

## Discussion with Bargur Cattle Pastoralists at Dronagiri Matt, Bargur block, Erode district on 3-3-2026



One day discussion with Bargur cattle pastoralists has been organized at Dronagiri Matt, Bargur block, Erode district on 3-3-2026. This event has been jointly organized by Tamil Nadu Federation of Pastoral Sangams, SEVA and Dronagiri Matt. Mr. Ashok Rajendraswami presided over the meeting. Mr. P. Vivekanandan briefed SEVA work over the last 2 decades right from documenting traditional knowledge of the Bargur cattle pastoralists and also bio-cultural protocol in addressing their issues especially camping the herds inside the forests. He also talked about International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026 (IYRP). Mr. Rajiv Gandhi briefed the procedure in claiming grazing rights and camping inside the forests as per Forest Rights Act 2006. Mr. Anbu, Tribal Foundation described the historic background of Bargur cattle pastoralists and their culture in protecting nature and environment. He agreed to sponsor procuring 5 male bulls of buffalo for breeding purpose. Dr. Subash, Bargur Cattle Research Station briefed about the activities of their centre in conserving 100 number of Bargur cattle and earning income through distribution of calves, milk and milk products and supply of dung to the farmers on cost basis. He also

cautioned not to promote artificial insemination using semen of Murrah Buffalo for the local buffalo population. Mr. Ashok Rajendraswami has narrated how the local Lingayat community become vegetarian and gave up hunting the wild animals after the advise of their first Guru Siddha Veereswarar Swami being devotee of Matheswara Swami and this happened about 1000 years back. Now the 36<sup>th</sup> descendent of the Gurupeetam is the supreme leader and protector of Lingayat culture which worship Lord Shiva and cattle. They never engage cattle for agricultural operation viz. ploughing on Monday as it is auspicious day for Lord Shiva. They will not attend milking on Mondays and allow the calves to suckle. Such a tradition is conserving wild life bio-diversity but forest department is imposing all the hardship in the name of protecting forests. Therefore the rights of the cattle pastoralists ought to be restored and recognize their lifestyle including seasonal migration to forests during cropping season.



In the afternoon the pastoralists divided into 3 groups and discussed on the following themes :

1. Forming pastoralists association and vana gramasabha for claiming rights under Forest Rights Act 2006

2. Status of breeding in buffaloe keeping and addressing their issues on availability of buffaloe bulls.
3. How to increase income level of Bargur cattle pastoralists.

The group representatives presented the outcome of their discussion. Members agreed in promoting herbal veterinary clinic in Velampatti village where road access is limited. SEVA will provide training on preparation of herbal medicines for animals. Members agreed to construct pucca arch showing the wordings of International Year of Rangeland and Pastoralists 2026 at the entrance of Thamarai karai village. Members agreed to approach district collector for official permission for this purpose. It has been decided to involve volunteers in villages for forming gramasabha under Forest Rights Act 2006 for claiming the grazing and camping rights in forests.

Finally members stand together for oath taking event. Lunch has been arranged for all the participants by Mr. Ashok Rajendraswami. District collector Mr. Kandhasamy visited Dronagiri Matt on 7.3.2026 and assured all support for the pastoral communities as he was unable to present on 3-3-2026.



Minutes compiled by :

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