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‘Join struggle for total prohibition’

STAFF REPORTER

CHENNAI: Urging students to join the struggle towards implementation of total prohibition of liquor across the country, social activist Medha Patkar said that governments too had to give importance to the good health of the population at large and take steps towards banning liquor.

She was addressing an audience of students, faculty members and activists at Stella Maris College on Wednesday. As a part of the ‘Nasha Mukta Bharat Andolan’, a national yatra undertaken by her and a group of other activists and social workers to raise awareness about the need for prohibition of liquor and drugs which lead to an unhealthy addiction, Ms Patkar arrived in the city on Wednesday having started from Kaniyak-



Activists led by Medha Patkar gathered on the Marina as part of the rally seeking prohibition.— PHOTO: M. PRABHU

umari on October 2.

“The substantial increase in revenue for the government from the sale of alcohol in Tamil Nadu over the years is proof enough of how many people have fallen prey to this unhealthy addiction. As students, all of you should pledge to raise your voices and help implement prohibition,” she said.

A documentary on the ‘Narmada Bachao Andolan’, a movement spearheaded by Ms. Medha, was screened and speaking about the movement in her address, she said that while development was bringing in many comforts, it was also heralding inequity.

“The stark reality reflected in communities around

us which are affected on a daily basis should empower us to join hands and fight for food, housing and the bare necessities for the working class from the government as a larger vision is possible only with better participation of people,” she said.

Reflecting on the death of activist Sasi Perumal, who had demanded the implementation of prohibition, Ms. Medha observed that with liquor still being sold in the State, the constitutional Right to Life has been impinged upon.

“Through the yatra we have embarked upon, we hope to touch every nook and corner of the country — villages, hamlets, schools, colleges and more to ask people to demand total prohibition,” she said. The Nasha Mukta Bharat Andolan will conclude on October 12 at Bhopal.