



# TAMIL NADU HEALTH 3 ASSEMBLY

Erode, Tamilnadu | 15th Sep 2018



## THEMATIC AREAS OF DISCUSSION

- In Defense of Health Systems
- Privatisation of Healthcare  
( PPPs/Insurance/regulation of private sector)
- Gender and Health
- Access to Medicines
- Social Exclusion &  
Social Determinants of health

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## TAMIZH NADU MAKKAL NALAVAZHVU SABAI

*Tamizhnadu Makkal Nalavazhvu Sabai* was organised at CEEMA, Erode, on 15 September, 2018 to create awareness on 'Health For All' movement in India.

The day's programme began with a warm welcome address delivered by Mr D. Suresh, member, *Makkal Nalavazhvu Iyakkam*. This was followed by lighting of the lamps by a few representatives from among the participants.

Mr Shankar, Director – DEEPS, delivered the opening address and set the ball rolling for the day's programme. He spoke of the need and importance of good health for all. He, however, highlighted how our central and state governments are showing apathy towards this important aspect of human life. He pointed out how the government does not care enough to improve the public health centres but rather give free hand to mushrooming of private health centres which are only after money. He said that government policies are anti-people and on account of which people are not cared for. He exhorted the participants to fight against privatisation of public health sector. Recognising the yeomen work done by *Tamizhnadu Makkal Nalavazhvu Sabai*, Mr Shankar appreciated and thanked them wholeheartedly.

Mr Amir Khan, National Committee Member – MNI, spoke about the up-coming 3<sup>rd</sup> National Convention on 'Health For All' which was to take place at Raipur, Chhattisgarh, on 22 and 23 September, 2018. He insisted that the purpose of the Convention was to stress the motto of 'Health For All'. He pointed out that the government was unwilling to make this need a compulsory thing. So, the movement was determined to fight against this anti-people policy of the government.

Mr K. Sanmuga Velayutham, Founder, 'Thamizhnadu Makkal Mananala Amaippu', spoke on the topic of 'Health and Mental Health'. He spoke on the following sub-topics like how mental health affected people, types of mental health disorders, women were more affected mentally, possession by spirits, the lack of women mental health doctors, ways to prevent women's mental health and the demands we had to place in front of the government. A feedback session followed this presentation. There was an enthusiastic participation by all. One participant lambasted Mr Vijaya Bhaskar, Minister for Health, Tamil Nadu Government, who, according to a report, claimed that the state's mental health programmes had been the best in the country when the truth was nowhere near his claim. One another participant noted that several TV programmes and Serials had been the cause of mental health issues especially among women. Still one another participant observed that young girl-child's mental health

needed to be addressed urgently. Still another participant said how training was to be given as how to manage one's stress in daily life. Mr Shankar hit on the nail when he said that mental health problems cannot be eliminated totally as they are created by people. So, he said that our efforts were to be directed towards minimising the mental problems. The resource person wound up the session saying that all spheres of life like family, education, work place, etc. were needed to be connected in order to effectively counter the issue in hand.

After the tea break, Mr Dr. Balasubramaniam, Director – RUWSEC spoke at length on the topic 'Women's Sexual Reproductive Health' concerns. He pointed out that first of all it was considered a taboo in our society to talk about terms like 'sex', 'sexual' or 'sexuality'. He presented his topic with facts and figures. He reported that government had released several documents but nothing substantial had been done as such. Two or three participants complemented the resource person's presentation. One woman participant observed that women were the most affected in every way. One another participant said how Dalit were very vulnerable. Child marriages were another important concern that another participant observed were a contributing factor to ill mental health.

Dr. Rajalakshmi Ramprakash, a resource person, presented a comprehensive exposé on the theme 'Medical Insurance Scheme'. Dwelling on her doctoral thesis around the Tamil Nadu Government's 'Chief Minister's Medical Insurance Scheme', Rajalakshmi touched upon the following sub-topics.

- (I) Special features of the Insurance Scheme
- (II) Areas of the PhD's Research
- (III) Places of Research – North Chennai & Salem
- (IV) Awareness Regarding the Scheme
- (V) What Included in the Scheme
- (VI) Usefulness of the Scheme
- (VII) Challenges In Using of the Scheme
- (VIII) Purpose of the Scheme
- (IX) Findings and Queries

All appreciated the resource person's presentation that gave an over view of the topic dealt with.

After the lunch break, a short audio-visual about the 'Health For All' topic was presented. Followed by this Mr Shankar, Director – DEEPS, spoke about 'Thozhi Tamilnadu' of which he is the State Convener. He said the Organization was founded in 2014 and had 168 NGO partners working under them as of now. He said that the Organization had a four-fold aim namely,

- (I) To address the issues surrounding women working in unorganised sectors,
- (II) To ensure rights and privileges of the government women employees,
- (III) To address various kinds of harassment faced by women, and
- (IV) To push for a legislation to form a ministry particularly to address women's issues.

He, further said that the Organization by reaching out to women working in unorganised sectors had identified various types of unorganised jobs like leather industry, cashew nut industry, construction work, oil mills, brick kiln, etc. All these types of works exposed

women to all kinds of health hazards. They were denied of all rights and privileges on account of too much working hours, insufficient salary, no health insurance, no salary increment, etc. Thus, *Thozhi Tamilnadu* was fully involved in the empowerment of women working especially in unorganised sectors. Two coordinators working under the Trust supplemented Mr Shankar's presentation.

Mr Amir Khan presented the history and participation of 'Desiya Makkal Nalavazhvu Sabai' – National Health Assembly at the state, national and international levels.

What followed next was the passing of resolutions to be presented at the National Conference. This session was facilitated by Mr Ameerkhan. A few office bearers of 'Thamizhnadu Makkal Nalavazhvu Sabai' were seated as the brainstorming team complemented suitably by other participants. The following were some of the important resolutions passed on the occasion.

- (I) Ensure closure of health threatening factories like the Sterlite Copper Plant at Thoothukudi, etc.
- (II) Oppose the proposed new 8-line Salem-Chennai Road as it posed threat to environmental threat leading to people's mental and physical health.
- (III) To strongly advocate safe delivery methods and not just impose hospital-based delivery only.
- (IV) Encourage and ensure large people's participation in health development process.
- (V) Government needs to ensure transparency in social health auditing.
- (VI) Oppose and stop the privatisation of public health sector.
- (VII) Strengthen the public health sector with special emphasis on primary health.
- (VIII) Not to force health insurance policy on people.
- (IX) Regulate and filter only scientifically proven health advertisements.
- (X) Do not propagate self-medication.
- (XI) Allow all kinds of sound medical treatment systems.

Mr Kamala Kannan, member – *Thamizhar Nalavazhvu Amaippu*, proposed the vote of thanks. He thanked the team that ably organised the programme. He appreciated and thanked all the participants for making themselves available and for their enthusiastic participation.

After a group-photo session, all the participants dispersed after refreshing themselves with tea.

Eighty representatives from Tamil Nadu are expected to participate in the National Convention of 'Health For All' to be held at Raipur, Chhattisgarh on 22 and 23 September, 2018.

## PHOTOS



Some of the eminent participants seated on the dais.



Lighting of the lamps at the start of the programme.



Mr D. Suresh, member – MNI, delivers the welcome address.



Mr Shankar, Director – DEEPS & Thozhi Tamilnadu's State Convener, delivers the opening note.



Mr K. Sanmuga Velayutham, Founder, 'Thamizhnadu Makkal Mananala Amaippu', spoke on the topic of 'Health and Mental Health'.



A participant complements Mr K. Sanmuga Velayutham's input.



A participant raises a query to one of the speakers.



Mr Dr. Balasubramaniam, Director – RUWSEC, speaks on the topic 'Women's Sexual Reproductive Health'.



Dr. Rajalakshmi Ramprakash, a resource person, presents a comprehensive exposé on the topic 'Medical Insurance Scheme'.



Mr Amir Khan, National Committee Member – MNI, leads the Passing of Resolutions session.



A group-photo session with all the participants of the one-day programme on 'Health For All' organized by 'Thamizhnadu Makkal Nalavazhvu Sabai'.