

## TNF Kundrakudi Adigalar Rural Education Project

**Background:** Thavathiru Kundrakudi Adigalar, a well-known social worker and Tamil scholar, was the TNF's inaugural guest speaker at the 1991 Annual Convention held at the Bowling Green University, Ohio. Following Adigalar's visit to the USA, Dr. A.M. Rajendran, a former president of TNF initiated the "TNF – Kundrakudi Adigalar Rural Education" project with funding support from TNF life members and successfully launched the project when Rajendran visited Kundrakudi village in 1991 and again in 1994. He had discussions with the then senior Adigalar and the Village Planning Forum (an NGO under the Mutt) on various topics relating to Integrated Rural Development with which the Kundrakudi Mutt was deeply involved. During the discussions on education, Rajendran offered, on behalf of TNF to help in starting the Industrial Training Institute (ITI) at Kundrakudi. The TNF donated Rs. 2 lakhs to Kundrakudi Adigalar was used for this purpose.



Thavathiru Adigalar



Ponnambala Desikar

Due to the sudden demise of the Senior Adigalar in 1995, the project was delayed; but Thavathiru Ponnambala Desikar, the new Adigalar continued the education mission related to remote villages around Kundrakudi. He launched the "Kundrakudi Adigalar Memorial ITI" in the name of Amaran Kundrakudi Adigalar in 1997. The TNF funds were utilized towards a new building for the ITI's Computer Center. The TNF's name has been acknowledged in the plaque installed at the time of inauguration. The TNF also donated used computers to the High School for providing training to the students when Mr. Chandrasekar was the Secretary of TNF's center at Chennai.

**Project Progress:** During 2016, the TNF helped the Adigalar College of Education for Women and Sri Deivasikamani Arul Neri Thodakkappalli (an elementary school) in setting up "Smart Labs" with donation of around Rs. 2.0 lakhs. The

facility at the B.Ed college is being used by the teacher-trainees effectively and the one at the Elementary school is used by the teachers of 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> standard to teach and involve the students interactively.



With the efforts of two former TNF presidents: Mr. C.K. Mohanam and Dr. A.M. Rajendran, the TNF came forward in 2017 with additional funds towards the Improvement of Infrastructure in the elementary school. The photo above in which all students are sitting on the floor during the visit of Adigalar in the smart lab inspired Mohanam and Rajendran to generate funds (Rs. 2.5 Lakhs) to furnish the lab with bench-desks. Very recently, the class room with desks has been inaugurated by Adigalar in the presence of Assistant Education Officer and Teacher Training Officer of the District. The TNF efforts and contributions to basic education in rural areas have been appreciated by all.



While working with the TNF, the Adigalar with limited local resources has been actively pioneering small and big projects to provide clean drinking water, clean toilets, good buildings with clean surroundings, and greater care for the students. The spontaneous and timely offer of TNF to help improve the basic education in rural areas is not only appreciated by all including the local people but also gratefully acknowledged.