

Tamil Arasu

Publication of Information & Public Relations Department

January - February - March 2009

Rs.15/-



சுவாமிநாதர் சுவாமிநாதர்
1906 - 2009





Hon'ble Minister for Finance Prof. K. Anbazhagan arriving at the Tamil Nadu
Legislative Assembly to present the Budget for 2009 - 2010 .
Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development and Local Administration
Thiru.M.K. Stalin and Hon'ble Minister for Information
Thiru. Parithi Ellamvazhuthi accompanied him. (17.1.2009)

Tamil Arasu

Publication of Information &
Public Relations Department

Quarterly Magazine

Thiruvalluvar Year 2039 - 2040

January - February -
March 2009

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அஞ்சாமை அல்லால் துணைவேண்டி எஞ்சாமை
எண்ணி இடத்தாற் செயின்.

Courage is companion in aid to the one who acts
firm, from a chosen field, using brain

Thirukkural : 497

Wrapper

*His Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu
Thiru. Surjit Singh Barnala addressing the
Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly. (21.1.2009)*

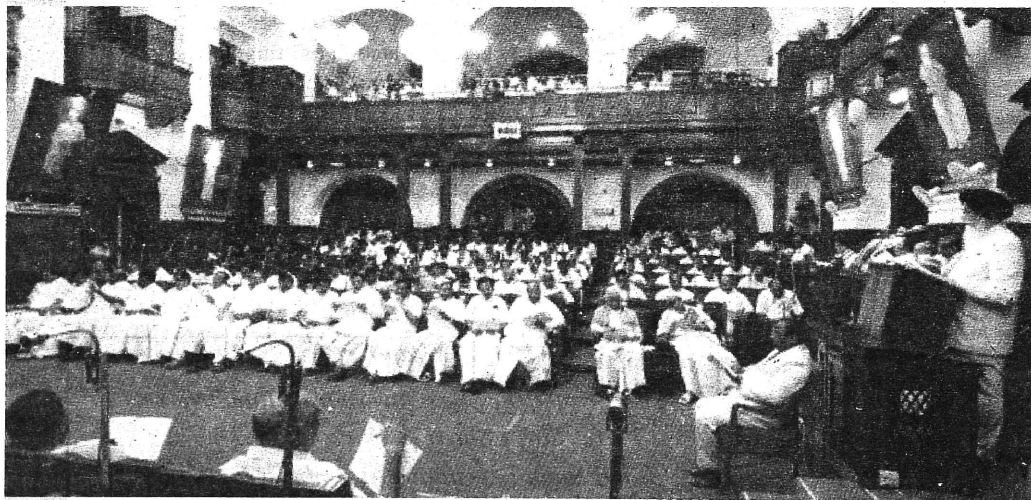
**“THIS GOVERNMENT
REGARDS ITS
VICTORIES
IN RECENT
ELECTIONS,
AS PEOPLE’S
ENDORSEMENT OF
THE PERFORMANCE
OF THIS
GOVERNMENT”**

**- Thiru. Surjit Singh Barnala
His Excellency,
the Governor at the
Tenth Session of the
13th Legislative Assembly on 21.1.2009**

**Hon’ble Members of the
Legislative Assembly,**

Vanakkam. I take great pleasure in addressing you at the commencement of the tenth session of the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly in 2009. I convey my hearty greetings for the Tamil New Year and Pongal, the festival of Tamils.

2. In the backdrop of sporadic occurrence of the acts of terror against the spirit of democracy, the vigour of democracy has been established at the national level in the recent elections in the six states of Delhi- the national capital, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Mizoram and Jammu and Kashmir and its strength has subsequently been demonstrated in the by-election in Tirumangalam. It is in this context, this Government takes special pride in presenting this



address before you. This Government regards its victories in all the three by-elections held in the last two and a half years of its rule, as people's endorsement of the performance of this Government and pledges to continue to perform with greater zeal.

3. The recent incidents in Mumbai, yet another manifestation of the threat posed by terrorism to the entire mankind, has shaken our hearts. While condemning such horrendous acts against humanity and religious harmony, this Government

punishment for those engaged in terrorist activities, this Government would like to emphasize the need for this agency to operate without interfering with the powers of the State Government or affecting individual liberty.

5. By mobilising contributions to the tune of Rs.48 crores and obtaining the concurrence of Government of India, Government of Tamil Nadu has sent essential relief



conveys its deep condolences to the families of the victims. While several parts of our country have recently witnessed such acts of terror, this Government has been maintaining continuous vigil to prevent such incidents in Tamil Nadu.

4. While welcoming the law enacted by the Union Government for establishing a new National Investigation Agency to ensure speedy investigation and appropriate

materials like food and clothing through International Red Cross Society to Sri Lankan Tamils, who have been suffering from hunger and starvation due to the civil war in our neighbouring country of Sri Lanka. As resolved in the meeting of leaders of all political parties, this Government urges the Government of India, which has always maintained the view that war is not a solution to the

problem of Sri Lankan Tamils undergoing inconsolable misery, to take without further delay, appropriate alternative measures like dialogue so as to establish peace there and thus protect the Sri Lankan Tamils who are suffering day after day having been deprived of safety to their lives and property and the right to live in their own land. We would like to point out that the sentiments of the Tamil people who have contributed to the Sri Lankan Tamil Relief Fund responding to an appeal from the Hon'ble Chief Minister are also ingrained in this request.

6. Due to the continuing conflict in Sri Lanka, 73,300 persons are living as refugees in camps across Tamil Nadu. Soon after assuming charge, this Government has doubled the monthly assistance provided to them with the financial assistance of the Union Government and has improved the basic facilities in these camps. All necessary assistance has been given for their children's education. This Government will further improve the infrastructure in the camps for these people, who have been forced to continue as refugees, being unable to return to their motherland.
7. Sethusamudram Project, a dream of Thanthai Periyar, Perarignar Anna, Perunthalaivar Kamarajar and other eminent men of this soil, will herald a prosperous future for the State. We urge the Union Government to remove the hurdles in its execution and ensure the completion of this major project, which would boost maritime trade and thus

provide a new impetus to the national economy.

8. Severe damage has been suffered by 12 districts of our State due to heavy rains of North-East Monsoon from 19.11.2008 to 28.11.2008 and cyclone 'NISHA', similar to that witnessed in 22 districts during the four spells of heavy rains during the North-East Monsoon in 2005. In addition to immediately undertaking relief measures in the affected areas, this Government has also provided necessary emergency assistance to the affected people. A Cabinet Sub-Committee, headed by Minister for Rural Development and Local Administration, was constituted to supervise these relief measures. The State Ministers personally inspected the affected areas and speeded up the relief operations. Convening a meeting of Collectors of the 12 affected districts on 7.12.2008, the Chief Minister reviewed the flood damage and relief operations.
9. During the floods of 2005, assistance to the tune of Rs.2.49 crores was disbursed as relief at the rate of Rs.50,000 each to the families of the 497 deceased. During the recent floods of 2008, Rs.4.10 crores has been disbursed as relief at the rate of Rs.2 lakhs each to the families of the 205

deceased. While a sum of Rs.86 lakhs had been paid as compensation for the loss of cattle numbering 1,520 in 2005, this time a relief of Rs.1.79 crores has been provided for the loss of cattle numbering 5,982.

10. In the year 2005, Rs.93.07 crores was disbursed as relief for damage to huts. This year, Rs.231 crores has been disbursed for this. While Rs.466.97 crores had been given as special relief assistance to houses in 22 districts affected by heavy rains or marooned by floods in 2005, this year, Rs.402 crores has been disbursed in the 12 affected districts alone. With respect to Chennai city, Rs.150 crores has been disbursed as relief assistance now, as compared to Rs.148 crores given in 2005.

11. As against Rs.368 crores given as compensation for crop loss in 2005, Rs.388 crores has been provided this year. Thus, while Rs.931 crores was disbursed as the total relief assistance in 22 districts in 2005, this year, in the 12 affected districts alone Rs.1,027 crores has been disbursed.

12. On the basis of the assessed damage, a sum of Rs.3,789 crores has been requested from Government of India for relief and restoration. Government of India has released an initial financial assistance of Rs.200 crores. A central team of officers has visited the affected areas and inspected the extent of damage caused by



the floods and the relief operations undertaken. We have urged the Union Government to provide at the earliest, based on its report, the financial assistance needed by the State Government to disburse adequate relief and fully restore the affected areas.

13. With a view to preventing such damage due to heavy rains in future, this Government has formulated certain permanent flood protection schemes and is implementing them. Works to the tune of Rs.211 crores are underway in Karur, Trichy, Ariyalur and Perambalur districts in order to prevent heavy floods in Cauvery and Kollidam Rivers. With a view to preventing flooding of Chennai City, a major project at an estimated cost of Rs.1,560 crores has been prepared and approval obtained for works to the tune of Rs.690 crores under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. These works will be taken up this year.

14. Even though the crop insurance scheme for compensating the losses suffered by the farmers due to natural calamities is in existence for many years, it is this Government which has been providing 50 percent of the insurance premium as subsidy to the farmers since 2006. As a beneficial outcome, the situation has changed from one of only one lakh farmers availing crop insurance in 2005-2006 to over 3 lakh farmers in 2006-2007, about 5.5 lakh farmers in 2007-2008 and about 8.5 lakh farmers in 2008-2009, utilizing this subsidy. For the first time ever, about 3 lakh farmers have

received compensation of Rs.279 crores for crop loss suffered by them due to heavy rains in 2007-2008. This scheme will continue to be implemented in the ensuing financial years as well.

15. Our Chief Minister had urged the Union Government, during the National Development Council Meeting held on 19.12.2007, to provide financial assistance at least for interlinking intra-state rivers in the first phase, pending implementation of National Programme for Interlinking of Rivers as a solution to the inter-state river water disputes. On the basis of the resolution of the National Development Council for providing financial assistance to such schemes under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme, sanction has been accorded for constructing a barrage across Cauvery at Kattalai at a cost of Rs.165 crores, as the first phase of the Cauvery-Gundar interlinking project for taking surplus flood water in Cauvery to water deficit districts, and this work is about to commence. Hon'ble Chief Minister will lay the foundation stone on 09.02.2009 for another scheme, namely the Tamirabarani-Karumeniyar-Nambiar interlinking project at an estimated cost of Rs.369 crores for diverting the surplus water of Tamirabarani to the dry areas of



Thoothukudi and Tirunelveli districts. Therefore, we urge the Union Government to provide the necessary financial assistance for these projects immediately.

16. We are to present the memorandum of our state before the Thirteenth Finance Commission soon. Rectifying the present situation in which the devolution to the performing States like Tamil Nadu is less than their requirement, we urge that States should receive a fair share of devolution with due weightage for their performance and developmental needs.
17. Even in the past, when our state had steadfastly implemented the policy of prohibition – like it is said that there is vice even in virtue- illicit arrack became rampant and hundreds of people lost their lives after consuming poisonous arrack. As a result, prohibition was reviewed and relaxed in 1971 and all subsequent

Governments have also continued with the same policy. It is in this context that several eminent persons including Dr. S. Ramadoss, the leader of P.M.K., heads and representatives of various organizations, and spiritual leaders met the Chief Minister Kalaignar on 22nd of the last month and urged to enforce prohibition in the State. Reminding that this DMK Government, which is in consonance with their views, has closed down 1,300 bars and 128 retail outlets in the last two years, it has been decided that attempts will be made to introduce total prohibition in a phased manner and till then it will be ensured that liquor outlets are not located against rules, near public places



like temples, churches, mosques and educational institutions. The working hours of liquor shops which were 10 am to 11 pm hitherto, have been reduced by one hour, and accordingly Government has ordered that these shops will function from 10 am to 10 pm, with effect from January 1, 2009. These measures bear testimony to the commitment of this Government to introduce total prohibition.

18. In the birth centenary year of Perarignar Anna, this Government has created history by fulfilling his dream of providing rice under public distribution system at one rupee per kilogram, the lowest in our country. In addition to this, the Government is procuring and providing essential food items like toor dal, urad dal, palm oil and wheat flour at subsidized price under the special public distribution

system. With effect from 2.10.2008, ten grocery items at a reduced overall price of Rs.50 are also being provided under the scheme to all ration card holders through the fair price shops. These measures taken by this Government for reducing the burden of price rise and providing succour to the people have become a model for the rest of the country.

19. Even though the Union Government has fixed the Minimum Support Price for the common and fine varieties of paddy at Rs.850 and Rs.880 per quintal respectively, accepting the request of farmers this Government has provided

additional incentive over and above the price fixed by the Union Government and has thus enhanced the procurement price of the common and fine varieties of paddy to Rs.1,000 and Rs.1,050 per quintal, respectively. In the current year, 16.5 lakh tonnes of paddy will be procured.

20. Though the Union Government has not increased the Minimum Support Price of Rs.811.80 for sugar cane in the last two years, this Government has increased the State Advised Price to

cane farmers will get Rs.1,220 per tonne.

21. Thanks to the easy accessibility and transparent functioning of this Government, new industries are continuing to come to Tamil Nadu. After this Government assumed charge, 29 new industries with an investment of Rs.37,595 crores have been attracted through a package of incentives thus ensuring employment opportunities for 2,05,350



Rs.1,050 per tonne to help the sugar cane farmers. On the basis of the request to further increase this price, this Government has decided to raise it to Rs.1,100 per tonne. In addition, by bearing Rs.90 towards transport charges and providing on an average Rs.30 as recovery based incentive, it has been made possible that the sugar

persons. Even in the current situation, where many developed economies are in recession and developing economies too are experiencing deceleration in their growth, multinational companies like Caterpillar have come forward to establish their new industrial units in Tamil Nadu. This is a

clear testimony to the fact that Tamil Nadu is a globally favoured investment destination.

22. With a view to ensuring that the benefits of this industrial development reach the people in all parts of the State, this Government has announced additional incentives to encourage investors who come forward to establish industries in industrially backward areas and the southern districts of the State. I am pleased to inform that, as a result of such farsighted policies and efforts to disperse industrial development, ATC Tyres is establishing a new tyre manufacturing unit at Gangaikondan in Tirunelveli district, MRF is establishing another tyre manufacturing unit in Perambalur district, Suzlon is establishing a unit for manufacturing wind energy generator parts at Palladam in Coimbatore district

and Growth-Link is establishing a modern footwear unit at Cheyyar in Tiruvannamalai district.

23. A survey by Dataquest Magazine has rated Tamil Nadu as the best state in e-governance in our country. Apart from this, our state has witnessed tremendous growth in software development during the last three years. While Tamil Nadu has thus emerged as one of the leading states in Information Technology in the country, we are also taking proactive efforts to develop Information Technology industry in the tier-II cities of the State such as Coimbatore, Madurai, Trichy, Salem and Tirunelveli. The lands required for the IT Parks to be established in these cities have been allotted.



Through these measures, we have ensured that people living in all parts of the State are able to benefit from the growth of Information Technology.

24. In the first three phases of the scheme for providing free colour televisions, which was one of the election promises, 62,80,000 colour television sets have been procured in a transparent manner and 54,28,204 colour television sets have been distributed to the beneficiaries so far. In the fourth phase of this scheme, 41,62,500 colour television sets have been ordered and the distribution will continue this year.

25. The demand for power in the State has witnessed a rapid increase in the last two years due to the huge industrial growth. This Government has taken all measures to improve the power supply through efficient management of power generating stations of Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TNEB) as well as by purchasing power from other states and private power producers. As a result of these efforts, there has been a substantial improvement in the power situation since last month.

26. This Government is implementing various projects to augment the power generation capacity in the State. The works for establishing additional power stations with a capacity of 1200 MW in North Chennai and 600 MW at Mettur have commenced in 2008. In addition, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) for establishing two units of 800 MW each at Udangudi in Thoothukudi district.

Apart from these, in the current year, the State will be getting 925 MW, being its share from the Koodankulam Atomic Power Plant which is about to be completed and 325 MW from the expansion project of Neyveli Lignite Corporation. The power requirement of the State in the coming years will be fully met with the commissioning of these projects.

27. With a view to effectively implementing the scheme for distribution of the house site pattas to the houseless, this Government has issued orders to reduce the minimum number of years one must have resided on government lands to be eligible for a house site patta from ten years to five years and to remove the income ceiling. On account of such measures, 6,50,517 house site pattas have been distributed to the poor under this scheme in the last two and half years. Under the scheme for reclaiming waste lands and distributing them free to the poor landless agricultural families, 2,10,104 acres of land have been distributed to 1,74,924 persons free of cost so far. Reviving the Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Welfare Board, about 1.70 crore farmers and agricultural labourers have been registered as its members and assistance to the tune of Rs.209

crores has been distributed to them so far in the form of educational assistance, marriage assistance, maternity assistance etc.

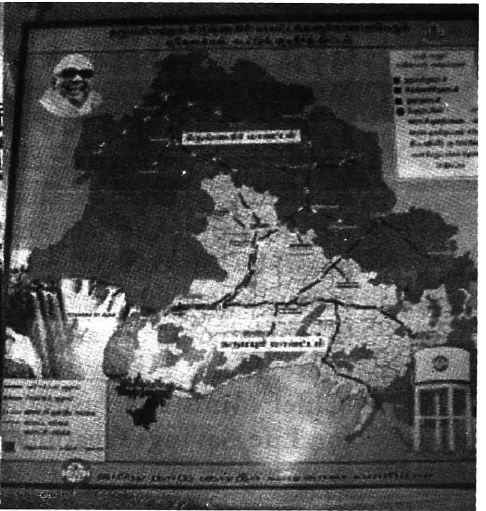
28. Hogenakkal Combined Water Supply Scheme is the only permanent solution for the drinking water problems of Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri districts which have a high fluoride content in ground water. Thanks to the determined efforts of this Government, financial assistance of Japan International Co-operation Agency has been obtained and Hon'ble Chief Minister has laid the foundation stone for this project on 26.02.2008. All necessary steps are being taken for the expeditious execution of this project at an estimated cost of Rs.1,330 crores. Works for the Ramanathapuram Combined Water Supply Scheme, envisaged for addressing the drinking water needs of dry areas of Ramanathapuram, Sivagangai and Pudukkottai districts at an estimated cost of Rs.616 crores, are progressing at a fast pace. These works will be completed by April this year.

29. With a view to solving the drinking water problem of Chennai city, the Union Government had announced in 2004-2005, financial assistance to the State Government to establish a desalination project. After this Government assumed charge in 2006, investigation in this regard was undertaken immediately and a detailed project report was presented to the Union Government. Based on this report, the Union Government has

recently accorded approval for establishing a 100 million litres per day desalination plant at Nemmeli, near Chennai, at a cost of Rs.908 crores. We thank the Union Government for this. Works for this project will be undertaken expeditiously. In addition, the works for another desalination plant at Minjur are underway. They will be completed by April this year and the plant will be put into use.

30. This Government has successfully achieved the goal of ensuring five years of primary education for every child in the State. The Activity Based Learning method followed in our state has become a model for the entire country. As the next step, this Government will improve the infrastructure of the high schools in the State under the new 'National Scheme for Secondary Education' announced by the Union Government with the objective of ensuring ten years of secondary education for every child.

31. Expert committees have given recommendations to the Government regarding implementation of a uniform education system in our state. In pursuance, the committee constituted to study the curricula in various other states, has visited them and studied their curricula as well as



the Boards of School Education followed in those states. Based on these studies, this Government will take necessary steps to ensure that all students in the State get a uniform education of high quality by improving the standard of the curriculum in our State Board.

32. Accepting the request of this Government, the Union Government has approved the establishment of an Indian Institute of Management (IIM) at Trichy, a World-class University at Coimbatore and a Central University at Tiruvarur. In addition, by establishing six new government engineering colleges in the same year at Viluppuram, Tindivanam, Panruti, Tirukkuvalai, Ramanathapuram and Ariyalur, this Government has paved way for the poor in obtaining higher education at low cost.

33. By reviving the 'Varumun Kappom Thittam' - a model scheme for the entire country in preventive health care, expeditiously filling up the vacant posts of doctors and nurses in government hospitals and improving the infrastructure

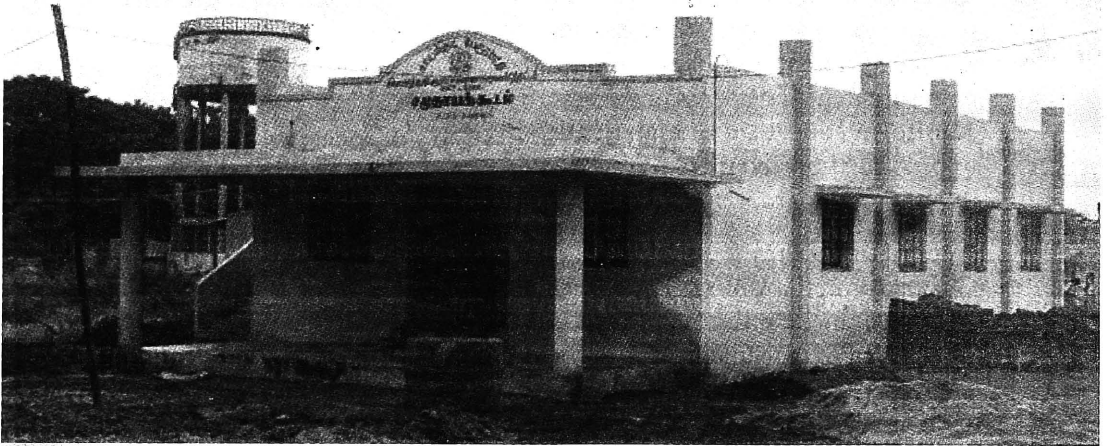
of government hospitals through the Tamil Nadu Health Systems Project, this Government has been taking all efforts to ensure adequate and timely healthcare for the common man. Free emergency ambulance service has been implemented throughout the State in a proper manner. As a result of such determined efforts of this Government in the health sector, the number of patients receiving treatment as well as the number of deliveries in government hospitals have witnessed a phenomenal increase. This achievement has been complimented by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as an example for the entire country.

34. Although the general public are greatly benefited by availing treatment in the improved government hospitals for most of the diseases, we all know that

the poor and downtrodden still have to access private hospitals for serious illnesses like cancer, heart diseases, kidney failure, brain and spinal problems and life threatening accidents: This Government is also well aware of the fact that it is not possible for the poor to bear the expenses towards treatment for such life threatening diseases. Considering these facts, a new scheme called 'Chief Minister's Insurance Scheme for Life Saving Treatments' will be

State will benefit from this revolutionary scheme.

35. National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is being effectively implemented in all districts of our state and a sum of Rs.1,343 crores has been disbursed as wages so far. The fact that, under this scheme, 82 per cent of the beneficiaries are women and 59 per cent are Adi Dravidars, merits special mention.



launched this year to ensure that such poor and low income groups who cannot afford costly treatment, are able to get free treatment in government as well as private hospitals for such serious ailments. Under this scheme, each beneficiary family will be insured for availing free treatment up to Rs.1 lakh. The Government will bear the entire premium for this purpose. About one crore poor families in the

36. With a view to upholding Thanthai Periyar's message of social equality, this Government had announced that 95 new Samathuvapurams, each having his statue, will be established over a period of three years. Accordingly, the works for 29 new Samathuvapurams are currently underway. Under Anaithu Grama Anna Marumalarchi Thittam (AGAMT), infrastructure

development works have been taken up in 7,585 villages at a cost of Rs.1,524 crores so far.

37. The works for Chennai airport expansion project, which had been approved by the Union Government, have commenced. An Elevated Express Highway from Maduravoyal to Chennai Port at a cost of Rs.1,655 crores has also been approved by the Union Government and the Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh laid the foundation stone on 8.1.2009, in the presence of our Chief Minister. While thanking the Union Government for according approval for these projects, this Government is determined to ensure their speedy execution and completion.

38. The Metro Rail Project at an estimated cost of Rs.14,600 crores, intended to address the public transportation needs of Chennai city thereby reducing the increasing congestion on the roads, will be implemented solely in the public sector mode. Having received the financial assistance of Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) for this project in such a short period due to the tireless efforts of this Government, I am happy to inform that the works under this project will commence this very year. In addition, based on the request of people from Thiruvottiyur that their town should also be linked under this

project, detailed investigation will be undertaken immediately.

39. Immediately after assuming charge, this Government had enhanced the monthly pension for elderly, destitutes, widows and physically handicapped persons from Rs.200/- to Rs.400/- and in respect of severely handicapped persons from Rs.200/- to Rs.500/-. Further, the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme for all old aged persons living below the poverty line is also being effectively implemented jointly with the Union Government. Moreover, in a gesture never shown before, mentally challenged persons who are not even able to take care of themselves will continue to be given Rs.500/- per month without any restriction as to number of beneficiaries and income limit.

40. By ensuring equal property rights and reservation in employment to women, this Government has staunchly supported women in securing their legitimate rights. By launching the Self Help Group movement, it had sown the seeds for their economic development also. This Government has taken all necessary steps to empower this movement to bring about a transformation in the entire society. 61,687 new Self Help Groups, having 10.48 lakh women as members, have been formed since 2006. The training allowance for the members of these groups has been enhanced and for the first time in our state, urban Self Help Groups have also been given revolving fund. Further, by allocating Rs.150 crores, this Government is providing revolving fund to all eligible Self Help Groups in the State.

41. Under the scheme for providing monthly assistance to unemployed youth, 3,32,091 persons have been given assistance of Rs.60 crores this year so far. Moreover, in order to make them employable, job oriented training programmes are being conducted through Adi Dravidar Welfare Department, Backward, Most Backward and Minorities Welfare Department and Corporation for Development of Women.

42. With the socio-economic and educational development of people belonging to Adi Dravidar and Tribal communities as its prime objective, this Government is formulating and implementing various schemes for their welfare. Separate welfare boards have been created for sanitary workers and Scheduled Tribes, who are the most backward among them. **Recognising that the development of Arundhatiars requires special concessions, a one man commission headed by retired Justice M.S. Janarthanam was constituted to explore the possibility of giving special reservation to Arundhatiars within the 18% quota for Adi Dravidars including Arundhatiars. Based on its report, this Government has decided to enact necessary legislation to provide for 3 percent reservation to Arundhatiars within the quota for Adi Dravidars. By**

implementing this reservation soon, this Government will change the destiny of those who were engaged in manual scavenging and will open a new chapter in the socio-economic development of Arundhatiars, enabling them to live with self respect.

43. Unorganised labour welfare boards constituted by this Government during 1996-2001 for the benefit of the workers in the unorganised sector were subsequently abolished. This Government has revived these boards and has been providing various benefits through them. After this Government assumed charge, benefits worth Rs.91 crores have been disbursed so far through these boards to their 35 lakh members.

44. Following the implementation of the recommendations of 6th pay Commission by the Union Government, an official level committee is examining the modalities of implementing the new pay scales, pension and family pension for the employees of the State Government as well as local bodies, teachers, pensioners and family pensioners. Having regard to the fact that it will take some more time to complete this work, the Government has granted interim arrears to the tune of Rs.4,247 crores to employees and pensioners. Revised pay scales will be implemented soon on receipt of the final report of this committee. Accepting the long standing demand

of noon meal workers, they have recently been given special time scale and special pension. In addition, as assured earlier, when the pay scales of the government employees are revised, pay scales of these over two lakh noon meal workers will be revised again.

45. It is known to everyone that the DMK Government, as the heir to the legacy of the Justice Party that had sown the seeds of social justice, has been functioning in all spheres with social justice as its guiding principle. Accepting our repeated requests, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government has implemented 27 percent reservation for the other backward communities in central educational institutions through necessary constitutional amendment and enactment of

appropriate legislation. This Government urges the UPA Government to take all necessary steps to ensure that social backwardness is the sole criterion for reservation, so that, irrespective of economic status (creamy layer), everyone belonging to the backward communities is able to enjoy the benefits of reservation, as articulated by Thanthai Periyar, Perarignar Anna, Pandit Nehru and Dr. Ambedkar. The demand for adding Adi Dravidars following Christianity to the list of Scheduled Castes, as in the case of Adi Dravidars following Hinduism and Buddhism, is being raised for a long time. The Government of Tamil Nadu urges the Union Government to come forward to fulfill this genuine demand. In addition, this Government also requests the Union Government to consider the recommendations of the Justice Ranganath Mishra



Commission to provide reservation for backward Muslims at the national level and make necessary announcement in this regard.

46. As a result of the tireless efforts of Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaingar, the Government of India has established the Central Institute of Classical Tamil at Chennai, in addition to having honoured our mother tongue Tamil as a classical language, thus realising the dream of Parithimal Kalaingar. With a view to ensuring that everyone learns Tamil, this Government has enacted legislation making learning of Tamil compulsory in all schools in the State. This Government will leave no stone unturned for making Tamil one of the official languages of the Union Government and a language of transaction in Madras High Court.

47. In view of the consensus amongst all Tamil scholars that the beginning of the Thiruvalluvar year- the first day of the month of Thai- is the first day of Tamil New Year, this Government has declared 1st Thai as the Tamil New Year Day and enacted legislation in this regard. To enable the people who have been celebrating Pongal as the festival of Tamils, to celebrate it also as the Tamil New Year Day, this Government has given rice, jaggery etc., to all families in the State as a Pongal as well as Tamil New Year gift. On this occasion, folk art forms which proclaim the greatness of Tamil culture and various musical programmes are conducted. We appeal to the people of this state to celebrate this

occasion as Samathuva Pongal and Tamil New Year Day by wearing new clothes and with boundless joy in the coming years as well.

48. I have elaborated before you the various schemes implemented in the last two and half years since this Government has assumed office with the welfare of the people of Tamil Nadu as its sole concern and the proposed future initiatives. Committed to the philosophy that a Government should not only cater to the major sections of the society like farmers, agricultural labourers, small-scale industrialists, industrial workers, saltpan workers, weavers, fishermen, palm tappers, traders, washermen, tailors, film industry workers, hairdressers, construction workers, domestic workers, loadmen and other manual workers, government employees and teachers, but should be a friend in need also to those voiceless and powerless sections on the margins of our society like Arundhatiars, transgenders, disabled and mentally challenged; this Government has been working ceaselessly towards the development of every member of the Tamil society. With the hope and expectation that your support will always be available for these efforts to succeed, I conclude this address.

Vanakkam

Jai Hind

WORK ON INTERLINKING OF TAMIRABARANI - KARUMENIYAR - NAMBIAR RIVERS INAUGURATED



Interlinking of rivers flowing within the State could be the appropriate and effective solution to the growing demand for irrigation water, as connecting inter-State rivers might consume more time owing to disputes, Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaigarr M. Karunanidhi said on February 21, 2009.

He addressed a function in Tirunelveli through teleconferencing from Sri Ramachandra Medical College Hospital, after inaugurating the work on interlinking the Tamirabarani - Karumeniyar and Nambiyar rivers at the cost of Rs.369 crore. The floodwaters of these rivers will be diverted to the dry regions of Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi districts.

Recalling his address to the National Development Council meeting in New Delhi

on May 29, 2007 and the resolution adopted, Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaigarr M. Karunanidhi said interlinking of intra-State rivers could be the fitting solution to shortage of irrigation water. If consensus could not be arrived at for interlinking inter-State rivers, the Centre should come forward to support interconnection of intra-State rivers by providing financial assistance.

"Tamil Nadu, which took the initiative in this direction, commenced interlinking the Cauvery and the Gundar on June 24, 2008 as the Cauvery dispute still remains unresolved and the work on connecting the Tamirabarani - Karumaeniyar and the Nambiyar rivers has been taken up now... to fulfil our demand," he said.



This is the second river linking project in the State next to the Cauvery-Gundar interlinking project that took off last year.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister said, that the implementation of Tamirabarani-Nambiyar-Karumaeniyar interlink project would provide water to the people in the rain shadow region of Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi districts.

Though the national river-linking project was mooted, it could not be implemented due to indifference among the states, he said, adding that during the 53rd and 54th National Development Council meetings in New Delhi, the State government appealed to the Centre to allot funds for inter-linking of rivers flowing in the State.

He also advised other States to interlink the rivers flowing with in their states to end

water crisis. The Chief Minister noted that the Cauvery dispute remains unresolved for over 40 years.

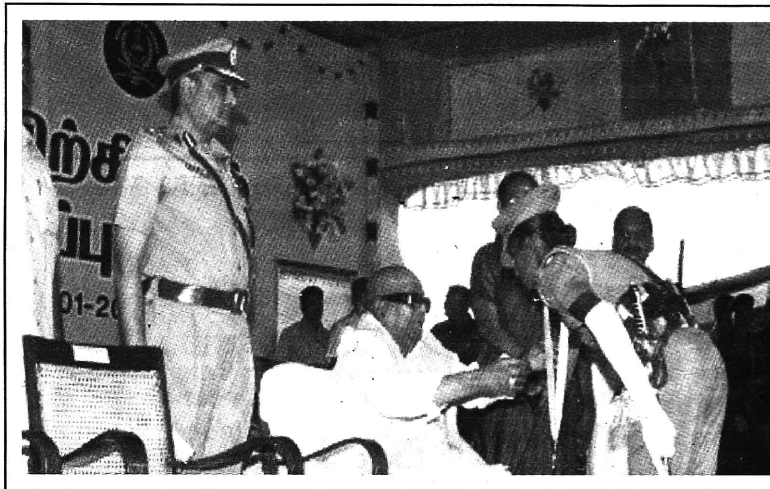
Principal Secretary of Public Works Department, Thiru.S. Audiseshiah, while explaining in detail about the project appealed to the public and farmers to bury their differences and wholeheartedly cooperate to realise the dream of connecting intra-State rivers.

Hon'ble Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Thiru.R.Avudaiyappan, the Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Home Tmt. V. Radhika Selvi, Hon'ble State Ministers Thiru T.P.M. Maideen Khan and Tmt. P Geetha Jeevan participated in the function.

★ ★ ★

POLICE SHOULD SERVE PEOPLE AT ALL TIMES

- Hon'ble Chief Minister



Hon'ble Chief Minister K. J. Somasundaram on January 11, 2009 exhorted the first batch of Sub-Inspectors, who passed out of the Tamil Nadu Police Academy at Unamanchery near Vandalur, to imbibe what they had learnt during their training and to serve people at all times.

He was addressing the first batch of 716 trainee Sub-Inspectors, who completed their nearly 10 month - long training programme at the academy.

The Chief Minister said the Government would give cash award of Rs.500 to all those policemen, firemen, staff of the revenue and all other government departments, who were engaged in the three - day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held at Chennai Trade Centre at Nandambakkam.

The event attended by the President and the Prime Minister was held amidst tight security owing to threat perceptions.

All government staff who were involved in the event, and another function at Maduravoyal,

where the Prime Minister laid the foundation for an elevated road project, had done exemplary work and hence the reward, the Chief Minister said.

He said that Tamil Nadu police force, without any fear of threatening or intimidation exhibited their courage and valour at times of crises and difficult situations. He quoted the couplet of Thiruvalluvar exhorting

students to 'study and learn with clarity what is worthy of learning and stand firm by their norms and virtue'. After having successfully completed the necessary training they are now entering into a period wherein they have to strictly practice the three cardinal tenets viz, Duty, Decency and Decorum for success in any career enunciated by Arignar Anna. They should be above board in their career discharging their duties to the society without fear or favour and without any consideration of caste, creed or religion.

He also gave away medals to prize winners. Thiru. T. Vinothkumar won the Sword of Honour for the best overall trainee Sub Inspector, in addition to two other medals. Hon'ble Labour Welfare Minister Thiru T.M. Anbarasan and Home Secretary Tmt. S. Malathi were also present. Thiru K.P.Jain, Director General of Police, welcomed the gathering. Thiru. Amit Verma, Additional Director General of Police (Training) and Project Officer, Tamil Nadu Police Academy, proposed a vote of thanks.



“NEW INITIATIVES TO ENLIVEN THE POOR, COMMON MAN, FARMERS AND THE WORKING CLASS”



**Speech of Prof. K. Anbazhagan,
Hon'ble Minister for Finance,
presenting the Budget for 2009-2010 to the
Legislative Assembly on 17th February, 2009.**

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Our beloved people of Tamil Nadu - having experienced and felt the impact of the schemes conceived and achievements aimed at uplifting and opening the eyes of the poor and downtrodden common men, working classes, farmers and middle classes, during the four previous rules of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, which has been performing its

democratic duties both in the treasury and opposition benches in the Assembly for the past fifty years with the vow that its heart, word and soul are fully devoted to people's problems - having thought and analysed about who is best equipped to rule for their development, wellbeing, improvement and creation of an egalitarian society and following the Kural,

“இதனை இதனால் இவன் முடிக்கும் என்றாய்ந்து
அதனை அவன்கண் விடல்”

*“After having considered, “this man can
accomplish this, by these means”,*

let leave with him the discharge of that duty.”

gave the mandate to rule for the fifth time to present ruling party and the Hon'ble Members and our countrymen know the resultant achievements of this Government in the previous years. This Budget, being the fourth one during the fifth tenure of the Kalaingar as Chief Minister, is placed for the approval of this House as a compendium of the new welfare schemes announced recently in the Governor's Address and the other new initiatives to enliven the poor, common man, farmers and the working class.

2. While thanking our Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaingar who has been toiling in social work each and every day without rest and loss of zest; for spending his time and energy in the preparation of this Budget, giving it a full shape and thus reducing a major portion of my burden, in spite of having been hospitalized for surgery for severe back pain; I express my wish that he should recover soon and join us in our endeavour.

3. With a view to securing social justice, by taking up the struggle for implementation of the recommendations of Mandal Commission, by adopting a resolution for the same in the legislative assembly and by succeeding in it through late Prime Minister V.P.Singh, by providing 20 percent

reservation to Most Backward classes (including Denotified Communities) and

3.5 percent reservation to Minority Muslims in education and employment, this Government has paved way for the students belonging to these classes to acquire knowledge in colleges and universities and progress in life.

4. In view of the present harmonious functioning of State and Union Governments, Government of India is implementing many new major projects in Tamil Nadu. While expressing our gratitude to the Union Government for the same, in consonance with this Government's first and foremost policy of autonomy for the states, this Government will continue to lend its voice for the cause of State Government in getting their due rights in full measure.

5. While this Government is continuously lending its voice for the rights and welfare of Srilankan Tamils, we thank the Union Government for fulfilling the



expectation of this Government that India's determined and powerful voice should join the calls given by all other nations for cessation of the present hostilities against Tamils and early restoration of peace, by espousing this view in the address of the Hon'ble President of India and request the Union Government to take necessary measures vigorously to effect cessation of hostilities and arrive at a fair settlement. As announced in the Governor's address, with a view to improving the basic amenities in the refugee camps where Srilankan Tamils are staying, a provision of Rs. five crores is made in this Budget.

6. As announced in Governor's Address, with a view to enabling poor and downtrodden to receive free specialist treatment up to rupees one lakh for 51 life threatening diseases, orders have been issued and tender has been invited to select the Insurance company to implement this scheme. Families belonging to members of Agricultural Labour Welfare Board,

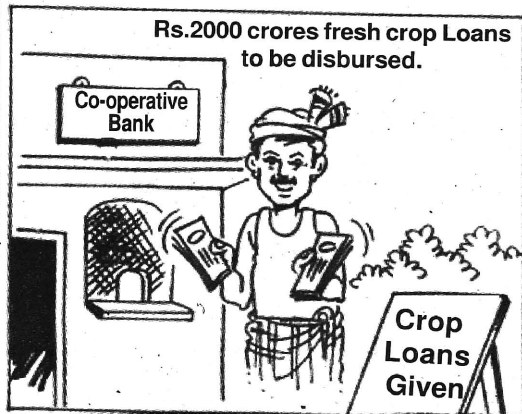
Unorganized Labourers Welfare Board, Fishermen Welfare Board and all other welfare boards will be benefited from this scheme. Moreover, all families having annual income of less than Rs.24,000 can also be benefited under this scheme. This scheme benefiting over one crore families will be launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister in June this year. This scheme will be named as 'Chief Minister Kalaingar's Insurance Scheme for Life Saving Treatments'. A provision of Rs.200 crores is made in this Budget for this scheme.

Agriculture and Co-operation

7. With a view to rejuvenating the agriculture sector, this Government has waived the cooperative loans of farmers on the very podium on 13.5.2006, the day this Government assumed charge and the cooperative institutions have been compensated to the tune of Rs.4,493 crores so far. Following this, the Union Government has also waived the agriculture loans of small and marginal farmers in our country. Due to these actions, farmers of our state are fully liberated from the burden of debt and are now availing fresh crop loans. A sum of Rs.1,250 crores has been disbursed as crop loan during 2006-2007, Rs.1,360 crores in 2007-2008 and Rs.1,325 crores this year so far. Fresh crop loans to the tune of Rs.2,000 crores will be disbursed during 2009-2010.

Rs.200 crore for Chief Minister Kalaingar's Insurance scheme for Life Saving Treatments





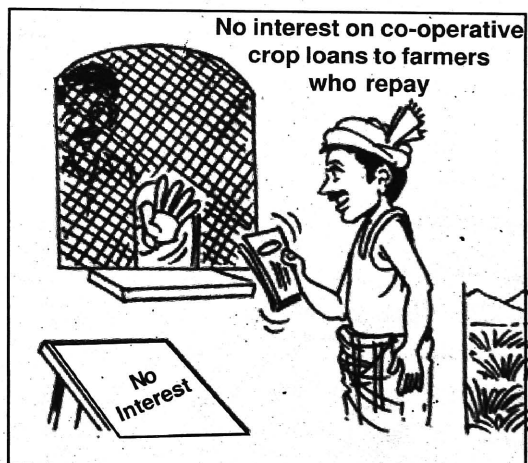
8. This Government, conscious of the fact that it is the sweat and toil of the farmers which contributes to the core of a nation's prosperity and hence concerned with their welfare, has ensured easy availability of co-operative crop loans being their most essential need. In addition, this Government has reduced the interest on crop loans from 9 percent to 7 percent in the year 2006-2007, further reduced it to 5 percent in year 2007-2008 and has further reduced it to 4 percent in the last Budget, thereby, enabling poor farmers to avail crop loan at low interest rates.

As yet another example of the care and concern of this Government towards the farmers of the State who toil for the prosperity of the nation, for the first time in our country, this Government has decided not to charge interest on co-operative crop loans hereafter to all farmers who repay their crop loans on time from the ensuing financial year. The Government will pay that interest to the co-operative institutions. For this

purpose, a provision of Rs.140 crores has been made in this Budget.

9. As announced in the previous Budget, 10,000 self help groups of farmers, availing loan from primary agricultural cooperative banks, have been formed and each group has been provided with a revolving fund of Rs.10,000. In the coming financial year, the number of such groups will be increased to 20,000. Revolving fund will be provided to these new groups as well.

10. Agricultural productivity has increased as this Government has encouraged our farmers to adopt new technologies like System of Rice Intensification and Precision Farming and consequently the income of farmers adopting these new technologies has also gone up. In order to encourage farmers to use these techniques Agriclincs are being set up in all 385 blocks so that all necessary services could be provided to the farmers at a single place. With a view to encouraging farmers to cultivate more remunerative



horticultural crops, National Horticulture Mission will be implemented at an outlay of Rs.200 crores in the coming financial year. A sum of Rs.30 crores has been provided as State share for this scheme.

11. In order to ensure supply of fertilizers to the farmers without any shortage, financial assistance of Rs.70 crores has been provided to the Tamil Nadu Co-operative Marketing Federation. Keeping the welfare of farmers in mind, this Government has provided an incentive of Rs.120 and Rs.100 per quintal for fine and common varieties of paddy, respectively, over and above the Minimum Support Price and incentive fixed by the Union Government. Thus, the procurement price for common and fine varieties of paddy has been enhanced to Rs.1,000 and Rs.1,050 per quintal respectively. A sum of Rs.200 crores has been allocated in this Budget for providing the incentive given by the State Government. Moreover, the State Advised Price for sugarcane has been increased thereby ensuring that farmers get Rs.1,220 per tonne.

Food Production Increased



**“ 84 Lakh tonnes
were produced in
2007-2008
against the food
production of 61
Lakh tonnes in
2005 - 2006. ”**

12. Due to the damage caused by the recent floods of North East Monsoon, paddy and other crops cultivated in 14.25 lakh acres were affected. A sum of Rs.388 crores has been disbursed as compensation to 10.4 lakh affected farmers. **The land revenue will be waived for this fasli year in these 12 flood affected districts.**

13. This Government is providing 50 percent of the insurance premium as subsidy to the farmers from the year 2006-2007 to protect them from the crop loss suffered on account of natural calamities. Due to this, the number of farmers availing crop insurance has gone up from about one lakh to 8.5 lakhs in the last three years. **Subsidy will be provided to 25 lakh farmers to insure their crops in the coming year under this scheme.** A sum of Rs.40 crores has been provided for this purpose. In addition, a sum of Rs.200 crores has been provided as State's share in this Budget for providing compensation for crop loss.

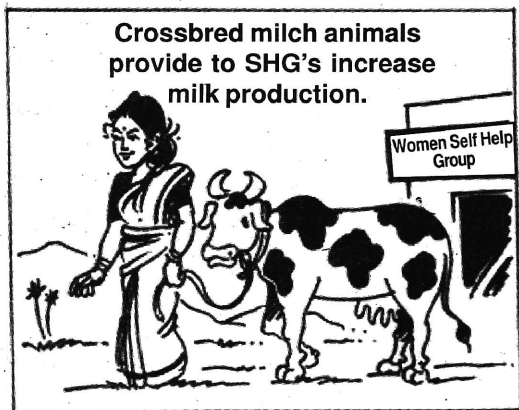
14. As a result of the keen and enthusiastic efforts taken by this Government in the past three years, food production in our State has increased considerably. It is evident from the fact that as against the food production of 61 lakh tonnes in 2005-2006, 84 lakh tonnes were produced in 2007-2008. During the current financial year 2008-2009, even though the State was affected very severely by floods, our food production is expected to be about 91 lakh tonnes.

15. Tamil Nadu Agricultural Labourers Welfare Board, established by this Government for the welfare of farmers and agricultural labourers in the year 2000 and subsequently abolished, was revived again and various benefits are being provided to the farmers and agricultural labourers. 170 lakh members have been registered under this scheme so far and various benefits like assistance for education, marriage, and pension are being provided to them. A sum of Rs.152 crores has been provided for this scheme in this Budget.

16. The great scheme of providing free power to all farmers, introduced by this Government, will be continued in the coming years as well. A provision of Rs.279 crores has been made in this Budget as State Government's subsidy to Tamil Nadu Electricity Board for this scheme.

Animal Husbandry

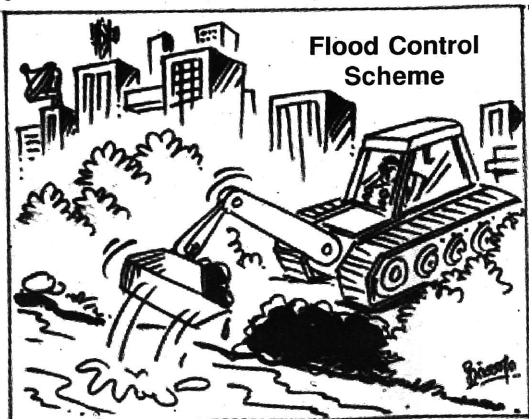
17. After assuming charge, this Government has appointed 492 veterinary assistant surgeons and 743 animal husbandry assistants. Livestock Protection Scheme has been revived and 149 lakh cattle have been treated in 12,037 veterinary camps held so far. **5,500 veterinary camps benefiting 68 lakh**



cattle will be conducted in coming financial year as well.

18. With a view to increasing milk production, this Government announced a new scheme for providing crossbred milch animals to the women self help groups in the last Budget.

In the coming financial year, 5,000 crossbred milch animals along with other support measures will be provided to the women self help groups through the Tamil Nadu Co-operative Milk Producers Federation in 100 villages in the State which are suitable for milk production.



Irrigation and Flood Control

19. This Government will continue to take all necessary legal measures with determination, on the basis of respect for national integration, to fully protect the rights of our state, regarding all disputes in sharing river waters affecting the livelihood of farmers of our State such as, sharing of Cauvery river waters, opposition to raising the water level in Mullai Periyar Dam, Neyyar river waters and attempts to construct check dam across Palar.

20. The World Bank Aided Irrigated Agriculture Modernization and Water-Bodies Restoration and Management (IAMWARM) project is being implemented at a cost of Rs.2,547 crores with the objectives of improving the water resources in our state and introducing modern agricultural practices, thereby enhancing the agricultural productivity and income of farmers in our state. This project will benefit about 16 lakh acres of agricultural land. Works have been taken up in 25 sub basins. During 2009-2010,

works will be undertaken in 38 more sub basins. A sum of Rs.533 crores has been allocated for this project in the Budget for the year 2009-2010.

21. This Government, with the assistance from NABARD, is implementing canal improvement works in the important irrigated regions of the State. A sum of Rs.50 crores for improving the Grand Anicut Canal and its structures and another sum of Rs.4 crores for rehabilitating Kalingarayan Canal have been provided in this Budget.

22. A Committee of experts headed by Thiru Mohanakrishnan, Chairman of Cauvery technical cell will be constituted to examine and submit a detailed report regarding implementation of Athikadavu-Avinasi canal project, a long standing request of the people from Coimbatore and Erode districts. Further, with the financial assistance from NABARD, a dam at an estimated cost of about Rs.7 crores will be constructed across Nallathangal Oodai at Kothayam village near Ottanchatram in Dindigul district.

23. This Government announced last year a major scheme for conserving the unutilized surplus water of rivers and rivulets by means of check dams in the water stressed areas of the State so as to utilize the same for agriculture and drinking water purposes throughout the year. Under this scheme, works for construction of 48,500 check dams and ponds at an estimated cost of Rs.550

crores are being executed through various departments. A sum of Rs.100 crores has been provided for this purpose in this Budget.

24. As announced in the Budget Speech of 2006-2007, sanction has been accorded and works are being undertaken for flood mitigation scheme in Madurai at an estimated cost of Rs.12 crores. Similarly, permanent flood protection works against floods in Cauvery and Coleroon rivers in Karur, Trichy, Ariyalur and Perambalur districts have been taken up at a cost of Rs.211 crores. A sum of Rs.155 crores has been allocated for these works in this Budget. **With a view to preventing flooding of Chennai City, a major project at an estimated cost of Rs.1,448 crores has been approved under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. The works under this project will commence in the ensuing financial year.**

25. Based on the resolution of National Development Council for providing financial assistance under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme for linking intra-state rivers in the first phase under National Programme for Interlinking of Rivers, this Government has accorded sanction for construction of Kattalai Barrage across Cauvery under the Cauvery-Gundar interlinking project for taking the surplus flood water to water deficit districts and for interlinking project of Tamirabarani-Karumeniyar-Nambiar so as to divert the surplus flood water of Tamirabarani river to

the dry areas of Thoothukudi and Tirunelveli districts. Preliminary works for these projects have commenced recently. In the coming financial year, a sum of Rs.200 crores has been allocated for these two projects. We urge the Union Government to provide the necessary financial assistance for these projects early.

26. With a view to highlighting the importance accorded by this Government to agricultural sector and farmers, a separate Appendix (No.22) has been added to the Appendices to the Budget Memorandum. I am happy to inform that a total sum of Rs.5,236 crores has been provided for the agricultural development under Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, Co-operation, Public Works and Revenue Departments.

Public Distribution System

27. By providing essential commodities at low prices under Public distribution system, this Government has lessened the burden of inflation to a large extent. Accordingly, with



a view to removing hunger of the poor, this Government has created a record by providing rice at one rupee a kilogram, which is the lowest in the country and essential food items like toor dhal, urad dhal, palm oil and wheat flour under the Special Public Distribution System and ten cooking condiments at Rs.50 under the scheme of 'Condiments at affordable prices'. For these pioneering measures of this Government a provision of Rs.2,800 crores is made in this Budget as food subsidy. In addition to issuing family cards to all eligible persons, with a view to ensuring that the commodities are supplied at correct weight in fair price shops, this Government has provided electronic weighing machines to all fair price shops in the State at a cost of Rs.12 crores.

Law and Order

28. This Government is working vigilantly to ensure law and order and communal harmony in the State. Due to effective action of the Police department attempts to fan extremism from neighbouring states into our

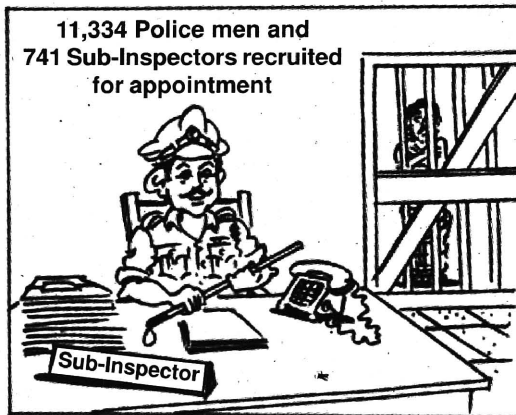
State have been thwarted. This Government will take severe action against those who try to impair public tranquility and incite violence and challenge the integrity and sovereignty of the nation.

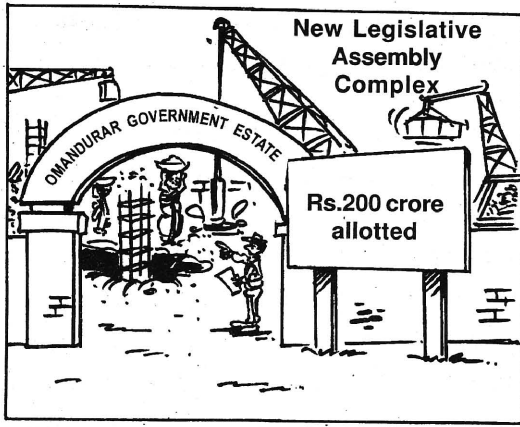
29. Recommendations of The Third Police Commission, constituted by this Government to promote the welfare of the Policemen have been examined. I am happy to announce that this Government has approved 278 recommendations out of 444 recommendations. Among these, delegation of power to the Director General of Police to fill up vacant posts of Constables and Sub-Inspectors and increasing the allowances of Policemen are worth mentioning. After this Government took charge, 11,334 Policemen and 741 Sub-Inspectors have been recruited for appointment. The total allocation for the Police department, which was Rs.1,346 crores in 2005-2006, will increase to Rs.2,855 crores in the coming year.

Judiciary

30. Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaignar had announced that necessary buildings for courts and quarters will be built in our state over a period of four years at a cost of Rs.300 crores. As per this, building works to the tune of Rs.138 crores have been sanctioned by the Government and are being executed.

Besides this, sanction is being accorded for construction of 22 court buildings and quarters. In the past three years, this





Government has ordered for creation of 101 new courts and with a view to expediting the disposal of the cases, as a pioneering effort in our country, Government has sanctioned the constitution of 56 evening courts. Totally a sum of Rs.378 crores has been provided for the Judiciary in this Budget.

New Legislative Assembly Complex

31. Pursuant to the announcement during the Golden Jubilee Celebration commemorating 50 years of service in the Legislature by the Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaignar, a new Legislative Assembly complex adopting our traditional Dravidian style of architecture has been conceived and the works are fast progressing at Omandhoorar Government Estate. These works will be completed by April 2010. A provision of Rs.200 crores has been made in this Budget for this work.

School Education

32. In the past three years, this Government has taken all efforts like

awarding time scale of pay to all school teachers, filling up vacant posts of teacher, creating new posts of teacher wherever necessary and improving school infrastructure, to enhance the quality of education imparted in Government schools. In the coming academic year, 100 middle schools will be upgraded as high schools and 100 high schools will be upgraded as higher secondary schools. Several states have started adopting the Activity Based Learning, implemented in our state.

33. Tamil Nadu is implementing Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) in an exemplary manner. During the past three years Rs.2,338 crores have been allocated for this scheme. 336 new primary schools have been started and 1,577 primary schools have been upgraded as middle schools. Primary school dropout percentage has decreased to 1.23% in 2007-2008 from 12% in 2001-2002. Middle school dropout percentage has decreased to 1.90% in 2007-2008 from 13% in 2001-2002. In addition to building 15,788 classrooms in the first two years of this regime, 9,085 classrooms are being constructed during 2008-2009. This scheme will be implemented at a cost Rs.820 crores in the coming financial year and a sum of Rs.328 crores is provided in this Budget as State's share. **The infrastructure of high schools will be improved at an outlay of Rs.800 crores under the new national scheme for secondary education of the Union Government.** A provision of Rs.200 crores has been made as State's share for this

scheme. As an outcome of the efforts taken by this Government to improve the quality of education, the report that the school children in our state rank first in term of competencies in language, mathematics and reading and comprehension in the entire country in the recently conducted national level survey is gratifying.

34. This Government is implementing works to improve the infrastructure of the government and local body schools in the State. Under the panchayat union schools renovation programme implemented by Rural Development department, from the year 2007-2008 works to the tune of Rs.188 crores in 14,546 schools have been completed so far. **In the coming financial year also improvement works will be taken up in 5,000 schools at a cost of Rs.85 crores.** In addition to this, buildings for 421 government high and higher secondary schools are being constructed with the assistance of NABARD. A sum of Rs.250 crores is allocated for these works in the coming financial year.

35. After this Government assumed charge, all government high schools and higher secondary schools have been provided with computers in the last three years.

As announced in the last Budget, 2,200 middle schools have been provided with computers under the scheme of providing computers in a period of three years to all government and local body middle schools. **A sum of Rs.50 crores has been allocated**

for providing computers to 2,500 middle schools in the coming financial year.

36. This Government has abolished the public examination fees of about eleven lakh 10th and 12th standard Tamil medium students belonging to government and aided schools, special fees paid by about 50 lakh students studying from 6th to 12th standard and special fees paid by students of government industrial training institutes. **Through these measures, it has been ensured that complete free education is imparted in government and aided schools.**

37. By conducting refraction test to all students studying in middle, high and higher secondary schools in our state, a new scheme for providing free spectacles to those with defective vision will be implemented at a cost of Rs.5 crores, under National Rural Health Mission, in the coming financial year.

38. In the coming financial year, a sum of Rs.58 crores has been allocated for the scheme for providing uniforms free of cost to the poor students studying in government and aided schools and Rs.70 crores has been allocated for the scheme for providing free text books. In this Budget, a sum of Rs.300 crores has been provided as grants to state transport undertakings for implementing the scheme for providing free and concessional bus passes to students and a sum of Rs.112 crores has been provided for the scheme for

providing free bi-cycles to the students studying in 11th standard. Overall, the total allocation for the school education department which was Rs.4,110 crores in 2005-2006 has been increased to Rs.9,147 crores in the year 2009-2010.

39. With the objective of enabling the general public and poor students to have access to read all books, this Government had announced that **a modern state library of international standard** would be established in Chennai. Works for establishing this library at an estimated cost of Rs.166 crores for which foundation stone was laid by the Hon'ble Chief Minister on 16.8.2008 are progressing fast. **These works will be completed by May 2010.**

Higher Education

40. Considering the need for space requirements of the students 1,142 class rooms are being built at a cost of Rs.65 crores in government arts and science colleges. For these works, a sum of Rs.27 crores has been allocated in this Budget. **In educationally backward districts lacking adequate facilities for higher education, new government arts and science colleges will be established, with the financial assistance of Union Government in the coming years.**

41. With a view to enabling students from poor families pursue higher education without any impediment, this Government

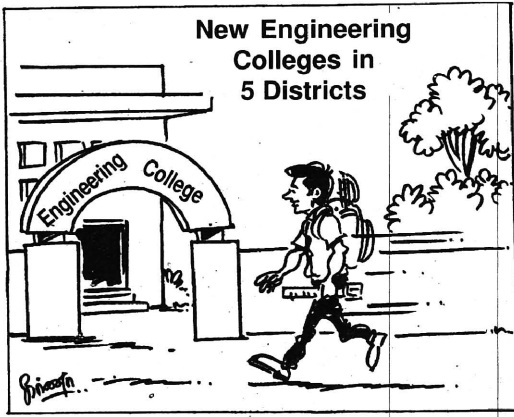


after assuming charge, has abolished tuition fees to all undergraduate students of government and aided arts and science colleges and has also converted all the self-financing courses in the governments colleges to general courses. In addition, by abolishing the common entrance examination, which was an unnecessary burden to the students, this Government has enabled larger number of students from rural and poor families to get professional education.

42. Besides establishing three new Anna Universities at Trichy, Coimbatore and

**Rs.166 crore for
Modern State Library of
International Standard
at Kotturpuram**





Tirunelveli, six new engineering colleges have been started in backward places of the State like Tindivanam, Villupuram, Panruti, Thirukkuvilai, Ramanathapuram and Ariyalur. **In the coming financial year, new engineering colleges will be started through Anna Universities in the districts of Tiruvannamalai, Thanjavur, Dindigul, Thoothukudi and Kanyakumari districts which do not have government engineering colleges.** In addition, the infrastructure facilities in the existing government engineering colleges and polytechnics will be improved under the second phase of the Technical Education Quality Improvement Project with the financial assistance of the World Bank. The provision for Higher education, which was Rs.745 crores in 2005-2006, has been enhanced to Rs.1,463 crores in the coming financial year.

Health and Family Welfare

43. This Government which considers providing compassionate medical service to

humanity as service to God, has appointed 4,156 Doctors and 5,183 nurses in the last three years. In addition, by appointing three nurses in all Primary Health Centres, this Government has made available 24 hours medical care to people living in rural areas. In addition, to this, 125 government hospitals have been upgraded as emergency care centres. Due to these measures, the number of deliveries in primary health centres has increased from 80,776 in 2006 to 2,41,078 in the year 2008.

44. The pioneering scheme of 'Varumun Kappom Thittam' that enables diagnosis of disease at incipient stage and provision of appropriate treatment has been revived and is being implemented by this Government. Under this scheme, teams of medical experts have conducted 9,000 medical camps throughout the State. Through these medical camps about 91 lakh poor people have benefited. **4,500 medical camps will be conducted under this scheme throughout the coming financial year.**

45. Under the World Bank aided Tamil Nadu Health Systems Project, works to the tune of Rs.276 crores are in progress for constructing buildings for 35 government hospitals in the first phase and 224 hospitals in the second phase. Moreover equipments and ambulances necessary for these hospitals are being provided at a cost of Rs.140 crores. In addition to this, wherever necessary specialist doctors have been appointed

additionally. A sum of Rs.279 crores has been allocated in this Budget for this project. A new MRI equipment at a cost of Rs.5 crores will be installed at Kilpauk Medical College hospital, Chennai. A new Cath lab (Catheter laboratory) at a cost of Rs.4 crores will be installed in Government General Hospital, Chennai. Totally, a sum of Rs.53 crores has been provided for the purchase of hospital equipments to government hospitals in the state in the coming financial year.

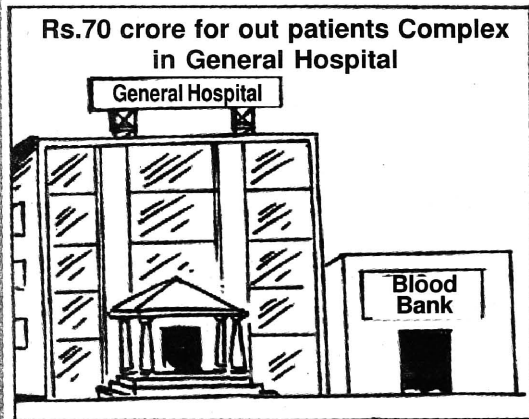
46. Chennai central jail has been shifted to Puzhal and having regard to the difficulties faced by the outpatients and other patients on account of insufficient space, this Government has decided to utilize the erstwhile jail site for the expansion of Government General Hospital at Chennai. At this site, a big complex for outpatients of Government General Hospital will be constructed at a cost of Rs.70 crores. In addition to this, a mega blood bank at an estimated cost of

Rs.400 crores with the financial assistance from Union Government will be constructed in the remaining space.

47. The Union Government has recently agreed to this Government's request for upgrading the Government Rajaji Hospital at Madurai as a multi-speciality hospital like the All India Institute of Medical Sciences at New Delhi, to benefit the people of southern districts. Under this, the present Rajaji Hospital will be upgraded and its speciality block will be constructed at Thoppur near Madurai. Towards these works costing Rs.150 crores, this Government will provide the required land and the State share of Rs.25 crores.

48. Number of patients in need of dialysis in Tamil Nadu is increasing due to diabetes and kidney problems. With a view to enabling poor people across the State to avail this treatment and making available this treatment at least in one government hospital in every district, dialysis units will be provided to government hospitals at a cost of Rs.5 crores.

49. After this Government assumed charge, new government medical colleges have been sanctioned at Villupuram, Tiruvarur, Dharmapuri, Sivagangai and Perambalur. Works for providing necessary buildings and other facilities for these medical colleges and hospitals are under progress. For



these works, a sum of Rs.307 crores is allocated in this Budget. For procurement of medicine for all Government hospitals a provision of Rs.224 crores is made in this Budget. The overall allocation for Health and Family welfare has been increased to Rs.3,391 crores in 2009-2010 as against a provision of Rs.1,487 crores in 2005-2006.

Industries

50. As a successful outcome of the efforts of this Government to increase employment opportunities by encouraging entrepreneurs during the past three years, entrepreneurs have come forward to establish 29 new industries with an investment of Rs.37,595 crores with an employment potential of about two lakh persons. Of these new investments, eight industries have already commenced production. Particularly in this short period itself, Tamil Nadu has emerged as a leading state in our country in important industries such as manufacturing of automobiles and electronic goods. Global majors in heavy

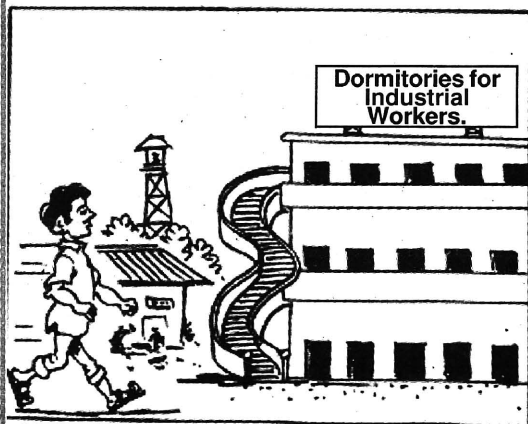
vehicles production like Daimler-Hero, Ashok Leyland-Nissan, Caterpillar and in automobile parts like Delphi, Allison have come forward to establish industries in Tamil Nadu. In the same manner, leading companies like Dell Computers, Motorola, Samsung and Nokia-Siemens networks have established industries for production of electronic goods.

51. With a view to spur industrial development in southern districts, this Government is providing structured package of assistance that is being extended to investments above Rs.250 crores in other districts of the State to even the investments exceeding Rs.50 crores in these districts. As a result of these efforts, ATC Tires company is establishing tyre manufacturing unit at Gangaikondan in Tirunelveli district. In addition, leading companies like TVS Srichakra Tyres and Elgi Tread have come forward to establish industries in the same place and Caparo Engineering and Fenner India at Nillakottai in Dindigul district.

52. In addition to encouraging entrepreneurs to start industries, this Government will continue to improve the basic infrastructure facilities required for the development of these industries. The approach roads to industrial estates in the State will be developed at a cost of Rs.10 crores. Dormitories having facilities to accommodate 1,000 workers each will be constructed at Sriperumpudur and Tirupur which are having large number of industrial workers.



53. This Government will definitely take necessary steps to provide employment to at least one person from the families giving land to an extent of one acre and above for industrial parks to be established by SIPCOT, in the industries being established in that area. For this purpose, SIPCOT will establish skill development training centres in these industrial parks for skill enhancement of the youth belonging to such families.



54. The Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Limited, a well performing public sector undertaking has embarked upon an expansion at a cost of Rs.1,000 crores. On completion in June, 2010, the paper production capacity of this plant will go up from 2.55 lakh tonnes to 4 lakh tonnes per annum.

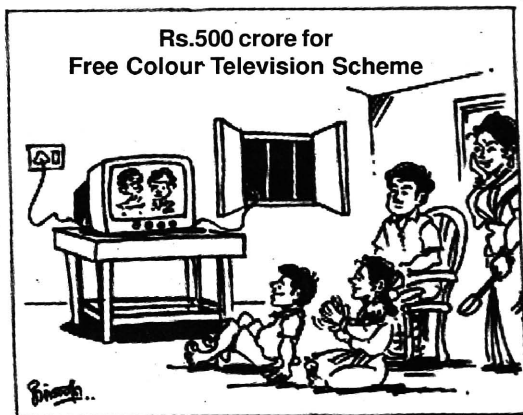
Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

55. With a view to encouraging micro, small and medium enterprises, for the first time in our country, this Government has

come out with a separate policy for these industries. A provision of Rs.30 crores has been made in this Budget for providing capital subsidy to the micro, small and medium enterprises being established in industrially backward blocks in the State as per this policy. In addition, a sum of Rs.10 crores has been allocated for value added tax (VAT) refund concession.

Information Technology

56. This Government is taking all efforts to make Tamil Nadu a leading state in our country in Information Technology and to enable the people living in all parts of the State to realize benefits of this growth. This Government has announced a new Information Technology Policy providing various concessions to IT companies.



The Information Technology Park being established at a cost of Rs.380 crores at Coimbatore will be completed by coming September. Necessary steps are being taken

to establish Information Technology Parks in Madurai, Trichy, Tirunelveli, Salem and Vellore. Due to these efforts, software export from our state has increased to 28,490 crores in 2007-2008 from 13,615 crores in 2005-2006.

57. By consolidating all basic information and statistics of various departments and providing the same together with all other services through Internet, a State Data Centre is being set up at a cost of Rs.56 crores. Tamil Nadu only holds the distinction of being the first state in the entire country to establish a State Wide Area Network. Under this Wide Area Network district, revenue divisional, taluk and block headquarters have been connected to the State capital.

58. Under the scheme for providing free colour televisions, one of the promises in the Election Manifesto of this Government, 1,04,42,500 colour television sets have been ordered to be procured in a transparent manner in four phases and are being distributed. A sum of Rs.500 crores has been allocated in the coming financial year for distribution of 25 lakh colour televisions to the remaining families having no colour television.

Development of Roads

59. Bearing in mind that good quality road facilities are essential for day to day use of the public as well as for overall economic growth, this Government is implementing

improvement works by allocating more funds for road development and maintenance in the last three years. During the period of 5 years from 2001 to 2006, road development works to the tune of Rs.4,328 crores and road maintenance works to the tune of Rs.1,534 crores were undertaken. In comparison, I would like to inform that during last three years alone, funds have been allocated to the tune of Rs.6,617 crores for road development works and to the tune of Rs.2,503 crores for road maintenance.

60. After this Government assumed charge, development of 45,943 Km of roads has been undertaken so far. 4,730 Km of roads have been widened as double lane roads. In addition to this, 551 minor and major bridges have been constructed at a cost of Rs.577 crores. A sum of Rs.3,087 has crores been provided for the capital expenditure on road development and bridge works and a sum of Rs.880 crores has been provided for road maintenance works for the financial year 2009-2010. Utilizing these allocations, besides developing 12,500 Km of roads, about 1,000 Km of roads will be converted into double lane roads and 194 major and minor bridges will be completed.

61. You are all aware that during the previous tenures of DMK Government, many major bridges like Anna Fly over at Chennai, two level bridge at Tirunelveli, three level bridge at Coimbatore and bridges across Cauvery at Kulithalai and Thirumanur were

**Rs.1730 crores sanctioned for
new Railway Bridges**



constructed. Similarly, in the last three years, this Government has sanctioned a construction of many major railway overbridges at a cost of Rs.1,730 crores.

A sum of Rs.400 crores has been provided for these works.

62. Under Tamil Nadu Road Sector Project, road upgradation works, construction of bypass roads and enhanced road maintenance works are being undertaken in different parts of the State at a cost of Rs.2,442 crores, with the assistance from World Bank. Upgradation works for the two major components of this project, namely, Arcot-Tiruvannamalai-Vridhachalam-Tiruvarur road and Nagapattinam-Ramanathapuram-Thoothukudi stretch of the East Coast Road will be completed in the coming financial year. The remaining stretch of the East Coast Road from Thoothukudi to Kanyakumari spanning 120 Km will be widened and upgraded as double lane road

at an estimated cost of Rs.190 crores. This work will be taken up in the coming financial year.

63. Having regard to the development of suburban areas of Chennai City and increasing traffic congestion, this Government has decided to build Outer Ring Road connecting major national highways, namely, Chennai-Trichy highway, Chennai-Bengaluru highway and Chennai-Kolkata highway. In the first phase of this project, works for constructing the 30 Km long road between Vandalur-Nazarathpet-Nemilicheri will be taken up at a cost of Rs.858 crores in the coming financial year. A sum of Rs.100 crores has been allocated for this work in this Budget.

Electricity

64. Considering the fact that there has been significant increase in the power requirement of the State and that it is likely to increase further in future, this Government is implementing projects for installing additional power generation capacity in our state. Works for establishing power stations of 600 MW capacity at Mettur and 1200 MW capacity in North Chennai are under progress. Works for establishing 1600 MW capacity power station at Udangudi in Thoothukudi district in joint venture with Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) will commence soon. In the coming financial year, the power

generation capacity of Tamil Nadu will increase to 11,533 MW on commissioning of Koodankulam Atomic Power Plant and expansion project of Neyveli Lignite Corporation.

65. The facility for online payment of electricity bill enabling the consumers in Chennai City to pay the bills through internet has commenced in this financial year. In the coming financial year, steps will be taken to extend this facility to other parts of the State. 11,284 transformers and 45,911 km of electric lines will be newly laid at a cost of Rs.447 crores and about 5.5 lakh rural households will be electrified under Rajiv Gandhi rural electrification scheme. A sum of Rs.1,251 crores has been allocated in the Budget towards free connections to huts and places of worship and subsidized connections for homes and local bodies.

Transport

66. After this Government assumed charge, in the last three years, 9,248 new buses have been purchased by State Transport Undertakings and put into use. A sum of Rs.729 crores has been provided as assistance for the Government to the State Transport Undertakings for purchasing these buses. In the coming financial year, another 3,500 new buses will be purchased with the assistance of the State Government as well as the Union Government under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. A sum of Rs.250 crores



3500 New buses to be purchased

has been allocated in this Budget as financial assistance by the State Government for this purpose.

Municipal Administration

67. Tamil Nadu is the most urbanized state in the country. Having regard to this fact, this Government is according high priority for the development of infrastructure in urban areas. Under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, which is being jointly implemented by the Union and State Governments and the local bodies, 223 projects to the tune of Rs.8,364 crores have been sanctioned so far and works are underway. In addition, under the World Bank aided Tamil Nadu Urban Development Project -III, 98 projects are being implemented at a cost of Rs.1,374 crores.

68. With a view to ensuring that local bodies are able to mobilize adequate financial resources for taking up necessary infrastructural development works in urban areas, financial assistance of Rs.345 crores

from Japan International Cooperation Agency and Rs.500 crores from KfW, a German funding agency has been obtained and 11 projects to the tune of Rs.732 crores have been sanctioned. A sum of Rs.170 crores has been allocated in this Budget for this purpose.

69. As per the decision of this Government to implement underground sewerage schemes in all municipalities in the State, in the first phase, these works have been completed in six district headquarters and steps have been taken to implement this scheme in other district headquarters also. In the next phase, these works will be taken up in other important municipalities. Underground sewerage schemes will be taken up during the next financial year in Karaikudi, Sattur, Mannargudi, Pollachi, Kodaikanal, Periyakulam, Palani, Keelakarai, Sivakasi and Melur municipalities at a cost of Rs.408 crores.

70. Under the Anaithu Peruratchi Anna Marumalarchi Thittam works at an estimated cost of Rs.140 crores have been taken up in 280 Town panchayats so far. In the coming financial year, works will be taken up in another 140 Town panchayats at a cost of Rs.70 crores.

Metro Rail Project

71. On account of tireless efforts of this Government, project approval and financial sanction has been received for



the Chennai Metro Rail Project from the Union Government as well as Japan International

Co-operation Agency (JICA) within a very short period of time as compared to other Metro projects being implemented in India. This major project will be implemented solely through a public sector company, 'Chennai Metro Rail Limited'. Out of the total allocation of Rs.14,600 crores for this project, Rs.11,680 crores will be the share of the State Government and Rs.2,920 crores will be the share of the Union Government. Out of the State Governments share, Rs.8,646 crores will be received as loan from JICA and Rs.3,034 crores will be met from Tamil Nadu Government's funds. For this project, a provision of Rs.600 crores has been made as State Government's share in this Budget.

72. Tenders for the first work of the Metro Rail Project, namely the viaduct from Koyambedu to Ashok Nagar has

been finalized. Nevertheless, as announced in the Governor's address, the investigation for linking Thiruvottiyur under this project is to be taken up shortly. Foundation stone for this project will be laid by the Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaingar soon.

Drinking Water

73. As announced in the last Budget, out of 10,255 rural habitations to be provided with protected drinking water supply in the year 2008-2009, drinking water supply has been provided to 6,092 habitations so far. Remaining works will be completed within this financial year. **In addition, protected drinking water supply will be provided to 8,000 rural habitations at a cost of Rs.700 crores in the coming financial year.** In the current financial year, works for 30 combined water supply schemes and water supply improvement schemes for 45 towns will be completed. **Besides, 30 combined water supply schemes and drinking water improvement schemes for 50 towns will be undertaken in the coming financial year.**

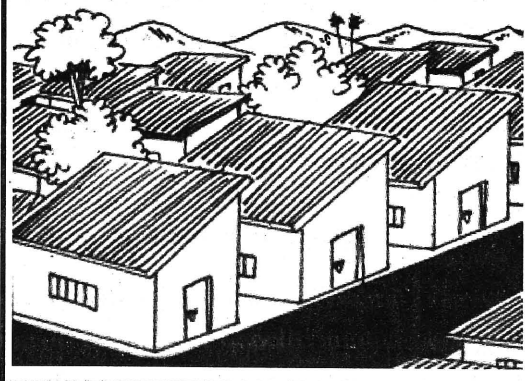
74. Financial assistance for Hogenakkal Combined Water Supply Scheme estimated to cost Rs.1,330 crores has been obtained from Japan International Co-operation Agency. As announced earlier, this scheme will be commissioned within the stipulated time. A sum of Rs.200 crores has been allocated for this scheme in this Budget.

Works for the Ramanathapuram Combined Water Supply Scheme, envisaged for addressing the drinking water needs of dry areas of Ramanathapuram, Sivagangai and Pudukkottai districts at an estimated cost of Rs.616 crores, will be completed by April this year. Totally, an unprecedented sum of Rs.1,064 crores has been allocated for water supply schemes.

Housing

75. Under Indira Awas Yojana, the Union Government had enhanced the unit cost per house from Rs.25,000 to Rs.35,000 last year. In this, the share of Union Government is Rs.26,250. In addition to the State Government's share of Rs.8,750, the subsidy provided by the State Government for concrete roofing has also been enhanced from Rs.12,000 to Rs.20,000 by this Government. Thus, the share of the Union Government is Rs.26,250 and the share of the State Government is Rs.28,750 in the total cost of

Rs.742 crore for new Concrete Houses



house constructed under this scheme. 70,000 houses are being constructed this year in rural areas at a cost of Rs.55,000 per house. **With the objective of providing permanent houses to the larger number of poor people, in the coming financial year an unprecedented number of 1,35,000 concrete houses will be constructed in rural areas at a cost of Rs.742 crores. The share of Union Government in this great compassionate scheme is Rs.354 crores. A sum of Rs.390 crores has been allocated in this Budget as State Government's share.**

76. Under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, 1,05,373 concrete houses and multistoreyed tenements are being constructed. **In the coming financial year, under the Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme 21,000 new houses will be additionally constructed in urban areas at a cost of Rs.441 crores.**

Rural Development

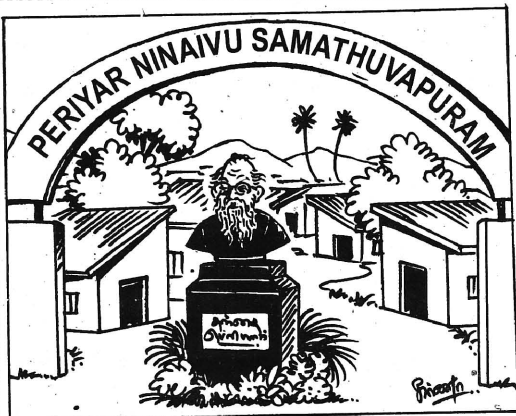
77. This Government is committed to entrust additional responsibilities and provide necessary powers to the local bodies for enabling them to improve basic amenities and play their due role in development of the State. In this regard, all necessary actions have been taken as per the recommendations of a High Level Committee headed by Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development and Local Administration.

78. Under Anaithu Grama Anna Marumalarchi Thittam, a unique achievement of this Government, basic amenities and developmental works have been undertaken in 7,585 village panchayats at a cost of Rs.1,524 crores in the past three years.

A sum of Rs.509 crores has been allocated for this scheme in the Budget 2009-2010. Under this scheme, basic infrastructure will be improved in 2,511 more village panchayats in the coming financial year.

79. The roads in village panchayats, where the Anaithu Grama Anna Marumalarchi Thittam is implemented, are being improved with the financial assistance from NABARD. Under this, sanction has been accorded and works are underway for improvement of roads in 5,000 village panchayats at a cost of Rs.884 crores. **In the coming financial year, roads in 2500 more village panchayats will be improved at a cost of Rs.401 crores. A sum of Rs.350 crores has been allocated for these road improvement works in this Budget.**

80. The "Namakku naame thittam" which enables people to choose the development schemes required by them and get them executed through their contribution has been revived by this Government. 3,333 works have been taken up under this scheme so far. A provision of Rs.50 crores has been made as Government's contribution in this Budget.



Cuddalore find place among 22 districts at the National level selected for best performance under this scheme. A sum of Rs.1,412 crores has been disbursed as wages so far under this scheme which has greatly benefited the downtrodden Adi dravidars and poor women in our society. This scheme will be implemented in all the districts at an outlay of Rs.1,750 crores in the coming financial year.

81. As announced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaignar that 95 Samathuvapurams with Thanthai Periyar's statue will be established over a period of three years to spread his ideals of equality, 29 Samathuvapurams are being established. In the coming financial year 29 more samathuvapurams will be established. A sum of Rs.75 crores has been allocated in this Budget for this purpose.

82. Tamil Nadu is a frontline state in implementing the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), the flagship scheme of United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government under the leadership of Honourable Prime Minister Thiru Manmohan Singh and Tmt.Sonia Gandhi. Prompt disbursement of wages to the beneficiaries and ensuring minimum wages to all those working under the scheme have been acclaimed widely. It is a matter of great satisfaction to note that three districts of Tamil Nadu, namely Dindigul, Sivagangai and

83. As announced by this Government while accepting the recommendations of the Third State Finance Commission the devolution of funds to local bodies will be increased from the present 9 % to 9.5 % in the coming financial year. Due to this, local bodies will additionally receive Rs.187 crores in the coming financial year. A sum of Rs.6,241 crores has been provided in the current financial year to local bodies in the form of devolution, assigned revenue and schematic assistance. In the coming financial year, this will be increased to Rs.6,928 crores. Hon'ble Members may note that including expenditure incurred by the Government for providing basic services relating to primary education, water supply and public health on behalf of the local bodies, the total amount incurred by the State Government as direct financial assistance to local bodies and towards expenditure incurred by the State Government for the functions to be discharged by these bodies account for about 31% of the State's own tax revenue.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

84. Under the existing system of land revenue collection, which has been in vogue for a long period, Local Cess, Local Cess Surcharge and Water Cess are being collected along with the land revenue. As this tax serves as proof of possession of farmers over their land holdings, hereafter only a nominal sum shall be levied as 'Land Revenue'.. By simplifying the present cumbersome system, land revenue of Rs.2 per acre of dry land as against an average levy of Rs.15 per acre at present and Rs.5 per acre of wet land as against an average levy of Rs.50 per acre at present, shall be levied from the coming fasli year. Farmers shall not be burdened with any other levy such as Local Cess and Local Cess Surcharge. About 50 lakh farmers will benefit from this measure.

85. As announced by this Government earlier, works are under progress for construction of buildings and quarters required for revenue department at a cost of Rs.45 crores. For these works, in the coming financial year, Rs.34 crores has been allocated. Totally, the allocation for revenue department has increased to Rs.2,416 crores in this Budget.

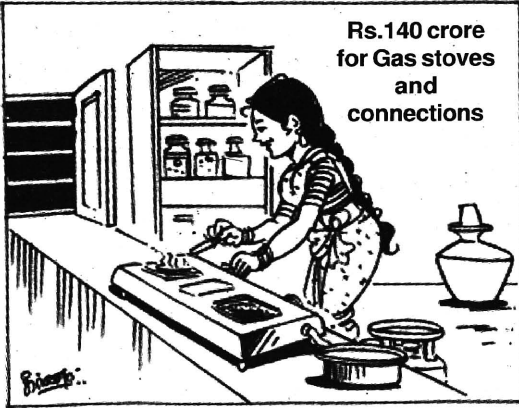
Welfare of women

86. With a view to enabling pregnant women to have adequate nutrition, this Government is implementing Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy Memorial Maternity

Assistance Scheme providing Rs.6,000 as maternity assistance to them. Having regard to the fact that pregnant women face difficulties in getting income certificate as per the earlier guidelines, this Government has ordered that they can get maternity assistance based on the recommendations of the village health nurse even without the income certificate. Under this scheme, so far 10 lakhs mothers have been benefited. A sum of Rs.250 crores has been allocated for this scheme to benefit over 4 lakh mothers in the coming financial year.

87. After this Government assumed charge, besides reviving Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Memorial Marriage Assistance Scheme, the assistance amount has been doubled from Rs.10,000/- to Rs.20,000/-. About two lakh poor girls have been benefited from this scheme so far which has been lighting up the lives of poor girls. A sum of Rs.150 crores has been allocated in this Budget to enable 75,000 poor girls to benefit under this scheme in the coming financial year.

88. With a view to helping women belonging to poor and middle income families, this Government has launched a scheme for distributing free gas stove and connection to those who do not have the same. Free gas stoves and gas connections have been given to 10,84,866 families under the scheme so far. A sum of Rs.140 crores has been allocated in this Budget to



provide 6 lakh gas stoves and connections in the coming financial year.

89. The Self Help Group movement started by this Government in the year 1989, has spread like a banyan tree and grown into a mammoth movement in our State with 62 lakh members in 3,91,000 self help groups. Among these 2,74,000 groups are functioning in rural areas and 1,17,000 groups are functioning in urban areas. In order to encourage them, besides giving revolving funds to urban self help groups for the first time in our State, revolving fund is also being given to all eligible self

help groups at a cost of Rs.150 crores. In this context, it has been brought to this Government's notice that many women belonging to poor families are yet to join and benefit from this movement. In order to enable all women living below poverty line to join and benefit from the self help group movement, it has been estimated that one lakh more new self help groups need to be formed in our State. For this to happen in the next 2 years, 50,000 new self help groups will be formed in 2009-2010 and another 50,000 new self help groups will be formed in

2010-2011. After this is accomplished, Tamil Nadu will have the distinction of enrolling all women living below poverty line in Self help group movement.

90. This Government has realized that self help groups that are members of Panchayat Level Federation (PLF) could easily avail bank loan and take up beneficial economic activities. Therefore, this Government has established PLFs and has been providing necessary assistance and skill upgradation training in the past three years. With a view to encouraging these federations further, 1,000 best performing Panchayat Level Federations will be selected and Rs.one lakh each will be given to them as incentive. A sum of Rs.10 crores has been allocated for this purpose in this Budget.

Welfare of Elderly and Destitutes

91. Soon after assuming charge, this Government has increased monthly



assistance given to elderly and destitutes from Rs.200 to Rs.400. Further, the Indira Gandhi National Old age Pension Scheme for all old aged persons living below poverty line is also being effectively implemented jointly with

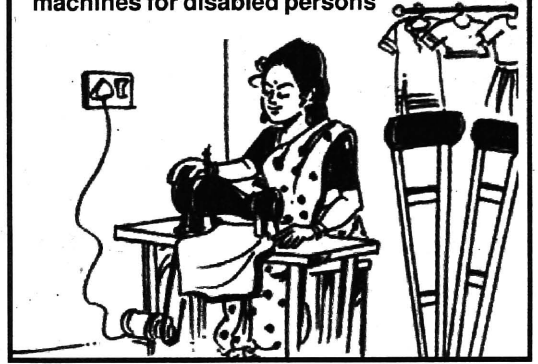
Union Government. Under these schemes 7,39,541 elders and 7,90,041 destitutes are getting benefited. Due to the benefits extended by this Government in the past three years, expenditure on pension to old aged persons and destitute will increase to Rs.911 crores in the year 2009-2010 as against Rs.303 crores in 2005-06.

92. National Centre for Geriatrics Research, having facilities for providing necessary special treatment to elderly and undertaking research regarding old age ailments, will be established at Kalaignar Karunanidhi Nagar at a cost of Rs.112 crores with the assistance from the Union Government.

Welfare of the Disabled

93. This Government has enacted an Act and established a separate welfare board thereby facilitating continuous flow of various benefits to the disabled. The monthly assistance for disabled has been increased from Rs.200 to Rs.400 and the monthly assistance for severely disabled has been increased from Rs.200 to Rs.500, benefiting 10,000 disabled. Besides this monthly assistance of Rs.500 is being given to those affected by Muscular Dystrophy.

Free Motor fitted sewing machines for disabled persons



In the coming financial year motor fitted sewing machines will be given free of cost to enable disabled persons get self employment. For providing various benefits to the disabled, a sum of Rs.75 crores has been allocated in this Budget.

Welfare of Mentally Challenged persons

94. By removing restriction as to number of beneficiaries and income limit for providing assistance to the mentally challenged persons who are not even able to take care of themselves, about 20,000 mentally challenged persons from our state are getting Rs.500 as monthly assistance. Financial assistance is being given to Non-Governmental Organizations for providing early intervention training and imparting basic education to them through special schools.

Welfare of Transgenders

95. With a view to alleviating the sufferings of the transgendered, this

Government has established a separate welfare board and is providing various benefits such as family cards and employment training. Besides this, assistance is being provided to them to start a business either individually or by forming a self help group. **Group houses will be constructed for the transgendered without housing at an estimated cost of Rs.one crore in the coming financial year.**

Welfare of Weavers

96. In order to provide additional employment opportunities to handloom weavers, scheme for the distribution of dhotis and sarees to poor people on the eve of the Pongal festival will be continued in the coming year also. A sum of Rs.256 crores has been allocated in this Budget for this purpose. In addition to establishing a separate welfare board for handloom weavers, pension for elderly weavers has been increased from Rs.200 to Rs.400.

97. The scheme of this Government for providing free power supply to handloom and power loom weavers will continue without any impediment. In addition to this, interest subsidy to weavers co-operative societies has been revived and interest rate has been reduced from 12% to 8%. A sum of Rs.90 crores has been allocated for these schemes.

Welfare of Fishermen

98. This Government has special concern for the welfare of fishermen. This

Government is implementing the scheme for providing financial assistance to the fisherman families who have gone missing while fishing and the scheme of providing assistance to fisherman families during the period of ban on fishing in the sea. A sum of Rs.42 crores is allocated in this Budget for these schemes and for providing relief during monsoon periods.

99. 37,947 bicycles and 1,20,306 life saving jackets have been provided to Tsunami affected fishermen. In addition to this, a sum of Rs.30 crores has been provided for improvement works of fishing harbours and fish landing centres. **Besides, a new fishing harbour will be established at Thengaipatnam in Kanyakumari district at a cost of Rs.40 crores.**

Welfare of Handicraft Workers

100. This Government is providing various benefits to handicraft workers by establishing a separate welfare board for them. **With a view to providing good quality raw materials to them at fair prices to make handicrafts, a raw materials bank will be established at Swamimalai.**

Welfare of Small Traders

101. This Government has issued credit cards and organized small traders into Self help groups and enabled them to avail loan from co-operative banks. **This Government will establish a separate welfare board for small traders like hawkers, those selling goods either on**



pavements or by carrying them in baskets or in carts and petty shopkeepers.

Welfare of Journalists

102. This Government has enhanced the pension of retired journalists and the family pension of their families. In addition, by providing Rs.one crore, this Government has ensured that journalists suffering from severe ailments get financial assistance for treatment from journalists welfare fund. The working journalists have been allotted house sites at Chennai, Vellore, Trichy, Dindigul and Salem at concessional rates. In addition, their other requests will be examined and necessary assistance granted.

Welfare of Unorganized Labourers

103. By reviving the welfare boards established by this Government during 1996-2001, which were abolished subsequently, 39 lakh members have been registered and welfare benefits are being provided to them. Unorganised labourers have received

assistance to the tune of Rs.105 crores so far through these boards, functioning under Labour Welfare department. A sum of Rs.30 crores has been allocated in this Budget as the financial assistance of the Government for this purpose.

Welfare of Palm Workers

104. This Government has provided financial assistance to palm artisans for purchasing tools and has established a separate welfare board for them. A Neera chilling plant will be provided to Neera Sales Centre at Sayalgudi in Ramanathapuram district In the coming financial year.

Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare

105. The quality of life and the socio-economic condition of Adi-dravidar and Tribal youth will improve only if they receive education and skill upgradation training and get proper employment. Having regard to this aspect, by allocating Rs.25 crores annually during the past two years as State Governments special financial assistance, skill upgradation training programmes, special coaching to succeed in various national level competitive exams are imparted to these youth. A sum of Rs.25 crores has been allocated for this scheme in the coming financial year 2009-2010 also.

106. By enhancing the income ceiling for availing State Government education scholarship from Rs.50,000 to Rs.1 lakh, a

sum of Rs.177 crores have been disbursed as scholarship to three lakh Adi-dravidar and tribal students in the current year. **Own buildings will be constructed for 25 hostels which are functioning in private buildings at a cost of Rs.12.5 crores.**

107. A scheme for providing basic amenities to the Adi-dravidar habitations is being implemented at a cost of Rs.111 crores with the financial assistance from NABARD. A sum of Rs.61 crores has been allocated for this purpose in this Budget.

Welfare of Sanitary Workers

108. Having regard to the fact that special concessions are required for the development of Arundhatiars who are most backward among the Adi-dravidars, on the recommendation of an one man commission headed by Justice M.S.Janarthanam constituted to examine the need for separate reservation, this Government has decided to implement 3 percent reservation for Arundhatiars within the overall reservation for Adi-dravidars. **A Bill for this purpose will be introduced during this Budget session itself.**

109. In addition to providing welfare benefits to those engaged in cleaning and sanitary work by establishing a separate welfare board for them, this Government is implementing a rehabilitation scheme at a cost of Rs.22 crores for helping those engaged in manual scavenging earlier, to take up

alternative employment. **In order to eliminate the need for these workers to work inside sewer lines, desilting machines at a cost of Rs.6.3 crores will be purchased for Chennai Corporation and 9 other Municipalities.**

110. Schemes are being implemented for the development of Adi-dravidar and Tribal communities through separate allocations in the divisible plan schemes of State Government under Scheduled Caste Sub-plan. I am happy to announce that the allocation under Scheduled Caste Sub-plan has been increased to Rs.2,615 crores in the financial year 2009-2010 as against that of Rs.567 crores in the year 2005-2006.

Welfare of Backward Classes, Most Backward classes and Denotified Communities

111. This Government has enhanced ceiling on the annual income of parents from Rs.50,000 to Rs.1 lakh, for enabling the students of Backward, Most backward and Denotified Communities to avail scholarships. A sum of Rs.82 crores has been allocated in this Budget for the purpose of scholarship to these students. Moreover, last year this Government has increased the monthly food allowance for School students and college students staying in the hostels to Rs.450 and Rs.550 respectively. 66,652 students have benefited on account of this measure. **With a view to helping these students belonging to poor families, own buildings will be**

constructed for 25 hostels which are functioning in private buildings at a cost of Rs.12.5 crores.

112. This Government is implementing the scheme for imparting skill development training to youth of Backward, Most backward and Denotified communities to enable them to get proper employment. Under this scheme, 10,000 more youth will be trained in the coming financial year. A sum of Rs.10 crores is allocated for this purpose in this Budget. Overall, a sum of Rs.435 crores has been allocated to Backward, Most backward and denotified communities department in ensuing financial year.

Minorities Welfare

113. In addition to providing 3.5 percentage reservation in employment to the Muslim minorities who are socio-economically and educationally backward, in order to pay special attention to minorities development, this Government has created a separate Directorate for Minorities. Training has been imparted to youth numbering 8,000 under the scheme of skill upgradation training that enables youth from minority communities get employment. In the coming financial year, loans to the tune of Rs.30 crores will be disbursed to 10,000 persons belonging to minority communities through Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation.

**“1,539 New Child Centres
and 3,168 mini Centres
established and
73 Lakh Children are
benefited under scheme
for providing
eggs to the Children who
take food in schools and
child centres.”**

In addition, a separate welfare board for Ulemas and other employees will be established for the welfare of Ulemas and other employees serving in mosques, darghas and madarasas in the State.

Welfare of Children

114. This Government is providing eggs and banana for those who do not eat eggs, thrice a week for 73 lakh children in Tamil Nadu who take noon meal under the nutritious meal scheme. With a view to protecting employees cooking food and the children from smoke, under the scheme of modernization of kitchens, gas stove and pressure cooker are being provided to 1,850 nutritious meal centres and 5,940 child centres at a cost of Rs.805 lakhs, during the past three years. In the coming financial year, these items will be provided to 350 nutritious meal centres and 2,000 child

centres at a cost of Rs.224 lakhs. Overall, a sum of Rs.830 crores has been allocated for Noon meal scheme.

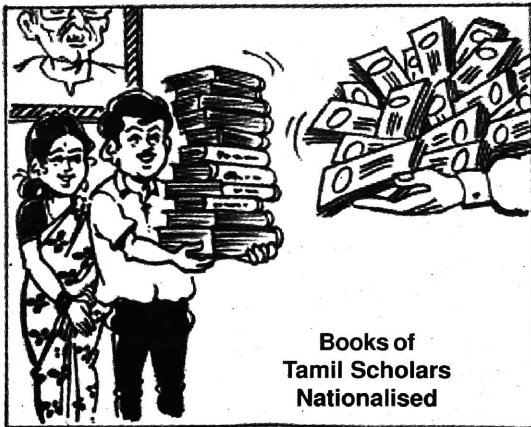
115. With a view to enabling more number of beneficiaries avail benefit under the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) which aims at providing nutritious food to children, pregnant women and adolescent girls, this Government has established 1,539 new child centres and 3,168 mini-centres. 73 lakh children are being benefited under the scheme for providing eggs to the children who take food in schools and child centres. A sum of Rs.176 crores is allocated in this Budget for this scheme.

Tamil Development

116. The success of the tireless efforts of the Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaigarnar in ensuring students studying in all schools in Tamil Nadu learn Tamil language, making the Union Government declare Tamil language as a classical language and establishing Central Institute for research

in Classical Tamil at Chennai, is a matter of satisfaction and happiness to all of us. This Government will leave no stone unturned for making Tamil one of the official languages of the Union Government and a language of transaction in all proceedings of the Madras High Court.

117. With a view to ensuring that the views and thoughts of great Tamil Savants who dedicated their lives to the Tamil language, benefits not only the present but future generations also, the Tamil Nadu Government is implementing the scheme of nationalization of books of Tamil scholars. The books of 95 Tamil scholars have been nationalized by the State Government so far. Out of these, the works of 87 scholars have been nationalized by the DMK Government. After assuming charge by this Government in 2006 the works of 65 Tamil scholars including that of Parithimar Kalaignar, Pulavar Kuzhanthai, Muthamizh Kavalar K.A.P. Viswantham, Ilakkuvanar, Prof. Vellaivanar, Dr. R.P. Sethupillai and Va. Suba. Manickam have been nationalised and solatium of Rs.4.86 crores have been given to their legal heirs. In continuation of this, this year books of 28 Tamil scholars namely Kuzhanthi Kavignar Ala. Valliappa, Kaviarasu Kannadhasan, Prof. Viayapuri Pillai, Pandithamani M. Kathiresan Chettiar, M. Raghavaiyangar, Pammal Sambandanar, A. Chidambaranathan



Chettiar, M.S.Poornalingam Pillai, T.M.Baskara Thondaiman, Palur Kannappa Mudaliar, Raya.Chockalinganar, Dr.M.Varadharajanar, Dr.S.Akathiyalingam, Pavalar N.R.Natchiappan, Puliyur Kesikan, Writer Chandilyan, Writer V.M.Kothainayaki, Chinna Annamalai, Poovai S.Arumugam, N.V.Kalaimani, Kavingnar Murugusundaram, Pulavar T.Kovendan, Writer Sundara Ramasamy, Tirukural Mani, A.K.Navaneetha Krishnan, Lakshmi, Vaduvor Duriasamy Iyengar, Jamathagni and J.R.Rangaraju will be nationalised and solatium will be given to their legal heirs having regard to the number of books written by them, their social impact and their literary value.

Tourism

118. Several important tourist spots in Tamil Nadu are being improved during the last three years at a cost of Rs.67 crores. Improvement works have been undertaken in Madurai, Kanyakumari,

Thanjavur, Tiruvarangam, Yelagiri, Rameswaram, Sapthavidangal, The Nilgiris, Kodaikanal, Kovai Kutralam, Mudumalai, Anaimalai, Chettinadu, Puliyanchoilai and Vellore Fort. Besides, works at a cost of Rs.29 crores are being undertaken in Tharangampadi, Pazhaverkadu, Kolli hills, Mamallapuram, Courtallam, Thiruchendur and Hogenakkal. In the coming financial year tourist spots like, Valparai, Grand Anicut, Yercaud, Tiruvanaikaval, Srivilliputhur, Sikkal, Velankanni and Nagore will be improved. In addition, a provision of Rs.10 crores is allocated in this Budget for improving the roads leading to important tourist centres.

Forest and Environment

119. With a view to improving the forest area in Tamil Nadu, the Tamil Nadu Afforestation Programme is being implemented at a cost of Rs.567 crores with the financial assistance from Japan Bank for International Co-operation. Under this project, afforestation programmes at a cost of Rs.63 crores will be taken up in the coming financial year. Under this, 450 checkdams and 150 recharge pools will be formed.



120. The scheme for growing trees in private lands, implemented by this Government during the last two years has received good response from the farmers of Tamil Nadu. With a view to increasing the forest cover in the State, one crore saplings will be planted in the coming year under this scheme. A sum of Rs.10 crores is allocated in this Budget for this purpose.



Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments

121.By upholding the principle of equality that qualified persons from all castes amongst Hindus can be Archakas, this Government has realized the dream of Thanthai Periyar. Six Archaka Training centres have been started and 207 students belonging to all castes have completed their one year training. This Government will take necessary steps to enable them work as Archakas in temples.

Sports and Youth Welfare

122.All village panchayats have been provided with sports materials at a cost of Rs.5 crores, during the past two years. With a view to enabling talented sports persons to get proper training, a new synthetic atheletic track will be set up at Tirunelveli at a cost of Rs.300 lakhs. Moreover, a swimming pool of international standard will be constructed in Coimbatore district at a cost of Rs.175 lakhs.

Welfare of Government Employees & Pensioners

123.Soon after assuming charge, in addition to filling up vacant posts in many departments, this Government has restored many benefits of Government employees that were taken away during the previous regime. By increasing the quantum of medical assistance for Government employees a new medical insurance scheme has been implemented with a view to benefiting not only the Government employees but also those working in the public sector undertakings, statutory boards, universities and local bodies. While only about 2,000 Government employees received medical assistance worth Rs.18 crores on an average annually under the previous medical assistance scheme, 19,311 employees have received medical treatment worth Rs.70 crores in first eight months alone under the new medical insurance scheme implemented by this Government. A provision of Rs.66 crores has been made for this scheme in this Budget.



124. An official level committee, appointed by this Government to examine the modalities of implementing 6th pay commission recommendations for state Government employees, has met various employee associations, received their representations and is currently examining them. In the meantime, this Government has ordered payment of interim arrears to the tune of Rs.4,247 crores to Government employees, the scale and magnitude of which has no parallel in any other state. **On receipt of the final report of the committee, the Government will examine and issue necessary orders to implement the revised pay scales at the earliest.**

125. Under the scheme for medical treatment to pensioners, in addition to providing Rs.24 crores in the past three years to make up the shortfall in view of the contribution received from them being insufficient, the ceiling on medical reimbursement has been increased from Rs.50,000 to Rs. one lakh by this Government. **Accepting the long standing demand for inclusion of the spouse of the pensioner also under this scheme for the purpose of providing medical reimbursement, medical expenses incurred by them also will be reimbursed.**

Annual Plan

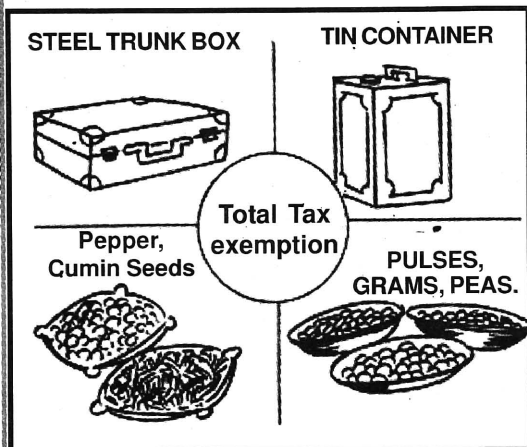
126. The Eleventh Five Year Plan is being implemented with an outlay of Rs.85,344 crores from the year 2007-2008.

Plan schemes have been implemented at an outlay of Rs.14,000 crores in the first year 2007-2008 and are being implemented at an outlay of Rs.16,000 crores during the year 2008-2009. **This outlay has been further increased and in the coming financial year 2009-2010, plan schemes are proposed to be implemented at an outlay of Rs.17,500 crores.**

Taxes

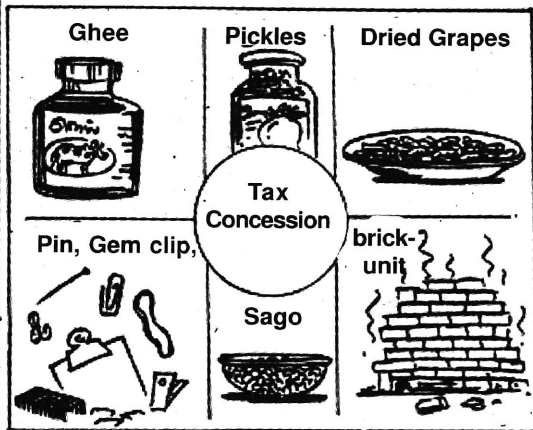
127. The electricity tariff and bus fares have not been increased in the last three years. Moreover, in the last three Budgets, this Government has only announced reduction and exemption of Value Added Tax on various commodities. Similarly, for everyone's benefit, it is proposed to announce tax reductions and exemptions in this Budget as well. Having regard to the requests made by the representatives of the trading and manufacturing community in the pre-budget meeting conducted by the Government on 4.2.2009 as is the custom with this Government, the following tax concessions are being announced for the benefit of consumers, traders and manufacturers in respect of Value Added Tax.

- ★ Last year, the important cooking ingredients such as mustard, aniseed and fenugreek were exempt from levy of tax, for dealers having total turnover up to a limit. Now, pepper and cumin seed which are in the same category will also be granted exemption with the same condition.



- ★ Sale of pulses, grams; peas and peas dhal are conditionally exempt from levy of tax. However, when these goods are purchased for use in the production of goods like flour, purchase tax is levied on these goods. To avoid this, pulses, grams, peas and peas dhal will be exempt from levy of purchase tax with effect from 1.1.2007.
- ★ At present 12.5% tax is levied on hand-made steel trunk box. These goods will be exempt from levy of tax.
- ★ Handmade tin containers will be exempt from levy of tax.
- ★ The tax levied at 12.5% on branded ghee will be reduced to 4%.
- ★ The tax levied at 12.5% on branded pickles will be reduced to 4%.
- ★ The tax levied at 12.5% on hand-made iron safe will be reduced to 4%.
- ★ The tax levied at 12.5% on dried grapes (Kismis) will be reduced to 4%.

- ★ The tax levied at 12.5% on bleach liquid will be reduced to 4%.
- ★ The tax levied at 12.5% on paper pin, safety pin, gem clip, identity card clip, examination board clip, rubber band and stapler pin will be reduced to 4%.
- ★ The tax levied at 12.5% on I.T. products, namely, i-pod, MP3 and MP4 players will be reduced to 4%.
- ★ The tax levied at 2% on the sale of sago and starch through Salem SAGOSERVE will be reduced to 1%.
- ★ To enable brick manufacturers to pay tax in a simple manner, tax will be levied on the basis of number of kilns, at the option of the dealers.
- ★ Manufacturers and traders whose turnover was below the threshold limit of Rs.5 lakhs and 10 lakhs, respectively, during the period from 1.1.2007 to 31.3.2007 have represented that they also may be given the benefits under VAT Act. Accepting their request, the assessment for the above period will be made under Tamil Nadu Value Added Tax Act (TNVAT Act) treating the total turnover for the year 2006-2007, including the turnover under TNGST Act, from 1.4.2006 to 31.12.2006 as annual total turnover under TNVAT Act. This assessment will be made only on dealers who have collected VAT during the above period. Due to this, about 10,000 small



manufacturers and traders will be benefited.

- ★ Necessary amendments will be brought relating to the provisions of Tamil Nadu Value Added Tax Act, 2006 and its rules in order to further simplify and fine-tune the procedures. The details of such amendments will be announced when the Demand for Grant of the Commercial Taxes Department is taken up. •

The announcement of tax exemptions and reductions made now, will take effect from 1.4.2009. In the interest of the public, manufacturers and traders this Government announces these concessions even though these concessions will entail a loss of revenue of Rs.100 crores:

128. This Government had reduced the fee charged for outdoor shooting for the benefit of the film industry. In addition, with a view to rejuvenating the film industry by attracting more people to the

Cinema halls, this Government had fully exempted the entertainment tax levied on Tamil films named in Tamil. However, in spite of providing such concessions to this industry, in view of the fact that these benefits have not been passed on to the general public, this Government will constitute a committee to review these concessions.

Overall Financial Position

129. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, I will now present the details on the fiscal projections for the Budget Estimates for the year 2009-2010. The total revenue receipts of the Government for 2009-2010 are estimated at Rs.58,270.93 crores and the total revenue expenditure is estimated at Rs.59,295.28 crores. In addition, the total capital expenditure of the Government including net of loans and advances is projected at Rs.10,799.30 crores in the coming financial year.

130. Under the circumstances stated above, revenue deficit of the Government of Tamil Nadu is estimated to be Rs.1,024.34 crores and the total fiscal deficit is estimated to be Rs.11,823.64 crores in the coming financial year. This situation of revenue deficit has arisen on account of declining trend in the growth of revenue receipts of the Government due to slowdown in country's economy, likely increase in salaries as per sixth pay commission recommendations and higher allocation for various welfare schemes. In spite of this,

realising the fact that increasing the development expenditure of Government is the only way to protect the people belonging to the lowest strata of the society from getting affected due to the adverse impact of the difficult economic conditions prevailing in the country now and to continue to take the State on the path of development, this Government has ensured adequate allocation of funds for various schemes. The Hon'ble members may note that, even in this situation, the total fiscal deficit of the State is within the three percent of the Gross State Domestic Produce, as stipulated in the Tamil Nadu Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2003. Taking into account the net Public Account, the overall deficit will be Rs.6.36 crores. This deficit will be made good by economy in expenditure and better tax administration.

131. A plan of action for future has been indicated in the Medium Term Fiscal Plan given as annexure to the Budget Speech. I request that this may be taken as read as part of the Budget Speech. This Government will effectively adhere to the fiscal targets indicated in the Medium Term Fiscal Plan.

132. Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam - which was founded by Perarignar Anna, strengthened and has been in sustained and continuous existence since then - has assumed office on the strength of the massive mandate given by the people of this State and has been formulating and implementing various schemes to bring prosperity and benefits, resulting in development of all sections of the society, especially the common man. The

achievements of this Government during the last three years after coming to power for the fifth time, bearing testimony to this Government's endeavour to protect and nurture the treasures of language, art, tradition and culture of the ancient Tamil race, are abundant.

133. If one can recall the following list of accomplishments, it can be realized that, the thoughts and deeds of our Chief Minister Kalaignar constantly revolve around the downtrodden alone. Here are a few examples from the list of achievements:-

- ★ 20 Kilograms of rice per month to 1.86 crore families at one rupee a kilogram.
- ★ Rs.80 crores worth rice, dhal, jaggery etc., to 1.84 crore families as Pongal gift for celebrating Tamil festival of Pongal which has been declared as Tamil New Year.
- ★ Waiver to the tune of Rs.7,000 crores of co-operative loan for 22,40,739 farm families.
- ★ Opening of Uzhavar Sandhais numbering 117 with a facelift benefiting farmers and consumers.
- ★ Financial assistance of Rs.104,97,44,000 to 3,74,357 families of unorganised labourers.
- ★ Free colour television sets to 56,26,557 poor families at a cost of Rs.1,374,54,30,000 so far.
- ★ Free gas stoves with connections to 11 lakh families at a cost of Rs.220 crores.

- ★ 2,10,289 acres of land given free of cost to 1,75,159 poor landless agricultural labourers .
- ★ Free house site pattas to 6,54,308 poor families.
- ★ Eggs and bananas thrice a week to 73 lakh children and students.
- ★ Waiver of special fees to over 50 lakh students studying in Tamil medium Government and aided schools and waiver of Government examination fees to students of 10th and 12th standards.
- ★ Free bus passes to 24.82 lakh school children and concessional bus passes to 2.99 lakh college students.
- ★ Rs.355.89 crores as marriage assistance for 2,14,189 poor girls.
- ★ Rs.487.56 crores as financial assistance to 10,78,612 poor pregnant women.
- ★ Free electricity to 1,42,369 handloom weavers, 1,05,182 power loom weavers and 2,39,511 farmers who obtained power connection under the self financing scheme.
- ★ Assistance of Rs.176,15,30,604 to 3,53,488 educated unemployed youth.
- ★ Employment to 3 lakh youth in Government and Government organizations.
- ★ Financial assistance to 15,29,582 old aged persons and destitute widows at the rate of Rs.400 per month.
- ★ Pay scales and pension to 2,12,981 noon meal workers.

134. During this three year period of administration by Kalaigarnar, who gave the saying that, "Don't forbid temple, forbid temple from turning into a tent of tyrants" to Tamil Nadu, 3072 temples have been renovated, repaired and restored by conducting Kudamuzhukku at a cost of Rs.65 crores. 2,790 works such as renovating old temple chariots, crafting new golden temple chariots and providing necessary facilities for the devotees have been carried out at a cost of Rs.257 crores. 46 ancient temples of historical importance are being renovated at an estimated cost of Rs.10 crores. Also justice has been done with the world famous Natarajar temple at Chidambaram coming into Government's fold.

135. With a view to reminding the multiple facets of the ancient Tamil culture which came into existence along with the Moon, great Sun, Sky, Stars and the deep Sea and ensuring that the present and future generations remember and praise the scholars, political leaders, freedom fighters and literary figures right from Sangam poet Kaniyan Poongundranar, who before 2000 years had got measure of the world through his thoughts and reaching the pinnacle of humanity, declared that 'Every place is our place and Everyone is our relative' to Kumaran, the protector of the tri-colour – everlasting monuments have been established by this Government. Under this rule, the statues of Thyagi Arya alias Bashyam, Thyagi Sangaralinganar, Thyagi Shenbagaraman, Veeran Azhagumuthukon, S.S.Ramasamy

Padayachiar, Thyagi Kakkan, Nadigar Thilagam Sivaji Ganesan – monuments and commemorative halls for Poolithevan, Kattabomman, Sundaralingam, Viswanatha Das, Jeevanandham, Thillaiyadi Valliyammai, Mahakavi Bharathiyar, Annal Ambedkar, Mootharignar Rajaji, Namakkal Kavignar Ramalinganar, Udumalaiyar, Pattukkottaiyar – memorials for Maruthu Pandiyar, Pasumpon Thevar Thirumaganar, Thanthai Periyar, Perarignar Anna, Perunthalaivar Kamarajar, Periyavar Bakthavatsalam, Quid-e-Milleth, Makkal Thilagam M.G.R. (first memorial) – Omanthoorar Government Estate, Sir Pitti Thiyagarayar Auditorium and Kalaivanar Arangam – seven storeyed Silappathikaram memorial at Poompuhar, Valluvar Kottam at Chennai and the sky-high statue of the famous Saint Thiruvalluvar at Kanyakumari surrounded by seas - have been established, thus ensuring that Tamil Nadu will never forget them.

136. After Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaignar gave his consent to the demand for installing the statue of the Kannada poet Sarvajna at Chennai, touched by this magnanimity, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka has agreed to provide necessary cooperation to install the statue of Saint Thiruvalluvar at Bengaluru. Pursuant to this, I wish to inform with delight that the statues of Saint Thiruvalluvar and Poet Sarvajna will be installed shortly, thus fulfilling the dreams of Kannadigas living in Tamil Nadu and Tamils living in Karnataka. It is also the wish and objective of this Government that such cordial relationship between states should grow and prosper.

137. This Government which is working each and every day, with a view to realizing the dream of Puratchi Kavignar Bharathidasan –

“Crowds of Tamils like floods
crowds of sterling heroes
Though several forms
Their heart beats as one.
Malice cannot approach them
When'll come the day
when I watch in ecstasy
At the world's bewilderment
on watching this scene?”

has been carrying out great work with the support of the United Progressive Alliance Government and with the hope that the support of Tamil people will be always be available for achieving the prosperity of this state and every household, glory of the race and language, sustained religious harmony by adoring secularism and fulfillment of the unique thoughts of Anna and the exemplary endeavours of our Kalaignar.

138. I place the Budget for the year 2009-2010 before this house, conveying my heartfelt thanks to the Principal Secretary, Finance Thiru K. Gnanadesikan, IAS and other officials of all Government departments including Finance department who have worked tirelessly and co-operated to prepare this Budget.

Vanakkam

K. Anbazhagan
Minister for Finance

★ ★ ★

Hon'ble Chief Minister Inaugurates Chennai Sangamam



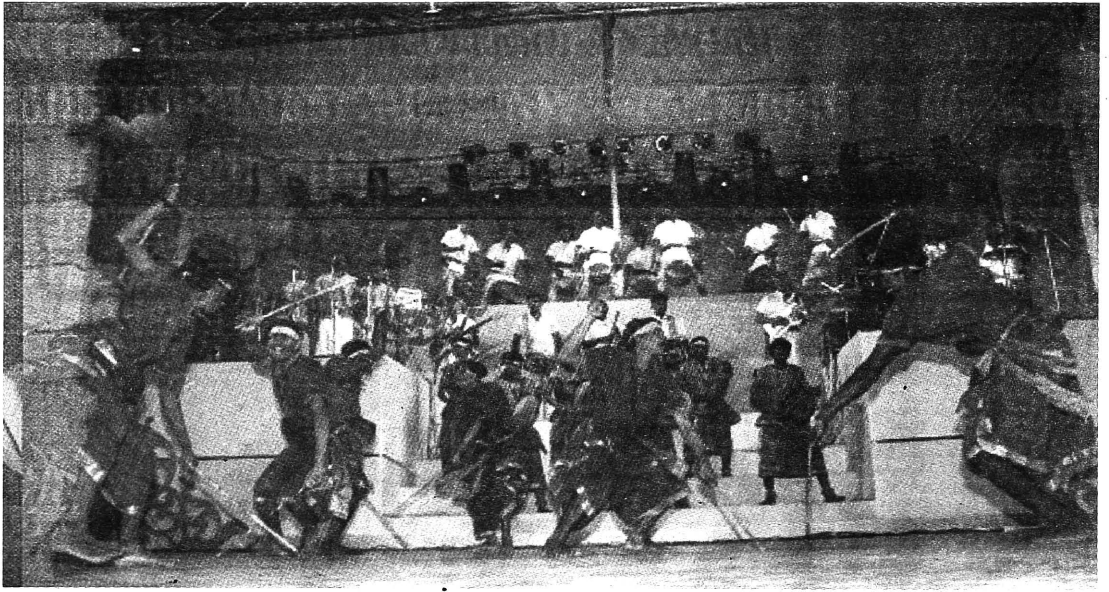
Two years ago, while attending a function in Chennai, Hon'ble Union Tourism Minister Tmt. Ambika Soni had said that the Centre would help setting up a hall with a seating capacity of 2,500.

On January 10, 2009 the Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaignar M.Karunanidhi while participating in the inauguration of Chennai Sangamam, reminded the Union Minister about the commitment. Tmt. Soni said she had

not forgotten her promise and the amount had been decided upon.

Funds for constructing a Chamber Hall in Chennai will be sanctioned if the State Government sends a proposal within seven weeks, Tmt. Ambika Soni said. She explained that the amount could not be sanctioned if elections to the Lok Sabha were announced.

The Chief Minister appreciated the efforts of Poet Tmt.Kanimozhi MP in organising



the Chennai Sangamam festival saying she was spared from election work in Thirumangalam constituency to enable her to make the arrangements.

Hon'ble Overseas Indian Affairs Minister Thiru. Vayalar Ravi said, "when it comes to culture of the South, it is Tamil Nadu that dominates the mind of the North Indians." He termed Tamil cinema the cultural expansion of the South.

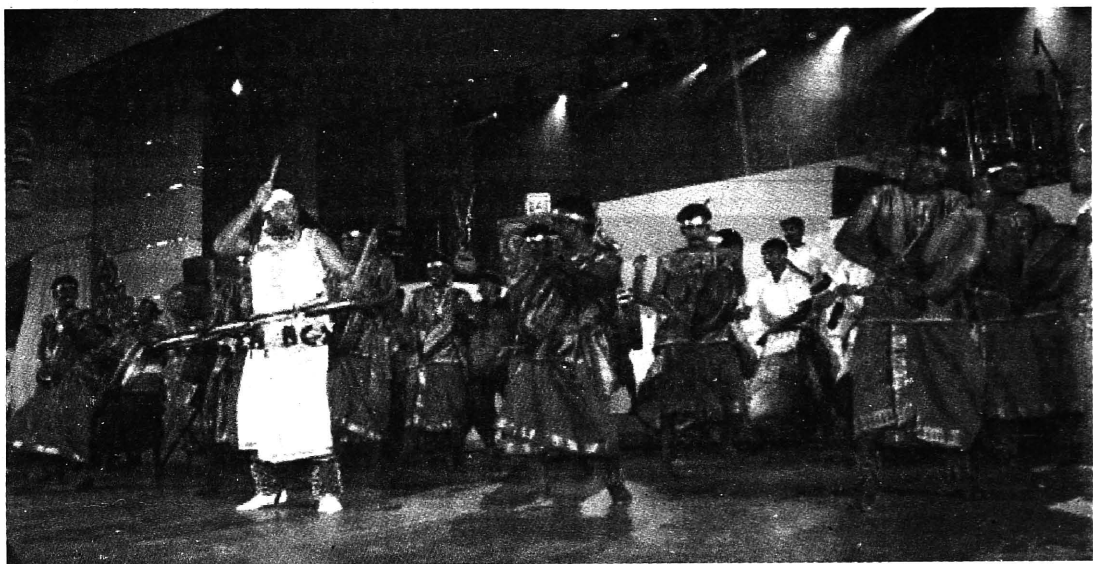
Earlier, the opening ceremony was marked by a confluence of folk and classical music on the theme 'Nadanthai Vaazhi Cauvery,' conceived by Poet Kanimozhi. There were classical dance performances, folk dances, kaavadi aatam, beating of varieties of drums, sendai melam, playing of nadhaswaram and thavil and display of silambam and other martial arts.

In the end, Percussionist Sivamani joined the folk artistes.

The Hon'ble Minister for Tourism Thiru N. Suresh Rajan and Tamil Maiyam founder Thiru. Jagath Gasper Raj spoke.

A reverberating start to the city's own cultural fete: As 18-year-old E.Muthuselvi's Silambam danced to the tune of 'Nadanthai Vaazhi Cauvery' on January 10, 2009 the applause only reinforced the cultural traditions of Tamil Nadu with women of courage and grace.

The inaugural programme was organised at the Centenary Auditorium of the University of Madras was a lively and creative mix of folk and classical traditions involving 450 artists and technicians. Directed by Member of Parliament Poet



Tmt. Kanimozhi, the opening programme focussed on the ancient and enduring richness of the River Cauvery passing through the hills (kurinji), forests (mullai), river-fed fertile plains (marutham) and the coast (neythal) of Tamil Nadu.

The 7-day Chennai Sangamam, an inclusive city festival of performing artistes from many disciplines and traditions will have around 4,500 performances across the city. The parks and beaches in the city were all set to become lively and colourful with various programmes.

Folk artistes steal show at Sangamam:

The two-hour cultural programme, was mostly percussion laden. Hon'ble Minister for Local Administration and Rural Development Thiru M.K. Stalin, Hon'ble Minister for Electricity Thiru Arcot N.Veeraswami participated in the function.

The event was a medley of what Sangamam had to offer this year, and was on at the Centenary Hall, University of Madras. Over 450 artistes participated in the inaugural event.

Percussion instruments of every size and of folk origin, from the chendai, melam, periya melam, thavil and mridangam, turned up in regular intervals and sizeable numbers on stage, sending the ever-enthused gallery into a tizzy with their varying beats.

The two-hour long cultural programme reached its zenith in the presence of ace-percussionist Sivamani, whose rarely-failing on-stage energy had everyone, including a few ministers, tap feet or clap hands to varying rhythms, emerging from a whole range of instruments he was accompanied with.

★ ★ ★

Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi

STRESSES ON CLEANSING COOUM RIVER



Expressing happiness over the impressive strides made in improving Chennai's infrastructure, the Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi said he would be fully satisfied only "when crystal clear water flows in river Cooum".

Inaugurating the flyover at Thirumalai Road - Gopathi Narayana Road (G.N. Chetty road) junction, the Hon'ble Chief Minister recalled the days when the late philanthropist Patchaiappa Mudaliar bathed in the cooum river. The river should be cleaned in such a way that "our children can happily swim in it."

The new flyover, constructed at a cost of Rs.16.50 crore, was named after Kalaivanar N.S. Krishnan. His statue was installed in the junction by Arignar Anna.

"It was the last public function attended by Anna. It was presided over by me. So the flyover will be named after Kalaivanar," the Chief Minister said.

The Chief Minister said all local bodies, whether they were under the control of the ruling party or opposition, were getting adequate funds from the present Government.

The Chief Minister said Chennai had developed impressively and it would not be an exaggeration to say that its roads and by lanes were on par with those that matched world standards.

The Chief Minister sent a strong message to his political detractors that their criticism of the Government's welfare projects could not

deter him from executing several other popular schemes for the benefit of the common man.

He said that not a single flyover was built by the previous Government though its leader had arrested me and others alleging corruption in the construction of the flyovers during my tenure as the Chief Minister of the State. "Only at the intervention of the Centre, we were released after our incarceration in the jail for a week," he added.

He sarcastically said, "While we build flyovers for people's welfare, my political detractors break them all for sadistic pleasure, and for fixing us under some pretext or other unnecessarily." Voicing his concern over the traffic problems in the city, the Chief Minister said that his Government had so far built 76 big and 26 small bridges and 10 flyovers, the first flyover being the Anna flyover near the Gemini Circle in the seventies. He heaped praises on his political allies, particularly the Congress, for their support extended to welfare schemes executed by his Government.

He said that his Government had given the people of Tamil Nadu improved roads, apart from bridges and flyovers, and many other welfare schemes, which would have the appreciation not only from the local people but also from the foreigners who visited Chennai for various purposes.

In 1967, there was only the Corporation of Madras, "Now, there are over 10 Corporations, including the one in Tiruchy, Coimbatore, Salem,

Madurai, Tirunelveli, Tirupur, Erode, Vellore and Thoothukudi, which are all executing welfare schemes for the benefit of people in their respective regions", he said.

"There is a difference between the present and previous rulers," he said and added that this Government would always try to promote all types of schemes for the benefit of everyone.

Hon'ble Minister for Local Administration and Rural Development Thiru. M.K. Stalin said funds had been sought from the World Bank to clean the river. He also disclosed his plans to seek the help of Sathya Sai Trust, which had earlier provided financial assistance for improving Krishna canals. The Chief Minister had asked for assistance when Sai Baba visited him. "Along with PWD Minister Thiru. Durai Murugan will soon approach Sathya Sai Trust," he said adding that "we will achieve the task of cleaning the river within the term of the present regime".

Thiru. M.K. Stalin said Tamil Nadu had been allotted and additional Rs.345 crore under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, besides Rs.360 crore allotted earlier.

Hon'ble Union Minister Thiru. T.R. Baalu, Thiru. Dayanidhi Maran, MP, Chief Secretary Thiru. K.S. Sripathi, Municipal Administration Secretary Thiru. Niranjan Mardi, Chennai Mayor Thiru. Subramanian, Chennai Corporation Commissioner Thiru. Rajesh Lakhani also participated.

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3G services Launched in Tamil Nadu

Chief Minister Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi Inaugurates



Video calling, which gives mobile users the chance to see the person at the other end of the line, is set to become a reality in Tamil Nadu soon with the launch of 3G (third generation) mobile services by BSNL on February 22, 2009.

From his hospital bed, the Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi made the first video call over a 3G phone to Hon'ble Union



Minister Communications and IT Minister, Thiru A. Raja congratulating him and BSNL officials for launching the new service in Chennai.



The Chief Minister said communications technology was a boon to the underprivileged and that BSNL schemes, including the recently announced Rs. 0.50 per minute “Golden 50” scheme, would benefit the poorer sections especially.

The Union Minister Thiru. A. Raja said BSNL would launch 3G services in Tamil Nadu commercially “around April 20.” It was planning to cover 700 cities with 3G services. Chennai, Kancheepuram, Tiruvallur and other places will be considered in Phase-I.

Mobile Number Portability would be implemented in metropolitan cities and

category “A” circles by August 2009, and in the entire country by the end of 2009.

“Once implemented, it will allow subscribers to migrate from one operator to another operator for better services while retaining their numbers. It will promote competition among the operators to provide better quality with more value-added services at lower tariff,” he said.

While BSNL and MTNL had received spectrum for launch of their services (MTNL launched its 3G service in Delhi last December), the auction of spectrum for private players would take place next month in spite of the hurdles, he added.

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2,500 middle schools to get computers



Hon'ble Minister for Local Administration and Rural Development Thiru M.K.Stalin on February 19, 2009 said that State Government in the 2009-10 budget has announced several initiatives to ensure that free education is imparted in government and aided schools.

Speaking at a function to distribute cash incentives totalling Rs.4.95 lakh to 1,035 Corporation school teachers who guided students to score well in the board examinations, he said a sum of Rs.50 crore had been allocated for providing computers to 2,500 middle schools in the coming financial year.

He said that the Government had waived the public examination fees of about 11 lakh Tamil medium students in 10th and 12th classes belonging to Government and aided schools, the special fees paid by about 50 lakh students studying in classes 6th to 12th and special fees paid by students of Government Industrial Training Institutes.

At the programme, the Hon'ble Minister presented 844 computers and 78 printers worth of Rs.3.08 crore to high schools and higher secondary schools.

Chennai Mayor Thiru M.Subramanian said that teachers were instrumental in moulding the students. He highlighted the measures initiated by the Chennai Corporation to improve infrastructure at its schools and encourage teachers to perform better. ❖

PRIME MINISTER INAUGURATES PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIWAS

GLOBAL INDIAN KNOWLEDGE NETWORK LAUNCHED



The Hon'ble Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, inaugurated the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2009 at Chennai on January 8, 2009. Launching a new initiative called 'The Global Indian Knowledge Network', the Hon'ble Prime Minister said that this network will connect people of Indian origin from a variety of disciplines to users at the national, state and local levels in India. He added that the Network will facilitate transfer of knowledge and serve as a 'virtual think tank' to generate new ideas on issues such as development, education and healthcare.

Following is the text of the Prime Minister's address on the occasion:

"We have congregated in the southern most state of India and in a city where traditions and culture blend with modernity and technology with great ease.. I am sure many of you will be visiting the great temples at Mahabalipuram. They stand testimony to our sea-faring history. The ancient Tamil people, the ancient Telugu people, the people of Bengal and Orissa, have all sailed through the sea to our East, not to conquer lands but to conquer the hearts and minds of the people they came in contact with.

This Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is our contemporary tribute to that great spirit, to that great heritage and to the excellent work you all

continue to do as people of Indian origin in your respective countries. It is a tribute to your spirit of adventure and enterprise which have transformed you and the Indian Overseas community into powerful agents of social and economic change and the world admiration in distinct lands.

You come to this Conference from distant lands from all around the world. Our Chief Guest today, His Excellency Mr. Ramdien Sardjoe, the Vice President of Suriname, comes from the other side of our planet. Yet, he has inside him the blood of his Indian ancestors. His leadership and contribution to public life are a testimony to the achievements of the sons and daughters of India who have travelled to distant lands, and excelled in their respective professions. We take great pride in their achievements.

We feel proud of the great achievements of the people of Indian origin around the world. More than any other people, the people of India and of Indian origin know the meaning of tolerance and the art of living together regardless of caste, creed, religion or language.

Pluralism and the willingness to live with each other despite our differences is a deeply embedded trait of Indian culture. That is why I have often said that those who pursue the politics of exclusion, of monotheism, who divide people between "us" and "them", betray the very idea of India. Our civilization was built

on reason; on the willingness to engage in dialogue. As my friend Prof. Amartya Sen has reminded us, we Indian people have been over the centuries, an argumentative people. But I also say that we have been a consensual civilization.

The recent terrorist attacks in Mumbai were a grim reminder of the grave threat posed by extremism and terrorism to our pluralistic and liberal traditions. There are some who would not like to see India succeed. But we have shown, over and over again, that we will not allow the forces of terrorism and extremism to destabilize our polity, our economy and our society. We have taken several measures to strengthen national security, to promote national cohesion and we will continue to work with the international community to ensure that there are no safe havens and launching pads for terrorists.

Despite the global economic downturn, the fundamentals of Indian economy continue to remain strong. We expect to achieve a growth rate of about 7% this year, which will be among the highest in the world. Much of India's growth is internally driven and I expect we can maintain a strong pace of growth in the coming years. That certainly will be our ambition.

India is actively involved in the meetings of the global G-20 countries, which are deliberating on the creation of a new global

financial structure. We need to ensure that any new architecture that emerges is suited to the new challenges and vulnerabilities facing the world economy and simultaneously it must be reflective of the changes that have taken place in the economic structure over the years. Countries like India have a right to be given their due place in the evolving scheme of things.

A few months ago the international community lifted restrictions to end our nuclear isolation of the last thirty four years. The overseas Indian community, specially in the United States, played a key role in ensuring this outcome and in mobilizing congressional support for it in the United States. For this we are truly grateful to all of you. But much more importantly, this is a sign of the growing role that Indian origin communities are now playing in public policy and opinion making across the world. We applaud you for that contribution.

I am sure that each one of you would have sensed the growing respect with which India is today regarded in the world. -India's rise is increasingly being regarded as an important dimension of the emerging international world order. Our counsels on key global challenges are not just being heard, but are being actively sought and in this enterprise of changing the image of India, the overseas Indian community have played a magnificent role and I thank you for that.

The Overseas Indian Citizenship Scheme which we had announced in 2006 has elicited an overwhelming response. I am therefore happy to announce that henceforth OCI card holders who are qualified professionals - doctors, dentists, pharmacists, engineers, architects and chartered accountants - will have the benefit of practicing their professions here in our country. Further details to operationalize this benefit are being worked out.

I am happy to launch today a new initiative called 'The Global Indian Knowledge Network'. This Network will connect people of Indian origin from a variety of disciplines to users at the national, state and local levels in India. My hope is that the Network will facilitate transfer of knowledge and serve as a 'virtual think tank' to generate new ideas on issues such as development, education and health-care.

I would like to say a few words about the five million Indian workers working in the Gulf. I have seen their contributions first-hand when I recently visited Oman and Qatar. I was amazed to see their grit, their determination, and how they are contributing magnificently to processes of wealth creation in these countries.

We are therefore concerned at the rise in tensions in the region as a result of the attack in Gaza that has led to the needless loss of lives of many innocent men, women and

children. India has strongly condemned these incidents and it is our hope that the international community would get together and help restore peace in the region as soon as possible. I wish to reiterate our unstinted and unwavering support for the just Palestinian cause.

We have put in place several measures for better protection and welfare of our workers overseas, including by entering into inter-governmental agreements.

I am happy to inform you that we have launched a comprehensive e-governance project on migration. Under this project, every worker will be issued a 'Smart Card' that will contain all details of the worker, his work contract, his employer, his insurance etc. This data will also be available to the Government of India as well as our missions overseas. The objective of this project is to transform emigration process into a simple, transparent, orderly and humane process.

Till now, at these gatherings, we have celebrated the spirit of adventure and enterprise of the global Indians. This year, let me add, that we have made contact with a distant pravasi that you have all grown up hearing about - Chandamama!

When Chandrayaan-I soared into the skies last October, it was not just a display of India's technological achievements. It was the fulfillment of an ancient dream, to meet

Chandamama! I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, that one day an Indian, desi or pravasi, will complete that journey and we will be able to land a man on the moon from India.

It is this sense of confidence in our future that defines the India of today. I urge you all to come and participate in this great adventure of human development within the framework of a free and open society and an open economy.

I have often said no where else a billion people are trying to seek their economic and social salvation in the framework of a functioning democracy committed to respect for all fundamental human rights, commitment to the rule of law and if India succeeds it will have profound implication for the development of the rest of the country of the third world. India welcomes your participation in our social and economic development.

Modern science and technology have created many new frontiers of knowledge to be harnessed for human development and well being. I hope your conference gives us more ideas on how we can work together for India's progress and your welfare. With these words, I once again welcome you all to this magnificent Conference."

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CEREMONIAL GRANDEUR MARKS REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS



The 60th Republic Day on 26th January, 2009 was celebrated in the State with traditional fervour, march-past and unfurling of the national tricolour.

His Excellency the Governor Thiru Surjit Singh Barnala hoisted the flag near the Gandhi statue on the Marina. Hon'ble Minister for Finance Prof. K. Anbazhagan presented the gallantry awards. He deputised for Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaighnar M.Karunanidhi, who was hospitalised early on January 26, 2009 after he complained of backache.

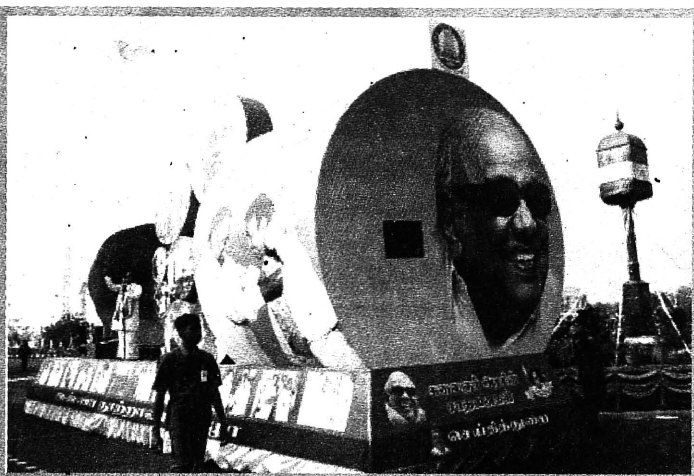
The ceremonial march past on the occasion had 39 contingents, including those of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Railway Protection Force, Chennai City Police, Mounted Police, Commando Force, Fire Service, Nilgiris Police, Home Guards, National Cadet Corps, Bharat Scouts, Road Safety Patrol and Ex-servicemen.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister distributed the Anna Medal for Gallantry 2009 to Salammal of Srinivasapuram village

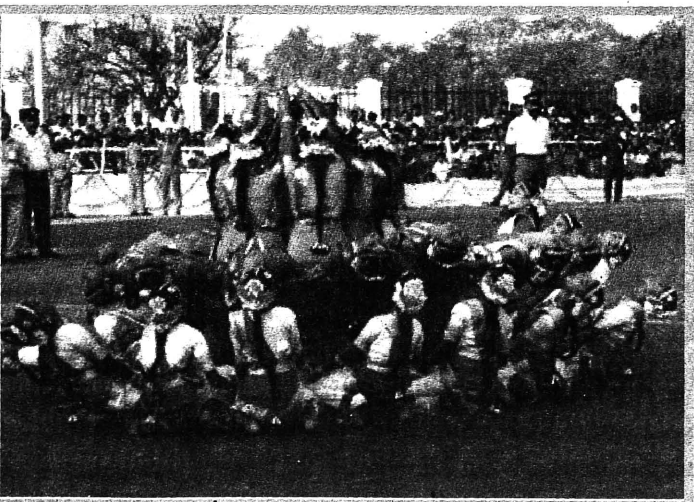
in Krishnagiri district. It was presented posthumously to Dhabith Ali of Devipattinam village in Ramanathapuram district. The award carries a medal, a cheque for Rs. 10,000 and a citation. Thiru. R. Radhakrishnan, now Inspector of Police at Perambur police station in Mayiladuthurai, was given the Centre's Jeevan Raksha Padak.



The Kottai Ameer Communal Harmony Award was presented to Thiru. M.M.S. Abdul Wahab of Athiramapattinam in Thanjavur district. It consists of a medal, a cheque for, Rs.25,000 and certificate.



Thiru. SP Murukesan, a Additional Superintendent of Police, Prohibition Enforcement Wing, Cuddalore district, Thiru. Devaraj Mahendra varman, Deputy Superin- tendent of Poice, Thiruvanna malai district, Thiru. B. Kumar, Sub Inspector, Villupuram district and Thiru R Ravi, Sub Inspector, Kancheepuram





district received the Mahatma Gandhi medals for their out standing work in curtailing illicit liquor.

Students of the Chennai Corporation Higher Secondary School at Perambur, St. Raphael's Girls Higher Secondary School, Santhome, St. Patrick's Higher Secondary School at Adyar, Presidency Higher Secondary School at Egmore, Bharathi Women's College at Broadway, Stella Maris College and Dr.MGR Janaki College of Arts and Science for Women, Adyar, presented cultural programmes.

The Dangi dance of Gujarat, displaying a human pyramid, drew applause. Along with two other dance forms -Cheraw of Mizoram and Phag of Haryana - were organised by the South Zone Cultural Centre, Thanjavur.

The Information and Public Relations Department organised the traditional folk dances of Tamil Nadu.

Twenty two departments, including department of Co-operation, Fisheries, Forest, Horticulture, Tamil Nadu Electricity Board, Chennai Metrowater, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fire and Rescue Services participated in the procession of floats, highlighting their programmes and projects.

The first prize for floats went to the Department of Information and Public Relations, the second prize to the Department of Horticulture and the third prize to the Tourism Department Earlier, the Governor, accompanied by his wife, paid homage to Martyrs at the War Memorial.

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FOUNDATION LAID TO INDIA'S LARGEST ELEVATED CORRIDOR



Clarifying that the strong link between the Central and State governments had facilitated constructions of an elevated corridor in Chennai, Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaigal M. Karunanidhi asked the Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to firmly stand and cooperate in getting the Sethu Samudram project implemented.

Delivering his address at the function Chennai on January 8, 2009 in which the Hon'ble Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for India's longest elevated corridor meeting Chennai Port and Maduravoyal junction to be constructed at an estimated cost of Rs. 1600 crores.

The Chief Minister informed that he wrote a letter in this regard to the Prime Minister on 5.6.2006 one month after the present government took office reminding this promise and asked him to approve an elevated highway to Chennai Port to decongest traffic in the city.

Barring one or two the UPA government and the Hon'ble Prime Minister immediately conceded and sanctioned demands of the State government and have approved this Rs.1600 crore worth scheme. "I want to make clear that we could create this elevated highway (bridge) because of the bridge strongly linking the Central and State governments" he added.



As Hon'ble Union Minister of State Thiru G.K. Vasan pointed out the Centre had granted schemes and projects worth several thousand crores to Tamil Nadu among which the most noteworthy was the Sethu Samudram project, which had been the dream of Tamils for over 150 years and demand of various leaders and scholars including Arignar Anna and Perunthalaivar Kamarajar, the Chief Minister said.

The Chief Minister felt that the implementation of Sethu project might cause discomfiture for Sri Lankan government, but it would be treasure for the future of India. There were certain political parties opposing the project and favouring Sri Lankan government and had even

approached the Supreme Court to stall it. But we had to somehow get it completed in the interest and prosperity of Tamils.

Stating that the Sethu project was a challenge for the people of Tamil Nadu. He wanted the Prime Minister to be firm in getting the project implemented. The Chief Minister wished that the laying of foundation today would also serve as prelude to the completion of the Sethu project.

India's longest 4-way elevated expressway from the Chennai port to Maduravoyal will be ready within 36 months, said the Hon'ble Union Minister for Shipping, Road Transport and Highways Thiru. T.R. Baalu.



The 19-km expressway will begin near the War Memorial gate and run along the banks of the Cooum up to Koyambedu (14.5 km) and along NH4 up to Maduravoyal.

The last 1.5-km will be at the surface level. A sum of Rs.258 crore has been set aside as rehabilitation package for 12,000 families. The State and Central

governments have decided to share the cost equally.

“This project has been conceived to handle 7 million TEUs by 2017. The existing port can handle 1 million TEUs. The second container terminal, with a capacity of 1 million TEUs, will become operational by May 2009 and the Rs.3,686 crore mega terminal will handle the balance,” the Union Minister said.

“In the last 18 months, the Central Government widened 6,609 km of roads (3.99 km per day) as against 2,302 km (1.86 km/day) by the previous government. In the last four years, the Centre spent Rs.33,081 crore on road projects, Rs. 18,850 crore on port and shipping sector, Rs.9 crore on lighthouses and Rs.2,464 crore on the Sethu Project,” he said.

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BOOK RELEASED

The Dravidian movement, never propagated fundamentalist ideas, the Hon'ble Minister for Finance Prof. K.Anbazhagan said in Chennai on January 3, 2009.

“The oppressive forces unleash fundamentalist ideas whenever they fear they are losing their hold.” he said at a function organised to release “Pecharavam Kettilaiyo.” a collection of interviews of Poet Tamizhachi Thangapandian.

The Minister for Finance Prof. Anbazhagan said that the Dravidian movement never indulged in the act of destroying its enemies. “On the contrary it believes in engaging its enemies in a dialogue and conversation,” he said. Poet Tmt. Kanimozhi M.P., who received the first copy of the book, said the interviews had broken the stereotype images of women.

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TAMIL NEW YEAR TO BE CELEBRATED IN A FITTING MANNER

- Hon'ble Chief Minister



Hon'ble Chief Minister Kalaaignar M.Karunanidhi on January 15, 2009 distributed awards for Tamil scholars, who have contributed significantly to Tamil language and literature.

The Thiruvalluvar award was given to Thiru. Porko (Pon.Kothandaraman), the Periyar award to Thiru.Gnana Rajasekaran, the Ambedkar award to Thiru.Şolai (K. Soma sundaram), the Anna award to Thiru. A.Maraimalayan, the Kamarajar award to Thiru. A.Gopanna, the Bharatiyar award to Thiru. R.Maniyan, the Bharatidasan award to Tmt.Tamilachi Thangapandian, the Thiru Vi Ka award to Thiru. S.P.Arulanandam and the Thiru. K.A.P. Viswanatham award to

Thiru. T.Palamalai. The awards carry a medal, citation and Rs.1 lakh.

Felicitating the writers, the Chief Minister said that the cash component of the award was the State's gesture to reach out to writers and activists who had spent a lifetime in the service of the language.

He said that this year, the Tamil New Year, January 14, could not be celebrated in the manner it should have been because Tamils were being persecuted in some places. He promised that next year the scene would change. "In each district we will celebrate the Tamil New Year in a befitting manner."

Dwelling on the reasons as to why the awards were named after Tamil scholars and



statesmen of yesteryears, the Chief Minister said that because this was done, the image of the leaders and scholars also came to one's mind when the awards were being distributed.

When it came to images of scholars who lived centuries ago, there was a problem. Elaborating on the instance of Thiruvalluvar, he said that there were images of the scholar depicting him differently, about 60 years ago. Each group and community tried to appropriate him and to claim him as their own. It was intellectuals in the Dravidian movement, the Congress and some independent thinkers who came together to discuss the need for a common image of the scholar. The task was given to Venugopal Sarma of Mylapore. After he made a portrait, politicians with various affiliations were invited to view it. All sections approved the portrait.

The Chief Minister Kalaignar said that he later raised the issue in the Assembly and wanted the Bakthavatsalam Government to install the portrait in the Assembly

alongside statesmen. This was agreed to. Though the then Chief Minister Bakthavatsalam initially wanted Kalaignar to bear the cost of the painting and its installation, he announced the next day that the government itself would do it.

The Chief Minister Kalaignar said that people have started accepting Thai first as the Tamil New Year Day as more of them have begun celebrating it.

Compared to the previous year more number of people have celebrated the Tamil New Year this time. But from next year onwards our people should celebrate New Year in a very grand manner as the United States and the United Kingdom celebrate their Independence days with all the jubilation and euphoria. On the fore-shore expanses and the beach sands of the coastal towns, on the banks of tanks and ponds in big towns and District headquarters, the Tamil New Year day should be celebrated in a festive mood with the display of fireworks, the Chief Minister said.





Hon'ble Chief Minister **Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi**
inaugurated the scheme of free distribution of rice and
other ingredients for Sweet Pongal (1.1.2009)

India's Longest Elevated Corridor - Connecting Chennai Port & Maduravoyal

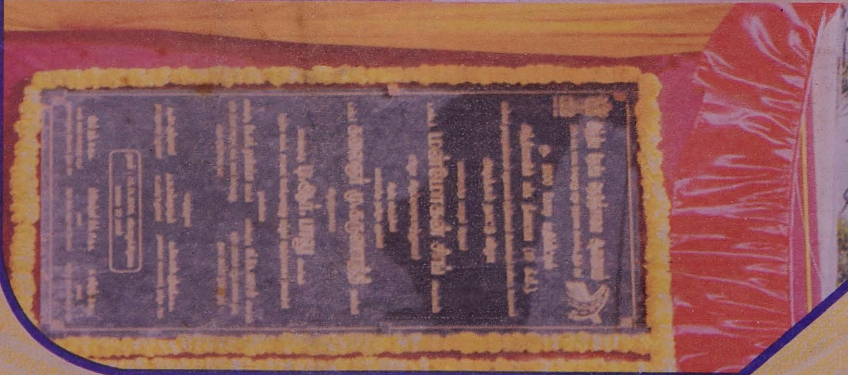
Dr. Manmohan Singh

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

Kalaigarnar M. Karunanidhi

Hon'ble Chief Minister

Thiru. Jayalalitha



Hon'ble Prime Minister of India **Dr. Manmohan Singh** laid the foundation stone for the Chennai Port - Maduravoyal elevated corridor.

Hon'ble Chief Minister **Kalaigarnar M. Karunanidhi** and Hon'ble Union Ministers participated in the function. (18.1.2009)