



**Dr V.C. Kulandaiswamy**  
**Second Vice-Chancellor of Anna University**  
**(1981-1990)**

Dr.V.C.Kulandaiswamy served as the second Vice-Chancellor of Anna University for three successive terms during 1981-1990. It is to his credit that he is the only Vice-Chancellor who held the prestigious post that long.

Born in an agricultural family of a small remote village, Professor V.C. Kulandaiswamy obtained his M.Tech. degree in I.I.T.Kharagpur and then his Ph.D. in Hydrology and Water Resources from the University of Illinois, U.S.A. under USAID Fellowship. He received one year training in Hydraulics Laboratory Practice in West Germany under the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce Scholarship.

Starting his career as a faculty in Engineering, he soon rose to be the Dean of Post-Graduate Studies in the College of Engineering Guindy, Chennai. Later he moved to Educational Planning, Development and Administration. Starting as Director of Technical Education, Government of Tamil Nadu, he was successively Vice-chancellor of Madurai Kamaraj University (1978-79), Anna University and after his tenure at Anna University he became the Vice-Chancellor of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi (1990-94). Between 1979-81 he was UNESCO Advisor in Hydraulics and Hydrology in University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka. Currently, he holds the position of Chairman, Tamil Virtual University Society. He is a great planner and builder of institutions. During the brief period he was the Vice-Chancellor at Madurai Kamaraj University, he established a Post-Graduate Centre at Tirunelveli which became later the seat of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University.

During his term as Vice-Chancellor, Anna University blossomed into a Centre of Excellence, the seat of a number of innovative programmes and at the same time, the largest technological University in the country with an enrolment of 5000 students. It was during his period that the name of the University was changed from Perarignar Anna University of Technology to Anna University and the method of constitution of the Syndicate was changed with the approval of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly. Again, it was during the period of his Vice Chancellorship that IGNOU was conferred by the Commonwealth of Learning (CoL), Vancouver, Canada the unique distinction of Centre of Excellence in Distance Education—the only university in the Commonwealth to achieve this distinction. A Commonwealth Education Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) was also set up at IGNOU and a Staff Training and Research Institute in Distance Education (STRIDE) was established during his tenure. A Distance Education Council (DEC) and a Teleconferencing facility via the Satellite was also introduced which was unique at that time. The Education Media Production Centre (EMPC) was established with a massive assistance of Rs.50 Crores from Japan. The Indian Journal of Distance Education was started and the campus saw the construction of as many as 260 quarters for the staff. Mention must be made of Rajiv Gandhi Fellowship under which IGNOU extended its programme on 'Distance Education' to 19 developing countries with assistance from the Commonwealth of Learning (CoL), Vancouver, Canada.

He is a Fellow of several Academic bodies namely, the Academy of Sciences, Allahabad, the Indian National Academy of Engineering, New Delhi, the Institution of Engineers (India) Calcutta and the Computer Society of India.

He was a member in the five member committee appointed by the Ministry of Water Resources (1994) to look into the environment and rehabilitation problems of Narmadha Project when NBA announced a major agitation against increasing the height of the dam. He was nominated by the Commonwealth Secretariat, London as a member of the Review Committee to review and recommend the future course of developments of the Commonwealth of Learning (CoL), Vancouver, Canada.

He was a member of the UNESCO Planning Group (1978) for the preparation of the Second Six Year Plan(1981-86) of the International Hydrologic Programme (IHP). He has authored over 60 research reports and papers in the field of Hydrology besides 50 on areas of education, science and technology.

He has been the Chairman of many national and International Committees. To mention a few, he was a member of the University Grants Commission (UGC) for two terms, the member of the General Council and also a member of the Executive Committee of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the Joint Council of Vocational Education, the General Council of NCERT, the Indian-Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), the Board of Management of I.I.P.A, the Vice-President of the International Council for Distance Education (ICDE) for Asia, the President of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), the President of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (London) for a brief period and the President of the Indian Society for Technical Education for two terms. He was the Chairman, All India Board of Undergraduate Studies, AICTE, the Board of Faculty Development and Continuing Education, AICTE.

He is currently the Chairman of Tamil Academy, Chennai, the Vice Chairman of the International Association for Tamil Research (IATR), Vice-Chairman, International Institute of Tamil Studies (IITS), Chennai and the Chairman, Tamil Virtual University based at Chennai.

He has made outstanding contributions in Hydrology. One of the pioneers in developing mathematical models in Hydrology, a general equation developed by him and a model based on it for rainfall runoff relationship is known as Kulandaiswamy Model widely quoted in Hydrologic Literature including Handbooks and Textbooks.

The valuable and commendable services rendered by him to the growth of Anna University during his tenure as its Vice-Chancellor were highly cherished and placed on record. The Institute of Remote Sensing, Centre for Bio-technology, the Crystal Growth Centre and the Ramanujan Computing Centre and the Language Laboratory were established during his tenure. The University was able to attract financial assistance from West Germany, O.D.A. Programme, Britain and also from Switzerland. He was responsible for laying a solid foundation for the vast development that the University has undergone over the past several decades both in the Academic and Administrative spheres. He was responsible for introducing a number of new degree programmes at both Post-Graduate and Under-Graduate levels and Research Programmes in a variety of engineering and technological fields. The Printing Technology programme introduced in 1983-84 is the first of its kind in the country as a

whole. The M.Tech programme in Remote Sensing, Biotechnology and Foot-wear Science and Engineering, the B.E. programme in Mining Engineering, the B.E. programme in Computer Science and Engineering and the B.Tech. Programme in Rubber Technology are examples of similar innovations. During his tenure as Vice-Chancellor the Institute Industry Collaboration has gained a new impetus. He was also responsible for introducing a new cadre of teaching/research fellowship to encourage promising fresh graduates to take up the teaching profession and at the same time encouraging them to pursue higher education leading to a Master's and Doctoral Degrees.

Born of a peasant family in a remote village, being aware of the living conditions of an average citizen and having been endowed with the benefit of advanced education, he has a healthy and positive sense of social justice. An S.C. & S.T teacher training scheme introduced by him in Anna University is a commendable effort to ensure that those from the disadvantaged, stand on par with the rest in competence. He was also responsible for introducing Faculty Development Programmes like Ph.D allowances for Lecturers, Assistance for Doctoral Studies, Text Book Promotion Scheme etc.

He was also responsible for bringing in substantial grants to the University from several funding agencies, both from within and outside India, and for the massive building construction programmes in the University to provide facilities to the faculty and to the staff. A record number of 34 buildings were constructed during his Vice-Chancellorship.

He is the recipient of many awards and honours. He was conferred D.Sc., (Honoris Causa)/D.Litt. (Honoris Causa) by seven universities i.e. Jaffna University, Sri Lanka (1980); Alagappa University, Karaikudi (1997); Pondicherry University (1997); Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Hyderabad (1999); Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi (2000); Karnataka State Open University, Mysore (2002); and Dr.B.R.Ambedkhar Open University, Hyderabad given the Indira Gandhi National Integration Award (1984); The Central Board of Irrigation and Power, Diamond Jubilee Award (1991); the U.G.C. Pranavananda Award for 1990; the Institution of Engineers Scroll of Honour as one of the Eminent Engineering Personalities of India (1991). The Commonwealth of Learning, honoured him the Honorary Fellow of the Commonwealth of Learning in 1999.

He was conferred the national honour of PADMA SHRI (1992) by the President of India for his contributions to 'Science and Education' and PADMA BHUSHAN (2002) for his contributions to 'Engineering and Science'. He was one of the two chosen by the Senate of IIT Kharagpur for the Distinguished Alumnus Award among the 35000 odd Alumni, and was conferred the distinction in its 49<sup>th</sup> Convocation in 2003.

He is deeply interested in developing Tamil as a vehicle for modern knowledge. He is relentless crusader for Tamil Script Reform to make learning Tamil easier. Perceiving reasonable possibilities in the Script reform advocacy, the Government appointed a Committee on Script Reform under his Chairmanship in 1996. His book on 'Script Reform' and 'Tamil for Science and Technology' have run through several editions. He established a journal by name Kalangiam "Treasure" a quarterly for promoting Tamil writing in modern areas of knowledge.

He is an acknowledged writer and a poet in Tamil. His book entitled 'Vazhum Valluvam' ( The Immortal Kural) was given the national honour of Sahitya Akademi Award for the year 1988. In recognition of his contributions to Tamil Literature, Jaffna University, Sri Lanka conferred on him D.Litt (Honoris Causa) in 1980. It is stated in the citation that :

Kulandaiswamy belongs to the rare band of Scientists who are able to synthesize the scientific and literary cultures. Consequently his scientific pursuits are permeated with a deep sense of humanism and his literary pursuits are characterized by highly sober and critical judgment based on rigorous scientific methods".

He has so far published ten volumes of poems, fifteen volumes of essays in prose in Tamil, mostly of original nature, six volumes in English and numerous articles in journals. He is the recipient of the following prestigious awards.

1. The Government of Tamil Nadu conferred on him the prestigious '**Thiruvalluvar Award**' consisting of a gold medallion, citation and Rs. One lakh during 1999.
2. He was also the recipient of **Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar Award** (2005) consisting of a citation and cash award,
3. **Raja Sir Muthiah Chettiar Award** (2008) consisting of a citation and cash award of Rs. One lakh
4. **Murasoli Endowment Award** (2008) consisting of citation and cash award of Rs. One Lakh.

5. He has been honoured by a number of well established institutions in Tamil including Madurai Kamaraj University, the title of Tamil Chemmal (1996) and Tharumapuram Adheenam with **Chevviyal Mozhi Chelvar** (2008).
6. The Tamil Nadu Foundation, USA conferred on him the **TNF Excellence Award** (2008) and the City of Oak Ridge, USA conferred on him its Honorary Citizenship (2008).

The 'Tamil Academy' of which he is the Chairman is engaged in brining out a series of twelve volumes of Medical Encyclopedia and seven volumes on Siddha Medicine. The Academy has also planned and started work on a series of seven volumes in Tamil on Science and Technology.

He has been ceaselessly writing and speaking for major reforms in "Higher Education". The report on 'Vocational Education' (1985) by the national working group of which he was the Chairman is considered still, a classic document on the subject.

Dr Kulandaiswamy and Education are more or less synonymous. His contribution to the education sector, particularly Engineering education has been profound and pioneering. He is a distinguished educationist, technologists, teacher, Tamil scholar and poet and is also one among the top institution builders in the country who gave a firm foundation to institutionalized approaches for education in technology and technology in education. He is also a meticulous planner and expects perfection in all activities that he undertakes.