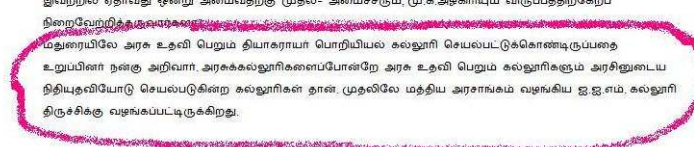


## *Why we, MUTA-TCE, oppose and will continue to oppose “converting TCE into a Private University”?*

### *Because,*

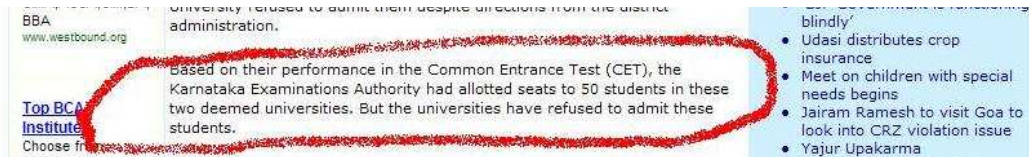
1. ***TCE, is a Government Aided institution,*** funded by State and Central Governments, having Staff (teaching & non-teaching) paid and controlled by the TN Government. It also comes under the appellate authority of the Director of Technical Education and worth crores of rupees. So, this institution cannot be just handed over to private management, for free. It is against common justice. So we opposed, oppose and will go on opposing this move.

In this regard, the Honorable Minister for Higher Education, Mr.Ponmudi himself had said in the TN Assembly that TCE is equivalent to a Government College because it is getting funds from the TN Government.



(<http://www.maalaimalar.com/2009/07/24125839/MDU12240709.html> )

2. ***The reservation system will not be complied with.*** In a country of many marginalized communities, unless the reservation system is followed, a mass of people would be barred from access to education. Reservation is followed in TCE because it is a Government Aided College. If TCE becomes a Private University, reservation will not be adhered to and the Government would not be in a position to force their compliance. The following news clip illustrates the unbending attitude of Private Universities towards Government’s orders.



(<http://www.thehindu.com/2009/08/01/stories/2009080155020600.htm>)

3. ***Fees will be hiked.*** Government colleges with nominal fee structure cater to the needs of poor students. In India around 90% of the people don’t have access to education. A private university which is just run for profit will have to hike its course fee exorbitantly to make ends meet. Then, only the rich 10% would have access to engineering education.

It is worthwhile to cite the opinion of Dr.P.M.Bhargava, Former Vice-chairman of National Knowledge Commission.

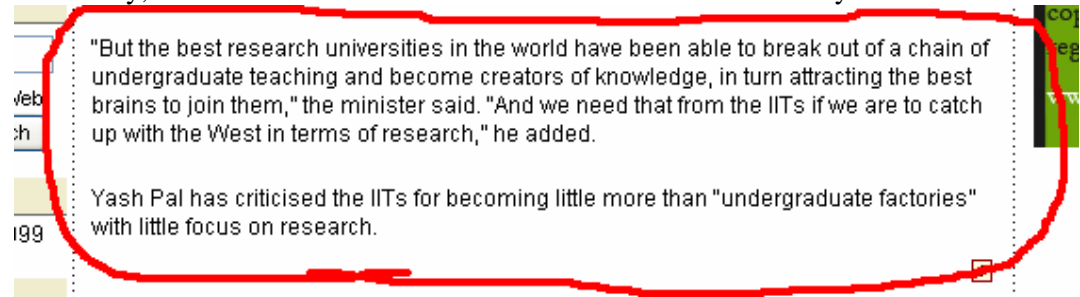
*"As regards education, the most important division in the country today is between those (numbering less than 10 per cent) who have access to good education and those (adding up to more than 90 per cent) who have only education without any value. The former are the rulers and the latter are the ruled.*

*To be truly independent as a nation, and to maintain national dignity, India needs a knowledge society in which every citizen has a minimum amount of knowledge. The country can do that only by decommercialising and decommodifying education and setting up a common school system (for which there has been a continuous demand since the days of the Kothari Commission in the early-1960s) in which the students of the rich and the poor in the same neighbourhood would be studying in the same school without paying any fees, and with a new curricular framework. That is the only way for us to ensure education security".*

(<http://www.thehindu.com/2009/08/11/stories/2009081155790800.htm>)

4. **UG Courses will be discontinued.** TCE is a Government Aided Engineering College primarily meant for running UG courses that produce engineers who are in great demand in our country. But the concern of a university is mainly research. So, if TCE becomes a Private University, UG courses will be withdrawn.

Also, the demand for all branches of engineering courses is not constant over a period of time. Core engineering had its field day, then it declined. IT & CSE were in demand for sometime, now it is facing a downtrend. Through all these ups and downs, students of Government Aided Colleges like TCE, still have the choice of choosing any branch they wanted as not even one course was withdrawn during the hard times. But if the college becomes a Private University, non-remunerative courses will be shut down immediately.



(HRD Minister's statement -

[http://www.telegraphindia.com/1090809/jsp/nation/story\\_11339320.jsp](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1090809/jsp/nation/story_11339320.jsp))

5. **Madurai is in dire need of at least one Government Engineering College,** leave alone a Anna University. We cannot allow the one and only Government Aided Engineering College in Madurai to slip out of Government

hands due to the short sightedness of our education-policy makers who think government spending on education is a liability. The following statistics show that India is in the 81<sup>st</sup> place when it comes to spending on education. The Government is heading for a disaster in education if it tries to further reduce its financial commitment in Higher Education.

Public Spending on Education and Health: An I	
Country	Public Expenditure on Education as % of GDP (2002-04)*
France	6
U.K.	5.5
U.S.	5.9
Brazil	4.1
South Africa	5.4
Mexico	5.8
S. Korea	4.6
Bangladesh	2.2
Malaysia	8
India	3.3

Note: \*For the most recent year, during 2002-2004, for which data is available.  
Source: UNDP Human Development Report 2006/

(<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2009/07/24/stories/2009072450160800.htm>)

6. ***This proposal is a retrograde move.*** When Tamilnadu Government is trying to establish Government Engineering Colleges in many districts of TN, the right move would be to upgrade TCE to full status of Government College not degrade it to a Private University.

To quote the words of Noam Chomsky,

*"Also, notice that privatizing it undermines the danger, it's kind of an ethic that has to be undermined, namely the idea that you care about somebody else. A public education system is based on the principle that you care whether the kid down the street gets an education. And that's got to be stopped. This is very much like what the workers in the mills in Lowell, Massachusetts were worrying about 150 years ago. They were trying to stop what they called the new spirit of the age: "Gain wealth, forgetting all but self." We want to stop that. That's not what we're like. We're human beings. We care about other people. We want to do things together. We care about whether the kid down the street gets an education. We care about whether somebody else has a road, even if I don't use it. We care about whether there is child slave labor in Thailand. We care about whether some elderly person gets food. That's social security. We care whether somebody else gets food. There's a huge effort to try to undermine all of that--to try to privatize aspirations so then you're totally controlled. Privatize aspirations, you're completely controlled. Private power goes its own way, everyone else has to subordinate themselves to it."*

(<http://www.freezerbox.com/archive/article.php?id=48>)

*To conclude, On August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008, when the Select Committee was in Madurai to hear our opinion regarding conversion of TCE into a Private University, the people of Madurai delivered a resounding “NO” to this atrocious plan. Why is the Tamilnadu Government reluctant to withdraw the bill- even after the massive verdict against the Private University Bill?*

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## **Answers to false claims raised by the people who are lobbying for Private University for their own gains.**

1. They say that the Private University will follow the Government norms in admitting the students by following the reservation policy without hiking the fees.

As of now, the Government is an appellate authority for Government Aided Colleges. The Governor of the State is the Chancellor and the appellate authority for any Government and Government aided University. In case TCE becomes a Private University, there will be no appellate authority from the Government side. But as per the proposed Private University bill, the Chancellor, who has been delegated full authority to control the Private University, is only from the management. So the Government totally loses the control over the Private University. It is not an appellate authority anymore. Therefore, in a Private University entirely run by the management, the staff and students will loose their security; favoritism will be the order of the day. Vindictive actions will become common disciplinary action. Even now, when TCE is under the control of Directorate of Technical Education of Tamilnadu, the management is thrusting SF classes on aided teachers, taking vindictive actions against association (MUTA & TNGEA) members, refusing to acknowledge the requests through ‘Right to Information Act’ . The list would go on.

So do you really think that a Private University run like totalitarian state will honor Government norms for admission, reservation and fees?

2. They say that the Private University will follow the Government norms in paying staff pension.

Nothing is said in the bill about paying pension to the staff. No mention is made of Corpus fund, that is required to pay a huge amount of pension salary. Further the bill clearly states that the Government funds will be cut on the date of implementation of the Act, which is actually the only part of the proposed bill which is honest. This is the Government norms that is followed elsewhere in our country when a public sector company is handed over to a private entrepreneur.

Take for example, what happened to Airport Authority of India Ltd, which is a public company. When it was proposed to privatize the airports of Delhi and Mumbai, the staff were given an option of reverting back to the parent government department OR those willing to join the private establishment were given VRS, their Government service terminated and then they were absorbed in the private company. The financial commitment for the Private company which is taking over was in the order of thousands of crores.

*The airports were handed over as a public-private partnership in May 2006 to a GMR Infrastructure Ltd-led consortium that runs **Delhi International Airport (P) Ltd (DIAL)**, and GVK Infrastructure and Power Ltd-led consortium that runs **Mumbai International Airport Pvt. Ltd (MIAL)**, with a condition that the two firms will retain the AAI employees—numbering at least 2,000 each—for the first three years.*

*Under the agreement, DIAL and MIAL were to offer and try to absorb about 60% of these employees. But so far, just 5% of the workers at these two airports have accepted the offer by the airport companies. By May, most will return and join AAI, resulting in a huge surplus pool. AAI, according to data of March last year, had 19,180 employees, including those at the Delhi and Mumbai airports.*

*"We are working to accommodate (the Delhi and Mumbai airport AAI staff) in other airports and a VRS will be offered to those who do not want to relocate," said an AAI board member, who asked not to be named.*

*A senior civil aviation ministry official estimated the proposed VRS plan could cost at least Rs1,000 crore. The official arrived at the figure considering that an average of Rs25 lakh would have to be paid to each employee under the scheme.*

*The official, who requested anonymity, said the ministry expects most employees serving the airports for decades "would prefer to take VRS" than shift to places such as the North-East where many small airports are coming up on the back of Union government funding.*

*"And we are now going to pursue these two companies to share the costs under the provisions of Omda," this official added.*

*Omda is short for operations management development agreement or the privatization agreement.*

*Omda terms mandate DIAL and MIAL share VRS costs, this official insisted, estimating the airport companies would have to cough up about Rs500 crore. The agreement prescribes that if less than 60% of AAI employees are absorbed at the two airport developers, then the companies shall pay "retirement compensation" for the difference between that benchmark and the number of workers who take employment at the new airport firms.*

*By that rule, DIAL and MIAL will have to bear retirement costs for some 55%, or 2,200, of AAI workers at the two*

But the Private companies honored this commitment and started implementing the switch over process. Even then, the move to privatizing airports was opposed as it is being against national interest.

But in the proposed Private university bill of the TN government, nowhere is there a mention of exit option which is actually a norm to be followed by any Government in India. Now, there is much talk about modifying the Private University Bill to incorporate Government Aid and Government pension to the staff. But, does anybody really think that we can believe the proposal without appropriate action in terms of clear-cut exit options, creating huge corpus funds and the choice of reverting back to Government colleges.

But we at MUTA-TCE unit had never even considered pension as one of our demands for opposing the Private University Bill. We oppose in-Toto the very idea of a Private University, because it is against the social and natural justice.

### 3. They say that the Private University will improve the Quality of Engineering Education in TamilNadu.

But the haste in which the TN Government blindly agreed to hand over its assets - an engineering college together with its staff (teaching and supporting) - without consulting the stake holders and in deadly secrecy, shows only greed not a concern for Higher Education. This leaves us to conclude that the motive for this hasty gifting of a Government Engineering College to a private entrepreneur did not have as its objective, the improvement of Higher Education.



The political decision to convert TCE into a Private University just shows the greed of a few individuals who stand to gain by this move, but at the cost of large group of other stakeholders. 50 years of tax-payer's money that had gone into creating the assets of this institution will pass into private hands with no strings attached. And certainly this will adversely affect the next generation of students and parents, besides affecting the current batch of students.

*This issue concerns all, and publicity is the best weapon for correcting wrong political decisions.*

*Teachers and Students from various colleges staged many struggles to seek the attention of the public and hence the Government.*





Tamil Nadu - Madurai



### Teachers observe hunger strike

*Against making college into university*

MADURAI: A one-day hunger strike was observed here on Saturday opposing the State Government's move to convert Thiagarajar College of Engineering (TCE) into a private university.

Over 250 teaching staff from various colleges took part in the protest held under the aegis of Madurai Kamaraj, Manonmaniam Sundaranar, Mother Teresa and Alagappa University Teachers' Association (MUTA) in which the Government was urged to withdraw the Bill introduced in the Assembly.

S. Vivekanandan, MUTA general secretary, said that the move to make a Government-aided institution like TCE as a university would negatively affect both staff and students.

"The Private Universities Bill must be withdrawn. MUTA will hold a series of programmes in this regard till the move is given up," he said.

S. Thiagarajan, zonal president of the association, said that the attitude of the Minister for Higher Education, K. Ponmudy, was highly condemnable because the Select Committee which visited Coimbatore a few days ago did not give students adequate chance to express their grievances.

"The lathicharge by police is beyond comprehension and the Minister too did not fully listen to teachers and students' views," he said.

According to Dr. Thiagarajan, the main reason for objection by MUTA was that students' scholarship and reservation for admission along with teaching staff's future would be in jeopardy if TCE and Thiagarajar College were made into a university.

He said that the association was expressing solidarity with the staff of these institutions who turned up for the fast. Representatives from various trade unions also took part.

(<http://www.thehindu.com/2008/08/10/stories/2008081058510300.htm>)



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Tamil Nadu - Madurai

### College teachers plan protest rally

Special Correspondent

On the eve of Minister's visit

Objection to move to convert college into university

Public views to be heard on August 26

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MADURAI: Members of college teachers' associations, trade unions and students have decided to take out a protest rally here on August 25.

The Select Committee of Tamil Nadu Assembly including Minister for Higher Education, K. Ponmudy, is scheduled to hear public views on August 26 on the State Government's proposed move to convert the Thiagarajar College of Engineering and Thiagarajar College here into a university.

Strong condemnation and opposition came from the Madurai Kamaraj, Manonmani Sundaranar, Mother Teresa and Alagappa University Teachers' Association (MUTA) which held a press conference here on Saturday questioning the rationale behind privatisation of government-aided colleges.

P. Vijaykumar, former General Secretary of MUTA, told reporters that the Government should not convert Thiagarajar College into a private university "as it is detrimental to the interests of both students and teachers in all aspects - be it reservation, fee structure, students' scholarships and teachers' appointments through community roster system."

Time inadequate

The association's zonal president, S.Thiagarajan, demanded more time to listen to public views since the allotted 45 minutes is not enough for people to express their opinion before the committee which will meet people at the Madurai Medical College on August 26.

"When many political parties including the Congress and the PMK are opposed to the privatisation bill, why should the DMK Government go ahead by ignoring everyone," Dr. Thiagarajan questioned.

- "Economic growth alone is not enough for nation's pr...
- Teachers plan protest i...
- Industrial estate plan i...
- trouble
- New technique for knee replacement introduced at Madurai hospital
- Scrap use of 'My Lord', Council
- College teachers plan p...
- rally
- Water release date yet decided
- Water level
- Banks urged to focus o...
- insurance
- Top priority to water su...
- Photographs of loan de...
- can be published
- So soft
- Madurai today

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Business  
SciTech  
NXG  
Friday Review  
Cinema Plus  
Young World  
Property Plus  
Quest

(<http://www.thehindu.com/2008/08/24/stories/2008082461030200.htm>)

The select committee comprised MLAs P. Moorthy, S. S. Raja, T. Senguttuvan, T. Udayasooriyan, Prabavathi, Thambidurai, Sudarsanam, Kovai. Thangam, K. Arumugam, Higher Education Secretary K. Ganesan and Legislative Assembly Secretary M. Selvaraj.

### CP(M) plea

Members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) led by MP P. Mohan and MLA N. Nanmaran submitted a memorandum to the committee.

Later, talking to reporters, Mr. Mohan said that at a time when they had been repeatedly insisting the government to set up Anna University in Madurai and establish a Central University here, the proposal to accord university status to Thiagarajar College of Engineering and Thiagarajar College had come as a blow to the public.

The institution had grown with government funds and hence it should not be made a university, he said.

SFI State general secretary K. S. Kanagaraj said that the public hearing was an eye-wash and described it as "stage managed." He threatened that the students would intensify the stir if the government went ahead with its proposal.

(<http://www.hinduonnet.com/2008/08/27/stories/2008082757920300.htm>)