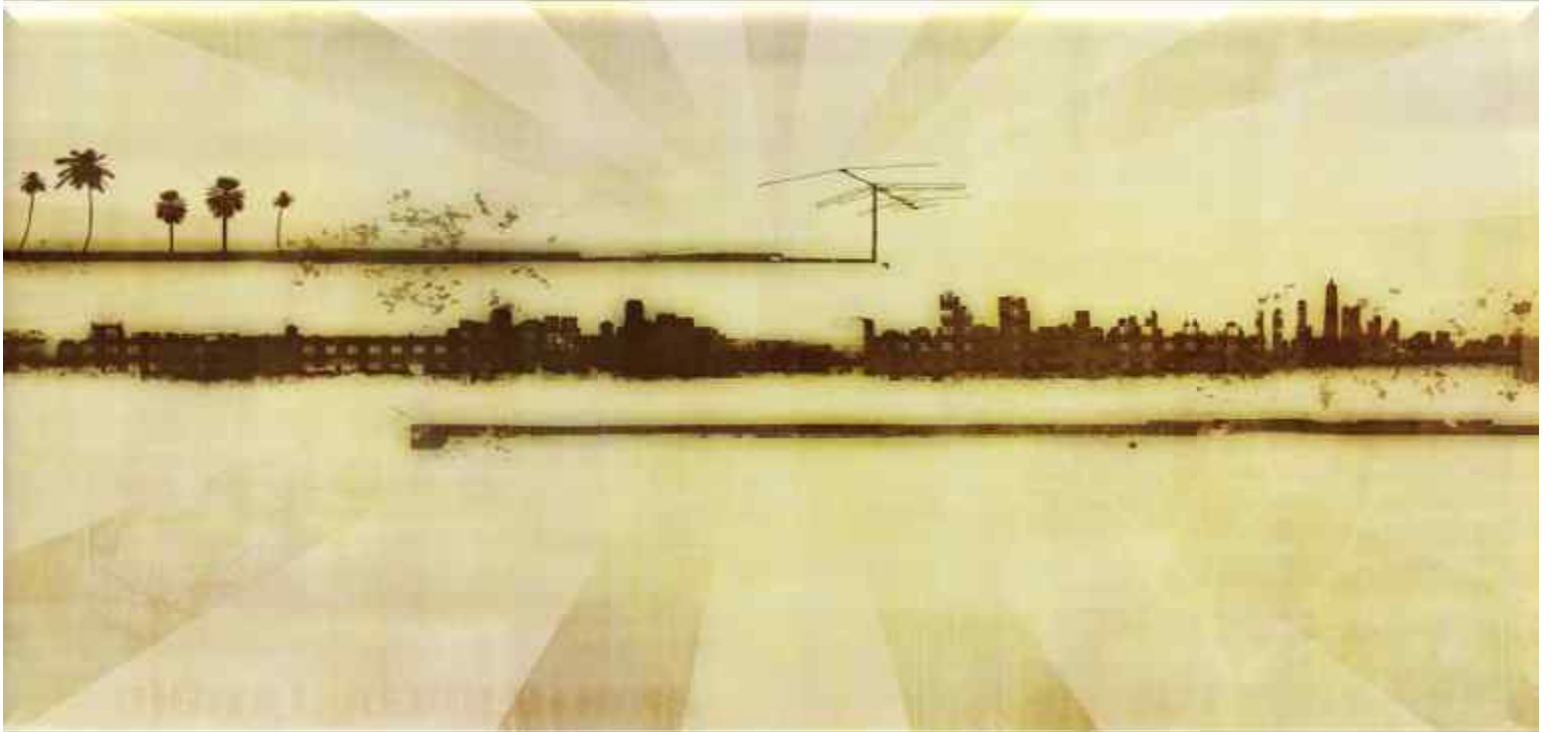


MEL THIRUTHANI RURAL CAMP REPORT

DEC 2010



DEPARTMENT OF OUTREACH
LOYOLA COLLEGE
CHENNAI

**DEPARTMENT OF OUTREACH
LOYOLA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), CHENNAI**

REPORT ON RURAL CAMP (LEAP PROGRAMME)

at

Mel Thiruttani Village

(13th December to 18th December 2010)

Submitted

by

I Year M.Sc. Statistics

I Year M.Sc. Mathematics

REPORT ON RURAL CAMP (LEAP PROGRAMME)

Venue	:	Mel Thiruttani, Thiruvallur District.
Date	:	13 th December to 18 th December 2010
Faculty-In-Charge	:	Prof. John Kaviarasu from Outreach Dept. Prof. Barathi from Mathematics Dept. Prof. Ruban Raja and Prof. Selvam from Statistics Dept.
Departments	:	I Year M.Sc. Statistics and I Year M.Sc. Mathematics

OBJECTIVES OF THE RURAL CAMP

To learn from the people at the grass-root level about the harsh realities of life and to develop a critical consciousness of the same.

Programme Outline:

Day 1: 13th December 2010

- Orientation in the college by – Prof. Selvanathan (History Dept.)
- Ride to Mel Thiruttani
- Ice breaking session
- Division of students into groups and committee.
- Night Prayer

Day 2: 14th December 2010

- Morning Prayer
- Documentary “kollavandha Inbam”
- Talk on Personality by Prof.Kaviarasu

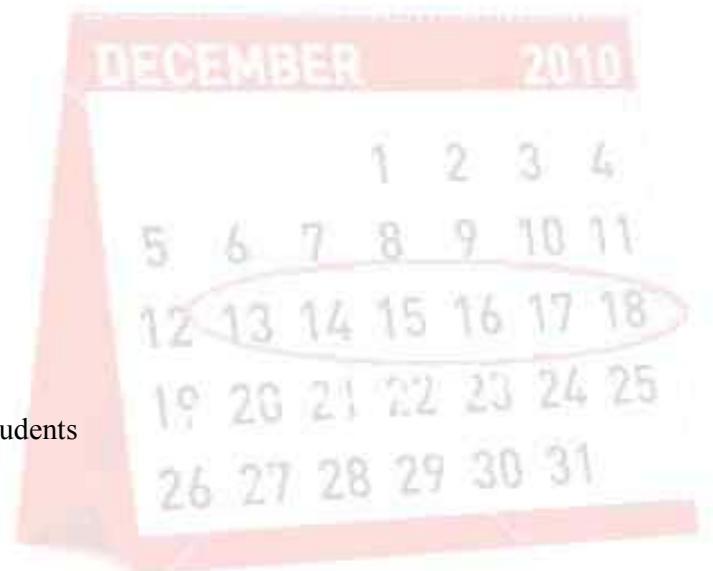
- Building 'Ideal Village' and evaluation of the same
- Documentary "The Journey"
- Night Prayer

Day 3: 15th December 2010

- Morning Prayer
- Discussion on the syllabus and the need for LEAP
- Village Visit - I
- Documentary "Garbage trap"
- Documentary "Agaram"
- Night Prayer

Day 4: 16th December 2010

- Morning Prayer
- Village Visit – II
- Discussion on "Where's my dinner?"
- Personal experiences of Village life by students
- Night Prayer



Day 5: 17th December 2010

- Morning Prayer
- Summing up session under the guidance of Prof. S Jesudoss Arokiam
- Discussion on Village visit with Principal Rev.Dr.Jeyaraj
- Documentary on Abortion
- Night Prayer

Day 6: 18th December 2010

- Morning Prayer
- Documentation Session
- End of the day



The Outreach programme for the Department of Mathematics and Statistics started off with an orientation programme by Prof. Selvanathan, Department of History, Loyola College, Chennai. Under his wonderful guidance students were encouraged to understand the lives of people in villages and their struggles to meet their basic necessities of life. A clear picturization of the key data, data sources, efficient methods for data collection and the vital role played by the villagers in our country were provided to the students.

Soon after the Orientation programme, 64 students – both from the Dept of Mathematics and Statistics community comprising members started their journey to Mel-Thiruttani at 13:20 hours from Nungambakkam. The three hours journey in the train from Chennai-Central to Thiruttani was fun and entertaining.

The Department of Mathematics, consisting of 40 students, was accompanied by Prof. Bharathi and the Department of Statistics, consisting of 24 students, were accompanied by Prof. Ruban Raja. Led by Prof. Kaviarasu, Department of Outreach, the team reached Thiruttani at 18:45 hours and Mel-Thiruttani at 19:15 hours. The picturesque surrounding, the cool breeze and the warm evening sun filled everyone with peace.

The team was given a warm welcome by Fr. Jacob Albert. He briefed them about the place, the people and their life.



The actual programme began at 19:30 hours with an ice-breaking session, encouraging everyone to mingle with each other.



Following dinner, the entire group was divided into

5 committees namely,

- Prayer and Relaxation
- Food
- Documentation
- Work
- Time-keeping

Duties and responsibilities were allotted to each respectively.

The journey, which began with students from two different Departments, on a warm afternoon of 13th December 2010, thus ended uniting everyone as a single united family who are ready to understand, see and feel the harsh realities of village life.



The beautiful bright morning of 14th December 2010, began by seeking the blessing of the Lord. This was followed by a relaxation programme. After this a touching documentary “kollavandha Inbam” was screened. This 20mins documentary focused on the damages caused by alcoholism and drug addiction to the families in particular and to the society in general. Following this a short discussion was held. This discussion led to a conclusion that proper awareness is required in controlling these activities among the youth. Moreover, self-realization does play a key role in eliminating these life-killing habits from youth.



Later Prof.Kaviarasu initiated a discussion on Personality, the factors that affect personality namely hereditary aspects and the environment, tradition and culture, family background, life experience and socialization process all of which play an important role in the formation of personality. Beautiful examples and touching stories added luster to the discussion. After this, a brief idea on the definition of a village, living conditions and characteristics, structure of rural administration, globalization and reason for migration were explained to the entire group. All the five teams build on “Ideal

Village”. Each group got an opportunity not only to develop a model of their own village but also to explain and justify their viewpoint. Thus mathematicians and statisticians became budding architects, engineers and dramatists. This was followed by a debate on the



topic “Ideal Village”. A 30mins documentary “The Journey” by Center for Social Work & Research was then screened. It was about the life of a 10yr old boy ‘Pandi’ whose genuine

aspirations and desires were washed away by the dirty hands of alcoholism. From the desire to gain education, the child ended up being as victim of Child labour.



Later in the night, after making a detailed analysis on child labour, its aftermath and measures to bring it under control students got an opportunity to watch another touching documentary that created waves of uneasiness in

the hearts of everyone. This 22mins documentary titled “Where Is My Dinner?” based on a research by Shri.Rishu Nigam, not only traced the helplessness of undernourished children of Shivpuri, Varkhada and Badali districts of Madhya Pradesh but also brought to light the inefficient Public Distribution System of the Government. The key issue of the hour “Food Security of the Nation & never-ending hunger of the citizens” thus became the topic of discussion.

It was really pathetic to see the underprivileged section of the society struggling for daily bread when the nation spends 62000 million on storage of food grains.

Day2 thus ended after a brief discussion on this theme followed by a prayer seeking the blessings of the almighty.



The warm morning of 15th December 2010 began with a detailed discussion on the objectives of the Outreach Programme and the syllabus of the Loyola Extension Awareness Programme. After an introductory session, different groups were allotted villages within Thiruvallur district which are at a walkable distance from the place of their stay. The names of the villages are as follows:



Nookalamman Kovil, Irular Colony, Papireddy Palli-1, Papireddy Palli-2 and MGR Nagar. Later in the evening, a documentary titled “Garbage trap”, which focused on the “Why should I care” attitude of Urban Life, and the collective responsibility in management of garbage and a clean and green environment was screened. This touching documentary also highlighted the lives of those who clear the garbage, their difficulties, pains and also a hope for better living.

Students were touched to see the harsh living conditions of this “disrespectable” section of our society victims of ignorance and agony. The documentary ended with the need for each one of us to be garbage literate.

Later in the night, a documentary titled “Agaram”, which stresses the need of Women Education was shown to the students, and was followed by a brief discussion on the theme. If a woman is educated, the family is educated, which will lead to an educated society that will lead the nation to progress. The day ended with a prayer.



The 4th day (16th December 2010) began with prayer and relaxation followed by a briefing on the program of the day. Team members from different groups expressed their views on the documentary film titled “Where

is my dinner?”. Later, students shared their personal experiences on their life in villages. This was followed by Village Visit. All the five teams were assigned the following villages within

Thiruvallur district namely:



- 1) Thekkalur
- 2) Sooryanagaram
- 3) Bommarajapuram
- 4) Islam Nagar
- 5) Netterikandikai

These places were approximately 6-8 kilometers from the place of stay. All the groups were treated cordially by the villagers. Later in the evening, there was a group discussion on the village life. Discussion continued even after dinner. This gave them the satisfaction of bringing to light the problems in villages. This was followed by a session wherein a representative from each group presented their group report. Later games were played till 12 pm, and the day ended on a happy note.



The 5th day (17th December 2010) began with prayer and exercise at 7.30 am. Following breakfast, there was a brief discussion on the “Dimensions of Education” which focused on doing something true and new. Prof.Kaviarasu stressed on the fact that it was the time to discover the new facet of education. Later, Fr.Jacob Albert explained to the team the goodness of the village, the innocence of the life in villages where people live with openness, love, self-respect and dignity. Villagers are rich not economically but in terms of character and humanity. He kindled the spark in the minds of the students and prepared them to serve others. Following this, students assembled in groups, and prepared a pictorial representation of the villages they had visited and the problems that needs to be tackled. This was followed by the summing up session under the guidance of Prof. Jesudoss Arokiam, Department of History, Loyola College. He enlightened the

group with the impact of Globalization in India, Neo-liberalism, types of democracy and constitutional provisions. Later, each group took their own time for the presentation. The session ended at 6:30 p.m. Later, Rev. Dr. B. Jeyaraj, SJ, Principal, Loyola College Chennai paid a visit to the camp. He enlightened the gathering with simple yet thought-provoking words. "Live, not leave, your experiences" became the motto of the group. This was followed by sharing of experiences by the students to gathering. The session ended with distribution of cake brought to the camp by the honorable



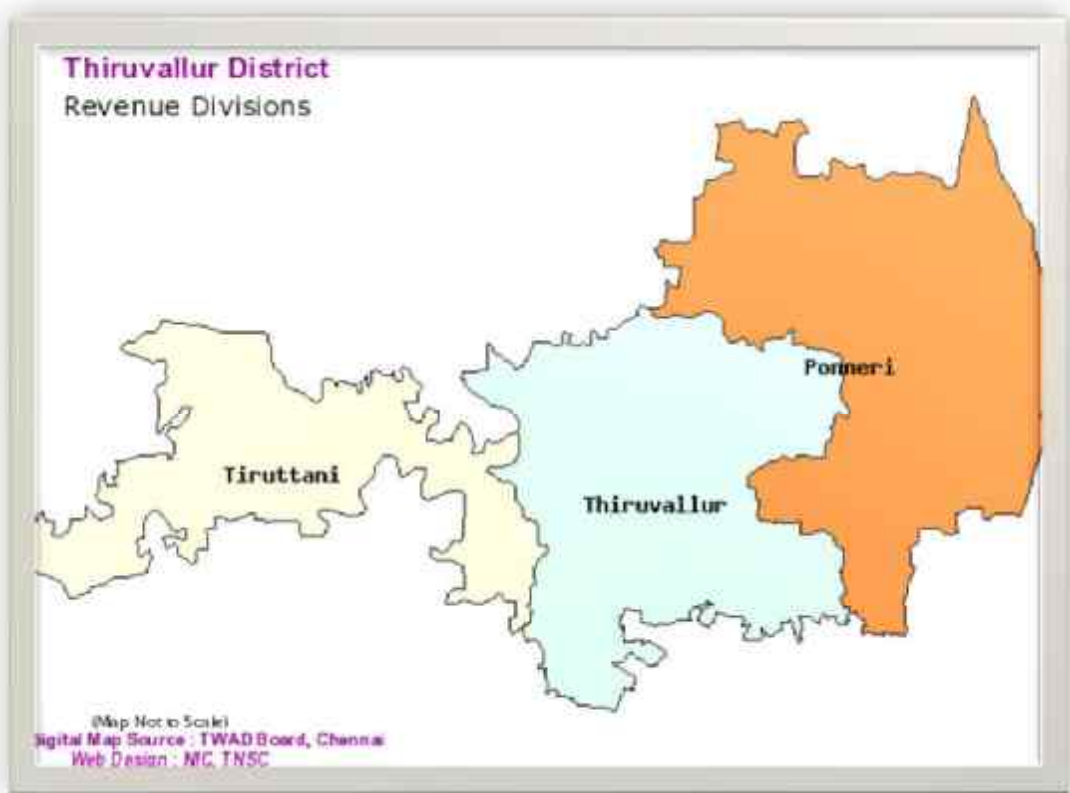
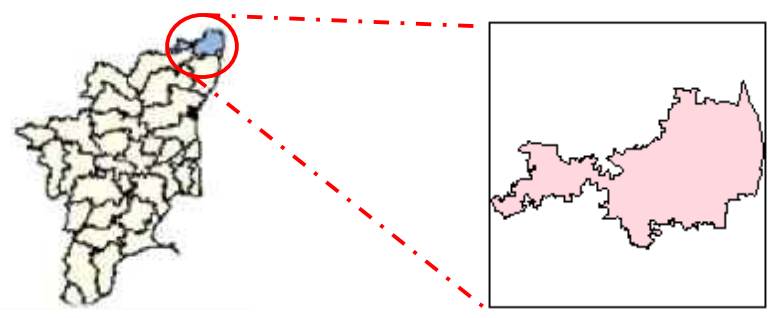
chief guest Rev.Dr. B Jeyaraj, SJ, as part of Christmas celebrations. After the delicious dinner a documentary film based on the theme "Abortion and its aftermath" was shown to the students, leaving them in tears. The day ended on a happy note at midnight, after some interesting games and prayer.



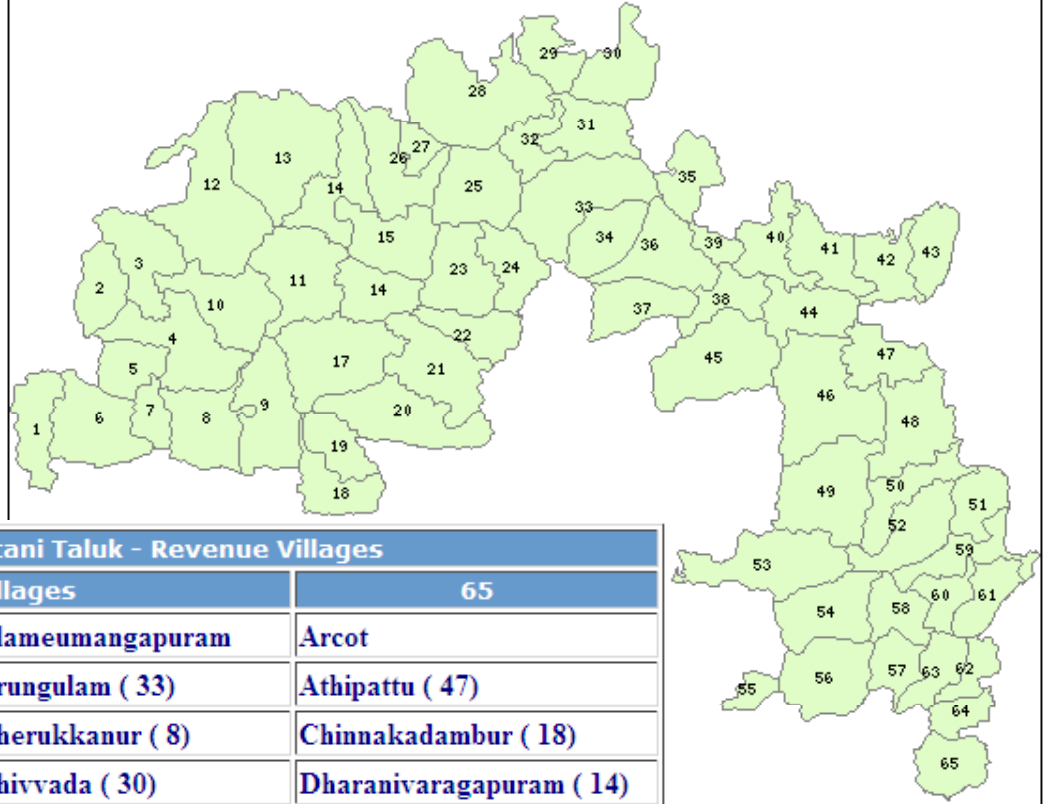
The final day of this educational camp began with prayer and relaxation. After the breakfast, the morning session was at 9 a.m. The teams prepared group report on the activities in the camp. The task got over at 1.00 pm. Meanwhile, Fr. Jacob Albert enlightened the gathering and an inmate of the Church explained to the students her harsh experiences of Village life. Students then gave many suggestions for the future camps and dispersed for lunch at 1.30 p.m. At 2:30 pm, all the participants bid goodbye to one another. Leaving the camp, all of them had mixed emotions and fruitful memories that would stay in their hearts and minds forever. Thus, apart from serving the goals of the programme, it was a refreshing experience to be away from city life.

"Get educated, Unite and Struggle".

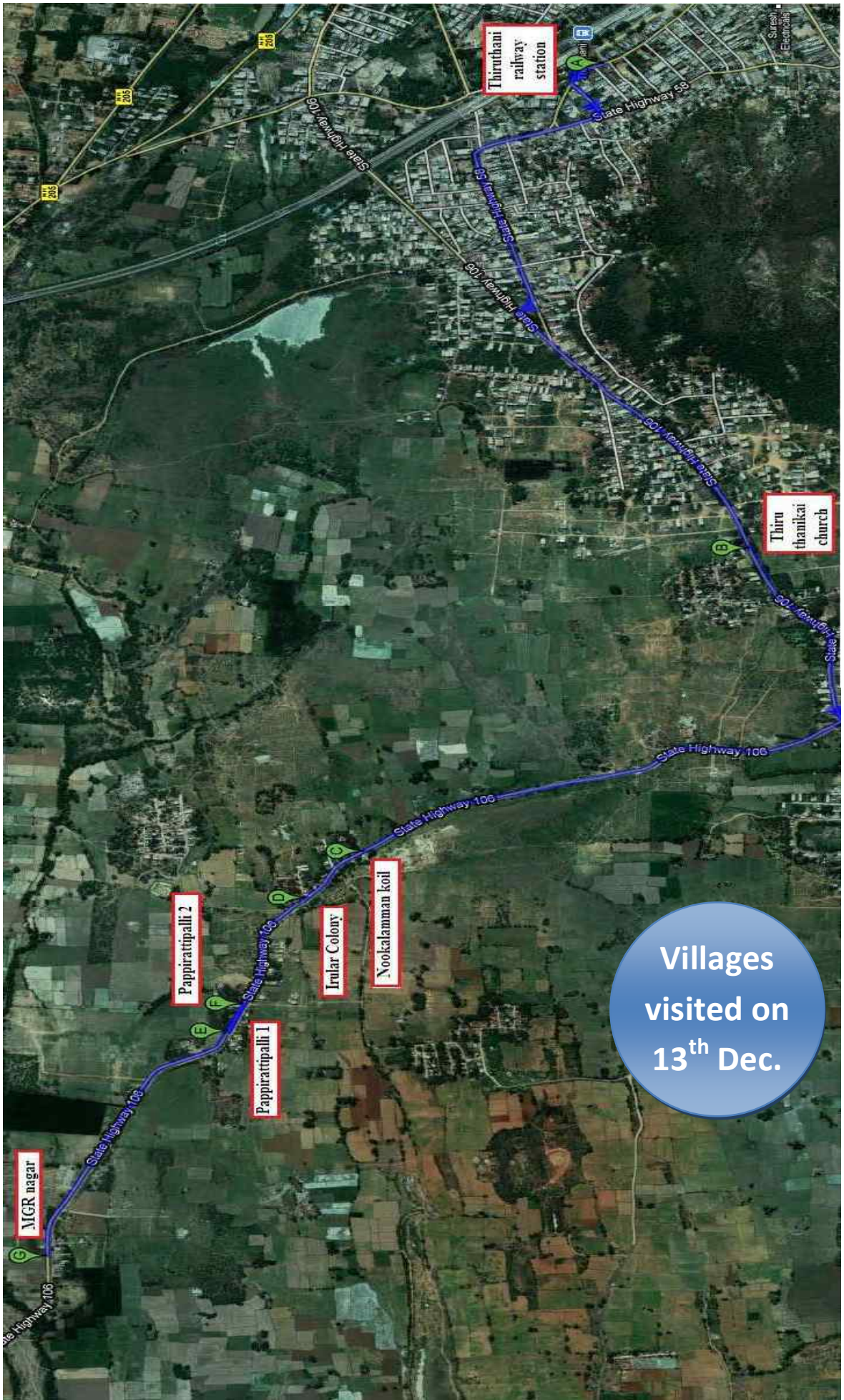
Village Topography



Thiruvallur : Tiruttani Taluk
Revenue Villages



Tiruttani Taluk - Revenue Villages		
Number of Revenue Villages		65
Agoor (17)	Alameumangapuram	Arcot
Arumbakkam (35)	Arungulam (33)	Athipattu (47)
Beerakuppam (5)	Cherukkanur (8)	Chinnakadambur (18)
Chinnamandali (64)	Chivvada (30)	Dharanivarapuram (14)
Gollalakuppam (27)	Gulur (42)	Harichandirapuram
Illupur (38)	J.s.ramapuram	Jageermangalam
Kabulakandigai	Kalambakkam (65)	Kanchipadi (43)
Karthikeyapuram (20)	Kaverirajapuram (46)	Koramangalam (9)
Krishnasamudram (12)	Kuppam	Lakshmilvilasapuram (62)
Maddur (13)	Mamandur (34)	Manavur (61)
Marudhavallipuram	Murukkambattu	Muthukondapuram (44)
Nabalu	Nallattur	Nedumbaram (40)
Nemili (31)	Orathur (57)	Pagasalai (63)
Palayanoor	Panapakkam (41)	Pattabiramapuram (22)
Periakalakattur	Periyakadambur	Ponpadi (26)
Poonimangadu (28)	Rajapadmapuram (59)	Ramapuram (45)
Santhanagopalapuram	Satran Jayapuram	Senakalathur Agraharam
Sirugumi	Suriyanagaram	T.g.kandigai
Thadur (4)	Thalavedu (25)	Thiruvalangadu
Tiruttani (21)	Veera Kaverirajapura M	Veeraganallur (10)
Veeraragavapuram (49)	Velanjeri (23)	Velure Krishnamanaidu Kan
Venugopalapuram (48)	Vyasapuram (53)	





Villages
visited on
14th Dec.

Suriyanagaram

Thekkalur

Pommarajapuram

Islam nagar

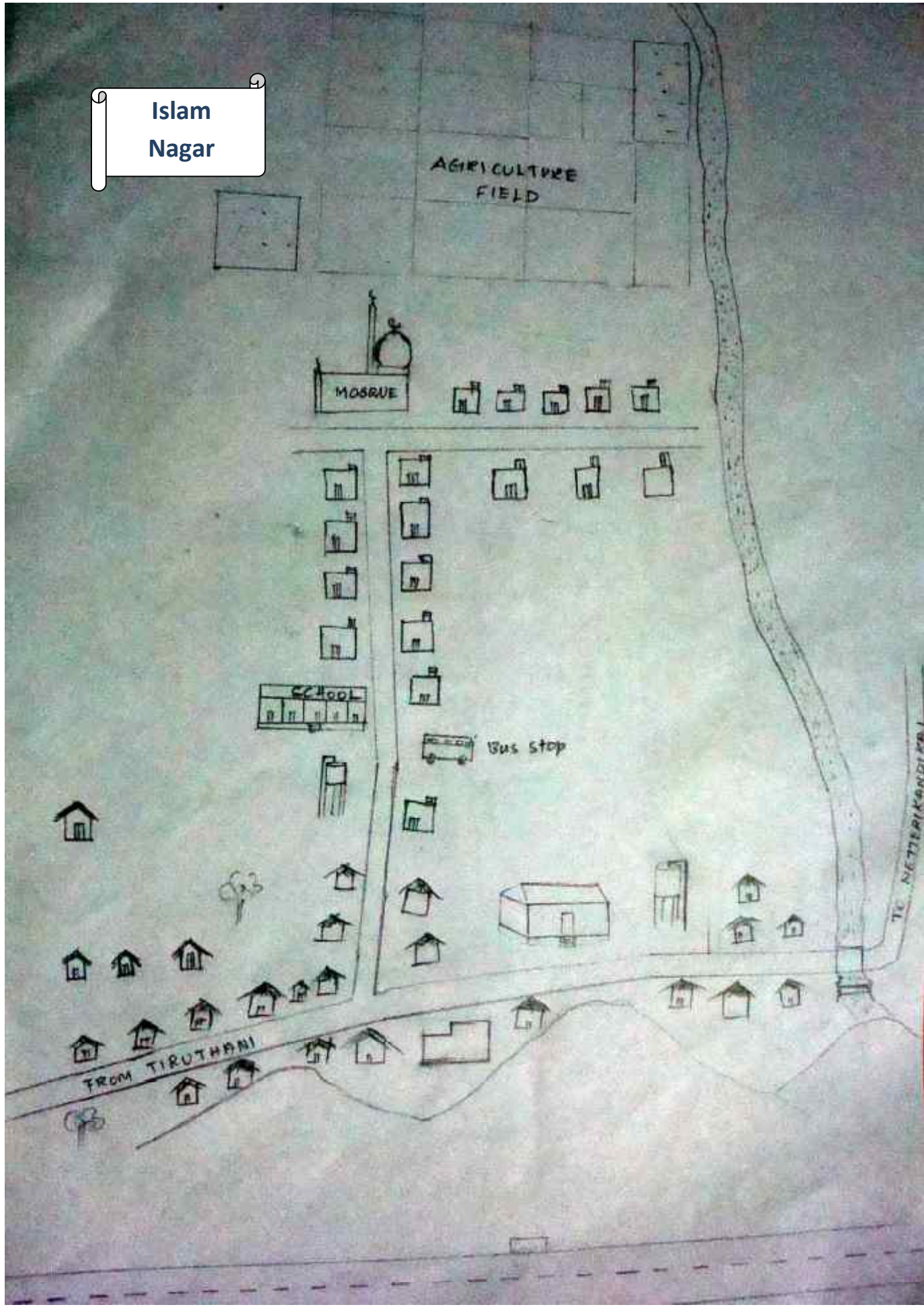
Netterikandigai

6.5km to thiruthani railway station

M G R Nagar



Islam
Nagar





Netterikandigai



STUDENTS' PERSONAL CHANGES

To be frank, all of us were hesitant at the very idea of leaving our families and our comfort zones to come and live in a village for 6 days. But looking back, we as a group believe that our experience at the camp exceeded our expectation. We have learnt so much in a little time and with people we had never met. We learnt to listen to one another. We learned that it isn't impossible to live without phones and that our world wouldn't collapse if we weren't having constant conversations with our loved ones. The importance of food was also felt. We learned to deal with new people in situations that we were in. We learned to act as a team. We had our arguments but we learned to deal with them and accept our faults.

The most was learnt at the villages. On visiting various households we realized and truly came to term with the pitiful living conditions of the people. The stark difference in the houses and status of close neighbors were shocking. One house was well build and had a family that could afford a tractor and fanciful agricultural machinery, good play kits for the children and established toiletries. But the very neighboring house had none of these facilities: No bathrooms, half constructed

house with metal sheets as roof, no facility for clean water, and children play with rock on road. Most people in the village lived on a single meal. We learnt that that the villagers who possess nothing to call their own had so much happiness and love to share with us than those who have everything they need. We experienced such warmth from people whose lives were far from easy.

Furthermore, we were faced with issues like gender inequality, starvation, abortion, dowry - things that we have only heard about in stories but faced them in reality. This touched us further and made us feel for others.

On a whole, our lives took a different turn, owing to the Outreach programme. We have become sensitive to the issues our fellow brothers and sisters face. And we pledge to help them in any way we can.

Members:

(Front Row Left-Right) Shirley Priya, Rosary, Thiresasikala, Sakthivel, Mohammed Abubucker, Charles, Monica Paul, Shankar Ganesh, Arul Jeeva Kani, Santha Kumar, Mervin.

(2nd Row Left-Right) Ranjith Jesu Dossan, Crescent.

Prayer and Relaxation committee





- We encountered love and care of the people in the village.
- We learnt to be happy with what we have.
- We understood the happiness and advantages of joint family system.
- Though we study, we are not fully aware of its worth. But when we happened to meet the people in the villages, struggling without education, we came to know that we are blessed.
- We learnt how to behave in the society.
- We now know the importance of nature and agriculture.
- We have decided not to encourage caste system and not to practice caste discrimination at any level.
- In whatever position we may, be we have to respect our fellow beings.
- We learnt to adjust ourselves in different situations.
- Whatsoever position we are in, we will never separate ourselves from our parents. We know that money will not give happiness.



Members:

(Left-Right) Sathish, Arul Amirtha Raj, Baranidharan, Vishnu Prasad, Arulsudar, Raikhan, Rajkumar, Daisy Thavamani, Rizwana Sultana, Delphina, Jancy Josephine, Femina, Antony Raj, Anish.





STUDENTS' PERSONAL CHANGES

The Outreach Programme was an eye-opener for many among us. We could find many harsh realities that exist. It really motivated us to be human. We could feel the true love and affection of the villagers.

We have learned to live and to lead a happy life with limited facilities available.

The villagers showed us very simple manners of welcoming, which was really meaningful to us. Educational facilities available in the village made us to realize how blessed we are.

We learnt that if we have to achieve anything in life we need to work hard. And the problems which we face are nothing compared to the one which the villagers face.

We have realized the importance of agriculture. We enjoy so many things in our life but we forget from where these come or

who made them. The villagers are much more humane than us. And they are content with what they have. This made us realize the greatness and goodness in them.

The village visit made us ponder how we are going away from the nature and spoil it. They are not scared of tomorrow and ready to face any challenges in their life. This should be our attitude towards life.

Work committee

Members:

(Front Row Left-Right) Maria Jesu Raja, Kuppusamy, Franklin, Antony Kumar, Anand Wilson.

(2nd Row Left-Right) Sathinathan, Christy Anitha, Mary Vinnarasi, Subhashini, Monika, Jagadeesh.

(3rd Row Left-Right) Thiyagarajan, Komathaivelu.





STUDENTS' PERSONAL CHANGES

- We learnt from villagers that unity is strength.
- Though they do not have many facilities, they are satisfied with whatever they have.
- They give more importance to relationships than money. These attitudes are lacking in cities.
- We are welcomed whole heartedly with lots of care and hospitality.
- Many villagers have just a single meal. Yet even from that they are ready to share with us. Whereas in cities, this attitude of 'sharing with others' is diminishing rapidly.
- In villages, though they don't have enough of opportunities to study, they try hard to make use of the little education that is available. Whereas we have not felt that we are so much privileged.
- We came to know the pain of abortion; we all need to spread this awareness.
- The documentary films made a large impact on us, telling us about:
 - Child labours.
 - Drug addiction.
 - Painful life of garbage cleaners.
 - Caste discrimination
 - Scarcity of food.
- Child labours: Lack of awareness about education. We will make a point to help the poor children in future.
- Drug Addiction: We will create awareness among our families, friends and relatives and not get addicted to drug.
- Garbage cleaners: We ourselves will try to avoid using plastics. We will not litter streets and public places for any reason.
- Scarcity of food: We will never ever waste food.



Members:

(Left-Right) Daisy, Naushin Akhtar, Miya Mary Mathew, Saravanan, Victor Desoza, Sivamani, John Antony, Sathyaseelan, Vibha, Britto, Tamilarasan, John Britto.





Documentation committee

- Deep realization of the fact that food should not be wasted and a conscious effort to implement the same in our lives.
- Water, being a scarce yet precious resource, needs to be consumed so as to maintain sustainable development. Water saved now will be a treasure for generations to come.
- Careful yet efficient usage of electricity, usually taken for granted, is to be realized as an irreplaceable source of energy for all.
- The average expenditure on junk food for once a day is equivalent to the daily wage of the farmers; Better understandings of the value of each penny spent, a higher level of value that we attach to the money we spend without even thinking twice.
- Working with new and different kind of people coming from different diverse backgrounds is always a challenge. Adjusting with and accommodating each other's viewpoints and respecting their individualities is something that all of us have learnt gradually over the past week in the Outreach programme.
- Having been seated next to villagers and understanding the heartfelt narration of their hardships, and their fights for social justice and their very own human rights have moved us to the core.

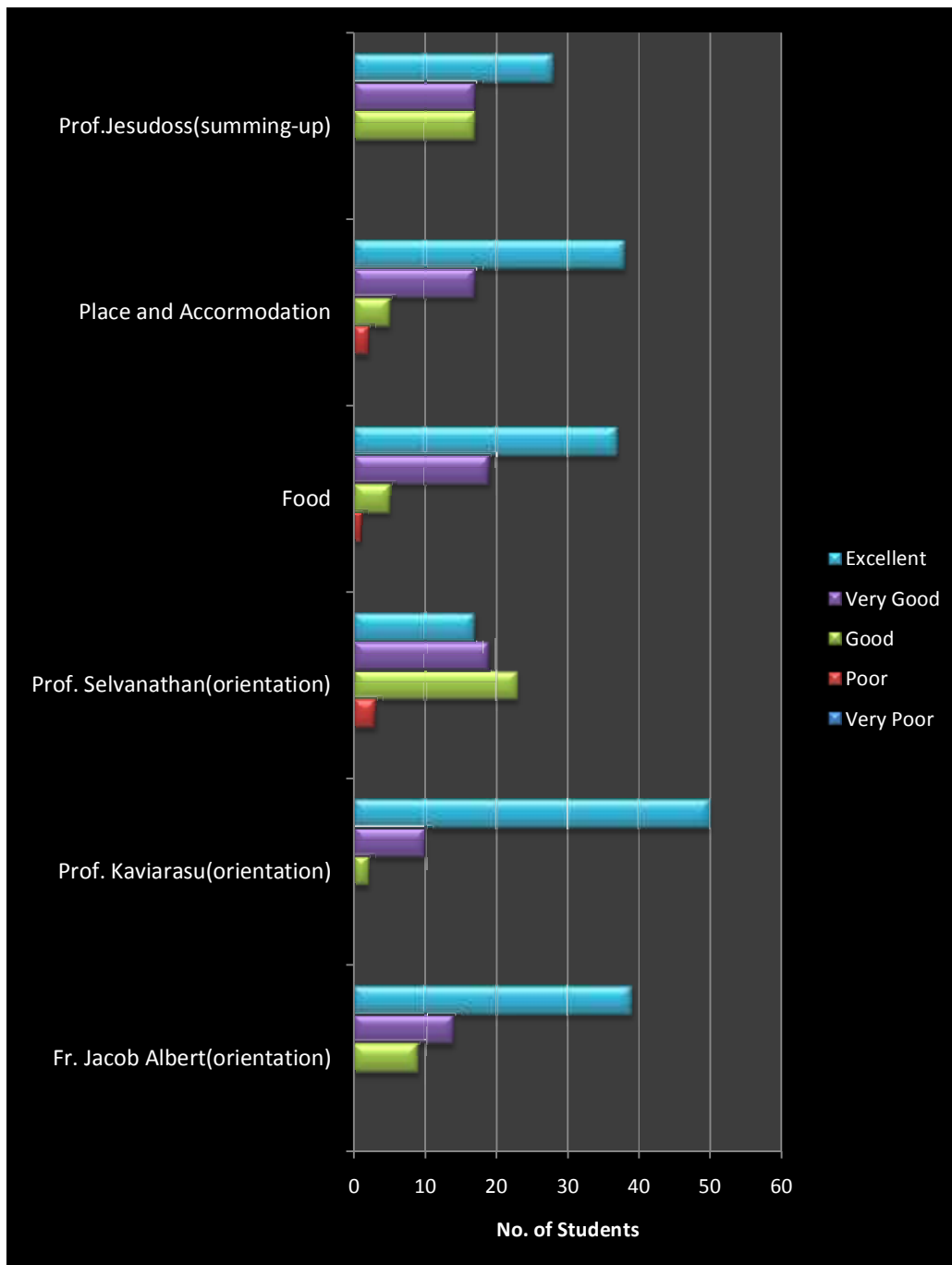
We are now compelled to think, to analyze and to make resolutions to heal the wounded hearts.

Members:

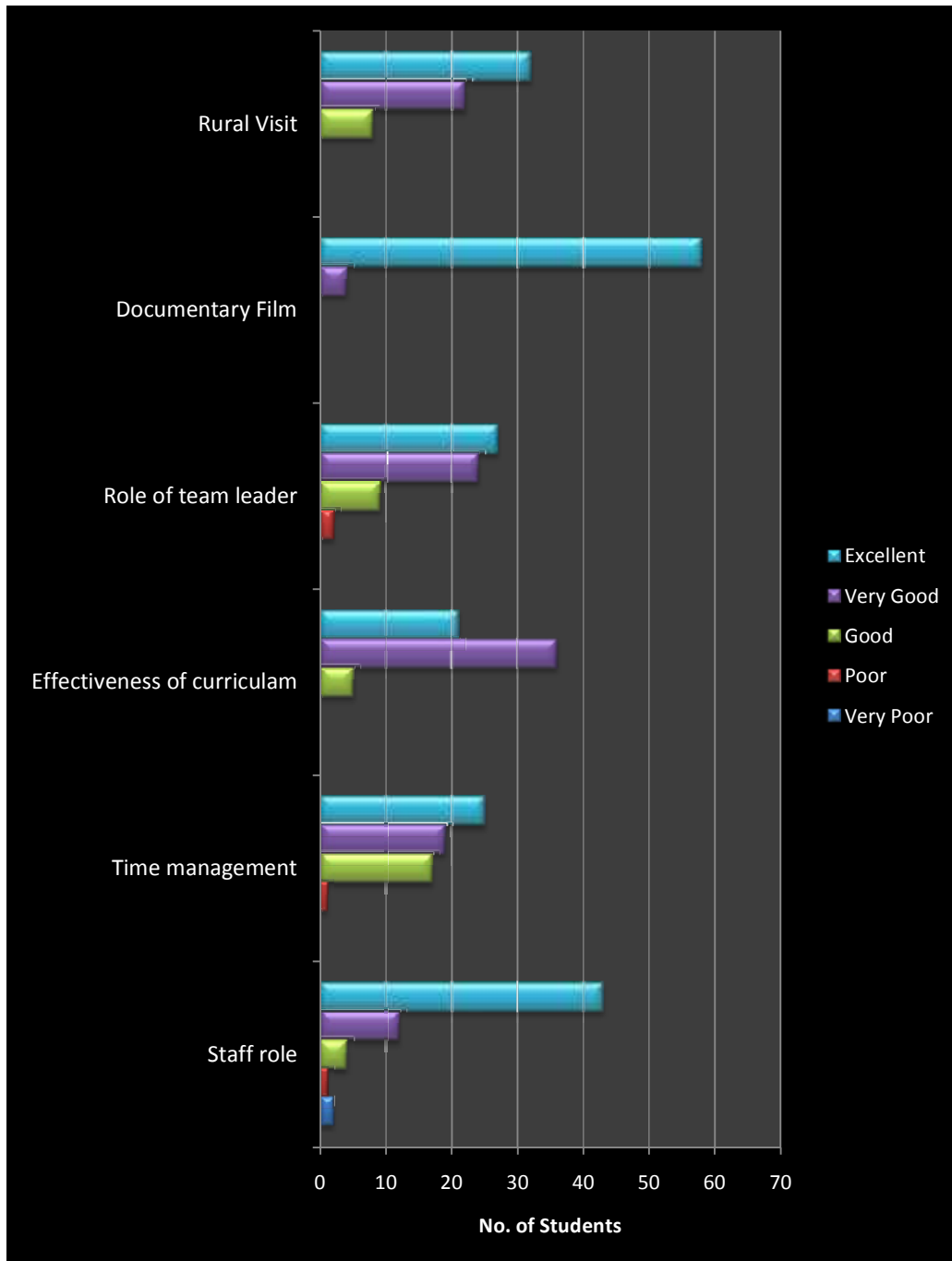
(Left-Right) Arokia Jennifer, Samraj, Andrew Marshall, David Vinoth Kumar, Vani Lakshmi, Arokiaraj, Siddarth Kumar, Niji Moses, Jayagopal, Elizabeth Sukanya, Dinesh Babu, Andrew.



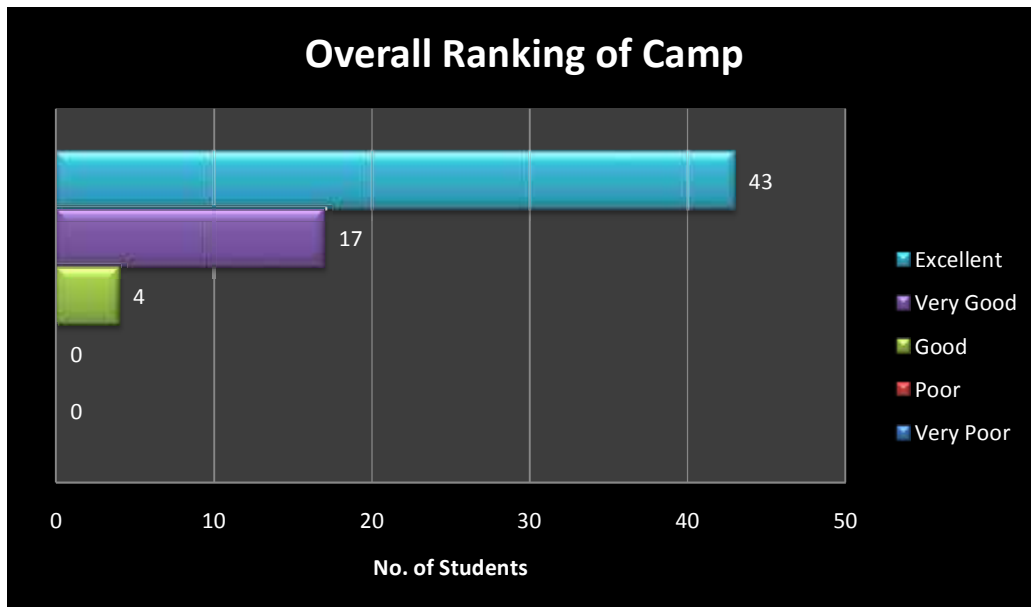
STUDENTS' EVALUATION



STUDENTS' EVALUATION



STUDENTS' EVALUATION



GALLERY



நெடுதூர பயணத்தில் என் ஒற்றை தீக்குச்சி

சுவைதை

திருத்தனி குன்றில் மோதிய மேகம்,
திரும்பும் திசையெல்லாம் வயலோடும் வரப்போடும்
பச்சைப் போர்த்திய கம்பளம்,
இதயக்கூட்டை உசுப்பும் கார்த்திகை தென்றல்
மௌனமாக பேசியது புரியாத பாஷை.

சலனமின்றி வரவேற்றார் சர்ச்சுபாதர்;
அறிமுகம் செய்து கொண்டோம் முன் இரவில்.
புதியபொழுது புதியமனிதர்கள்
புதியசூழ்நிலை புதியசிந்தனைகளை நோக்கி,
நாங்கள் மட்டும் பழைய மனநிலையில்...

உயர்ந்த நம்பிக்கையுடன் வீடுதிரும்பும்
ஒன்னாம் வகுப்பு பையனின் வேகம்,
அப்படிதான் சென்றோம்; அது
முதல்நாள் கிராம சந்திப்பு.

ஒவ்வொரு வீட்டிலும் இடம் கிடைத்தது
அமர்வதற்க்கு; வீட்டுத் திண்ணையில் மட்டுமல்ல
அவர்களின் நெஞ்சத்திலும்தான்.



பேச பேச தெறிந்து உதட்டில் வழியும் புன்னகை
உள்ளத்தில் குமுரலை மறைக்கும் திரை என்பது.

பசியோடு வேலை செய்தாலும் பட்டினியை தணிக்காத
சன்மானம்; இது உழைப்பாளிகளின் குமுரல்.
கூலிக்கு மேல் கூலி கொடுத்து குடி முதலே போச்சு;
இது நிலச்சுவாந்தாரின் குமுரல்.

பரிட்சை நேரத்தில் கூட, பஸ் நிக்காது
இது பள்ளி மாணவர்களின் குமுரல்.
ஒவ்வொருவருக்கும் ஒரு பிரட்சனை ஆனாலும்
அனைவரின் முகத்திலும் மகிழ்ச்சியின் சுவடு.

பஞ்சிபோல் பறந்துசென்றோம்
திரும்பும்போதுதான் வலித்தது
எங்கள் கால்களின் தளர்ச்சியால் அல்ல
எங்கள் இதயத்தின் பாரத்தால்...

- தமிழரசன்



awake





Documentation:

Vani Lakshmi R

Andrew A

Photography:

Anand Wilson

Sahay Siddharth Kumar



Thank you