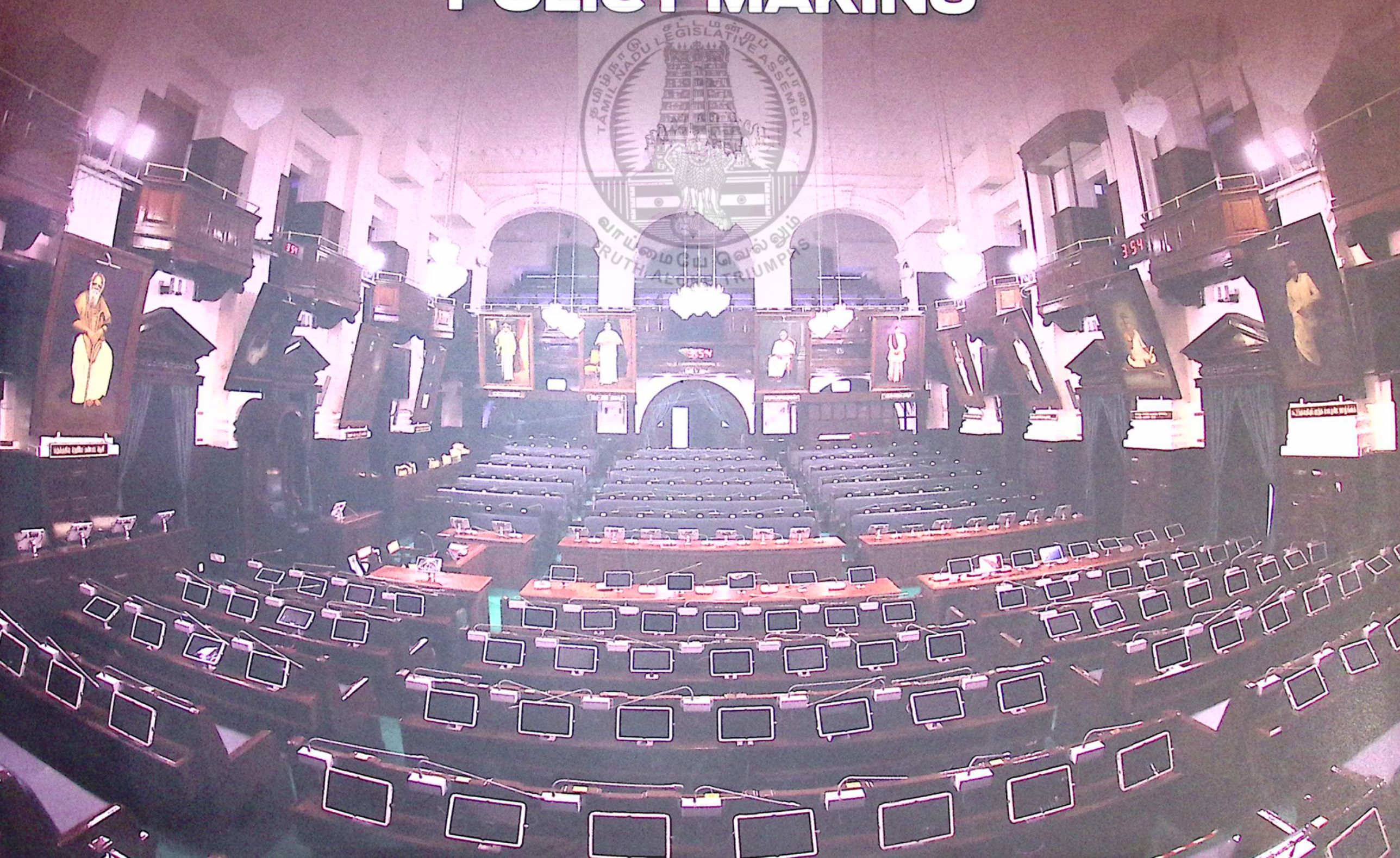
TAMIL NADU
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
SECRETARIAT

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TAMIL NADU LEGISLATURE

A JOURNEY IN LEGISLATING & POLICY MAKING



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Curated by
T. RAMAKRISHNAN



THE HINDU GROUP

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TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
வாய்மையே வெல்லும்
TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS

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M.K. STALIN
CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU

SECRETARIAT
CHENNAI - 600 009.

Date: 13.02.2026



Message

I am happy to learn that the Tamil Nadu Assembly Secretariat and The Hindu Group, one of the widely respected media organisations of the country, are bringing out a publication - *Tamil Nadu Legislature: A Journey in Legislating and Policy Making*, Capturing great moments in the illustrious past of the State Legislature.

Tamil Nadu represents an ancient and glorious civilisation with its culture rooted in democratic principles, dating long back to the Sangam era.

Rightly, the State boasts being a frontrunner in having a highly refined electoral system and written constitution prescribing the mode of elections, as illustrated in the Uthiramerur inscription of around 920 CE when Parantaka Chola (907-955 CE) ruled the Tamil territory. The genesis of the State's Legislature in the modern period goes back to the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and the Government of India Act of 1919, which paved the way for the evolution of the system of a representative legislature.

It is this sense of history that has guided the legislature of Tamil Nadu, while formulating and adopting several historic and revolutionary pieces of legislation, be it the Temple Entry Indemnity Act of 1939 or the Hindu Marriage (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act of 1967, which validates all non-ritual Hindu marriages or the Hindu Succession (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act of 1990, providing for the equal right of daughters in coparcenary properties. After Independence, many stalwarts including Rajaji, Kamarajar, Anna, Kalaignar and M.G. Ramachandran, all of whom had held the post of Chief Minister and served the legislature for years. Some of the important Bills passed in this historic Assembly are given below:

1. Tamil Nadu Land Reforms (Reduction of Ceiling on Land) Act, 1970 – Reduced the land ceiling from 30 to 15 standard acres per family to redistribute surplus land to the landless and reduce rural inequalities. This built on earlier reforms and was a key agrarian change brought in Kalaignar's regime.

2. Tamil Nadu Agricultural Labourer Fair Wages Act, 1969 – Ensured fair wages for agricultural labourers (especially in the Cauvery delta) and penalized exploitation by landowners, as part of early rural-focused legislation under Kalaignar's Government.
3. Tamil Nadu Women's Property Rights Act, 1989 – Granted equal property rights to women, promoting gender equity in inheritance and assets.
4. Tamil Nadu State Industrial Promotion Corporation (SIPCOT) establishment-related legislation (1971) and SIDCO creation (1970) – Promoted industrial development, small/micro enterprises, and economic growth through State Corporations. This was a Landmark initiative that paved the way for the Industrialisation of Tamil Nadu.
5. The Tamil Nadu Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Act, 1971 – Constituted the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board for effective clearance of slums and to provide basic needs such as streets, water supply and drainage. This is a dream project of Kalaignar.

After the Dravidian Model Government assumed office under my leadership in May 2021, the regime has ensured that many progressive and far-reaching measures are reflected in the form of legislative pieces and resolutions. To name a few, within a few months of my Government taking charge, the Assembly adopted the Tamil Nadu State Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Bill, 2021 and the Commission started functioning on October 13, 2021, with the main objective of safeguarding the legal rights of SC/STs at the State level and addressing the community's important issues.

In January, 2025, I tabled a Bill to amend the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Harassment of Women (Amendment) Act, 1998 aimed at protecting women against different types of harassment including digital/online harassment. Further, in April, 2025, I moved the Bills to amend The Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Act, 1998 and The Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994, to ensure the voices of persons with disabilities are heard in local governance and to achieve social justice by way of distribution of opportunities and privileges to all citizens including the persons with disabilities.

Among the important resolutions moved by me and adopted by the House pertained to the call made to the Union Government in April 2023 to amend the Constitution to extend statutory protection, rights and concessions, including reservation to Scheduled Caste members, who have converted to Christianity, and another appeal made in June 2024 for conducting a caste-based census along with the general census. More recently, the House passed a resolution urging the Union Government to restore the MGNREGS instead of the new scheme VB-G RAM G. Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly continues to strive for this welfare of the people, remain as the voice of the under privileged and will be a beacon light of federalism for the country always.

I hope and trust this publication will serve as a valuable document to political parties, historians, journalists and anyone who is interested in the process and history of Legislation in Tamil Nadu.

Best Wishes.



M. APPAVU
SPEAKER
TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SECRETARIAT
CHENNAI - 600 009.

Date: 19.01.2026



Foreword

Legislative Assembly, according to the Constitution, occupies the central place in governance of a State and is well positioned to be the primary force of socio-economic transformation. It has to demonstrate robustness in responding to needs and aspirations of the common man.

As one of the cornerstones of parliamentary democracy, the legislature performs effectively dual roles – ensuring accountability of the government of the day and providing guidance in policy matters to the government.

The Legislature of Tamil Nadu has always been looked upon by the rest of the country as an institution that has played a stellar role in realising democracy in practice at the grassroot level. Its contribution towards the enrichment and embellishment of Indian democracy has been acknowledged by one and all.

It is against this backdrop that the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Secretariat, as part of its duty to ensure the proper dissemination of knowledge and information among people about the history of the State legislature, has teamed up with The Hindu Group, one of the old and highly regarded organisations in the field of journalism, to bring out this publication - *Tamil Nadu Legislature: A Journey in Legislating and Policy Making*.

This work is essentially based on archival material available with The Hindu Group, which has been bringing out many titles in recent years.

I am sure that all sections of society will find the book an extremely important reference material with regard to the Legislature of Tamil Nadu.

19/1/26

Introduction

The legislature, under the Indian Constitution, occupies a pre-eminent and pivotal position in the democratic polity. As an embodiment of the freedom and sovereignty of the people of the country, the Parliament of India deliberates on matters of public interest; ventilates grievances of the people and seeks to initiate progressive social and economic changes. Of course, it does so primarily as a body that makes laws, approves budgets and frames policies.

The State legislature of Tamil Nadu is a quintessential example of the Indian model of parliamentary democracy. As a vibrant institution of free speech, the State legislature, which was bi-cameral for about 50 years since the mid-1930s, influenced the development of the State. Discussions in the legislature have been providing resilience to democratic processes, apart from protecting and advancing the interests of Tamil Nadu. As with many other parts of the country, Tamil Nadu too had its first Legislative Assembly under the Constitution only in 1952, but the voice of the common man began to be heard in the hallowed portals of the legislature - then the Legislative Council - from January 1921 through the elected members, following the implementation of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms.

Social justice, equity, pursuit of progress and support to vulnerable sections of society have been the guiding objectives of the legislature from the beginning. Even before the country gained Independence, the legislature had strengthened the case for communal reservation, the abolition of "Devadasis" (the system of dedication of girls to temples) as early as in 1927 and throwing temples open to Scheduled Castes. It was only natural that Independence and the consequent universal adult franchise made the legislature the champion of such issues. This was in addition to paving the way for further democratisation of the scheme of representation of people. The change of regime over the years did not deter the legislature from proceeding to realise larger goals. The State Assembly has had many sharp and seasoned leaders as members, whose contributions to parliamentary traditions and legislative work are still relevant. It has become a symbol of healthy parliamentary democracy, alive to contemporary issues and problems of the State.

This book is an attempt to bring out various facets of the working of the legislature, especially the Legislative Assembly. *Tamil Nadu Legislature: A journey in legislating and policy making* draws largely on archival materials of *The Hindu*; it contains a number of rare and old photographs. Wherever required, context has been provided to old reports, articles and editorials, the earliest of which dates back to January 1921.

We thank the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Secretariat for the opportunity to bring out a visually appealing and well-researched publication on the history and evolution of the State legislature. We also acknowledge the contributions and help of a host of people, from officials of the Tamil Nadu government and the Assembly Secretariat, both serving and retired, to political leaders and journalists, who all shared their insights with us.

The book has been curated by T. Ramakrishnan, Senior Associate Editor with *The Hindu*, and designed by B. Karthikeyan, Assistant Editor (Design).

Suresh Nambath
Editor

SECTION 1

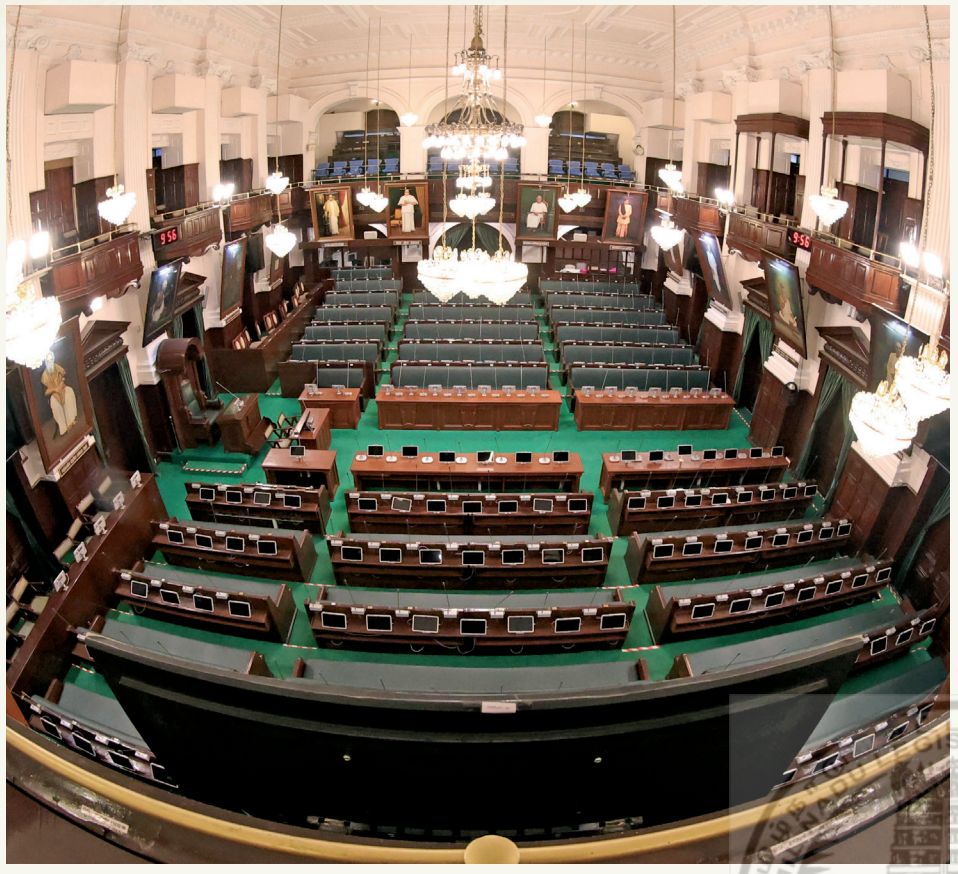
DEMOCRACY TAKES ROOTS

Meaning of the inauguration

His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught opened the Madras Legislative Council this morning [January 11, 1921] and set the machinery of the modified Minto-Morley Reforms in operation. The proceedings as reported appear bald and do not betoken the heralding of an epoch of momentous national importance. It is necessary for as clearly to gauge the exact significance of this function. Whatever else it may mean, it does not mark a little of advance upon the absurd state of things brought about by the Reform Act as finally whittled down to shape by the reactionary Rules thereunder. If anything, it constitutes the coping stone to the reactionary structure reared by the Rules. It emphasises the fact that the Reform Act is only a test, not as to the fitness of India for self-government, but as to her fitness to obtain self-government by an indefinite series of stages. The people of India are to be in political swaddling-clothes and in political tutelage. There need be no mistake on this point "The future happiness of the peoples of India," wrote the Times on the eve of the departure of the Duke of Connaught to India, "depends upon the calm and steady growth of that aptitude for self-government which it is now our chief thought to foster. The enlarged institutions which the Duke of Connaught will inaugurate do not constitute finality, but are rather a beginning." It is not self-government that was inaugurated this morning: His Royal Highness' speech itself points out with painful plainness that it is but a beginning, or rather a sounding of the people of India as to their fitness "for orderly progress towards constitutional liberty." The more carefully you read His Royal Highness' speech, the more are you impressed with the



The Chair of the Speaker of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly which was presented by Governor of Madras Presidency Lord Willingdon to President of Madras Legislative Council P. Rajagopalachari on March 6, 1922.



A view of Legislative Assembly chamber at Fort St. George.

deliberate emphasis it lays on stages and tutelage, with the suggestion that the goal is yet distant, beyond and behind the horizon, and the journey long and arduous. His Royal Highness referred to Sir Thomas Monro's despatch in which he stated "that the people of India should be taught and guided and fitted to govern themselves" and added that that policy was at last "ripening into fruition." The Council was exhorted by His Royal Highness to carry the progress which was now achieved "a stage further towards perfect maturity." His Royal Highness' speech, in fact, was nothing but an elaboration of the preamble to the Government of India Act, a commentary, so to say, which might have been written by Lord Curzon. It frequently emphasises the "gradualness" and more than once indicates the importance of the mention of "successive stages" in the well-known preamble to that Act. No greater significance, then, attaches to His Royal Highness' visit than that he is to interpret, inaugurate and thus boom the Reform Act so as to make the path of the bureaucracy easier. No "boon here" and no concession this, but a purely political mission of a highly contentious kind which, constitutionally speaking, was improper on the part of the Cabinet to saddle a member of the Royal Family with. When His Royal Highness returns home, therefore, conveying the ostentations, loyalty and respect to the throne of the official circles and the minority of non-officials and, we hope, also that loyalty of the real India which is not less respectful because expressed away from his presence and in significant silence when His Royal Highness returns home with these, we hope he will also, free as he will be from the conventional fetters now imposed on him, express to His Majesty the real feelings of the country in this matter. He will, we hope, note, for instance, that those to whom the Reforms are tolerable – it is quite different from saying "satisfactory" – have no following whatsoever in the country as a whole India feels that she is not less fit for self- government to-day than is Australia or New Zealand or South Africa or Canada. She repudiates the theory underlying the Reform Act that She is to be on prolonged probation and earn a certificate of proficiency before she is to be granted self-government. That is one point which we would respectfully beg of His Royal Highness to note, circumventing, as he must, the sedulous attempts that have been made to hide this fact from him by ignoring and belittling mass movements and meetings and proceedings at monster mass meetings. There is another aspect in regard to these reforms to which also we should like that Duke's attention should be drawn. It is this: The Reform Act has so far had but one result and promises to bring forth none else. New offices, and more of them, are being created with no benefit to the country, but involving very heavy expenditure. This undesirable development has intensified the scramble for offices and this scramble is calculated farther to demoralise public life in this country. The Indian masses, illiterate though they be, are yet endowed with sense and intelligence enough to appreciate these developments, to see the reason why the Nationalists in the country have, as a body, stood out from the Councils, to grasp why offices should not be multiplied and why they do and ought to support Non Co-operation. It may, perhaps, be easy for a time to shut out these inconvenient facts from the notice of His Royal Highness and from responsible men in Britain or belittle them; but no responsible man who works for a British Commonwealth of Free Nations can ignore or attempt to suppress them. That is the point which the people of this country would like to bring to the notice of His Royal Highness and, through him, to His Majesty the King Emperor and the British public.

Editorial
January 12, 1921

Governor's message

His Excellency Lord Erskine, the Governor of Madras, has sent the following message to Members of the Madras Legislative Assembly and Council: "In pursuance of sub-section (1) of Section 68 of the Government of India Act, 1939, John Francis Ashley, Lord Erskine, Governor of Madras, hereby requires the attendance of the Members of the Madras Legislative Council and the Madras Legislative Assembly at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, the 31st August 1937, at the Senate House, Chepauk, Madras."

August 18, 1937

Fort St. George, 1890
PHOTO: VINTAGE VIGNETES



A historic budget

C Rajagopalachari, Prime Minister and Finance Minister, presented to the Madras Legislative Assembly this morning [September 1] the budget for 1937-38. The first Congress Budget of Madras shows a surplus of Rs.6,000. "Although we have been able to give it some "Congress orientation," the Premier declared, "the present Budget can hardly be regarded as all that we desired for a Congress Party's Budget."

The Budget makes a beginning towards implementing the Congress programme by making provision for the following items:

- The ryots are to get relief in taxation by remissions involving Rs.75 lakhs.

- Prohibition will be introduced in Salem as a first instalment. This will mean a loss of Rs.26 lakhs.

- Rs.13.75 lakhs are to be spent on new schemes including:
- Assistance to hand-spinning movement, Rs.2 lakhs.
- Installation of broadcasting sets in villages.
- Subsidies for opening new rural dispensaries and employment of midwives.
- Water-supply and drainage schemes.

Towards the close of his speech, the Premier indicated the Government's plans to impose cuts on the salaries of members of services and their intention ''to approach the Secretary of State in that connection." He also hinted at the possibility of fresh taxation, which, however, he assured the Assembly, would not add to the already heavy burden on the poor.

A novel proposal in the Budget was one for levying licence fees on dealers of cloth other than hand-woven cloth.

Budget speech: excerpts

The Prime Minister, spoke as follows, in presenting the Budget for 1937-38.

Sir, I rise, to present, to this Assembly the Budget for the current year 1937-38. Before I approach the actual Budget, I crave the indulgence of the House to make some preliminary observations which the present occasion seems to demand. The present Legislature is the first in the history of the Province to be entirely devoid of any official element. For the first time, the Treasury Bench of this House is occupied by a body of persons elected by and wholly responsible to the people of the Province, and a representative of the people is charged with the duty of placing the annual estimates before the House and of asking it to vote supply.

I should perhaps gracefully mention that neither under the Act nor under the Governor's instrument of Instructions do His Excellency's special responsibilities include one for the maintenance of the financial stability of the Province. 'That responsibility has now been transferred to the popularly elected Government, and I am confident that the Ministry can rely on the support of Hon'ble Members of this House in maintaining the credit of the Province which is our greatest asset.

Separation of Orissa

There was at one time a considerable risk that the closing balance for 1935-1936 might not be the opening balance for the year 1936-37. As and from the 1st April 1936 certain areas were taken away from the province of Madras to form part of the newly formed province of Orissa, and there was much apprehension that a slice of our balances might accompany the loss of territory. Fortunately, the danger did not materialise and our balances were preserved to us. The changes in the financial position of our Province as the result of the constitution of the new Province have not been to our disadvantage. Our Revenue account has benefited to the extent of 23 lakhs annually. Since the average expenditure in the transferred areas has been about 53 lakhs as against an average revenue of only about 31 lakhs. The Provincial debt was reduced to the extent of 47 lakhs by the transfer or this liability to the new Province, while the Madras Famine Relief Fund has been, relieved of the liability to contribute to famine relief operations in the transferred areas. Madras's gain in these respects may add is not Utkal's loss, since under the Niemayer Settlement, the Central Government provided the Orissa Province with a suitable opening balance and will pay an annual subvention adequate to ensure the solvency of the Province. I am sure that the good wishes of the Honourable Members of this House and of the people of this Province are with the young Province Of Utkal, and we trust that it will have a happy and prosperous future in its new-found life.

Seasons and prices

The position as we found it on our assumption of office was something as follows. The total revenue anticipated for the year was 1606.74 lakhs, an increase of 32.81 lakhs over the revenue of the previous year. Notwithstanding that allowances has been made for land revenue concessions in fasil 1347 amounting to 75 lakhs as against 34½ lakhs in fasil 1348 due to the collection of arrears of last year in the current year, anticipated extension of irrigation under the Cauvery Mettur Project, and reduced provision for seasonal remissions in expectation of a normal season, it was

The present Legislature is the first in the history of the Province to be entirely devoid of any official element. For the first time, the Treasury Bench of this House is occupied by a body of persons elected by and wholly responsible to the people of the Province, and a representative of the people is charged with the duty of placing the annual estimates before the House and of asking it to vote supply

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
Prime Minister



Madras Premier C. Rajagopalachari presenting his first Budget to the Assembly on September 1, 1937.

anticipated that there would be an increase of 15½ lakhs under the head of Land Revenue. Last year, the south-west monsoon broke earlier than usual and was on the whole defective. Wet crops were restricted in the Carnatic, and Central districts and dry crops in the south. The north-east monsoon ushered itself in with a terrific cyclone which worked havoc in some districts, especially Guntur, and the Government had to grant large remissions of revenue and distributed aid to sufferers both in money and in kind. Except for this catastrophe the north-east monsoon was, on the whole, above normal in most districts.

Agricultural indebtedness

While on the question of the relief of the land revenue burden, I may say, Sir, that my colleagues and I consider that of ever, greater urgency and value to the agricultural population is the adequate relief of indebtedness and immediate steps will therefore be taken in this direction, which will release the cultivator in our Province from the stranglehold of unredeemable insolvency and despair and, we hope, make a man of him.

Prohibition and excise revenue

Now I come to the major change which has been made in the estimates of revenue, viz., under the head of Excise. We regard the introduction of the prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs as of such vital and fundamental importance to the well-being of the people, that we felt that, at whatever cost, an effective start must be made at once. The Government therefore decided to close with effect from the 1st October 1937 all toddy and arrack shops in the district of Salem. The problem of prohibition has been complicated by the revenue from drink having been worked deep into the financial structure of the Province. We have of course problems of enforcement and of finding other employment for the families who hitherto derived livelihood in the drink business. These questions have to be faced and tackled, and the Government being serious about it, have therefore decided to proceed step by step and not all at once.

The first area to be tackled will be Salem. My colleagues have been pleased, Sir, in choosing the venue for this first memorable step to pay a delicate compliment to the faith and enthusiasm of their Premier in this cause, and have given preference to his native district. It is, Sir, not to be regarded as a mere experiment, but it should be understood as a first stage. Our policy is finally settled and there can be no question of withdrawal from it. We deem it wrong for Government to be party to the organising of evil temptation calculated to ruin weak-willed people and cause the destitution of the women and children of their families. With time for financial adjustments and experience in the work of enforcement, it is confidently hoped that the prohibition of drink and drugs throughout the Province will become an accomplished fact. By losing 26 lakhs we really put no less than a crore in the pocket of the peasants and labourers of Salem District every year. So it will be in the rest of the Province as we proceed. But here, again we must counsel patience to those who would like to see the whole of the Province become "dry" at one swoop.

Salaries of ministers

The financial effect of closing liqour shops in the Salem District in a full year will be a loss of revenue of 28 lakhs. The loss in the year will be 13 lakhs, which the sum available for new schemes to the small figure of 3.25 lakhs. In the limited time at our disposal we could make but little alteration in the estimates of expenditure on standing sanction, except in one respect. Our proposals for the salaries and allowances of Ministers, even including payment of salaries to parliamentary Secretaries and Members of the legislature, involved a saving of over Rs.20,000 on the provision as it stood in the draft Budget, when we came into office, but against this had to be set the provision of money for the purchase of cars for the use of Ministers. This latter measure we consider to be reasonable and desirable in view of the fact that the Minister will draw only a small salary and can hardly be expected to put himself to the expense of buying a car which is under present condition necessary for the discharge of the duties of a political appointment of uncertain tenure and this expenditure is not recurring but cover the utility for a number of years.

Small surplus

The sum total effect of these proposals will be to leave the revenue account for the year not with a deficit but with a small surplus of

about Rs.6,000, which just represents the Micawberian shilling my predecessors on this bench referred to when presenting the Budget for 1936-37. But we do not propose to follow Micawber's policy of cheering up on a shilling's worth of porter after conversation.

Loans to ryots

Budget-making inevitably involves the striking of a balance between the pleasant privilege of spending money in new and additional ways for the well-being and prosperity of the people, and the unpleasant duty of taking money out of the pockets of the people. For after all the Government can spend only to the extent that they are able to tax, and even if schemes are financial from borrowings, borrowed money has to be repaid sometime or other. Much remains to be done, and is indeed already under the consideration of the Government, which does not come within the scope of the present Budget. The most important and perhaps the most difficult, yet the most urgent of these is the problem of how to relieve the burden of rural indebtedness without unduly straining the financial credit of the Province. The present Budget provides for the grant of Government loans for the relief of the indebtedness of ryots to the extent of 30 lakhs. The amount will be increased if necessary, but we wish to evolve a way of tackling the problem on more wholesale lines and provide for more effective relief.

Water-supply in villages

Ninety-two per cent of the total population of our province lives outside municipal towns. The problem of an adequate drinking water-supply for these people is still to be solved. Foremost among the things that the school of public service which the present Government represents wishes to achieve, is to make pure drinking water is available for the people of every village in our land. Not roads, not even literacy can possibly be a greater or more urgent need. My Hon'ble colleague in charge of Public Health hopes to issue here long a comprehensive memorandum on the subject. But I may broadly indicate the principles on which the Government propose to work. There are some 50,000 villages in our province, in which some 80 lakhs of families live. If our experts adopt the urban standards to which they are accustomed we can never hope to solve this problem. We have to fix a different standard and different varying types of design to suit the varying conditions of the localities in this widespread. Measures have simultaneously to be taken to prevent the source getting contaminated. Small tanks which would be located at some convenient centres provided with taps all round would adequately serve villages and we should not waste money on pipe lines in the rural area, It is possible also to devise a method of drawing water from tanks and channels so as to ensure dependability and non-contamination all through the year.

Reduction of salaries

A loyal and efficient service is essential for the proper discharge of duties of Government and with contentment, there can be no loss or efficiency. The Government, therefore, fully realises the importance of maintaining proper standards of remuneration for the important services rendered by the servants of the Crown. All the same, it would be an utter failure of our duty by the people we shirk the task, however unpleasant, of adjusting the cost of the administration on the taxable capacity the people would be impossible with any sense of justice or of proportion to maintain the existing ratio between the earnings of most of the people who pay the taxes and the scale of pay that we disburse for maintaining the administration. Unless the people are made to live a better life the whole organisation of Government will soon break down. In the new political conditions we are in, the very contrast of the lives of the people and those of Government officials can not, last much later without creating dangerous bitterness. Responsible Government will not be possible for long under these conditions knowing the standard of life that 90 out of 100 people in the countryside have to live what I say in all earnestness. During the year 1933, revised scales of pay were framed by the then Government for various Provincial and Subordinate services. We consider that these revised scales are still too high and are easily capable of further reduction and that the revised scale should be framed in a system of graded cut on the present revised scales. It will be proposed that the salaries of Province and Subordinate services should undergo a cut grades from 2½ per cent to 30 per cent

It is our desire to all persons appointed on or after 1st April 1937 should come on the scales and the other members of the Provincial and Subordinate services while remaining on their own scales of pay in respect of the posts now held, them should on promotion to another service or post, enter on the new revised scale to be fixed for that service or post. We cannot reduce the salary of existing incumbents of offices without obtaining the sanction from Secretary of State for India for which we propose to apply. The Finance Department has been asked to present a detailed scheme on the basis of these and I hope that we should be able to enable to carry it out. These reductions may not yield much money but; if the cuts be only a gesture it is while and will help to create a new spirit of hope in the people for better distribution of the burdens of state upon the people of the land.

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Foremost among the things that the school of public service which the present Government represents wishes to achieve, is to make pure drinking water is available for the people of every village in our land. Not roads, not even literacy can possibly be a greater or more urgent need

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
Prime Minister

Tribute to Finance Department

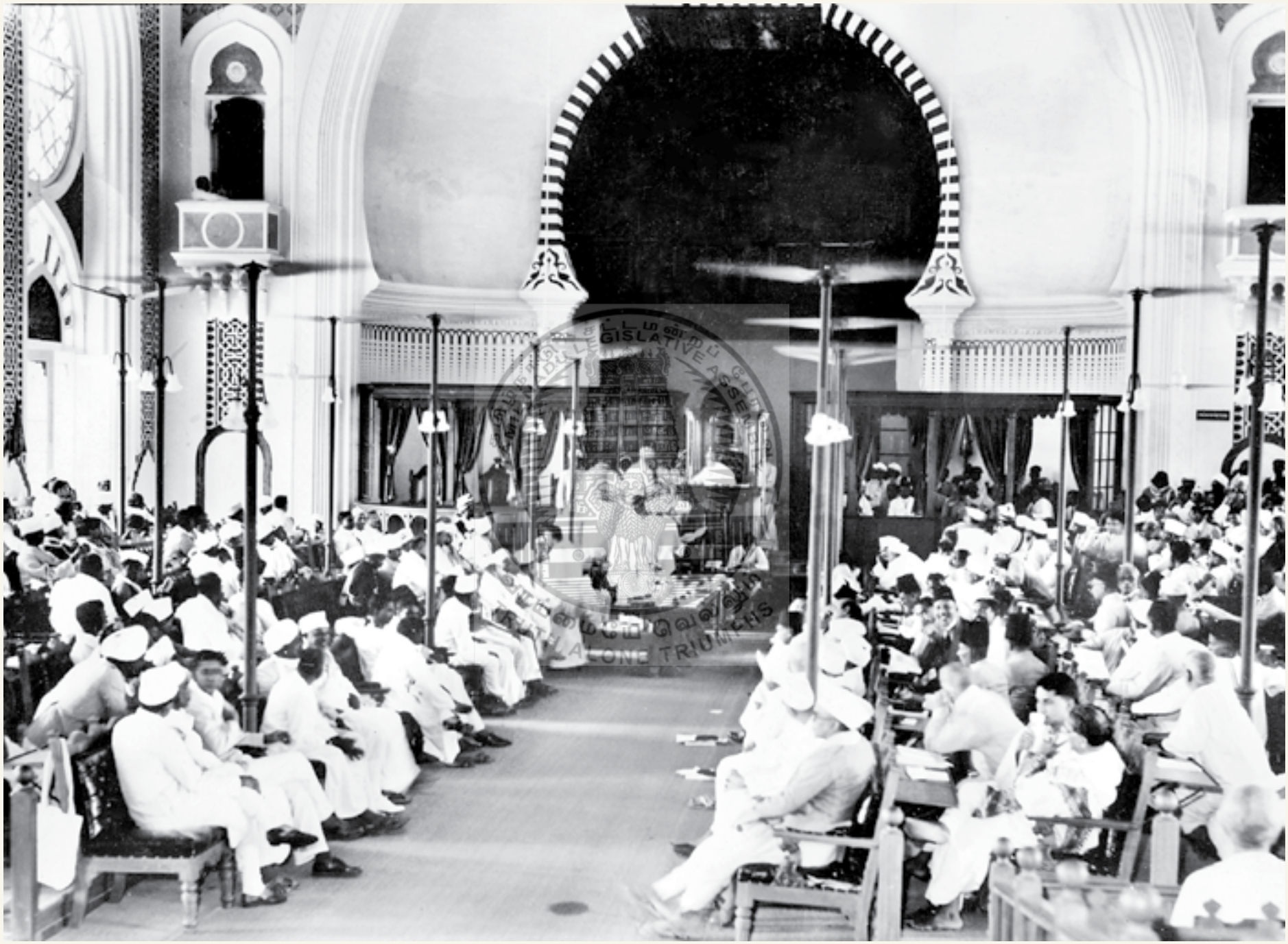
The work of the Finance Department has not been simple and easy this year - what with the change brought about by the new Constitution and a new kind of Ministers to deal with (Laughter). The Finance Department of Madras has always had a deserved reputation for the maintainence of a high standard of financial administration and adherence to the principles of financial rectitude. Even within the short period that I have to work with this Department is enough to be able to assure members of the House that our Finance Secretary and those working with have maintained the best tradition of their Department and are good and able men. (Applause).

Budget introduced in Council

The Premier took one hour to deliver his speech, which was heard clearly and distinctly in all parts of the House. Pin drop silence prevailed and the speech was listened to with rapt attention.

After question-time in the Madras Council, this afternoon, the Minister made his budget speech same as that made in the Assembly.

September 1, 1937



A view of the Madras Legislative Assembly on the day of swearing-in of members on July 14, 1937.

Assembly adopts Sales Tax Bill

The Premier expresses the hope that bulk of the apprehensions felt in business circles would soon clear and that they would find that the Bill was not a bad one.

The Assembly concluded the consideration of the Sales Tax Bill within two hours of the commencement of the proceedings yesterday [May 13].

Members of the Opposition, except four belonging to the European bloc, walked out at the very outset, declining to participate in the proceedings as a protest against the "unresponsive attitude of the Government."

Clause 3, the further consideration of which was left over from the previous night, and the subsequent clauses were all passed without any discussion.

The Premier [C. Rajagopalachari] spoke again at length during the third reading, justifying the measure and the scale of tax. He expressed the hope that bulk of the apprehensions felt in business circles would soon clear and that they would find that the Bill was not a bad one. The indirect effects of the measure, he hoped, would be to give a healthy tone to the business structure in the province.

Mr. G.H. Hodgson once again marked his protest on behalf of the European group, reiterating that there was no justification for the proposed tax at the present time, and that in any case, the Bill in the form it was put through, had been badly designed.

Opposition members walk out

Question time over, Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan sought permission to make a statement.

The Speaker allowing him to make the statement, Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan said:

"We regret very much that it is not possible for us to co-operate in the proceedings on the Bill at this stage because we are sorry that we have not been able to do much for the people whom we represent. Therefore, we are walking out without meaning any disrespect to the Chair."

Kumararaja Muthiah Chettiar, Leader of the Opposition, then made the following statement:

"It is with profound regret that we have, after mature consideration, come to the conclusion that no useful purpose will be served by our further taking part in the proceedings at this stage of the Bill in view of the attitude taken by the Government with regard to the various amendments. I assure you, Sir, that we do not mean any disrespect to the Chair. We do not mean any disrespect even to the Prime Minister or any individual member of the Government. Only we want to say definitely that we are completely and wholly dissatisfied with the manner in which the Bill, now before the House, is considered and voted upon. That is very clear from the attitude we are adopting. We very much regret that we have to take this course of action."

The Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Muslim League Group followed by members of their groups left the House, Messrs. M. C. Rajah, G. Krishna Rao, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari immediately following them.

Four members of the European group remained in their seats though in the course of the proceedings they indicated that they did not propose to move any of the amendments they had given notice of.

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It is with profound regret that we have, after mature consideration, come to the conclusion that no useful purpose will be served by our further taking part in the proceedings at this stage of the Bill in view of the attitude taken by the Government with regard to the various amendments. I assure you, Sir, that we do not mean any disrespect to the Chair.

KUMARARAJA MUTHIAH CHETTIAR
Leader of Opposition

All amendments having been disposed of, the Prime Minister moved that the Bill as amended be passed into law. Many comments had been made about the Bill most of which he had already dealt with. The substance of such criticisms was that the measure would affect trade and that the rate proposed was far too heavy. Trade might suffer in one of two ways; either through buying, selling and consumption being affected or through the trader himself being directly affected. Where the tax could not be shifted by the dealer but had to be borne from out of the profits, trade was affected in one way. If the tax led to diminution of consumption it affected trade the other way. Either of these results, if serious, would constitute a proper objection. But the present Bill was not likely to affect trade in either way.

It was not possible to undertake, the Prime Minister continued, fundamentally new policies without disturbing to some extent the existing organisation. It was only possible to limit the disturbance and moderate its extent by making adjustments. It was impossible altogether to escape disturbance of any kind and yet make fundamental changes in important matters. That was the only defence he would put forward and it was, he suggested, a complete defence.

"Just and proper" principles

The principles they were applying, the Prime Minister said, were just and proper and it was proper that all the consumers, the buyers, the traders and the merchants should readjust and share the burden which they had to bear in lieu of what they had agreed to give up. He did not think that they were going to suffer. If the argument was that they were going to get an enormous amount and that

they were simply taxing the people without any definite policy, he would say, again, though he had already referred to these points and replied to them, that the principles with reference to the taxation which they were trying to follow with necessary modifications in regard to their own environments and particular circumstances, were correct principles. It was not possible to levy a tax over and over again at varying rates each year.

Out of this controversy much heat had arisen, the Prime Minister said, but at the same time he was glad to note that two or three matters had emerged from this transaction of theirs. In the first place, it had brought together into the opposition not only in this House but outside in the country people of all communities. Whether the taxation proposals were good or bad, whether the rates were just or unjust, the incidental byproduct was a good and progressive gain to the country. Hitherto people were fighting in groups and communities and the heat produced by this friction had brought people together. The very spectacle before them by which businessmen of all communities had come together at least for the moment was a good sign. To that extent democracy had been helped by this proposal. He hoped that at least hereafter people would come together instead of dividing themselves on illusory differences and fanatical dogmas. Let them divide on matters of real importance, if necessarily they must. Even if this whole adventure failed, the Prime Minister said, he would be glad to have made this contribution.

"A right to ask people to pay"

"The Congress has proved that through its government," the Prime Minister, proceeding, said, "it can deliver the goods as was expected of them'. I do not think that any other Government or any other group of persons carrying on the Government, would give up the drink revenue. We felt it was our duty to do it and we did it. The people expected this government should take up the responsibility and we have done it. If we had not undertaken it, it would have been a dereliction of duty on our part. If we have done that, we have also the right to ask the people to pay for it. Take for instance, the Tobacco Tax. The tax was about to be passed but the past Government did not dare do it. I do not blame them. We cannot expect a pair of bullocks to pass by a horse or a horse to overtake an aeroplane. That is the essential difference between us and the past governments. It is not possible for any other Government to have the courage and to have the determination to ask the people to pay taxes. Having been trusted by the people and representing them in every way, we have a right to demand of them taxes.

"Speculation in trade will be reduced"

"In the trade organisation as we have in our country, we have not only ordinary and proper distributors, we have gamblers pure and simple, and we have speculators who are not gamblers pure and simple, but who have to take risks, properly and legitimately, who have to be cautious, who, it may be said, still speculate and who must be tolerated and have a place in business. We have these three groups of people. Now any tax like what we have proposed is bound, if it falls upon all these people, to create varying degrees of irritation and unpleasantness."

Proceeding, the Prime Minister said that the gambler was hitherto gambling and calling it sale. Now he was not free to gamble. If he did, he would have to pay a tax as on a real sale. Once upon a time when there was no stamp duty, people used to make all kinds of benami alienations. When every transaction had to be paid with stamps, there was a slight reduction in such benami alienations. Every gambler who gambled in "the name of sales would have to pay a tax. "If this tax", the Prime Minister added, "reduces that kind of gambling, this country need not be sorry. Neither the Opposition, inside this House nor outside, be sorry of gambling being reduced."

To-day the entire difference between the price of the producer and the price of the consumer, continued the Prime Minister, was divided among the distributors. In former days the distribution business was paying because transactions were kept secret and people made enormous profits without knowing how. To-day people knew all those things. There was a congestion in the business of intermediary distributors and they were undercutting one another. Was it a good thing? This tax would affect every one of them. Therefore, each one of them would consider whether it was worthwhile to go on in that fashion. If they considered it worthwhile and paid the tax there would be less and less of undercutting and more and more of business. He would, therefore, the Prime Minister concluded, commend the motion, that the Bill be passed into law, for the acceptance of the House.

"We have been told that we are making a mountain out of a molehill, because the tax is only one pie in the rupee. But, Sir, what we see is not one pie in the rupee, but half per cent on many crores of rupees; and this is no molehill, but a mountain which is none of our making.

HODGSON
Member of European group

G. H. Hodgson's statement

Mr. G. H. Hodgson, speaking next, said: Ten short weeks ago the hon. Prime Minister, in the course of his budget speech, first revealed to this House Government's intention of introducing a tax on the sale of goods, a tax of half per cent on turnover, described by him as of 'low incidence.' I shall refer later on to our opinion regarding the incidence of this tax.

My friend, Mr. Town, speaking a few days later in the general discussion on the Budget, spoke no more than the truth when he said that this announcement of the Prime Minister had caused very serious consternation in the minds of the business community in this Province. "Not", said Mr. Town, "the ordinary consternation that any taxing measure causes, but a very serious deep-rooted, consternation to serious-minded businessmen."

The publication of the Madras Sales Tax Bill a few days later did nothing to allay those fears. On the contrary, the Bill was greeted, as in our view it deserved to be greeted, by a wide-spread, spontaneous and unrehearsed agitation by the merchants and traders throughout this Province.

Quite apart from the merits of the tax itself, it was a bad Bill in its original form because it failed altogether to make plain what exactly the Government intended to tax, whom the Government intended to tax, and when the Government intended to tax them. The result was that businesses throughout the Province were quite unable to gauge the possible effect of the tax on their business.

Now Sir, it is, well known that the interests which I represent in this House do not support the Government's Prohibition policy and it follows therefrom, that we do not accept Government's contention that a measure of this kind is in any way necessary. I need not dilate upon this; but, Sir, it seems to have been completely overlooked by Government that it

is possible to oppose, as we do, the principle of Prohibition, and at the same time to accept the fact of Prohibition, and we on these benches have all along accepted the fact that this Government is committed to its Prohibition policy. It is therefore against that background and all its unfortunate implications that we have considered in very great detail the merits of this particular Bill. We have adopted that attitude from the very start and that being the case, our views and our votes on this measure are, or certainly should have been, considered, just as worthy of attention as those of any other member or group of members in this House.

We have been told that we are making a mountain out of a molehill, because the tax is only one pie in the rupee. But, Sir, what we see is not one pie in the rupee, but half per cent on many crores of rupees; and this is no molehill, but a mountain which is none of our making. It is said, too, that the producer will pay the tax or conversely that the consumer will pay it. Why then should the merchant worry? But we know that, these are dangerous half truths just as we know it would be inaccurate to say that the merchants will pay the whole of the tax; but whoever pays it, the merchant knows very well that he will suffer because his prosperity is so inextricably bound up with the prosperity of the people as a whole.

"Not an equitable measure"

It may be that the Madras Government in deciding originally on a tax of half per cent on turn over really did think that this was a tax of low incidence. But this is not a retail sales tax, nor is it a one point tax; it is a cumulative turnover tax which has been found by practically every country or State which has experience of sales taxes to be a thoroughly bad tax; and, with extremely few exceptions, they have been forced by bitter experience to revert to a one point tax. It is true that in a very few cases a wholesale tax has been retained, but this is invariably of extremely low incidence. The State of North Carolina is one of the few cases where a wholesale tax has been retained, and it is there one-twenty-fifth of one per cent only.

I am not among those who believe that a sales tax is an inherently bad tax. It can, as the hon. the Prime Minister has himself said, be a just tax. Of that there is no doubt in my mind. But to say that a sales tax can be a just tax is not to say that this Bill is either an equitable, sound or well designed measure.

We shall, therefore, oppose its being passed into law on the two main grounds that there is no justification for this tax at the present time, and that even if there were the Bill in its present form is a badly designed measure, Mr. Hodgson added.

Prime Minister's reply

The Prime Minister observed that he must express his "feelings of gratitude for the form in which Mr. Hodgson has put the opposition." The arguments that had been put forward, he said, amounted to saying that "Prohibition should be postponed or an extension of it should be postponed." Mr. Hodgson had put forward the plea in the form of an analogy that the repairs to the house should be postponed till the occupants were well enough to move out. He argued that the tax being a tax on sales, and trade being in its present condition, it was not a thing that should be levied now. So it should be put off. "I quite admit", the Prime Minister said; "that is the clear issue. I do not think, Sir, I will be wrong in putting my answer in this form, that on the whole, taking over the condition of trade into account, the manner in which we propose to deal with the situation in terms of this measure is not such as would make it difficult for trade to be carried on. It is true trade may not improve on account of this. But it is also true, we hope, that it will not be hurt by this tax."

Proceeding, the Prime Minister said that they had exempted three-fourths of the buying and selling in this country. The purchasing power of the people being what it was, their purchases would begin and end in shops with a turnover below ten thousand rupees.



I do not think, Sir, I will be wrong in putting my answer in this form, that on the whole, taking over the condition of trade into account, the manner in which we propose to deal with the situation in terms of this measure is not such as would make it difficult for trade to be carried on. It is true trade may not improve on account of this. But it is also true, we hope, that it will not be hurt by this tax

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
Prime Minister

Therefore, three-fourths of the buying and selling was not going to be touched by this measure as he visualised it.

A large number of the apprehensions–the bulk of them–that prevailed in business circles would soon clear away and they would find that this was not so bad a measure as they thought it was. He hoped, the Prime Minister went on, that the indirect effects of the measure would give a healthy tone to the business structure of the province. The Opposition might not agree, but if this turned out to be so, all would rejoice.

"If we do not do this", the Prime Minister said, "I see a picture before me which is full – more full than the picture with regard to trade which friends opposite painted – of difficulty. I see a picture of far greater harm done to the country than the harm which they say is going to be done to trade as a result of this tax. It will not be possible to carry on as we have been carrying on keeping the tax on the cultivators and on the poorest in the land who find it most difficult to bear." He would invite members to go near any drink shop and see for themselves. To him, Prohibition was a question of how drink affected poor people in the country and the bulk of them. It was a question of how it affected the workmen who made six or eight annas a day, who were recalcitrant sometimes and who struck work and created difficulties for members opposite. How did wage-earners who got ten or twelve annas a day through hard toil spend their earnings? If friends would only see! Not that they did not. They knew very well all about it but he would ask them to put themselves this question: Shall we save business from being "hurt" and ask the Government to carry on with the money taken out of these people? It appeared to him incontrovertible that it was quite a disgrace to run a Government on money obtained from these people. The evil was not merely a nuisance but a tragedy. To depend on the proceeds of the drink trade to run this Government and to say they should not reform the state of affairs because, for sooth, trade was in a bad way or would be "harmed", was a difficult proposition to accept. That was his only answer to all that had been said against the Bill.

Third reading passed

The motion that the Madras Sales Tax Bill be passed into law was put to the House and carried amidst Ministerialist cheers and applause from a large body of visitors in the gallery and outside the House.

May 14, 1939

Tamil Nadu shows the way

Revenue collections from Sales Tax and the subsequent commercial taxes have been making numerous welfare measures a reality in Tamil Nadu

In a pioneering move, the General Sales Tax was introduced in the erstwhile Madras Presidency (which encompassed many parts of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka too) from October 1, 1939, to offset the loss of revenue that arose on account of Prohibition. In the first six months, the move had fetched ₹4.39 crore. Since then, the idea of taxation gained wider acceptance. In 1957, the Central Sales Tax was introduced and two years later came the modified State Sales Tax. Tamil Nadu switched over to levying the Value Added Tax in January 2007 and exactly 10 and a half years later (July 1, 2017), the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was introduced all over the country, subsuming a large number of Central and State indirect taxes into a single tax.

Pattern of revenue through sales tax in select years

Year	Total Sales Tax revenue* (₹ in crore)	State's Own Tax Revenue (₹ in crore)	Share in SOTR (in %)
1960-61	19.12	42.22	45.29
1970-71	81.86	148.85	55.1
1980-81	456.88	639.06	71.49
1990-91	2,065.95	3,101.48	66.61
2000-01	8,197.15	12,040.74	68.08
2010-11*	28,614.23	46,156.91	61.99

Pattern of revenue post-GST (Goods & Sales Tax)

Year	Tax Revenue (₹ in crore)	State's Own Tax Revenue (₹ in crore)	Share in SOTR (in %)
2020-21	67,507.41	1,06,152.95	63.59
2022-23	95,594.61	1,50,222.75	63.64
2023-24	1,01,176.88	1,67,278.39	60.48

*The figures up to 2000-01 pertain to the sum of revenue from the Tamil Nadu General Sales Tax and Central Sales Tax. The figure for 2010-11 covers revenue from the Value Added Tax (VAT), with which the TNGST was largely subsumed since January 1, 2007.
SOTR - State's Own Tax Revenue
Source: Finance Department, Government of Tamil Nadu.

Assembly passes Indemnity Bill for temple entry

The Temple-Entry Authorisation and Indemnity Bill was passed by the Assembly last evening [August 5, 1939] without a dissentient voice and amidst loud cheering from the Ministerialists.

Every one of the amendments moved by Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, the only member on the Opposition side who suggested changes, was rejected. All the amendments moved by the Prime Minister (C. Rajagopalachari), with a view to improving the Bill, were agreed to with little discussion.

Opposition motions in the main fought to introduce the principle of referendum for the ascertainment of public opinion on the lines of the Malabar Temple-Entry Act. The Prime Minister, while not opposing the principle as such, contended that it was unnecessary to provide for the same method in more than one legislation. The principle of the vote would be applied wherever it was found necessary, he said. But the method of eliciting opinion by the Trustee or authority, through personal contacts among the people concerned, would, in his view, be generally more satisfactory, as it would eliminate the chances of confusion and conflict that might arise in the ballot procedure.

An agreement by understanding, he urged, was much better than determination of the issue by mechanical majorities. Moreover, it was not easy to stipulate what should constitute the deciding majority. The Prime Minister, however, assured the House that both methods would stand side by side and would be resorted to as necessitated by circumstances and that the Government might be trusted to act properly. The Prime Minister reiterated that no political motive was behind the measure. It was conceived in a highly religious spirit. He said the Government moved in the matter in a religious spirit, and it was in that spirit that he sought the co-operation of all in the eradication of a long-standing and obstinate custom.

Opposition leader's speech

When the discussion was resumed on the Temple-Entry Indemnity Bill, Kumararaja Muthiah Chettiar (Leader of Opposition) said all parties were interested in the emancipation of the depressed classes. But with regard to this particular move that had now been made in the cause of the depressed classes, there were one or two dangers and it was their duty to steer clear of them. But that should not be regarded as an attempt to put off temple-entry or any other reform. They wanted to see that all such reforms were carried out in a sincere manner, without disturbing social life as far as possible. The Speaker referred to the statement of Mr. M. C. Raja, issued in connection with the opening of a temple in Poonamallee, wherein he had said he "hated the drama enacted by some persons", and said temple-entry should not be achieved simply for the sake of advertisement. It ought to be remembered that methods pardonable in the political field should not be adopted in the religious field. Secondly, orthodoxy might not appeal to many; but all the same, convictions based on age-long customs ought to be respected.

Proceeding, Kumararaja Muthiah Chettiar said their enthusiasm in the cause of reform was one thing, and legislating for the reform was another. However much it might be claimed that the reform had come about voluntarily, however much it might be plain that public opinion had been growing in recent times in favour of temple-entry, it could not be said that the members of this House were being asked to legislate for that purpose. If law had not been evoked, they could praise those responsible for the reform as much as they liked. But they, as a legislative body, should not mix up their enthusiasm for reform with their duty as legislators. The position was that even before they were asked to legislate, an Ordinance had been promulgated. The members of this House had a right to express their views on the issue of the Ordinance. They might have registered their protest by a resolution. As the chance of moving the resolution would be the same as the chance of expressing opposition to this Bill, he thought he need not take up the time of the House by bringing forward a separate resolution, but could register his protest when speaking on the Bill.

The Speaker (Bulusu Sambamoorthy): A resolution would have made considerable difference.

There was, Kumararaja Muthiah Chettiar said, an attempt at moving a resolution or adjournment motion, but the motion was handed in late and so it could not be taken up. But even if it had been taken up there was, he feared, hardly any chance of its coming up for discussion, since the requisite number might not have been forthcoming, considering the overwhelming majority behind the Government. He would therefore request the Prime Minister to consider the protest he and those of his way of thinking made on the occasion. If he could not convey conviction to the Prime Minister through his protest, there was no chance either of carrying conviction to the "voting machine" behind him through a resolution or adjournment motion; in any case, he wished to make his protest.

The action of the Ministry in having recourse to an Ordinance, he went on, had definitely provoked public feeling, besides offending the feelings of the Opposition groups. Many people shouldered at the power exercised and the manner in which it was exercised (ironical laughter from the Treasury benches). The object in view could have been achieved, without any untoward result arising, by the ordinary legislative procedure. The spirit underlying the Ordinance was opposed to the "spirit of the Congress". There was hardly any justification for the Ordinance either on the ground of the occurrence having taken place

during the recess of the Assembly or as a test of the relationship between the Governor and the Ministry.

An interlude

Mr. Langley raised a point of order as to whether reference to the Governor was permissible,
Mr. Muthiah Chettiar: My friend, the member of the European Group, who claims to be the real Opposition when it suits him, might keep his patience a little bit. I know who is the real Opposition generally and who it is, when it is a matter of certain interests, such as for instance in connection with Prohibition.

The Speaker suggested that dissensions between groups in the House need not be ventilated in the House. (Laughter).

Mr. Muthiah Chettiar said he wished to refer not to the conduct of the Governor but to the fact that there was no need for such a test as the Prime Minister seemed to have in mind, knowing as they all did that the Governor was a trained parliamentarian, and a constitutional Governor.

The Prime Minister: It is not merely adverse comments but even flattering references that are barred. (Laughter).

Mr. Muthiah Chettiar said he referred to a ground put forward by the Prime Minister in one of his public speeches as a justification for issuing the Ordinance. The Prime Minister said that what might be a perfectly legitimate point of discussion in a political gathering might not necessarily be a point for proper discussion in the House.

Mr. Hameed Khan: Is it not open to any member of the House to quote any of the statements of any member or the Government?
The Speaker: You want a ruling on the matter? I shall give one. Such statements as are permissible will be allowed; such statements as are not permissible will not be allowed. (Laughter).

The Prime Minister: May I add that permissible statements should not be such as will induce members to go into irrelevant continuations? (Laughter).

Procedure not clearly defined

The Bill, Mr. Muthiah Chettiar said in conclusion, was defective in that it did not prescribe clearly the procedure to be followed in the matter of opening of temples to the excluded classes and the circumstances in which sanction would be granted. He hoped there would be no vagueness in the matter and that everything would be done to see to it that in ushering in the new era nothing would happen which would leave behind any bitterness.

Prime Minister's reply

The Prime Minister said that on the whole, the principle of the Bill had received what might be called support from all quarters, except the European group which had, it appeared, put upon itself a self-denying ordinance in expressing an independent and impartial opinion "in this quarrel".

Mr. Langley: I think I ought to explain that we, as a group, still rely on the famous words expressed by Queen Victoria in 1837 which we have never deviated from since that date.

The Speaker: That is the explanation on behalf of the European group.

The Prime Minister said that though he generally followed Mr. Langley with ease, on the present occasion he failed to understand the statement of that member. He took it to mean that that member believed that the Proclamation of Queen Victoria would protect him from any interference on the part of the Government in reference to the faiths and religious practices which he respected.

The Bill, the Prime Minister said, had received a fair amount of encouragement from the Hindu quarters, so to say, of the House. He was grateful for the very warm support which Mr. Raja in particular had given to the Bill, which he appreciated particularly in view of the "hot debate" that took place on a former occasion.

Opposition leader and Sanatanists

The Leader of the Opposition, the Prime Minister said, had shown a very commendable spirit of consideration for the feelings and opinions of those who might be called "Sanatanist" Hindus. He greatly appreciated this consideration on behalf of the Sanatanist community to which he claimed to belong. It was indeed a relieving feature that even under the new leadership of the Party to which the Leader of the Opposition belonged this delicate and considerate attitude towards Sanatanists had been vouch-safed in a responsible manner by the Leader of the Opposition. He hoped this attitude would obtain in all matters and in all ways. To-day it was not the Leader of the Opposition that "laid a heavy hand" on Sanatanist feeling and practices; it was he (the Prime Minister) and the Government of Madras. It was he (the Prime Minister) and the Government that were on their defence. It was no doubt easy for the Leader of the Opposition to play the rescuer; but might he suggest that the Leader of the Opposition was not very consistent? If only he (the Prime Minister) should carry out all that the Leader of the Opposition had advised him to, he was afraid he could not be as nice and delicate towards the Sanatanists as the Leader of the Opposition wanted. He should have been very grateful to the Leader of the Opposition if he had only indicated how they could achieve progress in a wholesale manner, such as the Leader of the Opposition suggested, and how they should deal with the Sanatanists.

"

They, as a legislative body, should not mix up their enthusiasm for reform with their duty as legislators. The position was that even before they were asked to legislate, an Ordinance had been promulgated. The members of this House had a right to express their views on the issue of the Ordinance

KUMARARAJA MUTHIAH CHETTIAR
Leader of Opposition

Why Ordinance was issued

Let there not be any confusion of arguments. The Ordinance was not a method through which temple-entry could be achieved and the Government did not want to seek that method to achieve the end. It was to fill up a temporary lacuna that the Ordinance was passed. It was not the Ordinance that was before the House but it was the Bill. He would admit that not having another opportunity to criticise the Government for passing such an Ordinance, the Leader of the Opposition had taken this opportunity to do so. It was stated that the justification he had made out for the Ordinance was not enough. The justification was that the House, if it was sitting, would support the principle embodied in the Bill. Because the House was not sitting and could not with expedition be made to sit to approve the principle, there was the necessity to pass an Ordinance. It was the duty of the Government, the Prime Minister said, to forestall the House and do what the House would have done. He would even say that It would have been a failure of duty if the Government had not issued that Ordinance. He would plead that the Ordinance was not only justifiable but the only thing that was to be expected of the Government under the circumstances.

Reformers' action defended

It would be quite a different matter if the argument was that the reformers should have waited and that they should not have put the Government to the necessity of issuing an Ordinance. A reform of this nature had been effected and when they were waiting tor Hindu opinion to assert itself on this matter, and when it had asserted in a way, then it was the duty of the Government to see that those who had effected the reform were not punished.

No reform in this world had been achieved except through some persons being punished as law-breakers in the first instance. Every religion had examples to prove that. Therefore, the Prime Minister said that there was nothing in what he had done to express an apology. He would plead with all the warmth at his command that no one should find fault with the reformers. They had only remedied a long-standing grievance and a wrong and it was not right for people to pick holes in their conduct. Nor was it right for the Leader of the Opposition to find fault with the Government for coming up with an Ordinance to support the reform and protect the reformers.

The government's majority

Reference had been made to the voting machinery of the Government. "It is a stale joke," the Prime Minister said, "to say that we have a large majority. We have not got a large majority for nothing. We have become a large majority by hard work, by sacrifice and by identifying ourselves with the people and to-day we are still in a large majority because people approve of our actions. If a large majority is prepared to support a measure, the Leader of the Opposition should feel that the country wants it and not simply explain it away by saying that we have gained the thing by a large majority. It is like saying, 'You are a strong man and therefore you are strong'. It is no use saying, 'You are strong man and I am a weak man and I cannot do anything'. A large majority is entitled to stand on its majority and it will be a failure of duty if the large majority which has been asked to do large things fails to do those large things in the manner it alone can do. This is my defence for the so-called 'voting machinery'."

The Prime Minister said the Leader of the Opposition and others who fought with him should understand that it was not an easy job to work this large majority. That was not a docile majority. The public were aware of the differences of opinion among the different groups in the large majority. The Leader of the Opposition and others received a certain amount of satisfaction from the fact that there was some friction in the machinery of this large majority. Even on this Bill, there were half-a-dozen opinions on this side of the House. Therefore, it was not simply a matter of "voting machinery", as the Leader of the Opposition seemed to imagine. It was really the will of the nation that had expressed itself in the form of a large majority in a House, which had been formed to represent, to some extent, the will of the nation.

Kumararaja Muthiah Chettiar, intervening, said his reference to the voting machinery was entirely in a different connection and not related to this Bill. He referred to that in connection with moving adjournment motions to express their protests. He said that the Prime Minister should convince him of the necessity for this Bill. He did not mean to refer to the voting machinery in the manner in which the Prime Minister had treated it.

The Prime Minister said that in a sense, he agreed with the Leader of the Opposition. The only justification for the Ordinance was the fact that the House would support a substantial measure in the same terms if it was brought before it.

Sanatanist legalism

The Prime Minister, continuing, said that Mr. V. V. Srinivasa lyengar was a very esteemable gentleman, a cultured gentleman and one who had correct views on most matters (Laughter). But in regard to matters of Hindu orthodoxy, he had been a consistent opponent of temple-entry. He was a liberal in other matters of orthodoxy, but in the matter of temple-entry, he had been opposing it ever since the matter was mooted by the speaker in 1932. What aroused him was the progress Mr. Srinivasa lyengar had made since then. In those days, his opposition was on the merits of the question; to-day his opposition was on the procedure that he (the Prime Minister) had followed. "That is to say, Sanatanism seems to be quite as alert in legalism as in Sastraic laws. Both seem to work hand in hand" (Laughter). After all, it was a very essential characteristic of the lawyer that he would stick to the decisions in law. The same spirit was behind the Sanatanist, who was after all a student of law. A Sanatanist dreaded any alteration in the law. He would say the change must be made by interpretation and not by direct alteration. "So the present attitude of Mr. Srinivasa lyengar does not surprise me. It is consistent with his double personality, a good Sanatanist and a very good lawyer, combined in one".

> **It is a stale joke to say that we have a large majority. We have not got a large majority for nothing. We have become a large majority by hard work, by sacrifice and by identifying ourselves with the people and to-day we are still in a large majority because people approve of our actions**
>
> **C. RAJAGOPALACHARI**
> **Prime Minister**

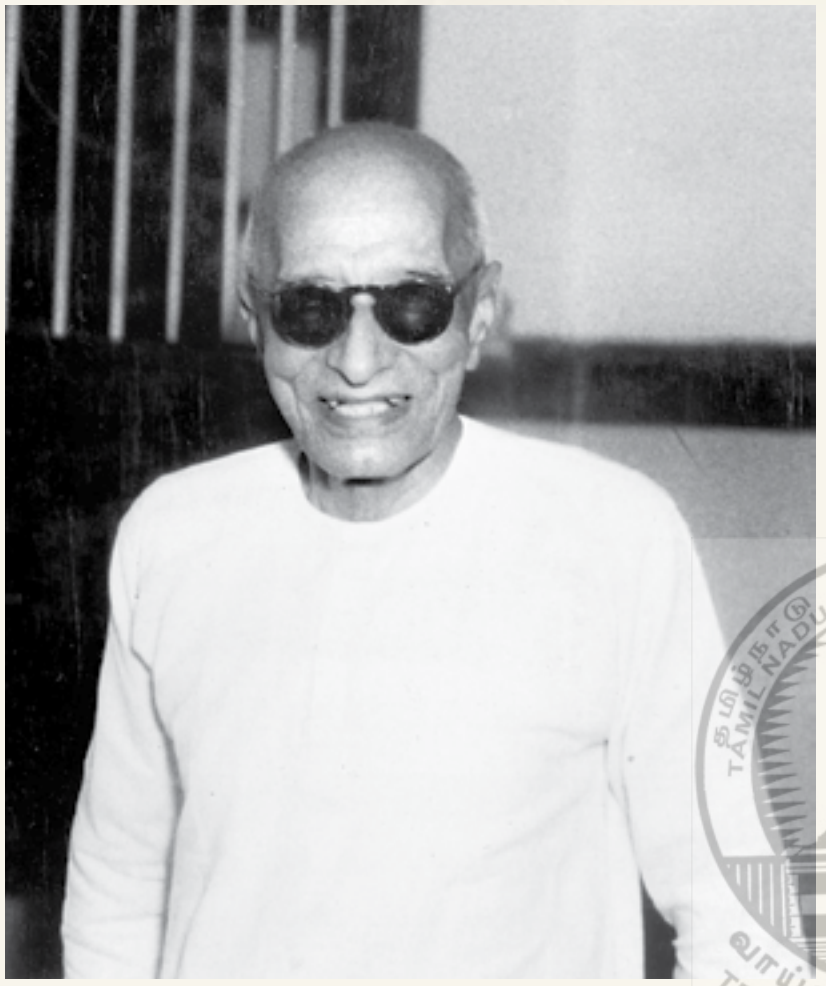
"Insinuating proposition"

It was stated by the Leader of the Opposition, the Prime Minister continued, that the present Bill discarded the system of ascertaining opinion by voting because the Government were anxious to get the indemnity through. It was a very "insinuating proposition" that had been made. The Prime Minister strongly repudiated the motive that had been attributed to him and said that "it is exceedingly surprising that so much experience of the ways and convictions and the manner of working of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition should have thought that in order to get the indemnity through, we gave up a very good thing, which otherwise appealed to us. Was it difficult to get the indemnity through?''

Kumararaja M. A. Muthiah Chettiar, intervening, said it was not difficult to get the Indemnity Bill through, but the Prime Minister wanted to justify it.

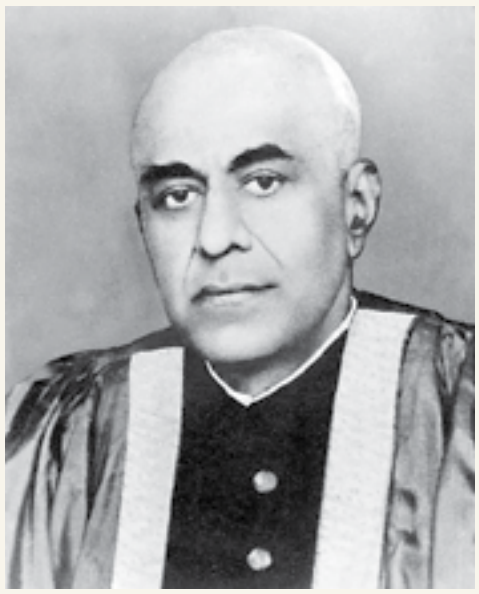
The Prime Minister stated that if the Leader of the Opposition imputed to him the motive of a continuous desire to justify the Bill, he could also attribute to him some common sense. How could he justify it, if he were moved by this unworthy motive? How could he bamboozle people for all time? It was wrong to imagine that he had been justifying the Indemnity Bill. There would have been no difficulty in adding a provision for the ascertaining of opinion by voting in this Bill. The Leader of the Opposition was thus entirely wrong in his presumption.

The Prime Minister thought that the Leader of the Opposition had been misled by the notion that he should find some wrong reason for any step the Government were taking. If he had searched for good reasons, there would













(From left top) Premier C. Rajagopalachari, an Opposition member T.T. Krishnamachari, the first nominated member from Scheduled Castes in the Madras Legislative Council M.C. Raja, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Kumararaja Muthiah Chettiar, and prominent activists of temple entry movement P. Kakkan and A. Vaidyanatha Iyer

TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS

not have been the necessity for attributing this patently wrong motive. It was because on merits they (the Government) were opposed to simply duplicating the method that had already been incorporated in the Malabar Temple-Entry Bill, that they went in for a supplementary method, an easier method, of getting round an obstinate custom. It was not as if they were unwilling to accept truth. It "would have been quite enough for the Leader of the Opposition to say that it would have been good to ascertain opinion by voting. It was unnecessary for him to find an unworthy reason for the Bill."

Was temple really deserted?

Proceeding, the Prime Minister said that Mr. Krishnamachari started the debate by criticising his speeches made on certain occasions elsewhere. It was open to Mr. Krishnamachari to have referred the speeches to him as reported in the Press and found out whether they were correct. But probably he had hardly time to do such a thing. It was pity that instead of dealing with the subject matter here and what he had said on the floor of the House, Mr. Krishnamachari wanted to rely on reports of what he had said elsewhere. His (the Prime Minister) views on the question were well known. Mr. Krishnamachari said he had also gone to Madura and visited the temple and that he did not find many people there. So he tried to draw the inference that the temple was deserted and wanted to advance that as an argument against the Bill. On the same day, he (the Prime Minister) had also been there. He had agreed to address three meetings and wanted that all people should gather there so that he could ascertain the opinion of the people. The Sanatanists had also convened a similar meeting and wanted all the opponent to temple-entry legislation to assemble there so that the Prime Minister might see for himself the volume of opposition against his Bill. So, if Mr. Krishnamachari took it into his head to go to the temple at that time and found a poor attendance, there was nothing surprising. "I do not say that it was not the right time for worship but it was a wrong time to take evidence" (Laughter). If, instead of trying to gather impressions inside the temple, Mr, Krishnamachari had gone round with the Prime Minister, then he would not have had occasion to refer to the reports, but would have been impressed with the reality of what he (the Premier) had said.

An offer

There might be a certain amount of desertion. The Prime Minister would not deny that. When a great change was made, when there was resentment against that change, and when that change had been made against the wishes of a section of people, then those people whose wishes had been flouted would certainly resent the change. He would not have respected them if they had not resented. So nobody need be surprised if there was a natural reaction in resentment and opposition. But let them hope that this thing would not go on for all time. That was the reason why he had been trying a different method from the method of taking opinion by votes. There would be more of faction and desertion if he had employed any other method. "If, however, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari could tell me that the Sanatanists Mr. N. Natesa Aiyar, and others, will agree and raise no difficulty whatever," declared the Prime Minister, "once it is found by vote that the majority of the worshippers are in favour of the throwing open of the temple to excluded classes, and if such a sporting offer is made on behalf of the Sanatanists, I am here to accept that method of ascertainment of local opinion. But I know Sanatanists well and the authorities on which they rely. It is open to Mr. Krishnamachari and other friends who take an intermediate and friendly position to persuade the Sanatanists to agree. Will the offer come from the Sankaracharya Mutt and Ahobilam Mutt? If it does, I am prepared to accept the amendment straight away. But it is not for us to try to ask them to do what they may consider to be impossible."

There might be a certain amount of desertion. The Prime Minister would not deny that. When a great change was made, when there was resentment against that change, and when that change had been made against the wishes of a section of people, then those people whose wishes had been flouted would certainly resent the change



Need for imaginative sympathy

Proceeding, the Prime Minister said Mr. Krishnamachari told them that he knew how to worship God in his own house. The speaker had known Mr. Krishnamachari's father. He was a perfect Sanatanist and it was not surprising that he had trained Mr. Krishnamachari at least to speak on behalf of the Sanatanists (Laughter). Mr. Krishnamachari had his family gods and he knew how to worship them. That was the position with the Sanatanists also who objected to the temple-entry. All of them could carry on the worship of the Gods in their own homes and could dispense with temples if they cared. Yet they did not give room in the temples for those who stood very much in need of those temples. There was no reason why they should stand in the way of throwing open temples, which after all signified a lower form of worship. And if they yet opposed, he might be permitted to say that it was only a "dog in the manger" policy. It was not enough to understand the situation. They must have the imagination to place themselves in the position of Harijans who swore by the same gods, followed the same customs, respected the same forms. They should not keep out of the temples those who derived so much consolation and joy therefrom, though they had done so for long. It was not a question of logic or law or trust, but was a matter of human feeling. It was not in a legalistic spirit that they must analyse the feelings of people in this matter. The Prime Minister, therefore, hoped that one day the Sanatanists would be "blessed with the imagination to feel that there was enough in Hinduism to allow these alterations."

An English precedent

The Prime Minister proceeded to say that Mr. Krishnamachari had spoken about infringing the Law of Trusts. It was not as if these temples were denominational temples belonging to different sects. The excluded people did offer worship in those temples from appointed places. In a few temples, they could go in only on stated days. It was not if these temples belonged to one class and did not belong to another. It was only that there were differences in the procedure laid down for various classes as to how they should worship. It was, therefore. wrong to imagine that there was any infringement of trust. Referring to the famous Church of Scotland case, where Parliament had to make an enactment in order to hand back the property to the majority, the Prime Minister said that what was sought to

be done now was the same. The Prime Minister also pointed out that the argument that indemnity could be given only where the act was committed bona fide was not also correct. It would then mean that the indemnity given was only a superfluity. The sovereign power of the Legislature could not be limited in regard to the alteration of the Trust law.

Local option not the only method

With regard to the other arguments advanced with reference to giving up democratic methods in the substance of the Bill, the Prime Minister said that there was some confusion in the matter and he was afraid that he was the cause of the confusion. Because he started in 1933 with the idea of a local option Bill for the opening of temples. It was now believed that that was the only democratic way of passing a temple entry legislation. They had passed the Prohibition Act. It was well-known that Prohibitionists all over the world imagined that the method of local option was the best method for doing away with drink. This method had been recommended by Liberals like Mr. Gokhale. But it did not mean that the local option method alone was the democratic way for Prohibition. Because he had put forward the local option method for temple entry, people were arguing to-day that it was the only democratic way. Local option should not be confused with democracy. The Government here were going through democratic methods. When the Prohibition Act was passed, did they take a mandate? The confusion in their thinking with regard to local option and democratic methods should be brushed aside.

Mr. Krishnamachari was here heard to exclaim "from the sublime to the ridiculous". The Prime Minister observed that the Hon. Member could explain when moving his amendments what exactly he meant by that expression. It was one thing to argue that in a matter of this kind they should take local option. It was one thing to argue that in a particular matter they must follow a particular method. But it was wrong to say that the whole of democracy was against it and that the wicked Prime Minister wanted to go against the principles of democracy. It was not a question of throwing democratic methods to the winds; it was a question of doing what was reasonable. It was again not a question of the Congress being against democracy. It was with a good reason that he had given the example of Prohibition when referring to the question of local option. The Prime Minister referred to an incident which occurred some years back and said that when he took a draft Bill for introducing Prohibition (the draft was in the same form in which the prohibition Act I had now been passed), to his long-time friend, the Rev. Mr. Anderson, the latter said that it was not right and that local option was the best method. He then argued that local option in the matter of Prohibition was not suited to India. In the same way he wished to point out that local option in the matter of temple entry would only create difficulties and it would be better if they could do without local option. But let this not be taken to mean that temples would be opened even when local opinion was against it. His point was that the method of ascertaining public opinion need not be by voting. The worship in the temple must be carried on and the Trustee must be in a position to judge whether such worship could be carried on even after the admission of Harijans. Therefore, the method now proposed was supplementary to the other and the argument of inconsistency did not really hold water.

Pledge to be redeemed

There seemed to be some confusion, the Prime Minister continued, in regard to the question of local option, democratic practice and mandates. The question was asked whether in the absence of a specific mandate, they were entitled to bring forward such legislation. "I say", the Prime Minister declared, "that the Congress is pledged to the removal of untouchability, root and branch. The Congress is pledged to the removal of untouchability, not only root and branch, but specifically to the removal of the bar in respect of temple entry. For, in 1932, a specific pledge was given by us, by the whole of the Hindu community and by Congressmen. It is on that pledge that the electoral machinery was altered and the machinery so altered was accepted and has become part of the constitution and we are bound by that pledge given on the 24th September 1932. What one is bound by is greater than what one has promised in an election manifesto. Long before we went to the electorate, we had been pledged inextricably to the removal of the bar in respect of temple entry, just as we were pledged to the removal of untouchability in whatever form it obtained. We might not be able to carry it out; but we were none the less bound to do all that we could. It is not the completed result that has to be shown; it is a bona fide attempt at performance that has to be shown. Can I plead that I need not introduce this measure or that for the removal of the bar in regard to the temple entry? I say, this Congress Government are entitled to bring this Bill and are bound to bring forward this Bill".

The way of doing the thing, the Prime Minister said, was a different matter from the principle of it, and it was for the House to think of the ways. The principle of the Bill was what the House had to decide on and he would say that the Government were entitled to bring this legislation without having to go to the electorate. "We were returned on this issue," he said. "The character of the Congress was understood thoroughly. That the removal of untouchability root and branch was of the character of the Congress was thoroughly understood. It was also clearly understood that the Congress was elected of that character."

August 5, 1939

"The Congress is pledged to the removal of untouchability, root and branch. The Congress is pledged to the removal of untouchability, not only root and branch, but specifically to the removal of the bar in respect of temple entry

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
Prime Minister

V.—THE MADRAS TEMPLE ENTRY AUTHORIZATION AND INDEMNITY BILL, 1939 (L.A. BILL No. 17 OF 1939), AS PASSED BY THE ASSEMBLY.

* THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR:—" Mr. President, I move—

*' that the Bill * to authorize and indemnify trustees, officers and other persons in respect of entry into and offer of*

worship in Hindu temples by certain classes of Hindus who by custom or usage are excluded from such entry and worship (L.A. Bill No. 17 of 1939), as passed by the Assembly, be taken into consideration at once.'

* THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR:—" Quite so and Mr. Ramalingam Chettiyar is a member of the Committee. I may go further and say that it is not because he has no power, it is not because there is the committee which has to consider all that; but it is because he is not a slave, he is not servile,

Extract of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly on the temple entry bill on August 7-8, 1939

[Sri C. Rajagopalachariar] [8th August 1939

but he acts according to his judgment and we allow him to act according to his judgment. I repeat my case for the Bill in answering the question. What is our position and what is our policy? It is this. It is a living thing that we see, not merely a vote to the worship in the temple. Now in order to keep the worship going, those persons who are immediately concerned and who are as important as the generality of the people around and those few persons who are concerned in the actual ceremonial and custody of the temple must first agree and co-operate. Otherwise, we won't get the living worship, but will get only the vote. Mere order and actual dismissal or suspension of persons do not amount to worship in the temple. That is not what we want. What is required is, the real initiative must come from the trustees and the persons nearest to the temple who will carry on the day-to-day work: they may have the courage, they may have the confidence and they can ascertain opinion; but they will not. All that is the preliminary requisite. In some cases it is available: in some not; but if in some cases it is available, the example will infect others and will spread. That is the principle of the Bill. At the same time if a trustee is willing and takes the initiative, he has also to ascertain opinion, because he cannot act safely and properly and successfully unless he senses public opinion around him. Apparently the Tirupati Commissioner has not reacted in that manner: so he has not said, 'Yes.' The other Commissioner reacted in the other way; so he did it. That is the principle of the Bill in effect. In fact, completely and in a very clear manner the question of the Leader of the Opposition has elicited the real principle and motive of the Bill, so to say, and has answered also the doubts and suspicions entertained in certain quarters.

"I submit, Sir, there is no question of compulsion here because we want to succeed in a good object in a successful and efficient manner; and we cannot do it by orders. The only thing is, whether to ascertain by voting or ascertain from the trustee how he feels about it and which is better. Both methods may be good; or in one place one method may be good and in another the other method may be good; we want to have both the weapons in our armoury; we do not wish the one to cancel the other. In actual practice if one is better than the other, the more effective will displace the less effective, not like the baser coin displacing the good one. Both methods may be equally useful and we want both side by side. I therefore commend the Bill to the House."

The motion was put and carried and the Bill was passed into law.

Temple entry legislation: Decide on intrinsic merits

It is with a feeling of surprise that one reads the views of two of our most respected countrymen, Sir (P.S.) Sivaswami Aiyar and Mr. T.R. Venkatarama Sastri, on the Temple-entry legislation.

The attitude of the orthodox school who oppose temple-entry on Sastric grounds and who do not countenance a referendum nor the fiat of a ruler who according to them is bound to uphold the eternal Dharma is perfectly intelligible whether one agrees with them or not and does not call for any special remarks.

On the main question of the desirability of permitting entry of the excluded classes into temples, Sir Sivaswami Aiyar and Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri are whole-heartedly in support of the reform and it is refreshing to note a good Sanskrit scholar like Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri stating that there is nothing in the Hindu Sastras or religion against temples being thrown open to the hitherto excluded classes. Indeed one could not have expected any difference of opinion from them, having regard to the enthusiastic reception accorded by them to the famous Temple-Entry Proclamation of Travancore [now called Thiruvananthapuram] . The extreme view that, from a legalistic point of view, it is better by a stroke of the pen to throw open temples without regard to local conditions or the classes affected by it in different parts of the country, may have the merit of logicality but does not deserve serious consideration by any one interested in the maintenance of Law and Order in the Presidency which is the primary concern of any Government. These two eminent lawyers supported the Temple-Entry Proclamation unreservedly and did not then take exception to it on the ground that there was no local referendum or even that the Legislative Assembly in Travancore was not consulted.

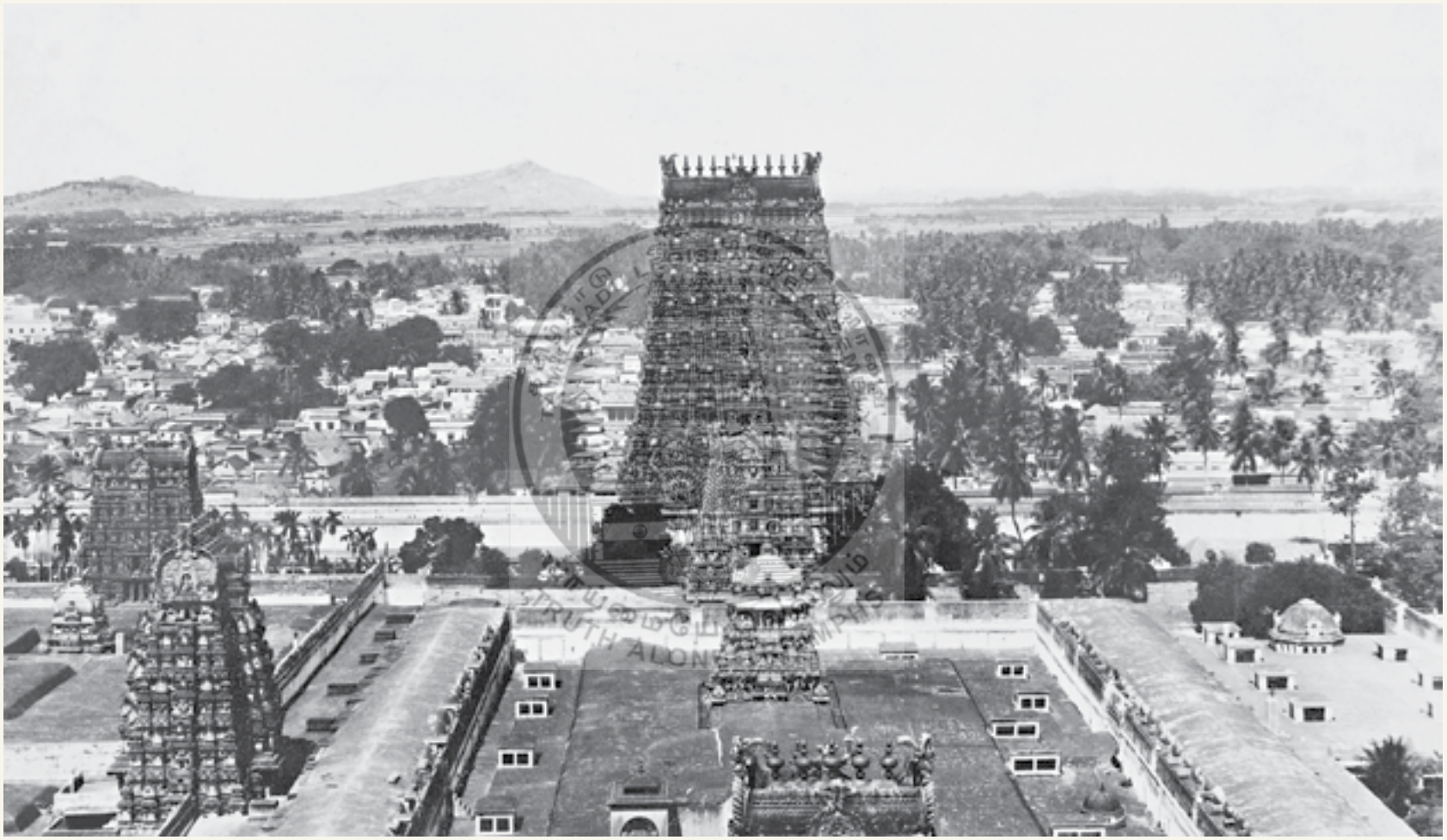
Cabinet's responsibility

If the leaders think that the proper procedure to be adopted in throwing open a temple in any particular locality is by the method of local referendum, it cannot be denied that the procedure was as much open to the Travancore Ruler as it is open to the Government of Madras and the Legislature here to adopt. To argue that the Travancore Ruler had the power to issue the proclamation can be no answer to the criticism, for subject to any special argument about the distribution of legislative power and so on, we have to proceed on the assumption that the provincial legislature has equally the power to throw open the temples to the classes hitherto excluded. The question of power belongs to the domain of constitutional law, and has no necessary relation to the propriety or the advisability of any particular method to be adopted to achieve a result considered to be laudable or desirable. If the power resides in the legislature, the responsible cabinet for the time being is in no way inferior to or different from that of a ruler of a Native State who on his own fiat, without reference to the will of the legislature or without going to the formality of consulting the opinion in any locality, issues a proclamation conceding a right of worship to all the Hindu public in all the temples of the State. In the case of a representative legislature and Responsible Government, there is at least the semblance of the majority party being pledged to a particular course of policy of the issue being before the country both before and after the elections and of the party being ultimately answerable to the people and the electorate at the polls during the next election. Again It is impossible to appreciate the enthusiasm of the two eminent lawyers for the procedure as to a local referendum in preference to the procedure of the Trustee or a committee sensing local opinion and then the local Government taking the responsibility of giving their sanction to the recommendation of the local committee of the trustees. A question like this will have to be decided on its intrinsic merits and not upon the point whether the Government, at one stage, showed a greater leaning for a referendum and whether the method now suggested was or was not present in the mind of the legislature at the time when the Malabar Temple-Entry Act was passed.

Referendum and democracy

It is common knowledge that some of the temples in this Presidency are really provincial and a local opinion, say in Tirupati or Rameswaram, would be much less satisfactory procedure than the Government responsible to the legislature, the accredited representatives of the people of this province holding themselves responsible for the act of opening the temples. Do these eminent lawyers want us seriously to believe that a local referendum at Tirupati or Rameswaram would be a more satisfactory solution of temple-entry in those places than the Government responsible to the legislature throwing open the temple on their own responsibility? A constitutional purist might even say that a local referendum on an issue like this is inconsistent with the principles of representative democracy. It is unnecessary to weary the reader by a discussion of the decisions of the highest tribunals which hold that a referendum is inconsistent with and is opposed to the principles of representative democracy.

August 5, 1939



A view of the Meenakshi temple in Madurai in October 1956.

SECTION 2

CONTINUING LEGACY: POST INDEPENDENCE



Chief Justice of Madras High Court Justice Fredrick William Gentle administering oath to Madras Governor Archibald Edward Nye at Fort St George on the morning of August 15, 1947.

When city revelled in day-long jubilation

In the run-up to "India's Tryst with Destiny" in 1947, the mood and atmosphere in Chennai, then called Madras, was one of celebration and joy, unlike in parts of the northern and eastern regions of the country which were being rocked by a massive migration of people and communal disturbances.

The city, which had seen numerous agitations against the British in the preceding years, started sporting a festive appearance a few days before the D-Day. At midnight of August 14, every man, woman and child, as reported by *The Hindu* on August 15, 1947, were overtaken by the zest of the occasion and "it is difficult to see even a single person without wearing a National Flag".

Government buildings, Central and Egmore railway stations, harbour and business places were all illuminated. Every vehicle, ranging from "luxurious private vehicles to outmoded automobiles to heavy handcarts to bullock carts," was washed and decorated.

The celebration, as pointed out by this newspaper 65 years ago, had a special significance for the city as it was here that the British power first established itself in the country.

When the transfer of power took place in New Delhi, thousands of Chennai residents were glued to community radio sets, listening to the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. "Hundreds marched on roads with torches and the tricolour, with drum and music, keeping up an unending refrain of 'Vande Mataram' and 'Mahatma Gandhi ki jai'."

The festive mood was not confined to certain sections of society. This newspaper, in its issue on August 17, recorded that "the scenes presented in the slums and hutments of 'Harijans' (the term then used for Dalits or members of the Scheduled Castes) were unprecedented. Long accumulated filth and dirt had been removed overnight, and the unmetalled "roads" swept clean of dust and dung".

The newspaper also said: "Muslim residents of the city cooperated freely in making the celebrations quite successful."

On August 15, a Friday, the swearing-in of Governor Archibald Nye and Prime Minister (which was how the post of Chief Minister was known then) O.P. Ramaswami Reddiar took place in the Cabinet Room at Fort St. George. The Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, Frederick Gentle, administered the oath of allegiance to the Governor, who later swore in the Ministers. The Governor hoisted the national flag on the Island Grounds.

Reddiar unfurled the flag at the Ripon Buildings, the headquarters of the Chennai Corporation.

The advent of freedom was not without a political controversy. Dravidar Kazhagam founder E.V. Ramaswami had called upon his followers to dissociate themselves from "the ceremonies and inspired jubilations". Yet, the city celebrated the day with vigour.

T. Ramakrishnan
August 15, 2012

The city, which had seen numerous agitations against the British in the preceding years, started sporting a festive appearance a few days before the D-Day. At midnight of August 14, every man, woman and child, as reported by The Hindu on August 15, 1947, were overtaken by the zest of the occasion and "it is difficult to see even a single person without wearing a National Flag"



Tribute to Mahatma Gandhi

Meeting to-day [September 15] for the first time after India's attainment of freedom, the Madras Legislative Assembly sent its greetings to Mahatma Gandhi and placed on record its appreciation of the services of all those who had sacrificed and suffered in freedom's cause. There was a fairly good attendance when the House met at 11 a.m. today, Mr. J. Sivashanmugam Pillai, Speaker, presiding. A big-size National Flag, presented to the Assembly by a citizen of Conjeevaram (Kancheepuram), was hung up in a glass frame over the Speaker's Chair. The Speaker extended to all members his greetings on the occasion of the first meeting held after India became free.

Dr. P. Subbarayan, who has been returned to the House from the Dharapuram Rural General Constituency, took his oath of allegiance to the new Constitution. He was followed by Mr. C. M. Kothari who has been elected to the House by the Planters Constituency and Mr. B.W. Batchelor, the new representative of European Commerce.

Rising soon after the new members were sworn in, Mr. Prakasam raised a point of order as to whether the Assembly was competent to proceed with its work in this session. He said he had raised the question before the Constituent Assembly whether the Provincial Legislatures could continue to function as in the past and whether it was not necessary that they should be treated as dissolved and fresh elections held. "We have now met here. Mr. Speaker", he added, "and I have raised this point so that you may decide it before we proceed further." The Speaker said that Mr. Prakasam gave notice of the objection only two or three minutes before he came to the House and he (the Speaker) had told him that he would take up the matter the next day. Accordingly, this point would be dealt with on Tuesday.

The Resolution

Dr. P. Subbarayan, Leader of the House, then moved the motion conveying the greetings of the House to Gandhiji, which was as follows: "This House sends its greetings to Mahatma Gandhi on the occasion of the attainment of Independence by India and places on record its appreciation of the services of all those who have suffered and sacrificed in the cause of Indian Freedom." Dr. Subbarayan said the Leader of the Opposition had agreed to second the resolution.

This, he said, showed that there was no difference of opinion in this matter. The Governor-General himself, speaking on the occasion of the handing over of power to the Constituent Assembly on August 15, described Mahatma Gandhi as the "Architect of India's freedom", which he certainly is (Cheers). Was there any other instance in history, Dr. Subbarayan asked, where a country attained freedom without revolution and bloodshed? Gandhiji devised a new technique for attainment of freedom, which was an example for the whole world. He also taught that there was no use arming oneself to the teeth and destroying people. On the other hand, one could, by one's own action, change the feelings of one's opponents to such an extent as to attain what one wanted by means of non-violent non-cooperation. It was to Gandhiji's credit that in spite of every obstacle placed in his way, he stood firm in his faith in Ahimsa and brought about the country's freedom. Gandhiji was even now trying through the same means to bring peace to this land. Unfortunately, peace had been disturbed because of conditions prevailing in North India, of which fortunately this part of the country was free. But our sympathies ought to go to our brethren in the north -- Hindu, Muslim and Sikh – for what was happening there. He hoped Gandhiji's message would go to their hearts and this fratricidal war would cease in the near future.

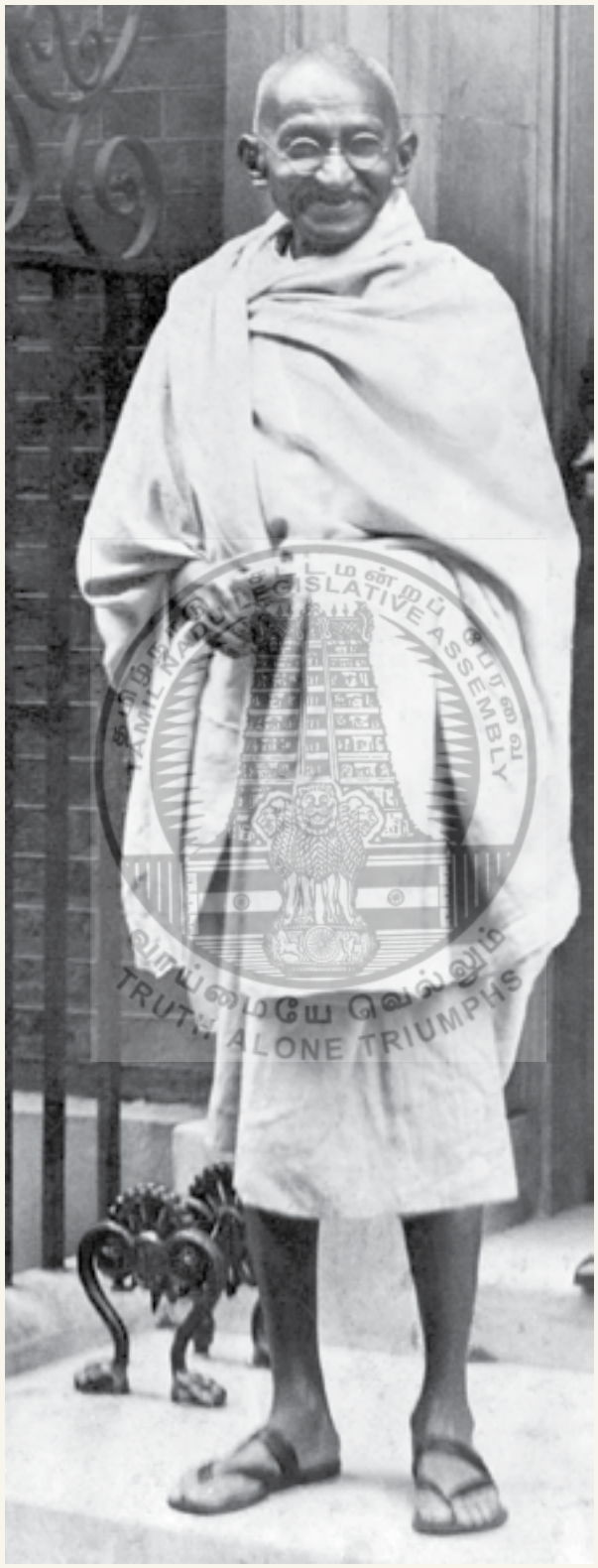
At the same time, Dr. Subbarayan said, we could not but remember those who had suffered and sacrificed in the cause of Indian freedom. They had done so in spite of the violence used against them. It might be that some broke into violence due to the weakness of human nature. But their leader had kept his faith firm and bright and it was that faith that made many people even to lay down their lives for freedom. He wished on this occasion to pay homage to all those who had suffered and sacrificed in the noble cause. They had set an enduring example for all the world.

Before concluding, Dr. Subbarayan paid a tribute to the English people. It was rarely, he said, a foreign Government handed over power as the British did in India. Mr. Attlee's name, he said, would go down in history along with those of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Lord Durham who had solved the constitutional problems of South Africa and Canada. He commended the resolution for the acceptance of the House.

Opposition leader's tribute

Mr. Mohammed Ismail Saheb, Leader of the Opposition, seconding the motion, said that Gandhiji was a historic figure and his actions and achievements had also become historic. It was he who introduced in modern times the principle of non-violence and passive resistance in the political field on a mass scale. That principle had infused courage and roused the consciousness of the people in this country at a time when those qualities were in dire need. Muslims too had taken a glorious part in the movement for freedom and they would continue to be in the vanguard in maintaining and preserving the freedom that had been won. Gandhiji had been a great advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity. Recently, he had brought about unity and harmony among the two communities in Calcutta and now he was trying his best to extend his efforts to other parts of the country which sorely and badly needed those efforts. "We deplore and condemn the happenings in those parts of the country and we hope fervently that the activities of Gandhiji would result in peace and harmony. We wish him all success and we send our good wishes to him in that noble deed."

Kumararaja Sir M. A. Muthiah Chettiar said this was a historic occasion in the parliamentary life of this country. This House had met under the auspices of various Governments; today, for the first



Mahatma Gandhi

time, this House was meeting under the auspices of its own Government. The one name that every one would remember in connection with the attainment of freedom by the country was that of Mahatma Gandhi. They would also remember on this occasion the services and sacrifices of the leaders and workers during the past 50 or 60 years. He was, therefore, glad that this motion had been brought forward to enable this House to pay its homage "to the great leader for the work he has done and the success he has attained." It was no wonder that the gospel of Gandhiji had spread rapidly throughout this country. Their satisfaction was that this gospel, though not practised in other parts of the world, was being appreciated by a large section of the people throughout the world.

Proceeding, Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar said their happiness on the occasion was a bit damped because the country had not been able to remain free from bloodshed. He hoped that through the efforts of Mahatma Gandhi, blood-shed in Northern India would cease in a short time. Gandhiji had worked a miracle in Calcutta and their prayers and good wishes went to Gandhiji in his work in other parts of the country. "We, in South India, have taken pride that Hindus, Muslims, Christians and all other classes of people have been living in this part of the country as friends and brethren. We wish that this message of good fellowship will spread all over India. This should not only remain a wish, but propaganda must be carried on in this field to help eminent men like Mahatma Gandhi in restoring peace and goodwill."

Need for ending violence

Mr. T. Prakasam observed that there could be no two opinions on this resolution. Their fight for freedom had been waged for 31 years under Gandhiji's leadership. No leader in the history of the world had carried on a struggle of this type, totally different in method, in manner and in conception from struggles witnessed in other parts of the world. At the same time, the freedom of the country had not been achieved by Gandhiji alone, but achieved with the help of millions of people who received his message as a message from God. It was also through their services, sacrifices and discipline that the present result had been achieved. He was glad that Mahatma Gandhi had survived the struggle and was able to see independence achieved. It might be called Dominion Status now, but if they bore the provisions of the Statute of Westminster in mind, they would see it was independence itself. It was, therefore, their duty on this occasion to convey their greetings to Mahatma


J. Sivashanmugam Pillai

Gandhi and to all those who had suffered in the cause. They should also remember those whose bodies had been reduced to ashes and whose blood had been shed in the cause of independence.

Proceeding, Mr. Prakasam said that at the end of a non-violent struggle, they found themselves in the thick of violence. Violence burst out in Bengal and violence burst out elsewhere. This apostle of non-violence marched out alone when violence broke out in Bengal with a view to impressing upon the people the need for stopping this senselessness. He had succeeded to some extent in Bengal. He did not say entirely, because this was not a thing which could be cured in a day or two. He hoped violence in Punjab would also subside soon, because violence was due to ignorance of a particularly bad type. All these days, South India alone had stood in marked relief in regard to maintenance of peace in the most troublous days, thanks to the co-operation of all people concerned. They could congratulate themselves on that and feel that, to that extent, they had taken the anxiety and burden off the shoulders of their leaders. Since the Prime Ministers of the two Dominions went to the Punjab, things had greatly been brought under control. But violence had spread to Delhi. He had, however, no doubt that things would become all right in a short time

Communist member's support

Mr. P. Venkateswaralu (Communist) associated himself with the resolution on behalf of his Party. He said that it was an expression not only of the opinion of the House, but of the nation as a whole. It was Mahatma Gandhi, who induced coinage into the hearts of the masses and had led defiance in a non-violent way. The people were proud to fight under his leadership. It was Mahatmaji who had shaped and moulded the nation during the last 30 years and more. Mahatmaji had given up his recent fast on the assurance that violence would not break out again, It was upto the people to see that communal strife was put an end to. There could be no salvation for the country unless communal struggles ceased. The speaker appealed to the leaders of all parties to follow the path of Mahatma Gandhi and endeavour to solve the communal struggle.

Mr. V. I. Muniswami Pillai said that he considered it a great privilege to associate himself with the resolution. They were now paying a tribute to a great 'avatar.' The elevation of the underdog and the removal of untouchability were the main items of his work. Mahatmaji had inspired a feeling among the Caste-Hindus that the so-called low castes must be lifted up. Then only could they be proud of the fact that India had attained independence. It was right and proper on this occasion to pay a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi who had been the torch-bearer of the freedom movement in this country. At the same time, it was their duty to think of the thousands of martyrs who had shed their lives for attaining freedom.

The Speaker, in putting the resolution to the House, associated himself with the sentiments expressed by the members and prayed that long life and prosperity be vouchsafed to Mahatmaji for continuing his great humanitarian work.

The resolution was unanimously passed by the House. Dr. P. Subbarayan moved that the Rules of the Assembly in force before August 15, 1947, be adopted as Rules of the House to the extent that they were not repugnant to the provisions of the Indian Independence Act as also the orders passed thereunder.

The motion was accepted.

September 15, 1947

Devadasi Bill goes through Assembly

Four Bills, including the legislation to prohibit the dedication of women as Devadasis, sponsored by the Home Minister [P. Subbarayan] were disposed of in the Madras Legislative Assembly to-day [November 26] after question-time.

The first item on the agenda was a motion to amend Schedules II and III to the Madras Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1931. Mr. Daniel Thomas, [Minister for Prohibition] moving that the draft rules proposed to be made by the Government be approved, said they related to the taxation of certain types of motor vehicles and rules were in fact already in force. But those rules were made by the Governor of Madras under the Section 93 regime. Unless re-enacted, they would cease to be in force after April 30, 1948. It was, therefore, expedient for the House to make those rules permanent.

Mr. P. Natesan desired the Minister to explain further the communique relating to the cut in petrol ration. He also wanted to know why petrol coupon-holders had to go to the police for re-validating them, what were the instructions to the police, he asked, and what was the basis on which the petrol ration was to be cut? What class of people were to suffer on this account and would public utility concerns have any priority over the ordinary public? To entrust the whole work to the police might not be a satisfactory arrangement, as people were hitherto accustomed to going to the Area Rationing Officers for their petrol ration. It was, therefore, necessary to amplify the press communique on the subject.

Mr. Daniel Thomas suggested that the question of petrol ration might be raised through a short-notice question. The motion was then carried and the rules were approved. Mr. Daniel Thomas next moved that a draft rule under Sub-Section (1) of Section 17 of the Madras Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1931, amending Schedule II to the said Act, be approved.

The rule in question provided for the levy of a quarterly tax of Rs.25 on Dot motor cycle trucks fitted with pneumatic tyres not exceeding 650 lbs. laden weight, and Rs.32.60 for the same type of vehicles not fitted with pneumatic tyres. The Minister explained that this was a new rule intended to tax a new type of vehicle that had been put on the road, namely a motor-cycle with an attachment for transporting luggage. The House accepted the motion and approved the draft rule.

Probation officers

Mr. K. Madhava Menon, Minister for Agriculture, then introduced the Madras Probation of Offenders (Amendment) Bill, 1947, and moved that the same be taken into consideration at once. Explaining the object of the Bill, the Minister said that in April 1946, the Government provincialised the posts of Probation Officers appointed under the Madras Probation of Offenders Act, 1936, and ordered that the Chief Probation Officer should be included in the provincial service and appointed by themselves and that District Probation Officers should be included in a subordinate service and be appointed by the Inspector-General of Prisons. When passing the order, the Government had overlooked the provision in the Act which required that all appointments should be made by the Government.

Efforts at this legislation [the Bill to prevent Dedication of Women as Devadasis] had begun as early as 1927. During the years that had elapsed, the public had had opportunities of saying what they felt in the matter. The report of the Select Committee, P. Subbarayan was sure, was acceptable to all members and he urged the House to take the measure into consideration and pass it



In pursuance of the Government order, some District Probation Officers had been appointed by the Inspector-General of Police. It had, therefore, become necessary to amend the section so as to enable a person authorised by the Government to appoint District Probation Officers and also to validate all appointments already made by the Inspector-General of Prisons. Mr. M. A. Salim said that the appointments should not be left to the discretion of an individual officer, but should be vested in the Public Services Commission.

Mr. Madhava Menon pointed out that the wording of the Bill would enable the Public Services Commission also to make the appointments when authorised to do so by the Government. The Government would give due consideration to the point raised by the member.

The motion that the Bill be taken into consideration was passed and the Bill was taken up for consideration clause by clause.

Clause 2, which provided for the appointment of a Probation Officer by the Provincial Government or a person authorised by them, and Clause 3, which provided for validating all appointments made before the commencement of this Act, were approved by the House without discussion, as also Clause 1 giving the short title and the Preamble.

Mr. Madhava Menon then moved that the Bill be passed into law, and the motion was carried.

Amendment to Opium Act

Mr. Daniel Thomas, Minister for Prohibition, next introduced the Opium and Dangerous Drugs (Madras Amendment) Bill, 1947, and moved that the same be taken into consideration at once. He explained that Section 14 of the Opium Act and Section 23 (1) of the Dangerous Drugs Act empowered the officers of the Excise, Police, Customs, Salt, Opium or Revenue Department to conduct searches in buildings, vessels, or enclosed places for opium and other dangerous drugs. It was now proposed to empower the officers of the Prohibition Department also to exercise those powers.

Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan enquired when a Bill to amend the Prohibition Act to make opium-eaters punishable would be brought by the Minister. Mr. Daniel Thomas said that opium did not stand on the same footing as liquor. The motion to take the Bill into consideration was carried and the two clauses providing for the change mentioned and the preamble of the Bill were passed without discussion. The Minister for Prohibition next moved that the Bill be passed into law. The motion was also carried without any debate.

Mr. Daniel Thomas next introduced the Madras Prohibition (Temporary Amendment) Act, 1947, and moved that the same be taken into consideration at once. Explaining the scope of the Bill, he said that the Government storehouse, where ganja and bhang were stored and issued to licensed vendors, was situated in Vetapalem in Guntur district. The district had gone dry now. As the Government intended to extend Prohibition throughout the Province, the need for the storehouse would shortly disappear. It was considered not worthwhile now to shift the storehouse to some other place for a short period. The Bill sought to make the retention of the storehouse at Vetapalem permissible. The motion to take the Bill into consideration was passed and the two clauses of the Bill were approved by the House. The motion that the Bill be passed into law was also carried without debate.

Suppression of immoral traffic

Mr. K. Madhava Menon, Minister for Agriculture, presented the report of the Joint Select Committee on the Madras Suppression of Immoral Traffic (Amendment) Bill, 1847, and moved that the Bill, as reported by the Joint Select Committee, be taken into consideration.

The main purpose of the Bill was to increase the maximum period of imprisonment prescribed by Section 12 of the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act for solicitation by a woman



Muthulakshmi Reddi

in a street or public place from two months to one year. The other provision of the Bill was to empower a Magistrate to commit a woman found guilty under Section 12 of the Act for detention in a vigilance home for a period of not less than two years, but not exceeding five years.

Mr. Madhava Menon pointed out that the only change made by the Joint Select Committee was to reduce the age-limit of a woman to be committed to a vigilance home from 35 to 30.

Mr. Brahmananda Reddi enquired why the woman alone should be punished and not the man and the Minister said that it was an interesting point, but beyond the scope of the present Bill. It was for the Legislature to decide whether a man going to a prostitute should also be punished. The motion for taking the Bill into consideration was carried and all the five clauses of the Bill and the preamble were approved by the House without discussion. The Minister next moved that the Bill be passed into law.

Begum Amiruddin congratulated the Government on bringing forward this legislation and said that they should see that one law for man and another law for woman did not obtain. The member also drew attention to the early need for provincialising the Madras Vigilance Association. She also urged the appointment of women police officers for tackling this problem.

Mr. K. Madhava Menon said that he was glad that the lady members of the House had approved the proposal to extend the period of detention. The subject of provincialising the Vigilance Association was already under consideration and considerable progress had been made in that direction. The main difficulty was accommodation, but he was sure that the Association would be taken over by the Government very soon. He also hoped that the suggestion for the appointment of women police officers would be taken into consideration by the Minister concerned. The motion that the Bill be passed into law was put to the House and carried.

Dedication of Devadasis

Dr. P. Subbarayan then presented the report of the Select Committee on the Bill to prevent Dedication of Women as Devadasis and moved that it be taken into consideration. The Bill, he said, had had a rather chequered career and those who had been in charge of it had also met with untoward accidents. He trusted that a similar accident would not occur again in the present case (Laughter). Efforts at this legislation, he said, had begun as early as 1927. During the years that had elapsed, the public had had opportunities of saying what they felt in the matter. The report of the Select Committee, he was sure, was acceptable to all members and he urged the House to take the measure into consideration and pass it.

Begum Amiruddin congratulated the Government on undertaking this wholesome piece of legislation and paid a tribute to

(4) THE MADRAS DEVADASIS (PREVENTION OF DEDICATION) BILL, 1947 (L.A. BILL NO. 21 OF 1947).

THE HON. DR. P. SUBBARAYAN :—" I move, Sir—

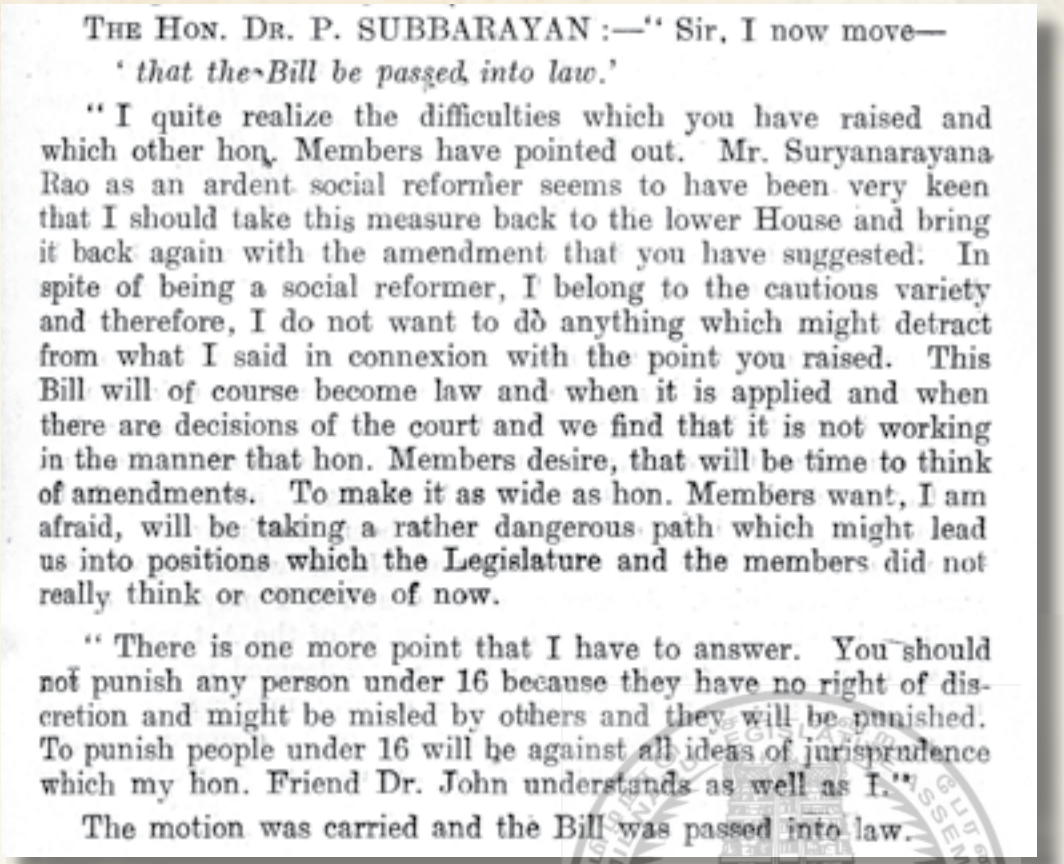
' that the Madras Devadasis (Prevention of Dedication) Bill,[a] 1947 (*L.A. Bill No.* 21 *of* 1947) *as passed by the Legislative Assembly be taken into consideration at once.'*

" Sir, this legislation has a long history behind it. It was in the year 1928 that my friend, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, introduced a measure of this kind, but as I said in the other House,

this Bill has had a rather chequered career, because it has always been usual for something to happen soon after the introduction of this measure. Then came Gandhiji's arrest after the introduction of this Bill and Dr. Muthulakshmi who felt keenly on the way the Government had acted, resigned her membership of the Legislative Council and a difficulty arose and the Bill lapsed. The question was not thought of till the new Congress Ministry came into being in the year 1937, when through the efforts of Dr. Muthulakshmi, who was naturally keen on this measure—and she had the support of the community behind it for passing such a measure—had this Bill introduced by Mrs. Ammanna Raja and this again unfortunately met with the same fate, because after the Bill had been before the Select Committee, and the Select Committee of which I was the Chairman had reported, came the Second World War and the treatment of India by His Majesty's Government which made the Congress Ministry quit office. So, it had to wait till again it was taken over by the present Government and introduced into the Legislative Assembly but fortunately, it seems to have a better course than the other two measures had. I am here to pay my tribute to Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi for the incessant efforts she has made and for the persistence with which she has tried to get this measure passed. She has had conferences of these communities and they have welcomed that as a whole.

" Sir, there is another measure which has been incorporated in this and that is the Bill given notice of by Srimathi Sitamahalakshmamma in the Legislative Assembly with regard to a practice that exists in the Circars, known as Bogum-melam. That has also been introduced into this measure to see that this measure applies not only to the south but also to the Circars and other places where this practice is prevailing. It is a comprehensive measure and I think it will include what Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi had in mind at the time she introduced her measure. At the same time the Government have taken care to see that the advancement of the art in which the Government are as much interested as the people, is not affected by this measure. So, amateur performance of Bharata Natyam and performances of people of this art are not prevented by this measure."

Extract of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly on The Madras Devadasis (Prevention of Dedication) bill passed on December 5, 1947



THE HON. DR. P. SUBBARAYAN :—" Sir, I now move—

' that the Bill be passed into law.'

" I quite realize the difficulties which you have raised and which other hon. Members have pointed out. Mr. Suryanarayana Rao as an ardent social reformer seems to have been very keen that I should take this measure back to the lower House and bring it back again with the amendment that you have suggested. In spite of being a social reformer, I belong to the cautious variety and therefore, I do not want to do anything which might detract from what I said in connexion with the point you raised. This Bill will of course become law and when it is applied and when there are decisions of the court and we find that it is not working in the manner that hon. Members desire, that will be time to think of amendments. To make it as wide as hon. Members want, I am afraid, will be taking a rather dangerous path which might lead us into positions which the Legislature and the members did not really think or conceive of now.

" There is one more point that I have to answer. You should not punish any person under 16 because they have no right of discretion and might be misled by others and they will be punished. To punish people under 16 will be against all ideas of jurisprudence which my hon. Friend Dr. John understands as well as I."

The motion was carried and the Bill was passed into law.

Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi's early efforts at such legislation 20 years ago.

Srimati Sitamahalakshmamma said that the evil was rampant in Andhradesa and it was high time that young women of the communities concerned were saved from this practice and enabled to enter into proper wedlock and lead honourable lives.

Mrs. Lakshmi Sankara Aiyar and Srimati Anjalai Ammal supported the Bill.

Mr. P. Natesan said that much time seemed to be spent over a matter affecting a very small section of the people, at a time when the evil itself was rapidly fading out. If these nautch parties were objected to as tending to immorality, what could one say about high-class women and girls coming on the stage and dancing, in the name of art, almost nude? The evil seemed to have disappeared from amidst the so-called Devadasi community, but threatened to invade even respectable households. After all, legislation could not effect the reform desired, but only right education and healthy public opinion.

Mr. P. Venkateswaralu supported the Bill and said that "khasas" maintained by zamindars for this purpose should be put an end to.

Mr. R. V. Swaminathan supported the Bill.

Dr. P. Subbarayan, replying to the debate, said that this measure was long over-due and Mr. Natesan was wrong in thinking that it was a "hastily conceived legislation." The Province owed a great deal to Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, who had done much for nearly a quarter of a century for eradicating this evil. Even during the last Congress Ministry, the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly, Mrs. Ammanna Raja, had introduced a similar measure. Mr. Natesan was rather "flippant" in his remarks. There were many amateurs, Dr. Subbarayan stated, who had cultivated the art of dancing and especially Bharatanatya. The Tamilians were a cultured race and had developed the arts of music, painting and dancing to a large extent. These must continue to be developed at the present time also and institutions like the Kalakshetra at Adyar were doing excellent work in this field. They should not do anything to impede the development of these arts. The amendment, given notice of by Srimathi Sitamahalakshmamma, was not at all necessary. In the working of the measure, she would find that what she wanted to provide had been provided for. The Government did not want to encourage prostitution in any manner. But, at the same time, they had got to see that they did not entrench upon the right of the people to develop dancing.

Proceeding, Dr. Subbarayan stated that the Bill affected every community who practised prostitution, and it was not necessary to give an exhaustive list of all the affected communities.

The motion that the Bill be taken Into consideration was passed. After the Bill had been passed clause by clause, Dr. Subbarayan moved that the Bill be passed into law.

Mr. M. A. Salam said that the Andhras also had developed the art of dancing and instanced the case of Kuchipudi dances. Dr. Subbarayan stated that he did not say that the Andhras were backward and did not make any comparisons. He merely referred to the development of the art in Tamil Nadu. The motion that the Bill be passed into law was adopted.

Women's right to property

The Speaker announced that the House would adjourn for the day and meet again on Thursday at 11 a.m. He also announced that the House would sit only in the forenoon to-morrow on account of Krithikai.

Dr. Subbarayan stated that the Madras Hindu Women's Rights to Property (Extension to Agricultural Land) Bill, which was next on the agenda, had to be gone into in more detail in view of the amendments given notice of by some members. He would make the motion tomorrow.

The Minister added that he had given notice of a motion that they transact Government business to-morrow. It was the usual practice in the House of Commons that if the Government had certain legislation on hand, they could make such motions and it was usual that such motions were agreed to because the Government had the majority.

The House adjourned to meet again tomorrow at 11 a.m.

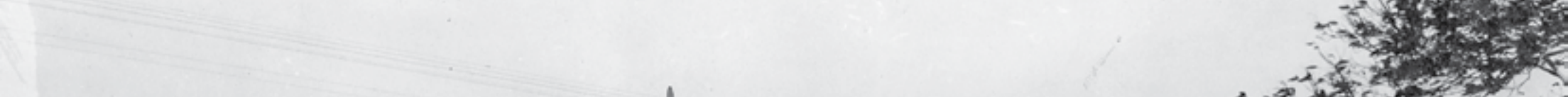
Bills passed by council

Earlier during the proceedings, the Speaker announced that he had received messages from the President of the Madras Legislative Council intimating that the Council had passed without any amendment the following Bills passed by the Assembly and transmitted to the Council. The Madras Betting Tax (Amendment) Bill; The Madras Abkari (Amendment) Bill; The Madras Prohibition (Amendment) Bill; The Madras Municipal and Local Boards (Amendment) Bill; The Madras Places of Public Resort (Amendment) Bill; The Madras Shops and Establishments Bill; and The Madras Non-Power Factories Bill.

November 27, 1947



Governor-General C. Rajagopalachari and Madras Governor Archibald Edward Nye seen along with other leaders after unveiling Mahatma Gandhi's portrait at the Assembly on August 25, 1948.



A view of the Madras Assembly building on Wallajah road in Madras in February 1956.

Assembly gets new building

The new building constructed in the Government Estate, Mount Road, to house the expanded Legislative Assembly of Madras elected under the new Constitution, was declared open on the evening of May 2 by Governor Mr. Sri Prakasa.

Mr. Sri Prakasa pointed out that they in India who had been greatly influenced by Western thought by close association for 200 years with the British people as their rulers could have the buildings and seating arrangements in the Legislatures, the system of election and party groupings on the model of the British. "But," he declared, "unless we have also the temperament of the British and appreciate the approach they make to public problems and the manner in which they conduct themselves towards one another in victory and in defeat, we cannot really be successful in working the institutions we copy from them."

He expressed confidence that Madras, which had given to them so many eminent constitutional lawyers and administrators during the past century and more as democracy had slowly developed in the land, would succeed in making its Legislature a model for the rest of the country.

Madras, it may be mentioned, can claim to be the first State in the Indian Union to provide a new building for housing its large Legislative Assembly elected under adult suffrage. Some of the other States, it is

learnt, have asked for details from the Madras Government about the plan and design of this building.

The construction of a new building to house the Assembly has been necessitated, as the existing Chamber in the Secretariat is not spacious enough to provide accommodation for 375 members. The work began during 1950. The total cost of the building with equipment is about Rs. 10.5 lakhs, of which a sum of Rs. 3 5 lakhs has been spent on the sound reinforcement system and furniture.

On arrival, the Governor, who was accompanied by Mr. H. Sambamurti, Secretary, was received by Mr. K. Ramunni Menon, Chief Secretary, and Mr. T. S. Venkataraman, Chief Engineer, P.W.D. The latter introduced to Mr. Sri Prakasa the officers of his Department, the Architect, and the contractors who were connected with the construction of the building. The Governor formally declared open the building by cutting a ribbon at the main entrance on the northern side.

The function was held in the new Chamber which was filled to capacity. The invitees included the Ministers. members of Parliament (elected from this State), the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council, Mr. C.H. Sibghathullah, Mayor of Madras, Dr. P. Subbarayan, President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, and Secretaries; and Heads of Departments of Government. A large gathering witnessed the function, from the visitors' galleries which command a fine view of the Chamber.

On the Speaker's dais, along with the Governor, were seated Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Chief Minister, and Mr. P. T. Rajan, provisional Speaker of the Assembly, besides the Chief Secretary, the Public Works Secretary, and the Chief Engineers for P. W. D., Irrigation, and Public Health.

Mr. Venkataraman, Chief Engineer, P.W.D., requested His Excellency to open the new building.

Sri Prakasa's speech

Declaring open the building, the Governor said: ''Colleagues and Friends, – It is Indeed a high privilege that it has pleased you to give me, by inviting me to be present on this auspicious occasion and formally declare open the buildings erected to house the new Legislative Assembly. This ceremony, if I may say so, heralds in concrete form the real beginning in Madras, of the Constitution in all its bearings and implications, that was given to us by the Constituent Assembly, after strenuous' and continued labours of very nearly four years in which the highest talents and the noblest hearts in the land took an intimate part. The buildings, at the opening of which we are assembled, symbolise the Government of the people of the State by their own duly elected representatives. It also, I hope, represents the determination of the people to do their own duty so that the great experiment that we are starting to-day may prove to be a success.

"Many people have said in the past, do say in the present, and will continue to say in the future, ever so many things regarding the forms of government and the capacity and suitability of this or that people for one type of government or the other. We, of India, have also received our full measure of attention in this behalf both from inside and outside. This is no place to discuss the merits of the controversy or to whichever form of government would or would not be most suitable for us to-day. Conflicting opinions are bound to be given if invited, or perhaps, even if not invited. There is, however, no doubt that through the long ages of man's recorded history, he has continuously pondered as to how he should be governed.

"Man discovered early that he was more helpless than any other creature on earth so far as the fundamentals of his requirements went in the matters of food, clothing and shelter. He realised that he could not possibly live alone as an individual separate from his kind with any assurance of safety and security. He, therefore, started experimenting in corporate living in the very earliest stages of his development. Having been endowed with a growing mechanism for thinking, he naturally started cogitating early as to what form of order and governance would suit him best. Bhishma and Aristotle have analysed various types of Government and have discussed their virtues and drawbacks. Even to-day, controversy centres round varied ideologies in different lands on this topic.



Many people have said in the past, do say in the present, and will continue to say in the future, ever so many things regarding the forms of government and the capacity and suitability of this or that people for one type of government or the other.

SRI PRAKASA
Governor of Madras

Merits of democracy

"It, however, seems that so far, man has not been able to discover and decide upon any other method of government, despite its many and undeniable imperfections, that could come nearer to his desire for both good government and self-government than what is embodied in the principle of democracy. Details apart, the fundamental fact of democracy appears right and proper that all persons who are to be governed and have reached the age of discretion and can reasonably be regarded as capable of thinking of their own good and the good of others should have an opportunity of casting their vote in the matter of the election of those who may, in their turn, be reasonably expected to be capable of representing the feelings and working for the best interests of their fellow-men in the counsel of the nation.

"The underlying principle is clear. No one can really understand where the shoe pinches unless he himself puts on the particular shoe. And, therefore, if all interests are represented and if the wisest of all the groups are brought together by a process of election – it is presumed that everyone knows his own interest and also knows who can represent him best – then it can reasonably be expected that all manner of men will have a fair deal and there will be no fear or favour possible on the part of those in authority.

"It is not possible to guarantee capacity, integrity and other virtues by heredity in any family or group; it, however, seems safe to presume that in a large conglomeration of human beings which constitutes a State, there are bound to be some persons who are fit to be entrusted with the difficult and delicate task of the governance of their fellow-men, and that no other method is either so practical or so desirable as that of the democratic vote to find who these people are, or can be.

Responsibilities of freedom

"During the last two years or so, we in India have had to carry on somehow under the old system with an admixture of the new, as it was not possible to construct the machinery that could take us safely and peaceably from the one to the other overnight. We have reason to be thankful to all who have served the State faithfully and well during this critical period of transition; and I should like to offer on this occasion my own tribute of admiration and gratitude to the Ministers of Madras who have lately demitted



Madras Governor Sri Prakasa addressing the joint session of the State Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council at Madras on February 22, 1954.



Madras Governor Sri Prakasa (seated on the right) chatting with the guests at Raj Bhavan, Guindy, Madras, on August 01, 1952.

office after years of patient and devoted service, despite all the difficulties and obstacles that they had to face. And to-day, on our own part, as we usher in our new Constitution, in its fullness, we have to approach our tasks in a spirit of deep humility, for our responsibilities are very great indeed. The world's eye is on us, and more than that, we have to answer to our own conscience, to make sure within ourselves, that we are performing our duties properly and well and that the people who have entrusted their welfare to our care can rest in peace.

"Edmund Burke declared long ago that Members of Parliament were not delegates but representatives, and since our constituents, the voters in town and country, have elected us in utter trustfulness, our position as their representatives becomes doubly onerous. I hope that as each one of us proceeds with his task, the electors will have reason to think that they have cast their votes for proper men and given their trust to those that deserved it.

"May I also say – and this matter has always troubled me and I do not desire to make a secret of it – that while it is enough for one to imitate another, it is difficult to bring into being within ourselves that mentality that produces identical results. If we really want to achieve what another nation has done and which we like and admire, it is necessary not only to have the outward trappings, but also the inward psychology that made for success.

Framing of Constitution

"There is no doubt that in the framing of our Constitution, we have been very greatly influenced by not only Western thought but also by the institutions to which that thought has given birth. In fact, our close association of 200 years with the British people as rulers of the land unavoidably led us to the British Constitution for our own inspiration in the art of government. The difficulty, however, is that we can have buildings on the British model; we can have seating arrangements as the British have in their own legislatures; we can have the system of election and of party groupings such as they have; but unless we have also the temperament of the British and appreciate the approach they make to public problems, and the manner In which they conduct themselves towards one another in victory and in defeat, we cannot really be successful in working the institutions we copy from them.

"In our endeavours let us not forget that in England, after a political conflict, opponents shake hands and do not permit any bitterness to blight their lives; that, after...controversies, when a final decision has been taken by virtue of a majority vote, the same is accepted both by the victor and the vanquished in a spirit of sportsmanship and is given a finality without being followed by continual attempts to get the decision reversed. If, therefore, we want to bring in our own country institutions that have helped other people to prosper and to gain their liberty and continue strong and secure on the basis of democracy, we have also to imbibe their mentality.

"It may be presumptuous on my part to say this to so many elders and persons of eminence assembled here, but I cannot help sounding a note of warning that our democracy, and our freedom itself, may be endangered if we cannot, by our day-to-day conduct in the Legislature and outside prove that we have not only taken the body of the institutions of other peoples but also the soul that they embody. It will not be difficult for us to attune ourselves to the ways that are necessary for the working of democracy if only we make a slight effort and learn the simple lessons of give and take; of mutual accommodation; of giving credit to others for good intentions: of refraining from attributing bad motives to opponents; of discussing matters and not men; in short, of not doing unto others what we do not wish that others should do unto us. While I have said all this, you will please permit me to add that whatever be the form of government, we have to live our lives and strengthen ourselves on the basis of our own culture and tradition.

Necessity for a new building

"Perhaps, a short history of this building, at the opening of which we are assembled to assist, may be of interest. The Assembly Chamber in Fort St. George was found inadequate even for the purposes of the earlier Assembly. It was constructed in 1919 and was designed for the still earlier Legislative Council. Though it was remodelled in 1937 to be able to accommodate 240 members, no suitable provision was made for offices, library, or canteen for the use of members. The possibilities of temporarily accommodating the Assembly under the Constitution, in the Museum Theatre and adjacent buildings or in the Senate Hall or Examination Hall of the Madras University were then explored.

"It was, however, found that inadequate floor space and the large extra cost involved in effecting improvements precluded the use of those buildings. Sir Archibald Nye the then

Governor, thereupon offered the entire Government House Estate on Mount Road, including the Rajaji Hall, for the use of the Legislature; and Government were glad to accept the gift. Various considerations –political and financial – deterred Government from embarking on the venture of more extensive structures, which, as planned, were to cost Rs 35 lakhs and take about three years to be completed. The present buildings, now being opened, are spacious enough for the 375 members of the new Assembly, both in the matter of suitable accommodation and essential amenities that is taken, whether it conforms to his own wishes and opinions or it does not. We can never go wrong if we hold fast to this principle that underlies the working of true democracy; and I have every confidence that Madras, which has given to us so many eminent constitutional lawyers and administrators during the last century and more as democracy has slowly developed in the land, will succeed in making its Legislature a model for the rest of the country.

"In formally declaring this Madras Legislative Assembly buildings open, I pray that the purpose for which these have been dedicated may be fulfilled, and that the people of this great State may enjoy happy, healthy, purposeful and peaceful lives." (Loud and prolonged applause.)

Chief Engineer's survey

Earlier Mr. T.S. Venkataraman, Chief Engineer, P.W.D. (Buildings), gave an account of the plan and design of the building.

Mr. Venkataraman said that under the new Constitution of India, the Madras State Assembly will have 375 members. The existing Assembly chamber in Fort St. George has a maximum seating capacity of only 273 and does not lend itself to further extension. Government, therefore, decided to put a new building for the Assembly in the Government Estate in Mount Road of a design which, without sacrificing comforts and the minimum requirement of a House of Legislature, will yet be moderate in cost. The main approach to the building is from the northern side within the estate itself, while the public will have access direct to the visitors' gallery from Wallajah Road in the rear of the building.

The cost of the building and its equipment is as follows: the building Rs. 5.3 lakhs; electric and sanitary fittings Rs. 1.66 lakhs: sound reinforcement system Rs. 1.10 lakhs; and furniture Rs. 2. 40 lakhs. Total: Rs. 10.46 lakhs.

Hostel for members

At present, the main building in the Government House Estate is being used as a hostel for the members of the Legislature. This building can accommodate only 35 members.

The construction of a new building which can house 94 members at a cost of Rs. 6.22 lakhs (excluding furniture) was sanctioned by Government recently and this work has been entrusted to Messrs. Mckenzies Ltd., and is also in rapid progress. It is expected that it will be ready for occupation in July 1952. The rooms which are 14' x 10' would be provided with necessary furniture.

The existing kitchen and dining rooms in the old building will be improved so as to serve the members.

"As the Chief Engineer to Government for Buildings, it is a matter of pride for me that this Hall has been designed and completed under my direction. I fully trust that the building will, in the long years to come, serve the Assembly well and truly and that the wise deliberations of the representatives of the people assembled here will make for ever-increasing prosperity and happiness of one of the premier States of our India, that is Bharat," [Mr. Venkataraman added.]

Mr. N. Padmanabha Aiyar, Chief Engineer (Irrigation), proposed a vote of thanks to the Governor on behalf of the officers and staff of the P.W.D. He also thanked the guests who had responded to the invitation to be present at the function. The National Anthem was sung before the close of the function. The Governor spent a few minutes inspecting the building.

May 3, 1952

"Edmund Burke declared long ago that Members of Parliament were not delegates but representatives, and since our constituents, the voters in town and country, have elected us in utter trustfulness, our position as their representatives becomes doubly onerous. I hope that as each one of us proceeds with his task, the electors will have reason to think that they have cast their votes for proper men and given their trust to those that deserved it.

SRI PRAKASA
Governor of Madras

Assembly returns to Fort

The newly-elected members of the Madras Legislative Assembly were sworn in to-day [April 29] when the first meeting of the new House was held in the re-modelled Chamber in the Secretariat, Fort St. George.

Most of the members used the Tamil language in taking the oath or in their affirmation. The form of oath or affirmation had been prepared both in English and Tamil.

Mr. B. Bhaktavatsalu Naidu, temporary Speaker of the Assembly appointed by the Governor, was in the chair. After the oath taking or affirmation, the members signed their names in the official register and took their seats. Mr. K. Kamaraj, Chief Minister, took the oath first, followed by the other Ministers who are members of the Assembly.

Mr. V. K.Ramaswami Mudaliar, Leader of the Congress Reform Committee [CRC], Mr. C.N. Annadurai, Leader of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, and Mr. M. Kalyanasundaram, Leader of the Communist Party, were then sworn in. Former Ministers, the Government Whip and the other members followed. The members were called in the alphabetical order.

As soon as Mr. Bhaktavatsalu Naidu took the chair, he informed the House of his appointment by the Governor to perform the duties of the Speaker till a new Speaker was elected. He welcomed the members to the first meeting of the second Legislative Assembly under the Constitution of India.

According to Article 188 of the Constitution, he said, members had to take the prescribed oath or affirmation before taking their seats. He announced that in accordance with the practice followed in the Legislature, he would call the Chief Minister first to take the oath, then the Ministers, Leaders of Parties whose names had been sent to the Legislature Office, ex-Ministers, the Government Whip and then the members in the order in which their names appeared in the list.

Allotment of seats

"After taking the oath or affirmation and after signing their names in the register kept for the purpose," Mr. Bhaktavatsalu Naidu said, "members will be entitled to take their seats as members of the Assembly. I may say that except for the Ministers, no seats have yet been reserved. The Speaker who is to be elected tomorrow will allot seats under Rule 61 of the Assembly Rules. In the meantime, members may occupy any seat in the House."

The temporary Speaker said the solemnity of the occasion would require the attention and presence of members throughout the proceedings and he requested them to remain in their seats till the last member had taken the oath.

Mr. T. Hanumanthappa, Secretary to the State Legislature, then called the names of members for being sworn in before the temporary Speaker.

Mr. Kamaraj, Chief Minister, took the oath in the name of God. Mr M. Bhaktavatsalam, Home Minister, and Mr. M. A. Manickavelu, Revenue Minister, made a solemn affirmation, while the other Ministers. Messrs. C. Subramaniam, P. Kakkan, V. Ramaiah, and Srimathi Lourdhamma Simon swore in the name of God.

Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar took the oath in the name of God, while Mr. C. N. Annadurai and Mr. M. Kalyanasundaram, Leaders of the DMK and Communist Party respectively, made affirmations of allegiance. The former Ministers who were sworn in were Mr. M.A. Muthiah Chettiar, Mr. S.R. Sethupathi, Dr. U. Krishna Rao, Mr. S. S. Ramaswami Padayachi and Mr. A. Chidambaranatha Nadar. It took nearly an hour and a half for the rest of the members (194 out of 205) to be sworn in.

The members who were absent, it was notified, should take their oath in the Speaker's Chamber later to-day. Otherwise, they would not be allowed to participate in the election of Speaker and Deputy Speaker fixed for to-morrow, April 30. The House adjourned to meet at 11 a.m. on April 30.

Before the commencement of the meeting, a large gathering of DMK members, outside the Chamber, cheered their leader, Mr. Annadurai, on his arrival.

April 30, 1957



K. Kamaraj, Chief Minister

Full use of Tamil by end of 2nd Plan period

Mr. C. Subramaniam, Finance Minister, informed the Madras Legislative Assembly to-day [October 29] that before the end of the Second Five-Year Plan, all Government business would be transacted in Tamil.

The Minister was replying to a number of questions on the switch-over from English to Tamil in the administration of this State. Mr. N. K. Palaniswami asked the Chief Minister whether there was any proposal to introduce Tamil as the medium for the transaction of official business and correspondence in Government departments.

Replying on behalf of the Chief Minister, Mr. Subramaniam said that the Madras Official Language Act had been enacted in 1956 declaring Tamil as the official language of the State. Based on the recommendations of the Official Language Act Implementation Committee, instructions had been issued to all heads of departments in the matter.

Mr. Palaniswami wanted to know whether there was any time limit for its implementation.

The Minister said that the following was the programme: 1957-58: printing and distribution of standard glossary and Tamil translation of district manual; introduction of Tamil as official language in all offices for which English typewriters had not been sanctioned; standardisation of the Tamil typewriter key board and supply of Tamil typewriters to all offices; making good progress in the preparation of supplementary glossaries; making good progress in the translation of departmental codes, manuals and forms; starting Government typewriter institutes for training Tamil typists for offices in the districts. 1958-59: Tamil would be introduced as official language for correspondence in as many departments as possible constituting the first batch. In this regard, a list of eight departments in which it would be introduced had already been published.



A view of Fort St. George

Mr. S. Pakkiriswami Pillai asked whether this programme had been sent to the Corporation of Madras.

The Minister replied that the member could use his good offices to see that the Corporation evinced interest in the matter. Asked by Mr. A. A. Rasheed whether there was any opposition from the High Court to the introduction of Tamil, the Minister said that he had not heard of "any opposition from any quarter".

Answering a supplementary by Mr. M. Kalyanasundaram, the Minister said that the change would be brought about step by step. He informed Mr. Palaniswami that at present they were engaged in selecting administrative terms, and the question of finding Tamil equivalents to scientific terms would be taken up later.

Mr. Vedaratnam Pillai: "How long will the Government take to introduce Tamil for all administrative purposes in this State?" The Minister: "I think that before the end of the Second Five Year Plan, Tamil would be introduced for all administrative purposes."

Mr. A. Govindaswami urged that representations should be made to the Central Government that post cards and money order forms should also have inscriptions in Tamil. The Minister said that question would not arise before the House.

October 30, 1957

Mid-day meal scheme

Mr. C. Subramaniam, Minister for Finance and Education, said during question-time in the Legislative Assembly to-day [April 20] that a sum of Rs. 27,37,514 was spent by the Madras Government and the Corporation of Madras on the supply of mid-day meals for school children in the State during the year ending March 31, 1959.

The Minister, who gave the break-up figures of the amounts spent in each district, in reply to an interpellation by Mr. T. T. Daniel, said that out of the above sum, about Rs. 8,85,652 were spent by the Education Department; Rs. 14,44,400 by the Harijan Welfare Department and Rs. 4,37,162 by the Corporation of Madras. Apart from these amounts spent by the Government and the Corporation, the Minister estimated the donations from the public as their share for the supply of mid-day meals would be about Rs.20 lakhs to 35 lakhs.

Answering further questions, the Minister added that the immediate programme was to provide mid-day meals to all poor children in the elementary school in the State. The question of extending the scheme to the children in high schools could be thought of later on. Mr. Subramaniam added that the question whether Government assistance should be given to the Madras Corporation and the municipalities for the mid-day meals scheme was still under consideration of the Government.

April 22, 1959



Chief Minister K. Kamaraj serving gruel to the boys of a school in Sri Devalai's agricultural farm at Katpadi, on October 29, 1954. He brought in a free meal scheme to all panchayat and government-run primary schools in Tamil Nadu in 1956-57.

Insurance against hunger

Allocations in select years for Nutritious Meal Programme

Year	Amount (₹ in crore)
1942-43	0.0538
1957-58	0.1
1965-66	1.86
1982-83	100
1989-90	173.8
1992-93	256.32
1997-98	405.56
2005-06	724.44
2010-11	924
2014-15	1,412.88
2022-23	1,949
2025-26	2,602

Nutritious Meal Programme: Beneficiaries

Standard	Beneficiaries
Primary (1st standard to 5th standard)	19,36,976
Upper primary (6th standard to 8th standard)	14,49,794
9th and 10th standards	6,95,177
Total	**40,81,947**

Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme: Beneficiaries

Year	Beneficiaries
2022-2023	1,54,108
2023-2024	15,75,900
2024-2025	17,53,257

Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme

Year	Amount (₹ in crore)
2022-23	33.56
2023-24	500.5
2024-25	600
2025-26	600.25

Source: Finance department's budget documents, Policy Note and Performance Budget of Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department for 2025-26 and an article on noon meal scheme and breakfast schemes in Tamilar Nidhi Nirvakam: Thonmaiyum Thodarchiyum. (Tamils' Fiscal Administration: Antiquity and Continuity), a publication of the Finance Department

Assembly meets in Ooty

Ootacamund has begun to be buzzing with social and political activity with the arrival of Ministers and members of the State Legislative Assembly to attend the nine-day summer session of the House commencing here to-morrow [April 20] and ending on April 30.

Dr. U. Krishna Rao, Speaker of the Assembly, arrived here this morning [April 19] and he went round the Arranmore Palace in the evening accompanied by Mr. T. Hanumanthappa, Secretary to State Legislature, and other officials of the Legislature Secretariat and the police Department, to see the arrangements finally made for the session. The beautiful hall where the Assembly meets, is about two-thirds of the size of the chamber in Madras and its entire floor area is covered by a single piece of costly Persian carpet, a valuable article acquired by the Government along with other furnishings in the palace. The sides and the ceiling of the hall are empanelled with exquisite wood work with the stuffed heads of horned antelopes and other wild animals adorning the walls. The numerous gold-ornamented small chairs arranged in rows for the occupation of members add colour and impressiveness. As many as 170 members have been provided with seats without desks. In fact the hall can accommodate a still greater number if cushioned benches are provided as in Madras. Gangway is provided in the middle on either side for easy access of members. The Press gallery is on the left of the Speaker's "rostrum and the officials will sit to his right along the edge of the wall. Loud-speaker arrangement have been made but not on an elaborate scale as in Madras. Microphones are provided at convenient points and a member desiring to speak should go to the mike nearest to him. But during question-time members will have to put questions from their respective seats. The accoustics of the hall, however, seems to be good. There are two galleries on opposite sides facing the length of the hall and each may accommodate about 30 persons. One is to be utilised as the Governor's box and the other is for the visitors. Members have a well furnished lounge room and also a lobby while the Ministers have two big rooms. One spacious room has been placed at the disposal of the Press. The palace which is situated on the top of a hill has a beautifully- laid green lawn in front of it from where one has a commanding view of the surrounding area. The Assembly holds its session for the first time in this delightful Hill station which used to be the summer headquarters of the Madras Government during British administration. It may not, however in a sense, be the first Legislative body to meet here, because the Governor's Council, credited under the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909 for the purpose of making laws and regulations, met at Government House in Ootacamund for a couple of days about 44 years ago, to be exact, on May 25 and 26 in 1915- under the presidency of the then Governor, Lord Fentland. It was a small body with less than 40 members, mostly Europeans, with a sprinkling of Indians. This Council had further sittings here for three days on May 22, 23 and 24 in 1917. With the introduction of Montford Reforms of 1919 an enlarged Legislative Council with a few more powers and elected elements came into being. The question of holding a meeting of this Council in Ootacamund for the purpose of considering irrigation and Malabar Tenancy Bills came up for a brief discussion in March 1926 when the President of the Council was Mr. M. Rutnaswami. Records of the proceedings show that Dr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar who was then the Law Member of the Governor's Executive Council wanted to take the views of the Legislative Council on the matter. He stated at the conclusion of the discussion on the subject that he took it that "the opinion of the House is that the next meeting is to be held in Ootacamund provided we find accommodation for the House and for the members." However, no meeting of the Council took place in Ooty.

April 20, 1959

Atomic station for Madras State only way to meet increasing demand for power

Mr. V. Ramaiah, Minister for Electricity, declared in the Legislative Council to-day [May 8] that the only solution to meet the increasing demand for power was the establishment of an atomic power station in the State.

As soon as the Planning Commission decided about the number of such stations that the country should have, the Minister hoped that Madras would have one to meet her industrial requirements.

The Minister, who was replying to the two-day discussion on the budget of the State Electricity Board, characterised as "far from true" the criticism that the Electricity Department worked as a commercial undertaking.

An unusually large number of members participated in the discussion. Dr. P. V. Cherian, Chairman, fixed five minutes for each speaker and thanked the members at the end of the discussion for their co-operation.

May 9, 1959

Arranmore Palace, Ooty.



Arranmore palace renamed

Dr. U. Krishna Rao, Speaker, announced in the Legislative Assembly to-day [April 21] that in view of the fact that the Assembly is holding its summer session at the Arranmore Palace, the Government have decided to name the Palace Tamilagam.

The announcement was received with cheers by the members of the House.

April 22, 1959

Why name changed?

The decision of the Government to rename the Arranmore Palace in Ootacamund as "Tamilagam" figured during question-time in the Legislative Council to-day.

Mr. L.S. Karayalar, who had raised the matter in the form of a short notice question, asked whether the desire of the Government to promote Tamil language and culture had prompted them to rename the palace as "Tamilagam".

Mr. R. Venkataraman, Leader of the House, replied that members were free to draw their own inferences.

Replying to further questions, the Minister said that in regard to changing of names, the normal practice of the Government was to retain names, which were well known. However, in this particular case, in view of the holding of the Legislature session at the palace and of their having adopted Tamil as the State language, it was decided that the palace could be named as "Tamilagam". On the question of changing the name of Madras State as Tamilnad, he said that the matter had already been discussed a number of times and he had nothing new to say on that.

A member asked whether the changing of the name of Arranmore Palace was a prelude to renaming the State.

Mr. Venkataraman replied that the Government did not want to put any fetters on the imagination of members.

May 10, 1959

Holding of sessions at Ooty

Mr. C. Subramaniam, Leader of the House in the Madras Legislative Assembly, told newsmen today that a decision on the question of holding the session of the Legislature in Ootacamund in the future would be taken in the light of experience gained during this session.

The Finance Minister pointed that the holding of the present session was only a temporary scheme. That was the reason why the Government had not made permanent arrangements for accommodating members at Ootacamund during this meeting. The Government had not also gone in for any new furniture while converting the ball room of the Arranmore Palace into an Assembly chamber and the furniture that formed part of the palace was being utilised, he stated.

April 25, 1959

Renaming of State

The Government have decided that the official use of the name "Chennai" in Tamil should in future be limited to the City of Madras and the Madras State should be referred to in Tamil by the name "Tamizh Nadu", said Mr. R. Venkataraman, Minister for Industries, replying on behalf of the Chief Minister to a question by Dr. A. Srinivasan in the Legislative Council to-day [March 13].

Dr. Srinivasan: Is it something like a person having a pet name in the house and another name outside his house?

The Minister: I leave it to the imagination of the member.

Dr. Srinivasan asked whether it was a fact that someone had mentioned that the word "Tamizh Nadu" was unknown to us before "Subramanya Bharathi''.

Mr. Venkataraman said that he was no expert on these matters.

Dr. A. Chidambaranathan asked whether the Government were considering the question of making suitable amendments to the Constitution to change the name of the State as Tamizh Nadu.

Mr. Venkataraman replied that it was the Government's decision not to have any amendment to the Constitution in this regard. He added that the name 'Madras State' would remain in the Constitution.

When Mr. Md. Raza Khan asked whether the Government took the decision to change the name after the agitation to change the name of the State was started, or long before it, Mr. Venkataraman replied that they were all confidential matters.

Dr. Srinivasan desired to know what valid objection the State Government had to requesting the Union Government to change the name of the State into Tamizh Nadu, when so many amendments to the Constitution had taken place since independence.

Mr. Venkataraman said that the valid objection was that the Government thought it was not necessary.

Dr. Srinivasan asked whether the decision was according to the whims and fancies of the Government or any definite principle guided them in changing the names when they changed the names of the cities.

Mr. C. Subramaniam, Finance Minister, intervened and said that he would respectfully submit that it was objectionable on the part of the member to indulge in such insinuations.

When Dr. Srinivasan said that, according to May's Parliamentary Practice, what he said was not objectionable, Dr. P. V. Cherian. Chairman, stating that the view of the member was not final, passed on to the next question.

March 14, 1961

Sky-scrapers in Madras city

A suggestion to set up a committee to go into the numerous factors that should be taken into account before granting permission for construction of "skyscrapers" in the City of Madras was made by Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Leader of the Opposition, during question-time in the Legislative Council to-day [May 5 in Ooty].

Mr. M. A. Manickavelu, Minister in charge of Public Health, who was replying to a volley of questions in this regard, said that skyscrapers were coming up only just now and promised to go into the suggestion.

The Minister, in reply to the main question of Mr. T. Purushotham, said that permission was granted by the Corporation of Madras for the construction of two bank buildings, one on Nethaji Road and the other Mount Road, and the buildings were permitted to be erected to a height of 100 feet.

The two banks referred to are the Mysore Bank and the Indian Overseas Bank.

The town planning rules, he said, did not prescribe the maximum height to which a building might be erected. But it was the policy of the Government to allow building only upto a height of 100 feet. However, in the case of the bank building on Mount Road, a height of upto 130 feet was allowed as a special case.

May 6, 1959

Language of Pujas in temples

The agitation for the conduct of Pujas in temples in Tamil "is meaningless" said Mr. M. Bhaktavatsalam, Home Minister, who is in charge of Hindu religious endowments, replying to questions in the Legislative Council to-day [May 7 in Ooty].

Mr. Bhaktavatsalam said that Pujas in temples should be done according to Sampradaya (tradition) and it was not proper to bring about a change. Archana, he said, was only namavali, the chanting of the sacred names of the Lord, and, therefore, the question of language did not come into it.

The Minister said that the Commissioner had passed orders that Archanas could be conducted either in Tamil or in Sanskrit according to the wishes of the devotees in three temples in the State (Perur, Erode and Tuticorin). He himself had gone to one of these temples and was present when the Archana was done in Tamil. He could neither understand it nor did he find that there was any melody in it. It was "boring", he remarked.

Earlier, in reply to the main interpellation of Mr. V. V. Ramaswami, the Minister said that no representation had been received by the Government for the conduct of Pujas in temples in Tamil.

May 10, 1959

A university for the south



A view of the Madurai Kamaraj University campus in Madurai.

The Madras Legislature will soon be taking up a Bill for the constitution of a new university based on the historic city of Madurai. Unlike other States, Madras has not been anxious to multiply universities, though college education has been increasing at a rapid rate. Since the Annamalai University is a unitary one, with its colleges confined to its own campus, the Madras University has under its wing a large number of colleges scattered all over the State. When the Madurai University comes into being, the Government's intention was to place the six southern districts under the control of this University, leaving the other seven under Madras.

The Syndicate of the Madras University, which has been studying the draft Bill, has made the point that an arrangement making the Madurai University responsible for virtually half the total number of affiliating colleges would place a heavy burden on a new organisation. It has therefore suggested that the districts of Thanjavur and Tiruchirapalli should be retained by the Madras University for the time being and transferred to Madurai at a later date. This appears to be a sensible proposal in view of the fact that the site for the new University is only now being acquired and that it lacks the building and staff necessary to make it a going concern in the next academic year. In fact, it may be necessary for the affiliating colleges in Madras State to continue with the syllabi and examinations set by the Madras University for some time to come before the Madurai University is fully organised to cope with academic as well as administrative tasks. As the Syndicate has pointed out, the Madras University has a fairly high reputation all over the country and nothing should be done which might lower the standards already attained in the State.

Some time is also required for the new University to decide its future programme and its field of specialisation. Any new University worth its salt normally thinks of pioneering in certain chosen directions and although the funds available to Madurai are somewhat limited, it should make an attempt to give itself a distinctive character. This requires considerable thought and careful planning and the time target set is extremely short. Until the new University is ready to get off the ground, it is just as well that its administrative tasks are not too heavy. In recent years, the Madras University has steadily built up some good research departments and is doing good work in the field of post-graduate studies. This is now realised to be essential to the reputation and progress of all universities and the Madurai University will have to consider what are the fields of advanced studies where it can hope to make its own contribution. Fortunately, the University Grants Commission has promised to assist as far as it can.

Editorial
July 16, 1965

SECTION 3

EARLY YEARS OF TAMIL NADU

Madras as Tamil Nadu: Assembly Resolution

The Madras Legislative Assembly to-day [July 18] unanimously passed a resolution declaring "its firm opinion'' that the name of the State as mentioned in the Constitution of India should be changed as "Tamil Nadu."

The resolution, moved by the Chief Minister, Mr. C.N. Annadurai, and supported by all sections of the House, recommended to the State Government to take steps to secure necessary amendment to the constitution.

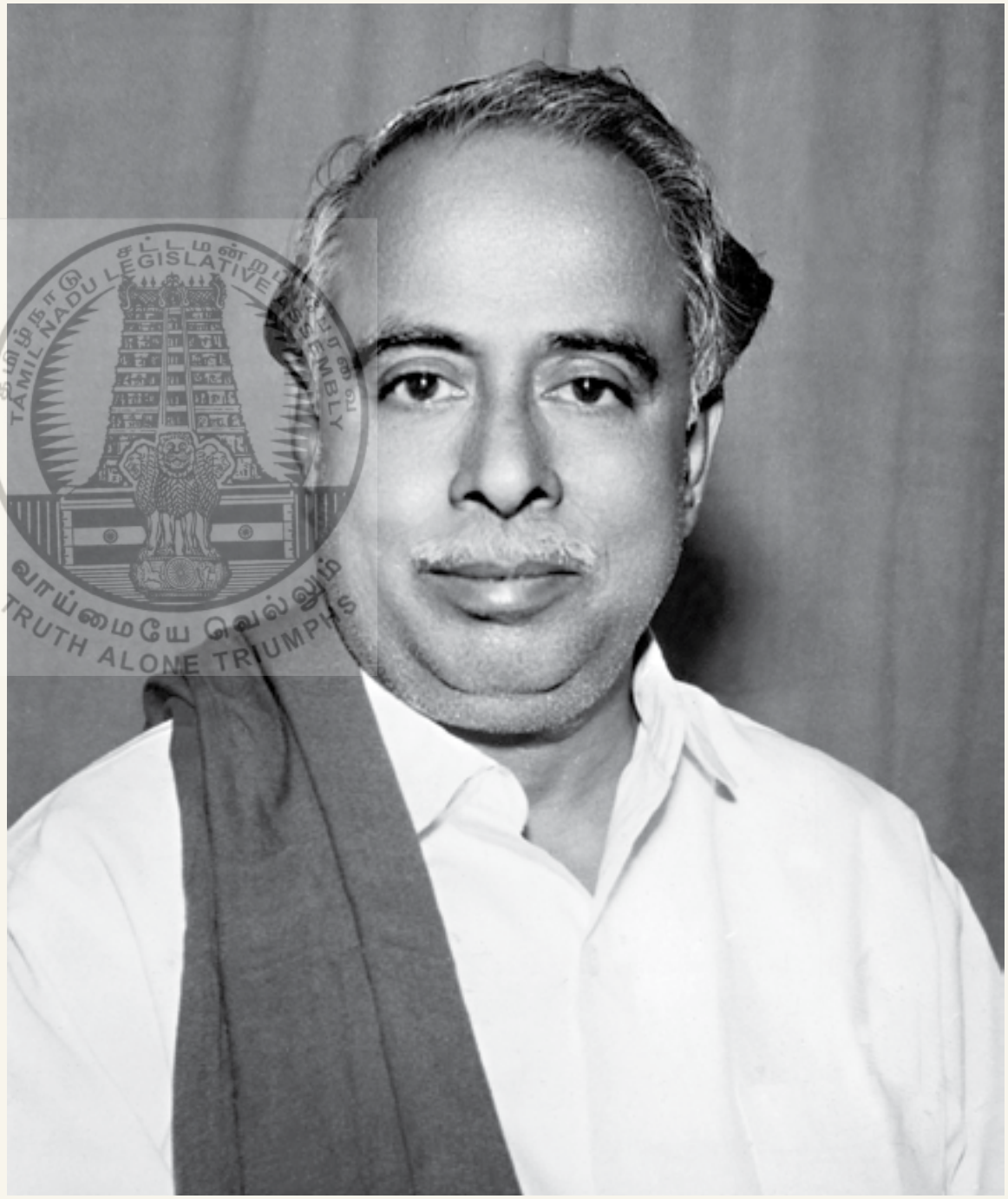
After the resolution was adopted, Mr. Annadurai, with the permission of the Speaker, uttered the name of "Tamil Nadu" and the members in their full throated voice hailed "Vazhga", and this was repeated thrice.

The Chief Minister, Mr. C.N. Annadurai, said in the State Assembly to-day that he was happy to note that the resolution declaring the Assembly's "firm opinion" that the name of the State as mentioned in the Constitution of India should be changed as "Tamil Nadu" was supported by all sections of the House.

The Chief Minister, who was replying to the debate on the resolution, stated that the leader of the Opposition. Mr. P.G. Karuthiruman, also supported it. (The Assembly later unanimously adopted the resolution).

Mr. Annadurai said that the resolution had to be forwarded, to the Central Government now. Recently, when he had been to Delhi he had informal discussions with the leaders in the Centre and the impression gathered by him was that if a resolution was sent to the Centre after a debate in the Assembly, the Centre would have no hesitation in amending the Constitution accordingly assured the house that there would be no international complications if the name was changed to "Tamil Nadu."

During the debate, Mr. Karuthiruman (Cong.), said he had no objection to supporting the resolution. But he would only offer his suggestion that "Madras State'' could continue to be used in English as it was well known. He cited in this connection the name



Chief Minister C. N. Annadurai

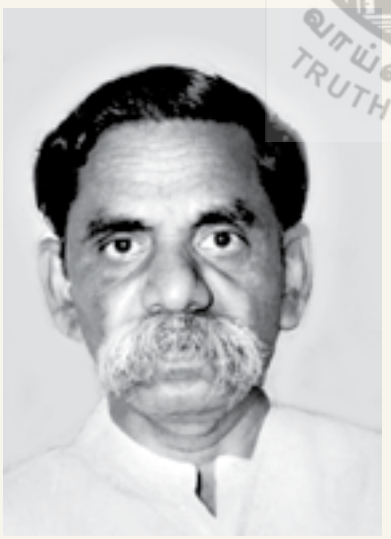


C.N. Annadurai being sworn in as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu by Governor Ujjal Singh at Rajaji Hall in Madras on March 6, 1967.

"Deutschland" which was used by the German people within their own country and the word 'Germany' used outside the world.

Mr. J.S. Athimoolam (Swat.) said he was glad that the cause for which Mr. Sankaralingam of Virudhunagar had laid down his life came to be realised now.

Mr. A. R. Marimuthu (P.S.P.) said that the adoption of the resolution was a matter for rejoicing and he was sure the Central Government would accept the name and incorporate it in the Constitution. Mr. Peer Mohamed (MLA) said that "Tamil Nadu" was a more appropriate name than "Madras State". Mr. K. K. Sathasivam (S.S.P.) said it was a red letter day in the history of the Tamil speaking people.



Tamil Arasu Kazhagam leader M.P. Sivagnanam

Mr. M.P. Sivagnanam (T.A.K.) said what should have been accomplished ten years ago was being done by the D.M.K. Party after assuming power. While the people in charge of the Congress organisation had not named the regional unit of the party as "Madras State Congress Committee'' but only called it "Tamil Nad Congress Committee" in English also, he was unable to understand Mr. Karuthiruman's suggestion to retain the name 'Madras State" in English.

Karuthiruman, by way of explanation, said he only offered his suggestion while supporting the resolution. His love of Tamil language should not be considered less than that of anybody else. Mr. A. K. Subbiah (Com.) and Mr. A. Balasubramaniam (C.P.I.M.) also took part in the debate.

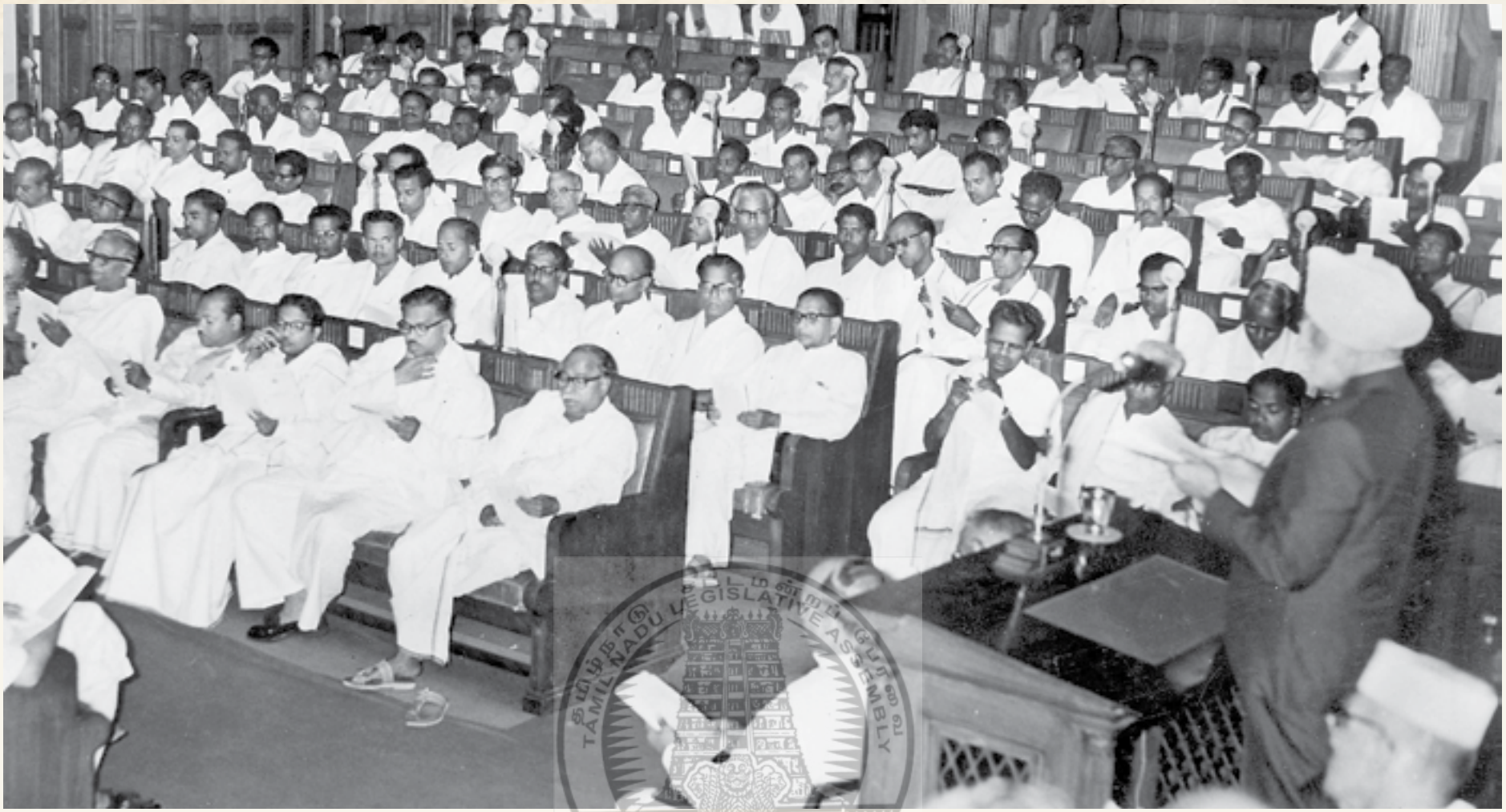
July 19, 1967.

Telugu Speech in Madras Assembly

For the first time since States' Re-organisation, a Telugu speech was made in the Madras Assembly to-day [June 26]. A Swatantra member from Hosur, Mr. B. Venkataswami sought the Chair's permission to speak in Telugu on the State Budget, as he was not in a position to express himself clearly either in Tamil or in English.

After hurried consultations with the DMK and Congress whips, Mr. P. Malaichami, a Member on the panel of chairmen, who was then in the Chair, allowed Mr. Venkataswami to speak in Telugu.

July 27, 1967



Madras Governor Ujjal Singh addressing the joint session of both Houses of the legislature on February 10, 1968 in the presence of Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai and Ministers V.R. Nedunchezian, M. Karunanidhi and K.A. Mathialagan.



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi being sworn in as Member of the Legislative Assembly on March 22, 1971 at the Assembly Chamber in the presence of M. Shanmugham, Protem Speaker.

Name change notified

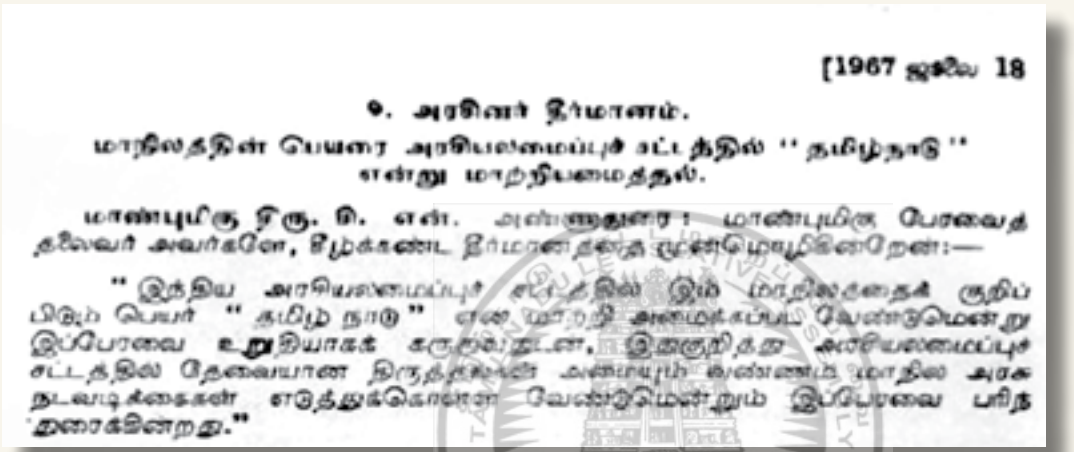
The Madras State (Alteration of Name) Act, 1968, changing the name of the State as 'Tamil Nadu', has been published in an extraordinary issue of the Fort St. George Gazzette. The Act will come into force from January 14 (Pongal Day).

January 11, 1969

"Tamil Nadu": Govt's Directive

The Madras Government has directed that the name of the State should be indicated as 'Tamil Nadu' instead of as 'Madras' in all Government communications from January 14 (Pongal Day), the date on which the Madras State (Alteration of Name) Act, 1968, comes into force.

January 13, 1969



[1967 ஜூலை 18

9. அரசினர் தீர்மானம்.

மாநிலத்தின் பெயரை அரியலமைப்புச் சட்டத்தில் "தமிழ்நாடு" என்று மாற்றியமைத்தல்.

மாண்புமிகு திரு. இ. எஸ். அண்ணாதுரை : மாண்புமிகு பேரவைத் தலைவர் அவர்களே, நீங்கள் தீர்மானத்தை முன்மொழிகின்றேன்:—

"இந்திய அரியலமைப்புச் சட்டத்தில் இம் மாநிலத்தைக் குறிப்பிடும் பெயர் "தமிழ் நாடு" என மாற்றி அமைக்கப்பட வேண்டுமென்று இப்பேரவை உறுதியாகக் கருதுகின்றது. இதைக் குறித்த அரியலமைப்புச் சட்டத்தில் தேவையான திருத்தங்கள் அரசியல் சாசனம் மாநில அரசு நடவடிக்கைகள் எடுத்துக்கொள்ள வேண்டுமென்றும் இப்பேரவை பரிந்துரைக்கின்றது."

மாண்புமிகு திரு. இ. எஸ். அண்ணாதுரை : சட்ட மன்றத் தலைவர் அவர்களே, வரலாற்றுச் சிறப்பு மிக்க தீர்மானத்தை நிறைவேற்றி இந்த இன்ற இந்த நள்ளிரவில் "தமிழ்நாடு" என்று நாம் சொல்லுவோம் "வாழ்க" என்று அதை உறுப்பினர்கள் சொல்லி வரவேற்க வேண்டுமென்று அனுமதியைக் கோருகிறேன்.

மாண்புமிகு திரு. இ. எஸ். அண்ணாதுரை : தமிழ்நாடு!
உறுப்பினர்கள் : வாழ்க!

மாண்புமிகு திரு. இ. எஸ். அண்ணாதுரை : தமிழ்நாடு!
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உறுப்பினர்கள் : வாழ்க!

Extract of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly on the resolution renaming the State as Tamil Nadu on July 18, 1967

Nationalisation of bus transport to be completed in five years, says Karunanidhi

The announcement made at the silver jubilee celebration of India's freedom

Speaking at the midnight meeting of the members of the Tamil Nadu Legislature [on August 14], Mr. M. Karunanidhi, Chief Minister, announced that nationalisation of bus transport in the State would be completed within five years from now.

He said the State Government had decided that 24 per cent of the share capital of public sector units should be allotted to the workers to bring about employees' participation in management of industries.

Mr. Karunanidhi announced an increase in the pension to political sufferers from Rs. 50 to Rs. 75 per mensem. There were now about 7,300 political sufferers in the State who would be benefited by this increase, he said.

The Chief Minister said that over 2,300 prisoners undergoing various terms of imprisonment would be released tomorrow [August 15] morning to mark the celebration of the silver jubilee of Independence.

According to the announcement, the remission of sentences will be as follows: Those who are undergoing more than ten years of imprisonment will be granted a remission of 1 1/2 years; between 5 and 10 years-remission 9 months; between one year and 5 years-4 1/2 months; those who are undergoing imprisonment from three months to one year (if they had already served half the term), the rest of the sentence period would be remitted; those who had not completed the term will get three months' remission; and those who are undergoing imprisonment for three months and less will be immediately released.

VOC memorial

Mr. Karunanidhi said that the 'chekku' (oil crusher) which Tamil patriot V. O. Chidambaram Pillai was forced to draw in the jail during the freedom struggle, now lying idle in the Coimbatore jail, will be brought to Madras and kept on display for the public before the end of this month.

The Chief Minister exhorted the people to see that there were no have-nots in this country, no illiteracy and no exploitation. "Let us strike a new path in every sphere and usher in an era of complete socialism," he said.

Mr. K. Rajaram (Cong-O), Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, said the silver jubilee celebration of Independence was a memorable occasion to remember the great sacrifices made by Gandhiji and other national leaders to achieve political freedom. They must take a pledge now to make greater sacrifice to achieve democratic socialism.

Mrs. T. N. Ananthanayaki (Cong.) said the country could be proud of being the home of real democracy as it had held elections at regular intervals. It should take concerted action to banish poverty and ignorance from the country.

Mr. K. T. K. Thangamani (CPI) said many great leaders in Tamil Nadu had toiled to safeguard the interest of the workers. It must be the duty of every one to work hard and usher in an era which ended the exploitation of labour.

Mr. Sa Ganesan read a long list of leaders who had undergone great sufferings during freedom struggle and said their life should always serve as a model to the people.

Mr. A. R. Damodaran (United Party-Legislative Council) said India had not only fought successfully the Britishers but also stood in the forefront of championing the cause of the subject people, who fought colonialism all over the world. He felt that steps should be taken to protect the interest of the Indian nationals living abroad so that they might be treated with dignity.

Messrs. S. S. Ramaswami Padayachi (Toilers Party), A.R. Perumal (Forward Bloc), and A. M. Mohideen (Muslim League) said that despite diversities, the nation had braved various challenges creditably and the occasion demanded that they should take a pledge to rededicate themselves to preserving the unity of the country.

The Assembly Chamber in Fort St. George where the meeting was held was colourfully illuminated and decorated with fragrant flower garlands. Members of the Assembly and the Ministers took their seats by about 10.30 p.m. Exactly at 10.45 p.m. the Governor, Mr. K. K. Shah, entered the hall accompanied by the Speaker, Mr. Mathialagan, Mr. Chitrarasu, Mr. Karunanidhi, and Mr. V. R. Nedunchezhian, Leader of the House [Assembly].





The Tamil Nadu Governor, Mr. K.K. Shah, and the Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, receiving Mr. Rajaji at the reception held in connection with the celebration of the silver jubilee of India's freedom at Raj Bhavan, Madras, on August 14, 1972.

Mr. M. P. Sivagnana Gramani, Deputy Chairman of the Legislative Council, said though the country had achieved political independence, there were many spheres which did not enjoy complete freedom. He expressed the hope that when the nation met to celebrate the golden jubilee of Independence, this would have been achieved.

Mr. C. P. Chitrarasu, Chairman, Legislative Council, described Gandhiji as a liberator and said his life must motivate every one to work for the emancipation of the have-nots and downtrodden people.

Mr. K. A. Mathialagan, Speaker of the Assembly, said Gandhiji had acknowledged the significant role played by the people of Tamil Nadu in the freedom struggle. The attainment of independence had posed a challenge to the leaders of the nation for they had to strive hard and end all disparities and achieve the economic emancipation of the masses.

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The Governor took over ten minutes to read his prepared speech in English. After this, the Chief Minister read a prepared speech in Tamil.

Mr. Nedunchezhian, also the Education Minister, recalled that C. N. Annadurai had advised that all those who had contributed to the achievement of Independence should be treated with honour irrespective of their present political affiliation.

At the stroke of midnight, the gathering observed two-minute silence in memory of the martyrs of the freedom struggle.

August 15, 1972

President to unveil Kamaraj portrait

Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran announced to-day [July 12] that a portrait of the late K. Kamaraj would be unveiled in the Legislative Assembly Hall.

Intervening in the debate on the Governor's address in the State Assembly, he said he had invited N. Sanjiva Reddy, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, to unveil the portrait, and as soon as his reply is received, the date will be decided.

The announcement was welcomed by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, Mr. D. Ramasami (Cong.), Mr. J. James (Janata), Mr. M.A. Latheef (ML), Mr. M. Ambikapathi (CPI). Mr. K. Kandaswamy (INFB) said portraits of Leaders like the late P.S. Kumaraswamy Raja should also be unveiled in the House.

Mr. Sundararaj (Cong.) had earlier pleaded for a portrait of Mr. Kamaraj, a former Chief Minister, in the Assembly Hall.

July 13, 1977

[On August 19, 1977, Reddy, who by then became President, unveiled the portrait]

'Common causes will unite us'

The Tamil Nadu Assembly to-day [July 16] saw the Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, and the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, moving with utmost cordiality and camaraderie in striking contrast to the rigid attitude they seemed to maintain on the first day of the sitting.

Both leaders, in their speeches during the debate on the Governor's address, referred to their long association. "We parted company only a few years ago," recalled the Chief Minister. They claimed to know each other well.

"Newspapers, which have been expecting us to come to blows, will be disappointed that nothing of the kind has happened," Mr. Ramachandran remarked.

As a climax to the expression of fraternal feelings came the Chief Minister's declaration that he and Mr. Karunanidhi would operate like a "double-barrel gun" while fighting for common causes. This was greeted with cheers by members of the DMK and the AIADMK.

July 17, 1977

MGR - Karunanidhi exchanges in Assembly

The Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran and the former Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, were engaged in a verbal duel on more than one occasion in the Tamil Nadu Assembly to-day [July 9].

The first provocation came when Mr. G. R. Edmund, Minister for Food and Co-operation, in his reply to a discussion on a Government resolution on Central Co-operative Banks said that a humanitarian approach was needed not only on the part of those who recovered the loans from agriculturists but also on the part of those who were to pay back the amount to the credit societies.

Mr. Karunanidhi said that he could understand the Minister advocating a humanitarian approach for officials recovering the loans and wondered what the Minister meant by expecting the same from the defaulters. This poser produced some mirth among the DMK members.

The Minister said that what he meant was that the well-to-do who could very well afford to repay should not hold back.

Mr. Karunanidhi wanted to know in what way the Government proposed to collect the money back and whether it would take recourse to 'japti' (attachment of property) with regard to these people. Mr. Edmund said the Government would not be lenient towards those who failed to pay up.

Both the Leader of the House, Mr. K. Manoharan, and the Chief Minister came to the rescue of the Food Minister.

Mr. Manoharan asked Mr. Karunanidhi, as former Chief Minister, to spell out what steps he would take under the situation.

Mr. Karunanidhi said that his Government took severe action, including 'japti', against the well-to-do who did not repay the loans but was lenient towards those who were indigent. The Government could not be lax in collecting the dues to the co-operative societies and banks as objections would be raised by the Reserve Bank and the Government of India.

At this stage, the Chief Minister intervened and recalled that the CPI and AIADMK partymen had undertaken fasts to persuade the previous Government to declare the drought-stricken Ramanathapuram district a famine-stricken area and to take ameliorative measures. Even at such a time, when there was drought, recovery measures like 'japti' and seizing of cattle were not given up and this was a matter widely criticised at public meetings.

Mr. Karunanidhi pointed out that his Government had taken several relief measures in Ramanathapuram district. The Chief Minister wondered whether the help had reached those for whom it was intended.

As to the clarification sought by Mr. Karunanidhi on the humanitarian approach expected of those who defaulted on payment, Mr. Ramachandran said any man worth his name should show human feelings towards others. The people who failed to repay should realise the suffering it would cause to others.

Replying to Mr. Karunanidhi's question as to how the Government proposed to realise its dues, Mr. Ramachandran said it would not be appropriate to spell out the policy now, just as it would be inappropriate to say anything on budget proposals in advance.

July 10, 1977



Governor K.K. Shah addressing the State Assembly on the intervening night of August 14-15, 1972 to observe the silver jubilee of Indian Independence. Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi seated in the front row.



Anna University Bill introduced in Assembly

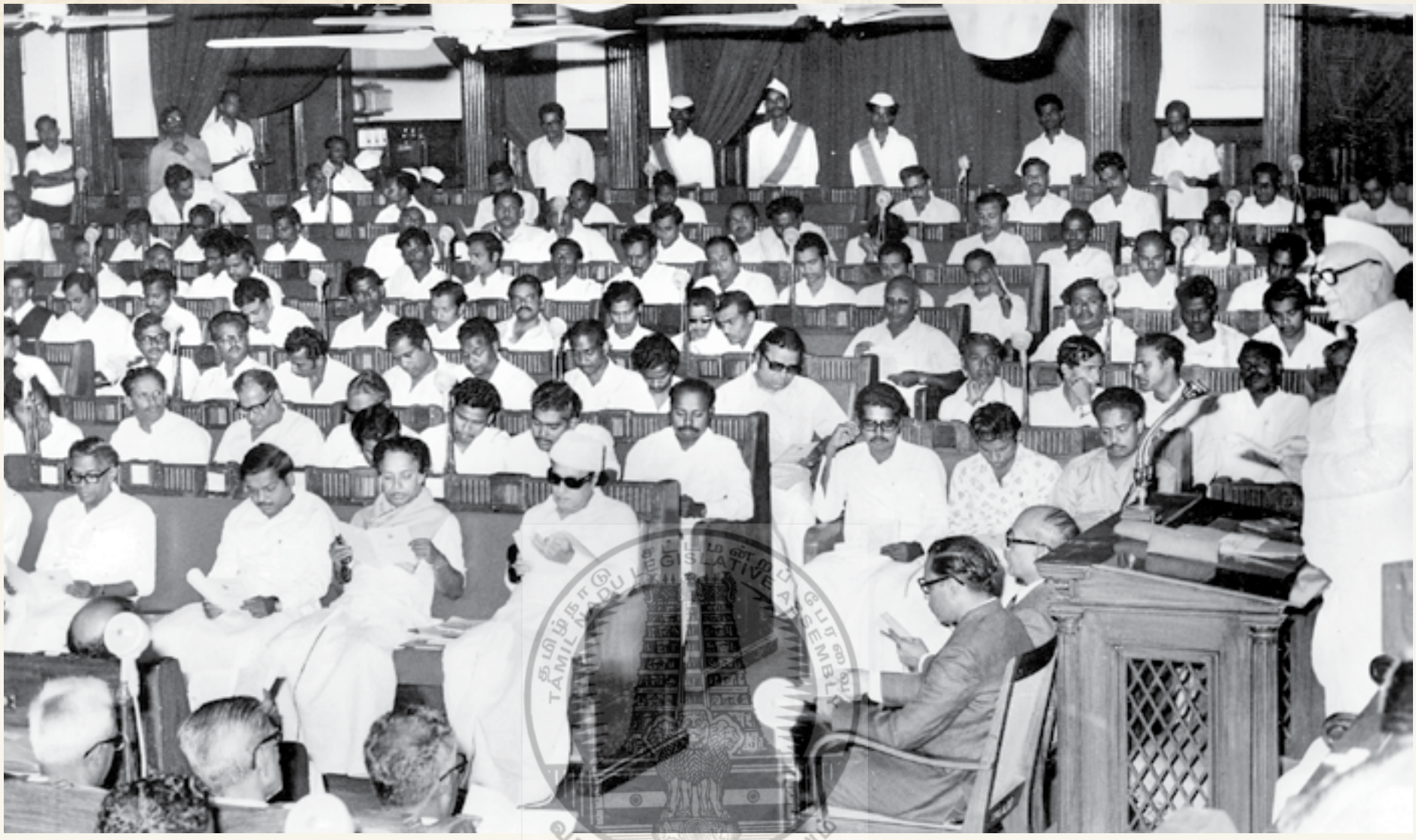
A Bill to set up a technological university in the State, named after the late C. N. Annadurai, was introduced in the Tamil Nadu Assembly to-day [April 3] by the Education Minister, Mr. C. Aranganayagam.

The Perarignar Anna University of Technology will be of a unitary type and the College of Engineering, Guindy, Madras, will be the principal seat of the proposed university, according to the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill. [The prefix in the nomenclature of the University - Perarignar - was dropped later and in 2001, the University was converted to an affiliating type varsity by bringing together all the engineering colleges.]The following four departments of the University of Madras located on the campus of the Alagappa College of Technology will form part of the university: Chemical Technology, Leather Technology, Textile Technology, and the School of Architecture and Town Planning. In addition, the Madras Institute of Technology, Madras, will be brought under the university.

The university will provide facilities and opportunities for higher education and research in engineering, technology, and allied sciences; devise and organise relevant programmes; foster co-operation and exchange of ideas between the academic and research community and industry; and promote the spirit of entrepreneurship and professional dedication among the students.



April 4, 1978 Anna University campus, Guindy, Chennai.



Governor Prabhudas B. Patwari addressing the joint session of the legislature on July 07, 1977. Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran sitting in the front row.

No blind support to Centre: MGR

The Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, told the Tamil Nadu Assembly to-day [September 13, 1978] that the State would not hesitate to oppose any move of the Central Government if it affected the interests of the Tamils.

Resuming his reply to the six-day discussion on the Governor's address, Mr. Ramachandran said the opposition had been accusing the State Government of extending blind support to the policies and programmes of the Centre. Even the Congress (I) leader, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, had asked whether he would have the courage to oppose the wrong policies of the Centre.

The State would not lend its co-operation to any scheme which would go against the interests of the people. He shared the Opposition view that the States lacked adequate powers and the Centre was encroaching even on their limited spheres. In fact, the Chief Minister said that he had raised his voice of protest against this tendency of the Centre on several occasion.

Mr. Ramachandran, in reply to a query from Mr. S. J. Sadiq Pasha (DMK), said the mass rapid transit system project in Madras was awaiting the Planning Commission's clearance. It was proposed to have a surface-cum-elevated railway and take up in the first phase the 5.5-km stretch from the Beach station to Bharati (Pycrofts) Road. He would put forth the case strongly at the coming National Development Council meeting at Delhi this month. When the Government imposed excise levy on power generation, the State Government opposed it tooth and nail. Besides writing to the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister, it took up the issue with

the Chief Ministers of other States. Since the Centre was not responsive, the State had to raise, quite reluctantly, the power tariff.

He had told the Asoka Mehta Committee on Panchayati Raj Administration, of which he was a member, that Tamil Nadu would not agree to the creation of district boards or mandal committees as envisaged by the panel.

On the enforcement of Prohibition, the Chief Minister said Karnataka had acceded to the request to introduce a five-km dry belt along its border with Tamil Nadu. It had become effective on July 1. He expressed the hope that the Chief Ministers of Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, who had earlier turned down this request, would reconsider their decision.

Mr. Ramachandran referred to members' complaint of rampant illicit distillation and bootlegging in the State and said the Government intended to make the penalty deterrent. It was his wish that a penalty of six months' rigorous imprisonment should be made compulsory even for the first offence. At the same time, he pointed out, the law alone could not achieve the objective. All political parties should endeavour to put down the evil.

It was not his claim that his partymen did not indulge in such illegal activities. But he would assure the House that party considerations would not stand in the way of punishment.

The Chief Minister said the State-owned Poompuhar Shipping Corporation proposed to acquire two new ships, each with a capacity to carry 35,000 tonnes of coal. The old ships would be sold.

Mr. Ramachandran said it was being asked repeatedly from public platforms and inside the House why action had not been taken on the basis of the Sarkaria Commission's [which went into allegations of corruption against Karunanidhi and some of his ministers in the 1970s] findings. Pointing out that one could not be hasty in such matters, he said the report was being examined by the Law Ministry, the Accountant-General and other legal experts with a view to ascertaining what action should be taken against whom, the grounds of charge, and other issues.

Once the detailed scrutiny was over, the Government would certainly take appropriate action against whoever had been found to be responsible for corruption. None could escape action just because he had joined the AIADMK. He was emphatic that once the guilt had been proved, the person concerned could no longer remain in his party (the AIADMK).

Referring to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. M. Karunanidhi's charge about illicit quarrying at Pallavaram, in the name of a co-operative society with which a ruling party MLA was involved, the Chief Minister said it was true that the District Collector had imposed a penalty. The member had gone on appeal, saying the penalty was high. In regard to the offence of trespass alleged to have been committed by the member, order was yet to be passed by the District Collector, Mr. Ramachandran said, and assured the House that the law would take its own course irrespective of the fact that the accused was ruling party member.

While dealing with the labour situation, Mr. Ramachandran deprecated a certain industrial management for attempting to break workers' unity by putting up its own "stooges" as leaders. It was deplorable that the trade unions could not hoist their flags or hold gate-meetings – workers' basic rights.

If the State Government was showing utmost restraint in this matter, it was because of its concern for national interest. The industrial units were manufacturing components essential for defence equipment. Should these factories be closed, it would have serious repercussions for the nation's defence preparedness.

Mr. Ramachandran did not, however, give the name of the firm. Nor did he oblige Mr. Suppu with the name of the pseudo-trade union leader he was referring to. He, however, appealed to the labour leaders to caution the workers not to fall prey to the design of the management.

The Chief Minister made a special plea to political parties not to do anything that would even indirectly encourage casteism or religious fanaticism. Viewing everything from a communal or religious angle would only create disharmony. He agreed to personally inquire into the recent incidents at Peranambut in North Arcot district [now divided into Vellore, Ranipet, Thirupathur and TIruvannamalai districts].

After the Chief Minister's reply, the House adopted the motion of thanks to the Governor which was moved by Mr. R. Manimaran (AIADMK).

September 14, 1978

Colonial building turns into a monument

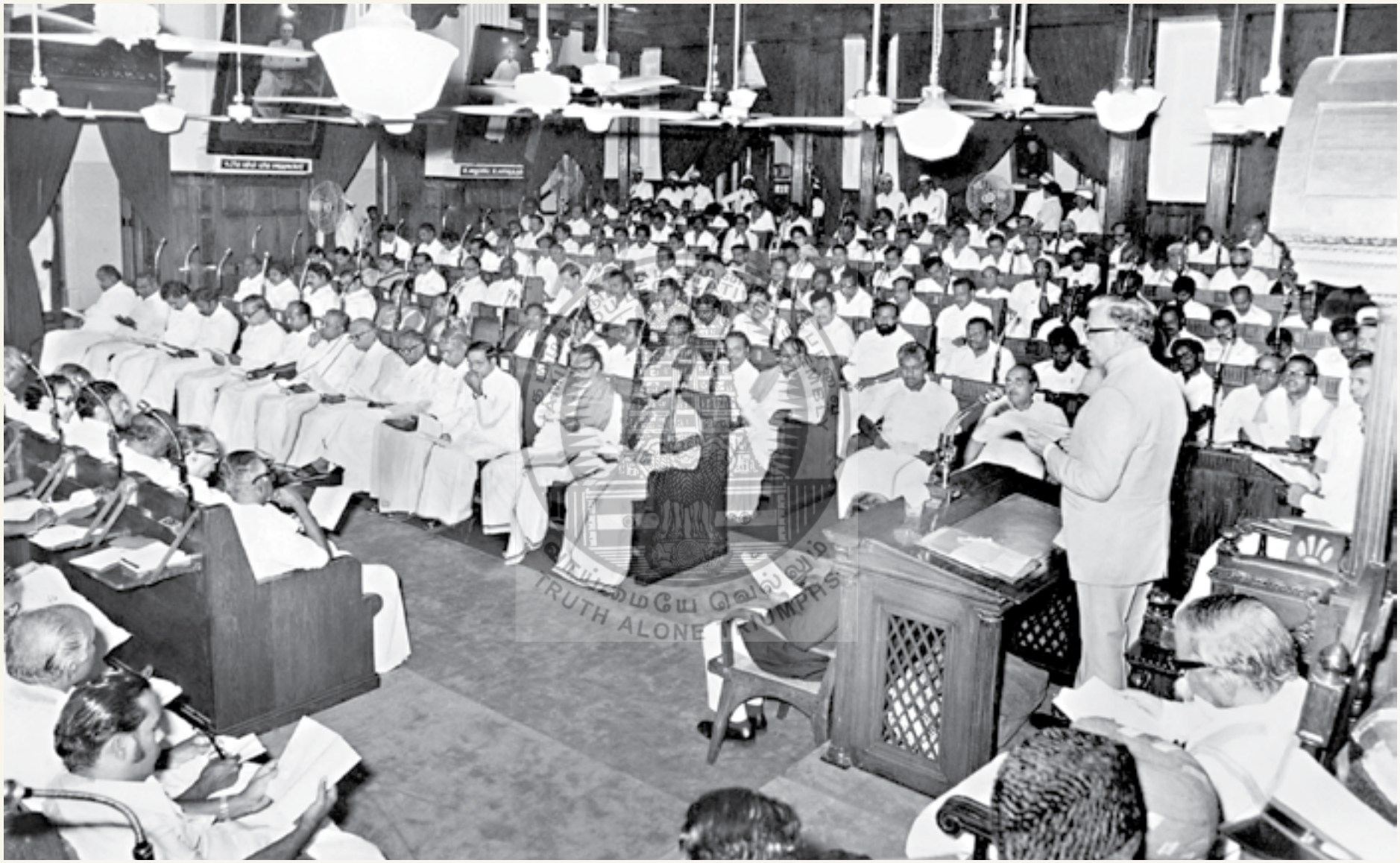
Age has caught up with yet another colonial building in Madras. No one seems to know exactly how old it is. The records indicate that the imposing three-storey structure behind Rajaji Hall in the Government Estate could be over 250 years old. In any case, it is clear that the building is at the end of its useful life.

It was bought by Sir Robert Clive of the East India Company in 1749 from an unidentified Sultan.

A portion of the ornate ceiling of the old legislators hostel building collapsed last week. The hostel building, which once served as official residence of the Governor of Madras and more recently as legislature offices of the DMK, the CPI, the CPI(M), and the Janata Party, may hereafter have to stand as an untenanted monument. Cracks appeared in its splendidly carved ceiling last week. Even as repairs were being attempted, a good section of it came crashing down.

No one was hurt, but it was a clear warning that the building was unsafe for occupation by the four MLAs who live there and by the staff of the Official Languages Commission. The authorities have served notice on the occupants to vacate the premises immediately.

January 13, 1987



Governor S.L. Khurana addressing the joint sitting of the Legislative Assembly and the Council on March 08, 1985. Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran sitting in the front row.



A view of the Ezhilagam complex in January 1968. The Board of Revenue once functioned from there.

Board of Revenue abolished

The curtain was rung on the 194-year-old Board of Revenue today [August 6, 1980] when the Tamil Nadu Assembly passed a Bill to abolish it. The Revenue Minister, Mr. S. D. Somasundaram, and the members who participated in the brief discussion hailed it as a historic step.

Tamil Nadu joins other States like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Punjab in ending the relic of the British days. Replying to the discussion, the Minister said the Revenue Board had acquired the reputation of delaying matters which came up before it. The Government had brought forward the Bill to abolish the Board as it was keen on seeing that its policies and plans for the people were implemented without delay through the district administration.

Mr. Somasundaram said no vacuum would be created by the abolition of the Board. Appropriate authorities like Additional Secretaries, Commissioners, or District Collectors would be appointed at different places each in separate charge of departments like transport, commerce, land reforms.

The Commissioners would be the appellate authorities. Earlier, while moving the Bill, the Minister said the Board was created in 1786 by the East India Company to oversee the work of Collectors and collect revenues. Later, the elected Governments tried several times to end the system as they felt that it was out of place in a growing democracy where the administration should function at a swift pace. Rajaji [as Chief Minister] tried in 1937 and 1952 and Mr. Mathialagan [as Revenue Minister] in 1969 to abolish the Board but did not succeed. Whoever attempted it invariably failed. The AIADMK Government brought forward a Bill last February, but it was dismissed. Now it had come up with a new Bill.

No haste

The Minister denied that the Government was being hasty. Actually the matter had been given deep consideration and the Government had taken a decision only after studying various reports, including the report prepared during the DMK regime. That report had cited several advantages in abolishing the Board of Revenue.

Heart of administration

Earlier participating in the debate, Mr. Durai Murugan (DMK) expressed his fear that the abolition of the Board which was the "heart" of the administration would create a vacuum. He pointed out that the Government was attempting something which had been attempted at least 15 times before by the previous Governments, including the British administration, and given up as impractical.

The DMK Government had also tried to do it and gave up the idea. The Board of Revenue was the ultimate appellate authority and if it was abolished, the aggrieved would have to approach the Ministers or the Secretaries. There would be an exodus to the Secretariat. He felt that the Government was being hasty and urged that the Bill be referred to a select committee to consider the advantages and disadvantages.

Dr. K. Samarasam and Messrs. M. S. Manickam of the AIADMK, L. Elayaperumal of the Cong.-I, J. Hemachandran of the CPI(M), and S. Alagarsami of the CPI welcomed the abolition of the Board saying that the Board was a stumbling block for the implementation of the Government's policies and functioning as a parallel government.

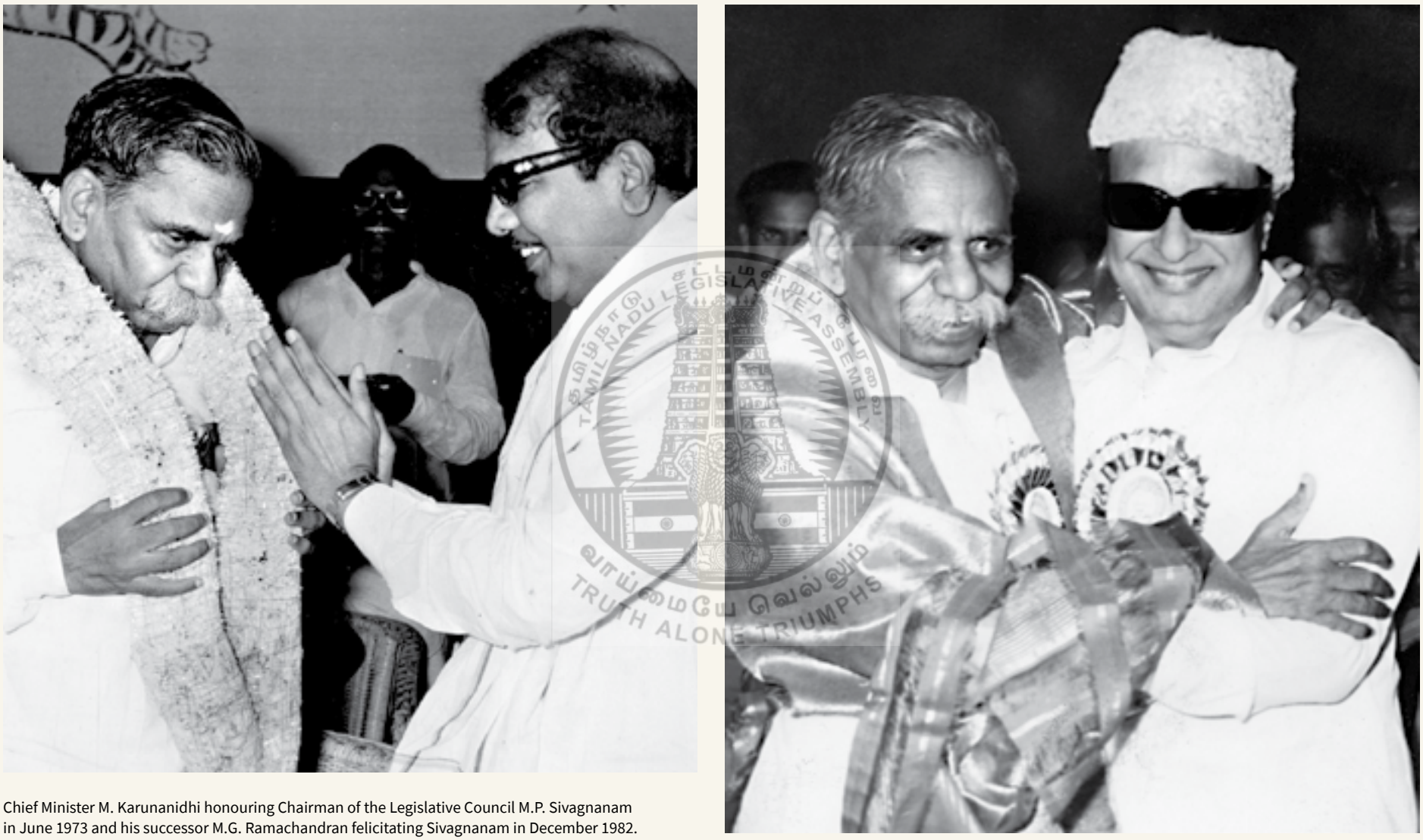
The House passed the measure after the Minister's reply.

August 7, 1980

The Board was created in 1786 by the East India Company to oversee the work of Collectors and to collect revenues. Later, the elected Governments tried several times to end the system as they felt that it was out of place in a growing democracy where the administration should function at a swift pace. Rajaji tried in 1937 and 1952 and Mr. Mathialagan in 1969 to abolish the Board but did not succeed.



Resolution on abolition of Legislative Council passed



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi honouring Chairman of the Legislative Council M.P. Sivagnanam in June 1973 and his successor M.G. Ramachandran felicitating Sivagnanam in December 1982.

The Tamil Nadu Assembly [on May 14] passed, by a 136-25 vote, a resolution recommending to Parliament the abolition of the Legislative Council. While the AIADMK, the CPI(M), the All-India Forward Block and the Republican Party of India voted in favour of the resolution, the DMK, the CPI, the Muslim League and the Janata Party opposed it.

The 62-member Congress (I) group and the lone member of the Gandhi-Kamaraj National Congress (GKNC) withdrew from the House at the end of the debate and did not participate in voting. While still inside, the Congress (I) member, Mr. N.S.V. Chithan, said though arguments could be marshalled for and against the resolution, the party did not want to associate itself with the move considering the circumstances in which the resolution was brought for.

Hectic activity

Earlier, there was hectic activity in the lobby with the Congress (I) members holding consultations and the party leaders frequently rushing to the telephone, apparently to consult the high command. Once the party's stand was known, the Congress (I) members started withdrawing from the House one by one, and Mr. Chithan was the last to leave. The GKNC leader,

5. அரசினர் தனித் தீர்மானம்.

தமிழ் நாடு சட்டமன்ற மேலவையை நீக்குதல்.

மாண்புமிகு டாக்டர் இரா. நெடுஞ்செழியன் : மாண்புமிகு பேரவைத் தலைவர் அவர்களே, மாண்புமிகு முதல்வர் அவர்களின் பெயரால் உள்ள கீழ்க் கண்ட தனித் தீர்மானத்தை நான் மொழிகிறேன்—

" அரசியலமைப்புச் சட்டத்தின் 169-வது உறுப்பின் (1)-வது கூறின்படி தமிழ்நாடு சட்டமன்ற மேலவை நீக்கப்பட வேண்டும் (abolished) என தமிழ்நாடு சட்டமன்றப் பேரவை தீர்மானிக்கிறது. "

1918-வது ஆண்டில் மாண்டேகு செம்ஸ்போர்டு அரசியல் சீர்திருத்தக் குழுவினுடைய அறிக்கையின் பேரில் மேலவைத் தத்துவம் முதல், முதல் இந்தியாவில் உருப்பெற்று எழுந்தது. அந்தத் தத்துவத்தை 1935-வது ஆண்டு இந்திய அரசாங்கச் சட்டமும் ஏற்றுக்கொண்டது. இந்தியா விடுதலை பெற்றதற்குப் பிறகு தனி அரசியல் அமைப்புச் சட்டம் ஒன்று அமைக்கப்பட வேண்டும் என்ற தன்மையில், அரசியல் அமைப்புக் குழு ஒன்று அமைக்கப்பட்டு, பாபு ராஜேந்திர பிரசாத் அவர்களின் சீரிய தலைமையில் கீழ் அமைக்கப்பட்டு ஒரு தனி அரசியல் அமைப்புச் சட்டம் உருவாக்குவதற்கான ஏற்பாடுகள் நடைபெற்றன.

An image of the resolution on abolishing the Legislative Council on May 14, 1986

Mr. Kumari Ananthan, also withdrew from the voting, after appealing to the Chief Minister to circulate the resolution draft for public consultations.

At 1.39 p.m., amid thumping of desks by the ruling AIADMK members, the Speaker declared the resolution passed. Now, it requires ratification by Parliament.

V. R. Nedunchezhian, Finance Minister and Leader of the House, who moved the resolution on behalf of the Chief Minister, Mr. M.G. Ramachandran, said the Government had no ulterior motives in seeking the abolition of the Upper House. The Constitution had provided for it, and the Government had weighed the pros and cons.

The decision, he said, was not sudden as the Opposition tried to make it out. Instead, it had been under consideration of the Chief Minister for the past seven or eight months, and discussions held about its advantages and disadvantages. Pointing to precedents, the Minister said West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh had abolished the Legislative Council in their States earlier. When the resolution for abolition of the second chamber in West Bengal came up before Parliament, the DMK had supported the move. The DMK and the Communists had also supported the Council dissolution in Andhra Pradesh. Rebutting criticism that the ruling party was afraid of losing majority in the Council if elections were held for the local bodies' seats, Mr. Nedunchezhian said the Government had not thought of such a move even when in a minority after it came to power in 1977. It now enjoyed a majority in the Council and would continue to do so even if elections were held to fill the vacancies, he said. "The Government was well within democratic norms in abolishing the Council, and it was untenable to call the action anti-democratic or murder of democracy."

Political wisdom

The move was also not aimed at the DMK leader, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, an MLC, the Minister asserted. In this context, he referred to Mr. Karunanidhi resigning his Assembly seat a couple of years ago, and said, "We very much wanted him to continue" and even Mr. K. Rajaram, the then Speaker, appealed to him not to quit. "We are not bankrupt of political wisdom to seek his oblivion," he said adding, "Both Mr. Karunanidhi and Mr. M.G. Ramachandran are popular with the masses, and their sway will continue." As such, "we are not motivated by political animosity", Mr. Nedunchezhian declared. In this context, he said Mr. Karunanidhi could be returned to the Assembly any time. The late K. Kamaraj, and the late C. N. Annadurai were in the Council once, but were subsequently elected to the Assembly. It would also be not correct to say that teachers and graduates would be deprived of opportunities following the Council abolition, the Minister said. They could be elected to the Assembly, and even now graduates, teachers/lawyers and doctors were among the members of the Lower House, he said giving out figures. Commending the resolution to the House, Mr. Nedunchezhian quoted Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as saying that the second chamber was provided for in the Constitution "purely as an experimental measure" and that it could be got rid of.

Three-hour debate

During the three-hour debate, members of the DMK, the CPI, the Muslim League and the Janata Party attacked the move as anti-democratic. The Government was in great haste as the ruling party had suffered reverses in the recent local body elections and was unsure of retaining its majority in the Upper House.

They were not prepared to believe Mr. Nedunchezhian's statement that the proposal had been under the consideration for seven or eight months. If so, why was such an important move not mentioned in the Governor's address or during the campaign for the recent local body elections, they asked.

Even Mr. K. Ramani (CPI-M), who supported the resolution, was critical of its timing, saying it gave the impression that the ruling party was afraid of further erosion in its popularity as it were to lose its majority in the Council after the reverses in the local body elections.

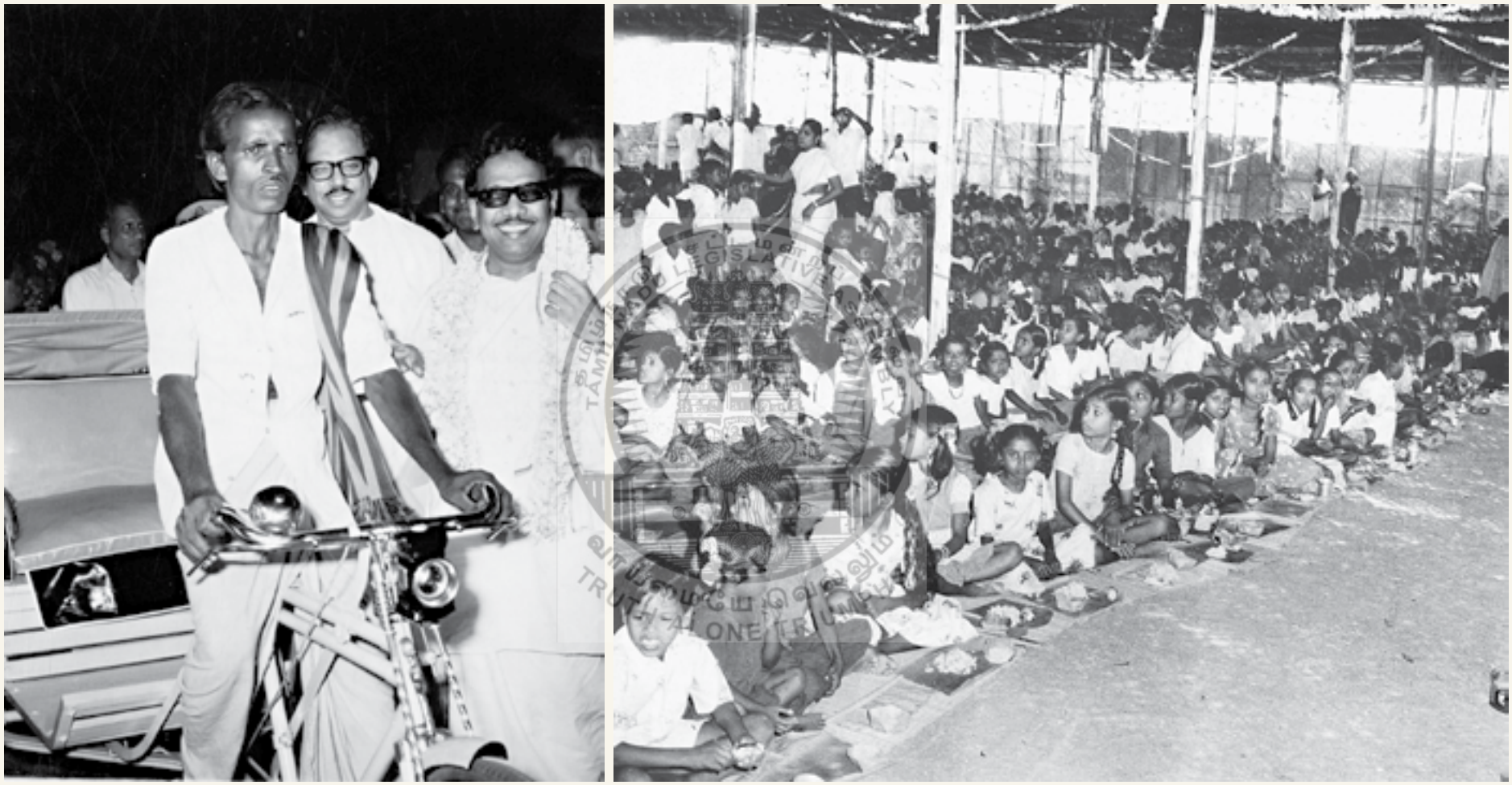
May 15, 1986

"Both Mr. Karunanidhi and Mr. M.G. Ramachandran are popular with the masses, and their sway will continue"

V. R. NEDUNCHEZHIAN
Finance Minister

"The late K. Kamaraj, and the late C. N. Annadurai were in the Council once, but were subsequently elected to the Assembly. It would also be not correct to say that teachers and graduates would be deprived of opportunities following the Council abolition, the Minister said. They could be elected to the Assembly"

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The replacement of hand rickshaws with cycle rickshaws in June 1973 and the inauguration of nutritious noon meal scheme in July 1982 mark the highlights of numerous welfare schemes launched by the Tamil Nadu government during the period. (Left) Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi and Education Minister V.R. Nedunchezhian seen with a cycle rickshaw puller in Chennai. (Right) Children of Pappakurichi in Tiruchi district taking food as part of the noon meal scheme.

SECTION 4

GROWING IN STRENGTH

Assembly celebrates golden jubilee

The golden jubilee of the Tamil Nadu Assembly was celebrated this evening [May 5] amidst scenes of joy and emotion.

The Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, four of his Cabinet colleagues, a few former Speakers, Deputy Speakers and members past and present, who had served the Assembly for more than four terms, were among those who were honoured with a shield and shawl.

Describing the celebrations as historic, Mr. Karunanidhi paid his respects to the former members some of whom had served as Ministers, Speakers, and Deputy Speakers and said their presence inspired the present day leaders to emulate the path shown by them.

The Chief Minister said the Tamil Nadu Government proposed to erect a memorial in Madras for Sankaralinganar who laid down his life for changing the name of Madras State into Tamil Nadu.

Mr. Karunanidhi said the Assembly had glorious traditions and it was the responsibility of every member to maintain the dignity and decorum of the House. Sometimes, certain incidents happening in the House should not make one think ill of the Assembly. Just because a storm was whipped up by the sea, people could not afford to hate it. Similarly one did not abuse the sky when lightning left a trail of destruction somewhere.

The celebrations were, however, boycotted by the AIADMK, the main Opposition party in the House, in protest against what it called the Chief Minister's refusal to initiate action against members responsible for the March 25 incidents [in which both the Chief Minister and the then Leader of the Opposition, Jayalalithaa, were allegedly attacked] in the House.



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi honouring Education Minister and Leader of the House (Assembly) K. Anbazhagan during the golden jubilee of Tamil Nadu Assembly on May 05, 1989.

Strong foundation

The Chief Minister recalled how the Tamil Nadu Assembly had enacted laws in the early 1920s to lay a strong foundation for social justice and economic uplift of the backward classes.

Welcoming the gathering, the Speaker Mr. Tamizhkudimagan, instanced how historic laws had been enacted by the House to the envy of other States. It was Rajaji who made it possible for all people to enter temples. Kamaraj brought in a progressive reform by enacting the tenancy law for the benefit of the tiller. C. N. Annadurai brought glory to the State by renaming Madras State as Tamil Nadu. The State witnessed the emergence of the Slum Clearance Board and the various social welfare measures during the term of Mr. Karunanidhi. The ten-year regime of M. G. Ramachandran saw the coming-up of many universities, the Speaker said, honouring Mr. Karunanidhi with a shawl and a shield for having served 25 years as a legislator.

Mr. Tamizhkudimagan said Mr. Karunanidhi's invaluable gift to the women in the State was his decision to confer the right to inherit property on women. "The self-respect movement spearheaded by the late E. V Ramaswami adopted a resolution as early as in February 1929 at Chengalpattu, demanding rights for women to inherit

properties. The Government is now trying to translate the wish of EVR. The House will enact the legislation in a couple of days," Mr. Karunanidhi said.

Mr. K. Anbazhagan, Education Minister and Leader of the House, said leaders of various parties had jealously guarded the dignity of the House despite political differences. Their ideals should be a beacon light to the present day legislators in the discharge of their onerous responsibilities.

The glorious traditions of the House and the many progressive laws enacted by it in the past were recalled by Mr. Kumari Ananthan, Deputy Leader of the Congress, Mr. K. Ramani (CPI-M), Mr. Y. Venkateswara Dikshithar (Janata Dal), Mr. S. Alagarsamy (CPI), Mr. M.A. Latheef (ML), Mr. Pon Vijayaraghavan (T. N. Janata), and Mr. P.H. Pandian (AIADMK-Janaki). All of them said the very presence of the former members had a tremendous impact on them.

Unprecedented glory

Mr. M. P. Sivagnanam, former Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Council, speaking on behalf of the honoured guests, said only two leaders – Mr. Rajaji and Mr. Karunanidhi – had crowned themselves with unprecedented glory as the two had the honour of coming back to power twice.

Mrs. Jothi Venkatachalam, former Minister and former Governor of Kerala, Mr. M.A. Manickavelu, former Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Council, Mr. Pulavar Govindan, former Speaker of the Assembly, and Mr. Sivagnanam, and former Assembly Secretaries Mr. J. Hanumanthappa, Mr. C. D. Natarajan, Mr. M. Shanmugasubramaniam, and Mr. G.M. Alagarswamy were among those who were honoured by the Chief Minister.

The visitors' galleries overflowed with officials, special invitees, and the family members of the Chief Minister, other Ministers, and members of the House.

The portraits of Thiruvalluvar, Mahatama Gandhi, C. N. Annadurai, Rajaji, Kamaraj, Mohammed Ismail, Dr. Ambedkar, E. V. Ramaswami, and Muthuramalinga Thevar that adorn the House were decorated with serial lights.

The Chief Minister hosted a dinner in honour of the Members of the Assembly at the Government Estate.

May 6, 1989



Former Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Council M.P. Sivagnanam



Former Minister M.A. Manickavelu

"The Assembly has glorious traditions and it is the responsibility of every member to maintain the dignity and decorum of the House. Sometimes, certain incidents happening in the House should not make one think ill of the Assembly. Just because a storm is whipped up by the sea, people cannot afford to hate it

M. KARUNANIDHI
Chief Minister



Leader of the AIADMK (Jayalalitha) Legislature Party, J. Jayalalitha, taking oath as member of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly at the Assembly House in Madras on February 6, 1989. DMK supremo and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M. Karunanidhi, looks on.

Welfare measures not populist: Chief Minister

Karunanidhi says the poor and the downtrodden could not be asked to wait to enjoy the fruits of long-term projects. Last year alone, 10,000 girls and 66,000 pregnant women were benefited under the marriage and maternity assistance schemes.

The Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, today [January 24] defended the various welfare measures implemented for the benefit of the poor, and said the schemes would not jeopardise the financial discipline of the State government or affect the Plan expenditure.

"A truly welfare Government cannot afford to be indifferent to the plight of the people struggling for their daily existence even while planning various long-term measures for their benefit," he said in his reply to the discussion on the Motion of Thanks to the Governor for his address to the Assembly.

Mr. Karunanidhi did not agree with the view that schemes like free distribution of rice to the poor, supply of eggs to children, and marriage and maternity assistance were all populist in nature and aimed at safeguarding the vote bank. He was conscious that even the noon meal scheme designed to benefit 80 lakh schoolchildren, initiated by the previous AIADMK regime, could not ensure landslide victory for that party in the elections.

The Chief Minister contended that the poor and the downtrodden could not be asked to wait to enjoy the fruits of long-term projects. Last year alone, 10,000 girls and 66,000 pregnant women were benefited under the marriage and maternity assistance schemes. Also, the Government granted financial aid to 88 persons to undergo heart surgery and to 23 persons suffering from kidney failure.

Referring to the criticism of the members that the Governor's address was silent on farmers' problems, Mr. Karunanidhi said his government was very considerate and had written off penal interest on short, medium, and long-term loans to the extent of ₹39 crore. The government had decided to honour the commitment of concessions that cost ₹67 crore announced by the previous AIADMK regime. The Chief Minister said he would announce further concessions during the budget.

Recalling how the recommendations of a committee set up by the former Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, to redress the grievances of farmers were gathering dust, he said the present Government at the Centre had promised to take a decision soon on the report.

'Contradictory stand'

Mr. Karunanidhi criticised the AIADMK for its "contradictory" stand on the establishment of an inter-State council. When the Sarkaria Commission sought the views of the previous AIADMK Government on the subject, it wrote to the Centre in 1985 that such a council was not necessary. Later, it justified its views saying that as an inter-State council had not been in existence in the last 35 years, it did not see any need for such a set up. But during the recent Lok Sabha poll, the AIADMK in its election manifesto promised to fight for the establishment of an inter-State council, he said.

The DMK, on the other hand, had been demanding consistently the constitution of such a council in line with the recommendations of the Rajamannar Committee, which went into the question of autonomy for the States. Subsequently, when the Assembly adopted a resolution demanding State autonomy in 1974, and sent a copy to the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, she wrote back saying that the subject should be discussed at the Chief Minister's level before arriving at a decision. She did not term State autonomy as a dangerous and secessionist idea. But Mr. Rajiv Gandhi during the recent Lok Sabha poll called the State autonomy demand as one which would lead to balkanisation of the nation. Mr. Karunanidhi was confident that Mr. V. P. Singh would convene a conference of Chief Ministers to discuss such issues.

Welcoming the Centre's assurance that the recommendations of the Mandal Commission would be implemented early, he said the previous Government at the Centre had not initiated any action, although the Commission submitted its report in December 1980 and it was placed on the table of the Lok Sabha in April, 1982.

According to the Commission's report, he said, out of 1.74 lakh Class-1 officers in the Central Government offices and its undertakings, only 9,891 persons belonged to SC and ST and 8,169 to backward classes. And out of 9.13 lakh Class-2 officers, 1.66 lakh belonged to SC and ST and 97,000 to backward classes. In Class-3 and 4, out of 4.85 lakh employees, 1.18 lakh belonged to SC and ST and 90,575 to backward classes. He hoped that the Union Government would implement the recommendations at the earliest and help the backward classes realise their long-cherished hopes and aspirations in employment opportunities.

Financial constraint

The Government, he said, was aware of the financial constraints of the local bodies and proposed to make an announcement in the budget that would seek to improve the position.

The Corporation of Madras had a Rs. 68-crore budget against the Rs. 1,000 crore budget the Bombay Municipal Corporation had. The Government was considering ways and means to increase the revenue of the Madras Corporation. The AIADMK Government did not honour its commitment made on June 1, 1986, to make all the teaching and non-teaching staff in the municipal schools as Government servants. The DMK Government has now decided to implement the decision from April 1 this year. This step would benefit the municipalities to the extent of Rs. 10 crore.

Refuting an allegation by Mr. Peter Alphonse (Congress) that the Government had failed to return the money collected from thousands of poor farmers and daily wage earners towards a defunct insurance scheme, Mr. Karunanidhi said the scheme was launched by the AIADMK and although only three lakh farmers initially joined it, village officials were pressured to bring in more people and the figure swelled to 16 lakh.

Under the scheme, each member had to pay Rs. 10 a month, of which Rs. 3.50 would go to the Life Insurance and the remainder kept in their savings account. The scheme floundered soon, and a vast majority of the members after paying subscription for a couple of months defaulted. The money collected on their behalf was in safe custody and the Government would arrange to return the deposits with due interest to all. There had been no irregularities or cheating in this regard, he said.

The Chief Minister dismissed a charge by Mr. K. Arjunan (AIADMK) that IAS and IPS officials were on compulsory wait and said this was only true of the AIADMK regime. Quoting figures, he said 53 IAS officials were kept in compulsory wait ranging from 30 days to 100 days and 20 IPS officials from 56 days to 107 days by the previous Government.

The funniest part of the allegation of the AIADMK member, the Chief Minister said, was that the Government had ordered surveillance by CID personnel when the general secretary of the AIADMK, Ms. Jayalalitha, visited Hyderabad recently. The registration numbers of the two cars alleged to have been used by the CID personnel to follow the AIADMK leader, on investigation, turned out to be a scooter owned by a person in Salem and another a tractor owned by a woman of Mannargudi.

Warning to policemen

The Chief Minister warned that police personnel colluding with illicit liquor traders would be hauled under the Goondas Act.

Though he could not claim that he had completely put down bootlegging, the social evil had been controlled to a large extent now. He was aware that the problem could not be solved without the cooperation of people and police personnel. But ironically there were strong links between bootleggers and some police personnel. So, the Government had decided to apply the Goondas Act not only against brewers of illicit liquor, but also against police personnel found hand in glove with them.

Mr. Karunanidhi said out of 5.17 lakh pending prohibition cases in the court, 2.93 lakh cases were compounded, thanks to an amendment to the prohibition law. Till November last, 4.68 lakh cases out of 6.98 lakh pending were allowed to be compounded leading to the realisation of a sum of Rs. 13 crore. The Chief Minister said the plugging of loopholes in the Excise rules relating to the manufacture and sale of liquor had helped the State government to realise an additional revenue of Rs. 200 crore.

Gas pipeline

The Centre, he said, had agreed to examine Tamil Nadu's request for the construction of a gas pipeline to tap power potential in the State. The Union Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals, Mr. M. S. Gurupadasami, in a recent communication, had assured that the Gas Authority of India Ltd. would examine the possibility of bringing natural gas from the western gas fields to the South through a pipeline to boost the power potential in the State. Mr. Karunanidhi recalled how the previous regime at the Centre had turned a deaf ear to repeated appeals of the Tamil Nadu Government to help bring in gas to the South. He thanked the National Front Government for initiating quick action on the request of the State in this regard.

Appeal in Supreme Court

The State Government, the Chief Minister said, had decided to prefer an appeal in the Supreme Court against the order of the Division Bench of the Madras High Court which had commuted the death sentence into life imprisonment on Jayaprakash who caused the death of nine members of a family at Virugambakkam, a suburb of Madras, in February 1984. He said the Court had commuted the death sentence citing the long delay in the disposal of the mercy petition and the consequent great mental agony suffered by the accused. Mr. Karunanidhi said the mercy petition was sent to the President on August 1985, and was rejected in June 1988. According to his information, the petition was lying with the Union Home Ministry from October 25, 1985 to June 7, 1988, leading to the delay in the disposal of the petition.

This instance, the Chief Minister, said had showed amply how the previous Government at the Centre remained inactive and indifferent.

January 25, 1990

> **A truly welfare Government cannot afford to be indifferent to the plight of the people struggling for their daily existence even while planning various long-term measures for their benefit**
>
> **M. KARUNANIDHI**
> **Chief Minister**

Hindu women get equal property rights

The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly today [May 6] adopted an amendment to the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, in its application to the State, to confer on daughters of Hindu families the rights equal to sons to coparcenary property.

It would have retrospective effect from March 25, 1989, when the Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, announced the legislation. Any partition or sale of property subsequent to that date in contravention of the provisions in the amendment would be null and void, said the Law Minister, Mr. S. J. Sadiq Pasha.

When the Speaker, Mr. Tamizhkudimagan, put the measure to vote, the entire House responded in one voice, “none against”.

Appreciating the gesture of the members, the Chief Minister said the idea of equal rights for women and men was mooted in the form of a resolution at the first self-respect conference at Chengalpattu in 1929.

After a lapse of six decades, the DMK Government had drawn up legislation. Moving the Bill for consideration, the Law Minister said that at present, daughters were not members of the coparcenary under the Hindu Mitakshara Law and were not entitled to claim partition in coparcenary property. This had led to the creation of a socially pernicious dowry system with its attendant social evils.

To eradicate these evils by positive means, which would simultaneously ameliorate the conditions of women in Hindu society, it was necessary to confer the same rights on a daughter as a son had in a Hindu joint family.

The provision, however, would not apply to a partition which had been effected before the date of the commencement of the amending Act. At the discussion stage, irrespective of party affiliations, all speakers welcomed the Bill as a long-felt necessity which would enhance the status of women.

May 7, 1989



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi and Law Minister S.J. Sadiq Pasha (right) seen in the picture, which was taken at Tiruvarur in June 1971.

Rendering of Tamil Anthem at the beginning

New practice

In a significant departure from the earlier practice, the address of the Governor, Mr.Bhishma Narain Singh, to the Legislative Assembly on Thursday was preceded by the playing of the official invocation song in Tamil, "Neerarum Kadaludutha"

The members stood in silence when the song was played. After the Speaker read out the Tamil version of the Governor's address, the National Anthem was played.

In the past the Governor would enter the House, deliver the address and leave.

July 05, 1991

மாண்புமிகு டாக்டர் மு. கருணாநிதி : மாண்புமிகு பேரவைத் தலைவரவர்களே, இந்த மாமன்றத்தினுடைய வரலாற்றில் புதியதொரு பொன்னேடு புரளுகிறது என்று நாமெல்லாம் மகிழத்தக்க அளவிற்கு பெண்களுக்குச் சொத்துரிமை என்ற தலைப்பு உள்ள சட்டம் இன்றைக்கு நிறைவேறுகின்றது.

இந்தச் சட்டம் நிறைவேறுகின்ற தறுவாயில் என்னுடைய கருத்துக்களையும் இங்கே கூறப்பட்ட கருத்துக்களோடு இணைத்துக் கொள்வதில் நான் பெருமை அடைகிறேன். இதுபோன்ற ஒரு சட்டம் இல்லாமலே கூட ஒரு சில இல்லங்களில் பெற்றோர்களுடைய இதயக் கனிவின் காரணமாக ஆண்கள், பெண்கள் இருவரும் சமமாக நடத்தப்படுகிற நிலைமைகளை நாம் உணர்கின்றோம். அது ஏதோ விதி விலக்காக நடக்கிற காரியங்கள் என்ற காரணத்தால் அதை ஒரு விதியாக்கவே ஆக்கிவிட வேண்டுமென்ற எண்ணம் கொண்டு இந்த அரசு அமைச்சரவையில் ஆழச் சிந்தித்து எடுத்த முடிவை இந்த அவையின் வாயிலாக இன்றைக்கு நிறைவேற்றிக் கொண்டிருக்கிறது.. பெண்களைப் பற்றி கவிச் சக்கரவர்த்தி பாரதி எத்தனையோ அருமையான கவிதைகளைப் பாடியிருக்கிறார். அவருடைய வழித் தோன்றல் புரட்சிக் கவிஞர் பாரதிதாசன்,

" பெண்ணடிமை தீருமட்டும் பேசும் திருநாட்டு
மண்ணடிமை தீர்ந்து வருதல் முயற்கொம்பே
ஊமை என்று பெண்ணை உரைக்கு மட்டும்
உள்ளடங்கும் ஆமை நிலைமைதான் ஆடவர்க்கும் உண்டு"

என்று அழுத்தந் திருத்தமாக கவிதை வடித்துக் காட்டியிருக்கிறார். அதுமாத்திரமல்ல மிகுந்த உருக்கத்தோடு புரட்சிக் கவிஞர் பாரதிதாசன் எழுதிய கவிதையில்—

' பெண்கள் துயர் காண்பதற்கும் கண் இழந்தீரோ
கண் இழந்தீரோ உங்கள் கருத்து இழந்தீரோ '

என்று ஆடவரைப் பார்த்து வசைமாரியே பொழிந்தார்.

' பெண்ணுக்கு ஒரு நீதி கண்டீர் பேதம் எனும் மதுவை உண்டீர்

கண்ணில் ஒன்றைப் பழுது செய்தால் கான்றுமிழாதோ? கான்றுமிழாதோ புவிதான் பழியாதோ ? " என்று மிக வேகமாக ஆடவர் இனத்தைப் பார்த்து பெண்கள் வர்க்கத்திற்காக வாதாடி இருக்கிறார். இத்தகைய கவிதைகளை பாரதியார், பாரதிதாசன் மற்றும் அவர்களுடைய வழித் தோன்றல்கள் இந்த அளவு பாடியிருந்தாலும் கூட நேற்றைய தினம் நடைபெற்ற பொன்விழாவில் நான் சுட்டிக்காட்டியதற்கொப்ப என்னுடைய வயது ஐந்தாக இருக்கும்போது, நம்முடைய பேராசிரியர் சற்றொப்ப ஏழு வயதாக இருக்கும்போது தமிழ் நாட்டில் இன்றைக்கு நாம் பேசிக் கொண்டிருக்கிற இந்தப் புரட்சிக்கு பழைய செங்கல்பட்டு மாவட்டத்தில் அதன் தலை நகரான செங்கல்பட்டிலே வித்து ஊன்றப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. என்னுடைய கையில் இருக்கிற இந்தப் புத்தகம் கடந்த கால சுயமரியாதை இயக்க வரலாற்றை, நீதிக்கட்சி வரலாற்றை விளக்குகின்ற ஒரு ஆங்கிலப் புத்தகம்.

Extract of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly on the bill providing for equal property rights to women on May 6, 1989

Behaviour needs to be improved



Chief Minister J. Jayalalitha addressing the symposium, 'How to Raise the Level of Debate in the House,' at the Legislative Assembly chamber on June 27, 1993. Lok Sabha Speaker Shivraj V. Patil (2nd left) and Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Speaker Sedapatti R. Muthiah also seen in the picture.

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Ms. Jayalalitha, today [June 27] said the decline in the standards of performance and norms of behaviour in the legislatures could be a continuing trend unless arrested consciously.

Inaugurating a symposium held in connection with the Speakers' conferences, she said more and more time was spent in political wranglings and acrimonious controversies rather than studied debate in the legislatures. The Lok Sabha Speaker, Mr. V. Shivraj Patil, said that using illegal obstructionist methods to have ones say was counter-productive in the parliamentary system of functioning.

Ms. Jayalalitha said that while on the one hand, the volume of business in legislatures had grown enormously, the members spent less time to study various subjects and come prepared for discussions. The political atmosphere outside the legislature contributed to the heat inside the House. The elected representatives had to realise that they were the lucky few chosen by the people to echo their views and they should use this opportunity to make a contribution through reasoned debate.

'Refined language needed'

Ms. Jayalalitha quoted Jawaharlal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, and C.N. Annadurai to drive home the point that refined language, decorous behaviour, and wit could demolish the arguments of opponents in a debate. She used one such quotation of Annadurai on the threat of dismissal of his Government as an oblique reference to the present state of affairs in Tamil Nadu.

Annadurai had said, "Vinayagam (the senior member of the Opposition Congress) said we shall not topple your Government. I am pleased to note that there are able people in the Congress like Vinayagam to support us. I am repeatedly saying that if you topple our Government, the loss is not to us; on the contrary, it is to the country."

The Chief Minister devoted a major portion of her speech to trace how debate had evolved as a key instrument of parliamentary functioning in a democracy. By their personal conduct, good performance and faith in the democratic process, the members could uphold and enhance the dignity and prestige of the legislature.

Commending the address by Ms. Jayalalitha, Mr. Patil said the thought-provoking and comprehensive speech on the symposium topic, "How to raise the level of debate in the House," deserved circulation to all the legislatures. Referring to the criticism of the nature of zero hour proceedings, he said all members wanted something to be done to curb zero-hour activities. The remedy lay in arriving at an implementable solution to the "ailment of the parliamentary system".

'Make relevant speeches'

Calling upon legislators to make relevant speeches, he said that if this rule was followed, speeches, submissions, questions, and replies could be effective and productive. Mr. Patil stressed the need for introducing modern methods in information-gathering and retrieval like computers and satellite links for the benefit of elected representatives. Audios and videos should be used to inform the members. The Tamil Nadu Assembly Speaker, Mr. Sedapatti R. Muthiah, traced the arrangements made to hold the conference of presiding officers in Madras.

June 28, 1993

T.N. plans bandh on reservation - resolution adopted

A resolution urging the Centre to amend the Constitution to protect the basis of the reservation policy of Tamil Nadu was today [November 9] unanimously passed by the State Assembly at a special session.

Moving the resolution, the Chief Minister, Ms. Jayalalitha, announced that Tamil Nadu would observe a bandh on November 16 to voice the deep concern that had engulfed the people over the threat to the existing 69 per cent reservation being followed in the State.

Leaders belonging to all the parties in the legislature endorsed the resolution and spoke forcefully in favour of continued reservation at the present level and the need to take steps in the face of the Supreme Court's verdict to restrict the reservation to the maximum of 50 per cent.

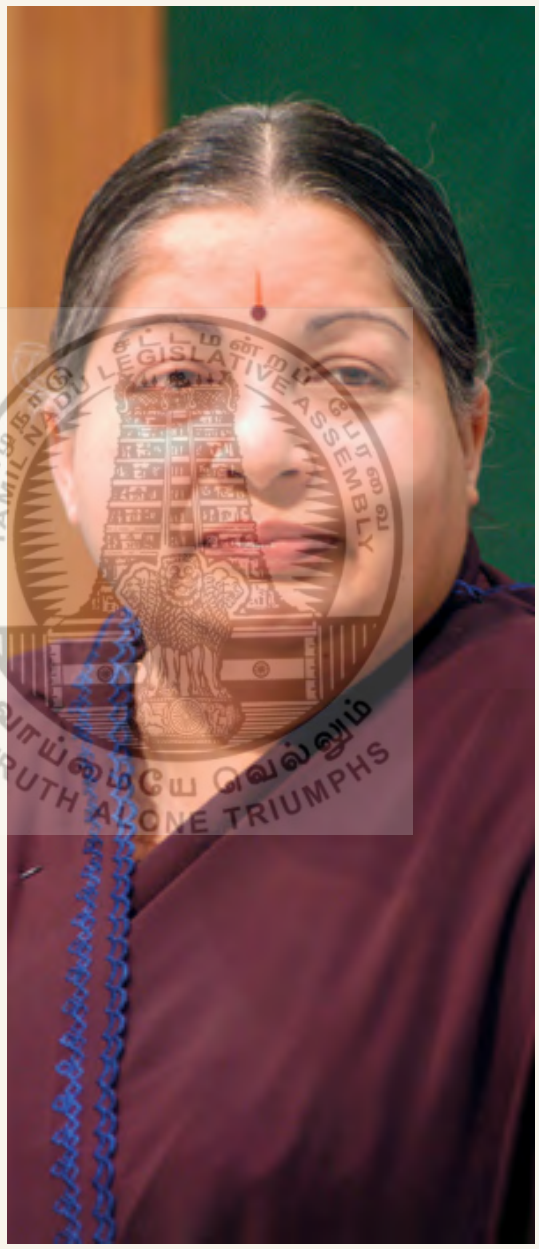
Sharp exchanges

The discussion, however, witnessed sharp exchanges on claiming credit for implementing the Mandal Commission's recommendations and the question mark over the response of the Congress(I) Government at the Centre to the State's demand for a constitutional amendment.

The resolution pointed out that the 69 per cent reservation policy was a crucial instrument in the social and economic uplift of the backward classes in the State. And this had been borne out as a historical fact. It was, therefore, vital to continue with it and there was no option but to amend the Constitution to achieve this objective.

The passage of time prompted several inevitable social changes. Modifying the Constitution in tune with the requirements of the majority of the people and enacting new legislation through appropriate changes, both by the Centre and the States, was necessary. The history of the nation was replete with instances when this had been done.

Recalling the litigation on reservation,



Chief Minister J. Jayalalitha

the resolution referred to the order of the Supreme Court limiting the reservation to a maximum of 50 per cent in November 1992. Subsequently, the High Court allowed the present reservation level for the current year and said that the Supreme Court order could be given effect to from 1994-95.

In response to an appeal from Tamil Nadu, seeking the continuation of the 69 per cent reservation, the Supreme Court confirmed in an interim order that the limit should be 50 per cent.

Looking at the evolution of the State's reservation policy, it was clear that the quantum had only been increased to meet the needs of the majority and had never been reduced, the resolution noted stressing that there should be no change from the present level of 69 per cent. The Centre should amend the Constitution without delay to continue the reservation scheme.

Appealing to the House to unanimously support the resolution, Ms. Jayalalitha said the present juncture was similar to the situation that prompted Jawaharlal Nehru to bring in the First Amendment - Article 15(4) - to the Constitution paving the way for continued communal reservation. If the Constitution had to be amended today to protect the interests of the backward classes in Tamil Nadu, it would be entirely acceptable.

The present Central Government had the urgent compulsion to give shape to Nehru's assurance that the First Amendment of the Constitution would help the States to pursue their reservation policy for the socially and educationally backward classes. The reservation was entirely a social issue and the Centre had an equal responsibility with the States to sort out any problems if necessary through amendments.

Asserting that the Constitutional amendment was the only way out, the Chief Minister said the State Government did not have the intention of disrespecting or ignoring judicial verdicts. It held the courts and judges in highest esteem and would continue to do so.

November 10, 1993

Compulsory Education Bill introduced



Students at a goverment school at Pachamalai Hills near Thuraiyur in Tiruchi district.

The Education Minister, Mr. K. Ponnusamy, today [April 29] introduced in the Assembly a Bill providing for compulsory elementary education in the State for all children of school age.

The Bill seeks to make it obligatory on the part of every parent or guardian of a child of school age to "cause the child to attend an elementary school".

[It was only since April 2010 that the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, came into force at the all India level]

The Government would provide such a number of elementary schools as may be necessary with trained teachers. Exemption would be given to children where no elementary schools within the prescribed distance existed or if the child was sick, infirm, or if it was attending an unrecognised school with "satisfactory" education, or if the child was being educated in any other manner declared satisfactory by the competent authority.

A parent or guardian of the child of school age who failed to discharge his duty would be punished with a fine which may extend to Rs. 100.

Amendment Bill

The Leader of the House, Mr. V. R. Nedunchezhian, introduced a Bill to amend the Tamil Nadu Public Property (Prevention of Damage and Loss) Act under which provision was sought to be made to pay compensation and award punishment for damage or loss to private property.

April 30, 1994



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi taking oath at the swearing-in ceremony of newly-elected members of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, in Madras on May 22, 1996.

Assembly nod for name change





The Tamil Nadu Assembly today [August 31] gave its unanimous approval to changing the name of the State's capital Madras to "Chennai".

The Bill to effect the change was moved by the Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, and leaders of all the parties hailed the decision. The capital is to be known hereafter as "Chennai" in all languages.

Replying to the brief discussion on the Bill, the Chief Minister said the measure would be a forerunner to changing the names of towns in good Tamil. He noted how the English names - Tuticorin, Cape Comerin, Madura, Ginjee, and Tranquebar - continued to be in vogue.

Earlier, the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. S. Balakrishnan, urged the Government to circulate the new name "Chennai" to all States in Hindi itself for their better understanding and proper pronunciation of the name.

The statement of objects and reasons of the Bill states that the area comprising the city of Madras has been known as "Chennai" in Tamil from ancient days. This name has been employed by the people from different walks of life and it has thus been universally accepted. Given the universal acceptance of the name "Chennai" and the historical, social, cultural and other details of the city of Madras, the Government has taken a policy decision that the city would be hereafter called "Chennai" in all languages as against "Madras" and "Madharas".

September 1, 1996

Given the universal acceptance of the name "Chennai" and the historical, social, cultural and other details of the city of Madras, the Government has taken a policy decision that the city would be hereafter called "Chennai" in all languages as against "Madras" and "Madharas"



‘Speaker can’t alter previous House records’

The Assembly Speaker, Mr. P. T. R. Palanivel Rajan, in a significant ruling, today [April 29] declared that no Speaker had powers to alter, modify, or expunge the records of proceedings of the previous Assemblies.

Giving his ruling on demands to expunge the denigrating references about the former Governor, late M. Channa Reddy, in the previous Assembly, he said there could be no expunction even if they contained disparaging remarks against the Governor. However, he suggested that the present House pass a resolution condemning the “indecent” references to the late Reddy. Also, a new rule could be introduced to protect the Governor from such “unethical” debates by any future Assembly.

In the course of an elaborate ruling, Mr. Palanivel Rajan referred to the tampering of records pertaining to the violent incidents in the Assembly on March 25, 1989, and suggested an amendment to the rules to insulate the Assembly records from the whims and fancies of the presiding officers.

Arguing that the State should not set a bad precedent for other State Legislatures, the Speaker ordered the removal of the appendix added by the former Speaker, Mr. Sedapatti R. Muthiah, to the records of the proceedings of the previous House.

The ruling was in response to the requests of Mr. C. Gnanasekaran (TMC) and Mr. Parithi Ilamvazhuthi (the Deputy Speaker) on January 27 this year that the records of the proceedings of the previous Assembly be suitably amended to remove disparaging remarks against the former Governor.

Expressing his inability to expunge the offending portions of the records, despite an appeal by the Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi himself, the Speaker said there could be no change in the records of the proceedings of the previous House on April 19, 1995 and April 26, 1995, where the late Reddy was maligned.



P.T.R. Palanivel Rajan



46. உறுப்பினர்கள் தெரிவித்துள்ள இக்குற்றச்சாட்டுகளுக்கு அடிப்படை இருந்தாலும், தங்களைப் பற்றி உண்மைக்கு மாறாகவும், தரக்குறைவாகவும் பதியப்பட்ட குறிப்புகளை நீக்க வேண்டுமெனவும், எதிர்க்கட்சி உறுப்பினர்களின் கருத்துக்களை மறைக்க வேண்டுமென்று நீக்கப்பட்ட சில பகுதிகளைச் சேர்க்க வேண்டுமெனவும் அவர்கள் விடுத்துள்ள நியாயமான கோரிக்கைகளை என்னால் நிறைவேற்ற இயலாது என்பதைத் தெரிவிக்க நான் கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கிறேன். ஏனென்றால் நான் முன்னரே தெரிவித்தவாறு, நமது விதிகளின்கீழ் முந்தைய பேரவைத் தலைவரால் ஒப்புதல் அளிக்கப்பட்ட நடவடிக்கைக் குறிப்புகள் எதையும் மாற்றவோ, திருத்தவோ அல்லது நீக்கவோ எனக்கு எந்த அதிகாரமும் இல்லை.

Extract of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly on April 29, 1997

The only redressal would be for the House to pass a resolution, if it so desired, expressing its disapproval and condemnation of the recording of indecent and denigrating references against the Governor. The resolution might also say that the previous House had caused an irreparable damage to the image of the Assembly "which is one of the model Assemblies in the country", he said.

"To obviate recurrence of such unconstitutional, unethical, and indecent debates and recordings against the Governor in future, another rule should be incorporated in the Assembly rules stating that under no circumstances the conduct of the Governor who is the Head of the State and also part of the House be discussed in the House."

The Speaker ordered cancellation of the appendix included in the revised edition of the proceedings dated March 25, 1989, published on the orders of Mr. Sedapatti Muthiah on March 26, 1992. "Even assuming that the proceedings of the House dated March 25, 1989, did not reflect the true deliberations or incidents in the House, the Speaker of the previous Assembly (Mr. Muthiah) had no authority to modify or expunge the proceedings approved by the previous Speaker, Mr. Thamizhkudimagan."

As it was practically not possible to collect all copies of the revised publication of proceedings dated March 25, 1989, printed with appendix, as per the orders given by the previous Speaker on March 26, 1992, the Speaker said the copies already distributed need not be withdrawn. But as far as the House was concerned, the appendices in all the copies of the debates available with the Assembly Secretariat would be destroyed and the asterisk marks and footnotes in that revised publication would be struck off.

The Speaker admitted that in the light of his ruling that the succeeding Speaker could not alter the proceedings of the House which had been approved by the earlier Speaker, it might be asked whether it would be proper for him (Mr. Palanivel Rajan) to order the destruction of the additions made in the proceedings dated March 25, 1989. In this context, he explained that the references made in the House on March 25, 1992 and March 26, 1992, would remain as part of the proceedings. He had not expunged or modified or altered anything in the proceedings of the previous House. He had merely restored the proceedings dated March 25, 1989, which were modified by the previous Speaker, contrary to the rules.

To avoid such unsavoury incidents in future, the Speaker suggested that the Rules Committee include a provision in the Rules that proceedings once approved and published under the authority of a Speaker should not be altered, modified, or expunged by the same Speaker later, and much less by the subsequent Speakers.

Referring to the requests of Mr. Gnanasekaran and Mr. Parithi Ilamvazhuthi that derogatory remarks made against them in the previous Assembly be expunged, he said he had no powers to do so. However, he noted that the former Speaker, Mr. Muthiah, by asking the Commissioner of Police to take action against the members on an incident which had happened inside the House, had surrendered his authority as the presiding officer to the executive.

April 30, 1997

A stalwart of the ancient House

The Tamil Nadu legislature has produced many a stalwart in its rich history.

But not many will be aware of the credentials of the first Indian nominated to the body.

The person was Vembakkam Sadagopacharlu, a native pleader in an East India Company's court. He was one of the three non-officials nominated in 1862 by the then Governor, Sir William Thomas Denison, to the Governor-in-Council which was given the power to make laws in accordance with the Indian Councils Act, 1861.

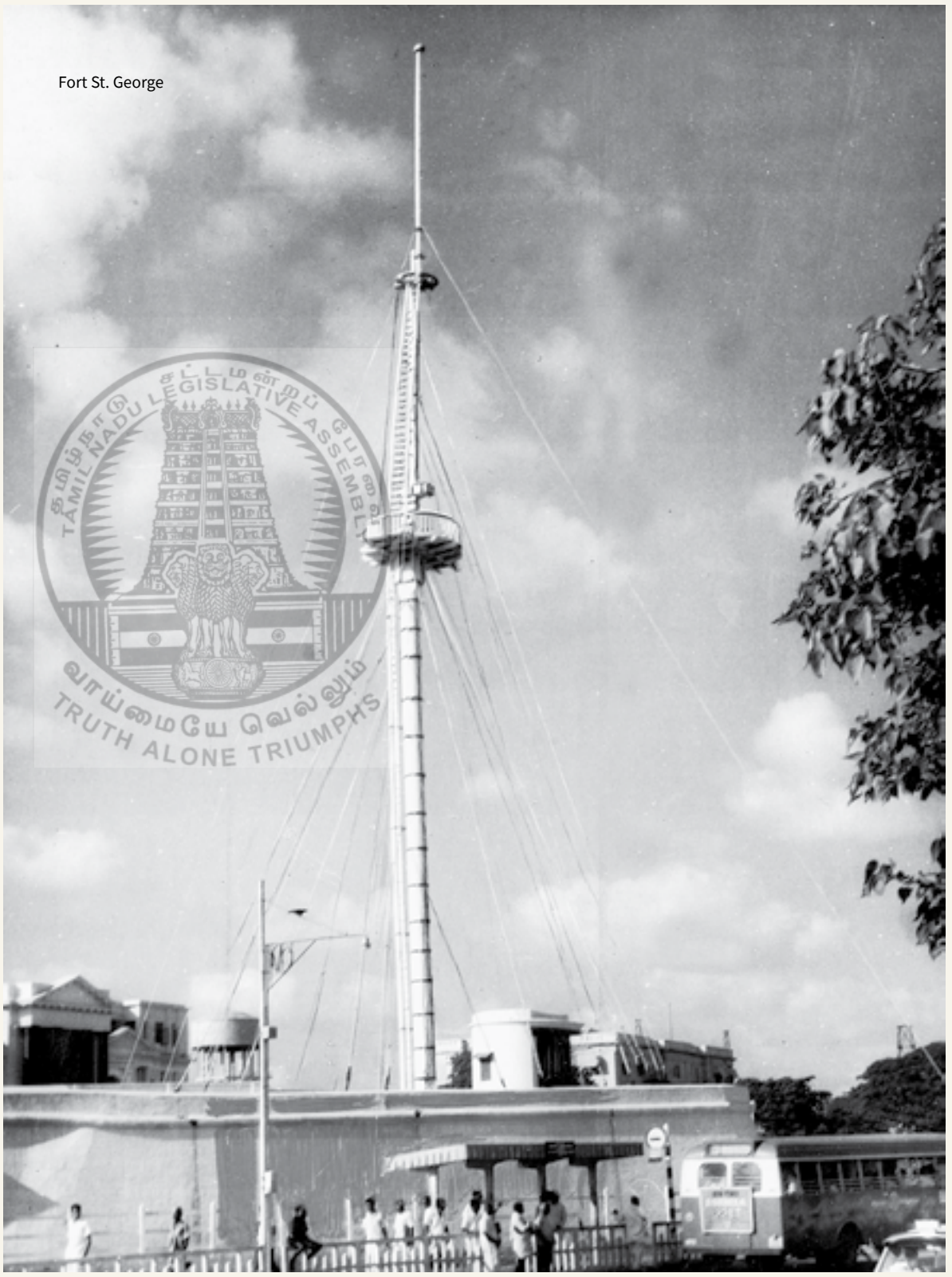
But, he was not in the Council for long, as he died a few years later.

Sadagopacharlu was known as an exceptionally able and active member. Commenting on his selection, *The Hindu* observed: "He is a man of extensive and varied information regarding the country and its wants; is a sound practical lawyer; has come in contact with almost all sections of the population of the southern districts of the Presidency; is highly esteemed for his popular sympathies...; and possesses in abundance the essential requisites of a public man, to wit, sound judgement and tact".

The other two non-official members were Robert Orr Campbell, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, and William Reierson Arbuthnot, former Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce. The three official members were: Thomas Sydney Smith, Advocate-General; Thomas Pycroft, Chief Secretary; and Charles Pelly, First Member of the Board of Revenue.

The first meeting of the Council was held on January 22, 1862, at the Fort St. George. Presided over by the Governor, it was attended by six members, besides J. H. Grant, Commander-in-Chief; and W. A. Morehead and E. Maltby, Executive Councillors.

T. Ramakrishnan
July 14, 1997



Fort St. George

SECTION 5

IN RECENT YEARS

Legislature through the ages

Tamil Nadu on July 14, 1997, celebrates the platinum jubilee of its elected legislature, but the seeds of its germination can be traced to the Indian Councils Act, 1861. This Act restored the legislative power to the Governor-in-Council of Madras, after a gap of nearly 30 years, and it showed the way for the segregation of functions between the legislature and the Governor-General's Executive Council.

The Act enlarged the strength of the Madras Council by including the Advocate-General and by empowering the Governor to nominate four to eight members. The consent of the Governor and the Governor-General (stationed at Calcutta) was, of course, made mandatory for all the laws passed by it.

However, the Legislative Council was a mere advisory committee for the Government in its work of legislation. It was not a "deliberative" body with respect to any subject other than that of the immediate legislation before it. But one positive feature was that the public came to know of what went on in the Council, which was till then not possible.

As a result of the Minto-Morley Reforms, the British announced a package of constitutional concessions through another Act, Indian Councils Act, 1909. This Act increased the number of members in the Governor-General's Council and the Provincial Legislative Councils. It introduced the method of election, though not direct. Most of the members were elected indirectly by the Provincial Councils in the case of the former and by municipal committees and district boards in the case of the latter.

The maximum strength of the Legislative Council of the Madras Presidency was increased from 20 to 50.

In the wake of rising tide of nationalist and anti-government sentiments, the British enacted the Government of India Act, 1919, popularly known as the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. The Provincial Councils were further expanded and the majority of their members were to be elected.

However, every law of the Councils required the assent of the Governor-General and the Governors.

The membership of the then Madras Legislative Council went up to 127, the biggest legislative body at that time in India. The number of elected members was 98 and the rest belonged to members of the Executive Council and nominated non-official members.

History was made when the Madras Legislative Council was constituted in 1921 and had its first meeting at the Fort St. George on January 8 that year. Four days later, the Council was formally inaugurated by the Duke of Connaught, a paternal uncle of George V, the then Emperor of England. In its inaugural meeting, it adopted a resolution to allow women the voting right. The duration of the Council was three years.

The next step in the evolution of legislature was taken 14 years later when the Government of India Act, 1935, was enacted. This Act established a bi-cameral legislature in the then Madras Presidency.

The Legislative Council was to be a permanent body and nearly one-third of its members were to retire every three years. It consisted of not less than 54 members and not more than 56. Of them, 35 were from the General Seats, seven-Muslims, one-European and three-Indian Christians, while there were eight to 10 nominees of the Governor.

The first Legislative Assembly of the State comprised 215 members, of which 116 were from the General Seats and 30 were from the Scheduled Castes.

The other categories of members were: Muslims-28, Indian Christians-eight, Commerce and Industry, Landholders, Labour-six each, Europeans-three, Anglo-Indians-2, and University and Backward areas/tribes-one each. Interestingly, there were eight women members, of which six were from the General Seats.

Another moment of pride came in July 1937 when the Assembly was constituted and Rajaji became the Premier of the Madras Presidency.

T. Ramakrishnan
July 14, 1997

In the wake of rising tide of nationalist and anti-government sentiments, the British enacted the Government of India Act of 1919, popularly known as the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. The Provincial Councils were further expanded and the majority of their members were to be elected. However, every law of the Councils required the assent of Governor-General and the Governors for validity.



Wipe out inequalities, legislators told

The Governor, Ms. M. Fathima Beevi, [on July 14] called upon legislators to obliterate inequalities - political and otherwise - that haunted the nation even after fifty years of independence.

"Inequalities, in fact, threaten the very existence of democracy," she said, presiding over the platinum and diamond jubilee celebrations of the Tamil Nadu Legislature and the Legislative Assembly respectively.

There was no better substitute for the representative parliamentary democracy than the legislature. The State legislators' were better placed in the middle stratum of Indian politics. Through their close and constant interaction with the people, they could understand the common people and ventilate the public grievances in the Assembly, she said.

The Governor stressed the need for discussion on economic and social issues, apart from political ones in the legislature. "What is needed for a serious involvement in public cause is a high quality of mind, heart, character, and intelligence." Knowledge could be gathered and a balanced judgment of facts and new ideas could be arrived at through sincere efforts, she said.

Ms. Fathima Beevi also urged the MLAs to participate, "in a neutral stance", in social issues and "see that social justice is upheld". Social justice could not be brought forth by government Acts; it demanded an innate feeling of the people. "Our Constitution is a charter of a democratic social revolution. As members of the Legislative Assembly, you could try to bring about the social revolution which is still found wanting in several regions," she said.

The Governor said that State politics provided areas for new styles and methods and State legislatures contributed a great deal to the national polity by contributing a "stream of thoughts and ideas".

The Governor complimented the Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, on his move to rename the districts and transport corporations and said this testified to his "sagacious approach and wise decisions".



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi presenting a memento to Tamil Nadu Governor M. Fathima Beevi during the platinum jubilee celebration of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly at Chennai on July 14, 1997. (From left) Chief Justice of Madras High Court Manmohan Singh Liberhan, Assembly Speaker P.T.R. Palanivel Rajan and former President R. Venkataraman in the picture.

Justice Manmohan Singh Liberhan, Chief Justice of Madras High Court, inaugurating the celebrations, said the controversy over the supremacy of the legislature or the judiciary was a futile exercise. It was the people who were supreme and the three wings -- the executive, the legislature and the judiciary -- had their assigned roles to play. A judicial review was not an act of confrontation. The constitutional machinery would run smoothly if only each of the wings functioned without trespassing into others' areas, he said.

Mr. Karunanidhi, who released a souvenir to mark the occasion, said the Tamil Nadu legislature had the unique distinction of many of its Ministers becoming Presidents and Governors later. Tamil Nadu had a hoary system of elections recorded in the Sangam literature itself.

He said people's representatives should have the people's concern alone in their minds. Nowadays, the people's expectations were more and the legislators should rise up to fulfil their aspirations. He recalled Mr. C. Subramaniam, as the State Finance Minister, presenting a Rs. 100 crore budget in 1958 and said it was a moot point whether benefits reached the people fully even though budgets of Rs. 15,000 crores were presented now.

The celebrations were held at the University Centenary Auditorium, near the University Senate Hall where 60 years ago on the same day, the first elected Assembly in the Madras Province met for its inaugural session. The celebrations were marked by the honouring of former legislators and the presiding officers of the legislature.

Mr. R. Venkataraman, former President who received the first copy of the souvenir, said democracy could not be safeguarded without a spirit of tolerance and willingness to hear the "other side". In matters of national interest, the ruling and Opposition parties should try to accommodate each other and get the best results. Recalling the stalwarts who had adorned the Tamil Nadu Legislative Council, he urged the Chief Minister to people the Upper House with eminent persons.

Mr. K. Anbazhagan, Leader of the Assembly, highlighted the epoch-making legislation passed by the House from its very inception. There was no safer way than the democratic way, he said, adding that the Tamil Nadu Legislature had created history in the annals of democracy.

July 15, 1997

Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterji addressing the Assembly on the occasion of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi's completion of 50 years as a legislator in Chennai on May 12, 2007.



Governor P.S. Ramamohan Rao arriving in the Assembly chamber to address the House on March 9, 2002 while Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa, DMK president M. Karunanidhi and Leader of Opposition K. Anbazhagan look on.


நாள் : 11.5.



Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Chief Minister M.Karunanidhi, Congress president Sonia Gandhi, former Prime Minister I.K.Gujral, Union Minister for Agriculture Sharad Pawar and CPI (M) general secretary Prakash Karat at a function on Island Grounds, Chennai, on May 11, 2007 on the occasion of Karunanidhi's completion of 50 years as a legislator.



Union Minister for Railways Lalu Prasad greeting Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi at a function to mark Karunanidhi's completion of 50 years as a legislator of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on Island Grounds in Chennai on May 11, 2007. Tamil Nadu Finance Minister K. Anbazhagan also in the picture.



A view of Fort St. George in June 2007.

Karunanidhi seeks gifts from Manmohan for the people

Lists water disputes and reservation for women, backward classes as major problems

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Friday [May 11] assured Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi that with the cooperation of all constituents of the United Progressive Alliance, "we will be able to arrive at a practical, pragmatic and just solution" to the problems of river water sharing and reservation for women, backward classes and minorities.

He was responding to Mr. Karunanidhi who, thanking all the leaders for having come to greet him on the occasion of his golden jubilee as member of the State Legislature, said there were many problems that remained to be solved. Tamil Nadu was surrounded by States that were "not friends of Tamil Nadu," and the State seemed an island.

Elaborating, he said in the past 30 years, the Tamil Nadu Assembly had adopted many resolutions and he himself had held discussions with 11 Chief Ministers of Karnataka on the Cauvery water-sharing dispute. He had spoken at length to four or five Central Ministers. The State government had great hopes on the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal. But, even after the verdict of the Tribunal was pronounced, the problem persisted. "Hence I am entrusting this problem to you," he said and added that his Government was ready to help in every way possible to find a solution. The only way to solve the problem was interlinking of rivers.

Mr. Karunanidhi said the State Assembly had adopted resolutions on the need to enact a law to provide 33 per cent reservation for women in all elected bodies, the need to preserve 27 per cent reservation for Other Backward Classes in Central educational institutions and to extend reservation for the minorities. "These are the gifts that I ask of you for the people of my country," Mr. Karunanidhi told the Prime Minister and Congress president Sonia Gandhi.

Ms. Gandhi said the UPA Government functioned as per the Common Minimum Programme and the alliance would continue to do so.

Both Dr. Singh and Ms. Gandhi highlighted the multi-faceted achievements of Mr. Karunanidhi and showered praises on him for the formation of the Democratic Progressive Alliance. "Karunanidhiji has held high the flag of Tamil Nadu, as a proud Indian. Karunanidhiji's name will forever be written in gold in the history of Tamil Nadu and the history of the nation," Dr. Singh said.

The victory in Tamil Nadu went a long way in the formation of a secular, democratic government at the Centre, Ms. Gandhi said. Recalling that the period of rule of Kamaraj was referred to as the golden period in Tamil history, she said that she was sure that a vibrant Opposition then was responsible for taking the State to great heights. The UPA was committed to expanding the opportunities of people, she said, and added that as opportunities widened, more people got a chance to contribute to the economy. This, in turn, would lead to better economic growth.

May 12, 2007

> **Karunanidhiji has held high the flag of Tamil Nadu, as a proud Indian. Karunanidhiji's name will forever be written in gold in the history of Tamil Nadu and the history of the nation**
>
> **MANMOHAN SINGH**
> **Prime Minister**

Another milestone in legislative history

For Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, the opening of the complex right on target date constitutes a major achievement.

The inauguration of the Assembly-Secretariat Complex on the Omandurar Government Estate in the heart of Chennai marks another milestone in the history of the Tamil Nadu legislature. The origins of the legislature can be traced back to the Indian Councils Act, 1861. The law restored the legislative power taken away by the Charter Act, 1833.

The legislature of the Madras Presidency, which comprised Tamil Nadu and parts of Orissa, Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh, was given the power to make laws for the "peace and good government". The Provincial Legislative Council was constituted. It consisted of the Advocate-General and four to eight ad hoc members nominated by the Governor to the Executive Council. At least half the number of members were to be non-officials, nominated for two years. The Legislative Council could not interfere with the laws passed by the Central Legislature. All Bills passed by the Provincial Councils required the assent of the Governor-General. Even after that, they could be disallowed by the Queen, to whom they had to be referred. Though the Council was a mere advisory committee for the government in its legislative work, one positive feature was that the public came to know of what went on in the Council, which was till then not possible.

As a result of the Minto-Morley Reforms, a package of constitutional concessions was formulated through the Indian Councils Act, 1909. This raised the strength of the Council from 20 to 50. Elections, though not direct, were introduced.

With nationalist sentiment gaining strength, the British enacted the Government of India Act of 1919, also known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. The membership of the Madras Legislative Council went up to 127 – it was the country's biggest body of its kind at that time. The number of elected members was 98; the remaining belonged to the Executive Council or were nominated non-official members. The term of each House of the Council was three years.

On January 8, 1921, the inaugural meeting of the Council took place at Fort St. George. Three days later, the Council was formally inaugurated by the Duke of Connaught, an uncle of George V, Emperor of England. At the inaugural meeting, the Council adopted a resolution to grant women the voting right.

The next important stage in the evolution of the legislature was the enactment of the Government of India Act, 1935. The Act established a bi-cameral Legislature in the Province of Madras, as it was then called, with the Legislative Assembly consisting of 215 members and the Legislative Council 56 members.The Legislative Council was to be a permanent body with one-third of its members retiring every three years. In the Assembly, there were 116 members from the general seats and 30 from those set aside for the Scheduled Castes. Representation was given to different groups such as Muslims, Christians and landholders. There were eight women members, too.

The first House of the Assembly was constituted in July 1937 after the general elections. C. Rajagopalachari became the Premier of the Presidency and headed the Congress Ministry. His Ministry resigned in 1939 following differences between the Congress party and the British government over the Second World War. The legislature ceased to function.

In March 1946, general elections were held all over the country. T. Prakasam, famously called Andhra Kesari, became the Chief Minister. Between March 1947 and April 1952, Omandur P. Ramaswamy Reddiar and P.S. Kumaraswamy Raja held the post.

Two years after the Constitution of India came into force in January 1950, elections to the first legislature of Madras State were held. The then Composite Madras Assembly consisted of 375 seats. These were filled by means of elections in 309 constituencies – 243 single-member constituencies, 62 double-member constituencies (one seat in each reserved for Scheduled Castes) and four more double-member constituencies (in which one seat was reserved for Scheduled Tribes). As three seats were uncontested, elections were held only in the remaining 372 seats. One member was nominated by the Governor to represent Anglo-Indians.

In April 1952, Rajaji, who had by then held the posts of Governor-General and West Bengal Governor, succeeded Kumaraswamy Raja who lost in the general election. Two years later, K. Kamaraj became the Chief Minister and he held the post till 1963.

The strength of the Assembly went down to 231 with the formation of Andhra State in October 1953 and the merger of Kannada-speaking area of Bellary district with Mysore State. After the States Re-organisation Act came into force in November 1956, the number of members was further reduced to 190. After Kanyakumari district and Shencottah taluk were added to the State, the strength was raised to 205. Three years later, the addition of one more constituency to Tamil Nadu took the strength to 206.

In 1961, all 38 double-member constituencies were abolished and an equal number of constituencies was reserved for



An overview of Fort St.George as seen from the Fort Museum.

the SCs and the STs. Through the Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies Order of 1965, the number of territorial constituencies was increased to 234. Of these, 42 seats were reserved for the Scheduled Castes and two for the Scheduled Tribes, besides one member to be nominated from the Anglo-Indian community. Since then, there has been no change in the strength of the Assembly.(Under the latest delimitation order of 2007, the number of seats earmarked for the SCs and the STs has not been disturbed.)

M. Bakthavatsalam succeeded Kamaraj in October 1963; since then, there has not been a Congress Chief Minister. In the historic Assembly election of 1967, the 18-year-old Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, under the leadership of C.N. Annadurai, was swept to power.

M. Karunanidhi, who became the Chief Minister in February 1969, remained in power till January 1976 when the Union government dismissed his government and dissolved the Assembly. After a brief period of President's Rule, M.G. Ramachandran, founder of the AIADMK, became the Chief Minister after his party captured power in the 1977 election.

In February 1980, his government was dismissed and the State had another period of President's Rule. Ramachandran came back to power in June that year after the AIADMK emerged successful in the general election. After his demise in December 1987, his widow Janaki Ramachandran held the post of Chief Minister for 24 days. A spell of President's Rule followed.

The Legislative Council, which was part of the State legislature since 1937, was abolished effective November 1986. In May that year, the Assembly adopted a resolution seeking to abolish the Upper House. Subsequently, Parliament adopted the Tamil Nadu Legislative Council (Abolition) Bill, which got presidential assent in August 1986.

In 1989 and 1996, the Assembly adopted resolutions to revive the Upper House but these efforts did not fructify. In the 1989 Assembly election, the DMK staged a historic comeback and Mr. Karunanidhi became the Chief Minister after a gap of 13 years.

Two years later, his government was dismissed again. In the 1991 Assembly election, the AIADMK was returned to power and Jayalalithaa became the Chief Minister. Five years later, Mr. Karunanidhi was sworn in the Chief Minister for the fourth time. In 2001, it was the turn of the AIADMK to stage a comeback. Ms. Jayalalithaa was the Chief Minister for most of the term. O. Panneerselvam held the post for about five months. The 2006 election saw the DMK coming back to power. Mr. Karunanidhi became the Chief Minister for the fifth time.

T. Ramakrishnan
March 13, 2010

Historic moments, historic personalities

As it moves into its new home, here is a potted history marking some moments in the life of the Tamil Nadu Legislature:

In 1927, Muthulakshmi Reddi, the well-known medical practitioner and social activist, became the first woman legislator in the country when she was nominated by Viscount Goschen, Madras Governor, to the Madras Legislative Council. She went on to become the Deputy President of the Council.

An adjournment motion moved by Congress leader S. Satyamurti against the confiscation of books containing Subramania Bharati's songs was adopted by the Legislative Council in October 1928.

Rukmini Lakshmipathy was the first woman elected to the Legislative Assembly. She held the post of Deputy Speaker of the Assembly from July 1937 to October 1945. She also had the distinction of being the first woman Minister in the State when she became Health Minister in 1946 in the Prakasam Ministry.

U. Rama Rao and U. Krishna Rao formed the only father-son duo to become the presiding officers of the two Houses in the State. Rama Rao was the Chairman of the Council during 1937-45, while his son became the Speaker of the Assembly in April 1957. Krishna Rao held the post till August 3, 1961, when he died.

C. Rajagopalachari, popularly known as Rajaji, became the first elected Chief Minister (then called Premier) of the State in 1937. Fifteen years later, when he became the Chief Minister again, he became the first non-elected Chief Minister as he was a nominated member of the Legislative Council.

Exactly a month after Independence, the Assembly adopted a resolution, greeting Mahatma Gandhi and recording its appreciation of those who had sacrificed for the cause of freedom. On September 16, the Council adopted a similar resolution.



Muthulakshmi Reddi and S. Satyamurti

It was Omandur P. Ramaswamy Reddi who was the Chief Minister of the State at the time of Independence. The Government Estate is named after him.

K. Kamaraj, who was the Chief Minister during 1954-1963, had the distinction of facing the general Assembly election and retaining power twice – in 1957 and 1962.

C.N. Annadurai, who was the Chief Minister for barely two years (1967 to 1969), passed away while in office. So did M.G. Ramachandran, who was the Chief Minister for 10 years (1977-1987) with a four-month break in 1980.

Both Houses of the Legislature organised a function at the Assembly Hall on the midnight of August 14, 1972, to mark the silver jubilee of Independence. K.K. Shah, the then Governor, addressed the members.

At the stroke of midnight, the members stood in silence for two minutes in memory of those who sacrificed their lives during the freedom struggle.

In July 1997, a function was organised at the Madras University Centenary Auditorium to celebrate the platinum jubilee of the State Legislature and the diamond jubilee of the Assembly. R. Venkataraman, former President, and C. Subramaniam, who was the State Finance Minister during 1952-1962 and later became Union Agriculture and Finance Minister, attended it. M. Karunanidhi, the only person to have been sworn in the Chief Minister of the State for five times, had the distinction of being at the helm of affairs during the silver jubilee and golden jubilee celebrations of Independence.

When Jayalalithaa became the Chief Minister in June 1991, she became the youngest person to hold the post: she was 43. When Mr. Karunanidhi was sworn in the Chief Minister for the first time in February 1969, he was 44.

Deputy Chief Minister M.K. Stalin is the only person to have held the post of Member of Legislative Assembly and Chennai Mayor concurrently (during 1996-2002).

T. Ramakrishnan
March 13, 2010

Structure for the people

Valluvar in his Thirukkural lists a number of qualities a good king should possess, and in the sixth *kural* of Iraimaatchi says: Kaatchik Keliyan Kaduncholan Allanel/Meekkoorum Mannan Nilam. (Where [the] king is easy of access, where no harsh word repels, That land's high praises every subject swells.)

– G.U. Pope, and others.

In a representative democracy, where the government is of the people and for the people, it is essential that the seats of executive and legislative power be accessible to the people. By shifting the Assembly Complex to its new location abutting an arterial road of Chennai, the government will be better able to feel the pulse of its people.

Madras, for the British, was an important post on the Cholamandala coast, and it was no wonder that the seat of authority in the early years overlooked the Bay of Bengal. After having been the seat of the Presidency during British rule, post-Independence Madras, while it was still forging for itself a new identity as the capital of a new-born State, naturally looked to the 300-year-old Fort St. George to house its representatives.

In the current century, however, when the city's heart is moving inward and beats in sync with the latest in technology, when it has expanded so deep into the hinterland that the Marina Beach has become, even for some of its citizens, a tourist spot visited only so often, the old Assembly complex, for all its historical value, is too distant from its people.

A more central location would have been ideal logically, but would have involved a Tughlaqian effort, and hence would have defeated its purpose.

At a time when analysts and laymen alike are bemoaning the political apathy in civil society, all will agree that the institutions of political discourse, if not its terms and forms, need to be constantly in the public eye to remind the people that politics is not the practice of a professional class, but the essence of civil life; that representative democracy is not the writing away of the rights to decide the course of society. Anyone who has visited the labyrinth that was the Assembly Complex at Fort St. George will appreciate the need for a modern touch to the institutions that represent the people.





Statues of Thiruvalluvar and G.U. Pope

The new Assembly Complex is also a symbol of the new approach to governance, and evokes the freedom and the space that has to enter political discourse. And for those who would have imposing and grand structures rooted in the architecture of the past, the new Assembly Complex, apart from the symbols embedded in its design, is built for the present and the future and it is in its function that it will achieve its greatest value. They will do well to remember that Raja Raja I is known now for his innovations – not for his imitations.

Shyam Ranganathan
March 13, 2010

Monumental achievements

M Karunanidhi's different tenures as the Chief Minister have been characterised by the construction of memorials or landmark structures. The present tenure is, of course, marked by the construction of the state-of-the-art Secretariat Complex. Two memorials, the Valluvar Kottam in Chennai and the Thiruvalluvar Statue in Kanyakumari, both dedicated to the saint-poet, stand testimony to his initiatives.

The Valluvar Kottam at Nungambakkam was conceived and built during Mr. Karunanidhi's first tenure that lasted from 1969 to 1976. In September 1974, sculptor S.K. Achar, who had already designed the Vivekananda Rock Memorial in Kanyakumari, launched the work on the Valluvar Kottam. In January 1976, the structure was ready, at a cost of Rs. 99 lakh. Mr. Karunanidhi was no longer in power when it was declared open by President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed in April 1976. In a recent statement, he noted that he was not even invited to the event.

In January 1989, Mr. Karunanidhi assumed charge as the Chief Minister again at a ceremony held at the Kottam.

The idea of installing a statue for Thiruvalluvar in Kanyakumari was floated towards the fag end of Mr. Karunanidhi's first tenure. On December 31, 1975, the State Cabinet, at a meeting chaired by him, approved the proposal. A month later, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam government was dismissed and the State was brought under President's Rule. In April 1979, Prime Minister Morarji Desai laid the foundation for the statue project.

It was left to Mr. Karunanidhi to revive the project during his next tenure from 1989 to 1991. While presenting the Budget in March 1990, he announced that a 133-foot-tall statue for Thiruvalluvar would be installed in Kanyakumari. Six months later, he inaugurated the work. After he came back to power in May 1996, the statue project got a new lease of life. On New Year's Day 2000, he unveiled the statue.

It is not just memorials that mark Mr. Karunanidhi's rule. The construction of the TIDEL Park, housing several information technology companies over a built-up area of 1.3 million square feet, was another high point of his previous tenure. In July 2000, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee declared open the building. It cost Rs. 340 crore.



Valluvar Kottam in Chennai.

T. Ramakrishnan
March 13, 2010

The story of the search

For over 25 years, the Tamil Nadu government and policy-makers were in search of a suitable location for the Secretariat.

It all started with the decision of the M.G. Ramachandran regime in May 1983 to build a Secretariat building opposite Fort. St. George. At the height of water scarcity in Chennai, MGR had even floated the idea of shifting the administrative capital of the State to somewhere near Tiruchi. But this dream did not receive popular approval.

Nearly 20 years later, in May 2002, Jayalalithaa, the then Chief Minister, announced in the Assembly that the government was considering a 2,000-acre administrative city near Mamallapuram. Later, it was stated that the proposed city would come up in Thiruvidanthai and Thaiyur villages, about 40 km south of Chennai. In January 2003, the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) signed an agreement with the Construction Industry Development Board of Malaysia for a feasibility study of the administrative city project.

Subsequently, Ms. Jayalalithaa informed the Assembly that as the proposed administrative city would take 15 to 25 years to build, the Secretariat would be shifted to a vacant space opposite the Marina Beach in two years. The new building would be more majestic than Bangalore's Vidhana Soudha, she asserted.

Originally, the Lady Willingdon College campus was chosen. But since the area (about 15 acres) of the campus was found inadequate, the then Chief Minister, in April 2003, announced the 30-acre Queen Mary's College campus. However, this plan was abandoned because of a variety of reasons – political and legal.

Five months later, the government decided to establish the Secretariat over an extent of 43 acres in Kotturpuram.

The land belonged to Anna University, the Madras University, and the State Government Data Centre. The CMDA was entrusted with the work of selecting the architect and the construction agency, apart from being authorised to mobilise funds.

In October that year, Ms. Jayalalithaa laid the foundation stone for the project. Seven months later, there was rethinking on the project.

In May 2007, when the Assembly organised celebrations to mark the completion of 50 years of association of Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi with the legislature, the idea of constructing the Assembly-Secretariat Complex was mooted. Mr. Karunanidhi laid the foundation in June 2008 and the site was formally handed over to the contractors five months later.

The Assembly-Secretariat Complex will have two blocks – Block 'A' and Block 'B'. The seven-storey Block 'A' houses the Legislative Assembly Hall and the Assembly Secretariat, besides the offices of the Governor, the Chief Minister, Ministers, the Chief Secretary and certain core departments such as Finance and Home.

The cost of construction of this block has been revised to Rs. 450 crore. In December 2009, work on the construction of the seven-storey Block 'B' started. With a cost estimate of Rs. 280 crore, the work was expected to be completed in 18 months. This block will house a host of departments.

The plinth area figures of Block 'A' and Block 'B' are 9,30,297 sq ft and 7,43,900 sq ft respectively.

T. Ramakrishnan
March 13, 2010

Where the State legislature met...

Council Chamber, Fort St. George (1921-1937)

Senate House, Chepauk campus, Madras University (July 14, 1937 - December 21, 1937)

Banqueting Hall (Rajaji Hall), Government Estate (January 27, 1938 - October 26, 1939)

Legislative Council, Fort St. George (May 24, 1946 - March 27, 1952)

Children's Theatre (Kalaivanar Arangam), Government Estate
(May 3, 1952 - December 27, 1956)

Assembly Hall, Fort St. George
(April 29, 1957 - March 30, 1959)

Arranmore Palace,Udhagamandalam (April 20-30, 1959 - Legislative Assembly; May 4-9, 1959 - Legislative Council)

Fort. St. George (August 31, 1959 - March 13, 2010)

Legislative Assembly-Secretariat Complex, Omandurar Government Estate
(March 19, 2010 - February 10, 2011)

Fort St George
(May 23, 2011 - March 24, 2020)

Kalaivanar Arangam
(September 14, 2020 - January 7, 2022)

Fort St George
(February 8, 2022 till now)

People will be freed from freebies, says Chief Minister

Jayalalithaa says she is confident of achieving her goal of ensuring that the poor people of Tamil Nadu do not depend on others for meeting their requirements

Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, whose government has been implementing a slew of welfare measures, on Wednesday [August 24] said that her ultimate aim was to see that the people of Tamil Nadu would not have to depend on freebies.

"It is my desire that everyone gets everything and never want for anything. At one point time, people of Tamil Nadu will not have to depend on freebies and seek help from others," she told the Assembly on the occasion of her government completing 100 days. "I will achieve the goal with your (alliance partners) support and the people of Tamil Nadu," she said amidst thumping of desks by the treasury benches as well as the members of her alliance parties.

Recalling the speech of the leaders of the alliance parties that though she was driven by the desire to do more for the people of the State and an indifferent Centre was not releasing adequate funds, Ms. Jayalalithaa said her situation was akin to that of a poor mother who had ten children, but did not have adequate food to feed them all.

"The mother has only one dosa and that has placed her in an invidious situation. What is weighing on her mind is whether to give it to one child and leave others to go hungry or split the dosa and feed all the mouths. A good mother will share the dosa equally among her children though she knows well that it is not enough to fill their stomach. I am facing a similar situation. But we will achieve the goal despite all the hurdles," she declared.

Ms. Jayalalithaa said the kudos from the alliance partners for the achievements of her government had filled her with fear rather than happiness. "I don't think you congratulated me out of tokenism. The kudos has come from the bottom of your heart and it has filled with me a fear that I have never experienced in my life. The fear that I have to live up to your expectations. It is a great challenge to outdo the achievements of the 100 days when my government completes five years in office."

"But I strongly believe that I can do it because we are doing everything with conviction and commitment. There is absolutely no element of deception in what we are doing for the people," she said.

In the same vein she accused the DMK government of not fulfilling its promises to people. "They gave gas stoves to a few and even those few could not get gas connection. They loudly trumpeted electricity connection to farmers. But there was no power."

August 25, 2011

"The mother has only one dosa and that has placed her in an invidious situation. What is weighing on her mind is whether to give it to one child and leave others to go hungry or split the dosa and feed all the mouths. A good mother will share the dosa equally among her children though she knows well that it is not enough to fill their stomach. I am facing a similar situation.

JAYALALITHAA
Chief Minister



President Pranab Mukherjee receiving a memento from Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa at the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly's diamond jubilee celebration in Chennai on November 30, 2012. Tamil Nadu Governor K. Rosaiah also seen.

Pranab slams growing trend of disrupting legislature proceedings

"The role and functions of an Assembly can be described as three Ds - debate, dissent and decision"

President Pranab Mukherjee on Friday (November 30) came down heavily on the growing trend of disruption of proceedings of Parliament and State Assemblies and the declining importance given to debates on Finance Bills.

Participating in the diamond jubilee celebration at the elegantly-decorated Assembly Chamber in Fort St. George here, Mr. Mukherjee said every legislator should ensure that the content and the quality of debates were befitting their status as people's representatives. "The role and functions of an Assembly can be described as three Ds – debate, dissent and decision. The fourth 'D,' that is, 'disruption' should be strictly avoided," he said, adding that "disruption should never be used as a strategy."

He noted that "dissent is a recognised democratic expression but it should be expressed with decency and within the contours and parameters of parliamentary practices, norms and conventions. The cardinal principle of effective functioning of a Parliamentary system is that majority will rule and minority will oppose, expose and if possible, depose. But this should be done within the framework of rules framed by Legislatures themselves."

It was members of the legislature, both at the Centre and in States, who framed rules for the conduct of business. If they felt that the rules had to be flexible enough, they could amend the rules. But, after having amended the rules, they should not violate them. This was not expected of elected representatives of people.

Deviating in many places from his prepared speech, the President said the amount of time spent on debates on budgets was inadequate even though there had been a "phenomenal change" in the financial responsibility of the executive. Recalling that the total outlay of free India's first Union budget was Rs. 293 crore, he said it was Rs. 12 lakh crore, as per the budget presented by him [as Union Finance Minister] early this year. The amount of time devoted for discussion on budgets, demand for grants of various departments and the passage of Finance Bills was "quite inadequate."

It was in this context he suggested that meetings of Parliament and State Assemblies should be held at least for one half of the year.

He also voiced his concern over the re-promulgation of ordinances after the legislature did not approve such ordinances.

Mr. Mukherjee, who laid the foundation stone for a hostel for former legislators, received the first copy of the diamond jubilee souvenir from Chief Minister Jayalalithaa.

Governor K. Rosaiah said several landmark legislations, introduced in the House, covered pioneering schemes in the areas of social justice, eradication of untouchability, women and child welfare and education.

They had well represented hopes and aspirations of people of the State. He also emphasised that "accommodation and consensus make a healthy democracy. Discipline and decorum form the basic foundation of Parliamentary and Legislative democracy."

The Chief Minister, who traced the history of the State legislature starting from the Regulating Act of the 18th century, said many historic unanimous resolutions had been passed in the House. "This Assembly has been graced by stalwarts who steered the course of history. It has a long list of illustrious Speakers who helped preserve the sanctity of the traditions of the House."

Talking of the importance of Fort St. George which had been the seat of power since colonial times, Ms. Jayalalithaa said it was around the Fort that Chennai grew. "The core of the present Secretariat building still has parts surviving from 1693 when the original Fort House was pulled down and the complex metamorphosed into Fort St. George." She also explained how the Fort had been the home of legislature ever since 1921 when the Legislative Council, a precursor to the Assembly, was constituted.

Chief Justice of Madras High Court M.Y. Eqbal said that "in Tamil Nadu, the Legislature and the Executive on the one side, and the Judiciary on the other side, have had a peaceful co-existence with each other."

At the beginning of the function, a silent homage was paid to former Prime Minister I.K. Gujral who died in Gurgaon earlier in the day.

T. Ramakrishnan
December 1, 2012



Fort St. George illuminated on the occasion of Tamil Nadu Assembly's diamond jubilee celebration in November 2012.

Time for MLAs to introspect on debates

In recent times, the Tamil Nadu Assembly has witnessed heated arguments between the treasury benches and the Opposition over a host of issues ranging from the serious to relatively petty ones. As a result, the proceedings have been disrupted and certain pressing issues of the people have been ignored.

In the last two decades, the proceedings of the House have mostly centred on individual leaders and the rise of this personality-centric culture has replaced principled debates. Members of different parties are keen on being in the good books of their leaders. Hence, they frequently ridicule the rivals or take pot shots at them. Even Question Hours have become an occasion to eulogise party leaders. The studied supplementary questions in the distant past that provided an opportunity to prove the Ministers' efficiency have become rare.

Dravidian historian K Thirunavukkarasu feels that debates, such as the recent clash between the ruling and Opposition benches on whether it was proper to call the Chief Minister or DMK president by name is unwarranted.

"When late communist leader P. Jeevanandam moved a no-confidence motion against the Congress government, led by Rajagopalachari, he mentioned the Chief Minister's name 52 times. Jawaharlal Nehru was a great leader who had spent many years in jail. But, he never prevented the Opposition leaders from calling him Mr. Nehru," he pointed out.

Former Minister and DMK MLA E. V. Velu, however, disagrees. He pointed out that AIADMK founder M G Ramachandran, despite his political differences, always addressed DMK leader Karunanidhi as Kalaignar.

On many occasions, MGR had requested Mr. Karunanidhi to initiate debates on major issues concerning the State. There were occasions when the DMK and AIADMK members clashed in the House and cooled the tempers over a cup of tea in the Assembly canteen, since they all once worked together in the DMK before they parted ways.

Anna's retort

Recently, PMK leader S. Ramadoss recalled an incident to illustrate how late Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai conducted himself in the face of stringent criticism. Responding to Congress leader K. Vinayagam's jibe that "your days are numbered" (a reference to Anna's failing health); Anna retorted "my steps are measured."

Former Congress MLA Peter Alphonse said he had witnessed great debates in the Assembly by communist leaders R. Umanath and Pappa Umanath, INL leader Abdul Latheef and AIADMK's Panruti S. Ramachandran.

"Senior DMK leaders would make excellent presentation after moving resolutions. I have spoken in the House for 45 minutes without interruption. Now, not a single minute passes without interruption," complained Mr. Peter Alphonse.

"What we require today is tolerance on both sides. The debates should be free from personal attacks and provocative remarks," said AIADMK spokesperson Panruti S. Ramachandran.

When Rajaji once wondered why Jeeva, who would normally harp on international political situation, confined himself to problems of Washermanpet, the communist leader said, "At least, I have a constituency," insinuating that Rajaji did not contest in the election and became the Chief Minister through his election to the Legislative Council. The House plunged into laughter.

B. Kolappan
August 8, 2016

"When late communist leader P. Jeevanandam moved a no-confidence motion against the Congress government, led by C. Rajagopalachari, he mentioned the Chief Minister's name 52 times. Jawaharlal Nehru was a great leader who had spent many years in jail. But, he never prevented the opposition leaders from calling him Mr. Nehru

K THIRUNAVUKKARASU
Dravidian historian

T.N. legislature turns 100

President Ram Nath Kovind will inaugurate the centenary celebrations of the Tamil Nadu legislature tomorrow. The occasion is significant for more than one reason. The House has passed several epoch-making legislation, beginning with voting rights for women in 1921

The Assembly chamber at Fort St. George, the 17th-century vestige of the colonial era and Tamil Nadu's seat of power, will witness a historic event on Monday [August 2] when President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates the centenary celebration of the State legislature.

Mr. Kovind will also unveil the portrait of five-time Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, who led the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) for nearly half a century, in the presence of Governor Banwarilal Purohit and Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, son of the former Chief Minister. This is the first time in four decades that a portrait of an eminent figure of the State is getting unveiled by the President. In August 1977, then President N. Sanjeeva Reddi unveiled the portrait of former Chief Minister K. Kamaraj.

For the State that boasts a Chola inscription of around 920 CE in a tiny town of Uthiramerur, about 90 km south of Chennai, dealing with a written Constitution, the celebration carries a special meaning beyond the fact that the legislature has completed 100 years of existence.

Inclusive representation

Tamil Nadu witnessed elections in November 1920 when electors (only men), accounting for just 3% of the population, were enrolled, as a result of the Montague-Chelmsford Report and the Government of India Act of 1919. The development paved the way for a more representative body than what it was till then. The proportion of elected members increased to over 70%. The concept of dyarchy came into being with Ministers, who were Indians, gaining limited control over certain subjects, such as local self-government and education. It was then that the office of the Chief Minister, also called Premier, got instituted. Besides, one seat in each territorial plural-member constituency – 28 in all – was reserved for non-Brahmins.

With the Congress boycotting the election, the Justice Party romped home. Eugene F. Irschick, an American historian, in his 1969 work, 'Politics and Social Conflict in South India, the Non-Brahman Movement and Tamil Separatism, 1916-1929', points out that the House included 65 non-Brahmin Hindus and 22 Brahmins, apart from five members of the Scheduled Castes who were official appointees.

The first Ministry of the Justice Party, a precursor to the present DMK, saw to it that two government orders (G.O.), famously called 'Communal G.O.s', were issued in September 1921 and August 1922. For the first time, caste became the basis for appointment to public services. It took over 70 years for the Central government to follow the principle in its institutions for education and employment. In December 1993, the scheme of 69% reservation for Backward Classes, Most Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, in vogue in the State only through executive orders till then, got legal safeguard when the Assembly adopted a Bill. The law was subsequently included in the IX Schedule of the Constitution, through an amendment passed in Parliament, so that its validity could not be challenged. The then Chief Minister Jayalalithaa took the lead in providing legislative support to the scheme of reservation.

Talking of the most significant fallout of the 1920 election, M.E. Duraipandiyan, former Additional Secretary of the Assembly Secretariat, points out that as women were not part of the electorate, the Council, in its first session in April 1921, resolved to provide voting rights to women. Subsequently, it decided to remove the restriction on women getting elected as members. In early 1927, Muthulakshmi Reddi, the well-known medical practitioner and social activist, became the first woman member of the Council and, in no time, became the Deputy President of the Council.

There were several moments of pride associated with the Assembly. One of the Congress stalwarts, S. Satyamurti, by rendering the banned songs of Subramania Bharati in the Legislative Council in October 1927, highlighted the issue and got the ban lifted subsequently. The 88-year-old Kumari Ananthan, former TNCC president, who was elected to the Assembly on four occasions and the Lok Sabha once, recalls that when Kamaraj was at the helm of affairs, C. Subramaniam, as Finance Minister, was the first to make a budget speech in Tamil in 1957-1958. He points out that Si.Pa. Aditanar, as Speaker during March 1967-August 1968, introduced the practice of commencing the House's proceedings with the recital of a verse from Thirukkural.

When Omandur P. Ramaswami Reddiar was the Chief Minister in the late 1940s, the government gave a convincing reply in the Assembly during a debate on the State government's emblem of temple gopuram and got the issue resolved. During the two-year rule of the DMK founder C.N. Annadurai, the Assembly, in July 1967, adopted a motion renaming Madras State as Tamil Nadu, which later got the approval of Parliament too, Mr. Ananthan explains.

Another former official of the Assembly Secretariat points out that during Jayalalithaa's first innings as Chief Minister, "Tamil Thai Vazhthu" was rendered in July 1991 for the first time at the beginning of the Governor's address.

K. Balabharathi, a three-term legislator of the CPI(M), says that to the credit of the legislature, it has passed several landmark laws for the welfare of women, such as

Devadasi abolition, equal rights to women in property and constitution of the State Commission for Women.

Many stalwarts

Over the years, both Houses of legislature [now only one] have had many stalwarts. While A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Satyamurti, T.A. Ramalingam Chettiar, C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, T.S.S. Rajan, P.T. Rajan, R.K. Shanmugam Chetty, C. Subramaniam and R. Venkataraman were the leading figures till the 1960s, the subsequent period witnessed the debating skills of P.G. Karuthiruman, Sa. Ganesan, K. Vinayakam, V.R. Nedunchezhian, Panruti S. Ramachandran, K. Suppu, Duraimurugan, Mr. Kumari Ananthan, N. Sankariah, and R. Umanath.

Mr. Duraipandiyan says that while Mr. Panruti Ramachandran and K. Kalimuthu, as Ministers in the AIADMK regime, were sharp and brief in their replies, Mr. Duraimurugan, while representing the treasury benches, could gauge the mind of the Opposition well ahead of the latter completing their observations. In the late 1970s, Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran, perhaps, made the longest reply to the discussion on the Governor's address. Mr. Panruti Ramachandran, a seven-term MLA (elected on tickets of four parties), recalls that the entire line-up of members of the Opposition in the late 1960s and early 1970s was outstanding. This included Swatantara Party's D.S. Authimoolam and H.V. Hande (who later switched to the AIADMK and the BJP), Forward Bloc's P.K. Mookiah Thevar and the CPI(M)'s A. Balasubramaniyam. The 93-year-old Hande, former Health Minister, who served both the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly during 1964-86, admires the way in which Karunanidhi and his long-standing colleague, K. Anbazhagan, enlivened discussions in the legislature.

Of late, the Assembly is taking steps to use technology in a big way and the State has joined the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA), a programme meant for digitisation of the working of legislatures all over the country. "We are moving towards a paperless legislature and to begin with, e-budget will be presented this year," says M. Appavu, Speaker.

The Assembly website now contains the transcript of debates held during 2011-20.

Black spots

In the long history of the State legislature, there were many black spots too.

Scenes of pandemonium were witnessed in December 1972 when then Assembly Speaker K. A. Mathialagan was removed from office and in January 1988, when 33 MLAs of Jayalalithaa's faction in the ruling AIADMK were disqualified on the day the Ministry headed by Janaki Ramachandran sought a vote of confidence. In March 1989, when Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi rose to present the State Budget and Jayalalithaa wanted a privilege motion to be brought in against the Chief Minister, there was a commotion leading to the ruling and Opposition parties using their lung and muscle power.

In November 2003, amid protests from the entire Opposition, the then Assembly Speaker Kalimuthu awarded, on the adoption of a motion by the House, a 15-day simple imprisonment to *The Hindu*'s then Editor N. Ravi, Executive Editor Malini Parthasarathy and three others, besides S. Selvam, Editor of *Murasoli*, all for breach of privilege. Another infamous instance of the Assembly acting against a senior journalist was the one concerning S. Balasubramanian, Editor of *Ananda Vikatan* in April 1987. While the Supreme Court later stayed the operation of the sentence against the senior journalists of *The Hindu*, Balasubramanian, after being kept at the Central Prison for two days, was released in deference to the wishes of the then Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran.

In February 2017, the Assembly experienced commotion when the regime, led by Edappadi K. Palaniswami, won a vote of confidence.

Legislature vs judiciary

On the matter of legislature versus judiciary, former Assembly Speaker Sedapatti R. Muthiah, whose tenure of 1991-96 too saw a few breach of privilege proceedings against the Press, including the Illustrated Weekly of India, feels that there is still no clear separation of powers of the legislature and the judiciary. However, he concedes that with regard to disqualification of legislators, there exists the scope for judicial intervention.

For several years, there have been voices of concern over the declining quality of debates in the legislature. Mr. Panruti Ramachandran says the problem lies in the selection of candidates. Mr. Duraimurugan, now Water Resources Minister, and who is a long serving member of the Assembly, does not agree with the criticism and says that as in the past, there are legislators who come to the House thoroughly prepared.

Stressing on the importance of regular discussions in the legislature, Dr. Hande recalls how an adjournment motion on the language issue, at the heat of the anti-Hindi agitation in January 1965, was taken up for a debate in the Legislative Council, after the Chairman M.A. Manickavelu was deftly persuaded by A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Leader of the Opposition, though the Assembly refused to have any discussion on the subject.

Former Deputy Speaker V.P. Duraisamy, now in the BJP, says the Opposition should be given more time to make their point. Former CPI floor leader, G. Palanichamy, quotes C.N. Annadurai, who had said the ruling party should keep its ears open and the Opposition should keep its mouth open. Former Speaker R. Avudaiappan is hopeful that the situation will improve under the present DMK regime. And this is not just the wish of Mr. Avudaiappan alone.

T. Ramakrishnan
August 1, 2021

The first Ministry of the Justice Party, a precursor to the present DMK, saw to it that two government orders (G.O.), famously called 'Communal G.O.s', were issued in September 1921 and August 1922. For the first time, caste became the basis for appointment to public services. It took over 70 years for the Central government to follow the principle in its institutions for education and employment.



President hails Tamil Nadu legislature's contribution

Karunanidhi's portrait unveiled in Assembly





Former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, former President Ram Nath Kovind and Chief Minister M.K. Stalin

Hailing the rich contributions made by the Tamil Nadu legislature over the past century, President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday [August 2] observed that the [erstwhile] Madras legislature had sown the seeds of a fully representative democratic form of governance, which were realised after Independence.

Welfare State

"The concept of the welfare State has taken deep roots in this legislature irrespective of who rules here," he said, addressing the centenary celebrations of the State legislature at Fort St. George, Chennai.

He unveiled a portrait of five-time Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi in the Assembly on the occasion.

"This legislature became the fountainhead of many progressive legislation, which were subsequently replicated across the country to empower the weaker sections of society and strengthen democracy," the President said.

Politics and governance

According to Mr. Kovind, the Madras legislature can rightly be credited with nurturing the roots of democracy by focusing on governance to uplift the poor and purge social evils. "Politics and governance in the region evolved around positive and rational content that targeted the welfare of those living on the margins," he noted. The abolition of the Devadasi system, widow remarriage, mid-day meals in schools and distribution of agricultural land to the landless were some of the revolutionary ideas that transformed society.

Lauding the leadership qualities of Karunanidhi, who started his political career as a teenager when India was still fighting for freedom, the President said the former Chief Minister must have been satisfied while breathing his last that this land and its people had made astounding progress and development on all fronts.

Pointing out that very few political leaders were so passionate about language, Mr. Kovind said, "For him [Karunanidhi], his mother-tongue was the object of worship. Tamil, of course, is one of the greatest and the oldest languages of humankind. The whole world takes pride in its rich heritage. But it was Karunanidhi who ensured that it was granted official recognition as a classical language."

Exemplary leaders

Recalling that the titan among freedom fighters C. Rajagopalachari, who was the first Indian occupant of Rashtrapati Bhavan, had graced the State Legislature, Mr. Kovind said, "His successors, too, were exemplary political leaders. Among all Rajaji's successors, however, it is Shri Karunanidhiji who ruled the longest, and thus has left a defining stamp on Tamil Nadu."

Earlier commencing his speech with "Vanakkam", the President attempted a few sentences in Tamil to loud applause from the gathering.

Call to legislators

Governor Banwarilal Purohit called upon the members of the 16th Legislative Assembly to work together with a common goal of serving the people and for the progress of the State, even if they belonged to different political parties with varying ideologies.

"It is through the elected representatives that the sovereign will of the people finds expression in our legislative bodies. The trust and faith which the people have reposed in you need to be justified with sincerity and commitment," Mr. Purohit said.

He noted that the visionary zeal and foresight of stalwarts were instrumental in the enactment of important and historic legislation, which paved the way for the creation of a progressive State.

Lauding the leadership qualities of former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, Mr. Purohit said he won the hearts of lakhs of people in Tamil Nadu, especially the poor and the downtrodden.

Upliftment of the poor

The former Chief Minister's schemes, including the introduction of cycle rickshaws in place of hand-pulled rickshaws, a law for equal property rights for women, Samathuvapurams to eradicate caste discrimination, gas connections for the poor and rice at a subsidised price, spoke volumes about his service towards the upliftment of the poor, he said.

The portrait unveiled in the Assembly hall shows Karunanidhi standing in front of a stack of books, and with a portrait of Thiruvalluvar in the background. His right hand rests on a sculpture of an elephant. The portrait is accompanied by a wooden board with the slogan: Kaalam Pon Pondrathu! Kadamai Kann Pondrathu! (Time is Golden! Duty is like Eyes!)

The Governor recalled accompanying Prime Minister Narendra Modi to meet Karunanidhi in November 2017.

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin recalled all the significant legislation passed in the State legislature, which received appreciation from across the globe.

Stalin on portrait

"As Chief Minister, I am happy, and as his [Karunanidhi's] son, I am moved that the President of India, who is also the first citizen of the country, has unveiled his portrait," an emotional Mr. Stalin said.

He expressed his wish that the legislature should witness several centenary celebrations and enact legislation that uplift the poor and the downtrodden.

Assembly Speaker M. Appavu said the State legislature, set up in 1921 in the then Madras Presidency, was the mother of all southern States.

He recalled that both Houses of Parliament were adjourned after an obituary tribute to Karunanidhi, who was not even a member of either of the Houses. Deputy Speaker K. Pitchandi proposed a vote of thanks.

Leaders of major political parties and organisations, including Dravidar Kazhagam president K. Veeramani, MDMK founder Vaiko, Tamil Nadu Congress Committee president K.S. Alagiri, CPI(M) leader K. Balakrishnan, CPI leader R. Mutharasan, Manithaneya Makkal Katchi leader M.H. Jawahirullah and VCK founder Thol. Thirumavalavan were among those present on the occasion.

AIADMK leaders chose not to attend the function. However, PMK president G.K. Mani, Tamil Maanila Congress leader G.K. Vasan and BJP leader K. Annamalai – all allies of the AIADMK – took part.

August 3, 2021

A moment of pride for sons of illustrious fathers

The solemn function commemorating 100 years of the Tamil Nadu legislature on Monday was also an occasion that marked a distinct privilege for Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and Finance Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan. It was a special moment for both, as their fathers, too, held seats of importance and stature many years ago, which coincided with the landmark jubilee celebrations of the State legislature. In 1972, when the State legislature celebrated the silver jubilee of Independence, Mr. Stalin's father, M. Karunanidhi, was the Chief Minister. In 1997, when Karunanidhi was Chief Minister, the diamond jubilee celebrations of the Assembly and platinum jubilee celebrations of the State legislature were held. Soaking in similar importance was Mr. Thiaga Rajan. In the 75th year of the State legislature in 1997, his father, P.T.R. Palanivel Rajan, was a DMK legislator, who also served as Speaker from 1996 to 2001. "To be a part of the centenary year is a happy moment for me," the Finance Minister said.

Soma Basu
August 3, 2021

T.N. Governor walks out of House as CM objects to deviation from speech

Stalin moves resolution to retain on record only the approved version of the Address of the Governor, who had left out portions of the text, including on the Dravidian model of governance

In an unprecedented face-off, Governor R.N. Ravi on Monday abruptly walked out of the Tamil Nadu Assembly as Chief Minister M.K. Stalin disapproved of his selective deviation from the approved text of the Governor's Address to the House and moved a resolution to take on record only the transcript distributed to the members.

Trouble began after Mr. Ravi skipped a paragraph containing references to national and regional stalwarts and the term "Dravidian model of governance".

Objecting to Mr. Ravi's action, soon after Speaker M. Appavu read out the Tamil translation of the Governor's tabled Address, Mr. Stalin moved a resolution to retain on the Assembly records only the printed and approved speech copy given to the members earlier.

Mr. Stalin said portions "inserted" or "omitted" by the Governor in his oral address should not be part of the records. The paragraph number 65 skipped by Mr. Ravi read: "Following the principles and ideals of stalwarts like Thanthai Periyar, Annal Ambedkar, Perunthalaivar Kamarajar, Perarignar Anna and Muthamizh Arignar Kalaignar, this government has been delivering the much-acclaimed Dravidian Model of governance to its people." However, elsewhere in his speech, he mentioned "Kalaignar", denoting former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi. He also made certain extempore remarks.

The Governor did not read a reference to the management of law and order situation that said, "Tamil Nadu continues to be a haven of peace and is attracting numerous foreign investments and is becoming a forerunner in all sectors".

Against Assembly tradition, says Stalin

Describing the act of the Governor as "very sad and against the tradition of the Assembly", Mr. Stalin pointed out that he omitted portions of "the speech prepared by the State government and approved by him [Mr. Ravi]".

"We conducted ourselves in a manner to accord full respect to the Governor who came to the Assembly to deliver his address as per the Constitution. But he acted not only against our ideology but also against the government by not reading the speech prepared by the government and approved by him," Mr. Stalin said while moving a resolution seeking to relax Assembly Rule 17 to retain in the House records only the printed speech in English and its Tamil version read by the Speaker. Mr. Stalin told the House that the speech was prepared by the government and the printed version was distributed to the members only after the Governor gave his nod. "Though the Governor was functioning against the Dravidian model and it was unacceptable, we did not record our opposition as we are in the government," he said.

January 10, 2023



Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi walking out of the Assembly at Fort St. George in Chennai on January 9, 2023.

9-1-2023 ஆம் நாளைய பேரவை நடவடிக்கைக் குறிப்புகள்

மாண்புமிகு பேரவைத் தலைவர்: மாண்புமிகு முதலமைச்சர் அவர்கள்.

மாண்புமிகு திரு. மு.க. ஸ்டாலின்:

"சட்டமன்றப் பேரவை விதி 17—ஐத் தளர்த்தி, இன்றைக்கு அச்சிட்டப்பட்டு, மாண்புமிகு உறுப்பினர்களுக்கு வழங்கப்பட்டுள்ள ஆங்கில உரை மற்றும் மாண்புமிகு பேரவைத் தலைவர் அவர்களால் படிக்கப்பட்ட தமிழ் உரை ஆகியனவும், நான் முன்மொழிகின்ற இத்தீர்மானமும் மட்டும், அவைக் குறிப்பில் ஏற வேண்டும்"

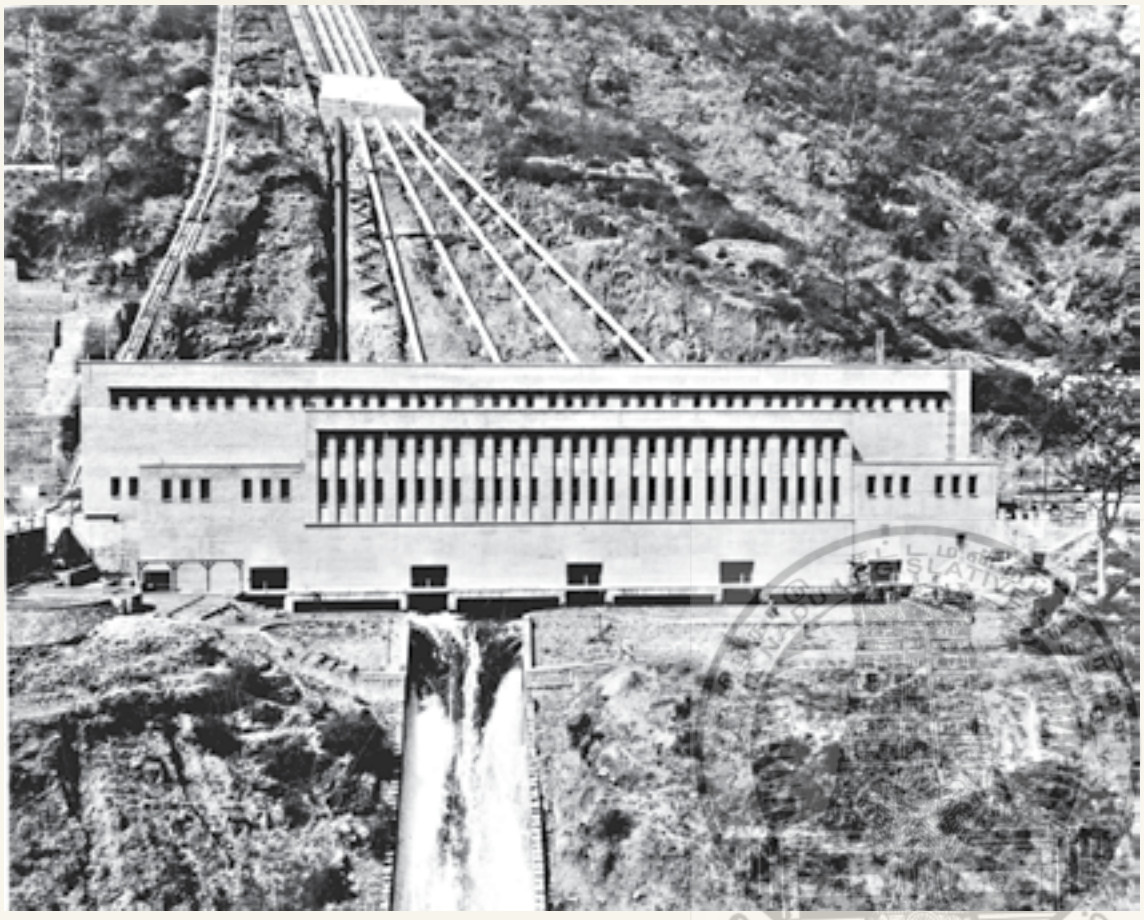
எனும் தீர்மானத்தையும்,

"அதேபோல், இங்கே அச்சிட்ட பகுதிகளுக்கு மாறாக மாண்புமிகு ஆளுநர் அவர்கள் இணைத்து படித்த பகுதிகள் இடம்பெறாது; விடுத்த பகுதிகள் இடம் பெறலாம்" என்னும் தீர்மானத்தையும் நான் முன்மொழிகிறேன். இத்தீர்மானத்தை இப்பேரவை ஒருமனதாக நிறைவேற்ற வேண்டுமென்று கேட்டுக்கொள்கிறேன்.

Images of the Legislative Assembly proceedings on January 9, 2023

SECTION 6

THOUSAND WORDS IN ONE FRAME



A view of the Power House II of the Kundah Hydroelectric Project on the Nilgiri Hills in Tamil Nadu.



Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru congratulating senior construction foreman at the Kundah project Sardar Khan after switching on the generator at Kundah on March 25, 1960.



Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru going round one of the sections at the Industrial Colony Gunidy on January 7, 1958. Chief Minister K. Kamaraj and Industries Minister R. Venkataraman also in the picture.



(From left) Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai and President Zakir Hussain witnessing the colourful pageantry procession organised in connection with the Second World Tamil Conference in Chennai on January 03, 1968.





(Left) Accompanied by Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi and Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board Rama Arangannal, Sarvodaya leader Jayaprakash Narayan going round the new tenements at Kotturpuram in Chennai on June 11, 1972. (Above) A view of the tenements at Kotturpuram.



Prime Minister Indira Gandhi pressing the button in Madras on May 25, 1983 to mark the inauguration of the Rs. 750-crore Krishna Water Supply Project to provide drinking water for Madras. Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh M.G. Ramachandran and N.T. Rama Rao also in the picture.



"Cradle babies" Mahalakshmi, Dhanalakshmi, Bhagyalakshmi and Jayalakshmi, named by Chief Minister J. Jayalalitha in 1993, with the CM at the Secretariat on August 08, 1995 before joining a convent school. Minister for Social Welfare R. Indirakumari and Social Welfare Secretary C.K. Gariyali also in the picture.



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi distributing free gas stove to a benificiary at a function in Chennai on March 10, 2008. Local Administration Minister M.K. Stalin and Mayor M. Subramanian also in the picture.



Former Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa's portrait in the Assembly chamber unveiled on February 12, 2018.



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi presenting a television set to one of the beneficiaries, as part of the Tamil Nadu Government's free TV distribution scheme, at Kalaivanar Arangam in Chennai on November 27, 2007. Chief Secretary L.K. Tripathy and Mayor M. Subramanian also in the picture.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin greeting Governor Banwarilal Purohit during the swearing in ceremony held in Chennai on May 7, 2021.



M.K. Stalin being sworn-in as Tamil Nadu Chief Minister by Governor Banwarilal Purohit at Raj Bhavan in Chennai on May 7, 2021.



A banner of former CM M. Karunanidhi at Fort St. George on the day his son M.K. Stalin took over as Chief Minister in May 2021.



Colourfully-decorated entrance of the Secretariat on the day of the visit of President Ram Nath Kovind to the Assembly in August 2021.

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin addressing the Assembly.



President Ram Nath Kovind unveiling the portrait of M. Karunanidhi in the Assembly on August 2, 2021. Governor Banwarilal Purohit and Chief Minister M.K. Stalin seen in the picture.


VVIP


காலம் பொன் போன்றது,
கடமை கண் போன்றது!



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin launching the *Puthumai Penn Thittam* in Chennai on September 5, 2022 amid Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Social Welfare Minister P. Geetha Jeevan, Higher Education Minister K. Ponmudy, Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Minister P.K. Sekar Babu, School Education Minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi and Chief Secretary V. Irai Anbu.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin speaks during the first session of the year of the Assembly at Fort St. George on January 9, 2023 before Governor R.N. Ravi's walk out.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin enquiring with passengers about free bus travel scheme (*Vidiyal Payanam)* for women in a bus in Chennai on October 23, 2021.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin with a beneficiary of the *Puthumai Penn Thittam* in Chennai in September 2022. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Higher Education Minister K. Ponmudy also in the picture.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin addressing the Assembly in Chennai on January 9, 2025.



Governor Banwarilal Purohit addressing the Assembly on June 21, 2021. Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, Ministers and other Members of Legislative Assembly also seen in the picture.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin addressing an event in Thoppur, Dharmapuri district, on July 24, 2023.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin launching Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thittam, women's basic income scheme, by distributing ATM cards to beneficiaries, in Kancheepuram, on September 15, 2023.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin greeting Transgender student Ajitha at Kalai Thiruvizha organised by School Education department at a function held at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai on January 12, 2023.



Governor R.N. Ravi greeting Udhayanidhi Stalin after swearing him in as Minister for Youth Welfare, Sports Development and Special Programme Implementation at the Raj Bhavan on December 14, 2022 in the presence of Chief Minister M. K. Stalin.



Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin addressing the Assembly on January 8, 2025.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and his ministerial colleagues at the inauguration of the Museum of Archaeological Artifacts found at Keeladi Excavation, in Sivaganga district, on March 5, 2023.



A view of the Keeladi Museum, in Sivaganga district.

PORTRAITS



MAHATMA GANDHI
(unveiled in 1948)



C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
(1948)



THIRUVALLUVAR
(1964)



C.N. ANNADURAI
(1969)



K. KAMARAJ
(1977)



“PERIYAR”
E.V. RAMASAMY
NAICKER (1980)



PASUMPON
MUTHURAMALINGA
THEVAR (1980)



B.R. AMBEDKAR
(1980)

PORTRAITS



MOHAMED ISMAIL
(1980)



M.G. RAMACHANDRAN
(1992)



J. JAYALALITHAA
(2018)



S.S. RAMASAMY
PADAYATCHI (2019)



V.O. CHIDAMBARAM
PILLAI (2021)



P. SUBBARAYAN
(2021)



OMANDUR
P. RAMASWAMY
REDDIAR (2021)



M. KARUNANIDHI
(2021)

SECTION 7

FINANCE MINISTERS IN LIMELIGHT

(SINCE 1952)



Finance Minister B. Gopala Reddi presenting the Budget for 1951-52 to the Madras Assembly.

B. Gopala Reddi

February 26, 1951

We should keep in mind that the people of this country had been used to autocratic rule all through the modern ages, and we have for the first time launched our ship of State in democratic waters. This form of Government can thrive, only if complete freedom of thought and expression is maintained, and in a land of many faiths, castes and racial stocks, this requires considerable experimenting and adaptation. However, we may note with pardonable pride, that during these early days of our Independence, we had allowed absolute freedom of worship, thought and mode of life and are in a position to rely on robust public opinion to stifle the antics of certain individuals by the process of sheer ridicule. If today our Prime Minister's voice is heard with respect in the councils of nations, and if the great American Republic is proposing to give us material assistance in food and money for the development of our country, it is largely because we have been able to establish a stable Government on full democratic lines.

The Government of India have so far allotted to this State only a total quota of 5 lakhs tons of imported foodgrains for the year 1951, of which not more than 1 lakh tons may be in the shape of rice. The extent to which both the Goverument of India and this Government have been subsidising food supply, is not generally recognized. During the seven years from 1943-44 to 1949-50, the total trading loss on grain supply schemes has amounted to over Rs. 17.5 crores...the total food subsidy during these years has worked out to Rs. 25.5 crores, of which the Government of India's share has been about Rs. 11 crores, made up of Rs. 8 crores by way of subsidy on overseas imports and Rs. 3 crores as procurement bonus, mostly earmarked for expenditure on intensive cultivation schemes. In other words, the Madras Government have been incurring an expenditure on the average, of more than Rs. 2 crores a year, by way of supplying food to the people, and they can hardly afford to add to this commitment.



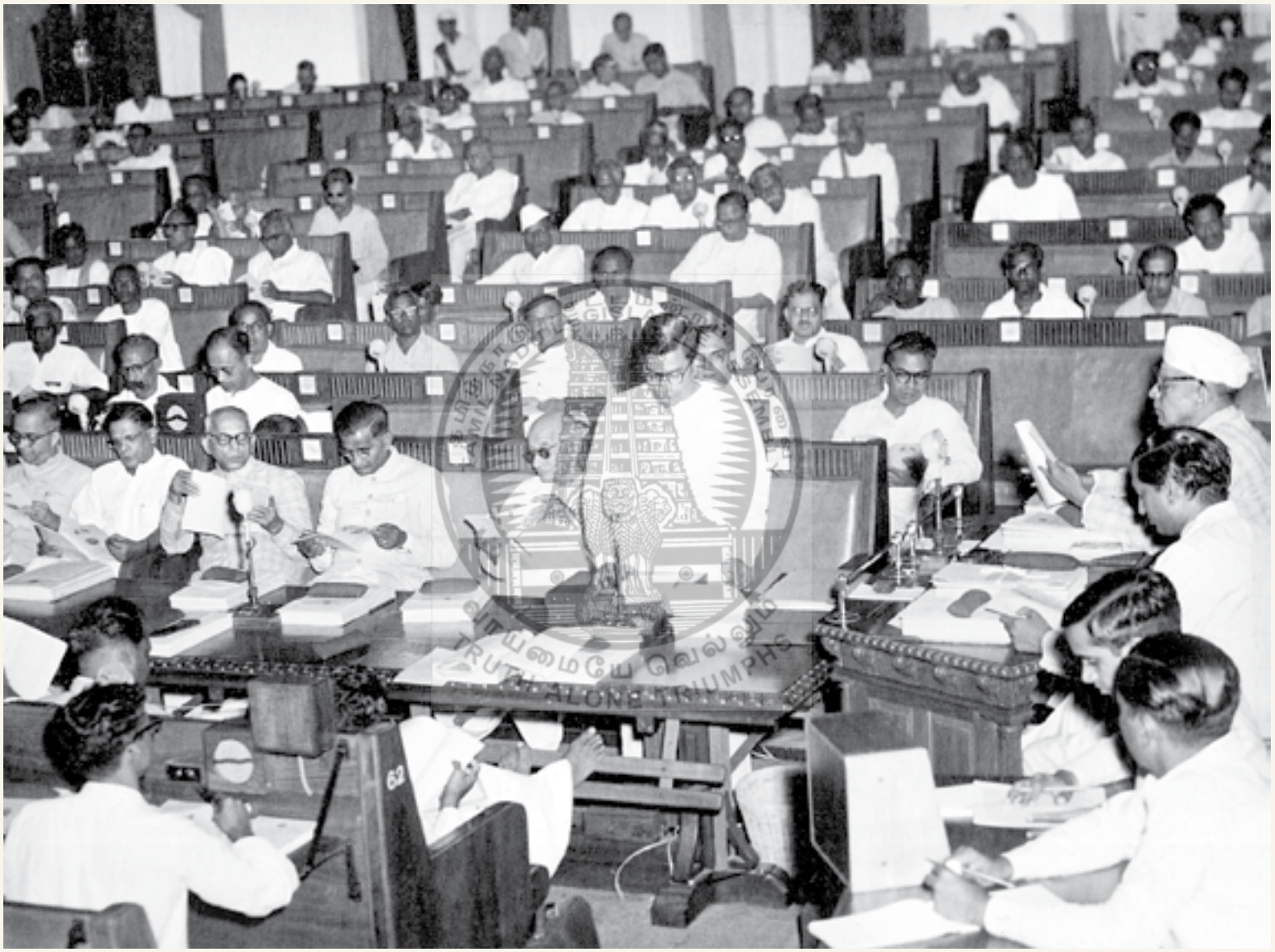
Finance Minister A.B. Shetty making the budget speech (1952-53) in the Assembly.

A.B. Shetty

March 15, 1952

For the fifth year in suceession, this State has suffered from adverse seasonal conditions causing widespread distress. The current year has been one of the worst, and severe drought conditions are now prevailing in the entire districts of Cuddapah, Chittoor, Chengalpattu and North Arcot. Scarcity conditions exist also in parts of Guntur, Nellore, Kurnool, Anantapur, Tiruchirappalli, Salem and Coimbatore districts. The Government are alive to the seriousness of the situation and the need for immediate relief. To avoid large-scale human mortality, gruel centres are being opened, wherever necessary, to sustain the aged and the infirm. Liberal remissions of land revenue and postponement of the collection of instalments of takkavi loans [a type of crop loans] have been ordered. The Government are also granting subsistence and takkavi loans on a liberal scale. The programme of works on roads, rural water-supply and minor irrigation schemes is being accelerated in order to provide employment. Fodder is being arranged to be sold at subsidised rates to preserve the cattle wealth of the area. It may perhaps be desirable to subsidise the sale of food grains, especially millets, in the affected areas, to place them within the reach of the distressed people, but this would entail heayy outlay, beyond the resources of the State. The cost on account, of the various relief measures which may have to be continued till the close of the calendar year 1952, is estimated at well over Rs. 5 crores. The amount available in the Famine Relief Fund at the end of the current year will be only about Rs. 60 lakhs. This Government have therefore approached the Government of India for substantial assistance by way of loans and grants and let us hope that our request will evoke a favourable response in quick time.

Among the new proposals for expenditure to be considered is the one to launch a pilot scheme for mining the lignite deposits located in the South Arcot district. In this investigation, we have now reached a stage when we should attempt an open-cast mine to make sure that the exploitation of this precious resource is economically feasible. The experts who have been at this job for the past few years have now unanimously recommended that the cost of about Rs. 1 crore on the pilot scheme is a hazard worth undertaking, and therefore it is now up to this Government, with the assistance of the Government of India, if that should be forthcoming, to sanction the scheme forthwith.



Finance Minister C. Subramaniam delivering the budget speech (1953-54) in the legislature on March 14, 1953.

C. Subramaniam

March 14, 1953

The impending partition [formation of Andhra State] has cast its shadow on us and our objective vision is somewhat blurred. In spite of many divergences, we had maintained in the past, a unity of purpose in all our deliberations, but now the air is charged with doubts, suspicions, and irritation. In these exceptional circumstances, I consider it prudent to present the budget for 1953-54, in a shape which will provoke the least controversy.

When Government presented the budget for the current year, towards the end of last June, we were in the grip of unprecedented famine. In our assessment of the magnitude of the disaster and the extent to which necessary relief measures would cut into our resources, we had erred on the wrong side. As against an estimated outlay of about Rs. 6 crores, we have already spent about Rs. 10 crores on famine relief and expenditure continues to be incurred, though on a reduced scale. When rains came down in the famine area towards the end of May, the acute scarcity of drinking-water was relieved, but the rains were not in time, to enable large-scale agricultural operations. Famine conditions therefore persisted in Rayalaseema. It gradually spread over the central districts of Coimbatore, Salem, North Arcot, South Arcot and Chengalpattu as the south-west monsoon held back. The rains in early October did some good, but the north-east monsoon again proved disappointing, with the result that crops withered in many areas. Conditions however, improved to some extent in the central districts and elsewhere, with the onset of rains towards the end of November. Acute distress has now shifted to the southern districts of Tirunelveli, Ramanathapuram and Madurai, which did not benefit by the cyclonic spell and relief measures have had to be organized there. A late crop is now being raised in the central districts and an indifferent crop has been raised in large parts of Rayalaseema. There are still very many pockets of distress in these districts and relief measures are being continued there. All reasonable steps have to be taken to alleviate distress and it is too soon to estimate the cost of famine measures for the budget-year.

The devastation caused by the cyclone, in Tanjore and large parts of Tiruchirappalli districts, cannot be reckoned in terms of money. Relief measures were promptly organized to assist the poor to absorb the immediate shock and set them back on their feet. The cost to the State has already exceeded Rs. 25 lakhs. While we bemoan the loss sustained by the people in this calamity, we must be thankful for the rains which accompanied the gale. Over a million acres of paddy in the Cauvery delta, were saved from imminent danger, consequent on the storage in the Mettur reservoir having been fully drained. The central districts also turned the corner with these rains, but for which, our food economy would have been in a deplorable state.

... certain investigations are now in an advanced stage of progress at Neiveli in South Arcot district, towards mining lignite or the brown coal, located in that area. Samples have been taken out and found on test to have adequate calorific value. A pilot scheme has just been started at an estimated cost of about Rs. 70 lakhs, with the aid of machinery, generously lent to us by the Government of India and provision has been made in the budget for this purpose. The object of this experimental scheme, is to find out with certitude, whether the deposits can be reached through the intervening layers of artesian springs and to assess the cost at which the mineral can be brought out for industrial use. If the experiment succeeds, i.e., if the cost of extraction is less than about Rs. 30 per ton, which is the price we now pay for rail-borne coal, we shall have an abundant supply of motive power, for industrial development.

The recommendations of the Finance Commission on the division of certain resources between the Centre and the States, have been published and accepted by the Centre. In placing our case before the Commission, we had pressed three points. We wanted that the share of income-tax payable to States, should be increased from 50 per cent to 60 per cent. The Commission has recommended an increase from 50 per cent to 55 per cent, meeting our request half-way. In the division of this share between the different States, we had pressed that the respective populations of the States should be the only consideration, as that would be a true measure of the financial need of each State and that no special weightage should be given to industrialized States which seemed to show larger collections. The Commission evolved a compromise formula under which 80 per cent of the share of States, should be divided in the proportion of population and the remaining 20 per cent on the basis of collection. We claimed a share from Excise duties levied by the Centre. The Commission has recommended to the States, 40 per cent of the Excise duties on tobacco, matches and vegetable products, to be divided in the proportion of population. Our requests have not been granted in full, but we cannot say that we have been wholly disappointed.



Finance Minister C. Subramaniam presenting the budget (1958-59) in the Assembly.

C. Subramaniam

March 1, 1958

"The one obvious lesson from the present food situation is that we should redouble our efforts to step up production. We have achieved a fair measure of success on the various grow-more-food schemes launched in recent years such as the construction of major irrigation works, improvements to the minor irrigation systems, digging of ordinary and filter-point wells to utilize the sub-soil water, installation of electric pumpsets for lift irrigation, increased application of chemical fertilizers, oilcakes and green manures, and the popularisation of improved seeds and pesticides. The total food production of the present Madras State in 1955-56, the final year of the First Five-Year Plan, was 44 lakhs of tons as against 28 lakhs of tons in 1950-51, the base year for our present crop statistics. Even after making due allowance for the adverse seasonal factor in 1950-51, the increase of 16 lakhs of tons in production by 1955-56, does reflect a heartening upward trend. The outturn of 46 lakhs of tons in 1956-57, when seasonal conditions were almost similar to those of the previous year, was higher by 2 lakhs of tons and confirms the favourable progression. The food requirements of this State for a population of 30 millions, at the average rate of 1 lb. [pound] per head per day, amount to 48 lakhs of tons and, therefore, with a production of 46 lakhs of tons in 1956-57, our deficit can only be marginal. This is confirmed by the fact that we were generally able to maintain supplies last year, even though the export of rice to Kerala during the year of about $2^{1/2}$ lakhs of tons, was only partially off-set by the import of about one lakh of tons from Andhra and overseas. The average yield per acre of paddy cultivation in this State has been increasing steadily from 1,149 lb. of clean rice in 1954-55 to 1,214 lb. in 1955-56 and 1,255 lb. in 1956-57. In fact, ours is the best average yield for any State in India and is much higher than the all-India average of about 750 lb. per acre. These achievements may indeed be reassuring, but the fact remains that we still do not produce enough to stabilise prices and to provide an adequate cover for a lean year.

In order to prepare an integrated plan for the industrial development of the State, the Government have constituted an Advisory Committee of eminent industrialists, which is studying the different raw materials and other resources available and drafting practicable project reports. Appreciable progress has been made on the small industries included in the State Plan. The Guindy Industrial Estate estimated to cost about Rs. 70 lakhs, has been inaugurated by the Prime Minister and 52 out of the 90 factory units have been let out. The smaller Estates planned for Virudhunagar, Erode, Tirunelveli, Madurai and Marthandam are coming up, and will be opened in the coming year."



Chief Minister M. Bhaktavatsalam presenting the budget for 1965-66 to the Assembly.

M. Bhaktavatsalam

March 1, 1965

By the end of the Third Plan, the admission capacity in the Engineering Colleges in the State would have been stepped up to 2,140 and that in Polytechnics to 4,200. We would thus overfulfil the target originally set in the Third Plan. The House should be glad to note that arrangements are being made to start the proposed Government Engineering College at Salem with effect from the next academic year. It is also considered necessary to initiate advance action in respect of the new polytechnic proposed to be established in the Fourth Plan period. The Budget Estimates now before the House provide for the taking of preliminary action in respect of the new Government Polytechnics proposed to be opened at Thanjavur, Tenkasi, Mettur and Cuddalore, early in the Fourth Plan period. With the expansion of education at higher elementary level it is necessary to provide for diversion of boys of the age-group 14-17 to technical courses of study. The Junior Technical Schools are intended to meet this need. Ten Junior Technical Schools have already been started in this State and the Budget Estimates provide for the opening of ten more Junior Technical Schools to be located at Kancheepuram, Nagapattinam, Gudiyatham, Salem, Annamalainagar, Dindigul, Tuticorin, Karaikudi, Rajapalayam and Avadi. Provision has also been made for the establishment of an Institute of Textile Technology and an Institute of Commercial Practice at Madras. The bulk of the expenditure on the development of these institutions will arise in the Fourth Plan. Ninety-two per cent of the children of the age-group 6-11 will be at school by the end of the Third Plan and on the basis of this achievement, we are now in a position to plan confidently for 100 per cent enrolment in the next quinquennium. It may not be out of place to mention here that the Fourth Plan visualises a target of enrolment of only 87.7 per cent for the country as a whole. It is clear that we are far ahead of most of the other States.



Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai, also Finance Minister, presenting the budget for 1967-68 in the Assembly.

C.N. Annadurai

June 17, 1967

In framing the budget so as to subserve the objectives of the present Government, we have obviously had to take note of the limitations under which the State governments have to function in our federal set up. Apart from the provisions of the Constitution which are themselves weighted in favour of the Centre, the practices and conventions, which have evolved in the last fifteen years of economic planning have also tended to strengthen the role of the Central Government at the expense of the States. With the delimitation of powers as provided in the Constitution, which gives it the authority to regulate foreign trade, monetary and credit policy, the responsibility for overall direction of our economy vests with the Central Government. Through its access to the more elastic sources of revenue, including residuary powers of taxation, the Centre is in a position to syphon off a large share of the national income, leaving the States in a position where they have to depend on discretionary loans and grants-in-aid from the Centre for implementation of their plans and policies.

It is the firm view of this Government that food prices hold the key to the revival and smooth functioning of our economy. It is no use arguing that through increased agricultural production we can bring about a reduction of prices in due course. We cannot wait for these long-term measures to unfold their benefits. The first major decision of policy was that procurement of foodgrains should be intensified so as to maintain an uninterrupted flow of supplies through Government controlled ration shops. We have, by and large, successfully completed our procurement programme. It is a measure of public co-operation with the Government that we have been able to procure about 5 lakh tonnes of rice even after exempting completely holdings of one acre and less.

It was the stabilisation of supplies through Government controlled shops that enabled us to take the next important step towards bringing about a substantial reduction in prices of foodgrains.



Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai delivering the budget speech (1968-69) on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

C.N. Annadurai

February 28, 1968

The promotion of economic growth is rightly looked upon in the circumstances as a joint responsibility of the Centre and the States, the Central Government being obviously the dominant partner. In assessing therefore whether the present budget seeks to provide effective remedies for the economic difficulties facing our people, it will be appropriate if the House considers whether the State Government, the junior partner, had done all that is necessary and expected of it.

In my view, it is not difficult to identify what the major responsibilities of the State Government are in promoting economic development. First and foremost, the State Government have obviously to build up a techno-administrative machinery adequate and competent for the attainment of the several tasks of development. The machinery has to be kept in a continually trim condition so as to shoulder the new responsibilities and challenges which emerge in an era of planned economic growth. It cannot be seriously denied that we have in this State built up such a machinery capable of pushing through programmes according to schedule in vital sectors like Irrigation, Power and Agricultural Production. The State Government have also to keep in view prominently the need to contain non-Plan expenditure in general and non-developmental expenditure in particular so as to liberate resources to the maximum extent possible for fulfilment of the programmes embodied in the Plan. Here again, it can be established that this State has exercised considerable restraint in regard to non-developmental expenditure so as to facilitate maximum possible diversion of resources for the Plan. We have exercised strict vigil even over developmental expenditure of a maintenance nature in our anxiety to support the Plan.

It may also be reasonably expected that the State in deploying its own resources and those made available by the Central Government should observe the relative priorities of the Plan and that in particular there should be no frittering away of resources on prestigious projects which do not in terms of direct or indirect returns contribute significantly to the strengthening of the economy. On this count too, it will be generally conceded that we have avoided schemes involving wasteful expenditure and have concentrated on programmes well within our capacity to execute and administer effectively and that, by and large, these are the programmes best calculated to improve the economy of the State.



Finance Minister K.A. Mathialagan presenting the budget for 1969-70 to the Assembly.

K.A. Mathialagan

March 1, 1969

"We are aware that the cut in Central assistance is in part the outcome of the decision of the National Development Council to reserve 10 per cent of the aggregate Central assistance for State Plans exclusively for six States whose per capita income is reported to be below the national average. We have argued before the Planning Commission that even if the need for special assistance for backward States is granted, the resultant reduction of Central assistance for other States should be distributed equitably among the States with reference to their level of prosperity as measured by the excess of the per capita income of the State above the national average. It is our contention that the per capita income of Tamil Nadu is just a shade above the national average, and under the present formula we are called upon to sacrifice more than our proportionate share for the sake of the backward States. Further, we feel that even under the formula as evolved by the National Development Council, the Planning Commission does enjoy an element of discretion in the allocation of Central assistance and this discretion should be so exercised as to ensure that no State suffers unduly in relation to what it had been promised for the original Fourth Plan. Ten per cent of the Central assistance for State Plans has been reserved to be distributed among the States with reference to special problems and in our view it should be possible for the Planning Commission to distribute the amount reserved under this head so as to bring about on the whole a more equitable allocation of Central assistance for State Plans. In any case, when the formula suggested by the National Development Council is seen in practice to inflict undue hardship on certain States and to confer wholly unintended benefit on certain affluent States, it is necessary that the whole issue should be referred back to the National Development Council for reconsideration. We hope that the principles for allocation of Central assistance will be considered afresh by the National Development Council and as a result of such a reappraisal, our share will be marked up to an extent.

The House should be glad to know that the present Government following in the footsteps of Anna have now decided to grant exemption from payment of tuition fees and thus make education free for all students irrespective of caste or community and without income limit in Pre-University Class.

About 45 lakhs of people in the statutory rationed areas of Madras City and Coimbatore town and environs are covered by the "One Rupee a Measure" Scheme.



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, also Finance Minister, on the way to present the budget for 1972-73 to the Assembly.

M. Karunanidhi

March 1, 1972

No praise will be too high for the spirit of dedication to democracy, which moved our Prime Minister [Indira Gandhi] to heed the call of Bangladesh, and for the exemplary valour shown by our officers and men on the battlefield.

The blood that the heroic men hailing from our State shed in the cause of our country, the spontaneous response of the people of this State to the call of the State Government in all areas of defence efforts - all these go to prove the abiding commitment of the people of this State to the unity and integrity of our nation.

The readiness with which the people of the State have donated generously Rs 3.3 crores to the Defence Fund within three months is yet another example to prove that the united voice of our people from Kanyakumari to Kashmir is such as to make our enemies tremble.

We are keen to strengthen further the feeling of unity exhibited by the people of this country in vanquishing the enemy. At the same time, no one should lose sight of the fundamental fact that the strength of Indian democracy lies in its unity amidst diversity. Unity does not mean uniformity. If democracy is to flourish, there should be adequate freedom for contending thoughts and diverse ideologies. While the country has wholeheartedly accepted the goals of socialism and democracy, there will be differences of opinion on the manner in which different regions of this country should attain these goals. The insistence that all the States of the Indian Union should go along one single path and to create difficulties in their pursuit of different lawful and peaceful policies to achieve these noble objectives will strike a discordant note in ensuring the harmony and the unity of the country.

Socialism does not mean mere economic growth; there should be corresponding changes in the social structure too. Economic prosperity, unmatched by social changes, would merely cover a festering sore with a golden garment. If we are to introduce modern and innovative changes in the economic sphere alone but would allow anachronistic and irrational practices to dominate the social set-up, the socialist society that we create will be more like a garden stricken by a cyclone.



Finance Minister Nanjil K. Manoharan, accompanied by Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran, going to the Assembly for presenting the budget for 1977-78.

Nanjil K. Manoharan

July 25, 1977

After a period of relative price stability, inflationary forces are again reasserting themselves in the national economy. In Tamil Nadu, while the increase in the price of foodgrains has been more or less under control mainly due to the formation of the Southern Zone, there have been price increases in edible oils, cash crops and manufactured goods. The instruments of monetary and fiscal policy for ensuring price stability, while promoting growth and employment, are mainly with the Central Government. Our role consists in giving them constructive co-operation to implement national economic policies on sound lines and while doing so, to formulate and implement our own programmes in such a manner that investment and welfare are promoted without leading to financial difficulties or distortion of priorities. We have to balance immediate and short-term needs with adequate provisions for the long-term development of the State. Deficits have to be avoided; at the same time, the tax burden cannot be unduly increased. The demands of Government and other employees have to be reconciled with developmental priorities and adequate provisions for meeting the basic minimum needs of the people. Production and employment have to be stepped up but not at the cost of price stability. Existing schemes have to be continued and at the same time, many new beginnings have to be made. In this difficult situation, all problems have to be approached in a fair and balanced manner while formulating the Budget.

The financial position of our State has been placed at a serious disadvantage in comparison with most other States due to the loss in revenue arising from the social welfare policy of Prohibition. To our disappointment, repeated representations to the Centre have not been successful in making them accept the principle of compensating this loss which arises from the fulfilment of a Directive Principle in the Indian Constitution. The recent appointment of the Seventh Finance Commission will give us the opportunity to press our claims on this and other important issues affecting the interests of Tamil Nadu.

The difficulties experienced in the Cauvery Delta have once again highlighted the need for efficiency and economy in the use of water in the old irrigation systems of Tamil Nadu. In this context, the Cauvery modernisation programme will have to be proceeded with expeditiously. A provision of Rs. 3 crores has been made in the Budget for this purpose. Honourable Members will be happy to know that arrangements have been concluded with the World Bank in respect of the Periyar Improvements scheme. The total project cost will be Rs.41.04 crores. This scheme for which a provision of Rs. 3.16 crores has been made in the Budget will benefit 38,000 acres of new area besides stabilising irrigation in the existing ayacut.



Finance Minister V.R. Nedunchezhian presenting the budget for 1982-83 at the Assembly chamber on February 26, 1982. Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran also in the picture.

V.R. Nedunchezhian

February 26, 1982

The Government is fully aware that it is its immediate and inescapable duty to make an earnest endeavour to the extent possible to redress the sad plight of mothers, living below the poverty line and bemoaning their lot in not being able to provide even a single wholesome meal to their children. Impelled by this awareness, a scheme has been formulated to provide at least one nutritious meal a day to all the poor children in the age group of 2 to 10. This scheme will be implemented from 1st July, 1982 and will provide noon meal, free of cost, to the pitiably poor children in Tamil Nadu, who have no means even for one meal a day. I would make a fervant and earnest appeal to the philanthropists and social organisations with rich experience in this field to extend their whole-hearted co-operation to the Government in the noble task of feeding the poor children all over the State. To finance the implementation of this feeding programme, which is expected to cost about Rs. 100 crores, the State Government intends to introduce certain changes in the tax structure.

The revenue presently earned by the Electricity Board does not even cover the operation, maintenance costs and other essential liabilities. Though the State Government has not been able to fill this gap completely, it has been giving financial assistance in a big scale.

In addition to this, the State Government has also been giving ways and means advance to the Civil Supplies Corporation which loses about Rs. 500 on every tonne of rice sold through the public distribution system. During the current financial year, the loss on the sale of rice alone is expected to be about Rs. 35 crores. The State Government had to help the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation with a ways and means advance of Rs.25 crores during this financial year to meet their commitments. Till now, Rs.65 crores of advances from the State Government is outstanding. Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation has not even paid the interest of Rs.11.44 crores payable upto 31st March 1982. In fact, no interest has been paid to Government from 1st January, 1980.

In spite of a hike in the passenger fares, the State Transport Corporations have not been able to meet their current liabilities and other day-to-day expenses. They have also come to Government for assistance.

In view of all these factors, the current year is likely to end with a deficit of Rs. 17-77 crores. The most important factor responsible for the huge deficit in the next year's budget, is the total dependence of the State Electricity Board on the State Government for increased funds for implementing their Plan programme and for meeting their other commitments. As mentioned earlier, the Plan outlay under Power sector is Rs. 220 crores for 1982-83. At the existing level of Electricity tariff, the Electricity Board is expected to end up with a deficit of Rs. 51 crores, without taking into account the Plan outlay of Rs. 220 crores. Hence, the financial requirements of the Electricity Board for 1982-83 is a staggering figure of Rs. 271 crores for which the Board has to depend entirely on the State Government. Hon'ble Members will realise that assistance from the State Government to the Electricity Board on this scale can only be done at the cost of new progressive schemes and projects in the State. Tamil Nadu Electricity Board has to battle with a tariff structure which is one of the lowest in the country. As repeatedly advised by the Union Planning Commission, there is no alternative except to go in for an upward revision of electricity rates not only to meet the Board's own financial requirements but also to enable the State Government to fruitfully use its own resources for carrying out many important development projects which are held up due to financial constraints and which are very essential for the welfare of the State.



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi arriving at the Assembly to present the budget for 1989-90.

M. Karunanidhi

March 25, 1989

In the current year, although the south-west monsoon did not fail us, the north-east monsoon has been deficient to a serious extent. As a result, there is a severe drinking water shortage in many parts of the State. Our agricultural community has also been greatly affected by the drought. The Government have examined the demand for lessening the burden of agricultural debt with considerable sympathy. In order to lessen this burden on the small and marginal farmers, the Government have taken certain decisions: (i) fully write-off the overdues under medium term conversion, medium term conversion (rephasement) loans, in areas affected by drought; (ii) write-off penal interest on short-term, and medium term loans (iii) write-off segregated interest under blocked account on long term loans.

The Central Government have proposed to establish a nuclear power project in Koodankulam at an estimated cost of Rs. 4,000 crores. This will be a massive new investment in the Central sector in Tamil Nadu. Concerns have been expressed in connection with this project on behalf of affected fishermen and agriculturists who depend on irrigation from the Pechipparai dam. They have also been voiced by those who apprehend hazards from nuclear installations. We have requested the Centre to constitute an expert group in order to give the most careful consideration to these concerns and to recommend measures to implement this project with the fullest safeguards and guarantees so that it will not affect the interests of fishermen, farmers or the people in that area in any manner.

Our Government is firmly opposed to the attempt to impose Hindi through Navodaya schools which are being created under the New Education Policy. I wish to draw attention to the views expressed by educationists that Navodaya schools will only help the elite rather than the poor. We shall urge that the allocation for Navodaya schools should be redeployed for providing essential facilitles to primary schools in rural areas and for upgrading them...

In the last few years, approval has been given to a number of private self-financing colleges. We have received several complaints that these colleges lack adequate facilities and that the quality of education provided by them is quite poor. Other irregularities have also been brought to our notice. In these circumstances, no new private self-finanicng colleges will be approved in future. We shall also examine the functioning of all such institutions which are in existence at present and take necessary action.

We shall re-examine and revive the proposal to install Valluvar's statute at Kanniyakumari.



Chief Minister J. Jayalalitha and Finance Minister V.R. Nedunchezhian on their way to the Assembly before the presentation of the interim budget for 1996-97.

V.R. Nedunchezhian

February 20, 1996

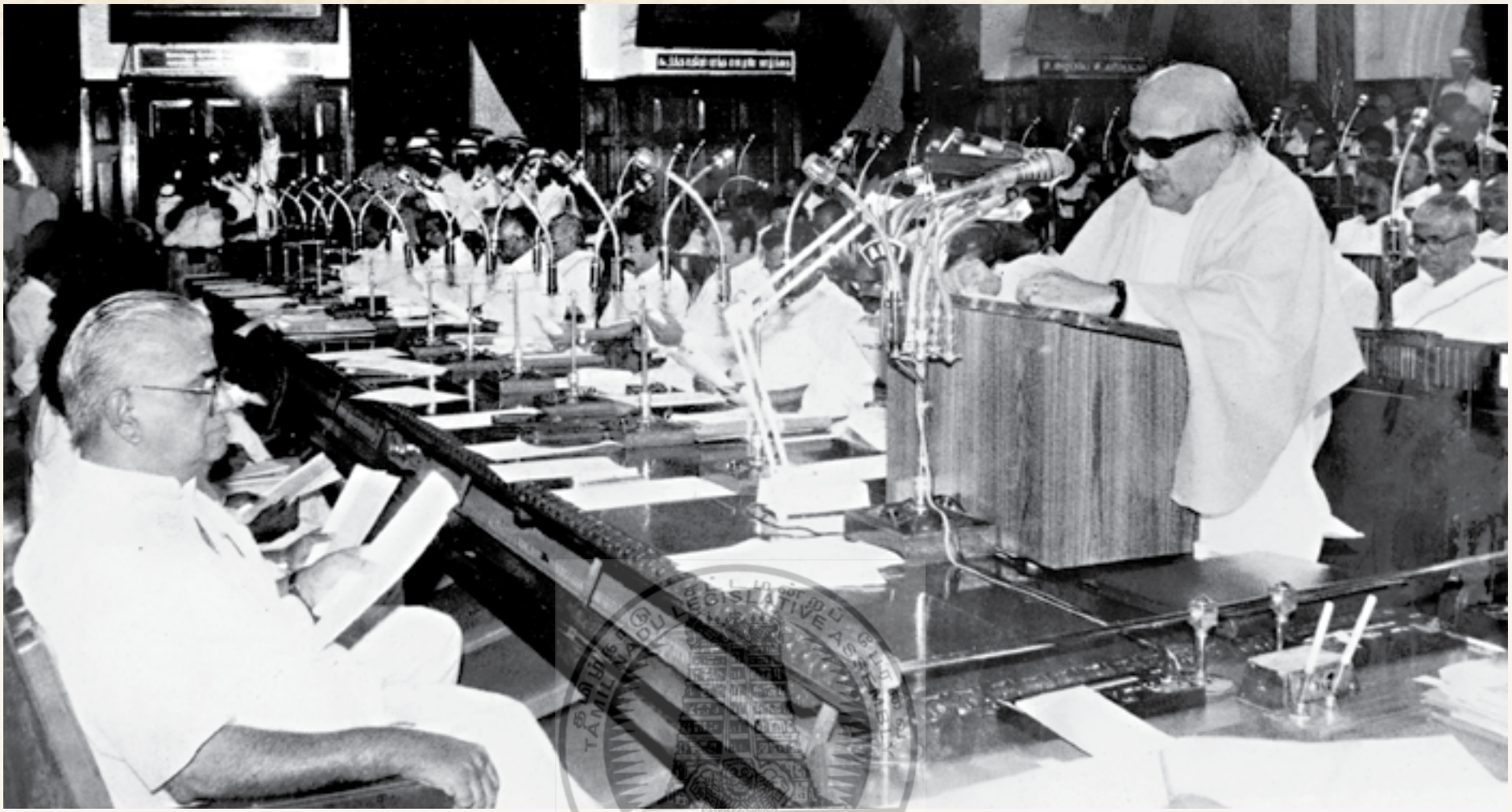
The economic crisis faced by the country in the years 1990 and 1991 led to far reaching measures of economic reform and liberalisation. This Government has consistently supported the economic reforms initiated by the Central Government. At the same time, out of our concern for the poor and the disadvantaged we have stressed the need to ensure that the conditions of life of the poor are not adversely affected and the levels of expenditure on the critical elements of social welfare are not reduced.

There is now a shift in the focus from the reforms at the national level to State level reforms. The reforms that the Government of India can effect in terms of deregulation of the economy are generally easier to implement since the instruments for macro-economic control are largely vested with the Centre. The State level reforms are much more difficult to accomplish. Fiscal reforms including public expenditure limitation have to be undertaken in a context where the bulk of the State Government expenditure is on social services which cannot and should not be reduced and is related to salary costs, which are difficult to contain. At the same time, resources have to be found for large additional investments for upgrading the infrastructure required for speeding up economic growth.

Inspite of the difficulties involved, the Government of Tamil Nadu has already embarked on certain policy initiatives for economic reforms in the state. On the fiscal side, we have considerably simplified the complicated Sales Tax structure. The total number of rates was brought down from 17 to 5 basic rates and 4 special rates. The grouping of goods was also rationalised. Moves towards reduction of input taxation have been initiated. I participated in the meeting of the State Finance Ministers on Sales Tax Reforms in December 1995 in which it was resolved that States will move towards the harmonisation of tax rates and withdrawal of distorting waiver and deferral schemes by 1st April 1997.

We have undertaken a number of measures to ensure the provision of improved infrastructure for industries in the State. The Industrial Policy announced in June 1992 and the State Specific Plan of Action provide mechanisms for quick clearance of investment proposals in the State. In order to augment the availability of funding for infrastructure, we have welcomed private sector initiatives in areas such as power generation and construction of highways.

This Government, ever vigilant of the need to protect the poor from the adverse impact of the drought, decided to provide an additional 8 kg. of rice per family card in the Public Distribution System so as to keep the food prices under check. The additional financial commitment of Rs.70 crores per month for food subsidy due to this measure did not deter us from taking this bold decision. With this, the overall food subsidy burden during 1995-96 will go up from the level of Rs.600 crores, estimated at the time of presentation of the Budget, to Rs. 800 crores in the Revised Estimates 1995-96. Rs.840 crores has been provided for food subsidy in the Interim Budget Estimates, 1996-97.



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi presenting the budget for 1999-2000 to the Assembly.

M. Karunanidhi

March 17, 1999

Tamilnadu's economy in 1998-99, can be said to be in its growth phase as compared to 1997-98. The Gross State Domestic Product at 1993-94 prices is expected to register a growth of 6.78 percent this year as against a growth of 6.31 percent last year. The population below the poverty line in the rural areas has decreased from 32.48 percent in 1993-94 to 24.72 percent in 1997-98 and in the urban areas from 39.77 percent to 32.70 percent. The overall poverty ratio in Tamilnadu has declined from 35.03 percent to 27.58 percent.

The President's assent for the bill on the Transparency in Tenders passed in this Assembly last year has been received recently. The Act will be implemented soon.

A Special Golden Jubilee Year Programme will be launched for improving drinking water supply in urban areas having insufficient water supply. In the first phase, the programme will be implemented in 10 Municipalities and 25 Town Panchayats during the next financial year with a budgetary allocation of Rs.50 crores and loans of over Rs.100 crores from financial institutions.

Despite an increase in the average cost of procurement of rice for Public Distribution System from Rs.6.70 per kg. in the year 1995-96 to Rs.8.08 per kg. now, Government has not raised the issue price of rice. Consequently, the food subsidy borne by the Government has increased from Rs.653 crores in 1995-96 to Rs.1,000 crores in 1998-99.

The first private sector power project with a capacity of 196 MW located at Basin Bridge near Chennai, has commenced production in the current year and its inaugural function is slated for the 28th of this month. Further, construction work on the 330 MW power project at Pillaiperumalnallur in Nagapattinam district and the 250 MW power project at Neyveli has already been started. Construction work on the 106 MW project at Samayanallur and 106 MW project at Samalpatti will commence during this month. All these projects are in the private sector.

Tamilnadu Government will create a "Tamil Software Development Fund" to encourage the rapid growth of Tamil software. It has also been planned to set up an International Tamil Virtual University for the benefit of Tamils living throughout the world. Due to these efforts, the benefits of internet and information technology will be available not only to the people of Tamilnadu but also to all the Tamils in the world.



Finance Minister C. Ponnaiyan presenting the budget for 2004-05. Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa also in the picture.

C. Ponnaiyan

February 11, 2004

Tamil Nadu's experience during 1996-2001 shows that unless the Government is committed to proper management of its public finances, the attainment of development goals of the State and welfare of the people will be jeopardized. From being a financially well-managed State till the mid-1990s, Tamil Nadu found itself going down by the end of 2000-2001 mired in a deep-rooted fiscal crisis. It is often thought that a fiscal crisis is nothing new. Unfortunately, this is not true and the crisis we had to face was like something never experienced before. The debt burden was alarmingly high. There was no scope for borrowing more to tide over the crisis. This Government had to act fast and decisively to prevent a total collapse. This was done, intelligently, without burdening the poor.

This Government was forced to scale down the annual Plan outlay of 2001-2002 from Rs.6,040 crores to Rs.5,200 crores. We had to reckon with unpaid expenditure liabilities of over Rs.4,000 crores, which the previous Government had failed to meet. In addition, pay and pension arrears of Government employees amounting to about Rs.1,800 crores had been impounded by the previous Government for payment beyond 31st March 2003. The previous Government had drawn in advance, in March 2001, the future revenues upto November 2003 accruing from lignite royalty to Tamil Nadu amounting to Rs.250 crores. The rationale of governance was lost and the credibility of the State in meeting even the basic development needs of the people was called into question.

This House enacted the Tamil Nadu Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2003, in the last financial year. This legislation, as amended on 10th February, 2004, is a landmark step to ensure fiscal transparency and accountability. It enjoins upon the Government to prepare and present to the Legislative Assembly a Medium Term Fiscal Plan outlining a roadmap of reforms and development of Tamil Nadu.

Its salient features are as follows: This plan intends to wipe out the revenue deficit by 2008-2009. This is to be achieved by controlling unproductive revenue expenditure and by ensuring enhanced revenue receipts. The fiscal deficit, which represents the net borrowings of the Government, shall be contained to a level below 3% of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) by the year 2008-2009 as a means to ensuring sustainable progress.



Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi along with the Finance Minister K. Anbazhagan coming to the Assembly ahead of the presentation of the budget for 2006-2007.

K. Anbazhagan

July 22, 2006

During the previous regime, it was stated in the Budget speech for the year 2001-2002 that 50 lakh acres (20 lakh hectares) of wasteland is available in Tamil Nadu. Accordingly it has been announced in the manifesto of DMK that these lands would be developed and the Government would distribute the wastelands to the families of the poor landless farmers two acres each.

Statistics relating to the availability of wasteland villagewise are being collected through the Revenue Department to implement this scheme. The wastelands are either Government Poramboke wastelands or patta lands of private individuals. The Poramboke wastelands of the Government will be developed into cultivable lands and distributed to poor landless farmers two acres each. At the same time, if the families of poor farmers who own patta lands come forward on their own volition to get their lands developed into cultivable lands such patta lands will be developed into cultivable lands at the cost of the Government and given back to them for cultivation.

Apart from effectively implementing the Public Distribution System which protects the poor and the downtrodden from hunger, as promised in the election manifesto, on the very day of assumption of office orders have been issued for distribution of rice to all the family card holders at Rs.2 per kg., which is the lowest price of rice issued under Public Distribution System in the entire country. In the Revised Budget for 2006-2007, a sum of Rs.1950 crores has been provided as food subsidy.

...an Act providing for the compulsory learning of Tamil by all students studying in schools in Tamil Nadu has been enacted so that the embarrassing position that 'Tamil alone is not there in Tamil Nadu's schools' is removed. As per this Act Tamil will be taught as a subject in the first standard this year and will be extended up to the tenth standard in a phased manner in the coming years.

Special concessions will be granted to companies that come forward to establish factories in Tamil Nadu for the manufacture of computers so as to increase the use of computers in our state and create a situation where computers will be affordable to all. Exemption will be given from the General and Central Sales Tax without any limit on the sale of computers manufactured by companies with an investment exceeding Rs.100 crores in the Special Economic Zones in Tamil Nadu. This concession will be given for a period of 10 years from the year of commencement of commercial production.



Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa and Finance Minister O. Panneerselvam proceeding to the Assembly for the presentation of interim budget for 2016-17. Finance Secretary K. Shanmugam also in the picture.

O. Panneerselvam

February 16, 2016

This Government is conscious of the fact that the poor cannot be made to wait for long to cross the poverty line, and therefore has given an intensive thrust to speedy implementation of these programmes across the State. In the last four years, a saving of Rs.6,356 crores and credit disbursement of Rs.25,785 crores was achieved through 12,524 Panchayat Level Federations (PLFs) and 840 Common Livelihood Groups with Self Help Groups (SHGs) as the basic unit. Skill training has been imparted to 3,04,690 youth of whom 2,61,784 youth have received placement so far. Till date 414 job melas were conducted which facilitated placement of 1,13,881 youth in private companies.

Though the Government of India has suddenly withdrawn the levy sugar and limited the Central subsidy, this Government continues to supply over 36,500 Metric Tonnes of sugar per month at a subsidized rate of Rs.13.50 per kilogram. This Government also continues to supply pulses at Rs.30 per kilogram and palm oil at Rs.25 per litre, despite the very high market prices of these commodities. In the last five years, this Government has provided Rs.25,000 crores as food subsidy and Rs.762.93 crores to Co-operatives as administrative subsidy to run the PDS shops. In this Interim Budget, a sum of Rs.5,500 crores has been provided as food subsidy.

As enunciated in the Vision 2023 Document, this Government has commenced work on 1 x 660 MW Ennore Expansion Power Project, 2 x 660 MW Ennore SEZ Power Project and 1 x 800 MW NCTPS Stage-III Power Project and initiated action to establish new projects such as 2 x 800 MW Uppur Thermal Power Project and 5 x 800 MW Kadaladi Thermal Power Project in Ramanathapuram District, 2 x 660 MW Udangudi Thermal Power Project in Tuticorin District, 1 x 660 MW Ennore Replacement Thermal Power Project, 4 x 125 MW Kundah Pumped Storage Hydro Power Project and 4 x 500 MW Sillahalla Hydroelectric Project.

In order to improve the finances of TANGEDCO, financial restructuring was done by taking over Rs.6,353 crores of its short term liabilities by the Government in 2012-2013. Besides, the Hon'ble Chief Minister has increased the tariff subsidy compensation substantially to improve the finances of TANGEDCO. The Agricultural subsidy alone has been enhanced from a small sum of Rs.287.12 crores in 2010-2011 to Rs.3,319.30 crores in 2015-2016. Since May 2011, this Government has also provided Rs.15,111.74 crores as equity share capital assistance and Rs.9,694.26 crores as loan. In the Interim Budget Estimates 2016-2017, Rs.13,819.03 crores has been provided to the Power Sector, including Rs.7,370.33 crores for tariff subsidy, Rs.2,000 crores as share capital assistance and Rs.1,483 crores as loan support.



Finance Minister D. Jayakumar presenting the budget.

D. Jayakumar

March 16, 2017

The Economic Survey 2016-2017 has revised the Gross Domestic Product growth rate of India for the year 2016-2017 to 7.1 percent and has projected the growth rate for 2017-2018 between 6.5 percent and 7.5 percent. It is essential that our economy be rejuvenated to achieve a higher economic growth that would enable the Government to mobilize more resources to meet its commitment to redistributive justice and accelerated economic development. The pace of economic activity is picking up and it is expected that Gross State Domestic Product will grow at 7.94 percent at constant prices during 2016-2017. We expect that the concerted efforts of this Government will further create a favourable environment for increased private and public investment in key sectors, thus boosting the economic growth to 9 percent during the year 2017-2018.

The Government of Tamil Nadu is therefore launching an innovative programme for organizing small and marginal farmers into 'Farmer Producer Groups' which will be federated into 'Farmer Producer Organisations' to promote collective farming for credit mobilization, better adoption of technology and to facilitate effective forward and backward linkages. In 2017-2018, as a pilot project, 2,000 such Farmer Producer Groups will be promoted, each comprising not less than 100 farmers so as to cover at least two lakh farmers this year. Each Farmer Producer Group will be given a corpus fund of Rs.5 lakh besides channelising grants and credit available to Farmer Producer Organizations from NABARD and Small Farmer Agri Business Consortium. A total allocation of Rs.100 crore has been made for this purpose for 2017-2018. This scheme will be scaled up in the coming years to benefit 40 lakh farmers over the next five years.

The State has joined Government of India's Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana (UDAY). Out of Rs.30,420 crore of debt of the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO), the State Government has taken over 75 percent of this debt i.e. Rs.22,815 crore and bonds are being floated in the open market to repay this debt. The remaining 25 percent of the loans considered under the scheme, i.e., Rs.7,605 crore will be converted into power bonds by TANGEDCO. Due to this debt takeover, TANGEDCO will get interest savings of Rs.2,882 crore per annum and savings of Rs.2,282 crore in principal repayment per annum as these liabilities shift to the State Government. Further, Rs.201 crore per annum will be saved by TANGEDCO due to the reduction in interest rates by converting 25 percent of the loans into TANGEDCO bonds. The implementation of UDAY scheme is resulting in an interest saving of Rs.1,335 crore per annum for the State and TANGEDCO together.

In continuation of the establishment of Urban Haats in Kanniyakumari and Mahabalipuram to promote marketing of handicrafts, a third Urban Haat will be set up in Udhagamandalam during 2017-2018 at a cost of Rs.5 crore.



Deputy Chief Minsiter and Finance Minister O. Panneerselvam presenting the 2018-19 budget.

O. Panneerselvam

March 15, 2018

This budget is being presented under challenging circumstances. The economy needs to be steered ahead in a hazy environment due to the transformational changes that have happened in the country post demonetisation and GST implementation. At this critical juncture, the State is facing major challenges in -

- Attracting investments and creating more jobs
- Training youth to make them employable
- Improving farm productivity and farmers' income
- Urban development and upgrading basic amenities and infrastructure
- Housing to the poor and achieving the objective of housing for all
- Natural resource management, particularly in water management
- Eradication of poverty both in urban and rural areas
- Providing quality education, health care and sanitation with universal coverage

The pace of economic growth in the State has picked up in 2017-2018 and will continue to improve in 2018-2019. The Gross State Domestic Product of the State in real terms is expected to grow at 8.03 percent in 2017-2018. As the economic outlook of the State is favourable, the sustained investments made by this Government in the primary sector and the measures taken for invigorating the industrial investment in the State could drive the economic growth further to surpass 9 percent in 2018-2019.

...the country witnessed the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on 1st July 2017. The Union Government will compensate the States for any loss of revenues in the first five years of GST implementation. During the period from July 2017 to February 2018, the State has received Rs.632 crore as GST compensation from the Government of India. I am confident that our State will stand to gain from GST in due course, since the gap between the projected revenue with 14 percent growth rate and actual revenue has been shrinking considerably over these eight months.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin along with Finance Minister P.T.R. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan before presentation of budget on August 13, 2021.

Palanivel Thiaga Rajan

August 13, 2021

The sheer magnitude of the second wave of COVID over the past few months, and its health and economic consequences have further constrained the Government's flexibility in what was already a precarious fiscal position. So, our primary ambition for this revised budget is to lay the strongest foundation for the full budget for the financial year 2022-23 which this Government will present in about six months.

The White Paper, released on 9th August 2021 and also laid on the table of House, has laid bare the dismal record of fiscal mismanagement of the past decade, including the elevated deficits and consequent debt overhang from the previous Government. Arresting and reversing this decline is one of the important commitments we made to the people. The task is daunting and cannot be completed at one go or in one year. It will need sustained efforts over at least two to three years.

Nowhere is this dilution of the spirit of federalism more apparent than in the taxation of petrol and diesel at the pump. The overall Union levies on petrol were increased from Rs.10.39 per litre in May 2014 to Rs.32.90 per litre today. Similarly, the levies on diesel were increased from Rs.3.57 in May 2014 to Rs.31.80 today. Even as the Union Government's cesses and surcharges were increased, basic Union Excise Duty was brought down sharply. Hence, in 2020-21 even as the revenue to the Union Government from petrol and diesel went up by 63 per cent from the revenue in 2019-20, the share of the States declined sharply. Hence, the onus of providing relief to the final consumers of petrol and diesel lies with the Union Government.

I propose to implement the following major initiatives relating to Data Centric Governance Reforms. The lack of adequate beneficiary data is the fundamental limitation in our Government's ability to efficiently implement welfare schemes in order to improve social and economic justice. A cross-departmental initiative to link all available Government data sources to better understand the true economic status of all citizens and households will be undertaken. This foundational effort which will help improve the delivery of many tens of thousands of crores worth of subsidies.

...all the 2.1 crore rice ration card holders in the State have been given a special Covid assistance package comprising cash worth Rs.4,000 released in two instalments in May and June, 2021 and a special grocery kit at the peak of the second wave of the Covid pandemic. At a total cost of Rs.9,370.11 crore, this was the largest COVID-19 relief package undertaken by any State.

This Government will launch the Green Tamil Nadu Mission to increase the total area under the forest and tree cover in Tamil Nadu to 33 per cent of the land area of the State. Under the Mission a massive tree plantation programme of indigenous and diverse species, in co-ordination with multiple departments, public and private institutions will be taken up with people's participation over 10 years.

At least 55 litres per capita per day of good quality drinking water will be supplied to all the 79,395 habitations in the State. Household connections will be enabled for all the 1.27 crore dwelling units situated in rural areas. The 83.92 lakh households which currently do not have household water supply connections will be provided access to such connections by March, 2024. To achieve this objective, the Jal Jeevan Mission will be implemented at a total cost of Rs.2,000 crore during 2021-22.

This Government will ensure that 8,03,924 houseless families in rural areas are provided a house in the next 5 years.



Finance Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan presenting the budget for 2023-24.

Palanivel Thiaga Rajan

March 23, 2023

Notwithstanding the several massive welfare schemes that are being implemented during the last two years, owing to the unprecedented and difficult reforms undertaken, we have reduced the annual revenue deficit of around Rs.62,000 crore which we inherited on assuming office, to around Rs.30,000 crore in the Revised Estimates of the current year. It is noteworthy that this is approximately Rs.5,000 crore lower than the level of the pre-COVID year of 2019-20. In accordance with the mandate of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of achieving Zero-revenue deficit, the State will adopt a smooth glide path without compromising on our welfare initiatives and developmental priorities.

The main reason for the fiscal stress faced by the Government at the time of assuming office was the fall in tax revenue in the previous years. The State's own tax revenues which were at a healthy 8 per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) during 2006-11 have witnessed a precipitous fall in the last 10 years and reached 5.58 per cent in 2020-21. This is much lower when compared to other large States such as Maharashtra and Karnataka. Though the Tax-GSDP ratio has increased to 6.11 per cent in the current year due to the efforts of this Government in the last two years, concerted action is needed to raise it further to find financial resources for welfare schemes.

The 1,000 bedded Kalaignar Memorial Multi Super Speciality Hospital in the premises of King Institute of Preventive Medicine and Research Centre, Guindy will be inaugurated this year. New speciality hospital buildings are being constructed in three Government medical college hospitals at Madurai, Coimbatore and Kilpauk at a total cost of Rs.1,020 crore and they will be put to use shortly.

The goal of social justice can be fulfilled only when knowledge is made widespread and accessible to people in the remotest of places. With this objective, moving beyond Chennai, book fairs were conducted in all districts and five literature festivals were successfully conducted during the current year. This great initiative will continue next year also, at a cost Rs.10 crore. The Government successfully organized the first edition of the Chennai International Book Fair in January 2023 with participation from 24 countries. An unprecedented number of 355 MoUs were signed between publishers from Tamil Nadu and various countries paving way for knowledge and copyright exchange. This international book fair will also be conducted next year.

Since this Government assumed office, it has retrieved 4,491 acres of encroached temple lands worth Rs.4,236 crore. A massive exercise is underway to record the geo-coordinates of temple lands and prepare a digital land resources database. So far, this exercise has been completed for 1,08,000 acres.

In order to ensure that Government schemes and services reach the last mile, a new scheme will be launched in all village panchayats and wards in urban areas. Under this scheme, outreach camps will be conducted with the participation of all departments. The entire administrative machinery will reach out to the people and provide the required Government services.



Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu presenting the budget for 2024–25. Chief Minister M.K. Stalin also present.

Thangam Thennarasu

February 19, 2024

In the recent survey conducted by this Government for replacing huts with safe and permanent concrete houses in rural areas of Tamil Nadu, it has been found that approximately eight lakh huts continue to exist. Hence, to create a 'Hut-Free Tamil Nadu' by 2030, eight lakh concrete houses will be constructed in rural areas. In the first phase, one lakh new houses will be built at a unit cost of Rs.3.50 lakh per house in the coming year.

The selected beneficiaries will be provided with house sites in case they are landless and will be provided with funds for constructing the house directly into their bank accounts. With a scientific survey and transparent selection process, a new scheme, 'Kalaignarin Kanavu Illam', will be implemented in the coming year at a cost of Rs.3,500 crore, providing an opportunity for the poor to build their dream homes.

In the next two years, this Government will launch the final assault on poverty, rescuing around five lakh of the poorest families from poverty by providing all the necessary Government assistance in an integrated manner.

Under this scheme, most vulnerable sections of the society including the destitutes, elderly persons living alone, single-parent families, orphaned children, mentally challenged, differently-abled persons, and families with children requiring special assistance will be identified. In addition to fulfilling their basic needs, the requirements of education, employment opportunities, skill development and housing will be met under this scheme. The identification of the poorest of the poor families will be carried out through convergence of official databases, field inspections, community participation, and Gram Sabha sessions. The participation of elected representatives, charitable organizations, and banks will be ensured in this grand initiative namely, "Chief Minister's Thayumanavar scheme."

The monthly assistance of Rs.1,000 will not only help the women heads of households who are adversely affected in their daily lives due to ever-increasing family expenses but also helps them to set aside a substantial amount as savings. The objective of this scheme, its data-driven selection process, use of technology in implementation and transparency have received widespread acclaim. We hope that this pathbreaking scheme will be replicated in various States across the country in future, thus benefiting women nationwide. For this scheme, an amount of Rs.13,720 crore has been allocated in the coming year.

One among the first five files signed by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on his first day of assuming office, was the "Vidiyal Payana Thittam" to provide free bus travel to women.



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin with Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu during the first day of the budget session at Fort St. George on March 14, 2025.

Thangam Thennarasu

March 14, 2025

After Independence, some States gave priority to poverty alleviation, while others laid emphasis on industrial development. But, it is Tamil Nadu alone that has succeeded in achieving a multi-faceted development in poverty alleviation, education, health, infrastructure and industrial development.

When the country was inching towards the distant goal of providing basic education for all, we were the ones who established educational institutions in every village. Our initiatives of Mid-day Meal Programme, Nutritious Meal Programme and Breakfast Scheme, benefitting young children, have been widely recognised and appreciated not only in India but also by countries around the world. At a time when the plans for power generation revolved around meeting the needs of large industries, we were concerned to provide electricity to the most remote villages. When the issue of removing slums was being discussed in the development of cities, we formed a separate board to provide modern housing to the poor and downtrodden urban inhabitants. Following the path set by the Madras Presidency, which became the first Indian province to give voting rights to women, Tamil Nadu entered the list of leading States which granted property rights to them. By unflinchingly following the bilingual policy, Tamil Nadu not only preserved the Tamil culture but also empowered its youth with English proficiency, to rise with strength on the global stage with their unquenchable thirst for knowledge and success.

The path that Tamil Nadu chose over the past century is truly unique. Its journey– marked by a steadfast commitment to humanity, social justice, inclusive economic growth, women's empowerment, the upliftment of marginalized communities, and the celebration of Tamil heritage–is a historic one.

Our pride in the remarkable success of this hundred-year journey reinforces the need to move forward towards future development with even greater determination, overcoming all obstacles. As a guiding compass for our journey in the coming years, I would like to remind Tamils across the world, through the members of this Assembly, of two achievements of Muthamizh Arignar Kalaignar a quarter of a century ago. While the world was immersed in the celebration of the dawn of a new millennium, Muthamizh Arignar Kalaignar etched a profound message in history–raising a statue of Vanpughazh Valluvam at Kanyakumari, and in the same year, inaugurating the TIDEL IT Park in Chennai. Our heartfelt gratitude to Muthamizh Arignar Kalaignar, the architect of modern Tamil Nadu, who stands today in this Assembly through this painting, reminding us that our path forward must be guided by two pillars– the ever-rising pride of Tamil heritage and the enthusiastic embracement of cutting-edge technology.

By tracing the footprints of the past century, we must chart a visionary course for the next 25 years. Challenges that lie ahead of us must be addressed with scientific temper and technology-driven solutions. While carefully shaping the rapid urbanisation in Tamil Nadu, proactive efforts are needed to attain new heights in agricultural production and exports through adoption of modern technologies. In the age of Artificial Intelligence, skill development of youth needs to be given due attention. Industries creating large scale employment opportunities should be set up across the State. While creating modern infrastructure facilities, efficient utilization of green energy resources must also be ensured. A historic need has arisen to immediately formulate a comprehensive action plan for Tamil Nadu to expedite the pace of development to be at par with developed countries.

Recognising that India is a confluence of diverse languages, the 'Agaram - Museum of Languages' will be established at the Madurai World Tamil Sangam campus to educate the younger generation about the antiquity and continuity of Tamil, one of the world's oldest independent classical languages. This museum will feature invaluable records supported by advanced technological facilities, highlighting the linguistic relations between Tamil, the oldest language of the Dravidian family, and other Indian languages. It will also showcase records of the languages spoken by South Indian tribal communities and the evolution of Tamil from rock paintings to inscriptions, prints, and Tamil computing.

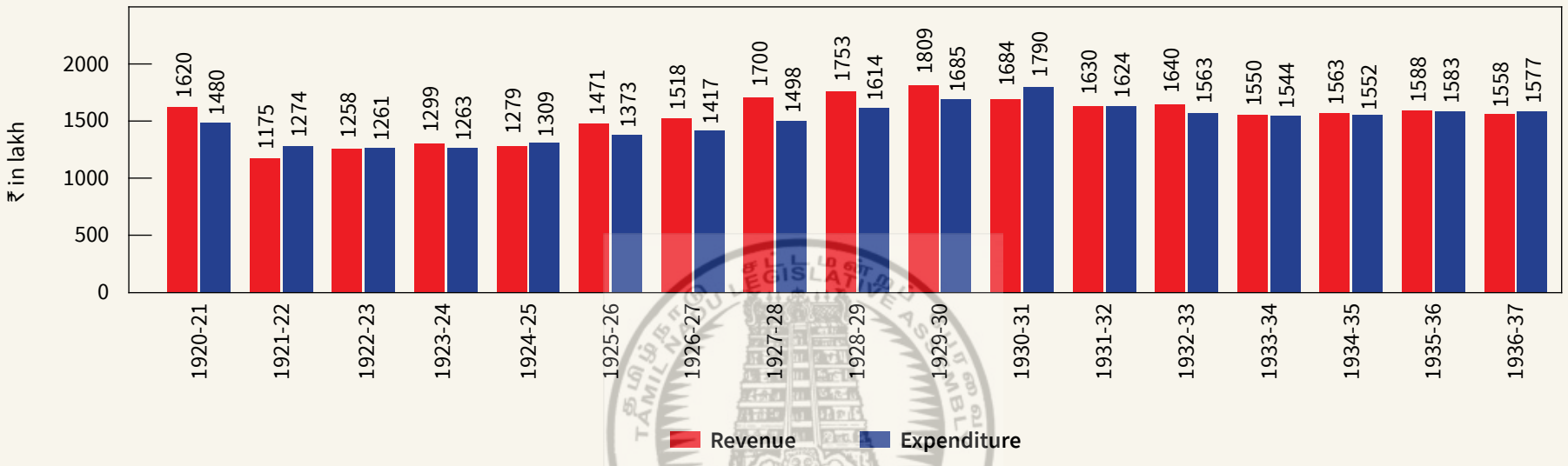
Our Government is working tirelessly to establish the antiquity of Tamil culture not only in the field of literature and history, but also through archaeological excavations in a scientific manner that is accredited by the academic community. "Iron smelting technology was introduced in the Tamil region as early as 5,300 years ago" - This historic revelation was recently announced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, based on research findings from world-renowned laboratories on the evidences unearthed from various Iron Age archaeological sites in the State. The findings of these studies have been widely welcomed and appreciated by the world's leading archaeologists and technical experts at the national level. The members of this Assembly are well aware that Tamils worldwide celebrated with immense pride and joy upon learning of these research findings, which highlighted the antiquity of iron and the technological prowess of ancient Tamils.

SECTION 8

CENTURY OF GROWTH AND WELFARISM

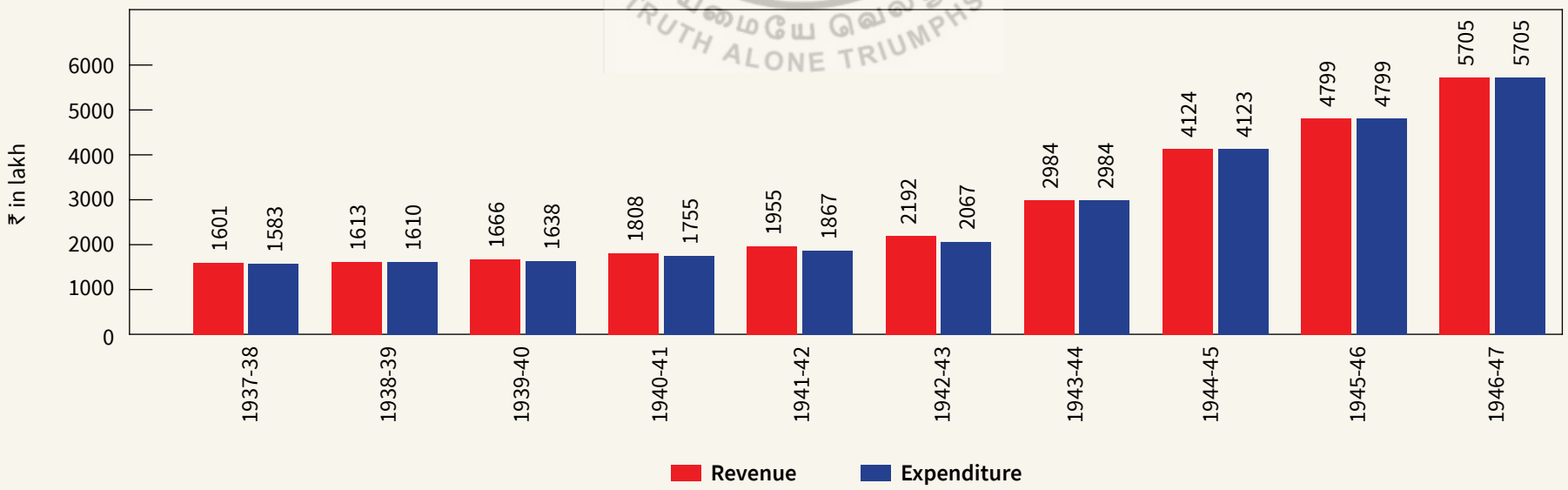
The following data have been drawn from an article written by K.R. Shanmugam in ***Tamilar Nidhi Nirvakam: Thonmaiyum Thodarchiyum*** (Tamils' Fiscal Administration: Antiquity and Continuity), a publication of the Finance Department of the Tamil Nadu government.

Revenue and Expenditure in Madras Government (1920-21 to 1936-37)



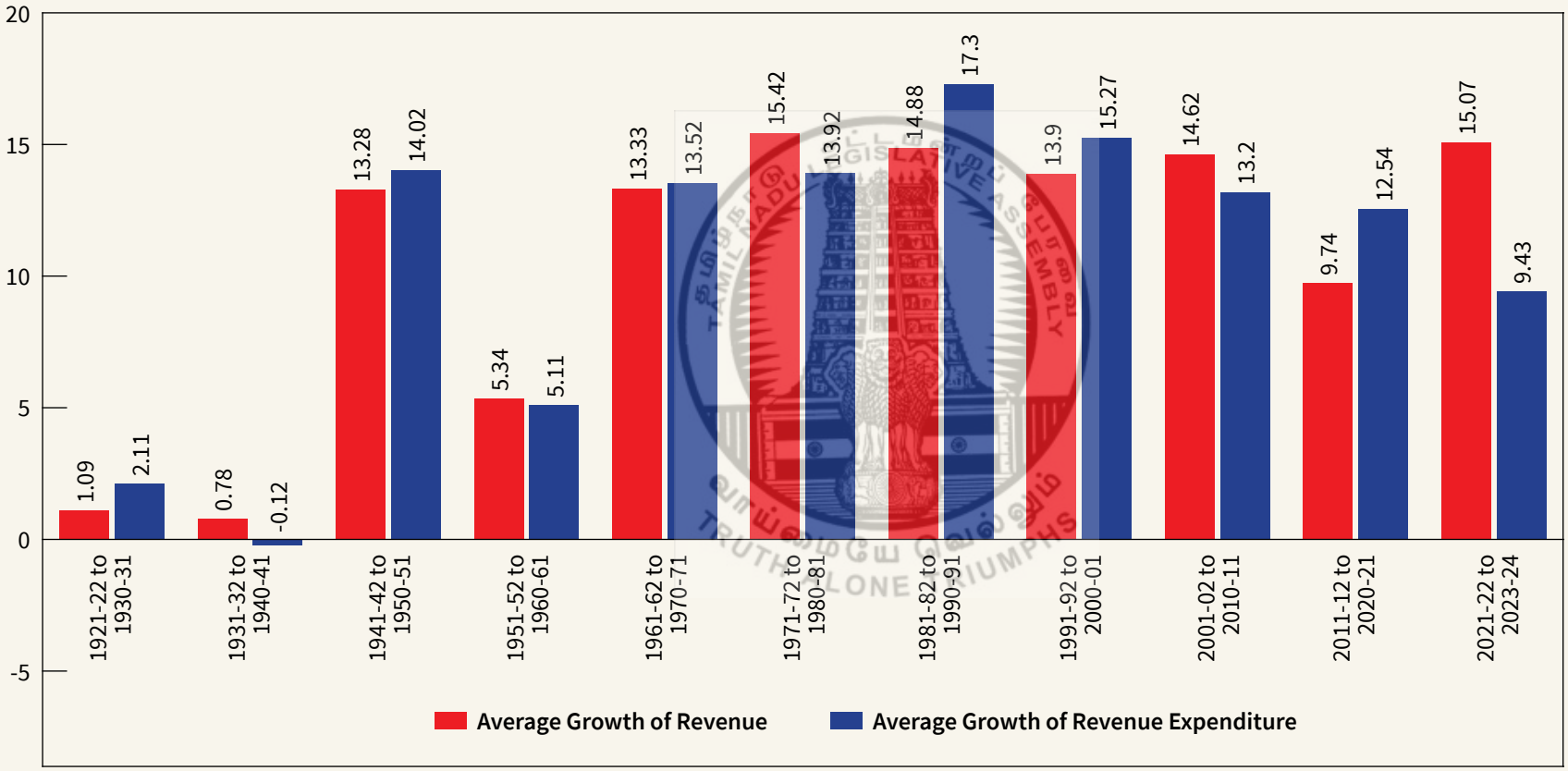
Source: Thomas (1939)

Revenue and Expenditure in Madras Government (1937-38 to 1946-47)



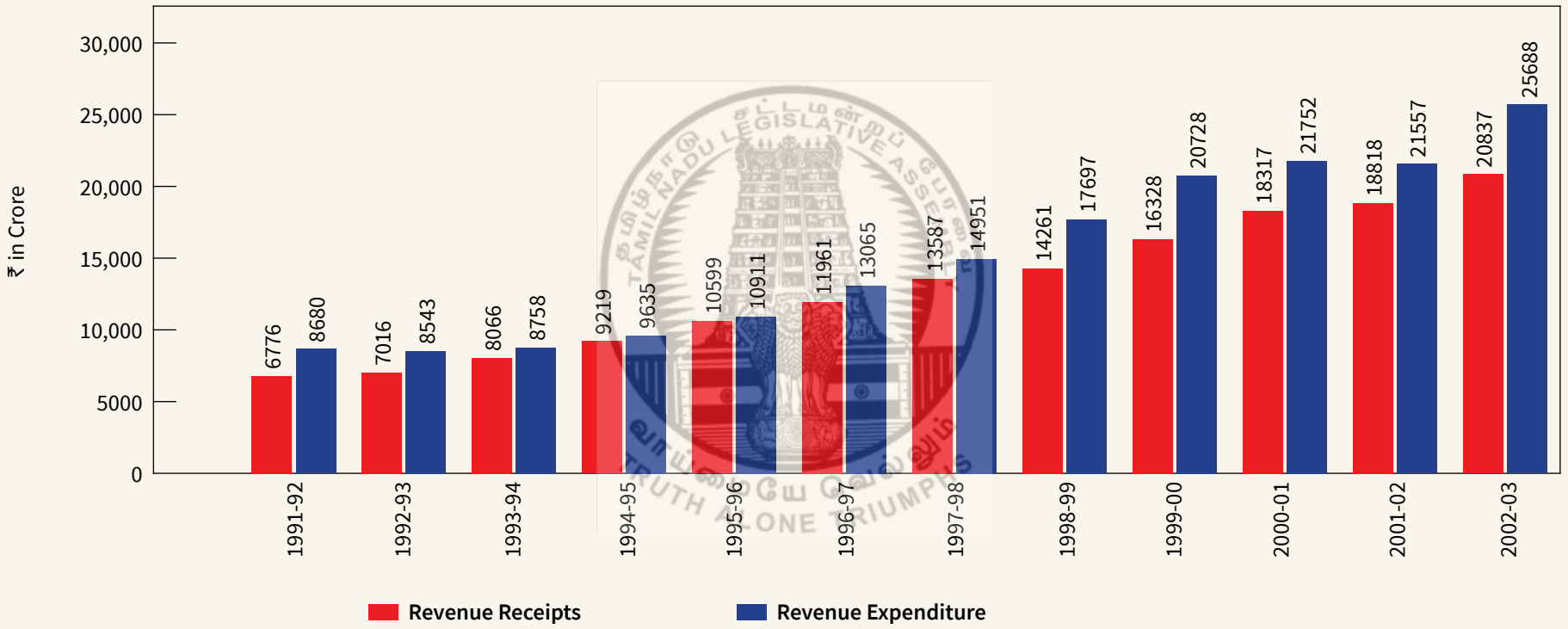
Source: Budget Discussions documents for various years, Government of Madras

Decadal Growth Rates (in %) of Revenue Receipts and Revenue Expenditure



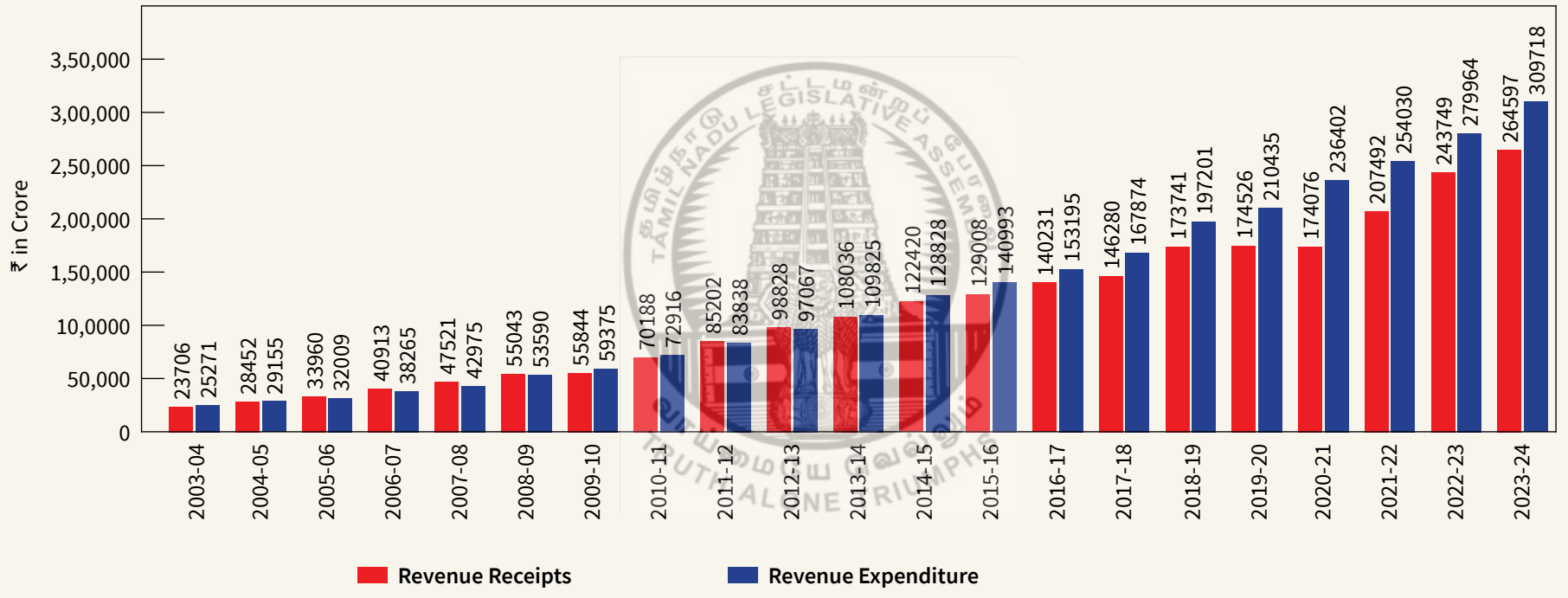
Source: Computed using data given in above figures

Revenue Receipts and Revenue Expenditure of Tamil Nadu Government (1991-92 to 2002-03)



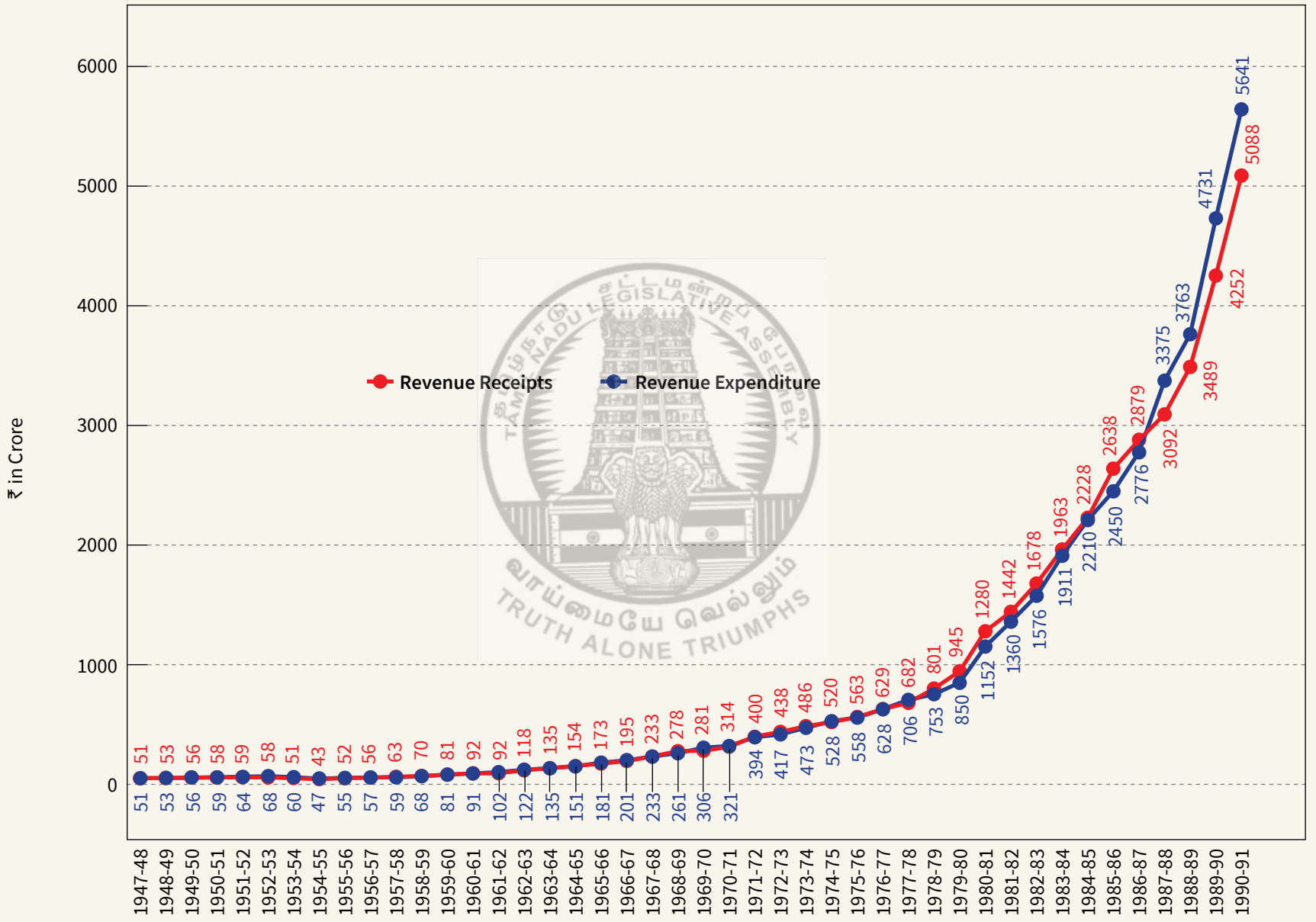
Source: Budget Documents, GoTN (various years).

Revenue Receipts and Revenue Expenditure of Tamil Nadu Government (2003-04 to 2023-24)



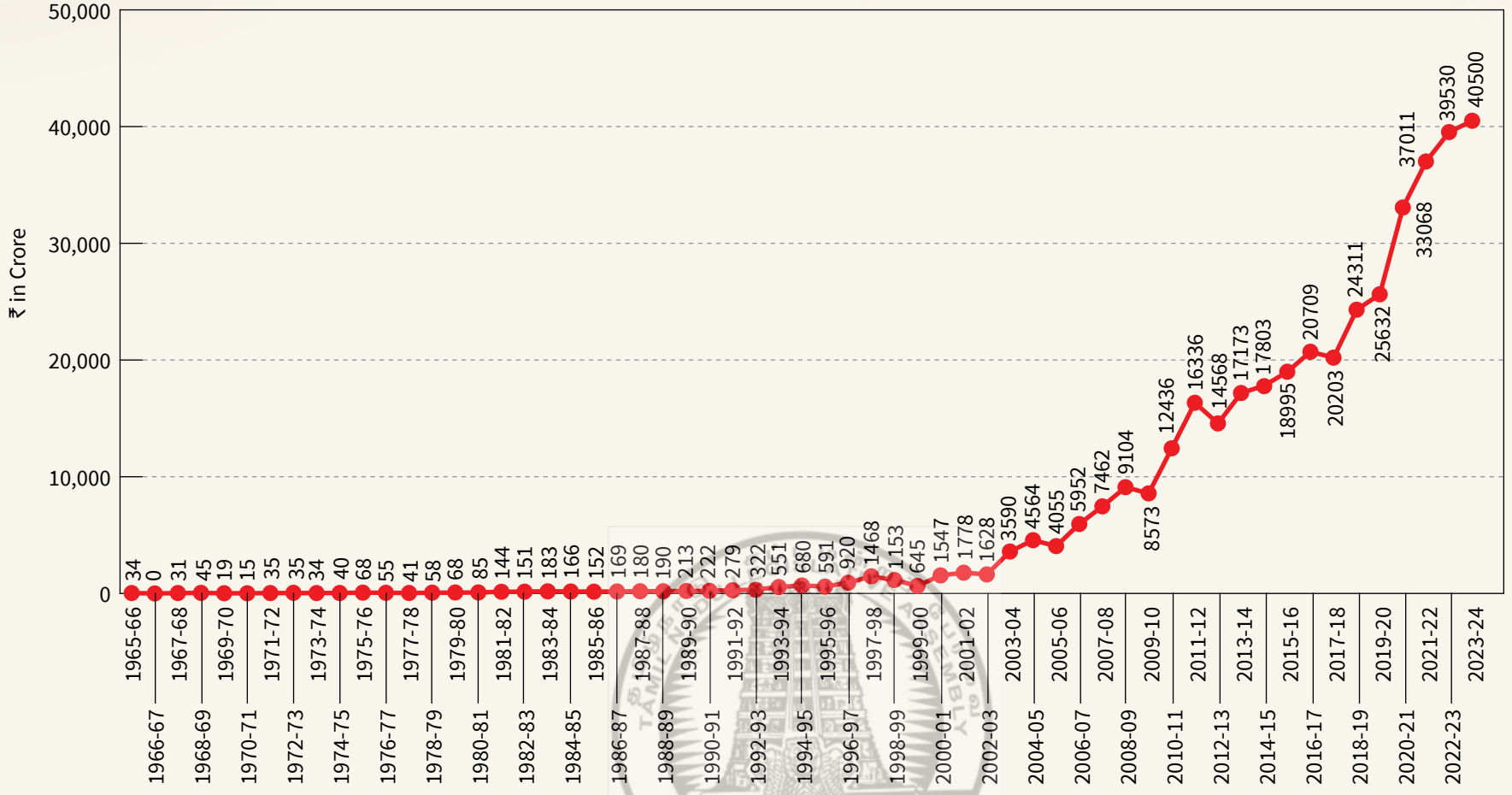
Source: Budget Documents, GoTN (various years).

Revenue and Expenditure in Tamil Nadu Government (1947-48 to 1990-91)



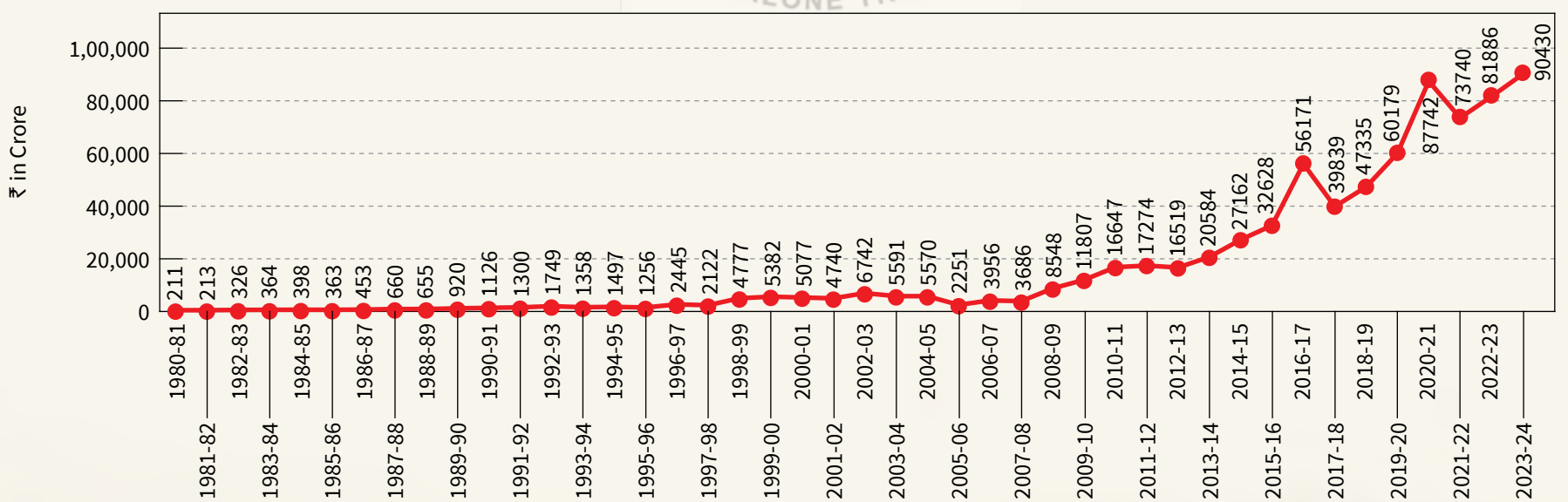
Source: Budget Discussions documents for various years, Government of Madras. Annual Statistical Abstract, the Director of Statistics, Madras (various years) and Budget Documents of Tamil Nadu Government (various years).

Trends in Capital Expenditure (since 1965-66)



Source: Budget Documents (various years). GoTN

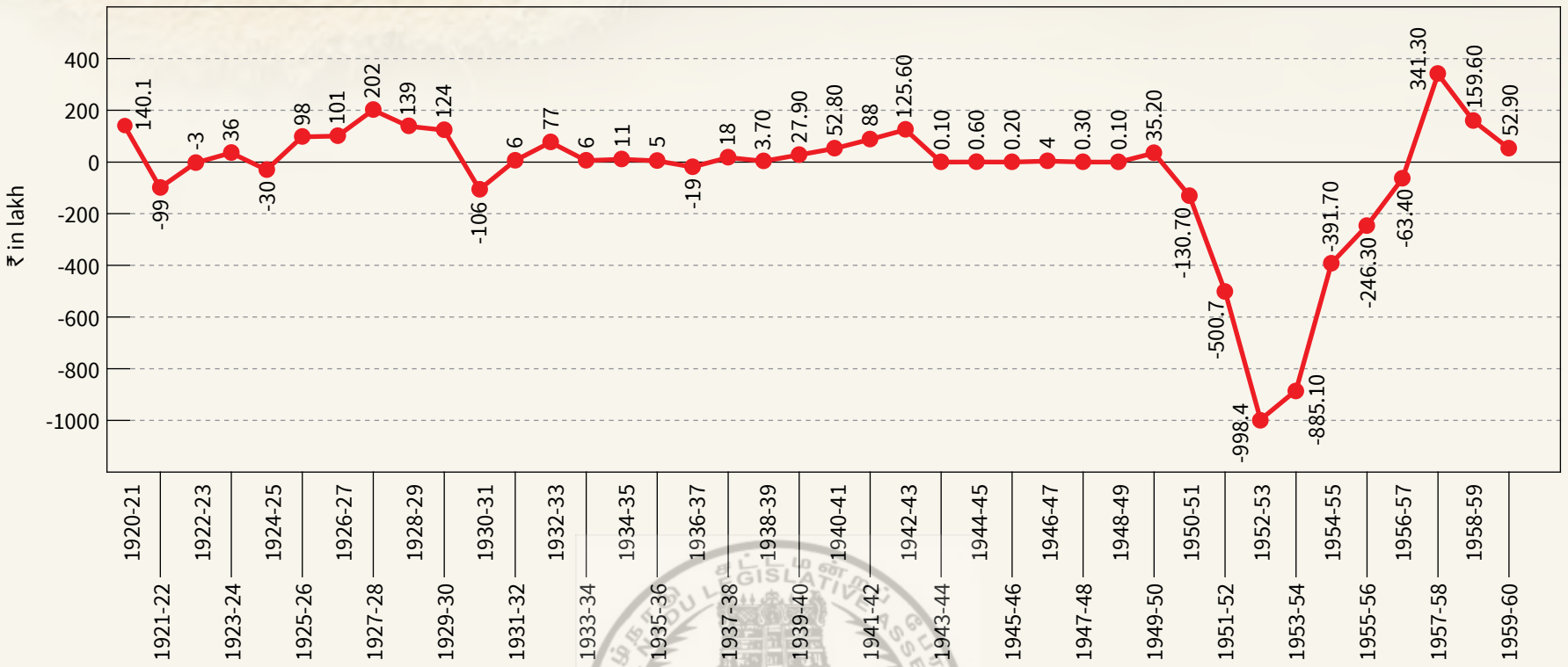
Fiscal Deficit (since 1980-81)



Source: Budget Documents (various years). GoTN

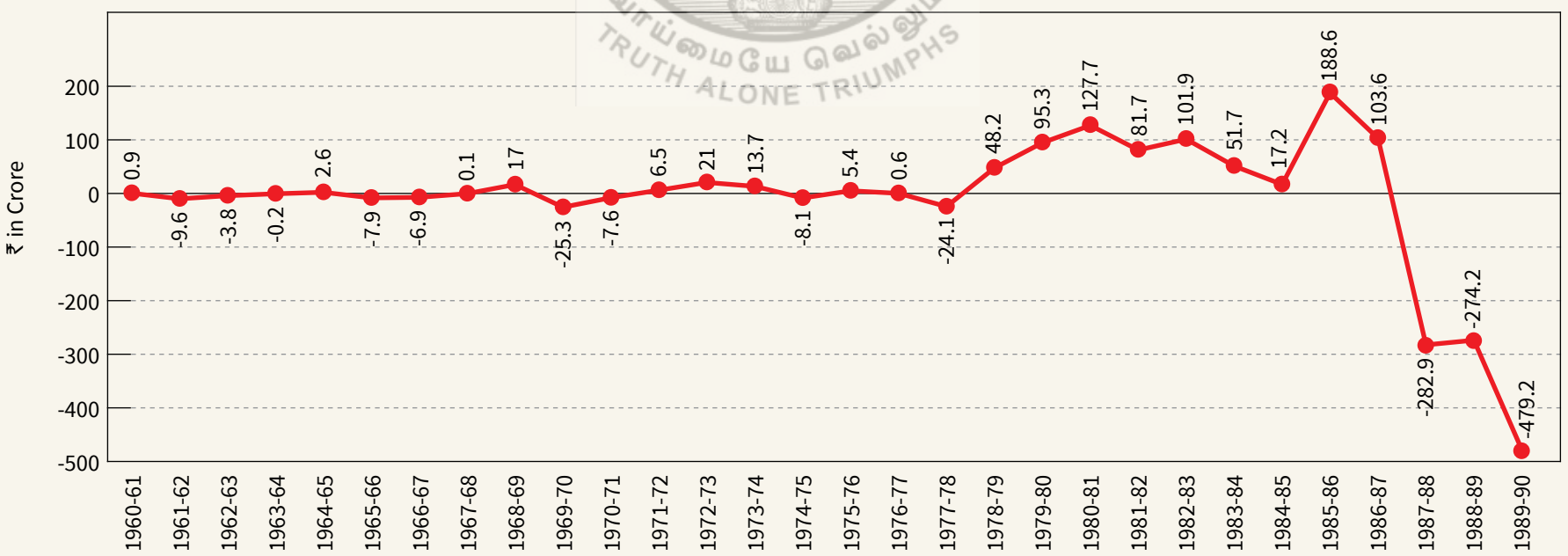
வாய்மையே வெல்லும்
TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS

Trends in Revenue Gap (from 1920-21 to 1959-60)



Source (Basic Data): Budget Discussions documents Government of Madras; Annual Statistical Abstract, the Director of Statistics, Madras; and Budget Documents of Tamil Nadu Government (various issues).

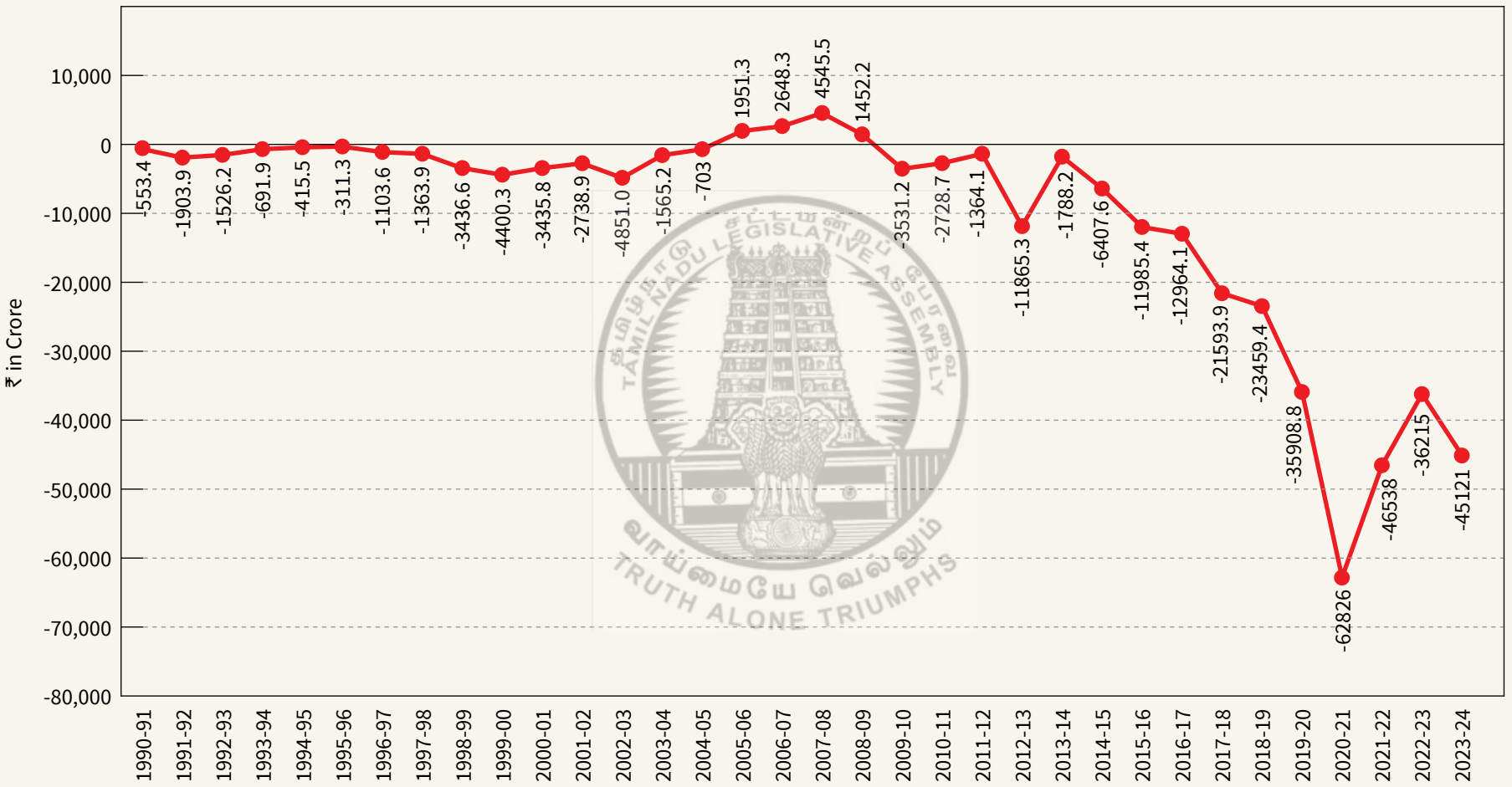
Trends in Revenue Gap (from 1960-61 to 1989-90)



Source (Basic Data): Budget Discussions documents Government of Madras; Annual Statistical Abstract, the Director of Statistics, Madras; and Budget Documents of Tamil Nadu Government (various issues).

TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS

Trends in Revenue Gap (from 1990-91 to 2023-24)



Source (Basic Data): Budget Discussions documents Government of Madras; Annual Statistical Abstract, the Director of Statistics, Madras; and Budget Documents of Tamil Nadu Government (various issues).

Trend of Revenue Receipts and Revenue Expenditure in relation to GSDP (%)

Year	Revenue as % of GSDP*	Rev. Expenditure as % of GSDP*	Year	Revenue as % of GSDP*	Rev. Expenditure as % of GSDP*
1960-61	8.28	8.19	1993-94	14.02	15.22
1961-62	8.09	8.93	1994-95	13.43	14.03
1962-63	10.10	10.43	1995-96	13.55	13.95
1963-64	10.78	10.79	1996-97	13.40	14.64
1964-65	10.96	10.78	1997-98	13.12	14.44
1965-66	11.56	12.09	1998-99	12.06	14.97
1966-67	11.11	11.50	1999-00	12.93	16.41
1967-68	12.57	12.57	2000-01	12.98	15.42
1968-69	14.43	13.55	2001-02	13.11	15.02
1969-70	13.08	14.25	2002-03	13.43	16.56
1970-71	13.24	13.56	2003-04	14.07	15.00
1971-72	14.85	14.61	2004-05	12.99	13.31
1972-73	15.43	14.69	2005-06	13.17	12.41
1973-74	14.17	13.77	2006-07	13.18	12.32
1974-75	14.30	14.52	2007-08	13.55	12.25
1975-76	15.11	14.97	2008-09	13.71	13.35
1976-77	14.61	14.60	2009-10	11.64	12.38
1977-78	14.48	14.99	2010-11	12.00	12.47
1978-79	15.96	15.00	2011-12	11.34	11.16
1979-80	15.50	13.94	2012-13	11.56	11.36
1980-81	15.84	14.26	2013-14	11.15	11.34
1981-82	14.84	14.00	2014-15	11.41	12.01
1982-83	16.74	15.72	2015-16	10.97	11.98
1983-84	16.85	16.41	2016-17	10.77	11.76
1984-85	16.31	16.18	2017-18	9.98	11.46
1985-86	16.86	15.66	2018-19	10.66	12.10
1986-87	16.44	15.85	2019-20	10.01	12.07
1987-88	14.94	16.31	2020-21	9.74	13.22
1988-89	15.04	16.22	2021-22	10.01	12.26
1989-90	15.67	17.43	2022-23	10.18	11.70
1990-91	16.23	18.00	2023-24	9.72	11.38
1991-92	18.33	23.49	-	-	-
1992-93	16.31	19.86	-	-	-

*From 1960-61 to 1979-80, NSDP 1970-71 base series was used; From 1980-81 to 1992-93, GSDP 1980-81 base series was used; From 1993-94 to 2003-04, the GSDP 1993-94 base series was used; From 2004-05 to 2010-11, GSDP 2004-05 base series was used; From 2011-12 to 2023-24, GSDP 2011-12 base series was used.
GSDP - Gross State Domestic Product. NSDP - Net State Domestic Product.

SECTION 9

LEADING LIGHTS OF LEGISLATURE



A view of the Raj Bhavan at Guindy in Chennai.

GOVERNORS

(SINCE 1952)



SRI PRAKASA

(March 12, 1952 to December 09, 1956)



A.J. JOHN

(December 10, 1956 to January 23, 1958)



BISNURAM MEDHI

(January 24, 1958 to May 03, 1964)



JAYACHAMARAJA WADIYAR

(May 04, 1964 to June 15, 1967)



UJJAL SINGH*

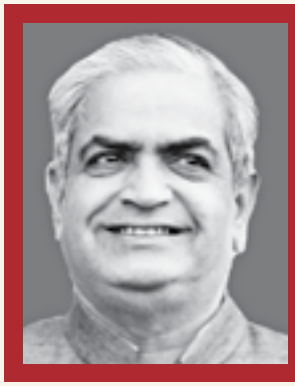
(June 28, 1966 to May 26, 1971)

* The date of his assumption of office covered a part of the period of Wadiyar's leave



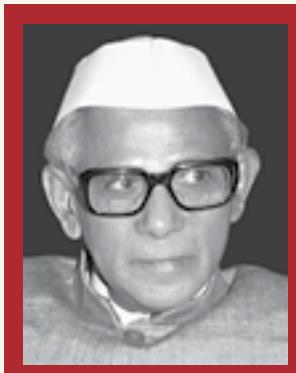
K.K. SHAH

(May 26, 1971 to
June 15, 1976)



MOHANLAL SUKHADIA

(June 16, 1976 to
April 08, 1977)



SADIQ ALI

(November 04, 1980 to
September 02, 1982)



PRABHUDAS B. PATWARI

(April 27, 1977 to
October 26, 1980)



S.L. KHURANA

(September 03, 1982 to
February 15, 1988)



DR. P.C. ALEXANDER

(February 17, 1988 to
May 23, 1990)

TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
வாய்மையே வெல்லும்
TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS



SURJIT SINGH BARNALA

(May 24, 1990 to
February 14, 1991)



BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH

(February 15, 1991
to May 30, 1993)



M. CHANNA REDDY

(May 31, 1993 to
December 2, 1996)



M. FATHIMA BEEVI

(January 25, 1997 to
July 01, 2001)



P.S. RAMAMOHAN RAO

(January 18 2002 to
November 2, 2004)



SURJIT SINGH BARNALA

(November 3, 2004 to August 31, 2011)



K. ROSAIAH

(August 31, 2011 to September 01, 2016)



C. VIDYASAGAR RAO

(September 02, 2016 to October 05, 2017)



BANWARILAL PUROHIT

(October 06, 2017 to September 17, 2021)



R.N. RAVI

(since September 18, 2021)

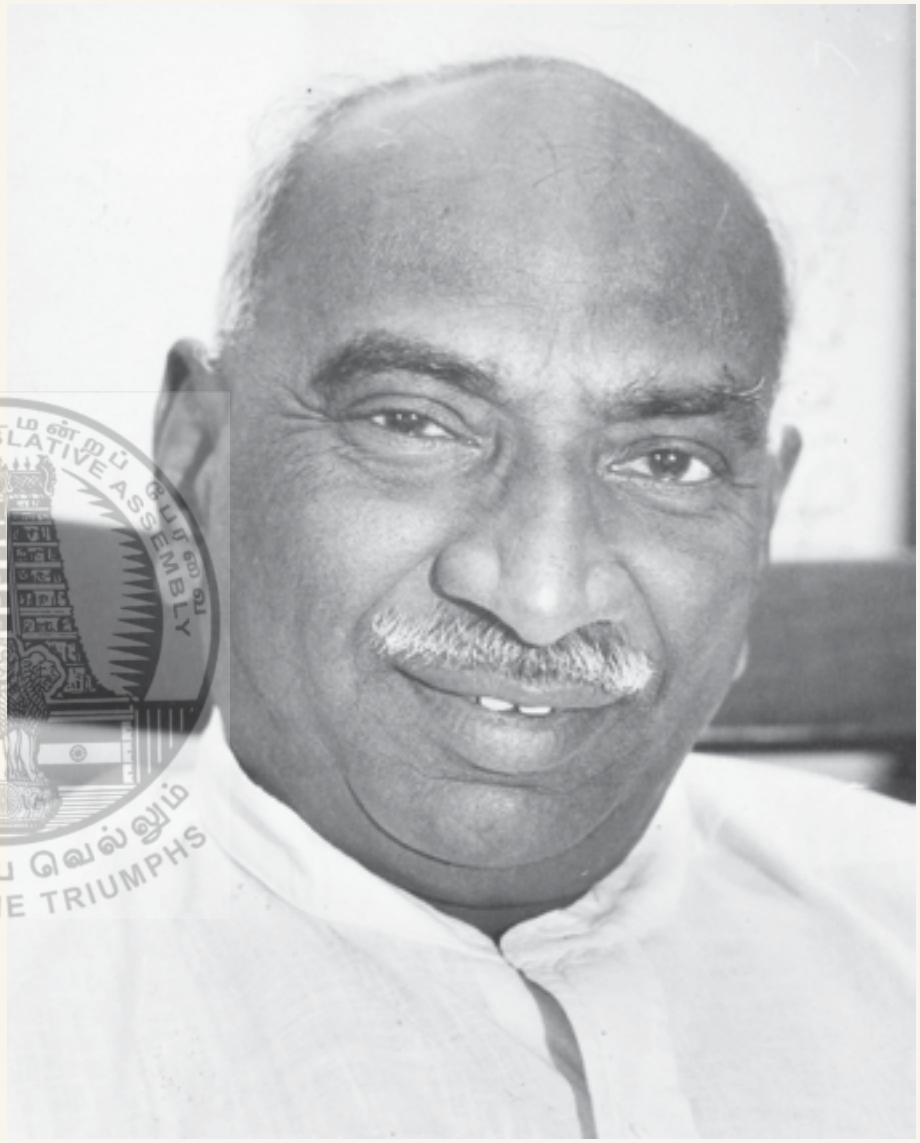
CHIEF MINISTERS

(SINCE 1952)



C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

(April 10, 1952 to April 13, 1954)

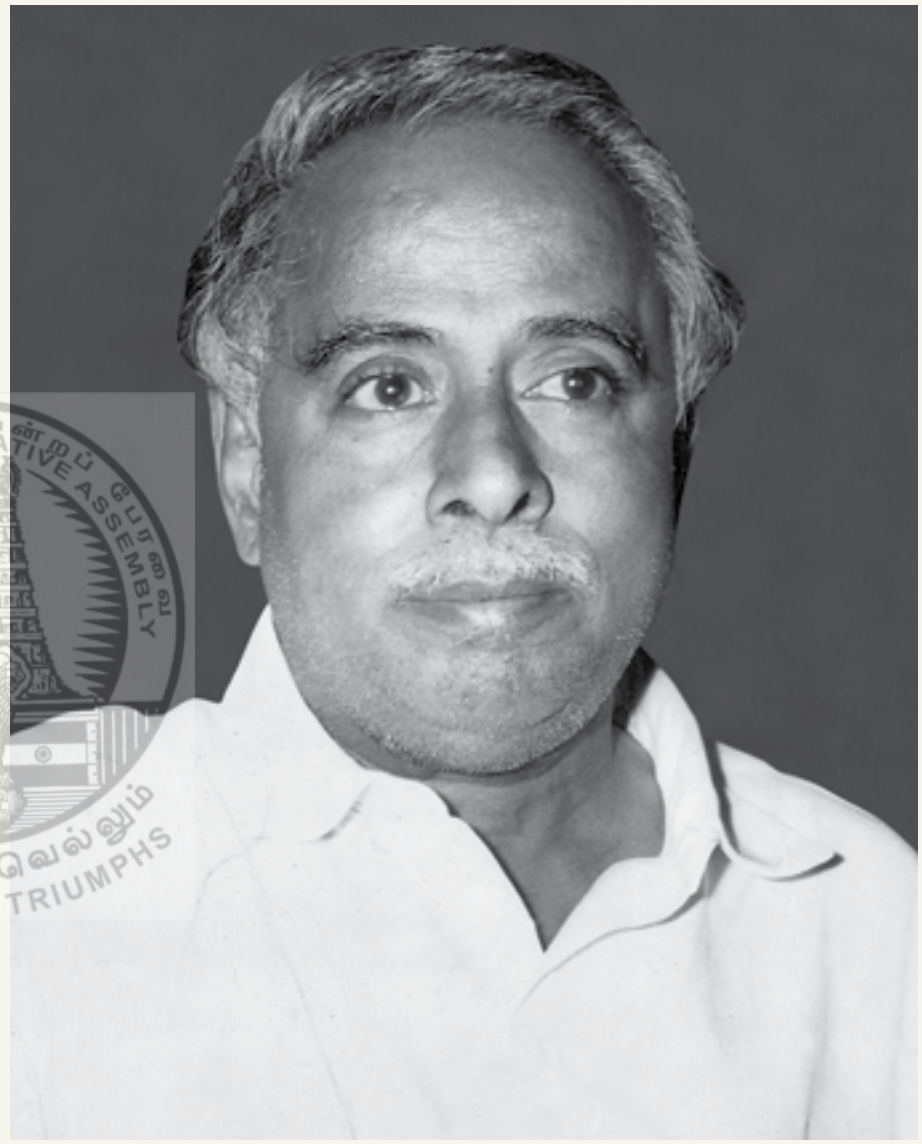


K. KAMARAJ

(April 13, 1954 to October 2, 1963)



M. BAKTHAVATSALAM
(October 2, 1963 to March 6, 1967)

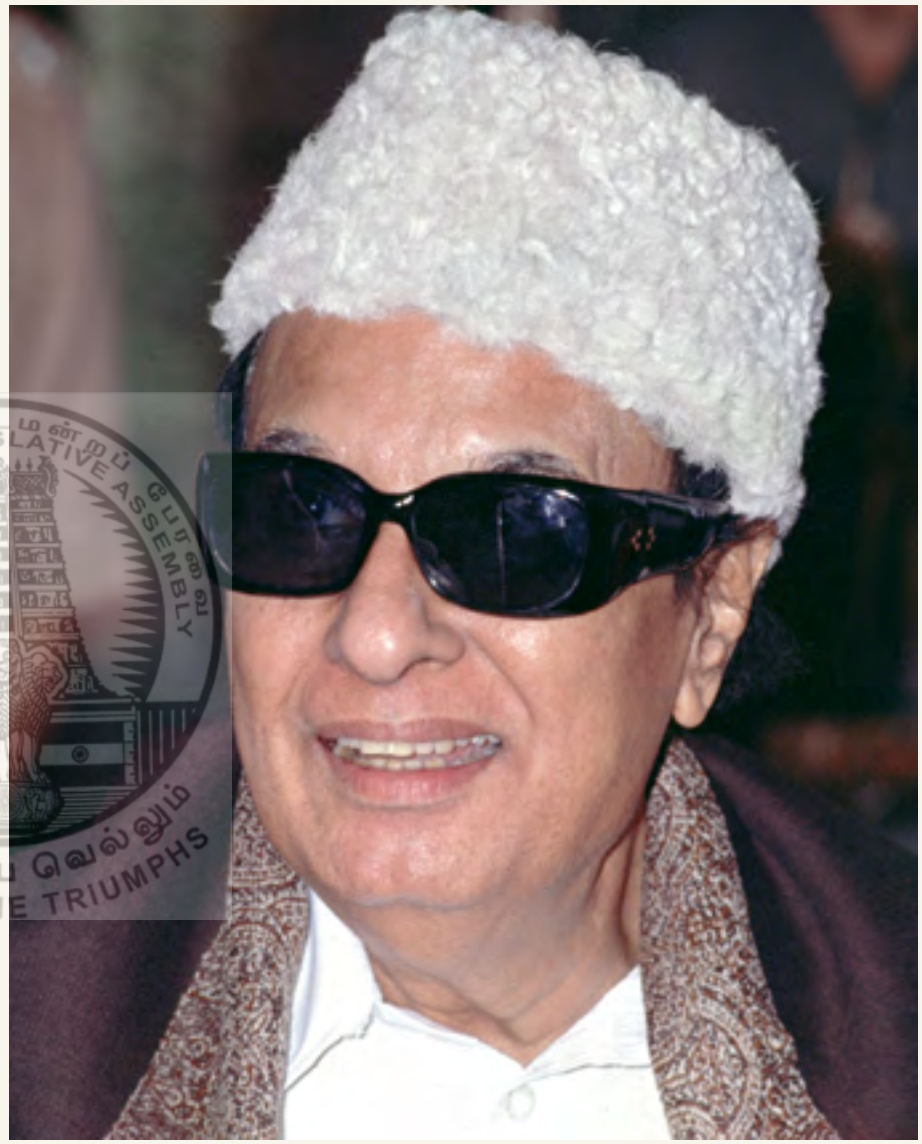


C.N. ANNADURAI
(March 6, 1967 to February 3, 1969)



M. KARUNANIDHI

(February 10, 1969 to January 4, 1971 | March 15, 1971 to January 31, 1976 | January 27, 1989 to January 30, 1991 | May 13, 1996 to May 13, 2001 | May 13, 2006 to May 15, 2011)



M.G. RAMACHANDRAN

(June 30, 1977 to February 17, 1980 | June 9, 1980 to November 15, 1984 | February 10, 1985 to December 24, 1987)



JANAKI RAMACHANDRAN

(January 7 - 30, 1988)



J. JAYALALITHAA

(June 24, 1991 to May 12, 1996 | May 14, 2001 to September 21, 2001 | March 2, 2002 to May 12, 2006 | May 16, 2011 to September 27, 2014 | May 23, 2015 to May 21, 2016 | May 23, 2016 to December 5, 2016)



O. PANNEERSELVAM

(September 21, 2001 to March 1, 2002 | September 29, 2014 to May 22, 2015 | December 6, 2016 to February 15, 2017)



EDAPPADI K. PALANISWAMI

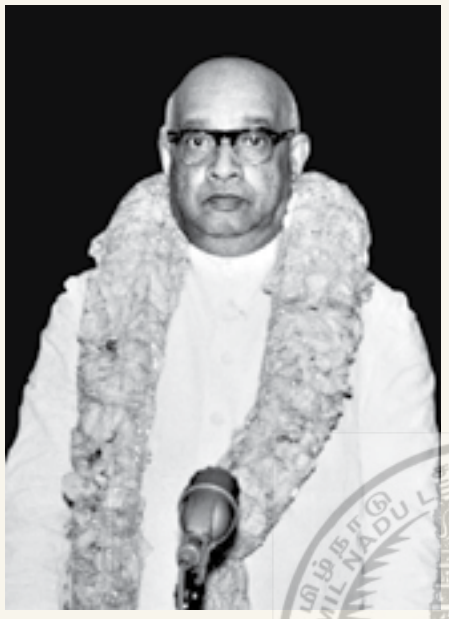
(February 16, 2017 to May 7, 2021)



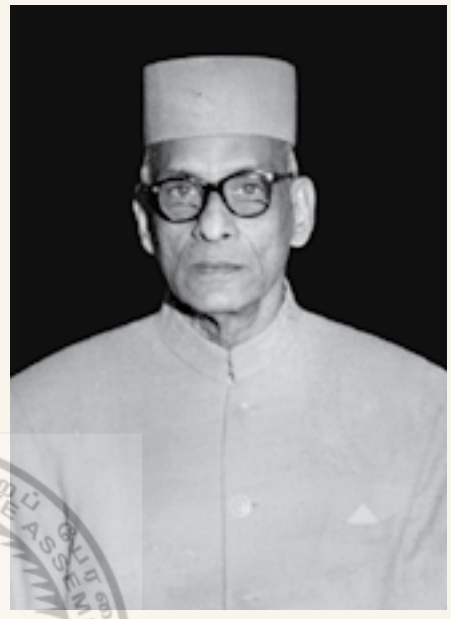
M.K. STALIN
(since May 7, 2021)

PRESIDING OFFICERS

CHAIRPERSONS OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (SINCE 1952)



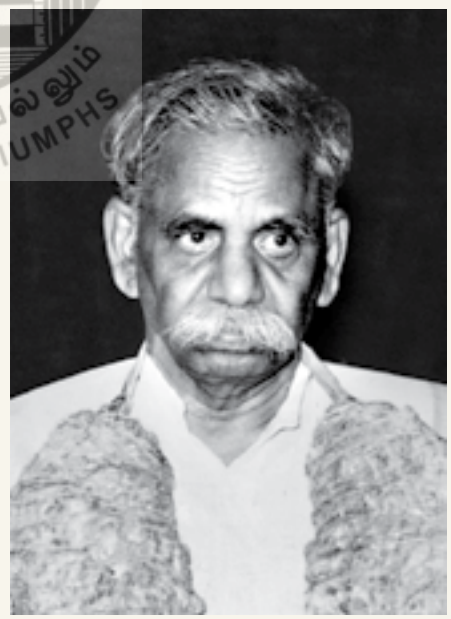
P.V. CHERIAN
1952-64



M.A. MANICKAVELU
1964-70



C.P. CHITRARASU
1970-76



M.P. SIVAGNANAM
1978-86

PRESIDING OFFICERS

SPEAKERS OF ASSEMBLY (SINCE 1952)



J. SIVASHANMUGAM PILLAI

(May 6, 1952 to August 16, 1955)



N. GOPALA MENON

(September 27, 1955 to November 1, 1956)



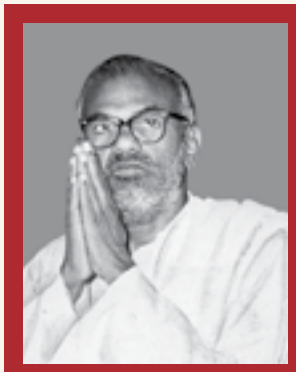
S. CHELLA PANDIAN

(March 31, 1962 to March 4, 1967)



U. KRISHNA RAO

(April 30, 1957 to August 3, 1961)



SI. PA. ADITANAR

(March 17, 1967 to August 12, 1968)



PULAVAR K. GOVINDAN

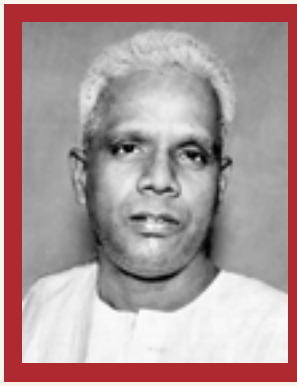
(February 22, 1969 to March 14, 1971)

TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS



K.A. MATHIALAGAN

(March 24, 1971 to December 2, 1972)



PULAVAR K. GOVINDAN

(August 3, 1973 to July 3, 1977)



K. RAJARAM

(June 21, 1980 to February 24, 1985)



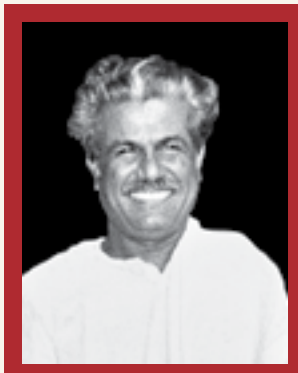
MUNU ADHI

(July 6, 1977 to June 18, 1980)



P.H. PANDIAN

(February 27, 1985 to February 5, 1989)



M. TAMIZHKUDIMAGAN

(February 8, 1989 to June 30, 1991)



SEDAPATTY MUTHIAH

(July 3, 1991 to May 21, 1996)



P.T.R. PALANIVEL RAJAN

(May 23, 1996 to May 21, 2001)



R. AVUDAIAPPAN

(May 19, 2006 to May 22, 2011)



K. KALIMUTHU

(May 24, 2001 to February 1, 2006)



D. JAYAKUMAR

(May 27, 2011 to September 29, 2012)



P. DHANAPAL

(October 10, 2012 to May 24, 2016)

(June 3, 2016 to May 10, 2021)



M. APPAVU
Speaker
(since May 12, 2021)

A DMK stalwart who completed 50 years as lawmaker and is still going strong

Water Resources Minister and Leader of the House Duraimurugan, who first entered the Tamil Nadu Assembly 50 years ago in 1971, turned emotional on Monday when the House, led by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, felicitated him.

The DMK veteran had won in 10 Assembly elections – eight times from Katpadi and twice from Ranipet – and lost only on two occasions in the five decades.

The Minister vowed to follow the path of the Dravidian Movement and Mr. Stalin, the DMK president. Mr. Duraimurugan, who is known for his debates and oratory, could not complete his sentence as he became emotional and took his seat with folded hands.

Vacuum filled

Earlier, thanking the Chief Minister for moving a resolution and members of the House who spoke in praise of his contribution, Mr. Duraimurugan said, "I would live up to the faith you have reposed in me."

"I do not know how I will repay the love showered on me. My leader has so much love for me and if it were some other place, I would have hugged him and cried. I thought there would be a vacuum after the death of my leader [former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi]. But Mr. Stalin has not only filled the vacuum but also gone further and excelled," he said.

Mr. Duraimurugan recalled that he had moved closely with former Chief Ministers C.N. Annadurai, Karunanidhi and M.G. Ramachandran, and now with Mr. Stalin. "For the first time, I am at a loss for words to express my feelings."

Recalling his association with Karunanidhi, his "guide, mentor and a friend with whom he would spend hours chatting", Mr. Duraimurugan said, "Kalaignar asked about my caste only when he fielded me in the election. He treated me like a friend even when I was a student."

Mr. Stalin said he would be envious sometimes as Karunanidhi would spend hours with Mr. Duraimurugan.

"If he did not visit our house, Kalaignar would ask us to call him," he recalled. "When he was admitted to hospital for a surgery, Kalaignar spent the whole night with him."

August 24, 2021



DURAIMURUGAN
Water Resources Minister and Leader of the House
(Since May 8, 2021)

From teacher to Speaker of Tamil Nadu Assembly

Tirunelveli district, after giving three Speakers to the Tamil Nadu Assembly since 1962, has given the fourth one with Radhapuram MLA M. Appavu, 69, assuming office on Wednesday.

After Chellapandian (1962-1967), P.H. Pandian (1985-1988) and R. Avudaiyappan (2006-2011), Mr. Appavu from the district has been handpicked for the coveted post.

After serving in the Sacred Heart High School (now higher secondary school) at Kaavalkinaru as mathematics and English teacher, Mr. Appavu voluntarily retired from teaching service in 1995 to enter politics in 1996. He was elected MLA of Radhapuram Assembly segment as the candidate of G.K. Moopanar-led Tamil Maanila Congress. His political journey continued as MLA of the same segment with a hat-trick by him after getting elected in 2001 and 2006 also.

During his tenure as MLA between 2001 and 2006, Mr. Appavu's aggressive approach put an end to sand mining in the Nambiyar riverbed. His sustained campaign for linking the Tamirabharani-Karumaeniyar- Nambiyar rivers by digging a 73 km-long flood carrier channel from Vellankuzhi in Tirunelveli district to M.L. Thaeri near Sattankulam in Thoothukudi district was approved by then Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi.

This ambitious river-linking scheme was shelved indefinitely following a change of guard at Fort St. George in 2011. Then Mr. Appavu, after obtaining much-needed information through the Right to Information Act, approached the High Court.

After being rapped by the court, the then AIADMK government resumed the third and the fourth phases of the work. Mr. Appavu, after winning the 2021 election on May 2, said: "I'm much relieved as the Almighty has rendered justice to me... Now, I'm waiting for the Supreme Court's verdict on the declaration of the result of recounting of votes polled in the 2016 Assembly election."

Teachers who worked with him describe Mr. Appavu a down-to-earth person. "He would visit us suddenly and talk about his tenure as a teacher," says A. Dhanaraj, who has worked with Mr. Appavu.

P. Sudhakar
May 13, 2021



CM Stalin says those who lost people's confidence sought the removal of the Speaker

The motion gave an opportunity to compare the functioning of Appavu with how proceedings were conducted in the past. Appavu demonstrates the culture to be followed by the House: Stalin

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said in the Assembly on Monday [March 17, 2025] that the people would laugh at the (AIADMK's) motion for the removal of M. Appavu from the post of Speaker, since it was moved by those who had lost the confidence of the people.

"I regretted having moved a motion (against the AIADMK government of Edappadi K. Palaniswami) in 2017 [as it had led to stormy proceedings and eviction of DMK MLAs]. The current motion has provided an opportunity to get to know about how House proceedings were conducted in the past, and the actions of the erstwhile Speaker who had failed to respect democracy. Everyone, including the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Palaniswami), knows about it, and I need not explain it again," Mr. Stalin said, while taking part in a debate on the motion.

The Chief Minister said he had the duty to declare the impartiality of the Speaker since the arguments advanced by the AIADMK members were contrary to the truth. "I feel happy when Ministers tell me that the Speaker handles the ruling party members in a firm manner. The Opposition members should get more opportunities to speak in the House. Our leader Kalaignar (former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi) believed that they were in the House to improve the functioning of the government," he said.

Mr. Stalin said the motion gave an opportunity to compare the functioning of Mr. Appavu with how the House proceedings were conducted in the past, and to establish his impartiality. He said Mr. Appavu had functioned not only as the Speaker, but also as a leader demonstrating the culture to be followed by the House. "He is running the House without any intervention from me or the Ministers."

The Chief Minister said that on several occasions, Mr. Appavu had allowed the AIADMK members to speak, and asked the DMK members to speak on some other day, though they had been listed as the speakers for that particular day. "Though the Opposition members could not openly appreciate the Speaker, they are praising him silently," he said.

'Diverting attention'

Mr. Stalin alleged that since the AIADMK could not find fault with the government, it had moved the motion to divert attention from its internal squabbles. "But your conscience will hurt you in the future for having moved such a motion. We see it as an arrow aimed at the Speaker, and the House will not accept it."

He recalled the words of Karunanidhi that anyone could be subjected to criticism, but the critics should keep in mind that they had to meet the person they found fault with.

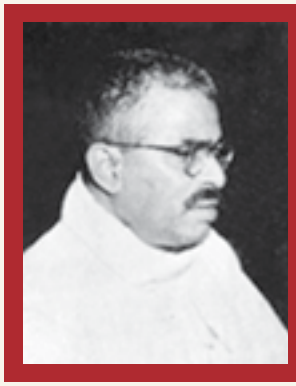
He said Mr. Appavu was occupying the post of the Speaker when the centenary of Karunanidhi was being celebrated.

Recalling his association with Mr. Appavu when he was a member of the House between 2006 and 2011, Mr. Stalin, who held the Local Administration portfolio at the time, said Mr. Appavu was committed to democratic principles, and would not hurt others.

"He would express his views in an honest manner. His impartiality and smiling face attracted me, and I proposed his name for the post of Speaker. Anyone with a conscience will agree that he has love and affection for all members," he said.

March 18, 2025

DEPUTY SPEAKERS OF ASSEMBLY (SINCE 1952)



B. BAKTAVATSALU NAIDU

(May 6, 1952 to March 31, 1957 and April 30, 1957 to March 1, 1962)



K. PARTHASARATHY

(March 31, 1962 to February 28, 1967)



G.R. EDMUND

(February 26, 1969 to January 5, 1971)



PULAVAR K. GOVINDAN

(March 17, 1967 to February 21, 1969)



P. SEENIVASAN

(March 24, 1971 to March 9, 1974)



N. GANAPATHY

(April 17, 1974 to January 31, 1976)



S. THIRUNAVUKKARASU

(July 6, 1977 to February 17, 1980)



P.H. PANDIAN

(June 21, 1980 to November 15, 1984)



V.P. DURAISAMY

(February 8, 1989 to January 30, 1991)



V.P. BALASUBRAMANIAN

(February 27, 1985 to January 30, 1988)



K. PONNUSAMY

(July 3, 1991 to May 16, 1993)



S. GANDHIRAJAN

(October 27, 1993 to May 13, 1996)

TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS



PARITHI ELLAMVAZHUTHI

(May 23, 1996 to May 14, 2001)



A. ARUNACHALAM

(May 24, 2001 to May 12, 2006)



P. DHANAPAL

(May 27, 2011 to October 9, 2012)



V.P. DURAISAMY

(May 19, 2006 to May 14, 2011)



POLLACHI V. JAYARAMAN

(October 29, 2012 to May, 21, 2016 and June 3, 2016 to May 3, 2021)



K. PITCHANDI

(since May 6, 2021)

LEADERS OF OPPOSITION OF ASSEMBLY (SINCE 1952)

T. NAGI REDDI

(1952 to October 1953)



P. RAMAMURTI

(December 1953 to March 1957)



V.K. RAMASAMY MUDALIAR

(April 1957 to February 1962)



P.G. KARUTHIRUMAN

(March 1967 to January 1971)



V.R. NEDUNCHEZHIAN

(March 1962 to February 1967)



M. KARUNANIDHI

(July 1977 to February 1980 and June 1980 to August 1983)



K.S.G. HAJA SHAREEF

(August 1983 to November 1984)



O. SUBRAMANIAN

(February 1985 to January 1988)



J. JAYALALITHAA

(February 1989 to December 1989)



G.K. MOOPANAR

(January 1991)



S.R. ERADHA

(December 1989 to January 1991)



S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN

(July 1991 to May 1996)



S. BALAKRISHNAN

(May 1996 to May 2001)



K. ANBAZHAGAN

(May 2001 to April 2006)



O. PANNEERSELVAM

(May 2006)



VIJAYAKANTH

(May 2011 to February 2016)



J. JAYALALITHAA

(May 2006 to May 2011)



M.K. STALIN

(May 2016 to May 2021)



EDAPPADI K. PALANISWAMI

(since May 2021)

Legislative Assembly Secretaries

R.V. Krishna Ayyar - **April 24, 1952 to March 23, 1955**

T. Hanumanthappa - **March 24, 1955 to October 17, 1964**

C.D. Natarajan - **October 18, 1964 to May 13, 1973**

M. Shanmugasubramaniam - **May 14, 1973 to June 30, 1976**

G.M. Alagarswamy - **July 1, 1976 to June 30, 1985**

C.K. Ramasamy - **July 1, 1985 to May 31, 1990**

T.P. Delhi Dorai - **June 1, 1990 to June 30, 1991**

C.S. Janakiraman - **July 1, 1991 to April 30, 1997**

D. Solomon Jayapaul - **May 1, 1997 to June 30, 1999**

V. Rajaraman - **July 1, 1999 to May 15, 2006**

M. Selvaraj - **May 15, 2006 to May 16, 2011**

A.M.P. Jamaludeen - **May 16, 2011 to May 31, 2017**

K. Boopathy - **May 31, 2017 to February 28, 2018**

K. Srinivasan - **since March 3, 2018**

Legislative Council Secretaries

M. Surya Rao - **1946 to 1952**

T. Hanumanthappa - **1953 to 1954**

A.G. Sabesa Ayyar - **1954 to 1955**

C.D. Natarajan - **1956 to 1964**

G.M. Alagarswamy - **1964 to 1976**

C.K. Ramasamy - **1976 to 1985**

P. Pallikonda Perumal - **1985 to 1986**

TAMIL NADU
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
SECRETARIAT

THE HINDU GROUP

TAMIL NADU LEGISLATURE

A JOURNEY IN LEGISLATING & POLICY MAKING

Tamil Nadu's legislature, which was bi-cameral for about 50 years from the mid-1930s, boasts a hoary tradition of strengthening and enriching India's parliamentary democracy. Capturing important features of the working of the legislature, this book, visually loaded, essentially contains reports, articles and editorials carried by *The Hindu* over the years on the historical events that shaped the evolution of the Legislative Assembly. Extracts from budget speeches of Finance Ministers, since 1952, have been included in these pages. The book gives a glimpse of how the legislature has been functioning in a manner that ensures the implementation of welfare measures and pays sufficient attention to the progress of the State.



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