

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

Vanakkam.

I congratulate and welcome all the new members elected to this august Assembly. It gives me immense pleasure to deliver the inaugural address of the first session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly. The people of Tamil Nadu have delivered a historic verdict by giving a consecutive second term to the Party in power, after a gap of 32 years. I am confident that each one of you, conscious of the immense faith placed by the people in you, will work for their upliftment and for the overall development of the State.

2) The people of Tamil Nadu have once again reposed their faith in the leadership of the **Hon'ble Chief Minister Selvi J Jayalalithaa** by re-electing her Government. This historic verdict has vindicated the people-friendly policies and programmes implemented by the Government under her leadership and ensured its return to continue the march towards making Tamil Nadu the **Numero Uno** State in the Country. The Government will strive to achieve its stated objective of ensuring **peace, prosperity and development** in the State. Towards this, effective policies and programmes will be formulated and implemented, benefiting all sections.

3) The Hon'ble Chief Minister's commitment to speedily implement various welfare schemes promised in the Election Manifesto, was amply evident from the fact that on the very day of assuming charge, this Government issued orders on giving effect to five important promises,

- ✓ **Waiving the outstanding agricultural loans owed by small and marginal farmers to Co-operative Institutions.**
- ✓ **Providing one hundred units of free electricity to all domestic consumers.**
- ✓ **Increasing the gold for Thirumangalyam from four grams**

to eight grams under Marriage Assistance Schemes.

- ✓ **Increasing the free electricity provided to Handloom weavers to 200 units and Powerloom weavers to 750 units.**
- ✓ **Reducing the working hours of TASMAC retail shops and closing 500 retail outlets.**

4) This Government is committed to improving transparency in administration, and will establish the institution of Lokayukta in Tamil Nadu through appropriate enactment, once the proposed amendments to the Lokpal Act are enacted by the Parliament.

5) The Hon'ble Members are well aware that though more taxation powers are vested with the Centre, the functional responsibility for actual delivery of vital public services are with the State Governments. The resource distribution is skewed in favour of the Centre, while the State has to shoulder more responsibilities without matching resources. Therefore, while working with the Central Government for the overall development of the State, this Government will continue to insist on fair and adequate sharing of financial resources between the Centre and the States.

6) This Government will strive to ensure declaration of Tamil as an official language of the Union Government and also

the use of Tamil language in the Hon'ble High Court of Madras. Tamil Scholars will continue to be duly honoured through institution of awards and construction of Memorials for them. Earnest efforts will be made to lift the ban on Jallikattu, which is intertwined with the socio-cultural and rural ethos of Tamil Society.

7) Securing the legitimate rights of the State in various inter-state river water disputes is very close to the heart of the Hon'ble Chief Minister. Consolidating her historic achievement in raising the water level of the Mullai Periyar Dam to 142 feet, this Government is determined to further raise the water level to its Full Reservoir Level (FRL) of 152 feet and bring prosperity to the farmers in the Southern Districts of

the State. Another noteworthy achievement of the Hon'ble Chief Minister is securing the legitimate rights of the State through the Notification of the Final Order of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal by the Government of India. This Government will continue to pursue action to obtain an order from the Hon'ble Supreme Court for the constitution of the Cauvery Management Board and the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee by the Government of India for effective implementation of the Final Order of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal.

8) This Government will lay emphasis on the effective management of water resources. To rejuvenate our water bodies and tanks, and increase their storage capacity, the State Government has secured

funding from the World Bank for Phase-II of the 'Irrigated Agriculture Modernisation and Water Bodies Restoration and Management' (IAMWARM) Project. This Government has also secured the Asian Development Bank funding for the 'Climate Adaptation Programme', which will reduce the impact of climate change in the Cauvery Delta, and preliminary works have already commenced in the Vennar sub-basin.

9) The 'Amma Call Centre' has emerged as an effective grievance redressal mechanism responding to public calls round the clock. This will be further strengthened. Similarly, the e-Sevai Centres (Common Service Centres) established throughout the State have been providing a range of hassle-free services to citizens.

To strengthen the delivery of e-services, the e-Sevai Centres set up under the aegis of Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu (ELCOT), the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation (TACTV), Primary Agricultural Co-operative Societies (PACS) and Village Poverty Reduction Committees (VPRC) will be further expanded and services of all the departments will be made available online through these Centres. The Government will continue its efforts through various novel initiatives to further strengthen the public service delivery system in the State.

10) The recent devastating floods had caused heavy damages in several parts of the State, especially in Chennai City and some coastal Districts. The concerted efforts of various Government agencies under the

leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister enabled the speedy restoration of normal life, bringing great relief to the large number of affected people. This Government will expeditiously prepare Comprehensive Flood Protection Plans for Chennai City and vulnerable coastal Districts in the State to permanently mitigate the impact of floods.

11) The Hon'ble Chief Minister through her grit and determination has effectively put an end to the activities of anti-social elements. The Police Force will be further strengthened by providing modern equipment and other facilities to deal even more effectively with crime, including cyber crime. The high morale of Police Personnel will be maintained by giving a free hand

to them to deal with crime and law and order situation. Public order will be strictly enforced and Tamil Nadu will continue to remain a haven of peace and tranquillity.

12) The Hon'ble Chief Minister has always championed the cause of Sri Lankan Tamils. Through international fora like the United Nation Human Rights Council, this Government will continue to seek accountability of those who perpetrated genocide on innocent Tamils in Sri Lanka during the closing stages of the civil war. This Government will continue its efforts to secure equal rights and opportunities for the Tamil minorities in Sri Lanka on par with other citizens.

13) On being re-elected, this Government has the opportunity of taking

the State closer to the ambitious and aspirational goals set out in the 'Tamil Nadu Vision 2023 Document' launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister. The Tamil Nadu Vision 2023 will continue to be the agenda for action for this Government, which is committed to securing for the people of Tamil Nadu a greatly improved quality of life. For the first time in the Country, a comprehensive and focused institutional and financing mechanism has been established. With this, the pace of implementation of projects will be substantially stepped up.

14) This Government will continue to give a thrust to the development of agriculture with a farmer-centric approach. Self-sufficiency in cereals, oilseeds and

pulses will be achieved with enhanced focus on popularizing high-end technologies and crop diversification. This will pave the way for sustained improvement in agricultural production, productivity and farmers' income. The earlier policy of actively promoting farm mechanization and water conservation measures like micro-irrigation will be continued. As a measure to improve market linkages and realize better prices for farm produce, this Government will take steps to integrate and computerize the regulated and co-operative agricultural markets on electronic platforms, facilitating their eventual linkage with the national commodity markets.

15) With several initiatives launched in the Animal Husbandry Sector in the

past five years, the contribution of Animal Husbandry activities to farm income has substantially increased in Tamil Nadu. This Government will continue to accord high priority to the development of the Animal Husbandry Sector. Strengthening the veterinary infrastructure by establishing new sub-centres and upgrading sub-centres into dispensaries will be taken up on need basis. The flagship schemes of free distribution of goats/sheep and milch cows, which have transformed the lives of poor rural women, will be continued. Dairy infrastructure will be further strengthened by this Government to sustain the growth and momentum of the Animal Husbandry Sector.

16) Tamil Nadu, being a State with a long coastline, strengthening the

infrastructure in the Fishery Sector is vital for augmenting the income of fisherfolk. This Government will vigorously pursue the development of fishing infrastructure by improving fishing harbours, constructing fish landing centres, creating cold chain and other processing infrastructure. The Government will continue to provide timely and enhanced assistance to fishermen families during the lean season and fishing ban period. A special focus will be given to promote deep sea fishing by popularizing the usage of Tuna longliners.

17) The frequent arrests and harassment of our fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy while fishing in their traditional waters must be ended and their right

to livelihood, safety and security ensured. This Government will continue to urge the Government of India to prevail upon the Government of Sri Lanka to arrive at a lasting solution to the fishermen issue. We will continue to strive for the retrieval of Katchatheevu in order to protect the traditional fishing rights of the Tamil Nadu fishermen in the Palk Bay.

18) As this Government is committed to ensuring food security to all, the policy of Universal Public Distribution System will be continued. The entire operations of the Public Distribution System will be computerised for better monitoring. The pioneering price control measures already taken by the Government, such as, 'Farm Fresh Outlets', 'Amma

Marundhagams', 'Amma Unavagams', 'Amma Drinking Water', 'Amma Cement' and 'Amma Salt' have insulated the poor and middle class families from the burden of price rise. These novel initiatives will be continued.

19) The concerted efforts and focused attention given to the Power Sector by the Hon'ble Chief Minister has enabled Tamil Nadu to script one of the most remarkable turnarounds - the transformation of Tamil Nadu into a power surplus State. All restrictions on power consumption have been removed with effect from 5.6.2015, thus ensuring uninterrupted power supply. This Government will ensure that the State continues to be free of power-cuts and provide uninterrupted

quality power. In the next five years, new power generation capacity of 13,000 MW of thermal power and 3,000 MW of solar energy will be added. Further, the ongoing power projects will be expeditiously commissioned to augment the State's power generation capacity.

20) This Government will accord the highest priority for strengthening and widening of the road network. Decongestion and smooth flow of traffic will be ensured through construction of by-passes, ring roads, expressways and bridges. To improve the standard of roads, the 'Comprehensive Road Infrastructure Development Programme' (CRIDP) and the 'Performance Based Maintenance Contract' (PBMC) system will continue.

The World Bank assisted 'Tamil Nadu Road Sector Project-II' with an outlay of Rs.5,171 crores, which is under implementation, will give a further boost to the road infrastructure in the State.

21) The scheme of 'Free Distribution of Dhoties and Sarees' will be continued in order to provide adequate employment opportunities to handloom and powerloom weavers in the State. This Government will promote new textile clusters and silk parks for generating employment opportunities in the traditional textile areas. The initiatives taken for strengthening the infrastructure for Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETP) to achieve Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) will be pursued vigorously.

22) This Government's initiative of the rural habitation-centric scheme, the 'Tamil Nadu Village Habitation Improvement' (THAI), will be continued to further upgrade the amenities and infrastructure in the rural areas. This scheme will be taken up with the resources available to the Rural Local Bodies under the Finance Commission grants.

23) This Government is determined to ensuring that every house has a functional toilet and unhygienic open defecation is completely eradicated from Tamil Nadu. Public sanitation will be further improved by taking up Solid Waste Management programmes in all villages. I am glad that the Solid Waste Management model of our State, using

'Thooimai Kaavalars', is now being emulated by many other States as well. I am confident that the Government under the dynamic leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister will achieve the objective of garbage-free clean villages and cities.

24) Financial inclusion and linkage to banking credit are essential for bringing in economic empowerment. This Government will continue its efforts to reduce poverty by adopting the strategies of the 'Pudhu Vaazhvu Project' in all Districts through the 'Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission' (TNSRLM). The Self Help Groups, the Village Poverty Reduction Committees (VPRC) and the Panchayat Level Federations will be guided to start

a large number of micro-enterprises for their economic empowerment.

25) Tamil Nadu being the most urbanized large State in India, further upgradation of urban infrastructure is required. The thrust will be on providing better roads, storm water drains, solid waste management, sewerage management, street lights, etc. The successful State initiatives of the 'Integrated Urban Development Mission' (IUDM) and the 'Chennai Mega City Development Mission' (CMCDM) will now be synergized with the Government of India's 'Smart Cities Programme' and the 'Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation' (AMRUT) scheme to further strengthen urban infrastructure.

The Government has also obtained the World Bank assistance for the 'Tamil Nadu Sustainable Urban Development Programme' (TNSUDP) to provide additional resources for the Urban Sector.

26) It is the endeavour of this Government to provide adequate potable water to all households in the State. The Government is committed to implementing new water supply schemes, to meet the ever increasing demand for drinking water in both rural and urban areas. The work for establishing two more desalination plants near Chennai, with a capacity of 150 MLD at Nemmeli and 400 MLD at Perur will be expedited.

27) At present, the Chennai Metro Rail is operating passenger services

between Koyambedu and Alandur. The passenger services on the stretch from Little Mount to Airport and from Alandur to St. Thomas Mount will be inaugurated soon. This Government will expedite the work relating to Phase-I and commence the services in the entire network before the end of 2017. With sustained efforts, this Government was able to secure the Government of India's approval for the extension of Corridor-I of the Metro Rail line from Washermenpet to Tiruvotriyur / Wimco Nagar at a cost of Rs.3,770 crores and the work will be commenced immediately. This Government will take up implementation of Phase-II of the Chennai Metro Rail Project at the earliest.

28) This Government is committed to its goal of making Tamil Nadu the most attractive investment destination in the Country. The Government will continue its efforts for further improving ease of doing business in the State and creating an even more conducive environment for attracting new investments. The first ever Global Investors Meet conducted by Tamil Nadu was held in Chennai in September, 2015. The event was a resounding success, resulting in 98 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) committing a total investment of Rs.2,42,160 crores with direct employment potential of 4,70,000 jobs. Many of these projects have already commenced. The Government will host a Global Investors' Meet once in every two years in future.

29) The State Government is taking very serious efforts for the revival of the Nokia plant along with the component manufacturers. The Hon'ble Chief Minister deputed a team of officials to Taiwan recently to hold discussions with global companies like Foxconn on the issue. Issues pending with the Government of India have also been taken up at the highest level to facilitate the revival.

30) Industrial corridor based development, particularly on the Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor and the Madurai-Thoothukudi Industrial Corridor will be given top priority. As part of the Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor project, Ponneri will be developed as a vibrant industrial node. Further,

as promised in the Election Manifesto, a new Granite Policy will be framed and the sale of beach minerals will be undertaken directly by the State Government to further augment resources.

31) The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) provide substantial employment opportunities in the organized sector in Tamil Nadu. As per the Annual Survey of Industries, Tamil Nadu has the largest number of factories and largest employment in factories in India. Emphasis will be placed on promoting start-ups and encouraging budding entrepreneurs, channelizing funds under the 'New Entrepreneur-cum-Enterprise Development Scheme' (NEEDS). The policy of this Government to give financial incentives for

promotion of new industrial estates established by industrial associations independently or in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation Limited (SIDCO), will be continued.

32) The vision of this Government is to ensure slum-free cities and hut-free villages. A Mission Mode programme will be launched in the State to construct houses under various State and Central schemes to fulfill one of the most important promises in the Election Manifesto relating to the Housing Sector.

33) The Government is determined to providing accessible and affordable healthcare by strengthening its public health infrastructure. This Government will set up

new Primary Health Centres (PHC) in needy areas and upgrade PHCs, Taluk and District Hospitals to further improve health infrastructure in the State. The ambitious 'Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme', which has enabled common people to access quality healthcare services in both public and private sector hospitals, will be continued.

34) The Hon'ble Chief Minister's commitment to the cause of education and respect for the role of teachers in society was evident from the rich tributes she paid to her own teacher recently. This spirit imbues the numerous initiatives the Hon'ble Chief Minister has launched to upgrade the quality of education in Tamil Nadu including the provision of laptop computers,

special cash incentives for reducing drop-outs at secondary level, complete kit of study material like textbooks, notebooks and school bags, four sets of uniform, footwear, bus passes and bicycles. The Government will continue to implement the 'Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act' in its true spirit.

35) This Government will strive hard to address the issues of access, affordability and quality in higher education to preserve Tamil Nadu's pre-eminent position as the State with the highest enrolment ratio in higher education by strengthening infrastructure and opening of new colleges in needy places. Financial support to enable all deserving students to pursue higher education will be provided by continuing

schemes such as reimbursement of tuition fees to first generation graduates. The Government will take concerted efforts for improving employability by providing skill training with industry linkage.

36) The Government is deeply concerned about the implications of the interim order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court to admit students to medical colleges only through the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET). This Government will seek the continuation of the existing fair and transparent policy followed by the State Government in medical college admissions. We will also continue to seek the support of the Government of India for enacting necessary legislation permanently

exempting Tamil Nadu students from the NEET.

37) Ensuring a social safety net for the vulnerable sections of society like women, children, differently-abled, transgenders, senior citizens and destitutes, has been accorded the highest priority by the Hon'ble Chief Minister. This has been amply demonstrated through an array of social security schemes like gold for Thirumangalyam under Marriage Assistance Schemes, Cradle Baby Scheme, Social Security Pensions, Integrated Special Homes for Senior Citizens and Destitute Children. In a path-breaking measure aimed at empowering women, the reservation for women in elected posts in Local Bodies has been increased to 50 per cent.

38) The post-matric scholarships for students belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes studying in private colleges have enabled them to pursue higher studies. This initiative will be continued by this Government. In the meantime, I also urge the Government of India to release immediately an arrear amount of Rs.1,167 crores which is due to the State under the Post-Matric Scholarship scheme. The infrastructure in the schools and hostels run by the Adi-Dravidar Welfare Department will be further improved to provide an ideal environment for students. This Government will also support eligible persons to take up income generation activities through the Tamil Nadu Adi-Dravidar Housing and

Development Corporation (TAHDCO) for their economic upliftment.

39) This Government will continue to work for providing adequate hostel buildings with necessary infrastructure facilities for the welfare of the students belonging to Backward Classes, Most Backward Classes and Denotified Communities. The Government will support their education with scholarships and food allowance, and provide financial assistance to these Communities for their economic development through the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Economic Development Corporation (TABCEDCO). This Government will take all measures to protect the interests of Minorities and continue

to implement welfare schemes for their betterment.

40) I have outlined the various policies and initiatives of this new Government. This Government will make all efforts to achieve the inclusive socio-economic development of the State. I am confident that under the able leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, this State will march ahead of all other States and reach the zenith of success and glory.

41) This House has the onerous responsibility of ensuring healthy and constructive deliberations setting the highest standards of democracy. Conscious of this, I hope that this august Assembly will debate and deliberate on important issues and come out with pioneering

development-oriented policies and programmes. I once again wish you all the best in your endeavours to fulfill the aspirations of the people of this State.

Nanri
Vanakkam
Jai Hind