

**SAKTHI FOUNDATION - Uni5 EDUCATION**  
**Associates of Bharathiyar - 4**  
**MADURAI FRIENDS**

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Mahakavi Bharathiyar was working at the royal port in Ettayapuram Jameen palace. He was not happy with the work because there was no chance for his creativity and individuality. He did not like to be a poet who needs to sing romance and sex to make the royal officials and Jameen happy. So he was just hunting for an opportunity to leave the palace. He could not give up his SAL ENERGY in spending his poetic energy just singing romance and physical love of men and women. Because he himself has realized the self-truth. He was very much aware about his talent and responsibility to the Indian society.

This has been somehow understood by the Jameen. Meanwhile Mahakavi wrote a poem "முட சிகாமணிகள் நகூத்ர மாலை" - "Stars of foolishness of Ettayapuram". In this he has strongly teased and commented how royal officials are wasting their time and irresponsible.

This poem was read by [Mr.Gopala Krishna Iyer](#) who lived in the temple city Madurai. He was inspired with the poetic vision and language pattern of Bharathiyar. He wanted to make use of his talent. He was waiting to meet Bharathiyar also. He was a tutor in Nativity College in Madurai. He came to know that Bharathiyar is searching for a challenging job.

**Maharaja Sethupathy Higher Secondary School** is near Madurai Railway station.[North Veli Street,Simmakal] There was a good Tamil assistant called [Cholavandhan Arasan Shanmuganar](#). He was a well-known scholar. He was sick and took 3 months medical leave. So the school was searching for a tutor temporarily. Gopala Krishna came to know this and recommended Bharathiyar to Shanmuganar.

Arasan Shanmuganar belonged to the tiny village Cholavandhan very near to Madurai. He has been one among the royal poets of Ramanathapuram Sethupathy Maharajas. He has been appointed as an important writer in "SenTamil" magazine published by Madurai Tamil Sangam which has been established by Pandithurai Devar in 1901. He was the one who donated Rs.100000 to the national leader Mr.V.O.Chidhambaram Pillai.

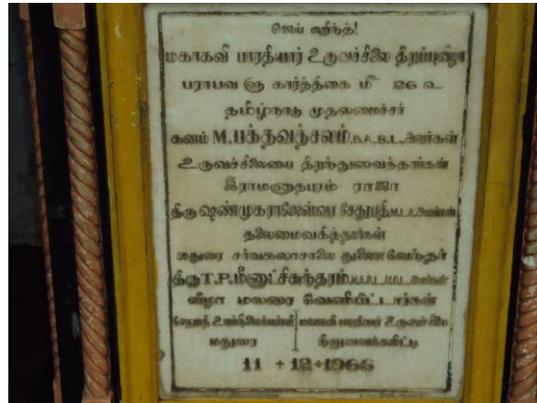
Before Shanmuganar met Mahakavi he read his poem "Stars of foolishness of Ettayapuram" and enjoyed with the theme and language pattern. He was satisfied with Mahakavi's language. He also said that the poem has to be destroyed, because it will harm the name of Mahakavi. He also tore the poem and threw it away. Bharathiyar also met these two Madurai friends. Bharathiyar was taken to Shanmuganar's home by a friend called Ayya Swamy Iyer. Shanmuganar gave his recommendation



letter to school head master to appoint Bharathiyar for 101 days.

Bharathiyar was appointed as temporary Tamil assistant in Sethupathy High School on August first, 1904. He worked for 90 days. His monthly salary was Rs.17. He enjoyed his teaching and after seeing his talent Shanmuganar wanted to help him for some more time. So he tried to extend his medical leave. Mahakavi inspired his students by his poetic versions, explanations and talks. School officials were happy with his work. He was 22 years old at that time.

He made use of his evenings in visiting various places in and around Madurai. He read many books. His spiritual exercises were much associated with Meenakshi Sunderaswar Temple.



### How Bharathiyar taught?

[Mr.Vaidhyanadha Iyer](#) was a national freedom fighter studied under Mahakavi. He says, "*Bharathiyar was friendly with students. He broke away the teaching-listening pattern of teaching. He encouraged more discussions and made us to think and analyze the concepts. I saw a flame of light in his clear eyes when he talks.*"

Bharathiyar was very happy but he wanted more to be done to the Indian society. So he was again searching for another opportunity somewhere else because Shanmuganar's leave was getting over. Again we have to thank Mr. Gopala Krishna Iyer who has made the great poet to go to Madras to start his most responsible life towards nation's freedom!

Bharathiyar was constantly writing letters to his friend [Mr.Lakshmana Iyer](#) to get a good job. He was living in Saidhapetai in Madras. He was the close friend of [Mr.Subramanya Iyer](#) who was the editor of the famous newspaper "Sudesamithran". He was the seed for "The Hindu" also. He was a close friend of Madurai Gopala Krishna Iyer. Once he came to Madurai and while talking to his friend said that he wants a good person with strong multilingual skills.



Gopala Krishna Iyer recommended as follows, *"He has been from Ettayapuram Jameen. He has been rewarded with the title "Bharathy" by the great saint Shivagnana Maha Yogi swamigal at the age of 11. He got educated in Varanasi. He is well versed with Tamil, Hindi, Sanskrith and English. His poetic talents are marvelous. Make use of him!"*

Subramanya Iyer, "Good! I wish he will be the same person recommended by friend Lakshmana Iyer in Madras. I need his language skill for translation. Let us meet him."

Bharathiyar had a friendly talk with Sudesamithran editor and impressed him with his skills. He was also much aware about that Newspaper for its dedication in inspiring Indians for national spirit. So he accepted and prepared himself to leave Madurai.

Madurai was Pandiya's capital where kings established the third Tamil sangam to enrich the language and made people to become aware through literary work. We thank the sacred City of Devi Meenakshi for making this great poet to stay and work for 3 months through which he has surely done many spiritual exercises. Today we can see his small stucco at the entrance of the school and his signed register has been maintained in the office.

Sure Bharathiyar must have visited the Tamil sangam with Shanmuganar and read his writings. We wish that he must have enriched his ancient Tamil literary knowledge in Madurai in 3 months of time.

With this we leave Madurai saying namaskaram to his friends. I view that he has been chosen by the conscious to work for the nation through his writings in this city through Subramanya Iyer. Lord Subramanya is the most celebrated Tamil deity. He himself has selected this poet for his nation's development.

Om Sakthi!

Madras, September 2nd, 2012

Photos: 1. Logo of Tamil Sangam in Madurai established by Pandithurai Devar, 2. Stone inscription about Bharathiyar's stucco installation, 3. Sethupathy School, Madurai