

# Ponniyin Selvan

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**In news-** Tamil novel Ponniyin Selvan authored by Kalki Krishnamurthi (1899-1954) is now adopted for big screen.

## About the novel-

- The **novel's enduring popularity stems from its connect with Tamil Nadu's culture and heritage** through a narrative woven around the Chola rule.
- **Ponniyan Selvan means the son of Ponni (the Cauvery River).**
- The novel was penned by author and freedom fighter Kalki Krishnamurthy, and serialized from 1950-54 on a weekly basis in Tamil magazine 'Kalki'.
- It was later published in form of a book in 1955. **It tells the story of the early days of Rajaraja I**, born Arunmozhi Varman and considered the greatest of all Chola rulers.
- While the **novel is work of fiction, it draws heavily on the events and involves characters from the Chola dynasty.**

## The author-

- Born in 1899, R **Krishnamurthi was a writer and freedom fighter**, who authored several short stories, novels, essays, travelogues, and biographies.
- He wrote under **his pen name, Kalki**, and also ran a weekly Tamil magazine by under the same title.
- Most of Kalki's novels were a success for his story-telling skills, and humour in his writings.
- Most of his work revolved around cultural and social aspects of India, particularly Tamil Nadu.
- Some of Kalki's famous novels, other than Ponniyan Selvan, are Thiaga Boomi (1937), Solaimalai Ilavarasi (1947), Magudapathi (1942), Apalaiyin Kannir (1947) Alai

Osai (1948), Devakiyin Kanavan (1950), Poiman Karadu (1950), Punnaivanattupuli (1952), Parthiban Kanavu (1941-42), among others.

- He died in 1954 due to tuberculosis.

## **Rajaraja I-**

- **Rajaraja I, born Arulmozhi Varman** and often described as Raja Raja the Great, was a Chola emperor who **reigned from 985 CE to 1014 CE.**
- He was the most powerful king in south India during his reign and is remembered for reinstating the Chola influence and ensuring its supremacy across the Indian Ocean.
- **His extensive empire included vast regions of the Pandya country, the Chera country and northern Sri Lanka.**
- He also acquired Lakshadweep and Thiladhunmadulu atoll, and part of the northern-most islands of the Maldives in the Indian Ocean.
- **Campaigns against the Western Gangas and the Chalukyas** extended the Chola authority as far as the Tungabhadra River.
- On the eastern coast, he battled with the Chalukyas for the possession of Vengi.
- Rajaraja I, being an able administrator, also **built the great Brihadisvara Temple at the Chola capital Thanjavur.**
- The temple is regarded as the foremost of all temples constructed in the medieval south Indian architectural style.
- During his reign, the texts of the Tamil poets Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar were collected and edited into one compilation called Thirumurai.
- He initiated a massive project of **land survey and assessment** in 1000 CE which led to the reorganisation of the country into individual units known as **valanadus.**
- **Rajaraja died in 1014 CE and was succeeded by his son**

## **Rajendra Chola I.**

- In world history, the **Cholas are among the longest recorded dynasties with their reign peaking in the ninth and tenth centuries.**
- During this period, the entire area south of the Tungabhadra River was brought together as a single unit under the Cholas.
- In terms of the scale of accomplishments in art and architecture and the wealth of writing and epigraphic records, the **Cholas would come across as one of the richest dynasties in South Indian history.**