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www.vajiraoinstitute.com



info@vajiraoinstitute.com

# YOJANA MAGAZINE ANALYSIS

(August 2024)

(Part 1/3)

## TOPICS TO BE COVERED

### PART 1/3

- CELLULAR JAIL- THE SAGA OF RESISTANCE
- JAMBUDWEEP PROCLAMATION

### PART 2/3

- UNTOLD STORIES OF FREEDOM STRUGGLE FROM NORTHEAST INDIA
- CONTRIBUTION OF INDIAN LANGUAGES TO THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

### PART 3/3

- YOUTH CONSCIOUSNESS FOR INDIA FREEDOM IN BENGAL

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# CELLULAR JAIL: THE SAGA OF RESISTANCE

- **Location:** Cellular Jail, also known as “Kala Pani”, is situated in Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. Its remote location was chosen to prevent escape and isolate prisoners from the rest of the world.

- **Construction:**

- Start Date: 1896
- Completion Date: 1906
- Labor: Constructed by convict labor under harsh conditions, using local stone and concrete.

- **Purpose:** Built to exile and punish political prisoners and revolutionaries opposing British colonial rule. It was a direct consequence of the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny, reflecting the British policy shift towards more severe repression of dissent.

- **Historical Impact:** The jail became a symbol of British cruelty and was intended to suppress the spirit of resistance among Indian freedom fighters.

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## KEY FACTS ABOUT THE JAIL

- **Architecture:**

- **Designer:** British architect J. A. H. W. Macpherson.
- **Design Theory:** Based on the 'Pennsylvania System' or 'Separate System', which required complete isolation of each inmate. This system aimed for total separation to prevent communication between prisoners in the same or different wings.
- **Layout:** The jail features seven wings radiating from a central watchtower, resembling a spider's web. This layout was intended to isolate prisoners and prevent rebellion.
- **Cell Design:** Each cell, approximately 4.5 x 2.7 meters, was designed for solitary confinement with thick walls, small windows, and limited ventilation, creating a suffocating environment.
- **Watchtower:** The central tower allowed guards to monitor all prisoners, reinforcing the oppressive nature of the facility.

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- **Operational Period:**

- Inauguration: 1906
- Closure: 1947, following India's independence.

- **National Memorial:** Declared in 1969. The site has been developed to educate visitors about the atrocities committed during colonial rule and the heroism of those imprisoned there.

## FREEDOM FIGHTERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE JAIL

- **Vinayak Damodar Savarkar**

- **Role:** Prominent revolutionary, poet, and politician. Known for his opposition to British rule and the concept of "Hindutva."
- **Sentence:** Two life terms (50 years) in 1911 for anti-colonial activities.
- **Release:** 1924
- **Contributions:** Played a significant role in mobilizing support for Indian independence.

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- **Batukeshwar Dutt (B.K. Dutt)**

- **Role:** Revolutionary freedom fighter involved in the 1929 Central Legislative Assembly bombing with Bhagat Singh.
- **Sentence:** Life imprisonment, exiled to Cellular Jail.
- **Death:** July 20, 1965, at age 54.

- **Fazl-E-Haq Khairabadi**

- **Role:** Involved in inciting violence after the 1857 Rebellion.
- **Sentence:** Life imprisonment in Cellular Jail, with his property confiscated.

- **Barindra Kumar Ghose**

- **Role:** Involved in the Alipore Bomb Case and attempted assassination of Kingsford.
- **Sentence:** Initially death, reduced to life imprisonment, deported to Cellular Jail in 1909.

- **Sushil Dasgupta**

- **Role:** Member of the Yugantar Dal, involved in the Putiya Mail Robbery case of 1929.
- **Sentence:** Imprisoned in Cellular Jail after escaping from Medinipur prison.

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## SIGNIFICANCE

- **Symbol of Resistance:** Cellular Jail **symbolizes the extreme repression** faced by Indian freedom fighters and the inhumanity of colonial rule. It serves as a stark reminder of the sacrifices made for India's independence.
- **Post-Independence Use:** After India's independence, the jail was **preserved as a national memorial**. It now **functions as a museum and educational site**, commemorating the struggle for freedom and educating visitors about colonial history and the heroic sacrifices of those imprisoned there.
- **Modern Day:** The site **attracts visitors from across the world** and serves as a powerful symbol of resistance and resilience. It helps in educating new generations about the brutalities of colonial rule and the **valor of the freedom fighters who endured these hardships**.

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## JAMBUDWEEP PROCLAMATION

In the proclamation of 1801, the **Maruthu brothers** said, "The Europeans violating their faith have deceitfully made the Kingdom their own and considering the inhabitants as dogs, accordingly exercise authority over them. There existing no unity and friendship among you the above castes, who, not being aware of the duplicity of these Europeans – have not only inconsiderately calumniated each other, but have absolutely surrendered the kingdom to them. In those countries now governed by these low wretches, the inhabitants have become poor and the rice has become water" – South Indian Rebellion, **The First War of Independence 1800-1801.**

### ABOUT MARUTHU BROTHERS

- **Colonial Expansion:**
  - **Early British Presence:** The British East India Company initially came to India for trade, but used military and political tactics to expand control. Their influence grew through alliances and conflicts with local rulers.

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- **Nawab of Arcot:** Mohammed Ali, the Nawab of Arcot, ceded significant administrative control to the British, including tax collection and governance. This led to the widespread impoverishment of local populations and increased British dominance.
- **Background of the Maruthu Brothers:**
  - Family: Periya Maruthu (the elder) and Chinna Maruthu (the younger) were born to Mokka Palanisamy Thevar and his wife Ponatha. They served the second king of Sivagangai, Muthu Vaduganathan Thevar.
- **Training and Role:** Both brothers were trained in military tactics and artillery. They became trusted aides to the king, with Periya Maruthu serving as a military commander and Chinna Maruthu as a key administrator.
- **Conflict with the British:**
  - British Actions: Following failed negotiations, the British launched a brutal attack, killing the king and queen of Sivagangai. The Maruthu brothers fled with the first queen, Velu Nachiyar, seeking refuge in the neighboring kingdom of Virupakshi, ruled by Gopal Nayak.

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- Return to Sivagangai: After seven years, the Maruthu brothers returned to Sivagangai. Periya Maruthu assumed command of the army, while Chinna Maruthu became the chief minister. They sought to restore their kingdom and resist British rule.

## THE PROCLAMATION

- **Issuance of the Proclamation:**

- **Date and Context:** In 1801, the **Maruthu brothers, having united with other Southern Indian kings opposed to British rule, issued the Jambudweep Proclamation.**
- **Content:** The proclamation was a powerful declaration against British oppression. It criticized British deceit and their brutal policies towards Indian rulers and people. The proclamation condemned the lack of unity among Indian castes, which had facilitated British dominance.

- **Symbolism and Public Display:**

- **Cultural Significance:** Jambu Dweepa, an ancient term in Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain cosmology, refers to a large landmass or continent, often the

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Indian subcontinent. The Maruthu brothers used this term to evoke a sense of national identity and unity.

- **Public Display:** The proclamation was prominently displayed on the walls of significant locations like the **Sri Rangam Temple and the Rock Fort in Tamil Nadu**. This act was risky but symbolized their defiance and commitment to the cause.

## BRITISH RESPONSE & EXECUTION

- **Military Campaign:**
  - **British Reaction:** The British were enraged by the Maruthu brothers' **defiance** and **launched a comprehensive military campaign to suppress the rebellion**. They sought to crush any organized resistance to their rule.
- **Capture and Execution: Date:** October 24, 1801
  - **Details:** The Maruthu brothers, along with around 500 of their supporters, were captured by the British forces. The executions were carried out without legal proceedings, described as **“anomalous and irregular”** by **contemporary observers**.

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- **Aftermath:** The British executed the male members of the Maruthu family to prevent future resistance. Doraisamy, the only surviving son of Periya Maruthu, was exiled to Malaysia.

## LEGACY

- **Historical Significance:**

- **Early Resistance:** The **Jambudweep Proclamation** is notable as one of the **earliest and most organized efforts to challenge British colonial rule in India**. It represented a significant attempt to unite various Indian rulers and communities against British oppression.
- **Precursor to Independence Movements:** Although the rebellion was ultimately suppressed, it highlighted the potential for collective resistance and inspired subsequent independence movements.

- **Enduring Legacy:**

- **Symbol of Courage:** The Maruthu brothers' bravery and sacrifice are remembered as pivotal in the history of Indian resistance against colonial rule. Their actions contributed to the growing sentiment for independence and resistance against British domination.

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- **Historical Context:** The rebellion set a precedent for future uprisings and was a precursor to more widespread movements like the Vellore Mutiny of 1806 and the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857.

## CONCLUSION

The Jambudweep Proclamation of 1801, led by the Maruthu brothers, represents a significant early challenge to British colonial rule in India. Despite its ultimate failure, the proclamation and subsequent rebellion highlighted the potential for collective resistance and unity among Indian rulers and people. The courage and sacrifice of the Maruthu brothers remain an inspiring chapter in the history of India's struggle for independence. Their actions foreshadowed the more widespread movements that would later play a crucial role in achieving independence from British rule.

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