CHAPTER-V

DEMAND FOR STATE AUTONOMY: A CASE OF DMK AND AIADMK PARTIES IN TAMIL NADU

The birth of the DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) ushered in a new era in the history of Dravidian Movement. It was launched by C.N.Annadurai, better known as ‘Arignar Anna’ and his associates such as Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi and Perasiriyar K.Anbazhagan on 17th September 1949 at Robinson Park, Royapuram, Chennai to liberate the mute millions of Dravidians from the shackles of superstition and religious dogmas of the Aryans, to revive and restore the ancient glory and greatness of the Tamil language, to preserve the rich heritage of the Tamil people and to protect and safeguard their mother tongue from the onslaught of Hindi imperialism.

The DMK party is a rational, socio-political reformist movement. It represents the genuine aspirations of the Tamils living in various parts of India and abroad. Essentially it is a movement for the uplift of the Tamils, particularly the weak and the meek. In fact it came into being to fight against the political domination of the North, social tyranny of the upper downtrodden and poverty-stricken Tamils from the economic thralldom. Therefore, social justice forms the basic tenet of the party. To maintain “unity in diversity” the DMK pleads for provincial autonomy as one of its cardinal demands. In short, Tamil revivalism is the pith and marrow of the ideology of the party.

The emergence of the DMK party was neither a sudden outcome nor an accident of history, but a well-organized endeavour of a cluster of elite Tamils, headed by Anna, who were politically articulate and
economically and socially viable, to reform the society, steeped in ignorance, illiteracy and superstition. It was the offspring of noble parents, namely the Justice party and the Dravida Kazhagam. It naturally inherited a wealthy legacy of political ideology and social philosophy from its parent bodies and it adopted them with certain modifications such as giving up of the anti-Brahmin stance in order to obliterate the stigma of communalism.

**ITS ILLUSTRIOUS PREDECESSORS:**

**1. THE JUSTICE PARTY:**

The Justice party, otherwise known as the south Indian liberal federation was started on the basis of the non-Brahmin Manifesto, at the fag end of 1916 by Dr.T.M.Nair and P.Thyagaraja chettiar and others “to advance, safeguard and protect the interest of the non-Brahmin community”. In other words, it challenged the preponderance of the Brahmins in all spheres of life, more particularly in the field of education and government services. It needs to be stated that the leaders of the Justice Party were “all men of substance and standing highly educated and conscious of the direction and goal of their endeavours”. They were not mere idealists, but practical politicians; they accepted dyarchy with a view to employing the available power of the government for the upliftment of the non-Brahmin communities. Though its area of operation was confined to the Madras presidency, it enjoyed remarkable support from the people for over three decades and it functioned effectively through various local branches. What the Muslim league was to the Muslims, the Justice Party was to the non-Brahmins of the south. It remained in
power from 1921 to 1926 and from 1930 to 1937, by commanding a comfortable majority. It also earned the credit for having successfully experimented dyarchy in Madras presidency. Its legislative performance was really noteworthy.

a) The two communal government orders which were passed at the instance of the Justice Party constitute a milestone in the history of social movement which could not be politically reversed and this has been amply proved when the principle of reservation of seats for educationally and economically backward classes was accepted not only in Tamilnadu but also in other parts of the country.

b) The Justice Party, which pursued the welfare of the depressed classes as one of its social objectives, took special efforts to promote their educational interests. It therefore opened separate primary schools for the sake of the depressed classes called labour schools in places accessible to them. Vigorous attempts were also made for starting hostels for them.

It is salutary that the Justice Party gave the heterogeneous group of Non-Brahmin communities a certain amount of coherence and unity as well as identity as a result Non-Brahmanism became a popular creed of the people and an attractive vocabulary in the politics of Tamilnadu. The Non-Brahminisation of the congress party in the1930’s of this century and in subsequent decades was an inevitable consequence of this political development. It should also be succeeded in dislodging the Brahmins from their privileged positions.
2) THE DRAVIDA KAZHAGAM:

E.V.Ramaswami Naicker, affectionately called as “thanthai periyar” (thanthai means father, periyar means wiseman), who was adored by the people of Tamil Nadu as periyar in later days, entered the political arena of Tamil Nadu as an ardent congressite and earned a title namely “Vaikkam virar” (the hero of Vykom) for offering satyagraha as a protest against the custom forbidding the untouchables to use the roads in and around the temple at Vykom in the former Travancore state. His popularity evoked the antagonism of the Brahmin leadership of the congress party in Tamil Nadu. The gurukulam controversy in which periyar was deeply involved projected him as the arch enemy of the Brahmins. Finally his advocacy of reserved seats for the Non-Brahmins in the Legislative council at the Kanchipuram congress conference in 1925 led to his break with the congress party. Hence his launching of the self-respect movement in 1926. But that time Dravidian nationalism gained strength due to the spectacular achievements of the Justice Party and Periyar naturally came under its spell. The self-respect movement of Periyar was nothing but radicalization of “Dravidian ideology” which was already advocated by the Justice Party. The primary aim of Dravidian movement was to restore the self-respect of the Non-Brahmins that was denied to them by the Brahmins. Its twin objectives were

1. Giving Non-Brahmins a sense of pride based on their Dravidian part.

2. Denying the superiority of the Brahmins, accorded to them under the varnashrama Dharma. He was an uncompromising
rationalist; Periyar's uniqueness lies in rated "zeal in fighting Brahmins". In other words Non-Brahmanism in his hands acquired a militant form.

The self-respect movement was visualized in the introduction of Hindi as a compulsory language in schools by C. Rajagopalachari, the premier of the Madras presidency as an attempt to subjugate the Tamilians to Aryans (Northern imperialism) and he genuinely felt that kind of humiliation could be averted through the creation of a Dravidastan. At the Justice party conference convened on 2nd June 1940, which was held at Tiruvarur, Periyar got a resolution passed demanding a sovereign independent Dravidastan consisting of the four southern states.

In August 1944 at Salem, the famous “Annadurai resolution” in that conference rechristened the Justice party, the Dravida Kazhagam, thereby invigorating the Dravidian Movement into a more virulent organization. Thereafter Annadurai and the front-line leaders played a vigorous role in propagating the ideals of the Dravida Kazhagam. However, the style of functioning of Periyar was the strange but peculiar. Policies were announced but not discussed with the members of the party. Programmes were launched then and there docility was the badge for membership. Finances of the party were kept as a top secret and above all, none raised any issue connected with its organization, its policies, its finances and even about its future. Consequently Anna and his associates parted ways with Periyar and thus the DMK was born.
Annadurai described ideologically their was no difference between the Dravida Khazagam and the Dravida Munnetra Khazagam in the beginning but they differed in organizational structure. E.V. Ramaswami Naicker was authoritarian in his approach whereas Annadurai insisted on the theory of intra-party democracy. The DMK worked as organisation to the DK and Annadurai said the two parties as a “double-barrelled shot gun”\(^7\) that would help remove the social degradation and the economic backwardness of a major but vulnerable section of the people of Tamil Nadu. Annadurai was sagacious statesman who reformulated the ideologies of the party to make them acceptable to the changing conditions of the society. He brought forth a great transformation in the nature and character of his newly established organization. Consequently, the DMK has changed itself from a political movement to a full-fledged party. Radical ideas of social reform were transformed in such a way as to promote rationality in ritual observances and theology. When E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker became the leader of the Justice party he attempted to destroy its secular disposition by substituting atheism as its creed. However, at the time of giving re-orientation to the policies and programmes of DMK party, Annadurai revived the secular character of the Justice Party by incorporating the famous aphorism of ‘thirumular thirumandiram’ “one community, one god” into the tenets of the DMK party.\(^8\)

The first general election was held in March 1952. As a protest against the constitution, Annadurai declared that the DMK party would not directly participate in the election. This decision was taken mainly to refute E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker’s accusation that the DMK...
was after the gains of office rather than social reform. The DMK party resolved to support candidates who would sign a pledge supporting the Dravida Nadu demand and who would function in the Madras legislature and the parliament in defence of DMK's policies, and worked in conformity with the DMK programme to fight against exploitation. The DMK tried to attract the communists by their socialistic propaganda. Annadurai said that the DMK was "generally communist". In its ideals and that he was more communist than the communists. An agreement was reached between the DMK and the Communists, although the agreement was nullified, still some of the individual communist candidates got support of E.V.Ramaswamy Naicker. It helped the DMK party for 82 seats out of 375 including 57 independents and Lok sabha 8 of the DMK supported candidates were elected.

The congress emerged as the single largest party holding 152 seats and DMK was invited to form the ministry. Rajaji became the Chief Minister on April 8, 1952. E.V.Ramaswamy Naicker co-operated with Kamaraj to curtail the growth of DMK in 1952, the Dravidian parliamentary party consisting of M.L.A.'s sympathetic to the Dravidian ideology had been founded. Kamraj also challenged DMK to enter into the legislature, "if they could". DMK accepted the challenge and decided to plunge into direct electoral competitions. The DMK till 1956 adopted the political system of mass demonstrations and agitations by remaining outside the democratic framework. These campaigns were used as a means for augmenting the party's organizational strength and for winning the mass support. The political climate in Tamil Nadu after 1954 necessitated the entry of the
DMK in electoral politics due to the support extended by Periyar, to the congress, led by K. Kamaraj. Therefore in 1956 the DMK formally and publicly decided to enter the electoral fray. This decision was taken at a conference held at Trichy. 56,942 people voted for electoral support for DMK party and 4,203 people voted against it.

The DMK Election Manifesto, drafted by Annadurai, declared its long-range goal as the creation of a Dravidan “Socialist”. But that in the meantime the DMK would place before the people an immediate programme. The DMK called for the creation of a socialist economy, based on direct taxation and nationalization of banks, big commercial chains, cinema theatres, and transport, industrial developments, construction of an atomic power station, social ownership of all means of production and distribution. If DMK party elected it would distribute 3 acres of wetland to each Harijan family without land of its own. This manifesto reflected as in 1957 the second general election was held. The DMK party secured large number of votes 2,66,373. The main vote banks of the DMK were concentrated in the urban areas like Madras and the rest in North and South Arcot districts. Madras (chennai) till to date remains a DMK stronghold.

Another important ideological change was the abandonment of the demand of Dravida Nadu as a sovereign independent state, separated from the Indian union. Annadurai was a man of Churchillian courage. It is not so easy to conquer the ideology of one’s own party, which was advocated for more than two decades. The national interest in him was strong enough to persuade his won
followers to give up that ideology when the Indo-Chinese war of 1962 posed a threat to the territorial integrity of our country. In the words of Annadurai, “the party had realized the dangerous potentialities of secession at the time of Chinese aggression and had come to the conclusion that the plea would be “suicidal” to the DMK in particular and the country in general”. In a statement Annadurai explained that his party had to give up its demand for a separate Dravida Nadu since no party in our country could exist outside the ambit of the constitution of India. Instead, it has decided to function as parliamentary party with good reasons. Accordingly in June 1963 the central executive committee of the DMK party amended the party constitution to drop its goal of independent Dravida Nadu.12

The third general elections took place in 1962 DMK party contested 142 seats for the Assembly and 18 seats for the parliament and secured 50 seats in the assembly and 7 seats in the parliament. Congress, which secured 154 seats in the assembly and 7 seats in the parliament. Congress, which secured 154 seats in the assembly during 1957 elections, secured only 138 seats in 1962. But unfortunately Annadurai was defeated at Kanchipuram. But it was a blessing in disguise, because he was elected to the parliament. The methods congress pursued to defeat him made the public hate the congress. DMK party secured 34,00000 votes in the 1962 elections and became a stronghold in Tamil Nadu.

Annadurai clearly explained the aims and objectives of DMK party:13

1. Reshaping the constitution so that it becomes effectively federal.

2. Fuller autonomy to the states.
3. Proportional representation, which seeks to solve the problem of communal minorities.

4. Democratic socialism.

5. Eradication of caste.

In 1967, election proved to be historic in as much as the congress was routed and dislodged from power in Madras after 20 years of uninterrupted rule. The DMK accused the congress of despotism, bad management of the state and corruption. The DMK was projected as a party, which epitomized the rich and great Tamil culture and humanitarianism. By voting for the DMK, the Tamils were voting for a glorious culture, which would produce a just society. In 1967 election, the DMK party captured power in Tamil Nadu, with 130 members elected to the 234 member strong Tamil Nadu Assembly. Annadurai became Chief Minister heading a nine member Cabinet. Annadurai ruled the state only for 2 years. His life came to an end in 1969.

Karunanidhi's mere diligence and perseverance made him a multi-dimensional personality an eloquent orator, a powerful writer, a famous novelist, talented dramatist, a renowned playwright sharp-witted journalist, able organizer, astute administrator and above all a clear and wise statesman, a rare compound of greatness. Ever since Karunanidhi joined 'kudiarasu' press at Erode as sub-editor; he came under the spell of the magnetic personality of Annadurai. Thereafter they grew up in politics as twins. The dedication with which he laboured for the growth and development of the DMK made Annadurai repose greater confidence in him. Confidence grew into admiration
and later affection. Long before the DMK came into power, Annadurai had been grooming Karunanidhi as his “political heir”. What Nehru was to Gandhi in the freedom movement, Karunanidhi was to Anna in the Dravidian movement.¹⁴

After the demise of Annadurai his mantle fell on the shoulders of Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi who took up the office of a chief minister in 1969, and subsequently the Presidentship of the party. In his first address after becoming a chief minister in Tamil Nadu legislative assembly he set forth his testament of faith. On assuming Chief Minister of DMK party M. Karunanidhi declared a five important agenda of DMK party and set them as the goal for the cadre.¹⁵

1. Tirelessly toil in the path of Annadurai
2. Strive to establish an egalitarian society.
4. Avoid violence and eradicate poverty.
5. Autonomy to state and federalism at centre.

In all fairness it should be admitted that the DMK was nurtured by Annadurai on the best democratic traditions, which were scrupulously adopted even at the grass root level. Its democratic persuasion of the DMK came to the fore during the “great divide” that took place in the congress party during 1969.¹⁶ The emergence of Indira Gandhi in congress has witnessed a different equation between the DMK and congress, who were hither to diametrically opposite to each other. The leadership of Indira Gandhi was not accepted by some
of the senior congress leaders. During the presidential elections in 1968, Indira Gandhi did not accept the candidate of the congress party, and instead asked her party members to vote as per their conscience. This had created a split in the congress. At this juncture, the DMK, with its 25 MP’s and 130 MLA’s chose to support the stand of Indira Gandhi. M.Karunanidhi advised his party colleagues in Delhi to support her without reservation. A contrary decision would have led to the disintegration of the democratic set up at the centre. Karunanidhi wanted his party to help maintain a stable government in New Delhi and therefore Karunanidhi said, “We are for the unity of India. We do not want to do anything which might weaken the unity and jeopardize the larger interest of the country.”

The cooperation between congress (I) and the DMK developed into electoral alliance in 1971 mid-term elections. It was a master stroke of political strategy about which K.M.Balasubramaniam remarks “the greatest and boldest stroke of far-sighted statesmanship and political prodigy and heroic vote catcher was to have thrown in his lot with that of the Prime Minister of India and dissolved the Tamil Nadu Assembly along with the union parliament in 1971, one year in advance, and sought the unequivocal verdict of the electorate. The DMK party worked honestly for the success of the 10 congress candidates for the parliament, of them C.Subramaniam was the most prominent. He publicly declared on the marrow of his victory “My victory is the victory of the DMK” it was strange within a few months that relations between congress (I) and the DMK strained due to “trivial matter”. In 1975 Indira Gandhi struck at the root of
democracy by declaring national emergency. In spite of the fact that M.Karunanidhi did not hesitate to fight against the imposition of “emergency” by tooth and nail.\(^\text{19}\) there was a countrywide resentment. As a result, a new political atmosphere surcharged with emotion and contempt emerged to fight against the “emergency”. It was considered the second war of independence. In this historic struggle Tamil Nadu stood the vanguard under the leadership of M. Karunanidhi. Yet the DMK was pressurized to toe the line of central government by constant threat and intimidation. It is highly laudable that M.Karunanidhi remained unyielding to the pressure tactics of the central government.

Consequently the central government by misusing the provisions of the Article 356 of the Indian Constitution dismissed the DMK government on 31 January '1976. Dark days followed front-line leaders of the party and more than 500 cadres of the party were thrown into prison under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). But the DMK party still remained a formidable political force, withstood the repressive measures adopted by the congress government and continued its struggle for the preservation of democracy. Today MISA is an honorable prefix for the cadre of the DMK party who suffered incarceration during the “emergency”. Nonetheless when Indira Gandhi came forward to extend her hand of friendship and gave an assurance that the cruelties of the “emergency” would not be inflicted on the nation in future on any account, M.Karunanidhi was magnanimous enough to renew the electoral alliance with her party forgetting the dark days of the betrayed past.
One of the important political planks of the DMK party was to fight against the imposition of Hindi on Non-Hindi speaking people. But this legacy came to it from the Justice party, which waged a successful battle against the introduction of Hindi in government schools as a compulsory language, on 21st March 1938 immediately after C. Rajagopalachari became the premier of the Madras presidency. This measure actually threw the presidency into the political turmoil. The champions of the Tamil language considered this measure as an affront to Tamil culture and its hoary literary tradition. The non-Brahmin leaders of both the Justice party and the self-respect movement opposed this move tooth and nail.

The battle against Hindi that began in 1938 has not yet ended. The DMK opposed Hindi not because of any hatred towards a particular language nor even clue to its overwhelming love for the mother tongue viz, Tamil. Its opposition is based upon deeper and more fundamental principles. If Hindi, the mother tongue of certain North Indian states, were allowed to become the national language it would naturally result in the supremacy of those states over others. Such a situation make the Non-Hindi states in general and Tamil Nadu in particular to take a subordinate place in the national politics. This is the real cause for which the DMK has been opposing the imposition of Hindi even today. The framers of the constitution of India decided to institutionalize Hindi as a language of administration much against the wishes of the Non-Hindi speaking people. Hence the Article 343 which sought to give effect to this decision after 15 years from the commencement of constitution.
In 1965 the Anti-Hindi feeling reached its apogee when the DMK observed the Republic day as a day of mourning. The reaction of the government of Tamil Nadu, headed by M. Bakhtavatchalam towards this agitation was one of the apathy and it characterized this movement as antinational. But the DMK party had not in anyway relented in its fight, even though repressive measures were adopted against it. The government was driven to the necessity of obtaining the services of the army when the law and order situation deteriorated. The excited and frenzied fank and file of the DMK resorted to self-immolation in different parts of the state. Strongly the students of the colleges and high schools in Madras were in the vanguard of the movement. They came forward to give up even their lives. The slogan “life to Tamil and body to the soil” reverberated throughout the length and breadth of the state of Tamil Nadu. the necessity arose on the part of the police to open fire on them. Horror spread throughout the state. It appeared that a reign of terror was let loose. At this juncture, Annadurai fervently appeared to the students to suspend the agitation. This counsel of restraint had prompt response from the students and the agitation subsided. However there was no formal assurance from the leaders of the congress party that Hindi would not be imposed on Non-Hindi speaking people. Instead, M.Karunanidhi a mighty warrior published two articles namely “lime in one eye” and “Nettle” in his Murasoli, which the authorities considered instigative.

M.Karunanidhi’s ceaseless demands for state autonomy have provoked a national debate on the subject, involving in it prime minister, as well as eminent political leaders, like Jaya Prakash Narayan, Ashok Mehta, and Biju Patnaik, has fully supported the plea
for greater powers to the states. Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram has virtually blessed M.Karunanidhi's vigour and determination. Annadurai, it may be recalled had at the outset defined an ideal constitution as one that left sufficient powers to the states. While according to the requisite authority to the central government to protect the integrity and sovereignty of the country. He emphasized that DMK party wanted "not division of territory, but division of powers". It wanted a state government that would be self-sufficient or self-contained without being over-dependent on a federal centre for save in times of a national emergency.

M.Karunanidhi has clarified, on more than one occasion, that autonomy does not mean independent rule by the states, even as self-respect (which has always been an important word in DMK party ideology) does not mean respect for one's own self at the expense of another's liberty. The party has been endeavouring to create a climate of opinion in which additional powers are ceded to the states and strong autonomous states would make for a strong United and Independent India. Tamil Nadu legislature, under the stewardship of Karunanidhi passed an "epoch making resolution" on "state autonomy". It urged upon the centre that the constitution be amended for establishing a truly federal government under a system of state autonomy in order to secure the integrity of India to promote economic development and to enable those states that had close contacts with its people to function without restraint of their demand.

In interpreting the autonomy demand, M.Karunanidhi explained that his party had undertaken the responsibility of ensuring that no
region in the country dominated another in the name of "integration". The DMK party seeking to protect the rights of the states from suppression, by the centre, proposed a plan for the uniform economic development of all states. In a similar strain, M. Karunanidhi says if national integration and unity were to be meaningful, there should be a fairer distribution of resources not only in the form of central assistance, but also in more equitably distributed investments of central projects in the various states. The specific allocation of powers is between the centre and the states. State autonomy was not to be interpreted as a demand by individual states for more powers. Once more powers were earmarked for all the states, they would view with one another in a healthy development of their territories. Even independent countries of the contemporary world had co-operated for the development and achieved progress; there would therefore be no question of inter-state conflicts, linked as they are by strong bonds of unity and integration. While M. Karunanidhi asking for state autonomy has firmly underlined the importance of a central government. However, separate ministries at the centre for agriculture, medicine, education, roads and public works and small industries appear superfluous to him, since these exist as departments at the state level. M. Karunanidhi carried this wordy duel on behalf of state autonomy to the forum of the National Development Council at New Delhi on 30th May 1972; he said decentralization is particularly necessary if a large country like ours is to cope with the problems of a modern economy. It is in this sense, our demand or state autonomy should be understood a request for a more efficient management of the country's resources, as a means to
enable the centre to be strong in areas of vital National concern, as a method of enabling the minimum demands of our people to be met in the quickest time and in the most efficient manner.

M.Karunanidhi, the president of the DMK party constituted a committee at coimbatore on 24th April 1971 to examine the report of the centre-state relations a committee appointed by the government of Tamil Nadu with Dr.P.V.Rajamannar as the Chairman, and to submit a report giving the outlines as to secure atmost autonomy of the states in a federal set up without prejudice to the integrity of India as a whole. Some of the important recommendations of the committee are:

1. The committee recommended the transfer of several subjects from the union and concurrent lists to the state list. It recommended that the residuary powers of legislation and taxation should be vested in the state legislature.

2. An inter-state council comprising chief ministers of all the states as their nominees with the prime minister as the chairman should be set up immediately. No bill affecting one or more states should be introduced in parliament without the concurrence of that council. No decision should be taken by the centre, with the exception of issues relating to defence and foreign affairs, without consulting the inter-state council if that decision was likely to affect the interests of one or more states.

3. The committee recommended that every state should have equal representation in the Rajya Sabha, irrespective of population.
4. On recruitment to the services, the committee recommended that Article 312 should be so amended as to omit the provision for the creation of any new All-India Cadre in future.

5. The High Court of states should be the highest court for all matters falling within the jurisdiction of the states.

6. The committee said that “territorial integrity” of a state should not be interfered with in any manner except with the consent of the state concerned.

7. The emphasis on greater autonomy becomes particularly sharp in the committee’s recommendations on financial relations. It recommended that the state should also get a share of the tax revenues from the corporation tax, customs and export duties and tax on the capital value of assets and also excise duties. It also recommended that the surcharge on income tax should be merged with the basic rate of income tax so that it could be shared with the states.

8. The governor should be appointed by the president in consultation with the state cabinet or some other high power body. That might be setup for the purpose and once a person had held this office, he should not be appointed to any other office under the government.

The election manifesto of the DMK party in 1971 proclaimed “state autonomy” as its goal since it believed in the concept of unity in diversity. Therefore it is strongly convinced that a federal central government with decentralization of powers granting more autonomy
to states is the only solution to preserve the unity and the integrity of the country. Hence the slogan of the DMK party "we extend our hand of friendship to the centre, at the same time we raise our voice for the rights of our state".27

The DMK party aims to end the practice of state governments going on “begging missions”.28 The organs of the people’s power should be granted the necessary authority and legally allowed access to these resources. Confronted with the soaring prices of essential commodities, which directly affect the poor, the state governments are helpless. Karunanidhi believes that the circulation of black money and the evasion of income tax to the extent of crores of rupees that (which has a bearing on the high prices) are factors the centre alone has the powers to control.

Karunanidhi argues state autonomy, would be a cure for many such ills and would not only help, improve economic conditions, but also ultimately strengthen the nation. This requires, of course, a proper amendment of the constitution. And without mincing words, he states that the constitution has not remained inviolate. It has been amended number of times so far often for reasons best known to the congressmen. M.Karunanidhi has ever stressed the fact that the salutary powers accumulated the centre have stood in the way of greater co-operation between it and the greater co-operation between it and the status. While it was not the intention to enlarge the DMK party into an all India party, the party wanted that the state autonomy issue be discussed at an all India level, denying the suggestion that state autonomy would lead to a discriminatory sons of the soil
DMK government had been the first to condemn the projected polity in striking contrast to the so-called integrationists who were encouraging the move. The charge seems to be confirmed by the fact that the sons of the soils policy is now being actively propagated in Karnataka, Madhya pradesh, Maharashtra, and a few other states where the congress is in power.

In 1973 Chief Minister M.Karunanidhi visited Uttar Pradesh, to propagate his party’s case for autonomy, consistent with the DMK’s declared policy that autonomy should not be confined to Tamil Nadu alone, but it should also embrace other state. Karunandihi had organized state conference at Uttar Pradesh and invited Harijans, Backward Classes, and minority communities and was given a hero’s welcome, on his arrival Karunanidhi said in Allahabad, the two big rivers—the Jamuna and the Ganga merge here. Till it flows into the Ganga, the Jamuna has an individual personality and glory as a famous river. Once it joins the Ganga, they flow as one river. The states are like the Jamuna; proud of their own rights and privileges and serving the people independently, while in conjunction with the centre they constitute the Indian union a federal setup Karunanidhi declared, “I am not a separatist. I am afraid that those who deny us autonomy are the real separatists.”

One of the important features of the DMK party as a regional party that does its thinking for itself, has become a model to many opposition parties in other states. The Uttakal congress, sponsored by Biju Patnaik in Orissa and the Bharatiya Kranti Dal started by Charan Singh in Uttar Pradesh, have both drawn inspiration from the
DMK. In particular, the ideal of autonomy, formally proposed by the DMK as an electoral objective, also captured the imagination of many opposition parties after the 1967 elections, which was certainly one of the instruments that won these non-congress parties a majority in the state legislatures. The successful effort of the congress, in the wake of this challenge to its hitherto exclusive and undisputed supremacy at the states and the centre, to displace them from power (the DMK government in Madras is a notable exception) set the opposition thinking. It must be noted that the congress leadership launched a war of attrition on these parties at the Hyderabad session of the congress, in January 1968 and its efforts met with initial triumph. Ministries in Bihar, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh fell in quick succession to join those in Punjab and Haryana, who had collapsed much earlier. M.Karunanidhi's aim to mobilize enough support for the successful piloting of a resolution in parliament, endorsing the state legislature's views on state autonomy. In dealing with the question of Bombay reorganization, the parliament had set aside the recommendations of the state reorganization commission, and created the separate state of Maharashtra. The bilingualism theory was thus annulled. M.Karunanidhi realized that autonomy is not a matter to be settled between him and the prime minister but should be a living idea which permeates the minds of the masses. A contrast contribution of views on the questions by political leaders should help to create the requisite political attitude among the people not only in Tamil Nadu, but also in other states. M.Karunanidhi had determination to launch a movement for state autonomy if necessary. Even if other states did not join, he had his party would go to it alone.
M.Karunanidhi’s fight for state autonomy will be real battle in this war for our rights. If we have to choose between power and principle, M.Karunanidhi’s campaign for state autonomy is relevant not only to Tamil Nadu but to all the states.

CHIEF MINISTER M. KARUNANIDHI FORMED CERTAIN POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

1. The first task of M.Karunanidhi was the creation of a new department to look after the welfare of the backward classes under the control of a separate Minister. As a follow up action, the backward classes commission was formed to improve the lot of the poor and weak.

2. A major forward step towards land reform was to limit the maximum number of standard acres of land that a family could hold, to 15. All the concessions granted to big landlords by congress government were withdrawn and the loopholes in the Act were promptly plugged. As a result, 67,000 acres of land was distributed to the poor and regular pattas were issued in respect of 40,000 acres. Large areas of uncultivated government lands were put to good use.

3. Another important programme of DMK government under M.Karunanidhi was to engineer a “green revolution” to increase the agricultural production. Consequently Tamil Nadu became not only self-sufficient but also surplus in food production. In 1973 several states in India were hit by devastating famine. Tamil Nadu was gracious enough to send 5000 tons of rice to Maharashtra 6000 tans to Gujarat, 2000 tons to Karnataka and 3000 tons to West Bengal from its surplus stock.
4. Another important programme of DMK government was the introduction of a seven-year cash programme to clear the city of Madras of all its slums by the end of the financial year 1977 to 1978. To implement the scheme a high-powered statutory board viz. the Tamil Nadu slum clearance Board was constituted. Subsequently an enactment was passed to confer wide powers on the Board for the speedy clearance of the existing slums and for the prevention of the growth of new slums. The Tamil Nadu government as a "fine monument to the service of the lower sections of our urban society". Similarly V.V.Giri remarked thus: "Tamil Nadu leads the rest of India in affording housing facilities to the common man".

5. M.Karunanidhi wanted "to behold god in the smile of the poor". Hence the abolition of beggary. M.Karunanidhi set forth a concrete scheme to remove beggars from the social fabric and to provide avenues to rehabilitate them for which a beggar rehabilitation fund was raised to the extent of 1.09 crores. M.Karunanidhi considered those homes sacred places. With a sense of pride he says, "the temple that I visit is the Home of Beggars and the deities that I pray to with devotion are the beggars there in and the boon that I beseech is the recovery and resurrection of their health and self-esteem". 

One of the important policies of the DMK party to protect the Tamils wherever they are. That is why it has taken up in right earnest the problem of the people of Indian origin in Sri-lanka. The Shastri-Srimavo pact of Oct. 1964 threw ten lakh people of Indian origin living
in Srilanka stateless. They would be in a limbo. It was the DMK, which organized a campaign against this injustice. In the same way, when the Srilankan troops and the Singhala chauvinists committed a systematic genocide of the Tamils in the Northern and Eastern part of Srilanka, the DMK under the leadership of M.Karunanidhi carried on a relentless campaign to internationalize this issue by sending a weighty petition to world organizations like UNO in order to mobilize the opinion of various peoples in favour of Srilankan Tamils. M. Karunanidhi took all diplomatic efforts not only to bring the extermination of the Tamil race in Srilanka to an end but also to safeguard their political rights. Karunanidhi was extremely generous to provide financial assistance to all Tamil organizations in Srilanka and to rehabilitate the refugees who sought asylum in Tamil Nadu. The government of India as well as the government of Tamil Nadu under M.G. Ramchandran remained silent towards the problems of Srilankan Tamils. However, M.Karunanidhi resigned from the position, as the member of the Tamil Nadu legislative assembly protesting against the systematic genocide of the Srilankan Tamils.

ROLE OF CHIEF MINISTER : M.G.RAMCHANDRAN

After Annadurai's death in 1969, Karunanidhi and M.G. Ramchandran had been colleagues in films. M.G. Ramchandran threw his weight behind Karunanidhi and got him elected as leader of the DMK legislative party. For his part, he accepted the post of party treasurer. As the treasurer of the DMK party, M.G.Ramchandran had striven to perform his duties without being a 'yes' man to the dictates of the leaders in the party. He wanted proper accounting of the huge
income of the party and wanted also to know of the sources of such income. Because of his insistence on accounts, M.G. Ramchandran was kept in the dark about the amount collected at the Madurai party conference in 1972. M.G. Ramchandran was corrupted in collection of money. Feeling neglected M.G. Ramchandran had called for the arrest of dictatorial trends and personality cults in the party on 1972. Whatever are the reasons for an overt confrontation between the organizational forces headed by Karunanidhi and the forces of non-political personalities symbolized by M.G. Ramchandran, the clash had ideological, organizational and personality dimensions all rolled into one. For these personal differences M.G. Ramchandran announced his decision to form a new political party on 18 October 1972, Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK). He declared that his party would faithfully follow the principles and policies laid down by the late C.N. Annadurai.

The formation of the new party had an electrifying effect on the masses of Tamil Nadu. M.G. Ramchandran cut off his relations with the DMK party on 28th October 1972 by sending a formal letter of resignation. By the end of October 1972 the ADMK began to function as a viable political party. The Anna DMK was renamed as All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam on 12 September 1976.

M.G. Ramchandran became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, he had no political background and knew nothing of administration. During M.G. Ramchandran's stewardship of the state, the administration became a forced steeped in corruption, nepotism and favoritism. The minister of ADMK party resorted with impunity to
corruption and illegal ways of making money. No file moved in the
government from the taluk level to the state level without greasing the
palms of some one or other in the ADMK party in his ministry. In one
sense Mr.Ramchandran himself encouraged corruption by creating a
number of non-statutory bodies to create a source of earning by his
coterie. His egoism never allowed him to think the party he founded.
The administration of the state that had gone to ruins under his
stewardship. The political climate too was stinking due to his dubious
tactics. The result was that within hours of the death the of MGR
minister in his erstwhile cabinet and self-styled leaders took to the
leadership. And announced Miss Jayalalitha as the general secretary

On January 21, 1989 polling for the assembly elections in Tamil
Nadu was held. The DMK scored a resounding victory capturing 148
of the 232 seats. The DMK president M.Karunanidhi was sworn in as
chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for the third time on January 27, 1989,
at a function in Madras. But in 1991 Chandrasekhar government in
Tamil Nadu for its alleged secret links with LTTE in order to serve the
vested interest of Jayalalitha, thereby, giving a death blow to
democracy. For the blunders committed at Delhi, the people of Tamil
Nadu suffered the tyranny of ruthless women for five long years.
M.Karunanidhi used to compare the governmental status symbolically
to a towel on his shoulders. The dismissal of his government was, for
him, nothing but flinging the towel from his shoulders.

AIADMK general secretary Jayalalitha said on 31 January 1991,
the Congress (I) welcomed the imposition of president's rule on Tamil
Nadu as a 'right step' and said the Assembly elections should be held immediately on February 1st 1991, Jayalalitha demanded that the centre should immediately recall Tamil Nadu governor S.S. Barnala as he had aligned himself with the DMK. On February 5, 1991 Jayalalitha announced that the AIADMK and the congress (I) would contest the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections together in an electoral alliance which would include Janata Dal (s) the Republic party (Gavai), both factions of the Forward Bloc, the Farmers Association and the Farmers and Toilers party. The AIADMK was to contest 168 of the 234 seats in the Assembly, while the Congress (I) would contest 66 seats. This ratio Jayalalitha claimed, was more than the formula the late M.G.Ramchandran had worked out with the Congress (I). On February 7 1991, the AIADMK general secretary Jayalalitha, announced the Constitution of Committees for Assembly elections. On March 27, 1991 the AIADMK filed a petition with the election commission taking its claim for the 'Two leaves' symbol in the elections. On 18th June 1991 the hustings, the AIADMK secured on absolute Majority in the Tamil Nadu Assembly. The party in combination with the Congress (I) virtually demolished the rival DMK led alliance, it is the end of an era of darkness and the ushering in a new bright future, AIADMK general secretary Jayalalitha, reaching to the resounding victory of her party and its alliance. The Union Cabinet, which met for the first time on June 22, 1991, under the chairmanship of Narasimha Rao, took a decision to the effect that president's rule in Tamil Nadu was to be revoked to pave the way for the AIADMK government led by Jayalalitha to assume charge as the chief minister of Tamil Nadu on 24th June 1991. Jayalalitha as a chief
Minister in a statement said, “I accept the verdict of the people as god’s verdict (‘Makkar Theerpe Mahesan Theerpe’) and bow before it. She said her party workers should look at the verdict as an indicator of the people’s mind and continue to work in M.G.Ramchandran’s way”. 34

In a dramatic move, the Tamil Nadu chief minister Jayalalitha went on an indefinite fast in Madras on July 18 1993 demanding immediate release of water from the cauvery by the Karnataka Government for saving the standing kuruvai crop of Tamil Nadu. Jayalalitha said that she was compelled to undertake the fast as all efforts by the Tamil Nadu Government to goad the centre and the Karnataka government to ensure implementation of the interim award of the cauvery water disputes Tribunal had failed. Jayalalitha ended her four-day-old fast on July 21st 1993 after winning a package deal from the centre for the implementation of the award and the other for monitoring of data with reference to the implementation. Jayalalitha had gained all-round sympathy and the fast had projected her as a strong leader who will go to any extent to achieve her purpose.

The election manifesto of AIADMK in 1991 political policy under the leadership of Jayalalitha, the AIADMK demands neither dependence nor independence but, interdependence, as enunciated by its late leader M.G.Ramchandran, the AIADMK party demands more powers for the states as the development of a country depends upon the development of the states. AIADMK strives to find amicable solutions to the unresolved national and Inter-state problems. The AIADMK under the leadership of Jayalalitha works to establish a spirit
of friendly co-operation between the centre and the states and it seeks a larger share for the states from the central funds. The AIADMK extends its full support to the centre in making India politically and economically strong so that the divisive, disruptive and extremist elements within the country, who are operating with the active support and connivance of some militant groups from outside are totally routed.

The AIADMK party holds that there should be “rule of law” in every aspect of administration to make Tamil Nadu a model for other states. The AIADMK led by Jayalalitha will ensure to give a stable, clean, straightforward, and efficient and corruption free government. It believes that the whole administrative machinery is to be streamlined to provide a corruption free and effective administration to the state. The Jayalalitha government has translated its ideological principles into electoral promises at the first instance. After obtaining power, the electoral promises flourished into administrative policies, which were notified in general in the governor’s addresses to the joint sessions of the Tamil Nadu legislature and in the Finance Minister’s speech to the budget session of the legislatures. AIADMK draws its speech to the budget session of the legislature. AIADMK draws its support from backward communities, scheduled caste and scheduled tribes, urban and rural areas it is concerned with their welfare and with the development of Tamil. However Jayalalitha government has given first priority to the eradication of terrorism from Tamil Nadu.

The AIADMK government assumed office at a time when the state was confronted by an extremely sensitive and complex problem
posed by foreign militants (LTTE), the breakdown of law and order, an extremely critical financial situation, difficult. Economic choices caused by the national economic crisis and serious deterioration in general administration. An objective and unbiased view would indicate that this government has done remarkably well on all fronts—law and order has been restored, the threat posed by foreign militants pushed back, the critical financial situation has been handled deftly, the development momentum restored and above all the standards of living of the poor and downtrodden have been improved.

Jayalalitha maintaining law and order, it is a matter of utmost satisfaction that the state police has fully risen to the very many difficult situations and acquitted itself most creditably. Motivated by an extremely result oriented Chief Minister, Jayalalitha, the state police has attained to new heights of excellence in every sphere. The evil designs of an alien extremist outfit, which was responsible for the unfortunate assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, were effectively neutralized and peace and security maintained. Criminal investigation has received high priority and much sensational and difficult cases have been solved with great ease. Perhaps, the most gratifying to the police leadership was the display of high morale by the subordinate ranks, a factor contributed by the Chief Minister, Jayalalitha, government had organized the Tamil conference as an “Aradhana” to the Tamil language. The Prime minister of India, P.V.Narasimha Rao, delivered the valedictory address at the Eighth world Tamil Conference, some of the tangible achievements of the world Tamil Conference were, a windfall to the temple town of Thanjavur in terms of a 17KM ring road, a bridge and
other infrastructure. The government spent Rs. 60 Crores in sprucing up the town. A new bus stand came upon the outskirts and the government persuaded the army to lay a floating bridge on the cauvery so that delegates staying in Bangalore could travel easily to the venue. Jayalalitha stands totally committed to the principles and programmes enunciated by Bharat Ratna M.G.Ramchandran. Jayalalitha undertook the construction of a fitting memorial to their beloved leader at Marina Beach near the Annadurai Samadhi. The remodeled M.G.Ramchandran memorial on the Marina beach symbolizes Ramchandran's love for the Tamil people.

The performance of the Jayalalitha government has been extremely satisfactory, considering the fact that Jayalalitha became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu at a very difficult period, facing not only problems of finances but also those of law and order the major reasons for these problems being that they were inherited from the previous regime of Karunanidhi. The law and order problems were tackled by the Chief Minister Jayalalitha with an iron hand, and the people of Tamil Nadu are now able to lead a fairly peaceful life. The confidence of the people in the AIADMK government is evidenced in the fact that the AIADMK government had secured retained the seats in the by-elections held on 26th may, 1994 in the Mylapore and Perundurai assembly constituencies. The general atmosphere is that of content and satisfaction on the part of the people regarding the efficiency of the Jayalalitha administration, and thus shows a positive ideological commitments into administrative policies, the Jayalalitha government has been careful to balance the policies aiming at the welfare of the socially downtrodden and the policies which concern the
welfare of the general public. It maintains a reasonable poise between the special claims and the economic endeavours. It has also tried to resolve the conflict between equality and social justice on the one hand, and liberty and free enterprise on the other. The Jayalalitha government's policies towards the non-Brahmin backward communities, scheduled caste and scheduled tribes, women and children stemmed out of its ideological convictions pertaining to the society and was clearly redistributive in nature. Its policies were towards agriculture and allied agro-industries, industries and other economic development. Its nature is distributive. The party's policies regarding revenue administration, police, etc. try to provide general welfare for all and hence they are regulatory in character. The Jayalalitha government has handled the instrument of bureaucracy for socio-economic changes for the amelioration of the Tamil Society. Hence the AIADMK has become a politically successful centrist party. In that respect it has been true to the social ideals of Annadurai and M.G.Ramchandran.

The AIADMK chief minister, Jayalalitha quickly appreciated the implications of the changing incentive structure. Between 1991 and 1993 the 11 AIADMK MPs. Prime minister Narasimha Rao was keen to keep the AIADMK on board in spite of the equivocal support offered by Jayalalitha. The AIADMK leader made no secret of her sympathies for Hindu nationalist causes and Jayalalitha anticipated that the BJP would emerge as the largest party in the next Lok sabha election. Jayalalitha was interested in forming an alliance with the BJP that would increase the number of AIADMK MPs in the Lok sabha and give the party representation in the cabinet at the centre. In the event the
AIADMK, dogged by allegations of corruption, formed another alliance with congress but this time contested fewer seats of 11 in 1991. The alliance was formed in spite of the objections made by members of the state unit of the congress party who considered the AIADMK to be a severe political liability. When the alliance went ahead regardless of local objections a breakaway Tamil Manila Congress was formed, the AIADMK, now allied mainly with the rump of the congress party, suffered a crushing defeat in the 1996 Loksabha and assembly elections. The defeat and the corruption charges levelled against the party leadership raised doubts over the future of the party.

The 1998 Lok sabha elections provided a useful opportunity for Jayalalitha to rehabilitate the AIADMK. Jayalalitha formed an alliance with the BJP and a number of smaller state based parties including the PMK, MDMK, and the Janata party. No longer encumbered by a nationally strong congress party, the AIADMK increased the number of seats it contested to 22. Jayalalitha’s earlier ambitions were achieved with the outcome of the election. The BJP extended its lead over congress and was in the best position to form a coalition government. The BJP formed a minority coalition that included its alliance partners from Tamil Nadu. The AIADMK, with its 18MPs, was important ally and a pivotal party able to topple the government in 1997. Naturally the AIADMK and the junior allies were rewarded with portfolios in the Union cabinet. The AIADMK reestablished its credibility without having to make any sacrifices to these allies in the area that matter most recapturing power in the state. The AIADMK, as the dominant member of the alliance, was relatively generous with the
allocation of seats to its junior allies. It soon became clear that state level issue were Jayalalitha's core concerns. Nationally, the centre could have provided some relief in the large number of corruption cases in which senior members of the AIADMK were implicated. More importantly it was hoped that the pivotal status of the AIADMK would oblige the BJP to dismiss the DMK government, by imposing president's rule and call fresh elections in the state. The BJP, at the head of a coalition of regional parties and without a secure majority, proved unwilling and unable to acquiesce. The AIADMK responded by withdrawing support from the government and then voting with the opposition in the subsequent confidence motion.

The federal insentive structure that the AIADMK faced before 1991 continues to shape developments in state politics. The primary interest of power in state politics. The primary interest in power at the state level is still the most powerful motivator. The concerns about the use of president's rule continue but it is now clear that it is much less likely to be used without a national party with a majority at the centre. An important change is that the AIADMK can reasonably expect to participate in national government. Indeed in some circumstances the party can occupy an extremely powerful position at the centre. The AIADMK has also demonstrated how the centre provides a space in which state level conflicts can be played out. The AIADMK failed to achieve its ultimate objective of ousting the DMK in 1999 but the publicity generated by Jayalalitha's carefully choreographed moves on the national stage served as a useful reminder that the party remained politically relevant.
The electoral decline of congress has changed the dynamics of alliance politics in the state. Instead of a straightforward alliance with congress the AIADMK has to seek out a range of parties to be sure of leading a winning combination. These alliances are much less stable as the parties have a much more diffused range of interests. Unlike the national congress leadership, that kept the state unit subdued, the leaders of the smaller parties have a much greater interest in winning power in the state. The AIADMK has not fully recovered from the excess of the 1991/1996 periods in government. The partisan base of the party has contracted making it heavily reliant on alliances to win elections.

The DMK's alliances with the Tamil Manila Congress in 1996 helped it defeat the AIADMK led alliance. The allocation of seats reflected the priorities of the DMK leadership. The party contested the majority of the assembly seats and won a solid majority assembly seats. The TMC was allowed to contest the majority of the Loksabha seats but significantly the old ratio, one third of the seats to the Dravidian party and two third to congress, was abandoned. The relatively stronger position of the DMK increased the amount of patronage at the disposal of the party leadership. Thus the TMC and DMK have 20 and 17 MPs holding posts in the union cabinet. The DMK quickly formed an alliance with the BJP after Jayalalitha failed to unseat the state government in 1999. This was a way of gaining protection in case of future attempts on the part of the AIADMK to harass the DMK via the centre. The value of the alliance with the BJP became fully apparent following the arrest of senior members of the DMK in June 2001. The centre expressed its displeasure by recalling
the state governor. The alliances should also have helped the DMK party secure once again power in state on 2001.

The election manifesto of AIADMK of 2004 says “we want neither dependence nor independence but inter-dependence”.36 This is the policy of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam on federalism. India is a federation of states with a diversity of Languages, ethnic streams cultural and geographical variations. The federal government of a nation of such diversity must therefore, necessarily espouse the principles of co-operative federalism so that states possess adequate powers and resources. This alone will enable the states to take up reforms and changes leading to the all round development of the state. This is the firm belief of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. Based on this credo, the AIADMK will urge the central government to bring about the necessary constitutional amendments to enable state governments to carry out and implement their policies in the true federal spirit without their rights being encroached upon in any way.

E.V.Ramaswamy Naicker, Annadurai, and M.G.Ramchandran firmly believed that in order to eliminate social disparities, the status of scheduled castes, and Scheduled tribes, and most Backward classes and the denotified communities must be raised in all spheres of activity. It was the Tamil Nadu chief minister Jayalalitha who gave reality to these ideals by introducing in 1993, 69% reservation for these communities by a separate enactment and having the enactment incorporated in the IX schedule of the constitution of India. Jayalalitha said “as long as the DMK, MDMK and PMK parties
occupied prime positions of power at the centre, even the demands of Tamil Nadu were not accepted”.

These parties took no efforts to fight for Tamil Nadu’s rights, a situation that changed totally after these parties left the central government.

Jayalalitha can protect the Tamils wherever they are she has to provide the employment opportunities to Tamils in Tamil Nadu, on the contrary, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam is committed to come to the aid of the Tamils wherever they are in distress, in whatever part of the globe.

The All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam government is taking a number of measures to make Tamil Nadu the number one state in the country. The National level, law and order is perfectly maintained and the economic development of the state. Agriculture, industry and service sectors in Tamil Nadu must grow rapidly to provide adequate employment opportunities and sovereignty of India should be protected to achieve all these implementation in Tamil Nadu.

In south Tamil Nadu, there is a different kind of dynamics at play. It is in the districts of Madurai, Virudhunagar and Theni that the AIADMK is the strongest. The position of Jayalalitha’s has drawn the Thevar community, the most numerous backward castes, in the region into its fold. It is true that dalits in this region predominantly the pallar community are alienated from the party. But the DMK led front may not gain because the dalits here are still with the Independent Puthiya Tamizhagam, led by K.Krishnaswamy. Vaiko’s influence is strongest in south Tamil Nadu and so the AIADMK front
can look forward to a rich harvest in this region. Further south in the Tirunelveli and the Kanyakumari districts, the congress and the left can claim their presence and this perhaps is where the DMK led combine can look forward to a relatively good performance. In western Tamil Nadu consisting of the Coimbatore, Erode and Dindigul districts, the social divisions are not as clearly pronounced as they are elsewhere in Tamil Nadu. The predominant backward caste groups to determine their political choice. In political terms, the west has been an AIADMK bastion and there is little indication of a change in the direction.

Given all these factors, the outcome of the May 8, 2006, polls in Tamil Nadu is difficult to predict with any certainty. While the exit of MDMK from the DMK led Front has demoralized the parties in the Democratic progressive alliance combine, the AIADMK after being swept aside in the May 2004 general elections appears to have regained strength. The Jayalalitha government has retrieved some ground with its well schemes, one of them being the distribution of bicycles to these children to the backward classes. Similarly, these government's response to the 2004, tsunami and the floods that lashed during December 2005 appear to have earned the AIADMK some good will. Jayalalitha had also revoked harsh decisions taken against the state governments employees. It remains to be seen if all these have an impact on the polls, in 2006 elections.

In 2006 elections Tamil Nadu is all set to have its first-ever coalition government. The DMK led democratic progressive alliance has won with a thumping majority and DMK leader M.Karunanidhi
could well be the Chief Minister for the fifth time. But AIADMK supremo J.Jayalalitha won't go away without a fight she set herself to provide the state with a strong opposition in the assembly. AIADMK is stunned by its reversal 61 seats; the DMK is probably unhappy that it could not muster a majority on its own and had to be satisfied with 96 seats. The results are a reflection of the 2004-Lok sabha polls, except that the DMK lost some urban seats in Chennai and Coimbatore to the AIADMK. The DMK has picked up seats in the south. Jayalalitha's alliance with MDMK itself could get only 6 out of 35 seats.

M.Karunanidhi, chief minister of Tamil Nadu, was the first to form an alliance with Indira Gandhi (1978) in the state and the first to help V.P.Singh to bring all regional parties together in the a National Front Government in 1989. Ever since, Tamil Nadu has played an important role in national politics. It's a strange miscalculation for politicians as shrewd and cautious as Karunanidhi. He generally does not stick his neck out without testing the waters. Even when C.N.Annadurai had split from the Dravida Khazagam to form Dravida Munnetra Khazagam, Karunanidhi took a while to join the new outfit. His caution was also evident when he made peace with Indira Gandhi after the emergency and during the Anti Hindi agitation. Recently he risked party ideology to avoid scrapping ties with BJP.

The new manifesto of 2006 DMK's consistent stand, that the constitution should be amended for the creation of a wholesome and genuine federalism with fuller autonomy for the states. It will continue to strive for the suitable constitutional amendments that will empower the states to function freely and effectively in the changed new world
order. Just we have to wait and see how far the DMK party will work in the days to come.

To conclude, the DMK leadership of M.Karunanidhi and AIADMK leadership of Jayalalitha has been acting and performing with a very balanced outlook. The stability, durability, civil order and legitimacy factors have been manifested in a conspicuous manner, with reference especially to the promises made and follow up performance in demanding for state autonomy-Tamil Nadu government has not only laid a very firm foundation for growth and development but it has also passed the way for implementing some very revolutionary and highly progressive reforms in demanding more powers to the states. The government has provided a momentum, which is indicative of a new dynamism in the government and politics of Tamil Nadu.
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