



LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF RAJAH SIR MUTHIAH CHETTIAR – A STUDY

Dr. G. Palanivel

**Assistant Professor (History) , Department of History,
Thiruvalluvar Government Arts College Rasipuram, Namakkal District, Tamil Nadu.**

ABSTRACT

Muthiah Chettiar was an Industrialist Banker. He was service to educationist and Philanthropist. Who was largely remembered for his social work and endowments in Tamil Nadu. He was great service Tamil Music The Government of Tamil Nadu honoured him with paramount Tamil Isai Kavalar and very good administrator. On entering politics he became a Mayor of madras corporation. He was member of Madras Legislative Council ,Minister for Education and opposition leader.



KEYWORDS: *Paramount, Philanthropist, reputed, remarkable, pantheon, gibraltor.*

INTRODUCTION:

Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, was a reputed personality. He inherited a family heritage of repute and is a man of great on merits. He was born on 5th August 1905 at Pallathur in Chettinad as the first son of Dr. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, when his father was 24 years old and earned acclaim in the financial world. He had a very good opportunity to observe and learn many things from his able father. “True to the old adage, there were three gods in his pantheon, father, mother and teacher. But it was his father, who came first”.² To him his father’s word was law. Never once did he slight him or cross his wishes. His chief ambition was to emulate his father, follow in his footsteps and serve the public to the best of his ability.³ When his father established a College in Chidambaram,⁴ he was only fifteen years old. When the University was founded in 1929,⁵ he was a dynamic and vigorous young man of 24 years. He closely watched and participated in the growth of the University from its inception along with his father by supporting his work for more than 21 years. And later for 36 years as a single man, like the rock of Gibraltor, he shouldered the work of the University with the vision of his father and by combining his own vision developed it and made it fit for the changing times

HIS EDUCATION

He went to school at the age of three at Kanadukathan and had his primary education. There was no big change in the syllabus. Like his father he too studied Arichuvadi, Kilvailokkam and Nalvazhi. He had his further studies at primary level in the Presentation Convent at Vepery in Madras.⁶ Later he had his further education in Ewart School.⁷ He had his high school education in Kalavala Ramanuja Chettiar School in Madras. And still later he joined St. Joseph High School, Tiruchirappalli.⁸ During his school education in Madras, one Miss Lazarus, a private tutor, took classes for English.

HIS MARRIAGE AND HIGHER EDUCATION

During his school life as per the practice of the society in those times his marriage was arranged by his father on 2nd February in 1917.⁹ He married Meyyammai, the daughter of Sigappi Achi. After marriage he pursued his collegiate education in Madras Presidency College and obtained the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1924.¹⁰ For his degree he took History, Economics and Political Science as his major subjects. In this college he came into contact with reputed Professors of all India stature like Professor Papworth, Dr. John Muthiah, Professor of Economics (who later became Finance Minister at the Centre in Independent India). His father kept an eye on his studies. T.G. Ramaswami Aiyangar gave him lessons in English. So also Miss Krishna Rao, R. Krishnamurthi Aiyar,¹¹ Professor of English, Pachaiyappa's College later (Principal of the College) K.B. Ramanathan, K. Swaminathan, E.S. Rungathan and Rt. Hon'ble V.S. Srinivasa Sastri,¹² C.S. Srinivasachariar, Professor of History, Pachaiyappa's College,¹³ gave private coaching to him. In his college days he found time for playing Cricket and Tennis and won many medals. He was closely connected with the Madras Cricket Club, Cosmopolitan Club, Gymkhana Club, and the Rotary Club that functioned in the city of Madras and other places.

A few years after the wedding, true to the dictum of the Scots that "every herring must stand by its own head", a separate portion in the family house was allocated to the couple to learn and raise their own establishment within the father's house.

After receiving his B.A., degree in 1924 he showed interest in public affairs and served his apprenticeship under his father. His father took him to the Ramaswami Chettiar School at Chidambaram,¹⁴ which was brought under his care. His father was happy to see his son's interest in the management of the college. Actually he became unofficial secretary to his father and attended to all the work of correspondence "He was, in his own words, his father's errand boy".⁵

COMMERCE AND BANKING

His father had a wish to train his son in business and commerce. Hence, to have a first hand knowledge of the family business concerns in Burma he sent him to Burma. In Burma, he visited all the branches of his family business from Rangoon to Bhamo (located on the Chinese frontier). This visit gave him first hand information about the family business in Burma. After his return from Burma, in order to set the business on strong foundation, he sent A. Venkatarama Aiyar, an able advocate of Pudukkottai to collect all relevant records and legal details for ready reference. Thus he had a thorough knowledge about the business world in Burma. He also enjoyed the natural beauty of Burma and actually he had lost his heart to Burma.

He showed interest in modernizing the business activities, especially money-lending business. in India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaysia and French Indo – China.¹⁶ His father converted his money-lending concerns into Banking companies and conducted them on modern lines, his son showed interest in banking law. His interest and training in business gave him an opportunity to

serve as a member of the provincial Banking enquiry committee under the Chairmanship of Mr.H.M. Hood of the Indian Civil Service.

His family had intimate connection with the Banking activities. They were considered as the financial wizards of South India, naturally he had a great say over financial institutions. He became a Director of Indian Bank in 1928 and held that office till 1932.¹⁷ He was the Director of the Imperial Bank of India from 1932 to 1936¹⁸ (now it is called State Bank of India). He again joined the Directorate of the Bank in 1945. Later he was the president of the Local Bank of India. In 1941, he was a member of the South Indian Chamber of Commerce and was its President.¹⁹ He enjoyed the unique honour of being elected president of the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He became Director of the Indian bank in 1956. Later he served as the Chairman of the Indian Bank in 1969.²⁰

When a bank crash was engineered, he tactfully handled it and within seventy two hours every one saw the recovery of the prestige of the bank. He instilled confidence in the account holders by running the bank in full swing. The saving of the Indian bank was a triumph of his personality. His good service to the Banking sector was publicly acknowledged by the provincial banking enquiry committee.

SOUTH INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

He was connected with the South Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry for more than 50 years; this body elected him to the legislature of the presidency. Many times he was elected President of the Chamber. During the Second World War he was the president of the chamber in 1941. As president, he spoke and toiled for the progress of commerce and industry in the war situation. The worst affected area was foreign trade. There were numerous restrictions on imports and exports and the business community, no doubt, had been hit hard. He demanded the urgent intervention of the National Government. He highlighted the problems of the evacuees especially Burmese and Indians and their sufferings on account of “the scorched earth policy.” All the time his presidential address to the Chamber of Commerce highlighted the problems of commerce and industry and showed ways and means solution for improvement and development that the Government had to initiate. His knowledge of Commerce and Industry and their problems was based on personal experience, which was up to date and many men in business often picked his brain with profit. Besides his had intimate association with South Indian Chamber of Commerce. “He represented the chamber of commerce on the railway rates of reference. His knowledge of finance, both theoretical and practical, was the subjects of considered encomium”.²¹

POLITICAL LIFE

His father was responsible for his grooming from his childhood to adult hood. His family background gave him an opportunity to have contacts with many political personalities, social leaders, religious heads, administrators, intellectuals etc. After his graduation he involved himself in public life. His father also welcomed it. As a young man he also showed interest in social reform movement. The leaders of Madras Presidency like Sir Pitty Theagaraya Chetti, the Rajah of Panagal, Dr.T.M. Nair, Sir Mohammed Usman, the Rajah of Bobbili and Mr.P.T. Rajan organized the party known as Justice party. This party fought for the rights of Non – Brahmins of the Madras presidency. He joined this party and became one of its leaders. Being an important personality in commerce and education and of an influential family in the city of Madras, he was nominated as the Councilor of Madras Corporation on February 26, 1929.²² Later, he was unanimously elected as president of Madras Corporation on 2nd November 1932.²³ The Justice party supported him. He won the election

unanimously for the first time in the history of Madras Corporation. On 8th March 1933, when the office of the president was redesignated as 'Mayor' he became the Mayor of Madras Corporation. Hence, he was the last president and the first mayor of Madras Corporation.²⁴ Again he was reelected unanimously for the second term to the Mayor ship on 5th November 1934.²⁵ During his Mayorship he was instrumental in bringing the Radio station to the city.

As Mayor of the famous city of Madras, he evinced been interest to keep the city clean and wished to maintain the city as 'the city of distances and the city of Gardens' He acted as chairman of the special committee to study the problem of over crowding in the city of Madras, and to evolve a comprehensive housing policy for the city. The Committee, under his chairmanship submitted a report, to the Council and the Council sought a financial aid to the tune of Rupees twenty lakhs from the Presidency Government to implement the Scheme. Later he constituted the city improvement trust and was associated with it for ten years. During his tenure, in the Corporation of Madras a new suburb Thiyagaraya Nagar was planned to relieve the congestion in the city. Thus, he always worked to keep the city more beautiful with the hope of seeing the growth of the city in multiple ways. His two terms in the city corporation remained a gracious memory all his life.

Under the Montford Reforms of 1919, the new ministry of the Justice party, assumed office on 17th October 1920 in the Madras Presidency. The party was a ruling party in the beginning and opposition party in the council still later in 1930. Once again it captured power and B. Muniswami Naidu formed the ministry. The South Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry unanimously elected Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar to the Madras Legislative Council on 8th September 1930.²⁶ This Chamber of Commerce was electing him as legislator throughout the period of Diarchy In the legislative council, he became the Chief Whip and Chairman of justice party in 1930²⁷ and held this office till 1935. However, B. Muniswami Naidu's ministry created a great deal of discontent. It left the Telugu zamindars headed by Rajah of Bobbili to feel discomfort. Similarly there was a displeasure with leaders of Justice party belonging to the Tamil districts of the Madras Presidency. This displeasure was voiced effectively by a 'Ginger group' of Nattukkottai Chettis of the justice party. In 1936, when Rajah of Bobbili formed the ministry, he in order to patch up factionalism within the party, inducted Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar into his ministry. When Dewan Bahadur S.Ramaswami Reddiyar resigned his ministerial post due to his failing health, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was given the portfolio of Education, Medical Relief, Public and Excise.²⁸ When he was hardly thirty one years old a 'sort of younger Pitt', he was minister from October 10th 1936 to March 31st 1937 a short spell but a fruitfull spell of activity. As a minister of education, by law he becomes the Pro - Chancellor of the University of Madras and other Universities of Madras Presidency. Now a rarity was accomplished in the field of education. Both father and son were Pro-Chancellors. As a minister for education, he wanted that education should be widespread, to cater to the poor and the illiterate and pleaded for increase in subsidies, When the question of trained teachers and untrained came up, he felt that by long teaching, they (the untrained) had all the training needed and defended their continuation in service. Similarly, with regard to the department of medicine when a distinction is made between the permanent medical officer of the department and honorary medical officers with regard to confidential report, he said, that as a "point of fact honorary doctors are encouraged under the system".

Again, when the private medical practice of the permanent medical officers of the government was questioned, he assured the legislature as a minister that only one officer was carrying out private practice and he too will stop it within six months. He also dealt with Municipal problems like 1. Water supply and drainage scheme, 2. More schools to meet the educational needs

of the town, 3. A government high school with a girls' high school for the area and 4. A women and children hospital. He did all this sympathetically as Minister of Education and Public Health.

After the passing of the Government of India Act of 1935, elections were held, but the Congress declined the invitation of the Governor to form the Ministry under this circumstance, an interim ministry was formed by Sir K.V. Reddy by the invitation of the Governor on 1st April 1937. K.V. Reddy inducted Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar as Minister for Local Administration and Hindu Religious Endowment.²⁹ In 1937, the Nattukkottai Nagarathar Association elected him unanimously as a member of the Madras Legislative Assembly.³⁰ During his membership a bill was brought by him to reform the administration of Tirupathi temple and this bill brought the temple under Government control. This ministry was in office only for a short time, when the Congress made a claim and C.Rajagopalachariar formed a Congress ministry on July 14th 1937, Dr.Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar became the leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly and remained in that post from 1937³¹ to 1939. As an opposition leader in the Assembly, he played his part in an appreciable manner. "He never opposed for opposition sake". In the debates he participated carefully with due preparation on the subject. "He was particularly good at supplementaries which, were shot off on the spur of the moment". He gave in suggestions Budget discussions, expressed his views on social justice for which his party stood. When the Government implemented prohibition, he explained the qualified support of the opposition and the attitude of 'No hurry please; wait and see policy'. He actively participated in the discussion and voting when the following bills were brought to the assembly.

1. Madras Agriculturists Moratorium Bill September (1937)
2. Madras Agriculturists Relief bill 29th January (1938)
3. Madras Minor Port Fund August (1938)
4. Madras Electricity Duty Bill (1939)
5. Madras District Municipalities and Local Board (Amendment) Bill (1939)
6. Madras Tobacco (Taxation of Sale and Licensing) Bill (1939)
7. The Madras Sales Tax Bill, April (1939)
8. The Madras District Municipalities and Local Board amendment Bill (1939).
9. The Madras Sale of Motor Spirit Taxation Bill 20th October (1939).³²

When Hindi was introduced as compulsory language of study in the schools and colleges in 1938, he opposed it and explained that they have no objection to Hindi being made an optional subject, instead of a compulsory subject, and this opposition is genuine and not born out of party faction. When the demand on soil was discussed, he protested, what was wrong in saying "Long Live Tamil" and "Down with Hindi" during picketing and said in clear terms that Mr. Ramaswami Naicker's detention in Bellary Jail is not proper and demanded his release. He said. "I am not voicing my own individual opinion. In my objection to the compulsory introduction of Hindi I am dealing with the question only in a humanitarian spirit".³³

When on the removal of disabilities among certain classes of Hindus Mr.M.C. Rajah's motion on acceptance of the select committee's report (1938) was debated, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was generally ahead of the times. His party, he affirmed, had always worked for the uplift of the depressed classes. "He was confident that the bill will go a long way and educate our brother about temple entry". "I congratulate the premier and the government on having accepted the bill. The good wishes of the house will be a guarantee of the success of the measure in the country".³⁴

When his father was toiling and moving heaven and earth for the sake of the Indian merchants in Burma, on the floor of the legislature, Dr.Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar participated in debates on the happenings in Burma. He pleaded that the provincial government and the Indian

government must come forward to protect the people of Indian origin in countries like Burma, Malaya, Ceylon and he suggested sending a delegation to help the Indians in those countries. He demanded that the government must get in touch with the government of the above countries. He brought to the notice of the government the loss of property of Indian petty merchants in Burma etc. Again in 1954 when the plight of Indian nationals in Ceylon was discussed in the Assembly, he said, “the question of treatment of Indian nationals abroad has been engaging the attention of the government of India and this house for a long time. It is not as if this is the first instance where in this house we are discussing the question of treatment of Indian nationals abroad”³⁵ and explained the drawback in the role of the Government of India and State Government. He demanded the reopening of the emigration department and the attention of the Prime Minister of India to take-up the matter for the redressal of the grievances of Indians in Ceylon.

He was nominated to the Indian Constituent Assembly as a member from 1946 to 1950.³⁶ He participated in the debates of the Assembly. He also gave his opinion in the Madras legislative assembly debates on the following bills:

1. The Madras city municipal second amendment bill 13th February (1947)
2. General discussion of budget 5th March (1947)
3. Land revenue 5th March (1947)
4. Voting on demands for grants 8th March (1947)
5. Demand on education 29th March (1947)
6. The Madras Hindu Bigamous Marriage prohibition and divorce bill April 23rd (1947)
7. General discussion of the budget (1948)
8. Position of Indians in Burma 28th February (1948)
9. General discussion of the budget 28th February (1948)
10. The Madras Village Panchayats Bill 12th January (1950)
11. The budget memorandum for labour including factories and Harijan uplift (1950)
12. Delimitation of constituencies and conduct of elections to legislatures 9th August (1950)
13. Food situation in the state 10th August (1950)
14. Study of languages in secondary schools 12th August (1950).
15. The Madras City Improvement trust Bill 2nd September (1950),
16. The Madras Hindu Religious and Endowment charitable Bill 11th September (1950).
17. The Madras Irrigation (Betterment, contribution and inclusion fees) Bill (1951)
18. The Madras Appropriation Bill March (1952)
19. Andhra State Bill 20th July.³⁷

After Independence of India, he was elected from Tiruppur Constituency as Congress candidate in 1952 to the Madras Legislative Assembly³⁸ and again re-elected in 1957 from Karaikkudi Constituency. During this period he actively participated in the following debates where his views and opinions always won the appreciation of the legislators. They were (I) Indian National abroad in Ceylon May 13th (1954), (ii) Budget discussion March 3rd (1955) (iii) state reorganization November 21st 1950. Later from 1963 to December 1983, he was a nominated member of Madras Legislative Council³⁹ (Upper House of the State Legislature).

Although his career as a legislator had ended “he fitted into the environment, moved easily and in the friendliest way, with his fellow – legislators. Wealth and social status did not go to his head. He was a gentleman every inch of him and his gentlemanliness was not just conformity with current social codes. He got on excellently with those he had to deal with. His rich experience of men and affairs, ability to see the other man’s point of view and reach agreed decisions made him a valuable asset in the legislative field. Muthiah Chettiar took his legislative responsibilities seriously.

He was assiduous, studied the questions before the legislature in detail, strove to understand conflicting points of view and expressed his conclusion with a forthrightness which gained rather than lost by the scrupulously temperate way in which he expressed his views. He was particularly good at supplementaries which, shot off on the spur of the moment, helped to focus attention on the heart of a problem. Perhaps Muthiah Chettiar's most engaging characteristic was his unwillingness or his incapacity to hurt any body's feelings. He was one of the most urbane of men and the soft answer which precluded wrath came to him naturally. While he readily appreciated and lent his support to a measure which he was satisfied was in the public interest, he was not mean to condemn what he thought was hasty or ill conceived. He never lost touch with realities but displayed always foresight and a clear appreciation of the facts of life. He did not mince his words; at the same time he was courteous and fair.

That explains why he was rated highly by persons as differently constituted, as say the Rajah of Panagal, Rajagopalachariar, Basheer Ahmed Sayeed, Abdul Hamid Khan, Sir A.T. Pannirselvam and Sir Mohamed Usman. His utterances in the legislature were well reasoned and moderate in tone. C.Rajagopalachariar, not by any means an easy man to please, had the highest regard for him and gave expression to it not only in private but also on the floor of the house. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer once said at a public meeting by using Kalidasa's phrase, satyaya mitabhashi, moderate in speech in the interests of truth.⁴⁰

EDUCATIONALIST

Following in the footsteps of his father, he too contributed much to the development of education. He was associated with his father in running Schools and Colleges and the University. The family also created many endowments for education. The awakening for western education among the Non Brahmins of Madras presidency enabled them to established Pachaiyappa's Charities in the Presidency. A trust board was constituted to administer the institutions of Pachaiyappa's Charities. His association with Sri Meenakshi College enabled him to associate himself with the above famed charities as a trustee. In his life he laboured in many fields but the field which was nearest to his heart was education and it remained so all his life.⁴¹ He served the field of education for more than seventy years. He served this trust board from 1928 to 1963, continuously for thirty five years. During this period, the Pachaiyappa's College in Madras had a very good expansion and became a reputed college in the city and in the state. The polytechnic, elementary schools and high schools located all over Tamilnadu under the charities catered to the educational needs of the society. From 1941 – 1942 he was the president of the trust board.⁴² His work, in Pachaiyappa's trust was acknowledged in 1942 itself by Justice W.S. Krishnaswami, and the charities celebrated its centenary celebration in 1942, under his presidentship.⁴³ He moved with Mr.C.Rajagoapalachariar (Premier of the Madras Presidency) and secured a grant of 3.47 lakh in 1938 as a part of one fourth of the estimate for the construction of a residential college by Pachaiyappa's Charities. He also opened a Pachaiyappa's College at Kanchipuram in 1953.⁴⁴ In his commemoration address in the celebration of 106th anniversary of Pachaiyappa's Charities, he narrated the growth of Pachaiyappa's institutions from its inception and thanked the donors especially Chengalvaraya Naicker, Govindu Naicker, Ponnambalam Pillai, Shanmugam Mudaliar, Olati Ranganayake Ammal and Chellammal and said, "They have done one of the highest forms of national service".

As the demand for High School in Madras City grew with the growing population, he started the Gandhi Nagar Education Society and managed many institutions under the auspices of the society. During his life time, he started many educational institutions to serve the needs of society, they were.

1. Rani Meyyammai Primary School, Gandhi Nagar, Madras 1950.
2. Kumara Rajah Muthiah High School, Adyar, Madras (1950)
3. Rajah Annamalaipuram Primary School, West Madras (1956)
4. Rajah Annamalaipuram Primary School, East Madras (1956)
5. Rajah Muthiah Higher Secondary School, Rajah Annamalaipuram, Madras (1957).
6. Rani Meyyammai Higher Secondary School, Rajah Annamalaipuram, Madras (1961).
7. Rani Meyyammai High School for Girls, Gandhi Nagar, Madras (1971).
8. Rani Meyyammai Boy's High School, Gandhi Nagar, Madras (1971).
9. Rani Meyyammai Elementary School, Puliyur, Karur 1972.
10. Rani Meyyammai Nursery School, Puliyur, Karur 1974.
11. Rani Meyyammai Kinder Garden School, Annamalainagar, 1973.
12. Rani Meyyammai Matriculation School, Puliyur, Karur.
13. Rani Meyyammai High School, Puliyur. (1981).
14. Annamalai Polytechnic, Chettinad (1956).
15. Muthiah Polytechnic, Annamalainagar, 1958.⁴⁵

Because of this background, especially his association with Pachaiyappa's Trust Board, the Justice party selected him for the cabinet and offered him the portfolio of Education in 1936. Hence, he became the Pro-Chancellor of the University of Madras from 1936 – 1937. He acted as a member of the Syndicate of the University of Madras from 1942-1946.⁴⁶ From 1948 he was the second Founder Pro-Chancellor of the Annamalai University till his death in 1984.⁴⁷ In actuality the annals of Annamalai University identify him as co-founder along with the first Founder of the University. During his tenure as Second Founder Pro-Chancellor the University expanded and developed in various ways including in the fields of Engineering, Agriculture, Directorat of Distance Education and Medicine.

HIS SERVICE TO TAMIL ISAI

He showed keen interest in Tamil Literature and Tamil Music. It is, in a sense, a part of his family inheritance. His father had an ambition in his life to create and instill in the minds of the people of Tamil Nadu real pride in their Literature and Language following his directions, his son worked along with him and after him for the cause of Tamil music. His interest in Tamil Isai starts right from his early days. When he was the Mayor of Madras he inaugurated the Madras music conference on 22nd December 1934 and spoke in the conference in favour of Tamil Isai. In 1936, during the tenure of his office as minister for Local Self Government and Hindu Religious Endowments he got a bill passed in regard to Tamil Isai.⁴⁸ According to this bill it was expected that every temple in the Presidency should make arrangement for reciting Tevaram Hymns. Further, in Sep. 1941 a meeting was held under the presidentship of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy in Tiruchirappalli.⁹¹ Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar attended the meeting and delivered a speech on the significance of the Tamil Isai movement and also expressed his willingness to support the movement. Periyar E.V.Ramasamy endorsed his view.⁵⁰ Meanwhile a conference was held at Victoria Hall in Madras on 16th Sep. 1941 to encourage the Tamil Isai movement. C.N.Annaduri, M.M.Dhandapani Desigar and several eminent men attended the conference.⁵¹ On seeing the vast gathering Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was extremely pleased and expressed the hope that with such a patronage there should be no hindrance of any kind to the growth of Tamil Isai movement. He appealed to the Tamil musicians that they should sing only in Tamil. His beloved father Annamalai Chettiar donated a sum of Rs.15,000 to encourage Tamil Isai on his Sixtieth birthday.⁵² Then he organized a Tamil Isai conference on 26th Oct. 1941 in Annamalai University. Rajah Muthiah

Chettiar helped his father in all possible ways in the field of Tamil Isai. He delivered a scintillating speech in the conference. He further requested the musicians to sing Tamil songs only.⁵³

While Tamil Isai was witnessing a remarkable progress under the leadership of father and son, the Madras and Tiruchirappalli All India Radio Stations were not providing ample coverage to Tamil Isai. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar pointed out this at the right time by leading a peaceful movement with his son, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar against the Tiruchirappalli Radio Station in order to get more time allotted for broadcasting Tamil Songs.⁵⁴ He sent a warning notice to the All India Radio Programme. Advisory committee and finally his cherished ambition were realized. He also urged the Radio Station to broadcast Tevaram songs.⁵⁵ Thus he succeeded in his efforts at popularizing Tamil Isai through All India Radio Station by his peaceful struggle.

Apart from this a number of Tamil Isai conferences were conducted throughout the state. The most important aspect of this development was the personal involvement of Tamil Isaivanar M.M.Dhandapani Desigar. During the Thyagaraja festival at Thiruvaiyaru he sang only Tamil songs at the music conference. This incident provoked another singer. He insisted on cleaning the stage which he considered as polluted as a result of Tamil recitation.⁵⁶ This social insult affected many of the Tamil people and Tamil singers. This incident led to the formation of the Tamil Isai Sangam. All the Tamil scholars and Tamil Isaivanars realized the necessity of a permanent Tamil Isai Sangam for the growth of Tamil music. The Tamil scholars and Tamil musicians came under the presidentship of Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar and urged him to start Tamil Isai Sangam. Following the great efforts of Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar and R.K. Shanmugam Chettiar, Tamil Isai Sangam was started in Madras in May 1943.⁵⁷ Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar became its President and R.K. Shanmugam Chettiar was nominated as Vice-President. The Tamil Isai Sangam conducted the first Tamil Isai Vizha (Music Festival) at St. Mary's Hall in Madras from 23rd Dec. 1943 to 4th January 1944.⁵⁸ It was the great occasion in the history of the growth of Tamil Isai. At the end of this conference, Annamalai Chettiar announced several decisions that were taken by the Tamil Isai Sangam. From then on every year the Tamil Isai Vizha is being conducted every December. Further to the growth of Tamil Isai, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar started a Music College on 3rd January 1944 in Madras.⁵¹

HIS SERVICES TO MUSIC AS SUCCESSOR

After Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, the Tamil Isai Sangam was patronized by his illustrious son, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar. He became the Vice-President of the Tamil Isai Sangam and continued in this post till his death.⁶⁰ Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar always wished to have a permanent building for the Tamil Isai Sangam. The whole credit for constructing a building goes to his illustrious son Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar. With the help of R.K. Shanmugam Chettiar and M.A. Chidambaram Chettiar, he began the construction of a building in 1950 at Esplanade in Madras. The building was completed in 1952⁶¹ and it was opened by the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, C. Rajago palachariar. This building is now called Raja Annamalai Manram.⁶²

Rajah Muthiah Chettiar was a staunch lover of Tamil Isai. He wanted to find out many facts about Tamil Isai. One of the aims of the Tamil Isai Sangam is to conduct research on Tamil Isai and bring out its salient features so as to enable people to appreciate it properly. For this purpose he organized a Pann committee under the Presidentship of R.K. Shanmugam Chettiar on 25 Nov. 1949.⁶³ They insisted on the singing of Tevaram songs in the traditional methods throughout the country. The minute details and facts about "Pann" and "kattalai" have been brought out because of intense research activities up to 1983. The pann research committee discovered 23 new panns. All this research was possible on account of his encouragement.

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar has collected several musical instruments and exhibited them at Rajah Annamalai Manram in Chennai.⁶⁴ This house for musical instruments was opened on 1st January 1956 and a demonstration regarding the performance on these instruments was shown to the public. The Hall of musical instruments has 44 kinds of instruments. This shows the keen interest of Rajah Muthiah Chettiar in Tamil Isai. He also wanted to give importance to one of the oldest instruments, which is in vogue today that is barangiyazh. He had great understanding of Tamil Music. He himself took a prominent part in the discussions, and made substantial contribution by giving the research Scholars the lines on which Pann Research should go forward.

MADURAI TAMIL ISAI SANGAM

In 1944, Madurai Tamil Sangam was started by Shamugavelrajan. Later it slowly declined due to various reasons. Everyone remembers Madurai, as an ancient seat of Tamil Sangam, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar had a desire to establish a Manram for the propagation of Tamil Music. Urged on by his father's desire, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar made efforts to found a Tamil Sangam in Madurai also. He did this in collaboration with L. Alagu Sundaram Chettiar, T.M. Narayanaswami Pillai and Rama AR.Subramaniam Chettiar in Madurai on 21st January 1974. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar contributed Rs.3 lakhs to purchase a site for Tamil Isai Sangam in Madurai building was constructed in 1974,⁶⁵ to house the Madurai Tamil Isai Sangam. It was named after Rajah Muthiah Chettiar and called 'Rajah Muthiah Manram'.⁶⁸

He recognized the musicians who remained for long unnoticed. As a result of Rajah Muthiah Chettiar's insistence, for the first time Somasundara Bharathiar was honoured with a Doctorate degree during the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Annamalai University in 1954.⁶⁷ His contribution to the field of Tamil Isai is really praiseworthy. In appreciation of his contribution to Tamil Isai he was honoured with the title of "Tamil Isai Kavalar" (patron of Tamil music) by the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Hon'ble M.G Ramachandram in Madurai on 29th April 1974.⁶⁸

SERVICES TO TEMPLES

His family was a very pious family. They made endowments for the renovation and upkeep of temples of Tamil nadu. As a minister for Hindu Religious Endowments, he brought the Tirupathi Davasthanam bill in 1937. Thereby, he solved many problems faced by that great temple at the hands of private management. Today the growth and functioning of the Tirumalai Tirupathi Devasthanam largely has its origin and foundation only in the above bill.⁶⁹ As a minister he enforced the conduct of pooja six times in every temple.⁷⁰ He started Vedapadasalai to teach Tevaram, Thiruvagam, etc.

HONOURS AND TITLES

His excellent performance both in his public life and in his professional life brought great honours in recognition of his service. Both the alien and native governments had honoured him. On 11th June, 1941 the British Government conferred on him the 'Knighthood' for the services he had rendered in the field of education, public and social life. This same decoration was conferred on his beloved father Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, exactly nineteen years before.

When the Second World War broke out the British Government organized the National Defence Council. Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India, appointed him as a member for a term of six years in the Conseil L' Urgence. When India was in the process of liberation from the alien rule, the Indian Constituent Assembly was summoned in 1946, to draft a Constitution. He was one of the 45 members nominated by the Indian National Congress to the Indian Constituent Assembly. This

nomination is significant. It shows that he was held in great esteem and that he was above party, affiliations or loyalties. He participated in the debates and served the Assembly during the period 1946-1950. The Government of India recognized his services and conferred on him the title 'Padma Bushan' in 1973 in appreciation of his independent service to the society⁷¹. The Government of Tamilnadu, under the chief Minister ship of M.G. Ramachandran, conferred on him the title, 'Tamil Isai Kavalar' on 29th April 1979, in praise of his outstanding service to Tamil Music.⁷²

EDUCATION HOURS

In recognition of his meritorious service to the cause of higher education many universities, both Indian and foreign, conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters on him. On 8th February 1955, the Annamalai University, at a special convocation in its Silver Jubilee year conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Letters Honoris Causa.⁷³ On June 26th 1982, the New York World University conferred on him an honorary Doctorate, in recognition on him services to Tamil.⁷⁴ In 1983 the University of Madras conferred on him an honorary Doctorate.⁷⁵ Dr.V.Sp. Manickam described the personality of Padma Buhshan Dr.Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, and pointed out how he takes care of the society like a medical practitioner with total kindness and love. Here, he states and emphasizes the desire of his father, which, he wholeheartedly carried out as the duty of a good son and his own desire developed and initiated by his beloved father, for growth of the Tamil Isai'.⁷⁶

In 1987, in honour of Dr.Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar the Government of India, released a postal stamp.⁷⁷ He is one of the rarest examples of a worthy son, who has not only preserved the ideas of wealth and heritage, handed over to him by his great and beloved father, but also a man of solid achievements and greatness. He proved himself as a worthy son, of a high order, legislator, administrator, Industrialist, Educationalist, social reformer, and philanthropist. He was a rare example for humanity.

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Dr. G. Palanivel

Assistant Professor (History) , Department of History, Thiruvalluvar Government Arts College Rasipuram, Namakkal District, Tamil Nadu.