Chapter IV

LINGUISTIC REORGANIZATION AND TAMIL POLITICS: ANALYSIS OF CONGRESS RESPONSE

The issue of linguistic reorganization of states determined the contours of national politics in the first decade after independence. As linguistic nationalism dominated the polyglot province of Madras came to be severely contested by different linguistic groups. As the pulls and pressures of Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam nationalisms impinged on Tamils, the different factions of Tamil Nadu Congress Committee reacted in different degrees of emotional attachment to safeguard Tamil interests. The response of different factions of congress to linguistic reorganization demand constitutes an intrinsic component of congress dominance in the electoral politics of Tamil Nadu in the post reorganization period.

The Madras Presidency was described as “a sprawling political Babel carved out by the British map makers with little regard to South India’s cultural differences”\(^1\). The polyglot province included Kannada speaking areas in west, Malayalam speaking Malabar, Telugu speaking northern parts and Tamil areas lying in the South. As nationalist consciousness penetrated deeply and freedom movement marched on these disparate linguistic communities started demanding the creation of linguistically homogenous individual states. The simplest explanation of the struggle for the linguistic states could be traced in the political ambitions of the different educated communities found in the presidency. The creation of separate states would herald plentiful administrative and professional opportunities to the Western educated elites of these respective linguistic communities. As Tamil Brahmins, thanks to the geographical location of Madras and University of Madras, crucial to the southern presidency dominated in modern educational institutions and concomitantly modern occupations in the presidency, the linguistic movements took on the character of anti-Tamil movement.\(^2\)
Emergence of Andhra Demand

The rudiments of separate Andhra identity emerged on the political horizon conspicuously in 1913 at Bapatla in Guntor District where a meeting of Telugus was held to demand the establishment of a separate Telugu unit of the congress party. The major objective of the meeting at Bapatla was to achieve freedom of action for Telugus in the politics of the Telugu areas and to diminish the domination of Tamils. The meeting also talked about the distant dreams of establishing a separate Telugu province and a university for Telugu language.

In a widely circulated pamphlet in 1916, the Telugu leaders Konda Venkatappayya and Pattabhi Sittaramaya argued powerfully for the formation of a separate Andhra. They stated "The clear sketch of continuous territory, a common language and literature, common traditions of heroes and poets, warriors and kings, and deep down a strong similarity of temper and character—this language bound community is to be outlined into a single race and accorded all those accessories of communal and political institutions which illustrate and feed that unity."\(^3\)

The separate Andhra demand was particularly voiced by the Andhra Brahmins, who feared that the introduction of Home Rule would erode the rights and interests of Telugu people and would concede unfair advantages to Tamils. The Andhras were dissatisfied with the Home Rule movement as under Annie Besant, it advocated a homogenous India and more importantly because of her intimate association with Tamils. B. Pattabhi Sittaramaya, the official historian of congress had stated that Mrs. Besant and some of her "Tamil friends from the South" had opposed the Telugu proposals at the 1916 Congress session.\(^4\)

Mrs. Besant’s known association with Tamil politicians hardly gave her a ready introduction to Telugu politics since Tamils not only were unwelcome and were also incapable of interfering in Telugu areas. For many years since the 1870s political meetings in the Telugu districts were conducted exclusively in Telugu, which effectively
barred non-Telugu speakers from participating. The Telugu politicians often accused The Hindu newspaper of anti-Telugu bias and one of them T. Prakasham established an English language paper called the Swarajya to voice Andhra claims in Madras.

This bitter struggle within the congress organization for a separate unit for the Telugus came to an end in 1917 with the formation of a separate Telugu unit of the congress giving Telugus control in their linguistic region. Andhra University and Andhra state were gradually pushed into political oblivion by the momentous events of Montague visits, Reforms and the Gandhian Non-Cooperation Movement. This decline in the Andhra agitation for a separate province and university was also attributed to the diversion of Telugu energies and attention into Non-Brahmin movement even though this movement was not immune to the incursions of Telugu–Tamil dichotomy.

Consequent upon the implementation of the Montague Reforms and attendant Legislative Council Elections in 1920 a number of Telugus became members of the Legislative Council. During their participation in the Legislative Assembly discussions they criticized the government for its reluctant, nonchalant attitude towards the Telugu demands. Once a Telugu Brahmin by the name of M. Suryanaraya brought forward a resolution recommending that the Madras government create a separate Andhra province. The move provoked a serious difference of opinion in the Executive Council and among the three Justice party ministers. When the time came for Suryanarayana to press his resolution, the Justice Education minister prevailed on him to forsake the move.

The Non-Brahmin movement looked at the Telugu university demand as a lurking danger to the assiduously cultivated edifice of Non-Brahmin unity. C. Natesha Mudaliyar, a Tamil member of the Justice Party vehemently criticized the suggestions for the formation of an Andhra university on the ground that it smacked of disunion among the members of the Non-Brahmin community. Many Tamils in the Justice Party had distrust towards the Telugu university demand, as they believed that such a move would enhance their already substantial position in the party. Their mistrust of Telugu moves was aggravated further by the exclusion of Tamils from the constitution of the first
Justice ministry in 1920. Two years later T. N. Ramanathan, a Tamil Non-Brahmin accused Thiyagaraja Chetti of deliberate indifference to Tamils.

The Tamil-Telugu divide within the justice party threatened menacingly to destroy the Non-Brahmin unity and Ramanathan even warned the Telugu leaders that if no Tamil minister found a place in the next Justice ministry in late 1923, the Tamils might break away from the party altogether. A group of disgruntled Tamils in August the same year convened a Tamil Nadu Non-Brahmin conference at Trichy. The meeting was organized evidently in defiance of the annual Justice confederation held in December.

Along with the growing dichotomy the Telugu Non-Brahmins led by Thiyagaraja Chetti accommodated T. N. Sivagnanam Pillai a Tamil Non-Brahmin in the Justice ministry in 1923 in place of Reddi Naidu who stepped aside as Minister of Development. This deal restored harmony between the fratricidal rivals and Tamil Non-Brahmins pooled their generous support to the Telugu brothers in approving the bill that would establish a university for the rapid development in the study of Telugu language and literature.

With the formation of the Telugu unit in 1917 in congress and establishment of a Telugu university in 1925 two of the three major demands of the Telugu community were fulfilled and the remainder, the establishment of a separate province involved protracted struggle before the fruition of the demand in 1953. In this prolonged process the Tamil-Telugu solidarity and fraternity was stretched to the maximum, at times on the verge of a complete breakdown.

With the implementation of provincial autonomy as a sequel to the 1935 Government of India Act and the formation of congress ministry in the presidency led by the imperious Rajaji the Telugu-Tamil divide got widened. The Tamil politicians argued that a moratorium on Andhra question should be voluntarily enforced so that other pending primary issues of National struggle could be tackled. Yet the determined Telugus went ahead an the elder statesman of the Andhra movement Konda Venkatappaya
decided to introduce a resolution in 1938 in the provincial legislature that stated "this assembly recommends to the Government that the views of this chamber of the legislature of Madras be communicated under section 290 of the Government of India Act 1935 to His Majesty in council that steps be taken as early as possible for the constitution of separate province so as to place under separate autonomous provincial administration the areas wherein the language predominantly spoken is respectively Tamil, Telugu, Kanada and Malayalam."

The Tamil group led by Rajaji cautiously reacted to this resolution and expressed fears that the primary objective of congress in achieving political advancement would be undermined by the passionate diversionary demands of linguistic reorganization and hence counseled them for patience. But the resolution was passed and the parliamentary demand for linguistic reorganization was to be forwarded compulsorily to the Secretary of State by the reluctant premier. But the triumvirate of British colonial administration, the Secretary of State Zetland, Governor General Linlithgow and the Governor of Madras Erskine all combined to reject any such move for linguistic reorganization of the provinces.

The Telugu group condemned the Premier accusing him of wrecking the parliamentary mandate for the creation of the separate Andhra state. In a trenchant and stringent attack the Telugu stream of congress held the Premier responsible for sabotaging the Telugu demand in a dubious manner whereby even while acquiescing with the linguistic demand motion in the legislature he had communicated to the British superiors advising against the territorial rearrangement of the province.

To register its implacable opposition against the Premier the separate Andhra campaigners even advocated picketing of the Premier’s residence and some influential quarters even demanded the resignation of Telugu ministers as their continuance in the ministry undermined the cherished ideal of a separate Andhra.
The Premier took some efforts to pacify the Telugu anger and on his visit to the disaffected northern districts of the proposed new state he argued before an irate audience that he should not be looked at with suspicion because of his Tamilian status and assured them that he would do all that was necessary to create the separate Andhra state. He elaborated that the agitation for a separate province had inadvertently created unnecessary mistrust between the major communities of the presidency and concluded that the demand was legitimate and plausible and hence he would do all that was possible to help the Telugus to realize their dreams.

Rajaji, Regionalization and Andhra

The dyed in the wool nationalist and cosmopolitan Rajaji himself was influenced by Tamil regionalist sentiments especially over the Tamil – Telugu conflicts. “Under pressure C-R’s Tamilian pride surfaced, which merely showed that C-R was himself as much the victim of the dual and sometimes conflicting loyalties of Indian and regional nationalism as his fellow Indians. He made a remarkably stubborn effort to frustrate the emergence of an Andhra State”.12

The Telugu leaders were always at loggerheads with Rajaji as they were totally convinced about his obstructive, dilatory and dubious efforts. They accused him of secretly wrecking the demands in 1937-39 periods by persuading the Governor Erskine to write to the Secretary of State against the creation of the cherished Andhra even while acquiescing with the parliamentary motion for the creation of the state brought out by Telugus in the Madras Legislative Assembly in March 1938.13

The anger of the Telugus directed at Rajaji reached a crescendo in 1938 and even there was some talk of Satyagraha and Picketing of the Premier’s residence. Rajaji in his efforts to frustrate the Telugus adopted a three pronged strategy of exploiting the differences between Northern Circars and Southern Royalseema within the Telugus, selective discriminatory allotment of ministerial berths to Andhra politicians and finally utilizing his contacts and relationship with central government (in 1937-39 with the
Secretary of State and in 1952 with the Prime Minister) to avert the linguistic reorganization of the state. Though his ideological convictions that creation of linguistic entities would precipitate the fragmentation of Madras Presidency into a collections of probably bankrupt and assuredly inefficient, unviable small entities propelled him to work with all resources at his command towards the maintenance of status quo still the Telugu pride portrayed him in the colour of Tamil chauvinism.

In 1952-53 when Rajaji visited the Andhra districts to explain and pacify the turbulent Telugu society he was repeatedly presented with demonstrations and protests. Even violence was committed to impress upon the visiting dignitary the intensity of Telugu hatred. One agitator threw black tar on the face of the visiting Rajaji. The response of the chief minister though indicated the firmness of his convictions served to further the Telugu feelings of humiliation. The targeted Rajaji appreciated the mud throwing Telugu for his ability to hit the target still promised him immediately that he would oppose the creation of the Andhra state.\textsuperscript{14} The Telugu anger against Rajaji crystallized into a war cry statement of "Arava Rajaji Sawala, Telugu Rajya Panala" which meant that Rajaji should die and Telugu state should be formed.\textsuperscript{15}

Once the creation of Andhra state seemed inevitable and imminent, Rajaji pooled all his resources to retain the Madras city in entirety with the Tamil speaking remainder of the Madras state. The was even an argument with considerable validity that Rajaji stood by his unreasonably high demand of maintaining the integrity of state only as a bargaining counter for his ultimate, real objective that Madras city should be for Tamils. He proved far more unsentimental in his defense of Madras city as the capital of the Madras state shorn off its Andhra districts.\textsuperscript{16}

While participating in the discussion in the Madras Legislative Council on the Potti Sriramulu fast controversy the chief minister said firmly that Chennai city was part and parcel of Tamil areas. The inhabitance of Madras and its considerable expanse of adjacent areas all were Tamils. The Andhra people did not have any right or claims over Madras city. They could not put any conditions about the administration of the city.
While Telugus formed only 17% of the city population Tamils constituted nearly 68% of the total population of the city. He also promised the Telugu people that if and when they gave up their demand over Madras city and its future administrative status he would readily and wholeheartedly cooperate with them to realize their dream of a separate Andhra state.

On more than one occasion he said in the legislature “the reason why I am so clearly of opinion and in agreement with the Communist party that the temporary capital or any kind of capital of the Andhra state should not be in Madras is a common sense feeling. If people quarrel and when the quarrel is fresh and hot, that is not the time to put a further strain on feelings”.  

The Telugu leader’s perception of Rajaji as a Tamil chauvinist increased with validity as Rajaji was unwilling to release the imprisoned Andhra agitators on grounds that their release would jeopardize the smooth creation of the new state. He told the Telugus that if any one wanted to go out of a room, he should not hold on firmly to a pillar in the room. Only as and when he left the hold on the pillar he could come out. Hence if Telugus wanted to go out of Madras state to their new residence of Andhra they should leave their hold on Madras city. 

On another occasion Rajaji while speaking at a Tamil Vizha function in 1952 told the Telugus that if they wanted to go separate, they could go immediately, provided they gave up insisting on their illogical demand about the incorporation of Madras city in future Telugu state. He was also against giving temporary capital status in the Chennai city to Andhras. If Chennai were made the temporary capital of Andhra, then in the future violence and war would take place between Telugus and Tamils. The Telugu people would come to the capital city in large numbers and emotional situations would be created where Telugu and Tamils would be battling in the streets precipitating a situation where both Governments in the city would fight with each other. The Telugu activist Srilanka Sundaram accused that Rajaji was behind the denial of temporary capital status to Andhra in Chennai bitterly.
When the recommendations of the Wanchoo committee were submitted Rajaji went to the capital and had consultations with the prime minister whereupon he was made to understand through subtly placed information that the Central Government was in favour of granting capital space to the emergent Andhra state in the sprawling Madras city. The perturbed chief minister reiterated his opposition to such move and informed the high command of his resolve to resign the chief ministership of the Madras state if such arrangements providing space in the city to Andhra were implemented.

When Rajaji was the target of Telugu anger, there was a widespread mobilization of support for him in the Tamil areas irrespective of party differences. The congress party, Tamil Arasu Kazhagam besides others was in the forefront of defending Rajaji from the vitriolic campaign of the Telugus. Kalki, a Rajaji supporter believed that truth and justice prevailed over the settlement of the Madras city. He said “the contribution of Rajaji to the successful retention of the city is incomparable and priceless.” Even the foes of congress and opponents of Rajaji have admitted, some covertly some others overtly that Rajaji prevented the mutilation of the capital city from Tamils. Even the bitter political opponents of Rajaji like EVR accepted the fact that without Rajaji Madras city would not be with Tamils. The fact that Rajaji with truth and fairness tenaciously struggled to save the city for the Tamils should be imprinted in the history of Tamils, in their consciousness eternally. The millions and millions of Tamil hearts would always appreciate Rajaji for his stand on the Madras city”.

In his articles Kalki advised Tamils to think about paying the gratitude to this Himalayan achievement of Rajaji. He said that neither money nor sculptures and statues would be sufficient to express our gratitude and we should sincerely attempt to follow the ideals, which were closer to Rajaji if we are seriously interested in thanking him. He concluded his laudatory article by stating that by following the divine saint Valluvar and peerless poet Kamban, by sincerely adopting discipline, we could pay our gratitude to Rajaji for his contribution to the continued presence of Madras city in Tamilagam.
TAMIL NADU
Pudiya Tamilagam

As the demand for the creation of a separate province for Telugus gained prominence it had repercussion in the Tamil areas too as considerable number of Tamil congressmen started demanding the formation of a Tamil homogenous state. M.P. Sivagnanam, an ardent congressman who combined the apparently incompatible ideals of nationalism and Tamil centric regionalism was in the vanguard of the Pudiya Tamilagam demand. He introduced the concept of Pudiya Tamilagam or new Tamil land. He coined this new slogan for Tamils as a result of the stimulus from the general atmosphere of Madras Presidency where Telugus demanded Andhra, Kannadigas demanded united Karnataka and Malayalees demanded integrated Kerala.²²

He started a monthly named Tamil Murasu to popularize his ideas about the formation of a separate linguistic state for Tamils that would be endowed with extremely federated powers. Besides Sivagnanam a host of veteran and prominent Tamil congressmen wrote frequently articles in the magazine Tamil Murasu propounding Tamil centric demands but unlike Dravidian movement within the confines of the united India. On November 21, 1946 Tamil Murasu affiliated congressmen led by Sivagnanam formed a new political and cultural subdivision with in congress titled as Tamil Arasu Kazhagam.²³

The working committee of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam was convened later to deliberate the ideological moorings of this subcultural organization. All the participants of the conference were congressmen or people with strong identity links with nationalism. The core ideology of the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam was prepared in this meeting. Accordingly the party defined the territorial expanse of Pudiya Tamilagam as inclusive of Chennai city, Chengalpettu, North Arcot, Chittoor, South Arcot, Thanjavour, Trichy, Ramanathapuram, Thirunelveli, Madurai, Coimbatore, Salem, Nalgiris. Explaining its commitment to Tamil identity the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam wanted the inclusion of the princely state of Pudukottai and the French colonies of Karaikal and Pondicherry in its Pudiya Tamilagam.²⁴
And moreover this cultural organization defined the identity of Tamil in all embracing, catholic fashion. All those who considered Tamil as their mother tongue and Tamilagam as their motherland or place of residence would be entitled to be called as Tamils. The party ardently advocated the adoption of Tamil language as the official language of the state and proclaimed that the fundamental objective of the Pudiya Tamilagam should be to promote the development of Tamil language in arts and science. The party prominently asserted its commitments to welfare of the Tamils living in other parts of India and the world too.

Notwithstanding these ethnic loyalties the party decidedly articulated its nationalist credentials and unequivocally expressed that such a Pudiya Tamilagam should always function within the confines of a united, sovereign India. It favoured the establishment of federal institutional arrangements where only a few subjects like defense, foreign affairs, communication would be allotted to the central Government while the remaining multitudinous range of powers were to be provided to the provinces. Yet these provinces were to function not as independent entities but as sub-regional divisions of a united India. The party and its leader Sivagnanam emphatically expressed not infrequently the nationalist character of the organization by making two important assertions.

1. The Tamil Arasu Kazhagam is not a separate political party but only a small branch of the nationalist party, the Indian national congress. It reiterated profusely that it sought to function more like the congress socialist party of 1930s, the congress –Khilafat Swaraj party of 1920s and not as the extremist congress fragment born in the historic session of Indian national congress at Surat in 1907.25

2. Secondly the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam reiterated its commitment to Indian nationalism and unity, integrity and sovereignty of India. It reprimanded the political and social groups, which called for the observance of the Independence Day as black day. It condemned repeatedly the separatist stream operating in the
politics of the Madras Presidency especially in the Tamil areas. It coined a new slogan “for rights Tamil is important, for relationship India is paramount”. It is pertinent to recollect that the nationalist credentials and proclamations of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam are unambiguous, as its leader had enthusiastically participated in the freedom struggle. Starting from 1927 when he had an introduction with nationalist struggle in the Southern presidency he had involved himself vigorously in the Civil Disobedience Movement, as he was the secretary of North Madras Struggle Committee during the movement in early 30s. He campaigned actively for the congress party in the 1936 Corporation Council Elections in Madras. In 1937 he functioned as the secretary of Madras District Congress Committee. He was imprisoned in 1941 for his participation in the Individual Satyagraha organised by Indian National Congress to register its protest against the unilateral involvement of India in the Second World War.

As he participated actively in the organization of struggles when the August resolution was adopted by Congress and Quit India Movement was launched, he was arrested and imprisoned first in the Vellore central jail and later in Amaravathi where he had a great opportunity to meet and interact with freedom fighters from all parts of the country.

Sivagnanam also popularized the past nationalist heroes of the Madras Presidency and used consciously the celebrations commemorating these heroes as vehicles of nationalist mobilization of masses. He wrote a book in 1944 titled as Kappalotiya Tamilan meaning the Tamil who navigated the ship. The book was about the Non-Brahmin congressman of yesteryears V.O. Chidamparam Pillai who in order to promote Swadeshi movement in the South in the initial decades of 20th century ran a navigation company from Tuticorin to Colombo. Sivagnanam demanded that in memory of this great nationalist the George Town area of the Madras city should be named as Chidamparam Nagar.
From 1948 October to 1949 January the weekly editions of *Tamil Murasu* published a series of articles on Kattapomman. He was a warrior from Thirunelveli district who rebelled against the oppression of British colonialism and was hanged subsequently in Kayataru in the year 1799. Sivagnanam the leader of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam glorified the anti colonial legacy of Kattapomman and in the process exhorted the people to follow the great tradition of sacrifice shown by Kattapomman. This Kattapomman celebration was particularly significance in the context of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam depiction of Tamil identity as this great nationalist hailed from a Telugu descendant family.

The Tamil Arasu Kazhagam organized many memorial meetings to highlight the contributions of Bharathiar to nationalism and Tamil. Sivagnanam vehemently criticized the Dravidian organizations for their studied indifference to the great contributions of Bharathiar to Tamil literature because of his Brahmin descent. For Tamil Arasu Kazhagam Bharathiar symbolized the fusion of Indian nationalism and Tamil literature and hence should be paid all attention and affection.

Sivagnanam and Tamil Arasu Kazhagam distributed their attention to both Indian nationalism and Tamil regionalism. He many times had deplored the deliberate indifference and discrimination in the official history of the congress written by the Telugu congressman Pattabhi Sitharamayya against Tamil contribution as V.O. Chidambaram Pillai and other Tamil fighters were totally ignored.

**Dar Commission**

The newly independent state grappling with the enormity of the demand for linguistic reorganization of India decided to elicit opinions of experts and common people on the necessity and desirability of adopting linguistic criterion for geographical rearrangement of political entities in India. Accordingly a three-member commission chaired by the retired Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court Dar was established. When the commission visited the volatile southern state of Madras the congressmen of Tamil areas
owing allegiance to the cultural Tamil Arasu Kazhagam presented their case to the commission arguing that the demand for the creation of a Tamil speaking state was neither isolated nor marginal but broad based. These Tamil congressmen strove to impress on the commission that the creation of such a state for Tamils should be followed by the constitutional endowment of extensive powers. They also reiterated their steadfast, implacable opposition to any diminution of Tamil rights over the Madras city and argued for exclusive ownership over Madras city to the proposed Tamil centric state. Some of the prominent personalities of Tamil journalism like R. Krishnamoorthy of Kalki, A. N. Swarnam of Dinamani met the commission and substantiated the demand for the retention of the entire Chennai city with the Tamil speaking state.

Surprisingly the regionalist Dravidian movement adopted a dismissive attitude towards the commission, as it believed that the creation of the linguistic states in South India would have a deleterious impact on the integrity and unity of the Dravidian people. Periyar frequently attacked the linguistic state demands as importunate, diversionary and imprudent. He attributed the emergence of this demand in the political discourse of the state to the self-seeking politicians. The Dravida Kazhagam considered the linguistic state demand as inimical to Dravidians, Dravida land and more especially to the prosperity of the Tamil language.

The Dar Commission submitted its recommendations to the government of India where it rejected, even reprimanded the demands for linguistic reorganization of states as it considered them barbaric, provincial and destructive. The commission provided some suggestions about cosmopolitan cities like Bombay and Madras, which ignited vociferous, livid antagonism from Tamil congressmen belonging to Tamil Arasu Kazhagam. The commission recommended the exclusion of these major cities from any particular state as diverse ethnic groups inhabited these cities and moreover these cities were nationally important. The complete rejection of linguistic state demands and suggestions that Chennai city would not belong to any particular state precipitated virulent reactions from both Telugus and Tamils. The Tamil Arasu Kazhagam demonstrated its opposition to the Dar Commission recommendations by observing
"Linguistic State Demand Day" on 26.12.1948 throughout Tamil areas and conducted many protest marches and meetings and its leader Sivagnanam in his articles in the Tamil Murasu characterized the recommendations of the Dar Commission as betrayal of Mahatma’s basic values.33

J.V.P Committee

The Telugu congressmen were the more aggrieved party as their consistent demand was completely rejected and the president of All India Congress Committee Pattabhi Sittaramayya was in the vanguard of opposition to the recommendations of the Dar committee when its proposals were discussed at the Jaipur session of the Indian National Congress in 1948. In an emollient move the congress party decided to appoint a committee called JVP committee comprising the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, the home minister Vallabai Patel, the president of AICC Pattabhi Sittaramayya to further examine the protracted issue. This committee prepared its proposals on this issue within the allotted period of three months and reaffirmed the congress consensus against linguistic state demands. Yet considering the unique position of Telugus it conceded to the immediate creation of a Telugu state incorporating all the non-controversial areas in the present Madras state of that time. The JVP committee excluded the Madras city and included the Chittoor district in the proposed Andhra state.

The Tamil Nadu Congress Committee under the leadership of the loyal Kamarajar accepted the proposals of JVP committee but the more assertive congress members affiliated to Tamil Arasu Kazhagam were vehemently against the inclusion of Chittoor district in the new Andhra state and absence of unambiguous clarification about the status of Madras city. They organized a conference known as Tamil Border Protection Conference in Chennai to forcefully demonstrate their demands regarding the retention of Chennai city and Chittoor district with the Tamil speaking state.34 This conference was attended by some of the prominent leaders of the congress party in addition to the active members of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam. The former union finance minister R.K. Shanmugam, the former state education minister T.S. Avinashilingam Chiettiyar, the
editor of Kalki magazine R. Krishnamoorthi etc attended the Tamil Border Protection Conference. An incumbent minister of the State Government Bhakthavachalam too participated.

The former union finance minister R.K. Shanmugam emphatically advocated the promotion of Tamil language in all spheres of knowledge and to achieve that noble objective he averred that it was necessary to create the Tamil homogenous state. He condemned the President of Indian National Congress and a member of JVP committee Pattabhi Sittaramayya for his misinterpretation about the recommendations of the committee about the city of Madras and expressed the resolve of Tamils to resist with all their might the clandestine maneuver to either snatch or share the city of Madras. He made a distinction between the cosmopolitan cities of Bombay and Madras and said that Dar Commission might have been appropriate in recommending the direct central governance of the city of Bombay but the position of Madras differed considerably as it was a city with an overwhelming majority of Tamil speakers and vast expanse of adjacent geographical area inhabited by Tamils.35

The partition committee set up by the state government under the chairmanship of the chief minister P.S. Kumarasamy Raja finalized its report and submitted the same to the central government. While the majority of members of the committee suggested the location of the capital of the proposed state within the parent state the Andhra stalwart T. Prakasam wrote a dissenting note arguing that Madras city should continue to be the capital of Andhra too and if not permanently at least temporarily so that when the newly proposed state achieved political stability and economic strength a new capital could be built for it within its boundaries.

As the culmination of the protracted demand of a separate Andhra appeared imminent and the claims of Tamils over the city seemed to turn tenuous especially in the context of the relatively non-assertive congress unit in the state, the concerned congressmen decided to mobilize support in the Madras Corporation Council. The Mayor of the Madras Corporation Council S. Ramaswamy Naidu convened a special
session of the council in 1949. The Tamil members of the Corporation Council sought to introduce a resolution whereby they argued that Madras city should remain within the truncated Madras state and no other alternative would be acceptable to the Tamils. They expressed their opposition to alternatives like ceding Madras city to Telugus, making it a joint capital, making it a separate province, making it a commissioner province or bringing it directly under the control of the central government.36

The Telugu members like Guntur Narasimarao, Rajamannar Chetti etc in turn questioned the authority of the Madras Corporation Council to debate on this question. Ultimately after a heated discussion the resolution favouring the retention of the city in the truncated Madras state was passed.37 The Tamil members in a strategic move promptly sent the copies of the Corporation Council resolution to the Governor General, the Prime Minister, the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly and the President of Indian National Congress. Burdened with this intractable imbroglio the central government relented from its determination to create the Andhra State before the adoption and implementation of the republic, democratic constitution and postponed the issue to a later date.

The commencement of the constitution on January 26th 1950 heralded the near revolutionary first general elections based on a non-discriminatory universal adulthood franchise. The embittered Telugus and determined Tamils decided to approach the elections in the Madras city as a test of their claims. The Andra leader with undefeatable energy T. Prakasam formed a struggle committee and sought to mobilize support for the accession of Madras city to the Telugus. He popularized a slogan "Madaras Manasa" meaning that Madras is ours. He chose to contest the election from the harbour constituency and his choice seemed to be determined primarily by the considerable number of Telugus living in that cluster of areas like Sowcarpet, Mannadi etc. He exhorted the Telugus to unite and deliver their votes to his party as the national leadership would see it as a vindication of Telugu claims over this city.
Some sections of the Tamil congressmen led by the leader of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam took up the gauntlet on behalf of Tamils and campaigned against T. Prakasam in support of a congress candidate of the official congress. Both groups viewed this selection a mini referendum. The Tamil congressman Sivagnanam campaigned actively for congress candidate and repeatedly stated that only a defeat, that too a crushing one leading to the loss of deposit to the leader of the Madras Manasa demand would expose the unjust, undemocratic claims of Telugus over the Tamil city of Madras. There was mutual recrimination and exchange of hot arguments between Sivagnanam and T. Prakasam. In the final outcome the Praja Socialist Party was defeated and the Telugu warrior had lost his deposit, which was interpreted by the Tamil congressmen as a vindication of the Tamil credentials over the city of Madras.\(^{38}\)

**Potti Sriramalu Fast**

After the elections the demand for a new state of Andhra picked up momentum and vigor. A freedom fighter Potti Sriramalu undertook a fast into death demanding the early formation of Andhra state with Madras as headquarters. The popular leaders of Andhra including T. Prakasam, Bulasu Sambamoorthy, Pattabi Sittaramaya etc supported the fast of Potti Sriramalu.

The fast dominated the proceedings of the Madras state legislature. The agitated and aggrieved Telugu members of the Legislative Council raised questions over the fast. They advised the government to tackle this fast with immediate attention and to concede to the demand for the creation of Andhra with promptness so as to save the life of a freedom fighter.

Replying to the questions of the Telugu members the chief minister Rajaji in a firm and clear manner stated that Madras city was part and parcel of Tamil speaking state. He further replied that the inhabitants of not only Madras city but even the adjacent villages too were Tamil speakers.\(^{39}\) He told the Telugu members that Telugu demands were unjust, invalid and superficial. He told them that they could not put any conditions
on how Madras city should be governed, as they constituted approximately only 14% of the city population while Tamils constituted nearly 68% of the total population in the city. He promised the Telugu members that if and when they gave up their demands over Madras city and its future administrative status he would readily and wholeheartedly cooperate with them to realize their dream of a separate Andhra state.

Potti Sriramalu died after an epic fast lasting 58 days in the month of December in 1952. The Telugu leaders glorified the sacrifice of Potti Sriramalu and T. Prakasam stated that Sriramalu had become a great Mahatma, greater than even Gandhiji. The death of Sriramalu precipitated a huge and violent agitation. Public disturbances broke out over large areas of the Telugu land. There was burning of southbound or departed from south trains, government offices were burnt and looted. Even the police stations were attacked.40

Announcement of Prime Minister

On 19.12.1952 in the midst of violent disturbances in Telugu areas the Prime minister brought out an announcement, which had an emollient impact on the volatile situation. He announced that a separate Telugu state would be immediately created encompassing in its territory the undisputed, non-controversial areas in the parent state. His announcement also explicitly excluded the controversial city of Madras from the proposed state thereby preventing any possible upsurge of discontent and animus in the Tamil areas of the state. The prime minister also intimated the public through that proclamation that a committee under the chairmanship of the chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court Wanchoo would be established so as to investigate and provide recommendations as to the location of the administrative structure of the emergent state. The timely prime ministerial intervention was intended assiduously to satisfy Telugu aspirations and in the process to assure the Tamils that their demands would also be considered with empathy.41
The chief minister of Madras state readily accepted the statement of the prime minister. The Tamil Nadu Congress Committee expressed its satisfaction at the prime ministerial promise respecting the retention of the capital city in entirety within the Tamil speaking state.

Though intended to have a pacifying impact on the volatile situation in the post Sriramalu sacrifice phase the announcement did not have the desired impact on the Telugu mindset. And the Telugu leaders led by T. Prakasam formed a war committee to mobilize and consolidate the support of not only Telugus but also other non-Tamil minorities of marginal and considerable proportions to either achieve the incorporation of the capital in the new state or at least to make the city a joint capital or nationally administered area. Earlier the non-Tamil and non-Telugu segments of the city's populations had periodically voiced a new slogan “Madaras for Madarasis” implying that the prized city should be in the common possession of only Madras people and hence to symbolize that spirit of common possession of the city by local inhabitants the center should bring the city under its direct administrative governance.42

Madras Corporation Council Resolution

Disappointed with the continuing struggle of the Telugu people even after the categorical assertion of the prime minister about the retention of Madras city in the Madras state itself the Tamil congressmen who were affiliated to the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam decided to bring up the issue again in the Madras Corporation Council so us to explicitly declare the democratic opinion of Madras people through their elected council.

The special session of Madras Corporation Council was convened on 3.01.1953 by Mayor Chengalvarayan to deliberate over this burning conundrum. The leader of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam Sivagnanam introduced a resolution on this vexed issue and elaborately explained the demographic, literary, religious, geographical and social dimensions of Tamils holding over the city. He argued that geographically Madras Manasa demand of Telugus was not tenable as Madras city was not located at the
boundary between Tamil and Telugu areas but located deeply within the Tamil land. He argued that the city was well surrounded by Tamil speaking areas on three sides with the Bay of Bengal on the fourth side.43

Demographically overwhelming percentage of people of the city speaks Tamil language. And only around 17% of the people spoke Telugu. He urged the Telugu leaders to mingle with the people at all walks of life to find out the demographic reality and identity of this magnificent city. The passionate defender of Tamil interest S Sivagnanam also augmented Tamil claims over the sprawling city on literary, cultural and religious grounds and traditions. Many Tamil poets and religious leaders emanated from the city and its suburban areas. He accentuated his arguments by stating that even among the Telugu population which was arguably a considerable one in the city, majority of the people believed that despite linguistic difference they belonged to the Madras state as they were intricately, inseparably assimilated into the consciousness of Tamil society. He pointed out the fact that in the Madras Corporation Council through not a small number of Telugu members were present only a paltry number of them advocated the accession of the metropolis to the newly proposed state.44

Sivagnanam augmented the Tamil credentials over the city by drawing extensively the cultural, literary, philosophical and religious ingredients of the city. The immortal saint of Tamil literature, the author of Thirukural hailed from Mylapore in the Madras city. The pious men of Tamil tradition were associated with various places in the city like Pattinathar with Thiruvettryur, Thirugnanasampanthar with Mylapore, Vallalar with Kandar Kottam etc. The leader of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam poignantly asked a question whether Telugus could arrange an impressive assembly of similar arguments to substantiate their rather importunate claims over the city.

He also argued against granting any transient capital in Madras to the proposed state, as he believed that such a temporary arrangement would be the reservoir of prolonged animosity between the two fraternal states and moreover the duration of the Andhra state in the Madras city could not be specified unambiguously. He ultimately
ended his long speech evidently replete with unassailable arguments by firmly expressing that the Tamil people would make any sacrifice needed to hold on to their capital city. The clarion call, the battle cry of the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam was “Thalayai Koduthavathu Thalainagarai Kappom” meaning we would protect the capital city even if it demanded the sacrifice of our lives.\textsuperscript{45}

The resolution asking for the retention of the city with Tamils was passed in the Madras Corporation Council by an overwhelming majority support of the members.

**Final Decision on Madras**

In 1953 the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam convened the second state level conference in Madras where many congressmen affiliated to Tamil Arasu Kazhagam participated including R.K. Shanmugam Chettiar the former finance minister of the Union. The deliberations at the literary and political meetings of the conference emphasized again the Tamil claims over the Madras city in its entirety.

Amidst this intense opposition from Tamil areas and leaders the Wanchoo committee, established to discuss the issue of capital city for the new state of Andhra recommended the retention of Madras city as the temporary capital till alternative arrangements of building the capital infrastructure were made for the emerging state. The chief minister Rajaji returned from a meeting with the prime minister in a mood of despondency as he was told of the central government’s intention to implement the recommendations of the Wanchoo committee. He, upon his return to the state informed his loyal band of congressmen that fate of the city had been adversely sealed and in dejection he said that no stone was still left to be tried to reverse this decision.

Immediately the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee and affiliated organizations sent a flood of telegrams to the prime minister and home minister reiterating the Tamil opposition. Various Congress Committees, Tamil Arasu Kazhagam, Tamil Associations, Commercial Organizations, Labour Organizations, Madras Corporation Council,
Members of Parliament and State Legislative Assembly all sent telegrams to the central government expressing their intense dissatisfaction against the allocation of the temporary capital to Andhra in Madras. Yielding to popular pressure the central government announced that the capital of Andhra state would not be in the Madras city and would be located within the territory of the new state.

**Question of Chittoor**

The Chittoor district was created by the colonial administration in 1911. Earlier it was part and parcel of the sprawling North Arcot District. On March 31st 1911 it by separating some taluks from the Cuddappah and North Arcot Districts on administrative grounds created the separate district of Chittoor. Thiruthani, Thirukalasthi, Chandragiri, punkanur, Palmanari, Chittoor taluks of North Arcot district and Madapalli, Vayalpadi taluks of cuddappah district were taken out and the new district of chittoor was created. The Tamil Arasu Kazhagam demanded in the forties and fifties that Chittoor should be merged with the Tamil speaking state in the event of separation of Telugu speaking areas from Madras state.

The Chittoor district was placed in the list of districts which were considered to be non-controversial areas that should be included in the about to be created Andra State. In 1953 the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam conducted its second state level conference. The conference was conducted on January 24 and 25 at N.K.D. Kalamandapam in Tripilicane. The conference passed fourteen resolutions after intense rounds of deliberations. One of the resolutions wanted to merge the Tamil majority Chittoor district with the Madras state.

The Dinamani, a leading newspaper in Tamil on 28.01.1953 wrote in its editorial arguing that the Tamil majority areas of Chittoor district should not be parts of the about to be formed Andra State. It characterized the inclusion of Chittoor in Andra as an unjust move. It argued that the demand of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam that such areas should be left in the truncated Madras state was a reasonable one. The editorial also said that the
information about the Tamil credentials of these areas should be gathered and documented. Moreover the editorial suggested to the Wanchoo commission to take in to account the available linguistic and demographic evidences before deciding on the question of Chittoor. 47

When justice Wanchoo came to the Madras city the leader of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam Siviganam met him and requested him to recognize the mistake in the announcement of the Prime Minister and take appropriate steps to exclude Chittoor from the Andra state. And moreover the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam argued that whenever a commission was formed to demarcate the areas between Andhra and Tamil speaking Madras the issue of Chittoor also should be enquired and settled along with other disputed areas and districts.

But the Justice Wanchoo commission in turn refused to consider the request of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam stating that Prime Minister himself had concluded that district to be an undisputed one and hence he could not consider its demand.

The Rajaji Government and the succeeding Kamarajar Government did not raise any objections against the Prime Ministers statement about the status of Chittoor district even though they had opposed the granting of temporary capital status to the Andra state in Madras city.

The Tamil Arasu Kazhagam wrote a letter to the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru pointing out the disputed status of the Chittoor district. In that letter the Tamil congressman argued that the inclusion of Chittoor in Andra should be only a temporary measure and whenever the border commission was established with the responsibility to demarcate the territories between the sibling Andra and parental Madras, it should examine the demands of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam about Chittoor. The leader of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam demanded a promise from the Prime Minister about Chittoor before the official bifurcation of the Madras State. 48
But much to the disappointment of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam the central government and the Prime Minister chose to ignore the missive from Sivaganam and remained silent on Chittoor controversy despite many remainders from the Tamil congressmen. Subsequently the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam launched a series of agitations in Chittoor district from March onwards in 1953. Hartals, public strike, boycott of schools, hartals before government offices were undertaken by the Tamil congress outfit and Tamils of Chittoor district. The strike was hugely successful in the Tamil majority areas of Puthur, Chittoor, etc., of the Chittoor district. On May 5th 1953 Tamil Arasu Kazhagam observed Chittoor day all over the Tamil speaking areas of the state. Demonstrations processions and public meetings were mobilized all over Tamil Nadu to protest against the inclusion of Chittoor district with Andhra. Though there was opposition from the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee over the observance of Chittoor day; the Rajaji government did not ban it. The TNCC meeting at Trancobare condemned the Chittoor agitation as unnecessary and undisciplined and threatened to take disciplinary action against those congressmen who participated in the agitation.49

Departure of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam from Congress

In 1953 the elections to the Tamil Nadu Congress committee were conducted. The president of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam filed his nomination papers from Thiyagarajanagar constituency. Many other prominent members of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam like Chinna Annamalai also field their nominations. There was opposition to the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam candidates from a group of rival congress men who demanded the rejection of the nomination of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam members by quoting the rule 14 of the congress constitution which stated that members of other political parties could not become members of congress party and as Tamil Arasu Kazhagam was a political party its members were automatically disqualified from joining the congress party. Satisfied with the argument of the rival group opposed to Tamil Arasu Kazhagam the party official in charge of the election process rejected the nominations of the members of Tamil Arsu Kazhagam.
The leaders of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam sent immediately telegrams to the All India Congress Committee President and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru arguing that Tamil Arasu Kazhagam was only a cultural organization and not a political party and hence its members were eligible to contest the party elections of the congress party. They prayed to the President of the party to intervene and solve the problem arising out of the unjust rejection of their nominations papers.

In response the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru asked the election officials of the party to accept the nomination of members of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam. He also said that the exact status of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam whether it was a cultural organization as claimed by it or a political body as alleged by its rivals should be investigated by All India Congress Committee and till then the members of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam for the purposes of elections should be considered eligible.50

In the ensuing party elections the leader of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam Sivaganam was elected from the Thiyagaraja Nagar constituency with overwhelming support. The princely state of Trivandram and Cochin were merged together and the resultant composite Kerala state witnessed elections to the legislative assembling. The Tamil parties of the state put up their candidates against the candidates of the Kerala Congress in the Tamil majority areas. The Tamil Arasu Kazhagam supported the Tamil candidates against the official candidates of the Kerala congress.

The Tamil Nadu Congress Committee ordered the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam members and its leaders to go and campaign for the official congress candidates in the neighbouring state. As it would involve campaigning against the Travancore Tamil Nadu congress members the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam refused to abide by the directions of the Tamil Nadu congress committee. The leader of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam cited that as he was not popular in Kerala he would be an ineffective campaigner.51

The Tamil Nadu congress committee conveyed its displeasure over the defiance of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam to the congress high command. The congress high command
in turn wrote a letter to the chief minister of Madras state asking him to go to the
neighbouring state by taking along his close political confident for the purpose of
electioneering. When the Chief Minister called his friend Sivaganam to come with him to
Kerala as per the instruction of the High command the leader of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam
again politely and firmly declined. This episode created bitter relationship between
Tamil Arasu Kazhagam and Tamil Nadu congress committee.

Meanwhile as a result of the Kula Kalvi Thittam and subsequent agitation the
Chief Minister Rajaji was replaced by Kamarajar in the state. The leader of Tamil Arasu
Kazhagam Sivaganam was a close supporter of Rajaji but an intense opponent of
Kamaraj. The social fact that both Kamarajar and Sivaganam came from the Nadar
Community, therefore, had to compete with each other precipitated the political
atmosphere where the continued existence of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam within congress
became increasingly untenable.

The Tamil Arasu Kazhagam was openly critical of the Prime Minister for his
alleged failure to implement his promise of appointing a commission to investigate and
demarcate the boundary between the newly created Andhra and the parental Madras
States. The Prime Minister stated that the responsibility of establishing the border
commission was with the concerned states and centre had no role to play in this matter.
As Madras under the new Chief Minister had other pressing problems at hand like food
crises, the new administration was indifferent to the territorial disputes over Chittoor
district. Protesting against the indifferent attitude of Kamarajar government the Tamil
Arasu Kazhagam decided to observe July 3rd 1954 as the border commission day for the
second time.

The criticism of the Prime Minister, hostility to the Chief Minister, the observance
of border commission day and the rejection of the high command’s directive to go for
campaigning in Kerala invited disciplinary action from the high command. The congress
working committee chose to give the power to the regional unit to take a decision on the
political status of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam.
The Tamil Nadu congress committee after deliberations concluded that Tamil Arasu Kazhagam was indeed a separate political party and no dual membership was acceptable and hence all congressmen should henceforth cease to be its members. It also said that the functioning of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam was a violation of the rule 14 of the congress constitution. The Tamil Nadu congress committee ordered the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam members to disband the association within 15 days otherwise it warned that they would be expelled from the party.\(^{52}\)

The working committee of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam sat and deliberated over the order of the Tamil nadu congress committee and after a long discussion decided to reject the warning from the congress unit. The members of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam also decided to disassociate themselves from the congress organization so that they could independently promote the interests of Tamizhagam especially in border disputes, language issue and linguistic reorganization of Madras state. The leader of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam resigned his membership of the Legislative Council, senate of the University of Madras, Chairmanship of central library council.

**Travancore Tamil Agitation**

The princely state of Travancore witnessed a sustained agitation in the Tamil areas that wanted a merger of predominantly Tamil speaking areas with the neighbouring Tamil state of Madras. There were ten taluks in the Travancore state dominated by Tamils. They were Thovalai, Agastheesvaram, Kalkulam, Vilanyangode, Neyyatrin Karai (South), Nedumangadu (South), Devi Kulam, Permedu, Chittoor, and Chengottai. The Nawab of Arcot ceded these Tamil areas, once a part of the Tamil Pandiyan Kindom to the Malayalee Travancore state by an agreement signed in 1766. There was no Tamil-Malayalee conflict in the princely state in the initial period as the Tamils were given due representation in administration in the Tamil areas by the king.\(^{53}\)

But in the 20th century the communal relationship between Tamils and Malayalees worsened as Tamils began to oppose the systematic discrimination meted out to them in
administration, judiciary and education. They complained against the chauvinist policies of Malayalee officers. They were deeply wounded by the elimination of Tamil language from the judicial process of south Travancore where only Malayalam and English became the languages of official business. They demanded the provision of education in the medium of Tamil to the children of Tamils. They felt deprived by the fact that only insufficient number of schools offered education in Tamil and more disappointingly these schools lacked adequate infrastructure in terms of buildings, teachers etc. at one time out of the 184 schools in the Princely state only one school taught the students in Tamil and that solitary school was a school meant only for girls.\textsuperscript{54}

Travancore Tamils organized a number of protest movements and among them the following were important ones in the early period.

1. Tamil freedom Congress organized by Manjangudi, Kunjan Nadar in 1928.
2. Tamil party organized by Appavoo Asan in 1935.
3. Anbukkudi peoples movement started by Ayya Vaigunda Samy in 1936.
4. Ethamoli Tamil Sangam started by P. Ramasamy in 1938 etc.

**Formation of Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress**

A number of Tamil leaders came together to establish a party called *Naanjil* Tamil Congress. The editor of Tamilian paper Chidamparam Pillai as an elder statesman of Tamil people advised them to rename the association as All Travancore Tamil Congress. Again 1945 Nesamani, the most towering leader had formed a social organization called Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress with its headquarters at Neyyur in 1945. As Chidampa Nadar requested him to take over the leadership of All Travancore Tamil Congress Nesamani decided to convert his own social organization into a political party. So he convened a special meeting of Tamil leaders at the Allen Mandapam where almost all the important dignitaries of the Tamil community participated. This gathering of important Tamils established the Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress as the political party of the Travancore Tamils. The group of leaders forming the party included Nesamani, V.
Chidamparam pillai, Sam Nathenial, the leader of Muslim league in south Travancore A. Razak etc.55

The constitution of the party had outlined the inter related important objectives of incorporating all the Tamil lands of Travancore with the Tamil state of Madras and promoting the social, economic and cultural welfare of Tamils. A green flag with a golden pot was adopted as the symbol of the party.

Palayam Kottai Pact

In 1950 an agreement was signed between the Chief Minister of Kerala Pattam Thanu Pillai and the leaders of the Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress at Palayamkottai the twin city located on the other side of Tamiraparni river in Tirunelveli. The agreement provided for the emergence of a new revenue division in south Travancore by the merger of four disputed taluks, the TTNC would be offered the status of a new district Congress Committee and it would remain part and parcel of the Kerala Congress organization and as and when it was granted permission by the All India Congress Committee, it would become affiliated to the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee. When the linguistic reorganization of India came to be implemented, the new District Congress Committee of the Travancore Tamils could take all the legal steps for the incorporation of Tamil areas with Tamil Nadu.56

The agreement also provided that Tamil would be used for all official purposes in the Travancore Tamil areas besides English and Malayalam. The Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress was allowed to establish contact committees with TNCC. Mean while the TTNC was expected to offer its legislative support to the Congress ministry in the Travancore-Cochin Assembly.

The agreement was signed by TTNC leaders Sam Nathaniel, Nesamani, Sivaramapillai, Gandhi Raman, Thanulinga Nadar. Though the agreement was based on the consent of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, it invited strident opposition from
many quarters. The Tamil Arasu Kazhagam expressed its strident opposition to the agreement stating that these areas of south Travancore region were the traditional areas of Tamil people and nobody including the leaders of TTNC had any right or authority to cede away them to any other political entity. Many leaders of TTNC also had misgivings over the agreement, as they perceived only partial benefits accruing to Tamils from the treaty. More importantly the dissidents condemned the treaty for ignoring other taluks and areas of Tamil concentration like Permedu, Devikutam and Sengottai. They led by Thanulinga Nadar broke away from TTNC and formed a new political outfit called The Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress.

**Conference of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam**

The cultural organization of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam operating still as part of TNCC came forward to conduct the struggle with more vigour and said that if TTNC failed to carry the agitation, the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam would directly plunge into the agitation. A number of leaders from both Tamil Nadu and Travancore spoke at the conference that included Chinna Annamalai, M. Sherif, A. Gandhi Raman, besides M.P. Sivagnanam. The conference passed many resolutions requesting the people of Tamil Nadu to get more actively involved in Travancore Tamil agitation and demanding the establishment of a border commission to demarcate the boundaries rationally.

**Language Stir**

Both factions of TTNC conducted a language stir in the Tamil areas demanding that Tamil should be made the official language of governance, administration and education in the Tamil majority areas. The language agitation widened the geographical spread of the movement from the traditional Nanjil Nadu region to new areas like Permedu, Devikutam taluks. As these areas were essentially plantation areas and as the trade unions were powerful and as Tamils were organized, the regional capital Moonar became another epicenter of the Tamil agitation.
Kalkulam Agitation

In the agitation in a place called Kalkulam the police unleashed brutality and around 11 Tamils were killed. The Tamil leaders demanded action against the perpetrators of violence. The Kerala government constituted a commission led by Justice Shankaran which was ignored by Tamils as the revered judge was a relative of the police officer involved in the firing. The Tamil Peravai led by its President, Secretary and a member conducted an investigation that reported excessive police firing as the cause of the massacre. As both factions of TTNC were subjected to severe suppression during the language agitation they decided to get united in 1953.

Fazal Ali Commission

The Fazal Ali commission accepted the legitimacy of the demand of the Travancore Tamils for unification with Tamil Nadu. It recommended that the five taluks of Sengottai, Kalkulam, Vilavancode, Thovalai, Agastheesvaram should be taken out to be incorporated with the adjoining Tamil state. The commission advocated the linguistic reorganization of controversial areas on the basis of taluks and not villages and refused to take out the Tamil villages in Neyyattringarai taluk for the purpose of incorporation with Tamil Nadu. The commission also recommended that the taluks of Devikulam and Permedu should be retained in the Kerala state. It recommended so because of the fact that the original inhabitants of these areas were Malayalees and Tamils came here as mere plantation workers.

The reaction of TTNC to the recommendations of Fazal Ali commission was a mixed one as it welcomed the imminent prospects of a union with adjoining Tamil state even though in the process it had to loose forever it claims over Peermedu and Devikulam. The TNCC also expressed its displeasure over this dimension and its leader C. Subramaniam officially conveyed its displeasure to the central government.
The Tamil Arasu Kazhagam opposed the Fazl Ali Commission recommendations and announced its determination to carry out further struggle in south Kerala. It decided to observe a general strike in Tamil Nadu over Devikulam and Permedu.

Broadly based on the recommendations of Fazal Ali commission the linguistic reorganization of states was carried out through the enactment of a Constitutional Amendment Act in 1956. The Sengottai taluk was merged with Tirunelveli district and the other four taluks were amalgamated to form a new district called Kanyakumari in the Tamil speaking Madras state.
Relationship between Tamil Congress and Travancore Tamil Congress

The paramount objective of the Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress was to achieve the status of an affiliated unit of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee as it considered the contemporary authority of Kerala Congress Committee as unacceptable. The regionalism of Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress was unique as it was a movement against Malayalee Congress and not against the nationalist Congress movement. Therefore the Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress did not have any intense relationship with the regional Dravidian movement of Madras state.

The Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress argued that the article 14 of the Congress constitution, inspired by Mahatma vision provided for linguistic organization of the Congress movement and hence the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee should have authority over the south Travancore Tamil areas. The Tamil Nadu Congress Committee had shown only a sympathetic attitude towards the demands of south Travancore Tamils as it was bound by the party discipline. It had to consider the position of the Kerala Congress Committee on the question of Travancore Tamils as a sisterly organization. Yet it had shown measured response to the agitation of the Travancore Tamils.

As Madras Presidency was engulfed in the politics of linguistic demands the TNCC decided to take measures for the protection of Tamil interests. The president of TNCC Kamarajar appointed a Border protection committee under the leadership of C.N. Muthuranga Mudaliyar to protect the Tamil areas and interests as Telugu people in the North, Kannada movement in the west and the Malayalee movement in the south west had their bitter struggle with Tamil Nadu.63

In 1946 the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee convened its political conference at Ambasamudram in the south where the unfortunate fate of the south Travancore Tamils was intensely debated. Here an official resolution was passed demanding the unification of the Tamil areas of south Travancore with Tamil Nadu.64
In 1948 after the police firing in south Travancore in which a large number of agitating Tamils were killed the president of TNCC Kamarajar visited the troubled areas and advised the Kerala Congress leaders to adopt the strategy of peaceful negotiation towards the Tamil leaders. He also called for the establishment of a Tamil district in south Travancore so that the interests of the minority people could be saved.

In 1953 Kamarajar while speaking at a public meeting reiterated his argument that the Tamil areas of Travancore should not be retained as and when the united Kerala came to be formed. He also expressed his determination to launch a Satyagraha if the Malayalee government continued its repressive measures.

Again in the heat of the struggle many leaders of Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress crossed over to the Madras state and the Pattam Thanu Pillai government sought the help of the Madras government to arrest the fugitives but the TNCC outrightly rejected the request. Its leaders Kamarajar and Baktavachalam took the lead in the conclusion of the Palayamkottai pact. It formally announced its support to the Travancore Tamils in 1954. A year later when the Linguistic Reorganization Committee took the decision to allot only the five taluks from the controversial areas for the process of merger with Madras state, the TNCC passed a resolution reiterating its demand for the complete merger of all the Tamil majority taluks. On the republic day in 1957 about 3 months after the merger of Travancore Tamil areas the TTNC had an official merger with Tamil Nadu Congress Committee.

The Malayalee leaders often criticized the support rendered by the leaders of TNCC to the TTNC. Pattam Thanu Pillai even called the attitude of Tamil Nadu Congress leaders as chauvinist and in a public meeting said that but for the central government the Tamil leaders like Kamarajar and Baktavachalam would have invaded Kerala. Again in 1955 the Chief Minister of Kerala criticized the efforts of Tamil leaders like Kamarajar and said that the Malayalee people would resist with all their might any attempt of Kamarajar to influence the central government in favour of Tamils and against Malayalees.
TTNC and Nationalism

After the Tripuri Congress resolution the nationalist struggle was launched in the princely state of Travancore and while Pattam Thanu Pillai was the President of this fledgling nationalist association, P.S. Natesa Pillai, the son of the great Tamil scholar Manonmaniam Sundaranar became its Secretary. There was a considerable level of participation from Tamils in the South Travancore, both individually and collectively. Dr. M.E. Naidu, Sivanuthu Karuppa Pillai, Seygunthamoli Pavalar, Nesamani etc were important leaders.

The emergence of TTNC eliminated the nationalist activities and organizations in the Tamil areas. The main line Tamil leaders of the Nationalist movement either got sidelined from political dynamics in the state or became part of the TTNC movement. Dr. M.E. Naidu was a leading Gandhian activist in the Travancore Tamil areas as he participated in the Temple entry movement, Harijan welfare activities in the intensely hierarchical south Travancore society in the 1930's. But he chose to withdraw from active politics in protest against the non-application of the Congress principle of linguistic organization in the Tamil areas. He began to support TTNC after its emergence.

Tiagi Muthu Karuppa Pillai, a veteran Congress nationalist was also sidelined with the emergence of TTNC. Nesamani the most towering leader of the Tamil movement was, in the beginning a Congress participant. He was even described as Sardar Patel of Travancore for his participation in freedom struggle. 66

The dissatisfaction of these Tamil leaders with Kerala Congress party arose because of the Malayalee domination of the nationalist party. In 1946 the nationalist Congress organized a conference at Nagorcoil where it recognized the right of the Tamil areas to opt for incorporation with the neighbouring Madras state in the event of linguistic reorganization of India. This gesture was intended to secure the consent of
Tamils for the establishment of a united Kerala. But later on the Kerala Congress went back on this assurance.

The Malayalee Congress leaders began the slogan that cape comarin was the head, Travancore was the heart and Kazarkode was the feet of Kerala. Their tone became strident in the face of emergence of TTNC.

The Aluwai on the banks of river Periyar the Kerala Congress Committee organized a conference in which the concept of united Kerala was discussed. The Tamil leader Nesamani was also a participant in the conference. When the official resolution was discussed about the united Kerala Nesamani introduced an amendment in the resolution to the effect that a united Kerala should be established but excluding the Tamil majority areas. But the Malayalee dominated Congress rejected this amendment precipitating the further alienation of Tamils from the Kerala Congress. 67

**Electoral Politics and Kanyakumari**

The congress party gained immensely in the electoral contests in the southern district of Kanyakumari. The merger of Travancore Tamil Nadu congress, the party of the Kanyakumari struggle with the Tamil Nadu congress committee paved the way for the emergence of congress as an electoral leviathan in the district. In the erstwhile Travancore princely state the electoral politics in the south Travancore areas was always dominated by the Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress as the Malayalee dominated Kerala congress committee in its earlier forms could not make much headway in attracting the attention of Tamil dominated areas. The TTNC won either all or most of the fourteen Legislative Assembly seats in the Tamil areas in all the elections from 1948 to 1956. The merger of TTNC with TNCC entirely transferred its social base and political clout to the later.

The caste configuration of the district too favoured the congress party. The most populous caste of the Tamil speaking areas of south Travancore is nadars and as congress
party was firmly under the leadership of Kamarajar, the district became the political bastion of the party. As a large number of nadars were engaged in mercantile activities the dominant position enjoyed by congress in 1960’s attracted them. Moreover the district was not part of the Madras Presidency when Dravidian movement penetrated the consciousness of the Tamil areas and therefore the DMK always remained a relatively weak force in the politics of the district. Even in the contemporary era of congress marginalization, the congress party relatively remains strong in the district. As the district has geographical continuity with Kerala, the rightwing organizations are also strong there. The Padmanabapuram Legislative Assembly was the first constituency to elect a BJP member which happened in 1989. In late 90s the BJP in alliance with ADMK and DMK alternatively won the parliamentary seats in the district for two consecutive terms.

In conclusion it can be said that the burning conundrum of linguistic reorganization of states in the dangerous decade of 50’s left its imprint in the policies and dynamics of the congress party. As linguistic nationalism in the non-Tamil areas of the south picked up momentum and recognition, the Tamil Nadu Congress committee came to be subjected to a powerful regional impact. The different factions of the congress party reacted with varying degrees of concern for the protection of Tamil interests in the linguistic reorganization exercise. On the question of a separate Andhra demand and more importantly on the controversy over the position of Madras City even the most cosmopolitan personality of South Indian politics Rajaji was also influenced by Tamil regionalism. The most powerful main stream faction in the Tamil Nadu Congress committee led by K.Kamarajar too strenuously fought for the protection of the territorial interests of Tamils. Undoubtedly the cultural nationalist organization of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam represented the extreme regionalization of the party on issues like Tamil Language, linguistically homogenous state etc., The regionalization of the congress party in Tamil Nadu in the era of linguistic reorganization of states in India contributed greatly to the electoral success as seen from the continued dominance of congress even in the contemporary period in the southern district of Kanyakumari.
# NOTES

5. New India, 8 May 1916.
7. Ibid., p.245.
8. Ibid., p.248.
11. Ibid., p.91.
12. Ibid., p.273.
13. Ibid., p.274.
27. Tamil Murasu, 15 November 1947.
29. Ibid., p.120.
31. Ibid., p.175.
32. Tamil Murasu, 19 December 1948.
35. Dr. R.K. Shanmugam Mani Villamalar, pp.245-49.
37. Ibid., p.217.
41. Sivagananam, M.P. *Pudhiya Tamilagam Padaitha Varalaru*, Op-cit, p.188.
42. Sethupandian, T. Op-cit, p.113.
45. Sethupandian, T. *MaPoSi In Tamil Unarvu*, Chennai; International Institute of Tamil Studies, p.112.
46. Sivagananam, M.P. *Tamilagathil Pira Mozhiyinar*, Op-cit, p.72
47. Dinamani, 24 January 1953.
49. Sivagananam, M.P *Pudhiya Tamilagam Padaitha Varalaru*, Op-cit, p.60.
50. Ibid., p.71.
51. Ibid., p.72.
52. Ibid., p.80
53. Patchaimal, K. *Kumari Mavattam Pirantha Varalaru*, Op-cit, p.59
54. Ibid., p.40 7
57. Ibid., p.328.
58. Ibid., pp.322-33.
59. Ibid., pp.328-345.
60. Patchaimal, K. Op-cit., p.148
63. Dinamalar, 16 November 1955.
64. Dinamalar, 23 November 1953.
65. Thingal (weekly), 23 November 1953.