

Moundadan Chetty Community

Monday, July 25, 2011

HISTORY AND LIFE STYLE OF MOUNDADAN CHETTTY

HISTORY AND LIFE STYLE OF MOUNDADAN CHETTTY COMMUNITY OF THE NILGIRIS

The Nilgiris is a famous place for life for its natural setting and surroundings. In Nilgiris Gudalur one of the taluks of this district. Though Ooty, the headquarter town of the district, is a world renowned place, the adjacent town and taluk of Gudalur is very very backward educationally, economically and in social status of the people. The Moundadan Chetties are one among the indigenous people of the locality among other fellow other tribal people namely Paniar, Kurumbar and Kattunaiker. The traditional occupation of Moundadan Chetties was agriculture in dry and wet Lands. They live in Padanthurai, Cherumulli, Srimadurai, Gudalur, Mudumalai and Nellakottai villages. The major part of Mudumalai and Nellakottai (Benna) are situated within the wild life area of Mudumalai. About 500 people in 100 families reside in Pulpalli village in Wayanad District of the Kerala state. Those who are living in Pulpalli is said to be the migrants from Gudalur in 16th century. As regards of marriage alliance these people have to seek among 5000 in Gudalur and 500 in Pulpalli. Though they are indigenous people of Gudalur taluk, we can see these people in Gudalur town only during day time but not after sunset. The reason for this is that they do not have residential accommodation in Gudalur town nor do they have any shops


Gudalur is very recently developed to the status of 3rd grade Municipality. It is linking place where the roads fork into two, one leading to Mysore about 110 kms and the other to Calicut at distance of about 140 kms. It is 50 kms from Ooty., the head quarter town of the Nilgiris. It is said that Gudalur belongs to Gudoor ancestors, one of the sub clans among Athu Chetty clan of Moundadan Chetty and the name is gradually changed as Gudalur in due course (Joining village) (Koodal- Joining Oor village or place).. The ancient temple shrine Vaneswari as at present called in the town is the family deity of Gudoor sub clan of Athu Chetty I clans of the community. The Moundadan Chetties and other indigenous people depends upon Gudalur town for their day to day needs like provision, medicines, clothing and jewelry.

When we look on the historic line, we cannot decide for how- long these people live in Gudalur or from where they migrated to Gudalur. It is clear from the above that their civilization dates back to prehistoric. Gudalur once part of place called Bayalnadu (paddy field country) which was under the reign of kings of Mysore. The places which were occupied by Ratter, Kadambas, Ganga, castes, Hoysala emperors., governed under Chera emperors dynasty. After the fall of Vijaya Nagar Dynasty, the kings of Mysore Wadayar hierarchy ruled these places. Subsequently during British advent the area formed part of Greater Wayanad of Malabar District of the composite Madras Presidency in 1800 for Revenue administration set up. During 1877 again a separate Nilgiri district was constituted carving a part of Wayanad called south east Wayanad namely the three *amsoms* called Nambalakode, Moonanad and Cherangode and the taluks of Coonoor, and Ooty apart from the Kundhas already transferred from Malabar.

OCCUPATION:- The chief means of livelihood of Moundadan Chetties has been agriculture and cattle herding. Paddy, cereals like millet, ragi were the crops cultivated. Apart from this, banana, jack fruit, guava, orange were also grown for their home use but not for marketing. Their settlements were always close to their paddy fields and very simple ones made of hollow woody stems of bamboos and branches of jungle trees and they used the hay stalks as materials for upper and outer covering of the houses. Up to 1974, their right of ownership for land was denied and it was considered that these lands owned by chetty people belonged to Kovilagam of Thirumalpad in Nilambur.. In the year 19679 dispossession of Jenmam lands by land owners and enactment of Ryotwary Act (Act No. 24/69) was promulgated. After strutting the Ryotwary Act, *patta* was assigned to land holding basing of the documental evidences for possession of the land particularly for the wet portion of the holding denying the area of occupation around the settlements and the shifting cultivations of dry crops like ragi and millet for home use since they could not maintain valid



Followers

 Join this site
With Google Friend Connect

Members (4)



Already a member? [Sign in](#)

Blog Archive

2015 (1)

2014 (7)

2013 (3)

2011 (11)

July (1)

[HISTORY AND LIFE STYLE OF MOUNDADAN CHETTTY](#)

June (4)

documental evidences for such holdings. Thus, even though they had dry lands in their possession, [▶ January \(6\)](#)
patta for this type of land was not assigned to them. Now it is said that such of the land have become the holding of the company estate owners who had established the tea estates during British [▶ 2010 \(2\)](#)
subsequent sold to the big companies of India after independence.

LANGUAGE:- Moundadan Chetty people have been speaking in a corrupt form of Kannada a dual languages of Malayalam and Tamil. Some Telugu words are also mingled with their dialect. They are able to converse with Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada apart from the tribal dialects Paniar, Kurumbar and Kattunaikar who are their co-tribal people. As their language does not have script, they are depending on other regional languages like Tamil and Malayalam for lingua franca but still unable to express their ethos and thought to the proper way for want of fluency in such languages to the officers who come for survey of the lands and their values so also other basic needs with Government.

PROPERTY:- As already explained in the previous paragraph, the land in their possession till 1974 were not solely assigned to them. Now we shall develop for the information about how their lands became the property of others.. They are all Siva devotees. The Moundadan Chetty people live in Padanthurai, Cherumulli, Sreemadurai, Gudalur and udumalai worship Lord Siva in the temple of Nambolakottai situated in the vicinity of all the above villages and *Bagavathi* Amman near Gudalur, *Paradevadhai* at Chullikunnu in Srimadurai village, *Puthur Bagavathi* shrine, *Aravalli* at Puliambarai and Devala besides Siva temple at Kallingarai in Cherumulli and Si Krishna temple at Srimadurai villages as common temples and shrine for all. Apart from these, every 24 clan of this community have their own home deities at different origin places. The presiding deity is worshiped as *Vettaikaruman (Vettaihunt)* at Nambolakottai. The Moundadan Chetties and Badaga people who are all on equal status with Chetty people called this place as Kottaibetta also (*Kotta* means temple for fort *betta* means hill top). Let us see why Lord Siva is worshiped as *Vettikorumagan*. There is a myth behind this.

We have learned that before the beginning the war between Pandava and Kourava in Mahabharata under the advice of Lord Krishna, Arjuna went to a hill top to perform penance for obtaining Pasupathasthra (Boon-arrow) from Lord Siva which is ideal to defeat Karna the mighty warrior who was in the side of Kouravas army. The place where powerful and perseverance tapa was performed for *ambu* (arrow) is believed to be the hill so called as *Ambu malai* (*Ambu* means arrow – *Malai* means Hill top in Dravidian languages). Lord Siva before appearing before Arjuna, had conducted a test of penance under the guise of a hunter armed with bow and arrow came to a place called Mookurthi in the Nilgiri hill range with his consort Parvathi Devi. They met Todas, the aboriginal tribes and made friends with them. At that time Parvathi Devi felt thirsty and asked her husband Siva to fetch some water. There was no water nearby. Hence he pressed the earth by his heel and the water gushed out from the earth which became a pond. Parvathi Devi quenched her thirst. There was great flow of water from the pond and it was beyond control. Lord Siva canalized the flooded water by his arrow on hand to three directions towards West, East and South. The stream flow Westward is believed to be the *Pandiar* river. The one flows towards South called Bhavani while the third one towards East is said to be the *Kelavthapuzha*. (*Kelavu* in Kannada means East *puzha* in Malayalam means river. *Aaru* in Tamil also means river.) It is believed that Toda or Thothuva of Nilgiris are Friends of Lord Siva and therefore even to-day they are honored in the annual rituals in the Nambolakottai. From Mookurthi to the place of Arjuna performing penance, Lord Siva sent an arrow to testify the severity of the penance. There was fight between Lord Siva in the guise of hunter and Arjuna and while surrendering of Arjuna, Lord Siva graced him with Pasupathasthra. Thereafter Lord Siva disguised as a saint, went down to a shelter of a devotee of Nambolan race. The saint was worshiping Siva and performing daily offering to the God. Lord Siva in the guise of saint asked the poor devotee for cooked sweet rice (paayasam) by raw rice, when he returned after a dip in the nearby pond. The devotee didn't have source for raw rice or cow milk for preparation. He was in a predicament situation as to what to do for cooking the sweet food ordered by the saint. To his surprise, he found a cow feeding her calf from where he could get the milk while one astonished visitor suddenly arrived and supplied raw rice. The sweet food was prepared ready for offering to the saint after his return from bath. After taking the sweet rice, the saint went up to pillar and disappeared from sight. Later it was learned by astrology that the saint visited the place is none but Lord Siva. Even today offerings are made to the God near the pillar inside temple during the daily poojas. As a natural female circumstance made Parvathi to keep herself away from company of Lord Siva. It is believed that she was installed as *Bhagavathi* at Mamguzhi near Gudalur. And for her company, one God is installed at Chullikunnu as *Utharam Paradevahi* and one *Thchan Paradevathi* just below the Nambolakottai main shrine

As already explained in the previous paragraph, the administration of the whole area was under different monarchs of Mysore area. But after a war between Kottayam Raja of North Malabar and Mysore kingdom, this area went on to the administration of Kottayam Raja. The local inhabitants the Moundadan Chetties and other indigenous communities were looking after the temple and social welfare of the inhabitants with the administrative capacity as *Nattukaramaikarar* of 5 Clans among the Moundadan Chetty Community under the overall administrative control of the monarchs of Mysore and then North Malabar. In due course, the Kottayam Raja did not evince interest in maintaining the temple as such the heads of 5 leading clans were managing the affairs themselves with the support of Ramamangalam Kovilagam in Wayanad. During those days there were disturbances of freebooters

About Me



[Moundadan Chetty Community of Gudalur](#)

[View my complete profile](#)

from South Malabar area. So the leading clans have approached different Chieftains of North Malabar and finally arrived to the Kovilagam (Place) of Kurumbarnad Raja and submitted their grievances. They requested to appoint permanent royal family to look after the welfare of the people and temple management. Kurumbar Nad Raja agreed for the request and on consideration certain quantity of grains as personal property he send two members from his royal family to look after the Nambolakottai *amsom* and the temple management. A Fort was built for their residence on the hill top and the title of *Valavannur Ooralan* (Manager of people) was conferred to his family.

During those times, temples with defined territories and as called *sanketams* were more or less acting as autonomous administrative division (Page 270, A History of Kerala K.V. Krishna Ayyaar, Coimbatore 1968) One such temple was Nambolakottai in Gudalur. It was originally under *Valavannur* under the jurisdiction of Kottayam Raja. Hyder Ali of Mysore defeated the Nair Chiefs (including Kottayam Raja) of North Malabar at the Tamarassery battle in 1773. The British attacked Hyder Ali in 1783 and concluded a treaty with him, after which these territories came under the overall control of Zamorin of Calicut. Gudalur at that time became Nilambur Kovilagam (temple territory), Thirumalpad of Nilambur came to assume Jenmi (Hereditary possession) right over vast tract of land whereon Nambolakottai *Paradevathai* temple is situated. According to Jayashree Vencatesan Forest Reserves as Refugia for Human Impacted Biodiversity in Mudumalai 2003 page 22, this spot also makes the beginning of rights to land, long leased felling etc.

As per an ancient manuscript on palm leaf in medieval Malayalam and Kannada languages, seized by the revenue officials on 18-08-1989 from the residence of one Kuttikrishnan Chetty S/o Late Perumal Chetty of Padanthurai Village now maintained in the Government museum at Ootacamund, there is evidence that rulers of Mysore had bequeathed the territory extending from Pykara, Naduvattam and Gudalur to Nambolakottai *Vettkorumagan Paradevathai*. The *Paradevathai* at Nambolakottai is worshiped as family deities of Moundadan Chetties, Todas, Badagas, and Kottas of the Nilgiri hills as an incarnation of Lord Siva recalled in the Mahabharata epic. This discovery was published inter-alia the Dinathanthi Tamil newspaper dated 18-08-1989. Having preserved these type of several ancient manuscripts seized by Government from Moundadan Chetties in different occasions, the Moundadan Chetties heritage will reveal that these people are the sons of the soil from time immemorial inclusive of the present wild life area in Mudumalai and Benne. Nambolakottai, Nellakottai, Benne shrine near Bitherkad all were part of erstwhile Mysore rulers. The place names pertaining to that period like Jadhahalli, Nagahalli (Now Nagampalli) Torahalli (Now Torappalli) Madahalli, Marageddai, Hozur, Jaladarai, Kalbaribetta, Jenubarebetta, Kakkannahalla and Bitherkad, besides the check dams, stone temples irrigation canals and the inscriptions in Kannada are proof of this. A dilapidated temple at Gudivayal, an ancient *Bommadevarayar* temple at Mandakarai, Durga shrine at Mandagamoola daily illuminated and rituals performed periodically in Mudumalai and Benne are the further proof for the habitation of Moundadan Chetties and other tribal people residing from time immemorial in the inner part of the forest too now converted into wild life and national park without considering the sufferings of these poor people apart from their habitation in other villages around Gudalur.

The brief history of how the land in question has passed on to the Nilambur Kovilam and became Thirumalpad families Janmam latter leased to Government for formation of Mudumalai Reserve Forest and to big companies for establishing coffee and tea estates in 1863 onwards are narrated here under. During the rule of Nambolan race of Nambolakottai, the temple and landed property of the temple was administered by them. In course of time, they did not evince interest in maintaining the temple and landed property. So the leading 5 clans among the Moundadan Chetties namely (1) Kee Chetty (2) Kelavatha Gounda, (3) Huthu Chetty (4) Kodi Chetty and (5) Cherumulli Chetty supported by the Malayaran who came from North Malabar for looking after the accounts of management of the temple and settling the disputes and maintenance of peace among the local inhabitants. Malayaran's help was needed to read and write matters since none of the Chetty people was educated nor they have any script for their language. In course of time there were disturbances of the marauding freebooters. To overcome these disturbances they sought the help of Chieftains in North Malabar. And finally approached the Kurumbarnad Raja who ultimately agreed to send his son and nephew with 100 Nayar troops to rule over them for consideration of receiving seven granaries as his private property. Such a day the area was held sway by Valavannur who took charge of *Vettkorumagan Devastanam* (Temple Territory). The same *Devastanam* property was subsequently annexed to the Janmam land of Thirumalpad of Nilambur in phased manner.

1. After the fall of Valavannur hierarchy at the time of advent of British rules in the fight between Tipu Sultan and English East India Company, Chandukutty Valavannur exited from Areakode. To meet the expenses towards his funeral ceremonies and some urgent needs, *Orakkaduvilamban Valavannur* borrowed some money from one *Chovvakkaran Kunjupakki* of Calicut in lieu of lease down the ghat and paddy fields. On expiry of term of lease, Kelukutty Valavannur together with his clerk (*Karyasthan*) Kuppu Patter went to Calicut and stayed at *Thakaliambalam* and tried to settle the dues but returned without fruitful result with a quarrel with the lender. This happened in ME. 1002 (1826 A.D). After filing a case in the *North Thukkidi Civil Court* at Calicut, signed an accord and settled the affairs for which a sum of 900 *Pannam* deom *Dhamoory Kovilagam Pandaram*, 500 *Pannam* from *Pockanjeri Kunju Chandu* and 500 *Pannam* from Anthony John Masthan of Mangalore was borrowed. (4 *Pannam* is equal to one Rupee). In the circumstance of notable to repay the dues on expiry of the term, Kelukutty Valavannur consulted the trustees of

Nambolakottai who are all Moundadan Chetties, and as their belief heard the words of oracles and decided to lease certain rich forest area near the ghat and some paddy fields earmarked for the home deities of that area. Accordingly Valavannur, Appu Pattar of Puthan Vivil, Permal of Orakkadavu (Moundadan Chetty), Kodungaloor Kutty (Moundadan Chetty), Marakkara Villy (Moundadan Chetty) went to Nilambur in M.E. 1005 (1830 A.D) and executed an agreement with Thirumalpad signed by all the above persons under the following condition.

- a. Cutting and transporting of the trees in sandalwood and teakwood growing forest and to share 50 percent of the benefit to each after meeting the expenses and toll charges.
- b. Two pieces of paddy fields earmarked to home deities and shrine of that area and share 50 percent of the benefit both side after meeting the expenses of rituals of the deities and shrine.

As such the loan of Damoori Kovilagam was settled on the spot and arrangement made to settle the dues of other parties.

But since the loan of Anthony John Masthan was not settled as agreed which worked out to 632 Rupees, 12 Anna and 4 Chilly Paisa and documentation charges of 8 annas, he filed a suit in the Wayanad Munisif Court at Wythiri and a decree was passed to auction of part of the land extending the of from Nellakottai to Theppakadui inclusive of Nambolakottai temple. One Suppu Patter S/o Appupatter of New Kalpathi Village near Palghat being the agent of Nilambur Kovilagam took the auctioned land for Rs.3000/- and sold to the same to the Manavikkraman Thirumalpad of Nilambur Kovilagam. For the same amount. The auction was held in 1836.

2. When Ssubadra W/o Orakkadavilamban, the lady Valavannur and Sister of Kelukutty Valavannur, became widow, she was asked to get away from the temple premises to maintain the auspices. Hence she was staying at Madiambarai house in Chullikunnu hamlet nearer to Nambolakottai under the care of clan head of Cherumulli Chetty with her minor son Govindankutty aged 12 years who was the direct heir of the Valavannur royal family. One Vijayam Pattar of Nilambur had contact with the widow and she was induced to move to Nilambur with his son for allegedly of unsound mind and for natural treatment, where the latter died in 1845 and the former 1872. In the mean-time Vinayan Manavikraman Thirumalpad of Thacharakkavil Nilambur obtained the landed properties of entire Nambolakottai Devasom inclusive of all temples and lands in which details about the area of the property bequeathed by the Mysore Rulers was mentioned; but the deed alleged to have been obtained from a unsound lady without the consent of the trustees of the Nambolakottai temple viz. Moundadan Chetties. or the Kurumbadri Senior Thamburan who was the titler of the province at that period first in a bond paper for sum of Rs. 20000/ or 80000 *Pannam* which was subsequently register as document No. 58/1853 on 03-12-1853 in the Sub Registrar's office Calicut. The territory of Nambolkattai Vettakarumagan Paradhevathi from central point of the temple premises as per the inscription in palm leaves and in the deed executed by Lady Valavannur to Thirumalpad family are as follows.

1. East = 6 gatham (24mils) up to Pykara river
2. West = 2 gatham (8 miles) up to Paruthanjolai
3. South = 5 gatham (20 miles) up to Neelathodu
4. North = 5 ½ gatham (22 miles) up to Karayakanivu

There was no signature of Subadra, the Lady Valavannur nor the local trustees but one Vakil Chakku has signed on behalf Subadra in the sale deed in a suspicious manner. After hearing the rumor of the wicket deceit, the Moundadan Chetties among renowned clans submitted two memoranda to the District Collector of Calicut once on 18-03-1852 about the enquiry of the missing lady and second signed by 18 members in 1854. for enquiry about the execution of the deed without valid signature of the owner or the trustees, but much importance was not given to the petitions of the laical inhabitants. After obtaining the property from Subadra, the Thirumalpad family representative came to Nambolakottai and called the Moundadan Chetties and other ancient land holders and informed about the transfer of the property and asked them to hand over the erstwhile records of proof of their holdings conferred by the Valavannur to the Jenmi and to get the fresh lease from the Jenmi or to vacate the land cultivated. By threatening of evicting the land forcibly, most of the original documents of Moundadan Chetties and other local inhabitants were seized and carried away to Nilambur and kept under their custody. The temple land was then annexed with the Jenmam property of Nilambur Kovilagam. During the settlement in 1836, all proof of previous land holdings were taken over by the British administration and the land was treated as the property of Nilambur Jenmam. The cultivators were treated as Jenmi's bonded tenants of leased land which was restricted up to the maximum 12 years subject to the renewal of every year. Permanent structures for residences were not permitted to avoid creation of basis for the claim for permanent holdings. Those who were unable to pay the lease had to forfeit the land. The thick forest area was leased to Government for 99 years from 1863 which expired in 1962. The so called tenants have got *patta* for the wet portion of the lands at the time of implementation of Gudalur Jenmam Land Abolition Act 1969 in 1974 onwards subject to production of only receipt of Jenmi.. No other evidence was considered by the settlement authorities. Thus their right over the dry lands were neglected.

Part of the land around the settlements of Moudadan Chetties and tribal people had been leased to private companies for establishing coffee and tea plantations. The rest of the area surrounded by Moundadan Chetties and other tribals have become reserved forests. The reserved forest was subsequently converted as Wild Life / National Park of Mudumalai and Benna as per the policy of the Government. *“Thus the Jenmam right above the ghat was a creation of British Administration and due to insufficient knowledge among earlier officers of the true position of affairs. However this may be the net up-shot of the enquiries was that, of the three amsoms comprising of the Nilgiri Waynad, Nambolakottai was declared to be Jenmam property of the Nilambur Kovilagam and thus rightly or wrongly the said re-organization of the amsm as Jenmam property became a fiat accompli as far as the English were concerned” This is the pathetic history of Moundadfan Chetty people whose land rights were usurped by the Valavannur and the Thirumalpad Family of Nilambur Jenmam.*

The List of under mentioned shrines worshiped by all in the places around Nambolakottai are as follows:-

1. Bommdevarayar Shrine : Mandakarai in Mudumalai Village presently within the Wildlife sanctuary
2. Paradevathai Shrine : Chullikunnu in Srimadurai Village near Puthurvayal.
3. Bhagavathi amman Temple : Manguzhi near Puthurvayal ,Gudalur Village
4. Eswaraswami Temple : Kallingarai in Cherumulli Village
5. Mahavishnu temple : Srimadurai village in the river bank adjuring Puthurvayal,Gudalur
6. Aaravalli temple : Aaravalli near Devala in Devala village
7. Vettaikorumaga shrine : Devala in Devala village
8. Mariamman shrine : Thorappalli in Gudalur village

Apart from these every clan have their own clan deity shrines at different places as furnished below:-

Sl. No	Name of the Clan and Origin	Family God and place of Worship
1.	Kee Chett, Chemundi Village	Chemundi Bagavathi and Paradevathai in Srimadurai
2.	Kelavartha Gounda (Migrant from Mysore in 15 th century	Mariamman, Hallur near Thorappalli in Gudalur Village
3.	(Huthu) Puthu Chetty, Uliamnjolai Padanthurai Village	Chundavayal Bagavatjhi, Uliamanjolai Paradevathai in
4.	Kodi Chetty Kottaimedu Cherumulli Village	Bagavathi at Kottaimedu and Paradevathai at Nellikunnu
5.	Cherumulli Chetty Moola Cherumulli	Bagavathiat Koundankolli in Cherumulli Village
6.	Herur Chetty	Benna Bagavathi, Bommadeva and Pardevathai in Benna
7.	Elamballi Gounda	Kandakarnan of Kilangode Chjetty
8.	Kiliangode Chetty In Benna hamlet	Kandakarnan Paradevathifor Kiliangode Chetty alone
9.	Athu Chetty aub clan Koodur Chetty Athur, Puliambarai	Aravalli, Paradevathaiand Bagavathi at Puliambarai in Padanthurai Village
10.	Chelukkadi Chetty Chelukkadi	Kalavattan, Paradevathai andBommadevarayaratChelukkadi in Padanthurai Village
11.	Balunnu Chetty Balunnu	Bagavathi, Paradevathai at Balunnu in Padanthurai Village
12.	Ithur Chetty sub division Arikottai Gounda in Cherumulli	Paradevathai, Bagavathi Bommadevarayar atAnjikunnu, Mangunnu and Ariakottai in Gounda , in CherumulliVillage
13.	Uthur Chetty Uthur Hill & Puramanali	BagavathiParadevathaiat Uthur hill and Puramanali in GudalurVillage
14.	Thaithamatta Chetty	Bagavathi at Karakkarai and Paradevathai at Thaithamattam
15.	Marakkarai Chett supposed to the migrantsfrom Kdungaloor	in Padanthurai Village
16.	Kadambur Chetty Kadambur	Bagavathi & Paradevathai at Kadamburin Cherumulli Village.
17.	Elamalai Chetty Elamalai migrated to Chemundi	Paradevathai at Elamalai and Bagavathi at Chemundi inSrimadurai Village
18.	Hulial (Pulial) Gounda said to have been migrated from Hullathi near Sholur.	Bagavathi at Mandagamoolai in Mudumalai i
19.	Kalladi Gounda Kalladi	Bagavathi t Kalladi and Kelavatha Mary at Hallur in Gudalur
20.	Elikkai Gounda Elikkaimalai	Paradevathai I Elikkai in Mudumalai Village
21.	Herukkulu Gounda Herakkulu	Perkkal Bagavathi near Ponvayal in Cherumulli Village
22.	Nemmili Gounda Nemmili hamlet	Bagavathi at Kalikunnu & Madeswaran at Manvayal in Srimadurai Village
23.	Nanda Kalikunnu Gounda	Paradevathai at Nandakalikkunnu near Nandahatti inNandahattiGudalur
24.	Nalappadi Manimoolai	Bagavathi Durgai, Paradevathai at Manimoolai in Srimadurai Village
25.	Hallur Gound	
26.	Attkal Gounda	

27. Nellikarai Gounda
28 Bitherhalla Gounda
29 Hombattai Gounda

The clans in Sl. No. 25 to 29 have been exterminated groups once living in the areas in the Mudumalai Wild Life sanctuary. Moreover in the apprehension that since the members of the few clans are fewer in number in course of time may exterminate. By this means, Moundadan Chetty people worship their clan deities and community deities at Nambolakottai and surroundings as per their own traditional habit. In order to maintain the Nambolakottai temple and shrines near by, they set aside a part of their agricultural yields. The following five clans in Nambolakottai area and three in Benna area total 8 clans had been respected by all of their community, for settlement of disputes, solemnizing marriages and the management of the temples and periodical rituals in their own traditional manner.

1 Kee Chetty Eastern sector	Head of the group and in charge of Eastern sector
2. Kelavathu Gounda	Guest and assistant to Kee Chetty
3. Hutthu Chetty	In charge of Western sector and settlement of land and family disputes
4. Kodi Chetty	In Charge for Northern sector and settlement of marriage alignments and disputes
5. Cherumulli Chetty	In charge for Central sector and management of temple affairs.
6. Herur Chetty	
7. Elamballi Gounda	Combine responsible for all affairs in Benna area
8. Kiliangode Chetty	

The above respectful representatives are entrusted Governors called *Nattukaramaikarar* to direct the Public affairs of the people. Southern side of the province of these people's are mountainous place where Toda, Kottas and Badagas are living. During the time of festivity those people from south would also join with Moundadan Chetty people. 5 *Nattukaramai* executives in the civilized organization and other 18 clan members are Ooramai as being the General Body members. During festivals, rituals in temples, special respect were offered first to 5 *Nattukaramai* from Kee Chetty to Cherumulli Chetty in the order 1 to 8 followed by the eldest among each of the clans assembled in the occasion. In solemnizing marriages and death ceremonies, Key Chetty is considered the governing head of the people of Moundadan Chetty society.

Thus the members of the Moundadan Chetty who maintained temples and hamlets they needed an accountant since all were illiterate and didn't have script in their language they adopted the Malayalam language and culture and appointed a person from Malayalam speaking society who ultimately took charge of the possession over the activities of the *Nattukaramaikarar*. Subsequent changes occurred in course of time have been explained in Pages 4 to 6 of this book. During the regime of Valavannur the descendants of Valavannur family became aristocrats and autocratic. The people could not raise any question against his atrocities in the cover of punishments like beheading and hanging the beheads on the branches of Mango trees at *Kamatti* and the torture keeping victims chain legged without food or drink at *Utharalamattam* until death or to a certain period whichever is less. Both the punishing sites are located in the vicinity of Nambolakottai.

During the years 1929 onwards people became aware of the usurping of the total area of temple property by the Nilambur Kovilagam realized the in the phased manner and represented the Hindu Religious Board of Government of Madras to take over the possession of the temple administration and grant land titles to the original land holders. The *Nambolakottai Kudiyan Samajam* established in 1932 under the leadership of K. M. Velu chetty of Mallamvayal Padanthurai village who was a school teacher and Subban Chetty of Melambalam who was the Panchayat President of Sreemadurai panchayat. Detailed enquiries were held by the Inspector of the Hindu Religious Endowment Board Coimbatore and orders were passed in Boards Proceedings No. 3222 dated 21-12-1936 declaring all the temples and shrines were public. The Raja of Nilambur filed an appeal in the Boards Head Office at Madras in which the *Nambolakottai Kudiyan Samajam* engaged one Sri C. V. Subramanian Ayyar as their pleader and filed counter affidavit in the case. The case was dealt in File No. 229/32 of the Hindu Religious Endowment Board. Since Rs. 90/- being the balancers 35.00 of agreed fees and Rs.55.00 being the translation charges of documents in Malayalam language, the pleader did not appear in the final hearing and so the judgment was delivered ex-parte in favour of the Nilambur Raja after canceling the earlier order No. 3222 dated 21-12-36 in which all temples including Nambolakottai having declared as public temples. In the revised order, Nambolakottai temple was declared as Private temple of Nilambur Jenmi and the rest of the temples as public ones.

For maintenance of the temple part of the yield from the paddy fields of the erstwhile Nambolakottai Desam was collected from the land holders as lease in kind or cash. At the beginning the lease amount in cash or paddy were collected for maintenance of the temple and the receipt were issued in the letter head forms of Nambolakottai Devasom property up 1901. Gradually the same have been collected as the lease amount of the tenants as Jenmam right of the Nilambur Kovilagam. Thereafter changes had been made as the family property of the Kovilagam such as Chinna Thambatti Estate, Lakshmi kutty Thambatti Estate, Sreekumaran Thamban Estate etc. after setting apart a portion for maintenance of the temples inclusive of the Nambolakottai. The landed property of

Namolakotai temple was declared as 26.10 acres surrounding the temple during the settlement of Jenmam right to the Jenmi and tenants. while implementation of the Gudalur Jenman Land Abolition Act 1969 (Act24/69) By this way the ancestors of Moundadan Chetty who were the owners of the land became poor lease holders after enactment of subsequent rules and regulations of Government before and after independence . Tax such as *pattam*, *kani* (kind of lease) were collected from them. When an Act was passed abolishing the Jenmam land and assigning *pattas*, under the proviso that the Moundadan Chetties should stand as lease holders of Nilambur Jenmi. They were deprived of the right of ownership though they had been using the lands centuries ago. Dry lands available in and around the settlements were brought under the English company estates. Part of the land was taken over by the Government Forest department as Mudumalai Reserve Forest and the remaining areas maintained as private forest of Nilambur Kovilagam subsequently assigned for meager value to the settlers from the plains of Malabar. Few lands were full of bushes and were covered with tangled vegetation. Being illiterate and fear of violating the rules Chetty people were unable to cultivate the land adjacent to the to the cultivatable lands as it was said to be the waste land of the Estates who were paying the land revenue to the Government. Above all nobody have come forward to guide this poor illiterate people within the jungle, while the retired estate workers of he adjacent company estates with the moral support of their own fellow citizens and company management encroached the bushes for forming smaller tea gardens. Nevertheless the tribals were used as outfits to clear the bushes and planting tea saplings. Thus even though there were lot of bushes once cultivated could not hold on the possession of the land even the extend per head is within 5 acres far away from the scheduled forest cover. The Government threatened these poor people without valid documental evidences for the holdings adjacent to the available patta lands and dwelling places . They are now considered encroachers at par with the recent settlers neglecting their right of sons of the soil . borne and bread in this soil.

The house holds of Moundadan Chetties are generally called as follows:-

HALLI (Households):-

- 1) Thorahalli (now Thorappalli) (2) Athuhalli(now Athipali) (3) Nagahalli (now Nagampalli) (4) Hulhalli(now Pulpalli) (5) Jadahalli (6) Madhahalli (7) Kongahalli (8) Molahalli (now Molappalli) etc

KOLLI (Swampy area surrounded by hills):-

- (1) Handhikolli (Pandrikolli) (2) Bachikolli (Vachikolli) (3) Chembakolli (4) Nayvalkolli (5) Mundakolli (6) Ambakolli (7) Machikolli (8) Koundankolli (9) Hulukolli (now Puzhukolli) (10)Bollanangolli (11) Chjundukolli (12) Golikolli etc.

.KANDI(*A place where people live together*):-

- (1) Chithrakandi (2) Mochikandi (3) Mangkandi (4) Kuppachikandi (5) Halasukandi (now Pilakandi) (6) Kalakandi (7) Pathrakandi (8) Karalalikandi (9) Moorthikandi (10)

OOR:- (Place name where houses or hamlet built):-

- Mukoor (2) Kundoor (3) Hallur (4) Athur (5) Kadambur (6) Gudalur (7) Puthur (8) Uthur (9) Killur (10) Hosur etc.

VAYAL(*Paddy fields*)*spread out of flat land where house holds are seen*:-

- (1) Chudavayal, Moolavayal (3) Mooppuvayal (4) Mallamvayal (5) Ponvayal (6) Alavayal (7)Machivayal (8) Kaniamvayal (9) Manvayal (10) Vadavayal (11) Vedanvayal etc

KARAI(*Houses built higher side adjoining the field*)

- (1) Machikarai (2) Marakkarai (3) Peiakarai (4) Mandakarai (5) Nellikarai (6) Kalligarai (7) Nagilikarai.(8) (9) (10)

KUNNU (Hill side):-

- (1) BALUNNU (now Valiakunnu) (2) Kalikunnu (3) Mundakunnu (4) Nambikunnu (5) Anjikunnu(6) Nelliangunnu (7) Athikunnu (8) Mangunnu (9) (10) etc.

KUNI (*Just upper side of wet lands where irrigation facility is scarce*):-

- (Kottaikuni (2) Athikuni (3) Thumbakuni (4) (5)

Both Moundadan Chetties and tripal people reside in theabove place names and the revenue records are also maintained as such for example Chundavayal Kunnu, Mundakolli Kunnu, Marakkarai Kunnu, Thaithamattam Kunnu, Alavayal Kunnu, Orumadakunnu, Cheppatti kunnu, Machivayal Kunnu Nagalivayal Kunnu etc. etc.

POPULATION:- The population of the Moundadan Chetty does not grow vastly comparing to the other community from the past 200years. The reason for this may be stated below

1. Most of the children died for Malaria due to the lack of knowledge or the parents since the area was Malaria prone and there was n medical facility found out for curing the disease

2. Death due to plague and Cholera,. Sufficient medical and preventive measures were unknown to these people in this hilly area.

3. The Sickle cell anemia prevalent among majority of the population was unnoticed up to very recent period by the medical authority by which the per centage of survival of children born was very meager.

4. For want of proper education and lack of awareness on the importance of education, instead of depending upon medicines there is superstitious beliefs of witches sorcery and devils for thje cause of death.

5. Death occurred during the reign of Hider Ali and Tippu Sultan and Valavannur king after violation of chastity by self immolation and by rigorous punishment like beheading and torturing by chain legged and clashes between free booters and defendants.

6. A few women died of violation of chastity death of Husband caused the women also to finish the life due to poverty and lack of support by the relatives.

7. Lack of interrelationship between other communities for betterment of life style

8. Undergoing birth control during recent period by the awareness of inability in bringing up the uncontrolled births to scarcity of sources for survival in the absent of alternative job or extending the land holdings.

PREVIOUS AND PRESENT SOCIAL STATUS COMPARATIVE SOCIAL ANALYSES:-

Though the place where Moundadan Chetties lives was malaria prone, they did not migrate to fertile localities. In contrast they cultivated the lands by removing bushes, thorny areas which was an arduous task undertaken by these people. It is said recorded evidences shows that the district Collector once advised the Badagas of upper plateau of the Nilgiris during British administration to move to the then Wayanad (Gudalur) area in the lower plateau where plenty of swam area available for cultivation. But Badaga people did not agree for this suggestion and made a protest before the district Collector. They said that they would not go over to Gudalur area even if they were shot dead or beheaded. They had understood that they would die if they migrate to Malaria prone Gudalur. When they forced to move to lower plateau they staged a strike before the collectors office and told that they would not budge an inch.

Even though Badagas refused to move to Gudalur for cultivation Moundadan Chetties lived in this area withstanding the severe unhealthy climatic conditions and difficult situation prevailed fighting with pests and vermin. They struggled against difficulties and the bushes around the knolls were made into cultivable lands by their hard effort. But the cultivated lands adjacent to their dwelling places were included in the leased lands to the English company estates without the consent of the inhabitants. These lands should be alleviated and reassigned to the Moundadan Chetties and tribal people of the same locality. Taking into the consideration of hardship, truthfulness and faithfulness of the Moundadan Chetties Government should assign pattas to them. In regard to protection of the places such as public burial grounds, grazing land places of water resources the people are always ready to co-operate with the Government.

During the period of the region under the tiller control of Nilambur Kovilagam even after transferring the part of three *amsoms* namely Nambolakode *amsom*, Moonanad *amsom* and Cherangod *amsom* from Malabar district to form a separate Nilgiri district with effect from 31-03-1877, the Jenmi gave the cultivable wet lands to the people of Moundadan Chetty on lease only. The English people were allowed to raise coffee and tea plantations in the vast track. Some part of the land was treated as reserved forest and handed over to Government which is now known as Mudumalai Wildlife sanctuary. The rest of the dry land was owned by the Kovilagam and maintained as their private forest. In course of time having known the Jenmam land abolition Act was to be enacted started to sell such lands to the people from Malabar plains for meager sum and allowed to fell all the costly trees in thick forest area and raise tapiocas cultivation thereafter as smaller tea gardens. The Chetty people inside Mudumalai were denied to occupy such dry lands out the forest area. Had the compensated extend of land outside the sanctuary area on the outskirts in lieu of holding inside was assigned during the implementation of the Jenmam Land Abolition Act, the present situation of rehabilitation of these people to alternative place would not arise.

During establishment of plenty of tea and coffee estates in 18th and 19th centuries around the habitation of Moundadan Chetties and tribals, lot of labours had been brought from the plains of composite. Madras Presidency instead of engaging as many people among local inhabitants who were landless. During subsequent period the education and medical facilities provided to the labours from outside could not get the local inhabitants on the plea that they were not members of the company estates. By this way also the educational and social status could not be improved in accordance with the modernization of the World.

TRITIONAL CULTURE CUSTOMS AND CREED:-

When a girl attains puberty, a ceremonial function will take place. This is unique among these community. On the day of maturity the wife of the maternal uncle will pour saffron water on her for washing the body. The pollution will be observed for not less than 11 days setting aside in a separate side portion of the main house erected by palm leaves and seated on a chair like vessel until the date of the function. Relatives will visit sweets made of themselves and ornaments according to their position. On the day of the ceremony The day before the ceremonial bath she will be taken for saffron bath. by a group of women the main member being the wife of maternal uncle and bathed. On return there are some traditional formalities before bringing her to the main house. The special Cake made of rice flour with ghee will be provided to among all guest attended for ceremonial feast. This cake is called *THAMBUTTU*. After the bath the girl wears new cloths and wishes the elders of both sex This is the

normal function adopted after puberty.

MARRIAGE:-

After puberty the arbitrators will sit together to work out details by observing of the horoscope of the girl. The auspiciousness of the days of attaining puberty will also be taken into account for matching the grooms. After marriage alliance the betrothal will take place in brides home. The total expenses is met out by the brides` parents which will be half of the expense of the marriage function. Many unique social formalities have been adopted in the marriage ceremony. like erecting the posts for *pandal* cutting of plantain for ripping to the special feast lighting the handing lamps, measuring certain quantity of paddy to the brides parent by the groom on the day before marriage in the *pandal* and paying certain amount to the maternal uncle in lieu of his expenditure towards providing jewels to the bride , wishing the elders by touching feet both bride and groom before the mail function. Some of the elderly persons the grooms family both men and women will proceed to the brides home with betel and nuts on the day before marriage and halt there. The next morning the betel and nuts would be given by the bride to the elders assembled and wish them by touching the feet and accompany the people as a procession and reach the groom's house and stay there. Now a days sufficient vehicles are arranged for brings the brid`s party. The *pandal* installed in front of the house for marriage is considered equal to a temple after lighting the lamps until it is downed after the function. The lamp will burn without break until it is downed. Very early in the morning of the day for main function the bridegroom goes to Nambolakottai along with an assistant preferable a young companion,, make a dip in the temple tank and offer a special *pooja* in the temple and return with the priest of the temple to solemnize the marriage. The priest will perform a special *pooja* in the *pandal*. A mat will belayed by the elders member of the groom's clan for seating the marriage couple. At the beginning the bride will be brought to the *pandal* She will get the wishing of the priest with flowers, sandal paste and water and set on the mat. Afterwards the groom is also brought with full decorations who also get the flower etc from the priest. Thereafter she will get the special garland made by the temple priest with that she will walk round the groom three times and place the garland on the neck of the groom. In turn the groom also get another same nature garland from the priest and place on the bride's neck Thaly is given by the priest to the groom . During chanting of the mantras the *thaly* is tied by the groom to the bride. Thereafter the young couple are taken to the house for internal ceremonies like feeding milk and fruits special meals called *THUPPA KUVU*(ghee rice). The ghee rice is served by the sister-in laws of the couple with joking comments to create love and affection among each other. In the night there are some other customs like fetching new water from the well by the newly wed bride serving sweets to the guests by herself bathing her husband with hot water etc. The first nights will not be held on the marriage day. Instead after worshipping the clan deities and offering a special *pooja* in Nambolakottai by the couple on an auspicious day not latter than 3 or 4 days after the marriage ceremony they will be allowed to a special room for the first night.

During pregnancy on the seventh month, after providing ghee and curd rice specially prepared from the maternal house a team of people will proceed the daughter's house provide the ghee rice to all nearby assembled people and after take the daughter to their home for delivery. and rest.. Usually the Paniaya woman is the midwife. Eleven day's pollution is observed during delivery. On the selected day not earlier than 11 days the baby will be bathed and laid in fron of the main entrance of the house on the plantain leaf where oil lamp is burnt and small heap of cow dung and auspicious grass (*Arugampul*) by the mother in turn the aunt (husband's sister) will take the baby with wet cloth immediately into the house forchznhing the dry cloth and decoration after which a feast is served to all the guest visited for the ceremony.

In the death ceremony, there are ceremonial functions. Normally elder ones are burned while the younger and less economic who are not able to get firewood etc are buried. Those who die of epidemic suicide, will be compulsorily buried They take much care about the old aged persons during death. All the time of losing the soul, will necessarily wait in the house , at the time of last breath cow milk or pure water and a golden ornament are put in the small vessel and then little of them fed into the mouth. A light will be lighted and staged at the head and leg side of the corpse. A coconut will be broken and kept on the head side. The message of death will immediately be sent through a Pania old man to the relatives. Wherever the news is delivered, a certain quantity if paddy will be given to the messenger from each house . Action for carrying the body to the grave yard will be taken only after return of the messenger in token of having informed the news to all the relatives and known persons. In the meantime servants are engaged either for cutting firewood for burning the corpse or digging of pit

for burial will be done by some of the servants. Special makeshift structure with green bamboo poles bamboo strips will be fabricated by the mourning people for carrying the corpse to the grave yard for cremation. New cloths are placed on the body by as many members of relatives as possible to honour their respect. After measuring certain quantity of paddy to the Pania servant, and fetching three pots of water by the three day members among the bereaved family from the nearby water source the rituals conducted. All the female members will pour little water on the feet of the corpse and worship with the folded hands with deep sorrows and cry and come three rounds. Thereafter the corpse is carried in the makeshift structure to the grave yard by the male members. There also the male members pour little water on the feet of the body and worship with folded hands three rounds. And after completion of this rite the body is laid on the pyre for burning or laid on the pit for burial. In the case of burning each person lay stumps of firewood on the body for showing the respect or through three handful of soil in the pit and the body is fired by lighting the fire by the heir of the dead or covering the pit with soil. The days of final ceremonies will be announced by the heir of the dead in the grave yard itself to the persons attended. the funeral 16 days pollution is observed during which lights will not be burned in the houses of any member of the clan and in the clan deity shrines. On the 13th day the ceremony will be started and completed on 16th day after cremation. After the completion of the 15 day's rites non-vegetarian diet will be served on 16th days ceremony. After that holy water is fetched from Nambolakottai which is called as ` *NAMBLINEERU* ` in their language. (*Nambli*- means the thing from Nambolakottai and *Neeru* means water) and poured all over the house and here after usual performance held..

ASSOCIATION WITH OTHER INDIGENOUS PEOPLE:

The tribal people like Panian Kattunaikens and Kurumba live with these people all along their existence in the region. Generally Pania and Kattunaikenas are engaged in farm work of Moundadan Chetties.while. Kurumbas reside little far away of the settlements of chetties and will be helpful for the dry land shifting cultivation like millet and ragi and maize etc. Considering in mind that these poor tribal people would spend their daily wages at once, the part of their wages would be given in kind to the works retaining the balance for their future. Even lean periods these tribes are fed by the chetty people without getting works from them. It was the bounden duty of each chetty family to take care and look after the day to day needs of the tribal people engaged in their farm work and divide the proceeds according to the earning and members. If a particular Pania boy marry with the Pania girl of another area, compensation for loss of labour to the erstwhile cultivator of that particular area engaged the Pania girl had to be paid by the new cultivator and vice versa. The wages in kind as paddy was paid in the midday itself for preparing their diet before extracting works in the evening. The time of work in the field was very limited and simple say about 3 hours in the forenoon and 2 hours in the afternoon. In the remaining time between the working time these labours will do their work such as ponding the paddy for preparation of diet, fetching fire woods for the home use and also for selling to other for other expenses and also spending the time enjoying their traditional music and dance.

SCHEDULE OF WORK IN THE FIELD WERE AS FOLLOWS:-

During winter, the work would begin by 6 A.M. and end by 11 A.M. and in the afternoon from 3.30 P.M. to 5.30 or 6 P.M. During rainy season the timing would be between 9.00 to 12.00 Noon according to the nature of work. In the afternoon the timing would be from 2.00 to 4.00 P.M. Since the unyoked bullock should be grazed till 7.00 P.M. and rested in the cattle sheds. The chetty people of both sex would also work along with their farm labours. Those who graze the cattle in the grasslands and those who plough the field and spade work, would be fed three times while other labours are fed twice. The food carried over to the shelters by the labours can spare for the hunger of the family until their own food is cooked in their huts. The evening food to the workers were limited to their consumption and eaten in the cultivators residences itself. Women servants ponding the grains were fed in landlords house and paid in kind as ponded rice to the extend of three times of other work and fed three diets in house owners residence.

Men for plough and spade work are paid 5 measure of paddy and for women for

plucking and transplanting were paid 3 measures as wages. Temporary watch sheds called *palli* were erected in the paddy field and crops guarded staying in those watch sheds by adult males of chetty and farm labors in nights. The wet beds across the field would be planted by the female servants during transplanting and the entire yield from such beds were her property while harvest. During thrusting of heaps of yield grains in the lower portion which is called *adimethai* are the property of the laborer. During harvest selected best harvest a piece of harvested paddy is allotted to the male and female servants for watching the yield during graining period and for harvesting by the female servants. While winnowing the removal of chaffs, the grains sided to the heaps would go to the laborer. Which should not be taken by the land owner. While bundling the stalks into small sheaves also the grains accumulated are the property of the female servants. Those were the bonus availed by the servants. Apart from these the horticulture yields like jack fruit, guava, chilly mango, banana are carried over without any restriction for their home use as is those were the common property of both land owner and the servants.

In order to speed up the transplanting work there were customs of group farm work. All people nearby with their servants and pairs of bullocks for ploughing would work together. The male members will plough the land and prepare the beds for transplanting while female members pull the seedlings in the nursery and make bunches in the forenoon till the beds are ready and do the transplanting work in the afternoon. would be done in group. During such group farming there would be music played by the Pania musicians with small drums and pipe. These are called as *thudi and cheena*. During intermittent time the female servants dance according to the tunes of the music to get away the tiredness during the continuance work. The Caption leaders extracting work and the musicians would be paid better than the workers as per their hereditary and customs. After finishing off the group farming work there would be payments in plenty by kind as paddy and food to eat and o carry to the huts. These type of work is called as *KAMBALAM*. In the areas wherever Panias are not living and Kattumaikas inhabit the same works were undertaken among chetties and Kattunaikans. The Kurumbas did not participate in the farm work in the wet lands but were engaged in shifting cultivations. The Kurumbas were asked to make house hold articles such as baskets, winnows filtering baskets etc. They exchanged their goods with Moundadan Chetties for paddy or ragi through barter. On important occasions such as festivals and rejoicing they would perform music drum beating and dance with each other chain round. The Kottas and Toda caste would also participate in the festivals in the Nambolakottai temple on selected occasions along with chetties and pania kattunaiker. Badaga people from upper plateau also joined for Nambolakottai festivals.

NOTABLE BENEFITS GRANTED TO THE SERVANTS AT THE TIME OF HARVEST FOR THEIR WORK AND SHARE IN THE FIELD:-

1. Two part of the best yield segments of the field would be selected and allotted to a couple of labour. This was a special favor granted to the male servant for keeping watch over the paddy field at night and for female servant for transplanting the seedlings. The seedlings transplanted on the edge of the raised beds it is fund mustering would be the property of the female servant during harvest. The same would be set off while harvesting.
2. While winnowing for separation of chaff from grains the paddy falling down on the margin of the heap of grains were taken by the worker. The landowner does no have authority on such grains.
3. The grains found under the heaps of sheaves were given to the servants as a free gift while threshing.
4. While bundling the dry stales into small sheaves, the grain underneath are the property of the female servants.

5. At the rest after work in the field, jack fruit and tender jacks, guava, bunch of banana, unripened mangoes would be carried over by them without any restriction.
6. Chillies, pumpkins grown in the garden can be carried away by the servants for cooking.
7. It was the duty of the chetty landowner to supply tobacco and salt brought from shops to the servants as they neither visit towns nor able to purchase for cash which was scarce to them during those days.
8. During festival occasions, betel and betel nuts jingly oil etc. would be provided to the servants.
9. One day on a week normally on Saturday the servants would be paid in cash for meeting their urgent needs or allowed to work with others for cash payment.
10. On the marriage occasions and festivals a part of the meals prepared fruits etc. would be set aside exclusively for the servants to enjoy the celebration. This concession is considered for their service during funerals of chetty people

FESTIVALS :

Moundadan Chetties adopt Hindu festival embarrassing the Malayalam culture like Onam, Vishu. Besides they have their own traditional festival like Sankaranthi on the 1st day of Aadi (Karkadakam) Puthari on 10th day of *lyppasi (Thulam)* , *Ucharlu* on the 27th day of *Thai (Makaram)* and on every new moon days offerings to the soul of ancestors in the traditional way with vegetarian or non vegetarian dishes boiled or fried different type of cakes for the soul. in the nights. After celebrating the *Onam* and *Vishu* festival the newly married couple up to certain period visit the parents of the wife's family for worshipping the elders and for special feasts .

HINDRANCE AND BOTTLENECK FOR THE PROGRESS OF THE SOCIETY:-

Lack of legal knowledge, and proper education, these people are unable to settle the problems amicably themselves which are rather influenced by the recently settled people creating difference of opinions among the relatives for getting their benefits. Even on matters of little significance, they pick up quarrel and seek advice of outsiders spending huge amount earned by selling the cultivable lands and other belongings. After losing the property it is pity to see them serving as labours in their own lands sold to others. When they fell ill instead of getting timely medicare, they seek the advice of the astrologists to find out the cause of the illness and take rude type of sacrifices to the local gods and goddess as per the advice of the astrologists After losing all the means, again they will go to the doctor for medical help at the advanced stage of the sickness the survival will seldom be possible. By this way of life style many lost their happiness and became pathetic of time.

NOTABLE PERSONS SERVED FOR UPLIFTING THE SOCIETY AND THEIR WELFARE:-

As already explained in Para of this book, the Moundadan Chetty people established an organization called as the NAMBOLAKOTTAI KUDIYAN SAMAJAM in the year 1932 One Moopuvayal K. M. Velu Chetty a school teacher along with Melambalam Subban Chetty the Sreemadurai Village panchayat presidents were the Secretary and President of the association. During their hard effort they struggled the level best to alienate the Nambolakottai Devasom property from the clutches of the Jenmam of the Nilambur Kovilagam and treat the temple, temple property as public and also to assign the land to the traditional land holders which have been narrated already in Para . The following were the notable persons involved in social activities in different spells.

1. Sri K. M. Velu Chetty : Moopuvayal Padanthurai village
2. Sri Subban Chetty : Melambalam in Sreemadurai

village	
3. Sri Ponnai Chetty	: Kuttimuchi in Sreemadurai village
4. Govindan Chetty	: Manimoola in Sreemadurai village
5. Velu Chetty	: Mukkur in Cherumulli village
6. Krishnan Chetty	: Kambadi in Cherumulli village
7.T.S. Krishnan Chetty	: Thaithamattam in Padanthurai village
8. M.R. Madhavan Chetty	: Mangakndi in Padanthurai village
9. Permal Chetty	: Mukkooor in Padanthurai village
10. C.S. Krishnan Chetty	: Chundavayal in Padanthurai village
11. K. Krishnan Chetty	: POilakndi in Gudalur village
12. Andy Chetty	: Kodamoola in Gudalur village
13. O. Chathu Chetty	: Odakkadavu in Gudalur village
14. Subban Chetty	: Mandakarai in Mudumalai village
15. Velu Chetty	: Cheppadam in Bennain hamlet of Nellakottai village
16.Subramanian Chetty	: Mallasmvayal in Padanthurai village
17. Sekaran Chetty	: Kalakandi in Padanthurai village
18. Perumal Chetty	: Kavathi in Padanthurai village
and so many other.	

Sri K. M. Velu Chetty of Moopuval was the first chair person of the Association. Others were the leading persons during course of time During the years of 1950s when the proposal of State Reorganization under linguistic basis was under active consideration, the Malayalee teachers and officials in Gudalur insisted the students of Moundadan Chetties and tribals of this area to take up Malayalam medium for their study in schools on the plea that have come from the Gurukulam type of primary schools inside the remote villages. The reason behind the Malayalam speaking people was to include Gudalur to the proposed newly forming Kerala State from 1956 comprising Malabar of Madras Presidency , Travancore and Cochin and to justify the steering committee formed for reorganization of linguistic states by indigenous people of this locality. The Moundadan Chetties guessed the ideas and apposed to the movement. The parents and leaders apposed the activity of compelling the children to take up Malayalam medium stating that their children have already studied in one or two classes in Tamil medium apart from the fact that their fluency in both the languages.. The Moundadan Chetties wanted to continue the area under Madras State (Now Tamil Nadu) only. The parents insisted to teach their children in Tamil medium only considering the future advantages in employments oportunities.and staged a strike of not sending the children to schools until their demands are fulfilled. After an enquiry held by the Education departments, it has been decided to start the primary education of this area according to the option of the children and parents in either language as medium of education. This was the significant achievement these people attained.

After this, late Sri Velayuthan of Hallur hamlet and K. Narayanan of Puthurvayal were the prominent leaders among others who formed a union namely *Nambolakottai Vivasiskal Sangam* (Nambolakottai Agricultural Workers Union) and worked for its improvement. Basing their demand the community was notified and included in the list of Most Backward communities a per G.O. Ms. No. 1634 (Home Department) dated 16-06-1967. This is another significant achievement to this community.

When action for proposal of draft Janmam Land Abolition and Introduction of Roythwari Act was under active consideration, late Thiru Velayudhan has strived had to collect as many ancient and old records as possible before the rein of Valavannur, Nilambur Kovilakam etc. from different houses of chetty people like copper plates inscription in palm leafs etc. and submitted for verification before the steering committee for perusal in the meeting held at Gudalur under the leadership of late Thiru Madhiyazhakan the Hon. Food Minister in Dr. Karunanithi`s cabinet in 1969. the documental evidences have not returned to the concerned after verification and kept as basic records. Had the present systems of Xeroxing available those days, copies of the documents handed over could have been preserved for future years for stabling their claims of sons of soil. At the request of the Association , among other policy matters,

the Act canceling the possession of land by Jenmam was passed in the legislative Assembly of Tamil Nadu State during the time of honourable Dr. K. Karunanithi as Chief Minister. .

The Moundadan Chetty people have presented as many memoranda as possible in various occasions citing all the above facts mentioned in the proceeding paragraphs that can be seen from the start lapping claims of their right that is due to them. It is sad to note that the death of Thiru Velayudahm in a short spell, the society was not functioning properly for many years. It was the set back in delighting the people to bring up to the main stream

In the year 1973, *THE YOUNG MOUNDADAN CHETTY ASSOCIATION* was organized under the joint effort of C.R. Krishnan a Government Servant who worked at Ooty and as per the advise of P. Narayanam working in Revenue Department. The Association was registered as 223/1973 and an anniversary was also held in 1974. for the regular function of the Association. The following persons were the office bearers. In that Association.

1. Late T.R. Arjunan Chetty Thaithamattam in Padanthurai village : President
2. P. K. Narayanam, Puthurvayal Gudalur Village : Vice President
3. M. Narayanan Mukkur House Cherumulli village : Secretary
4. Late P.P. Krishnan Chetty Pannimoola Cherumulli village : Joint Secretary
5. Late A.S. Velayuthan Angankalari Padanthurai village : Treasurer
6. C.R. Krishnan Chundavayal Padanthurai village : Auditor
7. Late M.R. Sekaran Chetty Kavathi Padanthurai village : Audit Assistant
8. Late P. Narayanan Karinkulam Cherumulli village : Adviser and guide

After the transfer of C.R. Krishnan from Ooty the Association was relegated to its background as other responsible members did not evince interest for the function of the Association .

Under this condition, after a long spell of more than 25 years, few retired Government Servants among the community along with imortant persons joined together and again tried to renew the registration of the Young Moundadan Chetty Community Association but they were unable to produce the mandatory records for the period from to 1974 till the date of required period on date , they have to form a new Association in the Name of Nilgiri District Moundadan Chetty Community Association with the intention for the uplift and welfare of the community. It has been registered on 29-10-2000 under Reg. No. 137/2000. This *SANGAM* or Association functions at Kuttimuchi in Cherumulli village as its headquarters. At the beginning there were 12 branches for the work of the Association in different places in all the 6 villages namely (1) Cherumulli 1, (2) Cherumulli 2, (3) Kottaimeddu (4) Sreemadurai 1, (5) Sreemadurai 2, (6) Padanthurai, (7) Puliambarai , (8) Puthurvayal (9) Kunil , (10) Hallurvayal , (11) Mudumalai and (12) Benna.

The following persons worked for formation of the new union and selected as Offices bearers of the Central and branch committees .1.M.Narayan,Mukkur,Cherumulli a retired teacher in Government Middle School President of the Association, 2 K. Narayanan, Puthurvayal, an Agriculturist and Social worker : Former Vice President 3. T.P Venugopalan Kolar Cherumulli village Leading Agriculturist : Former Secretary, 4. K.P Gananthan Kuttimuchi, Sreemadurai village Leading Agriculturist :Former Treasury, 5. T.A. Viswanathan Kuttimuchi, Cherumulli village Leading Agriculturist : Former Joint Secretary, 6. N.V. Manickan Chetty, Nellikunnu, Leading Agriculturist : Head Committee member and Guest President, 7. M. K. Ananthasayanan, Agriculturist and social worker: Erstwhile Branch President 8. K. Subramanian, Puthurvayal, Agriculturist :Erstwhile branch committee Secretary and present Head Committee Treasurer, 9. M.S. Andy, Manguzhi , Agriculturist Head Committee member and presently Vice President of Head committee, 10.A.S.Balan,Anjukunnu, Agriculturist : Formerly Branch President, 11.K.M. Sathyaseelan, Mangunnu Cherumulli Agriculturist: Present Head Committee Member and erstwhile Treasurer of Branch committee ,12. C.R. Balakrishnan. Kuttimuch, Sreemadurai village A Private Estate Employee: Formerly Branch committee President and now Head Committee Member ,13 M.P. Balakrishnan Makkumoola, Puthurvayal Leading Agricuturist : Head Committee Member, 14. P. K Balan.Agriculturist : Formerly

Branch Committee President 15. M.V. Govindan, Vattkolli, Padanhurai village Agriculturist: Former Head Committee Member 16. P.S. Velayudhan Puzhukolli Padanthurai village Agriculturist Padanthurai : Formerly Head Committee Member. 17. C. Andy Chetty, Puliambarai, Padanhurai village : Former Branch President 18. K. S Sreedaran, Kappumoola, Padanthurai village L.I.C. Agent : Formerly Branch Committee Secretary 19. K.R. Ramachandran, Kuttivavayal, Padanthurai village, Agriculturist : Active Member in Branch Committee 20. K.K. Madhavavan, Vengalamoola, Padanthurai village Agriculturist: Active member in Branch Committee 21. P.C. Krishnan Chetty, Pediaikai , Padanthurai village, Formerly Head Committee Member 22. P.C. Shanmugam, Pediaikai, Padanthurai village Agriculturist,: Former Active member in Branch Committee and now Head Committee Member , 23. K. P. Narayanan Kalligarai, Cherumulli village Agriculturist: Former Branch President ,24. M. R. Mugundan, Manjamoola, Cherumulli village, Agriculturist: Former Branch Secretary, 25. M. Prabakaran, Mandakarai, Mudumalai village, Agricultureist: Former Branch Secretary ,26. P.S. Kuttan Chetty, Pulialam, Mudumalai village: Former Brach President, 27. K.R. Sukumaran, Kottamedu, Cherumulli village Agriculturist : Former Branch Secretary, 28. Suresh Kumar, Cheppadam, Benna, Agriculturist : Former Branch Secretary, 29. N. V Balakrishnan, Cheppadam, Benna Agriculturist : Former Branch committee President, 30. Usha Kolur, Cherumulli village Housewife: Head Committee Member, 31. Ambika, Devanvayal, Puthurvayal Houewife Head Committee Member 32., K.K. Balan, Machikolli, Cherumulli village, Agriculturist : Former Head Committee, Member, 33. M.B. Chandran, Moolacherumulli Cherumulli village : Present general Secretary Head Committee 34. S. Sivasankaran, Athur, Puliambarai, Padanthurai village : Former Head Committee Member and many other social minded persons. The Head Committee and all the Branches at different plaes were working well up to the celebration of the *Maanaadu* (Seminar) held on 29-04-2002.

After induction of Thiru C. R. Krishnan , instrumental in formation of the erstwhile *Young Moundadan Chetty Association* in 1973 and who retired from Government Service on 30-06-2001, he dedicated his retired life for the service of the Association . For his honest and selflessness service the present Association has awarded him the assignment of Adviser and Public Relation Officer of the Association. Under his constructive advice, the activities of the Association has been intensified and there was a Seminar of the Moundadan Chetties and Tribales held on 29-04-2002 A Booklet compiled the past and present status of the community written by C.R. Krishnan basing on the collection of valid importations was released in the seminar. In the Seminar the Association passed many resolutions for raising their demands to the State and Union Governments. C. R. Krishnan as a social activist is having close touch with the Government officers for fulfilling the demands of the Moundadan Chetties and Tribal peoples and socially oppressed and marginalized sections of this area. He is also serving as a honorary guide to the oppressed and depressed people.

In course of time the branch members did not co- operate with the Central Union due to certain difference opinions, these sub centers have gradually become un functioning whereas the central committee struggled had for various developments to the society as a whole so also to the betterment of the entire area in association with other social organizations.

The following are the notable achievements of the Association notwithstanding the major demands are yet to be addressed.

1. In the Work shop held on 2002 arranged by the Kee Atone , a Non Government Organization in Udhagamandalam town .C.R. Krishnan made arguments before the delegates attended for the work shop about the non inclusion of the Moundadan Chetty and Wayanadan Chetty Communities of Gudalur area as indigenous communities among other communities such as Badaga, Kotta, Toda, Pania, Kurumba etc. and included as one of the indigenous communities in the Minutes of the work shop. Thereafter this community is recognized as one of the indigenous group of communities of Nilgiris. Thereafter in all the petitions to the bureaucrats and Minister etc it is being mentioned as one of the indigenous Nilgiri communities.

2. In the Seminar of Moundadan Chetties and Tribals of Gudalur held in Gudalur on 29-04-2002 it was stressed to the Government for taking many welfare of measures

which will benefit the tribals and Moundadan chetties to uplift their economic and educational and social status and many resolutions have been passed in the seminar.

3. Basing on the statistics and documental evidences mentioned in many of the petitions, a request has been made to the Government not to treat the Moundadan Chetties and tribals as encroachers of the waste lands around their settlements and patta lands extending less than 5 acres per family and allow them to raise the tea saplings for their livelihood on a plea these lands were with their possession before forming these as Janmam land of Nilambur Kovilagam from 1853 onwards only . Several petitions explaining the details of the holdings have been sent to the district administration for consideration. The result is awaited after settling the land rights after the disposal of the Case in the Supreme Court.

4. Basing on the materials available , the documental evidences produced, a memorandum have been submitted to the State Government for recommending the Central Government to include the Moundadan Cherry community under the list of Shedule Tribes of the Nilgiris which has been forwarded by the Director Tribal Reaserch Centre M. Palada, Udthagamandalam and under active consideration of the Department of Scheduled tribes and Scheduled Castes.

5. The Office bearers of th Association have met His Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu on 27-05-2005 and submitted a memorandum explaining the position of the community and reminded his Excellency to do the needful

6. C. R. Krishnan, who participated in the talk show of ` *visuvin arrtai arrangam* ` held in Gudalur town on 16-04-2003 took the talk show team to Mudumalai village where the people suffer for basic needs like health education, electricity, telecommunication etc. and arranged for a video graph about the exact position of the indigenous people inside the Reserved Forest and Wildlife Sanctuary which was telecasted after the talk show by which awareness has been created among the Government . The matter was known Worldwide Sun T.V. Later a rally and one day fast was also observed on 18-01-2007 in Gudalur town to draw the attention of the Government for rehabilitate and resettle the people to elsewhere as per the direction of the Honourable High Court of Madras dated 18-02-2007 The action of rehabilitating the people is undertaken by the Forest and revenue departments.

7. A. demand for setting of an Art and Science College for the students of Gudalur and Pandalur taluk as made in the Seminar out of which an Art and Science College has been set up. The request for a Polytechnic and I.T.I is yet to be considered.

8. The Adviser of the Association C.R. Krishnan having close touch of the various State and Central Government Officials. As such he took the Official of Anthropology visited two times for surveying the basic needs of the people of Sreemadurai and Mudumalai villages , stayed with them and helped as an interpreter for enumeration work and also two seminars held at Mysore on 20, 21-2-2007 in Nagpur held and 27-2-2008 to 29-02-2008 and presented papers about the situation prevailing in Mudumalai village which were highlighted in the Seminars.

9. C.R. Krishnan has conducted a house to house enumeration in all the villages wherever these people reside in a particular format prescribed by him and collected details of all the family members about the age, wealth movable and immovable education and employment status , affection of sickle cell anemia etc. for inclusion the details in the petitions about the welfare of the community and the population details as on 01-01-2005 have been ascertained and necessary changes are carried out as and when changes occur.

10. Several representations have been made for improvement of the village roads leading to the remote village where the Moundadan chetties and tribal people inhabit to bring to the main stream by which many roads have been repaired and maintained. For construction of a Health Sub Centre in Padanthurai village near Karkappali on the request of the general public one local farmer has donated 6 cents of his patta land for site for construction of the Heal Sub Centre and the work is being undertaken with the fund provided by the HADP.

11. The temple administration of Nambolakottai Vettaikorumagan was under dispute between the Nilambur Kovilagam who were the erstwhile trustees of the entire temples and lands up to abolition of Jenmam Land system in 1969 onwards, the Moundadan Chetty Community Association has imp leded themselves as as additional party in the Write Petition and argued the antiquity of the temple and the responsibly of the community in maintaining the temple and the temple property basing on which now the temple administration has been vested with the Hindu. Religious Endowment department with effect from 08-06-2009. The traditional Festivals of the temple is now celebrated without any disturbances.

12. Resulation has been passed to make open the road via Sيريur Sathyamangalam for the use of the public in Gudalur and Pandalur and to save time and expenses for reaching the plains of TamilNadu for urgent Medical and other important work. This issue is discussed in every general body meetings every year and renewed the resolution.

DEMANDS OF MOUNDADAN CHETTIES

Since Gudalur area was once declared as malaria prone and unhealthy locality, the British administration did not evince interest in development in education, public health, high ways etc.when similar developments were made in other part of the Nilgiris viz. Ooty and Coonoor. Hence these people could not avail the opportunity of English medium education for better prospects in civilized lifestyle and thereby getting job opportunity in Government institutions. But for these facilities, availed by others in upper plateau of the district, their status too remained as of the chetty people without vast development in all the fields. Moundadan chetty people though very sincere and faithful to God and Government Rules and Regulations, very panic in expressing their democratic rights due to illiteracy and usurp and oppressing by the recent settlers dominating the locality. Hence they have put forth the following vital demands.

1. Considering the right of sons of the soil basing on the recorded evidences that these people inhabit in this unhealthy locality from immemorial for formation of the landed properties administered by the Valavannur hierarchy there after passing over to Nilambur Jenmam from 1853 onwards during British settlement, they should not be treated as encroachers of the vacant lands once they cultivated shifting crops like ragi, maize, millet etc now planted with tea saplings to an extend of 5 acres or less per family far away from forest cover without hindrance to water resources and wildlife.

2. Inclusion of the Moundadan chetty community under the list of Hill tribes of Nilgiris like Kota, Toda, Kurumba, Pania, Kattunaika since all these indigenous communities co-exist all over the period without co-operation .

3. Action of Rehabilitation of the people languishing in the Mudumali and Benna villages surrounded by the Wild life to the alternative place at Ayyankolli to be speed up and their lifestyle to be improved at par to the people in other areas outside the wildlife sanctuary.

4. Appointment of Moundadan Chetties as trustees in the Nambolakottai temple and Manguzhi Bhagavathi Amman temple to maintain the tradition festivals in these temples adopted by the moundadn chetty people all along the period until taking over the temples by Government.

5. Electrification of all villages and laying pathways in all the remote rural areas.

6. Identifying these people by the Government Officials for their democratic rights like change patta, issuing community certificates, nativity certificates which are required for job opportunity and not to drag on the matter by the revenue people.

We evoke the blessing of God worshiped as Vettaikorumagan in the Nambolakottai in the vicinity and through their clan deities worshiped by all the chetty people for protection and help from central and state Governments in providing employment so that they may pattern their life style with latest improvements in science telecommunication, technology, print and electronic media.

ANNEXURE 1**Anthropology**

The Weekly Magazine Section of the HINDU Dated 11-5-1958

A NILGIRI COMMUNITY

By Iruthayanath Philo

Among the various communities to be found on the Nilgiris is the "Mandadan Chetty" community. This community is confined to a small area near Gudalur on the Mysore- Otacamund) bus route. The people of this community live in five small villages called *amsoms* about five miles from Gudalur. The five *amsoms* are Gudalur, *Chimathurai*, *Cherumulli*, *Padanthorai* and *Mudumalai amsoms*. Their population is about 3,000.

The chief occupation of this community is agriculture. All necessary food grains and sugarcane are being cultivated by them. Some of them owning larger extents of lands are rich and they live in houses built of brick and tiles. The majority, who are poor live in huts. Most of their household utensils are mud pots though brass and bronze vessels are also used.

The men are somewhat fair in complexion and of good physique. A dhoti called [*mundu*] and an upper cloth are normal dress for a male but shirts are also worn by quite a good number. Every male carries a knife [*aruva*] on his hip. The women are generally pretty and well-built. As a rule they do not come before strangers and are intensely religious. Their mode of dress, hair do and wearing of ornaments are similar to those of women of Malabar. Normally the women wear a single sheet of white cloth round the body covering down to the knee. However, now a day's *sarees* and blouses are also being worn by many women, whenever they go outside their *amsoms*. But during marriages and other ceremonies, they wear the traditional dress. Usually women do not wear flowers.

There is no age limit for marriages among this community and Both Post puberty pre-puberty marriages are common. Generally marriages are arranged by the parents with the help of intermediates. The bride and the groom do not see each other until after marriage. The bridegroom's parents have to give the bride's parents a certain amount of rice as dowry. The marriage expenses are borne by the bridegroom's parents. Polygamy is allowed but all marriages alliances are strictly confined to the five *amsoms*. A Brahmin priest who is generally the village temple priest officiates in marriages. The marriage ceremony is in the typical Hindu fashion with exchange of garlands between the bride and groom and the tying of *Mangal*.

The Mandadan Chetti community eats meat, fish and birds besides grains. They are prohibited from taking non-vegetarian food on certain specified days. They grow all kind of food grains including rice and also sugarcane. Women also take part in the agricultural operations. Poultry is developed on an extensive scale. A few live by hunting in the nearby forests.

In every *amsom* there is a panchayat board with a chairman who is known as "*Nattukaaraamaikaar*" This post is hereditary. Any one committing an offence is brought before the panchayat board who render justice by imposing fine.

In the five *amsoms* there are six temples for different gods and goddesses. The annual festival in these temples is conducted on an elaborate scale. People believe in witches, sorcery, devils etc. and the temple priest is credited with powers to divine the future

The language spoken by the Mandadan Chetti community is a queer mixture of Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam with Malayalam as the dominant factor. It has no script. They use Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada for writing and reading. A general survey of the living condition of the community indicates that they are akin to the people of Kerala and have been greatly influenced by their customs and manners. It is surmised.

COMMENT A READER

Sir:- The article on the 'Mandadan Chetti' community of Nilgiris by Mr. Philo Iruthayanath published in the Weekly Magazine Section of THE HINDU dated May11, makes interesting. In concluding the article, Mr. Philo Iruthayanath has surmised that these people must have originally belonged in the Kerala region. But from the description of the customs and manners, complexion and living condition of these people as enumerated by the author, it looks as though they originally belonged to Coorg, now forming part of Mysore, and not to Kerala. Their physical condition, customs and manners, etc. are very much similar to the culture and customs of the Coorg people.

The Coorgis are also fair in complexion and are of good physique. Their chief occupation is also agriculture. The Coorgis also have a spoken language of their own [without script] which is also a queer mixture of Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil and Tulu languages. They also use Kannada for reading and writing.

Their marriage customs are more or less akin to the customs of the Mandadan Chetti community. Among Coorgis, the practice of widow remarriage is in vogue. The practice of re-marriage of divorced men and women, the burial and cremation of the dead, the mode of greeting the elders by touching their feet, the use of a small sword on festive occasions –all these are very much similar in both the cases.

In the circumstances, I am of the opinion that the Mandadan Chetti community referred to by the author in his article, are the descendents of the Coorgis who might have migrated to the Nilgiris from their forest abodes in Coorg, about the 16th or 17th century, for some reason or other, and this aspect of the question deserves study by students of anthropology.

Bangalore

K. Chetharamaiah

//TRUE COPY//

ANNEXURE II

Before the Board of Commissioners for Hindu Religious Endowment M a d r a s.

2nd day of July, 1937.

Present .M.R. Ry. A. Kondappa Garu B.A.B.L.

E.V. Sundara Reddiar Avl. M.A.B.L.

--- o0o ---

M.P. No. 24 of 1937

Read:

Board's Order No. 3222 dated 21-12-1936 declaring the temple of Sri Vettaroyaswamy- Nambalakode village, Gudalur Taluk,, Nilgiris District, as a public one Petition on behalf of the Rajah of Nilambur to set aside the orders passed on 21-12-1936.

Memo. Filed on behalf of the Rajah of Nilambur dated 2-7-37.

Board's Order No. 1453 dated 2-7-1937

This case having come on for final hearing on 2/7/37 in the presence of the Agent for the Rajah of Nilambur and none others being present either in person or by Vakil on the said date, the Board after considering all the materials placed before it, passed the following:-

B.O. No. 3222 dated 21-12-1936 is hereby cancelled.

Sd. A. Kondappa,

President

2- 7-1937

Sd. E.V.SundaraReddi,

Commissioner,

2-7-37

//True copy//

Total No. of words: /8/

No. of words corrected: :Four

Read by :Sd.xxx 13.06.69

Compared by :Sd.xxx 13-6-69

Typed by : Sd.xxx 13-6-69

Assistant Commissioner,
H.R.& CE (Administration)
COIMBATORE-641018

Office of the Board of Commissioners

for Hindu Religious Endowment Cathedral P.O. Madras.

Annexure to Board's Orders Nos. 1453 to 1460 dated 2-7-37.

Sri Bombaki temple Mudumalai- Gudalur Taluk, Nilgiris
District

Sri Vetturayaswamy temple- Nambalakode -do- -do-

Sri Paradevatha temple Chullikunnu -do- -do-

Sri Bhagavathiamman temple Maunguzhi -do- -do-

Sri Bhagavathiamman temple Puthur -do- -do-

Sri Eswaraswamy temple Kallingara -do- -do-

Sri Krishna temple Sri Madura village -do- -do-

8 Sri Veerayaswamy temple -Ayervalea -do- -do-

9 Sri Vettarayaswamy temple -Devala village -do- -do-

(Sd.....)

The matter is reopened. Accepting the Memorandum filed by the agent of Rajah of Nilambur, the Vettkaramakan temple- Nambalakottu is declared as private and the other temples are declared public. The latter temples will be treated as excepted temples

2 The temples of Sri Vettarayaswamy at Nambalakode village Gudalur taluk, Nilgiris District, is not a temple as defined in this Act"

(Sd.....)

Secretary

Note: The annexure to this order containing the grounds of the above decision will be furnished on receipt of a copy application for the same (duly stamped with two nanas court-fees stamp) together with the copings and postal charges amounting to Rs. 0-14-0.

To Mr. N.A Krishnan Iyer Avl., B.A.B.L, Advocate, 36, Nadu Street Mylapore, Madras

To The Rajah of Nilambur, Nilambur, South Malabar

Copy to

1. The Adm., section with a copy of annexure

2. Mr.N.A Krishnan Iyer Avl., B.A.B.L, Advocate, 36,

- Nadu Street Mylapore, Madras copy of annexure
3. Mr. C.V. Subbrarhamanya Iyer Avl., B.A.,B.L.,
Advocate, No.3, Thambu Chetty Street, G.T. Madras.
 4. Copy to: The Inspector of H.R.E., for Coimbatore
District, with a copy the file of the D.T.C., Thro` No. 4
 5. Copy to the file of the District Advy. Committee, Thro. No .4.
 6. Copy to The Adm., section with a copy of annexure

//True copy//

Typed By: Sd. Xxxx

Compared by: Sd. xxxx Read by: Sd. xxxx No of corrections: two

Annexure III

Copy of Communication from C.V.Subrahmanya Ayyar, Advocate , madras to Thiru K.M.Velu Chetti pertaining to Nambala Kotta pagoda case Number 229 of 1932 in the file of the Board of Commissioners , Hindu Religious Endowment

VERY EMERGENT

C.V. SUBRAHMANYA AYYAR, Advocate.
3, Thambu Chetty Street,

MADRAS

August, 27th, 1936.

M.R. Ry. K.M. Velu Chetty Avl.,
T e a c h e r,
D. B. V .E . School, Gudalur,(Nilgiris)
M.R.Ry. Melambalam Subban Chetty, Avl.,
Sri Madur Desam, Gudalur, Nilgiris.

Sirs,

I received a telegraphic Money Order for Rs. 25/- on Tuesday the 25th instant which I have credited in part payment of the balance of my fees. In spite of my personally having clearly warned you that I would be unable to work in the case without the receipt of dull fees before hand and your personally having agreed to the said term and condition, and notwithstanding three letters addressed to you and remit the entire balance of fees as well as a sum of money sufficient for the translation and typing charges of documents, you have neglected to abide by the terms. I hereby give you final notice that unless immediately on receipt of this letter the sum of Rs55/- on account of the balance of fees and another sum of Rs 35/- on account of translation and typing charges be remitted tome, I shall consider myself relieved of responsibility for any default in the preparation of the documents for hearing of he original application 229 of 1932- Sri Veetarayaswami temple which stands adjourned peremptorily to Saturday the 11th September 1936. The adjournment was made after very great difficulty, the President being very loath to adjourn the hearing of an application of year 1932. A sum of Rs. 35/- will become necessary for, the translation and typing charges because there are nearly a dozen documents some of which are long. Their preparation will take time and their study could not be undertaken before they are translated. It is therefore behoove to act quickly.

The President of the Board expressed himself against the holding the enquiry at Gudalur on the ground that the expenses to the board would be even greater than for the parties. It will therefore become necessary that two or three of the permanent Residents in the villages round about the vettakaraswami Koil in Nambalakode amsom, preferably old and preferably Canarese speaking, be persuaded to accompany you and arrive on Madras a day earlier that is to any on the 10th September 1936 s0 as to enable me to take proofs of their evidence in support of our contention not only that the Pagoda is a Public Temple but that it has been managed by Trustees selected by the public, that the lands attached to the temple are the property of the idol and not the private property of the idol and not the private property of the Nilambur Raja and that the repairs and the utsavams have been being conducted by themselves and not by the Raja. I understand from what transpired before the Board today., certain remarks that we should lead evidence on our side in support of our own position Some documentary proof of repairs and festivals at the expenses of the residents is not forthcoming then at least oral evidence should be let in. For this purpose men of age- the older the better, and status and preferably able to speak Canarese should be selected.I must have the money for the balance of fees and for expenses on or before Wednesday the 2nd September, and I shall just then have time enough to attend the preparation of documents,

Yours faithfully,

Sd. C.V. SUBRAMANYA AYE

//True copy//

Annexure IV

True Extract of Book on WYNAD Its People and Tradition

By Rao Bahadur C. GOPALAN NAIR

pages 57-59.

MANDADAN CHETTIS

About forty families of Mandadan Chettis are to be found in Veliyambam and Pulpalli desams in Puthadi amson.

They are found nowhere in Wynad and they appear to have migrated from Gudalur Division of the Nilgiri District where, it is said about 500 families of this community exist.

Between Mandadan Chettis and Wynadan Chettis, already mentioned, there is a similarity that both bear the *kuduma* in front and the males interline; but the former follow Makkthayam and the latter Marumakkthayan.

They have their own paddy and hill cultivation and while they do not go out as laborers, they manage to live on the proceeds of their own.

They have no separate shrine for their God who is called "*Athiralan*," and who is worshipped in every house, and any special offering they desire to make is made at Nambulakotta in Gudalur (Nilgiri District) once a year. Marriage is permissible before or after puberty. Arrangements are made by the bridegroom's father or uncle and on the day fixed for the wedding, the father and, in his absence, the paternal uncle or elder brother proceeds to the bride's house with *thali* and ear ornaments, which are handed over to the father of the bride. She wears them and accompanies the party to the bridegroom's home. The ceremony lasts generally for five days and the garlanding is done on the third day in a special *pandal* erected for the occasion, where the bridegroom ties the *thali* round the neck of the bride and they exchange garlands which, for a consideration of a rupee and eight *anas*, a Brahmin provides.

Cremation is the rule among them except where children die, but in cases of death from cholera and small-pox, the dead are buried and not cremated. Fifteen days' pollution is observed after death.

The husband may divorce the wife and the latter may marry again, but the children live with the father. On the husband's death his brother may marry the widow; in fact it is the brother's right to marry her to the exclusion of a stranger.

The origin of these Chettis cannot be ascertained. They have adopted the *kuduma* in front which is a Malabar custom; but everything else indicates their headquarters, as they represent, is in the Gudalur Division of the Nilgiri District, but their original home is unknown.

Extract V

//TRUE EXTRACT//

WEEKEND [The Indian Express Dated 30-04-2004]

CRAVING FOR A FAIR DEAL

Nilgiris hill district is known for the unique tribal communities. Apart from the Badagas, whose tribal status is still disputed, there are Todas, Kurumbas, Panias, Kattunaikar, Kottas and Moundadan Chetty who make the district rich with their tradition and culture.

While much has been written about different tribal communities in print media, the only community that has been left out is Moundadan Chetty settled Gudalur on the Tamil Nadu Kerala border since time immemorial, their population is just 5,000. They speak a dialect which is a mixture of Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam and Telugu.

In 1967, the government included the community in the Most Backward Class (MBC). Despite this most of the people from the community are not aware about the government departments and the officials, and hence experience much difficulty in getting 'chitta adangal' (land ownership), ration cards, community certificate and agricultural loans points out C.R. Krishnan, Adviser, the Nilgiris District Moundadan Chetty Community Association.

Over the years, the non-tribals like Sri Lankan repatriates and also people from various parts of Tamil Nadu and Kerala encroached upon the Section 17 (Jenmam forest lands) and caused much damage to the environment and ecology of the Nilgiris biosphere by constructing concrete buildings. But it is also a fact that tribals, including Moundadan Chetty, had lost their cultivable lands even during the British period due to lack of education.

The bamboo thatched tiny houses built close to the paddy fields, and also the unfinished houses made of bricks still stand testimony to the tribals' interest to protect flora and fauna.

Being one of the educationally and socially most backward areas, Gudalur region of the Nilgiris district requires the urgent attention of the Chief Minister for providing facilities like higher education, electricity, protected drinking water, better roads and health care so that tribals could come up in life.

Their basic demands include setting up of a government arts and science college, polytechnic and an industrial training institute in Gudalur. Up gradation of Gudalur Govt. Hospital, provision of patta to the original settlers of Gudalur region and a request to the Kerala Government to uplift the 102 Moundadan Chetty families living in the Wayanad district of that state.

//TRUE COPY//

Annexure VI

EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK ON PEOPLE OF
INDIA VOL.II PART III TAMILNADU VOL.II PART III
Pages 1028 to 1030
MOUNDADAN CHETTY

The Moundadan Chetty is also known as the Moundan Chetty. The community uses Chetty as a title. It is said their community name was coined by the British. Since they lived in the hills, they were known as Malai (mountain) Chetty. Hence, the British called them Mountain Chettys. The term mountain in time became corrupted to Moundan and, latter, Moundadan. The community does not have sub groups. Some of them say that they migrated from Mysore area. Some of them say that are an aboriginal group from the Nilgiris They live only in the Nilgiri District. Their concentration is more in Gudalur taluk, particularly in the villages of Cherumulli, Padanthorai, Puthurvayal, Mudumalai, Sri Madurai, Gudalur, Pandalur and Nellialam. They inhabit the densely forested hilly terrain and valley of the Nilgiris. They speak a Kannada dialect among themselves. They speak both Malayalam and Tamil with others and use the Tamil or Malayalam script. In the past, the community had some identifications marks. The men sported more earrings, nose studs and nose-rings, bracelets and anklets and clothes similar to those of Kurumba tribe of the Nilgiris. However, they no longer dress like this.

The Moundadan Chetty is no-vegetarian, who eat game, but not beef. They consume all varieties of pulses, vegetables, roots and tubers. Their staple food is rice, *ragi* and *samai*. They prefer coconut oil for cooking. Most of the men are occasional drinkers. They generally drink *kallu* (Toddy) *sarayam* (arrack). Elderly women also consume alcoholic drinks during rituals and festivals. They consume tea, coffee and milk products. Most of men smoke *beedi* and cigarettes. Both men and women chew tobacco and betel and use snuff.

The Moundadan Chetty community is divided into 25 *kula* or *tharavaad* clan or lineage or surname). Of these, the Cherumulli Chetty, Kelavatha Kounder, Kee Chetty, Puttu Chetty and Kodi Chetty are considered to be superior *kulas*. The *kulas* mainly regulate marriage, alliances and indicate descent. Men generally prefix the *kula* names to their personal names and suffix them unity title. The Moundadan Chetty has equal status with Badagas, Wynaadan Chetty and Ezhuthachan. Both nuclear and joint families are found among the Moundadan Chetty. They do not observe any kind of avoidance relationship. They have joking relationships between sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law. Succession is by the eldest son. Nowadays, a few families give small shares in the property to daughters.

The Moundadan Chetty follow community level endogamy and *kul level exogamy*. They practice both types of *cross-cousin* (father's sister's daughter and mother's brother's daughter) consanguineous marriages. Junior sororities and senior levirate are allowed. The age at marriage for girls is between 18 to 22, while for boys it is between 20 and 27. Marriages are arranged through negotiation. Both sorrels and non-sorrels polygamy is allowed. The marital norm is monogamy Their marriage symbols are *kumkum* (vermillion) and the *thali*. Traditionally, the Moundadan Chetty does not pay dowry or bride-price. Divorce is permitted, with social approval. Only the husband can initiate divorce. Children are the responsibility of the parent chosen by their panchayat. Remarriage is allowed for widows, widowers and divorcees. Most divorces are now sought in courts of law.

Traditionally, women have no right to parental property in the Moundadan Chetty community. Women participate in all kinds of agricultural operations, animal husbandry, poultry rearing and other social economic activities. Women have a significant role in their social functions and religious activities. Most women work as agricultural or plantation lab ours. A few of them work in private and government organizations.

The Moundadan Chetty observes a pre-delivery ritual called *Koddai* during the eighth month of a woman's pregnancy. It is celebrated at her in-laws house. Her parents and other relatives come to her house and offer ghee-rice and curd rice to the pregnant woman. She is then taken to her natal home for the delivery. A Paniaya midwife is paid in both cash and kind for her services. They don't have any pre-delivery restrictions, but they strictly observe pos-natal pollution for seven or nine days. Till the end of pollution, the mother and the child are kept in seclusion. On the seventh or ninth day after delivery, a ceremonial bath is given to the mother and the child... After that, the mother is allowed into the kitchen and other rooms of the house. On this day they sprinkle the *namlineeru* (sacred water brought from the Nambalineeru Kottai temple) on the mother, child and house. *Punyarchanam* includes five pacificatory objects, such as gomutra (cow's urine), *halu* (milk), *dharbha* (sacred grass, *mavin yele* (mango leaves) and *almara* (banyan). They conduct *punyarchanam* to end any kind of pollution. The child is named when it is six months old, after an astrologer is consulted.

The child is tonsured at a temple when it is three. On the same day, they pierce the earlobes of girl children.

When a girl attains menarche, the Moundadan Chetty observes puberty rites. The girl's maternal uncle is the first to be informed that she has become a *pushpavathy*. He arranges a small temporary hut to be built outside the house and she is secluded in it for seven days. On the seventh day, she is given a ceremonial bath to end pollution. After the ceremonial bath, she goes to the bank of a river or a brook, and performs puja there. *Nambalineeru* (sacred water) is sprinkled on the roof of the house. After conducting *punyarchanam*, the girl is allowed to enter the house. On the same evening, a small function is conducted (*samarsaddai*). A feast is given to relatives. On the same day, the maternal uncle may ask for the girl's hand for his son.

In the past, the Moundadan Chetty conducted marriage rituals over five days. The rituals on the five days were *neerattu* (ceremonial bath), *alangaram*, (adornment), offering of sweets to the bride and groom, worshipping their *kula* deities and other deities, *bhathakattu* (giving paddy to the bride and groom), offering of sweets, gold ring and chain to the bride and the concluding *kanyadhanam* (*dharavarthu kudupu*). The wedding feast is given by the bridegroom's parents. After the marriage, the couple visits their clan deity's temple or regional deity's temple. They conduct the

santhi muhurtham consummation ceremony) on the third day after marriage, or on the same day.

// True Excerpts//

Posted by [Moundadan Chetty Community of Gudalur](#) at 1:40 AM No comments:



 Recommend this on Google

[Newer Posts](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Posts](#)

Subscribe to: [Posts \(Atom\)](#)

Simple template. Powered by [Blogger](#).