

'Sport brings down crime'

By OUR CORRESPONDENT

Chennai, Sept. 23: Introduction of sports, especially volleyball and throw ball, in villages in Tamil Nadu have substantially brought down crime rates and alcoholism, according to Swamy Suyagna, spokesman, Isha Foundation.

Speaking to this newspaper on the sidelines of the one-day rural festival organized here on Sunday, he

said hundreds of volunteers were working for the betterment of the standard of living of the rural folk. "We provide free education to hundreds of students in remote villages that do not have any school. We have put into service more than 20 mobile health clinics in villages in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka," he said.

"India is on the verge of a major economic transformation. If you do not include the rural masses

into this process, whatever progress we make will not be sustainable," said Swamy Suyagna.

He said the situation in the villages of Tamil Nadu is appalling. "There is no proper food or medical facilities in most of the villages in the state. I have come across many incidents of people dying of diarrhea and urinary infection in Coimbatore district itself for want of medical assistance," he said.

The Action for Rural Rejuvenation (ARR) launched by the foundation is a mission to rekindle the spirit of rural life, according to Swamy Suyagna. The action programme includes multi-pronged activities to strengthen the health and knowledge sectors of rural life. "Our mission is total elimination of poverty and diseases from these villages. We are striving hard to make rural life a celebration," the Swamy said.