Welfare Department which was presented by the deputy Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak bin Hussein. In the 1970s, monetary contributions from individuals and villagers were used to extend the main prayer hall.

After the Japanese Occupation, a religious school was established at the Sungai Nibong Mosque to cater to the villagers' request. The teachers were Haji Abdul Hamid who was the mosque *imam* at the time and Adnan bin Lebai Mat. However, when the Sungai Nibong Malay School was opened in the 1950s, the religious school was moved here. However, religious classes were still held at the mosque at night. Between the 1940s and the 1950s, the mosque was popular with well known *ulama* and speakers. Hence, the mosque continued to attract local interests. MK

¹ In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island this mosque is known as Sungai Nibong Mosque.

² The original *mihrab* and *mimbar* were retained.



BAGAN JERMAL JAMEK MOSQUE, Tanjung Tokong Road

The Bagan Jermal Mosque was built around 1800 by a European sailor (his country of origin was unknown) who had embraced Islam and took the name Haji Ahmad. Haji Ahmad had sailed to Penang and on the way his ship hit a storm. He made a vow that if he ever arrived in Penang safely, he would embrace Islam. He fulfilled his vow when he arrived safely and had performed the hajj in Mecca. After embracing Islam he settled in the fishing village known as Bagan Jermal. Bagan means landing place for fishermen and jermal is a type of fish trap.

Much of the land in Bagan Jermal at that time belonged to some rich Chinese. Haji Ahmad once

treated the son of a rich Chinese *towkay* who was afflicted with a strange ailment. The rich man rewarded him with a piece of land for having cured his son of the sickness. Since then Haji Ahmad became well known and the villagers regarded him as a miracle worker for what he had done. It was on this land that he built a mosque as a convenient place of worship for the locals.

After his death, the piece of land was sold and resold several times and finally a lady by the name of Salasiah binti Abdullah bought it. Salasiah collected rent from the villagers who resided on the *wakaf* land. Several years later, the land was again sold and this time to Alaudin.



Alaudin was a rich businessman. His business was in the rentals of *tongkang* and cargo boats. He was also a ship chandler for cargo ship workers.¹ Alaudin turned the land into *wakaf* land for the mosque and cemetery. He appointed Akob bin Yob, Ariff bin Yob (in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats*, 'Ariff' is spelt 'Shariff') and Ahmad bin *Ishak* as trustees. In the 1960s, three new trustees were appointed after the previous trustees had passed away. They were Haji Ismail bin Alaudin, Hamid bin Akob and Mahmud bin Shariff.

At the end of 1959, the old mosque was demolished and a new one was built on the same site. The cost of construction of \$25,000 was sponsored by the Social Welfare Department. According to Haji Osman, the Baboo Sports Club also contributed towards the construction of the mosque besides extending financial help to poor children of the Bagan Jermal *kariah*. The new mosque was completed in 1961. In the 1940s, Haji Harun was the *imam* of the mosque. He was unanimously elected by the villagers to continue as *imam* as he was deemed most qualified to lead the congregation because of his knowledge of Islam.

In the 1970s, after the death of the three *nazir*, Haji Harun was appointed as *nazir* of the Bagan Jermal Mosque. Later, Haji Harun entrusted the responsibilities of *nazir* to his son, Ustaz Azim. In the 1970s, Ustaz Azim was also *imam* alternating with his father. At the same time, Ustaz Azim was also appointed village headman by the government. At the Bagan Jermal Mosque, the *imam* was selected by the villagers. This method had been practised since the 1940s and continued until the 1980s. After the 1980s, the office of *imam* was chosen by the UMNO Bukit Bendera Division before the candidate's name was submitted to the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP).

In the 1980s, the Bagan Jermal Mosque extended



the prayer hall on the side and front. The old *mihrab* was demolished. The renovation was suggested by Jamaludin who was then the mosque's chairman because the population in Bagan Jermal had increased tremendously. At the same time the prayer hall for women was also extended. In 2000, the prayer hall was extended to the back of the mosque.

From the 1940s till the 1970s, the Bagan Jermal Mosque organized Quran and religious classes. These were conducted by Haji Harun. Haji Harun had many students. In the 1960s, some of his students helped him run the Quran classes which were held at the mosque. In the 1970s Haji Harun's son, Ustaz Azim, also helped him as instructor. The Quran classes are still in place today. They are under the care of the *imam*, Ustaz Mohd Rodzi Abdul Hamid. **MK**

¹ Interview with Haji Osman bin Salleh, 1 August 2012.



TUAN GURU MOSQUE, Tanjung Tokong Road



The Tuan Guru Mosque, which faces a Chinese temple, is situated not far from the Karwa Mosque. According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 37), the mosque was built in 1880 by a religious teacher who had settled down in Acheen Street. The book also referred to a Tuan Guru Shaikh Abdul Ghani, a religious teacher who came from Madura. He was mentioned by J. D. Vaughan (a police officer in Penang in the 1850s) and was regarded a miracle worker.¹ Vaughan said Abdul

Ghani was a fanatic who preferred to distant himself and his congregation from the wider community. Abdul Ghani was also responsible in getting Muslim members of secret societies in the mid-19th century to reconvert to Islam. However, neither his connection with the mosque nor the date of the mosque's construction had been ascertained and recorded.

¹ See *Keramat Tuan Guru* in *Keramat* No. 6.

Another view is that the Tuan Guru Mosque was built much earlier than the date given in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* as the Tanjung Tokong area was opened around 1794 by religious teacher, Tok Guru Haji Hassan Fusanah. He was a *Jawi Peranakan* from Madura. Malays from Kedah who had escaped the Siamese had settled down in Tanjong



Tokong since 1821.² According to Haji Abdul Rashid bin Khalid, the Tuan Guru Mosque was built by a trader (whose name was unknown) who came from the Indonesian Archipelago about 150 years ago (in the 1860s).³ The trader had dropped by to sell his jermal.⁴ He built the mosque for the locals who were mostly fishermen and taught them Islamic knowledge. The Tuan Guru Mosque was named as such in commemoration of this religious teacher who had built the mosque. Haji Abdul Rashid refuted the entry in *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* that the mosque was built by Encik Taib on *wakaf*land endowed by Tanjong Tokong residents. He said the *wakaf*land was bequeathed by Syeikh Abdul Kader. It was located near the beach where UDA Holdings had reclaimed and developed into a commercial and residential area in 1986.

The original mosque was of *merbau* wood for the walls and *nipah* for the roof. About 30 years later it was demolished and in the early 20th century, as a result of local contribution a new concrete mosque was built for convenience of the congregant. In 1962, the mosque committee launched a drive

to upgrade the mosque. The upgrading involved the construction of two minarets. In 2002, a modern new mosque were built. The whole project cost RM70, 000. Funding came from the federal government. The wooden pillar from the old mosque was used to build a shed next to the mosque. The old mosque's original gateway at the back of the new mosque was restored. In the mosque compound is a religious school which was built in 2002 and a community hall. Currently, the school has been upgraded to Sekolah Agama Rakyat (Islamic Religious School). The mosque administrators have also applied to UDA Holdings for the plot of land located adjacent to the mosque for expansion of the school. Presently, the Tuan Guru Mosque takes turns with the nearby Karwa Mosque to conduct Friday prayers to ensure the mandatory number of 40 people per congregation is always fulfilled. MK

² In 1821, Siam attacked and conquered Kedah. Siam ruled Kedah until 1842 when the Kedah Sultanate was restored.

³ To date no further oral/written information had been obtained about this individual.

⁴ Jermal is a type of fish trap made of net and mangrove wood.

TANJUNG TOKONG RECLAMATION LAND MOSQUE [MADRASAH AT-TAQWA], Tanjung Tokong



In reality this is not a mosque but a *madrasah*, known as Madrasah At-Taqwa. The date of its establishment is not stated on its signboard. It is located in Kampung Keling, Tanjung Tokong. According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 38), the *madrasah* was constructed in 1941 in the Malay village of Kampung Moden. Kampung Moden was opened on reclaimed land in the 1930s while the houses in the area were constructed in 1937.

According to Syini Ibramsah bin Aziz, the *madrasah* caretaker, the pioneer of Kampung Moden was a wealthy *Jawi Peranakan* who paid the British to reclaim the area. The reclaimed land was given to the fisherman who lived in Hashim Road, Tanjung Tokong. This area was named Kampung Moden because the houses were built systematically and properly arranged under the supervision of the British. Each villager had to pay a monthly installment of \$15 for the construction cost.

The villagers of Kampung Moden were *Jawi Peranakan* fishermen. Madrasah At-Taqwa was built in 1925 on Hashim Road. It was also known as *Madrasah* Haji Hassan in commemoration of its founder before it was given the new name. Haji Hassan was a religious teacher who came from Java. When the fishermen from Hashim Road moved to Kampung Moden, the *madrasah* was relocated as well. The villagers took down the *madrasah* and assembled it in Kampung Moden. In 1959, the *madrasah* was renovated with a new roof and a new coat of paint with funding from the Social Welfare Department. In 1989, the *madrasah* was renovated again giving it a concrete look. The premise was also expanded. The cost was \$60,000 which was paid by contributions from the *madrasah* fund and the public.

In the 1970s Kampung Moden became known as Kampung Keling. At the *madrasah* Quran was



taught to the locals. It was also used for daily prayers although it was just a few metres away from the Tuan Guru Mosque. However, Friday prayers were never held at Madrasah At-Taqwa. Instead it was held in rotation between the Karwa Mosque and the Tuan Guru Mosque. MK

TANJUNG BUNGA FLOATING MOSQUE, Tanjung Bungah Road





The Tanjung Bunga Mosque has a vague history. The date when it was built was not written on its notice board. The people who live in the locality now are third and fourth generations of the original settlers. Many people had relocated elsewhere because of the rapid development in the area making it difficult to acquire either oral or written information about the mosque.

According to the locals, Tanjung Bungah was a fishing village. Based on information from the former mosque secretary, Hj Zulkifli bin Nayan, it was named after “*Pokok Bunga*” (a flowering plant) that grew in the promontory, hence Tanjung Bunga.



The word ‘*bunga*’ became ‘*bungah*’ because of the mispronunciation by the Chinese. The area was originally known as Teluk Tikus (literally; Mouse Bay). Apparently there were many mice in the area.

The original Tanjung Bunga Mosque was a wooden structure. However, it was not certain when this structure came into being or who built it. In 1955, the newly formed Tanjung Bunga Mosque Committee planned to renovate the mosque with an estimated cost of \$2,000. The Islamic Advisory Committee of Penang and Seberang Perai gave its permission to the mosque to collect public donation. From these efforts, the wooden mosques was subjected to renovation.

In 1963, there was a plan to upgrade the wooden structure to a semi concrete structure. The mosque committee at that time faced numerous challenges before the plan became reality. These include to change the mosque site from government land to *wakaf* land which took about 18 months, to wait for more than a year for the plan approval, to wait for 6 months before the state engineer consented to build a new wall to prevent sea erosion and and to wait for the state funding for \$25,000. The cost of the mosque construction was estimated at \$35,000. About \$10,000 were collected from the public while the mosque provided another \$7,000 in cash. The chairman of the mosque committee at that time was Wanchik bin Mohd. Ariff. The new mosque was completed in 1967 through a cooperative effort and it was officially opened by Tun Abdul Razak bin Hussein.

In the 1980s, there was a plan to build a bigger mosque as the Tanjung Bungah population had increased considerably and the existing mosque was no longer able to accommodate the congregant. Jamil Ghani Construction Sd Bhd was entrusted to build a new mosque next to the old mosque. This new mosque was named Masjid Terapung Tanjung

Bunga. It was not actually a floating mosque as it was supported by concrete pillars but at high tide, the mosque appears to be floating on the sea. It is the first mosque in Malaysia that was built on water.

The mosque architecture is based on West Asia and Turkey. It could accomodate 1,500 people. The mosque is also equipped with a main prayer hall for male, female prayer hall, ablution rooms for male and female, a room to keep dead bodies before their burial, a tower and car park. Construction started in 2003 and it was completed in early 2005 with a cost of RM15 million provided by the federal government. On 16 May 2007, the Masjid Terapung Tanjung Bunga was officially opened by the fifth prime minister, Tun Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi.

The old mosque was never demolished despite all religious activities had been transferred to the new mosque. The old mosque was turned into a *tahfiz* centre. During the tsunami of 26 December 2004, the old mosque experience slight damage while the new mosque which was nearing completion was unscathed. The mosque area was only covered with sea water brought by tsunami waves. **MK**



TANJUNG HUMA OLD MOSQUE,¹ 10th Milestone, Batu Feringgi



¹ In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island (1974, Mosque no. 40) this mosque is known as Tanjung Huma Mosque.

Tanjung Huma was a fishing village located on a hilly promontory near the sea. '*Padi buma*' (hill paddy) was also grown on the surrounding hills. Many Malays went to settle there at the end of the 19th century because of the opportunity to be both fishermen and hill paddy farmers. They named the area Tanjung Huma.

By the 20th century many more Malays had settled down in Tanjung Huma. Although there was a mosque in nearby Batu Feringgi, they needed their own mosque to conduct prayers and to perform Friday prayers as the congregation was more than 40 which is the prerequisite condition before Friday prayers are allowed. In 1921 Sa'ad bin Tahir donated a piece of land on which the Tanjung Huma Mosque was built. According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 40), the mosque was founded by Osman bin Talib. He was a fisherman and the village headman. He built the mosque partly with his own money while the rest was contributed by the locals. However, this account could not be verified as the respondent had never heard of Osman bin Talib or his descendants being trustees of the mosque.

The Tanjung Huma Mosque conducted Friday prayers on a rotation basis with the Batu Feringgi Mosque. In 1931, the Tanjung Huma Mosque was extended to the back and side of the main prayer hall in order to take in more people. The village community paid for the extension. By the mid-1950s, Friday prayers at the mosque were discontinued because there were less than 40 people in the congregation.

In the 1970s, the wooden walls were replaced with concrete ones but the wooden pillars remained. Again the villagers paid for the renovation. In the

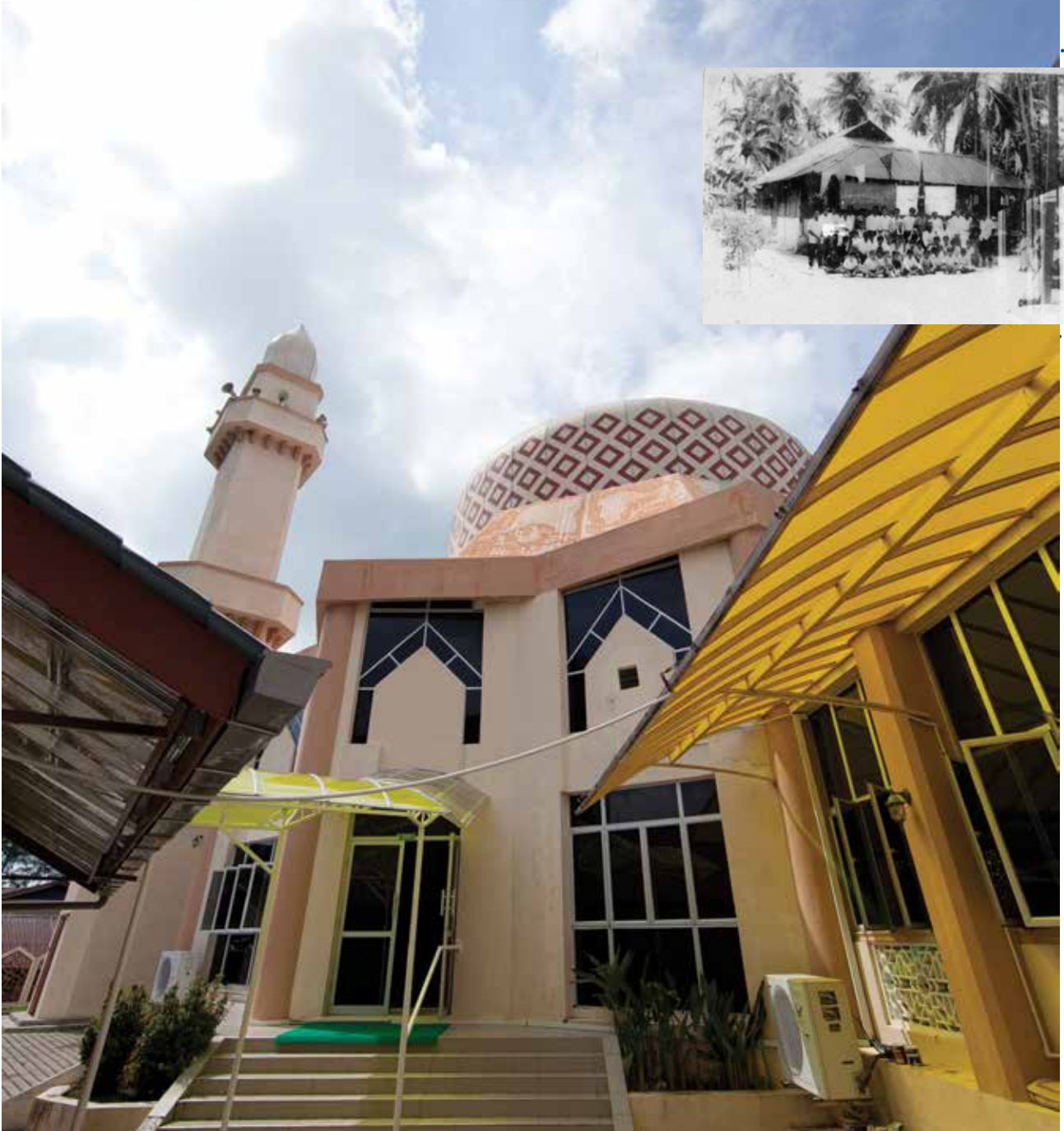
1990s, a new floor was laid while a new toilet and a place to perform ablution were added. The cost for the renovation came from the mosque fund and public contributions.

With regard administration, Pak Yusof and Kassim bin Arshad were prominent in the development and administration of the mosque in the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1950s Kassim was the village headman and mosque *nazir*. He was *nazir* until his death in the 1980s. The following *nazir* was Hashim bin Yusof. Both Kassim and Hashim were involved in the affairs of the mosque.

The villagers chose their *imam* from among the most qualified and suitable among the villagers. Since the 1930s, Lebai Umar bin Abu Bakar was the *imam*. He resigned in the 1960s because of old age. Haji Idris became the following *imam* and is still holding the office. In 2001, Haji Abu Bakar who is a son of Lebai Umar became the *imam*, carrying out the responsibility in rotation with Haji Idris. Haji Abu Bakar was the *imam* of the Batu Feringgi Mosque since the age of 15. The *imam* and mosque officials are volunteers and they do not get paid. Mosque utilities are paid by contribution from the mosque fund. The Tanjung Huma Mosque has been organizing Quran and religious knowledge classes since the 1960s. The classes are still going strong. Haji Abu Bakar is the present instructor.

In the 1970s, the mosque had problems in connection with *wakaf*land. The problem surfaced when the owner of the *wakaf*land sold it to a Chinese; the Chinese in turn, sold it to the proprietor of a hotel. The *wakaf*land was not big enough to be broken up into two lots to enable the part that was sold to have its own grant. Although efforts had been taken to get a separate grant for the mosque as *wakaf*land the problem is still not solved. MK

AR-RAHMAN MOSQUE,¹ Batu Feringgi



¹ In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island this mosque is known as Batu Feringgi Mosque.

There are many versions of the history of the Ar-Rahman Mosque. One version was that Batu Feringgi was opened by Kia San who was a migrant from Burma. Kia San was the pioneer of Batu Feringgi. He embraced Islam and took the name Hassan. He was also known as Haji Hassan. When he died he was buried in Batu Feringgi and his grave was considered a shrine by the locals. The locals named the area '*Batu Tinggi*', after the large and tall rocks that were found in the area. However, the British either misheard or misunderstood the word '*Tinggi*' for 'Feringgi' (Portugis), when locals went to see them for official purposes.

According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 41), the Batu Feringgi mosque was established in

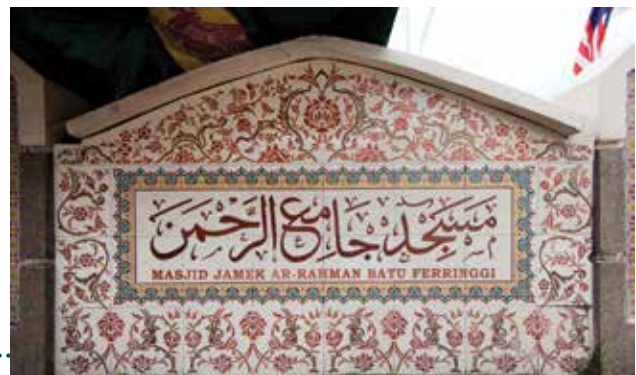
around 1880 by Tuan Syed Jabat who hailed from Perlis. Before that there was already a wooden mosque in Batu Feringgi which was built on *wakaf* land bequeathed by a Malay woman. However, the locals did not like its location because it faced a Chinese temple. So they agreed to build a new mosque at another location under the leadership of Tuan Syed Jabat who was Haji Hassan's son-in-law.² When the mosque was completed, the old mosque was demolished.

Saharom bin Mohd Sahab has another version.

¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* this mosque is known as Batu Feringgi Mosque.

² Information on the site of the new mosque is vague.





According to the story that was passed through generations, the Batu Feringgi Mosque was opened in the 1920s (around 1925). However, he does not deny that it could be earlier. His great-great grandfather, Ismail, had told him that the man responsible for building the mosque was Lebai Saat. Lebai Saat led the villagers who were mostly fishermen, to look for timber from the nearby forest to build the mosque. The site of the present mosque was a plot of *wakaf* land bequeathed by a Malay individual whose identity is unknown. Since its inception, the Batu Feringgi Mosque had undergone several renovations. The earliest renovation took place in the 1940s when the mosque was demolished and a new one was constructed. The cost was between \$5,000 and \$6,000. It was paid from the mosque fund

which was contributed by the villagers. In 1976, the mosque was renovated again. The walls were replaced with a concrete one. The federal government paid about \$3,000 for the renovation cost. It was officially opened by the governor Tun Dato' Haji Sardon bin Haji Jubir.

The present mosque was the result of renovation works in 2005. The works were started in 2001 when the federal government bought the land around the mosque costing RM 4 million. This follows the request by the mosque committee at that time, which felt that the existing mosque was no longer able to cater to the increasing number of congregants. The federal government also provided a fund of RM1.5 million for the above purposes. The mosque was completed in 2009. **MK**

AL-ITTIFAQ MOSQUE,¹ Sungai Nibong Kechil



The notes relating to the Sungai Nibong Mosque found in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 42) are rather brief. The mosque is believed to have existed since the 1870s but there is no proof to validate such claims while the third generations of descendants of the original village dwellers hardly remember the history of their ancestors. The mosque was officially opened in 1961.

A village resident, Haji Jamil bin Haji Ishak, claims there is no record or proof as to the date of the mosque construction. He also has not heard anyone from the older generation talking about it. Haji Jamil is a third generation resident of Kampung Sungai Nibong Kechil and presently the chairman of the Sungai Nibong Kechil Mosque. In 1995, he was vice-chairman of the mosque.

¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* this mosque is known as *Sungai Nibong Kechil Mosque*.

The Sungai Nibong Kechil Mosque was built on Lot 84, 85, 616 and 4568. A large part of the mosque is located on Lot 84 with the other part on Lot 85, 616 and 4568. The establishment of the mosque was a puzzle because Lot 84 and 85 were not *wakaf* land while the grant owner was unknown to the villagers. Lot 616 and 4568 were bequeathed by its owner, Mat bin Hitam.

Before 1961, the Sungai Nibong Kechil Mosque was just a small wooden structure with a thatched roof. The *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* noted that its history changed when the late Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj stopped at the mosque in 1959 to pray. He noticed all sorts of shortcomings and immediately issued a personal cheque of \$2000 as donation to build a new mosque. The Social Welfare Department supported with another \$3000 and another \$2000 from public donations to fund its construction which was completed in 1961. It was officially opened by Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj on 26 January 1961.

After the new mosque was completed, a religious school was built in front of the mosque in 1961.

The school was for the village children to learn to read the Quran. The school was systematically administered and have put in place evaluation tests or examinations. Known as *Madrasah Tarbiyah* it was opened every day in the afternoon after the regular school hours. In 1998, the school (now known as KAFA) was administered by the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) which operated three days a week.

In the 1980s, the Sungai Nibong Kechil Mosque was expanded but information on its cost and funding was not available. What is clear is that public help was crucial in the project. In 1995, the mosque was renovated again. A double-storey building was added while new pillars were constructed to strengthen it. The main prayer hall was not changed. Funding came from two philanthropists who donated RM350,000 and RM50,000 each. Donations amounting to RM750,000 were also collected. During its construction, the country experienced an economic downturn in 1998. Building material sky rocketed in price slowing down construction. Some workers had to be laid off to cut cost. However, the project was completed for the public to use in the same year. MK



KARWA MOSQUE, Tanjung Tokong



According to local oral tradition, the Karwa Mosque was built for the inshore fishermen in Tanjung Tokong to enable them to pray when going out to sea. Before this, they conducted their prayers on the beach. The mosque was built through the effort of an Indian-Muslim fish towkay by the name of Karwa (real name, Karwa Nina Mohamed). He bought and bequeathed a piece of land with beach frontage as site for the mosque. According to Idris bin Ahmad the Karwa Mosque was named after Karwa. Besides fish business Karwa might also have dabbled as money changer in George Town as most Indian-Muslims have more than one type of business. It was stated in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 43) that Karwa had a money changing facility near the Netherland Trading Society Building on Beach Street.

The mosque was built with the co-operation of the fishermen and was fully funded by Karwa. It was a concrete mosque and was completed in 1897. Although it is more than 100 years old it had never been demolished and rebuilt. However, several extensions have been made in order to accommodate the growing congregation. In the 1960s, the first extension was undertaken for the first time. A hall was added behind the mosque and the right side was extended. Another extension to the back of the mosque was undertaken in the 1980s. In 2002, the mosque *kariah* spent about RM50,000 to construct a community hall next to the mosque. Despite these renovations the original structure is still intact as can be seen today. Friday prayers at the Karwa Mosque was done in rotation with the Tuan Guru Mosque because of its close proximity. This was to ensure the congregation fulfilled the required number of 40 people. MK

KAMPUNG RAWA MOSQUE, Kampung Rawa



The Kampung Rawa Mosque is located in Pattani Road which is next to Sungai Pinang Road. The Rawa Malay community is also known as ‘Melayu Rao’ (Muslim Rao settlers, Sumatera). The community originated from the family of the Rao. They have blood ties with the Rao, speak in the Rao language and practice its customs. Since the Melaka Sultanate trade had encouraged the Rawas to travel, trade and settle in the Malay Peninsula including Penang.



In Penang, the Rawa community sells Islamic books, starts a printing press and spreads Islam particularly in the Acheen Street area. They settled and married with local women creating a Rawa settlement. In the early 20th century (1920 to 1930s), the Acheen Street area was crowded with buildings and settlers. After identifying a suitable location the Rawa community started a new settlement (Kampung Rawa) near the Pinang river. In the beginning it was a swampy area surrounded by jungles, coconut and oil palm trees. They built houses on stilts and used small bridges to connect to each other's house and the road. Today, Kampung Rawa still maintains its originality with 100 sturdy original houses still standing although some have been repaired.

Three blocks of flats with 700 units were built to accommodate the growing population in Kampung Rawa.

Originally, the Kampung Rawa Mosque was a small wooden *surau* located in Pattani Road. The *surau* was built in 1952 on City Council land (Majlis Perbandaran Pulau Pinang) for council workers who were mostly Muslims. The *surau* was built at the request of the workers, headed by Pak Yusop. Pak Yusop was appointed temporary *imam* because he was knowledgeable in Islam.

With increasing City Council workers the wooden *surau* became crowded at certain times. It had to

expand to accommodate the growing congregation. In the 1960s, the *surau* was demolished to make way for double storey wooden quarters to be built for council workers. The *surau* was moved to Kampung Rawa (the site of the present mosque) which belonged to the City Council. The new *surau* had a new *imam*, Ahmad Baldran, appointed by the villagers because of his piety and knowledge of Islam. At the time, Ahmad Baldran had recently arrived from Brunei. He settled down in Kampung Rawa. After Ahmad Baldran, Hashim Bidin was the *imam*, followed by Haji Hussein.

In 1995, the *surau* became a mosque. It was built with a donation of RM500,000 from an individual and contributions from the public. It was given the name Kampung Rawa Mosque because it is located in Kampung Rawa. The mosque is about 925 sq. meters located on lot 1486. The site was endowed by the Penang City Council. The modern structure of the mosque was the work of the Public Works Department engineer. Malay architecture was maintained for the roof. Befitting a mosque, more religious activities were carried out like *maghrib* lectures, Quran reading classes for children, Islamic talks and Islamic festivities.

In 1998, a Hindu temple was built behind the mosque premises. This became an issue between Muslims and Hindus. The temple was located about 20 metres from the mosque. Each side accused the other of being noisy. As a result dispute broke out causing the state government to intervene. The chairman of Kampung Rawa Mosque, Yatim Ahmad (Pak Yat), collected signatures from the villagers to petition for the temple to be moved to another location. In March 1998, Pak Yat and several villagers together with the Hindu temple representatives met to discuss the problem. It was finally decided to move the temple to S. P. Chelliah Road.



Due to the episode, the Kampung Rawa Mosque became well-known. On 17 October 2002, the mosque was recognized by the Penang Islamic Department as the Kampung Rawa Jamek Mosque. The Mosque *kariah* was subsequently formed and chaired by Yatim Ahmad. The mosque conducted religious activities, religious talks and *Fardu Ain* (KAFA) classes every Monday. In 2011, the mosque *kariah* decided to buy three plots of land located behind the mosque; lot 930, 932 and 510 to build a religious school and to conduct *Fardu Ain* (KAFA) class. MK

PENANG STATE MOSQUE, Ayer Itam Road



The Penang State Mosque was officially opened by the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah Al-Musta'in Billah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Abu Bakar Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mu'adzam Shah on 29 August 1980. In 1965, the prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj had suggested that Penang build a State Mosque, promising the state a federal grant of RM1 million. His suggestion was welcomed by the state government then under chief minister Dr. Lim Chong Eu. It received strong support from the former governor of Penang, the late Tun Datuk Syed Sheh Al-Haj bin Syed Hassan Barakbah.

In June 1969, a State Mosque Construction Committee was formed to ensure the construction

went smoothly. The Chairman of the Committee was Datuk Haji Harun Sirat while Datuk Haji Mohd Sidek bin Elamdin was the Secretary. The State Mosque Construction Committee decided that donations would be collected from Muslim and non-Muslim philanthropists, voluntary bodies, associations, business sectors, banks, Muslim and non-Muslim government servants and others. The amount contributed by the federal government was \$2,104,601 while the state government contributed \$1,500,000 and donations from the public amounted to \$1,245,264.11.

Among the sites suggested was the Esplanade (Padang Kota Lama), Dato' Keramat, the junction of Scotland Road and Western Road and Goal Road

(Jail). Finally, the Construction Committee decided on an 11 acre state land located at the junction of Ayer Itam Road and Green Lane. In 1974 the prime minister, the late Tun Abdul Razak gave his consent to the proposed site.

The structural model of the mosque was prepared by the Penang Public Works Department. The architect was Mr. E. B. Paz who was from the Philippines. He had researched a number of well-known mosques in West Asia before designing the Penang State Mosque. Construction company Loh Thow Yoong Sdn. Bhd. won the tender to build the mosque at a cost of RM5 million.

The State Mosque displays the uniqueness of Islamic tradition. The mosque is decorated with Quranic verses written in *khat* (Arabic calligraphy). The circular prayer hall is complimented by the circular roof in the shape of the hibiscus flower which was made from high quality material. There is also parking space for 400 vehicles. The minaret is 170 feet high, its five pillars symbolize the five principles of Islam. Visitors are able to go up the minaret by a lift which can take six people at one time to have a panoramic view of the area below. The prayer

hall on the mezzanine floor and the balcony can accommodate 5,000 congregants. The mezzanine floor is exclusively for ladies. There are two separate stairs to the area. The gallery on this level is decorated with wooden carvings that display Islamic culture. The whole prayer area is 44,000 square feet.

There is a fully air conditioned lecture hall which can accommodate 250 people for any religious activities or other Islam related activities. This hall is also used for meetings, seminars and conferences. Other facilities in the mosque are offices including that of the *imam* and library. There is also an all-purpose room and a kitchen located on this floor. The security room is equipped with an information counter. Two special rooms are reserved for the use of non-Muslim visitors to change clothes before entering the mosque. The staircase to the pulpit is made of aluminium and is circular in shape. The *Mihrab* is where the *imam* stands to lead the congregation in prayers. It maintains its traditional characteristics and is covered with high quality onyx marble imported from Pakistan. The dome is made of aluminium which is golden in colour. Over the dome are found 30 feet long horizontal lines symbolizing the ever-lasting glory of Islamic tradition through the ages. MK



BUKIT BENDERA MOSQUE



Penang Hill (Bukit Bendera) is a major tourist attraction in Penang. In the early years the area was known as Strawberry Hill (Bukit Strawberi) because strawberries were grown here. Penang Hill was opened in 1921 when A.R. Johnson¹ built a funicular railway with four coaches at a cost of \$1,573. The train was officially launched by Sir Laurence Nunns Guillemard on 1 Januari 1924.² Works on a jungle path to Penang Hill had started in 1897 when an application to have a railway service was sent to J. K. Birch, the Resident Councillor of Penang.³

At the summit of Penang Hill there was a small mosque known as Bukit Bendera Mosque which was built in 1963. The site was formerly a football field

¹ A.R Johnson was the person who was responsible for creating the Penang Hill Railway.

² Penang Hill Railway Achievement at the National Archives Website. http://www.arkib.gov.my/keretapi_bukit_bendera;jsessionid=874A1FA60A43CEDD7671A2A7A196F720?p_p_id=56_INSTANCE_H5gW&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-3&p_p_col_pos=1&p_p_col_count=2&page=2, accessed on 16 January 2012 at 12.41pm.

³ Basir Abu Bakar, Vehicle to the Summit ['Kereta ke Puncak Bukit'] in Kosmo: http://www.kosmo.com.my/kosmo/content.asp?y=2012&dt=0216&pub=Kosmo&sec=Horizon&pg=ho_03.htm

for the Penang Hill Railway workers. In mid-March 1963, a millionaire who was leader of the Penang Chinese Community acquired the land in front of the police quarters near “Bel Retiro”⁴ to build a temple.

The Chinese millionaire’s plan caused a stir among the Penang Hill residents. Muslims in the area headed by Haji Hamid Araby bin Haji Md. Salih, the Station Master of Penang Hill Railway, worked together to stop the construction of the temple. With the support of a well-known businessman, Tuan Syed Omar bin Ahmad Almashoor,⁵ the matter was brought to the attention of the Penang Governor, Raja Tun Uda Alhaj. A week later the governor ordered the Land Office to cancel the land purchase by the millionaire.⁶

It was an unforgettable lesson from the episode for the Penang Hill residents which led them to build a *surau*/mosque at the site for the convenience of Muslim residents of Penang Hill and Muslim tourists. Tuan Syed Omar once again was asked to communicate with the governor on this matter. The suggestion was welcomed by the governor who directed the formation of a mosque construction committee to go into detailed study of the project. In early May 1963, the Penang Hill Mosque Committee was formed under Syed Omar. The committee was made up of wealthy and well-known Muslim personalities in Penang as well as local residents of Penang Hill:

NO.	NAME	POST
1	Haji G. M. Yusoff, J. P	Advisor
2	Haji Syed Omar Almashoor	Chairman
3	Haji K. P. Hussain	Vice Chairman
4	Haji K. S. Mohamad Ismail	Vice Chairman
5	Shaik Kamaruddin	Vice Chairman
6	H. R. Pa’wanteh	Secretary

7	Abd. Rahman bin Abd. Rashid	Assistant Secretary
8	Haji Shaikh Hassan Bajenid	Treasurer
9	Haji S. M. Zainul Abidin, J.M.N., J.P. (B.A.)	Auditor
10	A. B. Mohamad Eusoff	Auditor
11	Tuan Haji Ahmad Sa’id, J.P.	Committee Member
12	Tuan Ismail Idris	Committee Member
13	Nyak Hashim bin Nyak Puteh, A.M.N	Committee Member
14	A. G. Mohamad Yusoff	Committee Member
15	Haji S. Mohamad Ismail, J.P	Committee Member
16	S. M. Idris	Committee Member
17	S. M. Ibrahim	Committee Member
18	Kassim bin Mydin	Committee Member
19	Shaikh Ali Balidram Al-Haj	Committee Member
20	Shaikh Nuttersah bin Imam Meah, A.M.N	Committee Member

Later two representatives from the Penang and Seberang Perai Islamic Councils were also appointed to the committee (names were not noted in the list attached with a letter dated 21 September 1963 from the chairman to the Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development). From the committee three trustees were appointed. They were Haji Syed

⁴ According to Dato’ Haji Hamid Araby, Bel Retiro which is situated on the summit of Penang Hill is the official residence of the Governor of Penang.

⁵ Syed Omar bin Ahmad Almashoor, at that time, went to Penang Hill to teach the Governor Raja Tun Uda’s grandchildren Quran and Islamic knowledge.

⁶ Interview with Dato’ Haji Hamid Araby, 16 January 2013.

Omar Almashoor, Haji K. P. Hussein and Shaik Kamaruddin.⁷

The construction of the mosque took three years at a cost of \$70,000 provided by the government. The federal government contributed \$25,000 under the Second Malaysia Plan. Before that it received an allocation of \$5,000 on 17 July 1966 under the First Malaysia Plan. The rest came from contributions from the Muslim public which amounted to \$47,000.⁸ According to Tuan Haji Hamid, part of the cost of construction went to the transporting of building material by the funicular railway.⁹ This was because there was no road going up the hill.

The design and architecture of the Penang Hill Mosque is a combination of South Asia and Middle Eastern architecture. The dome displays both South Asian and Middle Eastern architecture as seen in several mosques in Penang like the Kapitan Keling Mosque and the Kongsi Balik Pulau Mosque. This is probably due to the contractor, engineer and the committee appointed to oversee the construction were from the *Jawi Peranakan* community. The structure of the mosque is octagonal like the al-Aqsa Mosque.

The mosque was built in 1963 and completed in February 1966. It was officially opened by the Penang Governor, Raja Tun Uda Alhaj on 22 April 1966. In March 1982, the management of the Penang Hill Mosque was transferred to the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP). Since its inception it had been repaired a few times. In 1971, the roof was repaired because it was leaking badly. In 2011, the federal government through the Prime Minister's Department granted an allocation of RM180,000 for repairs and building a community hall near the mosque. Mosque activities began in July 1966. Ustaz Ahmad Badjunid (Headmaster Madrasah Almashoor Al-Islamiah) was invited to teach religious knowledge at the Penang Hill

Mosque every Wednesday (Thursday night after *maghrib* prayers). As of June 1971, the Penang Islamic Council *kadi* voluntarily offered himself to teach *tafsir* (interpretation of the Quran) to Muslim residents of Penang Hill. Until 1985, the Penang Hill Mosque had conducted Friday prayers.¹⁰ However, since then it was discontinued because the congregation was less than 40. MK

⁷ P.L.B 2/7 Masjid Bukit Bendera, Pulau Pinang, Ministry of Rural Development.

⁸ In an effort to collect fund for the construction of the Penang Hill Mosque, the mosque committee accepted only contributions from Muslim donors. Contributions from non-Muslims were politely refused. "Penang Hill Mosque Taking Shape," Sunday Gazette, 20 October 1965.

⁹ Cost of transporting building material by the funicular was 30-35 cents per ton.

¹⁰ In the old days, many Muslims lived on Penang Hill. There were quarters for workers of the Penang Hill Railway. Every staff of the Penang Hill Railway had to reside on the hill. However, the number of Muslims on the hill began to decrease when their quarters were demolished. This contributed to the lack of congregation for Friday prayers.



ANJUMAN HIMAYATHUL ISLAM MOSQUE, Chulia Street



The Anjuman Himayathul Islam Mosque was built around 1835 by local Indian-Muslims who were mostly merchants. It is situated on a piece of land which belonged to Cut Kader. Cut Kader endowed the land for a mosque and cemetery.¹ Originally the mosque was known as '*Masjid Kecil*' (Small Mosque) before its name was changed to the Anjuman Himayathul Islam Mosque (in Urdu it means 'organization which controls Islamic movement') in the late 1930s.

In the 1930s, the mosque was taken over by several Indian-Muslims who had resigned from the United Indian-Muslim Association (formed in 1929) because of the *tarekat* teachings. Due to the breakaway, the group used the mosque as its headquarters for the teaching of the *tarekat*. The *tarekat* utilized the mosque to open the Anjuman Himayathul Islam Tamil School and Quran class (Madrrasah Anjuman Himayathul Islam). These activities were held every day on the premises. The premises was divided into three sections; the back for the Tamil school, the middle for the Quran class, and the front for praying. The Anjuman Himayathul Islam Tamil School was registered in the early 1940s.

In 1945, members of the *tarekat* located at the mosque were divided into two groups. This stemmed from the disagreement over the practice of *zikir* in the *tarekat* which they participated in. The *tarekat* group at Anjuman Himayathul Islam Mosque was known as the *Kundu Kachi Tarekat* (in Tamil) and the other group the *Tanggal Kachi* (moved to Kedah Road). The *Kundu Kachi Tarekat* had about 40 followers. The group performed *zikir* every Thursday and Friday night in the mosque. This practice slowly diminished when the second generation of followers took over in 1950. They preferred to undertake *zikir* at home by themselves instead of in a group at the mosque. The Anjuman Himayathul Islam Mosque was headed by Haji Ahmad Syah who was from India. He came to Penang in 1905 for business purposes. Tuan Haji Diwan was then the mosque leader. Both of them were considered pious and people would refer to them

for problems concerning the faith. People also referred to the *imam* of the mosque, Syed Osman, on religious matters as he had deep knowledge of Islam.

In 1957 the Anjuman Himayathul Islam Tamil School was transferred to the Indian-Muslim Association which was located in Transfer Road. This was due to the impending mosque demolition and the building of a new mosque. The construction of the new mosque was planned by Haji Diwan and Haji Ahmad Syah. They were fully supported by the mosque committee. In 1958, the old mosque was demolished and the new mosque took shape. Funding came from the public and the mosque fund. While work on the new mosque was going on, Quran class was held at a rented room in Dato Koyah Road. The rent was paid by the mosque fund with financial assistance from the Indian-Muslim Association. The Quran class was taught by Shaul Hamid and Haji Uduan (the earlier teacher). After both had passed away in 1965 their pupils took over the responsibility. Among them were Abdullah Bukhari, Maulana Hanifah and Maulana Sultan Ghani.

In 1962, the new mosque was completed at a cost of \$150,000. It had three storeys to allow the holding of various religious activities. The first floor was the prayer hall, the second floor, a meeting room and the third floor for the Quran classes. The *imams* were Sainder Madar and Maulana Sultan Ghani. Both were pious Indian-Muslims from India.

In 2005, the mosque developed cracks in the walls due to the tsunami. The cracks were repaired and new tiles were laid. Funding came from the mosque and public donations. In 2010, the mosque extended the prayer hall to the side near the entrance. The extension caused the grave of Cut Kader, the lady who endowed the land for the mosque, to be pushed inside the mosque. The shrine remained inside the mosque as a show of respect to the original land owner. The cost of the extension was paid by Think City and the mosque fund. MK

¹ Previously the grave of Cut Cader was sited outside the mosque entrance but with the extension to the prayer hall it is located in the mosque.

AL-MALIK KHALID MOSQUE, Universiti Sains Malaysia



The size of the al-Malik Khalid Mosque is 53,614 sq. ft. It is located at the university's Sungai Dua entrance. The mosque was designed by Fawziah Lukas who was attached to the School of Building, Housing and Planning. The architecture is traditional and Islamic as usually found in West Asia. The mosque is named after the late al-Malik Khalid bin Abdul Aziz Ali Su'ud, the 4th King of Saudi Arabia. He had contributed about \$1.5 million for the first phase of its construction. Funding for its construction also came from the federal government.

The al-Malik Khalid Mosque started in 1970 with the Balai Islam which was located at the ground floor of the Department of Students' Affairs and Development (*Hal Ekwat dan Pembangunan Pelajar*). Through the efforts of the Muslim Undergraduate Association, [Persatuan Mahasiswa Islam USM (PMIUSM)] a mosque was built in 1972 on the main campus in Penang. PMI USM had prepared a memorandum for Tan Sri Hamzah Sendut who was the vice chancellor at the time, to build a mosque for students, the campus and the outside community. The plan was given serious consideration by the subsequent vice chancellor Tan Sri Hamdan Shaikh Tahir. Through various efforts, the construction of the mosque started in 1977 and was completed in 1983. It was officially opened by the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ahmad Shah al-Musta'in Billah on 2 September 1983.

In 1983, the al-Malik Khalid Mosque came under the direct management of the Islamic Centre. The mosques in the Health and Engineering campuses are also managed by the Islamic Centre. The al-Malik Khalid Mosque is a double-storey mosque. The prayer hall on the ground floor is 8,262 sq. ft. and can accommodate 1,100 male congregants. The area upstairs is 6,642 sq. ft. and can take in 600 female congregants. In 1999, the al-Malik Khalid Mosque was expanded with allocation from the 7th Malaysia Plan. It can now accommodate 3,000 congregants at any one time. The expanded area was officially opened by the vice chancellor Professor Datuk Ishak Tambi Kechik on 6 June 2000. The mosque has become the centre of Islamic and community activities which are attended by the USM population as well as the Sungai Dua and Bukit Gambir community. There is an Islamic kindergarten, a seminar room and other facilities at the mosque. The mosque library has 14,000 books. Since 1983, the mosque maintains the unique tradition of cooperative efforts (*gotong royong*) in preparing food for breaking the fast during the Ramadan for students and university staff. The activity managed to draw the participation of the international students particularly those from West Asia. **MK**



AT-TAQWA MOSQUE, Taman Brown/Taman Tun Sardon



The At-Taqwa Mosque was built in 1974. In the early years, it was a small *surau* built by local residents for religious purposes through the effort of the late Datuk Haji Mohd. Nor bin Ahmad, also known as Cikgu Mohd. Nor among the local community.¹ As village headman, Cikgu Mohd. Nor formed a *Surau* Construction Committee. Included in the committee was the former Minister of Health, Dato' Mohd. Farid Ariffin. Cikgu Mohd. Nor also led the Taman Brown residents in clearing the bush near their homes to prepare the site for the *surau*.²

After the bush was cleared, Cikgu Mohd. Nor who was active in Penang politics at that time and had a good rapport with several UMNO leaders, requested the land from the government to build a *surau*. His application was approved. Cikgu Mohd. Nor then

¹ Haji Mohd. Nor, affectionately called 'cikgu' because he was the headmaster of Jelutong Malay School.

² In the 1970s, the area around Taman Brown was not cleared and developed. The area was still jungle. The situation changed when government low cost houses were built in Taman Tun Sardon. Indirectly, it contributed to the expansion of Taman Brown.

took the initiative to endow the land with an area of 50' x 80' as site for a *surau*. The cost to build the *surau* was \$100,000. Funding for its construction came from the federal government through the late Tun Abdul Razak (\$15,000) and donations from the public which amounted to \$70,000. The late Tuan Haji Murad Nasrudin gave a personal donation of \$15,000. The *surau* was completed in 1975.

The opening of a residential area near the Taman Brown *surau* caused an increase of the local population. This led to an increase of the *surau* congregants. As chairman of Taman Brown *surau*, Cikgu Mohd. Nor once again led local residents and residents of the low cost housing of Taman Tun Sardon to expand the *surau*. In 1984 local residents and the public contributed a total of \$88,263.05. The federal government gave \$20,000. Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim gave a personal donation of \$5,000 while Tuan Haji Alaudin and family gave \$20,000 for the *surau*.

Work on expanding the *surau* began on 21 March 1986 and was completed on 10 July 1986 at a cost of \$113,236.05. Subsequently, the Taman Brown *surau* could take in about 1,200 congregation at any one time. In 1987, the *surau* was recognized as a mosque and was known as the At-Taqwa Mosque Taman Brown/Taman Tun Sardon. Given the recognition, the At-Taqwa Mosque was allowed to conduct Friday prayers beginning from 6 November 1987.³ The first Friday prayers was led by the then Mufti of Penang, Dato' Haji Mohamed bin Haji Hashim.

However, the elevation of the At-Taqwa *surau* to a mosque led to the fragmentation of the *kariah*. The At-Taqwa Mosque *kariah* covered the residential area of Taman Tun Sardon, Taman Brown, Jalan Hilir Pemancar and Jalan Sungai Molek which involved 750 houses with 4,440 occupants. The *kariah* boundary was fixed by the Penang



Islamic Council (MAIPP).

In 1990 the At-Taqwa Mosque was renovated and expanded. It was turned into a double storey mosque while the roof on the left and right side of the mosque was raised. Work started on 16 March 1990 and completed on 27 April 1994. The cost was about RM357,000. The public contributed RM257,000 while the federal government provided RM100,000.

In 2010 two Penang Malay contractors offered the mosque committee to rebuild the mosque and the offer was accepted. The two contractors were Jamil Ghani and Muhammad Iqbal Nahuu. They sponsored the cost of building the new mosque which was RM2 million. The mosque took four months to be built and was completed in 2011 in time for the month of Ramadan. **MK**

³ The permission to begin Friday prayers at the At-Taqwa Mosque is found in the letter of approval No.(64) in MUIPP.5011 dated 20 July 1987 signed by Abni Habban bin Mahieddin, Secretary, Penang Islamic Council.

AL-JAMI' AL-SOGHIR MOSQUE, Taman Pekaka



The mosque is located in Taman Pekaka, Sungai Dua. Taman Pekaka is a residential area which was opened in 1982 for government employees. In the early years, the mosque was just a small *surau* named Al-Jami' Al-Shoghir Surau. The name Al-Jami' Al-Shoghir was taken to commemorate the committee's vision of turning it into a mosque for the Taman Pekaka residents. 'Al-Jami' means a place to gather and 'Al-Shoghir' means small. According to the chairman of the mosque, Haji Hashim bin Nayan, the *surau* was built in 1998. It began when the Taman Pekaka Residents Committee formed a *surau* construction committee and the committee later applied to the developer of the housing area, Syarikat Perumahan Pegawai Kerajaan Sdn. Bhd. (SPPK), for a plot to build a *surau*.¹



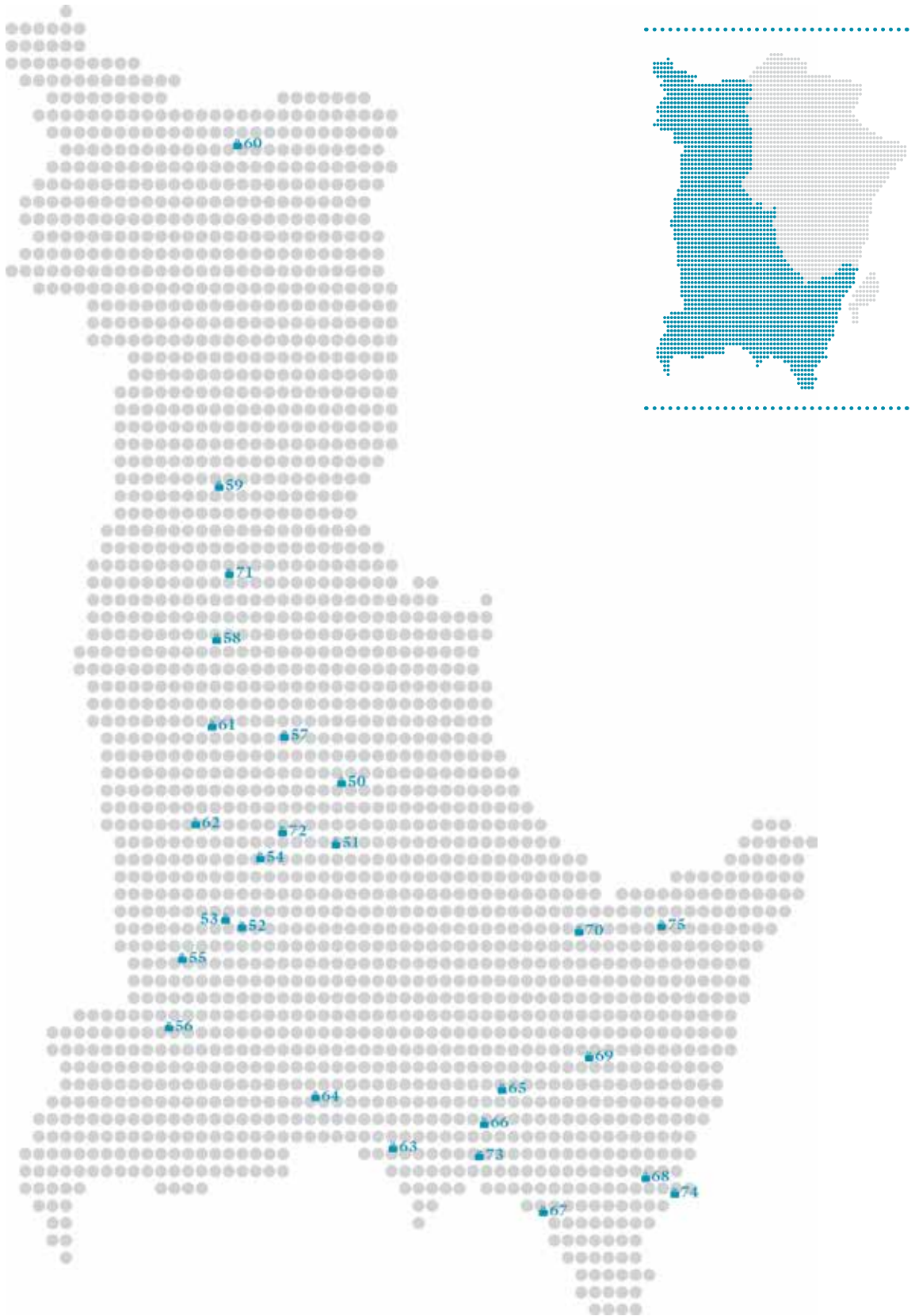
SPPK had already reserved a plot to build a *surau* for the Taman Pekaka residents. So when SPPK received the application, they endowed the land to the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP). MAIPP in turn gave permission to the Taman Pekaka Surau Construction Committee to start collecting donations for the purpose. The *surau* was built as 1998 approached and was completed in 2000. The total cost for the double storey *surau* was RM450,000 with contributions from the public and from individuals. Among those who donated generously was Wan Zaleha, from Pantai Jerejak, better known as Mak Haji Wan to the locals, who donated RM150,000 while members of her family donated RM120,000. The rest were contributions from the public.

The *surau* was subjected to two phases of expansion. The first phase took place in 2004 when the extension was done to the back of the building. The cost of RM80,000 was funded by the North East District Office. The second phase took place between 2008 and 2009 which involved the extension to the left of the *surau*, the place for performing ablution and the upper floor of the *surau*. The project was completed in early 2009.

The Al-Jami' Al-Shoghir Surau Taman Pekaka, was upgraded to the status of a mosque on 6 March 2009. The mosque was officially opened by the Penang governor Tun Dato' Seri Utama (Dr.) Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Abbas on 16 November 2011. Before the opening of both the *surau* and the mosque, Taman Pekaka residents were within the *kariah* of Sungai Nibong Kecil Mosque and the al-Malik Khalid Mosque of USM.² Today, the *kariah* Al-Jami' Al-Shoghir includes residents of Taman Pekaka, Kampung Sungai Dua, Taman Murai, Penang Senior Police Officers' Housing, Sungai Dua Clinic, Penang Education Department, Sekolah Kebangsaan Bukit Jambul and part of Taman Lip Sin. **MK**

¹ In the early stage when the area became a residential area, 70% of residents were Malays. However, some of the residents sold their houses to non-Malays leaving only 30% Malays in Taman Pekaka at the moment.

² Taman Pekaka residents are included in Masjid al-Malik Khalid *kariah* so that there will be enough congregation for Friday prayers at the mosque. This is because the Penang Fatwa Council decreed a fatwa that USM students are not to be counted because they are not considered as permanent residents there. See <http://www.e-fatwa.gov.my/pulau-pinang?page=5> accessed on 21 January 2013.



LIST OF MOSQUES IN SOUTH WEST DISTRICT

50. Mukim Kongsu Mosque, Balik Pulau
51. Pondok Upeh Jamek Mosque, Balik Pulau
52. Simpang Empat Jamek Mosque,
Kampung Paya Genting, Balik Pulau
53. Kampung Terang Mosque, Kampung Terang
54. Kampung Genting Jamek Mosque,
Kampung Genting
55. Kampung Perlis Qaryah Jamek Mosque,
Kampung Perlis
56. Raudah Mosque, Pulau Betong
57. An-Nur Mosque, Kampung Titi Teras
58. Permatang Pasir Jamek Mosque,
Permatang Pasir
59. Al-Ehsan Mosque, Sungai Pinang
60. Teluk Bahang Jamek Mosque, Teluk Bahang
61. Bagan Air Hitam Mosque, Jalan Baru,
Balik Pulau
62. Sungai Burong Mosque,
Kampung Sungai Burong
63. Ridwaniah Sungai Batu Mosque, Teluk Kumbar
64. Maqbul Mosque, Teluk Kumbar
65. Al-Idayah Mosque, Bayan Lepas
66. Kampung Seronok Qaryah Mosque,
Bayan Lepas
67. Al-Qahhar Mosque, Permatang Damar Laut
68. Batu Maung Jamek Mosque, Batu Maung
69. Sungai Tiram Jamek Mosque, Bayan Lepas
70. Al-Huda Mosque, Sungai Ara
71. Sungai Rusa Mosque, Sungai Rusa
72. Al-Mukhtar Mosque, South West District,
Balik Pulau
73. Kampung Binjai Jamek Mosque,
Kampung Binjai
74. Nurul Hidayah Mosque, Teluk Tempoyak,
Bayan Lepas
75. Umar Ibnu Al-Khattab Mosque, Bayan Baru

MUKIM KONGSI MOSQUE, Balik Pulau



The Kongsı Mosque is located about a kilometre from Balik Pulau town. The name 'Kongsı' was taken to commemorate a long house which was shared by many Chinese in the town which was not far away. According to the *imam* of Kampung Kongsı Mosque, Jamalludin bin Darus, the mosque was founded by Dato' Bahauddin, also known as Bahauddin Haji. He was a *Jawi Peranakan* who was appointed *penghulu* by the East India Company. This same information is also noted in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 44). Before that there was only a *surau* which was constructed by the Balik Pulau community. The Malay community were refugees from Kedah following the Siamese attack in 1821.¹ In the 1860s, Dato' Bahauddin took the initiative to expand the existing *surau* and build a mosque on his *wakaf* land for villagers in the Balik Pulau area. He also paid for the mosque construction. Haji Bahauddin was the son of Bapu Alauddin Meera Hussein Lebai, a trader from India who was asked by the Kedah Sultan to accompany Francis Light to proceed to Tanjung Penaga, Penang on 11 August 1786.² The mosque was completed in 1882.

In the early years, the Kongsı Mosque was a wooden structure before it was expanded in the 1920s. Funding came from local contributions.³ The renovations, however, still preserved the original wooden structure⁴ although the wooden walls were replaced by concrete one. In 1932, the mosque went through major repairs. In the 1960s, the government provided an allocation to rebuild the mosque. The new Kongsı Mosque was completed in 1966 and officially opened by Tun Abdul Razak bin Hussein in July the same year. The architecture of the rebuilt Kongsı Mosque was unique among mosques in Balik Pulau. It was influenced by South Asian and Moorish architecture which is different from other mosques in the Balik Pulau area. This can be seen in the present structure of the dome and windows. The influence of South Asian architecture was brought by the architect engaged for the project, Zainol Abidin, who was a *Jawi Peranakan* then living in George Town.⁵

The Kongsı Mosque was managed by the descendants of Dato' Bahauddin until the 1950s when a mosque committee was formed.⁶ After the 1950s his descendants refused to be chairman of the Kongsı Mosque. In the 1980s, the Kongsı Mosque was given funding by the federal government to expand the prayer space and for a hall. In 2009, the mosque undertook repair works to the damaged wooden parts and the concrete walls. Funding for the project came from the federal government through the Prime Minister's Department. MK

¹ Kedah was under Siam from 1821 till 1842.

² In recognition of the good deeds of Bapu Alauddin, his descendant was appointed *penghulu* of Balik Pulau. After Dato Bahauddin died in 1918, his son, Abdul Halim, became *penghulu* of Balik Pulau. One of Abdul Halim's sons, Mohamed Hussein was appointed Balik Pulau District Officer by the Resident Councillor, Meadows Frost around 1922. When Abdul Halim died, the responsibility of *penghulu* was inherited by Haji Suleiman bin Mohamed Taib, grandson of Dato' Bahauddin. However, Haji Suleiman held the post for just two years when the post was cancelled by the District Officer, Mohamed Hussein, who was his cousin. The cancellation was said to be due to the involvement of Haji Suleiman in a dispute concerning a new religious sect that was introduced to Balik Pulau by Haji Sauddin in 1925. Since then, the post of *penghulu* was no longer held by Bapu Alauddin's descendants.

³ According to Jamalludin Darus, the mosque was built by Dato' Bahauddin with cengal wood because during the renovation of the mosque in 1960s, he saw a pile of cengal wood which was not used.

⁴ The timber which was used for the main pillar is still in use today but had been strengthened with cement.

⁵ Tanjung is the name for George Town.

⁶ Dato' Bahauddin was buried in Balik Pulau. His grave is located behind the Balik Pulau Market.

PONDOK UPEH JAMEK MOSQUE, Balik Pulau



Kampung Pondok Upeh was one of the earliest settlements founded in Balik Pulau. The settlement was pioneered by refugees from Kedah and Pattani who left following the 1821 war between Siam and Kedah. The refugees chose Balik Pulau because geographically it is surrounded by hills where they could be protected from Siamese attack. Most of the refugees were Muslims hence many mosques or at the very least *suraus*, were built by these immigrants.

From Pondok Upeh the refugees moved to other areas in the Balik Pulau area. Areca nut palms that were found in the area were used to build temporary

homes. The trunks of the palm were used as pillars and walls while the roofs were made from flower-sheaths of the nut (literally, *'upih'* in Malay). Hence the name Kampung Upeh Pinang but now known as Kampung Pondok Upeh.

There are several versions of the origin of the Pondok Upeh Mosque. A respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (Mosque no. 45) claimed it was the oldest mosque in the area as it was founded around 1822. It was a small mosque built by the refugees on *wakaf*land given by religious teacher, Lebai Saad bin Ismail. At that time it was suitable as a place of worship in a new settlement. Lebai Saad became the first *imam* of the mosque. This mosque was built through collective efforts with donations from the community. The respondent also said the grave of Lebai Saad is located in the mosque premises. It was considered a shrine by the local community.

However, Haji Jaafar bin Saad, the former *bilal* of Kampung Pondok Upeh Mosque claimed that the mosque was built in 1914 through the collective efforts of the villagers. The wood used were found in the hills and forest around the village. This narration is similar to the information found in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* which stressed the site was *wakaf*land bequeathed by Lebai Saad who was a member of the *kariah*. The same informant claimed the Pondok Upeh Mosque was renovated at least three times but he did not remember the costs of these renovations. However, Haji Manaf Yusuf, the former chairman of Pondok Upeh Mosque gave a different story. He claims the Pondok Upeh Mosque was opened in 1890s at the same time as the opening of the village. In the early years, the mosque had four pillars, water tank for performing ablution, *mimbar* and *beduk*.¹ According to Haji Abdul Manaf, the mosque area was *wakaf*land bequeathed by four individuals: the mosque is sited on the *wakaf*land endowed by Lebai

Saad² while the cemetery and the Pondok Upeh Public Religious School is on *wakaf*land bequeathed by Hashim bin Yunus, Hariyah binti Hussain, and Jaafar bin Pandak.³

Based on the above versions it can be deduced that the founding of the Pondok Upeh Mosque was in 1821/1822. This is in line with the Siamese capture of Kedah. During the invasion many Malays were killed. The people of Kedah left the state because they did not want to be ruled by the Siamese infidels. Many migrated to Penang, Province Wellesley (Seberang Perai) and Kerian in early 1821. Their migration swelled the population of Penang and Province Wellesley in the late 1820s.

The Pondok Upeh Mosque was repaired several times from 1965. In 1965, the back of the mosque was expanded to accommodate the growing congregation. Major renovations took place in 1983 which cost \$70,000. The building was replaced with bricks which changed the mosque original structure. In 2003 the mosque was again subjected to renovation. A new ablution tank was built beside the mosque. The final renovation took place in 2009 when the brick walls which were built in 1965 were replaced with new ones. A new roof was added as well. Funding came from the government either through the District Office or the Penang Islamic Council. The mosque administration and expenses are paid by donations through the mosque fund. Although there is pipe water the mosque still uses water from the nearby hills for ablution. MK

¹ The *beduk* had been there since Pondok Upeh Mosque was opened.

² Haji Manaf strongly denies that it is the grave of Lebai Saad. According to Haji Manaf, the grave of Lebai Saad is still not found and a wall has been built around the grave not because it is considered a shrine but because it is too near the entrance of the mosque caused by the expansion of the mosque.

³ According to Haji Manaf, the land endowed by Hashim bin Yunus, Hariyah binti Hussain and Jaafar bin Pandak could not change its status to *wakaf* land because of several problems. So the status is still private land with the three names. They had *wakaf* their land orally which complicates the process of changing ownership.

SIMPANG EMPAT JAMEK MOSQUE,
Kampung Paya Genting, Balik Pulau



According to Haji Kamaludin bin Mohd Souad, the chairman of the Simpang Empat Jamek Mosque *kariah*, the mosque was built around 1886 through the collective efforts of the villagers. The mosque was also used by villagers of Kampung Permatang Tengah, Permatang Tepi, Kampung Bukit and Kampung Paya. In the early years, the mosque was called Kampung Paya Mosque. However, as the mosque was used by communities from other villages, the *kariah* committee decided to call it ‘Simpang Empat Mosque.’ The name ‘Simpang Empat’ was used because of its location near a ‘simpang empat’ (four junctions). ‘Empat’ means ‘four’.

Based on the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (Mosque no. 46), the

construction of the Simpang Empat Mosque was initiated by Lebai Mat, a religious teacher from Temelok, Perak who taught Islamic knowledge to the Kampung Paya villagers. He took much effort to prepare the site for the mosque.¹ In the early years, it was a wooden structure. However, in the 1920s, a bigger mosque was built not too far from the original one.² The new mosque was built on a piece of land which the villagers had bought and then changed to *wakaf* for the construction of the

¹ Kampung Paya was opened up in the 1880s by refugees from Southern Siam (now Thailand) fleeing Siamese imperialism in Southern Siam and the northern Malay states. The original site of the mosque was wakaf land endowed by Lebai Mat which is now part of the mosque frontage.

² The new mosque was built behind the old one. The site is now a prayer hall for ladies.





mosque. The mosque was built collectively by the villagers. While the new mosque was built the old one was still used for religious activities. The old mosque was demolished soon after the new one was completed. In 1940, the wooden structure of the original mosque was replaced with bricks at a cost of \$600 which was donated by the villagers. The brick mosque was completed in 1948.

According to Haji Fadzil Haji Ismail, the money for the construction came from the villagers' income from the rice fields. Haji Fadzil added that after the 1940s, the Simpang Empat Mosque was rebuilt three times. However, he could neither remember the date nor the cost of the first one. According to him, the mosque was rebuilt in the 1990s at a cost of nearly \$500. The last time it was rebuilt was in 2000 when he was the chairman of the mosque *kariah*. The construction was completed in 2003 at a cost of RM2 million. RM1.5 million of the cost came from the government and the rest from donations which amounted to RM500,000. While the mosque was being rebuilt all matters concerning religion shifted to a *surau* in Kampung Paya. When the District Mosque (see entry on Al-Mukhtar Mosque) was built not too far from the Simpang Empat Mosque in early 2003, all matters concerning religion including Friday prayers were undertaken at the new District Mosque until the Simpang Empat Mosque was completed.

However, after the completion of the Simpang Empat Mosque Friday prayers were still held at the Balik Pulau District Mosque because the latter would have insufficient congregation if Friday prayers were held at the Simpang Empat Mosque. So Friday prayers were never organized there. Recently, the management of the Simpang Empat Mosque, the District Office, Religious Office and the District Mosque held a meeting to ascertain the *kariah* boundary. With this solution both mosques could organize Friday prayers without having to worry about not having enough congregations. **MK**

KAMPUNG TERANG MOSQUE, Kampung Terang



When exactly the Kampung Terang Mosque was constructed was not known. According to the locals, Kampung Terang and Kampung Genting were originally a single village. It became separated because of religious conflict. At that time (in the 1920s) there were different interpretations of religious laws. Kampung Terang was headed by Haji Jaafar, the Balik Pulau *kadi* at the time, who decided that followers of Syed Muhammad Shafie must leave Kampung Terang. Syed Muhammad Shafie was from Kampung Seronok. As a result, the followers of Syed Muhammad Shafie opened a new village called Kampung Genting just next to Kampung Terang. The Kampung Genting community then built their own

mosque. The mosque's drum was divided into two; one was taken by Kampung Genting and the other remained in Kampung Terang. It is believed that Kampung Terang was opened towards the end of the 19th century or the early 20th century by To' Terang.¹ The village was named after him.

At the beginning of its settlement, Kampung Terang was thick jungle. There were many wild animals roaming in the village. To' Terang was inspired to create a gun named 'Senapang Pemasas' (literally; worried gun). The loud noise from the gun was meant to scare the wild animals from damaging crops. However, when he used the gun, the shot hit

him in the neck and he died instantly.

According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 47), the Kampung Terang Mosque was founded by To' Ahad bin Haji Bakar who was a rich farmer. He endowed a piece of *wakaf* land to build the mosque. In the early stage, it was only a wooden mosque which was gradually renovated. But according to Haji Abdul Rahman bin Salleh, it was the descendant of Che Amah whose house was near the mosque who endowed the mosque site. The *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* mentioned Che' Amah as a descendant of To' Ahad. In fact, Che Amah's son, Haji Hamid bin Haji Osman was a former imam of the Kampung Terang Mosque.² The mosque was believed to have been built through collective community effort. In the early years the Kampung Terang Mosque was built on Lot 72 with an area of 0.06 hectare. However, in 1996, the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) bought Lot 76 which was located beside the mosque to add to the mosque premises.

Interestingly, the original architecture of the Kampung Terang Mosque is still visible. The moon and star symbols are the identity of the mosque (moon and star carvings fill every corner of the mosque). The influence of Malay architecture is evident in the structure. Since its inception, it was renovated and upgraded a few times. In 1992 the hall was expanded to the right and left of the mosque at a cost of RM30,000. The Kampung Terang Mosque also went through repairs and maintenance from time to time including reroofing, renovating and repairing the *mibrab* and so forth. Funding came from the government and public contributions. MK



¹ There were villagers who claim To' Terang was of Siamese descent.

² Great great-grandfather of Che Amah was Tok Haji Seman who was imam of the Kampung Terang Mosque.

KAMPUNG GENTING JAMEK MOSQUE, Kampung Genting



In the 1880s, Kampung Genting was a thick jungle. The village was located on the left side of the Teluk Kumbar Road towards Balik Pulau town. On its right is the Pulau Betong Road. Kampung Genting was named so because of its location in the valley. Residents of Teluk Kumbar, Bayan Lepas and Sungai Batu used the area as path to walk through. The valley was narrow, or '*genting*' in Malay hence the name '*Genting*'. According to the respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 48) the settlement was opened by To' Udin bin Haji Idris who came from Batu Bara in Sumatera. He was the *penghulu* of the village. Around 1884 he built a small mosque on the present site of the mosque for the Muslim community.

In the early days, Kampung Genting was part of Kampung Terang. In the 1920s, the village was divided into two due to sectarian (*'mazhab'*) differences. A small group of villagers had followed the Syiah teaching which was brought by Syed Muhammad Shafie. After Syed Muhammad Shafie had passed away, his son, Syed Ghazali Ali continued his legacy.

Due to the differences, the villagers agreed to be separated. Those who were followers of Syed Muhammad Shafie built another mosque not far from the Kampung Terang Mosque.¹ It is located opposite the Kampung Terang Mosque. The drum was divided into two with each mosque given one half.



The Kampung Genting Mosque was originally a small wooden mosque. As to when it was built or who built the mosque remains unknown. The date of its establishment is not written on the signboard although some claim the early *surau*/mosque was built in 1884. Othman bin Yean, the *penghulu* of Kampung Genting claimed it had existed much later around 1912. The Kampung Genting Mosque was built on land belonging to a wealthy Malay lady in the village by the name of Sharifah or better known as Tok Pah. Tok Pah was believed to have own much land at that time. Tok Pah endowed the land as *wakaf*land as site for the Kampung Genting Mosque.

In the 1960s, the old mosque was demolished to give way to a new and bigger mosque so as to accommodate the growing congregation. The mosque was a collective effort of the villagers who built and funded it with their donations. At the time it was demolished, the premises were used for religious purposes.

In the 1960s, the Kampung Genting Mosque committee agreed to buy the land around the mosque which was then turned into *wakaf*land. In the 1980s, the Kampung Genting Mosque was again upgraded and renovated. The prayer hall and the water tank for performing ablution were also added. At that time a dome was placed on the roof. Funding came from the government and contributions from the villagers as well as their children who worked away from Kampung Genting.

The Kampung Genting Mosque has had minor repairs from time to time. In 2000, the dome was dismantled when repair was made to the roof. The architecture of the Kampung Genting Mosque is similar to the Kampung Seronok Mosque. **MK**

¹ There are two views on the origin of the Kampung Genting Mosque. One view claimed in the early stage, the mosque was just a *surau*. Later, it was expanded to be a mosque. However, according to Othman bin Yean, it was never a *surau* but a small mosque.

KAMPUNG PERLIS QARYAH JAMEK MOSQUE,¹ Kampung Perlis



There are many versions with regard to the emergence of Kampung Perlis. According to the Perlis Association of Writers,² Kampung Perlis Balik Pulau was opened in 1843 by Lebai Hitam with his ten followers who were fugitives after Perlis was attacked by Siam. They drifted to Balik Pulau by boat. In the early years, the Kampung Perlis area was a mangrove swamp mixed with *gelam* forest. Its landscape was transformed when Lebai Hitam pioneered a settlement and cultivated rice.

¹ In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island this mosque is known as Kampung Perlis Mosque.

² Utusan Zaman, 13 June 1993.

However, a respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 49) claimed Kampung Perlis was opened soon after Siam captured Kedah in 1821 by refugees from Perlis. Until 1842 Perlis was a part of the Kedah sultanate until it was created into a state by the Siamese after Bangkok returned the Kedah throne to the Kedah ruler. The original date of the mosque's emergence is hazy. It is estimated that it was built immediately after Siam attacked Kedah about 1822. The idea to build the mosque was mooted by Haji Abdullah, a religious teacher who had settled in Sungai Batu and taught religious knowledge in the village. The mosque was built through the collective efforts of the Kampung Perlis villagers. This was verified by Haji Ahmad Fuad bin Abdul Hamid who is a fifth generation descendant of Haji Abdullah. According to him, it was possible that Haji Abdullah had taught in the Kampung Perlis area because the village is not far from Sungai Batu. Haji Abdullah had also taught in the Bayan Lepas area. Haji Ahmad Fuad rejected the view that Haji Abdullah came from Perlis. Instead he claimed Haji Abdullah originally came from Indonesia.



The original Kampung Perlis Mosque was a wooden structure. In the early years, it was a small mosque with only four main pillars. Two more pillars were later added when the mosque was expanded. Even the minaret was constructed of wood. However, the wooden minaret was damaged and is no longer visible. In the beginning, a well was dug behind the mosque to provide water for ablution. As there is pipe water now the well is no longer used.

Based on a picture of the old mosque kept by Hamzah bin Mat Ali, the structure of the Kampung Perlis Mosque reflects the influence of Perlis as its roof looks like the roof of a Perlis traditional house. The mosque was built on *wakaf*land Lot 481. However, the identity of the person who bequeathed the *wakaf*land could not be traced. The *wakaf*land was entrusted to Che Din bin Hashim, the former chairman of the Kampung Perlis Mosque *kariah* in the 1950s.

The Kampung Perlis Mosque was renovated and repaired several times. According to a respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*, the mosque went through major repairs when To' Drin was the *nazir* after Haji Abdullah had passed away. Concrete was first used in 1933 and a minaret was constructed in 1945 with donations from the villagers. In the 1950s, the mosque was renovated for the first time. The back area of the mosque was expanded with a cost of \$12,000. In the 1960s, it was renovated for the second time. Bricks and cement were used to cover parts of the wall. Funding came from the government. The last time the Kampung Perlis Mosque was renovated took place in 2009 at a cost of RM80,000. The wooden walls were replaced with brick walls while the four original wooden main pillars were covered with cement to strengthen the mosque structure. The hall was also expanded to the right and left to accommodate the growing congregation, especially for *eid* prayers. MK

RAUDAH MOSQUE,¹ Pulau Betong



The Kampung Pulau Betong was opened in 1901 by Long Tambang who was a trader from Sumatera. He first landed in Kedah and from here, he and a few other people from Aceh came to Penang to open a settlement in Pulau Betong. Here he built a small *surau*. According to Abu Bakar Md. Nor who is the *imam* of the Pulau Betong Mosque, the person who built the local mosque was Haji Bakar bin Dahaman. Haji Abu Bakar was a pious man. He was a farmer and also *penghulu* of Pulau Betong. He endowed his land on Lot 359 (II), Mukim 1 as *wakaf* to be used as site for the Pulau Betong Mosque. This information is

¹ In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island this mosque is known as Pulau Betong Mosque.



similar to the information found in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 50). The mosque was built in 1909 through collective local efforts. The original mosque was a wooden structure with wood brought from Bukit Penara (behind Pulau Betong) while building materials like thatch for the roof and nails were contributed by the villagers.

When the mosque was completed, Haji Bakar entrusted Haji Ibrahim bin Latif, Abdullah bin Dahaman, Man bin Bakar and Suleiman bin Bakar to manage the mosque and his land. Revenue from the land was to be used to fund mosque administration and its expenses. In fact, when Haji Bakar was Pulau Betong's *penghulu*, the penalty for any villager who was found guilty of any misdemeanour was to contribute to the mosque like a small container of sand for mosque repair or kerosene to light the mosque lamps during *maghrib* and *isyak* prayers.

Both the mosque and Haji Bakar's land were later entrusted to Haji Muhammad while another two

lots located in front of the mosque were entrusted to Ramlah bin Bakar.² In 1959, the mosque committee applied for an allocation from the federal government to repair the mosque. In 1960, about \$200,000 was approved for mosque expansion. The upgraded mosque could accommodate 100 people.³ In the 1970s, the federal government approved funding to rebuild the Pulau Betong Mosque. The old mosque was demolished giving way to a new one. While waiting for its completion, all religious activities were moved to the Pulau Betong *surau*.

In 2006, the mosque was demolished to make way for a new one at a cost of RM1.5 million. The initial cost was estimated at RM1.2 million as provided by funds from the federal government. Technical problems in its construction raised the cost which was later made up by donations from the mosque *kariah*. MK

² The two lots were later endowed as wakaf by Ramlah's son, Ajis bin Salleh, to the Pulau Betong Mosque. A religious school was built on the site under the patronage of the mosque.

³ At that time, only a part of the mosque was concrete while the rest was made of wood.

AN-NUR MOSQUE,¹ Kampung Titi Teras



Official notes on the establishment of the An-Nur Mosque, Kampung Titi Teras are unavailable while the date of its establishment is not found on the signboard. Most of the villagers were refugees from southern Thailand who were running away from Siamese imperialism. In fact the Kampung Titi Teras cemetery was endowed as *wakaf* land by a man who was of Siamese origin and known as Tok Siam. Titi Teras was named after a small wooden bridge. This account matches the account by a respondent in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 51) although the latter claimed the village was founded by refugees from the Kedah-Siam war who had originally settled in Pondok Upeh. From here, one group pioneered the new settlement in Titi Teras. The first *penghulu* was Muhammad Sa'ad Benua.² He was of Malay-Siamese descent.

According to the *imam* of An-Nur Mosque, Haji Mohd Tuah, the person who built the mosque was never identified. It is possible the mosque was built in the 1830s through the collective efforts of the villagers. However, he could not deny claim that it could have been built by Tok Kari who was a pious man in Balik Pulau. This account matches the account in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*. The source mentioned that the mosque was built in 1830 and it was known as the Haji Kari *Kramat* Mosque. The villagers believed Haji Kari *kramat* was a shrine. The mosque was constructed of wood brought from the forest near the mosque. According to Jamaludin Haji Ahmad who is the chairman of the An-Nur Mosque *kariah*, *merbau* wood was used in the mosque construction.

According to Md. Noh bin Saad, the An-Nur Mosque was built on *wakaf* land which was endowed by a villager called Tok Haji Salleh. He endowed the land in front of his house as *wakaf* for the mosque. This claim is supported by Mokhtarudin

bin Yahaya, a member of the An-Nur Mosque Wakaf Land Bureau, who said Tok Haji Salleh's house was behind the mosque. The present parking area in front of the mosque was bought from Fatimah who is a descendant of Tok Haji Salleh. There used to be a well behind the mosque which never dries up. It was used for ablution.

The An-Nur Mosque was upgraded and renovated several times. The first took place in the 1950s when the wooden walls were replaced with half concrete walls while the other half was still wood. In 1989, the old wooden mosque was demolished. According to Md. Noh bin Saad, debris from the old mosque was buried on the site before the new mosque was built. According to Haji Mohd Tuah, initially the cost of construction was estimated at \$250,000. Funding came from the Friday prayer donations.

Due to intractable technical problems, a new contractor was hired for the construction. This caused the cost to increase to almost \$400,000 and the subsequent intervention of the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) before the project was continued.

In 2002, the An-Nur Mosque received government funding to repair its roof around the dome which was leaking caused by stagnant water. Since then, the mosque requires only maintenance and minor alterations which were carried out periodically. A Public Religious School, kindergarten (Tadika Umami) and library were also constructed on the mosque *wakaf* land. Part of the *wakaf* land was also rented to the village Development and Security Committee to build a kindergarten called 'Taska Tunas Islam'. MK

¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* this mosque is known as Titi Teras Mosque.

² The word 'Benua' referred to Muhammad Sa'ad who originated from northern Siam.

PERMATANG PASIR JAMEK MOSQUE, Permatang Pasir



The *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 52) mentioned that the Kampung Permatang Pasir Mosque was built in the 1860s by an early pioneer of the village, To' A'ak bin Lebai Ismail. However, we could not find any other information or the mosque signboard about its establishment. Interviews with respondents whose ancestors were the original settlers claimed the Kampung Permatang Pasir Mosque was built at the end of the 19th century. Kampung Permatang Pasir was believed to have been opened by a group from the Indonesian archipelago. They first landed in Jelutong before moving further inland to start a settlement in Permatang Pasir.

Permatang Pasir was named as such because the land surface was found to be undulating like waves and covered with white sand. The mosque was built by Saad bin Lebai Ismail, also known as To' A`ak, Haji Mustapha bin Haji Jamhuri, Haji Abdul Kari, Haji Salleh bin Hitam and others whose names were unknown. To' A`ak's name had appeared in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*.

The mosque was built with the villagers' collective efforts. According to Kasim bin Haji Hashim, the early mosque was partly wooden and partly concrete. *Merbau* wood from the Teluk Bahang area was used. These were brought by sea and landed at Bagan Air Hitam before they were transported by bullock carts to Kampung Permatang Pasir. Pieces of the *merbau* wood are still visible today in the main pillar. The floor and walls were built from solid rock found in the area. Hajah Fatimah binti Haji Salleh remembers her grandmother used to tell how she used to hammer the rock from the hills in Permatang Pasir for the mosque flooring. According to her, it was a collective effort of both male and female villagers. For the walls red clay and eggs were used to strengthen the structure. The mosque was small but the congregations came from Kampung Permatang Pasir and Sungai Rusa. A few years later the Sungai Rusa villagers decided to have their own mosque. As the combined congregation was small the Kampung Permatang Pasir Mosque and Sungai Rusa Mosque take turns to conduct Friday prayers.

Next to the Permatang Pasir Mosque is the 66 year old religious school. It is the earliest religious school in Balik Pulau. The school was opened after the Japanese Occupation in 1946, by a villager, Haji Yahya bin Haji Muhammad. Haji Yahya had studied

¹ A fee of 50 cents was charged to pay the salary of teachers and the school's administrative expenses.

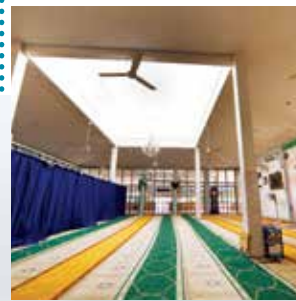
² Besides from the village, teachers from other villages were also recruited like Haji Saat Lazim who came from Kampung Titi Teras.



in Mecca for 12 years. Initially the school was located at the foothills before it was moved closer to the mosque. The school was built with donations from the villagers. It offered religious education to the Kampung Permatang Pasir villagers but also accepted students from other villages in the Balik Pulau area like Kampung Sungai Rusa and Kampung Jalan Baru. These students are charged a fee of 50 cents a month.¹ There used to be 21 huts built around the mosque which were occupied by students from outside Kampung Permatang Pasir. The majority of the teachers were local villagers like Haji Bakar, Haji Hassan Kadir and Haji Ishak.²

The mosque was renovated and upgraded several times. The first took place in 1947 when the hall was added. It was funded by public donations. In the 1960s, with funding from the mosque fund, the mosque was renovated again. The original mosque was never demolished but was periodically expanded. In 1996, the mosque received a RM100,000 allocation from the federal government to repair its roof and to add a dome. Since then, the mosque was renovated periodically by the *kariah*. In May 2012, the Permatang Pasir Mosque rebuilt the *mihrab* and replaced the *mimbar* with a new one. MK

AL-EHSAN MOSQUE,¹ Sungai Pinang



Based on the information given by a respondent, the Al-Ehsan Mosque in Sungai Pinang was built in 1889. It was located near a river called the Sungai Pinang. This account did not match the account found in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 53) which noted the mosque was built around 1908 or 1909 through the efforts of the old people in the village like Haji Hussein bin Lebai Md. Amin, Haji Salleh bin Haji Tahir and Haji Md. Nor bin Tengku Ahmad (died in 1917). The name Sungai Pinang came from the areca nut (*'pinang'*) tree found in abundance along the river (*'sungai'*) in the area. The old mosque was located in front of the present

¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 53) this mosque is known as Sungai Pinang Mosque.



The Quran 'keramat' kept at the Al Ehsan Mosque.

mosque. In 1975, the new site for the new mosque was moved to a site near the old site. Most of the early villagers were refugees from Kedah who ran away when Siam attacked the state in 1821. In fact, even the *wakaf* land for the mosque was endowed by a lady from Kedah who settled in Kampung Sungai Pinang. A small hut was built on a grave believed to be that of the lady who had endowed the land as *wakaf* for the mosque.

According to the *imam* of Al-Ehsan Mosque, Ahmad bin Haron, the mosque was built in the month of Ramadan in 1889 through the collective efforts of the villagers. His grandmother, Asiah binti Tahir, told him that during its construction, everyone in the village, male and female, would come out after break fast, to carry the rocks from the river in Sungai Pinang to be used for mosque flooring. For the wooden walls, wood were brought from the forest in Titi Kerawang while other materials, such as the thatch for the roof and nails were contributed by the villagers. The *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* mentioned Haji Hussin bin Lebai Md. Amin, Haji Salleh bin Haji Tahir and Haji Md. Nor bin Tengku Ahmad as

the key people in the construction of the mosque. They were led by Razali bin Abdullah. To equip the mosque, villagers started a drive. When a family member passed away, the family was required to bequeath the *mengkuang* mats to the mosque on behalf of the dead. The *tok siak* would fill up the water tank from the nearby river for ablution.

In 1932, Kampung Sungai Pinang and several other villages in Balik Pulau were severely affected by flood. However, the Al-Ehsan Mosque area was not affected although it is located near the Sungai Pinang. The mosque has also kept a Quran believed to be *kramat*. The Quran was found floating in the sea by two fishermen, Tok Long and his friend who were fishing. It was believed to be one hundred years old but still looks new. Even the letters are still clear. In the beginning, the Quran was kept at the *penghulu's* house but after his death, it was given to the mosque. Among the original articles that are still found at the mosque is the drum (*beduk*) to announce prayer times and when there was death in the village. In fact, the tradition is still practiced today but only for the maghrib and *isyak* prayers.

Since its establishment, the Al-Ehsan Mosque had been renovated several times. In 1947, the mosque was repaired with donations from the community. In 1975, it was demolished and subsequently moved to a new site. The cost of building the new mosque was \$45,000 which was funded by the federal government. It was officially opened by the Governor of Penang Tun Dato' Haji Sardon bin Haji Jubir on 29 July 1977. In the 1980s, the mosque was repaired again. This time glass doors were installed. The renovation was paid by donations from the community. In the 1990s, the hall was expanded to the left and right of the mosque which was funded by a federal allocation and public contributions to the sum of RM100,000. The Madrasah Raiyyah Islamiah was also built on the mosque *wakaf* land. It is still functioning today. **MK**

TELUK BAHANG JAMEK MOSQUE, Teluk Bahang



The official date of its establishment was unknown as it was not written on the mosque signboard. There are various versions of how it started based on the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 54). One of the respondents claimed the mosque was constructed in the early 20th century (about 1912 or 1913) by a religious teacher, Haji Abdullah Buyong, who was also a merchant. He lived in Acheen Street. Teluk Bahang residents had asked his help to build a mosque with the money they had collected. Haji Abdullah Buyong died in 1932 and was buried at the Perak Road cemetery.

Another version was similar to the above except that Haji Abdullah Buyong was said to have lived in Rangoon Road. The respondent claimed that the money for the mosque construction was provided by the descendants of Mohamed Ariff who was a wealthy man in Penang. The villagers had asked Haji Abdullah Buyong on how to spend the money they had collected. He advised them to build the mosque. This marked the beginning of the Teluk Bahang Mosque.

The most recent information was that the Teluk Bahang Mosque was constructed much earlier than

the date mentioned in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*. According to the mosque chairman, Tuan Haji Hassan bin Ismail, the Teluk Bahang Mosque is 156 years old. This means it was built in 1856. It was believed to have been built by an Indian-Muslim merchant whose identity was unknown. He had businesses around Penang but he lived in Teluk Bahang. He endowed about two hectares of land to build a mosque. The area was named Teluk Bahang because the condition was hot (*'bahang'*). When he died, he was buried behind the mosque in memory of his good deeds and as founder of the mosque.

Since its establishment nearly 156 years ago the mosque was renovated several times. The first renovation took place in 1969 costing \$100,000. Contributions came from villagers and the public. The mosque committee launched a house to house drive for contributions. Villagers were allowed to build houses on *wakaf* land but they had to contribute \$1,000 towards the mosque building fund. The old mosque was demolished to make way for a new and bigger one.

In the 1980s, the Teluk Bahang Mosque was renovated again. The prayer hall was expanded and a community hall was added to accommodate the growing congregation. The villagers and the public contributed towards the building fund just as they did in 1969. The third renovation was undertaken in 2004. It was a massive one. The administration of the mosque had to be moved to the multipurpose hall which is located in front of the mosque. The roof and dome were given new looks. Glass doors were installed. A new place for performing ablution was built. A dining hall was also added. For the first time the Teluk Bahang Mosque was given government allocation of RM950,000 for the purpose. In 2010, during the final renovation the ground on the edge of the mosque was leveled. This cost the federal government RM20,000. The renovations done to the mosque have completely wiped out the original mosque structure. Its modern architecture is similar to other mosques in Penang. At present there are 60 squatters on the two hectares of *wakaf* land on which the mosque stands. **MK**



BAGAN AIR HITAM MOSQUE, Jalan Baru, Balik Pulau



The Bagan Air Hitam Mosque which was built in the 1870s was a unique mosque in the Balik Pulau area. Compared to the other mosques in the district, the Bagan Air Hitam Mosque was the only mosque built with rock pegs in its pillars. All other mosques in Balik pulau used wooden pegs. According to Haji Sulaiman bin Hassan, the former chairman of the Bagan Air Hitam Mosque *kariah*, rock were collected from Tok Gambut near Sungai Pinang by the villagers with the help of Chinese labourers who were paid for the job. The rock, 14 pieces altogether and measuring 20 ft. x

1 ft. each, were hauled by buffalos and horses to the mosque site. The old mosque, 20 ft. long and 30 ft. wide, was built on *wakaf*land. The rock used to peg the pillars were bequeathed by an individual (name unknown) as indicated on the pegs. Apart from using rock as pegs for the pillars, red bricks and wood were also used in the mosque's construction.¹

¹ The red bricks were believed to have been obtained from Sungai Bagan Air Hitam. This was so as at that time the Bagan Air Hitam area was a centre for brick making which were exported overseas.

Since the 1870s, the mosque has not had any major alteration. It was renovated only once when the hall was expanded to its right, left and front. As the congregation increased in number, the Bagan Air Hitam Mosque committee decided to build a new and bigger mosque. The committee refused government allocation, instead chose to build the new mosque with public contributions. In 1994, the mosque committee reached a consensus to collect RM240 per family in the Bagan Air Hitam area as building fund for the mosque. Each family was given two years to do so. As the building fund was still insufficient the contribution was increased to RM440 per family which is payable within ten months.

By 1997 RM180,000 was collected. Although still insufficient the mosque committee decided to begin construction of the new mosque.² Donations continued to be collected. The village headman continued to encourage people to donate to the building fund and they were informed of the cost of building material. The new mosque measures 75ft.

x 75 ft. and modeled after the Akar Peluru Mosque of Alor Star. The mosque was completed on 15 January 2000.

On 25 June 2000, the mosque was officially opened by the first *imam* of the Bagan Air Hitam Mosque, Tuan Haji Saad bin Lazim.³ In the same year, the Bagan Air Itam Mosque received a state grant of RM250,000 through Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) to build a hall and a meeting room which are located beside the mosque. In front of the mosque is the Sekolah Agama Rakyat which is under the administration of the mosque but teachers are supplied by the MAIPP. MK

² A new building was built outside the mosque premises. When the new mosque was completed, the old mosque was demolished.

³ He was chosen for a number of reasons. The mosque was built without any government help. The mosque committee reached a consensus to choose a local to officially open the mosque. Tuan Haji Saad was chosen for his service as imam of the mosque for nearly 20 years. His excellent personal record was unblemished and he was given the recognition as 'Tokoh Maulidur Rasul' (Personality in conjunction with the anniversary of the birth of Messenger of Allah, Prophet Muhammad s.a.w), Penang.



SUNGAI BURONG MOSQUE, Kampung Sungai Burong





The village was called Kampung Sungai Burong (literally Bird River Village) because there were many birds in the area. The area had been in existence since the early 1900s. According to the *penghulu* of Kampung Sungai Rusa, Zulkiflee bin Ishak, the Sungai Burong Mosque was opened since the 1920s. Haji Kassim bin Tahir, the *penghulu* of Kampung Sungai Burong mooted the idea of building a mosque there. Haji Yusof bin Haji Awaluddin bequeathed a piece of land, the size of a soccer field as *wakaf* for the site of the mosque. The mosque was built with the cooperation of the villagers led by Haji Kassim who also sponsored the construction cost.

The old mosque was built with *cengal* timber which was sourced from the nearby forest. *Cengal* timber was used for the main pillar while the walls were made of planks. The roof was from *nipah* leaves. The old mosque was small just like a traditional Malay house. It was surrounded by a six foot verandah on its left and right. At that time the mosque could only accommodate 50 people.

The Sungai Burong Mosque underwent several phases of renovation and expansion. One took place in 1932, after the big flood that swept through Kampung Sungai Burong and several other villagers in the Balik Pulau area. The flood water damaged the Sungai Burong Mosque. The cost of repairs was paid for by contributions and donations from the villagers. In the 1960s, the Sungai Burong Mosque received an allocation from the government to rebuild the mosque. The old mosque was demolished. A small concrete dome was added to the mosque.¹ It was completed in 1961. It was officially opened by the Penang Chief *Kadi*, Tuan Haji Ahmad Maliki, on 18 June 1961.

In 2004 the mosque was expanded on its right and left side because of the growing congregation. Funding came from the government as well as donations from villagers. Located near the mosque was a religious school which was built in 1940s. It was built from trunks of the areca nut tree and *nipah* leaves for the roof by Umar Long for local children to acquire religious knowledge. It was upgraded to Sekolah Agama Rakyat. The school is now a double-storey concrete building with its sessions held in the afternoon. **MK**

¹ As mentioned above, in the early days of the Kampung Sungai Burong Mosque, its structure was like a traditional Malay house which does not have a dome.

RIDWANIAH SUNGAI BATU MOSQUE,¹ Teluk Kumbar



There are two versions on the founding of the Sungai Batu Mosque. In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, No. 57), it was noted that the mosque was founded by refugees from Perlis. They escaped to the Batu Uban area during the Kedah-Siam War in 1821. The refugee leader's name was To' Baa. Together with To' Kelompang who was a medicine man, and with the cooperation of the villagers, they built a mosque in the area. In 1914, the wooden mosque was repaired and expanded.

However, two respondents who were interviewed for this project claimed the mosque was built about 110 years ago around 1902 by Haji Ibrahim bin Mohd Salleh. Haji Ibrahim was a religious teacher from Kedah. He became the first *imam* of the mosque. Haji Ibrahim who went to Sungai Batu to teach

religious knowledge married a local girl who was a daughter of Haji Abdullah. Haji Abdullah was the pioneer in the second wave of settlement in Sungai Batu. Both respondents, Haji Ahmad Fuad and Haji Muhammad Salleh, agreed that the first settlement was pioneered by Tok Garuk who was a trader from Indonesia and not a refugee from Perlis. The mosque was built on land which was bequeathed by Osman Kaya. According to Haji Muhammad Salleh, the original mosque was constructed with timber from Pulau Kendi, an island off Teluk Kumbar. The mosque had a horizontal roof and was built on four pillars, indicating the influence of Indonesian architecture.

In 1967, a new mosque was built not too far from the old one. It was built to replace the dilapidated mosque which was too small to accommodate the growing congregation. The new mosque was built on *wakaf* land which the public had endowed.² Religious activities were still held at the old mosque even after the new mosque was completed. For about two years Friday prayers were conducted on a rotation basis between the new and old mosque.

Then, for 25 years the old mosque was neglected³ before the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) ordered it to be wrecked.⁴

In the 1970s, the federal government granted an allocation to renovate the new mosque. The structure of the old wooden mosque was replaced



¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*, this mosque is known as Sungai Batu Mosque.

² According to Haji Ahmad Fuad, the site for the mosque was bought with donations from the villagers. The money was collected door-to-door. The land was then bequeathed to the mosque by the villagers. They paid \$10 each time they went out to sea. Collection was done twice a month which meant that each family paid \$20 per month.

³ For 25 years, the old mosque was used for Friday prayers, maghrib and isyak prayer. In fact, senior citizens used it as a place to acquire religious knowledge.

⁴ Although it had been wrecked, the original architecture can still be seen today.

with concrete. When the renovation was completed, it was officially opened by Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak bin Hussein. In 2002, the Sungai Batu Mosque received an allocation of RM1.8 million to rebuild the mosque. The new mosque was completed in 2004 and was officially opened in 2006 by the Governor of Penang, Tun Dato' Seri Utama (Dr.) Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Abbas. In the 1980s, Haji Ismail Haji Ibrahim, the *imam* at the time, named the mosque Ridwaniah, meaning '*keredaaan Allah*' (Allah's acceptance). He was inspired to name the Sungai Batu Mosque as such after he had stopped to pray at the Ridwaniyah Mosque in Kuala Kangsar.⁵

The Sungai Batu Mosque is unique because 99 per cent of its committee members are descendants of Haji Abdullah. Haji Abdullah was a pious theologian and taught religious knowledge in the Bayan Lepas area. There are two versions about Haji Abdullah's origin. According to Haji Ahmad Fuad, based on his grandfather's story, Haji Abdullah came from Java but his grand uncle told him that Haji Abdullah came from Rawa, Sumatera. Haji Abdullah's grave which is located near the old mosque was regarded as kramat.⁶ Villagers claimed they could still hear him chanting praises to Allah as though coming from

the direction of the grave every Thursday night. There were strange happenings at the mosque after *imam* Haji Ismail died. The *siak* who was on duty claimed when he went to open the mosque early one morning for *subuh* prayers he saw a glimpse of the late Haji Ismail praying at his usual place in the mosque. This continued for 40 days after his death.

In front of the Sungai Batu Mosque is a religious school which was built on the same site as the mosque. In its early days the school taught only *fardu ain* (religious duty) to the village children. The school was founded by Haji Ismail. In the beginning, learning was carried out in the mosque because the building which now houses the religious school was rented to the Religious Office for almost 20 years for Maahad Al Mashoor Al Islami religious secondary school. It was only in 2011 that the religious school was handed over to the mosque.⁷ MK

⁵ The name Ridwaniah was also chosen in commemoration of Haji Ismail's first son, Ridwan.

⁶ There were outsiders who came to worship and went into a trance on the cemetery. Once, a small hut was built on the cemetery. It was decorated with yellow cloth. However, the mosque kariah demolished the hut to nip in the bud apostasy and unIslamic practices.

⁷ In January 2011, the Maahad Al Mashoor Al Islami moved to a new complex in Balik Pulau.



MAQBUL MOSQUE,¹ Teluk Kumbar



The Maqbul Mosque was opened in 1938 especially for the people in the new settlement in Teluk Kumbar. The name ‘Teluk Kumbar’ was given by Indonesians who had resided there. They found a lot of *kumbar* fruit trees in the area and decided to name the place after this tree.

¹ In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island this mosque is known as Al Makbul Mubarak Mosque Teluk Kumbar.

Prior to this, there was a mosque which was built on *wakaf* land endowed by several people. One of them was Haji Nor² who was ostensibly a wealthy man. It was a wooden mosque situated at the foot of a hill not far from the present mosque. The mosque was left neglected when villagers moved in to a new area in the vicinity of the present mosque.

According to Haji Suhaimi bin Mat Isa, the front part of the mosque was from the original mosque which was built in 1938. The 1938 concrete mosque was built by artisans from Java who were led by Wak Kang. Some villagers claim the mosque was opened by Haji Zubir who was the first *imam* of the mosque. Haji Zubir was a religious teacher from Bayan Lepas. In his younger days he had studied in Mecca. When he came home to Penang, he married Haji Rashid's daughter from Teluk Kumbar. At that time, Haji Rashid was a committee member of the mosque.

Haji Suhaimi who is Haji Zubir's grandson refuted the story that his grandfather was responsible for

the opening of the Maqbul Mosque as stated in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 58). In reality the mosque was already in existence before Haji Zubir married Haji Rashid's daughter. Haji Zubir only moved to Teluk Kumbar after his marriage and became the *imam* of the mosque.

Since 1938, the Maqbul Mosque was never renovated until the 1970s when the government gave funding to expand the hall. Between the 1970s and 1980s, the mosque had expanded in stages. The cost of \$5,000 was provided by the mosque fund which was collected from the *kariah*. The mosque expanded on its left and right. Before the provision of clean water by the government, the mosque depended on the nearby stream for its water supply to perform *wuduk* (ablution).³ At present the federal government has allocated RM5 million to build a new mosque. Work on the new mosque began at the end of 2012 and the entire construction will be completed within two years. MK

² There is a claim that the site of the present mosque/the second mosque belonged to and was endowed by To' Haji Mat Akid.

³ This river is known as the Mosque River among the locals. Its water flows from the hills located near the mosque.



AL-IDAYAH MOSQUE,¹ Bayan Lepas



The Al-Idayah Bayan Lepas Mosque is located in the south west of Penang near Bayan Lepas town. A group of travellers who reached the area saw a *bayan* bird (parakeet). While trying to catch it the bird managed to free (*lepas*) itself. Hence, the place was called ‘Bayan Lepas’ and the name remains to this day. The mosque was built on *wakaf*land endowed by a Chinese Muslim by the name of Haji Hassan bin Haji Salleh. Haji Hassan was an itinerant traveller from Kwantung, China. Haji Hassan is the great-great-grandfather of Haji Murshid bin Haji Mansor who is the present deputy chairman of the Bayan Lepas Mosque.

There are different versions of how the mosque

started. According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 59), the mosque was already in existence before the 20th century. This is in line with the account of J.D. Vaughan (Penang Superintendent of Police 1851-1856). Vaughan had interviewed a descendant of Haji Mohammad Salleh or Haji Brunei² who said that Haji Brunei had worked for Francis Light clearing the forest to build a harbour. When the harbour was completed Haji Brunei requested permission from Light to

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¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* this mosque is known as *Bayan Lepas Mosque*.

² *Haji Brunei* who was from Brunei stopped for a while at Kuala Perai on his way home from Mecca.



open up another area. Together with Nakhoda Kechil, he opened up the Jelutong area. After 11 years in Penang (between 1797 and 1798), Haji Brunei together with Long Syed moved to the Bayan Lepas area. The area was subsequently turned into a settlement and orchards. Haji Brunei died in 1837.³ This information suggests that Bayan Lepas had already been opened up since the end of the 18th century. It is possible that a *surau* or mosque was built during this period for the convenience of the community. After Haji Brunei many more people from Brunei came to settle in Bayan Lepas including the family of a Brunei dignitary in the mid-19th century.

In 1900, the wooden mosque was demolished and a concrete one took its place. In 1912, it was expanded. After the Japanese Occupation ended it was again expanded and repaired. There is another version to the founding of the mosque. According to Subky Haji Arof, the Bayan Lepas Mosque was opened in the 1920s.⁴ It was built with timber brought by boat from Pulau Langkawi. The boats landed at Batu Maung before the timber was taken to Bayan Lepas. A religious teacher by the name of Haji Noh bin Ahmad, J.P. and his friends, Haji

Nasir, Haji Hassan and Haji Ambia were responsible for bringing in the timber. They also contributed to the fund together with other locals to build the Bayan Lepas Mosque.

Since the establishment of the Bayan Lepas Mosque it had been renovated several times. One such renovation took place in 1928 when the wooden structure was replaced by a concrete mosque. Red bricks were used in its construction. In the 1970s, the mosque was expanded to accommodate the growing congregation especially for Friday prayers. In 2004, the mosque was renovated again at a cost of almost RM1 million. The federal government provided RM700,000 while the family of the Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi contributed RM200,000.⁵

The Bayan Lepas Mosque is now known as the Al-Idayah Bayan Lepas Mosque. In spite of going through several renovations, the mosque still maintains its original structure. This is evident in the front windows which are the original windows. The main pillar is still the original wooden pillar but has been reinforced with cement. The drum (*beduk*) and the pulpit are still the originals which have been used ever since the mosque came into existence. The architecture of the Al-Idayah Bayan Lepas Mosque is both traditional and contemporary.

The cost of the mosque management and administration are borne by donations collected from the congregation especially during Friday prayers. MK

³ Mahani Musa, "Sejarah Awal: Pulau Pinang Sebelum 1786," in Muhammad Haji Salleh (ed.), *Sejarah Awal Pulau Pinang (Pulau Pinang; Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia, 2008)*, pp. 36-37.

⁴ According to Haji Subky, the mosque was built in the 1920s. This is based on the Bayan Lepas Cemetery Records in his possession which state the Bayan Lepas Islamic Cemetery was opened in the 1920s. The mosque had been in existence even before the Bayan Lepas market and the Bayan Lepas police station which were built in 1930.

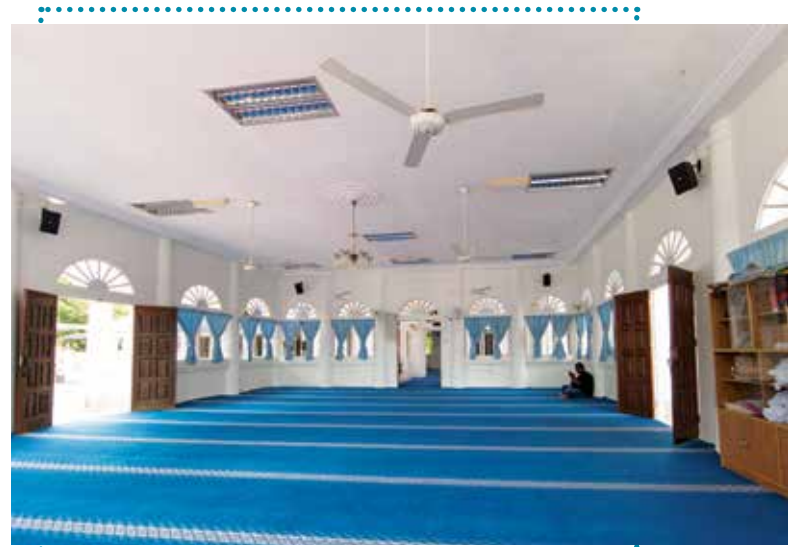
⁵ Tun Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi has connections with the Bayan Lepas Mosque. He was born in Bayan Lepas. When he was young he used to frequent the mosque which was not too far from his house.

KAMPUNG SERONOK QARYAH MOSQUE, Bayan Lepas



Information on the founding of the Kampung Seronok Mosque is not written on its signboard. Based on interviews with several villagers, it can be deduced that the Kampung Seronok Mosque was built by an immigrant from Madura, Syed Muhammad Shafie bin Syed Sailuddin Jamaluddin. He came to Penang in the mid-19th century. He was once a student of Abdul Ghani who was a well-known religious teacher in Penang at that time. Abdul Ghani was influential and he was responsible for helping apostate Muslims who had joined secret societies to revert to Islam. Abdul Ghani expelled Syed Muhammad Shafie from his congregation because he went against the prohibition of reading several forbidden books with deviated teachings that were nonsensical and difficult to comprehend. The original name of Kampung Seronok was ‘Kampung Haji Muhammad’, in memory of Syed Muhammad Shafie who had opened the area in the 1860s. He died in 1913.

Syed Muhammad Shafie was also known as ‘Haji Muhammad Matahari’ because part of his teachings and practice were connected with the sun (*‘matahari’*). He claimed that he could control the sun’s movement.¹ He also claimed to be able to heal the sick. In 1946, the English engineer, D.W. Graham, changed the name of the kampong to Kampung Seronok because he found the lifestyle of the villagers delightful especially when there was a feast and during *hari raya*. In fact, he found it exhilarating the way villagers welcomed the British back to Malaya after the Second World War ended. Syed Muhammad Shafie had built the Kampung Seronok Mosque in 1870 as the place for locals to learn and teach Islamic knowledge. There was a claim that he had to build the mosque because he was not allowed to use the Bayan Lepas Mosque which was already in existence due to the different schools of thought. The villagers said Syed Muhammad Shafie was a Shia. The original mosque is still sturdy, standing next to the new mosque.



However, the former was never utilised by the locals.

The second mosque was built next to the old mosque in the 1930s as the congregation increased. The construction of the mosque was funded with donations from the villagers. However, the actual cost of the construction was unknown. In the 1980s, the mosque was expanded again. The cost was about \$700,000 which was contributed by local residents. According to Abu Bakar bin Ali, for the mosque expansion each village resident was required to contribute a month’s income within two years to the mosque fund. Collection was carried out every month.

The architecture of the Kampung Seronok Mosque manifest the influence of the Indonesian archipelago as seen in the wall carvings and wooden parts of the mosque. The Islamic symbol of the moon and the star was not fixed on the top of the dome; instead a bell was placed there. **MK**

¹For further details see Azmah Abdul Manaf, “Sejarah dan Perkembangan Pengaruh Ajaran Taslim yang diasaskan di Pulau Pinang 1870-1960,” MA thesis, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 1992, pp. 70-78. There were claims that he could dictate the sun to follow his order; if he told the sun to set, it would set; if he ordered the sun to rise, it would rise; if he wanted it to stop, it would stop.

AL-QAHHAR MOSQUE,¹ Permatang Damar Laut Permatang Damar Laut



According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 61), the earlier Permatang Damar Laut Mosque was founded by Haji Abdullah. Haji Abdullah was from Pulau Langkawi. He left for Penang after the Siamese conquered Kedah in 1821. According to the book's respondent, there was a possibility that the Permatang Damar Laut Mosque was built just after the war started.

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¹ In the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* this mosque is known as Permatang Damar Laut Mosque.

However, according to Haji Ahmad Suhaimi bin Ismail, Kampung Permatang Damar Laut was opened in 1860. The name 'Permatang Damar Laut' was given because the undulating terrain was like a 'permatang' (raised narrow ridge between rice fields). 'Damar laut' was a type of plant that grew wildly in the area. The Permatang Damar Laut Mosque was built with the cooperation of the villagers. The original structure was wooden while the floor was from solid rock. Every family contributed a block of rock from the hills for the mosque flooring.

During a visit to the mosque in the 1960s, Tunku Abdul Rahman gave an allocation for its renovation. In 1975, the original mosque had to be demolished to make way for the construction of the Bayan Lepas Airport. The mosque was relocated to a new site which is the present one. Relics of the old mosque can still be seen within the Bayan Lepas Airport area. The new mosque was constructed at a cost of \$100,000.² Timber from the old mosque was reused in the new mosque. Since then the mosque had gone through three more renovations. The first renovation was done in the 1980s when the prayer hall was expanded to accommodate the growing congregation which cost the federal government \$250,000. With the renovation the mosque's wooden structure had disappeared completely.

A verandah was added to the mosque in the second renovation. According to the chairman of Al-Qahhar Mosque, Ahmad Subri bin Isa, the cost was RM80,000 which came from the South West District Office. In the third renovation a pool for performing ablution was built at a cost of RM13,000 which was paid for by donations from the *kariah*.

The new Permatang Damar Laut Mosque comes without a dome. According to Haji Ahmad Suhaimi, the original mosque had a dome but it



The Pak Ta'in Quran.

was dismantled in the 1980s because it was leaking during a downpour which caused discomfort to the congregants. A building next to the mosque houses a meeting room and a cyber centre for youths. It was built with the cooperation of Indonesian artisans who live and work in Permatang Damar Laut.³ The mosque also keeps a 329 year old Quran. It was hand written in Mecca by Haji Abdul Rahman Rawa who was originally from Sumatera. He studied Islamic knowledge in Mecca. Another account claims that the Quran was found floating in the sea by a local resident, Pak Ta'in. When he found it, it was dry. The Quran is known as the Pak Ta'in Quran. MK

² The original plan was to build a double storey mosque but the plan was aborted due to several technical problems.

³ This building was built for free by the Indonesian workers who were also from the congregation. The mosque only had to pay for building materials. Work was done cooperatively on Saturdays. It took three Saturdays to complete the building.

BATU MAUNG JAMEK MOSQUE, Batu Maung



Batu Maung was named after *bau maung* (unpleasant smell) permeating the flat stony area where the Chinese used to spread and dry shrimps to make shrimp paste. The Batu Maung Mosque was built on three *wakaf* land which were bequeathed by three different owners. The plot on which the mosque was built was endowed by Haji Ismail while

the premises in front and to the left of the mosque were endowed by Pak Mahmud. Pak Mahmud's grave is located in front of the mosque. The back premise was endowed by the villagers. Originally, this part belonged to Pandak who had mortgaged the land to a chettiar but failed to redeem it. With the help of the Kampung Batu Maung villagers,



Pandak was able to redeem the plot. It was then given to the villagers who in turn endowed the land to the mosque to be used as a cemetery.

According to Abdul Ajis bin Hashim, the former Batu Maung Mosque *siak*, Haji Ismail bin Jemudi was responsible for building the mosque. He was an Islamic scholar from Selangor who had settled down in Batu Maung. This information is similar to the one found in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 62). There was still no mosque when he arrived at Batu Maung. In 1860, Haji Ismail led the Batu Maung folks to build a mosque. When he passed away Haji Ismail was buried next to the mosque. Since then the plot has become his family burial ground.¹

The Batu Maung Mosque was made of wood. It was renovated in phases beginning in the 1930s with concrete steps. In the 1950s, concrete walls replaced the wooden walls.² In the 1960s, the Batu Maung Mosque was demolished to give way for a new mosque.³ Upon completion, it was officially opened by Haji Ahmad Maliki, *Yang dipertua*³(president) of the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP).

In 1980, the Batu Maung Mosque was expanded to cater for the growing congregation. The cost of the expansion was \$7,000.⁴ In 1986, the area located at the back of the mosque was reclaimed to enlarge the mosque area. The cost of reclamation was \$20,000.⁵ In 2002, a new building costing RM200,000 was built on the reclaimed land. The building was used as a religious school for the Batu Maung children.⁶ In 2010, the state government gave an allocation to build a religious school on *wakaf*land located behind the mosque.

The Batu Maung Mosque still maintains its original pulpit, the main pillar (*tiang seri*) and the *beduk*. Presently, the Batu Maung Mosque is collecting funds to build a new mosque. MK

¹ However, Haji Ismail's grave cannot be detected because many of his family members are buried there.

² The bottom half of the wall was concrete while the top half was wooden. The cost was funded by villagers.

³ After its demolition, building material from the old mosque was reused to build the new mosque.

⁴ The concrete water tank for performing ablution had to be filled with earth so that the horizontal hall could be built on it.

⁵ In the initial stage, there was a suggestion to construct a building on the reclaimed land. But the idea was shelved due to several technical problems. During the process of reclamation, a Chinese towkay from the quarry in Teluk Tempoyak contributed nine lorry load of granite.

⁶ Teachers' salaries are paid by the Batu Maung Mosque.

SUNGAI TIRAM JAMEK MOSQUE, Bayan Lepas



The Sungai Tiram Mosque is located on the Bayan Lepas Highway, next to the Bayan Lepas Airport. The area was named ‘Sungai Tiram’ (literally Oyster River) because oysters were found in the area. Before independence, Sungai Tiram was part of Brown Estate.¹ The area used to be a coconut plantation and the population was made up of Malays and Indians who were labourers for Brown Estate. Information on the early history of the mosque is not available as it was not documented. Those from the older generation from the locality are oblivious to its history.

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¹ See entry on the Sungai Gelugor Mosque.

According to Haji Rawi bin Mat, one of the oldest resident of Sungai Tiram, the mosque was already in existence as early as the 1930s. He was still a small boy then. The mosque was built on *wakaf* land endowed by several people. One of them was Arifin who was the former headman (*penghulu*) of Sungai Tiram. At the time, the mosque was a wooden structure with a tiled roof. Just before the outbreak of the Second World War it was demolished and replaced with a brick mosque.

After independence, the federal government allocated \$25,000 to rebuild the mosque. The opening of the mosque was officiated by the Penang governor Tun Dato' Haji Sardon bin Haji Jubir. A few years later, through the efforts of Dato' Ismail Hashim, the mosque was granted another allocation of \$25,000 for its expansion to accommodate the growing congregation especially for Friday prayers. The rapid development in the Bayan Lepas area had resulted in the increase in population in the area.

In the 1980s, the mosque was expanded again. A horizontal hall was extended on the right side of the mosque. A few years after that the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) sponsored the cost of another extension. The concrete tank for performing ablution was demolished to make way for another hall. In 2011, the Sungai Ara Tunas Muda Cooperative endowed a piece of land to the left of the mosque to build a car park for the congregation especially for Friday prayers. There are also covered parking space for motorcycles. The cost was funded by the Sungai Ara Tunas Muda Cooperative. [MK](#)



AL-HUDA MOSQUE,¹ Sungai Ara



The Al-Huda Sungai Ara Mosque had moved three times to different sites. There is no official documentation on the date of the opening of the original mosque. Only the dates relating to the second and third mosques are available. According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 64), in the beginning a small wooden mosque was built in a rubber plantation in Bukit Gedung by Tok Min Tuah who was the owner of the plantation. The mosque was built for his workers and the local community who worked as labourers in Brown Estate. Sungai Ara and Bukit Gedung areas were part of Brown Estate which planted rubber.²

The rapid development in Sungai Ara resulted in the increase of its population. As the old mosque was located in a rubber plantation, it was considered quite far from where people had their residence. In 1908 the Sungai Ara residents built a new mosque near a river, the Ara river (Sungai Ara). Although there was a new mosque the old mosque in Bukit Gedung was still used.³ Over time, the dilapidated mosque collapsed. The site is now a residential area while the grave of Tok Min Tuah located in front of the mosque can still be seen today.⁴

During the Japanese Occupation (1942-1945) the new mosque was destroyed. However, the mosque was rebuilt with donations from the community. Building materials from the destroyed mosque were reused.⁵ It was built in a cooperative manner. As inscribed on the *mihrab* of the old mosque it was completed in 1954. The mosque was expanded in stages as the congregation expanded.

In the 1980s, a new mosque was built beside the second mosque as the congregation kept increasing. The idea to build a new mosque was mooted by Dato' Ismail Hashim. The site for the new mosque was bought through the efforts of the Sungai Ara Tunas Muda Cooperative under the leadership of Dato' Ismail Hashim before it was endowed to the mosque. The cost for the construction was estimated at \$1 million which was contributed by the federal government, public donations and the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP).

Although there is a new mosque, the old mosque is still in use because old timers in the area still go there to pray. The horizontal hall on the right side of the mosque is now a kindergarten. The old *beduk* (drum) from the mosque which Tok Min Tuah built is still there but cannot be used. MK

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¹ In the Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island this mosque is known as Sungai Ara Mosque.

² David Brown was the largest estate owner in Penang since the early 19th century. See entry on the Sungai Gelugor Mosque.

³ Friday prayers are still conducted at the old mosque in Bukit Gedung on a rotation basis with the new mosque.

⁴ The grave of Tok Min Tuah is located in Bukit Gedung. A small hut was built in the area which was looked after by his descendants. At present the grave is neglected with no one looking after it.

⁵ Among the original materials used were four main pillars which can still be seen today.

SUNGAI RUSA MOSQUE, Sungai Rusa



Historical information on the establishment of the Sungai Rusa Mosque was not listed on the mosque signboard. Kampung Sungai Rusa is located next to Kampung Permatang Pasir. In the early days, the villagers in Kampung Sungai Rusa came to the Permatang Pasir Mosque to pray because there was no mosque in their area. The Sungai Rusa Mosque was built a few years after the Permatang Pasir Mosque was opened.

Kampung Sungai Rusa was opened up by people from Siam and the Indonesian Archipelago, such as Aceh and Sumatera, who migrated to Balik Pulau. Based on the account given by Maulana bin Haji Salleh, the Kampung Sungai Rusa Mosque was built cooperatively by people from Siam and Aceh. Tok Konam led the Siamese while Tok Keling led the Achinese community.

The original mosque was built on *wakaf* land while wood were brought from the Pantai Emas area.¹ When the mosque was completed, it took turns with the Kampung Permatang Pasir Mosque to conduct Friday prayers to ensure that the stipulated number of people in the congregation was met. The mosque was not renovated in a big way until the 1960s

when the villagers agreed to build a new mosque to replace the dilapidated structure. The new mosque was built on the original site with donations from villagers. According to Haji Hassan bin Saad, the donations were collected from house to house for three consecutive years.² As most of the Sungai Rusa villagers were paddy farmers, their contributions were in the form of bags of paddy which were sold to get cash. Building materials for the mosque was then bought with the cash.

The new mosque was built with the help of the entire community. It has a minaret which cost \$17,000. It was the first time that the Sungai Rusa Mosque had a dome. The cost of building the new mosque was unknown. The design of the mosque was modern while its dome looked similar to the dome of the National Mosque. In the 1970s, the mosque was expanded to accommodate the growing congregation.

MK

¹ Pantai Emas is not far from Pantai Aceh.

² According to Haji Hassan, in the beginning, the mosque committee went from house to house to find out how much each household could contribute. Collection was done in three consecutive years before work on the new mosque started.



AL-MUKHTAR MOSQUE, South West District, Balik Pulau



The Al-Mukhtar South West District Mosque, Balik Pulau is a new mosque. It was built in 2003 with a federal government allocation. The cost was estimated at RM12 million which covered the land purchase and the construction of the mosque. The idea of building a District Mosque was mooted by Datuk Seri Haji Hilmi Yahaya who was the Deputy Chief Minister of Penang at that time. The site of the mosque originally belonged to Loh Boon Siew who was a well-known businessman in Penang. The federal government bought the site and endowed it to build the Al-Mukhtar Mosque. It is located not too far from the Simpang Empat Mosque of Kampung Paya. When the Al-Mukhtar Mosque was completed in 2003, the congregation at the Simpang Empat Mosque used it for their activities while their mosque was being improved.

At the end of 2003, when the Simpang Empat Mosque, Kampung Paya was completed, the community returned to this mosque. This created a problem for the Al-Mukhtar Mosque because the stipulated number of congregation for Friday prayers could not be met. Hence, the religious department decided that Friday prayers would be conducted only at the Al-Mukhtar Mosque. At the time when the interviews were conducted for the present study, the Al-Mukhtar Mosque and the Simpang Empat Mosque were discussing how best to divide the *kariah* so that Friday prayers could be held at both mosques. This was because the Al-Mukhtar Mosque did not have a *kariah*. The committee members of the mosque were government staff in Balik Pulau, headed by the District Officer who was the chairman of the mosque. Several residents in the nearby residential area were also on the mosque committee.

Since its inception, the Al-Mukhtar Mosque which is now almost nine years old, has been improved only a few times. Small improvements have been made using government aid and contributions from individuals. The first improvement work was done in 2011. A store and kitchen were built on the premises costing the federal government RM65,000. The second improvement work was done in early 2012. With funding of RM70,000 from the *Jemaah Tabligh*, the verandah was turned into a hall which could accommodate 130 to 140 people at one time. Behind the hall were four rooms known as *bilik musafir* (literally traveller's room) which are for guests to spend the night. The Al-Mukhtar Mosque also owns a shop which is rented out. The shop is located not too far from the mosque. Proceeds from the rental are channelled into the *kariah* fund. MK

KAMPUNG BINJAI JAMEK MOSQUE, Kampung Binjai





Kampung Binjai was named after the *'binjai'* (a type of fruit) tree that was found in the area. The mosque was built in 1926 as noted on the mosque signboard. However, several people who were interviewed claim that the mosque was built nearly 100 years ago. According to Sharif @ Ahmad bin Ismail, third *imam* of the Kampung Binjai Mosque, Haji Sulaiman who came from Sumatera was the founder of the mosque. Haji Sulaiman had bought a piece of land for the mosque. The Kampung Binjai Mosque is still sturdy at its original site. The mosque was built on two plots of *wakaf* land. The mosque stands on the plot which was endowed by Haji Sulaiman. The plots in front and behind the mosque were endowed by the villagers by pooling their contributions.

Originally, the villagers bought the two plots to turn them into a cemetery for Kampung Binjai folks but the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) did not approve the idea because the ground was rocky and unsuitable as burial ground. Instead, they were endowed to the mosque for its expansion. According to one mosque official, the mosque architecture is similar to that of the Batu Uban Mosque which indicates the influence of Indonesian architecture.

Today, the original structure had disappeared entirely after the mosque was renovated several times. According to the deputy chairman of the Kampung Binjai Mosque, renovation works were done in stages with allocations from the federal and state governments. In the early days there was a well in front of the mosque with its water source located in the ground under the *mihrab*. The well has never dried up and its water was believed to have healing powers. At the time mosque management had dug wells both for men and women to bathe on the premises. MK

NURUL HIDAYAH MOSQUE, Teluk Tempoyak, Bayan Lepas





Teluk Tempoyak is a fishing village which is located near Batu Maung on Penang's South West coast. The name 'Teluk Tempoyak' was derived from a large tree. Construction of the Teluk Tempoyak Mosque was completed in 1961. Originally, it was a small *surau* which was used by villagers for prayers. The person who was responsible for constructing the *surau* is unknown. The *surau* was built on land that belonged to Haji Mohammad.¹ In 1961, the federal government gave an allocation of \$10,000 to upgrade it to a mosque.² Work on the mosque was undertaken several times to improve it. In the 1970s, a hall was added beside a prayer hall for women.

In the 1990s, a concrete tank was built for the convenience of the congregant to perform ablution. In 2007, the Penang Islamic Council (MAIPP) bought a piece of land from the family of Haji Samad bin Muhammad to turn it into *wakaf* land for the mosque. In 2011, the store in front of the mosque was moved to the back and a meeting room was added. These renovations cost RM1,000. This mosque is not only used by the congregation from the Kampung Teluk Tempoyak area but also factory workers from the nearby industrial area especially for Friday prayers. MK

¹ Haji Mohammad gave written permission to build a surau on his land.

² During the construction of the mosque, the site was still under the name of Haji Samad bin Mohammad, son of Haji Mohammad. He gave permission to build the mosque on the land.

UMAR IBNU AL-KHATTAB MOSQUE, Bayan Baru



Bayan Baru was once a part of Bayan Lepas. Due to rapid developments and industrializations, there was an increase in population that led to new settlement in the area. Bayan Baru was opened in the 1970s after several factories began their operations in the area in the 1960s. The factories attracted people to move into Bayan Baru and Bayan Baru was finally separated from Bayan Lepas. Until the 1990s, Bayan Baru did not have a mosque. Muslims in Bayan Baru used a *surau*¹ (located behind the site of the present Umar Ibnu al-Khattab Mosque) for their religious activities including Friday prayers.

According to the *imam* of Umar Ibnu al-Khattab Mosque, Haji Ramli bin Haji Ahmad, in the 1990s, the Bayan Baru surau committee, headed by Cikgu Razali bin Jamal (treasurer of the *surau*), took the initiative to build a mosque for the Bayan Baru Muslim community. The mosque cost RM4 million and it was completed in 1994. It was named the Umar Ibnu al-Khattab Mosque.² The site of the mosque was originally a swamp which belonged to the Tunas Muda Cooperative. The reclaimed swamp was given to the Mosque Construction Committee to build a mosque. Funding for the construction came from the federal government, public contributions³ and the private sector. The Penang Shipbuilding Corporation (PSC) sponsored the cost of labour in building the mosque.

Although it was completed in 1994, the Umar Ibnu al-Khattab Mosque was officially opened in 2002 by the governor of Penang, Tun Dato' Seri Utama (Dr.) Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Abbas. This is noted on the plaque on the mosque wall. The architecture of the Umar Ibnu al-Khattab Mosque is contemporary. In the following 18 years, the mosque was expanded in 2002, 2003, and 2005. The expansions were made to the left and right of the mosque. The expansion on the left cost RM75,000 with RM50,000 donated by an individual and RM25,000 was from the mosque fund.⁴ In 2011 the Malaysian Wakaf Foundation (Yayasan Wakaf Malaysia) through its programme called 'My Wakaf' built five shop lots on the mosque premises which are managed by the mosque.⁵

The Umar Ibnu al-Khattab Mosque conducts religious activities like Quran classes for ladies, *fardu ain* and *tajwid* classes as well as *maghrib* and *subuh* lectures. The mosque also organizes a thriving *Ramadan* bazaar at its parking lot every Ramadan.⁶ MK

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¹ At that time, the surau was temporarily used by the Bayan Baru community.

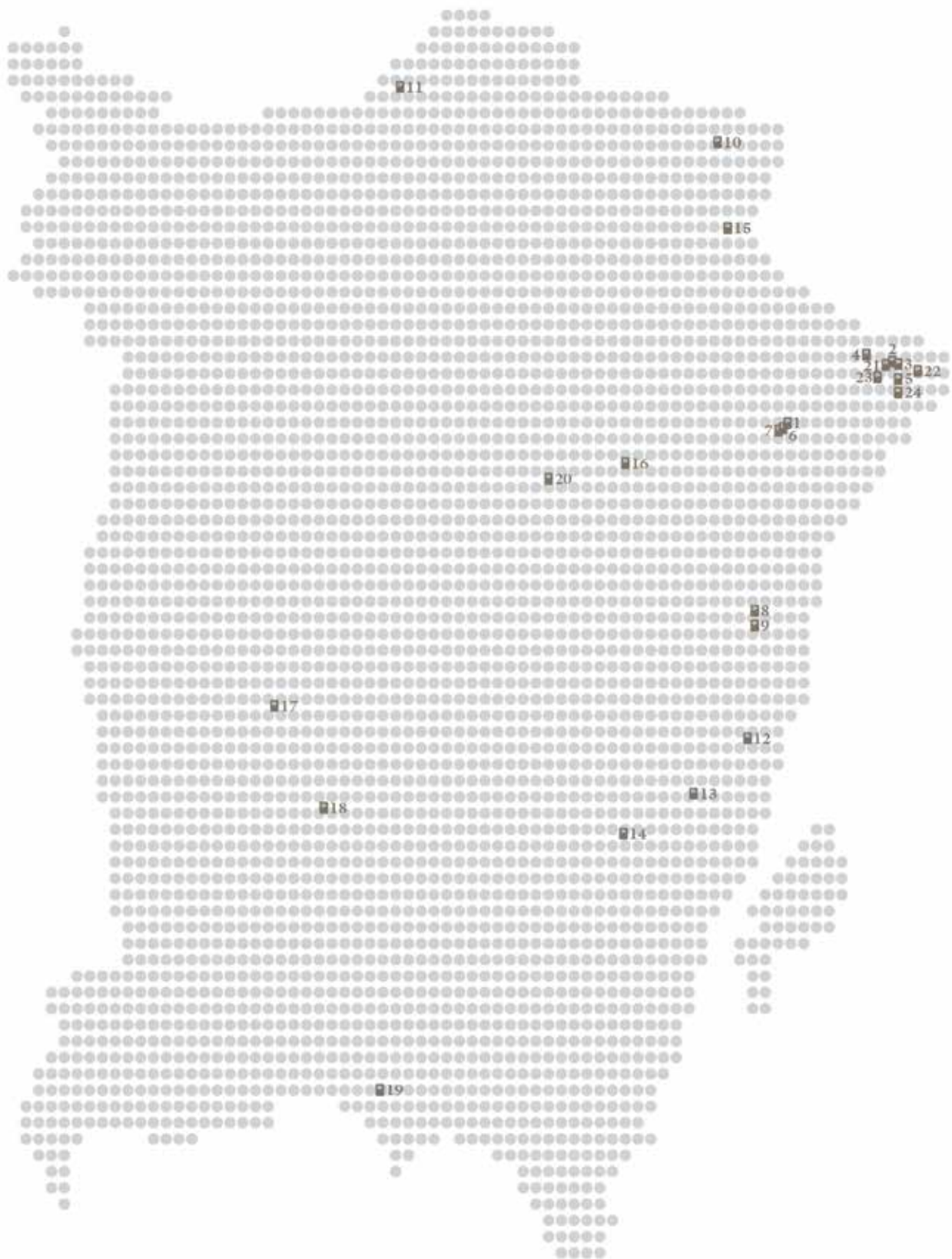
² The name Umar Ibnu al-Khattab was taken in memory of the second Caliph, Sayidina Umar Al-Khattab.

³ Donations were collected through the surau fund while the Mosque Construction Committee went door to door asking for donations with the permission from the Penang 'Fatwa' Committee. See, <http://www.e-fatwa.gov.my/fatwa-negeri/permohonan-mendapat-keizinan-mengubahsuai-bangunan-masjidmemungut-derma-0>, accessed on 12 January 2013.

⁴ According to Haji Ramli, the cost of operation and administration of the mosque is RM17,000 a month which is helped by the collection of mosque fund.

⁵ This shop is rented at RM 300 a month. The rental goes to the mosque fund for the administration of the mosque.

⁶ The tradition of holding a Ramadan Bazaar has been practiced since 20 years ago. See Zaki Salleh, *Kecoh dua Bazar setempat dalam, Kosmo*: http://www.kosmo.com.my/kosmo/content.asp?y=2011&dt=0801&pub=Kosmo&sec=Negara&pg=ne_06.htm accessed on 16 January 2013.



LIST OF KRAMATS

1. Kramat Tuah, Perak Road
2. Kramat Shaik Ismail, Chulia Street
3. Kramat Nagore, Chulia Street
4. Kramat Dato Koyah, Transfer Road
5. Tomb of Mak Amah, Kampung Kolam
6. Kramat Tuan Guru, Perak Road
7. Kramat Panjang, Perak Road
8. Kramat Wali, Gelugor
9. Kramat Serban Hijau, Gelugor
10. Kramat Haji Hassan, Tanjung Tokong
11. Kramat Haji Hassan, Batu Feringgi
12. Kramat Nakhoda Intan
(Haji Mohammad Salleh), Batu Uban
13. Kramat Haji Mohamed Amin,
Sungai Nibong Besar
14. Kramat Tok Pakeh, Sungai Nibong Besar
15. Kramat Pak Haji Ahmad, Bagan Jermal
16. Kramat Sheikh Omar Basheer, Ayer Itam
17. Kramat Haji Kari, Titi Teras, Balik Pulau
18. Kramat Lebai Saad, Pondok Upeh, Balik Pulau
19. Kramat To' Haji Abdullah, Sungai Batu
20. Kramat Tujuh Beradik, Paya Terubung
21. Kramat Alimsah Walley, Chulia Street
22. Kramat Maulana Miskin Wali Allah, Jalan Masjid
23. Kramat Sheikh Mustafa Wali,
Campbell Street Market
24. Tomb of Tunku Sayyid Hussain Al-Aidid,
Acheen Street

KRAMAT TUAH, Perak Road

According to oral accounts, Kramat Tuah was the grave of an Indian-Muslim who had lived in the area presently known as Dato Kramat. One source claimed Dato Kramat was named because of the man's holy nature. In fact, the name Tuah was considered the same as Dato Kramat. There is another claim that Tuah was a descendant of the Kedah ruler. He had gone into solitude for religious purposes before Francis Light landed in Penang. This was in line with western accounts that a small group of people were already in the Dato Kramat area before Francis Light landed on 11 August 1786. The discovery of graves and an early settlement in the area strengthened the account.

Tuah was also known with a nickname 'Rantai Tuah' or *Sangli Peerappa* in Tamil. He was given the nickname because he wore a chain around his leg wherever he went to redeem his sins. Tuah who was by then considered a kramat was buried at the Perak Road cemetery before 1715. At that time, the cemetery was a swampy area located near the estuary of the Pinang river. In the 1740s, Tuah's family members and his followers were asked by the Sultan of Kedah, Sultan Muhammad Jiwa Zainal Adilin Mu'adzam Shah II to leave Penang. When Light took over Penang in 1786, a descendant of Tuah, Maharaja Setia returned to Penang to reclaim his ancestral inheritance.

Tuah's grave is located in a square shaped brick building measuring approximately 40 ft. by 30 ft. His grave is sited near the entrance of the building and close by are the graves of his family members. The original tombstone is still there but without the date of his death. A tombstone of a family member states

the date of his death as 1312 Hijri [1895 A.D.]. According to Abdul Salam, the former caretaker of the Perak Road cemetery, the brick building was constructed more than 250 years ago. Originally, around the top part of the building was fretted work made of wood for ventilation. This part was later sealed with cement because thieves had been using it as conduit to steal cleaning tools valued in the thousands of dollars. The zinc roof of the building had been changed several times, the most recent in early 2012. Tuah's grave is without any decorations and left in its original state. In the 1970s, a copper money chest for visitor donations was placed in front of the grave but it was later stolen. Since then no money chest had been placed there.

According to Abdul Salam and Abdul Razak prior to the 1970s the money chest was opened once a year during the fasting month. The money collected was used to sponsor free food for children and the poor who lived around the Perak Road cemetery. It also helped to pay for small religious activities like Yasin recitals and the like. There were still people within the Penang Malay community who pay their homage at the grave imploring for a safe trip for the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Before the 1970s, the grave also received many visitors who made vows although such practices have stopped at present while the general public seems to be oblivious of the grave. **MK**

KRAMAT SHAIK ISMAIL, Chulia Street

In the *Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board, Penang* (1932, page 18), the Kramat Shaik Ismail was described as ‘Masjid Shaik Ismail’. The kramat is located in Chulia Street, on a piece of land Grant No. 45 (1801) which became Lot 160 and 163 Town Sub-division 21 with an area of 2,384 sq. ft. The kramat was to commemorate Shaik Ismail, a pious man who had passed away in India.

According to the entry in the *Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board* there was no house or building on that land other than the Kramat Shaik Ismail. The kramat was looked after/owned by Aboobakar Sidik who was not related to Shaik Ismail.

The Kramat Shaik Ismail no longer exists today. In fact, many old timers in Penang are not aware of the kramat. According to Dato’ S.A. Sheik Abdullah Bukhari and Tuan Haji Idris, they have not heard from their fathers, grandfathers or the public about the Kramat Shaik Ismail which was said to be in Chulia Street. They are of the opinion that this kramat had disappeared a long time ago because neither the Indian-Muslim community nor his descendants had looked after it. Although Kramat Shaik Ismail is listed in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island*, the kramat is no longer found in Chulia Street. Both respondents said there are only two kramats which still exist in the locality, the Kramat Nagore and Kramat Alimsah Walley. Near Chulia Street, there are two other kramats; the Kramat Maulana Miskin Wali Allah in Jalan Masjid and the kramat Shaik Mubarak in Cintra Street. According to Tuan Haji Idris, Shaik Mubarak’s grave is presently neglected by the Indian-Muslim community or his inheritor. Most likely it, too, will disappear one day. MK

KRAMAT NAGORE, Chulia Street



Penang, Chulia Street.

Chapter 1st
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The Kramat Nagore (between Chulia Street and King Street) came into existence to commemorate wali Syed Shahul Hamid. The kramat was categorized as a mosque in the Mohammedan and Hindu Endowments Board but it was actually a kramat because it did not have a *mibrab* to indicate the direction of the *kiblat*. Kramat Nagore was included under the management of the Mohammedan and Hindu Endowments Board after 1905.

Syed Shahul Hamid was born in Manickapur near Oud, India in 910 Hijrah (1201 A.D). As a pious man, he had travelled to acquire religious knowledge when he was younger. He was said to possess unusual abilities like making a dumb person speak, a lame person walk and curing various ailments. On his way to Mecca, he was met by a rich man, Kazi Hazerat Noordin Sahib in Lahore who asked him to pray for his wife to be pregnant. After the meeting, Noordin's wife gave birth to a son but the son was surrendered to the *wali* as promised. The wali, his adopted son and followers later visited Ceylon and several districts in south India to spread Islam. Finally, he stopped in Tanjore and while here he cured the ruler's illness. He was rewarded with a piece of land in Nagore. He died on a Friday when he was 68 years old and was buried at Durga Nagore. Today, he is still considered a *wali* kramat.

The anniversary of the *wali* was celebrated annually for 14 days beginning with the first day of the Muslim month of Jamadilakhir. The celebration was known as *Grand Kandoori*¹ and attracted followers from Arabia, Ceylon, Burma, the Straits Settlements and other parts of the world. Today it is still being celebrated every year in Penang. Before the Second World War, the wali's followers would make a vow at the kramat as it was done in Nagore. The *Kandoori* would begin with a flag raising (crescent and star symbols) ceremony followed by a procession around Ah Quee Road, Pitt Street, Carnavon Street, Maxwell Road, Burmah Road, Transfer Road, Argyll Road and Chulia Street before its ends at the kramat. The procession was usually sponsored by individuals, businessmen and the Indian-Muslim association. The celebration continues with the recital of *Fatihah*, *berzanji* and the followers singing praises for the *wali*. During the celebration sweets, dates, bananas and ghee rice were shared out with visitors and participants. On the final day, the flag was carried in a procession around George Town. During the Japanese Occupation,

the ceremony could not be held on a grand scale because of wartime hardship. Today, the flag is no longer carried around but the flag raising ceremony, *berzanji* and the feast are still part of the celebration on the first day.

The Kramat Nagore is a square and believed to have been built in the early 1800s. According to the 1904 Report of the Land Commisioner, the kramat was built by Nakarsah Jemadar to commemorate Kramat Nagore. For several years the kramat was under the care of the family of Vapoo Dorai Saiboo who claimed to be descendants of the *wali*. The kramat had no trustee but its monthly revenue of \$28 from eight shops was used to manage the kramat.² The kramat was always locked. It is only opened by the caretaker to allow the public to visit it. Anyone who intends to make a vow or request had to inform the caretaker before hand. In front of the kramat is a long table with various paraphenalia like water, incense burner, several sticks of sandalwood and Quran for the performance of religious rites. There were two *pahar* placed near the entrance of the Kramat Nagore on which are several candles used in religious rites. The committee members of Kramat Nagore consists of Haji Shaik Fareed Maricar, Haji Hameed Maricar and children of the late Haji S.M.I. Razak. While working on this project, nearly 10 people had come to meet the caretaker of the kramat, Mohamed bin Jalaluddin, to make a vow at the Kramat Nagore. Two of them were Malays while the rest were Indian-Muslims. MK

¹Kandoori means feast.

² Revenue from rentals were for the year 1932.

KRAMAT DATO KOYAH, Transfer Road

Karamat at Transfer Road, Penang



Dato Koyah or Kramat Fakir (real name Sheik Mustapa Idris) came from the Malabar Coast of south India. He was a mendicant who travelled from place to place. He was said to have the ability to cure the sick. According to Muhammad Ibrahim Munsyi who had visited Penang in 1872, an incident happened one day which forced Dato Koyah to leave his village. He was accused of killing someone although he was innocent. He discovered the corpse of someone who

was killed. He prepared the corpse for burial and when he was about to dispose it, the government caught and prosecuted him. The judge exiled him to Penang although there was no evidence to connect him to the crime. He landed in Penang in the early 19th century and he was a state prisoner for seven years. By the time he was freed, Dato Koyah was old and did not wish to return to his original country. In Penang, Dato Koyah stayed under a tree where his grave is located today.

Dato Koyah worked as labourer to support himself. There were several stories about him having magical powers, among them, able to feed many people with just a small pot of porridge. He could also produce sweets from his mouth which he gave to children. Dato Koyah was said to have vanished from a locked jail. This happened when he and his friends were trying to protest other friends who were beaten by high ranking British officers. He was subsequently jailed. When he was jailed he used his magical powers to complete a road which the British were constructing. Finally, Dato Koyah was able to win the British. Dato Koyah was said to have died in 1840. His followers buried him under the tree where he lived which was located in Transfer Road. In his honour, the British named the road Jalan Dato Koyah. According to Muhammad Ibrahim Munsyi, after he was buried, people could hear voices (chanting) coming from his grave. The tombstone on his grave had moved while his grave had become longer. This led the community to believe he was a kramat. Various rites were held for 10 days during the anniversary of his death along with the *maulud* (Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. birthday) ceremony and *hadrah* (a kind of song or ode using small drums) and the customary feast. Believers would also scatter jasmynes on his grave. On the tenth night *tabut*¹ (*'kuda pusing'* or merry go round) was carried around while invoking the name of the kramat. According to Muhammad Ibrahim Munsyi, most people who were involved in such rites were from the 'Keling' (Indian-Muslim) community although there were Malays who had joined in the celebration because they were convinced the kramat could fulfill their wishes.

Dato Koyah's grave is located right in the centre of a square tomb measuring 25 ft. by 25 ft. A green piece of cloth covers the grave and the tombstones; over it there is a black gold embroidered canopy with verses from the Quran. Around the tomb are eight pillars with two of them in each corner. Each pillar is about 7 ft. high and the distance of each pillar to each corner is about 5 ft.

According to an informant,² the original tomb was repaired about five years ago and given a coat of paint. The cost of the repairs was paid by the Social Welfare Department. Various paraphernalia for religious rites were placed at the foot of the tomb like incense burner, two *pahars* placed at the left and right corner of the tomb and sandalwood place in a container. The copper *pahars* are filled with candles. At the head of the tomb is an earthenware jar filled with water and aluminum cups while at the other end is a money box for donations.

Dato Koyah's grave is opened to the public every Thursday evening after *isyak* prayers. Visitors come to visit the grave to recite the Yasin. Those who need to ask for favours from the Kramat Dato Koyah would come every Thursday. The grave was known as Dato Koyah. An inheritor of Dato Koyah dreamt that the name must be changed to his real name of Asaiyudu Sheik Mustapa Idris Wali. However, the Penang community is more familiar with Makam Dato Koyah. In the 1960s and 1970s on the fifth day of the month of Safar the caretaker of the grave would distribute rice and free food to the poor for ten days. At that time, the public would come to visit Makam Dato Koyah to get its blessings. The practice has been continued ever since.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the grave of Dato Koyah was very popular with the *Jawi Peranakan* community because most parents would bring their newly married children to visit the grave to ask for his blessings for a lasting marriage and be blessed with many children. Today, most Jawi Peranakan community no longer do this as it is against the Islamic faith. MK

¹ The *tabut* was carried around during procession by Shiites to commemorate the death of Hassan and Hussain on the 10th of Muharram during the battle of Karbala.

² Interview with Khadar Bee on 5 April 2012.

TOMB OF MAK AMAH, Kampung Kolam

There are two different versions on the Makam Mak Amah. The *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Kramat no. 5) and *Historical Personalities of Penang* claimed the grave belonged to Wan Maheran who was a daughter of a Kedah prince. In both versions Wan Maheran was described as beautiful which made a Siamese prince wishing to marry her. However because of their religious difference, they could not marry. When Siam attacked Kedah in 1821, Wan Maheran escaped to Penang and settled in Kampung Kolam where she died and was buried here. When Kapitan Keling met her father in Kuala Muda and found out that the lady was in Penang, he followed and married her. The marriage was only in name and was never consummated as Wan Maheran was a pious lady. She was called 'Mak Amah' (Mother) because of her piety. Mak Amah then asked Kapitan Keling to find her a pious husband. Kapitan Keling granted her request and divorced her so that she could marry the pious man whose name was not known.

Another version claimed Mak Amah or her real name Fatimah Nachiar was Kapitan Keling's first wife. Kapitan Keling called her by her pet name '*Patheni*.' In Tamil '*Patheni*' means 'lady who is faithful to her husband's command'. Patheni Amma was the sister of Muhamed Salleh, a trader and descendant of 'Merican Murugi', who had settled in Sungai Nibong. It was here that Patheni Amma met the Kapitan Keling.

As there were more settlers in Sungai Nibong, a court was formed to manage the social aspect of the area. Muhamed Salleh was appointed judge and was known as Tok Hakim Salleh. He adhered to Islamic teachings. Muhamed Salleh was a close friend of Kapitan Keling. He was attracted to Kapitan Keling's behaviour and he had intended his sister Fatimah Nachiar to marry him.¹ After Kapitan Keling married Fatimah Nachiar, he took his wife together with a *jariah* (slave girl) and a *khadam* (servant)² to Tanjung Puthukarei.³ At that time, they lived in one of the prominent houses located within the Kapitan Keling Mosque.

According to oral accounts,⁴ although Patheni Amma was married to the Kapitan Keling she was still a virgin. The marriage was never consummated until her death. Patheni Amma is considered as a *zubud*⁵ lady. She devoted her life to the

service of Allah s.w.t. All day long Patheni Amma would spend her time under a yellow mosquito net in her room. She did not like meat but loved eating rice with vegetables which she grew herself in her garden.

As Patheni Amma preferred a life of piety, she asked her husband to take another wife who was her niece, Che Aminah whom Kapitan Keling subsequently married.⁶

According to oral accounts,⁷ Patheni Amma died in 1830 but none in her family knew the exact month she passed away. Every meal that was served to her was seemingly consumed by someone else. Her slave girl would feel anxious and nervous whenever she sniffed the aroma of incense coming from Patheni Amma's mosquito net. She would open the mosquito net and would find a body in prostrate position praying to Allah s.w.t. Patheni Amma's body would be damp although she had died possibly for nearly a month.

During Patheni Amma's burial in Kampung Kolam, there was a light shower that smelt of rose water. At that time, the Indian-Muslim community in Kampung Kolam believed that her grave was a kramat. The grave is located on the Kapitan Keling *wakaf* land. Today, the site of the Kapitan Keling grave had been renovated by the Penang Islamic Religious Affairs Department (JAIPP) and is a popular tourist attraction.

According to oral accounts,⁸ one day Patheni Amma appeared in a dream to remind Haji Abdul Kader Merican who was Udman/Othman Shah's son and brother to Ahmad Othman Merican to dig a pond in front of the entrance to the grave area. Haji Abdul Kader Merican immediately dug a pond at the prescribed place. Since then, the vicinity was known as Kampung Kolam. Haji Abdul Kader Merican had hired a caretaker to look after Mak Amah's grave and its vicinity. In the 1960s and 1970s, the pond became the source of water for the Kampung Kolam community. In the 1960s, there were cases of people falling into the pond. As a result the state government ordered it to be closed. When Mak Amah was still alive, her bath water was said to be able to cure various skin ailments. Once, a Chinese lady was afflicted with smelly feet due to scabies which disappeared when she cleaned them with Mak Amah's bath water. **MK**

¹ Datin Ragayah Eusoff, *The Merican Clan: A Story of Courage and Destiny*, Singapore: Times Books International, 1997, pp. 39-40.

² According to Kamus Dewan, *jariah* means 'slave-girl' and 'khadam' means 'servant'. See Kamus Dewan, (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1989), pp. 479 and 623.

³ Tanjung Puthukarie is located in the vicinity of Kampung Kolam which is a part of Chulia Street and Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling. According to Tamil etymology, 'Puthu' means 'new' and 'karei' means 'having a beach, shore'. This was the beginning of Kapitan Keling's family heritage with Cauder Moheeddin Merican @ Kader Mydin Merican making a gift to his descendants in Penang by pioneering a new settlement near the beach.

⁴ According to Azmi Iskandar Merican this story was told by his aunt, Hajjah Maimunah Nachiar binti Haji Abdul Kader Merican. Interview on 24 March 2012.

⁵ According to Kamus Dewan 'zuhud/jahid' or 'zahid' means ascetic. See Kamus Dewan (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1989), pp.

⁶ Datin Ragayah Eusoff, *The Merican Clan*, p. 40.

⁷ According to Azmi Iskandar Merican, this story was told to him by his cousin, the late Haji Mohd. Ismail Merican. Interviewed on 24 March 2012.

⁸ According to Azmi Iskandar Merican, this story was told to him by the late Mohd. Tajudeen Merican in 2000. He was Haji Abdul Kader Merican's grandson and held the key to the Makam Mak Amah and Kapitan Keling Mosque.

KRAMAT TUAN GURU, Perak Road

Abdul Ghani (real name Gunny bin Abdul Rashid) originally came from Madura in Indonesia. He was descended from a noble Arab-Javanese ancestry. When he was in Madura, his effort to take over the place was unsuccessful and he decided to emigrate to Penang. In Penang, Abdul Ghani became a religious teacher at the Malay Mosque Acheen Street. He was also a cousin of Sheikh Omar Basheer who was an influential religious leader in the mid-19th century.¹ Abdul Ghani had his own congregation and was responsible for reconverting Muslim apostates who were members of both the Chinese and Malay secret societies in the mid-19th century. His stature as religious teacher earned him the appellation of ‘Tuan Guru’ (teacher).

Abdul Ghani’s fame spread throughout Penang not just because of his deep knowledge of Islam but also because he was extremely spiritual. There was a story of a Chinese merchant who was suddenly caught in a storm and lightning in a *tongkang* (Chinese junk) laden with rice from Kedah. As he was fearful for his and the crew’s safety he invoked the name of the Tuan Guru, ‘if you are truly a holy person, please protect us from this peril’. Soon after his call, the storm and lightning stopped. When the merchant arrived in Penang, he sent bags of rice to Tuan Guru but the latter refused the gift. Instead he insisted the rice to be distributed to the poor. Before he died he asked to be buried in the Perak Road cemetery. Abdul Ghani died in 1880 and was buried at the cemetery of his choice.

The grave of the Tuan Guru is sited in a square shed near the Hashim Yahaya Mosque with an area of 20 ft. by 15 ft. The grave is located in the centre of the shed near the graves of other family members. The original tombstone is painted yellow but the grave is neither covered nor decorated with cloth. According to Abdul Razak, in the 1970s, the grave received visitors who came to fulfil their vow. However, today very few Malays come to fulfil their vows and recite Yasin verses at the grave. MK

¹ Sheikh Omar Basheer became a religious teacher at the Malay Mosque Acheen Street and the Ayer Itam Mosque.

KRAMAT PANJANG, Perak Road

The information on the Kramat Panjang in the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* is very brief. It is said to have been in existence before the time of Francis Light.

Based on this research, there are several accounts on the kramat. Although most older residents of the Perak Road area could not confirm the history of the kramat, Abdul Salam bin Abdul Karim who is the caretaker of the Perak cemetery, claimed the grave had been there for more than 100 years. One oral account claimed that '*makam panjang*' (long grave) does not refer to the height of the dead person, rather it was to honour the dead for his service to the community as missionary or religious teacher. It is possible that the Kramat Panjang grave belonged to a Muslim missionary or a religious teacher.

The Kramat Panjang is located in the open area of the Perak Road cemetery near the Hashim Yahaya Mosque. The grave is approximately 12 ft. by 5 ft. There are a few pillars around it which are tied together to fence off trespassers from getting into the kramat area. According to Abdul Salam, the grave had been there since he was a small boy. According to the grave caretaker, Abdul Razak Hashim, many people visited the grave in the 1960s and the 1970s to make their vows. When their wishes were granted, they would celebrate with a feast of rice or porridge and feed the people living near the cemetery. After the feast, Yasin verses would be recited at the grave. Today, such practices have ceased because they are against the teachings of Islam while the Hashim Yahaya Mosque committee branded it as *syirik* (polytheism). The public no longer visit the grave but it is still well looked after by the caretaker of the Perak Road cemetery. MK

KRAMAT WALI, Gelugor

According to the *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Kramat no. 8), Kramat Wali was believed to be the grave of Dato Ismail who was considered a holy and noble man by people in the vicinity. He was said to have died in the early 1880s. Some people did visit his grave to ask for favours, make a vow and ask for blessings. However, as a result of modernisation, people's world view had changed. The community had stopped believing in mystical elements associated with kramat. In fact, they considered kramat in the realm of superstition. This was supported by the *fatwa* (theological edict) which declared it was taboo to build inside or on a grave any form of structure which could last even after the dead body had decomposed for any purpose.¹ As such, matters concerning the kramat remain unknown to the new generation. Hence, it is difficult to obtain information on the history of the Kramat Wali² and the Kramat Serban Hijau³ in Gelugor because the locals are unaware of the existence of both.

Several respondents did not deny the existence of a grave in the mosque's compound. The grave is believed to be the individual responsible for building the Gelugor Mosque. However Atan bin Man strongly dismissed that the grave was a kramat. This is because his father who was the *tok siak* and grave digger in Gelugor had never told him about the grave in the mosque compound being a kramat. According to him, no one had come to make a vow at the grave. This fact was corroborated by Salleh and Haji Osman bin Hashim who said they never knew that Kramat Wali and Kramat Serban Hijau existed in Gelugor. MK

¹ Fatwa of the Kedah state government dated 26 May 1976 and fatwa of the Perak state government dated 18 March 2006.

² Kramat Wali is located in the compound of the Gelugor Mosque but the kramat could not be found because the area has been closed due to the construction of a new mosque.

³ Kramat Serban Hijau is believed to be non-existent now.

KRAMAT SERBAN HIJAU, Gelugor

Kramat Serban Hijau is located in the Sungai Gelugor Jamek Mosque cemetery. According to Norizan, the kramat had been in the Sungai Gelugor cemetery for hundreds of years. Only the early settlers of the area knew of its existence. Most of the second and third generations who still live in Gelugor do not know the history of the kramat. According to the account of older residents, Kramat Serban Hijau was known as such because the deceased was said to have worn everything green like green turban and green robe. Today, the kramat is believed to be no longer in existence. MK

KRAMAT HAJI HASSAN, Tanjung Tokong

Haji Hassan was a religious teacher and the original settler of Tanjung Tokong. He once held an important post in the Tuan Guru Mosque of Tanjung Tokong. He was not just pious but also trustworthy and active in charitable work organized by the Tuan Guru Mosque. In his lifetime he was devoted to the Tanjung Tokong villagers who often asked for his help. Some claimed that his requests were always granted by Allah. Haji Hassan died in 1911 and was buried in the Tanjung Tokong cemetery. His grave was considered a kramat. Before the 1980s, there was a wooden hut which had long been built on Haji Hassan's grave. It was about 10 ft. by 12 ft. At the time, many of the locals as well as outsiders came to the grave to make a vow. There were outsiders who came to worship at the grave and ask for lottery numbers. As a result, in the 1990s, the Tuan Guru Mosque *kariah* asked the family members of Haji Hassan to demolish the hut sited on the grave. Since then, villagers have stopped asking favours from the kramat for fear of being boycotted by the rest of the community. The new generation of residents, however, do not believe in kramat which they find ridiculous and frivolous. MK

KRAMAT HAJI HASSAN, Batu Feringgi

According to one oral account, Haji Hassan had settled in Batu Feringgi since the mid-19th century. He was a religious teacher who strictly adhered to the teachings of Islam. Haji Hassan was said to have died around 1880. His life was devoted to the Muslim community in Batu Feringgi. He was better known as Pak Hassan among the locals although he had gone on the pilgrimage in Mecca.

Pak Hassan's grave is located in the Batu Feringgi cemetery. The grave is encircled by a 4 ft. high brick wall approximately 8 ft. by 10 ft. In the encircled area are tombstones made of wood. The encircled area is without a roof. Outside is a shady headland tree (tanjong tree: *mimusops elengi*). The grave is not well-looked after and the locals do not know any of Pak Hassan's descendants.

According to one respondent, Asiah, before the 1960s, Pak Hassan's grave was often visited by locals and people from outside Penang who came to make vows. When their wishes were granted, they would celebrate with a feast of bananas, yellow rice or rice with chicken/beef for the people living in the area. Also, they would recite Yasin verses at Pak Hassan's grave.

By the 1960s, Pak Hassan's grave was no longer sited at the Batu Feringgi cemetery because the area was cleared by the Ar-Rahman Mosque committee and locals.¹ Our respondent was unsure if the grave was demolished or moved to another location. Since then, later generations have not heard of Kramat Pak Hassan. MK

¹The present cemetery is approximately 50 ft. by 100 ft. and is located on a hilly area.

KRAMAT NAKHODA INTAN (HAJI MOHAMMAD SALLEH), Batu Uban

Nakhoda Intan (also known as Haji Mohammad Salleh) was the pioneer of the Batu Uban settlement and the Batu Uban Jamek Mosque. According to the signboard of the Batu Uban Jamek Mosque, the area was believed to have been opened up in the 1730s or earlier.

Nakhoda Intan's real name was Raja Nan Intan Ibni Almarhum Tengku Pateh Sebatang. He came from Kampung Bodi, Payakumbuh, Sumatera and was connected to the Minangkabau ruler. He migrated to Batu Uban as a result of misunderstanding concerning religious practices. As Nakhoda Intan was a pious person, many traders and people from Kedah and Province Wellesley came to the Batu Uban Mosque to learn and acquire religious knowledge. Nakhoda Intan died in the early 19th century and was buried next to the Batu Uban Jamek Mosque. To the locals, his grave was considered a kramat because he was a pious man. The fact that the water from the well located on the mosque premises was not salty although it was next to the sea, was credited to his holiness. MK

KRAMAT HAJI MOHAMED AMIN, Sungai Nibong Besar

Haji Mohamed Amin (Haji Mak Min) or better known as Kramat Amin came from south India. He migrated to Penang in the early 19th century with the intention to propagate Islam and start a business. He was known for his piety. To the locals he was known to have magical powers based on incidences which took place around him. Haji Mohamed Amin married a local Malay lady and most of his children lived in Sungai Nibong Besar. Haji Mohamed Amin was said to have died in the 1880s and was buried at the Sungai Nibong Besar Mosque cemetery.

His grave is located close to the Sungai Nibong Besar Mosque. It is located in a spacious part of the cemetery while a 2 ft. high concrete was built on it. The size is about 20 ft. by 8 ft. On the left and right of the grave are the graves of his children. According to Haji Idris, before Malayan independence, there was a rack¹ built near Haji Mohamed Amin's grave. The rack was 6 ft. high. People used it as a place to take a bath to wash away bad luck or to have herbal bath. There were also people who came to make vows by sacrificing a goat or chicken. After 1957, the practice ceased because it came under the criticisms of the Sungai Nibong Besar Mosque committee. MK

¹ The rack is made of wood and bamboo.

KRAMAT TOK PAKEH, Sungai Nibong Besar

Tok Pakeh whose real name is unknown was said to have originated from Indonesia. According to Haji Idris, '*Pakeh*' in Indonesia refers to a person who is pious, a Tok Guru. Tok Pakeh migrated to Penang with his wife and followers before Francis Light. He was a religious teacher and Muslim missionary. According to one oral account, in the beginning, he settled in Juru and then moved to Pulau Jerejak. When he heard that the English East India Company (EIC) was going to make Pulau Jerejak a military headquarters to safeguard the new town, Jamestown, which was planned in Bayan Baru in the 1790s, he and his followers had to move and find a new area to open up. He and his followers opened up Bukit Kecik in Sungai Nibong Besar. It was said that most of the dwellers were his descendants.

Tok Pakeh's two sons, Haji Abdullah and Haji Din (his other children's names were not known) followed in his footsteps in their piety, God-fearing and adhering strictly to the teaching of Islam. There was a rock in Pulau Jerejak which Haji Din used as place to pray. Today, it is still known as '*Batu Haji Din*' (Haji Din's rock).

Tok Pakeh's grave is located in the Bukit Kecik cemetery of Sungai Nibong Besar. No structures have been built on it. In the 1960s and 1970s, there were people who visited the grave to fulfil vows but at present the practice has stopped. Today, most of the visitors who visit the grave are his descendants. Yasin verses are often recited at his grave. MK

KRAMAT PAK HAJI AHMAD, Bagan Jermal

Pak Haji Ahmad was a sailor from Europe who converted to Islam when he safely arrived in Penang after experiencing a storm at sea. He settled in Bagan Jermal. He went on the pilgrimage in Mecca. At one time, Pak Haji Ahmad was able to cure a sick Chinese child. The wealthy Chinese father rewarded him with a piece of land. Pak Haji Ahmad built a mosque on the land (Bagan Jermal Mosque). Pak Haji Ahmad's grave is located in the Bagan Jermal Jamek Mosque cemetery.

Although the grave had been there for a long time, original residents in the area and the Bagan Jermal Mosque committee have no information on the life history of Pak Haji Ahmad. The community was unsure if any of Pak Haji Ahmad's family members still live in the locality or had relocated elsewhere. According to the accounts of the older generation, Pak Haji Ahmad was a pious man. He died in the early 19th century.

According to Mohd. Suhaimi and Ismail, Pak Haji Ahmad's grave is still in its original shape. In the early 1960s and 1970s, there were locals and those from outside of Bagan Jermal who visited the grave to make vows. When their wishes were fulfilled they recited Yasin verses and distributed food to the local community. In the 1980s and 1990s this practice was stopped by the Bagan Jermal Jamek Mosque Kariah. Since then, locals just ignored the Kramat Pak Haji Ahmad while its history has slowly slipped into oblivion. MK

KRAMAT SHEIKH OMAR BASHEER, Ayer Itam

Sheikh Omar Basheer was a well-known religious teacher and leader of the Malays in the mid-19th century. His authority in religious matters and leadership made him a respectable individual among the Penang Muslim community and the British administrators in Penang.

Sheikh Omar Basheer was of Arabic descent from Hadramaut. His father's name was Basheer the son of Hamid bin Bahaman from the Baridzwan and Bafadzal tribes. Sheikh Omar was born in the Kampung Kapitan Keling Mosque in 1811 (1226 Hijrah). He was educated in religious knowledge by his father and then furthered his education in Mecca. Among his teachers in Mecca were Sheikh Muhammad Al Faturi, Syed Omar Alshata, Syed Bakri Alshata and Sheikh Sulaiman Al Zuhdi. It was from these teachers that he gained further knowledge and passed the Naqsyabandiah *tarekat*.

After several years in Mecca, Sheikh Omar returned to Penang and became a respectable religious teacher. Soon after the death of his father, Sheikh Omar was invited to be a religious teacher and *kadi* (judge in Muslim affairs) in the district of Demak, Java. He married a lady from Semarang who gave him four children. His first son, Muhammad Faturi, was named after his teacher in Mecca; the second child was Mujrah; the third was Zaharah and the youngest was Muhamad Asad. Sheikh Omar returned to settle in Penang with two of his children after the death of his wife. In Penang he remarried Salehah binti Ya'kob who was of Palembang ancestry. They had five children. The first was Haji Yahya (1853-1901) who became a *kadi* in Penang. His second son was Zakaria¹ (1855-1926) who was the *mufti* (Muslim

jurist). Zakaria took over his father's responsibility in propagating the Naqsyabandiah *tarekat*. Towards the end of his life, Zakaria was an import-export trader covering Arabia, India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. The third was a daughter named Asiah (1855-1890). The fourth was Sha'ya (1859-1925) and the youngest was Muhammad Natt (1862-1910). Haji Sya'ya, better known as Haji Puteh, sold religious books and similar items. Asiah was married to Haji Ibrahim, a relative of Haji Abdul Rahman who was the *khatib* of the Malay Mosque, Acheen Street while Muhammad Natt went into the *songkok* (Malay cap) and shoes business. Towards the end of his life, Muhammad Natt was appointed *kadi*, a post which he held until he passed away in 1910.

Based on the notes on the signboard placed at his grave in Ayer Itam, Sheikh Omar Basheer died in 1881 and was buried in Kampung Melayu. However, another source claim Sheikh Omar died on 11 May 1884.² Probably the latter could be accepted based on another evidence, the oath of allegiance to the Naqsyabandiah *tarekat* which he had issued dated 5 June 1882.³

The tomb is colourful and conspicuously located in front of his house. It is the biggest tomb not just in Penang but probably in Malaysia. There is also a 35 ft. wide minaret, supported by concrete structure.

¹ Sometimes spelt Zachariah and Zakariah.

² Makam/Mausoleum Sheikh Omar, Muzium Negeri Pulau Pinang, 1988. A short article published with the cooperation of the Penang Heritage Association (Persatuan Warisan Pulau Pinang) in conjunction with 1988 Visit Penang campaign. In the article the date when Sheikh Omar Basheer died is noted on 11 May 1884.

³ The edict was obtained from the Penang State Museum in January 1990.

The tomb was specially built by his son, Zakaria, to commemorate his father. Zakaria brought an expert from India to build it. Even the white stone which formed the main building material was brought from India. Zakaria is buried next to his father in the tomb.

Based on his two diaries,⁴ Sheikh Omar played a prominent role in the spread of the Naqsyabandiah *tarekat* in Penang, Province Wellesley and the northern states of peninsula Malaya. He even had followers from Johor and Indonesia. He continued his grandfather's legacy, Hamid bin Bahman who was a well-known sufi from Hadramaut. Before teaching sufism in Penang in 1806, Hamid taught sufism in Aceh. In Penang, Hamid opened a *madrasah* in Bayan Lepas to teach sufism to the locals. His lectures on sufism received good response from the locals. Hamid then moved to Kampung Melayu and formed another *madrasah* to teach sufism which was named *Madrasatul Suluk Kampung Melayu*. After his death, Sheikh Omar continued his grandfather's legacy as a religious teacher in three places; Bayan Lepas, Ayer Itam and the Acheen Street Malay Mosque where he was also the *imam*.

In Acheen Street,⁵ the leadership of Sheikh Omar Basheer was prominent in the religious, social and business fields. His status as the imam of the Acheen Street Malay Mosque gave him the opportunity to propagate *tarekat* Naqsyabandiah and introduced a form of sufism known as *suluk*. *Tarekat* means 'path' to get closer to Allah. In Malaysia, there were nine types of *tarekat* and one of them was the Naqsyabandiah. Although there were other forms of *tarekat* that differed in their doctrines and rites their objective was the same that is a path towards Allah. A leader of a *tarekat* is called *syaikh*. The influence of a *syaikh* in one locality depends on his charisma, knowledge of Islam and often enough, his extraordinary power or even invulnerability. A follower who could feel the power of the *syaikh*

would tell everybody, hence the *syaikh*'s reputation would travel far and wide. *Suluk* activities were held at the Madrasatul Suluk Kampung Melayu and in the Bayan Lepas hills.

Sheikh Omar was highly respected by the locals for his leadership in *tarekat* Naqsyabandiah that one of his followers, Syed Hassan bin Syed Haron, presented him a house in Kampung Melayu. The house was built in 1840 and originally belonged to Nathaniel Bacon who was Francis Light's secretary. Bacon bequeathed it and its vicinity to his friend (some said his adopted son; see Al-Qadrie Jamek Mosque), Syed Hassan bin Syed Haron. The house was Sheikh Omar's second residence and at the same time, it became a venue for *suluk* activity because the existing place was not big enough to accommodate the group. The house then became the residence of his descendants.⁶

One of Sheikh Omar's significant contributions is related to Malay involvement in secret societies which culminated in the Penang Riots of 1867. The Riot started as a result of a dispute between Malay and Chinese Secret Societies which had merged in order to gain strength in trade monopoly and territorial influence; the Red Flag Malay Secret Society with the Tua Peh Kong and the White Flag Secret Society with the Ghee Hin. Sheikh Omar's role was very important after the British requested him to advise the Malays with regard their involvement in Chinese secret societies.

On 24 August 1867, a theological edict was issued by Sheikh Omar on the order of the Governor of Penang concerning the involvement of Malays in

⁴ One of the diaries was exhibited in the Penang State Museum entitled "Buku Catatan Peribadi Sheikh Omar Basheer dengan Rujukan Terhadap Rusuhan di Pulau Pinang pada tahun 1867."

⁵ Centred at no. 69 Acheen Street.

⁶ One of his grandchildren, the late Haji Fathil bin Zakaria, had lived in the house which is now occupied by one of Haji Fathil's sons.

Chinese secret societies. The edict was directed at all Muslims in the state. It prohibited them, be they Malays, Arabs, Indian-Muslims, Benggalis or others who were Muslims, from joining any secret societies because it was against Islamic teaching. In fact, the edict strongly prohibited Muslim involvement in Chinese secret societies which would result in apostasy based on three aspects. The first was loyalty to a Chinese secret society would result in Malay youths forgetting, even leaving their families. The second, the process of joining a secret society would result in committing major sins like taking vows while drinking blood and liquor were against Islamic laws. The third aspect was involvement in clashes to the point of sacrificing oneself and belongings for the secret society (not for the religion or the family). The edict specified a heavy penalty to whoever refused to leave the secret society and repent. These people would be boycotted by the community and would be denied participation in all mosque activities until they repent. Those who did not join secret societies would not be allowed to attend the funeral of any member of a secret society. In fact, they were not even allowed to visit a sick secret society

member or marry descendants of people involved in such activities.

When the edict was issued many Malays pledged and surrendered their weapons as well as their secret society insignia to Sheikh Omar Basheer. According to one source, more than 7,000 Muslims in the state and Province Wellesley took their pledge in front of Sheikh Omar Basheer. In his diary, Sheikh Omar however took note of 259 names which took the pledge. He wrote *“ini list nama-nama orang yang mari bersumpah kepada al-fakir Sheikh Omar bin Basheer al-khalady mengatakan ia hendak bersetia dengan raja dan tiada masuk mana-mana kongsi dan setengahnya keluar ia daripada kongsi dan tiada berkehendak masuk kongsi lagi.”* (This is the list of names of those who came to make a pledge in front of al-fakir Sheikh Omar bin Basheer al-khalady to state their loyalty to the ruler and will never join any society and those who had left a society will not wish to rejoin). The list was dated 26 August 1867. To ensure the edict was obeyed, Sheikh Omar issued a certificate or an acknowledgement letter to those who had pledged not to join secret societies. MK

KRAMAT HAJI KARI, Titi Teras, Balik Pulau

Haji Kari was a very pious man who strictly adhered to the teachings of Islam. *Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island* (1974, Mosque no. 51) noted Haji Kari as the founder of the Titi Teras wooden mosque in the 1830s. According to Haji Abdul Rahman, the Kampung Titi Teras community had mentioned Haji Kari's name in the 1940s. Usually when the kampung people wanted to build a house or start something like padi planting or to go into the jungle, they would first invoke Haji Kari's name. Failure to do so they believed would bring bad luck. According to him, although such a practice was rampant before the Second World War, he has never heard either his grandparents or parents talking about the Kramat Haji Kari. Presently, local people do not mention Haji Kari's name at all. Several respondents who were interviewed claim they had never heard of Kramat Haji Kari. MK

KRAMAT LEBAI SAAD, Pondok Upeh, Balik Pulau

According to Che Meh Shafie, Lebai Saad bin Ismail was an original settler of Pondok Upeh. He was once the *bilal* of the Pondok Upeh Mosque. In his lifetime, he loved to do charity work in the locality. Lebai Saad was said to have died in 1850 and was buried in the Pondok Upeh Mosque cemetery. Lebai Saad's grave was located near the Pondok Upeh river. It is in a neglected state just like other graves in the area. When the river was widened, most of the graves including the grave of Lebai Saad could not be identified. The respondent is unsure if the descendants of Lebai Saad still live in Pondok Upeh or had relocated elsewhere.

Che Meh and others living in the vicinity of Pondok Upeh had denied Lebai Saad was a kramat. Since

young, they had never heard nor seen anyone from their community or from outside visiting Lebai Saad's grave to ask for favours.

According to Che Meh, the present burial system is different from the one in the old days. In the old days, a village chairman had a book to record deaths. He would have the exact information of the dead and the location of the grave. Also, in the old days, the *imam* of a mosque had to be an original settler. He would know all those from his village who had died. But at present, if an outsider is married to a local villager and deemed fit to be an *imam*, he would be chosen by the *kariah*. Certainly, he would not know much history of those who were buried in the local mosque cemetery. MK

KRAMAT TO' HAJI ABDULLAH, Sungai Batu

Tuan Haji Abdullah or better known as To' Haji Abdullah (Dollah) originally came from Java, Indonesia. Others claim he was from Rawa, Sumatera. To' Haji Dollah migrated to Penang in the early 19th century and settled in Sungai Batu, Telok Kumbar. He was a pious man and the locals often consulted him on religious matters. He was also a religious teacher in the area. He was one of the founders of the Sungai Batu Mosque. He was involved in the founding of the earliest mosque in Kampung Perlis. To' Haji Dollah was married with seven children. At present they are the eighth generation living in Sungai Batu. The descendants still keep the tradition of their ancestors' involvement in religious matters. Most of his descendants are on the mosque committee and also *imams* of the mosque. To' Haji Dollah was said to have

died in the 1850s and was buried in the Sungai Batu cemetery.

Some years later, his inheritor built a wooden building with a zinc roof on the grave of To' Haji Dollah. The building measures 10 ft. by 10 ft. Encircling the building was a piece of yellow cloth. Every year, villagers in Sungai Batu would hold a *tablil* session and Yasin recital at the grave followed by a feast. At the moment such a session is held in the mosque. According to Tuan Haji Ahmad Fuad, an inheritor of To' Haji Dollah demolished the building on the grave in 2007 because it was misused by punters to ask for numbers and to make vows. According to him, the cemetery was donated by Tuan Haji Osman, better known as Haji Osman Kaya, for religious purposes. MK

KRAMAT TUJUH BERADIK, Paya Terubung

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Kramat Tujuh Beradik which is located in Ayer Itam was very well-known. Most people in the area were familiar with this Kramat Che Nah. The kramat is located on a hill in Paya Terubung, Ayer Itam. According to one account, a long time ago there was a couple with seven daughters who lived on the hill. Every day the seven maidens would bring their goats downhill to feed. One evening while on their way home, three of them lost their way. So they decided to spend the night in a cave on the hill. When dawn appeared, they hurried home but the youngest sister, Che Nah, was still lost in the jungle. The jungle was full of roots and when Che Nah wanted to save herself, her foot was caught in the roots. A man was watching and he tried to save Che Nah. While he was trying to help, Che Nah suddenly turned into stone. One night, Che Nah's father had a dream asking him to dig a well at the site of the incident. When the well was dug, he found gold nuggets in the hole. To commemorate his daughter, Che Nah's father built a hut near the place which was once considered a kramat by locals.

Che Nah's grave is situated on a hill which was adjacent to a Buddhist temple in Paya Terubung. Today, the grave is under the care of the Paya Terubung Mosque. The hut which her father had built was not used anymore. The kramat, too, is slowly being forgotten by the locals in Ayer Itam. According to Abdul Wahab, the kramat was regularly visited by those from Penang and outside Penang in the 1960s and 1970s to make vows. Some had prepared feasts when their wishes were fulfilled. There were others who took the opportunity to ask for numbers. The younger generation of Paya Terubung is still aware of the existence of the kramat but have no knowledge of its history. MK

KRAMAT ALIMSAH WALLEY, Chulia Street

Alimsah Walley or Haji Abdul Qader Alimsah¹ originally came from India. He migrated to Penang in 1801 and settled in Chulia Street. Haji Abdul Qader was pious, devoting much time to religious matters and charity work.

In 1802, the Indian-Muslim community in Chulia Street appointed Haji Abdul Qader as their leader and *imam*. The appointment was not because of his wealth but because of his religious knowledge. In his effort to rouse the spirit of Islam among the Indian-Muslim community in the area, he built a mosque in 1811 through local cooperative efforts. The mosque was called the Alimsah Walley Mosque and he became its *imam*.

Haji Abdul Qader died in 1852. He was buried beside the Alimsah Walley Mosque. Indian-Muslims believed his grave a kramat and they called it Kramat Alimsah Walley. To preserve the grave a brick building was built around it. The building was approximately 20 ft. by 20 ft. Haji Abdul Qader's descendants paid a caretaker to look after the grave. Within the brick building are also the graves of his two children who are buried next to him.

In 1990, work to expand and renovate the Alimsah Walley Mosque was undertaken because of the growing number of Indian-Muslims and *Jawi Peranakan* settling in Chulia Street and the Alimsah Walley flats. Since then, the building was demolished and an iron fence built. The oval shaped fenced area was approximately 4 ft. high, 8 ft. wide and 15 ft. in length but without a roof.

According to Tuan Haji Idris, to safeguard the Islamic faith, Haji Abdul Qader's descendants have disallowed the practice of making vows at the grave. According to him, outsiders only stopped by the mosque to pray while a few visited the grave to recite Quranic verses. MK

¹ Also spelt Abdul Cauder Alimsah in the *Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board, Penang* (Penang: Criterion Press, 1932), p. 4. See, entry Alimsah Walley Mosque, Chulia Street.

KRAMAT MAULANA MISKIN WALI ALLAH,¹ Jalan Masjid

Kramat Maulana Miskin Wali Allah was the grave of Haji Yaacob Khan bin Mohamed Khan. He was a *Jawi Peranakan* of Pakistani origin. Haji Yaacob Khan was born and raised in Penang. He was a wealthy man who owned a cemetery in Jalan Masjid, Penang. In his lifetime, he adhered strictly to the teachings of Islam and liked to help the poor. He was often involved in charity work. Haji Yaacob Khan died in 1940, or even earlier and was buried in his own cemetery in Jalan Masjid. His grave was considered a kramat by the locals.

To preserve the grave of Haji Yaacob Khan, a tomb measuring 20 ft. by 20 ft. was built by his descendants. At the time, the grave did not have any name. In 1985, the grave was named Makam Maulana Miskin Wali Allah, a name that has lasted until the present.

In the 1950s and 1960s, locals consisting of *Jawi Peranakan*, Malays, Chinese, and Indians, would visit the Makam Maulana Miskin with the intention of making vows. When their wishes were granted, they would celebrate with a feast of bananas, rice or porridge. According to Naina Mohamed, this practice is still being carried out today although the number of followers are declining. On festive occasions such as, *Hari Raya Puasa*, *Hari Raya Haji*, and the first day of Muharam, the grave is visited by the public including Haji Yaacob Khan's descendants to recite Yasin and say prayers to avert misfortune.

Today, Maulana Miskin's grave is placed under the committee of Maulana Miskin grave which consists of outsiders and Haji Yaacob Khan's descendant. In order to ensure that the grave is not abused by visitors, the gate to the building is always locked and only opened to the public on Thursdays. On that day Yasin verses are recited and prayers offered to avert misfortune. MK

¹ The name *kramat Maulana Miskin Wali Allah* is not in the list of Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island.

KRAMAT SHEIKH MUSTAFA WALI, Campbell Street Market

Sheikh Mustafa Wali originated from Afghanistan. He migrated to Penang before the arrival of Francis Light in 1786 with the intention to preach although at that time he was only 16 years old. In Penang he settled in Pitt Street (now known as Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling).

Sheikh Mustafa Wali was said to be a young man who was of impeccable behaviour and God-fearing. His character earned the respect of the local residents, irrespective of their age. Sheikh Mustafa Wali was an active preacher who was never married and he lived alone. He was believed to have died in the early 19th century and was buried in the Hutan Mayat Cemetery. The cemetery was located between the junction of Campbell Street and Carnarvon Street (at present the site of a market).

According to Kamaruddin bin Abdul Rani, the market was built by the British government in the early 20th century. Before its construction, the British government gathered all the remains in the cemetery and reburied them in the Jalan Perak cemetery. Strangely the remains of Sheikh Mustafa Wali could not be transferred. Strange things happened when the work was undertaken such as workers getting into accidents, fell sick, and the grave difficult to unearth. When these things happened work had to stop and the grave remained at its original site until today.

This episode led the British to build a wall 40 feet wide and 120 feet long with a height of 7 feet to maintain the grave. This wall was at the back of the market. In the walled up area a small building measuring 20 feet wide and 20 feet long was built. In the building was the grave of Sheikh Mustafa Wali.

According to Kamaruddin, since then until the present time locals as well as those from outside Penang had come to visit the Sheikh Mustafa Wali's tomb to make vows. They include Chinese and Indian Muslims. In the 1970s, a Chinese had made a visit to seek recovery from an illness. After his request was granted, he built an extension to the front of the tomb. The extension measured 10 feet wide and 10 feet long. Since then the building is now 30 feet wide and 30 feet long.

At present Kamaruddin looks after the Sheikh Mustafa Wali tomb. According to him, there used to be several Indian Muslims who were caretakers but they had gone through paranormal experiences, such as waking up from sleep at a different location. These scary experiences led to their resignation. Kamaruddin never had such experiences since he started the caretaker job in 1981. MK

TOMB OF TUNKU SAYYID HUSSAIN AL-AIDID, Acheen Street



Tunku Sayyid Hussain Al-Aidid was a very rich trader from Acheh. He was from the Acheh royal family who had migrated to Penang in 1791 with his relatives, followers and servants. Tunku Sayyid Hussain started a settlement in Acheen Street. Acheen Street later developed into a business, religious and community area. He died in 1840 and was buried in the cemetery next to the Acheen Street Malay Mosque. Some of his relatives were also buried in the area.

According to Mohamed bin Yahaya whose house is located in the compound of Acheen Street Malay Mosque, before the 1950s the tomb of Tunku Sayyid Hussain and his family members were located in a long wooden building. The building was 60 feet wide and 80 feet long. The roof was of tiles and the wall made of wood. In 1954, Tunku Sayyid Hussain's descendant demolished the building. They built a new square building measuring 20 feet wide and 20 feet long. It was a wooden structure without wall and the roof made of tiles. It housed the graves of Tunku Sayyid Hussain and his wife.

According to Mohamed, although the residents in the Malay Mosque village never regarded Tunku Sayyid Hussain's grave as *kramat* (shrine), a fisherman from Kota Kuala Muda, Kedah came to fulfil a vow in the 1960s. According to the fisherman, he had dreamt of the Acheen Street Malay Mosque. Since then his daily catches had increased. For that he went to the mosque to fulfil his vow. The fisherman held a feast in the front part of the mosque compound. About 150 people attended the feast with many of them family members of the fisherman.

In the 1970s, Mohamed had seen a Malay lady, accompanied by her family, who came to visit the tomb of Tunku Sayyid Hussain with the intention of '*mandi tolak bala*' (special bath to ward off bad luck). The family was from outside Penang. In the same year he saw several locals visiting the tomb. They tied yellow cloth around it. However, the descendants of Tunku Sayyid Hussain took it off because they did not want their ancestor's grave religiously abused. After the 1980s until the present, Mohamed had not seen anyone coming to make vows at the tomb of Sayyid Hussain. **MK**

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Interview by Research Assistant, Omar Yusoff, with the original settlers of Titi Teras; 90 year old Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Tahir, former headmaster of the Madrasah Al-Nahdzoh Al Shuun Al-Diniah Religious School, Titi Teras/trustee of Madrasah Al-Nahdzoh Al Shuun Al-Diniah Religious School *wakaf* land since 50 years ago; 86 year old Maimunah binti Zabrit, wife of Haji Abdul Rahman; Jamaludin bin Ahmad, chairman of the An-Nur Mosque *kariah*; 62 year old Haji Kasim bin Darus, *imam* of the An-Nur Mosque; 39 year old Razi Haji Abdul Rahman, son of Haji Abdul Rahman, 14 September 2012.

KRAMAT LEBAI SAAD, PONDOK UPEH, BALIK PULAU

Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island (Penang: Malayan Teachers College, 1974), Kramat no. 20 dan Mosque no. 45.

Interview by Research Assistant, Omar Yusoff, with original settlers of Pondok Upeh: 77 year old Che Meh bin Shafie, 72 year old Yusof bin Yaacob and 52 year old Abdul Razak Hashim, 23 September 2012.

KRAMAT TO' HAJI ABDULLAH, SUNGAI BATU

Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island (Penang: Malayan Teachers College, 1974), Mosque no. 57, Sungai Batu Mosque.

Interview by Research Assistant, Omar Yusoff, with 40 year old Tuan Haji Ahmad Fuad bin Haji Abdul Hamid, *imam* of the Sungai Batu Mosque, fifth generation descendants of To' Haji Dollah, 19 May 2012.

KRAMAT TUJUH BERADIK, PAYA TERUBONG

Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island (Penang: Malayan Teachers College, 1974), Kramat no. 24 and Mosque no. 32.

Interview by Research Assistant, Omar Yusoff, with 55 year old Abdul Wahab bin Omar, an original settler of Paya Terubong, Ayer Itam, 15 September 2012.

KRAMAT ALIMSAH WALLEY, CHULIA STREET

Hand Book of the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board, Penang (Penang: Criterion Press, 1932), p. 4.

Historical Survey of the Mosques and Kramats on Penang Island (Penang: Malayan Teachers College, 1974), Mosque no. 3.

Interview by Research Assistant, Omar Yusoff, with 62 year old Tuan Haji Idris bin Abdul Salam, descendants of Haji Abdul Qader Alimsah Walley, 7 December 2012.

Interview by Research Assistant, Omar Yusoff, with 81 year old Dato' S.A. Sheik Abdullah Bukhari bin Abdul Rahman, better known as Ustaz Abdullah Bukhari, *imam* of the Kapitan Keling Mosque, 7 December 2012.

KRAMAT MAULANA MISKIN WALI ALLAH, JALAN MASJID

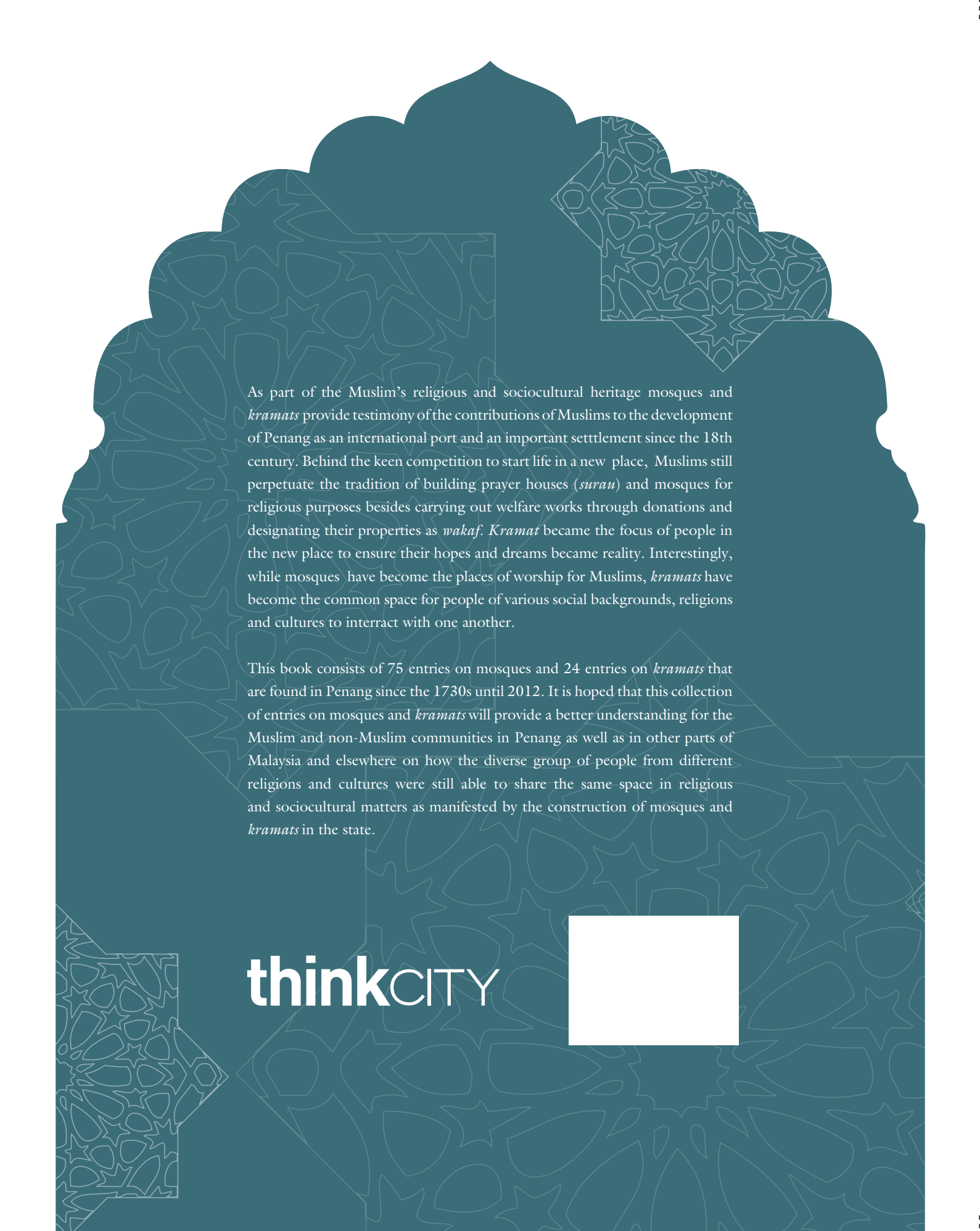
Interview by Research Assistant, Omar Yusoff, 63 year old Naina Mohamed bin Abdul Ghafur, Haji Yaacob Khan's grandson, 7 December 2012.

KRAMAT SHEIKH MUSTAFA WALI, CAMPBELL STREET MARKET

Interview by Omar Yusoff with 66 year old, Kamaruddin bin Abdul Rani, caretaker of the Kramat Sheikh Mustafa Wali (since 1981), on 31 August 2013.

TOMB OF TUNKU SAYYID HUSSAIN AL-AIDID, ACHEEN STREET

Interview by Omar Yusoff with 75 year old Mohamed bin Yahaya, at no. 69, Lebuah Acheh, on 10 September 2013. Mohamed is a descendant of Sheikh Omar Basheer, a community leader and prominent religious figure in the mid-19th century.



As part of the Muslim's religious and sociocultural heritage mosques and *kramats* provide testimony of the contributions of Muslims to the development of Penang as an international port and an important settlement since the 18th century. Behind the keen competition to start life in a new place, Muslims still perpetuate the tradition of building prayer houses (*surau*) and mosques for religious purposes besides carrying out welfare works through donations and designating their properties as *wakaf*. *Kramat* became the focus of people in the new place to ensure their hopes and dreams became reality. Interestingly, while mosques have become the places of worship for Muslims, *kramats* have become the common space for people of various social backgrounds, religions and cultures to interact with one another.

This book consists of 75 entries on mosques and 24 entries on *kramats* that are found in Penang since the 1730s until 2012. It is hoped that this collection of entries on mosques and *kramats* will provide a better understanding for the Muslim and non-Muslim communities in Penang as well as in other parts of Malaysia and elsewhere on how the diverse group of people from different religions and cultures were still able to share the same space in religious and sociocultural matters as manifested by the construction of mosques and *kramats* in the state.

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