



FIGHT INTELLECTUALLY

LIFE & LESSONS

SARDAR
P.M.AUDIKESAVALU
NAICKER



P.M.AUDIKESAVALU

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SARDAR P. M. AUDIKESAVALU NAICKER

CHAPTER – I EARLY LIFE



Sardar P.M. Audikesavahu Naicker was born on 9, September, 1898 at Madras. His paternal grandfather Krishnaswamy Naicker was leading his life in Pondicherry with his family. The family migrated from Pondicherry to Madras due to some violence which took place in that state. The state was then governed by the French. At last, Krishnaswamy Naicker's family settled at Korukupet in Madras. There he had an ancestral property. The members of the family belonged to the Hindu Vaishnavite sect and they belonged to the Vanniya kula kshatriya caste.

His grandfather Krishnaswamy Naicker was a leading shell lime merchant in Korukupet. He had four gongs and Maduraimuthu Naicker was his eldest son. Krishnaswamy Naicker had set up the business for his son Maduraimuthu Naicker, who later picked up the business by his own initiative, hardwork and with the great assistance of his sons. Maduraimuthu Naicker had five sons and no daughter. Audikesavelu Naicker was the third son of Maduraimuthu Naicker. He had two elder and two young brothers. P.K. Jeyaram Naicker and Lakashmana Perumal were his two elder brothers. P.M. Garudapathy Naicker and sri P.M. Sundararaj Naicker were his younger brothers. Audikesavelu Naicker hailed from a decent and a respectable joint family consisting of his parents and four brothers.





Audikesavalu Naicker had his elementary education in a local school at Korukupet. Subsequently he studied upto school Final class in Madras Christian college school which was then situated at Parys corner in front of Madras High Court. In those days the school was popularly known as Dr. Miller's school, It was run by the Protestant Christian Missionaries belonging to the Scottish Mission, This institution produced many heroes who sacrificed their lives in the freedom struggle, During his student career, he was highly liked by his teachers who had a soft corner for him in their hearts. He possessed laudable qualities both in academic and in the sports field. He was a good orator in English and in Tamil. The infallible memory that he had possessed was one of the responsible factors for his success in the oratorical contests in which he participated and succeeded.



He was an expert in weight lifting events. His regular practice at home made him successful in this field. He maintained a good physique by periodic and regular exercise.

Audikesavalu Naicker's interest in the labour movement sprang from the care which he bestowed upon the labourers working in his father's shop. He used to look after his father's shop occasionally. He loved the labourers working with him. He was always kind towards the laboureres even in. those days. In this respect his early career had its impact upon his later life.

The other three sons of Maduraimuthu Naicker, were also responsible for bringing up their business. For the betterment of their business, the entire family worked tirelessly round the clock. Unfortunately a calamity overtook the family and Maduraimuthu Naicker died due to a heart attack in the year 1927. Till his death Maduraimuthu Naicker rendered service to the people arid to the country.





He was an active member of vandemataram Troop. Arundale B.P.Wadia and others were his close associates who strengthened the Vandemataram organisation, Audikesavelu Naicker followed his father's foot steps and participated in the movement. After the death of his father, Audikesavalu Naicker had a moral responsibility to augment the financial resources of his family, along with his brothers. Hence he entered into his business affairs and picked up the same well.

When he was young he himself cultivated the habit of attending the public meetings organised by the Indian National Congress. Some of the speeches delivered by great leaders of the Congress in Tamilnadu were stirring and eloquent and inspired "young" Audikesavalu very much. Inspired by such speeches, he was drawn into the arena of freedom movement.



He was a close associate of Satyamurthi in his student days. They both had a mutual understanding. They exchanged ideas with each other and they used to discuss several matters in connection with politics in those days.

Audikesavalu Naicker married Rajammal, a daughter of Narayanaswamy Naicker of cheyyur in the Chingleput district. She was very affectionate, faithful and obedient to her husband throughout her life. The way in which she looked after her husband and children marked her out as a dutiful wife, loving mother and a sincere and loyal guardian of her children.





Audikesavalu Naicker had four sons and three daughters. They were;-

1. Mr.P.A.Gopalakrishnan, B.A., B.L.,
2. Dr.P.A. Varadarajan
3. Mr.P.A. Srinivasan, B.Sc., B.L.,
4. Mr .P.A. Daivasigamani, M.A., B.L.,
5. Mrs. Kowsalya Venugopal, B.Sc., B.L.,
6. Mrs. Sarojini Sankaranarayanan, B.A., B.L., and
7. Mrs. Indirani Elumalai

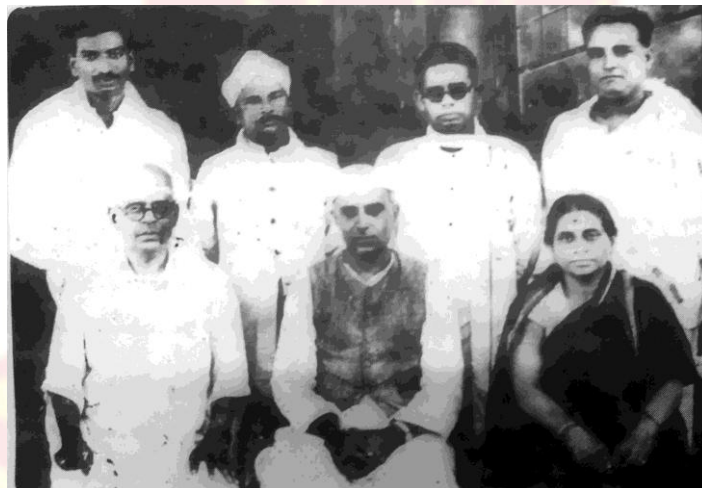




CHAPTER - II

HIS ROLE IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The First World War (1914-1918) adversely affected the - Indian Industries and consequently worsened the conditions of the workers employed in factories. Nominal wages did not keep pace with the rise in prices of commodities and the labourers were put to hardship. They found life miserable. Discontent among the workers increased. Further the workers were illiterates. They were highly ignorant, and backward. Naturally they were. Unable to organise themselves. They were a heterogenous mass coming from different parts of the country. Some workers left their families back in the village while they reverted to a 'bachelor existence in the factories. Submerged in poverty, these workers lived in dirty slum "areas". They wore dirtiest dress and received inadequate wages. The condition of labourers in Tamil Nadu was, the same as in the rest of the country.



It was at this juncture that the concept of trade Union occurred in the mind of Adikesavalu Naicker who realised the need for improving the life of the labourers especially in Tamil Nadu. He resolved to work for the upliftment of the labourers by associating himself with the prominent labour leaders of his times. He became one of the pioneers of the labour movement. He zealously fought for the cause of the down trodden toiling people of pre-Independent era in Tamil Nadu.

Audikesavalu Naicker joined the labour Movement in 1916. It was in that year that he became the President of the ' M & S M Railway young Mens Union and also the President of the Massey & Company Employees' Union.





He also organised the Madras Kerosene Oil workers' union and the P.W.D. Workers Union and Madras Tramway union.

In organising the above labour unions, Naicker had the able support of T.V. Kalyana Sundara Mudaliar, editor of the Navasakthi in Tamil and thereby he also became a close associate of Singaravelu Chettiar who was then a prominent Labour leader Madras.

Some of the eloquent speeches of B.P. Wadia, another labour leader of the times, were instrumental in inspiring the listeners to join the labour movement. Audikesavalu Naicker was one among them who were highly influenced by Wadia's speeches. He gained a vast knowledge and rich experience in this field from his senior labour leaders such as T.V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar and Singaravelu. He was also a close associate of V.Chakkarai Chetti and G. Selvapathy chetty.

Audikesavalu Naicker organised the first labour strike in 1917, when he was General Secretary of the North Madras Labourers Union.

He organised WIMCO Match Factory Workers strike and B & C Mill employees' strike. The WIMCO factory was situated in Tiruvottyur. So he took a special attention towards the employees of the Company. He never missed any of the meetings which were held by them. In his meetings or discussions with them he advised the men not to yield into the greedy grips of the management.

He gave some good suggestions for them and he took his own decision on behalf of them. Ultimately he brought success for them. Simultaneously he joined with T.V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar and others in organising the B & C Mill strike. Their demands were many. They pertained to the wages and amenities to workers. A few of the demands were conceded owing largely to the tireless efforts of Audikesavalu Naicker. Hence the strike proved to be a partial success.

MADRAS LABOUR UNION:

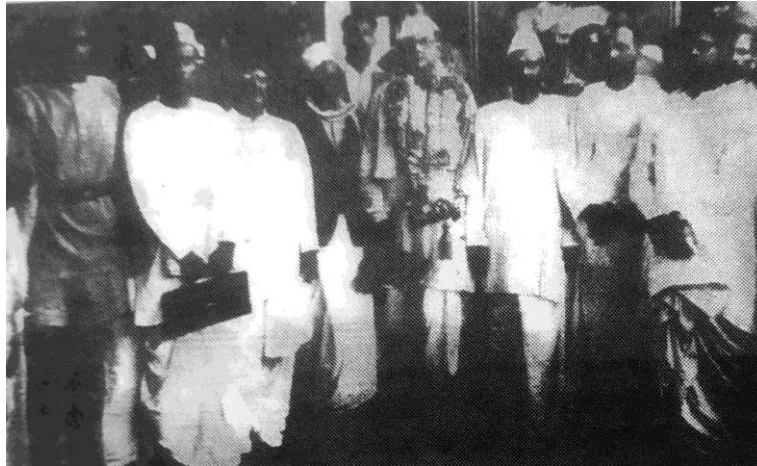
The interests of the workers in Madras State were ably protected by a labour organisation known as Madras Labour Union. It came into existence on 27 March 1918 at Perambur Barracks.

B.P. Wadia was the founder President. Kesava Pillai and T.V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar were the Vice Presidents. Selvapathy Chettiar and





Ramanajulu Naidu were the secretaries of the M.L.U. Initially M.L.U. had a very low strength. Workers meetings were generally held in the premises of M.L.U. for which various leaders from different organisations used to attend. Audikesavalu Naicker was one of the important Leaders who participated in these meetings. He associated himself with the organisation from its inception and strove hard to consolidate it by serving it along with his colleagues. Thanks to his efforts new members were inducted into the organisation which subsequently became a force to reckon with.



MADRAS TRAMWAY MENS ' UNION:

Barrister B.L. Iyer used to attend the workers of the M.T.M.U. at M.L.U. premises. Some Tramway men approached Chelvapathy Chettiar and expressed their suffering under untold conditions. They were subjected to a lot of harassment, untimely working hours and victimisation. They requested Chelvapathy Chetty to start a Union for them. Egmore was the spot where these Tramway men met frequently. They wanted that the Union could be located there itself, Thus the M.T.M.U. was started in 1919.

As the Union did not have its own premises the first meeting of the Union was held at. E.L. Iyer's residence situated adjacent to the Magistrate court, Egmore. E.L. Iyer presided and formed the general body meeting of the M.T.M.U. Audikesavalu Naicker was one of the advisers of the newly formed union and in that capacity he contributed towards the growth of the union. E.L. Iyer published a biweekly titled 'Swadharma' in which he wrote about the activities of the union. The grievances of the Tramway Men were redressed through the union by means of which the workers derived many benefits.





M & S.M. RAILWAY EMPLOYEES UNION :

Like the workers of B & C Mills, those of the Madras Southern Maratha Railway Employees' Union were suffering under intolerable and inhuman conditions. They were subjected to several hardships and misery. They resorted to agitational means to present their legitimate demands and indulged in strikes, Chelvapathy, T.V.Kalyanasundara Mudaliar and Ramanujulu Naidu rendered their valuable help in strengthening the M & S. M Employees Union. Audikesavalu Naicker also joined the union as one of the leaders and subsequently became the President. He served the union with devotion. As president of the union, he discharged his duties to the satisfaction of its members and protected the interests of the workers.

On 13 December 1920 a union meeting took place in which clerical staff also attended. The meeting was addressed by Annie Besant and G.S. Arundale. Audikesavalu Naicker also attended the meeting. The union in the workshop grew strong day by day with the help of some active workers. Management immediately granted increase in wages, overtime allowances, provision of toilet facilities, tiffin sheds and drinking water facilities.

P.W.D. WORKSHOP EMPLOYEES UNION:

It was founded in July 1926 when there was an intense awakening among the workers. Audikesavalu Naicker and Ramadoss assumed leadership of the union and involved themselves in its activities. The main object of the union, was to ameliorate the social economical and other working conditions of the members through constitutional methods.

May Day was celebrated in Singaravelu's house on 1 May 1927. A lunch was provided to the labour Leader and the workers who participated in the celebrations. On the same day evening a meeting took place. It was presided over by Dr. P. Varadarajulu Naidu. Singaravelu moved a resolution of solidarity of Madras workers.

In May 1927, Sakatwala, a communist M.P. visited Madras. Singaravelu was responsible for making several arrangements for his stay in Madras. A mammoth meeting took place at Triplicane Beach. It was presided over by Satyamurthi, Sakatwala addressed the Railway workers meeting at Perambur. Audikesavelu Naicker made excellent arrangements for this meeting. He delivered a welcome address in the meeting.





The city of Madras witnessed two important strikes in 1927. They were Burma Oil Company Workers strike and Massey and Company Engineering workshop workers' strike. A detailed study of these two strikes helps to throw Light upon the role of Audikesavalu Naicker in these strikes and his involvement in the labour movement.

BURMA OIL COMPANY WORKERS' STRIKE:

Chakkarai Chetty was the President of the Kerosene Oil Workers' union in 1927. Most of the meetings of the union were organised in his residence at 13, Kummallammian Koil Street. Singaravelu and Audikesavalu Naicker also worked unitedly for the welfare of the oil workers.

Audikesavalu Naicker was an active member of the special executive committee of the oil workers' union. The committee meetings took place at 13, Pillayar Koil Street, Tandiarpet, Madras. The representatives of the workers made the following demands to the higher authorities of their management:

1. Reinstatement of 119 workers
2. Restoration of wage out of 23 workers
3. Provision of benches for workers to do their work
4. Increase in wage i.e. an increase of one anna per day in wage.

Failure of the management to concede the demands led to the strike.

This strike began on 19 April 1927. The workers of B.O.C. had joined a few days before this occurrence by the Asiatic Petroleum Company men and some of the Standard oil Company men.

On 10 May, the Commissioner of Labour and his Assistant and the Commissioner of Police and his deputy had met Audikesavalu Naicker and the representatives of the labourers of B.O.C. and had a talk at H-3 police station which was about two furlongs away from the scene of the disturbance. They discussed and settled with them certain terms on which the labourers were to be advised to return to work. The officers and the labour representatives had left the conference about 10 a.m. after arriving at a settlement. But before they could reach their destinations and the labour representatives could meet their men, this disturbance had occurred which upset the settlement arrived at and postponed it for ten days more.





While negotiations were going on at the H-3 police station a large body of the strikers estimated at about 800 men had assembled in the open space near Seni Amman Kovil, where they used to hold meetings, awaiting for their representatives who were in conference at the police station. Another body of strikers estimated at two to five hundred, many of whom had Lathes, had posted themselves in a coconut thope near the principal entrance of the B.O.C. installation.

The next group of men attacked the clerical staff who had not gone or participated in the strike. The policemen on duty warned the strikers to allow clerical staff to go to their work. Incidentally four of the strikers brought some logs and kept them across the road to obstruct the traffic.

one of the police constables had noticed it, and intimated it to the police inspector who strengthened his team but the policemen were unarmed. When the lorries loaded with petrol came out of the company, the strikers rolled the logs on the road and blocked them. But the police removed the logs. Some strikers soon attacked the lorries and pelted stones on the lorries. Even a lorry was set on fire. Fifteen striking men were injured in the incident and a few policemen also sustained minor injuries.

A meeting of the strikers of the B.O.C. Asiatic Petroleum Company and Standard oil Company was held on 11 May 1927 at the Madras High Court Beach. It was presided over by Chakkarai Chetty. Audikesavalu Naicker participated in the meeting. He moved a resolution which sought to provide the relief of men who were out of work. Through this resolution he made an appeal to the public to render financial aid to the union in view of the sympathy towards the poor strikers. He further stated that a special committee would be authorised to collect the same. He explained the necessity for such an aid being given to the poor strikers and pointed out what the world would be without labourers.

The strike came to an end on 17 May 1927. The management conceded three of the demands of the workers such as

1. Re-in statement of workers
2. Restoration of wage cut off for 23 workers
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Their fourth demand was also agreed to be conceded by the management later.





Thus the joint efforts of Audikesavalu and those of his colleagues and the utmost co-operation of the workers were responsible for the success of the strike.

MASSEY & CO WORKERS STRIKE:

Audikesavalu Naicker played an important role in bringing about a settlement in Messrs Massey & Company Workmen's Strike.



The workers of Messrs. Massey. & Company's Engineering, Workshops, Madras made certain demands to the management. Their demand included rise in wages. The committee of Managing Directors gave a reply on 23 May 1927 declining to consider the Audikesavalu Naicker was an active member of the special executive committee of the oil workers' union. The committee meetings took place at 13, Pillayar Koil Street, Thandiarpet, Madras. The representatives of the workers made the following demands to the higher authorities of their management:

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A meeting of the strikers was held with P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker in the chair. He spoke about the negative attitude of the management towards conceding the legitimate demands of the workers. He appealed to the men to be firm and united for achieving their object.

Subsequently, Audikesavalu Naicker started holding daily meetings of the striking workers. Along with other Labour leaders, he addressed the men and was giving hopes of speedy settlement.

In one of the meetings of the workers which was held on 29 May 1927 at Robinson Park, Audikesavalu Naicker said that the employers ultimatum to forfeit gratuity was but a bluff and that the men would not resume work unless there was an honourable settlement of the dispute





In another meeting which was organised by the striking committee on 31 May 1927 in the same park, Audikeselu Naicker explained some of the objectionable methods resorted to by the capitalists to compel the man to resume work on the next day and asked them not to show any sign of weakness or discouragement and fall an easy prey to the employers.

After prolonged attempts at negotiations, the strike came to an end on 18 July 1927. The management conceded to the demands of the workers and the dismissed workers were reinstated. Thus the success of the strike was largely due to the untiring efforts carried on by Audikesavalu Naicker and other labour leaders.





CHAPTER - III

HIS ROLE IN THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

Audikesavalu Naicker had an immense faith in the Indian National Congress and its ideals even from his student days. He developed a liking for the nationalist cause envisaged by the Congress. Traditionally he hailed from a family of Congressmen. His father and forefathers were staunch congressmen. Even as a boy, Audikesavalu Nadker accompanied his father to various meetings organized by the congress. Some of the speeches of stalwarts of the congress party had increased his inherent interest towards the national movement. Moreover his father was an active member of 'Vande Mataram Troop' Arundale, and B.P. Wadia were his close associates. They used to hold the meetings of the vandemataram troop in his house. Audikesavalu Naicker along with his brothers used to assist his father in organising such meetings. Many great leaders participated and their speeches kindled nationalistic fervour in young Audikesavalu.

In 1908, the annual session of the Indian National congress was held at Madras. Satyamurthy was naturally drawn towards this great event. He enrolled himself under the captaincy of Srinivasa Sastri. Audikesavalu Naicker also attended this congress session as one of the young volunteers.

In 1909, Audikesavalu Naicker began taking part in the freedom movement.

The Minto-Morley Reforms of (1909 provided for separate electorate for Muslims. Thus the British imperialism set Muslim Communalism against Indian Nationalism. Anti-British feeling began to spread through out the country.

In 1919, the British came forward with a scheme of constitutional reforms known as Montague-chelmsford Reforms. These reforms were embodied in the government of India Act of 1919. Since the Act fell short of the expectations of the congress, it contributed to the disturbed political conditions throughout the country.

The Indian National Congress which met at Amritsar in 1919 criticized the new reforms as inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing. But the congress did not still lose faith in the good intention of the British and was even prepared to work the reforms "so far as they may be possible, so as to secure an early establishment of full responsible Government".





The British government had passed the Rowlatt Act empowering the government to imprison the suspects without trial to quell the spirit of patriotism. This most dastardly Act caused discontent in the minds of the people and led to Jallianwalabagh massacre incident which had taken place at Amritsar. General Dier ordered his troops to open fire on the unarmed citizens. Innocent people including women and children died in large numbers. The Jallianwalabagh massacre spoke volumes about the reign of terror in Punjab.

The Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwalabagh massacre enraged the people. The Leaders of the congress were severely disappointed and shocked. Gandhiji called for a country wide hartal on 6 April, 1919 and it was a complete success.

NON-CO OPERATION MOVEMENT :

The agitations and opposition to the Rowalatt Act led to Non Co-operation Movement in 1920. It was launched by Mahatma Gandhi on August 1920.

The annual session of the congress was held in 1920 at Nagpur. C. Vijayaragavachariar of Salem a prominent leader of the congress in Tamil Nadu was the President of the session who endorsed Mahatma Gandhi's non violent non co-operation movement.

According to Gandhiji, non co-operation and civil disobedience are but different branches of the same tree of Satyagraha.

Non co-operation predominantly implied with drawing of co-operation from the state which in the non-co-operators view has become corrupt. By its very nature, non co-operation was open even to children of understanding and could be safely practised by the masses.

The non co-operation movement was unique in the sense that for the first time in the history of the struggle for freedom in India, the common people came forward and participated in the national movement. With triple boycott programme as the basis, Mahatma Gandhi called upon the people to boycott the legislatures, law courts, schools and colleges. He wanted congressmen, to refrain from contesting the elections to the new legislatures under Montague Chelmsford reforms.

Gandhiji travelled all over India with a view to spread the non co-operation movement. He identified himself with the poorest of the poor when he saw poverty and misery.





Audikesavalu Naicker was drawn to the non co-operation movement organised by Mahatma Gandhi. By this time he had already become the secretary of Madras District Congress committee in which capacity he served the congress organization from 1920 to 1925.

The Congress boycotted the first elections held under the Monford Reforms introduced by the Government of India act 1919. The liberals and Moderates had contested the elections in November 1920 to two Houses of the Indian legislature.

In 1921, Gandhiji made a memorable visit to Madras when S.Srinivasa Iyengar was the President of the Madras District. Congress committee. He addressed a public meeting at the Marina beach. Being the secretary of the Madras District Congress Committee. Audikesavalu Naicker had the unique honour of making the welcome speech in that public meeting. Andhrakesari T.Prakasan and S. Srinivasa Iyengar also Spoke. The visit of Gandhiji helped very much to kindle the national conscicousness in Tamil Nadu.

In February 1923, Gandhiji suspended the non co-operation movement in view of the violent turn it assumed when the Chauri-Chaura incident took place. In a village called Chauri - Chaura in United Province, an angry mob set fire to a police station with police men locked inside. Gandhiji was shocked and stricken with grief at this outrage. Suspending the non co-operation movement, Gandhiji asked all the congressmen to stop their activities of breaking or disobeying repressive laws and restraining orders of the government,

During his tenure of office as a secretary of Madras District Congress committee (1920 - 1925), Audikesavalu Naicker took pains for the growth, of the congress and in carrying the message of the national movement from village to village. He became a close associate of the great lawyer patriot of Madras Sri S. Srinivasa Iyengar. In recognition of his valuable service to the congress organization. Audikesavalu Naicker was made the President of Madras District Congress Committee in 1926. He also began to play an active part in the All India congress Committee as one of its prominent members.

Audikesavalu Naicker was responsible for the spread of the congress. Movement in the city of Madras and throughout the present chingleput District.





The history of the Indian National congress is an unique saga of the service and sacrifice, toil and turmoil and devotion and determination of a remarkable organization which played a vital role, in the political history of India.

Annual sessions of the congress have been conducted in different parts of the country. Such sessions highlighted the policies, programmes, aims and achievements of the congress. They indicated the steady growth and progress of the nationalist movement. Hence every session of the Indian National Congress was of considerable importance for tracing the history of India's struggle for freedom from the alien rule.

MADRAS SESSION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS - 1927.

The forty second session of the Indian National Congress was held at Madras in 1927. Dr. M.A. Ansari was the President of the session. The session lasted for three days from 26 December to 28 December 1927. The venue of the session was Tilak Mandap situated between Egmore and Chetput. C.N. Muthuranga Mudaliar was the chairman of the Reception Committee.

Audikesavalu Naicker was the secretary of the Reception committee. As a secretary of the Reception Committee. Audikesavalu Naicker worked hard with his colleagues in organizing the session. He made all arrangements in a grand manner. The venue pandal was elegantly decorated. Tricolours were hung from every part of the pandal and the central pillars were covered with tricolour khadar. Colour festoons were hung all round and portraits of leaders were fixed to most of the pillars.

Dias was most artistically decorated, Over the dias the national chakra and bharatmata were painted. Satyamurthi, Dr. Vardarajulu Naidu, Dr. U.Rama Rao (From Madras), Vallabhai Patel (Gujarat) and Govind. Vallabh Pant (U.P.) were on the dias.

On his return from Moscow Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru also attended this session of the congress. He gave a new direction to the Congress policy and committed the congress to the goal of complete Independence.

The session meeting began at 2.00 p.m. As chairman of the Reception Committee, Muthuranga Mudaliar read the welcome address. Following it, the Presidential address took place.





The session called upon the people of India to, organize hartals and mass demonstrations at the time of the arrival of Simon Commission in India. The goal of India was declared as "Complete National Independence", replacing "Dominion Status". One of the important resolutions adopted by the Congress session was the boycott of Simon Commission.

The validictory speech by Dr. Ansari marked the culmination of the session. In his concluding speech, he expressed his sense of gratitude to Muthuranga Mudaliar, the chairman of the Reception committee and to P.M. Audikedavalu Naicker, the Secretary of the Reception committee for the valuable services they rendered in organising the session of the congress and for making the session a grand success.

SIMON COMMISSION - 1928

The appointment of the Simon Commission in 1927 created a new stir in the Indian political atmosphere. A wave of seething resentment swept the whole country when no Indian was made a member of the Simon Commission. The enquiry of the commission was boycotted to a large extent by the effective bodies that counted during those days of political unrest and upheaval.

LAHORE SESSION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS – 1929:

A momentous session of the congress was held at Lahore in December 1929 under the presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru. In his presidential speech Nehru categorically proclaimed that the goal of India was Independence. A resolution was passed pleading the congressmen to work for the attainment of complete Independence. It was also decided to celebrate 26 January of every last year as Independence Day. The resolution of the session also authorized AICC to launch civil movement.

In pursuance of the resolution passed at the Independence day was celebrated all session of the congress, Independence Day was celebrated all over India on 26 January 1930. As part of the celebrations organised by the congress workers in Madras city, Sri C.N. Muthuranga Mudaliar led a procession from congress Grounds to George Town. Audikesavalu Naicker also participated in the procession.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT:





Gandhiji launched the civil disobedience movement in 1930. According to the Gandhiji, Civil Disobedience was an important branch of Satyagraha. He defined Civil Disobedience as 'Civil' breach of immoral statutory enactments. Civil Disobedience Movement included Salt Satyagraha, boycott of foreign goods and picketing of toddy shops.

Gandhiji made an historic march to Dandi to break the salt law which made it a legal offence to prepare salt even from the salt water. The Salt Tax had been doubled in 1923. Since this tax fell heavily on the common mass, the Salt Law was taken up to be broken first the civil disobedience. On 11 March, 1930, Gandhiji appealed to the people in different parts of the country to break the salt law.

On 12 March 1930, Gandhiji started the march on foot with 79 dedicated and daring disciples from Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmedabad towards Dandi, a place situated on the sea coast, about 200 miles away from Ahmedabad.

Gandhiji and the satyagrahis reached Dandi on 5 April 1930. Next morning at 6 a.m. Gandhiji picked up a Lump of salt as a signal for almost simultaneous breaking of the Salt Law all over the country.

The civil disobedience movement began to spread rapidly throughout India. The British Government adopted repressive measures to suppress the movement with a firm hand. Thousands of Indians were lathi charged and imprisoned. Jawaharlal Nehru was put behind the bars on 16 April 1930. Gandhiji was sent to Yervada Jail on 5 May 1930.

The Dandi March was followed by Vedaranyam March in Tamil Nadu. C. Rajagopalachari led 99 volunteers from Tiruchirapalli to Vedaranyam in Thanjavur district, where they defied the Salt Law. On 28 April, Rajaji and his fellow marchers reached Vedaranyam. On 30 April 1930, Rajaji repeated the act which Gandhiji had committed at Dandi a month back.

The year 1930 was marked by disturbances in Madras on account of the activities of satyagrahis. Public meetings and processions were held to protest against Salt Act. Many volunteers took part in such meetings and processions. T. Prakasam who organised a procession with his colleagues and a group of volunteers in Madras was arrested on 23 April 1930 and was sentenced to one year simple imprisonment. After T. Prakasam's arrest, Satyamurthi led the Salt Satyagraha in Madras. Audikesavalu Naicker joined the civil disobedience movement under the





leadership of Satyamurthy and actively participated in the Salt satyagraha organised by him.

A meeting of all parties was held on 27 April 1930 at Triplicane Beach to express condemnation of the action of the police in using force on Satyagrahis and innocent citizens. It was styled as an All Party Meeting in which congress party domination. Nearly ten thousand people gathered for the meeting. The important leaders who addressed the gathering were Satyamurthi, T. Chengalvarayan, P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker, Varadarajulu Naidu, Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar, V. Chakkarai Chettiar and Sri Ramulu Naidu. Audikesavalu Naicker appealed to the people to resist the foreign rule with determination, The police authorities began to take action against the crowd to disperse it. The crowd then gathered at Pycrofts Road blocked it and pelted stones on the police. The police resorted to lathicharge and arrested a large number of people.

On account of his extraordinary courage exhibited during this tense situation, he earned the title of Sardar the rare honour which was shared only by two persons namely Sardar Vallabhai Patel and Sardar Vedaratnam Pillai of Vedaranyam. Gandhiji recognised this title.

When a session of the congress was held at Karachi, in March 1931, Satyamurthi and Sardar Audikasavalu Naicker also attended it along with the other delegates from Tamil Nadu.

As a part of the programmes in civil disobedience movement, toddy shop picketting was organised in Madras in 1931 by the Madras district congress committee. Committees for prohibition of Liquor were set up in different parts of the city of Madras and under the auspices of such committees toddy shop picketting was conducted. A prohibition committee was set for the entire Madras presidency with S. Satyamurthi as its President. Sardar P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker became the President of the North Madras prohibition committee. M.P.Singaram was the secretary of the North Madras prohibition committee. He served as the Secretary of the North Madras picketing committee. He served as the Secretary of the North Madras picketting committee.

Once the toddy shop picketing was organised in Royapuram in front of Manicka Nayakar's toddy shop. Then a tense situation arose as a result of the exchange of words between the shop owner and the picketting committee members because this toddy shop did not have licence. On the information furnished by M.P.





Sivagnam about the incident, Satyamurthi and Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker rushed to the spot and restored peace.

As in rest of the country the Independence Day was celebrated on 26 January 1932 in Madras. To mark the occasion and to organise the boycott of foreign cloth, C.N. Muthuranga Mudaliar and Sardar P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker organised a big procession along China Bazaar on 26 January 1932. They were carrying congress flags and led the procession consisting of nearly two hundred congressmen. Police dispersed the crowd. Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker and Muthuranga Mudaliar were severely beaten by the police and consequently they sustained injuries. The sub-inspector seized the congress flags from Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker and C.N. Muthuranga Mudaliar and arrested them.

When produced and interrogated in the Presidency Magistrate court, Egmore, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker boldly stated that he only did his duty. He was sentenced to one year rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100/- under section 17 C.1.2 of the Indian criminal Law Amendment Act XIV of 1908. He was first placed in B Class in the prison. Subsequently on the appeal of the Vanniyakula Kshatriya Association and Chunamb Merchant Association, he was placed in A class.

AUDIKESAVALU NAICKER AND HARIJAN UPLIFTMENT :

Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker also made a significant contribution towards the upliftment of the Harijans in Tamil Nadu. In 1933, he was the President of the North Madras Harijan Welfare Association when M.P. Sivagnam was its secretary. They worked unitedly for the welfare of the Harijans. Thiruvengada Naicker as the Joint Secretary of the Association too had given his able support to Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker in all the schemes and measures undertaken for Harijan welfare. The three leaders arranged a public meeting under the auspices of the Harijan Welfare Association at Robinson Park in Madras on 21 February 1933. Gandhiji presided over the meeting. Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker and M. P. Sivagnam were immensely happy to have got the unique opportunity of sitting along with Gandhiji on the dias. Gandhiji addressed the gathering and his speech, was translated into Tamil by Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker. The Harijan welfare fund collected by Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker and his colleagues was handed over to Gandhiji by him.

Sardar Audikesavalu, Naicker also associated himself with the activities of the Madras Mahajana Sabha, which was, a training centre for freedom fighters. He gave a new political dimension to its growth and extension. In 1934, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker was elected as the secretary of the Madras Mahajana Sabha.





On 28 July 1938, the Madras city Political conference took place at the congress house to throw light on the Prevailing opinion among congressmen regarding the political and social conditions for Tamil Nadu. Sardar P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker was the chairman, of the reception committee. In his address, he laid emphasis on the need to take up rural re-construction work and spread the ideals of the congress by strengthening the organisation. In regard to the government of India Bill 1935, he stated that though the bill was unacceptable, they ought not to allow the enemies of freedom to capture power.

The Government of India Act, of 1935 provided for an All India Federation and provincial autonomy.

On 10 May 1936, Subhas Chandta Bose, a veteran freedom fighter was arrested by the British government. In response to the congress Presidential appeal, Subhas Chandra Bose Day was observed on that day throughout the city of 'Madras. A large procession started in the evening from the Congress House to Triplicene Beach where a public meeting was held under the. presidentship of S.Satyamurthi, President of the T.N.C.C. In this meeting, protests, against the arrest and detention of Subhas Chandra Bose were made by all the speakers. The main speakers on the occasion included K. Bashyam Iyengar, Ramdas Pantulu K. Santhanam, V. Chakkarai Chettiar, Sardar. Audikesavalu Naicker and T. Prakasam. They expressed their shock to hear the arrest of Subhas Chandra Bose and regretted that they were not able to save him in the Lucknow Congress. They also passed a resolution in Tamil, protesting against the suppression of individual liberty mentioning the number of occasions on which the Press Act was enforced.

Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker had an opportunity of meeting pandit Jawaharlal Nehru when he visited Madras by the end of October 1936. As a congress representative, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker accompanied Jawaharlal Nehru throughout Tamil Nadu during his visit. Satyamurthi instructed his colleagues to arrange and organise the tour of Panditji in a proper manner. The tour was a tremendous success, and went off smoothly without a hitch.

Towards the end of October 1936, Audikesavalu Naicker was elected as a councillor of the Madras Corporation from the Korukkupet division. He was also elected as the Vice-President of the Madras Mahajana Sabha along with K. Subramanian for 1936- 37.





In accordance with the provisions of the government of India act of 1935, elections took place for the Madras Legislative assembly in 1937.

Sardar P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker was elected as a member of the Madras Legislative Assembly from the North Madras constituency. He was also the Vice-President of the Madras Mahajana Sabha during 1937-39. Subsequently he, became the President of Sabha in 1939 and held the post till 1941. He was also one of the vice-presidents, of the All India Khadi and Swadeshi Exhibition committee which organised an exhibition in Madras in 1939.

The second world war broke out on 3 September 1939. The congress warned the British against imposing a war on India and against using Indian resource in a war without the consent of Indian people.

The warning went unheeded. Without consulting the Indian leaders, the British declared India to be a belligerent country in the second world war.

The congress working committee called upon the Congress Ministers in the provinces to resign in protest against the involvement of India in the war, against her consent. Consequently congress ministers resigned.

On the same day, a reception was accorded to Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker in Sir P.T. Theagaraya Chetty Secondary School at washermanpet. While addressing, he said that Some of the political prisoners including those of high social status were asked to give thumb impression and some of them refused to do so. He observed that the British government had no other go than to come to terms with Mahatma Gandhi and warned them not to underestimate the strength of congress.

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

On 8 August, 1942 AICC passed the famous 'Quit India Resolution'. The resolution demanded that the British should quit India forthwith. It also made it clear that if the British did not do so, then the congress would be compelled to start a non-violent movement under the leadership of Gandhiji for the vindication of the political rights and liberty of the Indians. A vigorous campaign was launched against the government.

As a reaction to the 'Quit India resolution' of the AICC all the top-ranking Leaders of the Congress including Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Azad, Acharya Kripalani and G.B. Pant were arrested. Ordinary civil life was ruthlessly





suppressed by the bureaucracy and Congress leaders courted arrest in different parts of the country.

In Madras also, prominent congress leaders of the T.N.C.C. like Satyamurthi, K Kamaraj, T.Prakasam, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker and M.P. Sivagnanam were arrested and imprisoned in Vellore central jail.

Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker who was wielding considerable influence in the northern part of Madras city was in the original list of leading congressmen to be arrested as soon as the AICC passed the Quit India Resolution on 8 august 1942. He was arrested along with Bapi Naidu on 9 August 1942 under the Defence of India Rules. He was imprisoned in the vellore Central Jail.

When he was in Vellore jail he made a request on 5 September 1942 to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras to allow him to attend the meeting of the council of the corporation of Madras. But the government authorities felt that under the then prevailing circumstances it was unwise to accede to his request. Hence his request for permission to attend the Madras corporation council meeting was rejected.

Vinobha Bhave was also brought to vellore central jail where he became a close friend of Sardar Adikesavalu Naicker. During his stay in the Vellore prison, Sardar audikesavalu Naicker learnt Hindi from Vinobha Bhave and in turn vinobha Bhave was taught Tamil by Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker.

A terrible misfortune took place in his family when Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker was in the Vellore central jail. During this period, one of his sons died. Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker became very sad due to this calamity in his life. Further his health condition also deteriorated. He had a continuous giddiness for many days. He also suffered from severe rhumatic pain.

Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker's wife too fell ill seriously due to his detention and anxiety over his health and also due to the worry caused by the death of her son.

In spite of the adverse circumstances in which he was placed Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker patiently bore the sufferings with courage. The government refused to release him even on medical grounds.





Early in 1943, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker had the opportunity of developing friendship with Honourable R.Venkata Raman in the Vellore Central jail where the latter used to teach Economics to some of the congress leaders. T.S. Avinasilingam Chettiar, who was also in the prison delivered lectures on Bagavat Gita. M.P. Sivagnanam was also a source of moral strength and support to Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker in Vellore central Jail.

Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker was released on 20 May 1943 from Vellore Central Jail under the orders of the government of Madras on condition of furnishing two securities for Rs. 250/- each executed in favour of the Commissioner of Police, Madras. But only on 13 September 1945 the authorities of the Madras Government cancelled the bond taken from the two sureties, and refunded the security money deposited by them.

Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker was largely responsible for organising the Central Village Industries Exhibition in Madras in 1945.

When India became Independent on 15 August 1948, celebrations of the independence day took place in different parts of the country. Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker was one among the congress leaders, who addressed some of the meetings organised in North Madras to mark the occasion. Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker became President of the Tamil Nadu political Sufferers' Association in recognition of his role in the freedom movement.

One of the important changes made by this Act was widening the franchise by lowering the general qualifications of voters to vote. Forty five seats were allotted for divisional elections. Out of these Forty five seats, forty were classified as general seats, three were specially reserved for Adi-Dravidas and two were specially reserved for Labour.

The Act also provided that every person elected or appointed as Councillor or Alderman should take an oath of affirmation of his allegiance to the crown.

In accordance with the main provisions of this act, the Divisional Elections were held on 26 October, 1936. Being a prominent citizen of North Madras, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker contested in this election from Division Number: 5 and was elected as the councillor of that Division.

During his tenure of office as a councillor in the Corporation of Madras, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker was an active participant in the Council meetings. He discharged his duties to the best of his ability.





In pursuance of the transitional and transitory provisions of the Amendment Act, the old council continued in office till 1 November 1936 when the new Councilors constituted the Corporation Council under the Amendment Act.

The Amendment Act introduced Six standing committees dealing respectively with

1. Accounts
2. Education
3. Health
4. Taxation and Finance excluding taxation appeals
5. Town Planning and Improvements, and
6. Works.

Sardar P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker was one of the members of the standing committee (works), which was constituted on 31 March, 1937 under the chairmanship of Mrs. Rukmani Lakshmipathy. The other members of this committee were S.M. Anwyl, G. Selvapathi Chatti, P.K. Vinayaka Mudaliar, T.K. Srinivasan and C. Subramanian Chetty.

The Corporation Council at its meeting held on 5 April, 1938 appointed a committee consisting of the following members with Mayor as convenor to go into the question of electricity charges:

1. K. Bashyam Aiyangar
2. K. Venkataswami Naidu
3. T.R. Kothankarama Mudali
4. N.R. Varadhachari, and
5. N. Rajagopalan

K. Bashyam Iyengar and N.S. Varadachari ceased to be councillors from 1 November 1938. So, N. Sankaran and P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker were elected as members in their places and the newly organised committee consisted of the following members:

1. K. Venkataswamy Naidu
2. N. Rajagopalan
3. T.R. Kothandarama Mudaliar
4. P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker, and





5. N. Sankaran.

Information with reference to the working with full details as to the expenses that were being incurred and proposals calculated to increase the usefulness of the Electrical Department were called for from the electrical department and they were furnished to the committee. Six meetings of the committee were called for on various dates. Later this committee was wound up.

At a meeting of the council held on 15 November 1938, a committee was appointed to consider and report on the business of the Public Health Bill. This committee consisted of the following members:

1. K. Venkataswamy Naidu (Mayor)
2. V. Chakkarai Chetty
3. Syed Niyamatullah
4. U. Krishna Rao
5. C. Basu Dav
6. B.W. Bachelor
7. W.W. Ladden
8. A. Rukmini Lakshmipathy
9. Mohammed Ibrahim
10. PM. Audikesavalu Naicker, and
11. C. Tadulinga Mudaliyar.

The committee with V. Chakkarai Chetty as the convenor met on 21, 23, 28 and 30 December 1938 and discussed the full provisions of the Public Health Bill. Sardar P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker took active part in the deliberations of this committee and finally this committee submitted its report to the council which forwarded the same to the Government. Thus as a Councillor, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker evinced interest in the Public Health Department of the Madras Corporation.

HIS ROLE AS DEPUTY MAYOR

On 6 November 1939, when S. Satyamurthi was elected as the Mayor of Madras for the year 1939- 40, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker was elected as the Deputy Mayor of Madras. Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker held the post of the Deputy Mayor till 4 November 1940.

On the day of the election to the post of Mayor and Deputy Mayor, a meeting of the council of the Madras Corporation was held. K. Venkateswami Naidu, the





retiring Mayor invited nominations for the election of the Mayor Dr. V. Krishna Rao proposed the name of S. Satyamurthi. This was seconded by K. Sreeramulu Naidu. Since there was no other nomination, S. Satyamurthi was declared elected as the Mayor of Madras for 1939 - 40. S. Satyamurthi then took the chair as the Mayor. He invited nominations for the election of the Deputy Mayor. K. Vankataswami Naidu proposed the name of P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker.

This was seconded by A.R. Venkatram Achar. Since there was no other nomination, P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker was declared elected as the Deputy Mayor of Madras for 1939 - 40.

Sardar P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker offered his congratulation to Satyamurthi on his elevation to the exalted office of the Mayor of Madras and expressed a fervent hope that in his period considerable improvement would be effected to the affairs of the Corporation of Madras.

Satyamurthi, reciprocating the same sentiments, congratulated Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker on his election. as Deputy Mayor in the following words: I now congratulate my esteemad friend Mr. P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker, who has been unanimously elected as the Deputy Mayor. I am sure in the discharge of his duties, his qualities of head and heart, will stand him in good stead. I wish him all success in that office. I promise to give him more opportunities than what Dr. Krishna Rao or Mr. Rajagopalan got.

Audikesavalu Naicker thanked the councillors for having elected him as Deputy Mayor and said that he would try to deserve the confidence placed in him.

To felicitate S. Satyamurthi, the Mayor and P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker, the Deputy Mayor and to thank K. Venkatswami Naidu, former Mayor, a public meeting of the residents of Triplicane was held on 3 December 1939 6 P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker said that in the past Madras had led in many aspects of civic administration, and he was sure that during the Mayoralty of Satyamurthi that prestige would be kept up.

On the same day, the members of the Mahatma Gandhi Valibar Sangam, Krishnampet presented addresses of welcome to S. Satyamurthi and P.M. Audikasavalu Naicker. Replying to the addresses, Audikesavalu Naicker said that his association with Satyamurthi went back to nearly twenty years and he considered it his proud privilege to have been elected Deputy Mayor when Satyamurthi was the Mayor of the city.





In another function held on the same evening, the members of the Madras District Congress Committees entertained S. Satyamurthi and P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker at Tea at the 'Congress House', Royapettah. In his speech on the occasion, P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker assured that the fair name of the Madras city would be kept untarnished.

During P.M. Audikesavelu Naicker's tenure of office as the Deputy Mayor of Madras, Satyamurthi was very often absent from the city on account of his membership of the Delhi Legislative Assembly. So, Audikesavalu Naicker ably assisted him during his absence in the administration of the Madras Corporation. He was Largely responsible for the provision of several amenities for the North Madras Division of the Corporation.

P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker attended the meetings of a special committee constituted to consider the resolutions passed by the All India Burma Mayor's Conference which was held at Karachi on 28 and 29 July 1930. This committee met on 27 November, 1939 and 5 December 1939 and approved some of the resolutions of the All India Burma Mayor's conference to improve the working conditions of the Corporation.

In November 1939, under the leadership of Satyamurthi and Audikesavalu Naickers the Elementary Education Budget was passed by the Corporation Council and sent up to the Government. Further, under their leadership, the city cleaning campaign was inaugurated and programme for inspection of the several divisions of the city was chalked out.

On 10 June 1940, Audikesavalu Naicker as Deputy Mayor forwarded the resolutions of the Corporation Council to the chief secretary, Government of Madras. These resolutions which were mostly passed in May 1940 were intended to make improvements in the administration of the Madras Corporation.

The second session of the All India Mayor's conference was held in the first week of August 1940 at the Ripon Buildings, Madras with S. Satyamurthi, Mayor of Madras in the chair. During their stay in Madras to attend the conference, A.R. Siddiqi, Mayor of Calcutta, Laljee mehorotra, Mayor of Karachi, Goonasinha, Mayor of Colombo, Hussainbhoy Esmailjee, Deputy Mayor of Karachi and B. Mukherji, Secretary, Calcutta Corporation visited a number of municipal institutions in the city. P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker along with K. Venkatswami Naidu, N. Rajagopalan and C. Venkatswami Reddi accompanied them in their visit. The places of their visit





included the Mid-day Meals Centre, Chindadripet, the Corporation Playground, Theagaraya Nagar, the Corporation Girls' School, T.P. Koil Street, Triplicane, the Corporation Boys' School, Vallabha Agraharam, the child welfare centre, Triplicane, the Zoo and the People's Park, the Corporation Workshops and some of the model tenements.

When Audikesavalu Naicker was the Deputy Mayor of Madras, he was largely instrumental in effecting improvements for a cremation ground in Moolakothalam near Korukkupet.

Among the major schemas and proposals initiated during the Mayoralty of S. Satyamurthi was, the Poondi Raservoir Scheme. This scheme ensured perennial water supply to the city of Madras. Audikesavalu Naicker also assisted Satyamurthi in to launching of this schemes.

On the occassion of his relinquishing office as Mayor of Madras S. Satyamurthi appreciated the support rendered to him by Audikesavalu Naicker in the discharge of his duties. He also thanked him for his 'splendid and loyal' help.





CHAPTER - V **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

HIS OTHER ACTIVITIES

Apart from being a councillor and Deputy Mayor of the Madras Corporation, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker was also a member of the Madras Legislative Assembly during 1937-39. After India became independent, he was a member of the Parliament from 1950 to 1952.

1. HIS ROLE IN THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

According to the Government of India Act 1935, provincial autonomy was introduced. Election to the Madras Legislative Assembly, was held in 1937. In this election, the Congress won a grand victory for the Assembly seats, securing 159 seats out of 215 seats. The Justice Party could secure only 16 seats. The first congress ministry was formed under the chairmanship of C. Rajagopalachari.

When the elections took place for the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1937, P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker contested the election as a congress candidate from North Madras constituency. C. Parthasarathi Naicker was set up as the candidate of the Justice Party to oppose Audikesavalu Naicker in the constituency.

C. Parthasarathi Naicker was popular in that areas. So to oppose him was not an easy task for the congress. Hence elaborate preparations were made by the congress party for election campaign. M.P. Sivagnanam worked tirelessly in the congress campaign in favour of Audikesavalu Naicker, Along with other congress leaders, Sivagnanam also addressed several meetings appealing to the electorate to exercise their franchises in favour of Audikesavalu Naickar. Even Rajaji expected that congress would not win the election in that particular constituency, where Audikesavalu Naicker contested. But Audikesavalu Naicker won with a resounding victory, securing a big Lead against his rival candidate. While C. Parthasarathi Naicker got 2332 votes, Audikesavalu Naicker secured 4335 votes.

Audikesavalu Naicker was an active member of the Madras Legislative Assembly from 1937 to 1939. He regularly attended the Assembly meetings and took part in its debates. In one of the debates in the Madras Legislative Assembly in September 1937, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker wanted that when a member who





had given notice of a question was absent in the Assembly any other member could be allowed to put the question on behalf of the absent member.

He made this plea with a view to simplify the procedure adopted for the discussions and debates in the Assembly. Finally his demand was granted.

Audikesavalu Naicker was interested in promoting the welfare of the peasants and in relieving them of their debts. A debate took place in the Legislative Assembly when a Bill seeking to provide debt relief to farmers was introduced it in January 1938.

The Bill was known as the Madras Agriculturists Relief Bill. Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker who was a champion of the cause of agriculturists ably supported the Bill throughout the discussions. Later the Bill was passed.

Audikasavalu Naicker was a staunch believer in prohibition. He was fully aware of the evil effects of the practice of consuming liquor. He realised the pernicious impact of this practice on the downtrodden section of the society. He advocated total prohibition and supported the Prohibition Bill when it was passed in 'the Madras Legislative Assembly through the initiative of C. Rajagopalachari.

2. HIS ROLE IN THE PARLIAMENT

India became independent on 15 August 1947. The constitution of India was drafted by a Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly. This committee was headed by Dr. Ambedkar. The Constitution was finally passed by the Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949 and it came into effect on 26 January 1950.

Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker was nominated by the President as a member of the Parliament in 1950. He was one among the members who represented the then Madras State. He was allotted quarters in 29 Constitution House, New Delhi. He continued to be member of the Parliament till the General Elections in 1952.

As a member of the Parliament, he took active part in the parliamentary debates. He supported the introduction of the well subsidy scheme throughout the country.

In another parliamentary debate held on 27 February 1950, he stressed the need for the representation from backward communities in a commission which was to be appointed to investigate the conditions of socially backward classes.





When the Parliament met on 6 March 1950, Sardar Audikesevalu Naicker pleaded for the necessity for setting up a broad gauge in the Southern Railway.

A Railway accident occurred on the night of 3 March 1950 when Madras-Calcutta Mail derailed between Tada and Sullerpetta. The engine and the first four bogies on the train capsized. Six persons were killed and ninety six received injuries. This railway accident figured in the Parliament on 6 March 1950. Participating in this debate, Sardar Audikesavalu Neicker wanted to know whether the government of India would pay the necessary compensation to those who were either killed or injured in the accident. He was convinced when Gopalaswami, the then Minister of Transport and Railways assured him that the said compensation would be paid by the government.

When the Parliament met on 14 March 1950, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker emphasised the need for remodelling the Villupuram Railway Station.

He was also interested in the expansion of Madras Harbour without affecting the beauty of the Marina Beach. He expressed this view in a parliamentary debate. Thus he was proved to be an active member of the Parliament.

3. HIS OTHER SERVICES

In the succeeding years, till his demise in 1964, Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker took interest in the public affairs and rendered valuable service, He served in the Indian Railways Advisory Boards and Railway Users Consultative Committees. He was responsible for implementing the double tract line from Tambaram to Villupuram and in introducing Electrification of the Railway Line between Tambaram and Villupuram. With his untiring efforts a New Railway Station was opened at Nungambakkam near Loyola College and T.B. Sanitorium near Tambaram and also a Railway Station at Perungalathur.

He was the President of the Madras Chunnambu (Lime Kilm) Merchants Association and he made representations on behalf of the above Association to the South India Chamber of Commerce. He provided employment opportunities to the weaker sections of the society particularly the Aadhi Dravidas, Harijans, Aadhi Andhras and the weaker sections of the society. The entire rubbish grounds in Korukkupet and Tondiarpet areas were converted into Lime Kilm business centres which provided employment, opportunities to the down trodden and weaker sections of the society.





He took keen interest in the welfare of the Vanniyakula Kshatriya Community and worked for its upliftment.

He was responsible for the success of the Congress party in subsequent general elections in which the Vanniar Kula Kshatriya Community supported the Congress through his efforts and the Vanniarkula Kshtriya Community members involved themselves and participated in the Congress movements. Because of his major assistance the commonwealth party and Toilers party were merged with the Congress party and the entire Vanniarkula Kshatriya Community gave their unstinted and united support.

The Congress was able to form the Government with a thumping majority in the general elections: The Vannaiyarkula Kshatriya community took lot of interest in the Congress party. As office bearers of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee and President of the Madras chingleput District Congress Committee, he enrolled majority of the Vanniyarkula Kshatriya community people as Congress members and because of his efforts many Vanniyarkula Kshatriya community conferences were organised to support the Congress Institutions.

He continued to be a staunch Congressman till the end of his Life.

He was the founder President of the All India Political sufferers Association and Tamil Nadu Freedom Fighters Welfare Association. He arranged many conferences in this connection at All India and state levels and he represented that the Freedom fighters should be given lands for cultivation and employment opportunities should be provided to the family members of the freedom fighters.

Under his leadership majority of the freedom fighters were given lands for their Livelihood under the Grow More Food Campaign. As a Social worker and political a sufferer conferences arranged by him put him forth the claims of the political sufferers before the central and state governments for grant of pensions to deserving and economically weaker sections of the freedom fighters and also for the grant of Railway passes to them.

As a social worker he organised many conferences for the social justice. He strenuously worked for the eradication of untouchability and for womens welfare and he arranged many conferences in this regard through the Madras Mahajana Sabha. He was connected with many Educational Institution such as Sir Thyagaraja College, North Madras Social and Cultural Association and also President of the Madras





Social Service League and Civic Amenities were provided. With his vast experience in the Corporation of Madras as councilor and Mayor of Madras and also Leader of the Educational and Taxation committees, he opened three corporation reading rooms and two clock towers and five play grounds for the citizens of North Madras particularly. He is the lover of Agriculture and Horticulture and developed lands at Perungalathur and assisted for the growth of Agriculture and Horticulture.

Sardar P.M. Audikesavalu Naickar passed away on 9 September 1964. M. Bhakthavatsalam, the then chief Minister of Tamil Nadu called at his residence and paid his Last respects to him.

CONCLUSION

Born in a Pious Hindu Vaishnavite Family which rose to prominence in business field in North Madras Sardar P.M. Audikesavalu Naicker started his career as a labour leader. He associated himself with the stalwarts of the labour movement in Madras like T.V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, Singaravelu Chettiar and B.P. Wadia, and worked zealously for the welfare of the labourers, He organised labour unions and led some labour strikes which culminated successfully.

Imbued with patriotic fervor even during his early Life, he started participating in the freedom movement and emerged as a full-fledged freedom fighter, when Gandhiji launched his Non co-operation movement in 1920, Because of his involvement in the Indian National Congress, he rose to the position of the secretary of the Madras District Congress Committee and took steps for the spread of the Congress movement and ideals in the city of Madras and through out the present Chingleput District, A close associate of S. Srinivasa Iyengar and S. Sathiyamurthi, he played a significant role in the freedom movement in Tamilnadu. He was an ardent follower of Gandhiji and was arrested while participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement and in the Anti war Movement, His political career was a saga of toils and turmoils and service and sacrifice.





He displayed his indomitable courage in opposing the British Government when he participated in the Salt Satyagraha movement in Madras and was given the title of "Sardar" along with Sardar Vallabhai Patel and Sardar Vedarathnam Pillai of Vedaranyam. It was indeed an unique which he richly deserved.

While in Vellore Jail, he suffered a calamity in his family in the death of his son. But he bore the suffering with courage and conviction.

He was a firm believer in the policy of Congress capturing the Corporation and Municipalities and in minimising the rigours of the British rule in those Local bodies. He served the Corporation of Madras, first as a Councilor for many years and then as a Deputy Mayor for one year. As a Councilor he discharged his duties with a sense of devotion. Even when he was in Vellore Central Jail, he requested the authorities to permit him to attend a meeting of the Corporation Council. Although his request was not granted, it revealed his sense of responsibility and devotion to duty. As the Deputy Mayor of the Corporation of Madras, he was a pillar of support to the then Mayor, S. Satyamurthi when he undertook Civic improvement programmes in the city of Madras.

He had immense faith in Gandhiji's ideals and worked for the upliftment of the Harijans. He wore Khadi dress and was the Vice - President of the All India Khadi and Swadeshi Exhibition Committee in 1939.

A staunch believer in prohibition and in relief to the agriculturists, he supported the prohibition Act and the Madras Agriculturists Relief Act, which were passed by the Madras Legislature through the initiative of C. Rajagopalachariar.

He took keen interest in the welfare of the Vanniyakula Kshatriya Community to which he belonged. He appealed to the community to be nationalists, whenever he was called upon to preside over the conference of the most backward Community. He also favoured the education of women.

Sardar Audikesavalu Naicker had a magnetic personality and wore the peculiarly South Indian dress with his turban and a walking stick. His Commanding Voice and his witty and humorous way of speaking attracted large audiences and admirers. He led a Life of honesty and simplicity.

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