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Kerala

in Mumbai

April 2010

Father of
Indian Rubber
Industry

Vagamom-Tourist Delight

"SPREAD LOVE": VIDYA BALAN

Happy Vishu



Kerala in Mumbai Vol 01, No.03 April 2010

Chief Consulting Editor
P K Ravindranath

Executive Editor
P V Vijay Kumar

Managing Editor
K V Satyanath

Feature Writers
Lakshmi Venkatachalam
K Padmakumar

Art Department
K M Sudhakaran

Advertisement & Marketing
Girish Rao(Mumbai)
Cell: 98202 81939
Reshma Nair (Mumbai)
Tel: 2920 9959

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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Andheri (E), Mumbai – 400 059 Tel: +22 2920 5641

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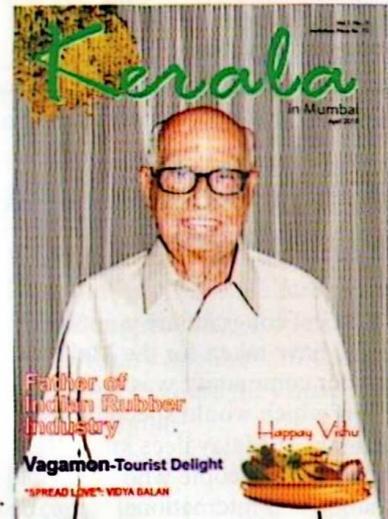
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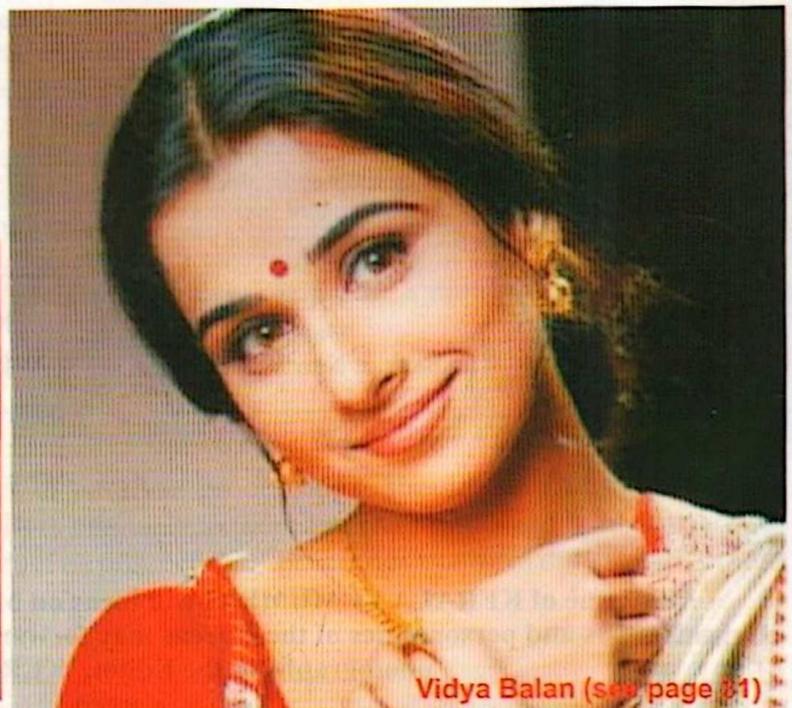
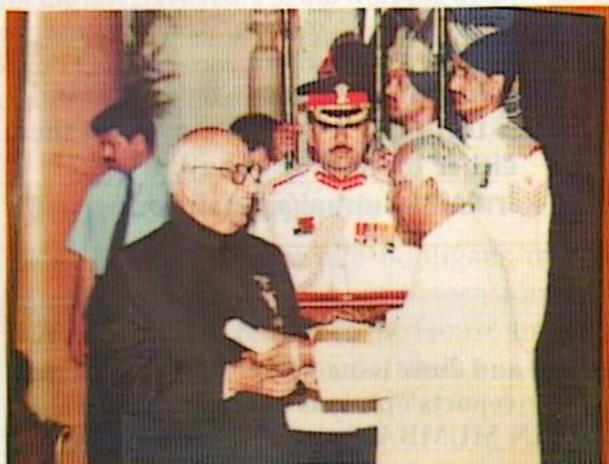
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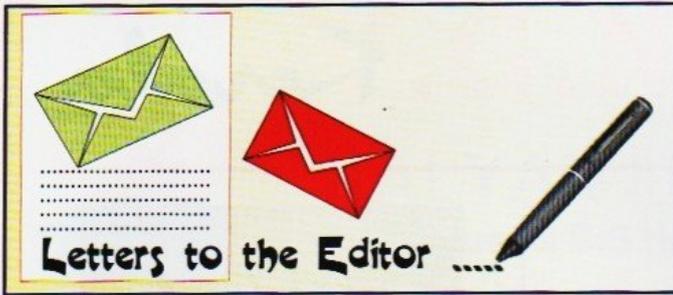
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Bachchan -KIM News Bureau



Vidya Balan (see page 31)



Hello to the entire team of Kerala in Mumbai Magazine.

Let me first congratulate you on this great initiative that you have taken for the Malayalees in Mumbai. I guess our community was waiting for a magazine like this which would specially let the younger generation of Malayalees know the rich culture of Kerala and the people who have made us proud on the nation and international stage, be it politics, entertainment or business.

I am very proud to be a Mumbaikar and also feel extremely happy to see that our community has grown in numbers over the years, in this beautiful city we call home. There is not a single place where a Malayali has not left his mark and with the help of this magazine, I am sure we will come to know about many more people who have made us proud. As a reader all I can do is to send you my well wishes and prayers. I hope this magazine becomes a part of every Malayalees daily life and also the most important point would be that it never compromises on the quality of the articles published in this magazine.

God Bless and Keep up the great work.
Vivek Sreedharan
Charkop, Kandivali (W)
Mumbai -400067

I have gone through the latest issue of Kerala in Mumbai. I am quite impressed with the content and style. Nevertheless, I would like to have some more regular features highlighting the culture and literature of Kerala. Some jokes, if included, would provide a little punch.

- Aneish Kumar K
Managing Director
The Bank of New York, Mellon

Congrats for a colourful presentation!

It is a fact that the second generation of Malayalis in Mumbai, who are heavily burdened with academic curriculum and competitions in various fields do not have much time left to learn our mother tongue. It may not be proper to interpret this as lack of interest on their part or on their parents' part. Your excellent product recognises this aspect and caters to their needs as well.
Best Wishes!

“Kerala in Mumbai” is of my liking.

I could see a rapid improvement to the March issue from the previous one. Wish you and your team all success!

My cheque for Rs.3,000 for a five year subscription is enclosed and look forward to receive it without any interruption.

Mrs Ambika Ramachandran
Nerul

Hearty congratulations!

I received the 'Kerala in Mumbai' vol 1 No 2. Please accept my hearty congratulations! 'How to Read Newspapers' naturally interested me along with other items.

- Dr A R K Pillai
Goregaon (W)

Kerala in Mumbai welcome feedback and suggestions from readers. You may send them either by post or e-mail to keralainmumbai@gmail.com

May issue of KERALA IN MUMBAI will focus on Mulund and June issue will be on Nerul. Organisations and personalities of these areas may forward their reports/opinions along with relevant photographs to the Editor, KERALA IN MUMBAI

EDITORIAL**HANDLING LANGUAGES**

Almost double the entire population of Great Britain speaks their language in India. A preliminary analysis of the census data of 2001 reveals that about 125 million Indians speak English.

Most of them, of course, speak it as the second language, next to their mother tongue. It was the primary language for just 2.3 lakhs Indians, but as many as 86 million listed it as their second language and another 39 million as their third language.

Hindi, as was to be expected, has secured prime position, with 551 million people speaking it. This means, almost half the entire population of India speaks Hindi as their first language, or the second language.

English is, no doubt, gaining ground all over the world as the primary language of communication. This is but natural in the age of globalisation and the computers. Even Russia, where it was difficult to find English speakers, now have 60 million (almost the population of U K) speaking that language of speakers in Bengali (91), Telugu (85), and Marathi (84). These figures are revealing. They point to the fact that the number of primary speakers of these major languages is growing in number, commensurate with the increase in population in the States where they are prevalent. Malayalam has 33.8 million speakers. That figure corresponds with the population of that state.

No Indian language, the survey reveals, has lost its grip over its users. In other words, there is nothing for any Indian language to be apprehensive of in the coming years.

GENDER EQUALITY

The primary purpose of the Women's Reservation Bill is yet to ensure gender equality in a phased manner. It provides for reservation for women in Parliament to the extent of 33% of the total membership of that august body. This is only the beginning.

There are large sections of people in this country who do not want even that token representation to be guaranteed to women. Their opposition boils down to a typical mental attitude which refuses to accept the fact that women are on par with men. Luckily, this mental block prevails only in one area of the country.

It does not prevail in Kerala, and in Manipur, where the matriarchal system has produced a healthy outlook among the people, breaking down the gender discrimination. It is a different matter that women are still not fully represented in the state legislature, according to their strength in the State.

Social and sociological factors contribute to the deprivation of women's representation at the appropriate level in elective bodies in that state.

The bill has lofty aims. They need to be carried forward by social workers and reformers, who must now try to change the mindset that prevents women occupying their rightful positions.

Women are still discriminated against in several ways throughout the country. They endure foeticide, infanticide and dowry deaths and harassment. In comparison to their male siblings, they are discriminated against in the matter of food, education, basic amenities at home, health care and finally choice of career.

In most backward communities bright girls are specifically denied permission to go in for higher education on the ground that it would be difficult to find appropriate matrimonial matches for "highly educated" girls. Male chauvinism, at its worst. Women in the best societies suffer the pangs of sexual abuse and rape. They are paid less than their male counterparts for the same kind of work. The Constitution provides all the safeguards women require, but for the last sixty years of the working of the Constitution, no effort has been made to ensure the full acceptance of the concept of gender equality throughout the country. Society has to accept the concept in good faith at the grass root level. Over to social reformers and social activists to ensure that acceptance on a uniform basis throughout the country. Change the mindset.

- Editorial Board

Quote of the month

If some MPs behave like hooligans in order to paralyse proceedings, should the House be a mute spectator? The provision for suspension of MPs is precisely to meet such situations and if the suspended MPs continue to remain in the House and obstruct its proceedings it becomes a painful duty to effect their expulsion with the aid of marshals.

- Soli Sorabjee

K M Philip

FATHER OF INDIAN RUBBER INDUSTRY

P K Ravindranath

As Kandathil Mammen Philip enters his 99th year on May 2, there is nothing better he would like to do than to begin the day with a round of golf. "But the prospect of three men propping me up on the golf course deters me from doing it, any longer," he says ruefully. The spirit is still willing.

That indefatigable spirit endured from 1938 for the next six decades to earn K M Philip world-wide recognition as the Father of the Indian Rubber Industry. He had landed in Mumbai in 1934 after obtaining his Master's in Economics, as Branch Manager of the family-run Travancore National and Quilon Bank.

The sixth son of K C Mammen Mappilai, the founder of "*Malayala Manorama*" faced the most turbulent period in his life for the next four years. Political vendetta unleashed against the family and its various businesses by the then Dewan of Travancore, Dr C P Ramaswamy Iyer, forced the closure of the Bank in 1938. Mammen Mappilai was imprisoned and the family was harassed and hounded out of Kottayam, their homeland.

Jobless in Mumbai, Philip hit upon a new venture of development of the manufacture of latex, to replace all rubber products imported from Great Britain. Philip began with the manufacture of toy balloons. From prison, his father wrote to his elder brother, K M Jacob, on 4 June 1939, commending Philip's Balloon Scheme. Mammen Mappilai inspired his sons to adhere to the moral values of integrity, concern for others, and

courage- qualities that helped them in whatever they undertook.

Underlining the difficult times faced by the family on the verge of poverty, Mammen Mappilai wrote in the same letter: "It has been my experience that more insufferable than death and prison life is deprivation of means of livelihood."

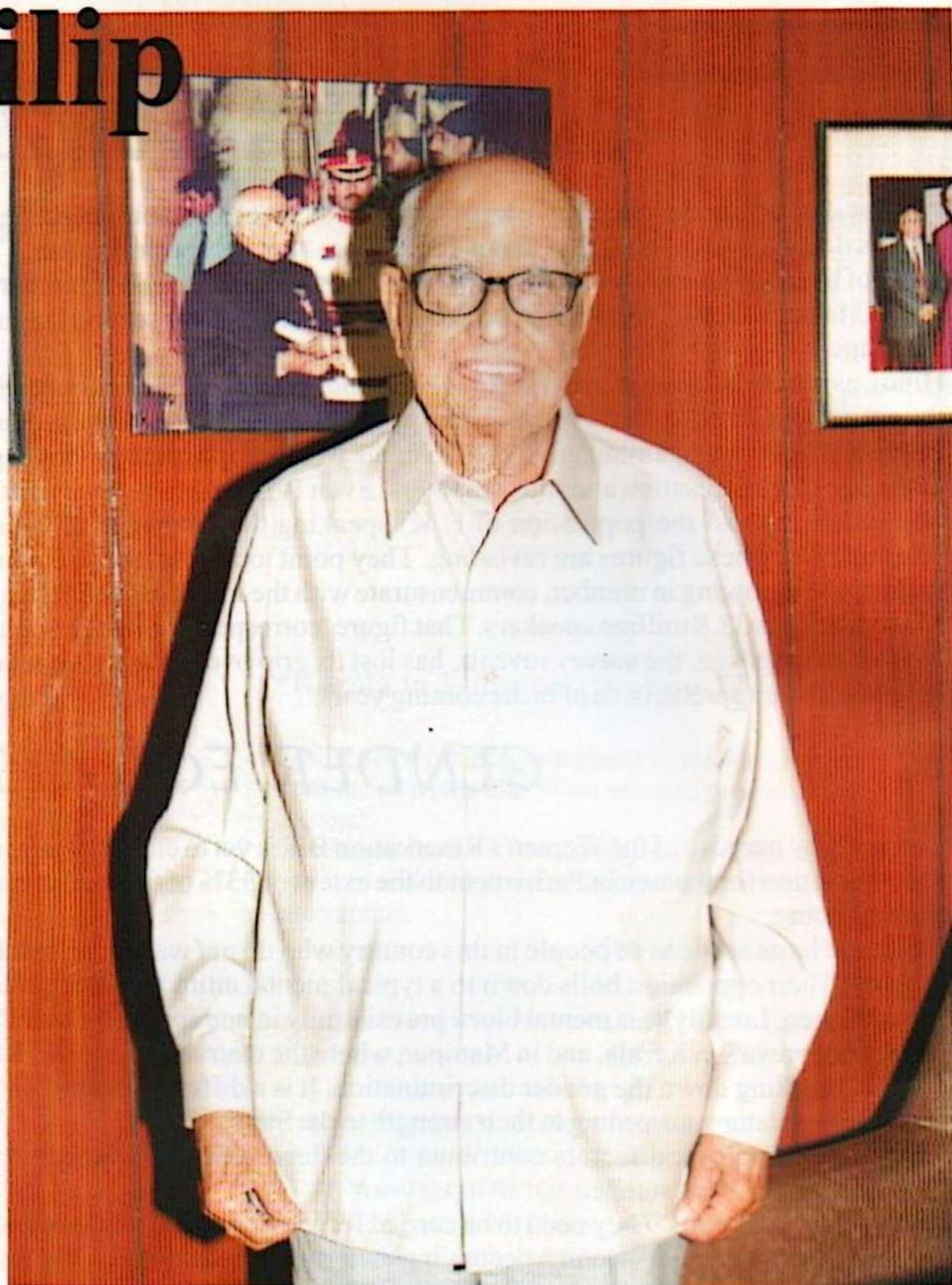
"*The Malayala Manorama*" was seized and sealed. It remained closed till 1947, when the country gained independence. The Mysore Rubber Factory, owned by the family, began the manufacture of latex, from which Philip produced toy balloons and a new item then in dire need - condoms. By the end of the Second World War in 1945, all rubber needs of the country were met by local manufacture. Wartime conditions did not allow for imports, in any case.

Philip struck a partnership with Lalit Mohan Jamnadas to set up more units for

the rubber industry. He also set up the All India Rubber Association. Abid Ali, later a Union cabinet minister, became the President of AIRA. By 1948, Philip became the President of the AIRA, which post he adorned for the next four decades. In 1952, India consumed 1000 tons of rubber. Today the country's need is for 1.1 million tons, all locally produced. The Madras Rubber Factory (1946) and M M Rubber Co. Ltd (1958) contribute in a very substantial manner to meet this demand. K M Philip continues to be director of both companies.

INNOVATIONS

Philip also encouraged and promoted, if not founded, some ancillary industries based on rubber. The most significant among them was the process of reclaiming rubber from used rubber products. He became Chairman of the Gujarat Rubber Reclaim Products Ltd, in



1970. This is the largest reclaimed rubber factory in the world.

To help others in the rubber industry to come to terms with latest technology abroad, Philip would produce extracts from foreign industry journals and technical papers. Slowly, this led to the founding of "Rubber News" a monthly journal "covering the manufacture of rubber." Philip remained the editor of this journal till 1990.

In 1992 the All India Rubber Association, in recognition of his services to the industry, instituted the K M Philip Gold Medal, on the lines of the Hancock Award of the Plastic and Rubber Institute of U K, for outstanding contributions to the rubber industry.

The Association dedicated the Gold Medal to the "positive and purposeful role of Mr. K M Philip in shaping the destiny of the Association as one of its founder-members and later as its senior architect." In 1970 the Association conferred on him its Honorary Membership. The Plastic and Rubber Institute conferred its membership on Philip in 1981.

"Rubber News" in its July 1992 issue in an editorial admitted: "We could easily confer on Mr Philip the title of 'Hancock of the East,' a title he so richly deserves." He is an individual who has risen in the industry by sheer dint of his painstaking efforts in the cause of the industry, the editorial pointed out.

The spirit Philip displays at 98 must have propelled him to found companies, one after another in quick succession, all to



Mammen Mappila and sons with President Dr S Radhakrishnan

expand the family's industrial base. The Mysore Rubber Factory came up in 1940 and it was followed by the establishment of the Sanitary Rubber Manufacturing Co. in Mumbai. Then came up the India Tea and Coffee Distributing Co. Ltd. (popularly known as Philips Tea and Coffee), The Madras Rubber Factory, the largest auto tyre complex in India with a turn over of Rs.6,000 crores, and the Gujarat Reclaim And Rubber Products Ltd. He is also associated with Rubblast SDN BHD, a joint venture between India and Malaysia, another rubber producing country, to manufacture Reclaim Rubber. In 1984 he helped set up Integrated Finance Co., offering hire purchase,

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

I am impressed by the way his career has paralleled that of his nation, not only in space of time, but from its early struggles, supported by love and a rich heritage from the past, through many challenges and vicissitudes to a position as an illustrious citizen of the world.

It has indeed been a privilege for me to participate with Mr Philip and his family in a period of strong development. It is my prayer that this association can long continue and bring further satisfaction to all of us, particularly as it permits us to realise our goals in life, one of the foremost of which has been to contribute in our own small way to India's achievement of internal strength with ever expanding opportunity for all of its people.

- James J Hoffman

President, Mansfield Tyre Co.,
Ohio, U S A



K M Philip receives Padmashri Award from President K R Narayanan

leasing and other facilities and financial services.

Planned Development

Philip has been on several government panels and committees for development of the rubber industry. He has been President of the Indian Rubber Manufacturers' Research Association. He has been a member of the Rubber Board, set up by the Government of India to encourage rubber plantations. He



K M Mathew, K M Philip and K M Eappen

served the Board for 17 years.

In 1986 he was given a reputed international award- the Hancock Gold Medal from the Plastic and Rubber Institute of Great Britain. He functioned as Chairman of a government panel set up under the Fourth Five Year Plan to set plan targets for production of various rubber products.

Philip is credited by the industry for bringing in the concept of planning perspectives for the industry, which enabled it to grow so speedily. "He provided the navigational aids to the industry," is a common refrain you hear in rubber circles in India.

Recognition

Recognition and awards have come to Philip in large measure. He was made a Fellow of the Plastic and Rubber Institute in 1981, and elected a Life Member of the World Alliance of YMCAs, Geneva, the first Asian to hold this prestigious office. Philip has written "*The Memoirs of my Working Life*" (1977) and "*Evolution of the Indian Rubber Industry*" (2002). He has also contributed over a hundred articles in various financial, industry or trade journals, besides "Rubber India" and the Hindu Survey of Industries.

As the eldest member of the Mammen Mappila family, he is the Chairman of the Family Council which runs the various industries from the *Malayala Manorama*

publications to the rubber factories and the Manorama News, a TV channel. This position requires him to go often to Bangalore, Kochi and Chennai, and "when my health does not permit it, the Council meets in Mumbai," he adds wryly. This rules out foreign travel, much as his spirit would still like to.

Philip maintains a rigid regimen in his daily life. With physical exercises now curtailed, he spends at least two hours every evening playing Bridge. "That helps keep my brain ticking," he points out.

His wife Chinnamma, now 92, like him, has no ailments to complain of. "She has

no diabetes or blood pressure problems," and manages her own affairs without help. Movement outside the house is of course restricted.

Philip shares "Kerala in Mumbai's" concern for the younger generations of Malayalees living outside Kerala. "They need to be brought back to their roots. They should never forget that. They have the inherent intelligence, capacity and sense of values, like most other people in the country. Many of them have done the country proud abroad in some of the most abstruse fields of endeavour. They should not be alienated from our history and traditions."

STEELED BY CALAMITY

The closure of the Travancore National and Quilon Bank by political manipulation was a great calamity for the family. We lost practically all our assets and properties. Almost all members of the family had to flee the State as the security of our lives was in danger.

In the face of this major disaster, my father did not lose courage. Calling all his eight sons, he told us that the true qualities of men surface in the worst crises, that this was an opportunity for the entire family to stand together and work as one team, in which case what was lost, he promised, would fade into insignificance and we would have a glorious future. What was important was that in such circumstances and suffering, one should not lose faith in God, nor compromise one's character.

..... I am happy to say that my father lived sufficiently long, until the end of 1953 and saw his vision largely fulfilled.

-K M Philip in "Memoirs of a Working Life", 1977

Miss Kerala of Mumbai Contest

Kerala in Mumbai proudly announces a mega beauty contest **MISS KERALA OF MUMBAI**, exclusively devised and designed for the young Malayalee girls settled in Mumbai. All girls of age between 18-25 years are eligible to participate in the contest, to be held during Sept-Oct 2010 in a prestigious auditorium of Mumbai.

Contestants will be judged by a panel of eminent judges for poise, dress sense, haircare, intelligence etc. Winners of each category will compete for ultimate position of **Miss Kerala of Mumbai**. Fabulous prizes await them.

A Fashion Show consisting of informal, formal, social and bridal costume designs will be held, accompanied by music and dance programmes. Costumes and jewellery are to be borne by the contestants themselves. It is open to all girls from zones of Mumbai city, Mumbai suburb, Navi Mumbai and Thane district. Interested individuals may fill in the entry form provided below and forward to us latest by June 30, 2010. Entry forms must be accompanied with photocopies of birth certificates, educational qualifications, proof of residence, consent letter from parent/guardian and three photographs (close up of face, frontal and side full size). These can be claimed after the contest. There is **NO ENTRY FEE** but only forms printed in this issue will be accepted.



1. Name of contestant in full _____
2. Date of birth _____ Contact address _____

3. Place of residence _____ Zone _____
4. Telephone: () _____ Cell: _____
5. E-mail: _____
6. Educational qualifications: Under graduate / Graduate / Post Graduate / Professional / Others (Specify) _____
7. Name and address of the institution where the highest qualification is acquired from: _____

Date: _____

Signature of contestant

Forward to: Kerala in Mumbai, B-105 Twin Arcade, Military Road, Marol, Andheri East, Mumbai 400 059. Phone: 022- 2920 5641 / 9959 Fax: 29202094

E-mail: keralainmumbai@gmail.com

Website: www.keralainmumbai.com

Vishu is the New Year of Malayalees, usually celebrated on first of Medam (mid-April to mid-May). Vishu signifies the beginning of the main harvest season while Onam symbolises the end of it. Vishu is the astronomical or zodiac New Year in Kerala. This year Vishu falls on April 15.

Historically the festival is closely associated with the agrarian economy of Kerala. The highlight of the festival is *Vishukani*, *Vishukaineetam* and *Vishuphalam*.

The Vishu day celebrations begin with the 'Vishukani', the first auspicious thing that people see on the day. This takes place during the *Brahma Muhurta* or ideally between 0400 hrs and 0600 hrs. The 'Vishukani' is usually prepared the night before the Vishu day by the lady of the house.

Immediately on awakening from sleep, people close their eyes and proceed towards the place where Vishukani is placed. This is known as 'Kani Kānal' 'kani' means 'that which is seen first.' The custom stems from the strong belief of the people of Kerala that good things seen on the New Year day brings good luck for the entire year.

VISHU

Ushering in the

New Year

-Reshma R Nair

Preparing Vishu Kani

In Kollam areas, Akshatam, a mixture of rice and turmeric, which is divided into halves of husked and un-husked rice, is placed in *uruli*. While in other parts of Kerala, Unakkalari (raw rice) is the first ingredient that goes into the *Kani Uruli* to act as a support base for the other items to be positioned.

Placed over that is a freshly laundered white *kasavu pudava* (a typical Kerala style Sarang with golden embroidery), followed by a carefully selected *Kanivellari* (golden coloured, shapely cucumber), *Vettila* (betel leaves), *Pazhukkapakku* (reddish yellow coloured ripe areca nut), golden coloured mango fruit, ripe yellow jack fruit (halved) and a shining brass *valkannadi* (hand mirror).

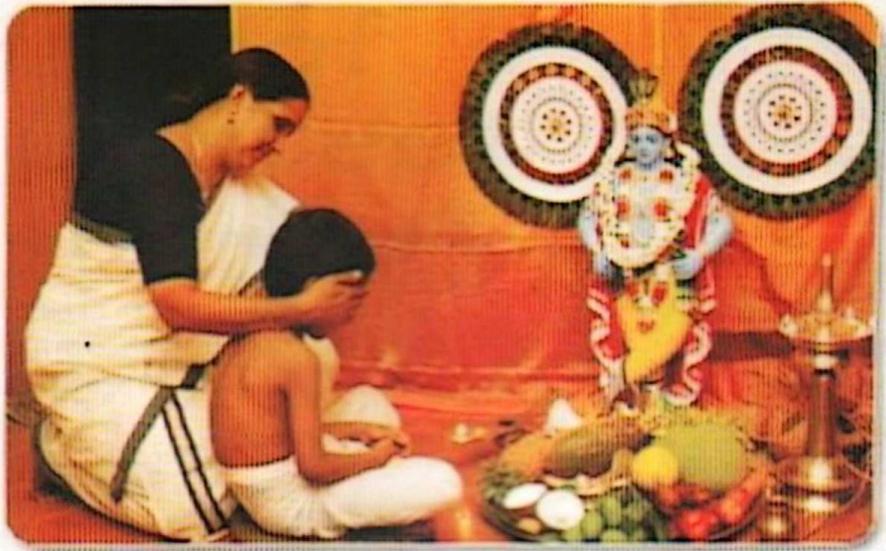
A nice, well-starched cloth is then pleated fan-like and inserted into a highly polished brass *kindi* (a spouted puja vessel used for pouring sacred water). The *valkannadi*, a special type of mirror with an extremely long and thin handle, often decorated with gold, is also inserted into the *kindi*. The *kindi* is then placed in the *uruli* on top of the rice.



In many places, Ramayanam or any of the scriptures written on Palm leaves (also called as *Thaaliyola*) is also added to the auspicious constituents of the *Kani* arranged in this *Uruli*. Similarly, *Ashtamangalyam* may also be kept in the *Kani Uruli*. After this, a gold coin or gold ornament is placed on top of all. Then keep a pair of halved coconuts upright, filled with oil along with cotton wicks.

Then in a small flat-bottomed vessel is kept a little rice, a silver coin and some flowers. After the *Kanikanal*, thinking of a wish, if one takes the coin and check if its top side is head or tail. Depending on this, one may know if his/her wish would be realized or not.

The *Kani Uruli* is kept in front of the statuette or picture of Sree Krishna Bhagavan. In Northern Kerala, the *valkannadi* signifies or is the embodiment of Sree Bhagavathi, the Jaganmata Jagadeeswari. The *Kani Uruli* is



Vishukani

decorated with *Konnappoovu* (Indian Laburnum.). A lit *Nilavilakku* (bronze oil lamp) is placed nearby in such a way that it imparts a golden yellow hue to the *Kani*-ambience.

Two deepams, which are fashioned from the two halves of a split coconut, are also kept in the *uruli*. The wicks are made from pieces of starched cloth that are folded into bulbs at the base. These bulbs are placed into the coconut oil that fills the deepams, anchoring the wicks in place. The starch helps the rest of the wick to extend straight upwards so that they burn properly. The lighting of the *deepam* welcomes God into our lives and is also symbolic of spiritual knowledge the remover of the darkness of ignorance.

Golden Start of the Year

Now the subdued yellow splendour of *Nilavilakku* and its brilliant reflections on the bronze *Uruli*, golden coloured *kanivellari*, gold ornaments and bronze mirror boost the overwhelmingly yellow abundance of the *Kanikonna* flower clusters and in turn augment the beauty of the yellow clad divinity that is Lord Sree Krishna Paramatma. When one opens the eyes for the first time in the *Brahma Muhurtha*, to look at Bhagavan's glorious



Konna (Laburnum)

image, where is the chance that any thing can go wrong in the new year?

Gold both in colour and in coin is central to the *Vishukkani*. *Kanikkonna*, a golden-yellow flower is used liberally throughout the puja room. This flower only blooms when the sun is in its most exalted position astronomically the month surrounding Vishu. In the puja room, the flower verily represents the sun itself, the eyes of Lord Vishnu. Gold coins are symbols of monetary affluence, as well as cultural and spiritual wealth, which the elders of the family must share freely with the younger generation. *Vishukkaineetam*, the distribution of wealth, is another aspect of the festival. It should be given freely and accepted with reverence. On Vishu, the highly affluent families will not only give money to their children but also their neighbours, perhaps the entire village.

Vishukkani points to a year of abundance both spiritually and materially. Food, light, money, knowledge all should fill our life. Taking in the *Vishukkani* we should pray that the vision remains with us throughout the year. It is not enough that the joy we have from viewing the *Vishukkani* comes only to our eyes. It must reflect in our thoughts and in our actions. The auspicious start of the year which has come to us due to the grace of beginning it with a divine vision is not for us alone. It is up to us to spread this love, happiness and hope to the rest of society.

This is followed by bursting of crackers and lighting of sparklers, welcoming the new year.

Then, the eldest member in the family gives '*Vishukkaineetam*' to the members of the family. The *Vishukkaineetam* is usually coins but nowadays people also

Now it is ready to serve.

Erriseri

Ingredients:

Chana daal ½ cup
Green unripe banana 1
Finely ground Black Pepper 1 teaspoon
Turmeric powder ½ teaspoon
Red chili powder ½ teaspoon
Salt to taste
Fresh or frozen grated coconut ½ cup
Cumin seeds a (pinch)
(Blend the coconut and cumin seeds to a fine paste using very little water)
Oil 2 tablespoon
Mustard seeds ½ teaspoon
Dried Red chili pepper (broken to pieces) 2
Curry leaves 5-6 sprigs
Grated coconut ½ cup

Preparation

Clean and wash the Chana Daal. Add the dhal to 2 cups of water in a cooking pot, cover it with a lid and cook over medium heat. Do not over cook to the point that the dhal is a paste.
Cut the peeled banana in to 1/2 inch cubes. Wash and place them in a cooking pot. Add 2 cups of water, black pepper, chili powder, Turmeric and salt. Cover with a lid and heat it up. Stir in between

and see that the banana cubes are cooked. Now add the cooked dhal and mix well and boil for a few more minutes. If required add small quantities of hot water to prevent the contents from burning. Add the coconut-cumin paste to this and continue heating till it comes to a boil. Stir the contents occasionally for uniform cooking and to avoid burning. Remove from stovetop.

Heat up a saucepan and when it is hot and dry add the oil. Now add the Mustard seeds to the oil and cover the pan with a lid to prevent splattering. Once the seeds start popping, add red chillies, curry leaves and ½ cup grated coconut and stir with a wooden spoon. Continue until the grated coconut turn golden brown in color and an aroma is released. Add this seasoning to the prepared Erriseri and mix very well: Cover with a lid.

Paalada Pradhaman

Ingredients:

Ada pieces of dried rice flour cakes(available at South Indian stores) 1 packet
Whole milk 5-8 cups
Sweetened Condensed milk (14 oz can) - 1cup

Sugar 1-1 ½ cups
Cardamom powder 1 teaspoon
Ghee ½ cup
Raisins roasted in Ghee
Cashews broken and roasted in Ghee 1 tablespoon-

Preparation

Wash the Ada and add this to 4 cups of boiled water and turn off the stove. Drain the water after 20 minutes.

Heat up a heavy bottomed pot and add 2 tablespoon ghee. Transfer the softened Ada to the ghee and heat and stir for 3-5 minutes. Add milk and cook the Ada at medium flame. Stir occasionally and bring it to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer this for about 45 minutes stirring to prevent the Ata sticking to the bottom and burning. Now, add ½ cup condensed milk. Stir well. Add ½ of the sugar and mix well. Taste and add the remaining sugar, to the desired sweetness. Let it simmer, stirring constantly, for 10 more minutes. Turn off the stove and let this stand in the cooked vessel for a couple of hours. Stir the contents in between to prevent a creamy layer forming on top. When the paayasam is cooled down, add the Cardamom powder and mix. Add the Raisins and broken Cashew nuts roasted in Ghee to the paayasam.

Pravasi Property Protection Council

In order to protect the interests of the real owners on their properties in the native state, an NGO namely Pravasi Property Protection Council has been formed in Mumbai under the initiative of George Sebastian a native of Vannapuram, Thodupuzha taluk of Idukki district. Sebastian is in Mumbai for the last twenty years and stays at Sion. He has submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister and Law Minister of Kerala, Prime Minister of India and Cabinet Ministers for Law, External Affairs, Overseas Affairs and others, demanding a legislation to protect the properties in the state of persons staying overseas as well as out side the state, on account of employment or other reasons.

The memorandum states that often the people who own property in their state have to stay outside the state for various reasons for a long period and their properties are managed in their absence, by siblings or other relatives with an oral or written understandings but they refuse to part with the property when the

real owners demand. The memorandum points out that the present law entails the possessor to ownership if the concerned property is under him for a period not less than twelve years. Filing of legal suits damages the family relationships, the memorandum points out. Legal proceedings take long periods to conclude which does not favour the 'pravasi' as he cannot remain present on all hearing dates. As this is an indirect harassment to the real owner, many are helpless and do not get justice.

Often during the pendency of the case, the complainant dies and thus more problems are created to the heirs as the property cannot be taken over by them until the case is settled. Further, under the shadow of 'stay', the possessors enjoy the benefits of the properties while the real owner gets nothing and have to financially suffer. This is sheer injustice to the pravasis whose contribution is much more than others who contribute to the wealth of the state, the memorandum states.

The memorandum demands that the illegal possessors of properties owned by the pravasis should be brought under criminal law.

The office bearers of the Council are: George Sebastian (President), M K Divakaran (Secretary), James (Jt Secretary) and K K Rajan (Treasurer). The working committee members are Asha Janardhanan, Prakasan, A K Rajiv and N R Harshan. The Council has approached the Chief Minister Ashok Chavan seeking permission to stage a indefinite peaceful Dharna at August Kranti Maidan to press the demand. For further details contact George Sebastian on 98199 35594.



George Sebastian

AROUND MUMBAI

MATUNGA

Confluence of Art,
Culture and Spirituality

-K A Viswanathan

MATUNGA is home to the largest number of educational institutions, places of worship, cultural organisations, open playgrounds and a highly cosmopolitan population. It is the intellectual and spiritual hub of Mumbai.

Known to have been a cluster of villages in 1700 A D, it developed as the first planned suburb of Mumbai. As Mumbai developed as the commercial capital of the then Indian empire, Matunga became home to the legion of middle class administrators of the commercial firms and business houses in Ballard Estate and the Fort area.

The original name of this area was Marubai Tekdi Gaon, a mouthful for anyone. It got shortened to MaTunGa. Marubai was the presiding deity of the village and had a temple for herself at King's Circle, under a banyan tree.

When the City of Bombay Improvement Act, 1898 came into force, the Marubai temple was shifted from King's Circle to make way for a new road. The Marubai Temple was shifted and placed near a Shiva temple on what is now College Street.

Marubai continues to be the main attraction for old time residents of the suburb. The Shiva temple was the favourite haunt of the Kapoor family that lived in the lane. The head of the clan, Prithviraj Kapoor, along with sons Raj and Shammi used to visit the Shiv temple often.

Mumbai's first Engineering College, the VJTI came up in Matunga in 1887. Originally the Victoria Jubilee Technological Institute, it became Veermata Jijabai Technological Institute, by the time VJTI had become a global brand name in engineering studies.

The VJTI campus also housed the UICT,

*Kochu Guruvayoorappan Temple*

the University Institute of Chemical Technology which emerged as the training ground for generations of distinguished chemical engineers.

The Bombay Improvement Act was designed to distribute the growing population of Bombay city evenly and to ensure for the residents quality living standards. Since a large number of the early employees of the business firms, banks and commercial establishments were South Indians, mostly bachelors, Matunga soon sprouted hotels, restaurants and eateries, to cater to their needs and tastes. Udipi hotels and South Indian Brahmin eateries flourished. Till today, they hold the fort as far as South Indian delicacies are concerned. They also claim credit for popularising Iddli, dosa, upma, uthappam, Sambar, avial and other vegetarian dishes to other communities.

Matunga soon had a number of popular restaurants Classic Hotels, Mani's Lunch Home (outside Ruia College and another opposite the Bhajana Samaj),

Madras Cafe, Cafe Mysore, Anand Bhavan, Rasna Punjab, DP's Fast Food, Ram Ashraya and Ram Nayak's Udipi Hotel and several others. A number of Irani restaurants, offering cheap bread and butter, maska slice and brun maska also flourished. Gulshan Restaurant opposite Matunga Central Station was a meeting place for several budding film makers, journalists, artists and writers.

Mani's started by V S Mani Iyer from Palghat, remains a joint which provides choicest feasts for Onam and Vishu. A little away was Trichur Mess providing tasty and filling vegetarian lunches and dinners. Long queues in front of Mani's and Trichur Mess were common features. Trichur Mess closed down along with two other notable institutions, The South Indian Co-operative Society and South Indian Concerns, both offering essential household commodities at cheap rates. The Co-operative Society was run by Brahmins from Kerala and Concerns by migrants from Tamilnadu.

Venkateswara Hotel and Appadurai's are



**Giri Stores**

other establishments providing good South Indian tiffin.

Educational Institutions

In keeping with the growing needs of the South Indian communities that dominated Matunga, the South Indian Education Society was founded in 1932 to provide quality education to them. Starting as a primary school in a rented room, the SIES has now 15 organisations, with a student strength of over 20,000 and a teaching staff of about 500, spread over Mumbai and Navi Mumbai. It has colleges offering courses in Science, Commerce, Engineering, Management, Mass Media, Environment and Packaging.

The SIES today boasts of an alumni that include Dr K Kasturirangan, musicians Hariharan, Sankar Mahadevan, Shreya Ghoshal, Saroja-Lalitha and others.

Inaugurating the SIES College in 1960, the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Y B Chavan had hailed it as "a gift from the South Indian community to the newly born State of Maharashtra."

Two years later came another South Indian educational institution, the South Indian Welfare Society as a primary school that later moved to Wadala to become a college.

Among other educational institutions in the area are the Don Bosco High School, the Khalsa College, the first Khalsa institution outside Punjab.

In 1937 came the Ram Narain Ruia College set up the Shikshan Prasarak Mandali, an educational society of teachers of Pune. In 1941, the S P Mandali founded the Poddar College, adjacent to Ruia College, on land donated by the railways.

The Poddar College later set up the Welinkar Institute of Management, adjacent to it.

Social Service

Matunga has been home to several social

service organisations over the years.

For several years the dominant organisation was the Social Service League, whose President, M Madhavan carried on various activities for the welfare of the people. He was elected to the Bombay Municipal Corporation in 1948 and ultimately became the first and the only Malayalee Mayor of Bombay (1965-'66).

As Mayor he initiated a number of projects for housing of the poor in Malvani, Ghatkopar and Deonar. He died in 1989 at the age of 73.

There was also the citizen's Welfare League, another organisation devoted to making the life of common citizens easier in the city.

The Matunga Welfare Social Service League was largely composed of members over 60, who devoted their energies to provide succour and help to families cope with bereavement. The League helped such families to conduct the last rites and rituals for the deceased procuring all materials required for the final rites, including arranging for the services of priests and engaging ambulances to ferry the body to the cremation ground.

The League has now over 700 members. K N Ganesan is the President and V N Parameswara Iyer the Secretary.

The Bombay Municipal Corporation donated a community hall near the Sion Cemetery where rites from the 10th to the 12th day could be performed at a nominal fee.

Giri Stores, in the heart of Matunga came up to cater to the need for spiritual and prayer books and accessories. The founder, Giriswaran (or Giri) provided books in Malayalam and Sanskrit for the devout.

The store, located in a small little room, has now grown into a flourishing business with branches all over South India and in an adjacent basement down

**Flower Shop**

the same street. It now sells a variety of religious tracts, CDs, idols and puja materials.

Giri's sons and daughter and their children now run Giri Stores.

Flowers, Fruits and Provisions

A number of shops at Matunga market sell jasmine, roses, thazhampoo, kanakambaram and other South Indian varieties of flowers, especially imported from Chennai every day.

A number of shops sell tapioca, small onions (shallots), koorkala, banana leaves and every other item needed for Vishu and Onam feasts.

The Annapoorna Stores, along with other stalls sell murukku, neiappam, poli, veppilakatti, varuthupperi, sharkara upperi, mango pickles (Kadumanga), pappadam and other savouries. They also sell fresh Coimbatore butter and ghee.

Matunga still retains the old flavour, with dhoti-clad men, women in nine yard saris and decked in diamond earrings and nose rings. Bare chested Vadhyars (priests) with kuduma (tufts) and the sacred thread are common sights. They flit from one temple to another, several of which abound in Matunga.

Places of Worship

Matunga has the largest number of places of worship than any other suburb of Mumbai.

One of the busiest is the Asthika Samaj, now popularly known as the Kochu Guruvayur temple.

It came into being in 1923 with a portrait of Lord Rama. Consecrated in 1953 by the Shankaracharya of Kamakoti Pitham, it housed idols of Sri Rama, Sita, Laxmana and Hanuman in a specially created garbagruha. This was followed by the installation of other idols Lord Karthikeya (1965), Navagriha (1967), Guruvayurappan (1974) and Ayyappa

(1978).

The Asthika Samaj organises a variety of religious festivities throughout the year. They have the Rama Navami Festival. Sri Krishna Jayanti festival, Sri Skanda Shashti festival, Sri Thaipooam festival, Sri Saphaha Maha Yagnam, Sri Mandala Pooja and Kochu Guruvayur Prathishta celebrations. Religious discourses, lectures, homams and Harikadha are rendered by erudite pandits and scholars of the Vedas and Puranas.

The Samaj runs an auditorium where marriages, upanayanams and other religious and social functions are held.

In the Kochu Guruvayur temple, all poojas conducted at Guruvayur in Kerala are adhered to.

Sri Sankara Madham was established in 1939. It was shifted to the present plot in 1954 and the temple constructed in 1973. The main idols here are the Shivalingam and Adi Sankaracharya. There are six smaller temples around that house Lord Ganesh, Devi, Surya, Lord Vishnu, Karthikeya and Dakshinamoorthy. The main ritual at this temple is associated with Adi Shankara's birthday that falls on May 9. It also conducts Sanskrit classes for children and adults twice a week, free of charge. The Vedas and Vedanta are also taught here. It provides pension for 15 Agnihotri pandits from Maharashtra and 25 Vedic pandits from all over the country, who are above the age of 70.

Sri Kanyaka Parameshwari Temple has Goddess Parvati. It was established in 1964. An idol of the goddess was installed in 2000, after a Kumbhabhishekam. It is the family deity of the Arya Vysya community of Andhra Pradesh.

The main pujas here are during Dassera, Prathishta Day and Vasavi Jayanti and the Goddess' birthday. Vasavi is the unmarried Goddess Parvati. There are other idols in the temple including those of Ganapati, Shiva, Ashta Lakshmi Gaja Lakshmi, Dhana Lakshmi, Danya

Lakshmi, Adi Maha Lakshmi, Sanatana Lakshmi, Veera Lakshmi, Vijaya Lakshmi and Aishwarya Lakshmi.

The South Indian Bhajana Samaj with Lord Rama as the presiding deity, was built in 1927. It conducted the Sahasra Chandi Mahayoga on completing 81 years in 2008, where 50 pandits performed the yagna. The main celebrations are Ram Navami and Dassera. The other main idol in the temple is that of Sri Rajarajeswari along with Maha Ganapathi and Navagraha idols. Devotees throng this temple on Fridays to pray to Rajarajeshwari and on Saturdays to Navagraha.

Shiv temple located near the Bhajana Samaj is one of the oldest in Matunga. Devotees visit the temple on Mondays with milk for abhishekam. They come again in large numbers on Maha-shivaratri day.

Art, Culture

Matunga has been home for several cultural organisations that have flourished for decades. They run courses in dances, music and other fine arts.

Among the premier organisations devoted to music and South Indian dances is the Rajarajeshwari Bharatha Natya Kala Mandir, started in 1945 by Guru A T Govindaraja Pillai along with his wife Karuna. Their sons, Guru T K Mahalingam Pillai and Guru K Kalyanasundaram took over from them and expanded the activities of the organisation. For the last six decades, the Rajarajeshwari has produced thousands of students, who in turn, have turned teachers to carry the dance form to various distant countries.

Rupayatan, once dominated by Guru Karunakara Panicker and Guru Raghavan Nair, continues to teach South Indian dance forms.

Kalanilayam, founded by M N Kurup, conducted several Malayalam plays and staged them, mostly in the Poddar College Auditorium, long before Shanmukhananda Hall came into being. The cultural wing of the Bombay Keraleeya Samaj has staged several Malayalam plays and celebrated Onam festival with cultural shows for decades.

Several other smaller art and cultural organisations have helped generations of



Bombay Keraleeya Samaj

children in Matunga and surrounding suburbs to acquire the finer points of dance, music and the fine arts.

Bombay Keraleeya Samaj

Among the premier Malayalee organisations in Matunga is the Bombay Keraleeya Samaj. Originally named Bombay Kerala Samaj, it was changed on the suggestion of Mahakavi Vallathol Narayana Menon, who said there could not be a Kerala Samaj in Mumbai it could only be a Samajam of Malayalees. It was formally launched at a meeting under the presidentship of Mrs Yashoda M Karuvan (who also founded the Keraleeya Mahila Samaj, in 1934). It was registered as a trust under the Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950.

The Samaj runs the oldest and only Malayalam quarterly magazine, Vishalakeralam. Over the last 60 years, it has earned the reputation of a quality literary magazine. The Samaj runs Ayurvedic dispensaries at King's Circle, Matunga, Chembur, Goregaon and Malad.

With the efforts of several leading Malayalees in Mumbai, the Samaj acquired the present premises, Kerala Bhavanam, in 1957. Among them were N Balakrishna, M Madhavan, V Rajagopal, C A Menon, K N Nair, M C Menon, M Balakrishnan, PM N Menon and others.

Kerala Bhavan today is the nerve centre of various social activities, including a free reading room, a library, a kindergarten, dance, music and sewing classes and an Ayurvedic dispensary with free consultation.



Mani's Lunch Home

Our mother tongue - 1

“Malayalam is the most difficult language to learn”

·Satyanath

Malayalam is considered by many foreigners and even by non-Keralites, to be a very difficult language to learn. We often wonder what they could find tough in this language. Though this language has the highest number of characters, 52, a close look would convince us that all letters are indeed borrowed from other Indian languages. As modern Malayalam evolved just five hundred years ago, it is the most scientific among all Indian languages. More characters mean more sounds to represent and it is an ideal vehicle to transliterate most of the world languages. This writer has often felt that by addition of a few more characters, would enable us to handle any language in the world.

While at University, I had an opportunity to learn Russian and my Keralite friend and me surprised our Russian Tutor by writing the pronunciations of the Russian words in Malayalam while the North Indian classmates were struggling with the Russian pronunciations. (The Russian alphabet has more characters than Roman has).

A person learning a foreign language would benefit more while writing the pronunciations of various difficult words in Malayalam. We can also write almost all sounds of letters of other Indian languages too.

Most languages, especially Indian, have two variations viz., oral and written. For example, Tamil has only a few characters but they manage to pronounce even complicated Sanskrit words, by hard training. If you read what is written in Tamil, you would not be able to pronounce most of the words as they pronounce. It is because their *Vaimozhi* (oral language) is much stronger than the *Varamozhi* (written language). In Malayalam, this is just the opposite. An interesting observation is that among all Indian languages, the least importance is given to the correct and good pronunciation in Malayalam. It is not the fault of the language but of the people

who use it. Recently a well known Malayalam author wondered how soon the non-Keralites discovered that he was from Kerala even when he spoke for a few minutes in English. It is no wonder, he carried the traits of a Malayalee while speaking Malayalam, into English. An average Malayalee never reads what is written and he always distort the words. Even language-teachers of Malayalam are no exception.

Handling words with kid-gloves

Many proper names starting with a short 'a' in the first syllable, are pronounced with a short 'e'. Many Hindu names such as Rama (രമ), Yashoda (യശോദ) etc, we not only pronounced as Rema, Yeshoda and also written so in English though we write them correctly in

Malayalam characters. Similarly, we do not pronounce the letter 'ta' (ട) properly if it appears anywhere but the first in a word, but as 'da' (ദ) and while transliterated in English, we use the English characters as 'da'. We have innumerable examples. For example, Vadakara, Kozhikode, Palakkad, Adoor, Chalakudi, Iranjalakuda which would have been respectively Vatakara, Kozhikot, Palakat, Atoor, Chalakuti, Irinjalakuta if we were strict with our pronunciation. Since the Government has also recognised the wrong spellings, even if a commoner wants to use the right diction, he is helpless. The funniest part is that when making one mistake, we are making additional mistakes while writing them in Devanagari. See how they are written in

Devanagari: वडाकरा, कोझिकोड, पालाक्काड, अदूर, चालक्कुडी, इरिञ्जालक्कुडा while they are written in Malayalam as വടകര, കോഴിക്കോട്, അടൂർ, ചാലക്കുടി, ഇരിഞ്ഞാലക്കുട. We treat these words as if they would get hurt if we pronounce them correctly. This unwarranted concern and regional slang have created havoc when some local names are written in English such as Trivandrum and Trichur and we made further collateral crimes by trying to correct them with new English spellings such as Thiruvanthapuram, Thrissur etc. You should carefully listen

Malayalam characters during early 20th century																																											
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to these names when a foreigner, or even a non-Keralite pronounces them. If these places had their own voices, they would have violently protested for calling them wrongly

Slang

Kerala is a small state but the slang expressions outgrew its size. Almost every district has its own slang and sometimes more than one (e.g: Malapuram district). If the people of Kasargod and Thiruvananthapuram districts converse in their natural manner, it is certain they would not understand each other as many of their words are very different from the other. Further, while people from certain districts have a tendency to abbreviate their words, certain others have an opposite tendency i.e, adding extra sounds to the real word. We shall elaborate on these points later, when we

get into detail.

There is small disagreement about the number of characters in the Malayalam alphabets, though it is of no consequence now. The current count is 51 as shown below (vowels 15 and consonants 36), the character 'tta' (്റ്റ) is not included in it though it has a distinct and different sound. If that too is included, the number becomes 52. However, it is to be remembered, three vowels R̥h, ū and ū were discarded a few decades ago as there are no words in Malayalam using those vowels though 'u' was used in one word 'k̥liptam' (meaning 'Limited'). Since English words are of late used in place of Malayalam words, that word is now abandoned though some use it as 'k̥liptam'. Further, while the character 'ksha' (ക്ഷ) is according to some, a conjunction of 'ka' (ക) and 'sha' (ഷ),

others argue that it is not so as 'ksha' is not pronounced as 'ka'+ 'sha' but differently. They argue that even in Devnagari, 'ksha' (क्ष) is shown in the group of consonants, along with 'nja' (ञ). Since Sanskrit has a role in the development of Malayalam, 'ksha' is also a part of its alphabet. Thunchathu Ezhuthachchan, considered as 'father of Malayalam' has said "Ambathonnaksharadi.." indicating the presence of 51 characters, it is generally conceded.

When a Malayalee speaks his language to a non-Malayalee who tries to learn Malayalam, the latter would not find any word that he has meticulously tried to learn, in the conversation and he might be at a loss and would feel that all his efforts are in vain. He then loudly announces "Malayalam is the most difficult language to learn".

SUNANDA ENCHANTS

by VIJAY SHANKAR

After a lapse of over a decade, Mumbayites had the oppournity of witnessing the exquisite Mohiniattam recital by accomplished danseuse Sunanda Nair, who incidentally is one the senior most disciples of the renowned Mohiniattam exponent and dance educationist, Dr Smt Kanak Rele of Nalanda Dance Research Centre. Sunanda performed for a select audience at the Ravindra Natya Mandir Mini Theatre, last week. Besides the technical quality of the performance, Sunanda created a lasting impresseion with her flawless "abhinaya"

After the invocatory number in praise of Lord Ganapathy, Suanda proceeded on to perform "Oru Magal"(One daughter) in which the mother laments the sudden disappearance of her daughter and learns that the daughter has eloped with a warrior. The mother is completely shattered and recollects the moments as to how the daughter was nourished and taken care from tender age

until her growth on to become an adolescent. Sunanda was successful in interpreting the various shades of emotions, changing from happiness to sadness and lamentation.

In the Maharaja Swati Tirunal Keertanam "Bhavayami Raghuramam", Sunanda enacted varied episodes from the Ramayana like the abduction of Seeta, the killing of Ravana and the Rama Pattabhisekam wherin Lord Rama attains the throne. Sunanda is a versatile performer with a rare ability of transforming different scenes within a short span of time. Sunanda concluded the brief recital with Jeeva wherein the dancer experiences eternal bliss which in other words is known as "Moksham"..

Sunanda recieved fine orchestral support from Kalamandalam Gopalakrishnan on nattuvangam, Kalamandalam Gireeshan for vocal, Satish Krishnamurthy on the mridangam. Nambisan on Edakka and Balasubramaniam on the violin. A brief but enhanting recital.



Old is Gold

-Satyanath

Bharyamar sookshikkuka (1968)

Lyricist: Sreekumaran Thampy Composer: V Dakshinamoorthy
Raagam: Mohanam Singers: A M Raja & P Leela

candrikayilaliyunnu candrakānTam
nin ciriylaliyunnen jeevarāgam
neelavānilaliyunnu dāhamēgham
ninmizhiyalaliyunnen jeevamēgham ...(candrika...)

Tarakayō neelaTTāmarayō – nin
TāraNi kkaNNil kaTiR corinju..?
vaRNNamōhmō pōya janmapuNyamō –nin
mānasaTTin prēmamadhu pakaRnnu! (candrika...)

mādhavamō navahēmanTamō –nin
maNikkaviL malaray vitaRTTiyenkil!
Tankaccippiyil, ninte TēnalaRccuntil – oru
sangeeTabinduvay njanuNaRnnuvenkil! (candrika...)

c = ച്ച, t = ട്, T = ത്, ā = ാ, ē = ഐ, TT = അത്ത്,
ō = ഐ, N = ണ്, R = ര, L = ല്, nj = ണ്



A M Raja



P Leela

Music maestro V Dakshinamoorthy reminiscences about the above song. "I remember an incidence when I was composing music for "Bharyamar sookshikkuka". The lyrics were written by Sreekumaran Thampy. He wrote the first two lines of "candrikayilaliyunnu candrakānTam.." and handed over to me. I asked him to give me the next two lines too. If anupallavi and charanam are written as per my tune, the song will turn better, I told him (though it was not proper to suggest to him). This was not acceptable to him. He reacted sharply and an argument ensued. "Then take your kunTam back" and I threw his paper on his face and walked out. Thampy became dejected and later, when I went back to him, he did not show any sign of recognising my presence. I patted on his back and told him to write as he thought fit. With some modifications, he wrote some more

lines. Our arguments and fight had a positive result. The song turned out to be very popular and remained a hit for a long time." (From

SangeeTa rajankaNaTTil (At the Royal Court of Music) by Dakshinamoorthy, published by Mathrubhumi Books, Kozhikode)



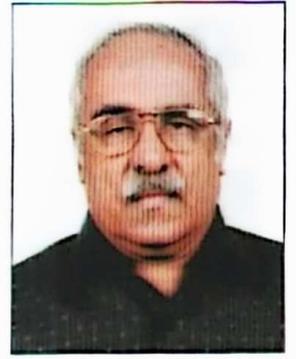


Dances of Kerala-2

Mohiniattam

The Classical Dance of Kerala

Prof. Ammanath Vijayashankar



The two Maharajas – First rumblings of rejuvenation of Mohiniattam

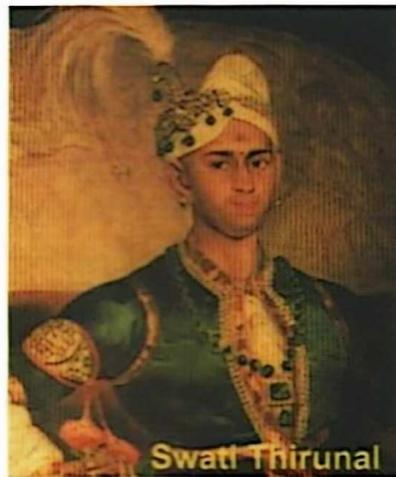
The 'Wheel of Time' rolled on. Towards the latter half of the 18th century, Maharaja Karthika Tirunna Balarama Varma assumed the throne of erstwhile Travancore, which marked the beginning of first phase of innovation of Mohiniattam. (Travancore maharajas used to prefix their personal names with the name of their birth star. Thus Karthika Thirunna, here refers to the birth star of Balarama Varma.). A great scholar and connoisseur of arts, he has to his credit many Atta-kathakal (narrative lyrical compositions based on puranas used for choreography in Krishnanattam, Ramnattam and Kathakali). His book 'Balaramabharatam', a treatise on performing arts is a synthesis of ancient Sanskrit tradition of Natyasastra of Bharatamuni and indigenous developments in the field of arts, then prevalent. It deals with technical aspects of nritta, 'dance', and abhinaya, 'acting', and elaborately deals with movements, symbols, stances and steps of a dance which he calls mohini natanam and mohini nritta, implying Mohiniattam.

The chapter on hasta mudras (hand symbols) deals with 40 single-handed and 27 double-handed mudras some of which are in vogue in Mohiniattam (Naty Nireekshanam by Guru Shri Chandrasekharan). A peep into the book reveals Mohiniattam in a transitional state from

dasiyattam. In Tamil Nadu, dasiattam had, by then progressed from its nascent form to become sadirattam, which in due course metamorphosed into glamorous and stylized classical dance, Bharatha Natyam. Enamored by the performance of sadir dancers from Tamil Nadu, Karthika Tirunna entrusted his courtesan and trusted aide Karuthedathu Chome-thiri to initiate steps to popularize the dance in Kerala.

Swathi Tirunna Maharaja

The reign of Swathi Tirunna was the golden age of arts in Kerala. Swathi

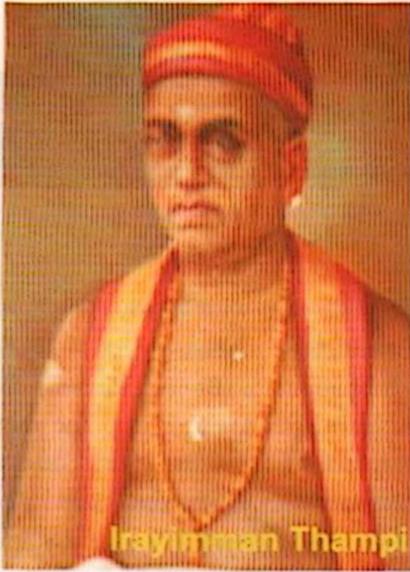


Tirunna was the best figure in Kerala's musical tradition ranking on par with the greatest among the Carnatic system of Indian music. A doyen in the realm of arts, he believed that strength of art lies in synthesis; the ability to absorb the best in other traditions and assimilate it into native heritage. Great lyricist and singer, he composed several libretto in Malayalam, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada and Hindi. The only south Indian of his time to compose lyrics in Hindi, he was

equally at ease with Hindustani music. He contributed immensely for promotion of Mohiniattam, Bharatanatyam, Carnatic and Hindustani music. The inimitable carnatic musician Shri Shadkala Govindamarar, Palakkad Shri Parameswara Bhagavathar and Irayimman Thampi were beneficiaries of his patronage. The artist in him saw the potential of Mohiniattam to be groomed into a fine dance befitting cultural ethos of Kerala. He invited to his palace the famed quartet of Tanjavor brothers (Vadivelu, Ponniah, Chinniah and Sivanandam), noted masters of Sadir attam, as Bharathanatyam was then known, to teach dance to young girls. With the help of Vadivelu, a versatile nattuvanar (a dance master who is also singer), he initiated renovation of Mohiniattam. Instead of traditional Natyasastra of Bharata and Abhinaya Darpana, he resorted to the techniques given in Balaramabharatam. This paved the way for divergence of Mohiniattam from Bharatanatyam. He invited dancers from different places to perform in his palace and also in public, thus giving a stamp of royal recognition to Mohiniattam. With the help of Vadivelu, Swathi Tirunna initiated steps to systematize staging of Mohiniattam along the lines of sadir kutcheri or Bharatanatyam recitals. But, it was Swathi Tirunna's contribution to the musical repertoire of the dance that left lasting impression. Till his time the lyrics used for the dance were mostly Tamil, a few Sanskrit and Telugu compositions. He composed several padams, varnams and tillanas for

mohiniattam, both in Malayalam and Sanskrit. A few Telugu lyrics too flowed from his pen.

Irayimman Thampi (1783- 1856), a



Irayimman Thampi

relation and close aide of Swathi Tirunna, was a noted lyricist who composed a number of verses for Mohiniattam. His famous composition, "Omanathinkal kidavo" is the best lullaby in Malayalam literature to date, an item cherished by all. His daughter Kutti Kurinji Tankachi also composed many lyrics for Mohiniattam. Being ardent devotees of Shree Padmanabha, the presiding deity of erstwhile Travancore, their compositions are epitomes of bhakti or devotion; and re-infused bhakti rasa into Mohiniattam.

A misunderstanding that there are no good lyrics in Malayalam, suited for



K.C.Keshava Pilla

Mohiniattam prompted Smt. Leela Omcheri to compile verses suited for Mohiniattam composed by these three and publish a book 'Abhinaya Sangitam' (Kerala Bhasha Institute, Trivandrum, in 1982). Mahakavi K.C.Keshava Pilla (1868- 1913) also has penned several beautiful lyrics suited for Mohiniattam which are not included in this collection as they were published separately earlier. There are several notions about the origin of Mohiniattam. Many, ignorant of the distant past of Mohiniattam consider Swati Tirunna to be its originator. Shri V.M. Kuttikrishna Menon, in his book 'Keralathile Natana Kalakal' (Mangalodayam Printers, Trichur, 1957) opines that Mohiniattam, Kathakali and Koodiattam emerged simultaneously. Some consider Mohiniattam to be a concoction of Kathakali and Bharata Natyam. A few take Mohiniattam to be a mixture of Kaikottikali and Kathakali because of some superficial similarities in the body and hand movements with that of female Kathakali characters and also Kaikottikali. Whatever similarities and differences one may discern among these art forms are at best results of convergences and divergences of co-evolution from the same cradle at some time or other. Mohiniattam definitely is a distinct form of female dance that germinated, grew and matured in the cultural soil of Kerala. It certainly is not a hybrid art form that many would have us believe, though it must have drawn nourishment from other sources. The style and tradition reveal an unmistakable distinction of Mohiniattam from other classical dances of India.

But for the sincere efforts of the two maharajas Mohiniattam could have been irretrievably lost. However, a sad fact remains that Swathi Tirunna did not pay much attention to the moral up-liftment of dancers. The successors of Swati Tirunna did nothing to encourage Mohiniattam. With loss of patronage dancers deserted the palace in search of greener pastures. Shri Parameswara

Bhagavathar, who was also a nattuvanar, returned to Palakkad and continued teaching music and dance. Most of the sincere teachers were lost in the sands of time for want of support. A few who survived were greedy and turned to old habits adding ill-fame to the dance. Some were resourceful enough to invent new vulgar items to please lustful customers. Things became so bad that the royalty was forced to ban Mohiniattam in Travancore, and the proscription was later extended to other parts of Kerala as

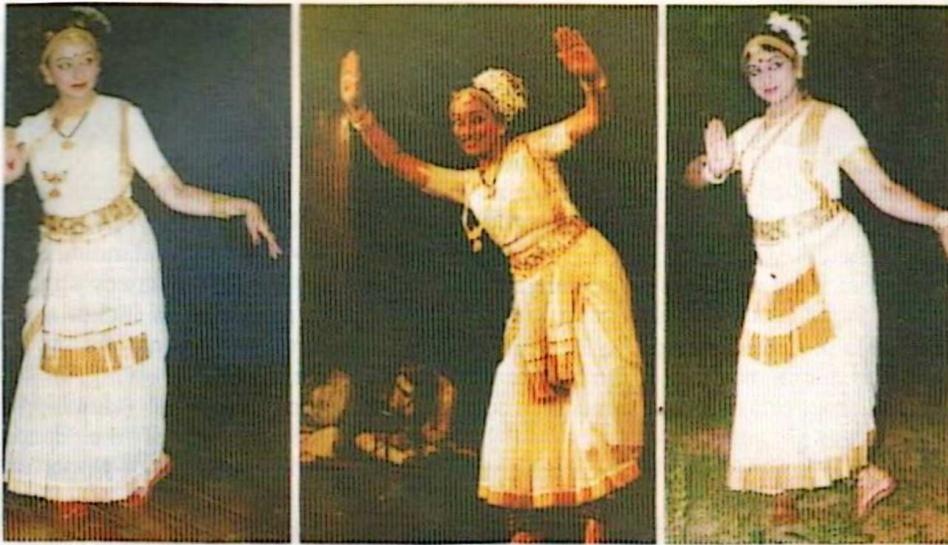


Vallathol Narayana Menon

well. The notoriety was such that many dancers were hounded as family wreckers and ostracized. Many, boastful of Mohiniattam artists of their families in the past found silence the better part of discretion. However, a few sincere artists living incognito, yet practicing, saved the art from extinction. These inveterate ones remained dormant, waiting to be awakened. At last the call came during the second quarter of 20th century, not from maharaja but from a mahakavi.

Mahakavi Vallathol (1878 - 1958) and the renaissance of Mohiniattam.

During 1920s at Korattikkara, near Trichur one Shri. Kalamozhi Krishna Menon used to teach Thiruvathirakkali (Kaikottikkali) to some girls. His friend, Shri Appekkattu Krishna Panikkar, a Mohiniattam teacher, selected a handful of talented ones from this lot and taught them Mohiniattam. They formed the



Transition of Mohiniattam costumes (1940 to 2000)

nucleus of the future genre of refined Mohiniattam dancers. This core-group comprised Orikkinedath Kalyani Amma of Peringottukurissi, Korattikkara Madhavi Amma, Pazhayannur Chinnammu Amma, Nalluvai Kunjukutti Amma, Lakkidi Mankili Kochukutti Amma and Nadavaramb Kalyani Amma of Irinjalakuda.

On 30th November 1930, Mahakavi Shri Vallathol Narayana Menon founded the prestigious academy, 'Kerala Kalamandalam', for performing arts of Kerala, at Cheruthurithi, near Shornur. Though the prime objective was to renovate and popularize Kathakali, the artistic genius in Vallathol spotted the immense prospect of grooming Mohiniattam into a graceful classical dance of Kerala. To renovate and save it from ignominy he decided, against all oppositions, to include Mohiniattam in the curriculum of Kalamandalam.

In 1933 Orikkinedath Kalyani Amma was appointed as first Mohiniattam teacher at Kalamandalam. The stigma attached to the dance was such that despite his popularity and charismatic personality, Vallathol could manage only one student. Not one to give up easily he proceeded with the lone student. That girl, Thankamani, blossomed into a versatile dancer and later became the wife of famed dancer Guru Gopinath. In 1936, when Mahakavi Rabindranath Tagore visited Kalamandalam he was much impressed by Kalyani Amma's talent, and with the permission of Vallathol took her to Shantiniketan. The classes were temporarily held by Kalamandalam Madhavan, who soon migrated to Chennai, lured by the glitter of the film world. Madhavi Amma, the disciple of Krishna Panikkar conducted classes for some time. ('Mohiniattam Charitram Attaprakaravum', Smt. Kalamandalam

Kalyanikutty Amma, D.C. Books, 1992). At the instance of Vallathol, Guru Krishna Panikkar took charge of classes and successfully tutored five students. (He was called 'one eyed asan' or 'teacher' as he must have lost the sight of one eye). One of his disciples, Kalamandalam Kalyanikutty Amma, a great exponent and teacher of Mohiniattam, later became wife of celebrated Kathakali artist Shri Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair. Old age did not permit Krishna Panikkar to continue for long, and he sought retirement in 1940. Meanwhile the World War erupted and classes were suspended. When classes resumed in 1946 Chinnammu Amma, though reluctant initially as she had stopped regular practice and performance of dance for nearly three decades, yielded to Vallathol's persuasion and became Mohiniattam teacher at Kalamandalam. It was a critical phase in the chequered history of Mohiniattam as its future was in danger. Apart from Chinnammu Amma, already stressed by old age-related problems there were only a few disciples of Krishna Panikkar. What we inherit today of Mohiniattam came from fading memory of Chinnammu Amma, as passed down to her disciples, and the experience of a few others like Kalyanikutty Amma. Chinnammu Amma's repertoire was meager as she had either forgotten or only partly remembered things. When she retired in 1964 her disciple Smt. Satyabhama replaced her and worked ceaselessly with tireless dedication.

At Kalamandalam, Vallathol worked incessantly for refinement of Mohiniattam. Though his first love always was Kathakali, his roving eyes hovered over Mohiniattam classes looking for areas



that needed renovation. He insisted on the need to purge erotic elements from the dance and also to do away with repulsive items meant to exploit the gullible. Though Swathi Tirunna had initiated steps to systematize Mohiniattam recitals, still much needed to be done. It was customary for asan, the teacher, to come on the stage with accompanying musicians and the artist, dancing around her. Vallathol put an end to this and fixed a place, on right side of stage, for nattuvanar and accompanying musicians. Only the dancer was allowed to move on to the stage; strictly on stage alone and not among audience, to tickle them, as was the practice before. He also fixed an order for presentation of items in Mohiniattam recital, following the example of Swati Tirunna. The invocatory item traditionally is Cholkettu, followed by Jathiswaram. Then padam and varnam, with kutcheri to be concluded with Thillana.

Refining the techniques of abhinay and nritta, Vallathol endowed the dance with high aesthetics and saved it from terminal decline. Besides Balaramabharatham, he used 'Hastalakshana Dipika' for hastas, 'hand gestures' used as symbols in dance. The hastas, asamyukta, 'single handed' and samyukta, 'double-handed', are common with Kathakali, but less in number.

Aharya, 'costumes and make up', also needed innovation. The costumes in vogue were simple but seductive; most often did not serve the purpose of concealment. They were scanty to allure. Vallathol insisted that apparel should be draped in such a manner that no body

parts customarily covered, as a sign of modesty, be exposed during dance. In 1960's artists used off-white long mundu with kasavu (golden) border, called plain kasavu mundu- sarees, draped like ordinary saree, and well fitting blouse with border. By '70's simple fans were added to saree, in front. The main changes in costume since then is addition of two or three well pleated fans with kasavu (golden) or gold and colored broad border. A few wear colored blouse matching with saree border to make the attire colorful and attractive.

The coiffure too has undergone transformations. Many dancers had their own hair style. Currently the coiffure is standardized. Hair is gathered slightly to the left side in a bun and adored with a garland of jasmine flowers wound around the base. A circular pendant like ornament fixed on top of the bun complete the hair dress.

The ornaments are of traditional Kerala design- like Nagapatathali, Mangamala, Pavanmala or Kasumala, Poothali, Ilakkathali.; usually one necklace, close-fitting around the neck with another one or two long chains. A few broad bangles, to the taste of the artist are recommended. The ear stud is always a large circular thoda. There are nose ring and ornaments for the head and forehead (nettichutti). A many jointed and ornamented gold plated

metal belt, arappatta, is used now-a-days in place of un-jointed one called udyanam. Rings on fingers and padasvaram or anklet complete the ensemble. Most artists use imitation jewellery called 'temple jewellery', at least partly, as gold has become unaffordable.

Vallathol fixed orchestra as mridangam, violin and edakka with nattuvanar using cymbals providing tala or rhythm. This ensured harmonization of the musical aspect (sangeeta) of the dance in tune with Kerala's musical tradition. Many use flute and even Veena wherever suited. Synchronization of music with dance, as in all classical dances, is perfect. Repeated singing of lines enables the dancer to complete facets of abhinaya before entering the next. Singing without indulging in musical complexities, within the scope of raga, maintaining tala, helps the dancer to maintain tempo and mode; be involved and innovative to become creative. In items like padam artist has greater freedom to elaborate as musician merely follows dance. But in Cholkketu, Jathiswaram and Tillana where rendering of raga (raga alpama), swara and chollu (verbal syllables) are assertive, singer comes more prominently into picture.

Distinctiveness of the style of Mohiniattam from other dances is

unmistakable. The emphasis always is on fluidity of movements. The gliding movements of the body are like undulating glissando where movements neither begin nor end each flowing and imperceptibly merging with other. There is richness of variety in movements—on tip of toes, on heels while standing or in aramandalam pose with knees slightly bent and feet placed a few inches apart, back and forth movements facing the audience, swirling and revolving, the last one describing a circle (chuzhippu) which is the imprint of the dance. Complicated and brisk foot-works are avoided. Their exclusion is not without purpose as they disturb free flow of movements, making the dance different from what it is meant to be- a pure lasya nritta.

Nurtured by best hands under watchful eyes of Vallathol, Mohiattam breathed in new life. Purged of all dross, it blossomed into a graceful and vibrant dance to claim its rightful place among classical dances of India. Virtually sanctified through rigorous purification, probably never before seen in the annals of art, all depravity and proscriptions were gone; Mohiniattam truly became a means for expression of pure Love, adoration, to Lord.

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Vagamon

Tourist Delight

Traveller

When former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee went to Kerala for a holiday-cum-ayurvedic treatment, Vagamon shot into fame. It was here that he spent his holidays. It is an ideal tourist spot surrounded by greenery of tea gardens, beautiful meadows, deep puzzling valleys and dales. The enchanting hill station dotted with tea gardens will soon be one of India's foremost eco-tourism projects. All trekking enthusiasts will enjoy climbing this 1,100 metres tall hill. This tourist place also has to offer Thangal Para, the Indo-Swiss Project and Kurisumala Ashram. Welcome to a land which would make you come back again and again. So that



you could rejuvenate yourself and cherish memories of this enchantingly beautiful land. Grass covered hills, velvet lawns and the cool mountain air make Vagamon a perfect holiday retreat. A curious blend of religious mysticism and European legacies,

this hillside village is a haven of tranquility. The chain of three hills - Thangal Hill, Murugan Hill and Kurisumala - is a mark of religious harmony. The dairy farm managed by the Kurisumala monks is worth a visit.

Location



Vagamon is an enchanting hill station located on the Idukki-Kottayam border, dotted with gardens and beautiful meadows.

Vagamon 64 kms. from Pala, is situated at an elevation of 1,100 metres above sea level. Vagamon provides unlimited holidaying fantasies round the year, except with the season being slightly off during the monsoons.

Water fall

This is essentially a lake and its catchment area, with grassy hillocks stretching into the forest on one side and ending at the cliff on the other. This large tract of land has a small stream originating at the lake.

The steep hill tract which provides access to the water fall area is along the ridge and there can be many pavilions along that to enjoy rain, wind, and the infinite view of the hillsapes. There can also be performance podiums with the mountainous landscape as the background. The stream goes along the ravine and can be developed as a trekking path as it is a rugged route, with rocks and rough undulations. A small facility like a coffee bar and the like would add richness of the place with more participation. A reservoir up stream would ensure the presence of enough amount of water

even during dry season. A stairway leading to the water fall itself would be of interest.

Rocky out crop

The steep rocky hill tract is almost mountainous in character. The cliff and ravine topography area is ideal for adventure activities that would attract people who like gliding, rope climbing, jumping and the like. There can be viewing pavilions too, as gufas in the vertical surface of the hill which would attract people for staying inside. This can be carved out of the rocks and would provide an adventurous stay.

Forest

Around 100 acres of forest area could be developed as a holistic health care center with Ayurveda as the theme. Providing treatment, health care facility, rejuvenation centers, yoga and meditation center, naturopathy clinics, herbal garden etc. emphasizing the theme of living with nature and exploring the aeons old way of life. Tree walks, medicines preparation areas, etc. all designed to a character of ashrams.

Grassy planes

Features:

1. Eucalyptus plantation
2. Road side slope

3. Grassy hills

4. School hill

The area is rather featureless compared to other parts of the site, with grassy, slowly rolling plains. It has a direct access from the road and slopes down from there ending at the cliff. At present there are plantations of eucalyptus, tea and some agricultural crops here.

This plot can be reserved for residential school or some similar institutional use. The relative flatness of the site and gentle slope is ideal for this. The land is generally buildable also. The area near the main road could be reserved for exploiting the future commercial potential. This long strip can be developed for the future public amenities and facilities that have commercial viability. Land value will also increase as the place develops and demand for plots with accessibility will increase.

Camping site

A unique type of space with stream, rocky terrain and forest meet. This can be developed to a camping site, a small lake and a special abode, for evening tea and the like.

Lake

The entertainment center and related activities like boating leisure walking etc. could be



organized around the lake. Lawned rolling hills and flowers that grow along the ground can be provided as a part of the landscaping. This should be developed with minimum intervention of built. This place (node) should be developed to communicate the essence of this site, to a passerby along the public road as this portion is visible from the road as a lake between three knolls. A stage for performance, crafts, arts center, pedestrian path etc. can concentrate around this node.

Wild Orchid

The area is a stretch of rolling hills with green meadows.

A unique cottage resort built in a rugged village style and is eco friendly in all features especially in the disposal of water, conservation of resources, building material use and construction techniques. A total of 50 cottages are coming up on one side of a beautiful lake and common facilities like restaurant, theatre etc. on other bank of the lake.

How to Reach

Vagamon is roughly 100 kms from Cochin, the commercial capital of the State. It is also 64 kms from Kottayam -the nearest railway station. It is easily accessible by road from Kottayam and Cochin. Other tourist attractions around Vagamon like Bird Sanctuary at Kumarakom, Hill resorts at Munnar, Kodaikanal etc. are easily accessible by road from Vagamon.

Kurisumala Ashram

Kurisumala Ashram is at the heart of the Sahya Mountains, which run parallel to India's south west coast. It is a place sanctified by the

breeze which blows softly across the valleys and by the overwhelming beauty of the creation, and the meditative thoughts which arise from the depth of silence. Even today people move to the mountains in search of peace of mind and of God-experience.

Today Kurisumala has become the Mount of Transfiguration, as it gives to all who come to the Ashram for a visit or to spend a few days, the feeling that, " It is good to be here", as Peeter said on Mount Tabor. Here the seeker's soul realizes the commands of God. Here are relevantly assembled 'Om karam', the primordial sound of the ancient seers of India and the Cross.

Kurisumala Ashram is a community of spiritual seekers who have become one in the spirit. The spiritual light of Kurisumala is the Acharya, the leader of seekers. The history of Kurisumala Ashram is the history of Acharya. It was in 1955 that John, at baptism, a Belgian by birth, but brother Francis as a Cistercian monk, and an Indian citizen since 1968, reached Kerala. He was prompted by an inner call to a new life.

He had travelled all over India to have direct knowledge and experience of the people. He felt, as by touch, the spiritual nature of India through learning, travelling and spiritual seeking. He visited and stayed in most of the great Ashrams of India.

In 1950, Abbe J. Monchanin (Swami Parama Arubi Ananda), a French missionary priest and H. Le Saux (Swami Abhishiktananda), a Benedictine monk, had founded the Christian way of life on the bank of river Kaveri, near Trichy (Tiruchirappally). Saccidananda Ashram, Shantivanam, was a Christian Ashram, based on Indian spiritual tradition. Br.Francis joined them and studied with them for a long time. He was specially interested in the Ashram life-style. John had come under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi when he was studying in London in 1931. Gandhiji who had come for the Round Table Conference of the British Dominions had been contemptuously spoken of as a half-naked fakir, yet it was in his simple Indian dress that he led the delegates into Buckingham Palace for an audience with Queen Mary. The nobility of his character and the simplicity of his life deeply touched John's heart. This



influence promoted John to study the ancient culture of India to which he was from now on looking as to the land of Promise for him.

Hill Stations

Kerala is the home to some of the most beautiful hill stations in the world. Waynad, Munnar, Vythiri, Idduki and Ponnudi are just some of the beautiful hill stations in Kerala. Located at a high altitude, Vagamon Hill, is one of the most beautiful hill stations in Kerala is engulfed by three hills.

It is from here one can see the green grass covering the hills and the smooth lawns like silk carpets with the fresh mountain air - make Vagamon Hill the most sort after tourist

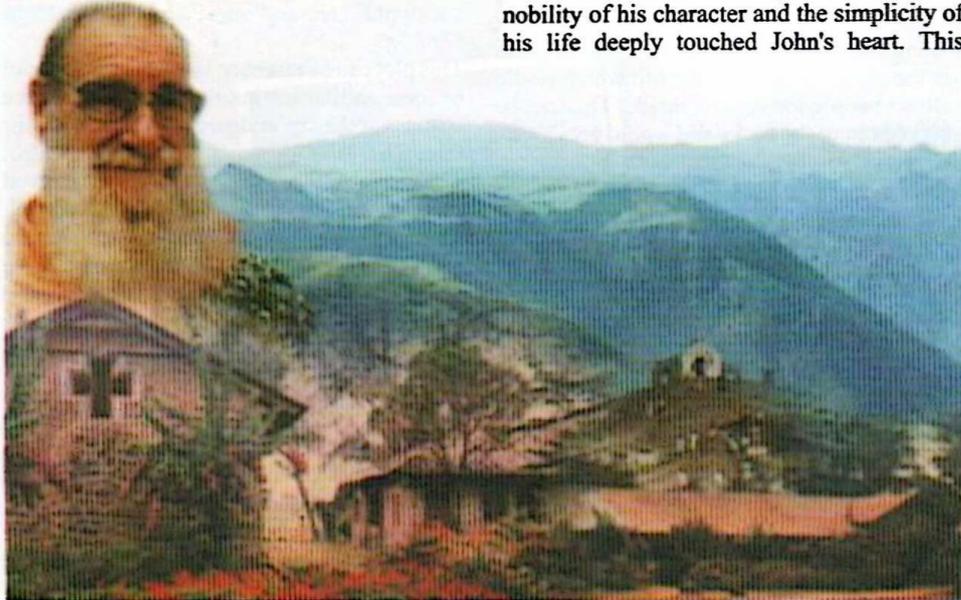


destination. Beautiful flowers, bluish brown hills, cotton mist, meadows, breathtaking view all of it can be enjoyed in the enchanting land of Vagamon Hill.

Reaching Vagamon Hills-Kerala, is quite an interesting journey. Vagamon Hill are closely connected through all major road, air and railways. One can also drive up to this hill station and enjoy the scenic view en-route. As you enjoy the view you realize how generous mother nature has been to Vagamon Hill. The scenic beauty will not let you realize the time taken for the journey and before you know Vagamon Hill in Kerala comes into view.

Once the guests reach this hill station in Kerala, finding an accommodation in Vagamon Hills is not that difficult. From star rated hotels, to budget hotels, they are all well equipped with modern facilities for the traveller. The Ananya Hill Resort is one such place. A homely ambiance, attractive décor, excellent service, Ananya Hill Resorts is one of the finest resorts in Vagamon Hill. The traveler is treated royally with a touch of the local flavour.

There is lots for a tourist to indulge himself in when in Vagamon Hill. Adventure enthusiasts can enjoy trekking on the mountains, para gliding and rock climbing. Have fun on the boat ride on the lakes or one can sit on the





banks or hours and watch the sun go down. If lucky the tourists may spot wild animals like the elephants, wild buffalos and deer.

Vagamon Hill offers a good vacation time for the leisure traveler and the adventure spirited. It is the beautiful valleys, the waterfalls and green slopes with flowers all around that can leave the traveller enthralled, an experience he will carry home with him.

One of the most beautiful places in Kottayam, Vagamon hill station is a beautiful place and a much sought after tourist destination. The hill station is located at a height of around 1100 meters above sea level. The steep slopes make it an ideal place for trekking and many trekkers are often seen here trekking on the hills. The lush green hills have a picturesque view of beautiful tea gardens, green meadows and valleys filled with mist. Known as one of the most literate place in Kerala, Vagamon hill station provides its visitors with the ultimate holiday experience and never ever fails to enthrall with its enchanting beauty.

Vagamon hill station is comprised of a beautiful series of hillocks, valleys and cascading waterfalls that make it the ideal getaway for tourists. Take a walk along the narrow, mist covered zigzag roads that wind up the hills and experience true bliss. For adventure seekers, there is an option of trekking, para gliding or rock climbing. The hill station has a chain of 3 beautiful hills called Thangal hill, Murugan hill and Kurismala that give an enchanting feel to this beautiful hill station. So visit Vagamon hill station to experience eternal bliss and peace of mind.

How to Reach Vagamon

By Air

The nearest airport to the Vagamon hill station is the Cochin International Airport.

By Rail

Kottayam railway station is the nearest railway station to Vagamon hills.

By Road

Vagamon hills can be easily reached from anywhere in Kottayam, Kerala as the place is well connected by a wide network of roads.

Places to see Vagamon

Vagamon is an enchanting hill station on the Idukki-Kottayam border. With rolling knolls cloaked in emerald green, evergreen tea gardens, the mist embracing exquisite trees, cascading waterfalls, mist clad hilltops, Vagamon has no comparison.

Meenachil River

Meenachil River, made famous by Arundhati Roy in her masterpiece "God of Small Things", originates near Vanilla County. The river or rather the stream is of ravenous beauty as it gushes and gurgles forth through the rocks and creates baby waterfalls and little pools on the way down. The crystal clear water allows you to see the pebbles underneath.



Illikal Peak

Illikal Peak at 6000 ft., is the origin of the River Meenachil and many other rivers. The natural menhirs atop the mountain take on a mystical meaning to those who view it from afar. A 3 hour climb to the top is a rewarding experience to trekkers as well as to those who wish to see the origin of one of Kerala's life giving rivers.

Maramala Waterfalls

Maramala Waterfalls, a scenic stream and its breathtaking waterfalls are together referred to as "Enchantress of the Jungle" in the local lore. Sliding down 200mts. from the numerous hillocks, this gushing water has etched out over the years, a deep natural pond amongst the rocks.



Poonjar Palace

Poonjar Palace, the seat of the ancient Poonjar kingdom still draws the crowds to marvel at an era long past. It is a glorious testimony to the regal opulence of a bygone era. The present day Munnar was a small principality under these rajahs till they were leased to the British tea companies two centuries ago.

Ayyampara

Ayyampara, or Five Rocks, a 20-acre rock formation is a favourite haunt for those who wish to see some spectacular sunsets. It is really fascinating to witness the Moon rising as the orange red Sun sets on the horizon. The Five rocks are said to represent the five Pandava brothers of the Indian epic Mahabharata. A cave nearby is big enough for 15 people to live in.



Rāgaratnamalika 3

Śankarābharaṇam

This is the 29th rāga of 72 mēlakarṭta rāgas.

Though it is the fifth rāgam of fifth Bāñacakra and is known as Dhīraśankarābharaṇam, it is known as śankarābharaṇam in mēlakarṭta rāgas.

It has complete ascendance and descendance.

Swarasthanams: caṭuśruṭirīṣbham, anṭaragāndharam, śuddhamaddhyamam, caṭuśrutidhaivat am, kākaliniṣādham.

Ādharaśruṭi is Śadjam and Pancamam.

(Ā, ā = അ, C, c = ഹ, D = റ, d = റ, ḍ = റ, Ē = റ, ē = റ, ī = റ, ng = റ, nj = റ,

Ś, ś = ശ, Ṣ, ṣ = ഷ, ṅ = ണ, Í = ള, T, t = ട, th = റ, Ṭ, ṭ = റ, Ṫ, ṫ = റ)

If 'rī', 'dha' are sung long, it may improve RANJHAKATWAM. Singing of 'sa dhā, pa' is common. Sometimes a special singing of 'Sā nī pā', jandaiswaras and dhattuswaras are common. This rāgam could also be sung with elongation. In Hindustani, it is called 'Bilawal'. In both Hindustani and western music, this is the first rāgam taught. Though it can be rendered any time, a rendering at an early beginning of night gives this a sweet and silk touch. A little variation in śruṭi can provide a lot of romanticism. It requires long and regular practice to render effectively and hence only a few singers dare to use this rāgam.

For example:

	Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Śa	Ri Ga ma
Kharaharapriya	Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Śa	
Fodi	Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Śa	
Kalyani	Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Śa	

Swami ninne
Chhalamela
Enthugupeddala
Akshayalingavibho
Sarojadhanetri
Bhakthaparayana
Sakhi hey nee gamiyka
Mahalakshmi

Varnam
Varnam
Keerthanam
Keerthanam
Keerthanam
Keerthanam
Padam
Keerthanam

Veena Kuppa Iyer
Swati Thirunnaal
Thyagarajaswamikal
Muthuswami Dikshithar
Shyama Shastrikal
Swati Thirunnaal
Swati Thirunnaal
Papanasam Sivan

Film songs

Keralam Keralam
Ponveyil manikkachha
Maanikyaveenayumaiyen
Raghuvamsapathe
Thoda thoda malarndhathenna
Netrillathe maatram
Strawberry Kanne
Omkaara naathanu

Malayalam
Malayalam
Malayalam
Malayalam
Tamil
Tamil
Tamil
Telugu

Minimol
Nrutthashala
Kaattupookkal
Bharatam
Indra
Puthiya mukham
Meensara kanavu
Sankarabharanam



Prasanna Warriar



AVIAL

By Marina Boben George

The crowd gaped in wonder at the stage. The reason? A leaping figure clad in a green Mundu, with a microphone in hand. Meet Tony John, vocalist of Malayalam Alternative Rock band Avial. Though its self titled album released just two years back, Avial has been creating waves among music lovers worldwide ever since its conception in 2003. True to its name, the band's music is truly 'Avial Paruvam' - a heady concoction of electronica, rock and folklore capable of transporting you into the days of yore.

The now quartet band is comprised of Tony, Gibson endorsed guitarist Rex Vijayan, Benny Isaac on bass, and percussionist Mithun Puthanveetil. Each of the members dabbled with different genres of music before finding their own niche. Mithun worked with heavy metal band Rage, while Rex was the guitarist of Motherjane.

Avial delivers a potpourri of music that transcends the barriers of language, race and region, offering the world a small insight in to the marvel that is Kerala. Profound lyrics reel back into the nostalgic days as it recounts tales of nature, fisher folk and moneylenders, emphasizing on the Malayali culture and traditions. Their first video 'Nada Nada' showcased a politically driven side of the band, urging the youth to take charge instead of blindly following the norms set upon them.

Understanding the language however, is not a prerequisite to enjoying the bands enthralling music. The fact that Avial has wide acclaim amongst its international audience only goes to show that it has blurred boundaries and stepped out of clichéd stereotypes to broaden its musical spectrum. The band was nominated by the Rolling Stones Magazine as one of the hottest 25 bands in India.

If you haven't heard them yet, you need to know what you're missing out on. Visit their website at www.phat-phish.com/avial. Release your inhibitions and brace yourself for the band's sheer musical genius.



Photograph by Aarti Shinde

Here's an exclusive interview with the band before their performance at the Rajiv Gandhi Institute in Juhu on 24th March.

How do you explain the lyrics to those who don't understand Malayalam?

International audiences fall for the band's music, they've never wanted to know what we're singing about! (Laughs) It's funny, but it's true. But then even we listen to a lot of German and Spanish bands- Rammstein is great, but nobody has a clue what they're singing about.

How has the band been accepted among the local audience?

A lot of people who don't listen to English music have now tuned into Malayalam Rock. They find it easier to relate to, so they're opening up to it. It's fun to see non-Malayalis mouth lyrics to 'Chekele'. At home, I think it's helped our parents understand the kind of music that we do. They even sing along now!

Tell us about your recent achievements.

We've won 6 titles at the Jack Daniels Annual Rock Awards, including Best Band, Best Song, and Best Album. Also, Avial was the lone band to represent India at the Sakifo World Music fest in Mauritius, where 40 bands across the globe came together to perform. The first lines of 'Ettam Pattu' have been used in an ad campaign by the shoe brand, Converse.

Was it a gamble to sing in a different language?

You could say it was more of an experiment. Singing in Malayalam came naturally to us, and we found our comfort zone. But we aren't a commercial band. We made the 'Nada Nada' video much before we released an album so that we could check the response we receive. People liked it, and it's been great ever since.

What are your plans for the future?

We'll be releasing another album soon. Plus, we have an eye on the Gammy Awards!

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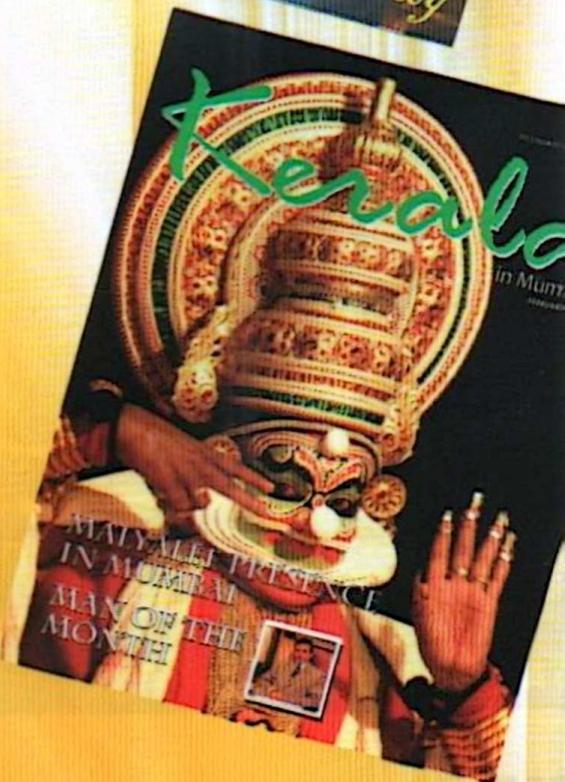
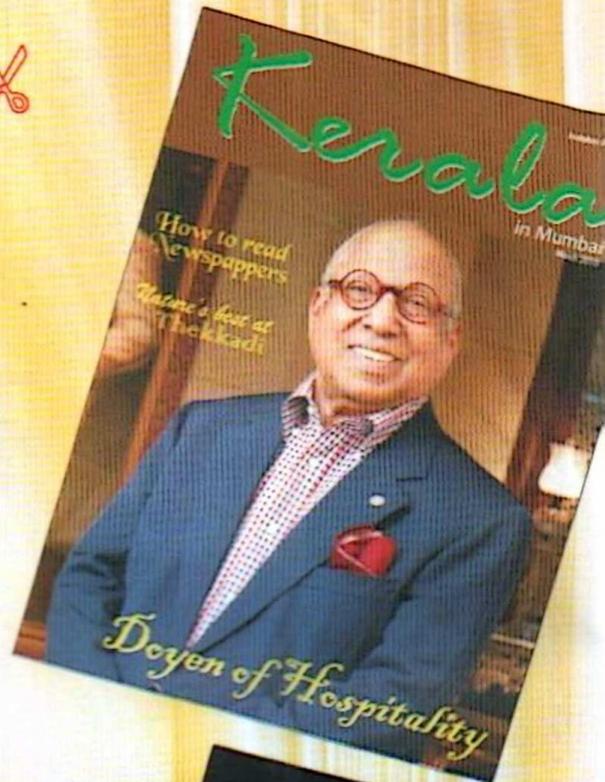
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Interview

"SPREAD LOVE": VIDYA BALAN

By Lakshmi Venkatachalam

"Kerala", says Vidya Balan, one of today's leading stars in the Hindi film world, "is very special to me. Both my mom and dad hail from Guruvayur and Palghat respectively. It is also special to me because it is the place where Amma (Mata Amritanandamayi) lives. I visit Kerala and seek her blessings whenever I can. I have also visited our ancestral kaavu in Palghat many times."

Vidya Balan hails from Palghat. Her mother, Saraswathi is a home-maker and her father P.R. Balan is Vice-President of ETC Channel. Born on 1st January, she has been brought up in Mumbai. She studied at St Anthony's Convent at Chembur and did her graduation from St Xavier's College, Mumbai. She also completed her post-graduation from Mumbai University. But she has not forgotten her Kerala roots. An Iyer girl, she knows Tamil, Malayalam, Hindi, Marathi, English and even Bengali. She has one elder sister who is married to a Maharashtrian and stays in Delhi.

Kerala Magic

Vidya Balan visits Kerala quite often and loves the greenery of the place. In fact this New year she spent in Alleppey. "Kerala is as yet unpolluted," she feels. She loves the temples there. "The sight of Malayali girls in white or cream coloured saris with chandana kuri on their foreheads and curly hair, going to temples early morning is a sight I can never forget. Cleanliness is next to godliness and truly Kerala is God's own country in that respect. It is a wonderful way to start the day. And the lamps being lit at dusk in the temples is also a beautiful sight. The temples are so peaceful there. There is a kind of divinity there," she concludes. In her house Vishu kani is kept every year. A mirror, gold jewellery or coin, silver items, nilavilakku, yellow konna flowers, rice, the customary fruits and

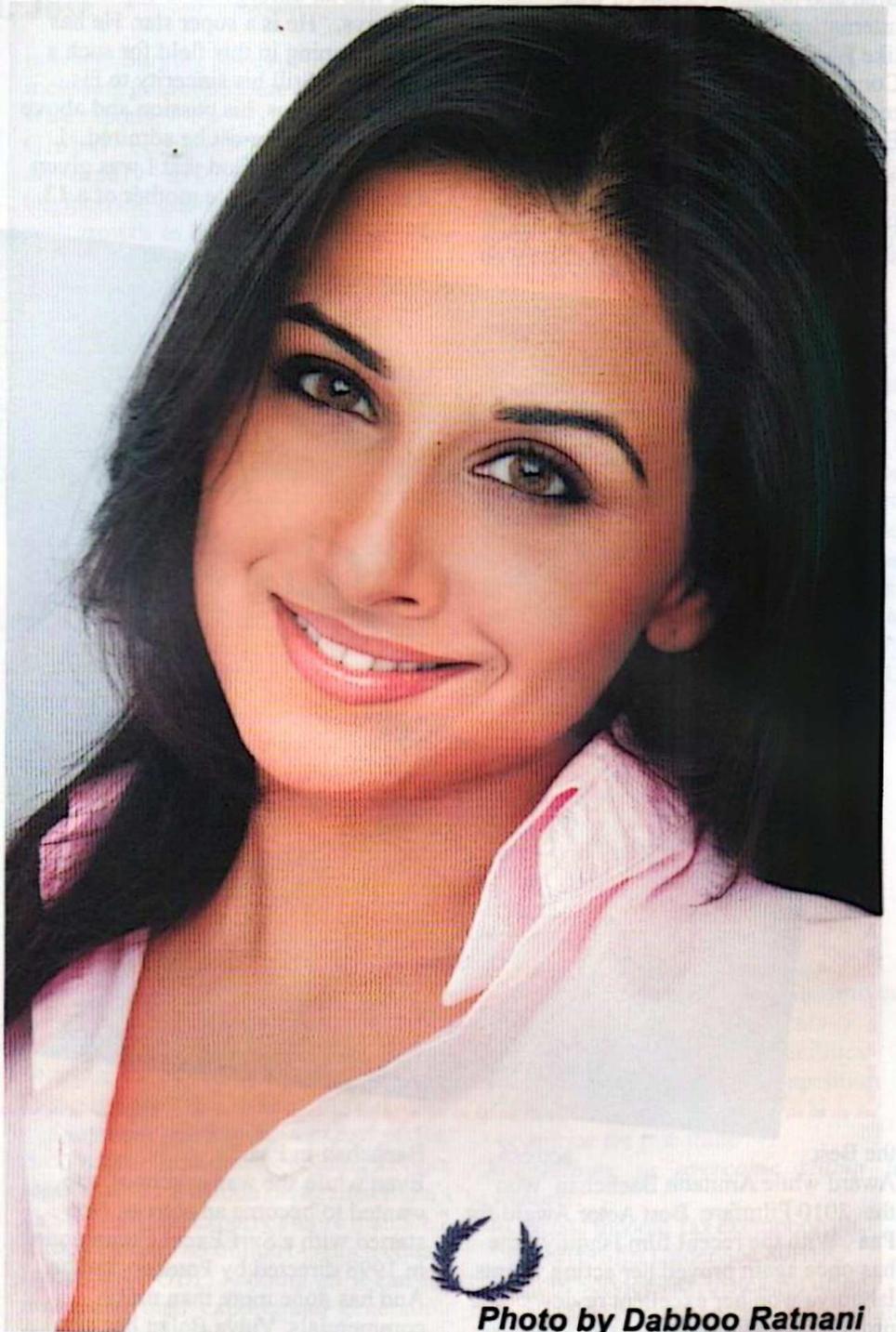


Photo by Dabboo Ratnani

vegetables as per tradition are kept in front of the deity and she has the Vishu kani, first thing in the morning. She is given Vishu kaineetam by her father and later in the morning she goes to the temple with her family. This is then followed by the conventional Vishu Sadhya with payasam, and all the curries.

Film Forays

Vidya Balan's first film was a Bengali one in 2003 - Bhalo Theko. This won her an award. In 2005 she entered the Hindi film world with Parineeta a film based on Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay's Bengali novel. She plays the role of Lolita, the quintessentially Indian woman. This

won her the Filmfare Best Debut Actress Award. And then there was no looking back. Her roles have been varied. She played a woman with a physical disability in *Guru*, was a part of the *Runaway* success *Lage Raho Munna Bhai* and her film *Ekalavya* was internationally recognized. Other films like *Bhool Bhulaiyya*, *Kismet Connection*, *Salaam-e-Ishq* gave her recognition as an actress. But with *Paa* and *Ishqiya*, she has shown the viewers her talents as a superb actress. Early in 2010, with the Filmfare Best Actress Award for *Paa*, she carved a name for herself. She won

are Waheeda Rehman, Jaya Bachchan, Shabana Azmi, Rekha and the list goes on. In the South, Revathy, Radhika, Suhasini are among her favourite stars.

Working with Amitabh Bachchan in *Paa* was an unforgettable experience, she says. "He is a super star. He has been reigning in this field for such a long time. Still his sincerity to his work, his focus, his passion and above all his patience must be admired. I feel grateful to God that I was given a chance to act as the mother of a 13 year old Amitabh

you the way you are if you accept yourself."

Heart to Heart

Vidya Balan is an ardent devotee of **Mata Amritanandamayi**. She believes in **Amma's** religion of unconditional love and compassion. And she believes all of us in our own way should spread love and happiness. This will make the world a better place to live. She is also brand ambassador for many social and educational causes.

One is struck

by this Vidya's smile and



Photo by Dabboo Ratnani

the Best actress Award while Amitabh Bachchan won the 2010 Filmfare Best Actor Award for *Paa*. With the recent film *Ishqiya* she has once again proved her acting talents. *Ishqiya* won her excellent reviews. She proved herself a match on par with sensitive actors like Nasiruddin Shah, Arsalan Warsi, veterans in the show business. She has become a favourite of cinelovers. But success has not made her complacent or smug. "I have to learn a lot more. I have to grow more as an actress," she admits. "Every role for me is a dream role. I want to do my best so that it becomes a dream role for my audience." Her favourite film actresses

Bachchan in *Paa*."

Even while she was in school, she wanted to become an actress. She started with a Surf Excel Commercial in 1998 directed by Pradeep Sarkar. And has done more than ninety commercials. Vidya Balan has also done three Music videos with Pankaj Udhas, Euphoria and Shubha Mudgal. She has acted in the earlier episodes of Ekta Kapoor's TV serial *Hum Paanch*. She is now shooting for the film *No one killed Jessica*. Her advice to youngsters who want to become actors and actresses: "Keep faith in yourselves. Do not change yourself for work. People will accept

pleasant appearance at all times. She reveals that to look beautiful, we should eat healthy food, exercise regularly, drink lots of water and have sufficient sleep. "You should feel peace within you, and then you will look good," she emphasizes. She prays a lot and that helps, she says. She believes that Ayurvedic medicines can set right many of our health problems. It should be given more importance in our country. She has a special message for KIM readers every where: "I will be happy with the affection and appreciation of everyone out there. My Vishu asamsagal to you all", she concluded.

Business, Finance and Investment

STIMULUS NEEDED FOR EXPORT SECTOR

P.I. Jose



Export seems to be a neglected sector in the recent years. There has been sharp deceleration of export growth in current fiscal year until October. While exporters were hard hit due to rupee appreciation during 2007-08, the weakening of currency would have given a sigh of relief in the following year, had it not been global economic melt down that has set off the advantage. Indian rupee has once again started strengthening, causing worry for exporters. Strengthening of rupee will badly affect exporters who are already under pressure of the global fall in demand.

Incentives (whatever little) given by the government are not reaching all sections of exporters. Incentives given in the beginning of current fiscal at a cost of Rs.2000 crores and last month's sops for 2000 products at a cost of Rs.400 crores, are small drops in a big ocean and does not have much impact on the growth of this sector. The expansion of focus markets scheme by adding 26 tiny countries will only bring insignificant share to the kitty of international business. Interestingly export promotional support of Rs.600 crores was slashed away in the Union budget for 2008-09. Export benefits are only announced but not reaching the hands of proposed beneficiary. Again, govt. is in a mood of reversing the sops during or after the union budget this month, when the crisis has not come to an end.

All India exports during this financial year 2009-'10 would be in the region of US\$ 166 billion, thus registering a negative growth of ten percent over the previous year. Hence it is not time for celebration unlike some of the flash news appearing in the media suggests. It must be remembered that Europe and America have not yet come out of financial crisis and economic recession. Exports started looking up for last three months mainly on account of the low base effect of 2008 and increased demand of festive season. The main contributors to this temporary growth are only a few sectors, viz. Gems and jewelry, Automobiles and Petroleum products. Exports to UAE shot up by 50% to \$ 24 billion during last one year mainly comprising of diamonds and

jewelry. Surging prices of these products including gold contribute to higher value-wise exports.

Global economic slowdown has adversely affected exporters of engineering goods the most. There is no real growth in quantitative terms, after taking into consideration weakening of dollar as well as inflation. Exporters are alarmed by the surge in inflation and rising rupee as both will affect their costing, thereby getting priced out in markets abroad. Following figures show the contraction in exports for thirteen consecutive months. The marginal growth for last three months may be short lived.

Oct. 2008	-12.1%
Nov. 2008	- 9.9%
Dec. 2008	- 1.1%
Jan. 2009	-15.9%
Feb. 2009	-21.7%
Mar. 2009	-33.3%
Apr. 2009	-33.0%
May 2009	-39.0%
June 2009	-29.2%
July 2009	-28.4%
Aug. 2009	-19.5%
Sept. 2009	-13.8%
Oct. 2009	- 6.6%

Government feels that India has got a comfortable Forex reserve level of about \$ 285 billion as of now. This could be reason for the govt. extending a cold shoulder to exporting community. But they ignore the trade deficit and employment generation in export sector. In contrast, China despite holding a Forex reserve of \$1.8 trillion (as against India's 285 billion) and export of more than \$ 1.2 trillion (India 185 billion) - which equals India's total GDP, is doing all it can for increasing their exports and generating employment year after year. Chinese exports have been 5 to 6 times that of India for the past many years. Export accounts for 25% of China's GDP, whereas the share of export is only 14% of India's GDP. We need to go a long way on the export front.

World economies are interdependent and we are no exception so that we can continue for long in a closed door market. All developed nations depend on export /

foreign trade in order to keep going their growth momentum and employment generation. Following country wise GDP & Export (2009 estimate) will emphasize this point:

The stimulus package introduced during recessionary period is mainly given to domestic businesses in order to create more domestic demand and to some extent offset the business lost abroad. It is time to give a little more on the export benefits at this juncture when exporters are trying to wipe out their earlier losses and call back laid off employees. Job loss in export sector alone was ten lakhs (one million) during the year 2009, as confirmed by the Commerce ministry. Job loss in United States has been 12 million and China 6 million.

Concerns of Indian Exporters:

- Global economic downturn
- Rising prices of raw material inputs
- Strengthening of Rupee against dollar
- Cascading effect of taxes in export pricing
- High rate of Income tax
- Cumbersome procedures and documentation for claiming tax refunds and nominal export incentives from various govt. departments
- Inadequate infrastructural facilities
- Ever increasing Chinese competition
- China teaming up with ASEAN countries for free trade

Suggestions to overcome slump in exports:

- Reinstate Income Tax exemption on export profits Under Sec.80HHC
- Exempt Service Tax, instead of tiring procedural mechanism for refund
- Interest rate subvention scheme must be extended to cover all export sectors
- Study how China gives better export benefits to exporters
- Improve infrastructure facilities
- Simplify export procedures
- Control rising input costs

If reinstatement of income tax exemption on export profit is not WTO compliant, taxing the profit derived from export at a concessional rate (say 50% of normal

Country	GDP	Export	Percentage of export to GDP	Per capita income: (US\$)
USA	14.0 trillion	1.0 trillion	7%	47,440.00
Japan	5.1 "	516 billion	10%	38,457.00
China	4.9 "	1.2 trillion	25%	3,696.00
Germany	3.3 "	1.1 trillion	33%	39,442.00
U.K.	2.7 "	351 billion	13%	43,733.00
France	2.6 "	456 billion	18%	42,091.00
Russia	1.6 "	295 billion	18%	8,874.00
Australia	1.0 "	161 billion	16%	41,982.00
India	1.2 "	185 billion	15.4%	950.00

(Figures are 2009 estimate and for the purpose of comparison only)

tax) may be considered. If this is done, other inconsequential export sops viz. interest subsidy, 2% additional incentive under focus market / focus product scheme, enhancement of incentives by half or one percent, etc. may be done away with.

Exporters pay various direct and indirect taxes on raw material purchases and services received during manufacturing

and shipping of goods abroad – viz. Service tax, VAT, Octroi duty, Excise duty etc. and getting refund in every case is not practical and a waste of time. A section of exporters are even not in a position to claim Modvat for the duties paid.

If export from India has to double by the year 2014 as envisaged by the Commerce Minister, there has to be a drastic shift

from the current pattern of too many incentive schemes which will make life difficult when claimed from various government departments and finally contribute very little to the thin profitability of export business.

P.I. Jose e-mail: flotek@vsnl.com
The writer P.I. Jose is Director of Flotek International Pvt. Ltd.

FINANCE BILL, 2010

Hon. Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, in his opening speech mentioned that Direct Tax Code shall be introduced effective from 1st April 2011, a simplified version in place of the current form of the Income Tax Act which is in force for almost 50 years.

Finance Bill 2010 presented in the Parliament sets this tone and brought out certainly some amendments on these expected lines.

The changes that are proposed in the Direct Tax rates are:

The threshold limits for taxable income for individuals, HUF, etc. remain at Rs.1,60,000 per annum. However, the applicable tax rates have been changed to 10% up to income of Rs 5,00,000 and 20% from Rs.5,00,001 to Rs.8,00,000 and 30% on income over Rs.8,00,000/-.

The savings in taxes will be Rs.51,500 in case of an individual whose taxable income is Rs.8,00,000 per annum which is a welcome change.

The threshold limits for senior citizens and women assessee remain unchanged at Rs.2,40,000 & Rs.1,90,000 per annum respectively.

The tax-rates, as applicable as above, shall be further increased by the education cess of 3% which has not been changed except that of surcharge on corporate assessee (domestic companies) which has been reduced to 7.5% from the current 10%.

However, the Minimum Alternate Tax

(MAT) which was at a minimum of 7.5% once upon a time has been raised to 18% which makes it no longer MAT, as the word suggests.

Individual or HUF assessee are entitled to an additional deduction of Rs.20,000 in respect of subscription to long-term infrastructure bonds. This is a welcome amendment for the tax payers while the expectation of Government of India to raise long-term resources for infrastructure is met.

The medical insurance for self and family up to a premium of Rs.15,000 per annum is deductible under section 80D of the Income Tax Act. An additional insurance cover is available for dependant parents upto Rs.15,000 which now enhanced to Rs 20,000 if parents insured are 65 years or more. Premium paid under Central Government Health Scheme will now be available for deduction under this section with in the overall limits.

Other form of Direct Taxes, such as Dividend Distribution Tax, Corporate taxes, taxes on capital gains, etc. have not been altered. Surcharge at reduced rate of 7.5% will be applicable to the existing tax rate.

Some of the rationalization and simplification provisions in the taxation laws as proposed are:

Higher threshold for deduction of taxes at source such as payment to contractors, professional fees, rent etc.



Jacob Koshi

Details are given in box overleaf.

Some of the mandatory disallowance provisos in respect of expenses where taxes at source are not deducted and paid to the account of the Government, are also proposed to be amended. Now, the rigors have been reduced if the taxes so deducted are paid on or before the due date of filing the return of income, viz. July or September, as the case may be, which is a welcome amendment.

Threshold limit for Sales/Gross receipts of Business or Profession which are subjected to mandatory audit has been proposed to be raised to Rs.60Lacs and Rs.15Lacs respectively which is again a welcome measure.

The law of Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) has already been passed in the parliament. However, the taxation of LLPs and its members are still not clear. But the Finance Bill proposes to make way for some clarity. Conversion of an

Nature of payments	Existing Limit (Rs)	Proposed Limit(Rs)
Payment to Contractors	20,000/- for single transaction . 50,000/- for aggregate of transactions per annum	30,000/- for single transaction. 75,000/- for aggregate of transactions per annum
Rent	120,000 per annum.	180,000 per annum.
Fees for Professional or Technical Services.	20,000/- per annum	30,000/- per annum
Commission or Brokerage	2,500/- per annum	5,000/- per annum

existing Private Ltd. Company or an unlisted Public Ltd. Company would not be regarded as transfer on fulfillment of certain conditions.

The definition of property u/s 56(2) of the Income Tax Act, 1961 is proposed to be amended to include property in the nature

of Capital Assets of the recipients and any receipts of such immoveable property would be considered as income from other sources only if it is received without any consideration.

The proposed changes in taxation of transfer of assets without consideration is

a back door entry by taxing the Gifts although the Gift Tax Act was abolished way back in 1998.

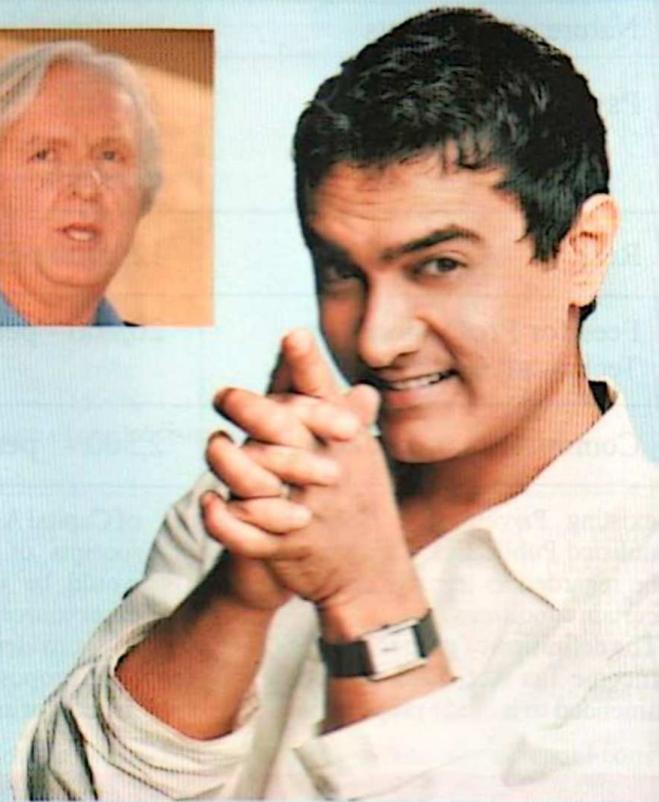
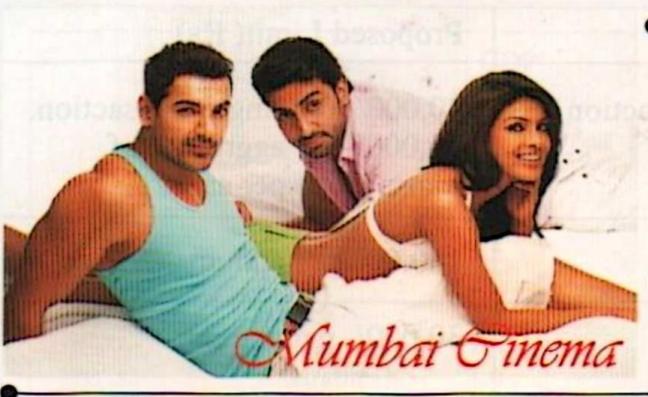
In the hindsight, one hopes that the Bill will get passed in its present form bringing in some clarity along with monetary gains.

jkoshy2007@gmail.com

Kerala in Mumbai Quiz

1. The epic Ramayana mentions a river in Kerala by its present name. Name the river.
2. This Chief Minister of Kerala later became the Governor of Punjab. Who is he?
3. Vayalar Ramavarma wrote the lyrics for the first time for this movie. Name its Music director.
4. Two landmark institutions in Mumbai were named after Queen Victoria. One of them was Victoria Terminus. What is the other one now known as? (Write the full name)
5. Name the Malayali who was once the Mayor of Mumbai.
6. This Hindi movie had the longest run in Mumbai. Who is the hero of this movie?
7. This old friend of Swami Chinmayananda is now as famous as him. What is he known for?
8. One of the finest actors of Malayalam cinema, after hearing the news that he is chosen for the national award for best actor, roamed the Bombay streets after consuming a drink too many, in a celebratory mood. Who was he?
9. One Bombay Music director composed many well known songs for Malayalam films, after composing very popular tunes for many Hindi movies. Who is that composer?
10. This site in Mumbai is believed to have been visited by Lord Ram. Name the site.

Rush the answers to 'Kerala in Mumbai' before the end of the month. The first person to send all-correct answers will receive a fabulous gift. Address: Quiz, Kerala in Mumbai, B-105, Twin Arcade, Military Road, Marol, Andheri (E), Mumbai 400 059. or Email: keralainmumbai@gmail.com



Aamir Khan may join James Cameron

Bollywood Superstar Aamir Khan is on top of the wish list of Avatar director James Cameron who is keen to cast him in one of his films.

When speaking about the meeting of Western filmdom with India's own Bollywood, Aamir said that he has not yet been a part of a Hollywood film, to which Cameron quickly replied, "We could fix that as soon as possible."

The director of two of the highest-

grossing films in the history of cinema, Titanic and Avatar, Cameron shared the stage with the actor known as 'Mr Perfectionist' at the India Today Conclave 2010 in New Delhi and said that he was honoured to do so.

Aamir too expressed his admiration for the Terminator director saying that he came to listen to him and learn as much as possible.

The director and the actor have a lot in

common, including the fact that they hold records for highest grossers.

While Cameron's 3-D sci-fi epic Avatar broke global box-office records, Aamir's 3 Idiots is the highest grossing Bollywood film of all time.

The two were speaking on the topic Future of Cinema at the conclave, where the audience included Cameron's wife actress Suzy Amis and Bollywood actors Ranbir Kapoor and Asin among others.

Freida Pinto likely to be next Bond Girl



Heroine of the Oscar Winner Movie 'Slumdog Millionaire' Freida Pinto is likely to be cast as the Bond girl in the next James Bond movie. Its director Sam Mendes is believed to have approached Freida with a multi million dollar proposal. The movie is to be shot in Afghanistan. It is planned to be visually stunning and Freida is to cast against Daniel Craig, Bond of the last couple of movies. Hollywood actress Olivia Wilde is another actress of the movie.

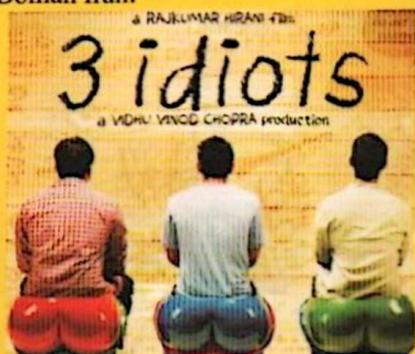


Mumbai Cinema - Recent Releases

Still running:

3 Idiots 14th Week

Cast: Aamir Khan, Madhavan, Kareena Kapoor, Boman Irani



My Name Is Khan 7th week

Cast: Sharuk Khan, Kajol



March 5, 2010

Atithi Tum Kab Jaoge ★★★

4th week

Director: Ashwini Dhir
Cast: Ajay Devgn, Paresh Rawal

Road, Movie ★★★

Director: Dev Benegal
Cast: Abhay Deol, Tannishtha Chatterjee, Satish Kaushik

Rokkk

Director: Sumeet Saigal

Thanks Maa ★★★

Director: Irfan Kamal

Cast: Shams Patel, Salman, Fayyaz, Jaffer, Sakshi, Raghuvir Yadav, Barry John, Ranvir Shorey

Hello Zindagi ★★

Director: Raja Unnithan Cast: Mrunmayee Lagoo, Kitu Kidwani, Milind Gunaji, Neena Gupta, Kanwaljeet Singh

March 12, 2010

Right Yaa Wrong ★★

Director: Neeraj Pathak Cast: Sunny Deol, Irfan Kahan, Konkona Sen Sharma, Isha Koppikar



Trump Card

Hide & Seek

Director: Shawn Apranha Cast: Purab Kohli, Arjan Bajwa, Mrinalini Sharma

Na Ghar Ke Na Ghaat Ke

Director: Rahul Aggarwal Cast: Om Puri, Paresh Rawal, Neena Gupta, Ravi Kissan, Narayani Shastri, Rahul Aggarwal

Swaha

Director: Manoj Sharma

March 19, 2010

Shaapit-The Cursed

2nd week

Director: Vikram Bhatt

Cast: Aditya Narayan, Shweta Agarwal, Rahul Dev, Shubh Joshi

Love, Sex and Dhokha

2nd week

★★★

Director: Dibakar Banerjee

Cast: Anshuman Jha, Shruti, Rajkumar Yadav, Neha Chauhan, Amit Sail, Arya Devdutta, Henry Tangri

Lahore

Director: Sanjay Puran Singh Chauhan

Cast: Aanaahad, Sushant Singh, Farooque Sheik, Shraddha Das, Mukesh Rishi, QAshish Vidyarthi, Sabyasachi Chakraborty, Nafisa Ali, Kelly Dorji, Nirmal Pandey

Idiot Box

March 26, 2010

Hum Tum Aur Ghost ★★

Director: Kabeer Kaushik

Cast: Arshad Varsi, Dia Mirza, Boman Irani, Sandhya Mridul



Prem Kaa Game

Director: Ashok Kheny

Cast: Arbaaz Khan, Madhuri Bhattacharya

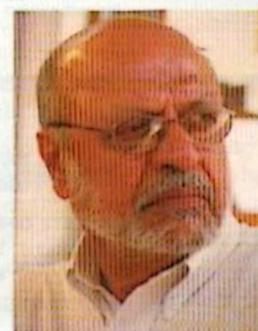
Well Done Abba ★★★

Director: Shyam Benegal

Cast: Boman Irani, Minissha Lamba, Sameer Kulkarni, Rajit Kapoor

Mittal Vs Mittal

Director: Karan Razdan Cast: Rituparna Sengupta, Rohit Roy



Shyam Benegal

Your Home

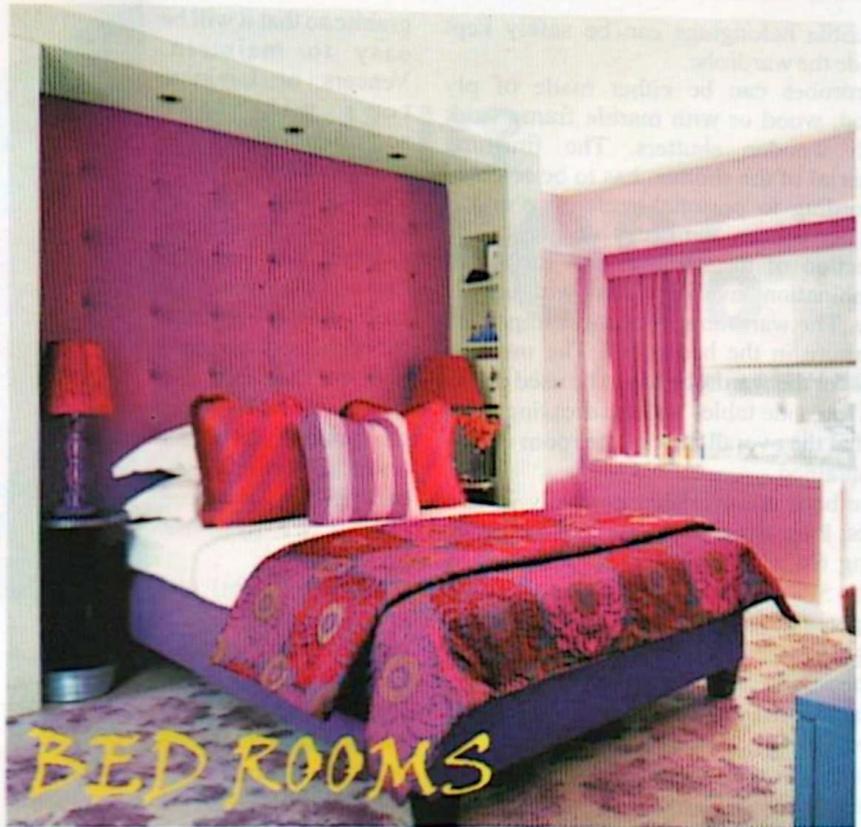


Krishna Kumar R Nair
Consulting Interior Designer

The bed room is the most personal and private place in a house. Utmost care is to be taken in designing it. It should meet the basic need of the end user and as such should address his needs and tastes. Even a ten year old will have a dream of his/her own bed room which must be done to the individual's taste and desires.

Basically, every house should have a minimum of 3 bed rooms, one for the master that is the master bed room and the second for children, depending on their age and needs. The third one either dedicated to the guest who drops in sometimes or it can be a makeshift bed room for the second child.

Vastu says that the master bed room



should be on the south east part of the house so that the wealth of the house should be safely kept there since it is the place of Kubera.

Atleast the master bed room should have an attached bath room and the orientation of the bath room should not be in the south west corner. The master bed room has to be the biggest bed room in the house to merit of the status of the master. A bed, probably two side-tables on either side of the bed, a dressing table and a

wardrobe to accommodate clothes, belongings etc. are essential in a master bed room.

The ideal depth of a wardrobe will be 24 inches with the shutters and the width of shutter should not increase more than twenty inches. Arrangement inside the wardrobe must accommodate all belongings and can be decided before the creation of the wardrobe.

The drawers should not be above 42 inches from bottom since any increase in height will be difficult for a normal six footer to remove the stuff kept inside. The first drawer should start 42 inches from bottom.

Drawers can have 8 inches depth with glass front so that once one can open the wardrobe shutter, he can locate the dress he wishes to wear without opening the drawers.

Nowadays, the shelf also can have a roller channel so that one need not strain oneself to remove the stuff kept on the shelves. One can just pull the shelf out and remove the stuff easily.

If the wardrobe height exceeds seven feet it will be a little difficult for a person to remove the clothes that is hung on the rod inside at that height. The portion above seven feet in height can be covered with shutters where rarely used items like brief cases, etc can be kept.

Nowadays, high quality drawer channels are available that can take weight up to 75 kgs each. There should be a provision for a small safe or a vault so that one's



valuable belongings can be safely kept inside the wardrobe.

Wardrobes can be either made of ply wood, wood or with marble frame work with wooden shutters. The finishing material of the shutters has to be selected according to personal preference and it can be veneer, laminates or glass. The selection of the material and its colour combination have to be done with utmost care. The wardrobe is the most important furniture in the bed room. The material used for the wardrobe has to be used on the bed too, side tables and the dressing table so that the overall look of the room can be maintained.

The beds are available normally in two sizes; king size and queen size, king size being 6'6" x 7'0" and the queen size is being 5'6" x 6'6". We can accommodate it as per size of the room available, the height of the bed should not exceed 16 inches with the mattresses. The storage beds are very handy to keep day to day linen, pillows, bed sheets etc. Option exists for a top that can be opened upwards or one or two drawers from the sides. Drawers are the best option since it is easier to manoeuvre. The height of the side table has to be minimum 1 inch lower than the mattress so that while sleeping one will not get hurt accidentally. The side table top can be clad with marble or

granite so that it will be easy to maintain. Veneers or laminate tops will take scratches easily on extensive use.

The mattresses in various materials are available. A combination of 3 inch thick coir with one inch thick rubber foam covered with quilted fabric can make a good mattress for young and elder ones. Definitely we can go for a branded one, if we have the budget.

As per vastu, the dressing table has to be placed in such a way that the person sleeping on the bed should not be reflected on the mirror. The dressing mirror should have a small storage cabinet next to it so that the make up items can be accommodated.

We have an abundant variety for the flooring. One can go from Indian marble to the trendiest wooden flooring. Pre-

laminated mdf floorings are the easiest to be fitted on the floor. Existing flooring has to be broken for marble tiles and granite, etc whereas the pre-laminated mdf floor can be fitted on the existing floor within three hours for a normal bed room. It is available in various colours and forms too. The windows can be either in wood or in aluminium anodized finish, as per the theme of the room, a master bed room should be in veneer finish with either contemporary or classical theme. Veneer has the rich look with either mellamine or polythene coating. It's long lasting and one wouldn't get bored looking at it for a

longer period of time. Laminates are also available in various colours. Mixing two three colours in proportion will give the room a decent look.

LCD TV being available cheap, can be installed opposite to your bed along with a personal music system. The lighting plays a vital role in the interior. Combining white lights and yellow lights with LED concealed light can be used as per your mood. If you are listening to music, you can switch off all the general lighting and switch on only the concealed LED lights (few of the colour changing ones will give you a great atmosphere and ambience).

The ceilings can be done in plaster of paris or in gypsum board. Plain ceiling with shadow boxes and concealed lights will look very sophisticated and contemporary. The shadow boxes can have a contrasting darker colour. Concealed general lighting is the best option.

Curtains play a major role in the interiors. There should be two curtains; one a sheer curtain and the other a solid one when you need privacy. When the curtains open you can keep the sheer curtain on. Having a scallop above the curtain gives a trendy look to the room.

A picture lamp at seven feet height above head board with a beautiful painting below will give a lot of character to the wall and one can also add reading lamps on either sides of the bed.



Women's Reservation Bill

Do we need it? Yes, but 50%

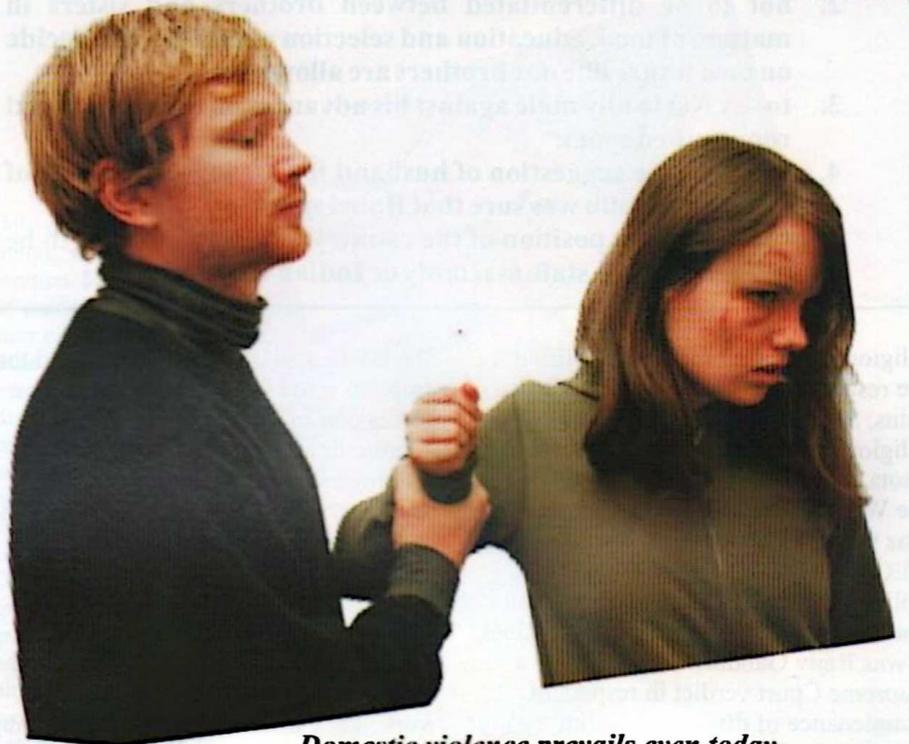
-Revathy

The men showed their generosity towards us by throwing a coin into our begging bowl to show their superiority over us. I strongly feel we deserve 50% but giving us 33% is charity.

We form half of the human race of our nation but still we have never been given our legitimate share of decision making at home, forget at the national level. Is it necessary that we be given our share that is legitimately ours instead of taking it over all by ourselves?

Anything given, never benefits the getter but degrades the getter cheap and makes him lazy. See the conditions of Red Indians in US, the local Kuwaitis in Kuwait, the original Ugandans or Nigerians. They all have been given their basic needs of life free by their respective governments and that made them lazy, arrogant, thieving and mentally degraded. They have become parasites of their own government, bleeding the body politic. The social security aid given by US government to the unemployed only helped them to remain unemployed.

Look at ourselves. The first reservation was that for Harijans when India attained political independence. Nehru



Domestic violence prevails even today

and his colleagues felt that only reservation in all spheres of life would help them gain equality. Gandhiji had said that unless their plight improves, India cannot be called truly free. Reservation was limited to a period of ten years. When the leaders realised that the intended benefit had not percolated down but only benefited a

few who could corner them, they extended the reservation. The beneficiaries resented being addressed as Harijans unless it was related to cornering more benefits. Now it is a crime inviting fine and imprisonment if they are called by their caste names. Later other castes besides SCs and STs were added to the list of reservation



Jawaharlal Nehru



Indira Gandhi



Rajiv Gandhi



Sonia Gandhi

beneficiaries, under the name Other Backward Classes (OBCs). More and more self appointed caste leaders came forward demanding their caste also be included under OBC category. Politics became caste based. One more potential 'vote bank' called religious minority was left out. Though India has many religions, only one

female, the fusion of Y of father and X of mother forms the male. In this process, the mother's role is limited but often the mother is blamed for conceiving a girl. Many a time, the man goes for a second wife to get a male progeny. Even in modern times, the woman has no powers to say NO to a conception.

tutored about her duties and obligations but rarely about her privileges and rights.

"Leaders" of women's groups vociferously fight for our rights but they hardly do anything if the victim belongs to an ordinary family without any connections. It appears whatever they do is for their own benefit such as a nomination to some award, a seat in a legislature or some recognition. If they are really serious and committed to the issues they profess, they should (there are thousands of women NGOs in India) merge into a cohesive unit (even a political party) and fight against male chauvinism. Remember we form 50% of the population and we can easily defeat the men at their own game. It is a day dream as it is many times proved that no two women would see eye to eye on any subject. If the women leaders join together, all other problems faced by the society would easily evaporate and there would not be any need for political parties. Let Sonia Gandhi, Sushma Swaraj, Vasundhara Raje, Uma Bharati, Mamta Banerjee, Brinda Karat, Mayavati, Jayalalithaa, Gowri Amma, Ajitha and others join together to fight for women. All of them had some kind of patronage from either dynasty, powerful families or they knew how to assert themselves in a male dominated society. It is the same case with our neighbouring countries where at some time, women were or are at the helm of the affairs. Let them unite to leave the Yadav triumvirate to lick their thumbs.

According to me, our rights should be:

1. to be born a female because we can't help it.
2. not to be differentiated between brothers and sisters in matters of food, education and selection of careers and decide on own future like our brothers are allowed to.
3. to say NO to any male against his advances on the road, board room or bed room.
4. to refuse the suggestion of husband to vote for a candidate of his choice. (Lalu was sure that Rabri would obey him) and
5. to occupy any position of the country on our own strength be it in panchayat, state assembly or Indian Parliament.

religion, according to them, qualified for the reservations. Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs etc are all outside the religious barricade. Now the reservation quota is set at 27%. We have lived with the Women's Bill for the last 15 years. It was taken off the political agenda BECAUSE of opposition from some political parties. Indira Gandhi or Rajiv could have easily adopted it. Remember, it was Rajiv Gandhi who subverted a Supreme Court verdict in respect of maintenance of divorced Muslim women: the Shah Bano Case. Now, Sonia says that it was Rajiv's dream to provide 33% seats to women in legislative bodies. After Rajiv, the Congress party did not have enough numbers of their own to adopt the bill. Congress is a political party run not on democratic process but on a dynastic mode. The only time after Independence that Congress party worked democratically was during Jawaharlal Nehru's time and then during Lal Bahadur Shastri's tenure.

Our activism ends in speeches that seldom materialise to reality. Our leaders loudly proclaim that they respect women and want to solve their problems.

What are our problems? Too many. It starts with the conception of the embryo. Everyone knows that it is the father who decides the sex of the embryo because he contributes the XY chromosome that will fuse with the XX chromosome of the mother. If the X part of paternal chromosome fuses with the X part of maternal chromosome to form the

She is often an obedient partner and the problem starts there. Then starts the procession of problems. Foeticide, infanticide, dowry deaths and discrimination between sons and daughters regarding food, education and often employment too. As for physical abuses, there is no distinction from a girl child, adolescent girl or adult woman. All are equally prey to man's lust and ego. Female workers are paid less than male workers for the same work. They often end up even financing the man's evil styles of living such as drinking, gambling and more often than not, supporting the domestic expenses and children's education and other needs. Their work load is always more than that of men. An employed woman has to change to a domestic mode as soon as she arrives at home to look after her husband, children and often in-laws too. She hardly gets any sympathetic consideration that she too is human and needs rest. She neither gets any help from husband or other male members of the family.

What we need is not reservation in legislatures but awareness about our problems and their solutions. Indian upbringing is such that since a very tender age, a girl child is



Shah Bano

Your Health



Some of the problems that constantly nag youngsters these days are dandruff, hair fall and untimely graying. Wrong life style and defective hair maintenance are the reasons behind them.

Thick and jet-black hair is not only attractive but a sign of good health. Hair has a great role in controlling and maintaining the heat affecting the head during all climates. So a proper hair care is a must not only to women but men also.

The abundance of hair and its rich texture, like many other diseases, is a matter of heredity. Baldness and pre-mature graying catch many quite early in their life.

Dandruff

Scratching of head, hair fall, falling of a white powder from scalp, burning sensation, small blisters on scalp are some of the signs of dandruff.



The major reason for dandruff is the accumulation of dirt on the scalp. It is a kind of fungus. If moisture, oil, dust etc are allowed to accumulate on the scalp, it may result in dandruff. When hair pores are blocked, hair fall starts.

Hair fall

Dandruff alone does not cause hair fall. But it becomes a matter of concern only when it becomes excessive. Hair fall is normal after

Hair Care



Dr Indira Varier

delivery among women. Lack of nutrients may cause it. Side effects of many other diseases also may cause it. Irregular secretion of some hormones can cause hair fall.

Graying

Graying is a matter of great concern. Untimely graying is mostly hereditary. Nevertheless, physical disorders as well as mental disturbances and protein deficiencies may also cause graying. In this case, treatment is the only option. However, hereditary graying can only be delayed.

Precautions

It is necessary to take some precautionary measures to prevent dandruff, hairfall and graying. Dandruff is a communicable disease. Comb, towel and sheets are some of the means of spreading it. These items have always to be kept clean and other people should not share them. Care is also to be taken to keep hair and scalp clean and tidy. In case one cannot have a hair bath, it should be kept well cleaned with a piece of cloth. If oil is used on hair, after some time it should be completely removed with the help of shampoo. Otherwise possibilities of contacting cold, sinusitis, neck pain etc cannot be ruled out.

Oils of good quality should be applied on the hair and rubbed well much before the actual bath and it would help maintain hair and improve eye sight. Oils exclusively prepared for hair are much better than ordinary oils. Proper application of specially prepared oil can improve hair texture, eye sight, prevent hair fall and graying.



Till recently, women of Kerala used shampoo to remove oil from the hair. Shampoo was prepared from the juice of leaves of Chembarathy (*Hibiscus Rosa Sinensis*), Kurunthotty (*Sida carpinifolia*), Katukka (*Chebulic myrabola*), vellilam (*Mussoenda frondosa*) etc. Powder prepared from cherupayaru (green gram), uzhunnu (black gram), nellikka (gooseberry) can also be used to remove oil from hair.

Food habits and health of hair
Health of hair depends on the health of the body. All types of nutrients, vitamins, minerals etc should be part of our normal food. Fruits, milk, green gram, vegetable leaves would help improve health of hair. Proteins, calcium, vitamins, iron etc available from these items are essential for the health of hair. Gooseberry juice taken after dinner would also be helpful.

... to continue in page 45

Beauty Care

NOW THAT SUMMER IS HERE

By Lakshmi Venkatachalam

Summer has come again.. This is holiday time when many people like to take a break and go on a vacation. Some go to their home-towns. For the children it is a break from schools and studies; for the grown-ups, a break from office routine. But summers take their toll on our



health and our skin. The heat of the sun and its ultra-violet rays are not good for our systems and bodies. As noon sets in, the intensity of the sun's heat increases and makes us feel tired and hot. We rush indoors to our air-conditioned comforts. If by some chance we are out, by evening we become so tired that we wilt and droop. We blame the heat. As an after effect, illness sets in, cough, cold, stomach ailments, eye infections, prickly heat, allergies, rashes, and so on. And our holidays are spoilt. But with a little care and precaution, we can enjoy our summers and look back upon them with satisfaction.

Liquid Magic

Intense heat of the summer months dries up the moisture from our skin. Whether the heat is humid like in Mumbai where we sweat, or dry, as in Delhi, where we seem to be in a furnace, our skin suffers. It becomes dry or flaky due to lack of moisture. To overcome this, our intake must include a lot of liquids. And what is a better thirst-quencher than water? We must drink a lot of water. Whenever we go out, we can carry a bottle of water. Before going outside, we can drink a glass of water. Water quenches our thirst; it reduces our fatigue. It prevents dryness of the skin. It takes care of our dull hair. It prevents chapping of our lips.

Tender coconut water is another excellent anti-dehydrating liquid. It is a wonderful summer companion. Coconut water is hygienically packed by nature herself. It is very good for



various summer illnesses. All types of citrus fruits like lemon, sweet lime, oranges, grapes etc are ve-



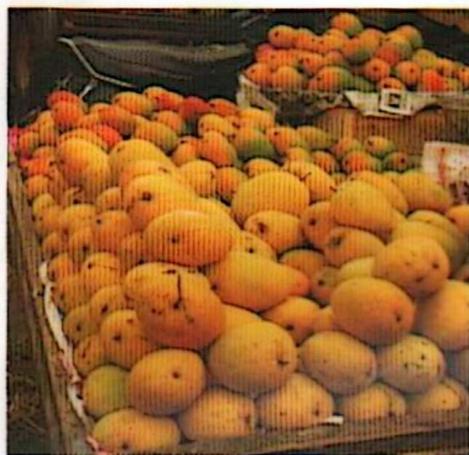
good. They boost our immunity levels. Then, there are watermelons, mangoes, pomegranates which are in abundance during these days and are very good for our health.

Barley water mixed with milk or buttermilk has a soothing and cooling effect on our digestive systems. Chaas or buttermilk is another cool drink, easy on the stomach and soothing to our taste buds. There is another natural health-drink that will keep our systems cool. Take equal quantities of coriander seeds, cumin seeds and aniseeds and powder

them. Then add a handful of black grapes and powdered sugar twice the quantity of the above mixture. Mix the above thoroughly. Soak one teaspoon of this mixture in 200 ml water. After two hours, squeeze and strain the liquid. This is a very good time-tested drink that cools our body.

Diet rules

As a rule, avoid spicy and pungent foods during summer months. Cooked food gets spoiled fast due to the hot weather and bacteria thrive on it. So it is best to eat freshly prepared food as far as possible.



Salads must accompany all meals. We can eat rice or wheat preparations without any fear. A plate of curd rice and a salad made with small pieces of cucumber, tomatoes, carrots, onion, sprinkled with coriander leaves, green chillies and a dash of lemon juice, not to forget a pair of roasted or fried pappads, is a divine treat. The same goes for the comfort food. Kichdi-kadi is very soothing during these hot days. These are perfect summer meals, gentle on our stomach and taste-buds.

All kheer preparations and shrikhands can be eaten without worry. Among vegetables, all water based vegetables like cucumber, different types of pumpkins and gourds, cabbages, tomatoes are good and healthy.

Beauty Hints

Summers may be harsh, but we have to take care that our skin does not become a victim of its cruelty. Our skin should not lose its softness. Generally the heat reddens our skin, or we get prickly heat. Our skin itches or they become flaked. Our lips become chapped. Our eyes redden. Our heels crack. Our hair loses its shine. The skin on our hands and legs



become dry. With a little care and some effort, we can retain the softness and suppleness of our skin. Aloe vera based lotions are excellent body smootheners. There are many natural and water-based body lotions to take care of the skin. A good moisturising face cream or a Sunscreen lotion (SPF 15-30), takes care of the face. It prevents the UV rays of the sun from harming the skin and prevents skin allergies also. Lip Balms soften our lips. Rose water on cotton swabs placed over our closed eyes refresh them. Vaseline heals the cracks on our feet. A warm coconut oil massage followed by a wash with a mild shampoo gives our hair the lustre it lacked.

A few minutes of body care can drive away summer beauty woes.

Wardrobe care

Nothing can beat cotton fabrics worn during these hot months. The fabric is cool, and keeps our bodies cool. It is



better to choose light shades and wear loose clothing. Also covering the head with a cap or a piece of cloth protects us from the heat.

Summer is the time when we reconnect with our families and friends. With some basic precautions and planning we can enjoy this season and spend the days in a manner that is worth remembering and which will bring a smile on our lips when we recall them later.

contd. from page 43

Hair Care



Recommendations

1. Coconut oil in which small onion, cut into very small size and fried well, should be applied and rubbed well and after 30 minutes, wash hair in kanjivellam (liquid part of rice gruel) and water. This will get rid of dandruff.
2. Liquid extracts from leaves of castor and hibiscus flowers, softened by keeping them under sunlight, if applied regularly, would prevent dandruff and hair fall.
3. Once a week, a mixture of lemon juice and coconut juice should be applied on hair for about half an hour. This also would prevent hair fall.
4. The following specially prepared oils and Rasayanas are necessary to maintain hair properly. Medicines containing gooseberry and metal ash, are recommended to remove dandruff, graying and hairfall but only after consulting the doctor.

- (a) Dhurdhoorapatradi kera tailam
- (b) Doorvadi tailam
- (c) Pamanthaka tailam
- (d) Prapoundareekadi tailam
- (e) Neelibringadi kera tailam
- (f) Kayyanyadi tailam
- (g) Malathyadi kera tailam etc
- (h) Narasimha Rasayanam
- (i) Chyavanaprasam
- (j) Brahma Rasayanam
- (k) Valiya chinchadi leham
- (l) Sankha Bhasmam

Malayalam Movie World



Malarvadi Arts Club launched

Dileep and his Grand Productions launched their new film 'Malarvadi Arts Club' which sees actor-singer Vineeth Sreenivasan debuting as director. The film has five fresh faces along with Jagathy, Nedumudi, Innocent, Salim Kumar and Suraj Venjarammoodu in supporting roles.

The inauguration of the film was held at BTH Sarovaram and several luminaries from tinsel town like Megastar Mammooty attended the function. Vineeth's dad Sreenivasan was all smiles and looking at his son Vineeth in admiration.

Says Vineeth Sreenivasan: "I have worked on the script for over a year. It's a youthful film set in a village called Manassery and tells the story of five friends who run the Malarvadi Arts Club."

Sarath Kumar becomes busy in Malayalam

Nadigar Sangam' chief Sarath Kumar has become the busiest actor in Malayalam films, following the mega success of his Pazhassi Raja. Now Sarath is doing two more films in Malayalam - Christian Brothers and Oridathoru Postman.

In the multistarrer Christian Brothers directed by veteran director Joshi Sarath shares screen space with Mohanlal, Dileep, Suresh Gopi, Lakshmi Rai, Kavya Madhavan and Kaniha.

Last week Sarath Kumar signed a new film in Malayalam Oridathoru Postman, which has Bobban Kunchacko and Innocent playing son and father. Sarath Kumar plays a mystery character who saves the hero from his predicaments.

Mohanlal starts Oru Naal Varum

Mohanlal and Sreenivasan are coming together, nearly four years after their last smash hit Udayananu Tharam. In Oru Naal Varum, Sreenivasan is playing a strict Town Planning Officer, who is trying to demolish the house built by Mohanlal, as he has violated all building laws.

Says producer Manianpilla Raju: "It is a one man upmanship game between Lal and Srinu, which should work with the audiences. Sameera Reddy is playing Lal's wife in the film which is family entertainer laced with comedy and sentiments."

Tamil actress Devayani is said to be making a comeback through this film. The film also has Sooraj Venjarammoodu, Nedumudi Venu, and former Tamil actress Devayani in a crucial role. Manoj Pillai is the cameraman. The film will be completed in one schedule in and around Thiruvananthapuram and Kanyakumari. Producer Manianpilla Raju and distributor Damor Films are trying to release Oru Naal Varum, as Mohanlal's 50th Birthday special on May 21, the star's birthday!

Mohanlal turns Gandhian

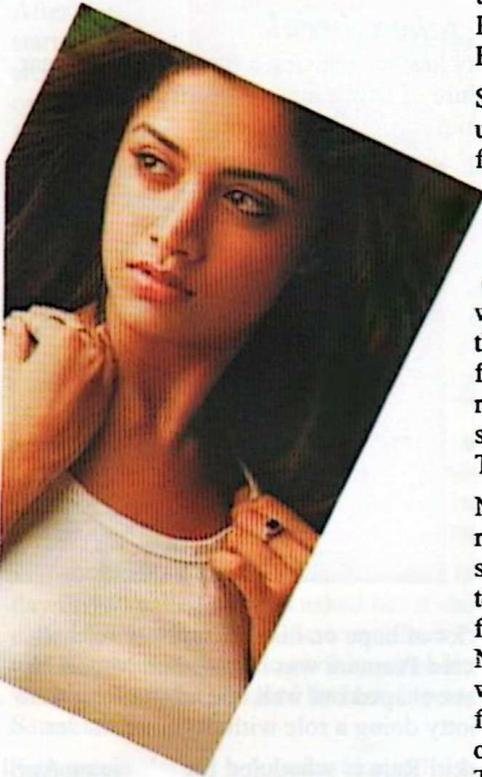
Superstar Mohanlal who has endorsed a number of luxury items like gold, real estate, financial companies, elixirs, textiles and has even done a surrogate advertisement for a liquor company, is now turning Gandhian!

Mohanlal has accepted Kerala Industries Minister Elamaram Karim's plea to become the goodwill ambassador of Khadi and Handloom clothes in the State. Karim also said that the actor would do it free of cost.

Elamaram Karim said: "The clothes woven by these sectors wove many lives as well. Support for them would not only boost their production but also strengthen the culture and heritage of the State. Hats off to Mohanlal for supporting Khadi."

Mamta croons in Malayalam

Mamta is not only a good actress, but a fantastic singer. She has sung under the baton of music director Devi Sri Prasad for the Telugu film Rakhee and won a Filmfare award.



She once again sang under DSP in Tamil for Vijay's Villu.

The song Daddy Mummy... was a runaway chartbuster, and was the highlight of the film. However, for some strange reason, Mamta stopped singing in Telugu and Tamil.

Now, she has rendered her first song in her mother tongue Malayalam for director Amal Neerad's Anwar, in which she plays the female lead opposite Prithviraj. The music director

of the film is Gopi Sundar.

Meera Jasmine makes a comeback

Mira Jasmine is making a comeback after a year with Patinte Palazhi directed by Rajiv Anchal. She plays the role of a leading playback singer who is lonely at the top. Jagathy Sreekumar plays her father and Revathy plays an important role along with Nedumudi Venu and Manoj K Jayan.

"When I wrote the story I had Meera in my mind and only she can do this character of a great singer. Music will play an important role in the film. ONV's lyrics are to be tuned by debutant Dr Suresh Manimala," said director Rajiv Anchal.

'Sufi Paranja kadha'

Director Priyanandan's Sufi Paranja Kadha is based on writer K P Ramanunni's award winning novel, was released on February 19.

According to Prakash Bare, the producer and lead actor, "The film as well the novel (published 15 years ago and now sold in 8 languages) on which it is based, is all about our glorious past and our land's culture of communal harmony. It actually explores the shared space we had among Hindu and Muslim religions. The censor board had commended our matured approach towards the subject and has cleared the film with U/A certificate."

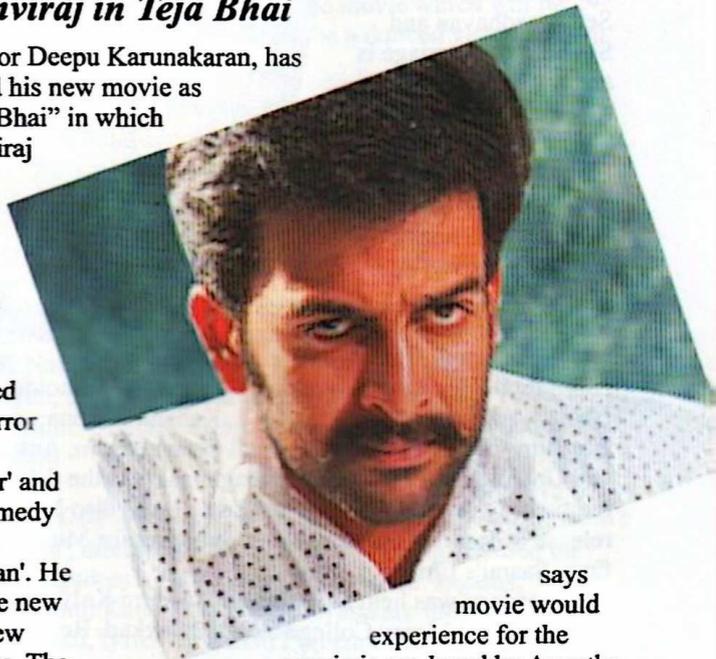
The story in the film unfolds, as a narration by a Sufi (a Muslim mystic). It is about Karthi, who belongs to a prestigious Hindu tharavadu called Meleppullara. The patriarch Sanku Menon had seen some dangers awaiting the family in the future, during the time of her birth itself. But he never told anyone about his anxieties. Karthi grew up to become a beautiful girl.

She falls in love with a Muslim trader Mammooty who comes for trade there. She elopes with Mammooty and the two start living in a Muslim household. Karthi becomes a Muslim but she could never give up her original beliefs and faith in her traditions. This creates tensions in her life and between communities as well. Sharbani Mukerji plays Karthi while Thampy Antony is Sanku Mama and Prakash Bare is doing the role of Mammooty. Jagathy Sreekumar, Babu Antony and Samvritha Sunil also include the cast. Rafeek Ahmad's lines have been composed by Mohan Sithara. K G Jayan is the cinematographer. Produced by Silicon Media and distributed by Central Pictures, Sufi Paranja Kadha was part of the competition section in the prestigious International Film Festival of Kerala at Thiruvananthapuram in December 2009.

Prithviraj in Teja Bhai

Director Deepu Karunakaran, has named his new movie as "Teja Bhai" in which Prithviraj

plays the title role. Deepu has earlier directed the horror movie 'Winter' and the comedy 'Crazy Gopalan'. He that the new be a new viewers. The Vision who earlier 'Robinhood'.



says movie would experience for the movie is produced by Anantha produced 'Chocolate', 'Classmates' and

Shooting commences as soon as Prithviraj is free from his other engagements. Currently he is shooting for more than a dozen movies including 'Cousins', Manickya Kallu, Anwar, Ulakam Chuttum Vaaliban, Arjunan Sakshy and Mumbai Dost. Prithviraj is the most busy actor in Malayalam with many big banners.

Mohanlal and Rasool Pookutty get D Litt

After being honoured by Territorial Army with a Lt Colonel rank, Mohanlal is awarded a D Litt by the Kaladi Sanskrit University. The University was honouring the actor for his services for popularising the language by enacting the Sanskrit play 'Karnabharam.' Accepting the doctorate, Mohanlal stated that the honour should go to Kavalam Narayana Panicker for writing the play and encouraging him to enact the role. Without his encouragement, this would not have been possible, Mohanlal said. Besides Mohanlal, the Oscar winner Rasool Pookutty was also honoured with the doctorate. While Mohanlal came to the venue with his mother Santhakumari, maternal uncle Radhakrishnan Nair and wife Suchitra. As soon as he received the honour, Mohanlal approached his mother and sought her blessings. Rasool Pookutty was accompanied by his wife Shadiya and children Monu and Mia.

Actress Sridevika gets married

Malayalam Tamil Kannada actress Sridevika married Mumbai based pilot Rohit Ramachandran on March 27.

Sridevika became popular with Ahathian's Kannada film Ramakrishna in which Jai Akash acted.

Sridevika is the daughter of agriculturist Sethumadhavan and Shoba. The marriage is an arranged one. Her Malayalam films include Anil's Parthan Kanda Paralokam, Avan Chandiyude Makan, Chembada, Samayam and a children's movie Manchadikkuru.

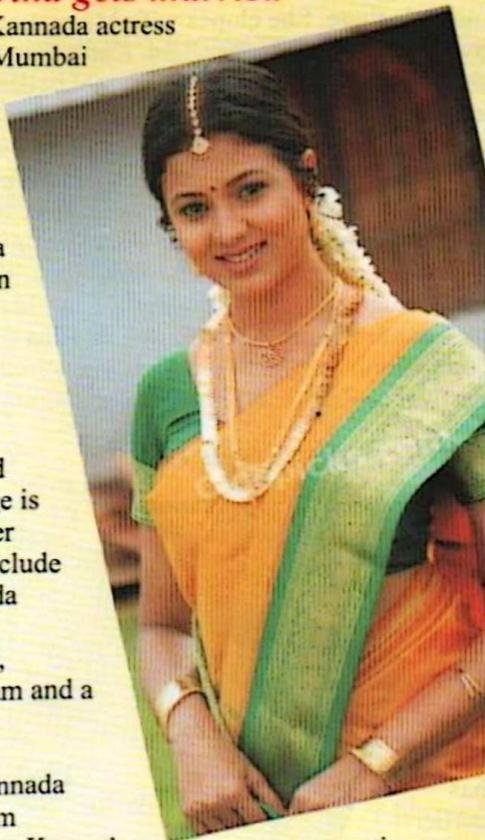
She also did the Kannada remake of Tamil film

Autograph. Her other Kannada movies are Neela Kanda, Santha and Kshana Kshana.

Her films in Tamil are Andha Naal Gnayabagam, Anbe Vaa, and Gnabagangal in Tamil. Gnabagangal was the debut movie of lyricist Pa Vijay as an actor. It was also her last release in Tamil. At present she is shooting for Mirugam fame Saami's film Sarithiram.

The marriage was held at Prasanna Lakshmi Kalyana Mandapam in Mercy College Road, Palakkad. Relatives and film stars attended the wedding.

She is likely to continue her acting career after her marriage as Rohith has approved it.



Mohanlal revives his production house

After 11 years, Mohanlal has revived his home banner Pranavam Arts. Some of the best movies ever made in Malayalam like- His Highness Abdullah, Bharatham, Kamaladalam, Vanaprastham, were made under this banner.

Pranavam Arts and a Mumbai based corporate will jointly produce Major Ravi directed Kandahar. Suresh Balaji, brother-in-law of Mohanlal will look after the production. Suresh has been doing outsourcing works for Mumbai producers making Tamil films and is a professional production man.

Mohanlal is clearly going for a total restructuring of his priorities in production. It also clearly means that Aashirwad Cinemas of Antony Perumbavoor will be put in the backburner. Will the star distance himself from Antony his right hand man for many years, remains to be seen.

Meanwhile the star is going all out to make Kandahar happen in the next six months. Major Ravi is doing research and also trying to get permissions to shoot the film in high security areas. Amitabh Bachchan has given dates for the film towards the end of the year.

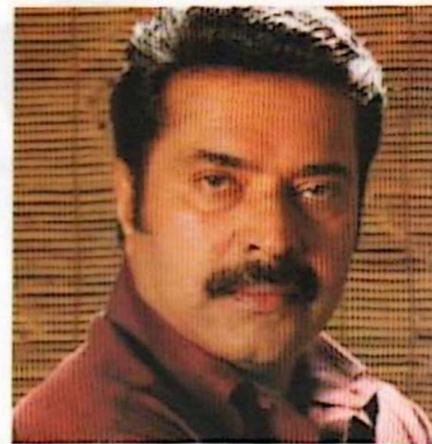
Now it is almost certain that Tamil superstar Suriya will not

be a part of the film. He has called up Mohanlal and has cited "lack of dates" as reason for not doing the film. The producers are now on the lookout for a Tamil action hero to step in as Suriya's replacement.

Mammootty to take a break

Megastar Mammootty has been having a torrid time this year after the colossal failure of Drona and Thilakan's wild accusations against him.

Mammootty the cool guy that he is, did not get into a slanging match with Thilakan, though the veteran actor tried to needle him. Now leaving all that behind, Mammootty is going to take a one month break, where he will just chill out. He wants to keep his holiday plans under the wrap.



The star is pinning a lot of hope on his two summer releases. B Unnikrishnan directed Pramani was released on March 24. The film is said to have shaped out well and after a long time you can see Mammootty doing a role with negative shades.

His multi starrer Pokkiri Raja is scheduled for release on April 30. It is a mass action film with Prithviraj and Shriya doing the supporting roles. Both these films are sure to work big time at the box-office.

'Chaverpada' gets ready

The surprising success stories of films like '4 The People' have always prompted filmmakers to regularly make attempts to repeat the feat. A new movie coming up with similar storyline is 'Chaverpada' directed by debutante T S Jispaal. Featuring Arun, Manikuttan, Siraj Ali and Ajith Somanathan as a suicide squad named 'Fourtech' studying in a college and engaging in societal struggles to correct the bureaucracy and politicians. The movie will have Bala as the hero. G S Anil scripts this movie which is produced under the banner of Sourparnika Vision.

Apart from this there are a number of movies under different stages of production featuring the recently debuted young heroes. Asif Ali, Nishan and Nithya Menon team-up for 'Apoorva Ragangal' while movies like 'Malarvady Arts And Sports Club', 'Best Of Luck', 'Not Out', 'Text Book', and 'Plus Two' feature a lot of youngsters in the cast.

Thanthonny' released

Prithviraj had his first release of the year in 'Thanthonny' on March 18. This action packed family drama, directed by debutante George Varghese has the young star as Kochukunj a rich angry young man who decides to take on the social system.

Tipped as a treat for the fans of the star, the movie features Telugu actress Sheela as the heroine. The movie also features a song crooned by her along with the veteran Udhayabhanu. The film is scripted by T A Shahid.

The cast of the film includes Saikumar, Biju Menon, Jagathy

Sreekumar, Lalu Alex, Captain Raju, Ambika, and Saddique.

Sameera in love with Kerala

After she started working opposite Mohanlal in T.K.

Rajeevkumar's film 'Oru Naal Varum', Sameera Reddy has literally fallen in love with God's own

country. Sameera says Kerala is a breathing place. The greenery, the back waters and especially the food - Appams and payaru payasam top the list and then comes puttu- Sameera loves everything Kerala.

Sameera thanks Priyadarshan for being in Mollywood. One day Priyan called her and asked her if she knows somebody called Srinivasan. After she went blank Priyan continued and told her, well you will know him soon because you are working in a film scripted by him, it was so quick recollects Sameera.

Sameera is already a popular face in Kerala through Tamil films 'Varanam Aayiram' and 'Asal'. Sameera is also cast in another Malayalam film Casanova again with Mohanlal. Tamil actor Arya also plays an important role in 'Casanova'.

'In Ghost House Inn' on March 25

After the big hits like 'In Harihar Nagar' and 'Harihar Nagar-2', director Lal will present another sequel to the superhit series with 'In Ghost House Inn'. The movie again features the



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famous foursome in another hilarious act.

'In Ghost House Inn' features the four friends who decided to spend a vacation in the big bungalow, newly bought by Thomaskutty with the money that he got in the climax of 'Harihar Nagar-2'. Amidst their extravagant celebration in the bungalow with their families, some new occurrences unleash a horror parade before them, to make their life horrible. Produced by P N V associates and Lal creations, the movie will have his regular castings and the regular crew including cinematographer Venu, music director Alex Paul and editor V Saajan.

Mammootty's Big B in Telugu

Megastar Mammootty's most stylish movie 'Big B' will have a Telugu release by next week. The movie which will be presented in the same name, will be a dubbed version of the sensational hit.

The movie features Mamtha Mohandas, Nafisa Ali, Pashupathy and Sherveer Vakil who are also known names in Telugu. Directed by Amal Neerad, the movie is presented in Telugu by Sri Varalakshmi Productions.

'Pulliman' released

'Pulliman' starring Kalabhavan Mani and Meera Nandan was released on March 26. The screenplay and direction are by Anil K Nair. Other actors are Nedumudi Venu, Vijaya Raghavan, Sudheesh, Sharanya, Urmila Unni and KalaRanjini. Lyrics by Kaithapram, Sharat Varma and music by Sharath.

'April Fool' on April Fool's Day

Damar Cinema's 'April Fool', directed by Viji Thampy is being released on April 1. Jagadeesh, Siddhique, Biju Menon, Jagathy, Sukumari and Kannada actress Nayana are the actors. Story by Jagadeesh, lyrics by Girish Puthencherry and music by M Jayachandran.

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Profile

Narinder Gupta

KIM News Bureau

He is handsome, youthful, educated, committed to his cause, clear in vision and determined to convert his vision to reality. He is Narinder Gupta, Managing Director of RNA Builders (NG). According to him, his physical age is unimportant. What is important is one's mental age. "I am seventeen with a lot of worldly experience. A couple of degrees would not make a person but what he does should be the criterion of assessment," he explains. "I achieved nothing. Whatever I achieved, I have transferred to others. I have no time to think about them for I have something before me demanding my attention and time. When I achieve something, I will let you know," he concludes. RNA Builders (NG) has undertaken many projects in Mumbai and around, building homes for Mumbaikars, providing well designed, strong homes with ultra modern facilities and amenities and take pride that their clients got their monies worth. NG explained, they don't live on past glories because there is so much to be done for the future. For the last 27 years RNA Builders (NG) have lent a whole meaning to gracious living in Mumbai's suburbs both western

and central. They display confidence to deliver the goods as promised and this confidence takes them long. They have not only built home for the common people but also for corporate bodies like Mahindra & Mahindra, CEAT, Reliance, ENRON, IDBI, IOC, BPCL, Air India etc. NG Classic, Oakland Park, NG Vihar, NG Heritage, NG Garden and NG Arcade are some of the projects they have already completed. NG Vedant, NG Galaxy, NG Rock, NG Vikas, NG View, NG Estate, NG Plaza, all in Mira Road East, and NG Suncity Phase II in Kandivli East, all in the western suburb while in central suburb NG Royal Park (Kanjur Marg) and NG Hill View (Thane West) are the current projects. NG Shelter, NG Paradise, NG Plaza (all in Mira Road East), NG Park Phase III (Borivli East) and NG Suncity Phase III (Kandivli East) are projects lined up for execution. One thing Narinder Gupta does not want to hide, is that he and his



organisation have received assistance-co-operation and devotion from his employees and is thankful to them. "They would also progress as RNA(NG) progresses," Gupta says. Narinder Gupta joins Keralites in Mumbai in celebrating 'Vishu' and wishes them "A happy Vishu and New year."



Prof Vijayashankar, K S Nair and C N Kutty, representing various Malayali organisations of Marol called on Maharashtra Governor K Sankaranarayanan. (Report in Mumbai News Digest)

Tharangini Awards Nite

Gokulam Tharangini Awards for Malayalam film industry will be given away on April 13 at Shanmukhananda Hall, Sion. These awards are given to actors and actresses who need and deserve encouragement to reach the top. This year's nominees are Jaya Surya, Shweta Menon, Suraj Venjaramoodu, Manoj K Jayan, and Padmapriya. Other awards nominees are M G Sreekumar and Director Blessy. After awards presentation, there will be a presentation of popular film songs by M G Sreekumar and party.



MUMBAI NEWS DIGEST

KIM News Bureau

Marol Malayalees seek Governor's intervention

A few prominent Malayalees of Marol representing various Malayalee organisations met Governor K Sankaranarayanan on March 19. C N Kutty, Prof Vijayashankar, A S Sukumaran and K S Nair were in the delegation.

They apprised him of the activities of Malayalees for the development of Marol, educational developments and other cultural activities. They informed him about the application with Government of Maharashtra for starting a Junior College pending since 2008. They sought his intervention to get the required sanction expedited. The Governor assured the delegation all help in the matter.

"Swararnavam"

celebrates Silver Jubilee

Silver Jubilee celebrations of Smt. Prasanna Varrier's music school "Swararnavam" were recently held with pomp and gaiety at BKS School, Vasai and also at Santacruz Billwara Association Auditorium.

The 60th birthday of Ganabhooshanam Smt. Prasanna Varrier was also celebrated on this occasion. All her students participated and felicitated their teacher during this function. At Santacruz Billwara Association, Arun Gopan Asianet Star Singer 2007 and the TV anchor Durga Varrier from Thrissur, performed.

A team from Wynad, "Thryssileri Naadan Paattu" led by Mr. Raman, exhibited their skills.

T M Jagadeesh Shiv Sena Dharavi Shakha Pramukh

Matunga: Labour Camp Malayalee Samajam President T M Jagadeesh has been appointed Shakha Pramukh of Dharavi by Uddhav Thackarey, Executive President of the Sena. A native of Irinjalakkuda, Jagadeesh has been an active worker of Shiv Sena for a long time. He is also a member of SNDP of Matunga as well as Patron Member of Shree Narayana Mandira Samithi and Patron of Labour Camp Ayyappa Temple.

'Swathi Thirunal' Play

'Saptaswara' is getting ready with their new historical play 'Swathi Thirunal' with its first reading at Municipal Welfare Hall of Thakur Complex, Kandivli East on March 16. The play scripted by Pirappankod Murali and directed by Prem Kumar, boasts of a star cast of K D Chandran, C K K Potuval, Rajan Katannappalli, V K Rajan, Joseph Pannakkal, Madhu Nambiar, Guptan, C C K Pillai, Vijayan Nair, Baiju, Benny, Ravi Thodupuzha, Sivaprasad, Suma Mukundan, Rajani Chandran, Aanandi, Kavya and Reshma.

New office bearers for ATMA

Thane: Annual General Meeting of All Thane Malayalee Association (ATMA) will have a new team of office bearers. They are A M Balan (President), Sasikumar Nair (General Secretary), V Raghunathan Nair (Treasurer), N Madhavan Kutty and Bharathan Menon (Vice Presidents), A B Mohandas and Sukumaran Menon (Secretaries), M Kuchelan (Joint Treasurer), Suma Mukundan, Upendranatha Menon, E V

Sivadasan, K V Kunhiraman, Sreekanth Nair, A K B Panicker, P Ramachandran, P Uday Kumar, P Prabhakaran, Gopalakrishnan, K K Chandrasekharan, Surendran Nambiar, Joy Raju and K C Venu-gopal (Committee members)

NSS Women's Wing

Ulhas Nagar: NSS of Ulhas Nagar



A M Balan
(President)



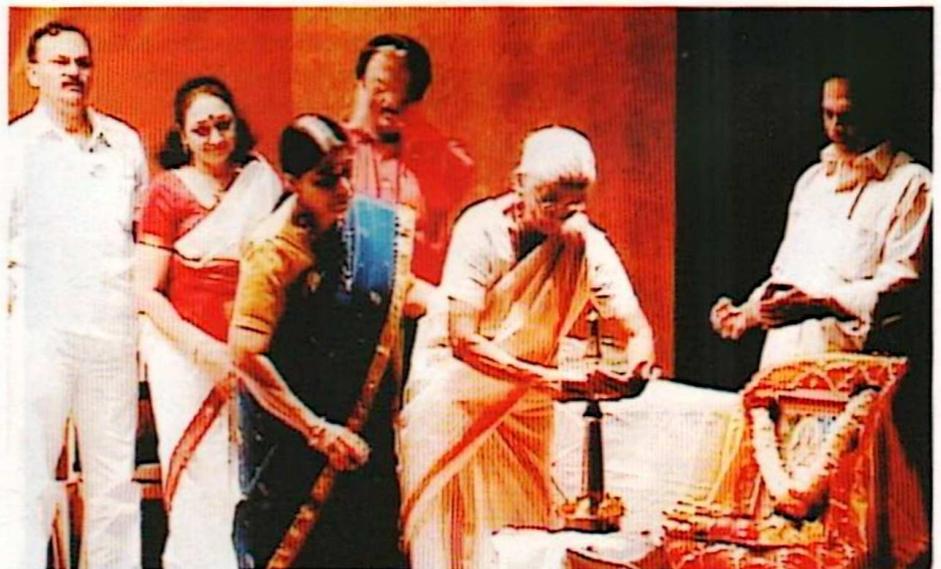
Sasikumar Nair
(General Secretary)



V Raghunathan Nair
(Treasurer)

New Office for Kharghar Kerala Samajam

Kharghar: A new office of Kharghar Kerala Samajam was opened at Sector 12 CIDCO Community Centre on Gudipadva day. Marathi and Malayalam classes for Malayalees will be conducted here on a regular basis.



Mrs Lakshmi Wariar lights the lamp while Prasanna Wariar, Usha Narayan, Vishwanathan, Jayakumar and Prem Kumar look on

formed their women's wing. Office bearers and 21 members of the Managing Committee were elected on February 28. Sathi K Nair, Jyothilakshmi K Nair and Shobha V Nair are Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer respectively. They decided to start Malayalam class, Sewing class and Reading Room very soon.

V T Gopalakrishnan Award for Balakrishnan

Matunga: The award in memory of Columnist and Scientist V T Gopalakrishnan was presented to novelist Balakrishnan by Maharashtra Governor K Sankaranarayanan. The Governor stated that the strength of the lakhs of Malayalees living outside Kerala was their confidence and determination. To reinforce this strength, litterateurs should provide support to them, he opined. The award ceremony was held at Kerala Bhavan, Matunga.

Actor and writer V K Sreeraman urged the writers to write about the real lives of people instead of building their creations on dreams. Malayalee of today is moving towards a narrow world, he pointed out. This should change, he remarked.

Prof V A Vasudevan and Devadas G Nair were among other speakers.

'Vivaharthi Mela' of Sree Narayana Mandira Samithi

Nerul: More than eight hundred young men and women, along with their parents, attended the 'Vivaharthi Mela' held at Gurudevagiri, seeking partners. Besides Mumbai and Navi Mumbai zones, people from Hyderabad, Bhopal, Faridabad, Nagpur, Aurangabad etc also participated



Rajan V Nair inaugurates the new office of Lok Kalyan Malayalee Association

Federal Bank General Manager Abraham Jacob inaugurated the function lighting the lamp kept before the painting of Sree Narayanaguru. President of the Samithi Dr KK Damodaran, General Secretary N S Salim Kumar, Chairman M I Damodaran and Co-ordinator O K Prasad explained the objectives of the Meet. Details and photographs of the proposed bridegrooms and brides were displayed on digital screen, to fast track the events.

National Eminence Award to Nedunoori Krishna Moorthy

Matunga: Maharashtra Governor K Sankaranarayanan presented the National Eminence Award of Mumbai Shanmukhananda Sabha to Carnatic Music Maestro Sangeetha Kalanidhi Nedunoori Krishna Moorthy. Nedunoori Krishna Moorthy was a

living symbol of a powerful musical tradition, the Governor stated. The recipient of this prestigious award was Semmangudi Sreenivasa Iyengar. A purse of one lakh rupees, citation and a silver lamp constitute the award. President of the Sabha V Shankar presided over the function. Following the presentation, Nedunoori's disciple Smt Sarada Subrahmanyam presented a music concert.

New office bearers of Keraleeya Samajam

Dombivli: Annual General Meeting of Keraleeya Samajam elected new office bearers. V Rajendran Nair was elected President while Narayanankutty Nair was elected Vice President. Seven managing committee members and two internal auditors were also elected unanimously.

East Kalyan Welfare Association starts classes

Kalyan: East Kalyan Welfare Association started classes for music dances and Kolkkali besides Marathi

Lok Kalyan Malayalee Association Office opened

Well known social worker Shri Rajan Nair inaugurated the new office of Lok Kalyan Malayalee Association. KDM corporator Kailas Shinde and Mallesh Shetty were chief Guests. Vijayan M Nair presided over the function. Members of the first Managing



First reading of "Swathi Thirunal" Play at Kandivli

Committee are: M K Sugunan, Bhaskara Menon, Sunil Raj, Rajesh R Panicker, Raghunathan, EM S Nair, Sakthidharan S Nair, Sreenath Menon. The Association also distributed sewing machines to the needy. In the event presided over by Vice President Vijayan M Nair, social activist Mallesh Shetty inaugurated the free distribution of sewing machines.

Mathrusangham medical camp

Kalyan: Mathrusangham conducted a seminar to make people conscious of cancer and also held a free breast cancer detection camp at Powai St. Joseph Church. Bombay Hospital nursing Vice Principal Anamma Glori, Dr Shishir Shetty supervised the camp. About one hundred women participated in the camp. Mathrusangham Director Fr Kuriakose Kalapparambath, Asst Director Fr Jitto Thengumpilli, President Vimala Xavier and Secretary Rani Thomas provided the leadership.

Marriage Bureau at Kharghar NSS

Kharghar: NSS Kharghar has started a Marriage Bureau for the benefit of members. Every Friday between 7.30 p m and 9 p m, registration can be done free of cost at NSS office. Astrologer Bijesh Menon will provide free services, if necessary. Registration can also be through by e-mail kharghar@rediffmail.com.

Onam Restaurant at Vasai-Manikpur

Khoperkhairane: Onam Restaurant to be opened at Vasai Manikpur Road by Bombay Chit Funds was inaugurated by SNDP Yogam General Secretary Vellappilli Natesan. AC and Non-AC sections are provided at the restaurant. Bombay Chit Funds had earlier opened similar restaurants at Khoperkhairane.

Marg Foundation

Effective April 1, 2010, Marg is on their own feet, operating under The Marg Foundation, a public charitable trust registered under the Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950.

The Marg Foundation's main objective is propagation, research, advancement, preservation and education in all fields of art, science and literature with special reference to the Indian subcontinent but more widely to Asia.

Every quarter Marg publishes a book and a magazine which can either be individually purchased or received under an annual subscription at a

subsidized price. Marg books and magazines are rarely reprinted and become a collector's item within a short time. Marg has published two books titled 'Kathakali- The Art of the Non-Worldly' edited by D. Appukkuttan Nair and K. Ayyappa Panicker and Cities of Kerala, actually small towns edited by Baiju Natarajan'. The books are priced at Rs 2,750/- & Rs 1,800/- per copy respectively and would be available to Malayalees at special 40% discount on the listed price.

Consecration Day Festival

Iroli: Iroli Ayyappa Temple's eighth Consecration Day festival was celebrated during March 21 -23 under the guidance of Azhakath Sasthrusarman Namboothiripad, Tantri of the temple. Special pujas like

Office bearers of Malayalee organisations may send their reports on their letter heads, signed by authorised persons, along with related photographs to: keraliinumumbai@gmail.com or its office at B-105 Twin Arcade, Military Road, Marol, Andheri East, Mumbai 400 059, so as to reach us by 20th of the month. Tel: 29205641

Navagruha Puja, Maha Sudarshana Puja, Kalasa Puja, Sarpa Puja, Mahaprasadam etc were offered. Hundreds of devotees flocked to the temple to offer prayers.

Free Medical Camp

Goregaon: Bangur Nagar Ayyappa Temple management conducted a free medical camp on March 21. Free

medicines were also distributed.

Stress Management Classes

Thane: Wagle Estate Malayalee Association conducted a Stress Management Program at WEMA School under the leadership of Stress Management Specialist V Vijayakumar.

P V Vasudevan elected BJP President of Dombivli RBI Colony

Dombivli: P V Vasudevan is elected President of BJP of Dombivli West Ward No 71 (RBI Colony). Native of PERUMBAVOOR, Vasudevan is a resident of Mumbai for the last 31 years and stays at Dombivli. He is also President of BJP District South Cell.

Consecration Festival at Sakinaka

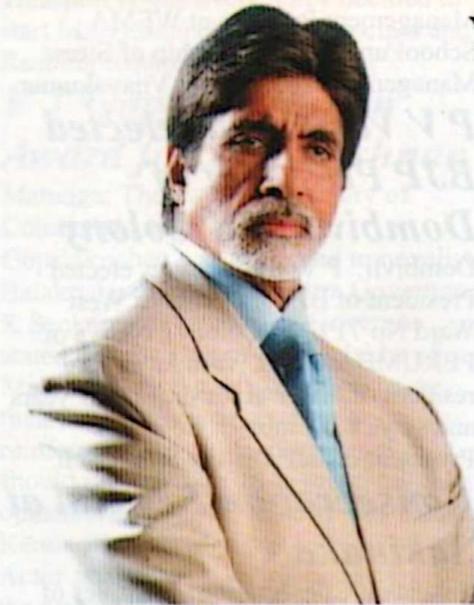
Sakinaka: Consecration at temples of Sakinaka Sree Narayana Mandira Samithi Unit was held on March 22. Temples, constructed at Sree Narayana Nagar, near Ayyappa Temple on Vairani Road, are dedicated to Guru, Mahadevan and Mahadevi. Consecration of Gurudevan was done by the Head of Aluva Gayathri Ashramam Swami Sachchidananda and of other temples by Parappanangadi Vijayappan Tantri. In a meeting held at St Antony's Church Auditorium, Maharashtra Minister Arif Khan was the Chief Guest while Corporators Chitra Somanath Sangle and Sharad Pawar were honourable Guests. Samithi President Dr K K Damodaran lighted the auspicious lamp.



SNDP Yogam General Secretary Vellappilli Natesan inaugurates Onam Resturent at Vasai

Kerala retracts offer to Bachchan

Yechuri pressurises Kodiyeri



Amitabh Bachchan, the icon of Hindi film world, is insulted by the Government of Kerala by its withdrawal of invitation to be a brand ambassador of Kerala tourism. A few days ago, in a chat with the Manorama News channel, Bachchan had expressed his willingness to be the State's ambassador if invited by the State Government. Kodiyeri Balakrishnan, the State's tourism minister promptly invited him to promote Kerala tourism by becoming its ambassador. The magnanimous Bachchan accepted the offer and made clear that for such assignments, he does not charge a penny as Kerala being his favourite state. Then came the objection from one person, not even remotely connected with the state to the offer and the State tourism minister ran for cover and said his government would reconsider the offer (meaning withdrawal of the offer).

"The matter would be taken considering the controversy over the issue triggered by certain resistance from different quarters in the state as the actor was also the promoter of Gujarat and other states, Home Minister Kodiyeri had said in the state assembly while replying to a query by K Babu of Congress.

Amitabh Bachchan, the Shahenshah of Bollywood in his inimitable style, was at first very cautious while responding to the queries from the journalists and said he would wait till the state government communicated its decision to him.

"I did not ask them for it, they came forward with the invitation, I accepted, now they want to decline it, fine," Bachchan now wrote in his blog. It is not

known if the Government communicated to him about its decision to dispense with his free services.

"Not the first time such incidents have happened. (I got) invitation to be the Chief Guest at the Goa International Film Festival and when I get there, they decline(d) it, fine," he consoled himself. On the State Government developing cold feet now, he said, "It is a petty act of cheap political convenience to prevent me from doing that and by pitting me up against political connotations and manoeuvres without paying any respect for the actual work that I would do. Fair enough, I shall abide by the judgment of the State Government."

Amitabh Bachchan, who earlier said no politics was involved in his promoting tourism in the BJP-ruled Gujarat and that his intention was only to promote tourism, wrote "that is what I would precisely do when I would be asked to similar acts in Kerala."

Many Mumbai Malayalees when KIM quizzed about this development expressed their anger at the move of the State Government. "Kodiyeri should have wisely thought about the repercussions before he extended the invitation. This will badly reflect on the culture and tradition of the people of Kerala," one of them remarked.

"Who is this Yechuri to put pressure on State Minister to withdraw the invitation? Kerala is not his family property," another Malayali requesting anonymity, remarked.

"It is a first instance in the history of any government in India to extend invitation only to withdraw later. Kodiyeri should have first thought about it and discussed with the cabinet before extending the invitation and then should not have yielded to pressure once the decision is taken, whomever the boss is," a senior manager working with a leading multinational said.

The problem with the Kerala government is that its income from tourism has fallen considerably and only a person of Amitabh Bachchan's stature can help in restoring it. It is for this reason that Kodiyeri Balakrishnan has been sticking to his gun on the issue and still maintaining that if everything went

in accordance with the plan, Bachchan would still be appointed the ambassador for the State.

It may be recalled that Kerala has been ruled by left coalitions for a long time now and the party frequently resorted to bandhs and hartals, the income from tourism went down drastically. In fact, the Kerala has the dubious distinction of facing 1 bandhs, hartals in a year, which is a record in the whole of the country. The obviously has drained the treasury of the state and it needs some special measure to regain its financial health.

The basis of objection is that Amitabh already an ambassador for Gujarat, ruled by BJP. Now a question arises. Will the Government of Kerala prohibit if any of the industrialists such as Ambani, Tata etc wanted some factories to operate in Kerala? It is also to be assumed that they wouldn't venture since they are aware of the work culture in the State. Will they stop importing pulses and oils produced in Gujarat to Kerala, since that state is ruled by BJP?

Amitabh has praised Gujarat for the progress they made during the last decade as the national statistics show that Gujarat is No.1 Since the Government of Kerala wants to be away from that state they should distance itself to a far away place, may be to the last place.



Bachchan with Narendra Modi



Kerala in Mumbai

LINKING MUMBAI MALAYALEES

Email: keralainmumbai@gmail.com

Website: keralaimumbai.com

— 98201 10509 —