



**OPENING OF
TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY -
SECRETARIAT COMPLEX**

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
BY**

**HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU
KALAINAR M. KARUNANIDHI**

13.03.2010

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Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and
Hon'ble Tmt. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson, UPA,
who have come over to Tamil Nadu to inaugurate
Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly - Secretariat Complex
after successfully passing the Constitutional Amendment
Bill in the Rajya Sabha, for 33% reservation for women
in Parliament and State Legislatures.

His Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu
Thiru Surjit Singh Barnala,

Hon'ble Union Ministers,

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh
Thiru K. Rosaiah,

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka
Thiru B.S. Yediyurappa,

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Puducherry
Thiru V. Vaithilingam,

His Excellency the Lt. Governor of Puducherry
Thiru Iqbal Singh,

Hon'ble Speaker of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly
Thiru R. Avudaiappan,

Hon'ble Chief Justice of Madras High Court
Thiru Gokhale,

Hon'ble Ministers of Government of Tamil Nadu,

Hon'ble Judges of the High Court of Madras,

Members of Parliament,

Members of Legislative Assembly,

Thiru K.S. Sripathi, I.A.S., Chief Secretary to
Government of Tamil Nadu,

Officers and other Officials,

Beloved Leaders of various political parties, who
have come over here accepting our invitation,

Eminent personalities from various spheres of life,
My friends from the entertainment industry,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My brethren whom I hold dearer than my life,

The demand for reservation for women in Parliament and State Legislatures has been a dream for the last several years. There have been apprehensions whether it will ever see the light of the day. Overcoming all hurdles and after passing the necessary Bill in the Rajya Sabha, Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the beacon of sacrifice Tmt. Sonia Gandhi have come first to our State. Therefore we have got an unexpected opportunity to welcome them first on behalf of our State for having accomplished a historic achievement. I request all of you to applaud for a minute as a token of our happiness for this great achievement.

It was indeed the Justice Party Government, the first one to be installed in the Madras Legislative Council, which was inaugurated on 12th January 1921 by Duke of Cannought that conferred the right to vote on the women.

Our great leader Thanthai Periyar organized a conference for the advancement of women at Chengalpet in 1929 and passed a resolution in the conference demanding equal property rights for women. I am proud to inform that we, his disciples, only translated the above resolution into law in 1989 in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, after 60 years.

The United Progressive Alliance decided to elect the first woman President of India. Welcoming this decision, Tamil Nadu was the first State to invite Tmt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, organised a grand all women rally and sowed the seeds of her victory.

This is the place, where we honoured Tmt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India and presented 14 mementoes for having nationalized 14 banks in response to our demand voiced in the National Development Council, New Delhi, to nationalize them, despite a stiff opposition even within the Congress Cabinet.

When Tmt. Sonia Gandhi came to Chennai for election campaign, I welcomed her saying "Welcome to the daughter-in-law of Indira! Victory to the noble daughter of India!" All our country men are well aware that she continues to occupy the exalted position of the noble daughter of India. The Congress and the DMK continued the electoral alliance in the Assembly Elections of 2006 and in the Parliamentary Elections of 2009. Besides achieving success after success, both the State and Central Governments continue to implement many schemes necessary for the welfare of the people.

The understanding between Congress and DMK continues to prosper and it goes to prove the assertion

made by Tmt. Indira Gandhi "Karunanidhi will be firm in his stance both in alliance as well as in opposition", at the meeting held at the Marina Beach in 1980.

To sever this relationship, innumerable efforts and countless shuttles have been indeed made; concocted and imaginary propaganda spurn by the media with wild imagination, attempted to add force to these efforts.

But our firm resolve has defied all these endeavours to create enmity between us. I convey my gratitude for your friendship and determination.

I, instrumental in the construction of this magnificent edifice of India, am a simple person. I am from a small village and with humble family background. I am not favoured with any hereditary greatness. My family had lesser means than even a middle-class family. I did not graduate from any college. Anna blessed me to "study well". But I only "learnt" to obey the good people and did not have formal higher education.

Only thing I know is **work** and **work**. All I know is only **hard work** and **tireless hard work** alone, be it the field of Arts, Politics, Social Work or Literature.

I have never cherished any personal desire. I constantly think of the ways and means to see contentment on the faces of the poor and the downtrodden and toil always for them.

I am now 86 years old. Even in this 86th year, it has not dawned on me to construct a palatial villa of my own and to lead a life of luxury.

In the very same place where we have now gathered, a Government building was allotted to our Legislative Party while I was the Leader of the Opposition. From this very same place, our party MLAs including Professor Anbazhagan and myself were arrested and evicted throwing out our party belongings and were asked to go elsewhere. However, this incident became a springboard for the construction of our own building, "Anna Arivalayam", for our party.

The episode did not stop there. This imposing building has come up on the very same place where I was kept in solitary confinement, long through the dark night in the then CBCID office, after my arrest and battering on the fateful day at the mid-night hour.

I always desire to be kind towards one and all. Even my friends from the opposition know too well that I am considerate and nice even with the members of the

opposition. I have often counselled that our criticism of others should not lead to bitterness when we happen to come across them face to face in the future.

In addition to striving hard to uplift the down-trodden people of Tamil Nadu, by formulating appropriate schemes and programmes, we have never forgotten our lofty objective of elevating our mother tongue Tamil to its top position and celebrate its glory.

When I was a school student in the years 1936-1940, and of young age, I came across the wall writings in Tiruvarur containing slogans like "mobile temple service". These advertisements provoked me to introspect the need for "a mobile temple" when there were scores of existing temples.

One day, I raised this doubt and sought clarification from a wise old person in Tiruvarur.

He gave a scientific explanation with spiritual underpinnings that a simple renovation will mean carrying out repairs of a dilapidated temple, whereas, renovation of mobile temple will connote rectification of internal impairment and rejuvenation of human body, by appropriate medical treatment.

The deep impact of this explanation had resulted later, in the launching of scheme for poor and downtrodden like "Kannoli Vazhangum Thittam" (Free eye treatment and surgery scheme), Kalaignar Health Insurance Scheme for life saving treatments for 51 diseases, free emergency ambulance services scheme (108) and heart surgery scheme for children.

In continuation of these efforts, Tamil Nadu Government has announced a scheme to extend appropriate assistance to the handicapped persons, better known as differently abled persons, in keeping with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the persons with disabilities. India is the 7th country to sign this convention. I make use of this opportunity to request the Government of India to also consider to take up this scheme and to extend necessary assistance to the Government of Tamil Nadu, to implement the announcement it has made.

Various schemes implemented from 1969, when I became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu succeeding Anna, keeping in mind the political, social and economic development of Tamil Nadu, such as Schemes ensuring Social Reforms, Education Development Schemes, Schemes for creation of employment opportunities for

youth, creation of Ministries and Departments for focusing exclusive attention on the development of poor and disadvantaged sections, various irrigation schemes implemented throughout Tamil Nadu, Electricity Schemes, Road Development works, construction of innumerable bridges, Housing Scheme, etc., have won accolades and laurels on numerous occasions from the people of Tamil Nadu, as well from other States and also from the Government of India. On this occasion, I recall the memorials erected by our Government in testimony of the architectural excellence and cultural richness of Tamil Nadu and its eminent personalities.

This new complex stands tall, epitomizing the fond memories of those great men who strove for the welfare of Madras Presidency and later Tamil Nadu.

I dedicate my heartfelt gratitude;

- To my dear people of Tamil Nadu who gave me an excellent opportunity to construct this building;
- To Thanthai Periyar and Perarignar Anna who sowed the seeds of rationalist thoughts, love for Tamil language and Self Respect sentiments, nurtured, brought up and guided me;

- To the eminent leaders like Kamaraj, Rajaji, Babu Jagjivan Ram, Jayaprakash Narayan, Quaid-e-Milleth, P.Jeevanandam and Muthuramalinga Thevar, who guided me to sharpen my thoughts, to harmonize speed with tact in implementation, when I was struggling hard in the field;
- To my dearest brethren who have been moving with me affectionately and standing by me through the thick and thin and while in power or out of power and bolstered my body and spirit.

I appreciate from the bottom of my heart the thousands of the workforce who toiled tirelessly and whom I behold as my friends, the Construction Company, the Engineers and all the Government officers at different levels including Thiru. K.S. Sripathi, IAS, Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu,

Thiru. K. Gnanadesikan, IAS, Principal Secretary, Finance, Thiru. S. Ramasundaram, IAS, Principal Secretary, PWD and Thiru. S. Karunakaran, Chief Engineer, PWD for having translated my dreams into reality, a magnificent structure which shall become a grand landmark of the Chennai City.

I shower floral tributes of heartfelt gratitude to our Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh and Tmt. Sonia Gandhi for having accepted my affectionate invitation and having declared open the Complex despite exacting official commitments. I convey my thanks to His Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu for having participated and graced this function.

Similarly, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my beloved brother Thiru. K. Rosaiah, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Thiru B.S. Yediyurappa, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka, Thiru. V. Vaithilingam, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Puducherry and His Excellency the Lt. Governor of Puducherry, Thiru Iqbal Singh on behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu for gracing this function reinforcing my avowed desire of fostering kinship with the neighbouring States.

I convey my gratitude to the Hon'ble Union Ministers, Hon'ble Chief Justice and Hon'ble Justices of the High Court.

I must thank again and again the leaders of various political parties of Tamil Nadu who by their participation have added strength to my sentiments to uphold the democratic traditions in Tamil Nadu on the path shown

by Perarignar Anna, Hon'ble Ministers of Government of Tamil Nadu, Hon'ble Members of the Parliament and the State Legislative Assembly, learned Tamil Scholars, Friends of Film world, Friends from Print and Electronic Media, other dignitaries and general public for having participated in this function. I once again thank and take leave of you. **Vanakkam!**