

National and State Identity: Pioneering Welfarism in Tamil Nadu

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¹Received: 27/06/2025; Accepted: 07/08/2025; Published: 09/10/2025

Introduction

Welfare of the people is the immediate and ultimate motto of all forms of state machinery. The primordial society is the one which in unorganized form along with abundant sources of life evolved into many forms of civilizations. Be it Athenian, Sumeritan, African, Indus, Chinese so on with their diversified cultural practices transmitted to other parts of the globe which gave way for mutual exchanges and development. The evolution of society and state with the breakthrough in science and technology ended up in large amount of production through industrial revolution and nation state system. Subsequently, colonialism and imperialism emerged with its tentacles and exploited the aplenty resources of different continents and regions.”Might is right” and “Survival of the fittest” are the buzz dictums of many nations in their extension and expansion of their influences and power.

Keywords: *Welfare; Marginalized groups; Identity Schemes*

However revolutions like French and Russian changed the mode of the life of the subjects of each nation. Liberty, equality and property of individuals were emphasized for all under authoritarian regimes. Eventually; the state machinery hitherto concentrated in “expansion” thus changed into welfare modifying it selves into welfare states. Modern states are both democratic and welfare states indeed. The world states are too much economical than political. The era of globalization and interdependence made people and governments to cooperate and coexist in the 21st century. Democratic governance prioritizes peoples welfare for which the parties frame their manifestos along with inherent ideologies. Albeit of mode of regimes the state machinery gives special impetus for the welfare of its subjects. Social welfare has become an extra-ordinary instrument in strengthening the democratic apparatus and the nation indeed. Governments strengthen its party base by unleashing various welfare measures which also helps the government to be in the power for along span of time.

Governments and parties are identified through their schemes and implementations. American president elects are given with good many opportunities to debate and discuss about their policies in front of the people who choose them on accordance with their policies regarding various issues, both internal and external.

M.G.R. Puratchi Thalaivar Nutritious Meal Programme Mid Day Meal Scheme is a hallmark initiative that is administered in all government and government-aided schools to meet the nutritional needs of school-age children, with a focus on the oppressed classes. It is a programme that aims not only to eliminate classroom hunger but also to strengthen the country by providing nourishment to India's future citizens. Tamil Nadu was the first state in India to

¹How to cite the article: Rajarajan R (October 2025); National and State Identity: Pioneering Welfarism in Tamil Nadu; *International Journal of Development in Social Sciences and Humanities*; Vol 20, 16-20

implement the Mid Day Meal Program in order to boost the number of children attending school. Thiru. K. Kamaraj, the previous Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, initiated the Midday Meal Scheme in Chennai. The initiative was thereafter expanded throughout Tamil Nadu.

The Nutritious Meal Program was established in 1982. Thiru Kalainger Karunanithi, the previous Chief Minister, added egg into the Nutritious Meal Programme from 1986 to 1989. The Programme's Objectives To minimise school dropouts and, as a result, ensure an increase in child enrolment. To put an end to classroom hunger. To boost literacy rates and to reduce childhood hunger. The Scheme's Prominent Features are Primary School Children Aged 5 to 9 Years and Upper Primary School Children For 220 working days each year, children between the ages of 10 and 15 are served freshly prepared variety meals with masala eggs. ii. Children enrolled in National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Special 87 Schools are also provided with hot cooked healthy variety meals and masala egg for 312 days each year. iii. Food Entitlement Guidelines - Rice is distributed at a rate of 100gms per day per beneficiary for primary kids (1st to 5th Std.) and 150gms per day for upper primary and high school students (6th to 10th Std.).

Evolutionary Development Yearly Expansion of the Nutritious Meal Program In 1962, the Midday Meal Programme was launched in Tamil Nadu. 1982: Begun Nutritious Meal Program for Poor Children Aged 5 to 9 Years. 1984 Extends the Nutritious Meal Program to children in grades 6th through 10th. 1989: All youngsters were given one Egg every two weeks. On the birthdays of renowned leaders in 1997, sweet Pongal was introduced to the Nutritious Meal Beneficiaries. In 1998, one egg per week was introduced for youngsters aged 2 to 14 years. Nutritious Meal Program Expansion in 1988 In 2006, two eggs per week were introduced for youngsters aged two to fifteen years. In 2007, three eggs a week were introduced for youngsters aged two to fifteen years. Eggs were introduced in 2010 on all working days (5 days a week) for students in the first through tenth grades. Variety Meal with Masala Eggs was introduced in 2014.

The DMK was founded in 1971. Despite preferential treatment rules, the scheduled castes (SCs) had not organised into a politically coherent entity to become a numerically major factor, nor had they joined any portion of the population to displace the advanced non-brahmin castes to become politically dominant in the 1970s. The SCs had to settle for one or two cabinet positions that were offered as a concession rather than as a measure of their political power. Tamil Nadu's SCs saw themselves as politically oppressed.

The Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act of 1989 States and UTs are given assistance in implementing the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. Financial aid is offered to states/UTs for the execution of these Acts, such as redress to atrocity victims, incentives for inter-caste marriages, awareness generation, and the establishment of exclusive Special courts, among other things. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2015 (No. 1 of 2016) was published in the Extraordinary Gazette of India on January 1, 2016. The Amended Act went into effect on January 26, 2016. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995 were revised in June 2014 to increase the relief sum to victims of atrocities to between Rs.75,000/- and Rs.750,000/- based on the nature of the violation. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Rules, 2016 amended the Principal Rules, namely the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995, and were published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary on April 14, 2016.

Ethnic Belonging Politics in The early Dravidian movement was opposed to some ethnic groups, particularly Brahmins and "north Indians," who spoke the Sanskrit-based languages of western, northern, and parts of eastern India. By supporting Gandhi, rejecting independence in the early 1960s, and explaining that he opposed caste inequities connected with Brahmanism rather than Brahmins, Annadurai forged connections with these groups and Indian nationalism. Thus, under his leadership, the DMK reaffirmed Tamil and middle-caste pride while avoiding ethnic animosity. Karunanidhi confronted his opponents even more forcefully. A bigamist whose creative writings and speeches regularly featured racy sexual references, he excused the DMK's harsher components as typical of a plebeian party. He opposed the AIADMK on nativist grounds immediately after its formation, abandoning this strategy only because it did not halt the DMK's fall. Karunanidhi's political approach, as well as rivalry from the AIADMK, weakened the party's popularity among upper castes, Dalits, and linguistic minorities. As a result, he was regularly

one of the two most popular leaders in Tamil Nadu, but he was also the one who elicited the greatest criticism, particularly throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

In Tamil Nadu, Hindu nationalist parties received no more than 3.2 percent of the vote in state assembly elections. This was crucial because DMK leaders promoted norms contrary to those valued by Hindutvavadis – Tamil specificity based on middle caste cultures, rather than Hindu/Indian homogeneity based on Sanskritic upper caste norms; and because, with the exception of the period when it was allied with the BJP from 1999 to 2004, the DMK built cooperative links between OBC Hindus, Muslims, and, to a lesser extent, OBC Christians. Such networks hampered Hindutva expansion and inter-religious violence, both of which were most constrained in DMK strongholds in northern and central Tamil Nadu. Many Muslims found better political support in the DK's and early DMK's accusations of caste inequity and Hindu polytheism than in Indian nationalism. As AIADMK officials were increasingly open to different types of Hindu religiosity and declarations of Hindu supremacy, Hindu nationalists gained popularity and encouraged increased violence in AIADMK strongholds in southern and western Tamil Nadu.

Because it was strongly affiliated with the middle castes and allowed Dalits minimal autonomy, the DMK had little impact on middle caste violence against Dalits. It first established middle caste-Dalit coalitions in the Kaveri delta, allowing some of its members to advance through small land reforms. It acquired some support among Dalits in its northern bases, but not as much as it did among other communities. It formed relations with the most politically active castes, the Mukkulathor and the Kongu Vellala Gounder, in the southern and western plains, where it was weaker until the 1970s, and hence did not resist their recurrent anti-Dalit violence. This was true of the violence in Mudukulathur in 1958, as well as elsewhere in the southern plains during the 1990s and in sections of the western plains since the 2000s. Furthermore, while in power, the DMK and AIADMK grew more closely associated with dominant castes everywhere, and local party cadres instigated caste violence at times, like as in Villupuram in 1978, Pulliyur in 1998, Sankaralingapuram in 2001, and Nayakkankottai in 2012.

The DMK's programmes were inextricably linked to the party's egalitarian ideology. Karunanidhi arranged for one of his sons to marry a Dalit lady, personalising a commitment to caste equality in ways that non-Dalits do not. However, OBCs benefited more than Dalits and Adivasis from Tamil Nadu's larger (69 percent) educational and job reservations than other states. The Congress Party established a 25% OBC quota in 1951, which the DMK increased to 31% in 1971 and the AIADMK to 50% in 1980. Less well-known is that an additional 27 percent of the population was entitled to OBC reservations during Dravidianist administration, including better-off castes like as the Kongu Vellala Gounder, who were the primary beneficiaries subsequently.

In July 1967, the Anjugam Ammal Memorial Intercaste Marriage Assistance Scheme was established. This initiative was called Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy Ninaivu Intercaste Marriage Assistance Scheme under the AIADMK's reign. Anjugam Ammaiyyar was the late DMK supremo M Karunanidhi's mother. Graduate couples are eligible for Rs 50,000, whereas non-graduate couples are eligible for Rs 25,000. In reality, several states, including Karnataka, have similar plans that give financial aid to couples who marry outside of their community if one of them is from a scheduled caste. The Union government also has a programme that gives financial assistance to intercaste marriages if one of the partners is from a scheduled caste. This initiative assisted around 1.2 lakh couples between 2013-14 and 2019-20. "We are a land of social justice," claimed the DMK government. All of our leaders, including Anna, Periyar, and Karunanidhi, have said unequivocally that inter-caste marriages are effective in abolishing caste system. And similar systems have existed since 1967." From 2006 to 2011, the DMK administration employed 287 people as Secondary Grade Teachers. In the recent five years, however, no members of inter-caste marriages have been appointed. The previous AIADMK administration did not carry out former Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran's agenda.

In comparison, the Dravidian parties increased the SC-ST quota by less than a fifth, from 16 percent to 19 percent, which is still less than the population percentage of these groups, which is 21 percent (which understates the number who experience Dalit-Adivasi deprivation because Christian Dalits are not deemed SCs). OBC employment quotas are filled at a greater rate than SC-ST quotas, particularly in higher-level positions. However, the creation of a 1% tier for STs in 1989 and a 3% tier under the SC quota for Arunthathiyar in 2009 aided some of the lowest status groups, as did the two 10% tiers introduced within the OBC quota in 1989 for MBCs and denotified communities. Thus, caste-

targeted programmes largely benefitted better-off middle castes, but also provided some Dalits, Adivasis, and others with opportunities.

Some Dravidianist welfare and development schemes benefited a diverse group of people. The lunch programme, whose success prompted its replication in other states and the implementation of a similar but less effective national programme, improved nutrition, health, and education among the poorest. Along with large government educational investments and SC/ST educational subsidies, it greatly raised primary school enrolment to the third highest level in India, allowing Dalits to virtually match others in this regard, but not in higher educational levels. High investments in basic health care, widespread distribution of subsidised food grains, homestead land and housing, a successful rural job programme, and the development of women's self-help groups benefited the poor significantly.

Following a Madras High Court decision recommending that the Scheduled Tribes be granted distinct reservation and not be lumped in with the Scheduled Castes, he established a 1% quota for the STs in 1990. During his subsequent tenure, which began in 2006, he established two sub-quotas of 3.5 percent for Muslims and Christians among the backward classes. This was within the 30% BC quota. Christians perceived this compartment to be restricting for students and job seekers, since they stood to earn more if there was no Christian quota. This quota was removed, but the BC-Muslim category of reservation is still in place in Tamil Nadu, with the number of Muslim students enrolled in medical and engineering programmes increasing since then.

Another notable intervention was the implementation of a sub-quota for the Arundathiyars, a Dalit group at the bottom of the Scheduled Castes. Karunanidhi enacted special laws to ensure job and educational quotas for this underserved minority, which accounted for 16% of the State's SC population. He was one of those who constantly advocated for the Mandal Commission's suggestion of backward class reservation in Central government jobs. He advocated for Dalits to be given reservations in the corporate sector as well.

who claims to be an atheist, will soon have his own temple. A Dalit community is erecting a 10,000-square-foot Temple of Rationality to honour the former chief minister for reservation. In honour of late DMK Chief M. Karunanidhi's efforts to the upliftment of the Arunthathiyar community, its members held a groundbreaking ceremony on Sunday for the construction of a temple for the former Chief Minister in Rasipuram in Tamil Nadu's Namakkal district. The temple will be named Kalaingar Pakuthuarivalayam (Temple of Rationality) and would cost Rs30 lakh to build on an area of 10,000 square feet. The Arunthathiyar Community is a scheduled caste at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. The temple will have a life-size statue of Karunanidhi, as well as a library, a park, and historical papers detailing the former chief minister's accomplishments.

The temple, however, will not have any pujas, rituals, or priests and will honour Karunanidhi's, a self-proclaimed atheist, spirit of rationality. Kalaingar is our deity. By giving reservations in government employment, he raised our community and improved the lives of many young people. We chose to construct the shrine as a symbol of gratitude to the great leader K Chinnasamy, President of the Arunthathiyar Munnetra Peravai, said.

The Communal government decree was implemented by the Chief Minister of the Madras Presidency in 1927, thanks to the efforts of Periyar E. V. Ramasamy. Non-brahmin Hindus received 44% of the reservation, scheduled castes received 8%, and Brahmins, Christians, and Muslims received 16%. Despite the fact that these figures did not adequately represent their demographic share, Periyar referred to them as a "compromise" and accepted them.

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) administration enhanced reservation for BC from 25% to 31% in 1971, and reservation for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) from 16% to 18%. During the DMK's administration from 1971 to 1976, Karunanidhi formed the country's first independent Ministry for the Welfare of the Backward Classes. The overall reserve in the state was 49 percent. The tenor of debate in the State Legislature during the initial few months between the DMK's accession of government in 1971 and MGR's creation of the AIADMK in 1972 was one-upmanship regarding the Congress' performance during its dictatorship. The ruling DMK ministers took advantage of every occasion to highlight their party's performance.

The major opposition, the Congress, demanded clarity on numerous social welfare programmes, citing a decrease in budget allocation for SC welfare, the mid-day food scheme, education, and so on. The time spent on the requests for public works and collaboration was longer than the time spent on education, social welfare, and health sectors combined in the two budgets presented during the Fifth Assembly Session. The debates were attended by an average of 80-85 individuals from all parties. Members of the Congress and the Muslim League, however, dominated the question hour discussion on calling attention motions.

Concluding Remarks

Education is the most basic requirement for a society's progress. Growth and development are essential components of a well-educated community. As a result, it is critical to promote education among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes communities. Recognizing this, education for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is given a high priority. Because of these initiatives, the level of literacy among Scheduled Castes has increased significantly.

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