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Social reformer and activist Medha Patkar staging a protest at Marina in Chennai on Wednesday, demanding the government to stop the trade of intoxicants and make India addiction free | **ASHWIN PRASATH**

Medha Patkar bats for total prohibition

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

CALLING for total prohibition in Tamil Nadu, noted social activist Medha Patkar on Wednesday exhorted students to come forward and fight for the cause.

Addressing students at Stella Maris College here, she said the impact of addiction was unimaginable as widows below 50 years are now becoming very common in every village across the country. Maharashtra, for instance, generated ₹4, 800

crore as revenue on liquor sales in 2004, which increased to ₹26,000 crore in 2016. Tamil Nadu's story is also the same. This steep increase, she said, showed that more and more people are getting addicted to liquor.

Students should take active part in the movement against consumption, said Patkar, who is on a nation-

wide 'Nasha Mukta Bharat Andolan' (addiction-free India campaign).

On the raging Cauvery water issue between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, she blamed it on the shortsightedness of the former rulers. It is the rulers who build structures across the river without considering the impact on either side and about water scarcity or food security. "Peo-

ple should look for alternative ways to manage the resource instead of building structures across rivers," she said.

She was speaking at the workshop on 'Inclusion of value education in schools and colleges in Tamil Nadu', organised by Department of Social Work and National Service Scheme of the college, National Alliance of People's Movement, Unorganised Workers Federation, Pennurimai Iyakkam, and People's Movement against Liquor and Drugs.



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Medha Patkar, social activist