

AUG 10,2026 – BLACK DAY

SHORT REPORT ON THE PROGRAMMES ORGANISED, DEMANDING SCHEDULED CASTE (SC) STATUS FOR DALIT CHRISTIANS



On 10 August 2026, the TNBC – Commission for SC/ST organised and coordinated **August 10 – Black Day / Day of Awakening** programmes in various dioceses and regions across Tamil Nadu, emphasising the long-standing demand for **Scheduled Caste (SC) status for Dalit Christians**.

The programmes were organised primarily to demand the **removal of Clause 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, and the inclusion of Dalit Christians in the Scheduled Caste list**. Across Tamil Nadu, various programmes were conducted, including **rallies, demonstrations, peaceful protests, awareness meetings, hoisting of black flags, peace marches, submission of petitions to District Collectors, and attention-drawing programmes**.

These programmes were organised with the objective of creating public awareness about the **rights, social justice, equality, human dignity and constitutional rights of Dalit Christians**. The programmes also served as platforms to continuously emphasise the demand for SC status for Dalit Christians through **democratic and constitutional means**.



OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME :

The major objectives of the **August 10 – Black Day / Day of Awakening** programmes were:

- To create awareness about the issue of **SC status for Dalit Christians**.
- To explain to the general public the issue concerning **Clause 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950**.
- To emphasise the need for equal constitutional protection for Dalit Christians.
- To uphold **justice, equality and human dignity**.



- To bring together the Church, political parties, social organisations and leaders of other faiths.
- To strengthen awareness and coordination at the diocesan level.
- To strengthen the demand for the rights of Dalit Christians in the public sphere.
- To continue the struggle for rights through **democratic and peaceful means**.

BROAD-BASED PARTICIPATION :

A major feature of the **August 10, 2026 programmes** was the participation of leaders and representatives



from various sections of society. The programmes were attended by **Bishops and Archbishops, Diocesan SC/ST Secretaries, priests, religious sisters and brothers, Members of Parliament, former Members of Parliament, former Ministers and Members of Legislative Assemblies, representatives of political parties, advocates, social activists, leaders of people's movements, representatives of**

SC/ST employees' organisations, leaders of other Christian Churches including CSI and TELC, and leaders of other faiths.

The participation of leaders from different faith communities demonstrated that the issue concerning the rights of Dalit Christians is a broader issue of **social justice and equality**, requiring collective concern, solidarity and support.

PROGRAMMES CONDUCTED ACROSS TAMIL NADU :

In the Eastern Zone, a programme was held in **Dindigul Diocese** on 10.08.2026 from 10.00 AM to 1.00 PM at St. Thomas Pastoral Centre. The programme was attended by Bishop P. Thomas Paulsamy of Dindigul, Rev. Fr. Robert, diocesan priests, senior advocates, representatives of people's movements, social activists and interfaith leaders.



In **Sivagangai Diocese**, a programme was held on 09.08.2026 from 10.00 AM to 1.00 PM at the District Collectorate Campus, Ramanathapuram. Rev. Fr. Amal Das, diocesan priests, religious men and women, Mr. K. Navaskani, Member of Parliament, and interfaith leaders participated in the programme.

In **Madurai Diocese**, a programme was held on 10.08.2026 from 3.30 PM to 6.00 PM at CMS Martin Ground, Srivilliputhur. Most Rev. Archbishop Antony Savarimuthu of Madurai, Most Rev. Jeyasingh Prince Prabhakaran (CSI), Rev. Fr. Britto, Mr. M. Veerapandian of CPI, Mr. Kudanthai Arasan of Viduthalai Tamil Puligal Katchi, Mr. Madukkur Ramalingam of CPI(M), and interfaith leaders participated in the programme.



In the Western Zone, a programme was held in **Dharmapuri Diocese** on 10.08.2026 from 10.00 AM to 1.00 PM at Our Lady of Health Church, Pappireddipatti. The programme was attended by Most Rev. Bishop

Lawrence Pius of Dharmapuri, Dr. Palaniyappa, Former Minister, Dr. M.M. Ramesh Nathan, Rev. Fr. Mariyappan, Rev. William (CSI), Mr. Mohamed Ali from the Minority Welfare Department, political party leaders and interfaith leaders.

In **Salem and Coimbatore Diocese**, a programme was held on 10.08.2026 from 10.00 AM to 1.00 PM at the Salem District Office. Rev. Fr. Gregory Rajan, Rev. Fr. Dellys Roche, Rev. Augustine (TELC), Muslim and Hindu religious leaders, priests and religious men and women participated. Another programme was held at the Namakkal District Office from 2.00 PM to 5.00 PM.



In the Central Zone, the **dioceses of Tiruchirappalli, Thanjavur and Kumbakonam** jointly organised a programme on 10.08.2026 from 4.00 PM to 7.00 PM at Sivagangai Park – Panagal Building, Thanjavur. The programme was attended by Bishop Jeevanandam of Kumbakonam, Bishop Arokiyaraj of Tiruchirappalli, Bishop Sagayaraj of Thanjavur, Archbishop Samuel Durairaj (CSI), Archbishop Christian Samraj (TELC), Rev. Fr. Celestine, Rev. Fr. Irudayaraj,

Rev. Fr. Arokia Vinito, Mr. Sindhanai Selvan, Former MLA, Mr. Franklin Caesar Thomas, Mayor Anjugam Bhooopathi and interfaith leaders. The coordinated participation of several diocesan and Christian Church leaders expressed a united voice for the rights of Dalit Christians in the Central Zone.



In the Northern Zone, a programme was held in the **Chennai–Mylapore Archdiocese** on 10.08.2026 from 10.00 AM to 1.00 PM at Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine Campus, Perambur. Archbishop George Antony of Chennai, Mr. Gnanasekaran of the Railway SC/ST Union, Rev. Fr. John Bosco, interfaith leaders and religious men and women participated.

In **Chengalpattu Diocese**, a programme was held from 3.00 PM to 6.00 PM at the NH Bypass – Cathedral Campus. Bishop Neethinathan of Chengalpattu, Rev. Fr. Selvam, Church leaders, religious men and women, leaders of CSI, ALC and TELC Churches, interfaith leaders and political leaders participated.



In **Vellore**, a programme was held from 10.00 AM to 1.00 PM near Anna Kala Rangam. **Bishop Ambrose of Vellore**, Bishop Sharma Nithiyanandam (CSI), Rev. Fr. Arokiyaraj, Rev. Fr. Boopathy Lourdesamy, Rev. Fr. John Robert, other priests, religious men and women, leaders of other faiths, and political party leaders from CPI, CPM and VCK participated.



In the **Pondicherry–Cuddalore Archdiocese**, a programme was held on 10.08.2026 from 10.00 AM to 1.00 PM at Villupuram Municipal Ground – New Bus Stand. The programme was attended by Most Rev. Archbishop Francis Kalist of Pondicherry, Rev. Fr. Nithiya Sagayam, Secretary of the TNBC SC/ST Commission, Very Rev. Fr. Kulandai Samy, Rev. Fr. Deiva Nayagam, Mr. Sindhanai Selvan (VCK), leaders of MMK and IUML, interfaith leaders, people's movement leaders, representatives of DCLM and NCDC, and political party leaders. The



programme brought together various social and political organisations and demonstrated public support for the rights of Dalit Christians.



In the Southern Zone, the dioceses of Palayamkottai, Kottar, Tuticorin and Kuzhithurai jointly organised a programme on 10.08.2026 from 4.00 PM to 6.00 PM at Vannarapettai, near Chellapandian Bridge and opposite the BSNL Office, Palayamkottai. The programme was attended by Bishop Stephen of

Tuticorin, Rev. Fr. Motcha Rajan, Apostolic Administrator of Palayamkottai, Rev. Fr. Maria Soosai, Rev. Fr. Jeeva, Rev. Fr. Arokia Jenis, Rev. Fr. Arokia Amalraj, Mr. Eugene, Ms. Vijila Sathyanandam, Former Member of Parliament, leaders of democratic people's organisations, diocesan secretaries, priests, religious men and women, and interfaith leaders.

The programme held in the Southern Zone was an important event that brought together several dioceses, people's movements and interfaith leaders to emphasise the demand for Scheduled Caste status for Dalit Christians.



MAJOR OUTCOMES :

Increased Awareness

Awareness among the Church community and the general public regarding the issue of **SC status for Dalit Christians** was increased.



Social Unity

Various Christian Churches, social organisations and leaders of other faiths came together and participated in the programmes.

Interfaith Solidarity

The participation of Hindu, Muslim and other religious leaders demonstrated broader solidarity for **social justice and equality**.

Political Engagement

The participation of Members of Parliament, former public representatives and representatives of various political parties strengthened opportunities for dialogue at the political level.

Diocesan Coordination

Coordination among dioceses across Tamil Nadu was further strengthened through the statewide programmes.

Voice for Rights in the Public Sphere

The demand for **Scheduled Caste status for Dalit Christians** continued to be raised prominently in the public sphere.



FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS :

As a continuation of the August 10 programmes, the following activities need to be further strengthened by the TNBC SC/ST Commission:

- Creating awareness regarding the Constitution and constitutional rights.
- Conducting training programmes on the rights of Dalit Christians.
- Increasing the

participation of youth and women.

- Taking steps towards securing **reservation at the State level**.
- Conducting continuous awareness programmes at the diocesan level.
- Strengthening **interfaith and ecumenical cooperation**.
- Continuing dialogue with political and social leaders.
- Creating awareness through social media platforms and YouTube.
- Systematically documenting photographs, videos and reports of all programmes.
- Continuing Memorandum and Representation activities.
- Strengthening democratic and constitutional advocacy for the demand for **SC status for Dalit Christians**.

CONCLUSION :

The **August 10 – Black Day / Day of Awakening 2026** became a collective voice across Tamil Nadu for the **rights, social justice, equality and human dignity of Dalit Christians**.



The programmes conducted in various dioceses witnessed the participation of **Bishops, Archbishops, priests, religious sisters and brothers, political representatives, advocates, social activists, leaders of people's movements and leaders of other faiths.** Their participation demonstrated broad-based social and religious solidarity for the demand for **Scheduled Caste status for Dalit Christians.**



These programmes further strengthened the coordinated efforts of the **TNBC SC/ST Commission and the diocesan SC/ST commissions** and provided renewed momentum for future initiatives in

awareness-building, social mobilisation, democratic advocacy and the protection of constitutional rights.

The **TNBC SC/ST Commission**, under the leadership of **Most Rev. Bishop Jeevanandam, Chairman,** and **Rev. Fr. Nithiya Sagayam OFM.Cap, Secretary,** remains committed to working continuously for **justice, equality, human dignity and the rights of Dalit Christians.**

SC STATUS FOR DALIT CHRISTIANS!
JUSTICE • EQUALITY • HUMAN DIGNITY