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Is the Cholas' kudavolai system a forerunner to today's democracy?

#Thread



The Kudavolai System of Cholas

A Root For Today's Democracy.



The 'Kudavolai' (Kuda Olai) voting method, which predates today's Constitutional Democracy, dates back to the Chola dynasty (900 CE).

The Chola government was based on democratic ideas, & the Panchayat system developed throughout their reign. The Chola dynasty's administration was primarily monarchical in nature, with the king at the center and all executive, legislative, & military authorities vesting in him.

A council of ministers and other important officials was present to advise the king on the Chola Empire administration.

The Chola self-government was founded on village 'general assemblies,' or 'sabhas,' or 'mahasabhas.' These general assemblies were in charge of overseeing all elements of village life. In each village, there were 30 wards.

The "Kudavolai System," in which the names of contenders from whom one could be chosen were written on palm leaves and placed into a pot, was used to elect a representative for each ward.

The elders counted the leaves and chose the person who had the most.

To carry out six various responsibilities of the village administration, the chosen members were divided into six variyams: samvatsaravariyam, erivariyam, thotta variyam, pancha variyam, pon variyam, and puravuvvari variyam.

The first recorded incidence of 'free and fair elections' was on the walls of the Vaikunta Perumal temple at Uttiramerur in the Kanchipuram district during the days of Parantaka Chola I in 919 and 921 A.D.

The 'Ur', or gatherings of local inhabitants to discuss things without any official rule or procedure, and the 'Sabha' or 'Mahasabha,' or gatherings of adult male members of the Brahmin Settlement, are both mentioned in the Chola inscriptions (Agrahara).

The inscription also explains the local council's structure, eligibility and disqualifications for candidates, the selection process, how they work and what they do, and restricts their power.

He must be between the ages of 35 and 70, he must own one veli land and a house built on taxable land on his own site, he must be among those with qualifications such as expertise in business and are known for their virtues,

According to the inscription, he must be among those with honest earnings and a pure mind, and he must know about Vedas and mantras.

Those who had served on committees for the previous three years, those who had failed to submit accounts as committee members, those who had committed sins, those who had stolen the property of others, those who had killed brahmins, women, cows, or children,

those who had been punished, and thieves and drunkards were all disqualified from running for office.

The great men thus chosen will serve for a total of three hundred and sixty days before retiring. If any committee member is found guilty of any offence, he will be removed immediately.

The Kudavolai system was clearly a significant and distinctive element of the Cholas' village administration, and it was exceedingly methodical, well developed, well organized, and efficient, thereby constituting the first step toward the concept of democracy.