



ARULMIGU PALANIANDAVR ARTS COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

(Autonomous)

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Run by Arulmigu Dhandayuthapani Swamy Thirukoil, H.R & C.E Dept. Government of Tamil Nadu
A Government Aided College - Affiliated to Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal
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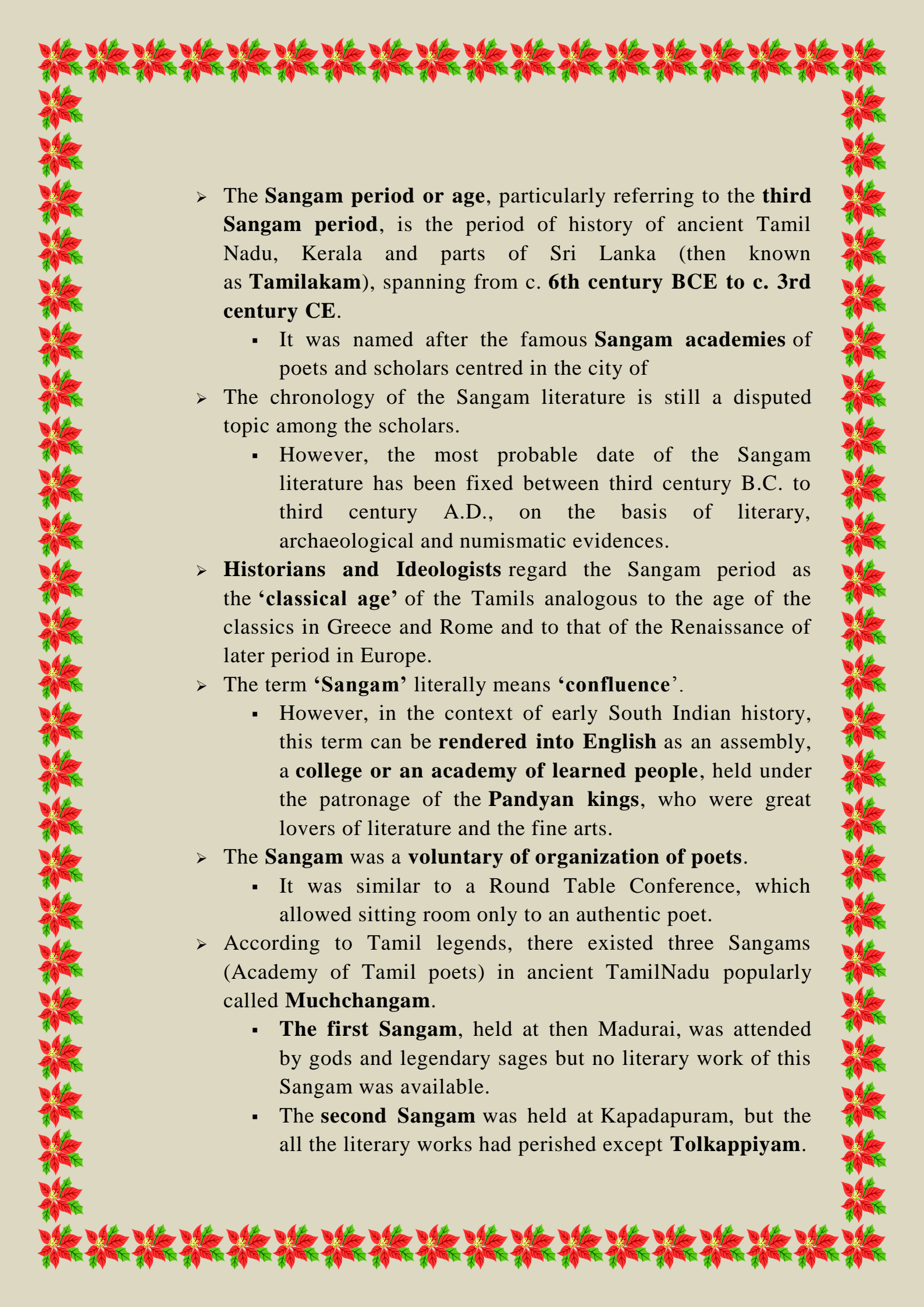
LEARNING RESOURCES

**SOCIO – CULTURAL HISTORY OF TAMILNADU UPTO
2000AD**

PREPARED

BY


PG & RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

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- The **Sangam period or age**, particularly referring to the **third Sangam period**, is the period of history of ancient Tamil Nadu, Kerala and parts of Sri Lanka (then known as **Tamilakam**), spanning from c. **6th century BCE to c. 3rd century CE**.
 - It was named after the famous **Sangam academies** of poets and scholars centred in the city of
 - The chronology of the Sangam literature is still a disputed topic among the scholars.
 - However, the most probable date of the Sangam literature has been fixed between third century B.C. to third century A.D., on the basis of literary, archaeological and numismatic evidences.
 - **Historians and Ideologists** regard the Sangam period as the '**classical age**' of the Tamils analogous to the age of the classics in Greece and Rome and to that of the Renaissance of later period in Europe.
 - The term '**Sangam**' literally means '**confluence**'.
 - However, in the context of early South Indian history, this term can be **rendered into English** as an assembly, a **college or an academy of learned people**, held under the patronage of the **Pandyan kings**, who were great lovers of literature and the fine arts.
 - The **Sangam** was a **voluntary of organization of poets**.
 - It was similar to a Round Table Conference, which allowed sitting room only to an authentic poet.
 - According to Tamil legends, there existed three Sangams (Academy of Tamil poets) in ancient TamilNadu popularly called **Muchchangam**.
 - **The first Sangam**, held at then Madurai, was attended by gods and legendary sages but no literary work of this Sangam was available.
 - The **second Sangam** was held at Kapadapuram, but the all the literary works had perished except **Tolkappiyam**.

- The **third Sangam** at **Madurai** was founded by **Mudathirumaran**. It was attended by a large number of poets who produced voluminous literature, but only a few had survived.

Sangam Literature

- As mentioned earlier, the Sangam works contain **mines of information** for the study of early history of **Tamilakam**.
- They reflect the matter of great historical importance.
- **Tolkappiyam**, a treatise on Tamil grammar and poetics, composed probably during the second Sangam, is the **oldest extant literary work in Tamil**.
- Modern scholarship use the term 'Sangam Literature' for only those works in verse (prose is of much later origin), which are comprised in the **Ettutogai** (Eight collections), **Pattupattu** (Ten songs) and **Patinenkilkanakku** (The Eighteen Minor Works), which are judged to have been produced in that order during the period A.D 150-250.
 - The Ettutogai or Eight Anthologies consist of eight works:
 - Aingurunooru
 - Narrinai
 - Aganaooru
 - Purananooru
 - Kuruntogai
 - Kalittogai
 - Paripadal and
 - Padirruppattu
 - The Pattupattu or Ten Idylls consist of ten works:
 - Thirumurugarruppadai
 - Porunararruppadai
 - Sirupanarruppadai
 - Perumpanarruppadai
 - Mullaippattu
 - Nedunalvadai
 - Maduraikkanji
 - Kurinjippattu
 - Pattinappalai and

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- Malaipadukadam
 - **Pathinenkilkanakku** contains eighteen works mostly dealing with ethics and morals. The most important among them is Tirukkural authored by
 - Further, the so called ‘**Five Epics**’ (‘the five great poems’) include **Jivakachintamani**, **Silappadikaram**, **Manimekalai**, **Valayapathi** and **Kundalakesi**
 - **Ilango Adigal** was the author of **Silappadikaram**
 - **Manimekalai** was written by **Sathanar** mainly to propound the Buddhist doctrine among Tamils
 - These poetical works describe about the social, religious, economic and political conditions of Tamilakam with the focus on the cities like **Madurai**, **Puhar** (Poompuhar/ Kaveripattinam), **Vanji** (Karur) and
 - Also, the ‘**Eighteen Minor Works**’ include the ethical and didactic literature. The didactic literature, which includes the world famous **Tirukkural** is mostly in stanza form.

Political History

- The Tamil country was ruled by three dynasties namely the **Chera**, **Chola** and **Pandyas** during the Sangam Age.
 - The political history of these dynasties can be traced from the literary references.
- **Cheras**
 - The Cheras ruled over parts of modern Kerala.
 - Their capital was Vanji and their important seaports were Tondi and Musiri
 - Cheran Senguttuvan belonged to 2nd century A.D. His younger brother was Elango Adigal, the author of Silappathigaram
- **Cholas**
 - The Chola kingdom of the Sangam period extended from modern **Tiruchi** district to southern Andhra Pradesh
 - Their capital was first located at Uraiyyur and then shifted to Puhar.



- **Pandyas**

- The Pandyas ruled over the present day southern Tamil Nadu. Their capital was Madurai.
- Maduraikkanji written by Mangudi Maruthanar describes the socioeconomic condition of the Pandya country including the flourishing seaport of Korkai
- The Pandyan rule during the Sangam Age began to decline due to the invasion of the Kalabhras.

- **Minor Chieftains**

- The minor chieftains played a significant role in the Sangam period.
- Although they were **subordinate** to the Chera, Chola and Pandya rulers, they were powerful and popular in their respective regions.

Sangam Polity

- **Hereditary monarchy** was the form of government during the Sangam period.
 - The king had to take the advice of his minister, court-poet and the **imperial court or avai**.
- **The Chera kings** assumed titles like Vanavaramban, Vanavan, Kuttuvan, Irumporai and Villavar,
 - The Chola kings assumed titles like Senni, Valavan and Killi
 - The Pandya kings assumed titles like Thennavar and Minavar.
- Each of the Sangam dynasties had a royal emblem, such as:
 - Carp for the Pandyas
 - Tiger for the Cholas
 - Bow for the Cheras.
- The imperial court or Avai was attended by a number of chiefs and officials.
- The king was assisted by a large body of officials who were divided into **five councils**.
 - They were ministers (amaichar), priests (anthanar), military commanders (senapathi), envoys (thuthar) and spies (orarr).

- Further, the policies of the king were controlled by a **system of checks and balances** in the councils.
 - **Silappadikaram** refers to the two types of councils — **Aimperunkulu and Enperayam**.
 - The **aimperunkulu** or the council of five members was the council of the ministers.
 - **The enperayam** or the great assembly (perayam) consisted of 8 members (government officers).
 - This worked as an administrative machinery of the state. These two assemblies that of the Five and that of the Eight functioned as administrative bodies, though their function was generally advisory in character. However, their **advice was rarely rejected by the king**.
- The military administration was also efficiently organized during the Sangam Age.
 - Each ruler had a regular army and their respective **Kodimaram** (tutelary tree).
- Further, **Land revenue** was the chief source of state's income while **custom duty** was also imposed on foreign trade.
 - The **Pattinappalai** refers to the custom officials employed in the seaport of Puhar.
- Also, Booty captured in wars was also a major income to the royal treasury.
 - Roads and highways were well maintained and guarded night and day to prevent robbery and smuggling
- Also, of the **three muventars** (three crowned monarch) the **Cholas** controlled the fully irrigated fertile **Cauvery** (Kaveri) basin with their capital at **Uraiyur**, the **Pandyas** ruled over the **pastoral** and **littoral parts** with the capital at **Madurai**, and the **Cheras** had their sway over the **hilly country** in the west with **Vanji (Karur)** as the capital

Sangam Society

- Tolkappiyam refers to the fivefold division of lands.
- The people living in these five divisions had their respective chief occupations, as well as their Gods as follows:

Land Division

Chief Deity

Occupation

Kurinji

Murugan

Hunting and honey collection

Mullai

Mayon (Vishnu)

Cattle-rearing and dealing with dairy products

Marudam

Indira

Agriculture

Neydal

Varunan

Fishing and salt manufacturing

Palai

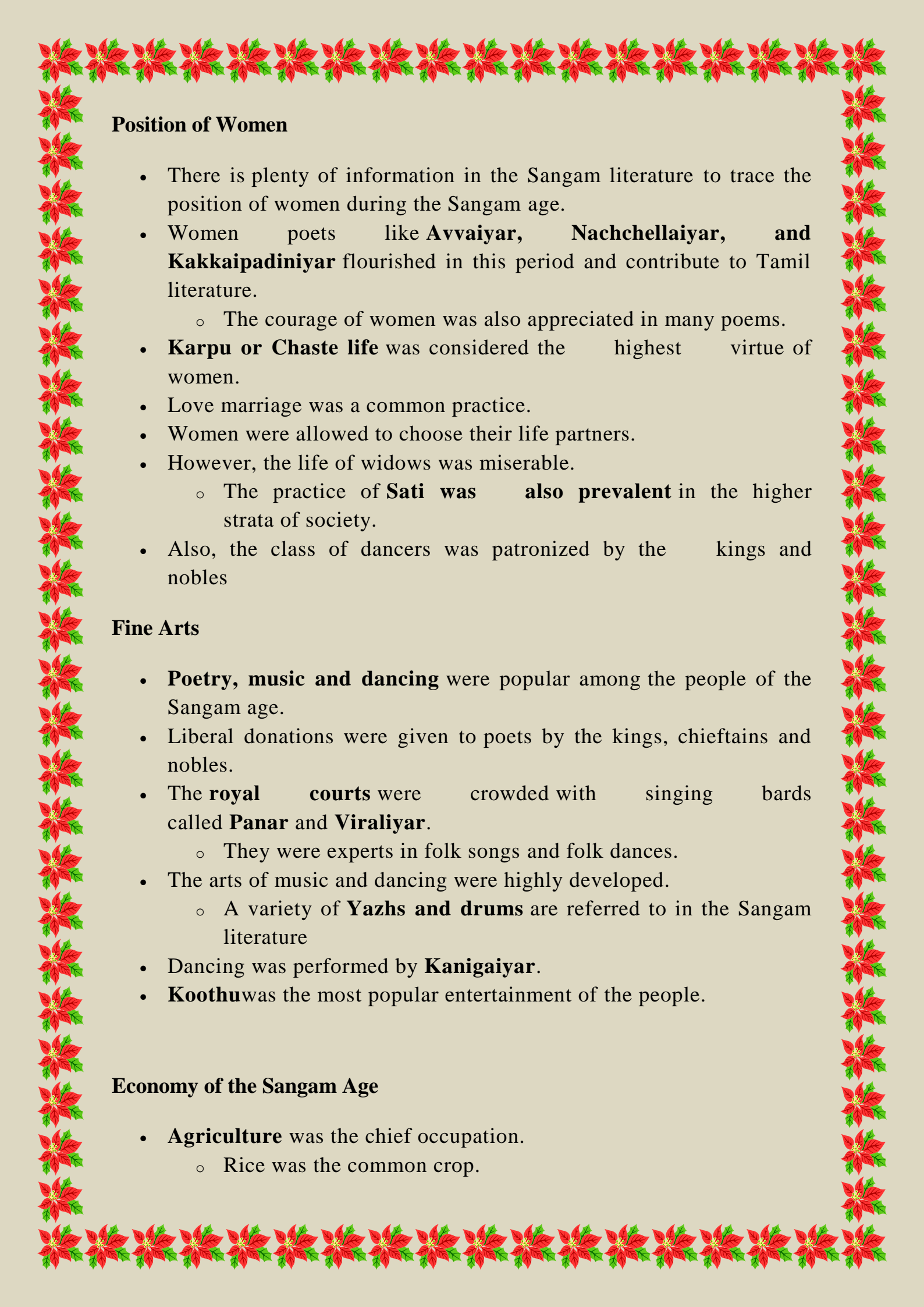
Korravai

Robbery

- Also, *tolkappiyam* also refers to four castes namely:
 - **Arasar**, which was the ruling class
 - **Anthanars.**, which played a significant role in the Sangam polity and religion.
 - **Vanigars** carried on trade and commerce
 - **Vellalas** were agriculturists.
- Other tribal groups like Parathavar, Panar, Eyinar, Kadambar, Maravar and Pulaiyar were also found in the Sangam society.
 - Ancient primitive tribes like Thodas, Irulas, Nagas and Vedars lived in this period.

Religion

- The primary deity of the Sangam period was **Seyon or Murugan**, who is hailed as Tamil God.
 - The worship of Murugan has an ancient origin and the festivals relating to God Murugan was mentioned in the Sangam literature.
- Other gods worshipped during the Sangam period were Mayon (Vishnu), Vendan (Indiran), Varunan and Korravai.
- The Hero Stone or Nadu Kal worship was significant in the Sangam period.
 - The Hero Stone was erected in memory of the bravery shown by the warrior in battle



Position of Women

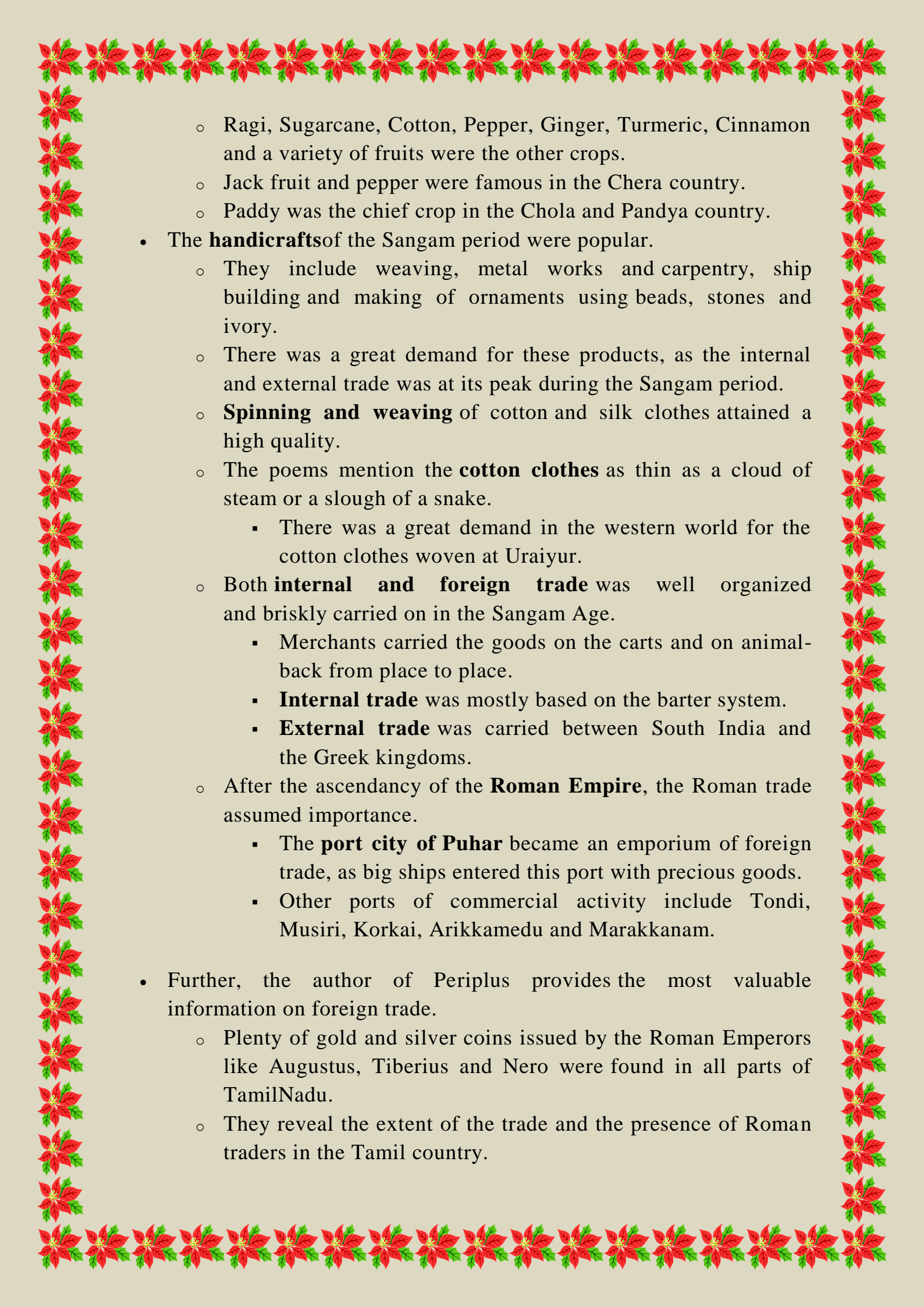
- There is plenty of information in the Sangam literature to trace the position of women during the Sangam age.
- Women poets like **Avvaiyar**, **Nachchellaiyar**, and **Kakkaipadiniyar** flourished in this period and contribute to Tamil literature.
 - The courage of women was also appreciated in many poems.
- **Karpu or Chaste life** was considered the highest virtue of women.
- Love marriage was a common practice.
- Women were allowed to choose their life partners.
- However, the life of widows was miserable.
 - The practice of **Sati** was also prevalent in the higher strata of society.
- Also, the class of dancers was patronized by the kings and nobles


Fine Arts

- **Poetry, music and dancing** were popular among the people of the Sangam age.
- Liberal donations were given to poets by the kings, chieftains and nobles.
- The **royal courts** were crowded with singing bards called **Panar** and **Viraliyar**.
 - They were experts in folk songs and folk dances.
- The arts of music and dancing were highly developed.
 - A variety of **Yazhs and drums** are referred to in the Sangam literature
- Dancing was performed by **Kanigaiyar**.
- **Koothu** was the most popular entertainment of the people.

Economy of the Sangam Age

- **Agriculture** was the chief occupation.
 - Rice was the common crop.

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- Ragi, Sugarcane, Cotton, Pepper, Ginger, Turmeric, Cinnamon and a variety of fruits were the other crops.
 - Jack fruit and pepper were famous in the Chera country.
 - Paddy was the chief crop in the Chola and Pandya country.
 - The **handicrafts** of the Sangam period were popular.
 - They include weaving, metal works and carpentry, ship building and making of ornaments using beads, stones and ivory.
 - There was a great demand for these products, as the internal and external trade was at its peak during the Sangam period.
 - **Spinning and weaving** of cotton and silk clothes attained a high quality.
 - The poems mention the **cotton clothes** as thin as a cloud of steam or a slough of a snake.
 - There was a great demand in the western world for the cotton clothes woven at Uraiyur.
 - Both **internal and foreign trade** was well organized and briskly carried on in the Sangam Age.
 - Merchants carried the goods on the carts and on animal-back from place to place.
 - **Internal trade** was mostly based on the barter system.
 - **External trade** was carried between South India and the Greek kingdoms.
 - After the ascendancy of the **Roman Empire**, the Roman trade assumed importance.
 - The **port city of Puhar** became an emporium of foreign trade, as big ships entered this port with precious goods.
 - Other ports of commercial activity include Tondi, Musiri, Korkai, Arikamedu and Marakkanam.
 - Further, the author of Periplus provides the most valuable information on foreign trade.
 - Plenty of gold and silver coins issued by the Roman Emperors like Augustus, Tiberius and Nero were found in all parts of TamilNadu.
 - They reveal the extent of the trade and the presence of Roman traders in the Tamil country.


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- The **main exports** of the Sangam age were Cotton, Fabrics, Spices like Pepper, Ginger, Cardamom, Cinnamon and Turmeric, Ivory products, Pearls and precious stones.
 - While Gold, horses and sweet wine were the **chief imports**.

Analysis of the Sangam Age

- Thus, the **picture that emerges** from the study of Sangam literature reflects that the period witnessed the **conception of state** for the first time in South India. However, it was still in the **process of crystallization**.
- Sangam polity was characterized by the **patriarchal and patrimonial systems** in which the administrative staff system and various offices were **directly controlled** by the rulers.
- We also notice **social inequalities** with the dominance of the Brahmanas.
 - But the **acute class distinction**, which appeared in later times, were **lacking in Sangam age**.
- **Agriculture** was the **backbone of Sangam economy**.
- The **trading activities**, especially trade relations with the Mediterranean World enriched their economy.
- The **foreign elements** also influenced the **socio-economic and cultural life** of people.
- The **beliefs and customs** practised by Sangam people suggest the complex nature of their religion.
 - Both, animism and idol worship, were followed during the Sangam age.

End of the Sangam Age

- Toward the **end of the third century A.**, the Sangam period **slowly witnessed its decline**.
- The Kalabhras occupied the Tamil country for about two and a half centuries.
- We have little information about the Kalabhra rule.
- Jainism and Buddhism became prominent during this period.

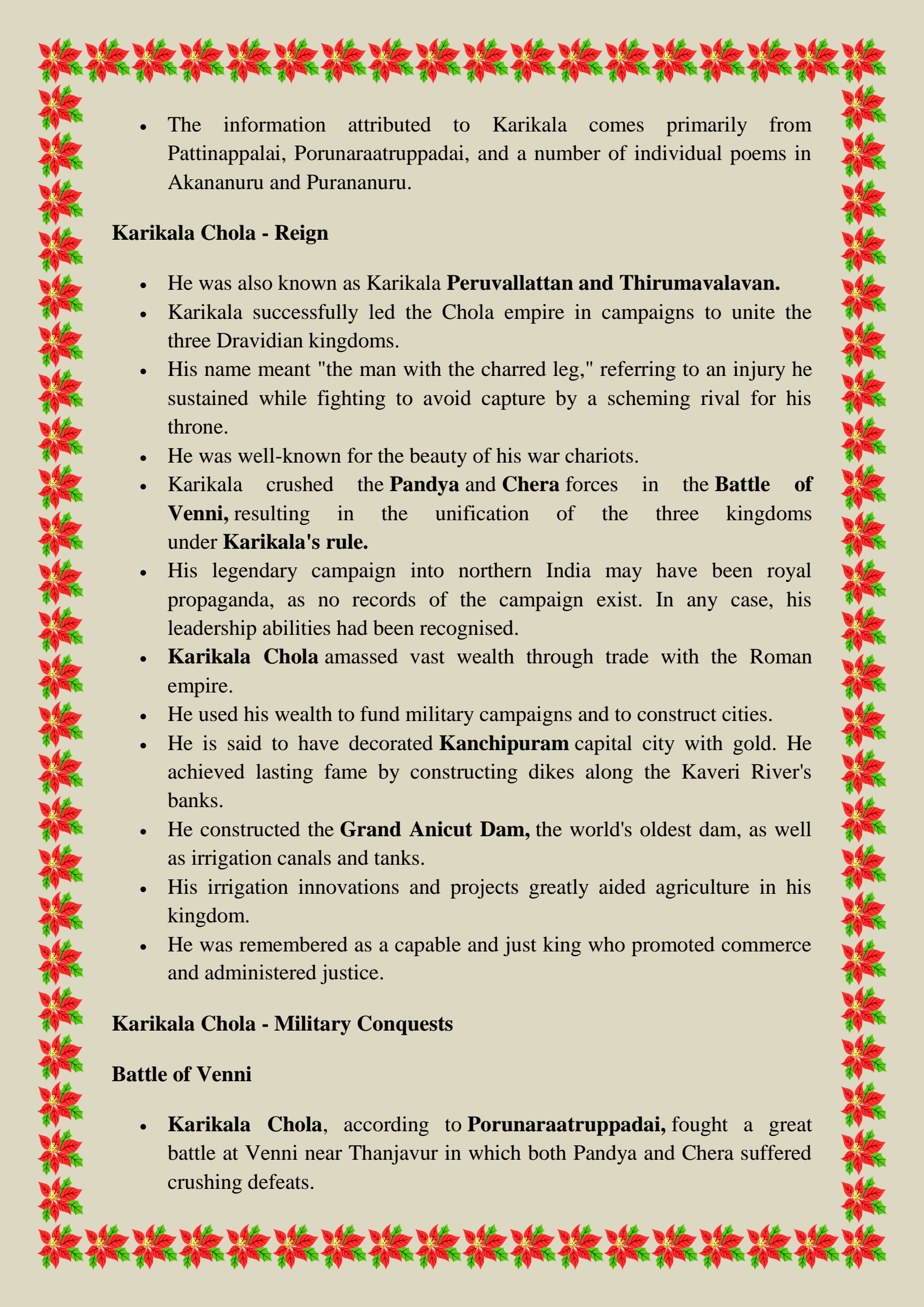
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- Later, the Pallavas in the northern Tamil Nadu and Pandyas in southern Tamil Nadu drove the Kalabhras out of the Tamil country and **established their rule.**

Karikala Chola

Karikala Chola was one of the Chola dynasty's greatest rulers. He was an early Chola king who reigned during the Sangam period. He also went by the names Karikala Peruvalathan and Thirumavalavan. His reign's date has yet to be determined because there are no clear proofs. The most commonly accepted date is 190 A.D. He succeeded his father Ilamchetchenni as the Chola empire's second known ruler. This article will explain to you the **Karikala** which will be helpful in Ancient History preparation

Karikala Chola - Early life

- Karikala, Ilamcetcenni's son, was known for the beauty of his numerous war chariots.
- Karikalan's name means "the man with the charred leg," and it commemorates a fire accident in his early years.
- Ilamcetcenni, King of Uraiyr, married a Velir princess from Azhundur, who became pregnant and gave birth to Karikala.
- Soon after, Ilamcetcenni died. Karikala's right to the throne was overlooked due to his youth, and the country was in political turmoil.
- Karikala has been exiled. When normalcy was restored, the Chola ministers dispatched a state elephant to search for the prince.
- The elephant tracked down the prince, who was hiding in Karuvur. His political opponents had him arrested and imprisoned.
- That night, the prison was set on fire. Karikala escaped the fire and defeated his enemies with the help of his uncle Irumpitarthalaian.
- Karikala's story combines legend and anecdotal information gleaned from Sangam literature.
- Karikala has left no authentic records of his reign in history. The numerous references in Sangam poetry were the only sources available to us.
- The extant Sangam literature has been difficult to date with any degree of certainty, leaving the time period in doubt.

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- The information attributed to Karikala comes primarily from Pattinappalai, Porunaraatrupidai, and a number of individual poems in Akananuru and Purananuru.


Karikala Chola - Reign

- He was also known as Karikala **Peruvallattan and Thirumavalavan**.
- Karikala successfully led the Chola empire in campaigns to unite the three Dravidian kingdoms.
- His name meant "the man with the charred leg," referring to an injury he sustained while fighting to avoid capture by a scheming rival for his throne.
- He was well-known for the beauty of his war chariots.
- Karikala crushed the **Pandya** and **Chera** forces in the **Battle of Venni**, resulting in the unification of the three kingdoms under **Karikala's rule**.
- His legendary campaign into northern India may have been royal propaganda, as no records of the campaign exist. In any case, his leadership abilities had been recognised.
- **Karikala Chola** amassed vast wealth through trade with the Roman empire.
- He used his wealth to fund military campaigns and to construct cities.
- He is said to have decorated **Kanchipuram** capital city with gold. He achieved lasting fame by constructing dikes along the Kaveri River's banks.
- He constructed the **Grand Anicut Dam**, the world's oldest dam, as well as irrigation canals and tanks.
- His irrigation innovations and projects greatly aided agriculture in his kingdom.
- He was remembered as a capable and just king who promoted commerce and administered justice.

Karikala Chola - Military Conquests

Battle of Venni

- **Karikala Chola**, according to **Porunaraatrupidai**, fought a great battle at Venni near Thanjavur in which both Pandya and Chera suffered crushing defeats.

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- Although little is known about the events leading up to that battle, it was a watershed moment in Karikala's career, breaking the back of the powerful confederacy formed against him.
 - Apart from the two crowned kings of the **Pandya and Chera countries**, eleven minor chieftains joined the campaign and shared Karikala's defeat.
 - The **Chera king** committed suicide by starvation after being wounded on his back in battle.
 - **Venni** was a watershed moment in Karikala's career, firmly establishing him on his throne and securing him a virtual hegemony among the three crowned monarchs.

Other wars and conquests

- Karikala had more opportunities to practise his arms after the battle of Venni.
- In the battle of **Vakaipparandalai**, he defeated a confederacy of nine minor chieftains.
- In his poem from **Agananuru**, **Paranar**, a contemporary of Karikala, mentions the incident without elaborating on the cause of the conflict.
- Karikala went on an expedition to the north after conquering the south and engraved his tiger emblem in the Himalayas.
- The king of the **great Vajra**, whose sway extended as far east as the roaring sea, presented him with a pearl canopy as a tribute, while the **king of Magadha**, famous for his sword-play and an enemy a while ago, presented him with an audience hall (pattimandram).
- The king of **Avanti** graciously presented him with a tall and beautiful arch on the gateway.

Grand Anicut

- Karikala fought in other battles after the battle of Venni. In the battle of **Vakaipparandalai**, he defeated a confederacy of nine minor chieftains.
- He was one of the few Tamil kings to rule over the entire island of Ceylon (modern Srilanka).
- Ceylon was ruled by the Sinhalese kingdom at the time.

- After defeating the Sinhalese, he decided to build an Anicut along the banks of the Kaveri river. He built Anicut with the help of **Sinhalese** war prisoners.
- They are used to transport massive blocks of rock from the mountains to the **Kaveri River's** bank.
- The **Grand Anicut** is now known as the Kallanai dam, an ancient dam built across the **Kaveri river** in Trichy district, Tamilnadu.
- It is regarded as one of the world's oldest water diversion or water regulator structures that is still in use.
- **Karikala Chola** will be remembered for his efforts to divert river water to agricultural fields for irrigation.

Perur Patteeswarar Temple

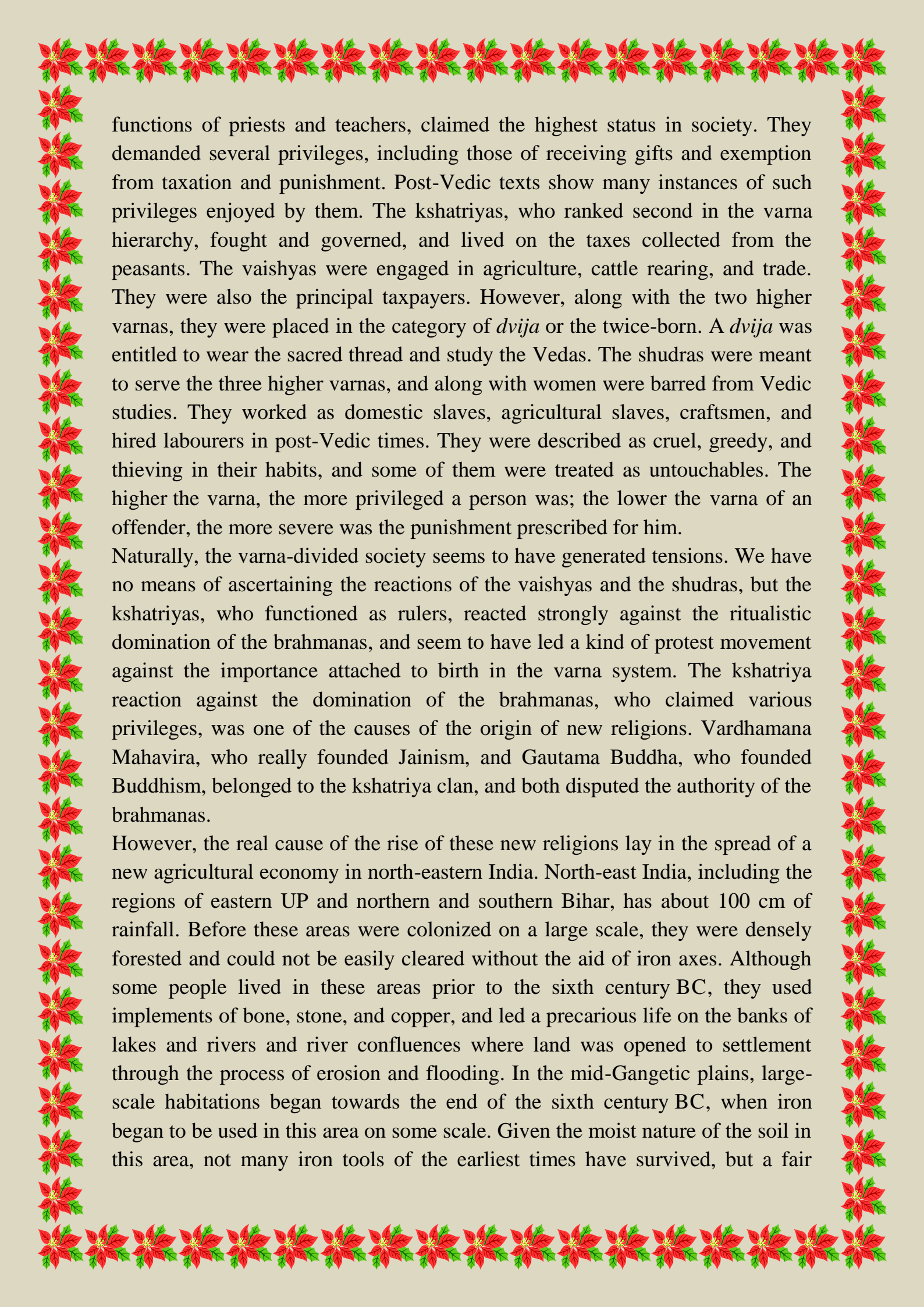
- Karikala returned to Tamil land after defeating the Northern kingdoms of **Vatsa, Magadha, and Avantika**, and worshipped Lord Shiva at the Perur Pateeswarar Temple on the banks of the river Noyyal.
- Karikala was a devout follower of Lord Shiva. He is said to have performed the temple's **Kumbhabhishekam** (sanctification ritual) using a hundred golden vessels.
- Kachiyappa Munivar wrote a famous Tamil text called Perur Puranam about the temple's origins.

Conclusion

Karikala Chola was a great ruler of the Chola dynasty. He ruled during the Sangam period as an early Chola king. Karikala's story weaves together legend and anecdotal information from Sangam literature. Karikala's reign has left no authentic records in history. The only sources we had were the numerous references in Sangam poetry. The existing Sangam literature has been difficult to date with any degree of certainty, casting doubt on the time period.

Rise of Jainism and Buddhism The Causes of Origin


Post-Vedic society was clearly divided into four varnas: brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas, and shudras. Each varna was assigned well-defined functions. Though varna was based on birth, the two higher varnas captured power, prestige and privileges at the cost of the lower varnas. The brahmanas, who were allotted the



functions of priests and teachers, claimed the highest status in society. They demanded several privileges, including those of receiving gifts and exemption from taxation and punishment. Post-Vedic texts show many instances of such privileges enjoyed by them. The kshatriyas, who ranked second in the varna hierarchy, fought and governed, and lived on the taxes collected from the peasants. The vaishyas were engaged in agriculture, cattle rearing, and trade. They were also the principal taxpayers. However, along with the two higher varnas, they were placed in the category of *dvija* or the twice-born. A *dvija* was entitled to wear the sacred thread and study the Vedas. The shudras were meant to serve the three higher varnas, and along with women were barred from Vedic studies. They worked as domestic slaves, agricultural slaves, craftsmen, and hired labourers in post-Vedic times. They were described as cruel, greedy, and thieving in their habits, and some of them were treated as untouchables. The higher the varna, the more privileged a person was; the lower the varna of an offender, the more severe was the punishment prescribed for him.

Naturally, the varna-divided society seems to have generated tensions. We have no means of ascertaining the reactions of the vaishyas and the shudras, but the kshatriyas, who functioned as rulers, reacted strongly against the ritualistic domination of the brahmanas, and seem to have led a kind of protest movement against the importance attached to birth in the varna system. The kshatriya reaction against the domination of the brahmanas, who claimed various privileges, was one of the causes of the origin of new religions. Vardhamana Mahavira, who really founded Jainism, and Gautama Buddha, who founded Buddhism, belonged to the kshatriya clan, and both disputed the authority of the brahmanas.


However, the real cause of the rise of these new religions lay in the spread of a new agricultural economy in north-eastern India. North-east India, including the regions of eastern UP and northern and southern Bihar, has about 100 cm of rainfall. Before these areas were colonized on a large scale, they were densely forested and could not be easily cleared without the aid of iron axes. Although some people lived in these areas prior to the sixth century BC, they used implements of bone, stone, and copper, and led a precarious life on the banks of lakes and rivers and river confluences where land was opened to settlement through the process of erosion and flooding. In the mid-Gangetic plains, large-scale habitations began towards the end of the sixth century BC, when iron began to be used in this area on some scale. Given the moist nature of the soil in this area, not many iron tools of the earliest times have survived, but a fair



number of axes have been found from the layers of *c.* 600–500 BC. The use of iron tools made possible clearance, agriculture, and large settlements. The agricultural economy based on the iron ploughshare required the use of bullocks, and could not flourish without animal husbandry. However, the Vedic practice of killing cattle indiscriminately in sacrifices hampered the progress of the new agriculture. The cattle wealth was gradually decimated because the cows and bullocks were being killed in the course of the numerous Vedic sacrifices, and the non-Vedic tribal people living on the southern and eastern fringes of Magadha also killed cattle for food. However, if the new agrarian economy was to stabilize, this killing had to be halted.

Around 500 BC, we see the rise of a large number of cities in northeastern India. We may refer, for example, to Kaushambi near Allahabad, Kusinagar (in Deoria district of UP), Varanasi, Vaishali (in the newly created district of the same name in north Bihar), Chirand (in Saran district), Taradih in Bodh-Gaya, Pataliputra, Rajgir (situated at a distance of about 100 km south-east of Patna), and Champa in Bhagalpur district. Both Vardhamana Mahavira and Gautama Buddha were associated with several of these cities. In them, many artisans and traders worked who used coins for the first time. The earliest coins relate to the fifth century BC, and they were generally of the punch-marked variety. They circulated for the first time in eastern UP and Bihar. The use of coins naturally facilitated trade and commerce, which added to the importance of the vaishyas. In the brahmanical society, the vaishyas, as we have noted, ranked third, after the brahmanas and kshatriyas. Naturally they sought a religion that would improve their position. Besides the kshatriyas, the vaishyas extended generous support to both Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. The merchants, called the *setthis*, made handsome gifts to Gautama Buddha and his disciples. There were several reasons for it. First, Jainism and Buddhism at the initial stage did not attach any importance to the existing varna system. Second, they preached the gospel of non-violence, which would put an end to wars between different kingdoms and consequently promote trade and commerce. Third, the brahmanical law-books, called the Dharmasutras, decried lending money at an interest, and condemned those who lived on interest. Therefore, the vaishyas, who lent money because of the growing trade and commerce, were held in low esteem and looked for better social status.

On the other hand, we also notice a strong reaction against various forms of private property. Old-fashioned people did not like the use and accumulation of coins made certainly of silver and copper and possibly of gold. They disliked




the new dwellings and clothes, new luxurious systems of transport, and disliked war and violence. The new forms of property created social inequalities, and caused misery and suffering to the mass of ordinary people. Therefore, the common people yearned to return to a primitive lifestyle, to the ascetic ideal which dispensed with the new forms of property and the new style of life. Both Jainism and Buddhism propounded simple, puritan, ascetic living. The Buddhist and Jaina monks were asked to forego the good things of life; were not permitted to touch gold and silver. They were allowed to accept only as much from their patrons as was sufficient to keep body and soul together. They, therefore, rebelled against the material advantages stemming from the new lifestyle of the Gangetic basin. In other words, we find the same kind of reaction against changes in material life in the mid-Gangetic plain in the sixth and fifth centuries BC as occurred against the changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution of modern times. As with the coming of the Industrial Revolution, many people yearned for a return to a pre-machine age lifestyle, so in ancient times, people yearned for a return to the pre-Iron Age style of life.

Vardhamana Mahavira and Jainism

The Jainas believed that their most important religious teacher Mahavira had twenty-three predecessors who were called *tirthankaras*. If Mahavira is taken as the last or the twenty-fourth *tirthankara*, the origin of Jainism would go back to the ninth century BC. Some Jainas believe that Rishabhadeve was the first *tirthankara* or teacher of Jainism, but he is associated with Ayodhya which was settled on any scale only by 500 BC. Most *tirthankaras*, up to the fifteenth, were supposed to have been born in eastern UP and Bihar, but their historicity is extremely doubtful. No part of the mid-Gangetic plains was settled on any scale until the fifth century BC. Evidently the mythology of the *tirthankaras*, most of whom were born in the mid-Gangetic basin and attained nirvana in Bihar, seems to have been created to endow Jainism with antiquity. The earliest important teachings of Jainism are attributed to Parshvanatha, the twenty-third *tirthankara*, who hailed from Banaras, abandoned royal life, and became an ascetic. However, it was his spiritual successor Vardhamana Mahavira who was the real founder of Jainism.

It is difficult to fix the exact dates of the birth and death of the great reformers Vardhamana Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. According to one tradition, Vardhamana Mahavira was born in 540 BC in a village near Vaishali, which is coterminous with Basarh in Vaishali district of north Bihar. His father




Siddhartha was the head of a famous kshatriya clan, and his mother, Trishala, was the sister of the Lichchhavi chief Chetaka, whose daughter was married to Bimbisara. Thus, Mahavira's family was connected with the royal family of Magadh, and such high connections made it easy for him to approach princes and nobles in the course of his mission.

Initially, Mahavira led the life of a householder, but in his quest for truth he abandoned the world at the age of 30 and became an ascetic. He wandered for twelve years from place to place, not staying for over a day in a village and more than five days in a town. During the course of his long journey of twelve years it is said he never changed his clothes, and abandoned them altogether at the age of 42 when he attained omniscience (*kaivalya*). Through *kaivalya* he conquered misery and happiness. Because of this conquest he is known as Mahavira or the great hero or *jina*, that is, the conqueror, and his followers are known as Jainas. He propagated his religion for thirty years, and his mission took him to Koshala, Magadha, Mithila, Champa, and elsewhere. He passed away at the age of 72 in 468 BC at a place called Pavapuri near modern Rajgir. According to another tradition he passed away in 527 BC, but, archaeology does not support his existence in the sixth century BC. The towns and other settlements with which he was associated did not come into existence till 500 BC.

Doctrines of Jainism

Jainism taught five doctrines: (i) do not commit violence, (ii) do not tell a lie, (iii) do not steal, (iv) do not hoard, and (v) observe continence (*brahmacharya*). It is said that only the fifth doctrine was added by Mahavira: the other four were taken over by him from previous teachers. Jainism attached the utmost importance to ahimsa or non-injury to living beings. Sometimes it led to absurd results, for some Jaina kings ordered the execution of persons guilty of killing animals. Although Parshva, Mahavira's predecessor, had asked his followers to cover the upper and lower portions of their bodies, Mahavira asked them to discard their clothing altogether. This implies that Mahavira asked his followers to lead a more austere life. Because of this, in later times, Jainism split into two sects: *shvetambaras* or those who donned white garments and *digambaras* who remained naked.

Jainism recognized the existence of the gods but placed them lower than the *jina*, and did not condemn the varna system as Buddhism did. According to Mahavira, a person is born in a high or in a lower varna as a consequence of his




sins committed or virtues acquired by him in his previous birth. Mahavira looks for human values even in a chandala. In his opinion, by leading pure and meritorious life, members of the lower castes can achieve liberation. Jainism principally aims at the attainment of freedom from worldly bonds. No ritual is necessary for such liberation. It can be obtained through right knowledge, right faith, and right action. These three are considered to be the three jewels or *triratna* of Jainism.

Jainism prohibited the practice of war and even agriculture for its followers because both involve the killing of living beings. Eventually the Jainas principally confined themselves to trade and mercantile activities.

Spread of Jainism

In order to spread the teachings of Jainism, Mahavira organized an order of his followers that admitted both men and women. He preached his teachings in Prakrit, the language of the common people. It is said that his followers numbered 14,000, which is not a large figure. As Jainism did not very clearly differentiate itself from the brahmanical religion, it failed to attract the masses. Despite this, Jainism gradually spread into south and west India where the brahmanical religion was weak. According to a late tradition, the spread of Jainism in Karnataka is attributed to Chandragupta Maurya (322– 298 BC). The emperor became a Jaina, gave up his throne, and spent the last years of his life in Karnataka as a Jaina ascetic, but this tradition is not corroborated by any other source. The second cause of the spread of Jainism in south India is said to have been the great famine that took place in Magadha 200 years after Mahavira's death. The famine lasted for twelve years, and in order to protect themselves, many Jainas migrated to the south under the leadership of Bhadrabahu, though the rest of them stayed back in Magadha under the leadership of Sthalabahu. The emigrant Jainas spread Jainism in south India. At the end of the famine, they returned to Magadha, where they developed differences with the local Jainas. Those who returned from the south claimed that even during the famine they had strictly observed the religious rules. They alleged too that the Jaina ascetics living in Magadha had violated those rules and had become lax. In order to sort out these differences and to compile the principal teachings of Jainism, a council was convened in Pataliputra, modern Patna, but the Jainas who had returned from the south boycotted it and refused to accept its decisions. From now onwards, the southerners began to be called *digambaras* and the Magadhans *shvetambaras*. The tradition that refers




to drought as the cause relates to a later period and is considered doubtful. It is, however, beyond doubt that the Jainas were divided into two sects, but epigraphic evidence of the spread of Jainism in Karnataka is not earlier than the third century AD. In subsequent centuries, especially after the fifth century, numerous Jaina monastic establishments, called *basadis* sprang up in Karnataka and were granted land by the king for their support.

Jainism spread to Kalinga in Orissa in the fourth century BC, and in the first century BC it enjoyed the patronage of the Kalinga king Kharavela who had defeated the princes of Andhra and Magadha. In the second and first centuries BC, it also seems to have reached the southern districts of Tamil Nadu. In later centuries Jainism penetrated Malwa, Gujarat, and Rajasthan, and even now these areas have a substantial number of Jainas who are principally engaged in trade and commerce. Although Jainism did not win as much state patronage as did Buddhism and did not spread very rapidly in early times, it still retains its hold in the areas where it spread. On the other hand, Buddhism virtually disappeared from the Indian subcontinent.

Contribution of Jainism

Jainism made the first serious attempt to mitigate the evils of the varna order and the ritualistic Vedic religion. The early Jainas discarded the Sanskrit language principally patronized by the brahmanas. They adopted instead Prakrit, the language of the common people to preach their doctrines. Their religious literature was written in Ardhamagadhi, and the texts were eventually compiled in the sixth century AD in Gujarat at a place called Valabhi, a great centre of education. The adoption of Prakrit by the Jainas helped the growth of this language and its literature. Many regional languages developed out of Prakrit, particularly Shauraseni from which the Marathi language developed. The Jainas composed the earliest important works in Apabhramsha and compiled its first grammar. Jaina literature comprises epics, Puranas, novels, and drama. A large percentage of Jaina writing is still in the form of manuscripts that have yet to be published and which are to be found in the Jaina shrines of Gujarat and Rajasthan. In early medieval times, the Jainas also made substantial use of Sanskrit and wrote many texts in it. Last but not the least, they contributed to the growth of Kannada, in which they wrote extensively.

Initially, like the Buddhists, the Jainas were not image worshippers. Later they began to worship Mahavira and also the twenty-three *tirthankaras*. Beautiful and sometimes massive images in stone were sculpted for this purpose,



especially in Karnataka, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and MP. Jaina art in ancient times is not as rich as its Buddhist counterpart, but Jainism contributed substantially to art and architecture in medieval times.

Gautama Buddha and Buddhism

Gautama Buddha, or Siddhartha, was a contemporary of Mahavira. According to tradition he was born in 567 BC in a Shakya kshatriya family in Lumbini in Nepal near Kapilavastu, which is identified with Piprahwa in Basti district and is close to the foothills of Nepal. Gautama's father seems to have been the elected ruler of Kapilavastu, and headed the Shakya republican clan. His mother was a princess from the Koshalan dynasty. Thus, like Mahavira, Gautama too belonged to a noble family. Born in a republic, he also inherited some egalitarian beliefs.

From early childhood Gautama showed a meditative bent of mind. He was married early, but married life did not interest him. He was moved by the misery suffered by people in the world, and sought a solution. At the age of 29, like Mahavira, he left home. He wandered from place to place for about seven years and then attained enlightenment at the age of 35 at Bodh-Gaya under a *pipal* tree. From this time onwards he began to be called the Buddha or the enlightened one.

Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon at Sarnath in Banaras. He undertook long journeys and carried his message far and wide. He had a very strong physique, and this enabled him to walk 20 to 30 km a day. He kept wandering, preaching, and meditating continually for forty years, resting only during the annual rainy season. During this long period he encountered many staunch supporters of rival sects, including the brahmanas, but defeated them in debates. His missionary activities did not discriminate between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, and man and woman. Gautama Buddha passed away at the age of 80 in 487 BC at a place called Kusinagara, coterminous with the village called Kasia in Deoria district in eastern UP. However, as in the case of Vardhamana Mahavira, the existence of Gautama Buddha in the sixth century BC is not supported by archaeological evidence. The cities Kaushambi, Shravasti, Varanasi, Vaishali, and Rajgriha, which the Buddha visited, did not assume any urban character until the fifth century BC.



Doctrines of Buddhism

The Buddha proved to be a practical reformer who took note of the realities of the day. He did not involve himself in fruitless controversies regarding the soul (*atman*) and Brahma which raged in his time, but addressed himself to worldly problems. He said that the world was full of sorrows and that people suffered on account of desires. If desires are conquered, nirvana is attained, that is, man is free from the cycle of birth and death.


Gautama Buddha recommended an eightfold path (*ashtangika marga*) for the elimination of human misery. This path is attributed to him in a text of about the third century BC. It comprised right observation, right determination, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right awareness, and right concern. If a person follows this eightfold path, he would free himself from the machinations of priests, and would reach his destination. Gautama taught that a person should avoid an excess of both luxury and austerity, and prescribed the middle path.

The Buddha also laid down a code of conduct for his followers on the same lines as those of the Jaina teachers. The principal tenets are: (i) do not commit violence, (ii) do not covet the property of others, (iii) do not use intoxicants, (iv) do not tell a lie, and (v) do not indulge in sexual misconduct and adultery. These teachings are common to the social conduct ordained by virtually all religions.

Features of Buddhism and the Causes of its Spread

Buddhism does not recognize the existence of god and soul. This can be seen as a kind of revolution in the history of Indian religions. As early Buddhism was not enmeshed in the claptrap of philosophical discussion, it appealed to the common people, and particularly won the support of the lower orders because it attacked the varna system. People were accepted by the Buddhist order without any consideration of caste, and women too were admitted to the sangha and thus brought on a par with men. In comparison with Brahmanism, Buddhism was liberal and democratic.

Buddhism particularly appealed to the people of the non-Vedic areas where it found virgin soil for conversion. The people of Magadha responded readily to Buddhism because they were looked down upon by the orthodox brahmanas. Magadha was placed outside the pale of the holy Aryavarta, the land of the Aryas, covering modern UP. The old tradition persists, and the people of north Bihar prefer not to be cremated south of the Ganges in Magadha.



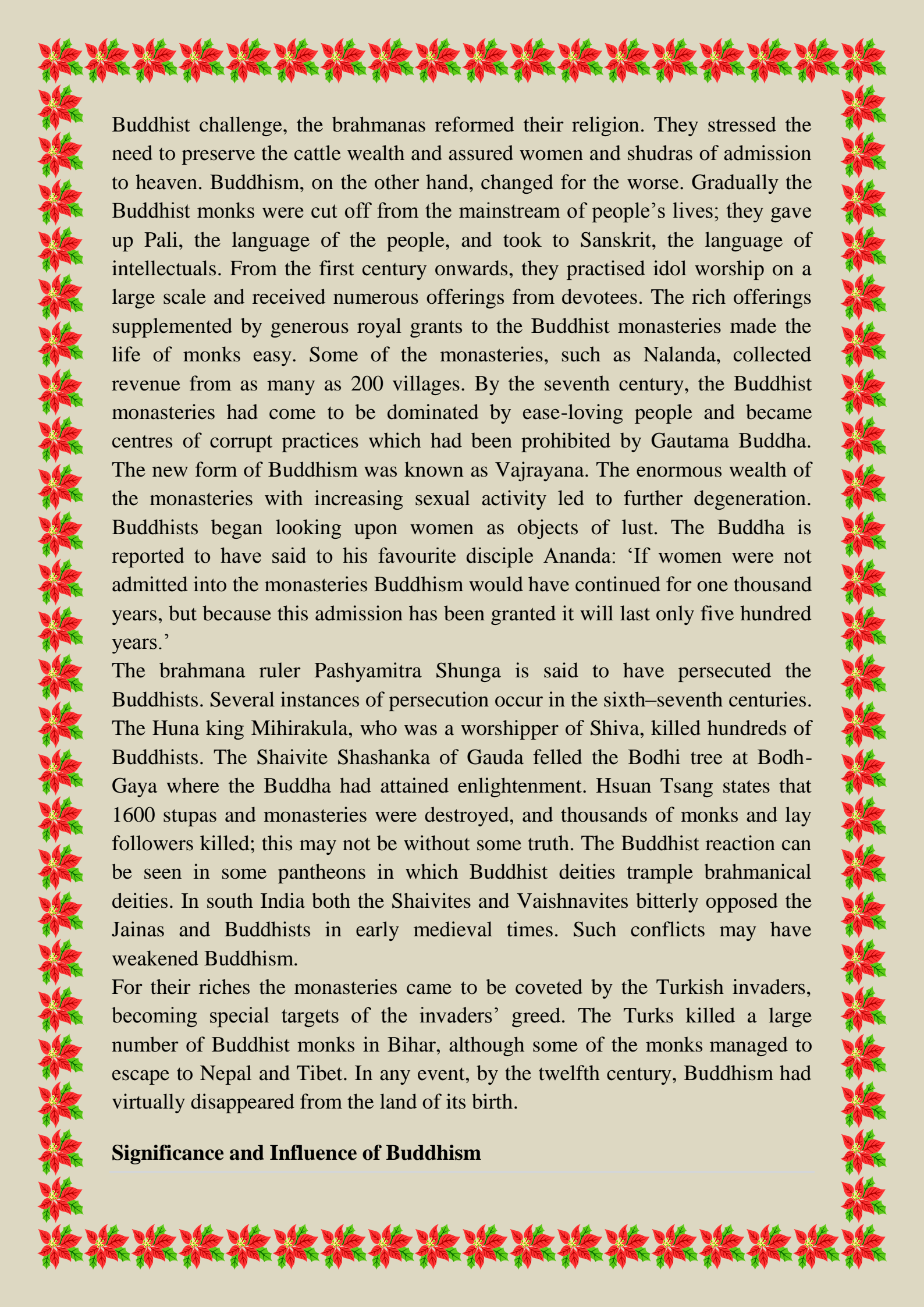
The personality of the Buddha and the method adopted by him to preach his religion helped the spread of Buddhism. He sought to fight evil by goodness and hatred by love and refused to be provoked by slander and abuse. He maintained his poise and calm under difficult circumstances and tackled his opponents with wit and presence of mind. It is said that on one occasion an ignorant person abused him. The Buddha listened on silently, and when the person had ended his abuse, the Buddha asked: ‘My friend, if a person does not accept a present what will happen to it?’ His adversary replied: ‘It remains with the person who has offered it.’ The Buddha then said: ‘My friend, I do not accept your abuse.’

The use of Pali, a form of Prakrit, which began around 500 BC, contributed to the spread of Buddhism. It facilitated the spread of Buddhist doctrines amongst the common people. Gautama Buddha also organized the sangha or the religious order, whose doors were open to all irrespective of caste, creed, and sex. However, slaves, soldiers, and debtors could not be admitted. The monks were required to observe the rules and regulations of the sangha faithfully. Once they were enrolled as members of the Buddhist church, they had to take the vow of continence, poverty, and faith. There are thus three principal elements in Buddhism: Buddha, dhamma, and sangha. As a result of organized preaching under the auspices of the sangha, Buddhism made rapid strides even during Buddha’s lifetime. The monarchies of Magadha, Koshala, and Kaushambi, and several republican states and their people adopted this religion.

Two hundred years after the death of the Buddha, Ashoka, the famous Maurya king, embraced Buddhism. This was an epoch-making event. Through his missionaries Ashoka spread Buddhism into Central Asia, West Asia, and Sri Lanka, and thus transformed it into a world religion. Even today Sri Lanka, Burma (Myanmar), Tibet, and parts of China and Japan profess Buddhism. Although Buddhism disappeared from the land of its birth, it continues to hold ground in the countries of South Asia, South east Asia, and East Asia.

Causes of the Decline of Buddhism

By the twelfth century Buddhism became virtually extinct in India. It had continued to exist in an altered form in Bengal and Bihar till the eleventh century, but after that Buddhism almost completely vanished from India. What caused this? We find that at the outset every religion is inspired by the spirit of reform, but eventually it succumbs to the rituals and ceremonies it originally denounces. Buddhism underwent a similar metamorphosis. It became a victim to the evils of Brahmanism against which it had initially fought. To meet the

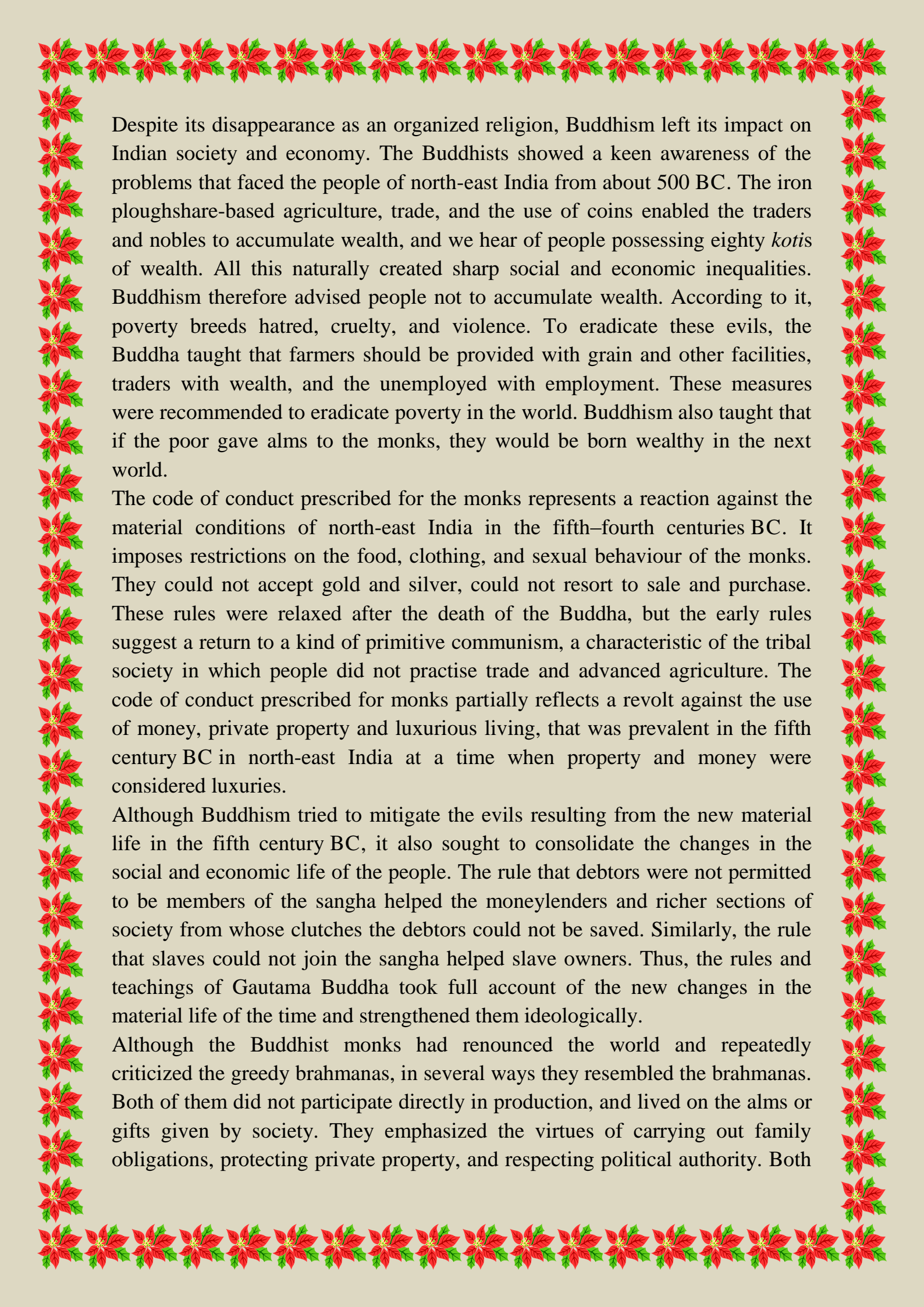


Buddhist challenge, the brahmanas reformed their religion. They stressed the need to preserve the cattle wealth and assured women and shudras of admission to heaven. Buddhism, on the other hand, changed for the worse. Gradually the Buddhist monks were cut off from the mainstream of people's lives; they gave up Pali, the language of the people, and took to Sanskrit, the language of intellectuals. From the first century onwards, they practised idol worship on a large scale and received numerous offerings from devotees. The rich offerings supplemented by generous royal grants to the Buddhist monasteries made the life of monks easy. Some of the monasteries, such as Nalanda, collected revenue from as many as 200 villages. By the seventh century, the Buddhist monasteries had come to be dominated by ease-loving people and became centres of corrupt practices which had been prohibited by Gautama Buddha. The new form of Buddhism was known as Vajrayana. The enormous wealth of the monasteries with increasing sexual activity led to further degeneration. Buddhists began looking upon women as objects of lust. The Buddha is reported to have said to his favourite disciple Ananda: 'If women were not admitted into the monasteries Buddhism would have continued for one thousand years, but because this admission has been granted it will last only five hundred years.'

The brahmana ruler Pashyamitra Shunga is said to have persecuted the Buddhists. Several instances of persecution occur in the sixth–seventh centuries. The Huna king Mihirakula, who was a worshipper of Shiva, killed hundreds of Buddhists. The Shaivite Shashanka of Gauda felled the Bodhi tree at Bodhi-Gaya where the Buddha had attained enlightenment. Hsuan Tsang states that 1600 stupas and monasteries were destroyed, and thousands of monks and lay followers killed; this may not be without some truth. The Buddhist reaction can be seen in some pantheons in which Buddhist deities trample brahmanical deities. In south India both the Shaivites and Vaishnavites bitterly opposed the Jainas and Buddhists in early medieval times. Such conflicts may have weakened Buddhism.

For their riches the monasteries came to be coveted by the Turkish invaders, becoming special targets of the invaders' greed. The Turks killed a large number of Buddhist monks in Bihar, although some of the monks managed to escape to Nepal and Tibet. In any event, by the twelfth century, Buddhism had virtually disappeared from the land of its birth.

Significance and Influence of Buddhism




Despite its disappearance as an organized religion, Buddhism left its impact on Indian society and economy. The Buddhists showed a keen awareness of the problems that faced the people of north-east India from about 500 BC. The iron ploughshare-based agriculture, trade, and the use of coins enabled the traders and nobles to accumulate wealth, and we hear of people possessing eighty *kotis* of wealth. All this naturally created sharp social and economic inequalities. Buddhism therefore advised people not to accumulate wealth. According to it, poverty breeds hatred, cruelty, and violence. To eradicate these evils, the Buddha taught that farmers should be provided with grain and other facilities, traders with wealth, and the unemployed with employment. These measures were recommended to eradicate poverty in the world. Buddhism also taught that if the poor gave alms to the monks, they would be born wealthy in the next world.

The code of conduct prescribed for the monks represents a reaction against the material conditions of north-east India in the fifth–fourth centuries BC. It imposes restrictions on the food, clothing, and sexual behaviour of the monks. They could not accept gold and silver, could not resort to sale and purchase. These rules were relaxed after the death of the Buddha, but the early rules suggest a return to a kind of primitive communism, a characteristic of the tribal society in which people did not practise trade and advanced agriculture. The code of conduct prescribed for monks partially reflects a revolt against the use of money, private property and luxurious living, that was prevalent in the fifth century BC in north-east India at a time when property and money were considered luxuries.

Although Buddhism tried to mitigate the evils resulting from the new material life in the fifth century BC, it also sought to consolidate the changes in the social and economic life of the people. The rule that debtors were not permitted to be members of the sangha helped the moneylenders and richer sections of society from whose clutches the debtors could not be saved. Similarly, the rule that slaves could not join the sangha helped slave owners. Thus, the rules and teachings of Gautama Buddha took full account of the new changes in the material life of the time and strengthened them ideologically.

Although the Buddhist monks had renounced the world and repeatedly criticized the greedy brahmanas, in several ways they resembled the brahmanas. Both of them did not participate directly in production, and lived on the alms or gifts given by society. They emphasized the virtues of carrying out family obligations, protecting private property, and respecting political authority. Both




supported the social order based on classes; for the monks, however, the varna was based on action and attributes but for the brahmanas it was based on birth. Undoubtedly the objective of Buddhist teaching was to secure the salvation of the individual or nirvana. Those who found it difficult to adjust themselves to the break-up of the old egalitarian society and the rise of gross social inequalities on account of private property were provided with some way of escape, but it was confined to the monks. No escape was provided for the lay followers, who were taught to come to terms with the existing situation.

Buddhism made an important impact on society by keeping its doors open to women and shudras. As both women and shudras were placed in the same category by Brahmanism, they were neither given the sacred thread nor allowed to read the Vedas. Their conversion to Buddhism freed them from such marks of inferiority. Buddhism did not deprecate manual labour. In a second-century sculpture from Bodh-Gaya, the Buddha is depicted ploughing with oxen.

With its emphasis on non-violence and the sanctity of animal life, Buddhism boosted the cattle wealth of the country. The earliest Buddhist text, *Suttanipata*, declares cattle to be givers of food, beauty, strength, and happiness (*annada, vannada, balada, sukhada*), and thus pleads for their protection. This teaching came, significantly, at a time when the non-Aryans slaughtered animals for food, and the Aryans in the name of religion. The brahmanical insistence on the sacredness of the cow and non-violence was apparently derived from Buddhist teachings.

Buddhism created and developed a new awareness in the field of intellect and culture. It taught the people not to take things for granted but to argue and judge them on merits. To a certain degree, the place of superstition was taken by logic, promoting rationalism among people. In order to preach the doctrines of the new religion, the Buddhists compiled a new type of literature, enormously enriching Pali by their writings. Early Pali literature can be divided into three categories. The first contains the sayings and teachings of the Buddha, the second deals with the rules to be observed by members of the sangha, and the third presents a philosophical exposition of the dhamma.

In the first three centuries of the Christian era, by blending Pali and Sanskrit, the Buddhists created a new language which is called Hybrid Sanskrit. The literary activities of the Buddhist monks continued even in the Middle Ages, and some famous Apabhramsa writings in east India were composed by them. The Buddhist monasteries developed as great centres of learning, and can be called

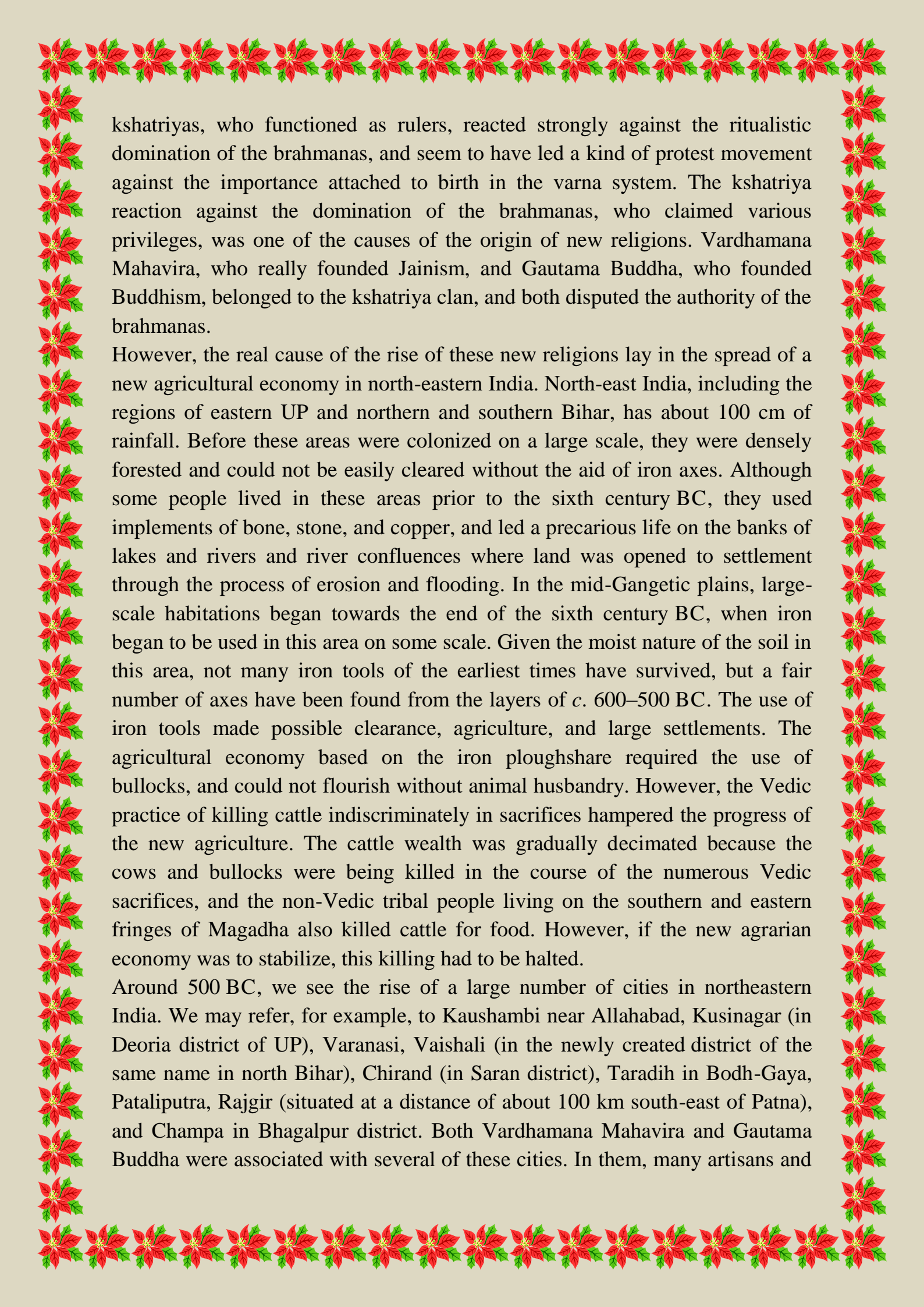


residential universities. Mention may be made of Nalanda and Vikramashila in Bihar, and Valabhi in Gujarat.

Buddhism left its mark on the art of ancient India. The first human statues worshipped in India were probably those of the Buddha. Faithful devotees of the religion portrayed the various events in the life of the Buddha in stone. The panels at Bodh-Gaya in Bihar and at Sanchi and Bharhut in MP are illuminating examples of artistic activity. From the first century onwards, panel images of Gautama Buddha began to be made. The Greek and Indian sculptors worked together to create a new form of art on the north-west frontier of India known as Gandhara art. The images made in this region betray Indian as well as foreign influence. For the residence of the monks, rooms were hewn out of the rocks, and thus began the cave architecture in the Barabar hills in Gaya and also in western India around Nasik. Buddhist art flourished in the Krishna delta in the south and in Mathura in the north.

Post-Vedic society was clearly divided into four varnas: brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas, and shudras. Each varna was assigned well-defined functions. Though varna was based on birth, the two higher varnas captured power, prestige and privileges at the cost of the lower varnas. The brahmanas, who were allotted the functions of priests and teachers, claimed the highest status in society. They demanded several privileges, including those of receiving gifts and exemption from taxation and punishment. Post-Vedic texts show many instances of such privileges enjoyed by them. The kshatriyas, who ranked second in the varna hierarchy, fought and governed, and lived on the taxes collected from the peasants. The vaishyas were engaged in agriculture, cattle rearing, and trade. They were also the principal taxpayers. However, along with the two higher varnas, they were placed in the category of *dvija* or the twice-born. A *dvija* was entitled to wear the sacred thread and study the Vedas. The shudras were meant to serve the three higher varnas, and along with women were barred from Vedic studies. They worked as domestic slaves, agricultural slaves, craftsmen, and hired labourers in post-Vedic times. They were described as cruel, greedy, and thieving in their habits, and some of them were treated as untouchables. The higher the varna, the more privileged a person was; the lower the varna of an offender, the more severe was the punishment prescribed for him.

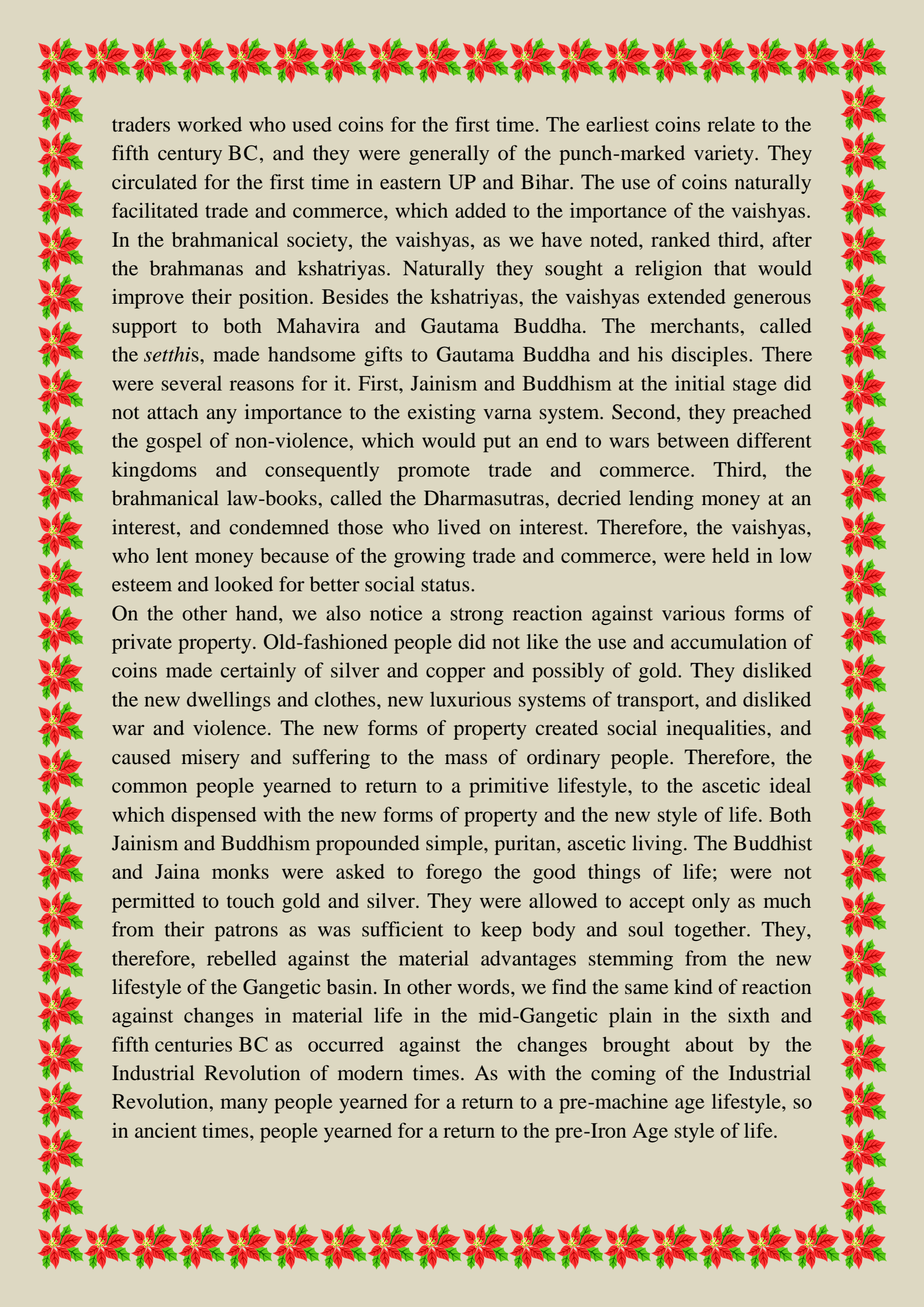
Naturally, the varna-divided society seems to have generated tensions. We have no means of ascertaining the reactions of the vaishyas and the shudras, but the



kshatriyas, who functioned as rulers, reacted strongly against the ritualistic domination of the brahmanas, and seem to have led a kind of protest movement against the importance attached to birth in the varna system. The kshatriya reaction against the domination of the brahmanas, who claimed various privileges, was one of the causes of the origin of new religions. Vardhamana Mahavira, who really founded Jainism, and Gautama Buddha, who founded Buddhism, belonged to the kshatriya clan, and both disputed the authority of the brahmanas.

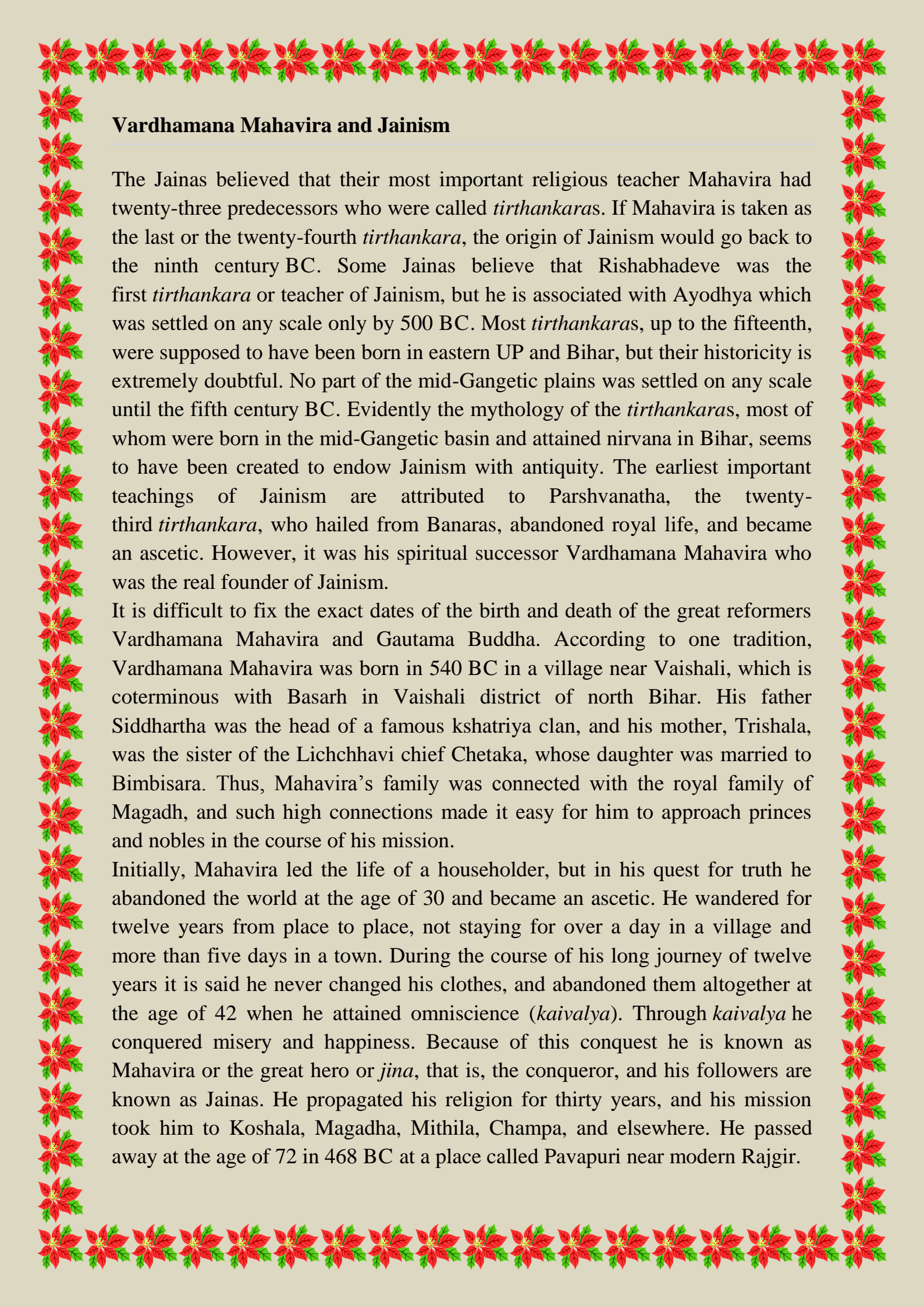
However, the real cause of the rise of these new religions lay in the spread of a new agricultural economy in north-eastern India. North-east India, including the regions of eastern UP and northern and southern Bihar, has about 100 cm of rainfall. Before these areas were colonized on a large scale, they were densely forested and could not be easily cleared without the aid of iron axes. Although some people lived in these areas prior to the sixth century BC, they used implements of bone, stone, and copper, and led a precarious life on the banks of lakes and rivers and river confluences where land was opened to settlement through the process of erosion and flooding. In the mid-Gangetic plains, large-scale habitations began towards the end of the sixth century BC, when iron began to be used in this area on some scale. Given the moist nature of the soil in this area, not many iron tools of the earliest times have survived, but a fair number of axes have been found from the layers of *c.* 600–500 BC. The use of iron tools made possible clearance, agriculture, and large settlements. The agricultural economy based on the iron ploughshare required the use of bullocks, and could not flourish without animal husbandry. However, the Vedic practice of killing cattle indiscriminately in sacrifices hampered the progress of the new agriculture. The cattle wealth was gradually decimated because the cows and bullocks were being killed in the course of the numerous Vedic sacrifices, and the non-Vedic tribal people living on the southern and eastern fringes of Magadha also killed cattle for food. However, if the new agrarian economy was to stabilize, this killing had to be halted.

Around 500 BC, we see the rise of a large number of cities in northeastern India. We may refer, for example, to Kaushambi near Allahabad, Kusinagar (in Deoria district of UP), Varanasi, Vaishali (in the newly created district of the same name in north Bihar), Chirand (in Saran district), Taradih in Bodh-Gaya, Pataliputra, Rajgir (situated at a distance of about 100 km south-east of Patna), and Champa in Bhagalpur district. Both Vardhamana Mahavira and Gautama Buddha were associated with several of these cities. In them, many artisans and



traders worked who used coins for the first time. The earliest coins relate to the fifth century BC, and they were generally of the punch-marked variety. They circulated for the first time in eastern UP and Bihar. The use of coins naturally facilitated trade and commerce, which added to the importance of the vaishyas. In the brahmanical society, the vaishyas, as we have noted, ranked third, after the brahmanas and kshatriyas. Naturally they sought a religion that would improve their position. Besides the kshatriyas, the vaishyas extended generous support to both Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. The merchants, called the *setthis*, made handsome gifts to Gautama Buddha and his disciples. There were several reasons for it. First, Jainism and Buddhism at the initial stage did not attach any importance to the existing varna system. Second, they preached the gospel of non-violence, which would put an end to wars between different kingdoms and consequently promote trade and commerce. Third, the brahmanical law-books, called the Dharmasutras, decried lending money at an interest, and condemned those who lived on interest. Therefore, the vaishyas, who lent money because of the growing trade and commerce, were held in low esteem and looked for better social status.

On the other hand, we also notice a strong reaction against various forms of private property. Old-fashioned people did not like the use and accumulation of coins made certainly of silver and copper and possibly of gold. They disliked the new dwellings and clothes, new luxurious systems of transport, and disliked war and violence. The new forms of property created social inequalities, and caused misery and suffering to the mass of ordinary people. Therefore, the common people yearned to return to a primitive lifestyle, to the ascetic ideal which dispensed with the new forms of property and the new style of life. Both Jainism and Buddhism propounded simple, puritan, ascetic living. The Buddhist and Jaina monks were asked to forego the good things of life; were not permitted to touch gold and silver. They were allowed to accept only as much from their patrons as was sufficient to keep body and soul together. They, therefore, rebelled against the material advantages stemming from the new lifestyle of the Gangetic basin. In other words, we find the same kind of reaction against changes in material life in the mid-Gangetic plain in the sixth and fifth centuries BC as occurred against the changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution of modern times. As with the coming of the Industrial Revolution, many people yearned for a return to a pre-machine age lifestyle, so in ancient times, people yearned for a return to the pre-Iron Age style of life.




Vardhamana Mahavira and Jainism

The Jainas believed that their most important religious teacher Mahavira had twenty-three predecessors who were called *tirthankaras*. If Mahavira is taken as the last or the twenty-fourth *tirthankara*, the origin of Jainism would go back to the ninth century BC. Some Jainas believe that Rishabhadeve was the first *tirthankara* or teacher of Jainism, but he is associated with Ayodhya which was settled on any scale only by 500 BC. Most *tirthankaras*, up to the fifteenth, were supposed to have been born in eastern UP and Bihar, but their historicity is extremely doubtful. No part of the mid-Gangetic plains was settled on any scale until the fifth century BC. Evidently the mythology of the *tirthankaras*, most of whom were born in the mid-Gangetic basin and attained nirvana in Bihar, seems to have been created to endow Jainism with antiquity. The earliest important teachings of Jainism are attributed to Parshvanatha, the twenty-third *tirthankara*, who hailed from Banaras, abandoned royal life, and became an ascetic. However, it was his spiritual successor Vardhamana Mahavira who was the real founder of Jainism.

It is difficult to fix the exact dates of the birth and death of the great reformers Vardhamana Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. According to one tradition, Vardhamana Mahavira was born in 540 BC in a village near Vaishali, which is coterminous with Basarh in Vaishali district of north Bihar. His father Siddhartha was the head of a famous kshatriya clan, and his mother, Trishala, was the sister of the Lichchhavi chief Chetaka, whose daughter was married to Bimbisara. Thus, Mahavira's family was connected with the royal family of Magadh, and such high connections made it easy for him to approach princes and nobles in the course of his mission.

Initially, Mahavira led the life of a householder, but in his quest for truth he abandoned the world at the age of 30 and became an ascetic. He wandered for twelve years from place to place, not staying for over a day in a village and more than five days in a town. During the course of his long journey of twelve years it is said he never changed his clothes, and abandoned them altogether at the age of 42 when he attained omniscience (*kaivalya*). Through *kaivalya* he conquered misery and happiness. Because of this conquest he is known as Mahavira or the great hero or *jina*, that is, the conqueror, and his followers are known as Jainas. He propagated his religion for thirty years, and his mission took him to Koshala, Magadha, Mithila, Champa, and elsewhere. He passed away at the age of 72 in 468 BC at a place called Pavapuri near modern Rajgir.



According to another tradition he passed away in 527 BC, but, archaeology does not support his existence in the sixth century BC. The towns and other settlements with which he was associated did not come into existence till 500 BC.

Doctrines of Jainism


Jainism taught five doctrines: (i) do not commit violence, (ii) do not tell a lie, (iii) do not steal, (iv) do not hoard, and (v) observe continence (*brahmacharya*). It is said that only the fifth doctrine was added by Mahavira: the other four were taken over by him from previous teachers. Jainism attached the utmost importance to ahimsa or non-injury to living beings. Sometimes it led to absurd results, for some Jaina kings ordered the execution of persons guilty of killing animals. Although Parshva, Mahavira's predecessor, had asked his followers to cover the upper and lower portions of their bodies, Mahavira asked them to discard their clothing altogether. This implies that Mahavira asked his followers to lead a more austere life. Because of this, in later times, Jainism split into two sects: *shvetambaras* or those who donned white garments and *digambaras* who remained naked.

Jainism recognized the existence of the gods but placed them lower than the *jina*, and did not condemn the varna system as Buddhism did. According to Mahavira, a person is born in a high or in a lower varna as a consequence of his sins committed or virtues acquired by him in his previous birth. Mahavira looks for human values even in a chandala. In his opinion, by leading pure and meritorious life, members of the lower castes can achieve liberation. Jainism principally aims at the attainment of freedom from worldly bonds. No ritual is necessary for such liberation. It can be obtained through right knowledge, right faith, and right action. These three are considered to be the three jewels or *triratna* of Jainism.

Jainism prohibited the practice of war and even agriculture for its followers because both involve the killing of living beings. Eventually the Jainas principally confined themselves to trade and mercantile activities.


Spread of Jainism

In order to spread the teachings of Jainism, Mahavira organized an order of his followers that admitted both men and women. He preached his teachings in Prakrit, the language of the common people. It is said that his followers



numbered 14,000, which is not a large figure. As Jainism did not very clearly differentiate itself from the brahmanical religion, it failed to attract the masses. Despite this, Jainism gradually spread into south and west India where the brahmanical religion was weak. According to a late tradition, the spread of Jainism in Karnataka is attributed to Chandragupta Maurya (322– 298 BC). The emperor became a Jaina, gave up his throne, and spent the last years of his life in Karnataka as a Jaina ascetic, but this tradition is not corroborated by any other source. The second cause of the spread of Jainism in south India is said to have been the great famine that took place in Magadha 200 years after Mahavira's death. The famine lasted for twelve years, and in order to protect themselves, many Jainas migrated to the south under the leadership of Bhadrabahu, though the rest of them stayed back in Magadha under the leadership of Sthalabahu. The emigrant Jainas spread Jainism in south India. At the end of the famine, they returned to Magadha, where they developed differences with the local Jainas. Those who returned from the south claimed that even during the famine they had strictly observed the religious rules. They alleged too that the Jaina ascetics living in Magadha had violated those rules and had become lax. In order to sort out these differences and to compile the principal teachings of Jainism, a council was convened in Pataliputra, modern Patna, but the Jainas who had returned from the south boycotted it and refused to accept its decisions. From now onwards, the southerners began to be called *digambaras* and the Magadhans *shvetambaras*. The tradition that refers to drought as the cause relates to a later period and is considered doubtful. It is, however, beyond doubt that the Jainas were divided into two sects, but epigraphic evidence of the spread of Jainism in Karnataka is not earlier than the third century AD. In subsequent centuries, especially after the fifth century, numerous Jaina monastic establishments, called *basadis* sprang up in Karnataka and were granted land by the king for their support.

Jainism spread to Kalinga in Orissa in the fourth century BC, and in the first century BC it enjoyed the patronage of the Kalinga king Kharavela who had defeated the princes of Andhra and Magadha. In the second and first centuries BC, it also seems to have reached the southern districts of Tamil Nadu. In later centuries Jainism penetrated Malwa, Gujarat, and Rajasthan, and even now these areas have a substantial number of Jainas who are principally engaged in trade and commerce. Although Jainism did not win as much state patronage as did Buddhism and did not spread very rapidly in early times, it still



retains its hold in the areas where it spread. On the other hand, Buddhism virtually disappeared from the Indian subcontinent.

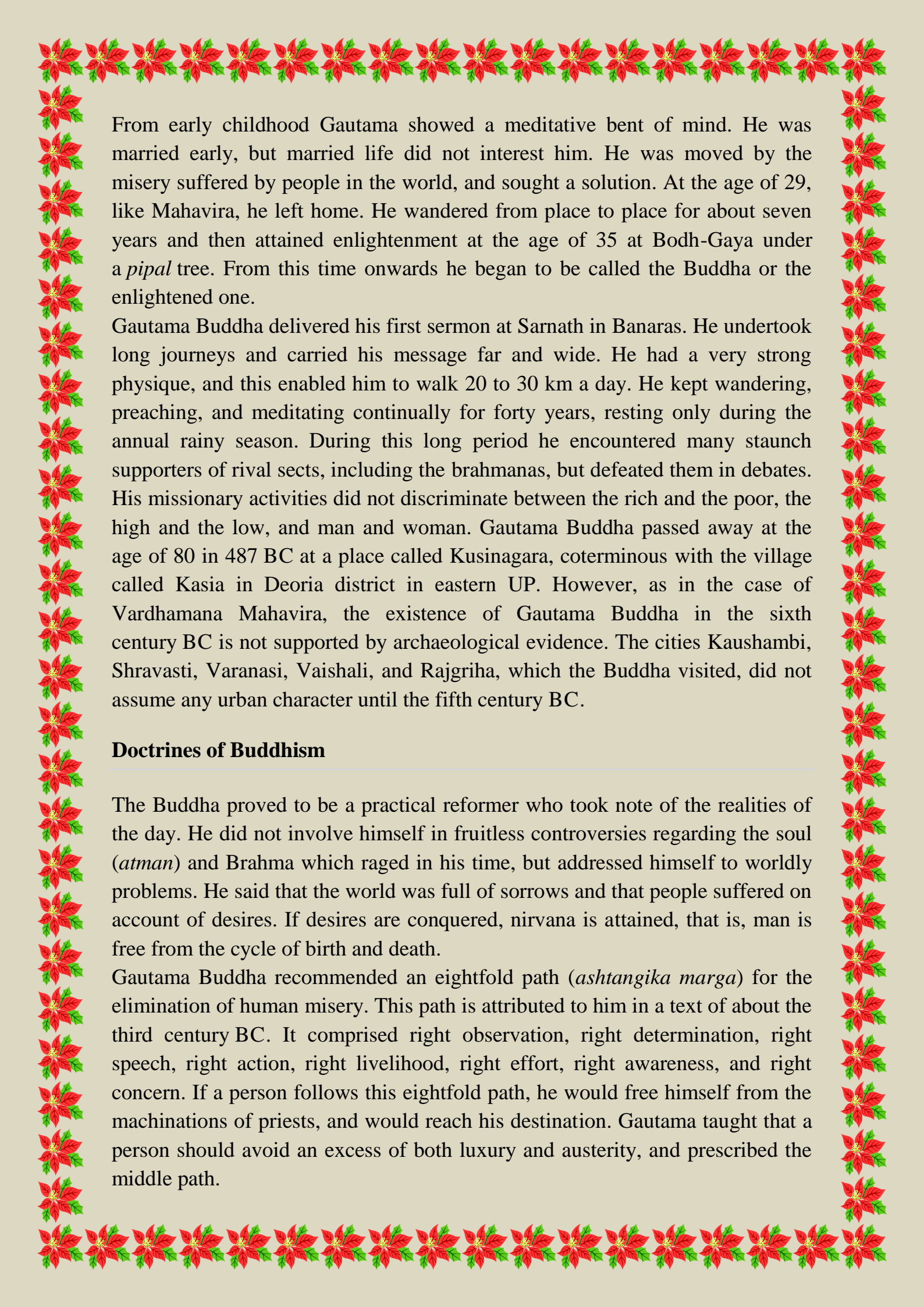
Contribution of Jainism

Jainism made the first serious attempt to mitigate the evils of the varna order and the ritualistic Vedic religion. The early Jainas discarded the Sanskrit language principally patronized by the brahmanas. They adopted instead Prakrit, the language of the common people to preach their doctrines. Their religious literature was written in Ardhamagadhi, and the texts were eventually compiled in the sixth century AD in Gujarat at a place called Valabhi, a great centre of education. The adoption of Prakrit by the Jainas helped the growth of this language and its literature. Many regional languages developed out of Prakrit, particularly Shauraseni from which the Marathi language developed. The Jainas composed the earliest important works in Apabhramsha and compiled its first grammar. Jaina literature comprises epics, Puranas, novels, and drama. A large percentage of Jaina writing is still in the form of manuscripts that have yet to be published and which are to be found in the Jaina shrines of Gujarat and Rajasthan. In early medieval times, the Jainas also made substantial use of Sanskrit and wrote many texts in it. Last but not the least, they contributed to the growth of Kannada, in which they wrote extensively.

Initially, like the Buddhists, the Jainas were not image worshippers. Later they began to worship Mahavira and also the twenty-three *tirthankaras*. Beautiful and sometimes massive images in stone were sculpted for this purpose, especially in Karnataka, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and MP. Jaina art in ancient times is not as rich as its Buddhist counterpart, but Jainism contributed substantially to art and architecture in medieval times.

Gautama Buddha and Buddhism

Gautama Buddha, or Siddhartha, was a contemporary of Mahavira. According to tradition he was born in 567 BC in a Shakya kshatriya family in Lumbini in Nepal near Kapilavastu, which is identified with Piprahwa in Basti district and is close to the foothills of Nepal. Gautama's father seems to have been the elected ruler of Kapilavastu, and headed the Shakya republican clan. His mother was a princess from the Koshalan dynasty. Thus, like Mahavira, Gautama too belonged to a noble family. Born in a republic, he also inherited some egalitarian beliefs.




From early childhood Gautama showed a meditative bent of mind. He was married early, but married life did not interest him. He was moved by the misery suffered by people in the world, and sought a solution. At the age of 29, like Mahavira, he left home. He wandered from place to place for about seven years and then attained enlightenment at the age of 35 at Bodh-Gaya under a *pipal* tree. From this time onwards he began to be called the Buddha or the enlightened one.

Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon at Sarnath in Banaras. He undertook long journeys and carried his message far and wide. He had a very strong physique, and this enabled him to walk 20 to 30 km a day. He kept wandering, preaching, and meditating continually for forty years, resting only during the annual rainy season. During this long period he encountered many staunch supporters of rival sects, including the brahmanas, but defeated them in debates. His missionary activities did not discriminate between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, and man and woman. Gautama Buddha passed away at the age of 80 in 487 BC at a place called Kusinagara, coterminous with the village called Kasia in Deoria district in eastern UP. However, as in the case of Vardhamana Mahavira, the existence of Gautama Buddha in the sixth century BC is not supported by archaeological evidence. The cities Kaushambi, Shravasti, Varanasi, Vaishali, and Rajgriha, which the Buddha visited, did not assume any urban character until the fifth century BC.

Doctrines of Buddhism

The Buddha proved to be a practical reformer who took note of the realities of the day. He did not involve himself in fruitless controversies regarding the soul (*atman*) and Brahma which raged in his time, but addressed himself to worldly problems. He said that the world was full of sorrows and that people suffered on account of desires. If desires are conquered, nirvana is attained, that is, man is free from the cycle of birth and death.

Gautama Buddha recommended an eightfold path (*ashtangika marga*) for the elimination of human misery. This path is attributed to him in a text of about the third century BC. It comprised right observation, right determination, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right awareness, and right concern. If a person follows this eightfold path, he would free himself from the machinations of priests, and would reach his destination. Gautama taught that a person should avoid an excess of both luxury and austerity, and prescribed the middle path.



The Buddha also laid down a code of conduct for his followers on the same lines as those of the Jaina teachers. The principal tenets are: (i) do not commit violence, (ii) do not covet the property of others, (iii) do not use intoxicants, (iv) do not tell a lie, and (v) do not indulge in sexual misconduct and adultery. These teachings are common to the social conduct ordained by virtually all religions.

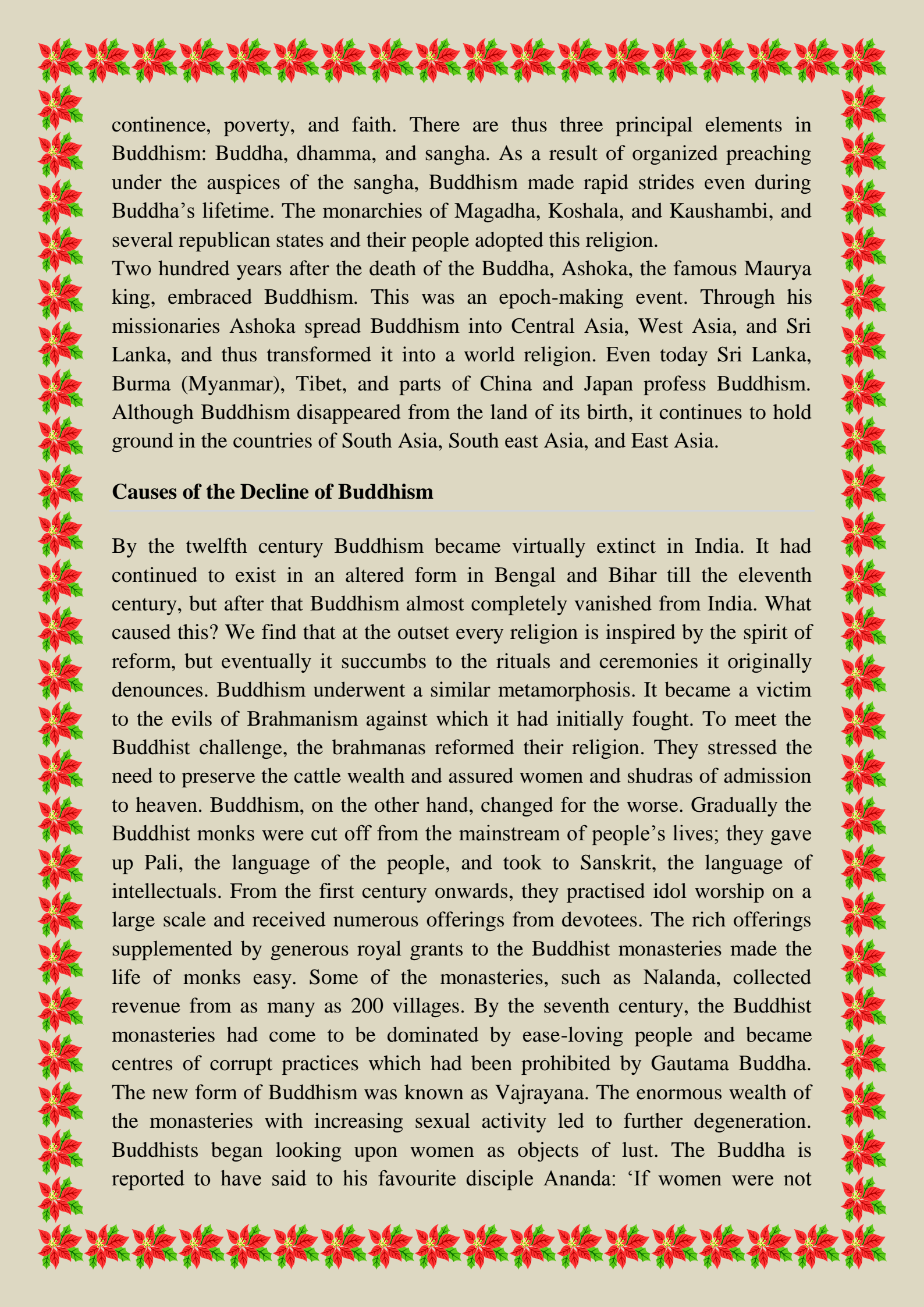
Features of Buddhism and the Causes of its Spread

Buddhism does not recognize the existence of god and soul. This can be seen as a kind of revolution in the history of Indian religions. As early Buddhism was not enmeshed in the claptrap of philosophical discussion, it appealed to the common people, and particularly won the support of the lower orders because it attacked the varna system. People were accepted by the Buddhist order without any consideration of caste, and women too were admitted to the sangha and thus brought on a par with men. In comparison with Brahmanism, Buddhism was liberal and democratic.

Buddhism particularly appealed to the people of the non-Vedic areas where it found virgin soil for conversion. The people of Magadha responded readily to Buddhism because they were looked down upon by the orthodox brahmanas. Magadha was placed outside the pale of the holy Aryavarta, the land of the Aryas, covering modern UP. The old tradition persists, and the people of north Bihar prefer not to be cremated south of the Ganges in Magadha.

The personality of the Buddha and the method adopted by him to preach his religion helped the spread of Buddhism. He sought to fight evil by goodness and hatred by love and refused to be provoked by slander and abuse. He maintained his poise and calm under difficult circumstances and tackled his opponents with wit and presence of mind. It is said that on one occasion an ignorant person abused him. The Buddha listened on silently, and when the person had ended his abuse, the Buddha asked: 'My friend, if a person does not accept a present what will happen to it?' His adversary replied: 'It remains with the person who has offered it.' The Buddha then said: 'My friend, I do not accept your abuse.'

The use of Pali, a form of Prakrit, which began around 500 BC, contributed to the spread of Buddhism. It facilitated the spread of Buddhist doctrines amongst the common people. Gautama Buddha also organized the sangha or the religious order, whose doors were open to all irrespective of caste, creed, and sex. However, slaves, soldiers, and debtors could not be admitted. The monks were required to observe the rules and regulations of the sangha faithfully. Once they were enrolled as members of the Buddhist church, they had to take the vow of




continence, poverty, and faith. There are thus three principal elements in Buddhism: Buddha, dhamma, and sangha. As a result of organized preaching under the auspices of the sangha, Buddhism made rapid strides even during Buddha's lifetime. The monarchies of Magadha, Koshala, and Kaushambi, and several republican states and their people adopted this religion.

Two hundred years after the death of the Buddha, Ashoka, the famous Maurya king, embraced Buddhism. This was an epoch-making event. Through his missionaries Ashoka spread Buddhism into Central Asia, West Asia, and Sri Lanka, and thus transformed it into a world religion. Even today Sri Lanka, Burma (Myanmar), Tibet, and parts of China and Japan profess Buddhism. Although Buddhism disappeared from the land of its birth, it continues to hold ground in the countries of South Asia, South east Asia, and East Asia.

Causes of the Decline of Buddhism

By the twelfth century Buddhism became virtually extinct in India. It had continued to exist in an altered form in Bengal and Bihar till the eleventh century, but after that Buddhism almost completely vanished from India. What caused this? We find that at the outset every religion is inspired by the spirit of reform, but eventually it succumbs to the rituals and ceremonies it originally denounces. Buddhism underwent a similar metamorphosis. It became a victim to the evils of Brahmanism against which it had initially fought. To meet the Buddhist challenge, the brahmanas reformed their religion. They stressed the need to preserve the cattle wealth and assured women and shudras of admission to heaven. Buddhism, on the other hand, changed for the worse. Gradually the Buddhist monks were cut off from the mainstream of people's lives; they gave up Pali, the language of the people, and took to Sanskrit, the language of intellectuals. From the first century onwards, they practised idol worship on a large scale and received numerous offerings from devotees. The rich offerings supplemented by generous royal grants to the Buddhist monasteries made the life of monks easy. Some of the monasteries, such as Nalanda, collected revenue from as many as 200 villages. By the seventh century, the Buddhist monasteries had come to be dominated by ease-loving people and became centres of corrupt practices which had been prohibited by Gautama Buddha. The new form of Buddhism was known as Vajrayana. The enormous wealth of the monasteries with increasing sexual activity led to further degeneration. Buddhists began looking upon women as objects of lust. The Buddha is reported to have said to his favourite disciple Ananda: 'If women were not



admitted into the monasteries Buddhism would have continued for one thousand years, but because this admission has been granted it will last only five hundred years.'


The brahmana ruler Pashyamitra Shunga is said to have persecuted the Buddhists. Several instances of persecution occur in the sixth–seventh centuries. The Huna king Mihirakula, who was a worshipper of Shiva, killed hundreds of Buddhists. The Shaivite Shashanka of Gauda felled the Bodhi tree at Bodh-Gaya where the Buddha had attained enlightenment. Hsuan Tsang states that 1600 stupas and monasteries were destroyed, and thousands of monks and lay followers killed; this may not be without some truth. The Buddhist reaction can be seen in some pantheons in which Buddhist deities trample brahmanical deities. In south India both the Shaivites and Vaishnavites bitterly opposed the Jains and Buddhists in early medieval times. Such conflicts may have weakened Buddhism.

For their riches the monasteries came to be coveted by the Turkish invaders, becoming special targets of the invaders' greed. The Turks killed a large number of Buddhist monks in Bihar, although some of the monks managed to escape to Nepal and Tibet. In any event, by the twelfth century, Buddhism had virtually disappeared from the land of its birth.

Significance and Influence of Buddhism

Despite its disappearance as an organized religion, Buddhism left its impact on Indian society and economy. The Buddhists showed a keen awareness of the problems that faced the people of north-east India from about 500 BC. The iron ploughshare-based agriculture, trade, and the use of coins enabled the traders and nobles to accumulate wealth, and we hear of people possessing eighty *kotis* of wealth. All this naturally created sharp social and economic inequalities. Buddhism therefore advised people not to accumulate wealth. According to it, poverty breeds hatred, cruelty, and violence. To eradicate these evils, the Buddha taught that farmers should be provided with grain and other facilities, traders with wealth, and the unemployed with employment. These measures were recommended to eradicate poverty in the world. Buddhism also taught that if the poor gave alms to the monks, they would be born wealthy in the next world.

The code of conduct prescribed for the monks represents a reaction against the material conditions of north-east India in the fifth–fourth centuries BC. It imposes restrictions on the food, clothing, and sexual behaviour of the monks.



They could not accept gold and silver, could not resort to sale and purchase. These rules were relaxed after the death of the Buddha, but the early rules suggest a return to a kind of primitive communism, a characteristic of the tribal society in which people did not practise trade and advanced agriculture. The code of conduct prescribed for monks partially reflects a revolt against the use of money, private property and luxurious living, that was prevalent in the fifth century BC in north-east India at a time when property and money were considered luxuries.

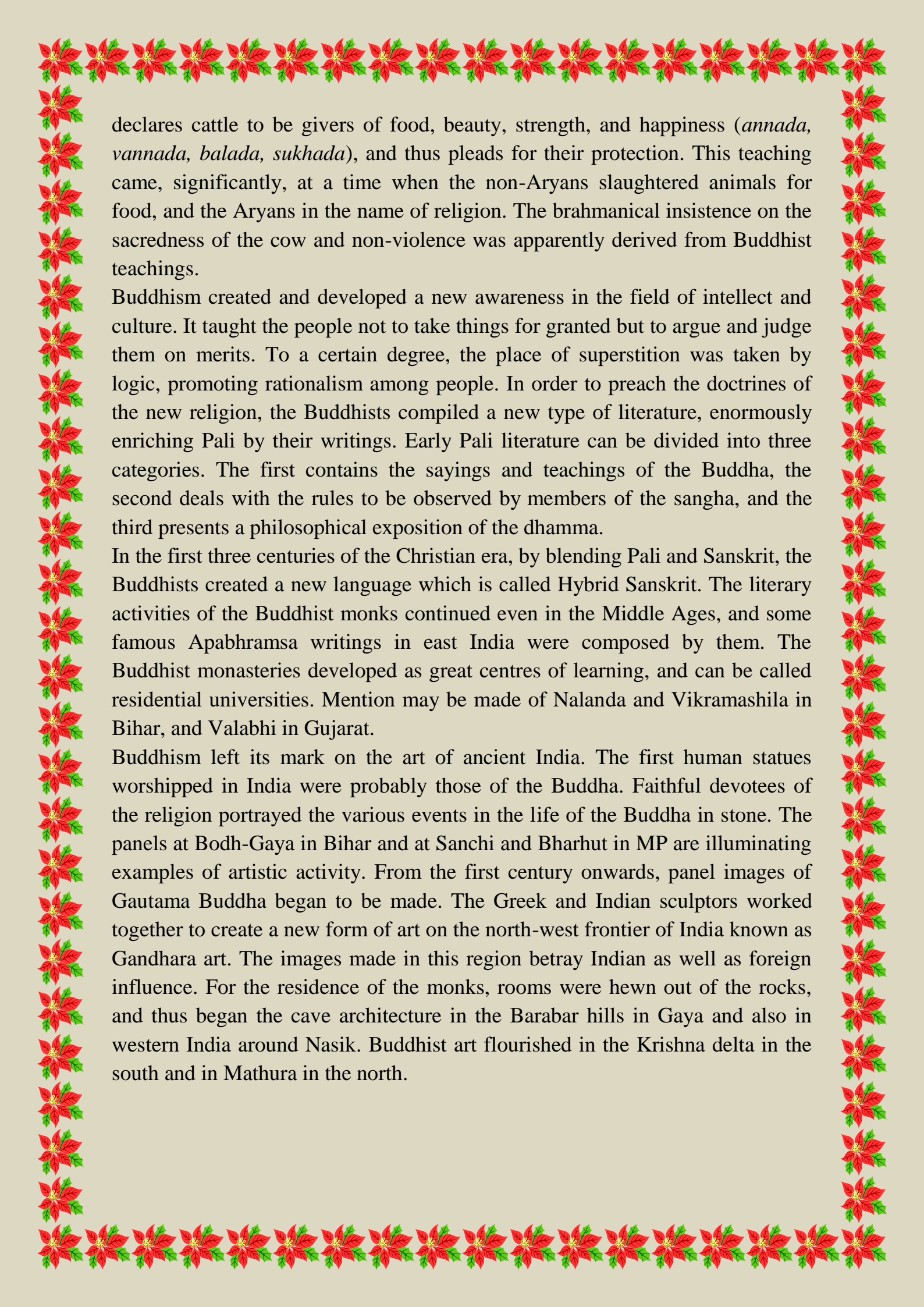
Although Buddhism tried to mitigate the evils resulting from the new material life in the fifth century BC, it also sought to consolidate the changes in the social and economic life of the people. The rule that debtors were not permitted to be members of the sangha helped the moneylenders and richer sections of society from whose clutches the debtors could not be saved. Similarly, the rule that slaves could not join the sangha helped slave owners. Thus, the rules and teachings of Gautama Buddha took full account of the new changes in the material life of the time and strengthened them ideologically.

Although the Buddhist monks had renounced the world and repeatedly criticized the greedy brahmanas, in several ways they resembled the brahmanas. Both of them did not participate directly in production, and lived on the alms or gifts given by society. They emphasized the virtues of carrying out family obligations, protecting private property, and respecting political authority. Both supported the social order based on classes; for the monks, however, the varna was based on action and attributes but for the brahmanas it was based on birth.

Undoubtedly the objective of Buddhist teaching was to secure the salvation of the individual or nirvana. Those who found it difficult to adjust themselves to the break-up of the old egalitarian society and the rise of gross social inequalities on account of private property were provided with some way of escape, but it was confined to the monks. No escape was provided for the lay followers, who were taught to come to terms with the existing situation.

Buddhism made an important impact on society by keeping its doors open to women and shudras. As both women and shudras were placed in the same category by Brahmanism, they were neither given the sacred thread nor allowed to read the Vedas. Their conversion to Buddhism freed them from such marks of inferiority. Buddhism did not deprecate manual labour. In a second-century sculpture from Bodh-Gaya, the Buddha is depicted ploughing with oxen.

With its emphasis on non-violence and the sanctity of animal life, Buddhism boosted the cattle wealth of the country. The earliest Buddhist text, *Suttanipata*,



declares cattle to be givers of food, beauty, strength, and happiness (*annada, vannada, balada, sukhada*), and thus pleads for their protection. This teaching came, significantly, at a time when the non-Aryans slaughtered animals for food, and the Aryans in the name of religion. The brahmanical insistence on the sacredness of the cow and non-violence was apparently derived from Buddhist teachings.

Buddhism created and developed a new awareness in the field of intellect and culture. It taught the people not to take things for granted but to argue and judge them on merits. To a certain degree, the place of superstition was taken by logic, promoting rationalism among people. In order to preach the doctrines of the new religion, the Buddhists compiled a new type of literature, enormously enriching Pali by their writings. Early Pali literature can be divided into three categories. The first contains the sayings and teachings of the Buddha, the second deals with the rules to be observed by members of the sangha, and the third presents a philosophical exposition of the dhamma.

In the first three centuries of the Christian era, by blending Pali and Sanskrit, the Buddhists created a new language which is called Hybrid Sanskrit. The literary activities of the Buddhist monks continued even in the Middle Ages, and some famous Apabhramsa writings in east India were composed by them. The Buddhist monasteries developed as great centres of learning, and can be called residential universities. Mention may be made of Nalanda and Vikramashila in Bihar, and Valabhi in Gujarat.

Buddhism left its mark on the art of ancient India. The first human statues worshipped in India were probably those of the Buddha. Faithful devotees of the religion portrayed the various events in the life of the Buddha in stone. The panels at Bodh-Gaya in Bihar and at Sanchi and Bharhut in MP are illuminating examples of artistic activity. From the first century onwards, panel images of Gautama Buddha began to be made. The Greek and Indian sculptors worked together to create a new form of art on the north-west frontier of India known as Gandhara art. The images made in this region betray Indian as well as foreign influence. For the residence of the monks, rooms were hewn out of the rocks, and thus began the cave architecture in the Barabar hills in Gaya and also in western India around Nasik. Buddhist art flourished in the Krishna delta in the south and in Mathura in the north.




Madurai Nayak

The Madurai Nayaks were a Telugu dynasty who ruled most of modern-day Tamil Nadu, India, with Madurai as their capital. The Madurai Nayaks had their origins in the Balija warrior clans of present-day Andhra Pradesh. The Nayak reign which lasted for over two centuries from around 1529 to 1736 was noted for its achievements in arts, cultural and administrative reforms, revitalization of temples previously ransacked by the Delhi Sultans, and the inauguration of a unique architectural style. The dynasty consisted of 13 rulers, of whom nine were kings, two were queens, and two were joint-kings. The most notable among them were king Tirumala Nayaka, and queen Rani Mangammal. Foreign trade was conducted mainly with the Dutch and the Portuguese, as the British and the French had not yet made inroads into the region.

History

Origins

Originally, the Nayakas were Telugu-speaking Balija warriors from present-day Andhra Pradesh. The Kaifiyat of the Karnata Kotikam Kings mentions the founder of the dynasty, Viswanatha Nayak, as belonging to the Garikepati family of the Balija caste. They started as kartakkals (agents) of the Vijayanagar empire in southern regions of what would become Tamil Nadu. That region had long been a troubled province due to its distance from Vijayanagara and had been only been fully subjugated in the early 16th century under Veera Narasimha. The first Nayaka, Nangama, was a popular and able general of Krishnadevaraya. Krishnadevaraya sent Nangama Nayaka with a large army to bring Pandya Nadu back under imperial control. Although he was an able administrator he was a hard ruler and rejected any claims of authority from the petty chieftains, which made him unpopular. In addition, experienced officers like Nangama Nayaka were chafing under the strict control Krishnadevaraya imposed on them. Towards the end of Krishnadevaraya's reign, trouble erupted in the south as the Chola Nayakas openly revolted and fled to Travancore, while Nangama began defying central orders while still claiming power of deputy. In response, the emperor sent Nangama's son, Viswanatha, with a large army to recapture Madurai. Viswanatha Nayaka defeated his father and sent him as prisoner to Krishnadevaraya, who in turned pardoned Nangama Nayaka for his valued service. After defeating his father Krishnadevaraya made Viswanatha governor of Madurai and other Tamil

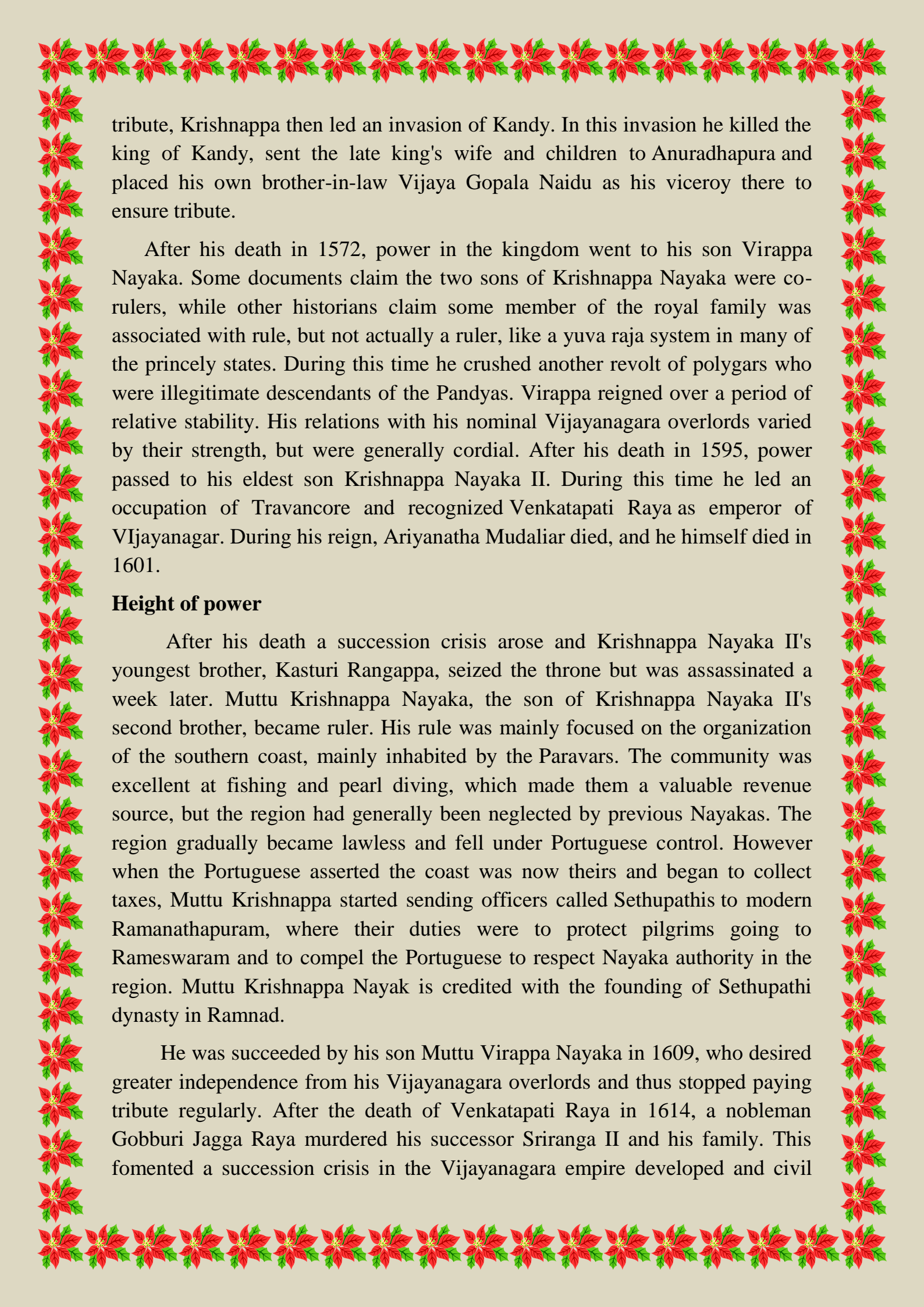


provinces in 1529, beginning the Madurai Nayaka dynasty. Another story goes that the Pandyas were under attack from the Cholas and appealed to Krishnadevaraya for help. He then sent Nangama Nayaka to restore the Pandyas to their rightful throne. Nangama defeated the Cholas, but instead claimed the throne for himself and deposed the Pandyan king. So Krishnadevaraya sent Nangama's son Viswanatha Nayaka to defeat him, which he did. Thus he was made nayaka of the region. However, this story does not have epigraphic evidence to support it.

Rise to power

Viswanatha Nayaka was not originally independent, but was treated as just another governor who the emperor had sent to keep control over the provinces. Originally he had control over Chola Nadu as well, which was ruled by a feudatory Chola prince, but this was transferred to the Thanjavur Nayakas. In 1544, Viswanatha Nayaka helped Rama Raya's army subdue Travancore, which had been refusing to pay tribute.

Viswanatha also rebuilt fortifications at Madurai and made travel safer. He cleared the jungle around the banks of the Kaveri near Tiruchirappalli and destroyed hideouts of robbers there. He also expanded the borders of the kingdom so it included most of modern southern and western Tamil Nadu at his death. However, many of the local chieftains were still chafing under his rule, and so to appease them, Viswanatha's chief minister, Ariyanatha Mudaliar, assisted him in using the palayam or poligar system. The system was a quasi-federal organisation of the country, which was divided into multiple palayams or small provinces; and each palayam was ruled by a palayakkarar or a petty chief. Ariyanatha organized the Pandyan kingdom into 72 palayams and ruled over the 72 dry-zone poligar chiefs. of these 72, Kurvikulam and Ilayarasanendal, which were ruled by Kamma Nayakas of the Pemmasani, Komatineni and Ravella clans, were considered royal palayams. In the last year of his life he abdicated the throne and was alive for his son's investiture with ruling power in 1564, and died thereafter.^[23] Viswanatha's son, Krishnappa, was crowned in 1564. He immediately faced threats from nobles disgruntled with the new palayam system brought in by his father. These nobles, led by Tumbichchi Nayaka instigated a revolt among some of the polygars, which was crushed by Krishnappa. In the same year, he sent a contingent to the Battle of Talikota but it could not arrive in time. The defeat of Rama Raya made the Nayakas virtually independent. When the king of Kandy, a friend of Tumbichchi Nayaka, stopped sending



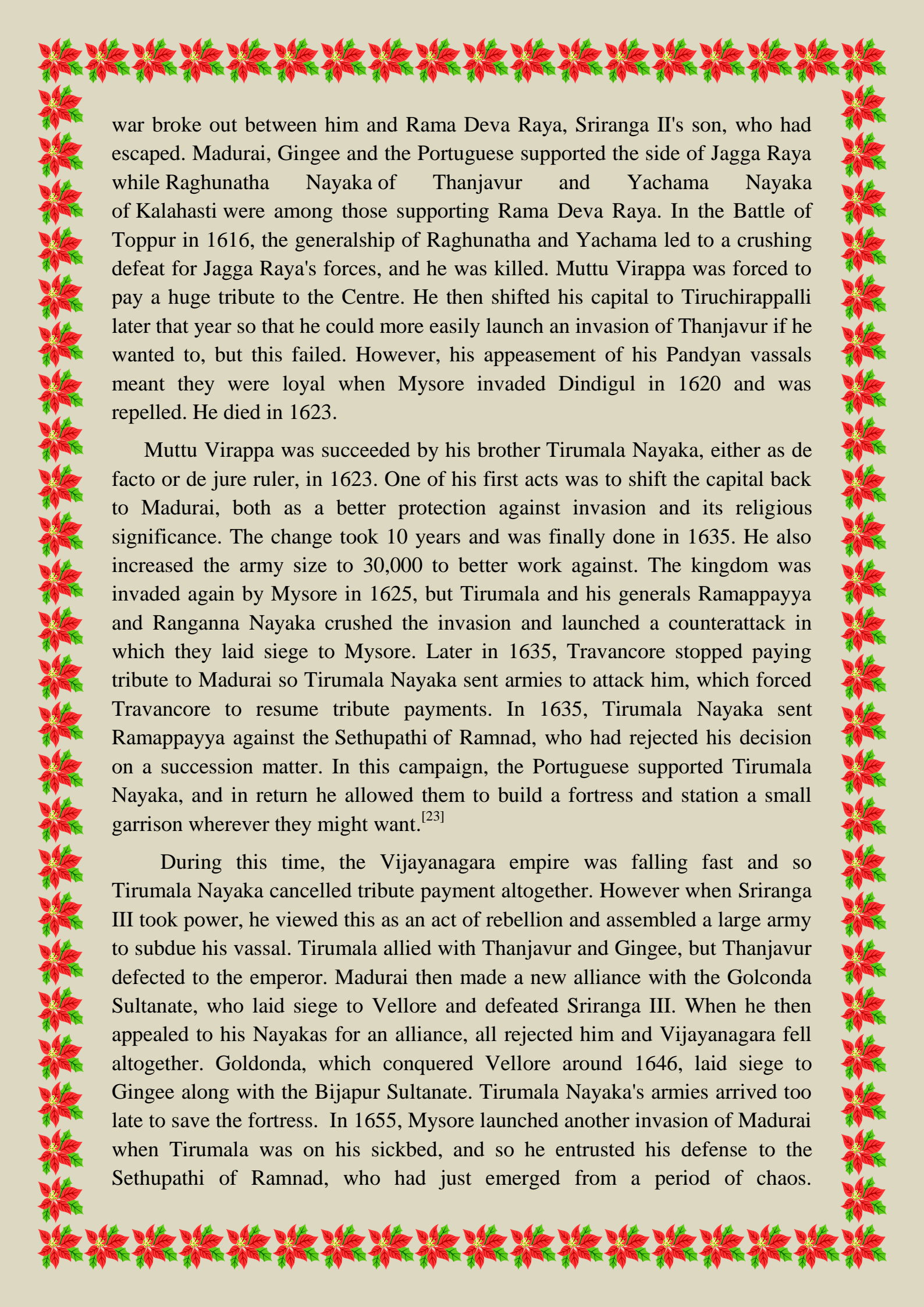
tribute, Krishnappa then led an invasion of Kandy. In this invasion he killed the king of Kandy, sent the late king's wife and children to Anuradhapura and placed his own brother-in-law Vijaya Gopala Naidu as his viceroy there to ensure tribute.

After his death in 1572, power in the kingdom went to his son Virappa Nayaka. Some documents claim the two sons of Krishnappa Nayaka were co-rulers, while other historians claim some member of the royal family was associated with rule, but not actually a ruler, like a yuva raja system in many of the princely states. During this time he crushed another revolt of polygars who were illegitimate descendants of the Pandyas. Virappa reigned over a period of relative stability. His relations with his nominal Vijayanagara overlords varied by their strength, but were generally cordial. After his death in 1595, power passed to his eldest son Krishnappa Nayaka II. During this time he led an occupation of Travancore and recognized Venkatapati Raya as emperor of Vijayanagar. During his reign, Ariyanatha Mudaliar died, and he himself died in 1601.

Height of power

After his death a succession crisis arose and Krishnappa Nayaka II's youngest brother, Kasturi Rangappa, seized the throne but was assassinated a week later. Muttu Krishnappa Nayaka, the son of Krishnappa Nayaka II's second brother, became ruler. His rule was mainly focused on the organization of the southern coast, mainly inhabited by the Paravars. The community was excellent at fishing and pearl diving, which made them a valuable revenue source, but the region had generally been neglected by previous Nayakas. The region gradually became lawless and fell under Portuguese control. However when the Portuguese asserted the coast was now theirs and began to collect taxes, Muttu Krishnappa started sending officers called Sethupathis to modern Ramanathapuram, where their duties were to protect pilgrims going to Rameswaram and to compel the Portuguese to respect Nayaka authority in the region. Muttu Krishnappa Nayak is credited with the founding of Sethupathi dynasty in Ramnad.

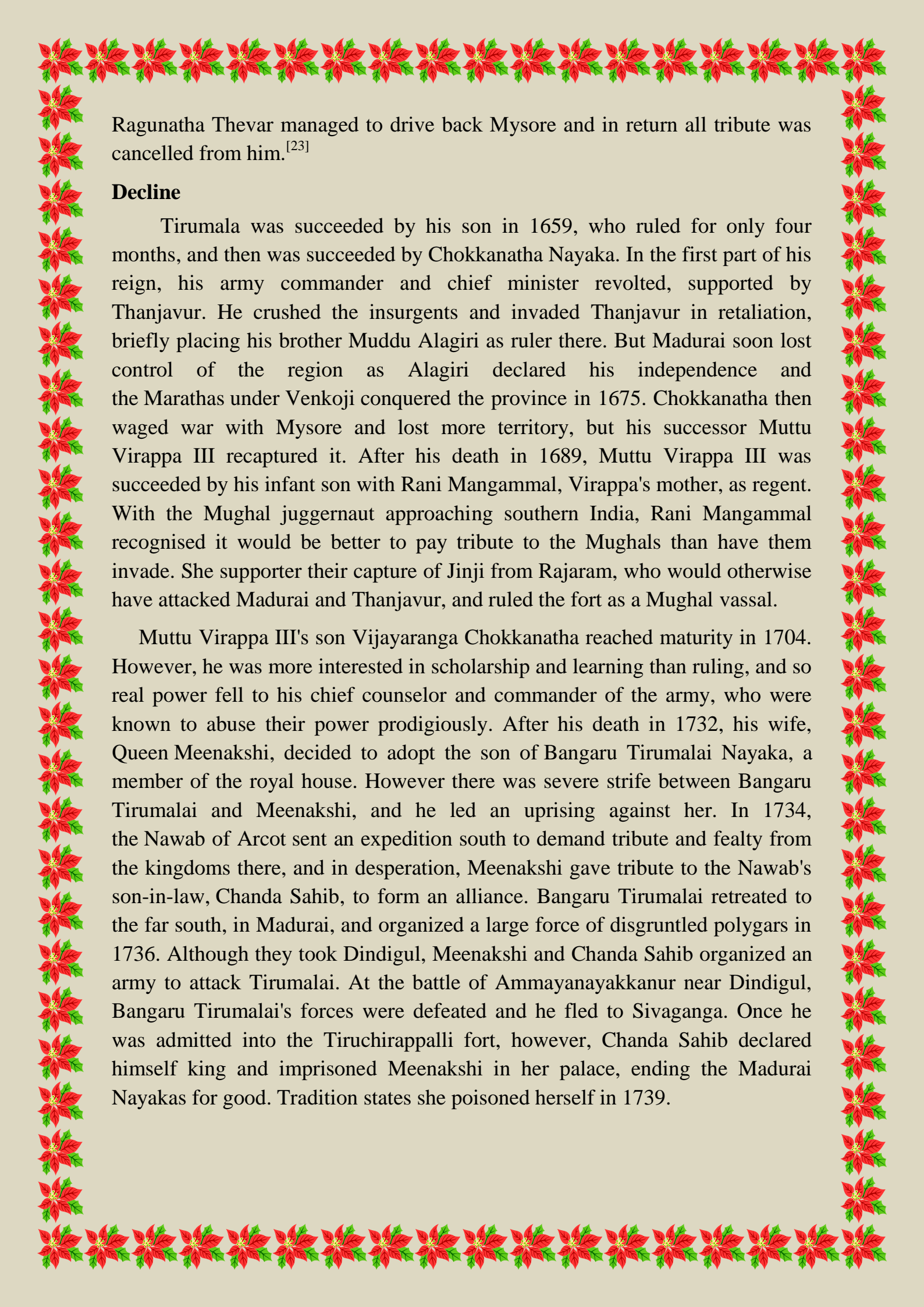
He was succeeded by his son Muttu Virappa Nayaka in 1609, who desired greater independence from his Vijayanagara overlords and thus stopped paying tribute regularly. After the death of Venkatapati Raya in 1614, a nobleman Gobburi Jagga Raya murdered his successor Sriranga II and his family. This fomented a succession crisis in the Vijayanagara empire developed and civil



war broke out between him and Rama Deva Raya, Sriranga II's son, who had escaped. Madurai, Gingee and the Portuguese supported the side of Jagga Raya while Raghunatha Nayaka of Thanjavur and Yachama Nayaka of Kalahasti were among those supporting Rama Deva Raya. In the Battle of Toppur in 1616, the generalship of Raghunatha and Yachama led to a crushing defeat for Jagga Raya's forces, and he was killed. Muttu Virappa was forced to pay a huge tribute to the Centre. He then shifted his capital to Tiruchirappalli later that year so that he could more easily launch an invasion of Thanjavur if he wanted to, but this failed. However, his appeasement of his Pandyan vassals meant they were loyal when Mysore invaded Dindigul in 1620 and was repelled. He died in 1623.

Muttu Virappa was succeeded by his brother Tirumala Nayaka, either as de facto or de jure ruler, in 1623. One of his first acts was to shift the capital back to Madurai, both as a better protection against invasion and its religious significance. The change took 10 years and was finally done in 1635. He also increased the army size to 30,000 to better work against. The kingdom was invaded again by Mysore in 1625, but Tirumala and his generals Ramappayya and Ranganna Nayaka crushed the invasion and launched a counterattack in which they laid siege to Mysore. Later in 1635, Travancore stopped paying tribute to Madurai so Tirumala Nayaka sent armies to attack him, which forced Travancore to resume tribute payments. In 1635, Tirumala Nayaka sent Ramappayya against the Sethupathi of Ramnad, who had rejected his decision on a succession matter. In this campaign, the Portuguese supported Tirumala Nayaka, and in return he allowed them to build a fortress and station a small garrison wherever they might want.^[23]

During this time, the Vijayanagara empire was falling fast and so Tirumala Nayaka cancelled tribute payment altogether. However when Sriranga III took power, he viewed this as an act of rebellion and assembled a large army to subdue his vassal. Tirumala allied with Thanjavur and Gingee, but Thanjavur defected to the emperor. Madurai then made a new alliance with the Golconda Sultanate, who laid siege to Vellore and defeated Sriranga III. When he then appealed to his Nayakas for an alliance, all rejected him and Vijayanagara fell altogether. Goldonda, which conquered Vellore around 1646, laid siege to Gingee along with the Bijapur Sultanate. Tirumala Nayaka's armies arrived too late to save the fortress. In 1655, Mysore launched another invasion of Madurai when Tirumala was on his sickbed, and so he entrusted his defense to the Sethupathi of Ramnad, who had just emerged from a period of chaos.




Ragunatha Thevar managed to drive back Mysore and in return all tribute was cancelled from him.^[23]

Decline

Tirumala was succeeded by his son in 1659, who ruled for only four months, and then was succeeded by Chokkanatha Nayaka. In the first part of his reign, his army commander and chief minister revolted, supported by Thanjavur. He crushed the insurgents and invaded Thanjavur in retaliation, briefly placing his brother Muddu Alagiri as ruler there. But Madurai soon lost control of the region as Alagiri declared his independence and the Marathas under Venkoji conquered the province in 1675. Chokkanatha then waged war with Mysore and lost more territory, but his successor Muttu Virappa III recaptured it. After his death in 1689, Muttu Virappa III was succeeded by his infant son with Rani Mangammal, Virappa's mother, as regent. With the Mughal juggernaut approaching southern India, Rani Mangammal recognised it would be better to pay tribute to the Mughals than have them invade. She supporter their capture of Jinji from Rajaram, who would otherwise have attacked Madurai and Thanjavur, and ruled the fort as a Mughal vassal.

Muttu Virappa III's son Vijayaranga Chokkanatha reached maturity in 1704. However, he was more interested in scholarship and learning than ruling, and so real power fell to his chief counselor and commander of the army, who were known to abuse their power prodigiously. After his death in 1732, his wife, Queen Meenakshi, decided to adopt the son of Bangaru Tirumalai Nayaka, a member of the royal house. However there was severe strife between Bangaru Tirumalai and Meenakshi, and he led an uprising against her. In 1734, the Nawab of Arcot sent an expedition south to demand tribute and fealty from the kingdoms there, and in desperation, Meenakshi gave tribute to the Nawab's son-in-law, Chanda Sahib, to form an alliance. Bangaru Tirumalai retreated to the far south, in Madurai, and organized a large force of disgruntled polygars in 1736. Although they took Dindigul, Meenakshi and Chanda Sahib organized an army to attack Tirumalai. At the battle of Ammayanayakkanur near Dindigul, Bangaru Tirumalai's forces were defeated and he fled to Sivaganga. Once he was admitted into the Tiruchirappalli fort, however, Chanda Sahib declared himself king and imprisoned Meenakshi in her palace, ending the Madurai Nayakas for good. Tradition states she poisoned herself in 1739.



Descendants

Some of the family members of Bangaru Thirumalai established the Nayak dynasty in Sri Lanka known as the Kandy Nayaks. They ruled till 1815 with Kandy as their capital and were also the last ruling dynasty of Sri Lanka. The Kings of Kandy had from an early time sought marriages with Madurai and many of the queens were from Madurai. The Kandy Nayaks received military support from the Nayaks of Madurai in fighting off the Portuguese. And in the 17th and 18th centuries, marital alliances between the Kandyan kings and Nayak princesses had become a matter of policy.

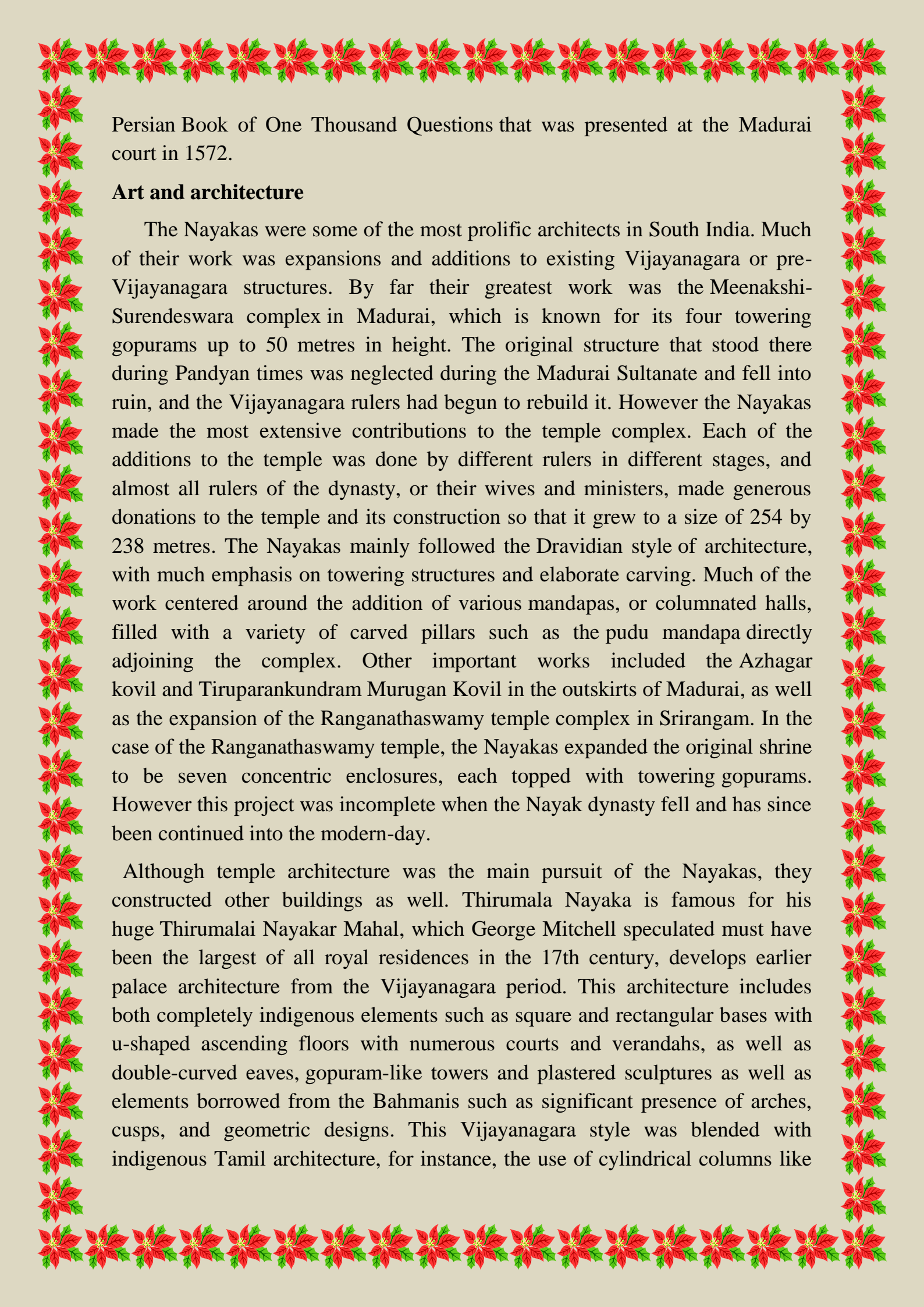
Administration

The Madurai Nayakas followed a decentralized governance style. The king was supreme ruler, but his main advisor was the dalavai, who controlled both civil and military matters. The three most effective dalavais were Ariyanatha Mudaliar, Eamppayya and Narasappayya. The next most important figure was the pradhani or finance minister, and then the rayasam, chief of the bureaucracy. The kingdom was divided into provinces and local areas, each with its own governor and bureaucracy. The most basic unit was the village. Revenue would be earned through taxes on land.

The Nayakas also had a parallel system of administration. They divided their territory into 72 palayams, each of which was ruled by a palaiyakkarar, better known as polygar. These warrior-chiefs had a significant amount of autonomy from the centre and held powers of law enforcement and judicial administration. In return, they would give one-third of the palaiyam's revenue to the Nayaka and another third for the upkeep of an army. Often, however, the polygars were completely outside central control and would raid and pillage nearby territory. Culture. The main languages of Nayaka rule were Telugu and Tamil. Tamil was mainly used by the common people, although there were some Telugu cultivators in the region. The Madurai Nayakas, on the other hand, had Telugu as mother tongue but could also speak Tamil.

Literature

The Nayakas were great patrons of literature in Telugu, Tamil and Sanskrit. Although most kings patronized mainly poetry (considered "divine"), under Nayaka patronage Telugu prose flourished. The earliest Muslim work in Tamil that survives complete is a translation by Vaṅṅapparimalappulavar of the




Persian Book of One Thousand Questions that was presented at the Madurai court in 1572.

Art and architecture

The Nayakas were some of the most prolific architects in South India. Much of their work was expansions and additions to existing Vijayanagara or pre-Vijayanagara structures. By far their greatest work was the Meenakshi-Surendeswara complex in Madurai, which is known for its four towering gopurams up to 50 metres in height. The original structure that stood there during Pandyan times was neglected during the Madurai Sultanate and fell into ruin, and the Vijayanagara rulers had begun to rebuild it. However the Nayakas made the most extensive contributions to the temple complex. Each of the additions to the temple was done by different rulers in different stages, and almost all rulers of the dynasty, or their wives and ministers, made generous donations to the temple and its construction so that it grew to a size of 254 by 238 metres. The Nayakas mainly followed the Dravidian style of architecture, with much emphasis on towering structures and elaborate carving. Much of the work centered around the addition of various mandapas, or columnated halls, filled with a variety of carved pillars such as the pudu mandapa directly adjoining the complex. Other important works included the Azhagar kovil and Tiruparankundram Murugan Kovil in the outskirts of Madurai, as well as the expansion of the Ranganathaswamy temple complex in Srirangam. In the case of the Ranganathaswamy temple, the Nayakas expanded the original shrine to be seven concentric enclosures, each topped with towering gopurams. However this project was incomplete when the Nayak dynasty fell and has since been continued into the modern-day.

Although temple architecture was the main pursuit of the Nayakas, they constructed other buildings as well. Thirumala Nayaka is famous for his huge Thirumalai Nayakar Mahal, which George Mitchell speculated must have been the largest of all royal residences in the 17th century, develops earlier palace architecture from the Vijayanagara period. This architecture includes both completely indigenous elements such as square and rectangular bases with u-shaped ascending floors with numerous courts and verandahs, as well as double-curved eaves, gopuram-like towers and plastered sculptures as well as elements borrowed from the Bahmanis such as significant presence of arches, cusps, and geometric designs. This Vijayanagara style was blended with indigenous Tamil architecture, for instance, the use of cylindrical columns like



Tamil wooden architecture, to create new architectural styles for grand buildings such as the Thirumalai Nayakar Mahal. Only two sections of this palace still stand, the dance hall and audience hall.

Nayaka coins

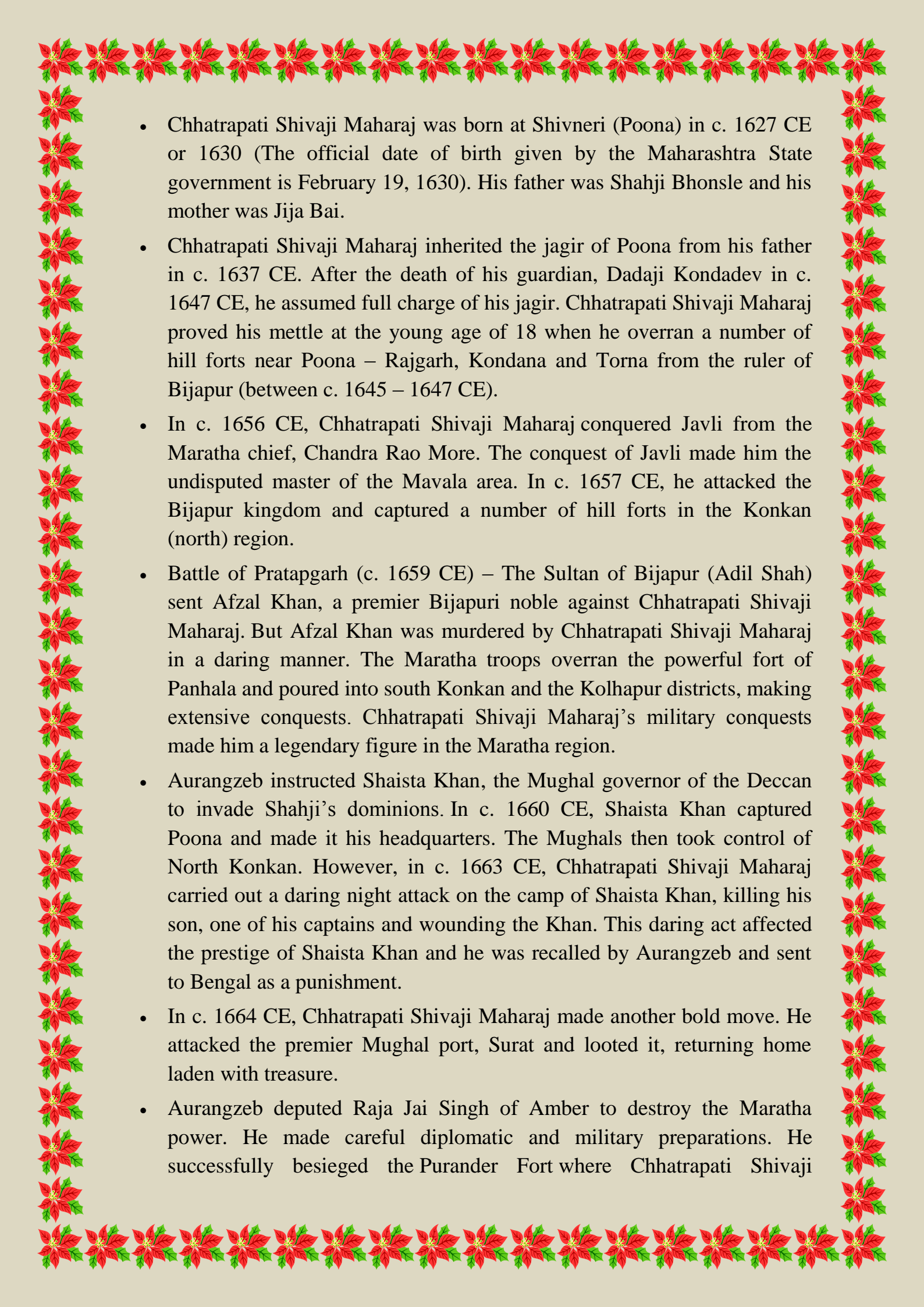
Some early Madurai Nayaka coins portray the figure of the king. The bull also is seen frequently on the Madurai Nayak coins. Chokkanatha Nayak, one of the last rulers of the dynasty, issued coins displaying various animals, such as the bear, elephant and lion. He also issued coins featuring Hanuman and Garuda. The inscriptions on the Nayak coins are in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Nagari scripts. Unlike the coins of many of the earlier dynasties, the Nayak coins are easily available for coin-collectors. The Marathas emerged as an important power during the decline of the Mughal Empire. Various factors contributed to the rise of the Marathas in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Marathas are an important chapter in the modern history of India and is hence an important topic for the In this article, you can learn all about the Marathas and other provincial powers in the Indian subcontinent.

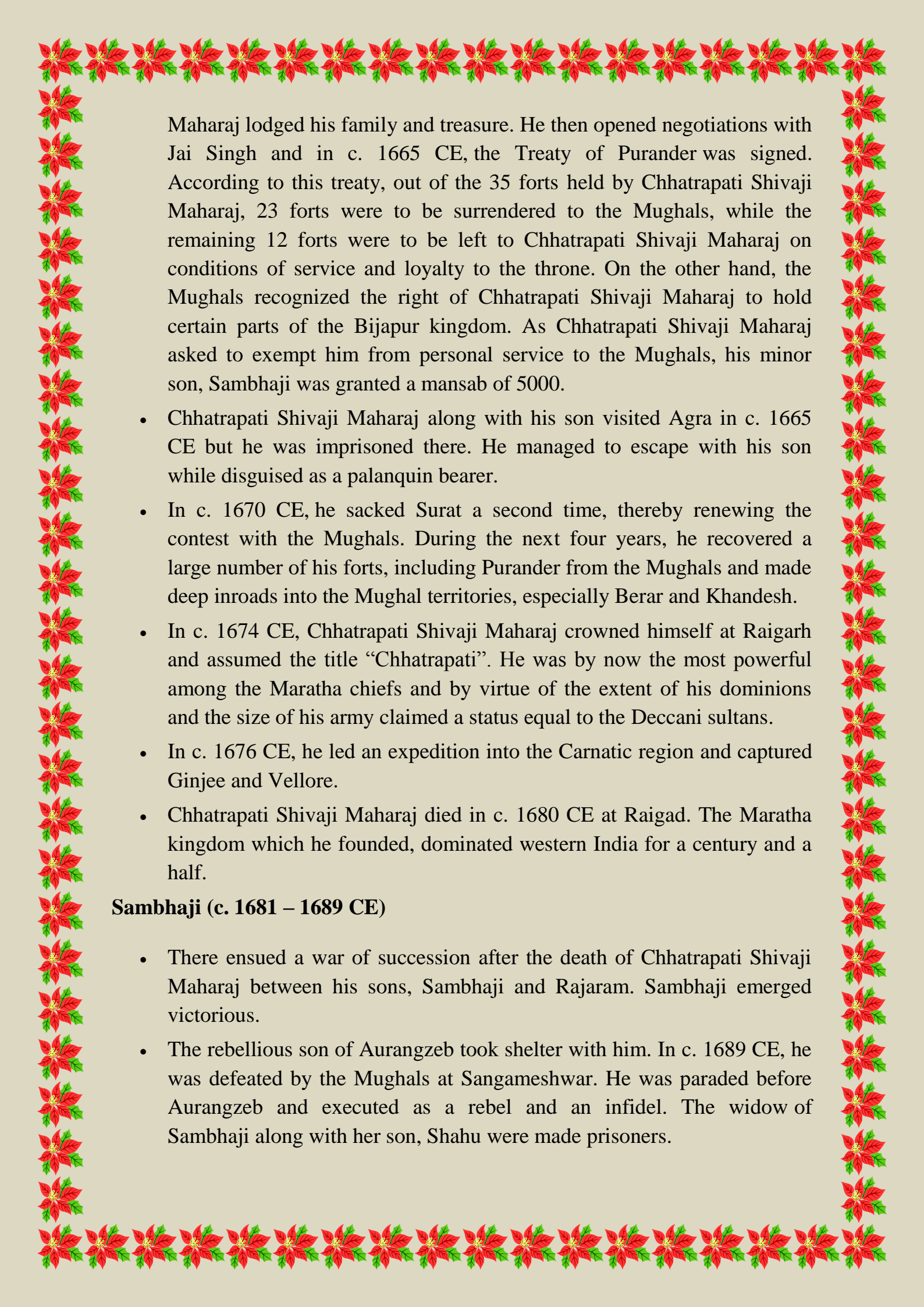
Marathas

The physical environment of the Maratha country developed certain unique traits among the Marathas. The mountainous region and the dense forests made them brave soldiers and adopt guerilla tactics. They built a number of forts in the mountains. The spread of the Bhakti movement in Maharashtra under the influence of spiritual leaders like Ramdas, Vaman Pandit, Tukaram and Eknath inculcated a spirit of religious unity among them, and the much-needed political unity was conferred by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The Marathas held important positions in the administration and military systems of the Deccan Sultanates of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar, and their power and influence in the affairs of the government had grown as the Mughals advanced towards the Deccan. There were a number of influential Maratha families such as the Mores, the Ghatages, the Nimbalkers, etc but the Marathas did not have any large, well-established states as the Rajputs had. The credit for establishing a powerful Maratha state goes to Shahji Bhonsle and his son, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Rise of Marathas

Shivaji Raje Bhonsle (c. 1674 – 1680 CE)

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- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was born at Shivneri (Poona) in c. 1627 CE or 1630 (The official date of birth given by the Maharashtra State government is February 19, 1630). His father was Shahji Bhonsle and his mother was Jija Bai.
 - Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj inherited the jagir of Poona from his father in c. 1637 CE. After the death of his guardian, Dadaji Kondadev in c. 1647 CE, he assumed full charge of his jagir. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj proved his mettle at the young age of 18 when he overran a number of hill forts near Poona – Rajgarh, Kondana and Torna from the ruler of Bijapur (between c. 1645 – 1647 CE).
 - In c. 1656 CE, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj conquered Javli from the Maratha chief, Chandra Rao More. The conquest of Javli made him the undisputed master of the Mavala area. In c. 1657 CE, he attacked the Bijapur kingdom and captured a number of hill forts in the Konkan (north) region.
 - Battle of Pratapgarh (c. 1659 CE) – The Sultan of Bijapur (Adil Shah) sent Afzal Khan, a premier Bijapuri noble against Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. But Afzal Khan was murdered by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in a daring manner. The Maratha troops overran the powerful fort of Panhala and poured into south Konkan and the Kolhapur districts, making extensive conquests. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj’s military conquests made him a legendary figure in the Maratha region.
 - Aurangzeb instructed Shaista Khan, the Mughal governor of the Deccan to invade Shahji’s dominions. In c. 1660 CE, Shaista Khan captured Poona and made it his headquarters. The Mughals then took control of North Konkan. However, in c. 1663 CE, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj carried out a daring night attack on the camp of Shaista Khan, killing his son, one of his captains and wounding the Khan. This daring act affected the prestige of Shaista Khan and he was recalled by Aurangzeb and sent to Bengal as a punishment.
 - In c. 1664 CE, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj made another bold move. He attacked the premier Mughal port, Surat and looted it, returning home laden with treasure.
 - Aurangzeb deputed Raja Jai Singh of Amber to destroy the Maratha power. He made careful diplomatic and military preparations. He successfully besieged the Purander Fort where Chhatrapati Shivaji

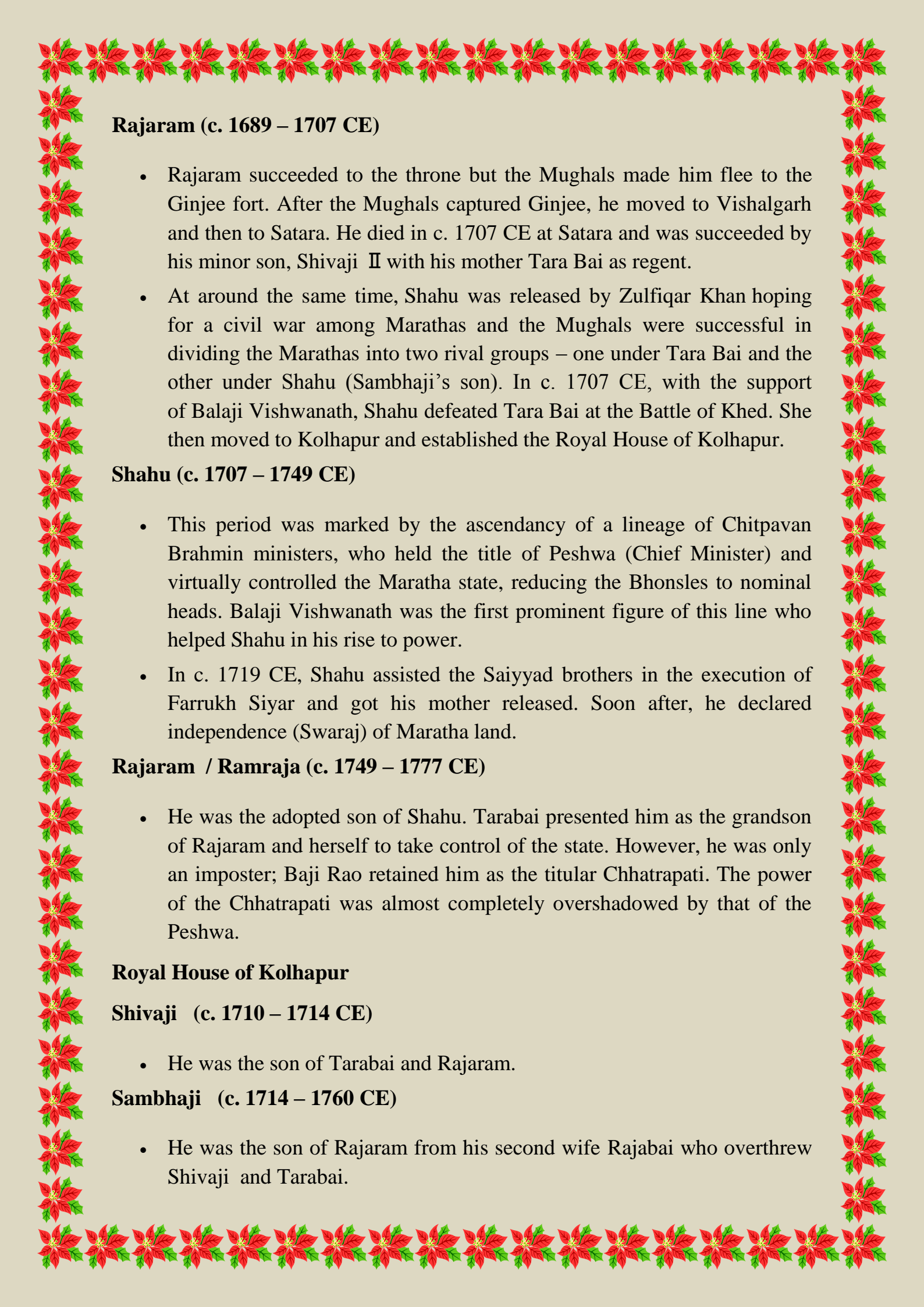


Maharaj lodged his family and treasure. He then opened negotiations with Jai Singh and in c. 1665 CE, the Treaty of Purander was signed. According to this treaty, out of the 35 forts held by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, 23 forts were to be surrendered to the Mughals, while the remaining 12 forts were to be left to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on conditions of service and loyalty to the throne. On the other hand, the Mughals recognized the right of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to hold certain parts of the Bijapur kingdom. As Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj asked to exempt him from personal service to the Mughals, his minor son, Sambhaji was granted a mansab of 5000.

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj along with his son visited Agra in c. 1665 CE but he was imprisoned there. He managed to escape with his son while disguised as a palanquin bearer.
- In c. 1670 CE, he sacked Surat a second time, thereby renewing the contest with the Mughals. During the next four years, he recovered a large number of his forts, including Purander from the Mughals and made deep inroads into the Mughal territories, especially Berar and Khandesh.
- In c. 1674 CE, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj crowned himself at Raigarh and assumed the title “Chhatrapati”. He was by now the most powerful among the Maratha chiefs and by virtue of the extent of his dominions and the size of his army claimed a status equal to the Deccani sultans.
- In c. 1676 CE, he led an expedition into the Carnatic region and captured Ginjee and Vellore.
- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj died in c. 1680 CE at Raigad. The Maratha kingdom which he founded, dominated western India for a century and a half.

Sambhaji (c. 1681 – 1689 CE)

- There ensued a war of succession after the death of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj between his sons, Sambhaji and Rajaram. Sambhaji emerged victorious.
- The rebellious son of Aurangzeb took shelter with him. In c. 1689 CE, he was defeated by the Mughals at Sangameshwar. He was paraded before Aurangzeb and executed as a rebel and an infidel. The widow of Sambhaji along with her son, Shahu were made prisoners.



Rajaram (c. 1689 – 1707 CE)

- Rajaram succeeded to the throne but the Mughals made him flee to the Ginjee fort. After the Mughals captured Ginjee, he moved to Vishalgarh and then to Satara. He died in c. 1707 CE at Satara and was succeeded by his minor son, Shivaji II with his mother Tara Bai as regent.
- At around the same time, Shahu was released by Zulfiqar Khan hoping for a civil war among Marathas and the Mughals were successful in dividing the Marathas into two rival groups – one under Tara Bai and the other under Shahu (Sambhaji's son). In c. 1707 CE, with the support of Balaji Vishwanath, Shahu defeated Tara Bai at the Battle of Khed. She then moved to Kolhapur and established the Royal House of Kolhapur.

Shahu (c. 1707 – 1749 CE)

- This period was marked by the ascendancy of a lineage of Chitpavan Brahmin ministers, who held the title of Peshwa (Chief Minister) and virtually controlled the Maratha state, reducing the Bhonsles to nominal heads. Balaji Vishwanath was the first prominent figure of this line who helped Shahu in his rise to power.
- In c. 1719 CE, Shahu assisted the Saiyyad brothers in the execution of Farrukh Siyar and got his mother released. Soon after, he declared independence (Swaraj) of Maratha land.

Rajaram / Ramraja (c. 1749 – 1777 CE)

- He was the adopted son of Shahu. Tarabai presented him as the grandson of Rajaram and herself to take control of the state. However, he was only an imposter; Baji Rao retained him as the titular Chhatrapati. The power of the Chhatrapati was almost completely overshadowed by that of the Peshwa.


Royal House of Kolhapur

Shivaji (c. 1710 – 1714 CE)

- He was the son of Tarabai and Rajaram.

Sambhaji (c. 1714 – 1760 CE)

- He was the son of Rajaram from his second wife Rajabai who overthrew Shivaji and Tarabai.

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- In c. 1713 CE, he signed the Treaty of Warna with his cousin Shahu wherein the two principalities (Satara and Kolhapur) of the Bhonsle family were formalised.

The Peshwas

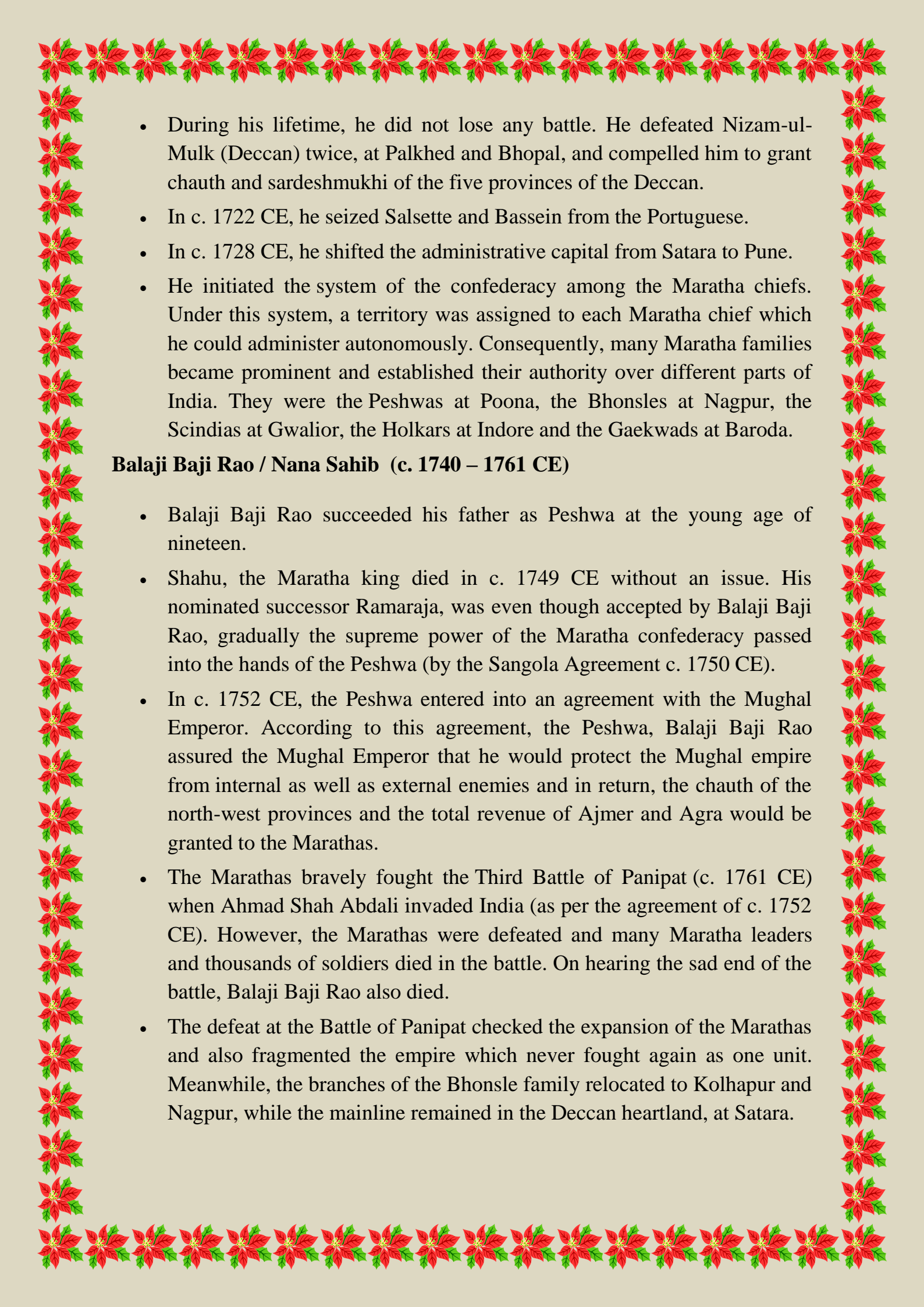
The word Peshwa has its roots in the Persian language meaning “foremost”, and was introduced in the Deccan by the Muslim rulers. The early Peshwas were the prime ministers of the Maratha Chhatrapatis who were appointed to assist the rulers in different administrative and political affairs. The Peshwas later assumed the number one position in Maratha politics.

Balaji Vishwanath Bhatt (c. 1713 – 1719 CE)

- The Bhattas were Chitpavan Brahmins hailing from Shrivardhan in the Konkan region.
- He made the post of the Peshwa hereditary and is also known in history for making the position of Peshwa the most important and influential in the Maratha administration.
- He played an important role in the civil war as he sought the support of all Maratha leaders for Shahu and thus, helped Shahu in his rise to power.
- In c. 1719 CE, Balaji Vishwanath was successful in attaining certain rights from the then Mughal Emperor, Farrukh Siyar such as recognition of Shahu as the Maratha king and to collect Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the six Mughal provinces of the Deccan, including the Carnatic and Mysore.
- Along with Shahu, Balaji Vishwanath assisted the Sayyid brothers in deposing the Mughal emperor, Farrukh Siyar in c. 1719 CE.

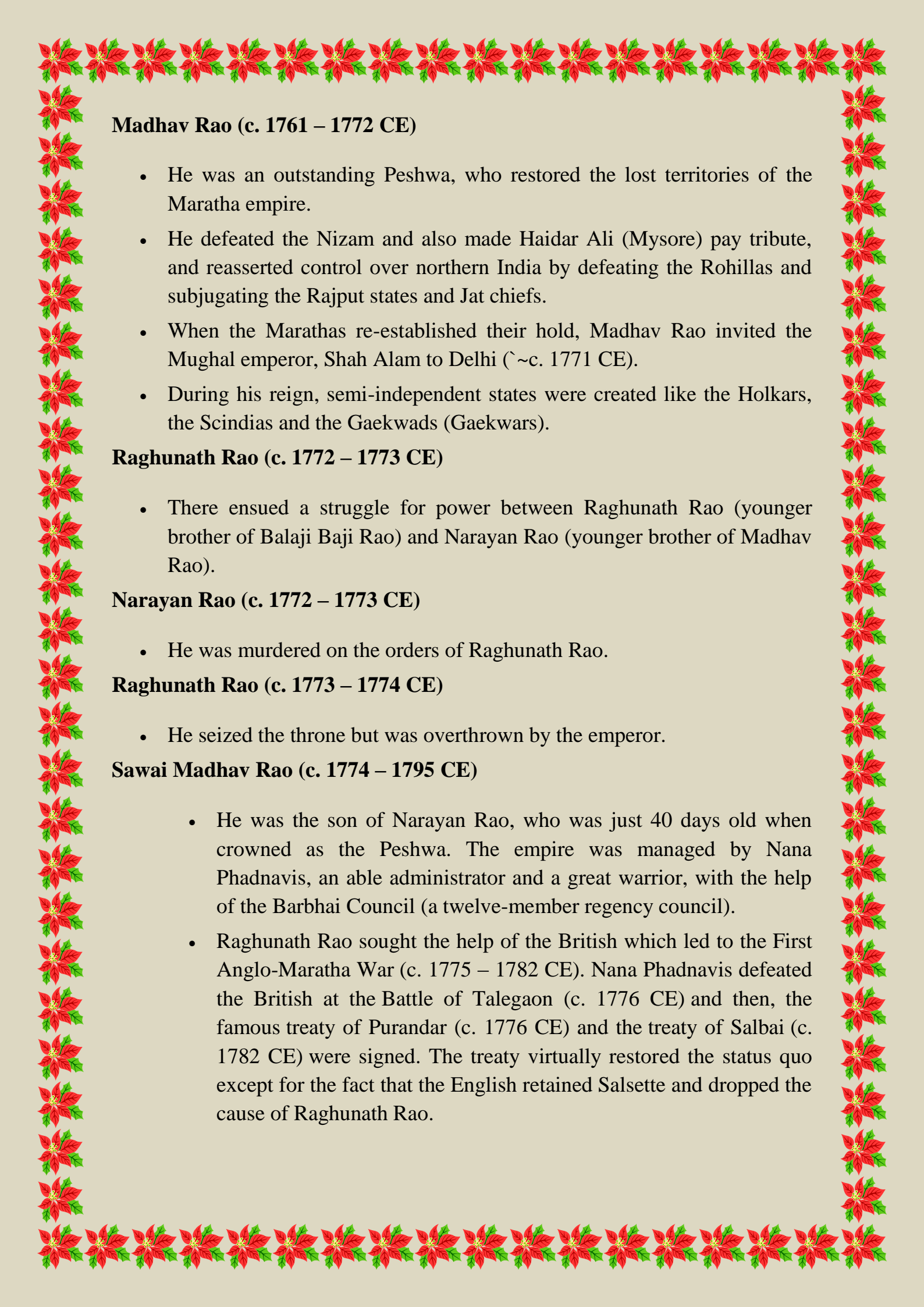
Baji Rao (c. 1720 – 1740 CE)

- Eldest son of Balaji Vishwanath who succeeded him as Peshwa at the young age of twenty. The Maratha power rose to its heights under him and he was the most famous among all the Peshwas.
- He preached and propagated the idea of Hindu-pad-padshahi (Hindu Empire) to gain the support of the Hindu chiefs against the Mughals, their common enemy.

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- During his lifetime, he did not lose any battle. He defeated Nizam-ul-Mulk (Deccan) twice, at Palkhed and Bhopal, and compelled him to grant chauth and sardeshmukhi of the five provinces of the Deccan.
 - In c. 1722 CE, he seized Salsette and Bassein from the Portuguese.
 - In c. 1728 CE, he shifted the administrative capital from Satara to Pune.
 - He initiated the system of the confederacy among the Maratha chiefs. Under this system, a territory was assigned to each Maratha chief which he could administer autonomously. Consequently, many Maratha families became prominent and established their authority over different parts of India. They were the Peshwas at Poona, the Bhonsles at Nagpur, the Scindias at Gwalior, the Holkars at Indore and the Gaekwads at Baroda.

Balaji Baji Rao / Nana Sahib (c. 1740 – 1761 CE)

- Balaji Baji Rao succeeded his father as Peshwa at the young age of nineteen.
- Shahu, the Maratha king died in c. 1749 CE without an issue. His nominated successor Ramaraja, was even though accepted by Balaji Baji Rao, gradually the supreme power of the Maratha confederacy passed into the hands of the Peshwa (by the Sangola Agreement c. 1750 CE).
- In c. 1752 CE, the Peshwa entered into an agreement with the Mughal Emperor. According to this agreement, the Peshwa, Balaji Baji Rao assured the Mughal Emperor that he would protect the Mughal empire from internal as well as external enemies and in return, the chauth of the north-west provinces and the total revenue of Ajmer and Agra would be granted to the Marathas.
- The Marathas bravely fought the Third Battle of Panipat (c. 1761 CE) when Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India (as per the agreement of c. 1752 CE). However, the Marathas were defeated and many Maratha leaders and thousands of soldiers died in the battle. On hearing the sad end of the battle, Balaji Baji Rao also died.
- The defeat at the Battle of Panipat checked the expansion of the Marathas and also fragmented the empire which never fought again as one unit. Meanwhile, the branches of the Bhonsle family relocated to Kolhapur and Nagpur, while the mainline remained in the Deccan heartland, at Satara.



Madhav Rao (c. 1761 – 1772 CE)

- He was an outstanding Peshwa, who restored the lost territories of the Maratha empire.
- He defeated the Nizam and also made Haidar Ali (Mysore) pay tribute, and reasserted control over northern India by defeating the Rohillas and subjugating the Rajput states and Jat chiefs.
- When the Marathas re-established their hold, Madhav Rao invited the Mughal emperor, Shah Alam to Delhi (~c. 1771 CE).
- During his reign, semi-independent states were created like the Holkars, the Scindias and the Gaekwads (Gaekwars).

Raghunath Rao (c. 1772 – 1773 CE)

- There ensued a struggle for power between Raghunath Rao (younger brother of Balaji Baji Rao) and Narayan Rao (younger brother of Madhav Rao).

Narayan Rao (c. 1772 – 1773 CE)

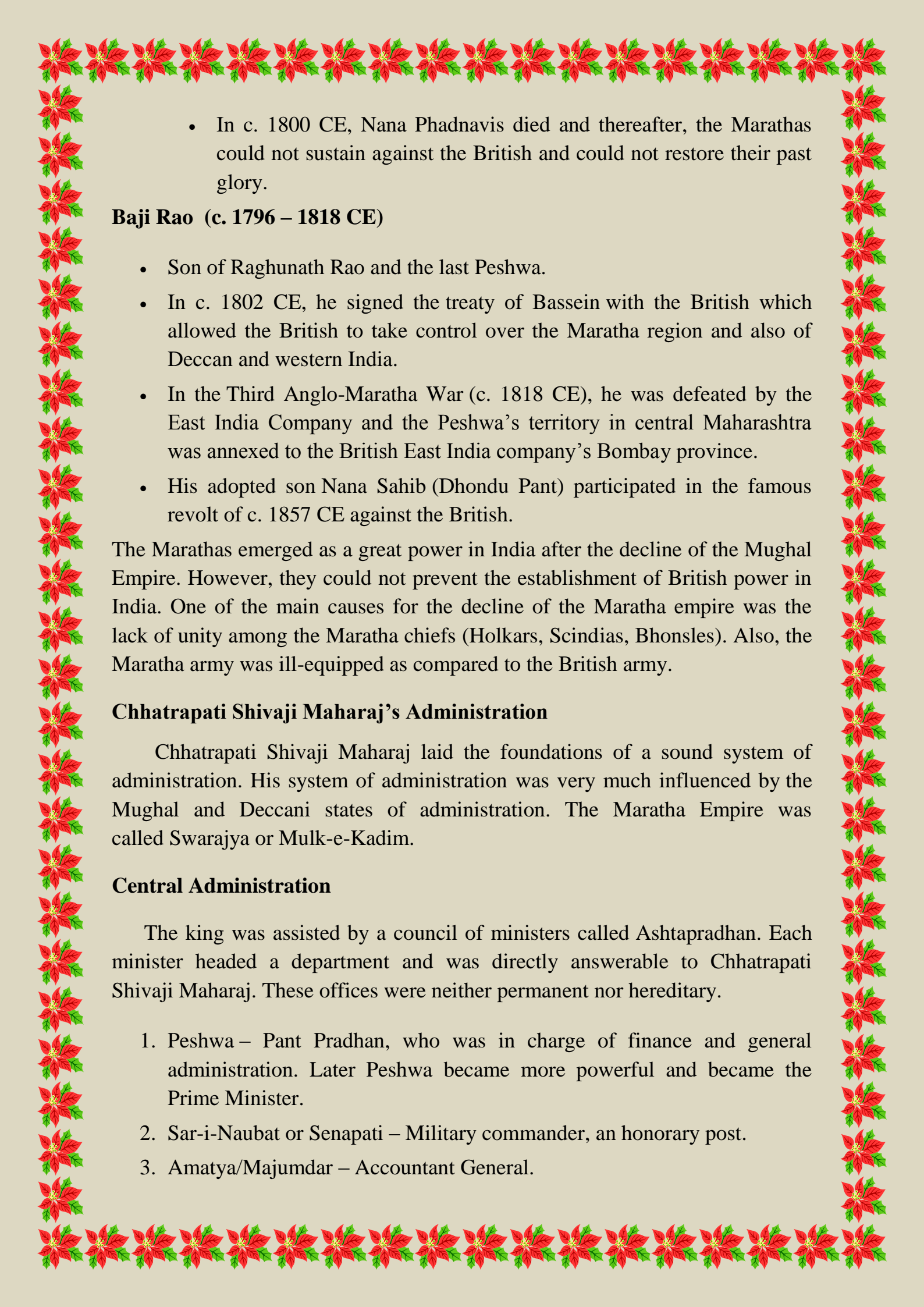
- He was murdered on the orders of Raghunath Rao.

Raghunath Rao (c. 1773 – 1774 CE)

- He seized the throne but was overthrown by the emperor.

Sawai Madhav Rao (c. 1774 – 1795 CE)

- He was the son of Narayan Rao, who was just 40 days old when crowned as the Peshwa. The empire was managed by Nana Phadnavis, an able administrator and a great warrior, with the help of the Barbhai Council (a twelve-member regency council).
- Raghunath Rao sought the help of the British which led to the First Anglo-Maratha War (c. 1775 – 1782 CE). Nana Phadnavis defeated the British at the Battle of Talegaon (c. 1776 CE) and then, the famous treaty of Purandar (c. 1776 CE) and the treaty of Salbai (c. 1782 CE) were signed. The treaty virtually restored the status quo except for the fact that the English retained Salsette and dropped the cause of Raghunath Rao.

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- In c. 1800 CE, Nana Phadnavis died and thereafter, the Marathas could not sustain against the British and could not restore their past glory.

Baji Rao (c. 1796 – 1818 CE)

- Son of Raghunath Rao and the last Peshwa.
- In c. 1802 CE, he signed the treaty of Bassein with the British which allowed the British to take control over the Maratha region and also of Deccan and western India.
- In the Third Anglo-Maratha War (c. 1818 CE), he was defeated by the East India Company and the Peshwa's territory in central Maharashtra was annexed to the British East India company's Bombay province.
- His adopted son Nana Sahib (Dhondu Pant) participated in the famous revolt of c. 1857 CE against the British.

The Marathas emerged as a great power in India after the decline of the Mughal Empire. However, they could not prevent the establishment of British power in India. One of the main causes for the decline of the Maratha empire was the lack of unity among the Maratha chiefs (Holkars, Scindias, Bhonsles). Also, the Maratha army was ill-equipped as compared to the British army.

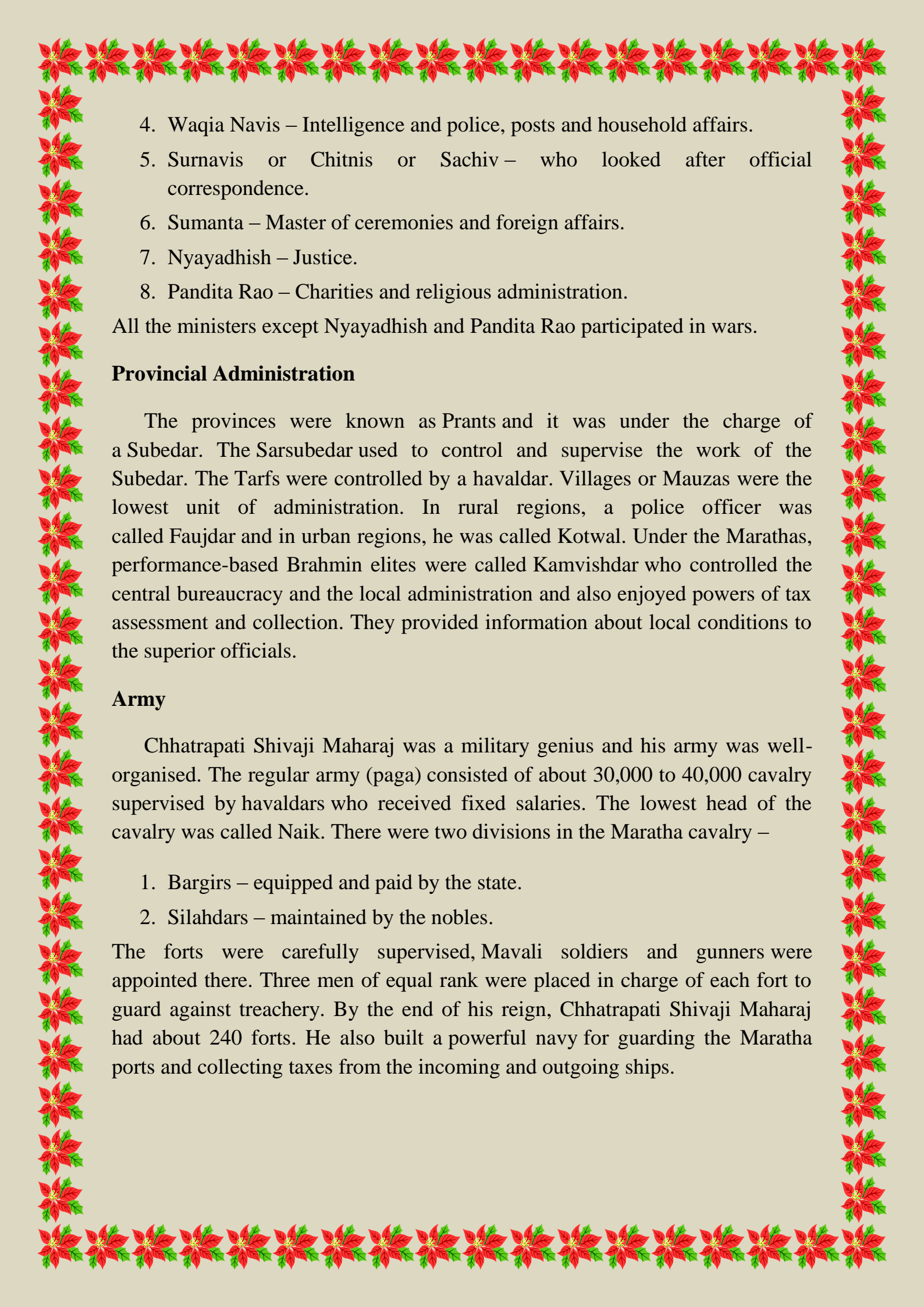
Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's Administration

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj laid the foundations of a sound system of administration. His system of administration was very much influenced by the Mughal and Deccani states of administration. The Maratha Empire was called Swarajya or Mulk-e-Kadim.

Central Administration

The king was assisted by a council of ministers called Ashtapradhan. Each minister headed a department and was directly answerable to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. These offices were neither permanent nor hereditary.

1. Peshwa – Pant Pradhan, who was in charge of finance and general administration. Later Peshwa became more powerful and became the Prime Minister.
2. Sar-i-Naubat or Senapati – Military commander, an honorary post.
3. Amatya/Majumdar – Accountant General.

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4. Waqia Navis – Intelligence and police, posts and household affairs.
 5. Surnavis or Chitnis or Sachiv – who looked after official correspondence.
 6. Sumanta – Master of ceremonies and foreign affairs.
 7. Nyayadhish – Justice.
 8. Pandita Rao – Charities and religious administration.

All the ministers except Nyayadhish and Pandita Rao participated in wars.

Provincial Administration

The provinces were known as Prants and it was under the charge of a Subedar. The Sarsubedar used to control and supervise the work of the Subedar. The Tarfs were controlled by a havaldar. Villages or Mauzas were the lowest unit of administration. In rural regions, a police officer was called Faujdar and in urban regions, he was called Kotwal. Under the Marathas, performance-based Brahmin elites were called Kamvisdhar who controlled the central bureaucracy and the local administration and also enjoyed powers of tax assessment and collection. They provided information about local conditions to the superior officials.

Army

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was a military genius and his army was well-organised. The regular army (paga) consisted of about 30,000 to 40,000 cavalry supervised by havaldars who received fixed salaries. The lowest head of the cavalry was called Naik. There were two divisions in the Maratha cavalry –

1. Bargirs – equipped and paid by the state.
2. Silahdars – maintained by the nobles.

The forts were carefully supervised, Mavali soldiers and gunners were appointed there. Three men of equal rank were placed in charge of each fort to guard against treachery. By the end of his reign, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj had about 240 forts. He also built a powerful navy for guarding the Maratha ports and collecting taxes from the incoming and outgoing ships.



Revenue

The revenue system of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was based on that of Malik Amber of Ahmednagar. The measuring rod (lathi) was used for measuring land. Lands were also classified into three categories – paddy fields, garden lands and hilly tracts. He appointed his own revenue officials called Karkuns and reduced the powers of the existing Kulkarnis and Deshmukhs. Chauth and sardeshmukhi were the two major sources of revenue that were collected in the neighbouring territories of the Mughal empire or Deccan Sultanates (and not in the Maratha kingdom). Chauth was one-fourth of the land revenue paid to the Marathas in order to avoid the Maratha raids. Sardeshmukhi was an additional levy of ten percent on those lands on which the Marathas claimed hereditary rights.

Other Provincial Kingdoms

Bengal

- With the gradual weakening of the central Mughal authority, Murshid Quli Khan who served as a diwan under Aurangzeb became virtually independent but had to pay tribute to the Mughal Emperor.
- In c. 1739 CE, he was replaced by Alivardi Khan and became the Nawab himself.
- These Nawabs brought peace and stability in the region and also promoted trade, agriculture and industry.
- They provided equal employment opportunities to both Hindus and Muslims.
- However, they failed to understand the long-term implications of the presence of European trading companies in these areas and could not keep up the level of their military preparedness with the European powers.
- Consequently, there were battles and wars between the two, for example, Siraj-ud-Daula, the successor of Alivardi Khan, had to fight the East India Company over the trading rights in c. 1756 CE. His defeat in the Battle of Plassey (c. 1757 CE) resulted in the subjugation of Bengal as well as India by the British.



Awadh

- During the decline of the Mughal power, another provincial kingdom – Awadh, emerged under governor Saadat Khan Burhan ul Mulk.
- He made his position hereditary just before his death in c. 1739 CE and later his successors, Safdar Jung and Asaf ud Daulah played an important role in the politics of northern India and gave long-term administrative stability to the Awadh province.
- Under the Nawabs, Faizabad and Lucknow emerged as centres of cultural excellence comparable to Delhi in the spheres of arts, literature and crafts.
- Regional architecture also reflected itself in the form of Imambarahs and other buildings.
- The evolution of the dance form of kathak was the outcome of this cultural synthesis.

Rajputs

- Rajputs had served well under the Mughals and in exchange, they were granted considerable autonomy in their watan jagirs.
- However, during the reign of Aurangzeb, the relationship between the Mughals and the Rajputs suffered, mainly due to his interference in the succession dispute of Marwar.
- Moreover, most of the Rajput states were constantly involved in petty fights and civil wars.
- One of the important principalities that emerged in the early 18th century was that of Jaipur (earlier Amber), located in eastern Rajasthan.
 - Its ruler, Sawai Jai Singh emerged as the single most important ruler in the region.

With the rise of the Marathas, Rajput influence began to decrease and Jaipur became a vulnerable target for the ambitions of the Marathas particularly, Mahadaji Scindia.

Punjab

- The decline of the Mughal power gave Sikhs the opportunity to rise.

- By c. 1770 CE, there was a confederation of about 60 chieftains, some of who later emerged as princely states under the British such as Patiala and Nabha.
- It was Maharaja Ranjit Singh (grandson of Charhat Singh Sukerchakia) who brought the Sikh chiefs west of the river Sutlej under his control and established a powerful Sikh empire in Punjab.
- He started controlling the different trade routes, and in order to enhance his revenues started imposing monopolies on the trade in salt, grain and textiles from Kashmir.
- Using these earnings, he built up a modernized army of 40,000 cavalry and infantry and by c. 1809 CE emerged as the undisputed master of Punjab.
- His rule lasted for four decades, c. 1799 – 1839 CE. However, within ten years of his death, the British annexed Punjab.

South India

The principal states that rose to prominence in the latter half of the 18th century (after 1740 CE) were –

1. Travancore in Kerala under Martanda Varma and Rama Varma
2. Mysore under Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan

Before them, there were three formidable powers (though representatives of Mughal authority) in the south –

1. The Marathas who were present both at Thanjavur and elsewhere,
2. Sadullah Khan of Arcot (Karnataka) who ruled around the 1700s and
3. The Nizam-ul-Mulk of Hyderabad.

However, in the second half of the 18th century, the power of all three of these declined.

The State of Travancore

Martanda Varma ruled Travancore (southern Kerala state of Venad) from c. 1729 – 1758 CE, built a strong standing army and fortified the northern limits of his kingdom. He was succeeded by Rama Varma (c. 1758 – 1798 CE) who was able to protect his kingdom successfully against a new rival power – Mysore.




Mysore

Mysore emerged as a powerful state under the rulers of the Vadiyar dynasty (or Wodeyar). Being a landlocked region, Mysore depended on ports of the Indian east coast for trade and military supplies. In c. 1761 CE, a cavalry commander of migrant origin, Haidar Ali attained sufficient power in the kingdom to reduce the Vadiyars to mere figureheads. Haidar Ali, and later around c. 1782 CE his son Tipu Sultan worked hard to consolidate Mysore and to have access to both coasts of Peninsular India. They were also relatively successful against the Kodavas (the inhabitants of the upland kingdom of Kodagu, Coorg), Coastal Karnataka and northern Kerala which enabled Tipu Sultan to have diplomatic and commercial relations on his own with the Middle East. However, they had to fight against the local chiefs, the Poligars. They eventually lost their kingdom to the English East India Company.

The Sethupathis are a Tamil clan of the Dakhini Hindu Maravar community native to the Ramanathapuram and Sivaganga district of Tamil Nadu, India. They were from the 12th century considered independent kings in 16th century who ruled the Ramnad kingdom, also known as Maravar country.^[3] The male rulers of Ramnathapuram also bore the title of "Sethupathi" or "protector of the bridge", the bridge here referring to the legendary sacred Rama's Bridge (Adam's Bridge), while female rulers bore the title "Nachiyar". Among the 72 poligars (feudal title of chieftains under Nayaka rulers) of the region, the Sethupathi stood first. This special position was conferred not based upon the revenue that his kingdom generated but because of his military prowess. Back in the beginning of the 18th century, the Sethupathi ruler could mobilize a considerable army, about 30,000 to 40,000 strong at short notice (one week).

Under the Madurai Nayak king Muthukrishnappa Nayak, the first recorded Sethupathi, Saidaikan who assumed the title Udaiyan Rakunatha Sethupathi was installed as ruler from 1606–1621. The Sethupathis who were under the suzerainty of the Madurai Nayak, gained its full independence in 1702. The Ramnad Kingdom lost its independence under British Empire and became a Zamindari divided into the Ramnad estate also called Greater Marava and Sivaganga estate also called Little Marava.

Etymology



The title Sethupathi is a Tamil term meaning "Lord of Sethu", where Sethu refers to Ram Setu, a chain of limestone shoals from Rameswaram Island in India to Mannar Island in Sri Lanka.^[12] The Maravar clan from 5th century CE were patrons of the Ramanathaswamy Temple, which is also known as Sethu and thereupon assumed the title Sethupathi.

The title "Sethu Kavalar" meaning "Guardian of Sethu" was a title used by the Aryacakravarti dynasty of Jaffna Kingdom, who also used the term "Sethu" on their coin on account of being related to the Sethupathis.

Sethupathis of Ramnad and Sivaganga

The rulers of Ramnad and Sivaganga region of early 17th century were called Sethupathis. The Nayak ruler Muthukrishnappa Nayak reestablished the ancient line of Sethupathys who were the chieftains under the pandyas in the beginning of 17th century as protector and guardian of the pilgrims to Sethusamudram and Rameswaram. The protector of Sethusamudram was called as Sethupathy. Sadaikkathevar was a loyal subordinate of the Nayaks. He emerged as the chief of the poligas. Sethupathis were maravas of Ramnad, Madurai and Tirunelveli. They had Ramnad as their official headquarters. Sadaikkathevar and his son KuttanSethupathi acted as Sethupathis and extended protection to the pilgrims who visited Rameswaram. Apart from giving protection two Sethupathis did religious services to the Ramanathaswamy temple at Rameswaram. The Sethupathis also issued copper coins until they became Zamindar in the 18th century, the coins depict horses and peacocks with deity on the obverse and the name Sethupathi in Tamil on the reverse.

List of Sethupathis

- Sadaikka Thevar Sethupathi (1590–1621)
- Kootan Sethupathi (1621–1637)
- Dalavai Sethupathi (1637–1659)
- Raghunatha Thirumalai Sethupathi (1659–1670)

The independent kings were:

- Raghunatha Kilavan Sethupathi (1670–1708)
- Vijaya Raghunatha Sethupathi I (1708–1723)
- Sundaresvara Raghunatha Sethupathi (1723–1728)
- Kumara Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Sethupathi (1728–1734)
- Muthukumara Raghunatha Sethupathi (1734–1747)

- Rakka Thevar (1747–1748)
- Vijaya Raghunatha Sethupathi II (1748–1760)
- Muthuramalinga Sethupathi (1760–1794)
- Ruler of princely state under the paramountcy of the British Raj
- Mangaleswari Nachiyar (1795–1803)

The zamindars are as follows:

- Mangaleswari Nachiyar (1803–1807)
- Annaswami Sethupathi (1807–1820)
- Ramaswami Sethupathi (1820–1830)
- Muthu Chella Thevar Sethupathi (1830–1846)
- Parvatha Vardhani Ammal Nachchiyar (1846–1862)
- Muthuramalinga Sethupathi II(1862–1873)

Court of Wards (1873–1889)

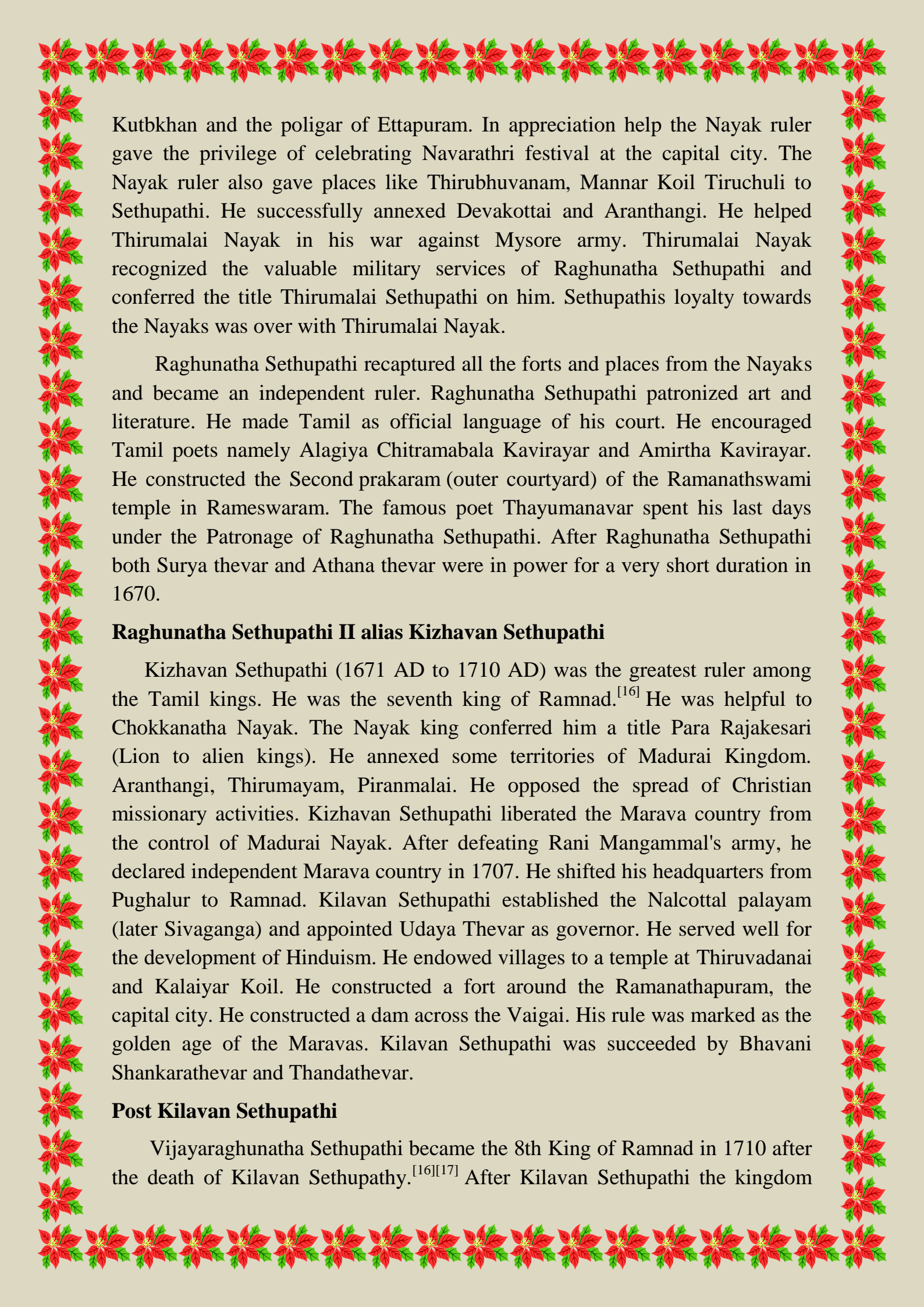
- Bhaskara Sethupathi (1889–1903)
- Dinakara Sethupathy
- Raja Rajeswara Sethupathi (1903–1929)
- Shanmugha Rajeswara Sethupathi(1929–1967)
- Ramanatha Sethupathi (1967–1979)
- Rajeswari Nachiyar (1979–present)
- Sadaikka Thevar

Sadaikka Thevar (1601–1645 CE)

Kuttan Sethupathi made his adopted son Sadaikkathevar II as the next ruler. This was opposed by Kuttan Sethupathi's natural son Thambi, Thirumalai Nayak supported the claim of Thambi. The ruler Sadaikka thevar was dethroned and jailed. Thambi was made as Sethupathi. Thambi was not competent. Sadaikkathevar's nephews Raghunathathevar and Narayanathevar rebelled against Thambi's rule. Accepting the popular representation, Thirumalai Nayak released Sadaikkathevar from Jail and made him Sethupathi after dismissing Thambi from the throne Sadiakkathevar constructed a new Chokkanatha temple at Rameswaram. He did lot of Charitable and public works

Raghunatha Sethupathi

Raghunatha Sethupathi (Raghunatha Kilavan) (1645 AD to 1670 AD) was loyal to the Nayak ruler. He helped the Nayaks by defeating the Muslims under



Kutbkhan and the poligar of Ettapuram. In appreciation help the Nayak ruler gave the privilege of celebrating Navarathri festival at the capital city. The Nayak ruler also gave places like Thirubhuvanam, Mannar Koil Tiruchuli to Sethupathi. He successfully annexed Devakottai and Aranthangi. He helped Thirumalai Nayak in his war against Mysore army. Thirumalai Nayak recognized the valuable military services of Raghunatha Sethupathi and conferred the title Thirumalai Sethupathi on him. Sethupathis loyalty towards the Nayaks was over with Thirumalai Nayak.


Raghunatha Sethupathi recaptured all the forts and places from the Nayaks and became an independent ruler. Raghunatha Sethupathi patronized art and literature. He made Tamil as official language of his court. He encouraged Tamil poets namely Alagiya Chitramabala Kavirayar and Amirtha Kavirayar. He constructed the Second prakaram (outer courtyard) of the Ramanathswami temple in Rameswaram. The famous poet Thayumanavar spent his last days under the Patronage of Raghunatha Sethupathi. After Raghunatha Sethupathi both Surya thevar and Athana thevar were in power for a very short duration in 1670.

Raghunatha Sethupathi II alias Kizhavan Sethupathi

Kizhavan Sethupathi (1671 AD to 1710 AD) was the greatest ruler among the Tamil kings. He was the seventh king of Ramnad.^[16] He was helpful to Chokkanatha Nayak. The Nayak king conferred him a title Para Rajakesari (Lion to alien kings). He annexed some territories of Madurai Kingdom. Aranthangi, Thirumayam, Piranmalai. He opposed the spread of Christian missionary activities. Kizhavan Sethupathi liberated the Marava country from the control of Madurai Nayak. After defeating Rani Mangammal's army, he declared independent Marava country in 1707. He shifted his headquarters from Pughalur to Ramnad. Kilavan Sethupathi established the Nalcottal palayam (later Sivaganga) and appointed Udaya Thevar as governor. He served well for the development of Hinduism. He endowed villages to a temple at Thiruvadana and Kalaiyar Koil. He constructed a fort around the Ramanathapuram, the capital city. He constructed a dam across the Vaigai. His rule was marked as the golden age of the Maravas. Kilavan Sethupathi was succeeded by Bhavani Shankarathevar and Thandathevar.

Post Kilavan Sethupathi

Vijayaraghunatha Sethupathi became the 8th King of Ramnad in 1710 after the death of Kilavan Sethupathy.^{[16][17]} After Kilavan Sethupathi the kingdom




was divided into two new Sivaganga Kingdom emerged. During the later period of Sethupathi's rule, the Ramnad was reduced to a zamin level. Then it was brought under the control of the Britishers. Finally it became a part of the Indian Union. Among the later Sethupathis, Bhaskara Sethupathy was an exceptionally enlightened zamindar. And his brother Raja Dhingara Sethupathi were English educated rulers. Raja Dhinagara sethupathy become the zamindar after Bhaskara Sethupathy died from 1903. He honored Swami Vivekananda who attended the parliament of Religion at Chicago. on return of Swami Vivekananda both zamindars maeda great agenda on that day, for this they made a memorial pillar on Sigil Raha Street, Now the street is named after the "Swamy Vivekanandga Salai". The social life under Sethupathi's rule was good.

The Sethupathis, Thondaimans – Social Life of People

Sethupathis of Ramand and Sivaganga: The rulers of Ramnad and Sivaganga region of early 17th Century were called Sethupathis. The Nayak ruler Muthukrishnappa Nayak appointed Sadaikkathevar in 1605 as protector and guardian of the pilgrims to Sethusamudram and Rameswaram. The protector of Sethusamudram was called as Sethupathy. Sadaikkathevar was a loyal subordinate of the Nayaks.

He emerged as the chief of the poligas. Sethupathis were maravas of Ramnad, Madurai and Tirunelveli. They had Ramnad as their official head quarters. Sadaikkathevar and his son KuttanSethupathi acted as Sethupathis and extended protection to the pilgrims who visited Rameswaram. Apart from giving protection these two Sethupathis did religious services to the Ramanathaswamy temple at Rameswaram.

Sadaikka Thevar II: 1636AD. – 1645AD: Kuttan Sethupathi made his adopted son Sadaikkathevar II as the next ruler. This was opposed by Kuttan Sethupathi's natural son Thambi. Thirumalai Nayak supported the claim of Thambi. The ruler Sadaikka thevar was dethroned and jailed. Thambi was made as Sethupathi. Thambi was not competent. Sadaikka thevar's nephews Raghunathathevar and Narayanathevar rebelled against Thambi's rule. Accepting the popular representation, Thirumalai Nayak released Sadaikkathevar from Jail and made him Sethupathi after dismissing Thambi from the throne. Sadiakkathevar constructed a



new Chokkanatha temple at Rameswaram. He did lot of Charitable and public works.


Raghunatha Sethupathi – 1645AD. – 1670AD.

He was loyal to the Nayak ruler. He helped the Nayaks by defeating the Muslims under Kutbkhan and the poliga of Ettayapuram. In appreciation to this help the Nayak ruler gave the privilege of celebrating Navarathri festival at the capital city. The Nayak ruler also donated places like Thirubhuvanam, Mannar Koil Thiruchuli to Sethupathi. He successfully annexed Devakottai and Aranthangi. He helped Thirumalai Nayak in his war against Mysore army. Thirumalai Nayak recognised the valuable military services of Raghunatha Sethupathi and conferred the title ‘Thirumalai Sethupathi’ on him. Sethupathi's loyalty towards the Nayaks was over with Thirumalai Nayak Raghunatha Sethupathi recaptured all the forts and places from the Nayaks and became an independent ruler. Raghunatha Sethupathi patronised art and literature. He made Tamil and Telugu as an official languages of his court. He encouraged Tamil poets namely Alagiya Chitramabala Kavirayar and Amirtha Kavirayar. He constructed the Second Prakaram of the Ramanathswami temple in Rameswaram. The famous poet Thayumanavar spent his last days under the Patronage of Raghunatha Sethupathi. After Raghunatha Sethupathi both Surya thevar and Athana thevar were in power for a very short duration in 1670.

Raghunatha Sethupathi II alias Kilavan Sethupathi : 1671AD. – 1710AD.:

Kilavan Sethupathi was the greatest ruler among the Marava kings. He was helpful to Chokkanatha Nayak. The Nayak king conferred him a title Para Rajakesari (Lion to alien kings). He annexed some territories of Madurai Kingdom, Aranthangi, Thirumayam, Piranmalai. He opposed the spread of Christian missionary activities. Kilavan Sethupathi liberated the Marava country from the control of Madurai Nayak. After defeating Rani Mangammal's army, he declared independent Marava country in 1707. He shifted his head quarters from Pughalur to Ramnad.

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After Kilavan Sethupathi the kingdom was divided into two. A new Sivaganga Kingdom emerged. During the later period of Sethupathi's rule, the Ramnad was reduced to a zamin level. Then it was brought under the control of the Britishers. Finally it became a part of the Indian Union. Among the later Sethupathis, Baskara Sethupathi was an exceptionally enlightened zamindar. He was an English educated ruler. He honoured Swami Vivekananda who attended the parliament of Religion at Chicago. The social life under Sethupathi's rule was good.


The Thondaimans of Pudukottai

Kilavan Sethupathi established a new Pudukottai Kingdom and made his son Raghunatha Raja Thondaman as its first ruler.

Raghunatha Thondaiman: After becoming the ruler of Pudukottai, Raghunatha Thondaiman fought against the Nayaks of Tanjore in support of the Nayaks of Madurai and conquered Thirukkattupalli a very important place. Then there was a direct clash between Thondaimans of Pudukottai and the Nayaks rulers of Tanjore. Thondaiman conquered the west of Thirukkattupalli. The Pudukottai Thondaiman's army defeated a combined army of the Maravas of Ramnad and Marathas of Tanjore. With this victorious experience the Pudukottai Raja supported poligas. Pudukottai was made as the capital of the Thondaiman's Kingdom.

The Nizam of Hyderabad recognised the independent rule of Pudukottai Thondaiman. Pudukottai Thondaiman maintained friendly relation with the British and the Nawab of Arcot. Raghunatha Thondaiman was the real founder and consolidator of the independent Pudukottai kingdom.

Thondaiman helped Arcot Nawab against Hyder Ali the ruler of Mysore. He was also loyal towards the British Government. After some time, when Hyder Ali's army tried to enter into Pudukottai, the Thondaiman's army successfully defeated them and drove Hyder's army away. Thondaiman captured Kilanilai and Aranthangi. He helped the British Government. against Tipu Sultan. Raja Raghunatha Thondaiman died in 1789. As he had no male issue, he was succeeded by his uncle's son Vijaya Raghunatha Thondaiman.



Vijaya Raghunatha Thondaiman: During his rule, charitable services continued. The Nawab of Arcot conferred a title Raja Bahadur on Thondaiman. Thereafter the Thondaimans of Pudukkottai came to be known as Rajas of Pudukkottai. Pudukkottai Raja supported Arcot Nawabs in their battle against the poligas and the rulers of Tanjore and Ramnad. He built many choultries to provide free rest houses. He fed the poor pilgrims. He consolidated the state of Pudukkottai.

During his period he replaced the old weak administration of Tondaiman with Thanjavur Maratha's new administrative system in Pudukkottai region. Many Marathi brahmins were employed in state administration. Due to calamities the old city of Pudukkottai faced destruction. The present city of Pudukkottai was designed and rebuilt during his period.

After Rahunatha Thondaiman, Ramachandra Thondaiman, Marthanda Bairava Thondaiman and Raja Rajagopala Thondaiman ruled Pudukkottai. During the period of these weak Rajas, the British influence had increased in Pudukkottai. Many social, judicial educational reforms were introduced. A new Anglo vernacular free School was started. Population census was commenced. Irrigation tanks were built to overcome famine. Finally Pudukkottai became a part of the Indian Union in 1948.

Social Condition

During the early part of Thondaiman's rule people of Pudukkottai region led normal life. Kings concentrated more on political matters and also on the people's welfare. Choultries were built for pilgrims. In the later part of their rule due to famine people faced many types of sufferings. Heavy rain and flood damaged the city of Pudukkottai and natural diseases were there. Later after sometime city of Pudukkottai was modernised. New school was opened. Tanks were built to increase water supply. Vaccination was introduced against small Pox. Many reforms were introduced during the last phase of their reign.

Social Reform Movement in Tamil Nadu

In the 19th Century Society was influenced by radical thinker due to the impact of western education. Many social evils like sati, polygamy, child marriage, untouchability, female infanticide, were practiced in the state. In order to eradicate these social evils many social reforms, movement emerged in Tamil Nadu.

Samarasa Satha Sanmarga Sangam (1867)

Ramalinga Adigal (1823 -1874):

Samarasa Satha Sanmarga Sangam (1867) was started by Ramalinga Adigal, popularly known as Vallalar. Born at Chinnamarudur near Chidambaram - (1823). He Believed in Arulperunjothi (Supreme grace of light). Samarasa Satha Sanmarga Sangam aimed for the religious unity and communal harmony in the society, Condemned rituals and caste belief. Promoted universal love and brotherhood. believed hunger and poverty are the greatest ill of society. In order to conduct prayer built Sathyagnana Sabha. He also founded Sathya Darma Sala at Vadalur for feeding the poor - irrespective of caste and religion. Vallalar Showed his mercy not only on human being but also on plants, insects, birds and animals. This is called 'Jeeva Karunya' (Mercy of life)

Origin of Justice Party:

Due to over domination of brahmin's in government administration. The British gave them job though they constituted only 3% of the population. Hence non-brahmins of Tamil Nadu united together under the leadership of Dr. Natesa Mudaliyar. They formed South Indian Liberal Federation in 1916. Later in 1917 this association was called "Justice Party". In the 1920 election, Justice party came to power Sabburayalu Reddiar became the chief Minister of Madras Presidency.

- During Justice party Government all communities shared the official and administration benefits, issued Communal G.O 1921 and 1922.
- The Staff selection Board was established in 1924. On this basis, Public Service Commission was established first time in India in 1929.
- Andhra University and Annamalai University was started.
- Hindu Religious Endowment Act (1921) - Non-brahmin Archagas can be in the temple.
- Act of 1921, Women were given voting rights.

Self Respect Movement :

Brahmin's dominated the administration in the British period, non- brahmin's were deprived and treated badly. E.V Ramasamy headed the Self respect movement.

- He left Indian National Congress in 1925 at the kancheepuram session

- Started the self respect movement in 1925
- He Started 'Kudiyarasu' a Tamil weekly in 1925 and 'Revolt' a English journal in 1928

Achievement of Self respect movement and Periyar :

1. Temple Entry movement (1924) : - Vaikom is a place in Kerala, Periyar was given the title "Vaikom hero"
2. Social Reform : He was against untouchability, he with the support of justice party, passed the Anti - untouchability Act in 1930. This movement led to the foundation of casteless society in Tamil Nadu.
3. Welfare of Women : This movement passed a number of resolution for passing of legislations. The most important legislation was Widow Remarriage Act, Women Right's to property Act, Abolition of Devadasi Act.Devadasi Act was abolished by the Act of 1930 with the earnest effort made by Dr. MuthuLakshmi.
4. The Government of India Passed Dowry Prohibition Act in 1961.

Points to remember:

- The Samarasa Sutha Sanmarga Sangam was founded by Vallalar.
- The Non - Brahmin students Hostels was organized in chennai Dr. C. Natesan mudaliyar.
- The staff selection Board was established in 1924.
- In the Year 1920, Elections , Justice Party came to power under Subbarayalu Reddy.
- The Dowry Prohibition Act was passed in 1961.
- Ramlinga Adigal was born at Chinnamarudar near Chidambaram in 1823.
- Hero of Vaikom was E.V Ramasamy (Periyar)
- The South Indian Liberal Federation was renamed as Justice Party.
- 'Kudiyarasu' was a Tamil weekly started by Periyar in 1925.
- By the Act of 1930 the system of Devadasi was abolished.
- Ramalinga Adigal - Jeeva Karunya
- Sathya Dharma Sala - Vadalur
- EVR Periyar - Self Respect Movement.
- Dr. MuthuLakshmi Reddy - Devadasi System Abolish
- Justice party - 1925



Social Reformers of Tamilnadu


(a) Ramalinga Swamigal

Popularly known as Vallalar, Ramalinga Swamigal or Ramalinga Adigal (1823–1874), was born in Marudhur, a village near Chidambaram. After his father's death, his family moved to his brother's house at Chennai. Despite having no formal education he gained immense scholarship. Ramalinga emphasised the bonds of responsibility and compassion between living beings. He expressed the view that 'those who lack compassion for suffering beings are hard-hearted, their wisdom clouded'. He showed his compassion and mercy on all living beings including plants. This he called jeevakarunya. He established the Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam in 1865 and it was renamed "Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Satya Sanga" which means "Society for Pure Truth in Universal self-hood". Ramalinga also established a free feeding house for everyone irrespective of caste at Vadalur (1867), in the wake of a terrible famine in south India in 1866. His voluminous songs were compiled and published under the title Thiruvarutpa (Songs of Grace).

Ramalinga bore witness to hunger and poverty in the country: "I saw poor people, emaciated with hunger and terribly weary, going to every house, yet their hunger was not removed, and my heart suffered intensely. Those who suffer with relentless disease, I saw them in front of me and my heart trembled. I saw those people, poor and of unmatched honor, their hearts weary, and I grew weak."

(b) Iyothee Thassar

Pandithar Iyothee Thassar (1845–1914) was a radical Tamil scholar, writer, siddha medicine practitioner, journalist and socio-political activist. Born in Chennai, he was fluent in Iyothithassar Tamil, English, Sanskrit and Pali languages. He campaigned for social justice and worked for the emancipation of the "untouchables" from the caste clutches. He worked for the construction of a casteless identity and castigated caste hegemony and untouchability. He considered education as an important tool for empowerment and became the driving force behind the establishment of several schools for the "untouchables" in Tamil Nadu.



Pandithar Iyothee Thassar founded the Advaidananda Sabha to raise the voice for the temple entry of the “untouchables”. In 1882, John Rathinam and Iyothee Thassar established a movement called, Dravida Kazhagam and launched a magazine called Dravida Pandian in 1885. He founded the Dravida Mahajana Sabha in 1891 and organised the First Conference of the association at Nilgiris. Pandithar Iyothee Thassar was disappointed with the Hindu dharma, which served as the basis for propagating and validating caste in Hindu society. Influenced by the Theosophist organizer, Colonel H.S. Olcott, he went to Sri Lanka in 1898 and converted to Buddhism. In the same year, he founded the Sakya Buddhist Society at Madras to construct the rational religious philosophy through Buddhist religion. He started a weekly journal, Oru Paisa Tamilan, in 1907 and published it until his demise in 1914.

Temple Entry Proclamation


The Temple Entry Proclamation was issued by Maharaja Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma on November 12, 1936. The Proclamation abolished the ban on the so-called 'low caste people' or avarnas from entering Hindu temples in the Princely State of Travancore, now part of Kerala, India. The proclamation was a milestone in the history of Travancore and Kerala. Today, Temple Entry Proclamation Day is considered to be a social reformation day by the Government of Kerala.

History

Following the campaign to introduce social reform in Travancore inspired by the teachings of Narayana Guru and others, a deputation of six leaders appointed by the Harijan Sevak Sangh toured the princely state to obtain support from caste Hindus for so called untouchable people to be allowed to enter state-operated temples. Temple Entry Proclamation 1936 (in Malayalam) by Maharaja Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma

Vaikom Satyagraha

According to historian Romila Thapar, protests in 1924–25 against the prohibition of untouchables using a public road near a temple in Vaikom were a significant precursor to the temple entry movement. Known as the Vaikom Satyagraha, it involved the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The protests sought equal rights of access in areas previously restricted to members of upper castes. The protests expanded to become a movement seeking rights of access to the interior of the temples themselves. These peaceful protests inspired the future, it



widely criticized that Temple Entry Declaration was done in order to prevent lower caste people from converting in mass to Christianity. The then-Travancore rulers feared that if the Hindu majority is lost in the country, it will be difficult for them to manage.


Temple entry committee

In 1932, the Maharajah, Chithira Thirunal appointed a committee to examine the question of temple entry. This opened the possibility of reversing the opposition to the practice that had been shown by his predecessors, Moolam Thirunal and Regent Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi. Subsequent to a meeting with Gandhi, Bayi had released those who had been imprisoned by Moolam Thirunal for involvement with the Vaikom Satyagraha and had opened the north, south and west public roads that provided access to Vaikom Mahadeva Temple to all castes. She refused to open the eastern road to the temple because it was used by Brahmins. She avoided acting on Gandhi's advice by pointing out that she was a regent for her minor nephew, Chithira Thirunal and so had no power to do so. Annoyed with this response Gandhi asked the 12-year-old prince, who immediately promised that it would happen during his reign. This incident was later quoted by K. R. Narayanan, the former President of India, in his speech referring to the progressive mind of Chithira Thirunal.

During the Vaikom Sathyagraha, Mahatma Gandhi visited Kerala. At that time, Sree Chithira Thirunal was a young man, and had not ascended the throne. Gandhiji asked: "When you attain majority and assume full authority, will you allow Harijans to enter the temple?" The twelve-year-old Maharajah said without hesitation, "Certainly". This was not the result of anybody's advice. He spoke his own mind. It came from his own thinking and that is why I say, in spite of all the advice and influences in which he was enveloped, he had a mind and he had a policy of his own. The Regent's refusal to act on temple entry rights attracted criticism from people such as Mannathu Padmanabhan, who accused her of being under the influence of the Brahmins and said that her excuse that she had no power to decide was a lie.

Royal proclamation and its aftermath

The Proclamation is a unique occasion in the history of India and specially of Hinduism. It fell to the lot of His Highness, not as a result of agitation, although some people have claimed to result as due to agitation, but suo moto and of his own free will, to have made it possible for every Hindu subject to enter the historic temples of this land of faith and bend in adoration before



the Supreme. Such an act required a minority vision and usage amidst difficulties and handicaps. when it is remembered that this decision was a purely voluntary act, on the part of sovereign, solicitous for the welfare of this subjects and was not the result of any immediate pressure, the greatness of the achievement becomes even more apparent. This action broke the calamity of Hindu religion and helped to strengthen the Hindus.

In an open letter addressed to the maharajah, Gandhi said:

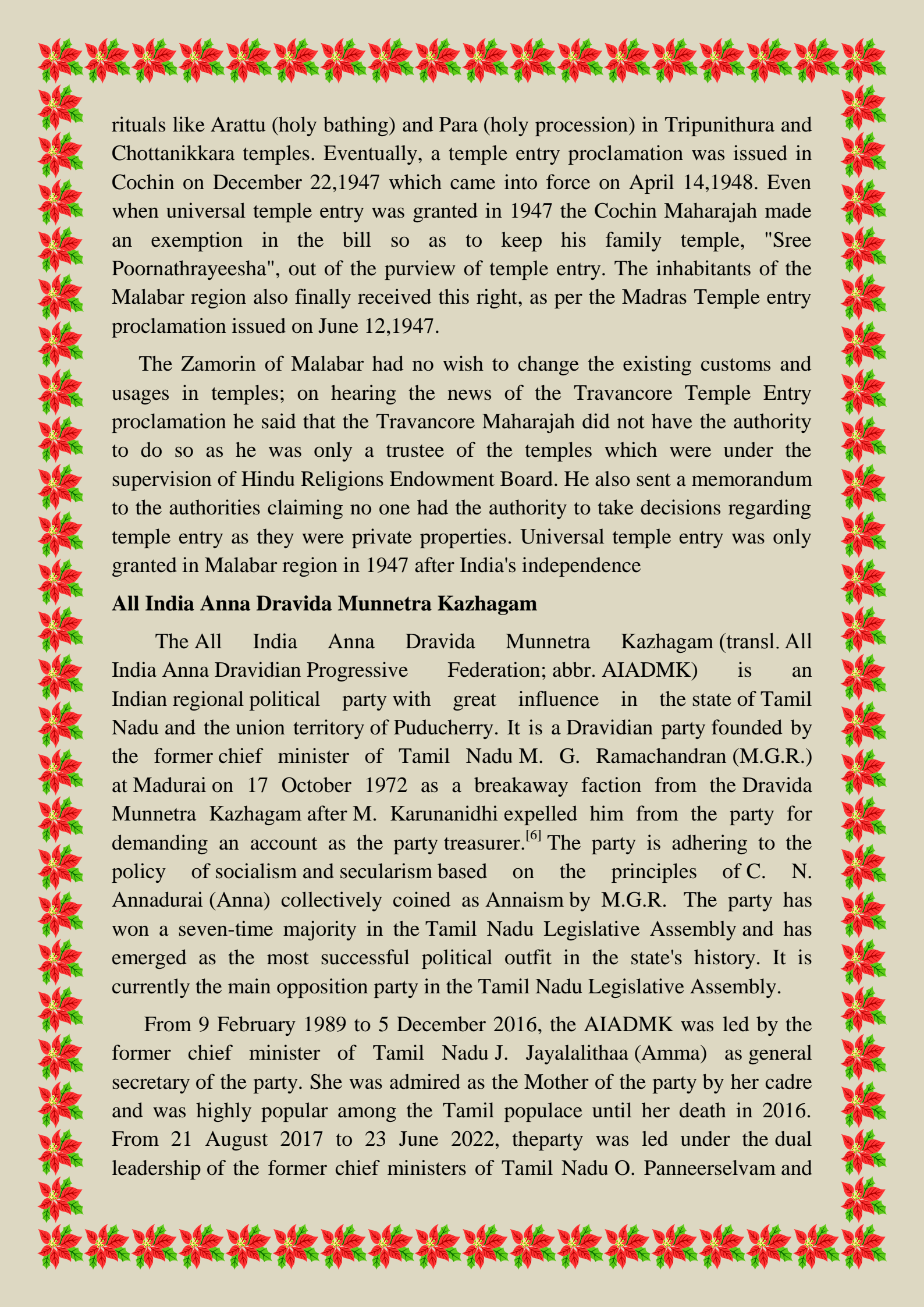
People call me "The Mahatma" and I don't think I deserve it. But in my view, you have in reality become a "Mahatma"(great soul) by your proclamation at this young age, breaking the age-old custom and throwing open the doors of the Temples to our brothers and sisters whom the hateful tradition considered as untouchables. I verily believe that when all else is forgotten, this one act of the Maharajah- the Proclamation- will be remembered by future generation with gratitude and hope that all other Hindu Princes will follow the noble example set by this far-off ancient Hindu State

Historians believe that it was Aiyar's legal skill that overcame the practical difficulties posed by the orthodox Hindus before the proclamation. He foresaw the objections that could be raised against temple entry and dealt with them one by one. He was also able to ensure that the actual declaration was known beforehand to few people. The Universities of Andhra and Annamalai conferred D.Litt. degrees on the Maharajah, and life-size statues of him were erected in Trivandrum and Madras.

Sociologists believe that the Proclamation struck at the root of caste discrimination in Travancore and that by serving to unite Hindus it prevented further conversions to other religions. The Proclamation was the first of its kind in a princely state as well as in British India. Even though there were agitations in various parts of India as well as rest of Kerala for temple entry, none managed to achieve their aim.

Temple entry in Cochin and Malabar

The Travancore Temple Entry Proclamation did not have a serious influence in Cochin or British Malabar as the Maharajah of Cochin and the Zamorin were staunch opponents of temple entry for dalits. The Cochin Maharajah went to the extent of declaring the whole people of Travancore as untouchables and forbade any Travancore citizen from entering temples under the control of the Cochin government. The Cochin ruler even forbade



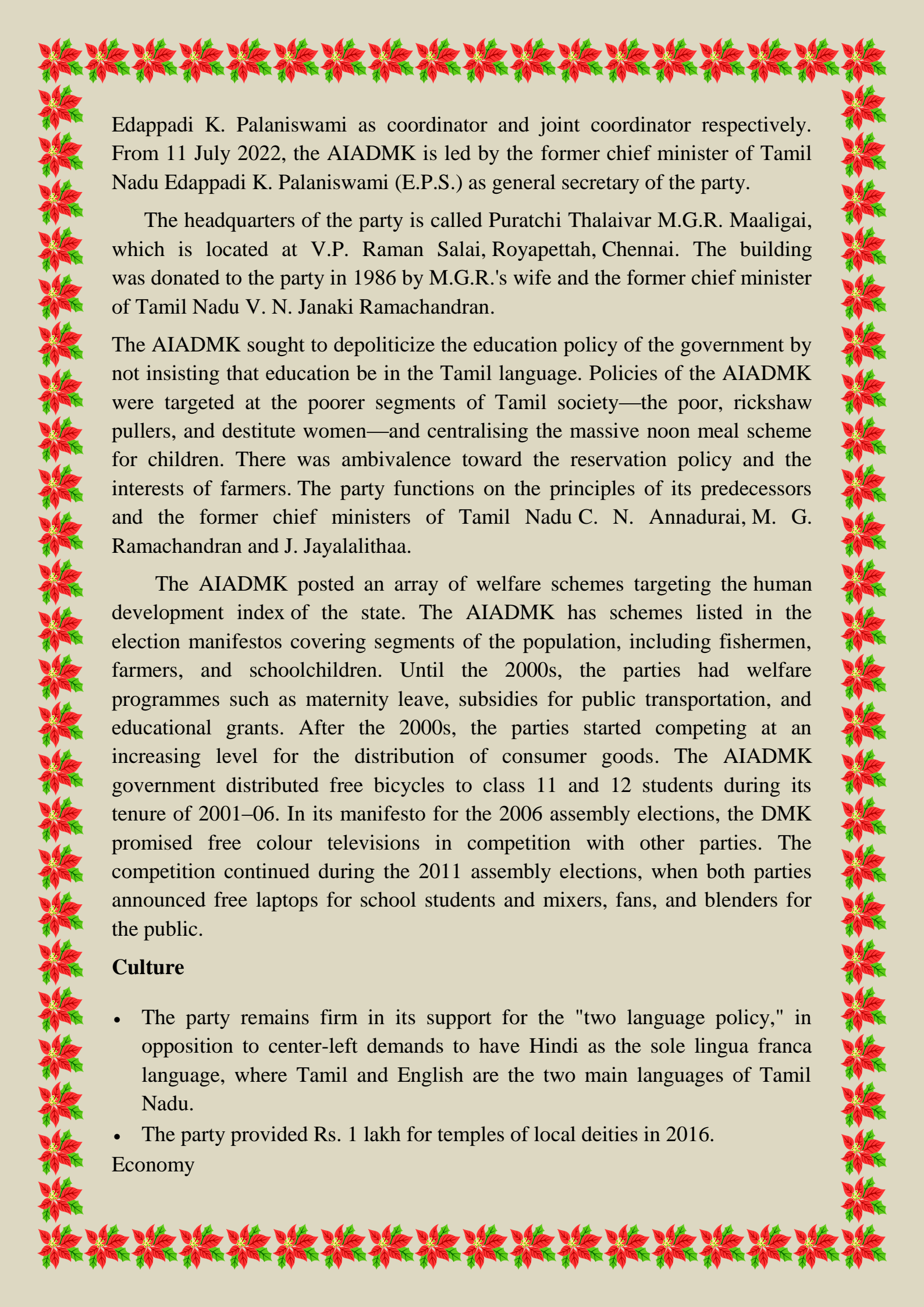
rituals like Arattu (holy bathing) and Para (holy procession) in Tripunithura and Chottanikkara temples. Eventually, a temple entry proclamation was issued in Cochin on December 22, 1947 which came into force on April 14, 1948. Even when universal temple entry was granted in 1947 the Cochin Maharajah made an exemption in the bill so as to keep his family temple, "Sree Poornathrayeesha", out of the purview of temple entry. The inhabitants of the Malabar region also finally received this right, as per the Madras Temple entry proclamation issued on June 12, 1947.

The Zamorin of Malabar had no wish to change the existing customs and usages in temples; on hearing the news of the Travancore Temple Entry proclamation he said that the Travancore Maharajah did not have the authority to do so as he was only a trustee of the temples which were under the supervision of Hindu Religions Endowment Board. He also sent a memorandum to the authorities claiming no one had the authority to take decisions regarding temple entry as they were private properties. Universal temple entry was only granted in Malabar region in 1947 after India's independence

All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

The All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (transl. All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Federation; abbr. AIADMK) is an Indian regional political party with great influence in the state of Tamil Nadu and the union territory of Puducherry. It is a Dravidian party founded by the former chief minister of Tamil Nadu M. G. Ramachandran (M.G.R.) at Madurai on 17 October 1972 as a breakaway faction from the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam after M. Karunanidhi expelled him from the party for demanding an account as the party treasurer.^[6] The party is adhering to the policy of socialism and secularism based on the principles of C. N. Annadurai (Anna) collectively coined as Annaism by M.G.R. The party has won a seven-time majority in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly and has emerged as the most successful political outfit in the state's history. It is currently the main opposition party in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.

From 9 February 1989 to 5 December 2016, the AIADMK was led by the former chief minister of Tamil Nadu J. Jayalalithaa (Amma) as general secretary of the party. She was admired as the Mother of the party by her cadre and was highly popular among the Tamil populace until her death in 2016. From 21 August 2017 to 23 June 2022, the party was led under the dual leadership of the former chief ministers of Tamil Nadu O. Panneerselvam and



Edappadi K. Palaniswami as coordinator and joint coordinator respectively. From 11 July 2022, the AIADMK is led by the former chief minister of Tamil Nadu Edappadi K. Palaniswami (E.P.S.) as general secretary of the party.

The headquarters of the party is called Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. Maaligai, which is located at V.P. Raman Salai, Royapettah, Chennai. The building was donated to the party in 1986 by M.G.R.'s wife and the former chief minister of Tamil Nadu V. N. Janaki Ramachandran.

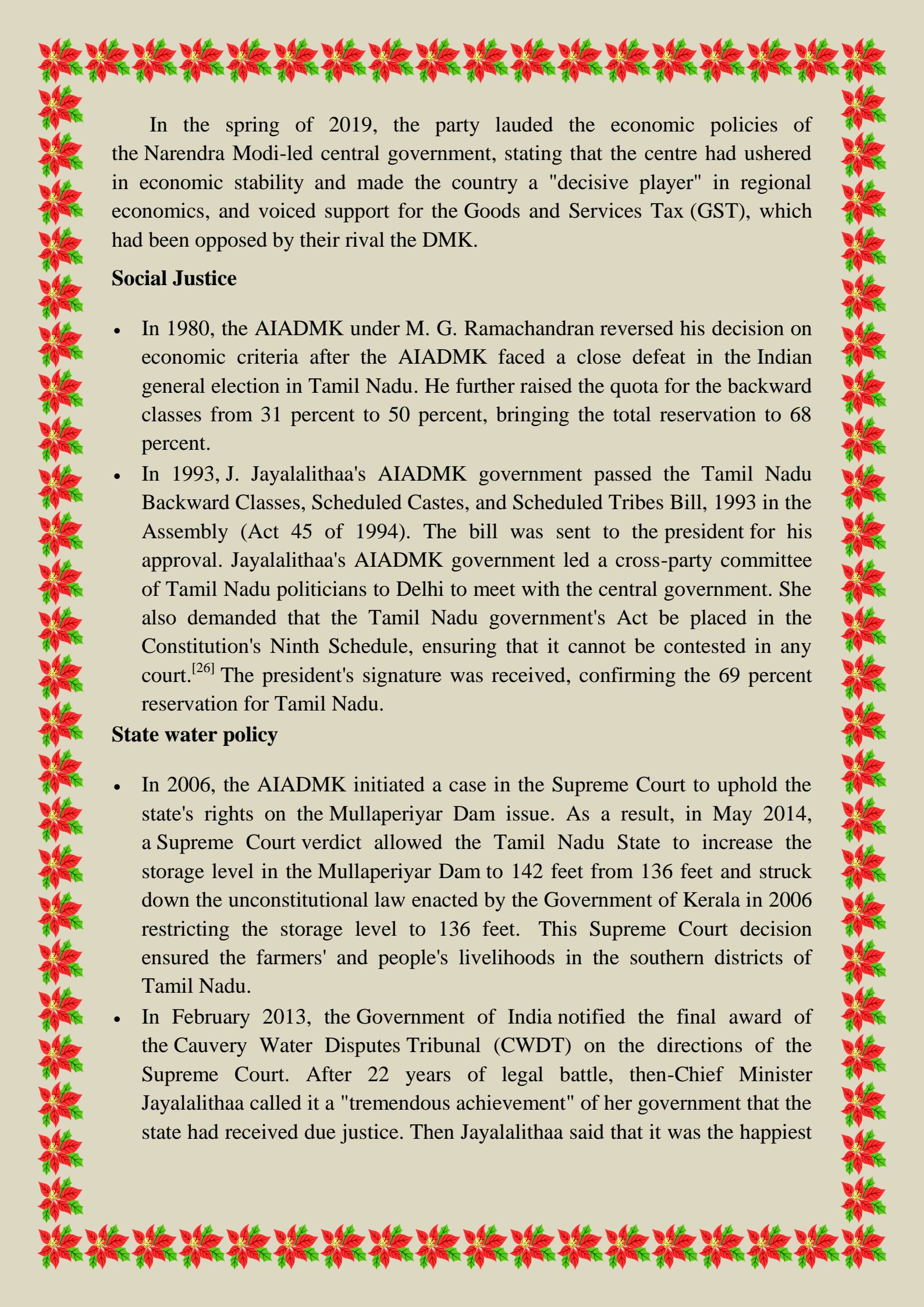
The AIADMK sought to depoliticize the education policy of the government by not insisting that education be in the Tamil language. Policies of the AIADMK were targeted at the poorer segments of Tamil society—the poor, rickshaw pullers, and destitute women—and centralising the massive noon meal scheme for children. There was ambivalence toward the reservation policy and the interests of farmers. The party functions on the principles of its predecessors and the former chief ministers of Tamil Nadu C. N. Annadurai, M. G. Ramachandran and J. Jayalalithaa.

The AIADMK posted an array of welfare schemes targeting the human development index of the state. The AIADMK has schemes listed in the election manifestos covering segments of the population, including fishermen, farmers, and schoolchildren. Until the 2000s, the parties had welfare programmes such as maternity leave, subsidies for public transportation, and educational grants. After the 2000s, the parties started competing at an increasing level for the distribution of consumer goods. The AIADMK government distributed free bicycles to class 11 and 12 students during its tenure of 2001–06. In its manifesto for the 2006 assembly elections, the DMK promised free colour televisions in competition with other parties. The competition continued during the 2011 assembly elections, when both parties announced free laptops for school students and mixers, fans, and blenders for the public.

Culture

- The party remains firm in its support for the "two language policy," in opposition to center-left demands to have Hindi as the sole lingua franca language, where Tamil and English are the two main languages of Tamil Nadu.
- The party provided Rs. 1 lakh for temples of local deities in 2016.

Economy




In the spring of 2019, the party lauded the economic policies of the Narendra Modi-led central government, stating that the centre had ushered in economic stability and made the country a "decisive player" in regional economics, and voiced support for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), which had been opposed by their rival the DMK.

Social Justice

- In 1980, the AIADMK under M. G. Ramachandran reversed his decision on economic criteria after the AIADMK faced a close defeat in the Indian general election in Tamil Nadu. He further raised the quota for the backward classes from 31 percent to 50 percent, bringing the total reservation to 68 percent.
- In 1993, J. Jayalalithaa's AIADMK government passed the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes Bill, 1993 in the Assembly (Act 45 of 1994). The bill was sent to the president for his approval. Jayalalithaa's AIADMK government led a cross-party committee of Tamil Nadu politicians to Delhi to meet with the central government. She also demanded that the Tamil Nadu government's Act be placed in the Constitution's Ninth Schedule, ensuring that it cannot be contested in any court.^[26] The president's signature was received, confirming the 69 percent reservation for Tamil Nadu.

State water policy

- In 2006, the AIADMK initiated a case in the Supreme Court to uphold the state's rights on the Mullaperiyar Dam issue. As a result, in May 2014, a Supreme Court verdict allowed the Tamil Nadu State to increase the storage level in the Mullaperiyar Dam to 142 feet from 136 feet and struck down the unconstitutional law enacted by the Government of Kerala in 2006 restricting the storage level to 136 feet. This Supreme Court decision ensured the farmers' and people's livelihoods in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu.
- In February 2013, the Government of India notified the final award of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) on the directions of the Supreme Court. After 22 years of legal battle, then-Chief Minister Jayalalithaa called it a "tremendous achievement" of her government that the state had received due justice. Then Jayalalithaa said that it was the happiest




day of her life and the happiest day for the farmers in Tamil Nadu; she recalled her famous fast-unto-death at Marina Beach in 1993.

Environment and nature

- The AIADMK was one of two parties, along with the BJP, to not voice opposition against a ban on cattle slaughter through the national Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. However, it has sought an exemption in the Act regarding traditional bull fighting; the party supports popular opinion in Tamil Nadu that traditional bull fighting, known as Jallikattu, should not be banned by the centre due to an APEX court ruling against animal cruelty.^[35] During the controversy, the party called for animal-rights organisation PETA to be banned.
- In May 2018, the AIADMK government has ordered the closure of the Sterlite Copper factory in Thoothukkudi in the interest of the people, knowing that the air and water in the city are being heavily polluted by the factory, which has been at the center of violent protests by locals to protect and improve the environment.
- The AIADMK opposes the building of the Mekedatu Dam, which could reduce water flows into Tamil Nadu and negatively affect quality of life for residents and agriculture.

History

The party was founded on 17 October 1972, as Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK) by M. G. Ramachandran (M.G.R.), a veteran Tamil film star and popular politician. It was set up as a breakaway faction from the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam after its president M. Karunanidhi expelled him from the party for demanding an account as the party treasurer.^[39] M.G.R., who wanted to start a new political party, then incorporated into Anakaputhur Ramalingam's party, which had registered under the name ADMK. He then quoted, "I joined the party started by an ordinary volunteer" angave the post of Member of Legislative Council (MLC) to Ramalingam. Later, M.G.R. prefixed the All India (AI) tag to the party's name to protect the party during the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). Since its inception, the relationship between the AIADMK and DMK has been marked by mutual contempt. M.G.R. used his fan club to build the party cadre; he claims his party recruited more than a million members in the first two months. C. N. Annadurai's ideologue and movie producer turned politician R. M.




Veerappan was the key architect in unifying M.G.R. fan clubs and further consolidating the party structure in the 1970s. Other key leaders, such as Nanjil K. Manoharan and S. D. Somasundaram played major roles in consolidation. Pavalar M. Muthusamy was elected the first presidium chairman of the party.^[42] The party's first victories were the wins of Maya Thevar in the Dindigul parliamentary bye-election in May 1973 and of C. Aranganayagam in the Coimbatore West assembly bye-election a year later. On 2 April 1973, the AIADMK emerged as the third-largest political party in Tamil Nadu, represented by 11 MLAs in the assembly. By January 1976, the AIADMK had emerged as the second-largest political party in Tamil Nadu, with 16 MLAs in the assembly. By supporting the National Emergency between 1975 and 1977, the AIADMK grew close to the Indian National Congress party.

The DMK-led government was dismissed by a central government on corruption charges in 1976. The AIADMK swept to power, defeating the DMK in the 1977 assembly election. M.G.R. was sworn in as the third chief minister of Tamil Nadu on 30 June 1977. In the 1977 general election, the party won 18 seats. In 1979, the AIADMK became the first Dravidian and regional party to join the Union Cabinet. Sathiavani Muthu and Aravinda Bala Pajanor were the members of parliament who joined the short-lived Union Ministry led by then-prime minister Charan Singh.

The relationship between the AIADMK and the INC slowly became strained. In the 1980 general election, the INC aligned with the DMK, and the alliance won 37 out of the 39 state parliamentary seats. The AIADMK won just two seats. After returning to power, Indira Gandhi dismissed a number of state governments belonging to the opposition parties, including the AIADMK government in Tamil Nadu.

In the 1980 assembly election, with the opposition DMK continuing the electoral alliance with the INC, In a massive reversal of fortunes following the Lok Sabha elections, the AIADMK won a comfortable majority in the state assembly with 129 of 234 seats. M.G.R. was sworn in as chief minister for the second time on 9 June 1980.

In the 1984 general election, the party again aligned with the INC, and the alliance won 37 out of the 39 state parliamentary seats. In the 1984 assembly election, even with M.G.R.'s failing health and hospitalization, the party won the election. He was sworn in as chief minister for the third time on 10 February 1985. Many political historians consider M.G.R.'s persona and charisma at this



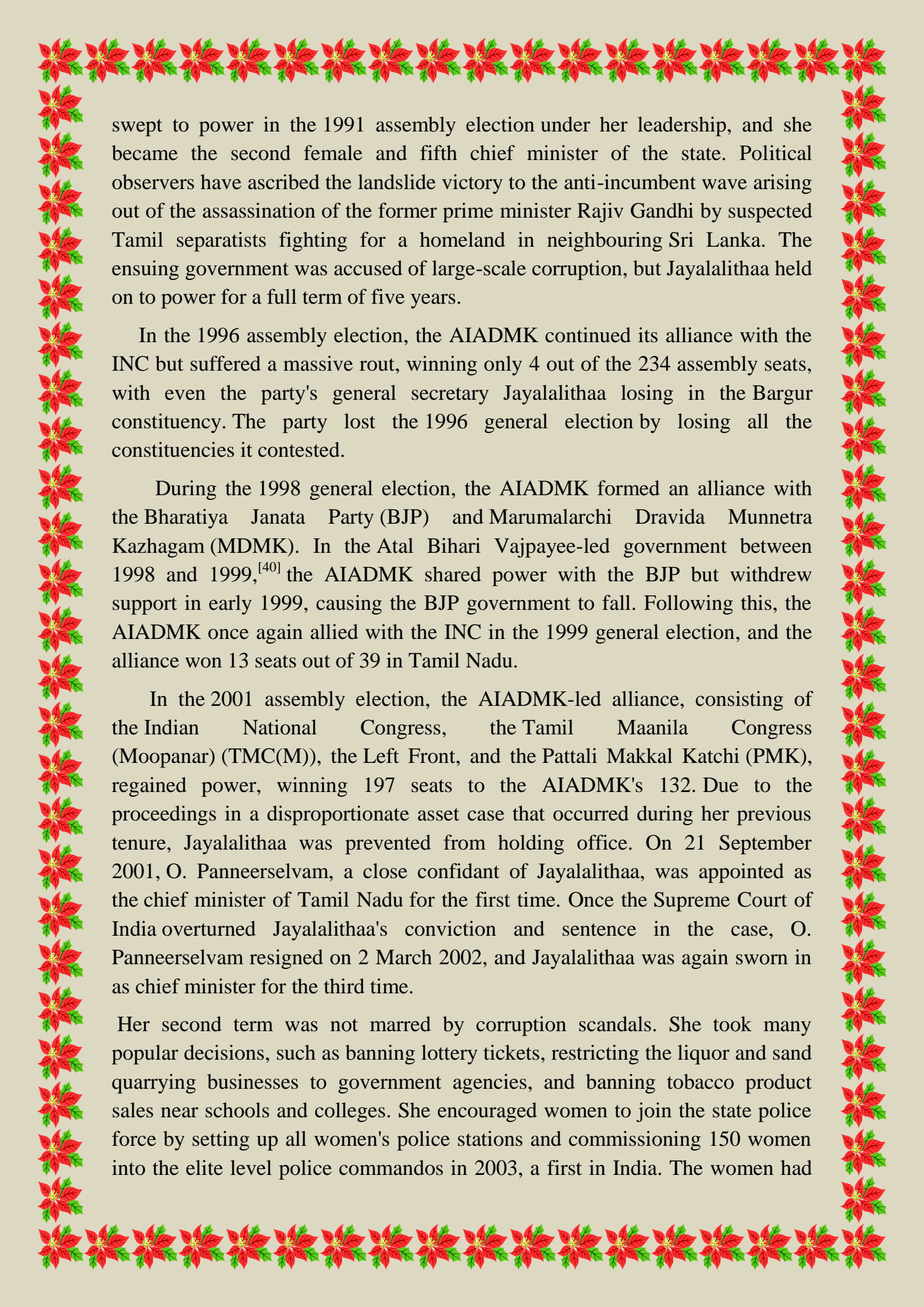
point in time as "infallible" and a logical continuation of his on-screen "good lad" image, strengthened by his "mythical status" in the minds of the masses. M.G.R. continued to enjoy popular support in his third term until his death. He died on 24 December 1987, and became the second chief minister in Tamil Nadu to die in office after Anna.

Succession conflict between the Janaki and Jayalalithaa factions

Following M.G.R.'s death, his wife, actress-turned-politician V. N. Janaki Ramachandran, rose to the party's leadership with the support of R. M. Veerappan and 98 MLAs. On 1 January 1988, Jayalalithaa was elected general secretary of the AIADMK by the prominent members of her faction, and it was ratified by the party general council convened by her the next day. Janaki served as the state's first female chief minister for 23 days, from 7 January 1988 until the state assembly was dissolved on 30 January 1988 and President's Rule was imposed. The party began to crumble due to infighting and broke into two factions, one under Janaki Ramachandran and the other under J. Jayalalithaa, an associate of M.G.R. and another film actress-turned-politician who had starred with M.G.R. The Election Commission of India froze the "Two Leaves" symbol on 17 December 1988.^[48] The 1989 assembly election saw the DMK regain power after 13 years, with M. Karunanidhi returning as chief minister for the third time. Due to its split, the AIADMK suffered heavily in the election, with the Janaki and Jayalalithaa factions winning only 2 and 27 seats, respectively.^[45] Following the AIADMK's rout in the election, the factions led by Jayalalithaa and Janaki merged under Jayalalithaa's leadership on 7 February 1989, as Janaki decided to quit politics as it was not her forte. On 8 February 1989, then Chief Election Commissioner R. V. S. Peri Sastri granted the Two Leaves symbol to the united AIADMK led by Jayalalithaa.

J. Jayalalithaa era (9 February 1989 – 5 December 2016)

On 9 February 1989, the AIADMK, led by J. Jayalalithaa, became the main opposition party in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, and she became the first female leader of the opposition in the assembly. In the 1989 general election, the party allied with the Indian National Congress, and the alliance won 39 out of 40 constituencies it contested in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. The DMK government was dismissed in 1991 by the central government headed by then-prime minister Chandra Shekhar, an ally of the AIADMK at that time, on charges that the constitutional machinery in the state had broken down. The party allied with the Indian National Congress (INC) and




swept to power in the 1991 assembly election under her leadership, and she became the second female and fifth chief minister of the state. Political observers have ascribed the landslide victory to the anti-incumbent wave arising out of the assassination of the former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi by suspected Tamil separatists fighting for a homeland in neighbouring Sri Lanka. The ensuing government was accused of large-scale corruption, but Jayalalithaa held on to power for a full term of five years.

In the 1996 assembly election, the AIADMK continued its alliance with the INC but suffered a massive rout, winning only 4 out of the 234 assembly seats, with even the party's general secretary Jayalalithaa losing in the Bargur constituency. The party lost the 1996 general election by losing all the constituencies it contested.

During the 1998 general election, the AIADMK formed an alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK). In the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led government between 1998 and 1999,^[40] the AIADMK shared power with the BJP but withdrew support in early 1999, causing the BJP government to fall. Following this, the AIADMK once again allied with the INC in the 1999 general election, and the alliance won 13 seats out of 39 in Tamil Nadu.

In the 2001 assembly election, the AIADMK-led alliance, consisting of the Indian National Congress, the Tamil Maanila Congress (Moopanar) (TMC(M)), the Left Front, and the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), regained power, winning 197 seats to the AIADMK's 132. Due to the proceedings in a disproportionate asset case that occurred during her previous tenure, Jayalalithaa was prevented from holding office. On 21 September 2001, O. Panneerselvam, a close confidant of Jayalalithaa, was appointed as the chief minister of Tamil Nadu for the first time. Once the Supreme Court of India overturned Jayalalithaa's conviction and sentence in the case, O. Panneerselvam resigned on 2 March 2002, and Jayalalithaa was again sworn in as chief minister for the third time.

Her second term was not marred by corruption scandals. She took many popular decisions, such as banning lottery tickets, restricting the liquor and sand quarrying businesses to government agencies, and banning tobacco product sales near schools and colleges. She encouraged women to join the state police force by setting up all women's police stations and commissioning 150 women into the elite level police commandos in 2003, a first in India. The women had




the same training as men, which included handling weapons, detection and disposal of bombs, driving, horseback riding, and adventure sports. She dispatched a special task force to the Sathyamangalam forests in October 2004 to track down notorious sandalwood smuggler Veerappan. The operation was successful, as he was killed by the task force on 18 October 2004.

However, despite the popular measures taken by the government, in the 2004 general election, the party, in alliance with the BJP again, was humiliated, winning none of the 39 Lok Sabha seats from the state. The Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA), a DMK-led alliance consisting of all the major opposition parties in the state, swept the election.

Later, in the 2006 assembly election, in spite of media speculations of a hung assembly, the AIADMK, contesting with only the support of the MDMK and a few other smaller parties, won 61 seats compared to the DMK's 96 and was pushed out of power by the DMK-led congressional alliance of the PMK and the Left Front. The AIADMK's electoral reversals continued in the 2009 general election. However, the party's performance was better than its debacle in 2004, and it managed to win nine seats. Following widespread corruption, a price rise, a power cut, and allegations of nepotism against the DMK government, in the 2011 assembly election, the party, in alliance with parties like the left and actor-turned-politician Vijayakant's Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK), swept the polls, winning 202 seats, with the AIADMK winning 150. Jayalalithaa was sworn in as chief minister for the fourth time.

In the union territory of Puducherry, the AIADMK allied with N. Rangasamy's All India N.R. Congress (AINRC) and won the 2011 assembly election, which was held in parallel with the Tamil Nadu assembly election. Rangasamy, on the other hand, formed the government without consulting the AIADMK and refused to share power with the pre-election alliance partner. So Jayalalithaa accused him of betraying the coalition.

The AIADMK's good electoral performance continued in the 2014 general election as well. It opted not to join any alliance and contested all seats in the state of Tamil Nadu and the union territory of Puducherry on its own. The party won an unprecedented 37 out of the 40 parliamentary constituencies it contested and emerged as the third largest party in the 16th Lok Sabha of the Indian Parliament. It was a massive victory that no other regional political party had ever achieved in the history of general elections.



On 29 August 2014, J. Jayalalithaa was elected as the general secretary of the party for the 7th consecutive term, making her the longest-serving general secretary of the party to date. Earlier, she was elected as general secretary on 1 January 1988; 9 February 1989; 23 June 1993; 23 September 1998; 10 September 2003, and 10 September 2008. During her longest tenure as general secretary, V. R. Nedunchezhiyan, K. Kalimuthu, Pulamaipithan, C. Ponnaiyan, and E. Madhusudhanan served as the presidium chairmen of the party.


On 27 September 2014, Jayalalithaa was convicted in the disproportionate assets case by a Special Court along with her associates V. K. Sasikala, Ilavarasi, and V. N. Sudhakaran and sentenced to four years' simple imprisonment. Jayalalithaa was also fined 100 crore, and her associates were fined 10 crore each. The case had political implications as it was the first time a ruling chief minister had to step down on account of a court sentence.

Due to her resignation, O. Panneerselvam was sworn in as chief minister on 29 September 2014.^[62] Jayalalithaa was denied bail by the High Court and moved the Supreme Court for bail. The Supreme Court granted bail on 17 October 2014. On 11 May 2015, the High Court of Karnataka said she was acquitted from that case and was again sworn in as chief minister for the fifth time.

In the 2016 assembly election, running without allies, she swept the polls, winning 135 out of 234 seats. It was the most audacious decision made by her for the spectacular victory that no other political leader had ever made in the history of Tamil Nadu. On 23 May 2016, Jayalalithaa was sworn in as chief minister for the sixth time. On 22 September 2016, she was admitted to Apollo Hospital, Chennai, due to fever and dehydration. After a prolonged illness, she died on 5 December 2016, and became the third chief minister in Tamil Nadu to die in office after Anna and her mentor M.G.R.

Expansion beyond Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

Under J. Jayalalithaa's regime, the party spread beyond Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. It established state units in some other Indian states and union territories like Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, the National Capital Territory of Delhi, and Telangana. The party also has functionaries in other countries where Tamil people are present. In Karnataka, the party had members in the state assembly from 1983 to 2004 and has influence in the Tamil-speaking areas of Bengaluru and Kolar. In Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Maharashtra, the party




contested some legislative assembly elections but did not win a single seat in any of the elections.

A History of Dina Thanthi: Establishing and creating a new readership in Tamil Nadu As the state is going into what will be among its most fiercely contested elections later this year, the role that the popular Tamil daily Dina Thanthi and the media group's other outlets in shaping Tamil readers/ viewers views and opinions become as important as it has ever been in its long history.

Tamil Nadu has a long, enduring history of journalism, beginning with the newspaper, Swadesamitran, which began its print-run in 1882 and continued till 1985. The state has a literacy rate of about 80 per cent at last count, and its people have always been ardent followers of news, especially the newspaper. Tea Kadai or tea shop counters filled with the day's headlines are commonplace across the state. Even though TV news is as ubiquitous as anywhere else in the country, the newspapers still hold pride of place. This is especially because TV news channels still only offer highly biased and politicised versions of current affairs. It should be noted that news channel ownership is also considered a prerequisite in the arsenal of political parties. Among the newspapers in Tamil, in Tamil Nadu, the prominent players are Dina Thanthi (which leads the pack in terms of circulation), Dina Mani, Dina Malar, Dinakaran, Tamil Murasu, Makkal Kural, Malai Malar and The Hindu (Tamil).

Among these Dina, Thanthi has been a trendsetter ever since SP Adithanar established it in 1942. The paper currently boasts of 16 editions across Tamil Nadu and India and an edition from Dubai. SP Adithanar, belonging to the Nadar community, studied law in England and the US and practised in Singapore before returning to Tamil Nadu to set up the newspaper. His most significant contribution was the setting up an in-house newsprint factory when other newspapers were paying significant amounts to purchase newsprints from elsewhere. The paper also stood out for its non-Brahmin ownership when the Brahmin community predominantly controlled the industry. Instead of presenting an "intellectual" take on current affairs as many of the pre-independence papers tended to do, Dina Thanthi kept its news and terminologies simple.

Athithanar aimed at developing a subscriber base of those who are not fervent readers but of the more common citizenry who are literate enough to



read the newspaper. He even went so far as to create a special dictionary for the paper itself, the Ithazhazhar Kaiyedu (A newspaper man's guide), where he specified the colloquial terminologies to be used to avoid estranging their readership by using complicated words. The paper is also known for its use of onomatopoeia in its large font headlines Dina Thanthi, with its nearly eight-decade history, is notable for practising a distinct editorial style. The paper also has reporters stationed in all district headquarters and employs stringers extensively across the state.

The contemporary scenario


Dina Thanthi and the Thanthi group is now in their third generation of ownership. After SP Adhithanar, the reigns of the newspaper empire were handed over to his son, Sivanthi Athithan. The latter followed in his father's footsteps regarding the newspaper's politics, style and content. He also established the Maalai Malar in 1959, which was Tamil Nadu's first evening daily. Following his stepping down in 2005, his son S Balasubramaniam Adityan has been in charge of the business and taking it forward into the future.

Thanthi TV (A 24-hour news channel) and DT Next, an English supplement that accompanies the Tamil daily, were set up in recent years. While the paper retains its populist flavours, there are significant changes in its editorial style. As things stand now, Dina Thanthi still retains its large circulation figures. The media group, especially the newspaper, still largely works on the tried and tested formulae of running a regional media empire as prescribed by SP Athithanar.

The Dravidian movement and Thanthi

When Dina Thanthi began its print-run in 1942, a strong Dravidian movement with EV Ramasamy or Periyar at the helm was sweeping across the state. The figureheads of the Dravidian movements were taking baby steps into electoral politics and needed taking their message and propaganda to the people then, more than ever.

Periyar was the president of the Justice Party from 1938 to 1944 and went onto establish the Dravidar Kazhagam (Dravidian Party) in 1944. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) was also established by Periyar's protégé CN



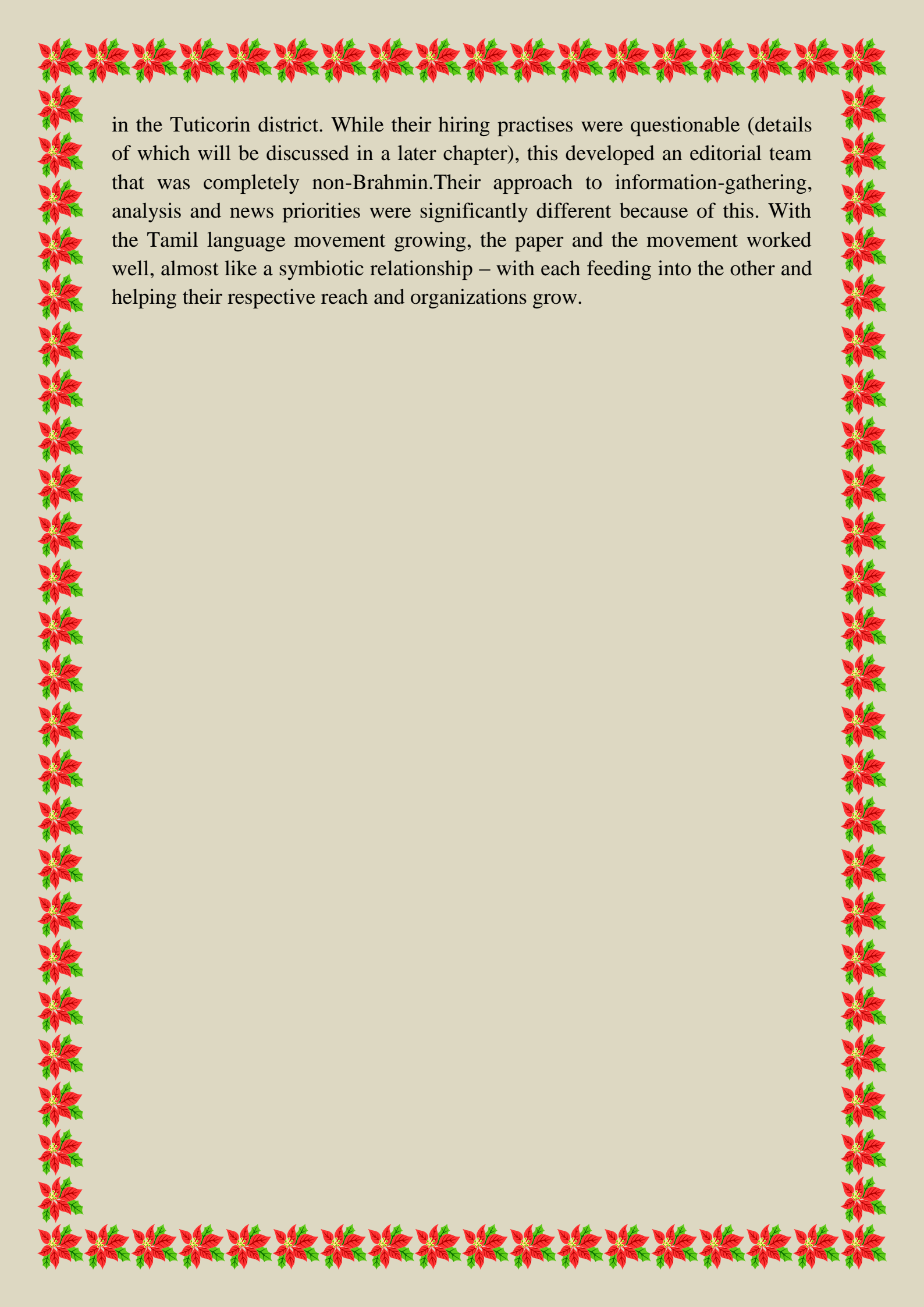
Annadurai towards the end of the decade. This was also the time when there were strong anti-Hindi sentiments in the state. The Tamil newspapers present at the time, regardless of being sympathetic or antithetic to the ideologies of the Dravidian movement, had little to no readership outside the Tamil intelligentsia. It was this gaping vacuum that Thanthi filled. SP Athithanar, apart from keeping the goings-on of the Dravidian movement and Periyar at the forefront of his newspaper's priorities, also established his political outfit a couple of decades later, calling it Naam Tamilar Katchi (We are Tamils Party).

As Arunachalam Mari Sami, 81, who worked at the Thanthi from 1954 till 2007, recounts, "I was based in Tiruchi then and Periyar used to come to town often, staying at the Periyar Maligai." Sami was the Editor of the newspaper from 1958 to 1962 and then went on to be the Editor of their popular weekly magazine, Rani, for the next four and a half decades. He adds, "I used to interview him often and was encouraged to travel with him across the state as well. At Thanthi, he and the party were highly respected, and we looked to give them as much coverage as possible then."

Thanthi, whose news style was inspired by that of the Daily Mirror in England, proved useful in developing a cadre-based for the Dravidian parties. Being the first paper to be printed in various towns across the state, people were, for the first time, delivered immediate news and didn't have to wait for day-old newspapers that were printed in Madras (Chennai) to reach them. Its simple language style was easy to read and follow and many in the state, who had a cursory education, learnt and developed their Tamil reading skills through the Thanthi.

A voice for the non-Brahmins

The Thanthi was also the first newspaper that directly challenged the dominance of the Brahmin community in the Tamil media landscape. In the 1940s, the other Tamil newspapers, such as the Dina Mani and Swadesamitran, were decidedly under Brahmin leadership. SP Athithanar, who belongs to the Nadar community, was the first media-figurehead to emerge from another community. Since Kayamozhi had a significant Muslim population, many from the community were also hired and offered editorial and non-editorial positions at the Thanthi. Athithanar predominantly hired from his community, especially his village of Kayamozhi



in the Tuticorin district. While their hiring practises were questionable (details of which will be discussed in a later chapter), this developed an editorial team that was completely non-Brahmin. Their approach to information-gathering, analysis and news priorities were significantly different because of this. With the Tamil language movement growing, the paper and the movement worked well, almost like a symbiotic relationship – with each feeding into the other and helping their respective reach and organizations grow.