

Tamil Arasu

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1999 Rs.6





**நமது அன்றாட
பழக்கவழக்கங்களால்,
எய்ட்ஸ் வராது.
அதற்கு நீங்களே
ஒரு உதாரணம்.**

காலையில் எழுந்தது முதல் ராத்திரி படுக்கப் போகும் வரை நீங்கள் எத்தனையோ பேரைச் சந்திக்கிறீர்கள். ஓட்டலுக்குச் செல்கிறீர்கள், சினிமா பார்க்கிறீர்கள், நெரிசலான பஸ்ஸில் பயணம் செய்கிறீர்கள், பலருடன் கை குலுக்குகிறீர்கள்.

இவர்களில் யாருக்காவது எச்ஐவி/ எய்ட்ஸ் பாதித்து இருக்கலாம்.

சாதாரண பழக்கவழக்கங்களின் மூலம் எய்ட்ஸ் பரவுவதாக இருந்தால், உங்களையும் எய்ட்ஸ் பாதித்திருக்க வேண்டும்.

ஆனால் அப்படி இல்லையே...

ஏனெனில், கை குலுக்குவதாலோ, உணவைப் பகிர்ந்து கொள்வதாலோ, தொடுவதாலோ, தும்மலினாலோ, கழிப்பிடத்தை அனைவரும் உபயோகிப்பதாலோ, எய்ட்ஸ் பரவுவதில்லை.

எனவே எய்ட்ஸ் பாதித்தவரைக் கண்டு நீங்கள் ஒதுங்க வேண்டியதில்லை. உங்களுக்கு எந்த ஆபத்தும் இல்லை.

அவர்களும் நம்மைப் போன்றவர்கள்தான். அவர்களுக்கு எப்பொழுதும் போல நாம் அன்பும், ஆதரவும் காட்டுவோம்.

**கிறிதளவு ஆதரவு பெருமளவு
சுமையைக் குறைக்கும்.**

**குழந்தை பிறப்பைத் தடுப்போம்
எய்ட்ஸ் வந்தோரைக் காப்போம்**



மேலும் விவரங்களுக்கு அணுக வேண்டிய முகவரி:
தமிழ்நாடு எய்ட்ஸ் கட்டுப்பாட்டு அமைப்பு
417, பாந்தியன் ரோடு, சென்னை - 600 008.
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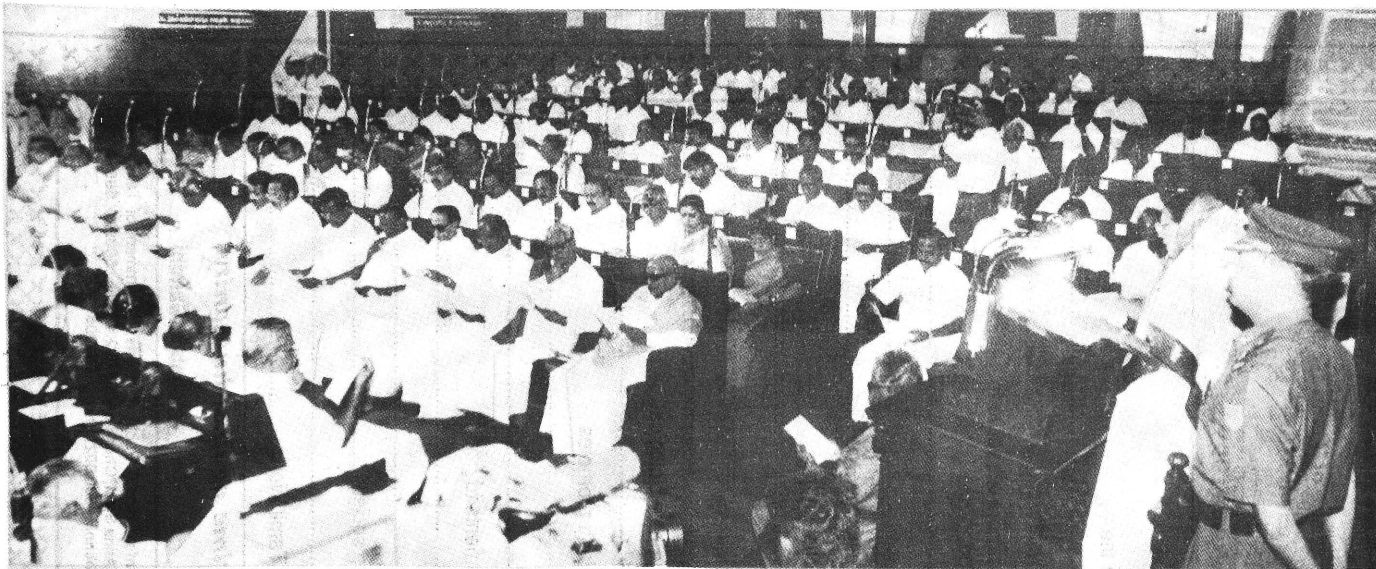
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Untouchability is a crime against humanity

- Mahatma Gandhi

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THIS GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO ACCELERATE THE RATE OF GROWTH OF THE STATE'S ECONOMY, UPHOLD DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS, PROTECT AND NURTURE THE WELFARE OF THE SOCIETY AND TO ACT AS THE GUARDIAN OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE POOR

Honourable Members of the Legislative Assembly,

I have great pleasure in addressing you at the commencement of the seventh session of the Eleventh Legislative Assembly. I extend my warm greetings to all of you. I hope that in 1999, Tamil Nadu will achieve further

economic growth and improvement in the standard of living of its citizens.

2. At a time when the aspirations of the people are rising and the obligations of the State are becoming more

onerous, increased resource transfer from the Central Government to the State has become imperative. The Eleventh Finance Commission, which was constituted last year, will be submitting its report before the end of the year 1999. Under the Tenth Finance Commission recommendations, states like Tamil Nadu, which are known for their prudent financial management, had received less financial assistance from the Central Government rather than being rewarded for prudence. We hope that the Eleventh Finance Commission will give due importance to this aspect and recommend larger resource transfers.

3. While upholding the country's unity, integrity, secularism and social harmony, this Government continues to strive for greater autonomy for the States, making the official languages of all States the official languages of the Union, and as a first step making Tamil as an official language of the Union and for a constitutional amendment to vest with the States the power to decide the policy of reservation for ensuring social justice. Though not much progress could be achieved on this, this Government will continue to press the Central Government for necessary legislative and executive action.

4. The Honourable Members are aware of the determined and sustained efforts made by this Government to effectively maintain law and order in this State. The steps taken in this direction have yielded results and this Government believes that with the wholehearted support of the people, the State would continue to enjoy peace and communal harmony.

5. There have been caste clashes for a long time in the

history of Tamil Nadu. This Government has taken a number of measures to identify the underlying reasons for caste clashes and to find long-term solutions to reduce the occurrence of such incidents in future. All Party meetings were held on 22.10.1998 and 26.10.1998 to deliberate on ways to avert caste clashes. On the basis of the consensus that emerged from these meetings, policy decisions have been taken and the Government is taking further action. The Government has also instructed the District Administration not to grant permission for processions, rallies, meetings etc., which are likely to disturb communal and social harmony and incite violence. They have been asked to prevent printing/publishing/pasting of posters/wall-writings by caste/communal organisations which are likely to incite violence. 'Peace Committees' have been constituted at village level. These committees will be useful in resolving the differences at the grass-root level and will act as important institutions for conflict resolution in the years to come.

6. The rainfall this year in the State was quite satisfactory. However, a few districts had floods due to excess rainfall and had suffered flood damages. Loss of lives and property was minimised considerably due to timely action by Government agencies. The Government has sanctioned about Rs.33 crores for providing relief to the affected persons and for restoration of damaged roads, bunds etc.

7. This Government is deeply concerned over the steep rise in the prices of essential commodities required by the people for day-to-day consumption. Price levels of essential commodities are determined by the general economic policies of the country as a whole and this problem of rising prices can

be solved only by the Central Government. By increasing the supply in the market by release of essential commodities procured by the State agencies, it is possible to influence the prices to a limited extent only. Following the increase in prices of essential commodities in the last few months, the Central Government had increased the price of rice, wheat, sugar, cooking gas and urea recently. In pursuance of its commitment and concern for the poor and the middle class, this Government has decided not to pass on the increase in the issue price of rice announced by the Central Government to the consumers, even though it would entail an additional expenditure of Rs.160 crores.

8. As announced in the last year's Governor's address, the task of issuing new family cards has been completed and 142 lakh families have received the new cards. Distribution of essential commodities under the new cards has also commenced. In order to build up adequate stock of rice to meet the requirement of the Public Distribution System, Government has introduced monopoly procurement in the Cauvery delta region for the current Samba season. The farmers in this region are being given an incentive of Rs.50 per quintal over the minimum support price fixed by the Central Government.

9. This Government has continued to maintain its record of achieving the State Plan outlay. During 1997-98, the approved outlay of Rs.4010 crores was fully achieved. The approved outlay of Rs.4500 crores for the year 1998-99 is also expected to be achieved. The Government will endeavour to step up the Plan outlay substantially next year.

10. Improvement of the irrigation systems is essential for agricultural development necessary for enhancing the production of foodgrains essential for the State. Desilting of the irrigation channels in the Cauvery Delta and the tanks in various districts has enabled irrigation water to reach the tailends and has also effectively moderated the effect of heavy rains this year. The Government will make an increased allocation for desilting the irrigation channels next year. Thanks to widespread rains in the State in the last season and consequent increased availability of water for irrigation, it is expected that about 98 lakh tonnes of food grains will be harvested this year. With a view to increasing the agricultural output in the State and the agricultural income of dry-land farmers, the Government has decided to launch a programme of wasteland development next year to cover over 10,000 hectares. This Government will also launch a programme of accelerated horticulture development by providing necessary infrastructure like good roads, cold storage and grading facilities. These measures will benefit the farmers and consumers by enhancing the production of vegetables and fruits.

11. The Government has decided to accord high priority for Information Technology due to its potential for accelerating the economic growth of the State, providing increased employment opportunities, and enhancing the efficiency of Government agencies and the quality of their service to the people. An Information Technology Task Force has been set up under the chairmanship of the Honourable Chief Minister to monitor the progress of this sector and render advice. Tamil Nadu is the first State to announce a new policy for the development of Information and Communication Technology.

The Tamil Nadu Institute of Information Technology has been set up to provide high quality trained manpower to the industry.

The State Government is also developing a world class Software Development Park at Taramani in Chennai at a cost of Rs.320 crores.

12. In order to provide easy access to computers and Internet, a joint venture company will be set up with 'World Tel', an organisation based in England, and for the first time in India, 1,500 Community Internet Centres would be set up all over the State in the coming year, and a further 12,000 such Internet centres will be set up in the next three years. When all these centres become operational, they will create direct and indirect employment opportunities for about 1,50,000 persons throughout the State. It has been decided as a policy that the ultimate goal shall be to ensure that all students passing out of the schools will be computer literate. This goal will be achieved within the next five years. The international conference 'Tamil Net 99' was held in Chennai on February 7th and 8th to standardise the coding of Tamil scripts for computers and to standardise Tamil key boards and consensus decisions have been arrived at. Provision of standardised Tamil software will help to provide access to computers and Internet to persons who do not know English.

13. Development of industrial sector is vital for the economic growth of the State. The transparent and industry-friendly policies of the State have helped attract major investments to the State from well known multinational companies. It is a matter of pride and satisfaction that

Tamil Nadu has moved up to the second position among the States in the country in terms of investments attracted till October '98 as compared to the fifth position it held in April, 1996. Investments amounting to Rs.48,497 crores have been committed in the State during the last 32 months. This year, the automobile factories of Hyundai and Mitsubishi have commenced production. Ford Motor company's automobile factory will commence its production by October, 1999.

14. In its efforts to provide basic infrastructure for industrial development, this Government is undertaking formation of Industrial parks and satellite towns in different parts of the State, both through public sector agencies like SIPCOT and TACID as well as through joint venture efforts with private entrepreneurs. A Petrochemical industrial park at Ennore, a hi-tech industrial park at Nanguneri, an auto ancillary park near Singaperumalkoil and a floriculture infrastructure park at Hosur are being promoted by TIDCO in the joint-sector. These facilities are expected to give a fillip to the industrial growth in the State. The recent visit of the Honourable Chief Minister to Singapore and Malaysia has not only strengthened the cultural relations between us and these countries, but has also generated considerable interest among the entrepreneurs there for investment in infrastructure and industries in Tamil Nadu.

15. Increased power generation is essential for the development of industry, commerce and agriculture. Government has succeeded in attracting large private investments in the power sector in the State and the State has

undertaken a number of power projects. This year, the first private sector power project with a capacity of 196 MW has been commissioned at Basin Bridge, Chennai. Construction works on projects with a capacity of nearly 2000 MW is due to commence within the next few months. First phase electricity generation from this will commence by the year 2000-2001. Finalisation and award of contracts for the 500 MW Integrated Lignite Mining cum Power Generation project at Jayamkondam and the 2000 MW LNG based power project at Ennore through international competitive bidding in a transparent manner has received international acclaim and has enhanced the reputation and the confidence in the Tamil Nadu Government among investors.

16. This Government is taking steps to improve the capacity of the Urban Local bodies for better delivery of basic services to the public. A comprehensive legislation to govern all urban local bodies in the State was enacted by this House in its last session. This Government is paying special attention to institutional improvement and human resources development in the local bodies. It has sought funds from the World Bank for a second Tamil Nadu Urban Development Project. This project is now in an advanced stage of finalisation and will provide a sizeable line of credit for urban infrastructure and institutional development in the urban sector.

17. Apart from being the State Capital, Chennai serves as a prominent commercial hub. In view of this, Government has been implementing various schemes for the development of Chennai Metropolitan Area. The work on the Second phase of Mass Rapid Transit System Project is progressing rapidly

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and when completed would help in easing the traffic problems of the city. Widening and strengthening of the major radial roads from Chennai will commence before the end of this year. Construction of 10 mini-flyovers at important traffic intersections in Chennai for reducing traffic congestion has already started and will be completed in the next 15 months. The work on the Flood Control and Drainage Project for the Metropolitan Area will commence soon in Coovum, Adayar, Buckingham canal and Otteri Nullah. Construction of the mofussil bus terminal at Koyambedu will commence within the next three months.

18. The Government accords special attention to rural development, poverty alleviation and the welfare of the poor. In pursuance of these objectives, this Government has devolved adequate powers and finances to the three tiers of Panchayat institutions. While continuing the devolution of powers to these institutions, the Committee which was constituted by the Government to recommend transfer of more powers to these institutions has submitted its report on 11th January 1999. The Government will take decisions on these recommendations soon.

19. In the 1997-98 budget, this Government launched two people centred programmes, viz., “Namakku Naame Thittam” and “Anna Marumalarchi Thittam”. So far, 424 Village Panchayats have been covered under “Anna Marumalarchi Thittam” and 55086 rural infrastructure works for Rs.357.79 crores have been taken up. The demand driven and participatory “Namakku Naame Thittam” has evinced good response from the people. In last two years, 9171 works for Rs.42.39 crores were taken up under “Namakku Naame Thittam”.

20. As announced in the last Budget, schemes to provide adequate water to the 5,398 rural habitations getting less than 10 lpcd water have been taken up and are under implementation. 6,300 more rural habitations will be taken up for full coverage during 1999-2000. Hitherto, house-to-house water-supply connections were being provided only in the urban areas. This Government has taken a decision to extend this facility to the rural areas also. The Government has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with HUDCO for a loan assistance of Rs. 500 crores over a period of five years for improving the water supply in the urban local bodies. The Government of Tamil Nadu is also availing of loan assistance from the Austrian Government to set up desalination plants at Chennai and Thoothukkudi.

21. A well laid out network of roads is a precondition for the rapid economic development of a State. Projects at a cost of Rs.702 crores have been sanctioned by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development from the Rural

Infrastructure Development Fund. Out of 2661 works taken up till now, 1335 works have been completed. The construction work has commenced for 104 bridges, undertaken with loan assistance from HUDCO and NABARD at a cost of Rs.360 crores. The World Bank assisted Road Sector Project will commence next year. Under this project, 750 KM length of roads will be improved.

22. For the first time in India, this Government is setting up Samathuvapurams for achieving the noble objective of creating a casteless society. Here, people of all Communities live together in peace, friendship and harmony sharing common facilities like drinking water, electricity, community hall etc. Sixteen such Samathuvapurams have been established so far and 83 more are being set up. This scheme will continue to be implemented with renewed vigour.

23. The Government, besides earmarking higher outlays each year to promote all-round development of the Adi-Dravidars and the Scheduled Tribes has also been formulating and implementing innovative schemes for them. As education holds the key for the development of any section of the Society, Government has taken effective steps to improve the quality of education provided in the Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare schools.

24. With the same humanitarian policy under which the practice of hand pulled rickshaws had been abolished and replaced with cycle rickshaws, this Government has decided to introduce a Bill in this session for abolishing the demeaning practice of manual scavenging.

25. The Government is examining the report of Kolappan Committee on fixing of minimum wages for farm labourers. The decisions taken by the Government will be announced later in this session.

26. In addition to opening 300 new primary schools in the year 1998-99, primary schools have also been opened in Samathuvapuram villages. By the year 2000, all habitations with a population over 300 will have access to an easily accessible primary school within a distance of one kilometre. Steps to create infrastructure for these schools have also been accelerated. Government has also distributed free textbooks to all students of first to fifth standards with the object of achieving the goal of universal primary education. The Tamil Nadu Compulsory Primary Education Act has also been brought into effect from this academic year to ensure universal enrolment of children of school-going age. From this academic year, 15 percent reservation is being provided for rural students in all professional colleges. This will give opportunity to students from rural areas to get professional education and help them to progress in life.

27. The State Government is keen to achieve the goal of "Health for All" by 2000 AD. In the last three years, the Government has sanctioned construction of permanent buildings for 652 Primary Health Centres. With this, all Primary Health Centres in the State would function in permanent buildings. Further, this Government is committed to ensure that medical institutions and hospitals are adequately equipped and properly maintained to give better health care. Chennai Medical College, one of the oldest Medical Colleges in India, has been granted

the status of a Deemed University. The new Medical College at Tiruchirappalli has started functioning now. The new Medical College at Thoothukkudi will start functioning from the next academic year.

28. The House is aware of the various measures taken by the Government for the revival and development of the Handloom Industry. The 20% rebate on the sale of handloom fabrics was extended throughout the year. In order to liquidate accumulated stocks of the previous years, 30% rebate was granted in the current year upto October 1998. By availing this special rebate, the Primary Weavers Cooperative Societies and Coopex were able to sell goods worth Rs.202 crores. Besides this, considering the heavy accumulation of unsold lungis, the Government has granted 30% special rebate on these upto 31.3.1999.

29. The Tamil Nadu Women's Development Project is being implemented in 21 districts. 2,80,556 rural women having membership in 14,374 self help groups are getting assistance under Mahalir Thittam as on first January 1999. Total savings from these groups are about Rs.19 crores. This is a growing pool of funds from which the members are getting easy access to credit for urgent and other needs and they are also repaying the loans with interest. In the coming year, the remaining seven districts will also be brought under this project. Further, the Government has started a savings linked micro credit scheme for women in urban areas, as a pilot scheme to be implemented through urban cooperative banks. To begin with, this scheme has been launched in Chennai. It will be extended to other urban areas also.

30. This Government has taken appropriate decisions on the recommendations of the Justice Ramanujam Committee on procedural reforms and measures for providing honest, transparent and responsive administration and for preventing corruption in administration and is implementing them. This report and decisions of the Government on the recommendations will be placed in the Assembly in the current session.

31. Aware of the key role of Government employees, teachers, policemen and employees of local bodies in discharging its developmental and regulatory responsibilities, this Government has been sympathetic to their aspirations. Tamil Nadu was the first among the Southern States to extend the central pay scales to its employees and pensioners, that too with effect from 1.1.1996 despite severe financial stringency. Streamlining the recruitment procedures and recruitment on the basis of seniority of registration in employment exchanges have to a large extent eliminated complaints regarding recruitment to Government Service.

32. The sluggish economy coupled with rising Government expenditure has had an adverse impact on the resources of the State. Economy, efficiency and prudent financial management would continue to be the watchwords of the Government. Schemes that have outlived their utility will be weeded out and beneficial schemes and programmes will be further improved and implemented with emphasis on efficiency. The administrative machinery will be geared up to ensure time bound implementation of the plans and programmes of the

In the 1997-98 budget, this Government launched two people centred programmes, viz., "Namakku Naame Thittam" and "Anna Marumalarchi Thittam". So far, 424 Village Panchayats have been covered under "Anna Marumalarchi Thittam" and 55086 rural infrastructure works for Rs. 357.79 crores have been taken up. The demand driven and participatory "Namakku Naame Thittam" has evinced good response from the people. In last two years, 9171 works for Rs.42.39 crores were taken up under "Namakku Naame Thittam".

Government.

33. I have placed before you the achievements of the Government, its policies and programmes. This Government is determined to accelerate the rate of growth of the State's economy, uphold democratic rights, protect and nurture the welfare of the society and to act as the guardian of the aspirations of the poor. I conclude my address with the hope that your deliberations in this House will help the Government in achieving its policy objectives.

- Address by Her Excellency Justice Selvi M. Fathima Beevi to the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on 17.2.1999.

CHIEF MINISTER IN SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA

The Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi began his first visit to Singapore and boarded flight at 11.20 p.m. on 3rd January 1999 at the Meenambakkam Airport, Chennai. He had been invited by the Singapore's Second Minister for Trade and Industry, Brig. Gen. George Yeo to strengthen the ties and economic relations existing between Tamil Nadu and Singapore.

On his arrival at the Singapore Airport,

cultural ties between Singapore and Tamil Nadu.

Thiru Davinder Singh, Chairman of the India Business Group of the Singapore Trade Development Board, called on the Chief Minister at the Mandarin Hotel on 4.1.1999. The Indian Ambassador at Singapore Thiru Prem Singh, Hon'ble Minister for Health Thiru Arcot N. Veerasamy, Secretary Industries Department Thiru M.S. Srinivasan

were also present during the meeting. The Chief Minister explained to Thiru Davinder Singh the Industrial policy of Tamil Nadu and the steps taken to attract foreign investments, by



which the State had been successful in its endeavour.

Later in the evening, the Chief Minister met Thiru Mah Bow Tan, the Singapore Minister for Communications and held talks. He described in detail the various steps taken by the Government on Information

the Chief Minister was given a rousing welcome by representatives of the various Cultural and Trade Industrial Organisations. Speaking to a representative of 'Tamil Murasu' the Chief Minister described his visit as an opportunity to enhance industrial linkages and reinforce

Technology front and conveyed his confidence that the advancement achieved by Singapore in the IT field would help Tamil Nadu to a greater extent in its efforts to implement the IT schemes in Tami



Nadu. Pointing out the vast potential of Software professionals in India Thiru. Mah Bow Tan expressed the willingness of the Singapore Government to join hands with Indians and in particular South Indians in the Information Technology.

The Chief Minister later held talks with the Deputy Group President of the Port of Singapore Authority, Thiru Gaon Kok Loon. The expansion of the Chennai and Tuticorin ports are underway with technical assistance of Singapore Port Authority. The projects discussed include the Sethusamudram

project, Colachel port etc.

In an interview to the Singapore Radio, the Chief Minister said efforts were on to establish community internet in thousand places with the help of 'World Tel'.

The Chief Minister participated in various functions on 5.1.1999. At a lunch hosted by Brig. Gen. George Yeo, the Chief Minister discussed industrial growth in Tamil Nadu and the role to be played by Singapore to promote the industrial climate in the State.

Later in the evening the Chief Minister

called on the Prime Minister of Singapore Thiru Goh Chok Tong. Thiru M.S. Srinivasan, the Secretary for Industries was also present during the 45 minute courtesy call.



Speaking to the media on his talks with Singapore Prime Minister, the Chief Minister said, they discussed about the economic policy of India, politics in general and the miserable plight of job seekers who were systematically duped by bogus agents and middle men with false offers of employment in Singapore. The Prime Minister said suitable warning and advise would be issued to those involved. The Chief Minister said the Tamil Nadu Government would, on its own initiative take legal measures to curb this menace and would also take up this issue with the Government of India for appropriate action. He said it was a courtesy call and the objective of his visit was to reinforce the cultural bonds

between India, in particular Tamil Nadu, and Singapore besides broadly exploring the scope for industrial and trade linkages. The Chief Minister also said, he had suggested

the Prime Minister that Singapore could also participate in the joint venture partner in the 'Petro Chemical Park' of the Tamil Nadu Government - a Rupees Thousand crore project for which the Master Plan had been drafted.

The Chief Minister informed the media that the Prime Minister had said the project

could be discussed further when he had suggested the participation of Singapore in S-Bit Habitat Soft Bonded Information Technology Project.

The Chief Minister later delivered a speech in English at the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI).

The Chief Minister Kalaignar held discussions with the steering committee of the India Business group of the Singapore Trade Development Board on 6.11.1999. The main subjects that came under discussions were power generation, Information Technology, including computer education and housing. The Chief Minister



assured the entrepreneurs that the Government of Tamil Nadu would extend all its support to the foreign investors.

Later in the evening, the Chief Minister enthralled the audience with his literary speech at a public meeting organised by Singapore Tamil Organisations at a city stadium. The speech was enthusiastically received by the Tamils.



Completing his three day visit, the Chief Minister left Singapore for Malaysia on 7.1.1999. He was warmly received by a large number of Tamils, and Datto Seri S. Samy Vellu, the Malaysian Minister of Works and the Indian High Commissioner at Kualalumpur Thiru. Sahai at the Kualalumpur Airport. Speaking to the media at the airport, the Chief Minister said that this was his second trip to Malaysia and the visit was mainly to strengthen the cultural links and the economic cooperation between Tamil Nadu and Malaysia.

The Chief Minister called on the Malaysian Minister for International Trade and Industry, Ms. Rafidah Aziz at her office and held discussions on inviting investments from Malaysia, Tamil Nadu's infrastru -



ctural needs of power generation, Information Technology and Computer Studies.

Later the Chief Minister attended a dinner hosted by the Malaysia's Works Minister Dato Seri. S. Samy

Vellu. Welcoming the Chief Minister, the Malaysian Minister said, he considered the Chief Minister's visit to Malaysia as a renewal of the cultural ties existing between Tamil Nadu and Malaysia.

In his thanks giving address, the Chief Minister asking him to excuse stated that his visit was not to renew the ties between Tamil Nadu and Malaysia. Renewal was needed only when the relations were strained. The relations had not been strained. He had come to Malaysia to strengthen the ties between Tamil Nadu and Malaysia. He also

requested the assembled body to extend their helping hand in his efforts to the industrialisation of Tamil Nadu.

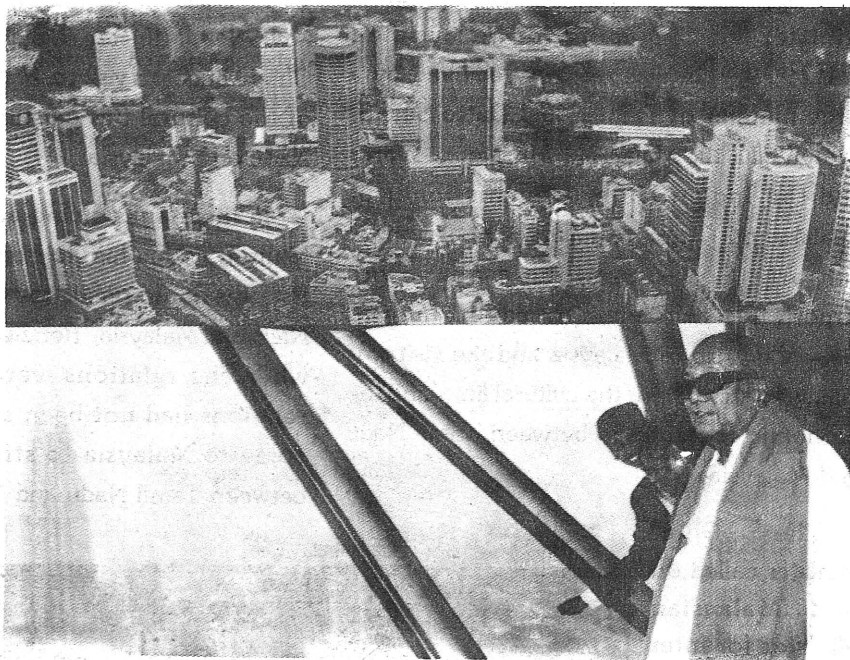
The Chief Minister called on the Minister for Works Dato Seri. S. Samy Vellu at his Office on 8.1.99 and held dialogues with him and other higher officials for more than an hour. The main project which came under discussion was the construction of a superhighway connecting the Chennai International Airport and the Port of Chennai.

In the evening the Chief Minister addressed a public meeting organised by Dato Seri. S. Samy Vellu and Malaysians of Indian origin at the Putra World Trade Centre auditorium. The emotionally charged speech of the Chief Minister was heard with rapt attention and appreciation. The auditorium overflowed with teeming people with hundreds having to stand outside the veque to hear the speech.

Later around 8.30 p.m. the Chief Minister spoke at a meeting with the Malaysian businessmen.

The Chief Minister called on the Prime Minister of Malaysia Dr. Mahathir Mohamed at his office on 9.1.1999. The meeting lasted for 35 minutes. The Prime Minister was apprised of the two projects viz. the Colachel Minor Port development and the Palar ground water scheme. The Chief Minister presented a copy of the techno - economic feasibility report on the Colachel Port.

Speaking to media, later, the Chief Minister said the Prime Minister had been apprised of how Collaboration in the project could give a boost to bilateral relationship.



The Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaigarr M. Karunanidhi after a week long visit to Singapore and Malaysia returned to Chennai by 11.30 p.m. on 9.1.1999. He was warmly received by Hon'ble Ministers, Members of the Parliament, Members of the Legislative Assembly and Public in large number at the Chennai Meenambakkam Airport.

★ ★ ★

***Our vision is to make our State more and more attractive to
investors through our investor - friendly and
transparent decision - making process.***

The cultural ties between Singapore and India and Tamil Nadu in particular have been in existence for a very long time. A large number of my Tamil Brethren have become Singaporeans long back and settled here. Though I have been in Public life for more than 6 decades now, I have not visited Singapore so far. A visit to Singapore has

You are a dynamic body closely watching the transformation of the Indian economy. You are well aware of the economic progress in India in general and in Tamil Nadu in particular. Since the liberalisation of Indian economy in 1991, the role and responsibility for the nation's development have shifted from the Central Government to the States.



been my long - felt dream. Only now, the dream is fulfilled. I am very happy to meet you all here, as a part of my first visit to Singapore.

It gives me great pleasure to participate at this function today, organised by the SICCI. At the outset, I extend my warm greetings and sincere wishes to you all for the New Year.

The States are emerging as key-players in charge of their own destiny. In fact, even the Founding Fathers of our Constitution had foreseen a prime role for the States in industrial and economic development. The situation in the last five decades had been different. But, I am confident that in the new

- Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi at the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) on 5.1.1999.



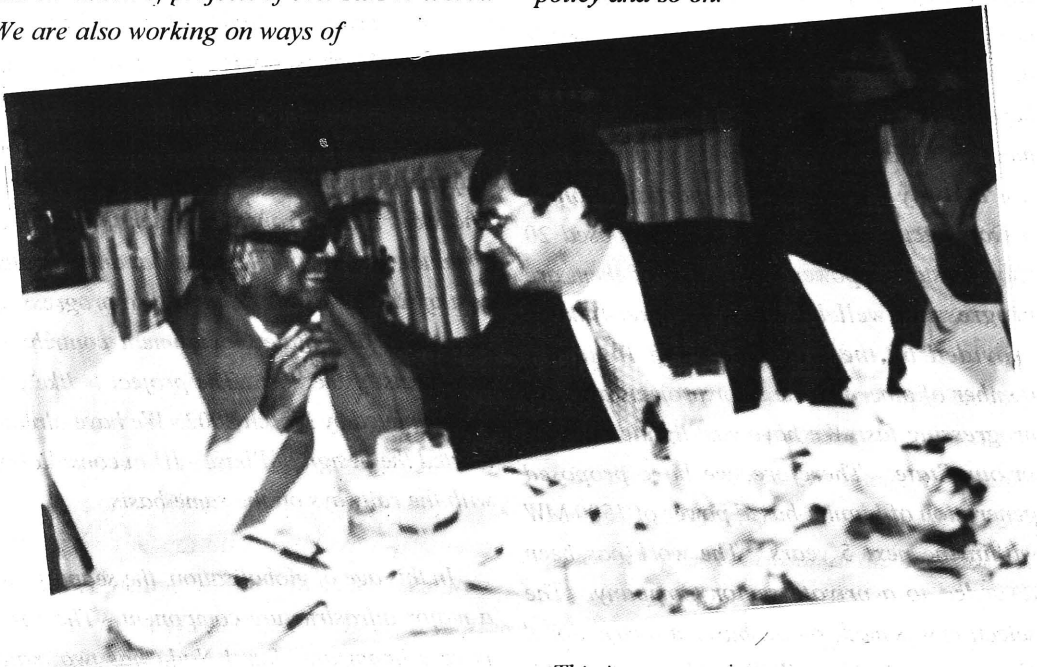
millennium, the States will be leading the process of economic growth and development in the country.

Traditionally, Tamil Nadu has followed a progressive policy of industrial development. This is reflected in the maturity and quality of the industrial base existing in the State. Our State was one of the first to understand the benefits of industrialisation in overall development, employment, poverty removal and social justice. Tamil Nadu has vast natural and human resources. It has become a market - leader in many industrial sectors. Auto and auto-ancillary, textile industry, leather industry are examples. These sectors account for sizeable portion of the national output and exports. However, the momentum in the initial decades was not maintained later for various

reasons. The State was lagging behind in the 80s and early 90s. This problem is now being effectively addressed. The State is again humming with industrial activity. After our return to power in 1996, we have taken a number of effective steps to restore Tamil Nadu to its previous glory. The impact of our efforts is already visible. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, which is an independent body in Mumbai, monitors the investment flows into the various States periodically. According to their figures, Tamil Nadu was in the 5th position among the States, in investment proposals into industry, in May 1996. It has gone upto the second position in November, 1998, next only to Maharashtra. We are not content with this. We have taken a number of initiatives. We are working hard to reach the top slot.

With a view to providing land with the infrastructure facilities to the investors, we are creating a number of self-contained industrial parks. These parks are spread in various parts of the State. This will enable the promoters to get off the ground without delay. Another area, where we have focused our attention, is cutting the red-tape. The Industrial Township Development Authority Act was enacted by us last year. It provides for all the clearances directly from the Authority by all the industries coming up in the Townships. We have also created a single window mechanism under my chairmanship. This will monitor the clearances and execution of projects of over Rs.100 crores. We are also working on ways of

Development Corporation Limited (TIDCO), State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited SIPCOT, Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation Limited (SIDCO), etc. They provide escort services as well as financial assistance to investors. Moreover, we have indentified certain sectors as thrust - areas. We have formulated sector-specific policies, to address the problems in these areas and try and help the investors. Some of these policies, we have formulated during the past two years are Information Technology (IT) policy, Floriculture policy, Co-generation policy and so on.



reducing the danger of the Inspector Raj, without compromising the safety-standards.

In addition to the systematic changes being carried out, we have industry promotion Agencies like Tamil Nadu Industrial

This is an on-going process.

While all these are important, the single most effective incentive for investors is good quality infrastructure. As such, Tamil Nadu ranks second at All-India level in terms of

adequacy and quality of infrastructure. This is as per a recent study done by the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER). However, we are not resting on our laurels. We are investing heavily into the various components of infrastructure. They are power, roads and port facilities. In fact, over 50% of the investment taking place in our States is towards infrastructure. More than 50% of this is in the power sector. We are taking effective steps to augment power generation capacity, both in the short run and in the long run. Against the present installed capacity of 7000 MW, we have proposed additional capacity to the tune of over 12000 MW in the next seven years. The estimated cost is nearly 400 Billion Rupees. We realise that it would be beyond the capacity of the State's finances to meet the increasing demand. Therefore, we are actively encouraging the participation of private sector in this. We have proposed 20 short gestation power projects. 6 of them are progressing well based on the fuel-linkage provided by the Government of India. A number of other private sector projects are also progressing fast. We have vast lignite reserves in our State. Therefore, we have proposed generation of Lignite-based power of 1500 MW within the next 5 years. The work has been awarded to a private sector Company. The selection was made on the basis of International Competitive Bidding (ICB). The work on this project has already started. Recently we have selected the successful bidder for generation of 2000 MW of power near Chennai. This project is based on imported Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). Here again selection has been made

through a transparent process of ICB. The work of erection of transmission lines from new projects and the modernisation of the old thermal power stations is being offered to the private sector. With all these measures underway I can assure you that the investors will have no worry about, power shortage in the State in the future.

The second important component of infrastructure, namely roads, involves large investments for improvement and upgradation. Our investment in this sector during this 2 year period is more than three times the corresponding investment 4 years ago. Also, we have taken the initiative of sharing the cost on 50 : 50 basis with the railways for conversion of meter gauge railway lines in our State into broad gauge. This conversion will help quicker movement of goods and cargo. The Mass Rapid Transport System Phase II, at Chennai, is being implemented at an estimated cost of Rs.750 crores. This is also progressing very fast. The State Government contributes two-thirds of the cost. The project is likely to be completed by March 2002. We have already started the design of Phase - III in consultation with the railways on the same basis.

In this age of globalisation, the seaports are a major infrastructure component. Their role is very important. Tamil Nadu has two major ports at Chennai and Tuticorin. I am aware that the Port of Singapore Authority, which is rated among the best in the world, is associated with both Chennai and Tuticorin ports in their operations and expansion. We have taken steps

for development of the minor ports at Cuddalore and Kolachel. Bids have already been received for Cuddalore port. Feasibility Report is getting ready for Kolachel. A new major port is coming up at Ennore. We are setting up our LNG Terminal and a huge Petrochemical Park at Ennore. We are working actively on setting up a new International Airport at Chennai. This will be in addition to the one already existing.

In the sunrise sector of Information Technology, Tamil Nadu has taken a number of initiatives. The mainframe capacity available at Chennai is the largest in the whole country. We produce annually 23 Thousand engineers. Among them over 10,000 engineers are from IT and related disciplines. In fact, our contribution to the engineering pool is 14% at the national level as against a population of only 6.4% The National Association of Software and Services Companies, NASSCOM, in its recent study of Software destinations in India has ranked Chennai No.1. for setting up of IT companies. We have a forward-looking and pro-active IT policy. This has been received very well by the IT Industry. We are setting up the largest IT Park in the country with state-of-the art facilities near Chennai. We have recently set up the Tamil Nadu Institute of Information Technology (TANITEC) with industry collaboration to meet the growing demand of the IT Industry. We are working in collaboration with Worldtel headed by Dr. Sam Pitroda for setting up over 1000 Internet Community Centres all over the State. This will bring

internet within the close reach of the entire population. We have also decided to make IT an integral part of the curriculum at school level from the next academic year. We are targeting to become 100% computer -literate within the next 10 years.

I am glad to learn that the industrial and business relationship between Singapore and Tamil Nadu is registering rapid progress. I am informed that among all Indian States, the highest number of joint Ventures of Singapore investors is in Tamil Nadu. I request the Singapore - Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry to advise more and more business people and project promoters here to come and participate in our industrialisation efforts in Tamil Nadu.

Summing up, I wish to reiterate that Tamil Nadu is today rapidly emerging as one of the most-favoured destinations of investors from abroad as well as from other States of India. Our vision is to make our State more and more attractive to investors, through our investor - friendly and transparent decision - making process and governance. Given our pride of place in higher education at the national level, we are determined to make Tamil Nadu, the most computer -literate State in India as early as possible. I want to assure you that we will extend our fullest assistance to bring your investments. We will always be with you to enable you to succeed.

*International
Conference &
Seminar on
the use of
Tamil in
Information
Technology*

The International Conference and Seminar on Tamil in Information Technology - "Tamil Net 99" - at Chennai, will play a useful role in promoting the use of Tamil on computers in many parts of the world.

I extend my warm greetings to the distinguished participants and organisers and wish the deliberations every success.

Thiru K.R. Narayanan,
His Excellency the President of India



I am happy to learn that the Government of Tamil Nadu is organising an International Conference and Seminar on Tamil in Information Technology, captioned 'Tamil Net 99', at Chennai on 7-8 February, 1999.

The revolution in information technology in this century has posed a major challenge to the oriental languages as well as presented them with an unprecedented opportunity. These languages, structured according to precise norms of grammar and syntax, are capable of being adapted to computer with the minimum effort. Tamil, as one of India's most ancient, mature and rich languages, can surely lead the way in computer adaptability. This will enable people conversant in Tamil language to freely use computers and benefit from the ever escalating information technology.

I am glad that the Government of Tamil Nadu has taken a very thoughtful step in the systematic evolution of Tamil for computer

usage aimed at development of internationally acceptable standards.

I wish the effort every success.

Thiru. Krishan Kant,
His Excellency the Vice-President of India



I am pleased to know that an International Conference and Seminar on Tamil in Information Technology, "Tamil Net 99", is being organised in Chennai on February 7-8, 1999. I have said that IT is India's Tomorrow. However, to ensure that all Indians are able to use its many benefits, there is an urgent need to increase local language content in information technology. Tamil is a classical language, whose richness is enhanced manifold by its ability to adapt itself to the challenges of the modern era. Tamil Nadu has produced a large number of highly successful Information Technology professionals and entrepreneurs, who are today operating both in India and abroad.

It is very heartening to note that the Information Technology Department of the Government of Tamil Nadu has organised this seminar to take Information Technology for the common people by enabling Tamil to become a major player in the information revolution.

I send my best wishes to the seminar and all its participants.

Thiru A.B. Vajpayee,
The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India



Computer technology and the use of the Internet are growing at a fast pace these days.

In such a situation, it is important that there is a fuller involvement of the Tamil language.

It is with this objective that the Tamil Nadu Government has decided to hold the Tamil Net '99 World Conference in Chennai on the 7th and 8th February.

The views of experts from many countries on matters relating to computers and Internet will be discussed to fully explore ways in which the Tamil language can be best adopted. The needs for development of innovative software is also part of the agenda. All persons interested in the Tamil language around the world will benefit from the common coding standards to be adopted at the Conference.

Only then will Internet transform into TAMIL NET!

Only then will the common man, and people living even in villages be able to look upon the computer as a friend, an aide, and an instrument of learning.

This Conference is a landmark in the move to open the vistas for harnessing the effort so far, and blending it with that of the future.

This historical event has been arranged by the Tamil Nadu Government to provide the basis for revolutionary changes in the field of communications in the new millennium. Towards that end, all assistance will be rendered for new developments in the use of Tamil.

I extend my best wishes for fruitful and successful discussions between the esteemed delegations from abroad and the experts from Tamil Nadu, and for their sustained interaction for the greater use of Tamil in worldwide communications.

Thiru M. Karunanidhi,
The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu



From Palm-Leaf to the Computer-Screen

MURASOLI MARAN, M.P.

Chairman, Reception Committee of Tamil Net 99

This is the age of Information Revolution - more subtle, yet more explosive - which will shape our future and those who care about today's - and tomorrow's - society have no other go except to welcome it and run to the forefront to become part of it and to take advantage of it.

India missed the first Industrial Revolution; but if we miss the Information Revolution we will be forgotten by history and our ancient civilisation

All over the world there is a realisation that in the information society the two required languages are : English and Computer.

If that is the case we cannot take the fruits of that Revolution to the common man living in our villages and towns who knows only his mother tongue.

Can't we use Tamil?



will continue to remain ancient, unable to keep step with the modern world.

Computer Technology is to the information age what mechanisation was to the industrial Revolution.

To this question the Tamils have answered "Yes" and have proved it also.

Tamil which is a classical language with an originality and a singularity of its own, and whose literatures and grammars written on the palm-



leaves that are still extant inspite of ravages of times, date back to thousands of years - is also a live modern language. Its unbroken continuity of existence right from its undoubted antiquity to its present modernity can be seen from the fact that it is used profusely in the computers also.

But as Tamil happens to be the official language in other countries and as Tamils live all over the world, many scholars have designed their own softwares without communication with one another.

They were engaged in these developments without being aware of the efforts of the C-DAC (the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing) under the Department of Electronics (Government of India).

Today there are about 350 softwares in Tamil. The immortal "Thirukkural", one of the masterpieces in Tamil literature and one of the noblest and purest expressions of human thought, composed about 20 centuries ago and preserved intact to this day through carvings on palm-leaves, is available in about 16 softwares. Likewise there are about 100 types of keyboard configurations.

Yes, it is a matter of pride. But the tragedy is that none has a uniform coding standard. As there is no common mutual compatibility among the 350 softwares. We can very well say that in the cyber highways and internet there are now 350 Tamil languages in use which is an euphemism for getting garbages.

In English ASCII has produced the uniform coding standard. That kind of international standard for Tamil is the urgent need of the hour if the Tamil used in the computers and internet is to be intelligible to all the fellow-Tamils.

Today, thanks to the efforts of the Government of Tamil Nadu, more than 100 delegates, including Tamil Scholars, Computer Specialists from India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Mauritius, U.S.A., Canada and Europe are meeting to arrive at a consensus on the following issues:

- i) Standardisation of coding of Tamil Scripts,
- ii) Standardisation of Tamil Key Board layout, and
- iii) Use of Tamil in Multi-media, Internet and Computing.

This is a historic event for the Tamils and for the Tamil language because the valuable decisions taken in the Conference will make the Tamils living all over the world to feel really like living in a global village and their language preserved through the ages in palm leaves will find its due place in the computer screen and will become an active player in the Information Revolution.

Most importantly, it will pave the way for creating a Transparent Electronic Government, because in a democracy Government can be run meaningfully and successfully only in the people's language.



Bright Future for Thamizh in Information Technology

Dr. M. Anandakrishnan

Vice Chairman, Thamizh Nadu State Council For Higher Education

Many hundred computer scientists with sufficient knowledge of Thamizh living in India and abroad are engaged in a variety of tasks relating to use of Thamizh in Computers and Communications. The new generation of computer experts in India are showing considerable aptitude in developing innovative approaches for this purpose. School children, teachers, office workers, businessmen and product developers are showing considerable interest in using Thamizh in computers. CD-ROM based products incorporating Tamil, meant for education, games, entertainment, cultural interest, etc., are appearing in large numbers everyday. New business opportunities are increasing exponentially. The Government of Tamil Nadu has decided to achieve a high level of computer literacy which would necessarily include Thamizh based applications. Most of the Governmental forms and procedure in Thamizh will be accessible through internet and computers even in remote parts of the State.

During the last decade and a half Thamizh related computer activities have been steadily growing. Initially most of the efforts were devoted to design of Thamizh font faces by a large number of persons keeping in view their use in the popular software and hardware systems available at different points of time. They were meant for use in different operating systems particularly for word processing. Some were devoted to special purpose use such as teaching of Thamizh and simple games and puzzles.

With rapid growth of Internet and e-mail activities around the world and their increasing use in India during the last five years the efforts to incorporate Thamizh in them gained considerable momentum. Hundreds of Thamizh related web sites have appeared in recent years. Several well-known Thamizh Newspapers and Journals are available in the web. A large number of well-known Thamizh classical as well as modern literature are included in very many sites. Several Thamizh software are freely downloadable from the Internet.

Quite a few developers are engaged in producing purely Thamizh based applications for e-mail communication, web browsing, learning classical music, playing computer games, spell checking, Thamizh dictionary

and thesaurus, etc. In due course of time several new innovations and products will emerge as a result of rapid changes in Information Technology. Further advances will take place using Thamizh in text processing, information exchange, e-mail communication, computer aided instruction, computer aided language learning etc. Multimedia products will become prolific. There will be significant changes and improvements in the use of Thamizh in the publishing industry.

A challenging area for new initiatives will be on the preparation and processing of large data bases in Thamizh including sorting, indexing and retrieving. Other important areas for future efforts will include natural language processing, machine aided translation, speech recognition, and building library archives. These developments signify a bright future for the use of Thamizh in Information Technology.

However all the energy and effort devoted to these tasks will produce maximum benefit only if there is a minimum set of standards for the input systems such as keyboards and the encoding system for the Thamizh Characters and fonts and symbols. The International Conference, Tamil Net 99, to be held in Chennai on 7 and 8 February 1999, will help to seek the consensus on such standards.





Tamil Net

will attain a

place of

prominence in the

information

superhighway

- Her Excellency the Governor Justice Selvi. M. Fathima Beevi at the
 inaugural session of the International Conference and Seminar,
 'TAMIL NET '99' at Chennai on 7.2.1999

I have great pleasure in participating in the Inaugural Session of the International Conference and Seminar on the use of Tamil in Information Technology, hosted by the State level Task Force of the Government of Tamil Nadu on Information Technology. I welcome the Ministers and high dignitaries from abroad and the International experts and delegates to this conference, which will set on course the process of making

Tamil an integral part of Information superhighway.

Information Technology can be used as a vehicle for all round development in creation of new jobs and in making access to information amazingly easy. Today's Internet links about 170 countries in the world, links people who speak many different languages on a 24 hour basis. Internet has come a long way since the day it first went online in 1969, initially conceived in

huge mainframes and later survived in the era of personal computers. After the invention of World Wide Web, Internet has become user-friendly providing access to information without any barriers between the users and now occupies the centre stage in the modern world.

The World Wide Web consisting of documents of a staggering volume and easy access to the entire world of data, through the Internet,

are among the finest contributions, after telephone, radio and television, by science to global communication and human interaction. Earlier in the 80s, the Internet was considered as a people's network meant for variety of academic purposes. In the

Technology and is very enthusiastic in making optimum use of the immense human capital of the State and its long tradition of academic excellence to attain serious growth in Information Technology. I congratulate the Government of Tamil Nadu

acknowledge the contribution being made by individuals at Private firms to the development of Software, especially in Tamil language and the creation of Websites carrying information on Tamil language and literature. But all these products lack in



90s, the usage of network was opened to individuals facilitating thousands to join the Internet everyday. True to the scientific tradition of the State, Tamil Nadu has taken progressive strides in Information Technology. The State Government has established a separate department for Information

on setting the pace for this growth in Information Industry. The Tamil Net 1999 is another laudable endeavour in this line.

The Government is willing to take advantage of competitiveness of the private sector in Information Industry and is happy to

uniform standards and global organisation. In addition to the millions in Tamil Nadu, there are lakhs of Tamil people living in different parts of the world. Their love for their mother tongue and zeal for its preservation and promotion are extraordinary. Since internet has become a daily

affair in individual life the world over, it is absolutely necessary to have Tamilnet with uniform codes which will be able to harmonise promotional efforts from various quarters in future. The Government of Tamil Nadu can perform this hard task and remain the Central Guide for Tamil Network usage in future.

I wish to place on record my deep appreciation of the number of individuals who have made serious and notable efforts to introduce Tamil Language on an International scale, by producing several Tamil Softwares and creating websites. With their sincere and enthusiastic co-operation, I am sure that Tamilnet will soon attain a place of prominence in the Information superhighway.

Already the use of Tamil in Internet is far greater than any other Indian languages. With the implementation of uniform coding standards, Tamilnet will be a huge network and in involving a broad community of Tamil internauts in working together and accomplishing the dissemination of Information on Tamil and Tamil Nadu. The most significant achievement will be the ability of Tamil net to bring the large rural population of Tamil Nadu - the non - English speaking and non-academics - into the fold of Internet.

This is the progressive step which will place Tamil on the information superhighway thereby rendering access to international scholars in

Tamil and is conducive to intensive development in Tamil language. The credit for this is solely due to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu who has given the needed fillip for modernising both teaching and learning of Tamil language across the world. I congratulate Thiru. Maran for his Perseverance and determination to modernise many dimensions in the state administration for the larger benefit of the people.

I am delighted to extend my warm greetings and best wishes to all the participants in this Conference for success in future endeavours. I wish the "Tamil net 99" a grand success.

★ ★ ★

First Wrapper

Her Excellency the Governor's address to the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.

Fourth Wrapper

Inauguration of the construction of 102 bridges and improvements to radial roads.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TAMILNET

It has become a necessity to link the commandable efforts in promoting Tamil into Internet carried out by the numerous Tamil enthusiasts around the world. To meet these requirements, the following decisions were taken at the International Conference - Tamil Net '99, held on 7th and 8th February 1999.

Recommendations of Tamil Keyboard Standards

There have been an evolution of keyboards developed for inputting Tamil characters into a computer. Over the years a lot of improvements have been incorporated one over the other and a few excellent keyboards have been evolved. There are the three types of keyboards, for Tamil namely Romanised keyboards, Tamil Typewriter based keyboards and Phonetic

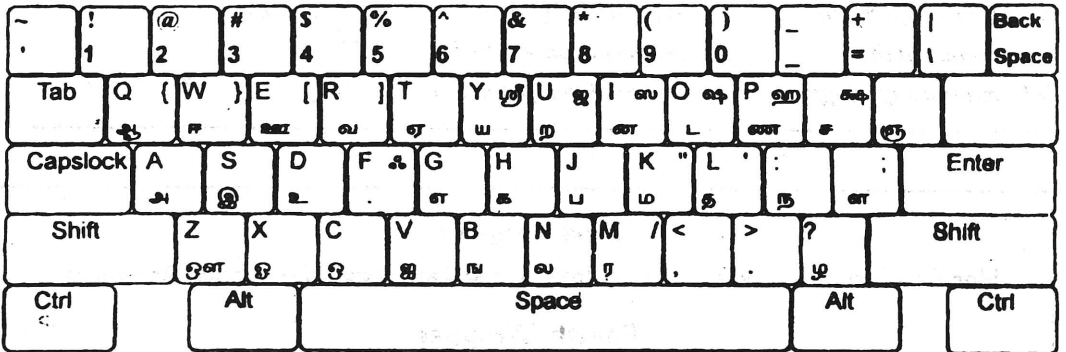
keyboards, of these the Phonetic keyboards have become more popular because of its user friendliness, language specific and lesser effort involved. While standardizing the keyboards the following aspects were considered.

Tamil Characters frequently used should be placed in strong fingure positions and less frequently used in the light fingure positions.

The less frequently used grantha letters shall be put in locations with shif key operations.

The short and long vowels shall be kept in adjacent positions for a good memory and easy operations.

In Tamil the இன எழுத்துக்கள், ங்க, ஞ்ச, ண்ட, ந்த, ன்ற always go together and if these letters are placed adjacently it would be easy for operation



**Key - Board Recommended by the Sub-Committee
of the State - Level Task Force Committee on I.T., T.N. Govt.**

and with the help of a software the additional operation for putting a dot for consonants can be avoided.

Incorporating the above aspects, a recommended standard for the phonetic keyboard is accepted. The various keyboards developed by the researchers in different parts of the world should be documented for reference.

In the interim period till switchover to Phonetic keyboard takes place the Tamil typewriter keyboard should continue without any change from the one proposed by the keyboard committee constituted by the Government of Tamil Nadu during 1997.

The Romanised keyboard for Tamil as proposed by the keyboard committee is suggested for limited use by those who prefer English character for typing Tamil Text.

To implement the Phonetic keyboard, to get trained in the use of Phonetic keyboard and to spread the use of the same in the society, necessary actions may have to be initiated.

Recommendations of Tamil Character and Glyph Encoding Schemes

Requirements of Tamil Computing can be broadly classified under three heads

1. Word Processing and Publishing.
2. Communication and Interfaces with ASCII based Software Systems.

3. Language analysis and processing, and system software based applications.

It is possible to meet the above requirements with a single character encoding scheme if adequate space is available. That is, in a eight bit system there are 256 locations available of which ASCII occupies the lower 128 locations leaving only less than 128 locations for Tamil characters. This space is not adequate to render all the Tamil characters. In future, if a 2 or 3 byte system like unicode is implemented in full, the problem of space will not arise.

Under this situation, we are forced to think of more than one system of encoding. After a careful analysis of the various requirements and limitations the following encoding scheme is shown in the figure.

This scheme is conveniently adaptable for both bilingual as well as monolingual applications. A character encoding scheme with only Tamil alphabets and consonents placed in the same locations as in the figure is recommended for modification of the existing unicode.

Realising the importance and criticality of addressing and ensuring the changeover from the existing codes presently in use, the proposed codes are recommended as draft standard. The draft standard should be made available to one and all from a website specifically created for this purpose and a timeframe of 100 days from 9th February '99 should be provided to facilitate developers to exercise the use of the draft codes

Monolingual Glyph Encoding

	0	16	32	48	64	80	96	112	128	144	160	176	192	208	224	240
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	A	B	C	D	E	F
0		Space	0	@	றி	'	ஃ		ஶ		ஶ	ரி	இ	ண	ல்	
1		!	1	கி	னி	ண்	ஹ்	1	'	ா	து	ஶ	ஈ	த	ட்	
2		"	2	நி	னி	த்	க்	2	'	ி	நு	தூ	உ	ந	ண்	
3		#	3	சி	யி	ந்	•	3	"	'	பு	நூ	ஊ	ப	த்	
4		\$	4	ஓ	ஹி	ப்		4	"	'	மு	நூ	எ	ம	ந்	
5		%	5	ணி	ஹி	ம்		5	ஸ்	உ	யு	மு	ர	ய	ப்	
6	Control	&	6	தி	க்	யி		6	ஸ	உ	ரு	யு	ஐ	ர	ம்	
7		'	7	நி	க்	ரீ		7	ஷ	உ	•	ஶ	ஓ	ல	ய்	
8	Characters	(	8	பி	நி	ல்		8	ஐ	உ	வ	வா	ஓ	வ	ர்	
9		)	9	யி	சீ	வி		9	ஹ	உ	வ	ஶ	ஓ	ழ	ல்	
A		*	:	யி	ஓ	ழ்		0	க்		மு	மு	கி	ள	வ்	
B		+	:	ரி	[	எ	{	10	ஸ்	டி	ரு	ஶ	க	ற	ழ்	
C		<	<	லி	\	ற	|	100	ஷ	உ	நூ	நூ	ஶ	ன	ள்	
D		=	=	வி	]	எ	}	நு	ஐ	கு	ஶ	ஶ	ச	க்	ற்	
E		>	>	ழி	^	எ	~	ஶ	ஶ	சு	சு	அ	ஓ	ங்	ன்	
F		/	?	ளி		ஷ	DEL	நு	க்	உ	கு	கு	ஆ	ட	ச்	

183 = Bullet

115 = Pulli

in various platforms and software for compatibility and adaptability. The decision on the codes to be adopted as the standard should be taken at a meeting to be held by June 1, 1999, The procedure to receive, and consolidate the experience feedback on the draft standard will be set forth by a monitoring committee comprising of experts from within and outside India.

The Tamil Nadu Government should provide adequate encouragement and help to convert the existing software systems into the new encoding system.

To exploit the opportunities to implement the future developments in computers and Internet computing using Tamil, an active research has to be initiated world wide. For this purpose it is necessary to create a State Level

Tamil Net Research Centre and an International Tamil Net Communication Centre.

We should make the rich Tamil Literatures and the Linguistic grammars available in the Internet. It is necessary to develop Computer Softwares for dictionary, thesaurus, spell checking facilities, E-mail, Tamil Hand Writing Recognition, Optical Character Recognition, Tamil Voice Processing, Natural Language Processing, Palm Leaf Character Recognition etc., The Governments in countries having Tamil as a official Language, Private organisations and the Universities should encourage such efforts.

The International Conference on Tamil Net should be organised every year.



TAMIL AND INTERNET

- Sujatha

Writer, Member, Reception Committee, Tamil Net '99

Among the Indian languages Tamil is the earliest to enter the Internet. There are many reasons:- Tamil Word processing software started appearing as early as 1978. Some pioneering efforts were done in IITs at Kanpur and Chennai.

Tamil being a simpler Dravidian language has less characters which are written linearly. Modern Tamil is non-cursive.

With some software tricks it is possible to accommodate all Tamil Characters in a standard keyboard. In fact in a phonetic keyboard layout, Tamil text can be inputted completely without using the shift key even once.

Many software engineers working abroad are Tamilians with a zest to contribute something to their mother tongue.

All these have been contributing factors for the early entry of Tamil into the internet and the world wide web.

There are many sites from which Tamil fonts can be downloaded freely. Tamil is used in the many popular e-mail programmes. The early Tamil search engines are in prototype stage now.

Many of the Research Institutions and Universities abroad are already inputting very large volumes of Tamil text, particularly its great literary works, into the net. The Tamil lexicon, the **sangam** classics, **kamban**, the **prabhandam** of alwars, the **thirumarais** of saivite saints and of course any number of times **thirukkural**, are all available in the net.

Normally this is a happy situation. Research scholars should have easy access to these. Unfortunately this is not happening because of a total lack of standardisation in the following.

1. The keyboard input methods.
2. The coding scheme for internal storage in computer media.

Each one of the enthusiasts in their eagerness and urgency evolved their own methods and have been merrily inputting text without really caring whether others should access them or not.

'If you want to read what I have inputted better buy my font' they say; some give it free.

It is somewhat like saying Tamil is very much in the internet but there are several Tamil languages.

This problem is not there for other world languages as they had government bodies or industry consortia to standardise their inputting and coding methods. In India the ISCII standard was evolved by the Government but unfortunately Tamil being a unique Dravidian language could not use ISCII standards efficiently. Tamil and computers were, to start with, worlds apart, suddenly the language made the quantum leap into cyberspace and the incompatibility problems are all surfacing now.

These were discussed in an international conference in Singapore - the Tamil Net 97

All the difficulties were stated and clear guidelines were given for

standardisation. The scholars all agreed, went back to their native pursuits, and continued in the same old way, totally convinced that THEIR way is the standard way.

The Tamil Nadu Government which has been a bystander in a chaotic development realised it is time to intervene and set the example. The Government undertook to host the next Internet Conference in Chennai with clear and focussed objectives of standardising input and coding methods.

A secondary objective is to take stock of all the wonderful things happening in the internet for Tamil with the purpose of supporting appropriate research efforts.

Delegates from all Tamil speaking countries, research scholars, universities and institutions are participating. Papers are going to be presented and the proceedings will be published as a book and in the net. This conference will be a path-breaking one and will enable the language to enter the next millennium confidently.

No more wasted efforts in re-inventing every time a new enthusiast enters the Tamil Net.

The conference is expected to achieve the following:

Establish standards for inputting and internal coding.

Give clear directions for future internet based activities in Tamil.

★ ★ ★

The emerging areas of Science and Technology today, namely, Bio-technology and Information Technology have taken very strong roots in India, especially in Tamil Nadu. It is well known that Tamil Nadu is in the forefront in implementing new biological alternatives to pesticides and fertilizers.

Thus the theme of the Congress, namely "New bio-sciences- Opportunities and Challenges as we move into the next millennium" very well meets the emphasis. Tamil Nadu has been laying emphasis for this area of science. The establishment of Golden Jubilee Bio-technology Park for women inaugurated on 29.7.1998 by His Excellency the President of India; the Educational Programmes introduced through the TANITEC; and Tidel Park being organised by the TIDCO are recent examples for the emphasis by the Tamil Nadu Government.

Science and Technology has always been occupying a pride of place in Tamil Nadu. It is well known that the infra-structure for professional education in our State is one of the best in the Country. This will be most helpful in

**TAMIL NADU
IS
IN
FOREFRONT
IN
IMPLEMENTING
NEW
BIOLOGICAL
ALTERNATIVES
TO
PESTICIDES
AND
FERTILIZERS**

Hon'ble Chief Minister
Kalaignar
at the 86th Session
of the
Indian Science Congress
on
3-1-1999.

establishing knowledge in the High-Tech and industrial development. This trend will also help us in keeping pace with the Global phenomenon. We have to our credit, several distinguished scientists, and technocrats like Ramanujam, G.N. Ramachandran, A. Ramachandran, Nayudamma, C.V. Raman, K.S. Krishnan, S. Chandrasekar, Vergheese Kurien, Abdul Kalam and many others.

All these personalities had their education in this State. They have made great contribution, to the world of science and technology.

Several years ago, our beloved late leader "Arignar Anna" described the tragic situation prevailing among our common people thus :

"If you ask our common people,

Do you know the conveyance of Yamadharm Raja?, they will readily reply, "Buffalo".

But if you ask them, Do you know, who has invented the Aeroplane, they will just say, "No".

Now the situation has completely changed. A common man, even in a remote village is quite aware of recent happenings. He knows not only Computer and Internet but also Pokhran and Atom Bomb.

The Information Technology has converted this World into a "Global Village" Thus science and technology of our age is reaching its peak.

Even now, there is a major gap between the common people and their understanding of science. Therefore continuous efforts have to be made to take the fruits of Science and Technology to small

Towards reaching the rural population, development in the Internet connectivity to the Villages, especially in Tamil, is being actively taken up. I am indeed very happy to see that such modern communication means are used in this conference through wireless and Internet Communication Systems.

I also understand that there is a home page created for the Indian Science Congress Association. The Ramanujam Computing Centre of Anna University has been actively involved in computerization of the large number of registrants



scale and rural sectors. I am happy to inform that efforts are under way by our Government to establish the basic infra-structures for "The Science City" They include a world-class convention centre for Conferences and Exhibitions, Techno Incubator Park, Children's Hands-on Science Park, Science and Technology Information Network and so on. These activities are planned with support from all the Institutions in Chennai. They are currently involved in organising this major conference.

for this programme. In addition, I am proud to announce that steps have been taken to establish a "Ramanujam Museum" - in the name of the well-known Mathematician of Chennai, jointly by the University of Madras and the Institute of Mathematical Sciences.

I request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to consider making this Museum into a National asset by support from the Central Government.

★ ★ ★



THE INDIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY OF TAMIL NADU PROMOTES PEACE AND GOODWILL

- Her Excellency the Governor Justice Selvi **M. Fathima Beevi** at the inauguration of Day Hospital at Indian Red Cross Society, Chennai on 28.12.1998.

I have great pleasure in having inaugurated the Diwan Bahadur Namberumal Chetty Day Hospital and the Blood Bank Component Separation Unit in the premises of the Tamil Nadu Branch of the Indian Red Cross Society.

Diwan Bahadur T. Namberumal Chetty was one of the illustrious sons of India who proved their mettle to the British rulers and left an indelible mark in our history. He was the great builder who built all those monumental Indo-Sareenic buildings in Chennai. I thank Tmt. Ruthi Rajamannar and her family for making the donation, through the Thatikonda Rajamannar Trust, to add one more monument to the memory of T. Namberumal Chetty.

The Day Hospital will have facilities for the provision of complete healthcare, both preventive and curative, and I am confident that it will substantiate the efforts of the Red Cross Society in providing medical care and treatment to the hapless poor of Chennai living in the slums and on the pavements. Healthcare formed part of the wide ranging activities of the Tamil Nadu State Branch of the Indian Red Cross Society in the past 78 years of its existence. Free clinics, mobile medical units, nutritious meals, creches for children and many other activities make the society a tireless worker in public welfare.

Another laudable service being rendered by the Society is the rehabilitation of the physically handicapped. Training courses for women in nursing, physiotherapy and computers are conducted by the Society. The relief work provided by the society ranges from assistance during calamities like floods, fire, epidemics, slaughter etc. It is a matter of gratification to note all these commendable efforts being put forth by the Indian Red Cross and I am happy that the Red Cross Movement is extended to the districts too.

Red Cross is universal in aim and function. The sole aim of the Red Cross Movement is to help those who suffer, without any discrimination. Its activities are diverse, yet they all reflect the singular humanitarian outlook of the Red Cross Movement inspired by its founder and promoted, over the years, by thousands of volunteers. Red Cross has become an integral part of life



in peacetime too. The Movement which was born to assist the wounded in battlefields has assumed a bigger role of preventing and alleviating human suffering to a successful extent that today, Red Cross is considered a symbol of peace during conflicts.

The Tamil Nadu branch of the Indian Red Cross Society, promotes peace and goodwill with the co-operation of the State and the people. I very much appreciate the good work done by this Branch in taking care of the needy people caught in extreme situation. I am happy to extend my best wishes to all those connected with the Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch for success in all their endeavours.

I wish the organisations who have been awarded the Rolling Shields a bright and successful future.

★ ★ ★

**India
has
always
proved
successful
in
keeping
up
the
humanitarian
tradition
of
hosting
refugees**

I have great pleasure in welcoming all of you to Raj Bhavan on this momentous occasion on which I had the privilege of receiving, on behalf of the Tamil Nadu State Branch of the Indian Red Cross Society, the donation of an ambulance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The issue of refugees, the forced displacement of people who flee their homes mainly due to inter-state and intra-state wars, persecution and human rights violations, is causing grave concern among the global community, because the refugee movement tends to create trauma in the refugees and tension in the hosting countries. As a country, India has undergone the experience of hosting more refugees than perhaps any other country and now has a rich expertise in handling refugee matters. India has always proved successful in keeping up the humanitarian tradition of hosting refugees. Since this region of Asia experiences massive refugee movements, the role of the UNHCR in South Asia is very important.

Refugees are like any other victims of tragedy and are entitled to all their human rights. The UNHCR is globally responsible for the proper treatment of the refugees and is doing remarkable service to the cause for which the UNHCR has already earned two Noble Peace Prizes. The UNHCR has a deeprooted association with the Subcontinent having long established its part in taking care of the refugees, especially in the reintegration of the returnees from India in Srilanka. I am happy to extend my warm greetings and good wishes to the UNHCR for continued success in its mission of serving a great humanitarian cause.

Today, the UNHCR has handed over an ambulance to the Tamil Nadu State Branch of the Indian Red Cross Society to cater to the medical needs of the local population, in particular the Srilankan Tamil Refugees living in Tamil Nadu. I am sure it will be of great use to the Red Cross Society in the State in providing assistance to the people in urgent need and in alleviating human suffering.

The Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu branch now carries out a wide range of activities that includes taking care of the refugees. It makes a significant contribution towards promoting peace and goodwill and acts as a valuable intermediary during conflicts. I wish the Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu State Branch, success in all future endeavours.

I wish to express gratitude, on behalf of the Red Cross, for the kind gesture from UNHCR.

Address of Her Excellency the Governor Justice Selvi. M. Fathima Beevi at the Donation of Ambulance to the Indian Red Cross Society at Raj Bhavan, Chennai. ★

Work on 10 Flyovers Inaugurated



Hon'ble Chief Minister **Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi** inaugurated work on 10 flyovers in various parts of the city at a function in Perambur, Chennai on 31.1.1999.

The places where the flyovers coming up are :

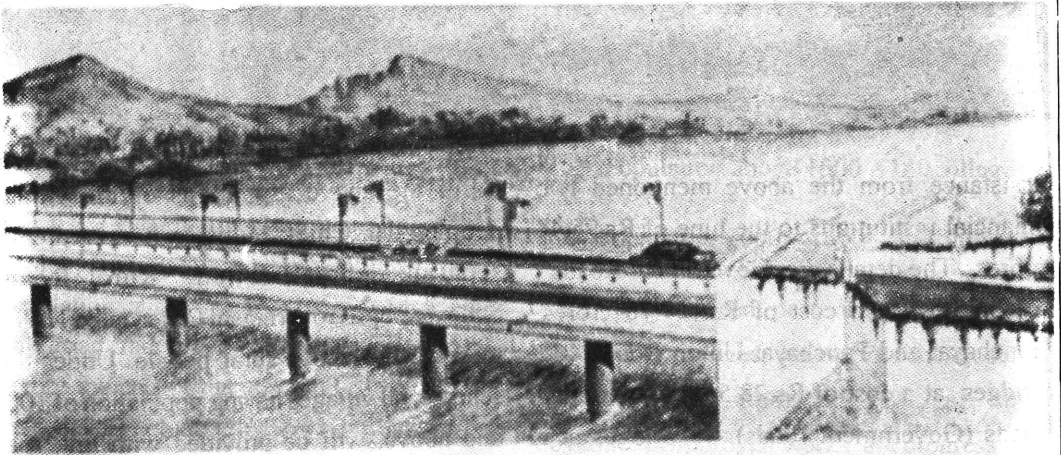
- ❖ A flyover near Perambur railway station at a cost of Rs. 21 crores.
- ❖ At the junction of Peters Road and Conronsmith road at a cost of Rs. 8.50 crores.
- ❖ Peters road - Westcot road at a cost of Rs.8.50 crores.
- ❖ Pantheon road - Casa Major road at a cost of Rs. 8.50 crores.
- ❖ Purasaiwakkam High road - Hunters road at a cost of Rs.12 crores.
- ❖ Dr. Radhakrishnan salai - Royapettah High road at a cost of Rs. 8.50 crores.
- ❖ Dr. Radhakrishnan salai - T.T.K. road at a cost of Rs. 15 crores.
- ❖ Alwarpet - Eldams road junction at a cost of Rs. 11 crores.
- ❖ Sardar Patel road - Latice Bridge road at a cost of Rs.15.50 crores.
- ❖ Sardar Patel road - Gandhi Mandapam road at a cost of Rs. 7 crores.

For the progress of the Nation in industrial development and social upliftment, road communication and information technology are the most vital infrastructural needs. Bearing this in mind, when the Government of India relaxed the social reforms process during 1991, priority was given for expanding the basic infrastructural facilities. After coming to power in Tamil Nadu for the 4th time in May 1996, the Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaignar formed a separate Department for Highways alone at the Secretariat during 1997 and also appointed a separate Minister exclusively for Highways Department during 1998. With the result of above efforts and for the sole development of road and bridge works in Tamil Nadu, this August Inaugural function has been arranged.

In Tamil Nadu, it has been estimated that there are total of 98,184 bridges existing over the Government roads alone comprising 1315 Major bridges, 7014 minor bridges and 89,855 very minor bridges.

Construction of 102 Bridges and Improvements to Radial Roads Inaugurated

Of this, approximately 3357 bridges need immediate improvements and in some places for restoring traffic with other nearby places, new bridges have to be constructed. Further, on account of recent heavy floods, many of the villages and towns in Tamil Nadu were



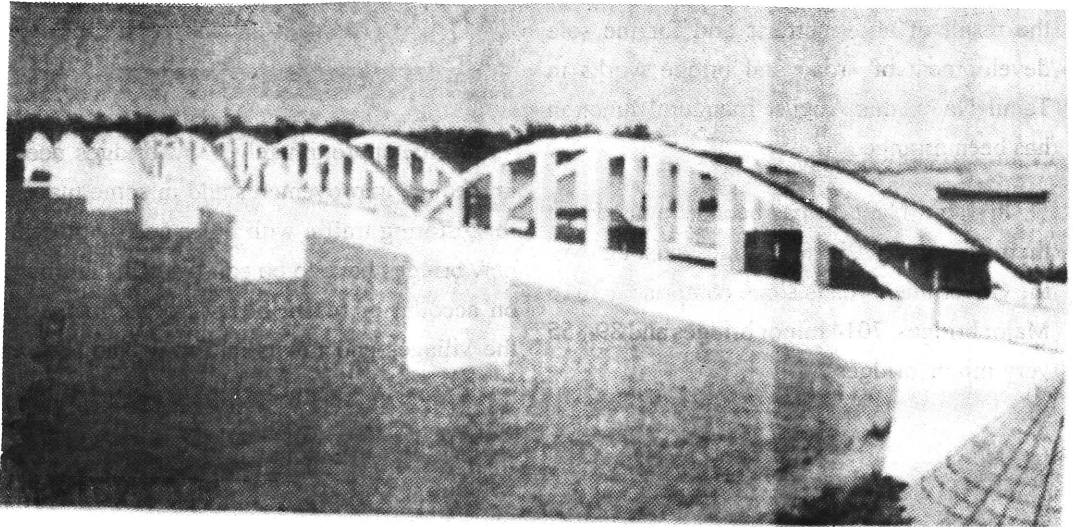
badly cut off with other parts and the people were subjected to innumerable sufferings. to mitigate their sufferings, the Chief Minister has inaugurated the construction of 106 bridges on Government roads by obtaining loan assistance to the tune of Rs.360 crores from HUDCO and NABARD. It has been programmed to complete the construction of these bridges before 31.12.2000.

Likewise the Government in another step towards progress have now accorded sanction for the construction of 102 bridges with loan

It has been programmed to complete the construction of these 102 bridges within the period of 31.12.1999 and 30.4.2001

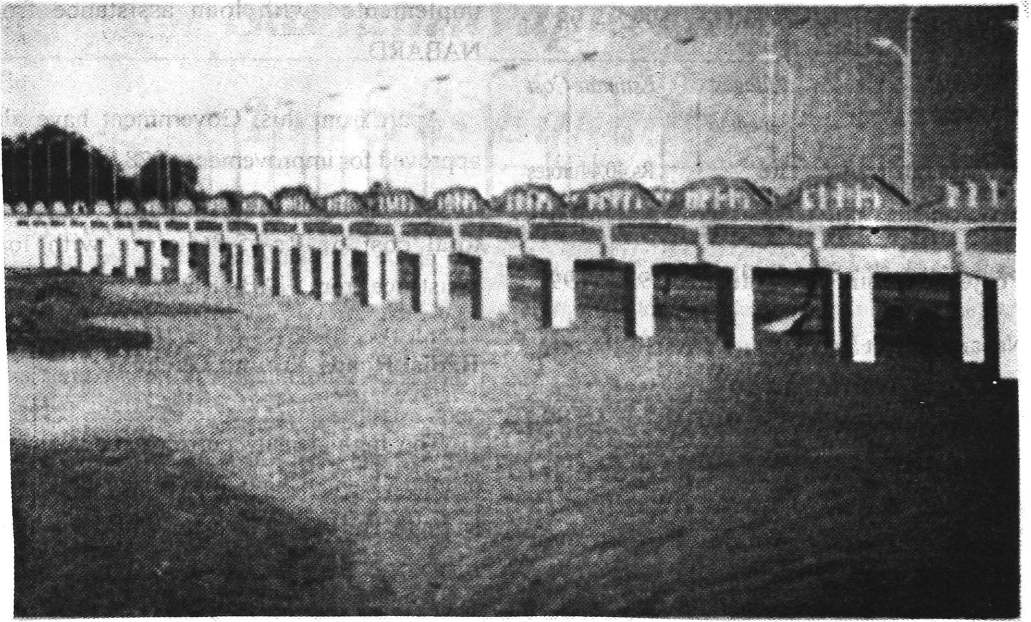
Rural Roads Scheme

As agriculture is the main and vital activity in villages, the village people felt that it will be better to have link road facilities with all weather roads to connect them with the nearby Government roads for ensuring easy and quick transportation of their agricultural produces to the nearby marketing centres in towns. To



assistance from the above mentioned two financial institutions to the tune of Rs.95.44 crores. The details are, Government Roads - 67 bridges, at a cost of Rs. 59.78 crores, Panchayat and Panchayat Union Roads - 32 bridges at a cost of Rs.28.54 crores, Radial roads (Government roads) - 3 bridges at a cost of Rs.7.12 crores, Totally 102 bridges at a cost of Rs.95.44 crores.

fulfill the above aspirations of the village people, the Chief Minister has created a separate scheme called "Rural Roads Scheme" by a Government Order dated 1.7.72, to serve the above rural people. Under this scheme, all villages having population of 1000 and above, will be provided with link road facilities with all weather roads. The scheme announced by the Chief Minister is the first ever one in India. When the scheme was



announced as per 1971 census, the number of villages without having any link road facilities are as below :

- a) Population 1500 and above - 3762 villages
- b) Population 1000 - 1500 - 2568 villages

with the creation of first ever new scheme ie. Rural Roads Scheme, by the Chief Minister on 1.7.72 and the subsequent of its implementation all the 3762 villages with population above 1500 were provided with link road facilities with all weather roads before the end of the seventh (7th) Five year Plan that concluded in 1990. Further all the 2568 villages having population 1000 - 1500, were also provided with link road facilities

with all weather roads, in stages and made as Government roads which are now being maintained by Government.

After assuming office the 4th time during 1996, the Chief Minister ascertained that, the number of villages without link road facilities were found to be 517 villages as below :

- a) Population above 1500 - 140 villages
- b) Population 1000 - 1500 - 377 villages

For ensuring cent percent connectivity to all these 517 villages, well before the closure of the current financial year, all the Government approved works, are progressing well to achieve the target.

Projects commenced during 1997 - 98

<i>Project</i>	<i>Villages Benefited</i>	<i>Estimate Cost</i>
Nabard Project II	108	Rs.40.44 crores
Nabard Project III	108	Rs.43.05 crores

Projects Commenced during 1998 - 99

Nabard Project IV	83	Rs.30.16 crores
Nabard Project V	149	Rs. 42.21 crores
Nabard Project VI	43	Rs.13.35 crores
Nabard Project VII	26	Rs.16.01 crores

By utilising the above allotment, it will be ensured that all the 517 villages having population above 1000 as per 1991 census will be provided with link road facilities with all weather roads before 31.3.99.

Further the Chief Minister during the presentation of budget for 98-99, has announced in the floor of the Assembly that all villages numbering 4986 having population between 500 to 1000 will also be provided with link road facilities with all weather roads in stages. For fulfilling the above objective, during 1998-99 Government have approved 373 road works with loan assistance from NABARD to a tune of Rs.123.70 crores for providing link road facilities with all weather roads to 340 villages and it has been programmed to complete all these works before 31.3.2000. All these works are to be

implemented with loan assistance from NABARD.

Apart from this, Government have also approved for improvement of 28 Government roads (ODR) for a length of 184 Kms at a total cost of Rs.15.86 crore with loan assistance from NABARD.

Radial Roads Around Chennai

The high density corridor roads in and around Chennai have inadequate width and strength and as a result the traffic on these roads have been very badly affected.

Due to this, loss of time and consumption of fuel have increased. If this trend is allowed to continue, then, there will be traffic hold up and economic loss in and around Chennai.

To avoid this situation and with a long time perspective in mind and with the able guidance of the Chief Minister, it has been programmed to widen and strengthen the radial roads in and around Chennai. which are lying with in 50 km radius. After assessing that there are a total of 251.60 kms of radial roads in and around Chennai, Government have accorded administrative sanction for improvement of radial roads with loan assistance from HUDCO to a tune of Rs.213 crores and it has been programmed to complete all these works before 31.10.2000.

★ ★ ★

Samathuvapuram

Towards Equality

The search for a just, free and prosperous society has occupied the minds of visionaries the world over. The move towards fulfilling these aims has been epitomised in India by the serene counsel of Mahatma Gandhi who upheld the principles of swadeshi, swarajya and self sufficiency. Tamil Nadu is fortunate that its Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi not only cherishes a vision but seeks to implement it through projects like the Anna Renaissance Scheme, the Self Help Programme and the Samathuvapuram (Equality Village) initiative.

The Anna Renaissance Scheme seeks to provide all basic amenities to villages drawing on the Mahatma's hope that every village would be a self sustaining republic that paves the way for a truly free India. The objective of ARS is to select a village in each legislative assembly constituency every year and develop it into a modern village by providing basic amenities such as protected drinking water, primary education, primary health care, nutritious food, street lights, link roads and fair price shops. So far 3477 works have been implemented in 212 villages in Tamil Nadu at a cost of Rs.192 crores.

The Self Help Programme introduced by the Chief Minister during 1997-98 is a dynamic new approach that prepares the rural masses to improve their know-how to create a better society. The rural people in the form of a Grama

Sabha assemble at a common location and discuss their needs focusing on the development programmes to be implemented. The awareness created by involving large masses in planning and execution fulfils the Mahatma's dream of true democracy being worked "from below by the people of every village". The Self Help Programme has resulted in building of irrigation tanks, desilting of channels, facelift to village roads, repair of burial grounds, renovation of school buildings, shelter for bus travellers and constructions of public libraries. Totally 3664 works were taken up last year and completed in 2699 villages at a cost of Rs.23 crores. The public contributed Rs.8 crores and a further Rs.10 crores has been allocated this year. This is truly Sarvodaya in action.



In commemoration of the golden jubilee of India's independence, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu announced the creation of Samathuvapurams or "Equality Villages" where members of all communities and religions would live in harmony without any differential treatment. These would be set up in all districts of Tamil Nadu. The first such Samathuvapuram has come up in Madurai district and has been created over an area of 10 acres at Melakottai. 100 houses have been built here at a cost of Rs.35,000 per house constructed on 5 cent plots with a built up area of 259 sq.ft. The entrance to the house is a large hall attached to which is a small kitchen followed by a bathroom and toilet with modern flush. Equipped with cupboards and doors and windows made from Kongu wood, the houses have concrete roofing. The forest department has planted trees in the front and rear portions.

These houses have been allotted free of cost to 100 people living below the poverty line in 8 villages of Madurai district. Officials visited the villages, convened Gram Sabhas and selected 100 beneficiaries, all living below the poverty line. Out of the 100, 40 houses have been allotted to Adi Dravidars, 25 to backward classes, 25 to most backward classes and 10 to people of other communities. The Samathuvapuram complex has water tanks, a community hall; a primary school, library, health centre, fair price shop, noon meal centre, recreation room, park and play ground.

Construction Work started in December 1997 and was completed in 150 days. The entire construction work was handed over to the Tamil Nadu State Construction Corporation, laying

emphasis on the quality of construction. Facilities provided for the Samathuvapuram include town bus from Madurai with stop over facility by all buses plying on the National Highway. Post office and telephone facilities will also be provided. Additionally, a dairy farm is being set up, with 30 inhabitants to be provided with milch cows. A scheme to extend loan facility for the self employment of youth at the Samathuvapuram is envisaged.

The Madurai District Collector has obtained a written undertaking from each of the 100 families living at Samathuvapuram: Not to permit the setting up of statues of religious or community leaders, not to sell or pledge the house for a period of 15 years, accept a common burial ground, not to create separate places of worship, not to consume liquor, not to let the house on rent, keep everything hygienic and an agreement that the property be taken over by the Government if any rules are violated.

The brainchild of the Chief Minister, the Samathuvapurams have crystallised the ideals of the Mahatma and brought them to life- "My picture in which the last is equal to the first, or in other words, no one is to be the first and none the last". "While inaugurating the Samathuvapuram, the Chief Minister said, "My wish is that the entire district should become a Samathuvapuram and not alone that, the entire State and above all the entire nation and the world should become a Samathuvapuram." The thoughts of a true visionary.

Ajay Menon

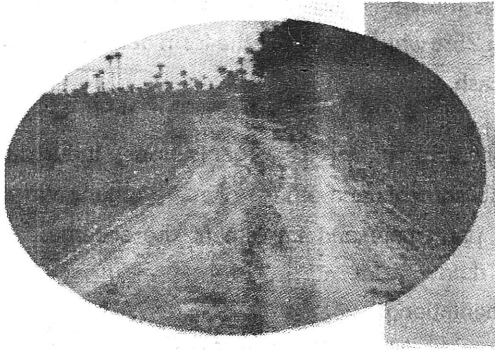
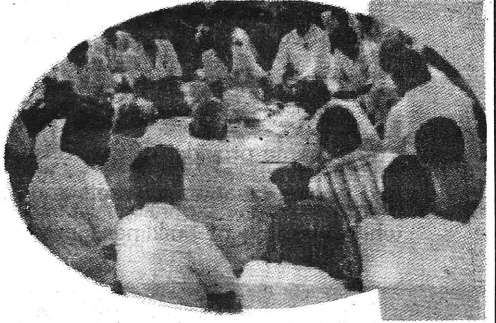
Courtesy: Economic Times, 29.1.99

★ ★ ★

NAMAKKU NAAME...

A Path to Self Reliance Society

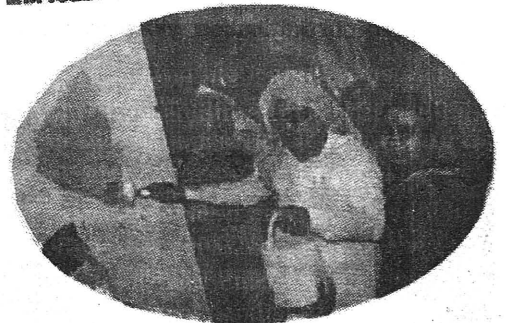
A Mass Contact Programme is already in existence enabling the officials to meet the public and to redress their genuine grievances. In addition to this, "Namakku Naame" Thittam is now introduced by which the public can plan and execute their priority needs through voluntary efforts.



Namakku Naame Thittam is a Programme implemented by the public on voluntary basis with the financial and technical support of the Government. Minimum public contribution shall not be less than 25% which may be in the form of cash, kind or labour. The activities include provision of basic amenities such as village roads, desilting of tanks and village ponds, construction of Public Health Centres, School buildings, pathways to burial grounds, link roads etc.,

Aim of the Scheme:

- ★ To involve the public in the implementation of Developmental works.
- ★ To ensure that the entire benefits of the Scheme reach the people.
- ★ To strengthen the relation between Government and Public.
- ★ Speedy implementation.
- ★ Quality of works.
- ★ Speedy Socio Economic Development.
- ★ To create self sufficient and self reliant society.

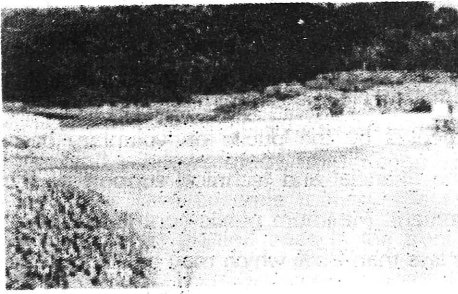


Approach to the Scheme

- ★ With the help of Government, public can fulfil their needs by themselves through voluntary efforts. This approach should be popularised to sustain in the society over years.



- ★ The Scheme provide for the construction of buildings, bridges, canals, deepening of tanks and ponds, creation of assets and also provides for the maintenance of all works such as white washing of buildings, improvement to environment etc.



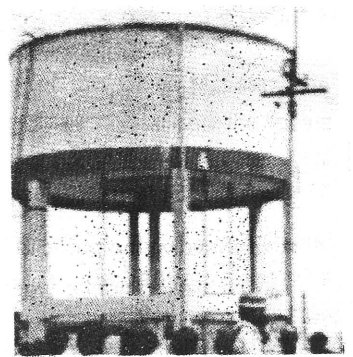
- ★ The Scheme provides for the fulfilment of public needs through voluntary contributions of not less than 25% which may be in the form of labour, kind or cash.

- ★ Public, Social Service organisations, Industrial Establishments and other Voluntary organisations can participate and implement the scheme.

- ★ The District Collectors coordinate the implementation of the Scheme with the assistance of various Departments.

Certain Landmarks of the Scheme

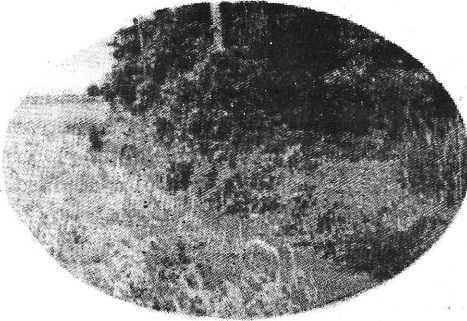
- ★ A over head tank with power pump at an estimated cost of Rs. 47 lakhs with one lakh litre capacity was constructed in Antonkovil (East) Panchayat, Karur District, out of cent percent contribution under this scheme from the public.



- ★ Drainage Channel in Kulithalai at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.40 lakhs with a distance of 19.5 km. has been taken up and completed under Namakku Naame Scheme, which prevents flood damages worth Rs. 1 crore per year.

★ Desilting work of Nadarantha Oorani, a drinking water pond, in Pappapatti Panchayat, Pudukottai at an estimated cost of Rs.60,000 done after a gap of 20 years, now with full of water after restoration.

Prior to execution...



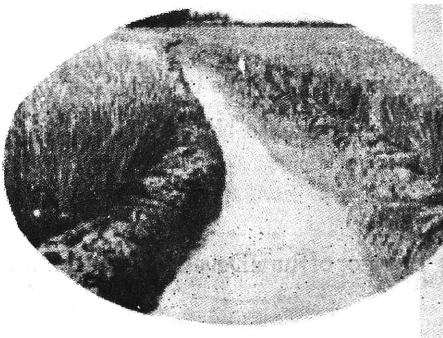
The view of irrigation channel not desilted for years together in Aviyanoor Panchayat, Annagramam Union, Cuddalore District.

Work in Progress...

Desilting work is in progress which was executed by the village people themselves with the cost of Rs.25,000 being the 25% contribution.

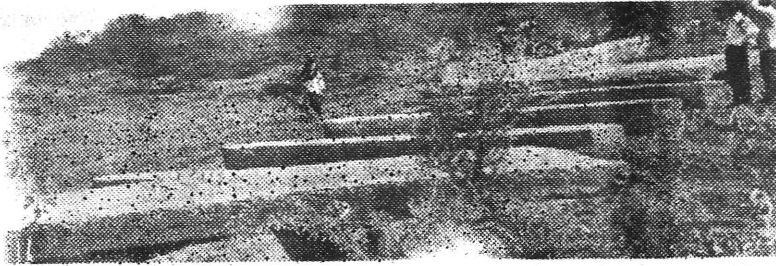


After Execution...



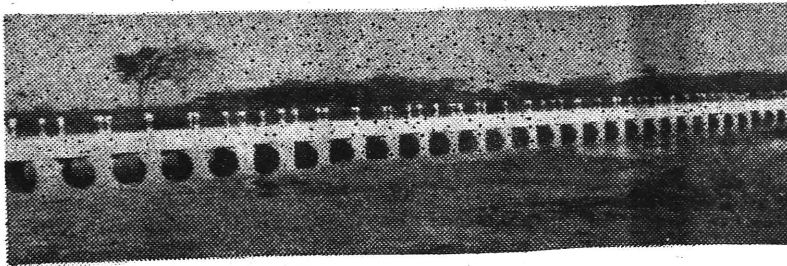
The view of desilted channel. This work benefited the farmers in avoiding wastage of water and also improved water use efficiency.

Prior to execution...

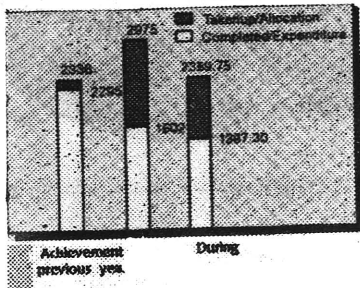


A Bridge washed away by Flood waters in the year 1977 was reconstructed after a gap of 21 years by the people of Keerathur Panchayat (Pudukkottai District) themselves as per the decision of Gramsabha at a cost of Rs.10 lakhs, which includes peoples contribution of Rs.2.50 lakhs.

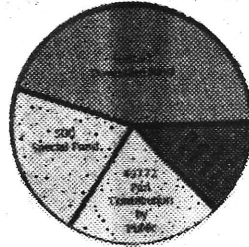
After execution...



Achievement during previous year



Financial Resources



1998-99 Scheme:

- ★ The Government sanctioned Rs.2 lakhs per Block and Rs.10 crores to State as a whole for the fulfilment of felt needs of the public through Namakku Naame Thittam.

For Additional Information :

- Block Development Officer ● District Collector ● Director of Rural Development, Chennai.



NALADIYAR

இயாவரும் பொருளுடைமையான் பெருமை எய்துவர்.

அத்திட்ட கூறை அரைச்சுற்றி வாழினும்
பத்தெட்டி ஓடைமை பலருள்ளும் பாடெய்தும்;
ஒத்த குடிப்பிறந்தக் கண்ணும்ஒன் றில்லாதார்
செத்த பிணத்திற் கடை.

Money Commands respect

Though he wraps a cloth dyed red around his loins, a dozen coins or so, will gain (the wretch) respect among many men! The man devoid of wealth, though born of noble race, is viler (in the world's estimation) than a lifeless corpse!

★ ★ ★

வறுமையானது ஒருவனைப் பலவற்றினும்
நுண்ணிதாகச் செய்யும்.

நீரினு' நுண்ணிது நெய்என்பார்; நெய்யினும்
யாரும் அறிவார் புகைநுட்பம்; - தேரின்,
நிரப்பிடும்பை யாளன் புகுமே புகையும்
புகற்கரிய பூமை நுகழ்ந்து.

The insinuating mendicant.

Where water cannot enter, the more insinuating *ghi* glides in; and smoke has a subtler power to penetrate than even *ghi*. If you look into it, the man debased by poverty will enter haunts where smoke scarce finds a way.

★ ★ ★

செல்வமுடையவர்க்கே யாவரும் உறவினர்

உண்டாய போழ்தின் உடைந்குழிக் காகம்போற்
தொண்டா யிரவார் தொகுபவே; - வண்டாய்த்
திரிதருங் காலத்துத் தீதிலரோ என்பார்
ஒருவரும் இவ்வலகத் தில்.

Time - serving friends

When wealth is there, obsequious myriads will assemble, like crows around the fallen corpse. When wealth, as the beetle wheels its flight, is gone, no one in all the world will ask, 'Is it well with you?'

★ ★ ★

வறியோர்மாட்டுள்ள ஈற்குண முதலியன
பயன்படுவனவல்ல.

நீர்மையே அன்றி நிரம்ப எழுந்ததம்
கூர்மையும் எல்லாம் ஒருங்கிழப்பார்; - கூர்மையின்
முல்லை அலைக்கும் எயிற்றாய்! - நிரப்பென்னும்
அல்லல் அடையப்பட் டார்.

Poverty ruins all.

O thou whose teeth vie in sharpness with jasmine buds! - When sharp distress of poverty assails, men lose all their attributes of goodness at once, with the mind's acuteness gained from amplest stores of wisdom.

★ ★ ★

செல்வமிகுதியாற் கீழோர் செய்யும்
பெருமிதத்தைக் காணின் மானமுடையார் மனம்
புழுங்குவார்.

திருமதுகை யாகத் திறனிவார் செய்யும்
பெருமிதங் கண்டாக் கடைத்தும் - எரிமண்டிக்
காணந் தலைப்பட்ட தீப்போற் கனலுமே
மானம் உடையார் மனம்.

Honourable minds are wroth with wealthy arrogance.

The mind of those possessed of honourable feeling will kindle into flame, like the fire that has caught the forest when the conflagration rages, whenever they behold the haughty acts of those who are destitute of virtuous habits, and to whom their wealth is their only strength.

★ ★ ★

மானமுடையார் தம்வறுமையைக் கீழோர்க்கு
உரையார்.

என்பாய் உகிழும் இயல்பிலார் பின்சென்று
தம்பா ஓரைய்பரோ தம்முடையார்? - தம்பா
ஓரையாமை முன்னுணரும் ஒண்மை உடையார்க்
குரையாரோ தாம்உற்ற நோய்?

High - minded men complaint not to the unsympathizing.

Will (honourable men who are) 'masters of themselves' follow graceless men to tell of their sufferings, though fallen away to mere skeletons?

Do they not (rather) tell the pain they have felt to those enlightened souls that understand their sufferings before they speak?

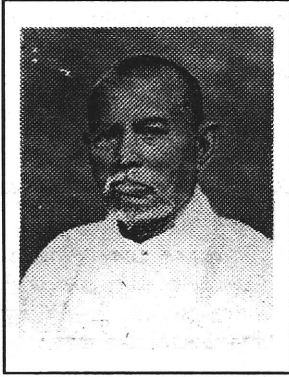
★

The Contribution of Kanniyakumari to the Tamil World

TRADITIONAL SCHOLARS

PAAVALAR

There were several traditional scholars in Kanniyakumari District. A majority of them were from Kottar. Sadavadaani Sheik Thampi Paavalar who was a doyen among the Tamil Scholars of his period, stands first in the line. (Sadavadaani means a person skilled in attending to numerous things at a time) He was a disciple of Sankaranaarayana Pattaariar, a Tamil Scholar in Kottar. Paavalar proved that religion does not bar the language. He was an authority on Kamba Ramayana. He was so brilliant that at his 15th year he had become a master of Tamil language. He wrote several books in Tamil. Among them Tirukkottatru Pathitrapatthu Anthaathi, Tirunaagoor Tiruvanthaathi are most important. He wrote commentaries on Seerapuranam which contains 5027 poems.



Paavalar wrote and spoke on the high ideals of Sri Ramalinga Swamigal and argued that his poems were Arutppa and not Marutpa as advocated by Kadiresa Pillai, one of the intellectual giants in Tamil Nadu. It is interesting to note that Thiru Vi.Ka. was a member of the opposition group and Maraimalai Adigal was in the group of Paavalar. Finally the view of Paavalar was crowned with success. For this

victory he was awarded several titles like Devamirtha Prasanka Kalanchiyam and was honoured with Poornakumbam at Kancheepuram Temple.

Sasthankutty Pillai of Thengamputhur was the chief disciple of Paavalar. He has not written any book. But he had several disciples who are outstanding scholars of Kanniyakumari at present. Among them Vidvan Sadasivam Pillai, the author of "Chera Naadum Senthamilum" is well-known.

Among the other disciples of Paavalar Manickavasagam Pillai, the author of "Isai mani maalai" containing more than 100 songs with musical notes and Haridaas Vaaythiriyaar, the editor of "Nallarkku Nanban" a literary monthly in Tamil were famous.

Kanthapurana Kirthanaas written by Neelakanta Aasaari of Kottar and Chanakya Sutram by his son Ganapathi Aasaari were released in the Subramonia temple at Tiruchendur in the year 1889. Chaanakiya Sutram contains 4500 poems. Desika Vinayakam Pillai of Kottar wrote "Lalitha puranam" during this period.

K.N. SIVARAJA PILLAI

The contribution of K.N. Sivaraja Pillai of Kottar occupies a prominent place in Tamil literature. He was the first director of Tamil Research Centre which was started at Madras in the year 1927. He had edited one monthly in Tamil named "Nanjil Nesan" at Trivandrum. At the request of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan

he went to Ceylon and published Kamba Ramayana. Based on the Synchronistic tables of the Kings, Chieftains and poets appearing in the Sangham literature he wrote a book "The



Chronology of Early Tamils". It was published by the University of Madras in 1932. His other works are Agasthiya in the Tamil land, The antiquity of Puranaanuru, Nanjil Venba and Mehamaalai. Several of his research works were not published. His introduction to Manonmaniyam is a fine piece of critical study. He was the pioneer in the field of Research in Tamil.

P. CHIDAMBARAM PILLAI

P. Chidambaram Pillai of Nagercoil has rendered great service to Tamil literature by publishing the famous Mudaliar palm leaf records in the year 1930. It describes the history of Naanjil Naadu for a short period. He wrote two books in English "Temple Entry" and "Aryans and Dravidians" and edited a periodical in Tamil named "Thamilan".

Panditha Muthuswamy Pillai of Kanniyakumari has published one periodical named "Thamilan" at Trivandrum in 1922. He has also edited "Viduthalai" of Periyar E.V.R. Dasavathanam Arumugham Pillai, a disciple of Paavalar was another Tamil scholar in Kanniyakumari. His important works were Kusela Venba and Cheramandala Sathkam. Kavignar Aathimoolam otherwise known as Kavimonithasan wrote several poems. But two books "Chentamil Cholai" and "Marungoor

Nanmanimaalai" were published in book form. He was the disciple of Kavimony.

Thondarkulam Maha Vidwan Arumugha Naavalar occupied a unique place in the religious field. He has founded at Nagercoil a religious organisation named "Tiruneri Thondarkulam" in the year 1928 and several branches were established in different parts of Tamil Nadu. Through this organisation he preached Thevaram, Tiruvaasagam and Tiruppugal to the common people. He went to Ceylon and became very popular in the Tamil speaking area. His "Hindu Matha Vilakkam" is a fine work on the basic principles of Hindu Philosophy. He had also edited one religious monthly "Thondan".

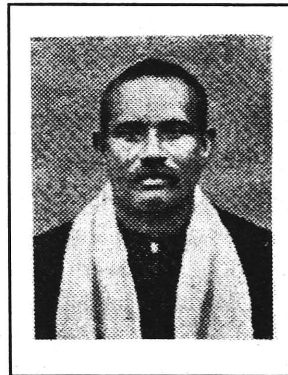
K.N. KUMARESA PILLAI

K.N. Kumaresa Pillai, the brother of Sivaraja Pillai was the pioneer in the field of propagating

the fame of

Kamban. He gave discourses on Kamba Ramayana in every nook and corner of Kanniyakumari District.

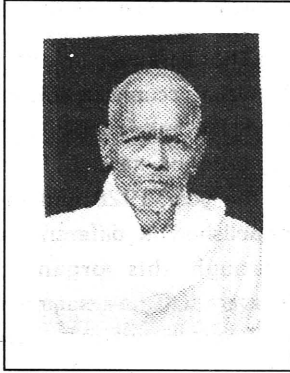
Following the musical recitation of Kamba Ramayana by his assistant Paramathilingam



Pillai, Kumaresa Pillai rendered the commentaries. It is a traditional method of narration prevalent in Kanniyakumari District, the origin of which is not traceable. This peculiar kind of discourse on Kamba Ramayana cannot be seen anywhere else. At present Kalliankaad Ramachandra Pillai is an exponent on Kamba Ramayana in the traditional method of narration.

KAVIMONY

Kavimony Desika Vinayagam Pillai has contributed quite a substantial volume to the growth of Tamil literature. Standing right in the centre of the Tamil Poetic tradition and uttering the noble thoughts in simple



and sweet words Kavimony occupied a unique place in the Tamil literary world. His poetical collection "Malarum Maalaiyum" is an outstanding contribution to modern Tamil literature. He is remembered for ever by some of his beautiful and simple lines like "Thottathil Meyuthu Vellai Pasu" and "Veyyirkketa Nilalundu". His translations and adaptations from western languages look almost original. He brings Omarkayyam to the surroundings of Tamil Nadu.

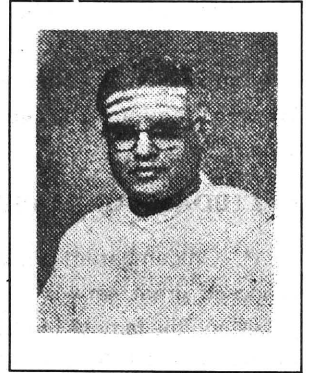
Poets according to Kavimony are not mere dreamers of dreams but the architects of society. His contribution "Marumakkal Vali Maanmiyam" is an excellent satire in modern Tamil literature. The language of the work is so powerful and sarcastic that the system, Marumakkal thaayam (matriarchal system of inheritance) among the Vellalas of Naanjil naadu was legally abolished. This is a pioneer work in Tamil literature which has revolutionised the society.

Kavimony was a Research scholar and a clever archaeologist. "Kaandalur Saalai" is a reputed research work of Kavimony. His interpretation of the phrase "Kalamarutharuli" attracted the attention of all the experts in Archaeology during his period. The earlier

archaeologists gave the meaning of the phrase "Kalamaruth aruli" thus. "The king was pleased to destroy the ship at the roadstead of Kandalur". According to Kavimony the word "Aruthu" is but a shortened form of "Varai aruthu". On this basis he gave a different meaning for the phrase. "The king was pleased to make an endowment and fix the number of Kalams i.e. literally, the number of dinner plates, and hence the number of persons to be fed in the institution of "Kaandalur" Kavimony's verdict thus created a mile-stone in the field of Archaeology.

T.K.S. BROTHERS

The contribution of Muthamil Kalaa Vittuva Ratna T.K.S. Brothers of Nagercoil in the Dramatic field is significant, for, they rescued and resurrected the dramatic art and theatre, one among the Muthamils

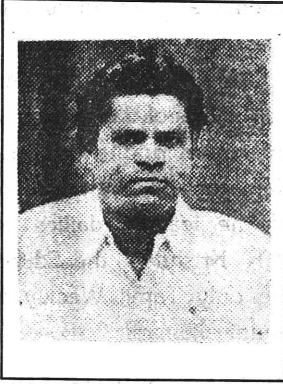


(Tripartite divisions of Tamil). The dramas Raja Raja Cholan and Avvaiyaar are their masterpieces. "The history of Tamil Drama" by T.K. Shanmugham is an outstanding work on Dramatic Art in Tamil literature. It is a compilation of three lectures delivered by him in the Annamalai University.

N.S. KRISHNAN

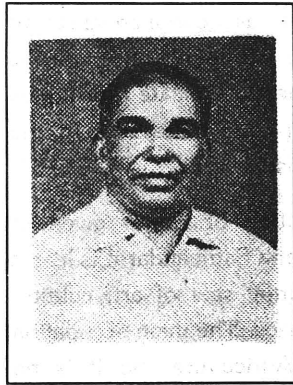
Kalaivaanar N.S. Krishnan is the asset of Kanniyakumari. "Laugh when you meet misfortune. There is nothing like this to overcome it and pass on to victory" says Tiruvalluvar. On the basis of this maxim Kalaivaanar lived and

made his audience to follow the maxim. There is no written contribution of Kalaivaanar to the Tamil world, but his contribution to the Tamil populace cannot be forgotten. He has occupied the mind of everybody in Tamil Nadu. Kalaivaanar has utilised Cinema as a medium of instruction to rectify the evils of society.



JEEVAANANDAM

Jeevaanandam of Bhoothapandi popularly known as Jeevaa, a veteran political leader has written several books in Tamil on politics and literature like Kalaiyum Ilakkiyamum, Bharathi Vali, Mathamum Manitha Vaalum. His lectures on Kamban and Bharathi were very famous. He was



the first man who went to jail for writing a book in Tamil on Bhagavat Singh.

Dr. K.K. PILLAY

Among the living scholars of Kanniyakumari Dr. K.K. Pillay and Dr. B. Natarajan immediately come to our mind. Dr. K.K. Pillay, an authority in South Indian history belongs to Aloor in Kanniyakumari District. His monograph on Suchindrum temple is a monumental work which touches the cultural, social and spiritual history

of Naanjil Naadu. His contribution to the Tamil world is significant, for, he has written an authoritative history of South India in Tamil.

Dr. B. NATARAJAN

Dr. B. Natarajan, an internationally reputed Economist has contributed substantially to our Tamil literature and Saiva Siddhanta philosophy. The greatest of his achievements is that he has translated Tirumandiram of Tirumoolar into English. He has thus conveyed the message of Tamil Nadu to the west.

Panditha Ramasubramania Naavalur of Nagercoil has written several poetical works. Among them Arul Manimaalai, Venba Pathitru patthu and Naanjil Naadu are important. The well known scholar and a master of several languages K. Appadurai belongs to Aaralvaaimoli. He has written several books on Tamil literature and history. His outstanding works are Kumari Kandam and Thennattu Porkalankal. Tamil perum pulavar Abraham Arulappanar of Nagercoil has written Tholkappiya Yaappu and commentaries to Tiruvaasakam and Tirumurugatrupadai.

In the linguistic field Kanniyakumari has produced three International authorities Dr. V.I. Subramoniam, Dr. S. Agasthilingam and Dr. Muthu Shanmuganaar. They have written several outstanding works on Linguistics.

PRESENT DAY TAMIL LITERATURE

Let us have a cursory glance at the present day literature of Tamil Nadu. To the present day literature also Kanniyakumari has contributed a major share. There are several poets, short-story writers, novelists, dramatists and journalists in Kanniyakumari District. Among them Sundara Ramaswamy, Neela Padmanabhan, Ponnellan, Nanjil naadan, N.A. Velayudham,

Pa.Perumal, Hepziba Jusudasan and Isaac Arumai Rajan are well known to the Tamil readers. Their contributions are noteworthy. Here special mention may be made of Sundara Ramaswamy's Puliamarathin Kathai, Neela Padmanabhan's Thalaimuraigal, Ponnalan's Karisal and Naanjil Naadan's Thalaikeel Vigithangal. During a short span of his life Krishnan Nambi, a young writer wrote two outstanding works. "Yaanai Enna Yaanai", a collection of poems for children and "Neelakkadal" a collection of short stories.

The contributions of Dr. P. Arunachalam, Dr. S. Subramaniam, Dr. A.N. Perumal, Dr. M. Ilayaperumal, Dr. D. Andiappan, Professor Veerabadran, Professor C. Jesudasan and Vidwan Shanmugham Pillai are of scholarly nature. Among the poets of Kanniyakumari Vidwan Umathanu Pillai, Kavignar Kuttalam and Kumari Amudan are most famous.

JOURNALISM

In the field of Journalism the contribution of Kanniyakumari in the early period was significant. We have already seen that the first Tamil daily in India and the first magazine for children came from Kanniyakumari. Although there are numerous writers and journalists in the district no outstanding journal comes from Kanniyakumari at present. Several periodicals like Tamilan, Devi, Naanjil, Sathangai, Tamilaruvi, Kanni, Kumari, Puthumai, Sudar, Tamilarasu and Ulavan came from Kanniyakumari. Among them "Tamilan" edited by P.Chidambaram Pillai, "Devi" by P.Mahalinga Mudaliar and "Sathangai" by Vanamalgai were noteworthy. They have published several literary articles and stories in their magazines. Devi was very popular among the readers of Kanniyakumari. N.A. Velayudham's "Theeviravaathi, Arjunan's,

Thenkural", Sivasubramoniam's "Kavi Amudu" Bhoothai Annamalai's "Kaivilakku" and P.S. Mony's "Kanniyakumari" are the present periodicals of the district. With great difficulties they are publishing their journals. T.V. Ramasubbiar, the Editor of "Dinamalar", one of the leading dailies of Tamil Nadu and M.R. Krishnan, the Editor of "Vanchinaadu" the only Tamil Weekly in Kerala hail from Kanniyakumari.

KOTTAR, THE METROPOLIS

The cultural heritage of Kanniyakumari District can be understood by going through the history of Kottar, the metropolis of ancient Tamil Nadu and the historical temples in the area. The history of Kottar which provides a fund of information gives us a clear perspective into the historic past. Kottar, now a part of Nagercoil Municipality was a commercial centre of fame in days of yore. Ptolemy's Geography and Pliny's Travels clearly indicate that it was one of the most important cities during the beginning of the Christian era.

From the description of Kottar given in Thevaaram of Tirugnana Sambandar it is learnt that Kottar was a great seat of art, culture, civilisation and pilgrimage. The main occupation of the people was Agriculture. So it is no wonder that the fertile piece of land was named Naanjil Naadu, the land of ploughshare. Spinning cotton was an occupation of women and even silk was woven there. Sambandar aptly describes Kottar as "the city of Industries". Even today Kottar is reputed for its artificial silk and Vadasery located to the North of Kottar is famous for its weaving industry.

Kottar was inhabited by men and women of noble descent. It was a perfect city and presented a beautiful appearance. There were many

bazaars at Kottar selling various goods. The main commodities of trade were ivory, teak, rose wood, salt, pepper etc. The river Palayaar might have been used as an inland waterway and in all probability Muttam, Colachel, Kadigaipattinam and Kanniyakumari might have been served as sea ports. They were busy centres of maritime activities in ancient days, even now the bazaar of Kottar is famous for trade and it is locally called *Pandaka Salai* and *Koolakadai*.

The trade and commerce dominated on one side of the river Palayaar. On the other side, there was Sanghams or assemblies of scholars. The place Puravaseri on the eastern side of the river is only a corruptive form of Pulavar Seri which means the assembly of scholars. There is epigraphic evidence that land was given to two teachers at Puravaseri for expounding Vedas. There were also several Jain Scholars named Putbananda Adigal, Uttananda Adigal, Vimalachandrar and Paathamoolathan Aranganmaaran who had prefixed the word Kottar to their names. Sambandar has also described the naked Jain monks roaming in the streets of Kottar. There is clear evidence to show that the temple of Nagaraja at Nagercoil is of purely Jain origin.

The city had a number of lofty and palatial buildings beautified with multi-coloured flags. The place was surrounded by a vast expanse of Paddy fields, beautiful flower gardens and wavy coconut groves, pleasing to the eyes of the visitors. That all types of music and musical instruments were popular in the city is evident from the poetical illustration of Sambandar. The city containing charming dancers, craftsmen with artistic talents and clever magicians was a heaven to the visitors. Thus a graphic picture of life in Kottar is given in Thevaaram. This

description is supplemented by the words of a Carmelite Monk Fr. Bartholomew of the 18th century who mentions that "...this city, of considerable trade, is upward of 2000 years old, and much frequented by merchants from the island of Ceylon, the provinces of Madura, Tanjore and the coast of Coramandal. A river which flows through the middle of it, divides it into two parts. It contains abundance of merchandise; and is inhabited by a great number of weavers, money changers, silver-smiths, jugglers, comedians, quacks, dancing girls, conjurers and black artists". Even now we can see in the Alagamman Temple at Vadiveeswaram near Kottar, the image of a juggler facing upward, balances an inverted short dagger at the tip of his nose and also a rotating saucer on the uplifted fore-finger of his right hand while his animated left hand and left foot are playing the popular game of ammanai with two balls. In another pillar one juggler stands in a balancing pose with his right foot on a stick vertically placed on the back of a pig.

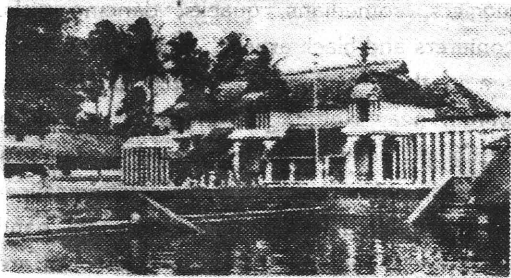
There is epigraphic and literary evidence to show that Kottar, the flourishing city of Naanjil Naadu attracted almost all the dynasties of South India. In the words of Dr.K.K.Pillay "Commencing from the days of the early Paandyas. Kottar, the metropolis became the cock-pit of the South". Kottar has served as a strategic base for the early rulers. From Paandikkovai we learn that the city was once surrounded by a gigantic fort and it was captured by the Paandya King Arikesari Maaravarman, the contemporary of Sambandar.

Sanctified by the inspiring verses of the Saivite Saint Tirugnanasambandar and ruled by the Kings of different dynasties, Kottar one of the cities of ancient Tamil Nadu stands as an embodiment of different religions Hinduism,

Jainism, Christianity and Islam and it continues to be a dynamic centre of trade.

TEMPLE CULTURE

Tamil Naadu is a land of Temples. As in other parts of Tamil Nadu Kanniyakumari is having numerous temples of legendary, historical and artistic importance. But except the temples at Kanniyakumari and Suchindrum all others are unknown to the outsiders.



musical pillars cut out of a single block of granite stone which produce sounds of different musical instruments. The colossal monolithic image of Anjaneya of a height of 18 feet is an outstanding work of art. There is an image of Thirumal Nayak at Suchindrum. The formation of the nostrils is done so skilfully in the image that the cavity of each nostril extends to the ear on its side and the holes of the ears are also connected. Thus the temple may be considered as one of the treasure houses of the richest specimens of art in stone.

The temple of Nagaraja at Nagercoil unifies the four streams of Indian religion. Besides Siva and Vishnu there are several Jain images in the temple. The beautiful main gate way of the temple reminds us of the Buddhist monastery. Thus the temple of Nagaraja stands as an embodiment of the four creeds Saivism, Vashnavism, Jainism and finally Buddhism.

The Nagaraja temple of Chera style, the Cholaraajakoil of Chola structure and the Suchindrum temple of Paandya architecture reveal the fact that the rulers of Chera, Chola and Paandya Kingdoms poured into the rich plains of Naanjil Naadu and left their memorabilia in the district. There is also evidence to show that the Vijayanagar Chieftains and Nayak rulers have also had their share in the reconstruction of the temples in Kanniyakumari. Thus almost all the leading dynasties of South India have had their share in the construction of temples in Kanniyakumari District.

The only shrine dedicated to Trinity is Sthanumalaya's at Suchindrum. Sthanu is a synonym for Siva, Maal for Vishnu and Ayan for Brahma. The temple is noted for its exquisite, workmanship in stone. The marvellous sculptural skill can be seen in the



The Adikesavaperumal temple at Tiruvattar is famous for its fine workmanship in stone and wood, the striking example among them being a huge piece of granite slab measuring 18 feet square and 3 feet in thickness cut out of a rock, placed in front of the main idol. It is called Ottakkal Mandapa, the construction of which is a great achievement in the field of structural

engineering. The wooden ceiling of Udayamaarthanda Mandapa is profusely carved with beautiful figures and it is regarded as a remarkable example of the artistic genius of the period.

The story of Ramayana has been depicted dramatically on 45 wooden panels in the Ramaswamy temple at Padmanabhapuram, once the capital of Venaad rulers. It is one of the best specimens of wood art in the whole of India.

There is a temple of Vishnu at Parthivasekharapuram. One of the copper plates dated 866 A.D. informs us that Kokkarunandakkan of Aay dynasty consecrated a temple and established there a college for vedic studies in which arrangements were made to give free boarding, lodging and tuition fees to 90 students. They have imparted advanced courses of study both in theory and practice and in the administration of the country both in the civil and military branches. In the institution the martial arts were taught to the students by the masters of Kalari Payittu.

Among the temples built in the modern period, the memorial of Swami Vivekananda on the sea-girt rock at Kanniyakumari ranks first. The majestic monument which is an embodiment of different styles of architecture including Pallava and Chola stands as a fitting testimony to the traditional architectural genius of Tamil Nadu.

ART

We have evidence to show that in Kanniyakumari District the Art of Dance, Music and Paintings were preserved in the Temples. Several dancers known as Devadasis were

attached to the temple of Sthanumalaya at Suchindrum as in Thanjavur. They could also sing and play on a variety of musical instruments. Their performances were also held in the temple at Trivandrum during Navaraathri festivals. Many folk dances like Kummi, Kolaattam, Kaavadiaattam, Mayilaattam, Poykaal Kuthirai Aattam, Kaniaan Aattam, Aali Aattam and Kumbaattam are in vogue in Kanniyakumari District even today. They are staged in all social and temple festivals. The puppet shows were also performed in the temple festivals. Gopala Rao of Kottaram and Chelliah Nadar of Elusaattuppatthu were experts on this dramatic art.

Kanniyakumari District encouraged the art of painting in ancient days. The old mural paintings are found on the walls of the rock-cut cave temple at Tirunandikkarai, the structural temple at Suchindrum and the palace at Padmanabhapuram. The main ingredient of the paint used during the period was only the leaves of certain plants.

VILLUPPAATTU (BOW-SONG)

Villuppaattu is a famous folk-art in the southern parts of Tamil Nadu. The people of Kanniyakumari saved the ancient art from the ravages of modern civilization. In Kanniyakumari there are several bow-songs in palm leaf records. A few of them were published by Arumugha Perumal Nadar of Agastheeswaram. In the year 1795 a bow-song named "The Victory of the Dewan" was written by Tiruanandam Pillai of Shenbagaraamanputhur. It describes the victory of Raja Kesavadaas in the war between the Maharaaja of Travancore and Tippu Sultan of Mysore in the year 1790. Osaravilai Appaavu Nadar of 19th century and

Punnakulam Kolappa Pillai, Thovalai Sundaram Pillai and Maatthivilai Ponnunmuthu Aasaan of 20th century were the exponents on Villupaattu in the district. Even ladies used to play Villupaattu there. Kalaivaanan N.S. Krishnan has introduced Villupaattu to other parts of Tamil Nadu. His Villupaattu on "Mahatma Gandhi" has earned a popularity still unmatched. The works of Dr. T. Natarajan in the field of Villupaattu and folk tales are commendable.

MEDICAL SCIENCE AND ALLIED ART

The medical science of the Tamils evolved during the Sangham period was known as "Siddha Vaidyam". There are numerous palm leaf records on Siddha Vaidyam in Kanniyakumari District. Kanniyakumari is not only a home of Siddha Vaidyam but also the birth place of Varmam, the science of bones and nerves in Siddha Vaidyam. Even the women members in Kalkulam and Vilavankodu Taluks know the science of Varmam. Several books like "Varmani" and "Varma Sutra" were written by Aasaans of Kanniyakumari. They are in Palm leaf records.

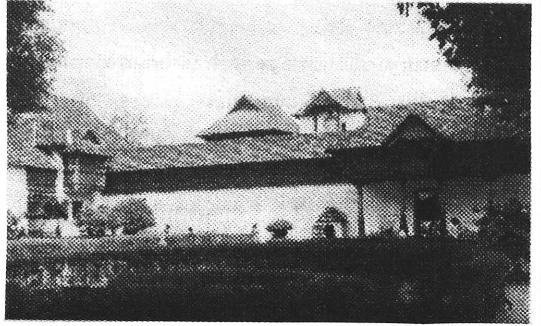
Kalaripayittu which includes Silampam (fighting with sticks) Katthikutthu (fighting with knives) and Varma pidi (the art of striking at vulnerable parts of the body) are unique pugilistic feats of the district. Karathe is said to be a modernised form of this martial art.

SCULPTURAL ART

Kanniyakumari is famous for its sculptural art. Indian sculptural forms are poetic utterances in stone, wood, metal or lime. In Kanniyakumari there are experts in making images in all the four mediums. The artisans of Mylaudy are specially reputed for their skill in making stone

images. They have developed a unique tradition. They still hold a high place in the artistic field of Tamil Nadu.

ARCHITECTURE



Besides the builders of temples there were builders of forts and fortresses in Kanniyakumari District in ancient days. The remnants of a fort from Kadukkarai to Kanniyakumari with a length of more than 20 miles can be seen even today. Vattakkottai on the shore of Kanniyakumari was utilised as a defensive structure to save the country from the naval invaders. Udayagiri, a fortified hill was of great strategic importance during the period of the Chola King Raja Raja I. Padmanabhapuram, the old capital of Venaadu rulers is surrounded by a square fortification of stone about 2.5 miles perimeter. The Palace at Padmanabhapuram which occupies the centre of the fort, is a complex of many structures built at various times. The forts and the palace in Kanniyakumari District testify to the strategic glory of the mighty Tamil rulers and to the engineering skill of the builders of the period. Such proficiency in all arts and architecture elevates Kanniyakumari to a height of glory in the cultural field of the Tamil World.

Source : Research Paper on Kanniyakumari
by Dr. S. Padmanabhan

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bright yellows...
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