CHAPTER IV

IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS AND POPULAR BASES OF THE D.M.K.

The D.M.K. stood for certain socio-political ideologies which provided it a distinct place in the political spheres of Tamil Nadu. If some of these ideologies were inherited from the Justice Party and D.K. of Which the D.M.K. was the offshoot, the others were achieved by efforts. The spirit of Non-Brahmanism and championing the cause of the poor and depressed were the ideologies which were inherited from the parental bodies. The principles like Tamil Nationalism, Anti-Hindi Imperialism, Mass Labour Organisations and mass movements were secured by D.M.K. by agitational means and methods and popular movements whereas an account of the socio-political ideologies inherited by the D.M.K. has been given in a previous chapter. The present one is devoted for discussion on the agitational means, mass movements and mass media as vehicles for providing ideological foundation and popular basis for the D.M.K. before it emerged as a force to be reckoned with.

The D.M.K. emerged as a powerful alternative to the Congress in Tamil Nadu and stole a march over its only political opponent the Communists by its extra parlimentary activities. Normally the extra parlimentary activities of the party aroused the enthusiasm of the people and mobilised support and
involvement, to gain possible recruits and sympathisers for the party. Thus by launching agitations, party leaders promoted the party's growth, built its structure, consolidated its position among the people, and influenced their opinion.\(^1\) Further, the success of the agitation enabled the leader and his party to secure the confidence and emotional attachment of the people and to add to their image the halo of honour.\(^2\)

The D.M.K. embarked upon the agitational policy to gain victories and to consolidate populist support and strength for the D.M.K. Through the medium of agitation, the D.M.K. was transformed from an ideological party into a parliamentary one. Anna's belief in agitational politics can be seen from his statement "the D.M.K. is born in tears, has grown in tears, by shedding blood of the people and it best makes more sacrifices in the years to come.\(^3\)

The work of the D.M.K. leaders among the masses, especially the low castes, has helped to identify the issues and measures that could be taken up and turned effectively against the Congress. The issues the D.M.K. agitated for were both local and national. The party agitated against Northern Imperialism on two fronts, the cultural or the language front and the economic front. The local issues normally dealt by the D.M.K. were remedies for class or group and caste


\(^3\) CNA's Speech at Special Election Conference at Coimbatore. 10 January 1957.
interests depending on the nature of the cases. "This agitational politics enabled the party to penetrate every nook and corner of the State.

A. Tamil Nationalism

The D.M.K. capitalised on the language issue and projected the party as the symbol of Tamil Nationalism and the champion and protector of Tamil language. Tamil Nadu Congress could not match D.M.K's anti-Hindi stance. Even Kamaraj the master manipulator stood perplexed. The anti-Hindi feeling grew more intense with the centre's attempt to Hindianise the South. On this issue the D.M.K. could count on the support of leaders like Rajaji, Ma. Po. Sivagnana Gramani of Tamil Arasu Kazhagam.

To make Hindi the official communication language the Central Government issued directives on April, 1950 to all its Departments. One of those said that those who learn Hindi would be given special concessions and quick promotions. The D.M.K. condemned it and warned the "Delhi Sultanate" to dispense with the disrespect shown to Tamil on the Railways, Post and Telegraph sign boards.\(^4\) As a protest the D.M.K. carried out tarring the Hindi names found on the signboards of the Railways and Post and Telegraph Departments on August 1, 1952 to protect Tamil language and culture and to fight Hindi imperialism and the political arrogance of the Congress rulers.\(^5\) This agitation

\(^4\) Resolution No.8, DMK Working Committee meeting, 27 Aug. 1950.
raised the fundamental question as to why all the National languages could not be made official languages.

The President of India appointed a 30 member Official Language Commission on June 7, 1955. B.G.Kher was its Chairman. The Commission was to recommend on the progressive use of the Hindi language for the official purpose of the Union.\(^6\) Opposing this move the Academy of Tamil Culture convened a meeting on January 28, 1956 on the initiative of Anna. Further, the observed October 13, 1957 as a day of protest against Hindi imperialism. A total of 678 meetings were held and resolutions were passed demanding amendment of Part. XVII of the Constitution and reiterating Continuance of English in the State and for. Centre-State Purpose.\(^7\)

Inspite of all these the Kher Commission recommended Hindi to be the Official Language of the Union, three language formula for the non-Hindi region and two language formula for the Hindi region and adoption of Hindi as the medium of instruction in the Universities and as the language of High Courts including the Statute books.\(^8\) In the Parliamentary debate on the report, the D.M.K members echoed Anna's views and called for an amendment that English should continue indefinitely as the Official Language. The Madras legislative Assembly adopted a proposal that both English and Hindi should continue as

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official languages even after 1965. But Anna did not support this proposal for, he had never wanted Madras to be apart of the Indian Union. However the Parliamentary debate continued and Pandit Nehru gave his assurance on August 7, 1959 that English would continue indefinitely as an alternative associate additional official language as long as the people would require it, leaving the decision not to the Hindi knowing people but to the non-Hindi speaking people. But on April 13, 1963, the Official Language Bill was presented to the Lok Sabha. Following this Anna called for an agitation against the imposition of Hindi because it violated Nehru's assurance. Further Anna opposed the use of Hindi by the Post and Telegraph Department in the forms including the money order forms. He pressed for the use of Tamil in them which after a long time was conceded in respect of money order forms but not in telegraph forms.

During Nehru's visits to Madras while commenting on the agitation launched by the D.M.K. he made scathing attacks on the D.M.K. and called the agitating leaders "old hags, madmen and barbarians". To teach Nehru a lesson and to restore Tamil self-respect and to express concern about Hindi imperialism, Anna called upon party people to stage a black flag demonstration asking 'Nehru to go back', on January 6, 1958 when Nehru visited Madras. About 20,000 demonstrators staged the black flag demonstration at Meenambakkam airport. The same reception awaited Nehru at Mount Road. To disperse the 20,000 demonstrators Police indulged in firing in which, 2 were killed. Further, the All

India Radio Stations in Madras and Tirchy were using the word 'Vanoli' in their broadcast. On the centre's directive it was changed to 'Akashwani' from January 1, 1959. This was condemned at a meeting held on January 14, 1959. Anna called for a total boycott of All India Radio Programmes by everyone interested in the life of the Tamils.  

Singers, speakers, actors and other artistes supporting Anna responded favourably. The D.M.K. General Council meeting held on February 7-8, 1959 called upon the Centre to give up the name 'Akashwani' or an agitation would be launched. The warning was repeated on July 12, 1959. Thereupon in the broadcasts, the phrase "All India Radio-Trichy, Madras Nilayam" instead of Akashwani was used. Finally on May 1967 the word 'Akashwani' was replaced by the word 'Vanoli'.

On April 27, 1960 the President of India issued an order regarding minimum knowledge of Hindi required for Central Government jobs. Those already in Government service must acquire a compulsory knowledge of Hindi. The Railways, post and telegraphs Departments issued suitable orders and the working employees had to face disciplinary action if they failed to acquire knowledge in Hindi. Anna asked the President to withdraw his directive before September 30, or the D.M.K. would be forced to launch an agitation. An

13 a) AIR 1977, Superme Court, pp.225-229.
    b) Cited in Indhi—Ya. Indhi Yava, (Hindi or India), pp.76-77.
Anti-Hindi conference with Anna as President was convened on August 1, 1960. It resolved to show black flag to the President raising the slogan "Down with Hindi, Reverse your Order". As the said order ran counter to Nehru's assurance, Anna reiterated in the State Assembly his demand for a total amendment of the relevant provisions of the Constitution. But inspite of these reactions, the official Language Bill with 9 sections was presented to the Lok Sabha on April 13, 1963. Anna opposed the Bill on grounds of "political ethics". He argued that the Bill was imperfect, ambiguous about the phrase ‘Official Language’. That Hindi unlike English could not bring about the required improvement, that the society being plural. State federal political system composite and the Constitution flexible Hindi should not be imposed at the expense of other national languages. Emphasising that "it is not a question of justice and freedom of consultation and concord, amenity and affection or animosity and that issues had to be decided with justice in view", he pleaded for "a reappraisal, for an amendment of the Constitution for maintaining the status quo and keeping English as the Official Language".14

On the enactment of the Official Language Act 1963, Anna pressed the D.M.K. into swift action. A two phased agitation and triple action agitation programmes were sanctioned. The first phase lasted from November 17, 1963 to January 24, 1965. This involved the burning of Part XVII of the Constitution of

14 Rajayyan, K., Modern Tamil Nadu, History Society and culture, Madurai, 1994, p.163.
India, picketing the Central Government offices and the Hindi Prachara Sabha. The 2nd phase of the programme was to start on January 20, 1965.\textsuperscript{15}

Anna was to have commenced the agitation by burning part XVII of the Constitution of India on November 17, 1963 on the Marina. But he and 168 others were taken into custody on November 15, 1963. Later they were prosecuted and sentenced to six months rigorous imprisonment. In all 3200 persons were prosecuted. Nehru condemned the agitation as "Childish, absurd and ridiculous" which brought more fire to the agitation with more youth and students joining the agitation.\textsuperscript{16}

Strong feelings were aroused and expressed in rhetoric speeches and violent acts. But the centre did not relent.\textsuperscript{17} January 26, 1965 was announced by the Government of India as the day when Hindi would start functioning as the Official Language of the Indian Union. Anna considered the move as a fraudulent device to twist Nehru's assurance rendering "political injustice" to the Tamils and destruction of the Dravidian languages.\textsuperscript{18} So the second phase of the agitation was announced and it was decided that the Republic Day would be observed as "a day of mourning". Black flag demonstrations were to be held in 1600 selected places with party men 'wearing black badges. The D.M.K. was branded anti-national. Anna replied that the decision to observe the Republic

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p.193.
\textsuperscript{17} Rajjayyan. K. Tamil Nadu are Al History, Trivandrum, 2005, p.443.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., p.444.
Day as a "Day of mourning" was not against the Republic Day but against the imposition of Hindi. On January 25, Anna and 300 party people were arrested.\textsuperscript{19}

Students took over the movement and it became militant resulting in chaos. Six D.M.K. men immolated themselves and two committed suicide by consuming poison. Two Central Ministers C. Subramaniam and O.V. Alagesan resigned. Finally on February 11, 1965, Prime Minister Lai Bahadur Shastri announced that "English would be an associate language as long as and until otherwise the non-Hindi people decide."\textsuperscript{20} It was only when the problem came up again in 1968, when the Students of Tamil Nadu reacted against the Hindi command words in the NCC that the Official Language Act was amended. The Tamil Nadu Assembly passed a resolution in January 1968, reiterating the demand for a constitutional amendment. Subsequently Anna totally removed Hindi from school Curriculum by reverting to the two language formula.\textsuperscript{21}

\textbf{Reservation Policy}

The next issue over which D.M.K. launched agitation was the caste issue. The communal G.O. issued in 1920 and 1927\textsuperscript{22} and later in 1935\textsuperscript{23} sought to confer certain benefits on Non-Brahmins. The G.O. was reversed in November

\textsuperscript{19} Rajjayyan, K., Modern Tamil Nadu, op.cit., p.194.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p.194.
\textsuperscript{21} Rajjayyan. K, Modern Tamil Nadu, op.cit., p.155.
\textsuperscript{22} ChittaBabu. C., op.cit., p.120.
1947 Which when questioned on grounds of fundamental rights to equality was nullified. In 1950 it was declared void by the High Court of Madras. Consequently Anna led a protest campaign on May 14, 1950, and an all-party meeting was held on the Marina Beach. Hartals were observed at Kanchi and Vellore. Anna assured support to the then Government in its right for justice to the Backward Dravidians in its appeal to the Supreme Court.  

The D.M.K. launched an agitation which gained a lot of attention, for the students bycottted classes and took to demonstrations. The Madras congress also prevailed upon the centre G.O. bring in the first amendment to the constitution, which among other things introduced a new clause in Article 10(4). This article allowed special provision for the socially and Educationally backward classes which had been forbidden, by Article 15(1). This agitation gained a lot of support from the backward classes for the D.M.K.

**Three Pronged Fight**

Rajaji introduced caste-based educational system namely Kulakalvi Thittam. This plan suggested that pupils in the age group of 5 to 11 should be given instruction and training in their ancestral occupation, and a shift system was proposed to accommodate this educational system. This was a realistic version of the Basic system of education. Against the plan Anna conducted a three-pronged agitation. The D.M.K. considered this plan as an attempt to perpetuate the Varnashrama Dharma. They planned to picket Rajaji's house on

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July 14, 1953. Simultaneously they launched an agitation to change the name of the Railway station called Dalmiapuram to Kallakudi, Ramakrishna Dalmia happened to be a North Indian Industrialist, the government to honour him named the Railway station 'Dalmiapuram'. To the D.M.K., this act symbolised the domination of the south by the North. Appealing to the Dravidian sentiments, the D.M.K. called for support to an agitation - trains would be stopped throughout Tamil Nadu. The third agitation involved the formation of separate Andhra State. Chittoor Tamils wanted Chittoor to remain in the Madras State. Picketing was conducted on June 1954 and later on July 3, 1954. Trains were stopped at Tirutani. This agitation was conducted in collusion with Tamil Arasu Kazhagam. The agitation was called off when Nehru assured the appointment of a commission to solve the border problem. However Nehru remarked that the Dravidian agitation was nonsensical, foolish and exhibited a tribal mentality. To condemn this remark, the train chains were pulled.  

This was the famous "Mummunai Porattam" (three cornered agitation) for which the D.M.K. working committee gave its sanction on July 13,1953. On July 21, the party conducted the protest meetings and signature campaigns. The parental signatures against the 'Kulakalvi Thittam' were sent to the Government authorities. But Rajaji refused to relent. Later mass processions were held on July 8 1953 in those places from where the D.M.K. supported M.L.A's had been elected. The processionists submitted memorandum to the M.L.A's calling upon them to fight against the educational formula in the Assembly. In Madras, Processionists were arrested on July 8

25 Thinathanthi, Varalattru Suvadugal, Chennai, 2010, p.410,
and 9, 1953. Eighty-seven persons were arrested on 8 July. On the violation of a prohibitory order by holding processions. The top leaders were arrested on July 13, 1953. The public supported the demands of the D.M.K. Rajaji's house was picketed on July 14, 1953. This continued for 15 lays. In Dalmiapuram, Karunanidhi headed the agitation. The Dalmia Cement Factory workers observed strike on July 10, 1953, sympathising with the cause of the D.M.K. although the Zonal Council of Southern Railways agreed to change the name of Dalmiapuram as Kallakudi, the Centre did not agree to it till December 27, 1969, when the latter issued orders changing the name of Dalmiapuram as kallakudi Pazhanganatham.

Rajaji's Bill regarding Kulakalvi Thittam (caste based Education) was taken up for discussion on July 29, 1953. Two amendments, one to drop it and the other for suspension were moved. When put to vote, the former was defeated and the latter was allowed by 139 for 137 votes. Considering this as the defeat of the Bill, Rajaji resigned and Kamaraj became the Chief Minister on April 13, 1954.

The D.M.K. extended support to the freedom struggle in Pondicherry and Karaikal. Travancore and Cochin were to be included in the proposed Kerala State. D.M.K. and Nesamani Nadar, the local leader of Tamils demanded that Nangil Nadu must be included with Madras. They started the agitation on August

26 Ibid., p.411.
7, 1954 and it turned serious. Police opened fire on August 11, in 5 places in which 7 Tamils were killed. A Protest day with hartal and strikes was observed throughout Madras State. The D.M.K. also organised demonstrations to protect the interest of Ceylon Tamils. The biggest protest meetings and processions were held on June 22, 1958 and on lay 7, 1961.  

The states Reorganisation Act was passed in November 1956 providing for 14 states on linguistic basis. Against public opinion, Chittoor, Tirutani and Tirupathi were given to Andhra. Devikulam and Peermedu in Nangil region went to Kerala. Nehru also agreed to cede part of Senkottai to Kerala. The D.M.K. formed an all party United Front and an action committee which included student representatives. A general strike and hartal were held on February 20, 1956. A procession of 2,00,000 people was taken out at Madras. In response to the public outcry, orders were issued for Nanjil Nadu and a portion of Senkottai to be given to Madras on November 7, 1956. Tirutani came to Madras and Tirupathi to Andhra. The D.M.K. celebrated November 11, as Thamizhaga aippu Nal (Tamil Nadu Formation Day)  

Anna exposed the hollowness of the five year plans which he said were made by people who were not in touch each reality but made lofty plans. Inspite of opposition a five year plans were forced on the people of TamilNadu. The D.M.K. observed March 20, 1955 as a protest day against Five Year plan, with

Anna’s Slogan ‘Vadakku Vazhkirathu, the Theikirathu’ (North lives while South disintegrates) there the D.M.K. alleged that Five Year Plans could really bring about National integration for the conferment’s or allocation and benefits were very uneven.31

D. Labour Movements

On 23 August, 1957 D.M.K. along with Thamizhaga Vivasayigal Munnetra Sangam started direct action and agitation to help the agricultural labourers at Kulithalai. Here the agricultural labourers were treated as coolies and wages were denied to them. When they protested they were ignored and labour was brought in from outside. Karunanidhi’s repeated attempts to gain the attention of the chief Minister Bhakthavatsalam failed. Anna’s plea in the Assembly was also ignored. So the D.M.K. decided on direct action. Led by Karunanidhi, the workers forcibly entered the field of work. The police arrested 150 farmers, lathi charged burst tear gas shells and opened fire, but the agitation continued. The landlords were forced to take back the evicted labourers as tenants. An agreement was reached the evicted labourers (land lords) were allowed to have 56 acres of land under their personal cultivation and each farmer was given 1.5 acres for cultivation on lease. On agreement being reached, those arrested were released.32

31 Ibid., p.284.
32 Chittibabu. C., op.cit., p.185.
The D.M.K. also fought for justice for the agricultural labourers in Chingleput, South Arcot, North Arcot and Thanjavur Districts for wage rise. Joan Mencher who conducted a study in these areas said that it was striking that in Chingleput District, the party which had claimed allegiance of the landless was the D.M.K. The Congress brought in the land ceiling Act in 1961. Anna called it the "Mitcha Varambu Sattam and not Utchavarambu Sattam" (not a higher ceiling but Residual Ceiling Act). A demonstration was staged before the Assembly on September 28, 1961. In the meantime the D.M.K. held on September 29, a "Farmer's Rights Day" to enforce the principle that the "tiller of the land should become its owner".

The next agitation was to help the Beedi workers of Trichy, Karunanidhi led the agitation and it lasted for 20 days. A wage rise of 50 paise was given. The agitation commenced by the workers of Swami Motor Transport Pvt. Ltd., Thanjavur District, intensified after D.M.K's support was extended to the workers on November 1, 1958. They demanded security of service, better working conditions and wage wise. The strategy of stopping and blocking the company's uses on all routes at all bus stands was adopted. A total hartal and a general strike took place on November 26, in Thanjavur. Despite the mediation of the Trichy Labour welfare Officer, the Management did not yield; the agitation also lasted for 51 days in Thanjavur. 216 D.M.K. volunteers were arrested. The D.M.K. volunteers also picketed the Thanjavur Collectorate on

33 Ibid., p.186.
December 17, 1958. Further. Anna asked Karunanidhi to continue the fight. This made R. Venkataraman, then Industries Minister to intervene and bring an agreeable compromise between the management and the workers towards the end of December 1958.  

During the late 1950s and early 1960s the D.M.K. leaders succeeded in redressing the grievances of the workers of Sugar cane factory at Pettaivaithalai in Trichy District, the Pallampalayam farm workers of Salem, the Madras Port Trust labourers, Coimbatore textile Mill workers and the autorickshaw and transport workers of Madras.  

The Central Budget of 1957 made the working farmers and middle class bear the brunt of escalation of prices. To protest against the budget, D.M.K. meetings and processions were held on May 26, 1957 in the State and in New Delhi on July 7, 1957. The new levies and taxes were condemned and resolutions were passed. This was the first occasion when a regional party ever held protest meeting, against a Central Budget at the capital itself.  

To agitate against unbearable tax burden, price rise, unemployment and poverty, to make the government bring down prices of food stuffs and agricultural products and also to condemn the centre’s new levy of taxes on the so far non-taxable handloom goods and the increased levy on the taxable items,
D.M.K. launched another agitation June–July, 1962. Protest meetings and processions were held on June 10, 1962. A demonstration was conducted before Assembly on June 30, 1962. On June 19, all colectorates and Taluk offices were picketed. 20,000 party men in the state including top leaders were prosecuted and sentenced to 12 weeks imprisonment. The immediate effect of their agitation was seen in the Trichengode by election to the Lok Sabha which was won by the D.M.K.

By the anti-Hindi agitation, the D.M.K. successfully whipped up the Dravidian chauvinism. It actively involved the students in all its activities. Its support and popularity grew by leaps and bounds by capitalising on the language issue. By showing the Congress to be pro-centre for the imposition of Hindi and projecting itself to be the saviour of Dravidian culture and Tamil language, the D.M.K successfully ended the popularity that congress had gained during the freedom struggle. National feeling had been replaced by regionalism and D.M.K. by catering to the needs of the people gained valuable support among the people.

The D.M.K. also successfully eclipsed the only other effective opposition party, the Communists, whose opposition was blunted by the D.M.K. implementing some of the most vital programmes of the Communists. The D.M.K. championed the cause of the poor, under privileged and exploited. By conducting so many agitations for the agricultural labourers and the industrial
factory workers, the D.M.K. effectively superseded the Communists. With the result that still the Communists play a very minor role in the politics of Tamil Nadu.

**E. Mass Communication**

Another very important factor which contributed to the growth of D.M.K’S popularity was its effective utilization of the mass media for propaganda purposes. Most of the top D.M.K. leaders were effective speakers and writers. Further there were many newspapers which served as effective propaganda machinery. Anna himself founded ‘Dravidanadu’ weekly in Kanchipuram on March 8, 1942. Here he wrote his famous "Letters to Brother" in 1952. It ceased to exist from 1964 onwards. He also started publishing ‘Kanchi’ on July 20, 1964. Anna also served as an editor of ‘Malai Mani founded by T.M.Parthasarathy on August 10, 1949. It ceased publication within a year due to lack of funds. ‘Namnadu' the Tamil daily was founded on June 19,1953. Anna edited it himself in the beginning, later he gave the work to other leaders'. 'Home Land' was an English weekly founded by Anna in 1957, which he edited till March 1, 1967. From 1966, he edited another English weekly ‘Home Rule’. Many of the other D.M.K. leaders owned papers. Murasoli which still serves to be the D.M.K. voice was started in 1952. This proliferation of party' magazines, pamphlets, hand bills, books, booklets enabled the youth and the public to rally round the D.M.K. ideas. The D.M.K. made best political use of the stage and the screen. Among the media of propaganda, the stage and the screen are very
powerful. In 1962 Anna said that if only a film of his design was screened without censor, he would prove that it was enough to remove the entrenched Congress Party from power.

He successfully used the stage, and celluloid media to captivate the mass of the people and to politically influence them. He succeeded in swaying the electorate in his favour and assume control of the government, thanks to Cinema's influence over the masses.\(^{38}\) In the pre-independence period the Congress leaders made effective Use of the stage and screen. After Independence they ignored this means of mass communication. Even when in D.K. Anna and the other leaders made use of the screen and stage.\(^{39}\) For propaganda of ideas of rationalism and Self-Respect. After the split in 1949 many artists and writers followed suit. Further the D.M.K. had among its fold many actors like N.S.Krishnan, K.R.Ramasamy, S.S.Rajendran, M.G.Ramachandran and Shivaji Ganesan. Shivaji Ganesan left the D.M.K. in 1957 to join the Congress Party. M.G.Ramachandran joined the D.M.K. in 1953. Many of the Influential D.M.K. leaders were film producers and directors. There were also script and dialogue writers like Anna, M.Karunanidhi, M.Maran, R. Arangammal, P.C.Ganesan, A.S.A. Swamy and A.K.Velan. Poets like Kannadasan were also great supporters of the D.M.K. Some private film producers and directors were sympathetic to the D.M.K. ideas. Most of the D.M.K. leaders were associated with the stage and the celluloid


\(^{39}\) Ibid., p.55.
world. They began introducing in the film, D.M.K. symbols, Party colours of black and red. The symbol ‘Rising Sun’ was often introduced either symbolically or verbally in the films produced by those sympathetic to the D.M.K. The names of Anna and the D.M.K. were suitably introduced and often popularised the revolutionary ideas of the D.M.K. If the D.M.K. films served as mass attractors and conveyors of Anna’s ideas, M.G. Ramachandran proved to be the best vote catcher and his very appearance hypnotised the masses. The M.G. Ramachandran Rasigar Manrams of Fan Clubs did a lot of propaganda. Anna once said that if M.G. Ramachandran showed his face, it would fetch 4 lakhs votes. That this was no overstatement was proved in the 1967 elections and in the subsequent ones. M.G. Ramachandran’s hold over the silver screen was such that he could engineer D.M.K.’s electoral victories in 1967 and 1971. The D.M.K.’s defeat in 1977 and the emergence of the A.I.A.D.M.K. as a political forces, showed M.G. Ramachandran’s hold over the masses. Kamaraj attributed the D.M.K.’s electoral victories to ‘Cinema Kavarchi’ i.e., the ‘lure of the Cinema’.

Anna’s gift as a powerful writer and orator and his command over stage and screen were very decisive factors that helped D.M.K. They helped him to attract the mass and popularise the party among the masses. It not only served as a source of entertainment but also a means of educating the people on socio-political ideas propagated by D.M.K. Some of the social themes they propagated were social advancement of women, widow marriage, inter-caste and

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self respect marriages, avoidance of child marriages, upholding the rights of women in all walks of life, freeing people from unwanted superstition and dogmatic religious entanglement, cultivation of the spirit of self respect and rationalism in preference to faith in super human action. Restructuring of the social fabric of Tamil Nadu along the dictates of the ancient Tamil works like "Thirukkural", virulent attack on Brahmins and the caste system, the reorganisation of the economic class system., inculcation among the masses linguistic chauvinism, emphasising the vast superiority of Tamil over other languages known to man, evolving a new code of public morality and social behaviour derived from the urge of conscience than from fear of God, were other items of work in the D.M.K. agenda. They urged the social upliftment of the down-trodden sector of the population and the reduction, if not total abolition of the economic disparities, so rampant in Tamil society. Further the D.M.K. whipped up the Tamil chauvinist feeling by capitalising on the North versus the Dravidian South. They Sought to prevent wasteful and unproductive expenses on temples and festivals and to curb the extravagance of religious heads like madathipathis. They stressed Dignity of Labour, the need for philanthropy in one's life, universal, brotherhood of man, belief in one superpower, God.

The D.M.K. grew from strength to strength. Due to its efficient and dedicated leaders and unity of action, D.M.K. very soon grew to be the ruling party of the State. By making good use of communication media it became popular among the commoners. Its leaders associated themselves with the poor and projected themselves as the answer to the prayers of the poor to solve their
needs. Many of the D.M.K. leaders were themselves from very ordinary or middle class families unlike those of Congress many of whom belonged to the affluent classes who were mainly supported by the very rich landlords and influential families. By means of their agitational methods, the D.M.K. successfully projected itself as the saviour of Dravidian Culture and made the congress appear as anti-south, quite unsympathetic to the aspirations of the Dravidians. Further, their bid for popularity and power was aided by the price rise and shortage of necessities, which the D.M.K. exploited to its best advantage. Their propaganda methods and their ideas attracted many towards the D.M.K. which paved the way for the final establishment of D.M.K. government in 1967.
Conclusion

The Vicissitudes of the political parties in India during the post-Independence period reveal that it is easier to be in the opposition bench, rather than to be in the chair of power. Because it involves the problems of converting promises into fulfillments. Election promises are usually Utopian and hence unrealistic. Politic leaders make promises under the impression that the public memory as is the case normally would be short and it can be easily diverted towards more sensational and emotional issues. It is for this reason that the election manifestoes are issued by the political parties with little or no modification to the previous ones. In this respect the D.M.K. was not an exception. But such a repetition of the same promises in more than one manifesto is to be found, until D.M.K. came to power in Tamil Nadu. Although, it continues to harp on the theme of Dravidian identity and casteless society, the latter promise, which is impossible to be fulfilled in the caste-conscious Tamil Nadu, the sincerity of the D.M.K. as a party in power is unquestionable. An analysis of the achievements of the party reveals that it did put its heart and mind
to implement the plans and programmes that it promised. Not all the programmes were successfully implemented, some failed to touch the grade, but these failures were not due to lack of endeavour on the part of the government.

The most important problem facing the government when it assumed power was the food problem. The most important promise the D.M.K. mad was to provide three measures of rice for a rupee. This could not be implemented due to the impractical nature of the promise. Even the implementation of one measure of Rice a Rupee was implemented only in Coimbatore and Madras. This gave the opposition an opportunity to vehemently criticise the D.M.K. However the rise in production of rice and the availability of rice at reduced rates helped the D.M.K. to placate the people. D.M.K. leadership took steps to modernize agriculture. A task force was constituted on November 3, 1971, the Minister and the Secretary, Department of Agriculture constituted the above force. A plan was drawn up, Multiple Cropping and Crop intensity programmes were undertaken, 230 seed farms were opened and new rice strains like IR-8 and Karuna were introduced. Thousand tractors were imported and supplied to the
farms on credit basis. These steps coupled with good rainfall, raised rice production from 53.03 lakh tonnes in 1970 – 71 to 59 Lakh tonnes in 1973 – 74. The Government was able to export 5,000 tonnes of rice to the other states and 50,000 tonnes were given to the Central Rice Pool. When production of rice fell to 41.05 and 39.12 lakh tonnes in 1974 – 75 and 1975 – 76, due to severe drought, the long term planning of the D.M.K. Government helped the people of Tamil Nadu.

The progress made by the D.M.K. Ministry on the food front was indeed one of its greatest achievements which helped to erase from public memory the promise of 3 measures of rice for a rupee made before elections.

Being a party committed to Tamil Nationalism with emphasis on preserving the Dravidian Identity, the D.M.K. firmly stuck to the two language formula by completely opposing Hindi imposition. The Anti – Hindi and Anti – Aryan feeling continued and the process of Tamilization went on uninterrupted during the D.M.K. rule. Tamil was introduced in the proceedings of the District Council. Archana (Innovation) in Tamil was introduced in the temples. But the anti-Hindu stance has come in for a lot of
criticism from the younger generation who feel that in the All-India science the Tamilians are not able to get their due share due to the adverse language policy of the state. However the Anti-Brahmin stance of the parent D.K. was diluted to opposition to the Varnashrama Dharma. The D.M.K. believed that Varnashrama Dharma was perpetuated not only by the Brahmins but also by the Non-Brahmin communities. They abandoned the policy of Anti-Brahmin and used the word ‘Socially backward classes’ for the Backward classes. This dilution of the Anti-Brahmin stance to Anti-Varnashrama communities. They Dharma pacified the Brahmin Community, and they even went to the extent of voting for the D.M.K. responding to Rajaji’s call to defeat the Congress in the 1967 general election.

The D.M.K., feeling the pulse of the people through periodical Conference and mass contact programmes was able to know the needs of the people and accordingly formulate its policies and decide priorities. The D.M.K. Government’s implementation of policies like reduction of taxes, controlling inflation, promotion of agriculture, giving assistance to labourers of all types, providing free education,
technical and job oriented education, land tenancy measures, insurance schemes, drought and flood relief activities, aid to N.G.Os, upliftment of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and Backward Classes fulfilled many of the promises made by the D.M.K. in its various election manifestoes. To help the socially Backward Communities a separate department was created for the welfare of the Backward classes and special efforts were made to house the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Harijan Housing Development Corporation established in 1972, constructed 30,000 houses in 778 villages and gave them to the Harijans free of cost. Special coaching camps were conducted to put them on par with the forward communities to enable them to have an equal chance in competitive examinations. By these measures, the D.M.K. government was able to place the socially Backward Classes, in good jobs. Of the 122 candidates selected for Group - I services during 1967 - 74, 112 belonged to the socially Backward communities.

Again the criticism arises that it only was educated and socially advanced among the Backward classes, Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes who
benefitted through the above mentioned schemes and not those from the backward rural areas. This is not true, the rural area students too had benefited from the free and cheap hostel accommodation run by the Government and many were helped by the special coaching classes as the statistics given in the preceding chapters would show.

The D.M.K. Ministry also introduced new schemes to foster social development of the backward people. The Manueedhi Plan or the mass contact programme was launched on July 9, 1969 to redress peoples’ grievances on the spot by the revenue officials. The Mobile health camps organised by the Health Department did Yoeman service in ensuring that people in remote villages, led healthy and hygienic lives.

The Slums Clearance Board was established in 1970, which constructed 19,035 tenements upto 1976. To improve their surroundings the ‘Environment Improvement Schemes’ was launched with assistance from World Bank. But still the Slum Clearance Scheme was not a complete success due to lack of follow up action after allotment. Many of the allottees either sold their flats or let them out for rent and started new
slums in new places, with the result, the city has not been rid of its slums still. New slums keep appearing. Slum fires, loss of lives and compensation paid to the victims are still a common phenomenon. Further the tenements constructed - by the Slum Clearance Board, due to neglect, bad maintenance and use of sub standard materials wear a dilapidated look. Gaping cracks and crumbling staircases are a common sight. Merely building and allotting is not enough. Constant attention and maintenance work should also be done if the scheme is to be implemented effectively. The Water Supply and Drainage Board implemented a 10 cure Renal drinking water scheme, but still the water problem in many of the villages has not been solved.

The Integrated Child Development Scheme Introduced by the D.M.K. aided the promotion of the Welfare of the poor and needy children. This scheme established a well - knit organisational set up to secure the welfare of poor children with the help of the Corporation of Madras and of voluntary Welfare agencies. A genuine attempt was made to curtail begging but this was not a success because of laxity in enforcement. The Beggars were not willing to work, many ran away from the homes and were not willing to
be rehabilitated. The AIADMA government which followed the D.M.K. did not evince any interest in the above scheme, with the result begging is still a lucrative money making job in the city. The free eye camps conducted by the D.M.K. were discredited by the opposition parties on the ground that they did not benefit the whole Society. Still the statistics prove that the scheme did benefit a large section of the Tamil Society. The schemes for the Welfare of the physically handicapped, enabled the vexed, dejected and disabled to perform their duties with confidence. By giving priority to the physically handicapped in different jobs, the idea of dignity of labour was infused in their minds and enabled the handicapped to lead dignified lives.

During Anna’s Chief Ministership the two budgets he presented had no provision for new taxes, and the budget for 1968 – 69 was a surplus one. This financial policy gave a weak economic base and implementation of socialistic measures which the D.M.K. had promised proved difficult. Soon the D.M.K. realised that the formation of an egalitarian society, lowering the status of the rich and raising that of the poor was a very difficult task. A beginning was
made by nationalizing 250 bus routes and 418 buses during the years 1967 - 68 and 1968 - 69. The government with its firm faith in Socialism did not encourage the private sector. It did not evince interest even in making use of the industrial licenses obtained during the term of the previous government. So industrial progress of the state was retarded. No new industries were started in 1967 - 68 against 12 in the previous year. But during Karunanidhi’s rule, the government encouraged the private sector to invest money in industrial projects. Not that the Socialist credo was given a go by; on the other hand Karunanidhi’s government did implement a number of socialist policies but his approach was more pragmatic. The land ceiling was lowered from 30 acres to 15 acres. The surplus acres of land were distributed to the landless. In June 1971 all the bus routes were nationalised, The employees of public sector establishments were given participation in the management by allotting 24% of the share capital for them.

The Government also attracted new entrepreneurs through credit facilities and advance placement of orders and greater emphasis on export promotion.
Further, in 1970 a small scale Industries Board was established with a capital of Rupees two crores. The small scale entrepreneurs were given lands, loans, and concessions in power tariff. The Small Scale Industries Board established Government Industrial Estates in rural areas in order to attract the small entrepreneurs. This policy arrested the industrial recession of 1967-68 in this state. A cement plant was started in Alangulam and the work on the Salem Plant began in 1970.

Some of the Government plans ended in a failure due to miscalculation about the financial capacity of the Government. Projects like Veeranam water scheme and Cooum Modernisation scheme remained Unimplemented for lack of funds. D.M.K’s stand on prohibition has come in for a lot of criticism. On August 30, 1971 prohibition was liberalised by the D.M.K. Government on the ground that it led to illicit production and consumption of liquor which endangered not only the life of the consumer but also affected his family economically. They further argued that liquor is brought illegally from the neighbouring states. Although relaxation of Prohibition augmented the revenue of becoming addicts. Prohibition was however
introduced in stages from 1973 after D.M.K’s defeat in the Dindugal bye-election. This suddenly removed a source of revenue. The D.M.K. made earnest attempts to abolish horse racing, but due to legal hurdles, it could not achieve its objective. Specifically a regional political party has the following functions to discharge. Firstly the party should act as a mobilising movement, it has to enlighten the local society about social inequalities and the ways by which they can be eliminated. Secondly the regional party must preserve unity and solidarity of the people its serves, by promoting their cultural tradition. Thirdly the party should act as an educational instrument, suggest reforms and foster orderly, peaceful change in the society. Finally when it gains the seat of power in a federal state, then the party must strive to maintain its identity and not allow itself to be overruled by the National Party in power, but at the same time maintain a cordial relation with the party in power at the Centre. The D.M.K. fills the bill as a good political party when judged from the above four standards. It acted as a mobilising force for the Dravidian people, gave them a cultural identity and tried to bring about an egalitarian society. Although the D.M.K. could not bring about
such a society, it has lightened the burdens of the less fortunate in the society and has created conditions favourable for the betterment of their lot.

The Karunanidhi ministry (1969 – 1976) introduced new schemes to foster social development of the backward people. The family fare scheme of 1975 provided Rs.10,000 to the family of a deceased Government employee general welfare of the backward class in 1975. The Karunanidhi Ministry wanted to incorporate the self respect ideals in the administration of socio economic planning. M. Karunanidhi in his 1971 Budget speech in the Assembly underlined the need for the creation of a casteless society. The Governments move to enable move in that direction. The Government gave priority to the backward classes in the government service for instance, between the years. 1967 and 1974, 112 candidates from Backward classes were selected out of 122 candidates for group I services of Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission. Besides the government has increased the reservation for backward classes in education and government Jobs from twenty five percent to thirty one percent. The D.M.K. policies towards the non Brahmin backward communities scheduled castes,
scheduled tribes. Women and Children stemmed out of its ideological convictism. Pertaining to the society and was clearly redistributed in nature. V.V. Giri, president of India 1974 commenced the social welfare schemes of the Government of Tamil Nadu under Karunanidhi by saying.

"Tamil Nadu leads the rest of India", Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayanan, also richely lauded Karunanidhi schemes for the Poor.

The Credit goes to Karunanidhi for the present beautiful appearance of Madras city. Steps were taken to reduce the unpleasant odour emitted by Koovam river. Replenishing the banks of Koovam with concrete slabs was done and its depth was increased and even boating was started in it. The present secretariat buildings inside Fort. St. George is a typical example of his construction. Historically important places were given preference during the reign of D.M.K. Kanchipuram, the capital of Pallavas was beautified. An art gallery was built in the historically important puhar. A monument including a statue was erected at Panchalam Kurichi in memory of early freedom fighter Kattabomman. A monument of Thiruvaluvar was raised at
Madras in the shape of Cheriot found at Thiruvaruar. In his second phase of administration the various transport corporation were amalgamated into one Tamil Nadu state Transport Corporation as a result of the communal riots that broke out in some places.

D.M.K. administration gave priority to the growth of Tamil conference at Madurai with the view to reduce the domination of English language places were adorned with Tamil names instead of English names. Preciously Madras state was changed to Tamil Nadu. In continuation of this Tamil language was given high priority in government offices, letter cores pondence and preparation of files. In schools and colleges.

Tamil Language had become the medium of instruction. Apart from this a separate portfolio of Ministry was constituted for the growth of Tamil Language. With the establishment of schools in every book and corner of Tamil Nadu the number of schools were increased. Colleges were opened in important taluks. Permission to start Colleges in private sector was lavishly given until D.M.K. had come to power the national flag was used to be hoisted by the Governor during the Independence day and Republic day.
Opposing this procedure, D.M.K. Government entrusted the responsibility of hoisting flag at the state secretariat with the Chief Minister, elected by the people. As a result of this, flag hoisting was done by the state Chief Minister during independence and Republic days.

The schemes implemented during the second and third terms of M. Karunanidhi Ministry touched upon the welfare of women and their development project was launched in September 1989 in eight districts so as to cover 1,05,077 women. This was mainly to enhance the economic development of women. The other innovative scheme under women’s development programme was the establishment of women welfare centers in 1997 - 1998 in rural areas in five districts at the rate of ten women welfare centres for district. These centers were to be located in selected pre School, noon meal centers, since women can be expected to feel free to go there. Through these centers awareness campaigns on various aspects of health, nutrition, family welfare, and literacy were being conducted. Towards the schemes of monetary assistance to women, under the Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammalyar Ninaivu Thirumana Udhavi Thittam, the Government enhanced the assistance from
Rs. 5000 to Rs. 10,000 per beneficiary from 1996 – 1996. Under Dr. Muthulakshimi Reddy Amma Iyer Ninaivu Maha Peruudhavi Thittam, the Government increased the assistance to Rs. 500 per beneficiary from 1996 – 1997. The Government has also launched a hunger free area programme with the aim of eradicating poverty induced hunger and to cater to the nutrition requirements of different groups of the population. A statue of Raja Raja I was unveiled in Thanjavur near the Big temple incommamoratio of the 1000 years of his rule. The damaged chariot of the Tiruvarur Temple was repaired by D.M.K. government and made fit for use again. The Samathuvapuram scheme was unique in the country and introduced in the state Budget during 1997 – 1998. In the Fifth term of the D.M.K. rule (2006 – 2011)

World classical Tamil Conference was held at Coimbatore on June 23 – 27, 2010, Tamil language got the status of Classical language.