

Periyar Marg

From 10th October to 18th October

The Samajik Parivartan Yatra 's bus of Periyar Marg reached Trichy on 10 October where we took out a procession near the Kuliymbalayam bus stand, surrounding shops, buses, and markets and near railway station and public.

A procession was taken out at Meenukara theru, Kulithalai. Around 85 community people gathered. Two liberated safai karmacharis, Lakshimi and Palaniyammal, called out all the community members and held a meeting at the bus stand.

In Kamarajar Nagar, Coimbatore, 60 community members participated. Mr. Adiamanu from "Adi Tamil Peravai" felicitated liberated SKs. Dinner and night halt was at Sathiyamangalam, where we reached via Gandhipuram.



Sathiyamangalam

On the morning of 11 October, there was a rally and a basket-burning programme attended by 300 people. The demands regarding rehabilitation were released in the meeting. Next was Erode, where we explained the bus yatra and its purpose to community members. We garlanded the Periyar statue at the Periyar House before leaving for Namakkal, where we held a meeting. Then we went to Selam and took out a kilometre long rally there. At the RMS colony, around 200 community members participated in our meeting.

Karnataka Periyar Marg `Revisiting where liberation began´ - The Kolar Gold Fields

On the morning of 12th October, we reached Bangalore, where Ruth Manorama from NAWO, Mr. Raju, Mari Cathre attended the meeting. In the Kolar Gold Fields, Ambedkar and Vivekanandha ' statues were garlanded. Participation from government officers like police and professors were remarkable in the meeting. After dinner, we proceeded to travel to Chennai in the night.

While travelling to Karnataka from Tamilnadu we accidently entered Andhra Pradesh without permission and the officers of the Road Transport Authority stopped the vehicle at late night and about to seize or asked us to pay a huge fine. When we explained about the purpose of the yatra and mentioned about our beloved chairperson S R Sankaran, the situation took an absolute change. The same officers immediately taken the goodness and contributions of S R Sankaran into the consideration and surprisingly started appreciating our chair person 's initiatives and allowed us to cross the inter-state border.

Tamilnadu, Chennai

We reached Chennai at 7 am on 13th October and were warmly welcomed by office bearers of Janodhayam- TAAMS. they made all the arrangements including the accommodation. A meeting was held in AICUF centre in Nungambakkam with the large number of Safai Karamcharis from across the Chennai. The yatris were felicitated and heard by the present safai karmachariess with lot of interest. Few sanitation workers who are working in the educational institution in that area also attended the meeting.

Hearing the courageous voice of the SKs they also came up openly to share their oppression including low wages. After the Yatris Fr. Yesu Marian and G Israel showed their solidarity with the movement. The large number of gathering witnessed the felicitation. Yatris were felicitated with shawls. Then a rally was held in the community area of Pullareddyapuram in Pullareddy Puram, where around 1,000 safai

karamchari families are living. After that we went to Choolaimedu, where almost 150 people attended our meeting.

National convenor of Safai Karamchari Andolan, Bezwada Wilson was present and spoke about the bus yatra, our mission, and also about our demands to the government. After the meeting, we received a donation of Rs. 5,001 from community members. In the night we proceeded towards Kadhiri.

AP: Where Narayanamma Showed the Way

In Kadiri municipality, the Yatra was flagged off by liberated SK women Gangamma and Nagamma. There was a rally towards the Ambedkar statue. After garlanding it, the air was rent with slogans like, 'We have two hands, so do you, scavenging is not our work by birth.' Campaign posters were released. SKA activist Pennobilesu, addressed the gathering, and spoke about the aim and demands of the Yatra. People were mobbed around the bus to enquire the purpose and collected the pamphlets as well. The event was telecast on local TV. From Kadiri, the Yatra went to Hindupur. A liberated woman SK, Jyothi, garlanded the statue of Ambedkar amidst slogans demanding complete eradication of manual scavenging and starting of rehabilitation package.

Janayya, SKA advisor, recalled his tortuous childhood and called upon all SKs to stop the work and send their children to school. We met the Anantapur District Collector and presented a charter of demands to him. He promised to look into the matter of immediate rehabilitation. The Yatra traveled 200 Kms in Anantapur district.

From Anantapur town, we went to Kalyandurg, where Ramakka, liberated SK woman, flagged off the Yatra. Next was Rayadurg, where liberated women SKs Narayanamma and Kulsum Bi brought the baskets and brooms used in manual scavenging and electrified the atmosphere by burning them publicly on the road amidst chanting of slogans. The bus went on to Uravakonda and returned to Anantapur town for the night halt.

Next were Narpala and Pamidi gram panchayats. The Yatris were given a sumptuous lunch in the homes of SKs, and later treated them all to an equally sumptuous tea. From Pamidi the bus went on to Gooty.

The Yatris reached Pattikonda town, where we went to Pandikuna, village of Narayanswamy, the district convenor. Here the Ambedkar's statue was garlanded by liberated SK woman Narasamma. The Yatra proceeded to Maddikera and Kosgi gram panchayats. This was the place where young new activists who were out to see the real India were shocked to know from Subbulamma, SK, who reported them that she was threatened by the upper caste people in the village - if she gives up the work, her house would be demolished. The SK team members assured her the support and encouraged her to keep up her morale. In Koutalam gram panchayat drainage workers and liberated SKs released the poster of demands and flagged off the yatra.

Next morning, 18th October, the yatra started at 8 AM in Koutalam village and took out a rally towards the tehsil office. The yatra proceeded to Matralaym and Emmiganur where the family of deceased SKA team member and prominent activist Kamal Kumar, warmly welcomed the yatris. Post-lunch the bus reached Kurnool town and rallied to meet the district collector, who first denied to give them entry but later agreed to meet a representative. But then all the participants went in and demanded to see the collector, and he had to agree to meet everyone. Demands of the Parivartan Yatra were presented before him. The collector was in fact astonished to see the data of dry latrines and admonished his officials for keeping him in the dark! He also requested the SKA team to help him in rehabilitating the liberated SKs.



Henri Tiphon addressing the Yatris



Mr. Adiamanu felicitating liberated SKs



Yatris in Bangaluru



Yatris demanding compensation from DC, Anantapur



SKs taking part in a meeting in Anantapur



Liberated SK women felicitated in Kolar



Demolishing dry latrine in Kurnool



Raising the voice in Chennai



Yatris in Chennai