

# Disturbance of the Peace: The Extraordinary Life and Legacy of Ramasamy Santhanam

Ramasamy Santhanam, fondly known as "Disturbance of the Peace," was a renowned Indian social reformer, journalist, and politician who left an indelible mark on the socio-political landscape of his time. His relentless advocacy for social justice, fearless journalism, and unwavering commitment to the betterment of society earned him the admiration and respect of generations. Through this article, we delve into the extraordinary life and legacy of Ramasamy Santhanam, exploring his pivotal role in shaping the Indian independence movement, his fearless journalism, and his enduring contributions to social reforms.

## Early Life and Education

Ramasamy Santhanam was born on December 20, 1895, in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, to an orthodox Brahmin family. Despite the conservative milieu he grew up in, Santhanam displayed a rebellious spirit and an insatiable hunger for knowledge from a young age. He pursued his higher education at Presidency College, Chennai, where he excelled in academics and actively participated in student politics. It was during this time that his passion for social justice and reform took root.



## Disturbance of the Peace by Ramasamy Santhanam

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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## **Political Activism and the Independence Movement**

Santhanam's entry into politics was sparked by his deep concern over the British colonial rule in India. He became actively involved in the Indian National Congress and quickly rose through the ranks, becoming a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi and other stalwarts of the independence movement. Santhanam's incisive intellect and persuasive oratory skills made him a formidable voice against colonial oppression.

In 1930, Santhanam joined the Civil Disobedience Movement, defying the British salt laws and leading protest marches. He was arrested and imprisoned multiple times for his involvement in the movement, enduring harsh conditions while remaining steadfast in his convictions. Santhanam's unwavering commitment to the cause of Indian independence earned him the affectionate title "Disturbance of the Peace," a moniker that aptly reflected his spirit of rebellion.

## **Fearless Journalism and Social Reforms**

In the 1920s, Santhanam founded the English weekly newspaper "Crusader" as a platform to amplify his voice for social and political change. Through his fearless editorials and incisive commentaries, he exposed corruption, advocated for the rights of the oppressed, and relentlessly challenged the established order. Santhanam's writing became a powerful

tool for social reform, bringing to light important issues such as caste discrimination, gender inequality, and economic exploitation.

As a social reformer, Santhanam played a pivotal role in abolishing the "Devadasi" system, a form of temple prostitution prevalent in South India. He also fought against untouchability and campaigned for the upliftment of marginalized Dalit communities. Santhanam's dedication to social justice extended beyond his journalistic work, as he actively supported various welfare programs and worked closely with organizations dedicated to eradicating social evils.

## **Post-Independence Era and Contributions**

After India gained independence in 1947, Santhanam continued to serve the nation in various capacities. He was a member of the Constituent Assembly that drafted the Indian Constitution, and later served as the Governor of Orissa (1956-1962). During his tenure as governor, Santhanam implemented several progressive policies aimed at promoting education, healthcare, and economic development in the state.

In 1962, Santhanam was appointed as the Chairman of the Commission on Centre-State Relations, tasked with examining the distribution of powers between the central and state governments. The Commission's report, submitted in 1969, became a landmark document in Indian constitutional law and continues to guide the relationship between the Union and its constituent states.

## **Legacy and Impact**

Ramasamy Santhanam's legacy extends far beyond his lifetime. As a social reformer, journalist, and politician, he played a transformative role in

shaping the destiny of India. His fearless advocacy for social justice, unwavering commitment to the independence movement, and tireless efforts to eliminate societal evils have left an enduring impact on the nation's history and consciousness.

Santhanam's legacy continues to inspire generations of activists, reformers, and policymakers. His life and work provide an enduring testament to the power of one person's unwavering conviction and the indomitable spirit of human compassion.

Ramasamy Santhanam, "Disturbance of the Peace," was a visionary leader whose life and work left an indelible mark on the social, political, and cultural landscape of India. As a fearless journalist, dedicated social reformer, and unwavering advocate for justice, he challenged the status quo and worked tirelessly to create a more just and equitable society. Ramasamy Santhanam's legacy continues to serve as an inspiration and a reminder of the enduring power of human agency in the pursuit of a better world.



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