

ANJALAI AMMAL: THE UNSUNG HEROINE OF FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU

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Abstract

This study has mainly focused on exhibiting the efforts of Anjalaiyammal in the freedom struggle. On the arduous path of the freedom struggle, a few leaders were glorified by the people in India and Tamil Nadu. There are numerous personalities who contributed their entire lives to the movement and greatly affected its path of the freedom struggle, a few leaders were glorified by the people in India and Tamil Nadu. There are numerous personalities who contributed their entire lives to the movement and greatly affected it. However, their sacrifices are partially or completely neglected by society and history. Women are large in number and fight against the hectic rule of the British, both individually and as part of organisations. Their vision and works were lost to history because they were unconcerned about their public image. Anjalaiyammal was a fearless freedom fighter who went unnoticed in Tamil Nadu and India's liberation movements. Those days, some of the freedom fighters, after their imprisonment, wrote letters to the British called "mercy petitions." However, fearless leader Anjalaiyammal never used the mercy petitions and was an active member of the freedom movement for many years.

Keywords: *freedom struggle, freedom movement, mercy petitions, British paramountcy, independence.*

Introduction

A few leaders were glorified by the people of India and Tamil Nadu during the difficult path of the freedom struggle. There are numerous personalities who contributed their entire lives to the movement and greatly affected it struggle. There are numerous personalities who contributed their entire lives to the movement and greatly affected it. However, their sacrifices are partially or completely neglected by society and history. Women are large in number and fight against the hectic rule of the British both individually and as part of an organization. Their vision and works were lost to history because they were unconcerned about their public image. Anjalaiyammal was a fearless freedom fighter who went unnoticed in Tamil Nadu and India's liberation movements. She was praised by Gandhi as the "Jhansi Rani of the South." She was always involved in the freedom struggle and was imprisoned for it. But her efforts and fearless acts were completely forgotten or unsung in the history of the freedom struggle. This study has mainly focused on exhibiting the efforts of Anjalaiyammal in the freedom struggle.

Early stage

Anjalaiyammal was born in the coastal district of Cuddalore, the erstwhile South Arcot district, on June 1, 1890, to Muthumani Padaiyatchi and Amma Kannu. Their family did the work of weaving for many years and possessed more than 20 charriatos for the purpose of business. They lived in the street named "Sunnambu Kara Street" (Chunnam Street). They have five children, namely Raji, Anjalai, Pavadai, Singaram, and Ramaswamy. Anjalaiyammal was taught Tamil and English at home by their father's teachers. She was married to Murugappan in 1908 A.D. They have six children, namely Karumbu, Saraswathi, Ammaponnu, Kalyani, Gandhi, and Jailveeran.

Between 1908 A.D. and 1918 A.D., Subramaniya Bharathi migrated to Pondicherry from Chennai under the pressure of the British. Anjalaiyammal read the journals of Bharathiyar and sometimes wrote letters to him. Also, she voluntarily donated the funds to the journal. Her brother was a charioteer, and Bharathiyar had three close calls with him in her home. While Bharathiyar was arrested and detained on Cuddalore, Anjalaiyammal's parents assisted them.

Gandhi's visit

Gandhi toured the entire country in order to strengthen the Congress party. The meeting was conducted on the bank of Gadilam. After hearing the words of Gandhi, Murugappan became a teetotaler. Then Anjalaiyammal joined the ranks of those who believed in Gandhi and his ideas. The only two women who have participated in the freedom struggle directly are Anjalaiyammal and the wife of Srinivasa Ayyangar, the president of Congress. Hence, Anjalaiyammal became the foremost leader in the journey of the freedom movement. In 1934, Gandhi travelled from Chennai to other places for the speech. While the train crossed over Cuddalore, some of the volunteers met Gandhi, but Anjalaiyammal was banned by the police of South Arcot. However, Anjalaiyammal wore the purdah and met Gandhi at the railway station. Gandhi praised Anjalaiyammal for her selfless service to the cause of freedom.

Song of identity

Anjalaiyammal and his husband took part in several agitations during the liberation struggle. During the day, police may have to arrest people in order to transport them in the police jeep. They were then dispersed from cashew groves throughout the night. So they shouted "Murugappan" and "Yei Anjalai" like a song. They were using the technique while they were arrested by the police.

As a Gandhian, he promoted the Khadi (homespun cloth) scheme for self-sufficiency and the boycott of foreign clothes. Periyar, the self-respect movement's founding leader, also known as "Periyar," led the event in each location. Periyar has visited Anjalaiyammal's home to reveal the objectives of the agitation against the group of people. They then held a rally with Periyar, while Anjalaiyammal carried a bunch of cloths on her head to spread the message of boycotting foreign clothing. The police had banned the sale of indigenous cloths when Anjalaiyammal diverted them and sold them in a railroad station.

Neil statue agitation

The statue of George Smith Neill was unveiled in the Anna Salai with a height of 12 feet after the successful suppression of the Indian rebellion of 1857. For the purpose of honouring the

officer, the British government installed the statue in Chennai. In 1927, the Congress initiated the agitation for removing the statue, knowing the cruelty of the officer. Anjalai Ammal led the agitation at the Cuddalore railway station. Her 11-year-old daughter took part in the event and was later sentenced to four months in jail. The next day, her husband, Murugappan, also participated in the event in Chennai and was sentenced to 6 months of imprisonment. Her family members and she voluntarily took part in this uprising, revealing their involvement in the liberation struggle. While Gandhi attended the meeting in Chennai in 1927, he met Anjalaiyammal and was advised to be brave.

Work with Subramaniya Siva.

Subramaniya Siva, whose well-known freedom fighters contracted leprosy while imprisoned in Salem, Anjalaiyammal invited Subramaniya Siva to Cuddalore and made arrangements for his shelter. There, he preached freedom to the younger generation. In 1923, there were lots of congress volunteers who were arrested and imprisoned after they fought against the toddy shops. They were transported to the Cuddalore jail by train, but the ration was not provided. So Anjalaiyammal made severe steps to feed them after a long struggle against the British with Subramaniya Siva. The train may have arrived in Cuddalore around 1 p.m. However, the incident triggered the British, who have banned the ashram where Subaramaniya Siva lived. Being a leprosy patient, nobody was willing to give shelter to Subramaniya Siva. Anjalaiyammal has given shelter to Siva at her home, where he suffered a lot and was seriously ill. Then he wanted to move the Bharatha Matha Ashramam at Pappirattipatti, and there he breathed his last.

Dandi March

Gandhi organised the Dandi March to protest the salt tax in Gujarat. These incidents triggered high regard for the entire country. Anjalaiyammal made significant contributions to the Cholinganallur March during the Dandi March. She was also imprisoned for three months for the same offense. In 1931 A.D., the march was conducted in Devanampattinam by the congress committee, while Anjalaiyammal participated. In addition, she was sentenced to six months in prison and imprisoned in Vellore. During that time, some freedom fighters would write mercy

petitions and be granted bail. But Anjalaiyammal refused to accept the Brits' mercy and fought for a long time.

Conclusion

India has clinched the victory of independence thanks to the tremendous efforts of the freedom fighters. Their vision is more prominent than other people's, who recognised that the only solution to the problem was getting freedom from the British. Earlier, some people only contributed to this act, and then other people admired or inspired their actions. The path of the freedom struggle was harsh, and those who were imprisoned suffered greatly. Meanwhile, some of the leaders' values were only celebrated and displayed in the texts. The other volunteers' tireless efforts to aid the freedom struggle were completely unknown, unsung, and unauthorized. As a result of the consequences, Anjalaiyammal may be one of the important people who contributed to the freedom events, receiving harsh punishment such as imprisonment. Those days, some of the freedom fighters, after their imprisonment, wrote letters to the British called "mercy petitions." However, brave leader Anjalaiyammal never used mercy petitions and struggled to be a freedom fighter.

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