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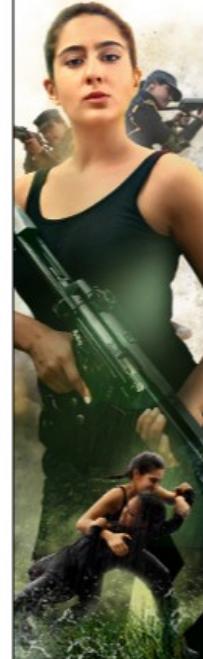
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Communal forces will not get an inch in Tamil Nadu... law will take care of AIADMK: CM MK Stalin



Jaya Menon / TNN / Aug 14, 2021, 08:31 IST



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Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin

He may have completed just 100 days in office, but for first-time chief minister [MK Stalin](#), it has been an action-packed stint. As the DMK government gears up for the rest of its tenure, the chief minister, replying to a questionnaire from TOI, spoke on a range of issues, including the crackdown on alleged corruption of former AIADMK ministers and his inclusive style of governance:

How did you feel when you took oath and said, 'I, Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin...?'

When I said [Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin](#), it marked the continuation of about 150 years of history. Born in littleknown Thirukkuvalai, Muthuvelar gave Tamil Nadu a great leader. A poet and songwriter himself, he was the father of Kalaignar. Born into a backward community, he rose to be a leader of the oppressed. I am a continuation of this history. Stalin is not a mere name. It's a continuation of this history. I felt great saying it aloud while taking the oath.

It was not just me, crores of DMK cadres too felt as if they were taking the oath along with me. I consider it an achievement, having given them such joy. Kalaignar had said, 'only if you sprint long, you can leap to greater heights'.

As you complete 100 days, how many promises have you fulfilled?

We protected the people of Tamil Nadu from the deadly effects of a second wave. As promised, we disbursed 4,000 Covid-19 relief to all ration card-holders in two instalments. And, though it was not a promise, we provided a hamper of 13 grocery items. Women can now ride free in buses. Under

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the 'Ungal Thoguthiyil Muthalamaichar' (Chief Minister in your Constituency) scheme, we have redressed the grievances of several people...

What about the opposition charge that you haven't delivered on several promises?

This is just a tactic of the AIADMK to divert the attention of the people from the earlier corrupt regime. People are keenly observing, acknowledging it and praising the achievements of our government. Law will take care of the AIADMK men who had indulged in corruption.

How different from the previous government was your approach to dealing with Covid-19?

I took up Covid-19 containment and relief measures even before I assumed office. Soon after being sworn in chief minister, my government worked 24X7 to ensure people's welfare. We set up a war room. We worked on a war- footing to tackle the oxygen shortage and tide over the crisis. We ensured there was no shortage of oxygen beds. We made the vaccination a mass movement. We significantly brought down Covid mortality. Even amidst lockdown, we ensured people's livelihood was not greatly affected. But proof of the way the AIADMK government handled the pandemic is evident in the corruption even in the purchase of broomstick, bleaching powder and masks.

How cooperative has the Centre been with the state on Covid management in releasing funds and vaccines? Is TN getting its due share of vaccines?

We had to pressure the Union government for everything the state required. Even the vaccine allocation for us was very low. We had to escalate the issue right up to the Prime Minister to get our due share. Even today, the situation is such that we continue to fight relentlessly even for life-

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saving matters.

On GST, another point of contention with the Centre, what are your plans?

The GST policy snatches the rights of the states, and this has been the DMK's stand. The Union government does not give states due share as per agreed schedule. Tamil Nadu should be given its full share of taxes for the pandemic period. We should get back the situation wherein states should handle their own revenues and taxes.

As for Centre-state relationship, why did you start off on a confrontationist note -- First 'Ondriya Arasu', then the draft Indian Ports Bill?

We use the term Union government only as per the principles of federalism. That is how it has been defined in the Constitution. How can that be wrong? We will continue to oppose schemes that snatch the rights of states. They only weaken the federal structure, not strengthen it.

Would such a stand make it difficult for TN? Did the Palaniswami government's friendly ties with the Centre help the state?

To protect his chair, Palaniswamy preferred to remain a bonded labourer to the Union government. It is wrong to consider that as friendship. This is a selfish, deceitful act. Indira Gandhi once said that in support and opposition, Kalaignar will remain firm in his stand. We will follow that. We will be vocal for Tamil Nadu's rights. We will fight to ensure the country's federal structure remain strong.

What will be your role in bringing together the opposition parties across the country, something which Mamata Bannerjee has been calling for?

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In the last Lok Sabha election itself, DMK's victorious 'Tamil Nadu Formula' (an alliance forged with Congress and other parties, including the Communists) created ripples in Indian political circles. That formula is still being talked about. When such talks translate into action, the desired change will happen.

How are TN's finances? What's its total debt?

For the last 10 years, especially the last seven years, TN has been pushed deep into trouble due to fiscal mismanagement. Our finance minister's white paper exposed that. Tamil Nadu has been burdened with 5 lakh crore debt. The DMK government's objective is to reduce this debt burden imposed on every Tamil by the AIADMK government. This will be achieved by increasing productivity, attracting investments, streamlining taxes, ensuring that the state gets its dues from the Centre on time, and getting the funds sanctioned in tune with the state's development. This Budget is a precursor to that.

What was the idea behind the Economic Advisory Council?

The state appointed the chief minister's [Economic Advisory Council](#) with eminent economic experts to ensure equitable growth in all departments, social justice-based welfare schemes and to offer timely as well as constructive advice to the government for financial reforms. It will not be a wasteful expenditure as seen in the AIADMK regime, but to help Tamil Nadu achieve self-sufficiency in economic and financial development.

Do you miss your father? That he was not around to have seen you achieve victory and watch your performance as CM?



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Not just I, but DMK cadres and the people of Tamil Nadu do miss Kalaignar. There is a yearning within me that Kalaignar is not around to witness the sixth time the DMK has formed a government... I keep saying frequently that he is within us, guiding us and watching over us.

How different is your style of functioning from that of your father?

He is Kalaignar M Karunanidhi. I am Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin. Just like the similarity in the names, it is the Kalaignar government, keeping with the times... His experience and deep visionary thoughts would be the guiding force for my government.

Your consultative, inclusive approach towards the opposition -- are you scripting a new style of governance and politics?

Embracing people and their representatives in an inclusive approach has been the hallmark of DMK founder C N Annadurai when he was chief minister of Tamil Nadu. There can be differences among parties in the political arena. This is not necessary when it comes to taking care of people's welfare. Here civility should take priority.

But the AIADMK has accused your government of vendetta politics with searches on M R Vijayabaskar and S P Velumani's premises.

The DMK government is only pursuing legal action against former AIADMK ministers, who indulged in corrupt activities and worked against the interests of the people. The just and legal action based on audited reports, evidence and several complaints of corruption will continue. The law will take its rightful course.

What are your big five challenges?

The Covid-19 pandemic, critical financial situation, stagnant industrial growth, the state's rights that have been snatched away by the Union government, absence of new power generation for 10 years, administrative decay are all tough challenges for us...

How do you ensure that everyone, not just DMK cadres or sympathisers, benefit out of programmes like 'Ungal Thoguthiyil Muthalamaichar'?

I am not chief minister for the DMK alone. I am CM for the whole Tamil Nadu. People trust me and come forward with their complaints that are addressed through appropriate departments... I represent everyone.

How do you plan to strengthen the DMK in the western belt?

DMK is strong even in the western region. In the Parliament election, we swept the western belt. Though we did not sweep the region for the assembly election, people voted for us sufficiently and everyone understands this from the election results. Despite spreading false propaganda and using its ill-gotten gains (in the election), the AIADMK could not tolerate the support that DMK garnered. I think this false propaganda spread by a motivated group is behind this question from you. DMK continues to enjoy goodwill of all Tamils in all parts of Tamil Nadu.

Will a weakened AIADMK help the DMK more or the BJP?

The DMK is a movement that has always drawn on its own strength. In Tamil Nadu politics, communal forces will not get even an inch of space.

The DMK had joined hands with the BJP in the past. Can that repeat?

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Mseham

10 days ago

communal forces shall not have any space ; however we have soft corner only for minorities.

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Tamil Nadu finance minister Palanivel Thiagarajan presents state budget on Friday.

CHENNAI: The MK Stalin government in [Tamil Nadu](#) enhanced the period of [maternity leave](#) for government employees from nine months to one year on Friday, fulfilling the promise made in DMK's election manifesto.



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Making this announcement in the assembly in his maiden budget speech, [Tamil](#) Nadu finance minister [Palanivel Thiagarajan](#) said the scheme will be restricted to women employees from nine months to one year on Friday, fulfilling the promise made in DMK's election manifesto.

Making this announcement in the assembly in his maiden budget speech, [Tamil](#) Nadu finance minister [Palanivel Thiagarajan](#) said the scheme will be restricted to women with less than two surviving children with effect from July 1.

The policy will help the state's target of increasing the number of babies who are breastfed in the first six months of life. It will also help mothers get back to good health in a short period of time, said officials from the [social welfare department](#).

"Tamil Nadu provides cash benefits, free vaccination and nutrition supplement for mothers and babies. But several mothers are not able to take care of themselves and their babies because they don't have time," said a senior social welfare department official. The longer duration of maternity leave will change this, she said.



TOP COMMENT



Rv Sagar
9 days ago

While the unorganised sector is suffering, facilities are extended disproportionately to the organised sector. Any maternity leave beyond six months is a waste of productivity.

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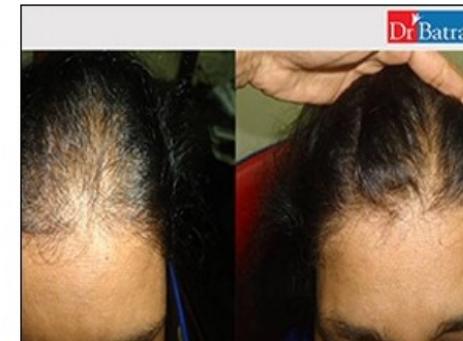
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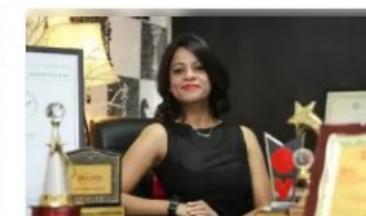
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FUTURE OF WORK IN INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT:



Last week, I was watching PV Sindhu play her Bronze medal match on TV when my younger son walked in and asked me a question – “does your boss know that you are watching TV during the day instead of working?” As it happens, my boss sits in another country and has no way of finding out what I am doing at a particular time. But I don't think he would care if he finds out that I was watching TV during my workday. Partly it is because the distinction between work-life and family-life has become muddled in recent times. But the main difference is that presence at the desk, always a tenuous measure of whether someone is working or not has become completely meaningless in a virtual work environment. For better or worse, COVID has changed the way we live and work. This is both good and bad news. Roles, skills, and working methods are all changing at a fast pace. To be successful in the post-COVID world, we need to understand what this means for us.

To start with, the social interactions at the workplace that we all take for granted will be much reduced in a hybrid or remote environment. How do we understand our co-workers, and how do we overcome misunderstanding and miscommunication? This problem is not new to us. India is the world's outsourcing capital, and a good proportion of our workforce is already used to working with co-workers in

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WORKFORCE IS already used to working with co-workers in other parts of the world. Our success depends upon how others perceive us – if you are in an internal-facing role, you have internal customers, and if your role is outward-facing, you have external customers in addition to your colleagues.



Vidhu Shekhar, CFA, CIPM

In a virtual environment, it is important to actively manage these relationships. It is not enough to just do the job

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assigned to you. Most work environments give you the opportunity to step outside of your job description and participate in projects that connect you with a wider set of co-workers. Another great way of building your brand is to become active on internal social media and collaboration platforms. Your activity should not be limited to telling others what you are doing but also being curious about what others are doing and how you can contribute.

The most important determinant of success in a virtual or hybrid workplace remains your ability to work with your immediate supervisor and your team members. In a [recent survey](#) of investment professionals by CFA Institute, 55% of the respondents said that their efficiency has gone up in a remote working environment. On the other hand, 17% of organisations said that productivity losses from remote work were a top concern. How do we reconcile these two? While individuals feel that they are working harder and are more efficient, employers worry about the loss of productivity. Efficiency and productivity are hard to measure, so how do you convince yourself that you are more productive?

Perhaps the answer lies in clearly defining what we are trying to achieve and how our work contributes to the results. [The teams that manage to do this well will perform better than those that stick to traditional metrics.](#)

If you are responsible for the outcomes of a large team, your work has most probably become harder than it used to be. Team leaders have to become more sensitive to the constraints faced by their team members and go the extra mile to find out what is happening in their life.

Our ability to deal with the disruption caused by the pandemic is a testament to our ability to adapt to change. We will travel less but interact more. We will spend less time with others but we will develop closer relationships. To succeed in the next COVID world, we need to reinvent

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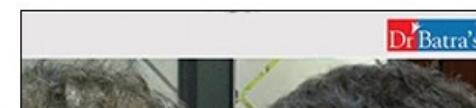
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CHENNAI: Fresh cases dropped to 1,933 cases on Friday compared to 1,942 on Thursday. Thirty-four new deaths pushed the toll tally to 34,462, when cumulative case tally touched 25.84 lakh. After discharging 1,887 people, the state was left with 20,411 active cases.

On Friday, at least 17 districts reported an increase, and the highest difference reported by any district in the last 24 hours compared to its Thursday tally was 13. Coimbatore, which had the highest number of fresh cases, reported the sharpest fall from 249 cases on Thursday to 236 on Friday. Salem reported the sharpest increase to 120 cases compared to 94 on Thursday, followed by Tiruppur, where cases rose to 105 cases from 83 during the same period. Six districts, Dindigul, Tenkasi, Thirupathur, Perambalur, Virudhunagar and Ramanathapuram reported cases in single digits.

Besides Coimbatore, Chennai (211) was the only district to

Kunal Pathan,
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report more than 200 fresh cases. Two days after Greater Chennai Corporation reported a cluster of 23 cases from a religious festival at Kilpauk, it found the second biggest cluster of the week in two blocks of Ramaniyam Gaurav Apartment on Model School Road in Sholinganallur. "This one also has 23 cases including six children below 10 years," addition, 18.01 doses have been administered at private hospitals since May 1.

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