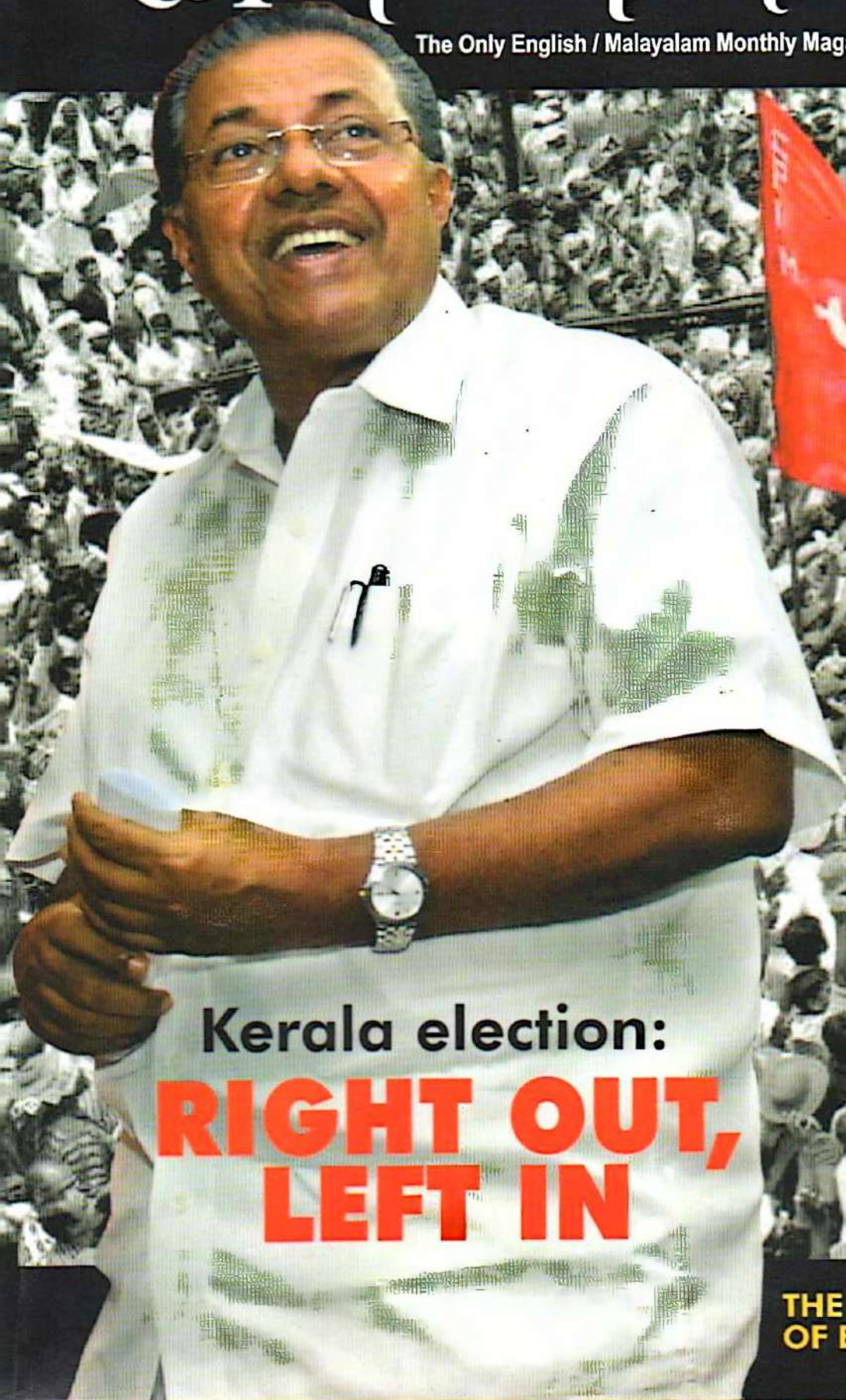


Women to be barred from temples?

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Kerala in Mumbai

The Only English / Malayalam Monthly Magazine linking Mumbai Malayalees



Kerala election:

**RIGHT OUT,
LEFT IN**

**THE HEAVENLY ALCHEMY
OF EDUCATION**

Publisher, Printer, Managing Editor

P V Vijay Kumar

Executive Editor

K V Satyanath

Feature Editor

Lakshmi Venkatachalam

Feature Writers

K R Narayanan

V N Gopalakrishnan

Sriprakash Menon

Dr. Nalini Janardhanan

Dr. Sujatha Nair

K. Padmakumar

Marketing Manager

Ms Asha Soman

Mob: 08108771247

Office Administration

Neetu Thomas

Sneha Sashidharan

Bureau Chief -Thane Region

Rajan V Nair

Mob: 9004972655

Consulting Creative Director

Shankar S Bhogwekar

Designer

Sudhakaran K M

Photographer

Mangesh U Borade

Mob: 08691902124

Advertisement & Marketing

T R Raghunandan

(Kochi - 09847169725)

Production & Logistics

K V Prabhakaran

Owner

Vibrant Printing & Publishing Pvt. Ltd

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Email: keralainmumbai@gmail.com

Website: www.keralainmumbai.com

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Vibrant
Printing & Publishing Pvt Ltd

105 - B, Twin Arcade, Military Road, Marol
Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 059
Tel: +22 29209959 Telefax: 29202094

LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP

The present children are a lucky lot. They have a large number of options for their career compared to their predecessors. About a century ago, one could become a teacher if fourth standard is cleared or could become a clerk in a commercial firm or in the land record office. Twenty five years later, the qualification was upped to eighth standard and a decade later, to matriculation. One could even become a vakil in a municif's court (noted litterateur and Jnanpith Award winner, Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai was one), a recognised Ayurvedic doctor, a clerk in a government office or worker in a factory or textile mill and many more careers.

Yet unemployment was rampant and less educated needed official protection to secure a good education as well as a well paying employment. The phenomenon of reservation for these two sectors was introduced as soon as India won her freedom from the alien rule and it was then restricted to ten years. Children of socially as well as economically backward people were covered under this scheme of reservation. The span of reservation was extended for decades after decades and probably after getting tired of giving extensions, they made it infinitely until those covered refuse to take it.

The times have changed and the attitude of people changed. India has undergone a plethora of changes and its people have become comparatively affluent except those who refused to see the light. The attitude of Indian population has transformed beyond recognition. Despite the loud declarations to the contrary, the present educational system is within the grips of corrupt politicians, bureaucrats with vested interests and a vast number of polluting mafia wearing masks of educationists. Educational institutions also changed, moving from offering generic diplomas and degrees in arts, science, commerce, engineering, medicine, law and education. There are innumerable institutions offering hundreds of subjects enabling the students to choose careers suiting their qualifications and tastes. Money is no more an obstacle as banks are offering educational loans at very low interest rates. Since government financed educational institutions and they have become a breeding ground for future political leaders and as such offer more training in holding *bandhs*, conducting agitations etc, serious parents send their children to private schools where such non-educational activities are scorned.

In this changed environment, the students would find extremely difficult to choose a particular stream and subject that would match his taste as well as qualifications while providing an adequate income to sustain himself and his family. Lucky are those who have someone to counsel them in the right direction and the means to reach there. And there are many who had the potential but had no assistance from experienced or from the imaginative.

It is time to find out our destination and reach there with dignity.

Avoid communalism

Read the letter of Biju Cherian titled 'Can Nair & Ezhava unite' in latest issue of KIM. Request you not to publish such items in KIM. It spreads communal poison in the minds of Mumbai Malayalees. Encouraging such things is very dangerous. Please think it over and take this in the right spirit. Further, Biju says NSS and SNDP are representatives of Nairs and Ezhavas. It is not so. They are the self-proclaimed representatives of Nairs and Ezhavas.

M Suresh
Andheri

Plight of Gulf returnees

I happened to see Kerala in Mumbai magazine in my last visit to Kerala and read the article in Kerala Engulfed in Gulf Financial Crisis. It is well presented. The situation back in Kerala is alarming with all the crisis around the globe. The authorities should step in and take action, otherwise it will be too late and will force the entire state into poverty. Hope this article will reach to right people and open up their eyes.

John John

I am a subscriber of your magazine since long and read all the pages despite my busy schedule. April edition (VISHU SPECIAL) of your magazine *Kerala in Mumbai* is well presented. The Article titled "Kerala engulfed in Gulf

financial crisis" make an interesting reading as it covers the current state of affairs in Gulf countries as well as in our home state, Kerala. The downfall of remittance from Gulf countries is already showing headlines in leading news papers. We, the readers consider such articles as an added attraction and we expect more such piece of writings in your magazine.

KTM Nambiar
Andheri West.

Tongue twisters

Further to my letter on "tongue twisters" appeared in your May 2016 issue, I would like to point out that it is not the British alone who should be blamed for twisting our names. The locals had an equal or more share in mutilating the names of places. A case in point is Mammiyoor (Mahima oor) near Guruvayoor and Mahabalipuram (Maamallapuram) near Chennai.

It would be interesting and enlightening if you could publish a list of names in your magazine of such places from Kerala and Tamil Nadu giving the background story, if any, of the original name.

To start with I shall send you the story behind the name "Maamallapuram".

Rukmini Venugopal
Andheri



Kerala in Mumbai

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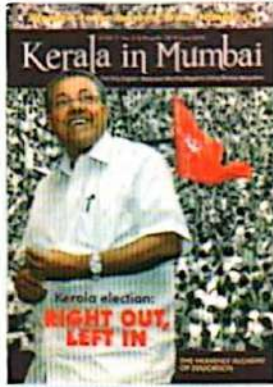


We welcome responses from readers. Please forward your responses and suggestions about various happenings concerning Malayalees residing in this part of India. You may send us your piece in either English or Malayalam. (We shall translate and publish it in English) You may send them via e-mail to keralainmumbai@gmail.com or by post to Editor, Kerala In Mumbai, 105-B, Twin Arcade, Military Road, Marol, Andheri (E) Mumbai 400 059.

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EDITORIAL

05 Look before you Leap

KERALA ELECTIONS

08 The Carnival is Over Satyanath
12 LDF Should Bring Stability and Economic Progress to the State Sriprakash Menon

EDUCATION

14 Scattered Thoughts on Education Ashwati
16 Education, Knowledge, Creativity A Blessing! Prof Pratibha Sudhakaran
18 The heavenly Alchemy of Education Prof:Dr John Mathews Vazhappilly
22 The Ultimate Guide to Get a Dream Job after You Graduate Vidhya Vasudevan

ESSAYS

25 Reflective Thoughts on Mirror in Life and literature Dr A P Jayaraman
28 Malayali Runs Trust for Mohammed Rafi T K Unnikrishnan
32 Seas and Lakes Everywhere but No Fish to Eat K R Narayanan
35 Every Drop of Water is Precious, Do Not Waste It P I Jose
40 Illogical Traditions to be retained? Manasi
43 What do Mumbaikars think of Malayalis? Biju Cherian

FEATURE

30 Sree Subhananda Gurudev V N Gopalakrishnan
38 Trends From the 90's that have made a Comeback Praseedha Sudhakaran
50 Mumbai News Digest KIM News Bureau
71 Health Dr (Major) Nalini Janardhanan
74 Malayalam Movie World Padmakumar

SERIALS

46 Mumbai of Balachandran-3 V Balachandran
65 Travlogue - Tehri Kunnam Vishnu





THE CARNIVAL IS OVER

- Satyanath

The prominent newspapers had the following headlines the next day of election results.

- Malayala Manorama: കേരളം ശരിവച്ചു LDF 91
- Mathrubhumi: 91/140 ചെങ്കൊടിയേറ്റം
- Deshabhimani: ഹൃദയം നൽകി കേരളം 91/140



The carnival of State Assembly elections is finally over and a ministerial cabinet is firmly in place for the next five years. Since 1957, Kerala has not been fortunate to see a particular political party or combination succeed itself but they were vacating the chairs for the other combination in the next election, though not willingly. History is the solid winner in this case.

When we recap the events leading to this election since last five years, the UDF government was somehow managed to be in the saddle for five years, without doing anything

spectacular. Even the opposition could not do much to outdo them. A few agitations they wanted to stage were abrogated by themselves in the middle. Occasional *hartals* they carried out were wholly enjoyed by the local populations and only tourists and other visitors on specific missions suffered.

In the pre-election predictions, LDF was projected as a clear winner, as usual, but even they were not so confident about it, if we look at the way they selected their candidates. As it is their wont, LDF managed to get a few popular independent candidates for the constituencies they were not very comfortable with and is said to have collected some election funds through

the deal. It reminds us about the 1957 elections in which the undivided Communist Party of India managed to get powerful and popular independent candidates who were not happy with the Congress, like Prof Joseph Mundasari, P K Chathan, Dr A R Menon, V R Krishna Iyer et al. This time also, they managed to get a few and some of those candidates became successful. UDF however did not follow that trend and paid for it.

When the results were announced, LDF to their surprise found themselves with 91 seats(58 seats for CPI(M)) and UDF to their shock had only 48 (22 seats for Congress) leaving one seat for BJP to open their account in Kerala, thanks to



Pinarayi shakes hand with V S before swearing in



Pinarayi Vijayan
Chief Minister, Home Affairs

the veteran election contestant, former Union Minister of State for Railways, O Rajagopal, with a majority of 8671 defeating CPI (M)'s V Sivankutty. To the surprise of all, BJP organised some victory rallies at various places of Kerala. Their candidate at Manjeswaram, K Surendran lost for 89 votes against Muslim League's P B Abdul Razak. BJP treated this defeat also as a victory. Besides, in Kazhakoottam, Vattiyookavu, Chathanoor, Malampuzha, Kasaragod, it came second and at many places came third, sending shockwaves to both the fronts. It was a clear signal for both the fronts to be on their toes in coming elections.

The credit of winning the seat with



Dr T M Thomas Issac
Finance



A K Balan
Law, Culture, Backward Community



G Sudhakaran
PWD



E P Jayarajan
Industries, Sports



K K Sailaja
Health, Social Welfare



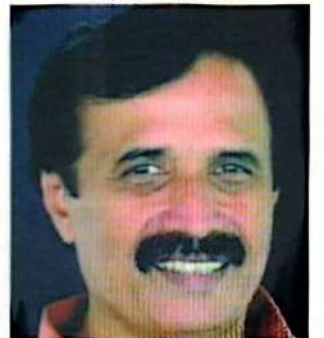
A C Moideen
Co-operation, Tourism



Kadakampalli Surendran
Electricity, Devaswom



T P Ramakrishnan
Labour, Excise



C Ravindranath
Education

the lowest margin (of 43) went to Anil Akkara of Congress in Wadakkancherry, the lone seat that Congress won in Thrissur district. Manjulamkuzhi Ali of Muslim league scrapped through a victory margin of 579 votes.

Ministers in the UDF government K Babu, Shibu Baby John, K P Mohanan and the lone female minister P K Jayalakshmi tasted defeat, along with speaker Sakthan and deputy speaker Palode Ravi.

Sacked from UDF and distanced by LDF, P C George fought the election on his own strength and won handsomely with a margin of 27,821 votes on par with most of the top leaders.

CPI(M) alluded their victory to the corruption, communalism and anti-people policies of UDF and not their own positive qualities. When Vaikom Viswan supported this view, Pinarayi Vijayan attributed their victory to their policies. Neglected by UDF, Sobhana George fought alone as an independent like PC George but lost the election. Nevertheless, she stated that she had no problem of returning to the Congress.

Four candidates deserve special mention. Nikesh Kumar, journalist, channelist and son of late M V Raghavan, booted out from the CPI(M), fought as a CPI (M) candidate on their own symbol but the electorate rejected him. Actor Mukesh, son of late O Madhavan, a strong CPI man, also fought on CPI(M) symbol and tasted victory. K K Rema, widow of slain CPI(M) rebel Chandrasekharan fought on her own party's label and came a third, emphasising that the past has no relevance in politics.

M M Mani, former CPI(M) district Secretary who defended and confessed political murders, won from Udumbanchola with a margin of 1,109 votes. Though there were rumours of him finding a berth in the ministry, Pinarayi kept him away, like EMS in the case of K P R Gopalan.

Many small parties who were bound to bigger parties for a place in the assembly lost their relevance. Among them are Revolutionary Socialist party (RSP), K R Gowri Amma's JSS, Janata Dal (S), Vellappalli Natesan's BDJS etc. Religious and casteist polarisation



Mercykutty Amma
Fisheries, Traditional handicrafts



Adv. V S Sunilkumar
Agriculture



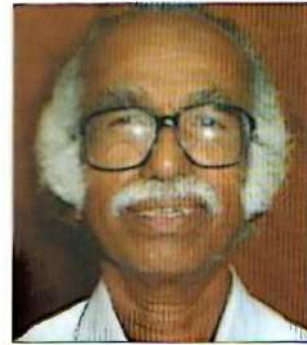
E Chandrasekharan
Revenue



P Thilothaman
Food, public distribution



Adv K Raju
Forests, Wildlife



Ramachandran Kadannappalli
Ports



A K Saseendran
Transport, Motor Vehicles



K T Jaleel
Local government



Mathew T Thomas
Water Resources



Ramesh Chennithala
Opposition Leader

resulted in UDF defeat, according to the state leaders. The propaganda that religious minorities are not safe under UDF could not be countered effectively and this caused pilferage of votes from UDF to BJP. The Hindu majority also sided with BJP though they could not gain seats in the election but received higher percentage of votes. It rose from 6.6% to 18%. Though Muslim League could prevent a major drop, it sustained its shares with lower vote share.

The election showed that the so called national leaders of Congress has no relevance to the people of Kerala as the political meetings addressed by Sonia Gandhi did not result in the vote share and realising this factor, Rahul Gandhi did not campaign citing fever.

Initially V S Achuthanandan was reluctant of contesting doubting his position after the election and it needed the persuasion of General Secretary Sitaram Yechuri to convince him to contest. He was persuaded to lead the campaign on account of his popularity among the masses. Every candidate of CPI(M) and their allies insisted on him to campaign in their constituencies as well as insisted to have his big size photograph displayed prominently on flexes and banners. Now it is clear that he has been promised some important position in the setup, possibly the post of CM itself after the election. Soon after the results, the somersault of the leaders abandoning him surprised even the critics of LDF by unilaterally declaring Pinarayi Vijayan as CM. The future will reveal the possible rebellion inside the party and the reaction of the unpredictable Achuthanandan. ■

The recently held election enables us to observe certain factors.

One: The uncontrolled utterances of leaders could badly affect the prospects of their own parties. The opposite is seldom seen in elections. The unwarranted utterance of PM Narendra Modi linking Kerala to Somalia was one of them. When the pollsters forecasted a maximum of 5 seats for BJP from Kerala, the party could gather only one. This single utterance reduced the seat to one (Rajagopalan won on his own personal strength) and the LDF benefitted though it did not admit any attempt to clarify the situation.

Two: The Solar Sarita case pervasive in the atmosphere for quite some time, has again flared up close to the date of polling and it further lowered the UDF's vote share, allowing the LDF to take more votes from it.

Three: Both Congress and CPI (M) have no national leaders worth the name. Buddhadev, Yechuri, Sonia and Rahul do not carry any weight in Kerala. The era of Nehru, Indira, Ajay Ghosh, Dange, EMS etc is over. Earlier national leadership of Muslim League was subservient to the state and now CPM (M) joined their company. For Congress of Kerala, Sonia and Rahul are

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Four: For the first time a Chief Minister designate called on the outgoing CM and also his senior in the party (VS Achuthanandan), thus establishing a healthy and positive precedence.

Five: The ploy of CPI (M) of supporting independent candidates in crucial constituencies known for their bondage to an opposition party or, a particular family, again found positive results. Unattached voters claim that the independent candidates did not receive adequate support from the party prior to the election but organised massive victory rallies when the candidates got elected.

Six: Many public conscious citizens feel that LDF did not win the election on their merit or on the basis of their manifesto but on the swing against UDF. Some say with their tongues firmly in cheek, that UDF scored self goals. Many leaders when found they were out of favour for various reasons, tried to push their close relatives and when that too

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At a few places the defeated candidates or parties showed their muscle power. When O Rajagopalan won from Nemam, the stooges of the CPI (M) candidate unleashed a violent destruction in the constituency. Thrissur and Kannur also witnessed similar actions and Kerala saw its first 'complete hartal' since the declaration of the election result.

One dangerous trend observed is the violation of the constitutional provision of electing the leader of the victorious party. The constitution stipulates that the elected candidates of the successful party meet and choose their leader who submits a list of members of his party and his election as their leader, to the head of the state. Eventually the head of the state invites him to form the government. Even though during the recent times, the party leaders choose the leader of the legislative party and go through the farce of election or get a resolution authorising the party President to choose the leader on their behalf.

In the present case, when the question of Chief Minister post came before the election, CPI (M) stated that the MLAs would decide on the issue. What Kerala witnessed was shocking: VS Achuthanandan was informed about the selection of Pinarayi Vijayan as CM designate. There was not even a mock meeting of the elected representatives to elect their legislative leader. Communist party in India always emphasis that they work for the people does not believe in a democratic process of calling a meeting to elect a leader. A mass leader like Achuthanandan, not having the organisational support, was left alone to lick the wounds inflicted on him. Had he not campaigned for the candidates his party fostered, the result would have been wholly different. Now he has to be contented with the decorative post thrown at him and keep his mouth shut for the next five years lest the allowances that come with the post would be withdrawn. Since a letter that he dropped into the General Secretary's shirt pocket on the occasion of the swearing in ceremony of his comrades, emitted a lot of heat in the media, he cannot write any more notes / letters nor he could utter any words of advice that was not sought, he cannot even open his mouth, the sharpest weapon in his arsenal.

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Namesakes to mislead voters

Current KPCC President V M Sudheeran tasted the bitter defeat in his last election not caused by the opposition candidates or voters but the two namesakes, having names sounding like his very own. His constituency had three Sudheerans, one of them is almost exactly like his own name. The votes garnered by the two namesakes exceeded the total margin of his defeat, causing the upright candidate of Congress to lick the wounds.

The namesake candidates have nothing to lose but a lot of money to gain from the likely beneficiary. His deposit at the time of filing nomination is remitted by the likely beneficiary and also he is paid a handsome monetary reward for lending his name to the contest. They do not print banners, display flexes, organise meetings and processions and solely remain incognito.

This time too, the scenario is similar. Out of the 140 constituencies, 68 had a plethora of namesake candidates only to cause an upset in votes to be garnered by a better known candidate, likely to upset the chances of the other likely to win candidate.

Very prominent candidates like Pinarayi Vijayan, V S Achuthanandan, Oommen Chandy, O Rajagopalan etc escaped without having any namesakes.

Former minister V S Sivakumar had two namesakes in his constituency Thiruvananthapuram, R Sivakumar and P G Sivakumar. At Chirayinkeezh, the victorious candidate of CPI, V Sasi had Sasi T P while his opponent K S Ajithkumar had Ajith Nandankode and Ajith to counter. C Divakaran of CPI at Nedumangad had another C Divakaran to fight against. At Aruvikkara, both the victor and the defeated had namesakes. At Karunagappalli when R Ramachandran of CPI won by a margin of 1,759 votes, his namesake stole 594 votes. At Kuutanad, Kerala Congress (M) candidate, Jacob Abraham who lost, had another Jacob Abraham to content with.

When we take it into account, the UDF candidates had more namesakes than the LDF candidates.

While the Election Commission cannot do anything about this phenomenon, it is the sense of morality and ethics of the mainstream parties that should drive to desist from this corrupt practice. They should not directly or indirectly promote this culture of impersonation. Lest we would be moving towards that state where names have no relevance but only the symbols fighting the election.

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LDF SHOULD BRING STABILITY AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS TO THE STATE

The CPM led Left Democratic Front (LDF) made a dramatic comeback in Kerala with 91 seats despite the emergence of BJP led NDA as a third force with 18 per cent of vote share, the Congress was battered with only 21 seats. The Kerala electorate however followed the traditional practice of rejecting the ruling alliance and gave yet another chance to the opposition.



Sriprakash Menon

■ New chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan has tough times ahead as dwindling oil prices, fewer opportunities of employment in the gulf region will see the unemployment

graph going higher. Corruption, alcoholism and trade union triggered *bandh* and *hartal*, if not changed will take Kerala another 20 years behind. Agriculture sector is not in a good shape. Prices of rubber, coconut and other agro based products are of a great concern.

Tourism is the only sunshine industry in Kerala but infrastructure like road and better transportation connectivity needed a big boost. Leave apart foreign investments, even domestic investors even today are cautious to empower the state with their expertise and resources. The government's greatest challenge will be to change the rural and urban landscape without any ecological damage to state's rich environmental riches.

What the LDF should surely shun is the 'politics of vindictiveness' instead should concentrate on progress and development of the state. A few well known Mumbaitees suggest and explain why the new government needs to be more accountable to the people's mandate.

Shrikant Nair, district president, Shiv Sena felt that "corruption free and a people friendly government is what people generally desire. However the efforts of the new Government will have to be solution driven towards people's problems rather than actions targeted at settling scores with the previous government leaders and officials".

He said "roads and other sectors that have been denied development in the recent past, need to be revitalised. Instead of favouring a particular



Shrikant Nair



A V Gopalakrishnan

community or class, equal opportunities for all sections of the society needs to be provided. Political violence, *bandhs* & *hartals* have caused havoc with Kerala's economy for too long a time. The new government should put an end to this trend."

As far as Mumbai Malayalees are concerned, Nair said "trains to Kerala need to be increased besides making the travel very secure, the state government should take up this issue with the union rail minister. A focussed development plan for the state is possible only when the state and central governments work together seamlessly. And I am positive and have full faith in our new chief minister

Mr Pinarayi Vijayan to deliver for the state and its people."

The new Kerala Govt with absolute majority unlike in the past is also an

experienced one particularly with regard to governing Kerala, said A V Gopalakrishnan, a leading businessman working with the outdoor media in Mumbai. "The task ahead for a seasoned politician like the new CM Pinarayi Vijayan will be quite different from the past. Dwindling Gulf remittance, worsening local labour market and irritating attitude of workers in some important sectors need his government's urgent attention".

"Kerala should be made a tourism hub as it has enormous potential. To achieve this infrastructure should be of top class. Good roads, courteous tour operators and easy access to hospitals and law and order authorities are very important aspects," he reminded.

Gopalakrishnan said "farmers should be encouraged to produce more and should be able to sell their stock directly in the market to ensure good returns." Such steps will boost the rural economy, he observed.

A S Madhavan, head of Warriar Foundation, social worker and noted businessman said

"government should continue with the liquor prohibition in the state and follow the footsteps of Gujarat and TN on this issue. He said when men drink, women are the biggest sufferers at home and prohibition will also ensure womens' safety to a great extent. Drinking of alcohol should be discouraged and an alternative should be developed to mop up funds and increase the state revenue. People addicted to drinks should be rehabilitated with the family involvement."

Mr Madhavan is of the opinion that "education of children from down trodden or backward classes should be taken care of instead of pursuing reservation policies for perpetuity. Reservation should also be based on economic conditions of the students. At our Balamandiram, we are providing free education, shelter and healthcare to all the children irrespective of their caste, creed etc."

"At present, farmers are getting very less income for their products like rice, coconut, mango etc. The ultimate consumer has to pay 30-40

times more than the price what the farmers are getting for their product. Hence most of the people are not opting for agricultural activity. If there is a proper distribution system by reducing number of middlemen, the total cost will come down and the farmers also can get proper price," he explained.

Higher labour charges, interference of political parties and government are causing unemployment and less opportunity for industrialization and manufacturing, he said suggesting "bureaucracy and labour laws should be modified for better manufacturing and employment opportunity. Our local people should be well trained and also there

should be recognition for doing hard work in the society than doing white collar jobs. Education system should be evolved for having equality status in all

jobs and skill development for everyone", he observed.

According to Surendra Babu, director marketing, Parksons Graphics and theatre cum cultural adviser, "The new government will have to confront lot of challenges on assuming power. Majority of the electorate believed that the UDF was very corrupt and this was a crucial factor due to which it lost power."

He said "the new government will have to undo the damage done by the previous government and also generate funds by improving the tax collections dynamically without burdening the common man.

The new government has to bring in a lot of clarity to the liquor policy which will have crucial implications on the tourism sector".

"The LDF manifesto emphasized that they will encourage giving up liquor through awareness campaigns; which does not necessarily mean prohibition. Many Keralites are returning from the gulf as a result of slump in oil price. The return of gulf

migrants will be a new reality and the new government will have a tough time to manage the dip in the remittance deposits and re-employing the NRIs. This will also bring a lot of social problems in Kerala. It is estimated that about 20 million citizens of Bangladesh have crossed over to India in the last two decades alone. A majority of them is said have moved to Kerala for lucrative employment from their point of view."

Babu pointed out that the "available data shows that while the average wage ranges between Rs. 200 and Rs. 300 for different professions in states across the country, Kerala does not pay below Rs. 600 for any job. The influx of migrants bring lot of security problems to the

state and will create further hurdles once the exodus starts from the gulf region". "Kerala has a unique record in India for the harmonious co-existence of diverse religions. Hindus make up half the population of the state whereas Muslims are 25% and Christians around 20% of the total population. However, off late the religious harmony of Kerala is thoroughly shattered. The new

government has to make all out effort to protect the secular fabric of Kerala society" he emphasized.

A state which boasts of highest literacy and excellent social development indicators see a 300% increase in violence against women, he cited. "It shows that literacy and education do not change the mindset of people. The new government will have to bring in innovative campaigns and measures to improve the situation and provide security to women against atrocities", he stated.

"The idea of constructing a Kerala House in Navi Mumbai was to make it a center for the propagation of arts and culture of Kerala. Unfortunately it has remained as a guest house for the bureaucrats and visiting legislators from Kerala. The new government should make it a point to transform Kerala House a center for the literary and cultural activities of Keralites in Mumbai. The premises should be available for Malayalee organizations at a nominal fee for their activities" Babu remarked. ■



A S Madhavan



Surendra Babu



SCATTERED THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION

Ashwati

Kerala is the most literate state of India. Since the last century, Kerala has transformed a lot and even left West Bengal behind, its competitor in the field of education one hundred years ago. Many of our great men went to Bengal to pick up the thread of knowledge and Poet Kumaran Asan was one among them. Bengal could boast of their proud sons like Ishwar Chander Vidyasagar, Bipin Chandrapal, Satyendranath Tagore, Saratchandra Chatterjee, Bankim-chandra Chatterjee and many others. Poor Kerala did not have any noteworthy sons in this field.

Education

When we trace the history of education in Kerala, we do not have much to fall upon. The educated lot always belonged to the ruling class (rich) and the landlords. Nevertheless their knowledge mostly hovered around Vedic and philosophical studies. For them, education meant only arth, kavya, vyakarana, tharkka and vedopanishads. Their syllabus was always confined to the need based and past time based knowledge. Education was restricted to knowledge of alphabets and a little bit of arithmetic. If any one dared to move beyond the socially accepted norms, that person was looked upon with suspicion, contempt and jealousy. An

example is Thunchathu Ezhuthachchan who was compelled to leave Malabar and seek refuge in Chittoor, then a part of Cochin State.

This author had seen head masters of primary schools, who had passed only fourth standard. Later this qualification was enhanced to eighth standard and later to matriculation. Needless to say, those teachers needed to have gone through a training to undertake teaching. Graduation with BEd was essential to teach in secondary classes but no training was needed to teach in colleges except that the teacher should at least secure a minimum of 50% aggregate marks. However, to teach in universities, after post graduation in the concerned subject, one need to have a Ph D to qualify to be a reader or professor. To be a head of department in a university, one needed to produce at least ten doctorates under ones' charge.

However the time has changed. When the University Grants Commission brought new wage scale, it put down several conditions to appoint a lecturer or professor. One such condition was holding an M Phil in the subject and later a Ph D.

Now the scales have been again altered. In order to bring a union pattern of qualification and standardisation in quality of teaching, the UGC insists on a candidate to pass an additional national test, NET; to be appointed in a college or university.

We have now had a bird's eye view on the career of teaching and one may find variations. Very often, teaching is considered to be an easy career. If the job is in a private institution, there is no fear of a transfer and there is hope to make some money by way of teaching privately in coaching classes or individually, though legally it is banned. If caught red handed, one may lose the job instantly. The entire career span would go without any significant change in work. A teacher might become an HM or a lecturer would be a professor and rarely a Principal. There is no scope for challenges. As long as there is no complaint about his method or style of teaching, the life would pass peacefully.

Teachers in Kerala, especially in Travancore Cochin, were a suffering lot several decades ago and some of the leading litterateurs of Malayalam were teachers and they had painted tragic pictures of some teachers. Among them was Karoor Neelakanta Pillai, who left the teaching profession and became a herbal seller, printer and what not to eke out a living. His short stories vouch for their sufferings.

One should consciously choose a career in teaching, if and only if, one cherishes teaching. Teaching should not be taken as a career but as a mission to do justice to that profession. Career should be taken only as a byproduct of that mission. Lest one would not have a peaceful retired life without nightmares.



Lata Mangeshkar



M F Hussain



Sachin Tendulkar

Legal Practitioner

After teaching, people of India always thought law as a possible good career. Initially there were different classifications, like teachers in the previous case, such as vakeel, advocates, barristers etc. Small civil disputes, mainly connected with land, were earlier dealt with local courts like panchayats and the professionals were vakeels, whose basic qualification was, as teachers in the above case, fourth standard, eighth standard or matriculation over a period of time. Also there were only two types of legal suits, civil and criminal. Time has now changed. Now the lowest court is presided over by a municipal who deals with only matters of civil suits. Then there are session courts, district courts, high courts and supreme court to deal with the matters of law. Besides, to deal with the matters concerning with different professions like defence, income tax, land matters, matrimony, public trusts etc there are tribunals. The judgements passed by these tribunals could be appealed only in high courts and later supreme court. Considering the various subjects, now there are advocates who specialises in specific subjects so that they become experts in their chosen subject. As a citizen's activities got diversified, the number of disputes has also been expanded. It naturally called for specialisation and now legal practitioners also specialise in particular fields.

Earlier, it was easier to get into legal profession as admission to B L or LL B was easier to seek. Now the case has turned upside down. Unlike in the past, any graduate cannot opt to become a lawyer. He has two options: one, opt for the combo course of a degree in any faculty and also a degree in law. Alternatively, after obtaining a degree in any stream, appear for an eligibility test and come out successfully to seek admission in a law college. Since the second option is a lot more risky, it is advisable to go for the first option, provided, one determined his or her future career at least three years earlier. After obtaining a degree in law, one has also options for a post graduation in law, i.e., LL M with specialisation in any chosen branch so that he can shine in that branch or opt for a career in teaching in a law college. Many also go from a Bar-at-law to become a barrister to offer better marketability. However, a course in Bar-at-law is not

available in India as it is a British degree. However one should remember, all these degrees do not guarantee a large number of lucrative cases but it is the successful culmination of cases in hand that earns prestige to the lawyer.

Engineering and Medicine

Engineering and medicine are the most sought after professions in India. People had a feeling that these two bring lucrative careers. These professions had several layers such as certificate, diploma, degree and post graduate levels in engineering as well as medical professions. One may be familiar with ITI, polytechnic, B Tech., M Tech etc in engineering. Medical profession also have similar layers such as nursing, pharmacy, physiotherapy, medicine etc. In medicine itself there are many streams such as Ayurveda, Allopathy, homeopathy, unani, naturopathy etc. Each one has its own merits and demerits. Once one acquires a degree in medicine, one may proceed to become a surgeon or a man of medicine for particular diseases or technical jobs such as radiologists, pathologists etc. Then he may proceed to become a diploma holder in that particular branch or a post graduate such as MD and later DM. The scope for higher studies is limitless. In all these, one has to be a constant student to remain relevant.

A professional remains so till he opts out where as in other jobs, there is a scope of limit for retirement. A professional can opt for a private career or a government service. The latter would ensure retirement benefits such as pension, gratuity etc. These were considered lucrative when one becomes old.

In this modern world, no single subject is superior to another. It is the mastery over the subject that counts. Any subject like archaeology or anthropology has tremendous scope as teachers to teach them are hard to find. English literature or for that matter a Master's degree in any language would fetch good dividends, provided the person has in depth knowledge in it.

Civil Service

Learning by rote may help to score high marks but would not be available to the holder when needed. One should remember that the high marks would only help at the entry level but the mastery and experience only would stand by the person. Take for example, the case of subjects learned by entrants of civil service examinations. You may find people of all sorts of subjects and all of them do well in their career. What the civil service examination demands is the ability to learn any subject in short duration and excel in it. Hence each candidate has to learn one subject that he/she did not opt in their college curriculum, besides his or her optional subject in their college education.

This author holds the view that one should not opt for any subject that would usher prosperity later but opt only those that would be nourished by your heart and mind and bring happiness in later life. There are multi-corepatis around who did not have millionaire fathers or attractive degrees but had their childhood passion to help them to achieve what they dreamt about. Think of Sachin Tendulkar, Lata Mangeshkar, M F Hussain, innumerable film actors with little education but had unlimited talent in their chosen field. ■

MOTHER'S INFLUENCE

It is common knowledge that a child is generally more influenced by its mother than its father. As example, I would like to enumerate (in a lighter vein) how Malayalam language which is said to be the offspring of Sanskrit (as its father) and Tamil (as its mother) has been influenced by its mother.

Sanskrit is a very well-made and perfect language. As a matter of fact, the alphabets and pronunciation in Malayalam should be exactly like Sanskrit. Tamil is basically different from Sanskrit so far as alphabets and pronunciation are concerned. In this language the consonant groups do not have different sounding consonants like Kha, Ga, Tha, Da, Pha, Ba etc. There is only one consonant for each group like Ka, Ta, Pa etc. As a result Gandhi and Kaanti are written in the same way in Tamil and pronounced at will. Similarly Sadamgeetham is pronounced as Sadamgeedam. In Malayalam even though the words are written as in Sanskrit, still they are mostly pronounced like Tamil words. As such Paripanthi becomes Paripadi, Sangeetham becomes Sangeedam, Jaanta becomes Jaandha and Rukmini becomes Rugmini! That is mother's influence for you!

- Rukmini Venugopal

EDUCATION, KNOWLEDGE, CREATIVITY - A BLESSING!!

Do you get bored at work? Do you hate your job? Is your life a routine that seems to never end? Are you feeling tired and hopeless of this paparazzi?



Prof. Prathibha Sudhakaran

If the answer to all the above is "YES", then you need to give some serious thought to what exactly you are doing in life. It all goes back to Education. We all went through the struggles of the school days where marks were everything. But is marks everything? No right! As an adult you agree but to our children we enforce to excel. A push is always required but it must always be to enhance their skill. We are all born exceptional with some talent or the other. It truly amazes me when I see people less privileged than many of us doing unbelievable tasks. The bottom line is *Do what you like...*

Many of us were so good at painting when we were young. We struggle even to draw these days nevertheless we sign or scribble when the mind is idol. What went wrong? Some of us loved to sing and dance. Many such are engineers and doctors. Where is their creativity lost? I agree many may argue that the above don't earn your bread but they are important to each ones development. Never shunt your hobbies.

New generation are blessed with so many options in education today. If I talk of Mumbai, You name it and its right here in this city. One of the reasons the Malayalee loves Mumbai is as Education Knowledge Creativity has always been an integral blessing for us Mallus. We have always been able to keep a balance between our tradition and new technology. I always find that



Do not encourage students to use technology at an early age. Less the least you can do. Remember they are all born with wings. The Engineering Medical fever has to end. Save another generation from ending up in air conditioned cabins and irritating bosses.

we easily blend into any culture and are very adaptable .

Some parents often complain that their children work hard for 12-14 hours and don't get the desired scores. It's not the quantity of time I tell them, it's the learning methodology that really makes the difference. As I counsel many students through years I have learnt that learning is a form of art too. Not all can understand the mumbo jumbo of the trigonometry and the integration. But that does not mean they are not good either. As parents you must encourage them to sharpen their skill. How to discover what they are good at, that's your job, I can't help there. I once accidently found that one of my students loved the English dictionary. He loved





learning new words and managed to use one new word every day. He was pursuing his engineering those days. But it was great boon in disguise for him. He scored exceptionally well in GRE and there he goes away... India loses another talent. Some are so good at sports. Enrol them into courses for them in that area.

Do not encourage students to use technology at an early age. Less the least you can do. Remember they are all born with wings. The Engineering Medical fever has to end. Save another generation from ending up in air conditioned cabins and irritating bosses.

I was so happy when our

honourable Prime Minister brought the idea of 'Make in India' The thought itself was so refreshing. I have always been completely blown away by some communities who never let their skill die. It gets carried from one generation to another.

Inculcate reading habits, open discussion on issues and encourage blogging. They need to think and write so they need to read. Technology is helping us change the scenario. Many are doing work from home, advertising their makes through facebook, instagram and whatsapp. The world is changing slowly but surely.

Make time for yourself. Relax. Take time off. If holidays seem to be a myth

at least paint, listen to music, dance, take a walk, talk to people, write, make someone happy, give a surprise, teach someone (I bet u will feel just awesome!), crosswords, play board games, cards, take pics (some do only this ! the selfie fever), call old friends. In fact YouTube channels these days have so many educational videos. All this is a part of education. It is a nonstop process. It never ends. Keep a mind ready to learn always. Accept the ignorance and welcome knowledge. Keep yourself busy, but not just only at your workplace.

As we all stand at the doorstep of our careers after 10th and 12th results this June, make a choice that matters!!! ■

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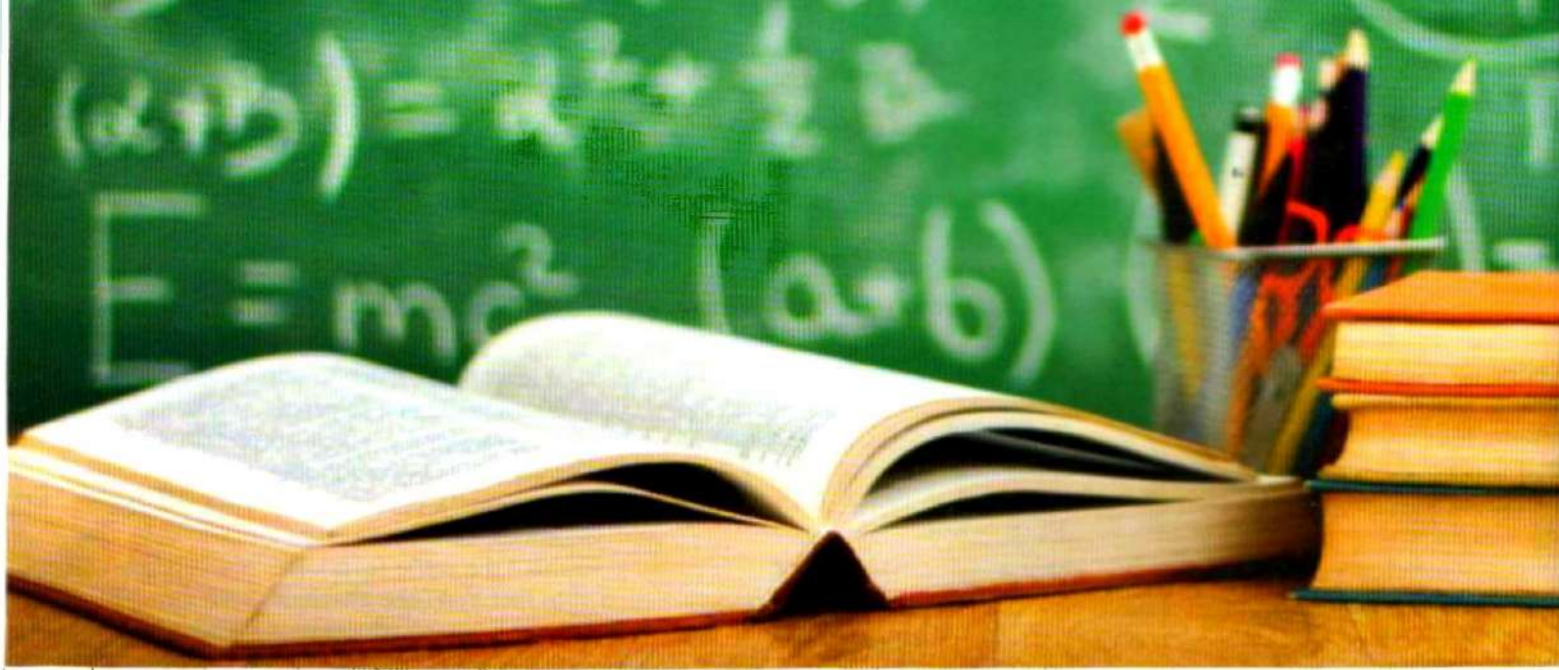
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THE HEAVENLY ALCHEMY OF EDUCATION



Prof. Dr. John Mathews Vazhappilly

■ A warm welcome to the intellectually exciting world of undergraduate college education. It is now an opportunity for our young aspiring students to delve into the depth and breadth of their area of academic interest. Ignite a passion for learning and develop an inquiry for intellectual pursuits. The meaning of the word "Education" lies embedded in its Latin root, "educere" which means to bring forth or lead out. Education is the full blossoming of the human person. Education forms men who can see clearly, imagine vividly, think steadily, will nobly and act creatively and effectively.

In my opinion, we should seek higher education for two basic reasons. One, education helps you to discover yourself. Knowing others requires intelligence but knowing yourself is true wisdom. Two, education helps you transform a mirror into a window. When you look into the mirror you see yourself. But when you see through a window, you see the whole world. This broadened perception gives a sense that you exist not just for yourself but you need to give back to society.

Education is the architecture of the

human soul. True education should deepen our insight, widen our horizon, create a meaningful outlook. Plato held that the purpose of education was not as it were to fill an empty vessel but to turn the eye of the soul towards light. When our vision of life is turned towards the light, we develop an inward vision of goodness and grace, joy and peace, wisdom and love. We also discover that education is the only enduring treasure. The treasure house of education stands intact and unshaken in the storms and stresses of life. A sound education fans the sparks of our aptitudes and capacities in to a luminous flame:

Help me to walk and I shall run
Help me to see and I shall look for
Help me to hear and I shall listen
Help me to sing and I shall dance
Help me to dream and I shall see visions.

Help me to read and I shall explore the world of books

Help me to fly and I shall soar.

Follow your Passion

"Follow your heart.. follow your passion" is the mantra heard in the academic circles today. There are many courses and careers on offer: But should one listen to one's heart and choose a career based on passion and interest or

settle for a practical option that promises good salary? The answer is crucial but not always clear. Students are often told to follow their passion and make a career out of what they like and love. In theory turning your passion into a profession should be easy and lead to financial nirvana where money flows and happiness prevails. Reality, however, is quite different.

Many people have no clue as to what they are made for. Distinguishing between what you believe your passion is and what your inborn talents are, is the secret of nurturing a career out of your passion, a career that allows you to do what you love, what you are good at and what others will pay you for. True passion gives us a proper insight into our aptitudes and capabilities. We understand ourselves and our triggers. What is it that really floats our boat? Want to be a teacher administrator, doctor, scientist, actor or writer? What gives a glow of joy and sense of fulfillment? When we love what we learn, learning becomes a great fun. Our true learning is aligned with our area of interest. Interest is the best catalyst for learning. Along with passion, hard work, commitment, skills, abilities and a positive attitude determine success and satisfaction. True passion helps you to do something of significance to illumine

your life.

The Fine Art of Education

■ Nurture a Culture of Curiosity and Inquisitiveness:

Inquisitiveness is the key to the treasury of learning. It is one of the traits of a vigorous intellect and a creative mind. Nourish and sustain holy curiosity. Millions of people had seen the apple fall. If we were to see an apple fall, we would pick up the fresh apple and eat it. But Newton was different and he asked why. Curiosity opens a luminous window to the stimulating and fascinating world of science and technology Philosophy and History.

Man's insatiable inquisitiveness cannot be subdued. The blade of grass shatters the concrete. An Einstein emerges from the European academies. Those who would reduce, control, quell must lose in the end. The ecstatic forces of life, growth, and change are too numerous, too various, too tumultuous, to be curbed, controlled, and contained. One of the most inquisitive minds of all ages was that of Einstein Listen to what he says: The Important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing. One cannot help but be in awe when he contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of reality. It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend a little of this mystery every day. Never lose a holy curiosity.

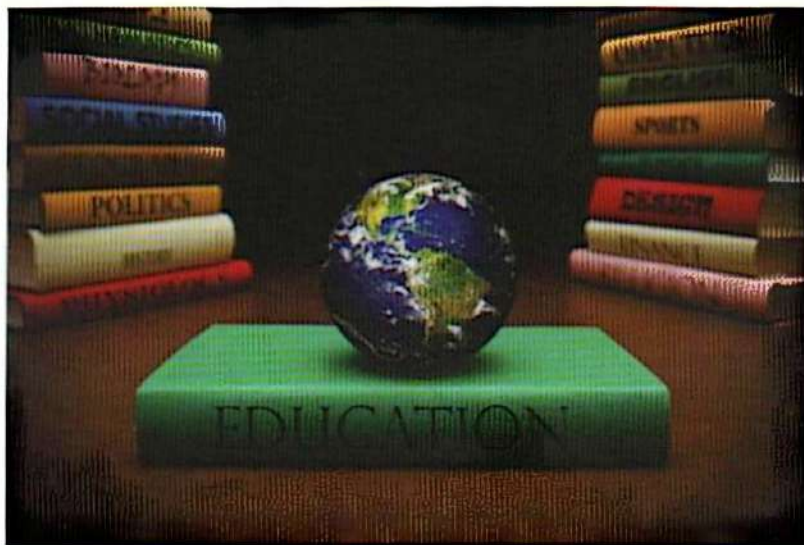
A culture of curiosity and inquisitiveness nurtures creative exuberance and freedom. From Dave Hewlett and Bill Packard, whose messing with gizmos and gadgetry in their garage led to HP, and indeed the term, garage start up to Bill Gates and Paul Allen, whose mucking with computers and programming resulted in an operating system and a giant corporation, America's world domination is built on curiosity and enterprises.

For all the exaggerated moping about its decline. US colleges remain the hotbed of innovation, attracting nearly a million foreign students every year and these colleges continue to provide breakthrough technology to the world.

From the first internet browser, which came from March Andreessen's work at the University of Illinois in Urbana Champaign, to Google, which was derived from the Stanford university work of Larry Page and Sergey Brin, to Facebook, which emerged from Mark Zuckerberg's work at Harvard, American Academia remains fertile and fecund.

Cultivate the Spirit of Creativity

Creativity is a state of being in grace. It is a product of simplicity, not sophistication. It is a spontaneous process, a natural flow like the oozing of gum from the bark of certain trees. It is found both in men of genius and common people. When a primary school teacher



uses an innovative method of teaching or a housewife prepares a new dish, they are doing something creative. Innovation is the essence of creativity. Human creativity is innovativeness and inventiveness. Intelligence, intuition and imagination are the well-springs of human creativity.

Creativity is the grace and power to use one's intelligence and imagination properly and productively. True creativity is always fresh and spontaneous. All creative persons are open doors that let in the breeze of a new idea, a new inspiration, a new perception of beauty. Every poet is a door through which a new poem flows. All scientists are doors through which a new insight into nature flows.

To be creative is to go where no one else has ever been. You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. What you'll discover will be wonderful. What you'll discover is your real potentials.

Develop the Scientific Spirit

Millions of our students take up science subjects to become scientist, doctors, engineers, technicians, architects etc.. A scientific spirit is the backbone of the study of any scientific subject. A scientific spirit demands disciplined devotion to the pursuit of truth. It develops in its votaries an attitude of tolerance, open-mindedness, freedom from prejudice and hospitality to new ideas. Science reveals to us the inexhaustible richness of the world, its unexpectedness, its wonder.

The Scientific quest is an adventurous and daring journey into the inscrutable mysteries of the universe. These journeys lead to unexpected discoveries and new insights that challenge traditional

wisdom. In this journey we also discover the unbreakable thread of rationality and order woven into the fabric of the entire creation. The mathematical precision, exactness, simplicity and elegance underlying the physical laws in nature are intellectually so intoxicating that many scientists have become mystics. Every drop of water in the ocean, every grain of sand on the beach, every autumn leaf that flutters and spins to the ground is subject to laws.

Learn to be Sensitive and Compassionate

The heart of education is the education of the heart. Life should be filled with positive feelings. Logic alone will not make a happy life. Put your heart in what you do, be it in college or at home. One should be emotionally fit, and that emotion should be guided by intellect or reason. Reason without emotion is dry and sterile. Emotion without reason is wild, capricious and whimsical. Compassion is the best of all passions. It is important to be sensitive to the needs of those who are not as privileged as we are. Education must sharpen the intellect and purify the heart. Wisdom must be combined with compassion. Compassion is not just a matter of emotional good will but of intellectual vigor and spiritual sensitivity.

Education is just not for giving you a livelihood but giving you the art of living wholly, wisely and joyously. As far back

as the 14th century the Persian poet Hafez said, "When all your desires are distilled you will cast just two votes to love more and to be happy."

Go Beyond the Sphere of the Academics

Remember there is life beyond the classroom. Go beyond the classroom to the vast theatre of the world. Now is the proper time to develop a passion for extra-curricular activities. Hone your soft skills. Life demands from you independent and critical thinking, have the ability and flexibility to adapt to the challenges that we have to face every day. Be self-motivated and acquire new-age skills.

Online Learning

Online learning is becoming the new trend in academic circles. University campuses in the United States are increasingly becoming wireless, enabling students to use their laptops or mobile devices from anywhere. Classrooms are getting "smart" in the sense that teachers can connect to internet sources from their classrooms, besides using other instructional tools. Many professors put up their class notes and other teaching materials online. Online discussions and wikis are becoming common teaching tools. The only problem with online learning is that classroom liveliness and vibrancy, the thrill of being with students, are absent online.

Have Patience

Youngsters at the cusp of life worried and tense over what the future holds in store for them should have the patience to learn valuable lessons from the chaotic experience one has to go through as a part of our maturation process. Walt Disney failed many times, but learnt the right lessons and hence failure was not fatal for him. Rather, it was fertilizer for his creativity.

Remember what Steve Jobs told us about the unrelated stuff he stumbled through, only to know later how it all come together to make future sense when he connected the dots back in time? That is exactly how it happens with most of us. Everything that happens in life has a purpose and a meaning. Believe in yourself and live in the magic of the present moment, both this have the

potential to give you a magnificent future.

Learn to Take Risks

Success comes to those who dare and do. Right from your college days learn to take risks. This is part of being proactive. Those who take risks ignite the sparks of creativity and innovativeness. A good system of education gives us the self-confidence to take reasonable risks and explore the world of possibilities. If you want to keep on learning you must keep on risking failure - all your life. Patrick



Overton's lines glide into the mind:

When you walk to the edge of all the light you have and take that first step into the darkness of the unknown, you must believe that one of two things will happen. There will be something solid for you to stand upon, or you will be taught to fly.

The Sublime Objectives of Education

A Passion for Truth

Truth is a quest, It is a fire, a passion. The search for truth is hard and arduous. This quest for truth consumes us like a passionate love affair. It possesses one; it drives one again and again in to new explorations, one goes on asking and an answer never comes, but by this asking, through this continuous quest, this passion, one changes slowly. One is transformed.

Truthful insights dawn upon us with all the overwhelming force of a sudden revelation, with all the brilliance of a sudden flash of inspiration, like a mansion emerging from the autumnal mist which has enveloped it, as the pilgrim of truth ascends the steep

mountain path, the majestic dome of the mansion of truth appears first, then the stately storey's of his mansion comes into view and finally the full mansion appear in all its intellectual beauty, splendor, glory and perfection.

Learn to Grow in Wisdom

Wisdom can be defined as the ability to judge soundly and deal sagaciously with facts, especially as they relate to life and conduct. It is not just thinking intelligently, but living intelligently and lovingly. It is a kind of glow that lights a man's world when he has experienced

much and drawn the best from what he has experienced. It is courage, prudence, good common sense and deep understanding of men and matters.

A wise person has ten attributes : Accuracy and exactness of speech; refined and gentle manners; the capacity for logical analysis and serene, deep reflection; a keen desire for personal growth; competence : the power to do things efficiently and effectively; broad-mindedness : an inclusive attitude to life; compassion : a sensitivity to the needs of others ; an openness to the transcendent dimensions of life ; knowledge and practice of sound ethical principles; a love of wisdom and a life of goodness and grace.

Knowledge is acquired and assimilated information from the outside; wisdom is infused and comes to us as an illumination. We need wisdom to make big decisions in our life. Life is a mix of knowledge and wisdom. It needs a fine tuning. A lamp has to be burnished to keep its flame pure and shining. Similarly our knowledge has to be infused with humility, understanding and compassion to turn it into wisdom. ■

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO GET A DREAM JOB AFTER YOU GRADUATE..!



Vidhya Vasudevan

■ Congratulations if you're a new graduate. Now that you've completed the goals others have set for you, it's time that

you have a list of your own. Your graduation is a greater achievement, but that is nothing compared to what life has in store for you next. Very few people around you will help in transition from a full-time student to a full-fledged adult in the working world.

So if you are putting your cap and gown on in a few weeks, below are some actionable tips that can help you create, refine, or revitalize your job hunt

First Job Interview: 10 Things You Should Know

Finding and applying for the job might be easy with many job search websites, but when it is time to face your very first interview, the thought will probably scare the living daylights out of you. Everyone has to face their very first interview.

In search for the right job, I went to a string of interviews, flunked a few, and learned a few things. Here is a list of 10 things you should know when facing your first interview.

1. Never Lie In Your Resume

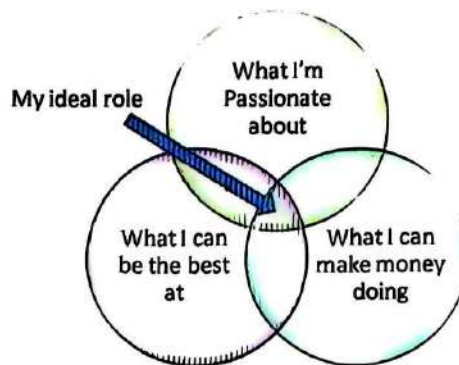
Creating a resume is probably the first hurdle I had to overcome during my job search. Stating skills which you do not have is something you should never do in the professional world. Lying easily backfires on you. You can



either say that you know or understand something on a basic level and then express how you have encountered the skill (or software) in the past with school assignments. This shows the employer that you already understand the basics, allowing them to skip the tutorial phase.

2. Go for what Interests you

It is not easy to display or describe something that is outside of what you know during a job interview. You should consider applying for a job that includes your interests or things you are passionate about (I am saying this out



of my own experience).

Applying for a job that interests you allows you to show off your skill for that particular job and gives you courage when talking to the interviewer. Technically, you have been training for this in your daily routine, as you are already immersed in it.

3. Read up about the company / Job Scope

One crucial thing you should do is to read up the company's profile and find out what their goal is, as the goals of each company of the same field is slightly different. Some may focus more on certain aspects that others don't look at. By reading the company profile and understanding their goal, you can better answer questions like "why should we hire you?" Even when there



is a mismatch of your skill and their requirement, showing them that you understand the company profile and their objective increases your chances of being hired.

4. A Book judged by its cover

There is a saying for a dress code: "It is better to be overdressed than underdressed". It is always a good idea to dress more professional than casual. Limit the use of aftershave, perfume, accessories like big earrings, rings etc.





Putting on a wristwatch may also put you in a better light it makes you look like you don't take time for granted. Keep a pen in your pocket, as there might be forms to fill and also a copy of your resume, cover letter or any related academic documents even if you have sent them copies before, in case they want a second look.

5. Be Ready for Everything

Mental preparation is crucial because this interview is just a one step away from you landing your dream job.



Tell yourself that you are going to an interview because they are already interested in your resume. Plan your schedule so you arrive 10 to 15 minutes early to the venue. Also, use specific words when explaining your reasoning instead of using 'like, like, that thing'. It helps to set you apart from the rest of the candidates if you know the right jargon to use. Bring your sense of humor and SMILE!

6. Observation starts from the receptionist

A receptionist handles many things for the boss: mail, phone calls, the greeting of clients etc. The receptionist



will also be the person to greet you and let the boss know that you are here. You might probably be sitting within their field of vision. While you wait, any bad habits like a restless leg, a need to constantly powder yourself, or trying to memorize the company profile from your notes that surface might be picked up by the receptionist, the eyes and ears of her boss (who could also be your new boss). Treat everyone right inside the vicinity of the company building as the person whom you held the lift door can also be your future head of department.

7. Question Everything Intelligently

Asking questions is highly recommended, and interviewers expect a ton of questions from you as it shows

that you are interested in the company. However, don't jump in and ask about benefits and leave days you can get in a year.

Focus more on questions that would keep them on their toes, making them remember you better than the many other candidates vying for the same spot. Note that some employers like risk takers as they are the ones who can come up with unique ideas. This will



help you stand out, be remembered and possibly get hired.

8. Show Willingness to Learn

If you are presented with something that might be slightly out of your knowledge, you can express willingness to learn. This will show the interviewer



that you are up for the challenge and willing to work harder than others to deliver the objective.

Large companies are known for sending their employees for training to improve in a certain aspect. Small companies on the other hand are able to give you face-to-face training session to help your overall growth. Both require an open mind to learn new things, even though you have graduated from the highest level in academic world.

9. There might be more than ONE interview

In smaller or medium companies, you might be given the job right after the very first interview while in large companies they have a second/third round of interviews for shortlisted



10. The Wrap Up: You're hired (or Maybe Not)

Wait? Seriously? No. Send them a thank you email. Get the contact from the name card they handed out to you and email them, telling them clearly who you are, than thanking them for the opportunity and telling them you wish



Conclusion

At the end of the day, you may or may not get hired. It's just how it is. Not all blind dates work out great either, right?

I personally did badly for my first interview because I was *seriously* not prepared. So learn from me and don't mess up! It's not that hard to prepare for all these things.

Now, go out and wow the world.

I wish you every success in your job hunting and all of your future endeavors. ■



candidates. If you get the invite, congratulations! You should feel more excited than worried as this means the company is interested in hiring you.

However in larger companies, the second interview might be accompanied by different interviewer. They could be your future boss, head of department, supervisor or co-worker.

At the end of this interview, they might offer you the job on the spot and you can choose to accept it then and there, or take some time to think about it. If there is no offer yet, go home.

they find the man (or woman) for the job.

It reinforces your position in their mind and decision-making process, especially when they are having a tough time deciding between you and two other candidates. This will give you the edge.

Shailaja Nair Foundation Presents A musical evening by Padmashree Anup Jalota

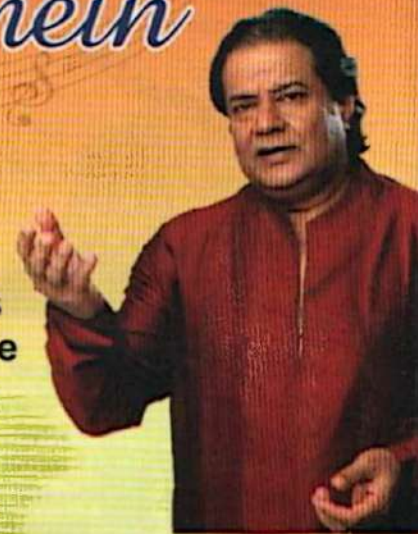


Teri yaad mein

In association with FEI Group of Companies
to celebrate their Founder's Day on 24th June

Time : 7:00 PM

Venue: Manik Sabhagriha Auditorium, I.E.S. Society
Opp. Lilavati Hospital, Bandra Reclamation
Bandra (W), Mumbai - 400050,



www.feicargo.in





REFLECTIVE THOUGHTS ON MIRROR IN LIFE AND LITERATURE



Dr. A. P. Jayarman

■ A mirror is a reflective device. The plain mirror helps us to capture the image of ours. We really see what we truly are from this virtual image. If we raise your right hand in

front of the mirror, the left hand of our image will appear to go up. We seldom know that this lowly plain mirror can trick our brain. Honestly we still find it hard to understand how mirrors work. The school science experiment with mirror and candle is a good example of correcting delusions. Mirror has a long history in science and a colourful one in literature.

Kannadi in Kerala

Mirror is Kannadi to Malayali. Kannadi is deeply ingrained in Kerala psyche. The popular television program anchored by media maestro P K Joseph and Amar augmented the Kannadi effect.

"If you have a good friend, you don't



need a mirror." So goes a saying in Malayalam. Equally eloquent is its converse. 'If the mirror is fine, you do not need a friend.' Buying a good mirror of any size, style or shape off the shelf is easy. Building lasting friendships is difficult.

I have not seen my father's grandmother ever looking at a mirror. There was no mirror in her room. Nor did she ask for one even once. Even in her better younger days, her exposure to mirror was rare. When she gets an infrequent chance to visit the Senior Nethyar of Kavalappara Kottaram (palace), she might have looked into the

rand mirrors adorning the reclining room of Nethiyar. There was a time when mirror was common in Kottarams and uncommon in commoners' houses.

Mirror makes me remember my homework on scaring away crows. We used to sun-dry boiled paddy by spreading it on bamboo mats. Ammu, our domestic help would focus intense rage of the sun on the crow with the help of a hand held mirror and shoo it away as it lands on the paddy. It was also a self-admiring tool in her hands. When she goes for her lunch break she would put me on that job.

My grandfather, a lawyer, decided to have a huge square Belgian mirror to be framed in a new jack wood *almirah* for placing it in his *Vakilmuri*. Maybe he had a streak of vanity of professional prosperity. It was bought in Coimbatore and brought by car after careful logistic planning. Here 'huge' means side of the square mirror measures fifty centimeter. The tender loving care with which Asari Kittu handled the fragile stuff is a textbook case of material handling.

One of the eight entities of the

auspicious Ashtamangalya set is the Valkkannadi, a metalloid mirror with built in handle. Often Aranmula Kannadi gains entry into this set. That Kannadi is of Kerala origin. Hand made from an alloy of zinc and copper by a process zealously guarded as a family secret, Aranmula mirror signifies the metallurgical heritage of Kerala. For VishuKani, apart from traditional bronze or brass mirror, a highly reflective glass mirror is also positioned. My wife sets up and assembles numerous entities for Vishu in front of a huge mirror.

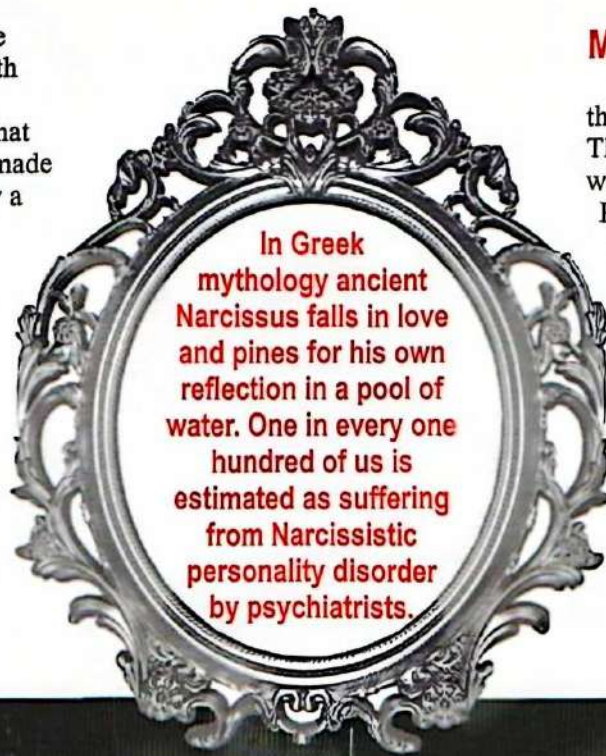
Kannadi is also the name of a village about five kilometres away from Palakkad town.

Science of Mirror

In the 1600s, several optical devices were invented and perfected by scientists like Galileo Galilei. The telescope, the microscope, and the camera are particularly noteworthy. The birth of the modern silvered-glass mirror is credited to chemist Justus von Liebig in 1835. He deposited a thin layer of metallic silver onto glass thus opening the way for mass production of mirrors. The age of looking has arrived.

I was not in comfort zone in the physics lab with mirror while doing the experiment on the laws of reflection. Proving that the incident ray, the reflected ray and the normal to the surface of the mirror all lie in the same plane was fairly easy. But I had to fudge fuzzy figures to show that the angle of incidence and the angle of reflection are equal. Rather poor in college physics I was pretty good at understanding the most famous failed experiment in history and explaining it to students. I mean the Michaelson Morley experiment.

When the earthshaking discovery of gravitational waves was announced recently, I quickly refreshed my memory of mirrors. Mirrors are at the very heart of the LIGO experiment. When gravitational waves passed through Earth, the mirrors moved one-ten-thousandth the width of a proton.



In Greek mythology ancient Narcissus falls in love and pines for his own reflection in a pool of water. One in every one hundred of us is estimated as suffering from Narcissistic personality disorder by psychiatrists.



Mirror scene from film 'Dracula'

In neurology, Vilayannur Ramachandran popularized the concept of mirror neurons. A science magazine gave the caption 'Mind is a Mirror'. The discovery of mirror neurons in the brains of monkeys sent shockwaves through the neuroscience community. These are cells that fire both when a monkey performs a certain task and when it sees another monkey does the same task.

Mirror test is a concept close to the heart of many experimental psychologists. They are trying to find out if animals have the ability of self-recognition. We and our ancestors, the great apes, have passed the test, as also an Asian elephant.

Mirror in Literature

Science aside, mirrors have attracted the attention of many a creative genius. There was a time in the past when there were no mirrors as we know them today. Perhaps, still water in a black pitcher provided the best surface for mirror like reflection.

In Greek mythology ancient Narcissus falls in love and pines for his own reflection in a pool of water. One in every one hundred of us is estimated as suffering from Narcissistic personality disorder by psychiatrists.

Literary symbolism expands the horizons of aesthetic experience. Dramatic symbols take us beyond the realm of plain narratives. In literary symbolism, one of the

noteworthy symbols tapped by celebrity authors to create a wide spectrum of acceptance is the mirror.

Playwrights and poets have given the best of their creative exploration to the object mirror as well as to the fragility of mirror. As an enriching literary symbol, mirror has a long and luminous history.

Shakespeare used the device of mirror impactfully and tactfully. In *Hamlet*, he exhorts to hold a mirror upto Nature. In *Sonnet 11*, we find "Look in thy glass and tell the face

thou viewest." In *Richard 11* when the king was at the juncture of deposition says, "Give me the glass, and therein will I read." Declaring his glory "brittle" he smashes the mirror on the ground. The mirror and the cracked mirror are potent images. Shakespeare was dramatizing the growing self-awareness of the Renaissance mind, the disjuncture between the image and the self.

Kalidasa too speaks of the mirror. "Having wiped the mirror gracefully with the ashes from his body, Shiva held it before Parvathy so that she may see the beauty of her attire in it."

The queen in "Snow White" asks a magical mirror to tell her who the most beautiful lady of the land was and the mirror praises her as the prettiest object.

Alfred Tennyson in his *The Lady of*

Shalott, presents a character who is condemned by a curse to watch the world indirectly, through the medium of a mirror. Once she was tempted to look directly and the mirror was shattered to smithereens.

Let us look at the Children's fiction *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* by Lewis Carroll. It is a masterly and majestic exposition of the mirror. Alice wonders what is there on the other side of the mirror. When Alice stepped through the looking glass she would have found that more than just the writing was back to front. The very molecules that made up her body would have been the wrong way around in the looking-glass world, and their interaction with the looking-glass molecules would have led to a very amazing adventure!

Dracula, by Bram Stoker has a mirror which shows Jonathan Harker that he is in a fix. The man who was close to him has no reflection of him in the mirror! Sure mark of a ghost in story.

Oscar Wilde in his *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, makes his character Dora in to use a mirror to compare with the man and his portrait. When he realizes what a monster he has become, he becomes mirror-smasher.

Poets have painted mirror in plaintive tones with calibrated decay of youth into old age and nearness to exit. The tragedy of ageing is vividly brought out by Thomas Hardy in *"I Look into My Glass*. Sylvia Plath in her poem *Mirror* finds a mirror utterly uncanny reflecting geriatric woes.

Mirror Symbolism: A case Study

I was attracted by the use of mirror symbolism by the contemporary Chilean playwright Ariel Dorfman in this *Death and the Maiden*. This play, psychological fall out in a country emerging from totalitarian dictatorship is poignantly portrayed.

There are three characters in the play. Paulina Salas is a former political prisoner who had been raped by her captors, led by a doctor whose face she never saw. The rapist doctor played Schnabert's composition *Death and the Maiden* during the act of rape. She lives with her husband, Gerardo Escobar. The despotic regime has fallen. Troubled freedom has dawned. When

Gerardo returns home after his accepting the position of investigator in the Human Right Commission, he gets a flat tire. A stranger Dr. Miranda helps him and drives him home. Paulina recognizes doctor's voice and identifies him as the rapist. She gags him with her panties, keeps him tied up to put him on trial and extract confession of his crime. She records the entire confession wielding a loaded gun. The play ends in suspense whether the doctor was liquidated or not.

In the play towards its end, Dorfman presents a giant mirror which descends forcing the audience to look at themselves in a carefully crafted stage direction. The mirror descends and is not springing in ascent mode.



Spectators watch their images in the mirror first the face and then the whole body. "Selected slowly moving spots flicker over the audience, picking out two or three at a time, up and down the rows."

The playwright is positioning the audience before a big mirror exposing them to an expressionistic mode to undergo a form of modern psychological mirror test. This provides an exercise in self-awareness of their commissions and omissions in the brutality of past regime. Spotted two and three may be refusing to recognize themselves and are forced to recognize their image. The descending mirror is

theatrical novelty thoughtfully crafted to take the play into a non-narrative and open ended dimension.

Its timing at the end of the play is equally significant. The events of the play with Paulina in critical control of the life and death of Miranda raise anxiety in the audience. Surprisingly the outcome is neither action nor inaction but a deflection to reflection. The mirror enables them to detect if they are wearing any masks and also by wearing the masks for long time, their innate face and mask have indistinguishably merged. The mirror is also a subtle but powerful device to differentiate the visual images of objective and subjective realities gripping every citizen in a troubled new born democracy.

The mirror descends and the descent is insignificant. As the mirror descends, the forehead is seen first. If there are frown lines, they indicate the mental state. Progressively the total face comes into view. The smile reflecting happiness at the birth of democracy or grimness displaying anxiety of the fragility of new found freedom or fear of a relapse into despotism and a whole spectrum of emotions could be visible.

The mirror is invented as a dramatic artefact for introspection and innovation. It serves the function of a looking glass to see one self. It also presents selected moving spots picking out two or three at a time. That choice preselection and focusing on to the mirror ought to have been for the human right violations committed by them. It may be a grand shaming and naming game with the help of the giant mirror.

Paulina turns slowly and looks at Roberto. "Their eyes interlock for a moment. Then she turns her head and faces the stage and the mirror." She made a deliberate attempt to squarely look at her tormentor, hold his gaze and then turns her head. Then she faces the mirror. The last act in the play

David Luban, a Yale University Professor of Law, describes mirror as a powerful and interesting device in the play and likens it to the jury in the audience. The play by itself is a mirror image of a nascent democracy with a latent despotism taking umbrage under amnesty. The three characters are articulations of three streams of thought with different shades of them held by the people. The play is regarded a mirror reflection of translational justice. ■

MALAYALI RUNS TRUST FOR MOHAMMED RAFI

T K Unnikrishnan

Music lovers all over the world would remember the legendary Hindi singer Mohammed Rafi, whose voice had mesmerized millions. Though Rafi is not with us today, his 8000 and odd songs, in almost all Indian languages, sung over a period of 40 years, will be alive in the minds of music lovers for years to come.

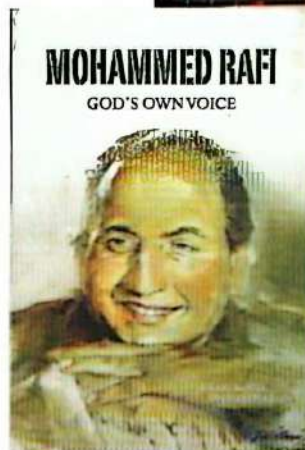
Rafi died on 31st July 1980 at an age of 55. He was reportedly suffering from high blood pressure and diabetes and had a massive heart attack. He has seven siblings three girls and four boys. Every year in the month of July, more than 15,000 tributary concerts for Rafi are organised all over the world.

Binu Nair, (60), originally from Kollam in Kerala is a gulf-returnee, who after a brief stint of 18 years in UAE and Abu Dhabi came back to Mumbai in 2005 to set up a spice manufacturing unit. His love for Mohammed Rafi songs made him start a Trust, exclusively for Rafi. Binu must have by now organised more than 120 Rafi-centric shows all over the country.

Asked how Binu ended up in starting a trust for Rafi, he explained: "I was always a Rafi fan and my father who was a veteran trade union leader in the railways used to organise musical programmes to raise funds for the union and many a time I used to go to meet singers and composers to fix up the concerts. I think this must have given me courage to start a



Binu Nair



trust for music lovers of Rafi songs".

Binu, himself a free-lance journalist, used to write for Screen and Khaleej Times while at gulf and had interviewed Malayalam's most popular singer Padma Bhushan K J Yesudas

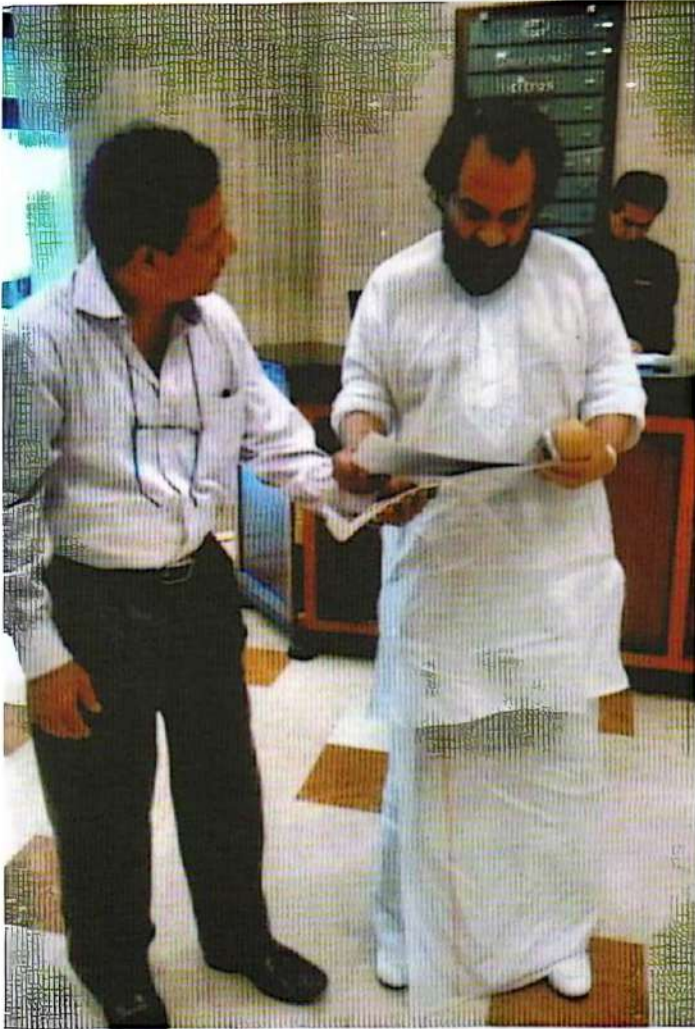
way back in 1985. "When I was working in Dubai, we used to market products including Sony Malayalam audio cassettes of Tharangini (the studio Yesudas used to own) and Das used to stay near to our showroom in Abu Dhabi. He used to come to our showroom very often to see the new arrivals. From those days itself music was my passion and even now I continue a very cordial relationship with him",

reminisced Binu.

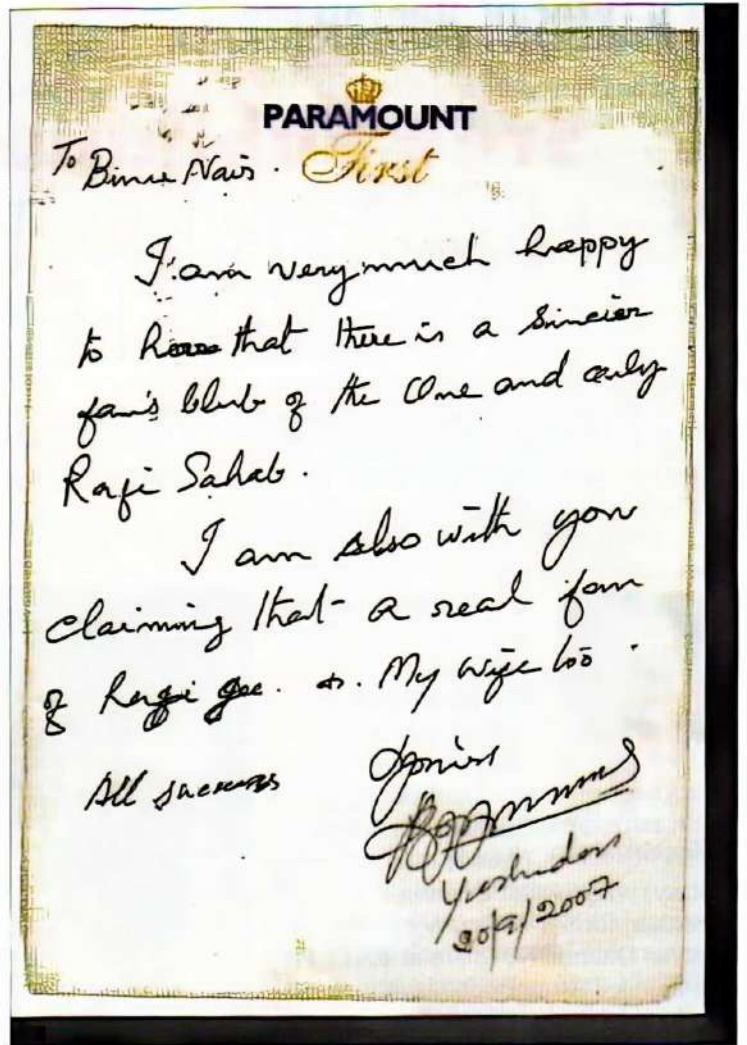
Binu is currently planning a series of Yesudas concerts from the coming August in Borivli's Prabhodan Thackeray Hall. The first concert will have more than 50 songs of Yesudas, both Hindi and selected Malayalam classics.

"Once when Yesudas was told by my friend (while in a flight





Binu Nair with Yesudas



from US) that I am running a trust for Mohammed Rafi in Mumbai, he became so happy that he wrote a congratulatory letter for me sitting in the flight itself on airline's stationery", (see pict) explained Binu showing Yesudas's love for Rafi's songs. "He even sang lines of Rafi's eternal song, 'O duniyakerakhwale' to the airline staff", Binu added. Binu, a great admirer of Yesudas and Lata Mangeshkar songs ensures that their songs are always included in his musical programmes.

"The 'NacheMayuri' fame dancer Sudha Chandran was interviewed by me for Khaleej Times in 1985 and the interview was carried on the front page which gave Sudha a lot of publicity in Gulf", remembered Binu of his journalistic days. Sudha was the only Asian artiste to have featured on the front page of Khaleej Times in those days and she shot to limelight overnight.

The Rafi Foundation formed in 2007 has more than 1200 members from all over the country. The foundation encourages aspiring singers selected by a competition who are later given chance to sing on the stage in the

programmes. Handicapped and visually impaired singers are also given opportunity to sing. "We recently gifted 20 wheel chairs to an association of handicapped in Haji Ali, Mumbai", said Binu explaining the social commitment of the Foundation. "I feel proud that our musical programmes provide livelihood to many artistes and musicians", added Binu.

The foundation recently brought out a book on Rafi's life titled 'Mohammed Rafi God's own voice' co-authored by Raju Korti and Dharendra Jain, two well-known journalists. Also, more than 8,000 songs of Rafi are available on the foundation's data bank which can be made available to members on request. Binu also arranges Rafi shows for corporates and institutions on his own and also in the name of the Rafi Foundation. Many a time Rafi's family members grace the musical programmes.

The foundation also regularly publishes a magazine 'Sargam' for distribution among the members.

S Thakur, DGM of a Mumbai based pharmaceutical company is a member

of the foundation for over five years. Thakur felt that the foundation is doing yeoman services to the music lovers, especially of Rafi songs. "Binu and his team deserves a pat on the back for striving to keep the old music and songs alive", said Thakur.

Binu is a little upset with the Indian politicians, who, even after a lot of lobbying at different levels, are yet to confer the coveted 'Bharat Ratna' on Rafi, who is the only singer whose voice still mesmerizes the whole world. "As a tribute by me to Rafi, I always mention his name as 'Bharat Ka Ratan' in all my correspondences and publicity materials", said Binu, who continues to strive to get Rafi the Bharat Ratna.

Binu stays with his family in IC Colony of Borivli West. While Binu's wife Prema teaches in a school in Juhu, his two daughters Tejasvini and Tulsi are employed.

The Rafi Foundation can be reached on Binu's cell number: 9833250701 or on their email: rafifoundationclub@gmail.com

Sree Subhananda Gurudev

HE STRIVED TO ESTABLISH A CASTELESS SOCIETY

Sree Subhananda Gurudev started his noble mission of liberating the untouchables from their misery and mingled with them in order to educate them. He declared that there is only one Supreme Spirit and that is the creator, protector and savior of all mankind.



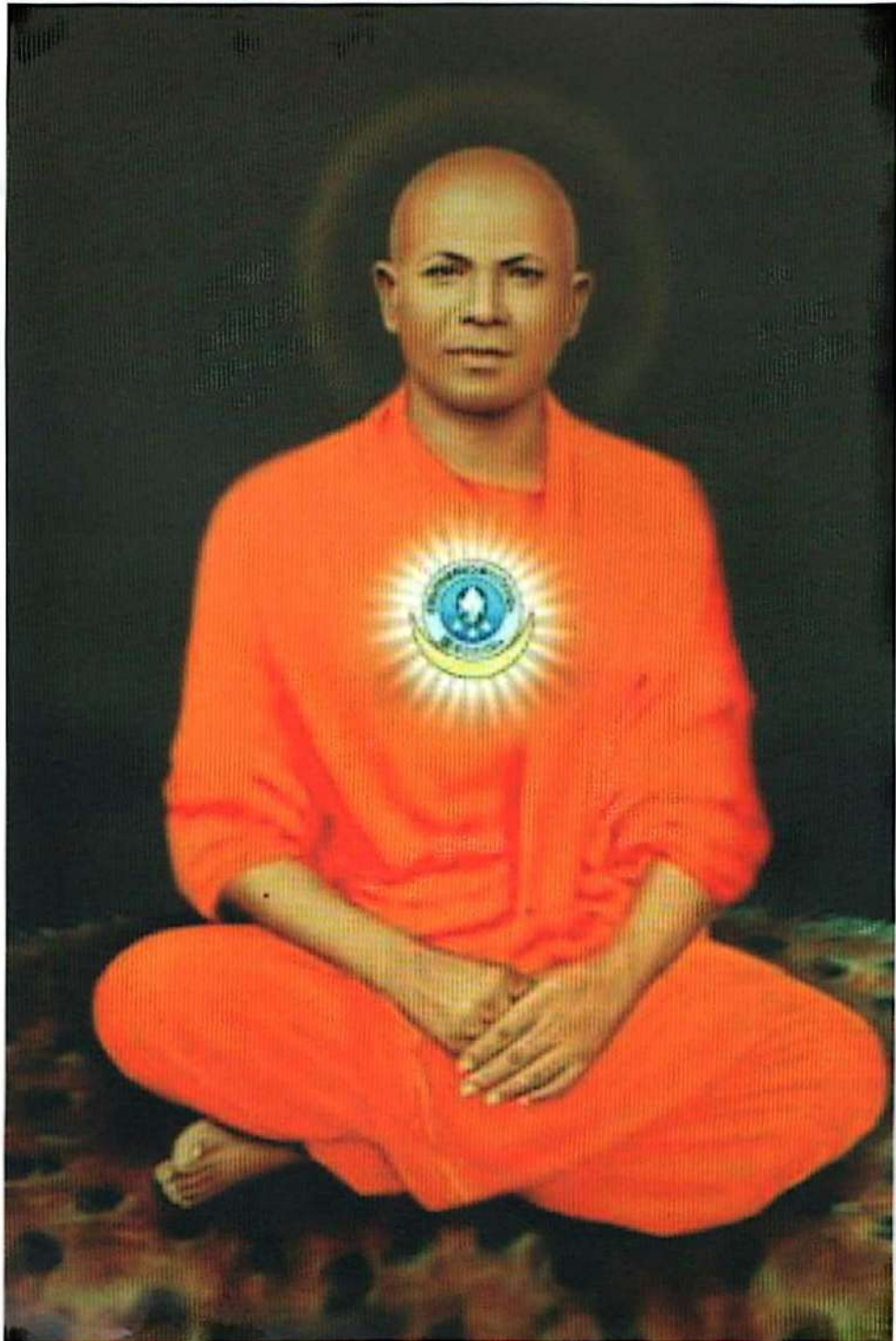
V N Gopalakrishnan

■ Sree Subhananda Gurudev was a social reformer, an unmatched thinker, a philosopher and an embodiment of truth. He founded Subhananda Ashram (Abode of Peace and Ecstasy) with Swami Dharma

Theerthar, former Secretary of Sree Narayana Dharma Sangham in 1918. He also founded Atma Bodhodaya Sangham (Organization to Enlighten Wisdom) with its head quarters at Cherukol, Mavelikara. Artist Rama Varma Raja, uncle of Sree Chithira Thirunal, Maharaja of Travancore was a patron of the Sangham which upheld the path of *Bhakti* and righteous living. The Sangham is aimed at discarding all distinctions of class, colour, creed, caste or sex. A new spiritual order had been established with its own rituals, rules and regulations besides condemning religious dogmas and superstitions.

Atma Bodhodaya Sangham is an Advaita Vedanta spiritual movement with the mission supporting Sree Narayana Guru's belief of 'One Caste, One Religion and One God for Mankind'. Sree Subhananda Guru considered Sree Narayana Guru as his spiritual guru. "The theosophy of the Atma Bodhodaya Sangham is that without caste, creed, religion, region or gender, anyone can attain *Moksha* (Salvation) through *Namasankeertana* (Recitation of Holy Names) by strict adherence to *Satya Upadesh*, *Janmanthara Jnanopadesh* (spiritual instruction) and *Kaliyuga Moksha Vyavastha* which reveals all eternal ecstasy.

Sree Subhananda Gurudev started his noble mission of liberating the



untouchables from their misery and mingled with them in order to educate them. He declared that there is only one Supreme Spirit and that is the creator, protector and savior of all mankind.

Shri. V.S. Subrahmanya Aiyer, retired Dewan of Travancore and President, Kerala Hindu Mission inaugurated Subhanada Ashram on December 2, 1937. The Ashram building was again renovated and reconstructed by Brahasree Anandaji Gurudev and was inaugurated on May 5, 1971. Over 20 Ashrams and 33 branches of the Atma Bodhodaya Sangham were established in different parts of Kerala, New Delhi, Kanya Kumari and Mumbai uniting the lower caste people who were denied the basic human rights and freedom of worship.

Sree Subhananda Gurudev stressed the need for abstaining from the Five Great Sins such as adultery, intoxication, tormenting others, violence and idol worship. He focused on education as the only way to eradicate poverty and slavery. His disciples started spreading the message of love and harmony to reach the oneness and get to know the blissful values.

The Sangham has undertaken social service activities to the under-privileged children, aged and the handicapped. Sree Subhananda Gurudev started weaving centres and agriculture-based cottage industries in order to provide livelihood to women and the aged. He carried on these activities for over 25 years with the help of dedicated sanyasins and the moral support from Maharajah Sree Moolam Thirunal.

According to Sree Subhananda Gurudev, with divine knowledge from a Guru, one can seek union with God and gain eternal bliss. He reiterated that there is only one God which is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. He cautioned his fellowmen against anger, greed and jealousy and stressed the realization of God as the main goal in life.

"He who is free from *Ashta Ahankras* such as lust, anger, greed, desire, rage, competition, arrogance and ego is a *Jnani*. It is the inner maturity, purity and oneness of mind in renunciation and personal experience of the Supreme that makes a saint. Devotion to God is the best and finest path to salvation. Sincere prayer, yearning for a lofty life and company of the good, *Sat Sang* are the essential *sadhana*", says Sree Subhananda

Gurudev.

According to him, if one pursues the path of truth and righteousness (*Satya dharma*) with oneness of mind, surely the kindness of Guru and the grace of God will flow in abundance and helps one to conquer one's ego, the *Ashta Ahankaras*. Then one will experience the highest spiritual bliss. One who experiences this supreme state is at once liberated from rebirth (*Punarjanma*), the cycle of births and deaths. One who has this knowledge (*Njanam*), sees clearly in oneself God and identifies oneself with the entire universe.

Sree Subhananda Gurudev was born on April 28, 1882 to the devout Sambhava couples Ittyathi, an astrologer and Kochu Neeli, a pious woman in Kulayikkal, Budhanoor, Pathanamthitta district. The couple prayed for a child and after 24 years of marriage, Kochu Neeli gave birth to a child at the age of 40 and they named the child as Paappan. At a very young age, the child showed spiritual bent of mind and started giving spiritual discourses and performing miracles. The bewildered parents took the child to renowned astrologers to seek remedy.

At the age of seven, the child had a heavenly light (aura) and its rays were omnipotent. This experience had lasted for three days continuously from November 16, 1889 and he returned to normal life on the fourth day. He discovered that in the inner self of

every individual, sparks of this heavenly light illuminates.

In 1894, his mother died and he went on a pilgrimage in quest of studying the heavenly light that he had experienced. He visited various holy places and met with different scholars, but they could not explain the meaning of the revelation that he experienced.

In 1914, he went into deep meditation for the realization of the divine light at a place which later on came to be known as "Thapogiri". After three years of intense meditation, he attained enlightenment (*Maha Samadhi*) on July 29, 1950 in Thiruvananthapuram at the age of 69 as prophesied. Later, his body was buried at Kottarkavu Ashram in Mavelikkara.

Brahasree Anandaji Gurudev was chosen as his successor at the tender age of 11. He became the Head of the Ashram for 26 years from 1962 to 1988. Atma Bodhodaya Sangham attained tremendous growth both spiritually and materially during his tenure. After his Samadhi, Guruprasad Gurudev became the Head of the Ashram and he established many branches and carried out several developmental programmes. He attained Samadhi on May 17, 2000. Brahasree Sadananda Sidha Gurudev is the present Head of the Ashram and Managing Trustee of Atma Bodhodaya Sangham Sree Subhananda Trust. Atma Bodhodaya Sangham has reached new heights today attracting devotees from all over the country. ■



PUSHPAM SILKS
WEDDING SAREES

D. S. CUTPIECE & R. M. SHOPPING
HANDLOOM TEXTILES

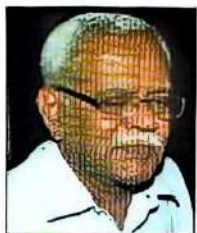
RAMRAJ DHOTHI, MUNDUKAL, READYMADE SHIRTS, VELCRO DHOTHI WITH POCKETS AVAILABLE

രാമരാജ് ദോത്തി, മുണ്ടുകൾ, റെഡിമെയ്ഡ് ഷർട്ടുകൾ
"ഒട്ടിച്ചോ കെട്ടിക്കോ വെൽക്രോ ദോത്തി പോക്കറ്റ് ഉൾപ്പെടെ"
ഫാക്ടറി വിലയിൽ ലഭിക്കുന്നതാണ്

No. 2, Matunga Mansion, Opp. Post Office, Bhandarkar Road,
Matunga (C.R), Mumbai - 400 019.
Tel: 2418 1025, 2410 5293, Mob: 98920 67581



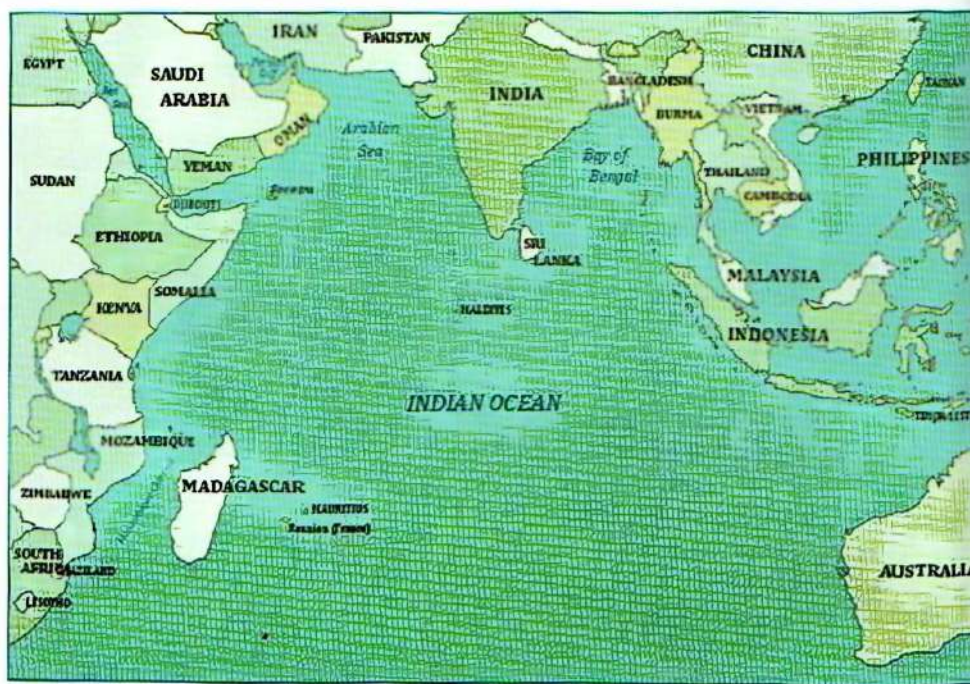
SEAS AND LAKES EVERYWHERE BUT NO FISH TO EAT



K R NARAYANAN

■ The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) of the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR), Kochi, has very recently come out with some not-so-

comfortable details in regard to the food output from the Indian seas. According to this report, the fish production from our seas in 2014 has declined by 5% at national level, while the fish yield of Kerala coast, in particular, has gone down by 15% compared to the production in the fiscal year 2013. This, according to some, has resulted in acute scarcity of fish in Kerala with particular reference to its Oil Sardine (*Sardinella longiceps*), popular as Mathi or Chaala. "India's Marine Fish landings(excluding Lakshadweep and Andaman-Nicobar Islands) amounts to 3.59 million tonnes.... It is a decline of 5% compared to 3.78 million landed in 2013" said Dr A Gopalakrishnan, Director of the CMFRI, at a press conference in Kochi. The scientist also pointed out that "over-exploitation" and the "damages of the ecosystem of rivers" could be the major reasons for the decline of the Indian Herring or



Hilsa Fish [*Tenulosa (Hilsa) ilisha*] in the Bengal waters".

The words of the fishery scientist cannot be ignored, as a 5% decline at the national level yield of the sea fish (15% for Kerala coast alone) clearly tells us how bad is the level of deterioration of the seas, or in other words, how badly have we treated our seas to go down to this productivity level. This necessitates a closer look into the ways we have been handling

this very potential and economically important resource of our country.

Where we stand

India has 7517 kilometers of sea coast, with about 3,827 fishing villages, and about 1,914 traditional fish landing centers. In addition, its fresh water resources consist of 195,210 kilometers of rivers and canals, 2.9 million hectares of minor and major reservoirs, 2.4 million hectares of ponds and lakes, and



about 0.8 million hectares of flood plain wetlands and other water bodies. Fishing is a very ancient livelihood in India and dates back even to the puranic age. Presently, this sector contributes a little over 1 percent of India's annual gross domestic product (2008) employing about 14.5 million people. The country's rich marine and inland water fisheries and aquaculture used to offer an attractive and promising sector for employment, livelihood, and food security. Fish products from India have been well received by almost half of the world, creating export-driven employment opportunities within the country and abroad and greater food security for the world.

During the past few decades, the Indian fisheries and aquaculture has witnessed improvements in craft, tackle and capture/culture methods. Creation of the pre-harvest and the post-harvest infrastructure received great attention of the Government and other development agencies, both at the central and state levels and these efforts have been inducing a steady growth of fishery trade and industry over the years.

To augment the economic benefits from the marine fishery sector, India has been utilizing its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which stretches to 200 nautical miles (370 km) into the Indian Ocean from the shore and encompasses more than 2 million square kilometers off the rich seas. Though fisheries was only a subsistence oriented activity in the pre-independent era, sea fisheries grew into a major industry within a few decades of independence. Fish production in India increased more than ten folds since the country became independent in 1947. According to the Food and Agriculture

Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the fish output in India doubled between 1990 and 2010.

The nine maritime states, and two Union Territories of India as detailed below - yielded 3.59 million tonne of fish, belonging to about 65 commercially important fish species/groups along the Indian shores.

The surface living (Pelagic) fish and the mid-water (columnar) species roughly contribute about 52% of the total marine fish production in India. The production rose from only 800,000 tons in 1950 to 4.1 million tons in the early 1990s. From 1990 through 2010, fishery industry's growth accelerated, reaching a total level of marine and fresh water fish production at about 8 million tonne. Special efforts were made to promote extensive and intensive coastal fisheries, and to encourage deep-sea fishing through joint ventures and international co-operations. These efforts led to more than four folds increase in the sea fish production from 520,000 tons in 1950 to 3.35 million tons in 2013. The value of fish and processed fish exports too increased from less than 1 % of the total value of exports in 1960 to 3.6 percent in 1993 and about 5 percent thereafter. The economists, therefore, were of the

view that the fish production in India grew at a higher rate than food grains, milk, eggs, and other food items between 1990 and 2007.

The Changing Scenario

While we were basking in the glory of our marine resources and the ever-growing fishery sector, our greed for more money from the seas too enhanced in multiple terms. The Government, the Industry, the politicians and the bureaucrats started forgetting the basic science that governs the biological production and the inter-connected food chains in the seas. Also, they seem not to have realized the natural and man-made ecological changes in otherwise benevolent seas over the years.

We intensified our fishing effort from the near-shore waters to the deep seas by expanding and modernizing our fishing fleet. We started deploying dangerous fishing gear (like the small-meshed bottom trawls), which virtually ploughed through the sea bottom, disturbing and destroying the coral reefs, coralline rocks and all the living and non-living resources in the substratum. Intensified modern fishing efforts with newer fishing crafts and implements, resulted in over-fishing, which caused great strain on the fish resources. This over fishing also resulted in poor catch-per-unit effort (CPU) and in some cases total depletion of certain valuable fish varieties as well. We went on strengthening our fishing fleet and intensified our exploitation further and further. The catch per boat per annum/season reduced miserably.

Also, the share of valuable fish species dwindled in the catch and uneconomic trash fish started domination. The Shrimp, Sardine, Mackerel, Thread Fin, Jew Fish, Rock Perch and many such fish species started disappearing from the catch. Apparently, not much reduction was seen in the total

volume of fish landings, as the trash-fish continued to replace the quality fish. This disappointed the common man and affected stability of the trade and industry.

Further to all these, we started dredging the sea floor for the very highly priced commercial products, like the minerals, natural gas and oil from the ocean beds. Thus the human craze to become richer at the cost of the oceans rose to an unlimited level, which the

| State/U. T | Production in 2014 (Lakh Tonne) | Share of the State (Percentage) |
|----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Gujarat | 7.12 | 19.8 |
| Tamilnadu | 6.65 | 18.5 |
| Kerala | 5.76 | 16.0 |
| Karnataka | 4.74 | 13.19 |
| Maharashtra | 3.45 | 9.54 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 3.42 | 9.51 |
| Goa | 1.53 | 4.26 |
| Odisha | 1.39 | 3.86 |
| West Bengal | 0.77 | 2.13 |
| Puduchery | 0.65 | 1.82 |
| Daman and Diu | 0.46 | 1.28 |

oceans could no longer bear. The oceanic environment started changing and the ocean ecology came to stay as a major concern.

As we are well aware, the sea water has innumerable types of salts and trace elements, dissolved in it. On an average, the Salinity of the Indian seas is about 35 Parts per thousand (ppt) or 3.5%. These salts are very essential to maintain the primary organic/biological productivity, using solar energy, in the sea water. Any fluctuation in the composition or proportion of these minerals and salts can bring in changes in the productivity of the sea water and, therefore, changes in the animal and

■ The level of changes in the ecology of the seas

The sea is not an "Akshaya Paathra"- the inexhaustible bowl. There are many physical, chemical and oceanological factors, which cause or contribute to its ability for biological production. One should not forget that out of miles and miles of deep waters we have, hardly 200 meters of surface water, which receive the sunlight (the Euphotic Zone) is capable of organic production, as sunlight is the sole energy that is capable of utilizing the minerals and salts of the sea water and create the primary life in the seas. The rest of the sea is dark, cold and barren



plant lives. We have been dumping all urban domestic, developmental and industrial wastes into the rivers and seas, and this gradually has turned the sea water into a non-productive chemical concoction.

In view of all these, nature started showing its negative reactions to the human interference with the oceans, as it does on the land. Those who managed the seas did not realize or pretended not to realize the dangerous signals of the oceans. The scientists and technocrats warned them off and on; but to no avail.

The Resource Balancing

There are some basic facts, which control /regulate the fish yield of the seas. They are:

- The level of primary production.
- The level of natural death/destruction of resources
- The level of new recruitment to the resource stock
- The level of human exploitation

in so far as the primary biological production is concerned.

Primary productivity is the base of the biological pyramids and food chains in the seas. Any fluctuation in the primary productivity affects the secondary and tertiary levels of productivity of the sea water.

Chaakara

Under-water currents, temperature and the congenial nutrient and chemical levels attract the migratory fish from one place to the other. It has been observed and proved that certain species of commercially important pelagic fish - like the Oil Sardine (Chaala/Mathi), Mackerel (Aila/Bangda), the Seer Fish (Nei Meen), the Thread Fin, Pomfret and the like are migratory in nature. That is perhaps the reason for their seasonal availability. They move in shoals to food-rich areas in the seas. The Chaakara (Mud Banks) phenomenon, along with the south-west trade winds

of Malabar Coast is one among such phenomena.

The calm, turbid regions in the coastal waters are called the mud bank popular as Chaakara along the Kerala coast. These mud banks are formed intensively along the Cochin-Alappuzha coast. They appear during the south west monsoon. The mud gets churned up and this mud is kept in suspension making the water highly turbid.

These muddy waters are free from surface disturbances and are without wave-action, even during peak monsoon. Also, the beach corresponding to mud banks too are free from wave action, even if the adjacent regions experience severe erosion.

Also, the mud bank acts as a barrier and saves the beach from being eroded. These mud banks are unique in nature, which are not reported from anywhere else even within India. By and large, it is a periodic phenomenon taking place between Kannur and Kollam. These mud-banks are the store-houses of primary and secondary levels of nutritive food and all sorts of migratory fish are attracted here by its richness of food.

Some Solutions

To put everything in a nut shell, the fish output of the seas is the nett balance of the existing resources plus annual/seasonal recruitment of new resource minus natural depletion and the quantity lost by human interference. If this balance is affected/changed, the output from the seas too would fluctuate negatively.

The ecological damages and losses due to human interference are two main factors, that should be addressed to urgently, in order to sustain our marine food resources. Legal, regulatory and scientific measures for saving the seas, backwaters and rivers from physical, chemical and biological destructions, need be enforced with all sincerity. The fish capture need be restricted to specific species, size-groups and seasons and, if need be, we may have to bring in a total fishing holiday for specific periods, in order to enable the seas to recoup its losses. Simultaneously, it is also necessary to create awareness among the people about the value of the seas and to drive home the idea that we are only the custodians of a valuable gift of the nature meant for many generations to come. ■

(The author is a former Dy. Director of Fisheries, Govt of Gujarat)



EVERY DROP OF WATER IS PRECIOUS, DO NOT WASTE IT !!

At a time when several regions of Maharashtra including Mumbai are facing drought and acute shortage of water, we as responsible citizens must give up our comfort and help those who are deprived, by saving water as much as we can.



P. I. Jose

■ A kind hearted and compassionate person who has time (a scarce commodity in our city) to think about others, will be shocked and saddened to hear about the misery our

fellow humans are facing in some parts of Maharashtra and in the city of Mumbai during this hot summer for want of drinking water, while many of us play in swimming pools. Mumbai has been facing acute water shortage due to deficient rainfall in the catchment areas during last year.

A disheartening narrative given by one of our staff who recently visited drought affected area of Aurangabad made me sad and prompted me to pen down my thoughts in this piece of writing. When he returned to Mumbai after one week's stay in the drought affected area, he was exhausted, tired, lost weight, lips dry and chapped, became dark and a worn out frame. If this can happen to him within a week's stay there, imagine the fate of all distressed locals. The panic situation and the extreme anxiety in the eyes of those villagers cannot be ignored as they are undergoing dark, murky times.



Queuing up for water in Aurangabad



Ruptured pipelines wasting water in Mumbai

Dams and Lakes supplying water to Mumbai

| Dam | Commencement Year | Capacity (Million Litres) | Overflow Level (Meters) |
|------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Modak Sagar (Lower Vaitarna) | 1957 | 1,28,925 | 163.15 |
| Tansa Lake | 1892 to 1925 | 1,44,000 | 128.63 |
| Vihar Lake | 1860 | 27,000 | 80.42 |
| Tulsi Lake | 1879 | 8,000 | 139.17 |
| Upper Vaitarana | 1973 | 2,27,047 | 603.51 |
| Bhatsa | 1983 | 7,10,000 | 142.07 |
| Middle Vaitarna | 2012 | 1,93,000 | 285.00 |

When Mumbaikars pay Rs.4.70 per 1000 litres of clean water, Aurangabad residents shell out Rs.3.00 per litre during this hot season; that too for well water in small tanks - he says. If the residents are lucky enough, water comes through the taps for about twenty minutes early in the morning around 5 A.M. - only on certain days. Another strange scene he witnessed is that - invitees for marriage functions carry drinking water from home in kettle like utensils, because only food is served and no drinking water.

Water is so much in scarcity so that it is reused after washing clothes or having bath - for cleaning the flooring of houses, watering plants, etc. Drinking water is so much valuable for these villagers akin to us preserving and consuming milk. The women in villages have to walk 3 to 4 kilometres to fetch muddy water; they use it and fall sick because there is no choice.

A little sacrifice by each individual in our city by way of saving water can

bring a smile on the faces of residents in the arid villages of Maharashtra and many in the city of Mumbai who are thirsty for water. Let's see how we can do our bit of contribution in stopping wastage and saving water:

- Fix leaking Faucets at home. Remember that many drops make a big ocean.
- Instruct housemaids not to keep the Tap open throughout while washing clothes and utensils.
- Use less water for bath. Do not leave the Tap or the Shower open until bath is over.
- Do not leave the tap open while brushing teeth or shaving.
- Care should be taken while filling water tanks to ensure there is no overflow.
- Cleaning of water tanks in housing societies must be done when they are near empty, or divert water to another tank which is empty or half full.
- Do not allow watering of society gardens for long hours and leaving hose

pipes open unattended.

■ Shut down swimming pools in summer when there is acute shortage of water.

Water crisis in Mumbai

Mumbai is consuming 3750 MLD (million litres per day) of water, out of which about 700 MLD is wasted as confessed by BMC. The wastage is equal to the water supplied to smaller cities of Pune or Nashik. The loss of water is mainly on account of bursting of main pipes, leakage and theft. Besides, the underground leakages of old supply lines go unnoticed for long time. The BMC and government must take stringent steps to stop wastage and penalise offenders and perpetrators.

Even the posh localities of our city, viz. Malabar Hill, Colaba, and Nariman Point are also reeling under water crisis and depend on tankers to supply water to residents. The apartments in these localities command premium prices in the country, and people who can afford to pay for these expensive apartments have to grapple with water shortage. India's first skyscraper "Usha Kiran" is regularly serviced by water tankers. Same is the case in Cuffe Parade and Malabar Hill where billionaire industrialists and businessmen reside.

As reported by TOI on 18th May (2016) Mumbai city is undergoing 20% water cut, but is all set to get an additional supply of 255 million litres daily (MLD) from August this year by tapping of Lakes and recycling sewage water for non-drinking purposes. The additional supply of water for a couple of months, immediately after a good monsoon is fairly practical, but let us hope that supply will continue all the way through the year.

Mumbai gets water from seven Lakes / Dams located in Thane district, yet Shahapur in Thane district is facing water scarcity and have to depend on water tankers. The residents have taken



Well without water



Rationing of drinking water by tankers

out a protest march to Mantralaya on 14th May (report in *Mumbai Mirror* dated 15.05.2016). The placards said "Mumbaikars live and let live" and "There is water all around us but we have nothing to drink". The organisers of protest laments: We supply 2960 million litres of water to Mumbai city every day. With that amount of water Shahapur and its four lakh people can survive for more than a year". It is time for Mumbaikars to take control and conserve water for the angry folks from Shahapur before they disconnect your supply.

Drought-hit Vidarbha & Marathwada

Maharashtra is known for its farm crisis and reports the highest number of farmer's suicides in the country. Most of the wells are dried up blocking the source of drinking water for villagers; and loss of agricultural products is their major woes. As many as 65 farmers in Marathwada have committed suicide (maximum from Beed district) in the first three weeks of April this year. The "Pravara river" in Ahmednagar district is completely dry without even a drop of water for people to immerse the



Nana Patekar, Aamir Khan & Akshay Kumar

ashes of their cremated kin. Some are lucky to get water from tankers for the immersion in the river, and others do not get a drop of river water even after death.

The drought-prone regions of Maharashtra are cultivating water guzzling crops such as sugarcane and cotton. This is main reason for consumption of excess water and shortage of ground water in the deep wells. As reported by TOI on 3rd May, Dams in Marathwada are left with only 2 percent of water.

A number of steel plants have shut down in drought hit Latur because there is no water to run the business, forcing workers to leave their jobs and return to their natives. There is 50% water cut for liquor and beer units in Aurangabad

and 20% for other industries. Districts like Nashik, Solapur, Ahmednagar, Satara, Beed and Nanded are also facing similar cuts.

Drought relief by film fraternity

Nana Patekar has been very active in helping drought affected villagers in Maharashtra through his Trust called "Naam Foundation". After him Aamir Khan and Akshay Kumar joined the movement of

adopting villages and giving donations for the needy. They also teach villagers the modus operandi of water conservation. When Maharashtra is facing one of the worst drought situations in the history this year, the social work initiative undertaken by the trio has to be lauded and appreciated

Wrapping up

Unless we stop wastage of water, we may in future face a situation similar to Arab countries where sea water is converted to potable water through desalination plants. The production cost itself of desalinated water in Saudi Arabia is approx. USD 3.20 per 1000 litres or Rs.214.00, whereas the consumers in Mumbai pay only Rs.4.70 per 1000 litres. ■



Walking miles together to fetch water

TRENDS FROM THE 90'S THAT HAVE MADE A COMEBACK



Ms. Praseedha Sudhakaran

I am proud to call myself a 90's kid, other than the fact that I was a child from the era of Cartoon Network (which is great in itself), I am also the one that gets to relive some of the more well known fashion trends from the 90's aka my childhood. If you have spent a considerable chunk of your early years during this period, you know exactly what I'm talking about. Looking back on all those photos with me in plaid skirts and candy cane striped dungarees, I guess it's safe to say that I inherited my sense of style from my very own mother. Here are some of the key fashion trends from the 90's that are making a major comeback in the year 2016: (how many times am I going to repeat the word '90's'? well that's what this post is all about)

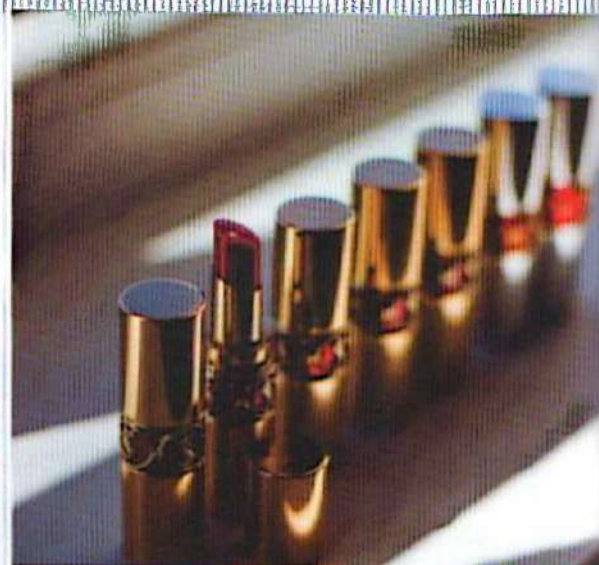


CHOKERS

♥ No, I do not mean those people who tug at your dupatta in the 9 am local and almost choke you to death; I am talking about the new in-trend accessory for 2016. Mumbai is the place where young fashion enthusiasts experiment with their personal style, so you can bet that chokers are one of them. Easily available in all variants from plain black ones to colourful and studded alternatives, I have seen youngsters go all gaga for it. Add this to your collection and you can easily grunge up any outfit.

DARK LIPSTICKS

♥ I remember back in the day when all the adults I knew who were "allowed" to wear makeup wore dark lipsticks. Even though most of us think 'The Vampire Diaries' and 'Twilight' inspired the trending vampy lip, well this isn't entirely true. They probably brought it back or maybe helped us name it (will give them that much credit).





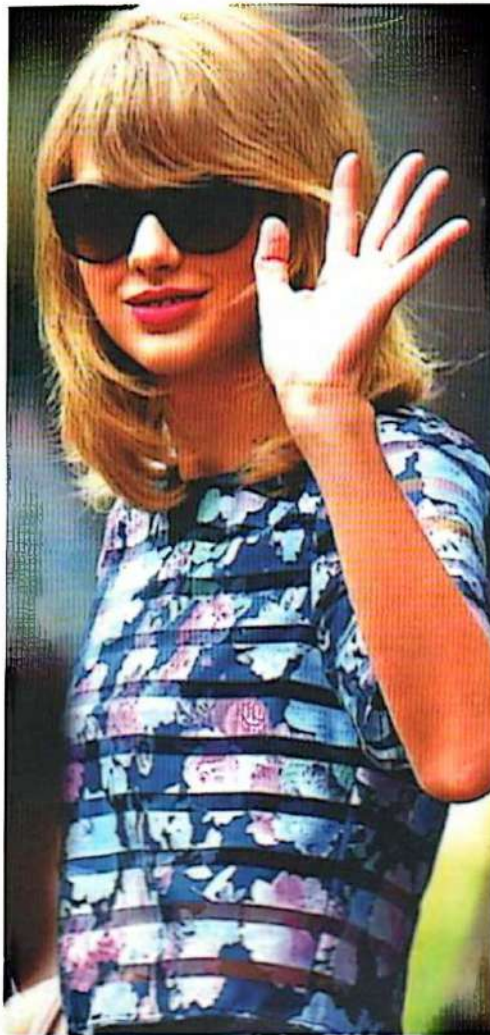
FLATFORMS

♥ What is more comfortable than platforms? The answer is flatforms. A heartfelt salute to all those women who are able to wear heels on a daily basis and do not feel like their feet are about to fall off (maybe it's numb from all the pain?). With that being said I can swear by the cosmopolitan on my desk that I can never wear heels (I can if there is an option of not walking in them). Why go through all this pain for that tiny boost in your height when you can do it with flatforms. Platform sandals are a worldwide solution to pain free elevation off the ground (I felt like I just sold it you with that line!)



DUNGAREES

♥ Dungarees or more popularly known as overalls are a wardrobe staple and can be easily transitioned for a day to night look. Comfort does not always have to mean sweatpants and a t-shirt; it could also very easily be your favourite denim dungarees with a daisy print crop top and a pair of white converse. For a more I-am-attending-an-important-event-look pair it up with a white shirt within, a blazer over, and those hot pink heels that you've been waiting to wear. Moreover if you are a fan of F.R.I.E.N.D.S (I mean who isn't), you could dedicate one of your outfits this summer to Rachel Greene who wore dungarees in practically all the episodes of season 1.



CO-ORD DRESSES

♥ Co-ord dresses take matching to a whole new level. For those of you who have never seen one, the only way I can think of describing it is: a dress cut into two, a top and skirt. Who ever thought of this is a genius. A co-ord dress is the perfect example of a three in one outfit. A full blown 'paisa vasool' idea.



ILLOGICAL TRADITIONS TO BE RETAINED?



Manasi

■ Why women are not allowed to enter temples during menstruation?

Why are women of a particular age group prohibited from entering a few temples like that of

Sabarimala?

What do women have in particular that makes the temple authorities to prohibit their entry to certain temples?

Is the menstruation which women undergo every month is the prohibitive factor? Why menstrual blood is considered to be "impure"? What does impurity mean? Does it denote lack of cleanliness? Does it mean dirty and soiled? Then why are other things which make one dirty not called impure? These are some of the hot questions greatly debated and talked about in different media today. Since

no clear consensus or answers seem to emerge from these debates I feel very much confused harboring more and more doubts. No logic seems to work here. God cannot be partisan as we all know. Then how can God be discriminatory against half of his creations namely women who have put immense trust in him till date? Is he so unfair and unjust? Or are we belittling Him to our own peril?

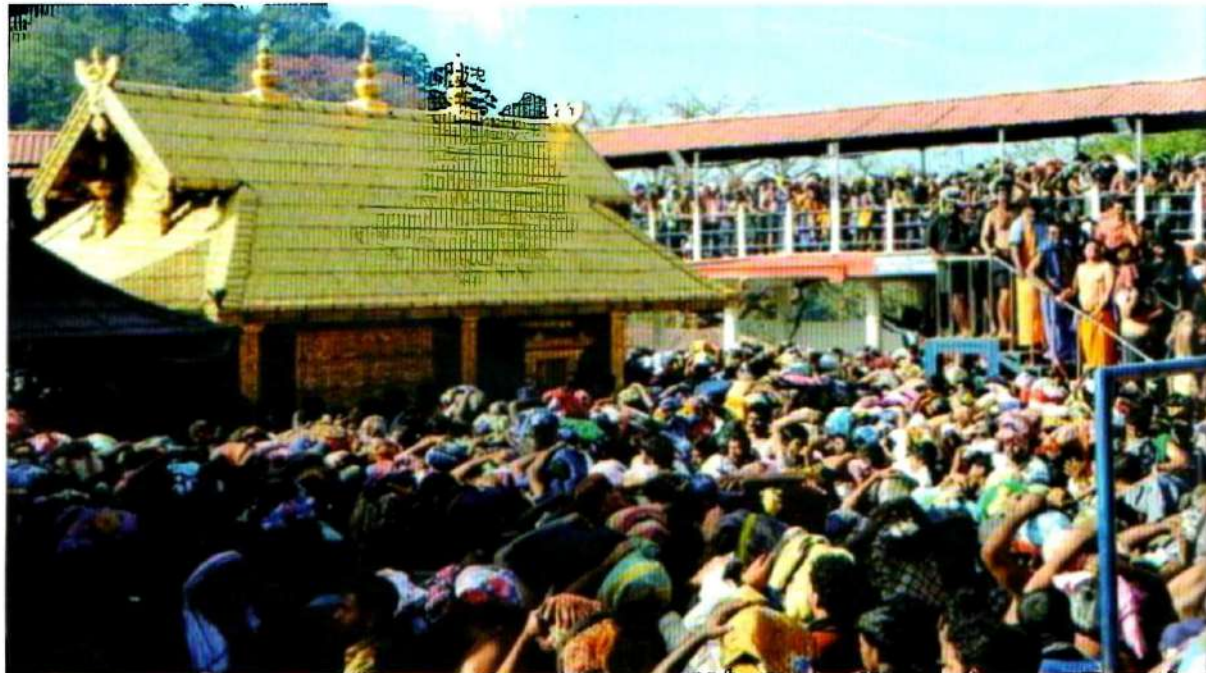
The first and foremost question that occurs to my mind in this matter is if any harm is done at all to a temple or its deity when a menstruating woman enters its premise. And if at all, how does anybody come to know of it? Till date I have not seen or heard any

mishap occurring to a temple or to its deity by the presence of a menstruating woman. To my knowledge, no proof has ever been provided to this effect. So on what ground the believers accepted this allegation about women? Forbidding a woman from entering any temple seems to be totally illogical and foolish to me by any standard of commonsense.

That explains this note. When these questions are often raised on various

platforms the only answer which comes from every corner like a bullet is that it is tradition, and traditions are not to be broken!!!"

What If we break it? We have done it before. In the course of our journey through history and civilization, we know we have broken many traditions. We have stopped human sacrifices; we have started widow marriages; we have allowed Brahmins to cross seas and accepted them back; we have fought



Sabarimala shrine

Women are generally considered to be "impure" during menstruating days! But by what logic? Impure in mind or body? If it is lack of "cleanliness", then how clean are we when we enter temples with fecal matter and urine in our organs? By the same logic, can a person with puss and blood from his wounds be allowed to enter a temple?

against untouchability and have overcome caste discrimination; we have stopped the practice of "Sati Pradha" of burning wives alive!!!! All these initiatives had broken existing traditions. No hell then broke loose. Nothing happened to any temple or its deity! So what is the problem if we break one more? What is so sacred about a tradition? Especially when it is not based on justice or equality?

Women are generally considered to be "impure" during menstruating days! But by what logic? Impure in mind or body? If it is lack of "cleanliness", then how clean are we when we enter temples with fecal matter and urine in our organs? By the same logic, can a

person with puss and blood from his wounds be allowed to enter a temple? Now, if it is mental impurity, if an 'impure' woman thinks of God during her periods, does the God get polluted? How can anybody stop her from thinking of God and polluting Him?

Questions galore

Lord Ayyappan, the deity of Shabarimala is said to be a *Naishtika* Brahmachari. According to our beliefs, young women are required to keep off from a Brahmachari. At least that is what Rahul Easwar says in his TV talk shows! That too without providing any logical reason except tradition!

As per our own religious books, a Brahmachari is someone who pursues knowledge. He is supposed to be not affected by any distractions or temptations. He is pursuing Brahma i.e. Absolute Knowledge. Absolute truth. And if he is vulnerable and succumbs to any other worldly interests, he is said to have not attained the status of a Brahmachari. So what do we suggest? Lord Ayyappan is vulnerable? He is not above temptations? Some young damsels can sweep him off his feet! I cannot stand this belittling of our revered deity for sure. Can you?

What has such a real [Naishtik or not] Brahmachari got to do with women or menstruation or impurity?

He is immersed in the quest of knowledge. Where is the time for him for entertainment?

Moreover, what about our Devis? I wonder if they too have periods. At least Ma Devi Parvathy should have had her periods, because she is said to be a mother of two kids. When Devis menstruate, what must have been they doing? Get out of the temple to faraway places? Or is it the male gods who flee out of the temple giving full respect to the females? In that case, how do the devotees come to know whether these DEVIS and DEVAS are inside the temple or out of it? Is there a fixed time schedule so that the devotees can be sure of the divine presence in the temple during their periods, so that they are not unclean! Who knows? Perhaps the ordinary mortals like us are not destined to see the truth since our visions are completely blurred by 'Maya'. Rahul Easwar may be also of the opinion that we have to be thankful to GOD for allowing us to see "Makara Jyothi" every year with these sinful plain eyes of ours and can understand its importance. It is so impressive to



Rahul Easwar



Actress Jayamala claimed to have entered the sanctum sanctorum of Sabarimala temple.

know also that our earnest Forest Department is so committed to the devotees that they make the devotees see the jyothi and get them blessed.

My doubt continues to ask why only a few deities forbid women from entering their abode. Why not other temples where Lord Ayyappan is the deity, prohibit women of young age into their premises? Also how near a menstruating woman could go inside the temple or idol? Can there be any standard distance a woman should keep from God? There are different types of temples, with big compounds and small, where the idol is kept at different distances from the outer fence. Besides, there are innumerable small temples near bus stops, on the foot paths of public roads, under trees on the way to offices and even near public urinals! How would we women deal with these wayside temples without making them impure by our close presence? The very thought makes many of us a bit scared

to think of god!

Or, are we saying indirectly that whatever is natural to male body is only acceptable in temple and to deities ?

I have visited temples during my periods. Not because of my devotion to its deity, but because I wanted to sit in a quiet place devoid of all the hustle and bustle of a city. Menstruating women feel very tired and low during those days and want to be left alone without anybody's interference. The aches and pains in the body add to physical discomforts making them feel lazy and not in a mood to work.

Naturally temples become the best place for women to rest, to be left alone, even to read books or just to meditate peacefully. There will not be obscene glances or queer comments even when alone in a corner. No moral policing. No questions asked, No inquisitive pokes. It is a great bliss for those women whose homes demand all their attention all the time. It is a luxury. So a temple premise becomes her natural choice of a respectable place to rest and to be away from a demanding home !

In spite of all my visits, I have not observed any harm happening to those temples. On the contrary, the temples seemed to prosper day by day in its glory and wealth. If those powerful Gods were against our entry, why is that they just don't burn us with a mere glance of theirs?

The only reason I can think of is that our Gods must be just and fair. They know very well that the women are no way responsible for their menstruation and only the Gods have imposed it on them for whatever reasons they might have thought of. It was they who made it part of a female reproductive process in humans and everyone, including all the males and females, was a part of that process.!

"Knowledge is God" is what we were taught in childhood. "God is omnipotent, is shapeless, has no end or beginning, is present in everything [animate or inanimate] in this world" were the words quoted from our scriptures, whom Rahul Easwar and team worship and consider to be Holy and divine!

To be honest, that is why I believed it all together. And now, are we being told to rectify our beliefs? I do not know if the god is a male, a female or a transgender. I have not seen God. That is what made me listen to our scriptures and to people like Rahul Easwar. He is insisting that the deity of Ayyappa at

Sabarimala is Naishttiika Brahmachari. And no women should go near him!!!!!! Might be true, because he seems to be immensely worried about Lord Ayyappan going astray by these young women who visit the temple!!!

How a God who defeated all his distracters and dared to take on all sort of conspiracies against him can be so vulnerable to the mere presence of a few females? Is it becoming of a deity? A 'naishttiika Brahmachari' who is supposed to be pursuing knowledge is

Framed long back by the Ruling class for keeping power in their hands and for keeping the down trodden and women at their beck and call, it was but natural that these practices, which were later passed on as traditions, were not allowed to be broken. The excuse is that it will hurt religious sentiments.

Is religious sentiment synonymous with traditions?

What the right thinking men and women debate today is only the right of women to level playing grounds. They

Rahul Easwar was saying on the talk show on a TV channel that our constitution does not insist on women going to temples! Quite true, Rahul. Our constitution does not insist we should eat, sleep or mate either. Am I to infer that you don't do any of these non-mandatory things?

Yes, we, the ignorant mortals may not be knowing the immense dangers of not allowing shaving off 'widows' heads, of Dalits learning Vedas, of our Asaram Bapu's magical abilities, of even our home grown Santhosh Madhavan's achievements! And we may not be the great contributors to our traditions either. So, in my opinion, Rahul Easwar and team should advise all the women folk of their households to strictly follow our traditions and keep its glory. They should not go to school, nor go out alone nor take up any jobs. They should shave off their heads when the time comes and go ahead with practice of 'SATI' if possible. Let them be the torch bearers of our great traditions and ideals for GOOD women. Let the



to have extreme control over his mind and intentions. Rahul Easwar should know it. Is the fact that our other Gods had often slipped into MOHA MAYA by women that makes Rahul Easwar so paranoid? Rahul Easwar assume the same fate to Lord Ayappan too?

Somebody needs to answer these questions. If Lord Ayyappan by any chance falls for women, why the ladies should be held responsible for it? Can Rahul Easwar point out any passage in our sacred books to this effect? Look at our Gods too. They also choose to keep mum. "Maunam vidwaanu bhushanam" is what they also think. Otherwise why don't they put a stop to all these with a flick of their hand?

They have not done it till date. Perhaps they would not let Rahul and team know it too well. Hence they scream like this during their TV talk shows. They know the Gods will not intervene even if the temples were burnt down. [We have a Babri Masjid for example!] They know that these traditions are what keep them alive!

question only the injustice of discrimination based on gender. We, as a nation has broken many traditions. We have done it time and again. Why does Rahul pretend not to know of the innumerable traditions we broke? As I mentioned before, if the traditions were not broken, we would not have had educated women today. We would not have had a prime minister as the present Prime Minister today. Our great Premji who married a widow for the first time in their community would not have been part of our history. Ambedkar would not have been revered as an intellectual. Today we wear western clothes including Neck TIEs which do not suit our climate even! Why make so much noise only when women break traditions? Why only target them?

Throughout the human history, it has been a norm for any new thought or concept to be challenged by the privileged and conservatives. We also know that those protests have been rightly thrown into the waste baskets of history.

women who may not obey Mohan Bhagavat's preachings about our tradition of women sitting at home and only doing only homely, wifely duties and acquiring 'PUNYA' by serving their husbands go to hell. One should at least request women to do the upkeep of our traditions. They may or may not do it. Yet there is no harm in requesting.

"karmany evadhikaraste ma phalesu kadachana

(Bhagwat Gita: Chapter Two verse 47) is what Lord Krishna had said. [Always do your karma, without thinking of its fruits]. You should listen to Lord Krishna, Rahul Easwar, you should listen to Lord Krishna.

The one and only thing to remember is that whenever a tradition needs to be kept alive, we should depend on women. All the religions have done it. All of them have told their women to uphold the traditions and keep them high and soaring. So do insist. That is what is all about manliness! ■

WHAT DO MUMBAIKARS THINK OF MALAYALIS?

A lot of Mumbaikars feel that Malayalis are a hospitable people, who are good hosts. They have warm hearts, make the guests feel at home and make sure that visitors are fed well. They have beautiful homes, which are spacious and decorated. They make great friends because friendship means a lot to them and they value it.



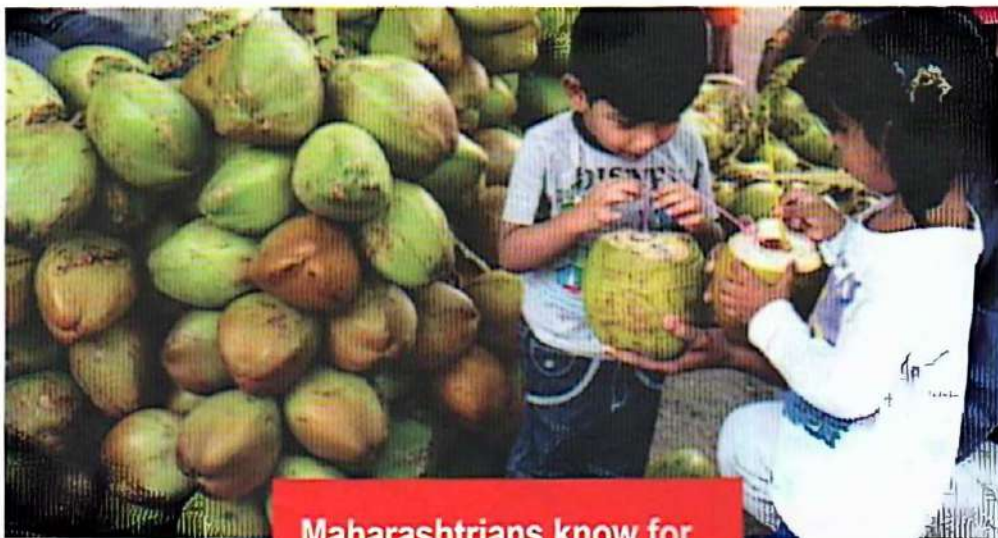
Biju Cherian that has been made on this Mahanagar. But what is more important is that, after all these years, what is the perception of Mumbai residents about Malayalis?

For example, Malayalis have been tagged with the old and odd stereotypes associated with them, like the wearing of lungis and the penchant for alcohol, being the notable ones.

Many years ago, Maharashtrians had the misconception that Malayalis as a separate entity did not exist. They thought that all South Indians were Madrasis, with no cuisine other than Idlis and Dosas. They assumed all South Indians to be highly educated, black in colour with leftist leanings. They thought that men wear nothing but

■ The Malayali community in Mumbai is about one hundred years old. Therefore there is always the impact, whether big or small, positive or negative,

lungis and hartals are a way of life. But times, and with it perceptions, have changed. Maharashtrians now know that there exists a specific species called the Malayali, whose mother tongue has a strong influence on them. For them, the accent, literature and tradition are too strong to ignore.



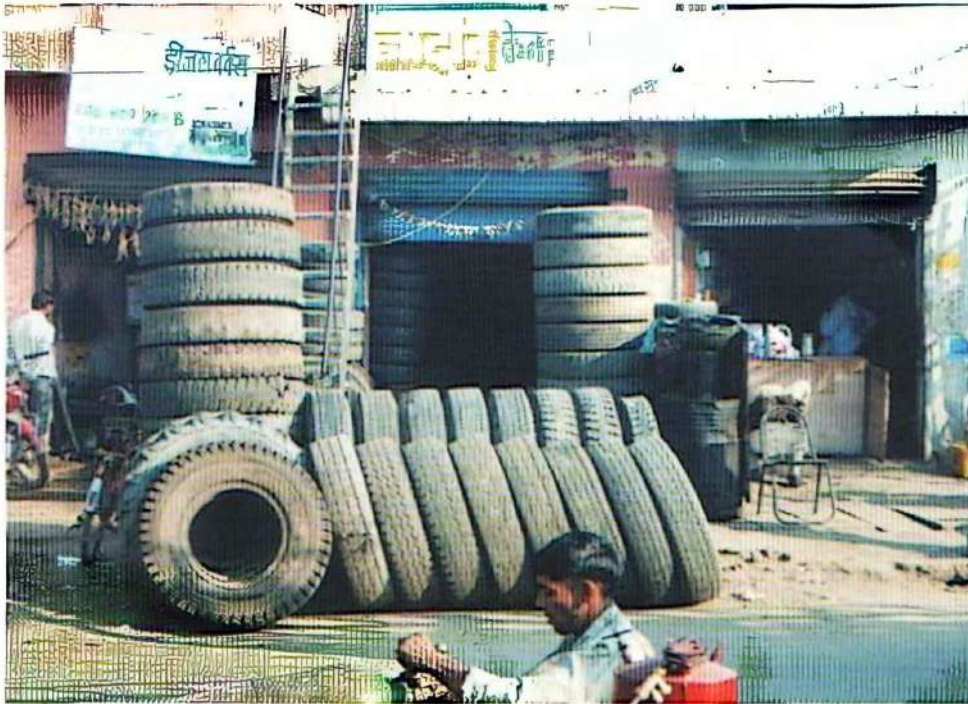
Maharashtrians know for sure that Malayalis are sharp, articulate, and disarmingly nice and friendly. Yes, the Mallus do tend to stick together, but then that is a common feature among most other communities also.

A lot of Mumbaikars feel that Malayalis are a hospitable people, who are good hosts. They have warm hearts, make the guests feel at home and make sure that visitors are fed well. They have beautiful homes, which are spacious and decorated. They make great friends because friendship means a lot to them

and they value it. Once you become close to them it's usually for life. Not only extremely friendly, Malayalis are a people, who will actually make an effort to talk to people in their office. They might even bring a glass of Payasam on Onam, or jackfruit pieces that some relative had brought from

Kerala. In other words, they won't treat you like an outsider. Mumbaikars also know that one or more family members are in Dubai. For Malayalis, Dubai is the second base after Kerala.

At one time, Mumbaikars thought that Malayalis could only become nurses and teachers. Now though this tendency has reduced a lot, but then these are still the favourite career lines for girls as well as boys. Mumbaikars are also aware about their insane love for gold. They



have commented that they can hardly see the bride amidst the shining metal.

Gujaratis think there are no poor Malayalis because these people from the South are opportunists and/or street smart and know how to make money, because when life pushes them to a corner, they will open either a tea shop, or a coconut stall, or a tyre repairing centre there. If life gives them lemons, they make pickles.

At the same time, Gujaratis are also aware that though Malayalis are frequently called opportunists, yet they are like Biharis, hard working people who have no hesitation to go out of their state to work. They also blend in easily. They also know that in Kerala, Malayalis may be lazy, talkative, agitation-oriented, argumentative, politically active and prone to go on a strike at the drop of a hat but in Mumbai these people are really hard working, who will complete the work allotted to them as soon as possible. Gujaratis also know the Malayali community is one of the best when it comes to networking. A lot of care and diligence is put into forming friendships and alliances, and not merely based on Whatsapp and Facebook acquaintances.

Maharashtrians know for sure that Malayalis are sharp, articulate, and disarmingly nice and friendly. Yes, the Mallus do tend to stick together, but then that is a common feature among most other communities also. They also know that Keralites are pretty rooted. So wherever they go, they retain their education, profession, values and

In the 1970s and 80s, Bollywood was under the impression that Kerala was the capital of B-grade porn cinema makers. But now that image is no longer there. Now, everyone know that Kerala produces some of the best movies in the country which are remade in other languages.

culture. No wonder, therefore they have established thousands of religious institutions and Malayali Samajams all over the globe.

However, Maharashtrians cannot understand why Malayalis are crazy over volleyball, athletics and football, particularly South American teams. Neither can Malayalis understand the craziness for cricket among Maharashtrians.

Once upon a time, Malayalis were considered to be pretty conservative, who preferred to marry within their community. They were considered to be a proud bunch, proud of their lineage, culture, movies and their accent. They were not only proud of their culture, but would even strut down the streets wearing dhotis and lungis. On the first sign of a festival, the women would emerge wearing lovely white sarees with golden borders. For Onam they would prepare and eat sadya (feast) served on a banana leaf. Therefore, marrying a non-Malayali was quite an uphill task. That perception has changed. Now, there are many Maharashtrian families with a Malayali in-law.

At the same time, most Maharashtrians know that Keralites are pretty daring, who have migrated successfully across the globe and it is not merely because there is a job crunch there, but people wants to earn more. They also know that Keralites are educated enough to have a stimulating conversation.

They are also aware of the fact that Kerala is one of the most progressive state in terms of physical quality of life and social welfare, so much so that women have equal rights in the



inheritance of ancestral property. On such issues, other states have enacted the Kerala model, but Kerala is the pioneer. The matriarchal system in the state is a unique social heritage and the women enjoy a better status than their counterparts elsewhere in India. In the 1970s and 80s, Bollywood was under the impression that Kerala was the capital of B-grade porn cinema makers. But now that image is no longer there. Now, everyone knows that Kerala produces some of the best movies in the country which are remade in other languages. Not only the movies, but even the musicals are trendsetters, originals and raw.

Though not as big as Bollywood, Mollywood produces far better movies than Bollywood can produce. In fact, Bollywood has gone in for a lot of remakes of Mollywood movies as these movies are down to earth, documentary type and thought provoking. For that matter, Bollywood art house cinemas are like taking baby steps compared to Malayalam movie industry.

Mollywood has out and out dramas, thrillers, suspense but the best ones are the comedy movies. Not only Malayalis love watching and boasting about their movies, but they also drag others unnecessarily into argument whether Mammooty is better or Mohanlal. Mumbaikars also know that Malayalis have less hangover with religion. Those who have gone as tourists and walked around in the streets of Kerala have found that beef is quite a common food item. Kerala has its own traditional beef dishes that people, irrespective of religion, relish. Those who have visited the State talk about commercialization of temples, early closing times of shops and a state owned alcohol distribution system with its serpentine lines. It is a place where Christians celebrate Onam, Hindus celebrate Eid and

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Muslims celebrate Easter, a place which has preserved Indian culture for thousands of years through Ayurveda, kalaripayattu. They are secular to such an extent that there are many Muslims and Christians with Hindu names. For that matter, the amount of religious riots are quite low when compared to north Indian states.

What amazes the tourists from Mumbai is that Kerala is quite divided on political lines. While people generally don't give a damn about religious fights, they are ready to die for their party. Malayalis are united when it comes to talking and projecting the best of their State. But when it comes, they have huge debates on north and south, not of India but north Kerala and south Kerala.

Mumbaikars have noticed that though the Kerala Tourism Development Corporation has successfully showcased

the state as God's Own Country, yet Malayalis will not call themselves as God's Own People, nor Malayalam as God's Own Language. They have also noticed that Keralites are conservative about their culture and that tourists are not allowed to visit certain temples wearing shirts.

Then there are Bengalis who are always baffled by the many similarities between Kerala and West Bengal. Both states like Left parties, Fish curries, Rice dishes and Football teams and both have matriarchal society. Like Bengalis, Malayalis are the most dedicated musicians. Just like Bengalis, all of them like music, and many of them learn

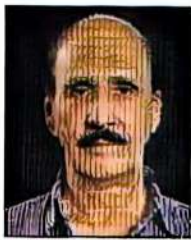
Carnatic and Hindustani music. Like Bengalis, Malayalis are easy-going and have a relaxed attitude towards life, rarely found in other parts of India. Both have a rich culture and heritage. Also, because most of them are well-travelled, there is a tendency to gel with

outsiders more easily, a trait much desired in other south Indians.

What Tamilians like about Malayalis is that though the official language of Kerala is Malayalam, yet English is widely spoken and is taught in schools and colleges. When the rest of India opposed Macaulay's system of education, Malayalis developed their own version of western education. Like Tamil, Malayalam is considered to be a very complete language it has 56 alphabets and many more vowels, making every word and accent in the world easily pronounceable.

Labourers from Maharashtra consider Kerala to be a mini heaven as they get to earn more wages, in some cases triple than what they expect, in Kerala when compared to other states. Keralites are also considered more tolerant than others. When there was a mass exodus of people of Northeast origin from rest of South India, no such thing was experienced in Kerala. ■

SLUM DEMOLITIONS AND THREATS TO LIFE



V Balachandran

■ Slums are the urban offshoots of an industrial civilization. They grow in haphazard way in cities when people from rural areas move out in search of

employment. When the migrants find no suitable accommodation, they occupy open lands belonging to the Government and other public institutions and build their ramshackle hutments and even brick structures. This has been happening in all the cities of India from the beginning of the last century (or, even earlier) and, perhaps, Mumbai, economically more advanced than the others, takes the lead.

According to the Government Census of 1976, the population of the slums was about six lakhs. The present estimate is 3.5 lakhs. The fall is due to the fact that many are already developed.

There are two aspects to the growth of slums which are of vital concern to the Government and the civic body (BMC). These are the legal and the humanitarian. There are occasions when the law against encroachments has to be given primacy and enforced strictly. It is not as if the official agency is totally insensitive to the human suffering likely to be caused by the demolition of the slums. It is a delicate balancing act that the authorities have to do balancing the demands of the law and the people's need for shelter. Only when there is more to be gained by demolition that this extreme step is taken. In such cases, the Government provides for rehabilitation and has plans for the development of the area evacuated or its better utilisation. Sometimes the demolition becomes necessary purely on humanitarian considerations; the slum-dwellers live in squalid surroundings and make do without drinking water, drainage, toilets, roads, lighting and such other amenities needed for good health and comfort.

It is in such situations, when the law is strictly enforced, that tension builds up and violence erupts. Self-styled slum



Demolition in progress

lords (the goonda elements) encourage the people to resist official action, and political parties play 'vote-bank' politics. The press is not much helpful with its patchy reports and one sided comments.

Janata Colony

Here are a few incidents of conflict in which I was involved.

The first relates to the evacuation of the people from the Janata Colony around the Baba Atomic Research Centre (BARC). The year was 1976 when the country was under the Emergency imposed from the midnight of June 25, 1975. The colony had to be removed for reasons of security of BARC. The people opposed the proposal and took up the matter to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court rejected their claim for the status quo. Armed with the State Government order and the Supreme Court judgement, as the Ward Officer (Slums), I got the people shifted to the Cheetah Camp where they were provided with all the necessary facilities. The day of evacuation was May 17, 1976. The rehabilitation was accomplished smoothly. Owing to the fear induced by the Emergency, there was little resistance from the people though the scene was like that of a battle with a large police force and the bulldozers in action.

The operation was successful but I

was not free from trouble. I was summoned by the Shah Commission set up by the Janata Government to enquire into the excesses of the Emergency. I had to answer allegations of the 'barbarian' use of the bulldozers. I came out of the enquiry unseathed as the Commission was satisfied with the re-settlement measures taken simultaneously on hand. The Commission was convinced that nothing inhuman was done.

Shivaji Nagar

A few more demolitions followed. One of them to remember was the demolition of 1200 illegal structures at Shivaji Nagar in Deonar. The cleared land was required for development of several roads and projects by the Government. The squatters, however, would not leave me in peace. They set fire to a few hutments before they moved out. Thanks to the fire brigade which swung into action, little damage was caused.

Threats from the anti-social elements became a regular feature. One day, as I was returning home from office to my residence at Goregaon, in my personal Fiat car, I felt that I was being pursued. A jeep with some goondas hit my car twice or thrice. I stopped my car and ran back to the traffic island to tell the police officer on duty that my life was in danger. The officer arranged for my

journey home with an escort of two armed policemen. I learnt that the intention of the goondas in the jeep was to overturn my car and push me along with it in the water below the Chunabatti bridge.

Licence for a revolver

Exposed as I was to danger, I consulted the Chembur police on measures of personal safety. They suggested keeping with me a weapon for self-protection. The Greater Bombay police granted me a licence to possess a revolver. I had to go to Singapore to procure one. That it was worthwhile possessing it was proved by a later incident.

It happened in March, 1983. I was told by the then Municipal Councilor, Mr. Amarnath Patil, that unauthorized bamboo structures were being put up by anti-social elements on the land close to the 200 ft. Link Road at Chheda Nagar in Chembur. On the day the structures were to be pulled down, I was on my way to the place. A group of men obstructed my car and along with some goondas, moved towards me, shouting and hurling threats. I pulled out my revolver and fired two shots in the air. As this was not expected by the murderous crowd, it fled the scene in no time. On reporting, the Tilak Nagar police rounded up the trouble-makers.

This incident was widely reported in the papers. It prompted Corporation officers in all other wards to approach the Municipal Commissioner for advance to secure firearms for self-protection. The advances were sanctioned and the officers should have felt satisfied.

I also got a police outpost for the 'M' Ward.

Court orders imprisonment!

In another incident I came within an ace of being imprisoned for a month on a charge of contempt of court. This was in November, 1982 or 83. I had to pull down some shops that had sprung on an open land at the Amar Mahal Junction of Mahul-Ghatkopar Road and the Eastern Express Highway. I did not

know that the shopkeepers had secured an injunction order against any possible demolition by the civic officials. Within 24 hours, the City Civil Court Judge, N. I. Makhi Jani, sentenced three of us to one month's simple imprisonment; the two others were Corporation Engineers. (I must admit that I could have avoided this unfortunate situation had I seen the court's injunction order. It so happened that instead of receiving the order direct the previous day, I had asked the delivery man to leave it with the Reception / Delivery Section). The Corporation took up the matter with the High Court, which quashed the civil court's order. Six of us, all civic



Balachandran planting sapling

officials, were also a party to the appeal.

There was another case of removal of hawkers in Chembur with an interesting sequel. On receipt of several public complaints, I launched on a drive against unauthorized hawkers. Goods worth Rs. 10 lakhs were seized. A substantial quantity of them consisted of fruits and vegetables. Under the rules the goods seized by the civic authorities should be auctioned and the spoilt goods, if any, should be thrown away at the dumping grounds. I thought that, instead of throwing away the perishables, I would be doing a humanitarian service if I gave them to a Children's Aid Society at Mankhurd for consumption. The Chembur Hawkers'

Union moved the High Court challenging my action. Justice Sujata Manohar, who heard the case, while appreciating the action as well-intentioned, found me guilty of violating the Rules. The hawkers should be compensated for their loss and, therefore, the amount of compensation could be deducted from my salary. The Municipal Corporation went in appeal against the order and succeeded. Thereby, I got relief. Thank God.

Shree Ayyappa Idol removed

Personally, I had never liked any destructive activity. On one occasion, I had to do a demolition work much against my conscience and under the compulsive force of the law. There was an Ayyappa Temple at Lotus Nagar on the Link Road in Chembur. A Shiv Sena Councillor, Amarnath Patil, wanted it to be demolished on the ground that it was an illegal structure built on encroached land. Shree Ayyappan was a deity that I worshipped Aaraadhana-murti. There was, therefore, no question of laying a profane hand on it. I got the idol removed to my ward office and arranged for puja twice a day. The day after the removal of the idol, about 20 Malayalee youngsters barged into my cabin in the office by breaking open the door. Fortunately, the door did not fall on me. They did no harm to me. In turn, I helped them to erect a temple at Shivaji Nagar. To this day, they have been showing their grateful respect to me and I participate in their annual festivities.

There was another case of an Ayyappa Temple on unauthorised land which was ordered to be demolished by the Municipal Commissioner. The temple was in Shell Colony and it was built on land belonging to the Housing Board. Perhaps, knowing me to be a Malayalee, the Municipal Chief had the goodness to entrust the operation to a Central Squad. The temple had been built by one C. B. Menon, an ardent devotee of Shree Ayyappan and a pilgrim to Sabarimala every year. Mr. Menon approached me for help to prevent the anticipated demolition. I was in no position to give him any assurance but said that 'Ayyappan will take care of

Himself. As it happened, a few days before the Mandala Puja was to commence on December 25, 1991, an injunction order against demolition was obtained from the court. The savior was one advocate, Mr. Narayanan of Uttam Society.

An unusual experience

Demolitions of unauthorized structures continued causing me much mental agony. I had an unusual experience after we had pulled down the Sarla Terrace, near Vijay Talkies, on the Sion-Trombay Road. (The Corporation was keen on the development of this road). After the demolition we wanted to take the residents to a transit camp for rehabilitation. Trucks were arranged to carry them with their belongings. Surprisingly, they placed their kids before the vehicles to obstruct their movement. The police had to be called to get over this unexpected form of protest. The operation ended peacefully.

Another incident of a direct assault on me had little to do with demolitions. The people of the Panjarapole Hutment Colony at Gautam Nagar were not

getting adequate water supply. They had been put to great hardship owing to this scarcity for a long time. One morning in January, 1982, a group of 10 youngmen barged into my cabin and started destroying the furniture. One of them broke the glass sheet on the table. The telephone was pulled out and thrown into my chair. I was physically assaulted. I managed to escape with the skin of my teeth. Six of the group were arrested and later tried in court and punished.

An enquiry into the incident revealed that the water scarcity was caused by anti social elements that had drilled holes in the main water pipe and drew water as it flowed into the colony. It was after this incident that I was given a licence to possess a revolver for personal safety. The revolver was purchased by me from Singapore the first country I visited outside India. (I kept the revolver with me even after my retirement. Finally, I sold it for Rs. 1,85,000/- through the Police Armoury Department.)

Communal slant

One of the massive demolition

operations and the last one in the Chembur area was at Zakir Hussain Nagar in May, 1984. Thousands of illegal structures had come up in the area. Most of them were shops and godowns. For long, the owners held on after securing an injunction against official action. Once the injunction was vacated, I took time by the forelock and carried out a three-day-long operation with 400 men and 100 trucks.

It was after this operation that I lost all peace of mind. All sorts of allegations were made against me including one that had a communal slant. I was accused of bulldozing a Masjid that stood at the site and throwing away the Holy Quran. A communal riot was in the offing. I decided to take leave and stay away from the place. I left for Kerala with my family after applying for a transfer. While in Kerala, I heard of the communal riots in the area. The army had to be called in. It took about 10 days to bring the situation under control.

I returned and took charge as Senior Ward Officer of H - West Ward, Bandra. I was to stay there for the next three years. ■



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Ships and shipping

- Revati Pillai

There is hardly any history written of this industry in Indian languages especially in Malayalam and Dr Raghavan to certain extent, redress that shortcoming.

Sea and sea voyage always fascinated mankind and Indians were no exception. Beginning with the wooden logs and bamboos and then graduating to rafts, boats and catamarans, the growth has culminated to ships and submarines.



Dr T R Raghavan devoted his entire career to shipping and associated subjects and earned the reputation as an enviable expert on shipping. Even his doctorate thesis is based on the subject. Needless to say, his searches and researches into the history of ships, its making and its usage indirectly led to the writing of his latest book, *Indian Kappalottathinte Charithram* (History of Indian Sea Voyage) published by Kerala Language Institute, under review.

The exploration of sea is the consequence of man's curiosity, urge and sense of adventure. Two factors played important roles: fish as a food alternative and other products like pearl etc derived from sea as merchandising commodity. Ships are used as a means of transport for personal voyages and transportation of commercial items. Transporting large quantities of materials at comparatively low costs was the prime concern though time was an adverse factor. Heavy guns, horses and elephants and huge quantities of food supplies were always a matter of concern.

In his 228page narration, Dr Raghavan traces the growth of ships since its infancy. It is interesting to note that even before the time Jesus Christ, India had a leading edge in shipping industry until we conceded to the powers of European forces.

Dr Raghavan draws our attention to the Rigveda period (1500 B C) and states that those days boats were built using wood of various trees of light weight for fear of the depth of the river thought to be inadequate to keep the boat floating (Archimedes Principle). The boats were driven manually by rowers and hence they could not be used for long voyages. In Ramayana, Valmiki mentioned about

Guha transporting Rama and Laxman across Sarayu River.

Though wood was used to make boats, iron nails were not used to bind them strong for fear of attracting magnetic elements under the sea bed and ropes were used to tie them. Dr Raghavan draws our attention to the noting of Marco Polo (13 C) wherein he mentioned about India's thriving boat industry. By 15 C, India started using iron nails replacing coir ropes and later they were interlocked eliminating nails

to a great extent.

Dr Raghavan tells us about the various modes of ships and boat making by Moguls, Marathas, and Europeans including Portuguese, Dutch and British. Emphasis is also given to the Malabar Mopla community in their superiority in ship building. Dr Raghavan surprises us by telling us the various types of ships built in India and also the contributions made by the Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Surat etc towards the Shipping business. He tells us about magnetic compasses, maps etc used in navigation, the progress from the rowing models to the wind directed, steam controlled, gas driven ships to the atomic power generated ships.

Several communities made their significant contributions towards the shipping industry. Wadia, Tata, VOC Pillai, Haji Catom, Sir P S Sivaswamy Iyer et al find mention his narrative of shipping industry.

The disintegration of Indian shipping industry at the hands of the British is explained in detail as well as its resurrection. The formation of various shipping companies and their incarnations are also explained in great details.

Shipping industry never captured the attention of common man unlike other mode of transport. The role played by the shipping industry is well illustrated by the word 'shipment' irrespective the mode used to transfer commodities from one place to another. Yet there is hardly any history written of this industry in Indian languages especially in Malayalam and Dr Raghavan to certain extent, redress that shortcoming. Well researched and well written besides being well published, this history of the evolution of the ships made in India and also the development of Indian shipping industry deserve all compliments and Dr T R Raghavan deserves our gratitude.

[*Indian Kappalottathinte Charithram* by Dr T R Raghavan published by Kerala Language Institute, Thiruvanthapuram. Pages 228 and four pages of colour photographs of Indian ships of varying models. price: Rs. 130 ■



Wedding Diamond Jubilee

KS Nayar (92 yrs) and Ratnam Nayar (83 yrs) celebrated their Wedding Diamond Jubilee on 18.3.16 with their children and their family. They now reside in BPCL Colony at Chembur with their eldest son Sudhir, a Sr. Manager at Bharat Petroleum Refinery at Chembur. Another son Sunil is DGM at Watson Pharma Ltd and eldest daughter is a retired Manager from Air India. They proudly claim their family to be well knit and live for each other.

ONV Remembered

■ New Bombay Keraleeya Samaj, Nerul organized 'ONV Anusmaranam' on 7th May 2016 at NBKS Complex, Nerul, to honour the departed Poet ONV Kurup. Famous Poet Alankkode Leelakrishnan rendered choicest film songs & drama songs written by ONV. In his 2 hours speech he went through the Life of poet ONV. Nearly 10 artists also rendered drama and film songs written by ONV. Samajam President Shri K.T.Nair presided over the meeting. Gen.Secretary Shri Prakash Kattakkada welcomed the audience. Treasurer Shri Mohanasundaran proposed vote of thanks.



Alankode Leelakrishnan addressing the audience



A section of the audience

Latur Collector compliments KKS

■ The members of Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatana were complimented by the Collector of Latur district for their prompt and efficient work in reaching water to the needy and financial assistance during the drought period. The collector also congratulated them for their dedication and efficiency. The members had met the collector and explained their plans to reach out to the affected people when they visited Latur to assess the gravity of drought. Later they sent the funds raised in Mumbai to the bank accounts of Gram Panchayat by online transfer and the tanker owner was paid from this account by cheque. The members worked in tandem with the collector, deputy collector and other officials and ensured speedy and efficient distribution. This demands Rs.14,000 every day and the total expenditure would touch Rs 1,25,000 till the rain eases the drought. KKS is appealing to all including the Samajams and philanthropists to contribute towards this gigantic effort.

ONV remembered

■ Chembur Malayalee Samajam organised an event to remember ONV Kurup. Poet Alankode Leelakrishnan delivered the keynote address. President

Narayanan Nair presided over the meeting. The event was held in Adarsh Vidyalaya, Chembur. Samajam secretary Madhu Nambiar, Dr K Venugopal and Asish Abraham also spoke on the occasion. Singers presented stage and screen songs penned by ONV Kurup.



Alankode Leelakrishnan delivering the keynote address

Sree Narayana Philosophy a model for the nation: Kapil Patil MP



Kapil Patil addressing the gathering

■ The time to adopt the message of Sree Narayana Guru has come for implementing inside and outside the country and that only his message could help protection of India, remarked Kapil Patil M P. He was addressing the audience after inaugurating the 52nd annual day of Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti held at Chembur. It is time to think above religious and caste considerations to create a society that could love and respect every one as an equal human being. He lauded the humanitarian and educational activities of the Samiti and promised all help from his side.

Narayana Guru was quite different from those rishis who spent their time inside the caves of Himalayas. Guru

spent his time among the people to raise their standards of thinking and living, said K Muraleedharan.

Prof G K Sasidharan, former director of Tata Sons R K Krishnakumar and K Muraleedharan were special guests on the occasion. President of Samiti N Sasidharan presided. Chairman M I Damodaran, Vice Chairman N Mohandas, General Secretary N S Salimkumar also spoke on the occasion. The Chief Guest released the Marathi translation of 'Sree Narayana Gurudev the Maharshi who made Adwaita Science' authored by Prof G K Sasidharan. The translator is Vivek R Jahar Girdhar.

According to N S Salimkumar, it is the aim of the Samiti to reach to all

libraries in Maharashtra with copies of this book. The Samiti also has the objective of getting other books on Gurudev translated to other Indian languages.

The event started with the cultural shows presented by the various units of Samiti. The winners of the quiz contest for women were presented with award. A souvenir was also released to commemorate the event. Kottayam Nazir and party presented a comic show followed by a grand feast. Around six thousand people from the 28 units of the Samiti participated in the celebrations.

The artificial football-cricket ground was also declared open during the event.



A section of the audience

Swaramanjari Music Talent Contest

■ Swaramanjari is organising a music talent contest for Pune and suburbs. The contest will be in four sections based on age groups viz., 8-14, 15-25, 26-40 and 40 Plus. The last date to register names will be July 15. For details and registration, contact 93710 36579, 98223 37347, 97671 51122 or 9405254553. One can contact on e-mail Swaramanjari@music@gmail.com also.

Free Educational materials and wheel chair

■ Harisri Kalyan has invited applications from deserving students for their education materials and wheel chair to be distributed later. Students from poor families will receive study materials to sustain for one academic year, in a bag. People knowing tailoring and hailing from poor families would get free sewing machines on a 'first come first served' basis. Applications are to be addressed to G7, Ashtami Apartment, Amrai, Vijay Nagar, Kalyan East. Phone: 98192 40947 or 98206 95920.



Well known danseuse and actress Sudha Chandran has been bestowed with an honorary doctorate by Invertis University of Bareilly. The doctorate is given for her services to Arts and culture. Sudha Chandran received the honour on May 19.

19 th Anniversary of Sree Subhananda Ashram held

■ The 19 th anniversary celebrations of Sree Subhananda Ashram, on the JVL Road, Powai were held at the Ashram premises, on May 1, 2016. The celebrations started with a procession carrying the picture of Sree Subhananda Guru, founder, Subhananda Ashram from Sree Subrahmanya Swamy temple at Tungagav. The procession was inaugurated by Shri. M.R. Vijayan. The celebrations of the Powai Ashram were presided over by Swami Salguna Sheelan of Sree Subhananda Ashram, Mumbai. Shri. C.P. Krishnakumar, novelist inaugurated the function. Shri. Gopan Dombivli, Chimaya Study Centre, Dombivli was the keynote speaker. Shri. V.N. Gopalakrishnan, Journalist, Shri. Sawat, Shri. Tulasidharan, (Ambernath Ashram) and Shri. Raju (Saki Naka Ashram) spoke on the occasion. Shri. Viswaraj Nair welcomed the guests and Shri. A.L. Menon proposed a vote of thanks.



C P Krishnakumar lighting the lamp

A new venture of Mumbai Nattarangu

■ Mumbai Nattarangu is a forum founded to encourage activists in the art, cultural fields and is active for the last three years. It is now coming out with a new initiative. It is proposing to produce a short tele-film highlighting the tremendous work done by Mumbai Malayalis in these fields. Titled 'Desadakante Chirakukal' (Wings of migrants), it is to be directed by film director Madhu Tothampalli. The forum now intends to bring in local talents in this project. Interested persons may contact Ravi Thodupuzha on +919146296616.



Procession in progress

Adi Sankaracharya Jayanthi in Mumbai

■ A eleven day Sankara Jayanthi festival to celebrate the birth of Adi Sankaracharya, was held from May 11 ,at one of the oldest temples in Mumbai , 75 year old Sri Sankara Mattham at Matunga. This temple is believed to be the only one in the country which has Adi Sankara as the main idol. Adi Sankaracharya , is believed to have been the incarnation of Lord Shiva, born about 2,500 years ago in a village named Kaladi , on the bank of the river Periyar in Kerala. He was one of the greatest philosophers who wrote the doctrine of Advaita Vedanta.

The rituals held at Sri Sankara Mattham were Govardhan Puja and daily Rudra Japam milk Abhishek to Adi Sankara and Lord Shiva, Gayatri homam, Suvasinis puja, and Manjal Kumkum for ladies. There were also daily discourses by Sanskrit scholars in the evening on 'Sankara Vijayam'. The topics covered includes Shatpadi stotra, Achyutashtakam, Atmashatakam, Sankara bhashyam and Bhakta Vijayam. Several vedic students from all over the country were also present to recite all four Vedas daily.

Adi Sankara's remarkable reinterpretations of Hindu scriptures,



Ritual in progress

especially on Upanishads or Vedanta, had a profound influence on the growth of Hinduism. Sankara developed his philosophy through commentaries on the various scriptures. It is believed that the revered saint completed these works before the age of sixteen. His major

works fall into three distinct categories - commentaries on the Upanishads, the Brahmasutras and the Bhagavad Gita. He traveled length and breadth of the country and established Matthams at Shringeri, Puri, Dwaraka, Badrinath and finally at Kanchipuram.



C K K Poduwal an active KKS member and Secretary of Mulund Kerala Samajam handing over a cheque Rs 50,000 towards KKS Latur drought relief activities to Gopalan Nair, President of KKS. G S Pillai looks on.

Vyshakha stories analysed

■ Dombivli Kerala Samajam organised a discussion on the stories written by noted story teller Vyshakh. Manasi, C P Krishnakumar, R K Marur and P S Sumesh participated in the discussion. Suresh Varma was the moderator.

According to Manasi, stories of Vyshakha were like a river that flows steadily and fluently. Krishnakumar evaluated them as an attempt to paint the struggle of the poor to make both the ends meet for survival. Chairman O Pradeep General Secretary Sadasivan Nair, E V Sureshkumar and C K Ramesh also spoke on the occasion. Ajith Sankar and E Harindranath were co-ordinators. About one hundred literature lovers participated in the meet.

Marthoma Church too joins drought relief

■ The Marthoma Community of Bombay region has joined several other agencies in reaching out the drought affected people of Latur district. The inauguration of the distribution of drinking water by Marthoma Church was done by Padegaon Corporator Sayaji Rao. They distribute about 10,000 litres of water daily. The operation is being carried out with active participation of religious and dedicated people of local churches.



Free Medical Camp

■ A free medical camp was conducted by Bombay keralaleeya Samiti Malad (West) in association with Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti, Mald East Unit, at St. Francis School, Malad East. Free medicines were also distributed.



Adv Padma Divakar lighting the lamp

Admission to Kanikkonna

■ Lok Kalyan Malayali Association started admission of students to Kanikkonna level classes of Malayalam Mission. This is fifth year of the classes by LKMA. Specially trained teachers are conducting the classes. The successful students of Suryakanthi and Kanikkonna classes will be presented certificates by the Government of Kerala.

Donate a Wheelchair Campaign

■ On April 24, 2016, NANMA Charitable Foundation donated a wheelchair to Dhiraj Ghaaru in Ulhasnagar, a suburb in Mumbai. Ghaaru had been suffering from Muscular Dystrophy for 15 years and had sought their help. NANMA CHARITABLE FOUNDATION initiated this campaign to bring back life into the physically challenged and empower them to lead an independent life. In the forthcoming months, their aim is to identify and help similar deserving people with wheel chairs and necessary aid.



The popular drama artist and social worker Shri.K.D.Chandran celebrated his 80th birthday in a grand scale on 8th May with the presence of all his relatives and well-wishers.



International Dance Day

■ **KALAKSHETHRAM, Dombivli** celebrated the International Dance Day with performances, lecture-Demonstrations on 29th April, 2016. Guru Udyogamandal Vikraman Pillai, winner of Pravasi Kalasree Award, instituted for pravasi artists by Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi was the chief Guest. KSNA Western Region Ad-hoc Committee President Shri Jayaprakash, Keraleeya Samajam, Dombivli Chairman Shri Pradeep Nair, Shri "Goodwin" Sunil Kumar were distinguished guests on the occasion.

Prof. Radhika Premanandan Nair, Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya presented Lecture- Demonstration on "Nuances in Bharatnatyam". Smt. Sreeja Warriar, Nrityanjali, Kalyan made a presentation on "Mohiniattam Yesterday and Today".. The presentations with audio-visuals and live demonstrations were very beneficial to the students and the rasikas also got a chance to update their knowledge of the art.

Kalakshethram students, disciples of Guru Kalasree Kalamandalam Gopalakrishnan performed Mohiniattam and Kathakali-Cholliyattam. The Mohiniattam presentation was based on Ashtapadi, choreographed by Padma Bhushan Dr (Smt) Kanak Rele.

Cholliyattam presentation of Kathakali without make-up and costumes was a new experience for many in the audience. While Jayasree Mohandas, Chitra Muralidharan and Divya presented 'Purappadu', Priya Namboodiri portrayed Bheema



(Kalyana Saugandhikam). Ranjish Nair, (A-Grade Kathakali Artist, Doordarshan) and Nedumbally Narayanan presented Roudra Bheema and Dussana (Dussasanavadham).

Bharatnatyam students disciples of Smt. Pallavi Phaujadar presented "Mahishasura mardini" in Bharatnatyam. Dance Lovers and dance

students of Dombivli witnessed the event. Established in 1984, Kalakshethram Dombivli is the initiative of a group of Rasikas dedicated to the preservation, propagation and presentation of Indian Classical Arts in general and Kerala Traditional Performing Arts in particular.

Kanchi Paramacharya Jayanthi in Mumbai

■ The 123rd Jayanthi Mahotsavam of the 68th Acharya of Kanchi Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamigal was performed on May 22 with devotion at the Sri Sankara Mattham, Mumbai. Besides Rudra Japam and homam, Pada poojas were also performed by the devotees. Usually referred to as Paramacharya, Mahaswami or Maha Periyavar, he is widely considered as one of the greatest Indian sages of recent times. He was renowned for his saintly life, strict adherence to the *sanyasa (asceticism)* and unparalleled knowledge in a wide array of subjects. His foremost vision was the protection of Vedas, tradition, and dharma. He was given Sanyasa Asramam at the early age of 13 and was named Chandrasekharendra Saraswati. He attained Mahasamadhi in 1994 at the age of 100.



Arangetram of Lavanya Panicker

■ Lavanya Panicker daughter of Dr. (Smt.) Bindu Panicker and Adv. (Shri.) Ajay Panicker performed her Bharatnatyam Arangetram on 24th April 2016 at S.P.Jain Auditorium, Bhavans College Campus Andheri (west). Lavanya was learning Bharatnatyam under the tutelage of Smt. Prasanna Nambiar and her two daughters Smt. Ajitha Nambiar and Smt. Amrutha Menon at Y.M.C.A Centre of Nrityaprabha. Andheri (w). Apart from Bharatnatyam Lavanya is good in Western Dance and Sports. The Arangetram was done under the aegis of Nrityaprabha. The programme was ably supported by a team of Senior Musicians and anchored by Shri.T.P.K. Nambiar. The programme was well appreciated by the audience.



Viswaroopam is being staged in Mumbai again

■ Well known play of Surasu 'Viswaroopam' is appearing again on the Mumbai stage soon. It is presented by Saptaswara. Experienced actors of Mumbai are bringing out the powerful characters and the talented V V Achuthan is directing it. During the occasion of the pooja, Achuthan, Vasantha Achuthan, Rajan, Shaji,

Srijith Mohan, Rati, Jyotsna, Gokuldas, Murukan Pappanamcode, Premkumar and Devi Premkumar were present. Premkumar will score music for the lines of Payannur Bhaskaran and A N Ganesh. The play will be staged in Booriben Laxmichand Golwala Auditorium of Ghatkopar West on August 27.

Saptahayajnam

■ Ayyappa Temple of Nalasopara is conducting a Saptahayajnam during its celebrations of consecration day from May 31 to June 8. Adv T R Ramanathan is the Yajnacharya. On June 7 and 8, pratishta homam, Bhagavathy Seva, Mahakumbabhishekam, Mahaprasadam etc will be done. Tantri Palakkad Korattikara Mana Brahmasri Harikrishnan Namboothiri will supervise the rituals.

Holy Angels School scores 100%

■ Holy Angels School, Dombivli scored 100% success in the recently held CBSE Std X examination. It is the 14th consecutive 100% result. Isha Pandya scored 97% for her first rank while Tavishi Suvarna scored 96.8% for her second rank. Of the 100 students appeared for the examination, 16 students scored above 90%. In the HSC examination also, its Junior College division scored 100%, its 6th consecutive similar result. Junior College sent 135 students for HSC. In commerce stream, Treeza Varghese scored 85.5% while Pranav Pradeepkumar scored 84.6% in the science stream. Holy Angels School is the only educational institution in Dombivli to score top rank.



Director Dr Oommen David and Principal Bijoy Oommen with some of the meritorious students

Office Bearers

■ The following persons were elected as office bearers of the new Federation Of Overseas Recruitment Associations Of India: V S Abdul Karim from Mumbai as Chairman, Suresh kumar Madhusudhanan from Mumbai as General Secretary, Mr. Srinivasan Krishnan from Kochi and Ramish Siddiqui from New Delhi as Vice Chairman and Supreet Sandy from Mumbai as Treasurer.



Chairman of FORAI, Mr. V.S. Abdul Kareem, Vice Chairmen: Mr. Sreenivasan & Mr. Ramish Siddiqui, Dy Secretary General: Mr. Sandeep Kapoor & Mr. Ashraf Ali jointly handing over the FORAI registration documents to Mr. M. C. Luther, Protector General of Emigrants at New Delhi.



V S Abdul Karim



M Suresh Kumar




Supreeth M J (Sandy)

Felicitations to

Mr. Jose Chemmassery
(Ollur)

On the occasion of completing 70
years of fruitful life



Vasai Fine Arts Festival starts on Dec 15

■ Vasai Fine Arts Society is organising Swati Tirunal Sangeethotsavam, a cultural festival, lasting 11 days starting on Dec 15. The venue is Sabarigiri Temple of Vasai. Kathakali, Chakyarkoothu, Thayambaka, Panchavadyam, sopana sangeetham, Bharathanatyam, Mohiniyattam, Kuchiputi, Carnatic music, pullamkuzhal concert etc will be the main events during the festival.

Mattannur Sankarankutty, Pallavoor Sreedharan, Kudamaloor Janardhanan, Balabhaskar, M Jayachandran, Prince Rama Varma, Kavalam Sreekumar, Dr Neena Prasad, Lakshmi Gopaldaswamy, Rachana Narayanankutty, Divya Unni et al will participate in the festival. There will be a seminar on Swati Tirunal also during the event.



Kudamaloor Janardhanan



Balabhaskar



Divya Unni



Rachana Narayanankutty



Kalamandalam Gireesan



Kalamandalam Gopalakrishnan

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KOZHI ADA

Malabar specials are plenty and one among them is Kozhi ada which is a stuffed snack to go ideally with tea during special occasions and festivals.

INGREDIENTS

Chicken : 1 kg

Garlic : 2 tablespoon

Ginger : 2 tablespoon

Curry leaves

Coconut oil : 1 cup

Maida : 2 cup

Salt to taste

Chilly powder : 2 tablespoon

Green chillies : 5



PREPARATION

Deep fry the chicken in coconut oil after marinating it with chilly powder and salt. After it is fried, mince the chicken. In a frying pan, saute garlic, ginger and curry leaves with a little coconut oil. Add the minced chicken to it and mix well.

Make a dough with maida adding little salt. Roll it into small balls and spread it. Add the chicken masala to the spread and roll it. Then fry it in hot oil till it is brown in colour. Kozhi ada is ready.

Readers are welcome to contribute recipe of typical Kerala dishes. Kindly mail the recipe along with photograph to keralainmumbai@gmail.com

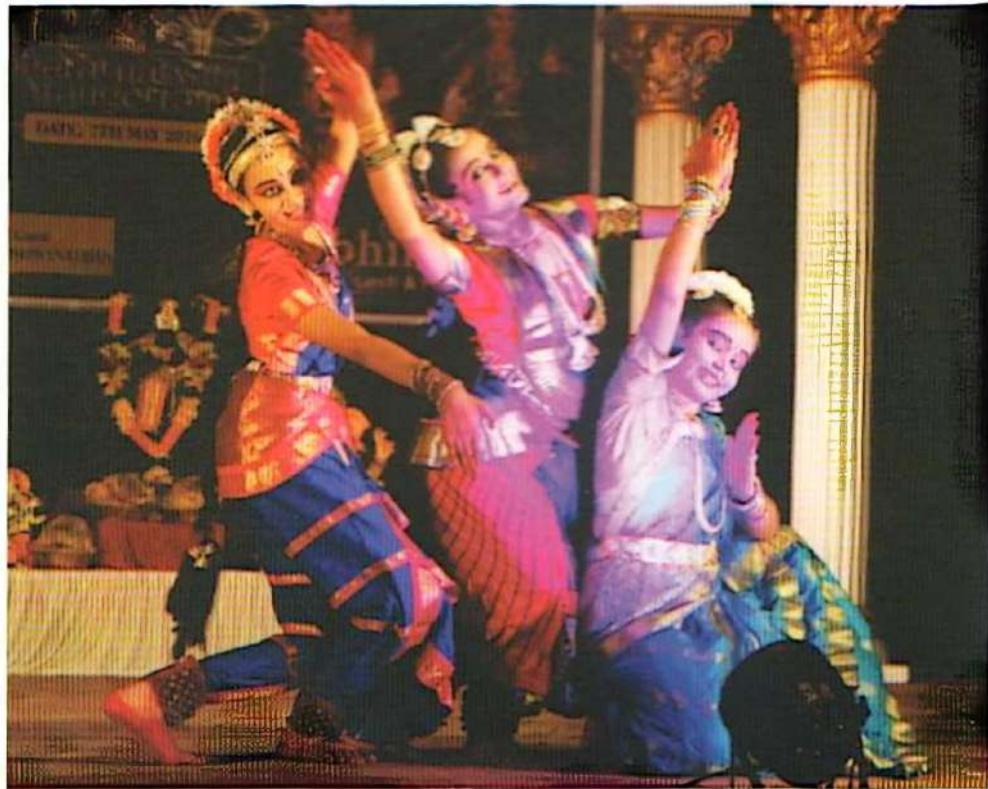


Talented Danseuse Varsha Vishwanathan

Abhinaya Institute of Research and Fine Arts (Vasai) presented the Bharata natyam debut performance by talented danseuse Varsha Vishwanathan, Nidhi Prasad and Samraghee at Bhandari Kshatriya Samaj auditorium in Vasai. The performance was noteworthy for the expressional quality and the command over the technique of Bharata Natyam.

Varsha is the talented daughter and disciple of accomplished exponent of Bharata natyam Dr Chitra Vishwanathan and P.E. Vishwanathan. Guru Dr Chitra Vishwanathan has established the Abhinayaa Institute with the intention of propagating and promoting classical arts. Several students have benefited from the Institute and have become professionals winning accolades and appreciation for their performances. Varsha has also won the title "Nrityashree" for her proficiency in dance and has also performed along with famous actress and dancer Sudha Chandran in Dubai, Bahrain and other countries!

Varsha commenced the performance with the traditional invocatory numbers, followed with the Alarippu that introduced the audience to the basic movements in the Bharata natyam style. The Kalyani Jatiswaram formed a fine synthesis between music and melody and dance. Besides the Varnam, Varsha scored well in the Meenakshi number in



praise of the goddess, the first "sanchari" revealed the marriage of Shiva and Parvati and the second "sanchari" portrayed the goddess as the destroyer of the evil, the slaying of the demon Mahisasura. Varsha's dramatic ability was appreciated by the audience. The concluding numbers were the intricate Thillana and the snake dance known as Pambati Natanam.

Chief guest PV Vijaykumar,

publisher of Kerala In Mumbai praised the efforts of Guru Dr Chitra Vishwanathan for encouraging children to take up Bharata natyam seriously with devotion. The other guests of the evening included Kuchipudi exponent and dance critic Guru Vijay Shanker, Bharata Natyam exponent Sukanya Bhat etc.

Varsha received fine orchestral support from Guru Dr Chitra Vishwanathan on the nattuvangam,

commendable vocal support by P.E. Vishwanathan and the well knit orchestral team. The dancers danced with lot of enthusiasam, while Nidhi danced with elegance. Samraghee pleased the audience with her innocent charm and Varsha proved to be the most confident dancer of the evening. With a little more concern towards the finer aspects of dancing, Varsha can definitely aspire to be among the front rank of dancers.

by Guru Vijay Shanker



Savaari Vandi

- Kadampat Gopalan Nair

Imagine a picturesque village, surrounded by green hills, thick forests and unending paddy fields, Gayatri (Cheerakuzhi) River flowing serenely through it, interspersed with imposing mansions such as *naalukettu* (multistoried mansions built around a small courtyard called *nadumuttam* - central court), single-storied *kottils* (where the farm produce, mainly paddy, is collected, sorted and temporarily stored before transferring to *pathayams* (large storage chambers) and multistoried *pathayapuram* (housing gigantic storage chambers - pathayams - to hold the year's paddy produce) belonging to the affluent families and single-roomed, hay-roofed abodes of the less privileged.

That was Kondazhi, then a part of the Kingdom of Kochi. A few wealthy landlords owning vast swathes of land and sprawling estates dominated the village. Kondazhi in the 1940s. A time when it had not been overrun by noisy autos, cars, trucks and buses. There was no public or private transport as we know them now. The only mode of conveyance was walking, walking and more walking, miles together, barefooted and in the searing heat. In fact, there was no motorable road in the entire village except an apology of a road called *ezhunnallathupaatha* (Royal visit road), so named as this road was specially built in a record time on the occasion of the Royal visit of His Highness, the King of Kochi to grace the marriage ceremony in the family of his trusted administrative lieutenant T K Nair of Thiruvilwamala across the Gayatri River separating Kondazhi from the neighbouring Thiruvilwamala. The existing road via Pazhayannur was circuitous, so a shorter route became necessary. The King could not only grace the marriage ceremony but also fulfill his long cherished desire to visit the Vilwadrinathan Temple there. It was more a narrow pathway than a road, unpaved, potholed and with abrupt turns and steep climbs. The only vehicle that moved on this path was a rickety bullock cart belonging to Ayyappan, the local shopkeeper. This cart also doubled up as a transport vehicle for those willing to climb on it. People belonging to the upper caste, especially women would not dare to climb on a bullock cart. They preferred to walk.

For the sick and infirm there was the *manchal* or *pallak* (*paalkhi*) that belonged to another affluent family. The only motor vehicle that made its rare appearance on this road was Dr. Anthony's white Ambassador car coming all the way from the neighbouring Chelakara where the doctor had his clinic. Such rare visitations would bring all the villagers to the impeccably maintained four-wheeled wonder!

Over the years, the grinding, trundling cart had made two parallel channels on the road through which the two wheels of the cart would move unerringly like a train on rails. The rider has only to prod the bullocks (generally a pair) or if he wanted to go faster to sharply twist the bullocks' tails (one at a time, or both depending on how fast the bullocks should run), an ingenious way to quick acceleration! The Doctor's driver would curse and swear whenever his car's wheels refused to get out of these channels.

Kadampat House (hereafter *Family*) was among the prominent landowning gentries of Kondazhi and was once a large joint family living in the ancestral *nalukettu*, a sprawling mansion standing tall in the middle of a large estate with all-weather gate-houses guarding the eastern and western entrances, and a large courtyard running around the house. As time went by, some members felt the need to set up their own independent houses and moved away from the joint set up but decided to be within the estate without separating boundary walls or fencing. They still lived as one huge family. Festivals like Onam were celebrated at the *nalukettu* where all the members gathered for days together, and what celebrations they used to be!

One of the branches of the Family housed in the *pathaayappura* a hop, skip and jump away from the *nalukettu*, had a *karanavar* (head of the family) by the name "Appottan" (given name: Gopalan Nair), and his younger brothers "Oppa Mama" (given name: Krishnan Nair) and Ramankutty, and their sisters Janaki Amma and "Chinnedathi" (given name: Devaki Amma) completed this branch of the Family. Appottan being the eldest male member of the Family assumed the role of Patriarch who wielded immense

authority and power. His word was law and generally every branch of the Family followed his command.

Appottan and Oppa Mama in their wisdom decided that they must have a transport of their own in keeping with the status of the Family. But what kind of transport? A motor car being a rare and expensive commodity, the choice fell on a bullock cart, not one of those ordinary rickety carts like Ayyappan's but an ornate 'savarivandi' (passenger coach), which will be drawn by just one bullock. Nobody in the village had any idea as to how a bullock cart could be built. The Family had a carpenter, Velayudhan, who was always seen doing odd jobs at one house or the other, making a chair here, an almirah or a reclining chair there. He was an interesting character, short tempered, occasionally given to drinking the local brew *chaaraayam* (arrack), prone to asthmatic attacks (made a wheezing sound as he worked on the timber), but a genius of sorts with some original ideas. He was the uncrowned *moothasari* (elderly, wise, master carpenter).

As a six year old, I had taken a liking for him (and he for me), for he would make some interesting toys for me (like the *theevandi* - steam engine - with a wheel fitted on a long stick and a tail like piston passing through a hole when you move the wheel, like a steam engine.) I often used to sit by his side fascinated by his dexterous fingers turning out articles of everyday use, like a ladle from coconut shell, beautiful toys like dolls out of the golden-hued timber of jackfruit tree. I was allowed to handle his carpenter's tools like the dangerous *vadakkanuli*, a 4" razor-sharp chisel used to fine-cut timber.

Appottan summoned Velayudhan and explained to him his pet project and added, "This cart has to be the pride of Kadampat and envy of the village." Velayudhan was not sure as he shook his greying (and balding) head sideways, indicating it was impossible but persistent prodding from the brothers and some veiled threat made him change his mind, and he said, "let me see," and left. Velayudhan seemed to have gone into hibernation. Anxious days for the brothers.

A few days later Velayudhan appeared

gingerly from out of the eastern gatehouse and the brothers were hopeful. "I will try to make it" he said and explained the process. He had done some research into the making of a bullock cart, inspected the one belonging to Ayyappan and made mental notes. A rough idea formed in his mind. It would be made of the best wood, teakwood, with arched roof the inside of which would be decorated. Seats would be provided on both the sides and at the rear, for comfort. The axle and wheel casings would be made of metal, which the village ironsmith could fabricate easily.

A temporary shed (which later would become the parking area for the cart) was specially erected a few feet away from the house, within sight. Velayudhan embarked upon his creative journey. Everyday after school, I would run to the shed to see the progress. Once I saw two giant wheels propped up in one corner and

and garlands made out of coloured tissue papers, soft beds filled with the finest cotton - name anything, he would create it beautifully. He was the master decorator for all marriages in the Family and elsewhere. The task of decorating the cart was in the ablest of hands. Kunjetan finished his task. One day, after school, as usual, I ran straight to the shed, and what did I see? A magnificently crafted, tastefully decorated coach the Kings would be proud of, standing in the middle of the shed, Velayudhan contemplative beside it. I could not wait longer for a ride on it. He had thought of everything. There was a *kambivilakku* (hurricane lamp) dangling underneath the cart (for night journey), and a tail-like projection suspended at the rear of the cart. Velayudhan explained that was the anchor or stopper to prevent extreme tilting of the cart backwards. And a horizontal piece of wood hanging behind the wheels just

shed. Appottan was furious at the sight of this unwelcome visitor. Guard Madhavan Nair was unwelcome for many believed he had evil eyes. They believed anything that his eyes would set upon would go bad, rotten, be it a house under construction or a vegetable growing in the backyard. But he could not care less. He came, saw, took a deep breath and left without a word. None dared to cross him. Did he curse?

As the day of the inaugural run approached, there was great excitement among the Family members. Who were to go on the inaugural ride? Appottan had the final say. Only four adults and four children would be allowed on the cart on the inaugural ride. Others could take turns later. The privileged ones were himself, Opal Mama, Chinnedathi and Kunjetan. Among the children, there was some stiff competition. Some ten chattering children were incorrigible hopefuls. The recalcitrant boy called Sankaran (son of Chinnedathi, and a contemporary and rival of mine) created a ruckus for he wanted to be in the group, but a stern look from Appottan (his maternal uncle) silenced him. He went sulking. The winners were I (happy, very happy) and two girls and another boy. All were elated. The women in their best attire of gold-brocaded "set mundu" (set of fine dhoti) matching white "rouka" (blouse), the men in white dhoti. And no shirts except Oppa Mama wearing an ancient white shirt that had seen many winters. The cart would be piloted by the young farm hand called Kochunni. The lucky seven were all perched on the benches inside the cart. The rider in front holding his head high, and I, just behind the rider getting a vantage view of the bobbing painted horns of Manikandan. The handsome Manikandan was decorated, his horns painted red, a 'gopi' (tilak) of vermilion generously smeared on his forehead, and a garland of marigold adorning his ample neck. Had not seen him more pleased. The cart drawn by an impatient Manikandan was brought to the courtyard from where it would enter the rough pathway which would join the 'ezhunnallath paatha' after a few furlongs. Someone brought a coconut and smashed it to smithereens in front of the cart. The villagers, old and young, children clinging to their mothers, some with running noses, all lined up along the road on both the sides. There was the excitement of a village festival in the air. The privileged members of Kadampat House ensconced in the tastefully decorated cart were ecstatic like never before.

Manikandan drew the cart along the road. A few minutes of uneventful trundling along, there appeared the first of



asked Velayudhan "only two wheels?". "The third wheel is the bullock!" he smiled. I could not see any bullock then but it turned out later that the white, young and handsome bullock with a *Mani* (bell) around his ample neck, called Manikandan, would be the lucky third wheel.

The work shed reverberated with the relentless hammering of Velayudhan and his assistant-son. The task of decorating the cart fell on the able shoulders of Kunjetan, the octogenarian husband of the eldest female member of *nalukettu*. The quiet, unassuming, bespectacled Kunjetan's artistic creations were legendary. Beautiful fans fashioned out of palm leaves, embellished with glittering ornamentation along the edges, flowers

caressing them. Velayudhan explained: They were the brakes! And the brakes were fastened to two ropes running underneath right upto the yoke and the rider would apply or release pressure on the ropes with his legs to apply or release the brake, Ingenious little inventions! (not Velayudhan's though).

The news of the Family having built a 'savarivandi' of its own spread far and wide. Eager and jealous visitors came and inspected every part of the cart, touched the wheels gently as if their touch would hurt the wheel, fondled the little flowers and awnings, savoured the tastefully decorated interiors. One such visitor was 'Guard' Madhavan Nair (so called as he was a retired forest guard), a relative of the Family. He came and went straight to the

the sharp climbs. Manikandan started to strain his strong muscles, and the cart made grinding noises, now more than before, and was considerably slowed down. Gradually the cart moved up, and then.....I could see the painted horns of Manikandan rising up...not only the horns but Manikandan himself seemed for a brief moment suspended in the air. The rear of the cart seemed to go down until the anchor stopped it from further tilting. An alert rider jumped down and restrained Manikandan who stood there rooted firmly to the ground. The cart had tilted backwards almost parallel to the incline, and was precariously positioned. All the passengers were panicky. Frantic cries arose from within the cart and some tried to jump. An alert Kochunni brought everyone down safely one by one.

The ride ended abruptly. Appottan was fuming with rage. Where was that rascal Velayudhan? What kind of cart had he made? And where was that evil-eyed Guard Madhavan Nair? The cart was turned around without its occupants and brought back to the shed, Manikandan walking along side, head bowed down.

For a long time no one spoke. Appottan seemed to have lost his speech. He sat in his favourite reclining chair, legs stretched out; looking forlornly towards the eastern gate-house as if Velayudhan would emerge from there any time! But no Velayudhan appeared. For days together, there was no sign of the *moothasari*.

Appottan could not wait longer. Velayudhan was hounded and brought before him. The punishment would be severe. He would be tied up at the next coconut tree and given 100 lashes following the unwritten law of the Family. But strangely, to the utter surprise of all, nothing of that sort happened. After the tongue lashing from the "mootharu", which he bore silently, Velayudhan quietly went to the shed and checked every part of the cart. How did the cart tilt? He had no idea. He went away confused. Meantime, Guard Madhavan Nair's visit to the shed kept on troubling Appottan.

Local wise men came one by one, checked every part of the cart but none could explain why it tilted backwards, lifting Manikandan along. The mystery of the tilting cart remained but for a brief period. Until.....

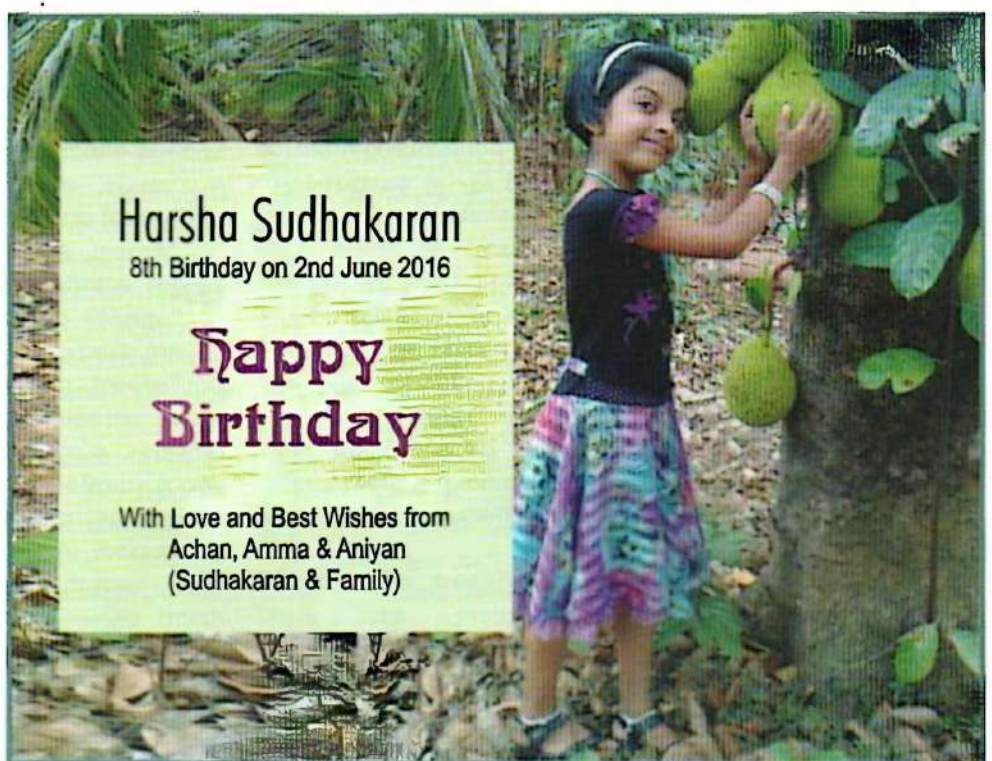
Post-script: Days went by. One day a serious looking Velayudhan emerged from the gate-house, and walked briskly up to the pathayapura and stood in front expecting someone to emerge from the house. Appottan who was resting in his favourite reclining chair after a heavy

meal came out and stared at him. Velayudhan mumbled something. Disinterested, Appottan started to return to his reclining chair, but a determined Velayudhan's words stopped him in his tracks. "I have found the fault, "moothare". I will fix the fault." Velayudhan explained that the cart tended to tilt backwards when it was filled with people, especially at the back, because the axle and the wheels were not placed properly at the centre, they were fixed nearer to the bullock. He would fix a heavy object (a large block of wood) under the yoke which will counter-balance the cart. Appottan was skeptical but gave in. "Do what you like and don't bother me, you imbecile" and he went to his reclining chair.

Velayudhan did not get up. He looked for a heavy piece of timber. At any given time there would be some lying around. He found one particularly heavy block of teakwood and rolled it up to his work area and began his work. A supporting frame was made and he wanted to fix the block in that casing fastened under the long beam between the yoke and the cart. He needed help to lift the heavy block. Oppa Mama who was by and large sympathetic to him willingly gave him a helping hand. The job done, Velayudhan said, "Now, we will try the cart once again. Moothare, the bullock". Manikandan was guided by Kochunni and the yoke was placed gently on his shoulder once again. He wanted some people to climb on to the cart. But none dared. Oppa Mama gathered some children, including myself and the cart was filled with chattering children.

Velayudhan himself sat at the rider's seat, Kochunni behind him, and prodded the bullock to move. Uneventfully the cart moved on to the main road and Velayudhan's gaze was fixed at the point where the cart had met its adversary in the form of a sharp climb. This was his hour of glory or disaster. The bullock drew the cart slowly and, lo, we reached the top of the gradient, and no, the cart did not topple. Success, grand success! Velayudhan's wrinkled face brightened and I could see his rare smile, eyes welling up. We the children started rejoicing. The return journey was extremely pleasant and satisfying.

*Velayudhan, though unlettered and no engineering genius, had figured out that there was something wrong with the placement of the axle and the wheels (centre of gravity, he had not known). His native wisdom and years of carpentry (*moothassari* was a title given only to the wise, old, expert artisan) helped him to figure out the cause of the disaster. His little brain had figured out the fault correctly and he rectified it on his own in his own ingenious way. Guard Madhavan Nair's supposedly evil eyes were nothing compared to this native genius. The indigenously created cart served the Family (all the branches) for many years until aging and the relentless competition from the motorized transportation made this baby, lovingly created by the *moothassaari* obsolete and redundant. It was eventually sold to Ayyappan for a song. In hind sight, I cannot but admire the raw, native wisdom of that humble man called Velayudhan. What a man! ■*



മോർച്ചറി



രവി തൊട്ടുപുഴ

■ സർക്കാർ ആശുപത്രിയാണെങ്കിലും നല്ല തിരക്കാണ്. സീനിയർ സർജ്ജൻ ഡോ. ജയിംസ് തോമസ് ആശുപത്രിയുടെ ചാർജ്ജ് ഏറ്റെടുത്തതിൽപ്പിന്നെ എന്തു അസുഖമുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ആളുകൾ അങ്ങോട്ടേ വരു. അത്രയ്ക്ക് കൈപുണ്യമാണെന്നാണ് ജനം പറയുന്നത്. സൗമ്യമായ പെരുമാറ്റവും കുശലാനുഷണവും വിശദമായ പരിശോധനയും കഴിയുമ്പോഴേക്കും അസുഖം പകുതി കുറയും. പ്രായഭേദമന്യേ രോഗികളുടെ ഒരു നീണ്ട നിരയുണ്ടാകും എന്നും. ഇതുപോലെ ആതുരസേവനം ജീവിതവ്രതമാക്കിയ മറ്റൊരാൾ ഉണ്ടായെന്ന് സംശയം. തീരാവ്യാധിയിൽ നട്ടം തിരിഞ്ഞ എത്രയോ പേർക്ക് സാന്ത്വനമേകാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞു. സാധാരണ ക്കാർക്കുവേണ്ടി ജീവിക്കുന്ന ഒരു ഡോക്ടറെ ആർക്കാണ് മറക്കാൻ കഴിയുക?

പതിവിൽ കവിഞ്ഞ തിരക്കാണ് ഡോക്ടറുടെ ക്യാബിനു പുറത്ത്. കേട്ടവർ കേട്ടവർ ആശുപത്രിയിലേക്ക് ഓടി. അല്പസമയത്തിനുള്ളിൽ അവിടം ജനനിബിഡമായി. ശ്മശാനമുകത തളം കെട്ടിനിന്ന അന്തരീക്ഷത്തെ കീറിമുറിച്ച് ഒരു ആംബുലൻസിന്റെ ശബ്ദം അടുത്തടുത്ത് വന്നു. ജനങ്ങളെ വകഞ്ഞുമാറ്റി വാഹനം മോർച്ചറിയുടെ അരികിലെത്താൻ നന്നെ പണിപ്പെട്ടു. അടഞ്ഞുകിടന്ന വാതിൽ തുറന്ന് 'മോനേ' എന്ന അലർച്ചയോടെ ഡോ. ജയിംസ് തോമസ് ആൾക്കൂട്ടത്തിനിടയിലേക്ക് എടുത്തു ചാടി.

ശവമുറിയുടെ മേശയിൽ പോസ്റ്റ് മോർട്ടത്തിനായി കാത്തുകിടന്ന ശവത്തിന് തണുപ്പ് കുടിക്കുകയുണ്ടായി. ഒരേയൊരു മകന്റെ മരവിച്ചു കിടക്കുന്ന ആ ശരീരം കീറിമുറിക്കാൻ ഡോ. ജയിംസ് തോമസിന് കഴിയുമായിരുന്നില്ല. ഡോക്ടറുടെ മുറിയിൽനിന്ന് ഉയർന്ന തേങ്ങൽ ആളുകളുടെ നെടുനിശ്വാസത്തിൽ അലിഞ്ഞില്ലാതെയായി. സഹപ്രവർത്തകർ എന്തു ചെയ്യണമെന്നറിയാതെ പകച്ചുനിന്നു. ഇനിയും താമസിച്ചുകൂടാ, പോസ്റ്റ് മോർട്ടം ചെയ്തേ പറ്റൂ. പക്ഷെ സീനിയറും ആശുപത്രിയുടെ മേലധികാരിയുമായ ജയിംസ് സാറിന്റെ അനുവാദമില്ലാതെ അതിനു കഴിയില്ല. ചോർന്നുപോയ ശക്തി സംഭരിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് അടഞ്ഞുകിടന്ന വാതിലിൽമുട്ടി. തുടർച്ചയായ ആ പ്രവർത്തി ഫലം കണ്ടു. സാവധാനം തുറന്ന വാതിലിനിടയിൽ കുനിഞ്ഞ ശിരസ്സുമായി ഒരു അച്ഛൻ. പാറിപ്പറന്ന തലമുടി, ചുവന്നു കലങ്ങിയ കണ്ണുനീർ നിറഞ്ഞുതുളുമ്പി ഒഴുകുന്ന കണ്ണുനീർ, കവിളിനകളിൽതീർത്ത ചാലുകൾ. ഒരു കൊച്ചുകുട്ടിയെപ്പോലെ അയാൾ സഹപ്രവർത്തകരുടെ ഇടയിലേക്ക് ഇറങ്ങിവന്ന് തളർന്നിരുന്നു.

സഹപ്രവർത്തകനും അകന്ന ബന്ധുവുമായ ഡോ. ജോൺ പോസ്റ്റ്മോട്ടം ചെയ്യുവാൻ മുന്നോട്ടുവന്നു. ഡോ.ജയിംസ് നിർവികാരനായി അയാളെ നോക്കി. ദുഃഖസാഗരം അലയടിക്കുന്ന ആ കണ്ണുകളിൽ ഘനീഭവിച്ച ആർദ്രത എല്ലാവരിലേക്കും പടർന്നു. ഡോ.ജോണിന്റെ നേതൃത്വത്തിൽ ഒരു പറ്റം സഹപ്രവർത്തകർ ശവമുറി ലക്ഷ്യമാക്കി നടന്നു.

തന്നിൽനിന്നും അകന്നവരെ കണ്ണ് ചിമ്മാതെ ഡോ.ജയിംസ് നോക്കി. അയാളുടെ മുഖത്തെ പേശികൾ വലിഞ്ഞുതുരുകി. കണ്ണുകളിലെ ചുവപ്പ് കൂടി. അയാൾ ഒരു ഭ്രാന്തനെപ്പോലെ ശവമുറി ലക്ഷ്യമാക്കി അലറി വിളിച്ച് ഓടി. പകച്ചുപോയ ഡോക്ടർമാരെ തട്ടിമാറ്റി അയാൾ ശവമുറിക്കുള്ളിൽ കയറി വാതിലടച്ചു. "ഇല്ല, എന്റെ മോൻ മരിച്ചിട്ടില്ല. അവൻ ഉറങ്ങുകയാ. ആരും അവനെ ശല്യപ്പെടുത്തരുത്. പോ.. എല്ലാരും പോ.. എന്റെ മോനനുണ്ടെട്ടെ." അടഞ്ഞുകിടന്ന വാതിലിനു മുമ്പിൽ എന്തു ചെയ്യണമെന്നറിയാതെ ഡോ.ജോണും കുട്ടരും നിർന്നിമേഷരായി നോക്കിനിന്നു.

മേശമേൽ മലർന്നു കിടന്ന ശരീരത്തെ മുടിയ വെള്ളവസ്ത്രം അയാൾ സന്തതമാക്കി. അയാളുടെ കണ്ണുനീരിൽ കുതിർന്ന ചുണ്ടുകൾ ആ മുഖത്തും ശരീരത്തിലും കളങ്ങൽ തീർത്തു. "മോനേ.. നീയെന്തിനിത് ചെയ്തു? ആത്മഹത്യ ഒന്നിനും ഒരു പരിഹാരമല്ലെന്ന് അറിഞ്ഞുകൂടെ നിനക്ക്? നിന്റെ ഏതാഗ്രഹത്തിനാ ഈ അച്ഛൻ തടസ്സം നിനക്ക്? എന്തോടെങ്കിലും പറയാമായിരുന്നില്ലേടാ? നിന്റെ അമ്മ നമ്മെ വിട്ടു പോയപ്പോൾ നീ ഉണ്ടെന്ന് ഞാൻ സമാധാനിച്ചു. പറയൂ, ഇനി ആർക്കുവേണ്ടി ഞാൻ ജീവിക്കണം? പറയാം.. പറയാതെ നിന്നെ ഞാൻ വിടില്ല." അയാളുടെ കരങ്ങൾ പലവട്ടം ഉയർന്നു താണു. കരഞ്ഞു കലങ്ങിയ കണ്ണുകളും തളർന്ന ശരീരവുമായി മേശയ്ക്കരികിൽ തറയിൽ അയാൾ കിടന്നു. അപ്പോഴും അയാളുടെ ചുണ്ടുകൾ 'മോനേ'യെന്ന് മന്ത്രിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നു.



"അച്ഛാ.. " അയാൾ കണ്ണുകൾ മെല്ലെ തുറന്നു. ഇല്ല, ആരുമില്ല. "അച്ഛാ.. " അയാൾ ചാടി എഴുന്നേറ്റു. അതെ, തന്റെ പൊന്നുമോൻ ചിരിക്കുന്ന മുഖവുമായി അരികിൽ. നിയന്ത്രണം നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ട മോനെ വാരിപ്പുണർന്നു. കവിളിനകളിലും മുർദ്ധ്യാവിലും മാറി മാറി ചുംബിച്ചു. "ഇല്ല, ഇനി നിന്നെ എങ്ങോട്ടും വിടില്ല. എനിക്ക് നിന്നെ വേണം.നിന്നെ ആർക്കും വിട്ടു കൊടുക്കില്ല."

"അച്ഛാ, അച്ഛൻ കരയുവാനോ? വേണ്ടച്ഛാ, ഇനി അച്ഛനെ തനിച്ചാക്കി ഞാനെങ്ങുംപോവില്ല. സത്യം."

"മോനേ, ഇനി ഞാനെങ്ങും പോവില്ല, മോനേ. ഇനി ഈ അച്ഛൻ കരയില്ല. മോൻ പറഞ്ഞാൽ എനിക്ക് വിശ്വാസമാ."

"എങ്കിൽ അച്ഛനാ കണ്ണുനീർ തുടക്ക്."

ഒരു കൊച്ചുകുട്ടിയെപ്പോലെ അയാൾ അനുസരിച്ചു.

"മോനേ, നമുക്ക് പുറത്ത് പോകാം.നിനക്ക് ഇഷ്ടമുള്ള എന്തു വേണലും വാങ്ങാം. വൈകീട്ട് പാർക്കിലൊന്ന് കറങ്ങാം. ഹോട്ടലിൽനിന്ന് ആഹാരം കഴിക്കാം. വാ മോനേ, ഞാൻ വണ്ടിയെടുക്കാം. മോനെന്റെ കയ്യേന്ത് വിടരുത്. കൂട്ടം തെറ്റും. നല്ല തിരക്കുള്ള സ്ഥലമാ.."

അയാൾ സാവകാശം വാതിൽ തുറന്ന് മുന്നോട്ട് നടന്നു. ഡോ. ജോണും കുട്ടരും വഴി മാറി നിന്നു. സന്തോഷവാനായി നടന്ന് അകലുന്ന ഡോ.ജയിംസിനെ അവർ അത്ഭുതത്തോടെ നോക്കിനിന്നു.

അകത്ത് ഇനിയും ഒരു നഗ്നശരീരം പോസ്റ്റ്മോർട്ടത്തിന്റെ ഊഴവും കാത്തുകിടന്നു. ■



Tehri

തൈഹ്രി



കുനം വിഷ്ണു

■ തലേദിവസം നിശ്ചയിച്ചിരുന്നതുപോലെ അതിരാവിലെത്തന്നെ എല്ലാവരും ഉണർന്നു. എല്ലാവർക്കും ഉറക്കം നല്ല സുഖമായിരുന്നു, തീർച്ച. കാരണം ഞങ്ങളും അന്നത്തെ പ്രഭാതം പോലെത്തന്നെ, നല്ല ഫ്രഷായി കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്നു. മുൻകൂട്ടി പറഞ്ഞുവെച്ചിരുന്ന തിനാൽ, ചുടുവെള്ളം നേരത്തെ തന്നെ കിട്ടി. പല്ലുതേപ്പും കുളിയും മറ്റു പ്രഭാത കൃത്യങ്ങളും കഴിഞ്ഞു. ചുടോടെ ഒരോ ചായ

കിട്ടി. ചായ കഴിഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ പെട്ടിയെല്ലാം ബസ്സിനു മുകളിൽ കയറ്റാൻ കൊടുത്തു ഞങ്ങൾ ബസ്സിൽ കയറി.

നേരം വെളുത്തു തുടങ്ങുന്നതേയുള്ളൂ. ഹോട്ടൽ നിൽക്കുന്നത് കിഴക്കുഭാഗത്തുള്ള ഒരു മലയുടെ നേരെ കീഴിലാണ്. അതിനാൽ വെയിലെത്താൻ വൈകും. ഗ്രാമം ഉണർന്നുവരുന്നതേയുള്ളൂ. എനിക്ക് അതിശയമായത് അതല്ല. നോക്കുമ്പോൾ ഞങ്ങൾ ഒറ്റയ്ക്കല്ല, തീർത്ഥാടകരുടെ ഏതാനും ബസ്സുകൾ നിരനിരയായി ഒരു കാരവൻ എന്നപോലെ നിങ്ങളുന്നു, എല്ലാം കേദാർനാഥിനെ ലക്ഷ്യമാക്കിക്കൊണ്ട്. ഉത്തരകാശിയിൽ നിന്ന് 230 കി മീറ്റർ ഉണ്ട് കേദാർനാഥിലേക്ക്.

ഉത്തരകാശി വിട്ടപ്പോഴേയ്ക്കും കയറ്റം തുടങ്ങി. ഇന്നലെ പോയ വഴിയേക്കാൾ കുത്തനെയാണ് പാതകൾ. പലയിടത്തും ഹെയർപിൻ വളവുകളും ഉണ്ട്. മിക്കവാറും പാതയുടെ ഇരുവശത്തും കാടുകളാണ്. ചിലപ്പോൾ ഒരു ഭാഗത്ത് അഗാധമായ കൊക്ക. വളരെ ഉയരമുള്ള ദേവതാരൂ, പൈൻ, ടൂർജ്ജ് തുടങ്ങിയ വൃക്ഷങ്ങൾ. ഇടയിൽ ഇടതൂർന്ന കുറ്റിക്കാടുകളും വള്ളികളും. അവിടത്തെ ഹിമാലയം പലപ്പോഴും പശ്ചിമഘട്ട മലനിരകളെ ഓർമ്മിപ്പിച്ചു. കടന്നു ചെല്ലാൻ പറ്റാത്തത്ര കനത്ത കാട്. അതിൽ ധാരാളമായി കാട്ടുമൃഗങ്ങളുണ്ടെന്നും അവർ നിരത്തിലേക്ക് ഇറങ്ങുന്നത്

സാധാരണമാണെന്നും ഡ്രൈവർ പറഞ്ഞു. ഒരു കാട്ടുമൃഗത്തെ യെങ്കിലും കണ്ടുമുട്ടണെ എന്നായി ഞങ്ങളുടെ പ്രാർത്ഥന. പക്ഷെ ഭാഗ്യദേവത ഞങ്ങൾക്ക് എതിരായിരുന്നു. ഒരു ജന്തുവിനെപ്പോലും കാണാൻ ഞങ്ങൾക്കു ഭാഗ്യമുണ്ടായില്ല.

കുറച്ചുകൂടി ചെന്നപ്പോൾ ഒരു വലിയ മലയുടെ ഒരം ചേർനായി യാത്ര. ഒരു വശത്ത് അഗാധമായ കൊക്ക. അടുക്കുകൊടുത്ത മലയോരം. അവിടെ പ്രഭാതത്തിന്റെ കിരണങ്ങളിൽ കുളിച്ചുനിൽക്കുന്ന മായാജാലങ്ങൾ. അടിയീലുടെ കല്ലുകളിൽത്തട്ടി വെള്ളി വാരിവിതറി ഓടിപ്പോകുന്ന ഭാഗീരഥി. ഓരോരോ ഗ്രാമങ്ങളിൽനിന്നുയരുന്ന പുക, അന്തരീക്ഷത്തിൽ വിചിത്രമായ ചിത്രങ്ങൾ വരച്ചു വെക്കുന്നു. ദേവഭൂമിയുടെ മാസ്മതിക സൗന്ദര്യം.

ചൗരഗീവാൽ

സാമാന്യം വലിയ ഒരു കയറ്റം കയറി കഴിഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ ഒരു ചെറിയ ഗ്രാമച്ചുരുട്ട. ബസ്സ് നിർത്തി. ഏതാനും ചായക്കടകളും പെട്ടിക്കടകളും മാത്രം. ഞങ്ങളുടെ മുന്നിലുള്ള ബസ്സുകളെല്ലാം അവിടെ നിർത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. ബസ്സിലെ യാത്രക്കാർ കാരണം അവിടെ നല്ല തിരക്കുമുണ്ട്. പലരും

ചായക്കടകളിലാണ്. അവിടെയിരുന്നു റൊട്ടിയും സബ്ജിയും മറ്റു വിഭവങ്ങളും കഴിക്കുന്നു. ചിലർ അല്പം മാറി നിന്നും ഇരുന്നും പ്രാതൽ കഴിക്കുന്നു. ഫോട്ടോ എടുക്കുന്നു, രസം മുത്ത് ബഹളം കൂട്ടുന്നു. ഞങ്ങളും പ്രാതലിന്നുവേണ്ടിയാണ് ബസ് നിർത്തിയിരിക്കുന്നത്. മുത്രശങ്ക തീർക്കാനുള്ള സൗകര്യങ്ങളും കൈകളും പാത്രവും മറ്റും കഴുകാനും ആവശ്യത്തിന് വെള്ളവും അവിടെ ഉണ്ട്. ചൗരംഗീവാൽ എന്നാണ് സ്ഥലത്തിന്റെ പേര്. ഗണേശൻ കാലത്ത് പുറപ്പെട്ടുപുറപ്പെട്ടെന്ന പ്രാതൽ ഉണ്ടാക്കിയിരുന്നു. അതും അടുത്ത കടയിൽനിന്ന് ഓരോ ചായയും. ഡ്രൈവറും



Chowranghi Khal

സഹായവും അടുത്തുള്ള ചായക്കടയിൽനിന്ന് റൊട്ടിയും സബ്ജിയുമാണ് കഴിച്ചത്. അവർക്ക് ഈ തെന്നിന്ത്യൻ ഭക്ഷണം അത്ര പത്ഥ്യം പോരാ.

പ്രാതൽ കഴിഞ്ഞ് ഒന്നു നടു നിവർക്കാൻ അഞ്ചു മിനുട്ട്. ഒരു കുന്നിൻറെ നെറുകയിലാണ് ചരംഗീഖാൽ. അടിവാരത്തുനിന്ന് തണുത്ത കാറ്റ് വീശുന്നു. അന്തരീക്ഷത്തിലെ തണുപ്പിനെ വെല്ലുവിളിച്ച്, വെയിൽ. വെയിലത്ത് നിൽക്കാൻ ഇത്ര സുഖമാണ് എന്നു കണ്ടുപിടിക്കുന്നത് അപ്പോഴാണ്. ലോകത്തിൻറെ ഉച്ചിയിൽ, നാലുഭാഗത്തും അഗാധത. ആരേയും വശീകരിക്കുന്ന ഒരു പ്രത്യേക സൗന്ദര്യവും ആകർഷണീയതയും അഗാധതയ്ക്ക് ഉണ്ട്. ഹിമാലയത്തിൽ കാലുകുത്തിയ നിമിഷം മുതൽ അത് ധാരാളമായി അനുഭവിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുകയാണ്.

ഒരു മണിക്കൂർ പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് വിശേഷമൊന്നുമില്ലാതെ ബസ്സ് ഓടി. മറ്റു വാഹനങ്ങളും ഞങ്ങളുടെ മുന്നിലും പിന്നിലുമായി ഓടുന്നുണ്ട്. പെട്ടെന്ന് ബസ് നിർത്തി. ബസ്സിൻറെ ഹോൺ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നില്ലത്രെ. ഡ്രൈവർ ഇറങ്ങി എന്തെല്ലാമോ തിരുപ്പിടിച്ചു. കാര്യമില്ല. ഹോൺ ശരിയാക്കാൻ അയാൾക്ക് കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല. ഒപ്പമുള്ള വാഹനങ്ങൾ മുന്നിൽ പോയിക്കഴിഞ്ഞു. അവസാനം എല്ലാവരുടേയും ജീവൻ സാക്ഷാൽ കേദാർനാഥൻറെ കയ്യിലേല്പിച്ച്, ഡ്രൈവർ വാഹനം സ്റ്റാർട്ട് ചെയ്തു, ഹോണില്ലാതെത്തന്നെ. വിവരമറിഞ്ഞ ഞങ്ങൾക്ക്, ആ പാതയുടെ വീതിയും വളവുകളും കണ്ട്, ജീവൻ തൊണ്ടവരെ എത്തി. ദേവാനുഗ്രഹമുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ മടങ്ങിവന്ന് ബന്ധുക്കളെ കാണാം. അല്ലെങ്കിൽ പത്രങ്ങളിൽ ഒരു വാർത്ത മാത്രമായി ഒരുങ്ങാം, “ഓ ഭഗവാൻ, ഹർ ഹർ മഹാദേവ്.”

തെഹ്രി

അല്പംകൂടി പോയപ്പോൾ, എനിക്കു തോന്നി, പരിഭ്രമിച്ചിട്ടെന്തു കാര്യം. പത്തുമുപ്പതു കൊല്ലമായി അതേ പാതയിൽ ഓടിക്കുന്ന ആളാണ് നമ്മുടെ ഡ്രൈവർ.

ഇത്രയും പരിചയസമ്പന്നനായ ഒരു സാരഥി ഉണ്ടാവുന്നതുതന്നെയല്ലേ ദൈവാനുഗ്രഹം? അദ്ദേഹത്തിൻറെ വൈദഗ്ദ്ധ്യത്തെ പഴിച്ചിട്ട് എന്തു കിട്ടാൻ?

എല്ലാം വിധിപോലെത്തന്നെ വരട്ടെ. ബാക്കിയുള്ളവരെ സമാധാനിപ്പിക്കാനെന്നവണ്ണം ഞാൻ ഉറക്കെ പറഞ്ഞു. മെല്ലെ മെല്ലെ എല്ലാവരും സാധാരണ നിലയിലേക്ക് വന്നു. ആ അപകടം പിടിച്ച യാത്ര രണ്ടു മണിക്കൂർ പോയപ്പോൾ, വലതു വശത്ത് വളരെ താഴെയായി ഒരു വലി തടാകം. വണ്ടി ഒരു മിനുട്ട് നിർത്തി പാർശ്വത്തിലേക്ക് ഇടാൻ പറഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ, ഡ്രൈവർ അനുസരിച്ചു. പാവം തോന്നി. നിറഞ്ഞ സമ്മർദ്ദത്തിൽ വാഹനം ഓടിക്കുകയായിരുന്നില്ലേ, ഒന്നു ദീർഘശ്വാസം വിടട്ടെ. ഡ്രൈവർ പറഞ്ഞുതന്നു, “തെഹ്രി ഡാമിൻറെ ജലനിരപ്പാണ് താഴെകാണുന്നത്. ഭാഗീരഥീ നദിക്കു കുറുകെയുള്ള തെഹ്രി അണക്കെട്ട് ലോകത്തെ ഏറ്റവും ഉയരം കൂടിയ അണക്കെട്ടുകളിൽ അഞ്ചാമത്തെതാണ്. 855 അടി ഉയരമുണ്ട് തെഹ്രി അണക്കെട്ടിന്. 52

ചതുരശ്ര കിലോമീറ്റർ വലിപ്പമുള്ള തടാകമാണ് അതിനുള്ളത്. അന്നത്തെ തെഹ്രി നഗരവും നൂറിലേറെ ഗ്രാമങ്ങളും അത് മുക്കി കളഞ്ഞിട്ടുണ്ട്. ” (പിന്നീട് ടൌൺ പ്ലാനിങ്ങോടെ അതിമനോഹരമായി നിർമ്മിച്ച തെഹ്രി നഗരമാണ് തെഹ്രി ജില്ലയുടെ ആസ്ഥാനം) ജലസേചനത്തിനുള്ള കുടിവെള്ളത്തിനും ആയിരം മെഗാവാട്ട് വൈദ്യുതി ഉല്പാദിക്കാനും തെഹ്രിയ്ക്കു കഴിയുന്നു. ഏറെക്കുറെ ഉത്തരാഞ്ചലിന്നു വേണ്ട വൈദ്യുതി മുഴുവൻ അവിടെ ഉണ്ടാക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ഭൂകമ്പസാധ്യതയുള്ള സ്ഥലത്താണ് തെഹ്രി അണക്കെട്ട് എന്നു പല വിദഗ്ദ്ധരും എതിർപ്പ് പറഞ്ഞെങ്കിലും ഒരു വിധപ്പെട്ട് ഭൂകമ്പങ്ങളെയെല്ലാം ചെറുക്കാൻ അതിനു കഴിയുമെന്നാണത്രെ അതു നിർമ്മിച്ചവരുടെ അവകാശവാദം. അടുത്തടുത്തു നിൽക്കുന്ന രണ്ടു കുന്നുകളെ കല്ലും മണ്ണും സിമന്റുമിട്ട് ചേർത്താണ് ആ അണക്കെട്ട് നിർമ്മിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്. ഹിമാലയത്തിൻറെയും മന്ദാകിനിയുടെയും പരിശുദ്ധിയി



Manimahesh-lake



Bhageerathi

ലേക്കുള്ള ഒരു കടന്നുകയറ്റമാണ് തെഹ്രി അണക്കെട്ട് എന്ന് ഹിന്ദുവാദികളും പരിസ്ഥിതിവാദികളും പ്രകടിപ്പിച്ച എതിർപ്പിനേയും മറി കടന്നാണ് അത് നിർമ്മിക്കപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുള്ളത് എന്നത് പ്രത്യേകം പ്രസ്താവ്യമാണ്.

കുറെകൂടി പോയി, ബസ് ഒരു വലിയ കയറ്റം കയറി, കിതച്ചുകൊണ്ട് നിന്നു. ആ ബസ്സിനും ഡ്രൈവർക്കും ഒരുപോലെ വിശ്രമം ആവശ്യമാണെന്നു തോന്നി. ഞങ്ങൾ ഒരു ഉയർന്ന മലയുടെ നെറുകയിലാണ്. ആകപ്പാടെ ഒരു ചായക്കടയുണ്ട് അവിടെ. പ്ലാസ്റ്റിക് ഷീറ്റുകൊണ്ട് മേയുകയും മറയ്ക്കുകയും ചെയ്ത ഒരു പരുങ്ങൽക്കട. രണ്ടോ മൂന്നോ പേർക്ക് വേണമെങ്കിൽ ഇരിക്കാൻ കസേരകളുണ്ട്. ആകപ്പാടെ പ്രായം ചെന്ന ഒരു സ്ത്രീ മാത്രമാണ് അവിടെയുള്ളത്. കുറെ നേരമായി ഇരുന്ന് മടുത്തതല്ലേ, ഒന്നു കാലു നിവർക്കാൻ എല്ലാവരും താഴെഇറങ്ങി. ഓരോ ചായയും ഓർഡർ ചെയ്തു. തികച്ചും വിജനമായ ഒരു പ്രദേശം. ചായ ഉണ്ടാക്കുന്നതിനിടെ ഞാൻ ആ ചായക്കടകാരനോട് ചോദിച്ചു, ഏതാണ് ആ സ്ഥലമെന്ന്. അത് കദംബാൽ എന്ന സ്ഥലമാണ്, ഖാൽ എന്നാൽ മലയുടെ നിറുക എന്നാണത്രെ അർത്ഥം.

പുറത്ത് വെയിലാണ്. പക്ഷേ നിലാവത്ത് നിൽക്കുംപോലെ. ഒട്ടും ചൂടില്ല. ചെറിയ തണുപ്പുള്ള ഒരിളംകാറ്റ് വീശുന്നുണ്ട്. ഞങ്ങൾ ആ പ്രകൃതിഭംഗി ആസ്വദിച്ച് പാതയുടെ പാർശ്വത്തിൽ ചായ കാത്തുനിന്നു. തൊട്ടുമുന്നിൽ ഒരു കുർത്ത മല. മലയുടെ നിറുകയിൽ ഒരു അമ്പലം. കുന്നിന്റെ കാണാവുന്ന ഭാഗത്തെല്ലാം വീതിയിലുള്ള കല്ലടവുകൾ പോലെ ഭൂമി തട്ടുതട്ടായി വെച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. കൃഷിയ്ക്കായിരിക്കണം എന്നു തോന്നി, കാര്യമായ കൃഷിയൊന്നും കാണാനില്ലെങ്കിലും. ഒറ്റ മനുഷ്യജീവിയേയും ആ പ്രദേശത്തൊന്നും കാണാനില്ല. ഇങ്ങനെ മനുഷ്യവാസമില്ലാത്ത പ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽ ക്ഷേത്രമുണ്ടായിട്ടെന്തു കാര്യം? മത്രമല്ല, എന്തിനാണ് മനുഷ്യന് എത്തിപ്പെടാൻ ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടുള്ള, ദുർഘടങ്ങളായ സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽത്തന്നെ ക്ഷേത്രം പണിയുന്നത്? ഭാരതത്തിൽ സാധാരണമാണെങ്കിലും, തൃപ്തിയായി ഉത്തരം കിട്ടാത്ത ഒരു പ്രഹേളികയാണിത്. അന്വേഷിച്ചപ്പോൾ, ആ കുന്നിനു ചുറ്റുമുള്ള ചില കുന്നുകളുടെ പാർശ്വങ്ങളിലും അടിവാരത്തിലും ചില ഗ്രാമങ്ങളുണ്ടെന്ന് അറിവായി. സൂക്ഷിച്ചു നോക്കിയപ്പോൾ, ഉറുമ്പുകളെപ്പോലെ രണ്ടു മനുഷ്യജീവികൾ അകലെ താഴെപണിയിൽ ഏർപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നത് കാണുകയും ചെയ്തു.

അകലെയായി തെഹ്രി അണക്കെട്ടിന്റെ ജലാശയം കാണാം. ഡ്രൈവർ ചൂണ്ടി കാട്ടി തന്നപ്പോഴാണ് അത് കണ്ടത്.

അകലെ നേർത്ത മുടൽമഞ്ഞിന്റെ മൂടുപടത്തിനപ്പുറം തെഹ്രി അണക്കെട്ടിന്റെ നല്ലവണ്ണം തെളിയാത്ത ദൃശ്യം. ഞങ്ങൾ എല്ലാം കണ്ട്, ചിലതെല്ലാം ക്യാമറയിൽ പകർത്തി. പതിനഞ്ചു മിനുട്ടുകൾ കഴിഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ ഞങ്ങൾ വീണ്ടും ബസ്സിൽ കയറി. അപ്പോൾ ഡ്രൈവർ വന്നു പറഞ്ഞു, “ആ മൂലയിൽ ഇരിക്കുന്ന സ്ത്രീ ഒരു അപേക്ഷയുമായി വന്നിരിക്കയാണ്. അവർ കാലത്ത് ബസ് പിടിച്ച് പോകാൻ വന്നതാണ്, നമ്മൾ പോകുന്ന വഴിയിലെ ഒരു ഗ്രാമത്തിലേക്ക്. അവർ ഇവിടെ എത്തുന്നതിനു തൊട്ടുമുമ്പ് ബസ്സ് പോയി. അടുത്ത ബസ്സ് വൈകുന്നേരമേ ഉള്ളൂ. അതിനു പോയാൽ ആ ഗ്രാമത്തിലെ ആമ്പോഴേയ്ക്കും ഇരുട്ടാകും. അതിനാൽ അവരെ നമ്മുടെ

ബസ്സിൽ കൊണ്ടുപോകാമോ? അവർക്ക് സീറ്റൊന്നും വേണ്ട, നിലത്ത് ഇരുന്നോളം.” ഞങ്ങൾക്ക് പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് ചിലവുമില്ല. “ആയ്ക്കോട്ടെ” എന്നായി ഞങ്ങൾ. അവരുടെ മുഖത്ത് അപ്പോൾ സ്മുരിച്ച ആശ്വാസവും കൃതജ്ഞതയും വിവരണാതീതം തന്നെയായിരുന്നു. അവരുടെ ലക്ഷ്യസ്ഥാനത്ത് ഇറങ്ങുമ്പോൾ അവർ ബസ് ചാർജ്ജ് തരാൻ ശ്രമിച്ചു. വേണ്ടെന്നു പറഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ ഞങ്ങൾക്കു മനസ്സിലാക്കാത്ത ഭാഷയിൽ കുറെ നന്ദിവാക്കുകൾ പറഞ്ഞു. അവരുടെ ഭാവത്തിൽനിന്ന് നന്ദി പറയുകയാണെന്ന് ഞങ്ങൾക്ക് മനസ്സിലായെന്നു മാത്രം.

ഹോണില്ലാതെ വണ്ടി ഓടിക്കൊണ്ടിരുന്നു. കുറെ പോയപ്പോൾ ഘർസാലി എന്നൊരു ഗ്രാമത്തിലെത്തി. ഡ്രൈവർ അന്വേഷിച്ചപ്പോൾ അവിടെ ഒരു മെക്കാനിക്ക് ഉറങ്ങുന്നു മനസ്സിലായി. ബസ്സ് അങ്ങോട്ട് നീങ്ങി. അര മണിക്കൂറിനുള്ളിൽ അയാൾ ഹോൺ ശരിയാക്കി. ഞങ്ങൾ ശ്വാസം നേരെ വിട്ടു, യാത്ര തുടർന്നു.

സമയം അഞ്ചുമണി ആയിക്കൊണ്ടും. ഞങ്ങളുടെ ബസ്സ് അഗസ്ത്യമുനി എന്നൊരു ഗ്രാമത്തിലെത്തി നിന്നു. ഞങ്ങളിറങ്ങി ഓരോ ചായ കുടിച്ചു. അവിടെ ഒരു ചെറിയ ഗൃഹയുണ്ട്, മന്ദാകിനി നദിയുടെ തീരത്ത്. അവിടെയാണത്രെ പണ്ട് അഗസ്ത്യമുനി തപസ്സ് അനുഷ്ഠിച്ചിരുന്നത്. എനിക്ക് വിചിത്രമായി തോന്നിയ ഒരു കാര്യം വിശ്വാസങ്ങളുടേതാണ്. കേരളത്തിലെ അഗസ്ത്യമലയും അഗസ്ത്യമുടിയും മറ്റും അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ തപോവനങ്ങൾ ആയിരുന്നു എന്നും കേട്ടിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഹിമാലയത്തിലെ മന്ദാകിനി തീരം എവിടെ കിടക്കുന്നു, പശ്ചിമഘട്ടനിരകളിലെ അഗസ്ത്യമല എവിടെ കിടക്കുന്നു! അവിടെയും ഇവിടെയും ഒരേ അഗസ്ത്യമുനി തപസ്സിരുന്നുവെന്നോ? എന്തെല്ലാം വിശ്വാസങ്ങൾ! ‘വിശ്വാസങ്ങൾ, അതല്ലേ എല്ലാം!

തൊട്ടുമുന്നിൽ ഏറെക്കുറെ ശാന്തമായിട്ടൊഴുകുന്ന മന്ദാകിനി. ഇവിടെ പുഴയ്ക്ക് വീതി കുടുതലും ആഴം കുറവുമാണ്. ആ നദി ഒന്നു തൊട്ടു സായുജ്യം നേടാനുള്ള അവസരം ആരാണ് ഒഴിവാക്കുക! ഞങ്ങൾ സോക്സ് അഴിച്ചുവെച്ച് വെള്ളത്തിലേക്ക് ഇറങ്ങി. ആത്മാവുവരെ കുളിരണിയിക്കുന്ന തണുപ്പാണ് വെള്ളത്തിന്. ആ നിർവൃതി അനുഭവിച്ചുതന്നെ അറിയേണ്ടതാണ്. കരയിൽനിന്ന് ഡ്രൈവറുടെ വിളി ഞങ്ങളെ ഭൂമിയിലേക്ക് തിരിച്ചെത്തിച്ചു. നേരം വൈകുന്നു. വേഗം ബസ്സിൽ കയറി പുറപ്പെട്ടു. ■



കാരാത്ത് സുധാകരൻ

പടയോട്ടം

പള്ളിക്കൂടത്തിലെ പാഠം 'പടയോട്ടം',
ഉള്ളിൽ അറിവിൻ വേരോട്ടം, എന്നാൽ
ബാലറ്റുയുദ്ധത്തിൽ നേട്ടം വരിയ്ക്കാനായ്
നാലുപാടും കൈകുപ്പി നെട്ടോട്ടം!

യുദ്ധം വിജയത്തിലെത്തിയ്ക്കുവാനേറെ
വിദ്യകളുണ്ടല്ലോ പൊക്കണത്തിൽ;
കാതിൽ കുളിർമ്മയേകുന്ന വാഗ്ദാനങ്ങൾ
തോതു കണക്കാക്കി വീതംവെയ്പ്പും!

കൊട്ടും കുഴലുമായ് സ്ഥാനാർത്ഥിയെത്തുമ്പോൾ
കൂട്ടത്തിൽ മേമ്പാടി മുദ്രാവാക്യം;
തട്ടിയും മുട്ടിയും കെട്ടിപ്പുണർന്നിടും
പാട്ടിലാക്കാൻ തക്ക പ്രാവിണ്യവും.

നാണമില്ലാത്തവർ നാണം കുണുങ്ങുമ്പോൾ
നാണക്കേട് കാണുന്നോർക്കേ വേണ്ടു;
സ്ഥാനത്തിനായുള്ള പരക്കം പാച്ചിലിൽ
മാതവും നാണവുമാരു നോക്കാൻ?

പണ്ടോരു നാൾ നാട്ടിലിത്തരം യാത്രയി-
ലുണ്ടായ സംഭവമോർക്കുന്നു ഞാൻ.

വണ്ടുപോൽ പാറിനടക്കുന്ന സ്ഥാനാർത്ഥി
പുണ്ടുവാരി തീലി മുത്തശ്ശിയെ!

മിണ്ടുവാൻപോലും കഴിയാത്ത മുത്തശ്ശിയ്-
ക്കുണ്ടായി പെട്ടൊന്നൊരാന്തലുള്ളിൽ;
വീണ്ടും സ്ഥാനാർത്ഥിത്വം തേടിയടുത്തപ്പോൾ
മണ്ടിയൊളിച്ചമ്മ കുരയ്ക്കുള്ളിൽ!

മറ്റൊരിടത്തു ഇദ്ദേഹത്തിനുതന്നെ
പറ്റിപ്പോയ് വീണ്ടുമമളി കേൾക്കു:
കൊറ്റിയ്ക്കുവെച്ചു കുളക്കോഴിക്കായപോൽ
തെറ്റി ലക്ഷ്യം പാടെ പാളിപ്പോയി!

യാത്രാമദ്ധ്യയൊരു മാനുനെ കണ്ടപ്പോൾ
സുത്രത്തിൽ മെല്ലെയടുത്തുകൂടി,
'എത്രനാളായി ചങ്ങാതി നാം കണ്ടിട്ട്'
സന്തോത്രംപോൽ ചൊല്ലി ഗാഢം പുണർന്നു!

കുറ്റംപറയരുതല്ലോ, യാത്രികനും
പറ്റും വിധത്തിൽ മര്യാദ കാട്ടി
മുറ്റിയ ആരോഗ്യബാഹുവലയത്തിൽ
പറ്റി വരിഞ്ഞു വിടാതെ നിന്നു.

രണ്ടേണ്ണം വിട്ടു മിനുങ്ങിനിൽക്കുന്നയാൾ-
ക്കുണ്ടോ സ്ഥാനാർത്ഥിയാണെന്ന ബോധം;
'കൊല്ലല്ലേ'യെന്നു കരഞ്ഞുപറഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ

എല്ലു നൂറുങ്ങാതെ രക്ഷപ്പെട്ടു!
കാടിന്റെ ഓമനമക്കളെ കാണുവാൻ
തേടി വലിഞ്ഞത്തും സ്ഥാനാർത്ഥികൾ;
കാട്ടിലെ ഹിംസ്രജന്തുക്കളെക്കാൾ യേം
നാട്ടിൽനിന്നെത്തുന്ന തന്മാക്കളെ!

മണ്ണിലിടംപോലുമില്ലാത്ത മക്കൾക്ക്
എണ്ണിയാൽ തീരാത്ത ദുര്യോഗങ്ങൾ;
തിരാസ്ക്കാരം ക്രൂരപീഡനമെന്നിയെ
ദുരവസ്ഥ മാത്രം ഇന്നു മിച്ചം!

കുടിവെള്ളം, പാഠശാലകൾ, യാത്രയ്ക്കായ്
റോഡുക,ളാശുപത്രികൾ തരാം;
പ്രീണനവാഗ്ദത്തങ്ങളേറെ പയറ്റിയും
താണുവണങ്ങിട്ടും വോട്ടുനേടും!

മാമുൽപ്രിയരെങ്കിൽ, നിങ്ങളൊന്നോർത്തോളു
ആമം കയ്യിൽ വീഴാൻ നേരം വേണ്ട;
നന്മകൾക്കെന്നും മരണമില്ലെന്നുള്ള
ഓർമ്മകൾ ഹൃത്തിലുണ്ടായാൽ നല്ലു!
സമ്മതിദാനാവകാശത്തിൻ മുല്യത്തെ
പുഴുതാ തട്ടിക്കളിക്കേണ്ടതല്ലാ;
മാനുഷവംശത്തിൻ മഹനീയതയ്ക്കുനം
വന്നാലനുചിതമെന്നു നൂനം:

പദ്ധതി പത്രത്തിൽ മാത്രമായാൽപ്പോരാ
ശ്രദ്ധദ്ധധയും വേണം ജനക്ഷേമത്തിൽ;
ഉദ്ദേശ്യശുദ്ധിയിൽ മാധം കലരുമ്പോൾ
തദ്ദേശവാസികൾക്കത്രേ ദോഷം!

ഓരോന്നു ചിന്തിച്ചു ചിത്തം പുകയുമ്പോൾ
നേരുന്നുണ്ടാവാമൊട്ടേറെ നേർപ്പു;
നേരായ മാർഗ്ഗേ ചലിക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുകിൽ
നേരിന്റെ നന്മകൾ പുത്തുലയും!

ചെയ്യും പ്രതിജ്ഞകൾ യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമാകുവാൻ
ചെയ്യേണമക്ഷീണം കൺതുറന്ന്;
മാർഗ്ഗവും ലക്ഷ്യവും സാക്ഷാത്ക്കരിക്കുവാൻ
ദുർഘട്ടമാകാതെ നോക്കുമിശൻ!



Pranav Menon

THE PARROT THAT FLEW AWAY

A blissful morning on a dim Friday
At the pet shop with squeaky mice
And purring cats happened to catch

My eyes for a golden fur of a retriever
When it wagged its fluffy tail and blinked
It's heart-warming puppy eyes
But.....behold for a creature.

The parrot that cackled and showed affinity
With its royal green-yellow feathers in
Regalia.
The chilli-red beak shone bright under the
brimming Sun.
I bought the parrot when she snuggled
Below my ear in purr and coziness

Cookies and sunflower seeds
Puddings and novels
Pomegranates and apples were our bonding
Friendship,
Patting by her green feathers and tapping
Her tiny beak.

Cages and perches were a torturous myth,
Climbing by the curtains and sofas were our hobby.
Days passed on with frivolous laughter and
Splish-splash bath tubs.

A day came before the crepuscule skies
Set in, when it was time for her
To fly to the endless skies and meet
Her own kind.

A day to fly from luxury and regalia
A day when my heart sank
Like the foot in the sands of the Thar Desert.
She soared high with propelling sorrow.
She raised her brimming polished feathers
And stretched them long to cross
The Infinite skies.



വി വി അച്യുതൻ

വിശ്വസുന്ദരി

ചുക്കിച്ചുളിഞ്ഞ മുഖവുമായ്പ്പുമുഖ-
ത്തിണ്ണയിൽ ദുഃഖിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു മുത്തശ്ശി
ആയില്ലത്തില്ലത്തെ വിഷ്ണുനമ്പൂരിതൻ
ആരോമലാപുത്രി ഗായത്രിതാനിവാൾ.

ബാലികയായിരിക്കുമ്പോഴേസംഗീത-
മോഹനനൃത്തങ്ങളുസിച്ചോളിവൾ
ഭൂലോകസുന്ദരിപട്ടം ലഭിക്കുവാൻ
വിലോമങ്ങളൊന്നുമില്ലാതെ നേടിയോൾ
ദർശനമായുമം നിത്യമവളുടെ
വശ്യസൗന്ദര്യ ലഹരി പകർന്നേകി.
അമ്പലമേടുകളാഭരണശാല;
വെള്ളിത്തിരയിലും സാന്നിധ്യമേകിയോൾ
ആരാധകവുനും ചുറ്റിവളയുന്നു
സൈരമൊട്ടുമേ നൽകാതെ രാപ്പകൽ
ഐശ്വര്യസമ്പൽസമൃദ്ധിപ്രസിദ്ധികൾ
വിശ്വസഞ്ചാരമവളിൽ നിറഞ്ഞില്ലേ!

പൂർണ്ണത തേടുവാനത്ര തുനിഞ്ഞാലും-
മാലക്ഷ്യം നേടുവാനസാദ്ധ്യമത്രേ!
ഒരു യാത്രമദ്ധ്യേയാരും നിനയ്ക്കാതെ-
യാപത്തു വന്നല്ലോ; കാലൊന്നു പോയല്ലോ
ആകാശമദ്ധ്യേ വിരാജിക്കുമാദിത്യൻ
പെട്ടെന്നു പോയ്പ്പോയി, കുരിശുൾ വന്നിതാ!
“ആരും വരേണ്ടയെൻ മൂന്നി,ലെന്നിയ്ക്കിനി-
യാരെയും കാണേണ്ട,നിയ്ക്കിനി ഞാൻ മാത്രം”.
ഗായത്രി ഓതിനാൾ, അന്തഃപുരംപുകി
കണ്ടില്ലയാരുമേയാ വിശ്വഗാത്രത്തെ
വർഷങ്ങളത്ര കടന്നുപോയി, സ്വന്തം
ഗാത്രത്തെ ഇന്നോളം നോക്കിയതുമില്ല.

ഏകാകിനിയായി ജീവിപ്പു ഗായത്രി,
നഷ്ടബോധം തൻറയാനനമാക്കിയും
പുമുഖത്തിണ്ണയിൽ കുനിയിരിക്കുന്ന
വ്യഥയാം രൂപത്തെ കാണുന്നതില്ലയോ?

IS SOCIETY ENABLING ADDICTION?



Dr Sujatha Nair

■ Addiction to alcohol and drugs today, is a problem that has beset the society at large. It is not a “it cannot happen to me” or “it cannot happen to us “scenario any

longer. It could be someone in your neighbourhood, friends, relatives, family or that someone can even be you!

Gone are the days when a person would consume alcohol to enjoy the taste, the drink and the good feel it leaves behind.

The current young generation are the ones that live on the fast track, the ones for whom the world is in the palm of their hands with smartphones and the internet. Families are nuclear and the pocket money large, the time spent as a family is lesser, dysfunctionalities abound.

The youth get into experimenting

with drugs and alcohol. In the past it was macho/cool to be smoking a cigarette, today if you don't smoke a joint or drink you are a nerd and uncool.

The norm is to drink to get drunk. children are getting into substance usage from the age of 15 or 16 and these are through all strata of society. A young patient of mine who would get “smashed” over the weekend with his group of friends told me “what is the fun in drinking doc if one does not get drunk every single time?”

Is the society today enabling increased consumption of alcohol and drugs? Alcohol is not advertised overtly as per the law of the land. However, subliminal marketing in the form of the alcohol brands selling other products like mineral water or soda etc is advertised. There is a new watering hole opening everyday. Consumers are enticed with happy hours wherein unlimited drinks are served at a minimal price. These

target the youth who have limited monies in their pocket. At the same time in some places there is talk of prohibiting alcohol. This leads to hoarding stocks of alcohol, encourages black marketeering of the same, thus leading to an increase in criminal activities and consumption.

Sadly, thus, the youth of today who drink to get drunk are in grave danger of being potential alcoholics.

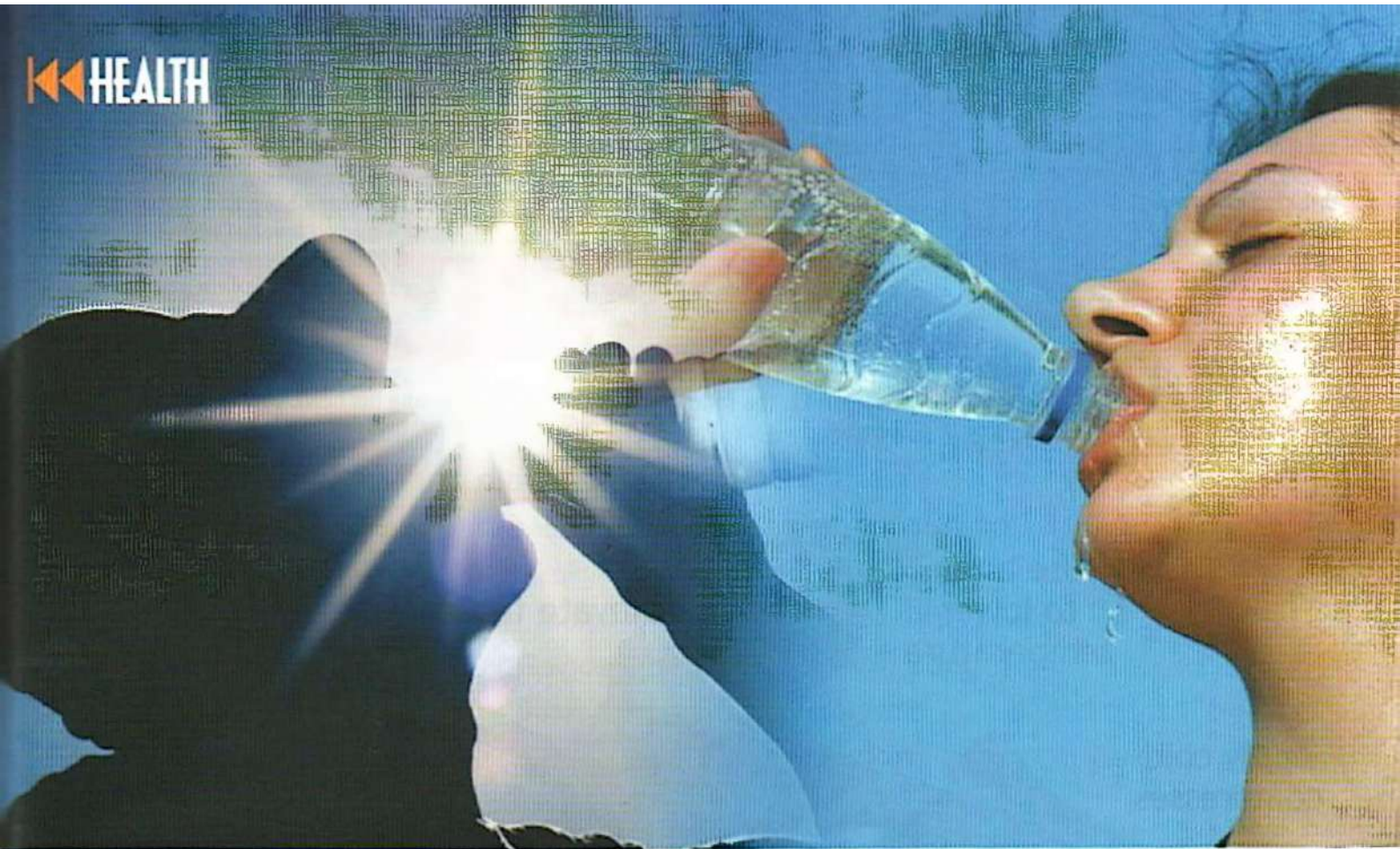
The way forward is to increase awareness amongst youth regarding addiction and addictive traits and to share the solution of an alternate life beyond drugs and alcohol.

We at AH facilitate such awareness programs.

For any clarifications contact
Dr Sujatha Nair on 09820330439



Anatta Humaniversity Pvt.Ltd.
Contact Person:
Ms. Vandana Hiranandani
+91 9967334000
Website- www.anatta.in



SUN STROKE



Dr. (Major) Nalini Janardhanan

■ The scorching heat of summer is harmful to our health. The most dreaded condition in summer is sun stroke or heat stroke which occurs when a person is exposed to hot environment doing

exercise or physical activities or by simply sitting outside for a long time. So many people die due to heat stroke. It is a life threatening condition which needs immediate treatment. When a person loses water and salt from his body he can develop heat cramps or later heat exhaustion. But when the internal temperature of body gradually rises above 40°C, heat stroke can develop and it can be fatal. Mild heat related

illness like heat cramps, heat syncope (fainting) and heat exhaustion can progress to the severe form of heat stroke. Heat stroke is a medical emergency as it can cause damage to brain and other internal organs. It can develop with very little or no warning, causing unconsciousness within minutes.

Causes:

1) Exertional heat stroke can occur if a person does intense physical activity

or exercise in hot environment, e.g.: Heat related medical emergencies during sports events.

2) Classic or Non exertional heat stroke caused by exposure to hot and humid environment for long periods of time.

Risk factors

Factors which increase the chances of heat stroke are:

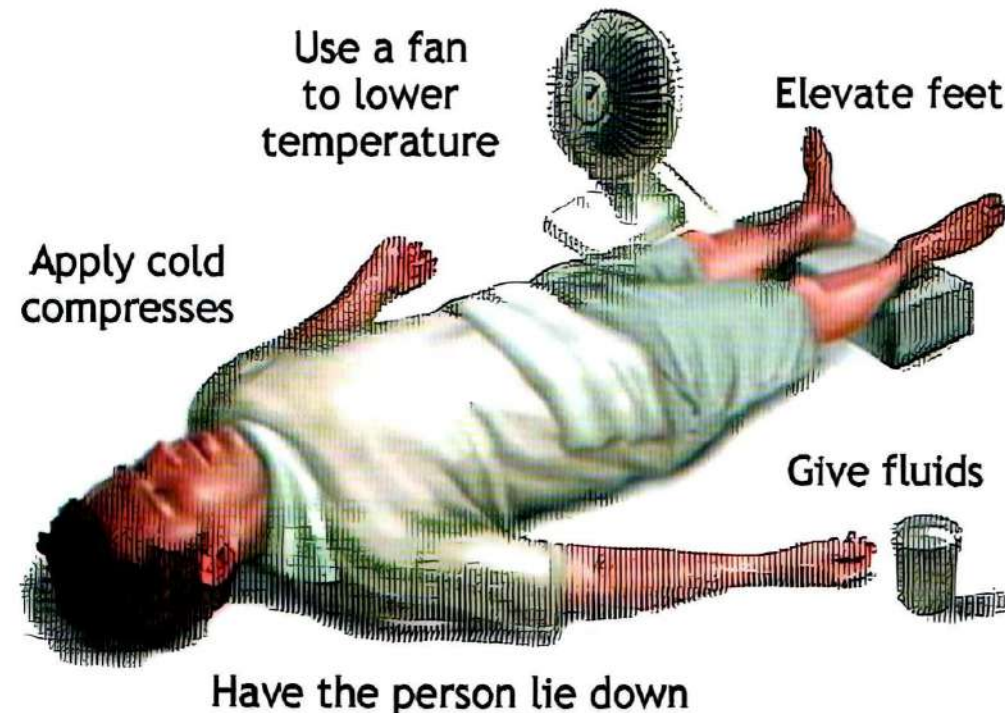
- 1) Exertion in high temperature outside.
- 2) Age- Young children and elderly people are more at risk.
- 3) Certain medications used for treating diseases may increase the risk.
- 4) Sudden exposure to extreme hot weather.
- 5) Sleep deprivation increase the risk.
- 6) Diseases: - Diabetes, Mental illness, Obesity, Diseases of heart, lung and kidneys and gastroenteritis can



increase the risk. Previous history of sunstroke is also a risk factor.

7) Wearing too much clothes, drinking alcohol and not replacing water lost due to sweating all these factors increase the chances of getting heat stroke. We must also take fluids along with salt to replace the salt lost through sweat. (e.g. lime juice with salt, buttermilk, sports drinks etc).

Symptoms



Early symptoms of heat related illness are giddiness, weakness and nausea. It is important to move out of the heat, cool off and rehydrate immediately to avoid severe problems. Reduced production of urine, concentrated urine (dark coloured urine) and strong smell of urine indicate that your fluid intake is not adequate. Urine is clear when there is enough fluid in body. In hot weather, we must drink enough water and other fluids to make the urine clear.

In the severe stage of heat related illness i.e. Heat stroke Symptoms are: headache, dizziness, discomfort, nausea, throbbing headache, vomiting. The body temperature increases greater than 104° F or 105° F. The patient may have rapid heartbeat, rapid and shallow breathing, hot flushed (red) and dry skin, full bounding pulse and lack of sweating. He may develop fits, restlessness, confusion, muscle

weakness or cramps and disorientation. There will be a fast deterioration in the level of response later going into coma (unconsciousness).

First Aid and Treatment

The main aim is to bring down the patient's temperature and take him away from the hot environment. When you happened to see a person suffering from heat stroke, the following first aid can be given:

- Quickly move the person to a cool place (AC room or room with fans or even tree shade will do) and remove his outer clothing.

- Immediately call for ambulance and inform doctor or hospital using emergency numbers.

- Wrap the person in a cold wet sheet and keep pouring cold water over it until the body temperature falls to at least 38° C (100.4°F) (You may measure temperature with a thermometer kept under the tongue or armpit).

- If there is no sheet, you may put on fans or AC or use hand fans or sponge down the person with cold water or apply ice packs to armpits, groin, neck and back. The person can be given a shower or bath with cold water.

- Cooling drinks can be given in sips if he is conscious. Avoid alcohol.

- Once the temperature becomes

normal, change the wet sheet and cover him with a dry sheet.

- While waiting for medical help, keep checking his pulse, temperature, breathing and level of response.

- If the body temperature again increases, repeat cooling process to lower the temperature.

- If the person becomes unconscious, open his airway by gently lifting his head. Check breathing, pulse and heart rate. Give cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) if needed. (When the patient's condition worsens).

Prevention

- Avoid exercise and physical exertion in hot humid weather. Take precautions if you have to exercise or work outdoors. Reschedule or cancel outdoor activities. Shift your time outdoors to the coolest times of the day (early morning or evening). If you are out in the sun, take frequent rests in shade.

- Clothing: - Wear light coloured, loose fitting and light weight cotton clothes only.

- Timing: - Don't expose yourself to the extreme heat from sunrays during the hottest part of the day. (11 AM to 3 PM).

- Sunburns: - Avoid sunburns and heat related illness by protecting yourself with umbrella, scarf or hats. Apply sunscreen with SPF 30 or more, before stepping

out.

- Parked cars: - Never leave someone especially children in car during summer. In a sealed car the temperature can rise almost 7°c within 10 minutes.

- Those who have increased chances of heat stroke (elderly, children, patients on certain medications, alcoholics etc) should not go out in extreme hot climate.

- Avoid fluids containing Caffeine and alcohol.

- Fluids: Maintain fluid intake to replace fluids lost through sweating. Avoid dehydration by taking plenty of fluids and maintain a clear and light coloured urine. Check with your doctor before increasing fluid intake if you have heart disease, kidney disease, fits or liver disease.

Stay cool and hydrated this summer! ■

ലക്ഷാർച്ചന കണ്ടു...

Film: Ayalathe Sundari (1974)

Lyrics: Mankombu Gopalakrishnan Music: Shankar Ganesh
Singer: K J Yesudas Raagam: Mand



Karthika



Mankombu Gopalakrishnan

ലക്ഷാർച്ചന കണ്ടു മടങ്ങുമ്പോൾ ഒരു
ലജ്ജയിൽ മുങ്ങിയ മുഖം കണ്ടു
ലക്ഷാർച്ചന കണ്ടു മടങ്ങുമ്പോൾ ഒരു
ലജ്ജയിൽ മുങ്ങിയ മുഖം കണ്ടു
മല്ലികാർജ്ജുന ക്ഷേത്രത്തിൽ വെച്ചവൾ
മല്ലികാർജ്ജുന ക്ഷേത്രത്തിൽ വെച്ചവൾ
മല്ലീശ്വരന്റെ പുവമ്പു കൊണ്ടു
മല്ലീശ്വരന്റെ പുവമ്പു കൊണ്ടു

(ലക്ഷാർച്ചന..)



Shankar Ganesh

മുഖക്കുരു മുളയ്ക്കുന്ന കവിളിലെ കസ്തുരി
നഖക്ഷതംകൊണ്ടു ഞാൻ കവർന്നെടുത്തു (2)
അധരംകൊണ്ടധരത്തിൽ അമൃതം നിവേദിക്കും
അധരംകൊണ്ടധരത്തിൽ അമൃതം നിവേദിക്കും
അസുലഭനിർവൃതി അറിഞ്ഞു ഞാൻ
അറിഞ്ഞു ഞാൻ.

(ലക്ഷാർച്ചന..)

അസ്ഥികൾക്കുള്ളിലൊരുമാദ വിസ്മൃതി തൻ
അജ്ഞാതസൗരഭം പടർന്നു കേറി (2)
അതുവരെ അറിയാത്ത പ്രാണഹർഷങ്ങളിൽ (2)
അവളുടെ താരൂണ്യമലിഞ്ഞിറങ്ങി അലിഞ്ഞിറങ്ങി

(ലക്ഷാർച്ചന..)



K J Yesudas

Produced by G P Balan for Chandamani Films and directed by T Hariharan, Ayalathe Sundari had an array of interesting stars of that era. Prem Nazir, Jayabharati, K P Ummer, Adoor Bhasi, Sudheer, Raghavan, T S Muthaiah, Bahadur, Sankaradi, Sreevidya, Sreelatha, Meena, Prema, T R Omana, Khadija, Sadhana et al were some of the actors. Hariharan also wrote its screenplay based on his own story and Dr Balakrishnan penned the dialogues.

There were six songs and the singers were Yesudas, K P Chandramohan (Udayabhanu's younger brother), P Jayachandran, Sreevidya and Vani Jayaram. A song Kora kagas from Aradhana written by Anand Bakshi and sung by Kishore Kumar and Latha Mangeshkar was also included in it.



VINAY FORT

ACTING IS AS DEAR TO ME AS MY LIFE

Padmakumar

Vinay Fort is on the scene for more than a decade but he was noticed only last year in film 'Premam' in which he came as Professor and delivered the dialogue 'Java is simple and powerful...'

Q: There is a novelty in your name itself.

Vinay: My real name is Vinaykumar. If I type that name in Google, there would be at least five crore Vinaykumars will rise. So I decided that I should have a noticeable name. I added the half name of the city where I was born and brought up, Fort Kochi, to my half name, Vinay. Thus I reinvented myself as Vinay Fort.

Q: First film?

Vinay: 'Rithu' of Shyamaprasad. Nishan, Asif Ali, Rima Kallingal and me. A few new faces!

After a few films, I got a noticeable film, 'Apoorvaraagam' of Siby Malayil. It was followed by Shutter, Premam, Hello Namaste, Kammattipatam,... and the list goes on.

Q: You did some Kung Fu in Apoorvaraagam. Are you trained in martial arts?

Vinay: Basically I am a theatre artiste. After spending five years on the

stage, I got trained in Film Institute, Pune for two years. During this period, they used to train us in Karate, Kung Fu etc. Also a little bit of fighting, necessary for films. With that exposure, I did the Kung Fu in the film.

Q: Is it essential to be trained in Film Institute to be an actor?

Vinay: I am a person with a lot of limitations. I am not very handsome. Not a noted figure! I do not belong to a filmy family. Yet I love acting more than me. My intention was to reach the world of acting. In such circumstances,

earlier film. Once I complete a film, I do not try to contact them seeking more opportunities. My nature is like that. It may be my deficiency but I have to live with my shortcomings. Alfonse Puthran saw my performance in another film and then he called me offering the role in Premam. I never did a similar role earlier. When the role is challenging, it is interesting to the actor. Now films are transforming to be realistic.

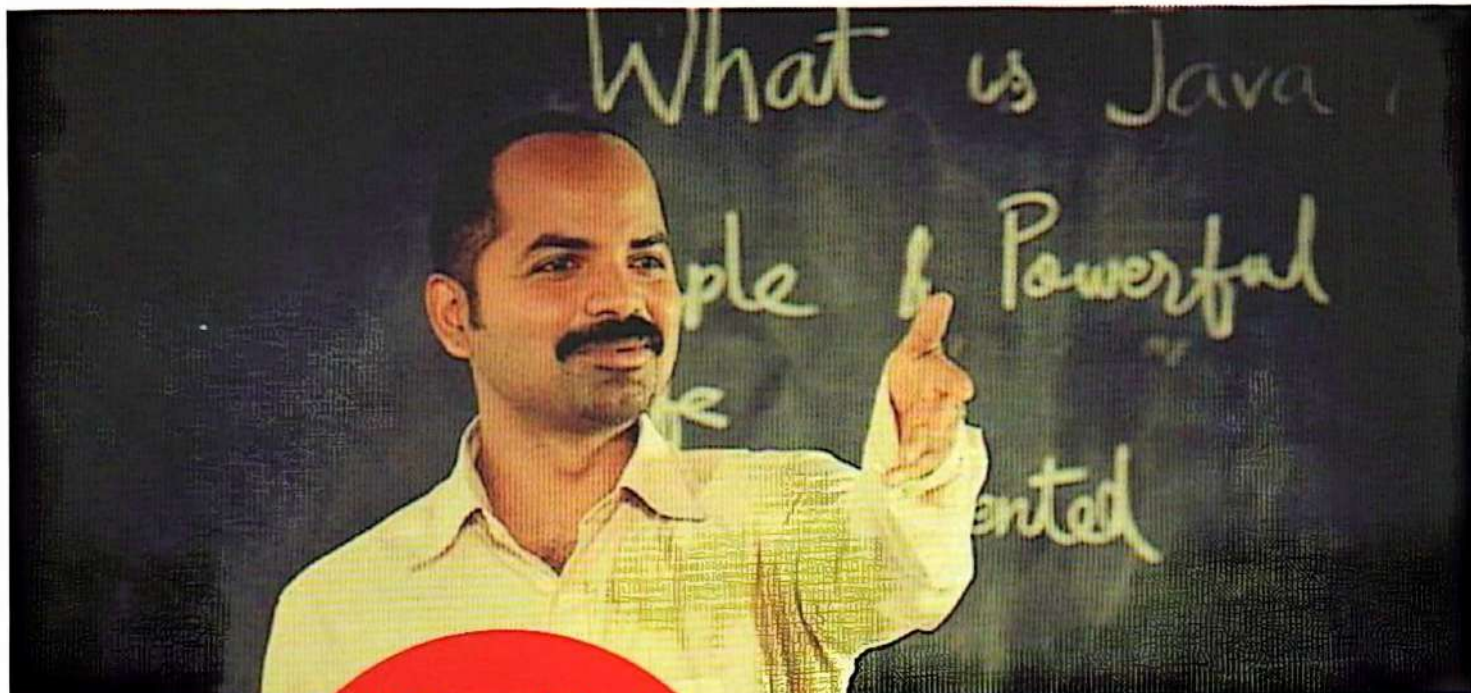
Q: Any role model for acting?

Vinay: I do not like to call it a role model. If people of my generation

number of important roles that one handled is important. A role that we never had an opportunity to be familiar with but could do convincingly, that is important. One such role I did in my forth coming film, Godse. Another film that gives me a lot of expectations is Rajiv Ravi's Kismet.

Q: Awards ?

Vinay: Most of I received were private awards. I received Asianet award for Premam. When I say private award... they invite all popular stars of the time and give them awards under a suitable



Whatever role I got, was given to me after seeing my performance in an earlier film. Once I complete a film, I do not try to contact them seeking more opportunities.

training in institute could be an entry pass to the industry. It helps us to polish our inborn talent to certain extent.

Q: How far this training from the institute benefitted Vinay Fort?

Vinay: My first film 'Rithu' happened without much difficulty. My noticeable film 'Apoorvaragam' took one year. My next important film 'Shutter' took two years to find me. 'Premam' took two years. Now 'Kammattipatam'. I have three films in row to be released now.

Q: For an actor, isn't it a long gap?

Vinay: What to do, I'm like this. I never approached anyone asking for roles. Whatever role I got, was given to me after seeing my performance in an

wanted to become an actor, the main factor is Mohanlal. His films and roles motivated us to become actors. It is a great influence.

Q: Did you have any opportunity to act with him?

Vinay: So far not.

Q: Which role captivated you?

Vinay: There is nothing like it. As far as an actor is concerned, he should identify his positive and negative traits. I could identify them early. There was nothing to be captivated. That would only lead to disappointment. Good screenplay, good cinema, good character that is what I look for. It is not the number of movies one did but the

category. They wanted only familiar faces and that is the criteria for the awards.

Q: How do you define acting?

Vinay: I am not competent enough to define acting in one line. I can tell you one thing. Everyone loves life. None wants die. How much I love life and how long I want to live, that much I love acting also. I belong to that rare breed who loves to do what he wants. That is certain.

Q: You are trained in Pune. Therefore any inclination to join Bollywood?

Vinay: No, not at all. I'm not that big. Eighteen out of the twenty people who studied with me there are now a part of Bollywood. After Kochi, I have more friends in Mumbai. Yet I never thought of leaving Malayalam films or Kerala. I always like to be comfortable, I love the food cooked by my mother, and I love my Fort Kochi. My heart is never after Mumbai that promises a faster life. ■



OOZHAM

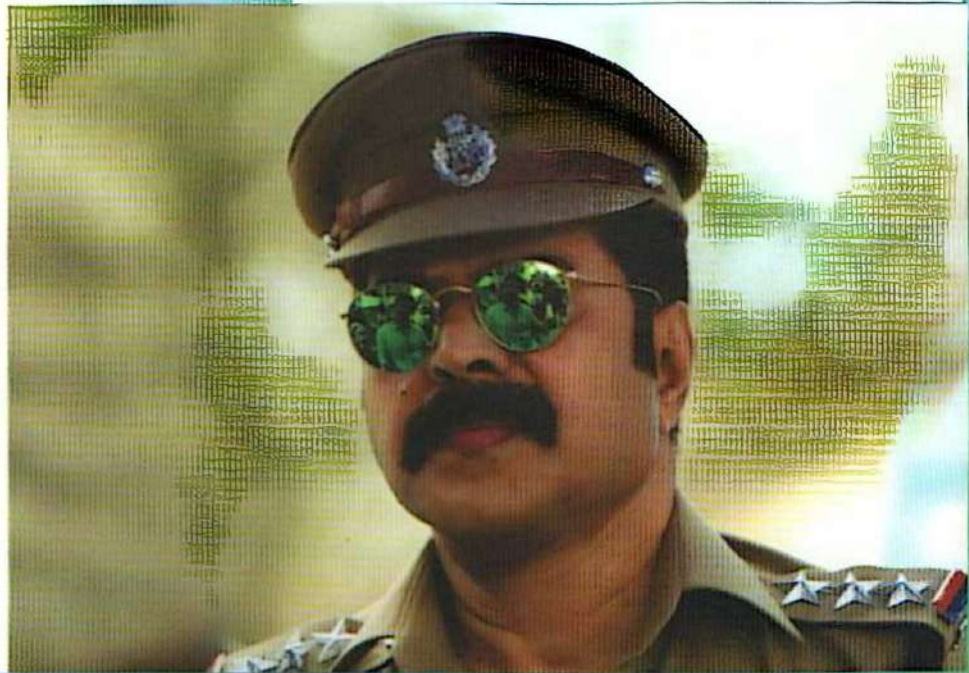
■ G George, Anto Jose Padinjarekkara and Mathew produce Oozham under the banner Fine Tune Pictures and Jithu Joseph directs it using his own screenplay. Prithviraj and Divya Pillai are the leading pair. Debutant Rasna and the experienced Balachandra Menon are having stellar roles in this film. Neeraj Madhav, Seetha, Pasupathy J P, Irshad, Kishore Sathya, Dinesh Nair, Anson Paul, Tony Luka et al are also in this movie. Anil Jones handles the music department.

KASABA

■ Nitin Ranji, son of Ranji Panicker, the screenplay writer and director who created many box office hits, is coming out with his maiden film, Kasaba with Mammootty in the lead role. The film will be released during next Ramzan.

Mammootty comes in the role of Rajan Scaria, a police officer. Tamil actor Saradkumar's daughter Varalakshmi is his heroine. Other artistes are Jagadish, Abu Salim, Tamil actor Sampath et al.

The film is being shot around Kochi. Rahul Raj scores music of this film.



KUTTIKALUNDU, SOOKSHIKKUKA

■ Screenplay writer Kalavur Ravikumar directs this film. Anoop Menon, Bhavana, Master Sanoop Santhosh, Master Siddharth Ajith, Baby Suryachandana et al are playing important roles.

The story is built around the mischief played by the children for the benefit of their parents and the problems arising out of it.



ORE MUGHAM

■ It is directed by debutant Sajit Jagad Nandan. Jayalal Menon and Anil Biswas produce it on behalf of Backwaters Studios.

Dhyan Srinivasan, Aju Varghese, Deepak, Arjun, Salim, Ranji Panicker, Maniyan Pilla Raju, Balaji, Cheman Vinod, Sreejith Ravi, Abhirami, Krishnaprabha, Devi Ajith et al present important characters. Gayathri Suresh and Prayaga Martin are the heroines. Deepu S Nair Sandeep Sadanandan wrote the screenplay and Lalji Kattiparamban penned the lyrics. Music is by Bijibal.

PATHU KALPANAKAL

■ Pathu Kalpanakal (Ten Commandments) is written and directed by film editor Don Max. Anoop Menon, Meera Jasmin and Kaniha present the main characters. Prasant Narayanan, a Malayali actor from Bollywood is also presenting a character in this film. Other actors are Joju George, Thampi Antony, Binu Adimali, Swamy, Sethulakshmi, Kavitha Nair, Shibin, Kulappulli Leela, Josutty and Rithika.

Sreenplay is written by Sangeeth Jain-Sooraj. Mithun sets the tunes to the lyrics written by Romi Puramadam.



SATHYA

■ Jayaram who goes through a lean period for some time now makes a comeback through this film. The story is about a card player who migrates to Pondicherry from Kochi. Roma is in the female lead. Its story is written by A K Sajan.



Story Vs Heroine

The storyline is more or less the same, only the making has to be different. That is the narration style has to be different. Even if that is not possible, change the heroine. Every film should have a different heroine. Hero can be anyone; Dileep, Nivin Pauly of Dhyan Srinivas... No problem. It is easy to fetch new heroines; from modelling field, channels or through acquaintances. We use the services of Facebook also. There is no need of any knowledge of acting, as nobody creates female roles with any depth. They should be seen in one or two songs and some dance. Over. Using money or influence, some press write-ups, photo shoot, one or two channel interviews. Their visibility is for about a year and afterwards nobody knows where they disappeared.

There were three heroines in 'Premam.' If anyone of them could be the heroine in 'Action Hero Biju', nothing would happen to film. After Kavya Madhavan, Namitha Pramod had more films with Dileep. Later she became heroine in 'Amar Akbar Antony' in which she hardly had anything to do. Then she vanished.

The recently released Kunchacko Boban film 'Valleem

Thetti Pulleem Thetti', we saw Elder Shyamili, who had an earlier incarnation Baby Shyamili. She had one dialogue in the film. Why do the story writers create such heroines?

After the much celebrated return of Manju Warrier, she is now appearing in a number of advertisements and thus is familiar to serial watchers.

The 'lucky star' of 'Vellimoonga', Nikki Galrani became an untouchable when two of her films flopped. Archana Kavi, Mythili, Ramya Nambissan, Parvathy Nair, Priyamani, Bhama, Meghna Raj, Ananya, Honey Rose, Jyothi Krishna, Janani Iyer et al started with super heroes in one or two films and ended with channels or sometimes paired with unknown newcomers.

Where are the heroines introduced by Kamal through 'Celluloid'? Where are Lal Jose' heroines, heroine of 'Jacobinte Swargarajyam,' heroines of 'Su Su Sudhivalmikam', heroine of 'Maheshinte Prathikaram'? Despite the films become hits, and heroes are repeated, the plight of heroines are sad. Their characters are not much of any importance. To put an end to this trend, powerful characters are to be created for them and more capable artistes should enter the field. The case of capable and popular singers vanishing from the world of film music, shouldn't happen to the female leads.



Film Critics Awards

Kerala Film Critics Association declared its 39th film awards.

'Ennu ninte Moideen' won the award for the best film and its director R S Vimal is chosen the best director. While Prithviraj won the best actor award for the same film, Parvathy got the best actress Award for the same film as well as for 'Charlie'. Member of Parliament Innocent was chosen for the award 'Chalacitraratnam' for his overall contributions to the films.

Kaviyoor Shivaprasad, Bichu Thirumala and Mallika Sukumaran received Chalachitra Pratishbha Award. The

second best film is 'Kaattum Mazhayum' directed by Harikumar. 'Charlie' and 'Oru Vadakkan Selfie' were chosen the most popular films.

Other awardees are: Second best actor-Prem Prakash (Nirnayakam), Second best actress- Lena (Ennu Ninte Moideen), Story-Lenin Rajendran (Edavappathi), Lyrics-Antony Abraham (Ormakalil Oru Manjukalam), Music-M Jayachandran (Nirnayakam, Ennu ninte Moideen), Male singer-P Jayachandran, Female singer- K S Chithra, Photography-Joemon T John, Editing-Mahesh Narayan, Sound recording-R P Anand Babu, Art-Jayashree Lakshmi Narayanan, debutant actor- Uttara Unni, Debutant director-Sathish Babusenana, Santhosh Babusenana (Chayam Poosiya Veedu), Child artist-janaki Menon, Vishalkrishna, ChildrenFilm-

Aakasangalkkappuram and Vikalpam.

Special Jury Award- Akkaldamayile Pennu, Social commitment award-Arani, Sanskrit film-Priyamanasam, special Jury award-Asif Ali, Sudhir Karamana. Awards will be presented during the last week of August.





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LINKING MUMBAI MALAYALEES

Email: keralainmumbai@gmail.com

Website: keralaimumbai.com

— 98201 10509 —