



# **TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**ADDRESS BY  
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GOVERNOR OF TAMIL NADU**

**On 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024  
Thai 29, Thiruvalluvar Aandu-2055**

**Honourable Members of the Legislative  
Assembly,**

**Vanakkam.**

It is my honour to deliver the inaugural address of the Legislative Assembly for the year 2024 in this august House. I extend my warm greetings to everyone for the New Year and I wish that this year brings more happiness, prosperity and well-being to everyone. I commence my address by recalling the immortal words of Saint Thiruvalluvar, which encapsulate the vision of this Government for the State:

பிணியின்மை செல்வம் விளைவின்பம் ஏமம்  
அணியென்ப நாட்டிற்கிவ் வைந்து

(Kural-738)

*Absence of disease, plenty in harvest, wealth, general happiness and security, these five are the jewels of a country.*

2. Tamil Nadu has emerged as a powerhouse of economic growth of the country in the recent decades. With just 4 per cent of nation's area and 6 per cent of its population, the State contributes more than 9 per cent of its economy. In the year 2022-23, the State witnessed a real economic growth of 8.19 per cent, surpassing the national growth rate of 7.24 per cent. At the same time, the average inflation rate in 2022-23 has been only 5.97 per cent in Tamil Nadu as compared to 6.65 per cent at the national level. This demonstrates the ability of the State to not only grow at a faster pace than the

country, but also highlights its ability to manage inflation better during the same period.

3. As a result of the untiring efforts of this Government under the dynamic leadership of our Hon'ble Chief Minister, the State has witnessed a remarkable surge in economic activity. There has been a quantum jump in export of electronic goods, propelling the State to the top spot in 2022-23 from the fourth position in 2021-22. Tamil Nadu has also surpassed Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat to emerge as the top State in the country as per Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2022.

4. The State's strong economic foundations, cohesive society and vibrant

democracy are the reasons for it being consistently considered as a favoured destination for foreign investments in the country. **The Global Investors Meet** that was successfully conducted on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> January at Chennai stands as a testament to this fact. The event excelled as a grand exhibition of Tamil Nadu's robust industrial ecosystem and its future-ready workforce to the entire world. With a wide participation from over 30 countries including renowned experts, industry leaders and policymakers, this event served as the ideal platform to elevate Tamil Nadu towards global leadership.

5. During the Global Investors Meet, the State has entered into a record number of 631 Memoranda of Understanding

(MoUs) with companies for an unprecedented cumulative investment commitment of Rs.6.64 lakh crore, generating direct employment opportunities for 14.54 lakh persons. This will further propel the State in a trajectory of high economic growth and progress. In a befitting tribute to this event, the Hon'ble Chief Minister released the **'Tamil Nadu Vision \$1 trillion'** document. This Government is committed to taking all necessary measures to achieve this aspirational goal.

6. This Government has been making relentless efforts for promotion of sports in the State and has positioned Tamil Nadu as the leading sports hub in the country. Our commitment to sports development is evident in the successful

hosting of marquee sporting events in the State such as International Chess Olympiad and Khelo India Youth Games. The 6<sup>th</sup> edition of **Khelo India Youth Games** made a debut in Tamil Nadu with a grand opening ceremony inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The 13-day spectacle featured 26 sporting disciplines and provided a platform for 5,600 young athletes from across the country to shine on the national stage. For the first time, Tamil Nadu achieved the 2<sup>nd</sup> position in the medal tally with 98 medals, including 38 gold, 21 silver and 39 bronze medals. We believe that these events and the huge investments in state-of-the-art sports infrastructure being made by this Government will foster a thriving culture of

nurturing talented athletes and position our State as a formidable force on the global sporting arena.

7. It is noteworthy that such remarkable feats, in both economic growth and societal progress, have been achieved by this State despite the onslaught of multiple disasters over the years. The State recently witnessed two massive natural disasters in quick succession in the form of Cyclone Michaung in Chennai and surrounding areas, and massive floods caused by unprecedented rainfall in the southern districts.

8. The districts of Chennai, Tiruvallur, Chengalpattu and Kancheepuram witnessed continuous and unprecedented



rainfall for 44 hours due to Cyclone Michaung. The entire state machinery was mobilized on a war-footing and extensive relief arrangements were made by the Government, led by the Hon'ble Chief Minister. The meticulous planning and deft management of Chembarambakkam reservoir minimized loss of lives and property to a great extent. However, despite the best efforts of the Government, the enormity of the rainfall caused widespread inundation leading to loss of clothing, utensils and livelihood of lakhs of people. Due to the unstinting relief and rehabilitation works undertaken by this Government, normalcy was restored in majority of the places in few days. While the State was still recovering from the impact of the Cyclone,

the southern districts of Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Tenkasi and Kanniyakumari were ravaged by extremely heavy rainfall and consequent flooding, which caused significant loss of lives and property.

9. In order to alleviate the sufferings of people, the Hon'ble Chief Minister announced several measures including a cash relief of Rs.6,000 to 24.25 lakh affected families in Chennai and surrounding areas at a financial implication of Rs.1,487 crore. Further, cash relief assistance of Rs.6,000 per family for 6.63 lakh families in severely affected areas in Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi districts, and Rs.1,000 per family for 14.31 lakh families in other affected areas in Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Kanniyakumari and Tenkasi

districts was announced at a cost of Rs.541 crore.

10. Cyclone Michaung and the unprecedented rainfall in southern districts caused widespread destruction and damage to public infrastructure of the State. An investment of approximately Rs.18,214 crore in the southern districts and Rs.19,692 crore in Chennai and surrounding areas is required to undertake necessary temporary and permanent restoration works. In this regard, two separate memoranda elaborating the extent and magnitude of the disasters were presented to the Union Government. We hope that funds from National Disaster Response Fund will be released based on the detailed memoranda and the survey conducted by inter-ministerial central teams.

11. I extend my sincere appreciation to this Government for taking earnest efforts to manage the disasters and I firmly believe that the State and its economy will emerge stronger in the coming months.

12. While the State is grappling with a severe stress on its fiscal resources in the aftermath of the disaster, its capacity for resource mobilization is constrained following the implementation of GST. When the States agreed to relinquish their fiscal autonomy, it was only under the legitimate expectation that they would receive adequate compensation until the new system could generate revenues equivalent to the pre-GST era. However, the Union Government terminated the GST compensation regime on 30.06.2022, resulting in a revenue

shortfall of approximately Rs.20,000 crore per annum for the Government of Tamil Nadu. We urge the Union Government to continue the compensation regime further.

13. Amidst these fiscal constraints, the Union Government has reneged on its promise to provide its share in the Chennai Metro Rail Phase-II project. The project was sanctioned at a cost of Rs.63,246 crore with an understanding that it will be a 50:50 equity sharing between us and the Union Government. The same was also announced by the Union Finance Minister in the Union Budget Speech in 2021-22. But, even after inauguration by the Hon'ble Union Home Minister, the project has not been approved by the Union Government despite approval of the Project Investment

Board on 17.08.2021. It is disappointing that while the Union Government has accorded sanction for similar projects in other States during this period, the proposal of Chennai Metro Rail has been kept pending. As a result of this unfair treatment, the entire expenditure for Phase II is being met by the State Government from its budgetary support, thereby adding to the strain on the State finances. We urge the Union Government to approve the project as originally envisaged.

14. Despite these challenges, the Government has remained steadfast in its commitment to providing a responsive administration and has launched many pioneering initiatives. Under '**Mudalvarin Mugavari**', out of 20.31 lakh petitions

received so far, 19.69 lakh petitions have been successfully addressed based on merits. In order to bridge the last-mile gap between administration and the public, this Government has launched yet another initiative called '**Makkaludan Mudalvar**'. As the name signifies, this initiative attempts to deliver on the resolve of Hon'ble Chief Minister to be with the people at every step and every turn of their lives. In the first phase of this programme, 2,058 camps have been conducted in urban local bodies and peri-urban village panchayats in all districts to offer services and effectively dispose petitions within 30 days, under the direct supervision of the Hon'ble Chief Minister. The camps are focused on services delivered by 13 departments, which have significant

interface with the public. Out of the 2.67 lakh petitions received so far, 2.40 lakh petitions have been addressed satisfactorily.

15. This Government accords highest priority to the maintenance of law and order, and communal harmony across the State. As a result, it continues to be counted amongst the most peaceful states by foreign investors and business houses, as echoed in the recently concluded Global Investors Meet. This Government continues to have a zero-tolerance approach towards crime and is taking all necessary measures to uphold law and order in the State including community policing, leveraging advanced technology for surveillance and stringent action on criminal activities.



16. This Government is committed to the Dravidian model of governance, which is founded on the principles of inclusive growth, social justice and equality. It firmly believes that true progress in the society can only be possible when the potential of every woman is positively harnessed. In line with this objective, this Government has launched its flagship scheme '**Kalaiginar Magalir Urimai Thittam**' to give more than 1.15 crore women their entitlement of Rs.1,000 per month directly in their bank accounts, thereby fulfilling its electoral promise. In a tribute to the visionary leaders of Tamil Nadu, this scheme was launched on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023, marking the birth anniversary of Perarignar Anna and

commemorating the centenary year of Muthamizh Arignar Kalaigarnar. Building on their unstinting efforts towards women's progress, this scheme will go a long way in promoting social and economic empowerment of women in the State.

17. Realizing that education is key to empowerment, this Government is taking all measures to increase the enrolment of girl students in higher education. Towards this, it has introduced the '**Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Ninaivu Pudhumai Penn Thittam**' to provide a monthly cash assistance of Rs.1,000 to all girl students pursuing higher education, who have completed their studies in Government schools from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> standard. In the current academic year, 2.73 lakh girl

students are benefiting every month under this scheme. I am happy to note that there has been a remarkable increase of 34 per cent in the enrolment of girl students from Government schools into colleges during the current academic year, as a result of this initiative.

18. This Government is also one of the frontrunners in the country to roll out the popular '**Vidiyal Payana Thittam**' providing free travel for women in ordinary town buses. The ripple effect of this initiative has been witnessed in the enhanced mobility and empowerment of women, enabling an increase in ridership from 40 per cent to 65 per cent.

19. The Self-Help Group (SHG) campaign that was pioneered by Muthamizh Arignar Kalaignar in 1989 in the district of Dharmapuri has become a massive movement today across the country. In order to create communities of economically independent and socially empowered women, the Government is taking continuous efforts to expand and strengthen the SHG network. During the year 2023-24, so far 27,539 new SHGs have been formed with 3.20 lakh women belonging to poor households. Further, under the SHG-Bank Linkage programme, an ambitious target of Rs.30,000 crore of bank credit for SHGs has been fixed by the Government for the current financial year. So far, an amount of Rs.24,926 crore has

been disbursed to the SHGs and we are confident that we will achieve this target.

20. It is such welfare policies implemented by our State that have made us the model for the entire country. Today, what is celebrated and globally acclaimed as the Mid-Day Meal scheme in the country was an initiative pioneered by the Madras Municipal Corporation more than a century ago. In 1962, it was introduced in all districts of the State by the visionary former Hon'ble Chief Minister Perunthalaivar Kamarajar. This was transformed into the Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R Nutritious Meal Programme in 1982 and then further enhanced by the former Hon'ble Chief Minister Muthamizh Arignar Kalaigarnar with the introduction of eggs in meals in 1989.

21. Continuing the rich tradition of the State's pioneering welfare schemes, the Hon'ble Chief Minister has once again etched the name of Tamil Nadu in the annals of Indian history by launching yet another flagship scheme of the Government **'The Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme'**, a scheme that will be the model for the entire country in the years to come. The trend has already started with the State of Telangana having emulated this scheme, following the footsteps of this Government. After a pilot conducted in 1,543 schools for a period of 6 months, the scheme has been extended to all the 30,992 Government primary schools, covering 16.85 lakh children. This scheme provides a well-curated nutritious breakfast to lakhs of

students from classes I to V, thereby increasing their nutritional levels, and improving their attendance and learning outcomes. In addition, the scheme also acts as a boon for lakhs of working women and mothers, whose onerous responsibilities are shared by this Government, giving a further fillip to women empowerment.

22. Following the ideals of Thanthai Periyar, this Government is committed to upholding the dignity of every individual, especially those belonging to the marginalized sections. It firmly believes that the upliftment of the marginalized is not only the moral duty of the Government but an enforceable right of the people. With this idea, the Government will introduce the **Tamil Nadu Development Action Plan**

**for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Bill, 2024** in this session.

23. In line with this commitment, this Government has also launched the **'Iyothee Thass Pandithar Habitation Development Scheme'** for the creation of infrastructural amenities in Adi dravidar habitations in rural and urban areas in a saturation approach. An amount of Rs.200 crore has been sanctioned for 1,769 works such as water supply, electrification, access to habitation, and public amenities including parks and libraries during the year 2023-24.

24. In a concerted effort to encourage entrepreneurs from SC/ST communities, this Government has also



launched the flagship scheme '**Annal Ambedkar Business Champions Scheme**' to promote economic development through credit linked subsidy. During the year 2023-24, an amount of Rs.84 crore has been disbursed as subsidy assistance to 755 beneficiaries.

25. In a major step towards educational advancement of students from Adi dravidar, tribal, backward, most backward and denotified communities, **the monthly feeding charges in hostels have been hiked from Rs.1,000 to Rs.1,400 for school students and from Rs.1,100 to Rs.1,500 for college students.** This decision has benefitted 1.71 lakh students across the State.

26. “யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளிர்”

- கணியன் பூங்குன்றனார்

**“Yaadhum Oore Yaavarum Kelir”**

- Kaniyan Poongundranar

This profound quote, which embodies the spirit of universal brotherhood embraced by Tamils in the Sangam Era, continues to serve as the guiding light for this Government. While the ideal of unity in diversity is facing a grave threat in our nation, this Government remains steadfast in its commitment to protect and preserve the communal harmony in the State. We stand with minorities and our Sri Lankan Tamil brethren, as we pledge to protect their rights. This Government will never permit the implementation of Citizenship

Amendment Act in our State and vows to take all necessary measures in this regard.

27. In order to create an equitable and inclusive society, it is important that the benefits of various welfare schemes reach the most deserving sections of the populace. The Hon'ble Chief Minister has addressed the Hon'ble Prime Minister requesting him to take up caste census along with the national decadal census, which is due since 2021. Given its robust, comprehensive and time-tested methodology, this Government believes that it will be a major step forward towards evidence-based policymaking and we hope that the Union Government will accept this request.

28. As part of its commitment to provide an equal and inclusive society, this Government had increased the **monthly assistance for severely affected differently abled persons from Rs.1,500 to Rs.2,000 and pension for differently abled persons from Rs.1,000 to Rs.1,500**. Further, under the Tamil Nadu Differently Abled Welfare Board, medical assistance and compensation for accidental death has been doubled in the current year. These initiatives will provide necessary support to 10.11 lakh differently abled persons.

29. In order to provide social security net to individuals who are below the income threshold and do not have adequate means to improve their livelihood,

the Government is implementing various social security pensions for old age persons, destitute widows, deserted wives, etc. In 2023, the Government has increased the **monthly pension from Rs.1,000 to Rs.1,200**, amounting to an additional commitment of Rs.845 crore. In addition, this Government has cleared all the backlog pending applications leading to an addition of 74,073 eligible beneficiaries within the social security net.

30. This Government is committed to the welfare of farmers and development of agriculture. With the kuruvai special package of Rs.76 crore, the State has reached a record area under kuruvai cultivation of 5.59 lakh acre. Further, under the '**Kalaignarin All Village Integrated**

**Agricultural Development Programme’,** works in 2,504 village panchayats at an outlay of Rs.190 crore have been taken up this year to create necessary infrastructure for the holistic development of agriculture.

31. In an effort to reduce the cost of cultivation and boost the income of farmers, this Government has announced another 50,000 new agricultural electricity connections in the year 2023-24, taking the total tally to 2 lakh connections since 2021.

32. With the objective of increasing the income of farmers and milk producers in the State, this Government has announced **an incentive of Rs.3 per litre of cow and buffalo milk supplied by the farmers.** This marks the first time in the history of the

State that the procurement price has been increased by six rupees in a short span of time. These efforts have benefitted more than 3.87 lakh milk producers in the State without affecting the interest of consumers.

33. This Government is firm on its commitment to get its rightful share of water in inter-state rivers and will leave no stone unturned to safeguard the interests of its farmers. We urge the Cauvery Water Management Authority to come out with a scientific formula for the sharing of river water, as per orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. This Government shall take all necessary measures to prevent the construction of Mekadatu dam on Cauvery.

34. The welfare of fishermen is of utmost importance to this Government and it is dedicated to safeguarding the rights of its fishermen in the traditional fishing grounds of the State. In 2023, the Sri Lankan Navy apprehended 243 fishermen along with their fishing crafts. As a result of the relentless efforts of this Government, 242 fishermen and 1 fishing boat have been released and repatriated to the State. However, in the past one month alone, 88 fishermen were apprehended along with their boats. The Government continues to implore the Union Government to decisively use diplomatic channels to secure immediate release of the remaining fishermen and their crafts, and to find a permanent solution to this issue.



35. This Government remains resolute and determined to conserve the rich biodiversity of the State. Towards this, the '**Project Nilgiri Tahr**' has been launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to protect and conserve the habitat of its State animal. The **Tamil Nadu Forest and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau** has been set up to curb the illegal trafficking of flora, fauna and marine species. The creation of an institutional setup dedicated to this cause marks a milestone in the conservation history of the State. The pioneering efforts of this Government have gained international recognition as three of its initiatives viz. '**Meendum Manjappai**', '**Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company**' and '**Women Eco-warriors**' were selected

by the Union Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Forest as best practices and showcased at the recently held Conference of Parties (CoP-28) at Dubai.

36. The State's healthcare institutions have an enviable record, making Tamil Nadu the prime destination for medical tourism in India. This Government has focussed on further expanding and enhancing the quality of healthcare infrastructure. In a record time of 15 months, the Government has constructed and operationalized a state-of-the-art 1,000-bedded **Kalaigñar Centenary Super Speciality Hospital at Guindy** at a cost of Rs.240 crore.

37. In order to prevent the spread of non-communicable diseases, the **'Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam'** initiative was launched by the Government to provide free healthcare services to the people in the comfort of their homes. It has been a huge success and so far, 1.07 crore people have benefitted under this scheme.

38. In a pioneering effort that stands as an example for the entire country to emulate, this Government launched the **'Innuyir Kappom-Nammai Kaakkum 48 Thittam'** to provide free and assured emergency treatment in the critical period of first 48 hours after an accident. So far, 2.17 lakh persons have benefitted under this Scheme, saving countless precious lives.

39. This Government has shown an unwavering commitment towards the enhancement and improvement of education among children, implementing various initiatives such as '**Illam Thedi Kalvi**' to address learning gaps and '**Ennum Ezhuthum**' to strengthen foundational literacy. Notably, the Illam Thedi Kalvi scheme, which is being implemented through volunteers in 1.65 lakh centres, has benefitted 24.86 lakh students in the State.

40. In order to cultivate the habit of reading among children and adults, this Government has constructed an iconic six-storeyed state-of-the art **Kalaingar Centenary Library at Madurai**, spread over 2 lakh sq.ft. and housing

4 lakh books, at a cost of Rs.218 crore. It serves as a landmark structure with all modern facilities such as an art gallery, multi-purpose hall, children's theatre with interactive floors and conference hall, benefiting people of the southern districts immensely.

41. The Government is focussed on the transformation of higher educational institutions into '**Centres of Excellence**', which not only produce a skilled and employable workforce for the industries, but also usher in the advancement of various fields through research and development. This Government, in collaboration with industry partners, is undertaking a project for the upgradation of infrastructure and training curriculum in 45 Government

Polytechnic Colleges at a cost of Rs.3,014 crore and 71 Government Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) at a cost of Rs.2,877 crore to meet Industry 4.0 standards.

42. The Hon'ble Chief Minister has also launched the visionary '**Naan Mudalvan**' programme with an aim of imparting industry-relevant skills to 10 lakh youth. In 2022-23 itself, the programme exceeded expectations by training over 13 lakh students, surpassing the target. In 2023-24, this programme has been further extended to polytechnic and industrial training institutes to cover 14 lakh students across the State. Furthermore, in the last year, 1.19 lakh out of 1.84 lakh

aspirants have secured placements, making this scheme a resounding success.

43. This Government recognizes the immense potential in the micro, small and medium enterprises to generate employment in the State. Addressing the most pressing needs of this sector post COVID, this Government launched the '**Tamil Nadu Credit Guarantee Scheme**' to provide guarantee to financial institutions to ease the flow of credit. As a result of this, Rs.4,679 crore has been disbursed as credit to MSMEs so far, which is 203 per cent higher as compared to the previous year.

44. In recognition of its untiring efforts to cultivate an ecosystem of startups and innovation, the State has been crowned

as the **"Best Performer State" in the prestigious Startup India 2022 rankings.**

This marks a quantum jump in the performance of the State, which had been earlier categorized in the bottom-most category in 2018. This achievement is an endorsement of this Government's proactive policies including TANSEED Emerging Sector Seed Fund, SC / ST Startup fund and Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Policy, among others.

45. The Government has taken several initiatives for the welfare and upliftment of unorganized workers engaged in various sectors. In particular, this Government has launched the **'Tamil Nadu Platform based Gig Workers Welfare Board'**, which will be responsible



for the welfare of more than one lakh unorganized workers engaged in web-based aggregator platforms for food delivery, car rentals, among others.

46. This Government recognizes that regionally balanced development is the prerequisite for sustained growth. In order to ensure quality infrastructure and amenities in rural areas, the '**Anaithu Grama Anna Marumalarchi Thittam – II**' is being implemented across the State. Under this scheme, works to the tune of Rs.1,149 crore have been undertaken in 2,504 village panchayats for the year 2023-24.

47. In order to provide functional household tap connections in all houses in rural areas, the Government has sanctioned

combined water supply projects at a cost of Rs.18,228 crore under Jal Jeevan Mission, which are under various stages of implementation. So far, more than one crore rural household connections have been provided.

48. With a special emphasis on rural connectivity, this Government has introduced the **'Mudalvarin Grama Salaigal Membattu Thittam'** to strengthen and upgrade panchayat union and village panchayat roads. Due to continuous efforts of this Government, a total of 11,655 km length of rural roads has been taken up for improvement at a cost of Rs.6,742 crore since 2021-22. Further, to bring important/major panchayat roads on par with other district roads, the Government

has taken up upgradation of 2,787 km of panchayat roads at a cost of Rs.3,056 crore.

49. For the improvement of State highways and other major roads, the Government has taken up upgradation works in 3,059 km length of roads at a cost of Rs.4,861 crore and 187 bridge works at a cost of Rs.553 crore under the **'Comprehensive Road Infrastructure Development Programme'** in the current year.

50. With a burgeoning population and increasing aspirations in urban areas, it is important for the Government to continuously expand and improve the quality of civic services. Since 2021, the Government has sanctioned 261 water

supply projects at a cost of Rs.21,156 crore, serving 1.45 crore beneficiaries. Further, 47 underground sewerage projects at a cost of Rs.10,314 crore have been sanctioned for 13 municipal corporations and 12 municipalities serving 71.67 lakh beneficiaries. In order to increase and improve the quality of roads, the Government has launched the '**Nagarpura Salai Membattu Thittam**'. Under this scheme, 19,766 road works in all urban local bodies at a cost of Rs.1,564 crore have been sanctioned.

51. This Government is committed to safeguarding the properties and lands belonging to numerous temples in the State. So far, it has retrieved 6,071 acre of lands worth Rs.5,579 crore from encroachments.

Further, since this Government has assumed office, a total of 1,290 temples have been consecrated after completion of renovation works. The renovation and conservation of thousand-year old temples are being carried out at a cost of Rs.294 crore.

52. Tamil is not just a language but is considered the life force which enriches and embellishes our lives, our whole being and is the mainspring of our glorious past, splendid present and resplendent future. This Government is taking all efforts to maintain and further strengthen the bonds of the State with its diaspora across the globe. This Government has recently launched **'Reaching Your Roots'** programme to provide a fully funded cultural tour of the State for the youth of Tamil diaspora.

This programme aims to expose them to various facets of Tamil Nadu's rich culture, history, and architecture, and transform them into 'cultural ambassadors of Tamil Nadu' in their countries.

53. Since this Government has assumed office, we have not only delivered on the promises made to the people, but have surpassed their expectations. We stand before the people today proud of the feats that we have accomplished and the progress we have achieved together in this short span of time. We remain dedicated to the well-being and prosperity of the people of Tamil Nadu and stand firm on the commitment to realize the grand Tamil dream. I thank the people of the State for reposing faith on our Government and

hope that the same will continue in the coming days, thus ensuring that Tamil Nadu remains as the torchbearer of social justice, communal harmony, rational thinking and democratic ideals for the entire nation.

54. I once again wish everyone a very happy New Year and conclude my address with the immortal words of Mahakavi Bharathiyar.

**Vazhiya Senthamizh!**

**Vazhga Natramizhar!**

**Vazhiya Bharatha Mani Thiru Nadu!**

**Government Central Press, Chennai - 600 001**