

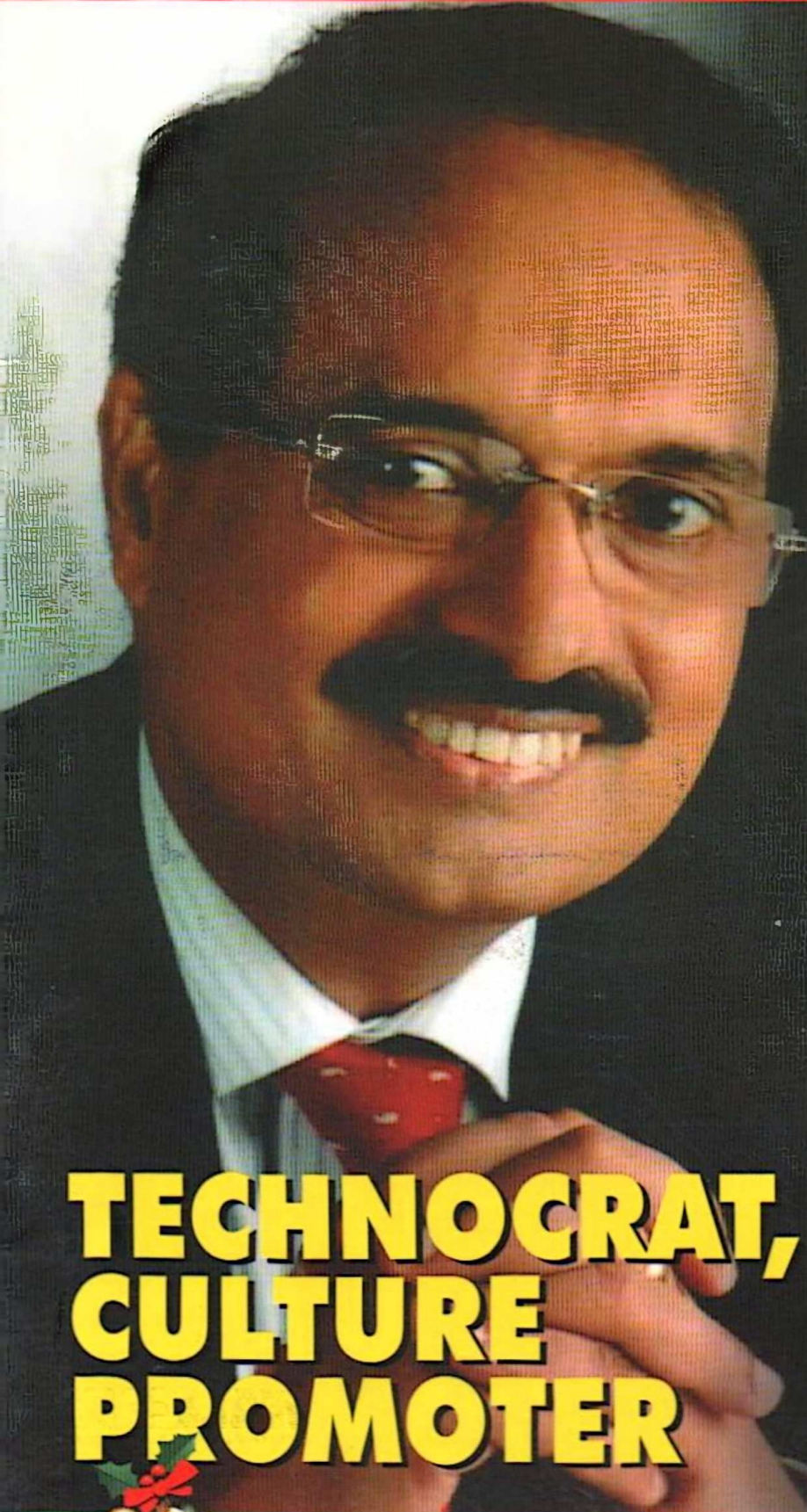
Kerala in Mumbai

Only English/Malayalam Monthly Magazine linking Mumbai Malayalees

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December 2012



**TECHNOCRAT,
CULTURE
PROMOTER**



**Versatile
Drama Artiste**



Merry Christmas

Young Talent

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DISCORDANT NOTES

Once again we are constrained to condemn the manner in which Malayalees seek to scuttle, prevent or sabotage efforts by well meaning members of the community to do something of great benefit to the State and its art, culture and heritage.

The Mumbai Pooram, staged in November was, by all accounts a great success. A spectacular show that presented lavishly the grandeur and piety of one of Kerala's greatest temple rituals to audiences in Mumbai. Instead of joining in the mammoth efforts of the organisers to put up an authentic and awe-inspiring show, some elements on the fringe, tried their best to thwart those efforts.

They created hurdles for the organisers, stealthily and in a despicable manner by preventing them from bringing on, seven elephants, for one of the highest elements of the ritual. Over-enthusiastic animal rights organisations were roped in, in the effort to achieve their objective.

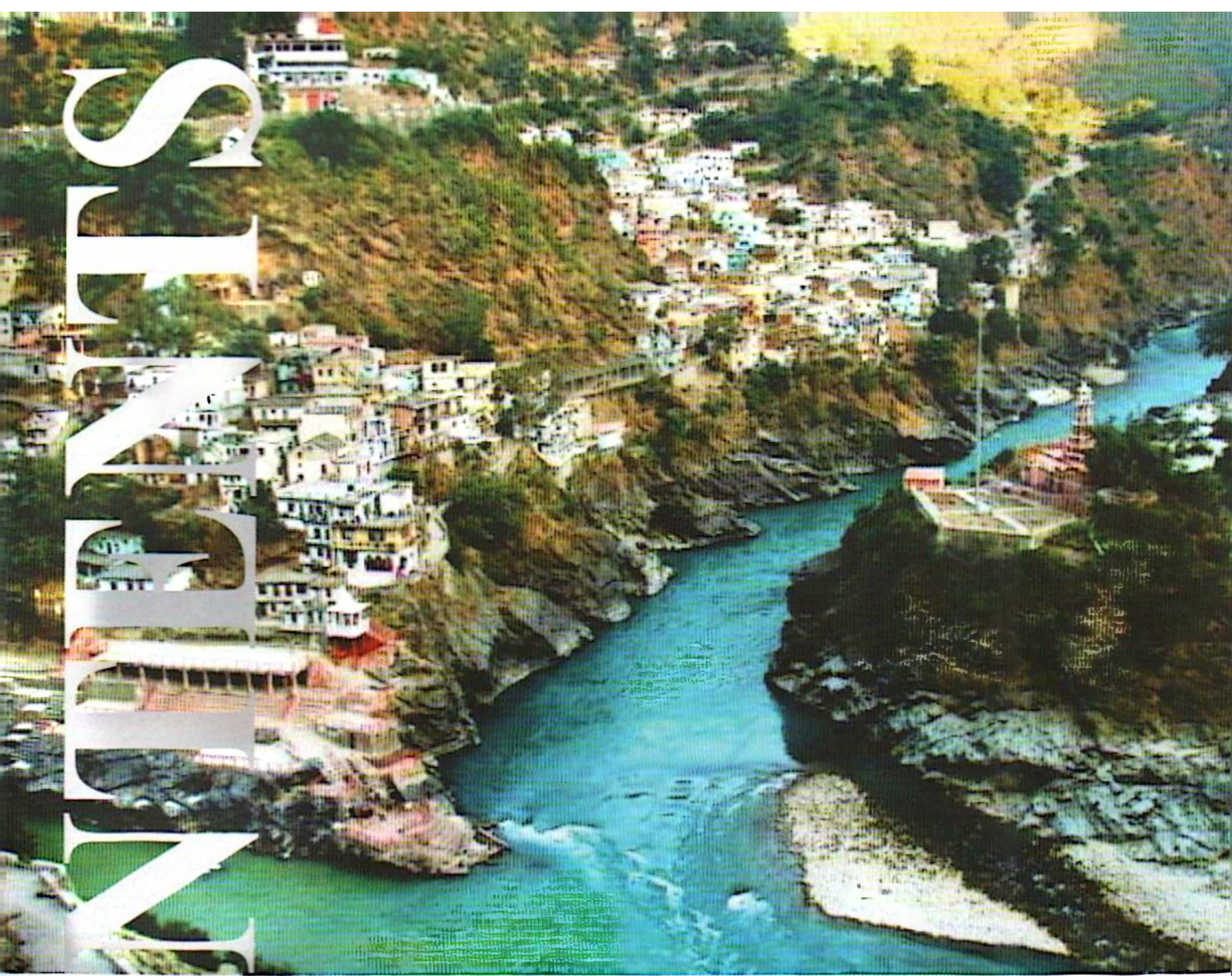
All kinds of rumors, innuendoes and half-truths were used to block the transport of the elephants from their home in Kerala to Mumbai in open trucks. The NGOs who were instigated by some Malayalees in their own vested interests, went by the rule book.

They were not aware of, nor bothered to find out why the elephants were being brought all the way from Kerala, over a distance of 1500 Kms. These elephants are fully trained in temple rituals, over several years. These elephants are used to the noise, rigours and even drudgery of being paraded for long hours before thousands of spectators.

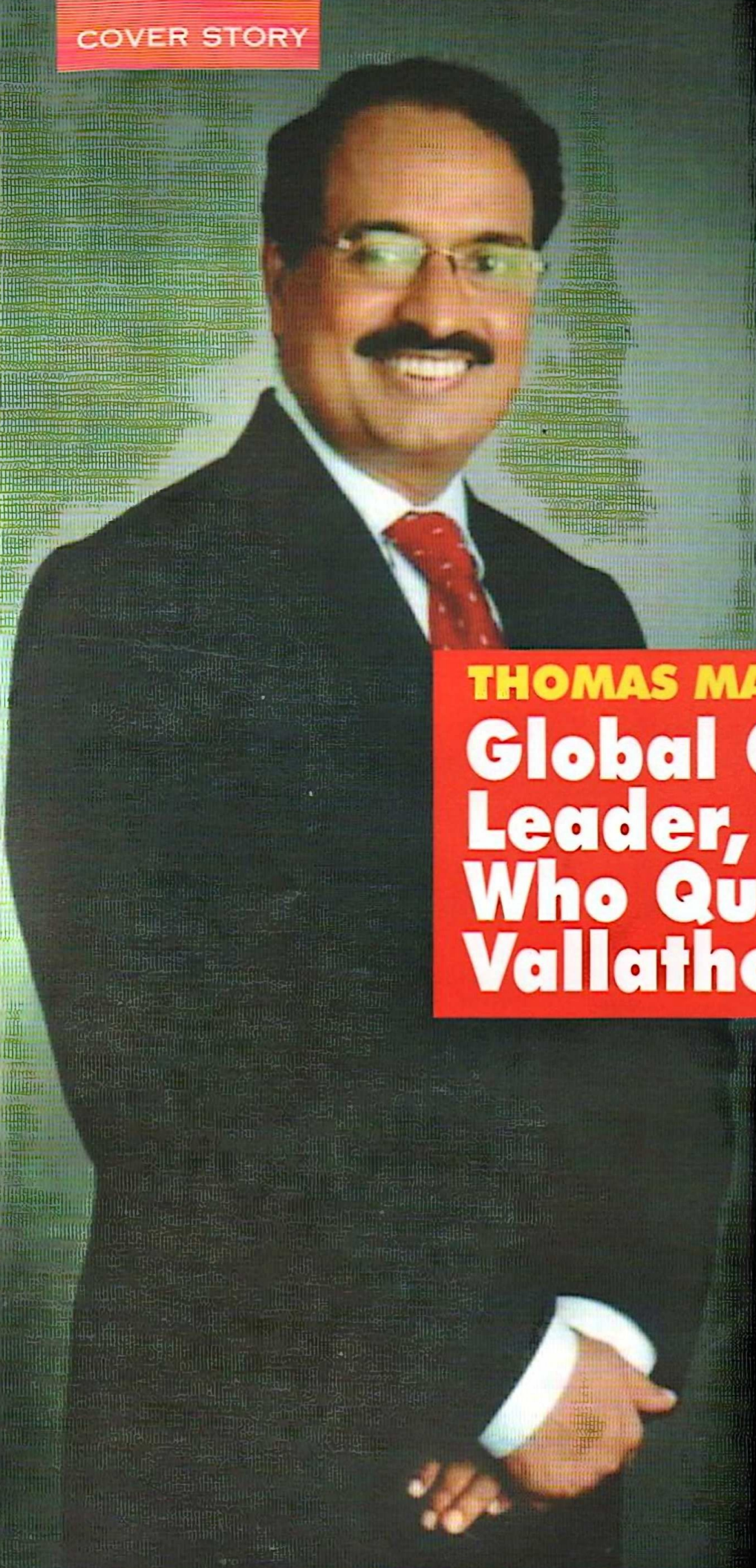
This is why these elephants are being brought all the way from Kerala. If any stray elephants would have sufficed they could have been procured locally. The very purpose of bringing them all the way from Kerala, with due care for their feed, physical strain and medical attention is to ensure that there is no untoward incidents or mishaps during the parade.

In any case, the machinations of a few Malayalees to thwart the staging of a slice of Kerala's cultural heritage were exposed even at the start of the three day festival.

Kerala in Mumbai desires that more harmony and affinity prevail among all migrant Malayalees in Mumbai and elsewhere, out of the State. It is indeed reprehensible that anyone in the community should behave like crabs in a bucket of water, seeking to pull down the ones seeking to climb out of it. They need to adopt a more progressive and co-operative attitude. This is all the more necessary since a large number of them are by nature temporary residents of this city, eager to go back to their home State, on retirement.



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A portrait of Thomas Mathew, a man with a mustache and glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a textured, light-colored wall.

Thomas Mathew, Managing Director of the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), the premier public sector undertaking, that ensures security against untimely death or calamities, deals in his profession with figures and finance yet he evinces keen interest in literature, fine arts and the Malayalam language passionately.

THOMAS MATHEW

Global Corporate Leader, Who Quotes Vallathol

KIM News Bureau

Thomas Mathew T, Managing Director of LIC of India, a company that assures security for human lives, dabbles in management, finance and statistics in his daily professional life but at heart he is a simple man, loving the simple pleasures of life.

He loves Kerala and its language and can quote passages from Malayalam literature with great ease. "It is our duty as parents to pass on to our children and to the next generation awareness of the beauty of their mother tongue. We must encourage them to learn Malayalam and become familiar with our culture, traditions and literature. Maybe we can organize literacy meetings, kavi sammelanams, seminars, etc. in which



Thomas Mathew and his wife

the young can be involved. In fact the second/third generation Mumbai Malayalee youth should see around Kerala, visit its villages and learn about their roots, our rich culture and traditions," he says.

Thomas Mathew completed his schooling in Wadakanchery, his hometown, and did graduation in English Literature from St Thomas College, Thrissur. He has done his post-graduation in Economics, holds a postgraduate diploma in Management and is a law graduate as well. He is an Associate of the Insurance Institute of India and has a diploma in the Spanish language. He has attended various Management courses in Institutions like IIM Ahmedabad, ISB and MDI.

He joined LIC in 1978 with his first posting in Assam and he has been with LIC for the last 35 years. After acquiring grass-root operational experience at the Branch and Divisional levels, Mathew moved to leadership positions as Senior Divisional Manager, Zonal Manager, Executive Director and Managing Director.

He has successfully handled all departments of LIC of India including marketing, investment, Information Technology, and international operations and has been instrumental in many far-reaching decisions of the Corporation and has travelled abroad extensively as part of his work.

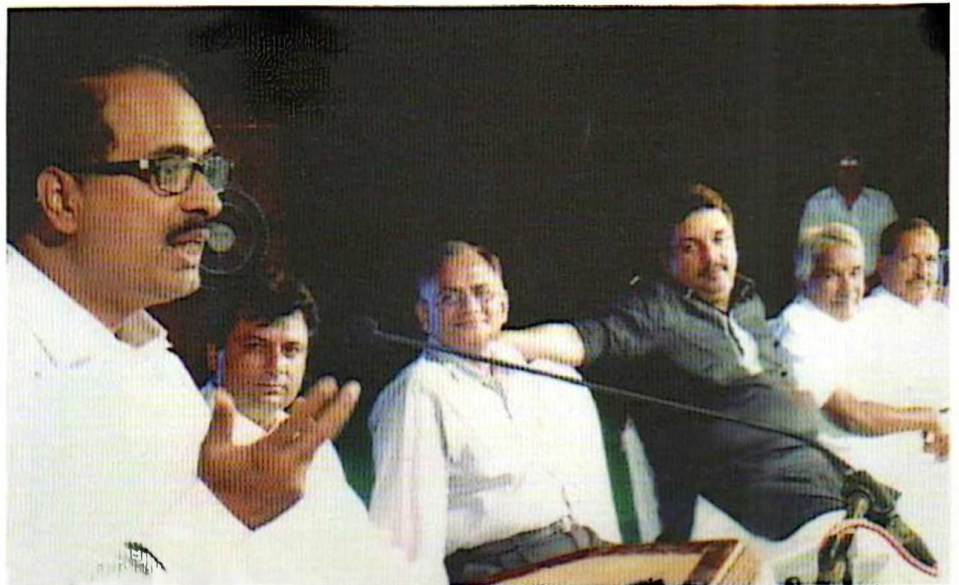
Thomas Mathew is currently

“It is our duty as parents to pass on to our children and to the next generation awareness of the beauty of their mother tongue. We must encourage them to learn Malayalam and become familiar with our culture, traditions and literature.”

Chairman of National Insurance Academy, Pune, and Chairman of LIC Nomura Mutual Fund Trustee Company Pvt Ltd. He is also a Director on the boards of Larsen and Toubro, Tata Power Company, L&T Infrastructure Development Projects, Management Development Institute, Gurgaon, LIC(Int'l) BSC (C) Bahrain, LIC Pension Fund, LIC Cards Services, LIC (Nepal) and was previously on the boards of Mahindra & Mahindra, Corporation Bank and Industrial Finance Corporation of India.

With keen business acumen and management skills he has been instrumental in moulding LIC into an entity to reckon with in the highly competitive global life insurance market. In fact LIC is the largest provider of life insurance within the country in spite of stiff competition from the private sector. According to Thomas Mathew, LIC holds 81% of market share in policy and 76% in Premium and it is the largest and most dependable insurance company in the world having 30 crore customers, total assets worth Rs 14 lakh crores, 1,18,000 employees, 13 lakh agents and operations all over India and abroad.

He says LIC commands the trust of the public, being completely owned by the Government and is described as the 'jewel in the crown of the Government of India'. It is the premier public sector undertaking of the country. With the largest agent network in India and by adopting global best practices and latest technology in insurance product development, servicing and marketing, LIC has reached all the parts of the country including small towns and very



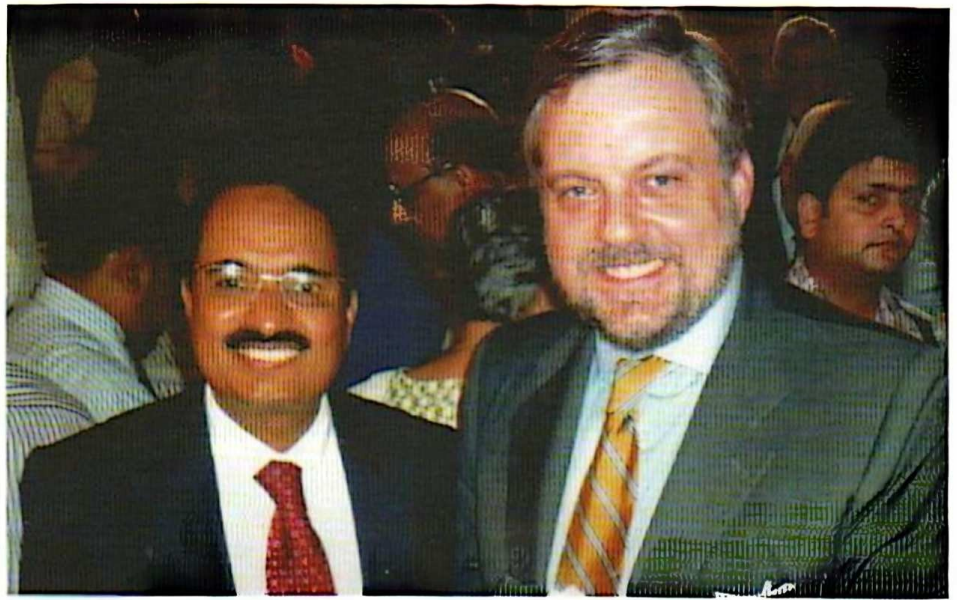
Thomas Mathew speaking at Mumbai Pooram. Ganesh Nayak, Minister of Maharashtra, Oommen Chandy Chief Minister, Kerala and Shibu Baby John, Labour Minister, Kerala are others on the dais.

remote villages. LIC holds one-fourth of the Government's securities, has an annual income of 3 lakh crores and settles around Rs 70,000 crores as claims every year.

Thomas Mathew's father, Shri TM Mathew, was a businessman in Wadankanchery. His older brother, Retd. Air Commodore Dominic Mathew was in the Indian Air Force and is currently Principal of an Aeronautical Engineering College in Bangalore. His second brother Shri George Mathew is a businessman and his sister Mrs. Jainamma Kurien lives in Wadankanchery with her family.

Thomas Mathew's wife, Thankom Mathew, is Executive Director at LIC. Her parents are late Shri P J Joseph, Retd. Additional Secretary in the Kerala Government and Smt KA Mariamma, who retired as Asst. Secretary, State Transport Authority, Kerala. Mrs

. Thankom is a postgraduate in Chemistry from Kerala University. Her brothers are



Thomas Mathew with Spanish Ambassador to India

Thomas Mathew has handled successfully all departments of LIC of India including marketing, investment, Information Technology, and international operations and has been instrumental in many far-reaching decisions of the Corporation.

Shri Johny Joseph IAS (Retd. Chief Secretary, Maharashtra and former BMC Commissioner), who is currently the Upa Lokayutka in the Maharashtra Government; Shri P J Thomas IAS (Retd Chief Secretary, Kerala Government and former Central Vigilance Commissioner) and Shri. Francis Joseph (Dy. General Manager, National Insurance Co., Kolkatta) and her sisters are Mrs. Ratan Joseph, former banker and Mrs. Mini Simkin a home-maker.

Thomas and Thankom Mathew have three children. Their eldest son, Thejas Mathew is an Engineer and was working with Ernst & Young. He is currently pursuing studies in Actuarial Science. Their daughter, Dr Nidhi Mathew, holds a Masters in Hospital Administration (MHA) from the prestigious Tata Institute of Social Sciences and is now working as the Asst. Administrator at St Elizabeth Hospital at Malabar Hill, Mumbai.



Thomas Mathew and his family with Cardinal Oswald Gracias

Their youngest son, Thapas Joseph, is the CEO of Fountainhead Digital a digital marketing and advertising agency. The children speak Malayalam at home, attend Malayalam social programmes and watch Malayalam movies as well. Thomas Mathew is closely involved in the Corporate Social Responsibility activities of LIC, in its support for education and health care assistance to orphanages, hospitals etc.

Thomas Mathew is passionate about literature, Carnatic and Light music and travel. Gardening is another hobby of his. He is an exemplary orator and a sought after speaker at several industry fora. But despite his hectic work schedule, he makes it a point to attend Malayalee social and cultural functions in Mumbai and is a popular speaker at such gatherings. He often cites these lines of Mahakavi Vallathol in his speeches:



Thomas Mathew , Mrs. Thankom Thomas Mathew, younger Son Thapas Joseph, Dr. Nidhi Mathew (daughter), elder Son Thejas Mathew, Sitting: father- T M Mathew and brother in law K J Kurian

“Bharatham ennu kettal abhimana poorithamaganam antharangam, Keralam ennu kettal thilakkanam chora namukku njarambukalil.”

Baselios Mar Cleemis Installed as Cardinal



Baselios Mar Cleemis

Pope Benedict XVI installed Baselios Mar Cleemis, Major Archbishop of the Syro Malankara Catholic Church, as Cardinal of the Catholic Church at a ceremony at the St. Peter's Basilica in The Vatican . Along with him, the Pope installed five other Cardinals, all of them, like Mar Cleemis, from non-European nations.

An official delegation led by Rajya Sabha deputy chairman P.J. Kurien, Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation K.C. Venugopal and E.T. Mohammed Basheer and Jose K. Mani, both MPs, a delegation representing the capital city led by Mayor K. Chandrika, Cardinals led



Baselios Mar Cleemis being installed as Cardinal by Pope Benedict XVI

by Cardinal George Alancherry, and Thiruvananthapuram Latin Archbishop Susaipakiam, all Bishops of the Syro Malankara Catholic Church, and a multi-religious delegation comprising Swami Sookshmananda of the Sivagiri Math, Palayam Imam Jamaluddin Mankada, Swami Gururathnam Jnanathapaswi of the Santhigiri Ashram, Bishop Joseph Barnabas of the Marthoma Church, CSI Bishop Dharmaraj Rasalam, among others, were present to witness the installation of the new Cardinal.

Shortly after his installation, the new Cardinal told television channels: “I place on record my respect for our nation. Let Kerala receive the blessings of God. I pray for all Malayalis. Let God lead our State from prosperity to greater prosperity”.

Earlier this year, the Pope had installed Mar George Alancherry of the Syro Malabar Catholic Church Cardinal. With Mar Cleemis' ascent to the College of Cardinals, Kerala has the rare distinction of being home to two Cardinals.



KANDIVALI - III

The Malayalee Presence

Kandivali has a sizeable number of Malayalees in the newly developed residential townships as well as in the older localities. The quiet ambience in the suburb is an added attraction for house hunters.



**Lakshmi
Venkatachalam**

Anand Nagar, Dahanukar Wadi, Lalji Pada, Gandhi Nagar Mohite Wadi, Tulaskar Wadi, Amrut Nagar, Kailash Tower, Kamla Nagar, Mathuradas Road, Shankar Lane, Parekh Nagar, Mahavir Nagar, Gaurav Gardens, Poisar, Fateh Baugh, Nilkanth Society, Ganesh Nagar, Ekta Nagar and Charkop are some of the prominent localities in Kandivali West. While in the East, Patankarwadi, Arya Chanakya Nagar, Thakur Complex, Thakur Village, Lokhandwala Township, Samata Nagar are better known areas.

Kandivali has its share of industrial complexes as well. Gundecha Industrial Estate, Charkop (Kandivali) Industrial Estate, Bonanza and Balaji Industrial Estates have several small and medium sized industries. Above all it has the Mahindra & Mahindra plant sprawling over a 63 acre area, and employing more than 3000 workers, the Times of India printing press, Thakur Educational Group of institutions and Associated Capsules, one of the world's largest manufacturers of empty capsules.

Lokhandwala Township Malayalee Association

It was in the Nineties that the construction activities started in Lokhandwala Township in Kandivali East. Along with other communities several Malayalees also shifted their residence to this area. Today there are more than 300 Malayalee families staying in this locality.

The early Malayalee settlers used to meet informally for Onam and celebrate it as a community festival. As years passed by the need for an Association was felt and in 2005 the Lokhandwala Township Malayalee Association was formed and subsequently registered.

Some of its charitable activities include donation to leprosy hospital, orphanages, conducting free medical camp apart from sports activities like football tournaments, cricket matches, cookery contests, drawing competitions etc. The Association has a ladies wing that does social welfare activities in the slum areas. The Association conducted Malayalam classes for members' children under the Kerala Kendreeya Sanghata, taught by Suresh Nair Principal of Vivek Vidyalaya, Goregaon, who lives there.

During the Onam celebrations this year, there were cultural competitions, Pookala malsaram, indoor sports activities (indoor games), cookery and drawing competitions and onasadya.

Radha Vijayan is the President of



Onam celebrations 2012 by LTMA members

the Association while Suresh Sukumaran Nair is the Vice President. Santosh Kumar TP is the Secretary and Sunita Sivasdas is the Jt Secretary. KNC Nair is the Treasurer while Sreekrishnan is the Jt Treasurer. In addition there are 16 MC members.

President Radha Vijayan hails from Shoranur. Her father is the late AP Narayanan, well-known freedom fighter, a founder members of Kerala Kendreeya Sanghatana, former president of Bombay Kerala Samajam for three terms, and worked for a mill in Mumbai. Radha's mother is Rukmini. Radha did her schooling at SIES and

graduation from Khalsa college. After graduation she got married to Vijayan Nair. When Vijayan left for Dubai on getting a job there, Radha joined him and the couple was in Dubai for 15 years. On returning to India, they settled in Kandivali. The couple has a son Pradeep who is working currently in the US.



Radha Vijayan

SHREE AYYAPPA MANDIR

Shree Ayyappa Mandir, run by Shree Ayyappa Seva Sangham, Kandivali East was founded in 1978. The main objective of the Sangham is to preserve, promote, support and spread the cult of God and Godliness and undertake activities which will be a source for peace of mind and solace in the fast moving and mechanical city life.

Since 1978, the Sangham celebrates Mandala Pooja and Makaravilakku of Lord Ayyappa in temporarily erected pandal. With the support and help of a large number of devotees, a temple was constructed and Prathishta of Shree Ayyappa was done in 1989. Later on temples for Lord Ganesh and Goddess Devi was constructed. All the important religious events are regularly observed throughout the year and well attended. Daily poojas are regularly conducted in the traditional manner.

The present office bearers of the Sangham are Dr. Suresh Nair, President,



Shree Ayyappa Mandir

Sasidharan Nair, Vice President, Manoj G Nair, Secretary, P Ramchandran Nair, Jt. Secretary, E Balakrishnan

Nair, Treasurer and Madhavan is the Jt. Treasurer.

BALAN DAMODARAN NAIR

■ Balan Damodaran is the proprietor of Shree Ayyappa Tyres Service, a one-stop shop for all those who want to get tyre related jobs done. Son of CR Damodaran Nair and N Devaki Kutty Balan is from Guruvayur. He came to Mumbai when he was only 18 in search of a job. He was in Saudi Arabia, for five years and then returned to Mumbai. Today Balan has a full-fledged machinery set up for tyre repairs.

Balan and his wife Sobhana have an elder son Subhash Nair who has a



Balan Damodaran

Masters Degree in Information Technology and works for HDFC Bank. He is married to Aswathy. Sudeesh Nair, Balan and Sobhana's younger son is a professional dancer and choreographer who has won several prizes in western dance competitions and runs the Sudeesh



Sudeesh

Dance Academy that trains students in Bollywood, Freestyle, Hip Hop, Bharatnatyam, ballroom dance forms and other activities like Gymnastics, Yoga, Singing Classes and Drawing Classes.

Sudeesh got formally trained with Sandip Soparrkar in the couple dance forms like cha-cha, Rumba, Samba, Jive, Salsa, Pasodoble, Waltz, Foxtrot etc. He has choreographed a variety of dance forms for stages and for films like *Heroine*, *Fashion* etc. Currently Sudeesh is undergoing advance training with Terence Lewis in the graceful dance form contemporary.

Sureshkumar Mangalath

■ Sureshkumar Mangalath was an active member of the Student Movement which forced him to settle outside Kerala. He came to Mumbai in 1976 and started his career as a stenographer for two years. Thereafter he started his own business of Industrial Labour Laws Consultancy.

During Emergency, Suresh Mangalath has keenly tackled various problems faced by Malayalees and worked towards forming the Jogeshwari Malayalee Welfare Association along with other Malayalee youth.

He was its Secretary and took a lot of effort to form the Kerala Passengers Association under the leadership of the ex-Mayor of Mumbai, Madhavan, which resulted in the launch of Netravati Express.

Suresh was instrumental in the formation of the Ayyappa Pooja Samiti



Sureshkumar Mangalath

as well as Thakur Complex Malayalee Association and is its Vice Chairman

and Treasurer.

Apart from the social involvements in Thakur complex Kandivali, he is active at Borivli Ayyappa Temple and presently he is the President of the Ayyappa Temple, Saibaba Nagar, Borivali (W).

Suresh's wife Usha hails from Guruvayoor is an educationalist and is also associated with various religious activities. She is the Chair-person of Mathru-sangham at Ayyappa Temple-Sai Baba Nagar, Borivali (W) and she has been very active in social and cultural activities. She is also conducting Malayalam classes at Thakur Complex Malayalee Association.

Suresh and Usha have two daughters, Surya, a software professional and Saumya a final year B.A.F student. Both of them participate in all the social and religious activities at Thakur Complex.

K J George

■ KJ George, having completed his graduation and a Diploma in Electronics, worked in Keltron Controls for two years in Kerala, then worked in Delhi as an electronic technician for two years and came to Mumbai in 1992. He first took up a job as Marketing Manager for a pharmaceutical company later worked as Sales Manager in a cosmetic company in Mumbai. In 2002 George started his own company Rarico Fire Engineers dealing with supply, installation and refilling of all types of fire extinguishers, installation and maintenance of hydrant and sprinkler systems as well as heat and smoke detector systems and other fire safety related equipments in commercial and housing complexes. His company also deals with giving free training in fire safety measures to members of commercial and residential complexes.

George has been active with the



KJ George

Lokhandwala Township Malayalee Association for 19 years and till recently its Jt Secretary. Now he is an Executive Committee member there. He

is member of AIMA and active in the social, religious and charitable activities of Blessed Cyriac Chavara Catholic Church in Kandivali East. He is the lead singer (choir Master) of its choir group and his team has won prize at the Fr Sunny Memorial Award at the annual Choir competition organised by Kalyan diocese. He has performed as a singer in several stage programmes and anchored stage programmes in LTMA, Church etc.

George's wife Daisy belongs to Pala in Kottayam District. She is a home maker. They have two children daughter Deslin is studying in Std XI at Bhatia College Kandivali (W) while son Joel is in Std VI at Childrens' Academy (ICSE) at Ashok Nagar Kandivali (E). Joel is keen in sports and won the second prize at the state level running competition.

Nirmala Mohan

■ Nirmala Mohan, hailing from Panoor in Kannur district, is a qualified professor of Malayalam Literature who came to Mumbai after her marriage. Known for her creative and contemporary style of writing, Nirmala Mohan is an author of two books

'Thripaadangal Sancharichcha Vazhigaliloode Oru Theerthayatra' and *'Gurudeva Sandeshangalu de Kaalika Prashakthi'* both published by Pambungal Publications, Mumbai.

Today she is also a Member of the Editorial Board of *Gururathnam* The Official Quarterly Magazine of

Sree Narayana Mandira Samithi and a Member of its Cultural Wing.

Her husband TK Mohan, is the Regional Sales Manager of a metal finishing company and also the patron and a very active member of Sree Narayana Mandira Samithi and several other trusts and organizations. Amrita, their daughter is married to Jayesh, both working in the media field and having a baby boy, Ishaan. Nirmala and Mohan's son Ashish is doing his B. Tech Final Year.



Nirmala Mohan

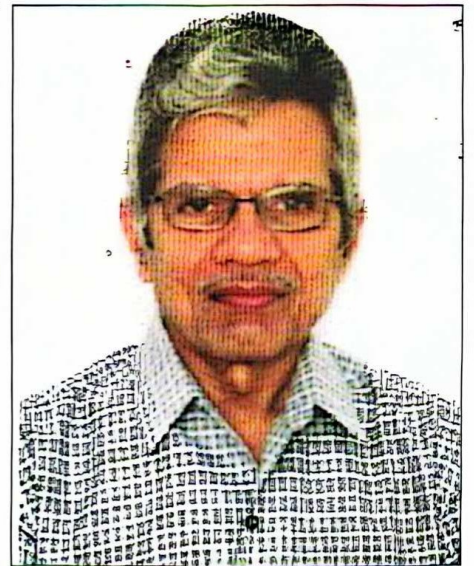
Unni Variath

■ NV Unnikrishnan (Unni Variath) is a writer, poet, music composer and director of Malayalam plays. More than 450 stories and 500 poems have been published in various periodicals and newspapers. He has written more than 70 Malayalam drama songs, directed more than 25 dramas and acted in several social dramas.

Proficient in Tamil he has presented Tamil skits. A collection of his stories and poems are scheduled to be published soon. Unni Variath hails from Nallepilly in Palakkad district. Born in 1943, his

parents are the late Padmanabha Menon and the late Thankamani Amma. After completing his education and learning typing and shorthand, he came to Mumbai in search of a job at the age of 17. For a long time he worked with Parle Biscuits and when he retired in 2006 he was PA to its Chairman and Director.

Unni Variath is married to Usha also from Palakkad and they have a daughter Padmasree who is a home maker. Her husband Ranjit Nair has his own Sea Marine Logistics company and the couple has a son Ronak studying in Std VI and a daughter Shreya studying in Std II. Padmasree teaches cinematic dance to the children staying in Lokhandwala Township.



Unni Variath



JOY TO THE WORLD

- Fr. Tenny Parakka

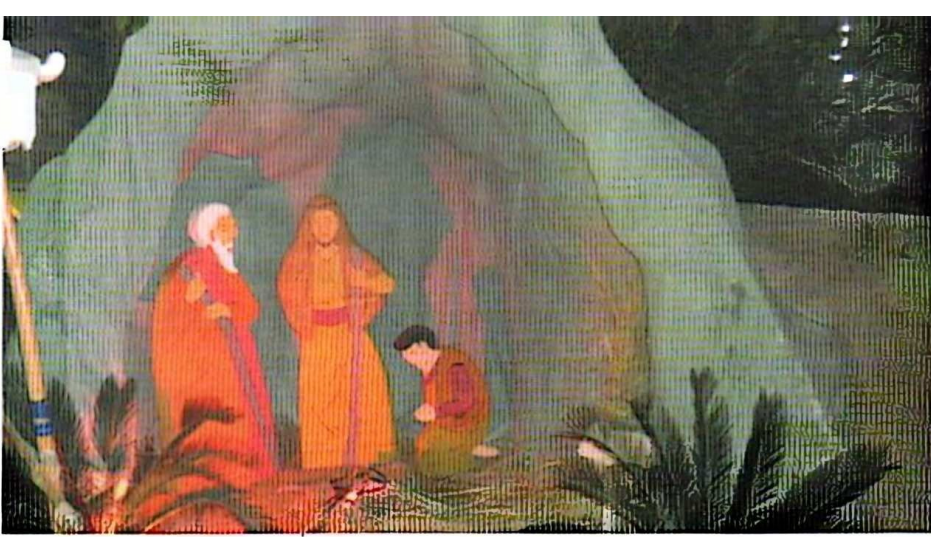


Every Christmas brings a special feeling within us. These feelings are filled with Christmas crib, Christmas tree, midnight mass, carols, cakes, cards and stories about Santa Claus etc. rekindling memories of peace and joy. For Kerala Christians, especially when they live in a multi linguistic and pluralistic society, the celebrations



Fr. Tenny Parakka C.M.I.

become more meaningful. At Christmas, like the stars in the night, every Christmas celebration should help us to give more light of joy and hope to people who live in darkness. It is a great message to ourselves to break the shells of selfishness and become a bright star for others in our daily life. Every Christmas is a challenge and reminder to become a twinkling star of hope, peace and joy to the world like Jesus Christ. Every Christian family will have 25



Christmas crib at St Mary's Church at Malad

days of special preparations and prayers to celebrate Christmas. They prepare Christmas crib, Christmas trees, send Christmas greetings, make Christmas sweets, specially Christmas cakes. The unique practice of 25 days abstinence from meat and other favourite items are practised by Kerala Christians in Mumbai. Christmas is an occasion to

renew relations with neighbours. It gives a chance for people to show their love for them by giving gifts and sweets. Malad, St. Mary's parish members invite neighbours to join the Christmas celebration. Even the children from the neighbourhood join the carol groups and go from house to house with Santa Claus singing carols

and distributing sweets to people. We have Christmas mass on the eve of Christmas day. After the common celebrations, people have festive gatherings and food with their family, friends and neighbours.

Kerala special items like Vattappam, Unniappam, Achhappam etc prepared with local flavours according to the region which they originally hail from, are favourites. In general it is great festival of Kerala Christians along with the universal Church.

Every year St Mary's Church Malad focuses on a theme for Christmas celebration. Competitions are conducted according to the theme. It may be crib making, star making or carol singing. The enthusiasm for these festivities makes Christmas celebration more meaningful and colourful in every one's life.

Fr. Tenny Parakka C.M.I. is Asst Vicar St Mary's Church and Vice-Principal St George High School Malad (East)

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS



The most significant custom is the nativity scene or crib set up in houses and churches celebrating the

birth of baby Jesus. Christmas tree, Christmas stars, candles, Santa Claus, Carol singing, Christmas stockings, greeting cards, exchanging gifts are all part of Christmas celebrations and make it a truly festival of joy and peace.

The tradition of Christmas tree, an important part of Christmas festivities, decorated with stars, lights, festoons, trinkets and roses, started in Germany in the 16th century. It is said Martin Luther King was impressed by the beauty of the fir trees in Germany with the starlight shining through the branches, and added candles also to the Christmas tree.

The setting up of Christmas crib with the figurines of Baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph and the shepherds and wise men is another important tradition among Christian houses and churches. St Francis of Assisi first created the crib scene in the forest near Greccio monastery and recited



Christmas has its own sets of rituals and traditions which make the festival so captivating.

the Christmas Gospel, thus starting the tradition in Italy. The rest of Europe and other countries including India followed suit.

Christmas Carols are a popular part of Christmas. The word carol comes from the ancient word 'chaurelien', meaning 'to dance and sing to flute.'

Malls and shops along the streets of Mumbai are brightly lit, stars hang from

balconies, and there is a lot of goodwill among friends and neighbors during this season. The Mass on the morning of Christmas day (or Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve) is an important religious service of the Church reminding the believers that God is always there to bless us.

Christmas Tidings

-Elvee

During the coldest season of the year, the most joyous and goodwill festival of Christmas is celebrated all over the world on December 25 as the birthday of Jesus Christ, spreading cheer and love.



Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, the Saviour who showed the path of love and peace to mankind. Mary and Joseph were simple and humble persons but the Son of God chose them as His parents.

Story of Christmas

One day the Angel Gabriel visited Mary and told her that the Holy Spirit would rest upon her and she will conceive a son. "He will be great and will be looked upon as the Son of God. You are to name Him Jesus and he is the messiah (Messenger of God)." Mary was afraid but she believed and obeyed the Angel's words. When Joseph was about to be married to Mary, he found out that Mary was pregnant and wondered what to do. But an angel appeared in Joseph's dream and told him that the child she was carrying was of the Holy Spirit and was the Son of God and Future Messiah. Joseph had absolute faith in the Angel's words and decided to marry her.

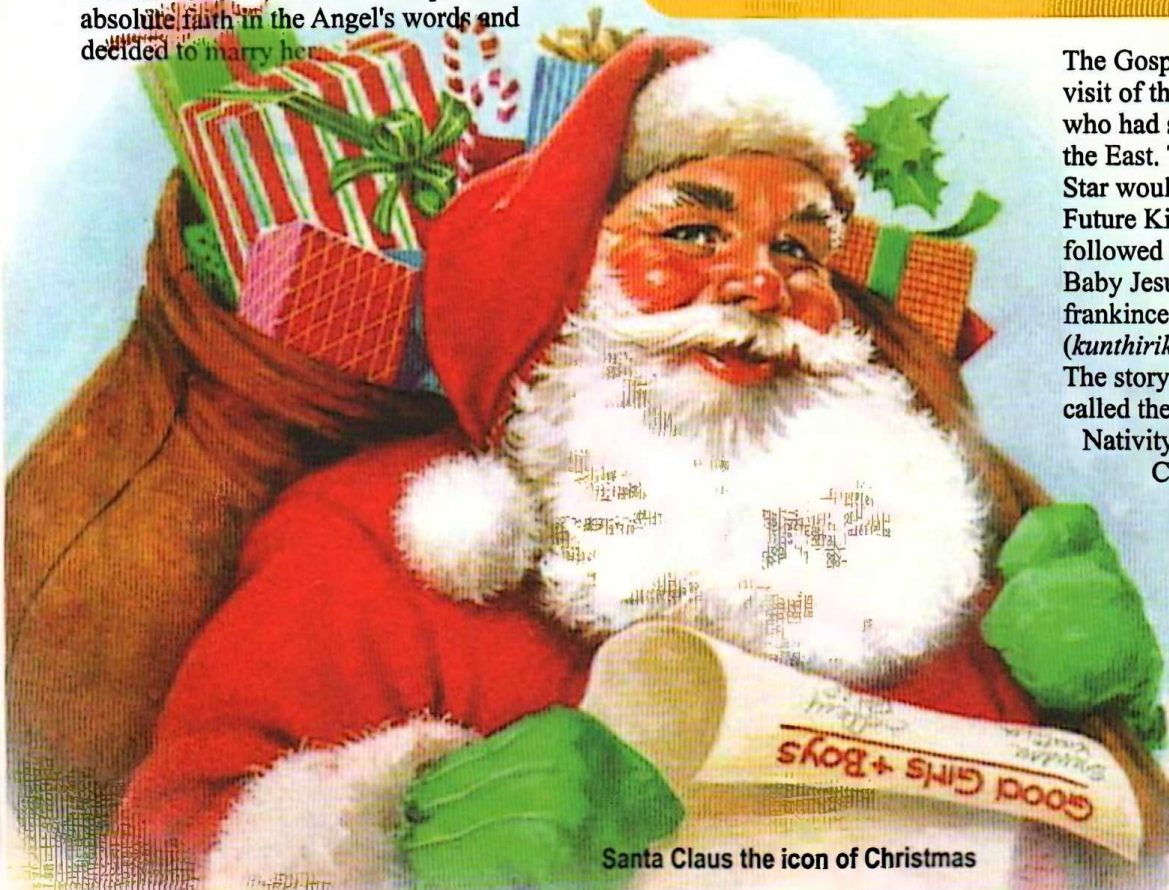


JESUS was born in a lowly manger by the side of farm animals. According to the Bible, shepherds from the fields surrounding Bethlehem, watching over their flock by night, were told of the birth by an Angel who said, "Have no fear; for truly, I give you good news of great joy which will be for all the people: for on this day, in the town of David, a Saviour has come to birth, who is Christ the Lord."

Along with the angel there was a band of spirits from Heaven singing praise to God saying, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is well pleased." So the shepherds went to see the child. They were the first to see Baby Jesus.

The Gospel of Matthew describes the visit of the three wise men, called Magi who had seen and followed the Star on the East. They had been told that the Star would rest at the place where the Future King of Jews was born. They followed the Star and came to visit the Baby Jesus with gifts of gold (*pon*), frankincense (*mooru*) and myrrh (*kunthirikkam*).

The story of the Birth of Jesus is also called the Feast of the Nativity. This Nativity scene (crib), is set up in many Christian homes and churches, where the figurines of baby Jesus with Mary and Joseph and the three wise men with their gifts and the shepherds and the stable animals are displayed. Nativity plays are also performed by children who enact the events of the birth of Infant Jesus.



Santa Claus the icon of Christmas

THE REAL MEANING OF CHRISTMAS



Christmas has a deep meaning in everybody's life and let God help us to understand the wonderful meaning of Christmas Celebrations 2012. The Christmas

season is action packed with Christmas tree decoration, the crib competition, Santa Claus Gifts and the Christmas goodies with fun.

Birth of a child is associated with great Joy after a long wait and so was the birth of the Infant Jesus Christ. It's a matter of great Joy for all those who knew the real reason of the birth of Jesus, since it was the manifestation of God's promise to man which makes Christmas the time to experience true joy which is beyond mere happiness. The Joy of God's Redeeming power through Jesus, because the son of GOD was made Man (Emmanuel-God with us) to live among us.

Before Christmas season is the Advent season. The word Advent derives from the Latin word meaning 'coming'. The Lord is coming. We may reflect that every year at this time we celebrate his coming. Before the Three Wise Men went to meet Jesus at the time of his birth, the message the angels gave to them was, 'look up and you will see a Star which will lead you to the Saviour'. As we prepare for the coming of the Saviour and since he was born 2000 years ago let us find out if this preparation has meaning in our lives today.

Mostly at the end of the season, everything seems to return to pretty much the same routine. If that is the case, then our preparation may have been lacking and we have therefore been robbed of the true meaning of this season. So in this fast paced life can we 'slowdown' the pace to catch up with ourselves. We can reflect on the past track record of God and so begin to understand what it means to us now for the sake of what is to come, in our own future and that of our world.

During the Advent season, we recall the history of God's people and reflect

on how the prophecies and promises of the Bible were fulfilled.

The three wise men who had seen a star considered it indicative of the birth of the King of the Jews, they followed it and had come to Jerusalem to find the child. So while we 'slowdown' and look above the problems we face in our daily lives, we will see the star or a way to work with our challenges and circumstances and see a new perspective.

The shepherds to whom the angels declared the birth of Jesus came to worship the Lord and to praise Him for His greatness and they returned with peace and hope. The Joy of finding the



Lord in a humble stable makes it easier for all humans from different walks of life to experience this humility in GOD and helps one find the true peace which comes from within.

There is suffering in the world, and men and women wander in darkness. In such a world let us go about giving love and compassion to all. Let us serve the poor and broken ones, serve our brothers and sisters, serve birds and



Fr. Sam Pathackal
Malankara Catholic Church - ETRI
Co-ordinator- Southern Region

beasts and all creation who have the breath of life. Let us not waste energy in questions and controversies. Let us light a few candles at the altar of suffering humanity. This will be achieved by having right understanding, viz., all mankind is one. The soul in man is the essence of God. We are members of the same family of God. We are all brothers in front of God. When we learn that God lives in every heart we should have respect and love for all. This realization must dawn on humankind.

While we 'slowdown' our eyes get the time to meet the eyes of the needy, the marginalised, the sick, the poor in our daily routine then our compassionate action prepares us to kneel at the foot of the Infant Jesus, who is true God and True Man. When we kneel down before the Child God and our eyes locked with his innocent, infant gaze who wraps us by the Peace of Lord and lifts our spirit to love the way He did and live life to its fullness.

Behold 'The spirit of Christmas' is born in you! Heavenly peace is the Christmas Gift of the Infant Jesus, which is offered to all men of good will.

It will be very glad to see that all are living in great and true 'Love of God and Love of Humanity' and work in loving cooperation with each other, to the Nature and ultimately to the Creator. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and bright Happy New Year full of new aspirations and new resolves, on the way to God and His Kingdom.

SOME MALAYALEE CHURCHES OF MUMBAI

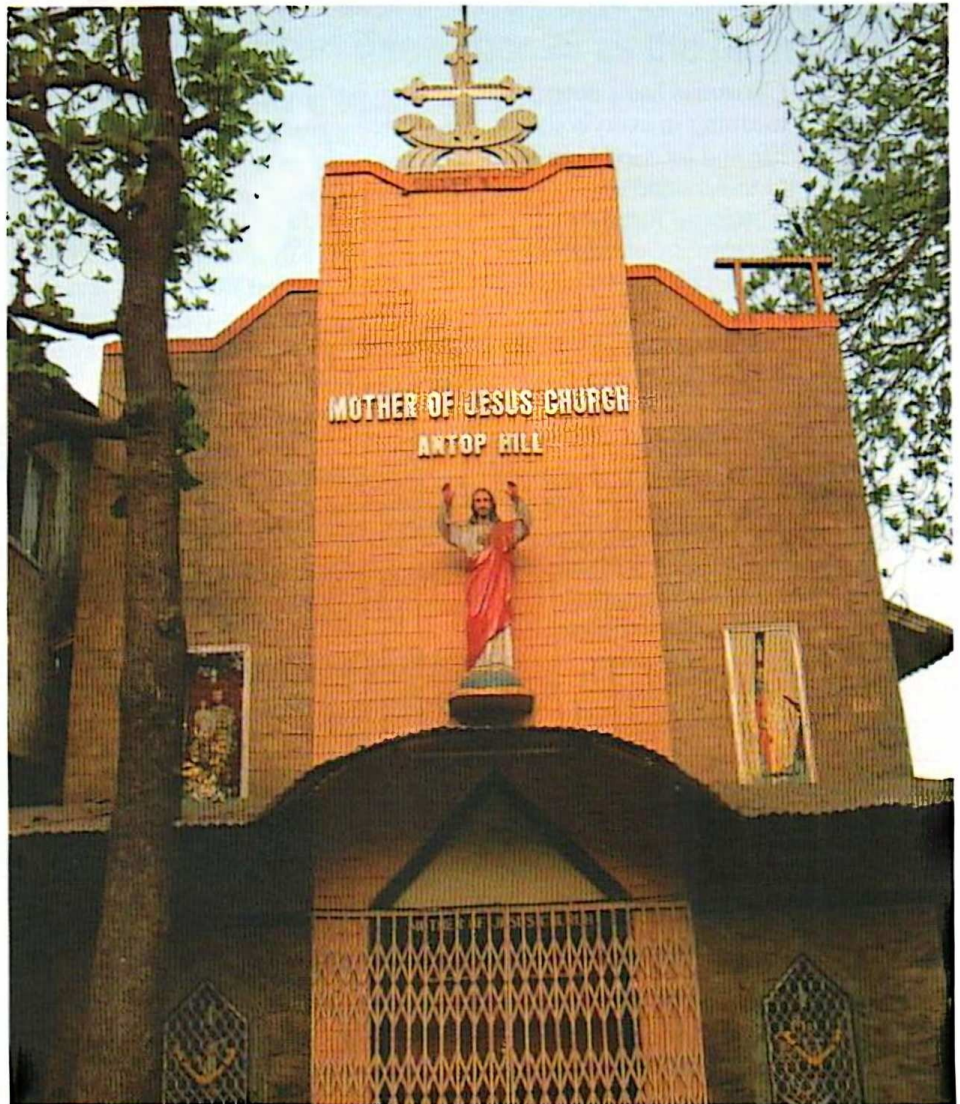


It is generally believed that churches had been established in Mumbai at the beginning of the 6th century and till the 14th century the church

in Mumbai was under the ecclesiastical rule of the Bishop of Kollam.

The early Malayalee Christians of Mumbai used to gather in halls, houses and public places and celebrate their religious activities through community prayers, especially during periods of festivals like Christmas, Easter and organized Retreats, Holy Mass celebrations, prayer meetings etc. The first Malayalee church in Mumbai is St Mary's Orthodox Church (Bombay Parish), in Dadar East, established in 1940. The Syro- Malabar Catholic church, Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, Malankara Catholic Church, Methodist Church, Mar Thoma Syrian Church are some of the denominations of the Malayalee churches and are located in several suburbs. These churches conduct mass in Malayalam and follow the same rituals of the churches in Kerala.

The Malayalee churches have contributed a lot to improve the social and financial conditions of the people living in Mumbai and its suburbs. They have good hospitals, give assistance to terminally ill patients, manage orphanages, run quality educational institutions etc.



Mother of Jesus Church in Antop Hill



Holy Immanuel CSI Church, Vasai

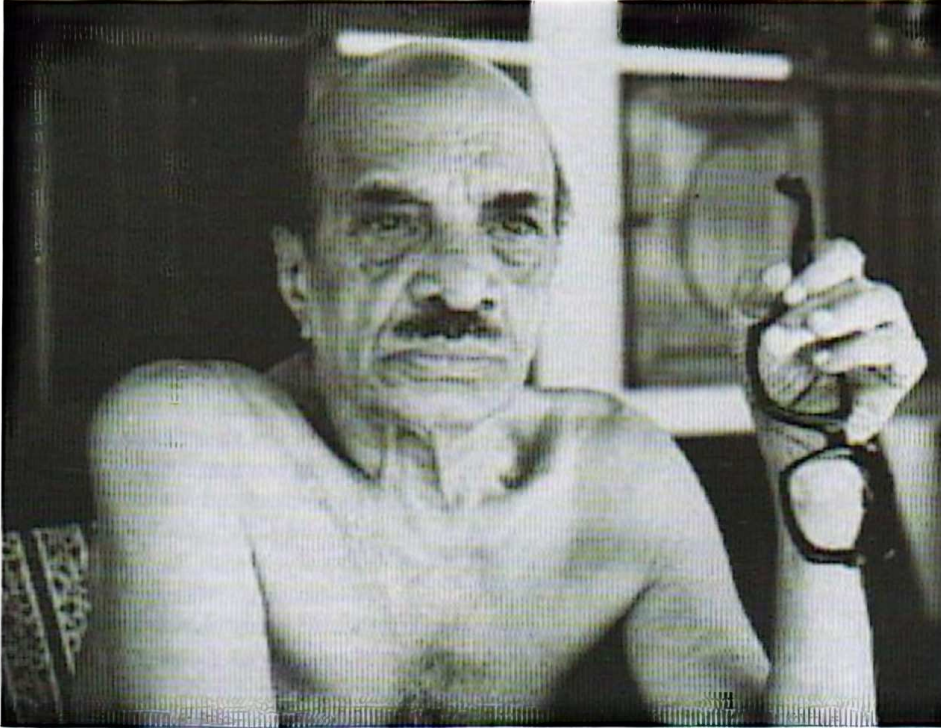


Mar Gregorios Orthodox Syrian Church

Vaikom Muhammed Basheer

Tallest among his peers

-Satyanath



Vaikom Mohammed Basheer was unconventional in his writing. He wrote in a natural manner, unmindful of grammar, spoken Malayalam and never used words that a common man could not comprehend. When he gave his 'Balyakalasakhi' to the printer, the latter edited it to give a polished look and printed it. Basheer took all copies of the printed book and made a bonfire out of it and asked the printer to recompose the pages as he wrote it. And his readers loved his unique style. His characters and their conversation have become a part of today's spoken language.

Basheer had a complex personality. Seeing him from a distance one would think that he was humourous and mischievous. Behind that veneer, he was a simple, benevolent, spiritual, merciful and mentally strong individual. He never cared for the values upheld by the surrounding community which he considered hypocritical. Though always surrounded by friends and admirers, he loved solitude and cherished it. Highly imaginative he was admitted to mental hospitals a number of times. Yet, he was counted by the western literary circles as one of the great writers of India, on par with Rabindranath Tagore, the Nobel laureate.

The man and his life

Basheer was the eldest child of Kayi Abdurahiman and Kunhachumma in Thalayolapparambu, in Vaikom taluk of Kottayam

district. Historians have estimated that he was born on January 1, 1908. He had three brothers Abdul Khader, Hanifa and Abubackar and two sisters Aanumma and Pathumma.

His father was a timber contractor, but the business did not do well enough for his large family to live in comfort. After beginning his education at the local Malayalam medium school, he was sent to the English medium school in Vaikom, five miles away.

Since childhood, he was fond of 'aimlessly roaming,' first in his village, then taluk and gradually outside too. This resulted in indifference to his studies and also laxity in completing the job his father asked to him to do. His father, like all other fathers of that time, believed in caning to discipline children.



These roaming ventures made him aware of what is happening around his village especially in British India where the freedom struggle was intense. Basheer was slowly attracted to that 'half clad fakir' who led the struggle from the front and to the Indian National Congress.

When Basheer was in the fifth form (today's IX standard), Gandhiji came to Vaikom (after the Vaikom Satyagraha) and Basheer met him and was 'very lucky' to touch him once. He cherished that experience and used to tell others whenever opportunity arose.

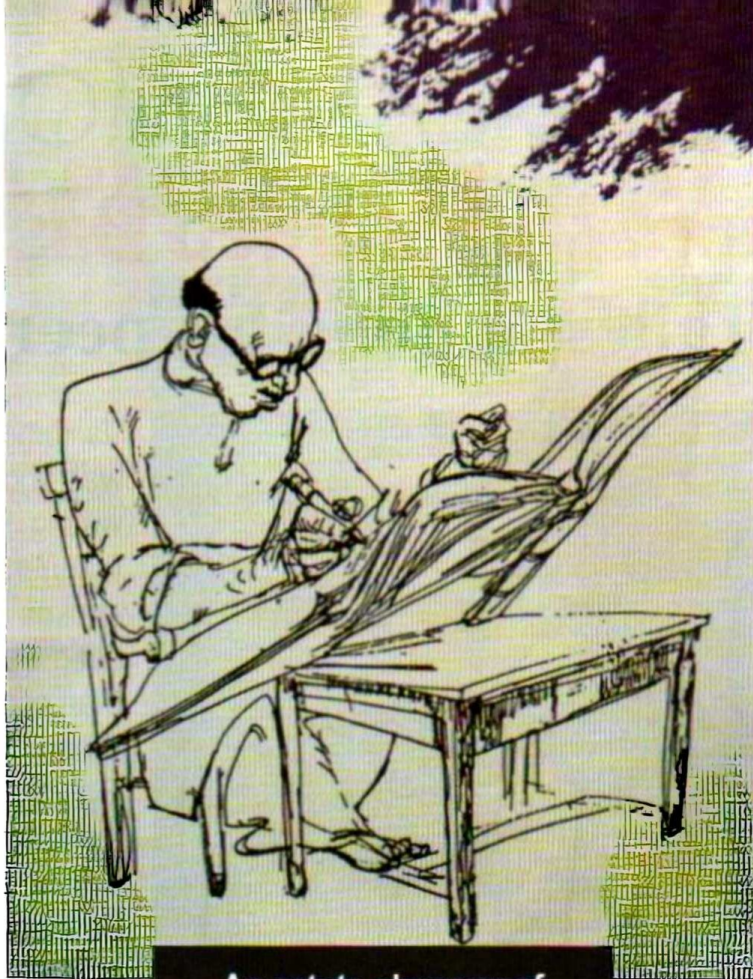
Once his father entrusted him with a particular job and on his way to the field, he met two of his friends. Soon he forgot his task and went with his friends. But punishment from his father was

waiting for him on his return. After receiving his punishment, he took one glass of water from his mother and then left home. When he reached Kozhikode, the city was immersed in the freedom struggle and the main leaders K Kelappan, Hassan Koya, E Muhammed Moulavi etc were all behind bars. Basheer went to the Congress office and volunteered for 'salt satyagraha'. He was arrested and was tortured at the station by a constable. He was sentenced to three months of imprisonment with hard labour. During his prison term in Kannur, Bhagat Singh and his two comrades were hanged and this news reinforced his desire to fight till India got her freedom.

After his release, he returned to Vaikkom and then walked to Thalayolaparambu during the night and reached home around 3 a.m. His mother opened the door. She asked him if he had food. When Basheer said 'no', she asked him to wash his legs and hands and then removed the cover of the plates in which his food was kept ready. Basheer was surprised and to his query, his mother said his food was always kept ever since he left home.

When he continued to move around with freedom fighters, he was arrested again without any charges and was tortured again. This torture strengthened his determination to work for the freedom of India. He also developed a love for books and liked fiction.

While he was an ardent admirer of Gandhiji, he developed a liking for Bhagat Singh's methods and soon started dressing like him. Clad in half pants and felt hat, he walked erect and talked seriously. He also had a Bhagat Singh-like moustache, muscular arms, fair complexion and thick curly hair. The youth admired his courage when they heard of his police torture. Soon Basheer became their leader. Though they did not indulge in violent activities, they plastered the walls of the town with posters bearing pictures of knives, rifles and sickle and warned the police that they would retaliate if provoked. When the police shadowed him, he escaped to Mattancherry and met



An astute observer of human character, Basheer skillfully combined humour and pathos in his works. Love, hunger and poverty played important roles in his narration. He weaved his stories around philosophy, down to earth people and social traditions especially of the Muslim community. The major theme of all Basheer stories is love and humanity.

Sainuddin who shared his views. Sainuddin started a newspaper 'Ujjevanam' and Basheer worked for it under the pseudonym 'Prabha'. Though there were no violent incidences, 'Ujjevanam' gave the impression that the country was wholly agitated against the government.

In the meantime some students stole some question papers from a school and in another incident, miscreants attacked a post office and destroyed letters posted in letter boxes. Police decided that Basheer was behind these incidents

and wanted to arrest him. Sainuddin persuaded Basheer to leave Kochi. He started his long journey that transformed him into a new personality. His travels stretched over many years and he lived in Coorg, Goa, Bombay, Karachi, Kashmir, Delhi, Calcutta and many villages and cities. To survive he did everything, like selling balloons in the street, pretending to be an astrologer, palmist, face reader, hypnotist, magician, copy holder, proof reader, journalist and so on.

In Bombay, he lived near Kamatipura and closely observed the lives of rowdies, prostitutes (both men and women), and lived everywhere from streets to hotels. These experiences did not make him a writer immediately but prepared him to be one. In Karachi, he stayed with Ram Mohan, a Brahmin, who nursed him

back to health when he fell unconscious. Basheer later recorded that Ram Mohan was happy to feed him but he never enjoyed free service from any one for long and hence left him.

These journeys prepared Basheer to face any hardship in life.

Feeling homesick he returned home. There he came to know that his childhood friend whom he wanted to marry once had come of age, and was already married to another man and was in a miserable condition. He felt totally helpless. (This romantic pain later took the form of a novel 'Balyakalaskhi').

To kill time, he used to mingle with his old local friends who were by now 'card players', petty thieves, cheats etc but their character did not deter him from mingling with them freely. He however did not participate in their vocations.

By this time his family was facing hardships as his father's business collapsed and he was struggling to make both ends meet. Basheer wanted to help and so he thought of starting a Sports Items Shop and his parents felt relieved. The shop was opened in Ernakulam but was soon closed as he met with an accident. After recovery, Basheer approached Padmanabha Pai, a publisher, editor, writer, peon all rolled into one of a monthly magazine 'Jayakesari' and requested him to

provide a job as he was already starving. Pai gave him food and then asked him if he could write for his magazine. Basheer had no alternate but to turn a writer.

Within two days, Basheer's first short story was ready. It was titled '*Thankam*.'

Those days there was great demand for short stories as all readers gave utmost importance to this branch of literature. Thakazhi, Kesava Dev, S K Pottekat and Ponkunnam Varkey were then prominent short story writers. Basheer followed their way but varied in the content and style.

Thankam was a love story in which the girl was ugly, dark in complexion and dirty in attire while the boy had all these qualifications in a greater degree. He was inspired by a girl who used to come to his lodge everyday to draw water from the well.

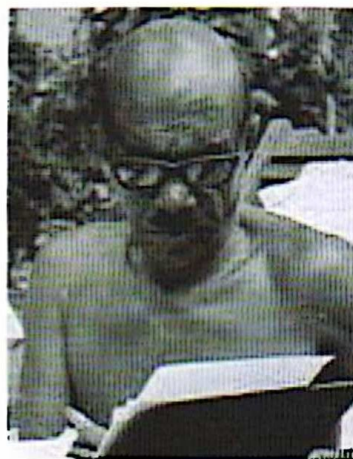
Padmanabha Pai enjoyed Basheer's first short story and gave him twelve annas (seventy five paise of today.) With this money Basheer cleared all his debts and treated some of his friends to tea.

Both the readers and editors of other publications took note of *Thankam* and

articles created a lot of problems for his family staying in Thalayolaparambu as the Travancore police started harassing them to reveal his address. All these forced him to change his lodge and he moved to another place. K C George who later became Food Minister of Kerala was his roommate. Another CPI leader T V Thomas also used to join them occasionally.

During this time, Basheer wrote *Jeevitanizhalpatukal*, and George his History of the Freedom Struggle of Travancore. Basheer wrote the preface to that book. Very soon George was arrested and the first thing Basheer did on hearing the news was to shift all pamphlets and secret documents to a safer place. In his autobiography, George has fondly described his life with Basheer.

The harassment of his family by the police compelled Basheer to surrender to the Kottayam police station with Puthankavu Mathan Tharakan. His



government because it was considered that the book would have an undesirable effect on the youth. When Pattom Thanu Pillai became the Prime Minister of Travancore, Basheer wrote to him from Madras, requesting the ban be lifted. Though Pattom declined, his successor Parur Narayana Pillai obliged.

After his release, Basheer stayed with M P Paul for some time and then moved to Madras. There he worked with *Jayakeralam*, a prominent weekly then. Later he decided to return to Kerala and engage in some business for a livelihood.

He opened a book shop in Cochin Bakery and then opened Circle Book House near Ernakulam Boat Jetty. When he was in the shop, he was very serious and used to aid the buyers with details of the books. Some government officers did not like it as they found that his shop was occupying government land. They submitted a paper to the minister recommending his eviction. But Public Works Department Minister Sahodaran Ayyappan rejected the recommendation and noted that it was a matter of pride for the government that a man of Basheer's stature was using government's land for his business but he should be charged a lease amount of Re.1 per month. However Basheer did not want to accept government's generosity and entrusted the book stall to political activist PK Balakrishnan. Once the deal was done, Basheer moved to T B Road and named his new shop Basheer's Book Shop.



the latter started approaching him for stories. Meanwhile he wrote an article criticizing the Dewan of Travancore and the police of Travancore started harassing one Basheer, a leader of the students opposing the Dewan. To save this Basheer from trouble, he started using the now famous pen name Vaikom Muhammed Basheer.

Pai was facing financial difficulties and thus decided to close down 'Jayakesari' and Pai joined the Indian Army for a living.

Since Basheer did not have a steady job, he found life difficult to pull on. He wanted to write stories but that demanded solitude and a proper mood. Writing articles touching various aspects of life was easy for him. His

prison days were comparatively peaceful and he had a lot of liberties such as getting beedi, matches, letters from friends and writing materials for his literary pursuit.

His stay in prison helped him to write several stories then as well as later. '*Mathilukal*' (The Wall) and '*Pavappettavarute Veshya*' (The prostitute of the poor) were some among them. '*Premalekhanam*' was another.

Inside the prison, Basheer mingled with all type of inmates and many of them later became characters in his stories and often their lives became themes of his stories.

Among his books, the last mentioned was banned by the Sir CP

Turning point

Slowly he lost interest in business and started entrusting its running to his friends and disciples. During this period, a small group of friends from Kozhikode called on him.

Thikkodiyam, Shobhana Parameswaran Nair and Abdurahiman were among them.

Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi had decided to conduct a drama festival in Kozhikode that year and they had decided to stage a play based on Basheer's '*Ntuppappakkoranandarnnu*'. Basheer should come to Kozhikode and convert the novel into a play, they said. Basheer agreed and left for Kozhikode along with them.

Chandrantham, the new house of



S K Pottekat was taken over for his stay and Basheer was busy with the work. N P Mohammed, VKN, Thikkodiyam, M V Devan, MT and many others were regular visitors there. Basheer cooked for them and entertained them during daytime and was busy with the play during the night.

Suddenly he thought of getting married as he was getting old. The question was who would provide him a wife, when he had no regular income and had passed the marriageable age. Then Abdurahiman brought a proposal of Fathima Beebi, young daughter of Koyakutty Master. There was a huge gap between their ages but Basheer agreed if both the girl and parents consented. A big team visited Dr Mohammed's residence at Cheruvannur and the girl was brought there. The decision was swift and the marriage was fixed. They got married on December 18, 1958. Basheer christened her name to FABI (abbreviation of Fatheema Beebi) and they left for Thalayolaparambu.

Soon he bought a piece of land there and built a house and started staying there. By the time the couple had a daughter Shahina. But when Fabi's parents suddenly died, they shifted to Kozhikode to look after her young siblings and Kozhikode became their hometown. Till he died in 1994, he stayed there.

He had a large number of friends there and they never left him alone. During this time, he received many awards, fellowships, doctorate and Padmashri besides a Thamrapatra for being a former freedom fighter but he did not give them undue importance. His writings became fewer but his earlier writings were translated and published in many Indian and foreign languages. *Pathummayute Aadu*, *Balyakalaskhi* and *Ntuppappakkoranadarnnu* were translated into 18 Indian languages and

English. They were published in English by Edinburgh University and later by Orient Longmans as a single volume.

Three of his stories were made into movies, *Bhargavi Nilayam* based on his story *Neelavelicham*, *Balyakalaskhi* and *Mathilukal*. For the former, Basheer himself wrote the screenplay and that movie was a huge hit. In this Madhu enacted the role of Basheer. The last mentioned received international acclaim.

During his last days, Basheer had written about the various phases of his life, through various interviews and on TV. "I have thought of committing suicide on many nights not because of any depression or disappointment but because of hunger. Not days and months, but for many years, I never had good food regularly."

Basheer was never rich nor was poor. When money came, he celebrated with friends or generously helped the needy and during its absence he silently suffered.

The society he lived in worshipped him and gave him love and affection in abundance.

Basheer during his younger days joined Indian National Congress but later all his friends were Marxian co-travellers. When someone asked him about this anomaly, he replied,

"Congressmen do not read."

His closest friends Mundasseri, M P Paul, Thakazhi, Kesava Dev and Kuttippuzha Krishna Pillai were actively involved in *Purogamana Sahitya Sanghatana* (Progressive Literary Organisation) but he did not join them. Nevertheless he caricatured their activities through his stories. He never joined any organization but used to say he belonged to the class of human beings. He was never a religious person but respected all religions equally.

Though he was always surrounded by friends, he longed for solitude. He used to hallucinate and thought his enemies would kill him. On a number of occasions, he was admitted into mental hospitals. He elaborately described the type of treatment he received in an Ayurvedic hospital.

For Basheer, life is an occasion to celebrate. Two of his quotes, "Be happy that you are born a man. Life is a joke and so sadness is futile" and "The only known living being on this earth, that can smile, is man" illustrate his view on life.

Basheer's literary world

An astute observer of human character, Basheer skillfully combined humour and pathos in his stories. Love, hunger and poverty are his recurring themes. There is enormous variety in them of narrative style, of presentation, of philosophical content, of social comment and commitment. His association with India's independence struggle, the experiences during his long travels and the conditions that existed in Kerala, particularly in the neighbourhood of his home and among the Muslim community all had a major impact on them. Politics and prison, homosexuality, all were grist to his mill. All of Basheer's love stories have found their way into the hearts of readers; perhaps no other writer has had such an

ബഷീർ
കൊല്ലപ്പെട്ടവന്റെ അനുഭവം



influence on his readers. The major theme of all Basheer stories is love and humanity. In the story "Muchittu kalikkarente Makal", when Sainaba comes out of the water after stealing bananas, Mandan Muthappa says only one thing: "Sainaba go home and dry your hair or else you may fall sick." This fine thread of humanism can be experienced in almost all his stories.



One contrast among his works is between those that are primarily autobiographical as far as events and characters are concerned and those that are the product of the author's imagination. This does not mean that they can be compartmentalized but contain both in different proportions.

Almost all of Basheer's writings fall under the heading of prose fiction short stories and novels, though there is also a one-act play and volumes of essays and reminiscences. Basheer's fiction is varied and full of contrasts. There are poignant situations as well as merrier ones and generally both in the same narrative. There are realistic stories and tales of the supernatural. There are purely narrative pieces and others which have the quality of prosaic poems. His superficially simple style conceals a great subtlety of expression.

His literary career started off with the novel *Premalekhanam*, a humorous love story between Kesavan Nair a young bank employee and an upper caste Hindu (Nair) and Saramma an unemployed Christian woman. Hidden underneath the hilarious dialogues we can see a sharp criticism of religious conservatism, dowry and similar social conventions. This novel starts and ends with a love letter, as given below:

"My dear Saramma,

How does my dear comrade spend this all too brief phase of existence when life is bubbling with youth and the heart is fragrant with love?

As for me my life passes moment by moment in the love for Saramma. And you, Saramma?

Begging of you to think it over well and reward me with a sweet, kind reply.

Saramma's own,

Kesavan Nair"

This was followed by the novel

Balyakalasakhi a tragic love story between Majeed and Suhra which is among the most important novels in Malayalam literature in spite of its relatively small size (75 pages), and is commonly considered as his magnum opus. In his foreword to *Balyakalasakhi*, Jeevithathil Ninnun Oru Aedu (A Page From Life), M. P. Paul brings out the beauty of this novel, and how it is different from run-of-the-mill love stories.

Balyakalasakhi was written during Basheer's stay with Prof M P Paul though the writing was started when he was in jail. He rewrote and polished it many times (10 times, unlike today's authors) to get the present form. The original text had more than four times the pages of final draft. After completion, it was read in a group called *Sahiti Sakhyam* whose President was Prof M P Paul and Dr S K Nair Secretary. It was discussed by about 50 well known authors of that time. The reading and discussion stretched to two Sundays. The criticism outweighed the appreciation. There were criticisms about his mentioning the bleeding following a circumcision and many of his expressions were termed obscene. When finally M P Paul spoke, he said people who were used to read the works of authors from higher communities should now start reading of other people too and who could not do this, should not touch this book. He further said that those who could not stand the sight of blood should not read this book.

The autobiographical *Janmadinam* ("Birthday", 1945) is about a writer

ഒരു എഴുത്തുകാരന്റെ ജന്മദിനം



struggling to feed himself on his birthday. While many of the stories present situations to which the average reader can easily relate, the darker, seamier side of human existence also finds a major place, as in the novel *Shabdangal* ("Voices", 1947), which faced heavy criticism for violence and vulgarity.

Mathilukal ("Walls") deals with prison life in the pre-independence days. It is a novel of sad irony set against a turbulent political backdrop. The novelist falls in love with a woman sentenced for life who is separated from him by insurmountable walls. They exchange sweet-nothings standing on either side of a wall, only to be separated without even being able to see each other or say good-bye. Before he "met" Narayani, the loneliness and restrictions of prison life were killing him; but when the orders for his release arrive he loudly protests, "Who needs freedom? Outside is an even bigger jail." The novel was later made into a film (1989) by Adoor Gopalakrishnan with Mammooty playing Basheer.

Sthalaththe Pradhaana Divyan, Aanavaariyum Ponkurishum, Muccheettukalikkarante makal and Ettukaali Mammoonju featured real life characters in his native village, Thalayolaparambu.

Controversy over *Shabdangal*

Basheer was a noncontroversial man from the beginning till his death. He was loved by all associated with literature and social bonding. He always kept aloof from all controversies. He never criticized other writers. On the contrary, he always encouraged them. He was never jealous of other writers and always felt happy when they climbed new heights. He avoided public meetings as a listener or speaker. He used that time to spin magic on the characters he created.

In spite of these traits, controversy courted him when he wrote his short novel *Shabdangal* (Voices). The concept of this story crossed the boundaries of the then sense of morality. So not only critics but even his acquaintances raised their voices against its 'vulgarity.' After reading this book, Prof S Guptan Nair declared, "I am Mahatma Gandhi if this is progressive literature."

It was then a period of progressive

literary movement and some of the leading lights of 'progressive literary movement' explored the man-woman relationship in sharp colours in graphic detail. Some of them even wrote short stories and published a compilation of them titled 'Five Dirty Stories' that was duly banned by the government. Some of his close friends defended Basheer's story as milder than some part of the epics 'Mahabharat' and 'Ramayanam.'

Basheer had many friends who had leftist leanings and even they clubbed the book an outcome of literary anarchy. Initially Basheer enjoyed the debate and he humourously mentioned it in his other stories. In 'Pathummayute Aadu' (Pathumma's Goat), you may come across his humour where he mentioned that the goat did not even spare *Shabdangal* after eating *Balyakalasakhi*. Nevertheless, the never ending controversy angered him.

Then came an appreciation from 'Sahodaran' Ayyappan who eulogized the story as very impressive and progressive and the need of the hour was to expose the hypocrisy of the critics. He cited it as a new beginning in the right direction.

This was followed by a defence in the form of a public speech by Ponkunnam Varkey who compared the then existing Malayalam literature to a leprosy struck woman clad in colourful silk clothes. He said that Basheer's fault was only that he ignored the clothes and pointed out to the diseased body that badly needed care. Dr S K Nair compared *Shabdangal* to Bhagvat Gita.

To put an end to the debate, Basheer presented a copy of the book to *Kesari* Balakrishna Pillai, the uncrowned emperor of literary critics and requested him to give his sincere opinion.

Kesari put forward his strong defence and called the story a classic and an ultimate challenge to hypocrisy. With *Kesari's* declaration, the controversy had a natural death.

Awards and recognitions

Padma Sri(1982), Kendra Sahitya Academy Fellowship, Kerala Sahitya Academy Fellowship, Lalithambika Antharjanam Award(1992), Muttathu Varkki Award (1993) for (Paaththummaayude Aadu), Vallathol Award (1993).

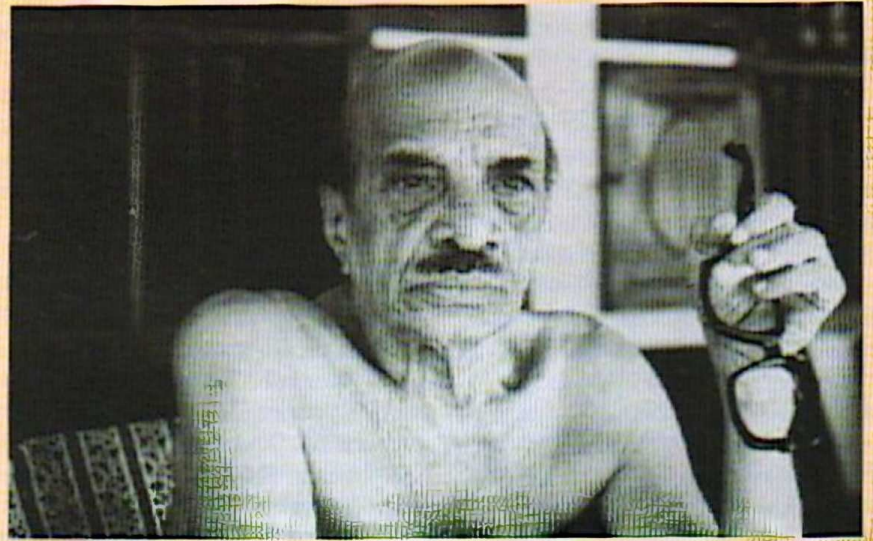
It Happened with

Vaikom Mohammed Basheer

When Kerala state was formed, unlike other people, Vaikom Mohammed Basheer did not display his happiness and he conducted his affairs as if nothing had happened. Next year a new government with EMS Namboothiripad as Chief Minister took over. Basheer's close friend Joseph Mundasseri became the Education Minister. Still Basheer did not show any enthusiasm.

One day Basheer called the party workers and told them that he was going to prevent Mundasseri's state car that was to pass in front of his book stall. The minister owed him Rs 37.70 and repeated requests to remit it did not yield results. The workers were anxious about the outcome.

Around 4.30 pm, a state car appeared far away and Basheer came out and stood in the middle of the road. He raised both his hands and waved to stop



the car. The car came to a halt. Mundasseri peeped out through the car window.

Basheer loudly announced, "Until the debt of Rs.37.70 is cleared, Minister will not be allowed to proceed."

Mundasseri laughed and ordered, "Get in."

Basheer got in and the car proceeded. Party workers sighed in relief.

Soon Mundasseri did something that he should not have done. He included Basheer's 'Ntuppuppakkoru Aanandarnnu' (My grand father had an elephant) as a non-detailed text for SSLC class without informing the author. The political opponents did not waste time in criticizing the minister. Mundasseri rushed to Kuttippuzha Krishna Pillai to get the necessary permission from the author and he did that within a day. Then the critics said the book was unfit to be taught as it contained unfit and obscene words such as 'kakkos' (latrine), 'mula' (breast) etc.

The criticism turned communal and the opposition exploited the situation. As a result, thousands of students did not buy the book and most of the printed lot was not lifted by the department and money was not paid. The opposition wanted to know who approved the book when its name was not recommended. Instead of blaming the bureaucrats or his friends in the selection committee, Mundasseri stood up in the legislative assembly and stoutly declared that he was to be blamed as he approved it as the Education Minister. Opposition leaders like P T Chacko were dismayed by the admission and vocal protest was subdued.

SPCS Secretary DC Kizhakkemuri was in a dilemma. The only way to get the dues was to file a suit against the government. A legal notice was served on the Chief Secretary. Soon the state government was dismissed in July 1959. Luckily, the government without further delay procured the remaining stock of the book and issued the cheques and Basheer got some financial relief that was much needed.

THE DIVERSE MALAYALEES

- K R Narayanan



■ About 2.76% of the Indian population live in Kerala. The population density here is 859 persons per sq km. The population appears to have increased about two

fold between 1951 and 1991 adding roughly about 15.6 million people- and reached a total of 29.1 million residents in 1991. It further went up to 32 million by 2001 and reached 33.3 million in 2011. The coastal region of this province is more densely populated, while its eastern hilly and mountainous terrains are sparsely populated.

The racial and ethnic history of the people of Kerala has been highly controversial and very often disputed by cultural anthropologists, historians, ethnologists and social scientists. We cannot afford to forget that the people of Kerala, known today as "Malayalees" (people speaking Malayalam language), are in fact polygenetic and had had their origin from different ethnic stocks, races and religions.

Malayalam is a Dravidian language born out of the Dravidian Tamil and obtained a distinctive identity at the beginning of the medieval era between 800-1200 AD.

Modern Malayalam, even though derived from Tamil, has borrowed innumerable words and usages from other languages, such as Sanskrit, Portuguese, Arabic, Syrian, Aramaic, Chinese, and (in the more recent times) English as well.

The Migrants

While a majority of Malayalees live in Kerala, a significant Malayalee population also exists in other parts of India, the Middle East, South East Asia, Europe and North America. It is estimated that about 23 lakh Malayalees

reside outside India (2011). A majority of them are Muslims (45%), although Hindus (37.5%) and Christians (17.5%) are also significant. The Largest Malayalee populations reside in the UAE (912,000) and KSA (570,000). The major concentrations of expat Malayalees distributed (in 2001) were as follows:

UAE: 883,313, KSA: 574,739,
Oman: 195,300, Qatar: 148,427,
Kuwait: 127,782, Bahrain: 101,556,
USA: 68,076 and the UK: 44,640.

The Heterogeny

There are more than 1,000,000 migrants (more than 3% of the population) from other parts of India living here, mostly from Bangladesh and West Bengal. Similarly, there are migrants from Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, and the North East also. Most of them seem to have concentrated especially in Cochin, Trivandrum and Kozhikode.

It is estimated that there are about 30 million speakers of Malayalam language in Kerala, making up about 96% of the total population of the state. Some details thereof are shown in the following Table.

Though Malayalam is the spoken language of the majority of the Kerala population, the present day Malayalees are a heterogeneous group and have

Religion	Malayalam Speakers (%)	Non-Malayalam Speakers (%)	Total (%)
Hindus	54.2	2.0	56.2
Muslims	23.7	1.0	24.7
Christians	18.0	1.0	19.0
Others	<0.1	<0.1	0.1
Total	96.0	4.0	100.00

distinct cultural and religious ancestry. Many of the ethnic groups have had their origin in other parts of India and a

few hail from other parts of the world as well. They have unique customs and traditions and speak diverse languages and dialects in their communities. Tamil, Konkani, Tulu, Kannada, Gujarati, Kuchchi, Marathi, Bangla, Oriya and the like are spoken in this region, though minimally, in addition to Malayalam.

This has contributed to a rich cultural and lingual diversity of the State and it is little wonder that the State is often referred to as the "Mould of Cultures and Religions".

Racial Ethnicity

The Census of India does not recognize racial or ethnic groups within the country as a valid unit for classification of the population. According to Edgar Thurston (1909), David Reich (2009) et al, the modern Indian population is composed of two genetically divergent and heterogeneous ancestry which mixed in the ancient past. They were the Ancestral Indo-Aryan-speaking North Indians and the Ancestral Dravidian-speaking South Indians.

The earliest racial strain in the population of South India in general and Kerala in particular is that of Negritos. Their progeny still live in the eastern mountainous forests of Kerala. Most of these tribes have curly hair, black skin, round head and broad nose. Some examples are: Hill tribes such as *Kadar*,

Kanikkar, Malapandarams, Mutuvans, Ullatans, Uralis, Paniyas etc. In due course of time, the Negritos were



replaced by *Proto-Australoids*, whose characteristics are generally the long head, flat nose and dark skin. Tribes such as *Irulans*, *Kurichiyas*, *Karimpalans*, *Mala Arayans*, *Mala Vetans* etc. could be identified as representatives of this group.

On the other hand, the Mediterraneans appear to be the main element of ancestry of the present Dravidian population of Kerala. They superseded the Proto-Australoids in the entire South India. These people perhaps came to India from the Mediterranean, after being driven away by the Greeks in three distinct waves. It is said that they settled in Western India, North India, and South India.

With the beginning of the increased Aryan settlements in north-western India, the Mediterranean population which had settled in those regions in all probability - migrated to South India to join the first wave of migrants. Mediterraneans form the main element of Dravidians in the present population of Kerala. The Nairs (12.88% of



Aryan migrants

Vedic-Aryan migrants. Through the intermingling or mixture of races and hypergamy of the Nairs with the Namboothiri Brahmins, it is said, the Nairs benefitted physically by getting taller and light-skinned progeny and also rose to higher social and economic status in the society.

During the time of the Chera empires, many Syrians and Jews had migrated to the Central Kerala regions. This along with the conversions to Christianity made a large number of Hebrew, Syriac and Aramaic speaking communities of the middle-east Asia (*Nazrani Mappillas*) to join the stream of languages in Kerala. Many of the coastal communities of Kerala have been greatly influenced by these Semitic languages, traditions and culture. The Portuguese prominence and influence, in the later periods, added more diversions to their language and culture.

In the same manner, the intermingling of the Muslim Arab traders and coastal fishermen (*Mukkuvas*) along the Malabar Coast resulted in a new *Indo-Arab* race, referred to as *Islam (Muslim) Maappilas*.

This Muslim community, even today, traces their origins far back to the early contacts with Arab traders even before the start of the Christian era, and mostly follows the *Shari's school* of Sunni Islam. Today many of their descendants speak the distinctive Mappila dialect of Malayalam.

Similarly, many Tamil speaking Muslims of similar Indo-Arab origin

population), Vellalas, Kammalas, Ezhavas (22.91%), Pulayas (27%), Parayas, Kuruvus *et. al.* may also be included in this group.

The Aryans began to enter Kerala from 2nd and 3rd century BCE onwards and the Namboothiri Brahmins (1.59%) represent a major element among the

(the *Ravuthars*) also have migrated from the coastal Tamilnadu through the Palghat passes and from Ramnad-Tirunelveli coasts via Quilon-Madurai.

Later, European nationals intermingled with the native women, (like the *Ezhava* and *Mukkuva* communities) and resulted in the white *Thiyyas* in the North Malabar region of Kerala, giving some cultural twists to their living pattern and the spoken language.

Population Diversities

It is estimated that out of a population of about 33 million, the



majority (about 54%) of the Malayalees of Kerala are Hindus, mostly of the Ezhava and Nair communities, as per the Census of 2001, as detailed below:

There are also a large Muslim (24%) and Christian (18%) population today in Kerala. The Majority of the Christians belong to Saint Thomas Christian community, and are also known as Syrian Christians or *Nazranees*. (Many

Caste/Castes	Share in the Total Hindus (%)
Ezhavas	22.91
Nairs	14.41
Pulayas	03.27
Brahmins	01.59
Cheruman/Pulayars	00.99
Other Scheduled Castes	01.07
Others	08.00

have since also converted to various non-Catholic protestant churches).

The descendants of the Cochin Jews (the *Juda Mappilas*) - who have traditionally followed Halakhic Judaism also live in Kerala, mostly in the Cochin Island and the coastal/backwater areas and the islands therein up to Kodungalloor in the north.

There have been frequent migrations

of Tamil speaking Brahmins (*Pattars*) to Kerala from the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu in comparatively recent times.

The history of ancient Kerala itself is deeply intertwined with Tamil Nadu's ancient past, and the Tamil and Malayalam languages are closely related. The dialect of Tamil spoken today in the district of Palakkad has a large number of Malayalam words and has been influenced by

Malayalam syntax and also has a distinct Malayalam accent.

Some of the earliest migrations attested by history were those of Iyers from the Cauvery delta to the district of Palakkad. The first of these migrations are believed to have taken place over 800 years ago. These Iyers settled in Palakkad and owned land and led an affluent existence till the enactment of the land reform acts in the 1960s. They followed many Malayali practices and traditions. There have also been migrations of Iyers to the princely state of Travancore from the Tirunelveli district during the 18th and 19th centuries. These Iyers are also called Kerala Iyers (*Pandi Pattars*) but differ significantly from Palakkad Iyers in their language and social status. Some of the prominent Diwans of the old Venad/Travancore principalities were Tamil Brahmins.

Apart from Iyers, many other Tamil communities also migrated to Kerala between the 18th and the 20th century, when the southern-most Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu was a part of the Travancore kingdom.

The capital of the Travancore kingdom which ruled over most of southern Kerala was located in Padmanabhapuram in present-day Tamil Nadu, before King Marthanda Varma shifted it to Thiruvananthapuram.

The caste system in Kerala is very similar to that which exists in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu. Vellalars migrated from Tamil Nadu to the eastern parts of Kerala like Idukki



Cheraman Masjid, Kodungallur

district, Pathanamthitta District. They are prominently found in Erattupetta, Pala, Ponkunnam, Kanjirappalli, Thodupuzha, Pathanamthitta etc. Similarly, Tamil Muslims migrated the same route from Madurai to Thodupuzha, Irattupetta, Pathanamthitta regions. They are distinct from Malayalam speaking Mappila Muslims in many ways including the usage of a dialect of Tamil in their houses.

Shivalli Brahmins living all over Kerala are part of the larger Tulu Brahmin subsect primarily found in Karnataka but also in the Kasaragod district. Their mother tongue is the Dravidian Tulu language. Brahmins from Tulunadu may have migrated to Kerala before the first century C.E. Today, there is a sizeable Tulu Brahmin population (known as *Pottis* or *Embranthiris*) in different parts of the state. Their brahmin hotels were reputed for their cleanliness and excellent vegetarian food in Kerala in the good old days. It is estimated that there are about 3,25,571 speakers of Kannada in Kerala, mainly concentrated

in the Kasaragod district. Most Kannada-speakers in Kerala are Tulu people who use Kannada language as an additional tongue.

Cochin Gauda Sarasvatha Brahmins (GSBs) are a branch of the Konkani speaking Gaud Saraswat Brahmins who form the majority of Konkani in Kerala. GSBs of Cochin form the southernmost sub-sect of Saraswat Brahmins of the West coast.

GSBs of north Kerala are similar to GSBs of Canara in speech and customs, whereas GSBs of former princely states of Cochin and Travancore have developed their own Konkani dialect and Customs, which distinguish them from the rest of the GSB community. In geographical terms, the vegetarian Cochin GSBs are those who live south of Thrissur district. Other Konkani speaking minorities include the *Kudumbis*, *Daivajnas* and the *Vaishya Vanis*.

All these groups had migrated from Goa in the last few centuries for various socio-economic reasons.

There are about 30,000 speakers of the Marathi language also in Kerala. Most Marathi-speakers in Kerala are descendants of the administrators and civil servants who migrated from the Tanjore district of Tamilnadu during the 19th century.

Most of the Mahl speakers are temporary residing people from neighboring Maldives. Other Mahl speakers are from the Indian island of Minicoy and most of them live in Kochi. The estimates indicate that there are about 10,000 Mahl speakers in this state.

Also, there are about 500 Gujarati families living for many generations in Kochi and Kozhikode which have been the commercial hubs of Kerala since long. The Gujarati community is composed of various social groups like Jains, Kathiavaadis, Surtis and Kutchis. The Gujarati Street at Mattanchery in the city is a main Gujarati cultural icon in Kerala. Similarly, Kozhikode, Alappuzha and Kollam too have a sizeable population of Hindu Vania and Jain Gujaratis. They are basically business people doing all



Jew Town in Kochi

forms of wholesale and retail trade. There is a Gujarati Higher Secondary School also in Kozhikode.

Kochi is home to a small Punjabi speaking Sikh community in Kerala as the coastal city has the most number of Sikhs in any south Indian state. Many of the Kerala's Punjabi Sikh community are in the automobile spare parts industry. The only Gurudwara (Sikh Temple) of Kerala is also located in Kochi. Kerala also has a small number of scattered Bengali, Bihari and Oriya communities.

A rough estimate of the language-based population of Kerala is given below.

An Ever-evolving Society

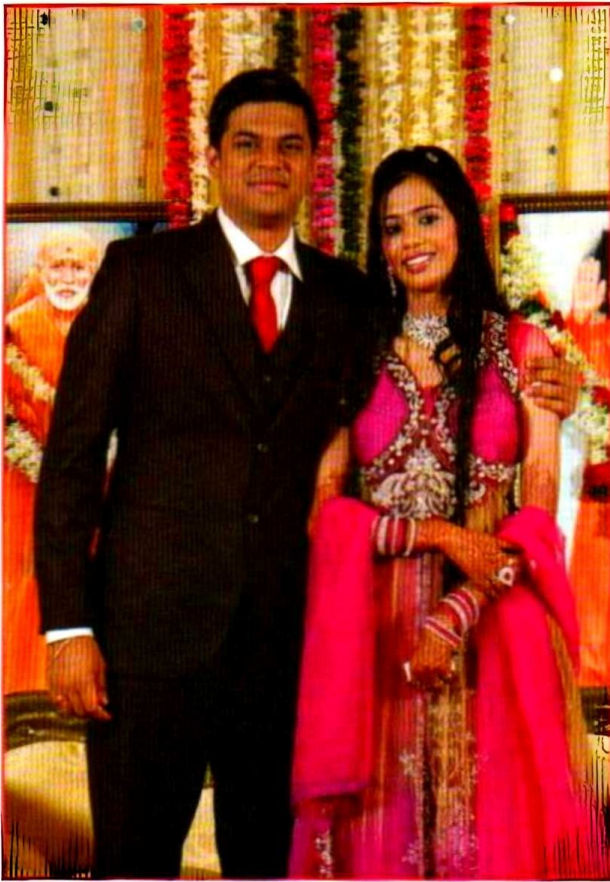
Like anywhere in the world, the Kerala society has undergone many ethnic, cultural, linguistic and societal changes during the course of its evolution. These changes are never static, but dynamic. The lack of opportunities within the State results in

LANGUAGE	SPEAKERS (NOS)	PERCENTAGE
Malayalam	28,096,376	96.66
Tamil	616,010	2.12
Kannada	325,571	1.20
Tulu	111,670	0.38
Konkani	64,008	0.22
Telugu	47,216	0.16
Hindi	21,751	0.07
Urdu	12,625	0.04
Gujarati	6,369	0.02
English	3,002	0.01
Punjabi	2,201	0.01
Bengali	1,919	0.01
Other Languages	8,270	0.17

ever-growing migration of its educated and skilled population to move out in search of greener pastures in the distant lands and shores. This also leads to the migration of unskilled and cheaper workmen and labour force into the state.

On account of these migrations, inter-regional, inter-religious, inter-racial, alliances and marriages have become very common. These are all likely to ultimately result in a society, with multifarious lingua and culture.

Wedding



Wedding Reception of Aditya, son of Dr. Mrs Jayashree Rajagopalan and K Rajagopalan and Aarti, daughter of Mrs. Ganga Harikumar and Harikumar was held on October 28 at Megarugas Banquet Hall, Powai.

HOW TO LOOK AND STAY YOUNG

There is no 'wonder drug' or miracle to stay young. Everybody ages but staying young and fit depends on one person You! You can keep yourself young if a few modifications can be made in your lifestyle and behaviors.

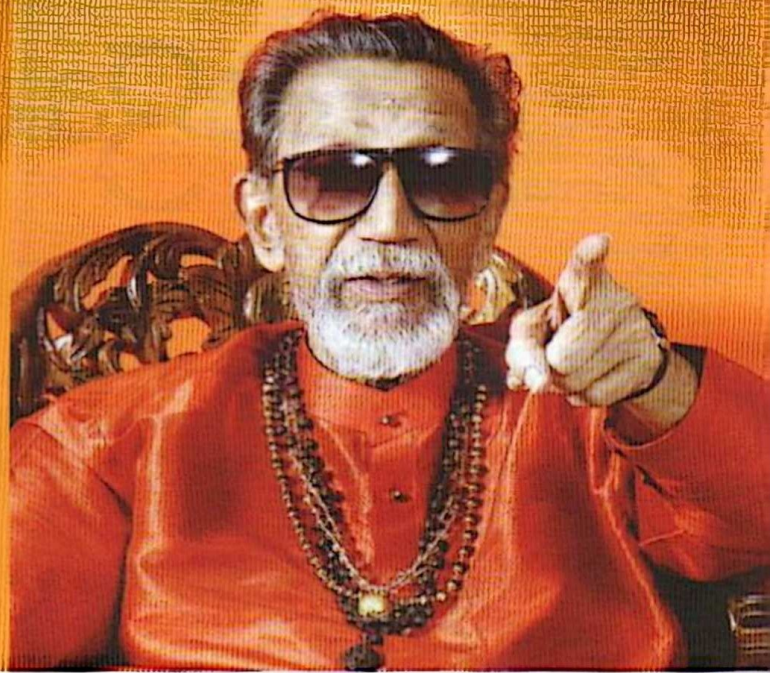
- Eat a balanced diet including plenty of fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables contain natural substances called antioxidants which can fight aging and prevent diseases.
- Exercise regularly, if you dislike hard exercise, try walking. For elderly persons walking is the best exercise.
- Avoid smoking and drinking alcohol.
- Drink at least 8 glasses of water daily.
- Avoid overeating and eating junk foods.
- A good night's sleep is important to awaken refreshed and start a happy day of work.
- Avoid over exposure to the sun and cold weather.
- Practice safety habits at home to prevent falls and fractures. While going out on vehicles don't forget to wear helmets/seat belts.
- Checkup with a doctor before buying 'wonder pills' or 'foods' that promise to slow aging.
- Stay in contact with your family and friends.
- Keep yourself active through work, play, hobbies and social interactions.
- Work satisfaction is important. If you are not happy with your job, look for better alternatives.
- Your attitude to life is most important to stay young. Keep a positive attitude to life and try to be free from tensions, worries and anxieties.

Now keep smiling and add life to years and also years to your life!

Dr (Major) Nalini Janardhanan

BAL THACKERAY

THE MAN AND THE LEGACY



P K Ravindranath

Bal Thackeray's significant legacies are that he was the one to give Maharashtrians in Mumbai an identity of their own and making Mumbai's militant trade unionism totally redundant. In fact, he was a creation of the Congress, then under S K Patil, V P Naik, the Chief Minister and later a series of Chief Ministers. All of them used him to further own political interest.

As he grew in stature, he created his own identity that could turn around and defy the Congress. It turned into a love-hate relationship between the Shiv Sena and the Congress. Even in death, the Congress Government accorded him a State funeral to a citizen who

never held any office nor even contested an election.

The Sena grew out of a sense of hurt, when in 1963 Bal Thackeray began publishing lists of people from other parts of the country in prominent corporate offices, in his weekly MARMIK. There were hardly any Maharashtrians in them.

The Sena came into being in 1966 in the wake of the sense of deprivation created by the lists. The fury of violent mobs was let loose on South Indians, particularly Malayalees in Mumbai.

Then came the realization that the popular Udipi Hotels in the city brought workmen from their hometown, instead of employing local unskilled labour even for cleaning restaurant tables. Udipi Hotels came under attack.

Then came Gujaratis who controlled business and commerce in the city and also the Bombay Stock Exchange.

By 1973 a prominent communist trade union leader, Krishna Desai, was killed, in Parel, the stronghold of the Communists. Thereafter till his death on

November 17, 2012 he lived under Z-Category security.

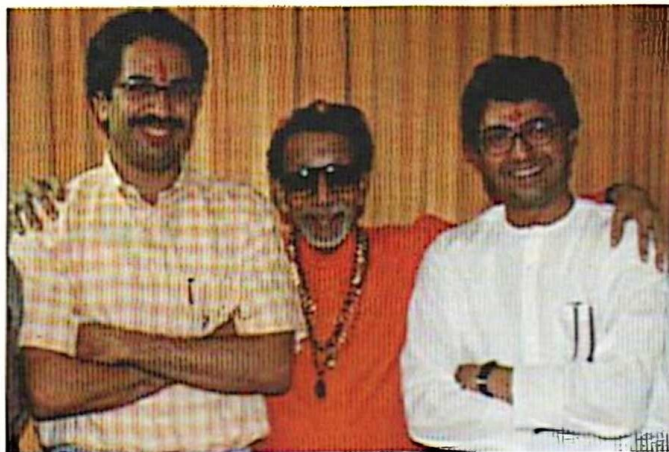
In spite of all this Bal Thackeray was a friend, affectionate, affable and caring, for close friends, who cut across castes and creeds, political orientations and other differences. I shared such a relationship with him from 1952, when we were colleagues in the "Free Press Journal."

Over the years, the Sena changed as an organisation and in its objectives. Several of them left from 1967 till 2008 when Raj Thackeray walked out with their followers. With the last exodus Bal Thackeray had re-defined a Mumbaikar as anyone living in the city and loving and caring for it. In other words he recognized the constitutional right of non-Maharashtrians to stay and work in the city.

The Sena is likely to undergo further changes in its outlook and functioning under Uddhav Thackeray. Uddhav is not as vociferous as his father, nor is a streak of violence in him, left to himself he would have preferred to be a wild life photographer.

Under him several Sainiks would move over to the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena of Raj Thackeray which provides them greater opportunities to indulge in questionable non-political activities.

The Congress has lost interest in the Shiv Sena and Raj Thackeray has so far taken care not to offend that party, even as differences between the Sena and the MNS remain.



Thackeray with son Uddhav and nephew Raj

TPP NAIR

Forgotten Volleyball Champion

- Rashma Anand



■ Padmanabhan Nair (TPP Nair), has the distinction of being the coach and captain of the Indian volleyball team that played against Japan in the IV Asian Games at Jakarta

Indonesia and won the silver medal for India in 1962. After this victory, India till date has not won silver medal for volleyball, in any international tournament.

At the third Asian Games held in Japan in 1958, India won the bronze medal for volleyball and Padmanabhan Nair was part of the Indian team. In 1960 he won several tournaments and emerged national Champion.

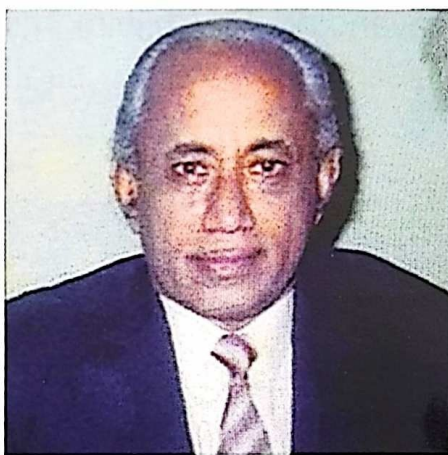
Still though he was recommended for Arjuna Award in 1960, he did not get it, since several others had to be accommodated. He was denied the Dhyanchand Lifetime Award and a pension for silver and bronze medalists of

international sports events. Earlier the pension, a small amount was given only to gold medalists. It was in 2008 when KPS Gill was the Sports Minister that the pension was sanctioned. And Padmanabhan Nair received his pension from 2009, 48 years after winning the silver medal!

Hailing from Cherukunnu in Kannur District, (he was born in 1934), he completed his education in 1951 and joined the Indian Airforce at Tambaram, Chennai.

He was a football and badminton player during his school and college days, but he started playing volleyball after he joined the Air Force when coach Joseph Vazhakulam spotted his talent.

Since 1952 Padmanabhan Nair has played in several volleyball teams for the services. He was Vice-Captain of the Volleyball team that toured Sri



Lanka in 1959, played all the test matches against Russia in 1960 and captained the last test held at Calcutta.

He was captain and coach of the IV Asian games held at Jakarta which won India a silver medal.

In 1960 he won the National volleyball championship played at Delhi representing the

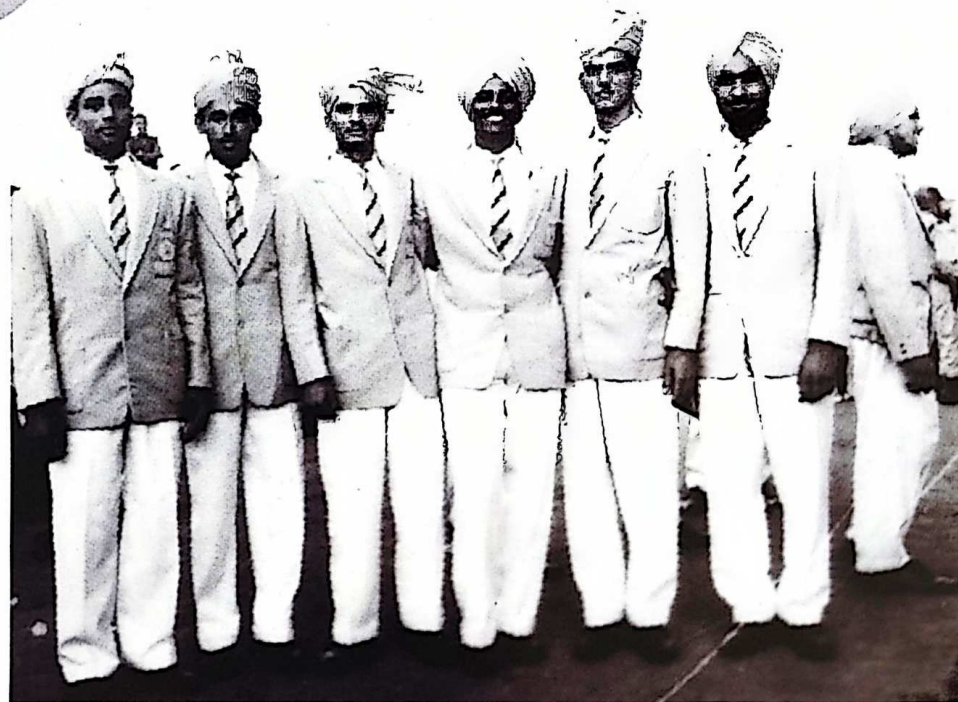
Services.

The same year he left the Airforce and joined Indian Railways where he won the national championship at Chennai playing for the railways. Thus he received two national Championship awards in the same year.

Padmanabhan Nair attended the first coaching camp for coaches conducted by the Russian Coach Pimenov at Patiala and qualified as a ranked coach with 90 % marks and was recommended as Understudy Coach at Netaji Institute of Sports at Patiala. While he was in the Railways, Padmanabhan Nair played in several volleyball tournaments and later coached the Railways men and women teams for tournaments in different cities till he retired in 1992.

Now 78, Padmanabhan Nair is interested in sports and watches the international competitions telecast in TV Channel. He laments the fact that the team spirit and dedication among the players those days is missing in the present generation, in spite of conveniences and advanced training imparted to the players. Padmanabhan Nair used to play tennis, football, billiards and snookers in his younger days.

His wife Omana, hails from Palakkad. While their son Pradeep is working with Mahindra & Mahindra and is married, his daughter Pramila is also working, married and settled. Both of them are in Mumbai. While Pradeep used to play cricket, Pramila played volleyball.



Indian Volleyball Team that played 1962 Asian Games in Indonesia and won the silver medal.

SRI CHITHIRA THIRUNAL BALARAMA VARMA

Rajarshi among Maharajas

- V N Gopalakrishnan

The last Maharaja of Travancore, Sri Chithira Thirunal attracted attention during his lifetime for his administrative reforms



■ His Highness Sri Padmanabha Dasa Vanchipala Sir Bala Rama Varma III, Kulasekhara Kiritapati Manney Sultan Maharaja Raja Ramaraja Bahadur,

Shamsher Jang, Maharaja of Travancore, GCSI, GCIE was the last ruler of the erstwhile princely state of Travancore. On the death of his adoptive maternal uncle, Sri Moolam Thirunal Rama Varma on August 7, 1924, Sri Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma succeeded to the throne of Travancore under the rule of *Marumakkathayam* Law of Inheritance. Since the Maharajah was still a minor, it was decided that the Senior Maharani should assume power and be Regent till he came of age. Accordingly, Sethu Lakshmi Bayi was proclaimed Maharani Regent of Travancore in September 1924.

Sri Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma took over the reins of Travancore on November 6, 1931. His birth centenary was celebrated on November 7, this year. He was the last surviving Knight Grand Commander of both the Order of the Star of India and of the Order of the Indian Empire. Sri Chithira Thirunal was proficient in several languages and was an embodiment of humility. He lived his life as a Padmanabha Dasa and contributed to every walk of life in Kerala like education, healthcare, music, spirituality as well as democracy. Anizham Thirunal Marthanda Varma was the first Maharaja to usher in the concept of Padmanabha Dasa in the 18th century and Sri Chithira Thirunal has been compared to Anizham Thirunal in terms of devotion to the temple.



Sri Chithira Thirunal Bala Rama Varma

Under Sri Chithira Thirunal, Travancore became a typical modern state and a model for the rest of India. Though opinion might be divided about the Legislative Reforms Act of 1932, the courage and wisdom underlying the proclamation of 1936 opening the temples of Travancore to every Hindu, irrespective of caste or sex, came in for high praise. By abolishing capital punishment in Travancore, it became a remarkable first step in the entire Asian sub-continent. Universal adult franchise was introduced in 1940. The mid-day meal scheme in the form of the Vanchi Poor Fund in Travancore was introduced to encourage poor children to attend school. The State Transport System inaugurated in 1937 has been an eye-opener to all as a public utility service earning a big net income for the state. Bombay was connected with Trivandrum by an air service in 1935. The Pallivasal Scheme (1933-40) was the first attempt in India to harness the waterfalls to man's service by generation of electricity.

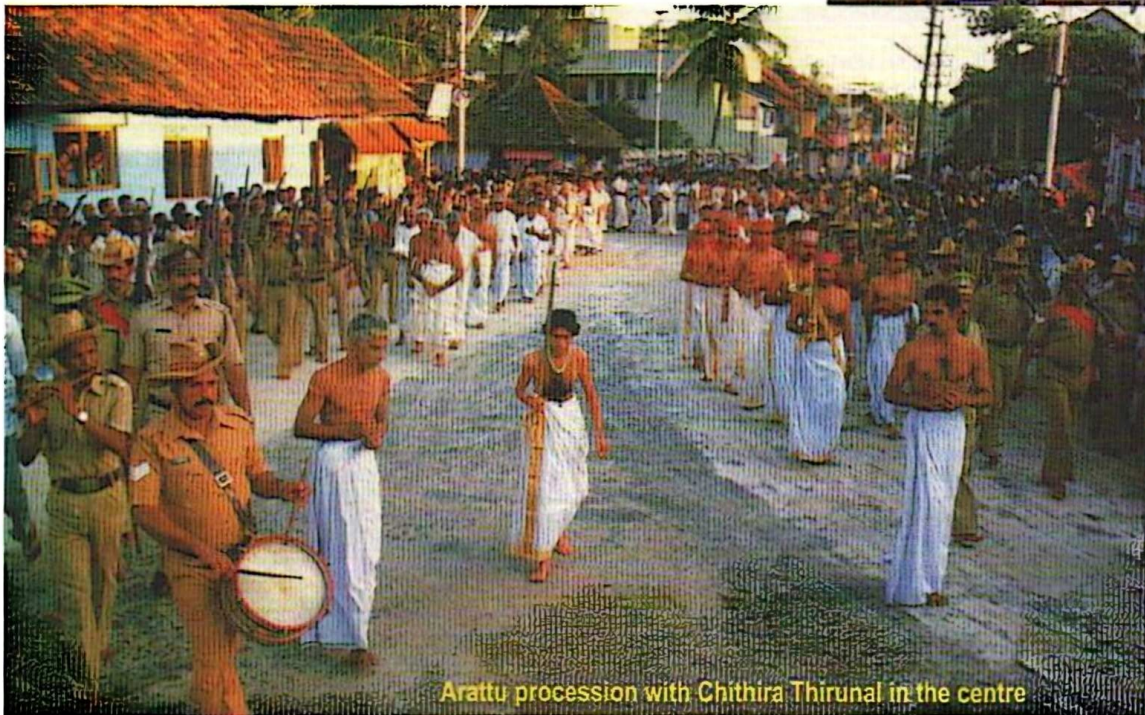
renovated and the Trivandrum Art Gallery was expanded. Aerodrome, Radio Station, Public Service Commission, Medical and Engineering Colleges were started in the state. However, the Maharaja's tenure was marred by the Punnapra-Vayalar Uprising that took place between the Communists and the Government, in which more than a thousand people lost their lives.

Balarama Varma was born on November 7, 1912 on *Diwali* day under the star *Chithira* and hence came to be known as Sri Chithira Thirunal. His father Ravi Varma Kochu Koyi Thampuram was the great nephew of Raja Ravi Varma, the legendary painter. His mother Sethu Parvathi Bayi was the junior Rani of Attingal who was distantly connected to the Travancore royal family.

Narayana Guru and Chattampi Swami and *Savarna Jaatha* led by K. Kelappan were the main factors that resulted in the Temple Entry Proclamation. When *Savarna Jaatha* was organised, high caste Hindus from different parts of the state participated to prove that they have



Sri Padmanabhaswamy Temple



Arattu procession with Chithira Thirunal in the centre

The University of Travancore (subsequently named as Kerala University) that was founded in 1937 not only provided for a well-recognised demand but also initiated movements for similar universities for the conservation of regional culture and research. Sri Chithira Thirunal became the first Chancellor and Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer the Vice Chancellor of Travancore University. The Padmanabhapuram Palace built during Marthanda Varma's regime was

In 1900 she was adopted by the Royal family by her maternal aunt Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi to ensure male successors in the family.

Though he was the last Maharaja of Travancore, he attracted attention during his lifetime for his administrative reforms. When Gandhiji came to Kerala in 1932 for participating in the Vaikom Satyagraha, he appealed to Travancore people to fight for justice. Gandhiji's Vaikom Satyagraha, K. Kelappan's Guruvayur Satyagraha, the influence of

no objection to the entry of lower caste people in temples. It proved to be a milestone in the annals of Kerala history.

On May 9 and 10, 1936 a meeting was held at Thiruvananthapuram under the leadership of Rameswari Nehru, nephew of Motilal Nehru. It brought all Kerala under one umbrella and was known as '*Akhila Kerala Kshetrapraveshana Sammelanam*'. It demanded entry for lower castes in temples in Travancore,

and also all over Kerala.

On November 12, 1936 with the co-operation of Maharani Sethu Parvathi Bayi and Dewan Sir.C.P Ramaswamy Iyer, Sri Chithira Thirunal issued the famous Temple Entry Proclamation on his 25th *Aatta Thirunal* (birthday) allowing Hindus of all castes and classes, including Harijans, the right to enter temples. Mahatma Gandhi and other social reformers praised the Maharaja for this proclamation though the conservative Hindus opposed it.

Padmanabha Swamy temple was the first in India to open its doors to all castes which made Mahatma Gandhi describe Sri Chithira Thirunal as a 'Modern Ashoka'. He sent a message praising the Maharaja for this historic decision.

With independence in 1947, after initial hesitation, Sri Chithira Thirunal agreed to accede Travancore to the new Dominion of India. In 1949, Sri Chithira Thirunal Rama Varma came close to refusing the post of *Rajpramukh* because he could not "give an oath to the Indian government." He reiterated that he would stand for the welfare of the people. However, he served as the *Rajpramukh* of the Travancore-Cochin union from July 1, 1949 to October 31, 1956. On November 1, 1956, the Travancore-Cochin union was merged with Malabar district of Madras state to form the state of Kerala and Sri Chithira Thirunal's office of *Rajpramukh* came to an end. On December 28, 1971, Sri Chithira Thirunal lost his Privy Purse and other privileges when the Government of India derecognized the rulers of the erstwhile princely states.

Despite losing the Privy Purse, Sri Chithira Thirunal continued to support the temple from his private funds and he could conduct *Murajapa* and *Lakshadeepa* more times than his predecessors. He was also a witness to the use of electric lights for the first time for the *Lakshadeepa* when there was scarcity of oil and cost escalation. Aswathi Thirunal Gouri Lakshmi Bayi has mentioned in her book on the Padmanabha Swamy temple that for the first time, in the 1960s, a *deva prasnam* (astrological consultation) was conducted when Sri Chithira Thirunal had to decide whether the temple could be electrified.

Sri Chithira Thirunal, the last ruler of Travancore breathed his last at the Kowdiar Palace on July 19, 1991 at the age of 78. He was succeeded as head of the royal house of Travancore by his brother, Uthradom Thirunal Marthanda Varma. On the recent discovery of priceless treasures in the vaults of Sree Padmanabha Swamy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram, the family shrine of the Travancore royals, Uthradom Tirunal stated: "It has been in the temple vaults for centuries and the royal family has been well aware of that...It is the wealth of Lord Padmanabha and we have never ever felt any interest in it. It should be preserved as God's wealth in future also."



Poem



G Gopalakrishnan

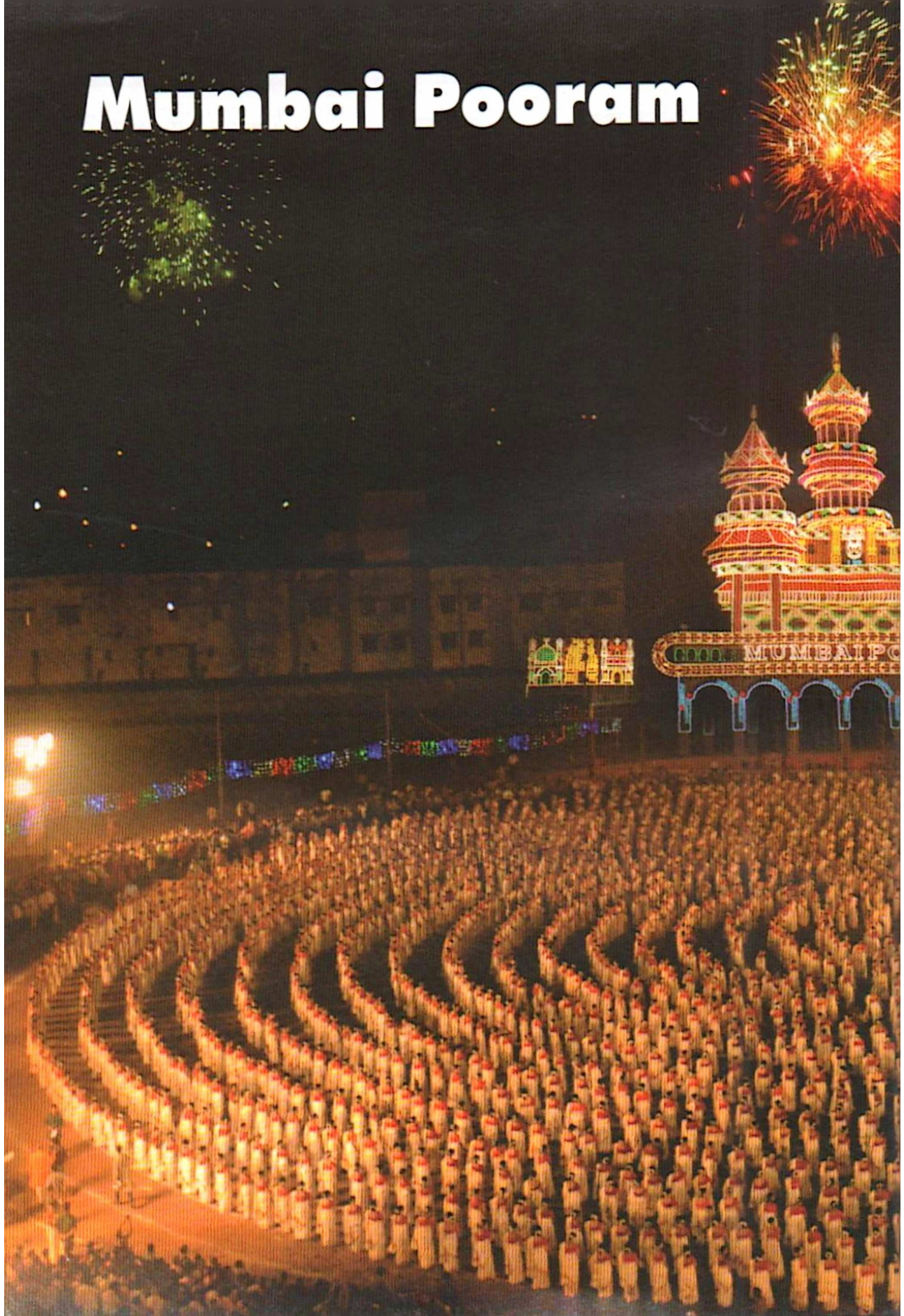
Wail for affection

*Feeble sound heard through woods,
Oh! A haggard cry hoarse as a far cry,
No one to succour,
To feed him a morsel of food with affection,
For which he wails.
His muffled cry reaches the wrinkled ears,
Of a hag who squat in a corner; his wife they say.
She crawled to cling to his shoulder,
Try to wipe out the warm tears.*

*Bestowed with children the couple now seeks,
A glimpse of their near and dear:
Oh! They are busy counting dollars,
Money flows to their portal,
But the flow of parental care dwindled!
A thought crept into the minds of
That nonagenarian couple,
"Why this Fathers Day, Mothers Day,
They celebrate in this world?... they whispered.*

The Government of India issued a Stamp of the Maharaja in 1991, commemorating the reforms that marked the rule of Sri Chithira Thirunal in Travancore. The Sri Chithira Thirunal Institute of Medical Sciences and Technology and the Sree Chithira Thirunal College of Engineering at Trivandrum were named after him. A statue of the late ruler was also unveiled by Dr. C Rangarajan, Governor of Andhra Pradesh on November 13, 2001.

Mumbai Pooram



Guinness World Record Kaikottikali



Rajan Kadannappally

PASSION FOR STAGE

Rajan Kadannappally has carved a name for himself in the business, social and dramatic circles in Mumbai. On the Mumbai Malayalee scene he is an actor to reckon with.

Lakshmi V

For the past thirty years, Rajan is a name to reckon with on the Mumbai Malayalam stage. He has acted in more than 48 plays which has been played on more than 150 stages in Mumbai.

Beginnings

It was during his college days that Rajan realized his interest in acting. He participated in college dramas and inter-collegiate drama competitions while studying in college. At the Calicut University drama competition he won a prize which inspired him to take up acting as a hobby. Even during his college days he won several other prizes and laurels. Before coming to



Mumbai he started his acting career in Kerala with *Navadhara Theatres*, *Bhavana Theatres*, and portayed different roles that displayed his histrionic talents and he earned a name for himself. *Bhavana Theatres* Production of Srimoolanagaram Mohan's *Thadakam*, PC Krishnan's *Mullkireedam* etc. won him appreciation from the discerning drama enthusiasts.

Born in Kadannappally in Kannur District his parents are the late KO Nambiar (Kadamkot House) and Janaki Amma (Kuppaadakath House). He completed his schooling in Mathamangalam High School and graduation at Payyanur College. As a student he was active in the leftist wing as a member of SFI Student movement.



Rajan Kadannappally in *Kaanaljalam*



Sudha Chandran and Rajan Kadannappally in *Apaswaram*



Rajan Kadannappally and Castro Vizhinjam in *Veerashringala*

Rajan and the Mumbai Theatre

Rajan came to Mumbai in 1976. He first got employed in a vegetable export company. After working for a year here, he joined Dattani Group as a typist in 1977. In 1984, he rose to become the Manager and is currently General Manager of Dattani Group of Companies.

But his love of the theatre was abiding and he continued to act on Mumbai Malayalam stage. His first drama in Mumbai was *Abhilasham* when he joined Kandivali Malayalee Samajam in 1981. Rajan has acted in several plays for Kandivali Malayalee Samajam including *Sapharashmi*, *Uparotham*, *Yugathrishna* etc. He was Secretary of Kandivali Malayalee Samajam for more than 10 years from 1981 -2001. He is currently President of the Samajam.

In 1982 he acted in Sangam Theatres *Aayiram Mukhamulla suryan* where he played the lead role. The play was a huge success and has been staged several times in Mumbai. From this period he started a long association with Sangam Theatres and acted in several of their plays. His presence was established with these plays on the Mumbai Malayalee stage. He directed *Aathmayuddham* written by C L Jose in 1993.

“Those days, Malayalees, mostly bachelors from Kerala were dedicated in staging dramas and had time to rehearse and fine-tune their shows. The audience were also interested to watch



“Mumbai Malayalees have always appreciated good drama. There is a reviving interest in Malayalam drama among the Malayalee youth of Mumbai which is a good sign. We should not disappoint them.”

Malayalam drama. With the advent of TV and multiplexes, Drama shows have lost a little of their attraction”, he says. “Fortunately an awareness to revive Malayalam theatre is taking place now. I am happy to be part of this”, he says.

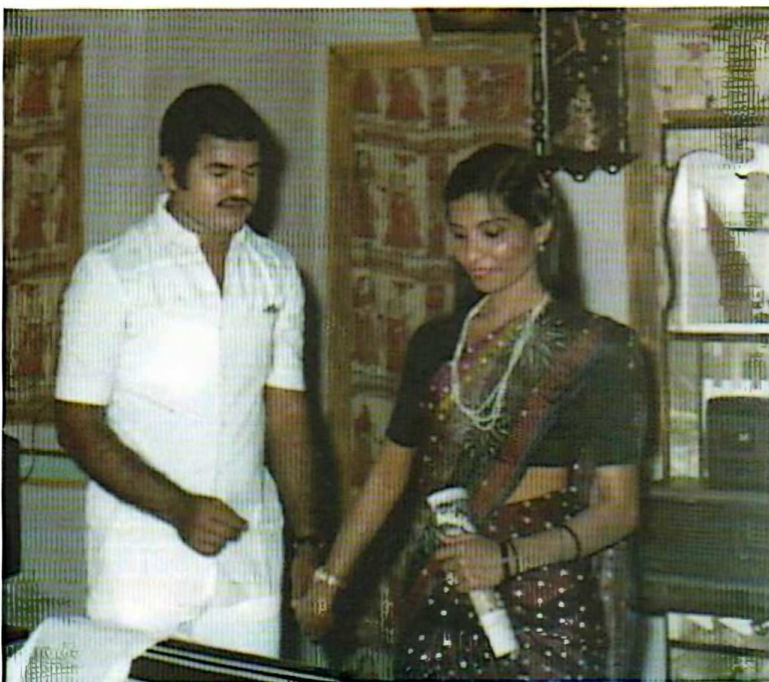
Rajan has recently acted in the main role in *poyadinagale vannittu pogu* (2012) directed Unni Varieth at Lokhandwala Township Malayalee Association, *Sebastianos* (2012), directed by PC Cherian, *Swati Tirunal* (2011) produced by Saptaswara, *Devasankeerthanam* (2011) directed by Madhu Vilappil. Some of the Malayalam plays he has acted and are his favourites are *Homam*, *Veerashringala*, *Apaswaram*, *Raja Sabha*, *samadhi*, *Anushtanam* and *Kottarakkettu*.

Awards and Recognitions

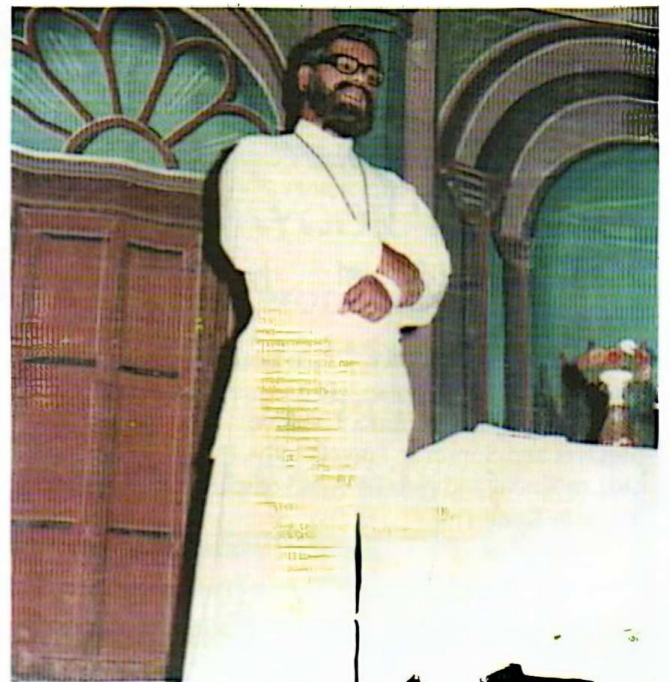
Rajan won the Nataka Thilakam MN Kurup Memorial Award by Nritya Sindhu, in recognition of his 25 years of invaluable service on the Malayalam stage. In 2010 he won the Nataka Pratibha Award from *Jwala* magazine Mumbai.

Rajan got married to Girija, a native of Azheekode in Kannur District in 1987. She knew dancing and used to sing well. She is working as a Senior officer in State Bank of India. They have a daughter Rajna who has completed her MBA and is employed and a son Jithish who is doing his first year MBA in Mumbai. Rajna during her college days acted in college dramas.

Rajan Kadannappally has acted in plays of Sangam Theatres, Rhythm



Rajan Kadannappally and Annie Helen in *Sapharashmi*



Rajan Kadannappally in *Akaldhama*

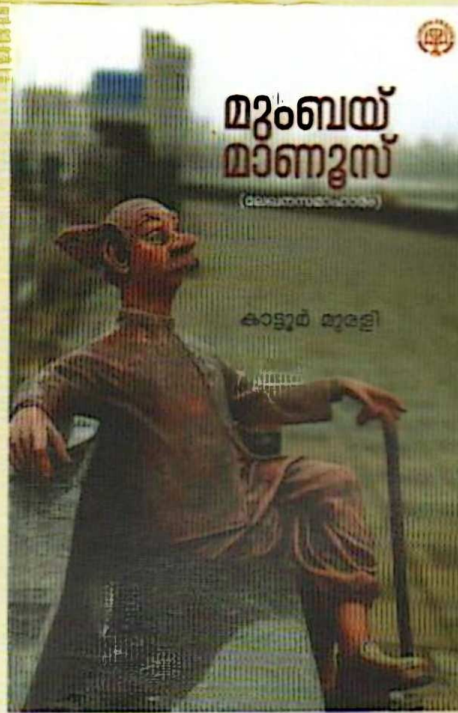
Mumbai Maanoos

-Ashwati

Mumbai Maanoos' by Kattoor Murali is a compilation of articles written for his column of the same title in 'Kalakaumudi', a Mumbai newspaper. Through his articles, Murali has attempted to capture the varying styles of Malayalee life in the metropolitan city.

Murali is a seasoned writer and has avoided all the clichés that normally haunt the new writers and hence all the articles selected for the book are quite readable. To a well settled migrant Malayalee, the articles offer nostalgia and to the second generation, they offer a little bit of history of migrants including their dreams, aspirations, disappointments and resignations.

All articles are written in a humourous frame of mind and a couple of articles are found with a flash of exaggeration (48-49). Further, most of the titles have an uncanny link with Malayalam film



songs and titles.
All articles are written in a simple

and lucid style but one sentence 'ശ്രാമത്തിലെ എല്ലാ പുരുഷന്മാരും വർഗ്ഗവും അവരവരുടെ രഹസ്യമാക്കി സൂക്ഷിച്ചു.' (page 110) remains a puzzle.

Articles based on Narayan Surve and Namdeo Dhasal are interesting and would be eye openers for those who moan about their own ill-fates. Both of them are reputed Marathi writers who rose from the gutters to touch the sky.

One question perturbs me. A few articles talk about 'Pravasi' the implied meaning of which is one that left for his livelihood but is bound to return. So will anyone who permanently settled outside, leaving no property in his home state be entitled to call himself 'Pravasi'?

— ['Mumbai Maanoos' by Kattoor Murali and published by Pambungal Publications, Mumbai 400 059. Pages 144 and price Rs.120]

Theatres, Adam Theatres, Bombay Keraleeya Samaj and several Malayalee Samajams of Mumbai, under prominent directors like Anthappan, Mundoor Rajan, VV Achuthan, Unni Variath, PC Cherian, Sundaran Nadavarambu, along with leading female artistes of Mumbai Malayalam drama like Mary Paul, Ramani Menon, Raji Nediyaath, Mani Nair, Jagada Chandran Suma Mukundan, Annie Helen, Jessi Peter and Sudha Chandran(film actor).

Business and Social Activities

An artiste to the core, Rajan is also a successful businessman. He has his own Construction venture, Creative Builders and Supreme Travels India Pvt Ltd, in Kochi and runs an Ayurvedic centre in Kandivali.

Rajan is President All India Malayalee Association, President Malayalee Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He does several social activities through Malayalee organization like helping the less



Rajan Kadannappally with his wife Girija, son Jithish and daughter Rajna

privileged ones in the field of education, medical assistance for the sick etc. He is also managing Editor of a Malayalam

monthly *Malayalee Vision* published by All India Malayalee Association (AIMA) .

MUMBAI FOUNDATION OVERCOMES ELEPHANTINE CRISIS WITH SPECTACULAR DISPLAY



**Sriprakash
Menon**

Mumbai Pooram 2012 was a landmark event for Malayalis of Mumbai firstly because it was a pooram without the traditionally attired elephants, secondly it created a world record through the folk art 'Kaikottikali' of Kerala by Mumbai women. Thirdly, the disruptive individuals among the Malayalis were defeated on their face though they were successful in blocking the entry of elephants to Mumbai by creating impediments by making wrongful and false allegations against the organisers

Indian festivals, traditions and rituals where animals are an important part of its celebrations. The foundation never expected such a biased stance from Naqvi based on 'wild allegations' from a few individuals.

There is no doubt, a section of Malayalis who indulged in such petty politics did not gain anything except their bloated egos but in the process they exposed themselves among Mumbaitites for their negative actions. Why should these Malayalis behave like the proverbial 'crab in a can' trying to bring down their own folks? Alas, it is pity even after coming to Mumbai—the land of opportunities, the mentality

festivals dedicated to animals. If the state animal welfare department and the NGO who complained were so keen to resolve the problems of animals, they should stop butchering innocent buffaloes and cows in Maharashtra and Kerala. There are several other atrocities committed towards animals but it goes unnoticed; only when animals are used as part of festivities it is seen as objectionable, otherwise no authority is bothered about their living and daily food.

Mumbai Pooram was a mammoth cultural extravaganza with many artistes from Kerala who regaled several lakhs of people who had come from all over



The missing spectacle at Mumbai Pooram

of Mumbai Pooram Foundation. Nagpur based Principal Chief Conservator Forest (Wildlife) S H Naqvi under pressure from vested interests failed to understand the cultural and social significance of this festival where animals and humans are normally in perfect sync and harmony. Such festivals with elephants are normal events in Kerala but the bureaucratic upper hand was clearly 'politically motivated', according to Foundation sources. The Foundation is planning to move legally against Naqvi as he has failed to acknowledge and recognise the 'secular spirit' of some

and attitude of some people have not changed. At the Pooram function the guests from Kerala especially Chief Minister Oommen Chandy criticised the people who tried to sabotage the grandeur and cultural scale of the Pooram without the elephants. It is ridiculous for the state animal welfare department to stop elephants from participating in Mumbai Pooram. Animals and plants are revered in India from Vedic times. Animal and ecological welfare is not an NGO prerogative taught to us by the West. A majority of Indian populace worshiped and revered animals and there are

Mumbai to witness and experience the rich traditional and cultural festival at MIDC stadium, Dombivli. The laser show and fireworks were a fitting fit to the three days of celebration and nostalgia to 'God's Own Country'. The programme was attended by the doyen of Malayalam music V Dakshinamoorthy Swamigal who was felicitated on the occasion. The Foundation of course need to put a much better expo of business and trade activities of Kerala. Where was the Kerala jewellery, Kerala handloom, Kerala handicraft and the vast number of products of its cottage and small s



Thayampaka in progress

industry especially Kudumbashri products. Tourism stalls were also very few and the aroma of Kerala nuts and spices were largely missing. The food outlets were also had a few choice especially for the vegetarians. The concept of Thattukada could have been cleaner and people friendly.

The Pooram ground also lacked in proper toilet facilities especially for women besides access to drinking water. Though there were several lakhs of Malayalis who attended the Pooram a quarter of the Mumbai Malayali population could not make it to Dombivli due to the distance. Mumbai Pooram Foundation should organise part of this Pooram in Thane/Mulund or Vashi or at Bandra Kurla Complex as well so that many from the present generation could catch a glimpse of Kerala's rich cultural heritage in Mumbai itself before they know about it from the US, Europe or UAE in the near future.

No doubt it was a great success for the Foundation team to organise Pooram in a grand manner especially the selfless work done by Ramesh Iyer and Girish Nair have not gone unnoticed. Mumbai Pooram Foundation has noble objectives for the future and it would be a great opportunity for the Mumbai Malayalis to associate and support their endeavours like building of a cultural centre like Kalamandalam and a hermitage home for the elderly people near to it. Such a centre if not centrally located should be somewhere in Navi Mumbai, Panvel or on Ahmedabad highway near Vasai/ Vihar. Ideally, such a cultural centre should come up in Mumbai near Wadala, so that the organisers can leverage proper

resources from corporates and accessibility for national and international artists could be easier with trans harbour road/rail link in the offing. I am reminded of what the noted scientist and former President of India

Abdul Kalam once mentioned to a gathering that for a dream to come true one needs to work hard and keep awake. The Foundation has a goal to achieve and surely people of Mumbai would support them.



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Alexander Prince Vaidyan, noted businessman and President of K&K Social Foundation, who is a common friend of Dr Farooq Abdullah, Union Minister for new and renewable energy and DMK Chief Kalainjar Karunanidhi, recently arranged a meeting at Chennai between them. During the Meeting Dr Farooq Abdullah thanked Dr Karunanidhi for the support extended by DMK to the UPA Government on FDI in multi brand retail. Dr Farooq Abdullah has told Dr Karunanidhi that they are on a strong wicket on FDI and most of the other things coming up in Parliament in the current session.

Gautam Varma first runner up in National Abacus and Brain Gym Competition.

Gautam Varma emerged first runner-up in the fifth level National Abacus and Brain Gym Competition held at Pune. At the fourth level State Competition in Thiruvananthapuram, Gautam won the Championship. Gautam Varma is the son of Kairali TV Chief news Editor Manoj K. Varma and Dr Bindu Varma Sr. Ayurveda Consultant KIMS Hospital Thiruvananthapuram. A Std IV student at Saraswati Vidyalaya Thiruvananthapuram, Gautam underwent training at Pattam Brain Wave Centre.



Kodungallooramma (1968)

(കൊടുങ്ങല്ലൂരമ്മ)

Lyrics: Vayalar Rama Varma Music: K Raghavan
Singer: K J Yesudas Ragam: Pahadi

Rohini



Vayalar Rama Varma



K Raghavan



K J Yesudas

മണ്ണുഭാഷിണി!

മണ്ണുഭാഷിണി! മണിയറവിണയിൽ
മയങ്ങിയുണരുന്നതേതൊരു രാഗം?
ഏതൊരു ഗീതം?

(മണ്ണുഭാഷിണി..)

നാദസരകളിൽ പ്രിയദർശിനി-നിൻ
മോതിരക്കൈവിരൽ ഒഴുകുമ്പോൾ
താനേ പാടാത്ത തന്ത്രികളുണ്ടോ?
താളം പിടിക്കാത്ത ഹൃദയമുണ്ടോ?
രാഗസരസ്സിൽ പ്രാണസഖി-നിൻ
രാജീവനയനങ്ങൾ വിടരുമ്പോൾ
വാരിച്ചുടാത്ത മോഹങ്ങളുണ്ടോ?

(മണ്ണുഭാഷിണി..)

കോരിത്തരിക്കാത്ത സ്വപ്നങ്ങളുണ്ടോ? (മണ്ണുഭാഷിണി..)

Mañjubhāṣiṇī!

Mañjubhāṣiṇī! Maṇiyarhavīṇayil
Mayaṇṇiyuṇarunnaṭṭoru rāgam?
Ētoru gītam?

(Mañjubhāṣiṇī...)

Nādasirakaḷil priyadarṣiṇī nin
Mōṭirakkaiviral ozhukumpol
Ṭāṇēpātāṭṭa ṭanṭrikāluntō?

Ṭālam pitikkaṭṭa hrūdayamuntō? (Mañjubhāṣiṇī...)

Rāgasarassiṭil praṇasakhī - nin
Rājīvanayanaṇṇāl vitarumpol
Vāriccūtāṭṭa mōhaṇṇāluntō?

Kōriṭṭarikaṭṭa swapnaṇṇāluntō? (Mañjubhāṣiṇī...)

This movie was produced by Excel Productions and directed by Kunchacko. Its dialogues were written by Jagathy N K Achari. The eight songs it had, were sung by Balamurali Krishna, Yesudas, P B Srinivas, P Suseela and S Janaki.



The main actors were Prem Nazir, K R Vijaya, Jyothilakshmi, Kottarakkara, Thikkurissi, S P Pillai, Adoor Bhasi, Adoor Pankajam, Jose Prakash and Aranmula Ponnamma.

Mulund Kerala Samajam's Endowment Award

Mulund Kerala Samajam felicitated veteran journalist PK Ravindranath by conferring on him KM Mathews Memorial Endowment Award 2012 as part of its 53rd Annual celebrations. This award, instituted for the first time was bestowed on PK Ravindranath for his invaluable service to society in the field of journalism and fearless reporting. Samajam President K Gopalan Nair, General Secretary CK Lakshminarayanan, Secretary CCK Poduval, Award Co-ordination Committee Member M Kumaran Nair, Dr A Venugopal, G Mohan Kumar and Ommen Michael, did the honours to him at his house. PK Ravindranath was also felicitated with a cash award of Rs 25,000, shawl and a bouquet by the Samajam. Ravindranath is the Consulting Editor of KERALA IN MUMBAI.



Kumaran Nair hands over the Award to P K Ravindranath



Saying it with flowers



Ravindranath and his wife with Mulund Kerala Samajam committee members and P V Vijaykumar and Lakshmi Venkatachalam of Kerala in Mumbai

Acceptance speech by P K Ravindranath at Mulund Kerala Samajam on K M Mathews Endowment Award, 17th November 2012

Friends,

I am thankful to Mulund Kerala Samajam for bestowing this prestigious honour on me. I shall ever cherish it.

I realised early in my career that journalism was not merely a profession but a means to iron out differences in society, communities and neighborhood. I recall with pride my early mentors, S Sadanand, M Shivram, M V Kamath and Frank Moraes.

They inculcated in me the lesson that through journalism one could help bring about harmony and peace, in a conflict-ridden society.

I have lived through much blood-shed, violence, hatred, animosity and strife, from the communal riots of Partition Days, to the Malegaon, Nasik and Bhivandi riots of the sixties, (including the Shiv Sena inspired unrest of 1969.)

A sense of right and wrong and the highest principles of journalism ethics, objectivity, honesty and fair reporting helped me project several socially relevant issues, which may have gone un-noticed. There were issues like progressive movements to reform beliefs in the Parsi and Bohra communities, besides of course, Hinduism and Islam, fight against superstitions, the campaign for propagating the scientific temper in the country, besides spread of literacy, eradication of poverty, widow remarriage and a hundred other issues that needed to be projected. I lived through an era when no journalist minced words to condemn outright what he felt was wrong and no one ever felt the need either to

sensationalise or exaggerate stories or their manner of narration. The most effective method of presenting a story was the narration of facts in a cogent and easily understood manner to readers. I sought to stick to this principle and I find it was richly rewarding and gratifying.

There was no competition whatsoever for attention in the media expect for scoops whether in reporting crime, political or social developments. The emphasis was never on spectacle, gore or disaster.

The time-tested values of journalism need to be revived and propagated amongst all new entrants to the media. I have had the singular experience of grooming over 500 young men and women who have come into the mainstream media both electronic and the print.

Engaged in training the Third Year students of the Bachelor of Mass Media (BMM) Course in six prestigious colleges in Mumbai. I am proud of them in that they remain steadfast to honest journalism, ensuring ethical conduct, objectivity and a high sense of commitment.

Having just overcome the ravages of cancer and radiation therapy, I only wish I will be able to infuse the same principles among more new entrants to the media. Today's media can do with a lot more of dedication to the finest traditions of Indian journalism.

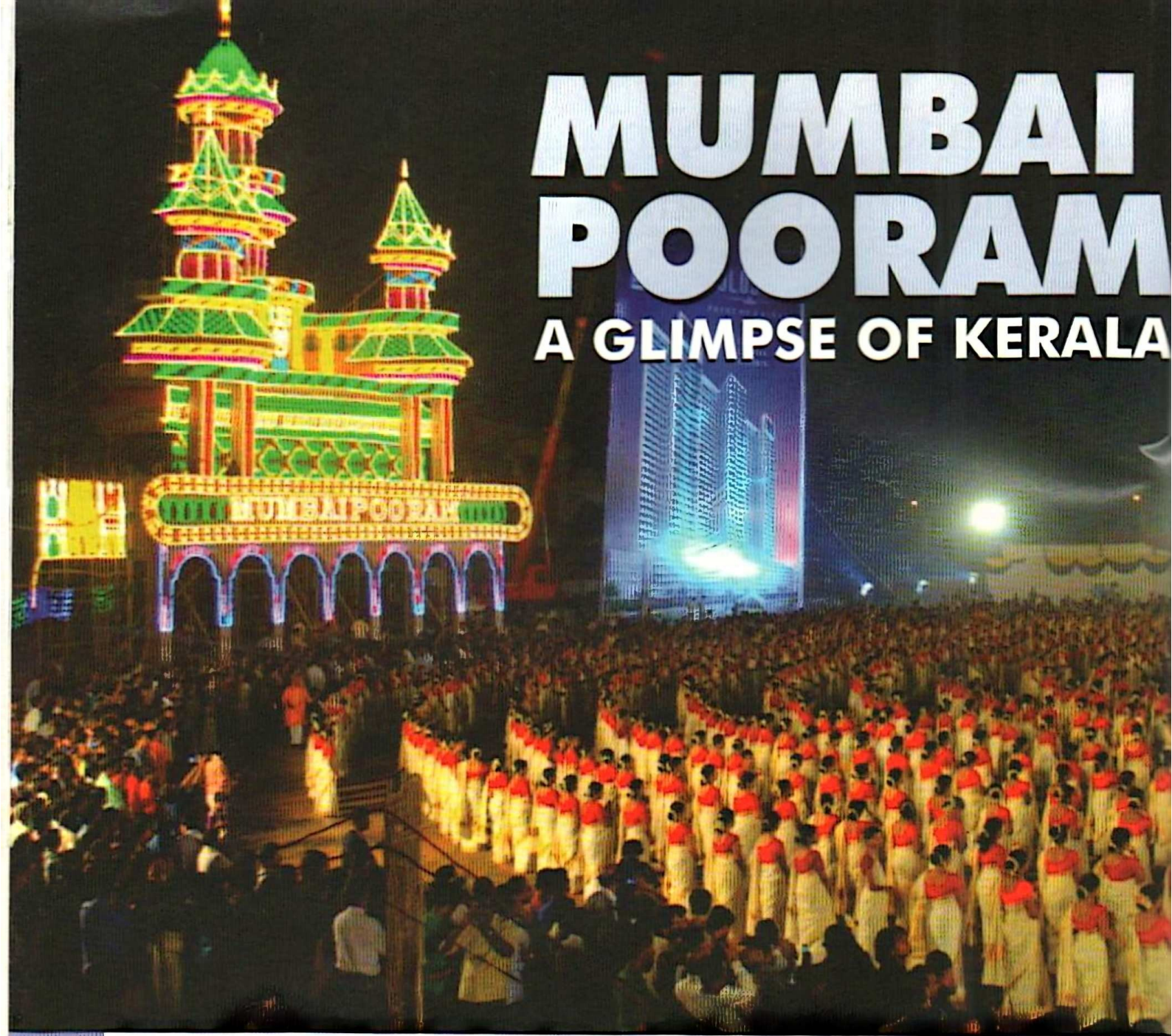
Once again I thank the jury and the members of Mulund Kerala Samajam for the honour and recognition they have bestowed on me. Thank you.



Thara Ravindranath reading out the acceptance speech on behalf of Ravindranath

MUMBAI POORAM

A GLIMPSE OF KERALA



Mumbai Pooram 2012 was a grand display of Kerala, giving Mumbaikars a glimpse of Kerala's traditional and folk songs and dances, its cultural heritage and its varied temple arts, not forgetting Kerala's speciality cuisine, its real estate scenario through the property exhibition and a display of the paintings of Mumbai Malayalee artistes and traditional music and dance programmes. The Pooram held a drama festival where Mumbai Malayalees staged dramas. In short, an essence of Malayalanadu and its heritage was showcased during the Mumbai Pooram from November 9 to 11 at MIDC Grounds in Dombivili.

The Pooram celebrations began with the Maha Ganapathy Homam officiated by former Sabarimala Tantri Kandararu Maheshwararu followed by kodiyyettam and the celebrations were formally started. In the evening Kerala State Forest Minister inaugurated the cultural conference where he regretted the inability to bring the promised elephants due to several reasons. Perumbavoor MLA Saju

Paul addressed the audience and urged Malayalees to form united groups outside Kerala and bring out such events showcasing the rich traditions and arts of Kerala. The Matha Maitri Sannam was inaugurated by the three religious heads, former Sabarimala temple Thanthri Kandararu Maheshwararu, Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal of Kalyan Diocese and KM Suleman Maulavi of Cheraman Masjid, Kodungallur who jointly lit the inaugural lamp and emphasized the basic unity of all religions that brings to man the message of love and unity. Other dignitaries on the first day were Soorya Krishnamoorthy, Kalyan Silks Pattabhiraman, Dr Saji Kumar, M Suresh, A Mahendran, Sajeew Krishnan, MCS Menon, Madhavan Kutty, Satheesh Menon and NS Rajesh who addressed the gathering.

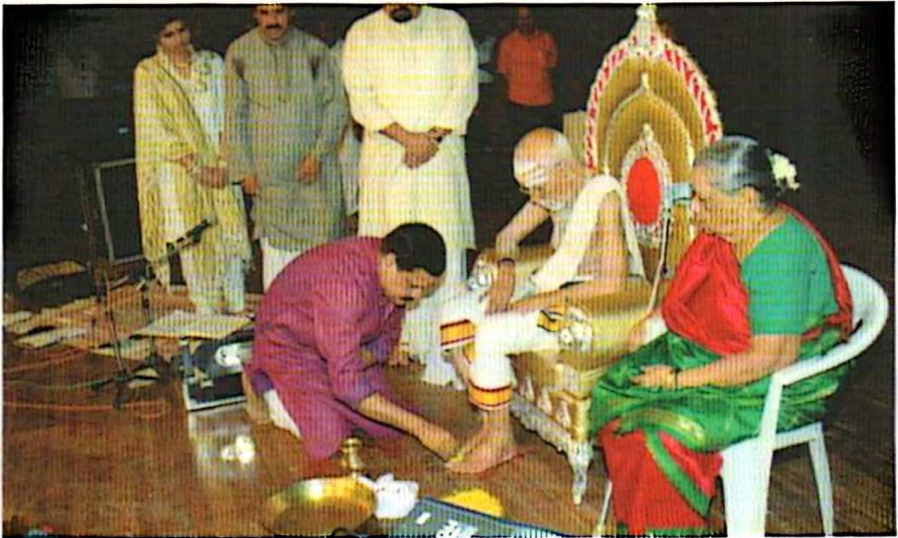
The second day started with the inauguration of Malayalam Drama festival by Soorya Krishnamoorthy and the painting exhibition of Mumbai Malayalee artistes at Savitribhai Phule auditorium. The conference in the

Elephants or no elephants
Mumbai Pooram Foundation
succeeded in bringing a
slice of Kerala's art and
culture at its ambitious
Mumbai Pooram 2012 that
enthralled the Malayalees
and other communities in
the metropolis. Now the
Foundation looks forward to
prepare for Mumbai Pooram
2013, next year hopefully
with the elephants in tow.

PADA PUJA TO DAKSHINAMOORTHY SWAMI

Another significant and enthralling event during Mumbai Pooram was the padapuja on November 11 offered by Mumbai Malayalee singers to veteran singer and music composer, 93 year old Dakshinamoorthy Swami. He has composed semi-classical tunes for about 900 songs in more than 125 Malayalam films and has given evergreen melodious numbers. Singers Vijaykumar of Raagalaya, Prem Kumar, Madhu Nambiar, Anu Shyam and Chaitra gave a riveting rendering of Dakshinamoorthy's melodious all-time hits like *harsha bashpam*, *kattile paazhmula*, *chandrikayil aliyunnu*, etc. The function took place at Savitribhai Phule Auditorium and Pooram Foundation Committee members welcomed the veteran singer and his wife with *poorna kumbam* and were led to a special seat. Chairman Kondath Venugopal welcomed them with a shawl and addressed the gathering. Later the Mumbai singers performed *pada puja* to the artiste and paid their tribute to him by singing his compositions.

Young and old singers touched his feet seeking the senior artiste's blessings. In his speech, Dakshinamoorthy said that Music is God and hence immortal. He blessed everyone with his sincere message that touched the audience's hearts. Ramesh Iyer Secretary of the Foundation and Prasad spoke on the occasion. The *Sangeetha Saparya Award* was bestowed to Dakshinamoorthy by the Foundation, the same evening.



P V Vijaykumar doing honours to Dakshinamoorthy Swamy



Ramesh Iyer of Mumbai Pooram felicitates Kerala Tourism Minister A P Anilkumar



Religious heads Thomas Elavanal, K M Suleiman Maulavi and Kantararu Maheswararu light the Matha Maithri lamp



Minister K B Ganesh Kumar addresses the gathering on the first day



Dancing to the tunes of Nadan Pattu



Mumbai Malayalee singers paying tribute to Dakshinamoorthy

evening was graced by the chief Minister of Kerala Oommen Chandy who was the chief guest. In his address to the audience Oommen Chandy praised the Malayalees who always got along well with the people of the localities they settled in and urged them to continue to love their motherland as well as to remember the land of their birth and its culture. The Chief minister praised the Pooram Foundation in its efforts to popularize the traditional and folk arts of Kerala outside the state and pledged the Government's support in the efforts of the Foundation.

Maharashtra Excise Minister Ganesh Naik, Kerala Labour Minister Shibu Baby John, Kerala High Court Justice Chidambaresh, LIC Managing Director Thomas Mathew, Thane MLA Eknath Shinde, Sankara Menon IAS, Sachin Menon, KVK Nair, Kalyan Silks CEO Pattabhiraman spoke on the occasion.

The concluding ceremony on the evening of the final day (November 11), was inaugurated by Kerala Tourism Minister Anil Kumar. He praised the efforts of the Foundation in bringing Kerala's heritage to Mumbai and assured his Department's support for the next Pooram of 2013. Thane Lok Sabha Member Anand Paranjpe was the chief guest. Minister Anil Kumar exhibited the Guinness World Record Certificate received for the mega *kaikottikali* to the gathering during the function. MPT Managing Director and Chairman Nandakumar, social worker Prakash Padikkal, Vijay Babu of Surya TV, veteran musician Dakshinamurthy Swami, Kannur Folklore Academy Chairman Mohammed Ahmad, Sunder Menon and Shrikant Nair spoke on the occasion.

The Foundation distributed awards to eminent personalities from various fields. Senior music composer

Dakshinamoorthy Swami was bestowed the *Sangeetha Sapariya* Award while *Chenda* artiste Kalloor Raman Kutty was bestowed the *Saparya Kulapathy* Award, businessman Sunder Menon, Pattabhiraman of Kalyan Silks and Dr Bijoy Kutty were also honoured by the Foundation. Folklore Academy Kannur performed *nadan pattukal* on the third day that was enjoyed by the audience. The three day Pooram event concluded with a brilliant display of fireworks that lit up the Mumbai skyline and enthralled the spectators.

Traditional folk arts and dances of Kerala found a place during the three days. *Theyyam*, *Padayani*, *thaympaka*, *panchavadyam singari melam*, *pandi melam*, *pulikali*, *kavadiattam* all these were performed by artistes either from Kerala or Mumbai and provided tremendous doze of entertainment to the audience and familiarised the Mumbai Malayalee with his cultural roots.

KAIKOTTIKALI IN THE GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS

The highlight of the Mumbai Pooram was the Maha Kaikottikali by over 2600 girls and women which entered the Guinness book of world records and brought international fame to Kerala's traditional dance. The ladies in off white traditional saris with gold zari border wearing red blouses, flowers around their hair tied into a low bun and a necklace round their necks, was an alluring spectacle to the viewers, The dancers swayed in rhythmic movements and danced gracefully round the huge nilavilakku that was lit and placed in the centre, to the song that was sung live by the singers to the accompaniment of *edakka*. The kaikottikali had the audience spellbound who applauded wholeheartedly when the dance ended. Not only Malayalees but several other communities from Mumbai and neighbouring cities participated in the dance that has now won international fame. All the participants will be given certificates of participation in this Guinness world record winning group dance. In spite of the heat and the long wait, the ladies participating in the dance, evinced an enthusiasm in organizing themselves and the audience patiently waited for them to form their circle and begin their performance. The kaikottikali group deserved this Guinness world record fame.



Nadan Pattu performers of Folklore Academy, Kannur



A view of the audience



Dancer Tara Varma and others holding the Guinness certificate



KIM News Bureau

Lalitha Kalalayam Annual celebrations

Lalitha Kalalayam celebrated its 21st annual day at Thunchan Smaraka Hall in Dombivili. KERALA IN MUMBAI Managing Director PV Vijaykumar, *Malayala Bhumi* Sasidharan Nair, *Amchi Mumbai* host JP Thakazhy, Shrikant Nair, Dancer Ragini Chokshi were Guests of Honour at the event. Rajesh Nambisan and Programme Co-ordinator Girija Nambisan welcomed the Guests of Honour. Noted dancer Ragini Chokshi was bestowed the Nelluvai KN Nambisan Memorial Award 2012 and PV Vijaykumar, Managing Director KERALA IN MUMBAI handed over the Award to her. Lalitha Kalalayam Nambisan Nelluvai and his troupe presented *kshetra kala vadya Manjari* (a programme of temple musical



P V Vijaykumar presenting 2012 Nelluvai K.N. Smaraka Award to dance teacher Smt. Ragini Chokshi. Corporator Ravi Patil also seen in the picture.

instruments of Kerala). There were Bharatanatyam Mohiniattam and semi-classical performances by students of Ragini Chokshi, Guru Ranjini

Nambisan and Grishma Gangadharan during the function. PV Vijaykumar and Sasidharan Nair distributed prizes to the participating children.



Lalitha Kalalayam 21st Annual Day Celebrations: Sitting from left Lalithakalayam Nambisan, Sasidharan Nair, Balakrishna Maharaj, KDMC Corporator Ravi Patil, Kerala-in-Mumbai Managing Editor P.V. Vijaykumar, Kairali TV Amchi Mumbai Anchor J.P. Thakazhi (addressing the audience), Anchors K.V.S. Nelluvai and Girija Nambisan.

Ramayana Recital Competition

Sree Krishna Seva Charitable Trust Mulund conducted a Ramayana Recital competition on November 10 at Matunga Kanyaka Parameswari Hall for two age groups from 5 to 12 years and 13 to 20 years. There were about 52 participants. Swetha Sivaramakrishnan (Mulund), Anjali Kesavan (Ulhas Nagar), Nihit Nair (New Panvel) bagged the first, second and third prizes in the 13 - 20 years age group and Sreedevi Panicker (Ambernath), Pooja Narayanan (Thane) and Nandini Vinod (Mulund) won the first, second and third prize in the 5 to 12 age group. The prize winners received certificates and awards from Swami Udit Chaitanya, Chief Promoter of the Trust.



Winners of Ramayana recital competition with Swami Udit Chaitanya.

Silver Jubilee Celebrations



Sushama Gopinath

The year long celebrations, to mark the start of Silver Jubilee year of 'NRITYA SHIROMANI' Sushama Gopinath's Navarasa Academy of Indian Classical Dance, began with the inaugural programme of Mohiniattam dance by Sushama herself at the Agri Koli auditorium in Nerul.

The evening started off with the lighting of the lamp by the Chief Guest Bhupesh Babu and the guest of honour, Ravi Joshi, the Principal of Bharatiya

Sangeet Seva.

The orchestra group comprised of Shiva Prasad, vocalist, Shankaranarayanan Mridangam, Anand violin, Prafulla Gosavi flute and Kuttan Marar on Edakka. The dance items included among others, *Nartana Keli* written by Sushama's father Late P.Krishna Warriar. In the first two items the Guru was accompanied by her talented dancer son Rohit. The vote of thanks was given by Guru Sushama's husband Gopinath.

FCI Member

Johnson Therattil, has been appointed by the Central Government as a member of the Consultative Committee of Food Corporation of India to represent Maharashtra.



Johnson Therattil

Malayala kalolsavam

East Kalyan Kerala Samajam in association with Tru Indian Guidance and Information, Dombivli is organizing *Malayala kalolsavam* in January 2013 at state level. A series of competitions will be held for Malayalee children in different age groups so that the younger generation may become more aware of their mother tongue. Further details are available on 9821218402/9320986322 and on malayalakalolsavam@gmail.com.

Narayaneeyam Dance Performance

Geeta Radhakrishna, Mohiniattam dancer performed her 105th Narayaneeyam solo dance recital at Melpathur auditorium at Guruvayur temple. The occasion was the 425th anniversary celebration in connection with Narayaneeyam. Organised by the Guruvayur Devaswom, the festival of *nriholsavam* was marked by ten days long celebrations of dance by eminent dancers and film actors.



Geeta Radhakrishna



Comm. David Director, Holy Angels' School and Jr. College, Dombivli receiving the Bharat Gaurav Ratan Award from Manish Tiwari (Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Government of India) for outstanding individual achievements and distinguished service to the nation at a function organised by the Global Achievers Foundation in New Delhi. Seen on the dais are Sardar Joginder Singh IPS (Former CBI Director), Bhai Mahaveer (Former Governor of Madhya Pradesh) and Anees Durani (Secretary, All India Congress Committee).

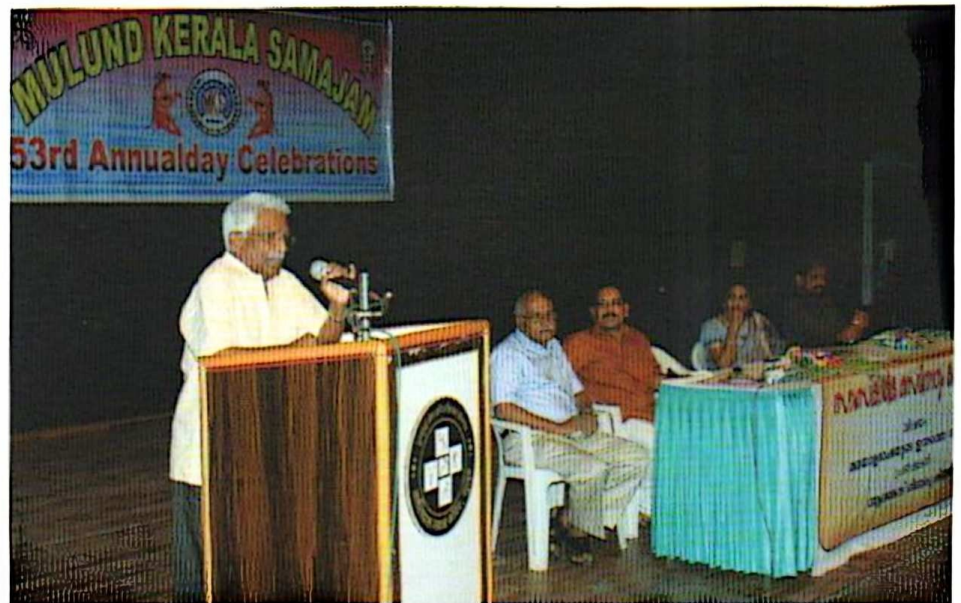
Thiruvadira Kali Aghosham

At the Thiruvadira Celebrations on December 23, organized by Tru Indian Information & Guidance Creative wing, couples who have completed 25 years of marriage will be felicitated, according to Ambika Varasiar the Director of Creative wing. Adv Padma Divakaran is the Chairman of the *thiruvadira Aghosha* Committee while Baby R Nair is the Vice Chairman. The other organizing Committee members are Suma Mukundan, Vinodini Ashtamurthy, Ajitha Jayadevan, Vijaya Prakash, Jayanti Unnikrishnan, Reshma Menon, Girija Panicker, Ramani Prakash Warriar, Beena Ajith Kumar, Sujitha Surendran, Shweta Nair and Smitha Prasad Pillai. The Thiruvadira kali will be held at Sarvesh Hall Dombivli.

Senior Kaikottikali artiste of Kerala Malathy Menon will address and inaugurate the Thiruvathira kali *aghosham*.

Malathy Menon is the founder director of *Parvanenthu*, a *Thiruvathira* teaching institute in Ernakulam and she has won several awards including Kerala Sangeeta Nataka Academy award,

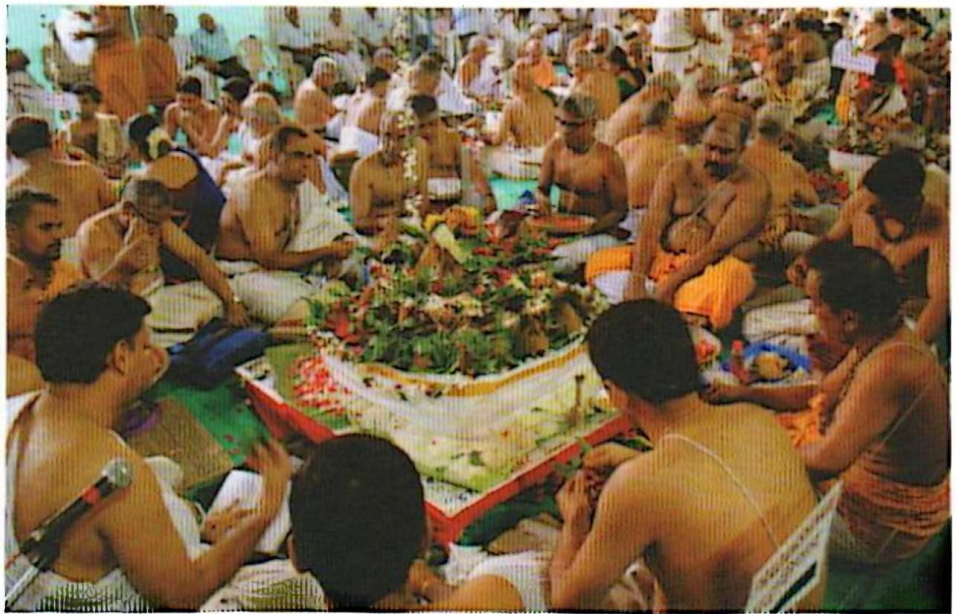
Folklore Academy award and several others. At 76, she is still active in teaching this dance and organized a *Thiruvathira kali* last month with 300 participants in Kerala.



Presidential address by K. Gopalan Nair, President Mulund Kerala Samajam, at the Inauguration of Samskarika Seminar and discussion on the subject 'Malayala bhashayude Innathe Avastha'. Novelist Balakrishnan, Alankode Leelakrishnan, Smt. Manasi and Dr. Venugopal on the stage.

Vasant Oscar Mandala Puja

Vasant Oscar Ayyappa Samithi celebrated their 7th Mandala puja celebrations for two days with *Maharudram*, *Mahayagnam* under the aegis of Rudralaya Mulund, followed by *vasurdhara homam*, *deeparadhana* and devotional songs by the ladies wing on the first day. On the second day about 200 men and women performed the *Hariharaputra Sahasranama laksharchana*, *sastha preethi*, and *bhajans*.



Maharudram at Vasant Oscar Ayyappa puja celebrations

Carnatic Concert

Vaikom Jayachandran performed a Carnatic concert organized by Bheri as part of their Sangeeta festival. He was accompanied by Sangeeta Samrat

Thriissur C Rajendran on the violin, Jayakrishnan (mridangam) and Sakthidharan (ghatam).



Jayachandran performing Carnatic Recital.



A view of the audience.

Kerala Christian Council Anniversary

Kerala Christian Council (KCC) is organising a Christmas cum New year celebration for their members on January 6 2013 from 6 pm onwards at Patuck Engineering College Ground, Vakola, Santa Cruz (East), along with various cultural programmes and Orchestra by RAAGALAYA. For details contact: KT Joseph on 29203873.



KT Joseph
KCC Welfare Convener

KNSS New Office Bearers

Kendriya Nair Service Society has elected its new office bearers. K G Krishna Kurup is the President, S R Pillai Vice- President, Vijaykumar Pillai is the General Secretary, Harikumar Menon, SS Pillai Secretaries, Haridevan S Treasurer, Madhu Nair Jt Treasurer and Santosh Pillai PRO. Other Committee Members are N Gopakumar Nair, KR Viswanathan Nair, VK Menon, Murali G Nair, Prabhakaran Nair, VN Gopalakrishnan and Chembur Balakrishnan Nair.

Shweta Warriar's Krishnavadhara Dance

Nrityashri Shweta Warriar performed *krishnavadhara varanam* Bharatanatyam dance recital at the 33rd Bal Sangeet Sammelan held by Swar Sadhana Samiti, Mumbai in memory of its founder and culture activist the late Dr Amban E Mistry. Shwetha had performed this dance earlier at Cuttack, Durg Chattisgarh and Pune in various competitions and won prizes. Shweta, daughter of CG Warriar and Ambika Varasiar, was the only Malayalee to participate in this Bal Sangeet Sammelan.



Membership drive

Membership drive is open throughout December for those natives of Kodungalloor residing in Mumbai who want to become members of Kodungalloor kudumba Kootayma. Further details can be obtained from KK Pradeep (9820543552)/ Murali V (9833112970)



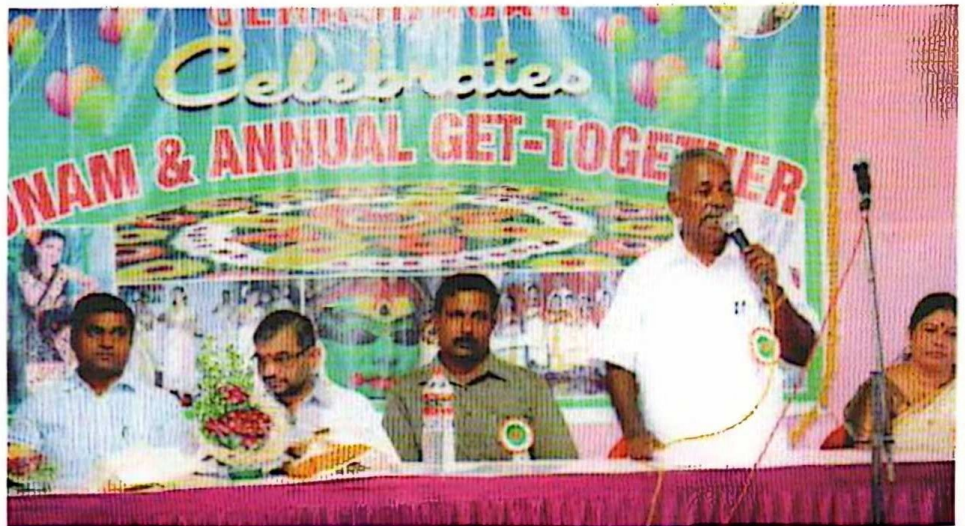
Subitha Murli performing at the Shivali Festival.

Kairali Seva Samiti Anniversary

Kairali Seva Samiti Chheda Nagar Chembur is celebrating their 10th Anniversary on December 23 at Modern English School, Chheda Nagar from 5.30 pm onwards. There will be cultural programmes by the members followed by a musical evening by RAAGALAYA. For details contact 9820669321/25258297.

Sabarigiri Ayyappa temple puja and Saptaham

Sabarigiri Ayyappa Kshetram Vasai will conduct Mandala puja celebrations on November 29, 30 and December 1 at the *prarthana Mantapam*. On December 2 Bhagavada Saptaham will commence under the guidance of Swami Udit Chaitanya.



K V Pillai, President NSS addressing the audience at the NSS Uhas Nagar Onam celebrations. Balaji Kiniker, MLA Ambernath, Rajan V Nair, Sudhir Pillai and Shobana Nair on stage.

Mandala Pooja

Shree Ayyappa Bhakta Sangham, Marol is celebrating its 38th Annual Ayyappa Pooja festival on 14th, 15th and 16th of December at Blossom Society grounds, Marol. This year's cultural programmes include a variety dance programme by the disciples of Smt. Radha Chandran

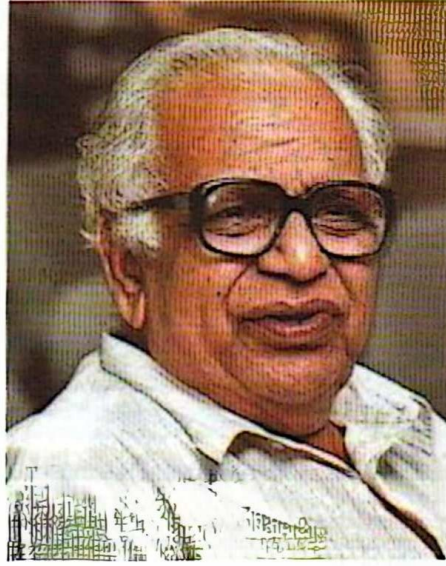
and Smt. Geetha Vijayshankar and devotional orchestra by playback singer from Kerala Anoop Shankar. Besides daily pooja, there would be 'vilakku pooja', 'Narayaneeya parayanam', Bhajan sessions, Bhagavat Geeta chanting and procession.

Marxist ideologue P Govinda Pillai dead

Noted leftist ideologue P Govinda Pillai, better known as PG, who opened the window of international affairs before Keralites, breathed his last around 11.10 pm on November 22. He was 86. He had been undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Thiruvananthapuram. Govinda Pillai, who is an author of several books on Communism, Marxism and international affairs had served as the chief editor of *Deshabhimani* daily and weekly. He was a legislator and was part of the Travancore-Cochin assembly and Kerala Assembly. He was also the editor of 100 volumes of writings of EMS.

Born on 23 May 1926 at Pulluvazhi, Perumbavoor as the son of Parameswaran Pillai and Parukutty Amma, PG joined the Communist party in 1946 and became state committee member in 1953. When the party split, along with AKG and EMS, Govinda Pillai stood with CPM. He was a master in international affairs. His columns related to international politics, in the party mouthpieces *Deshabhimani* and *Kairali TV* had a number of followers. He was an avid book buff and would spend hours continuously in reading. He had a vast collection of more than 30000 books.

Govinda Pillai was drawn to Marxism through the influence of P Krishna Pillai during his college days at UC College, Aluva. He was imprisoned four times in connection with Quit India movement. When he was 26, he was



P Govinda Pillai

elected to Travancore-Cochin Legislative Assembly. He was also a member of the first Kerala Assembly and also for two terms later.

He was married to Prof Rajamma, niece of M N Govindan Nair and his children M G Radhakrishnan and Parvathi are journalists. CPM leader and former Mayor of Thiruvananthapuram, V Sivan Kutty MLA is his son-in-law. Former Chief Minister P K Vasudevan Nair of CPI was the husband of his sister Lakshmi Kutty Amma.

After the death of EMS, Govinda Pillai was the leading ideologue of CPM in Kerala. But in due course, he fell

apart from the party following a debate over the issue of fourth world. He had indeed criticised even EMS through an interview published in *Bhashaposhini*. Following this he was demoted from the CPM state committee.

He had served as the chairman of Kerala Press Academy and Kerala State Film Development Corporation. Govinda Pillai is the recipient of several awards including the Kerala Sahitya Academy award for literary criticism.

Marxum Mooladhanavum, Isangalkkipuram, Marxist saundarya shastram, Udbhavavum Valarchayum, Bhootakaalavum Munvidhiyum, Frederik Engles - Snigdhanaya Sahakari Varishtanaya Viplavakari, Mar Gregoriosinte Mathavum Marxisavum, EMSum Malayala Sahityavum, Kerala Navoathanam- Oru Marxist Veekshanam, Mathanishedhikal -Mahabharatham Muthal Communism Vare, Mulkraj Muthal Pavanam Vare, Aagolavalkaranam Maadhyamam Samskaram, EMS Namboothiripad - A Biography, Charles Darwin- Jeevithavum Kaalavum, Vyjanika viplavam-Oru samskarika charithram were some of books authored by him.

His body was kept for the public to pay homage at VJT hall and AKG centre. The cremation took place at 4pm at Thycaud electric crematorium next day with full state honours.

Attoor Ravi Varma Wins Ezhuthachan Award



Attoor Ravi Varma, one of the pioneers of modern Malayalam poetry, has been selected for this year's Ezhuthachan Puraskaram, the highest literary award instituted by the Kerala Government.

The award carries a cash prize of Rs one lakh, a citation and a plaque.

The award was announced by Kerala Culture Minister K C Joseph at a press conference. He is also a recipient of the Kendra Sahitya Academy Award for his contributions to literary world.



The Shivaling and Devi made out of *nelpori* by KS Lakshmi of Lakshmi Trading and placed at the Bangur Nagar Ram Mandir, Goregaon, which attracted a lot of devotees on *thrikkarthika* night.

A University for Malayalam

At last a University exclusively dedicated to Malayalam is not only announced but inaugurated on November 1 at Thunchanparambu, the seat of Thunchathezhuthachchan Memorial in Tirur, Malappuram district. The Chief Minister of Kerala Oommen Chandy lit the lamp inaugurating the university named after the Father of Malayalam in the presence of leaders belonging to literary, academic and political fields besides common people.

On November 1, 1956 three states were formed (Andhra Pradesh for the Telugus was already formed) based on the languages spoken by the majority of people. Soon those states, barring Kerala, took steps to promote their language, including establishing exclusive Universities, making the language compulsory in official and academic fronts and every educational institution was asked to oversee the implementation. Result? Telugu, Tamil and Kannada were declared classic. But Kerala was an exemption. Recently Kerala Government was also pressurized by the academicians to follow suit. Announcements were made but implementation was slack or rather nil.

When the state was formed, University of Travancore was renamed as University of Kerala and all colleges including professional colleges were brought under it. Slowly the expansion started by establishing region-wise universities and then specific universities to address professional needs. Till now, Kerala had seven universities including Sri Sankara University of Sanskrit at Kalady and Kochi University for Science and Technology (KUSAT). The last mentioned two can hardly be said to have achieved their objectives. Instead of involving in research and expanding the horizons of the subjects beyond the mundane, they are reduced to the level of factories churning out M Phils and Ph Ds, necessary degrees to become a lecturer in a college.

The Sanskrit University has a near full faculty to deal with all departments but is looking for enough students interested in learning Sanskrit. It is hoped this new, eighth university



Chief Minister Oommen Chandy inaugurating the University

would be successful in drawing students really interested in learning Malayalam so that the scarcity of Malayalam teachers in high schools could be overcome. At present, more than 95% of the teachers teaching Malayalam in schools do not have a degree in that subject but can claim only that they had Malayalam as a subject during their graduation. During the sixties, even a science student who opted for Malayalam as the second language, had to study 14 text books at the graduate level but the years that followed have seen a considerable reduction in books the emphasis being on specialization. The result was pathetic. Even an original Malayalee student cannot now speak or write a few sentences correctly in Malayalam, without incorporating English words here and there. Our publications and TV media would vouch for this situation. Now there is hardly anyone in Kerala who could speak correctly without resorting to slangs or local dialect. Even highly qualified literary figures are no exemption, barring probably, one Abdussamad Samadani, a man from the so called literarily backward district Malapuram.

If one becomes skeptical, he cannot be blamed if the events that took place at the venue are of any indication. During the event, two stalwarts of Malayalam literature, M T Vasudevan Nair and O N V Kurup, the only living Jnanpith Awardees from Kerala, were made to sit in two corners of the stage, unseen by

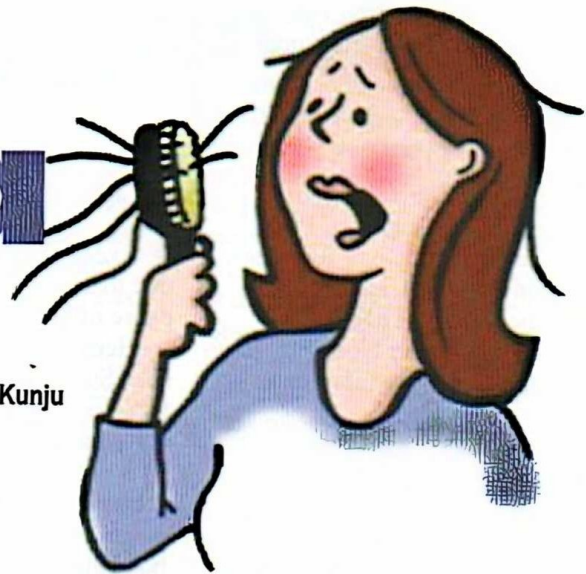
the audience, behind pillars while politicians cornered all visible seats. K Jayakumar, who was appointed Vice Chancellor of the new University the very next day of his retirement from his post of The Chief Secretary, told the audience that five Chairs would be founded in the names of Raja Ravi Varma, Swathi Thirunal, C V Raman Pillai, Kumaranasan and Herman Gundert. Soon demands were raised by some interested parties to have Chairs in the names of Cherusseri, the first known poet in Malayalam, and Moyinkutty Vaidyar, the pioneer of Mappila folk songs. One should not be surprised if demands are raised for similar Chairs in the names of Vallathol and Nalapat Narayana Menon, both from Malapuram district and Ulloor Parameswara Iyer, the only Malayalam poet from the Tamil Brahmin community.

The new university will need about 100 acres of land but so far no piece of land is acquired. The government has declared that no piece of land would be acquired against the will of the local people. For the time being, the Thunchan College of Tirur is asked to provide necessary space in their vacant building and later to transfer some land for the University. Until the necessary land is acquired and buildings constructed, it would be foolish to lay much hope on this university.

Alopecia

(Hair Loss)

- Dr Reshma Kunju



With proper dietary habits and Ayurvedic treatments there are ways to prevent hair loss and promote hair growth.

until after menopause. In addition, most women lose some hair two or three months after having a baby because hormonal changes prevent normal hair loss during pregnancy
AYURVEDA has described hair disease



■ Hair loss is a major problem these days. Any age group is affected with this and as hair is a major factor of your appearance and is a part of physical attraction, definitely

you don't want to lose hair. There are many causes for hair loss and the proper treatment depends upon the root cause of hair loss, which varies from person to person.

KNOW YOUR HAIR

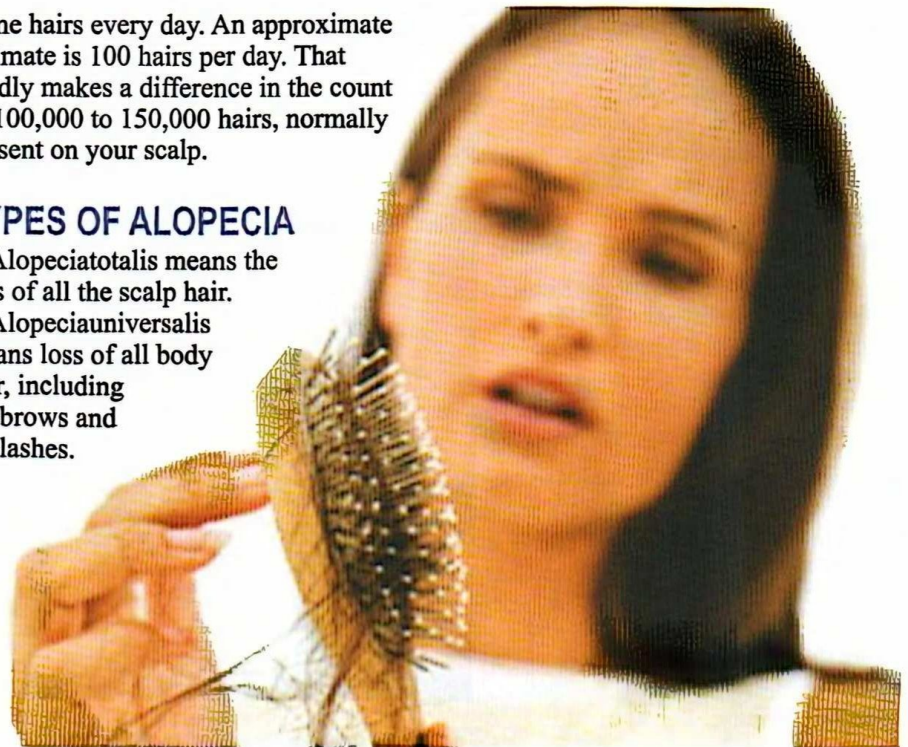
Each hair sprouts from a single hair follicle. The follicle is the socket where the hair shaft develops. Cells in the follicle multiply and form the hair shaft. The shaft of the hair itself is not a living substance only the follicles are alive. As more cells are formed at the base of the follicles they get keratinized and die, they push the shaft out of its socket and the new hair shaft grows longer and longer. When the hair is long enough, it stops growing. In the average uncut hair, the shaft is usually from 10 to 45 inches (24 to 100 cms) long. The hair may grow for four to six years. There are strong genetic influences, which decides the factors, such as - how long, how prominent and where the hair grows. Your entire scalp may have from 100,000 to 150,000 hairs.

You should not necessarily be alarmed when you notice some hair coming out while combing your hair. Everyone loses

some hairs every day. An approximate estimate is 100 hairs per day. That hardly makes a difference in the count of 100,000 to 150,000 hairs, normally present on your scalp.

TYPES OF ALOPECIA

1. Alopeciatotalis means the loss of all the scalp hair.
2. Alopeciauniversalis means loss of all body hair, including eyebrows and eyelashes.



3. Alopeciaareata is the sudden hair loss in circular patches on the scalp. The hair loss is not accompanied by other visible evidence of scalp disease. It can involve hair on the scalp, eyebrows, eyelashes, genital area and underarms (sometimes).
4. Androgenetic alopecia (AGA) is a less dramatic but more prevalent type of hair loss. It is often referred to as male pattern baldness. AGA is common in men.
5. Women sometimes have the same type of hair loss, but it is not usually as extensive and most often does not occur

in three words which are as under
KHALITYA : means loss of hairs
PALITYA : means premature hair graying
INDRAPULTA : means alopecia areata, totalis, universalis
Ayurveda describes alopecia by use of terms such as "indralupt" "Khalitya" and "ruhya". According to Aacharya Vagabhata, when hair falls suddenly it is known as indralupta while khalitya is a long running process of hair fall. One more opinion is that indralupta affects beard, khalitya affects scalp and

ruhya affects the entire body. The major reason for hair loss is over consumption of lavana rasa (salt).

CAUSE OF ALOPECIA

Ayurveda concept: Romkoop (hair follicle) contains bhrajak pitta. Pitta present at the root of the hair increases, in association with vata, and this appears as the falling of hairs. Then kapha and rakta together block the follicles of the hair by not allowing fresh ones to grow.

Ayurveda considers excess consumption of lavana rasa (salt) as a major cause for hair loss. Apart from this the other causes for hair loss mentioned in Ayurveda are excess exposure to water, dust, sunlight or other pollutants, excess sweating, bad sleeping habits, diseases, anxiety, depression, insomnia and an unhealthy life style. These factors affect body humor and imbalance dosha's which leads to hair loss.

According to modern medicine the most common cause of hair loss, in both men and women, is related to hormones, specifically to testosterone. A healthy balance of male and female sex hormones is integral to hair growth, but it's the male hormone testosterone (produced by both men and women) that is associated with hair loss. This relationship explains, the reason, why it is called androgenic alopecia or male pattern baldness.

In certain hair follicles, the cells within the follicles are able to convert testosterone to dihydrotestosterone through the action of an enzyme produced by that particular hair follicle, causing hair fall. In males, these hairs are present characteristically along the front of the scalp, resulting in the typical 'M'-shaped receding hairline. The apex of the scalp at the back and top of the skull is the other location where such hair follicles are typically located. Usually the hair around the sides of the head is spared, leaving a halo of hair. The cells in this area are genetically different and do not convert testosterone to dihydrotestosterone. In women, the susceptible cells are located more diffusely, resulting in a general thinning area that is in the front half of the scalp. There are some other abnormalities that can cause hair loss, e.g.,

▶ Low thyroid function (hypothyroidism) can cause a thick oily

scalp, with coarse sparse hair, or actual baldness. Over active thyroid function (hyperthyroidism) results in sparse fine hairs.

▶ Damage of pituitary gland that stimulates the thyroid gland, sex glands and adrenal cortex also result in hair loss.

▶ Excess formation of male hormones due to any of the disorders can be a cause of hair fall.

▶ Heredity may also play an important role. Sushruta stated that romkoop (hair follicles) never increase, they remains constant, since birth.

▶ Most popular theory of alopecia areata states it as an autoimmune disease where the immune system of the body attacks the hair follicles.



▶ Inadequate calories and insufficient protein intake will affect your hair, if you are on a crash diet to lose your extra weight. Hair loss can occur.

▶ In anorexia nervosa, a psychosomatic problem associated with refusal to eat an adequate amount of food may also affect hair.

▶ Severe psychic stress results in sudden loss of hair. Biological stress is a more common cause of sudden hair loss. Any number of surgical operations, hemorrhage or shock associated with an accident can cause it.

▶ There are number of mechanical

stresses on the scalp and hair that can cause hair loss.

▶ Post-partum alopecia - About two to five months after having a baby, women may suddenly start losing hair. The hair loss may continue for several months, but eventually there is a complete restoration of normal hair. The cause is not clear.

▶ Pressure alopecia may occur in a baby if the head rests continuously on one area. The same can happen in adults confined to bed who rest most of the time with pressure on the back of the head or persistently on one area of the head.

▶ Severe fever or any illness associated with prolonged fever may result in a subsequent loss of hair.

▶ Diseases, particularly those associated with weight loss, which usually means poor nutrition as well, may also cause alopecia. This includes cancer of lymphoma group.

▶ Tuberculosis and syphilis may rarely cause alopecia.

▶ Some patients have autoimmune diseases such as systemic lupus erythematosus. Alopecia is a useful diagnostic pointer for that and is seen in more than 50% of patients.

▶ Tineacapitis, which is a fungal infection of the scalp, may cause a localized loss of a patch of hair that resembles alopecia areata.

▶ Certain beauty practices e.g., hair bleaching and coloring (highlighting) can lead you to hair loss.

▶ Many medicines may cause hair loss. The most common are those, which are used for chemotherapy, in the treatment of cancer.

▶ Medicines used to treat high blood pressure, angina pectoris and hypercholesterolemia, arthritis, anabolicsteroids. Oral contraceptives may sometimes causes loss of hair.

▶ At the onset of menopause, when the body makes fewer female hormones to counter the body's existing levels of testosterone, many women experience hair loss.

▶ Widely detected cause for hair loss is dandruff.

Prevention

Hair loss may be prevented by proper diet and conduct. Following tips will

help you.

▶ Fruit and vegetables should be taken in abundance to facilitate the supply of essential vitamins and minerals.

▶ Endocrine abnormalities like hyperthyroidism, disorders that result in an excess formation of male hormones, an autoimmune disease like SLE etc., should be properly managed by treatment.

▶ Don't go for a crash diet to lose your weight as it causes damage to your health and will affect your hairs also.

▶ Avoid tension, stress, worries, anger, etc., as far as possible.

▶ The scalp must be kept cool, so protection from sun and washing in cold or lukewarm water are paramount.

▶ Avoid inflicting mechanical tension to the hair by pulling, crimping etc. Certain beauty practices like trimming, using strong hair color etc., impart sufficient damage to the hair.

▶ Avoid such hairstyles, which pull back hairs from frontal hairline.

▶ Don't use hot combs or hot water bath for hairs.

▶ Take care of hair shafts also by proper oiling etc., to avoid dryness or cracking of it.

▶ Don't use harsh chemicals (certain shampoos) over scalp.

▶ If dandruff is there take proper treatment. A high fat intake including whole milk, butter, cream, cheese chocolates etc., often worsens the dandruff condition, better avoid it.

▶ Try to replace the medications that are likely to cause hairfall.

Ayurveda Treatment

1: Yoga

SarvangAsana ,Padhastasna Asana

2: Managing Stress

Stress and hair loss got a lot in common; they both reflect the body's health. As you are exposed to more stress, you will look tired, restless and your body and hair will suffer. Few Tips to kill stress includes:

▶ Don't Rush While Eating

▶ Meditate

▶ Get Enough Sleep

▶ Be Positive & Affirmative

▶ Find Time to Distress at Work

▶ Spend Time Outdoors

▶ Take Deep Breaths

3: Diet

▶ Fruits-melons, berries, bananas, oranges, apples and many other fruits can supply your body with the proper

vitamins to reduce hair loss.

▶ Vegetables-while all vegetables will provide your hair with additional vitamins, the ones that offer the most benefits are those of the green leafy variety, including spinach, cabbage, etc.

▶ Dairy-increasing your dairy intake, including milk, eggs and cheese, can increase your hair's overall health by providing it with the vitamin B-12 as well as protein.

▶ Lean, healthy meats-this includes chicken, nuts, fish, and organ meats (such as liver). By adding these to your diet, or increasing your intake of these



items, you will supply your hair follicles with the vitamins they need for optimal operation.

▶ Water-consuming at least eight 8-ounce glasses of water per day will help transport the needed nutrients to your hair and help keep your hair strands hydrated and strong.

▶ Soybeans are useful as they contain large amounts of vitamin E and iron. Iron is important in the production of hemoglobin - hemoglobin is an element that carries oxygen in the blood to all the tissues and major organs of the body and normal hemoglobin levels ensures adequate flow of blood to the scalp for hair growth stimulation (vitamin E also assists in the increased flow of blood to the scalp).

▶ An extremely good source of vitamin B6A and zinc can be found in the miracle food chickpeas. These two elements nourish the hair, promote hair growth and prevent loss of hair while zinc and Vitamin A combine well in preventing dandruff and loss of hair.

▶ Silica and iron are significant in promoting hair growth and are provided by whole wheat. The predominant task of silica is assisting the body to absorb the many minerals and vitamins that it requires to function optimally.

▶ Almonds are a wonderful source of iron, protein and vitamin E (all critical elements in ensuring healthy hair and hair growth stimulation).

4: Proper Combing

It is advised to use comb than hair brush to help your hair grow healthy and

shiny. You should comb your hair every day with careful gentle 15-20 strokes.

Combing hairs help us in several ways;

▶ stimulates the blood flow thereby nourishing the hair follicles

▶ Prevents hair breakage and split ends.

▶ Helps in keeping hair naturally moisturized as this transfer natural skin oil from the roots to the tips of the hair.

▶ Remove flaky scales from the scalp. Combing the scalp helps keep your hair healthy and can also promote hair growth. It's also an effective way to relax which in turn prevents and fights avoidable hair loss, and re-establishes the natural development of healthy hair.

5:Local Treatment

Medicated oils are used for local application. Some of the commonly used oils are: Bhrungraj (Ecliptaalba) oil, Amalaki (Embliaofficinalis) oil, Brahmi (Bacopamonnieri) oil, Jaswand (Hibiscus rosa-sinensis) oil and Bhallatak

(Semicarpusanacardium) oil.

Some Ayurvedic physicians use leech therapy at the bald spots before using the above mentioned local medications.

Some advice a course of enemas of medicated milk (called as "Tikta-KsheerBasti") in conditions of extensive hair loss.

6:Immunomodulators

Some medicines which are used orally are: ArogyaVardhini, GandhakRasayan, LaxadiGuggulu, Rasayan etc.

Ayurveda believes hair to originate from the "Asthi" or bone tissue, and therefore, to treat hair loss, medicines to strengthen bone are given orally on a long-term basis. Some medicines used for this purpose are: PanchaTiktaGhruta,

MahatiktGhruta, PravalPanchamruta, Laxa and Asthishrunkhla (Cissusquadrangularis). Milk and black gram are advised for consumption in large quantities.

Medicines like Brahmi (Bacopamonnieri), Jatamansi (Nardostachysjatamansi),

Shankhapushpi and Vacha(Acoruscalamus) are given orally to reduce stress.

7:Detoxification (Panchakarma) Treatment

It is believed that regular application of medicated oils in the nose (a procedure called "PratimarshaNasya") has an important role to play in preventing premature baldness and graying of hair.●

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Ashwathi Divakaran

INBORN TALENT

Ashwathi Divakaran has been fascinated by dance since she was a child mainly because of its colourful costume and style of dancing. She is a Bharatanatyam dancer and started learning this classical dance at the age of six under Smt Radha Chandran.

KIM Bureau

Ashwathi Divakaran has been fascinated by dance since she was a child mainly because of its colourful costume and style of dancing. She is a Bharatanatyam dancer and started learning this classical dance at the age of six under Smt Radha Chandran. Ashwathi did her arangetram at the age of 10 at ISKCON Temple Mumbai. She has participated in many performances at Ayyappa Bhakta Sangham, Odakkuzhal Marol, interschool and intra-collegiate dance competitions and won prizes. At the Mumbai University Dance competitions she has participated upto the final stage. She has recently completed the Nritya Prabodhan



Diploma in Bharatanatyam from Nrityalika Institute of Bharatanatyam and Folk Dances, under Guru Kishu Pal.

Currently Ashwathy is learning Mohiniattam under Geetha Vijayshankar and Carnatic Music under Sumangala Warriar. She like western dancing and is learning this hip hop and contemporary from Shiamak Davar's Institute for the Performing Arts. She is also learning kickboxing.

Ashwathy's role model is Shobana, the Malayalam actor and dancer.

" Learning classical dance has helped me gain confidence in performing any kind of dance," she says.



She is now doing graduation in Bachelor of Banking and Insurance at SM Shetty College Powai and plans to complete her MBA.

Ashwathy's parents are KG Divakaran, hailing from Peruva in Kottayam District and working in ONGC Mumbai while her mother Usha hails from Trippunithura. But Ashwathy was born and brought up in Mumbai. She completed her schooling at Marol Education Academy.

Fruit Facts

Eating a whole fruit is better than drinking the juice.

- When you need to drink fruit juice - drink only fresh fruit juice, never from cans.
- Don't even drink juice that has been heated up.
- Don't eat cooked fruits because you don't get the nutrients at all. You only get the taste. Cooking destroys all the vitamins.
- If you should drink the juice, drink it slowly, because you must let it mix with your saliva before swallowing it.
- You can go on a 3-day fruit fast to cleanse your body. Just eat fruits and drink fruit juice throughout the 3 days and you will be surprised when your friends tell you how radiant you look!



Benefits of some fruits:

APPLE: An apple a day keeps the doctor away. Although an apple has a low vitamin C content, it has antioxidants and flavonoids which enhances the activity of vitamin C thereby helping to lower the risks of colon cancer, heart attack & stroke.

STRAWBERRY: Protective Fruit. Strawberries have the highest total antioxidant power among major fruits & protect the body from cancer-causing, blood vessel-clogging free radicals.

ORANGE: Sweetest medicine. Taking 2-4 oranges a day may help keep colds away, lower cholesterol, prevent and dissolve kidney stones as well as lessen the risk of colon cancer.

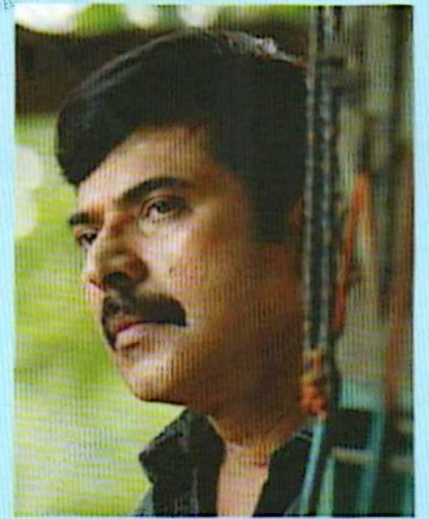
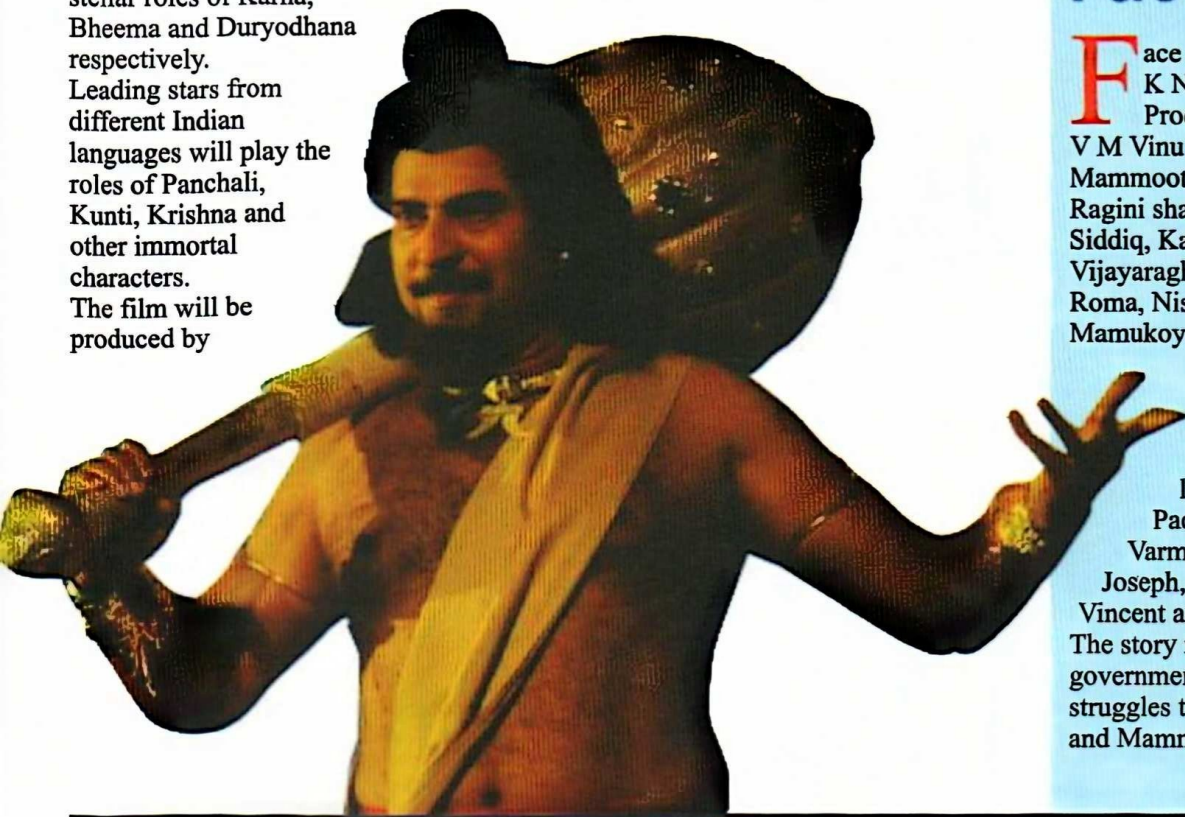
WATERMELON: Coolest thirst quencher. Composed of 92% water, it is also packed with a giant dose of glutathione, which helps boost our immune system. They are also a key source of lycopene - the cancer fighting oxidant. Other nutrients found in watermelon are vitamin C and Potassium.

Compiled by Sudhir Nair

An acting coup in Randamoozham

MT Vasudevan Nair is in the final stages of scripting his epic 1984 novel 'Randamoozham' (Second Turn) for the screen with Hariharan as its director. According to the director, it is the 'ultimate challenge' for any director. It is based on the story of the Pandavas in Bheema's perspective. Mammooty and Mohanlal are play stellar roles of Karna, Bheema and Duryodhana respectively. Leading stars from different Indian languages will play the roles of Panchali, Kunti, Krishna and other immortal characters. The film will be produced by

Gokulam Gopalan who produced 'Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja' with a mammoth expenditure and actors from other Indian languages will be engaged to play other characters so that it could be dubbed into those languages also. MT's novel 'Randamoozham' is translated into almost all Indian languages and English and has found appreciative readership.

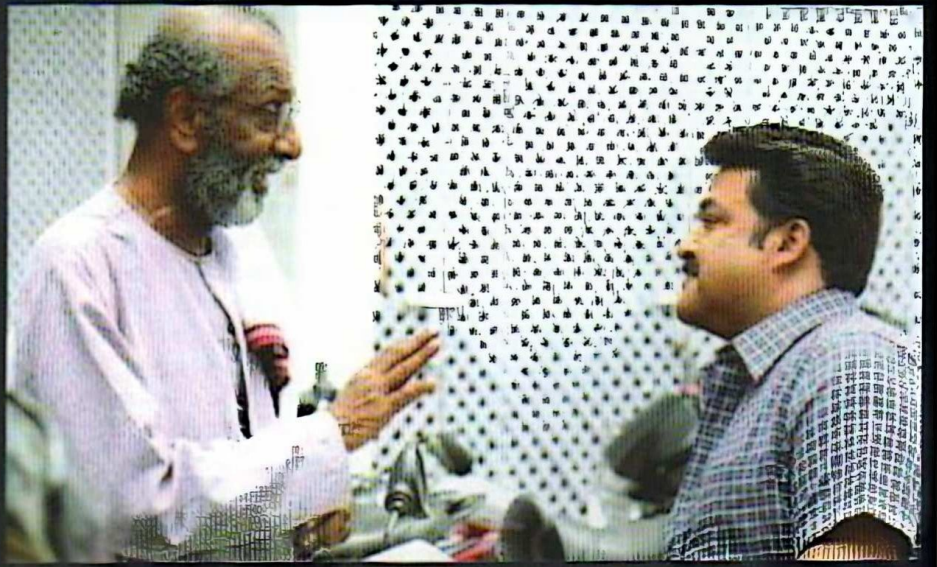


Face to Face

Face to Face, produced by M K Nasar for Goodline Productions and directed by V M Vinu is ready for release. Mammooty and Kannada actress Ragini share the important roles. Siddiq, Kalabhavan Mani, Vijayaraghavan, Vineet Kumar, Roma, Nishant Sagar, Mahesh, Mamukoya, Abu Salim and Joseph are the other actors while Rishi Das, Rohit and Gautam debut in this as actors. With lyrics by Manoj, Anil Pachooran and Santhosh Varma and music by Alphonse Joseph, Face to Face has Ajayan Vincent as its cinematographer. The story revolves around a former government employee who struggles to prove his innocence and Mammooty handles that role.

Lokpal

Happy and Ruby's 'Lokpal' is fast progressing. As the name suggests, this film is set to highlight the dangers of corruption. While Mohanlal is the hero, Kavya Madhavan is donning the role of heroine. Saikumar, Manoj K Jayan, Meera Nandan, Shammi Thilakan, Krishnakumar, TG Ravi and Shafna are sharing other important roles. The story is written by well known author of the 'CBI' series, S N Swami. It is directed by Joshii.



Samvruta-Akhilraj wedding

Malayalam actress Samvruta Sunil married Akhilraj of Kozhikode, in Vasava Cliff House of Payyambalam, Kannur. Prominent among the people who witnessed the wedding were directors Lal Jose and Ranjith, actors Anne Augustine, Meera Nandan, Aparna, Kunchan, Rekha Menon and former minister P K Sreemathy. Samvruta is the daughter of K P Sunil, owner of Hotel India House and Sadhana Sunil and Akhilraj is an engineer with Walt Disney Productions, USA and is the son of P Jayarajan and Preetha Jayarajan of Chevarambalam, Kozhikode. The wedding ceremony was followed by a reception at Le Meridian Hotel, Kochi on November 6.



Yathraykkoduvil

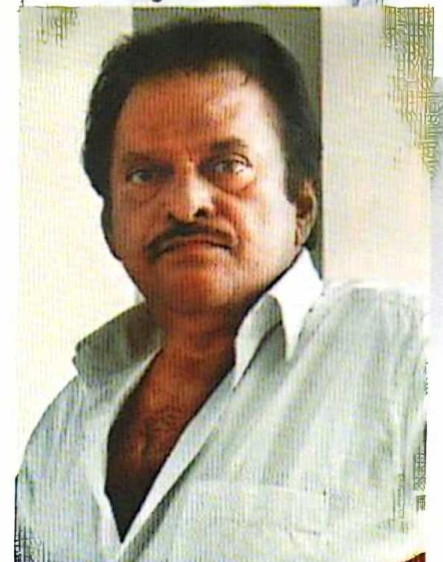
Debutant Basil Sak directs Yathraykkoduvil for which he wrote the screenplay also. Thilakan, Srijith Vijay, Ramu, Shaheen Oommen, Navaneet, Prajish, Vidya and Navana are in the stellar roles. Satish Krishnan composes music for which lyrics are written by Binoy Krishnan and Poovachal



MT's 15th film with Hariharan

After they collaborated for Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja three years ago, MT and Hariharan are joining hands for their 15th film, Aezhamathe Varavu (Seventh Coming), with a theme of wild life and its protection. MT wrote its screenplay and dialogues, based his own short story while director Hariharan is chipping in with lyrics and music. There are four songs, sung by K S Chithra and K J Yesudas. Oscar winner Rasool Pookutty is the

sound recordist and S Kumar wields the camera. Main actors are Indrajit, Vineet, Bhavana, Mohana, Mamu Koya, Suresh Krishna and Kanchana. Indrajit dons the mantle of a timber merchant and hunter engaged in deforestation, Bhavana comes as his wife. A leopard has an important part in the story but on account of not obtaining a licence to shoot with wild animals, the filming was getting delayed but now they have made arrangement to shoot such scenes abroad.





കേന്ദ്രാർത്ഥിലേക്ക്

സെപ്തംബർ 9-ാം തീയതി ചൊവ്വാഴ്ച പുലർന്നത് വിശേഷമായ ഉണർവ് പകർന്നുകൊണ്ടാണ്. ഏതാണ്ട് അഞ്ചരമണിയോടെ പ്രസന്നവദനനായ വിഹ്വനേശ്വരൻ തേങ്ങയുടച്ച് പ്രാർത്ഥിച്ച് ദേവഭൂമിയിലേക്കുള്ള ഞങ്ങളുടെ പ്രയാണം ആരംഭിച്ചു. ദേവിയുടെ സാന്നിധ്യം നിരന്തരമായി അനുഭവപ്പെടുത്തിക്കൊണ്ട് പ്രവഹിക്കുന്ന ഗംഗാമാതാവിനെ ഭക്ത്യാദരങ്ങളോടെ പ്രണമിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ഞാനൊരു കീർത്തനം ആലപിച്ചു. പിന്നീട് ശ്രീമതി രത്നകലയും കീർത്തനങ്ങൾ ആലപിച്ചു. ഞങ്ങൾ സഞ്ചരിക്കുന്നതിന്റെ വലതുവശത്തുള്ള അഗാധമായ താഴ്വരയിലൂടെ ഗംഗാനദി മതിമറന്നൊഴുകുന്നു.

ഗംഗാനദിയുടെ തീരത്തായി മഹത്തായ വസിഷ്ഠഗൃഹ സ്ഥിതി ചെയ്യുന്നു. 1928-ൽ സന്യാസിയായ ശ്രീ പുരുഷോത്തമാനന്ദജി ഈ ഗൃഹ കണ്ടുപിടിച്ച്, ഇവിടെ ആശ്രമം സ്ഥാപിച്ച് താമസമാക്കി. 1961 ഫെബ്രുവരി 13-ാം തീയതി ഒരു മഹാശിവാഭിഷേകം അദ്ദേഹം പരമപദം പൂജി. പത്തനംതിട്ട സ്വദേശിയായ സ്വാമി ചൈതന്യാനന്ദജിയാണ് ഇപ്പോൾ ആശ്രമത്തിന്റെ ചുമതലകൾ വഹിക്കുന്നത്. ഈ യോഗിവര്യൻ സ്നേഹാശിർവാദങ്ങളോടെ ഞങ്ങൾക്കു തന്നെ



രമ ആർ. പിഷാരടി

ആപ്പിൾകഷണങ്ങളുടെ ആസ്വാദ്യ മനസ്സിൽ നിറഞ്ഞു നിൽക്കുന്നു. പിന്നീട് വസിഷ്ഠഗൃഹ ദർശിക്കുവാൻ അവിടേക്ക് നടന്നു. ഗൃഹയ്ക്ക് ഏഴടിയോളം ഉയരമുള്ളതുകൊണ്ട് തല മുട്ടാതെ നടക്കാം. ശിവലിംഗപ്രതിഷ്ഠയ്ക്കു മുമ്പിലുള്ള നിലവിളക്കിന്റെ പ്രകാശത്തിൽ ഗൃഹാന്തർഭാഗം വ്യക്തമായി കാണാം. ആധുനിക സാങ്കേതികവിദ്യകൾ ഉപയോഗിച്ച് പ്രത്യേകതരം ക്യാമറകൊണ്ട് ഫോട്ടോ എടുത്തപ്പോൾ ഗൃഹാന്തർഭാഗത്ത് പ്രത്യേകതരം activation അനുഭവപ്പെടുന്നു എന്നത് ശാസ്ത്രീയമായി തെളിയിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. അഞ്ചുപേരടങ്ങുന്ന ഓരോ ചെറുസംഘങ്ങളായി ഞങ്ങൾ ഗൃഹയ്ക്കുള്ളിൽ



Badrinath Temple

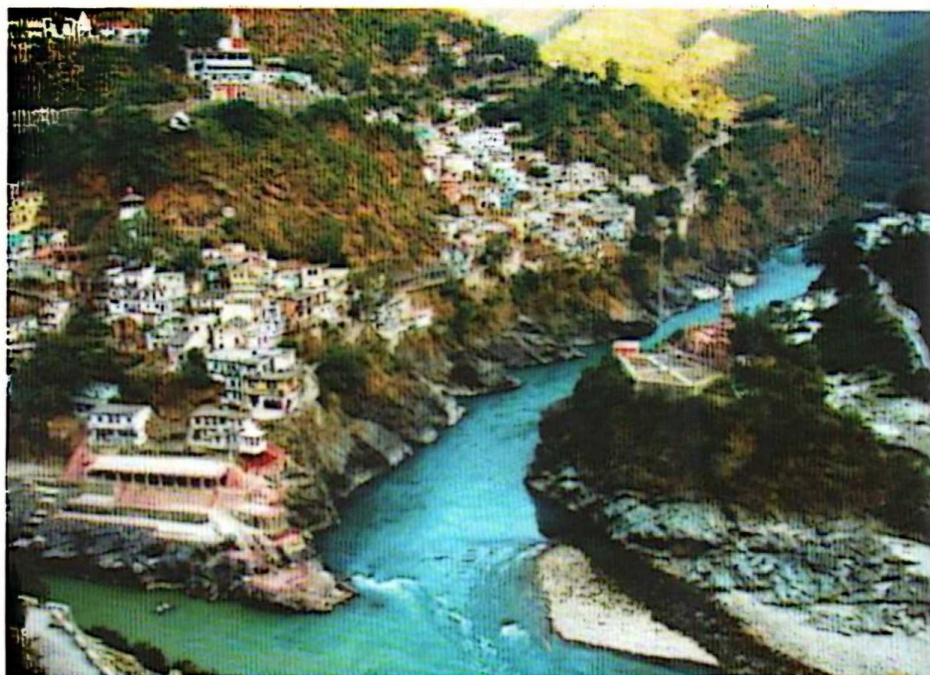
പ്രവേശിച്ച് ധ്യാനനിരതരായി അല്പനേരം ഇരുന്നശേഷം പുറത്തേക്കു വന്നു. വീണ്ടും ഒരിക്കൽകൂടി ഞാൻ ഗുഹയിൽ പ്രവേശിച്ചു ധ്യാനനിരതയായിരുന്നപ്പോൾ മനസ്സിന് അസാമാന്യമായ ലാഘവഭാവം കൈവന്നു. ആശ്രമത്തിന് താഴെയായി ഓജസ്സും തേജസ്സും കലർന്ന ഭാവത്തോടെ ഒഴുകുന്ന ഗംഗയെ നോക്കി നിന്നപ്പോൾ സമയം പോയതറിഞ്ഞില്ല.

അലൗകികസൗന്ദര്യത്തിന്റെ അവിസ്മരണീയ ദൃശ്യപരമ്പര കണ്ടാണ് പിന്നീട് ബസ് നിർത്തിയത്. ഋഷികേശിൽനിന്ന് 70 കി.മീ. ദൂരെയായി സ്ഥിതി ചെയ്യുന്ന ദേവപ്രയാഗ അക്ഷരാർത്ഥത്തിൽ പ്രകൃതിസൗന്ദര്യം വഴിഞ്ഞൊഴുകുന്ന ഒരു ദേവഭൂമിയാണ്. ഗോമുഖിയിൽനിന്നുത്ഭവിച്ച് ഒഴുകിവരുന്ന ഭാഗീരഥിനദിയും അളകാപുരി ഗ്ലേസിയറിൽനിന്ന് പിറവിക്കൊണ്ട് ആർത്തിരമ്പിവരുന്ന അളകനദാനദിയും ഗംഗാനദിയായി പരിണമിക്കുന്നത് ദേവപ്രയാഗയിൽ വെച്ചാണ്. അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ ഗംഗാനദിയുടെ ഉറവിടം ദേവപ്രയാഗയാണെന്ന് ഒരർത്ഥത്തിൽ പറയാം. സഹോദരിമാരുടെ സംഗമവേദിയായും ചിന്തിക്കാം. ഇലത്തിന്റെ നിറവ്യത്യാസം പ്രകടമാക്കുന്ന ഈ പുണ്യസംഗമസ്ഥാനത്ത് പടവുകൾ ഇറങ്ങി എല്ലാവരും ഗംഗാതീർത്ഥം ദേഹത്തിൽ തളിച്ചു. ഗംഗയുടെ ശീതളിമയാർന്ന തഴുകലിൽ മനസ്സും ശരീരവും കുളിരണിഞ്ഞു. ഉച്ചയോടെ ഞങ്ങൾ ദേവപ്രയാഗിൽനിന്നും ഗഡ്വാൾ ശ്രീനഗർ വഴി രുദ്രപ്രയാഗയിലെത്തി. കേദാർനാഥേശ്വരനെ അർദ്ധപ്രദക്ഷിണം വെച്ചൊഴുകുന്ന ശിവചൈതന്യമായ മന്ദാകിനിയും ബദരീനാഥന്റെ കരുണാകടാക്ഷങ്ങൾ ഏറ്റുവാങ്ങിയൊഴുകുന്ന വിഷ്ണുചൈതന്യമായ അളകനദിയും ഒത്തുചേരുന്നത് രുദ്രപ്രയാഗയിലാണ്. ഇവിടെ വൈഷ്ണവശൈവശക്തികളുടെ സംയോഗം ദേവപ്രയാഗയേക്കാൾ ഊർജ്ജസ്വലവും ശബ്ദയമാനവുമാണെന്ന് തോന്നി.

ഞങ്ങൾക്ക് ഉച്ചഭക്ഷണം നൽകിയത് കാലികമ്പിളിവാലയുടെ മാന്തിൽവെച്ചായിരുന്നു. ഗഡ്വാൾ ഹിമാലയത്തിൽ മാത്രമല്ല അശരണരുടെയും തീർത്ഥാടകരുടെയും സർവ്വോപരി പാവപ്പെട്ടവരുടെയും മനസ്സുകളിൽ ഇല്ലിച്ച് നിൽക്കുന്ന മഹാത്മാവാണ് ബാബാ കമ്പിളിവാല. അദ്ദേഹം ഹരിദാർ, ഋഷികേശ്, കേദാർനാഥ്, ബദരീനാഥ് തുടങ്ങിയ തീർത്ഥാടനകേന്ദ്രങ്ങളിൽ നിരവധി ധർമ്മശാലകളും സത്രങ്ങളും സ്ഥാപിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. ഭക്ഷണത്തിനുശേഷം ഞങ്ങൾ അഗസ്ത്യമുനിവഴി ഗുപ്തകാശിയിലേക്കു പുറപ്പെട്ടു. അഗസ്ത്യമുനി തപസ്സനുഷ്ഠിച്ച സ്ഥലമായതിനാലാണ് ഈ പ്രദേശം

അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ നാമധേയത്തിൽ അറിയപ്പെടുന്നത്. ഗുപ്തകാശിയിലേക്കുള്ള യാത്ര കുത്തനെയുള്ള കയറ്റങ്ങളാൽ ഏറെ ദുർഘടമാണ്. ഏകദേശം നാലുമണിയോടെ ഗുപ്തകാശിയിലെത്തിച്ചേർന്നു.

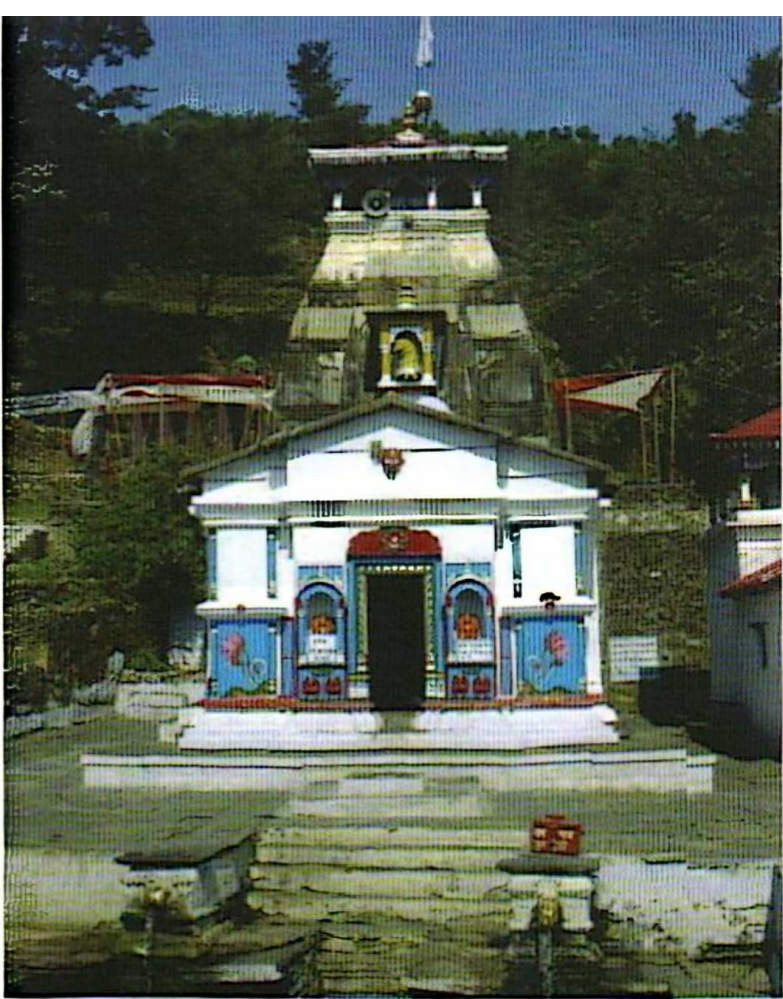
കുരുക്ഷേത്രയുദ്ധാനന്തരം വ്യാസമുനിയുടെ നിർദ്ദേശപ്രകാരം, (ആചാര്യബന്ധുമിത്രാദികളെ വധിച്ച തപ്തമനസ്സുമായി നീറിയ) പാണ്ഡവർ ശിവനെക്കണ്ട് അനുഗ്രഹം നേടാനായി കാശിയിലേക്ക് പുറപ്പെട്ടു. പാണ്ഡവരുടെ ഈ പ്രവൃത്തിയിൽ അനിഷ്ടമുണ്ടായിരുന്ന ഭഗവാൻ അവർക്കു ദർശനം നൽകാതെ ഹിമാലയത്തിലേക്കു പോയി ഒളിച്ചു താമസിച്ചുവന്നു. പാണ്ഡവർ ഈ പ്രദേശത്ത് ഭഗവാനെ അന്വേഷിച്ചെത്തിയപ്പോൾ പരമശിവൻ അവിടെനിന്നും പോയി കേദാരത്തിൽ ഒരു കാളക്കുറ്റന്റെ രൂപത്തിൽ ഒളിച്ചു താമസിച്ചുവെന്നും കാലിക്കൂട്ടത്തിൽ ഭഗവാനെ കണ്ടെത്തിയ ഭീമൻ കയറിപ്പിടിച്ചുവെന്നും, അവിടെനിന്ന് ശിവൻ പാതാളത്തിലേക്ക് രക്ഷപ്പെടാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു



Devprayag, Uttaranchal

എന്നുമാണ് ഐതിഹ്യം. ഭീമന്റെ പിടുത്തം കാളയുടെ മുതുകിലായിരുന്നുവെങ്കിലും ഭീമൻ പിടി വിടാതെ നിന്നു. ഭീമന്റെ നിശ്ചയദാർഢ്യത്തിൽ സംപ്രീതനായ ഭഗവാൻ അവരെ പാപകർമ്മങ്ങളിൽനിന്ന് മോചിപ്പിക്കുകയും അനുഗ്രഹവർഷങ്ങൾ ചൊരിയുകയും ചെയ്തു. കാളക്കുറ്റന്റെ ഈ മുതുകുഭാഗമാണ് കേദാർനാമിലെ പ്രതിഷ്ഠ. ശിവൻ ഗുപ്തനായി (ഒളിച്ചു) കഴിഞ്ഞ പ്രദേശത്തിന് ഗുപ്തകാശി എന്ന് പേര് വന്നു എന്നുമാണ് ഐതിഹ്യം. ഗുപ്തകാശിയിലെ പ്രശസ്തമായതും അതിപുരാതനവുമായ ചന്ദ്രശേഖരമഹാക്ഷേത്രവും അർദ്ധനാരിശരക്ഷേത്രവും ഞങ്ങൾ ദർശിച്ചു. (റോഡിൽനിന്നും പടവുകൾ കയറി അല്പം ഉയരത്തിലാണ് സ്ഥിതി ചെയ്യുന്നത്). ഈ ദക്ഷേത്രത്തിന് തൊട്ടുള്ള മണികർണികാ ഇലാശയത്തിന്റെ ഇരുഭാഗങ്ങളിലുമായി കാണുന്ന രണ്ടു ഇലയാരകളെ കേന്ദ്ര ഗംഗായും യമുനയായും സങ്കല്പിച്ച് ആരാധിക്കുന്നു. ഈ ഇലയാരകളിൽനിന്നുള്ള തീർത്ഥം തളിച്ച പവിത്രമാനസരായി ഞങ്ങൾ താഴേക്കിറങ്ങി. അകലെ ഉത്തരദിശയിൽ സൂര്യന്റെ പോക്കുവെയിലിൽ പൊന്നണിഞ്ഞു നിൽക്കുന്ന സുമേരു ഹിമാലയദ്വീപുകളിൽ വിസ്തൃതമായി, നിർമ്മിതമായി ഏറെനേരം നിന്നു. അസ്തമയസൂര്യന്റെ ആ സുവർണ്ണനിറവും മഞ്ഞിന്റെ ധവളിയും അനന്യമായി ചേരുന്ന ആ സുമേരുദ്വീപും വർണ്ണിക്കാൻ വാക്കുകൾ അശക്തമാണ്. കണ്ണിനു കുളുർമ പകർന്ന ആ ദൃശ്യം മനസ്സിലെന്നപോലെ ചിലർ ക്യാമറയിലും പകർത്തി.


പിന്നെയുള്ള യാത്രയിൽ നരനാരായണ കോട്ടിയും ഫാട്ടയും കടന്ന് രാംപുരത്തി. ഫാട്ടയിൽനിന്ന് കേദാർദാമിലേക്ക് ഹെലികോപ്റ്റർ വഴിയായുമെത്താം. ഉദ്ദേശം അഞ്ചുപേർക്ക് സവാരി ചെയ്യാവുന്ന ഹെലികോപ്റ്ററിലൂടെ ആകാശത്തിൽനിന്നുള്ള ഹരിതവീക്ഷണങ്ങളാകാം. രാംപുരിൽനിന്ന് ഏതാണ്ട് ഒന്നര കിലോമീറ്റർ അകലെയായി സീതാപുർ എന്ന സ്ഥലത്താണ് ഞങ്ങൾക്ക് രാത്രി തങ്ങാനുള്ള സൗകര്യമൊരുക്കിയിരുന്നത്. താമസിക്കാൻ ലഭിച്ച മുറിയിൽനിന്ന് നോക്കിയാൽ അങ്ങകലെ മന്ദാകിനി ഒരു വെള്ളിനൂലായി തോന്നാമെങ്കിലും ശ്രദ്ധിച്ചാൽ അവളുടെ ചുരുചുരുക്കും



Gupt Kashi

ഊർജ്ജസ്വലതയും കൗതുകമുണർത്തും. നാളെ കേദാർനാമനെ ദർശിക്കാനുള്ള യത്നം അഥവാ യജ്ഞം ആരംഭിക്കേണ്ടതിവിടെനിന്നാണ്.

യാത്രയ്ക്കുവേണ്ട നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങളും അത്യാവശ്യം അറിഞ്ഞിരിക്കേണ്ട ചില കാര്യങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചും യാത്രാസംഘാടകർ വിശദീകരിച്ചുതന്നു. യാത്ര അനായാസമാക്കാൻ കഴിയില്ലെങ്കിലും ക്ലേശം താരതമ്യേന കുറയ്ക്കാനും മർദ്ദവൃതിയാനങ്ങൾ സംഭവിക്കാനുള്ള സാധ്യത ഉള്ളതിനാൽ ആവശ്യമെങ്കിൽ ഓക്സിജൻ വാങ്ങി സൂക്ഷിക്കേണ്ടതിന്റെ ആവശ്യകതയെ കുറിച്ചും



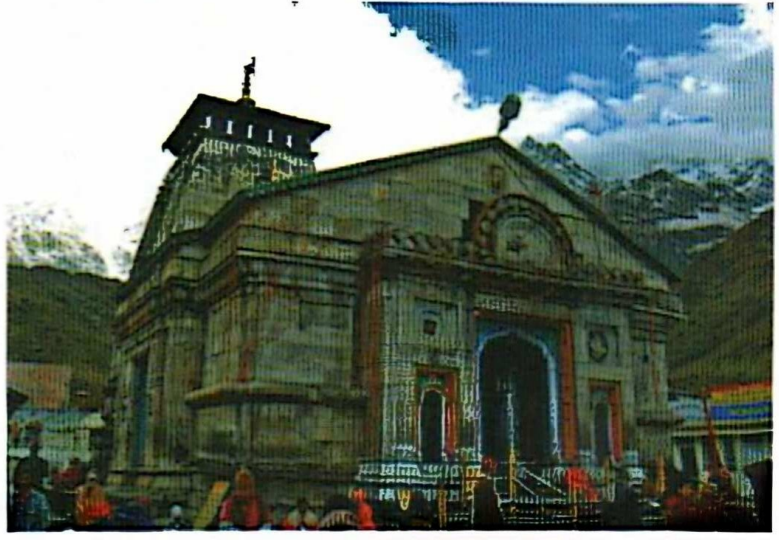
A man bought a car by bank loan. But he did not pay loan amount. So they took the car from him.

After seeing that the man is thinking, "If I knew before, then I would have taken a loan for my marriage also!!!"

On a romantic date Mahesh's girl friend asks him: "Darling ! On our engagement will you give me a ring?"

He said: "Sure ! What's your phone number?"

Readers can contribute jokes.
The selected ones will be published along with their names. Send to keralainmumbai@gmail.com



Kedarnath Temple



Gomukh new



Inside Vasishta Guha

അതുപയോഗിക്കേണ്ടതിനെയെ കുറിച്ചുമെല്ലാം അവർ വിശദമായി പ്രതിപാദിച്ചു. നിരവധി യാത്രകൾ വിജയകരമായി പൂർത്തിയാക്കിയ അവരുടെ പരിചയസമ്പന്നത ഇതിലെല്ലാം തികച്ചും പ്രകടമായിരുന്നു. അമിതഭാരം ഒഴിവാക്കി യാത്രാക്ലേശം ലഘൂകരിക്കാൻ, താമസിച്ചിരുന്ന ഹോട്ടലിലെ ഒരു മുറിയിൽ ലഗേജുകളെല്ലാം സൂക്ഷിക്കാനും, അത്യാവശ്യം ഒരു ദിവസം കഴിയാൻ വേണ്ട വസ്ത്രങ്ങൾ, ശൈത്യം അകറ്റാൻ

ആവശ്യമായ സ്വെറ്റർ, ഷാൾ, കയ്യുറകൾ, മരുന്നുകൾ തുടങ്ങിയവ അടങ്ങുന്ന തോൾസഞ്ചി കരുതാനും ധാരണയായി. യാത്രാസംഘത്തിലെ മൊത്തം 45 പേരിൽ ഏതാണ്ട് ഇരുപത്തഞ്ചോ ഇരുപത്തേഴോ പേർ കാൽനടയായി കേദാർനാഥേശ്വരന്റെ പുണ്യഭൂമിയിലെത്താനും ബാക്കിയുള്ളവർ ഡോലി, കുതിര തുടങ്ങിയ മറ്റു മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങളിലൂടെ കേദാർഭാമിലെത്താനും തീരുമാനമായി. ●

Wedding

Nitish, son of CG Gopinathan Nair and Mrs. Jayashree, got married to Niju, daughter of Captain Balagopalan and Smt. Prasanna on 18th Nov, 2012 in Kerala. Their marriage Reception was held on 25th Nov at Hotel Green Village, Malad (W).

Medical Help Sought

Miss Aryil D' Souza, 19 years old is diagnosed with cancer of the Lymph Nodes (Hodgkin's Lymphoma) which has spread to the shoulder bones and needs immediate surgery. The girl has lost weight and gets fever every night as the wound is still open and not healed. As per the medical reports, this has happened due to the sheer negligence of the Doctor who has performed an earlier surgery.

Ms Aryil underwent an earlier operation that lasted for about 12 hours. The Doctors at Tata told them that the infection has spread so much and that the left arm may have to be amputated. But her arm was saved.

Prior to the surgery, she was doing her second year BMS at St. Andrew's College, Bandra. But now Aryil is unable to move on her own and is confined in her home. Those willing to help her monetarily can contact : Mrs Rebecca Anil D'souza, (Aryl's mother). Bank details : Vijaya Bank, Versova Branch, SB A/c No: 507101011002695 IFSC NO: VIJB0005071 MICR 400029047. MOB NOS: 922419779/ 9702909285



Kerala in Mumbai

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