Vanchinathan (Vanchi) – Swadeshi Background, Bharatha Matha Association, Ashe Assassination at Maniyachi (1911) & Tinnevelly Conspiracy Case | TNPSC Notes

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Vanchinathan (**Vanchi**, also written **Vanchi Iyer / Vanchinatha Iyer**; born **Sankaran**, 1886–1911) was a young revolutionary from **Sengottai (Shencottah)**, then part of the princely State of **Travancore**. On **17 June 1911** he shot dead **Robert William d'Escourt Ashe**, the Acting Collector and District Magistrate of **Tirunelveli**, at **Maniyachi railway junction**, and then took his own life. A member of the **Bharatha Matha Association** organised by **Neelakanta Brahmachari**, he acted against the background of the British repression of **V. O. Chidambaram Pillai's Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company** and the Swadeshi movement of 1908. The station is now called **Vanchi Maniyachi**.

தமிழில் படிக்க

These notes are written for TNPSC Group 1, 2/2A and 4 aspirants and are meant to be complete on their own. Vanchinathan is a core topic in **History, Culture, Heritage and Socio-Political Movements of Tamil Nadu** (the role of Tamil Nadu in the freedom struggle, the Swadeshi movement in Tirunelveli and Tuticorin, revolutionary nationalism) and in **History, Culture of India and Indian National Movement** (the Extremist and revolutionary phase, 1905–1911, and links with revolutionaries in Pondicherry and abroad). Read each section, then use the tables, the quick revision table and the key points at the end.

Early Life, Family and Work

- **Born:** 1886 at **Sengottai (Shencottah)**, which was then in the princely State of **Travancore**; Sengottai is now in **Tenkasi district** of Tamil Nadu. The exact date of birth is not firmly recorded in reliable sources.
- **Name:** his given name was **Sankaran**; he became known as **Vanchi** or **Vanchinathan** (also Vanchi Iyer).
- **Parents: Raghupathi Iyer** (Ragupathy Iyer) and **Rukmani Ammal**; the family was of modest means.
- **Education:** schooling at Sengottai, followed by higher studies at **Thiruvananthapuram**, the capital of Travancore.
- **Work:** he first worked as an accountant in a temple and then took a government job in the **Travancore Forest Department**.
- **Marriage:** he married **Ponnammal**.

Sengottai lay on the border between Travancore and the Tirunelveli district of the Madras Presidency, so the young men of this area were closely connected with the political events in Tirunelveli and Tuticorin.

Background: Swadeshi in Tuticorin and the Repression of 1908

Vanchinathan's action cannot be understood without the Swadeshi movement in the Tirunelveli region, led by **V. O. Chidambaram Pillai (VOC)** and **Subramania Siva**.

- **Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company (SSNC):** founded by VOC and registered at Tuticorin on **16 October 1906**, it ran Indian-owned steamers between Tuticorin and Colombo and challenged the British shipping monopoly.

- **British pressure:** British officials opposed the company. Ashe, then **Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate of Tuticorin**, acted against the company and the Swadeshi agitation.
- **Arrest of VOC and Siva:** on **12 March 1908** VOC and Subramania Siva were arrested on charges of sedition.
- **Unrest of March 1908:** violent protests broke out in Tirunelveli and Tuticorin (the "Tinnevelly riots"); police firing killed people. Ashe, as Joint Magistrate, ordered the police to open fire on the crowds.
- **Sentence:** on 7 July 1908 VOC was sentenced to two terms of transportation for life (later reduced on appeal); Siva received ten years.
- **End of the company:** with VOC in prison, the SSNC lost support and was wound up in 1911.

Young nationalists in the region held Ashe personally responsible for the destruction of the Swadeshi company and for the firing of 1908. In 1911 Ashe was the Acting Collector of Tirunelveli. This is why he became the target.

The Bharatha Matha Association and Revolutionary Links

- **Founder: Neelakanta Brahmachari**, a young nationalist journalist, organised the group after the events of 1908.
- **Name:** it is called the **Bharatha Matha Association**, **Bharatha Matha Sangam** or Bharatha Matha Secret Society in different accounts.
- **Aims:** at first it promoted swadeshi goods and the reading of nationalist newspapers published from Pondicherry; it later became a secret society.
- **Oath meeting:** on **10 April 1910** members met at **Tenkasi** and took a secret oath to work for swaraj.
- **Members:** Vanchinathan was an active member and a close associate of Brahmachari. Others named in the records include Sankara Krishna Iyer, Madathukadai Chidambaram Pillai, Dharmaraja Iyer, Harihara Iyer and Madasamy.
- **Wider links:** the group had links with Indian revolutionaries in French-ruled **Pondicherry**, and through them with revolutionaries in London and Paris.

Training by V. V. S. Aiyar at Pondicherry

- **V. V. S. Aiyar** (Varahaneri Venkatesa Subramania Aiyar) had been a member of **India House** in London and came to Pondicherry, which was French territory and out of reach of British police.
- Vanchinathan went to Pondicherry, where V. V. S. Aiyar **trained him in the use of a pistol**. Aiyar is regarded by historians as his mentor in the plot.
- **Weapon:** a **Browning automatic pistol**, reported to have been obtained through **Madame Bhikaiji Cama** in Paris.

17 June 1911: The Shooting at Maniyachi

- **The journey:** on the morning of 17 June 1911, Ashe and his wife **Mary** boarded the **Maniyachi Mail** at **Tirunelveli Junction** (about 9.30 a.m.) to connect with the **Boat Mail** at Maniyachi junction.
- **The act:** when the train stood at **Maniyachi**, Vanchinathan went up to the **first-class compartment** and shot Ashe at point-blank range. Ashe died shortly afterwards.
- **His end:** Vanchinathan ran along the platform, entered the station latrine and **shot himself**. He was about **25 years** old.
- **Companion:** a companion who was with him slipped away. Accounts differ on who was at the station: some name **Sankara Krishna Iyer**, others **Madasamy**. Madasamy absconded and was never traced by the police.

- **The letter:** a letter found in his pocket said that he had acted on his own, accused the British of destroying the Sanatana Dharma, referred to the coming **coronation of King George V**, and stated that **3,000 Madrasis** had taken a vow against the British.
- **Father's response:** his father, Raghupathi Iyer, is reported to have refused to perform his last rites.
- **Significance:** Ashe is regarded as the **first and only British official assassinated in South India** during the freedom struggle.

Because the letter also used religious and caste-based language, the act is read differently by different groups; historians mostly study it as a political act of revolutionary nationalism arising from the repression of 1908. In TNPSC answers, keep to the facts and the political context.

The Ashe Murder Case (Tinnevelly Conspiracy Case), 1911–1912

- **Investigation:** the police traced the plot to the Bharatha Matha Association and to the revolutionaries at Pondicherry. Neelakanta Brahmachari was arrested later.
- **Deaths:** two members of the group, including **Dharmaraja Iyer** of Sengottai, took their own lives.
- **Accused: fourteen** men were charged; **Neelakanta Brahmachari** was the first accused.
- **Court:** because of its political importance the case was heard by a **special bench of the Madras High Court** of three judges: Chief Justice **Sir Arnold White**, Justice **Ayling** and Justice **C. Sankaran Nair**. Hearings began in **September 1911**.
- **Verdict (15 February 1912):** all the accused were **acquitted of abetting Ashe's murder**; by majority, eight of them were convicted of **conspiracy to wage war against the King** (Section 121A, IPC). Neelakanta Brahmachari was sentenced to **seven years' rigorous imprisonment**; several others received shorter terms of rigorous imprisonment.
- **Separate judgment:** Justice Sankaran Nair did not fully agree with the other two judges and wrote a separate judgment; his judgment is valued by historians as a record of the freedom movement.

Impact and Assessment

- **Peak of revolutionary nationalism in Tamil Nadu:** the Maniyachi shooting is the best-known revolutionary act in the Tamil region and a key event of the Extremist–revolutionary phase.
- **Limits of the conspiracy case:** historians such as A. R. Venkatachalapathy point out that the charge linking the accused to the murder itself was not proved in court; the act is best studied as the work of a small secret group.
- **Revolutionary path vs mass movement:** the event marked the rise of groups that preferred armed action; the later mass movement in Tamil Nadu followed Gandhian methods.
- **Reconciliation:** at the centenary in June 2011, descendants of Ashe sent a message of reconciliation to Vanchinathan's family.

Timeline at a Glance

Year / date	Event
1886	Vanchinathan (Sankaran) born at Sengottai, Travancore State
16 Oct 1906	Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company registered at Tuticorin (VOC)
12 Mar 1908	VOC and Subramania Siva arrested
13 Mar 1908	Unrest in Tirunelveli and Tuticorin; police firing
7 Jul 1908	VOC sentenced to transportation for life (reduced later)
c. 1910	Bharatha Matha Association organised by Neelakanta Brahmachari
10 Apr 1910	Secret oath meeting at Tenkasi
1911	SSNC wound up
17 Jun 1911	Ashe shot at Maniyachi; Vanchinathan shoots himself
Sep 1911	Trial begins before a special bench of the Madras High Court
1912	Verdict: Neelakanta Brahmachari – 7 years' rigorous imprisonment
2011	Centenary; Ashe's descendants send a message of reconciliation
2013	Vanchinathan memorial at Sengottai inaugurated by CM J. Jayalalithaa

Key Persons Linked with the Ashe Episode

Person	Role
Vanchinathan (Vanchi)	Shot Ashe at Maniyachi, 17 June 1911; shot himself
Robert W. D'E. Ashe	ICS officer; Sub-Collector at Tuticorin (1908); Acting Collector of Tirunelveli (1911)
Mary Ashe	Ashe's wife, travelling with him on the train
Neelakanta Brahmachari	Organiser of the Bharatha Matha Association; first accused; 7 years' RI
V. V. S. Aiyar	Trained Vanchinathan in pistol shooting at Pondicherry
Madame Bhikaiji Cama	Reported source of the Browning pistol (Paris)
Madasamy	Believed accomplice; never traced
Dharmaraja Iyer	Member from Sengottai; took his own life during the inquiry
C. Sankaran Nair	One of the three High Court judges; separate judgment
V. O. Chidambaram Pillai	Founder of SSNC; in jail in 1911; not involved in the shooting
Kumari Ananthan	Campaigned for renaming Maniyachi station after Vanchi

Memorials and Commemoration

- **Vanchi Maniyachi Junction:** Maniyachi railway station in **Thoothukudi district** was renamed in his honour after a campaign led by former MP **Kumari Ananthan**.
- **Memorial at Sengottai:** the Tamil Nadu Government built a memorial with a bust of Vanchinathan at Sengottai; Chief Minister **J. Jayalalithaa** inaugurated it in **2013**.
- **17 June:** observed every year by many organisations and leaders as Vanchinathan's memorial day.
- **Ashe's memorial:** the British erected a memorial to Ashe at Thoothukudi (Tuticorin).
- **Ashe papers:** condolence letters and cuttings on the murder are preserved in the Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge.

Writing Mains Answers on Vanchinathan (Group 1 / Group 2)

Descriptive papers ask about revolutionary nationalism in Tamil Nadu and the Swadeshi movement in Tirunelveli. Build your answer around these points and support each with a fact from the notes above.

Vanchinathan and the Ashe assassination – causes and significance (about 150–250 words)

- **Introduction:** 17 June 1911, Maniyachi junction; Vanchinathan of Sengottai shot Acting Collector Ashe and shot himself.
- **Causes:** suppression of VOC's Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company; arrest of VOC and Siva (12 March 1908); firing during the 1908 unrest; VOC's harsh sentence.
- **Organisation:** Bharatha Matha Association of Neelakanta Brahmachari; secret oath at Tenkasi (10 April 1910); training by V. V. S. Aiyar at Pondicherry; Browning pistol linked to Madame Cama.
- **Aftermath:** special bench trial of 14 accused in the Madras High Court; Brahmachari 7 years' RI; all acquitted of abetting the murder, eight convicted of conspiracy to wage war.
- **Significance:** only British official assassinated in South India during the freedom struggle; peak of revolutionary nationalism in Tamil Nadu.
- **Conclusion:** remembered through Vanchi Maniyachi Junction and the Sengottai memorial.

Revolutionary nationalism in Tamil Nadu (about 150 words)

- **Background:** Extremist phase after the Partition of Bengal (1905); Swadeshi in Tuticorin.
- **Centres:** Pondicherry (V. V. S. Aiyar, Bharati and others under French protection); Tirunelveli–Sengottai (Bharatha Matha Association).
- **International links:** India House (London), Madame Cama (Paris).
- **Climax:** Ashe assassination, 1911, and the Tinnevelly Conspiracy Case.
- **Evaluation:** showed the depth of anger after 1908, but the movement remained small and was crushed; mass nationalism later grew under Gandhian methods.

Link between the Swadeshi movement in Tuticorin and the Maniyachi incident (about 100 words)

- SSNC (1906) as economic swadeshi; British officials' opposition.
- 1908: Coral Mills strike, arrests, unrest, firing; Ashe's role as Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate.
- 1911: SSNC wound up; Ashe targeted as the symbol of repression.

Practice: Match the Following

Item	Match
Sengottai	Birthplace of Vanchinathan (then Travancore State)
Maniyachi	Place where Ashe was shot, 17 June 1911
Tenkasi	Secret oath meeting of the Bharatha Matha Association, 10 April 1910
Pondicherry	V. V. S. Aiyar trained Vanchinathan in pistol use
Neelakanta Brahmachari	Organiser of the Bharatha Matha Association
Madame Bhikaiji Cama	Reported source of the Browning pistol
Tuticorin (1908)	Ashe as Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate
Kumari Ananthan	Campaign to rename the station Vanchi Maniyachi
C. Sankaran Nair	Judge on the special bench in the Ashe case
Mary	Wife of Ashe, present on the train

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- **Place:** Ashe was shot at **Maniyachi** junction (Thoothukudi district), not at Tirunelveli Junction or Tuticorin.
- **Ashe's post:** in 1908 he was Sub-Collector at Tuticorin; in 1911 he was **Acting Collector of Tirunelveli**. The Collector of Tirunelveli in March 1908 was Wynch.
- **Fate of Vanchinathan:** he shot himself at the station; he was not tried or hanged.
- **Founder of the Bharatha Matha Association:** Neelakanta Brahmachari – not VOC, Bharati or V. V. S. Aiyar.
- **Trainer:** V. V. S. Aiyar at Pondicherry – not Subramania Siva.
- **VOC's position in 1911:** he was in prison and was not involved in the shooting.
- **Birthplace state:** Sengottai was then in **Travancore**, not in the Madras Presidency; today it is in Tenkasi district.
- **Year:** 1911 (17 June), not 1908 or 1912; the verdict came in 1912.
- **Court:** a special bench of the Madras High Court – not the Tirunelveli sessions court.

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Quick Revision Table

Topic	Fact
Full / given name	Sankaran; known as Vanchi, Vanchinathan, Vanchi Iyer
Born	1886, Sengottai (Shencottah), then Travancore; now Tenkasi district
Parents	Raghupathi Iyer and Rukmani Ammal
Wife	Ponnammal
Job	Travancore Forest Department (earlier temple accountant)
Organisation	Bharatha Matha Association (Neelakanta Brahmachari)
Trained by	V. V. S. Aiyar, Pondicherry
Weapon	Browning automatic pistol (linked to Madame Cama)
Date of act	17 June 1911
Place	Maniyachi railway junction (now Vanchi Maniyachi), Thoothukudi district
Victim	Robert W. D'E. Ashe, ICS, Acting Collector of Tirunelveli
Age at death	About 25
Case	Ashe murder case / Tinnevelly Conspiracy Case – 14 accused; Madras High Court special bench
Main sentence	Neelakanta Brahmachari – 7 years' rigorous imprisonment
Memorial	Sengottai memorial and bust, inaugurated 2013

TNPSC Key Points (PYQ-style facts)

- Vanchinathan was born in 1886 at Sengottai, then in Travancore State.
- Given name: Sankaran. Parents: Raghupathi Iyer and Rukmani Ammal. Wife: Ponnammal.
- Worked in the Travancore Forest Department.
- Member of the Bharatha Matha Association, organised by Neelakanta Brahmachari; secret oath at Tenkasi on 10 April 1910.
- Trained in pistol shooting by V. V. S. Aiyar at Pondicherry.
- 17 June 1911: shot Acting Collector Robert Ashe in a first-class compartment at Maniyachi junction; then shot himself.
- Ashe had been Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate at Tuticorin in 1908 and acted against VOC's Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company.
- Ashe is the only British official assassinated in South India during the freedom struggle.
- Letter in Vanchinathan's pocket referred to King George V's coronation and to 3,000 Madrasis.
- Trial: special bench of the Madras High Court (Arnold White CJ, Ayling J, C. Sankaran Nair J); 14 accused; Brahmachari 7 years' RI.
- Madasamy, the believed accomplice, was never traced.
- Maniyachi junction renamed Vanchi Maniyachi; memorial at Sengottai (2013).

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was Vanchinathan and why is he famous?

Vanchinathan (Vanchi, born Sankaran, 1886–1911) was a young revolutionary from Sengottai, then in Travancore State. On 17 June 1911 he shot dead Robert W. D'E. Ashe, the Acting Collector and District Magistrate of Tirunelveli, in a first-class compartment at Maniyachi railway junction and then shot himself. He was about 25 years old. Ashe is regarded as the only British official assassinated in South India during the freedom struggle.

Why was Collector Ashe targeted?

In 1908 Ashe was Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate at Tuticorin. He acted against V. O. Chidambaram Pillai's Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company and against the Swadeshi movement of 1908, and during the unrest that followed the arrest of VOC and Subramania Siva he ordered the police to open fire on the crowds. Revolutionary youth held him responsible for this repression.

What was the Bharatha Matha Association?

It was a revolutionary group organised by Neelakanta Brahmachari in the Tirunelveli–Sengottai region around 1910. It began by promoting swadeshi goods and nationalist papers from Pondicherry and became a secret society; members took a secret oath at a meeting held at Tenkasi on 10 April 1910. Vanchinathan was an active member.

What happened in the Ashe murder (Tinnevelly Conspiracy) case?

Fourteen men were tried before a special bench of three judges of the Madras High Court – Chief Justice Arnold White, Justice Ayling and Justice C. Sankaran Nair – from September 1911. Neelakanta Brahmachari was the first accused. All the accused were acquitted of abetting the murder, but eight were convicted of conspiracy to wage war against the King; Brahmachari was sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment and others received lesser terms. Madasamy, believed to be an accomplice, was never traced.

How is Vanchinathan remembered today?

Maniyachi railway junction in Thoothukudi district was renamed Vanchi Maniyachi Junction in his honour, after a long campaign led by Kumari Ananthan. The Tamil Nadu Government built a memorial with his bust at Sengottai, which Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa inaugurated in 2013. Many groups mark 17 June every year as his memorial day.

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Practice questions

1. Where was Vanchinathan born?

A. Tenkasi
B. Ettayapuram
C. Ottapidaram
D. Sengottai (Shencottah)

2. When Vanchinathan was born, Sengottai was part of:

A. Madras Presidency
B. Princely State of Travancore
C. Pudukkottai State
D. French India

3. What was Vanchinathan's given name?

A. Subramanian
B. Sankaran
C. Venkataraman
D. Neelakantan

4. On which date did Vanchinathan shoot Ashe?

A. 12 March 1908
B. 7 July 1908
C. 17 June 1911
D. 22 June 1911

5. Maniyachi junction, where Ashe was shot, is now in which district?

A. Tirunelveli
B. Tenkasi
C. Virudhunagar
D. Thoothukudi

6. What post did Ashe hold in 1911?

A. Governor of Madras
B. Acting Collector and District Magistrate of Tirunelveli
C. Superintendent of Police, Tuticorin
D. Collector of Madurai

7. What post did Ashe hold at Tuticorin in 1908?

A. Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate
B. Port Officer
C. Sessions Judge
D. Police Inspector

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8. Who organised the Bharatha Matha Association?

A. V. O. Chidambaram Pillai
B. Subramania Siva
C. Neelakanta Brahmachari
D. V. V. S. Aiyar

9. Where did members of the Bharatha Matha Association take a secret oath on 10 April 1910?

A. Tenkasi
B. Palayamkottai
C. Kovilpatti
D. Srivaikuntam

10. Who trained Vanchinathan in the use of a pistol?

A. Subramania Bharati
B. V. O. Chidambaram Pillai
C. Subramania Siva
D. V. V. S. Aiyar

11. Where did Vanchinathan receive pistol training, and who ruled that place then?

A. Karaikal – Dutch
B. Pondicherry – French
C. Cochin – Portuguese
D. Tranquebar – Danish

12. Which weapon was used to shoot Ashe?

A. Mauser rifle
B. Enfield rifle
C. Webley revolver
D. Browning automatic pistol

13. Through whom was the pistol used to shoot Ashe reportedly obtained?

A. Madame Bhikaiji Cama
B. Annie Besant
C. Sister Nivedita
D. Sarojini Naidu

14. What was the name of Ashe's wife, who was travelling with him on the train?

A. Elizabeth
B. Mary
C. Jane
D. Margaret

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15. Which train were Ashe and his wife going to catch at Maniyachi?

A. Nilgiri Express
B. Boat Mail
C. Frontier Mail
D. Kanyakumari Express

16. Which event was referred to in the letter found in Vanchinathan's pocket?

A. Partition of Bengal
B. First World War
C. Minto–Morley Reforms
D. Coronation of King George V

17. According to Vanchi's letter, how many 'Madrasis' had taken a vow against the British?

A. 300
B. 1,000
C. 3,000
D. 10,000

18. Which court tried the Ashe murder case?

A. Tirunelveli Sessions Court
B. Special bench of the Madras High Court
C. Privy Council
D. Tuticorin District Court

19. Which Indian judge was on the special bench that tried the Ashe case?

A. T. Muthuswamy Iyer
B. C. Sankaran Nair
C. S. Subramania Iyer
D. V. Krishnaswamy Iyer

20. What sentence did Neelakanta Brahmachari receive in the Ashe case?

A. Death
B. Transportation for life
C. Acquittal
D. Seven years' rigorous imprisonment

21. How many men were charged in the Ashe murder case?

A. 4
B. 9
C. 14
D. 21

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22. Which leader campaigned for naming Maniyachi station after Vanchi?

A. Kumari Ananthan

B. Ma. Po. Sivagnanam

C. P. Jeevanandam

D. K. Kamaraj

23. Match: (a) Sengottai (b) Maniyachi (c) Tenkasi (d) Pondicherry — (1) oath meeting (2) pistol training (3) birthplace (4) place where Ashe was shot

A. a-3, b-4, c-1, d-2

B. a-4, b-3, c-2, d-1

C. a-3, b-1, c-4, d-2

D. a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

24. Which statement(s) is/are correct? (i) Ashe is regarded as the only British official assassinated in South India during the freedom struggle. (ii) Vanchinathan was hanged after a trial.

A. (i) only

B. (ii) only

C. Both

D. Neither

25. In which year was the Vanchinathan memorial at Sengottai inaugurated?

A. 2006

B. 2011

C. 2013

D. 2017

Answers with explanations

1. **D) Sengottai (Shencottah)** – Vanchinathan was born at Sengottai (Shencottah) in 1886.

2. **B) Princely State of Travancore** – Sengottai was then in the princely State of Travancore.

3. **B) Sankaran** – His given name was Sankaran.

4. **C) 17 June 1911** – The shooting took place on 17 June 1911.

5. **D) Thoothukudi** – Maniyachi is in Thoothukudi district.

6. **B) Acting Collector and District Magistrate of Tirunelveli** – In 1911 Ashe was Acting Collector and District Magistrate of Tirunelveli.

7. **A) Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate** – In 1908 Ashe was Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate of Tuticorin.

8. **C) Neelakanta Brahmachari** – Neelakanta Brahmachari organised the Bharatha Matha Association.

9. **A) Tenkasi** – The oath meeting was held at Tenkasi.

10. **D) V. V. S. Aiyar** – V. V. S. Aiyar trained him at Pondicherry.

11. **B) Pondicherry – French** – He was trained at Pondicherry, then under French rule.

12. **D) Browning automatic pistol** – A Browning automatic pistol was used.

13. **A) Madame Bhikaiji Cama** – It was reportedly obtained through Madame Cama in Paris.

14. **B) Mary** – His wife Mary was travelling with him.

15. **B) Boat Mail** – They were going to connect with the Boat Mail at Maniyachi.

16. **D) Coronation of King George V** – The letter referred to the coronation of King George V.

17. **C) 3,000** – The letter spoke of 3,000 Madrasis.

18. **B) Special bench of the Madras High Court** – A three-judge special bench of the Madras High Court tried the case.

19. **B) C. Sankaran Nair** – Justice C. Sankaran Nair sat on the bench and wrote a separate judgment.

20. **D) Seven years' rigorous imprisonment** – He was sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment.

21. **C) 14** – Fourteen men were charged.

22. **A) Kumari Ananthan** – Former MP Kumari Ananthan led the campaign.

23. **A) a-3, b-4, c-1, d-2** – Sengottai–birth, Maniyachi–Ashe, Tenkasi–oath, Pondicherry–training.

24. **A) (i) only** – Vanchinathan shot himself at the station, so (ii) is wrong.

25. **C) 2013** – Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa inaugurated it in 2013.

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