

# Controversy Over DMK Minister Udhayanidhi's Remark On Sanatan Dharma

## History Of DMK In Indian Politics

### Why In The News?

- DMK Leader And Tamil Nadu Youth Welfare Minister **Udhayanidhi Stalin's** Statement, Saying **Sanatan Dharma Is Against Social Justice And Should Hence Be Eradicated**, Has Led To Political Controversy.
- The BJP Has Alleged It Is Now Clear That "A Complete Eradication" Of Hindu Dharma Is The "**Primary Agenda**" Of The **Opposition Alliance INDIA**, Of Which DMK Is Part.

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**Sanatana Dharma Remark Row: Ayodhya seer offers ₹10 cr reward for beheading Udhayanidhi Stalin**

### Origin Of DMK Party

- **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)**, Tamil Nadu's Ruling Party, Has Its Roots In The **Self-respect Movement Begun By EV Ramaswamy 'Periyar'**. The Early 20th-century Movement Championed **Opposition To Caste And Religion** And Positioned Itself As A Rationalist Movement Against Social Evils.
- Periyar, The Founder Of The **Self-respect Movement (1925)**, Was Strongly Anti-caste And Anti-religion In His Outlook. He Advocated Major Social Reforms Related To Caste And Gender, And Opposed The Domination Of Hindi, Emphasizing The **Distinct Cultural Identity Of The Tamil Nation**.



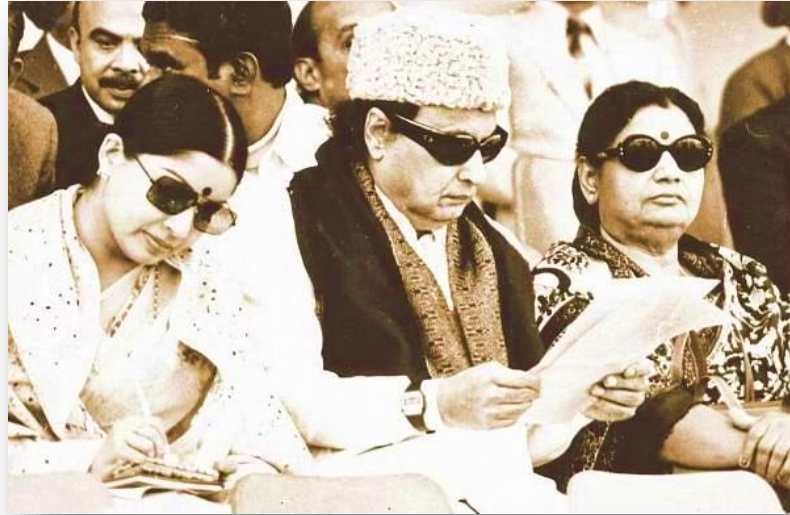
- **In 1938, The Justice Party** (Which Periyar Was A Member Of) And The Self-respect Movement Came Together. In **1944**, The New Outfit Was Named **Dravidar Kazhagam**.
- **DK Was Anti-Brahmin, Anti-Congress, And Anti-Aryan** (Read North Indian), And Launched A Movement For An **Independent Dravida Nation**. However, This Particular Demand Would Gradually Peter Out Due To A Lack Of Popular Support.



## DMK Party Post-Independence

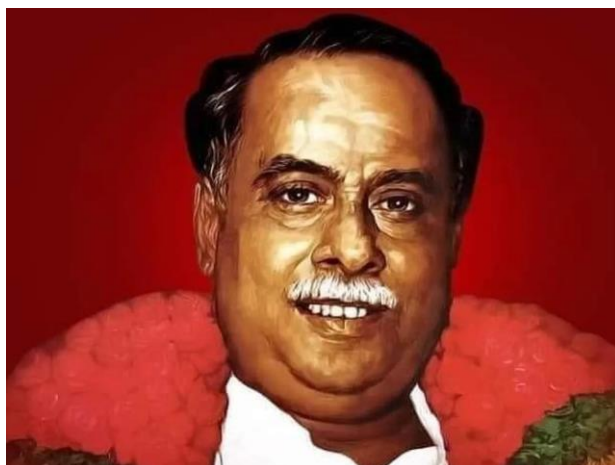
- Post-Independence, **Periyar Refused To Contest Elections**. In 1949, One Of Periyar's Closest Aides, **C N Annadurai**, Split From Him Due To Ideological Differences. **Annadurai's DMK Joined The Electoral Process**. The Party's Platforms Were Social Democracy And Tamil Cultural Nationalism.
- In 1969, Following The Death Of Annadurai, **M Karunanidhi** Took Control Of DMK. In 1972, Differences Between Him And Actor-politician M G Ramachandran Led To A Split In The Party. **MGR Formed The AIADMK**, With Associations Of His Fans As The Organisation's Bedrock.

- **In 1977, MGR Came To Power** And Remained Undefeated Until His Death In 1987. He Somewhat Diluted The Rationalist And Anti-brahmin Agenda That Was Core To The DK, Opting For Welfarism As Party Ideology.



## The Difference In Approach Towards Religion

- **Periyar Said In 1969**, Describing His Mission: “I Am A Reformer Of The Human Society. I Do Not Care About Country, God, Religion, Language, Or The State. I Am Only Concerned About The Welfare And Growth Of The Human Society”.
- Periyar Saw **Religion As An Institution Of Social Power** That Privileged The Brahmins As An Elite Caste Group To The Detriment Of Equality And Liberty Of Women And Lower Castes In The Hindu Hierarchy.
- **CN Annadurai**, Meanwhile, Would Go On To **Have A Moderate Stance** On The Matter Of Religion. He Said Later, “I Would Neither Break The Ganesha Idol Nor The Coconut (Make A Religious Offering).”



- His Protege And Later Chief Minister **M Karunanidhi Was Also An Atheist**. As A Poet And Scriptwriter, **He Further Criticised Brahmins And Religion** Through Popular Plays And Films That Reached Large Audiences And Spoke To Them In Their Native Language.
- In His Speech On Saturday, **Udhayanidhi** Also Spoke Of Points That Were Made Earlier By Periyar And Connected Them To The DMK's Political Platform. "What Did Sanatan Do To Women? It Pushed Women, Who Lost Their Husbands, Into Fire (The Erstwhile Practice Of Sati), It Tonsured The Heads Of Widows And Made Them Wear White Saris..."

