

29.11.2021

Monday



<http://www.sriramsias.com>

## In pursuit of social justice

1. The recently launched educational programme of the Tamil Nadu government, Illam Thedi Kalvi (Education at the Doorsteps), triggered mixed reactions.
2. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) government launched this programme as it recognises the pandemic-induced gap in learning among schoolchildren.
3. The lockdown disempowered children from the marginalised sections as they did not have access to technology-driven pedagogical methods as the privileged did.
4. The expensive nature of online teaching pushed a large number of underprivileged children out of the education system. The lockdown thus accentuated the asymmetrical structure of the school system.

**TAMIL NADU'S NEW PROJECT: ILLAM THEDI KALVI**

- MEANT TO TEACH STUDENTS OF CLASS 1-8 WHO HAVE MISSED CLASSES IN THE PAST YEAR AND A HALF
- SET TO BE IMPLEMENTED FOR A PERIOD OF 6 MONTHS
- INITIALLY LAUNCHED IN 12 DISTRICTS OF THE STATE
- TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF ₹200 CRORES

## Objectives of the programme

1. Many incentives provided by the state, including free textbooks, free uniforms, free bicycles and nutritious mid-day meals, were unavailable to children of vulnerable sections during the lockdown.
2. Their parents' loss of livelihood compelled these children to drop out of school and resulted in increasing cases of child labour.
3. This crisis steadily began to wreck a celebrated political value in Tamil Nadu and an enduring legacy of the Dravidian movement — social justice.

1

Internal Security  
Science & Technology  
International Relations

Polity  
Economic  
Life Science

History  
Geography  
Social Issues

Disaster Management  
Ecology & Environment  
Ethics, Integrity & Aptitude

29.11.2021

Monday



<http://www.sriramsias.com>

*Launching this programme is the government's attempt to achieve social justice.*

- 4. This policy will be implemented by volunteers first in 12 districts. It will be launched in other districts when the results from the 12 districts are positive.*
- 5. Some 68,000 of the 86,000 volunteers are women. This is quite encouraging as it could allay fears about the safety of female students and encourage them to participate in the programme. Otherwise, many may be compelled to become child labourers or domestic help.*

### **Towards Paulo Freire's vision**

- 1. It is commendable that experienced teachers and civic and education department officials will be monitoring the progress of the students at the district and block levels.*
- 2. By providing a concrete role to school management committees and community development activists, the programme is turning learning into a social engagement.*
- 3. The fact that a volunteer who has completed Class 12 becomes an instructor will challenge the inherent power dynamics between teachers and students. When young volunteers impart lessons creatively in an unconventional atmosphere, the possibility of better learning outcomes is higher.*
- 4. This also gives children an opportunity to develop a critical understanding of their social reality. This will enhance their self-respect and help them probe the reasons for oppression and injustice. This programme is an example of Paulo Freire's vision through 'conscientization'.*

*There should be strong and credible institutional mechanisms to prevent any violation of girl children's dignity as classes are going to be conducted outside the school premises by volunteers whose antecedents are not fully known to the parents and children. Though the large participation of women volunteers will dispel this fear, critiques could use this point to dent the programme's success.*

### **The importance of local language**

*For several decades, successive governments in Karnataka has attempted to make it mandatory for students to learn Kannada as a subject. Such attempts have met with opposition from some quarters and long-drawn legal battles.*



## Government orders

1. The issue has again come to the fore with the government issuing an order (GO) in August 2021 stating that undergraduate students should learn Kannada as one of the two languages from the 2021-2022 academic year.
2. The State government has argued that this is in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020, which states that “in order to preserve and promote culture, one must preserve and promote a culture’s languages”.
3. It also states that learning Indian languages needs to be integrated into the school and higher education at every level.
4. Critics have argued that the NEP does not specify any mandatory language for higher education and that the GOs take away the choice-based credit system offered in the NEP to promote inclusivity and access.

It is not unreasonable to argue that learning the local language would help students feel a sense of belonging and communicate better. However, a lot now hangs on the outcome of the pending case in the Karnataka High Court.

## Languages of India

### Schedule 8 of the Constitution of India

As per Articles 344(1) and 351 of the Indian Constitution, the eighth schedule includes the recognition of the following 22 languages

Sr.	Language	SR	Language	SR	Language
1	Assamese	8	Kashmiri	15	Odia
2	Bengali	9	Konkani	16	Punjabi
3	Bodo	10	Maithili	17	Sanskrit
4	Dogri	11	Malayalam	18	Santhali
5	Gujarati	12	Meital (Manipuri)	19	Sindhi
6	Hindi	13	Marathi	20	Tamil
7	Kannada	14	Nepali	21	Telugu
22	Urdu				

TS 27 11.2020