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Padakalam Children's Football Tournament



Editorial

As we continue our journey with renewed purpose, Fishermen Community Development Programme strengthened its commitment to holistic development through a series of meaningful initiatives during January and February. The Coastal Security Awareness Programme, organised in collaboration with Quilon Mallu Soldiers Family Meet & Charitable Society and supported by the Central Industrial Security Force, encouraged public vigilance and shared responsibility in safeguarding the coastline.

Adding depth to this outreach were efforts that promoted health, justice, and empowerment. A free thyroid check-up camp conducted with DDRC Agilus Diagnostics extended care and guidance to community members, while the World Day of Social Justice programme organised with Theeradesa Mahila Society strengthened awareness of rights and access to justice. Children and youth were engaged through sports activities, and women enhanced their leadership and financial skills through focused training programmes.

A major highlight was Kadal Conclave 2026, which united fisherfolk, scientists, and policymakers to address climate change, marine pollution, and declining fish stocks, reaffirming the collective commitment to sustainable oceans and dignified livelihoods.

-Fr. Saji Elambasseril SDB
Director FCDP-TMS

The Fishermen Community Development Programme (FCDP) & Don bosco children's forum organized a football sevens tournament at Boys Home Mundakal on February 7th to promote physical fitness, teamwork, and social bonding among coastal community children. Fr. Saji Ellambasseril inaugurated the event, highlighting sports' role in building character and values. The tournament saw enthusiastic participation, with teams showcasing skills and teamwork. The event aimed to provide healthy competition and joyful learning beyond academics. Parents and locals supported the programme, appreciating FCDP's efforts. The organisers thanked volunteers, parents, and supporters, reiterating their commitment to community-based initiatives for children's holistic development. The event concluded with prize distribution and cultural performances, marking a grand success.



Kadal Conclave 2026 Advocates for Sustainable Seas and the Protection of Fisherfolk

The Fishermen Community Development Programme (FCDP), a community-based organization established in 1979 under the guidance of the Salesians of Don Bosco, organized Kadal Conclave 2026 in Kollam to address the increasing challenges confronting Kerala's fishing communities. For more than forty years, FCDP has promoted the holistic development of fisherfolk in coastal Kollam, with initiatives in education, health, livelihood support, cultural activities, and social empowerment for all community members. The Theeradesa Mahila Society (TMS), a women-led organization, collaborates with FCDP to advance self-help groups, microfinance, skill development, and livelihood opportunities, thereby enhancing the economic independence of women in fishing communities. Led by Fr. Saji Elambasseril, SDB, who assumed leadership of FCDP in May 2026, the conclave assembled fisherfolk, researchers, church leaders, government officials, and civil society organizations.

Although this was his initial major engagement with the fisheries sector, participants recognized his capacity to rapidly comprehend both the opportunities and significant challenges facing fisherfolk throughout Kerala, as well as his effectiveness in uniting diverse institutions involved in coastal development. Organized in collaboration with the Centre for Social Innovation and Development Studies (CSIDS) and the South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies (SIFFS), the conclave concentrated on the ocean economy and its associated challenges. Speakers identified marine pollution, climate change, declining fish stocks, destructive fishing practices, and policy deficiencies as urgent issues. Bishop Paul Antony Mullassery characterized the sea as a shared heritage that should not be exploited for corporate gain. Government officials and scientists advocated for evidence-based fisheries management, stricter regulation of trawling, and the protection of breeding habitats. Dr. TM Thomas Isaac, former finance minister of Kerala, identified scientific factors contributing to declining fish stocks and emphasized the importance of conserving breeding grounds and implementing strict regulations on destructive fishing practices.

In the keynote address on "Biodiversity and Fish Wealth of Kerala," Dr. P. U. Zacharia (CMFRI, Kochi) emphasized the significance of Kerala's marine biodiversity and fish resources for the state's socio-economic development. The address identified major threats, including overfishing, pollution, climate change, illegal fishing, plastic waste, and sand mining, and proposed strategies such as digital surveys, sustainable certification, artificial reefs, and mariculture to address these challenges. The other speakers further emphasized the importance of biodiversity conservation, climate-resilient livelihoods, and the promotion of entrepreneurship opportunities for women and youth. The conclave concluded with a call for enhanced coordination among fishermen, government agencies, and academic institutions to promote sustainable oceans and dignified livelihoods. Organizers characterized Kadal Conclave as the inception of a sustained movement, describing it as "not just a wave, but a potential tsunami" for positive change along Kerala's coast.



Coastal Security Cyclothon 2026

The Fishermen Community Development Programme (FCDP) and Quilon Mallu Soldiers Family Meet & Charitable Society (QMS) organized a Coastal Security Awareness Programme on February 20, 2026, at Kollam Beach Ground. The event featured an awareness session by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) on coastal security threats and the importance of public vigilance. CISF representatives appreciated FCDP's initiatives in promoting social, economic, and security awareness among coastal communities. The event was part of the "Vande Mataram Coastal Cyclothon 2026" outreach programme, marking the 150th anniversary of "Vande Mataram". The cyclothon, covering India's entire coastline with 125 participants, was received by FCDP and QMS. FCDP Programme Manager Mrs. Gretta Raju and QMS President Mr. Kishore Athijeevan honored Cyclothon Team Captain Deputy Commandant Ashok Nandini Mohanty. The programme aimed to strengthen coastal security through community engagement and awareness.



Free Thyroid Check-up Camp – FCDP

On 28th February, FCDP and DDRC Agilus Diagnostics organized a free thyroid check-up camp at FCDP Hall, targeting 150 participants. It offered thyroid check-ups, health guidance, and expert support for people with symptoms, women, elderly, and others. Services included screening tests, health advice, and consultation with professionals. The camp ran smoothly; participants received screening and advice, with some needing follow-ups for abnormal levels. Feedback was positive. Recommendations: follow-ups, similar camps for other diseases, and promote thyroid awareness. Thanks to DDRC Agilus Diagnostics for making it successful.



World Day of Social Justice Event

The Fishermen Community Development Programme and Theeradesa Mahila Society, in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority, Kollam, and the Taluk Legal Services Committee, Kollam, organized the World Day of Social Justice event on 28 February at 12:00 PM at the NGO, Charitable Society, Mundakkal, Kollam. Adv. Venu J Pillai, former Public Prosecutor and Panel Lawyer of TLSC, Kollam, served as the resource person, guiding participants on social justice issues. The program aimed to highlight legal rights and access to justice for all, inspiring community participation and fostering social equality through expert guidance and interactive sessions.



WE-LIVE

Strengthening Teamwork and Leadership

As part of the We-LivE Project, FCDP organized a workshop on Group Dynamics, Leadership Skills, and Conflict Management for women at Mukundapuram, Chavara, on 02/02/2026. The session was facilitated by Mr. Alex K., Social Worker, and 50 women actively participated in the program. The workshop aimed to strengthen teamwork, enhance leadership capacity, and improve group functioning, particularly in the context of women-led entrepreneurship initiatives.

The training focused on understanding group dynamics, the qualities and responsibilities of an effective leader, and the importance of regular and well-structured group meetings. Participants learned about communication skills, collective decision-making, and transparency in group enterprises. Practical strategies for identifying and resolving conflicts, promoting unity, and building mutual trust among members were also discussed.

The session was conducted in an interactive manner through discussions and practical examples, enabling participants to share their experiences and challenges. The workshop enhanced their confidence, leadership abilities, and teamwork skills. Overall, the program was informative and empowering, contributing to the personal and entrepreneurial development of the women under the We-LivE Project.



Building Financial Literacy for Sustainable Women-Led Enterprises

Strengthening financial management skills is essential for the sustainability of group enterprises. With this objective, FCDP conducted a comprehensive workshop on Finance Management, Accounting, and Banking Methods under the We-LivE Project at Mukundapuram, Chavara on 03/02/2026. A total of 50 members actively participated in the session. The training was led by Mr. Sunil S., Social Worker and Marketing Professional, who provided practical guidance on financial management in the context of group-based enterprises and women-led initiatives.

The training focused on financial record keeping, maintenance of cash books and ledgers, the importance of regular group meetings for financial review, and ensuring transparency and accountability in financial transactions. Participants were introduced to basic accounting concepts, banking procedures, savings and loan management, digital banking methods, and essential financial terms. The session also covered practical strategies to manage income and expenditure, handle losses, calculate profit margins, and plan for financial sustainability.

The workshop was conducted in an interactive manner with real-life examples and practical exercises, enabling participants to better understand financial planning and responsible money management. Overall, the session enhanced their financial literacy and strengthened their ability to manage group finances effectively.



Production Skill Development Training Under We-LivE Project

We-LivE Project's training was held at Mukundapuram, Chavara on Feb 7, 2026, with 47 women participants. They were trained in 7 enterprises: jewellery making, poultry farming, street food stall, stationery shop, tailoring, hotel business, and lottery sales. Hands-on sessions covered practical skills and business management, aiming to boost their confidence to start small-scale ventures. The training equipped them with essential skills to initiate and manage their own businesses, promoting entrepreneurship and financial independence. Expert trainers guided them on breed selection, menu planning, stitching techniques, and more. The programme strengthened their readiness to take on business challenges and achieve sustainability.



CELEBRATIONS

We wish Fr. Saji Elambasseril, Mrs. Usha B , Mrs. Stephania ,Mrs. Princy Edison , Mrs.Soja Mrs. Bindhu H and Mrs. Anitha joyous birthday and a year filled with good health , happiness and prosperity! We also thank them for their dedicated service and support towards the activities of FCDP family.



GALLERY



**FISHERMEN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (Reg. No. Q.771/84)
THEERADESA MAHILA SOCIETY (Reg. No. Q.1039/95)**

Canal Road, Pallithottam P.O., Kollam—691 006
Phone: 6360544503, 9895249938, 9895754970

Email: director@fcdpindia.com
tms@fcdpindia.com

Log on to: www.fcdpindia.com
Follow fcdpkollam.com

