




INTACH Indian
National Trust
for Art and
Cultural Heritage

INTACH NAGERCOIL CHAPTER

E-NEWSLETTER - NAGERCOIL CHAPTER NEWS

Year Book - 2025



Anitha S. Natarajan
Convenor



Dr. Sunil Richardson
Co-convenor

Convenor's Note

Dear INTACH Members,
Greetings!

It is with immense pleasure and a deep sense of pride that I present this e-newsletter - a humble compilation of our efforts in heritage awareness and conservation throughout 2025. As the Convenor of the INTACH Nagercoil Chapter, I am privileged to showcase the milestones we achieved from January to December.



The year 2025 was truly vibrant. Our calendar was teemed with diverse activities, including:

- Heritage Tours: Immersive visits to ancient temples, historic churches, and museums.
- Educational Outreach: Heritage programs designed for school children and specialized seminars for college students.
- Knowledge Sharing: Engaging sessions featuring eminent speakers, scholars, and researchers for our members.
- Environmental Stewardship: Dedicated nature conservation programs
- Exploring Heritage Monuments like kalmadams

We are indeed blessed to inherit such a profound cultural legacy. We owe a debt of gratitude to our ancestors, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure this cultural diversity remains untainted for future generations.

INTACH has provided us with a vital platform to serve this mission - preserving our Tangible, Intangible, and Living Heritage. Thank you for being part of this journey.

Regards,

Anitha S. Natarajan
Convenor

About INTACH

The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) was founded in 1984 in New Delhi with the vision to spearhead heritage awareness and conservation in India. Today INTACH is recognized as one of the world's largest heritage organizations, with over 228 Chapters across the Country. In the past 40 years, INTACH has pioneered the conservation and preservation of not just our natural and built heritage but intangible heritage as well. Headquartered in New Delhi, it operates through various divisions such as Architectural Heritage, Natural Heritage, Art & Material Heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Heritage Education and Communication Services (HECS), Heritage Crafts and Community, Chapters, INTACH Heritage Academy, Heritage Tourism, Listing Cell and INTACH Knowledge Centre.

The history of INTACH outlines the development made by it since its inception. On January 27, 1984 INTACH is established as a Registered Society. Every year January 27th is celebrated as 'INTACH's Foundation Day'.

Brief History of INTACH, Nagercoil Chapter

INTACH, Nagercoil Chapter was initiated by the tireless efforts of Dr. Richard Lal Mohan in the year 2004 with him as the Convenor and Dr. Sumithra Raghuvaran as the Co-convenor.

The leadership was passed on Mrs. Anitha S. Natarajan as the Convenor and Dr. Sunil Richardson as the Co-convenor in the year 2022. Dr. R.S. Lal Mohan's contribution for the conservation and preservation of heritage of Kanyakumari District will always be remembered not only by environmentalists and heritage lovers but also by the people of Kanyakumari District. The Chapter is continuing its journey with various heritage activities under the leadership of Anitha Natarajan as the Convenor and Dr. Sunil as the Co -Convenor and a very supportive team of members.



Activities from January 2025 to December 2025

1. Visit to Swamithoppu Ayya Vaikunder Thalaimaipathy Temple and Museum on 18.01.2025
2. Visit to Parakkai Peunchadayar Mahadevar Temple
3. Visit to Parakkai Madhusoothana Perumal Temple
4. Seminar on 'The Present status of Coastal Fisheries in Kanyakumari with Special Reference to Wadge Bank' on 4.2.2025
5. World Heritage Day Celebrations - visit to the following on 29-03-2025
 - Padmanabhapuram Palace
 - Padmanabhapuram Govt School
 - Padmanabhapuram Ramaswamy Temple
6. World Heritage Day Seminar on Bird Diversity in different Landscapes and Habitats of Kanyakumari District & Heritage of Kanyakumari District at Sree Ayyappa College, Chungankadai on 4.4.2025
7. International Day of Biological Diversity & World Turtle Day Celebration in Hotel Pioneer Grand Palace on 22.5.2025
8. Kavalkinaru Kalmadam visit on 30.5.2025
9. Capacity Building Workshop on Build Heritage and Law XVI
10. Capacity building workshop for INTACH Members 28th April to 01st May 2025
11. World Environment Day 2025 at KDVP Government School, Kottar, Nagercoil on 5.6.2025
12. Van Mahotsav -2025 at Amsi High School, Amsi, Thengapattinam on 3.7.2025
13. Visit to Thangapattinam Fishing Harbour on 3-7-2025
14. INTACH Annual General body Meeting on 19.7.2025
15. Trivandrum Archaeological Department Student meeting on 28.7.2025

16. Heritage Site visits on 6-9-2025
 - South Travancore lines
 - Kanyakumari Government Museum
 - Guhanatheeswarar Temple
 - 18th century Lady of Ransom church
17. World Heritage week celebrations at Hotel Pioneer Grand Palace, Nagercoil on 11.11.2025

1. Visit to Swamithope Ayya Vaikunder Thalaimaipathy Temple on 18-01-2025 & visit to Anbuvanam (forest of love) and also to the Museum on 18-01-2025

INTACH Nagercoil Chapter had the privilege to visit the Thalaimaipathy of Ayya Vaikundar and meet Sri. Balaprajathipathy who is the head of the Religious Organization and enjoyed the hospitality. We visited the Anbuvanam, the Forest of Love, an initiative for organic cultivation and farming.

Visited the Museum which has a vast collection of traditional antique articles which were used by the people of Kanyakumari District and in tune with the tradition and custom of the people of Kanyakumari.





Swamithoppu Museum

2. Visit to Parakkai Perunchadayar Mahadevar Temple on 14-12-2024

Ancient Shiva Temple at Parakkai Perunchadayar Mahadevar Temple is a 10th century old temple situated at Parakkai Akarai. It was built by the old Pandiya king in Pandiya architectural style of construction.

Historical & Architectural Significance

- **Early Pandyan Era:** The temple is generally dated to the 9th - 10th century CE, placing it in the Early Pandyan period. While many temples in this region were later influenced by Chera (Kerala) or Vijayanagara styles, this one retains the core stone-built characteristics of the Pandyas.
- **He Inscriptions:** Inscriptions found at the temple (written in Tamil Vattezhuthu, an ancient script) identify the area by several historical names, including Kizhar Mangalam and Abimanameru

Chaturvedi Mangalam. These records mention that a local Sabha (assembly) managed endowments for the temple, showing it was a central part of the community's social and economic life.

- **"Akkarai" Sivan:** It is popularly called the Akkarai Sivan Temple because it sits on the eastern bank (akkarai meaning "the other bank") of the large Parakkai Lake. Its isolated location, away from the main residential areas, gives it a very serene and spiritual atmosphere.

Key Features

- **The Deity:** The Moolavar (main deity) is Sri PerunjadaiMahadevar, appearing as a Swayambhu (self-manifested) Lingam on a circular pedestal (Avudayar).
- **Architecture:** The structure consists of a Sanctum Sanctorum (Garbhagriha), an Antarala, and an Ardha Mandapam. You can still see the characteristic Pandyanpilasters (square pillars attached to the walls) and stone carvings of deities like Dakshinamurthy and Brahma in the niches (koshtas).
- **Renovation:** While much of the stone foundation and base (Adhistanam) are ancient, parts of the temple have undergone renovation in recent years to preserve the structure from the elements.



3. Visit to Parakkai Madhusoothana Perumal Temple on 14-12-2024

Parakkai Mathusoothana Perumal Temple is an old Vishnu Temple built in the 8th Century AD. The temple has sculptures carved with precision and in incredible style. It is often called the “Guruvayur of Kanyakumari” for a reason - it possesses a rare combination of deep antiquity, intricate artistry, and living traditions.

Architectural & Sculptural Highlights

The temple is a masterpiece of Pandyan and later Travancore craftsmanship. Its stone carvings are famed for their lifelike detail:

- **Shenbagaraman Mandapam:** This is arguably the most artistically dense part of the temple. It features massive stone pillars carved with exquisite figures of the **Dashavatara** (ten incarnations of Vishnu) and various celestial beings.
- **The “Manmuzhki” Mandapam:** A fascinating feature is the “Earthen Hall” or Manmuzhki Mandapam. This structure was historically buried under layers of soil and later excavated, revealing a beautiful ancient hall that now sits slightly below the current ground level.
- **The Stone Garuda:** Facing the main sanctum is a magnificent stone statue of **Garuda**. Local legend tells of a wooden Garuda made by a master craftsman in Kanchipuram that became so life-like it flew to Parakkai. The stone image marks the spot where it landed.

Inscriptions in the ancient Vattezhuthu script refer to this place as Kizhar Mangalam and Abimanameru Chaturvedi Mangalam.



Seminar on “The Present Status of Coastal Fisheries in Kanyakumari with special reference to Wadge Bank” on 04-02-2025

Seminar on “The Present Status of Coastal Fisheries in Kanyakumari with special reference to Wadge Bank” was held on 04-02-2025 at Hotel pioneer Grand Palace.

There were two resource persons:

- Dr. S. Lazarus, Rtd. Scientist, CMFRI (ICAR)
- Dr. S.P. Udayakumar, Social Activist and Conservationist

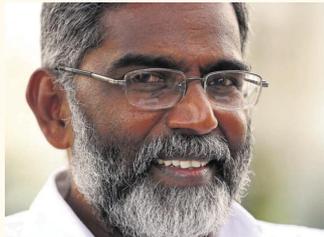


Highlights of the presentation by Dr. Lazarus as follows:

Fishing grounds are oceanic areas where marine species live and reproduce. They provide a livelihood source for many people worldwide. Wadge Bank, located near Indian waters, is a fertile fishing ground. The Wadge Bank is the third largest fishing ground globally, covering about 4000 sq. miles. The area is defined by the Fisheries Survey of India as part of the sea bed between 76°.30'E to 78°.00 E Longitude, and 07°.00 to 8°. 20' N latitude. The Wadge Bank is also a marine environment with rich availability of fish food organisms. One of such fertile fishing grounds near to our Indian waters is 'Wadge Bank'. Mr. Sivalingam (1969), who accidentally discovered it named it as the 'Cape Comorin Bank'. The Wadge Bank comprises a shallow zone off the southern tip of the Indian Peninsula, where the bottom topography is almost flat and the continental shelf is very wide compared to the adjoining shelf. As a result of such condition, it forms the third largest fishing ground of the world. He spoke about the threat that it is facing by the proposal by the Central Government to establish oil and gas exploration and extraction.

Dr. S.P. Udayakumar spoke on the 'Wadge Bank' - Highlight of his speech as follows:

'Wadge Bank' refers to different structures in different fields of geography. For instance, in limnology (the study of inland waters), bank means the terrain alongside the bed of a stream or river. In freshwater ecology, bank denotes the location of riparian habitats. To sum up, wadge bank is an underwater landform. When nutrient-rich currents wash a bank continuously, it can become a fertile fishing ground.



Marine biologists had discovered an important fishing ground lying off the apex of the Indian peninsula and named it the 'Cape Comorin Bank.' But the Ceylon Fisheries Department later named it as the 'Wadge Bank.'

Covering an area of roughly 10,000 sq.kms., this submarine plateau is rich in biodiversity and considered to be India's richest fishery resource. The Wadge Bank waters are moderate in their temperature (26 to 29C). The physical features such as underwater current, tides and waves have less impact on the fishes and aquatic animals of the region, more than 200 species of fish and some 60 other oceanic animals choose this region for feeding and breeding.

In late 2023, the Indian Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MOPNG) invited Notice Inviting Offers (NIO) under the Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP) for the exploration of oil and natural gas in three blocks south of Cape Comorin covering an area of some 27,154.80 sq.kms. The Wadge Bank is situated right in the middle of this





area. ONGC and Vedanta Corporation are said to have been given license to extract oil and natural gas in these three blocks besides other areas near Chennai and else where.

If this project indeed goes through, it could spell disaster for the Wadge Bank.

4. World Heritage Day 1.4.2025

To Commemorate World Heritage Day which is celebrated globally on 18th April every year, INTACH Nagercoil Chapter had conducted two programs on 1.4.2025.

- A) Heritage Tour
- B) Seminar on Natural Heritage at Sree Ayyappa College for Women.

A. Heritage Tour

- Visit to Padmanabhapuram Palace Museum
- 200 year Old school Kalkulam Government Higher Secondary School (formerly coin minting factory of Travancore Kings.
- Visit to Sree Ramaswamy Temple, Padmanabhapuram

Visit to Padmanabhapuram Palace and Museum

A visit to the Padmanabhapuram Palace is a fitting way to observe World Heritage month, especially considering the palace is on the UNESCO World Heritage tentative list.

We visited Padmanabhapuram Palace Museum with our members. The museum is well maintained by Kerala State Government. The museum wing houses an incredible collection of stone inscriptions, sculptures, and weapons that provide a timeline of the Venad and Travancore dynasties.



Padmanabhapuram Palace Museum





Padmanabhapuram Archaeological Museum



c) Visit to Sree Ramaswamy Temple, Padmanabhapuram

Padmanabhapuram Ramaswamy Temple is one of the oldest Temples built by a Travancore king in 1744. The temple has a unique architecture with the whole story of Ramayana being sculpted in wood. The Sri Ramaswamy Temple in Padmanabhapuram is often described as the “Ramayana in Wood,

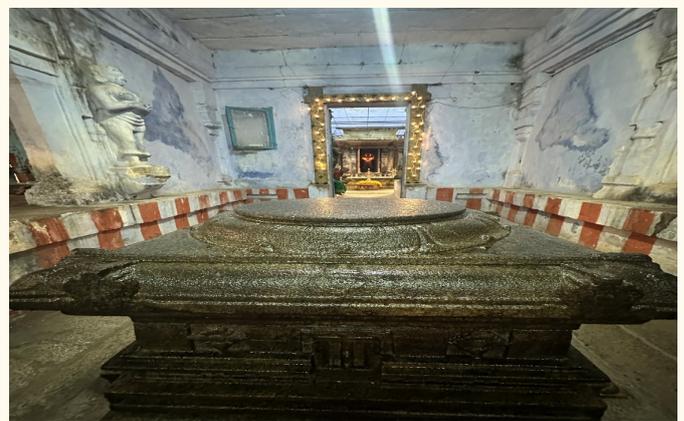
The temple is world-renowned for its 46 wooden panels that encircle the inner sanctum (Vilakkumatam). These are not just carvings; they are a masterpiece of storytelling:

- The Entire Epic: The complete story of the Ramayana, from the birth of Rama to his coronation (Pattabhishekham), is narrated sequentially through these panels.
- Segmentary Animation: Scholars have noted a rare technique here called “segmentary

animation.” For example, in the panel depicting the death of the demoness Tataka, the artist carved multiple heads or torsos on a single figure to show the motion of her falling - a 18th-century precursor to modern animation!

- Precision: The level of detail-the expressions of the characters, the jewelry, and the flora-is carved into hard wood with the same precision one would expect from soft wax.

The temple is a fine example of Kerala Temple Architectural style, featuring the Srikovil (sanctum), Namaskara Mandapam (prostration hall), and the tiled, sloping roof designed to withstand heavy monsoons.



Ramaswamy Temple, Padmanabhapuram



Visit to Kalkulam Government Higher Secondary School

We also visited the Kalkulam Government HSS which is 200 years old. The building was initially a coin minting workshop of the Travancore Government. This is a fascinating piece of local history. The Kalkulam Government Higher Secondary School (also known as the Padmanabhapuram School) is a perfect example of a “living heritage” site, where a building’s purpose has evolved from royal industry to public service.

From Coins to Classrooms: The “Kammattom”

Before it became an educational institution, this building served as the Royal Mint (known as the Kammattom) of the Travancore Kingdom.

- **The Minting History:** During the 18th and early 19th centuries, while Padmanabhapuram was the capital of the Travancore state, this site was the heart of the kingdom’s economy. It was here that historical coins like the **Anantharayan Fanam, Chinna Fanam** and **Ananthavarahan** were struck.

Architectural Legacy: The building still retains the robust, thick-walled stone construction typical of a secure royal facility. Its high ceilings and wooden trusses are characteristic of the Travancore-Kerala architectural style.



1. Seminar on Heritage - Natural and Cultural Heritage - at Sree Ayyappa College for Women, Nagercoil

INTACH Nagercoil Chapter and Department of History of Sree Ayyappa College for Women, Nagercoil jointly commemorated ‘World Heritage Day’ on 04-04-2025



Dr. S. Balachandran



SREE AYYAPPA COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
Re-accredited with A grade (IV Cycle) by NAAC
Chunkankadai, Nagercoil - 629003

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
IN COLLABORATION WITH
INTACH
ORGANISES
WORLD HERITAGE DAY CELEBRATION

RESOURCE PERSONS
Dr S.Balachandran, M.Sc, Ph. D
Former Deputy Director ,
Managing Trustee, Migratory Bird
Monitoring Foundation.

**TOPIC: BIRD DIVERSITY IN DIFFERENT
LANDSCAPES AND HABITATS OF
KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT**



Mrs. Anitha.S.Natarajan,
Convenor, INTACH, Nagercoil
Chapter
**TOPIC: "WORLD HERITAGE DAY" - HERITAGE
OF KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT.**

PRINCIPAL
DR.V.R.ANJANA

CONVENOR
DR D LEKHA

ORGANISING SECRETARIES
DR. T. ANITHA
DR. ANAND LALI SEENA

ORGANISING TEAM
DR.J.PRASANNA KUMARI
DR P.LEELA MONI
DR.V.KARTHIK NISHA
DR.P.PRAVITHA
DR.S.PRATHIKA

DATE: 04-04-2025
VENUE: SEMINAR HALL
TIME : 2.00 PM



Dr. S. Balachandran, Former Deputy Director, Managing Trustee, Migratory Bird Monitoring Foundation was the keynote speaker. He spoke on “Bird Diversity in different Landscapes, Habitats of Kanyakumari District’.

Convenor Anitha S. Natarajan presented a ppt on the ‘Cultural Heritage of Kanyakumari District - the Monuments of Kanyakumari District with special reference to the Temple Architecture and the Traditions and Customs of Kanyakumari District.

Brief Summary of Dr S. Balachandran (Managing Trustee-Migratory Bird Monitoring Trust) talk on “Bird Diversity in different Landscapes and Habitats of Kanyakumari District is given below:-

Out of 43 heritage sites in India, 7 sites are important in terms of supporting endemic flora, fauna, and migratory birds. These sites include Kaziranga National Park, Manas Wildlife Sanctuary, Keoladeo National Park, Sundarbans National Park, Western Ghats, Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area, and Khangchendzonga National Park.

A part of the Western Ghats extends up to the Kanyakumari district, with the dry deciduous and evergreen forests supporting a plethora of wild flora and fauna, including migratory terrestrial birds like Rosy Starlings, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, Forest Wagtail, Brown Shrike, and Golden Oriole. At the confluence of the river Pazhayar, which originates from the Western Ghats, lies a significant ecosystem—an estuary with luxuriant growth on the mudflats—known as the Manakudy Estuary. The waters of the estuary teem with a variety of fishes and invertebrates, which attract birds like Spot-billed Ducks, Painted Storks, Cormorants, Egrets, and many more. The Suchindram-Theroor wetland complex has become an important heronry for Cormorants, Egrets, Pelicans, and Ibises, supporting hundreds of these birds and their nests with young ones.

The talk illustrated how migratory birds spend their annual cycle between Arctic breeding ground to their wintering sites located as far as to Africa and New Zealand in the southern Hemisphere. How, and which species performing non-stop flight over 13,000 km. The smallest migratory species

Little Stint which weight around 20 gm perform their migratory journey from arctic to Kanyakumari by travelling 8000 km. The different groups of migratory birds like ducks, shorebirds, ibises, stork, Pelicans, flamingos and cormorants utilising the saltpans are illustrated with images from saltpans of Kanyakumari The presence of 12 Western Ghat endemic bird species within the Kanyakumari Forest Division, and several endangered mammals like Lion-tailed Macaque, Nilgiri Langur, NilgiriTahr, Leopard, tiger, Indian Bison, and the presence of 13 IUCN Red listed waterbird species signifies the natural heritage and global importance of this district has two Ramsar sites, one each bird Sanctuary and wildlife Sanctuary.

Convenor Anitha Natarajan presented a power point presentation of ‘Heritage of Kanyakumari District ‘covering the Tangible and Intangible Heritage of Kanyakumari District.





World Heritage Day Seminar



Seminar on Heritage - Natural and Cultural Heritage - at Sree Ayyappa College for Women, Nagercoil



Celebration of International Day of Biological Diversity and World Turtle Day

On 22nd of May 2025, INTACH, Nagercoil Chapter commemorated 'International Day of Biological Diversity' and 'World Turtle Day' Celebration at Hotel Pioneer Grand Palace, Nagercoil.

We had two speakers - Dr. R. Suresh SwamiyarKaani M.A , Ph.D., and Ms. Nina Joseph, Green Fellow, Kanyakumari District

World Turtle Day 2025'

Convenor Anitha Natarajan spoke about the importance of celebrating International Day of Biological Diversity (22nd May 2025) and the theme for the day - 'Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development' and the importance of observing the day to create awareness and also 'World Turtle Day - May 23rd, 2025 to raise awareness about protecting turtles, tortoises and their habitats for their survival. The theme for day was 'Dancing Turtles Rock' and she reiterated that it is imperative to create knowledge about conserving the endangered species.

Ms. Nina Joseph, Green Fellow of Kanyakumari District who was one of the resource persons, is involved in the Government initiative to protect the turtle eggs during the hatching season. Her speech on the Bio Diversity Western Ghats and Turtle conservation was very informative and interesting.

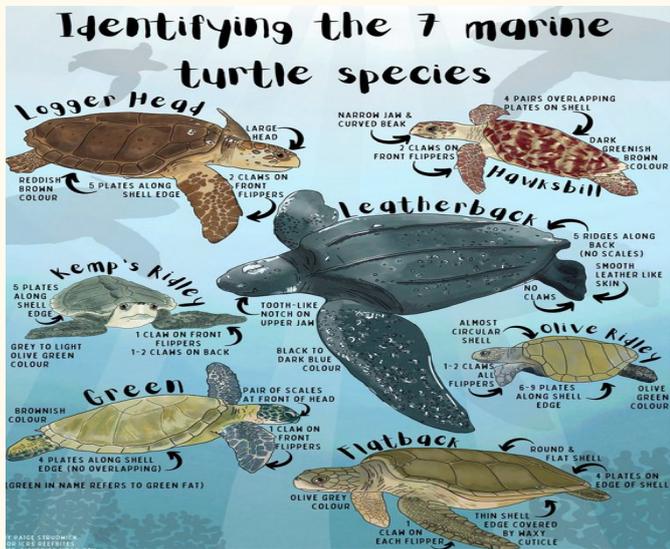


1. INTERNATIONAL DAY OF BIODIVERSITY & WORLD TURTLE DAY 2025 Nina M Joseph, Green Fellow (Kanniyakumari)

In the hustle and bustle of today's fast-paced world, we often forget to pause and observe the marvellous nature around us. Modern lifestyle has detached us and made us believe that we are above and beyond nature.



The International Day for Biological Diversity, commemorated every year on May 22, 2025, is a reminder to ground ourselves and celebrate the variety of life forms on the Earth. The theme for the year 2025 is harmony with nature and sustainable development, which focuses on the linkages between the Sustainable Development Goals and the 23 targets of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Some of the major issues faced by turtles include getting caught in trawlers and as bycatch, female turtles and eggs being harvested, light pollution causing confusion to the hatchlings, anthropogenic causes such as installation of groynes, marine vehicles, and pollution.



Biological Diversity - "Kattu Vaithiyam"

Dr. R. Suresh Swamiyar Kaani, M.A., Ph.D., National Representative of Southern Tribals, National Tribal Development Network, New Delhi

To commemorate 'World Biodiversity Day' we had a speaker from the Kani tribe, Dr. Suresh Swamiyar Kaani. The Kani is an indigenous community primarily found in the forests and hills of the western side of Kanyakumari District. They are known for their deep connection to the forests and their knowledge of medicinal plants. Dr. Suresh Swamiyar Kaani is the first research scholar from the Kani tribe. He has got his Ph.D on the indigenous medicine and medical practises of the Kani tribe.



He spoke on the topic 'Kaatu Vaithiyam' meaning medical treatment practised by the forest people."Kaatu Vaithiyam" isn't just about plants; it involves a deep understanding of forest ecology, seasons, and the spiritual connection between the healer and nature.



World Environment Day 5.6.2025

On 5th of June, 2025, INTACH , Nagercoil Chapter commemorated 'World Environment Day' at Kavimoni Desiga Vinayagam Pillai Government Higher Secondary School, Nagercoil. Convenor Anitha Natarajan spoke about the theme of World Environment Day -2025 "Beat the Plastics" and she gave an elaborate speech on the hazards of plastics. The students were given simple solutions to avoid plastic usage.

1. Bringing water cans instead of plastic bottles.
2. Using stainless steel lunch boxes.
3. Taking cloth bags to shops to buy things.
4. Very importantly, never to get hot food wrapped in plastic bags. Instead take stainless boxes to buy eatables.

1. Competition for School Students on 'Art from Waste' to commemorate World Environment Day

A competition was conducted for the students "Art from Waste" and prizes and certificates were presented to the first three place and participation certificates to those who participated.

Our Members Dr. Renu Devaprasath and Dr. Shunmuga Kumar very systematically assessed the entries and gave a fair judgement. Prizes and certificates were given by INTACH. Nagercoil Chapter.





2. Tree Planting on WED (World Environment Day) - 2025

Tree planting drive was organised at Kavimani Desiga Vinayagam Pillai Government Hr. Sec. School to celebrate World Environment Day 2025.

Intach Nagercoil Chapter under the leadership of Convenor Anitha Natarajan planted trees at Kavimani Desiga Vinayagam Pillai Government Higher Secondary School. We planted native “magilum tree saplings” which are fruit bearing and shady trees. Our members, teachers and students

actively participated. More than 1200 students get benefited. Our Convenor Anitha Natarajan, Mr. Joe Prakash Mr. Gladstone, Dr. Renu Devaprasath, Dr. Shunmuga Kumar and Mrs. Rekha attended the program.



Kalmadam visit on 29.5.2025

We explored a kalmadam at Kavalkinaru at the outskirts of Nagercoil which is a structure made of stone and hence the name “Kalmadam”. It is an architectural beauty in itself but it is in a very bad condition. Kalmadam are wayside inns built during the times of ancient kings for wayfarers to stay for a short time and take rest. This particular wayside inn must have been built by the Pandiya kings because we could see the carvings of fish symbols, Gajalakshmi etc.

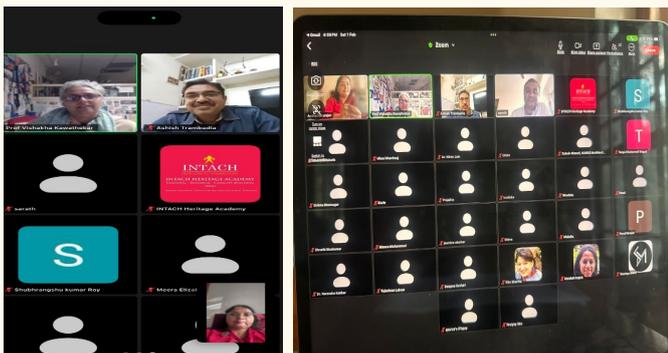
Architectural & Historical Significance

- **Royal Provenance:** The structure features prominent Twin Fish symbols (the dynastic emblem of the Pandyan Kings) sculpted on the roof and pillars.
- **Artistic Detail:** The entrance is adorned with a fine sculpture of Gajalakshmi (Mahalakshmi with elephants).
- **Engineering Marvel:** The inn is a two-storey stone structure featuring a sophisticated chimney-like ventilation system that allows light and air while remaining rainwater-proof-a testament to the advanced stone-craft of the era.
- **Epigraphy:** Preliminary observations indicate the presence of Vattezhuthu inscriptions on the walls, which may hold the key to the exact dating and the name of the royal patron.



Capacity Building Workshop on 'Build Heritage and Law'

On 01-02-2025, our Convenor Anitha Natarajan was one of the panellists at the Panel Discussion on 'Build Heritage and Law' conducted by INTACH HERITAGE ACADEMY



with Prof. Vishaka Kawathekar as the Moderator and Dr. Ashish Trambadia and Dr. Sarath as co panellists. Participants were the students of IHA, New Delhi.

XVI Capacity building workshop for INTACH Members 28th April to 01st May 2025

Our members Mr. Joe Prakash and Mr. Shahul Hameed attended the XVI the Capacity Building Workshop held at the 71, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi from 28th April to 1st May, 2025 and it was an enriching experience for both of them.



XVII Capacity building workshop held at the 71, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi from 6th to 9th Oct 2025.

Our members Mr. Nallaperumal and Mr. Dhaya Singh attended the XVII Capacity Building Workshop from 6th to 9th October, 2025. It was an amazing experience for them both.



Thengapattinam Amsi school - Van Mahotsav 2025

On 3rd of July 2025 Intach Nagercoil Chapter commemorated 'Van Mahotsav 2025' at Amsi High School, Thengapattinam. INTACH and the School Management organised a meeting to create awareness about "Celebrating Van Mahotsav 2025".

Our Convenor Anitha Natarajan spoke about the purpose and theme of “ Van Mahotsav 2025” and the importance of planting trees.



Visit to the Thengapattinam beach and the fishing harbour.

Thengapattinam beach is a coastal area in Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu known for its serene atmosphere and views of the Arabian sea.

The beach is situated in the Painkulam Panchayath along the coastal plains of Kanyakumari district. A significant feature is the confluence of Thamirabarani river with the Arabian sea which is called as “pozhi” and the presence of dense coconut groves in the area, from which the name ‘Thengapattinam’ derived meaning “a city of coconut trees”.

We visited the Thengapattinam fishing harbour also which is a famous fishing hot spot in the district.

Convenor Anitha Natarajan was invited by Trivandrum College of Archaeology to present a session on ‘Urban Context Study of Kanyakumari District’ to the students on 28.7.2025





INTACH Annual General body Meeting on 19.7.2025

On 19.7.2025 we conducted Annual General Body Meeting at INTACH Nagercoil Chapter. It was a well-attended program. The proceedings were as follows:

- The meeting started at 5.30 pm with a prayer song by our member Mrs. Nageswari Janarthanan.
- Welcome and Presidential address was given by our Convenor Mrs. Anitha Natarajan. She gave a heartwarming address on the working of the INTACH Nagercoil Chapter.
- Secretary Mr. Premdhas read the report of the activities of the INTACH.
- Members gave constructive suggestions for the successful working of the Chapter.
- Member Mrs. Latha Ramaswamy presented the audited report of the finance. It was passed.



Heritage Visit of INTACH Nagercoil Chapter on 6.9.2025

1. South Travancore Lines of Kanyakumari District
2. Kanyakumari Government Museum
3. Shrine of Our Lady of Ransom, Kanyakumari
4. Guhanatheeswarar Temple, Kanyakumari

1. Visit to South Travancore Lines of Kanyakumari on 6.9.2025

The South Travancore Lines refer to a historical line of ramparts in Kanyakumari, built by King Marthanda Varma to defend Nanjil Nadu, a fertile region in the state of Travancore.

The South Travancore lines were built by the Raja Bala Marthanda Varma (1728 to 1759) to protect Travancore Princely State from the invading armies from Tirunelveli side in 18th century. It served as a southern western boundary of Travancore.



2. Kanyakumari Government Museum on 6.9.2025

Kanyakumari is a renowned tourist destination attracting International tourists and pilgrims all over India due to the geographical phenomenon of the confluence of three seas - the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. It is the southernmost tip of the contiguous Indian subcontinent and the southernmost city in mainland India, and thus it is informally referred to as "The Land's End". In addition to add the beauty of this place Kanniyakumari district, a museum was established on 30 January 1991 by Tamil Nadu State Government. This Government museum of Kanniyakumari is a multi-type object museum which contains many exhibits which showcases on various fields like Archeology, Anthropology, History, Numismatics, Zoology, Geology, Botany, Children section and Local history etc.

3. Guhanattheswarar Temple, Kanyakimari on 6.9.2025

Guhanattheswarar Temple in Kanyakumari is a prominent ancient Shiva temple located near the Kanyakumari Railway Station and is a significant place of worship for its long history, with some sources suggesting it is over 1,000 years old. It is dedicated to Lord Shiva, the presiding deity. It is truly one of the hidden historical gems of Kanyakumari, often overshadowed by the famous Bhagavathi Amman Temple nearby, but arguably just as significant for its history and architecture.

Historical Significance

- **Chola Legacy:** The temple is widely believed to have been built by **Raja Raja Chola I**, one of the greatest emperors of the Chola Dynasty. This aligns with the "1,000 years old" estimate, as his reign was around 985–1014 CE.
- **Inscriptions:** The temple walls contain numerous stone inscriptions in **Vatteluttu** (an ancient writing system of South India). These records provide invaluable information about the Chola administration and their influence in the southern tip of the peninsula.
- **The Name:** The name "Guhanattheswarar" is quite unique. While the temple is dedicated

to **Lord Shiva**, “Guha” refers to Lord Murugan (Kartikeya). Legend says that Murugan worshipped Shiva at this spot, leading to the name which roughly translates to “The Lord worshipped by Guha.”

Architecture & Features

- **Dravidian Style:** The structure is a classic example of Chola-era architecture, characterized by its sturdy granite construction and intricate carvings.



And it is one of the most beautiful Churches with a most eye-grabbing pearl white façade.

We were allowed to visit the backside of the Church where there is an antique small church inside where St. Xavier worshipped the Lady of Delights Grotto. We were fortunate to view the Lady of Delights Grotto and also the paintings that belonged to the 16th Century.



4. Visit to the Shrine of Our Lady of Ransom Church, Kanyakumari on 6.9.2025

Our Lady of Ransom Church is a Catholic Church located at Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu.

In 1542 when St. Francis Xavier came to Cape Comerin, he found ‘Our Lady of Delights Grotto’ there. It then became a centre for mission activities of the Jesuits from Thoothoor to Ramanathapuram. Later the Church of Our Lady of Ransom was built.

We visited the ‘Lady of Ransom Church’ on 06-09-2025. The Church, constructed to worship Mother Mary was built in the Gothic Style of architecture.



National Education Day & World Heritage Week Celebrations

INTACH, Nagercoil Chapter celebrated World Heritage Week and National Education Day on 11th November 2025 at Hotel Pioneer Grand Palace. As part of the World Heritage Week celebration, we had two programs - a talk by an award winning artisan, Mr. Jeya Cruz. He is producing and selling coconut shell utensils and jewellery, thereby restoring the long lost art of coconut shell usage. He shared his experience in the field and the challenges he faced and how he has established his name in the field of handicrafts. Kanyakumari District is often described as land of coconuts and most of the household have at least a few coconut trees. The District is known for innovative use of coconut shells. The District's unique geography, sandwiched between the western ghats and the confluence of three oceans, provides a tropical maritime climate that is exceptionally well suited for coconut cultivation.



National Education Day

National Education Day is celebrated on November 11 every year in India to Commemorate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of India. It's a day to recognize the importance of education in shaping the nation's future. INTACH Nagercoil chapter commemorated it by conducting a debate session with two teachers, Mr. Abraham Lincoln, a retired teacher who had served as a teacher for more than 34 years and another teacher, Mr. Prem Dhas who is currently working as a PG Assistant in the same school, Carmel Higher Secondary School, Nagercoil.



The Heritage of Palm Leaf Manuscript

Our member, Mr. Abraham Lincoln, exhibited a rare palm-leaf manuscript of the *Thirukkural*. This historical document is written in **Grantha**, a classical South Indian script closely related to Tamil. These manuscripts represent an ancient form of bookmaking common throughout South and Southeast Asia. They are crafted from dried, treated palm leaves, inscribed with a metal stylus, and finished with ink to bring the text to life.

Cultural and Heritage Significance of Brass Lamps

Our Co-convenor Dr. Sunil Richardson exhibited a few brass lamps from his vast collection of lamps that belonged to different periods in the history. Some belonged to the Chola period. Under the Chola kings, lamp-making became a high art form. The Cholas utilized the **Cire Perdue (Lost-Wax)** casting technique to create seamless, hollow-cast lamps. Chola lamps are distinguished by their fine detailing, such as the **Annam** (mythical swan), **Gajalakshmi** (Goddess of wealth), or floral creepers (*kodi*) etched into the stems.



INTACH (Nagercoil Chapter) 2024-2025 New Membership List

Sl. No.	Date	Name
1.	11.09.2024	Mr. Subramonian Natarajan
2.	14.11.2024	Mr. Shunmuga Kumar
3.	15.11.2024	Dr. Jeni C. Padua
4.	28.02.2025	Mr. Natarajan Subramonian
5.	27.03.2025	Dr. Devaprasath Jeyasekaran
6.	27.03.2025	Dr. Renu Devaprasath
7.	22.08.2025	Mrs. A. Shanthi Nasians
8.	22.08.2025	Mrs. Lalith Lakshmi Nagarajan
9.	27.09.2025	Mrs. Suba Ramanathan

25.12.2025
Nagercoil

Mrs. Anitha Natarajan
Convenor

Dr. Sunil Richardson
Co- Convenor