

# Department of Employment and Training

## TNPSC GROUP II MAINS - UNIT II

**Course:** TNPSC Group II Mains Material

**Subject:** Tamil Society

**Topic:** Origin and Development of Justice Party

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**Director,  
Department of Employment and Training.**

## Early Efforts

In the mid-19th century, the British government introduced a significant order: the 1854 Standing Order (No.128(2), 1854). According to this order:

1. Appointments to lower government positions should not be the exclusive right of influential families.
2. The positions in each district should be distributed among the prominent communities of that district.

In 1871, the Census Superintendent W.R. Cornish recommended the following:

1. The government should not make policies based on a "Brahmin perspective."
2. Government positions should be limited according to the population of non-Brahmin communities like Hindus and Muslims.
3. Government policies should avoid giving preferential treatment to any particular caste.

The 1854 Standing Order and the 1871 recommendation were essential in laying the groundwork for the growth of the Justice Party.

### Adi Dravidar Jana Saba, 1892

The largest regional political organization of non-Brahmins in Madras Presidency (now Tamil Nadu) was the Justice Party. Before its formation, several efforts were made in this direction, and one significant attempt was the formation of the **Adi Dravidar Jana Saba** in 1892. This marked the first time that the term "Dravidians" was used to address the marginalized communities.

### Two Publications, 1895

Three years after the formation of the Adi Dravidar Jana Saba, two pamphlets were published in 1895 under the pseudonym "Fair Play":

1. "The Non-Brahmin Races and Indian Public Service"
2. "The Ways and Means for the Amelioration of Non-Brahmin Races"

These publications highlighted the Brahmin dominance in government positions and called for the inclusion of non-Brahmin communities. They were the first to bring the issue of non-Brahmins into the public discourse and were written from a nationalist perspective.

### C. Sankaran Nayar, 1904, 1908

Before becoming a judge, C. Sankaran Nayar criticized the concepts of equality and brotherhood promoted by the British, which he felt were in direct contradiction to the caste system. In 1904, he spoke about this, and in 1908, during a speech at the University of Madras, he stated that political progress was not possible as long as the caste system remained in place.

### Madras Non-Brahmin Association, 1909

In 1909, two non-Brahmin lawyers, P. Subramaniam and M. Purushothaman Naidu, founded the **Madras Non-Brahmin Association**. The objective of the association was to promote education among non-Brahmins. Initially, the association aimed to enroll 1,000 members, but it struggled to gain support from the influential non-Brahmin elites at the time. Despite these challenges, the association was the first such movement of the 20th century.

### **Madras United League, 1912**

Three years after the formation of the Madras Non-Brahmin Association, the **Madras United League** was formed in 1912 by non-Brahmin government officials. Influential figures like Saravanan Pillai, G. Veerasamy Naidu, and N. Naresamy Naidu were the core members. This political body, which initially operated without any political affiliation, focused on social activism. It was later renamed **Madras Dravidian Association** on October 1, 1912, with C. Natesa Mudaliar serving as its secretary.

### **Achievements of the Madras Dravidian Association**

After its formation, the Madras Dravidian Association achieved several milestones:

1. It opened branches across Madras.
2. It established a hostel specifically for non-Brahmin students.
3. It organized annual meetings for non-Brahmin graduates in Chennai to raise awareness about its objectives and activities.
4. Two books were published that contained the association's demands and were well-received. The association's efforts sparked greater awareness among non-Brahmins and marked a significant step towards social change.

### **Royal Commission, 1912**

In 1912, a Royal Commission on Public Services was set up to investigate the dominance of Brahmins in government services. P. Thiyagaraya Chetty, a member of the Madras Legislative Council, presented evidence about the Brahmin monopoly. The Commission examined 42 witnesses, and one of them, revenue officer Balaji Rao Naidu, suggested that caste-based representation in the government could be a solution to protect the interests of non-Brahmins.

### **Letters Uprising, 1915**

In 1915, a book containing 21 letters was published by non-Brahmin C. Sankaran Nayar. The letters attracted widespread attention and encouraged non-Brahmin leaders to reflect on the issues they were facing. The letters also discussed the creation of a political body called the **Dravida Maha Sabha** to form branches in districts and villages. The book *Dravidian Worthies*, written by C. Sankaran Nayar in the same year, was also well-received and inspired non-Brahmin communities to challenge their social and political realities.

### **Election Defeat (1916)**

- In the 1916 Imperial Legislative Assembly elections, non-Brahmin candidates like T.M. Nayar and P. Ramarayar were defeated by Brahmin candidates like P.S. Srinivasa Sastri and K.V. Rangasamy Iyengar.

- Similarly, Pitti Tyagaraya Chetti and Kumar Venkatarayudu, backed by Annie Besant's Home Rule League, were defeated by Brahmin candidates.
- All candidates were members of the Indian National Congress.
- The defeat was a significant shock to non-Brahmin leaders, as Brahmins, though a small minority, held dominant positions in government and other influential sectors, such as law and medicine.
- The elections widened the divide between Brahmin and non-Brahmin communities and sparked self-awareness among non-Brahmin leaders.

## Rise of the Justice Party (1916)

- Following the election defeat, Pitti Tyagaraya Chetti and M. Nayar, along with their supporters, decided on two important actions in November 1916:
  1. Forming the **South Indian People's Association**.
  2. Establishing the **South Indian Liberal Federation**.

### South Indian People's Association

- This association functioned like a joint-stock company with the aim to launch newspapers in English, Tamil, and Telugu to highlight the grievances of non-Brahmins.
- Tyagaraya Chetti served as the secretary.

### South Indian Liberal Federation

- This group became a political party with goals like advocating for the rights and welfare of non-Brahmins, negotiating with government officials, and implementing schemes for non-Brahmin communities.
- It published newspapers in English and regional languages like Tamil and Telugu.
- The party was later renamed the **Justice Party** after its English newspaper "Neethi" gained influence.

### The Non-Brahmin Manifesto (1916)

- In December 1916, Tyagaraya Chetti issued the **Non-Brahmin Manifesto**, which highlighted issues like:
  1. The Indian readiness for self-rule and the dominance of Brahmins in key sectors, despite being a minority.
  2. The lack of representation for non-Brahmin communities in government services and education.
  3. The manifesto called for the elimination of caste discrimination and the empowerment of non-Brahmins before self-rule could be achieved.
- This manifesto was considered a Magna Carta for non-Brahmins in Chennai.

#### The main objectives of the Justice Party (JP)

- i) To create and promote the Educational, Social, Economic, Political and material progress of all communities other than Brahmins of South India.
- ii) To work for Non-Brahmins upliftment through Constitutional government.
- iii) To make the government truly a representative government.
- iv) To create public opinion in favour of Non-Brahmins demand.



### Criticism and Impact

- The manifesto served as a political statement of identity for non-Brahmins and shaped Tamil Nadu's political landscape.
- National newspapers criticized the manifesto, accusing it of being inflammatory and divisive.
- Despite criticism, the Justice Party's influence grew, and it continued to advocate for the rights of non-Brahmin communities.

### Justice Party Newspapers, 1917:

- **1917:** Tamil Nadu People's Association sold its shares and raised Rs. 40,000 to buy a printing press.
- **Launch of "Justice" newspaper:** T. M. Tham became the chief editor, and M. S. Purnalingam was the associate editor.
- **"Dravidan" newspaper:** Started by Bhaktavatsalam Pillai in June 1917.
- **"Andhra Prakashika" newspaper:** Published by A. C. Parthasarathi Nayudu.
- **Role of newspapers:** Spread the principles, policies, and activities of the Justice Party.

### Non-Brahmin Conference, 1917:

- **First Non-Brahmin Conference:** Held on August 19, 1917, in Coimbatore under Ramarayanin's leadership.
- **Justice Party's objectives:**
  1. Improve educational, economic, social, and ethical conditions for all South Indian communities.
  2. Represent non-Brahmins' views to the British government.
  3. Promote the party's policies and plans through public meetings and publications.
- **Subsequent conferences:** Held in Coimbatore, Salem, Tirunelveli, and other cities.
- **First state conference:** Held in Chennai on December 28-29, 1917, focusing on education, agriculture, vocational training, political reform, and more.

### The First Four Years, 1916-1920:

- **Challenges:** The Justice Party faced opposition from Brahmin groups with strong intellectual, financial, and government backing.
- **Brahmin factions in Chennai:** Mylapore, Egmore, and Salem groups, which opposed the Justice Party's policies.
- **Key issues:** Opposition to communal representation (reserved seats) and Gandhi's non-cooperation movement.

### Justice Party and the Home Rule Movement:

- **1916:** Both the Justice Party and Annie Besant's Home Rule Movement were started.
- **Home Rule Movement support:** Strong support from Brahmins in Tamil Nadu.
- **Justice Party opposition:** Opposed the Home Rule Movement due to its Brahmin backing.
- **Justice Party's stance:** Argued that the Home Rule Movement would primarily benefit Brahmins rather than non-Brahmins.

### 1917 August Declaration:

- On August 20, 1917, Edwin Montagu, Secretary of State for India, announced that the British government would grant Indian representation in government and establish local self-governing institutions.
- This announcement gave a sense of hope and momentum to the Indian National Congress and its leaders in Tamil Nadu.
- Several meetings were held in Tamil Nadu to garner public support for representation, focusing on a common platform for non-Brahmin communities.

**Thiyagaraya Setti's Cable:**

- Thiyagaraya Setti, a leader of the Justice Party, sent a cable to Montagu, demanding separate constituencies for non-Brahmin groups and reservations in government jobs, similar to the Minto-Morley reforms of 1909 for Muslims.

**Madras Presidency Association:**

- Non-Brahmin leaders such as E.V. Ramasamy Naicker and others established the Madras Presidency Association to oppose the Justice Party's stance.
- The association aimed to promote the welfare of backward and marginalized groups, while also resisting British rule.
- The Justice Party criticized the association for trying to divide the unity of non-Brahmin communities.

**Montagu's Visit to Chennai (1917):**

- Edwin Montagu visited Chennai on December 14, 1917, to understand the perspectives of various leaders and groups on representation.
- The Justice Party submitted a memorandum demanding proportional representation for five major social groups, including Brahmins.
- However, Montagu did not accept the demands.

**Dr. T.M. Nayar's Efforts (1918):**

- In response to Montagu's rejection, Dr. T.M. Nayar was sent to London in 1918 to rally support for the Justice Party's demands for representation.
- Nayar's actions, including meetings with British parliamentarians and public campaigns, raised awareness about the importance of proportional representation.

**Southborough Committee:**

- The Southborough Committee was set up to draft a franchise framework under Montagu's plan.
- Dr. Nayar raised his concerns about the exclusion of non-Brahmin representatives from the committee and did not participate.

**Joint Select Committee (1919):**

- A Joint Select Committee was formed to finalize the Government of India Act (1919-20) based on multiple opinions.

- Key leaders from the Justice Party, including members from Tamil Nadu, participated in this process and successfully garnered support from Labour and Liberal parties in Britain.

**Meshtan's Arbitration (1920):**

- The Joint Select Committee recommended proportional representation for both Brahmins and non-Brahmins.
- However, the actual number of reserved seats for non-Brahmins in the Madras Legislative Assembly would be decided by the local government, not the British parliament.

**Compromise Agreement and Non-Cooperation Movement:****Compromise Agreement (1920):**

- Discussions held in Chennai between the Justice Party, Congress, and Madras Provincial Union Party.
- A compromise agreement was reached in March 1920, influenced by British official Baron Meston.
- 63 plural-member constituencies were allocated to non-Brahmins: 3 for cities and 25 for villages.
- This was a significant achievement for the Justice Party, supported by several groups.

**Non-Cooperation for Non-Cooperation (1919):**

- Gandhi launched the Non-Cooperation Movement in opposition to Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and Rowlatt Act (1919).
- The Justice Party refused to cooperate and decided to participate in state legislative elections under the reforms.
- The Justice Party believed social justice could be achieved under British rule, unlike Gandhi's vision of independence through non-cooperation.

## Justice Party Timeline

1. **Congress Participation in Elections:**
  - The Congress Party did not participate in the 1920 elections.
2. **Leadership of Justice Party (JP):**
  - **First President:** P.T. Chetty
  - **First Secretary:** Arcot Ramasamy
3. **Chief Ministers from the Justice Party:**
  - **1920-1921:** A. Subbarayalu Reddiyar
  - **1921-1926:** Panagal Raja
  - **1926-1930:** P. Subbarayan
  - **1932-1936:** Raja of Bobbili
  - **1936-1936:** P.T. Rajan
  - **1937-1937:** Kurma Vengada Reddy Naidu (last Chief Minister from Justice Party)
4. **Key Political Developments:**
  - **1923:** First no-confidence motion in Indian legislative history was moved against Panagal Raja.
  - **Election Results in 1926:**



- Swaraj/Swatantra Party: 41 seats
- Justice Party: 21 seats
- 5. **Periyar's Leadership and Transition to Dravidar Kazhagam:**
  - **22 December 1938:** Periyar became the President of the Justice Party.
  - **27 August 1944:** At the Salem Conference, the Justice Party was renamed **Dravidar Kazhagam (DK)** under Periyar's leadership.
- 6. **Formation of AIADMK:**
  - **17 September 1972:** **ADMK (Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam)** was formed by C.N. Annadurai.
  - **1976:** The name was changed to **AIADMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam)**.

## Achievements of the Justice Party

### Legislative and Governance Achievements:

1. **1920:**
  - **Madras Elementary Education Act** (Amendments in 1934, 1935)
  - **Madras Local Boards Act** (Replaced by Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act, 1994)
  - **Madras District Municipalities Act** (Replaced by Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act, 1994)
  - **Madras Town Planning Act**
2. **1921:**
  - **Communal G.O.:** Introduced communal reservations in government jobs.
  - **5 August 1921:** Thanikachalam Chettiyar introduced a bill to formalize reservation policies.
  - **16 September 1921:** Reservation in **government jobs**.
  - **15 August 1922:** Reservation in **education** (opposed by M.C. Rajah).
  - **Women's Suffrage:** Justice Party supported granting voting rights to women in 1921, implemented in 1926.
3. **1922:**
  - **Ayurvedic Medicine Development Policy**
  - **State to Aid Industries Act:** Promoted industrial development.
  - **Hindu Paripalana Act:** Focused on reforming Hindu temples and endowments.
4. **1923:**
  - "Education for All" initiative.
  - Abolished the **Mirasdari System** and introduced **modern irrigation systems**.
5. **1924:**
  - **Staff Selection Board:** Precursor to recruitment systems in Tamil Nadu.
  - **1929:** Established **Madras Public Service Commission** (later Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission in 1970).
6. **1925-1927:**
  - **1925:** Andhra Sarvakala Salai Act.
  - **1926:**
    - **Hindu Religious Endowment Act:** Regulated temple administration.
    - Founded **Andhra University**.
  - **1927:** Hindu Religious & Charitable Endowment Department was formed.
7. **1927, 1930:**
  - Devadasi Abolition Bill introduced by Muthulakshmi Reddy.
  - **1948:** Devadasi Abolition Act passed.



**8. 1928**

- **Quota System** was introduced by **V. Muthaiah Mudhaliar**.
  - **Proposed by:** Shanmugam
  - **Bill passed by:** B. Munusamy Naidu
  - **Guided by:** C. Natesa Mudhaliar

- **V. Muthaiah Mudhaliar** is regarded as the **Father of Communal Representation**.
- **Periyar** referred to **Muthaiah Mudhaliar** as the "**Black Horse**."

**9. 1929**

- Establishment of **Annamalai University** to promote Tamil language and higher education.

**10. 1933**

- Under the **City Municipal Act**, the post of **Mayor** was reintroduced during the tenure of the **Raja of Bobbili Ministry**.

**11. 1949**

- The **Devadasi Abolition Act** came into force, officially banning the Devadasi system.

**Social and Cultural Reforms:**

1. The Justice Party pioneered **communal reservation policies**, ensuring equitable opportunities for backward communities in jobs and education.
2. Supported women's empowerment by advocating for **voting rights** and opposing regressive practices like the Devadasi system.
3. Implemented reforms in temple management through the **Hindu Religious Endowment Act**, ensuring better governance and inclusivity.

**Infrastructure and Educational Development:**

1. **Ayurvedic Medicine Policy** encouraged traditional medicine.
2. Focused on **education for all**, reserving seats in schools and colleges for underprivileged groups.
3. Supported the establishment of **Andhra University** to promote higher education.

**Significant Initiatives for Governance:**

1. Abolished outdated systems like the **Mirasdari System** and introduced modern **irrigation systems**.
2. Established recruitment bodies like the **Staff Selection Board** and **Madras Public Service Commission**, enhancing administrative efficiency.

**Decline of the Justice Party:**

1. **Singular Focus on Caste-Based Representation**

- The Justice Party primarily focused on **caste-based representation**, neglecting broader socio-political and economic issues.
- 2. **Internal Conflicts**
  - **Factionalism** arose within the party due to members' extravagant lifestyles and personal ambitions for power.
- 3. **Anti-People Policies and the Rise of the Congress Party**
  - Certain policies of the Justice Party were perceived as being against the interests of the people, leading to a decline in popular support.
  - The growth and increasing influence of the **Indian National Congress** further diminished the Justice Party's relevance.
- 4. **Failure to Address Key National Issues**
  - The Justice Party failed to voice opposition to significant events like the **Jallianwala Bagh massacre**, which alienated it from the masses and weakened its political standing.

### Practice Questions :

1. How did the Justice Party address the lack of representation and discrimination faced by non-Brahmin communities in its early years (1916–1920)?
2. What were the key legislative and governance achievements of the Justice Party between 1920 and 1949, and how did these contributions influence Tamil Nadu's socio-political landscape?

