



1. ROLE OF TAMIL NADU IN FREEDOM STRUGGLE

Palayakkarar system and the revolts of Palayakkarars against the British:

- ⇒ The first resistance to East India Company's territorial aggrandisement was from Puli Thevar of Nerkattumseval in the Tirunelveli region.
- ⇒ This was followed by other chieftains in the Tamil country such as Velunachiyar, Veerapandiya Kattabomman, the Marudhu brothers, and Dheeran Chinnamalai.

Palayams and Palayakkarars:

- ⇒ The word "palayam" means a domain, a military camp, or a little kingdom. Palayakkarars (Poligar is how the British referred to them) in Tamil refers to the holder of a little kingdom as a feudatory to a greater sovereign.
- ⇒ Under this system, palayam was given for valuable military services rendered by any individual.
- ⇒ This type of Palayakkarars system was in practice during the rule of Pratapa Rudhra of Warangal in the Kakatiya kingdom.
- ⇒ The system was put in place in Tamilnadu by Viswanatha Nayaka, when he became the Nayak ruler of Madurai in 1529, with the support of his minister Ariyanathar.
- ⇒ Traditionally there were supposed to be 72 Palayakkarars. The Palayakkarars were free to collect revenue, administer the territory, settle disputes and maintain law and order.
- ⇒ Their police duties were known as Padikaval or Arasu Kaval.
- ⇒ On many occasions the Palayakkarars helped the Nayak rulers to restore the kingdom to them.

Eastern and Western Palayams

- ⇒ Among the 72 Palayakkarars, created by the Nayak rulers, there were two blocs, namely the prominent eastern and the western Palayams.



- ⇒ The eastern Palayams were Sattur, Nagalapuram, Ettayapuram, and Panchalamkurichi and the prominent western palayams were Uthumalai, Thalavankottai, Naduvakurichi, Singampatti, Seithur.
- ⇒ Claiming that their lands had been handed down to them over sixty generations, many Palayakkarars refused to pay taxes to the Company officials.
- ⇒ The Company branded the defiant Palayakkarars as rebels and accused them of trying to disturb the peace and tranquility of the country.

Palayakkarar's Revolt (1755-1801)

1. Revolt of Puli Thevar (1755–1767)

- ⇒ In March 1755 Mahfuzkhan (brother of the Nawab of Arcot) was sent with a contingent of the Company army under Colonel Heron to Tirunelveli.
- ⇒ Madurai easily fell into their hands.
- ⇒ Thereafter Colonel Heron was urged to deal with Puli Thevar as he continued to defy the authority of the Company.
- ⇒ Puli Thevar wielded much influence over the western palyakkarars.
- ⇒ For want of cannon and of supplies and pay to soldiers, Colonel Heron abandoned the plan and retired to Madurai.
- ⇒ Heron was recalled and dismissed from service.
- ⇒ Three Pathan officers, Nawab Chanda Sahib's agents, named Mianah, Mudimiah and Nabikhan Kattak commanded the Madurai and Tirunelveli regions.
- ⇒ They supported the Tamil playakkarars against Arcot Nawab Mohamed Ali.
- ⇒ **Kalakadu Battle:** Besides the 1000 sepoy of the Company, Mahfuzkhan received 600 more sent by the Nawab. Before Mahfuzkhan could station his troops near Kalakadu, 2000 soldiers from Travancore joined the forces of Puli Thevar. In the battle at Kalakadu, Mahfuzkhan's troops were routed.
- ⇒ On 16 May 1761 Puli Thevar's three major forts (Nerkattumseval, Vasudevanallur and Panayur) came under the control of Yusuf Khan.



- ⇒ Yusuf Khan who was negotiating with the palayakkarars, without informing the Company administration, was charged with treachery and hanged in 1764.
- ⇒ After the death of Khan Sahib, Puli Thevar returned from exile and recaptured Nerkattumseval in 1764. However, he was defeated by Captain Campbell in 1767.
- ⇒ PuliThevar escaped and died in exile.

2. Velunachiyar (1730–1796)

- ⇒ Born in 1730 to the Raja Sellamuthu Sethupathy of Ramanathapuram, Velunachiyar was the only daughter of this royal family.
- ⇒ The royal family brought up the princess Velunachiyar, training her in martial arts like *valari*, stick fighting and to wield weapons.
- ⇒ She was also adept in horse riding and archery, apart from her proficiency in English, French and Urdu.
- ⇒ At the age of 16, Velunachiyar was married to Muthu Vadugar, the Raja of Sivagangai, and had a daughter by name Vellachinachiar.
- ⇒ In 1772, the Nawab of Arcot and the Company troops under the command of Lt. Col. Bon Jour stormed the Kalaiyar Kovil Palace. In the ensuing battle Muthu Vadugar was killed.
- ⇒ Velunachiyar escaped with her daughter and lived under the protection of Gopala Nayakar at Virupachi near Dindigul for eight years.
- ⇒ Velunachiyar employed agents for gathering intelligence to find where the British had stored their ammunition. With military assistance from Gopala Nayakar and Hyder Ali she recaptured Sivagangai.
- ⇒ She was crowned as Queen with the help of Marudhu brothers.
- ⇒ She was the first female ruler or queen to resist the British colonial power in India.
- ⇒ Kuyili, a faithful friend of Velunachiyar, is said to have led the unit of women soldiers named after Udaiyaal.
- ⇒ Udaiyaal was a shepherd girl who was killed for not divulging information on Kuyili.



- ⇒ Kuyili is said to have walked into the British arsenal (1780) after setting herself on fire, thus destroying all the ammunition.

3. Rebellion of Veerapandya Kattabomman 1790-1799

- ⇒ Veerapandya Kattabomman became the Palayakkarar of Panchalamkurichi at the age of thirty on the death of his father, Jagavira Pandya Kattabomman
- ⇒ The Company's administrators, James London and Colin Jackson, had considered him a man of peaceful disposition.
- ⇒ The revenue of the Carnatic to the Company to be entirely under their management and control during the war with Mysore Sultan. One-sixth of the revenue was to be allowed to meet the expenses of Nawab and his family.
- ⇒ The Company had thus gained the right to collect taxes from Panchalamkurichi. The Company appointed its Collectors to collect taxes from all the palayams. The Collectors humiliated the palayakkarars and adopted force to collect the taxes. This was the bone of contention between the English and Kattabomman.
- ⇒ On 18 August 1798, Collector Jackson ordered Kattabomman to meet him in Ramanathapuram. But Kattabomman's attempts to meet him in between proved futile, as Jackson refused to give him audience both in Courtallam and Srivilliputhur.
- ⇒ At last, an interview was granted and Kattabomman met Jackson in Ramanathapuram on 19 September 1798.
- ⇒ Sensing danger, Kattabomman tried to escape, along with his minister Sivasubramanianar. Oomaithurai suddenly entered the fort with his men and helped the escape of Kattabomman.
- ⇒ On his return to Panchalamkurichi, Kattabomman represented to the Madras Council about how he was ill-treated by the collector Jackson. The Council asked Kattabomman to appear before a committee with William Brown, William Oram and John Casamajor as members.
- ⇒ Kattabomman appeared before the Committee that sat on 15 December 1798 and reported on what transpired in Ramanathapuram.



- ⇒ The Committee found Kattabomman was not guilty. Jackson was dismissed from service and a new Collector S.R. Lushington appointed.
- ⇒ Kattabomman cleared almost all the revenue arrears leaving only a balance of 1080 pagodas.
- ⇒ In the meantime, Marudhu Pandiyar of Sivagangai formed the South Indian Confederacy of rebels against the British, with the neighbouring palayakkars like Gopala Nayak of Dindigul and Yadul Nayak of Aanamalai.
- ⇒ Marudhu Pandiyar acted as its leader. The Tiruchirappalli Proclamation had been made. Kattabomman was interested in this confederacy.

The Siege of Panchalamkurichi

- ⇒ In May 1799, Lord Wellesley issued orders from Madras for the advance of forces from Tiruchirappalli, Thanjavur and Madurai to Tirunelveli. Major Bannerman commanded the troops.
- ⇒ The Travancore troops too joined the British. On 1 September 1799, an ultimatum was served on Kattabomman to surrender.
- ⇒ Kattabomman's "evasive reply" prompted Bannerman to attack his fort. Bannerman moved his entire army to Panchalamkurichi on 5 September.
- ⇒ Ramalinganar gathered all the secrets of the Fort, and on the basis of his report, Bannerman decided the strategy of the operation.
- ⇒ In a clash at Kallarpatti, Sivasubramanianar was taken a prisoner.
- ⇒ Kattabomman escaped to Pudukottai.
- ⇒ The British put a prize on his head. Betrayed by the rajas of Ettayapuram and Pudukottai Kattabomman was finally captured.
- ⇒ Sivasubramanianar was executed at Nagalapuram on the 13 September. Bannerman made a mockery of a trial for Kattabomman in front of the palayakarars on 16 October.
- ⇒ Kattabomman was hanged from a tamarind tree in the old fort of Kayathar, close to Tirunelveli, in front of the fellow Palayakkars.



4. The Marudhu Brothers

⇒ Periya Marudhu or Vella Marudhu (1748–1801) and his younger brother Chinna Marudhu (1753-1801) were able generals of Muthu Vadugar of Sivagangai. After Muthu Vadugar's death in the Kalaiyar Kovil battle Marudhu brothers assisted in restoring the throne to Velunachiyar. In the last years of the eighteenth century Marudhu Brothers organised resistance against the British. After the death of Kattabomman, they worked along with his brother Oomathurai. They plundered the granaries of the Nawab and caused damage and destruction to Company troops.

Rebellion of Marudhu Brothers (1800–1801)

- ⇒ Despite the suppression of Kattabomman's revolt in 1799, rebellion broke out again in 1800.
- ⇒ In the British records it is referred to as the Second Palayakkarar War.
- ⇒ It was directed by a confederacy consisting of Marudhu Pandyan of Sivagangai, Gopala Nayak of Dindugal, Kerala Varma of Malabar and Krishnaappa Nayak and Dhoondaji of Mysore.
- ⇒ In April 1800 they meet at Virupachi and decided to organise an uprising against the Company.
- ⇒ The uprising, which broke out in Coimbatore in June 1800, soon spread to Ramanathapuram and Madurai.
- ⇒ The Company got wind of it and declared war on Krishnappa Nayak of Mysore, Kerala Varma of Malabar and others.
- ⇒ The Palayakars of Coimbatore, Sathyamangalam and Tarapuram were caught and hanged.
- ⇒ In February 1801 the two brothers of Kattabomman, Oomathurai and Sevathaiah, escaped from the Palayamkottai prison to Kamudhi, from where Chinna Marudhu took them to Siruvayal his capital.
- ⇒ The British troops under Colin Macaulay retook the fort in April and the Marudhu brothers sought shelter in Sivagangai.



- ⇒ The English demanded that the Marudhu Pandiyars hand over the fugitives (Oomathurai and Sevathaiah).
- ⇒ Colonel Agnew and Colonel Innes marched on Sivagangai. In June 1801 Marudhu Pandiyars issued a proclamation of Independence which is called Tiruchirappalli Proclamation.
- ⇒ **Proclamation of 1801:** The Proclamation of 1801 was an early call to the Indians to unite against the British, cutting across region, caste, creed and religion. The proclamation was pasted on the walls of the Nawab's palace in Tiruchirappalli fort and on the walls of the Srirangam temple.
- ⇒ In May 1801, the English attacked the rebels in Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli. The rebels went to Piranmalai and Kalayarkoil.
- ⇒ The rebellion failed and Sivagangai was annexed in 1801.
- ⇒ The Marudhu brothers were executed in the Fort of Tirupathur near Ramanathapuram on 24 October 1801.
- ⇒ Oomathurai and Sevathaiah were captured and beheaded at Panchalamkurichi on 16 November 1801.
- ⇒ Seventy-three rebels were exiled to Penang in Malaya.
- ⇒ Thus the rebellion of Marudhu brothers, which is called South Indian Rebellion, is a landmark event in the history of Tamil Nadu.
- ⇒ **Carnatic Treaty, 1801 :** Under the terms of the Carnatic Treaty of 31 July 1801, the British assumed direct control over Tamilagam and the Palayakarar system came to an end with the demolition of all forts and disbandment of their army.

5. Dheeran Chinnamalai (1756–1805)

- ⇒ Born as Theerthagiri in 1756 in the Mandradiar royal family of Palayakottai , Dheeran was well trained in silambu, archery, horse riding and modern warfare.
- ⇒ He was involved in resolving family and land disputes in the Kongu region.
- ⇒ As this region was under the control of the Mysore Sultan, tax was collected by Tipu's Diwan Mohammed Ali.



- ⇒ Once, when the Diwan was returning to Mysore with the tax money, Theerthagiri blocked his way and confiscated all the tax money.
- ⇒ He let Mohammed Ali go by instructing him to tell his Sultan that “Chinnamalai”, who is between Sivamalai and Chennimalai, was the one who took away taxes.
- ⇒ Thus he gained the name “Dheeran Chinnamalai”. The offended Diwan sent a contingent to attack Chinnamalai and both the forces met and fought at the Noyyal river bed.
- ⇒ Chinnamalai emerged victorious. Trained by the French, Dheeran mobilised the Kongu youth in thousands and fought the British together with Tipu.
- ⇒ After Tipu’s death Dheeran Chinnamalai built a fort and fought the British without leaving the place. Hence the place is called *Odanilai*.
- ⇒ He launched guerrilla attacks and evaded capture. Finally the English captured him and his brothers and kept them in prison in Sankagiri.
- ⇒ When they were asked to accept the rule of the British, they refused. So they were hanged at the top of the Sankagiri Fort on 31 July 1805.

VELLORE REVOLT -1806

- ⇒ Before reducing all palayakkarars of south Tamilnadu into submission the East India Company had acquired the revenue districts of Salem, Dindigul at the conclusion of the war with Tipu in 1792.
- ⇒ Coimbatore was annexed at the end of the Anglo-Mysore War in 1799.
- ⇒ In the same year the Raja of Thanjavur whose status had been reduced to that of a vassal in 1798 gave up his sovereign rights over that region to the English. But the resistance did not die down. T
- ⇒ he dispossessed little kings and feudal chieftains continued to deliberate on the future course of action against the Company Government. The outcome was the Vellore Revolt of 1806.
- ⇒ The objective conditions for a last ditch fight existed on the eve of the revolt. The sepoys in the British Indian army nursed a strong sense of resentment over low salary and poor prospects of promotion.



- ⇒ The English army officers' scant respect for the social and religious sentiments of the Indian sepoys also angered them. With new experiments in land tenures causing unsettled conditions and famine breaking out in 1805 many of the sepoys' families were in dire economic straits.
- ⇒ The most opportune situation came with the sons and the family members of Tipu being interned in Vellore Fort. The trigger for the revolt came in the form of a new military regulation notified by the Commander-in-Chief Sir John Cradock.
- ⇒ According to the new regulations, the Indian soldiers were asked not to wear caste marks or ear rings when in uniform.
- ⇒ They were to be cleanly shaven on the chin and maintain uniformity about how their moustache looked.
- ⇒ The new turban added fuel to fire. The most objectionable addition was the leather cockade made of animal skin.
- ⇒ The sepoys gave enough forewarning by refusing to wear the new turban. Yet the Company administration did not take heed.

Outbreak of the Revolt

- ⇒ On 10 July 1806, in the early hours, guns were booming and the Indian sepoys of the 1st and 23rd regiments raised their standard of revolt.
- ⇒ Colonel Fancourt, who commanded the garrison, was the first victim.
- ⇒ Colonel McKerras of the 23rd regiment was killed next. Major Armstrong who was passing the Fort heard the sound of firing.
- ⇒ When he stopped to enquire he was showered with bullets. About a dozen other officers were killed within an hour or so.
- ⇒ Among them Lt. Elly and Lt. Popham belonged to His Majesty's battalion. Major Cootes, who was outside the Fort, informed Colonel Gillespie, the cavalry commandant in Arcot.
- ⇒ Gillespie reached the fort along with a squadron of cavalry under the command of Captain Young at 9.00 am.



- ⇒ In the meantime, the rebels proclaimed Fateh Hyder, Tipu's eldest son, as their new ruler and hoisted the tiger flag of Mysore sultans in the Fort. But the uprising was swiftly crushed by Col.
- ⇒ Gillespie, who threw to winds all war ethics. Tipu's sons were ordered to be sent to Calcutta.
- ⇒ The officers and men engaged in the suppression of the revolt were rewarded with prize money and promotion. Col. Gillespie was given 7,000 pagodas.
- ⇒ However, the commander-in-chief Sir John Cradock, the Adjutant General Agnew and Governor William Bentinck were held responsible for the revolt, removed from their office, and recalled to England.
- ⇒ The military regulations were treated as withdrawn. Recent studies show that the organizing part of the revolt was done perfectly by Subedars Sheik Adam and Sheik Hamid and Jamedar Sheik Hussain of the 2nd battalion of 23rd regiment and two Subedars and the Jamedar Sheik Kasim of the 1st battalion of the 1st regiment.
- ⇒ Vellore Revolt had all the forebodings of the Great Rebellion of 1857. The only difference was that there was no civil rebellion following the mutiny.
- ⇒ The 1806 revolt was not confined to Vellore Fort. It had its echoes in Bellary, Walajabad, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Nandydurg, and Sankaridurg.

Prominent Nationalists of Tamil Nadu in the Moderate phase

- ⇒ Tamil Nadu was then part of the Madras Presidency which included large parts of the present day states of Andhra Pradesh (Coastal districts and Rayalaseema), Karnataka (Bengaluru, Bellary, South Canara), Kerala (Malabar) and even Odisha (Ganjam).
- ⇒ The early nationalists believed in constitutional methods. Their activities consisted of conducting hall meetings and deliberating the problems of the country in English.
- ⇒ These views were communicated to the government in a language couched in a liberal discourse in the form of petitions, prayers, memoranda, and as evidence in various government commissions of enquiry.



- ⇒ When, at the time of Partition of Bengal, Tilak and other leaders adopted popular methods such as mass public meetings, and used vernacular languages to address the larger public, the early nationalists came to be known as moderates.
- ⇒ The distinguished Tamil Moderates from Madras: V.S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.S. Sivasamy, V. Krishnasamy, T.R. Venkatramanar, G.A. Natesan, T.M. Madhava Rao, and S. Subramaniam.
- ⇒ The primary contribution of moderates lies in exposing the liberal claims of the British: they exposed how the British exploited India and their hypocrisy in following democratic principles in England and imposing an unrepresentative government in the colonies.

Indian National Congress and Tamil Nadu

- ⇒ The first session of the Indian National Congress was held in 1885 at Bombay. Out of a total of 72 delegates 22 members were from Madras.
- ⇒ G. Subramaniam through his writings advanced the cause of nationalism. He ranks with Naoroji and Gokhale for his contribution to the understanding of the economic exploitation of India by the British.
- ⇒ The second session of the Indian National Congress was held in Calcutta in 1886, with Dadabhai Naoroji in the Chair.
- ⇒ The third session was held at Makkis Garden, now known as the Thousand lights, in Madras in 1887 with Badruddin Tyabji as president. Out of the 607 all India delegates of 362 were from Madras Presidency.

SWADESHI MOVEMENT

- ⇒ In various parts of India, especially Bengal, Punjab and Maharashtra popular leaders emerged.
- ⇒ They implemented the programme of the Calcutta Congress which called upon the nation to promote Swadeshi enterprise, boycott foreign goods and promote national education.
- ⇒ The Swadeshi movement made a deep impact in Tamil Nadu. The Congress carried on a vigorous campaign for boycott of foreign goods.



- ⇒ V.O. Chidambaranar, V. Chakkaraiyar, Subramania Bharati and Surendranath Arya were some of the prominent leaders in Tamilnadu.
- ⇒ Subaramania Bharati's patriotic songs were especially important in stirring patriotic emotions.
- ⇒ Many journals were started to propagate Swadeshi ideals. *Swadesamitran* and *India* were prominent journals.
- ⇒ The extremist leader Bipin Chandra Pal toured Madras and delivered lectures which inspired the youth.
- ⇒ Students and youth participated widely in the Swadeshi Movement.
- ⇒ One of the most enterprising acts in pursuance of *swadeshi* was the launching of the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company at Thoothukudi by V.O. Chidambaranar. He purchased two ships *Gallia* and *Lavo* and plied them between Thoothukudi and Colombo.

Tirunelveli Uprising

- ⇒ V.O.C joined with Subramania Siva in organising the mill workers in Thoothukudi and Tirunelveli. In 1908, he led a strike in the European-owned Coral Mills.
- ⇒ It coincided with the release of Bipin Chandra Pal. V.O.C and Subramania Siva, who organised a public meeting to celebrate the release of Bipin, were arrested.
- ⇒ The two leaders were charged with sedition and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment. Initially V.O.C. was given a draconian sentence of two life imprisonments.
- ⇒ The news of the arrest sparked riots in Tirunelveli leading to the burning down of the police station, court building and municipal office.
- ⇒ V.O.C. was treated harshly in prison and was made to pull the heavy oil press. Others to be arrested included G. Subramaniam and Ethiraj Surendranath Arya.
- ⇒ To avoid imprisonment Subramania Bharati moved to Pondicherry which was under French rule.
- ⇒ Bharati's example was followed by many other nationalists such as Aurobindo Ghosh and V. V. Subramanianar.



Ashe Murder

- ⇒ In 1904 Nilakanta Brahmachari and others started Bharata Matha Society, a secret society. The objective was to kill British officials and thereby kindle patriotic fervour among the people.
- ⇒ Vanchinathan of Senkottai, was influenced by this organisation. On 17 June 1911 he shot dead Robert W.D'E. Ashe, Collector of Tirunelveli in Maniyachi Junction.
- ⇒ After this he shot himself. Divorced from the people these young revolutionaries, despite their patriotism, failed to inspire and mobilize the people.

Rowlatt Satyagraha

- ⇒ On 18 March 1919 Gandhi addressed a meeting on Marina Beach. On 6 April 1919 *hartal* was organised to protest against the "Black Act".
- ⇒ Protest demonstrations were held at several parts of Tamil Nadu.
- ⇒ Processions from many areas of the city converged in the Marina beach where there was a large gathering. They devoted the whole day to fasting and prayer in the Marina beach.
- ⇒ Madras Satyagraha Sabha was formed.
- ⇒ Rajaji, Kasturirangar, S. Satyamurty and George Joseph addressed the meeting. A separate meeting of workers was addressed by V. Kalyanasundaram (Thiru. V. Ka) B.P. Wadia and V.O.C. An important aspect of the movement was that the working classes, students and women took part in large numbers.

George Joseph

- ⇒ George Joseph, a barrister and eloquent speaker, played a leading role in organising and publicising the cause of Home Rule League in Madurai.
- ⇒ Though born in Chengannur (Alappuzha district, Kerala State), he chose to settle down in Madurai and practice as a people's lawyer.
- ⇒ In the course of his long public life, he led the Vaikkom Satyagraha in Kerala, as he viewed it as an issue of civil rights for all citizens of India.
- ⇒ He championed the cause of the "Criminal Tribes" of Tamilnadu.



- ⇒ He was fondly called “Rosaappu Durai” by the people of Madurai for the services he rendered to the affected communities.
- ⇒ He helped the Harvey Mill workers of Madurai to set up Madurai Labour Union (1918).
- ⇒ The Union's initial struggles resulted in higher wages and reduced work hours for the mill workers.

Khilafat Movement

- ⇒ After the First World War the Caliph of Turkey was humiliated and deprived of all powers.
- ⇒ To restore the Caliph the Khilafat Movement was started.
- ⇒ Muslims who had largely kept from the nationalist movement now joined it in huge numbers.
- ⇒ In Tamil Nadu Khilafat Day was observed on 17 April 1920, with a meeting presided over by Maulana Shaukat Ali.
- ⇒ Another such conference was held at Erode. Vaniyambadi was as the epicenter of Khilafat agitation.

Non-Cooperation Movement

- ⇒ Tamil Nadu was active during the Non-cooperation Movement. C. Rajaji and E.V. Ramaswamy (EVR, later known as Periyar) provided the leadership.
- ⇒ Rajaji worked closely with Yakub Hasan, founder of the Madras branch of the Muslim League. As a result, the Hindus and the Muslims cooperated closely during the course of the movement in Tamil Nadu.
- ⇒ A Congress volunteer corps was set up to distribute pamphlets, carry flags during processions and to maintain order in the meetings. They also played an important part in picketing of liquor shops.

Swaraj Party

- ⇒ Following the withdrawal of the Non- Cooperation Movement, the Congress was divided between ‘no-changers’ who wanted to continue the boycott of the councils and ‘prochangers who wanted to contest the elections for the councils.



- ⇒ Rajaji along with other staunch Gandhian followers opposed the council entry.
- ⇒ Along with Kasturirangar and M.A. Ansari, Rajaji advocated the boycott of the councils.
- ⇒ Opposition to this led to the formation of the Swaraj Party within the Congress by Chittaranjan Das and Motilal Nehru. In Tamil Nadu the Swarajists were led by S. Srinivasanar and S. Satyamurti.

Agitation for Removal of Neill Statue (1927)

- ⇒ James Neill of the Madras Fusiliers (infantry men with firearms) was brutal in wreaking vengeance at Kanpur ('the Cawnpur massacre', as it was called) in which many English women and children were killed in the Great Rebellion of 1857.
- ⇒ Neill was later killed by an Indian sepoy. A statue was erected for him at Mount Road, Madras.
- ⇒ Nationalists saw this as an insult to Indian sentiments, and organised a series of demonstrations in Madras. Protesters came from all over the Madras Presidency and were led by S. N. Somayajulu of Tirunelveli.
- ⇒ Many were arrested and sentenced to prison. Gandhi, who visited Madras during the same time, gave his support to the agitation.
- ⇒ The statue was finally moved to Madras Museum when Congress Ministry, led by C. Rajaji, formed the government in 1937.

Simon Commission Boycott

- ⇒ In Madras, the Simon Boycott Propaganda Committee was set up with S. Satyamurti as the president.
- ⇒ There was widespread campaign among the students, shopkeepers, lawyers and commuters in train to boycott.
- ⇒ The arrival of Simon Commission in Madras on 18 February 1929 was greeted with demonstrations and hartals.
- ⇒ Black flags were waved against the Commission.



Salt March to Vedaranyam

- ⇒ Tamil Nadu was in the forefront of the Civil Disobedience Movement. In the city of Madras, shops were picketed and foreign goods boycotted. Rajaji organised and led a salt satyagraha march to Vedaranyam.
- ⇒ The march started from Tiruchirappalli on 13 April 1930 and reached Vedaranyam in Thanjavur district on 28 April. A special song was composed for the march by Namakkal V. Ramalinganar with the lines, “A War is ahead *sans* sword, *sans* bloodshed...Join this march.” Despite a brutal crackdown by the police, the marching *satyagrahis* were provided a warm reception along the route.
- ⇒ On reaching Vedaranyam 12 volunteers under the leadership of Rajaji broke the salt law by picking up salt.
- ⇒ Rajaji was arrested. T.S.S. Rajan, Rukmani Lakshmipathi, Sardar Vedarathnam, C. Swaminathar and K. Santhanam were among the prominent leaders who participated in the Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha.

Widespread Agitations in Tamil Districts

- ⇒ The *satyagrahis* under the leadership of T. Prakasam and K. Nageswara Rao set up a camp at Udayavanam near Madras. However, the police arrested them. It led to a hartal in Madras.
- ⇒ The clashes with the police in Tiruvallikeni which lasted for three hours on 27 April 1930 left three dead. Volunteers who attempted to offer *salt Satyagraha* in Rameswaram were arrested.
- ⇒ Similar attempts at Uvari, Anjengo, Veppalodai, Thoothukudi and Tharuvaikulam were stopped. Mill workers struck work across the province.
- ⇒ Women participated enthusiastically. Rukmani Lakshmipathi was the first woman to pay penalty for violation of salt laws. Police used brutal force to suppress the movement.
- ⇒ Bhashyam, popularly known as Arya, hoisted the national flag atop Fort St. George on 26 January 1932.
- ⇒ Satyamurti actively picketed shops selling foreign clothes, organised processions and distributed pamphlets. N.M.R.Subbaraman and K. Kamaraj also played an important role.



- ⇒ A temple entry programme with “harijans” in Madurai Meenakshiamman temple was organised (9 July 1939) by Vaidyanathar, L.N. Gopalsamy, President and Secretary of Madurai Harijana Sevak Sangh respectively.
- ⇒ The Temple Entry Authorisation and Indemnity Act, 1939 for the removal of the civil and social disabilities against the “depressed classes” was passed.

Undying Mass Movement

- ⇒ All sections of the society participated in the movement.
- ⇒ There were a large number of workers strike such as strikes in Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, Madras Port Trust, Madras Corporation and the Electric Tramway.
- ⇒ Telegraph and telephone lines were cut and public building burnt at Vellore and Panapakkam.
- ⇒ Students of various colleges took active part in the protests. The airport in Sullur was attacked and trains derailed in Coimbatore.
- ⇒ Congress volunteers clashed with the military in Madurai. There were police firings at Rajapalayam, Karaikudi and Devakottai.
- ⇒ Many young men and women also joined the INA. The Quit India Movement was suppressed with brutal force.