



The Meeting Point

A Quarterly Newsletter of AREDS

The smallest good deed is better than the grandest good intension

Children's special Issue - 11

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Editorial:

This Newsletter reaches you at the time when the tug-of-wars between the newly elected government in Tamil Nadu state and the High Court & the Supreme Court on the matter of abolition of '**Samacheer Kalvi**' (**Uniform System of School Education**) has come to a positive end.

Four different schooling patterns - State Board Schools, Matriculation Schools, Anglo-Indian schools and Oriental Educational Schools - which had different school syllabus, have been followed in the state. In the mean time, **Uniform System of School Education Act 2010** was enacted by the previous government and '**Samacheer Kalvi**' (**uniform syllabus**) was implemented to the 1st standard and the 6th standard students. According to '**Samacheer Kalvi**' 'pattern, same syllabus will be taught in all the four kinds of schools. Further, it was the sixty-year dream of the educationists to bring in uniform syllabus in school education in the state.

Since this new educational pattern was introduced by the previous government, the present newly elected government vindictively tried to scrap the Act.

From the day one of its rule, it has been abolishing the schemes that were named after the previous chief minister's name. It is always good if a newly elected government takes severe action against the corrupt practices and the crimes committed by the rulers of the previous government. But the newly elected government of Tamil Nadu, on the pretext of purging the education, obstructed the education by autocratically abolishing the '**Samacheer Kalvi**,' simply for one reason that it was introduced by the previous government.

As a result, the students were going to school with no books to be taught and going back home with no homework given. This had put the school-going children and their parents in great anxiety. Actually, the text books printed based on the '**Samacheer Kalvi**' on a huge sum of public money were about to be distributed to the students at the beginning of this academic year. Fortunately or unfortunately, the opposition party won the election, assumed the power and stopped distribution of the text books.

Without books and lessons, the teachers taught general Tamil and English languages to the students. A few private schools took the students to government offices to make them aware of

the functioning of the government departments, to zoo and menagerie to make them understand the behaviour of different animals and creatures and to trekking. Despite, there was a complete blankness in the learning process of the students in government schools almost for two months.

The educationists and civilians litigated against this despotic measure of the government and the state High Court also had ordered the government to continue the same educational pattern and distribute the text books to the students. Even then, the present government has audaciously moved the Supreme Court to abolish the '**Samacheer Kalvi.**' Consequently, students, lawyers, opposition parties and leftist parties took to streets, demanding the government to implement the '**Samacheer Kalvi.**' The protesters were arrested in several instances and cases were also filed against them.

At last, the Supreme Court pronounced the amendment made by the state government on the Act as unconstitutional and directed the government to implement the '**Samacheer Kalvi.**' within ten days in the academic year 2011-2012 itself and distribute books immediately to the students.

Yet, the people of the state have been demanding the government to improve the infrastructure, enhance the teaching quality, create an ambiance conducive for learning, establish laboratories and provide sports items in the government-run schools as the Matriculation schools and the private schools do. AREDS also has been demanding implementation of the Right of the Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act to its true meaning.

Yours in solidarity,
L. A. Samy

Felicitation to the students

Thulir Thalir Students' Movement (TTSM), the AREDS-initiated students' movement, conducts Weekend Programmes on street theatre and cultural activities for the school-going adolescent boys and girls in order to bring their latent talents to the surface. Besides, awareness on social issues, the significance of education and the importance of preserving the environment are imparted to them. Children reflect what they learn in their artworks, skits, street plays etc.

Learning extra curricular activities help the adolescents perform well in their studies and this has been proved in their progress reports. The impact of the weekend programmes organized by TTSM proves this statement... This year, 86 students in the 10th standard and 22 students in the 12th standard had passed in the annual examinations.

By way of encouraging the students, who have passed in the examinations and stimulating them to go for higher studies, AREDS arranged a felicitation function on the 19th of June 2011 at the SWATE Industrial School, Veerarakiam.

Mr. L. A. Samy, the director of AREDS presided over the meeting. Ms. Christina Samy, the general secretary of Women's Front, Ms. G. Vasanthi, graduate teacher of Athi Dravidar High School-Chinnamanayakkanpatti and Mr. Chandrasekar, the headmaster of panchayat union elementary school-Vellalapatti felicitated the children for their good performance in their studies.

The students also shared their experiences with TTSM and the outcome of their learning in schools. All those TTSM students who have passed in the examinations have inclination to go for higher education or pursue professional courses and it was made apparent through their personal sharing.

Note of Appreciation was issued to the students at the end of the function as a token of encouraging them to pursue higher education.



School Enrollment Campaign

In order to minimize the number of dropouts and the incidence of child labour in Karur district, AREDS has formed Tulir Thalir Students' Movement (TTSM). As a part of its regular interventions for the spread-out of education among the children community at grassroots level, TTSM organizes school enrolment campaign every year. This year also it conducted the campaign from 20th of June to the 30th of June 2011 in Karur district in the following villages.

Date	Village	School	Participants
20.06.2011	Kattur	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	135 students
	Kallaplli	Athi Dravidar Welfare Middle School	65 students
21.06.2011	Pillapalayam	Athi Dravidar Welfare Middle School	236 students
	Kuchipatti	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	56 students
	Lalapet (East)	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	269 students
22.06.2011	Kovakulam	Panchayat Union Middle Schools	165 students
	Tharapurathanur	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	61 students
23.06.2011	Jagathabi	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	106 students
	Ayyampalayam	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	110 students

24.06.2011	Lalapet (West)	Panchayat Union Middle Schools	400 students
	Korakuthi	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	29 students
	Sankaramalaipatti	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	33 students
28.06.2011	Karattupatti	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	41 students
	Vadavampadi	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	74 students
01.07.2011	Melamayanur	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	35 students
	Mettuthirukampuliyur	Panchayat Union Primary Schools	113 students



AREDS staff, school students along with their teachers took out a procession in every one the above-said villages, raising slogans on the importance of education. The procession meandered through the main streets of every village to make the parents aware of need for enrolling children in school compulsorily. Besides, street corner meetings were also organized in the villages.

Outcome: The participation of the teachers from the local schools and the staff of AREDS motivated the parents to get their children educated up to higher level. Many parents get their children admitted in schools on the same day.

TTSM activists undergo training on leadership qualities

To minimize the number of dropouts and the incidence of child labour in Karur district is the prime objective of Tulir Thalir Students' Movement (TTSM), the AREDS-initiated movement for **young and adolescent students in Karur district**. TTSM has units, almost, in all the villages in the AREDS operational area in Karur district and every unit has its own president, secretary and treasurer. TTSM organizes periodical training programmes for the office bearers of TTSM.

Hence, TTSM organized one-day training programme for its office bearers on the 16th of July 2011 at the AREDS Training Centre. 23 members, all are presidents, secretaries and treasurers, from 9 TTSM units, including, participated in the training programme.

In the beginning, Mr. Senthil, the programme coordinator of TTSM gave an orientation on TTSM and AREDS Children Theatre School (ACTS).

After icebreaking session, Ms. Divya, the AREDS Cultural Team Member, explained the four components under child right:

- Right to Live



- Right to Development
- Right to Protection
- Right to Participation

Then, she presented a brief account on child labour that exists in Karur district and explained the importance of educating children below eighteen years compulsorily. In immediate response to this, the students recalled the names of the dropouts and child labourers in their respective villages: 2 girls aged 14 from Kovakulam village work in textiles and cotton mills; 2 girls from Kundangalpatti village also work in cotton mills; 2 girls in Veerarakiyam village stay at home.

The students divided themselves into groups and discussed the child labour problem. After discussing deeply, they decided to meet the parents of those girls and make them send their children back to school.



Then, the TTSM activists shared the activities carried out by each unit in each village: planting of saplings, sweeping the temple premises, picking the plastic wastes on the roadsides and keeping the village clean were came out of the discussion.

Then, the roles and responsibilities of the president, secretary and the treasurer were discussed:

Roles and responsibilities of the president:

- Convening of meetings and disseminating information
- Keeping punctuality
- Respecting the other members
- Capable making decisions
- Being complaisant

Roles and responsibilities of the secretary:

- He/she should deserve the qualities meant for the president
- Writing the minutes of meetings and reading out the resolutions
- Monitoring the ongoing works and their impact
- Giving petition on local issues to the authority concerned

Roles and responsibilities of the treasurer:

- He/she should deserve the qualities meant for the president
- Collecting subscription from the new members
- Keeping the savings money
- Book keeping and accounting

In between the training sessions, games were played and songs were sung to sustain the enthusiasm of the student participants.



Outcome of the training:

- The children became aware of the objective of TTSM and the ACTS
- They became aware of child rights and the roles and responsibilities of a TTSM activist.
- They became aware of the techniques of handling village problems and writing petition to whom and which office

Last but not the least:

We take this opportunity to thank all those partners who have made their annual contribution to the efforts of AREDS-SHARE. Their sincere and generous help is the one that moves our commitment and to reach out. Your timely contribution made out of your personal sacrifices can be sent to the following accounts of AREDS SHARE:

For Belgium Partners

Account N° : 000 - 0000034 - 34 of ENTRAIDE ET FRATERNITE
32 Rue du Gouvernement Provisoire B 1000 BRUXELLES
avec la mention :pour le projet AREDS Inde 10-499

For Partners in France and the rest of the World

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Yours in solidarity,

L. A. Samy

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