

Kerala in Mumbai

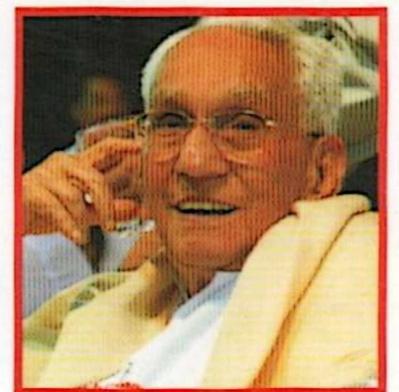
January 2011

Happy New Year



Reality Show Host

**A bit of Kerala at
Khotachiwadi**



LEADER gone

NURTURING CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

Kerala in Mumbai Vol 01, No.12 January 2011

Chief Consulting Editor
P K Ravindranath

Publisher, Printer, Managing Editor
P V Vijay Kumar

Executive Editor
K V Satyanath

Feature Editor
Lakshmi Venkatachalam

Owner
Vibrant Printing & Publishing Pvt. Ltd

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Sharprints, 13/679, Sardar Nagar 1,
Sion-Koliwada, Mumbai-400 022.

Feature Writers
Dr. Bijoy Kutty
Rashma Anand
G H Ananthanarayanan
K R Narayanan
P I Jose

Art Department
K M Sudhakaran

Advertisement & Marketing
V Kumar
Mob: 9821090857

Reshma Nair (Mumbai)
Tel: 2920 9959

Molly Thomas
Marketing Executive-Mumbai
Mob: 8087190353

Aravind
Marketing Consultant
Mob: 9220758957

T R Raghunandan
(Kochi - 0484 236 8331)

K Padmakumar
(Thiruvananthapuram - 0471 253 9750)

Ashok Iyer
(New Delhi - 9811 831199)

Production & Logistics
K V Prabhakaran

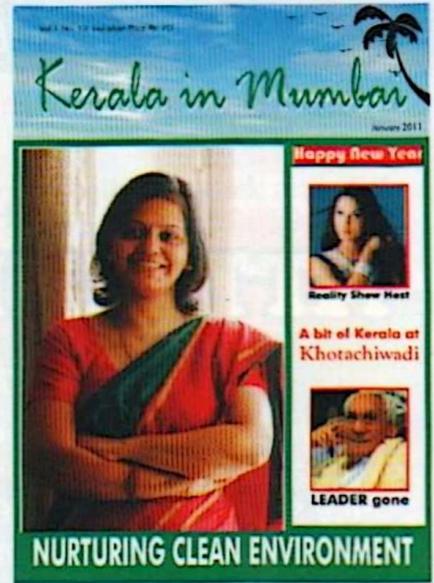
Email: keralainmumbai@gmail.com
Website: www.keralainmumbai.com

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Vibrant Printing & Publishing Pvt Ltd.
105 - B, Twin Arcade, Military Road, Marol,
Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 059
Tel: +22 29209959 Telefax: 29202084

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-Girija V Kumar



EDITORIAL

The Future Comes Calling

The innumerable cases of crimes involving youth, from road rage to rape, calls for quick remedial measures, before it becomes a national social problem. One cannot dismiss such cases as meaty stories played up by an avaricious media which has sprouted in various forms in the last two decades.

Most of the cases highlighted in media reports and coverage on the electronic media underline one cardinal factor: the breakdown of family bonds and fading parental control over their wards.

Lifestyles have changed leading to alienation of the younger generations from their parents and forefathers. Parents are far too busy with their lives to pay much attention to their children. They also feel that exposed as they are to the all-pervasive media in their drawing rooms and even their bedrooms, children of the modern age know much more than the parents did at their age.

Even if this is true to some extent, once the personal bond between offspring and their parents is snapped, there is little of family cohesion that once held back children from going astray. There was always the hidden feeling behind the back of their minds that they should not do anything that disgraces the family. That feeling is gone, with the kind of commercialization that has overtaken society.

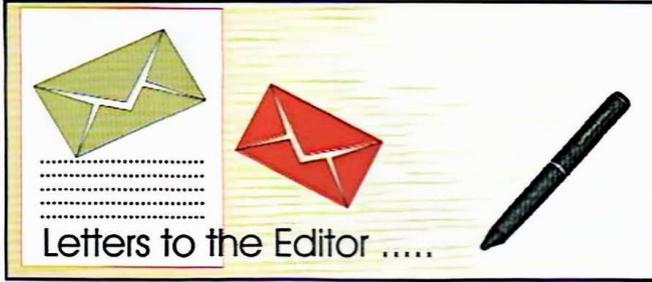
There is little need today for children to hark back to their spiritual moorings. In some extreme cases parents are scared to admonish their children for fear that they may hit back or just go away from home.

The media, in their coverage of cases involving children particularly from the affluent sections of society, have a tendency to put a gloss on crimes to the point of glorifying it. Invidiously this helps their TRP ratings providing vicarious pleasure to their viewers. Whether it is a story of a five-year old Prince falling in a 150-foot deep bore-well or an Inspector General of Police leading a teenaged girl to commit suicide the media takes delight in probing and presenting various aspects of such crimes merely to satiate curiosity and pander to baser instincts of the viewers.

All this calls for immediate corrective measures. If homes cannot take on the arduous task of moulding the future of their children, educational institutions must come forward to shoulder this responsibility. No specific move seems to be initiated even in the new educational policies that have been mooted by the Union Government.

Colleges across the country have been breeding grounds for some grisly crimes highlighted in the media in recent times. It is therefore appropriate that corrective measures should be initiated in such institutions.

What could be done is to institute appropriate counseling facilities in all educational institutions, right from the primary classes to the post-graduate level. Schools and colleges must step in and take charge where homes and the domestic front has failed to discharge its duty. This is what they owe to the future generations of the country.



Can You help?

I am a Gujarati and a linguist. Unfortunately, I do not know any of the South Indian languages. So I started with Malayalam. I can read, write and understand very little of it. I could not find a single teacher who could teach me the language through English or any other languages that I know. I have gone to great lengths. Yesterday I came across an issue of your magazine and was impressed by the write up pertaining to Malayalam Vowels and Consonants.

I have approached many a Keralite family, shop keepers, organisations but to no avail. Would you please help me? I hope I could speak and understand and master the language in my life time. I am 67 years.

- Mahesh Dave

Error in article on Dakshinamoorthy

I read your article on Dakshinamoorthy Swami. It is stated there that Swami's last movie was *Itavazhiyile Poochcha Mintaapoochcha*. The Music for this movie was composed by Shri M B Sreenivasan (Remember the song Vivaahanaalil). Swami's movie is *Itanaazhiyil Oru Kaalocha* (1987). And Swami's last movie, as of now, is *Mizhikal Saakshi* (2008). Please make the necessary corrections.

-Ragesh Revi

Kudos!

Kerala in Mumbai is definitely ascending heights in its journey. In the new year we all wish all the best in its sojourn.

A. Radhakrishnan, Mulund
9223293774

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 or by post to Editor, Kerala In Mumbai, 105-B, Twin Arcade, Military Road, Mumbai 400 059.

February issue of KERALA IN MUMBAI will also focus on Vashi and March issue will be on Borivili. Organisations and personalities of these areas may forward their reports/opinions along with relevant photographs to the Editor, KERALA IN MUMBAI

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Dakshinamoorthy sidelined

Your article on Shri V Dakshinamoorthy Swami on the occasion of his birthday was indeed welcome. It is sad that he has not been bestowed with a Padma Award so far for his contributions to film and classical music. In fact he deserves a Padmabhushan and it is a shame that the Union government did not find him worthy of one.

-Sebastian, Mumbai

Good go!

I happened to read your magazine recently and my wife Geetha Nair is a regular subscriber in Mumbai. I stay abroad but visit India every month for business. I have read with interest various personalities you have figured and it is a matter of great pride that Keralites in Mumbai are doing so well.

-Shashi Nair

Window to Malayalam Literature

I am a great fan of your magazine 'Kerala in Mumbai'. It opens a great window to the culture and traditions of Kerala especially its literature and its litterateurs. I believe that a land leaves behind its traditions through its literature. I am sure the young readers from Mumbai would surely appreciate it.

-Manoj Menon



VALSA R NAIR SINGH

MOTHERLY CARE OF ENVIRONMENT

-P K Ravindranath

For two years now issues concerning environmental problems and preservation of ecology have attained national significance. Mumbai, being the hub of all sensitive and delicate environmental problems, thanks to its location and its importance in the industrial, trade and commerce activities of the nation, has escaped criticism and embarrassment.

This is largely due to the efficient, quiet and meaningful manner in which the State's Department of Environment has been run by its Secretary, Valsa R Nair Singh. The manner in which she can rattle off the major environmental issues confronting Maharashtra and their possible solutions is clear indication of her deep involvement in the subject.

Valsa Nair Singh's interest in environmental issues began when she was doing her Master's in the U S, when she submitted a dissertation on Climate Change, a subject that had begun to be seriously discussed in the U S.

Revamping the department when she took over, Valsa Nair set a deadline of 105 days for any project clearance. When she joined the department, there were 400 pending cases. Today there is zero pendency.

A sense of drive and urgency was injected into the handling of

environmental problems when around the same time, Jairam Ramesh became the Environment Minister at the Centre. That helped Valsa push through many of the State Government's programmes with greater urgency. The Environment Department became the most focused wing of the government. Problems are many. From protection of mangroves, to afforestation, to disposal of electronic waste to restricting the use of plastic and noise pollution, the department is kept on its toes. And, it must be added to Valsa's credit, free of complaints.

CLEAR CUT POLICIES

She has ensured that her department works in close coordination with TERI University in New Delhi that has the intellectual brainpower to make a difference. TERI has been founded by Dr. Rajendra Pachauri and is affiliated to his The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) a non-profit research organization developing environmental projects.

The Environment Clearance Procedure, Valsa claims is part of the e-governance initiative of the Maharashtra Government. The functioning of the department has also been made transparent, with all requisite information available on its website and most of its work done electronically.

Environmental clearance is mandatory for specified developmental activities under the Coastal Regulation Act 1991,

and the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 issued under the Environmental Protection Act.

To help fight the fallout of Climate Change, the State Government has formulated a Climate Change Action Plan with the emphasis on local action to fight the world-wide threat. The impact of climate change can be felt on health, agriculture, water resources, coastal areas, species and eco-systems.

With the extensive developments in computers and other electronic equipment, the problem of disposal of electronic waste, is assuming alarming proportions as days go by. Ten States led by Maharashtra produce 70% of e-waste. Mumbai tops the list in generating e-waste in the country. The Maharashtra Pollution Control Board of which Valsa is the Chairman has identified sites exclusively for dumping and treating e-waste in collaboration with the Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (MMRDA).

The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) has been adopted by the State Government, under the Kyoto Protocol to meet Emission Reduction Targets.

NOISE POLLUTION

In Mumbai city one of the greatest problems is the control of noise pollution. The State Government issued the Noise Pollution (Control & Regulation) Rules, 2000 to check this menace. Under it areas around hospitals, courts, schools, religious institutions and other sensitive spots were declared as Silence Zones. The Silence Zone project has been successfully implemented in Mumbai city.

More than its implementation it has created a great impact on the people, Valsa avers. During festivals and other celebrations, she often gets calls from various localities in the city complaining about excessive noise levels. Efforts are now on to enforce the ban on unnecessary honking of horns by motorists.

There is a process on now to strengthen some of the existing laws in order to ensure their proper and prompt implementation. The Environment Ministry has cleared the Navi Mumbai airport project design. It should take off soon.

A National Green Tribunal is on the anvil, with experts in environmental issues and the preservation of the ecology. The tribunal will have a branch in Mumbai. The tribunal will have judicial authority to ensure that its decisions are enforced. Heavy penalties are also being considered for violation of other laws, including imprisonment and forfeiture of fines and penalties. The Hazardous Waste Act is also due for scrutiny.

The Department of Environment also has secured the help and guidance of the MET office in London for projections of climatic conditions and the monsoon. Incidentally, the head of the MET office in London happens to be a Malayali, Dr.



Bhaskar.

To push through the objectives of the Department, it has set up the Maharashtra Urban Infrastructure Development Co., to provide infrastructure facilities wherever required.

Valsa, hailing from Thodupuzha had her education in her hometown and later at Kochi. It was her father, an IPS officer, who persuaded her to go in for IAS. To get some tips on the entrance examination and other procedures she sought the help of the then Sub-Collector of Kottayam, Ashish Kumar Singh. Ashish Kumar Singh is now the Secretary to the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, while his wife Valsa, is the Secretary of the Environment Department. They have two sons, 13 and 16, both schooling in Mumbai.

Ashish speaks fluent Malayalam and reads Malayalam newspapers. His services were specially requisitioned by the new Chief Minister, with whom he had worked in New Delhi.

Handling environment issues is a tough job-a man's job generally. In two years Valsa has managed to establish her dominance over the department, thanks primarily to her inherent interest in the subject and her determination to come to grips with a challenging task.

Drink and be happy

While the Chief Minister of Maharashtra Prithviraj Chavan put his foot down despite the stand taken by his party's ministers' pro-liquor stand, the CPI-M led Kerala Government has allowed the opening of 138 more IMFL outlets and asked the state owned Beverages Corporation to open 33 new outlets in the state since assuming power in the state. When the left front government took over the administration, there were 3614 toddy shops. They have allowed 1600 more toddy shops to be opened. The reason given was it would increase the state's revenue.

The CPI-M Central Committee member and Excise Minister P K Gurudasan can truly take credit for increasing the state's revenue.



Excise Minister P K Gurudasan

Makara Jyothi and Makar Sankranti

Significance of January 14

January 14 is the day of Makara jyothi when a brilliant light appears on the summit of a hill opposite the Sabarimala Temple. It is also the day of Makar Sankranti when people gather on rooftops and open grounds to indulge in kite-flying, prepare sweets of sesame seeds and gud. Sugarcane stalks are seen everywhere. Makar Sankranti is the only traditional Indian festival that falls on the same date every year.



Lakshmi Venkatachalam

Makara jyothi

The Mandala masam from mid November to end December, the forty one days of fasting and prayer that is a prelude to the pilgrimage to Sabarimala, the pilgrimage itself to the shrine - all these have a fitting climax at the sighting of the makara jyothi on



January 14 atop a mountain opposite Sabarimala. Every year by January 10, the Sacred jewels (thiruvabharanam), of the Lord Ayyappan, namely the diamond crown, golden bracelets, necklaces and the sword, are brought in a procession to

Sabarimala temple from the Royal palace of Pandalam. Representatives from the Royal Family and a large number of devotees accompany the procession. They reach the temple sannidhanam on January 14 by about 6 pm. The Chief priest of Sabarimala receives the jewels and adorns them on the Lord. At about this time, a star, Uthram Naskshathram, that cannot be normally seen in the sky, appears on the opposite mountain. A few minutes later, This is the makara jyothi. This is the most important event in the religious calendar of Lord Ayyappan. The sighting of the makara jyothi is considered to be very auspicious by Ayyappa devotees. They gather in thousands to view this light. Many consider the sighting of this celestial star and light to be a miracle and a sign that the Lord Ayyappan himself has appeared in the form of a light to bless his devotees.

After the makara jyothi is seen, the makara vilakku festival lasting for seven days is celebrated in Sabarimala. It ends with the kuruthi puja and the ornaments being taken back to the Pandalam palace in a procession through the way it came.

Divine or Man-made?

Controversies surround the divinity of this light. The faithful vow that it is indeed a miracle and Lord Ayyappan himself is appearing as the celestial star. But some people have a different view. They do not rule out the possibility that the light may be man-made and is the work of the Electricity Board and Forest Department. Even the British had tried to find out its origin but failed to do so. However the Government does not want to delve deeper into the scientific evidence and the origin of the light in order not to hurt the religious sentiments of the devotees.

The benefits of til

The scientific name of sesame seeds, (ellu Malayalam, til-Hindi) is sesamum indicum. It is known to mankind for more than one thousand five hundred years. A cup of sesame seeds contains three times more calcium than a cup of whole milk.



Sesame seeds is rich in dietary fibre, contains Vitamin B1 and vitamin E, copper, zinc, phosphorus and manganese. It is used in making different preparations during Makara Sankranti all over India. Sesame seeds are especially good to provide heat to the body during the cold weather in January.

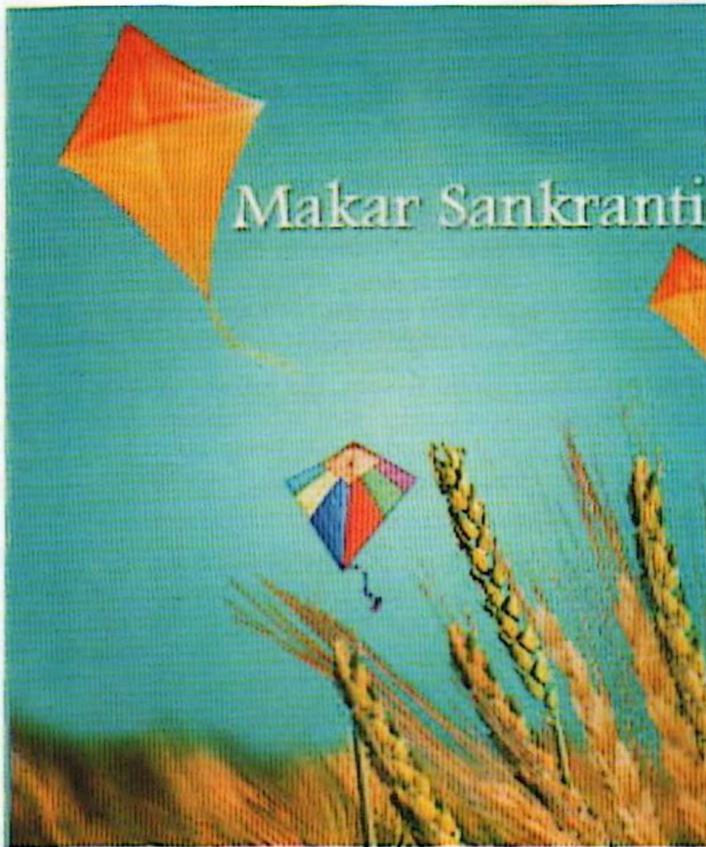
Sesame seeds contain the substances sesamin and sesamol that prevent high blood pressure and protects the liver from damage. It also strengthens the heart and nervous system.



Pongal in Tamilnadu

Pongalo Pongal

January 14 is also important for Tamil Iyers of Kerala. They celebrate Pongal on that day, as an offering to the Sun God. The entrance to the house and the puja room is decorated with kolam (rangoli). In earlier days, a clay oven used to be kept in the compound that was cleaned and drawn with kolam. Milk and rice is cooked at sunrise in a new vessel in which haldi kumkum is applied, and a turmeric stalk complete with leaves and the tuber is tied round the neck of the vessel. Nowadays this is done within the house in the kitchen. Milk is boiled in a new vessel. As the milk boils and rises up, fresh and washed rice is added to it. All the members of the family crowd around the fire and shout pongalo pongal. (Pongal means rising). Gud (jaggery) is now added to the mixture and ghee, cashews and raisins complete the pongal dish. Along with sugarcane stalks and fresh turmeric tubers, offerings are made to the sun God for a prosperous and happy time ahead.



Makar Sankranti as the Harvest Festival

January 14 is Makar Sankranti. It is a major harvest festival celebrated in many parts of India. The day marks the moving of the sun from the Tropic of Cancer to the Tropic of Capricorn (Makar) or from Dakshinayana to Uttarayana in the month of Poush in mid January. This means the days will be getting longer and warmer. It is celebrated as a festival of life and fertility. Since the day falls in mid-winter, traditional foods served include many that keep the body warm and give energy. Sankranti in Sanskrit means movement from one zodiac to another, hence the name Makar Sankranti. This is the only traditional Indian festival that falls on the same date every year because it is associated with the solar calendar and not the lunar calendar. People indulge in sweets made of til and gud. Fresh sugarcane stalks are cut and munched upon, rice is harvested

from the fields and it is the beginning of the harvest season.

Maharashtra festivities

In Maharashtra, Makar Sankranti is a major festival. Multi



Til guls and Til laddus in Maharashtra
coloured tilguls, made with til (sesame seed), and sugar, til laddus made with til and jaggery are eaten. People exchange these til guls as tokens of goodwill and greet one another saying, til gul ghya, god god bola, meaning 'accept these tilguls and speak sweet words.' In other words, it is a gesture to let go of past ill feelings and renew friendships. Married women invite one another for haldi kumkum and gifts of new utensils and clothes are given to others. Women and children wear new clothes on that day. Kite flying is another activity that Maharashtrians indulge in on Makar-Sankranti.

Celebrations in Other States

In almost all the states Makar Sankranti is celebrated primarily as a harvest festival. Everywhere the main ingredient used for the festival snacks are jaggery, til, rice, all fresh from the harvest. It signifies the cultural unity of India.

Among Gujaratis undhiyu (mixed winter vegetables) and chikkis (til, peanuts and jaggery) are the special savouries of the festival. In Rajasthan special lunch called Sakrat Bhoj and Rajasthani sweets like ghevar, til paati, are prepared. People of Haridwar, Varanasi and Allahabad take a holy dip in the river Ganges on that day. Kite flying is also an important activity here. Snacks are made with til and gud.

In Punjab, on the eve of Makar Sankranti, huge bonfires are lit and is celebrated as lohri. Sugarcane, sweets, and rice are fed to the fire by the people as they go round the bonfire. The following day which is Sankranti, is also called Maghi in Punjab. It is the first day of their month of Magh. After having a bath early in the morning, they light their lamps with sesame oil to bring in prosperity and good luck. Then they gather and dance their famous bhangra. Fresh sugarcane from their fields is cut. Their sumptuous lunch consists among many other dishes of kheer made of rice, milk and sugar. Maghi is also the day of commemoration of a battle. It honours the martyrdom of forty chali mukte or 'forty liberated ones' who laid down their lives defending Guru Gobind Singh against an attack by the imperial army.

In Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Sankranti festival is celebrated for a period of four days. Here also it is primarily a Harvest Festival. On the first day, the houses are given a spring



Lohri in Punjab

cleaning, the second day is the Sankranti festival where rice, sugarcane, and other products freshly harvested from the fields are offered to the Sun God. On the third day, the animals are taken care of, while on the fourth day, people visit friends and relatives. Rural sports are held in a spirit of camaraderie during this period. In West Bengal, this harvest festival is called Poush Parbon. Traditional Bengali sweets using the freshly harvested paddy, date palm syrup and palm jaggery are prepared. The Goddess Lakshmi is worshipped on the day of Sankranti.

Other significances of Makar Sankranti

Apart from being a harvest festival, Makar Sankranti is also regarded as the beginning of an auspicious period according to the Indian calendar. The period from mid December to mid January is looked upon as inauspicious, with December 21 or 22 (the day varies) being the shortest day and the longest night. Scientifically, from January 14, the day begins to get longer with the sun moving northwards.

January 14 is the day of kumbh mela. Every twelve years the Mahakumbh mela is held on the banks of the Ganges. Melas and fairs are held on Makar Sankranti by the river banks.

Every year thousands gather at the Ganga and other holy rivers to take a holy dip. According to Hindu mythology, by bathing in Ganges and other holy rivers on that day, not only are our sins washed away but our ancestors' souls are also put at rest. Hindus perform oblations for their forefathers by the river banks and bathe in the rivers.

Another legend says that the sun God Surya visited his son Shani on that day. The day thus symbolizes the special relationship between father and son.

The Mahabharata says that Bhishma, the grand sire of the Mahabharata chose to die on that day. He had been given the boon to choose his time of leaving the world. This also emphasizes the auspiciousness of January 14 to start a new venture or beginning.

In India Makar Sankranti is known by different regional names:

Makar Sankranti or Sankranti: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Sikkim, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Uttarakhand.

Uttarayan: Gujarat and Rajasthan

Maghi: Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab

Pongal: Tamil Nadu

Magh Bihu or Bhogali Bihu: Assam Valley

Shishur Saenkraat: Kashmir Valley

Makara Vilakku Festival: Sabarimala Temple (Kerala)

In other countries too the day is celebrated but under different names and in different ways

In Nepal: **Maghi/ Maghe Sankranti**

In Thailand: **Songkran**

In Laos: **Pi Ma Lao**

In Myanmar: **Thingyan**

In Cambodia: **Moha Sangkran**

DEVELOPMENT OF KERALA WITHOUT DRIFT

Though Kerala is rich in natural beauty, scope for industrial development is less, due to unavailability of land, shortage of natural resources, and inadequate water management. The state however, has taken the right step in focusing on tourism, wellness and IT related sectors for development. The state must also provide alternate ways of employment when the migrant population mainly from the Gulf, return to their native state. G H Ananthanarayanan suggests some points for development in Kerala.

Kerala's greatest resource is her natural beauty with mist-capped mountains, undulating forests, hills and valleys, endless stretch of lagoons and long sea coast blessed by world famous beaches. The intelligent people of rich culture, help make one of the greatest attractions of the world. But are its other resources adequate to support and progressively improve the standard of living of the population that it has?

a) Kerala, measuring 38,863 sq.kms comprises 1.8% of the total geographical area of the country and is the smallest of the Indian states. The 2001 Census shows that Kerala's population is 3.1% of the country. It has the third highest density of population at 819 per sq.km, the two states having the higher density being the West Bengal at 903 and Bihar at 881. For India as a whole, the density is 324 persons. [Contrast this with the population of more prosperous States like Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan where the density is only 258, 484, 478, and 165 respectively]. Because of the high density of population in Kerala, only limited land is available for industrial uses with the inevitable concomitant of high prices at which Industry does not find it economical to buy. A factor aggravating the scarcity is the NRI investment in housing. Even filling up of farmland may not be disadvantageous if it can promote industrial development, which is inhibited by other factors.

b) Forests are rich and reasonably adequate. Forest plantation consists of teak, eucalyptus, softwood species, bamboo and reeds, but there are severe limits to their expansion.

c) Although Kerala has 41 west-flowing rivers and three east-flowing rivers, they are comparatively small and are monsoon-fed and hence they turn into rivulets in summer. The water resources are thus not abundant, but are over-exploited. Though the State gets a rainfall of 2360 mm. per year, its topography with hills and valleys allows poor water retention. Moreover, a part of the water impounded has to be given to the neighbouring district of Tamil Nadu.

d) The State has little or no metal and mineral resources. It is endowed with rich mineral sand containing mainly thorium, titanium, lithium, zircon etc. However, mineral sand and China clay contribute more than 90% of the total value of the mineral production in the State.

E) The source of power is mostly hydel, which is dependent on the vagaries of the monsoon, besides being location-specific. Very little of the State's tremendous wind power is tapped. The problem of power can be solved only by going in for thermal and atomic power or better still, solar power. An economical way of tapping solar power has to be found. That leaves us with thermal and atomic power, the tapping of which is inhibited by excessive concern with pollution and radiation.

f) Available labour has to be equipped with requisite skills. It must have the motivation to work hard. The high level of literacy in Kerala is something to feel proud of, but its deleterious effect has been that people prefer soft jobs and are more conscious of their rights than duties. A positive result has been that people are aware of the value of family planning, slowing down the growth of population. According to the annual Sample Registration System (SRS) done

Forests are rich but there are severe limits to their expansion. Although Kerala has 41 west-flowing rivers and three east-flowing rivers, they are comparatively small and are monsoon-fed and hence they turn into rivulets in summer. The water resources are thus not abundant, but are over-exploited. The State has little or no metal and mineral resources. Because of the high level of literacy in Kerala, people prefer soft jobs and are more conscious of their rights than duties.

Migration has been a source of employment for Kerala. According to a study Keralites about 10% of the total work-f

by the Census Office for 1998-2008, the crude birth rate (number of live births per 1000 population) dipped from 26.4 to 22.8 for the whole country, i.e., a 14% decline. In Kerala, it dipped by 20%. There are, however, limits to measures taken to control population through reducing birth rates because of the simultaneous measures taken to improve health and longevity.

Thus, most of the principal requirements for industrial development and growth, viz., land, raw materials and power are not available, and labour, though available, does not give the expected output because of militancy and other factors.

It is, therefore, heartening to note that Kerala has now rightly focused on development of sectors where it has an advantage, viz., tourism and knowledge-related industries like I.T.

Health / wellness tourism has been one of the strongest growth sectors over the past few years. Kerala tourism continues to win world-wide awards and recognition.

JOBS FOR MIGRANTS

With a view to spread the IT industry, the State Government has set up quality I.T. Parks in all the districts on the basis of the hub and wheel model.

Kerala has three distinct advantages in this regard: a) Highest telephone density; (b) Highest rural telephone density; (c) High literacy and socio-economic

development indices. Smart City is soon becoming a reality with Techno parks and Info parks. A recent NASSCOM study in nine Indian ITES destinations ranked Kochi the second ITES destination above metros like Bengaluru, Mumbai and New Delhi. A very high level of e-literacy aided by Government-led projects such as AKSHAYA guarantees ready manpower resources for ITES/BPO sector.

Migration has been a source of employment for Kerala. According to a study Keralites working abroad constituted about 10% of the total work-force of Kerala in 2002. Through migration, on an average, four lakh Indians get employment every year. An interesting aspect is that the number of graduate non-resident Keralities (NRKS) in various countries in 2004 has increased by 133% compared to 1999. At the same time, NRKS with primary education has declined by 40.7%. Among the total migrants, the majority go to the Gulf countries, UAE and Saudi Arabia accounting for the largest number at 1, 72,262 and 1, 23,522 in 2004, out of a total of 4, 23,428 to Gulf countries that year.

In 2003, the total volume of remittance received by India rose to US\$ 17.4 billion compared to US\$ 11.1 billion in 2001. The major share of Gulf remittance came to Kerala which, during 2004, is estimated at Rs. 18,465 crores.

Gulf migration has, however, impacted the economy of Kerala in some negative ways such as -

a) Demand for more and better houses, which have led to an increase in the price of land, construction materials and wages for construction workers. The rising cost of land, inhibits industry. Poor households are badly hit because of high cost to repair/ renovation / rebuilding their old houses.

b) The boom in housing has led to an increase in the pressure on water. Flush-out latrines, which is now the norm, with many houses having more than one toilet and bathroom, has accentuated this pressure.

c) The emigration to Gulf countries, which accounts for about 95% of emigration from Kerala has resulted in about 18% of the total households dependent on remittances from these countries. Therefore, any disturbance in the Gulf Countries would directly affect Kerala's economy. In order to soften the impact of any such development, the Kerala Government has introduced a number of measures.

As the immigrants who return are reluctant to take up low-paid jobs in the domestic sector, it has become necessary to train and motivate them to seek self-employment opportunities.

Education holds the most important key to the development of Kerala. Education does not mean the mere mastering of the 3-Rs, but education in knowledge and skills that are required in the wide world, not only now but also in the future. In this, India as a whole and Kerala in particular has an advantage because of the very large youth population.

But that alone may not suffice when other countries send back their expatriate population and other States of India begin to rigorously apply the theory of 'sons of the soil' in the matter of employment. Such a possibility, though remote, cannot be ruled out altogether. What then can be done?

The problem can be perhaps be solved to a large extent by weaning people away from a perpetual state of ferment and ensuring a measure of political stability, so that their attention would turn to hard work to promote economic growth for all-round well-being. The alternative is to pray for Lord Parasurama to reincarnate and reclaim some more land from the sea to save the people from sinking into the sea by the weight of their own numbers.



Kerala with her natural beauty is a huge tourist draw

-KIM Bureau



VASHI

The oldest Node In Navi Mumbai



Vashi is the first township or node as it is called, to be developed by CIDCO (City and Industrial Development Corporation) in Navi Mumbai. Today it is the most developed and populated node in Navi Mumbai. It is separated from the island of Mumbai by the Arabian Sea and from Thane city by the Thane Creek. To be more precise, Vashi is bordered by Sion - Panvel Highway and Nerul to the south, Thane Belapur Road and Sanpada to the East, Khairnare Channel and Koparkhairne to the north and Thane Creek to the west.

In this Issue we are covering some of the Malayalee organisations in Vashi. Our next Issue will also focus on Vashi. Those desiring to give any news of activities of Keralites and their organisations may please send us the same.

In the seventies, builders started constructing co-operative housing societies in Vashi that was in mainland India. Keralites, among others, invested in houses there. They left the busy suburbs of Mumbai and their smaller flats, to buy and settle in a more planned suburb, that was coming up.

The first thing that strikes about Vashi, is that it is a well-planned suburb. It is divided into sectors that are well-marked. They are further sub-divided into plots. Most of the roads are lined with trees, that give shade and greenery to the place. Many housing Societies have their own gardens and there are several parks in the various sectors. Seaside Park is a beautiful park in Vashi developed on a strip of land along a portion of the Thane Creek. It is a popular picnic spot. It has a large holding pond and

a path round it that is used as a walking /jogging track. There is a Childrens' Park also and boating facilities are available here

Easy Accessibility

Vashi is easily accessible by road and rail. In the early seventies and eighties there was only one old bridge connecting Mumbai to New Bombay as it was then called. This bridge used to be closed for repair work on at least one Sunday in a month. Now there is a well maintained six lane bridge connecting Vashi to Mumbai. It is known as the second Mankhurd Vashi bridge and has been built across the Thane Creek linking Mankhurd in Mumbai to Vashi in Navi Mumbai. The bridge is an engineering marvel built with utmost precision in design, construction and





durability. It is 1837mt long. Another entry point into Vashi is via Airoli exit on the Eastern Express Highway. Mumbai's BEST buses, NMMT (Navi Mumbai Municipal Transport Corporation) buses, KDMT (Kalyan Dombivili Municipal Transport) buses and State Transport buses all have their services from and to Vashi, including AC Volvo buses connecting Vashi to all the suburbs of Mumbai. There are taxi services including private operated ones like meru, mega cars and so on. Within the node, autos are easily available.

The main township of Vashi is centred round Shivaji Chowk, a central square located on the Vashi- Turbhe Road. There is a big statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji on horseback in bronze here and the bus depot, fire station, and the busy commercial roads radiate from this centre.

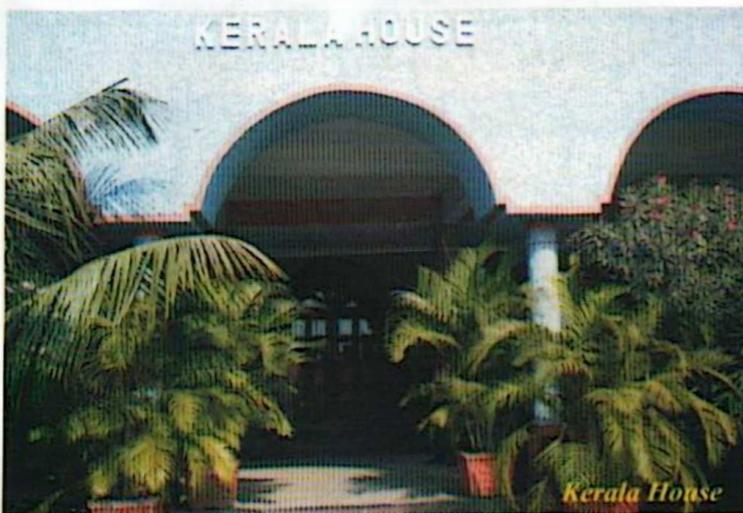
Sector 17 is the commercial hub of Vashi with small business offices, retail outlets, banks and clinics. Sector 8 and 9 also house a lot of commercial units. The APMC market selling wholesale agricultural produce is in Sector 19 and part of Sector 18.

Electric trains run regularly from CST Mumbai to Vashi and beyond. Train services are there from Andheri to Vashi and further stations in Navi Mumbai.

Vashi Railway Station

Vashi Railway station is a large and spacious one. It is situated beneath the International Infotech Park that is a massive office complex with seven broad white towers developed by CIDCO. The Infotech Park houses many software companies thus supporting the IT Industry.

Raghuleela, City Centre, In Orbit, Centre One and Palm Beach Galleria are some of the main malls in Vashi. The Palm



Beach Road is a beautiful four lane highway that links the various nodes of Navi Mumbai like Vashi, Nerul, CBD Belapur, Kharghar, Panvel and also links Navi Mumbai to Mhape and Thane. Like in the other suburbs of Mumbai, Keralites have settled in Vashi and are an active presence there, numbering about five thousand families. There are various Malayalee social, cultural and religious organizations that meet and celebrate festivals and keep the Kerala culture and Malayalam language alive and also assimilate the spirit of the local culture and language.

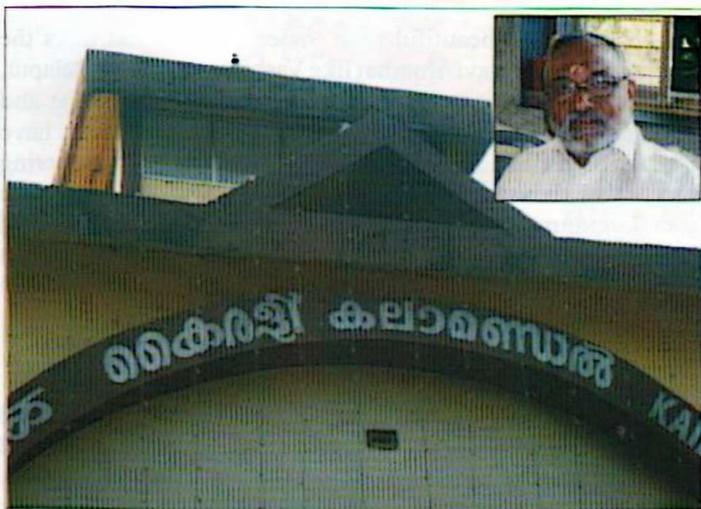
Kerala House

Kerala House is the Government Guest House at Vashi. Opened in 2006, it also houses a restaurant serving very good and authentic Kerala fare, both vegetarian and non vegetarian. There is the Kottakkal Ayurvedic centre. It dispenses Ayurvedic medicines with its team of doctors here. Kairali, Handicrafts Development Corporation of Kerala has a showroom within the Kerala house. It displays some of the most genuine and finest of Kerala handicrafts. Kairali conducts exhibition cum sale of handicrafts items regularly. Kerala House provides boarding to visitors from Kerala at economical rates.

Kairali Kala Mandal

In the early seventies, when Vashi was still an infant city, a handful of Malayalees living there came together to form a common platform for them to propagate their arts and culture and at the same time to assimilate the local Maharashtrian culture and traditions. Thus was born Kairali Kala Mandal (KKM), the oldest Malayalee organization in Vashi. To begin with KKM had 500 members. It worked from the houses of its members. In 1982, a plot of land about 1000 sq mts in Sector 9 A, Vashi, was given to KKM by CIDCO. A small building was built with contributions by members of KKM. Classes in Malayalam, Mohiniattam, Bharatanatyam, Mridangam and all Kerala arts were started by KKM for children of not only Malayalees but everybody without any distinction of state or language. KKM has also a Ladies wing that organizes cultural events and social work. Kairali Kala Mandal conducts medical health check-ups, and blood donation drives to the general public. It has also an Ayurvedic clinic, prescribing the traditional Kerala method of healing. Financial assistance is given to the poor and needy. An Earthquake Fund was set up to assist the earthquake victims of Gujarat and Maharashtra some years back. It distributes prizes to the students who have done





Kairali Kala Mandal. (Inset): Secretary R Chandran Pillai

well in the SSC and HSC and thus encourages the young to excel in their studies.

Kairali Kala Mandal is now planning to construct a multipurpose hall to house its various facilities. An Ayurvedic treatment centre, an exhibition Hall, scholarships to meritorious students are some of its future projects.

Babu Thomas is the President while B Girish Kumar is the vice president. R Chandran Pillai is the Secretary and Mrs Anitha Chandran is the Jt Secretary. PA Sahadevan is the Treasurer and P Ramachandran is the Jt Treasurer. Other Managing Committee members are T P Chandran, Ravindran, Sasi Damodaran, Soman Nair, N K Gangadharan, M P K Nambiar, V KN Nair, V D Omanakuttan, Omer A Sait, P K Purushothaman Nair, K N S Pillai, P G S Kumar, Mrs Thankam Madhavan, U Ummer, and VK Vijayan.

Dakshina Bharatiya Seva Sangh

This socio-political association was started in 2004 and inaugurated by Ganesh Naik. Its President is Sasi Damodaran. The Dakshina Bharatiya Seva Sangh has the support of all political parties. The main purpose of starting this Association was to bring together all Malayalees, Tamilians, Kannadigas and Andhraites living in Mumbai together so that they can have a common platform to voice their social and welfare issues.



Sasi Damodaran

According to Sasi Damodaran, there are samajams and sanghas, sevas and mandalis for Nairs, Ezhavas, Christians, Muslims, and so on, but there is no single organisation where all the various people of South India can come together for the common good, with no distinction of caste and creed. And Dakshina Bharata Seva Sangh fulfills this need. Today it has about 600 members out of which 500 are Malayalees and the remaining are from the other south Indian states. There are four vice-presidents, one from Andhra, one from Tamil Nadu, one from Karnataka and one from Kerala. An achievement that the Sangham can boast of, is the Onam Celebrations held in Airoli in August 2010 that was attended by about 3000 Malayalees of Navi Mumbai. Sasi's ambition is to organise a social and cultural event in Navi Mumbai where at least about 35,000 people will participate and thus show their strength and solidarity.

Apart from being the President of Dakshina Bharatiya Seva Sangh, Sasi Damodaran is also an active member of various other Malayalee Organisations and General Secretary of Maharashtra Tyre Retreading Association. He has his own business of tyre retreading and is active in the Lions Club International in which he has held the post of Chairman of their cultural, sports and pollution control units.

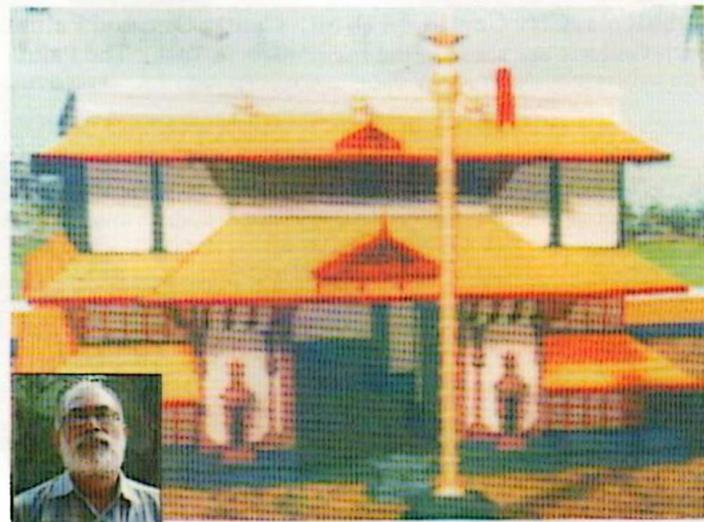
Sasi Damodaran hails from Chirayankizh, His father was a freedom fighter who had come to Mumbai as a youth. Sasi Damodaran was born and brought up in Mumbai and has been in Vashi for the past thirty three years. His wife Sunitha is from Varkala and they have three daughters, Shraddha who is married, and Sneha and Sanjana who are studying.

Malankara Orthodox Church

The Malankara Orthodox Church Council of Bombay (MOCCB) is a registered Charitable Trust, coming under the Malankara Orthodox Church, one of the Kerala Churches. It is dedicated to serving humanity in the field of education, social service, and other philanthropic activities without any discrimination, whatsoever. In Vashi, it runs the St Mary's Multipurpose High School and Junior College. The School functions under MOCCB whose president is His Grace Geevarghese Mar Coorilos, Metropolitan (Archbishop). It comes under MOCCB Education Board which manages 8 similar schools in Mumbai having Dr C J Samuel as Director and Rev Fr T E Isaac, a retd principal as its Secretary and CEO and there are several eminent personalities as members of the Board. Turbhe is generally considered as the Dharavi of Navi Mumbai. Since 2007, a rehabilitation Centre and Clinic for AIDS has been set up to provide counselling and free medicines for AIDS there. Free blood checks are conducted periodically. From December 2009 a Scheme for special care for children affected by TB has been started. Volunteers visit the centre and the victims are given nutritious food and medicines to fight TB.

New Bombay Ayyappa Mission

In 1978, when the first township of Navi Mumbai was developing, namely Vashi, a handful of Malayalees, all of them Ayyappa devotees, used to get together and conduct the annual Mandala Puja Mahotsavam. Thus was born the Ayyappa Mission, one of the oldest socio-religious organisations of Navi Mumbai. By 1998, a temple for Lord Ayyappa, (Dharma Sastha), was built and consecrated by late Kozhikottri Parameswaram



Proposed plan of the Ayyappa- Krishna Temple under construction. (inset) Secretary K Muralidharan



St Mary's Multi purpose School (inset): Rev Fr Abraham Joseph

Namboodiri of Pattambi. The main deity is Ayyappan here with Ganesha, Shiva, Durga, Murugan, as *upadevatas* and *navagrihas* and *naga devata*.

Recently, as per an *ashtamangalya prasnam*, (astrology pertaining to Godly matters) it has been revealed that in this temple there is the presence of Sree Krishna. So construction has been started for building a temple for Krishna within the temple premises, incorporating a *mukhamandapam vilakkumadam*, and extension of the existing prayer hall. With donations from the believers the Mission hopes to finish the temple construction by May 2011. In 2005, a gold plated flagstaff (*kodimaram*) was installed and this temple has become the first *mahakshetram* in Navi Mumbai.

KNS Pillai is the President, V C Chandran Pillai is the Vice President, K Muralidharan Secretary, N K Gangadharan Jt Secretary, K Sivaraman is the Treasurer and V Jayachandran Jt Treasurer. Other committee members are K P C Kutty, R Chandran Pillai, V D Omanakuttan, T Sasikumar Menon, P Sudheesh, P G Gangadharan, K S Unnithan, C Vijayan, and P V Sivaraman

St Mary's Day School and Night School

St Mary's Multi purpose School was started in 1986 with 17 students with the foundation being laid by the Late His Grace Dr Philipos Mar Theophilus. It is unaided and follows the SSC syllabus. In 2003, a Junior College in Science and Commerce stream was started. Today there are 6500 students, and 180 supporting staff in this school. They have a 80.000sq ft built up

area in the school and Junior College building plus a sprawling 10,000sq mt sports ground adjacent to the school. Free English medium education is given to the poor children, including uniform, text and note books, and meals and uniforms.

St Mary's School has its own School Committee with RT Thomas as its Chairman. The present Principal is Rev Fr Abraham Joseph. The school has been consistently achieving 100 % pass in SSC and HSC Board exams. It aims at the all round development of the child with emphasis in academics, sports and culture and the fine arts. They also have Educomp innovative educational system of learning.

St Mary's Night School was started with the main aim of providing education to the children mainly of the Turbhe industrial belt who live much below the poverty line. They are mostly children of migrant workers, or those working in the unorganized sector like sweepers, cleaners etc . The school encourages these parents to send their children to the night school and provides them free books and uniforms and one square meal. The classes from Std I to Std VI is from 4.45 to 9 pm. At present there are 250 students studying in the night school. Just like for Day School students, the facility of Educomp, computer education, and extra-curricular activities are also encouraged for the students of night school. It is a matter of pride that a blind student was encouraged to learn here to study in the Braille script from Std I to VI and he will be appearing for SSC shortly. Principal Fr Abraham Joseph's aim is to bring these underprivileged children to the forefront of society with the gift of education and he is working towards this end with his team of dedicated teachers.



Centre One in Vashi

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind Study Circle

The study circle of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind conducted a seminar on 'Islam in a divergent world' at Kerala House, Vashi. Jamaat-e-Islami Kerala Amir T Arifali inaugurated the seminar.

In his inaugural address, Arifali stated that Islam was an independent ideal and those belonging to this ideal, would have only the welfare of the entire world in their hearts. In the present day society, even the children are facing a mental crisis and the only remedy to overcome this is to return to the God, he remarked.

Jamaat-e-Islami Central Bureau member T K Abdulla, State General Secretary M K Mohamed Ali, Secretary N M Abdulrahman and Kerala Wakf Board member P P Abdulrahman Peringadi also spoke at the seminar.

Jamshir recited passages from Koran. V K Abdulla welcomed the guests while T P Moideen Kutty proposed a vote of thanks.



T Arif Ali addresses the gathering. Seated from left: T K Abdulla, M K Mohammed Ali, N M Abdul Rehman, P P Abdul Rehman Peringadi

K. Karunakaran

THE 'LEADER' BIDS GOODBYE

K Karunakaran (92) the Chanakyan strategist and political organizer died on 23 December, the day on which a person whom he catapulted to the highest position of the country breathed his last six years ago. He and P V Narasimha Rao shared several qualities.

Karunakaran, hailing from an ordinary family of Kannur migrated to Thrissur to get treatment to his eye as well as to pursue his ambition of becoming a painter. He rose from the lowly position of a trade unionist of the textile workers of Sitaram Mills to the Chief Ministership of Kerala and then a Union Minister, thanks to hard work, careful strategies and meticulous implementations.

Karunakaran was attracted to the struggle for independence and joined the Indian National Congress in 1936. Next year he became Secretary of Thrissur Town Congress Party and was arrested in 1942 and in 1945 he became a Municipal Councillor. There was no looking back for him thereafter. He steadily climbed the ladder of power as a member of the legislative assembly of Travancore-Cochin and later of Kerala, when the state was formed, and finally as member of both the houses of Parliament on different periods. During this journey, he became leader of the opposition in the Kerala assembly, home minister in a coalition ministry, Chief Minister, on four occasions and as Union cabinet minister.

In the first election to the Kerala assembly, he was defeated by Dr A R Menon but

won all later elections he contested. He was the only prominent politician who contested from two constituencies simultaneously and won both. Later he gave up his Nemam seat and retained his favourite Mala seat.

It was Karunakaran's political genius that helped to unite all anti-CPM forces to form a United Democratic Front that paved the way for the coalition politics all over India. To achieve this end, he brought political parties and religious and caste combinations together. He forged an alliance of several parties and maneuvered the UDF successfully.

In 1971, Karunakaran became Home Minister of Kerala in the C Achutha Menon ministry and was defacto Chief Minister for seven years, the only government that lasted more than five years.

In Kerala, all politically sensitive people were either his followers or his opponents but none could ignore his words, whether he was in power or out of it. He was said to be close to the Nehru family and hence had a key hand in moulding the Congress policies and practices.

During the second stint of EMS as Chief Minister, Congress

had only nine members in the assembly and Karunakaran, the seniormost of them all, became their leader. The title 'Leader' he assumed then became his hall mark. Often the opposition also called him 'Leader.'

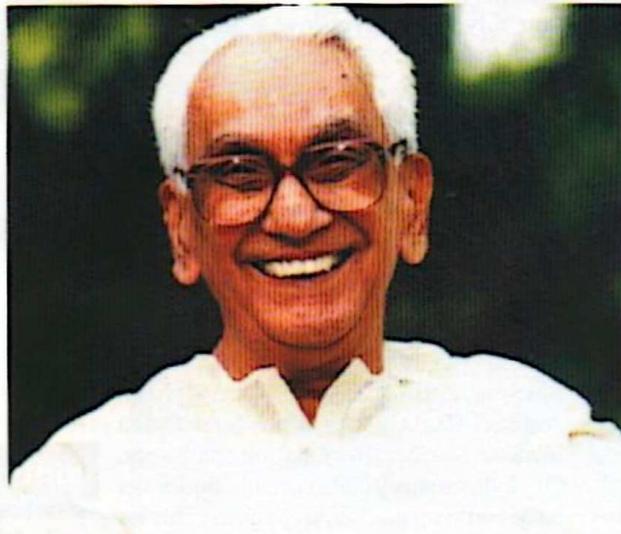
During the Emergency, police excesses became an albatross around his neck when he was Home Minister and despite having 110 MLAs with him in a house of 140, he was forced to resign his office, in the Rajan case. The infamous Palmolein case also forced him to resign a second time. More than the judicial references, inner party rivalry made him resign on other occasions. His obsession for his children Muralidharan and Padmaja Venugopal was the main cause of antagonism among the cadre and dislike for his leadership in his own party.

Kerala's development was always in his mind and he was instrumental in bringing several developmental projects to the state. The Nedumbasseri International Airport under PPP, Thrissur-Guruvayur Railway line, Ezhimala Naval Academy, Kayamkulam NTPC Thermal Power House, Cochin International Stadium etc are some of the projects that he initiated and brought to successful implementation. During his tenure, two new districts Kasargode and Pathanamthitta were formed. The technopark at Thiruvananthapuram, Regional Cancer Institute, Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology, Mahatma Gandhi University etc are obliged to Karunakaran's initiatives.

In the educational field, he brought Pre-Degree courses and later established a special board for its administration. He also showed keen interest in the expansion of Kerala Film Development Corporation. He increased the prize money of the Kerala film awards and introduced the Ezhuthachchan Award for Malayalam literature.

His love for his son Muralidharan was the main reason of his decline. He antagonized his second level leaders of the party by attempting to bring his son and daughter to state power and criticized the Antony and Oommen Chandy governments severely and even spewed venom on Sonia Gandhi which turned most of his former friends into foes. He was forced to resign from the Congress and formed the Democratic Indira Congress and made his son its President. After a couple of years, DIC was merged with NCP but the merger did not bring any solace to his humiliation. Ultimately, he rejoined the Congress but his son was refused admission.

For four decades, E M Sankaran Namboothiripad and K Karunakaran rode like Colossuses in Kerala politics and with both of them gone, Kerala has to seek a new leader of their stature and it would take a long time to accomplish.



CHANGE MINDSET FOR BETTER CITY LIFE



P. I. Jose

India is about to become an economic super power, yet the mindset of the people is not changing fast enough to keep pace with that objective. Can we not make Mumbai clean like Singapore or Shanghai? asks P I Jose, while he bemoans the lack of civic sense that he sees around him today. Most of the unwanted and unacceptable happenings around us can change for the better with a little change of attitude and mindset.

Intolerance, indiscipline and disrespect is on the rise. Everyone thinks he is supreme and above all does not want to be corrected or advised. Being humble and gentle is a good quality that distinguishes the individual among others.

Spitting and littering in public places

Paan spitting on walls, staircase corners in buildings, Lifts, buses and private vehicles, hoardings, streets, foot paths, railway platforms, on DON'T SPIT HERE sign boards, etc. is a common sight in Mumbai. In Singapore, there is a fine of Singapore dollar 1000 for the first offence and dollar 2000 for subsequent offences. The law is strictly enforced and as a result Singapore is known as one of the cleanest cities in the world. In contrast, irrespective of all the legal provisions in our country we easily escape punishment for spitting, littering or even urinating in public places.



Sometime back, the tin-sheet dividers put up by metro-rail authorities on Andheri-Kurla road for construction work was fully painted in red brown color with Paan spitting. The paid promotional ads by companies on these dividers disappeared slowly and gradually by Paan spitting.

Spitting, clearing throat and other orifices in public is an art that many in Mumbai have mastered. It causes serious health problems and spread of diseases.

Our city roads overflow with garbage and trash. Most parts of suburban Mumbai look filthy because people throw garbage on the roads, in the open drainage, compounds of housing / commercial buildings, etc.

Indiscipline and non-compliance of traffic rules

Long lines of trucks and tempos are parked on both sides of the roads blocking traffic. It is a common sight on Andheri-Kurla road from Saki Naka towards Kurla railway station since ages. Of late, many commercial buildings have come up on this stretch but vehicles are parked freely despite complaints to the authorities concerned. Tempos and trucks easily escape after scratching or damaging your vehicles while driving, but in spite of complaints to the police they are not fined enough. Registering a complaint in a police station is a time consuming and a traumatic experience. Getting the culprit booked is a difficult task.

Many drivers do not let you come out or enter the gates of your residential or commercial buildings. They are on the fifth gear when they notice the signal of someone entering or coming out. A law abiding citizen is only concerned about stopping the vehicle for long while entering the gate when there are other vehicles waiting behind him, but many of the drivers on the opposite side do not understand this. Taxis and auto rickshaws will only stop right in front of the gates blocking entry of another



Traffic jams

vehicle. These are all underlying attitudinal problems.

These incidents happen in our day to day life because generally the public is tolerant with this type of behavior and not concerned about what is going on around them. Seldom do people come to help when ladies or elderly people are attacked by goons and ruffians. At the end of the day, an honest and law abiding person gets frustrated and develops an attitude of helplessness, thus some of them turns cynical and hostile.

Indecent behavior in public

While commuting from home to workplace and back we come across people using abusive words and fighting for silly reasons. Women are far more disciplined when it comes to civic sense.

Disruptive acts in Co-op. Societies

Discipline and civilized social behavior must start at home. Incidents of scratching newly polished doors, lifts, and vehicles parked in the compound with keys and sharp objects, spreading foot wear outside entrance passage / door, etc. are nuisance in housing

societies. Society members waste electricity by not switching off lights and fans in common areas including gymnasium, swimming pool, etc. after use. Electricity can be saved by not pressing call button for two or three lifts at a time, but call the lift closer to your floor. Members damage equipments in the gym and make them dirty without any concern for others using the same.

Wastage of water

BMC's daily supply of water to Mumbai is 3100 MLD (million litres per day), out of which 600 million litres is wasted (about 20 percent) each day due to leakage and theft. Added to this, millions of litres is wasted in every household by sheer carelessness and keeping the water tap open in full force throughout while washing clothes and utensils. Again there is excessive use of water for bathing. There is no control even during summer when water is in short supply. We realize the value of water only when there is acute shortage.

The Times of India has very recently reported that drinking water is being packed and sold at ration shops along with rice and wheat, in Mumbai's slum areas where there is acute shortage. A one-litre pouch of potable water costs 50 paise in the winter and one Rupee in summer. Compare this with BMC's official rate of Rs.2.75 per 1000 litres.

Food and Milk adulteration

Milk consumed by all, including infants is adulterated using urea, groundnut paste, and often water that is not potable. Processed formaldehyde is used for preserving milk for long, which is dangerous and injurious to health. Contaminated milk leads to abdominal diseases. A recent test of milk samples collected in Maharashtra shows 23 percent adulterated, as revealed by the Minister of State for Health at the centre.

Toxic colors, injurious to health are added in sweetmeats sold in the market. Toxic chemicals are applied or injected into vegetables and fruits for speedy growth, preservation and for appearance. Urea is packed into budding bananas by cutting the sprout to make them bigger (one can smell urea in the big size ripe Kerala bananas). There is nothing much left for us to eat that is adulteration free.

All these heinous acts are perpetrated by unscrupulous and greedy traders and

These incidents happen in our day to day life because generally the public is tolerant with this type of behavior and not concerned about what is going on around them. Seldom do people come to help when ladies or elderly people are attacked by goons and ruffians. At the end of the day, an honest and law abiding person gets frustrated and develops an attitude of helplessness, thus some of them turns cynical and hostile.



Rubbish all around the dustbin



well - swept roads, a city's delight.

merchants to make a quick buck at the cost of public health.

The adulterated food and polluted environment are the major causes for all sickness today. We are sufferers by virtue of our tolerance to wrong doings.

India is about to become an economic

super power, yet the mindset of the people is not changing fast enough to keep pace with that objective. Can we not make Mumbai clean like Singapore or Shanghai? Please keep your city clean and a better place to live, in every respect.



- Traveller

Kovalam

The Beach Town of India

Kovalam means a grove of coconut trees and predictably the coconut trees along the beaches provide a ravishing look.

The potential of this beach to become an international beach was first identified by some European guests of the Maharaja of Travancore in the early 1930s.

The most famous beach in India is undoubtedly Kovalam, 13 kms away from Thiruvananthapuram city. Kovalam means a grove of coconut trees. Coconut trees along the beaches give it a ravishing look.

The potential of this beach to become an international beach was first realised by some European guests of the Maharaja of Travancore in the early 1930s. Nevertheless, it acquired popularity in the 1970s when the hippies thronged there and soon foreign tourists rushed there to spend their holidays.

Over the past three decades, the place is well developed, and now figures prominently on the world tourism map. Today Kovalam beach is known as the "Paradise of the South."

Beaches

Kovalam has three crescent shaped beaches separated by rocky outcroppings. The water level here is ideal for swimming as the shallow water runs to hundreds of metres. The long row of palm trees on the beaches makes them very attractive as well as comfortable.

The Light House Beach

The Light House Beach, the largest of the beaches and located at the southern part of Kovalam, acquired its name because of its position atop the 35 metre high Kurumkal Hillock. The cool sea breeze blowing from the Arabian Sea and a bare foot walk on the soft silver sand are quite enjoyable. It offers a spectacular view of the Vizhinjam mosque and its verdant surroundings.

Havvah (Eve's) Beach

The second largest one is Havvah Beach. It derives its name as it attracted a large number of European women. It is the first topless beach in India. Topless bathing is prohibited here now. Every morning fishermen set out to the sea to catch fish, their main source of livelihood.

Samudra Beach

The northern part of the beach, known as Samudra Beach, is adorned with wooden fishing vessels. The local fishermen ply their trade at this beach with less tourists coming on this beach. Samudra beach enjoys a tranquil and serene atmosphere, an ideal place for nature lovers. Tourists can relax in the lap of nature while enjoying the soothing surroundings.

The sands on the beaches in Kovalam are partially black in colour due to the presence of ilmenite and thorazite. The normal tourist season is from September to May. Ashoka beach is also the part of Kovalam beach.

Tourist facilities

There are a number of beach resorts in and around Kovalam. The sea port of Vizhinjam is about 3 km away and famous for its special varieties of fish, old temples, big churches and a mosque. The Proposed International Trans Shipment Terminal at Vizhinjam is very close to Kovalam.

Kovalam has several Ayurvedic salons, and recuperation and regeneration resorts which provide a wide variety of Ayurvedic



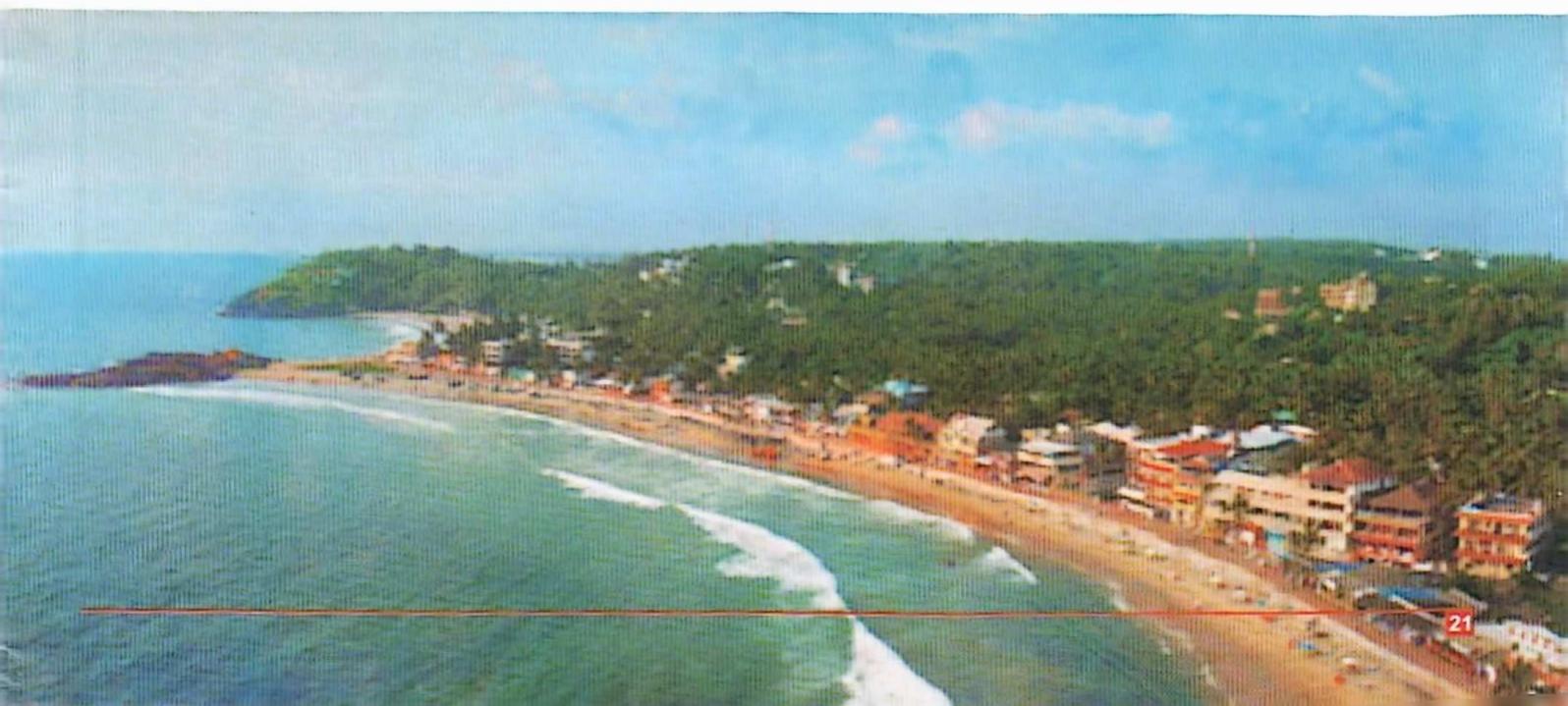
Havvah Beach



treatments for tourists. At present Kovalam is developed not only as a beach resort, but also as a Yoga and health centre. One can have Ayurvedic massages and oil baths or learn Yoga and meditation taught by experts.

The palm-fringed bays in secluded coconut groves, promise a relaxed stay. The boundless blue waters of the Arabian Sea and miles of white sands washed away by the surf at the feet of the tall palms and the rocky promontories, make this beach a paradise. This marvellous beach is a tourist's dream come true.

When you are tired of aquatics, swimming or sunbathing, you can explore the handicrafts, jewellery and cloth shops spread along the waterfront. There is also delightful sea-food fare including lobsters available at the beachside restaurants.



Things to do

Spend the moments of leisure at the beach site, especially during sunset. Laze on the golden sands and walk on it, to marvel at lush greenery all around. Relish a variety of vegetarian and non vegetarian cuisines. The restaurants alongside the beach, serve some lip-smacking Kerala sea food and continental cuisines including German and Swiss specialties. The shops along the beach provide jewellery, handicrafts and textiles.

Kovalam is also popular for classical Kathakali dance. In the evening the quiet atmosphere of the place is enlivened by Kathakali performances, the classical dance-drama of Kerala.

Adventure Activities

Kovalam beach is a one stop answer to all adventure buffs, a dream destination to indulge oneself in various thrilling adventure sports. Visitors can experience surfing, swimming, skiing and kayaking in the vast azure water of Arabian Sea that touches the golden sands of Kovalam. The safe zones for adventure sports are marked with the green flag and the area with red flags is not safe for tourists. One can hire boats from fisherman and set out fishing.

One can also explore other magnificent buildings at the Kovalam beach that are architectural wonders. Kovalam Jama Masjid and the Ganapati Temple are among them.

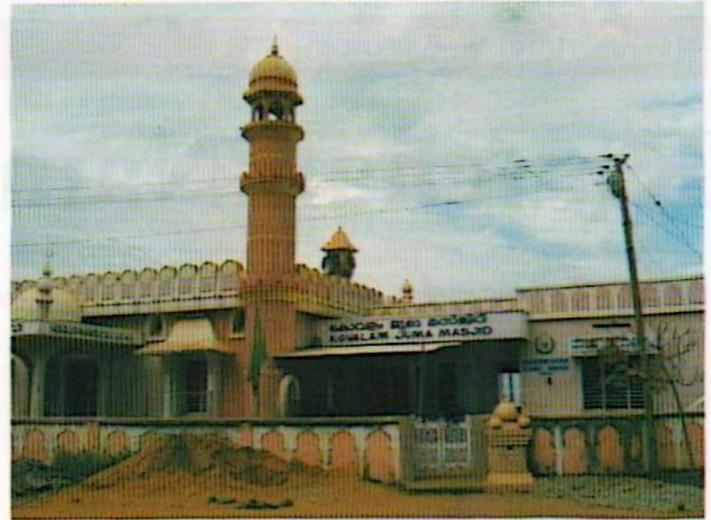
Hotels in Kovalam

There are a large number of places to stay, ranging from cheap concrete boxes to up-market resorts, and a large number of under-equipped restaurants catering to standard Asian travellers' tastes. There are a number of restaurants which provide western style food as well as Indian. The grilled seafood items such as lobster, king prawns and calamari are fresh catch from the sea at Kovalam. The ITDC-run Ashoka and the Kerala Tourism Development Corporation's 'Samudra' at the Kovalam beach provide five-star accommodation.

There are other hotels as well to suit every pocket. Kovalam is developing not only as a beach resort but is fast developing as a Yoga and health center.

The coast at many places is lined with beautiful patches of coral reefs or you can crest the waves on logs of lashed woods on catamarans.

From Kovalam, you can go for a backwater cruise to the beautiful countryside of Kerala paddling country boats, enjoying its lush greenery. A few hotels even offer houseboats, country boats and catamarans for tourists at reasonable rates.

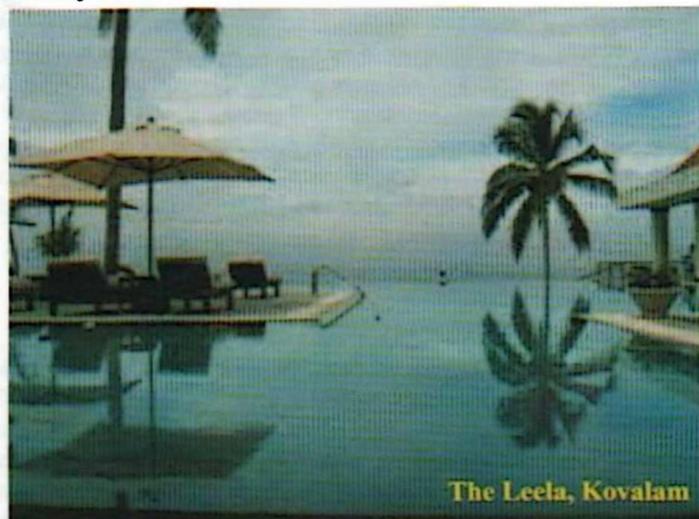


Kovalam Juma Masjid

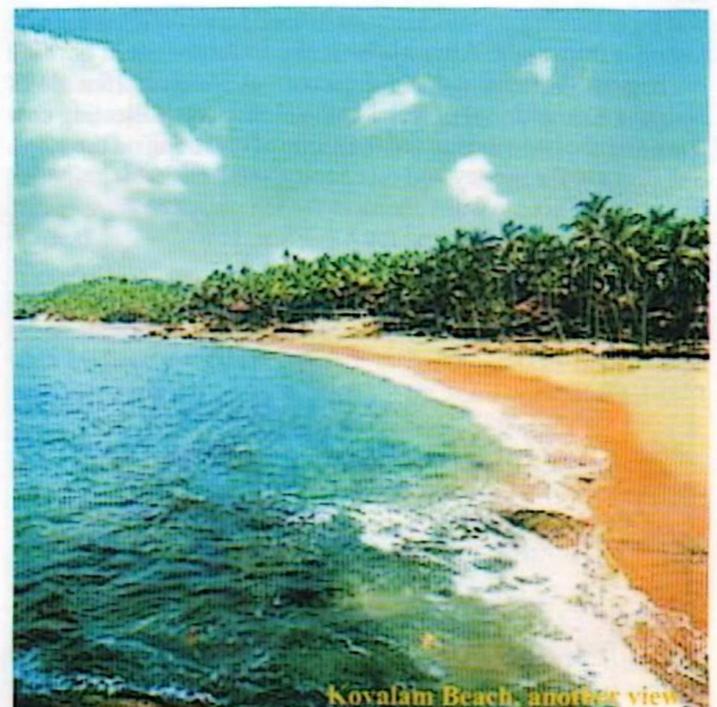
It is a dream destination to indulge oneself in various thrilling adventure sports within the territory of this exotic beach. Visitors can experience surfing, swimming, skiing and kayaking in the vast azure water of Arabian Sea that touches the golden sands of Kovalam.

How to Reach

One can reach Kovalam by air (Thiruvananthapuram international airport) or by Rail (Thiruvananthapuram Central) or by road. Tourists can also access Kovalam by bus from Thiruvananthapuram. Buses also link the place from Ernakulam, Kanyakumari and Periyar wildlife sanctuary.



The Leela, Kovalam



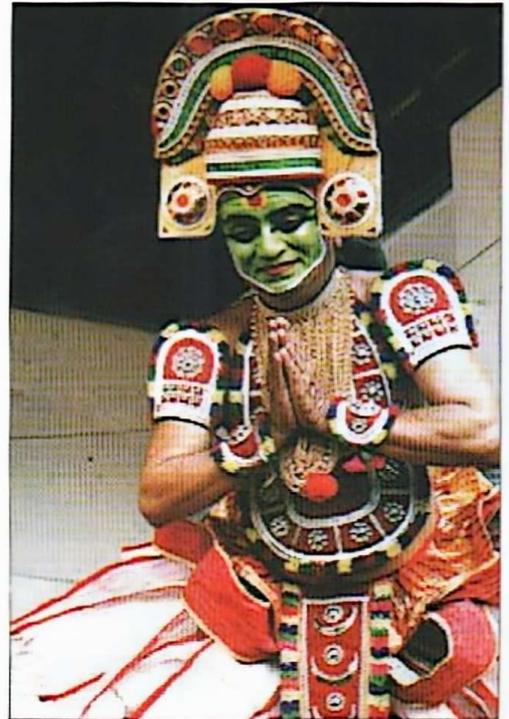
Kovalam Beach, another view

Great Poets of Malayalam-3

Kunchan Nambiar

A Poet Misunderstood

-Satyanath



Ottan Thullal

To Malayalees, Kunchan Nambiar is known as an instant poet, pioneer of Ottan Thullal, a poet with a good sense of humour and a social critic. Many of these qualifications are based on mere speculation and unfounded legends.

He was born (Malayalam era 880) at Kalakkathu House in Kilikkurissi Mangalam village near Lakkidi in the present Palakkad district. His parents were poor. Kilikkurissi Mangalam is now known as Shukapuram or Mangalam. We do not know much about his father except that he was a Nambiar from Kidangoor. During his childhood, the family was in dire straights. He and his younger brother and mother were under the wings of his uncle Raghavan Nambiar. It is believed that his real name is Raman and his younger brother Krishnan. It is also believed that he had assumed the name Kunchan when he became the male head of *Kalakkathu tharavadu*. It was the practice during those times to assume a certain name when one becomes the head of the hierarchy.

There is a legend regarding his birth. A poor Brahmin was returning from Thiruvananthapuram with some money donated by the Maharaja to meet the marriage expenses of his daughters and decided to halt at Kilikkurissi Mangalam temple during the day to escape the heat. He went to the river for his daily bath, leaving his money bag on the steps of the river *ghat*. While he was busy bathing, a cow came and dropped cow dung on the bag, hiding it from sight. After his bath, the Brahmin could not find his bag and became sad and dejected. A *Nangyar* (female of Nambiar Community) of Kalakkathu House was collecting cow dung and she happened to see the hump of cowdung on the steps. She thus got the money and on enquiry, realised that it belonged to the Brahmin who was sulking in the temple's *Agraharam*. She returned the bag to him and the happy Brahmin blessed her that she would bear a "son who will be famous."

It is said that Nambiar inherited his mother's honesty and throughout his life maintained his honesty and truthfulness. He always held Brahmins in high esteem and this would be clear from his following lines:

വേണീഭൂതസംസാര-
 കടലിലകരപ്പറ്റാൻ
 തോണിയായ് വരും പിന്നെ-
 സ്സുരലോകം കരേറുവാൻ
 കോണിയായ് വരും വിപ്രാ-
 നുഗ്രഹമെന്നറിഞ്ഞാലും
 (ഹരിശ്ചന്ദ്ര ചരിതം)

(Know that the blessings of a Brahmin would first come as a boat to cross the river of life and then as a ladder to climb to heaven)
 Though Nambiar has not directly given any evidences about his

Today, many consider Kunchan Nambiar as a poet who entertained with his satirical and humorous works. The fact is that he used satire to improve conditions then existing. He was very poor and whatever he earned was spent on his siblings and their children. He was a bachelor. He went from place to place to serve the ruling class and to eke a living and sacrificed his own pleasures for the sake of others.

life, records maintained at various palaces such as Ambalapuzha, Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi etc throw some light on him. It appeared that he was perennially poor and was compelled to flatter lords and local kings for his livelihood.

The young Nambiar had his initial education from his mother and uncle. He learnt grammar, astrology and logics from the well known Sanskrit scholar Narayana Bhattathiri of Thrikkaraman Mana. This fact has been acknowledged by Nambiar in his *Madanakethu Charitham* and *Seetha Raghavam*.

After his initial education, Nambiar proceeded towards North Kerala and stayed with several local chieftains, as was the practice then with poor pundits. The kings and lords too took it as a self effacing action. Nambiar in one of his poems mentioned his experience of living at Kolathunad.

Kōlabhoopasyanagarē vāsarā: hari vāsarā:
Maśakairmmakkuñaiscapi rāṭraya: shiva rāṭraya:
 (In the land of Kolathiri, all days are Ekādaśi (without food) and all nights are Shivarathries (no sleep) because of mosquitoes and bedbugs.

It is difficult to comprehend what sort of experience Nambiar faced from Kolathiri who had poets like Cherusseri as his companions. He was known for the patronage extended to



Killikurissi Siva Temple

poets and artists. Might be Nambiar went there when Kolathiri was facing domestic problems.

From Kolathunad, Nambiar moved to Vettathunad and became a dependent of Paliyath Achchan. *Vishnu Vilasam* was written while he was there. *Rugmini Swayamvaram* was written when he was staying at *Thingalkad* near Wadakancherry, as recorded (*Thingal kananasthale vilangitunnorambike*) in it. Since Nambiar's father was an employee at Kidangoor temple, Nambiar used to visit him occasionally when his father was alive.

It is presumed that Nambiar moved to Ambalapuzha somewhere around 912 (ME). When he was with the king of Chembakasseri, Nambiar was presumably wrote his Sanskrit works such as *Raghaveeyam*, *Ambaranadeestotram*, *Leelavathi Veethi* and lyrics for many *Thullal* tales.

When he stayed at Ambalapuzha, Nambiar became a student of Thekkedathu Bhattathiri. During this period, a Brahmin came there and challenged Bhattathiri to prove his mettle in vedic knowledge. After a few days of arguments, Chembakasseri Raja realised that if it continued, his court poet would be defeated. He then used a ploy to save the poet and asked both of them to compose a poem in *Manipravalam* (a smooth mixture of Malayalam and Sanskrit) style in twelve *sargams* about Lord Krishna and submit it to him next day. Bhattathiri found this task very onerous and therefore could not compose even a single stanza till midnight. When Nambiar came to know the sad plight of his guru, he asked for the assistance of twelve disciples of Bhattathiri. It is said that Nambiar composed each stanza of each *sargam* together so that each disciple could take them down. Thus by sunrise, he completed the story of Krishna, the deity of Ambalapuzha. Bhattathiri submitted the poem and received several gifts from the king. This work is called *Sri Krishna Charitham Manipravalam*.

Though the above legend is contestable, it is accepted that the entire work was done in a hurry. Nevertheless, Nambiar was recognised as an instant poet *par excellence*. Nambiar has however recorded this work as given below.

രാമേണ പാണിവാദേന
രചിതേ മിശ്രസംസ്കൃതേ
ശ്രീകൃഷ്ണചരിതേ കാവ്യേ
മുതൽസർഗ്ഗഃ സമാപിതഃ

Ambalapuzha Raja had 12 palaces at various places under him. Nambiar used to travel with him. However his main stays were at Thakazhi, Nedumudi and Ambalapuzha. Because of the extensive travelling he undertook, he came in contact with people from different regions and studied their characteristics. This helped him to compose many a satire about them. Through

the words of different characters in his compositions, he criticized their mode of working and behavioural patterns. He did not spare even the bureaucrats and brought their corruption to the notice of the ruler. This way he could even bring about several social changes. Many learned critics have said that Nambiar's characters, from the lowly to the gods, often look like people of Kerala. They held this against Nambiar. We have to acknowledge that in the absence of other mechanisms, Nambiar's poems did what today's RTI and whistle blowers do. When Chembakasseri Raja declined politically and economically, Nambiar shifted his base to Thiruvananthapuram as he was already known to the King Marthanta Varma. During his stay there, Nambiar was granted an allowance and his servant was paid from the funds of the palace. Though he stayed there for fifteen years, his stay could not be said to be a good experience. Nambiar's stay at Thiruvananthapuram resulted in the completion of several *Thullal* tales such as *Krishna Leela*, *Kaliya Mardanam*, *Harini Swayamvaram*, *Hanumaddutbhavam* etc.

There are many humorous anecdotes about Nambiar during his stay there. Once he was accepting the '*prasadam*' from Poojari Nambi and the latter asked him who he was. When Nambi complained to the Raja later about Nambiar's arrogance, Nambiar was called for an explanation. Nambiar said,

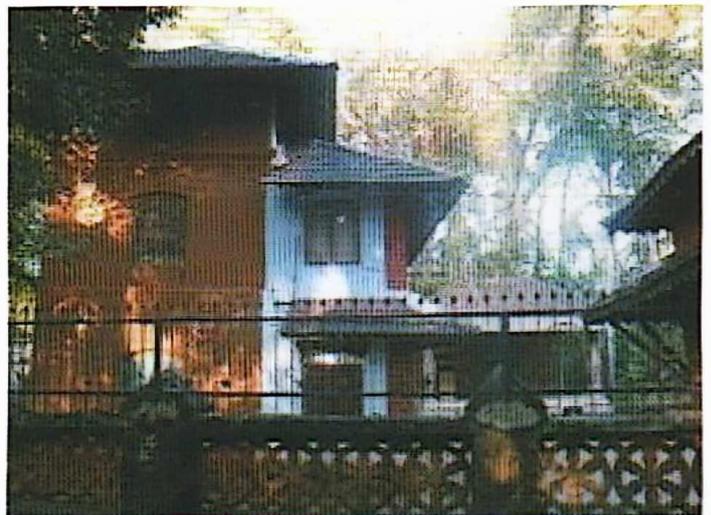
നമ്പിയാരെന്നു ചോദിച്ചു
നമ്പിയാരെന്നു ചൊല്ലിനാൻ
നമ്പി കേട്ടതു കോപിച്ചു
തമ്പുരാനെ പൊറുക്കണേ.

On another occasion, Marthanta Varma told his courtiers that the '*payasam*' was slightly bitter when he had the feast. Soon when the food was served to the latter, the courtiers declined '*payasam*' to please the king but Nambiar had it to his heart's content. When the king asked him about the bitterness, Nambiar agreed with him and added that it was the bitterness of sugar and milk and that he liked that bitterness.

When a light tower was built in Padmanabhaswamy Temple, the Maharaja asked all his courtiers to compose poems about it. All of them wrote lengthy poems when Nambiar wrote only four lines.

*Dīpastambham Mahāścaryam
Namukkum kittāṇam paṇam
Ityarṭṭa ēsham ślokānām
Allāṭonnum na vidyatē.*"

The readers can very well assume the plight of other poets. It is presumed that during this period, Nambiar might have developed friendship with *Ramapurathu* Varier, author of



Kunchan Smarakam

'Kuchela Vruttham Vanchipattu' as he was also staying there. Both Nambiar and Varier had mentioned in some of their poems that they were written at the instance of Marthanda Varma. There are a couple of anecdotes connecting these two stalwarts. Once both of them were having their bath at the bank of Padmatheertha, when a beautiful women and her maid servant carrying shampoo passed by. Seeing them Varier commented, "Kāpilōla". A common man might think that he was commenting on the ear-jewellery where as what he really said was "kāpilōla?" (who is more beautiful?). Nambiar appropriately responded, "Nallaḷāḷi" as if commenting on the shampoo carried by the maid. What was meant was "Nallthu āḷi" (maid is better). It was said that this was the first encounter between the two.

On another occasion, an elephant was brought to the palace pond and after its bath, the entire water turned muddy. When the Raja enquired about it, Varier replied that the pond was stirred black (kari)". Nambiar responded differently. He said that the pond was stirred sandal(kalabham). Both the words kari and kalabham have meaning 'elephant'. While Varier made a negative remark, Nambiar made it look positive.

Once the Maharaja ordered the termination of Nambiar's allowances. Nambiar realized that the jealousy of some courtiers played a role in this. After a few days he wrote a stanza and presented it to the king. This piece was full of dual meaning and conveyed the real plight of the poet.

പുഷ്പസന്തം സുജനൈഃ അഹം ച പട്ടുഭിഃ ശത്രുക്കളാലമ്പഹം കോറൻ വാരണമുണ്ടു തേ, മമ യഹോ കൊട്ടാരവാതില്ക്കലും ഒട്ടും തന്നരിയില്ല തേ, മമ തഥാപ്യഷ്ടിക്കു കുപ്പാട്ടിലും സേവിച്ചിട്ടടിയൻ ചിരേണനൃപതേ! തപത്തുല്പനായിടനേൻ.

(You are worshipped (with bouquets) by good people everyday, whereas I am worshipped by brickbats by my foes; you have elephant to pass through the palace door, but I have obstacles to pass through; you have no enemies but I have no food at home; after serving you for a long time, I became equal to you.) The common meaning is that after a long service, the employee became equivalent to the employer while the second meaning is that the employee has fallen to penury as his mistakes are not forgiven. (പുഷ്പസന്തം=worth worshipping, worth zero; വാരണം=elephant, obstacle; അരി=foe, rice)

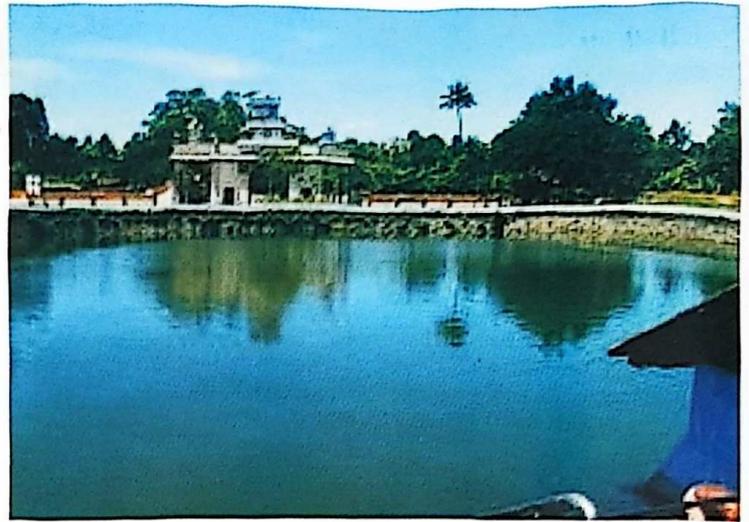
The learned Maharaja was pleased and removed all his restrictions for the entry to the palace and ordered restoration of all his allowances with arrears.

The poor quality of food served from the side kitchen of the palace provoked all dependents of the palace, who ate there to cajole Nambiar to bring the matter to the notice of the Maharaja. Once Nambiar and others were sitting with the Maharaja and a cow happened to pass down the balcony. The cow was then dropping dung in a liquid state and Nambiar immediately asked the cow whether it was also fed from the side kitchen. The Maharaja got wind of it and ordered improvement of the quality of the food served from there.

Once King Marthanda Varma asked Nambiar about the food served to him at Chembakasseri and Nambiar replied in a poem:

പത്രം വിസ്തൃതമത്ര, തുമ്പ മലർ തോറ്റോടീടിനോരനവു പുത്തൻ നൈ, കനിയപ്പഴുത്ത പഴവും കാളിപ്പഴം, കാളനും പത്തഞ്ഞൂറുകറിക്കു ഭാസ്യമിയലും നാരങ്ങയും മാങ്ങയും നിത്യം ചെമ്പ കനാട്ടിലുണ്ടു തയിർ, മോർ തട്ടാതെ കിട്ടും സുഖം.

The poem meant that the plantain leaf on which the meal was served was wide enough, the rice was as white as thumpa, with ghee pure and fresh, properly ripened banana that too Kaalipazham, the lime and mango pickles surpassing even a menu of 500 curries and very thick curd; over all very good



Ambalapuzha Temple

meal. Hearing this, King's expression changed and it was clear to Nambiar that he did not like the praise. He felt that Nambiar considered that meal better than what he got from his own palace. Nambiar sensed the mood of the king and recited the same poem again with different pauses that had a contrasting meaning.

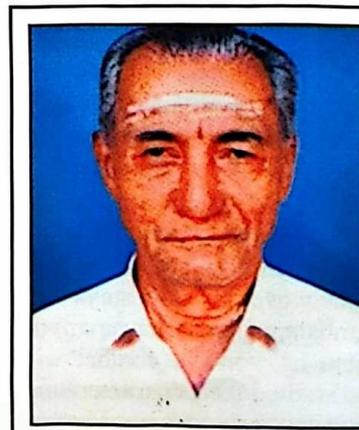
പത്രം വിസ്തൃതമത്ര തു, മലർ തോറ്റോടീടിനോരനവു പുത്തൻ നൈ കനിയ, പ്പഴുത്ത പഴവും കാളി, പ്പഴംകാളനും പത്തഞ്ഞൂറുകറിക്കു ഭാസ്യമിയലും നാരങ്ങയും മാങ്ങയും, നിത്യം ചെമ്പ കനാട്ടിലുണ്, തയിർ മോർ തട്ടാതെ, കിട്ടും സുഖം!

Meaning: The plantain leaf was as big as that of thumpa leaf (very small), rice was comparable with puffed rice (malar) that is very thin and too light, the so called fresh ghee was bitter (very old), the banana was decayed, kalan curry was stale, pickles were far below five hundred curries, curd and butter milk could not be seen. It was so good (sarcastically, very bad)! This poem having a dual meaning is very difficult to compose even by skilled poets.

Occasionally Nambiar used to go to his native place as he was the Karanavar. He wanted to take leave of absence from the Maharaja. The following was his application for leave of absence:

അമ്പ തൊന്നക്ഷരം പണ്ടടിയനുടെ
രസജ്ഞാഗ്രഭേദശേനുകമ്പ ാ
ശമ്പ തോടൊത്തൊഴുത്തിട്ടൊരു
ഗുരുവിനഹോ ഭീനമെന്നത്രകേട്ടു
അമ്പ തൊറബ്ധി കാഞ്ചീപതികളുഖിലരും
കുമ്പിടും തമ്പുരാന്തേ!
സംപ്രത്യചാരപാദം തൊഴുതിഹ
വിടകൊണ്ടീടുവാനാജ്ഞ വേണം.

To be continued



4th Death Anniversary
(9th Jan 2011)

In loving Memory of

Shri O.V. Achuthan Nambiar
(Annappoorneswari Stores, Matunga)

*Your Life, Words will continue
to inspire us forever.
We remember & miss your presence
every moment.*

With love remembered by wife-
Devi Amma and family members

Mandala Pooja Celebrations at Marol

Shree Ayyappa Bhakta Sangham, Marol held its 36th Annual Mandala Pooja on December 17, 18 and 19, 2010 on Blossom Society Grounds, with religious fervour and gaiety. There were Poojas. Cultural programmes like Bharata Natyam, Mohini Aattam, and a Dance Ballet in Kuchupudi style by disciples of Guru Radha Chandran, Guru Geeta Vijayashankar and Guru Prasanna Nambiar respectively and devotional orchestra by Vijay Kumar and group of *Raagalaya* were organized on 17th & 18th December in the evenings.

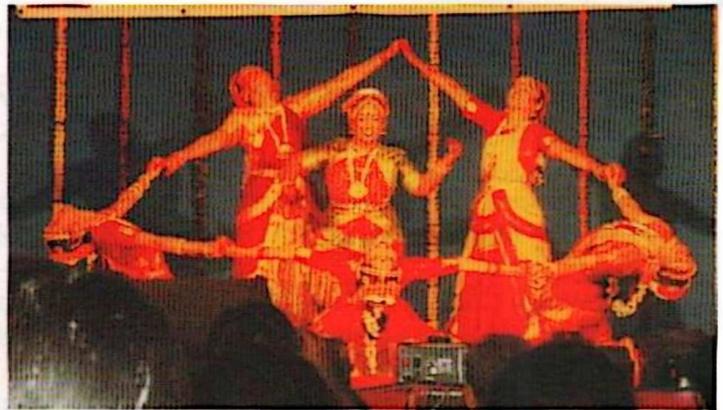
On the 19th December, a procession was taken out from Vijay Nagar Ganesh Temple to Blossom Society via Panchavati CHS, MEA High School, Bhawani Nagar, Lok Sarita / Yamuna, Military Road with a decorated chariot carrying the portrait of Lord Ayyappa accompanied by Panchavadyam and Thalapoli. The celebrations drew to a close with Mahadeeparadhana after the procession reached the Pooja venue.



Mohini Aattam by disciples of Guru Geeta Vijayashankar



Mahadeeparadhana for Lord Ayyappan



Bharata Natyam by disciples of Guru Radha Chandran,

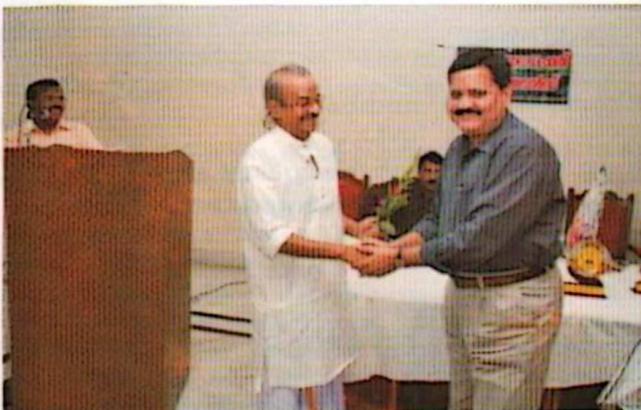
Jwala Award Function

The 13th Jwala Award function was held at Kerala House, Vashi on December 26, 2010. Jwala, a monthly Malayalam publication published from Mumbai by U N Gopi Nair held their 13th Jwala Award function at Kerala House, Vashi. Every year they distribute awards to various persons for overall achievements in different fields. The Awards are instituted in memory of Pappanamcode Prabhakaran. The winners are selected by readers of JWALA through a gallop poll. The event was inaugurated by well-known trade union activist

and social worker P R Krishnan and well-known poet Krishnan Parapalli. U N Gopi Nair presided over the function where Bhupesh Babu poets Krishnan Parapalli, and Keraleeya Sanghatana President K S Menon (Shriman) were present.

This year's award winners are: Smt Komalam Nair, social worker from Delhi, Chunakkara Raman Kutty well-known Malayalam film lyricist, N K Bhupesh Babu politician and social activist, Manoj Malavika young businessman, C P Krishnakumar, Oomen David (educationist) and K V Vijay Kumar Nair, (social worker).

Smitha Publications also released their second publication *Padakkappal* written by Babu Augustine on this occasion. It was released by Chunakkara Ramankutty.

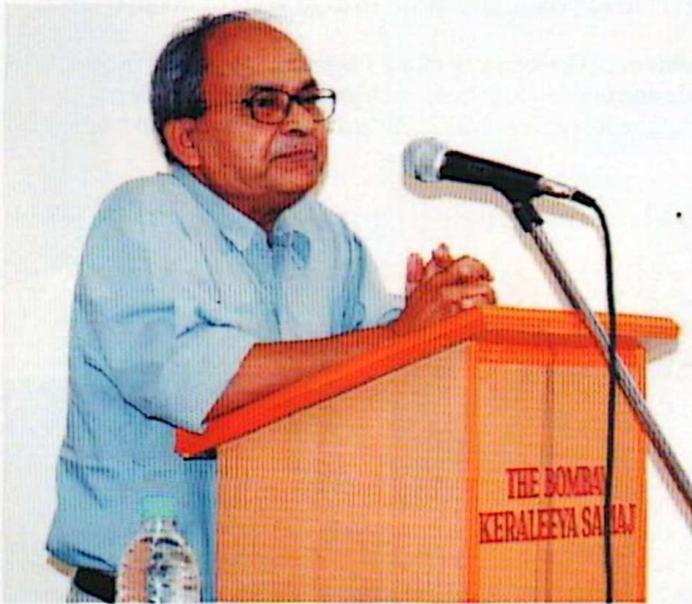


P V Vijay Kumar Managing Editor of Kerala in Mumbai welcomes Chunakkara Raman Kutty at the Jwala Award function



Seated from left: U N Gopi Nair, Bhupesh Babu, Komalam Nair, Chunakkara Raman Kutty, Krishnan Parapalli and K S Menon at the Jwala Award function

Alkkoottam: A Revisit of the novel



Forty years have passed since the publication (1970) of the novel *Alkkoottam* by Anand. *Alkkoottam*, which attracted readers (12th edition was published by D C Books in 2008) through all these years, narrates the story of a group of people living in Mumbai. The novel employs a unique style and structure, exploring a new path, different from the one followed by conventional Malayalam fiction. Anand (P Satchidanandan) was born in 1936 at Irinjalakuda, Thrissur district. He took a degree in Civil Engineering from Engineering College, Trivandrum in 1958 and entered government service. He retired in 1994.

J & P Publications and *Chenda*, a Malayalam magazine from Mumbai, jointly organized a meeting between Anand and the readers of fiction in Mumbai on 28th November 2010 at 5.30 p.m. at Keralaleeya Samajam, Matunga.

In his welcome address, Shri Jayaprakash of J & P Publications pointed out that the themes presented by Anand in *Alkkoottam* are relevant even today. This may be the reason for the interest of today's readers in this novel.

Shri Shreeman, who presided, recalled the famous lines of Ezhuttachchan, "As the tired travellers, in the wayside inns, assemble and then depart" (*Ramayanam, Ayodhyakandam, Lakshmanopadesham*) describe the theme of Anand's novel.

The story of *Alkkoottam* begins when Joseph alights from a train at the Victoria Terminus Station and concludes when he merges in the crowd at Bombay Central Station.

Dr Venugopal suggested that it would be interesting to know the feelings of the author about his novel, after forty years.

Discussions

Forty years is not at all a long period in human life. Anand lived in Mumbai during the years 1957 to 1962. He started writing the novel in 1960. It may be said that fifty years have passed since then. The characters of the novel *Alkkoottam* (Joseph, Sunil, Radha etc) were his friends. At the same time, he was in constant debate with them. During sixties, the majority of people coming to cities seeking employment were from the rural areas. The novel describes the struggle between the individual and the society with the urban rural conflict as the background. Concurrently, the novel also deals with other conflicts such as those between the society and nation and between the dreams of individuals and reality.

Only ten years had passed, since the country gained independence.

The independence struggle was led by Congress Party and the country won freedom. Pakistan and Burma, our neighbouring countries also became independent along with India but slipped into dictatorship and military rule. Everyone was concerned about the future of the nation. The relevance of Indian Army was questioned since the neighbours were friendly nations. The border dispute and subsequent skirmishes with China, started in 1958, culminated in the military attack and the pathetic defeat of India in the war of 1962.

During this time, the various unions of Central Government employees began a nationwide strike that lasted for a few days. The strike was a total failure. The failed strike became a milestone in the growth of the Indian trade union movement. This served as the background.

As a writer, Anand saw Mumbai as the true image of India, where people of various regions with divergent cultures lived together. The novel presents a realistic picture of city and society of Mumbai, in the view of an engineer. There is no fantasy in *Alkkoottam*.

In the beginning, Anand contemplated publishing the novel without a title, that became a problem in itself. Some of his friends who read the manuscript considered it good. Some found it too voluminous and difficult to complete reading. Some others wondered: A book of this nature can be called a novel?

No publisher was ready to publish the work. At last, with the special interest taken by M Govindan, the literary stalwart of Chennai, Sahitya Pravartaka Sahakarana Sangham (SPCS), Kottayam, published the novel in 1970.

Dr P Harikumar, P O Pushpangadan, Dr P V Narayanan Nair, C P Krishnakumar, Jayan Tanim, C G Warriar, Manasi, N Lakshmi, Radhakrishnan, A Purushothaman, Venugopalan and K P Mukundan participated in the discussion. Some of the views are:

The tendency of urban Malayali to use English words profusely while speaking Malayalam is described in the novel, written almost fifty years ago.

The novel deals with lack of meaning of human life. The lines, "Life is a tale, told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing" (*Macbeth, Shakespeare*) aptly describe the central theme of *Alkkoottam*.

Different styles of narration are seen in Anand's novels, *Govardhante Yatrakal, Maruboomikal Undavunnatu* and *Uttarayanam*.

Response from Anand

Responding to the various views expressed by the audience, Anand responded comprehensively.

Anand is happy to know that, *Alkkoottam* attracts readers even today. As on date, he does not have the mental frame to write another big novel like *Alkkoottam* as he has completed 74 years now.

With the present scenario of declining habit of reading books, the English translation of the novel may not necessarily make any impact. The basis of *Alkkoottam* was reality while his later works are a mix fantasy and reality.

In the contemporary social set up, the difference between the poor and rich is widening. The social repercussions of globalisation need to be considered today. Ideally, the society should control the nation. But today, the nation is controlling the society to a large extent. The institutions of authority are progressively reducing the independence of society through controls. Today, the economic structure controls the society. For Anand, fiction is only a medium of communication with the readers. He writes non-fiction as well.

Some interesting facts are that till the publication of *Alkkoottam* (514 pages), the novel, *Sundarikalum Sundaranmarum* by Uroob (350 pages) was the most voluminous novel in Malayalam. Though SPCS first rejected the book, they finally accepted it when M Govindan intervened.

Old is Gold

-Ashwathi

Turakkatta Vatil തുറക്കാത്ത വാതിൽ (1970)

Lyrics: P Bhaskaran Music: K Raghavan Singer: K J Yesudas

Transliteration:

Ā, ā = അ, ഓ; Ē, ē = ഏ, ഐ; ī = ി; ī = ി; Ō, ō = ഓ, ഔ; Ū, ū = ഊ, ഴ, ū = ഴ;
C, c = ച, ch = ച, D, d = ട, Dh, dh = ട, Ḍ, ḍ = ഡ, Ḍh, dh = ഡ, jh = ജ,
Ĵ, Ĵ = ജ; Ñ, ñ = ണ, ṅ = ണ, ṅ = ണ; ṛ = റ, ṛ = റ; Ś, ś = ശ; Ṣ, ṣ = ഷ, ṣ = ഷ,
Th, th = ത, Ṭ, ṭ = ത; ṭh = മ, ṭ = റ

Nālikēraṭṭinte nāttilenikkoru
Nāzhiyitangazhi maṇṇuntū (Nālikēra)
Oru Nāzhiyitangazhi maṇṇuntū

Aṭil nārāyaṇakkīkkūtupōlūloru
Nālukālōlappurayuntū (Nālikēra)
Nōmpum nōtenne kāṭṭirikkum vāzha-
Kkūmpupōlūloru peṇṇuntū
Chāmpaykkācuṭṭulla, candanakkavilūlla
Cāṭṭulikkāṇṇulla peṇṇuntū (Nālikēra)

Valliaperunnaḷu vannappōḷannoru
Vellinilāvulla rāpriyil
Kalluvettāmkuzhiykkakkareveccennō
Tulluṭṭāṇṇaṭin śēṣamē (Nālikēra)
Nīrunna nōvumai ninnekinākkāṇṭu
Dūraṭṭu vāzhunnu ṇāninnum
Ōrōrō ṇivāṇṭiyōṭiyēṭṭumpōzhum
Ōtunnu muṭaṭṭu nīyennum. (Nālikēra)

നാളികേരത്തിന്റെ നാട്ടിലെനിന്നൊരു
നാഴിയിടങ്ങഴി മണ്ണുണ്ട് (നാളികേര..)
ഒരു നാഴിയിടങ്ങഴി മണ്ണുണ്ട്

അതിൽ നാരായണക്കിളിക്കൂടുപോലുമുള്ളൊരു
നാലുകാലോലപ്പുരയുണ്ട് (നാളികേര..)

നോമ്പുനോറ്റെന്നെ കാത്തിരിക്കും വാഴ-
ക്കൂമ്പുപോലുമുള്ളൊരു പെണ്ണുണ്ട്
ചാമ്പയ്ക്കാചുണ്ടുള്ള, ചന്ദനക്കവിലുള്ള
ചാട്ടുളിക്കണ്ണുള്ള പെണ്ണുണ്ട് (നാളികേര..)

വല്ലുപെരുന്നാളു വന്നപ്പോളെന്നൊരു
വെള്ളിനിലാവുള്ള രാത്രിയിൽ
കല്ലുവെട്ടാകൂഴിയ്ക്കക്കരൈവെച്ചെന്നോ-
ടുള്ളുതുറന്നതിൻശേഷമേ-
നീരുന്ന കണ്ണുമായ് നിന്നെക്കിനാക്കണ്ടു
മൂരത്തു വാഴുന്നു ഞാനിന്നും
ഓരോരോ തീവണ്ടിയോടിയെത്തുമ്പോഴും
ഓടുന്നു മുറ്റത്തു നീയെന്നും. (നാളികേര..)

The music composer of this song Shri K Raghavan celebrated his 97th birthday last month. 'Kerala in Mumbai' wish him many more birthday celebrations. This movie had its story and dialogue by K T Muhammad and was directed by P Bhaskaran who wrote the lyrics too. It was produced by A Raghunath for Sanjay Productions. Its actors were Prem Nazir, Madhu, Ramankutty, CA Balan, Bahadoor, Jayabharathi, Ragini and Philomina. K J Yesudas, Renuka and S Janaki lent their voices to the songs. Other songs are *Katakkannin muna kondu* (Janaki, Renuka), *Manassinūlil* (Janaki), *Navayugaprakāśame* (K J Yesudas) and *Pārvanēnduvin* (KJY).



K T Muhammad



K J Yesudas



Madhu



Prem Nazir

Quiz:
(1) Name the movie for which the story and dialogues were written by K T Mohammad and he made a guest appearance.
(2) Name the movie in which Prem Nazir and Madhu appeared together for the first time.
Answers to the last quiz:
(1) 'അറിയാതെ ഞാനെന്നണിയിക്കട്ടെ?'
The permission sought takes away the surprise.

'Kandahar' on Celluloid

Captain C P Krishnan Nair, Chairman of the Leela Group organised a special preview of the Malayalam film *Kandahar* at the ball room of his hotel The Leela. This Malayalam film was produced by Mohanlal's Pranavam Arts International and was directed by Major Ravi. Captain Nair's sense of patriotism knows no bounds and he spares no opportunity to express it vehemently. 'Kandahar' is indeed a patriotic film made in Malayalam with two films preceding it, *Kurukshetra* and *Keertichakra*, all directed by Major Ravi. All three films have the same hero, Major Mahadevan, enacted by Mohanlal.

Captain Nair in his opening address, confessed that when he saw the film in its formative days, he felt a strong attachment towards it and several scenes in the film brought tears in his eyes, especially the last scene in which the father receives the personal belongings of the martyred son from latter's superior

Major Mahadevan. Indian film icon Amitabh Bachchan enacted the role of the father and Mohanlal that of the Superior Officer. From that day he wanted all his friends and well wishers to see the movie and have the same feeling. Amitabh Bachchan and Mohanlal the main actors of the movie were present at the event. Incidentally, *Kandahar* happens to be the first Malayalam movie of Amitabh. He said that it was his cherished wish to act in a Malayalam movie. Malayalam movie industry is indeed very professional and its discipline has a lot to do with its progress. He appreciates the acting abilities of Mohanlal who can bring any character to life quite effortlessly. Though it was their second movie together, he enjoyed every moment of its making.

Mohanlal, during his turn, said Major Ravi gave him the role of Major Mahadevan in all his three movies but it was not a sequential. It was the duty of

every Indian to enthuse the sense of patriotism among the youth, the honorary 'Lt Colonel' of Territorial Army said.

For Major Ravi, it was a dream come true. He watched the Big B with awe since his early days and the role was specially written for Mr Bachchan, he said. If Bachchan was not to do the film the movie would not have been made. Many film personalities from other languages too were present on the occasion.

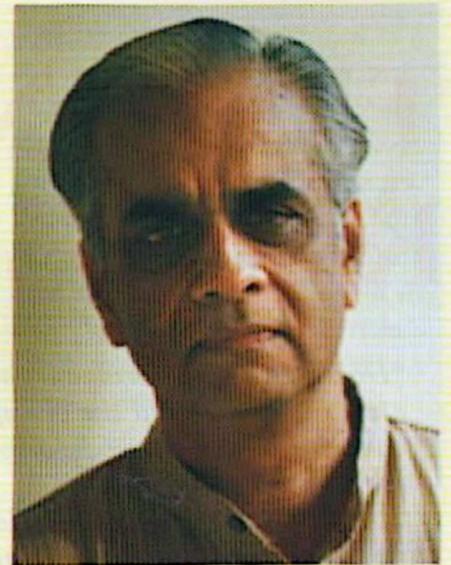
The movie was premiered soon and the assembled audience watched it keenly. Besides KPAC Lalitha, Sumalatha Parvathy Omanakuttan, Mamu Koyi, Gautam Kurup, Ragini Dwivedi and Major Ravi, many new comers and some old character artistes from Mumbai were also present in stellar roles. Amitabh Mohanlal and KPAC Lalitha stole the hearts of the audience, by their powerful performances.



Amitabh Bachchan, Mohanlal, Captain C P Krishnan Nair, and Major Ravi at the preview of *Kandahar*

POETIC IMAGERY IN PAINTINGS

-PKR



K Jayakumar

Kerala's Additional Chief Secretary and administrator of proven excellence, K Jayakumar, held a nine-day exhibition of his 33 paintings in Mumbai from 4 December to 12 December at the Ravindra Natya Mandir.

The show was inaugurated by the Governor, K Sankaranarayanan in the presence of a large gathering of artists, art lovers and eminent personalities.

Unusual for a career administrator, Jayakumar had earlier proved his mettle as a poet, writing lyrics for Malayalam films. He has been translating his poetic imagery into paintings for the last eight years, exploring avenues that words cannot reach. He has held five shows of his paintings in various places. This is his fifth show and the first in Mumbai. "These paintings have in them my obsessions and observations, discomforts and disconnects, memories and madness," Jayakumar told Kerala in



Hon. Governor, K Sankaranarayanan views Jayakumar's Paintings

Mumbai.

During the course of his writings he discovered "hidden landscapes where poetry does not reach." He began

exploring these hidden landscapes through his paintings.

Most of them in abstract style, Jayakumar, a self-taught painter, reveals a good sense of colour and the meaning they convey. He uses this ability to great benefit in his favourite diptych oil and acrylic on canvas entitled *Savitri Satyavan* with no human forms but the dexterous use of colour to evoke moods. The first part of the painting depicts the exuberance of life, the next the turmoil and loss and the third, hope and resurrection.

"Painting has been a passion with me for a decade. The more I explore its labyrinths the more I get fascinated with its possibilities. I look forward to my retirement in the next two years to enable me to devote full time to enshrine memories, philosophies, travels and thoughts beyond the mind" he told Kerala in Mumbai.

The Governor lauded Jayakumar's penchant for the creative arts.



Hon. Governor, K Sankaranarayanan lights the lamp at Jayakumar's Painting exhibition

THE ANCIENT KERALITES



K. R. NARAYANAN

“How was Kerala formed from the seas and who were the original inhabitants of this land? When and from where did the Nampoothiris, Nairs, Ezhavas and many other communities and races come from? Who were the original sons of the soil of Kerala?” are the questions very often asked by many.

The original Malayalees could be the ancient tribes of the jungles of the Western Ghats, who were well informed about values of the trees, plants, leaves, roots and vegetations and well versed in hunting, fishing and other means of food gathering. About three thousand years ago, when the Dravidians moved to South India they pushed these original inhabitants to the hills and forests.

Genesis

According to legend the Warrior Sage, Parasurama, (considered as the sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu) retrieved land from the sea and gave it to the Brahmins as atonement for the sins committed by him in killing the Kshatriyas (the ruling tribes). This is an oft repeated story, passed on from generation to generation, and upheld by the ancient works like the “Keralolpathy”.



Sage Parashurama

Geographers and historians, nevertheless, do not accept the legend in toto. They do agree that the present Kerala used to be submerged in the sea and the Indian subcontinent stretched only up to the present south Karnataka-north Kerala region. According to them, the heavy downpours in the Western Ghats resulted in continuous landslides, which ultimately filled the coastal seas and gave birth to a new stretch of land - the present

Kerala. Such withdrawals of the seas and land formations are not uncommon in Oceanology.

The Aryans

Historians, nevertheless, do not accept the theory that the Nampoothiri Brahmins who were of Aryan origin - were the first inhabitants of Kerala. The Aryans migrated to Kerala from the north only around the fourth century A.D. With them, they brought Hinduism to Kerala. King Mayura Varma sent Brahmin families to Kerala from Ahichatra in North India, some historians believe.

The words of Dr. Kesavan Veluthat, in this context, go like this: “.....The Brahmins of Kerala, known as Nambudiris came from North India and settled down in Kerala. It is clear that they constitute links in a long chain of migration along the West Coast of India, carrying with them the tradition that Parasurama created their land and donated it to them. It is possible that the (Brahmin) settlements came up between the third and ninth centuries of the Christian era, the history of South India, which historians describe as the “Sangam Age”, and the establishment of the Chera kingdom of Mahodayapuram.” Eminent historian, Dr M G S Narayanan concurs with this view, when he says:

The heavy downpours in the Western Ghats resulted in continuous landslides, which ultimately filled the coastal seas and gave birth to a new stretch of land - the present Kerala.

“The ancestors of present day Nambudiris established their temple-centred gramas in the span of the 8th-9th centuries..... these Brahmins brought all the paraphernalia of the Vedic-Sastric-Puranic Brahminism of the Gangetic valley, they could not have been indigenous to Kerala”.

The Nairs, who belong to the chaturvarna or four castes, appear on the scene even much later than the Brahmins (perhaps as late as the 12th century),

An interesting observation made by another historian - Dr. Jayaprakash runs: “There are hundreds of places in Kerala having the word ‘Palli’ either prefixed or suffixed to them”, Karunagapalli, Karthikapalli, Pallickal, Pallippuram, Edappally, etc. The term ‘Palli’ means and was used for a Buddha Vihara. Kerala had 1200 years of Buddhist tradition. Earlier, the schools in Malayalam were called ‘Ezhuthupalli’ or ‘Pallikoodam’. It is also worth noticing that the Christians and Muslims in Kerala use the term ‘Palli’

This Dravidian culture too is reflected in all the Malayalees. The Dravidians, it is believed, occupied the western part of Indian Peninsula and regarded Madurai as their capital. They built rock-cut tombs and megaliths in the lateritic regions of Kerala.

The Dravidians originally came to India from the Mediterranean region. They developed a great civilization which was authenticated by the excavations in Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa. Then the fair skinned Aryans migrated to India around 1500 BC, and they pushed the Dravidians to the south. Gradually the Aryans followed the Dravidians to the south.

to denote their church and mosque alike. These 'Pallies' or Viharas had been ruthlessly demolished by the Hindu forces under the leadership of Sankaracharya and Kumarila. They could exterminate 1200 years of Buddhist tradition and convert Kerala into a Brahminical state based on the 'Chaturvarna' system. Original inhabitants of Kerala like the Pulayas, etc. and the Ezhavas were crushed under the weight of casteism. Many viharas were transformed into temples and the people were prevented from entering temples under the pretext of caste pollution. It can also be noted that the very Dravidian and Buddhist term 'Cherala' was Sanskritised into its Aryan version as Kerala."

In view of all these, even the 'Nampoothiri Conversion Theory' regarding the origin of Christianity in Kerala is very doubtful. According to the customary belief of the Syrian Christians, an apostle of Jesus Christ - St. Thomas reached Malankara (near Cranganore) in Kerala in the year 52 AD and converted its most aristocratic caste the Namboothiris (native Vedic Brahmins) - to Christianity. St. Thomas came at the beginning of the Sangam period when Kerala was ruled by three dynasties namely Ay, Chera, and Ezhimala and these kingdoms lasted till the 5th century AD. It is an established fact that there were no Namboothiri (Brahmins) settlements in Kerala in the first century AD.

The Aryan Nampoothiri Brahmins migrated from the banks of Godavari River to Kerala only during the reign of Kadamba King Mayoora Verman (340-370 CE), in the 4th century AD. It is believed that the first batch of Namboothiris reached here from Ahisetrans.

Racial Synthesis

The Dravidians originally came to India from the Mediterranean region passing

through Iraq, Iran, and Baluchistan. Many scholars believe that they came out of the same stock as Abraham's ancestors of the Sumerian civilization. They left for India before Abraham started his journey to the Promised Land in Palestine.

In North India the Dravidians developed a great civilization which was authenticated by the excavations in Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa. Then the fair skinned Aryans left their original abode in the Central Asian Steppes and migrated to India around 1500 BC, and they pushed the Dravidians to the south. These pale skinned Caucasian immigrants to India brought with them the Sanskrit language and the Vedas, the oldest religious writings of humankind. The Aryans also gave the caste system to India. Gradually the Aryans followed the Dravidians to the south and they brought Kerala also under the caste system, although large scale migration of Brahmin Aryans to Kerala took place only during the 4th century AD onwards.

One of the South Indian Dravidians - the Tamils - fiercely resisted the encroachment of their culture by the new Aryan arrivals and maintained a separate identity. But Kerala got assimilated with the newly arrived Aryan Caucasians. Kerala's language also got mixed with the Aryan Sanskrit and Malayalam language was evolved separate from the original Dravidian language in course of time.

This spirit of assimilation is a major characteristic of Kerala culture. Kerala has truly been a melting pot of many cultures for the past 3,000 years. Through the breaks in the Western Ghats, the Dravidians and Aryans came to Kerala in the beginning, but Kerala's long seashores have left an open door for foreign visitors as well.

Some Jews came to Kerala in 585 BC, soon after their Babylonian captivity and others later during the Roman persecution in 72 AD. After the Middle East, Kerala has the most ancient Jewish community in the world though most have left for Israel since its founding in 1948. According to many Jewish historians, Kerala is the only land where the Jews of the Diaspora were never persecuted.

Like Christianity, Islam too did not come to Kerala by the sword as it did in many other places; but it came with the Arab merchants who immigrated to Kerala. Because of the naval skills of the Arabs,

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Depiction of Aryans coming into India

one of the Hindu kings, Zamorin of Calicut encouraged his coastal fisherman families to bring up one child as a Muslim.

Even today, temples, churches, and mosques stand side by side here. The long wail of the muezzin calling the Muslim faithful to prayer, and the Vedic chanting from the Hindu temples are heard along with church bells calling the Christians to worship. Tolerance of different religions and cultures has been part of Kerala's legacy in its recorded history. Followers of different faiths know that they may not mix together always, but they are sure that they belong together. A Kerala Hindu will be more at home with a Kerala Christian or a Muslim than with his Hindu counterpart from another part of India.

Jainism and Buddhism in Ancient Kerala

Jainism, too, met with the same fate in South India, observes Prof. Bahauddin. Very little information is available about the growth of Jainism in South India during 300-400 AD. The Jain book, 'Digambara Darsana', recounts the starting of a Sangham at Madurai in 470

According to Dr Jayaprakash, a number of Buddha statues have been discovered at places like Ambalapuzha, Karunagapalli, Pallickal, Bharanikkavu, Mavelikara and Neelamperur in Kerala.

AD and Jainism became widespread and strong during 500-600 AD ('Studies in South Indian Jainism' of Kumara Swamy Iyengar).

The Jains used to instal the images of their saints in their religious places, a practice which was followed by Brahmins. Hindu temples appeared all over Tamilnadu probably after converting the Jain religious places. The idols of 63 Brahmin Sanyasis, who led the destruction of Jainism, still adorn the walls of some Hindu temples in Tamilnadu. The remains of destroyed Jain idols, their abandoned religious and living places are scattered all over Tamilnadu to narrate their story. Frescos depicting the kings of Jains can be seen on the walls near the Golden Tank at Madurai Meenakshi Temple where, of the total 12 annual festivals, five depict the killing of Jains, according to Kumaraswamy Iyengar.

According to Dr Jayaprakash, a number of Buddha statues have been discovered at places like Ambalapuzha, Karunagapalli, Pallickal, Bharanikkavu, Mavelikara and Neelamperur in Kerala. They are either in the form of smashed pieces or thrown away from viharas.

Lord Ayyappa of Sabarimala and Lord Padmanabha at Thiruvananthapuram are said to be the proxy images of Buddha being worshipped as Vishnu.

Kerala was under the Mauryas (BC322-



Buddist Vihara

BC270). During the Sangam Age (1st-5th centuries AD) Kerala was part of Tamil Country. The original language was Tamil and through centuries Malayalam evolved into a full-fledged language. During the Sangam era, mainly three political powers ruled Kerala. The southern region was under the Ay kings while Ezhimala Kings ruled the northern region. The area between these two kingdoms was the early Chera country. From the beginning of the Christian era, the Cheras were prominent. They ruled Kerala for 250 years. However, after the Sangam age, during the 7th and 8th centuries, the history of Kerala is under a cloud. By the 9th century AD, Cheras again came to power (the second Chera Empire). Their rulers were known as 'Kulashekharas'. By 1102 AD, their rule came to an end. During their reign arts, culture, literature etc. flourished. The Sage Adi Sankara, was a contemporary of one of these rulers.

Ezhavas or Thiyyas

It is possible that the Ezhavas were an indigenous group in the land of Kerala or the earliest migrants to this land. Their origin too is hotly disputed. The etymology of the word Ezhava is 'the people of Eazham', the Eazham (Eelam) being an ancient Tamil name for Sri Lanka. One of the theories that are supported by the Vadakkan Paattu (popular ballads of north Kerala) is that of the legendary Thiyya warrior Aaromal Chekavar. Legend has it that his family was the descendants of one of the seven warriors sent to Kerala by a Sri Lankan king.

The word Eelam or Eazham could be derived from archaic Tamil word for Toddy. Hence, there is a view that Ezhavas were most probably an indigenous and not immigrant community. Iram or Ira in Kannada also means toddy. The community engaged in toddy tapping is called Idigas, which resembles the term Ezhava.

It is also difficult to believe that the Ezhavas or Thiyyas too were the original inhabitants of Kerala. It is possible that they had set their foot in Kerala even before the formation of the Chera Kingdom. Some believe that a few of the Chera rulers and their people were Ezhavas or Thiyyas and followed Buddhism. They flourished in this land till they were suppressed, dominated and downgraded to a low caste by the Aryans (circa 4th century onwards).

The Early Inhabitants

Archaeologists and historians believe that the early inhabitants of Kerala were a group of primitives (the hunters and food gatherers) belonging to the Negrito race. These tribes were experts in the knowledge of nutritive/medicinal herbs and could also interpret natural calamities. They could be the ancestors of Nayadees, Kuravas, Pulayas and Vetas.



Early inhabitants of Kerala

It is worth noting that some members of the hill tribes of Kadar, Kanikkar, Uralis, and Paniyar have curly to frizzy hair, black skin, broad noses, thick lips, and round heads that are characteristic of the Negroes of the Andaman Islands, Malay Peninsula, and Africa. However, the Australoids also have similar features. The Australoid group is the major racial element in the Munda or Kolarian population of North and Central India and in the Dravidian population of South India. Some anthropologists even notice distinctive Mongoloid features in the Kerala Dravidians.

There are also arguments in favor of the Austriches or the Austric people who resembled the present-day Aborigines of Australia. These people pioneered the cultivation of vegetables and rice that is practised in Kerala till date. The Austriches also brought with them the snake-worship cult which is still prevalent in Kerala.



Snake-worship

Race-blending was brought about by the open-door policy of the Malabar chieftains who brought the Chinese, the Egyptians, the Arabs, and the Europeans to mingle freely with the indigenous population.

The Malayalees of Kerala are "an ethnological museum," Several racial strains are easily recognized in the racial composition of the different communities in this region

The Austric people would have been followed by the Dravidians who migrated from the Mediterranean region. Many similarities also have been found in the customs, languages and other racial traits between these Mediterranean people and the people of Sri Lanka and Indus Valley Civilizations. It would also be possible that the Dravidians are a mixture of Negritos, Proto-Australoids and the Mediterranean people. But they did not worship the serpent and instead worshipped Mother Goddess in her numerous forms- as punisher, protector and an entity of wealth and wisdom. (Bhadra Kali?)

This Dravidian culture too is reflected in all the Malayalees. The Dravidians, it is believed, occupied the western part of Indian Peninsula and regarded Madurai as their capital. They built rock-cut tombs and megaliths in the lateritic regions of Kerala. The Dravidians drifted away southwards but left behind their substantial cultural contribution on the Aryans (Indo - Iranians) who brought Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism along with them. But Kerala still has the

predominant impact and influence of the Dravidians in all aspects of their life.

"Man seems to have come late to Kerala even though Kerala today is the most heavily over-populated region of India -- 4% of all Indians live on 1% of India's land", observes Dr. Zacharias Thundy, in his Kerala Story. It seems that the Stone-Age people deliberately avoided the forests of Kerala, which used to be infested by malaria-bearing mosquitoes and man-eating tigers.

Ethnological Museum

The history of race-mixing in this part of Peninsular India is of significant interest for our understanding of the pre-historic race-blending of Keralites. Race-blending was brought about by the open-door policy of the Malabar chieftains who brought the Chinese, the Egyptians, the Arabs, and the Europeans to mingle freely with the indigenous population. The Zamorins of Calicut encouraged the Arabs and the Mukkuvan fisherfolk to mix together socially and sexually, and, as a result, a half-breed Muslim

population grew up along the Calicut Coast.

With the Nairs it has been a case of hypergamy to give their women to the immigrant Aryan Nampoothiri Brahmins who forced it on them. As a result, physically, the Nairs became taller and light-skinned; culturally, they became very Brahminical in their Hindu beliefs and cults and economically, prosperous.

It is true that, to a greater or lesser extent, mankind is a mixture of races. Pure races do not exist in the human species. Everywhere racial mixing is taking place just as sex-mixing is taking place amongst different breeds of cows, canines and other animals.

The Malayalees of Kerala are "an ethnological museum," observe the anthropologists. Several racial strains are easily recognized in the racial composition of different communities in this region.

The original inhabitants of this land were dark skinned Negritos of the Proto-Australoid race. These original people have negroid features. About three thousand years ago, when the Dravidians moved to south India they pushed these original inhabitants to the hills and forests. They were kept separate from the rest of the population till recently as untouchables. These tribals could probably be the original Malayalees.

[K R Narayanan, the author, is a Marine/Fisheries Scientist and retired Dy Director (Fy) & Consultant to Gujarat State]



Recipe for

Vazhakka Thoran (Raw banana)

Manoj Nair

E-mail: accessmanojnair@gmail.com



Ingredients

Vazhakka (Raw banana)	500 g
Coconut	1 cup
Green chilly	8 to 10 finely slit
Turmeric powder	1 teaspoon
Garlic	6 to 8 pods
Shallot	12 to 15
Cumin powder	1 teaspoon
Coconut oil	3 tablespoon
Dry red chilly	6 nos
Mustard seed	1 teaspoon
Curry leaves	2 springs
Salt	to taste

Procedure:

Peel the bananas and cut into small cubes. Wash the bananas properly in order to get the slimy texture off. Place cut bananas in a cooker in double water volume and boil with added salt. Grind turmeric, shallots, garlic, cumin and green chilly coarsely. In a separate pan heat oil, splutter mustard seeds, add dry red chilly, curry leaves. Add the ground masala and saute for a few minutes. Add the cooked bananas and grinded coconut. Mix well and cook on a low flame for 2-3 minutes.

BIT OF KERALA HISTORY LOST AT KHOTACHIWADI

KHOTACHIWADI, a small quaint enclave of cottages in Girgaum in South Mumbai, will soon pass into history with the existing buildings giving way to high rise buildings. And with it, will be erased a part of Kerala's cultural history that took roots in this enclave more than 125 years ago.

It was in one of the cottages in Khotachiwadi that Kerala's best known artist, Raja Ravi Varma lived and painted all the prominent Gods and Goddesses of the Indian pantheon. In fact, more than any other artist, he is the one who gave form and shape to Hindu Gods and Goddesses.



Raja Ravi Varma



Raja Ravi Varma's paintings of Goddesses

Most of the depictions of Goddesses by Ravi Varma - Saraswati, Lakshmi, Sita, Draupadi, Damayanti- wear not the traditional Malayalee dress but the Maharashtrian *kashtha*- the nine yard sari. This was because his model was a Goan woman of immaculate proportions, statuesque-like, tall and attractive, by name Sugandha, who lived a few blocks away from Khotachiwadi.

The most prolifically creative part of Ravi Varma's life was spent at Khotachiwadi and in the company of Sugandha. She became the inspiration for many of the paintings that the artist etched with exquisite skill and mastery over his brush and the oils he used with the right tones and colours.

Raja Ravi Varma, Kerala's best known painter, famous for the depictions of the Hindu Goddesses Lakshmi Saraswathi, Parvathy, and mythological heroines Draupadi, Damayanti and Sita, lived in Kotachiwadi, 125 years ago. His inspiration and creative muse was Sugandha, a Goan woman who lived there. She was the attractive model for the various Goddesses that the artist etched with exquisite skill and mastery over his brush. The most prolifically creative part of Ravi Varma's life was spent at Khotachiwadi and in the company of Sugandha.



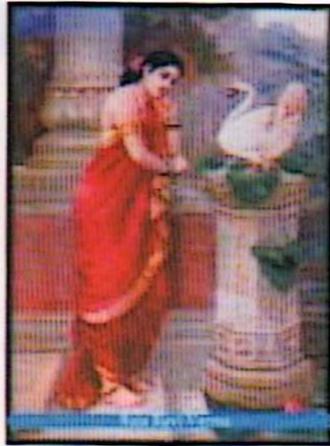
Maharashtrian lady



Kotachiwadi



Lady playing musical instrument



Hamsa Damayanthi

Later, he entered into a partnership with a German technician, Streicher who helped him set up a printing press to produce oleographic prints of his paintings, to fulfill Ravi Varma's desire to make his art available to the common people. This press at Girgaum was later shifted to Lonavala, near the Karla Caves, where the building still exists.

When his paintings and their oleographic prints became highly popular, a group of chauvinists and Hindu fundamentalists charged him with blasphemy. The case went on for months at the nearby Girgaum Court.

When Ravi Varma found that there were no lawyers who could argue his case, he studied civil and criminal law and existing laws on blasphemy in various countries and argued his own case in court.

His arguments were so forceful and convincing that he was honourably discharged of all charges. This is perhaps the first known case of an artist establishing his right to freedom of expression in an Indian court of law.

Ravi Varma first met Sugandha at the Banganga temple, where he used to go every morning for a walk and meditation. He was struck by her statuesque figure and gait. A few days later when she confronted him for his "ungentlemanly" behavior in staring at her, he asked if she would model for him. What followed was the attempt of the artist to give shape and



Ravana abducts Sita

form to Indian mythological and religious heroes and heroines.

All that now becomes a page in Mumbai's history, forgotten even by Kerala from where Ravi Varma hailed. The Government of Kerala has instituted an annual award, Ravi Varma Puraskaram for the most promising artist of the year.

Justice Krishna Iyer demands probe against Ex-CJI

Retired Supreme Court Judge V R Krishna Iyer demanded a probe against the alleged amassing of wealth by K G Balakrishnan, former Chief Justice of India and present Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission.

A Malayalam TV channel recently reported that Balakrishnan's son in law and Youth Congress leader P V Sreejan allegedly accumulated wealth within a short period of four years, which is beyond his known source of income.



K G Balakrishnan

Krishna Iyer said that the allegations were a blot on the judiciary. Sreejan and his wife K B Sony are said to have purchased several properties in Ernakulam and Thrissur districts worth crores of rupees. Sreejan in an affidavit submitted in 2006, when he contested unsuccessfully to the Assembly, to the Election Commission, declared that he did not own any landed property but had only a bank balance of ₹25,000 where as

his wife had a land measuring 93 cents and a bank balance of ₹1.2 lakh. However, in an affidavit submitted to the income tax department in 2008, he stated that his income was ₹25 lakhs and that of his wife was ₹15 lakhs.

They also bought prime land and posh flats. The properties were registered for much lower than prevailing market rates. Sreejan bought 2.5 acres of land on the river side in Thrissur for ₹30 lakhs whereas the market rates were above one crore. A resort is now coming up in the plot. The report alleged that Balakrishnan's influence had played a big role in these acquisitions.

Krishna Iyer in a statement said, "It is a shame to identify me as a former judge, while hearing the allegations against several former judges. A three member panel of judges should look into the allegation. If the charges are proved, the guilty should be punished."



V R Krishna Iyer

Artiste of the Month

-Lakshmi V

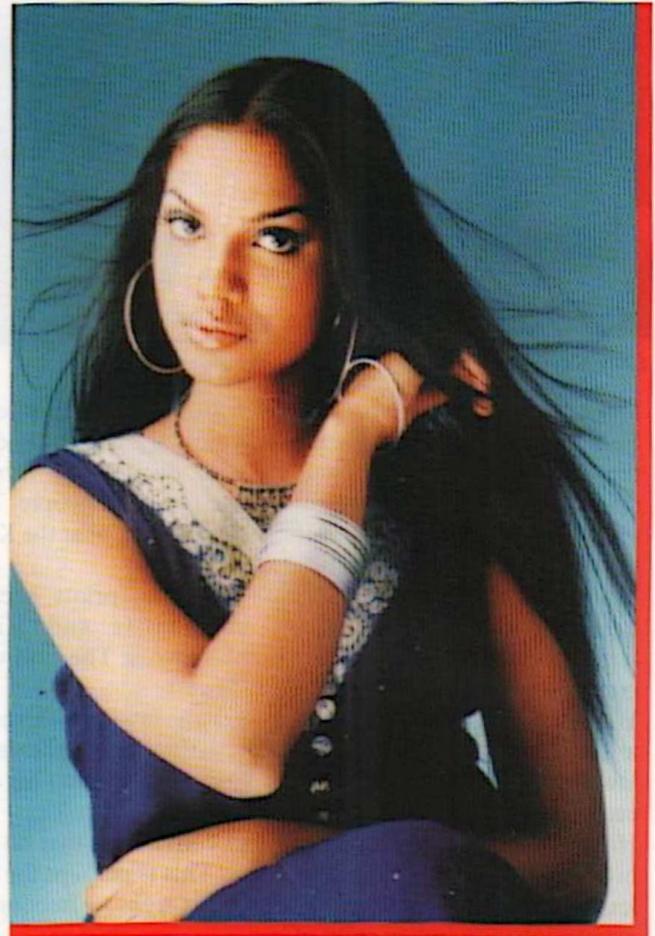
Shruthy Menon

Reality Show Host

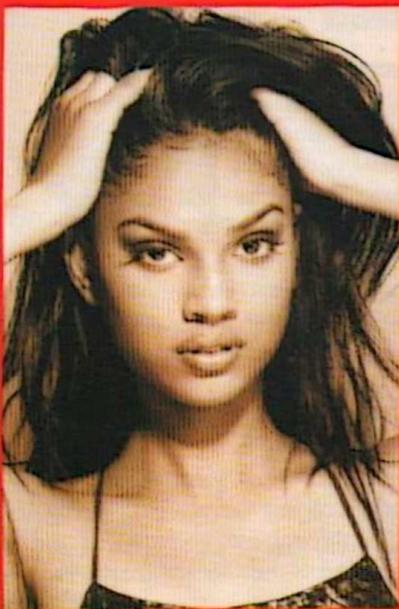
Shruthy Menon, born and brought up in Mumbai has not forgotten her roots. She is comfortable speaking, reading and writing Malayalam. For the past one year, Shruthy has been hosting the Vodaphone Comedy Show on Asianet on Saturday and Sunday late evenings. The show has the highest TRP ratings among all Malayalam channels.

Shruthy hails from Palakkad. She did her schooling at Mary Immaculate Convent in Kalina and St Xavier's in Bhandup. She completed her graduation from Rizvi College in Bandra. For the past 15 years Shruthy has been staying in Powai. Her father, Nedyath Sreevalsan Unny Menon is a Marine Engineer while her mother Shashikala works as senior manager in Air India. Shruthy has one younger sister Aishwarya who has completed training in US to become a pilot. Aishwarya won the Miss Kerala 2nd runner up title in 2007.

Shruthy Menon's first brush with the entertainment industry



The secret of her clear complexion, Shruthy attributes to drinking lots of water and eating fresh fruits and vegetables daily.



"In the TV reality show, while I am hosting the programme, I am me. But in films I have to get into the skin of the character and act my part. That is the difference. Comedy is pure fun."

happened in 2002 when she participated in a Beauty Contest in Kerala and became Miss Kerala 1st Runner Up and Miss Perfect Ten. As a child she had learnt Bharatanatyam. Later she learnt western dance at Shiamak Davar's Institute of Performing Arts. It was during this time, that at Shiamak's suggestion, she got her portfolio clicked by the photographer cum actor Boman Irani.

Shruthy has modeled for Pantaloons, Shoppers Stop, Shalimar paints, Phillips music system and others.

Round about this time, she won the Miss Kerala 1st runner up title. In 2005 she got an offer to act in a Malayalam film *Sancharram* directed by Director Liji Pullapalli from Chicago. Released in 2005 at the International Film Festival in Chicago it got the Best Film award. The film was shot in Ottappalam and the story revolves round the tender relationship between two girls who are close friends. The other film from India at that Festival was *The Raincoat*. This was followed by three films in Malayalam *Mulla* with Dileep, *TD Dasan* and *Std VTB*.

Then followed a series of TV programmes where Shruthy hosted Reality shows. There was a music Reality show on Asianet Plus in 2008-09, Super Star- 2 on Amrita TV. Her



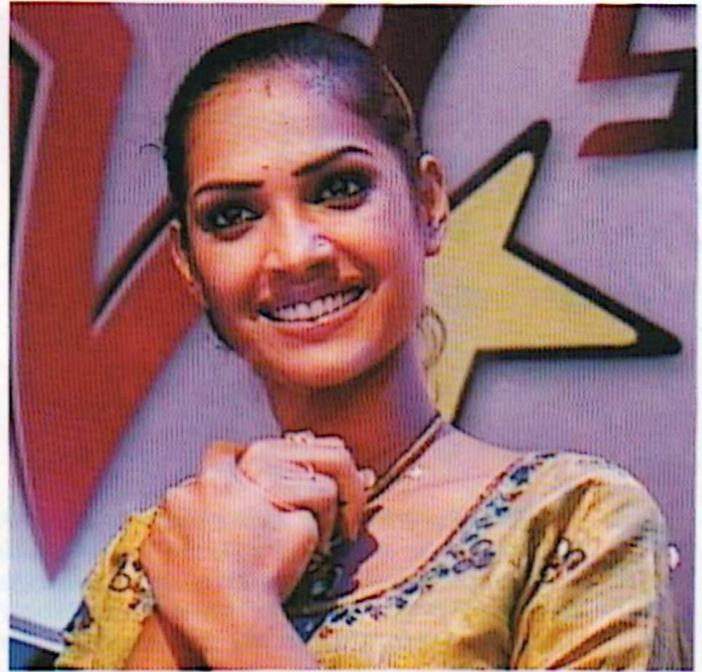
A Scene from Malayalam Movie "Mulla"

current project with Asianet Comedy Show is very popular. She flies down to Thiruvananthapuram to shoot for the programme.

Shruthy acted in Satyan Anthikad's *Katha Thudarunnu* and *Apoorvaraagam* directed by Sibi Malayail. Shruthi's recent film is *Elektra* directed by director Shyamaprasad. The star cast includes Manisha Koirala, S Prakash Raj, Nayantara, Biju Menon, new comer Skanda and Shruthy. She plays the role of Laura, a simple innocent girl in this film. *Elektra* won good reviews at the IFFI (International Film Festival Of India) and at the Dubai Film Festival this year. It is scheduled to be released in mid December in India. Other film projects in the pipeline are *Mitram* and *London Dreams* in Malayalam.

Speaking on the differences while shooting for TV comedy shows and films, Shruthy says, "In the TV reality show, while I am hosting the programme, I am me. But in films I have to get into the skin of the character and act my part. That is the difference. Comedy is pure fun."

Shruthy's hobbies include reading, travelling, and tasting local cuisine. Her fitness regime includes jogging and working out at the gym when time permits. She loves Italian food. But Shruthy's all time favourite is rice, sambhar and



Shruthy loves Italian food. But her all time favourite is rice, sambhar and pappadams, the typical simple Kerala menu.

pappadams, the typical simple Kerala menu. She also loves the Kerala breakfasts of puttu kadala, appam, idiappam, dosa, and idlis. She likes eggs and relishes chicken dishes.

Her message to young Malayalee girls and boys living in Mumbai is: Learn your mother tongue Malayalam and also Marathi.

The secret of her clear complexion, she attributes to drinking lots of water and eating fresh fruits and vegetables daily.

Neethi: Star Singer Season 5 contestant

Neethi Ravikumar Nair is a Mumbai girl who is one of the top 39 contestants in the Idea Star Singer Season 5 Show that is being aired on Asianet from Monday to Friday. Neethi is a good singer of both light and classical music and is learning Carnatic music under Prabha Rao, disciple of late Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer. She is also a dancer and is learning Bharatanatyam, Kathakali and Mohiniattam.

Currently she is pursuing Film Editing course from Digital Academy Andheri and is skilled in working with software like FCP and AVID. She has done her graduation in Statistics from K J Somaiya College, Mumbai.

Earlier Neethi qualified as one among the 16 finalists out of 3500 contestants all over the country, in a singing with performance based reality show Fame-X on Sony Sab TV in 2006-07. She has sung for a few Malayalam films,



Malayalam and Marathi albums and a few advertisement jingles. She has won many prizes in semi-classical music, light music and film music competitions conducted by various organisations in Mumbai. Neethi has also performed in a *kacheri* (Carnatic Music concert) in Ayyappa Temple, Kalyan and Gruvayoorappan Temple, Dombivli.

Regarding her participation currently in Idea Star Singer, Neethi says this is the first time she is staying in Kerala and working on a project. It is a new learning experience for her. From 150 contestants she has come to the top 39 after the second round of auditions. How long this talented

young singer would continue in the programme would depend on our support to some extent.

Voting format: To support Neethi sms your vote to ISS NEETHI to 5600678



Prof K.A. Sivaramakrishnan

Carnatic Music

Music is the ultimate expression of the creative soul. India has a rich musical tradition. Indian Music originated in the Vedas during the ancient Sangam period. It can be widely classified to Carnatic and Hindustani style of Music. We bring to our readers an introduction to the world of music. In this Issue we bring you an introduction to the world of Carnatic classical music.

Carnatic music is considered one of the oldest systems of music in the world. It is a very complex system of music that requires much thought, both artistically and technically. Its basis is the system of ragas (melodic scales) and talas (rhythmic cycles). There are seven rhythmic cycles and 72 fundamental ragas known as the 72 Melakarta Ragas. All other ragas are considered to have originated from these. An elaborate pattern exists for identifying these scales. Raga, a Sanskrit word, literally means 'mood'. It is a series or sequence of five or more musical notes upon which a melody is built.

Raga basically prescribes a set of rules for creating a melody. It specifies how the sequence of musical notes should progress for movements up and down (ascending & descending Arohana & Avarohana), which notes should be used while moving up and vice versa. Raga can be termed as a framework upon which the melody is created in Indian Music.

Raga literally means 'mood'. It is a series or sequence of five or more musical notes upon which a melody is built. It basically prescribes a set of rules for creating a melody.

With basic rules in place, it is possible to create numerous ragas upon which melodies can be built. The total number of possibilities will run into lakhs. Out of which, only a few have names assigned them.

The notes of Carnatic music is "sa-rigaa-ma-pa-da-ni". These are abbreviations of the real names of swaras which are Shadjam, Rishabham, Gandharam, Madhyamam, Panchamam, Dhaivatam and Nishaadam

Purandaradasa codified the teaching of Carnatic music by evolving several graded steps like sarali varisaigal, Jantai Varisaigal, Thattu Varisaigal, Alankaras and Geethams. Because of this, he is considered to be the SANGEETHA PITAMAHA (Pitamaha of Carnatic Music). The most important speciality of Carnatic music is its highly devotional element. The concept of the compositions are set entirely against a devotional outline.

Tyagaraja Swamigal, Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Shyama Shastri, are the the three saint composers of the 18th century. They have composed thousands of songs (krithis) that remain fresh among musicians and listeners

(rasikas). Even today a Carnatic singer chooses only many of their compositions in his concert. It is significant that the three lived almost round about the same period. Each of them was a great singer in his own style of singing and collectively they are called the Trinity of Indian Carnatic music.

THYAGARAJA SWAMY

Thyagaraja was born in Tiruvarur in 1767. He was the last of three sons of Ramabrahmam, a vedic scholar. Once when Ramabrahmam went to Tiruvaiyaru to perform bhajan, he was attracted by the village and decided to settle down there. Thyagaraja studied in the Sanskrit school in the village for four years and during this period took a special interest in the study of Valmiki Ramayana. He learnt music from Sonti Venkataramanayya and impressed his master with his musical power. According to tradition. Thyagaraja



Beauty Care



Basic Tips for Healthy Hair



Rashma Anand

Hair has been and always will be an important part of beauty. It may be recalled that when a child is born, the first thing people ask is 'what is the weight?' and the second question invariably is 'Does he / she have hair?' Abroad, Indian women have earned fame for their long, black tresses. Beautiful hair, well maintained and well-styled hair adds to a woman's personality. A few minutes of pampering our hair will reap us with a flowing mane.

To keep the crowning glory alive and sparkling, proper hair care is essential. We often tend to ignore it as we are pressed for time. We devote a lot of time for our skin and face and hair tends to get neglected. We usually apply sunscreen on our face and moisturizers on our body. But the hair is usually left exposed to the external elements like weather, pollution, sun etc without protection. Naturally, this takes a toll on hair health. Hair becomes more vulnerable to damage making it dull and listless. Therefore, the care and nourishment of hair should form an important part of our daily beauty regimen.

What is hair

Scientifically speaking, hair is an outgrowth from the inner layer of the skin called the *dermis*. The visible part of the hair above the scalp is called the *shaft*. The part below is called the *follicle* or the root of the hair. The hair basically grows from the follicle. When the follicles are well nourished and healthy, there is good hair growth. Good follicle health can be ensured by a diet rich in green leafy vegetables, essential minerals and vitamins and plenty of water. As always good sleep goes a long way in inducing healthy hair growth. There are several oil producing glands in the scalp. The oil prevents hair from drying out. When hair is brushed well, the oil is distributed all over, giving shine and lustre to the hair.

Thus the first and simple step in effective hair care is to cleanse the hair and brush it well. Shampoo is the most commonly used cleansing agent. Shampoo helps to cleanse the hair by removing dirt and impurities and also the remnants of any styling products left behind. It is essential to choose a shampoo that suits your hair type. Let us see the different hair types.

Hair types

Basically there are three types of hair:

Dry hair

Inactive oil glands on the scalp are the main cause for dry hair. Also the available oil blocks the pores not allowing the oil to spread all over the scalp, causing dryness in the hair. Other



Here is a quick way to know what type of hair you have:

Two days after washing your hair, dab a tissue on your scalp. If there is a blot on the paper, your hair is normal. If the paper has nothing, hair is dry. And if the strands are sticking together, hair is oily.

causes of dry hair include overexposure of hair to sun, use of harsh chemical shampoos and hair products and subjecting hair to constant chemical treatments like coloring, perming etc. Dry hair requires plenty of moisture and nourishment. Massage hair with warm herbal oil. Inclusion of zinc in the diet helps reduce the dryness of hair. Use a mild shampoo. Avoid heavy chemical based shampoos, as they tend to strip away the outer protein layer damaging hair further.

Oily hair

Oily hair normally goes with oily skin. Obvious reason for this is the over active oil producing glands in the scalp. Oily hair remains greasy even after shampooing. And greasy hair attracts more dirt and impurities. So hair needs to be washed and cleansed every second day. Use shampoo rich in neem and henna as it helps absorb the excess oil. Avoid oily food and increase intake of green leafy vegetables.

Normal hair

In this case the hair is perfectly balanced, neither too oily nor too dry.

Hair care Routine

There are two essential steps in the regular hair care routine shampooing and conditioning. Let us look at each in detail

Shampoo

A good shampoo cleanses the hair of all its impurities. We have to first wet our hair using lukewarm water. Then the hair must be thoroughly washed with a shampoo according to our hair type. The shampoo must be poured on the palm of our hands and then massaged thoroughly in the scalp and hair. It must never be applied directly on the hair. It should be then rinsed. All the shampoo must be rinsed out. The process may be repeated again. Shampoo containing eggs is particularly good for dry hair, as egg yolk has moisturizing properties. Oil based shampoos may also be used as they trap the water in the hair. For oily hair, use oil free shampoo and do not over massage on the scalp. If hair is very oily, add a little lemon juice to the water while rinsing.

Conditioner

Conditioning the hair essentially means moisturizing the hair. It is a vital step in hair care to replace the lost hair moisture. Conditioning gives the hair an intense kind of nourishment. It protects the hair from dryness making it softer and easier to manage. It also adds bounce and shine to the hair. While conditioning is essential and useful for all hair types, it is particularly beneficial to dry hair, as it adds to the natural oil supply. We can follow this method while applying conditioner:

1. Squeeze excess water from the hair.
2. Remove tangles using a wide tooth comb.
3. Take conditioner in your palm and apply through your hair. Do not massage on the scalp. Keep it on for five minutes and then rinse it off.

In case of oily hair, apply conditioner only at the hair ends, or



hair will get even stickier.

Hair Spa At Home

Hair spa treatment is a fairly new concept, aimed at rejuvenating and revitalizing your hair. Hair spa can also counter the effects of hair damage, bringing back shine and bounce to the hair. So what exactly is hair spa. The following are the steps in a hair spa treatment, which can also be done at home.

Oil Massage: Oil is massaged onto the scalp and hair for at least 10 minutes. Coconut oil or olive oil may be used. Slightly warm herbal oil massage would help in case of very dry hair.

Shampoo: Oil massage is to be followed by shampooing. Massage the shampoo well again for about 10 minutes. This is to essentially cleanse the hair and remove out all the dirt and impurities.

Deep conditioning Hair mask: To prepare the hair mask, mix together 1 egg, 1 tbsp castor oil, juice of 1 lemon and little glycerine. Apply on the hair and keep it on for 1 hour. This is a very good conditioner and replenishes the lost moisture to a considerable degree.

Rinsing: Final step is rinsing the hair free of all the above ingredients. Boil tea leaves in four cups of water. Add some lemon juice to it. This solution can be used for rinsing the hair.

Try the hair spa at home at least once in 45 days to see the life back in your hair.

Long Hair

Most of us would long for long hair, or at least hair that has volume and is not limp. Apart from a healthy diet, adequate sleep and water, here are some tips to ensure healthy hair growth.

1. Soak fenugreek seeds in water overnight. Apply solution on the scalp and massage well. Cover with a towel for 2 hours to prevent evaporation. Then rinse it off.
2. Massage hair and scalp with few drops of olive oil after washing. Olive oil is a natural hair growth product and also makes the hair shiny and soft.
3. Apply coconut milk directly on the scalp. Massage for 15 minutes. Use cold water to wash it off.

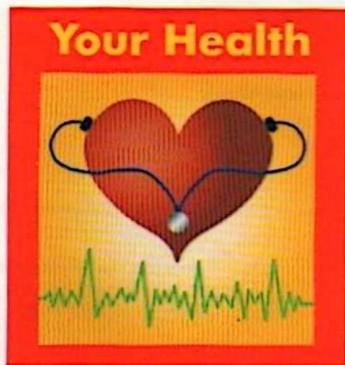
Of course in spite of our best efforts, certain hair problems do crop up and we need to be armed to tackle. In the next issue, we will tackle various issues of the hair and the remedial measures.

Highlight: We should know our hair type and apply shampoo accordingly:

Oily hair : lemon or henna based shampoo.

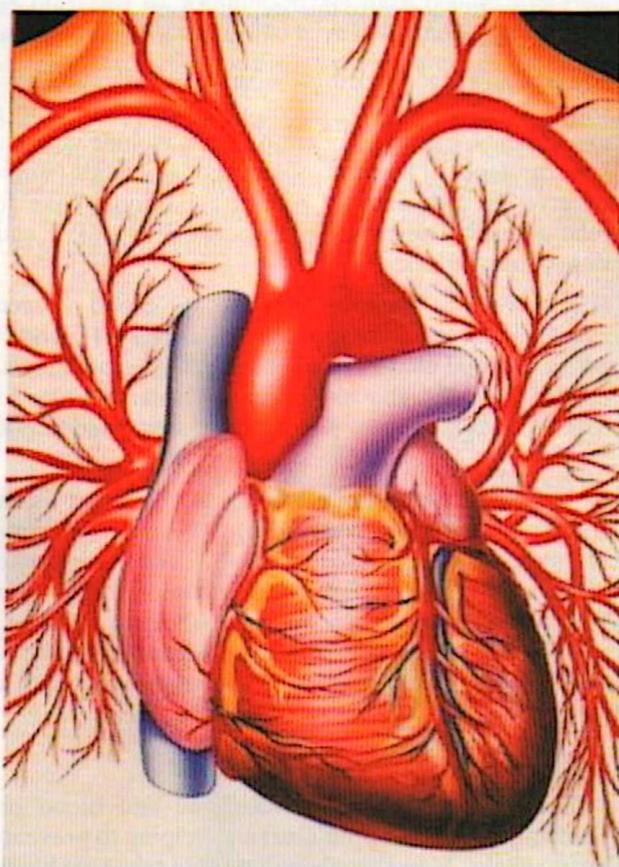
Dry hair : egg based shampoo.

Normal hair : any mild shampoo



Dr Bijoy Kutty

Five Medication Strategies To Help Prevent Heart Disease And Heart Attack



It's never too late to take steps to prevent a heart attack - even if you've already had one. In the first part of my article I had discussed medication free strategies. In this article I want the readers to have a basic understanding of the commonly used drugs for the heart which your doctor will prescribe. A better understanding of these medicines will not only ensure a better compliance on part of the patient, it will also help in avoiding various side-effects and thus reduce the risk of using them. While they are excellent in preventing a heart attack they will also go a long way in reducing your risk of a second heart attack and help your damaged heart function better.

Medications

Doctors typically prescribe drug therapy for people who've had a heart attack or who are at high risk of having one. Medications that help the heart function more effectively or reduce heart attack risk may include:

Blood-thinning medications:

The commonest in this group is Aspirin which makes your blood less "sticky" and likely to clot. Doctors recommend a daily aspirin for most people who've had a heart attack. Your doctor may, in some cases, prescribe a stronger blood thinner than aspirin. While aspirin has shown to be an excellent medicine to prevent an heart attack you can also use it as part of first aid when a patient is having chest pain. Doctors may prescribe aspirin and an anti-clotting drug, such as clopidogrel for people undergoing an angioplasty or stent procedure to open narrowed coronary arteries, both before and after the procedure.

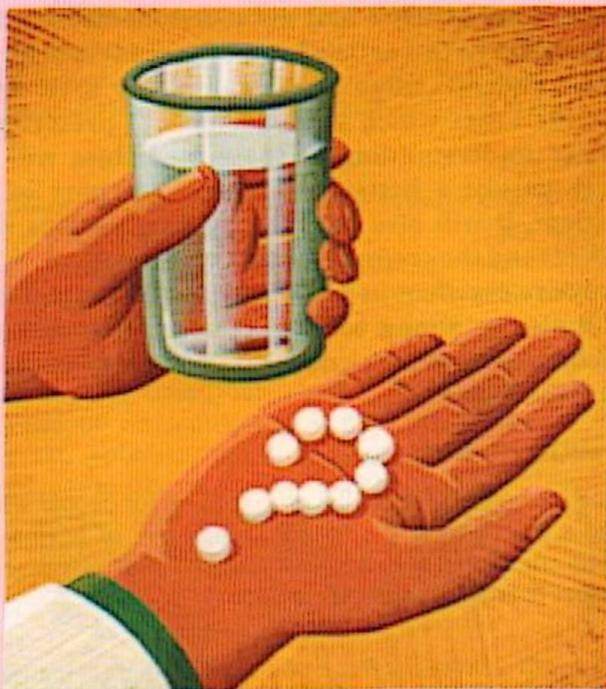
It is important to appreciate the commonest side-effect of

aspirin gastritis. Often you may get heartburns and pain in the stomach area. However the easiest method to prevent this is to take the tablet with food. Moreover nowadays special enteric coated tablets are available which reduce the risk of gastritis substantially. Another piece of caution if you're taking aspirin to help prevent a heart attack is to be aware that taking the painkiller ibuprofen or diclofenac at the same time, may increase the risk of gastrointestinal problems and may interfere with the heart benefits of aspirin. If you need to take a pain-relieving medication for certain conditions, such as arthritis, discuss with your doctor which is best for you.

Cholesterol-lowering medications:

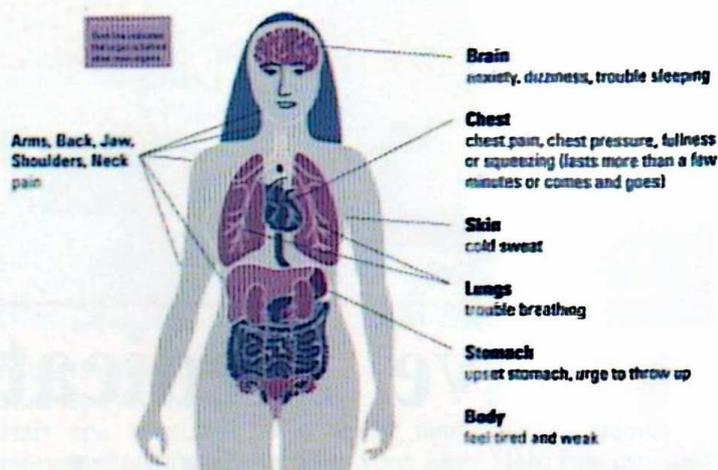
No other group of medicines has created such a market for themselves as much as the cholesterol lowering medicines. A variety of medications, including statins, niacin, fibrates and bile acid sequestrants, exist but the commonest is atorvastatin. While they can help lower your levels of unwanted blood cholesterol it is important to realize that they are not a substitute for regular graded exercise.

The majority of people who've had a heart attack take cholesterol-lowering medications drugs that help lower the risk of a second heart attack. These medications can help prevent future heart attacks even if your cholesterol was not very high at the time of the heart attack. While they are generally free from side effects they are known to cause weakness and a general feeling of malaise.



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Signs of a Heart Attack



Antioxidants and vitamins

The mechanism of a heart attack is formation of cholesterol plaques in coronary vessels. Simply put, these are cholesterol deposits in the lining of blood vessels in heart, causing blockage of the vessel and a heart attack. Oxygen free radicals are known to accelerate this step and here antioxidants come into the picture.

Antioxidants that block this oxidative modification have been shown to slow the progression of atherosclerosis in animal experiments. Examples of antioxidants include vitamin E and beta carotene. In humans, observational studies (studies that observe the frequency of related conditions) have found a relationship between the dietary intake of vitamin E and lower rates of heart attacks.

High levels of homocysteine in the blood (hyperhomocysteinemia) can damage the inner surface of blood vessels, promote blood clotting, and accelerate atherosclerosis which can lead to heart attacks. Vitamins primarily Folic acid and Vitamin C help in degrading Homocysteine and thus keep its levels low.

In humans, observational studies (studies that observe the frequency of related conditions) have found a relationship between the dietary intake of vitamin E and lower rates of heart attacks. In the Indian subcontinent high levels of Homocysteine a protein precursor has been found to be a cause for Coronary artery disease. Vitamins primarily Folic acid and Vitamin C help in degrading Homocysteine and thus keep its levels low

Beta blockers:

These drugs lower your heart rate and blood pressure, reducing demand on your heart and helping to prevent further heart attacks. Many people will need to take beta blockers for the rest of their lives following a heart attack. The commonest in this group is Metoprolol and this medicine should be taken strictly under medical supervision only.

Heart Healthy Foods

Some foods are good for the proper functioning of the heart.

Here are a few of them:

Tomatoes: Tomatoes are a rich source of anti-oxidants and potassium which help regulate our blood pressure.

Grapes: Grapes reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease by improving the functioning of the heart. A rich source of vitamins, grapes also help repair tissue damage. It lowers blood pressure and reduces inflammation of the muscles. All these make grapes a heart friendly fruit.

Berries: Berries including strawberries, blackberries, raspberries and blueberries are concentrated sources of antioxidants and increase the levels of good cholesterol in the blood.

Pomegranate: Pomegranate has been proved to slow down the damage caused by cholesterol and in this way, it reduces the risk of a heart attack.

Pumpkin: Pumpkin is a rich source of betacarotene, anti-oxidants and potassium. All these prevent tissue damage and thus help prevent heart attack.

Broccoli: Broccoli contains vitamin E, carotenoids, iron, sulphoraphane and other antioxidants. All this is very good for the proper functioning of the heart.



Olive oil: Olive oil is rich in mono-unsaturated fats and polyphenols and helps lower cholesterol levels. It also prevents arteriosclerosis, the thickening and hardening of the arteries. This means a reduced risk of heart attacks and strokes.

Spinach is another leafy vegetable good for the heart.

Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors:

Doctors prescribe ACE inhibitors for most people after heart attacks, especially for those who have had a moderate to severe heart attack that has reduced the heart's pumping capacity. The commonest in this group is enalapril and ramipril and they allow blood to flow from your heart more easily, prevent some of the complications of heart attacks and make a second heart attack less likely. Often patients using this drug complain of dry hacking cough necessitating the use of newer drugs which retain the potency but avoid the side effects.

While my aim has been to sensitize the reader to commonly used drugs it is to be remembered that these drugs must only be taken under strict medical supervision and only your doctor can decide what is best for you. The recent entry of the "poly pill" which contains a combination of various drugs has brought in lots of promise and researchers hope will go a long way in preventing heart attack.

Dr Bijoy Kutty is one of the Directors of Platinum Hospitals, Mulund/ICON Heart Institute, Dombivli.

Email: bijoykutty@gmail.com

Wedding



Veena d/o Vijayalakshmi and K V Prabhakaran Nambiar (*Sharprints*) is married to Vivek s/o Bharati and Vasantrao Kamble on December 1 at The Bombay Tamil Sangham Auditorium, Sion.

Malayalam Movie World

Shwetha Menon's plea against promo

Malayalam actress Shwetha Menon has moved the Kerala High Court against the use of her photograph from a yet to be released Malayalam movie *Kayam* for the promotion of a sex drug. She petitioned the court that the promotion advertisement uses one of the stills for the advertisement without her consent and thereby the film's producer has committed criminal breach of trust. Shwetha stated that in the still she had worn an attire suitable for a song scene of the film but it was used out of context. The court directed the Police to take action on her plea. She has also approached the Kerala State Women's commission for redressal.



'Chattambi Kalyani' to be renamed

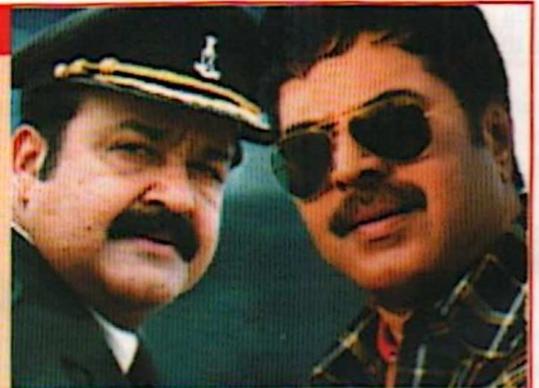


T S Saii who was planning a movie titled 'Chattambi Kalyani' with Urvashi in the title role, is likely to change the title of his movie. This follows a warning from Sreekumaran Thampi who made a film in the seventies with the same title with Sheela in the lead, to the effect that he plans to make a sequel to that film soon and therefore that title cannot be used by others. Saii therefore decided to change the title of his forthcoming movie in deference to Thampi's wishes.

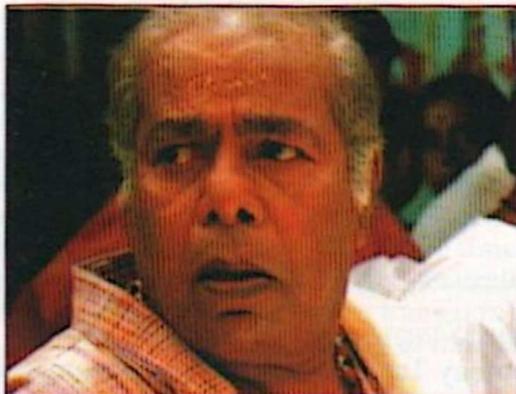
Clash of fans of M's

Though the superstars of Malayalam movie world Mohanlal and Mammootty are visibly friendly, their fans are at loggerheads. The fans recently clashed with each other near Matha Theatre at Aluva.

The fans of Mohanlal were trying to promote the recently released movie 'Kandahar' of Mohanlal near the theatre, using an LCD projector when the fans of Mammootty whose 'Best Actor' also being released, objected. The arguments soon turned to fisticuffs and a few fans were injured. Finally, the police had to be summoned to intervene and they arrested a few. In Kerala, it is the first time that the members of rival fan clubs clash physically.



Thilakan, back to stage



Veteran Malayalam actor Thilakan returned to stage after a gap of almost twenty five years. The actor who drew headlines following his rift with AMMA, would appear on stage for the new drama by Alappuzha Aksharajwala titled 'Itho Daivathinte Swantham Naadu'.

The drama scripted by Manilal, will have music by Ramesh Narayanan and songs by ONV Kurup.

Amala Paul's new movies

Amala Paul is the new sensation in Tamil film industry with her latest movie 'Mynaa' turning a big hit. The actress who entered film industry with films like *Veerasekharan* and *Vikatakavi*, after her assignments in many advertisements is presently working in a few new projects. She will be seen soon in 'Mirugam' fame Sami's '*Sindhu Samaveli*' that is getting ready to greet release centres in a short while. Her big projects in Tamil include Vikram's untitled movie, and a new movie with Arya. She has also bagged a Telugu movie as heroine to Siddharth. Amala, a native of Aluva and a second year degree student of St. Theresa College, had earlier done a short role in Lal Jose's '*Neelathamara*'. She will again be seen in the new Malayalam movie '*Ithu Nammude Katha*' by Rajesh Kannankara.



No takers for Prithviraj's new movie

B C Joshy, the producer of '*Veetilekkulla Vazhi*', reveals that his new movie with Prithviraj is still to find a distributor. He was talking at the premier show of the movie at the year's IFFK. Joshy demanded that the Chalachitra Academy should take the responsibility of distributing aesthetically valuable films.

The revelation shocked all present as Prithviraj's recent two movies made very big initial collections. This movie has a touching story about a young doctor's initiative to reunite a five year old child with his father and it was well applauded by the audience in IFFK, who rate it as the best from Dr Biju, whose debut film *Saira* has been screened at Cannes. The movie, shot at many locations in North India, is really a visual treat.

As the movie has fetched very good opinion from the masses, it is likely that the movie will soon be sold to worthy distributors.

Malayalam films popular in IFFK

For the first time in the history of IFFK, Malayalam films are getting more accolades than their international counterparts. Shyamaprasad's '*Electra*' got maximum accolades from the audience at the International film Festival of Kerala.

The movie featuring Prakash Raj, Nayantara, Manisha Koirala and Skanda also witnessed the biggest crowd in the entire festival.

Other Malayalam films like '*Janaki*' and Santhosh Sivan's '*Makaramanju*' also satisfied the discerning film buffs attending the fest. This film produced by Vindhyam is ready for release.



Gowri Munjal in 'Race'

Gowri Munjal debuted with Mammootty in '*Palery Manickyam*' but could not make it big. Now she is making a comeback with Kukku Surendran's '*Race*'. The movie will have her as a city lady in a crucial character and tells about the mad race of Malayalees after pleasure and money.

A thriller in the making, '*Race*' will have Kunchakko Boban as Dr. Abi, who is kidnapped for some mysterious reasons while he is attending a seminar in Bangalore. Indrajith and Mamtha Mohandas are also part of the movie which is produced by Penta Vision.

Karthika dazes Danny Boyle

The Oscar winning director Danny Boyle of 'Slumdog Millionaire' was in Mumbai recently and during his visit a special screening of the film 'Makaramanju' was arranged for him.

After watching the film, sources say Danny Boyle fell short of words to praise the film and its creators. Apart from Santosh Sivan who was greatly appreciated by Danny Boyle, the heroine of the film Karthika was also deeply admired for her performance. Karthika impressed Danny Boyle so much that he is even ready cast her in his next film. Danny Boyle has invited Karthika to appear for a screen test to feature in his next Indo-British production.



'Makaramanju' is a Malayalam film about a mythical tragedy that occurred during the creation of the most celebrated painting- Pururavas and Urvashi, by renowned painter Raja Ravi Varma. The film also tries to depict the love between the painter Ravi Varma and his model Anjali Bai.

Santhosh Sivan is making his debut as an actor playing Ravi Varma and Karthika plays Anjali Bai, the model in the film scripted and directed by Lenin Rajendran

While international fame is waiting for this new sensation, Karthika's debut Tamil film 'Ko' is in its very final stages to hit the theatres on Pongal day. Karthika has already garnered a lot of expectations and all these must be more than happy news for her mother, yesteryear dream girl Radha.



'City of God' in progress

After a short while, the star brothers of Malayalam Prithviraj and Indrajith are coming together for a movie in 'City of God'.

Directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery, the movie will focus on the lives of a few people from very different backgrounds which are inextricably intertwined. Prithviraj plays Jyothilal, an educated man who turns to crime to make a living. Indrajith's character is that of Swarnavel, a Tamil labourer.

The movie planned in a different format from the usual is being filmed with a hand-held camera to get a realistic feel. The complicated lives of three women are also a part of the narratives.

Shwetha Menon plays Viji Punnose a wealthy woman, whose husband gets murdered. While Rima Kallingal is Sooryaprabha, an actor who is into some disturbed relationships, Parvathi is Marathakam, a Tamil woman who flees her village to escape from her abusive husband.

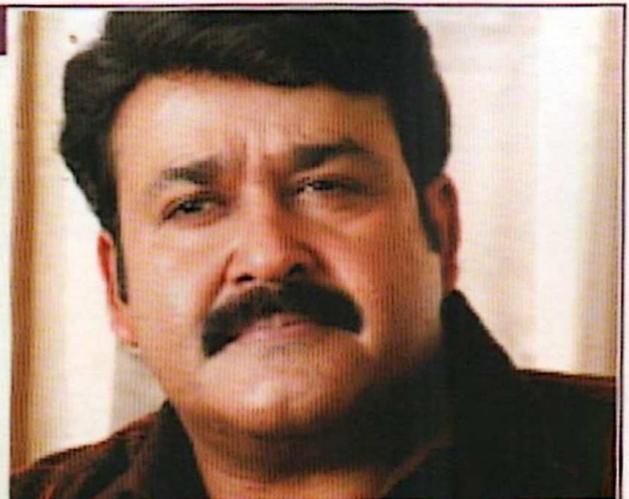
'City of God' is being produced by Anitha Anil Mathew under the banner of Mary Matha Creations is fast progressing.

Mohanlal in 'Tez'

Malayalam superstar Mohanlal and director Priyadarshan are teaming up again for a Hindi flick with the title 'Tez'. Mohanlal is playing the role of Shiv Menon, the chief of British Narcotics Bureau in this thriller.

The movie that is being shot at Scotland will have him wearing the uniform of a British cop armed with a bullet proof vest, and a machine gun. Action director of Bond movies, Gard Miller, is the action choreographer for 'Tez', who is with Lal making him move like a Hollywood star.

'Tez' also features Ajay Devgan, Anil Kapoor, Zayed Khan Sameera Reddy and Kangana Ranaut in other lead roles.





MUMBAI NEWS DIGEST

KIM News Bureau

Nava Chandika Mahayagam and Symposium on Harmony of Religion for World Peace

Satyananda Dharma International Charitable Society organised a Nava Chandika Mahayagam from December 6 to December 15, 2010 at Sunil Gavaskar Stadium CB D Belapur, Navi Mumbai. On December 14 a Symposium on Harmony of Religion for World Peace was organized by them. Upendra Menon was the co-ordinator, Dr Satyapal Singh, IPS was the moderator. Papers on Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Jainism were presented by Swami Bhrahmapadananda Saraswathy, Sree Ramadasa Ashram, Rev. Father Dr Francis Eluvathingal, Mr Ather Khan,



Upendra Menon addressing the gathering during the Symposium on Harmony of Religion for World Peace

and Dr D K Jain, IAS respectively. The introduction to Religion for World Peace was made by Swami Devatmananda Saraswati, Central Chinmaya Mission Mumbai. The vote

of thanks was given by T Balasubramanian General Convener while the ceremony was compered by Mannanur Raveendran.

BHARATHANATYAM ARANGETRAM of students of Nrityaprabha

Bharatanatyam Arangetram of Devika Nair, Malavika Nair, Poornima Panicker, Vidya Nambiar and Tania Jose disciples of Guru Prasanna Nambiar, Ajitha Nambiar and Amrutha Menon of NRITYAPRABHA, School of Indian Classical Dances, Andheri (W) was performed on 5th Dec. 2010 at Dinanath Mangeshkar Natyagrah, Vileparle East. Pankajam

Ramakrishnan, Ex- Principal, Barfiwala Higher Secondary School, Andheri (W) was the Chief Guest. She appreciated the performance of the young dancers. The Chief Guest, the Founder, Gurus of Nrityaprabha and the accompanying artists were well felicitated. T P K Nambiar anchored the programme. Bhargavi Nake disciple of Guru

Prasanna Nambiar, Ajitha Nambiar and Amrutha Menon of NRITYAPRABHA, School of Indian Classical Dances, Andheri (W) performed her Arangetram on 20th Nov. 2010 at Sathaye College Auditorium, Vileparle East. Dr Kavitha Shirish Rege, Principal of Sathaye College was the Chief Guest.



Malavika Nair (sitting left), Poornima Panicker, Tania Jose, Devika Nair and Vidya Nambiar (sitting right)



Ajitha Nambiar, Bhargavi Nake, Prasanna Nambiar and Amrutha Menon

KALOTSAVAM 2010

Navi Mumbai Malayalee Ekopana Samiti conducted KALOTSAVAM 2010 as part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Keraleeya Kendra Sangatana, Mumbai on 5th December at Kairali Cultural Complex, CBD, Belapur. Cultural competitions on various items were conducted on two stages from 8.30 am to 6.00 pm with the participation of 14 Regd. Malayalee Associations of Navi Mumbai Region.

V.N. Govindankutty (Chairman), lights the lamp at the Kalotsavam. Valsan Moorkoth (Convenor), K.T. NAIR (Co-Ordinator), Sabu Daniel (Corporator), K.S. Menon (President, Keraleeya Kendra Sangatana), Rukmini Sagar (Vice Chairman) are also seen.



Sports Meet-2010 was conducted on 12/12/2010 at Vashi Tilak School Ground by Navi Mumbai Malayalee Ekopana Samiti.

J.N.Kurup, Chairman, Vashi Tilak School, Corporator Sabu Daniel, Sasi Damodharan, V.N.Govindan Kutty K.T.Nair, Valsan Moorkoth and all Samajam Presidents & Gen.Secretaries and participants.

Thayambaka

Thayambaka presented for kattermanivilli Ayyappa Puja, Kalyan (E) by Nelluvai P Nambisan , Thrissur and troupe.



Yuva Prathibha award

Mumbai based Dr P N Prabhavathy was awarded the Yuva Prathibha award of the Kerala Sangeeta Nataka Academy this year. Dr Prabhavathy is a PhD in music , actively involved in giving concerts and teaching music. Her PhD was on the 'ragam Saveri'. She has presented many papers on classical music.



Dr P N Prabhavathy

Doctrate conferred

Dr Padmaja, daughter of K K Rajan has been conferred Doctrate by the Mysore University for her thesis 'The Art of Natya and the Science of Tantra a co-relative study'.



Dr Padmaja

Appointed President

Tulsidas Nair has been appointed as Dombivili City President of Maharashtra Building Construction Forest & Wood Workers Union (INTUC) which assists the unorganized building construction workers and other workers to derive benefit from The Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board.





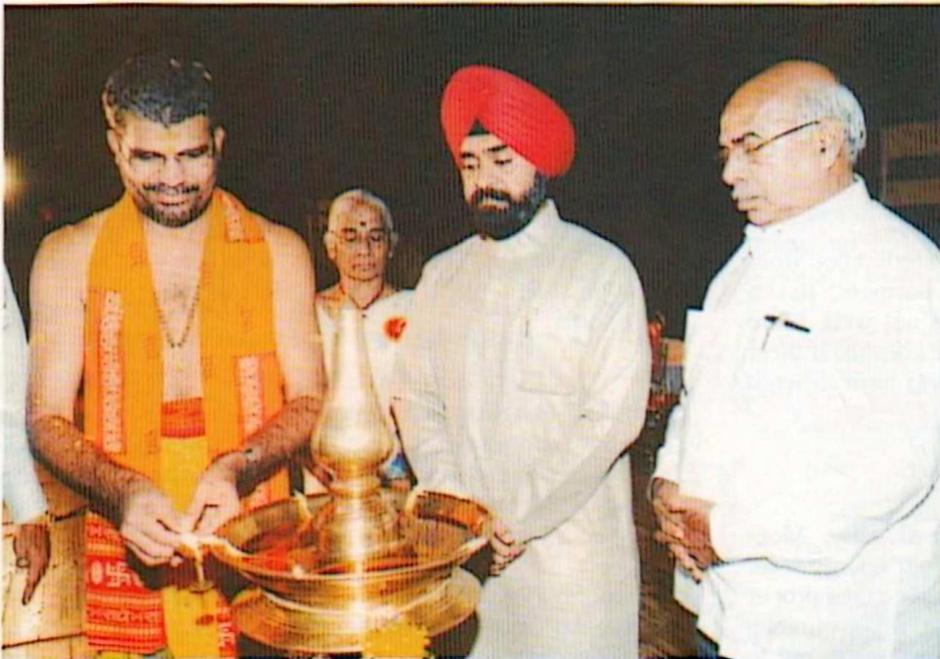
Thiruvathiraghosham 2010

Inauguration of Thiruvathiraghosham 2010 was organised by Tru Indian Information and Guidance Society held at Model English School, Pandurangwadi, Dombivli(E).

◀ Smt. Urmila Unni(Chief Guest), Smt. Ambika Warasiar(Ladies Wing coordinator, Tru Indian Information and Guidance Society), Shri. M.V Parameswaran(President Kairali Charitable Organization, Pune), Hymavathy Teacher(famous Thiruvathira teacher of Dombivli and programme committee head) and Rajan Nair(A great Social Worker) inaugurates the function.

GITA DISCOURSES

SREEKRISHNA SEVA CHARITABLE TRUST had arranged GITA DISCOURSES (Malayalam) by Chaitanyaji, from 30.11.2010 to 05.12.2010 at Kalidas Natyamandir, Mulund. The discourses were well attended. The Trust had also organized a free medical check up camp at the venue of the discourses on two days i.e on 30th November and 5th December 2010. The camp was arranged by Dr. Bijoy Kutty, leading cardiologist of Platinum Hospitals Mulund and there was massive response for the medical check up.

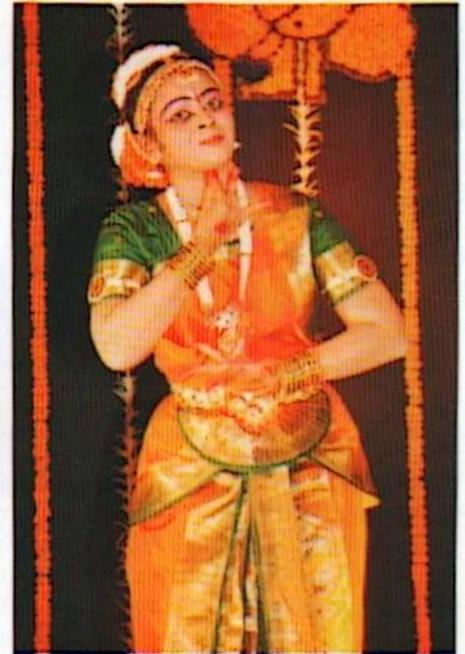


(Swami Udit Chaitanyaji lights the lamp)

New Year programme of Mulund Kerala Samajam

Mulund Kerala Samajam is heralding the New Year with a programme of music, dance and mimicry on Saturday, 15th January, 2011 at 8 pm at the Kalidas Natyamandir, Mulund West. In its sojourn the Samajam is looking forward to have a community hall. The programme scheduled on 15th January would feature popular singer Vidhu Pratap, mimicry artists Guinness Pakru, Ajeesh and Reji. For more details contact 9819996845/9223293774.

Arangettam



Priyanka Jairam performed her Bharatanatyam Arangettam on 4 Dec, 2010 at Gadkari Rangayatan, Thane. Currently doing her Post - graduation in Counselling Psychology, Priyanka has been studying Bharatanatyam for the past ten years from Sanskriti Academy of Fine Arts, Thane, under Guru Asha Sunil Kumar.

Obituary

Smt. Bharati, wife of Narayana Kurup (Nair Welfare Association Life member) passed away on 8.12. 2010 at Thane.



Kerala in Mumbai

LINKING MUMBAI MALAYALEES

Email: keralainmumbai@gmail.com

Website: keralaimumbai.com

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