

## CONTRIBUTION OF PASUMPON MUTHURAMALINGA THEVAR FOR THE WELFARE OF DE-NOTIFIED TRIBES IN RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT A-STUDY

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### **Abstract**

*Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar was known for his courage boldness and simplicity. Thevar fought for the cause of our National freedom and was an ardent follower of Nethaji subash Chandra Bose. Thevar's words ignited the spirit of parriotism in the minds of the youth especially those in Madurai, Tirunelveli, and Ramanathapuram District. Thevar won the hearts of the youth by his eloquent and touching speeches. Thevar is well known as a patriot, a disciple of Nethaji and an undisputed leader of Forward Bloc and he is not only a leader of the Mukkilathors but also another communities. He was an unparallel leader in India, especially Ramamathapuram District in Tamil Nadu. He dedicated his entire life for upliftment of the down trodden people particularly depressed class people. He led the historic entry of Harijans into the Meenakshi Amman Temple In Madurai. He also worked for the upliftment of peasant class and fought to abolish the Zaminndar System.*

**Keywords:** *Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar, National freedom, Nethaji subash Chandra Bose, Ramanathapuram District, Forward Bloc, Harijans*

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### **Meaning of De-Notified Tribes**

De-Notified Tribes (DNTs), also known as vimukta jati, are the tribes that were originally listed under the criminal Tribes Act of 1871, as Criminal Tribes and “addicted to the systematic commission of non-bail able offences”. Once a tribe became “Notified” as criminal, all its members were required to register with the local magistrate, failing which they would be charged with a crime under the Indian penal code. The Criminal Tribes Act of 1952 repealed the Notification, ‘De-Notified’ the tribal communities. This act, however, was replaced by a series of Habitual offenders Acts, which asked police to investigate a suspect’s Criminal tendencies and whether his occupation is “conducive to settled way of life”. The denotified tribes were reclassified as habitual offenders in 1959.

### **De-Notified Tribes if India**

The Mutharacha (Mudiraj) caste was once the caste listed under Notifies Tribes by British and later on it was put in the list of Denotified Tribes (DNT) by independence India. When the alien invading robbers become the rulers of India, the native Indians warriors and rulers were declared as criminals. Thus, the Tribal’s warriors were all branded and forced to become real thieves for the sake of their livelihood and survival. It may look like a crime as per the standard of present settled society, but it is their inherent militant and warrior quality to rebel against their enemy. It is for this great militant quality, today we salute our beloved leagers like Rani Jhansi, Chatrapathi Shivaji, Subhas Chandra Bose, Mangal Pande, Bhagat Singn, Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar and many others for their freedom fighting against British Imperialism.

### **Notified and Denotified Tribes in India**

The British had sought to control and contain these landless and nomadic criminal tribes through a series of criminal tribes’ acts propogated throughout the different geographical and administrative units of India. The first act passed in 1871, applied only to areas in north India, however, in subsequent acts, and particularly in 1911, the measures were extended to all of British controlled India. The act provided for registration of members, restrictions on their place of residence, and their reform by conferment in special camps were low-paid work could be

extracted from them. By 1921, the Criminal Tribes act was extended to all parts of India and new communities were continuously added to the list of Criminal Tribes.

### **De-Notified Tribes in Tamil Nadu**

In 2008, the National Commission for Denotified, Nomadic and semi-Nomadic Tribes (NCDNSNT) of Ministry of social justice Party Empowerment recommended equal reservations, as available to scheduled and scheduled Tribes, for around 11 crore people belonging to the denotified tribes, nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes in India. Along with the Tribes designated as, “Nomadic” or “semi-Nomadic”, the denotified tribes are eligible for reservation. The Govt of Tamil Nadu has declared the more than 90 communities as denotified communities (G.O.Ms.No) 100Bc and MBCW dept dated 24-11-1997. There are are so many communities under Criminal tribes act in Ramanathapuram districts such as Attur Kilnad Koravars (Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga and Virudhunagar, Districts), Appanad Kondayam Kottai Maravar (Sivaganga, Virudhunagar, Ramanathapuram, Madurai, and Districts), Vaduvarapatti Koravars (Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli, and Pudukottai Districts), Thottia Naickers (Sivaganga, Virudhunagar, Ramanathapuram), Sembanad Maravars (Sivaganga, Virudhunagar and Ramanathapuram District), piramalai Kallars (Sivaganga, Virudhunagar, Ramanathapuram Madurai, Theni, Dindigul, Pudukottai, and Tiruvarur Districts), Maravars (Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Thiruvarur, Pudukottai, Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli and Toothukudi Districts), Koravars, (Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Virudhunagar, Pudukottai, Tirunelveli, Madurai, Theni, Dindigul and the Nilgiris Districts), Kal Oddars (Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Virudhunagar), Kaladis (Sivaganga, Virudhunagar, Ramanathapuram, Madurai, Theni, Dindigul, Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Pudukottai), Chettinad Valayars (Sivaganga, Virudhunagar, and Ramanathapuram Districts), Chakkala Sivaganga, Virudhunaga, Ramanathapuram, Thanjavur ,Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Pudukottai), and Veppur Paraiyars etc.

### **The De-Notified Tribes in Ramanathapuram District**

In their census report, 1901, Mr. Francis records that ‘The Kallars, Maravars, Agamudayars, Kuravars, Parayars, and other communities are responsible for the share of the crime of the southern district of Tamil Nadu. But in general, any human being or community or clan or tribes are not born criminal, but in later due to some inevitable circumstances, some of them were made to become criminals. In Madras presidency about 98 communities declared as the criminal tribes like Audiniya, Dombas, Koravas, Irulas, Pichans, Adi-Draviders, Kallars, Maravars, Kaladies, Sungalis etc., who were basically peasants, traders and local police of Madras presidency.

### **Services of Thevar for the Upliftment of De-Notified Communities**

According to Thevar, he wanted to realize social reform through Nationalism. During one of his assembly speech, he observed ‘our nationalism implies not merely emancipation from political bondage from the British, but also equal distribution of wealth, abolition of caste barriers and social inequalities destruction of communalism and religious intolerance. In 1937 elections to the assembly of the Madras presidency, Thevar enlisted youths from the denotified communities to work for the congress. His activities created worries for the Justice Party Government, which forbade him to travel outside of the Ramnad district and to make speeches in public. In February 1937 Thevar contested the assembly election himself, as a candidate in the Ramanathapuram constituency. He had a powerful opponent, the Raja of Ramnad. However, Thevar won a landslide victory with 11, 942 votes against 6,057 for the Raja. Following the election the Congress ministry would revoke the Criminal Tribes Act. But the new Chief Minister, C.Rajagopalachari, did not fulfil those hopes.

### **Services of Thevar towards on De-Notified Laborers**

Thevar wanted create awareness among the denotified communities regarding functions, duties and regulations as contemplated under various labour legislations. Also Thevar stress to maintain industrial peace and consequently ensure industrial growth. Thevar as the leader of the workers, in the year of 1934 he was a Congress man then, took Jayaprakash Narayanan to Madurai and helped him from the socialist party there. It was a rare gesture shown by Thevar to a nationalist leader. As a consequence of it, there was big uprising of workers in Madurai in the year of 1938-1939. As a first step the Pasumalai Mahalakshmi Mills workers Union was formed and Thevar was elected as its leader. Then the Madurai cotton Mills workers Union and the Knitting company workers Union were formed and Thevar was elected as leader of all these Unions. So Thevar took and welfare of the Denotified communities workers of Union who gained for their industries rights.

The Ministry of Rajaji for the first time of the country enacted a law conferring rights on the Harijans to entry the temples. Harijans started entering temple in many places. At that time, Vaidhya Nathar Ayyar of Madurai a disciple of Rajaji was making arrangements to take the Harijans into the Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple. The opposed group of orthodox sects of people planned to engage rowdies who would bring them deadly weapons like words and spears, hide behind the pillars of temple, to pounce upon Vaidhya Natha Ayyar, if he entered the temple bringing Harijans and attack them with their weapons and commit murders if all necessary. So they understood about this problem without support of Thevar, Rajaji asked Vaidhya Natha Ayyar to meet Thevar and request him to interfere in the matter and to ensure the smooth entry of Harijans into the temple without any troubles of untoward incidents. At last, after seeing the bit notice of Thevar the rowdy elements ran away from that place. The Harijans entered the temple without any troubles and worshipped goddess meenakshi. This incident was an ample proof showing solidarity and fraternity of Thevar towards the Harijans people.

### **Services of Thevar for the De-Notified Peasant's Communities**

Agriculture is a backbone of Indian economy by the efforts of peasants who were member of a tradition class of farmers either labourers or small farms. Peasants are born on debt and died on debt. So, Thevar was created an association that is called Zamindari Land Owner Association for the farmers of the denotified communities in Ramanathapuram district. So he received a lot of enthusiasm by the farmers. Thevar convened a big level conference of the communist in Kerala, A.K.Gopalan, P.Ramamoorthi, Jeevanantham, Srinivasa Rao participate in the conference. The previous day, leaders of moderate held a political conference of Ramanathapuram district at Rajapalayam with Rajaji. The farmers' conference was held leadership of Thevar. They crowded attended outnumbered the participants who attended the conference of the leaders of the moderates. In this conference Thevar analyzed the problems being faced by the farmers of the denotified communities in a critical angle and demanded the abolition of the Zamindari system. This speech echoed through out Tamil Nadu in every nook and corner.

### **Conclusion**

U.Muthuramalingam Thevar is revered as a hero of the Denotified community. Thevar is an icon in the political life in southern district of Tamil Nadu. His socio- economic ideas are more and pragmatic. Thevar was true patriot born in a family of heroic people; he was relentless fight against evil forces. He was a great freedom fighter; also he rose in India to maintain the freedom that we have won and the democracy that we have established.

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