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Dalits in Kangeyam allege denial of temple entry

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The Uthamapalayam temple entry struggle committee has alleged denial of temple entry for Dalits and discrimination by caste Hindus at Uthamapalayam in Kangeyam, Tirupur district.

In 2005 January, when the Dalits demanded right to enter the Uthamapalayam Mariamman temple, Revenue and HR&CE officials held talks ensured the entry of dalits into the temple.

Convenor of the Committee S. Karupiah said that the caste Hindus, claiming that the temple had lost its sanctity because of the entry of Dalits had constructed another temple on a common site and named it New Uthamapalayam Mariamman Temple. The kumbabishegam took place on October 21.

When the Dalits from Velampalayam, Uthamapalayam, Dasavanaickenpatti, Nagamanaickenpatti numbering nearly 500 tried to enter the temple with materials for abishegam, they were intercepted and attacked.

Meeting held

In order to end the caste-based discrimination and practice of untouchability, representatives of 13 organisations conducted a meeting at Vellakoil on Saturday.

At the meeting, it was decided to condemn the official machinery for supporting the caste Hindu outfits, which resorted to discrimination of Dalits and practice of untouchability. An 18-member executive committee was constituted for the purpose of ensuring temple entry rights for Dalits.

The New Uthamapalayam Mariamman Temple was a symbol of shame depicting the practice of untouchability.

The meeting also resolved to seek registration of cases against caste Hindus for the attack unleashed on Dalits under the Protection of Civil Rights Act and arrest of those responsible for the attack.

The meeting also demanded the withdrawal of the case registered against the Dalits in Vellakoil police limits.

The meeting decided to represent to the District Collector and Superintendent of Police in connection with the attack.

It also resolved to hold a public meeting at Vellakoil on November 9 to highlight the rights of the Dalits to enter the Uthamapalayam Mariamman temple.

Keywords: [untouchability](#), [Dalits](#), [Kangeyam](#)