



VEPPATHIN VERIYAATTAM

The crisis of extreme heat in Tamil Nadu told through Kattaikuthu

Tamil Nadu has always been hot. What's changing is how much, how fast, and how unequally.

Veppathin Veriyaattam is an original **Kattaikuthu** production that brings the story of rising heat and climate change to the stage. Through storytelling, music, songs, dance, humour, and audience interaction, the performance explores how extreme heat is affecting our everyday lives.

Children, outdoor workers, farmers, older people, pregnant women, and communities with limited access to shade and cooling are among those facing the greatest risks. More than a performance, *Veppathin Veriyaattam* invites audiences to understand the changing climate, reflect on its impacts, and imagine how we can build more resilient communities together.

Meet Thilagavathi Palani & Her Kattaikuthu Troupe

Thilagavathi Palani is a Sangeet Natak Akademi Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar National Award-winning Kattaikuthu artist with over two decades of experience using traditional theatre to engage communities on issues that matter, from gender equality and public health to social justice.

In 2014, she founded **Sri Thilagam Kattaikuthu Kuzhu**, becoming the first woman to lead a troupe in the Kattaikuthu tradition. Through her work, she has nurtured emerging artists while bringing contemporary social and environmental stories to one of Tamil Nadu's oldest performing arts.

Kattaikuthu is a nearly **300-year-old theatre tradition** from northern Tamil Nadu, known for its powerful storytelling, music, elaborate costumes, painted faces, and the distinctive wooden ornaments (*kattai*) that give the art form its name.



About Asar

Asar Social Impact Advisors works at the intersection of environment, climate, and social justice, building locally rooted strategies that strengthen climate resilience and support meaningful climate action.

Climate Culture Collective, incubated by Asar, is a network of communicators, artists, and creators across India using media, arts, and culture to make climate conversations more accessible, relatable, and locally rooted.

About M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF)

MSSRF is a community-focused, science-driven, interdisciplinary research institution dedicated to sustainable development.

The Foundation has long recognised the power of art and storytelling to inspire social change.

Mina Swaminathan, who served as the Distinguished Chair for Gender and Development at MSSRF, strongly championed the use of drama and storytelling as tools for learning and community engagement. MSSRF also shares a long-standing association with the **Kattaikkuttu Sangam**, a not-for-profit initiative committed to preserving and promoting Kattaikkuttu theatre.
