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These colourful names are all part of our great heritage

MR RAJESH DHANIRAM's concern about Tamil names being doomed to disappear (December 11-13) raises another very important issue. In post-apartheid, we are busy re-constructing our society within a fragile democracy.

Too often we are blinded by our prejudice to understand, love and revere people and their culture for who they really are. How many of us, as South Africans, realise or acknowledge the rich history of the Tamil and Telegu-speaking Hindus?

Their struggle against imperialism started from 1860: Fighting for freedom and at the same time as indentured labourers, contributing through enormous hardships towards the foundation of our country's democracy, even before the great stalwarts of the mass liberation movements.

Then great names appeared during the decades of apartheid regime. Greatness in their selfless struggle for all. May God bless those great men and women and may their names like Valliammal remind us that these colourful names are part of our great heritage for they are embedded in our history and a rich culture.

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