M.G. RAMACHANDRAN AND THE
FORMATION OF A.I.A.D.M.K PARTY
AND ITS GOVERNMENT

Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam popularly known as ADMK was started by M.G. Ramachandran whose original name was Maruthoor Gopala Ramachandran. He was born at Kandi in Srilanka on 17th January 1917 as the fifth child of Gopala Menon and Sathyabhamam.¹ Gopala Menon started his career as a magistrate and later became a professor. As he died at Srilanka in 1919 Sathyabhamama, shifted her family, to Kumbakonam. There her eleven years old daughter also died.² Thus Sorrows and sufferings tortured the family.

4.1 EARLY CAREER

MGR started his early education at Alayadi school near Kumbakonam in 1923.³ The poverty that his family suffered at the early stage did not permit to continue his

education above third standard. So his brother Chakrapani joined the Madurai Original Boys Dramatic company as an assistant actor for a salary of five rupees per month to be accompanied by his brother MGR.⁴ Both the brothers were fed up with the tight work in the drama company and seeking chance to act in cinema at Madras.⁵

### 4.2 MGR’S ENTRY INTO FILM WORLD

MGR entered into the Cinema field in 1934 and performed first the role of a police-inspector in the cinema ‘Sathi-Leelavathi’.⁶ Then he was elevated to the rank of hero through the cinema ‘Rajakumari’ released in 1947. Subsequently the films 'Abimanyu’, ‘Mohini’, ‘Rajamukthi’ released in 1948 and the ‘Rathna kumar’ released in 1949 lifted his prestige step by step.⁷ After that MGR acted in the film ‘Marudhanattu Illavarasi’ released in 1950, which was scripted by M.Karunanidhi.⁸ During the shooting of this film

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the love blossomed between MGR and Janagi took them to marriage later. In 1958, MGR directed ‘Nadoodi Mannan’ and the role he took in it, helped him to reach the zenith of popularity in the Tamil cinema world. MGR was admired for his qualities all over the world with titles like ‘Puratchi Thalaivar’, ‘Makkal Thilagam’, and ‘Puratchi Nadigar’. He presented the characters in a disciplined form and the role of an unconscious drunkard that he acted in his 100th cinema ‘Olivilakku’ released in 1968 won for him mass admiration.

The fame MGR won in the cinema world is still a fresh in the minds of the people. The role of a poor man helping the poor that MGR acted in the cinema ‘Mannathi Mannan’ and his effective dialogues in ‘Nadoodi Mannan’ and ‘DeivaThai’ cinemas served as the flashbacks of the Dravidian bravery. It is said that in the beginning MGR had allegiance with the congress party, but became a member of the DMK in 1953 attracted by the scintillating speeches of Annathurai.

10.Seran, op.cit., P.64.
Annathurai had great appreciation for MGR and honoured him with the epithet “Idhayakani” (fruit of heart). The DMK in 1967 general election won a victory to mark a turning point in the History of Tamilnadu because of the dedicative work of MGR and the thought provoking speeches of Annathurai. These factors altogether pulled down the congress from power and put the DMK in the administration.  

On 12th January 1967 he was shot by one of his co–actors and Dravidar Kazhagam activist, M.R.Radha. He was seriously admitted in the hospital and underwent a surgery. After that with the wounds in his neck MGR won the Parangimalai (St.Thomas Mount) bye-election defeating his congress rival T.L.Raghupathy with a margin of more than twenty five thousand votes.

After the death of C.N.Annathurai in 1969, MGR was elected as the treasurer of the DMK party as he was a confident associate of M.Karunanidhi. Along with his involvement in cinema and party politics he found time to write

articles in daily newspapers and monthly magazines.\textsuperscript{18} Till 1971 he deeply involved in the DMK party.

\section*{4.3 DMK AND M.G.RAMACHANDRAN}

MGR was equally popular both in cinema and politics which had been properly utilized by the DMK party for its development.\textsuperscript{19} However the then Chief-Minister Karunanidhi became jealous of his popularity and started taking steps to discolour him. He encouraged his son M.K.Muthu to involve in the cinema field in 1971. M.K.Muthu was directed to show his attention deeply in the cinema field and was encouraged to compete with MGR. So M.K.Muthu became an actor in the cine field.\textsuperscript{20}

Due to this there arose a dispute between the two Fan Clubs. Karunanidhi went to the extent of writing scripts for his son M.K.Muthu’s cinemas. In fact, M.K.Muthu copied all the activities of MGR including the hair style. Yet he

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18}K.Kesavan, \textit{Dravida Iyakathil Pilavugal}[Tamil], Chennai, 1994, P.76.
\item \textsuperscript{20}S.Swami Nathan, \textit{karunanithi Man of Destiny}, New Delhi, 1974, P.23.
\end{itemize}
or his father could not succeed in reducing the popularity of MGR.21 Dishort the rift caused the birth of the AIADMK party as a rival to DMK.

4.4 FORMATION OF AIADMK

During the period of Annathurai the DMK party was very clean but his demise led the party became corruptive.22 Being very honest MGR opposed the party corruptions and attacked Karunanidhi for his neglect of Annathurai’s principles.23 Karunanidhi and some of his ministers could not tolerate the aggressive attitude of MGR.24 They decided to take disciplinary action against him as directed by the executive council members of the DMK party.25 The executive meeting of DMK which was held on 10th October 1972 suspended MGR from the DMK party and asked the explanation.26 M.Karunanidhi, the president and Nedunchezian,

21.R.Thandavan, All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, op.cit., P.52.
22.Ibid., P.72.
25.R.Thandavan, All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, op.cit., P.55.
the General Secretary of the DMK, announced the suspension of MGR from the party and got endorsed by 26 out of 31 members of the DMK executive.\textsuperscript{27} He was given a show cause notice on 11-10-1972 and asked to give explanation within 15 days. The news of his suspension reached MGR at Sathya Studio. When he was in the midst of the shooting of a Tamil film entitled ‘Netru Indru Naalai’.\textsuperscript{28}

After completing his shooting he met the press reporters.\textsuperscript{29} His fans got stunned on hearing the suspension of their hero from DMK party.\textsuperscript{30} The mediatory talks of Nanchil Manoharan and Mrs.Satyavani Muthu also failed. His treasurer post became a bone of contention among the party leaders because of his insistence on the accounts of the amount collected for the party conference at Madurai in 1972.\textsuperscript{31}

MGR guessed an amount of five lakhs of rupees collected for the purpose but Karunanidhi stood on only one lakh. At this hour of crisis the public consisting of peoples

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{27}\textit{The Hindu}, English daily, Madras, dated 11-10-1972. \\
\textsuperscript{28}Hartman, \textit{Political parties In India}, Madras, 1971, P.37. \\
\textsuperscript{29}\textit{Dinamani}, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 10-10-1972. \\
\textsuperscript{30}A.P.Janarthanam \textit{, op.cit.}, P.20. \\
\textsuperscript{31}\textit{National Herald}, English Daily, Madras, dated 1-12-1972. \\
\end{flushleft}
students, peasants and the workers stood with MGR.\textsuperscript{32} In the mean time Nanjil Manoharan, the joint-Secretary of DMK party announced the removal of MGR from the party in a public meeting held at Thirukalankuntam in 1972.\textsuperscript{33} Hearing this news a rebellion took place at Madurai in favour of MGR. The DMK flag was burned by the favourites of MGR. A majority of the youngsters of low class families participated in unlawful activities in favour of MGR.\textsuperscript{34} The protestors caused damages to the state owned transport buses to the tune of more than 60 lakhs.

The fans of MGR ran throughout the city streets attacked the DMK flags and the pictures of Karunanidhi. Violent incidents agitations and protests throughout Tamil Nadu paralysed the DMK administration over a fortnight.\textsuperscript{35} But MGR instead of getting shocked or surprised with the events was found in relaxed mood and smiling face. Despite these developments Karunanidhi was confident of the firmness of the DMK party. On 18, October 1972, MGR started a new political party known as

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\textsuperscript{32}The Hindu, English Daily, Madras, dated 9- 11-1972.
\textsuperscript{33}Dinamani, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 9- 11-1972.
\textsuperscript{34}The Hindu, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 20- 11-1972.
\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., dated 18- 10-1972.
\end{flushright}
‘Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam’. The party adopted a flag 4 inches in length, 3 inches in breadth, the upper half in red colour and the lower half in black with an emblem of Annathurai in the middle. On 23rd December 1972, MGR was given a public reception by a lakh of people at Kancheepuram.

The MGR fan clubs and some DMK branches initially converted themselves into ADMK branches providing the frame work for the party organization. Some dissident DMK leaders who had lost factional battles joined the ADMK soon after its formation. Bulk of the student wing of the DMK was also shifted to the ADMK along with the early organizers of the DMK like S.D.Somasundaram and Azhagu Thirunavukarasu.

At the beginning Vannai Mu.Pandian. H.V.Hande, a Kannadika Brahmin who had been with the swantra party and G.R.Edmund, a Christian from the fisher men

37. The Indian Express, English Daily, Madras, dated 22-10-1972.
40. Vannai.Mu.Pandian was one of the important follower of MGR who had formed MGR fan club in 1957 at Madras.
caste became state level ADMK leaders. Significance of female support for the ADMK was reflected in the existence of a strong women’s wing to the party.\textsuperscript{41} Political alignments followed lines of stratification when the ADMK broadened its coalition after assuming power. Unlike DMK the ADMK did not have a party organ periodical.

However the newspaper ‘Thennagam’ published by some prominent defectors from DMK was adopted as the party organ to be replaced by Annathurai later.\textsuperscript{42} The Nadars and SC community hitherto extended to the congress party was diverted towards the new party by P.H.Pandian\textsuperscript{43} the local legislator for over a decade restrained the violence of some Mudhukulathor farmers and cattle rustlers.

Further the initiation of many minor public works in the constituency helped the ADMK grow steadily during MGR’s rule. The ADMK regime supported the growth of

\textsuperscript{41}Narendra Subramanian \textit{op.cit.}, P.270.
\textsuperscript{42}\textit{The Hindu}, English Daily, Madras, dated 7-11-1972.
\textsuperscript{43}P.H.Pandian was a native of Tirunelveli district. He was a member of the AIADMK party. He served as the speaker of Tamilnadu Legislative Assembly when MGR was the Chief-Minister in 1983. He acted as the member of the Parliament.
Hindu revivalism which did not find a place in the DMK agenda and accepted Annaism as the manifesto.\textsuperscript{44}

### 4.5 ANNAISM

MGR gave a clear explanation for Annaism. According to him Annaism is the synthesis of the good matters and principles filtered from Gandhianism, communism and capitalism.\textsuperscript{45} It aimed at the establishment of a casteless and classless society through a democratic struggle.\textsuperscript{46} Settlements of communal and linguistic disputes through peaceful means formed the policy and principles of ADMK.\textsuperscript{47}

Karunanidhi was shocked to see the growth of the new party in the initial stage, he constituted an enquiry committee against MGR. He appointed a retired judge of the chengelpet session court namely Justice S.Vengadesan in 1972 to enquire ADMK party men and give the report for all the complaints related to the ADMK party men. It was a milestone in the history of Tamilnadu politics.\textsuperscript{48}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{44} Narendra Subramanian, \textit{Ethnicity and Populist Mobilization}, \textit{op.cit.}, P.276.
\item \textsuperscript{45} Charithra Navagar MGR in Sadanaigal [Tamil], Manimegalai Prasuram, Madras, 1979, P.72.
\item \textsuperscript{46} Annaism, [Tamil] AIADMK Publications, Madras, 1978, PP.4-6.
\item \textsuperscript{47} The Hindu, English daily, Madras, dated 29-10-1973.
\item \textsuperscript{48} Navamani, Tamil daily, Madras, dated 25-3-1976.
\end{itemize}

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4.6 DINDIGUL BYE-ELECTION

On 20-5-1973 the bye-election to the Dindigul parliamentary constituency came due to the death of Rajangam in 1971. In this election candidates of DMK, ADMK and Congress parties contested. Finally the ADMK candidate Mayathevar won the election. The Dindigul bye-election marked a turning point in the politics of Tamilnadu for ADMK party.

Similar elections held for the Coimbatore constituency and Pondicherry constituency were also won by the ADMK candidates. It gave a boost to the ADMK party members. During the DMK regime there was internal disorder in Tamilnadu. So the opposition party got a chance to fame corruptive charges against the DMK.

4.7 CORRUPTION CHARGES AGAINST DMK

There was a wide spread allegation that the DMK President M.Karunanidhi ordered Mr.Ambasangar, the secretary to Government, not to give any appointments to non-D.M.K persons. The corrupt measures were found from top to bottom. MGR urged the Central government to conduct an enquiry to examine the charges of corruption against the DMK government. Indira Gandhi the then prime minister of India herself described her erst while ally, M.Karunanidhi as the most corrupt Chief-Minister, in a meeting arranged by the congress Party on 14th February, 1976.55

In Madras, the workers living areas like Thiru.V.Ka Nagar, R.V.Nagar were destroyed by several roudies. The women inside the houses were raped. These unlawful activities of the D.M.K urged M.G.R to raise questioning against Karunanidhi in 1972.56 The DMK party members by their political influence did various atrocities in several places. So Kamaraj told the people to remove the corrupt rule of D.M.K. M.Kalyanasundaram, the Communist,

party General Secretary made several charges against the DMK ministry. He called upon other political opposition parties to oppose the unlawful activities of DMK. He asked the central government to take necessary action and to enquire the police department for supporting the D.M.K party members. He condemned the police department for not maintaining discipline.\textsuperscript{57}

In Madras when the Simpson factory workers stuck work, the DMK party members committed various atrocities against them. M.Kalayanasundaram noticed them and stated that at Mandapam Street in Ramanthapuram district, the Communist Party members were tied with rope by the DMK party members and dragged upon through the streets.\textsuperscript{58}

The then Congress President of Tamilnadu A.B.C.Veerabahu complained that the DMK party was keeping the police department under its control and using the government machineries for the growth of the DMK party. MGR insisted the then Prime minister Indira Gandhi to dissolve the DMK Govt in Tamilnadu.\textsuperscript{59} MGR and the CPI leader

\textsuperscript{57}Jagmohan, \textit{Emergency In India}, New Delhi, 1975, P.40.
\textsuperscript{58}Dinamani, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 22-2-1972.
\textsuperscript{59}Ibid., dated 20-7-1972.
M.Kalyana Sundaram went to Delhi and submitted a memorandum of corruption charges against the Karunanidhi ministry before the President of India on 6th November 1972. On this the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi sought explanations from M.Karunanidhi.\textsuperscript{60} They also submitted a petition against the DMK government to the Tamilnadu Governor K.K.Shah in 1976. Analysing the petition, the Governor identified 27 charges stated in the petition including the Rs.22 crore Veeranam project as true.\textsuperscript{61}

So the Governor of Tamilnadu K.K.Shah recommended to the President of India to remove the DMK ministry from power.\textsuperscript{62} Accordingly on 31\textsuperscript{st} January 1976 the D.M.K ministry was decided to be dissolved by using the ‘Article ‘356’ of the Constitution of India.\textsuperscript{63} Karunanidhi stated that the unlawful and unjust acts committed by the Central government sounded the death knell of democracy in Tamilnadu.\textsuperscript{64} That kind of democratic protest to signify the

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item The Hindu, English Daily, Madras, dated 11-11-1972.
\item Ibid., dated 6-3-1976.
\item K.Kesavan, \textit{op.cit.}, P.82.
\item M.P.Narayanaswamy, \textit{Kalaignar Karunanithiyai Arasiyalil Irinthu Viratta Vendum,} [Tamil], Madras, 1980, P.2
\item The Hindu, English Daily, Madras, dated 11-2-1976.
\end{thebibliography}
unpopularity of the ministry was not resorted before, anywhere in Tamilnadu. The CBI raided the house of an IAS officer Vaidyalingam, the Chief-Secretary and found out several unlawful activities done by him through corruption and he was dismissed from job on 26th March 1976.

Another IAS officer Nagarajan was also involved in corruptive measures during the DMK rule. His house was raided by the income tax officers. An Intimate friend of M.Karunanidhi, namely Mylapore Sundaram an arrack proprietor's house was also raided by the income tax officers and he gave the statement against Karunanidhi. Besides the house of a cinema actress namely Vijayakumari, a close associate of karunanidhi was raided by the CBI.

During the DMK rule Anbhazhagan was the PWD minister. His nephew's house was raided by the CBI and unaccountable money was taken from his house. He was then arrested. M.C.Balan, a Member of Parliament submitted a petition to the Governor stating that the Forest Minister during

66. Ibid., dated 27-3-1976.
the DMK rule O.B. Raman involved in several corruptive measures and it should be enquired. A relative of O.B. Raman namely M.P.V. Ayyanaraja purchased Bamboos from Kulasekharam. By this the loss for the government was Rs. 10 lakhs. In Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari district, all the Bamboo sticks were sold to Sun Paper Mill which was owned by S.P. Adithan. Due to this the Government had a loss of 50 lakhs. 68

In 1974 also Jambulingam, the forest officer and his personal secretary collected a huge amount of money. 69 M.C. Balan in his petition stated that for the coimbatore DMK conference in 1975 the forest range officer Jambulingam collected rupees five lakhs as donation and gave to the DMK party. K.T.K. Thangamony, a communist party leader in a statement told that M. Karunanidhi and P.O. Shanmugham got bribes of Rs Fifty Lakhs from sugar factories. This was cleared by an enquiry commission. 70

The then Tamilnadu Governor K.K. Shah in a statement told that in Co-operative banks, several malpractises

70. Thennagam, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 3-3-1976.
were charged and the DMK insisted not to take action against those petitions. But the Governor stated that severe actions would be taken against the culprits. 71

The AIADMK front line leaders submitted petitions to the Tamilnadu Governor K.K.Shah denoting that Neduncheziyan, was involved in getting commission from the printing press and book agencies. Even though 15 lakhs stock books were there, Neduncheziyan ordered for 15 lakhs books to Prasanth process book agency. He also ordered to C.C.Naidu & sons for the excess of books which were not used for students.72

In 1966, the Government of Madras constituted a committee to translate centre and state laws. The law book covered 25,000 pages to be translated into Tamil. Only 168 pages were translated during a period of 11 years.73 From 1969 to 1973 the commissioner for India to Singapore was Prem Bhadia. He stated that the DMK ministers and the party men were engaged in various unlawful activities against the central and the state government. He recommended the centre to dismiss the DMK government. The opposing political

71 Thennagam, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 4-3-1976.
72 Ibid., dated 2-3-1976.
73 Ibid., dated 5-6-1976.
74 Navamani, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 7-3-1976.
parties submitted a petition to the centre to conduct enquiry about the corruption of the DMK during its period. So the central government constituted an enquiry commission under the Supreme Court Judge R.S. Sarkaria. After analyzing the petition he stated that 54 charges against Karunanidhi can be taken into consideration.

4.8 ATTROCITIES AT SALEM

In Salem district, a DMK meeting took place on 29-1-1972 at Paramathi vellore. The meeting took place at Kanthaswamy Gounder High school. As the students of that school opposed it. Karunanidhi’s police crushed the students with iron hands. Teachers of the school were attacked by the police officials. Hearing this incident the Salem district INTUC president Ramamurthy and the secretary Kalyanasundaram submitted a petition to the Governor.

On 12-1-1974, another such incident took place at Kumarapalayam in Salem. In a factory a woman named

75. Makkal Kural, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 21-3-1976.
76. The Hindu, English Daily, Madras, dated 4-2-1976.
77. Ibid., dated 30-1-1972.
78. Engum Sama Neethi, Govt Of Tamil Nadu Publication, Madras, 1979, P.37.
Fathima was raped by four DMK party functionaries. But by the influence of the DMK leaders a case was registered under section 302 of IPC against Fathima’s husband and he was imprisoned. On 24-6-1974 the ADMK supporter Pulavai Sundaram was shot down by the DMK supporters but no action was taken by the DMK chief. A Harijan woman Kamalammal was raped by six DMK men at Mathanoor, a place in North Arcot district. But no action was taken. Due to the initiative steps taken by Maragadam Chandrasekhar some action was taken for name sake.

4.9. 1977 – A BLOW TO D.M.K

The year 1977 witnessed a total change in the politics of Tamilnadu. In India the long hegemony of the congress was brought to an abrupt which came into existence just on the eve of the 1977 elections. In Tamilnadu, M.G.Ramachandran a film-actor turned politician who had

founded a new political party, scored a spectacular electoral victory and captured power with in five years after founding the party. Both these phenomena were interesting and sensational events in the annals of political development of the country. His convincing triumphs of the Dindigul bye-election and the parliament election were clean indications of his ascending political supremacy. 83

4.10 M.G.R. AND LTTE

The SriLankans tried to crush the attitudes of LTTE but MGR gave full support boldly. He insisted all the district collectors to render help to the Srilankan refugees. MGR allotted seats also in medical and engineering colleges. 84 MGR called upon the cabinet and discussed some matters regarding LTTE and passed a resolution supporting the LTTE. He met all the political party leaders and insisted them to conduct a bandh in support of LTTE. 85 MGR and the political

85.The cabinet under the leadership of MGR met on 27-7-1983 at St.George fort, Madras. An all party meeting was conducted on 28-7-1983 and they decided to conduct a bandh on 2-8-1983 for the support of LTTE.
party leaders went to Delhi and insisted the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to support LTTE. He gave a donation of 20 Lakhs to the LTTE. To meet MGR some LTTE leaders came to Madras under the leadership of Sridharan and they were given a warm welcome. MGR also insisted the party men to wear black shirts. By his order his ministerial colleagues wore black shirts.

On 10-8-1983, meetings were organized to condemn the attitudes of the Srilankans. S.D.Somasundaram wrote an essay named ‘Srilankan Tragedy’ in the newspaper named ‘Porvaal’. To render support to the LTTE MGR the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu insisited his ministerial colleagues to wear black shirts from 15-8-1983 to 14-9-1983. The former minister Kalimuthu tore down the constitutional black law and he told that Jayawardhana must be hanged. On 10-8-1983, he spoke in the Aruppukottai meeting that all must render help to the LTTE. He also asked to give them weapon to

86.V.Thanga Neyan, op.cit., P.50.
87.The LTTE formerly called as Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eezham is one of the Tamil organizations fighting for their rights in Srilanka. It was organized by Prabhakaran and Anton Bala Singham.
88.The Hindu, English Daily, Madras, dated 1-3-1976.
89.Ibid., dated 16-8-1983.
wage war against the Srilankans. MGR passed a resolution against the Srilankans on 25-10-1983 in the Tamilnadu Legislative Assembly. 

The LTTE, in a statement told that if MGR was not in Tamilnadu they would have been as orphans. A rally was organized by MGR in Madras on 12-10-1983 by wearing black shirts to render support to the LTTE. At that time the AIADMK propaganda secretary Jeyalalitha and general secretary P.O.Shanmugham gave a petition to the American Ambassador Consolroy Victakes requesting America to keep neutrality in the LTTE matter without supporting Srilanka.

MGR made a statement infavour of the attitudes of Pazha Nedumaran a staunch supporter of LTTE. On 28-10-1983 a resolution was passed against the Srilankan government in the Tamilnadu Legislative council. He also

91.V.Thanga Neyan, op.cit., P.57.  
92.Ibid., P.58.  
94.Ibid., dated 13-10-1983.  
95.M.L.A Debates, Govt. of Tamilnadu, Madras on 15-11-1983.  
96.V.Thanganeyan, op.cit., P.65.
insisted Indira Gandhi to raise the Srilankan issue in the United Nation Organization [UNO]. The speech delivered by Pandurudi Ramachandran in the UNO was appreciated by Aladi Aruna. Thus the responsibility of the AIADMK in Tamilnadu was to give full support to the LTTE.

When MGR died, the LTTE sent a heartful condolence message to MGR’s family. All the young and the old ladies are keeping the photo of MGR in their houses in SriLanka. MGR was a true saivite. After becoming member of the Dravidian party, he followed the Dravidian principle. MGR spent a lot of money for the DMK party and its leaders and rose to the position of the Treasurer of the DMK party. For the opening of Jeeva’s statue MGR donated a sum of ten thousand rupees.

MGR was a hard working man. He gave donations for the students who scored highest marks in Tamil in the Annamalai University. He also donated funds for the language

97. V.Thanganeyan, _op.cit_, P.71.
98. _Poorval magazine_ [Tamil], Madras, dated 30-10-1983.
100. _Viduthalai_, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 26-12-1987.
101. _Film Fare Souvenir_, Madras, dated 1-6-1973.
agitator Rajendran to keep statue for him. By the nutritious meal scheme MGR told that he could see God in the laughing faces of the poor people.\textsuperscript{104} Even though the people of Tamilnadu gave a warm welcome to the then Prime Minister Indira Gandi they gave the votes for MGR.\textsuperscript{105}

After the dismissal of the MGR government by Indira Gandhi MGR won the next election.\textsuperscript{106} The victory which he got was remarkable.\textsuperscript{107} In USA, the world famous universities like Wisconsin, Chicago, Bergli and California invited MGR to give lectures.\textsuperscript{108} Even though MGR acted in one Cinema a year, the cinema ran for several days.\textsuperscript{109} In 1982, MGR introduced Jeyalalitha as the frontline leader in his party. He also appointed her as the propaganda secretary for the AIADMK party.\textsuperscript{110} A notice was published in the name of

\textsuperscript{104}\textit{Murasoli}, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 19-10-1965.
\textsuperscript{106}\textit{Deccan Chronicle}, English Daily, Madras, dated 3-6-1980.
\textsuperscript{107}\textit{Tamil Arasu magazine}[Tamil], Madras, dated 1-10-1984.
\textsuperscript{108}\textit{The Hindu}, English Daily, Madras, dated 3-6-1980.
\textsuperscript{109}\textit{Aranthai Narayanan}, \textit{Thiravidam Paadiya Thiraipadangal} [Tamil], Chennai,1992, P.20.
\textsuperscript{110}\textit{The Hindu} English daily, Madras, dated 12-11-1972.
MGR that no MLA should meet Jeyalalitha. To compete with Jeyalalitha cine actor Bakiaraj was announced as his successor by MGR in 1982.

### 4.11. SCHEMES OF MGR

MGR gradually dominated the Tamilnadu politics and arranged his party in an organized manner. By launching mid-day meal scheme he enjoyed the continued support of the electorate. In view of giving a national outlook to his party it was renamed as AIADMK on 12-9-1976. Krishna water project, Mid-day meal scheme, Tanjavur Tamil University are the living monuments of the MGR government.

The AIADMK government allotted eight lakhs rupees for procuring and displaying framed pictures of MGR eating with poor children in every one of the noon meal centres. Earlier it was the film magazines such as ‘Cinema Kadir’ and ‘Gundoosi’ which published MGR’s donations periodically. AIADMK Government under MGR taxed the rich

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112. K. Kesavan, *op.cit.*, P.86.
114. M.S.S. Pandian, *op.cit.*, PP.103-104.
for the upliftment of the poor.\textsuperscript{115} It exempted the liquor manufacturers from paying any excise duty on rectified spirit as to bear an annual loss of Rs.100 crores by the state exchequer for seven years. The state-run profit–making enterprises were transferred to private control.\textsuperscript{116}

The Goondas Act of 1981 was a unique invention of the AIADMK government. Under this Act, the district collectors were given the power to detain anyone whom they suspected to be potential violator of the law for a whole year without trial.\textsuperscript{117} In 1981 his government planned to amend the state laws to punish the indecent writing as a offence, punishable by a term of imprisonment varying between two to five years.

The provisions of the act were used to harass newspapers such as ‘Murasoli’ which was the mouth piece of the DMk leader M.Karunanidhi. ‘Malai Murasu’, a popular Tamil evening newspaper which too refused to publish news on the governments line.\textsuperscript{118} The acts armed the government

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\textsuperscript{115} \textit{Junior Vikadan}, Tamil weekly, Madras, dated 4-10-1989.
\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Aside}, English Magazine, Madras, dated 15-8-1989.
\textsuperscript{117} \textit{India Today}, Tamil Magazine, Madras, dated 1-1-1988.
\textsuperscript{118} \textit{Ibid.}, dated 30-9-1982.
\end{flushright}
with powers to ban films which had been certified by the central board of Film certification. The bill was provoked by the success of a film ‘Neethikkut Thandanai’ scripted by Karunanidhi. The film was, as one would expect, quite critical of MGR’s rule. 119

4.12 PARTY NEWSPAPERS

Due to severe criticism from the press and the public, MGR dropped the bill.120 The DMK newspapers like ‘Dravida Nadu’ and ‘Murasoli’ and the magazines like ‘Mutharam’, once too often carried deliberately exaggerated reports and commentaries on MGR’s donations. The issue of Mutharam carried a photograph of MGR on its front cover with ‘Comrade of the Poor’. The story inside the magazine notified that MGR donated ten thousand rupees for the people who were affected by fire. It pleased the hearts of the poor as he promised to give rupees one lakh every year to construct permanent houses for the poor.121 When MGR was in hospital in 1984, the party newspapers from time to time put forward the argument that surely MGR would survive.122

120. Dravida Nadu, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 13-4-1958.
121. Mutharam, Tamil Magazine, Madras, dated 1-7-1968.
**4.13 M.G.R IN FILMS**

MGR was a film star and politician. His extremely successful film career of his cinemas earned him one of the world’s largest fans. The very first full length Tamil talkie ‘Kalidas’ invoked the name of Mahatma Gandhi and the Nationalist slogan ‘Vande Mataram’ in its songs. Similarly in another MGR cinema, ‘Puthiya Bhoomi’ released in 1968 the socially conscious hero was named ‘Kathiravan’ which again means the sun.

An early film of MGR was titled Kanchi Thalaivan, released in 1963 an obvious reference to Annathurai who was from the small but historically important temple town of Kancheepuram in northern Tamilnadu. MGR was compelled by circumstances to play minor roles in several films including mythological ones. He appeared as Vishnu in ‘Dakshayagnam’, as Indiran in ‘Prahalada’, as Parameswarar in ‘Sri Murugan’ and as Indirajit in ‘Jananam’. A characteristic role of MGR was that of a working man attempting to combat everyday oppression.

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124. See Appendix-II, List of MGR acted films.
the cinema ‘Thozhilali’ MGR as a manual worker drank gruel from an earthen pot and licks pickle. MGR’s cinemas endowed these food items with a specific significance. All these food items were normally consumed by the poor and rich people. Cinema magazines carried letters from MGR’s fans expressing their admiration for his fighting skills. MGR demonstrated his skill in silambam. He showed his efficiency by saving his enemies life when in danger. In the film ‘Thozhilali’ released in 1964 MGR was a manual worker and spent endless nights for studying to earn degree.  

In ‘Panathottam’ released in 1963 and ‘Naan Yen Piranthen’ released in 1972 he pledged his modest house in order to acquire education. It was certainly not accidental that the leaders of the DMK and the ADMK came to accept honorary doctorates as well deserved by them. While the Annamalai University conferred a Honorary doctorate to

126.M.S.S.Pandian, op. cit., P.44.  
127. Thennagam, Tamil Daily, Madras, dated 3-3-1976.  
128. The film ‘Panathottam’ was released in 1963. It was produced by Saravana film owned by Velumani. It was directed by K.Sankar. The actress of this film was Saroja Devi.  
129. Annamalai University is situated in Chidambaram. The founder of this University was Dr.Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad. It was started in 1929.
M.Karunanidhi, the University of Madras\textsuperscript{130} conferred one Honorary Doctorate to MGR. When MGR managed to get an honorary doctorate from the University of Madras in 1983, the AIADMK turned it into an event for much celebratio n throughout Tamilnadu. Hence forth he was always known as ‘Dr. Puratchi Thalaivar’.\textsuperscript{131}

In the film ‘Thaiku Thalaimagan’ released in 1967 MGR an automobile mechanic married the only daughter of a local landlord. In ‘Periya Edathu Penn’, released in 1963 MGR turned the rural power structure upside down. As bullock-cart driver, he married the local landlord’s daughter. In ‘Ayirathil Oruvan’ released in 1965 MGR marries a princess. In ‘Thazhampoo’ released in 1965 MGR belonged to the family of a plantation labourer who marries the plantation owner’s daughter.

This pattern was repeated in several other films like ‘Baghdad Thirudan’, ‘Panathottam’, ‘Yenga Veetu Pillai’ and ‘Kumari Kottam’. In ‘Madurai Veeran’, ‘Panam Padaithavan’, ‘Nadodi’ and ‘Nam Nadu’ MGR’s matrimonial alliances

\textsuperscript{130}Madras University was established during the period of Britishers. It was established by the resolution passed on 5-9-1857. In 1873 the senate building was constructed.

challenge the caste distinctions. A head master of a school, at Kalakkad in Tirunelveli district, confessed in public that he had been teaching MGR’s songs as moral instruction lessons to his students.\textsuperscript{132} To foster the tendencies of being human, MGR cultivated several good habits from his younger days.

In the world of cinema MGR cinemas were born out of his own experience. When more and more of such films began to appear, MGR became the protector of the common man. The fans began to organize ‘Rasigar Mantrams’ (fans club) throughout Tamil Nadu. These mantrams in course of time gave publicity to MGR cinemas and also undertook political activities of the DMK. His position in DMK was unchallengable.

In AIADMK also, the legislative wing dominated over the organizational wing. MGR wanted both the ministerial berth and film career at a tune had several mantrams in his name and he used to convene the conferences of the mantrams even during Annathurai’s days and it was suspected that he was aiming at a clique within the party.\textsuperscript{133} MGR retained his mantrams so that they could constitute the

\textsuperscript{132}\textit{Indian express}, English daily, Madras, dated 27-7-1986.
\textsuperscript{133}S.S.Shivakumar, \textit{Karunanithi Man Of Destiny}, New Delhi, 1974, P.60.
nucleus for his own political party at a later stage. The most significant proof of the MGR's of cinemas become almost a ritual in itself. His cinemas contained this interface between entertainment and ritual.\textsuperscript{134}

MGR was represented as an exceptional man who did not involve in sexual violence against women. For instance in his hundredth film ‘Oli vilakku’, he played the role of a protector and guardian. He physically separated himself from her by sleeping in the porch of his own house. He did not attempt to exploit her sexually.\textsuperscript{135} In this way he got a name among the women folk.

The election wall posters of the AIADMK, noted below as ‘Unga Veetu Pillai – MGR’ or son of your home. MGR, during the public meetings, addressed the female audience as ‘Thai kulam’ or the community of mothers. Most of the MGR fans were from rural and semi urban areas and his films always performed better.

MGR was well versed in every aspect of film making, direction, camera, music and editing. All the fights in his cinema were personally supervised and edited by him.\textsuperscript{136}

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\textsuperscript{134}M.S.S.Pandian, \textit{op.cit}. P.77.
\textsuperscript{135}Ibid., P.80.
\textsuperscript{136}Indian express, English daily, Madras, dated 29-7-1986.
\end{flushright}
He addressed his followers as ‘Rathathin Rathammana Udanpirapugalae’. Party posters were effectively made to represent him as one among the common people.\(^{137}\)

### 4.14 HELPING HAND

MGR was a symbol of hope for the poor in Tamilnadu. Having no children of his own he adopted the poor as his successors. Almost on every occasion, he donated money for the benefit of the poor. In his later cinemas, he appeared with young heroines such as Jeyalalitha, Latha and Manjula, and in a number of cinemas he acted with more than one heroine.

There are a number of MGR fans, associations in different parts of Tamilnadu named as ‘Thrice Born MGR fans Association’. He was invariably garlanded with unimaginably huge garlands locally known a ‘Dindu malai’ which had later acquired a new name ‘MGR maalai’ made of at least ten thousand roses.\(^{138}\) Both in real life and on screen, MGR was represented as one among the common people and at the same time he was distinct from and stood above them.\(^{139}\)

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137. M.S.S.Pandian, *op cit.*, P.98.
139. M.S.S.Pandian, *op cit.*, P.98.
An AIADMK MLA, Tamarai Kani from Srivilliputhoor constructed a small shrine for his leader outside his house and people offered prayers there.

As soon as he died, one of his close associates and beneficiary of his rule Jeppiyar announced that he was planning to construct a temple for MGR. In remembrance of that he started a University in the name of MGR’s mother named as Sathyabhama Deemed University.\textsuperscript{140} MGR’s charisma took him to unprecedented heights and he won the assembly election of 1977, 1980 and 1984.\textsuperscript{141}

\textbf{4.15 M.G.R AS CHIEF-MINISTER OF TAMILNADU}

In the AIADMK party the legislative wing dominated over the organizational wing. However it was MGR’s charisma which was the moving spirit behind the legislative party and the organization.\textsuperscript{142} Soon after the results of the assembly elections of June 1977 MGR, the leader of the AIADMK, became the Chief-Minister of Tamil nadu on 30\textsuperscript{th} June 1977. In the seventh assembly elections of 1980 the AIADMK obtained an absolute majority of 130 seats out of 234.

\textsuperscript{140}Dinamani, Tamil daily, Madras, dated 8- 11-1972.
\textsuperscript{141}Ibid., dated 20-1-1988.
Hence on June 9, 1980 the cabinet headed by MGR was sworn for a second time. MGR created a history by assuming charge as Chief-Minister of Tamilnadu for the successive third time on 10-2-1985. After winning the elections, his council of ministers assumed charge on the 15th February, 1985. The AIADMK transmitted its ideological principles into electoral promises at the first instance. After obtaining power, the electoral promises flourished into administrative policies.

He accepted the medium of political initiative for settling all problems of the society. Annaism served MGR well to establish AIADMK and to take the reigns of power in 1977. The remarkable popularity of Annaism was witnessed again in the 1980 and the 1984 assembly elections.

In fact MGR was in the forefront of the opposing forces throughout his life. Here his life's experiences both personal and filmic coincided with the political climax in the DMK. Thus MGR became a ‘Vadiyar’, the only Makkal Thilagam and Puratchi Nadigar. He is the symbol of hope for the

143. Report of the Sixth Assembly Election, Government of Tamilnadu, Madras, P.120.

144. Virender Grover & Ranjana Arora, _op. cit_., P.411.

the poor in Tamil Nadu.\textsuperscript{146} Shivaji Ganesan urged all to pray for MGR when he was in sick bed. Padmini, an actress, went to Tirupathy to pray for MGR. The Hundi at Thirupathy was filled with purses and jewellery for the recovery of MGR’S health. After one hundred days, MGR returned to the studio amidst the garlands and the crowds and said that he was saved because of thousands of loving hearts.\textsuperscript{147}

MGR succeeded Annathurai as the most lovable mass leader by dint of his magnanimous efforts and in his own right. His party had a well organized system and the members were also expected to obey the commands of the higher party organizations. They were requested to contribute financially if the party requests contributions.\textsuperscript{148}

In the rural sector, every village in Tamilnadu had a branch of the AIADMK. It had not less than 25 members called as village unit. Next to village units, the higher organization of the AIADMK were Panchayat Union branches. In urban sectors Municipal Towns with a population of less than one lakh had an AIADMK branch which were called

\textsuperscript{146}Kalanchur .So.Selvaraj ,\textit{op.cit.}, P.121.
\textsuperscript{147}The Hindu, English Daily, Madras, dated 29-10-1972.
Town councils.\textsuperscript{149} District conferences and state conferences of AIADMK were held once in three years. The AIADMK was supported by the party newspapers ‘Anna’, ‘Pon Manam’ and ‘Thai’ and the pro- AIADMK press like ‘Makkal Kural’, Thina Thanthi’ ‘Malai Murasu’ and the ‘News Today’.\textsuperscript{150}

Some of the effective speakers of the AIADMK party were S.R.Radha, Dr.Samarasam, Thiruppur Manimaran, Madusudunan, N.V.N.Selvam, Kovai Thambi, Durai Govindarajan, Jeppiar, Valampuri John, Valarmathi and Nellai Balaji. To propogate its ideals the party staged a few play by Kathir Somasundaram Its major play was ‘Yar Intha MLA’ won the appreciation of many people.\textsuperscript{151}

Since most of the party workers happened to be the members of his fan clubs, MGR heared, them patiently, extended help to them education and livelihood and always ready to share their grievances.\textsuperscript{152}

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\begin{enumerate}
\item[149.] R.Thandavan, \textit{AIADMK- A Review}, \textit{op.cit.}, P.110.
\item[150.] Ibid., P.106.
\item[151.] M.S.Udaya Moorthy, \textit{Americavil Anna-MGR} [Tamil], Chennai, P.68.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
4.16 ADMINISTRATION OF M.G.R

MGR selected duly qualified persons as ministers. He exhorted the ministers to fulfill the promises given to the people by the party. He never hesitated to get advice from experts in Science and Technology and fully knew that the corrupt administration would destroy all the best efforts of the Government. He also followed the footsteps of Annathurai.\textsuperscript{153}

The AIADMK government identified 201 communities belonging to Backward classes for purposes of relief and reservation under articles 15(4) and 16(4) of the constitution. With a view to uplift the backward classes, the economic development corporation was set up in 1980. The AIADMK administration showed attention for socially neglected people. Rural communities were still devoid of the basic necessities of life even after 35 years of Independence.

The Tamil Nadu official language act was enacted for the development of the Tamil language. People settled in other states were encouraged to study Tamil. In order to enhance Tamil language and literature Tamil scholars

\textsuperscript{153.D.K.Murthy, Talks of Anna, Thanjavur, 1979, P.12.}
were honoured by giving prizes and laurels.\textsuperscript{154} Besides the prizes and laurels financial assistance was given to Tamil scholars. The Bharathi Dhasan award prizes were distributed every year to Tamil scholars.\textsuperscript{155}

\textbf{4.17 SCHEMES IN THE EDUCATIONAL FIELD}

In order to provide pride to Tamil as the official language of the state the AIADMK revived the poet Lauret-Ship in the Government of Tamilnadu. Further the Government ordered the implementation of certain reforms in Tamil language introduced by E.V.R.Periyar. A separate Tamil university at Tanjore was also set up in 1981. Lastly the AIADMK was instrumental in conducting the grand world Fifth Tamil Conference during January 4-10-1981 at Madurai.\textsuperscript{156}

The setting up of Bharathiyar University at Coimbatore, The Bharathi Dhasan University at Tiruchi, The Tamil University at Tanjore and the Anna University of Technology at Madras were the great contributions of MGR’s

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\begin{enumerate}
\item D.Ramanath, \textit{Thirai Valartha Tamil} [Tamil], Chennai, 1987, P.17
\item V.Lakshmanan, \textit{Makkal Thilagam MGR} [Tamil], Madras, 1985, P.49.
\item The Hindu, English Daily, Madras, dated 7-10-1981.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
regime. The setting up of women’s university at Kodaikanal and the Alagappa University at Karaikudi, increasing the emphasis on Tamil medium courses, granting of autonomous status to several colleges, giving emphasis on correspondence education and more attention to non-formal and adult education were also carried out during his tenure as Chief-Minister of Tamilnadu. These were some of the structural administration improvements achieved in the field of education under AIADMK.157

The AIADMK’s attitude towards Hindu revivalism did not change much after MGR’s death. After the BJP made major electoral advances in 1991, the ADMK began supporting Hindu revivalist demands to construct a Hindu temple in Ayodhya without advocating the destruction of the mosque which stood there and ended its alliance with congress. These shifts in the ADMK’s choice of allies were kept with the ADMK to forge links with whichever party appeared stronger in national politics. The ADMK regime redistributed property and changed the profile of income distribution less than the DMK regime did.158

Thus what is being analysed in this chapter is how MGR a malayalee by birth, who has acted in 136 films in his long career of 40 years in the film world had not only succeeded as a film hero but also a political hero. It also seeks to analyse why Shivaji Ganesan, a Tamil by birth who acted in 225 films in his 30 years film career though successful as a film hero had failed to succeed as a political hero in Tamilnadu.

The analysis very well says that the political change in Tamilnadu can be effected only by a handful of film personalities and not by all who have involvement in the film world.