



# Kerala in Mumbai

**LINKING MUMBAI MALAYALEES**

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— 98201 10509 —

**EDITORIAL***Headlong Into Degeneration*

Loyalty, morality, ethics and adherence to principled behaviour all have taken a beating in the run up to the elections to the Kerala State Assembly, scheduled for this month.

Almost every aspirant for political office has found himself shorn of all respectability, social honour and standing, mainly by his own erstwhile colleagues and collaborators. The motive in all cases has been to ensure that the person concerned is deterred from contesting the elections or if he does, to face the prospect of defeat.

The allegations that have come out into the open include murder, rape, bribery, corruption, kidnapping, forgery and embezzlement of funds. At the end of the election process, when the new assembly meets, there would be hardly anyone with a clean image left to take office as Chief Minister or Minister of the State Government. If the ultimate choice thus falls on someone who has not contested the elections and who commands an untarnished reputation, it would do the State a lot of good. Luckily, there are politicians, from all shades of opinion in the State who can be inducted into office, as had been done in Maharashtra four months ago.

Someone with such an image and with authority is needed to clean up the social and moral degradation, downslide in social and ethical values in public life, let loose by the inordinate craze for filthy lucre.

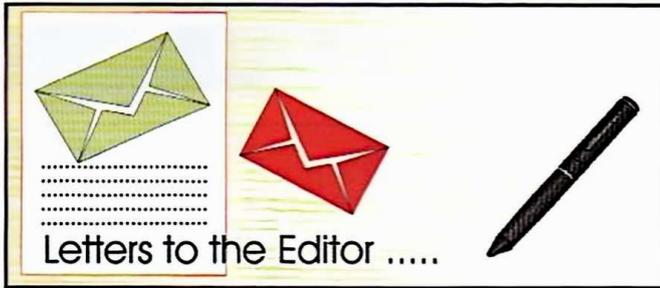
As if all the gory stories of political corruption is not enough, one comes across barbaric and medieval systems of making quick money that are rampant in parts of the State. The latest is the manner in which orphanages and special care centres for the mentally challenged girls and women are being used for surrogate breeding of children for adoption by foreign agencies or couples. This organised racket, leaves the poor girls with a pittance even though big money changes hands with the clients and the men who run the racket.

At a lower level, street corner thugs attach the label of a political party to themselves and set themselves up in the business of extorting money. The levels to which organised trade unionism has been reduced to extort money on any pretext provides such elements a nefarious cover for their operations.

As if to atone for all these sins and moral aberrations, the State is now witnessing a wave of religiosity a situation which Dr. S Radhakrishnan described a long time ago as "Irresponsible wealth and religious bigotry"

The elections underway are not likely to produce any different situation, socially or politically, since no party has candidates with an unblemished reputation to LEAD the State. To compound the decay in standards, a large number of turncoats are adopted as candidates by rival groups to further tarnish the blackened faces of their rivals.

In place of ideologies that seek to regenerate societies on healthy lines we now have reinvigorated casteist alignments, affinities and bonds in every party. There is consequently a growing feeling of unease and revulsion among the enlightened sections of people in the State. And on it rests hope for the future.



### VENKY- Another Facet

I am rather disappointed on your cover page story (March 2001) on Shri S Venkiteswaran, Sr Advocate . You have no doubt elaborated upon his meteoric professional success, but missed out the other nobler, dynamic and humane side of this great lawyer.

My association with Venky is three decades long. I have found in him something more and beyond a legal professional- a dominating personality who could charm and bring in line any hard nut. Venky was the chief advisor to the Pilots Guild during the IAC monopoly days and the entire pilot force drew guidance and inspiration from him. I have seen (late) Rajiv Gandhi, who was then a pilot waiting for him in his office. Mumbai's old era "dons" (Varadaraja Mudaliar et al) would not sit before him out of reverence and they always preferred to stand before him with folded hands. The entire film community-producers, actors, directors- looked upon him as a friend, philosopher and guide. He was the living God to many celebrities, to mention a few Hema Malini, Jagdish Kapoor, Shatrughan Sinha, the Hanuman fame Dara Singh, Nagma and so on.

Venky, though an authority on maritime matters, is no less in other legal areas. During my corporate days, I have had many occasions to avail of his legal services on non shipping matters.. He very ably handled my cases on Intellectual Property matters, joint venture/collaboration problems and even a few sensitive issues.. I have personally seen the attorneys in USA shrinking to dwarf size, when Venky presented my case before them. He floored them with his grasp on points of law and facts.

His time management skill is something to be admired and emulated. He never tells any one "I have no time". Always keeping a cheerful disposition, he is accessible to people of every stratum and has an ear for every one. With his 24x366 (leap year included) busy schedules of globe hopping - England, America, Europe, Singapore, Hongkong and Indian metros Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkatta, Kochi, he still never misses any social function He has been a pillar of strength and continues to be so for several organizations, notably, the Shanmukhananda Sabha, Subramania Samaj, the Asthika Samaj, and the Mumbai Keraleeya Samaj, to name only a few. All these organizations have benefited with his erudition, commitment and involvement. All of us should be proud of this Keralite who has made a mark globally

S.Ganesan

*Space constraints forced us to confine our profile on S Venkiteswaran to his professional achievements, which are unmatched. We are glad to reproduce S Ganesan's letter, which opens a window on Venky's social, cultural and educational involvements.*

Editor

### Kerala Beckons-Palakkad District

The above story published in your esteemed monthly (March 2011) was very interesting, highlighting the various value spots of Palakkad district. I appreciate the great efforts of "traveller" in compiling the same.

I hail from Aiylam village which is a part of Kottayi. In addition to Chembai Vidyanatha Bhagawathar and Guru Kunju Kurup about whom you have made reference, this village has also produced three men of unparalleled eminence.

(i) Justice A.S.Panchapakesha Iyer ICS who adorned the Madras High Court as Chief Justice for decades and also authored several outstanding books in English, Tamil and Malayalam including the most popular "Layman's Bhagawat Gita";

(ii) Shri.A.P.Venkateshwaran IFS who was the foreign Secretary to the Government of India, and last but not the least,

(iii) Major Ramaswamy who at the tender age of 23 sacrificed his life for the nation in a battle in Kashmir and, in recognition of which he was given a posthumous *Mahavirchakra* award and one road in Aiylam is named after him.

Anjalambal Ganesan

### Congratulations

Bit belated, yet hearty felicitations and Congratulations on KIM completing its first year, with considerable growth. I was present when the first issue of KIM was aptly launched by H.E. The Governor of Maharashtra, a true Keralite himself. Since then, the monthly issues have come with visible improvement each month. The Annual issue, with picture of H.E. The Governor himself on the cover page, shows the remarkable growth of KIM, in improving the quality and variety of its contents and in the whole production of the issue. Though myself a staunch Keralite at heart, but having left the state at very young age (over sixty years back), I have not had the opportunity to know many things about our magnificent state; but through your journal, I am now able to learn too many matters about Kerala, its culture, arts and people. Your effort in bringing the concept of KIM, I believe is a boon to many young and even old (like me) who did not have the opportunity to live and enjoy life in Kerala. All best wishes for the continued growth and popularity of KIM.

T.V.Ramachandran,  
President Variar Samajam, Mumbai

**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 them via e-mail to [keralainmumbai@gmail.com](mailto:keralainmumbai@gmail.com) or by post to Editor, Kerala In Mumbai, 105-B, Twin Arcade, Military Road, Mumbai 400 059.**

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# VISHU

## Kerala's Spring Festival

*Next to Onam, Vishu is the most important festival for Keralites. Some Mumbai Keralites relate their memories of Vishu.*

### Vishu: 'Then... and Now'

*Ambika Induchudan*

Vishu is a festival that signifies the dawn of hope for Malyalis all over the world. The first day of the New Year when we pray for the fulfilment of all our desires and aspirations for the whole year. The day also conjures up myriad memories of bygone Vishu days of my childhood which are vastly different from the present. Being an only child with no siblings to play with, I always looked forward to Vishu which meant vacations and a family get-together in my maternal and paternal ancestral homes at Calicut and Palakkad with my grandparents, uncles, aunts and lots of cousins. In today's world the families are scattered all over the world and such family get-togethers are rarely possible.

Land was not so dear then and all houses had huge compounds with mango and jack fruit trees and April being the time when these trees bore fruit, we children had a lovely time gorging on these fruits and also playing in the cool breeze under the trees. Global warming was unheard of then and the April heat wasn't as scorching as it is today. Days before Vishu, all the houses reverberated with the sound and glitter of crackers. Being an overprotected child, my dalliance with crackers was sadly limited to sparklers and the noisier ones

were lit by more adventurous cousins. The beginning of the Vishu day festivities was marked by the walk to the pooja room with eyes closed. If at all I happened to open my eyes before I saw the "Kani" there was always a niggling fear that it would affect the rest of the year adversely. Unlike today when we only have to worry about the caterer bringing the 'Sadya' in time for us to catch the special Vishu films on TV, the "Sadya" then was a source of great anxiety to the cooks and ladies of the house. The "Payasam" had to turn from white to pink with hours of boiling and stirring with no help from that great magic potion, we have today, the condensed milk.

After the sumptuous lunch the ladies retired to their rooms for some interesting gossip sessions. Now we all rush to the TV after lunch to watch the movies. We children would be counting those shining One Rupee coins which made us feel very rich and elicited a lot

of happiness. Today, of course we elders have learnt to adjust our rates to inflation and replace the One Rupee coin with a crisp hundred or even a thousand Rupee note as "Kaineettam". I am in no way a detractor of modern amenities and comforts, but I do feel nostalgic about my childhood Vishus and sometimes wish to turn the clock back. In all fairness, in those days if we had a glimpse into the future, we would have yearned for the Television and other modern comforts. It is a classic case of grass always being greener on the other side. I can only say that I feel blessed that I have been able to experience both in my lifetime and I can say with true conviction that, each year, when I open my eyes to the beautifully polished brass "Uruli" filled with mangoes, jack fruit, coconut, lovely yellow flowers and the lamps lit in front of God, my heart fills with joy and renewed strength to take on the year ahead.



## Pleasant Memories

*Upendra Menon*

Vishu takes us to nostalgic pleasant memories. Among kids Vishu was more important than Onam or Thiruvathira. Vishu kani in a large flat Bronze Uruli in which late grand parents, Guruvayurappan photos with coins, currency notes, gold, Vellarikka, Mirror, Konnapoo, Valkannadi, fruits, Kasavu kodimundu etc will be attractively displayed. Father would give Vishukkaineetam and we accept it with

folded hands and then do a sashtanga namaskaram at his feet to receive the blessings to make the entire year successful and pleasant. This will be followed by all the elders at home. Earlier we had joint families and used to collect a good amount. Vishukkaineetam is our first personal income. Though we may keep it with mother this is returnable and we are the owners of that much money. Crackers

were children's delight, crackers of different sizes, colours and sound level was part of the morning celebration. There in the Sky the Vishu bird will sing:

*"Witthum kaikkottum, kallon chakkittu kanda mundanda, konde thinnotte"*  
Awakening us to the call of hard work in the field and a call to "live and let live"

## VISHU the Harvest festival

*K A Viswanthan*

Vishu, one of the most important festivals of Kerala, also Kerala New year and harvest festival, is celebrated all over the world where Keralites live. Vishu falls on the first day of the Malayalam month of Medam on April 14. A festival of gaiety and renewal, this day is celebrated with great fun. This day is also celebrated as New year's day in Tamil Nadu.

The main ritual on this day is 'Vishukkani'. People make it a point to see all the auspicious things as soon as they wake up. On the previous night of Vishu, fresh agricultural produce such as rice, paddy, cucumber, jack fruit, arecanut, coconut and ripe plantains are aesthetically decorated and placed at the feet of Lord Krishna. A big mirror is also kept at the back of this decoration for reflection. The little yellow flowers called Konna Poovu are considered a must in this assemblage which is looked upon as the symbol of prosperity. This is called 'Vishukani'

There is a belief that to catch a glimpse of the reflection of these signs of prosperity in the mirror at the crack of dawn, would bring prosperity to the individual. The morning of the Vishu one of the members of the house, usually the eldest female member lights the lamp and looks at 'Kani'. She wakes up other members, one after another and the 'Kani' is shown to

every one of them, taking particular care not to allow anyone to look by chance at other things. Older members of the family give 'Kaineettam', a token amount of money, to the youngsters, as part of the celebrations. People carry on this custom believing that in this way, their children will be blessed with prosperity in future. Later they visit temples wearing new clothes and pray for a prosperous new year.

While the men and the children engage in bursting crackers, women start cooking a variety of delicacies for the day's lunch. The feast is prepared by the women of the household and the whole family sits down to enjoy the vishu lunch together. The dishes prepared from the vegetables and fruits that are abundant in the season like jackfruits, mangoes, pumpkins, coconuts and of course Pal payasam (keer).

In Mumbai the festival is celebrated in most of the temples where preferably the idol of Lord Krishna is kept. The notable one is at the Kochu Guruvayoorappan temple, also called Asthika Samaj at Matunga where Keralites from most part of the City visit, men wearing typical Mundu and females wearing Zari off white saree called 'Pamundu'. They stand in



serpentine queue from early morning for the darshan to see the 'Vishukani'. The unique feature of this temple is, it also has the idols of presiding deity Lord Rama with his consort Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman, Subramanya, Ayappa, Shiva, Vinayaka and the Navagraha devatas. In one visit to the temple the devotees can pray all the deities. That is the reason this temple is always crowded.

Another temple in the vicinity called Sri Sankara Mutt also displays the Vishukani in a befitting manner. Anyone visiting the temple on the morning of Vishu day is given a token one rupee coin. The temple also has the idols of Sivalinga and Adi Shankara.

A noted Maharashtrian temple near King's circle, named Marubai Gamdevi mandir which dates back to 18<sup>th</sup> century also displays Vishu. Here the Goddess Marubai Gamdevi was a Swayambhu (came on its own). The temple also celebrates all South Indian festivals like Navarathri Golu.

# EASTER

## CELEBRATION OF HOPE AND LIFE



**Easter is the oldest and most important Christian festival, as old as Christianity itself. The central tenet of Christianity is not the birth of Jesus but His resurrection. The message of Easter is hope in the resurrection. The Lord who raised Jesus from the dead will give resurrection to everyone. This year Good Friday falls on April 22 and Easter Sunday on April 24.**

way to the need for reconciliation with God and fellow beings.

### Ash Monday (karikkuripperunnal)

Ash Monday is observed on the Monday immediately after pethurtha Sunday (which means looking back) and is the beginning of 50 days of fasting. During the Ash Monday service, the celebrant makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the members of the Church with Ashes (vibhoothi) made out of the blessed palm fronds received on Palm Sunday during the previous years. It is a day of fasting and prayer.

### HOLY WEEK

Holy Week is the final week of Lent. It is the week that is observed in Christian Churches as a time to commemorate the Passion of Christ- Jesus Christ's sufferings leading to His death and resurrection.

The Holy Week starts with Palm Sunday takes us through Maundy Thursday and Good Friday and ends on Holy Saturday.

### Palm Sunday

Oshana Njayarazhcha, which is Palm Sunday is also called as Kuruthola Perunnal. A ceremonial procession around the church with priest and people holding the palm leaves and singing hosanna forms the highlight of the day. It denotes Jesus' triumphant entry into the town of Jerusalem.

### Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday or Pesaha is the day that denotes Jesus' last meal and His washing the feet of His disciples, Jesus' institution of the holy Eucharist, Jesus' praying at Gethsemane and Judas' betrayal of Jesus, leading to his arrest by Roman soldiers.

After the service in the church on Maundy Thursday, St Thomas Christians observe Pesaha at home under the leadership of the head of the family. After the evening prayer, biblical passage about the last supper is read while the 'pesaha appam' is broken

**Father Shaibu Paul Malethadathil**, vicar of St Thomas Catholic Church in Borivli, Mumbai describes how the Holy Week and Easter is observed by the Christians of Kerala of the St Thomas faith.

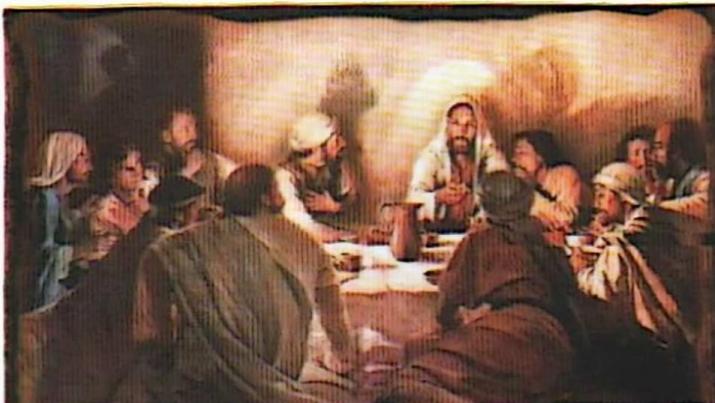


*Fr. Shaibu Paul Malethadathil*

### Lent: 50 days of fasting

Lent is the period of fasting of 40 days which comes before Easter in the Christian calendar. It is a season of reflection and preparation before Easter celebrations. It is marked by fasting, both from food and festivities. Whereas Easter celebrates the resurrection, Lent recalls the events leading up to and including Jesus' crucifixion by Rome.

The period of Lent - the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus - mark the climax of His salvific acts. By tradition, St Thomas Christians fasted and abstained from pethurtha Sunday to Easter Sunday. Lenten season calls our attention in a special



*The last supper of Jesus with His disciples*

## THE HOLY EASTER WEEK

The Holy Week of Easter starts with Palm Sunday, takes us through Maundy Thursday and Good Friday and ends on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter Sunday, the great festival of the Resurrection of Jesus, which begins on a fresh week.

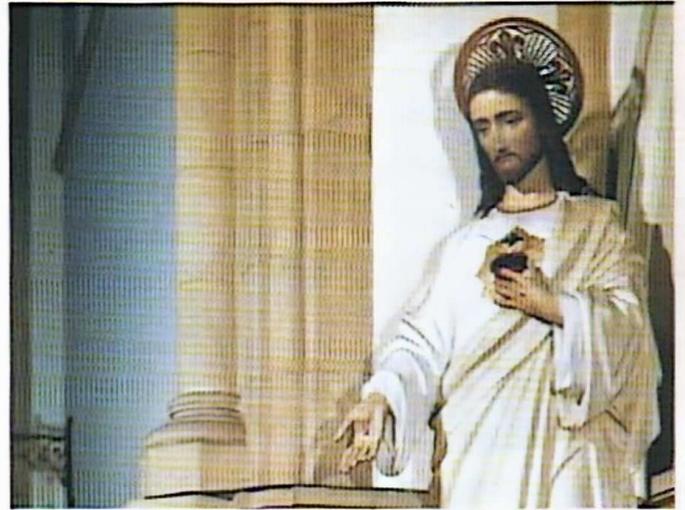
During the Holy Week, on the first three days, according to the Gospels, Jesus taught and preached in the temple and in Jerusalem. But His enemies conspired against Him and convinced Judas one of His disciples to betray Him by identifying Him to them. Maundy Thursday is the day of Jesus' last meal, his washing the feet of His disciples and institution of the Holy Eucharist or Holy Communion, Jesus' praying at Gethsemane and Judas' betrayal of Jesus leading to His arrest by Roman soldiers.

Good Friday commemorates Jesus' trial in the Roman courts and His being sentenced to Death. Jesus was tortured and humiliated and had to carry the Cross while making the long way to Golgotha (Calvary) outside Jerusalem. He was crucified, died on the cross and was buried. So Good Friday observes the Passion and death of Jesus Christ. It is a day of fasting and abstinence.

Holy Saturday is the day Jesus rested in His tomb. This is a day of vigil, calm and waiting leading to Easter celebrations that begin after nightfall.

According to the Gospels, on Easter Sunday when Mary Magdalene, Mary, Mother of Jesus and a few other women went to Jesus' tomb taking with them the burial spices, they found the stone that covered the entrance of the tomb had been rolled over. They went in but did not find the body there. An Angel of the Lord appeared and said to them, "Why are you looking among the dead for one who is alive? He is not here. He has been raised." (Luke: 24: 5-6). This is the essence of the Easter celebrations. The Resurrection became a reality when, according to the Gospels, Jesus was seen physically at public places at different times. So they accepted Him as the true Son of God and believed in His Resurrection.

In some Churches during Easter service, a big candle is lit by the priest and many candles are lit from it by the faithful indicating resurrection.



by the head of the family. With prayers, he gives to the woman of the house after soaking it in the 'pesaha Pal'. It is then distributed to the family members according to their age (eldest to youngest) in memory of the Paschal event.

During the service in the church, the priest washes the feet of twelve people (who represent the 12 disciples of Jesus Christ) in memory of the sacred act shown by Him before initiating the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. This indicates that every authority is for the service to others. Also the Pesaha appam is broken by the priest and after soaking it in the Pesaha Pal, it is distributed amongst the people as one family.

### Good Friday

Good Friday is observed as a day of prayers, penance and fasting to commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on Calvary Hills nearly 2000 years ago.

The services in the church start at 9.00 am and continue until about 3.00 pm. In most churches, the Good Friday highlight is the 'Nagarikanical' ritual, where the crucifix is carried through the street / church premises in a procession.

The 'Way of the Cross', the 14 stations on Christ's journey to Mount Calvary from Pilates palace is re-enacted with worshippers moving to each station, singing hymns as the events, which lead to the betrayal, arrest, trial and crucifixion of Christ, is narrated by the priest.

The most solemn moment is the drinking of 'choruka' (a decoction made of bitter gourd juice and vinegar) and gruel (Kanji) on Good Friday and continues to be observed without change. This is given to every person who arrives to attend the Good Friday service and symbolizes the event that took place

when soldiers mocked Jesus by giving him vinegar while on the cross.

### Holy Saturday (Dukha Shani)

Holy Saturday is the day Jesus rested in the tomb. Qurbana is held on Saturday and dearly departed are remembered and prayed for followed by blessing of Holy Water (Puthenvellam), which symbolizes new life. The same day, people renew their baptismal vows, which they have taken during their baptism.

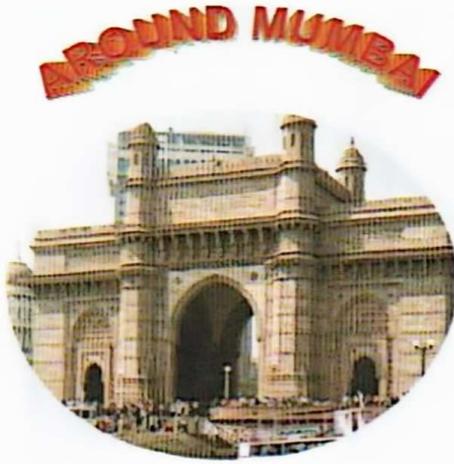
### Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday denotes the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Easter is the high point of the Catholic Church's religious calendar. Easter Sunday celebrations include special midnight mass in the intervening night between Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday, candle lit processions, scripture readings and singing homilies and decorations in the church etc.

Easter falls between March 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 25<sup>th</sup> on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox (the day in spring when the day and night are of equal length March 21<sup>st</sup>). The liturgical year revolves around the crucified and risen Christ. Easter is the hinge on which the whole church year swings.

The message of Easter is hope in the resurrection. The Lord who raised Jesus from the dead will give resurrection to everyone. The church believes in the Risen Lord.

On Easter Sunday the fast is broken, in Kerala with generally Palappam or kallappam and vegetarian or non-vegetarian side dishes.



## Borivli



### *The Malayalee pulse*

***Continuing our focus on Borivli, we bring you some Organizations and Personalities of this suburb. They are all Keralites living in Mumbai for many years and have contributed their mite to this metropolis in their own way.***

Like LIC colony, IC Colony is one of the oldest colonies in Borivli with a strong Malayalee population. The earliest settlers here, however, were East Indians and Goans who built their dwellings near the Immaculate Conception Church (I C Church). This is the second oldest Church in Mumbai, according to the residents here. It was built in 1554 and came under the Bombay Diocese. By the 50's and 60's Malayalees came from other parts of Mumbai and from Kerala and settled here. Today many Kerala Christians living in IC Colony and they go for mass to the IC Church.

Lakshmy Narayanan, a writer and a resident of Borivli since childhood and staying in IC Colony now for the past 35 years, remembers the Colony as it was earlier and the changes that have taken place there.

*"Since over than two decades, I.C Colony has undergone tremendous change. With all the greenery and shade, with beautiful small villas and pathways, it reminded a small Goan village. However, fear for security gave way to small buildings upto one and two floors. The colony was known as the 'Venice of Bombay' even in the '70s. The Colony extends upto Dahisar through the newly opened Link Road, called I.C extension, with high rise housing complexes.*

*All the old villas in I.C Colony have gone for redevelopment. There is a Residents's Association in the Colony which takes up health, water and sewage problems with the Municipality. Thanks to a tree plantation drive two decades ago, when the colony children participated enthusiastically, all the roads in I.C.Colony have trees on both sides of the roads.*

*While Citizen Co-operative Bank was the first to open its branch in I.C Colony, there are a dozen ATMs in and around IC Colony now with an immense presence of private and nationalized banks in the Colony. The locality has Mary Immaculate Girls' High school, deriving its name from the church and St.Francis D'Assisi Boys' school. While Ms Varunni teacher takes credit for having developed a basketball team for the Girls' school, the Boys' school has a prestigious football team. The children grew*

*up with reading habits, thanks to King's circulating library. I.C Colony population with its multi religious/ cultural faith, celebrates/conducts all events like Holi, Ganesh Chaturthi, Divali, Navrathri, Christmas and New year alike. The colony has almost an equal number of multi religious Keralite population, their mother tongue binding them together. Though the peaceful life of I.C Colony has lost its 'old charm' to the fast track and fast food culture, it is still a place to live happily in the peaceful, green environment with loving and helpful people of all communities around."*

#### **K Bhaskaran**

K. Bhaskaran hailing from Wadakancheri and a resident of Dorina Mansion in Holy Cross Road since 1962, is a well known figure among old I C residents. With an addition of 2 more floors to the building, the Kaimals also moved in here 30 years back. Bhaskaran has been the man behind several developments in the '60s to get the Holy Cross Road widened as also to get electricity and water connections to the locality.



**K. Bhaskaran**

Both the connections were received on an Onam day. He was once honoured by the residents of Holy Cross Road, for apprehending a thief, singlehanded. His wife remembers how difficult it was, to take her sons to the school during rains in the muddy water-logged road. It has been one of the oldest buildings redeveloped, comprising 7 floors now.

## Borivli Malayali Samajam

Malayalees, settled in Borivli in the 50's and 60's got together and formed 'The Borivli Malayali Samajam', to share a common platform and maintain contact with one another.

The Samajam was inaugurated by the distinguished diplomat, Late V K Krishna Menon in 1961. Today, it is one of the most reputed Samajams in Mumbai, having thousands of members, engaged in a variety of social, cultural and educational activities in Borivli.

From its inception the Samajam is engaged in the following activities:

It provides medical assistance to the members and general public through Borivli Polyclinic and Diagnostic Centre with a panel of 13 eminent doctors specialized in different branches of medicines, at a very nominal registration fees. It runs an Ayurvedic Dispensary with free consultation, well qualified Ayurvedic physicians and Ayurvedic medicines from Kerala.

The Samajam arranges Inter-School Athletic Meet under the auspices of Mumbai Suburban Amateur Athletic Association (MSAAA), covering schools between Bandra and Dahisar. It conducts March Past Competition among these schools on the inaugural and concluding day of the Meet.

It also conducts Inter-School Folk Dance Competition covering all schools from Bandra to Virar. It also arranges Inter-School Painting Competition and Elocution



Medical check up offered by Samajam

Competitions in Hindi, Marathi and English for different age group of students among the schools situated in Borivli and Dahisar. The Samajam also conducts dance classes. It awards Merit scholarships to SSC and HSC students in Borivli. It maintains a well-stocked library and reading room. There is an exclusive *Vanita Vedi* catering to the needs of women in the area and a marriage bureau with a huge data base to select one's life partner.

It undertakes social service activities like free medical check up camps, blood donation drive, discussions and debates on contemporary art and literature and many other subjects.

## V K Krishna Menon Academy

On the basis of the Samajam's meritorious social activities and persistent efforts of its members, the BMC has allotted a piece of land about 6725 sq. mts in Borivli (W), to construct and run a school. This school building, named V K Krishna Menon Academy, has started functioning and has classes from playgroup to Seventh Standard. Construction of the school building is also under way.

According to its current Secretary, Anil Kumar, the Samajam has entered into an agreement with a progressive trust, engaged in the professional educational activities, to develop the property and share the building area in lieu of their cost of construction. However the economic meltdown hit the progress of the project and new negotiations are now on, to ensure a flawless and uninterrupted completion of the



Left to right: Anil Kumar, Sasi Nair, E J Samuel, Sreeraj Nair, Gangadharan Nair and Mrs Jyotsna

construction work in the future. Anil Kumar feels that Borivli is undergoing a sea change due to its fast paced development taking place in the adjacent and surrounding areas of Gorai, Charkop and Kandivli East and West. The prevailing educational institutions are not sufficient enough to accommodate the number of students of this area. Therefore, students are forced to travel to distant places for their schooling. All reputed schools in this area are over-crowded and facing space constraints to accommodate the demands. There is good scope for many more schools in this area to run effectively.

## Future plans

Anil Kumar envisages the future of the Borivli Malayali Samajam. "Mumbai, the commercial heartland of our Nation, is always a favourite hotspot for the Malayalee population world over. Since we have the required space in the heart of the city, our Samajam can work as a facilitator to stay connected with the world in many ways and our Samajam can withstand and overcome potential challenges of any sort."

Regarding the attributes essential for long term planning and projects of the Samajam and its successful working, Anil Kumar has the following message to the Malayalee community of Mumbai with special emphasis to its younger generation:

"With the changing times, there are economic challenges which need to be addressed. It is essential that Malayalis, especially the younger generation, should have an objective



Anil Kumar

sense of their own. With modernization and cultural homogenization, the inherent strengths of our people are fast getting eroded and our community members often lack a proper understanding of our unique attributes. It is necessary to make use of frontier areas of management to tackle the problems. We have courageously met challenges before and we should be able to do it now. It is important that our community members realize the present reality and strive for excellence. This is a totally independent initiative by a team of professionals with the support of eminent persons. Without further ado, let us kickstart the process, now, and rightaway."

## SREE AYYAPPA SEVA SANGHAM SAIBABANAGAR

Around 1998, a few ardent devotees of Lord Ayyappa from the Ayyappa Seva Sangham - Sai Baba Nagar and the Zeal CHS Pilgrimage Unit at Ram Nagar, both in Borivli (W) came together to form the Sree Ayyappa Seva Sangham Sai Baba Nagar. They acquired a plot of land in Ram Nagar for the construction of a Temple of Lord Ayyappa.

During the Ashtamangalya Prashnam, it was revealed that hundreds of years ago there existed a temple in the acquired land. It was also revealed then, that the main deity at the proposed Temple Complex should be that of Lord Maha Vishnu.

The Founder President of this organization was AKG Nair, the Founder Secretary T Muraleedharan Nair and the Founder Treasurer K V Karthikeyan.

The foundation stone for the Temple Complex was laid in 1999 by Swami Satyanand Saraswati of Kerala. Within a span of 44 months, the members of the Sangham were able to construct a Temple Complex. The presiding deity is Maha Vishnu as Guruvayoorappan and the *upadevatas* are Ganapathy, Ayyappan and Bhagavathy. The Prana Prathishta was performed on June 16, 2002 by Temple Thantri, Brahmashri Azhakath Shastrasharman Namboodiripad who is presently the President of the Thanthra Vidhyapeedham of Aluva in Kerala.



*Sree Ayyappa Temple, Sai Baba Nagar*

Besides regular vazhipadu (offerings) for the various deities, Ayyappa Sahasranama Archana, Lalitha Sahasranama Archana, Akhanda Nama Japam, Vishnu Sahasranamam, Devi Mahatmyam and Narayaneeyam recitals are performed by devotees. Devotees can also perform annaprasham, thulabharam, and conduct marriages here.

Another offering that has been recently introduced is the Chandana Chartal for the 10 avatars of Lord Maha Vishnu (Dasha Avatharam) This is probably the first time that any Temple in Mumbai is offering this Vazhipadu.

The Temple is planning to bring out a booklet on Kerala Style Temples in Maharashtra and Gujarat sometime in July 2011. Those Temples who have still not submitted the details called for in the questionnaire may please contact the Temple Gen Secretary N Gangadharan.

The following are the present office bearers of the Temple. Sureshkumar D Mangallath is the President, K Narayanan Nair Vice-President, N Gangadharan Gen. Secretary, K V Nadhan Treasurer, P M Rajasekharan and K R Jaychandran Nair are Jt. Secretaries and Srinivas Menon Jt. Treasurer. In addition, there are 20 other members of the Managing Committee.



*Karuna Hospital*

## Little Angels Cosmos Play group and Nursery

Alice Kurias, wife of Augustine Kurias is the Principal of this playgroup and Nursery. She is a trained and qualified teacher from London Montessori Centre. Little Angels is the oldest nursery in Borivli having been established in 1970

and has qualified teachers and all facilities for the children attending the playschool. It has regular festival celebrations, picnics and field trips and parents-teachers interaction on a regular basis.



*Alice Kurias*



## M Vijayaraghavan

Malikayil Vijayaraghavan retired from LIC as Asst Divisional Manager and is now associated with LIC of India, private Insurance companies, RNIS College of Insurance and Institute of Financial and Investment Planning as visiting Faculty Member. He is actively associated with the Borivli Malayalee Samajam and has been its Vice-President for the past 12 years. He is involved in a lot of its social and community activities.

Vijayaraghavan and his wife Rema hail from Tellichery. They have two sons, Vikas and Vineeth. Vikas is working in a senior position with DNA in Mumbai while Vineeth is working in the US. Both of them are married and have two children each.



Vijayaraghavan

## Mrs Prabha Pillai

That adverse circumstances and unexpected turnoff events would bring out the best in a person is borne to be true in the life of Smt Prabha Pillai. She does not need any introduction as her late husband M P Narayana Pillai was known to all. The sudden demise of Narayana Pillai was a test by fire for her. Pillai was anxious how she would pull on when he was gone and used to tell her that she should never remain idle and do something that would be dear to her heart and to divert her attention from the hardships of life.

Prabha Pillai was born into a well known family of Parali near Palakkad and graduated from Women's College, Thiruvananthapuram. Since her school days, she used to indulge in passionate reading and kept abreast with the works of all leading writers of that time.

About her marriage with M P Narayana Pillai, she reminisces that her college education at the Kerala capital and the acquaintance of her close relatives and family friends like K C K Raja, Pavanan and P Govinda Pillai with the bridegroom made the marriage a reality. 'Nanappan' was earlier employed in Hong Kong. After the marriage, he started a business venture in Kerala but after some time wound it up. Those days she never imagined that she would step into writing during her lifetime. She was happy with her reading and took an additional responsibility of commenting on the writings of her beloved 'Nanappan'. He in turn gave a lot of credit to her views and incorporated her views before despatching them for publication in leading periodicals of Malayalam.

Nanappan's untimely death brought her to the crossroads of life and she was determined to move forward. She joined a diploma course in Sanskrit and later went in for an advanced course in Sanskrit.

Just before the first anniversary of Nanappan's death, *Malayala Manorama* approached to have her memoirs about Nanappan and she was honest enough to admit that she never wrote anything worthwhile. Manorama then persuaded her to write her memoirs in the form of letters which she was familiar with. Very soon, Manorama started serializing her memoirs. Afterwards there was no turning back.

Two of her books are already published: '*Ormakalute Mahānagaram*' (The Grand City of Memories) and '*Vērpātinte Vēdana*' (The Agony of Separation). Both the books were well received. Very often she writes for her favourite periodicals such as *Malayala Manorama*, *Mathrubhumi*, *Kala Kaumudi* and *Malayalam*. M G Radhakrishnan, N Sreejith and Jayachandran Nair give her all encouragement to pursue this profession. She is currently working for Economics & Political Weekly, published by Sameeksha Trust.

The pain of separation of the dear one often spurs the fire to write compulsive books. Nalapat Narayana Menon's *Kannuneerthulli*, Rosy Thomas' *Ivan ente Priya C J*, Dr M Leelavathy's *Niranjana Kannu* etc are some examples of this genre. Now we have Prabha Pillai's '*Vērpātinte Vēdana*' too.

Mrs Prabha Pillai has two children, Balakrishnan and Madhavan. The elder son, now of 39 years of age, is into his own business while the younger is a journalist with Open Magazine. She is very keen to see her boys settled soon with own families.



Prabha Pillai



## Ha ha ha!

Teacher: 'I killed a person.' Convert this sentence into future tense.

Student: You will go to jail.

\*\*\*\*\*

Patient: When I look in the mirror and see my face, I feel like throwing up Why?

Doctor: I don't know. But your eyesight is perfect.

\*\*\*\*\*

Girlfriend to boyfriend: We should get married.  
Boyfriend: Yes. But who will marry us?

\*\*\*\*\*

Teacher: Did your father help you with the home work?

Student: He did it all by himself.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mother: Can you do something which others can not:

Son: Yes.mum, I can read my handwriting.

# Kodungallur Bharani Kannaki Cult

*The Kannaki cult has throughout been a living force in Kerala. There is an annual festival for three days in a number of village shrines dedicated to her. The annual festival of Bharani in the month of Meenam (March-April) in the original shrine of Kodungallur lasts for a month, this year the Kodungallur Bharani falls on April 6. In Indian mythology Kannaki is the epitome of pativrita (chaste wife). Her chastity sets fire to the ancient city of Madurai.*

Kannaki and her husband Kovalan belonged to the Chola capital, Kaveripumpattinam. Kovalan lost all his fortune in the company of a courtesan, named Madhavi. In due course, they were estranged. Kovalan returned to his faithful wife Kannaki. Although he had lost all his riches, Kannaki welcomed him and offered him one of her golden anklets for sale. They decided to proceed to Madurai, the capital of the Pandyan king and start life anew.

There Kovalan offered the anklet to the goldsmith attached to the royal household. This goldsmith happened to have stolen the anklet of the Pandyan queen and he thought he had a good opportunity to cover his guilt. Accordingly, he informed the king. The

king ordered the execution of Kovalan. Fuming with anger at the murder of her husband, Kannaki went to the king and accused him of murdering her innocent husband. To prove this she opened her other anklet and sparkling precious stones spilled out. The Pandyan king was shocked as the queen's anklet contained pearls and he fell dead.

Kannaki then went to the streets. To prove Kovalan's innocence, Kannaki plucked off her left breast and hurled it at the city. In the riots that followed a fire broke out which almost destroyed the city of Madurai. The date of this fire is given in the form of a prophecy in *Silappadikaram* "There was a prediction that in the month of *ati*, on *thithi* of *ashtami*, in the dark fortnight, on a Friday with Bharani setting

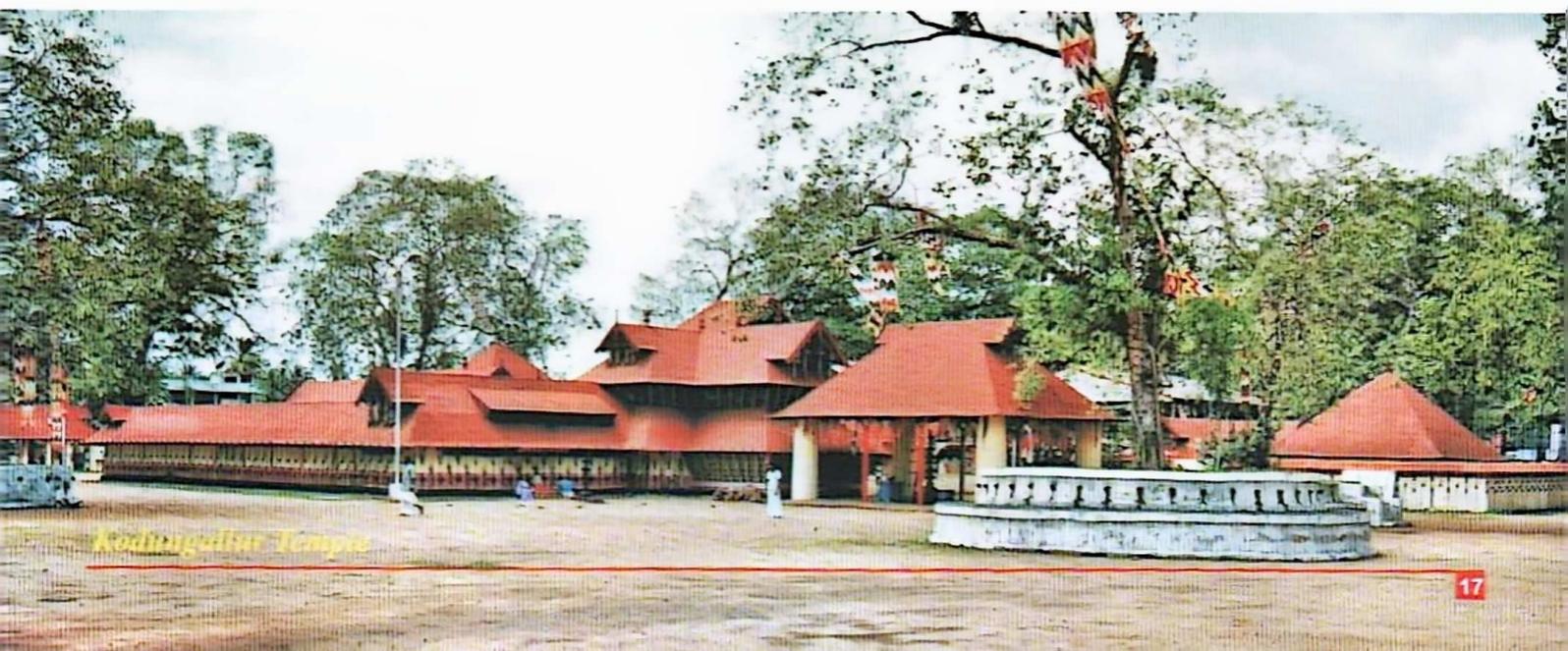
and *Karthikai* rising (stars), a great fire would envelop the renowned Madurai to the ruin of its king."

The astronomical data correspond to 26th Karkata (11th August) 171 AD. According to another historian, the date should be 174 AD the small difference of three years being due to the different siddhantas followed for calculation.

Kannaki left Madurai and came to Chenkunru in Kerala on the 14th day after the fire, that is, August 28, and building up a pyre, and setting fire to it, with her own hands, walked into the flame to join her deceased husband whose spirit came down to take her to heaven. To appease Kovalan's spirit, the successor of the deceased Pandyan king slaughtered the goldsmith along with a hundred of his



Statue of Kannagi, Chennai



tribes.

The reigning Chera king of the time, Senkuttuvan, deeming Kannaki to be an incarnation of Kali decided to erect a memorial to her at Kodungallur. He started for the Himalayas to bring a stone for her image. It took some 32 months to reach the Gangetic region and secure the stone. It took some months thereafter to build the shrine. The consecration ceremony might be assigned to the asterism *bharani* in the month of *meenam* (175 or 178). King Gajabahu, who was reigning in Ceylon from 173 to 191 AD, was one of the many distinguished guests who were present to receive Kannaki's blessings.

The work of *Silappadikaram* by Ilango Atikal, the younger brother and heir to the throne of Senkuttuvan describing the life of Kannaki and her apotheosis gave birth to the Kannaki cult. The Kannaki cult has throughout been a living force in Kerala. There is an annual festival in a number of village shrines dedicated to her. It is marked by three days' recital of *Silappadikaram*, Kannaki's spirit all the while residing in the *velichapad* or oracle. The annual festival of *Bharani* in the month of Meenam (March-April) in the original shrine of *Kodungallur* lasts

for a month, bringing people from all parts of Kerala. It begins on the *Bharani* asterism of the of the previous month of *kumbham* (February- March) in the morning with a goldsmith going round the temple three times ringing bell all the while in humble supplication for mercy and forgiveness for his Pandyan fellow caste-men. At about the same time, the intending pilgrims in the villages start on *noimbu* or ascetic preparation, which includes abstinence from sex till they return, though at night they rend the air with obscene songs in allusion to Kovalan's life of debauchery with Madhavi.

As *Bharani* approaches, the *velichapads* or oracles of the Kannaki shrines leave their villages, plying themselves with drinks and singing bawdy songs. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> day, the Nayers begin to arrive. The slaughter of the cocks, representing the Pandyan king's slaughter of the goldsmith is started by a member of the Bhagavathy veedu or family of the Goddess, that is Kannaki, and the first victims are those sent by the families of Thacholi Uthenan and Karampalli Kurup. The practice is now mercifully stopped. The 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> day are reserved for the Ezhavas (and Thiyyas),

supposed to come from the island of Ceylon. On the 27<sup>th</sup> day after the mid-day worship, the Raja of Kodungallur, gives them permission, as in the days of Senkuttuvan, to make their obeisance, upon which the washer-man bard Pulakkal Velan and the boatman chief Kurikkuzhi Arayan, with the *velichapad* in front, lead them to the temple premises. On the next day, *Bharani*, the assembled crowds once again make their obeisance and disperse with Kannaki's blessings conveyed through her oracle.

However, certain features of the structure of the Kodungallur temple point to the fact that originally it was a Shiva shrine and that the image of Kali was installed later. The idol of Shiva faces east and that of Kali north. The *mandapam* (platform for devotees to sit and worship, is also located before the Shiva shrine. It is also the practice to offer the puja and *nivedyam* first to Shiva and then to the Devi. All this leads to the presumption that in the early epochs, there was only Shiva. In the popular imagination however it is the Goddess who is the supreme deity of the temple so much so that a docile husband is mockingly called "Kodungallur Shiva."



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## Great Poets of Malayalam-5



# Kumāran Āśān

-Satyanath

**For Malayalees, the title Āśān stands for Kumāran Āśān. Such is his popularity as a leading Malayalam poet and social emancipator. Born into a backward community (ēzhava) with a low economic status, he had to struggle for long to achieve love, respect and honour.**

## His life

Kumāru, as his real name was, born in 1873 on Vishu day to his parents Nārāyanan and Kāliyamma (Kochu pennū) at Kāyikkara in Chirayinkil taluk, Thiruvananthapuram district. He was the second son in a family of nine children. His father was respected in his community and had a small business for living. He was proficient in Malayalam, had a working knowledge in Tamil and had a keen interest in classical music. He was a *sōpānam* singer. His mother though not formally educated, could teach Ramayanam, Mahabharatham and Bhagavatham to children. Both of them were very religious.

Kumāru joined a small primary school near his home when he was seven, and studied Amarakōśam, Siddharoopam, Sriramodantam, Srikrishnavilasam etc. When the government opened a school nearby, he joined it and continued education till he was fourteen. Then he joined the school as a teacher but soon had to leave as he was underaged. For the next two years, he worked as an accountant to a wholesale dealer. His urge to learn more made him read what

ever his hands could reach.

His urge for knowledge made him quit the job to join 'Vijnandayani' Sanskrit School at Manaboar. To learn Yoga and Tantra, he worked as an apprentice in a Muruga temple at Vaikkom.

By the time Kumāru was sixteen, he started writing poems and filling

'samasya' (a poetic practice prevalent then, wherein someone would give the fourth line of a Sanskrit sloka and others are expected to fill in the previous three lines) and published them in periodicals. For the publications, he used a number of pseudonyms such as Kumāru, K N Kumāran, Kāyikkara K N Kumāran etc. Within one year in the school, he



Āśān Memorial Institute, Thonnakkal

mastered *Magham*, *Naishadam*, the *Chambu kritis* and most of the books depicting figures of speech in poetry. He used to write 15 to 20 poems in the poetry writing examinations. Most of his poems were written in Sanskrit meters such as *Sruddhara*, *Sarddoolavikriditam* etc. He also wrote some small poems such as *Valli Vivaham*, *Ammanappattu*, *Usha Kalyanam* Drama etc but all of them were lost. During this period, he met Sri Narayana Guru and showed his writings. After going through them, Guru encouraged him but advised him to desist from romantic subjects.

Soon he stopped going to the school and concentrated on religious books written in Tamil and Sanskrit. He wrote two poems namely *Subramanyasatakam* and *Bhaktivilapam* during this time and stayed in a nearby Subramanya temple, teaching Sanskrit to children coming to the temple, thus acquiring the title *Āsān*, while often performing the duties of the temple priest.

He was dogged by ill-health all through his early life. When he was eighteen, Sree Narayana Guru visited his house at the request of his father. Kumāru was bedridden at that time. The great saint suggested that Kumāran should stay with him and become his disciple. The little boy found the invitation irresistible. Thus began a new phase of life for the young lad.

Kumāru's meeting with Sree Narayana Guru can be compared to the meeting of Naren with Sri Ramakrishna. But while Naren became a full fledged Swami,



*Āsān's Home Today*

Kumāru continued to remain a lay disciple of Narayana Guru. Soon people saw him in the guise of a yogi, roaming all over Kerala and neighbouring provinces and the Guru took the fledgling devotee under his care.

The Guru also advised him to master Sanskrit language, Vedas and Upanishads.

Sri Narayana Guru was very conscious of the lack of education of the people of his community and was convinced that only education could improve their plight. There were no schools by the community and their children were denied admission to other schools. He found a suitable candidate in Kumāru to experiment his vision. So the Guru took him to Dr Palpu,

who was in the service of Mysore government. Dr Palpu was also concerned with the backwardness of his community.

In 1895 Kumāru was sent to Bangalore where Dr Palpu worked, for 3 years for higher studies in Sanskrit at the Sree Chamarajendra Sanskrit College. Dr Palpu took Kumāru under his wings and endearingly called him 'Chinnaswamy'. Kumāru sought admission but the college refused him admission. Finally Palpu had to seek intervention of Diwan Sir K. Seshadri Iyer on behalf of Kumāru. It was for *Nyayavidwan*, a degree in logic (*Tharka Shastra*) that Kumāru sought admission and he always stood first in all the examinations. Kumāru was the only non-Brahmin student of the college and this posed severe challenges to him initially but soon the opposition evaporated on account of his brilliance. During the three year tenure there, Kumāru received a scholarship but he had to discontinue his studies when the college was closed due to a communicable disease, plague. Leaving Bangalore he went to Madras and after a brief stay, left for Calcutta to join the Sanskrit College. His teacher was Mahamahopadhyaya Kamakhya Nath who encouraged the poetic gift of his student and prophesised that he would one day become a famous poet.

Bengal was in the throes of renaissance at the end of the 19th century. The ideals of Brahma Samaj, nurtured by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Devendranath Tagore, inspired Kumāran to a great extent. The literary works of young Rabindranath Tagore published in "Bharathi" magazine also influenced him. Tagore had great



*A group photo with Guru: Asan is seen right in the rear row*



fascination for Lord Buddha and composed many a drama centering on Lord Buddha, which had wide-ranging social connotations, in terms of caste and creed, domination of the upper castes and clergy, and religious practices, some of which bordered on superstitions. Kumāran fully imbibed the lofty ideals of Tagore, which later on, he tried to translate into Malayalam. His fascination for Buddha was depicted in two of his famous poems, "Karuna" and "Chandala bhikshuki", which depict epochs from the life of Buddha.

This period also helped him to delve into English literature deeply and to have a wider view of the world affairs.

During his stay at Bangalore, Kumāru lost his father but he did not call on his mother even after returning home. People speculated that Kumāru was contemplating *Sanyasa* and hence feared that his mother would not allow him to pursue it. Kumāru, now aged 30, returned to Thiruvananthapuram and stayed with Dr Palpu at his house. Later when the Guru called him to Aruvippuram, he reached there and started looking after the affairs of the *Ashramam*. Socially, this period was very critical for people who belonged to the backward caste as they were denied the right of education, entry to temples, right to cover the bosom, sufferance of untouchability etc.

The poet in Kumāran emerged during this period and he began to contribute poems in Sanskrit and Malayalam to several periodicals in Kerala. He was being referred to as Kumāran by the literary elite of Travancore. But he was not content to be just a poet, writing of the imaginary and ethereal regions of the

literary firmament. He was not a dreamer as most poets are, but a hardboiled realist. He wanted to find answers to several problems of his State. He returned from Bengal and joined his Guru at Aruvippuram where the Swami had established his ashram. During his stay here he composed two plays "Mrithyun jayam" and "Vichithravijayam".

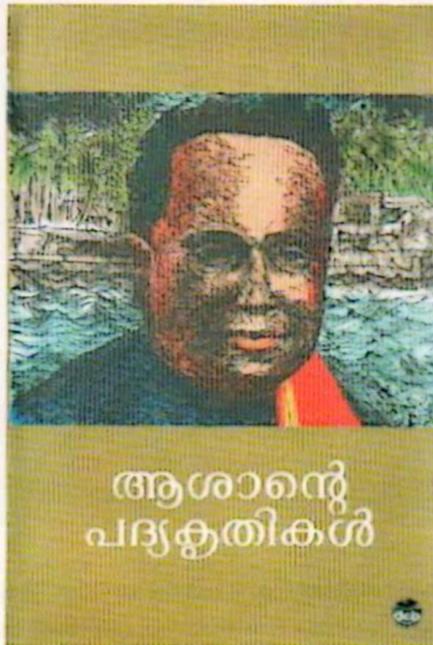
The Guru realised that unless the backward castes unite, their plight cannot be improved. The result was the establishment of Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Sangham (SNDP Sangham) in 1902. Kumāran was appointed its Secretary.

In 1917 he married Bhanumathiamma daughter of Thachakudy Kumāran - younger brother of Dr P Palpu's father. He had two sons, Prabhakaran and Sudhakaran.

## Death

The Mahakavi lived for 51 years. His life was tragically cut short in a boat accident in January 1924 while returning to Kollam from Alappuzha after attending a function as the chief guest. The boat capsized at Pallana and everybody was drowned in the accident. The trail he blazed in the literary and social firmament of Kerala remains an inspiration for any student of contemporary history.

Bhanumathiamma, who was an active social worker, remarried after Kumāran's untimely death. Bhanumathiamma died



in 1975.

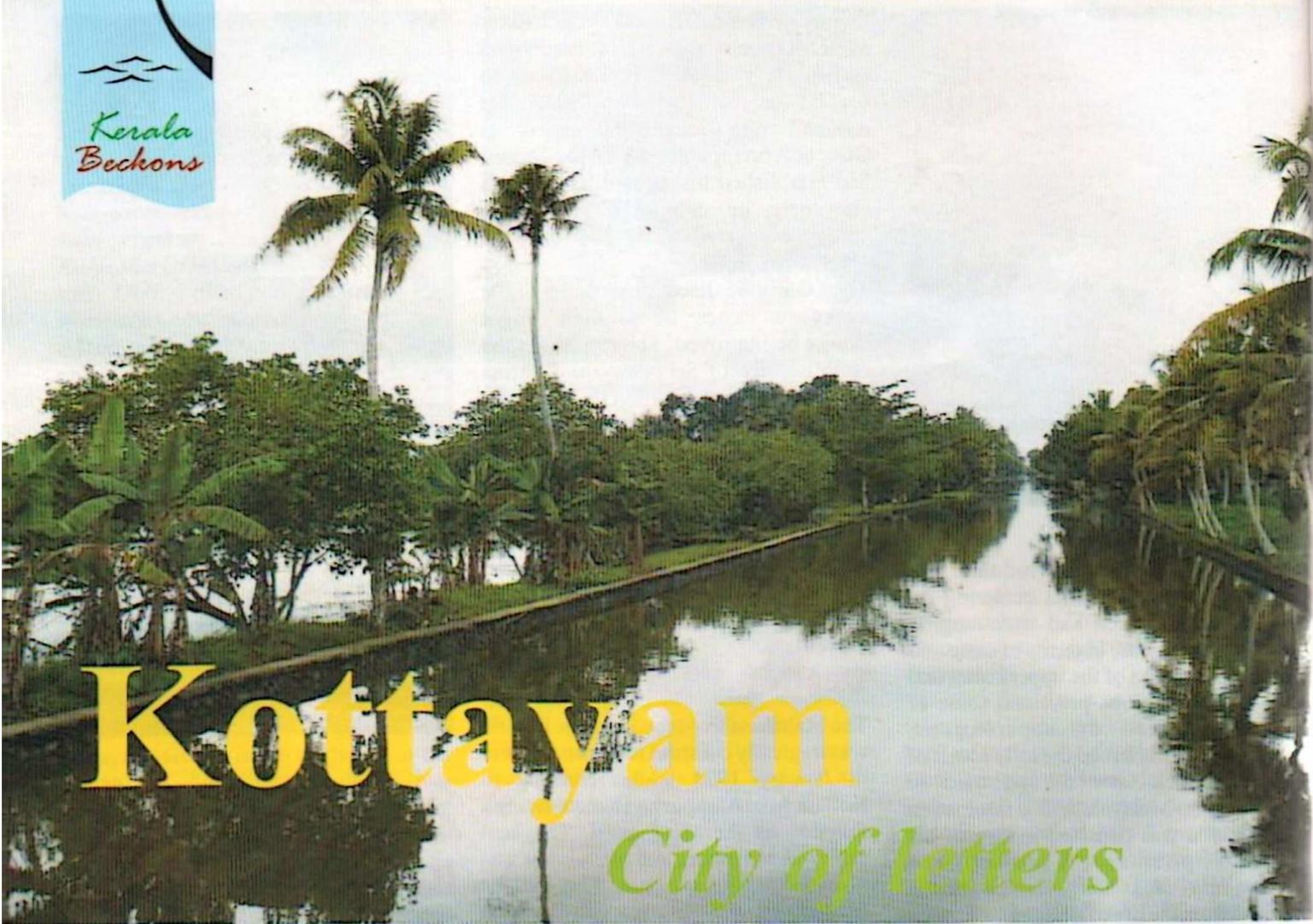
## Relevance of Āśān

"Khanda Kavyas" (mini poems) like *Nalini*, *Leela*, *Karuna* and *Chandala bhikshuki*, were great hits and many students could be seen chanting a line or two of these famous poems, while in school or elsewhere.

In "*Chintavishtayaya Seetha*" (mournfully remembering Seetha) he displayed his poetic artistry, while in *Duravastha*, he patiently and skillfully tears down the barriers of feudalism, orthodoxy and casteism and consummates the dictum of the Guru, "One Caste, One Religion, One God for man".

The crowning achievement of Kumāran was his "*Buddha Charitha*" in 5 volumes, for which he got inspiration from Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia". This *Mahakavya* earned for him the title "Mahakavi (great poet) and he was ranked equally with his illustrious contemporaries, Vallathol and Ulloor. While in "*Duravastha*", he revealed his revolutionary zeal for fighting caste injustices, a few other poetic works had a distinct Buddhist slant.

(To be continued)



# Kottayam

*City of letters*

Traveller

**K**ottayam is an important commercial centre of Kerala, thanks to its status as a producer of cash crops. Kottayam town is situated in the basin of the Meenachil River and of Vembanad backwaters which is formed from several streams in the Western Ghats in Idukki district. It flows through Kottayam district and joins Vembanad lake. As per the division of places in Kerala as Highlands, Midlands and Lowlands based on altitude, Kottayam is considered to be part of the Midlands. The general soil type is alluvial. The vegetation is mainly tropical evergreen and moist deciduous type. Most of India's natural rubber originates from the acres of well-kept plantations of Kottayam, also home to the Rubber Board, one of the country's primary commodities board. Kottayam, among the state's more mountainous districts, provides some of Kerala's finest natural scenes sandwiched as it is between serene palm-fringed backwaters on the

**Kottayam has produced many well known writers, journalists and artists. Muttathu Varkey (novelist), Pala Narayanan Nair (poet), Booker Prize winner Arundhati Roy and Vayala Vasudevan Pillai (dramatist and pioneer of the theatre movement) were all from Kottayam.**

west and the Western Ghats on the east. Much of this beauty is laid out in all its glory along the road which winds from

Kottayam to the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary in Thekkady through plantations of rubber, tea, coffee and pepper. Kottayam came into the limelight when it was declared the first fully literate municipal town of India, an event that triggered a mass movement to make Kerala the country's only state to achieve total literacy. Kottayam is also the birthplace of the state's publishing industry, and is home to a number of globally renowned newspapers and magazines including Malayala Manorama (India's largest circulated daily), The Week, Mathrubhumi, and Deepika. The city of Kottayam is also called as "*Akshara Nagari (The city of letters)*" considering its contribution to the print media and literature. First Freedom Fighter Chempil Arayan Ananthapadmanabhan Valiya Arayan Kankumaran who fought at the Cochin Fort against the British Rule on 29 December 1808, was the commander-in-chief of Velu Thambi Dalawa.

## Historical and Cultural Background

The district of Kottayam was part of erstwhile princely state of Travancore (*Thiruvithamkoor*). The Travancore state consisted of two revenue divisions viz., the South and the North, under the administrative control of a Divan Peshkar for each. Later, in 1868, two more divisions, Quilon and Kottayam, were constituted.

At the time of integration of the State of Travancore and Cochin, these revenue divisions were renamed as districts and the Divan Peshkars gave way to District Collectors, giving birth to Kottayam District.

At the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Kottayam under the reign of Kulasekharas was a part of the Kulasekhara Empire (1090-1102 A.D). The Vembanad Lake itself derived its name from Vempolinad. The Kingdom of Vempolinad was split into kingdoms of Thekkumkur and Vadakkumkur by about 1100 A.D. which later were annexed to Travancore by Marthanda Varma of Travancore (between 1748 and 1754). The Portuguese and the Dutch had their business relations with both Thekkumkur and Vadakkumkur kingdoms, pepper and other spices being the main attractions.

In addition to Thekkumkur and Vadakkumkur, Marthanda Varma brought two more petty principalities in Kottayam under his control. These were Poonjar and Meenachil.

After Marthanda Varma, Dharma Raja (1758-1798) placed Kottayam in a key position in the new defence strategy against Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan of



*Malayala Manorama*

Mysore. Apart from this, Kottayam gave asylum to a number of refugee princes who left Malabar in the wake of the Mysore invasions.

Kottayam occupied a pre-eminent position in the cultural life of the Travancore princely court, the main reason being the migration of Ramapurathu Warriar, the famous poet of Vadakkumkur, to Thiruvananthapuram, following the annexation of Kottayam by Marthanda Varma.

Kottayam has played its role in all the political agitations of modern times. The "Malayali Memorial" agitation may be said to have had its origin in Kottayam. The Malayali Memorial sought to secure better representation for educated Travancoreans in Travancore civil service against persons from outside. The memorial that was presented to Maharaja Sri Moolam Thirunal (1891) was drafted at a public meeting held in Kottayam Public Library. The event marked the beginning of the modern political movement in the state.

It was here that the famous Vaikom Satyagraha, (1924-25) an epic struggle against untouchability took place. Scheduled castes and other backward classes in Travancore were not only denied entry into temples, but also to temple roads. Vaikom, the seat of a celebrated Siva Temple, was the venue of the symbolic Satyagraha. It is of immense historic significance that national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, C. Rajagopalachari, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and E.V. Ramaswami Naicker were associated with this struggle.

The 'Nivarthana' agitation of the early thirties, to secure adequate representation for the low-caste Hindus, Christians and Muslims in the State Legislature, enjoyed considerable support from this district.

The district was also a centre of agitation led by the State Congress for responsible Government in Travancore. The agitation had a triumphant end, with the overthrow of Sir C P Ramaswami Iyer, the then Divan of Travancore.

## Reaching Kottayam



**By Air:** Kottayam is 93 kms from Kochi (Cochin) International airport while Thiruvananthapuram is 160 kms away. The airport is currently

served by Jet Airways, Kingfisher Airlines, JetLite, Kingfisher Red, GoAir, IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express, Srilankan Airlines, Silk Air, Emirates, Qatar Airways, Oman Airlines, Saudi Arabian Airlines, Kuwait Airways, Gulf Traveller, Etihad Airlines, Air Arabia, Jazeera Airways, Bahrain Air and Air Asia. From the airport, it is possible to get to Kottayam either by road (buses and taxis are available, and recommended for convenience) or by rail via railway stations at either Angamali (the closest to the airport, but very few trains stop here), Ernakulam Junction or Ernakulam Town.

**By Rail:** Kottayam has a number of

long distance trains coming through. Kottayam is well connected with the major towns in and outside Kerala by an extensive rail network. The railway station is situated just 2 km away from the central bus station. There are regular trains from Kottayam to Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, and Ernakulam.

**By Road:** Kottayam is connected to major cities of South India by good motorable roads. There are two bus stations, the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation bus station on T.B. Road and a private bus stand near the railway station. Buses to major centres operate from the KSRTC bus station.

## Geography and climate



*Purple Swamphen (Porphyrio porphyrio)*

The climate in this District is moderate and pleasant. Kottayam's proximity to the equator results in little seasonal temperature variation, with moderate to high levels of humidity. Annual temperatures range between 20 to 35 °C (68 to 95 °F). From June through September, the south-west monsoon brings in heavy rains as Kottayam lies on the windward side of the Western Ghats. From October to December, Kottayam receives light rain from the northwest monsoon, as it lies on the leeward side. Average annual rainfall is 3600 mm.

Kottayam is bordered by Pathanamthitta district on the south, Alappuzha district on the west, Ernakulam district on the north and Idukki district on the east.

## Transport

Public transport in the city is largely dependent on buses, run by both private operators and Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC). There are three bus stations serving



*Aerial View of Kottayam Town.*

*Jnananikshepam* was the first newspaper published by the natives of Kerala, and it was brought out from CMS press at Kottayam in 1848. *Nasrani Deepika* was started in 1887 by the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) missionaries at Mannanam near Kottayam. The newspaper continues to be published under the name *Deepika* and is a leading Malayalam daily. *Malayala Manorama*, India's largest circulating regional daily was founded here by K.C. Mammen Mapila in 1890. The part played by newspapers published from Kottayam, like *Malayala Manorama*, *Deepika* and *Bhashaposhini*, a literary magazine from *Malayala Manorama* Group in the cultural and literary development of Kerala is immense.

Kottayam- two catering to private buses and one exclusively for the KSRTC buses. Of the private bus stations, the bigger one is at Nagampadam which is very close to the railway station and the other one is in the heart of the city. Bus services are very economical. Besides local bus service for travelling within the town, Kottayam is well-connected to the rest of Kerala through inter-state bus services run by KSRTC. Hired forms of transport include metered taxis and auto-rickshaws. Two-wheelers form the majority of the private-owned vehicles.

The inter-city rail transport system in the city is administered by the Southern Railway division of the Indian Railways. Trains between Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram pass through Kottayam, with all trains having a stop. There are trains passing through Kottayam, from and to most major cities in the country like New Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai. 49 km of railway line runs through Changanassery, Kottayam, Meenachil (Kanakkari Village in Meenachil taluk-near Ettumanur) and Vaikom taluks. Kanjirappally taluk is not reached by rail.

The nearest airport is Cochin International Airport, 93 km away from the city. The other major nearby airport is at Thiruvananthapuram, approximately 160 kilometres away.

Kottayam town, due to its proximity to the Vembanad Lake, is also served by the Kerala State Water Transport Department (KSRTD). The KSRTD runs regular river and lake commuter services between Kottayam and Alleppey. Many smaller destinations are also served by this service. The nearest boat jetty to Kottayam Town is in Kodimatha. Older boat jetties, such as in Chandakavala, have been mostly

abandoned due to reduced patronage and due to the blockage of the surface water-ways by Water Hyacinth and other plant life.

## Culture, literature and sports

Kottayam has its place of honour on the cultural map of Kerala. The culture of Kottayam is influenced mainly by the large presence of the Syrian Christian community. The cuisine of Kottayam is Keralite Cuisine, characterised by the use of parboiled rice as the staple food and the presence of coconut and spices in abundance.

*Margamkali* and *Arjuna Nritham* are popular dance forms. *Margamkali*, which consists of group dance and martial arts like *Parichamuttukali*, is popular among the Syrian Christian community. It is performed by men and women separately. In the past, it was performed during Syrian Christian weddings. *Arjuna Nritham*, also known as *Mayilpeeli Thoorkkam*, performed by



*St Thomas Church*



*St Mary's Church (Valia Palli)*

men was also popular. Besides these, popular South Indian dance forms like Bharatanatyam, Mohiniyattam, and Kuchipudi and classical Carnatic music are also learned by a large number of young people, mainly as a hobby and extracurricular activity.

Kottayam has produced many well known writers, journalists and artists. Muttathu Varkey (novelist), Pala Narayanan Nair (poet), Booker Prize winner Arundhati Roy and Vayalar Vasudevan Pillai (dramatist and pioneer of the theatre movement) were all from Kottayam.

Cricket, basketball and football are among the most popular sports in Kottayam. Kottayam is also famous for athletics, as the place has produced several athletes who represented India. The main stadium of Kottayam is the

Nehru stadium at the entrance of the town. A number of popular basketball tournaments including the Marian Trophy, Girideepam Trophy, Lourdes Trophy and Virginia Memorial tournament are conducted every year.

A municipal park is located near Shastri Road. There are several movie halls which screen Malayalam, English, Tamil and Hindi movies. There are also restaurants that cater to Kerala, Tamil and North cuisines.

### Religious institutions

Various sections of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism co-exist harmoniously. The Ezhavas, Nairs, Viswakarmas and the Scheduled Class and Tribes constitute the major sections of the

Hindu religion. Followers of Orthodox church, Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, Jacobite Church, Knanaya, Marthoma Church, St. Thomas Evangelical Church, CSI Church, Pentecostal Churches and Indian Brethren form major Christian sects. Kottayam is the headquarters of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church.

Reflecting the religious make-up of the population, a large number of Hindu temples and Christian churches dot the townscape. Some of them are the Thirunakkara Mahadeva temple, two churches known as Valiya Palli and Manarcad Palli (Manarcad Church) and the Thazhathangadi Juma Masjid.

Thazhathangadi Juma Masjid, situated on the banks of river Meenachil, is one of the oldest mosques in India and is more than 1000 years old, famous for its architectural beauty, and richness in wood carvings. This mosque was constructed by the followers of Prophet Muhammad during one of their first voyages to Kerala. Thirunakkara Mahadeva temple, in the heart of the town, is a Shiva temple built in the Kerala style of temple architecture, with interior murals depicting themes from the Hindu epics. It was built at the beginning of the 16th century by the then Raja of Thekkumkur. The annual temple festival that culminates in a ceremony called the Aaraattu attracts large numbers of devotees.

Kottayam is a major center of Syrian Christians of Kerala. St. Mary's Church, the Valiya Palli (the Big Church), built in 1550 by Knanaya Syrian Christians who immigrated from West Asia, is considered as the first Christian church in Kottayam town. This church is



*Manarcad Church*



*Thazhathangadi Juma Masjid*



**Thirunakkara Mahadeva Temple**

famous for its two granite crosses known as Persian crosses. There are rare antique carvings and mural paintings behind the main altar and on the ceiling.

Another St. Mary's Church known as Cheria Palli (the Little Church), belonging to the Malankara Orthodox Church was built in 1579 by the Raja of Thekkumkur for his Christian subjects. These churches feature temple architectural influences. The interior murals, painted using vegetable dyes, depict Biblical themes. However, the most famous Christian church in Kottayam District is St. Mary's Cathedral Manarcad better known as "Manarcad Palli". Perhaps no other Christian centres in Kerala attract so many pilgrims and devotees than this church. The "8 days lent" known as "ettunompu" attracts around 1 million people from all religions and walks of life. The rally on the 8th day- "raaza" is the greatest of such events in Asia.

The Syro-Malabar rite of the Roman Catholic Church has an arch eparchy based in Kottayam. Some of the important Catholic churches in Kottayam include Lourdes Forane



**Deepika**

Church, Good Shepherd Church, Vimalagiri Cathedral and Christuraja Cathedral. Pope John Paul II visited Kottayam, during his visit to India in 1986. He announced the beatification of Father Kuriakose of Chavara and Sister Alphonsa, who hails from Kottayam district, at Kottayam. The mortal remains of Saint Alphonsa, who was elevated to sainthood in 12 October 2008, are kept in a chapel next to St. Mary's Church, Bharananganam. It is a popular Christian pilgrimage center.

## Media

Kottayam is considered as the nerve center of Malayalam literature and publishing media. *Unnuneeli Sandesam*, a beautiful and famous poetry work, is supposed to have been written by one of the Vadakkumkur Rajas. In 1821, Benjamin Bailey, a British missionary, established C M S Press, the first printing press in Kerala, in Kottayam. The town has been in the forefront of newspaper and book publishing in the state ever since.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Malayalam literature was enriched by the works of Christian missionaries. *Varthamana Pusthakam* (1778), written by Parammekkal Thoma Kathanar on a visit to Rome, is the first travelogue in Malayalam. The first Malayalam English dictionary and Malayalam dictionary were published in Kottayam in the years 1846 and 1865 respectively. The first autobiography in Malayalam by Vaikom Pachu Moothathu was published in Kottayam in 1870. The first Malayalam Bible was also published in Kottayam.

*Jnananikshepam* was the first newspaper published by the natives of Kerala, and it was brought out from CMS press at Kottayam in 1848. *Nasrani Deepika* was started in 1887 by the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) missionaries at Mannanam near Kottayam. The newspaper continues to be published under the name *Deepika* and is a leading Malayalam daily. *Malayala Manorama*, India's largest circulating regional daily was founded here by K C Mammen Mappila in 1890. The part played by newspapers published from Kottayam, like *Malayala Manorama*, *Deepika* and *Bhashaposhini*, a literary magazine from *Malayala Manorama* Group in the cultural and literary development of Kerala is immense.

Today, five major Malayalam

newspapers *Malayala Manorama*, *Mathrubhoomi*, *Deepika*, *Madhyamam* and *Mangalam* and around thirty periodicals are published from Kottayam. Kottayam is also home to several book publishers in Malayalam such as D C Books, Labour India Publications and Current Books. Almost 70 percent of books published in Kerala are from Kottayam. In 1945, a group of writers set up *Sahithya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Sangam*, (Literary Workers' Co-operative Society). It was the first co-operative enterprise of writers, novelists and poets.

## Education

The Orthodox Pazhaya Seminary of the Malankara Orthodox Church was the first institution to start English education in Southern India. C M S High School, (now Church Missionary Society College High School), was founded by the British missionary, Benjamin Bailey of the Church Mission Society of London. C M S College, the first college in Kerala, was started in Kottayam in 1817 by the Church Missionary Society. The Baker Memorial Girls High School in Kottayam, founded by Amalia Dorothea Baker in 1820, is one of the oldest girls' schools in India.



**Kottayam Medical College hospital is one of the major hospitals in Kerala**



**Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Technology**



**CMS College of Engg & Technology**

Mahatma Gandhi University, one of six universities in Kerala, is located at Kottayam. Kottayam Medical College is located about 10 km from the town. There are a number of Arts & Science Colleges, including C.M.S. College Kottayam, K G College Pampady, BCM College etc. There are government engineering colleges, Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Technology, Kidangoor Engineering College are some near the town, self financed engineering colleges are also there in Kottayam. Mangalam College of Engineering and Technology, Saintgits College of Engineering and Technology, St Joseph College of Engineering and Technology are some of the main colleges in the district. Polytechnic colleges and several nursing schools are located in and around the town.

Other institutes include the Centre for Rural Management (CRM), a leading autonomous research organization for rural development, and the Indian Institute of Mass Communication.

## Hospitals and Health care

Apart from the Medical College, there is one District Hospital and one District T.B. Centre. There is also one Children's Hospital, four Taluk Hospitals, six Community Health Centres, 11 Block Health Centres, 51 Primary Health Centres and seven Government Hospitals under the Health Department. Most of the modern treatment facilities are available both in the government and private sectors. A disease surveillance programme has been undertaken in the district.

(To be continued)



**A few prominent personalities from Kottayam: (from left) Muttathu Varkey, Pala Narayanan Nair, K R Narayanan, Arundhati Roy**



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## Project Management Meet 2011



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### Project Management Meet 2011

- On 07<sup>th</sup> April, Thursday at 4:00 pm at Prabodhan Thackeray Auditorium Sodawala Lane, Borivali (W), Mumbai.
- On 15<sup>th</sup> April, Friday at 3.30 pm at Tunga International MIDC, Central Road, Andheri (E), Mumbai.

### Agenda

4:00 pm - 4:20 pm	Welcome Speech & lighting of lamp
4:20 pm - 4:40 pm	Project Management - An Overview by Ms. Sowmya Lakshmi, Business Head - GSC
4:40 pm - 5:40 pm	Importance of PMP Credential & Need for the Preparatory Training by Mr. Kalpana Ashar, PMP
5:40 pm - 6:00 pm	Synergy School of Project Management - A Presentation by Mr. Karanishkolen, Managing Director CADD Centre Training Services
6:00 pm - 6:10 pm	Vote of Thanks
6:10 pm onwards	Dinner

### For Registration Contact:

Borivali : 28997978 / 7980 / 67102652  
Andheri : 65704118 / 4119 / 26288523





## Book Review

# POETIC ESSENCE OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

KRISHNAN PARAPALLY, now 90, has expounded, over the last 70 years, the essence of the philosophies of Sri Krishna (the Geeta), Adi Shankara, Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, in his poems. The best of his prolific creations have been carefully collected and codified in the latest anthology, "Parapally Kritikal," released in Mumbai by Kerala's poet laureate, ONV Kurup on 27 March.

This is the 21<sup>st</sup> anthology of Krishnan Parapally poems to be published since 1958. The pieces in it have been sieved and selected from the best of his published works. It, thus, emerges as the distilled codification of a lifetime of creative interpretation of the best in Indian philosophical thought.

Divided into 17 sections of 5 to 7 poems each, with each section prefaced by one of the top living Malayalam poets, the anthology is indicative of the wide notice Parapally's poems have attained among his peers. This is creditable for a poet, cut off from the mainstream Malayalam literary field and churning out his outpouring from distant Mumbai. Parapally's poems on Adi Shankara finds eloquent endorsement from one of the



greatest modern day sages, Swami Ranganathananda.

Parapally reflects implicit faith in mankind in all his poems, with great felicity of expression, simple yet brimming with profound meaning combined with great insight. The poet extensively uses his insight to chisel the thoughts that have motivated generations of Indians.

Parapally's greatest achievement has been that his isolation away from home, has not in any way affected his literary outpouring or their acceptance by contemporary literary Kerala. This is fully captured in his poem on Maxim Gorky. Parapally says:

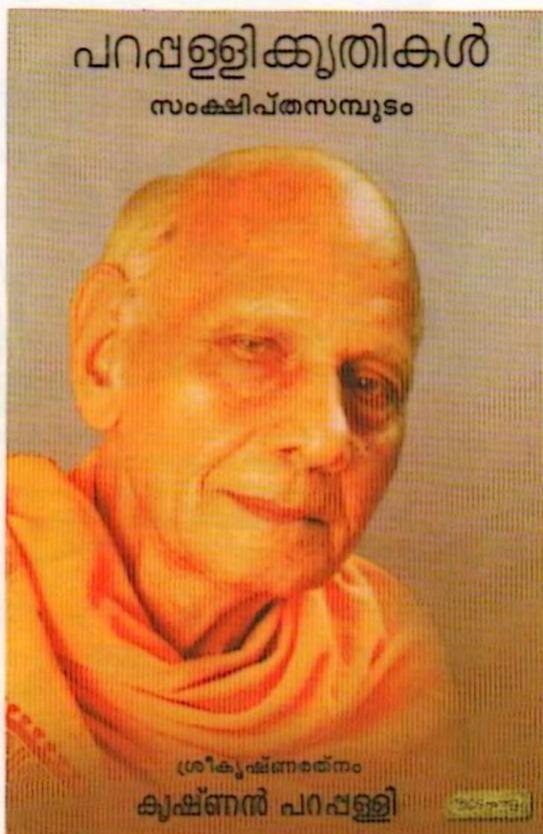
*If I had not been able to see  
What you are not able to see  
I would not have been Gorky.*

This is as true of Parapally as of Maxim Gorky.

Of late, Parapally has been experimenting with sonnets in Malayalam, with great success. This anthology contains a good selection of his best sonnets. They are not ten lines of metrical compositions but contain honed and refined elements of philosophy.

Some of the poems in this anthology have been translated into English. More of them need to be, in order to reach out to a wider audience.

Published by Adayalam Publications, Thrissur 680123, the 336-page book is priced at Rs. 200.





# Carnatic Music:

Prof K.A. Sivaramakrishnan

## SAPTASWARA

Saptaswara (SEVEN NOTES) is the foundation of music. They are seven in number, namely:

**Sa** (Shadjam) **Ri** (Rishabham) **Ga** (Gandharam) **Ma** (Madhyamam)  
**Pa** (Panchamam) **Da** (Dhaivatham) **Ni** (Nishadham)

**S R G M P D N**

In the beginning these saptaswaras are set in Ragam: Mayamalavagoula, Talam: Adi ( 8 counts ) and normally sung in three levels of speed. The saptswara set in one octave will be usually in Madhya sthayi (Middle Octave). Herein phrase starts from Madhya sthayi shadjam and ending with Tara sthayi shadjam.

**First level**  
x 1 2 3 x √ x √      x 1 2 3 x √ x √  
|| S R G M P D N Ś | Ś N D P M G R S ||

**Second level**  
x 1 2 3      x √ x √  
|| S R G M P D N Ś | Ś N D P M G R S ||

**Third level**  
x            1            2            3  
|| S R G M P D N Ś | Ś N D P M G R S |  
x            √            x            √  
S R G M P D N Ś | Ś N D P M G R S ||

## SAPTHA (seven) SWARAS AND THEIR VARIETIES ALONG WITH EUROPEAN STYLE OF MUSIC

Name of the Swara	Solfa Letter	Pronounced As	European Music
1. Shadjam	S	Sa	Doh
2. Rishabham	R	RI	Ray
3. Gandharam	G	Ga	Me
4. Madhyamam	M	Ma	Fa
5. Panchamam	P	Pa	Soh
6. Dhaivatam	D	Da	Lah
7. Nishadam	N	Ni	Si or Te

The Swaras Shadjam and Panchamam are fixed and they have no varieties. They are called PRAKRITHI SWARAS. Remaining five swaras have two varieties each, one KOMAL and one TIVRA. They are VIKRITHI SWARAS and they are 10 altogether. The total of swaras are 12 and they are as follows:

1. Shadjam, 2. Suddha Rishabham, 3. Chatusruthi Rishabham, 4. Sadharana Gandharam, 5. Anthara Gandharam,
6. Suddha Madhyamam, 7. Prathi Madhyamam, 8. Panchamam, 9. Suddha Dhaivatham, 10. Chatusruthi Dhaivatham,
11. Kaishiki Nishadham, 12. Kaakali Nishadham

Two Swaras having the same sthana(place) they are:

Chatusruthi Rishabham & Suddha Gandharam  
Sadharana Gandharam & Shatsruthi Rishabam  
Chatusruthi Dhaivatham & Suddha Nishadham  
Kaishiki Nishadham & Shatsruthi Dhaivatham

Hence the total number of swaras are 16, while the total number of swarashanas(swaras place) are 12(twelve).

The two swaras having the same sthana(Place) shown above will not appear together in any Raga.

**AROHANA, AVAROHANA, & STHAYI (Octaves)**

Arohana : Ascending order of the swaras.

Avarohana : Descending order of the swaras.

Sthayis : There are five sthayis ( Octaves ) namely:

1) Anumandhra sthayi, 2) Mandra sthayi, 3) Madhya sthayi, 4) Thara sthayi, 5) Athi thara sthayi

**Description of Sthayi:**

1. Anumandhra sthayi : Two dots below the swara  $\text{S}\underline{\underline{S}}$
2. Mandhra sthayi : One dot below the swara  $\text{S}\underline{\text{S}}$
3. Madhya sthayi : svara without dots  $\text{S}$
4. Thara sthayi : One dot above the swara  $\text{S}\overset{\cdot}{\text{S}}$
5. Athi Thara sthayi : Two dots above the swara  $\text{S}\overset{\cdot\cdot}{\text{S}}$

**SOME IMPORTANT POINTS - VOCAL PART****TECHNICAL TERMS IN CARNATIC MUSIC**

**AHATA NADA** : Ahata means STRUCK ( Music made by the Effort of man.

**ANAHATA NADA** : Anahata means UNSTRUCK ( music of Nature.

**ALANKARA** : Alankara means Beauty, but here the Group of Swara pattern in ancient music; The Swara exercises illustrating the seven Principal talas and their varieties.

**ANUSWARAM** : A secondary note played along with the Note of a melody for beauty effect. Anu- Swaras are used in raga alapana, specially Anuswaras can be heard on performance of Instrumental Music.

**AROHANA** : Ascending order of the swaras.

**AVAROHANA** : Descending order of the swaras.

**UCHCHASTHAYI** : ( Upper/Tara Sthayi ) Higher Octave.

**NICHA STHAYI** : ( Keezh Sthayi ) Lower Octave.

**SWARA** : Musical Note.

**SWARAVALI VARISAI**

or **SARALI VARISAI** : Preliminary svara Exercises ( Foundation : Vocalises )

**JANTAI VARISAI** : Double notes (Ex: SS RR GG MM)

**PURVANGAM** : Lower Tetrachord ( Lower part/ first half )

Eg : S R G M

In the varnam, the first half, Pallavi, Anu-Pallavi, Mukthayi swara is Purvangam.

**UTTARANGAM** : Higher Tetrachord ( Upper part/Second half)

Eg : P D N  $\dot{\text{S}}$

In the Varnam, the second half, Charanam And Ettugada swaras ( charana svaras )

**VOCALISES** : Vocal exercise.

**STHANA** : Octaves /position /Sthayi

**SWARA** : Note.

**VISARJITAM** : Without sound (Nishabdha)

**PRAKRUTHI** : Natural.

**PRAKRUTHI SWARA** : Natural Note.

**VIKRITA SWARA** : A swara other than Suddha swara.

## Artiste of the month

**K Venugopal**

-Lakshmi V

# The keyboard Plays On

***K Venugopal is a keyboard artiste familiar in Mumbai's music scene for the past 33 years. He is also a music director and music arranger, having provided music to several Malayalam Tamil and Kannada dramas and played the keyboard for several playback singers on Mumbai's various stages, for Malayalam, Hindi, Tamil, Marathi and Kannada and songs. For the last three years he has been the accompanying keyboard artist for Raagalaya's annual music competitions.***

K Venugopal was born in North Parur in Ernakulam as the son of late Karunakaran Pillai and Bharati Amma. He graduated from Kerala. As a child he learnt Carnatic music. "I studied Carnatic singing as well as the harmonium when I was young from Chertala Sreedharan Bhagavathar," he says."

While in Kerala he played for various professional music groups.

In 1978 Venugopal came to Mumbai and learnt the basics of Western music from Indira Vegas. It was the late K J Kuruvilla, the famous Malayalam singer, who introduced him to the Mumbai music field. Under Kuruvilla and Narayan Mani (veena player in Mumbai) Venugopal played in several



jingles, albums, serials, and telefilms.

## Stage performances

Venugopal has performed on the stage for music programmes conducted by various cultural organisations of Mumbai. He has played the keyboard for several playback singers like late Brahmanandan, late P Leela, Biju Narayanan, G Venugopal, Unni Menon, K G Marcos, Krishnachandran, Jolly Abraham, Minmini, K Alice, Radha Ramchandran, Mahendra Kapoor, Udit Narayan, Shaila Chikle and other singers. Since 14 years he has been accompanying on the keyboard for well-known dandia singers and music troupes on all the ten days of Navaratri at their performances in Malad, Borivli and Kandivli. In 1994, he was felicitated by K J Yesudas during singers Anupama and Nirupama's programme at the Chembur Fine Arts Hall, which was organised by T P Chandran, Secretary of Yesudas and KPV Unni, Retd Customs Commissioner. Currently, he is accompanying Idea Star Singers' and Indian Idol stars' music stage shows.



*K J Yesudas felicitating Venugopal*

"The student must practise to play the keyboard with both hands. It is good for anyone who learns the keyboard to know the basics of classical and western music.

I would advise the youngsters to remember that melody is important in a song. And they should enjoy the melody in songs"



*Discussing a tune with Unni Menon*



*Venugopal accompanying Mahendra Kapoor on the Keyboard*

## Music Director and Music Arranger

Venugopal has directed music for several Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada dramas that have been staged in Mumbai and Kerala. In January 2011, the Malayalam drama *Makarakoith* in which he gave music, won the first prize at Drama Competition held in Mumbai. This drama was directed by Studio Rajan and songs were sung by Madhu Nambiar. Other Directors with whom he worked as music director providing the music for their dramas are Achuthan, Rajendran Padiyur, KK Rajan, Rajan Kadannapalli, K R Parameshwar and Suvarna. He is also associated with Mundoor Rajan and Prathibha Theatres.

As music director and music arranger, Venugopal has several albums to his credit: Usha pooja, Yamuna Teera, Kavya Kalasham in Malayalam, Namu Ashtavinayaka in Marathi and several Tamil albums on Lord Murugan produced by K D Chandran, Christian devotional albums sung by K G Marcos and Radha Ramachandran's devotional albums. He was closely associated with K D Chandran's stage shows called *Nrithya Sindhu* in which Sudha Chandran participated and he provided the music.

Venugopal has some advice to give aspiring keyboard artistes and students who are learning to play the keyboard:

"The student must practise to play the keyboard with both hands. It is good for anyone who learns the keyboard to know the basics of classical and western music."

He laments the fact that today the youngsters are going for fast paced numbers and forgetting the melody that is an important aspect of music.

"I would advise them to remember that melody is important in a song. And they should enjoy the melody in songs," he adds.

Venugopal works with the Bank of Baroda and he has won many prizes and trophies in inter-bank music competitions in Carnatic, instrumental, national integration and folk songs. His wife is Snehalata, hailing from Parur, but born and brought up in Mumbai. They have a son Vignesh, studying in standard VII. He is studying to play the keyboard



*Venugopal in action*

## Points to Ponder



Jacob Koshy

# Finance Bill, 2011

The Finance Minister Mr Pranab Mukherjee has played a balancing act between growth and concerns of higher inflation while presenting the Budget 2011. He has partially succeeded in doing so by planning fiscal deficit at 4.6% and restricting the net borrowing to Rs 3,60,000 cr. The FM has recommended only a few proposals in the Direct Taxes where as the proposals for Indirect Taxes have far reaching consequences. This is understandable as Direct Tax Code is likely to be implemented in 2012. However, the more important Goods & Service Tax Act (GST) is unlikely to see the light in the next year as it lacks the support of all the state governments.

The proposed amendments in the tax rates in the Income Tax Act are discussed as below:

- i. The rates of tax remained the same where as the definition of senior citizens would mean and include those who complete the age 60 and above years as against 65 years at present.
- ii. A new category of very senior citizen is introduced which would mean and include those who complete the age 80 years and above.
- iii. The threshold limit for taxation has been raised to Rs 1,80,000/- per annum.
- iv. For senior citizen this limit is raised to Rs 2,50,000/- and very senior citizen the limit is raised to Rs 5,00,000/-
- v. For women (besides senior and very senior citizen as above) the limit is unchanged at Rs 1,90,000/-

The proposed amendments on taxation of non-residents include lower rates for dividend distributed by Foreign Subsidiary Company and received by the Indian Company at 15%. This would alleviate tax burden to some extent for the Indian Company which at present pay higher rate of 30%. Anti Avoidance measures are proposed to be introduced in this Budget for empowering the Central Government to collect/exchange information about entities in notified jurisdiction areas in relation to transactions entered by any assessee .

The provisions to exempt income of an infrastructure debt fund, to be notified by the Central Government in the Official Gazette, is yet another attempt to attract more funds into developmental activities of the Government.

Weighted deductions has been enhanced from 175% to 200% in respect of certain contributions to approved Scientific Research programme of National Laboratory or a University or an IIT or to any other specified person. The amendment to the definition of "Charitable purposes" has created a lot of hardship to many genuine Trust or Association who carries on certain activities which earns a fee, a cess or any other consideration. In such cases if the aggregate value of receipts from such activities does not exceed Rs 10 lacs in the previous year, the Trust or Association would still continue to claim tax exemption. This limit of Rs 10 lacs is proposed to be raised to Rs 25 lacs by the Finance Bill.

Minimum Alternate Tax once applicable to only Companies now proposed to be introduced to the Limited Liability Partnerships, popularly known as LLP. The tax advantage would be no more available to LLP as per the new proposal and would be taxed in future under Alternate Minimum Tax (AMT) @ 18.5% on the adjusted income , where the regular tax payable is less than the AMT. However, the LLP can claim the tax credit as and when the tax is payable under the regular provisions up to tenth Assessment Year immediately succeeding the assessment year in which the tax credit becomes allowable. Transfer Pricing provisions have undergone large scale changes in view of the significant importance attached to an international transaction. Presently if the international transaction is with in the forbearance limit of 5% with reference to its Arms Length Price (ALP), and no further adjustment is carried to such actual price. This discretion is now proposed to be done away with and Central Government will notify the rate for each type of transaction with in which no adjustment would be needed.

The provisions as discussed above cover the major changes proposed in the Finance Bill 2011, pertaining to Direct Taxes. These amendments will be enacted only after adoption by both houses of Parliament and after obtaining the President's assent.

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## MUMBAI MALAYALEE PROFILES JANAKEEYA RAJA

# Documentary Film on Palakkadsserry Shekari Varma

*Royalty is always associated with palaces and armies in all parts of the world. But the Palakkad Raja even in ancient days had no palaces and armies. They had tharawads and many temples, rich forests and thousand of acres of land. All the important royal functions took place in the temple and they were its owners. The Palakkad royal family lost its power to rule when Malabar came under British control and they began their life as a wealthy tharavad family headed by a karnavar. After Independence, when the Communists came to power in Kerala, they lost their extensive land.*

**Sriprakash Menon**, a Mumbai journalist and media consultant has directed a documentary on the current Palakkad Valia Raja Shekari Varma, which is slated to be released before July. The Documentary focuses on the Raja, his roots, his extended royal family and his association with the people of his kingdom for whom he has done a lot of social work to improve their conditions.

The current Raja Mallikal Shekari Varma, was born in Palakkad, studied in Shanti Niketan, UK, US and is presently staying in Singapore. Now retired, he worked as Aeronautical Engineer in Japan Airlines in Singapore for 35 years. In February this year he completed 100 years of age. There was a celebration with his family members and friends in which the Singapore President felicitated him.

Kallekulangara was the original place of the Palakkad Raja. He is called Valiyaraja. And their swaroopam was Tharoor consisting of nine places. About 1500 years ago when the Zamorin of Calicut attacked Palakkad, the Raja asked



**Sriprakash Menon**

the Mysore Maharaja to help him. The Royal family then shifted to Kallekulangara in Palakkad.

Born in 1911, Shekhari Varma is not just of blue blood. He is the son of K P Kesava Menon, founder editor of *Matrubhumi* and a freedom fighter who played an active part in the Vaikom Satyagraha. Greatly influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, K P Kesava Menon joined the non-co-operation movement and *Matrubhoomi* was the first paper in Kerala to advocate the cause of the Indian Freedom movement.

Thus the centenarian monarch has seen the freedom struggle at close quarters and has been part of History in the making. In this documentary Shekari Varma speaks about his father, and the role he played in the freedom struggle, about V K Krishna Menon, his concern and ideas on how to develop his hometown. Several members of the Royal family, Ravi Menon, K P Visalakshi, Nalini Damodaran, Sankaran Varma, *Matrubhumi* Editor and Shekari Varma's nephew M Kesava Menon give their opinions and views of the times.

The documentary is shot in Singapore and in Palakkad. Today a few dedicated members of the Royal family, under the leadership of Udaya Banu, and nephew of K P Kesava Menon, have founded the Palakkadessery Sevana Samajam for the benefit of their people. Its main objective is to spread education and a primary School called K P Kesava Menon Memorial School has been established.

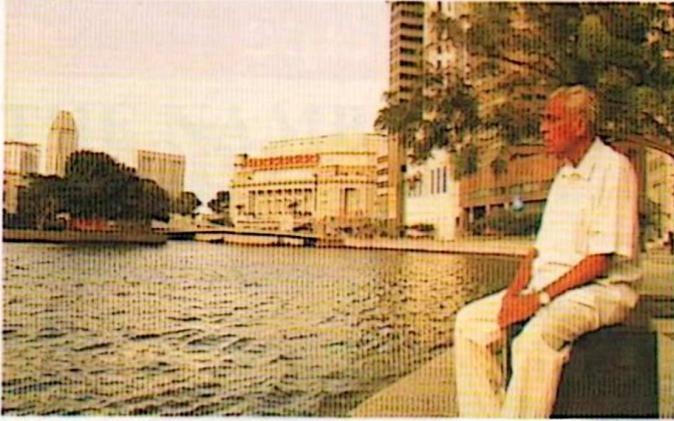
Sriprakash Menon has done extensive research to complete this project. His mother P Leela Menon hailed from an aristocratic family of Ayilur in



**Valia Raja Shekari Varma**

Palakkad. His father, Sethumadhavan Menon is from Kollengode who worked as a Government servant in Pune. But he was also a literary person who wrote kathakali padangal. Sriprakash did his schooling and Postgraduation from Pune. He worked for some time in Delhi under the Central Government and shifted to Mumbai in the early eighties. A versatile person, he studied Journalism, Travel and Tourism, Film and TV Production Course and worked with Free Press Journal, Indian Express and Times of India. He worked with Zee TV and has been involved in the direction of several film and TV documentaries and serials. He also writes on travel and tourism and is a senior editor of several magazines.

Sriprakash has earlier directed a



*Valia Raja Shekari Varma in Singapore*

documentary *Nada Brahma* on thayambaka player Pallavoor Appumarar . Apart from Janakeeya Raja, Sriprakash is making another documentary on Tukaram's abhangs .

As he says, "Making documentaries is my passion and I want to do it." He is also into rubber farming in Kerala and does a lot of cultural and social activities. He wants to bring the village folk arts and artists to a global level through his creative ventures . He is involved with the Chinmaya Mission. Sriprakash Menon's wife is Padmaja who is a lecturer and they have one son who is studying law.

Janakeeya Raja is produced by Padmasri Creations and Script and Direction by Sriprakash Menon. Music score is by Ved Nair. Cinematography and Sound is by Nandakumar and Mukundan Menon.



*Royal welcome for the Raja and his wife in Kerala*

## Quotes

*He dares to be a fool. But that is the first step in the direction of wisdom.*

*You can never learn less; You can only learn more.*

*Love is like war: easy to begin, but hard to end.*

*You may delay, but time will not.*

*A minute's success pays the failure of years.*

*Tell a person he is brave and help him be so.*

*The most important time in life is the present.*

*The hardest years in life are between ten and seventy.*

*A clear conscience is a sign of a bad memory.*

*Courage is knowing you may not win, yet trying even you know that you may lose.*

*Do not look down on any one unless you are helping them up.*

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## Communities of Kerala - Series I

# THE NAMBOOTHIRIES OF KERALA

(This is the third and final part of the article on Namboothiri Brahmins of Kerala)

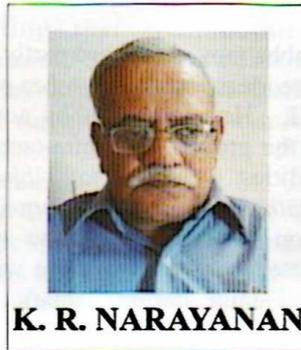
Efforts for the modernisation and the social development of Namboothiri community dates back to early 1908. A large number of Namboothiries congregated in Cherumukku Vaidikan's Illam located on the bank of the Periyar river, on the Mahāśivarāthri day of 1083 Malayalam Era (31<sup>st</sup> January, 1908) under the chairmanship of Shri Desamangalam Valiya Sankaran Nambudiripad. This event, in fact, gave birth to "Namboothiri Yogakshema Mahāsabha" (Namboothiri Community Welfare Organisation). About 155 members attended this meeting.

The broad objectives of the Sabha were the eradication of both illiteracy and lack of modern education in the community. Namboothiri settlements encompass the two princely states of Travancore and Kochi as well as the Malabar region of the Madras Province - the entire area from Kanyakumari to Gokarnam called Malayalam. Representations on these aspects, therefore, were submitted to the three Governments.

The Sabha started a monthly publication called "Yogakshemam", as a medium to create awareness among all the members of the community about the scope of the Sabha, its aims and objectives and how they could be achieved. The essentiality of English education and the drawbacks in its absence, were themes which were constantly discussed in the magazine.

It took some time to draft the academic syllabus and to actually start a school. The central or main school - Namboothiri Vidyālayam - started functioning in the Malayalam year 1094 (1919) at

Edakkunni, near Thrissur, with two regional schools at Peringottukara and Edappalli. In order to help in achieving the educational goals of the Sabha and to prepare the students to get admission in the main Vidyālayam, coaching of English by teachers appointed for the purpose was undertaken in Brahmaswam Madhom at Thrissur and a few other places.



K. R. NARAYANAN

A printing press - The Mangalodayam Press - was installed in the premises of Desamangalam Mana, and a monthly magazine - "Mangalodayam Māsika" - came out regularly. The press and the publication activities were later shifted to Thrissur.

The Yogakshemam Library-cum-Reading Room was established at Thrissur, as an institution of the Sabha in 1916. It was considered as one among the top reading rooms in Thrissur.

### Social reforms

A major break through was needed in the marriage systems of the Namboothiries. The Sabha took up this issue also seriously. The first step was to understand the problems faced by the Namboothiri women (Antharjanam). Along with all its strengths, the joint family system had its own problems. It was the first and foremost duty of the Sabha to find a proper solution to the problem. The solution was to permit the younger brothers also to marry from the Namboothiri community (*Kanishthha Vivāham*), and to stop the practice of *Sambandham*.

It was at this juncture that many of the young Namboothiries were attracted to the Indian National Congress, Gandhiji's non-cooperation movement, picketing,

fasting, etc. The implementation programmes were planned along these lines.

With regard to the women's education, a committee prepared a report based on a survey among the members and recommended that modern education should be imparted, but the traditions should be retained to the extent possible. The rules and guidelines being practiced in Namboothiri Vidyālayam at Edakkunni was modified to make it applicable to girls also.

The Youth Corps (Yuva Jana Sangham), a volunteer group during the annual meetings of the Sabha, grew to be a separate and independent entity. Thus the Sabha and the Sangham became two powerful organizations of the Namboothiri community. An important objective of the Sangham (youth corps) was to popularize and implement the aims and directives of the Sabha. It had to put an end to the polygamy of particularly those in the Sabha to start with. They extorted members, especially the older ones, to give up *Sambandham*, and polygamy.

In the first Legislative Council of the erstwhile Cochin State (1935), Kaplingat Sankaran Nambudiri and Chelur Ittiravi Nambudiri were elected as members. The former introduced a "Namboothiri Bill" covering the main issues, which was passed by the house in spite of severe objections from the traditionalists. But, the Maharaja's approval was required for the Bill to become an Act; and this did not happen, owing, perhaps, to lobbying from certain quarters. Meanwhile, in the erstwhile Travancore State, the Legislature had no such difficulties for passing a Bill which included most of the recommendations of the Sabha, and the Bill became law. Similarly, a Namboothiri Law came into effect in the Malabar region through legislation in the then Madras Presidency, of which Malabar was a part.

The Kerala Namboothiri Act and the Centre's Hindu Code together satisfied most of the aspirations and long-standing demands of the Sabha. The Sabha used different strategies to prevent polygamy.



Artist Namboodiri at work



*Some prominent Namboothiries: (from left) Mahakavi Akkitham, Community leader V T Bhattathiripad, National award winning actor Premji, Writer Lalithambika Antharjanam*

Physically preventing such marriages through pickets and serving of court injunctions and sometimes even getting the bride married to another suitable person on the same auspicious day ("Muhootham"), were mostly successful.

The Sabha effectively implemented the elimination of Purdah (*Maṛa*) practice from its annual meeting of 1930. This enabled V T Bhattathiripad to prove his leadership qualities. And in 1930, V T could organize and stage "Atukkalayil Ninnu Arangathekku" (from the kitchen to the stage) in Edakkunni, the venue of the Sabha's meeting. The drama had a revolutionary impact on the Antharjanams, especially the younger ones. While V.T's drama could motivate only a few like Parvathy Nenminimangalam, Arya Pallam and a small group of their followers, M R Bhattathiripad's "Marakkutakkullile Mahā Narakam" (The Hell inside the Palmleaf Umbrella) instigated the entire community to throw away this umbrella!

V T's next step was to promote inter-caste marriages. His own sister, then a student of the Vidyālayam was married off to a Nair. This act in fact, resulted in court proceedings against him for breach of contract within the Vidyālayam

Committee. The Committee could get a judgment in its favor to recover all the educational expenses incurred by the Committee on V T's sister, and got it implemented too.

The Sabha moved forward partly in line with the ideas and programmes pursued by V T. He and the Sabha now rose above the problems of intra-communal inequalities ("*Avānthara Vibhāgam*", "*Ābhijāthyam*", etc.) and turned their attention to bring back the excommunicated families and those who had changed faith during Tippu's attack. Their children were encouraged to apply for admission in the Vidyālayam. But the Committee, fearing adverse impacts, refused admission. For such people to be admitted as members in the Sabha, they had to wait till the annual meeting of ME 1935 at Haripad.

## Women Empowerment and Welfare

A resolution for "widow marriage" was introduced in the annual meeting (1934), held at Peramangalam but was strongly opposed. It was subsequently passed in spite of tremendous opposition.

Implementation of the resolution did not take long. Just as another important resolution for bringing excommunicated persons back into the Namboothiri fold was passed one year and implemented the next year, the widow marriage resolution was also first implemented a year after adoption. M R B. married a widow arranged and conducted by V T himself. In addition to Namboothiries themselves, persons from other communities also opposed this revolutionary movement.

But, more interestingly, Antharjanams and unmarried girls opposed it, fearing that it would adversely affect the daughters' and their own marriage prospects.

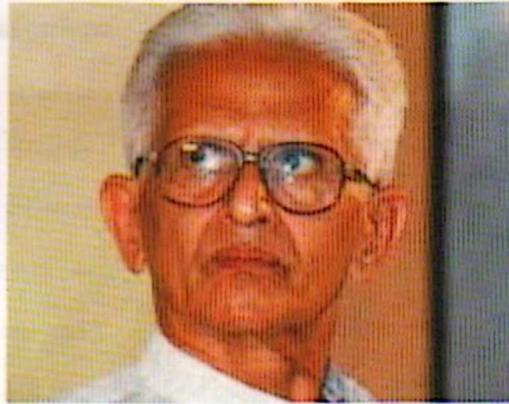
## Post-War Developments

Towards the end of the Second World War (1945), the Sabha met at Ongallur and communist theoretician, E M Namboodiripad was chosen to present over it. EMS gladly accepted it but could not devote much energy to Sabha activities (due to his involvement in political activities).

Every Namboothiri observed *Sudhha* (non-defilement). They used to remo-

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*Some prominent Namboothiries: (from left) First Chief Minister of Kerala E M S Namboothiripad, Poet Prof Vishnunarayanan Namboothiri and Carnatic Vocalist Sankaran Namboothiri*

*Asudhham* (pollution or defilement) by bathing and wearing the wet or fresh clothes. If anyone was suspected to have become polluted during the proceedings, he/she bathed before entering the dining hall. Gradually, over the years, such strictness started disappearing. Wearing a shirt was prohibited only in the dining hall. Such changes and transformation reached its zenith during the Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1933 at Karalmanna. By then, the Namboothiri youth had already started participating in public and social activities. Removal of

untouchability was one of the major issues. Caste difference began to be ignored. It was in the Kumāranallur meeting that Namboothiries and members of other castes ate sitting next to one another. Among the leaders from other castes were Sahodaran Ayyappan, Mannathu Padmanabhan Pillai and advocate and rationalist M. C. Joseph. Thus the transformation of Namboothiries was fast and commendable. The leaders met in 1962 again and decided to revive the Mahāsabha. There was even a suggestion to rename the "Namboothiri

Yogakshemam" to "Kerala Yogakshemam". The truth was that in the course of time the Sabha and the Sangham were gradually becoming redundant and an anachronism. This led to the natural death of the organization. Many years later in 1980, a group of young Namboothiries again established a "Yogakshema Sabha". It does have sub-units with clear goals. The Sabha did well to bring in changes in the Namboothiri men and women, in line with changes in Indian society.

*Concluded*

## Dance Review

SRK

Kum GAURI and Kum VARSHA

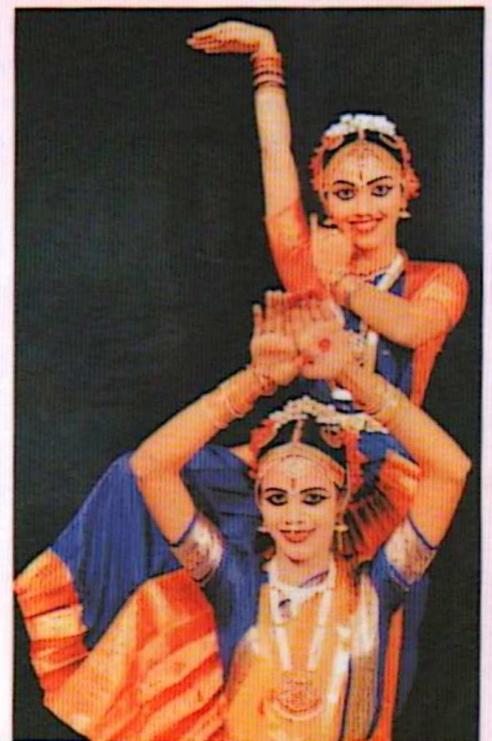
# Promising disciples of Guru Smt Sandhya Damle

Kum.Gauri and Kum.Varsha, had their first stage performance at ISKON Auditorium, Mumbai recently. The recital began with a traditional Pushpanjali, ragam Nattai followed by Alarippu in Khanda Ekam. The duo dancers performed the third number jathiswaram in ragam Hindolam set to rupakam composed by Ganesh Iyer.

The highlight of the evening was Varnam (Ragam:Panthuvarali set to Adi talam) in praise of Little Krishna.

In the post intermission, Gauri performed Shiva Tandavam ( SHATA SRUSHTITANDAVA) on a professional level with full expression. Varsha's RADHA SAMEDA KRISHNA ( In ragam Yaman ) impressed the audience. Finally they concluded their recital with a crisp thillana in ragam desh set to adi talam.

Orchestral support was of a high standard with Vocal (Ganesh Iyer) Mridangam (Shaktidharan) Violin (Vibhas Ranade) Flute (Raghavendra). On the side wing, Vocalist's mellifluous singing was matched by his full emotional involvement in the Sahitya bhava. The Violin and flute interludes were good as also the recital of Jathis. The mridangist got into the spirit of the recital right from the beginning. The duo dancers would do well to keep the orchestra group intact as they work well as a team which has a synergistic effect on the performance. Guru Smt.Sandhya Damle conducted the entire recital with Nattuvangam of high standard.



*Kum Gauri and Kum Varsha*



Lakshmi Venkatachalam

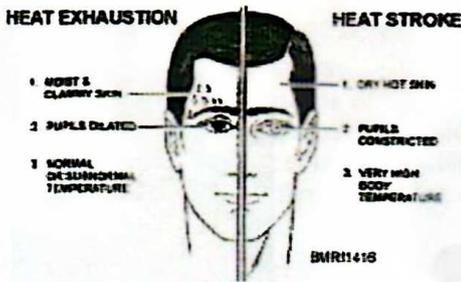
# Avoiding Heat Woes in Summer

*Summer is round the corner. And with it comes a host of heat related illnesses as also fatigue and lethargy. With some precautions we can overcome the worst of summer related heat exhaustion, dehydration and stroke and survive the hot days with sufficient strength.*



*Drink water to beat the heat*

Our weather experts predict an unusually hot summer in Mumbai this year. On March 16 this year, the city's temperature touched 41.6 degrees C. The last time the temperature rose above 40 was in 1952 and 1956 (42.2degrees C and 41.7 C degrees C) in the months of March. Weathermen attribute the rise in temperature to the recent phenomenon of lower levels of humidity in the atmosphere and the influence of loo like winds (heat winds that blow in the northern and eastern parts of India.) Generally, Mumbai's summer temperature ranges between 35-38 degrees, mainly due to its proximity to the sea and its humid weather. Mumbai seems to reel under 'an urban heat island effect' which in simple words mean, urban areas are getting hot due to excessive human activity.



Summer is the season of vacations and travel. But summer is also the time when we feel more tired and prone to several diseases due to the heat. With a little care and attention, forethought and planning, we can prevent heat illnesses and enjoy the benefits of the season and enjoy our holidays and reunions with relatives and friends.

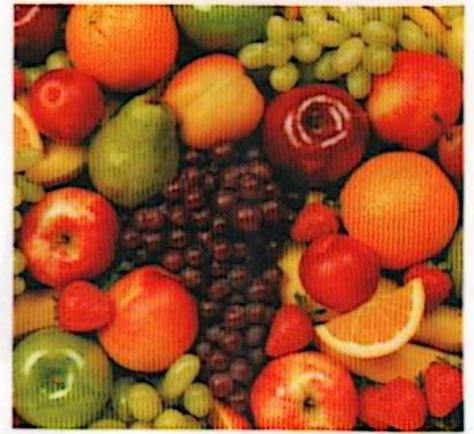
Heat exhaustion, dehydration and heat stroke are major risks that we succumb to, during summer. This is especially the case with children, elderly people, and those under certain medications or chronic diseases. Under normal conditions and in normal persons, our body loses its fluids through sweat, urine and stools. But it gets replaced with the water that we drink and the fluids in the food we eat. So the balance is maintained.



Heat exhaustion symptoms include heavy sweating, fatigue, headache, pale, clammy skin, excessive thirst, rapid heartbeat, dizziness, fainting, nausea, vomiting, muscle cramps, and mild rise in body temperature. Dehydration occurs when the body fluids that are lost are not replaced. This happens when a person has diarrhoea or vomiting, or is exposed for a long time in the sun.

Heat stroke is more severe and in extreme cases, even life-threatening. It occurs when a person is exposed for a long time to extreme heat and sunlight and the person does not sweat so as to reduce the body temperature. Elderly people, children, people who work outdoors for a long time are more vulnerable to heat stroke. In all cases of exhaustion, dehydration and heat stroke immediate steps must be taken to prevent them from becoming an emergency situation. If necessary, hospitalisation must be done and proper medical attention provided to restore the fluid balance in the body.

Other diseases to look out for during summer are rashes and itches, allergy, prickly heat, viral flu and cough and cold and gastritis. Gastritis is irritation and inflammation of the inner lining of the stomach. Its symptoms include stomach ache, indigestion, and loss of appetite, nausea, and vomiting. Chicken pox and typhoid are other diseases which are caused by the fluctuation of hot temperature during the day and cold weather at night. Viruses thrive under such weather



*Fruits are good for our health in summer*

conditions, doctors say. Eye allergies are common during this season. To avoid infection of the eyes, we must keep ourselves hydrated, splash our eyes frequently with cold water and wear goggles when going out in the sun.

We should make it a point to drink at least 8 to ten glasses of water during summer. It helps in quenching our thirst, keeps our body hydrated, and our digestive systems in working order. It is advisable not to drink excessive coffee, tea and alcohol.

Opt for fruit juices, fresh fruits and salads and avoid oily spicy food as far as possible. We should cut down on refined sugar as far as possible.

Nature has her own curative properties, so it is very good to eat the seasonal summer fruits like mangoes, watermelon, musk melon, pineapple, papaya, grapes bananas etc. Lime juice with a pinch of salt and sugar is very refreshing. Cucumber slices with tomato and carrot pieces is also very good and cooling. Buttermilk, tender coconut water, all kinds of fresh juices are excellent during these hot days.

It is wise to get up early during summer and stay indoors during the noon when the heat is at its height. Night times will be pleasant and we can sit out and enjoy the cool air.

Avoid excessive physical activity at noon. Unless absolutely necessary it is good to avoid going out in the afternoon sun. If you must go out, wear a cap or carry an umbrella.

Do not step out without a SPF cream (sun protecting factor) to protect your skin from the harsh rays of the sun.

When going out on vacations, it is advisable to carry energy powders like electoral and drinking water bottles.

Always opt for loose fitting, cotton clothes during summer. They absorb the heat.

## Symptoms of Heat stroke and remedies

Headache, dizziness, confusion, agitation.

Extreme fatigue.

Hot, dry skin that is flushed but not sweaty.

High body temperature

Rapid heart beat.

### First aid plans

First remove the patient to a cooler place or indoors.

Apply cool water on his face and body in large measure. If ice is available, apply the same. Make him drink water or energy drink. Take him to a doctor and administer immediate medical treatment.

We should be on the look out for heat stroke attack on children since they are more vulnerable and prevent them from succumbing to it.

## Beauty Care



Rashma Anand

# A Nose For Perfumes



*Since time immemorial, man has been seduced by scents. We are constantly in search of products that leave a lingering fragrance. We use room fresheners, car perfumes, scented candles, incense sticks and even toilet fresheners. It is almost an obsessive need that everything must smell good.*

*This is where perfumes come in. The perfume when applied on the body gives a unique scent that is usually a complex combination of various fragrances.*

## What is a perfume

Scientifically speaking, perfume is a mixture of certain chemicals called aromatic compounds and essential oils in a base like alcohol, more specifically ethyl alcohol.

## Essential Oil

Essential oil is typically an oily liquid containing a volatile aromatic compound. The essential oil is extracted usually from plant sources and rarely animal sources. The word essence refers to the fact that the oil has the 'essence' or 'the distinctive scent' of that plant. Some common essential oils are rose, lavender, jasmine, which are obtained from the flowers by a process called distillation. The by product of distillation is available in the market as rose water, lavender water etc. Other essential oils like the orange oil, lemon oil and other citrus oils are usually obtained from the skin of the fruits by the process of mechanical expression. The other parts that may be used for extracting essential oils also include leaves, roots, seeds etc.

## Aromatic Compounds

An aromatic compound is a chemical compound that has an aroma or fragrance, which we perceive due to their interaction with the olfactory receptors. Aromatic compounds are found naturally in essential oils, food, spices etc. Aromatic compounds are formed biochemically in ripening of bananas, fermentation of wine, which is responsible for the unique smell of ripe bananas and aged wines.

## Types of Perfume

As mentioned, perfume is a mixture of the essential oil (containing the aromatic compound) in a carrier base like ethanol. The particular scent of a perfume is very complex containing many fragrances and aromatic compounds. Also the strength of the perfume depends on the concentration of the aromatic compound. Based on this we have the following kinds:

Type of perfume	Concentration of aromatic compound
Perfume Extract (or simply Perfume)	15% - 40%
Espirit de Parfum	15% - 30%
Eau de Parfum	10% - 20%
Eau de Toilette	5% - 15%
Eau de Cologne	3% - 8%
Splash / Aftershave	1% - 3%

## Types of Fragrances

There are literally thousands of fragrances, and many still probably waiting to be discovered. So an exact and accurate classification of fragrances is not possible. The fragrances are roughly classified into different families:



### Floral

As the name suggest, the family contains mainly floral fragrances like rose, jasmine etc. It may be a single floral scent or contain a floral bouquet. This fragrance is very popular in womens' perfumes as they have a distinctive feminine quality



### Oriental/Ambered

These are stronger fragrances, compared to floral. They include fragrances like vanilla, musk and spicy amber. In perfumes, they give an exotic, oriental appeal



### Woody

The fragrances in this family are dominated by woody scents like sandalwood, agarwood, cedar and oakmoss, amongst others. This family also features leathery scents like honey, tobacco..



### Aromatic

This family contains typically herbal fragrances like basil, rosemary, anise etc. These are usually used in perfumes for men that are slightly more spicy.



### Fruity

This family contains fruity fragrances other than citrus fruits such as mango, peach, strawberry, black currant etc. They are generally fresh and spicy and have a youthful feel to them.



### Citrus

Contains the fragrance of citrus fruits. Owing to the low staying ability of citrus scents, these are normally used in freshening eau de colognes.



### Green

The green fragrances usually include the scents of freshly cut grass and spring scents. These are similar to the oriental scents but much lighter than them.



### Aqua

This is the newest family of fragrances which contains, fresh, refreshing water scents. It features scents like sea air, fresh water plants and of course water. Is a very neutral fragrance and can be used for both men and women.



*Smell good, feel good*

## Combination of fragrances

Perfumes combine fragrances for the best results. For instance, the floral fragrances combine very well with the aqua or green categories for a perfume that is essentially feminine without being overpowering. Oriental scents are often combined with spicy fruit tones or warm woody tones to make a strong perfume that can be used for evening events. Woody fragrances combined with citrus tones smell fresh, yet retain an air of sophistication. Citrus flavours are most versatile and suited for both men and women. For women, citrus is combined with floral or fruit tones. This kind of fragrance is often fresh, sporty and suitable for work. For men, the citrus fragrance is combined with woody and spicy (oriental) tones. Another typical combination for men is the aromatic fragrance combined with woody tones that produces an exotic inspiring fragrance.

*To be continued*



# MUMBAI NEWS DIGEST

KIM News Bureau

## Y. B. Chavan Memorial Award for Excellence to Capt. Nair

The second edition of The Maharashtra Economic Summit conferred Capt. CP Krishnan Nair, Chairman of The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts with the Y B Chavan Memorial Awards for Excellence in Hospitality. The award was presented by His Excellency K Sankaranarayanan, Governor of Maharashtra, in the presence of economists, politicians, scholars and achievers from different sectors.

The award is in recognition of Capt. Nair's outstanding business practices, leadership qualities and for raising the bar for the industry with his achievements. Acknowledged as the doyen of the hospitality industry, Capt. Nair reflects on his long journey, "This award highlights the friends, family, peers, business associates and all those who have stood by me and shared my vision, and contributed so immensely to the growth of the company." The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts is owned and operated by Hotel Leelaventure Ltd. headquartered in Mumbai. The luxury hotel group manages seven award-winning hotels in India which includes prime urban locations in Bangalore, Gurgaon, Mumbai, New Delhi and magical holiday escapes in Goa, Kovalam and Udaipur. Properties under development will open soon in Chennai followed by Agra, Jaipur and Ashtamudi, Kerala. The group has marketing



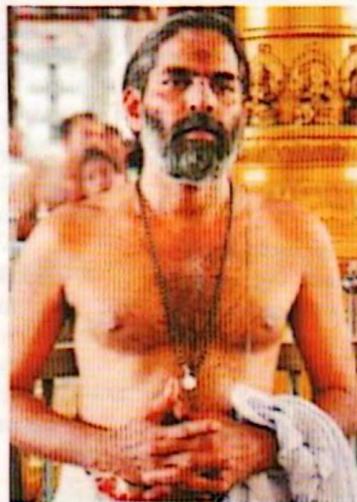
*Capt. Nair, Chairman of The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts receiving the Y.B. Chavan Memorial Award*

alliances with Germany-based Kempinski, US-based Preferred Hotel Group and is a member of Global Hotel Alliance based in Switzerland.

## Vashi Vaikundam Priest appointed Guruvayur Temple Chief Priest

Girish Vadakkedath Thirumeni, the Chief Priest of Vashi Vaikundam - Shri Guruvayurappan Temple at Sector 29, Vashi has been chosen to be appointed as the Chief Priest of Sree Guruvayur Temple at Guruvayur (known as Bhooloka Vaikundam) w.e.f. 1st April 2011.

Professionally qualified, well-experienced and mature, Girish Thirumeni spoke with the Secretary of Vashi Vaikundam, V K Narayan immediately after his name was declared as the new Head Priest of Guruvayur Temple and said that it was a *Varadan* for his sincere and dedicated service to Vashi Vaikundanathan. He thanked the devotees of Vashi and Navi Mumbai for their excellent support and co-operation. He also said that he would come back to Vashi Vaikundam as soon as he becomes free from this new assignment



*Girish Thirumeni*

## Sad Demise



*K Sivasankaran Nair*

K Sivasankaran (Appu), former Vice-President and life member of Kerala Samithi Vartak Nagar, Thane, passed away on March 17. He was 44. The Samithi expressed their condolences and remembered the social work he had done for the Samithi. The Samithi also paid their tributes to PD Raghavan, who had recently passed away. He is the bother of P D Sukumaran who is the Treasurer of the Samithi.

## V K Narayan honoured

V K Narayan, the Secretary of Sree Guruvayurappan Bhakta Samaj Vashi was honoured at Vashi Vaikundam Temple premises, Vashi. On behalf of the devotees attending the programme, Committee member N R Pillai commended the Secretary's contribution towards the overall development of the temple. A retired senior Executive from a Tata Company, Mr Narayan played a catalyst role in establishing and constructing the temple complex in a short span of time. Other members who spoke during this occasion include Mrs. Chandrika G Nair, Mavelikkara Radhakrishnan and D. Nambiar.



*Ganapati Subramaniam honouring Narayan with a shawl*

## V Suresh honoured

V Suresh, Principal Executive Officer, Hirco was honoured with the Achievement Award for Industry Doyen conferred on him by the Construction Industry Development Council (CIDC). He is a member of MFG since 30th May, 2009.

## Saraswathy Kala Kendra

Saraswathy Kala Kendra, a Govt Recognized Institute in Mira Road, conducted their Annual Concert at Borivli. The founder-Director is Smt Subhita Murali and she gives training in Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi styles of dance. The Institute is affiliated to the Akhil Bharatiya Mahavidyalay, Miraj.



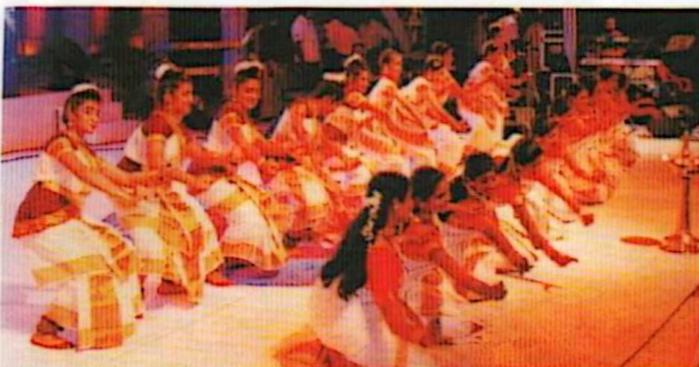
*Subhita Murali with her students*



*Guru Sushma Gopinath of Navarasa Academy Nerul performs on guru day at the Natyanjali Festival held at Chedda Nagar on March 2<sup>nd</sup> on the occasion of Shivaratri.*

## Chinmaya Mission Residential Vedanta Course

Chinmaya Mission Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Mumbai invites application for its 15 th Vedanta Course in English, a Study of the Upanishads, Bhagawad Gita and other Vedantic literature. The Chief Acharya is Swami Tejomayananda, Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide and Resident Acharya is Swami Advayananda and other visiting Acharyas of Chinmaya Mission. It is a two year residential course commencing on September 1, 2011. Accommodation, food, clothes and medical care will be provided free of cost. Personal interviews of all candidates will be conducted at specific locations in India and abroad.



*Students of Navarasa Academy headed by Guru Sushma Gopinath perform on the theme song of Kairali T V on the felicitation ceremony of M Jayachandran for completing 100 films held at Dombivli on March 6<sup>th</sup>.*

## STRENGTHEN MALAYALI ORGANISATIONS: GOVERNOR

The Governor of Maharashtra, K Shankaranarayanan, said it was only strong organizations that could render useful help to Malayalis outside the State. He was inaugurating Film Awards 2010 organised by the World Malayali Council and Kairali TV in Mumbai on 27 March.

He welcomed the Council's plans to raise funds for 111 heart surgeries for needy people during the year. The Chairman of the Mumbai Chapter of the Council K K Nambiar and President of the World Malayali Council, Gokuldas Madhavan and Secretary, K Ramachandran Nair explained the various charitable programmes of WMC.

Funds were raised through the Film Awards Night organised on the occasion. Film stars Mammooty, Dilip, Innocent, Jagdish, KPAC Lalitha, Archana Kavi, Roma, Ramya Nambissan, Kalabhavan Mani, Nadirshah, playback singers M G Sreekumar, Rimi Tomy, Afzal and others participated in the function.

Mammooty said he felt completely at home in Mumbai whenever he came to the metropolis. At the moment he was doing two major films whose stories are based on life in the city.

A mammoth crowd at the Andheri Sports Complex gave a rousing reception to the stars of the Malayalam screen. Mammooty was given the Best Actor Award for the year and Navodaya Appachan the lifetime achievement award. Special awards were given to Dr. James Thomas, Dr. M G Pillai, V G Nair, N R K Pillai, "Ujala" Ramachandran and others, on the occasion.



*M K Navas welcomes the Governor*



*A view of the audience at WMC function*

## P G Diploma Course in Patent Law and Practice

Sree Narayana Mandira Samithi organized a seminar on the six month Post-Graduate Diploma Course in Patent Law and Practice ( IPR, Intellectual Property Rights ) that they are planning to start on April 10 at their Sree Narayana Guru College of Commerce. IPR Director Dr K G Rajendran , I P R Attorney Jose Madan , Raj Bhakse, Dr Rajendran, Prof. Jayasri participated in the seminar.



*Director Dr K G Rajendran addresses the audience at IPR seminar at Chembur*

## Level Crossing Awareness Drive

Thakurli Kerala Welfare Association conducted an Awareness Drive on the dangers of level-crossing and the accidental death that occur. Corporator Harshad Harischandra Patel flagged off the event. The event started with the people observing a minute's silence in memory of those who lost their lives at the level cross. Many members, young and old, participated in the drive. The members carried placards in Marathi and English urging the public to use the overbridge for crossing. It was mentioned by the Samithi members that talks were on to enlist the services of the Railway Protection Force . Ajay Kumar Unnikrishnan E U, Sibi A Paily, Sreeram, Vimal Kumar, Vinay Murali Nair, Kanakaraj, Pappan, Ajay, Jesse Nixon, Lijo Kannadasan, C G Warriar, Premlal, Harindranath, Joy participated.



*Volunteers with placards in Marathi and English urging the public to use overbridge and avoid accidents*

# Chandrodayam Festival

The Chandrodayam cultural festival, under the auspices of Kairali TV Channel and Enkay Gardens held at Dombivli, attracted a historical crowd to the venue. As entry was free, people from all over Mumbai and suburbs swept to the grounds where sitting arrangement was made for more than fifty thousand people. Soon the accommodation was found inadequate and the venue overflowed.

Maharashtra governor K Sankaranarayanan was the Chief Guest while minister for education of Government of Kerala M A Baby was the Guest of Honour.

Music composer M Jayachandran, playback singer Sujata, actor-dancer Vineet, Lakshmi Gopaldaswamy, Rimi Tomi, Vijay Yesudas, Shweta Mohan were the other participating artistes.

The unexpected turn out of the spectators exposed the ill preparedness of the organisers. The presence of political personalities and the associated protocol became an obstacle to a further revision of arrangements. A long delay of more than half an hour to rearrange the stage for the cultural programme after the Award presentation, felicitations and speeches tested the patience of the audience.

All these contributed to a below par performances from the artistes. Only Rimi could create a favourable atmosphere. The refusal of applause from the spectators despite repeated requests was an indication to this.

The highest turn out however would encourage the organisers to hold similar festivals in future.



*Maharashtra Governor K Sankaranarayanan addressing the audience*



*M Jayachandran and Vijay Yesudas*

## “ALL SOUTH INDIAN LANGUAGES FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL”

Linguists and authorities on Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, Kannada and Telugu presented their views at a seminar organised by the Kerala Kendriya Sanghatana in the presence of Gyanpeet award winner Prof ONV Kurup on 27 March.

The President of the Mumbai Karnataka Sangh, Dr. Gurunath D Joshi, the President of the Marathi Abhyas Kendra, Prof Deepak Pawar, Prof Jayakanteepan of the Mumbai Tamil Sangham, the President of the Mumbai Andhra Mahasabha, A Mallikarjun Reddy presented papers on their respective languages. What emerged out of the discussions that followed was that the best cultural traits in each of the regional language groups is fast diminishing.

Summing up the discussions, Prof. Kurup said, English is only a guest language. It cannot assume the importance of the host language, even though tradition enjoins on us to treat guests as God himself, Prof. Kurup said.

It is the duty of every parent to ensure that our culture, heritage and language are preserved for posterity, he added.

## Giants celebrates Women's Day

Giants International Fed 1B observed International Women's day at Bombay Presidency Golf Club on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Central comm..Member Rajesh Joshi was Chief Guest and Mrs Annie Shekhar MLA the Guest of Honour. Lalitha vasan presided over the function. Giants International Coordinator Shaina NC inaugurated the function. Seven women achievers were felicitated. They were Dr.Medha Somiya (Socio Political), Dr Meena Mutha (Mentally physically challenged), Dr Jayashree Rajagopalan (Art and culture), Dr Priya Cholera (Health care), Dr Larra Shah (Alternative healing), Ms Elsie Gabriel (Journalist) and Ms Phylomena Fernandes (Auto driver). Special committee members Upendra Menon, S R Kubair and anda Shetty and Fed 1B Secretary Dayanand Nene also spoke on the occasion.

## 100 heart surgeries

Platinum Hospital, Mulund, promoted by Dr Bijoy Kutty and a few others successfully completed 100 heart surgeries within a span of less than a year. Platinum Hospital gives treatment to the middle class at affordable rates. This is one of the hospitals in Mumbai that gives genuine medical care for the common man.

# Old is Gold

- Revati

## PRIYA (പ്രിയ) (1970)

**Lyrics:** Yusufali Kecheri

**Music:** M S Baburaj

**Singer:** Lata

കണ്ണിനു കണ്ണായ കണ്ണൊ എനും  
ഗുരുവായൂർ വാഴും താമരക്കണ്ണൊ  
കണ്ണിനു കണ്ണായ കണ്ണൊ (കണ്ണിനു....)

ഈരേഷു ലോകവും നിന്നെ കാണാൻ  
ഈവും പകലും തേടുന്നു  
മഴമുകിൽവർണ്ണൊ, നിന്നുടൻ കാണാൻ  
മനസ്സിനു കണ്ണുകൾ നൽകൂ നീ  
മനസ്സിനു കണ്ണുകൾ നൽകൂ നീ (കണ്ണിനു....)

മുരളികയാലൊരു തേൻമഴചൊരിയൂ  
മുരഹര നീയെൻ ഹൃദയത്തിൽ  
പകരം ഞാനെൻ ജീവിതമാലിക  
ചാർത്താം നിൻ തിരുമാറിടത്തിൽ  
ചാർത്താം നിൻ തിരുമാറിടത്തിൽ (കണ്ണിനു....)

**Transliteration:** Ā, ā = ആ, റ; Ê, ê = ഏ, ഐ; Ī, ī = ഈ, ി; Ō, ō = ഓ, െ; Ū, ū = ഊ, ൠ, ũ = ൓; C, c = ച, ch = ചെ, D, d = ട, Dh, dh = ട, Đ, đ = ഡ, Đh, dh = ഡ, jh = ജ, Ĺ, ĳ = ഇ; Ñ, ñ = ഞ, ñ = ഞ, ñ = ഞ, ř = റ, řř = റ; ř = റ; Ś, ś = ശ; Ś, ś = ഷ, T, t = ട, Th, th = റ, Ṭ, ṭ = ത; ṭh = മ

Kaṇṇinu kaṇṇāya kaṇṇā ennum  
Guruvāyūr vāzhum tamarakkaṇṇā  
Kaṇṇinu kaṇṇāya kaṇṇā (Kaṇṇinu....)

Īrēzhu lōkavum ninne kāṇān  
Iravum pakalum tētunnu  
Mazhamukil varṇṇā, ninnutal kāṇān  
Manassinu kaṇṇukaḷ nalkū nī  
Manassinu kaṇṇukaḷ nalkū nī (Kaṇṇinu....)

Muralīkayāloru tēnmazha coriyū  
Murahara nīyen hṛdayaṭṭil  
Pakaram ṇānen jīviṭa mālika  
Caṭṭām nin ṭirumāriṭaṭṭil  
Caṭṭām nin ṭirumāriṭaṭṭil (Kaṇṇinu....)



Lata Raju



Yusufali Kecheri



M S Baburaj



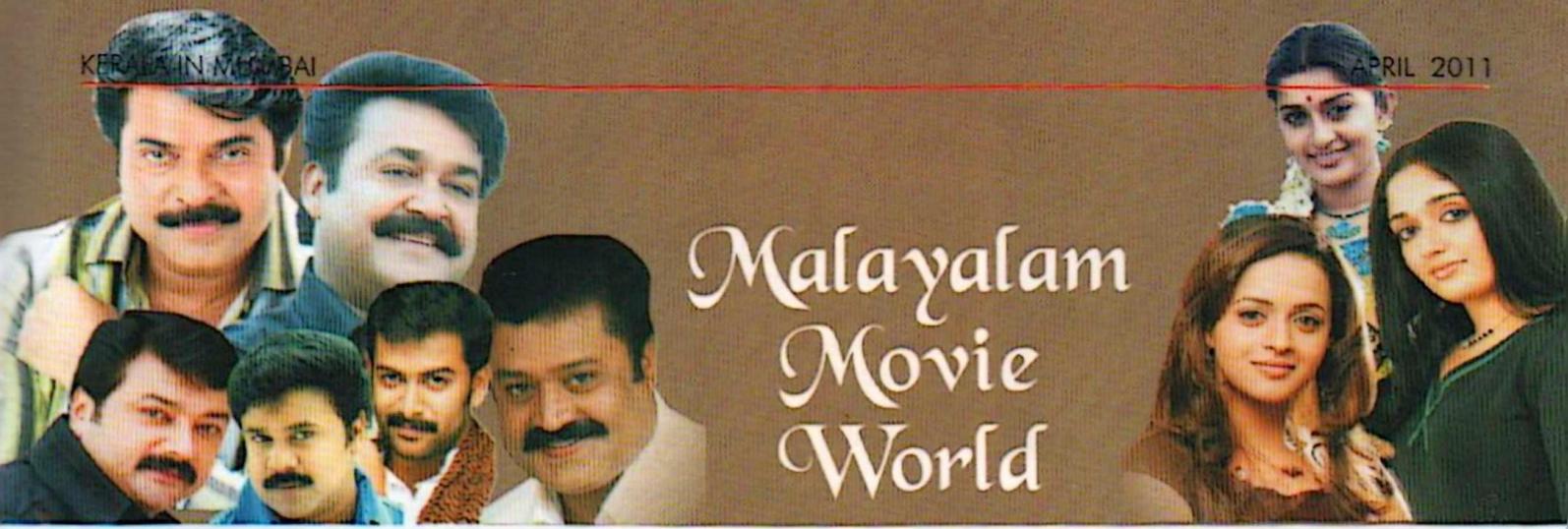
C Radhakrishnan



Lily Chakravarty

**Quiz:**  
(1) Name the title of a Malayalam movie directed by Yusufali Kechari, story of which was written by M T Vasudevan Nair.  
(2) പൂമണിമാരന്റെ കോവിലിൽ was written by Yusufali for a movie directed by K S Sethumadhavan with a story by Uroob.  
**Answers for the last quiz:**  
(1) Advocate  
(2) Niṇamaṇiṇa kālppatukal.

*Priya* was produced (under his Uma Pictures) and directed by Madhu who also acted as its hero with a negative shade. It is adapted from C Radhakrishnan's novel 'Ṭēvitiśśi' (തേവിടിശ്ശി). Bengali actress Lily Chakravarty, Jayabharathi, Ramu Karyat, Adoor Bhasi and Sankarati were the main actors. Hrushikesh Mukherjee was the film's editor. There were six songs in all, sung by Lata, Mahendra Kapoor, S Janaki and P Leela. Other songs were Bombay...Bombay, Viṇṇile kāvil pularumpol, kaṇṇonnu thūrakkū, kaṇṇīrāloru and Ātānumafiyām were the other songs, all penned by Yusufali.

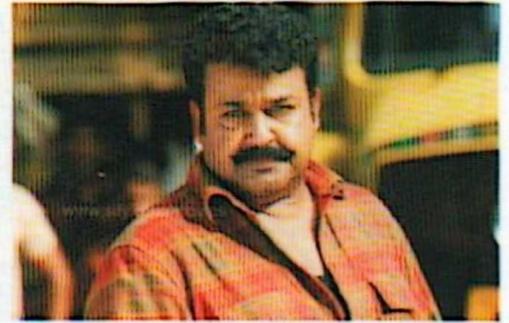


# Malayalam Movie World

## Pranayam

The Blessy directed 'Pranayam' has completed its first schedule and the second schedule would commence in May. Since Mohanlal was busy with his commitments of AMMA regarding its *Suryathejus* programme at Kozhikode, Anupam Kher and Jayaprada participated in the first schedule. Pranayam tells the story of love between the elderly couple and Mohanlal is reported to have two different make-ups in the movie.

Film's second schedule will be shot at a temple city in Tamilnadu.



## Thejabhai

With a series of flops behind him recently, the Youth Icon Prithviraj is keen to reverse the trend and hopes to achieve it through Deepu Karunakaran's *Thejabhai*. Deepu's last film *Crazy Gopalan* was a commercial success.

The shooting of this film started last month at Thiruvananthapuram and Prithviraj allotted priority dates for it. Akhila who appeared in Dileep's *Karyasthan* is the heroine.

In the movie, Prithviraj dons the role of an underworld don and Akhila that of a social worker and the love between them ends in their marriage. This is an out and out comedy film, a first for Prithviraj.

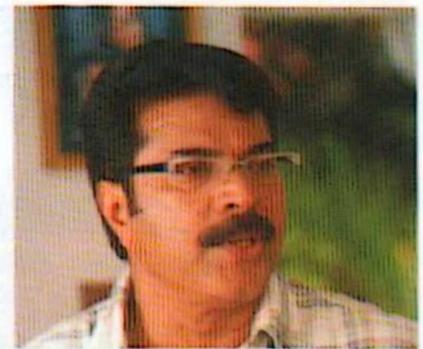
Suraj Venjarammoodu and Jagathy are also playing important roles in the movie produced by Anantha Vision of producer Shantha Nair who produced Prithviraj's two earlier hits *Classmates* and *Chocolate*.

## Mammootty's large heart

Mammootty has appealed to philanthropists to donate generously to Care and Share International Foundation for assisting poor children to get cardiac surgeries. The appeal has received a tremendous response.

Mammootty used Facebook and Twitter for the appeal for this programme called *Hrudayasparsham*.

The first contribution came from Abu Dhabi and this amount would foot the bill of 100 surgeries. There are nearly 3000 applications for financial assistance.



## 'China Town' for Vishu

The producer -distributor Antony Perumbavoor plans to release his new film, 'China Town' on the Vishu day. This new humorous story by Rafi-Mecartin will now make a wide release on hundred plus theatres on April 15. Movie watchers consider this move as an intelligent examination. Cricket World Cup and the election fever will be a matter of the past by then.

The other Mohanlal multi starrer 'Christian Brothers', will definitely benefit from this move as it would not have a competitor to share the spoils.

'China Town' featuring Mohanlal, Jayaram and Dileep is expected to be a sure hit, being a multi starrer.



## 'Veettilekkulla Vazhi' for Imagine India festival

Director Dr Biju's latest movie 'Veettilekkulla Vazhi' has been selected to the competition section of the tenth edition of the 'Imagine India International Festival'. The festival to be held at Madrid, Spain during May 17-31 will feature only one more film from South India, Girish Kasaravally's 'Riding the Stallion of Dreams'.

The movie was already screened in five international film festivals including Cairo and Mumbai and bagged the Netpac award for best film in the IFFK, 2010. The movie featuring Prithviraj in the lead and shot in Panavision camera across six states of India, will get to theatres by next month.

## Manoj K Jayan gets married

After two years of his divorce from his star actress wife Urvashi, actor Manoj K Jayan has tied the knot again. This time Manoj has opted for a non-celebrity woman Asha, from Varkala as his wife. The low-key marriage function took place in a relative's house at Thrissur early last month. Only a few relatives of the bride and groom attended the function.



## Priyadarshan to direct Aamir Khan

After working with Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan, director Priyadarshan is now getting ready to direct Aamir Khan, the third big Khan of Hindi cinema. But this will not be a regular commercial fare but a public service film on AIDS. It will have no songs, no comedy and no characteristic commercial elements.

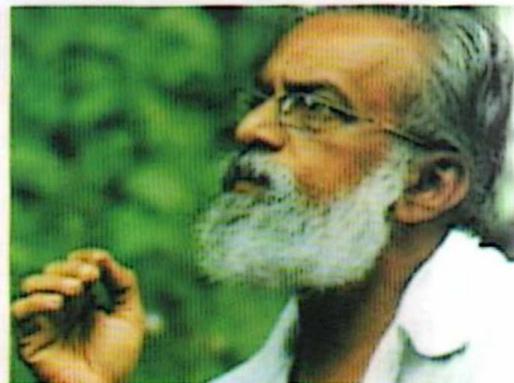
Priyadarshan is also getting ready for a comeback in Malayalam, after seven years. Featuring his favourite actor Mohanlal in the lead, the movie to be shot entirely in Abu Dhabi was started last month. Titled as 'Arabeem, Ottakavum Pinne Madhavan Nairum', the movie will be a humorous tale featuring the life of the lakhs of Malayalee expatriates in the gulf.

Priyadarshan has another commercial movie to be completed in Mumbai, titled 'Tezz', the big budget action thriller featuring Ajay Devgn, Anil Kapoor, Sunil Shetty, Kangna Ranaut and Zayed Khan. This is on hold now as the crew is waiting for the sun to come out in Scotland where the rest of the film is to be shot. The movie is expected to come out by this year end.

Priyadarshan has one more commitment in Bollywood - a sequel to 'Malaamal Weekly' for Percept Pictures, titled 'Malaamal Robbery', all about a group of people planning to rob a bank.

## Ivan Megharoopan'

After penning some notable scripts for films like *Ulladakkam*, *Pavithram* and *Uncle Bun*, P Balachandran scripted a movie 'Ivan Megharoopan' based on the life of poet P Kunjiraman Nair. The movie which will be realistically showing the various seasons of the countrysides, will be shot in four different seasons in four schedules. As per the plans, P Balachandran has completed the first schedule of the movie at Ottapalam and is waiting for the next to happen in a couple of months time. While Prakash Bare is the hero, Padmapriya plays the heroine of the movie. Rajeew Thampi handles the camera of this movie which will also feature songs by O N V Kurup- Sharath team. 'Ivan Megharoopan' is produced by Silicon Media.



## Sanusha, heroine to Dileep

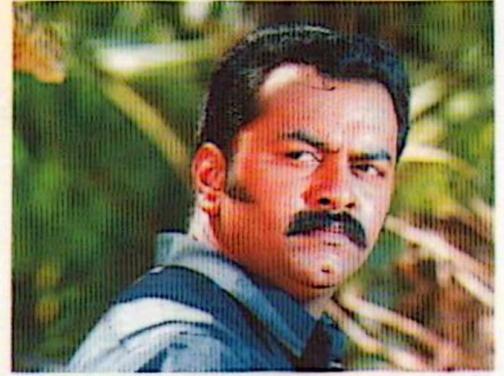
Baby Sanusha has turned heroine in a Tamil movie. But the child artist who captured many hearts with films like 'Kazhcha' will now make an entry in Malayalam also as a heroine in 'Mr Marumakan'. Dileep is in the main lead.

After the super hit of the early nineties 'Manathe Kottaram' that had Dileep as a big fan of the actress Kushboo, Dileep will be teaming up with the senior actress. The movie will have Kushboo playing the mother-in-law of the character played by Dileep. Tamil star Bhagyaraj will come up opposite Kushboo.

The movie 'Mr Marumakan' to be directed by Sandhyamohan is produced by Maha Subair and Nelson. The script is by Siby K Thomas.

## Indrajith's 2011

Indrajith's first movie in 2011 was 'Race' in which he played villain. Though the movie was not a big hit, his character with negative shades was applauded. His second movie of 2011 'City of God', released in March and directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery saw him playing a Tamil migrant worker. Indrajith is Swarnavel, who stays in Kochi and works in the construction industry. His character speaks only Tamil and so do the people around him. 'Flash' fame Parvathi is the heroine of Indrajith in the movie. Nevertheless, his third movie to hit the screen this year will be V.K. Prakash's 'Karmayogi,' a take on 'Hamlet'. He has a role that every actor in the world would give his right hand to without hesitation. Indrajith will take a comic avatar in 'Three Kings,' a slapstick comedy again with V K P. The movie will also have Kunchakko Boban and Jayasuriya together with Indrajith in lead roles.



In the later half of the year, Indrajith will don important lead roles in movies by Akku Akbar and Renjan Pramod.



## Anoop Menon turns independent hero

After playing second fiddle to many heroes in many films, Anoop Menon, one of the actors with a lot of female fans will turn independent hero. The new movie titled '*Mullassery Madhavan Kutty, Nemom PO*', will have him in the title role, as a commoner.

The pooja of the movie was held recently at the Muscot Hotel at the capital city. The movie based on a story by the director Kumar Nandha, will have screenplay and dialogues by Swathy Bhaskar. This film will have debutante Sonal Devaraj as the heroine.

Innocent, Suraj, Salimkumar, Manianpillai Raju, Nandu, Janardanan, Mamukoya and Jaffer Idukky are also part of the cast, produced by K S Chandran and Sam Varghese under the banner of Karthik Vision.

## Genelia learns Kalaripayattu for 'Urumi'

We have earlier reported about the new blockbuster of cinematographer Santosh Sivan's 'Urumi'. 'Urumi' is being made at a whopping budget of 20 crores. The cinematography and direction are handled by Santosh Sivan. The film is expected to be released by the end of March or in April.

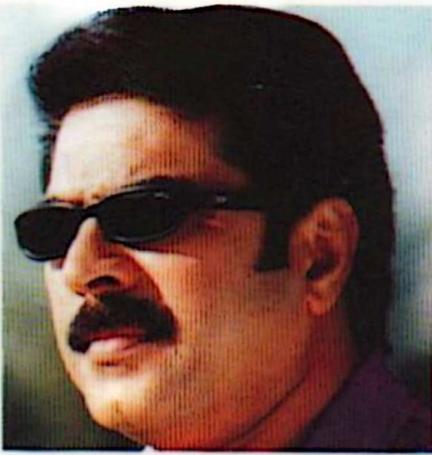
Under instructions from the director, Genelia learnt Kalaripayattu for the fight scenes in which she had to participate as a princess. Further, she learned horse riding and a little bit of rowing too as she was expected to row a boat by herself. The film is being shot in Malayalam and has Prithviraj, Genelia, Prabhudeva, Vidya Balan, and Tabu in the lead roles.



## Nithya Menon in Telugu

After the big hit 'Josh' in Kannada, Malayalee star Nithya Menon who is making a mark in other south Indian languages, has started attempting in playback singing too. She has already lent her voice for two songs in her new Telugu movie 'Alamo Deleinthi'. The industry sources say that both the songs are already big hits. Nithya who is very happy to hear her songs, adds that she still likes to croon for more songs in films.

Nithya will have a new Tamil release in 'Veppam', which will get to theatres in the coming weeks. She is also appearing in a new Malayalam movie 'Violin' to be directed by Sibi Malayil.



## Mammootty in 'King -2'

After the project 'The King and the Commissioner' is now called off due to some ego problems between the star actors, Shaji Kailas is not ready to waste the dates that Mammootty has already allotted for the project. And so he will prepare a sequel of the big hit 'The King' with the title 'King 2'. The megastar will once again appear as Joseph Alex, the district collector, scripted by Renji Panikkar.

The scriptwriter will make minor but suitable changes in the plot that he had set for 'The King and the commissioner' thereby reducing the prominence of the character of commissioner. Mammootty is expected to join this flick in a couple of months.

## 'Casanova' Mohan Lal's 300<sup>th</sup> movie as hero

The new movie under production 'Casanova' will be the 300<sup>th</sup> movie of Mohanlal as hero. The movie scripted by Bobby-Sanjay, after their immensely successful 'Traffic' has already completed its first schedule at Dubai. It is directed by Roshan Andrews.

The movie will have a number of heroines including Shreya Saran, Lakshmi Rai, Roma and Dimple Rose.



## Archana debuts with 'Kochi'

Popular television star Archana, who played the lead role in the teleserial 'Maanasaputhri', will debut into films with the movie titled 'Kochi'. Directed and Scripted by S Kishore after 'Maniyarakallan', the movie will have Archana as Rani. Jagadeesh comes as villain in this movie which will also have Meera Vasudev, Chandru, Kishore, and Tamil actor Nasser in other important roles. 'Kochi' is produced by Giri under the banner of Star Talkies.

## Actress Kumari Thankam passes away



Malayalam film actress of yester years Kumari Thankam died at her residence in Shenoy Nagar, Chennai on February 8. She was 80. Hailing from Poojapura in Thiruvananthapuram, she entered films in the 1950s and acted in more than 20 films as heroine and supporting actress. Cousin of Lalitha-Padmini-Ragini trio, the late P K Sathyapal, a producer, was her husband. The body was cremated at Anna Nagar crematorium. The late S Padmanabhan, the late S Jayapal and Asha are her children.

In 'Thiramala' (1953) directed by Vimal Kumar and PRS Pillai, Kumari Thankam was the heroine opposite a newcomer Thomas Burley with late Sathyan playing a negative role. This movie was successful with a

number of hummable songs penned by P Bhaskaran and composed by Vimal Kumar (in all 13 in number) rendered by Kozhikode Abdul Khader and Santha P Nair (then Santha B A). Her last memorable film 'Minnunnathellam Ponnalla' was a remake of Guru Dutt's 'C I D' with Sathyan as hero.

*Visappinte Vili* (1952), *Loka Neethi* (1953), *Avan Varunnu*, *Balyakala Sakhi* (1954), *Kidappadam*, *CID*, *Aniyathi* (1955) *Manthraavaadi*, *Koodapirappu* (1956), *Achanum Makanum* and *Minnunnathellam Ponnalla* (1957) are some of her other films. She played major roles in films of late Sathyan and Prem Nazir. The last movie she was seen was Sathyapal's 'Ummi Thanka' in which Padmini was the heroine.



# CREATIVE ARTS CAN OFFSET ARROGANCE OF AFFLUENCE

-O N V Kurup



**Prof O N V Kurup**

Litterateurs and practitioners of the creative arts alone can counteract the arrogance of affluence, this year's Gyanpeet Award winner and poet Laureate of Malayalam, Prof. O N V Kurup said in Mumbai on 27 March. He was replying to felicitations from various Malayalee organizations of Mumbai on his winning the award and also for the Padma Vibhushan award.

The function was organized by the Kerala Kendriya Sanghatana under the presidentship of K S Menon. Over 50 organisations offered floral tributes to the eminent poet.

ONV said he was once taken to the top of the World Trade Centre and asked to look down at the street below. He found human beings crawling around like ants far below. Years later that symbol of man's wealth and power was reduced to a heap of rubble. Human beings continued to walk erect on the street in Manhattan. He deplored the tendency of some parents to state proudly that their children do not speak Malayalam, if they were resident outside the State. The mother tongue had to be instilled in every child. The State and society have to ensure this, he added.

The previous evening at a reception held by the Dombivilli Kerala Samaj, O N V said in the modern age when communication systems enable anyone to view things as they happen anywhere in the world, one should never forget his roots.

Members of the Samaj and their families, including little children, recited and enacted in dance form, selected poems of O N V Kurup, much to his delight.

He recalled how when the Silent Valley in Kerala - the rainforest of the State was sought to be destroyed by land sharks and builders, the entire fraternity of poets of the State sang their hearts out against the assault on Nature. Their songs and poems saved the ecology of Kerala and the Silent Valley.

He recalled the words of a senior poet who once told him how ONV's songs helped little urchins earning a livelihood singing his songs in crowded train compartments. "My mind instantly went to the professional playback singers who earned thousands of rupees singing them, while the urchins got just a pittance."

He traced his association with Mumbai to a day in March 1952 when he along with other poets and music directors landed at VT Station, to be received by stalwarts of the Indian People's Theatre Association like Balraj Sahni and K A Abbas. He also acknowledged the contribution of Malayalee friends in Mumbai who helped him collect Rs. 50 lakhs to resurrect the famed Kerala Kalamandalam in the eighties.

ONV Kurup was accompanied by his wife, Mrs Sarojini Kurup.



**ONV Kurup being led in procession from Indian Gymkhana to Manav Seva Sangh**



**Rugmini Sagar, Mrs Sarojini Kurup, ONV Kurup, K S Menon, P K Ravindranath and Mathew Thomas at the official reception.**



# Kerala in Mumbai

**LINKING MUMBAI MALAYALEES**

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