



Colorectal Cancer March Awareness Campaign 2025 (Part 1)

Launch of Campaign to the Public “Unite against Colorectal Cancer”, 1st March 2025

One of the key gaps identified during the situation analysis for initiating the “Early Diagnosis of Colorectal Cancer” intervention in Coimbatore district was the low level of public awareness about colorectal cancer. Many people had never even heard of the disease, and consequently, most were unaware of its symptoms. This lack of awareness plays a major role in delaying the time it takes for a symptomatic person to seek medical help, thereby affecting early diagnosis and timely treatment.

Recognising this challenge, behaviour change-focused Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) activities were adopted as a central strategy to work towards the goal of promoting early diagnosis of colorectal cancer in the district.



A section of the audience of the public event.

As part of these IEC efforts, a month-long **Colorectal Cancer Awareness Campaign** was planned and implemented in March 2025 to coincide with the globally observed Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. The campaign was designed to raise awareness among the general public across Coimbatore district and to address misconceptions and stigma surrounding cancer. A range of activities were organised to engage

different sections of the community—poster competitions for college students, workplace awareness sessions, a multi-stakeholder forum, and a district-wide public event titled “Unite Against Colorectal Cancer.”

The campaign was officially launched through a public event held on the 1st of March 2025 at IMA Hall, Coimbatore. This event served as the symbolic beginning of the month-long campaign and was presided over by the District Collector, Thiru. Pavankumar G. Giriappanavar. The evening began with the Tamil Thai Vaazhthu and a lamp lighting ceremony, followed by a warm welcome address delivered by Ms. Akiko Hirano. Dr. P. Balusamy, the District Health Officer, then addressed the audience with an opening speech in which he outlined the objectives of the intervention and the urgency to raise public awareness, given the general lack of familiarity with colorectal cancer in the district.



The District Collector of Coimbatore lighting the lamp and inaugurating the event.

The District Collector, in his keynote address, launched the colorectal cancer awareness video that was produced under the project. He appreciated the intervention as a flagship initiative of the Tamil Nadu Health and Family Welfare Department, implemented in partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). He spoke about the persistent stigma surrounding cancer and how efforts like this campaign are essential to overcome fear and misinformation. His words reinforced the importance of collective responsibility in improving public understanding and encouraging timely health-seeking behaviour.



The District Collector of Coimbatore awarding one of the winners of CRC awareness poster competition.

Other speakers at the event included Rotarian Mr. Mysamy and Ms. Poornima, Senior Counsellor from the Coimbatore Cancer Foundation, who shared their perspectives on the importance of awareness, support, and access to care. The event also celebrated the winners of the student poster competition, who were recognised and awarded by the guests with cash prizes, certificates, and awareness-themed T-shirts as a token of appreciation.



A dance performance by the team from Shivanjali's Temple of Fine Arts.

The evening concluded with a vibrant cultural performance by the team from Shivanjali's Temple of Fine Arts and National Anthem. The event lasted two hours, from 6:00 PM onwards, and was attended by over 200 participants including healthcare professionals, college students, families of competition winners, and community members. Each attendee was given a blue ribbon as a symbol of unity in the fight against colorectal cancer.