

Thagam

Transport staff fund film on eco protection

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THE transport staff under the aegis of TN Transport Staff Federation (TTSF), a non-political trade union, has raised funds for a short film aimed at creating awareness on environmental protection.

The TNSTC bus conductor, Yoganathan, an ardent eco-activist and winner of the 'Earth Eco Warrior Award' by the Union government last year, spearheaded work on a short film on environmental issues.

Sharing his filmmaking experience with *Express*, he said that the 20-minute short film was titled *Thagam* (meaning hirst) and picturised at the Melakayampatty village near Pudukottai.

He said the four-day shoot with the locals as the supporting cast was an experience to remember. The TTSF had contributed Rs 60,000 of the total production cost of Rs 1 lakh and the balance amount was shared by the film crew.

Yoganathan said the film dealt with the issue of 'water scarcity' and the film followed what happened when



TNSTC conductor Yoganathan, who donned the role of a director for a short film *Thagam* explaining the scene to an old woman of Melakayampatti

farmers migrated to city selling their farm lands to developers who cut down trees for real estate purposes.

Cinematographer Arvind Kumar said they were overwhelmed to see Kasturi Srinivasan Trust hall jam-packed when the short film was screened for the public.

He quoted Poet Puviarasu's appreciation of their work and said he had never seen such a huge crowd in his two-decade experience of watching documentaries and short films.

He recalled that the team was greatly moved when a tailor at Crosscut Road, Gandhipuram said after watching the movie that he had decided against cutting down the trees in his house to foot the bill for a surgery. Arvind Kumar said that the short film has been sent for the CMS Vatavaran Award and for NLC Book Fair Award.

The team comprising poet Aaraa (actor), Vijay (associate director), Chellappa (hero), Arvind Kumar and Yoganathan are all set for their next feature film *Maanbumigu Vivasayi* which focuses on the sufferings of farmers.