

Information about Meditation Centers, Forest Monasteries, and other important places in Sri Lanka for Western bhikkhus and serious lay practitioners.

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Introduction

In Sri Lanka there are many forest hermitages and meditation centres which can be suitable for western practitioners of Buddhism whether they are monastics or laymen. The following information is particularly for Western bhikkhus, or those who aspire to become bhikkhus, or those who are very serious lay-practitioners. For less serious laypractitioners another paper has been written called: "Information about Meditation Centers and other important places in Sri Lanka for Western Buddhist lay practitioners."

Factors such as climate, food, noise, standards of Discipline (Vinaya), and accessibility have been taken into consideration with regards the places listed.

The place where the monastery is gives a good indication about its climate. In the SW low-country the climate is tropical, i.e., hot and humid. The eastern low country has a dry season between May and October. The South West (roughly between Mātara, Colombo, and Ratnapura) is the so-called "wet-zone" where two monsoons a year take place (May-June, November-January). The so-called "dry-zone" (this is an exaggeration as it can rain heavily here too at times) is in the East, North, and South. Only one main monsoon (Nov-Dec) takes place there. The deep South (the coastal area between Ambalantota and Pānama) and the far North (Northern coast & Jaffna peninsula) are the driest areas in S.L. The upcountry is the hill- and mountain-area in the center of Sri Lanka (roughly between Mātale, Badulla, Haputale, and Ratnapura). Here the climate is temperate and it can get cool at night. It is generally a more agreeable climate than the low-country for westerners. In the SW up-country areas such as the Singharāja rainforest and the Sri Pada Wilderness areas it rains the most, so much so that it can be impossible to dry one's robes etc. for days after washing.

The food is generally everywhere the same all the time in Sinhalese areas, fairly plain and simple. It can be quite spicy compared to Western food. In the cities the food can be more nutritious while in poor rural areas the food can be quite unnutritious. Many people in Sri Lanka don't eat meat or fish. As a monk one might receive a bit of fish, but hardly ever meat or eggs.

The medical care in government hospitals is free for monks in Sri Lanka and for those who are seriously ill there are bhikkhu-wards in the bigger hospitals. Medical care and hygiene are not of the same standards as they generally is in the west, but the doctors usually do their best to help sick bhikkhus. There are quite a few doctors and dentists who have trained and worked in the West. The monastery one is connected to will help if one needs medicines or medical care. The best hospitals are the Apollo and Navaloka hospitals in Colombo, but they are private hospitals and expensive. The same doctors who work in the private hospitals also work in government hospitals, but the equipment and facilities in government hospitals are of a lesser standard. Dentists often help monks for free. There are some good dentists, some trained in the West, in Sri Lanka who can do the same work as dentists in the West.

Sri Lanka is a great place for practising patience, simplicity, renunciation, and humility. The Sinhalese people support monks with the basic requisites but in general monks don't get more than that because the people believe that monks should live simply. Conditions in monasteries can be very simple and uncomfortable for those used to the luxuries and comforts of the west. Monasteries are not rich in Sri Lanka and only few monasteries have a monastery car. One will have to get used to taking public transport or walking when one wants to go somewhere. Bhikkhus who don't use money can use special coupons with which one can travel on government busses.

Bhikkhus do not get showered with requisites in Sri Lanka and are not so highly respected and honoured as in Thailand or Burma. Bhikkhus from Thailand have to get used to things which are never done in Thailand. The body language and ways of talking of Sinhalese people or monks can appear disrespectful to monks used to being in Thailand.

Loudspeakers can possibly be quite a disturbance in Sri Lanka, as in Asia in general. There are only a few places which completely escape the sound of the Paritta-chanting blasted from village-temples on Poya-days.

Sri Lanka used to be a British colony and there are many Sinhalese people who can speak English well, especially in Colombo and other big towns, however, in remote country-side areas it can be more difficult to find English speakers. Nevertheless, in almost every village there will be (or is supposed to be) an English teacher in the village school who will be keen to practise his English and can help with translating if necessary. In the bigger monasteries there usually are a few monks who can speak English, but in the more remote and smaller monasteries there might not be English speakers. It is not difficult to learn colloquial Sinhala and people are usually helpful and understanding.

It is generally easier for Buddhist monks to get a visa in Sri Lanka than in other Buddhist countries. In Sri Lanka Buddhist monks get a free one year residence visa which can be extended every year. One needs to get a letter of recommendation for a visa from the incumbent of the monastery one stays in or is connected to, then one needs to go with this letter and the so-called "application form to obtain a letter of recommendation to extend the residence visa" (available at major monasteries and/or the Ministry of Buddhist Affairs in Colombo) to the secretary monk of the district (*lekhakādhikāri handuruwo*) and get the application form signed and stamped by him, then this form needs to be signed and stamped by the secretary of the Provincial Council (*kacceri*). When this is done one can go to Colombo to the Ministry of Buddhist Affairs (opposite the Mahadevi park, behind the old Townhall in Colombo 7) and get a recommendation letter from the secretary there for the Immigration. (Also get an application form for next year.) For the first time application for a residence visa one needs to bring along two or three passport pictures. (They can be made in a shop at the immigration itself [downstairs near the main entrance].) The immigration is next to the Bambalapitiya train-station, off Galle Face Rd. It is best to telephone the district secretary monk before one goes to him and make an appointment as it is possible that he is often away from his monastery. At the Ministry of Buddhist Affairs one generally waits less than one hour and at the immigration usually one and a half hours, maybe more. One can go to the Ministry of Buddhist Affairs in the morning, have lunch there (they will provide you a lunch if you ask them) and then go by bus to the Immigration after lunch.

The standards of discipline vary from tradition to tradition, and from monastery to monastery. In Sri Lanka there is not such a strong tradition of refined teacher- and monastery-duties as there is in the Thai Forest traditions. The Galdūwa Forest Tradition is the strictest vinaya tradition in Sri Lanka and the bhikkhus strictly follow the commentarial traditions. In the forest monasteries and meditation centres which are not affiliated to Galdūwa generally the vinaya standards are a bit less strict, but still reasonable. [In many city and village temples and pirivenas (not listed in this work) the vinaya-standards can be bad, like everywhere in Asia.]

Usually the tradition a monastery or meditation centre belongs to is given as it gives an indication what the practice is like in a place. There are many traditions in Sri Lanka. The main ones are:

The Kaḷyāna Yogāshramaya Saṃsthāva or Galdūwa tradition is an independent part of the Rāmañña Nikāya. The headquarter is in Galdūwa, near Ambalangoda. This tradition is keeping a strict standard of Vinaya, the strictest in Sri Lanka. It is the largest forest-sect in Sri Lanka. There probably are close to a hundred centres affiliated to this tradition. The monks are easily recognised by the palm-leaf umbrella they carry and by the habit of wearing the double robe whenever they go outside the monastery boundaries. Members of all castes are accepted. Bhikkhus from other traditions who wish to become resident at one of their monasteries, are usually expected to undergo the so-called *daḷhikamma* (confirmation) at Galdūwa, a short ceremony intended to reconfirm the original *uvasampadā* in accordance with the Galdūwa standards. After this legal action newcomers are accepted according to their normal seniority.

The Deldūwa group is a small group of forest monasteries. It is an older forest division of the Rāmañña Nikāya, but not affiliated to Galdūwa.

The Mahāvihāra Vaṃshika Shyāmapāli Vanavāsa Nikāya or Waturawila group has over 80 branch monasteries throughout the country. The Vinaya standards are not so strict as in the Galdūwa group, but are generally reasonable. Only members of the high caste are accepted for upasampadā. The headquarter of this group is in Waturawila in Gālla district.

The Kanduboda group or Swejin Nikāya chapter of the Amarapura nikāya is a group of monasteries connected to the Kanduboda International Meditation Centre. It originates in the Burmese Swejin Nikāya and follows the Mahāsi meditation technique tradition of Burma. It has reasonable standards of Vinaya. There are about twenty small meditation centers connected to this tradition in and near towns. Most are of no significance for westerners.

The Tapovana group or Kaḷyānavāṃsa chapter of the Amarapura Nikāya is a small group of semi forest monasteries usually situated near major towns. The headquarter is near Colombo. Usually the Mahāsi meditation method is practised. Reasonable standards of Vinaya.

Information on the formation and history of the forest traditions in Sri Lanka can be found in Michael Carrither's book called "The Forest Monks of Sri Lanka", Oxford 1983.

The greatest concentrations of forest-monasteries are in the Western side of the country, esp. in Kurunegala , Colombo, Gālla, and Mātara districts. Due to the war there are very few active forest-monasteries in the northern and eastern districts although there are ruins of ancient ones in many places. In the higher mountain areas there are also few monasteries because the Singhalese generally find it too cold up there.

Western monks are usually regarded highly by Singhalese as they have not gone forth out of cultural or economic reasons, but out of a sincere desire to practice the Dhamma. Generally, western monks are welcome anywhere and travelling western monks are normally welcome to stay in any monastery for the night. Even if there is no monastery in a village one can stay in the school, etc. For longer stays in a monastery one needs to ask permission to the abbot and it is normally readily granted if there is place.

In non Singhalese areas in the North and East one might sometimes be less warmly received as some Singhalese bhikkhus are involved in politics and the the army. However, if Tamil people see that one is a genuine practioner of Dhamma and is not there on a political mission then they will be helpful, even if one is a Singhalese bhikkhu. One Singhalese bhikkhu walking barefoot from the South to Jaffna had no major problems and received generous piṇḍapāta even in LTTE controlled areas. He attracted some local journalists and his motives were questioned several times.

In general one can, and needs to be, more independent in Sri Lanka. If one wishes to practice independently and is not looking for a big guru then Sri Lanka can be a great place. The Singhalese, like Indians, are more individualistic than the Thais, and leave more space to others. There is not such a strong teacher-tradition in Sri Lanka as in Thailand and Burma, but there are monks, nuns, and laypractitioners who can give useful instructions and help one along the way.

The transliteration of Sinhala characters has been added when it was known and considered useful. This makes it easier to pronounce the place name and make oneself understood to the local people.

The character *æ* is pronounced as the English *e* in *end* or *a* in *cat*, *ā* is pronounced long drawn like the *a* in *taxi* spoken by a New Yorker, *a* as the *a* in *another*, *ā* as the *a* in *art*, *i* as the *i* in *ink*, *ī* as the *ee* in *cel*, the *u* as the *u* in *put*, the *ū* as the *u* in *prudent*, *e* as the *a* in *age* (but before a conjunct consonant as in *end* and thus the same as *æ*), and *o* as the *o* in *own* (but before a conjunct consonant as in *orange*). The *v/w* is pronounced mid-way between the English *v* and *w*. The *w* has been used in this work. For more information on the correct pronunciation of Sinhala, see W.S. Karunatillake's "An Introduction to Spoken Sinhala" p. ix ff and the Guide to Pronunciation in "The Forest Monks of Sri Lanka" by Michael Carrithers.

This paper is as comprehensive and exact as possible but a lot of the information is based on old memories and lists. There are probably quite a few small places and new places which are not listed in this paper. Frequently new monasteries are built and old ones abandoned. Sometimes abbots or teachers in a place are listed, but, as is the case in saṃsāra, things can change quickly. The monasteries and meditation centres have been arranged according to districts. However, sometimes it was not clear exactly in which district a place is located, because no map with district-boundaries was available, and then place has been put in the

most likely district. Given the lack of availability of useful information in Sri Lanka, outdated and slightly incorrect information can sometimes be better than none at all.

This paper is based on a much more basic list made five years ago by Ven. Dhammasīha and made available on the Metta Lanka website. Ven. Ānandajoti and Ven. Ñāṇaramita helped with proofreading this new paper and gave many valuable suggestions.

Please send any suggestions with regards this list to:

Bhikkhu Nyanatusita
Forest Hermitage
Udawattakele
PO Box 61
Kandy

Abbreviations:

A.: Aranya.
AS.: Aranya Senāsanaya.
BM.: Bhāvanā Madhyasthānaya/Meditation Centre.
DA.: Dharmāshramaya.
FM: The Forest Monks of Sri Lanka, Michael Carrithers , Oxfor, 1983.
IVMC: International Vipassana Meditation Centre.
MC: Meditation Centre/ Bhāvanā Madhyasthānaya
S.: Senāsanaya.
T.: Tapovanaya.
Y.: Yogāshramaya.
VPM: Vipassana Meditation Centre.

E: East.
N: North.
S: South.
W: West.

Major places for Westerners who are new to Sri Lanka.

Nissarana Vanaya or *Meetirigala A.* Mithirigala 11742 (Tel: 071-749-134).
Large, 100 hectare, forest monastery 30 kms E of Colombo. The most reknown meditation centre in Sri Lanka. Belongs to the Galdūwa tradition. About 20 resident monks.
The present meditation teacher, Ven.Dhammajīva, speaks excellent English and has meditated for a long time under Sayadaw U Pandita. He mostly teaches Mahāsi method. Ven. Dhammaraṃsi also speaks good English and teaches Samatha meditation. It has a good English section in the library. Strict standards of Discipline and little talking. Dense low-country jungle on a hill. Humid and hot climate. Good support and food for Sri Lankan

standards. Sometimes some noise from the nearby village. The Dharmāyatana (see the Galdūwa list below) is on the hill next to Nissarana Vanaya, a 25 minute walk away. From Colombo take a Kirindivela Bus at Central Bus stand in Pættah, the bus leaves close to the Bodhi tree outside the station. In Kirindiwælla, ask for a bus to Ranwalla or Wedagama, get off at Meetirigala (25 min. walk from bus-stop to monastery.) (Don't take the bus to Ameetirigala which is further away. If coming from the Ratanapura side one can take a bus to Ameetirigala from Awissawella and ask the driver to stop at the Meetirigala junction. It is about 40 mins. walk from there. If coming from Kandy, take Colombo bus and get off at Nitambuwa, then go to Kirindiwela, etc.)

Nā Uyana AS. Pansiyagama 60554. Get down at Melsiripura on the Kurunegala - Dambulla Rd, from there take bus to Pansiyagama. The road to the monastery is in very bad condition and full of potholes, although the distance from Melsiripura is only 14 km it will take more than 45 min to get to the monatery by car.

The senior monk is Ven. Nā Uyana Ariyadhamma (often in Galdūwa). The meditation teacher is Ven. Ariyananda Thera, who speaks good English and has an excellent knowledge of the Pa Auk Samatha and Vipassana methods. An ancient monastery with a few caves and a beautiful forest with many big Ironwood trees. In the forest it is not too hot. There are 50-60 monks at present and there is a strong meditative atmosphere. Well organised, clean and tidy. A new meditation hall and some kuṭis are being built on top of one of the hills. The most prominent meditation place in the Galdūwa Sansthāva. Many foreign bhikkhus, Western as well as Asian, have stayed here, but none have taken the Pabbajā and Upasampadā so far here. Nissarana Vanaya is probably a better place to start the monastic life.

Island Hermitage. Polgasdūwa, Dodandūwa, 80250. Tel: 075-452453.

On 2 small forested islands in a tropical lagoon, 10 km south of the beach resort of Hikkadūwa. One needs to write the abbot before one comes so that he can arrange to have you picked up with the boat. Bhikkhus known to the place can try their luck at the Dodanduwa postoffice in the afternoon as the monastery mail will be picked up from there.

This famous place was founded by Ven. Nyanatiloka in the early 20th century. There an excellent Pāli, English, and German library. It generally is quite humid and hot and there is some noise the flying foxes and egrets roosting in the trees and also from temples, houses, and fishermen around the lake. A nice place for studies. Normally there are only few duties and a lot of independent practice possible. Generally good Vinaya standards. Ven. Muditamana, a junior Singhalese bhikkhu, has been the abbot for about three years. The last years few westerners have stayed here. Amarapura Nikāya.

Ven. Ñāṇavimala, the most senior Western (German) monk in the world, stays on Parapadūwa, a neighbouring island (near Katudampe pansala), with 2 of his (Singhalese) disciples. He is 93 now and it can be difficult to get permission to visit him.

University Forest Solitude or Bowalawatta A. Bowalawatta, Hantāna, nr. Kandy.

In a large forest (old tea-estate) on the mountain above Perādeniya University (1½ hours walking). About 8 km from Kandy town. Quiet. Cool climate, approx. 15 kuṭis, very neat, clean, and orderly. Ven. Sanāthavihari thera is here occasionally. He speaks excellent English and has experience with the Pa Auk method. He normally stays at Katupotha Kanda Aranya near Anuradhapura. Many western monks have stayed here. Affiliated to the Vajirañāna Dharmāyatana chapter of the Amapura Nikāya. Reasonable Vinaya.

At Kandy Clocktower Station take a Bowalawatta Bus. The conductors will know the place. From there follow the small signs or ask the way.

Nilambe Meditation Centre, Galaha, Kandy. (Mr. Upul Gamage: 0777-804555.)

The major lay-meditation centre in Sri Lanka for western travellers. Many westerners, both male and female, come here, but there are also some Sinhalese. Often a monk or two are visiting or staying there as well, but it is mainly a place for lay-people. There is a 400/- a day charge for lodgings and food (not for monks). There is a strong daily schedule and little talking. In tea-estate-country on a mountain-top above Peradeniya. Quiet area. Cool, wet climate, beautiful views. Relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Godwin Samararatne, the respected and internationally known meditation teacher, was long connected to this place and passed away in early 2000. The resident teacher for Sinhalese meditators is Mr. Upul Gamage. Other teachers also come occasionally. There is no resident teacher for westerners at the moment.

About 20 kms south of Kandy. From Kandy take a bus to Galaha get off 17 km after Peradeniya at the Nilambe Bungalow junction (conductors know the place). From there it is a steep 40 min. climb through tea plantations. Follow the white arrows.

Siyane VMC or Kanduboda VMC. Kanduboda, Delgoḍa. Tel. 011-2445518; 011-2570306. E-mail: bhavanam@sltnet.lk or mupali@sltnet.lk

A meditation centre and monastery with a long tradition of offering meditation-instruction to Westerners. Besides monks and nuns also lay meditators are welcome and some get ordination here. The main teacher and head monk is Ven. Upāli, who is very experienced in the Mahāsi tradition. Women have a separate, enclosed area, and ordination has sometimes been given for western women (which may interest potential dasa-sīl-maenayos). A few large buildings with rooms and some kuṭis. It is close to a small road and surrounded by coconut plantations and a few village houses. The teaching is in the Mahāsi tradition. The vinaya is reasonable. The daily schedule and discipline is more relaxed than in the Mahāsi centres in Burma. More individual meditation than group meditation.

Approximately 20 kms E of Colombo. From the CTB Bus Station at Olcott Mawatha, Pettah, take the 224 bus which stops outside the monastery; also the 207 bus from Gampaha goes there. Some of the buses to Kirindivella are passing near Kanduboda (but this is not a good option, as they are infrequent). Kanduboda has more than 25 branches throughout the country. Most are of no significance for westerners.

Sumantiphāla BM. Hibatgala Rd, Kanduboda, Delgoḍa. Tel: 011-2402805.

A new meditation centre has been opened in 2003 on the land right next to Kanduboda. Lay people can build kuṭis and have access to them for life. This might interest to those who may want to meditate but not become a monk. Thirty kuṭis have been built already.

The head of the new centre is Ven. Pemasiri, a popular and experienced teacher in the Mahāsi tradition who is helpful and friendly to foreigners. He used to stay in Kanduboda VMC and then in Lanka Vipassana Centre. (See next entry.) Besides the Mahāsi method he also teaches other traditional methods of meditation. The place is mainly for laypeople, but monks do visit and stay here for limited periods. The female yogis and nuns have their own separate area. The facilities are nice and spacious.

Lanka Vipassana IVMC. 108 Wijerāma Mawatha, Colombo 7. Tel. 011-2694-100.

This is a branch of Kanduboda. Ven. Pemasiri used to stay here, but moved to a new place next to Kanduboda in 2003 (see previous entry) and his place was taken over by Ven. Ariyavaṃsalaṅkara. The place has had many Western long-term monastic- and lay-residents and was also often visited by Western monks staying some days in Colombo for extending visas etc. Good support, tidy, clean, quiet. In Colombo's diplomatic quarter. Suitable place for lay-people who like to meditate. Fairly quiet for Colombo standards. Women stay in a separate wing.

Dhammakūṭa VMC. Mowbray, Galaha Road, Hindagala, Perādeniya. (Nr. Kandy) 081-2234649/081-2385774-5/070-800057. email: dhamma@sltnet.lk Website: www.lanka.com/dhamma/dhammakuta

Meditation centre where Vipassana Meditation courses are given in the tradition of Sayagi U Ba Khin, as taught by S.N. Goenka. On a mountain, beautiful views, cool. Only courses, no permanent residents. Once a year, in November or December, there is a course which is for bhikkhus only.

Other Places:

Colombo

The capital of Sri Lanka. A hot, humid, noisy, polluted, and sensual place.

Pagoda Meditation Centre. 49/2, 1st Cross Street, Pagoda Road, Nugegoda. Tel: 011-2812397. Website: <http://groups.msn.com/PagodaMeditationCentre>

A new centre started by Ven. Olanda Ānanda, a well-known senior Dutch monk who speaks fluently Sinhala and has been teaching meditation for a long time in Sri Lanka and abroad. There is no accomodation to stay yet, but visitors are welcome. Retreats are planned. Situated in a fairly area in a suburb of Colombo.

Kanduboda VMC. Delgoḍa. See above.

Lanka Vipassana IVMC. 108 Wijerāma Mawatha, Colombo. See above.

Shri Kalyāṇī DA (Formerly known as 'German Dharmadūta'), 418/31 Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 07, 00700. (Tel: 01-696 494) Abbot: Ven. Nanda thera. Main Galdūwa place in Colombo, thus sometimes crowded with visiting and sick monks from all over Sri Lanka. Guest monks normally stay in a dormitory. Strict Vinaya standards, clean and tidy. Between a major road and school, so it can be fairly noisy.

International Buddhist Research and Information Center (IBRIC) / Nārada Center, 380/9, Sarana Road, Colombo 00700 Tel 689388. e-mail bic@col7.metta.lk Prof. Bhikkhu Dhammavihari's and Ven. Mettavihari's place. On the ground floor there is a Buddhist book shop with a wide selection of books. Small place, outsiders can't stay here. The Danish Bhikkhu Mettavihari is helpful and can provide useful information to westerners new to the country.

Bhikkhu Training Center - Maharagama. Lake Road, Maharagama, Tel. 011-2850-305 or 011-2850-207. Major training-centre for young Singhalese monks. The late Mahānayaka of the

Amarapura Nikaya used to stay here. There is a “meditation section” in the back where foreign monks sometimes stay. The new Mahānayaka is in Ratmalāna. There are over 25 branches throughout the country, with Bowalawatte A. as its major forest hermitage.

Sambodhi Vihāra. 106 Wijerāma Mawatha, Colombo 00700. Tel. 011-689307. Next door to Lanka Meditation Centre; see above. The abbot is Ven. Kusaladhamma thera. Small place, with only a few monks and good support. Joining in for outside functions, such as dānas and funerals of important people, is expected. Reasonable vinaya. It is next to road and somewhat noisy. At the moment there is a very large building project going on on the premises. Amarapura Nikāya.

Vajirāramaya, Vajira Road, Bambalapitiya. Colombo 4 . Tel. 011-2584-202. Close to Gālla Road. An old and reknown place with a famous tradition of scholars like Ven. Nārada, Kheminda, and Ven. Piyadassi. The standards have gone down the last decades. Visitors might have to go on piṇḍapāta and in this way they can normally stay without duties or involvement. Good library, but it might be difficult to get access to. Amarapura Nikāya.

Buddhist Cultural Center, (= B.C.C), 125 Anderson Road, Nedimala, Dehiwala, Tel. 726234, 734256 Fax. 736737. Director: Ven. Vimalajothi thera. Comprehensive selection of Buddhist Books. PTS books in stock. A deposit can be made on behalf of a monk so he can get books. It is maybe possible to stay here. There is a branch-bookshop at the junction of Baudhaloka Mawatha and Sarana-road in the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress compound, and 2 smaller centres, one in Kelaniya, and another near Lake House alongside the cetiya opposite the Hilton. Affiliated to this place is a meditation centre in Horana outside Colombo: Dekandūwala Meditation Centre; see the next entry.

Dekandūwala M.C. Kananwila, Kahatapitiya, Horana. Inquiries and bookings should be made through Ven. Vimalajothi at the Buddhist Cultural Center, see Colombo. It is situated on a hill-top. Kuṭis and rooms. Good facilities, nice meditation hall, quiet, nice views. Westerners are welcome to stay here. A place mainly for lay-meditators, but monks are also welcome.

Central Hospital Vajirāramaya, Central Hospital, Colombo, 01 692018. Temple in General Hospital. The resident bhikkhu is very helpful for sick monks.

Police Mortuary. St. Francis St. (Off Kinsey Rd.) It is situated in the small St Francis Street behind the Medical College (which is opposite the SE corner of the General Hospital complex.) This police morgue is suitable for practising the *asubha-kammaṭṭhāna*. Bhikkhus normally do not need to get official permission to enter here and they can walk in and have a look. (Otherwise, ask permission from the director, Dr. Alwis, or from one of the anatomists. The monk at the nearby Central Hospital Vajirāmāya - see above - can help too.) There is very poor hygiene and one needs to be careful. Don't go bare-footed into the cutting theaters as there are scalpels, blood stains, etc., on the floor. Open on all days, but on Saturdays and Sundays only in the morning. Old corpses in various stages of decay are in the cool-cells next to the main autopsy room and can be viewed too. Nearby, off Kinsey Road on the backside of the Hospital, is the Hospital Mortuary where autopsies are also done.

Gilan-āvāsaya, 525/3 Elvitigala Mawatha, Nārāhænpiṭa, Colombo 5, 00500. Tel: 075-350-976. Small place where sick Galdūwa monks can stay in Colombo. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Vishva Niketan International Peace Centre. 72/30 Rawatawatte Road, Moratuwa. Tel/Fax: (94-1)655653 E-mail: vishvaniketan@mail.ewisl.net. Affiliated to the Sarvodaya movement, they have programs for males and females of all religions.

Divulpitiya Dhammāyatana. Divulpitiya. (Managed by The Leela Jayatilaka Trust)

Gothama T. Kalapaluwawa, Mulleriyawa-New Town.

Sri Kavidhaja Vachissara MC. High Level Road, Meegoda.

Vipassana Bhāvanāyatana. Sri Jayawardenapura, Rajamalwatte, Kumbukgahadūwa, Battaramulla.

VMC. Talagala, Millewa.

The area around Colombo, Avissawella, and Gampaha.

Due to its proximity to the capital there are many monasteries here. Mostly flatland with some small hills, rubber estates and paddyfields. Hot and humid climate. The monasteries and centres in the area about 40 km around Colombo have been listed here, although they might rather be in Kægalla district or another district.

Nissarana Vanaya, Mithirigala. See above Major Places list.

Sri Ñāṇarāma Dharmāyatana, Mithirigala 11742. Nr. Kirindiwela. On the hill next to Nissarana Vanaya. This place was set up to be the largest Study and Vinaya training centre of the Galdūwa group but it was a flop. In the mid-nineties it became a Pa Auk meditation centre for a while, since then it has been a quiet place with about six monks and no teacher. Large meditation hall. Compound rooms. Regrowing forest.

Dikhena BM. Dikhena, Polgasowita 10320. (Tel: 780140) Meditation Centre. Facilities for laymen and laywomen. Set in coconut estate near Piliyandala, Kesbewa, south of Colombo. Facilities for about 12 monks. Two-week meditation courses for laymen and laywomen. Excellent meditation hall. Fairly quiet. Abbot: Ven. Vinīta thera teaches Mahāsi Method. Ven. Sumanasīla thera teaches Pa Auk method when visiting. At times a bit hot and humid. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Shanti Y. Arukpitiya, Talangama South 10120. (Tel: 864973) 10 km E of Colombo. Abbot- Ven. Dhammasiddhi. Friendly and supportive. Monastery in small area with many buildings. A bit cramped. A few kuṭis. Some noise. Foreign monks have stayed here.

Ñāṇacetiya Y. Raiyadoluwa, Uggalboda, Udugampola 11030. Head Monk: Ven. Dhammananda who speaks good English and is very knowledgeable with regards the suttas and vinaya. One can go on piṇḍapata. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Polwatta BM / Sri Dharmodaya BC. Industries Estate / Polwatta, Minuwangoda, Ekala 11380. Near Ja Ela between Colombo and Negombo. About 1-2 acres with buildings on industrial palm estate.. Not so suitable for meditation. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Haddagala AS or **Indomulla AS**. Indolamulla, Dompe 11680. About 20 kms E of Colombo. Rocks, 20 minute climb, good views, secluded. 3-4 monks. Affiliated to Galdūwa. Maybe this is the same place as Māligātenna described in FM p. 178.

Gothama T. Kalapaluwewa, Mulleriyawa-New Town. Buddhist centre established in a humid and hot twelve acre forest grove three kilometres from the Colombo city limits. A monastery with a Mahāsi tradition meditation centre and a boy's orphanage. The abbot is D. Chandrasiri thera, the nāyaka thera of the Kalyāṇavaṃsa of the Amarapura nikāya to which the Tapovana group and Ven. Kiribathgoda Nāṇānanda's Mahanewna group are connected.

Mahamevnawa Bhāvanā Asapuwa. Dompe, Palugama. Monastery connected to Ven. Kiribathgoda

Nāṇānanda; see Mahamevnawa Asapuwa near Kægalla. Kuṭis in an regrowing jungle in an abandoned rubber-estate on a hill in the Dompe area. About 16 monks. Well supported.

Amawathura Asapuwa. Pittugala, Malabe. Ven. Kiribathgoda Nāṇānanda's teaching centre for Colombo laypeople. Along road from Awissawella, near Colombo. Meditation centre in suburban area. Large meditation and Dhamma hall. 4 monks.

Sri Piyananda VMC, Naiwala Road, Udugampola, Doranagoda, Gampaha. Quite a large centre - probably has kuṭis. Ven. Visuddhi is the headmonk. Westerners have stayed there. Affiliated to Kanduboda.

Isigilikanda VMC. On a rock-hill with caves about 5 km away from Kanduboda towards the north, near Naranwala, via Udupila. Hot. At the moment, 2004, somewhat run down and not so suitable.

Upāsikārāmaya and Maṅgalārāmaya, Mithirigala. A handful of Austrian monks are living here. Simple kuṭis, piṇḍapāta, few possessions, ardent practise of meditation. Disciples of Ven. K. Nāṇānanda. See Potgulgala Aranya under Kægalla District.

Sirimaṅgala Y. Danawikanda, Wæliveriya. On Colombo - Mitirigala bus route. Coconut estate. Nice kuṭis. One big house. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Aturugiriya BM, Aturugiriya 10150. Ask your way from Colombo. Abbot - Ven. Nāṇānanda thera. Formerly a study place, but now a a meditation centre. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Ratnagiri Vivekāshrāmaya, Napawala, Awissavella. New place of Ven. Sanghasubhadra. Old bungalow in rubber estate. Intends to build kuṭis. 3 km from Awissavella.

Shri Kalyāna DA. No. 272, Dompe 11680. 35 kms E of Colombo. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Warana A. Warana. (= 5 km E from Yakkala on Colombo-Kandy road.) Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Devagiri AS. Puwakmal Ella, Udamalibada 71411. Avissawella area. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Shailagiri Y. Dæranियagala 71430. Tel: 036-49455. 15 kms E of Awissawella, Kægalla District. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Shaila-pabbata Y. Vidiyawatta, (Miyanawiṭa), Dæranियagala 71432. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Nugasevana Senasuna. Waharaka, Gonagaldeniya 71304. (Midway between Nittanbuwa and Ruwanwella. 12 km east of Kirindiwella.) Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sama Uyana T. Galboda, Waturugama 11742. E ? of Kirindiwela. Affiliated to Galdūwa.
Sri Shānta Tapovana AS. Katuwawa, Kalagedihena 11875. Affiliated to Galdūwa.
Siri Mangala Y. Danawkanda, Kirikitta, Weliveriya 11710. 25 km NE of Colombo. Affiliated to Galdūwa.
Maligātenna AS. Gampaha. Affiliated to Waturawila.
Mahakanda Purāna AS. Alawala, Weyangoda. Affiliated to Waturawila.
Millatākanda AS. Millate, Kirindiwælla. Affiliated to Waturawila.
Bopætta Viveka S. Ūrāpola. (Between Nittanbuwa and Kirindiwælla.) Affiliated to Waturawila.
Kolankanda AS. Diddeniya, Hanwælla. Affiliated to Waturawila.
Katana VMC, Sri Wimaldhamma Tissa Mawatha, Katana (North). Affiliated to Kanduboda.
Indigolla MC, Indigolla, Gampaha. Affiliated to Kanduboda.
Katuwalamulle MC, Katuwalamulla, Ganemulla. Affiliated to Kanduboda.
Meegahawatta MC, Meegahawatta. Affiliated to Kanduboda.

Kandy

The ancient capital of the hill country. A fairly large town with the temple of the tooth-relic and the two headquarters of the Siam Nikaya. There are some forests left on the hills and mountains. Temperate climate, cool at night.

Lewella MC, 160 Dharmashoka Mawatha, Kandy 20000, Tel. 08-2225471. Fax 08-2225471. A Meditation Centre connected with Nilambe, mainly for lay-people, both Westerners and Sinhalese. There is a house near a road and 4 kuṭis in the shrubby forest on the slope above the house near the Eastern edge of the Udawattekele. Group-meditation in evening. Yoga-classes. Monks are also welcome here. This place is in a town-area and can therefore be a bit noisy.

Sri Daladā Tapovanaya, Udawattakæle, Kandy. Headmonk: Ven Satimanta therā. Forest-monastery / temple, 5 - 15 monks, at the entrance of the Udawattakele Sanctuary. Western monks often stay here. Good support, kuṭis and rooms. Clean and tidy. Affiliated to the Tapovana group.

Forest Hermitage, Udawattakele, c/o Buddhist Publication Society, PO Box 61, Kandy. Tel: 07777-65944. The hermitage of Ven. Ñāṇatiloka, Ven. Ñāṇaponika, and Ven. Bodhi. The monastery is supported by the B.P.S. Good library. Monks and laypeople visiting the Forest Hermitage need not pay the fee for the Udawattakele sanctuary. Small place. Visitors usually need to go on piṇḍapāta. If one wishes to stay overnight it might be better to write beforehand to the resident bhikkhu, Ven. Ñāṇatusita. If there is no place one can stay at Senanayakārāma (see below) or Tapovana.

Senanāyake Ārāmaya, Udawattakele, Kandy. Next door to Forest Hermitage. Quiet place where both Western and Sinhalese bhikkhus stay. Bhikkhus go on piṇḍapāta.

Potgul Vihāra. Anagarika Dharmapala Mawatha, Kandy. Amarapura Nikaya. A few kuṭis. Near the Kandy lake and the Temple of the Tooth (Sri Dalida Maligawa). On slope of

Udawattakele Sanctuary. Quite noisy due to being located above major road. Western bhikkhus have stayed here.

Burmese Resthouse. D.S. Senanayaka Maw/Trincomalee Street. Near Trinity College. Burmese vihāra on a major street in the center of Kandy. One or two Burmese monks are residing here. Laypeople can get a room against a small payment and the place is popular with western backpackers.

Primrose Vajirārāma Primrose Gardens, Kandy, Tel 08 225353. On hill above Kandy. Westerners have stayed here. About 15 monks. There might be kuṭis. Amarapura Nikāya.

Ulpatkanda A. S. Springhill Watta, Hantana, Kandy. Phone: 081-2233471. New place. Kuṭis are under construction. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Buddhist Publication Society (B.P.S.), PO Box 61, 54 Sangharaja Mawatha, Kandy. Tel: 081-2237283. The B.P.S., founded by Ven. Ñāṇaponika, has a big bookshop with large assortment of Buddhist books. There is also a reasonable reference library upstairs.

Kandy District

Pāramitā International Buddhist Centre. No. 07 Balumgala, Kadugannāwa, Tel/Fax.08-570732 (office). A recently built meditation centre on the hill above the point where the Kandy-Colombo road starts going down the mountains (where the old road goes through the rock); 20 km west of Kandy. There is a good library. A comfortable place geared for westerners who like good facilities and food. Various teachers come for visits. Ven. Sīlananda is the resident teacher and main organizer. Some noise from Kandy-Colombo road.

University Vihāra, Perādeniya University, Peradeniya. Vihāra in quiet area on the border of the forest behind the University. Near the university library. Western monks sometimes stay here, but it is a crowded and busy place.

Nilambe MC, Galaha Rd, Kandy. See Major Places above.

Dhammakuta VMC. Mowbray, Galaha Road. Hindagala, Peradeniya. See Major Places above.

University Forest Solitude or Bowalawatta A. Bowalawatta, Hantana, nr. Kandy. See Major Places above.

Subodhārāma, Peradeniya. Amarapura Nikaya. Pirivena/Study Centre. Rooms & kuṭis. A few western bhikkhus have stayed here. Possibly a good place for learning the Sinhalese language and monk's chanting and customs etc.

Devanapathis International Samatha-vipassana Meditation Center, Pallakæle, Kandy. The centre of the late Ven. Amatagavesi therā. Several Sinhalese nuns and one monk are resident. Meditation instruction and courses (on cassette-tapes) in English are available.

Bo Uyana AS. Pallegama, Nawalapitiya. Ven. Sumanasiri, also good young monk Ven. Ariyañāṇa. New place. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Rock Hill Hermitage, Wegirikanda, Gampola. The place made a new start in 2003 after a long period of absence of Ven. Kassapa, the abbot. It used to be a fairly popular place for Western travellers in the nineteen-eighties. A rocky hill with caves in a quiet area. Ven. Kassapa, a junior bhikkhu, has been much involved with helping dying people and in giving lectures to doctors, etc, since being a layman in Australia.

Dumbara Y. c/o Amila Services. Digana, Rājawella, 20180. On Māhiyangana road from Kandy. In the Victoria reservoir valley. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sri Veluvana Y / Devagolla Y. Devagolla Alupathakada, Uduwela, Mahanuwara 20164. 4 miles along the Kandy-Uduwela Rd. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sangharāja Gallena. Udawela, Upper Division, Hantana Estate, Kandy 20000.

Sri Dātu Gal-lena A. / Dri Daladalena As / Galiha A. Mahāweli Raja Mawatha, Adhikārigama, Gonagantenna, Hangu ranketa. 25 kms SE of Kandy on the road to Randenigala Reservoir, less than 1 km from Adhikārigama. On steep, forested mountain-slope. Nice views, from the vihāra the Randenigala reservoir can be seen. Small place, not so well kept. Facilities for about 6 monks. A few ancient caves and kuṭis. Moderately cool climate. Maybe some noise from houses and the road in the valley. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Diyamakanda A. Liyamagahakotuwa, Handessa. Between Perādeniya and Gampola, near the Embekke devale. Small place, 2 monks, caves. Probably connected to Waturawila.

Dhannika Puññavaradhanāshramaya. Makehelwela, Wattedama, 71411. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Bambaragala. Digana. An ancient cave monastery on a rocky hill near the Victoria dam. Connected to Asgiriya Siyam Nikāya. Now a village temple but on the hill there are old caves.

Nuwara Eliya District

The centre and highest part of the hill country. Coolest climate in Sri Lanka. Mostly tea estates, but there is some remnant forests on the mountains.

Rahatungoda Y. Hewahæta 20440. 30 kms SE of Kandy. Tea-estate country. Very cool. 3 resident monks. Friendly and helpful abbot: Ven. Nyanavimala. 6 nice kuṭis. Several foreign monks have spent Vassa here and many visited. Not far from village and there might be some village-noise. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Asokārāmaya, Hawa Eliya, Nuwara Eliya. Tel 052 280994. Probably the coldest monastery in Sri Lanka. Western monks sometimes stay here. Rooms. Vajirañāṇā Amarapura Nikāya.

Udakirinda BM. Bogakumbara, Welimada. Meditation-centre with compound and also a few kuṭis. Siyam-nikāya. Mahāsi Method. A few westerners have stayed here. Mountain area 5 miles north of Keppetipola.

Haputale District / Uva province.

The southern edge of the hill and mountain country. Cool climate and spectacular views over the southern lowland. Mostly tea and vegetable estates.

Kolatenna Hermitage, Bandārawela. Another place where western bhikkhus have stayed for a long time, but at present the only residents are Sinhalese bhikkhus from nearby Kahagolla, Diyatalāwa. Rooms for approx. 4 persons, good library. Piṇḍapāta. Over 1000m altitude, cool climate. Surrounded by village and tea-estates on a mountain-slope above village-areas. Noise from temples, an army-camp, and the surrounding villages. From Bandarawela walk approx. 2 kms on the Haputale Road, then at the railway crossing turn down to the right. Founded by a Tsech monk in the 1960's.

Shri Nāṇārāma Vivekāshramaya / Kahagolla A. Kahagolla, Diyatalāwa 90150. 5 kms SW of Bandārawela, Badulla District. Above 1000m, cool, nice climate. Rooms in a communal building. In village area, near army-camp. Can be noisy. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Piyangala A. Welihællagama, Diyatalāwa 90150. Small aranya with a few kuṭis on a slope with pineforest in a quiet river-valley 4 km south of Diyatalāwa. Cool climate. Probably a few monks from Kahagolla are residing here, ask your way from Kahagolla A.

Kalyāṇī Yogāshrama. Nikapitiya, Gampaha, near Koslanda. Between Haputale/Beragala and Wellawaya, Uva Province. 200 acres of forested land. Still undeveloped due to lack of funds. Only one hut. Affiliated to Galdūwa. Not as high as Haputale, but still has a pleasant climate with cool nights.

Kalutara District

Coastal district. Hot and humid. On the inland hills, where it rains a lot, there are some small wilderness areas. Flatland along coast. Rubber and palm estates.

Kalugala AS. Pahalahewessa, Badureliya, Mātugama.

One of the nicest places in Sri Lanka in terms of seclusion and nature. Remotely situated inside a valley surrounded by hills. Western bhikkhus have stayed here for long periods. Meditative atmosphere. Friendly monks. Good vinaya. Kuṭis and caves. Wet, dense forest with many leeches. Moderate temperature. The most senior monk, who was formerly the abbot and meditation teacher, is very old now, but the second and third monks are experienced meditators are helpful. Not a place which is suitable for beginners. Founded in 1942; see FM p. 178. The place is unaffiliated to any tradition and monks from both Waturawila Vanavāsin group and the Amarapura nikāya stay here. From Kalutara take a bus to Mātugama, from there a bus to Badureliya, and then about an hour of walking. Or, when coming from the South along the Gālla-Colombo road, take a bus from Aluthgama to Pelawatta and walk for more than an hour.

Madakada AS. (Ingiriya A.) Ingiriya Approx. half way on the Pānadura-Ratnapura road. Forest in river-gulley. Wet. Friendly abbot. Good vinaya. About 15 monks. This seems to be the headquarters now of a section of the Waturawila group who are keeping strict vinaya

standards (not touching money etc.) and follow the example of the Galdūwa group. Aligned with this group is Salgala, and a number of other aranyas.

Bodhināgala A. on Pānadura-Ratnapura Road, one mile before Ingiriya, sign along Road. Forest monastery. Amarapura Nikaya.

Dharmadvīpa Y. Kalawilawatta, Aluthgama. Place near beach in a mangrove forest at the mouth of the Bentota Ganga. Hot and humid. The head monk, Ven. Sārananda, is very kind and helpful. He is teaching meditation at local ayurveda clinics, etc. A fairly large place, with about 15 monks. There are kuṭis among the mangroves, but the main attraction of this place is the little rock-island about 50 m. off the beach with a few kuṭis. It is accessible only by boat. A few western monks have stayed here. On the beach, visible from one side of the island, western girls in and out of bikinis might attract unrestrained eyes... (At the 59 km. stone on Colombo-Gālla road. Step out at the Blue Lagoon Hotel or at the big bridge over the Bentota River.)

Shri Kalyāna DA. De Abrew Mawatha, Kalutara North 12000. Affiliated to Galdūwa. Spacious compound on beach. No kuṭis but 3 rooms. Helpful English speaking monk.

Tundola A. Egodakanda, Polgampala, Matugama, 12136. Via Mātugama and Agalavatta. Not far from Kalugala A. Abandoned for long time as the local laypeople lost faith due to the misbehaviour of a monk. In 2004 bhikkhus connected to Kandubodha/Lanka Vipassana Centre went there to stay. 10 kuṭis on a hill. Rainforest. From Mātugama take Pelwatta bus, get down at Polgampala.

Pūjālena AS. Kirimætiyāwala, Hædigala 12234. (Nr Horana). Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Migahatenna BM. Migahatenna, Siyambalope. (E of Bentota, not far from Kalugala A.) Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Weligalpotta AS. Yagirala, Awittawa. (? Kalutara Distr.) Affiliated to Waturawila.

Ratnapura District

The gem district. Hills and mountains. Some fairly large wilderness areas in the mountains and hills. Warm and humid climate.

Sinharāja Prānta AS. Kadamuduna, Bulutota, Rakwāna, more than 30 kms SE of Ratnapura. On the top of a slope on a mountain-range in tea-estate country. Beautiful views. Cool, dense rain-forest. (Leech-country). Western bhikkhus have stayed here. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Sīlasamāhita YA or **Belihul Oya BM.** Sīlagama, Belihul Oya, 70140. 15 kms north-west of Balangoda on the road to Haputale. About 6 monks, some noise from road below, cool climate and beautiful scenery. Ven. Nāṇaramita, a senior German monk, is living there. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Lellopitiya VBM. Lellopitiya 10 km E of Ratnapura. The head monk is Ven. Piyananda, the Swegyin Mahānayaka thera and Vinaya ācariya. Quite a large centre, with emphasis on study, well situated. Affiliated to Kanduboda.

Balangoda VMC. Thotupola-tenna, Balangoda. The head monk is Ven. Mahānāma who is very kind and helpful. Foreign monks have stayed there. A number of kuṭis, well situated atop a hill, good support from local village. Affiliated to Kanduboda.

Śri Nandārāma. Udumulla, Bulatgama, via Balangoda. The late Ven. Balangoda Ānanda's place. The Japanese sect leader Aum Shinryo had a very large library built here in which Ven. Balangoda Ānanda's large collection of books is kept. A pansala with a few kuṭis. On hill-top, scenic views over the mountains. Amarapura Nikāya.

Samangiri AS. Warnagala, Eratna 70560. (On Avissawella-Ratnapura road turn left at Kuruwita.) On Sri Pāda mountain.

Sri Pada AS. Siripagama, Palabaddala. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Indolawatta AS or **Assagiri YA.** Indolawatta, Ayagama 70024. (= 12 km west of Ratnapura.) Hermitage affiliated to Galdūwa.

Badūwæla Kanda Kuṭiya. c/o Mahindakade, Gangodakanda, Ayagama 70024. (= 12 km west of Ratnapura.) Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Iluktenna AS. Panilkanda, Ulliduwāwa, Deniyāya. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Sri Dhammapāla AS. Kolawenigama, Pallegama, Deniyāya. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Budulena AS. Waturāwa, Kalawāna. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Bambaragala AS. Galpāya, Pallebedda, Godakawela. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Samanala AS. Massæna, Balangoda. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Bulatwatta Gāllena AS. Lellopitiya. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Ætugalakanda AS. Kolandagala, Lellopitiya. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Merekele AS. Paranagama, Ellawala. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Gālla District

Coastal district. Hot and humid. The headquarters of the forest traditions of Sri Lanka are in this district. Inland there are some fairly large wilderness areas on the hills and mountains such as the Singharāja NP. The Singharaja area is the largest and wettest rainforest in Sri Lanka.

Island Hermitage, Dodandūwa, see Major Places above. .

Shri Gunawardhana Y. or **Galdūwa A.** Galdūwa, Kahawa. Between Ambalangoda and Hikkadūwa.

Ven. Ariyadhamma is the abbot of this monastery, as well as the head of the Galdūwa group. He is highly proficient in the Pa Auk meditation system as well as in the Mahāsi meditation system and is a Tipiṭaka Bhāṇaka, having mastered the Pāli scriptures. The place is mainly a training center for junior monks. Three times daily Buddha-Puja/Vandana and a lot of scriptural study. Ven. Ariyadhamma knows and visits all Galdūwa places regularly and can give advice about their suitability. Hot and humid climate as it is situated in a palm-estate area on the edge of a swamp adjoining the coast.

Vanavāsa Saṅgha Mūlasthānaya or **Waturawila A.** Waturawila, Tibbotuwæwa, Kahadūwa. About 20 km inland (NE) from Hikkaduwa. The headquarters of the Waturawila group. One section is a large pirivena with many novices, the other section is a forest-monastery.

Deldūwa A. In the Ambalangoda area. The headquarter of the Deldūwa forest division of the Rāmañña Nikāya.

Kottawa Nāga A. Kottawa, Kottagama. 12 km E of Gālla. Take bus to Udagama from Gālla and get off at Kottawa junction.

About 50 acres of forest on small hills with a stream running through it. Fairly quiet. Warm & humid. Several kuṭis. Western monks have stayed here regularly. At present the Austrian Ven. Ñāṇasanta, who was formerly at the Island Hermitage, is residing here. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Tripitaka DA. (Koggala A.) Koggala, Habarāduwa 80630. 10 km SW of Gālla.

Originally a meditation monastery, but it is now more study orientated. The monastery comprises of a number of buildings and kuṭis situated on a small raised elevation of land jutting out into a lagoon and approached by a causeway. Hot and humid. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Diviyāgala AS. Kosgoda 80570. 10 kms south of Bentota.

The headmonk, Ven. Dhammasīla Mahāthera, has been long time resident of Nissarana Vanaya. Quiet, nice patch of forest, about 6 monks. Good kuṭis. At times hot and humid. Good library, also English books. Good food and vandana in the evening. Forest hermitage affiliated to Galdūwa.

Opāta A. / Rajavangala A. Opāta, Akuressa, 81442. 30 km SE of Gālla.

Nice monastery in forested hilly area with streams. Ven. Suguṇasāra, a meditation teacher in Pa Auk tradition, helpful and friendly, is staying here. Wet, not too hot climate. Affiliated to Galdūwa. Take an Akuressa bus from Gālla and then an Udugama or Tawalama bus. Get down at Opāta. Senanayaka Rd, 3 1/2 kms from Opāta.

Suddællāva AS. Ihalahewessa, Pitigala. (10 kms NE from Elpitiya) This is supposed to be a nice place, beautifully situated, but a little hard living. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Sinhalena T. Kosmulla, Neluwa 80082. About 50 km NE of Gālla. 30 km E of Ambalangoda. Abbot - Ven. Jinavaṃsa. Few monks. On the western edge of the large Singharāja Rain-Forest National Park. Dense rainforest with streams and waterfalls etc. Wet and humid, moderately cool climate. Two large (unused) rock-caves inside the monastery boundary. Take bus from Gālla to Neluwa and then walk for about one hour (or more?) up a mountain through tea-plantations. Western bhikkhus have stayed here for long periods. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Uluwahugala AS. Mawita, Neluwa, 80082. Nr. Neluwa; see above. Forest Hermitage affiliated to Galdūwa.

Vihāragoda Viveka Senasenaya, Vihāragoda, Watugedara 80340. Ambalangoda area. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Vivekārāmaya. Godakanda, Karapitiya. Just outside Gālla town. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Shri Ñāṇabhasara Y. Ihala Dickson Pāra, Gālla 80000. Tel: 075451762. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sri Kaḷyāṇā DA. Lawallena Watta, Baddegama 80200. (= 10 km inland from Hikkadūwa.) Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Nāgala A. Eppala, Panangala. 80075. Near Sinharaja NP. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sītaladela AS. Nākiyādeniya Watta, Pilidola Koṭasa, Nākiyādeniya. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Nugagala AS. Yālagala, Hiniduma, Udugama. Remote forest monastery. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Digālena AS. Narawæl Kætiya, Piṭuwala, Elpitiya. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Diwankaralena AS. Dūwa Piṭuwala, Elpitiya. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Viveka S. Agalia, Baddegama. (= 10 km inland from Hikkadūwa.) Maybe connected to Waturawila.

Mātara District

Coastal district. Hot and humid. Some small wilderness areas, but generally developed. Flatland along coast, inland some hills.

Shri Rohana Y./Puhulwella A. Puhulwella, Hakmana 81390. 15 km E of Mātara. Ask your way from Mātara. Well-known and well supported place. Kuṭis in 2 lines up forested hill. Foreign monks have stayed here. Some sound from village. Warm and humid. Affiliated to Galdūwa. Founded in the early 1950's; see FM 218.

Ellakanda AS. Kækanadura 81020. 10 kms E of Mātara.

Abbot: Ven. Sudhamma. A very calm cultured thera with learning and experience in meditation. Meditation-centre. It is situated in a state forest on a peninsula surrounded by a reservoir. Several foreign monks have stayed here for extended periods. Warm and humid. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Kirinda A. Kirinda. 15 km NE of Mātara. Old forest on a hill. A historical place, as it is the oldest continually occupied forest monastery in Sri Lanka, founded by Ven. Paññānanda, the founder of the Rāmañña nikāya, in the early 1850's; see FM p. 69 f. Affiliated to Deldūwa.

Baṭuvita A. Baṭuvita. In the Mātara area. (A few miles from Puhulwella A.) Affiliated to Deldūwa. The second oldest forest monastery in Sri Lanka; see Kirinda A. above.

Tummodara AS. Kandambigoda, Parapāmulla, Hakmana. (20 km NE of Mātara). Affiliated to Waturawila.

Aharagala AS. Dellawa, Morawaka 81477. Approx 30 kms N of Mātara. Forest hermitage affiliated to Galdūwa.

Nigrodhārāmaya S. Waturawa, Beliatta, Kumbara Post Office 70456.(= 30 km E of Mātara.) Hermitage affiliated to Galdūwa.

Rammale AS. Rammala, Warāpitiya, Walasmulla. (= 30 km NE of Mātara.) Affiliated to Waturawila.

Wawulagala AS. Wawulagala Watuyāya, Hawupe, Imadūwa. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Siri Sugata T. Poratota, Akuressa. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Dediyagala AS. Dediyagala, Malidūwa, Akuressa. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Mātale District

The Tipiṭaka was first written down at the Aluvihāra near Mātale town. The northern part of the hill and mountain country. Some large wilderness areas.

Laggala Forest Area. There are a number of kuṭis with excellent seclusion in the large wilderness area between the eastern slopes of the Knuckles Mountain Range (Dumbara Kanda), E of Mātale, and the Wasgamuwa National Reserve, SW of Polonnaruwa. Conditions are simple and sometimes tough. Open 3 wall kuṭis and caves, small remote villages, sometimes long and rough piṇḍapāta and simple food, (a little) chance of malaria, elephants, leopards, and bears. A place for those who are lovers of intense solitude and are experienced in bhāvana. Ven. Saṅkicca can help to introduce one to this area; see the next entry.

Watagala BM, Watagala, Moragaha Ulpata, Wilgamuwa 21000. Near Laggala, Hettipola. Abbot -Ven. Sankicca thera. He speaks good English and likes to help with introducing foreign monks to the Laggala area; see above. Only facilities for 3 monks. Caves and kuṭis. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Lumatuwa A. Udutenna 21006. Mātale - Godapola, Alwatta. About 5-8 kms outside Mātale by bus. Large cave used as vihāra. Facilities only for a few monks. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Nirodha International Bhāvanā Centre. Knuckles Estate Bungalow, Bambara Ella, Wattegama. On upper Western slopes of the Knuckles Range, 30 km NE of Kandy. Tea and cardamom estates. Quite cool, lots of rain, spectacular views. An old British tea-estate house. Manager living in other side of house. Large rooms. Nice place for walking, but there are many leeches. The place is connected to Ven. Homagama Kondañña but he is not there most of the time. Simple food.

A few kms away there is a very large natural cave in a small valley above (NE) the Bambara Ella village (below the Nirodha estate). It is not used but could be a suitable place. Ask the estate manager (Mr. Jewanis) in Bambara Ella. Take a bus from Wattegama (on Kandy-Mātale Rd) to Bambara Ella (by way of Panwila.)

Cetiya Giriya, Maningamuwa, Pallepola, Mātale District. On a rocky hill 20 km NW of Mātale. Moderately cool climate. The English Bhikkhu Ānandajoti is looking after the place. Small centre, only 2 or 3 monks. A few kuṭis and caves. Two caves connected to this place are semi-independent. Amarapura Nikāya.

Gallenawatta AS. Ætābendiwæwa Pāra, Pannampitiya. Turn left from the Mātale-Dambulla Rd. ± 8 km before Dambulla. About 1.5 km. Caves in the base of a hill. Kuṭis close to each other, but there are many other caves in this area. A few bhikkhus and several novices. Further on the road there are ancient ruins. Friendly abbot. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Enderagala S. Palwehera, Dambulla (6 km north of Dambulla, on Habarana Rd.). This is now the headquarters of a small group of monasteries that broke away from Waturawila. Mihindu A. in Mahintale, and Ritigala A. are affiliated with this group.

Pidurangala. Pidurangala Rājamahāvihāra, Pidurangala, Sigiriya. 2 km E of Sigiriya rock, near ancient monastery ruins. Several ancient cave kuṭis under a large boulder-hill in the Sigiriya forest not far from a Pirivena. Some caves have been repaired, but might not have been used for a number of years as the pirivena is not a meditation centre. The friendly head monk will probably be supportive if one wishes to stay in one of the caves.

Māliyadeva Devala Len Vihāraya. Elkaduwa Pāra, Punchi Mola, Wattagama. Comfortable kuṭis and a cave where the arahant Māliyadeva is supposed to have stayed. Supposed to be a nice place on a mountain with forest. The place belongs to a Siyam Nikaya scholar monk who comes for retreats here and is supportive in supporting forest monks who want to maintain proper vinaya practice.

Konāravatta. Atanvala. S of Kaikawala/Rattota, nr Mātale. Tel: 066-2233450. New, scenic place on the slopes of the Knuckles Range. Belonging to ex-Nyanasiha bhikkhu (Germany), now Peter. Monks or laypeople can build their own kuṭis here. If Peter is not there the caretaker is Chandrā.

Sri Jinavaṃsa Y. Mātale Road. Elkaduwa 21012. Near road and town. Rooms in compound. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Gallena AS. Wāwalawāwa, Dambulla. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Rangirigama AS. Rangirigama, Dambulla. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Nāgolla Nadī S. Nāgala Wāwa, Kimbissa, Dambulla. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Dambulla VMC, Kalundewa Road, Dambulla. Affiliated to Kanduboda.

Samādhi T. Tambarā Waliya Road. Aluvihāra, Mātale. Cave-kuṭis.

Kāgalla District.

In the foothills of the central mountains. Humid climate. Less hot than the coast. Hills and mountains.

Potgulgala A. Pahankanuwa, Devālagama. 10 km north of Kāgalla.

Ven. K. Nāṇananda thera is living here. He is the author of "Concept and Reality" and "Magic of the Mind." He speaks fluent English and is very knowledgeable in Pāli. He is a meditation teacher with several devoted western disciples, mostly Austrian, who are usually living at the Upasikārāmaya and Mangalārāmaya in Meetirigala; see below. The meditation instructions are sometimes received from the late Ven. Nāṇarāma through a female medium in Meetirigala. Simple conditions, only piṇḍapāta food, a few kuṭis and a few caves to live in. Daily vandana. The location is on a hilltop and there can be some noise from the surrounding villages. Cooler than the low-country. From Kāgalle get a bus to Devalegama, and from there ask your way. Unaffiliated to any tradition.

Salgala AS. Galapitade, Warakāpola. 50 kms E of Colombo. From Warakāpola 15 km to the S towards Ruwanwella. Large quiet forest monastery on a mountain-top. One of the first modern forest monasteries, founded in 1934; see "Forest Monks of Sri Lanka" p. 175. Well known. Nice kuṭis, including caves. Western bhikkhus have stayed here for periods. Wet, dense forest with many leeches. Moderately cool climate. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Nāvimana Y. or *Warakāpola AS.* Warakāpola 71600. Tel 078-641-662. 1½ miles along Warakāpola - Mirigama Rd, on top of hill. Friendly place. In Mahogany forest. Noise from the armycamp and villages below the hill. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Mahamevnaṅga Bhāvanā Asapuwa, Waduwa, Polgahawella. (= 10 km N of Kægalla. Turn off to Waduwa from Yangamodara (3,5 km) on the Alawwa - Polgahawella rd.) The head monastery of the movement around the very popular teacher Ven. Kiribathgoda Ñāṇānanda, an English speaking, meditative monk who is quite knowledgeable about the suttas. There are about 60 monks here. Kuṭis in a forest on a hill. In June 2004 Ven. Ñāṇānanda together with 45 other novice disciples received the Upasampadā. Connected to the Kalyāṇavaṃsa branch of the Amarapura Nikāya. Strict practice of the Dhamma and Vinaya. There are 4 branch monasteries connected to this monastery and more are planned. Well supported.

Ānanda Bodhi Āshramaya. Pitiyagama, Kiriwadunna 71014. (or Hiriwadunna?). Nr. Kægalla. Hermitage affiliated to Galdūwa.

Wellagala Y. Diwela, Pallegama 71022. Nr. Kægalla. Forest hermitage affiliated to Galdūwa.

Bodhithenna Y. Talgamuwa, Devanāgala 71527. Between Kægalla and Kandy. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Tummodara Y. Udugama, Hettimula, Kægalla. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Ānandabodhi Y. Aranāyaka -20 kms SE of Kægalla. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Naraṅgala Ānandabodhi Āshramaya. Ambalakanda, Aranayaka (= 15 km W of Gampola.) Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Ashokāraṅga S. Alawwa, Ranawala, Beligalla 71044. On Ranawala - Beligalla Rd, 1 mile from Alawwa, on Colombo - Kurunegala Rd. Probably a very small place. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Koswatta A. Nawa Colombo Para, Polgahawella 60300. (On Colombo-Kurunegala Rd.) Probably a small place. Affiliated to Galdūwa. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Kodigala Y. Kehelpannala, Hemmatagama 71530. Between Kægalla and Kandy. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sri Dharmodaya Y. Manikkawa, Hingula 71520. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Diviyāgala Y. Randiwela, Karapane. Between Kægalla and Kandy. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Kægalla Abhayabhūmi T. Bandaranāyake Mawatha, Kægalla. Affiliated to the Tapovana group.

Mawanella VMC, Māwanella. Affiliated to Kanduboda.

(FM 157 mentions a hermitage founded by A. Ratanapāla. It has ancient caves and is situated on a hill top near Asmaṅḍala, near Māwanella.)

Negombo and Chilaw area.

Ranaketugala AS. Tutiriwela, Bandar, Koswatta 60424. Affiliated to Galdūwa. 20 km N of Negombo.

Nekkawila VMC, Nekkawila, Chilaw. Affiliated to Kanduboda.

Kurunægala District.

There are many aranyas and monasteries in this district. The better known ones are Na-Uyana A. and Arankæle A. People in this district are known for their strong faith. Warm climate. Hills and flatland. Wilderness areas on and around the hills. there are ancient cave kuṭis On every hill in this area there are likely to be ancient cave kuṭis.

Na Uyana AS. Pansiyagama. See Major Places section above.

Arahatta Maliyadeva AS. or Arankæle A. Arankæle, Kumbukwæwa, Kurunægala District. The head monk Ven. Piyadassi, is helpful. Good vinaya. On the site of the medieval monastery, about 15 or more kuṭis and caves. Good library. Westerners have stayed here. Ancient cave monastery where the Sinhalese arahant Maliyadeva lived. His simple cave can still be visited. About 20 monks, including young novices. Amrapura Nikāya.

Ruwangirikanda A. Karagahagædara, Nārammala 60106. 15 km SW of Kurunægala. Formerly a major monastery. Forested hill with a nice cave-kuṭi on top. Also other cave-kuṭis and ordinary kuṭis. Foreign monks have stayed here. Quiet and suitable for meditation. Warm climate. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Nāthagane AS. Mahākeliya, Māspota 60344. 10 kms out of Kurunægala on Puttalam road. Abbot - Ven. Sirivimala. Forested hill-side. About 10-12 kuṭis. Some isolated caves. Friendly atmosphere. Suitable for meditation. Also a study and training place for young monks. Some noise from nearby Puttalam Road. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Siri Vidusarana T. / Nabæta A. Henegedera Landa, Nabæta 60540. Nr. Mælsiripura on Kurunægala - Dambulla Rd. Nice forest. Small monastery. Near main-road but fairly quiet. Facilities for 4-5 monks. There can be a lack of water during the dry season. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Nāgolla A. also known as: *Devahuwa A. or Gomoktāwa A.* Nāgolla, Bulanawewa, Devahuwa, Galēwela 21206. (On Kurunægala-Anuraddhapura Rd.). Turn off at the Mosque and then walk along the cart road to the aranya. Ancient Cave Monastery on a large hill. About 6 monks, some speak English. Nice forest (Iron-wood-trees). Probably suitable for meditation. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Dolukanda A. / Rankotlena AS. Dolukanda, Hunupola, Nikadalupotha 60582. Tel 072-289837. Not far from Arankæle Aranya in Kurunægala District. Ancient Cave Monastery. On lower forested slope of the Dolukanda mountain. (The ancient Arankele monastery is on the other side of the mountain.) Nice big caves, but the place was/is (?) used mostly for popular big Bodhi-pujas with loudspeakers. On the top of the mountain is a 500 metre long, partly forested plateau with spectacular views where there used to be a fortress/palace of a king, the bathing-pond is still there. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

In a cave (connected to Arankele A.) on the side of this mountain-plateau an American monk strenuously practised Asubha meditation with corpses brought to him by villagers until he went (temporarily) mad and disrobed. The pictures of his practice might still be at Arankæle monastery. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Jathika Namal Uyana. Upalathagama, Galkiriyagama, Madatugama. Small aranya/pansala on a hill in a fairly large forested area. Ancient stupa and ruins. Rose-quartz rock-outcrops. The abbot, Ven. Vanavasi Rāhula, is trying to protect the quartz and build up a monastery. 10 km north from Devahuwa A.

Rangirigala A. Diddeniya, Melsiripura 60544. Turn off at Melsiripura. Ancient Cave Monastery on a rocky hill. Facilities for about 4 monks. Meditative atmosphere. Affiliated to Galdūwa. Abbot: Ven. Nāṇasīla, a supportive English speaking Vinayadhara.

Ridivihāra Kaelepansala. There is a newly prepared cave on a nicely forested hill about half an hour walk from this ancient and rich vihara belonging to the Malwatta Nāyaka thera. Fairly quiet. Piṇḍapāta to nearby village. Close to well and stream. There are also several other caves in the forest. The incumbent of Ridivihāra needs to be consulted if one wishes to stay here.

From Kurunægala take the Kæpitigolla bus and get out at the Ridivihāra Devāla and walk to Ridivihara.

Bambaragala MC. Moratiya. On the Kurunægala - Kæpitagolla Rd. Less than 10 km from Kurunægala. A place set up as a meditation center by a Siyam Nikāya monk, but is now a Pansala as the founder went abroad. Several kuṭis and a large unfinished Dhammahall on a forested hill.

Minnettiya A. Māspota, Mahakæliya. In the area of Wariyapola on Kurunægala -Puttalam Rd. 1 cave kuṭi with one monk. Near village. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Pahankanuwa A. Kandegedara, Maharacchimulla. Maybe affiliated to Kandubodha.

Wæwgala A. Wæwgala, Kurunægala. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Ætugala AS. Ætugala, Kurunægala 60000. Forest hermitage affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sudarshana Y. Gantiriyāwa, Bamunākotuwa 60347. 5 kms NW of Māspota, near Wariyapola on the Kurunægala - Puttalam Rd. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Rambapokuna AS. Kandegædæra, Nikawæратиya 60470. (= Midway on the Kurunægala - Puttalam Rd. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Dandūwawa AS. Dandūwawa, Nikawæратиya 60470.. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Banakiyangama Y. / Sri Kaḷyāṇī Shaka Y. Banakiyanagama, Mūnamaldeniya 60218. 10 kms along Kuliyaipitia -Hettipola Rd, Kurunægala District. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sri Tampaiṇi A. Welewewa. Navagattegama 61520. 15 km W of Galgamuwa. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Kappetigala AS. Galnewa, Tuttiripitiyagama 60426. (= 10 km NE of Māho.) Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Nāgansole AS. Ratandala Oya, Nikawæратиya 60470. 3 miles along Nikaweratiya -Hidogama Rd. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Nammuwagama AS. Sindagamdaluwa, Nikawæратиya 60470. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Hidogama AS. Mahagirilla. Along Nikawæратиya -Māho Rd. 2 miles to Mahagirilla then to Hidogama. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Yahangala AS. Delwahuwa, Galēwela 21206. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Saliya Lena AS. Galkiriyākanda, Moragollāgama. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Kodigala AS. Polpitiyagama. Approx. 40 kms north of Kurunægala and 10 km E of Māho. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Sudarshanapura VMC, Sudarshanapura, Mawatagama, Kurunægala Dt. Affiliated to Kanduboda.

Telandapitiya, Tarangollagama, Maragolla Bazar. 10 km from Migalawa. Caves and kuṭis. Tradition unknown.

Hambantota District

Probably the driest district in Sri Lanka, especially along the coast. Hot. Some large wilderness areas such as Yala. Generally flatland, but there is the Wedahitakanda near Kataragama.

Nimalawa AS. Kirinda, Tissamahārāmaya 82614. 12 kms SE of Tissamahārāmaya. About 3 km walking from Kirinda on the way to Yala national park. Founded in 1951; see FM p. 212.

Abbot: Ven.Dhammadassī, a very strict Mahāthera. It is rather hot in the dry season. Ancient cave kuṭis under boulders in the jungle. It is bordering Yala national park and therefore there is contact with elephants and other wildlife. Foreign monks have stayed here.

Chanting/Vandana 2 or 3 times a day, foreign monks are sometimes exempted. About the driest climate you can get in Sri Lanka. Long hot piṇḍapāta starting at 9 am (about 40 minutes each way). Now has a new centre with caves which is about 1,2 km more remote than the original centre, the piṇḍapata taking consequently that much longer.

From here it is worthwhile to visit the ancient forest monastery of Situlpawa in Yāla National Park; see below.

Situlpawa. Large ancient cave-monastery. There are ancient ruins and probably more than a hundred cave-kuṭis on large 70 meter high granite boulders sticking out of the jungle. It is mentioned in the commentaries as a place where there were so many arahants flying in the sky that they obscured the sunlight and the farmers could not grow their crops! The incumbent monk of the place is Ven. Hemaratana thera, a Siyam-nikāya monk, who speaks English well. Austere western monks are welcome to stay in the caves (after asking permission from headmonk.) Food can be gotten from the temple and from pilgrims who come to see the stupas and ruins. There are many animals, some are dangerous. Also has a few rest-houses where laypeople can stay. The abbot has plans to make a forest monastery. Accessible from Tissamahārāma, Kirinda, or Kataragama. It is easiest to walk along the access-road from Tissa and get a lift with the pilgrim-busses or jeeps going there. From Nimalawa go to main (Kirinda-road) National Park entrance and then take the boundary track north to the Tissa entrance.

About mid-way between the Tissa entrance and Situlpawa there is a smaller ancient aranya called Makulvihāra under a large rock. Sil-māṇayos used to stay here but abandoned the place in the late 1990's due to the war.

Madunāgala A. Koggala. 15 km north of Ambalantota. E of Siyambalagoda, north of Ridiyagama wāwa. Ancient cave monastery on remote forested rock-outcrop surrounded by shrubby lowland. Hot. Western bhikkhus have stayed here. Founded in 1946 by the founder of the Waturawila Vanavāsin group, Vaturuvile Ñāṇananda; see Forest Monks of Sri Lanka p. 184. The monastery was a bit run-down in 1995. There are hot springs in the area. Affiliated to Waturawila.

There is another (uninhabited?) ancient cave monastery near Ridiyagama called Karambagala.

Bundala Kuṭi. One kuṭi near the village of Bundala, Hambantota district. For lovers of solitude. In dune-shrubland in the Bundala National Park near the sea. There are a few elephants in the forest and also other wildlife and snakes. The kuṭi was built for Ven. Ñāṇavira in the late fifties and since then many western bhikkhus have stayed here. Piṇḍapāta in the village. Dry hot climate. P.T.S. Tipiṭaka books are available on request from the Forest Hermitage, Kandy. Some noise from nearby road.

Tellula A. A kuṭi and ruins of kuṭis and a dānasala in the dunes about 3 km away from Bundala near the mouth of the Kirinda Oya river in the village of Tellula near Sūriyawelawa and Māgama. An aranya abandoned during the last JVP uprising. Nicely situated in the dunes

near an ancient cetiya. A French monk stayed there for a long time before passing away in 2003. There might be a few monks from Nimmalawa A. staying here now and rebuilding the place.

Sīmāpawura AS. Sūriya Āra, Angunukolapelæssa, Tanāmalwila. On top of rock-hill with good views. One cave-kuṭi. Supposed to be a nice place. Affiliated to Waturawila. Angunukolapæssa is 10 km E of Tanamalwila [which is halfway along the Tissamahārāma-Wellawaya Rd].

Swarnagiri AS. Laginagala, Galhiramankada, Kotaweramankada, Tanāmalwila 91312. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Wedahitakanda. Kataragama. There is an abandoned cave kuṭi on the peak next to the temple on Wedahitakanda. A swiss monk stayed here for some years.

Walaskanda AS. 31 Kanuwa, Kitulkoṭe, Tanamalwila. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Monarāgala District

There are many small aranyas in this undeveloped area. Simple conditions. Hot climate with a dry season. Mountains, hills, and flatland.

Budu-gal-lena AS. 14 miles post, New Katarama Road, Waguruwela, Buttala 91100. Tel: 055-73542.

Abbot - Ven. Guṇananda - a very senior monk. The present Upajjhāya of the Galdūwa tradition. Good support. Practice of Pa Auk method. Ven. A. Vajiravaṃsa speaks English. Jungle on hill-side. Hot climate. Nice caves, big cave for Vandana. Some noise from the nearby road. There are plans for developing a major aranya meditation-centre here. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Alulena AS. Dambepitiya 91060. Near Maligawila, 10 km SE of Buttala. Poor area. Monastery and facilities probably undeveloped. Remote. Facilities only for a few monks. Hermitage affiliated to Galdūwa.

Tarulenagala A. / Habutugala A. Hulannuge, Monarāgala 71000. Between Siyambalandūwa and Lahugala NP, along Monarāgala - Pottuvil road. Small place with a large rockshelter with an ancient lying Buddha statue and Vedha drawings. On top of the hill is the Yodalena, supposedly the longest rockshelter in SL, about 600 feet long. There are also other caves. 2 monks, Ven. Dhammasiri, the abbot of Kudumbigala, and his father. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Lollehela AS. Galgediyawa, Galabedda, Monarāgala 91008. Outside Monarāgala Town. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sitakanda AS. Monarāgala 91000. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Waḷagambā Rajalena AS. Helatungala, Badalkumbura, Monarāgala 91070. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sandækebelle AS. Kanda-uda-wanguwa, Monarāgala 91032 . Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sambodhi Y. 35 Kumaradola para, Monarāgala 910000. On hill above Monarāgala bus-stand. Convenient as a stop-over place on a long bus-journey. Tel. 055-76265. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sakmangala AS. Kumaradola para, Monarāgala 91000. Located on Monarāgala Mountain. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Wattārāma AS. Wattārāma, Kotiyagala, Monarāgala, 91024. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Rahatan Kanda AS / Devagiri AS. Dahatune Kanuwa, Mahagodayaya, Buttala. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Theraputtabhaya AS. Kalawela Aragama Para, Wellawaya. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Mayuragiri AS. Weliyaya, Monarāgala. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Bhavanagala AS. Punehipara, Etimole Wewa. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Maha Tissa Lena AS. Netol Kele Ella Para, Wellawaya. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Wewatenna AS. Dahate Kanuwa, Rattanadeniya, Bibile Road, Bakinigahawela. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Ampara District

This area has a lot of ancient monasteries, but due to its proximity to rebel areas they have not been redeveloped or were abandoned during the war. Now the area is accessible again. There is a lot of wilderness in this area. It has a hot climate and a dry season.

Kudumbigala A. Selawa Eliya, Pānama. Private mail box, 91000. Near Okanda, 15 km W of Pānama. Ancient Cave Monastery. Spectacular setting on the eastern border of Yala National Park, very remote, caves, wild animals. The monastery has been going through a difficult period due to the violent death of its founder Ānandasiri during the JVP time and then the war in the East. It was uninhabited for a three years (1999 - 2001) due to LTTE presence, but now accessible again. Pictures and a history of the place and its founder can be found in FM. The abbot, Ven. Dhammasiri, intends to develop the place into a large international meditation center with the help of Czech monks and a development organisation. Five monks at present, 10 caves are prepared. There are other abandoned ancient monasteries in jungles in the area, such as Bambaragastalewa, which the adventurous can explore. The abbot is usually in Tharulenagala Aranya near Hulanuga, Monarāgala Distr, and the junior bhikkhu, Ven. Santasiri, is the acting abbot. The coast at Okanda, with large beaches, a Kataragama shrine, and a wildlife department office, is about an hours walk. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Take a bus from Monarāgala to Pottuvil or Pānama. In Pānama go to the Sil Mænaya pansala (nunnery) where the abbot's mother lives and they will help. The sil mænayo place is 200 m. beyond the hospital. When the abbot, Ven. Dhammasiri, is in Tharugalena A., he can also help one to get there.

Shastrawella A. or *Rastrawella A.* Between Pānāma and Pottuvil. Get out of bus at the Special Task Force camp. A 2,5 km walk from Ārugam Bay along the beach, but it might be difficult to find the path to the monastery from the beach. It is a longer walk along the road. Ancient cave monastery on forested rocky hill ridge which runs about 600 m E from the Special Task Force camp along the Panama - Pottuvil road right up to the rivermouth of the Heen Oya and beach. There has been a pansala here for 30 years but it was abandoned for some years. In 2003 one young monk stayed here, made a nice kuṭi in one of the caves, and then abandoned the place... One cave is high on a rock overlooking Ārugam Bay, but is not so suitable. In a wilderness area with elephants and other wildlife, and with little noise, but the pansala area can be busy with villagers..
Near Pānāma are another few ancient abandoned cave monasteries including Wæwawehera near the wæwa (tank) 3 km W of Pānāma.

Buddhangala A. 22 Kanatta Rd. Ampara. Formerly a quiet cave monastery under Ven. Kalutara Dhammānanda. Today??

Samangala A. Kohombana, via Uhana.

Kokama A. Inginiyagala. (= W of Ampara near Gal Oya NP.)

Anuradhapura District

Anuradhapura was the ancient capital of Sri Lanka and the cradle of Singhalese Buddhist culture. It has a hot climate with a dry season. Mostly flatland with some lonely hills and rock-outcrops. Many tanks, wewas. West of Anuradhapura is the large Wilpattu NP known for its wildlife. Many undeveloped and poor areas.

Kaludiya Pokuna T. Mihintale. Nicely situated near the Kaludiya Pokuna bathing pond, down below the Mihintale hill. Ancient cave monastery. 10 caves on the small hill above the monastery have been repaired and are in use. Nice kuṭis and facilities. 5-6 bhikkhus, friendly atmosphere. Sometimes there might be a bit of noise from the road. Affiliated to the Tapovana group of the Amarapura Nikāya.

Mihintale Kanda. This is where the arahant Mahinda started to teach the Dhamma in Sri Lanka. Possibly the nicest ancient monastery site in Sri Lanka with cetiyas on the top of the large hill, etc. Many caves around the hill which one can use for meditation.

Katupotha Kanda Sri Vajiraguana VMC. Katupotha Kanda, Palugaswæwa, Mihintale Rd, Galkulama, Anuradhapura. (By car one has to turn off left [south] a few km from Mihintale on the Mihintale-Anuradhapura Rd and then turn left [E] after a few km again. Ask locals.) Small place with ancient caves on southern side of the large hill 2 km south of the Mihintale hill. Ven. Sanāthavihārī, formerly connected to Bowalawatta, is staying here. A few kuṭis. Amarapura Nikāya.

Ritigala A. Ganewalpola, Kækirāwa. The ancient cave monastery is on the eastern lower slope of Ritigalakanda mountain, visible from the Kurunægala - Anuradhapura Rd. More than one mile to the E from Galapitigala on the northern slope of the mountain range. The first Sinhalese arahant, Ariṭṭha stayed here. Strict Natural reserve, large forest with elephants and bears. The best, non-logged virgin forest is where the ruins of the large ancient monastery is managed by the Archeological Dept. 25 minutes walking from this place. An English bhikkhu

stayed here a long time and helped to build up the place. A few bhikkhus and some novices. The best cave is about 15 minutes walking up the slope under a big rock with a great view from its top. Take a bus from Kækirāwa to Habarana and get down at Galapitagala, walk one hour through the forest, be careful of elephants. If going by car, go along the unpaved but reasonable road going east from Galapitagala and turn left at the first junction after about two kms. There is no sign at the junction. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Subodhārāma A. BM / Labunurukanda A. A few kms NE of Ritigala on the hill facing the northern slope of Ritigalakanda. A forest monastery connected to Ritigala A. with kuṭis and ancient caves in forest on top of a forested hill. About 7 monks. Piṇḍapāta. Take bus from Kækirāwa to Galamudana (\pm 10 km). Get out at Arugola (= Alagollewa ??) at the monastery sign. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Atdalagala AS. Giratalana, Migalæwa. Between Kækirāwa (i.e., to the W) and Galgamuwa. Aranya set up by Ven. Ariyañāṇa, a friendly English-speaking meditation teacher formerly connected to Kanduboda. Western monks have stayed here. Forest, caves. Hot climate. 2 miles from Resvehera-Sasseruwa. From Galgamuwa take a bus to Katugampola and stop at Bongama, ½ mile walk.

Sambodhi Y. Kuratiyāwa, Migalæwa 60750. 15 km W from Kækirāwa. Take bus from Kækirāwa. Good new kuṭis and facilities, adjacent to large Wæwa (artificial lake). Possibly good for meditation. Hot, mosquitos, but good support. 3 monks. An English speaking Nepalese monk is the abbot. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Pancha Stūpa A. Palugolla. Mahananneriya. From Galgamuwa take bus to Anamadūwa and get off at Ihala Nanneriya junction. Place on hill with ancient stupa. Tradition unknown.

Mahamevnawa Bhāvanā Asapuwa. Vatavandanapara, Lolugasvæva, Anuradhapura. Monastery connected to Ven. Kiribathgoda Ñāṇānanda; see Mahamevnawa Asapuwa near Kægalla. A small, but popular place.

Wedisagiri A. Sanghappālaya, Wannikudawæwa, Galgamuwa 60721. (= Between Māho and Anuradhapura.) Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Purāṇa Gallena AS. Tammennāwa, Tambuttagama 60734.. (= 25 km. S of Anurādhapura.)

Maradankadawala AS. Maradankadawala. On Anuradhapura - Kækirāwa Rd, 30 km SE of Anuradhapura. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Yodhayākanda AS. Dampitigama, Halmillawæwa. (About 50 km E of Anuradhapura on Anuradhapura-Trincomalee road.) Affiliated to Waturawila.

Mihindu A. Anuradhapura. Along road from Mihintale to Anuradhapura. Pirivena and ordination centre connected to Waturawila.

Vavuniya District

The northernmost edge of Sinhalese Buddhist culture. Due to its closeness to rebel infested areas there are not many new monasteries here, but probably quite a few ancient ones.

Galpiyuma AS. / Galpokuna A. Kahatagollæwa, Padaviya. Approx. 30 kms E of Vavuniya. On the road between Kebatagollewa and Padaviya, get down at Kahatagallewa. Abbot - Ven.

Sumanatissa (Mahāthera), English speaking. Ancient cave monastery in large forest area with elephants. Good viveka. It can be hot here. Ruins scattered in forest. The area is on the border of the Singhalese area and was affected by the war. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Padaviya Abhayabhumi T. Deviyangekanda, Padawiya. Affiliated to the Tapovana group. On a hill with a few caves. Near army camp. Amarapura Nikāya.

Badulla district

The eastern edge of the mountain country. Cool climate with less rain than the western and central mountains and therefore quite agreeable for westerners. Tea estates with some remnant forest and wilderness areas. Strangely enough, there seem to be no aranyas or meditation centres in the mountain part of this district.

The low country E of the mountains around Bibile also appears to be a small part of this district and this is where the following monastery is. This area has a hot climate and a dry season. A poor, undeveloped area.

Mahasudharshana AS. Gadugodawāwa, Pahala-oya-gama, Ūraniya. (Between Mahiyangana and Bibile). Affiliated to Waturawila.

Polonaruwa District.

The second ancient capital of Sri Lanka. There are quite a few ancient monasteries on the hills and rocks in this area. Hot climate with dry season. Low country with some hills and rock-outcrops. Some large national parks. An undeveloped and poor area.

Mahāsena AS. Nagalakanda, Minneriya 51410. 25 km NW of Polonaruwa. Nice forest on a large hill. The site of an ancient monastery with ancient ruins and statues. Nice views from the top of the hill. Kuṭis. Facilities for about 6-8 monks. Friendly abbot. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Sinhapura VMC. Sinhapura, Polonnaruwa. Head Monk: Ven. Saṃvuta. 2 or 3 kuṭis and a compound. There is also an upasikā-ārāmaya in the grounds, where dasa-sil-maenayo Dhammananda teaches meditation. For those who like a hot climate. Affiliated to Kanduboda.

Dimbulāgala MC. Dimbulāgala. 20 kms SE of Polonnaruwa. Large ancient cave-monastery on a mountain ridge. In the front section there is a pirivena with about 130 sāmaṇeras, and there is an aranya with about 15 monks in the back. Amarapura Nikāya. In a mixed Singhalese-Tamil area. A site of strong Singhalese nationalism. The nationalist founder/abbot Ven. Sīlalaṅkara was shot dead in the mid-nineties by the LTTE.

Weharahena Y. 108 Mile Post, Awudangawa, Habarana 50150. On Anuradhapura - Polonnaruwa Rd. Abbot - Ven. Dhamminda. Several kuṭis. Small area. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Bodhiraja AS. Hiriwadunna, Habarana. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Kudusigiriya A. Dehi-ata-kandiya. On Mahiyangana-Polonnaruwa road.

Trincomalee District

Trincomalee is a large port and has a mixed community of Singhalese, Muslims, and Tamils. There are some ancient Buddhist sites in this area. The inland is undeveloped and poor. Some large wilderness areas. Long time unusable due to war, but now accessible again.

Kathārapura AS. Kathārapura, Duṭuwewa. North of Ratmale, 50 km from Trincomalee on the Anuradhapura-Trincomalee road. Affiliated to Waturawila.

Vān Ela Amādahara Tapovana. Near Kantalai, mid-way the on the Habarana - Trincomalee road. New place of Ven. Potuhera Vipassī. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Batticaloa District

Some areas in the eastern district of Batticaloa were not accessible for long time due to the war. There are some nice ancient buddhist sites on the hills in this district. Hot climate with dry season. Undeveloped and poor. Inland there are some large wilderness areas.

Piyangala AS. Rājagalatenna 32068. Near Mayadunna, near Bakiella. North of Uhana, midway along the Amapara - Maha Oya road. 25 kms SW of Batticaloa. Large forest area (1 square mile) bordering a wildlife sanctuary and the extensive ancient Rājagala monastery ruins situated on top of the mountain. Some caves. There is an army camp near the place due to its proximity to LTTE areas. Two monks. The place is supposed to be quite nice. Affiliated to Galdūwa.

Veheragala A. Maha Oya. Midway on the Mahiyangana -Batticaloa Road. Ancient cave monastery on a hill 1 km from the Maha Oya hot springs. This used to be an arañña built by Ven. Ambalampitiya Rāhula (the founder of Bowalawatta A.), but it was abandoned after a hurricane destroyed the buildings 15 or so years ago. No monks at present, but there are 4 caves kuṭis which are inhabitable and can be repaired. Supposed to be a nice place.

Jaffna District.

Dambakolapatuna. Keerimalai, Kankasanture. One or two kuṭis in quiet dune area near the beach, close to the Navy base to which the kuṭi is connected. It is possible to go on piṇḍapāta in nearby villages. This is supposedly the place where the Sri Mahā Bodhi arrived in Sri Lanka.