

## **DMK MLA hits out at govt for painting bridge in 'BJP colours'**



MADURAI: DMK's Madurai Central MLA P T R Palanivel Thiagarajan has condemned the highways department's move to paint the 130-year-old AV Bridge in saffron and green. He said that the number of counter messages he received through social media proves that it was part of the BJP's 10- year plan to imprint its image and colour among the people.

"I came back to Madurai on Saturday after about two weeks, and was struck by the sight of the saffron and green colour on the century-old AV Bridge. In my lifetime I have never seen it painted in any other colour than white," he told TOI.

He found that it was the Highways Department that was painting it at a cost of Rs 10 lakh. "There was no immediate need to paint the bridge when the city corporation and state are facing a financial crunch. I immediately posted it on the social media, and immediately was countered by many BJP members and supporters stating that it were the colours of the national flag and not the BJP, which further strengthened my suspicion on the same," he said. Palanivel pointed out that while the National Flag has green at the bottom and saffron on top, the bridge has green colour on top.

The MLA said that this was not the first time that they were doing it. In February and March, before the polls, he had seen the lotus symbol

drawn on many walls in his constituency. It was revealed later that the BJP had paid the local painters to paint the symbol randomly in all places possible. This was a move to create a psychological perception in the minds of the people that the party had a lot of support in the region. “They have huge funds and a 20-year plan, where they are going to do just this” he said.

He had written to the executive engineer of the highways department and Madurai Corporation Commissioner urging them to ensure that the bridge be painted in neutral colours, which do not represent any political party. On Tuesday evening, yellow and a bit of purple was also painted on the bridge. However, he said that it was his tweet, in which he took a dig at the AIADMK asking why it should not be called a slave party that did the trick. “I think they are changing the colours after my tweet,” he added.