

# Swadeshi movement transforming the lives of common people positively

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Rajeswary was busy attending the customers, in her role as a training staff of Swadeshi Kerala, a powerful alternative to globalisation. Thanks to Swadeshi Movement, she travelled afar in her life from a jobless post-graduate. Now, she is satisfied for the new initiative has transformed her life.

The Swadeshi Movement has started as a collective effort of some common people for the economic regeneration of the underprivileged people, inspired by the Swadeshi movement of Mahatma Gandhi. The Swadeshi spirit is revamped by producing and marketing local commodities in Kerala.

The movement was initiated by the Centre for Gandhian Studies of the University of Kerala when Jacob Pulickan was its director and is being coordinated by the Gandhi Centre for Rural Development (GCRD Swadeshi Trust). The movement was started among school students as a successful experiment and then it was disseminated to common people giving jobs to 1,25,00 common people in different parts of the state.

Swadeshi Festival, which began at the Gandhi Park here on Tuesday, envisages production and distribution of local products. Diversification of food products, herbal commodities, medicines, oils and soaps makes the festival attractive. There are 300 products available at the festival. "We fight against the present marketing culture that exploits both consumers and producers.

Health protection is our major concern. We ensure the quality of our products and provide healthy products to consumers and maximum profit to the producers," said Jacob Pulikkan.

## Training Programme

Training programmes on development of traditional and local products are being held as part of the festival in Gandhi Bhavan. Training in soap making, jewel making, umbrella making, paper bag making, and manufacturing food products are being conducted by the movement.