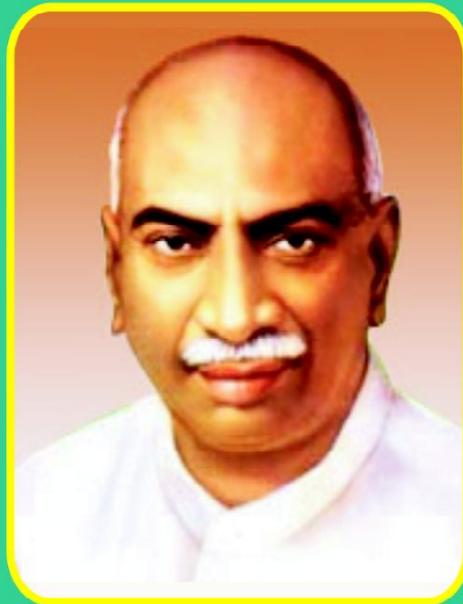


M.H. SYED

K. KAMRAJ



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An Illustrious Life

King maker of his times, Kumaraswamy Kamaraj, better known as K. Kamaraj was a great Indian politician widely known for his political intellect and strategic vision. He was widely known for his honesty, integrity and simplicity. He was involved in the Indian independence movement and was a close ally of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India. He was instrumental in bringing to power two Prime Ministers, Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1964 and Indira Gandhi in 1966. He was affectionately known as the Gandhi of the South, the Black Gandhi, and in Tamil Nadu, his home state he is still hailed for facilitating the spread of education to millions of the rural poor during the 1950s. He was awarded India's highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, posthumously in 1976.

Kamaraj dropped out of school when he was in the sixth grade. When he entered mainstream public life he felt handicapped and realised the importance of a good education. He educated himself during his periods of imprisonment.

Early Life

Kamaraj was born on July 15, 1903, in a family of traders at Virudunagar. His real name was Kamakshi Kumaraswamy Nader but was affectionately shortened to Raja by his mother, Sivakami

Ammal. His father, Kumaraswamy Nader, was a coconut merchant. Kamaraj was enrolled at the local elementary school, the Nayanar Vidyalaya but was later shifted to the high school Kshatriya Vidyalaya.

Unfortunately his father died within a year of Kamaraj's enrolment in school. Kamaraj's mother sold all jewellery except her earrings and deposited the money with a local merchant and cared for the entire family on the monthly interest that the money earned.

Kamaraj was not a good student in school and dropped out when he was in the sixth grade. When he entered mainstream public life he felt handicapped and realised the importance of a good education. He educated himself during his periods of imprisonment and even learned English from his co-worker.

Kamaraj joined as an apprentice in his maternal uncle Karupiah's cloth shop after dropping out of school. He would slip out from the shop to join processions and attend public meetings addressed by orators like Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu and George Joseph. His relatives frowned upon Kamaraj's budding interest in politics. They sent him to Thiruvananthapuram to work at another uncle's timer shop. Even there Kamaraj participated in the Vaikom Satyagraha led by George Joseph, of the Congress, against the atrocities of the higher caste Hindus on the Harijans. His elders had him called back home and pressured him to marry. Kamaraj resolutely refused to bow to the dictates of his elders.

At the age of 16, Kamaraj enrolled himself as full-time worker of the Congress. He participated in inviting speakers, organising meetings and collecting funds for the party. He also participated in the march to Vedaranyam led by Rajagopalachari as part of the Salt Satyagraha of March 1930.

Kamaraj was arrested and sent to Alipore Jail for two years. He was twenty seven at the time of arrest and was released in 1931 following the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Kamaraj was implicated in the Virudhunagar Bomb Case two years later. Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu and George Joseph argued on Kamaraj's behalf and proved the charges to be baseless. Kamaraj was arrested again in 1940 and sent to Vellore Jail while he was on his way to Wardha to get Gandhiji's approval for a list of satyagrahis.

While still in jail, Kamaraj was elected Chairman to the Municipal Council. Nine months later upon his release, Kamaraj went straight to the Municipality and tendered his resignation from his post. He felt that "one should not accept any post to which one could not do full justice."

Kamaraj was arrested once more in 1942 and sentenced to three years in the Amaravathi prison for spreading propaganda material for Quit India movement initiated by Gandhiji. While in prison, Kamaraj read books and continued his self-education.

Kamaraj's political guru and inspiration was S. Satyamurti, orator and parliamentarian. Satyamurti found in Kamaraj "an efficient, loyal, indefatigable worker and skilful organiser." Both developed a deep friendship and complemented each others' skills. In 1936, Satyamurti was elected President of the Provincial Congress and he appointed Kamaraj the General Secretary. Four years later they swapped positions. The party base was strengthened under their leadership. So deep was Kamaraj's devotion for Satyamurti that when India gained independence, he first went to Satyamurti's house and hoisted the Indian flag there. On his election as Chief Minister, Kamaraj went to Satyamurti's house and garlanded his photo and paid his respects to the leader's widow.

On April 13, 1954, K. Kamaraj reluctantly became the Chief Minister of Madras. To everyone's surprise, Kamaraj nominated C. Subramaniam and M. Bhakthavatsalam, who had contested his leadership, to the newly formed Cabinet. Kamaraj gave simple advice to his ministers, "Face the problem. Don't evade it. Find a solution, however small.... People will be satisfied if you do something." The State made immense strides in education and trade. New schools were opened, better facilities were added to existing ones. No village remained without a primary school and no panchayat without a high school. Kamaraj strove to eradicate illiteracy by introducing free and compulsory education upto eleventh standard. He introduced the Midday Meal Scheme to provide at least one meal per day to the lakhs of poor children. He introduced free school uniforms to weed out caste, creed and class distinctions among young minds.

Under his administration, a number of irrigation schemes were completed in record time. The Land Ceiling Act and the Tenancy Protection Act benefited small farmers and saved them from being exploited by landlords. Medium and small scale industries prospered in the midst of large industries making Madras one of the leaders in industrialisation. Nehru complemented Kamaraj for making Madras (later renamed State of Tamil Nadu) the best administered State in India."

Kamaraj remained Chief Minister for three consecutive terms. On October 2, 1963, he resigned to serve a greater purpose. Kamaraj noticed that the Congress party was slowly losing its vigour. He came up with a plan which was called the "Kamaraj Plan". He proposed that all senior Congress leaders should resign from their posts and devote all their energy to the revitalisation of the Congress. A number of Central and State ministers like Lal Bahadur Shastri, Jagjivan Ram, Morarji Desai and S. K. Patil followed suite and resigned from their posts. In 1964, Kamaraj was elected the President of the All India Congress and he successfully navigated the nation through the stormy years following Nehru's death.

On October 2, 1975, Gandhi Jayanti, Kamaraj awoke from his afternoon nap feeling uneasy. His housekeeper, Vairavan, rang up his physician. While he was on his way out, Kamaraj said, "Vairavan, put out the lights when you go out." K. Kamaraj died that day. He was honoured with the highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, posthumously in 1976

Birth

"Public figures cannot afford private life", Jawaharlal Nehru is reported to have lamented once. But there was one figure in Indian politics in the recent past who willingly merged his private life into his public life. The former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and All-India Congress President, K. Kamaraj was one such personality. July 15, 2003 marks his birth centenary. A life-long bachelor, this freedom fighter had only aspired for his motherland's freedom from foreign rule and to serve its people afterwards.

Kamaraj's life story had been stranger than fiction for its unbelievable incidents and turn of events. Almost an illiterate with no formal education and born in a poor family in a remote village, he rose to great heights of eminence in the political arena.

K. Kamaraj was born on July 15, 1903 to the couple Kumaraswamy and Sivakami in Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu, in the southern-most part of India. His father Kumaraswamy had a small coconut shop to support his family. While Kamaraj was studying in the primary school, the family was struck with a misfortune. His father, the only breadwinner of the family, succumbed to a massive heart attack.

This put an end to the education of Kamaraj. He had to take up all kinds of odd jobs including that of a street vendor to support his widowed mother and sister. The Independence struggle was in full swing in the country at that time. Kamaraj was eager to contribute his mite to the freedom movement pioneered by Mahatma Gandhi. Inspired by the patriotic leader Satyamurthi's fiery oratory against British atrocities, Kamaraj plunged headlong into the movement. From then on there was no looking back for him. He became an able organiser in mobilising people for public meetings addressed by patriots. Appreciating his skill, Satyamurthi took him under his fold. In due course, Kamaraj, by his selfless devotion, rose in stature. Starting as Satyamurthi's personal assistant he ultimately rose to become the President of the Indian National Congress.

Education

Unfortunately his father died within a year of Kamaraj's enrolment in school. Kamaraj's mother sold all jewellery except her earrings and deposited the money with a local merchant and cared for the entire family on the monthly interest that the money earned.

Kamaraj was not a good pupil in school and dropped out when he was in the sixth grade. When he entered mainstream public life he felt handicapped and realised the importance of a good education. He educated himself during his periods of imprisonment and even learned English from his co-worker.

He joined as an apprentice in the cloth shop of his maternal uncle Karupiah after dropping out of school. He would slip out from the shop to join processions and attend public meetings addressed by orators like Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu and George Joseph. His relatives frowned upon Kamaraj's budding interest

in politics. They sent him to Thiruvananthapuram to work at another uncle's timer shop. Even there Kamaraj participated in the Vaikom Satyagraha led by George Joseph, of the Congress, against the atrocities of the higher caste Hindus on the Harijans. His elders had him called back home and pressured him to marry. Kamaraj resolutely refused to bow to the dictates of his elders.

Habits

Kamaraj proved himself as Chief of all the CMs in the country. He was the first CM who was in the post for a long period of 9 years, i.e. from 1954 to 1963 unless he resigned the post voluntarily he would have continued to be the CM.

He did his duty boldly and patiently without discouragement. He listened the views of the opposite parties. He easily solved the political problems.

He attracted every one to his side. He listened others without himself speaking. He never concentrated on his food or dress.

Kamaraj honoured the news reporters. He affectionately moved with photographers. He never angered with anyone. Replied letters immediately. Listened the grievances and solved them immediately. He gave more data. Understood the problems easily and keenly studied the files. He did not like luxury, flattering and advertisement. He was very simple. He never uttered harsh words. Because of these habits he ornamented the CM's post. It would not be an exaggeration that the post got honoured through him.

The words of W. R. S. Sathyanathan were the evidence of the administration of Kamaraj. He served as Chief Secretary to the state under Kamaraj. He said that Kamaraj's efficiency made him to respect him. Kamaraj was fast and clean in finalising the things. He could judge people in a lightning speed who came to meet him. He can solve even a sophisticated big problem within seconds. He approaches the problem directly.

The judgement would be very clean. He detected the problems in an astonishing way. He used to read the files kept for his advice completely, then only he used to decide.

There was no village in the state which his feet never touched. Whatever the place whether Mountain area or river side he could explain with evidences about the climate of that region.

Politics

Kumaraswamy Kamaraj played a leading role in shaping India's destiny from the passing away of Jawaharlal Nehru to the Congress split in 1969. He was born humble and poor in a backward area of Tamil Nadu on July 15, 1903. He was a Nadar, one of the most depressed castes of Hindu society. His schooling lasted only six years. At twelve he was a shop assistant. He was barely fifteen when he heard of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre which was the turning point in his life. Two years later when Kamaraj saw Gandhiji at Madurai the path was chosen. He became a member of the Indian National Congress.

Kamaraj was content for years to remain a rank and file Congress volunteer, working hard for the cause of the freedom movement, unmindful of his personal comfort or career. He was eighteen when he responded to the call of Gandhiji for non-cooperation with the British. He carried on propaganda in the villages, raised funds for Congress work and took a leading part in organising meetings. At twenty he was picked up by Satyamurthy, one of the greatest orators and a leading figure of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee who was to be Kamaraj's political guru. In April 1930, Kamaraj joined the Salt Satyagraha Movement at Vedaranyam and was sentenced to two years his first term in prison. Jail-going had become a part of his career and in all he went to prison six times and spent more than 3,000 days in British Jails. Bachelor Kamaraj was forty-four when India became free.

Kamaraj was elected President of the Tamilnad Congress Committee in February 1940. He held that post till 1954. He was in the Working Committee of the AICC from 1947 till the Congress split in 1969, either as a member or as a special invitee. Kamaraj was elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1937 unopposed. He was again elected to it in 1946. He was also elected to the Constituent Assembly of India in 1946, and later to Parliament in 1952. He became Chief Minister of Madras in 1954. He was perhaps

the first non-English knowing Chief Minister in India. But it was during the nine years of his administration that Tamil Nadu came to be known as one of the best administered States in India. In 1963 he suggested to Nehru that senior Congress leaders should leave ministerial posts to take up organisational work. This suggestion came to be known as the 'Kamaraj Plan', which was designed primarily to dispel from the minds of Congressmen the lure for power, creating in its place a dedicated attachment to the objectives and policies of the organisation. The plan was approved by the Congress Working Committee and was implemented within two months. Six Chief Ministers and six Union Ministers resigned under the Plan. Kamaraj was elected President, Indian National Congress, on October 9, 1963. Twice he played a leading role in choosing the Prime Minister of India.

His defeat in Virudhunagar in 1967 considerably undermined his prestige. It was even said that he was a much disillusioned man. But the landslide victory at Nagercoil revived his political stature. However, the split in the Congress in 1969 (he remained in the Organisation Congress) and the General Elections of 1971 resulted in a set-back to his political prestige and authority. He continued to work quietly among the masses until the last. He was honoured posthumously by the award of Bharat Ratna.

Meeting with two Blossom Ministers

K. Kamaraj played an essential role in the meeting of India's two Blossom Ministers — Lal Bahadur Shastri in the gathering 1964 and Indira Gandhi in the period 1966. All throughout his dominion as chief minister of Tamil Nadu, K. Kamaraj strived to support aweigh meals and instruction to grouping. This was for the prime indication in the domain that a express like this was being executed in 1957.

Kumaraswamy Kamaraj, who is outmatch remembered as K. Kamaraj, was a strong Indian politico. He was regarded as the 'king-maker' in Amerind politics and was widely reputable for his traits of satinpod, unity and naiveness. During the try for Bharat's freedom from the Brits generalisation, Kamaraj was a enveloping person of Student Jawaharlal Solon, who was afterwards decreed as the opening maturity clergyman of the state. Read this story far to discover more most K. Kamaraj.

Kamaraj was titled king-maker because he played a pivotal persona in the appointment of Bharat's two First Ministers — Lal Bahadur Shastri in the 1964 and again Indira Solon in the period 1966. Thusly, grouping fondly called him the Solon of Southwesterly India or straight the Negro Solon. In his hometown Dravidian Nadu, the denizens plant assets him for wide breeding effortlessness to the thousands under the poorness reasoning.

All throughout the dominion of K. Kamaraj in Dravidian Nadu, he strived to wage disembarass meals and pedagogy to people. And this was for the prototypical minute in the humankind that a step like this was being executed by K. Kamaraj in 1957. Due to his selfless maintenance for the peachy of the bad and the downtrodden in the lodge, the Regime of Bharat awarded him with the Bharat Ratna, posthumously in the period 1976.

Though K. Kamaraj's nurtured an diversion in opinion since immaturity, it was at the age of 16 that he linked the Indian Subject Legislature as a chockful term. His task was to bespeak speakers, make arrangements for meetings and collect finances for the Legislature circle. Kamaraj also participated in a gather to Vedaranyam spearheaded by C. Rajagopalachari as a endeavour of the restrainer Satyagraha. There were galore occasions when Kumaraswamy Kamaraj was put down the bars during the assay for India's city.

Daily Life

From his young age Kamaraj never liked luxurious life. He adopted simplicity in anything. His food, dress and speech were very simple. But he was not a miser. When he was CM he used to spend most of his salary for the poor who came to him for help.

A cup of coffee in the morning, lunch at 11.00 a.m. evening a cup of coffee and 2 Idlies and a cup of milk at supper were his daily food. His lunch was a simple vegetarian meal. Occasionally an egg would be added with his lunch. He never celebrated Hindu festivals. He used to get up from his bed at 7 a.m.

Kamaraj gave interview to all whoever came to meet him. He never sent anyone without seeing. He helped all as far as possible.

He never helped anyone on the basis of cast or creed. For genuine reasons he never hesitated to help. He used to read books before sleep, some times up to 22 o'clock in the mid night. Sometimes he used to discuss serious political problem upto 5 a.m. in the next morning.

He used to have a nap after lunch. Daily he received about 75 letters. But he never replied them. Just helped the needy ones. He never replied the letters from Virudhunagar. He never wounded anybody's feelings. He moved friendly with everyone without political enmity. He used to get angry at times.

Suppose if anyone confuses Kamaraj or tried to suppress the fact or telling the same matter repeated he gets annoyed. But that anger remains for a short period only. Later he forgets that and moved normally when he meets them next time.

Achievements

During British rule the education was only 7 per cent. But in Kamaraj's period it was 37 per cent. During Rajaji's period there were 12,000 schools in the state. Whereas it was 27,000 in the period of Kamaraj. Power supply in all the villages and industrial growth were there in the period of Kamaraj.

Tamils compared the education and knowledge to our eyes. Hence Tamilians were considered as genius. Kamaraj who hailed from this group made a revolution in education.

Kamaraj removed the system of communal education started by Rajaji. He ordered to reopen the 6,000 elementary schools closed by Rajaji. Moreover he opened 14,000 new schools.

During first plan schools which were about 21,500 in number had gone upto 26,750 during 2nd plan which crossed over 30,000 later. Likewise the admission of students also went up gradually from 25 lakhs to 33.8 and to 46.1 lakhs. During 3rd plan it was decided to admit 14 lakhs more students.

The result of his work was there for all to see. There was an all-round development with village as the nucleus. By inducting colleagues like Shri R. Venkataraman and C. Subramaniam in his Ministry he paved the way for the growth of industrial, agricultural

and educational sectors. Tamil Nadu set itself as an example for other States to emulate.

Educational

There was the situation in the country that the construction of schools, serving midday meals, appointing teachers were the duties of the government. Kamaraj wanted to change this and started a great revolutionary plan.

Because of this plan every individual realised to think the education was his responsibility. That was the plan for growth of schools. Conference were conducted and donations were collected from public. About four crores of rupees were donated by public. Poor students were given free books and slates. Lakhs of poor students were benefited.

An important scheme for giving free uniform to poor children were organised and implemented. Kamaraj wanted to avoid the partiality between the poor and the rich students. Result was free uniform scheme. This stopped the inferiority complex among the students.

Kamaraj intended to give free education to all the students. He decided to give free education up to eleventh standard to all the poor students in the year 1960. The annual income of the parents of those students who get the concession should be less than Rs. 1,200. He modified this order in 1962-63. Children of the parents whose income was Rs 1,500 per annum could also get free education upto 11th Std., Apart from this order were issued that children of NGO's employees of Panchayat Unions may also get free education upto High School education.

To avoid illiteracy he formed compulsory primary education. He formed committee to make propaganda in villages about the importance of education.

Though compulsory and free education in schools were there was no proper response. Kamaraj seriously thought the reasons, therefore he meet the villagers and discussed with them. Found out the reason. He arrived at an solution.

How can a guardian parent who is lean bodied due to poverty, powerless eyes, scattered hair without oil and who struggles for

at least one time food send his ward to the school. He will send his children to schools at least if they get one time food. Immediately Kamaraj arranged for this. Free Midday Meal Scheme made lakhs of students to come to school. Countries all over the world praised this. Nehruji was much pleased.

At first Midday Meal Scheme properly started in 1956. Over 14 lakhs students were benefited. This scheme got help from CARE OF USA in 1961-62. Milk powder, corn flour and refined vegetable oils were sent free of costs to schools from CARE.

Kamaraj who was deeply worried about the growth of education decided to induce the interest of public. The government took responsibility to govern, fulfil the schemes for the growth of education. These were intensified during Kamaraj's period only. But public did not show their interest and direct involvement.

Onwards from 1956-57 free education was given to the children of elementary school teacher, police constables, head constables and the lower grade employees of government. It came to know in the next year that only 17 per cent of students were not getting free education. To compensate this a scheme for free education to all was announced in 1962.

The revolutionary and progressive schemes and the services of Kamaraj in educational side attracted the public. Because of that there are no villages in the state without elementary schools. A high school for every 5 miles distance with modern amenities was constructed.

Apart from increasing and developing number of schools steps were taken to improve standard of education also. To improve the standard number of working day were increased from 180 to 200. Unnecessary holidays were reduced. Syllabus were prepared to give opportunity to various abilities.

Furthermore two session classes were started. 45 multipurpose schools were started. In the second plan 191 multipurpose schools came up. 286 double session schools were opened. Labourites with modern facilities and librarians were made available. Salaries of the school teachers were increased in order to improve there standard of teaching and to kindle their interest in teaching.

K. Kamaraj introduced a scheme providing pension, provident fund and compulsory insurance to teacher which were not their so far.

He had introduced this scheme for the first time in India. Along with this he introduced family pension scheme also to the teacher.

Scheme was also introduced to provide quarters to the teacher of village schools. Rs 25 lakhs were allotted to this scheme. Construction of 750 houses was planned.

Kamaraj also arranged to give interest free loans to the poor students of medical college, engineering college and agricultural college. This has improved in admission of Engg. College and Medical College in every year. Facility to train nurses in hospitals were also increased

Very number of Arts colleges were increased in the period of Kamaraj. 2 PT Colleges, 10 Teacher training colleges and 39 Teacher training schools were opened in his period.

His government made arrangement to open one more university in his period.

Industrial

Major irrigation schemes were planned in Kamaraj's period. Lower Bhavani, Mani Muthuar, Cauvery Delta, Aarani River, Vaigai Dam, Amravathi, Sathanur, Krishnagiri, Pullambadi, Parambikulam and Neyaru Dams were among them. The Lower Bhavani Dam in Coimbatore district was constructed with an expenditure of Rs. 10 crores. 2,07,000 acres of land are under cultivation.

About 45,000 acres of arable land are benefited through Mettur canal of Salem. Another scheme was Krishnagiri in the same district. Vaigai, Sathanur facilitate to cultivate thousands of acres of lands in Madurai and North Arcot districts respectively. Rs. 30 crores were planned to spend for Parambikulam River scheme in Kamaraj's period. This has helped for the development of Coimbatore district in agriculture field

In 1957-61 1,628 Tanks were de-silted under Small Irrigation Scheme 2000 wells were digged with outlets. Long term loans

with 25 per cent subsidy were given to farmers. Apart from farmers who are having dry lands were given oil engines, electric pump sets on instalment basis. 150 lakhs of acres of lands were cultivated during Kamaraj's period. One third of this, i.e. 56 lakhs of acres of land get permanent watering facility.

Major industries with an investment in crores of Rupees were started in his period. Neyveli Lignite Scheme, Raw photo film industry at Nilgri, Surgical instruments factory at Guindy, Sugar factories, Bi-Carbonates factories, Cement factories, Railway coach factory at Avadi, Mettur paper industry, were started only in the period of Kamaraj. These are the backbone of the development of the nation.

The result is that Madras state stood first in India in providing electricity to rural areas. About 13,300 villages were give electricity during 1955-61. Using electric power for agriculture purpose, Madras state stands first. Expense to improve electricity situation at Madras in 1959 was Rs. 2.71 crores. Hydro power station at Periyar was constructed at an expenditure of Rs. 9 crores. 1 lakh KW of electricity produced under this scheme.

Well-known Kunda Dam project was constructed at an expenditure of Rs. 3.5 crores. Nehruji inaugurated this project. It was completed in a very short period by over engineers which made foreigners to wonder. In 1958-59, the investment in electricity connection was 95 crores and the income increased to Rs. 12 crores.

In this context, Avadi Congress Conference was held in 20th January 1956. It was 6th Conference. Kamaraj constructed a city and named it as Sathyamoorthy Nagar. Kamaraj told to Mr. S. S. Vasan who took the responsibility of decoration that it was not important one to say that he had not seen such a decoration there before, but it was important that one to say that he had not seen such a beautiful conference even after 25 years.

Jawaharlal Nehru appreciated the decoration. Nehruji unveiled the statue of Sathyamoorthy. The Avadi Congress had increased the prestige of Southern people in Northern part of India.

Masses donated food grains for the meals. Kamaraj's mother came to Avadi Conference from Virudhunagar. Nehruji took

photograph with his mother. In memory of Srinivasa Iyengar the AICC president his daughter Ambuja Ammal was nominated as the leader of reception committee.

Nation's newspapers wrote that Kamaraj was the main reason for the unforgettable Avadi Conference in the history of Congress.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad proposed to form a society of equality in the action committee meeting. Kamaraj seconded the proposal. In the conference when all participated Nehru proposed this and Kamaraj seconded.

K. Kamaraj said, "Only hard labour will save people. Wealth should not be massed with one group. No violence is necessary to form equality in society. It is also not desirable. Gandhiji got the freedom in a peaceful way. Let us form this society in the same way."

When Nehruji came to Madras in 1936 Kamaraj joined with him in the tour. Since 1949 he attended the AICC meeting. Avadi Congress conference was a turning point to Kamaraj

Under Kamaraj's administration, a number of irrigation schemes were completed in record time. The Land Ceiling Act and the Tenancy Protection Act benefited small farmers and saved them from being exploited by landlords. Medium and small scale industries prospered in the midst of large industries making Madras one of the leaders in industrialisation. Nehru complemented Kamaraj for making Madras (later renamed State of Tamil Nadu) the best administered State in India."

Political

Since Kamaraj took charge as CM from 1954 he formed interim ministry and governed for 3 1/2 years. His record was appreciated by all. Even opposite party people were afraid to blame his rule.

At this situation in the 1957 general election Congress won with an absolute majority, out of 205 seats Congress bagged 151. It astonished the whole India. For Madras state assembly Kamaraj won and became CM. He formed the second ministry.

Kamaraj submitted the list to the Governor A. J. John consisting the names of M/s M. Bakthavathsalam, C. Subramanian, A.

Manickavelan, P. Kakkan, V. Ramiah and Mrs. Lurdu Ammal Simon. His 2nd ministry took charge in 13th April 1957. Later R. Venkatraman was included in the ministry.

In 1957, general election Kamaraj was elected from Sathur Constituency. This election was a lesson to Kamaraj. Except Ananda Vikatan, the Tamil weekly, no paper or magazine supported Congress.

In general they were against Congress. Though Congress won in the election Kamaraj felt that there should be a newspaper for Congress.

According to his wish a Tamil Daily by name 'Thai Nadu' was proposed to be started in 1958.

But due to some delay in getting the machinery the daily could not be started. The registration of title was also expired.

In 1960 a daily by name 'Nava Shakti' was started. It was out and out for Kamaraj. The aim of it was to propoganda Kamaraj's view. In the 1962 election Congress bugged 139 seats and DMK 50. The communist who got 15 seats in 1952 election could get only 4 in 1957. Now it got only 2 seats.

Kamaraj was elected as CM for the third time. He sworn in as CM before the then Governor Vishnu Ram Methi on 15th March 1962. There were 9 persons including the CM in the ministry. It is to noted that it was only the smallest Cabinet in India.

Vinobaji toured Madras state (1956) only during Kamaraj's period. Kamaraj joined with him in tour and addressed the meetings. Vinobaji saw the affection of the public towards Kamaraj and said that he was only the true follower of Gandhiji.

Kamaraj was not only sitting in the fort where the flag was flying but he also was in the hearts of the public. He was the public and public was him. He was the only leader who constructed a bridge between the huts and the fort. He stood first in having a remarkable memory power in public life. Kamaraj was the main reason to forbid the red tapism in government.

Kamaraj remained CM for three consecutive terms. On October 2, 1963, he resigned to serve a greater purpose. Kamaraj noticed that the Congress party was slowly losing its vigour. He came up with

a plan which was called the 'Kamaraj Plan'. He proposed that all senior Congress leaders should resign from their posts and devote all their energy to the revitalisation of the Congress. A number of Central and State ministers like Lal Bahadur Shastri, Jagjivan Ram, Morarji Desai and S. K. Patil followed suite and resigned from their posts. In 1964, Kamaraj was elected the President of the All India Congress and he successfully navigated the nation through the stormy years following Nehru's death.

Speech

Kamaraj delivered his speech on 9th January. amidst lakhs of volunteers to eradicate the poverty of 45 crores of Indians,. It was the place where Emperor Ashoka fought with his warriors against Kalinga's empire's lakhs of soldiers 2,500 years ago to establish Magada Empire. It was the place where Emperor Ashoka decided not to fight and preach peace. Two lakhs people heard his speech.

His speech at the conference was as under:

"You have given me the responsibility to administer the INC by electing me to this highest post unanimously you have exposed your affection towards me. I expect your full cooperation and enthusiastic support to execute my duty to the entire satisfaction of you all".

Kamaraj's speech had explained in a way about the steps to be taken to fight against economical conditions after paying homage to the departed freedom fighters and the soldiers who lost their lives in Indo-China war.

"There are certain items in our economical conditions which worries us. I point out at first that massing of wealth with certain people. So there is monopoly in some trade. Tax evasion, black marketing of scare products. No honesty in trade, no regularity in trade. It is essential to take proper steps in this matter".

He further explained the procedures to be followed, "Since our aim is socialism we have to stop amassing of wealth with certain people and its hereditary continuance. If we allow this it will be hurdle for our development. At the end the rich will be more rich."

We have to see now whether the present laws and administration will fulfil our socialistic aims. INC should examine the developments in each state. Government should take action to stop monopoly and also they are to be examined. We have to develop new areas and start new industries. Districts should give free education upto secondary school education gradually.

Great Kamaraj

Just about three decades ago there lived here a selfless leader, an upright politician and a sacrificing son of the soil. Yet how many of us know of his greatness? It is to the credit of Ramana Communications that it has produced a film on K. Kamaraj, a diehard Congressman of the Nehru era. Making a film on the life of the distinguished personality, who remained a bachelor all his life and served the country till his last breath, surely allows no scope for any of the formula stuff that the filmgoer is so used to. And hence offers the investor absolutely no commercial guarantee. But undeterred by the risk, Ramana Communications has taken up such a venture.

Inspired by the Independence Movement and the Mahatma, the young, not very educated Kamaraj rises from humble beginnings to emerge as the Chief Minister of the State, a man of the masses and a king-maker of repute. His simple living and high thinking that ought to make each of us proud is presented with a visionary touch by director A. Balakrishnan. Kamaraj's corruption-free rule as Chief Minister, his sensitivity that made him do his utmost to educate the poor, his anger at injustice from any quarter, the elections in which the Congress was trounced, the period when Indira Gandhi declared a state of Emergency, and the effect that such events had on Kamaraj have been well brought out.

Besides documenting the life of the leader till the end, the film also traces the history of the nation and the State in an interesting manner. Kamaraj's interaction with his mother, the people who come to see him and the bureaucracy and his calm acceptance of the highs and lows of life are unforgettable facets of the film. And finally as you watch the funeral procession of the man, you are choked with emotion.

All the characters have been chosen to suit the roles they play. Thus, casting is a strong point of 'Kamaraj'. Richard Mathuram has done a neat job as Kamaraj. M. S. Bhaskar who has dubbed for him deserves special mention. The bright eyes of Sampathraj, the man who plays the young Kamaraj, is more an indicator of the kind of man he portrays.

Only the actor who plays Rajaji does not seem true-to-life in appearance and demeanour. Along with known faces such as director Mahendran, actors Vijayan, A. K. Veeraswamy and V. S. Raghavan, are Sumanth as Jawaharlal Nehru, Kovai Ramaswamy as Periyar, Aravamudhan as C. Subramaniam and Kanakaraj as Gandhiji. Well-known stage artiste, T. S. Anandhi is Indira Gandhi. The resemblance to the former PM, which is more because of her nose, makes her a reasonably right choice for the role.

The screenplay could have been moulded better and the sudden close-ups that come and go abruptly could have been avoided. Sembur Jayaraj and J. Francis Kripa take credit for the screenplay and dialogue. V. T. Vijayan has handled the editing. There are scenes that end too suddenly and thus give way to jerks in the narration. Rerecording is minimal in 'Kamaraj', and wherever it is heard, the maestro's touch is evident. The 'Naadu Parthathunda ...' number that Ilaiyaraja sings in the end makes a tremendous impact. Vaali's lyrics for the same moisten your eyes.

Presidential Address by Kamaraj

Even during the days of the freedom struggle, the Congress organisation had broadly indicated that the society which it envisaged after achieving independence was not the conventional type of society but a progressive one based on the modern concepts of social, political and economic equality and justice. The Indian National Congress, until Mahatma Gandhi assumed its leadership was confining its attention to political freedom. Mahatmaji not only spread the message of freedom to the farthest corners of India, but also devoted his attention to the eradication of poverty and misery among the masses. When the masses realised that the Indian National Congress stood for the betterment of their economic condition and their social progress, they joined the organisation in large numbers and gave them massive support.

Revolutionary Steps

K. Kamaraj reduced the ministry to eight from twelve. He included the supporters of Rajaji in his ministry. He also included C. Subramaniam who contested against him in his ministry. Bakthavathsalaam was also included one among the eight. The six person who opposed Rajaji were not included in the ministry.

At that time he thought that it would be better to include Vannian Community who opposed Congress. He included Ramaswamy Padaiaachi in the ministry who was the leader of opposite party and opposed Congress in the assembly. Hence there was no opposition for Congress from out side. He formed such a ministry and avoided the opposition from in and out of Congress. He took charge as CM on 13th April of 1954, the Tamil new year day. He was not a member in assembly nor a member in Legislative Council. He should become a member within six months from the date of taking charge in either of legislature.

It was quite easy to become a Member of Legislature Council. But Kamaraj did not prefer it. He had a strong belief for a healthy government one should be elected through assembly election only. Also he thought that he could understand the opinion of the public only if contest for the assembly election.

He was always elected from the Virudhunagar constituency. Suppose if he wanted to be elected from there the elected member of that constituency should resign. As always he did not want to create problem ever.

There was a vacancy in Gudiatham Constituency of North Arcot district. All wanted him to contest from there as the CM is common to the state and he contest from any constituency of the state. Finally he decided to contest from Gudiatham Constituency.

Kamaraj didn't belong to North Arcot which consist Gudiatham constituency. Even then he contested from there, except Communist party all other parties supported Kamaraj. Since the Dravidian parties did like Rajaji to become the Chief Minister again they supported Kamaraj and made serious propaganda for his victory. The Congress volunteers of all parts of Madras state

invaded Gudiatham since Kamaraj decided to contest from a new constituency which neither was his native nor a place he dwelled. The Dravidian parties and Muslim league openly supported Kamaraj and hunted for votes. Gudiatham was flooded by party people. Public worked for Kamaraj. Kamaraj visited all the villages and addressed the mass. He won in the election. He thanked the people of that constituency.

Kamaraj didn't go for the post of minister. It came to him. The post which came to him in 1954 he resigned it 1963. He was the first Chief Minister who was in that post for such a long period.

Many ministries changed in other states of India because of Enmity, Plots, Jealous and for post but it was not in Madras state. There was no quarrel, enmity or jealous in the ministry of Kamaraj. After Kamaraj became Chief Minister the trend of Madras state was totally changed.

Kamaraj's tenure was called as Golden Period. When he became Chief Minister he said, "People who works people as Maharajas and Lords who are lazy and live on other labours. I have become the Chief Minister only to wipeout the troubles of poor, else I don't want this post at all."

From that day onwards, all the poor had his portraits at their huts.

When he was the Chief Minister of Madras state he went in the path of Gandhiji and followed the principles of Nehru. He did what was Right. People respected him as a 'Model Man'.

Last Days and Demise

On October 2, 1975, Gandhi Jayanti, K. Kamaraj awoke from his afternoon nap feeling uneasy. His housekeeper, Vairavan, rang up his physician. While he was on his way out, Kamaraj said, "Vairavan, put out the lights when you go out." K. Kamaraj died that day. He was honoured with the highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, posthumously in 1976

Birth Anniversary

Kamaraj birth anniversary has been declared as 'Educational Development Day'

Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi on Saturday announced that the State Government would enact a law in the forthcoming Assembly session to declare Kamaraj birth anniversary (July 15) as 'Educational Development Day.'

Launching the expanded nutritious noon meal scheme for school children on the 104th birth anniversary of Kamaraj, Mr. Karunanidhi said the day would also mark the celebration to perpetuate his memory by offering floral tributes to his portrait in all schools, besides expressing gratitude for his contribution to developing education.

Under the expanded nutritious noon meal scheme, eggs would be provided twice a week to the beneficiaries, he said.

Justifying the proposal to bring forward a Bill in the Assembly, rather than issuing a Government Order to celebrate Kamaraj's birth anniversary as Educational Development Day, he said the move would make it difficult for successive Governments to modify or abandon the scheme, as it would evoke stiff resistance from the Opposition in the Assembly.

He accused the erstwhile All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) Government of modifying or withdrawing many good schemes implemented by the previous Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) Government. These schemes included the marriage assistance programme named after Moovalur Ramamirtham that had benefited about 2.50 lakh women and the scheme to provide eggs once in two weeks along with the nutritious meal, he said. It became possible for the AIADMK Government to abandon these schemes as they were implemented on the basis of GOs, he added. Tracing the evolution of the noon meal scheme, Mr. Karunanidhi said the programme was introduced after Kamaraj pointed out that it would be impossible for hungry children to attend school. The late Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran converted it into a nutritious meal scheme implemented by the Government instead of leaving the responsibility to teachers.

The Government's decision to provide eggs twice a week would improve the health of the students, he said, adding that the expanded nutritious meal programme would reflect on their efficiency to learn.

Mr. Karunanidhi launched the scheme by serving eggs to 200 children at the Chennai Corporation Middle School in Chepauk constituency. He distributed prizes to the winners of oratorical, painting and essay writing competitions held by the school. He also handed over assistance to students and other beneficiaries under different schemes.

Social Welfare Minister Poongothai said the Chief Minister had added one more feather to his cap by implementing the scheme. Minister for School Education Thangam Thennarasu said the decision to celebrate Kamaraj's birth anniversary as Educational Development Day showed Mr. Karunanidhi's affection for the late leader. Whip of the Congress Legislature Party Peter Alphonse thanked the Chief Minister for his gesture. Chief Secretary L. K. Tripathy welcomed.

Nehru's Comments

Nehruji appreciated the services of Kamaraj as under:

"It is impossible to find a person overcoming Kamaraj in public service. As a friend for several years I had a chance to know him. The value I had on him increased on and on whenever I moved with him. He is the CM to a government which is a example for efficient and good governance."

Husband of England Queen, Lord Eddianburro, congratulated Kamaraj and said that he should be the Chief Minister of Madras state during his next visit to India and Madras. Thus, Kamaraj ruled Madras State. As per the judgement of news reporters his way of ruling was a lesson to others and his service was an example to the post he held. S. Balasundrammal, wife of Sathyamoorthy said as under about Kamaraj:

"Kamaraj served for the nation for more than 20 years along with my husband. During that time he had the sense of sacrifice and public service. He was best companion to my husband and worked without rest to strengthen the Congress in Madras state. His Chief Ministership was the evidence to the dream of my husband". Thus, the disciple made the dream of his leader alive.