### "My City - My Duty: Mission Uyyakondan" - An Overview

In the face of an acute Water crisis and shrinking public space in the city, the Citizens of Thiruchirappalli saw an opportunity in restoring the 1000-year-old Chola – made **Uyyakondan channel** (69km) which carries water from the River Cauvery and traverses a distance of about 9km through the City, but now steadily losing its sheen.

The "Citizens for Uyyakondan (CFU)", came together (in December 2017) as a common platform for any individual/organization interested in restoring the Uyyakondan canal. The Restoration Activity was planned to be taken up as a 3 pronged approach of Awareness / Bank Restoration / and Cleansing Water.

The group has so far constantly worked on this approach for 150 consecutive weeks (as on 22-11-2020).

### As a part of Awareness:

- 1. The weekly cleanup activity by the Citizens for Uyyakondan (CFU), scheduled between <u>6 am</u> & <u>8.30 am on Sunday's</u> was inaugurated by the City Corp Commissioner on 7th January 2018 and has sustained since then.
- 2. Over 50 institutions / clubs / camps / meetings were addressed generating awareness and interest among the youth.
- 3. Pamphlets with details on the history of the canal and its present state distributed to public. Judicious use of water and Solid Waste Management (SWM) were also integrated, which is fundamental in retaining the health of our water bodies.







4. Periodic Street Plays and Silambaatam are organised by participating students to get public awareness on Mission Uyyakondan.

### Plays to pep up Uyyakondan renovation

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Trichy: Citizens for Uyyakondan forum organisad street plays and silambam in Trichy on Sunday in an effort to bring about a behavioural change among the public on solid-waste management. The move is also aimed at encouraging people to take part in the on-going Uyyakondan canal renovation.

National Service Scheme (NSS) students of Bishop Heber College and students from Sri Sivananda Balalaya School staged separate street plays while martial artistes from Tamizhan Silambam Pasarai performed silam-

All performances focued on raising awareness on



articipation in the ongoing Uyyakondan canal renovation

ill-effects of plastic and the rich history of Uyyakondan canal. The public has begun the canal renovation drive in Lapungay under a collective

banner 'citizens for Uyyakondan', with support from the city corporation. The drive is carried out Sundays and will complete 55th edition this week. So far, 2.1 km stretch from Kuzhunayi Amman temple to MG Ramachandran statue has seen cleaned up, Apart from the clean-up process, tree plantation initiatives were uso held.

This week and the next, the drive will be held at residential area of Azhwar Thoppu. "Since the drive over the course of next few weeks would be organised at congested areas, we wanted to come up with quirky programmes to engage general public to take part in the renormal part of the condition of Uyyakondan. That's why we conducted street plays and slamban," a member from Cittoens for unember from Cittoens for unember from Cittoens for the part of the conditions of the condit









5. On 30-6-2018, Puthiya Thalaimurai TV Channel had compiled a 19-minute video of our activity under the program: "Nammal Mudiyum".

This is the link to the program, available online:

https://youtu.be/kDDuRKY-cd8

6. A mass signature Campaign was organized on October 2nd 2018. Sanitary workers working in the residential areas adjoining the canal were honored / incentivized in the presence of the Corporation officials.



7. On 10-10-2018, an interactive ppt presentation was done for some of the 'influential' local residents and the office bearers of all the local mosques of Alwarthope in Trichy, on the banks of the Uyyakondan, which is densely populated with the urban

poor. The meet resulted is gaining the support of the the local residents and also





influenced them to participate in our weekly activity along with their children.

8. The 'Save Uyyakondan' mobile App (android) was launched on 15-11-2018 in the presence of the City Corp. Commissioner, as a promotion activity.

#### THE TIMES OF INDIA

# Trichy's Uyyakondan canal revival drive: Mobile applaunched

TNN | Nov 15, 2018, 04.24 PM IST



TRICHY: A mobile application was launched on Thursday to encour public participation in the ongoing civic efforts to revive the Uyyakon canal -- a Chola-era distributary canal of the Cauvery river -- here. Coimbatore-based startup Climate Smart Technologies developed a Android mobile application for a civic group involved in creating awareness and conducting cleanliness drives to revive the water bo facing rampant pollution.

The Citizens for Uyyakondan, a group comprising people from vario walks of life, has been taking up public campaigns since January 20 to beautify the canal.

The startup developed the app called 'Save Uyyakondan' at free of cost for the group.

9. The local urban poor living on the banks of the Channel were provided with bins of different colours and introduced to waste segregation, in the presence of the City Corporation officials.





10. Since July 2019, the CFU along with the Shakthi Rotary Club organizes a Medical "Wellness" Camp once every month as a means to address the community's health issues which is also related to the present state of the Uyyakondan canal.





11. A **Special Postal Cover Release** commemorating the **50th week** of "My City – My Duty": Mission – Uyyakondan" was released by the Post Master General on 23-12-2018, and first cover, received by a 96-year-old second world war veteran, who was also a resident of Alwarthope.





12. On the 8-11-2019, the CFU (through its executive arm, the Bridge Foundation) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of environmental Sciences, Bishop Heber College, Trichy, in order to strengthen its endeavor to find a solution to the present situation of the canal. In this regard we are also in contact with the Department of Environmental Sciences and Dept of Social Work of University of Louisville, Kentucky, USA, whose faculty, Dr.Russell Barnett and Dr.Karen Kayser visited us on 12-12-2019 and evinced keen interest in collaborating.



# Bishop Heber College signs MoU to help restore Uyyakondan canal

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Trichy: Bishop Heber Colleg (BHC) has joined hunds will the Citizens for Uyyakonda grouptohelp inthe ongoingres toration works on the centur esold Uyyakondan canal run ning through the city. The m morandum was signed by I Paul Dhayabaran, BHC princi pal, and K Narssimha Rao, fo under-managing trustee. Brid ge Foundation (Citizens for Uy yakondan) at the college premises on Priday.

Restoration of Uyyakondar anal has sofar been carried ou by Bridge Foundation along with Citizens for Uyyakondan a common platform to facilitate citizen participation - for \$5 con occutive weekends now The novement seeks to preven



Restoration of Uyyakondan canal has so far been carried out by Bridge Foundation along with Citizens for Uyyakondan - a common platform to facilitate citizen participation - for 95 weekends in a ro

arther pollution in the 8.7km cretch of the canal which runs runging the city The 1,000-year-old Uyyakondan canal caters to hore than 32,000 acres of farm on Uyyakondan" was laun-bed to undertake the restore.

tion with the support of the Trichy Corporation and river conservation departments.

As per the MoU, BHC ar Bridge Foundation will share expertise and conduct joint s minar and conferences. Apa parties shall also write briefing papers and contribute papers in journals related to environ-

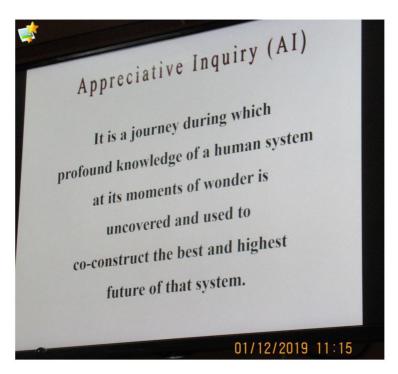
ment and health.

As part of canal bank restoration, two segments along the cleaned banks of Uyyakondan were restored as jogging tracks

"Some of the students fron
the college are already volunte
ering to the cause of Uyyakon
dan restoration. The MoU wil
facilitate some of the student take up projects on Uyyakon
danaspart of the academic act
vity." C Ravichandran, associa
te professor, BHC environmen

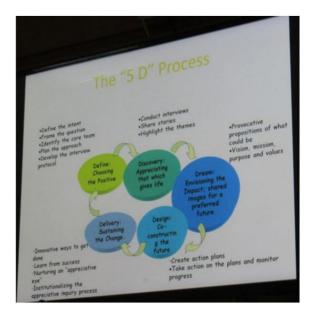
"We have decided to test water quality every month at various points which will help us in the process of restoring the conal "besaid

- 13. The Department of Remote Sensing of Bharadhidasan University, has assured to provide support and valuable inputs to facilitate the effective restoration of the Uyyakondan canal.
- 14. On the 1st December 2019, a Professor from Bharadhidasan Institute of Management conducted a workshop on "Appreciative Inquiry" for the members of CFU ,to give a positive approach to 'Mission Uyyakondan',









15. On 8-12-2019, as a **commemoration of the 100th week** of CFU activity, **"Rally for Uyyakondan"** was organised, which was flagged off by the City Commissioner, in which, the PWD-RC division officials and over 1500 students/citizens participated.









# Mission Uyyakondan completes 100 weeks

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

CITIZENS for Uyyakondan, a citizens group, celebrated the 100th week of its cleaning drive by organising a rally from collectorate to Uzhavar

persons cleaning around 200 metres of the canal every

metres of the canal every week.

They say that the only solu-tion was setting up a sewage treatment plant (STP). Mem-ber of the citizens group Manoj Dharmar said, "We are ready to place an STP We just need No Objection Certificate Sandai ground. Corporation
Commissioner S Sivasubramanian flagged off the rally
which saw participation of
more than 1,500 school and
college students, corporates,
clubs, communities and volmaker grouns. nteer groups. front development project un-The cleanup drive started der the Smart City Project.





- 16. On 15-12-2019, some of the CFU volunteered as co-coordinators in specific activities enlisted as promoting awareness among students, Rain water harvesting, STP work, weekly cleanup organization, interaction with Govt dept, and so on.
- 17. On 12-1-2020, Uyyakondan Trail 1.0 was undertaken by the CFU, from Trichy City limits upto Koothaapar lake, Thiruverumbur.



18. On 26-1-2020, on the occasion of Republic Day, the CFU conducted a Drawing Competition for students from 4th to 6th standards (Topic: Reasons for Water Pollution) and 7th to 9th standards (Topic: Beauty of a canal in a City). 273 children participated. Awards were given for the best three of each class.







19. On 9-2-2020, Mrs.Anu Hassan, Actress and activist, participated in the CFU - weekly cleanup, and assured of her continued patronage to "Mission Uyyakondan", Trichy also being her hometown.



20. On 23-2-2020, Uyyakondan Trail 2.0 was undertaken by the CFU completed the trail upto the Vazhavandhaan Kottai tank where it terminates.





21. On 2-3-2020, a photography competition on "Trichy's Pride: Uyyakondan Canal", was launched by the CFU for College Students with awards worth Rs.10,000/- and planned for display on the World Water Day (22nd March 2020).



22. On 22-3-2020, the die-hard spirit of CFU was displayed - not disheartened by the cancellation of the Seminar planned on the occasion of the 'World Water Day', also NOT violating the 'Janatha curfew' called upon by the PM, a handful of CFU, with all due precautions, completed the weekly cleanup and returned home pre-<a href="#">7am</a> - thus maintaining the uninterrupted streak of 115 weeks!



Indian Music Composer Mr.Karthik Raja and Environmentalist, Mr.SundarRajan extended their patronage on the occasion of World Water Day:

Citizens for Uyyakondan\_India Composer Mr Karthick Raja About CFU\_World Water Day\_March 22 2020. <a href="https://youtu.be/PgBWYLWQGFg">https://youtu.be/PgBWYLWQGFg</a>



# Citizens for Uyyakondan\_Mr Sundar Rajan about CFU\_World water Day March 22 2020 https://youtu.be/t-WbGhlH6mg



23. Taking cue from the effort on the 115th week, on 29-3-2020, the 116th week of Mission Uyyakondan, with the lockdown (COVID-19) in full force, a petition on change.org was initiated.





All of the aforementioned activity has been documented and updated periodically on the Facebook page: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/Citizensforuyyakondan/">https://www.facebook.com/Citizensforuyyakondan/</a> and also on other City-based social media sites.

Under the COVID-imposed lockdown, every weekend was utilized for some online activity-initiatives like:

- 24. Write-up titled "Me as a CFU" on each CFU's experience of 100+ weeks of 'Mission Uyyakondan' how it has taught/transformed/inspired. Many CFUs had participated which would be compiled and launched at a meet later!
- 25. Launch of a petition "Save Uyyakondan: 1000 year pride of Trichy" on Change.org-first in English (and then in Tamil) in order to create more awareness on need to expedite this restoration. This evoked great support online.

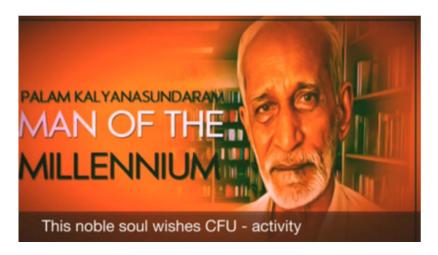
 $\underline{Link: \underline{https://www.change.org/p/trichy-corporation-save-uyyakondan-1000-years-pride-of-}$ 

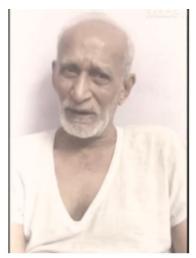
<u>trichy?recruiter=false&utm\_source=share\_petition&utm\_campaign=psf\_combo\_share\_initial&utm\_medium=whatsapp&recruited\_by\_id=f35b0d80-71ed-11ea-9dde-dfe9e6d1dc98</u>

26. A summary of all the activity so far was compiled and uploaded on Google Drive which was annexed to the petition launched online and would be updated periodically.

This is the link to the "Overview or Mission Uyyakondan": (https://drive.google.com/open?id=1QKK2kImYEcfjC37Ex\_XLgmPfcs2MEHmm)

27. Wishes of the Noble person, Thiru Paalam Kalyanasundaram Ayyah was compiled as a video and uploaded : (Link: <a href="https://youtu.be/-pJS5DSX404">https://youtu.be/-pJS5DSX404</a>)

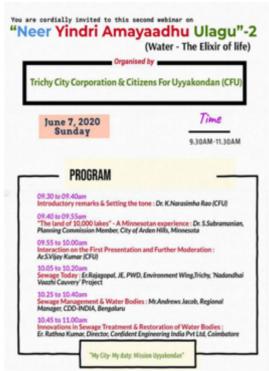




28. The Seminar planned for on World Water Day (March 22nd, 2020) was consumed By the COVID-crisis. Therefore, we attempted to cover most of the talks through a series of Webinars over the next few weeks depending on the speakers' convenience. We believe that such knowledge sharing would go a long way in overcoming the Im-pending water crisis confronting us. In this regard, please find attached the Invites which show the topics deliberated upon:



Biodiversity & Water Conservation / Ground Water Conservation



Sewage Management



Rotary & Citizens For Uyyakondan (CFU)

July 26, 2020
Rotary & Citizens For Uyyakondan (CFU)

PROGRAM

10.00 to 10.05 ton
Welcoming and Introductory Remarks: Mr. R. Ranjan (CFU)
10.30 to 10.30 ton
Rain Water Harverting: House. Community & City level implementation
Rain Water Harverting: House. Community & City level implementation
Rain Water Harverting: House. Community & City level implementation
Rain Water Harverting: House. And Programment of Charlest Engineer. Harver Constructions, Moderal
10.55 to 11.40 ton
Panel Oncussion.
Moderators: Ar. Vijay Kumar (CFU) & Dr. K. Narasimha Rao (CFU).
Fordings.
Fordings.
Fordings. Foreign Chief Trigineer, PVD
Er. S. Amudhavall. Cry Engineer. RCC
RTA. L. Chookkalings. Governor: RD 3000
Er.K. Masuraj, Foreign Chief Engineer, PVD
Dr. Raigagoad, R. PVD. Dr. browners (PVD
Dr. Raigagoad, R. PVD. Entry Dr. Chrystometal Sciences.
Biblop Hebr College. Entry
Mr. J. Justin Moham. Former Director Ground Trater Dept. Gort of Korala & Scottuny, National Biodevesily Auchority Got of India
11.40 to 11.45 am
Conclusion and Take Home Message: Ex Manej Karmel (CFU)

"Ny Chy- Ny duty Mosion Uyyakondan"
www. B. conviction of Union University and Convention of Conventi

You are cordially invited to this fourth webinar on

Water Resources and Way Forward

Rain Water Harvesting

The Content of the aforementioned Webinars were compiled into separate Concise Documents. All of these and the upcoming webinars would be compiled as a single Document which would possibly facilitate a Policy Document.

### As a part of Bank Restoration:

1. A major stretch cleaned of wild growth and garbage was taken up by the Trichy City





Corporation, under the smart city mission and is being developed into a public space"



- 2. One segment of the Banks of Uyyakondan was cleaned by the CFU and a Jogging Track (soft) with fencing tree plantation was created by the CFU. (As a gesture of support the power supply to light up the area is being provided by the Trichy City Corporation) One area along the bank ,used as a dump yard was cleaned and converted as a Children's Play area using used tyres as swings, see-saw, adventure climbing and Seating.
- 3. Further areas were fenced to prevent garbage from being dumped in the



Uyyakondan.



### As a part of Cleansing Water:

1. A model STP was set up, which treated sewage water from an apartment in the vicinity and the treated water was used to water the trees planted along the bank,







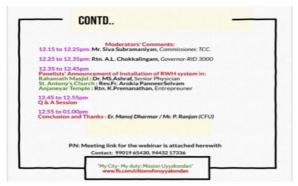
using an automated drip irrigation system.

2. The CFU has launched the cleaning the feeder canals / storm water drains, that empty into the Uyyakondan Canal, to ensure that its acts as an effective rain water supply canal that would least ensure that it would dilute the incoming sewage flows through the canal.

The City Corporation and the River Conservation Dept (Custodians of the Channel) are supportive of this Mission Uyyakondan, by way of:

- a) Permitting the aforementioned restoration activity,
- b) Providing vehicle to help clear the weekly cleanup garbage,
- c) Allowing donor-organizations to display their name at the points of their respective funding.





## Citizens group to promote RWH system through places of worship

Trichy: A citizens group comprising people from various walksof life working towards the restoration of the Chola-era Uyawkondan canal here has identified a temple, mosque and church, to install and promote the importance of ratinwater harvesting (RWH) mechanism. The group has planned to harvest the rainwater from these religious places of worship situated on the canal bank to divert the rainwater for the polluted irrigation canal.

Clitzen For Uyyakondan (CFU) comprising doctors, architects, engineers and students from Trichy completed 150 weeks of continuous weekend activities towards the canal restoration. CFU canal restoration. CFU in Bengaluru-based in CF

lemented to serve as a success model in promoting the same across houses situated on the banks of Uyyakondan. Though the group's fled-work came to half due to Coyld-19, if organised webhar and online awareness drives by roping in experts from various sectors such as solid waste management and environmental conservation, corporation, to suggest constructive ideas in policymaking.

king.
Former Trichy Corpora-Former Trichy Corpora-tion commissioner Swaran Singh, who participated as the chief guest in the 150th week celebration said, "Wit-hout the participation of the local community, environ-mental development pro-grammes will not sustain."

### **Introducing the Chief Guest:**

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KirMhMgSLLSUoshEZontOC9jHjmY8TYM

As a Commemoration of the 150th consecutive week of "Mission Uyyakondan" activity, this Webinar (5th of the series) was organized.

We had Shri Swaran Singh, former Trichy Corporation City Commissioner, who made an inspiring presence with a "seed of change" he sowed 25 years ago with his legendary performance - turning around the fortunes of Trichy.

The present TCC Commissioner promised to stop ALL sewage inflow into the Uyyakondan within 2 years.

"Rain-man" Shivakumar made a great presentation on RWH .. on simple methods for our own use and thereafter, to allow the excess to recharge ground water or the Uyyakondan.

The three Panelists, Dr.Ashraf, Rev.Fr.ArokiaPanneerSelvam And Mr.Premanathan committed to installing RWH systems in Rahamath Masjid, St.Antony's Church and Anjaneyar Temple respectively, which would inspire the citizens attending them. All three places of worship are located on the banks of Uyyakondan. So the excess run off - rain water would flow into the Uyyakondan Channel!

#### Note:

- 1. The executive arm of CFU is **The Bridge Foundation**, a registered trust (Regn. No.: 71/2015, 12AA Certification Unique Registration No.: AACTB5621J/05/16-17/T-0270, 80-G Certification: URNo.: AACTB5621J/05/16-17/T-0270/80G) www.bridgefoundationindia.org, whose founder is also a core member of the CFU.
- 2. The **Indian Institute of Architects, Trichy Centre** (a Registered Society & the professional body of architects) provides free consultation services, and has assured to continue to do so.
- 3. Many **individuals and organizations** also support in ways possible respectively on the common platform, called "Citizens for Uyyakondan", as aforementioned.
- 4. Mission Uyyakondan's activity, incidentally, falls under its scope of the **UNDP's** (United Nations Development Programme) **SDG** (Sustainable Development Goals) nos., 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 14(Life below water), 15(Life on land).

The CFU has just taken the "First Step" of" being the change you want to see" in the journey that is a thousand miles ahead!