

# MADRAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

(Established by the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department, Tamil Nadu)



# NEWSLETTER

July - August

2024

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The July–August edition of the CSJE newsletter highlights key activities undertaken by the Centre for Social Justice and Equity (CSJE) through its research, programme, and documentation units. During this period, the Centre organised Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes for Illam Thedi Kalvi (ITK) District Coordinators and field volunteers as part of the Socio-Economic Survey of Scheduled Tribes in Tamil Nadu. The training covered the objectives of the survey, detailed explanations of habitation and household questionnaires, and practical guidance on data collection. The first phase of training was conducted on 10 July 2024, followed by field-level training across the state on 26 July 2024, enabling volunteers to effectively undertake the survey.

In August 2024, CSJE commemorated the International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples (9 August) in collaboration with the Directorate of Tribal Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu, at the Madras School of Social Work. The programme aimed to highlight the rights, cultures, and development challenges of indigenous communities, particularly Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). The event included the launch of the CSJE website, release of tribal development reports, and a panel discussion on challenges in tribal development. It also featured a documentary screening on nomadic tribes, a photo exhibition titled “Lens of a Tribe” on the Betta Kurumba community, and cultural performances by members of the Irular community.

The Training of Trainers (ToT) for the Socio-Economic Survey of Scheduled Tribes in Tamil Nadu was held on 10 July 2024 at the Madras School of Social Work (MSSW), jointly organised by the Directorate of Tribal Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu, and the Centre for Social Justice and Equity (CSJE), MSSW. The programme aimed to equip Illam Thedi Kalvi (ITK) District Coordinators with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively implement the statewide survey. The event featured addresses by key dignitaries, including Dr. S. Raja Samuel, Principal, MSSW; Tmt. G. Laxmi Priya IAS, Secretary, Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department; Thiru S. Annadurai CLS, Director, Directorate of Tribal Welfare; and Thiru K. Elambahavath IAS, Nodal Officer of the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme. The programme concluded with a Vote of Thanks by Dr. R. Pavananthi Vembulu, Director, CSJE. Around 60 trainers participated in the first phase, covering survey objectives, household questionnaires, and the SurveyCTO mobile application for digital data collection. District and block coordinators were subsequently trained, who then trained ITK volunteers across the state on 26 July 2024 to conduct the field survey.

## Training of Trainers (ToT) for the Socio-Economic Survey of Scheduled Tribes in Tamil Nadu



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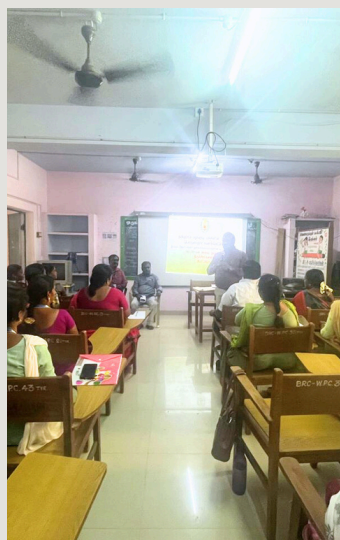
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As part of the Tribal Socio-Economic Survey, CSJE conducted District and Block Level Enumerator Trainings across Tamil Nadu throughout July 2024. Organised by the CSJE research team and supported by ITK Volunteer District and Block Teacher Coordinators, the sessions were held statewide across various districts and blocks. Volunteers were trained in survey methodology, questionnaire administration, and digital data entry to ensure effective field data collection. This grassroots-level training enabled consistent and accurate implementation of the survey across all regions of Tamil Nadu.



## Training of ITK Volunteers for Socio-Economic Survey of Scheduled Tribes in Tamil Nadu





## Launch of the Socio-Economic Survey of Tribal Livelihoods and Habitation

The Socio-Economic Survey of Tribal Livelihoods and Habitation was officially launched on 01 August 2024 at Thirisoolam Panchayat, Tamil Nadu, marking a significant milestone in the state's efforts to generate comprehensive and reliable data on tribal communities. The survey was formally initiated by Thiru S. Annadurai CLS, Director, Directorate of Tribal Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu, underscoring the department's commitment to evidence-based policymaking for the welfare and development of Scheduled Tribes.

The launch event brought together district officials, CSJE researchers, and Illam Thedi Kalvi (ITK) volunteers, reflecting a robust collaborative framework between government bodies, academic institutions, and grassroots-level functionaries. This multi-stakeholder participation ensured a well-coordinated and inclusive approach to field implementation across the state.

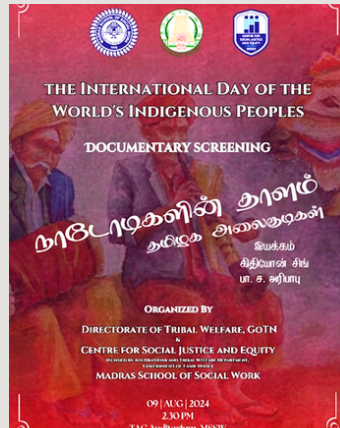
The survey aims to capture detailed information on tribal livelihoods, habitation conditions, education, healthcare, and socio-economic status, providing a strong evidence base for designing targeted and effective development programmes for tribal communities across Tamil Nadu.



The CSJE-MSSW, in collaboration with the Directorate of Tribal Welfare, Tamil Nadu, commemorated the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples on 09 August 2024 at the TAG Auditorium, Madras School of Social Work, to highlight the rights, contributions, and challenges of tribal communities. The programme featured addresses by Ms. G. Laxmi Priya IAS, Secretary, Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department, and Thiru S. Annadurai CLS, Director, Directorate of Tribal Welfare. The occasion also marked the official launch of the CSJE website, along with the release of key reports on tribal welfare.

A panel discussion on "Problems and Challenges in Tribal Development in Tamil Nadu" examined critical issues including land rights, education, and healthcare access. A consultation meeting with tribal organisations, particularly those working with the Irular community, facilitated dialogue on actionable development plans. The event featured a screening of "Naadoadiyin Thalam – Tamilaga Alaikudigal", directed by P. S. Aribabu, documenting nomadic tribes in Tamil Nadu, and a photo exhibition titled "Lens of a Tribe" by Ravi Maran, portraying the lives of the Betta Kurumba community.

## International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples



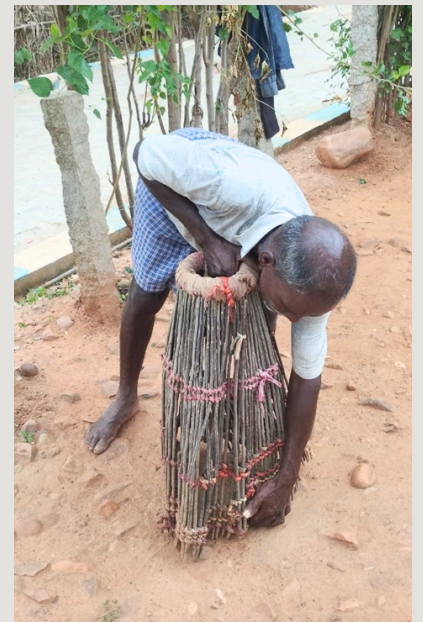
## Condolence Visit and Field Observation on Manual Scavenging – Arunthathipuram, Avadi

On 17 August 2024, a visit was conducted to Arunthathipuram, Avadi, to the residence of the late Mr. Gopinath, a victim of manual scavenging. Discussions were held with his wife and family members regarding the circumstances of his death and the challenges faced by the family in its aftermath. During the visit, it was observed that a significant number of Arunthathiyar community members in the locality continue to be engaged in sewer cleaning jobs, highlighting the persistent prevalence of manual scavenging in the area.



## Field Visit to Irular Community Settlement, Minjur

On 21 July 2024, Dr. Pavananthi, Director, Centre for Social Justice and Equity (CSJE), visited an Irular community settlement in Minjur to gain firsthand insights into the community's livelihood strategies. The visit provided an opportunity to understand the socio-economic conditions, daily challenges, and existing support systems within the settlement. The observations gathered will contribute to CSJE's ongoing research and advocacy initiatives aimed at promoting the welfare and development of tribal communities.



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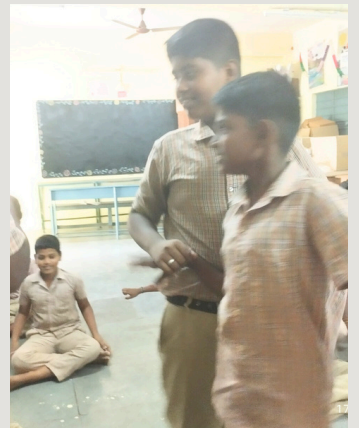
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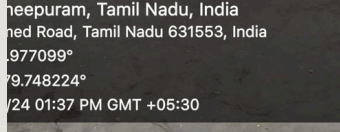


On 21 July 2024, Prof. Pavananthi, Director, Centre for Social Justice and Equity (CSJE), Madras School of Social Work, visited a Government School in Minjur to explore the possibility of conducting a science education workshop for tribal students. The visit aimed to assess the school environment, understand the learning needs of tribal students, and gather insights necessary for planning an effective and contextually relevant workshop. The observations will guide CSJE in designing an engaging science education initiative to foster curiosity and learning among tribal children.



## Preparatory Visit for Science Education Workshop – Government School, Minjur





## Livelihood Assessment Study – Proposed Green Airport Site, Parandur

On 30 August 2024, CSJE team visited the site of the upcoming green airport at Parandur to initiate a livelihood impact assessment study commissioned by TIDCO (Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation). The visit marked the commencement of a comprehensive study aimed at understanding the socio-economic conditions and livelihood patterns of communities residing in and around the proposed airport site.

During the visit, CSJE researchers held detailed discussions with the Kanchipuram District Administration to understand the scope of the project, identify key stakeholder groups, and establish a coordinated framework for conducting the survey. These discussions provided critical insights into the administrative landscape and the potential socio-economic implications of the airport development on local livelihoods.

Following the preparatory discussions, the field survey was formally initiated, covering aspects such as occupational patterns, income sources, land dependency, and community vulnerabilities. The findings of this assessment will serve as an essential evidence base for informing rehabilitation and livelihood restoration measures for affected communities.



The Madras School of Social Work (MSSW), founded by Mary Clubwala Jadhav in 1952, is one of India's premier institutions for social work education and research. It stands as the first social work institution in South India. Located in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, MSSW is a NAAC-accredited autonomous institution committed to fostering social justice, community development, and inclusive welfare through quality education and collaborative research.



The Centre for Social Justice and Equity (CSJE) at Madras School of Social Work was established under the financial grant-in-aid of the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, vide G.O. (MS) No. 87 dated 12 July 2023. The Centre was formally inaugurated by the Honourable Minister N. Kayalvizhi, Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare, on 16 August 2023, marking a significant step towards advancing research, advocacy, and policy support for tribal and marginalised communities in Tamil Nadu.

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