



Dear Fellow members!

*“Dream... Dream... and Dream  
Dream transforms in to thoughts  
Thoughts results in to Action...”  
Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam – Former President of India*

I too had a dream...

All our ACWW member societies in Central and south Asia join together and enrich ourselves, working towards empowering women worldwide. As we thought... this year's Area Conference brings us together as a Global family in sharing and listening to others, enriching us with a new spirit, with ideas and thought.

The theme 'Women: Redefining the Course of Action towards Transformation', challenging us to work together in redefining our thinking and the boundaries we set for ourselves, so we can truly represent the voice of the women worldwide.

Let us join our hands and work for the empowerment of the people.

Sister Viji DMI  
Area President, Central and South Asia

## THEME OF CONFERENCE

### WOMEN: REDEFINING THE COURSE OF ACTION TOWARDS TRANSFORMATION

The discrimination and marginalisation of women is affirmed as a hard and abiding reality of life. Women have an irreplaceable role in society, yet their contribution is not acknowledged, nor are they accorded equal rights and opportunities with their male counterparts. This oppression is felt in all sectors of life; economic, social, political, cultural sexual religious and even within the family itself. Having become conscious of their human rights and of the injustices perpetrated against them in all these sectors, there is a need to team up with them and help them. We should be aware that the liberation of women from the injustices is part and parcel of the liberation of all the poor and oppressed. This realisation demands a total rupture with the prevailing patriarchal system in order to build a democratic society.

The women's struggle is deeply connected with efforts of all the poor, who are struggling for their upliftment in all aspects of life. It is a time to embrace victoriously and progress, but also a time for renewing our vows and goals. It is also high time to redefine the course of actions -and taking courageous steps to realise them. Gender equality and women's empowerment are fundamental to the global mission, to achieve equal rights and dignity for all. This is a matter of basic human rights, as enshrined in our founding Character and the Universal Deceleration. It is part of our organisation's very identity.

The Beijing Deceleration remains as relevant today as when it was adopted. The third Millennium Development Goal to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment is central. We shall work with renewed determination for a future of equal rights, equal opportunities and progress for all. To achieve true equality for women, we must continue working towards women's political, economic and social empowerment.

The Area Conference should be an opportunity to strengthen our commitment to work towards redefining our way of thinking, our attitudes and the course of collective actions towards transformation. With solid partnership, dedicated resources and unwavering political leadership, we can build inclusive and equitable societies where it is widely understood that a win for women is a win for all.



**ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD**  
**CENTRAL & SOUTH ASIA AREA CONFERENCE**  
**16<sup>TH</sup>, 17<sup>TH</sup> & 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2011**

**'WOMEN: REDEFINING THE COURSE OF ACTION  
TOWARDS TRANSFORMATION'**

**Program Schedule-16th November 2011**

- 09.00 a.m. : Registration of Delegates  
10.15 a.m. : Delegates, Invitees to be seated  
10.00 a.m. : Arrival of Chief Guest Welcome Dance  
10.35 a.m. : Lighting the Lamp  
10.45 a.m. : Welcome Address by Ms.Jyothi, Shakthi Trust, Hosting Organization  
10.50 a.m. : Special Address by Fr. J.E.Arulraj, the founder and Chairman of DMI & MMI)  
11.00. a.m. : Key Note Address by Ms. May Kidd. The World President of (ACWW)  
11.10 a.m. : Inaugural Address by Thiru. Sagayam IAS, District Collector of Madurai.  
11.20 a.m. : Greetings by Country Delegates (Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal  
& India)  
11.30 a.m. : Vote of Thanks Tea Break  
12.00 p.m. : Introduction of By Ms. Ruth Manhorama, the Speaker of the day  
1.00. p.m. : Lunch  
2.30 p.m. : Presentation of Member societies  
4.30 p.m. : Tea break  
7.00 p.m. : Dinner by the Hosting Organisation

**Program Schedule- 17th November 2011**

- 8.00 a.m. : Breakfast  
9.00 a.m. : Interfaith Prayer Service  
9.45 a.m. : Assembling for the exposure visit (Team 'A' – Society for Serving Humanity

Sempatti – Dindigul) (Team 'B'- PACHE Trust – Madurai Vadippatti Block)

6.00 p.m. : Sound and Light Show at Thirumalai Nayakkar Mahal Madurai

### **Program Schedule- 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

9.00 a.m. : Welcome

9.05 a.m. : Documentary Film

9.15 a.m. : Special talk By Jo Almond, ACWW Hon Secretary

9.30 a.m. : Report Presentation by Sister Viji, Area President Discussion on Area Development

10.30 a.m. : Discussion about ACWW

10.45 a.m. : Tea break

11.00 a.m. : Presentation by the member societies

1.00 p.m. : Lunch Break

2.30 p.m. : Other business

3.30 p.m. : Tea Break

3.45 p.m. : Closing Ceremony

: Vote of Thanks

7.30 p.m. : Dinner hosted by Sr. Viji – Area President Central & South Asia.

## **TOURIST INFORMATION**

### **Madurai**

The oldest continuously inhabited cities in the Indian peninsula. It is an ancient and prestigious city in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, situated on the banks of the River Vaigai in Madurai district.

The city is widely known as the Temple City, and is often also referred to as City of four junctions (*Koodal Maanagar*), Cultural center of Tamil Nadu (*Kalaachaara thalainagar*), City of Jasmine (*Malligai Maanagar*), Sleepless city (*Thoonga Nagaram*), Athens of the East and The City of Festivals (*Thiruvizha nagaram*).It is the third largest (was second largest from its origin till 2001) city by population in Tamil Nadu and second largest by area.

Madurai was the capital city of ancient Southern civilization. Madurai's cultural heritage goes back 2,500 years, and the city has been an important commercial center and has conducted trade as far as Rome and Greece since as early as 550 BCE.

Madurai is built around the Meenakshi Sundareswar Temple. Concentric rectangular streets surround the temple, symbolizing the structure of the cosmos. The entire city is laid out in the shape of a lotus. Some of these rectangular streets are named after Tamil months. The six major rectangular streets around Meenakshi temple are Chittirai, Aadi, Aavani Moola, Maasi, Maarat and Veli streets.

## **RELIGIOUE KALAIKODAM**

### **The Aadheenam**

This is one of the oldest places in India constituted during the period of Thirugnana Sambanthar.

### **The Kaziyar**

Kazi, the jury and religious head of Muslims, in Madurai is appointed by Govt. of Tamil Nadu. The tradition of Kazis in Madurai goes back to 750 years.

### **The Archbishop**

The tradition of the Archdiocese of Madura goes back 70 years and the Archbishop of Madurai is considered the head of Roman Catholic Christians in Madurai. The archdiocese of Madura was erected in the year 1938.

## **TOURISM**

### **Meenakshi-Sundareswar Temple**

Madurai's Meenakshi-Sundareswarar temple stands today as one of the India's greatest cultural and architectural landmarks, was originally built by the early Pandya King Kulasekara. It is also one of the greatest Shiva Temples of Tamil Nadu.

### **Thirumalai Nayakar Mahal**

The Thirumalai Nayakkal Mahal palace complex was constructed in the Indo-Saracen style by Thirumalai Nayakar in 1636. There are 248 pillars, each 58 feet (18 m) tall and 5 feet (1.5 m) in diameter.

### **Kazimar Big Mosque (Periya Pallivasal) and Maqbara**

This famous mosque (masjid) is located at the heart of Madurai city, constructed by His Holiness Hazrat Kazi Syed Tajuddin during 13th century.

### **Gandhi Museum**

Rani Mangamma's palace has been renewed and converted to Gandhi museum. The museum displays information about Mahatma Gandhi, and most importantly it showcases the original blood-stained garment of Gandhi when he was assassinated by Nathuram Godse. The other piece of the garment is kept at the Gandhi Museum in Delhi.

### **Thiruparankundram**

Thiruparankundram is 7 km (4.5 miles) from the center of Madurai city. Thiruparakundram has become a symbol of the religious harmony among the people of Madurai. An Islamic Durgah (shrine) is located at the top of the hill. The traditional legend is that Murugan married Deivanai at Thiruparankundram Murugan Temple, which also is the first among the Six Holy Abodes of Murugan.

### **Goripalayam Dargah**

The name Gorippalayam comes from the Persian word **Gor** which means **Grave**. This area is called as Goripalayam because the Graves of the two famous saints of Islam and rulers of Madurai Hazrat Sulthan Alauddin Badusha (Radiyahallah) and Hazrat Sulthan Shamsuddin Badhusa (Radiyahallah) are located here.

### **Theppakulam**

Theppakulam belongs to Vandiyur Mariyamman temple. It has become quite a picnic spot now. There is an artificial island at the centre, made of stone. It was built sometime around 1500 AD

### **Koodal Azhagar Koil**

A beautiful Vishnu temple which has Navagraham also (usually Navagraham is found only in Shivan temple). There is a hayagrivar temple close to this temple where hayagrivar (Horse/"haya"griva avataram) is the main deity

### **St. Mary's Cathedral Church**

St. Mary's Cathedral in Madurai is the seat of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Madurai. It is one of the oldest Roman Catholic churches in India and is situated 2 km South East of Madurai Railway station and 200 meters from the Thirumalai Nayak Mahal.

## **OTHER TOURIST SPOTS IN TAMIL NADU**

**Courtallam:** 160 km from Madurai Altitude 167 meters Best Time to Visit June to September.

**Kodaikanal:** 120 km from Madurai Altitude 2133 meters (7,000 feet) Best Time to Visit April to June and September to October.

**Megamalai:** 130 km from Madurai Altitude 1,500 meters Best Time to Visit September to March.

**Palani Hills:** 122 km from Madurai Altitude 1500 meters to 2000 meters Best Time to Visit September to March.

**Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary:** 155 km from Madurai Area 777 sq km Climate Pleasant throughout the year Best Time to Visit October to April.

**Suruli Falls:** 123 km from Madurai Altitude 150 feet Best Time to Visit June to October.

## **TRANSPORT**

### **Air**

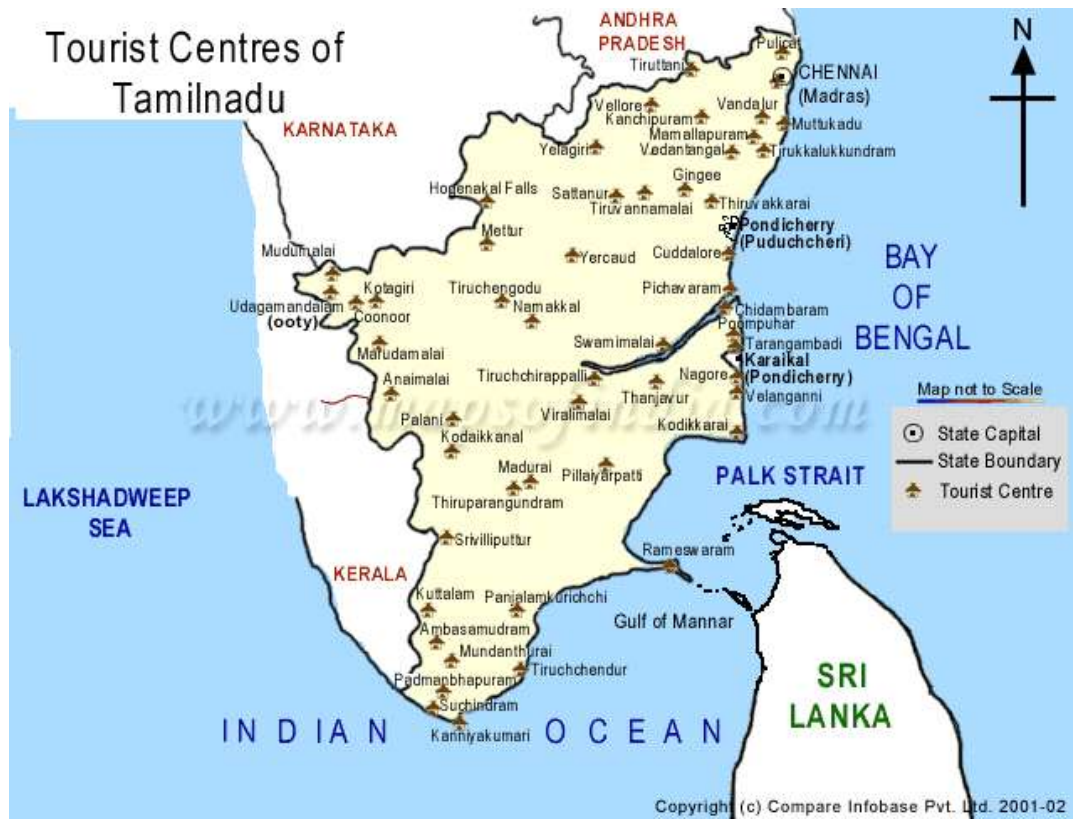
Madurai Airport is located at 12 kilometers from Madurai city and it offers flights to major cities in southern, western and north India.

### **Rail**

The Madurai Junction is one of the busiest in the country and has computerized reservation counters.

### **Road**

Madurai has several major bus stands: Madurai Integrated Bus Terminus (MIBT) at Mattuthavani (North), Palanganatham (South), Arappalayam (West), Periyar (Central) and Anna Bus stand (East).



A GLIMPSE OF TAMIL



NADU TOURIST PLACES



CHENNAI -MARINA BEACH



CHIDAMBARAM – NATARAJAR



COURTRALAM



CUDDALORE



DHARMAPURI



KANNIYAKUMARI (CAPE COMORIN)



KODAIKANAL



MADURAI



MAMALLA PURAM



NAGAPATTINAM



OOTY



POOMPUHAR



RAMESWARAM



TANJAVUR