



UPDATES

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October was a month of beginnings and steady growth. Communities came together for the inaugurations of Smrithivanam, the Anganjyoti solar initiative, and the Augmented Weather Station in Meenangadi. Farmers deepened their learning, women's groups strengthened their enterprises, and students nurtured their fruit forests. Each effort reflected quiet progress built on participation, care, and collective action.



Carbon Neutral Meenangadi

From Awareness to Action

Smrithivanam Inauguration | Remembering, Restoring, Reconnecting

On 12 October, the Smrithivanam Ecological Restoration Project was inaugurated at Purakkadi Poomala Paradevatha Kshethram, Meenangadi. Conceived as a living memorial to poet and environmentalist Sugathakumari

Teacher, in partnership with the Meenangadi Grama Panchayat, Purakkadi Devaswom, and KIMS Health CSR.

The event, attended by over 120 participants including poets, students, NSS volunteers, and community members, was inaugurated by eminent poet **Sri. Kalpetta Narayanan**. Thirty native saplings were planted during the launch, symbolising the beginning of a green space where ecology and culture coexist. The site will nurture biodiversity while cultivating puja flowers for the temple, weaving ecological restoration with cultural tradition.

A poetry session titled Smrithipadham followed the inauguration, celebrating Sugathakumari Teacher's lifelong message of compassion for nature. Smrithivanam will continue to grow as a three-acre learning space for conservation, reflection, and community participation.



Augmented Weather Station Launch

Data for Climate Resilience

The Augmented Weather Station (AWS) was inaugurated on 25 October at Government Higher Secondary School, Meenangadi, marking a milestone in community-based climate adaptation. Installed under the Carbon Neutral Meenangadi Project, in partnership with Thanal, Meenangadi Panchayat, and the Association for India's Development (AID), the AWS provides real-time weather data every 15 minutes within a 2 km radius.

Inaugurated by Mr. Samshad Marakkar,

Wayanad District Panchayat President, the event brought together more than 200 attendees including farmers, students, and officials. The system will enable farmers to make informed decisions on irrigation, pest management, and crop scheduling, helping them reduce losses from unpredictable weather.

Thanal's Executive Director Mr. Jayakumar C opened the session, emphasising the power of combining science and community. Technical orientation was led by Mr. Atthri Anand, CEO of DeepFlow Technologies, who explained how the system supports data-driven farming. The AWS inauguration reinforced Meenangadi's role as a model for climate-smart local governance, using innovation to empower rural livelihoods.



Anganjyoti Inauguration Solar Power for Learning Spaces



On 31 October, the Anganjyoti Programme was inaugurated at Thachambath and Mundanadapp Anganwadis, promoting clean, renewable energy in early learning environments. A collaboration between KIMS Health CSR, Meenangadi Panchayat, and Thanal, the initiative installed 5 kW rooftop solar systems to meet nearly 100% of each centre's electricity needs.

The event was inaugurated by Smt. Reshmi Aysha, Director KIMSHEALTH Nagercoil, CEO KIMSHEALTH Cancer Centre, CSR & ESG, in the presence of Panchayat President K. E. Vinayan, local representatives, and community members. Energy-efficient cooking appliances were also provided, reducing reliance on LPG and firewood.

This initiative ensures uninterrupted power for children's daily activities and healthier, safer environments for staff and kids. It stands as a model for sustainable community infrastructure and will guide replication across other Panchayats.

Poruvazhi Panchayat Orientation Sharing the Carbon Neutral Vision

On 22 October, Thanal and the Meenangadi Grama Panchayat hosted an orientation session for Poruvazhi Panchayat, introducing their team to the Carbon Neutral Meenangadi model. Thirty-five delegates, including the Panchayat President, members, and technical staff, attended.

The interactive session detailed Meenangadi's carbon-neutral journey, from emission assessments to sustainable agriculture, waste management, and renewable energy integration. Participants discussed policy needs, challenges, and solutions for replicating the model. The Poruvazhi team expressed strong interest in adopting similar practices in their Panchayat, marking a step toward scaling the carbon-neutral model across Kerala.



Mannorukkam Strengthening Soil and Community Experts Bring Fresh Insights

On 6 October, soil experts Ms. Manjushree Tadalkar and Mr. Shirish visited the Carbon Neutral Lab to assess progress under the Mannorukkam Soil Health Project. The session deepened the team's understanding of microbial interactions, pH balance, and nutrient cycling. Practical discussions on biofertilizers, vermiwash, and moisture regulation helped refine field strategies for soil health improvement.

Soil to Soul Fourth Master Farmers' Training

The fourth "Soil to Soul" session was held on 28 October at Meenangadi Community Hall with 18 master farmers. The training focused on organic input preparation, propagation techniques, and the use of beneficial microorganisms for soil fertility. Farmers received field kits and hands-on demonstrations linking soil vitality with ecosystem health.

New Cluster Formed in Pathirikavala Ward

A new women farmers' cluster was launched in Pathirikavala with 21 members. Discussions covered soil health, pest issues, and crop damage from wildlife. The session strengthened peer learning networks and encouraged eco-friendly farming through Thanal's Jaivakrishishahayi resource.

ITDP Kulathupuzha Livelihoods and Learning



Infrastructure and Water Security Progress

The CSR-funded water project at Arippa Hamlet is nearing completion, with 90% of work done. The borewell and pump house now bring water directly to households, benefiting 16 families and supporting horticulture activities.

The pond construction at Villumala Hamlet was completed this month, significantly improving local irrigation access. Compost ring units have also been completed across hamlets,

converting household waste into nutrient-rich compost and creating a sustainable income stream for residents.

Training and Livelihood Development

Training programmes continued to build skill and income opportunities:

Apiculture: Twenty participants from five hamlets completed advanced training on hive maintenance, honey extraction, and sustainable production practices.

Organic Farming: On 25 October, thirty-seven farmers attended a session led by Project Officer Abhirami N. G., focusing on pepper and banana cultivation, pest management, and soil health. Participants also learned about composting, intercropping, and pest prevention techniques.

Skill Workshops: Women from Kadmancod, Peruvazhikala, and Villumala attended practical sessions on soap-making, lotion-making, and tailoring, building skills for small-scale enterprise.



CSR UPDATES

Women's Food Enterprises Strengthen Operations

Under the KIMS Health CSR initiative, the chapathi-making and flour mill units in Kulathupuzha, continued steady growth through October. The Food Processing Unit has reached total sales of ₹1.28 lakh, while the Flour Mill Unit achieved ₹1.09 lakh – signalling stable operations and growing community trust.

Both units have diversified their product lines, introducing snacks, pickles, and traditional masalas made from locally sourced ingredients. New packaging and branding highlight women-led, preservative-free production. Discussions with supermarkets and local outlets are underway to establish regular supply agreements, with plans to include their products in the Thanal Organic Bazaar.

Fruit Forest Initiative | Schools Grow Living Classrooms

The Fruit Forest Initiative at Trivandrum International School (TRINS) and Lecole Chempaka, Nettayam continues to thrive. Most of the 360 fruit saplings planted earlier this year are now well-established, turning school grounds into vibrant green spaces that support pollinators and hands-on learning.

Students participate in daily care routines and composting, while teachers integrate the forests into classroom lessons. Plans for eco-club-led activities and sapling adoption are underway – nurturing both ecosystems and environmental awareness among young learners.

NEWS & EVENTS



Thanal Participates in Regenerating Sahyadri Meet

Thanal joined the Regenerating Sahyadri meet at Padmaprabha Hall, Kalpetta, bringing together experts and environmental organisations across the Western Ghats. The session focused on strengthening ecological restoration and inter-state collaboration. Contributions were recognised through the Sahyadri Awards, highlighting shared efforts for biodiversity and climate action.

BAF Team Visits Thanal Agroecology Centre, Panaveli



The Bharat Agroecology Fund (BAF) team and fellow travellers visited the Thanal Agroecology Centre, Panaveli, in October. The visit included a walk through our Paddy Diversity Block, the first of its kind in Kerala,

where they explored Thanal's ongoing work in conserving traditional rice varieties and promoting farmer-led seed systems.

Devi Lakshmikutty, Advisory Board Member of the Bharat Agroecology Fund, described the experience as "a beguiling time," sharing on social media how the visit offered a glimpse into the living heritage of agroecological practice and biodiversity conservation.

Thanal Sustainable Livelihood Team Attends Workshop on Livestock in Agroecology

From 14 to 16 October, Thanal participated in a workshop on "The Role of Livestock in Agroecology: A Critical Link", organised by ANTHRA in Pune. The sessions, led by Dr. Nitya Ghotge, explored how livestock supports soil fertility, climate resilience, and livelihoods within agroecological systems.

Participants gained insights into the use of ducks in paddy cultivation, herbal medicines for poultry and goats, and the ecological benefits of integrating livestock with cropping systems.

A visit to the INORA Biotechnology Lab demonstrated wastewater recycling for farm irrigation and the use of microorganisms in natural farming. The workshop provided practical knowledge and perspectives that will strengthen Thanal's agroecology initiatives and deepen its field-level applications.

Thanal at BFFP Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting in Sri Lanka

Program Coordinator Athul Raj represented Thanal at the Break Free From Plastic (BFFP) Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting held in Negombo, Sri Lanka. The gathering brought together changemakers from across South and Southeast Asia and the Pacific to discuss corporate accountability, just transition, and people-centered solutions for a plastic-free future.



Participants also visited the nurdle spill site in Negombo, observing the long-term environmental and social impacts of plastic pollution on coastal communities. The meeting strengthened regional solidarity and collective action toward reducing plastic footprints and promoting sustainable alternatives.

INTERNSHIP INITIATIVE

As part of their field learning, Clara and Alope, third-year BSW students from Rajagiri College, Kochi, completed their internships with Thanal in October. During their time with us, they distributed input kits to farmers in Thiruvananthapuram and helped form an Eco Club at Jawahar Nagar LP School.

They also led a session on paper bag making and sustainability for students, encouraging them to reduce plastic use and adopt everyday eco-friendly practices.



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