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## M.KARUNANIDHI – A LEADER OF PAR EXCELLANCE IN TAMIL NADU CHAPTER

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### ABSTRACT:

*M. Karunanidhi's overall achievement as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for the advancement of Tamils and Tamil Nadu had been remarkable. Karunanidhi was born at Thirukkuvalai, a small village in Thanjavur District on 3rd June 1924. His parents were Muthuvelar and Anjugam. Karunanidhi continued his education at Board High School, Thiruvarur. Life was a battle for the most of them but for Karunanidhi the battle itself was life. He was a rebel in the house. There is no denying the fact that sacramental rituals have not left a deep imprint on a mind capable of thinking for itself. He spent more than 50 years of his life in politics and public spheres. As a well know administrator, he served Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for five terms. Even though an ally of Congress, he vehemently opposed the emergency.*



**KEYWORDS:** Karunanidhi , Periyar, Annadurai, D.M.K., Uzhavar Sandiagal, Adi-Dravida.

### INTRODUCTION

Karunanidhi followed the footsteps of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy (E.V.R.) and his principles almost with fervor. He loved Annadurai for his grace and made him his model. Spitting fire on the platform, his model was Alagirisamy. E.V.R. appointed Karunanidhi as sub-editor of *Kudiarasu*.<sup>1</sup>

Karunanidhi insisted on the national philosophy and cultural heritage of the Tamils and rose to prominence. He was awarded the title of 'Kalaignar'. Karunanidhi contested the elections in the Kulithalai constituency in early 1957. In the 1962 election, his party, the D.M.K. had fifty legislators with V.R. Nedunchezian as leader of the opposition and Karunanidhi as Deputy Leader. In the 1967 elections the D.M.K. formed the first Non-Congress Ministry in the Tamil Nadu State with C.N. Annadurai as Chief Minister and Karunanidhi as P.W.D. Minister.<sup>2</sup>

After Anna's untimely death on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1969, Karunanidhi became Chief Minister on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1969. Also in the 1971 elections, the D.M.K. came out with massive victory, securing 184 seats. When the Emergency was declared on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1975 by the Indian Government, the first voice against it came from D.M.K. and as a consequence, the D.M.K. Government was ousted.<sup>3</sup>

### INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Karunanidhi had won twelve successive elections in various constituencies. They were Kulithalai, Thanjavur, Saidapet, Anna agar, Harbor and Chepauk etc.<sup>4</sup> He was Chief Minister of

Tamil Nadu five times during the periods 1969-1971, 1971-1976, 1989-1991, 1996-2001 and 2006-2011.<sup>5</sup>Karunanidhi never hesitated to meet the great leaders of other parties such as Rajaji, Kamaraj, Bakthavatsalam and convinced them of the need for their political decisions to benefit the welfare of the state.

### **ENGINEERING SKILL**

Karunanidhi was always an ambitious strategist in planning and executing projects aiming at the prosperous future for the state. He worked intensively on all government departments. It created a story by establishing that the D.M.K.-ruled state could establish a close working relationship with the central government in planning and executing central and state projects. <sup>6</sup> He was kind enough to address the issues presented him from members of the opposition. He was an artist. He freely discussed with experienced architects to shape his ideas for creating historical monuments in the state.

### **SYMBOL OF STATE AUTONOMY**

Despite being a fighter for greater autonomy for state governments, he maintained good relations with the central government. Although he was an atheist as a follower of E.V.R., he maintained cordial relations with the Hindus, Muslims and Christians. He encouraged projects such as the construction of houses for poor peasants and downtrodden, mainly Adhi-Dravidas. He promoted and performed complexes such as Samathuvapuram.<sup>7</sup> His Chief Minister's time was evidenced by the drought relief operations, the start-up of the Salem steel plant, the Veeranam scheme and the implementation of pay commission reports. <sup>8</sup>

### **INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION**

Karunanidhi laid the foundation for the startup of TIDCO and SIPCOT. When the central government was spreading the concept of Joint Sector Industries, Karunanidhi was quick to seize the opportunity. The result was the establishment of the Southern Petrochemical Corporation, which was to be followed by others later. They were clearance for TVS projects in Hosur, Enfield in Ranipet and others. In addition, now the Satellite Township and Industrial Estates had accelerated the pace of industrial progress in the state.

His hardworking nature, easy accessibility, open and frank discussion, listening to the opinions of others and quick and timely decisions were the foundations for his able administration. He was courteous and considerate of the government servants. He allowed them to express their views.<sup>9</sup> Thanks to his continued efforts, the Tamil language was given the status of a classical language.<sup>10</sup>

### **ENHANCEMENT OF WOMEN**

Karunanidhi created the unified department for women's welfare in 1958. He created the department of social welfare in the year 1972 and also the Tamil Nadu Corporation for the Development of Women was established by him. Under his skillful leadership, 2,182 midday Meals Centers were created up and were running throughout the state. Children were given the addition of eggs for nutritional support.<sup>11</sup>

### **INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS**

Several sugar factories in the state were suffered for various reasons, but the efforts and political guidance of Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi brought them back. Regeneration of the Sugar Industry through Sugar- Ethanol Cameo- Generation of Power Complexes was carried out. The sugar units were back to life. Karunanidhi first created the Guindy Industrial Estate and then Ambattur Estate. Industrial zones were spread to all districts. These industrial areas had generated large-scale employment and added considerable income to the state. The special export processing area near Tambaram had flourished with a number of export oriented units. Ford Motor and Hyundai Motor companies set up their manufacturing plants in Tamil Nadu. Karunanidhi had provided a powerful impetus for the development of the city of Tiruppur by drawing water from the Bhavani River in

Mettupalayam and the Cauvery River below the Town of Bhavani. As a result, Tiruppur became a knitwear town with a knitwear export capacity of over Rs 11,000 crores per year.

The establishment of IT Park in Taramani in Chennai was due to Karunanidhi's vision and serious efforts. Software companies, namely Infosys, Wipro, TCS and Satyam, were successfully attracted to take advantage of the abundant skilled workforce resources available in Tamil Nadu.<sup>12</sup>

### WELFARE MEASURES

Karunanidhi entered the Periyar E.V.R. barracks, where he was raised and trained by his tough master. E.V.R. was his first mentor in social movements and from him he absorbed the qualities of courage, deep conviction, fearless face, determination and will power to fulfill his endless dream of uplifting depressed and disadvantaged people. Karunanidhi had introduced many welfare measures. He improved the living conditions of the poorest of the poor through the implementation of various welfare schemes and economic programmes that aimed to improve the well-being of all sections of the population in general. To achieve his lofty ideals, he launched a series of programmes and set up many commissions and committees to innovate measures to achieve socio-economic and industrial development in Tamil Nadu.

Karunanidhi had formulated many important schemes for the well-being of people and had devised programmes for their proper implementation. Various legislations were enacted for the proper implementation of all these welfare schemes and he himself had supervised and monitored the implementation of all these programmes and schemes to meet his aspirations.

### MEASURES FOR DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE

Karunanidhi introduced many schemes, such as Adi-Dravida free housing programmes, the formation of separate welfare departments for the backward and most backward classes, and a special 20% reservation for the most backward classes. The measures included a) Establishment of the state planning commission, b) Rehabilitation Homes for Beggars, c) Family Benefit Schemes, d) Equal property rights legislation for women, e) Marriage Grant of Rs. 10,000 for poor girls, f) Encouragement inter-caste marriages, g) Free education for poor girls up to graduate level, h) Distribution of vacant lands to the landless poor, etc.<sup>13</sup>

In this context, it is worth mentioning an important social activity in the elaboration of the state list of the other backward classes including orphans and destitute and those who have no other body else to take care of them either by law or by custom and those who were admitted in any of the government-run or government-recognized schools and orphanages.<sup>14</sup>

This social service of Karunanidhi was justified and reinforced by the opinion expressed in the report of the commission of the backward classes led by B.P. Mandal which stated that Tamil Nadu was the pioneer in granting special concessions to OBCs.

Karunanidhi wanted to fulfill Mahakavi Bharatiar's dream. His government had launched a new programme for hunger-free areas with the aim of eradicating poverty. Numerous relief schemes were implemented to alleviate poverty and meeting the nutritional needs of different population groups. His Government had taken several major initiatives to attract investment and advance the state along the path of the economic growth.

### TAMIL NADU ON THE BIOTECHNOLOGY MAP OF INDIA

Karunanidhi's goal was to place Tamil Nadu on the biotechnology map of India and the world. The very important result of the policy was the creation of the country's first Women's Biotech Park in Siruseri, in the Chennai Knowledge Corridor. Another monumental contribution was the establishment of *Uzhavar Sandhaigal* (Farmers Markets). About 100 *Uzhavar Sandhaigal* were opened in the period 1999-2000. The first of its kind was started in Madurai on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1999. Fifty new *Uzhavar Sandhaigal* were foreseen in the budget for 2007-2008. at a cost of Rs 12.5 crores.<sup>15</sup>

### ADMINISTRATIVE ABILITY

Karunanidhi was par excellence as he was gifted with extraordinary vision, clear thinking and unambiguous expression and thus could rise to a high level of governance.. For delicate assignments, he carefully selected officers and placed them.From then on, he trusted them and expected them to carry out their duties faithfully. He made an effort to read the newspapers that circulated and was quite sure of their facts and figures. Public sentiments reflected in the media had not escaped his attention. Financial considerations were taken into account. In the meetings, members were given ample opportunity to express theirhis opinions, sometimes unpleasant as long as there was substance and reason. Therefore, the decisions made were undoubtedly the right ones .<sup>16</sup>

### ANNA ARIVALAYAM- A POLITICAL SANCTUARY

In 1987, Karunanidhi opened Anna Arivalayam in Chennai. It was a political milestone in India. It had become the political sanctuary for democratic leaders of all religions.<sup>17</sup>Karunanidhi had a strange instinct for judging people. He analysed the root of the various problems. He anticipated the model of public and private alliances. He also established Tamil Nadu State Industries Promotion Corporation, which integrated incentive programmes for new industries in several backward areas of the state, especially small and medium-sized industries.

### REORGANIZATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION

Another example of a forward-looking approach was the creation of a vision for the long-term development of Chennai and the creation of satellite cities such as MaraimalaiAdigalar Nagar. Karunanidhi was the first to recognize its importance of computerization in the functioning of the Government. He founded the Government Data Center, based on software provided by a local IT technician and a professor of the theAnna University .Karunanidhi visualized the reorganization of the state administration in accordance with the growing demand for it. He established a Commission for Administrative Reform under the chairmanship of T.A. Varghese and implemented many of the committee's recommendations.<sup>18</sup>

### MODERNIZATION OF PUBLIC SECTOR

Karunanidhi also created a state police commission under the Chairmanship of former Chief Secretary R.A. Gopalasami. He made a number of bold recommendations for the modernization of the police administration, which were gradually implemented.implemented. Karunanidhi was always concerned with using the state machinery for the greater good of state development, with particular reference to improving the life of the common man. He created the Tamil Nadu Text Book Corporation in 1970, which distributed approximately millions of textbooks to children during the year 2000-2001. through various departments including Education, Adi-Dravida and Tribal Welfare and the Directorate of Rehabilitation. <sup>19</sup>

Recognizing the inequalities and disadvantages of children in rural schools and Tamil medium-sized institutions, Karunanidhi had provided a special reservation of 15% for professional education which had actually been implemented during his tenure. He successfully introduced the single window system for admission to professional courses, ensuring transparency and credibility in the admission process. He abolished the common entrance examination for admission to professional colleges.. Realizing the huge financial burden on students seeking opportunities in higher education, Karunanidhi had taken many steps, such as eliminating tuition fees in government and aided arts and science colleges, enhancing the number and value of scholarships for special categories of children, and distributing free season tickets to the bus going students.<sup>20</sup>

Thalaivar- leader to his partymen, Kalgarnar-artist to his political peers , Thatta –grandfather to the younger generation of Tamils , Karunanidhi was closely identified with Tamil Nadu itself. <sup>21</sup>

Karunanidhi was best as an excellent spitting speaker, a brilliant writer, a dynamic and energetic organizer, the hero of many upheavals and the architect of many victories. He possessed the characteristics of tirelessness , relentless zeal, perseverance Dedication, unwavering determination,

affectionate, soft speaker , artistic skills, clarity of thought and the ability to get things done. He was an exceptional speaker, writer, poet, essayist, author of short stories and long stories, playwright, dramatist , author of short stories and film scripts, film director and producer, actor, newspaper editor, reformist, fighter for social reform , jailed martyr, political leader, member of the Legislative Assembly, Minister and Chief Minister. In fact, it is rare for so many particularities and the honors passed to reside in one person. His long and healthy life and continued leadership not only guide Tamil Nadu, but also the entire nation on a straight path of progress.

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