

List of Mudaliars

Mudaliar also **Mudaliyar**, **Mudali** and **Moodley** is a title used by Tamil castes such as [Agamudayars](#), [Vellalars](#) and [Sengunthars](#). It is derived from the honorary title **Mudali** meaning a person of first rank in the Tamil language which was bestowed upon top-ranking bureaucratic officials and army officers in medieval south India. The surname is generally prevalent among Indian Tamils and the Tamil diaspora though it is also used in other parts of South India.

Historical personalities

Poets

- [Ottakoothar](#): Poet in Chola dynasty and author of Thakayagaparani and Saraswathi Andhadhi
- [Andhaka Kavi Vira Raghava Mudaliar](#): A poet of the 16th century
- [Sekkizhar](#)

Kings and lords

- [Vallal Sadaiyappa Mudaliar](#): A landlord and patron of Tamil Poet [Kambar](#) who created *Kamba Ramayanam*

Ministers

- [Ambi Aramvalartha Mudaliar](#): Reputed minister during the reign of [Krishnadevaraya](#)
- [Ariyanatha Mudaliar](#): Vellala Dalavoy of the Vijayanagar viceroy Viswanatha Nayaka.
- [Sekkizhar](#)^l: Minister and a poet

Modern personalities

Social leaders, activists

- [S. P. Ayyaswamy Mudaliar](#)
- [C. Jambulingam Mudaliar](#)
- [OKSR Kumaraswamy Mudaliar](#) aka Tiruppur Kumaran (1904–1932) a leader died holding the Indian national flag
- [Muthuranga Mudaliar](#)
- [Sarojini Varadappan](#)
- [M.B.Nirmal](#): Founder and chairman of [Exnora International](#)
- [Thillaiyadi Valliammai](#), a South African Tamil woman who fought the apartheid regime along with [Mahatma Gandhi](#)^l

Tamil literature

- [Paventhara Bharathidasan](#): Tamil poet also known as "Puratchi Kavignar"

- [Kalyanasundara Mudaliar](#): Tamil writer, Thiru Vi Ka
- [Makara Karthikeya Mudaliar](#): Tamil scholar
- [Pa. Subramania Mudaliar](#): Tamil scholar
- [Varadarasanar](#): Tamil novelist, Mu.Va
- [Mahavidwan Vasudeva Mudaliar](#): Tamil scholar
- [T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar](#): A scholar and author of Kambar tharum Ramayanam; hailed from Athur Mopothiyar Gothram of Tenkasi
- [Erode Tamilanban](#), noted poet
- [Solomon Pappiah](#), Tamil scholar and debate judge

Philanthropists

- [Pachaiyappa Mudaliar](#): Philanthropist after whom the [Pachaiyappa's College, Chennai](#) was named.^[13]
- [Raja Sir Ramaswamy Mudaliar](#): Philanthropist who endowed a hospital and dispensary in the Native infirmary
- [W. T. Masilamani Mudaliar](#), Philanthropist of educational purposes
- [Arcot Narrainsawmy Mudaliar](#), Philanthropist who founded the R.B.A.N.M.'s Educational Charities and R.B.A.N.M.'s Chatram and other Charities.
- Sir Chevalier Dr. [R. A. N. Muthusamy Mudaliar](#), Founder President of Dr.RANM Arts and Science College, Erode, run by The Mudaliar Educational Trust.
- [Jambulingam Mudaliar](#), donated his 600 acres of land voluntarily to the government and made sure the neyveli lignite plant is setup as government enterprise. As a tribute his statue was erected at the first tunnel in Neyveli.

Politics



Natesa Mudaliar, Founded [Justice Party](#) along with [Theagaroya Chetty](#) and [Dr. T. M. Nair](#) as part of the Dravidian movement.

- [C. N. Annadurai](#): Former chief minister of Tamil Nadu and founder [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam](#) (DMK).
- [C. Natesa Mudaliar](#): Founded [Justice Party](#)
- [V. R. Nedunchezhiyan](#): Former Finance Minister of Tamil Nadu and former interim chief minister of Tamil Nadu.
- [N. V. Natarajan](#): Founding member of DMK and former minister of Labour and Backward Classes in the Tamil Nadu government during 1967-75
- [C. S. Ratnasabhpathy Mudaliar](#), Father of Modern [Coimbatore](#)
- [C. Muttukumarasami Mudaliyar](#), Indian politician and hereditary zamindar of Chunampet. Member of the Madras Legislative Council 1904-7
- [O. V. Alagesan](#)¹: Former union minister of India
- [K. Anbazhagan](#): Former Finance Minister of Tamil Nadu and DMK General secretary from 1977 to till date.
- [Pulavar K. Govindan](#): Former speaker, TN legislative assembly
- [M. Bhakthavatchalam](#): Former chief minister of Tamil Nadu and Congress leader.
- [P. T. R. Palanivel Rajan](#): (1932–2006) Formerly speaker of Tamil Nadu Assembly, Endowment Minister
- [R. N. Arogyasamy Mudaliar](#): an Indian civil engineer and politician who served as the Minister of Development in the [Madras Presidency](#) from 1926 to 1928
- [Jayanthi Natarajan](#): Former MP from [Indian National Congress](#) party
- [Muniswamy Mudaliar](#): a Fiji Indian politician & a member of the Legislative Council of Fiji from 1932 to 1937
- [Muthu Coomaraswamy](#): Member of Legislative council, Srilanka
- [Thambaiyah Mudaliyar Sabaratnam](#): Member of Legislative Council, Srilanka
- [Ponnambalam Arunachalam](#): Tamil political leader in Ceylon and a member of the Executive Council and the Legislative Council.
- [Ponnambalam Ramanathan](#): Former [Solicitor-General](#) and Tamil political leader in Sri Lanka.
- [A. M. Ponnuranga Mudaliar](#): Former MLA of [Sholinghur constituency](#), INC
- Sir [P. T. Rajan](#): Former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Leader Justice Party.
- [C. Ramaswamy Mudaliar](#) (1905–1997), Indian politician from [Indian National Congress](#). Member of Lok Sabha for Kumbakonam from 1951 to 1957.
- [S. J. Ramaswamy Mudali](#): Former DMK MLA
- [A. Ranganatha Mudaliar](#): Indian politician and theosophist from [Bellary](#)
- [S. C. Sadayappa Mudaliar](#): Former INC MLA

- [S. V. Natesa Mudaliar](#): Former INC MLA from Kanchipuram, Famous for defeating former chief minister C.N Annadurai.
- [Era Sezhiyan](#): Former MP
- [A. C. Shanmugam](#): Founder [New Justice Party](#), ex-MLA, MP
- [P. Shanmugam](#): Former Chief Minister of Pondicherry State and present State Congress Chief.
- [N. V. N. Somu](#): Former MP
- [A. R. Subbiah Mudaliar](#): Tamil Nadu politician
- [C. P. Subbiah Mudaliar](#): Tamil Nadu politician
- [C. N. Visvanathan](#): Former [MP](#), [Lok Sabha](#)
- [T. M. Anbarasan](#): Ex Labour Minister Of Tamil Nadu

Founders of educational institutions

- [V. L. Ethiraj](#) Founder of Ethiraj college for Women
- [A. C. Shanmugam](#) Founder, [Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute](#)
- [G. Viswanathan](#): Founder of [VIT University](#), Vellore

Doctors,scientists and academicians

- [A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar](#) First Indian Principal of the Madras Medical College, Served as Chairman-UNESCO; Vice Chancellor, University of Madras(padma Vibushan)
- [Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar](#): [Justice Party](#) Politician, Member of [Winston Churchill](#)'s war cabinet, First President of [ECOSOC](#) and Founder of [WHO](#), [Diwan](#) of [Mysore](#), Vice Chancellor, University of Travancore.
- [MyIswamy Annadurai](#): Indian scientist and [Chandrayaan-1](#) project director

Civil service and judiciary


- [S. Muthiah Mudaliar](#): High court lawyer and politician, [Justice party](#)
- Justice [S. Natarajan](#): Son-in Law of Sir P.T Rajan, Chief Minister of Composite Madras. Justice Natarajan was Judge of the High Court of Madras and Judge of the Supreme Court of India^[19]
- [Arunachalam Mahadeva](#): Diplomat and Minister of Home affairs, Srilanka
- [Rajarathnam Mudaliar](#): DIG- Madras State after whom the [Rajarathnam Stadium](#) in Chennai was named^[citation needed]
- [Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar](#): a senior leader of the Justice Party, Diwan of Mysore, Founding Chairman of ICICI Bank
- [T. V. Rajeswar](#), IPS Officer and Current Governor of Uttar Pradesh
- Rao Sahib [Adukkambarai Singaravel Veerasami Mudaliyar](#): Deputy Assistant Controller of Military Accounts, Burma. He was awarded the title of Rao Sahib by the then Viceroy [Lord Wavell](#) on 14 June 1945

Sports

- [Mithali Raj](#): Indian Women's Cricket Team Captain
- [Thirunavukkarasu Kumaran](#): Cricket Player, [Indian Cricket League](#)
- [Vasudevan Baskaran](#): Former field hockey player and captain

Arts and cinema



 Pammal Sambandha Mudaliar, involved with early Tamil theater

- [A. R. Rahman](#): Music director, composer and singer. (Born A. S. Dileep in a Hindu Mudaliar family^{[20][21]})
- [Anandaraj](#): Tamil film actor
- [Kalaipuli S.Dhanu](#): Tamil film producer
- [Nataraja Mudaliar](#): Producer of the first South Indian feature film
- [T. R. Sundaram](#): Tamil film producer, Modern Theatres
- [Na. Muthukumar](#): Tamil lyricist
- [Papanasa Mudaliar](#) (1650–1725): an early Carnatic music composer
- [G. V. Prakash Kumar](#): Tamil film music director
- [Prashanth Thyagarajan](#): Tamil film actor
- [M. K. Radha](#): cinema actor & recipient of the Padma Shri Award
- [V. Ravichandran](#): Kannada film actor and director
- [K. S. Ravikumar](#): Tamil film director and actor
- [Pammal Sambandha Mudaliar](#): Playwright and director of Tamil drama
- [R. K. Selvamani](#): Tamil film director
- [R. K. Shekhar](#): Music conductor and composer for Malayalam films
- [S. Shankar](#): Tamil film director
- [Thengai Srinivasan](#): Tamil film actor
- [Tharini Mudaliar](#): Australian actress
- [P. S. Veerappa](#): Tamil film Actor.
- [Thyagarajan](#): Tamil actor, stunt man, director and producer

- [Pa. Vijay](#): Tamil lyricist and actor
- [Pandiarajan](#): Tamil film Director and actor
- [Vijaya Bhaskar](#): Kannada film Music Director
- [Vijayalakshmi Navaneethakrishnan](#) : legendary [Tamil](#) folk artist

Persons with Mudaliar ancestry

- [Joseph Vijay](#): Tamil film actor
- [M. Night Shyamalan](#): Indian-born American filmmaker, script writer and actor
- [Vikram](#): Film actor

Spiritual

- [Kirupanandha Variyar](#): Shaivite spiritual leader
- [Vethathiri Maharishi](#): Founder of the The World Community Service Center, an organization promoting [world peace](#)¹

Business

- [Chenniappan](#): Chairman, [Nilgiris](#)
- [Sivasankaran](#): Chairman of Sterling Group
- Kulandivel Mudaliar: Founder of [The Chennai Silks](#)

Miscellaneous

- [Varadarajan Mudaliar](#): Known as Vardha Bhai; Tamil movie [Nayagan](#) was based on his life story

Thondaimandala Mudaliar

Thondaimandala Mudaliar

முதலியார்



[Sir P. T. Rajan](#) • [Jayanthi Natarajan](#) •
[Bhaktavatsalam](#) • [Muthiah Mudaliar](#) •
[O. V. Alagesan](#)

Regions with significant populations

[Tondai Nadu](#), [Chola Nadu](#)

Languages

[Tamil](#)

Religion

[Hinduism](#)

Related ethnic groups

[Mudaliar](#), [Kongu Vellalar](#), [Karkathar](#),
[Tirunelveli Saiva Pillai](#), [Tamil people](#)

Thondaimandala Mudaliar ([Tamil](#):

[முதலியார்](#)) is a [Tamil](#) caste in the Indian state of [Tamil Nadu](#). They trace their lineage to the ancient Chola Velirs (relatives of the Chola Dynasty). [Sekkizhar](#), the author of the [Periyapuram](#), was from this community.

Sangam and Medieval Tamil literature

According to [Sangam literature](#), the Vēlir migrated from the [Gangetic plains](#) of ancient [Dvārakā](#) under the guidance of the sage [Agastya](#). This is described by Nacchinarkkiniyar in his commentary on the [Tolkāppiyam](#) (*Payiram; Porul.34*). The sage Agastya took with him 18 families of [Vēls or Vēlirs](#) and their kings from Tuvarai (identified with Dvārakā) in the north, and migrated south. [Irunkōvēl](#), a Vēlir King of the Irunkōvēl line and a contemporary of [Karikala Chola](#) (*circa 270 BCE*), mentions his lineage and traces it back 49 generations to one of the kings of their ancestral home in Dvārakā. This is repeated by the poet [Kapilar](#) when he sings to Irunkōvēl and asks him to marry the two daughters of his close friend and patron [Vēl Pāri](#), another Vēlir king.

[Sekkizhar](#), one of the most prominent members of this community, is referred to as *Ganga-Kula Tilaka*, and his lineage is extolled in various pieces of medieval Tamil literature, the most notable among them being his biography by Umapati Sivachary. He was born in Kunrattur and would soon rise to become the Chief Minister of [Kulothunga Chola II](#).

Migration

48,000 [Vellalars](#) migrated north with the [Chola](#) King [Karikala Chola](#) (ruled around 270 BCE) after he conquered [Thondaimandalam](#) from the [Kurumbars](#), a nomadic tribe also known as the Aruvalars. He parcelled out the land to the Vellalar

chiefs, now known as the Thondaimandala Mudaliars, and divided the territory into 24 *Kottams* or districts: Pulal, Puliur, Eekadu, [Manavur](#), Chenkkadu, Payur, Eyil, Thamal, Uttukadu, Kalathur, Chembur, Amur, Eethoor, Venkundram, Palkunram, Ilankadu, Kaliyur, Chriukarai, Paduvur, Kadikai, Chenthirukai, Kunrapattiram, and Venkadam Velur.

Nāladīyār

During the pre-[Chola](#) period, the chiefs of the [Muthuraja](#)/Muttaraiyar community ruled over the [Tanjore](#) district in [Tamilakkam](#). They controlled the fertile plains of the Kaveri region. When the Cholas came to power, the Muttaraiyar were turned into feudatories. *Muttaraiyar* literally means *King of three territories*. They built many temples for [Siva](#). One of the most famous from this clan was Peru Muttaraiyar, who was known for his great wealth and grand feasts. Two stanzas (200, 296) of [Nāladīyār](#), one of the works of ancient Tamil literature, is dedicated to him. One of their titles was *Lord of Tanjore*.

During the period of [Ko Rajakesarivarman Rajaraja Chola I](#), we know of at least one high ranking chief and a feudatory of the Chola from this community: Śēkkizhār Araiyan Sankaranarayanan, also known as Chola-Muttaraiyan. *Araiyan*, which is the Tamil equivalent of the [Sanskrit](#) *Raja* or King, in this context means a chieftain or a governor. The title *Chola Muttaraiyan* means that he was a subordinate of the Chola King and was the Lord of the Muttaraiyar people.

Sivagnana Botham

The Kalappālar clan was an ancient and powerful Tamil clan which finds mention in Tamil literature. They embraced Saivism among other sects and religions. Two of the most famous from this clan are Achyuta Kalappālarāyan and his pious son Meykanda Deva. Achyuta Kalappālarāyan was a powerful chieftain or king,

while his son, [Meykanda Deva](#), (the enlightened one), is the author of *Sivagnanabodham* and is considered the father of modern [Shaivism](#). Some historians like P.T Srinivasa Iyengar identify the [Kalabhra](#) king Achyuta Vikranta with Achyuta Kalappala, while others like Krishnaswami Aiyangar refute this theory. Iyengar holds the view that Achyuta Vikranta of Kalabhra kula was the same person as Achyuta Kalappala, and that Kalabhra in [Pali](#) becomes Kalappala in Tamil. He also proposes that Achyuta Vikranta was Tamil, as the three Tamil kings ([Chera](#), Chola, and [Pandya](#)) sing to him in Tamil when they are displaced and imprisoned.

Ekambavānan

[Magadaimandalam](#) was the region around [Aragalur](#) and was ruled by the clan of [Banas](#). They were feudatories of the Chola and the [Pallava](#). One member of this clan was Ekambavānan or Ekamabara Mudaliyar. The son of a rich landlord and a Bana prince, he was tutored by the poet [Kambar](#). Tradition has it that on one occasion, the three kings, Chola, Chera, and Pandya, paid him a visit. His wife welcomes the kings and informs them that he had just left for the fields. To this, the three kings crack a joke that he has gone to plant the fields and that it was not an appropriate job for a prince. Enraged by the ridicule of the kings regarding agricultural operations, the wife retorts that her husband would indeed plant the crowns of the three kings in the fields.

When Ekambavanan returns, his wife informs of the visit of the kings and he immediately goes after them and takes them to task. The three kings realize their mistake and pay homage to Ekambavanan, who then releases them.

Periyapuranam

[Sekkizhar](#), the author of the Tamil hagiography *Periyapuranam* or *The Great Purana*, consisting of the life stories of the 63 Tamil Saiva Saints or the [Nayanars](#), hailed from this

community. Kulottonga was a devotee of Lord Siva Nataraja of Chidambaram and continued the reconstruction of the cult center of Tamil [Shaivism](#) begun by his predecessors. At the same time he was enchanted by the Jain epic *Jivaka Cintamani*. To wean him away, Sekkizhar composed and sang the [Tamil](#) epic *Periyapurānam*.

The [Periyapurānam](#) was composed during the 12th century during the reign of [Kulothunga Chola II](#). Sekkizhar introduces his brother as Thondaimān Pallavaraiyan, the Lord of Thondaimandalam and the king of the [Pallavas](#). When Thondaimandalam was affected by a famine, Sekkizhar sacrificed all his wealth in support of the people. For this act, the [Chola](#) king conferred upon him the title *Thondaimandalam nindru kātha Perumāḷ* (the great one who stood in front and saved Thondaimandalam)- Here we have an inscription of him from the Amman shrine of the Kunnattur, Sriperumbudur Taluk on the west wall of the Amman shrine, Tirunagēśwara temple:

“ Records an agreement of the Tiruvunāligai sabhāi of the temple to burn a lamp in the shrine for the money received from the wife of Śēkkizhār Bhuvanapperumāḷ alias Tundaganādudaiyān. ”

Tundaganādudaiyān literally means as the one who owns Tundaganādu which is the Sanskritized form of the Tamil [Thondaimandalam](#).

Initially a feudatory of [Rajaraja Chola III](#) (ruled 1216 to 1256), Kōpperunchingadēva I lived in one of the most turbulent times of the Chola and the [Pallava](#) empires. He had numerous titles, a few of which were *Alagiya Siyān* (the handsome lion), *Sakalabhuvana Chakravarthin* (the emperor of the universe), and *Avaniyālapirandān* (born to rule the world). From multiple

inscriptions, we know that he bore numerous titles and would assume the titles of all his ancestors: Ātkondadēvan, Gāngēyan, and *Tamilnādu Kātha Pallavaraiyar* or *Tamilnādu Kātha Perumāl*. In one of his inscriptions he is described thus (about mid 13th century):

“ The hero of heroes and the son of the black lord
the victor of victors, the Ātkondadēvan Gāngēyan of
militant long spear. ”

The Chola empire was rife with corruption and was surrounded by hostile states waiting to make a move. He had to frequently suffer incursions by the Hoysalas into Thondaimandalam. Finally, the breaking of the treaty by king Maravarman Sundara Pandya and the blind eye turned by Rajaraja Chola III would enrage him so much that he would decide to take on the reigns of the Chola empire. He marched to Sendamangalam and imprisoned the Chola king and become the guardian of young prince [Rajendra Chola III](#).^[40] Rajaraja Chola III appealed to the [Hoysala](#) emperor Vira Narasihma, who was matrimonially related to the Chola family, for help. The Hoysala emperor realised the weak state of affairs in the Chola empire, and took this opportunity to expand his own empire. Kopperinchinga submitted briefly and released the Chola emperor.

After having released Rajaraja Chola III, Kopperinchinga I retreated, regrouped. He decided to take a stand one last time. He dispatched his son, Kopperinchingadēva II. Born to Kōpperinchingadēva I and his wife Silāvathi, he fought the Hoysalas in the north-west, the Telugu Tikkas in the north, and the Pandyas in the south. He razed the Hoysala empire in the north-west, planted a pillar of victory, assumed the title *Karanataka mana mardhana*, and then performed the *Tulahabara* (weighing oneself against gold and precious gems) with the huge war booty at

Tillai ([Chidambaram](#)). He installed Rajendra Chola III on the throne and they worked together to regain some of the lost territories of the Chola empire). It is for this reason that he is described in his inscription as the *Sun to the Lotus tank (of Chola)*.

Ariyanatha Mudaliar

[Ariyanatha Mudaliar](#) was the Vellala *Dalavoy* (Chief Office Holder) of the Vijayanagar viceroy Viswanatha Nayaka (1529–64). He took power in the rich *Tamaraparani* rice lands. He is credited with founding the *palayam* or *small principalities* system ruled by petty chiefs called [poligar](#) or *palayakarars*. He divided the [Pandya](#) kingdom into 72 *palayams* and commanded the 72 dry-zone poligar chiefs. The [Thousand Pillar Hall](#) in the Meenakshi Temple was constructed by him in 1569. At the entrance of the Mandapam, there is a statue of him seated on horseback.

[Ariyanatha Mudaliar](#) was a pre-colonial military figure and enjoyed a cult status in southern Tamil Nadu. He became a tutelary patron figure amongst some of the region's cattle-keeping groups.

Ceremonies

The members of this community held the right of handing over the crown at the time of coronation ceremony (*mudi-sootu vizha*) of kings and religious heads. In the Tamil classical literature, [Kambaramayana](#), Kavi-chakravarthy [Kambar](#) stated that "the great sage Vashista took the crown from ancestors of [Vallal Sadaiyappa Mudaliar](#) and crowned the King Rama".

Historical personalities

- [Sekkizhar](#), the author of the Tamil hagiography *Periyapuram* or *The Great Purana* consisting of the life stories of the 63 Tamil Saiva Saints or the Nayanars hailed from this community.

- [Thirunavukkarasu Nayanar](#), also known as Appar, one of the 63 [Nayanars](#), celebrated by Sekkizhar in his epic [Periyapuramam](#) hailed from this community. He was a contemporary of Tirugnanasambandhar (younger of the two) and lived during 7th century [Sambandhar](#) affectionately referred to him as *appa*(father). Though born into an orthodox saivite family, Appar initially embraced Jainism and was known as Dharmasena. He would later convert back to Saivism and travel to many places and undergo ordeals to show his devotion to [Siva](#). He would sing one of his hymns in praise of [Siva](#) at [Vaitheeswaran Koil](#).
- [Kotpuli Nayanar](#), one of the 63 Nayanars hailed from Nattiyantankuti. He was so attached to Lord Siva that he allotted a heap of paddy in the form of huge hill in each of the Siva temples to feed the Saiva devotees.
- [Vallal Sadaiyappa Mudaliar](#), a rich 12th-century Vellala chief who had residences at Pudukkottai ([Pondicherry](#)) and Thiruvananthapuram. He was known for his philanthropic activities. He was a close friend and a patron of Tamil national poet [Kambar](#), who wrote [Ramavataram](#) and *Pararajasingham*.
- Ambi Aramvalartha Mudaliar was a minister during the reign of [Krishnadevaraya](#) (1509-1530 AD).
- [Andhaka Kavi Vira Raghava Mudaliar](#) was a poet of the 16th century. He was from Ponvilainthi Kalathur.
- Maavai Kumaraswamy Mudaliar administered the districts of [Madurai](#), [Tirunelveli](#), and [Trichy](#) from 1688 to 1700. His son-in-law, Aarai Aagappa Mudaliar, administered these areas from 1701 to 1726. Since Aarai Alagappa Mudaliar had no children, he handed over the authority to his sister's son-in-law, Dalavoy Kumaraswamy Mudaliar, whose direct descendants enjoy the title of "Dalavoy" to this day.

- Subramanya Mudaliar, a patron of arts and literature, was a Minister in the Pudukottai Kingdom. He is a direct descendant of [Sekkizhar](#).

Modern personalities

Freedom fighters

- [Muthuranga Mudaliar](#): A well known freedom-fighter; hailed from Vanavarayar Gothram of Nasarath Pettai near [Poonamallee](#) in [Thiruvallur](#) District

Social work

- [Sarojini Varadappan](#), Indian freedom-fighter and social activist; daughter of [M. Bhaktavatsalam](#) **Literature**
- [Makaral Karthikeya Mudaliar](#): A scholar and poet in the 19th century who hailed from Veyttur, near [Maduranthakam](#). He authored a number of Tamil books, including *Veleer varalaatrumanbu*, *Tamil Solvilakkam*, and *Mozhi Nool*.
- [Mahavidwan Vasudeva Mudaliar](#): A from [Chettipalayam](#) near [Pothanur](#) in [Coimbatore](#) District
- [Raosahib Vellakal Pa. Subramania Mudaliar](#): A Tamil poet of the 19th century who hailed from Athur Mappothiyar gothram of Vellakal, [Tirunelveli](#) District
- [Rasikamani T.K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar](#): A scholar and author of *Kambar tharum Ramayanam*; hailed from Athur Mopothiyar Gothram of [Tenkasi](#)

Arts and music

- [Salem K.Meera](#) a Karnatic musician in Salem
- [KS RaviKumar](#), a cinema director

Politics



 Nedunchezhiyan (left) with [M. Karunanidhi](#) (center) and [M. G. Ramachandran](#) (right)

- [C. Muttukumarasami Mudaliyar](#), Indian politician and hereditary *zamindar* of [Chunampet](#). Member of the Madras Legislative Council 1904-7
- [S. Muthiah Mudaliar](#), Minister in the Composite Madras Government, 1928-1930 as a member of the [Indian Justice Party](#). He was the author of the Communal Government Order in [Madras Presidency](#) in 1928.
- [Sir P. T. Rajan](#) (1892–1974): Justice Party politician and Chief Minister of Madras Presidency in 1936
- [Palanivel Rajan](#) (1933–2006): Politician of the [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam](#). Speaker, Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, 1996–2001. Minister of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (2006).
- [M. Bhaktavatsalam](#) (1897–1987): Indian freedom fighter and leader of the [Indian National Congress](#). Chief Minister of Madras state from 1963 to 1967.
- [O. V. Alagesan](#) (1911–1992): Indian politician and leader of the Indian National Congress. Minister of External Affairs in the Union Government and Minister of Railways. He resigned his post after a railway accident at [Ariyalur](#), Tamil Nadu.
- [V. R. Nedunchezhiyan](#) (1920–2001): Founding member of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. President of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (1962–1967). Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in 1969 and 1987. He was Education Minister in the

[Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam](#) (DMK) Government and Finance Minister in the [AIADMK](#) Government during the [M. G. Ramachandran](#) period and the [J. Jayalalithaa](#) period. He held portfolios as Minister for more than 25 years in the State of Tamil Nadu.

- [Professor K Anbazhagan](#): General Secretary, DMK Party. He was Minister for Health, Minister for Education, and is currently Finance Minister. He has served for more than 25 years as Minister in the Government of Tamil Nadu.
- [P. Shanmugam](#): Former Chief Minister of [Pondicherry](#)
- [Jayanthi Natarajan](#) - M.P. and congress politician, granddaughter of [M. Bhaktavatsalam](#). She was Minister of Aviation and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India.

Mudaliar

Mudaliar



[Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar](#)• [Sir PT Rajan](#)• [Bharathidasan](#)• [Arcot Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar](#)• [Ponnambalam Arunachalam](#)• [Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy](#)• [C. N. Annadurai](#)• [Mylswamy Annadurai](#)• [M. Bhaktavatsalam](#)• [Pammal Sambandha Mudaliar](#)• [Vethathiri Maharishi](#)• [AR Rahman](#)• [Joseph Vijay](#)• Others

Total population
23.6 Million(Approx)
Regions with significant populations
Tamil Nadu , Sri Lanka , Pondicherry , Singapore , Malaysia , Banglore , Chittoor , Nellore districts and Hyderabad of Andhra Pradesh
Languages
Tamil
Religion
Hinduism
Related ethnic groups
Vellalar , Tamil people , Dravidian people

Mudaliar also **Mudali**, **Moodley** ([Tamil](#): [முதலியார்](#))

) is a title used in [Tamil](#) diaspora. It is derived from the honorary title **Mudali** meaning a person of first rank in the Tamil language which was bestowed upon top-ranking bureaucratic officials and army commanders in medieval [South India](#). The surname is generally prevalent among Indian [Tamils](#) and the [Tamil diaspora](#) though it is also used in other parts of South India.

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Etymology

The word Mudaliar means *first citizens* or *first ones*. The word Mudali was also used to refer to a position held in a [Nagarattar](#) firm as it applies to Vellalar caste.

History

[Karikala](#) Cholan divided *Thondaimandalam* into 24 Kottams and parcelled it out to the [Vellalar](#) Chiefs, awarding them the title Mudali or Mudaliyar- literally meaning *The first citizens* or *first ones* after his son Athondai had won the battle against [Kurumbar](#).

Some of the Mudali clans of Thondaimandalam migrated to Sri Lanka during the period of medieval poet [Kambar](#). For example, some of the [Tamils](#) in [Ceylon](#) trace their lineage to this group some of whom had become saints called [Nayanars](#). The book: *The Tamils in Early Ceylon* By C. Sivaratnam traces some of the *Mudaliyars* in Ceylon to *Thaninayaka Mudaliyar* (among other), a

rich Saiva Velalar who emigrated to [Ceylon](#) from Tondaimandalam

Maanadukanda Mudali, a [Vellala](#) king of [Thondai Nadu](#) had shed over [kamban](#) a shower of gold for his work of Erezhupatu, a literary work praising agriculture. Taninayaga, a Vellala of Seyur was made the chief of Neduntiva.

Rajah of Cochin was also awarded Mudali title according to the book "Jews in India" by Thomas A. Timberg.

Castes such as [Agamudayars](#) also had used Mudali title from historical times as they had served in the regiments

The usage of the title is prevalent, though to a lesser extent, among [Desigar](#), [Chozhia Vellalar](#) and [Karaiyar](#)

Gatti Mudaliar

The Gatti Mudaliars were in charge of the most dangerously exposed province of the Nayak Kingdom with Kaveripuram on the right bank of the Cauvery as their strategic capital commencing one of the principal passes to the Mysore Plateau. The centre of their power seems, however, to have been Taramangalam where they have built a grant edifice of a temple. It is said their domination extended as far as Talaivasal to the east, Dharapuram in Erode district in the west and Karur district in the south. The forts of greatest strategic importance held by the Gatti Mudaliars were Omalur and Attur. By about 1635 A.D., the Muslim Sultans of Bijapur and Golkonda made inroads into the south when the power of Tirumalai Nayak had wanted palacode area came under Bijapur. Meanwhile Kantirava narasa Raja of Serangapatnam took several places in Coimbatore from Gatti Mudaliars in 1641 A.D.

Mudaliar title is used by various castes. Some of the castes using the Mudaliar title are:

Mudaliars of Bangalore

Mudaliars constitute a significant percentage of the population in South Bangalore (surrounding Ulsoor Lake, MG Road, High grounds). Many well-known buildings on MG Road & surrounding were once owned by Mudaliars (e.g. - Gangaram's, Plaza Cinema). The famous "Attara Kachheri" or the red court house that stands opposite of Vidhana Souda was built by a famous Mudaliar contractor. Palatial homes surrounding Windsor Manor (5 star hotel) are even today owned & inhabited by affluent Mudaliar families. The Bangalore Exhibition is usually conducted on the RBANMS grounds in Ulsoor which owned by Rai Bahadur Arcot Narayansamy Mudaliar trust. The trust has several schools and colleges affiliated to it. The famous quizmaster Avinash Mudaliar is another extremely well known Mudaliar. Sandalwood Hero Crazy Star [Ravichandran](#) is also a Mudaliar

Famous Mudaliars of Bangalore

Dr. T.V. Arumugam Mudaliar

Mudaliar was the doctor to the King of Mysore Sri. Jayachamaraja Wadiar and was given the title "Rajasevasaktha" and was recognised by the Viceroy of India. The family resided in Basavangudi near Arumugam Circle which was named after him.

T. V. A. Iswaran Mudaliar

Iswaran, son of T.V. Arumugam Mudaliar was Chief of Police in Bangalore and was then appointed the Trade Commissioner for Mysore in London in the 1930s.

Dr. T. Seshachalam Mudaliar

Seshachalam Mudaliar was professor of Surgery in Bangalore Medical College and discovered the recurrent artery of the appendix (Artery of Seshachalam described in Gray's Textbook of Anatomy).

Dharma Rathnakara Rai Bahadur Arcot Narainaswamy Mudaliar

Narainaswamy Mudaliar was the founder of RBANM Educational Institutions, Bangalore

Lt Gen (Dr) V. J Sundaram Param Vishist Seva Medal (Retd.)

An Aeronautical Engineer of distinction and a distinguished scientist of the Indian Army that he served in several important positions before he rose to the rank of Lt.General. He was awarded Vishist Seva Medal in 1980 for his work on India's First Surface-to-Air Missile. In 1983 he became the first Project Director for Prithvi- Surface-to-Surface Missile that led to a total successful flight with all systems integrated for which he was awarded the Athi Vishist Seva Medal in 1989. From 1992 to 1997 he was Chairman of the Management Boards of the Indian Missile Programmes—Prithvi, Trishul, Akash, Nag and Agni.. For his contribution to the productionization of Prithvi and Trishul he was awarded the Param Vishist Seva Medal in 1994. He has been the Mission Director for 42 launches of the Prithvi and Dhanush Missiles from 1988 till date including 3 Enemy Short Range Ballistic Missiles as part of the Air Defence Interceptor Programme. Presently he is Advisor Micro and Nano Systems with the National Design and Research Forum at Bangalore where he promotes micro-air vehicles. He is also Vice Chairman of the Engineering Staff College of India at Hyderabad. He has been awarded • National Aeronautics Prize for Missile R&D, • Aryabhata Award from the Astronautical Society of India for contribution to Aerospace • Instrument Society of India Award for miniaturized Flight instrumentation of missiles • Lifetime

Achievement Award from the Defence Research and Development Organisation.

[Dr.Mylswamy Annadurai](#)

It is interesting to note [Dr.Mylswamy Annadurai](#) renowned space scientist, though hails from Tamil Nadu, is living in Bangalore since 1982. He has been even decorated by the government of [Karnataka](#) award of the [Rajyotsava Prashasti](#) for Science (2008).

Mudaliars of Hyderabad

Mudaliars live in significant numbers in the areas of Boiguda, Padma Rao Nagar, Maredpalli in Secunderabad. They are Ahamudaiyar tulu vellal Mudaliar community. They run a popular girls school called "Keys High's School" in addition to some colleges. Mudaliars started developing the Secunderabad Cantonment commercially. Otherwise, Secunderabad had only large number of tents housing the troops of the British army as told by Mr. Luther in book Lashkar - 200 Years Of Secunderabad. The Mudaliars, who were camp followers of the British, made immense contributions for the growth of education and health care and explained the growth of the Secunderabad Club from a public room. Telugu actor [Dr. Rajasekhar \(actor\)](#) belong to the community.

Thondaimandala Saiva Vellalar

The Thondaimandala Mudaliar or Thondaimandala Saiva Vellalar are a high ranking caste in the state of [Tamil Nadu](#), India. They trace their lineage to Sekkizhar, the author of the Periyapuram. They are the original homogeneous group of Mudaliars who were settled in Thondaimandalam or Thondai Nadu in South [India](#) by Chola King, [Karikala Chola](#).

Thondaimandala Kondaikatti Vellalar

Tradition suggests that this group were the first Vellalar groups that were settled in Thondaimandalam by Adondai Chakravarti after overthrowing the Kurumbar sovereignty. Adondai Chakravarti is described in various ways: a) as a lieutenant in the Chola empire, b) as the son of ancient Chola King Kokkili and a Naga princess, c) as the illegitimate son of Rajendra Kulotunga Chola I and a palace attendant, d) son of Karikala Chola. This claim appears blurred due to the ambiguous identity of Athondai Chakravarti and the time of such settlement. There are conflicting sources, some that say, the settlement was in 7th or 8th century AD and others that say that it was much later in 11th or 12th century AD. Nevertheless, this settlement is much later than Karikala Chola's settlement of Tondaimandala. There were many Mirasidars and Zamindars belonging to this group. They are mainly concentrated in Chennai, Kanchipuram and Vellore districts.

Thuluva Vellalar/Arcot Mudaliar

Thuluva Vellalar or Tuluva or Tulumar is a sub-caste of Vellalars and were immigrants from the Tulunad, a part of the modern district of South Canara. A King named Athondai Chakravarthy had brought down the people of Thuluva Vellalar to the present day Thondaimandalam of Tamil Nadu. Athondai Chakravarthy had established his rule over Northern Tamil Nadu after winning the battle over the Kurumbar. This is the reason that part of North Tamil Nadu was named as Thondaimandalam, named after this victorious king. It has also been noted that Athondai Chakravarthy had brought Brahmins from Srisailam to settle down at Thondaimandalam^[26]. Arcot Mudaliar or Thuluva Vellalar is a majority caste among the Mudaliars of Northern Tamil Nadu and Southern Andhra Pradesh.

Kerala Mudali

Kerala Muthali (Mudali) belongs to various castes using Mudaliar title. They are predominantly found in the [Trivandrum](#),

[Ernakulam](#), [Alappuzha](#) and [Palakkad](#) districts of Kerala and Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu.

Kerala Muthalis still keep their separate identity even though they are a micro-minority caste in Kerala. They are listed in Other backward castes in the state of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry states have categorized them as Backward Castes.

Kerala Muthalis are primary worshippers of Tamil God [Lord Muruga](#). Their cultural identity is similar to native Hindu Keralites

Nanjil Mudali

Nanjil Mudali is another group of people who have the Mudali surname. They belong to Nanjil Nadu in Kanyakumari district.

Sengunthar

Sengunthar is a large caste among the castes using Mudaliar Title. During the British rule, their refusal to bow down to the new rulers while the rest did resulted in entire families being wiped out by the British army and their native co-conspirators. This eventually led to them even dropping the Muthali name as a means to survive and/or left the country. Presently a great number of them reside in other countries all over the world. They come under Other backward castes list. In Andhra Pradesh, they are clubbed with Kaikala and Karikalabhakthula, both being the sub-castes of Padmashali community for OBCs reservation

Sri Lankan Mudaliyars

The book: *The Tamils in Early Ceylon* By C. Sivaratnam traces some of the *Mudaliyars* in Ceylon to *Thaninayaka Mudaliyar* (among other), a rich Saiva Vellala who emigrated to [Ceylon](#) from Tondaimandalam.

Jaffna has two or three clans from Thondaimandalam with the Mudali surname. Irumarapum Thooya Thaninayaga Mudali from Seyyoor and Mannadukonda Mudali whose clan has been quoted even during famous poet Kambar's time. Here is the direct quotation from Kailaya Malai, a historical book of Jaffna on the migration into Jaffna from Thondai Nadu. The other clans may come under this section or under Sri Lankan Vellalar section.

The next was the Vellala of the family of him who shed over kamban a shower of gold for the work of Erezhupatu, whose country was Tondainade, who had a widespread name, who used to wear a lotus garland and whose name was Maanadukanda Mudali. He was made to reside at Irupalai. The next was the Vellala of Seyur, who was as wealthy as Indra, and who never deviated from the path of viture. whose garland was of water lilies. Whose fame was great and whose paternal and maternal lines were matchless and pure and whose name was Taninayaga. He was made a chief of Neduntiva..

See [Sri Lankan Mudaliyars](#) for the class of Mudaliyars created by the British administrators during 19th century [Sri Lanka](#).

Senaithalaivar

Senaithalaivar or Senaikudaiyar is among the castes using Mudaliar title, which is mainly concentrated in central and southern Tamil Nadu

Sengunthar

Sengunthar (Tamil : செங்குந்தர்)		
Castes of India		
Race		
Dravidian race		
Title		
Mudaliar (Tamil : மதுலியார்)		
Regions with significant Population		
Tamil Nadu		
Languages		
Tamil		
Gothram		
Upa Subramanya		
Religion		
Hinduism		
Classification		
Tamil people		

Sengunthar([Tamil](#): செங்குந்தர், pronounced [\[sɐŋkuntɻ\]](#)) or **Kaikolar**([Tamil](#): கைக்கோளர்) is a [Tamil](#) community found in the [Indian state](#) of [Tamil Nadu](#) and also in some parts of [Kerala](#), [Karnataka](#), [Andhra Pradesh](#) and [Northern Province, Sri Lanka](#). Sengunthars use the title of [Mudaliar](#) after their names. They are classified into various sub-sects based on a [patrilineal](#) system called *Koottams*, which is similar to [gotras](#).

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Etymology

- The word Kaikkolar comes from the words *kai* (hand) and *kol* (shuttle used in looming or spear).
- Kaikkolar also meant men with stronger arms(Men with Dagger).
- Senguntham means a **red dagger**. Sengunthar literally means a warrior with *Red Dagger*.
- Khai Kula, corruption of the [Pali](#) word Khatia Kula meaning a "Warrior Community"

This dual name of Sengunthar and Kaikolar has been in use for over 1200 years based on literary evidence. Sengunthars use the title of [Mudaliar](#) after their name.Sengunthars of South Africa use the title as **Moodley**, a variant spelling of the word Mudali.

Literary Evidence about Sengunthar

Adhi Diwakaram

The earliest literary evidence about Sengunthar occurs in Adhi Diwakaram, a Tamil lexicon written by Sendan Diwakarar. This dictionary dated 8th–9th century AD-says

படையார்

தலைவர்

கைக்கோளர். It meant the profession of

Kaikolars-Senkuntharpadai (army of Sengunthars),
Senaithalaivar(commander-in-chief), Thanthuvayar(weaver),

Kaarugar(weaver). This clearly proves Kaikolar pursued weaving along with soldiering profession

Senguntha Prabanda Thirattu

Senguntha Prabanda Thirattu is a collection of various literary works written about Kaikkolars. It was published by editor *Sabapathi Mudaliar* in 1926

These literary works contain the following:

Senkunthar pillai tamizh by Gnanaprakasa swamigal, Tirisirapuram Kovintha Pillai & Lakkumanaswami

Senkunthar pillai tamizh is a collection of songs from palm-leaf manuscripts about Sengunthars. It was published by Ñanappirakacacuvamikal, Tiricirapuram Kovinta Pillai, Ilatcumanacuvami in 18th century in Kanchipuram

Eetti ezhubathu

The major literary work about Sengunthar was a poetry by Ottakkoothar, a poet of the same caste, known as Eetti ezhupathu in 12th century AD during the reign of [Rajaraja Chozha II](#). This work describes the mythical origin of Sengunthar, expeditions of Sengunthar chieftains and also praises 1008 Kaikolar who gave their heads for the same work to be written by the court poet of chozha

Ezhupezhubathu

Ezhupezhubathu is a sequel to Eetti ezhubathu written by Ottakkoothar. In this work, he prays Goddess Saraswathi to fix the heads of 1008 Sengunthars to their respective bodies.

Kalipporubathu

Kalipporubathu is a collection of 10 stanzas compiled by [Kulothunga Chozha III](#). These stanzas were written after Ezhupezhubathu in express of joy when the 1008 heads of Kaikolars got attached to their respective ones. These stanzas include the songs who witnessed it in the court of Raja Raja II

including himself which was later compiled by his successor Kulothunga Chozha III

Thirukkai vazhakkam

Thirukkai vazhakkam describes the good deeds of Sengunthars and their saivite religion principles. It was written by Puhalendi

Sengunthar silaakkiyar malai

Sengunthar Silaakkiyar malai was written by Kanchi Virabadhra Desigar which describes the legends and eminent personalities born in Sengunthar community

Other works included in Senguntha Prabanda Thirattu are Sengunthar kulamaatchi, Kaliththurai malai, Senguntha Velavar thirukkai vazhakku anthathi, Senguntha vinayaga puranam, Sengunthar Verpathigam, Sengunthar Marabu Vilakkam and Senaithalaivar Marabu Vilakka suravali

Kaikolar Warriors

Commander-in-chiefs and Chieftains

Kaikkolar were Chieftains and Commander-in-chiefs of Later chozhas. Kaikkolar Commander-in-chiefs were known as **Samanta Senapathigal** or **Senaithalaivar**. The Chieftains of Sengunthar caste were mentioned in works such as *Vallaan kaviyam*, *Vira Narayana Vijayam* and *Eeti ezhubathu*. They were Suban, Chieftain of [Thiruchendur](#), Padaimaruthan, Chieftain of [Thiruvudaimarudur](#), Gomathi, Chieftain of Pazhuvur, Kachithaniyan, Chieftain of kachi([kanchipuram](#)), Otriyuran, Chieftain of [Thiruvotriyur](#), Kalanthaiyarasan, Chieftain of Ponvilaintha kalathur, Putridamkondaan, Chieftain of [Thiruvarur](#), Kolanthagan, Chieftain of [Kodunkundram](#), Puliur palli kondaan, Chieftain of [Chidambaram](#), Pinavan, Chieftain of [Kadambur](#), Kandiyan, Chieftain of Thiru kandiyan, Mudhukundra Maniyan, Chieftain of [Virudhachalam](#), Thanjai Vemban, Chieftain of [Thiruvaiyaru](#) and chief minister under [Parantaka I](#)'s reign. Pazhuvur Narayanan and Pazhuvur Veeran, twin-sons of Pazhuvur

Chieftain, were the famous Commander-in-chiefs mentioned in the above works.

Therinja kaikolar padai

Sengunthars who were initially weavers were militarised during the chozha empire and formed a major part of the chozha army from 8th century to 13th century. There were no Sengunthar army before or after the chozha empire. Sengunthar army was known as **Therinja kaikolar padai** (*Terinja* means well known in [Tamil](#) and *Padai* means Battalion). Some of the regiments were further divided into Ilaya Samakkattu and Mutha Samakkattu

Some of the well known Kaikola Battalions were:

- Singalantaka-terinda-Kaikkolar (a regiment named after Singalantaka i.e. Parantaka I)
- Virachozha-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Kodandarama-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Danatonga-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Parantaka-terinia-Kaikkolar
- Muthuvalpetra-Kaikkolar – (meaning the "recipient of the pearl ornamented sword" in Tamil)
- Samarakesarit-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Vikramasingat-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Adityapanma-terinda-Kaikkolar
- Karikala-chozha-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Arulmozhideva-terinja Kaikkolar
- Parttivasekarat-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Gangaraditta-terinja-Kaikkola
- Madurantaka-terinja-Kaikkolar

Smarakesarit-terinja-Kaikkolar and Vikramasingat-terinja-Kaikkolar derived their names from possible titles of Parantaka Udaiyar-Gandaradittatterinja-Kaikkolar[8] must have been the

name of a regiment called after king Gandaraditya, the father of Uttama-chozha. Singalantaka-terinda-Kaikkolar (a regiment named after Singalantaka i.e. Parntaka I)-Danatonga-terinja-Kaikkola (regiment or group). The early writing of the record and the surname Danatunga of Paranataka I suggests its assignment to his reign. Muttavallperra seems to indicate some special honour or rank conferred on the regiment by the king

Paluvettaraiyar regiment

Sengunthars were also soldiers in the regiment of [Paluvettaraiyar](#) and were involved in the invasion of [Sri Lanka](#) by Cholas in the 10th century.

Warrior traditions

Navakandam

Sengunthar soldiers had practiced the tradition of Navakandam. This act involved cutting any of the nine parts of the human body such as arms, legs and even the neck. This was usually done after taking an oath to death in service of a chieftain. Nava Kandam sculpture is found widely all over [Kongu Nadu](#) and at [Tharamangalam](#) Kailasanathar kovil

Saavaankal

Saavaankal or Nadukal was a rock fixed in place of warrior who sacrificed his life by slicing his neck. The name and specialities of the warrior would be written along with his portrait in this Saavaankal. In Thenkarai Moolanatha sami temple in Madurai, a Saavaankal depicting the act of a Kaikkolan warrior holding his hair with his left hand and slicing his neck with his right dated 14th century is said to be annually worshipped by Kaikolar

Military Exploits

In Journal of the Bombay Historical Society, the authors state that in the army of Medieval and Later chozhas, many commanders and captains were drawn from the ranks of Sengunthar. Further records

of exploits of Sengunthar army in [Ceylon](#), [Bengal](#), Burma and [Indonesia](#) were recorded in temple inscriptions.

According to Carla M. Sinopoli in the book *The Political Economy of Craft Production: Crafting Empire in South India*, evidence for Kaikkola armies appear from the chozha period. They describe that Sengunthars were both weavers and merchants and maintained armies to guard their regional trading ventures. Throughout the chozha period, trading and military activities of Sengunthar are predominant. Sengunthar were members of the [Ayyavole](#) 500 regional trading corporation-Sengunthars were referred to as the members of the chozha emperor's royal bodyguards.

Later Society

After 13th century Sengunthars had become associated with weaving completely. According to *Science and Empire: Essays in Indian Context*, by Deepak Kumar, the Sengunthar weavers very often figure in the capacity of kudi, i.e. tenant-cultivators and also holders of kaniyachi, that is hereditary possession over the land. During the period of Sadasiva raya, the sthanathar of the Brahmapuriswara temple made an agreement that they would cultivate certain lands of the Kaikkolar regiment.

Sengunthars Temple Trustees

According to *India Before Europe* by Catherine Ella Blanshard Asher, Cynthia Talbot, Sengunthas attained positions of responsibility at the two major Vaishnavite temples of Srirangam and Tirupati. In Tirupati, they were in charge of distributing the consecrated food offerings to the worshippers.

In the book *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India, 1500–1650*, author Sanjay Subrahmanyam states that many Senguntha families were rich enough to contribute both land and gold to temples.

According to Ruth Barnes in *Textiles in Indian Ocean Societies*, in AD 1418 in Tiruvannamalai, Sengunthars were given the right to

blow the conch, ride palanquins and elephants and wave the temple fly whisk They also built some temples

Sengunthars as Export and Transportation Specialists

As part of their association with the merchant group Ayyavole 500, Sengunthars were responsible for transporting goods manufactured from one area to another in ancient India. Like other merchant groups this led to their settling down in various areas all the way north from the [Vindhya Mountains](#) i.e. [Godavari district](#) to the south in [Sri Lanka](#). Similarly they settled in all the major ports such as [Cochin](#), [Mangalore](#) and Malabar areas. This is shown by the fact that Sengunthars were noted for their handling of export goods in Malabar

Spread of Tamil Literature by Sengunthars

Sengunthars looked on themselves as having a particular responsibility to Tamil as a language and used it as a cultural tool to spread Tamil beyond the traditional boundaries of that language. They had seen themselves as performing a kind of sacred cultural role in reciting the [Tamil Ramayanam](#).

Culture and Customs

The Culture and Customs of the Sengunthars is similar to most tamilians. However there are differences in customs between the various divisions of Sengunthar. The significant difference being that some divisions are more kootam conservative than other Sengunthar groups when it comes to marriage partners.

There is a diverse culture and customs among Sengunthar. Sengunthar follow the local custom and culture of the region where they live. While some Sengunthar groups follow the kootam culture, some groups do not follow kootam culture for marriage. Some intermarry with Akamudayar/Vellala(Mudaliar)

Community Legends and festivals

Mythical origin from Navavirars

Legend says Lord Siva was enraged against the giants who harassed the people of the earth and sent forth six sparks of fire from his eyes. His wife, Parvati, was frightened, and retired to her chamber and in so doing, dropped nine beads from her anklets. Siva converted the beads into as many females, to each of whom was born a hero with full-grown moustaches and a dagger. These nine heroes, namely Viravagu, Virakesari, Viramahendrar, Viramaheshwar, Virapurandharar, Viraraakkathar, Viramaarthandar, Viraraanthakar and Veerathirar with [Lord Subrahmanya](#) at their head, marched in command of a large force, and destroyed the demons. Kaikolar claim to be the descendants of these warriors. After killing the demon, the warriors were told by Siva that they adopt a profession, which would not involve the destruction or injury of any living creature and weaving being such a profession, they were trained in it. Chithira valli, daughter of Virabahu, one of the above commanders was married to Musukunthan and gave birth to Angi Vanman. His descendants were claimed as first generation of Sengunthars. The above legend was also depicted by Adhi Saiva saint Kachiappa Sivachariyar of Kanchipuram around 14th to 15th century AD in his masterpiece **Kanthapuramam**.kaikolars trace their origin to maravans of Chola Nadu who are none other than [kalabhras](#). they attained the title of mudaliar owing to the sanskritization of society and called themselves agamudaiyars and mudaliars moving to Thondai nadu

Legends about Sengunthar killing Demons

Tharagan, Banugopan, Surapadman were the demons killed by legendary Sengunthars according to Eeti ezhubathu and kanthapuramam

Sura samharam

The *Sura Samharam* festival is a ritual tradition practised a long time ago by the Sengunthars. At the Sura Samhara festival, they dress up as the lieutenants of Lord Karthikeya and enact the killing of the demon Narakasura. Viravagu Utsavam is a festival associated

with 14 naattu Sengunthar in the holy town of [Tiruchendur](#) and other abodes of Lord Muruga

Legend of Ayiramkaliyamman Temple in Thirumalairayan Pattinam

Ayiramkaliyamman Temple is located in Thirumalairayan Pattinam near [Karaikal](#). It is said that a pious Sengunthar had a dream to collect a Goddess Amman in a silver box floating in sea. The next day himself along with his friends had gone to the sea-shore and in accordance with the dream found the box. It contained the image of Goddess Amman with an inscription on a palm leaf to indicate that this deity had to be worshipped with 1000 items daily. But since that could not happen daily, people conduct pooja with 1000 items once in 5 years. The idol is dismantled part by part and kept back in the box to be opened after another 5 years only.

Padaikalam Festival

Once in ten years the Kaikolars in numbers flock to [Aragalur](#) for the Padaikalam festival.

Flag ceremony of Nallur Kandasamy temple

The hoisting ceremony at [Nallur Kandaswamy temple](#) commences with the flag being brought out from the Vairavar temple at Kontraladi, a decorated area for worshippers. It is customary for the Sengunthars to bring out and carry the flag as the ceremony of Suren Battle

The day of the flag ceremony finds the houses of Sengunthars beautifully decorated curtains with the picture of [rooster](#), the legendary vehicle of [Lord Muruga](#) hang in their houses.

Traditions

Sengunthar Shaivite priests are vegetarian, wear the [sacred thread](#), and shave their foreheads in the [Brahmanic](#) fashion. Both alcoholic and sexual abstinence are valued, as is control of the passions. But when they are concerned with the sacred locus of the interior, meat eating, blood sacrifice, spirit possession, and the worship of small

gods are all prominent. Sengunthars thus follow both a priestly model and a Dravidian tradition.

Religion

Sengunthars are predominantly [Shaivites](#), with some clans being [Veerashaivite](#). They possess a Clan God as most of the castes in Tamil Nadu. Mostly, it is some form of Goddess [Amman](#). Only a minority of Sengunthar are Vaishnavites. Some have embraced Christianity.

Divisions

Nadus

Historically there were 4 *thisai nadus*, which in turn was divided into 17 *kilai nadus*, exclusive of thisai nadus, totally making 72 nadus in the Sengunthar. The thisai nadus were

- Sivapuram ([Walajabad](#)) to the east, where Kamachchi Amman is said to have placed [Nandi](#) as a guard
- Thonthipuram to the south, where Thonthi Vinayakar was stationed
- Virinjipuram to the west, guarded by Lord Subramanya
- Chozhasingapuram ([Sholinghur](#)) to the north, watched over by Bairava.

Each of the seventy-two nadus is sub-divided into *kilai graamams* (branch villages), *perur* (big town) and *sitrur* (little town). In Tamil literary works relating to the Sengunthar caste, Kanchipuram is said to be the *mahanaadu*, and those belonging thereto are spoken of as the nineteen hundred, who are entitled to respect from other Kaikolars. All these Nadus have now disappeared by time.

Koottams

Now Nadu structure is being replaced by Koottam structure though some sections of Kaikolar do not have it. Koottam defines birth from a single male ancestor. Koottam is transferred

patrilineally i.e., via the father of a person. Hence people belonging to the same koottam are considered as brothers and sisters. Some of the Koottams are mentioned below.

<u>Thondaimandalam</u>				
Kootam Name	Region	God	Goddess	Temple Location
Adhiyamaan	Thiruvallur district, Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh	Subramaniya Swamy	Nanthali Amman	Thiruttani
Vellaathurarr	Thiruvallur district			Vellaathur
Kulasanan	Vellore district, Thiruvallur district		Ellaiamman	Thondaiman Nadu
Yeachean	Pallipattu taluk of Tiruvallur district		Anneamman	Iyyampetti, near Kaveripakkam
<u>Kongu Nadu</u>				
Arasan	Alingiyam, Kurumanthur, Erode district	Palani Murugan	Angala Parameswari Amman	Sokkanur
Kaanchan	Karamadai, Tirupur		Angaala Amman	Coimbatore
ChinnanChetty	Erode District	Palani Murugan	Selliyayi Amman	
KulandaiChetty	Kavindapadi, Erode District	Palani Murugan	Kanchipuram Kamatchi Amman	
Veerabahu				
Kanoorar				
Kariyoorar				
Ukayanoorar				
Sevoorar			RamPalayam Kaali Amman	RamPalayam, Tirupur Dt.(Tirupur-Dharapuram rd).

Pulikutti				
Annathana chozhan	Naduvacheri, Avinashi, Coimbatore district	Chennimalai murugan	Sivalapuri Amman	Naduvacheri, Avinashi, Coimbatore Dt
Sellangu udaiyar(pugaz hurar)	Tirupur district		Angalaamma	Palladam
Karumanda Vathiyar				
24 Nadu Pattakarar				
Pasiyoorar				
Poonduraiyar	Poondurai, Kangeyam , arachalooore, chennimalai, Erode dt		Angalaamma	
Karuvlooran	Naduvacheri, Avinashi, Coimbatore Dt		Sivalapuri Amman	
Gunnathroorar	paghutham palayam, sathyamangalam, erode Dt		kulavilakka mman	
Sooriya Mudhali	Erode Dt		Pon Parappi Amman	
Thadi Komban	Erode Dt		Nalla Pulli Amman	
Pongaloorar	Coimbatore Dt		Neelakandeeswari Amman	
kangeyan	kangeyam, Erode Dt, Tongutipalayam, coimbatore Dt		Angalaamma	
Vazhthu Mudhali	Erode Dt			
Ulagappan	ulagappan, Sivagiri , Erode		Angala Parameswari	kariyampatty, near palani, Dindigul distict
Samaya	Erode Dt			

Mudhali				
Kambarisi	Erode Dt			
Ondi Vagaiyarar	Namakkal district		Periyandichi Amman	11°29'N 78°13'E 11.49°N 78.21°E
Semmarar	Tirupur district			
Thenmandalam				
Kailasa / Namasivaya	Oddanchatram Dindigul Dt		Sangili Karuppanna Swamy, Muthunaickenpatti, Oddanchatram Taluk / Ariyur Chellandi Amman, K. Paramathi,	Karur district
16 Naattu Sengunthar	Thoothukudi , Thiruchendur	Thiruchendur Murugan	Vandimalaichiyamman	

Distribution

Sengunthars live throughout all the districts of Tamil Nadu and union territory of [Pondicherry](#). Though they are prevalent throughout the state, they form a significant population in the following districts of Tamil Nadu

- [Coimbatore](#)
- [Erode](#)
- [Tiruppur](#)
- [Thiruvallur](#)
- [Thiruvannamalai](#)
- [Cuddalore](#)
- [Dharmapuri](#)
- [Vellore](#)
- [Villupuram](#)
- [Salem](#)
- [Karur](#)
- [Kanchipuram](#)
- [Tanjore](#)

- [Nagapattinam](#)
- [Thiruvarur](#)
- [Trichy](#)

They are prevalent in the below districts of Andhra Pradesh

- [Chittoor](#)
- [Nellore](#)

The community is found in the following districts of Kerala.

- [Palakkad](#)
- [Ernakulam](#)
- [Thrissur](#)

In Karnataka, their presence is in [Bangalore Urban district](#)

Sengunthars had also migrated to other states of India such as [Gujarat](#) as Textile Merchants. In [Ahmedabad district](#), there a considerable number of them.

In Sri Lanka

- Nallur/Yaazhpaanam(Jaffna),Karaveddy,Mulliyavalai, Poonagary (Northern Province of Sri Lanka)
- Batticaloa,Thamaraikerny, Arayampathi, Kalmunai (Eastern Province of Sri Lanka)

Sengunthars are a part of [Tamil South African](#) population living in [KwaZulu-Natal](#) region of south Africa.

In Singapore

- [Serangoon Road](#)

SENGUNTHAR

SENGUNTHAR

Origin by Mythology

The Kaikolars also called as Sengunthar, are a large tamil people. Their name comes from a mythical hero 'Veera Bahu' and from the words "kai" (hand) and "kol" (shuttle used in looming or spear). They consider the different parts of the loom to represent various gods and sages. They were in the army of Chola dynasty. They are also known as *Sengundhar*, which means a red dagger.

In the anthology collection of songs from various period about Sengunthar, called *Senguntha Prabhandha Thirattu*, it was claimed that Sengunthas were serving the army of Early Cholas even about 2000 years ago. Further even before the rise of medieval Cholas, inscriptionary evidence exists about Kaikkola in Jain temples of Tamilnadu.

Brief History of Sengunthars in South India

The earliest historically accurate evidence for Sengunthars, as per Chola inscriptions (Thelintha Kaikola Padai) indicate that they belong to the Warrior class. They took up weaving silk and transformed to land owners and business men. Later, during 17th and 18th century history indicate that Sengunthars were predominantly involved in weaving. This is indicated in various sources. At the same time, weaving was not the only occupation involved. Agriculture and business were also secondary occupations of Sengunthars.

Since Sengunthars were not Vellalars and belonged to the idangai(Left-hand) caste group as per old British documents of the 18th century they did not feel bound to the land. They also

migrated across Tamilnadu from their origin to spread Tamil literature.

They form a significant population in Kancheepuram, Tirupur and Salem. They started using Mudaliar surname even though there is no established date on when they started using the title. It should be noted that Sengunthars do not tend to intermarry with other Mudaliars even though they may reside in the same area as other Mudaliars.

Literary Evidence about Sengunthar

The following literature mention about Sengunthar as early as 9th century AD.

Tivakaram – tamil lexicon

The earliest literary evidence about Sengunthar occurs in Tivakaram, a Tamil lexicon (dictionary) from the 9th century AD. This dictionary refers to Cenkuntarpatai – an army of Sengunthars. This proves that the dual name of Sengunthar or Kaikolar was existing for over 1000 years.

Ittiyelupathu – Seventy Spears – By OttaKuttar

The major book about Sengunthar was written by Ottakuttar in 9th century AD. This book called Ittiyelupathu refers to the historical and mythological account of origin of Sengunthar and their relationship with the Chola monarchs.

Senguntha Prabanda Thiratu – Editor Sabapathi Mudaliar

The book Senguntha Prabanda Thiratu was published by editor Sabapathi Mudaliar. This is a collection of songs collected from old manuscripts. These are songs mainly about Sengunthar and their tradition.

Kaikolars using Mudali title from the Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai

It is customary for Kaikolars to use Mudali title after their personal name. In Pondicherry there were many weaver families in the 18th century. Since each caste was represented by two head-men known as nattars, the weavers also were required to select two head-men. Since there was dispute in selecting these two-headmen, the chief dubash of that time Ananda Ranga Pillai was requested by the Governor of Pondicherry to select the two head-men.

The two head-men selected were Muttu Mudali and Ana Nayakka Mudali both from Kaikolar caste. From this we understand that Mudali surname was used by Sengunthars as early as 1750AD.

Cenkuntar pillaittamil by Ñanappirakacacuvamikal, Tiricirapuram Kovinta Pillai, Ilatcumanacuvami

Cenkuntar pillaittamil was a book published in later 19th century. This is also a collection of songs from palm-leaf manuscripts about Sengunthars. It was published by Ñanappirakacacuvamikal, Tiricirapuram Kovinta Pillai, Ilatcumanacuvami

History and Historical Evidence

During chola rule kaikolars served as soldiers and called as “Thelintha kaikolar padai”. Sengunthars were considered as descendents of lord Muruga having a kol{Vel}. There is another story indicating that Sengunthars are descendants of VeeraBahu the general of Lord Muruga.

Sengunthars were prominent members of Tamil society even during the 10th century AD during chola rule.

Sengunthars as Agriculturalists

According to *Science and Empire: Essays in Indian Context*, by Deepak Kumar, the Sengunthar weavers very often figure in the capacity of kudi, i.e. tenant-cultivators and also holders of kaniyachi, that is hereditary possession over the land. During the period of Sadasiva raya, the sthanathar of the Brahmapuriswara temple made an agreement that they would cultivate certain lands of the Kaikkola regiment. Here is a reference that Sengunthars are involved in agriculture and how they used Mudaliar title Cylon

Sengunthars Military Exploits

In *Journal of the Bombay Historical Society*, the authors state that in the Army of Later Cholas from 900-1200 AD, many commanders and captains were drawn from the ranks of Sengunthar. Further records of exploits of Sengunthar in Ceylon, Bengal, Burma and Indonesia are recorded in temple inscriptions.

According to Carla M. Sinopoli in the book *The Political Economy of Craft Production: Crafting Empire in South India*, evidence for Kaikkola armies appear from the Chola period. They describe that Sengunthars were both weavers and merchants and maintained armies to guard their regional trading ventures. Throughout the chola period, trading and military activities of Sengunthar are predominant. Sengunthar were members of the Ayyavole 500 regional trading corporation. Sengunthar armies are mentioned in several 12th century inscriptions and individual Sengunthar are frequently referred to as members of the Chola emperor's royal bodyguard. Sengunthar origin stories also emphasize their military heritage. A twelfth-century epic poem by the legendary Tamil poet Ottakuttan lauds the bravery and prowess of Sengunthar soldiers and traces their roots to the armies of the gods and original chola kingdoms of the early historic period.

Sengunthars Temple Trustees

According to India Before Europe by Catherine Ella Blanshard Asher, Cynthia Talbot, Sengunthas attained positions of responsibility at the two major Vaishnavite temples of Srirangam and Tirupati. In Tirupati, they were in charge of distributing the consecrated food offerings to the worshippers.

In the book The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India, 1500-1650, author Sanjay Subrahmanyam states that many Senguntha families were rich enough to contribute both land and gold to temples.

According to Ruth Barnes in Textiles in Indian Ocean Societies, in AD 1418 in Tiruvannamalai, Sengunthars were given the right to blow the conch, ride palanquins and elephants and wave the temple fly whisk.

Sengunthars as Export and Transportation Specialists

As part of their association with the merchant group Ayyavole 500, Sengunthars were responsible for transporting goods manufactured from one area to another in ancient India. Like other merchant groups this led to their settling down in various areas all the way north from the Vindhya mountains i.e. Godavari district to the south in Sri Lanka. Similarly they settled in all the major ports such as Cochin, Mangalore and Malabar areas. This is shown by the fact that Sengunthars were noted for their handling of export goods in Malabar, according to A Sourcebook of Indian Civilization By Niharranjan Ray and Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya.

Diverse nature of the Sengunthar Nadus forming separate castes with a single name

There are 72 subdivisions or Nadus in Sengunthar. These are separated across hundreds of kilometres in distance. As time progressed, these subdivisions got separated from one another and lost the common cultural bondings. Further based on the location

of the subdivisions, whether in Tamil Nadu or Kerala or Andhra or Karnataka their customs changed. Though they speak different languages in other states, their mother tongue is Tamil.

Finally all that remains common are

- The name of the caste – Sengunthar/Kaikolar
- The chief Goddess – Kanchipuram Kamatchi.

Sengunthar is recognized as a single caste for all legal purposes but in reality these 72 subdivisions are like separate castes with customs according to the regions they live and usually do not intermarry. However this is now changing due to culture integration.

Culture and Customs of multiple sections of Sengunthars

The Culture and Customs of the Sengunthars is similar to most tamilians. However there are differences in customs between the various divisions of Sengunthar. The significant difference being that some divisions are more kootam conservative than other Sengunthar groups when it comes to marriage partners.

Culture and Customs

Sengunthar caste consists of diverse group of people even though they are classified under the same group by the government of India. There is a diverse culture and customs among Sengunthar. Sengunthar follow the local custom and culture of the region where they live. While many Sengunthar groups follow the kootam culture, some groups do not follow kootam culture for marriage. So Sengunthar who live in the same area could belong to different cultures unlike other castes. The accent of Tamil and tradition varies according to the regions they live. So it can be said that though the various Sengunthar groups are called by a single name,

they are neither homogenous nor endogamous. This is a legacy of the federal system of the Sengunthar Nadus and Desams.

Community Legends and festivals

The *Sura Samhara* festival is a ritual tradition practised a long time ago by the Sengunthars. According to the mythology of weaver community, the Sengunthars weavers were born out of nine gems that were scattered from Parvati's anklet. At the Sura Samhara festival, they dress up as the nine warriors of Virabahu, the lieutenant of Lord Karthikeya and enact the killing of the demon Narakasura

Self Sacrifice of Senguntha Soldiers

Along with Agamudayars, Maravars, Kallars, Sengunthas also served in the army of Chola Empire. Similar to them, Senguntha soldiers seemed to have practiced the tradition of NavaKandam. This act involves cutting any of the nine parts of the human body such as arms, legs and even the neck. This is usually done after taking an oath to death in service of a chieftain.

Gods/Goddesses

Sengunthars are predominantly Shaivites. They possess a Clan God as most of the castes in Tamil Nadu. Mostly, it is some form of Amman i.e. Goddess Parvati. Since Sengunthas are considered to be descended from the armies of Lord Muruga, Murugan is their chief god. Sengunthas are historically associated with Shiva Temples in Andhra Pradesh temples like Srisailam, Srikalahasti and Kotappa Konda.

Kootam/kulam

Kootam defines birth from a single male ancestor. Kootam is transferred patrilineally i.e., via the father of a person. Hence people belonging to the same kootam are considered as brothers

and sisters. So marriage between a male and female belonging to the same kootam is prohibited. However distantly they may be related.

Historically there were many kootams in **Sengunthar** in the 72 nadus of ancient past. Each kootam had a leader. The head leader in Kanchipuram was the head for all these leaders. This was used to manage disputes within the community. Nowadays, the kootams have merged into one another and there is no well defined leader for each kootam. It is used only for setting up marriage alliances.

Warrior Clans

During Chola rule Sengunthars served as soldiers and were called “Terinja kaikolar padai”. (Terinja means “known” in Tamil and Padai means “regiment”), so “terinja-kaikolar padai” were the personal bodyguards. Sengunthars who were initially weavers were militarised during the Chola empire and formed a major part of the Chola army from 8th century to 13th century. There were no Sengunthar army before or after the Chola empire.

They formed many regiments in the Chola army. Some of those regiments are:

- Singalantaka-terinda-Kaikkolar (a regiment named after Singalantaka i.e. Parantaka I)
- Virasola-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Kodandarama-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Danatonga-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Parantaka-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Muttavallperra-Kaikkolar – (meaning the “recipient of the pearl ornamented sword” in Tamil)
- Samarakesarit-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Vikramasingat-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Adityapanma-terinda-Kaikkolar
- Karikala-Chola-terinja-Kaikkolar

- Arumolideva-terinja Kaikkolar
- Parttivasekarat-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Gangadaditta-terinja-Kaikkola
- Madurantaka-terinja-Kaikkolar
- Pirantaka-terinja-Kaikkolar

The link below indicates that Sengunthars were prominent members of Tamil society even during the 10th century AD during Chola rule.

-terinja-Kaikkolar and Vikramasingat-terinja-Kaikkolar derived their names from possible titles of Parantaka_Udaiyar- Gandaradittatterinja-Kaikkolar[8] must have been the name of a regiment called after king Gandaraditya, the father of Uttama-Chola. Singalantaka-terinda-Kaikkolar (a regiment named after Singalantaka i.e. Parantaka I) Danatonga-terinja-Kaikkola (regiment or group). The early writing of the record and the surname Danatunga of Parantaka I suggests its assignment to his reign. Muttavallperra seems to indicate some special honour or rank conferred on the regiment by the king.

Sengunthar Kings under Chola reign

- * Pazhuvur Veeran -Belongs to the period of Parantaka Chozhar (10th century).
- * Pazhuvai Narayanan ruled Pazhuvur along with his twin brother Pazhuvur Veeran
- * Kachchithaliyan-ruled Kanchi
- * Ottriyooran-ruled Thiruvottriyur
- * Kalanthai arasan-ruled Pon vilaintha Kalathoor
- * Putridang Kondaan-ruled Thiruvarur

- * Kolaanthagan-ruled Kodungkundram
- * Puliur palli kondaan-ruled Chidambaram
- * Pinavan-ruled Kadamboor
- 10.Kandiyuraan-ruled ThirukKandiyur
- * Mudukundra Manian-ruled Viruthachalam
- * Thanjai Vemban- ruled Thanjavur

Tamil Scholars

- * Thirumala Thevar(Author of Thirumanthiram)
- * Kaari Desiga Acharyar
- * Narasinga Munaiyariyar
- * Idangazhip Perumal
- * Perumizhalaip Perunthagaiyaar
- * Meipporul moorthy
- * Sathi Nayanar
- * Serunthunaiyaar
- * KotpuliNayanar
- * Kootruva Nayanar
- * Eripatha Nayanar
- * Kanam pullar
- * Dandiyadigal

- * Ottakuthar
- * Kuganeriappa Navalar
- * Kangeyar
- * Poyyamohip pulavar
- * Pagazhi koothar
- * Kachiyappa Munivar
- * Chidambara Swamigal
- * Pirasai Arunachala Swamigal
- * Irattai Pulavargal
- * Padikaasu pulavar

72 Sengunthar Nadus

There were 72 Sengunthar Nadus divided in four Divisions:

A)First **East Sivapura Nadu and its kilai(Branch) Nadus**. The kilai(Branch) Nadus under East Sivapura Nadu are

- 1.Mel Padappai, Kizh padappai,Aathanjeri
- 2.Maanampathi,Sembakkam,Agaram,Moonathondru
- 3.Munnoor,Paramesuramangalam,Mathuraanthagam
- 4.Thindivanam
- 5.Akkaraipathu,Mailam
- 6.Thiruvakkarai,Pudhuchery,Ozhukarai,Kathirkamam

- 7.Thiribuvanam, Nallaathur
- 8.Thiruvathigai,Palur
- 9.Idaiyaatrur,Thiruvonnainallur
- 10.Panamalai,Ananthapuram
- 11.Vazhuthalaipattu
- 12.Maaparai,Aarur
- 13.Pattinam,Karunguzhi
- 14.Mannaar Koyil
- 15.Palayam
- 16.Kuppakkam, Thirukkandechuram
- 17.Jambai,Thiruvarangam

Totally 18 including the Sivapura Nadu

B) South Thonthipura Nadu and its kilai(Branch) Nadugal

- 1.Murugamangalam
- 2.Thiruvamathur
- 3.Thiruvannamalai
- 4.Varathur,Senguruchi
- 5.Kachchithidal
- 6.Salem,Viruthachalam
- 7.Thittaikudi

- 8.Thirumalaipaadi
- 9.Thirukkoval
- 10.Thirunagechuram, Kumbakonam
- 11.Thiruchemponpalli
- 12.Koyil, Sirkazhi
- 13.Maapillai kuppam
- 14.Thirumarugal
- 15.Thevur, Kattur
- 16.Nallachery, Polagam
- 17.Rameshwaram, (Kanya)Kumari
- 18 including the main Thonthipura Nadu

C) West Virinjipura Nadu and his Kilai(branch) Nadugal

- 1.Aamur, Kudiyetram(Currently Gudiyatham)
- 2.Vaniyampadi
- 3.Korattai
- 4.Bhavani
- 6.Tharamangalam
- 7.Ezhukarai Nadu
- 8.Pagazharai
- 9.Poorathirai

- 10.Thiruchengodu
- 11.Vaiyapuri, Pazhani
- 12.Avinasi
- 13.Nanjunda kudi
- 14.Karur,Natham
- 15.Kavalpalyam
- 16.Karugur, Kangeyam, Sivanmalai, Chennimalai
- 17.Namakkal
- 18 including the Virinjipura Nadu

D) North Sozhingapura Nadu and its kilai(Branch) Nadugal

- 1.Thiruthani
- 2.Thelinadu
- 3.Nerinadu
- 4.Thiruvadi nadu
- 5.Thirumemisai
- 6.Konthampakkam
- 7.Thirukkaalathi
- 8.Thondai nadu
- 9.Varai nadu
- 10.Venkatagiri

11.Thirupathi

12.Jegannatham

13.Seettampalli

14.Sempuram

15.Varadapuri

16.Chandragiri

17.Kasi,Gaya(Buddha Gaya in Bihar), Ayothiya, Ima
nadu(Himalayas)

18 including the Sozhingapuram

Source:

* Senguntha Prabantha Tirattu

Mudaliars, Pillais and Gounders have a common ancestry which many people are not aware of. All the three so called caste names were originally titles held by chieftains. These three groups actually belong to the Vellalar community, who were agricultural landlords and inhabitants of the "marutha nilam" (one of the five lands advocated by the Sangam literature). It is said that pure Tamilians should be able to trace their origin to any one of the five lands. The "marutham" (cropland) was inhabited mainly by two groups, the Vellalas (agricultural landlords) and the Pallars (agricultural peasants). This land was very fertile with lots of fields. In an ancient Tamil poem, "mukkudal pallu" (முக்கூடற் பள்ளு), murthapalli (elder Pallar women), illayapalli (younger Pallar women) and "pallan" (their Pallar husbands) make fun of the Vellalar landlord.

Later, during cultural diversification, the Vellalars started diverging into small groups, depending upon the regions of Tamil Nadu that they inhabited. Thus, those of the Thondaimandalam became the Thondaimandala vellals (Mudaliars and few Pillais). This area includes the present day areas of Chennai, Chengalpet, Kanchipuram, Vellore, Cadalore, Arcot, Vadalore, and Thrivannamalai. In these areas, the Vella Mudaliars (also called Arcot Mudaliars) are the dominant community.

Those who inhabited the areas of Chola (Thichy, Thanjavur, and Pudukottai) and Pandiya mandalams (Madurai, Thirunelveli, Thuthukudi, Kanyakumari, and Nagerkovil) became the Shoziya Vellar (or "Chola Velar") and Pandiya Vellar respectively. Both these communities have Pillai as their surnames.

The Vellalas of the Kongu mandalam were called as Kongu Vellalas (Gounders or Kounders). This area includes Coimbatore, Salem, Pollaichi, Udagamandalam and Darmapuri, where the Kongu Vella Gounders are the dominant community. Its also said that the Pillai, Menon and Nair communities of Kerala also belong to the Vellalar community (the so called Chera Cellals).

Even though 90% of the Tamilian Vellalas have Pillai, Mudaliar or Gounder surnames, it should be remembered that not all Mudaliars, Pillais and Gounders are Vellalas. The vice versa is also true — thus sometimes some Vellalas have other surnames like Chettiar, Nayakar, and so on. Similarly the Adamudaiya Mudaliars and Senguntha Mudaliars (who form a significant number among the thondaimandala mudaliars) are, strictly speaking, non-vellals. The Adamudayars actually belong to the Mukkulathor community, which also includes the Kallars and Maravars. These three communities (as the name "Mukkulathor" — meaning three communities — have Devar has their surname. But latter the Agamudaiyars (the most upward community among the three) slowly migrated towards the northern part of Tamil Nadu, settled there, changed their surname to Mudaliar and mingled with the local Vellala Mudaliars. Similarly, the Senkunthars, who belong to the weaver community and form a significant population in Kancheepuram and Tirupur-Salem, started using Mudaliar surname for social upliftment,

and started marrying with the Vella Mudaliars.

Today the caste “Thuluva Vella” includes the Vella Mudaliars, Agamudaiya Mudaliars and Senkuntha Mudaliars. Even today inter-marriage between the Vella Mudaliars and non-Vellala Mudaliars is not accepted in very orthodox families. A small but significant population of Mudaliars also exist in areas other than the Thondaimandalam, such as Madurai, Tirunelveli, Coimbatore, etc. However, most of them are actually migrants from Thodaimandalam area.

Among the Coimbatore Gounders (even though the word generally refers to the Kongu Vallala Gounders), other non-Vella Gounder also exist including the “Vettuva Gounders” or “Vanniya Gounders”. Even though both the Vellala Gounders and Vanniya Gounders share the same surnames, they belong to a totally different communities, and marriage between these two communities is forbidden by both of them. In general, among all the vellalas, the Kongu Vellalas are unique and follow totally different customs and traditions. Endogamy is very strong among their community, and they strongly believe in the purity of their genes. They have a unique social organization called “kootam” which the equivalent of the bhraminical “gothram”. Thus persons belonging to the same “kootam” are considered as brothers and sisters, and marriage between them is forbidden. Some of the Vella Gounders were also rulers and thus are considered as Kshatriyas. Their marriages are held by senior members of their family and not by Brahmins. Their temples also have Vella Gounder priests, unlike other temples which have Brahmin priests. Thus most occupations in their society is managed by members of their own community, except for jobs with low social status.

Of the three Vellala communities, the Pillais are the most exogamous. Thus in many parts of Tamil Nadu, there are many people belonging to diverse communities who call themselves as Pillais — again for obvious social upliftment. Thus, the sub-caste system among Pillais is very diverse. Even among the Vella Pillais, eight major groups can be identified: 1. the Karuneega Pillai (Kanku Pillai mainly in Thondai mandalam area), 2. Karkattha Pillai (Thanjavur kumbakonam area — many people belonging to this community are wrongly mistaken as Brahmins due to the strong association between these two communities in the Cauvery belt area), 3. Thuluva Vella Pillai, 4. Shoziya Vella Pillai, 5. Pandiya Vella Pillai, 6. Thirunelveli Siva Pillai, 7. Nanjil Pillai (Sengottai Pillaimar) and 8. kKerala Pillai (Chera Vellalar).

Since there are so many sub-castes, hierarchy among them is inevitable. Even though the Thirunelveli Siva Pillais are Vella Pillais who belong to the Pandiya mandalam, they tend to differentiate themselves from the non-vegetarian Pandiya Pillais and claim supremacy. Similarly, even though the Shoziya Vellals and Karkathars both inhabit Chola mandalam and share their Pillai surnames, the vegetarian Karkathars

claim supremacy over the non-vegetarian Shoziya Vellas.

Interestingly, the Thodaimandala Saiva Mudailars, Thanjavur (kumbakonam) Karkathars and Tirunelveli Siva Pillai — though belonging to three different mandalam — tend to flock together due to common food habits (strict vegetarians) and traditions (most of them are Shaivites), and inter-marriage among them is sometimes acceptable. Each group claims supremacy over the others in terms of genetic purity, which is analogous to the fight between the “Vadakalai” and “Thenkalai” Iyengars.

Even though strictly speaking, these communities are minorities, they claim supremacy over other Pillais, Mudaliars and Gounders. Among the Pillais, the most isolated group is the Nanjil Pillais. They inhabit the Kumari mavattam (Nagerkovil and Kanyakumari). The other Tamil Pillais don't marry with them, since these people are strongly influenced by the Kerala culture. The Nagerkovil Kanyakumari area is located on the tip of Kerala and Tamil Nadu; it was once part of Kerala and is now in Tamil Nadu). The strong Kerala influence is seen in their food habits, language (slang) and other customs which sort of differentiate them from the other Tamil Pillai communities. But since this community is of Tamilian origin, marriage with the Kerala Nairs, Menons and Pillais is prohibited. Thus the Vellala community of Tamil Nadu (and perhaps Kerala) even though has a long heritage which can be traced back to Sangam literature is largely diverse and much unknown to the modern world.

Literature & Guides

Mudaliar also Mudaliyar, Mudali and Moodley in Tamil language literally means a person of first rank in a feudal society in south India. According to Vijaya Ramaswamy in mudali in the 13th century referred to a title and not specific castes. Due to the process called "sanskritization"(every caste takes up the habits and customs of its immediate superior to reach the superior status..) many of Kallars , Maravars and agamudaya thevars became Vellalars . This process started in the Pallav period . However, in recent times the Mudaliar surname is widely used by people belonging to various castes originally from Tamil Nadu, India and in the Tamil diaspora across the world. Most Mudaliars are Tamil people with Tamil as their mother tongue.

Origin

In ancient times, cultivation in South India was spread by force, people would move into virgin land which was used by tribal people for slash and burn agriculture or for hunting and convert it into prime agricultural land. These raids were organized and carried out by chieftains, feudal lords and agricultural landlords called Vellalars. Vellalars are agricultural landlords and inhabitants of the "marutha nilam" (one of the five lands advocated by the Sangam literature).

Mudaliar, like Pillai is a title conferred upon prominent Vellalar chieftains and feudal lords by the King depending upon the Tamil Kingdom. More specifically, the Vellalars of Thondaimandalam or the Pallava Kingdom were given the title Mudaliar, while the Vellalars of Pandya and Chola Kingdoms were given the title Pillai.

Origin of Vellalars and other castes

During cultural diversification, the Vellalars of TamilNadu can be classified into layers. The first layer consists of Saiva Vellalars (Saiva Vellala Mudaliars and Pillais). They are strict vegetarians, literate and sophisticated like Brahmins but do not perform priestly duties. They were major landlords, feudal lords and powerful like Rajput and Thakurs of Northern India. Saiva Vellalars of the Thondaimandalam became the Thondaimandala Mudaliars. This area includes the present day areas of Chennai, Chingleput, Kanchipuram, Vellore, Cadalore, Arcot, Vadalore, Thrivannamalai, etc. The second layer consists of a number of unique castes, which do not intermarry at all like Pandia Vellalar, (Madurai) Chozhia Vellalar, those who inhabited the areas of Chola (Thichy, Thanjavur, and Pudukottai) and Pandiya mandalams (Madurai, Thuthukudi, Kanyakumari, and Nagerkovil) became the Shoziya Vellar (or "Chola Velar") and Pandiya Vellar respectively.

These communities use Mudaliar, udyar, Pillai titles. The Kaikolar also known as Sengunthar, who are predominantly weavers, cloth merchants and were soldiers under chola empire also use Mudali title. Agamudaiyar, a caste belonging to the Mukkulathor community who generally use Thevar as their surname also use the Mudaliar surname. "Kallarum, Maravarum, Agamudaiyarum mella mella vanthu vellalar anaarkal"- so goes the saying in Tamil.

Various Religions that used Mudaliar title in historical times.

People from all castes were awarded this title by the kings. Many Brahmins, Warriors, Poets and Sages were awarded this title in various countries. Even Jews in Kerala were awarded this title in 1215 AD by the Maharajah of Cochin, according to the book by Si. Pi. Acyutamenon . In the 17th century a leading Muslim trader Marakkayar was given the title Mudali Pillai by the Nayak king of Madurai. Sadayappa Mudaliar, patron of the poet Kambar, was a Kongu Vellala or Gatti mudaliars (mixed race of tamill vellalas and gangas who use Gounder title) but he used Mudali title. Various castes using the "Mudaliar" title.

A brief description of various castes using the title Mudaliar is given below.

Tondaimandala Kondaikatti Vellalar

Tradition suggests that this group were the first Vellalar groups that were settled in Tondaimandalam by Adondai Chakravarti after overthrowing the Kurumbar sovereignty. Adondai Chakravarti is described in various ways: a) as a lieutenant in the Chola empire, b) as the son of ancient Chola King Kokkili and a Naga princess, c) as the illegitimate son of Rajendra

Kulotunga Chola I and a palace attendant, d) son of Karikala Chola. This claim appears blurred due to the ambiguous identity of Adondai Chakravarti and the time of such settlement. There are conflicting sources, some that say, the settlement was in 7th or 8th century AD and others that say that it was much later in 11th or 12th century AD. Nevertheless, this settlement is much later than Karikala Chola's settlement of Tondaimandalam. This Vellalar group seems to have been the most successful group during British times. There were many Mirasidars and Zamindars belonging to this group. They are mainly concentrated in Madras and Chingleput district only. Their mother tongue is Tamil.

Tondaimandala Saiva Vellalar

The Tondaimandala Saiva Vellala Mudaliars are forward-caste and are vegetarians. They are the original homogeneous group of Mudaliyars who were settled in Tondaimandalam or Tondai Nadu in South India by Chola King, Karikala Chola. Karikala Chola annexed Thondai naadu and gave it to his son Athondai after whom the region is named after. They are feudal lords, major landowners in Thondaimandalam area which includes the present day areas of Chennai, Chengalpet, Kanchipuram, Vellore etc. A significant population of Thondaimandala Saiva Vellala Mudaliars have also migrated to other areas such as Madurai, Tirunelveli etc. Dalawai Ariyanatha Mudaliar who is regarded as the founder of the Poligar system also settled some of them in areas outside of Thondaimandalam. They are endogamous and inter-marriage with other Mudaliars is quite rare. Their mother tongue is Tamil . Some of the Tamils in Ceylon also trace their lineage to this group some of whom had become saints called Nayanars. The book: The Tamils in Early Ceylon By C. Sivaratnam traces some of the Mudaliyars in Ceylon to Thaninayaka Mudaliyar (among other), a rich Saiva Vellala who emigrated to Ceylon from Tondaimandalam.

Agamudayar/Arcot/Thuluva Vellala

The Agam udayar actually belong to the Mukkulathor community, which also includes the Kallars and Maravars. These three communities together known as Mukkulathor generally use "Thevar" as their surname. But later the Agam udaiyars (the most upward community among the three) slowly migrated towards the northern part of Tamil Nadu, settled there, changed their caste name to Thuluva Vellala. So in reality Thuluva vellalar is just the renaming of Agam udayar and hence are classified as one by the Tamil Nadu government, India. So intermingling of on a large scale between two distinct communities is very unlikely and has no historical evidence. The Agam udaiyars changed their name to Thuluva Vellala. As early as 13th century, Agam udayars were using Mudaliar title. This inscription illustrates the accounts of the temple of Rajaraja-Isvaram-Udaiyar at Rajraja-Kulattur in Tiruvindalur-nadu, a subdivision of Rajraja-valanadu were audited by Kayiladamudaiyan alias Solakon-Pallavaraiyar, an agambadi-mudali of Solakon, between the 23rd and 25th [days of Adi]

Kerala Muthali/Mudali

Kerala Muthali (Mudali) belongs to various Mudaliar communities. They are predominantly found in the areas of Trivandrum and Palghat Districts of Kerala and Kanyakumari District of

Tamil Nadu. They migrated to these places starting late 17th Century onwards for various purposes including Agriculture, Coconut Oil extraction, Coir Trade and as Specialized Fighters and Reliable Spies. They were given special preference by Royal Family of Travancore due to their cultural similarity and loyalty. This status resulted in further deepening their area of influence within Travancore. During the British era many families came in to the influence of Christianity and became strong supporters and eventually embraced that religion. Unlike the Tamil Brahmins settled in various places of Kerala, Muthalis/Mudalis engage with marital relationships with Nairs, Chakravar, Sakravar (Kavathi) and those who are converted to Christianity but retaining Mudaliar identity. Kerala Muthalis still keep their separate identity even though they are a micro-minority caste in Kerala. Due to their linguistic and educational backwardness Kerala, Tamilnadu and Pondicherry states have categorized them as BCs. Gradually after independence and state reorganization, Kerala Muthalis have completely integrated with the Kerala Culture, but still consider Lord Muruga/Subramanya as their primary god of worship while most of the Kerala Hindus are devotees of Lord Vishnu.

Sri Lankan Mudaliyars

History of Jaffna has at least two or three clans from Thondaimandalam with Mudali surname. Irumarapum Thooya Thaninayaga Mudali from Seyyoor and Mannadukonda Mudali whose clan has been quoted even during famous poet Kambar's time. Please read Vaipava Malai and migration of people from Thondai Nadu to Jaffna and then write about Sri Lankan Mudaliyars. It is not a British Phenomenon. Here is the direct quotation from a part of Kailaya Malai a historical book of Jaffna on the migration into Jaffna from Thondai Nadu. The other clans may come under this section or under Sri Lankan Vellalar section. The next was the Vellala of the family of him who shed over kamba a shower of gold for the work of Erezhupatu, whose country was Tondainade, who had a widespread name, who used to wear a lotus garland and whose name was Maanadukanda Mudali. He was made to reside at Irupalai.

The next was the Vellala of Seyur, who was as wealthy as Indra, and who never deviated from the path of virtue. whose garland was of water lilies. Whose fame was great and whose paternal and maternal lines were matchless and pure and whose name was Taninayaga. He was made a chief of Neduntiva. See Sri Lankan Mudaliyars for the class of Mudaliyars created by the British administrators during 19th century Sri Lanka.

Sengunthar/Kaikolar

See main article at Sengunthar The Kaikolars also called as Sengunthar, are a large Tamil people in the states of Southern India[19]. Historically, there were seventy-two subdivisions (nadu or desams). Their name comes from the Tamil words "kai" (hand) and "kol" (shuttle used in loom or spear). They consider the different parts of the loom to represent various gods and sages. They are also known as Sengunthar, which means a red dagger in Tamil. During Chola rule Kaikolars served as soldiers and were called "Terinja kaikolar padai". (Terinja means "known" in Tamil and Padai means "regiment"), so "terinja-kaikolar padai" were the personal bodyguards. Kaikolars were militarised during the Chola empire and formed a major part of the Chola army from 8th century to 13th century. There were no Kaikolar army before or after the

Chola empire. Kaikkolar formed merchant groups and maintained a military unit to protect the merchants. They formed many regiments in the Chola army. Kaikolars were prominent members of Tamil society even during the 10th century AD during Chola rule. Smarakesarit-terinja-Kaikkolar and Vikramasingat-terinja-Kaikkolar derived their names from possible titles of Parantaka Udaiyar-Gandaradittatterinja-Kaikkolar must have been the name of a regiment called after king Gandaraditya, the father of Uttama-Chola. Singalantaka-terinda-Kaikkolar (a regiment named after Singalantaka i.e. Parantaka I) Danatonga-terinja-Kaikkola (regiment or group). The early writing of the record and the surname Danatunga of Parantaka I suggests its assignment to his reign. Muttavallperra seems to indicate some special honour or rank conferred on the regiment by the king.

Nanjil Mudali

Nanjil Mudali is another group of people who have Mudali surname. They belong to Nanjil nadu in Kanyakumari district

Mudaliars of Bangalore

Mudaliars constitute a significant percentage of the population in South Bangalore (surrounding Ulsoor Lake, MG Road, High grounds). Many well-known buildings on MG Road & surrounding areas of Infantry Road and Kamaraj Road are still owned by Mudaliars (e.g - Gangaram's, Vimal Chambers). The famous "Attara Kachheri" or the red court house that stands opposite of Vidhana Souda was built by Rai Bahadur Arcot Narayansamy Mudaliar. Palatial homes surrounding Windsor Manor (5 star hotel) are even today owned & inhabited by affluent Mudaliar families. The Bangalore Exhibition is usually conducted on the RBANMS grounds in Ulsoor which is owned by Rai Bahadur Arcot Narrainswamy Mudaliar trust. The trust has several schools and colleges affiliated to it.

Gatti mudalis of Taramangalam

The Gatti Mudaliars were in charge of the most dangerously exposed province of the Nayak Kingdom with Kaveripuram on the right bank of the Cauvery as their strategic capital commencing one of the principal passes to the Mysore Plateau. The centre of their power seems, however, to have been Taramangalam where they have built a grant edifice of a temple. It is said their domination extended as far as Talaivasal to the east, Dharapuram in Erode district in the west and Karur district in the south. The forts of greatest strategic importance held by the Gatti Mudaliars were Omalur and Attur. By about 1635 A.D., the Muslim Sultans of Bijapur and Golkonda made inroads into the south when the power of Tirumalai Nayak had wanted palacode area came under Bijapur. Meanwhile Kantirava narasa Raja of Serangapatnam took several places in Coimbatore from Gatti Mudaliars in 1641 A.D