



# Social Watch - Tamilnadu

## SOCIAL WATCH – TAMILNADU (SW-TN)

(April 2024 to March 2025)

### MILESTONES OF CHANGE : THE SW-TN JOURNEY

‘*SOCIAL WATCH – TAMILNADU*’ (SW-TN) is a *State-level Public Policy Research-cum-Advocacy Centre in the south-Indian State of India*

*Social Equity* is the central concern of SW-TN. The centre undertakes various research and advocacy initiatives, by interfacing with policy makers, social researchers and Human Rights-cum-grassroots movements in the State and outside, in its efforts to ensure Social Equity by linking public policy with livelihood rights of the socially marginalized sections in the State, such as **Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women and children.**

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**Vision:** Social Equity is the central concern of SW-TN. And “Social Equity Budgeting” is the over-arching framework of SW-TN.

**Mission:** SW-TN uses Budget Advocacy as a key instrument of monitoring Public Policy as well as of evolving Alternate Policy formulations.

We are one of the 14 Social Action Centres of “**JESUIT CHENNAI PROVINCE**”. We align our goals with the universal goals of Society of Jesus, by engaging ourselves in Empowering the marginalized, preserving & protecting the environment, providing holistic & integral formation to youth promoting justice, peace, reconciliation & secular values, forming our men to be rooted in Ignatian tradition and legacy.

## WALKING AN EXTRA MILE WITH THE EXCLUDED

The Annual Report of Social Watch–Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) for the period (April 2024 to March 2025) is not merely a record of activities such as seminars, consultations, discussion forums, etc. Still, it is a reflective document that situates the organisation’s work within the broader struggle for social justice, equity, and inclusive development in Tamil Nadu. As a state-level public policy research and advocacy centre, SW-TN has consistently foregrounded the rights and dignity of marginalised communities—especially Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs)—by linking grassroots realities with policy frameworks and governance processes.

It is a long journey of struggles with government agencies and people’s movements that has evolved into a significant civil society actor, bridging the gap between communities and the state. Its work is rooted in the conviction that **social equity must be central to public policy**, and that development must be measured not merely by economic growth but by the extent to which it uplifts historically excluded and marginalised groups.

At the heart of SW-TN’s engagement lies a threefold strategy: **budget analysis, consultation, capacity-building, and policy advocacy (lobbying)**. Through structured consultations, the organisation brings together SC/ST community leaders, grassroots movements, researchers, and government officials to deliberate on pressing issues such as budget allocations, education, livelihood, and access to welfare schemes. These platforms enable marginalised voices to be heard within institutional decision-making spaces, thereby democratizing governance processes.

Complementing this is SW-TN’s emphasis on **capacity-building**, which equips SC and ST representatives—particularly elected local body leaders and youth—with the knowledge and tools necessary to engage effectively with governance systems. Training programmes, workshops, and knowledge dissemination initiatives enhance their ability to monitor schemes, demand accountability, and assert their rights as equal citizens. Such efforts are crucial in transforming beneficiaries into informed stakeholders and active participants in development. Discussion forums are conducted for young students to help them engage in the process of social change.

A defining feature of SW-TN’s work, highlighted in its annual reports, is its sustained engagement in **budget advocacy and policy lobbying** with Tamil Nadu government agencies. Through its pioneering framework of *Social Equity Budgeting*, SW-TN critically analyses government budgets to assess whether allocations for SCs and STs—such as the Special Component Plan (SCP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)—are adequate, equitable, and effectively utilized. By presenting evidence-based recommendations and engaging with state departments, planning bodies, and commissions, the organization strives to influence policy formulation and ensure that public resources genuinely reach the most marginalized. In this regard, we conducted two national-level consultations for the Puthirai Vannar community.

The Annual Report also reflects SW-TN’s collaborative approach, as it works in partnership with national and international networks, civil society organizations, and academic institutions. These collaborations strengthen its advocacy efforts and situate local struggles within wider discourses on human rights, social justice, and inclusive development. It documents achievements, challenges, and lessons learned, while also articulating future directions for advancing the rights of SC and ST communities. More importantly, it reaffirms the organization’s enduring commitment to building a just society—one in which public policies are responsive, participatory, and firmly anchored in the principles of equality, dignity, and social transformation.

**A.Irudayaraj SJ**

**Director, SW-TN**

**Fr. A Irudaya Raj**, took charge from **Fr. John Kumar**, as **Director of Social Watch – Tamilnadu** on 5th June 2024.



### **Social Equity Advancement Initiatives for SC-ST Communities:**

#### **1) 14th Micro-Level Aandror (Scheduled Tribes - ST)**

On July 8–9, 2024, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN), in collaboration with PAALAM, successfully organized the 14th Micro-Level Aandror (Scheduled Tribes – ST) Meet at Dhyana Ashram, Chennai.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To create a participatory platform for Scheduled Tribes (ST) representatives to discuss challenges and strategize community development initiatives.
2. To enhance knowledge and awareness among ST members through expert inputs on tribal rights, development issues, and government processes.
3. To formulate and present actionable recommendations to the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department for policy consideration.

The gathering witnessed the active participation of 13 out of the 17 Aandror (ST) members representing various regions of Tamil Nadu.

- This two-day event served as a crucial platform for dialogue, reflection, and strategizing among ST representatives.
- Esteemed guests, including Mr. Valluvan, Anthropologist, and Mr. Ravichandran from the Revenue Department, were invited to share their expert insights on tribal rights, development challenges, and the role of government departments in addressing community concerns. Their inputs provided valuable perspectives that enriched the discussions.
- Throughout the sessions, the participating members engaged in collaborative discussions, identified key issues affecting their communities, and collectively drafted a set of well-grounded recommendations.

- These recommendations were formally compiled and submitted to the authorities of the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare (ADTW) Department for necessary policy-level considerations and action.



**Impacts:**

1. Strengthened collective voice of Aandror (ST) representatives, enabling them to advocate more effectively for their rights and welfare.
2. Increased awareness and capacity among participants to engage with government mechanisms and address community concerns.
3. Influenced policy discourse by submitting well-researched, community-driven recommendations to relevant authorities.

The meeting not only strengthened the collective voice of the Aandror (ST) representatives but also reaffirmed their commitment to advocating for the rights, recognition, and upliftment of the tribal communities in Tamil Nadu.



## 2) Focusing on the status of Malaikuravar Aandrors (STs)

On July 20, 2024, SWTN and PAALAM organized an online discussion for the first time, focusing on the status of Malaikuravar Aandrors (STs) in Tamil Nadu. Approximately twenty members participated, including several Malaikuravar graduates and students.

### **Objectives:**

1. To assess and discuss the socio-economic conditions and challenges faced by the Malaikuravar community in Tamil Nadu.
2. To connect Malaikuravar graduates, students, and representatives with SW-TN's initiatives and support systems.
3. To foster dialogue and networking among community members and stakeholders for collaborative problem-solving.

The discussion aimed to address the current socio-economic conditions and challenges faced by the Malaikuravar community in the region.

- Distinguished speakers included Ms. Devika, an Advocate, Mr. Kanagaraj from NLC, and Mr. Thanapal, a Malaikuravar representative.
- They introduced new ST individuals to the initiatives and support offered by SW-TN.
- The session provided a platform for meaningful dialogue and networking, fostering a deeper understanding of the issues and potential solutions for the advancement of the Malaikuravar community.

### **Impacts:**

1. Enhanced community awareness of available resources, rights, and support mechanisms through expert and peer sharing.
  2. Strengthened connections between Malaikuravar youth and advocacy networks, encouraging active participation in community development.
  3. Laid the groundwork for targeted interventions to address identified socio-economic issues within the Malaikuravar community.
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## 3) Discussions with University Liaison Officers

On Aug 24, 2024 Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) and PAALAM organized a **Zoom discussion with University Liaison Officers**. The meeting focused on exploring future-oriented strategies for collaboration between social activists and students.

On Sep 23rd, 2024 Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) organized a meeting with **University SC-ST Liaison Officers (Professors)** at Anna University, Guindy. The meeting focused on the Post Matric Scholarship (PMS) and discussed the current status of the Saandror (SC) and Aandror (ST) communities.

### **Objectives:**

1. To engage University SC-ST Liaison Officers in assessing the current status of Saandror (SC) and Aandror (ST) communities in higher education.

2. To review and discuss the implementation, challenges, and opportunities related to the Post Matric Scholarship (PMS) scheme.
3. To identify collaborative strategies for improving scholarship access and academic outcomes for SC-ST students.



**Impacts:**

1. Increased awareness among Liaison Officers about current gaps and needs in PMS implementation for SC-ST students.
2. Strengthened institutional collaboration to address educational and financial barriers faced by marginalized students.
3. Initiated a coordinated approach to enhance scholarship outreach and utilization in universities across Tamil Nadu.

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**4) 17th Micro-Level Aandror (ST) Meet – Malayali Aandrors**

On Aug 17 and 18, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) and PAALAM organized the 17th Micro-Level Aandror (ST) Meet for Malayali Aandrors at Sacred Heart College, Tirupathur. During the meeting, ST members drafted recommendations and discussed new developmental schemes for the Malayali Aandrors.

**Objectives:**

1. To provide a platform for Malayali Aandror representatives to discuss community-specific development needs and opportunities.
2. To draft actionable recommendations aimed at improving access to welfare schemes and development programs.
3. To strengthen coordination among community members for collective advocacy.



### **Impacts:**

1. Produced targeted recommendations reflecting the specific priorities of the Malayali Aandror community.
2. Enhanced awareness of new developmental schemes among participants.
3. Strengthened the community's capacity for organized advocacy and engagement with authorities.

### **5) 18th Micro-Level Aandror (ST) Meet - Erode Aandror Community**

On Sep 2nd and 3rd 2024, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN), PAALAM, and PARAN organized the **18th Micro-Level Aandror (ST) Meet** for the Aandror community of Erode at Kadambur, Sathyamangalam, Erode. Representatives from READ, Keystone ஊராளி முன்னேற்ற சங்கம் and தாளவாடி ஆதிவாசி முன்னேற்ற சங்கம் also participated in the Meet.



**Objectives:**

1. To bring together Aandror representatives and allied organizations to address local development and welfare concerns.
2. To encourage collaborative problem-solving and shared learning among tribal groups in Erode district.
3. To formulate strategies for improving access to government schemes and resources.

**Impacts:**

1. Fostered collaboration between multiple tribal development organizations, enabling a united advocacy approach.
2. Shared best practices and experiences that can be replicated across different tribal regions.
3. Developed actionable strategies for enhancing socio-economic opportunities for the Erode Aandror community.

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**6) 19th Micro-Level Aandror (ST) Meet – Nilgiris PVTG Communities (Sep 20–21, 2024)**

On September 20–21, 2024, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN), in collaboration with PAALAM and the Ooty Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) Federation, convened the 19th Micro-Level Aandror (Scheduled Tribes – ST) Meet, specifically focused on the Nilgiris PVTG communities.

**Objectives:**

1. To create a dedicated space for Nilgiris PVTG leaders and members to share ground-level realities and challenges.
2. To raise awareness about existing government schemes and development opportunities for PVTGs.
3. To advocate culturally sensitive, community-specific interventions that address unique socio-economic needs.

The two-day meeting was held with the participation of six dedicated community members and local tribal leaders who represented the unique voices and concerns of the PVTG population in the region.

- The meet served as a vital space for sharing ground-level realities, exchanging knowledge, and building awareness around existing government schemes and developmental opportunities available to the PVTG community.
- Participants actively discussed barriers to access, challenges in implementation, and the need for culturally sensitive interventions. Emphasis was placed on strengthening local leadership, enhancing community participation in governance processes, and advocating for tailored schemes that address the distinct socio-economic needs of PVTGs.
- The insights and reflections gathered during the sessions are expected to guide future advocacy and engagement with government departments, ensuring that the voices of the Nilgiris PVTG communities are recognized in the state's tribal development agenda.



### **Impacts**

1. Strengthened local leadership and participation in governance processes among PVTG representatives.
2. Identified key barriers and gaps in accessing welfare schemes, informing future advocacy efforts.
3. Contributed to the state-level tribal development agenda by amplifying the voices and priorities of PVTG communities.



## 7) State-Level Scheduled Castes (SC) Consultation

On October 5th, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) and PAALAM organized a **State-Level Scheduled Castes (SC) Consultation** and the 20th Micro-Level Meet at the ICSA premises in Egmore. Representatives from 21 organizations and federations participated.

### Objectives

1. To create a state-level platform for Scheduled Castes (SC) representatives to discuss policies, schemes, and issues affecting their empowerment.
2. To disseminate updated, accessible information on the Post-Matric Scholarship (PMS) and related entitlements.
3. To strengthen advocacy efforts through direct engagement with policymakers and MPs.

The Honorable Thiru Ravikumar, Member of Parliament (MP), joined the event and engaged with Saandrors (SCs), discussing policy advancements for their empowerment.

- Various resource persons and activists presented their insights on the Post-Matric Scholarship, DAPSC, விழிகுண், entrepreneurship scheme (AABCS), the establishment of Ambedkar Education Day, and other pertinent issues affecting Saandrors.



### Impacts:

1. Increased awareness among SC stakeholders on scholarships, DAPSC, and other relevant schemes.
2. Strengthened policy advocacy through direct interaction with the Honorable MP and resource persons.
3. Improved access to educational entitlements through the release of the updated PMS booklet.

During the consultation, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) and PAALAM also released the updated edition of the **Post-Matric Scholarship (PMS)** booklet, aimed at increasing awareness and accessibility of educational entitlements for Scheduled Tribe students.



The booklet, which provides comprehensive information on eligibility, application procedures, and relevant departmental contacts, was formally unveiled by the **Honorable Thiru Ravikumar, Member of Parliament**. His presence and endorsement underscored the importance of bridging information gaps and ensuring that tribal students are empowered to pursue higher education through timely access to government support.

### 8) Inauguration of the SC-ST Cell at MSSW

On Oct 23rd, the Director and staff members participated in the inauguration of **the SC-ST Cell** at the Madras School of Social Work in Egmore, Chennai. The event featured Chief Guest Mr. Christodas Gandhi IAS (Retd.), Tamil Nadu SC/ST Commission Member Dr. K. Raghupathy, and NSP Nodal Officer from MSSW, who provided valuable recommendations and guidance for the effective functioning of the cell. They emphasized the cell's long-term vision and its role in the advancement of SC/ST students.



## 9) 21st Micro-Level Meet – Malaikkuravar Community

On Nov 15, SW-TN and PAALAM jointly organized the 21st Micro-Level Meet for the Malaikkuravar (Scheduled Tribe) community at TAISHA, Virugambakkam, Chennai.



### **Objectives:**

1. To conduct the first in-person focused meeting for the Malaikkuravar community post-virtual session.
  2. To discuss community-specific needs, challenges, and opportunities for development.
  3. To strengthen participation of local Aandror Malaikkuravars in advocacy and planning processes.
- Aandror Malaikkuravars (ST) from Thirumullaivayil actively participated in this significant meeting.
  - The event marks the first in-person focused meet for the Malaikkuravar community, following the previous virtual session held via Zoom.



**Impacts:**

1. Strengthened bonds between community members and advocacy networks through face-to-face engagement.
  2. Identified priority issues and potential interventions for the Malaikkuravar community.
  3. Enhanced readiness for future collective actions and follow-ups.
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**10) State-Level Consultation & 22nd Micro-Level Meet - Puthirai Vannar Community**

On Nov 18, SW-TN organized a State-Level Consultation on the Puthirai Vannar community, along with the 22nd Micro-Level Meet, at St. Joseph's College, Trichy.

**Objectives:**

1. To provide a state-level platform for discussing policy advancements for the Puthirai Vannar community.
2. To facilitate dialogue between activists, organizations, and community members for collective strategizing.
3. To identify actionable steps for enhancing socio-economic empowerment.



Representatives from various organizations and activists participated in the event, engaging in discussions on policy advancements aimed at empowering the community.

**Impacts:**

1. Strengthened advocacy for Puthirai Vannar rights through consolidated stakeholder engagement.
  2. Broadened understanding of policy gaps and opportunities for targeted interventions.
  3. Fostered unity among diverse organizations working for the community's welfare.
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## 11) FGD with Malaikuravar Aandrors (STs) on AABCS

On November 22, 2024, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) facilitated a focused group discussion with members of the Malaikuravar community, aiming to explore effective strategies for accessing the benefits of the Annal Ambedkar Business Champion Scheme.



- The initiative was specifically designed to enhance awareness and bridge the information gap between Scheduled Tribe (ST) entrepreneurs and the schemes intended to support their economic empowerment.
- The session witnessed the active participation of aspiring and existing ST entrepreneurs from the community, along with key officials and scheme in-charges.
- Together, they engaged in constructive dialogue, shared experiences, and clarified doubts related to eligibility criteria, application processes, and the nature of financial and institutional support available under the scheme.
- The discussion also shed light on common challenges faced by tribal entrepreneurs and highlighted the need for continued handholding and follow-up mechanisms.



**Impacts:**

1. Increased understanding among ST entrepreneurs of government-supported business development opportunities.
2. Strengthened connections between entrepreneurs and scheme-implementing officials.
3. Initiated steps toward improved entrepreneurial participation and access to AABCS benefits.

The event served as a significant step toward enabling the Malaikkuravar community to claim their rightful share in government-supported entrepreneurial development programs.

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**12) 26th Micro-Level Meet for Chengalpattu Irulars**

On Dec 21st, SW-TN, Madras Christian College, and PAALAM jointly organized the “**26th Micro-Level Meet for Chengalpattu Irulars**”. Participants included Aandror Irulars (ST) from Chengalpattu, ASSET Organisation Director Ms. Sornalatha, Tamil Nadu Aandror (ST) Mandram Members Tr. Gunasekaran and Tr. Balaji, as well as professors and heads from MCC. Valuable inputs were shared to enhance collaboration and support for the Aandror (ST) community.



**Objectives:**

1. To engage Irular Community representatives in discussions on socio-economic development strategies.
2. To foster collaboration between academic institutions, NGOs, and community organizations.
3. To gather community inputs for advocacy and program design.



**Impacts:**

1. Strengthened partnerships between stakeholders working for Irular welfare.
2. Enhanced visibility of Irular concerns in academic and advocacy spaces.
3. Identified priority areas for follow-up interventions.

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**13) FRA Training Workshop for ST Communities in Valparai**

On Friday, January 24, 2025, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN), in collaboration with Arulagam and the Department of Social Welfare and Tribal Welfare (ST), organized a one-day intensive training workshop on “***The Benefits and Implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006***” for members of the Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities in Valparai.

**Objectives:**

1. To build awareness of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 among tribal communities.
2. To equip participants with practical knowledge for claiming IFR, CFR, and other rights.
3. To strengthen Forest Rights Committees and promote grassroots legal literacy.

The event took place at the Thulasi Ammal Memorial Hall and brought together tribal representatives, grassroots leaders, and civil society members committed to advancing the rights of forest-dependent communities.

- The session was facilitated by Mr. S. Rajan, M.A., L.L.B., a respected legal expert and current member of the State-Level Monitoring Committee under the FRA.
- Mr. Rajan provided a comprehensive overview of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, highlighting its genesis, scope, and significance in addressing historical injustices faced by Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers.
- Participants engaged actively in the workshop, raising critical questions about the barriers they face in accessing these rights, particularly challenges related to land mapping, documentation, and administrative delays.

அருளகம் மற்றும் சமூகக் கண்காணிப்பகம்-தமிழ்நாடு இணைந்து நடத்துகின்ற  
பழங்குடிகளும்(ST) வரலாற்று சிறப்பு மிக்க  
வன உரிமைகள் சட்டம் 2006-ன் பயன்களும் பற்றிய  
விழிப்புணர்வுக் கூட்டம்.

நாள்: 24-01-2025 (வெள்ளிக்கிழமை)

இடம் : துளசி அம்மாள் திருமண  
மண்டபம்,வால்பாறை.

நேரம்: காலை 10:00 முதல் மாலை 4:00 வரை



- Mr. Rajan addressed these concerns with legal clarity and offered practical guidance on how community members and local governance bodies can collaborate to ensure effective implementation.
- The workshop also highlighted the importance of strengthening local Forest Rights Committees (FRCs), building legal awareness at the grassroots level, and promoting collective mobilization to hold authorities accountable. Materials such as simplified guides and claim templates were distributed to assist participants in initiating or pursuing claims under the FRA.



### **Impacts:**

1. Increased legal awareness and readiness to claim FRA rights among participants.
2. Strengthened local leadership for effective FRA implementation.
3. Equipped communities with tools and resources for pursuing claims.

The initiative stands as a crucial step in empowering tribal communities to assert their legal rights, protect their habitats, and pursue sustainable livelihoods with dignity and autonomy.

#### 14) Gram Sabha in Nedungundru Village, Valparai



- On January 25, 2025, a Gram Sabha meeting was convened in Nedungundru village, Valparai, as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen democratic participation and ensure tribal voices are included in local governance processes.
- The meeting witnessed active and inclusive participation from a range of key stakeholders, including government officials, forest department officers, the local ward councillor, panchayat leaders, police personnel, and a representative from the Tamil Nadu Tribal Council.
- The meeting served as a crucial platform for community members to express their needs, share concerns, and engage directly with decision-makers on issues affecting their livelihoods, land rights, access to welfare schemes, and forest governance. Special attention was given to the implementation status of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), access to education and healthcare, and the protection of traditional tribal habitats.

#### **Salient Features:**

- Inclusive participation from government officials, forest department, local governance bodies, police, and Tamil Nadu Tribal Council.
- Discussed FRA implementation, access to education and healthcare, and protection of tribal habitats.
- Kadar community presented and documented resolutions.
- SW-TN team conducted a field study to understand local concerns.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To ensure tribal voices are represented in local governance through participatory decision-making.
2. To address livelihood, land rights, and welfare concerns with multi-departmental coordination.
3. To strengthen the role of Gram Sabhas as platforms for democratic engagement.

The active facilitation of this Gram Sabha helped reaffirm the role of community institutions in participatory governance and highlighted the importance of sustained engagement between tribal communities and the state machinery.



**Impacts:**

1. Improved responsiveness of officials to tribal concerns with agreed follow-up actions.
2. Strengthened community participation in governance processes.
3. Facilitated integrated problem-solving through inter-departmental engagement.

Kadar Tribal Community members engaged in discussions, presented resolutions, and documented them officially. Social Watch Tamil Nadu Director Fr. A. Irudayaraj, along with staff and researchers, attended and conducted a field study in collaboration with the community to understand their concerns.

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**15) 29th Micro-Level Meet for Chengalpattu Irulars**

On Jan 30, SW-TN, Madras Christian College, and PAALAM jointly organized the "**29th Micro-Level Meet for Chengalpattu Irulars.**" Participants included **Aandror Irulars (ST) from Chengalpattu** and **ASSET Organization members**. This meeting served as a follow-up to the previous Chengalpattu Irular development meet.

**Objectives:**

1. To assess progress on action points from the previous Irular development meeting.
2. To sustain dialogue between community members and support organizations.
3. To identify new priorities for the Chengalpattu Irular community.

**Impacts:**

1. Strengthened continuity in development planning for the Irulars.
  2. Maintained collaborative engagement between stakeholders.
  3. Identified gaps and emerging needs for targeted interventions.
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## 16) Panel Discussion on “The Indian Constitution and the Marginalized”

On Jan 27, SW-TN, in collaboration with LISSTAR, Loyola College Chennai, and Tamil Nadu AICUF, organized a panel discussion on “**The Indian Constitution and the Marginalized**” at L.S. Hall, Loyola College, Chennai. Panelists shared their insights on the Constitution, focusing on its provisions for marginalized groups, including SCs, STs, women, and children.



### Objectives

1. To raise awareness on constitutional rights and protections for marginalized groups.
2. To foster critical discussions on the implementation of constitutional safeguards.
3. To encourage civic engagement and advocacy among students and participants.

### Impacts

1. Enhanced understanding of constitutional provisions among attendees.
2. Strengthened commitment to advocacy for marginalized communities.
3. Encouraged informed participation in democratic processes.

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## 17) Online Zoom Meeting for Adhiyar Aandror (ST)

On Feb 15, SW-TN and PAALAM jointly organized an online Zoom meeting for **Adhiyar Aandror** (Scheduled Tribes) to discuss the following aspects: Assessment of implemented resolutions and pending actions; Overview of students enrolled in the college for the current academic year; Identifying and addressing their specific needs; Presentation of measures undertaken to promote entrepreneurship.

**Objectives:**

1. Review implemented resolutions and pending community action points.
2. Assess student enrollment and identify specific academic and livelihood needs.
3. Promote entrepreneurship among ST students and youth.

**Impacts:**

- Strengthened follow-up mechanisms by reviewing progress on past resolutions and pending actions.
  - Enabled targeted academic and entrepreneurial support planning for ST students.
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**18) Pre-Planning Discussion for Puthirai Vannar State-Level Consultation**

On Feb 21, A pre-planning discussion for the State-Level Consultation on Puthirai Vannars was held at the Social Watch office. The discussion included the Director, staff members, and state representatives Mr. Mohan Kumar and Mr. Kamuthy Subbaiah. The tentative date for the consultation was set for March 21, 2025 and the agenda for the meeting was discussed.



**Objectives:**

1. Finalize agenda and date for upcoming State-Level Consultation on Puthirai Vannars.
2. Align perspectives among state representatives and organizational staff.

**Impacts:**

- Established a clear agenda and timeline for an impactful state-level engagement.
  - Fostered alignment among key state representatives for coordinated action.
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## 19) **Online Discussion: Motivating Saandror (SC) Academicians for Syllabus Formulation**

On Feb 24, SW-TN and PAALAM jointly organized an online Zoom discussion on “**Motivating Saandror (Scheduled Caste) Academicians for Syllabus Formulation**”. The discussion involved professors from various colleges, focusing on strategies to enhance academic contributions from SC scholars in curriculum development.

### **Objectives:**

1. Encourage SC academicians to contribute to curriculum design.
2. Share strategies for increasing representation in syllabus formulation.

### **Salient Features:**

- Conducted via Zoom with professors from various colleges.
- Discussion centered on academic contribution and representation.

### **Impacts:**

- Boosted motivation and clarity for SC academicians to actively contribute to curriculum design.
- Promoted representation of marginalized voices in higher education policy and syllabus formulation.

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## 20) **Tamil Nadu Development Action Plan for SC/ST Act & Rules 2024 Consultation**

On March 1, the Tamil Nadu Development Action Plan for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Act & Rules 2024 consultation meeting was held at Asha Nivas Center, Chennai. The event, organized by SASY Thindivanam, Adhiboomi Charitable Trust (ACT), Centre for Child Rights Development (CCRD), Human Resource Development Foundation (HRDF), and Social Watch – Tamil Nadu, focused on policy implementation, accountability, and resource allocation for SC/ST communities.



**Objectives:**

1. Review and strengthen policy implementation for SC/ST development.
2. Ensure accountability and adequate resource allocation.
3. Focus on policy advocacy, monitoring, and coordination among the civil society organisations.

**Impacts:**

- Strengthened advocacy for transparent resource allocation to SC/ST communities.
- Built consensus among multiple organizations for joint policy monitoring and accountability.

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**21) Puthirai Vannar State-Level Consultation (Part II)**

On March 21, 2025, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu and PAALAM jointly organized the **State-Level Consultation Meeting for the Puthirai Vannar Community – Part 2** at Dhyana Ashram, Santhome, Chennai. The meeting focused on government welfare schemes and the participation of Scheduled Castes in higher education.



**Objectives:**

1. Provide updated information on government schemes for the Puthirai Vannar community.
2. Promote higher education and entrepreneurship opportunities.

**Impacts:**

- Increased community awareness on welfare schemes and entrepreneurship opportunities.
- Created direct linkages between community members and government agencies for faster access to schemes.

**Ms. Vasanthi Kumaresan, State Project Coordinator, TAHDCO,** provided an in-depth discussion on economic advancement and entrepreneurship opportunities for the community in Puthirai Vannar – Consultation.



## 22) Ambedkar Arundhathiyar Aran (AAA) – Student’s Meet

On March 23, SW-TN and PAALAM jointly organized the **Ambedkar Arundhathiyar Aran (AAA) – Students Support Program** at AICUF House.

### Objectives:

1. Raise awareness on constitutional rights and social justice among SC/ST students.
2. Foster dialogue between academia, civil society, and government.



The **Ambedkar Arunthathiyar Aran (AAA)** event was honored by the esteemed presence of Mr. Selvakumar, Member of the State Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission, whose keynote address emphasized the importance of constitutional rights, social justice, and equitable access to opportunities for marginalized communities. He was joined by distinguished academicians Prof. Bhuvaneshwari from Anna University and Prof. Muthukandhan from Madras Christian College (MCC) both of whom shared valuable insights drawn from their academic and grassroots experiences.

Their speeches focused on the role of education in empowering SC/ST youth, the challenges in accessing state-sponsored schemes, and the critical importance of community-level awareness and collective mobilization. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and parents associated with Madras Christian College (MCC), Loyola College & Janodayam.

**Impacts:**

- Empowered SC/ST students with constitutional and rights-based awareness.
- Fostered collaboration between academia, government, and civil society for student support.

The gathering created a vibrant space for dialogue and learning, fostering intergenerational conversations on rights, opportunities, and the pathways to collective progress. The AAA event stood as a strong reminder of the ongoing need for awareness-building, institutional support, and the active involvement of academia, civil society, and government in advancing the cause of social equity.



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**23) 32nd Micro-Level Aandror (Scheduled Tribes – ST) Meet at Palayamkottai**

On May 17, 2025, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN), in collaboration with AKAM and PAALAM, organized the 32nd Micro-Level Aandror (Scheduled Tribes – ST) Meet at St. Xavier’s College of Education, Palayamkottai. The meet brought together representatives from the **Kaniyaar, Kaanikaarar, Paliyar, and Kattunayakkar** communities residing in Tirunelveli and adjoining districts.

**Objectives:**

1. To provide a platform for tribal communities to share challenges and opportunities.
2. To equip participants with knowledge to access welfare schemes.

The one-day consultation served as a vital platform for tribal community members to come together and engage in focused discussions on the challenges they face and the opportunities available to them through government welfare schemes. Special attention was given to issues such as land rights, education, livelihood support, healthcare access, and the implementation of development programs tailored for ST populations.

Facilitators and subject experts guided the discussions, ensuring that participants were equipped with accurate information on entitlements and practical steps to access existing schemes. The meet also encouraged peer sharing, where community members spoke about their lived experiences, best practices, and obstacles in navigating administrative processes.

The gathering played a key role in strengthening grassroots leadership and building a collective understanding of the importance of policy engagement. It reaffirmed the commitment of all stakeholders to advancing the rights, dignity, and socio-economic wellbeing of Scheduled Tribes in the southern region of Tamil Nadu.



**Impacts:**

- Enhanced grassroots leadership and peer-to-peer learning among diverse ST communities.
  - Provided actionable guidance on accessing entitlements, improving socio-economic well-being.
-

24) **Strategic Engagements Through Visit:**

On 7<sup>th</sup> June 2024, we invited **Dr. Victor P. Karunan**, 'Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University- Thailand' and an International Expert on Child Participation' for a dialogue on Child Budgeting; at our office.



25) **Meet with Hon. Tr. Sasikanth Senthil, Member of Parliament – 08 July, 2024**



26) On 9<sup>th</sup> Nov, Ms. Vijayakumari *Field Visit on Thirumullaivayil, Thiruvallur Malaikkuravars.*



27) **Chennai Province: Provincial Visit - 11.11.2024**



## 28) **Field analysis in Sunnambuk Kaalvai Village**



- On February 15, 2025, a staff member and an intern from Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) conducted a field analysis in Sunnambuk Kaalvai village, located in the Thiruporur block. The visit aimed at directly engaging with members of the Irular community, with a particular focus on families traditionally involved in snake charming and related livelihoods.
- Through in-depth interactions and informal discussions, the team sought to understand the socio-economic realities, occupational vulnerabilities, and systemic barriers faced by the community. Special attention was given to the challenges surrounding livelihood security, access to education and healthcare, housing conditions, and the extent of benefit received from welfare schemes intended for Scheduled Tribes.
- The visit provided valuable grassroots insights into the cultural identity of the Irulars, the stigma associated with their traditional occupation, and the need for inclusive development policies that recognize and respect their way of life while ensuring socio-economic upliftment. The findings from this field visit will contribute to ongoing advocacy and planning efforts aimed at supporting tribal communities in Tamil Nadu through targeted interventions.

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## 29) **Inviting -TN SC/ST Commission Member, Thiru. S Selvakumar**

On March 14, **Tamil Nadu SC/ST Commission Member, Thiru. S Selvakumar**, was invited to the upcoming Ambedkar Arunthathiyar Aran meeting on the 23rd by SW-TN Researchers. As part of the invitation, they presented him with the *SC/ST True Status* book. Additionally, Thiru Selvakumar handed over a compiled publication of government orders related to educational assistance for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students to Social Watch – Tamil Nadu.



### **The People's Budget Lens:**

#### **30) பட்ஜெட் மீதான சமூகப் பார்வை at MSSW:**

On August 4 2024, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu, in collaboration with the World Social Forum – TN and the Madras School of Social Work, hosted a budget meeting “பட்ஜெட் மீதான சமூகப் பார்வை” attended by 120 participants, including academics, activists, and community leaders.



**Objectives:**

1. Analyze the Union Budget 2024–2025 from a social justice and equity perspective.
2. Highlight budgetary implications for marginalized communities.
3. Strengthen NGO and civil society advocacy for equitable resource allocation.

The event featured key speakers like Economics professor Mr. Venkatesh Athireya, MP Mr. Ravikumar, and social activist Ms. Neelavalli, who provided critical analyses of the Union Budget 2024-2025.

They addressed the economic implications, impact on marginalized communities, and the role of NGOs in advocating for equitable resource distribution, sparking a meaningful discussion on social justice and development.

**Impacts:**

- Enhanced public understanding of budgetary policies and their social impact.
- Equipped civil society with analytical tools to advocate for budget justice.

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**31) SCSP-TSP Pre-Budget Consultation Meet with Members of the Legislature**

On March 1, 2025, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN), in collaboration with PAALAM, organized the **SCSP-TSP Pre-Budget Consultation Meet with Members of the Legislature** at the IAS Mess, Koyambedu, Chennai. The consultation aimed to advocate for the equitable allocation and effective utilization of funds under the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) in the upcoming state budget.

**Objectives:**

1. To advocate for proportional and transparent allocation of SCSP and TSP funds.
2. To facilitate dialogue between policymakers and grassroots stakeholders.



The meeting was graced by the presence of the Honorable Member of the Legislative Assembly, **Mr. Sindhanai Selvan**, who participated as the special guest. In his address, he emphasized the importance of ensuring that SCSP and TSP allocations are not only proportionate to the population of SC/ST communities but are also implemented transparently and in a community-driven manner.

**Impacts:**

- Strengthened advocacy for fair budget allocations to SC/ST communities.
- Fostered policy-maker engagement with on-ground realities.

Civil society representatives, researchers, and community leaders presented data-based findings, field-level experiences, and key recommendations aimed at improving the reach and impact of the SCSP and TSP across Tamil Nadu. The consultation served as a vital space for dialogue between policymakers and grassroots actors, strengthening the collective demand for budget justice and inclusive development.

## Shaping Futures Through Gender Justice :

### 32) **Capacity Building Workshop for Marginalised Women**

On August 11, 2024, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu, in collaboration with the Abhithi Foundation, organized a **Capacity Building Workshop for Marginalised Women** in Puducherry, with a central focus on the theme “*Empowering Rural Women.*” The event aimed to enhance the leadership potential, social awareness, and access to entitlements among women from vulnerable and underrepresented communities.

**Objectives:**

1. To enhance leadership, awareness, and rights knowledge among rural marginalized women.
2. To improve access to education, livelihoods, and welfare schemes.



**ABHITHI FOUNDATION** CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR MARGINALISED WOMEN

**விளிம்பு நிலை பெண்களுக்கான  
திறன் வளர்ப்புப் பயிற்சி**

**Place: Puducherry**      **Date: 11.08.2024 (Sunday)**

**Organized by:**  
**Abhithi Foundation & Social Watch-TN**

The workshop brought together women representatives from several rural settlements, including Katheri Kuppam, Rasangulam, Madugarai, Panayadi Kuppam, and Bathu Kannu. These participants engaged in interactive sessions addressing critical issues such as gender-based discrimination, access to education and livelihoods, social security schemes, and the importance of women's voices in local governance.

Facilitators from both organizing institutions provided practical training on rights-based approaches, group mobilization, and how to effectively utilize government welfare schemes for sustainable development. The workshop also encouraged peer sharing, allowing women to reflect on common challenges and collectively explore solutions.

**Impacts:**

- Strengthened women's confidence and capacity for community leadership.
- Increased awareness of rights and entitlements among participants.

The event marked a meaningful step in fostering solidarity, self-confidence, and agency among rural women, reaffirming the commitment of both Social Watch – TN and the Abhithi Foundation to advancing gender equity at the grassroots level.

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**33) State-Level Consultation: Empowerment of Saandror (SC) Widowed Women**

On December 22, 2024, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SWTN) organized a state-level consultation on “*The Empowerment of Saandror (SC) Widowed Women*” at AICUF House, Chennai. The event marked SWTN's **first focused initiative** addressing the specific needs and rights of widowed women from Scheduled Caste communities. The program was coordinated by **Ms. Selvi**, a key representative from the *International Widow Women Welfare Foundation*.

**Objectives:**

1. To address the socio-economic and emotional needs of SC widowed women.
2. To advocate targeted welfare schemes and policy inclusion.



The consultation brought together **mental health professionals, healthcare experts, and counselors**, who offered valuable perspectives on the emotional, physical, and social challenges faced by widowed women. Key issues discussed included lack of access to welfare schemes, emotional trauma, social stigma, and the absence of structured support systems.

Those who participated, widowed women, activists, and community leaders, shared their experiences and voiced the need for recognition, respect, and inclusion in state policy. The session concluded with recommendations such as forming widow support groups, ensuring access to counseling, and advocating for targeted government schemes and pensions.

**Impacts:**

- Elevated the visibility of widowed women’s issues in advocacy spaces.
- Laid groundwork for policy proposals and community support programs.

The event laid the foundation for SWTN’s future work in supporting widowed women through advocacy, community organizing, and policy engagement.

On the same day, SW-TN and Abhithi Foundation organized a **Consultation on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment**, in collaboration with other organizations, at the Abhithi Foundation Office, Pondicherry.



**34) Medical Camp for Widows’ Wellness and Mental Health**

On March 2, SW-TN and the International Widows Welfare and Service Foundation organized a “Medical Camp for Widows’ Wellness and Mental Health” at Teynampet, Chennai. Nearly 40 women benefited from this camp.

**Objectives:**

1. To provide healthcare and mental health support to widowed women.
2. To address both physical and emotional well-being needs.



**Impacts:**

- Improved immediate health access for vulnerable women.
- Strengthened trust between widowed women and service providers.

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**35) International Women's Day Celebration**

On March 29, 2025, the **International Women's Day Celebration** was held at NRC Mahal, Nellikuppam, jointly organized by **ASSET, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SWTN),** and the **Helping Hands Foundation.** The event brought together women leaders, grassroots field workers, students, and civil society representatives to honor the achievements of women and discuss the ongoing challenges they face.



**Objectives:**

1. To celebrate women's achievements and raise awareness on ongoing gender challenges.
2. To promote legal literacy, health access, and economic empowerment.

Several **experts and practitioners** from the fields of health, law, education, and social work addressed the gathering. The sessions covered a wide range of topics, including **women's empowerment, access to healthcare, legal protections, and economic independence**. Special emphasis was placed on creating awareness about **welfare schemes, higher education opportunities for young women**, and the importance of legal literacy in navigating systemic challenges.

**Impacts:**

- Strengthened women's networks for mutual support and advocacy.
- Increased community awareness of legal and economic empowerment opportunities.

The discussions encouraged active participation from women across various backgrounds, allowing them to voice their concerns and share lived experiences. The event reaffirmed the commitment of the organizing bodies to promote **gender justice, dignity, and equal opportunity** through continued collaboration and community-based action.

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## **Voices of the Future: Child-Centered Action :**

### **36) Lecture-Discussion on Children's Rights in the Asia-Pacific Region**

On 7th June 2024, Social Watch-TN in collaboration with Arunodhaya; organized a Lecture - Discussion on Challenges in the protection and promotion of Children's Rights in the Asia-Pacific Region by Dr. Victor P. Karunan at Egmore.

**Objective:**

1. To highlight current challenges and opportunities in protecting and promoting children's rights in the Asia-Pacific region.
2. To foster dialogue between child rights advocates, educators, and social workers.



### **Salient Features:**

- Organized by SW-TN in collaboration with Arunodhaya.
- Keynote by Dr. Victor P. Karunan, an eminent child rights expert.
- Focus on regional disparities, policy gaps, and best practices for child protection.
- Interactive Q&A with practitioners and students.

### **Impacts:**

- Strengthened awareness among participants on regional child rights frameworks.
- Enhanced networking between grassroots child rights groups and academic circles.
- Inspired follow-up discussions on integrating children's rights education into local advocacy.



A staff member from Social Watch – Tamil Nadu conducted a focused session on scholarship applications, community support mechanisms, and special provisions for vulnerable children. This formed part of a one-day training programme organized by ActionAid Association (India) on April 8, 2025, at ALC Campus, Chennai. Titled ***“Training for Community Fellows: Facilitation of Access to Quality Free and Compulsory Education under SC/ST Scholarships for Homeless Children,”*** the event aimed to empower community fellows working in Broadway and George Town.

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### **37) Transformative Outcomes Led by SW-TN**

On Nov 6, 2024, Ms. Yazhini Rajakumar, a Saandror (SC) student trained by SW-TN for overseas scholarships, was selected for the Tamil Nadu ADTW scholarship.

This year, SW-TN successfully assisted five students in securing opportunities for further studies abroad:

1. Mr. Gokul Raj, Ireland.
2. Mr. Praveen, Germany.
3. Ms. Princy, U.K.
4. Mr. Jegan Murugaiyan, U.K.
5. Ms. Yazhini Rajakumar, U.K.

**T. ANAND, I.A.S.,**  
DIRECTOR



ADIDRAVIDAR WELFARE DEPARTMENT,  
CHEPAUK, CHENNAI – 600 005.

Date : .....  
06.11.2024

To Whom It May Concern:  
University of Leicester,  
U.K.  
Lr.R.C.No.J1/24324/2024,  
Sir/Madam,

Sub: Adi Dravidar Welfare - Scholarship - Tamil Nadu State Overseas Scholarship Scheme - Ms.Yazhini Rajakumar recommended for scholarship for pursuing MSc Advanced Mechanical Engineering with Industry in University of Leicester, U.K.- Sponsorship letter issued - reg.  
Ref: 1. G.O. (Ms) No. 105 Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare (ADW3(1)) Department, Dated: 21.08.2023  
2. Your Unconditional offer letter dated 10.10.2024, (Student Number: 249054835)  
3. Ms.Yazhini Rajakumar Overseas Scholarship Application, Dated: 15.10.2024

\*\*\*\*\*  
With reference to the Government Order 1<sup>st</sup> cited, Ms.Yazhini Rajakumar has been selected for Tamil Nadu State Overseas Scholarship Scheme for pursuing MSc Advanced Mechanical Engineering with Industry in your University.

### 38) Article in The Hindu Tamil on Widowed Women's Struggles

On October 22, 2024, an article titled “கைப்பெண்களின் கண்ணீரை துடைப்பது எப்போது?” (“When Will the Tears of Widowed Women Be Wiped Away?”) authored by the Director of Social Watch – Tamil Nadu was published in **The Hindu Tamil**. The piece shed light on the often-overlooked struggles of **widowed women**, particularly from marginalized communities, emphasizing the urgent need to address their **social security, mental health, and emotional well-being**.

#### Objective:

- To raise public and policy awareness about the systemic neglect of widowed women from marginalized communities.

**அ.இருதயராஜ்**  
கூட்டித் தகவலியல் துறைப் பேராசிரியர்  
தொடர்புக்கு: iruraj2020@gmail.com

## கைம்பெண்களின் கண்ணீரைத் துடைப்பது எப்போது?

சமீபத்தில் பதிவசெய்யப்பட்ட ஒவ்வொரு கைம்பெண் ணுக்கும் ரூ.50 ஆயிரம் கூடன் உதவியாக வழங்கப் படும் என்ற அரசாணை வெளிவந்தது. ஆனால், தகவல் சேகரிப்பதற்கு முன்பாகவே அது நிறுத்தி வைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. அரசிடம் நிதி இல்லை என்று காரணம் சொல்லப்படுகிறது.

**மனநலம் காக்க...**

கைம்பெண்களில் பெரும்பாலானோர் தங்கள் எதிர் காலம் எப்படி இருக்குமோ என்கிற பயத்திலும் அச்சத் திலும் தான் வாழ்கிறார்கள். குழந்தைகளோடு இருக் கின்ற கைம்பெண்கள் எதிர்கொள்ளும் சவால்கள் அதிகம். இப்படிப் பல்வேறு பிரச்சினைகளை எதிர் கொள்வதால், மிகப்பெரிய மன உளைச்சலுக்கு அவர்கள் ஆளாகிறார்கள். இதினிடமிருந்து அவர்கள் வெளிவருவதற்குத் தனியார் அமைப்புகளோடு இணைந்து இலவசமாக அவர்களுக்கு மனநல ஆலோசனையை அரசு வழங்க வேண்டும். மேலும், பல்வேறு ஆக்கபூர்வமான செயல்பாடுகளில் அவர்களை ஈடுபட வைக்க வேண்டும். குறிப்பாக, மாடல் அளவிலான பெண்கள் கண்ணாணிப்புக் குழு, கிராம மேம்பாட்டுக் குழு, கல்வி மேம்பாட்டுக் குழு, விவசாயிகள் குறை தீர்ப்புக் குழு ஆகிய குழுக்களை உருவாக்குவதோடு, அரசுத் துறை சார்ந்த குழுக் களிலும் கைம்பெண்களை ஈடுபடுத்துகின்றபோது அவர்கள் தங்கள் கவலைவாய்மற்றது இன்டர் செயல் பாடுகளில் தங்களை ஈடுபடுத்துகின்றன முடியும்.

**சட்டப் பாதுகாப்பு**

சமூக, பொருளாதார, அரசியல் தளங்களில் கைம்பெண்களின் சமத்துவ உரிமைகள் நிலைநாட் டப்படுவதும் அவர்களை சுதந்திரம் உறுதிப்படுத்தப் படுவதும் காலத்தின் தேவை. இதை மனதில் வைத்து கைம்பெண்கள் பரிசீலனை செய்யப்படும் திட்டம் சட்டம் இயற்றப்பட வேண்டும். கைம்பெண்களுக்கு ஏற்படுகின்ற பல்வேறு விதமான அநீதிகளைப் பதிவசெய்வதற்கும், அவற்றுக்குத் தீர்வு காணவும் ஒவ்வொரு மாடல்த்திட்டம் ஒரு சட்டப் பாதுகாப்புக் குழு அமைக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

மொத்தத்தில், கைம்பெண்கள் - ஆதரவற்ற மகளிர் நல வாரியம் அமைக்கப்பட்ட பிறகு, அவர்களுடைய வாழ்வில் முன்னேற்றம் ஏற்படும் என்கிற நம்பிக்கை உருவானது. ஆனால், வாரியத்துக் கென்று அரசு போதுமான நிதி ஒதுக்காததாலும், ஆக்கபூர்வமான செயல்பாடுகளை முன்னெடுக்காத விவலை, மகளிர் நலத் திட்டங்களில் தீவிரக் கவனம் செலுத்தும் திட்டம் அரசு, இதைமீடும் கவனத்தில் கொள்ள வேண்டும்!

கேள்விகளுக்கு: 044-26100000

**பேசப்பட வேண்டிய பிரச்சினைகள்**

அண்மையில், கைம்பெண்களின் கண்களுக்குப் பக்காக ஒரு புதிய செயலியை உருவாக்கி, அதன் மூலமாக கைம்பெண்களின் தரவுகளைப் பதிவசெய்வதற்குத் தமிழ்நாடு அரசு ஆணை வெளியிட்டது. எனினும், கிராமப்புறங்களிலும் சரி, நகர்ப்பகுதிகளிலும் சரி, திறன்பேசி பயன்படுத்தாத / பயன்படுத்தாத பெண்கள், யாழ்ப்பாணம், வயது முதிர்ந்த கைம்பெண்கள் அந்தச் செயலியைத் திறந்து, தங்களுடைய தரவுகளைப் பதிவிட இயலாமல் தவிர்க்கிறார்கள். திறன்பேசி வைத்திருப் பவர்களின் உதவியை அவர்கள் நாட வேண்டியிருக்கிறது. அப்படியான குழுவிலும், பலரால் சரியான விதத்தில் தகவலைப் பதிவெற்றம் செய்ய முடியாமல் போகிறது.

இந்த நல வாரியம் கைம்பெண்களுக்கு உடனடி யாகச் செய்ய வேண்டிய பணிகள் ஏராளமாக இருக் கின்றன. அவர்கள் சுதந்திரமாகத் தங்குவதற்கு வீடு இல்லாமல் அல்லலுறுகிறார்கள். குடிசை, தகரம் போட்ட வீடு, வாடகை வீடு அல்லது உறவினர்கள் வீடு என்று நிர்ந்தரமில்லாமல் வாழ்கிறார்கள். குறிப்பாக, நகர்ப்புறங்களில் கைம்பெண் என்று தெரிந்தால், வாடகை வீடு தர மறுக்கப்படுகிறது. இதனால், அவர்கள் களைவு இருப்பதுபோல் காட்டிக்கொள்ள வேண்டிய தேவை இருக்கிறது. அது அவர்களுக்குப் பாதுகாப்பையும் சமூக அங்கீகாரமும் அளிக்காததையும் கொடுக்கிறது. கஷ்டப்பட்டு எங்காவது ஒரு வாடகை வீடு எடுத்தால், மாத்திரமும் அவர்கள் வாடகை கட்டு முடியாமல் தவிர்க்கிறார்கள். வாடகைப் பணம் கடனாகக் கொண்டு வாடகைக்குக் கூன் வாங்க வேண்டிய சூழலுக்குத் தள்ளப்படுகிறார்கள்.

வீடு இல்லாத கைம்பெண்களை அரசு தற்காலிக மாடல் தங்கும் இல்லங்களில் வந்து தங்குமாறு அறிவுறுத்துகிறது. ஆனால், நடைமுறை வாழ்வில் அது சாத்தியம் இல்லை. ஏனென்றால், கைம்பெண்கள் தங்களுடைய உறவினர்களோடு பிரேரப்பிள்ளை களோடும் சேர்ந்து இருக்கத்தான் விருப்பத்தின்றனர். தற்காலிகமாகத் தங்கும் இல்லங்களில், ஆதரவற்ற வர்களோடும் இருக்க அவர்கள் விருப்பமில்லை. எனவே, கைம்பெண்களுக்கு வீடு கட்டுவதற்காக அரசு கூடுதலாகக் கூன் ஒதுக்க வேண்டும். வீட்டு மனை வழங்கவும் நடவடிக்கை எடுக்க வேண்டும்.

**பொருளாதாரத் தனிமை**

கைம்பெண்கள் - முதியோருக்கான ஒப்பீட்டியமாக வழங்கப்படும் ரூ.1,200-ஐ ரூ.3,000ஆக உயர்த்த வேண்டும். அப்போதுதான் அவர்கள் தங்களை அன்றாடத் தேவைகளையும், மருத்துவச் செலவு களையும் சமாளிக்க முடியும். மேலும், பொருளாதாரத்தில் சொந்தக் காலில் நிற்கும் அளவுக்குக் கைம்பெண்களுக்கான வேலைவாய்ப்புகளை அரசு உருவாக்கித் தர வேண்டும். அரசுத் துறையிலும் தனியார் துறையிலும் உள்ள வேலைவாய்ப்புகளுக்கு குறைந்தபட்சம் 10 சதவீதவாசு கைம்பெண்களுக்கு என்று ஒதுக்க வேண்டும். மேலும், சுயதொழில் செய்கின்ற அளவுக்கு அரசு மானியத்துடன் தொழில் முனைவோருக்கான கூன்களை வழங்க வேண்டும்.

Through compelling narratives and data-backed insights, the article called attention to the systemic neglect faced by widows in accessing government schemes, healthcare services, and community support. It also urged policymakers and civil society to recognize widowhood as a **public issue requiring targeted interventions and sustained advocacy.**

**Impacts:**

- Sparked conversations across social and political spaces.
- Elevated widowhood as a public issue requiring policy attention.
- Strengthened advocacy for targeted government schemes and social inclusion.

The article sparked important conversations across social and political platforms, reinforcing the need for inclusive welfare policies that uphold the dignity and rights of widowed women.

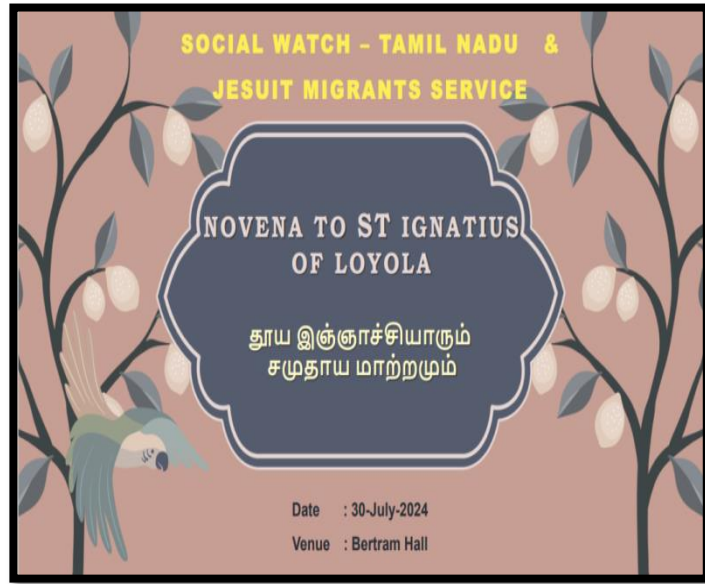
On 23<sup>rd</sup> October government published this article on Hindu Tamil.

The above mentioned article prompted an immediate government response the following day, underscoring the urgency of the issues raised. **(Response for the "கைப்பெண்களின் கண்ணீரை துடைப்பது எப்போது?" Article, which was written by Fr. A Irudayaraj, Director – SW-TN)**



### 39) Spiritual Wellness Engagement

On July 30, 2024, SW-TN and JMS jointly organized the Novena of Saint Ignatius of Loyola at Bertram Hall, Loyola College Chennai. The event focused on the theme of "St. Ignatius and Social Change," exploring the impact of St. Ignatius' teachings and philosophy on contemporary social issues and advocacy.



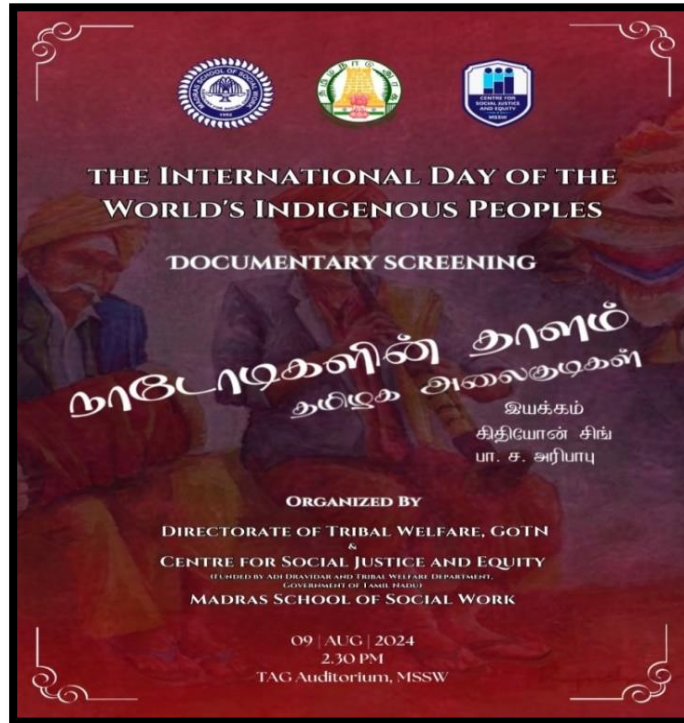
### 40) Performance & Impact Analysis by RR SAC



On Oct 24th and 25th, an "Impact Assessment: Re-imagination and Re-structuring" session of Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) was conducted at IDCR, Loyola College, Chennai. Prof. Vincent Vijayaraj and Fr. Francis Balaraj led focused group discussions and case studies with beneficiaries of Social Watch – TN. Additionally, Ms. Lio, an ISIB intern from Sweden, visited the office to observe ongoing activities.

#### 41) Visual Cultures of Social Concern: Voices Through Visuals

On August 9, a staff member participated in the review of the documentary *Nadodigalin thalam* at Madras School of Social Work (MSSW). Additionally, took part in the observance of 'World Tribal Day'.



On 27th September, Ms. Rajeshwari and Ms. Vijayakumari participated in a National Conference on *Tholkudi*, aimed at the preservation and promotion of tribal cultural heritage. The sessions focused on endangered tribal languages and oral traditions through policy interventions, as well as the revitalization of endangered languages using new technologies and media. The conference was organized by the Department of Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare in collaboration with MSSW's Centre for Social Justice and Equity, and held at The Westin, Velachery, Chennai.



#### 42) **Movie Review Event with Tamil Nadu AICUF**

On October 28th, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu, in collaboration with Tamil Nadu AICUF, organized the movie review event at AICUF House, Nugambakkam, Chennai. The event provided a platform for discussions on how cinema can inspire societal change and address critical themes of marginalised communities. It emphasized the potential of film as a transformative tool for social progress.



#### **Objective:**

- To explore cinema's role in addressing marginalized communities' issues and inspiring social change.

#### **Impacts:**

- Fostered critical thinking on representation in cinema among students.
- Motivated participants to use media as an advocacy tool for social change.
- Built cross-campus networks for socially engaged art.

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#### 43) **Manjolai - Documentary Screening and Discussion**

On Nov 5, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) and மாஞ்சோலை மக்கள் வாழ்வரிமை மீட்புக் குழு organized the Manjolai - Documentary film screening and commentary event at Madras School of Social Work, Egmore.

#### **Objective:**

- To raise awareness on the struggles and rights of the Manjolai workers community.



The event featured the director of the documentary, along with social activists and members from the Manjulai community, who shared valuable insights and personal experiences. Approximately 100 participants attended the screening, contributing to a meaningful discussion on the issues highlighted in the film.

**Impacts:**

- Strengthened solidarity with the Manjulai community.
- Increased visibility of community struggles in academic spaces.
- Encouraged participant commitment to ongoing advocacy.

On 16<sup>th</sup> Feb, The Director of SW-TN participated in the screening of **DALIT SUBBAIAH – The Voice of Rebels**, a musical documentary film organized by Yaazhi Film and Neelam Productions at Prasad Preview Theatre, Saligramam.



#### 44) **PARARI - Film screening and interactive discussion**

On **April 15, 2025**, a powerful **film screening and interactive discussion** on the critically acclaimed Tamil documentary *“Parari”* was held at **Loyola College, Chennai**. The event was collaboratively organized by the **Centre for Applied Justice / Centre for Alternative Media (CAJ/CAM)**, **Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SWTN)**, and the **Tamil Nadu Social Development Council (TNSDC)**. The initiative aimed to explore how visual storytelling can be used as a catalyst for **social awareness, resistance, and change**.

##### ***Objective:***

- To use documentary filmmaking as a tool for awareness, resistance, and social transformation.



The event featured the **director of the film, Mr. Ezhil Periyavedi**, along with members of his creative team. *“Parari”* (meaning ‘to flee’ or ‘to escape’) delves into the lives and struggles of marginalized communities, showcasing themes of **state violence, caste oppression, displacement, and the resilience of those who resist**. The film, rooted in real-life narratives, critically examines the systems that silence dissent while highlighting the courage of individuals who dare to speak out.

Following the screening, an interactive session was held where students, faculty, and civil society participants engaged in **an open dialogue with the director and team**. Key topics discussed included:

- The challenges of producing independent political cinema
- Film as a grassroots medium for education and mobilization
- The intersection of caste, media, and state repression
- The responsibility of young creatives in shaping progressive discourse

Students shared how the film deeply moved them, prompting reflections on their own roles in confronting injustice and amplifying unheard voices. The session provided a platform to bridge **academic spaces with field realities**, making visible the lived experiences often excluded from mainstream narratives.

### **Impacts:**

- Inspired youth to engage in political and social filmmaking.
- Built awareness on intersection of caste, media, and state repression.
- Strengthened alliances between academia and grassroots movements.

The event was **insightful, thought-provoking, and creatively stimulating**, and reaffirmed the importance of using **alternative media and documentary filmmaking** as instruments of **democratic dialogue and social transformation**.

### **45) சமத்துவத்தின் குரல்கள் - Participation & Contribution**



A SW-TN staff participated in event titled "**சமத்துவத்தின் குரல்கள்**" (**Voices of Equality**) was organized by the Social Justice and Equality Forum in collaboration with Chennai School of Social Sciences. Held on 24th April 2025 at 5:00 PM at Arasu Arangakatchiyagam, Egmore, Chennai, the event focused on promoting social justice, equality, and communal harmony. It featured a traditional shadow puppet show to creatively convey messages of dignity and rights. The program served as a platform to reflect on Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's ideals and their relevance today.

### **Books with Purposes – Review Meets**

#### **46) Remembrance Program for Dr. Prof. Raj Gouthaman**

On Dec 4th, SW-TN in collaboration with the Department of Tamil and History, Loyola College, Chennai, organized a program in remembrance of Dr. Prof. Raj Gouthaman at Arrupe Hall, Loyola College of Education. The event began with a 10–15-minute documentary on the life and contributions of Dr. Prof. Raj Gouthaman, produced by Neelam Social Production. The program was attended by over 50 participants, including professors, college students, representatives from organizations, and social activists.

**Objective:**

- To honor the life and contributions of Dr. Prof. Raj Gouthaman in academia and social activism.



**Impacts:**

- Preserved the legacy of Dr. Raj Gouthaman for younger generations.
- Inspired participants to uphold values of social justice in their work.
- Strengthened institutional memory of Tamil Nadu’s progressive intellectual movements.

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**47) Tamil Nadu - ஆதி கலைக்கோல் விழா - Exhibition Participation**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) showcased its publications and actively participated in the **ஆதி கலைக்கோல் விழா (Aadhi Kalaikol Vizha)** exhibition held at the Nandambakkam Chennai Trade Centre. The event witnessed the esteemed presence of the ADTW Minister, Director, Secretary to the Government, and several prominent leaders who visited the book stall. Our publications successfully reached these dignitaries, amplifying their impact and visibility.

**Objective:**

- To showcase SW-TN’s publications to reach policymakers, academics, government officials and the public.

**Salient Features:**

- Participation at Chennai Trade Centre exhibition.
- Visited by ADTW Minister, Director, and senior government officials.
- Displayed books and reports on social policy and advocacy aspects.



**Impacts:**

- Directly engaged decision-makers with SW-TN's work.
  - Expanded visibility of publications among diverse audiences.
  - Strengthened credibility of SW-TN as a knowledge resource.
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**48) 25th Micro-Level Plan Meeting for Saandror via Zoom**

On Dec 7th, as a continuation of the book fair initiative, SW-TN and PAALAM jointly organized the **25th Micro-Level Plan Meeting for Saandror** (SC) Publishers via Zoom. The meeting brought together book publishers and editors from the Saandror (SC) community, who shared insights and strategies aimed at fostering the community's effective development.

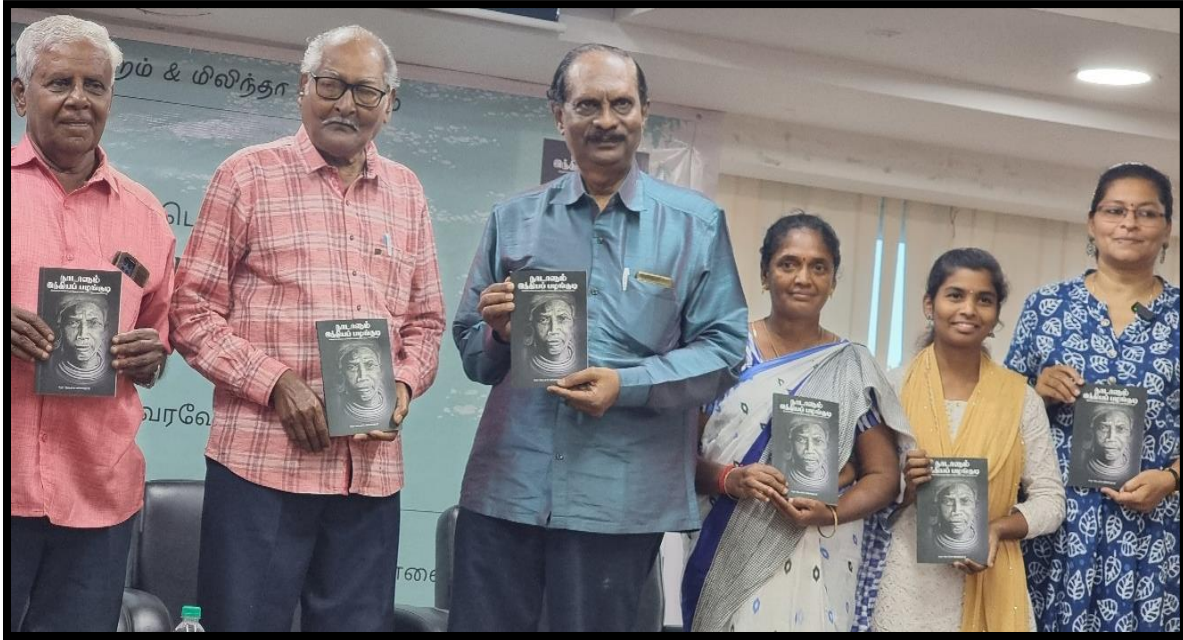
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**49) Book release event of “நாடாளும் இந்திய பழங்குடி”**

On **13th February 2025**, staff members from **Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN)** actively participated in the **book release event of “நாடாளும் இந்திய பழங்குடி”** (“*Governing Adivasi India*”), organized by **Malintha Publication** in collaboration with the **Buddha Research Forum**. The event served as a critical platform to delve into the **intersections of tribal history, leadership traditions, and indigenous cultural practices** in India.

The newly released book sheds light on the **rich governance systems and political philosophies of tribal communities**, challenging mainstream narratives that often marginalize or misrepresent these voices. Scholars, writers, and social activists from various parts of Tamil Nadu and beyond gathered to discuss the **epistemological contributions of Adivasi knowledge systems** and their relevance in contemporary governance frameworks.

The event included keynote speeches, panel discussions, and reflections on how indigenous leadership has historically resisted assimilation while advocating for **autonomy, environmental justice, and cultural preservation**. Participants emphasized the need to acknowledge and amplify tribal wisdom in policy-making and education.



SW-TN's presence at the event reflected its continued commitment to **social justice, indigenous rights, and inclusive development discourse**. The event was both **intellectually enriching and politically significant**, offering valuable insights for practitioners working at the intersection of **research, policy, and community empowerment**.

#### 50) **Release of Forest Rights Act, 2006 - Guidelines Book**

On **February 28, 2025**, **Social Watch - Tamil Nadu (SW-TN)** successfully organized the **book release event** of "**வன உரிமை (அங்கீகாரம்) சட்டம் - வழிகாட்டிக் கையேடு**" (**Forest Rights Act - Guidelines**) at the Vis.Com Preview Theatre, Loyola College, Chennai. This significant publication, authored by **Dr. Aruna Basu, IFS (Retd.)**, serves as a comprehensive and user-friendly manual on the **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006**.

#### **Objective:**

- To provide a comprehensive, accessible guide on the **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006**.



The book offers a thorough explanation of the legal provisions, procedural requirements, and practical implications of the Forest Rights Act, while also addressing the challenges in its implementation across various states. It sheds light on the historical injustices faced by Adivasi and forest-dependent communities and the urgent need for proper recognition and restoration of their rights.

The event witnessed active participation from students, faculty members, civil society representatives, and legal experts. Following the release, a review and discussion session was held, where students raised pertinent questions on the intersection of law, ecology, and tribal welfare. The conversation emphasized the need for policy-level advocacy, grassroots mobilization, and awareness-building among affected communities.

**Impacts:**

- Equipped communities, activists, and students with a practical legal resource.
- Encouraged policy advocacy for Adivasi and forest dwellers' rights.
- Strengthened SW-TN's role in legal empowerment and environmental justice.

The event reaffirmed the commitment of SW-TN to legal empowerment and participatory governance, highlighting how accessible educational resources like this book can serve as effective tools for community education, resistance, and advocacy. It also encouraged students and young professionals to take an active role in upholding environmental justice and defending the rights of indigenous populations.

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**World Book Day celebration with Saandror (SC) Publishers**

To commemorate **World Book Day** on **April 23, 2025**, a special event was organized at the **IAS Officers' Mess, SAF Village**. The celebration aimed to highlight the importance of books and literature in promoting social consciousness, to introduce new publications, and to provide a platform for community writers to share their contributions.

The event was organized by **Saandror (SC) Publishers** along with their well-wishers and writers, in collaboration with the broader literary community. It was a vibrant gathering of authors, activists, scholars, and community members who believe in the transformative power of literature, particularly in empowering marginalized voices.

**Objective:**

1. To celebrate the role of literature in advancing social consciousness and justice.
2. To promote publications by marginalized writers and advocate for community-based literary initiatives.
3. To present actionable proposals for increasing representation and support for Dalit and marginalized authors.

The event marked the release of several new publications authored and edited by members associated with Saandror Publishers. These publications reflected a wide range of themes including social justice, caste dynamics, empowerment, community rights, and historical narratives often neglected in mainstream discourse.

An exhibition was organized where previous and newly released works prepared by Saandror writers were showcased. This included books, articles, poetry collections, and research-based

compilations. The exhibition allowed attendees to engage with the diverse literary output and to appreciate the depth and richness of contributions from the community.

A significant part of the event was the formal presentation of a set of proposals developed by Saandror Publishers and their allies. These proposals outlined:



- Actions to be undertaken for promoting community-based literature.
- Strategies for demanding greater representation in academic and literary forums.
- Steps for advocating supportive policies for Dalit and marginalized writers.
- Initiatives to strengthen the distribution network for community-authored books.

The proposals were well-researched, action-oriented, and focused on building sustainable support systems for writers from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### **Outcome**

- The event successfully celebrated literary contributions while reinforcing the broader goal of social justice through literature.
  - New books and ideas were introduced to a larger audience, inspiring young writers and students present at the event.
  - Clear action plans were set into motion to further promote marginalized narratives and strengthen advocacy efforts through literature.
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## Recent Strategic Interventions/Innovative Program Launches

### 51) Launch of “வேர்மை” Digital Newsletter (1st Edition) - VERMAI – E-Newsletter

On April 10th, 2025, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu proudly launched its digital newsletter titled “வேர்மை”, a dynamic new platform committed to amplifying voices from the grassroots and fostering critical discourse on issues of social justice, governance, and people’s rights. The title “வேர்மை” (meaning “rootedness” or “truth in roots”) symbolically reflects the organisation’s deep connection with the struggles and aspirations of marginalized communities.

#### **Objective:**

1. To provide a bilingual platform for grassroots voices on social justice, governance, and people’s rights.
2. To enhance participatory documentation and advocacy through regular publications.

This bilingual newsletter, published in Tamil and English, is designed to be a bimonthly publication that curates original articles, field updates, interviews, event reflections, and advocacy reports. It provides a space for activists, researchers, community leaders, and youth contributors to share insights and narratives often overlooked in mainstream platforms.

The launch of *வேர்மை* marks a significant milestone in SW-TN’s ongoing efforts to strengthen people’s movements through participatory communication and documentation practices. By capturing lived experiences and emerging trends, the newsletter aims to contribute to knowledge-building, public policy discourse, and community solidarity.

#### **Salient Features:**

- Published in Tamil and English.
- Includes original articles, field reports, interviews, and event reflections.
- Contributions from activists, researchers, youth, and community leaders.
- Focus on narratives ignored by mainstream media.
- Covers the salient features and impacts on Gram Sabha Meets at Village Level.

#### **Impacts:**

- Expanded SW-TN’s reach as a communicator of marginalized issues.
- Created a repository of grassroots knowledge and lived experiences.
- Strengthened networking between civil society, academia, and grassroots groups.
- Encouraged youth engagement in documentation and advocacy.

The first issue received encouraging responses from civil society actors, academic partners, and grassroots collectives, reaffirming the need for such a reflective and accessible medium in today’s sociopolitical climate.



52) “வேர்மை” Digital Newsletter (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) - *VERMAI - E-Newsletter - II*

SW-TN also launched its digital bilingual newsletter titled “வேர்மை” (Vermai) – a platform dedicated to documenting and sharing articles and updates on the organization’s activities. The **2<sup>nd</sup> edition**, covering March–April 2025, was published on **May 10**. This initiative will be continued on a bimonthly basis.

**Objective:**

1. To maintain momentum from the inaugural issue by continuing the platform for community-driven narratives.
2. To document SW-TN’s activities and advocacy updates regularly.



**Salient Features:**

- Bilingual format (Tamil and English).
- Covers March–April 2025 activities, reflections, and reports.
- Covered with the article by Mr. Christodas Gandhi IAS (Rtd) on “Saandror (SC)”
- A study by MSSW PG-Intern Ms. Dhivya Tarshini on Irulars Socio-economic condition (Irular Snake Charmers)

**Impacts:**

- Reinforced continuity and reliability of SW-TN’s communications.
  - Sustained engagement with readers, including activists and partner organizations.
  - Provided ongoing visibility for grassroots issues and campaigns.
- 

**53) Educational Empowerment Camp for SC/ST Student**

Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN), in collaboration with AKAM, organized *Educatory and Informatory Summer Camps* for SC-ST students across various locations in Tamil Nadu.

**Objective:**

1. To provide educational and motivational experiences for SC-ST students during summer.
2. To enhance awareness of rights, opportunities, and career guidance.

**Salient Features:**

- Organized by SW-TN in collaboration with AKAM.
- Locations: St. Xavier’s College (Palayamkottai), St. Joseph’s College (Trichy), and Mount Joseph’s HSS (Thiruvannamalai).
- Sessions facilitated by experienced educators and resource persons.
- Covered academic skills, leadership training, and rights awareness.

**Impacts:**

- Empowered SC-ST students with knowledge and skills for academic and personal growth.
- Strengthened confidence and leadership qualities among participants.
- Fostered networks of peer support and mentorship between institutions and communities.

These camps were conducted with the support of esteemed educational institutions:

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- **May 1** – Camp organized at *St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai*



- **May 4** – Facilitated and provided resource persons at the camp held at *St. Joseph's College, Trichy*



- **May 7** – Camp organized at *Mount Joseph's Higher Secondary School, Thiruvannamalai*



## **Creative Writing Workshops**

### **54) Creative Writing Workshop - I, Loyola College - Mettala**

A two-day Creative Writing Workshop, organized by Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN) in collaboration with the Department of Tamil, Loyola College, Mettala, was successfully conducted on December 13th and 14th, 2024, at the Loyola College campus in Mettala, Salem.

#### **Objectives:**

- To develop creative and literary skills among rural and first-generation college students.
- To encourage exploration of diverse literary genres for self-expression.
- To build confidence in articulating ideas and experiences through writing.

The workshop aimed to nurture the creative and literary skills of students, empowering them to articulate their thoughts, experiences, and emotions with clarity and confidence through writing. Participants were encouraged to explore diverse genres, including poetry, essays, short stories, and reflective narratives, while gaining practical skills to refine their language and style.

The sessions were led by **Dr. Muthukanthan**, an accomplished professor from Madras Christian College (MCC), who facilitated engaging and interactive exercises designed to spark imagination, critical thinking, and expressive freedom. Group discussions, storytelling tasks, and peer review activities enriched the learning environment and motivated students to experiment with their unique voices.

Around 70 students actively took part in the workshop, sharing their ideas enthusiastically and collaborating with their peers. The event was widely appreciated for providing a creative and inclusive platform to develop literary talent and to promote confidence in written expression, especially among rural and first-generation college students.



**Impacts:**

- Enhanced creative thinking, language refinement, and literary expression skills.
- Provided an inclusive platform for rural students to showcase talent.
- Fostered collaborative learning and peer support networks among participants.

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**55) Creative Writing Workshop - II, Loyola College - Vettavalam**

The "Two-Day Creative Writing Workshop," organized by SW-TN in collaboration with Loyola College, Vettavalam, was successfully held on Jan 30–31 at Loyola College, Vettavalam, Thiruvannamalai.

The workshop aimed to nurture students' creative and literary skills, helping them express their thoughts and emotions effectively through writing. Dr. S. Muthukandhan, a professor from MCC, led the sessions, engaging students with interactive activities to enhance their learning experience.

College Principal Fr. S. Basil Xavier guided us throughout the workshop, and on the valedictory event, Writer Asatha participated, offering valuable insights to the students.



## 56) Internship – Initiatives on SC-STs

On 2nd & 3rd February 2025, Ms. Dhivya Tharshini and Ms. Sarumathi, MSW interns from the Madras School of Social Work, Egmore, commenced their field placement with Social Watch – Tamil Nadu. They are actively involved in **office-based assignments and research analysis**, contributing to the organisation’s ongoing documentation and advocacy efforts.

### Objectives:

1. To engage interns in research and advocacy on SC-ST economic and livelihood issues.
2. To generate evidence-based insights to support policy recommendations.

### Salient Features:

- Interns: Ms. Dhivya Tharshini & Ms. Sarumathi (Madras School of Social Work).
- Research Study 1: Economic status of SC traders and labourers at Koyambedu Market.
- Research Study 2: Sustainable livelihood opportunities for the Irular snake charmers of Vadanemmel.
- Activities include office-based assignments, fieldwork, and documentation.

As part of their internship, they are undertaking two focused studies:

- A research study on “**The Economic Status of Saandror (SC) Wholesale and Retail Traders and Labourers in the Koyambedu Fruit and Vegetable Market**”, examining livelihoods, working conditions, and socio-economic challenges faced by Dalit vendors and workers in one of Asia’s largest markets.

- A concurrent study on “**Economic Advancement Opportunities for the Snake Charmers of Vadanemmel (Irular community)**”, exploring sustainable livelihood alternatives and access to social security for members of this historically marginalised and semi-nomadic tribe.



**Impacts:**

- Produced actionable research to inform advocacy on SC-ST economic upliftment.
- Strengthened SW-TN’s documentation and evidence-gathering capacity.
- Built research and field engagement skills among emerging social work professionals.

Their contributions are expected to strengthen evidence-based advocacy and policy recommendations by Social Watch – Tamil Nadu.

**Students’ Discussion Forum (SDF) – 2025**

**57) SDF – Series – I: “Why are the identities of Periyar and Ambedkar still necessary today?”**

On February 26, 2025, Social Watch – Tamil Nadu (SW-TN), in collaboration with Tamil Nadu AICUF, organized a Student Discussion Forum on the theme “பெரியார் மற்றும் அம்பேத்கரின் அடையாளம் இன்று ஏன் தேவைப்படுகிறது?” (“Why are the identities of Periyar and Ambedkar still necessary today?”) at the AICUF Hall, Chennai.

### **Objectives:**

1. To critically examine the continuing relevance of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's ideologies.
2. To engage students in reflective debates on social justice, rationalism, caste abolition, and gender equality.

The forum featured distinguished speakers including **Tr. Indhirakumar Theradi** (Senior Journalist, *Press*) and **Tr. Punitha Pandiyan** (*Dalit Murasu*), who critically examined the philosophical and socio-political **contributions of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**.

The session encouraged active student engagement through thought-provoking discussions and debates on **social justice, caste annihilation, gender equality, rationalism**, and the ongoing relevance of Periyar and Ambedkar's ideologies in today's socio-political landscape.



### **Impacts:**

- Fostered critical thinking and historical awareness among students.
- Encouraged youth to connect past reformist ideologies to present-day struggles.
- Strengthened student engagement in socio-political discourse.

The event successfully served as a platform for students to **reflect on history, question contemporary social structures**, and explore pathways for progressive change inspired by these transformative leaders.

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### **58) SDF - Series - II: "Political Perspectives to Empower Dalit Communities"**

On **March 26, 2025**, **Social Watch - Tamil Nadu (SW-TN)** in collaboration with **Loyola FM Radio** organized the second edition of the student discussion series titled "**பட்டியலின மக்களைப் பலப்படுத்தும் அரசியல் பார்வை - மாணவர்களுக்கான கருத்தரங்கம் - பாகம் II**" ("**Political Perspectives to Empower Dalit Communities - A Student Discussion Forum - Part II**") at **AICUF House, Chennai**, at 4 PM.

**Objectives:**

1. To deepen understanding of socio-political issues affecting Dalit communities.
2. To inspire youth leadership for social transformation through critical discussion.

As a follow-up to the February forum, this monthly initiative aims to foster critical thinking among students by engaging them in discussions on key socio-political issues affecting marginalised communities.



The event commenced with a felicitation address by **Ms. Sornalatha** from **ASSET**, setting the tone for an intellectually rich evening. **Prof. Sakthi Devi** (Department of Social Work, Loyola College) and **Mr. Christodas Gandhi, IAS (Retd.)** delivered compelling keynote speeches, offering insightful analyses on caste, empowerment, and the role of youth in social transformation.

**Impacts:**

- Built momentum for monthly student-led critical dialogue series.
- Strengthened students' analytical and advocacy skills.
- Created a sustained platform for cross-institutional student interaction.

The session drew participation from students across institutions, who actively engaged with the speakers, further affirming the forum's goal of nurturing informed, socially conscious youth leaders.

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**59) A Panel Discussion - Jyotirao Phule's Social Reform Initiatives**

A panel discussion on **Jyotirao Phule's social reform initiatives** was held on 25th April 2025 at Loyola College, Chennai. Organized by CAJ/CAM and Social Watch – Tamil Nadu, the event featured speakers **A. Muthu Krishnan** and **Prof. Ko. Ragupathy**. The session focused on Phule's contributions to education, anti-caste movements, and gender equality. The discussion encouraged youth to continue the pursuit of social justice and equity.

### **Objectives:**

1. To explore the historical and contemporary relevance of Mahatma Jotirao Phule's work.
2. To connect Phule's ideas to ongoing struggles for educational equality, caste abolition, and women's rights.



The event began with a welcome address by representatives from CAJ/CAM, emphasizing the importance of revisiting the legacies of radical thinkers like Phule in today's socio-political climate. The panelists delved into the historical and contemporary relevance of Phule's ideas, drawing connections between his work and present-day movements for educational access, caste annihilation, and women's rights.

Mr. A. Muthu Krishnan spoke on Phule's groundbreaking efforts in establishing the first school for girls in India and the Satya Shodhak Samaj, a movement to promote truth-seeking and challenge Brahminical dominance. Prof. Ko. Ragupathy discussed the philosophical underpinnings of Phule's critique of religion and caste, linking them to ongoing Dalit struggles and the need for critical pedagogy in educational institutions.

### **Impacts:**

- Increased awareness of Phule's contributions among students.
- Linked historical reform movements to contemporary activism.
- Encouraged academic engagement with critical pedagogy and social equality frameworks.

The session concluded with an interactive Q&A, where students raised pertinent questions on the relevance of Phule an ideology in academic, activist, and policy spaces. Participants left with a deeper appreciation for Phule's vision and its relevance in confronting contemporary social inequalities. Certificates were distributed to all attendees, and resource materials on Phule's writings were shared for further reading.

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## Work & Culture Exposure – Hyderabad Edition

### 60) Team Engagement Visit to Hyderabad

On the 27th and 28th of April, all staff members of Social Watch – Tamil Nadu, along with the Director, participated in an office tour to Hyderabad.



### Media Highlights of SW-TN Events :

In 2024–25, SW-TN's initiatives gained notable visibility through regional and community media, highlighting its role in amplifying SC/ST voices. Events such as the State-Level SC Consultation, ST-focused micro-meets, and student discussion forums drew coverage for their policy relevance and grassroots impact.

The launch of the updated PMS booklet and focused livelihood studies were spotlighted as significant advocacy milestones. Creative Writing Workshops and thematic dialogues on Periyar, Ambedkar, and Phule received attention for fostering youth leadership and critical thinking. Together, these media moments reinforced SW-TN's position as a catalyst for social justice discourse in Tamil Nadu.

**உள்ளூர் செய்தி**

**தியமாம் NEWS**

16.11.2024

UDYAM-TN-05-00539964

**திருமுல்லை வாயிலில் 50 மலைக் குறவர் ஆன்றோர் குடும்பங்கள் உள்ளன. அவர்களுக்கான திட்டமிடல் கூட்டம் கோயம்பேடு TAISHA வில் நடைபெற்றது. நகராட்சி ஆணையர் திரு.சௌந்திராசன் அவர்களும், மேனாள் எத்திராஜ் கல்லூரி துறைத் தலைவி திருமிகு.அரங்க மல்லிகா அவர்களும் சிறப்பு விருந்தினராக வந்து சிறப்பித்தனர். பாலம் மற்றும் சமூகக் கண்காணிப்பகம் இந்த அணுகல் திட்டமிடல் கூட்டத்தை நடத்தின. பாலம் தலைவர் திரு.கிருத்தாசு காந்தி, சமூகக் கண்காணிப்பகம் அருட்தந்தை இருதயராஜ், திருமிகு இராஜேஸ்வரி, விஜயகுமாரி, ஜோசப்பின், சோபியா ஆகியோர் பங்கேற்றனர்.**

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**நீலகிரி பண்டைய பழங்குடியினர் ஆலோசனை கூட்டம்**

கூட்டம், செப்டம்பர் 23 - ண்ட்டில் நடைபெற்ற பண்டைய பழங்குடிகள் ஆலோசனை கூட்டத்தில் 200 க்கும் மேற்பட்டோர் கலந்து கொண்டனர். தலைவரின் ஆறு வகையான பழங்குடி மக்கள் வாழ்ந்து வருகின்றனர். இவர்களுக்கு அரசு பல்வேறு நலத்திட்ட உதவிகளை வழங்கி வருகிறது. ஆனால் இது சரிவர அந்த மக்களை சென்றடைகிறதா என்பது கேள்விக்குறி. அதுமட்டுமின்றி அரசு பல திட்டங்களை வகுத்திருந்தாலும் அவர்களுக்கு என்ன தேவை என்பதை கேட்டு அறிந்து திட்டங்கள் வகுப்பது கிடையாது. இதனால் 2014 ஆம் ஆண்டு முதல் பழங்குடி மக்கள் அவர்களுக்கு என்ன தேவை என்பதை அரசுக்கு எடுத்துரைக்க ஆரம்பித்தனர். ஒவ்வொரு ஆண்டும் எங்களுக்கு இந்த மாநிலியான திட்டங்கள் தேவை. இதனை வழங்குங்கள் என்று திட்டமிடும் கூட்டம் நடைபெற்று வருகிறது. இந்த கூட்டத்தில் இளை கிறிஸ்து தலைவரின் அறிவுக் குழுவின் தலைவராக இருக்கும் செயலாளராக இருக்கும்

பொழுது துவக்கி வைத்தார். தற்போது வரை இந்த திட்டமிடுதல் கூட்டம் ஒவ்வொரு வருடமும் செயல்பட்டுக் கொண்டிருக்கிறது. 20 மற்றும் 21 ஆம் தேதி ஆகிய இரண்டு நாட்களில் நீலகிரி மாவட்டத்தில் இந்த ஆறு வகையான பழங்குடி மக்களுக்கு என்னென்ன தேவை என்பதை அவர்களிடம் திட்டங்களை வகுக்க கூட்டமானது ஏற்பாடு செய்யப்பட்டது. இந்த நிலைமையில் நீலகிரி பண்டைய பழங்குடி மக்கள் காண்ப்பாக்கம் இணைந்து நடந்திய இந்த கூட்டத்திற்கு கிறிஸ்து தலைவரின் சிறப்பு விருந்தினராக கலந்துகொண்டார் இந்த கூட்டத்தில் பழங்குடி மக்களின் வாழ்வாதாரம் பெருக அவர்களுக்கு என்ன தேவை என்பதை திட்டமிட்டு அவற்றை அரசுக்கு அனுப்ப ஏற்பாடு செய்யப்பட்டது. இந்த கூட்டத்தில் 200க்கும் மேற்பட்ட பழங்குடியினர் கலந்து கொண்டது ஆலோசனைகளை வழங்கினர். இந்த கூட்டங்களில் பழங்குடி மக்களுக்கு தற்பொழுது என்னென்ன திட்டங்கள் செயல்படுகிறது என்பதை பற்றியும் விரிவாக எடுத்துரைக்கப்பட்டது. பல வாழ்வாதாரத்தை பெருக்கும் திட்டங்கள் அனுப்ப தயார் செய்யப்பட்டது. இது போன்ற மக்களுடைய கருத்துக்களை கேட்கும் கூட்டங்கள் மாவட்ட ஆட்சித் தலைவர், பழங்குடி கருக்காசு தேவரும் துறைகள் கேட்க வேண்டும் என்றும் அவர்களை அழைத்து அவர்களுக்கு என்னென்ன தேவைப்படுகிறது என்பதை பற்றியும் கூட்டம் நடத்தி கேட்க வேண்டும் என்பதும் அவற்றை அரசுக்கு அனுப்ப வேண்டும் என்பது பழங்குடி மக்களுடைய கோரிக்கையாக இருந்தது. இந்த கூட்டத்தில் தமிழ்நாடு ஆன்றோர் மன்ற குழு உறுப்பினர் மல்லிகா நீலகிரி பண்டைய பழங்குடியினர் கூட்டமைப்பின் தலைவரின் தோரண குடும்பம் இயக்குனர் இருதயராஜ் மற்றும் ஒவ்வொரு பழங்குடி குழுக்களின் தலைவர்கள் மற்றும் பிரதிநிதிகள் பழங்குடி மக்கள் கலந்து கொண்டனர்.



SC and ST panel member K Raghupathi addressing the meeting | MK ASHOK KUMAR

## Puthirai Vannars mull ways to better their lot

D VINCENT AROCKIARAJ @ Tiruchy

REPRESENTATION in electoral politics is vital for the upliftment of the vulnerable Puthirai Vannar community, said K Raghupathi, a member of the Tamil Nadu State Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes here on Monday.

Speaking at a discussion on the state of the community, organised by Social Watch-Tamil Nadu and NGO Palam, Raghupathi pointed out how the community, involved in services such as hairdressing and laundry, have not seen significant progress. Community members highlighted difficulties in obtaining community

certificates and stressed how it prevents them from accessing welfare schemes.

The government should issue a unified community certificate for all Puthirai Vannars, including Christian members of the community. Special government orders should be issued to ensure their inclusion in the welfare board, and district-level camps should be organised to issue certificates, they demanded.

The meeting also saw the adoption of several resolutions seeking a comprehensive community survey, post-matric scholarships to all eligible students of the community, free patta and housing facilities and livelihood projects.

திருவண்ணாமலை 31.01.2025

தினமதி



வேட்டவலம் இலொயோலா கல்லூரி மற்றும் சென்னை சமூக கண்காணிப்பகம் இணைந்து நடத்திய கல்லூரி மாணவர்களுக்கான 2-நாள் எழுத்தாளர் பயிற்சி பட்டறை நிறைவு விழாவில் பயிற்சி முடித்த மாணவர்களுக்கு எழுத்தாளர் அசுதா சான்றிதழ்களை வழங்கினார். முதல்வர் பேசில் சேவியர், சமூக கண்காணிப்பக இயக்குனர் இருதயராஜ் ஆகியோர் உடனிருந்தனர்.

tiruvannamalaianaminamathi

நிகழ்வுகள்

## தினமதி

வேட்டவலம் இலொயோலா கல்லூரி...  
மாணவர்களுக்கு 2 நாள்  
எழுத்தாளர் பயிற்சி பட்டறை...

வேட்டவலம், பிப்.2-

வேட்டவலம் இலொயோலா கல்லூரி மற்றும் சென்னை சமூக கண்காணிப்பகம் ஆகியவை இணைந்து நடத்திய கல்லூரி மாணவர்களுக்கான 2-நாள் எழுத்தாளர் பயிற்சி பட்டறை கடந்த 30,31-ஆகிய தேதிகளில் கல்லூரியின் கலையரங்கத்தில் நடந்தது.



இதில் சமூக கண்காணிப்பகத்தின் இயக்குனர் இருதயராஜ், சென்னை கிறித்தவக் கல்லூரி தமிழ்த்துறை பேராசிரியர் முத்து கந்தன் ஆகியோர் எழுத்தார்வுமுள்ள கல்லூரி பிள் 8 துறைகளை சேர்ந்த 40 மாணவர்களுக்கு கவிதை, சிறுகதை, கட்டுரை எழுதுவதற்கான அடிப்படை எழுத்து நுணுக்கங்கள் மற்றும் பயிற்சிகளை வழங்கினர்.

இதையடுத்து நேற்றுமுன்தினம் நடந்த பயிற்சி பட்டறை நிறைவு விழாவிற்கு முதல்வர் பேசில் சேவியர் தலைமை தாங்கினார். சமூக கண்காணிப்பக இயக்குனர் இருதயராஜ் முன்னிலை வகித்து சிறப்பு விருந்தினரை

அறிமுகம் செய்து வைத்தார். 2-ம் ஆண்டு மாணவர் பிரதிநிதி ரோடா ஜெனினா வரவேற்றார். சிறப்பு விருந்தினராக எழுத்தாளர் மற்றும் மொழிபெயர்ப்பாளர் அசுதா கலந்தகொண்டு எழுத்தின் நோக்கு, அவற்றின் உள்ளடக்கம், புத்தக வாசிப்பின் அவசியம் குறித்து பேசினார். தொடர்ந்து பயிற்சி முடிந்த மாணவர்களுக்கு சான்றிதழ்களை வழங்கினார். பயிற்சி பட்டறையின் மாணவர்கள் ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர் பேராசிரியர் பிரபாகரன், மற்றும் சமூக கண்காணிப்பக ஆராய்ச்சி யாளர்கள் ராஜேஸ்வரி, விஜயகுமாரி ஆகியோர் ஒருங்கிணைந்தனர். முடிவில் கல்லூரி மாணவி சங்கீதா நன்றி கூறினார்.



திருவண்ணாமலையில்

பழங்குடி மாணவ -மாணவிகளுக்கு  
உயர்கல்விக்கான வழிகாட்டி நிகழ்ச்சி

திருவண்ணாமலை, மே.8- திருவண்ணாமலையில் 10 மற்றும் 12 -ம் வகுப்பு தேர்ச்சிக்கு பிறகு உயர்கல்விக்கான வழிமுறைகள் குறித்து பழங்குடியின மாணவ - மாணவர்களுக்கான வழிகாட்டி நிகழ்ச்சி நேற்று நடைபெற்றது.

சென்னை அகம் பவுண்டேஷன் சமூக கண்காணிப்பாக்கம் மற்றும் தென்னிந்திய பழங்குடியினர் இருளர் முன்னேற்ற சங்கம் இணைந்து நடத்திய பழங்குடியின மாணவ-மாணவிகளுக்கான உயர்கல்வி வழிகாட்டி நிகழ்ச்சி திருவண்ணாமலையில் உள்ள ஒரு தனியார் பள்ளியில் நடைபெற்றது. நிகழ்ச்சிக்கு தென்னிந்திய பழங்குடியினர் இருளர் முன்னேற்ற சங்க மாநில பொதுச் செயலாளர்

ம.சரவணன் தலைமை தாங்கினார். அனைவரையும் மாநில பொறுப்பாளர் சுப்பிரமணியன் வரவேற்றார். துணைப் பொதுச் செயலாளர் எம். சிலம்பரசன் முன்னிலை வகித்தார். நிகழ்ச்சியில் திருவண்ணாமலை மாவட்டத்தில் ஜமுனாமுத்தூர் உள்ளிட்ட பல்வேறு பகுதியிலிருந்து மாணவ - மாணவிகள் கலந்து கொண்டனர். அவர்களுக்கு 10 மற்றும் 12 ஆம் வகுப்பு தேர்ச்சிக்கு பிறகு என்ன படிக்கலாம்? எங்கு படிக்கலாம்? எப்படி படிக்கலாம்? என்பது குறித்து அகம் பவுண்டேஷன் சமூக கண்காணிப்பாளர் ராஜேஸ்வரி, கிள்ளிவளவன் ஆகியோர் பயிற்சி அளித்தனர். முடிவில் மாநில துணைத்தலைவர் ஆனந்தன் நன்றி கூறினார்.

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