

# DEVELOPMENT OF TAMIL LANGUAGE

## C.R.'S APPEAL TO WRITERS TO ENRICH LITERATURE

### GOLDEN JUBILEE OF SANGAM AT MADURAI

(From Our Special Correspondent)

MADURAI, May 30.

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, former Governor-General of India, appealed to the people of Tamilnad to work for the common object of the Tamil Sangham, namely the development of Tamil language and literature, eschewing caste and communal differences.

He declared the present time needed people engaged in various spheres of activity to come forward and write in Tamil about their experience which would benefit people and enrich Tamil language. It would not be conducive to the growth of a language if writing was exclusively confined to professional writers.

Mr. Rajagopalachari was inaugurating the seven-day Golden Jubilee celebration of the Sangham at Tamkam grounds here this morning.

Earlier, on arrival at the Madurai station, he was received by Mr. P. T. Rajan, Chairman of the Madurai Tamil Sangham Golden Jubilee Celebrations Committee and was profusely garlanded by local Congressmen.

At the Pandai where the celebrations are held, Rajaji was received with *poornakumbam* and was led to the dais in procession to the accompaniment of *Nathaswaram* music. Rajaji was accompanied by Mr. Shanmuga Rajeswara Sethupathi, Minister for Public Works, Mr. O. V. Alagesan, Union Deputy Minister for Railways and Transport and Sir Kauthiah Vaidyanathan of Colombo.

His Holiness Kasivasi Arulnandi Thambiran, head of Tirupandal Mutt, who presided over to-day's morning session said Sanskrit and Tamil should be developed side by side to the mutual advantage of both. Tamil, he said, was a divine language rich in its grammar, diction and beauty.

Mr. Rajagopalachari at the outset said that Mr. Rajan who had invited him for the function had compelled him to inaugurate the celebrations, though he knew he was not worthy of the honour.

Referring to the remark of Mr. Rajan that his own acquaintance with Tamil literature was very little, Rajaji said that it showed that if there was enthusiasm anything could be successfully accomplished. People like Mr. Rajan had been under the misapprehension that they could not speak well in Tamil. Mr. Rajan read his speech beautifully. Tamil tradition and Tamil culture stood on a peculiar footing and they should bear in mind that the Sangam should bestow attention on the cultivation of the language in a proper manner.

#### OBJECT OF SANGAM

Rajaji said that Mr. Rajan had explained the future programme of the Sangam. He had also given a beautiful survey of the trends in Tamil literature during the past 50 years. Reference to industrial development and other aspects had also been included in the speech. That might lead to an impression that the gathering could be considered as a political gathering which was interested in industrial development and also other aspects of Tamilnad. He cautioned them that they should not entangle themselves in too many things at the same time. The object of the Tamil Sangam was to promote the growth of Tamil, and for this Mr. Rajan had asked for the support of all. His own usual appeal was also the same. All sections of the people would be happy to come together and work for the growth of Tamil language which was their common objective.

It was in the fitness of things, Rajaji said, that His Holiness Sri Arulnandi Thambiran, Head of Tiruppanandal Mutt, had been asked to preside over the inaugural session. This Sangam did not belong to any particular party as was manifest from their having invited persons who were above all political and other attachments. He did not see amidst the gathering many of those belonging to his political party because members of his political party were thrifty and would not be willing to pay the entrance fee indicated in the programme.

When Rajaji's attention was drawn to the fact that there was no entrance fee for the literary session he remarked that his men might perchance have been under the misapprehension as himself that even the literary session required a ticket. However, he was present there to represent them all.

Rajaji pointed out that even after thousands of years, they were priding themselves only on the names of a few great poets of the past, like Agastiyar, Tiruvalluvar and Kambar. Hitherto Tamil poets had been producing works dealing with high ideals and morals. They were now on the threshold of an era when they should strive to produce works on various aspects of contemporary life and thought. They must be written with the spirit of Bhakti (devotion) and humility too. There were to-day more writers than even readers. Even children after reading magazines instead of thinking of reading the next issue thought of contributing articles to those magazines themselves. The writer should produce work with devotion bearing in mind that his writings were to be read by many others.

#### MORE WRITERS SHOULD JOIN SANGAM

Rajaji said that in many instances the "building" was mistaken for the institution itself. The Sangam really meant the efforts of its members in realising its objectives. It was, therefore, necessary that more writers should join the Sangam and rich people should come forward to give financial support. The Madurai Tamil Sangam was an institution common to all people in Tamil Nad and should not be misconstrued as belonging to any particular area.

Proceeding, Rajaji said that in their task of developing the Tamil language, they should not give room for caste differences. They should realise the greatness of their language and devote themselves heart and soul to its enrichment. There were many languages

in this country and those who studied other languages could bear witness to the greatness of Tamil. It was their duty and responsibility to preserve the vast rich heritage.

Continuing, Mr. Rajagopalachari said that writing should not be pursued on professional lines. It would not be conducive to the growth of the language. People who were conversant with the practical affairs of the country, engaged in various spheres of activities, should come forward and write about their experiences and knowledge. Only then could the Tamil language be enriched.

#### NEED FOR CORRECT TRANSLATION

Stressing the importance of using appropriate terms in Tamil for corresponding words in English, Mr. Rajagopalachari said they had developed a tendency of translating in haste, using inapt words in newspaper journalism. He instanced the use of the word 'Kalacharam', meaning culture while the correct Tamil term was 'Panpadu'. They had done a disservice to Tamil by using the word 'Kalacharam' for culture. In this connection Rajaji coined a new term 'Patrikai Avasaralargal' to denote Pressmen who, he said, committed such mistakes by doing their work in haste. Rajaji said Tamil language had a rich legacy left by our ancestors and it was like a vessel, which could hold ideas. This they should not forget. While taking pride about the greatness of Tamil language, they should remind themselves of the responsibility cast on them. They should use their language to express lofty ideas and whatever they wrote should have a lofty ideal. They should not swerve from the righteous path.

Rajaji deprecated the tendency to bring out obscene literature in Tamil. He said if they wanted to express undesirable views, they could better use other languages like English or Hindi, but certainly not Tamil. He said even English writers, when they wanted to express vulgar ideas, used Latin terms in preference to English.

Mr. Rajagopalachari sounded a note of caution that their objective could not be realised if they did not eschew hatred for each other on the basis of caste or community. Though this idea had been accepted, still there were people, who, while expressing support for this view, felt that other "castes" should perish but not theirs. He said he was prepared to say this, while others did not want to say it openly. It was taught to him during his student days that Aryans and Dravidians belonged to two different stocks. Books which he used in his student days were books of antiquity and were meaningless. Unfortunately, some people held fast to those ideas and were proceeding on wrong lines. The speaker said till some years ago in England, the English and the Scots were on inimical terms but now they were carrying on together as if no enmity prevailed among them. Similar was the case of Canada, where the English and French were living together at present despite their past bitterness. This should be a good lesson to the people of this land, who had developed bitter feelings and mutual hatred. While in other parts of the world peace prevailed, it was unfortunate that a set of people, calling themselves Dravidians, developed ill feelings against the so-called Aryans, who were said to have migrated to this land some ten thousand years ago. It was meaningless and should be rooted out.

From time immemorial, Mr. Rajagopalachari said, people of different faiths and races had come and settled down here. It was difficult to make a distinction on the basis of their colour and habits. It would be foolish to do so. It would be dangerous if people want on carrying on propaganda against any particular community in a spirit of malice. It would be still worse if they sought to convert their precious language, namely Tamil, into an instrument to raise communal feelings. He appealed to them to realise the folly of such malicious propaganda and sink their differences. Their watchword should be peace and humility.

#### WELCOME ADDRESS

Welcoming the gathering present on the occasion, Mr. P. T. Rajan, M.L.A., Chairman of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations Committee said that before the Madurai Tamil Sangam was founded, there had been in existence, according to ancient Tamil literature three other Sangams. Madurai occupied a pre-eminent position in Tamil Nad during the reign of the three Tamil Kings, Cheras Cholas and Pandyas. The reason was that Madurai was the life centre of Tamil literature, civilisation and culture. After the kings, the chieftans, and philanthropic-minded literateurs patronised Tamil learning and scholarship. Ever since the advent of Mutt, the Adheenams had been giving every encouragement to Tamil.

During the British regime in India, people considered it a matter of pride to speak in an alien language. The fourth Sangam was founded in 1901 by the late Sri Pandithurai Thevar, Sri Bhaskara Setupathi, Raja of Ramnad at that time, gave every support to the Sangam. Among the other benefactors were the Raja of Pudukottai and Pethachi Chettiar, Zamindar of Andipatti. Not only were the old cudgeon leaves collected and preserved, but great works in manuscripts were printed and published through the efforts of the Sangam. The Sangam owned a printing

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press and published a monthly journal *Senthamil* devoted to Tamil research. The journal also dealt with questions relating to chronology and the literary value of works of eminent authors and was quite invaluable to any student of Tamil and to research scholars.

## RENAISSANCE IN TAMIL LITERATURE

Proceeding, Mr. Rajan said that after the demise of Pandithurai Thevar the greatness of the Sangam began to wane and due to change of circumstances the work of the Sangam slackened. The late Sri T. C. Srinivasa Iyengar in his last days entrusted the responsibility of the institution to him (Mr. Rajan). The last 50 years had been a period of renaissance and reformation as far as Tamil literature was concerned. In the sphere of Tamil prose, Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Aiyar, Marai Malai Adigal, Subramania Bharathi, Vibhulananda Adigal, Kathiresan Chettiar, Desika Vinayakam Pillai and Manonmiam Sundaram Pillai had done great service by doing research. Thiru V. Ka stood foremost among the few who had introduced a simple style in speech and writing which would be intelligible to the common man. The style adopted by the late T. K. C. in explaining the meaning of Tamil poems had kindled the enthusiasm of many to study Sangam literature. "Kalki" (R. Krishnamurthy), introduced a facile style in Tamil weekly journalism. *Ananda Vikatan*, *Kalki* and *Kalaimagal* became popular by adopting a simple style easily understood by the common man. *Swadesamitran* which had grown in the direction of educating the lay man had been started by the late Mr. G. Subramania Aiyar.

There was a time, he said, when it was considered *infra dig* to sing Tamil songs. Among those who started the Tamil Isai movement were the late Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar, the late Mr. R. K. Shanmugam Chettiar T. K. C., and "Kalki". Fortunately Mr. C. Rajagopalachari and Mr. C. S. Ratnasabhapathi Mudaliar who participated in the movement were with them to-day. On account of the movement Tamil songs were being sung in all music performances. Vibhulananda Adigal did great research in music. As a result of his research the shape and the tonal quality of the Tamil Musical instrument *Yazh*, were explained. The late Mr. Lakshmana Pillai did research in "Tamil Pann" and composed numerous songs.

The late Mr. Suryanarayana Sastri and Mr. P. Sambanda Mudaliar had rendered yeoman service to Tamil dramatic art. Due to the efforts of Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar, the *Suguna Vilasa Sabha* in Madras was founded. Among the professionals was the late Mr. C. Canniah. He enacted puranic plays. Nawab Rajamanickam followed his footsteps. Till recent years, the dramas enacted in this part of the country could not be called dramas in the real sense. It should be said to the credit of T.K.S. Brothers, that, by their persistent endeavours and novel ideas, they had effected progressive changes and brought the Tamil dramatic art on a par with the Western Dramatic art. The art of Bharatha Natya was appreciated and held in high esteem in countries of the West and foreigners came to this country to learn this noble art. The credit for resuscitating this ancient art should go to the late Pandanallur Mee-nakshisundaram Pillai. The late Madurai Ponnuswami Pillai enhanced the glory of the Nathaswaram instrument by his dexterous handling. Mr. Rajan paid tributes to the late Mr. L. K. Tulsiram of Madurai and Mr. G. D. Naidu of Coimbatore for the great service they had done in the industrial development of Tamil Nad, to Mr. C. V. Raman for his invaluable research in science, to the late Mr. V. O. Chidambaram Pillai who first started a swadeshi shipping company and to Mr. Subramania Bharathi who inspired the Tamils by his patriotic songs. He said that the celebrations had been arranged in order to remind the Tamilians of the greatness of their language and culture and to enthrust them to work for the development of their language and for regaining their past glory. He said, he would welcome the move of the people to celebrate the anniversary of the Tamil Sangam in each district in the State every year.

## SANGAM'S PROGRAMME

Explaining the programme of future activities of the Sangam, Mr. Rajan said that the institution should undertake intensive research in Sangam literature and translate great works on arts and science in other languages into Tamil. He also stressed the importance of the Sangam undertaking research in comparative study of Dravidian philology. Mr. Rajan felt that it would be good if the Sangam managed to sell at cost price its publications of important Tamil classics. Mr. Rajan said that a proposal was under consideration to appoint a committee to advise the Sangam on the merits of various Tamil works. Men, ripe with experience and well-versed in Tamil literature would be taken into the committee. Mr. Rajan thanked Mr. Rajagopalachari for having consented to inaugurate this function.

Messages, wishing function success were received among others from Dr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor of the Travancore University, Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Union Minister for Home Affairs, Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Mr. Justice A. S. P. Aiyar, the Sacred Kural Society, Colombo and the Bombay Tamil Sangam.

Earlier, the function commenced with invocation by Sri Sailappa Othuvur and prayer in Tamil by Kumaris Rajalakshmi and Jayalakshmi. Mr. Shanmugha Rajeswarar SETHUPATHI, Minister for Public Works, requested Mr. C. Rajagopalachari to inaugurate the Golden Jubilee celebrations. The function was attended by a large gathering of officials and non-officials and the elite of the City. In connection with the celebrations, the State Government offices in Madurai district remained closed to-day.

In the morning session, Mr. A. Karmega Konar, Dr. K. K. Pillai of the Madras University, Messrs. M. Arunachalam Pillai and K. Vel-laivaranan of the Annamalai University, spoke on the history of Tamil Sangam, Sangam age, *Siru Prabandams*, and music in the Sangam age respectively.

Mr. O. V. Alagesan, Union Deputy Minister for Railways and Transport, who presided over the music session of the Madurai Tamil Sangam to-day, said that he was glad that the Sangam was continuing the good work of the old Tamil Sangams. He was also happy to note that the institution was called by the name Sangam

instead of Kazhagam. The present Madurai Tamil Sangam had to accomplish much more than the old Tamil Sangams.

Mr. Alagesan pointed out that they had very many worthy books in Tamil produced by eminent writers in the past. But, he said, they should not feel satisfied with their past achievements and remain quiet without doing any work. In the matter of development of language, there was nothing wrong if they were greedy and ambitious. Production of more and more valuable literary pieces in Tamil would in a way induce people speaking other languages to learn Tamil so as to enjoy and understand the directness of expression and intensity of emotion in the original writings. In this connection, he instanced the enthusiasm given to non-Bengalees by the works in Bengali by Rabin-dranath Tagore. He said that there was no purpose in ploughing the beaten track, but they should try to convey new ideas in their writings.

A development analogous to one they sought to achieve in prose should be effected in music as well, the speaker added.