

Backward Class Movements and its Historical Struggles in Tamil Nadu Politics

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Abstract

Since the first non-Brahmin association was established in the name "The Madras Non-Brahmin Association" till Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) there were many struggle conducted to get reservation in the Government Jobs and admission for College, but the dominant people called Aryans, also called Brahmins were able to get more number of seats in both government organization with the influence of their talent. To stop this social hierarchy the non-Brahmin movement such the Justice Party was established, also Periyar "Self-Respect Movement and Diravidar Kazhagam got a historical role against the Brahmins. Further, C.N. Anna and his follower role is very important in Tamil Nadu Politics. In this way, Dr. S. Ramadoss's Road Roko was very powerful to get reservation for the Vanniyar Peoples.

Key Words:

Brahmins; Non-Brahmins; Justice Party; Periyar; Anna; MGR; Karunanidhi; PMK

The composite State of Madras Presidency occupied the places Tamilnadu, greater parts of Andrapradesh, some parts of Kerala (Princely State of Thiruvithangur) and some parts in Karnataka (Princely State of Mysore). It was a home of obscurantism and custom where caste had taken deep root and its effect were huge than North India. In

this presidency, the Brahmin caste was a wide-ranging from another and it was top level in the way of life following by the Varna system (Four Varnas). And the higher caste peoples passionately preserved their traditional styles of life by cooking or serving food in a particular manner and maintain hygiene. But the lower caste peoples followed their life style differently with compared to Higher castes people. The caste has been defined based on the traditional occupation. So, the modern political development had divided the Hindus of the peninsular (it means three side covered by sea and one covered by land) India into three groups. The Brahmins (forward), non-Brahmins (backward) and Harijans (Scheduled Castes). In India the caste has economic, social and religious aspects. In the economic field it prohibits based on occupation and in the religious field it lays down certain customs and rituals. This same way followed even in madras presidency, a person's social status is defined by the caste rather than his economic means or the occupation he follows.

Status of the Brahmins in Madras Presidency

The Brahmins has been living with the honour "The Highest Caste" in Hindu social hierarchy, and occupied top level position in the society. Though they have only a less

number of the population, they have had ability to reach in all aspects of their life and have been in the fore-front in many fields. But nothing their contribution to the society other than they were upper stage through favour for British rulers and opponents to the non-Brahmins people. The English education enabled Brahmins to join government service in more number. Their strength constituted about 3.5 per cent

of the total population of Madras Presidency, but enjoyed more than 70 per cent of the total government posts. Even though the non-Brahmin accounted in the Madras Presidency above 85%, they are very low percentage in the Government jobs. The following tables 1 and 2 shows whether how many jobs and seats for college occupied by the Brahmins in Madras presidency.

Table No: 1

Caste Group	Deputy Collectors	Sub Judges	District Munsifs	Population
Brahmins	77	15	93	3.2
Non-Brahmin Hindus	30	3	25	85.6
Muslims	15	nil	2	6.6
Indian Christians	7	nil	5	2.7

Though the Brahmins 3.2%, they occupied 77 seats for Deputy Collectors, 15 sub-Judges, 93 District Munsifs, the non-Brahmins 85.6%, but they got only 30 sub-Collectors, 3 sub-Judges, 25 District Munsifs, the Muslims 6.6%, they occupied

15 sub-Collectors, 2 District Munsifs and Indian Christians strength 2.7%, they occupied 7 sub-Collectors, 5 District Munsifs. In this first table the Brahmins were the highest number occupied the government jobs.

Table No: 2

Community	1911		1921		1931	
	Per cent of Population	Per cent of students	Per cent of Population	Per cent of students	Per cent of Population	Per cent of students
Brahmin	3.0	35.5	3.5	39.5	2.0	31.0
Non-Brahmin	86.0	41.5	85.5	44.5	86.0	47.0
Muslim	6.5	5.5	6.5	5.0	7.0	6.0
Christian	3.0	13.5	3.0	10.5	4.0	12.0
Others	1.5	4.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	4.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0



Source: Census of India, Madras, 1911, Vol. XII, Part II, p.62. 1921, Vol. XIII, Part II, pp. 62, 161. 1931, Vol. XIV, Part II, pp. 256, 275. Reports on Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency for the years 1911, 1921 and 1931.

This table shows the following three censuses of Madras presidency in 1911, 1921 and 1931, the Brahmins were only, 3, 3.5 and 2 per cent respectively of the population. But the percentage of students among them was 35.5, 39.5 and 31 respectively. It reflects their enthusiasm for learning, in the same case the non-Brahmin were 86, 85.5 and 86 per cent respectively of the total Population. The percentage of students among them was only 41.5, 44.5 and 47 respectively. When comparison between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins, the non-Brahmins were far away in social status. Because, the low level of education among them was responsible for the poor percentage of employment in government services. Both tables show the Brahmins were the top level in job reservation and literacy rate.

Formation of Justice Party

To oppose the Brahmins dominant the first non-Brahmin association was established in the name "The Madras Non-Brahmin Association" was established by the two lawyers, P. Subramaniam and M. Purushothama Naidu, and it was aimed to recruit a thousand of non-Brahmin members in 1909. But this association did not get publicity and support among the non-Brahmin people. Because, both of the organizers were very weak for economic sources, so their association failed. After 3 years, in 1912 some of the non-Brahmin people like Saravanapillai, Duraiswami Mudhaliar, N. Narayanaswamy Naidu and G. Veerasamy Naidu established a new organization called "Madras United League" this organization was gradually grown. But this growth was not enough as expectation. So, there was need to

change the name for the fast growth. Then, the 'Madras United League' reorganized and renamed as "Dravidian Association" under the leadership Dr. C. Natesamudaliar in October 1, 1912. This new association was played actively in such way conduct Conference, Public meetings, discussion meetings and rallies. This Dravidian Association admired all the non-Brahmins peoples like Students, Educated people, populist etc. For the Magnet speech all non-Brahmins people eagerly participated the Dravidian Association function. When the first Annual Day function conducted, some famous people like Sir. P. Thiyagaraya Chettiar, Ramasamy Ningaer and Tharavat Madhavan Nayar (T.M. Nayar) these well-known persons eagerly participated in that function. For more publicity of the Dravidian Association the leaders aimed to establish a newspaper. In this way this association established three Newspapers with names of Dravidian, Justice, Andhira Prakasika in language in Tamil, English, Telugu respectively. As all these three newspapers need to control within one organization. So that, the South Indian People Association (stock Company) was formed. Its another aim was to establish a hostel for the non-Brahmin students under the head of Dr. C. Natesamudaliar. After they got success in both ideas, they got next ideas was to reorganize and rename the name Dravidian Association to oppose the strong team of Brahmins (Annipesan gave support to Brahmins and the congress, all of these three in one way) Then, the non-Brahmins leaders gathered and discussed to change the name, finally, the name was changed as South Indian Liberal Federation under the leadership of P. Thiyagaraya Chettiar, T.M. Nayar. These both leaders were well-versed among the people. After formed South Indian Liberal Federation, it eagerly played a vital role to awake the non-Brahmin people and the speech of leaders was admirable by the people. Day by day it was getting popularity among the people. Due to the popularity, the people



themselves called the South Indian Liberal Federation as Justice Party. Later, the Justice Party published a Manifesto in 1916 that was called as the "Non-Brahmin Manifesto", this Manifesto says, the total population of Madras Presidency is about 4.5 core. In this the non-Brahmins people are about 4 core and the tax paying people most are non-Brahmins, even though strength, the non-Brahmin people don't have any ability to stop the Brahmins dominant. The Brahmins are occupying the most and highest Jobs in the government, in Indian Civil Service and other competitive exam also the Brahmins has been passing. To stop this hierarchy, the non-Brahmins people must be helped each and every one to develop their social status. Always, must be aware and the children must be send to school. We should strive for the political development, social developmentsocial rights, and against untouchability, and we should develop ourselves in Education, Politics, Society and Economy.

The main aim of the Justice party was to defeat the enormously growing political influence of the Brahmins and o secure by sustained effort the rightful place for the non-Brahimn people in social affairs. In the election held on November 20, 1920 the MonteguChemsford reforms in 1919. The Justice party won a majority of seats and ford a new government under the chief minister Subburayalu Reddy. For the first time the Brahmins were crushed by the Justice party since it captured power. The justice party ministers started implementing their programmed of rendering social justice to the non-Brahmin community. The Justice Party ministry in the Madras Presidency enjoyed a majority not only in the government but in power to further the interest of the non-Brahmin community and break theirhandcuffs of social deprivation the party concerned itself with the problem of communal representation in various areas of government service, which meant the virtual ending of Brahimn monopoly there. The legislative council hall vibrated with the fiery

oratory of the Justice Party loyalists who exploded the myth of the intellectual superiority of the Brahmins and proved beyond doubt that it only non-Brahmins could get equality of opportunity with the Brahmins, they would not only equal but even shine them in all walks of life. Even though, the Congress was very powerful since 1920 to 1937, the Justice party was the main alternative political party to them in Madras presidency. In the 1937 election, the Justice party lost to the Congress. Due to the defeat of Justice party, it came under E.V. Ramaswamy leadership. Justice Party opposed and campaigned against the non-cooperation movement of M.K. Gandhi, it primarily due to his praise for Brahminism. It also oppose the anti-Hindi agitations since 1937 to 1940.

E.V. Ramaswamy and His Early Political Life

Ramasamy was second son of Erode Venkatasamy Nayakar and Ramasamy also called with the famous name as E.V.R., Periyar (it means great sage) etc. his Father was a popular business man in Erode. E.V.R. not study much but he used to help to his father. He was an active man and had a lot of friends. Generally, E.V.R was unselfish man and he has thought of mind to help for other people and he was forward thinker. When E.V.R helping to his father profession, he also became very famous as his father famous in Erode. As his famous he was elected for the post 'Chairman' in Municipality of Erode in 1917. This was the first step in public life and E.V.R. had good relationship with many popular people in Congress party like, Rajaji, Varadarajulu Naidu. Though admired with the Gandhi Principles, E.V.R, not join. It was due to the efforts of Dr. Varadarajulu Naide and Rajaji, that E.V.R entered in the congress organization. E.V.R enormous protest was, against toddy shop closing, also he cut down his own Coconut Trees (about 500 Tree) to be role model for other people. E.V.R participated in Gandhiji's non-cooperation movement, and he resigned from all post. In that situation he got more

enthusiasm to fight against free form alcohol and Untouchability. Also, his thought was to wear Khadhi(it means the clothes weaving by Hand and Leg) clothes and he was taking himself the Khadhi Clothes and going Village by Village as a hawker to urge the people to wear.

Also an incident was happening in a place of Kerala (Thiruvithangur Samasthanam) called 'Vaikom', the issue was the Harijans (Ezhavas people) people must not use the road near the Mahadevar Temple. This issue was sent to E.V.R. by his non-Brahmin Congress colleague in Kerala. After this message, E.V.R. arrived at Vaikom and agitated for this ritual customs, when the agitation was going on E.V.R. was arrested and imprisoned. Due to the severity of the agitation he was released. As the Vaikom struggle was spread in every nook and corner he became popular. He was given the title the Hero of Vaikom (Vaikom Veerar) by the people. Later, E.V.R. involved in agitation against the separate Kitchen, Mess, Prayer Assembly etc. between Brahmins and non-Brahmins students at a Gurugulam in Seranamadevi, in Thirunelveli District. V.V.S Iyar who was entrusted with the responsibility of running the Gurugulam, but he maintained Untouchability inside the Gurugulam. As E.V.R. involvement Iyar resigned from the post head of the Gurugulam in May 1925. E.V.R. the patriot and social reformer could not stand this communal nonsense and when his efforts to do away with casteism inside the Congress failed, he had no alternative but to walk out of its fold. He understood that with many, to practice was not so easy as to preach. As one who believed that social tyranny should be put an end to before political freedom, he began to direct his attention solely to free the down-trodden castes from the clutches of the arrogant Brahmin minority. And the justice party provided the right platform for him and so he joined that party and reinforced the Self-respect Movement which he had started for the elimination of social backwardness. In this way in every issue

E.V.R. was against to the Congress and this is reason for E.V.R. came out from the Congress party. E.V.R. understood step by step the Rajaji and Gandhiji Varnasrama Thought (Congress was against in E.V.R.'s communal Representation in the following congress conference, 1920 Thirunelveli, 1921 Thanjavur, 1922 Thiruppur, 1924 Thiruvannamalai, 1925 Kanchipuram, E.V.R. released himself from the Congress party. After came out from congress, E.V.R. began to attack congress party through campaigns and public meetings. This circumstances was the way for formation 'Self Respect Movement' at 1926.

The self-respect movement was very eagerness to fight against the Untouchability. An incident has been happening in Mayaranatharswamy Temple (Maayuram - formerly known by Mayiladuthurai in Tamilnadu) that is the Depressed Class people should not enter inside the Temple this is order from the local heads. The self-respect Movement agitated this incident and solved, wherever the caste Hierarchy custom happening there the self-Respect Movements would fight whether E.V.R. said, in this way, the self-respect movement fought every nook and corner in the Madras presidency for the justice.

E.V.R.'s Role in Justice Party and Birth of the Dravida Kazhagam

In contemporary Indian politics the justice party was isolated by its many controversial activities in such way it had the anti-Brahmin attitude shaped many of its ideas and policies by the opposing Brahmins in civil service, government jobs, politics, also it opposed Home rule movement and also campaigned against the non-cooperation movement of M.K. Gandhi (it primarily due to his praise for Brahmanism). After congress, started Self-Respect movement and gave outside support to the Justice party. He organized many public meetings and conference to put awareness among the people. By



influence E.V.R rational Knowledge, the Justice party people participated in Self-Respect movement meetings and conferences. E.V.R also agitated The compulsory introduction of Hindi with Justice party, like this way both organization ideologies was same, the justice party step by step pull him into its circle and later EV.R was elected Chairman of Justice party in 1938. After became president of the Justice party his ideology was more powerful to oppose the Congress, and favour for the non-Brahmins. For the honesty of the Party member the name of Justice Party changed as "DravidarKazhagam" (Dravidaian Association) under the leadership of E.V.R in Selam Conference in 1944.

C.N. Annadurai and circumstances leading to form Dravidar Muntera Kazhagam.

C.N. Annadurai also called as Anna (Elder Brother), was an orator while he was studying in "Pachiyappa" college in Chennai. He was distinction student and he got some post in his college period such post Secretary of the College in 1931, Chairman of the College in 1933. Anna was a great admirer of E.V. Ramasamy writings and Speeches, so that, Anna entitled himself as a member of the 'Self-Respect Youth League' his political life began from this way. As, Anna was a enthusiastic desire for social Justice made him gravitate to the Justice party. Though studied the policies of different political parties he was attracted through social reformation ideas of Justice Party Anna engaged some times in translating the speeches of the Justice party from Tamil to English who were more conversant with the English Language then with their mother tongue. In this way his Political aspiration began. The Justice party provide a platform to Anna ample opportunity to struggle for social causes and with his gift for oratory he soon came to be recognize as one of the foremost speakers of the day. When Anna Joined Justice party he had the privilege for working under the leadership of E.V.R, and Anna had an

opportunity to contact with E.V.R. in the Sengunthar Yourth conference held in Thiruppur in 1935. For anti-Hindi compulsion, Anna addressed an effective speech in a number of meetings throughout the Madras Presidency. Since E.V.R elected as Chairman of Justice Party Anna began work for the party with new hope and redoubled vigour and some basic changes were brought in the Justice party (only Dominion status for India) but now asking complete Independence.

Anna started own weekly newspaper Dravida Nadu in 1942 to carry the message of the Justice party to every village and hamlet. Prolonged discussion and Ideology of C.N.A the South Indian Liberal Federation name was changed as DiravidarKazhagam in the conference of the at Salem in August 27, 1944 under the President ship of E.V.R. and C.N.A was elected as general Secretary. While in this way both of them leading the DiravidarKazham, Some misunderstanding (clash) raised between EVR and C.N.A such the first issue is EVR had described the August 15, 1947 and January 26, 1950 dates as the mourning days (transfer of power meant change from the British to the Brahmins-Baniyas combine) even CNA cheered as a good day. Another main issue was the controversy of E.V. Ramasamy and Maniyammai difference age marriage On 18th of June 1949. While Some secret meeting was going between CNA and his supporters to occupying the EVR Property and DravidarKahagam. When, This message came to EVR ear, his thought against CAN, then EVR found a reliable women as a wife to safeguard his DiravidarKazhagam and his property, announced his marriage. But C NA and other leaders opposed to his decision. Even a lot of pressure came to EVR against his unmatched (EVR-71 and Maniammai-28) marriage he was strong in his decision and he got marriage June 18, 1949 as his wish. This is the main issue to split between EVR and C.N.A and this marriage was a transgression of rationalist social reforms



said C.N.A. then, Anna and his followers came out of the Diravida Kazhagam and he and his followers such as V. R. Nedunchezhiyan, K. A. Mathiazhagan, K. Anbazhagan, N.V. Natarajan, E. V. K. Sampath and thousands of others at Robinson park in Rayapuram (Chennai) on the date of 17th September 1949, announced the formation of the DMK its Literature meaning of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (Dravidian Progress Federation) and came to power in 1967 in Madras state 18 years after its formation and C.N.A (party general secretary) was Chief Minister till 1969 in the Madras. Thus, the Dravidian Era began in Madras state (Tamilnadu).

Appearance of Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

After C.N.A death in 1969, there came the power tussle between V. R. Nedunchezhiyan and M. Karunanidhi, but most of the top leaders Mathiazhagan, Nanjil Manoharan and the Actor M.G. Ramachandiran (M.G.R) supported to M. Karunanidhi as Chief Minister. Later the party reorganized and created a new post called party president for Nedunchezhiyan (senior leader after C.N.A) and M.G.R appointed as the Party Treasurer. After some years, the political dispute between M.G.R and Karunanidhi, for the dishonesty inside the party. Due to dishonesty (looting the party money), in 1972, M.G.R called for the boycott of the party General Council, with the crisis falling into call for probe by M.G.R, and he was eventually suspended from the General Council and the DMK party. After dispute with Karunanidhi, M.G.R emerged a new party called the name "Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam", later it was changed as "All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam" (AIADMK) in 1972 and it won a first seat for Lok Sabha at Dindugul in 1974 by the by-Election. Later, it won in Legislative Assembly elections in 1977 and MGR became Chief Minister. The AIADMK stayed in power in the state till 1987.

When Anna was in Power he done many social reforms followed by EVR ideologies. After Anna, M. Karunanidhi and M.G.R followed Anna Ideologies. Especially, demand of Vanniya Sangam caste based reservation (this was handled by M.G.R at first, later Enacted by Karunanidhi after MGR sudden death) and Arundhadiyar 3% reservation in Karunanidhi (DMK) rule. In the way, the non-Brahmins people got reservation in Government jobs and equal rights after Many Historical struggle by the leadership of eminent leaders. In this way the non-Brahmin ideology followed also Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) and its main achievement is reservation 20% for Most Backward Class (MBC community) and this party played very crucial role in previous Legislative Assembly and Lock Saba election since formation and yet, its impact is very dominant in Tamilnadu politics

Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK)

Based on E.V.R. and Ambedhkar (non-Brahmins) ideologies, in the year 1980, the Vanniya Sangham founded by Dr. S. Ramadoss. Later, Vanniya Sangham converted as a political party "Pattali Makkal Katchi" (PMK) in 1989, the PMK is formed caste based orientation like previous party, Ramasamy Padayatchi-Toilers party and Manickavelu Naickers-communweel party, and both of these party included the people of Vanniya and Goundar community. Hence, the PMK is caste based organization and it is stronger in the northern part of Tamilnadu and where the Vanniya population 20%. And the PMK was struggled for social justice particularly, for backward class people development, and it was conducted a historical Road Roko for 2% in Central Government and 20% in State Government Jobs reservation in 19 December, 1986 for the reservation of Vanniya people in Government Jobs. Finally, the Vanniya Sangam succeeded for the reservation for their people (Vanniya reservation included with Most Backward Class category) in DMK

rule(Karunanidhi rule). The PMK was a alternative party alliance between DMK and AIADMK, in both election Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary election since its formation in Tamilnadu. PMK was able to get a significant share of power both in Central and State government after its formation, primarily due to coalition pressures and arm twisting tactics. Also, Dr. S. Ramadoss said, The PMK will win and rule the Tamilnadu in 2016 assembly election and it will be a People rule Like “AamAthmi Party- AravindKejariwal” in Delhi

Conclusion

The Brahmins and non-Brahmins were as two category in the Madras Presidency. Though the non-Brahmins people very high percentage for the population but it was very low percentage in the job reservation. After many struggle, the Dravidian people got opportunity and reservation in the Government job. Particularly, the Justice party leaders such Dr. C. NadesaMudaliar, Sir, P. ThiyagarayarChettiyar, T.M.Nayar, E.V.Ramasamy, C.N. Annadurai, M.G.

Ramachandiran M. Karunanidhi, and Dr. S. Ramadoss all of these leaders aim was same in uplift the backward class people and their role is very important in Tamil Nadu Politics.

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