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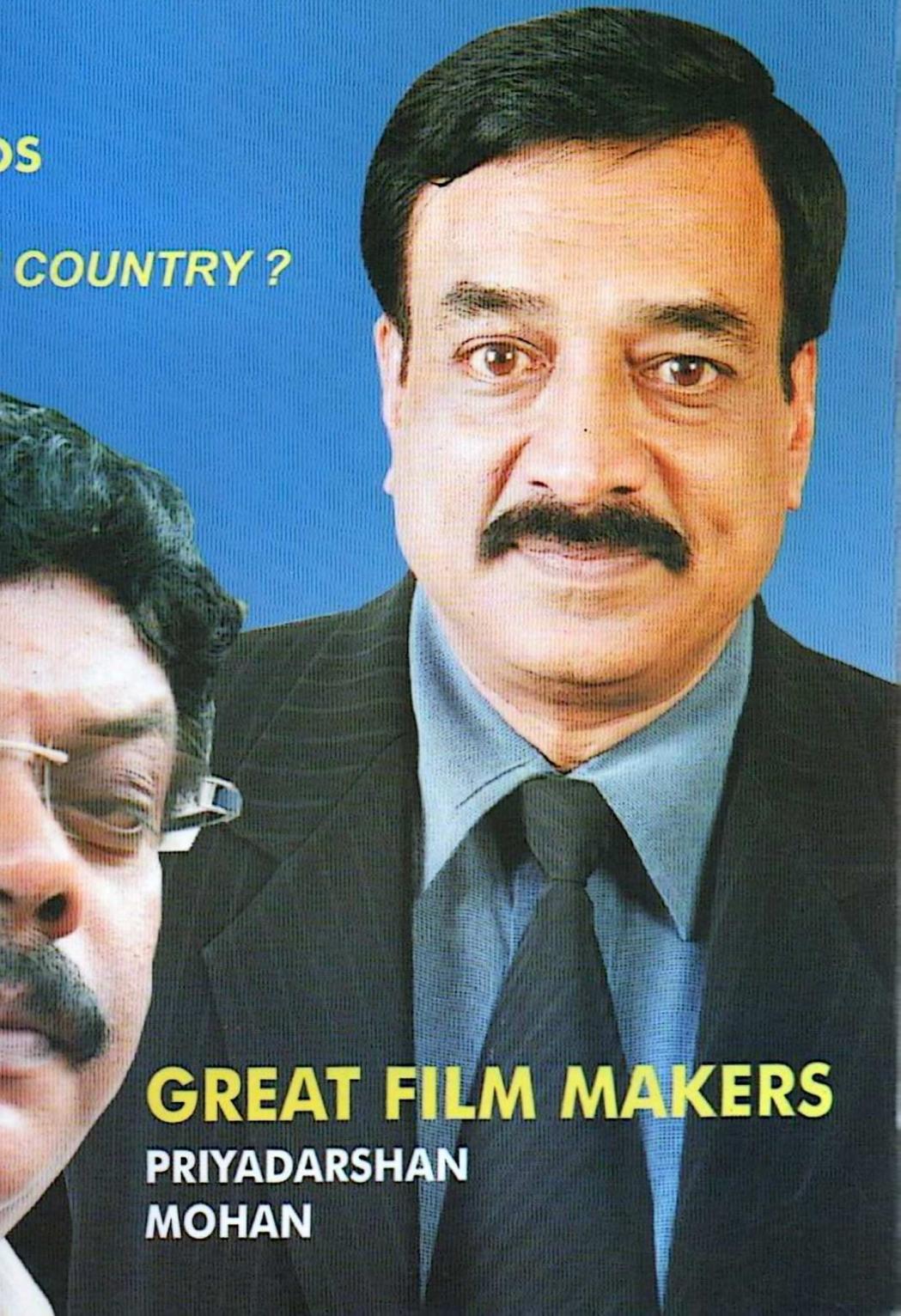
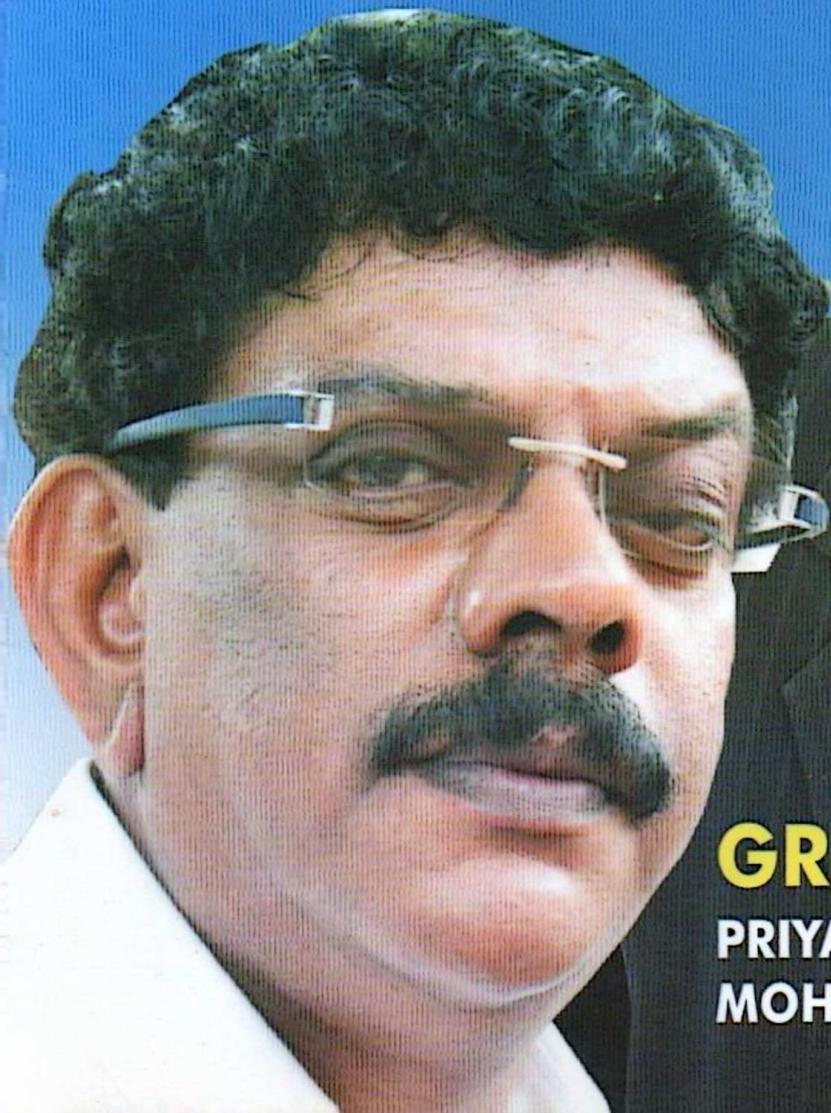
Kerala

in Mumbai

June 2010

**NERUL:
MALAYALEE ETHOS**

WHY GOD'S OWN COUNTRY ?



GREAT FILM MAKERS
PRIYADARSHAN
MOHAN

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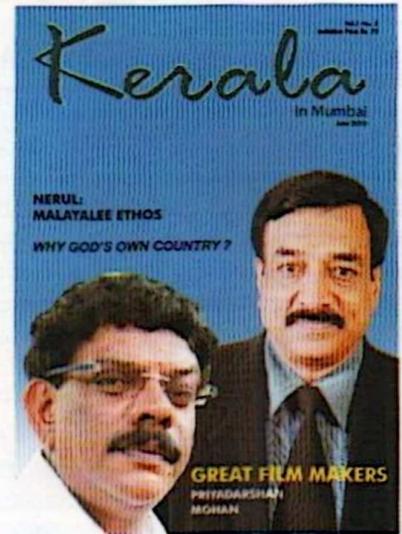
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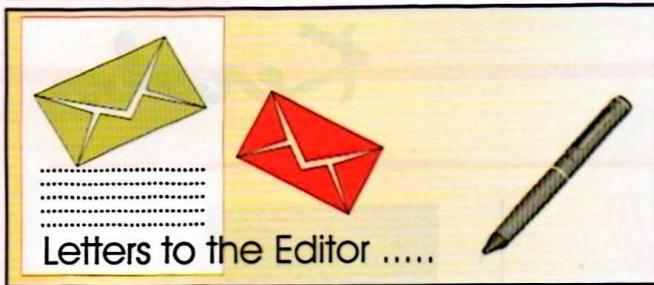
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Kerala In Mumbai fulfills a much felt need of Mumbai Keralites. A magazine of this kind should have happened a long time ago.

It is true that the new generation of Malayalees outside Kerala do not have any knowledge of their mother tongue. Your attempt to familiarise them with the nuances of the language, its origin, evolution and the variations over the centuries is indeed welcome. I am sure the young Keralites would definitely benefit from your magazine.

-K D Chandran
Vile Parle

Your magazine is very different from other Malayalam magazines which are a run of the mill. Kerala in Mumbai will surely help all our children who do not know the ethos of Malayali culture.

It is necessary to know the origin and the evolution of the unique Kerala culture to imbibe it. Speaking Malayalam alone would not make one a Malayali but he should certainly know to understand, read and write the language. Your attempt to introduce them to this culture is laudable.

Your coverage of local Malayali news and the introduction of the leaders among Mumbai Malayalees through their interesting growth in diversified fields are also fascinating. The special focus on Malayali organisations in different localities of Mumbai is also educative.

-Kuriakose J, Dombivli (E)

Congrats on your new venture "Kerala in Mumbai".

I have been in touch with your magazine's last few issues and I think it has been a good beginning so far. I am sure over a period of time, you could bring in more refinement and greater appeal.

-Gopinath Kutty, Chembur
Tel.: 9821314880

Thank you very much for the article on evolution of Malayalam language. Please publish a few articles on the famous writers of Kerala.

-Satish Rajan, Marol

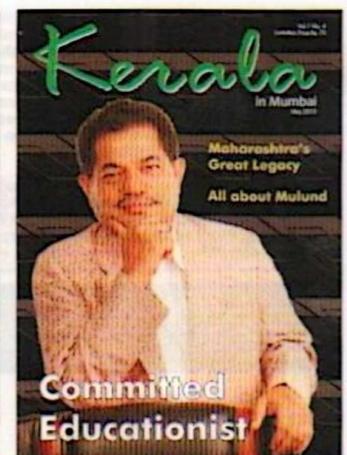
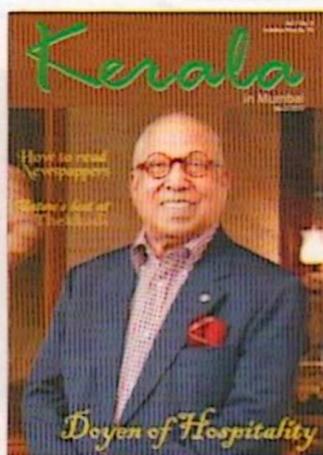
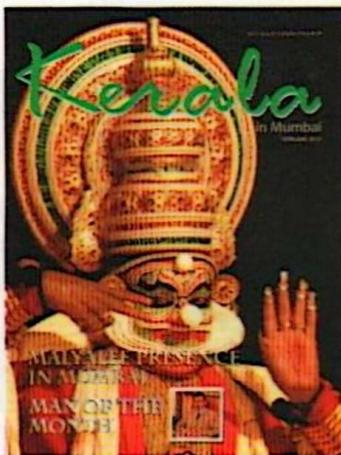
Prof Ammanath Vijayashankar's exposition of Mohiniattam is very interesting. His in-depth study of this fascinating dance form is indeed revealing.

-Malini Nair, Chembur

The article on Dr Vasudevan Pillai is very good. It is nice to see we have such great educationists among Malayalees living in Mumbai. Kudos to the veteran journalist P K Ravindranath!

-Varghese Thomas, Mira Road

We welcome responses from readers. Please forward your responses and suggestions about various happenings concerning Malayalees residing in this part of India. You may send them via e-mail keralainmumbai@gmail.com or by post to Editor, Kerala In Mumbai, 105-B, Twin Arcade, Military Road, Mumbai 400 059.



July issue of KERALA IN MUMBAI will focus on Thane and August issue will be on Mira Road. Organisations and personalities of these areas may forward their reports/opinions along with relevant photographs to the Editor, KERALA IN MUMBAI

EDITORIAL*Keeping Pace With Times*

Without sounding parochial or sectarian, KERALA IN MUMBAI, in the course of its five month old existence has discovered the immense contribution of Malayalees in Mumbai, not only to its composite culture but also its socio-economic structure and well being.

Many of them in key sectors like the national economy and giant organisations like the LIC and the Union Bank have a say in the operations of the financial and monetary markets. Many of them in various areas of the vibrant media in this country are shaping the outlook of growing generations in a silent, but effective manner.

Some of the giants in the field of industry, education, travel and hospitality have already been featured in our pages. They have done credit to the community and done the nation proud. There are, we learn, as we go along, many others who have already become role models in many other creative fields of endeavour, whose contributions to the national growth and economy are enviable.

We discovered to our gratification also that none of these hardworking, committed, self effacing persons has ever been the creation of the media. True to their nature, they have shunned publicity.

The media-made celebrities are a dime a dozen. You see them on page 3 of the Bombay Times and in huge splashes on Sundays in the Times of India. You come across the same faces on chat shows on television channels. In newspaper columns they appear along with their photograph under the caption "Among celebrities who attended were"

You read special stories about them, which make little sense, since they are written, not by professional writers or journalists but by members of event management teams, who are there as part of well-heeled cheerleaders at all public functions, where celebrities are frequently seen.

In fact, the one question they ask is "Where is the party tonight?"

And surprisingly enough, none of those who have featured on our page has been spotted at the stage managed parties, whose only purpose is to generate wild and boldly written stories that make little sense except for the mention of names of the clients of these event management units.

On chat shows when one sees the same faces, one can be sure that the evening is going to be one of excessive verbiage that in the end makes little sense. Then you wonder why you were glued so long to the television set.

Many of these silent, do-gooders, whom our readers may not know, or have heard of only vaguely, will find space and mention in our pages. None of them are paid for, or covered for any dubious reasons. Even the silent committed and devoted persons should get some exposure to readers of Kerala in Mumbai. In this mighty effort we welcome suggestions from readers.

Quote of the month

Your work will succeed as long as you don't care who gets the credit.

Harry S Truman
President of the United States.

-P K Ravindranath

PRIYADARSHAN

TAKING LIFE AS IT COMES ALONG



Just fifty, Priyadarshan has notched a record of 81 films in Hindi, Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil and Telugu. He has just completed shooting his 25th Hindi film. If his father, K S Nair, the venerable Librarian of Kerala University were alive today, he would have scarcely believed that his son had touched the pinnacle of Indian cinema, becoming in the bargain one of the most sought after film makers.

Thirty years ago, when Priyan wanted to join the only Film Institute then at Pune, his father had asked him: "Cinema? Is that a profession?" Down the years Priyan has proved that it is more than a profession or a way of life. It is a creative medium of communication, perhaps the most effective in an age when the media has come to dominate people's lives.



Priyadarshan with Mohanlal

"I never attempted to plan my life nor do what I thought

should be done. Things happened and I seized every opportunity that came my way," he says defensively.

In one instance, he is right. He recently admitted on stage in Mumbai that had it not been for an invitation from Producer Goodnight Mohan, to direct his "Gardish" he may never have come to Mumbai. He stayed on to make another 24 films in Hindi. The latest is "Akrosh", all about the caste conflicts in Bihar and the Hindi heartland. "It is not a documentary," he hastens to add, "but it is factual."

From childhood, Priyan loved films. The imagery and the visual impact the medium created impressed him. From childhood his imagination had been fired by the frequent visits of some of the greatest Malayalam writers to his house, to talk about books to his father. They included Keshav Dev and Thakazhi two of the most venerated novelists of the era. They discussed current literature in the context of world literature. He began reading fiction in Malayalam and then the best of writings in English.

All his siblings and kith and kin are highly educated, and generally well read. "I was the good for nothing son of the family," he admits. "But my father never pressurised me to take to a career in life," he concedes. "And that was a

great thing," for otherwise he might have landed up in the civil service or some such mundane jobs."

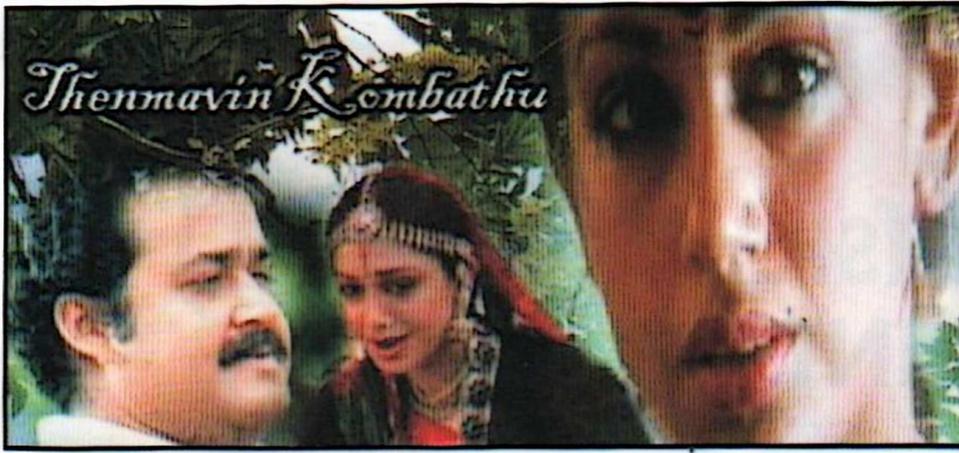
As years went by he got drawn into the cinema. "As opportunities came my way, I grabbed every one of them. I put in my best effort into each assignment, learnt new things on the job, improved my skills and learnt to discriminate between the good and the bad."

Once that sense of differentiation had been developed he set about improving on it. "The best really had to be the best."

Since he had no aspirations and no expectations, he took whatever came his



Priyadarshan's wife Lisy



way in his stride. "Do your best and say what you want without hurting anyone," became his motto.

"When you don't expect anything, whatever comes your way makes you happy. If it turns out to be an achievement or an honour, the happiness is all the more," he says philosophically. Priyadarshan is known for the informality and discipline he maintains on his sets. No star tantrums for him. Every member of the unit is equal in his eyes. The super star and the cameraman and the light boy are all human beings with talents of their own. And each one gives of his or her best in a Priyadarshan film.

As far as producers are concerned, Priyadarshan is a safe bet. His films don't flop. No one is known to have lost money on his films.

For him life is a process of learning, experiences and reading. He does not compromise on anything, least of all on his work. Once he is convinced that what he is doing is right, there is no going back and no need for any compromise. "Even the saints do what they do for the pleasure they derive out of it," he points out.

Doing the right thing the right way is

what gives Priyadarshan the greatest pleasure.

For making films he has one formula "A story has to be emotional enough to sustain interest. Comedy is perhaps the best way to rivet audience attention. You can make a film even on AIDS with a large dose of comedy and convey your message more effectively. It need not be a documentary."

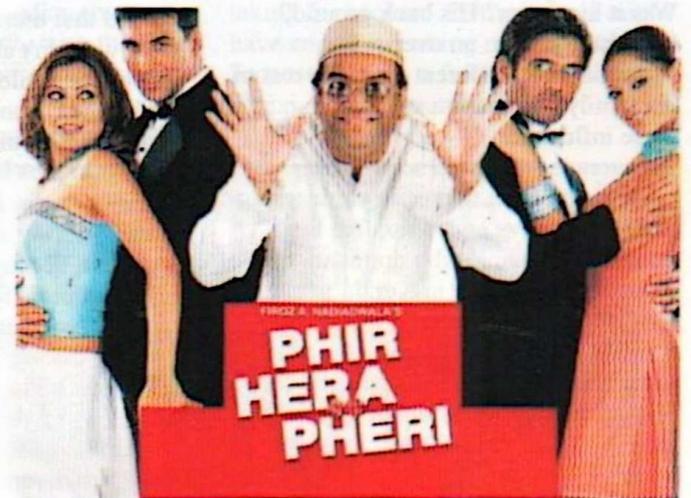
He made "Kancheevaram" that way.

"Kancheevaram" won the best feature film award in 2008 at the National Film Awards.

Priyadarshan keenly wanted to become a cricketer. The game itself deprived him the opportunity. He was blinded in the left eye, by a cricket ball. He strayed into Malayalam films, since from childhood he had acquired so much knowledge about the cinema. His college mates, Mohanlal, M G Sreekumar and producer Suresh Kumar had already made it good in Malayalam cinema. His first film "Poochakkoru Mookkuthi" became a big hit.

Then followed a string of successful films like "Kilukkam", "Chitram", "Boeing Boeing", "Thenmavin kombathu" and others. Almost all of them were later remade in Hindi "Virasat", "Herapheri", "Hungama", "Hulchal", "Garam Masala", "Bhool

Bhulaiya", "Bhagam Bhag", and "Billu." "Kalapani" he made for R Mohan and Mohanlal remains one of his best known Hindi films. The film had Mohanlal, Tabu, Amrishi Puri, Tinu Anand and Prabhu. It won four National Film Awards for Santosh Sivan (cinematography), Sabu Cyril (art



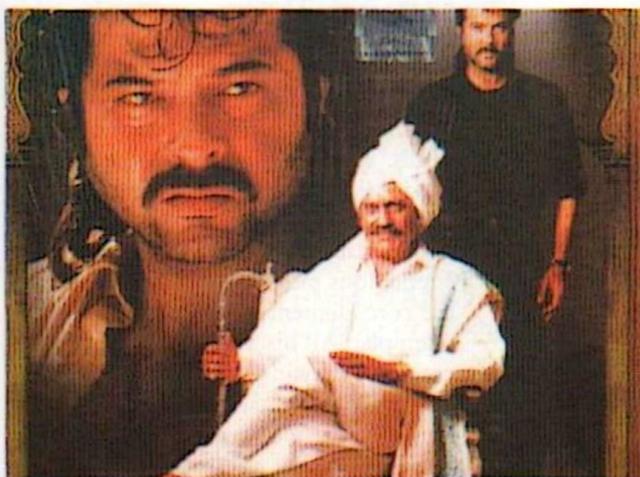
direction), Ilayaraja (music). It won the the Second Best Film Award from the Kerala State.

Priyadarshan is married to Lizy, film actress, with whom he had worked in a dozen films. They have two children Kalyani and Siddharth, both in school in Singapore.

Listed among the top ten directors of India, Priyadarshan is influenced by some of the masters of Western cinema David Lean in particular.

Among the numerous awards won by Priyadarshan are seven Kerala State Awards and seven National Awards. He also won the Asianet Lifetime Achievement Award.

Priyadarshan continues to make films fully aware that his best is yet to come. He patiently waits for that opportunity when he would be called upon to make it. That's an opportunity he will make the best use of.



Scene from hindi film Virasat

GOODKNIGHT MOHAN

ENJOYING RISKS, EVEN TO POINT OF GAMBLING

In 36 years in Mumbai, Kalyanraman, hailing from a tradition-bound, conservative Brahmin family from Trissur, finds himself transformed into the iconic film-market and businessman "Goodknight" Mohan a.k.a R Mohan. He is at a loss to define the factors that brought about this dramatic change. Was it his genes? His back ground? Opportunities? or, an over-riding ambition to be different from the rest of his family? Perhaps a combination of all these influences.

An average student in school, he managed to get a degree in engineering and should have ended up, like his numerous cousins, who dominate the cloth and saris trade in Kerala. Realising that his revered father, Ramaswamy Iyer, had spotted some different talent in his second son. Mohan headed for Mumbai to join his elder brother, Venkataraman, to look for a job.

His father was a pioneer "doctor" of "sick" textiles mills in Kerala in the forties, fifties and sixties. Starting with the Sectaram Mills in Trissur, Iyer went on to revamp and reinvigorate several ailing mills, which the government had taken over to protect the jobs and interests of labour. A man of rigid principles, Iyer would not even allow his children or wife to use his official car. And, if ever they hitched a ride in it he would keep tab of the kilometers run and pay for their extra petrol consumed, out of his own pocket.

Mohan grew up, never to think ill of anyone, quick to pardon anyone who worked against his interests. He would read all the books his father brought him, specially selected for the second son, in whom Iyer had detected some promise of future eminence. The upbringing and the reading, Mohan now recollects, made him abjure negative thoughts in toto. But he would not take anything on trust.

At the age of nine, he began questioning the existence of God. This was more because he detested the daily evening ritual of recitation of Sanskrit slokas and mantras. If ever it was proved that there was no God, wouldn't all the prayers be futile, he asked his brother, who is 12 years older to him.

After odd jobs in Mumbai, he hit upon a scheme of manufacturing a mosquito repellent, because he was highly allergic to mosquito bites. He named his product Goodknight.

It became a hit and the name stuck on him as a nickname. With the profits earned from Goodknight, Mohan sought to diversify his investments. He turned to the Malayalam film industry in which he had a number of friends and intense interest from childhood. He decided he would go in for good subjects and turn out quality products utilizing the best talent available in the industry. In the last 25 years he has produced about 40 films in Malayalam and Tamil and six in Hindi.

His entry into Mumbai's film world was with a bang with "Gardish" an instant hit. It brought to Hindi films a new talented director, Priyadarshan. Priyadarshan who had a number of good Malayalam films to his credit, stayed on in Mumbai to make one hit after another.

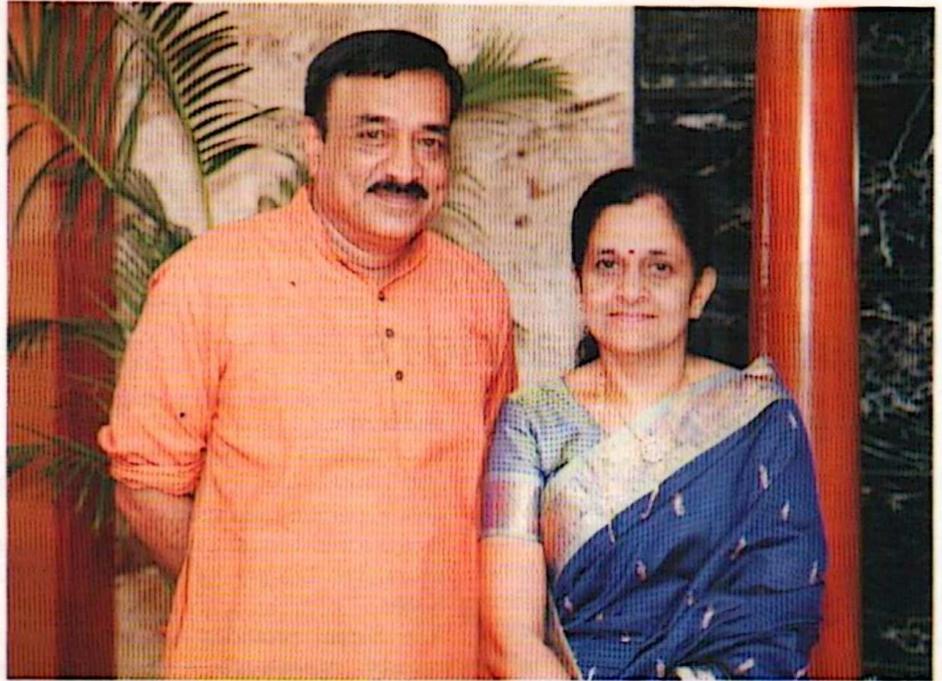
With "Gardish" both Mohan and Priyadarshan found a firm footing in Mumbai's film industry. Mohan's penchant for unusual, ennobling themes and Priyan's fastidious insistence on technical flourishes, made the producer-director team a formidable one.



Mohan's penchant for unusual, unorthodox themes led him to make "Gowri" with great hopes of accolades and honours for presenting an educative and unusual film.

At the first public screening of the film, Mohan realized the film was a flop. He went home and called up Priyan. "Let's make film together," he told him. "I need it to recoup my losses in "Gowri". Priyan was astounded at the brazen admission that a cherished project had hit the dust. That was contrary to practice in the Hindi film industry. Mohan's forte is his capacity to take risks, to the point of being gambles. You have no control over your birth or death. If, between the two a gamble succeeds, you have everything you want. And in Mohan's case, most gambles have paid rich dividends. Meticulous planning is what constitutes the core element of everything Mohan attempts. All his skill and penchant for carefully drawing up all his plans came into full play when his only daughter, Anu got married. Almost the entire Malayalam film industry and the Mumbai filmdom had turned up for the gala four-day event.

A posh suburban Mumbai hotel had been booked for a week to accommodate in guests who had come from Kerala, U S, Canada, Europe and the Far East. The elaborate, ancient rituals that covered all the four days, ended up in a highly acclaimed coffee table book entitled "Iyer Weddings" a record for posterity of a custom, peculiar to the Iyers of Kerala, which is fast being cut down to a day and a half. Mohan ends up taking a different view on everything and every situation he comes across. Once on a visit to the US his son, Amit, recalls, their host, Jose Anthony took them sight seeing in the Bahamas. He was fascinated by a beautiful bungalow and asked his guide how much it would cost. Mohan had meanwhile been fascinated by the entire island, Nassau, meeting place of heads of states for deliberations on global threats. "How much would they sell this island for" he asked the guide. Amit and Mohan make a good, stable father-son duo, with a huge fund of goodwill and admiration for each other.



Mohan with wife Lata

The transition of the Goodnight empire should be smooth, with the third generation scion Rudran, just a year old, now on the scene. Life is still a gamble and risks are worth

taking for Mohan. "Otherwise, I might have ended up cutting meters of cloth for customers in a family cloth shop in Thrissur," he comments.

"THE WEEK'S" MAN OF THE YEAR

The Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Ashok Chavan, presented Brother Christudas, "The Man of the Year" Award on behalf of "The Week" on May 18th at a well organized function at the Taj.

Bro Christudas has been engaged in rehabilitation of leprosy patients on behalf of Little Flower Centre, at Sunderpur, near Raxaul on the Bihar Nepal border, for the last 29 years.

The Little Flower Centre runs a leprosy hospital, a school, a hostel, a dairy farm, poultry farm, on 20 acres, with about 200 families. Most of the families are of cured leprosy patients who live there and work on various projects in the village, with pride and dignity.

The sixth of eight children of a toddy shop owner in Edamurukku, Bro Christudas trained to become a priest. He left it to join Mother Teresa's Mission of Charity. He decided to devote his life to the cause of leprosy patients after reading a book on Fr Damien, a Belgian priest who tended to the leprosy patients on Molokai island near Hawaii. Fr Damien contracted leprosy and died on the island on April 15, 1889. He was proclaimed a saint in October 2009. He is the patron saint of lepers the world over.

To-date, Bro Christudas has helped rehabilitate about 50,000 leprosy patients and their families. He himself had a bout with leprosy, but is now fully cured.

Suresh Shetty, Minister for Health, Shobhaa De and Philip Mathew, Managing Editor Of: "The Week"



C M Ashok Chavan presents "Man of the Year" award to Bro Christudas. Minister Suresh Shetty, Shobhaa De and Philip Mathew in the picture

attended. Shobhaa De introduced the work of Bro Christudas and the process of selecting the Man of the Year. The entire programme was professionally compered by Rini Simon-Khanna, former Doordarshan newsreader. Sr. General Manager, Riyad Mathew welcomed the audience.

Sarod maestros Aaman and Ayaan Ali Khan, sons of Amjad Ali Khan Saheb, enthralled the audience with a brief performance.

AROUND MUMBAI

NERUL

Malayalee Ethos
Overrides BarriersNEW BOMBAY
KERALEEYA SAMAJ

Nerul came into existence in 1984, when there were hardly any Malayalees in the new township. Soon, within a year some ardent enthusiasts came together to form the New Bombay Keralaleeya Samaj, Nerul. The aim of the new organisation was to provide relief to Malayalees in distress, take care of all their common problems, besides providing them a platform for their cultural development. It was set up as a secular, social and cultural organisation and registered under the Societies Act, 1950. Today it has 1320 life members.

In the last 25 years of its existence it has intervened effectively in several cases providing instant relief to people in distress.

There was the case of a man falsely charged with murder and subjected to third degree in police custody. The Samaj intervened with the Police Commissioner and saw to it that justice was done to him.

In another instance, when an employee of a chemical factory met with an accident while on duty and was badly injured, the employer sought to pacify him by paying him a paltry amount of Rs.10,000. The Samaj intervened and saw to it that full compensation amounting to Rs.3,40,000 was paid to him.

There were several other instances where conscientious office-bearers of the Samaj secured justice and helped relieve acute distress for Malayalees in Nerul without any kind of distinctions of caste, creed, community or religion.

To cater to needs of the members of the community in Nerul, the Samaj established an Ayurvedic dispensary in association with the Kerala Government-owned Oushadhi. It now provides panchakarma treatment.

It also runs a Triveni Academy class for XI and XII science students by highly qualified and experienced professors.

It conducts classes in Malayalam, Bharatanatyam, music, *chenda*, violin

and *karate*.

It conducts cultural competitions, *Atthapookkalam* competitions during *Onam*, painting and sports.

It runs a multi-lingual library and reading room. The Library has more than 4000 books.

The Samaj provides medical help to needy members and organises contributions to national calamity relief. Besides running youth camps, the NBKS gives financial help to students from economically distressed families. It organises Malayalam camps regularly for children below 14 years.

The Bharata Natyam class conducted for the last 15 years has now about 120 students.

The Samaj has its own building a three-storey structure housing all its activities along with an auditorium, which has become very popular in Nerul. The building has 7,500 sq ft space.

As a mark of recognition of the good work done by the Samaj, CIDCO allotted 500 sq mts area to set up a socio-complex and the Government of India's Department of Culture gave it a grant of Rs.14,24,000 under its scheme of Building Grant to Voluntary Cultural Organisations.

K A Kurup is the President of NBKS and K T Nair its General Secretary.



Ashok Kumar is the Treasurer. Among other prominent members of the organisation are Mathew Thomas, Mohan Kandathil, Baburaj, U K Menon, Dr Sherif, A R Pillai, K Janardhanan, Yohannan and Rugmini Sagar.

NERUL SRI AYYAPPA
SEVA SAMITI

Registered under the Bombay Public Trust Act, the Nerul Ayyappa Seva Samiti, is now 25 years old and has a life membership of 621, hailing from various states and religions.

It runs the Sri Ayyappa temple complex, situated on a plot of 452 sq mts in Sector 17. Three temples were built in the first phase by June 1966. The Samiti acquired another 272 sq mts from CIDCO to put up buildings for its spiritual, charitable and social activities.

It conducts the following *poojas* and



Proposed New Ayyappa Temple

festivals: *Mandala pooja* and temple *Mahotsav*, *Pratishtha Day Mahotsav*, *Narayaneeyam*, *Ashtapati*, *Soundarya Lahari*, *Sundara Kandam* and *Bhajan*, *Sampoorna Ramayana Parayanam*, *Bhagavata Saptaha Mahayagnam*, *Karkitaka pooja*.

The Samiti also conducts Carnatic Music and Mridangam classes, Bhagavata classes, medical and relief activities. It presents educational awards and runs a library and reading room.

CIDCO has allotted a plot of land adjoining the temple complex to develop a garden.

When completed, the complex will house deities of Lord Ayyappa, Devi Bhadra, Krishna, Shiva and Subramanya. Devotees have already contributed sums for various phases of the construction of the complex and the various temples. Sculpted granite pieces have already been brought from Kerala.

SREE NARAYANA INTERNATIONAL STUDY CENTRE

A four storey building near Nerul railway station, houses Gurudevagiri which has a computerised library and research centre on everything connected with Narayana Guru and his teachings. The building, located as it is, is almost akin to the final resting place of Gurudevan at Shivagiri in Kerala. The Devagiri building houses guest rooms, conference hall, a spacious auditorium, a meditation centre and a reading room. It also has a temple and the sacred relics of the Guru molar tooth and artificial teeth.

Even though this centre started work in 2001, the official inauguration was held in February 2005 at the hands of the former President of India, K R

Narayanan.

The Centre holds lectures by eminent scholars on various aspects of religion, communal harmony and the need to preserve world peace.

The parent organisation, the Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti, was formed at a public meeting under the presidentship of Swami Vimalanandaji, on 17 November 1963. Dr K K Damodaran who was elected the Chairman at the meeting has been leading the Samiti since then. He is currently the President of the Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti. In recognition of his long and dedicated services to the Mandira Samiti, it has now elevated him to the position of President Emeritus.

St. Thomas Church

With a view to uphold the Christian faith and for rendering service to the society at large, a handful of steadfast devotees formed the first parish of Mumbai in 1952. The Church was allotted a plot at Sector 3, Nerul, Navi Mumbai, by CIDCO of Maharashtra in 1989. The construction commenced in 1991, and in two phases it was completed and dedicated to the congregation in February 1999.

A Cross crib was constructed at the Church premise and was consecrated in April 1997. Another Cross crib dedicated in the name of St. George and Eldho Mor Baseliouse Bawa was consecrated in February 2004. The work to extend the Church building to the adjacent plot was commenced in

May 2005 and the renovated Church was rededicated by H.B Baseliouse Thomas I, Catholicose of the East in presence of H.G Thomas Mor Themothios, Diocesan Metropolitan and H.G Kuriakose Mor Eusebiose, Metropolitan of Trichur Diocese in February 2007.

The Holy Relics of Majanikkara Bawa (Late lamented Saint Ignatius Elias III)



St. Thomas Church

was interred in the Nerul Church in 1999. Subsequently the tomb was enshrined at the Church premises in October 2000.

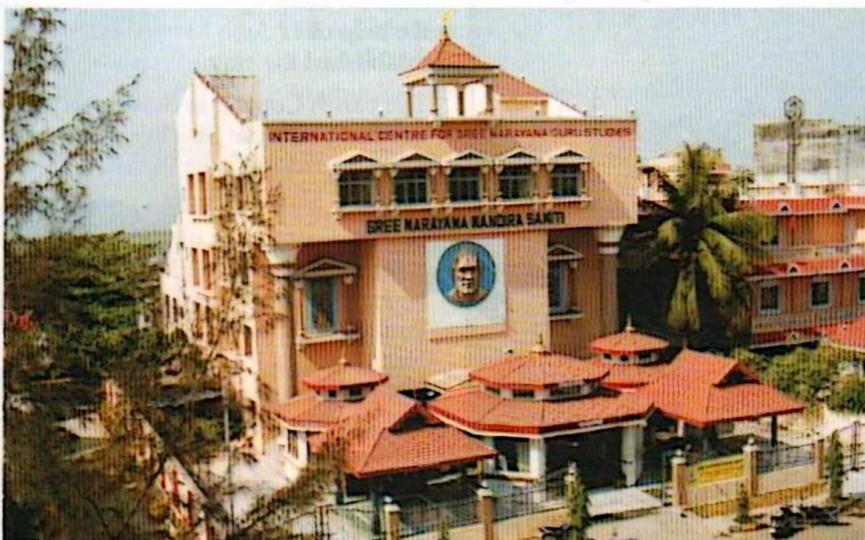
In order to impart education to the children in and around Nerul, the Church started St Ignatius Pre-Primary School in May 1999. Presently around 125 children are studying in the School. The Church is offering concession in fees and free education to the needy children.

The Dukhorono (Death Anniversary) of Majanikkara Bawa is being celebrated as the Main feast of Nerul Church in February. During the feast a large number of

devotees from different parts of Navi Mumbai and Mumbai visit the Church. The units of Sunday school, Youth Association, Vanitha



Fr. Eldho Varghese



Sree Narayana International study centre

Samajam and Antiochian faith protection movement are fulfilling various objectives of the Congregation. Sunday Schools are also functioning.

The Congregation extends financial assistance to the needy and the poor. During the natural calamities of 2005 and 2006, the church extended a helping hand in providing succor to the affected people. A separate charity fund has been set up by the church. From this, contributions are being made to the poor people towards children's education, medical treatment, marriages etc irrespective of caste, creed or religion. This congregation is headed by the current vicar Rev Fr. Eldho Varghese.

MATA AMRITANANDA MAYI MATH

Mata Amritanandamayi Math is situated at Brahmagiri, in Sector 20 of Nerul (W). Though the Math has many centres in India and abroad, the one at Nerul occupies a special place of pride. All activities of the Math in Mumbai and around are directed from this Math and the activities are many.

Brahmasthanam Temple: This unique temple is consecrated by Amma and it offers peace and relief to the suffering humanity. In addition to daily pujas, Mangal, Rahu and Shani Dosha Nivarana Pujas, homas and archanas are conducted.

Weekly Meditation, Satsang, Bhajans: These are conducted every Sunday afternoon, Akhanda Lalita Sahasranama archana conducted at the Akhanda Jyothi maintained at the Ashram.

Amrita Vidyalayam: This one among the 51 CBSE English medium schools



Mata Amritanandamayi Ashram

run by the Math is at Sector 25, Sanpada.

Amrita Kripa Sagar: This is a hospice for terminally ill cancer patients and full day free medical dispensary at Valivali Village, Badlapur.

Amrita Public Library: It houses a wide range of books on spiritual topics. It opens on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Amrita Health Care Clinic: This clinic provides free medical assistance to the needy every Sunday at the Ashram.

Amrita Balakendra and Yuva Dharma Dhara (Ayudh): These two wings cater to the development of children and young people.

Matruvani: This leading spiritual Monthly Magazine is published in 13 languages.

Amrita Publications: Besides magazines, the Math also publishes books on philosophy and spirituality and these are available through the book stall at the Math.

Amrita Scholarships: The poor and needy students are provided with scholarships to pursue their studies every year.

Annadanam: Free food distribution to the poor every Sunday at the Ashram is a blessing to many in the locality.

Little Flower Church

The man behind the Little Flower Church of Christian Catholic Community was Thomas Thalachira. He went around all houses of the Syro-Malabar congregation in Nerul and with the help of Fr John Madukoly, established the Nerul Parish.

The parish Council in September 1989 decided to choose St. Theresa as the Saint mediator for the Parish.

In October 1992, CIDCO allotted a plot for the construction of a church. The same month, the foundation laying ceremony was held by Ex Bishop Mar Paul Chittilappally, while Fr Varghese Nadackal was leading the parish. Construction was started in June 1994 and the church was consecrated in April 1998.

Little Flower Family consists of 400 families and 50 Bachelors and Spinsters.



Little Flower Church

Organisations of Nerul

KELI

KELI is one of the foremost cultural organisations, dedicated to the preservation, propagation and promotion of Traditional Indian Classical Art forms.

KELI endeavours to elevate and popularise traditional art forms in India for the last 18 years. It has organized several festivals and felicitated distinguished performing artists like Ustad Zakkir Hussain, Pandit Ram Narayan, Guru Semmangudi Sreenivasa Iyer, Guru Ammannur Madhava' Chakyar, Mattannur Sankarankutty Marar, Peruvanam

Kuttan Marar

The Gurus are honored with the esteemed VEERA SHRINGHALA (Veerashringhala is a traditional Golden Bracelet of Appreciation made with 80 gms of Gold). Seven senior performing artists have been honored with the prestigious traditional GOLDEN CONCH AWARDS and over 40 artists from various fields have been honored with other awards. Keli has published seral books on Art. Over a thousand artists have performed in the diverse art festivals organised by KELI through these years.

Navarasa Academy

Mr Gopinath Warriar and Guru Sushama Gopinath founded Navarasa Academy of Indian Classical Dance in 1988 in Nerul, with just 2 students.. The reputation spread not only in Nerul but entire Navi Mumbai and beyond and more students joined Navarasa to learn Bharathanatyam and Mohiniattam. Later, Navarasa was affiliated to Bharathiya Sangeeta Samiti, which conducts annual examinations and issue Diploma Certificates.

Today, Navarasa is one of the leading dance academies in Navi Mumbai with more than 400 students in its rolls.

Navarasa has more than 50 Bharathanatyam and 5 Mohiniattam arangetrams (graduation) to its credit. Many of the students who have already done their arangetram are continuing their advanced studies under the able tutelage of Guru Sushama Gopinath and are invited to perform at various places in India.



Mr Gopinath Warriar



Sushama Gopinath

Prominent Citizens

LEELA SARKAR

LEELA SARKAR has over the last 25 years translated 51 prominent novels in Bengali into Malayalam. She has translated Vaikom Mohammad Basheer's celebrated Malayalam novel "Mathilukal" into Bengali. She has also translated M T Vasudevan Nair's short stories into Bengali. these have been published in Bengali periodicals, some of them in Bangladesh.

Born at Penang in 1934, Leela hails from Thrissur. She is married to Dipesh Sarkar who spent a lifetime in pharmaceuticals, including with Roche. They have one son, Anoop, who is a professor of Computer engineering in Canada. Anoop is married to a Korean and has a daughter, Mira.

Some of the authors she has translated into Malayalam are Mahashweta Devi, Ramapada Chowdhry, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay, Satyajit Ray, Sheersendu Mukhopadhyay,



LEELA SARKAR

Navneet Dev Sen, Taslima Nazreen, Celina Hosein, Ashaporna Devi, Bibhootibhushan Bandopadhyay, Pratibha Ray, Samaresh Basu and Debesh Ray.

She has also compiled a monumental Bangla-Malayalm dictionary which called for stupendous effort on her part. This is perhaps a record no one else can claim in the span of Indian literature.

Leela Sarkar leads a retired life now in Nerul, with her husband.

K Ramachandran Film maker and man behind KELI

Ramachandran is an ardent devotee of the traditional classical art forms and has dedicated his life for the revival, promotion and propagation of arts. He founded KELI in 1992 and presented several KELI festivals in the last 16 years, featuring the leading lights of classical performing arts. Keli's mode of



K Ramachandran

felicitation of the masters is also unique and traditional. The veterans are presented with Veerashrunkhala (a bangle made of 80 gms of pure gold) or a golden conch.

For the propagation of the arts, he has produced two documentaries so far.

His first film was KAALAM (Unending Time) on the legendary percussion exponent the Late Pallavur Appu Marar. The second film SIKHI (The Fire) documents the significant female presence in the world's most ancient theater tradition the 1800-year old Kudiyattam. Both these films have been included in a number of National and International Festivals and have won critical acclaim and also awards. SAAMAM is his third cinematic attempt and is his tribute to late M D Ramanathan. This film has been produced by the well known visual artist Riyas Komu.

His next film will throw light on the life of Peruvanam Kuttan Marar who is a master of rhythm music (Melam).

Ramachandran can be contacted on 9820835737 or by e-mail : ramk.keli@gmail.com

Rugmini Sagar



Rugmini Sagar

Rugmini Sagar is a lively presence in all social circles of Nerul Malayalees. She was associated with most of the Malayalee organisations of the area where she had settled down.

She came to Bombay from Manjapra, Palakkad, with her husband in 1965 and settled at Mulund in 1970. She had served Mulund Malayali Samajam in the capacity of Joint Secretary, Vice President and President. She has also served the

Dignity Foundation and The Skill and Ability School for the Disabled Children for some time.

Since 1998-99, she was active in the Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatana and now holds the position of Vice President. Since she shifted her residence to Nerul in 2001, Rugmini Sagar became active in New Bombay Keraleeya Samaj. She was Joint Secretary and Vice President at various times. She looks forward to the opportunities to serve the community in any capacity with out caring for personal gains. The political inclinations of the organisations are immaterial but what matters is the people at large who benefit out of the organisations, she explains.

Rugmini Sagar is married to Kirthi Sagar and the couple has two children Usha and Indu.

K T Nair

K T Nair came to Bombay from Kerala in 1979. Since then he settled down at Nerul. He is associated with almost every Malayalee organisation. He has held the positions of President, Secretary etc of New Bombay Keraleeya Samiti since last two decades. Presently he has an additional responsibility of Co-ordinator of Navi Mumbai Ekopana Samiti consisting of 14 Malayali Samajams of Navi Mumbai.



K T Nair



Bharata Natyam

recital by Nidhi

Abhinaya Institute of Dance presented the Bharata Natyam recital by upcoming danseuse Nidhi Nair at the ISKCON auditorium. Besides the considerable command over the essentials of Bharata Natyam, what struck the audience was Nidhi's powerful display of expressions. Slim and blessed with expressive eyes, Nidhi transported the audience to a different world altogether. Dy Inspector General Ashok Kumar of Indian Coast Guard., Prof Sashi Priya, Guru Dr Vedantam Ramalinga Sastry of Sri Siddhendra Yogi Kuchipudi Kalapeetam graced the occasion.

Nidhi Nair is the daughter of Radha Krishna Nair and Dr Geeta Nair, dental surgeon.

Nidhi Nair is the disciple of Guru Radha Mohan and has been ardently learning Bharata Natyam for the last couple of years. The hallmark of her performance is her complete involvement and this quality of "joie-de-vivre" that she displays while performing, hence it was a pleasure to watch Nidhi Nair dancing.

-Vijay Shanker

WHY GOD'S OWN COUNTRY?



-Parur S Ganesan

It was an advertising copywriter's ingenuity that coined the phrase "God's Own Country" some years ago. The slogan was sold globally. The world today recognises Kerala as the ideal tourist destination.

Selling tourism apart, the slogan embodies the innumerable legends and myths that shroud this tiny state. A visitor to the state is not only impressed with the bounteous blessings of Nature, but also with the intense religious fervour of the people in all walks of life and spheres of activity.

The origin of Kerala is itself traced to God to Parasurama one of the ten incarnations of Vishnu. Parasurama's father, Jamadagni, was humiliated by a powerful Kshatriya King Karthaveerya. In vengeance, the son massacred with his axe (parasu) every Kshatriya in the land including unborn children. He then bequeathed the conquered land to brahmins. Realising the magnitude of the genocide he had committed, he undertook a rigorous penance (*thapasya*) to absolve himself of the sin. Having given away all the land polluted with the blood of the victims, he had no place of his own to conduct his penance. He sought the help of Varuna, the king of the seas, to give him a place by the sea by withdrawing his waters.

Varuna obliged him, but in return insisted that Parasurama should discard his blood stained axe. He should throw the axe as far away into the sea as he could, and all the land where the axe fell would be his. The sea would withdraw from all that land.

He could then perform his penance undisturbed. Parasurama climbed up the Mount Gokarn and hurled his axe with all his might. It fell at a point near the present day Kanyakumari. As the sea receded, modern Kerala came up.

Undisturbed, Parasurama conducted his penance for several years and came out of it mellowed and purged of his sins. The story goes that he urged Indra, the king of heaven to send down some nymphs. He brought saplings of *kalpavruksha*, which became coconut trees. He also brought Iravata's calves which today adorn every temple in Kerala. He then installed a benevolent king on the state and provided it with an enviable administration.

Celestial Links

In course of time, everything in Kerala came to be linked to something celestial.

While in the rest of the country, harvest festivals are occasions for merriment and celebration, Kerala marks the festival by according a right royal reception to its most benevolent ruler, Mahabali. Mahabali, condemned to the netherworld by the jealous Gods in Heaven for his popularity, Vishnu granted him his last boon that he could visit his grateful subjects on Thiruvonam Day, Which usually falls in September.

Kerala's religious fervour is marked by the hundreds of unique temples in the State. Kerala temples are simple and ordinary looking, but serene and without the ornate and splendid architectural excellence one finds in temples in nearby Tamilnadu,

Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Within the simplicity of its interior, Kerala's temples provide an ambience of divinity and serenity. The Supremacy and omniscience of the presiding deity in each temple is unquestioned and unchallenged.

A mere declaration of a confession of a person in front of the temple deity is recognised as acceptable evidence in courts of law. Each temple has a hoary history behind it, of its origin and sanctity. The virtues and powers every presiding deity is extolled and passed on from generation to generation. Devotees accept without question their miraculous powers. Children brought up in the vicinity of such temples grew up in an atmosphere of implicit piety.

Guruvayur, which devotees fondly call the *Vaikuntham on earth*, is believed to be five millennia old.

The Sabarimala temple in the far south draws pilgrims from all over the country and many abroad during seasons. So do many others like the temples at Vaikom and Chhottanikara. Chhottanikara is credited with miraculous powers to cure insanity.

Utsavas (annual festivals) lasting nine to ten days, are attractions for permanent devotees all over the country. All known gods and goddesses in the Hindu pantheon have a temple in Kerala. Rama's brother, Bharatha, also has more than one for himself in Kerala. Who then can challenge the slogan that Kerala is God's Own Country?

Our mother tongue - 3

History of Malayalam Alphabets

Satyanath

Islam in Kerala

When Muslim traders landed in Kerala, they were treated as honoured guests and the Samutiri (Zamorin, as called by the British) and the successors of Cheraman Perumal, accorded them every facility that a revered guest would expect. Among these Muslims, there were many scholars and they propagated among the locals that in Islam, there was no separation of people on the basis of caste. This propaganda attracted many backward class people to Islam. Ibn Battuta, in the 14th century, gives detailed information on Kerala Muslims. In his travelogue he wrote: "... Muslims are the most highly honored people....." Consequently, during the next three centuries, Muslims flourished economically and numerically. This resulted in Arabic Language getting a higher position. It is said that, there were even bilingual translators of Arabic language for the Samutiri.

Till this period, only Brahmins, Kshatriyas and the influential sections of Vaishyas and Sudras were allowed to study and they used Sanskrit and Brahmi scripts. The scholars among the Muslims introduced a new script called Arabic-Malayalam script as shown here. When a majority of Keralites were illiterates, Kerala Muslims were literates through their own technique of best utilization of Arabic alphabets. Muslims used to write letters, books, songs etc. using Arab - Malayalam script.

Malayalam being a Dravidian language, posed many problems while writing it using Arabic letters, a Semitic language. Only 28 letters were available in Arabic to pronounce 52 letters in the Malayalam. It was overcome by taking the help of Farsi (Persian) alphabets. The letters like 'Pa', 'gha', 'kha', 'nga', 'nja', 'zha', 'ga', 'cha' were not available in the Arabic alphabets. The scripts which stand for zha, cha, pa, ga are ك, ج, پ, respectively in Arabi Malayalam though they look like Arabic letters, are not. All these letters were taken from the Persian alphabets. Since the

All the old Mappila songs (a special category of Muslim songs) were written in Arabi - Malayalam. The term 'Mappila' connoting Muslims in Malabar, the main theme of Mappila Songs is Islamic; naturally a number of Arabic words and terms are used in these songs.

During this period i.e., till 16th century, Malayalam, as it was existing then, was taught in 'kalari's by teachers, known as *Ezhuthachhans* (feminine gender *Ezhutthamma*) and they belonged to Nair community of *Sudras*.

During this period, now we may summarise,

1. The 30 letter *Vattezhuthu* was taught as the Malayalam alphabet by the various *Kalaries* or schools to the common people.
 2. Alphabets which are equivalent to those in Sanskrit (*Granthakshara*) were learned by scholars and those interested in Sanskrit works.
 3. As the influence of Sanskrit in Malayalam increased, *Vattezhuthu* was used commonly to write Sanskrit words and other derivations, though distorted. The names of parts of Vedas like *samhita*, *ashtakam*, *varggam*, *anuvakom* were written as *changatha*, *attam*, *vakkom*, *anam* respectively, in *Vattezhuthu*. What was written, was not exactly what was read.
 4. *Vattezhuthu* was used with interposition of letters of the *Granthakshara* (a mixture of Sanskrit and Tamil) to denote essential Sanskrit phonetics. (Eg. - In important Decrees or *Shasanas*.)
- Now many questions may arise as to *Vattezhuthu*, Devanagari, Brahmi, *Granthakshara* etc. Let us try to explain:

The Malayalam language was first written in *Vattezhuttu*, an ancient script for Tamil. However, modern Malayalam script evolved from *Grantha*, a script originally used to write *Sanskrit*. Both *Vattezhuttu* and

Grantha evolved from *Brahmi*, but independently.

Vattezhuttu

Vattezhuttu (Malayalam: വട്ടെഴുത്തു, *Vattezhuttü*, "round writing") is a script that had evolved from Tamil-Brahmi, and was once used extensively in the southern part of present-day Tamil Nadu and in Kerala.

Malayalam was first written in *Vatteluttu*. The *Vazhappalli* inscription issued by Rajasekhara Varman is the earliest example, dating from about 830 CE. In the Tamil country, the modern Tamil script had supplanted *Vatteluttu* by the 15th century, but in the Malabar region, *Vatteluttu* remained in general use up to the 17th century, or the 18th century. A variant form of this script, *Kolezhuthu*, was used until about the 19th century mainly in the Kochi area and in the Malabar area. Another variant form, *Malayanma*, was used in the south of Thiruvananthapuram.

Grantha

The *Grantha* alphabet is a descendent of the Brahmi alphabet and started to emerge during the 5th century AD. *Sanskrit* was transmitted orally (e.g., *Mahabharat*, *Ramayan* etc) for a long time, and so was mostly written in the local script. (It is only in recent times, since *Sanskrit* was introduced in the modern universities, that the *Devanagari* was adopted as the standard.) In Bengal, it was written in the Bengali script; in Andhra, in the Telugu script.

Vattezhuthu, the early script used to write Malayalam, had about 30 alphabets. From the *vattezhuthu* was derived the *kolezhuthu*. There is no fundamental difference between the two scripts except that in *kolezhuthu* there are no specific symbols for endings in u and for a and o. This script was more commonly used in the Cochin and Malabar areas than in Travancore. Yet another script derived from the *vattezhuthu* was the *Malayanma*, which was commonly used south of Thiruvananthapuram. *Malayanma* also

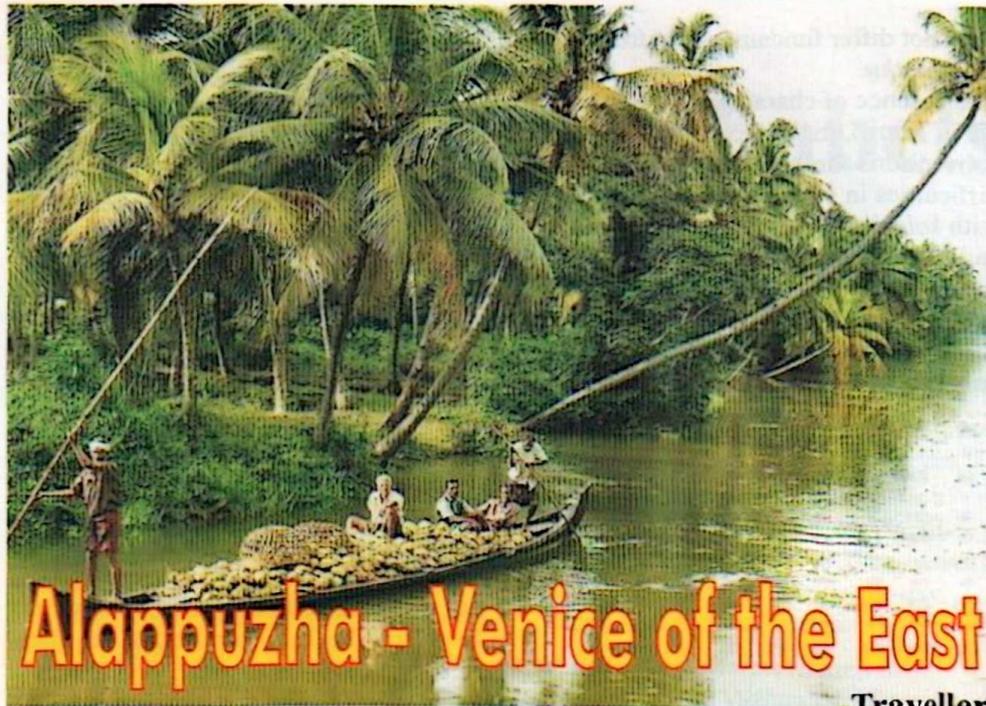
Visitors from the west call Alappuzha the Venice of the East. But to a person who has already gone there, it opens a number of windows, each distinctly different from the other. Backwaters, boat races, boat houses, beaches, marine products, coir and cashew industry, mouth watering coastal cuisines, well known temples and churches, literary figures and memorials and many more.

A singular characteristic of this land is the region called Kuttanad. A land of lush paddy fields, Kuttanad is the rice bowl of Kerala because of its wealth of paddy fields. This scenic countryside with its waterways also has a rich crop of banana, cassava and yam. This perhaps is the only region in the world where farming is done 1.5 to 2 ms. below sea level. Inland waterways which flow above land level are an amazing feature of this region.

Historical background



During the 16th century small principalities like Kayamkulam, Purakkad, Karappuram comprising two principalities called Moothedath and Iledath (present Cherthala taluk) emerged into power. During this period, the Portuguese also came into prominence in the political scene of this area and they built several churches. The churches located at Purakkad and Arthungal are built by them.



St. Sebastian's Church, Arthungal



In the 17th century, the Portuguese power declined and the Dutch came into dominance. As a result of several treaties signed between the Dutch and the kings of Purakkad, Kayamkulam and Karappuram, the Dutch built factories and warehouses in various places of the district for storing pepper, ginger etc. In course of time they interfered in the political and cultural affairs of the area. It was at that time Maharaja Marthandavarma, the 'Master of Modern Travancore' interfered in the political affairs of those principalities.

Places to Visit

With the Arabian Sea on the west and a vast network of lakes, lagoons and fresh



water rivers crisscrossing it, Alappuzha is a district of immense natural beauty. The backwater country side is also home to diverse animal and bird life. By virtue of its proximity to the sea, the town has always enjoyed a unique place in the maritime history of Kerala.

Krishnapuram Palace

The 18th century Krishnapuram Palace built during the reign of the Travancore



monarch, Marthanda Varma, is a double-storied structure which displays typical characteristics of Kerala architecture - gabled roofs, dormer windows, narrow corridors. It houses one of the largest mural paintings in Kerala, the Gajendra Moksham. It measures 14' x 11' and is at the western end of the ground floor, a walking distance from the Palace Pool. Inside is also a museum of antique sculptures, paintings and bronzes. Situated 47 kms from Alappuzha on the way to Kollam, Krishnapuram is easily accessible by bus from either town.

Pathiramanal (Sands of midnight)

This is a small beautiful island in the Vembanad Lake and is accessible only by



boat from Kumarakom and Muhamma. According to local legends, this island was created in the middle of Vembanad lake when a young brahmin dived into the lake to do his evening ablutions.

Ambalappuzha (Pilgrim Centre)

The Sri Krishna Temple at Ambalappuzha, 14 kms from Alappuzha is among Kerala's



famous ones boasting of the typical temple architectural style of the state. It is equally famed for its *palpayasam*. The temple's main festival occurs during March-April. It was in this temple that the 16th century poet Kunjan Nambiar staged his first Ottan Thullal, a solo dance performance with high social content.

Karumadi

Karumadi close to Ambalappuzha is famous for its Karumadi Kuttan, a black



granite figure of Buddha said to belong to the 10th century. This is under the protection of State Archaeological Department.

Punnapra

A short distance from Alappuzha is Punnapra, a village which has gone down



in history as the scene of a bitter and heroic fighting between the communists and Travancore State Police in the Punnapra Vayalar Communist uprising of 1946. These are the memorial of the martyrs located in Alappuzha near Kalarcode.

Alappuzha Beach

This is one of the most popular picnic



spots in Alappuzha. The pier, which extends into the sea here, is over 137 years old. Entertainment facilities at the Vijaya beach park add to the attractions of the beach. There is also an old lighthouse which is greatly a fascination to visitors.

Vijaya Beach Park

Picnic spot with children's park and boating facilities (Open 15.00-20.00



hrs). Entrance fee Rs. 2 per person; Free entrance for children below 5 years.

Boating charge: Rs.10 for 10 minutes. Other facilities for children: Toy train, bicycles. Video permit Rs. 25, Camera permit: Rs. 5 respectively.

Sea View Park

The park offers boating facilities and a swimming pool. Boat rentals for 10 minutes: Round boat (4 seater): Rs. 10. Pedalboat (2 seater): Rs. 15. Pedalboat (4 seater): Rs. 25. Video permit Rs. 15, Camera permit Rs. 100 respectively.



Chavara Bhavan

Chavara Bhavan (6 kms. from Alappuzha, accessible only by boat) is the ancestral home of the blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara. It is now a holy shrine and spiritual resort where thousands of devotees gather for prayer, receive favours and feel amply gratified. Here, a 250 year old historically important beacon of light is preserved intact in its original and primitive form. It still continues to burn every day.

Ambalappuzha Sree Krishna Temple

15 kms. south of Alappuzha, built in the typical Kerala architectural style, this temple is famous all over India for the Palapayasam, the daily offering of deliciously sweet milk porridge. It is also in this temple that Palipana is performed by Velans (sorceres) once every twelve years. Paintings of the Dasavatharam (the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu) are on display on the inner walls of the Chuttambalam. Ottan thullal, a satiric art form originated by the poet Kunchan Nambiar, was first performed on the premises of this temple.

Edathua Church

This Situates 24 kms. away from Alappuzha, on the Alappuzha - Thiruvalla Road. Established in 1810, the church is dedicated to St. George. It is believed that prayers and offerings at this church help to heal all mental disorders and other ailments. During the annual

feast (5th, 6th, 7th of May) pilgrims from all parts of South India, irrespective of caste and creed, visit the church and seek the blessings of the saint.



Mannarasala Sree Nagaraja Temple

32 kms. south of Alappuzha situated near Harippad, this is a serpent shrine under the patronage of a 'Brahman' family, headed by a priestess. The ancient shrine is an internationally renowned pilgrim centre dedicated to the Serpent God Nagaraja. Sarpa Yakshi and Naga Yakshi are the



beloved consorts of Nagaraja. It is believed that Nagaraja as the installed deity is endowed with the form of Hari (Lord Vishnu) and the spirit of Lord Shiva. Legend has it that the first priestess of Mannarasala gave birth to a five-headed snake, which is believed to reside in the ancestral house to safeguard the family. At Mannarasala, barren women are believed to be blessed with children and a special turmeric paste available at the shrine is credited with powers to cure even leprosy.

Chettikulangara Bhagavathy Temple

The Kettukazhcha festival at this temple draws large crowds of devotees. Processions of all decorated structures on chariots, brightly decorated effigies of horses and bullocks and cultural performances make a spectacular pageant. (Festival - February / March).

The Backwater Cruise -Alappuzha, "Venice of the East" has a large network of canals that meander through the town. The Snake Boat Race held every year in August in the backwaters of Alappuzha is a major attraction.

The backwaters act as a vital waterway for the transport of goods, people and their produce are often the only link between

isolated villages and crowded towns. In Kerala, the total expanse of backwater stretches over 1500 kms., with a network of 44 rivers, lagoons and lakes from north to south. Alappuzha which forms the main part of this network has the peculiar geographical feature of having the water in level with the land. This gives the advantage of getting a closer look at the village life on shore while on a backwater ride.

A glide in a "Kettuvallam" (Houseboat) through the enchanting backwaters of Alappuzha is sure to rob your heart. Palm fringed narrow canals winding through the vast expanse of paddy fields and the neat tiny hamlets lined up along either side of the canals are panoramic sights one can never forget. The Chinese fishing nets, the reminiscent of our past trade links, are also found on the way. Flocks of ducks swimming around the banks and tiny birds flying across the sky remain as enduring pictures reflecting the charm of this unique land. The sparkling water



and the caressing cool wind offer a temptation too strong to resist. Country boats of various types crisscross the path with passengers from all walks of Kerala's rural life ranging from milkman and newspaper boy to local politicians, priests and wedding parties. It is a unique experience as this is as close as one can get to feel the vibrant life in the countryside of god's own country.

It is in the months of August and September that the moist, rain-drenched earth and the glorious ever-flowing backwaters burst into song together, as over hundred thousand men and women gather on the banks to witness a spectacular water regatta - the SNAKE

BOAT RACES. Boat race crews begin to practice for the race months before the great day. They live together, eat together, toil together to work themselves into a smooth, coordinated team.

A splendid procession unfolds with all types of 'Kali-Vallangal' or **RACING BOATS**, led by the largest and the most majestic of them, the 'Chundan'. Its rowers sing songs known as ' Vanchi pattu ' to the rhythm of the oars - a feast for the eyes and the ears. The largest of the 'Chundan' boats the length of which varies between a hundred and a hundred and thirty feet can seat a hundred and twenty rowers, sixty on each side. Like the neck of an angry snake it curves to a height of fifteen to twenty feet. The prow is pointed and stands four feet above the water with its glistening brass embellishments. The main steerman of the boat stands on the amaram with specially made long oars. The efficiency with which they handles the oar is what

establishes the speed of the boat and its balance. They claim that a single strong plunge of the oar into the water can take the boat three leaps forward to a distance of thirty feet.

On boat race day, the 'Chundan Valloms' as the greatest racing boats are called -are slicked down with a special oil to make them glide effortlessly through water. The crews then visit a shrine carrying the stroke and largest steering oar with them. And having offered prayers to the Almighty, they are now ready to war with their fellow men. The air crackles with excitement as the best of the 130 feet Chundan Valloms, each manned by over a hundred rowers, fly through the waters



at break neck speed, egged on by the fierce competitive spirit that marks the event and the spectators lusty roars. The most famous of these is the **NEHRU TROPHY BOAT RACE** on the Second Saturday of every August. There are a dozen other Snake Boat Races. The latest addition is the one in connection with the **GREAT ELEPHANT MARCH** held on 19th of January every year. 'Champakulam', 'Kavalam', 'Karichal', 'Jawahar Thayangari', 'Kallooparamban', 'Pacha', 'Pulinkunnu', 'Nadubhagam', 'Cheruthana', 'Kandangari' and 'Paippad' are the chief competitors for the trophies. Large and spectacular 'chundans' glide towards the finishing line like meteors in the sky with water splashing violently on

both sides like streaks of lightning. An unforgettable and truly special scene. The fund of energy, spirit of competition and unerring co-ordination makes this sport one of the most dynamic.

Payippad Vallamkali

Held in memory of the 'Prathista' ceremony of Haripad Subramanya Temple and therefore has a religious significance. Payipad Boat Race is celebrated for three days, commencing from the 'Onam' festival day. Snake boat processions are taken out on the first two days. The competitive boat-race takes place on the third day.

Other Boat Races are

Tourism Boat Race, 11th January

connected with Great Elephant March. Pulimkunnu, Rajiv Gandhi Boat Race, August Last Saturday.

Champakulam Race, June-July Connected with the Asterism "Moolam" of Midhunam, (Malayalam month).

Neerattupuram Boat Race, August-Sept. conducted during Onam days.

Chettikulangara, Kettukazhcha, February-March

Thiruvalla, Pamba Boat Race

Haripad, Karuvatta Boat Race

Mannar Boat Race

'Kettukazhcha' is very famous and it is a procession of tall decorated structures in chariots in which effigies of horses, bullocks are displayed.

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Raagaratnamaalika - 5

Rāgam Hamsadhwani

Hamsadhwani is the janyam of 29th melakarta Rāgam, Dheera Sankarābharanam.

Aa: - S R₂ G₂ P N₂ S

Av: - SN₂ P G₂ R₂ S

The Swarams are Shadjam; Chathusruthi Rishabham Antara Ganadhram Panchamam and Kakali Nishadam. This is an Audava Rāgam and Upana Rāgam. It was discovered by Ram Swāmi Dekshithar, father of Shri Mukat Swāmi Dekshithar. G and N are jeevswarams.

This Rāgam also has scope for janta and Dhattu Swarams. We find a large percentage of *krithis* in this Ragam. Praise Lord Ganpathi Gamakavarak Rāgam. This rāgam is one of the rāgam depicting Neera Rasam.

Sarva Kalika Rāgam and Murchanakaraka Rāgam. If we considered Panchamam as Aadhra Shadjam, we get Naga Swarali another Audava Rāgam. In this rāgam Nishadam is sung very close to Shadjam.

Major kritis

- 1) Jalajaksha-Aditala Varnam Kothavasal Venkata Ramayyar
- 2) Vathapi Ganpathim Adi- Shree Mutuswami Deekshithar
- 3) Raghu Nayaka-Adi-Shree Thyagaraja Swamikal
- 4) Vinayaka Ninnuvina-Adi-Veena Kuppaiyer
- 5) Mutadhara- Adi-Papanasham Shivan

Film Songs

- 1) Sree Vinayakam- Bharatham
- 2) Ragangale Mohangale- Tharattu
- 3) Manatharil Engum Kaliyil Alpam Karyam
- 4) Beginning Of The Ragamalika Sumuhoorthamay- Kamaladlam
- 5) Aa Ragam- Kshanakkathu
- 6) And no Malayalee can ever forget *Uthradappoonilave vaa* from the album "*Ulsavageethangal*" of Dr.K.J.Yesudas, Sree Kumaram Thampi and Raveendran Master.
- 7) Paaduvaan- Anagha, Marannu Poy
- 8) The Second Part of "Rāgam Sree Rāgam" song "Hamsadhwani Rāgam"



Smt. Mallika Bharathan
(Cell:93214 28318)



Business, Finance and Investment

Co-operative Housing Societies - Obligations



Jacob Koshi

In the State of Maharashtra, Maharashtra Ownership Flats Act, 1963(MOFA) regulates the activities of construction and protection of interest of flat purchasers.

As per MOFA, the promoters jointly with the flat purchasers must register the organization as Housing Society as governed by the Maharashtra Co-operative Societies Act, 1960(MCSA) within a stipulated time. In very few cases, some promoters register these as Condominiums or Companies. We will restrict our topic of discussion to the Housing Societies governed by the provisions of MCSA.

The Housing Society must follow the regulatory requirements as envisaged under the MCSA, Maharashtra Co-operative Societies Rules, 1961(MCSR) and Bye-Laws as approved by the registering authorities viz: the Registrar of Co-operative Societies.

The management and administrative responsibilities vest with the Managing Committee of the Housing Society duly elected by the General Body. The MCSR and Bye-Laws form the rule book to decide on the manner in which the Housing Society carries on its activities.

The dispute redressal forums available to a member per se or the Society primarily rest with Registrar, or a Co-operative Court.

A Housing Society has a statutory obligation to maintain and keep the safe custody of all records/registers for a prescribed period of time. MCSR spells out the procedures with respect to the above.

Proper records of its receipts and payments, personal ledgers, general ledgers, bills, etc. must be maintained and a final annual statement of accounts must be prepared at the end of every year as of 31st March. These must be prepared on or before 15th of May every year. The Society should thereafter submit the statement of accounts to the Auditor for their audit not later than 31st May. These audited accounts must also be presented to the AGM on or before 14th August every year. The application for seeking permission for extension of any of these dates should be addressed to the Deputy/ Assistant Registrar of the respective Municipal Wards in which the Society falls.

Various statutory registers in the form of Members Register (I & J Form), Property Register, Share Register, Sinking Fund

Register, Audit Rectification Register (O Form), Investment Register, Nomination Register, Minute Books separately for MC and General Body Meetings, etc must also be maintained and MC must ensure safe keeping thereof.

The safe keeping of records for a specific period as per statute must be strictly adhered to. Certain records like bill books, receipt books, vouchers, etc. must be preserved for a minimum period of 10 years and in other cases on a permanent basis.

When the Society decides to destroy some of the records which need not be maintained beyond a period, detailed procedures as prescribed by the Commissioner of Co-operation must be adhered to.

Annual Audit of the Society's Accounts and Records is carried out on a yearly basis by the auditor appointed by the General Body. It is obligatory on the Society to appoint only chartered accountants who have undergone training in Co-operative Audit Course conducted by the WIRC of the ICAI or those from the panel of Certified Auditors maintained by the Divisional Joint Registrar. The role of the Auditor as a friend, philosopher and guide to Society is unique and should be taken in that spirit.

The Audit Memorandum in Form 1 & 28 form part of the audit report and the same be presented to the General Body. Once the report is approved in the AGM, the Annual Audited Accounts together with the Audit rectification Report in Form O and audit report must be submitted to Deputy/Asst Registrar, as the case may be.

We will examine the applicability of other laws such as Income Tax Act, Service Tax, MVAT, Profession Tax, etc. to Co-operative Housing Society.

The Co-operative Housing Society is liable to **Income tax** if it has a taxable income. However, a Society can take shelter under the mutuality concept which implies that no person can earn profit out of himself.

It may not be possible to claim mutuality concept in respect of all sources of income. For example, rental income, bank interest, donations and such other income fall outside the purview of the above concept and hence liable to be taxed.

Transfer premium collected from outgoing/incoming members is a subject of

controversy as there are contradictory views expressed by courts. In a recent judgment by a Special Bench constituted by the ITAT, Mumbai, it was held that if the premium charged is as per law, such premium paid is not liable to tax (Walkeshwar Triveni CHS vs ITO).

Where the income is generated from re-development of the Society's property, the taxability of such income largely depends on the manner in which transaction is structured and the manner of documentation of such transaction and also based on the facts of the case.

Provisions of Tax deduction at Source (TDS) applies to Societies within the scope of Chapter XVII B of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

The **Service tax** provisions too apply to certain societies depending upon the classification of service it provides. Typically, a Society can fall in the category of "Club or Association Services"

A silver lining in favor of some societies: If the collection per member per month does not exceed Rs 3000/-, exemption can be availed by such Society. Such collection excludes property tax, common electricity charges, water charges, etc. The overall exemption limit of income of Rs. 10 lakhs per annum also applies to Societies for chargeability to Service tax.

A Housing Society at times can also fall under the definition of dealer under **Maharashtra Value Added Tax Act, 2002(MVAT)**. It is also likely that TDS (under MVAT) applies under Works Contract and therefore it is advisable to examine the applicability on a case to case basis.

Profession Tax provisions too apply to a Society when it employs persons with a monthly salary or wages of more than Rs 5,000 and hence liable to deduct and pay the applicable tax to the Government. In addition to the above, profession tax of Rs 2,500 per annum is payable on its own under this Act.

We have only outlined some of the salient features of the applicable laws for the benefit of readers.

jkoshi2007@gmail.com

Old is Gold

Rosi (റോസി) (1965)

Lyricist: P Bhaskaran Music: K V Job
Rāgam:Dheera Sankarabharam Singer: K J Yesudas

Alliyambalkkatavilannaraykku vellam annu
 Nammaḥṇonay ttuzhanjillē kotumbuvaḥam
 Nammute nenjilāke anurāgakkarikkin vellam
 Annu- nenjilāke anurāgakkarikkin vellam (Alliyambal..)

Fāmarappoo nec doore kantu mōhiccu appōl
 Fāzhe njān neenticcennu poovu potticcu (Fāmarappoo..)
 Pinne tantotinja tāmara njān kontuvannappōl
 Peññē nin kavitiḷ kantu maṭ'oru tāmarakkatū
 Peññē nin kavitiḷ kantu maṭ'oru tāmarakkatū (Alliyambal..)

Kātu poottallō njāvalkkā pazhuttallō innum
 Kālamāyillē ente kai piticceetan (Kātu poottallō..)
 Annu moolippāttu pātittanna muḷam tattammē
 Innee Āložhinja koottilentē vannucērāttōo
 Innee Āložhinja koottilentē vannucērāttōo (Alliyambal..)

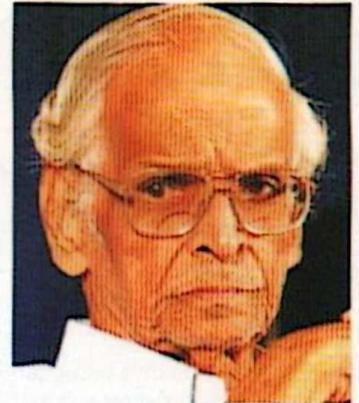
Note: Ā = ആ, ā = ഓ (1), c = ച (2), ē = ഐ (3), ū = ഊ, ṛ = റ്റ, nj = ന് (4), ṇ = ണ (5),
 † = ള് (6), ṅ = ണ് (7), ng = ണ് (8), ṣ = ഷ (9), , ō = ഓ, T, t = ട്, † = റ് (10),
 ††, †† = ത്ത, Sh, sh = ശ് (11), Ś, ś = ഷ് (12), ō = ഓ (13), †† = റ്

അല്ലിയാമ്പൽക്കടവിലന്നരയ്ക്കു വെള്ളം - അന്നു
 നമ്മളൊന്നായത്തുഴഞ്ഞില്ലെ കൊതുന്ദുവള്ളം
 നമ്മുടെ നെഞ്ചിലാകെ അനുരാഗക്കരിക്കിൻവെള്ളം
 അന്നു- നെഞ്ചിലാകെ അനുരാഗക്കരിക്കിൻവെള്ളം (അല്ലിയാമ്പൽ...)
 താമരപ്പൂ നീ ദൂരെ കണ്ടു മോഹിച്ചു അപ്പോൾ
 താഴെ ഞാൻ നീന്തിച്ചെന്നു പുവു പൊട്ടിച്ചു (താമരപ്പൂ..)
 പിന്നെ തണ്ടൊടിഞ്ഞ താമര ഞാൻ കൊണ്ടുവന്നപ്പോൾ
 പെണ്ണേ- നിൻ കവിളിൽ കണ്ടു മറ്റൊരു താമരക്കാട്
 പെണ്ണേ- നിൻ കവിളിൽ കണ്ടു മറ്റൊരു താമരക്കാട് (അല്ലിയാമ്പൽ...)

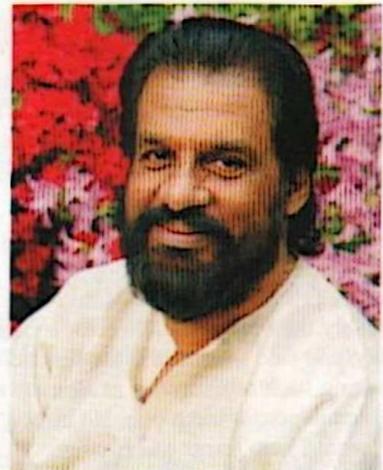
കാടു പുത്തല്ലോ ഞാവൽക്കാ പഴുത്തല്ലോ- ഇന്നും
 കാലമായില്ലേ എന്റെ കൈ പിടിച്ചിടാൻ (കാടു പുത്തല്ലോ..)
 അന്നു മുളിപ്പാട്ടു പാടിത്തന്ന മുളംതത്തമ്മേ
 ഇന്നീ- ആളൊഴിഞ്ഞ കുട്ടിലെന്തേ വന്നുചേരാത്തു
 ഇന്നീ- ആളൊഴിഞ്ഞ കുട്ടിലെന്തേ വന്നുചേരാത്തു (അല്ലിയാമ്പൽ...)

Rosi was produced by Vrindavan Films of Mani Swamy, former husband of Kaviyoor Ponnamma. He received tremendous support from Thikkurissi Sukumaran Nair (orator, dramatist, writer of story, screenplay and dialogue, magazine editor, film producer and director and versatile actor all rolled into one). Stage actor and dramatist Antony wrote the story, screenplay and dialogue of this film. This film was hailed as a real thriller with a believable story. Rosi was directed by P N Menon who was earlier engaged in film publicity. P J Antony had the lead role of a fugitive running from police for a crime that he did not commit and Thikkurissi was in the role of the police inspector chasing Antony. It was the second film that Antony was in the lead role. Kaviyoor Ponnamma was the heroine. Prem Nazir

and Vijaya Nirmala formed the romantic pair. Earlier, Antony was the hero in *Rantitangazhi*. Similarly Ponnamma was heroine in *Bharthavu*. Later, both of them had lead roles in a third movie; Antony in M T Vasudevan Nair's *Nirmalyam* and Ponnamma in Padmarajan's *Thingalazhchcha Nalla Divasam*. For the lyrics of Bhaskaran, K V Job provided music and it was the latter's second movie as music composer. All the five songs of the movie were well received. Other songs were *Kannilenthanu...*, *Chalakkudi puzhayum*, *Enkilo pantoru kaalam* and *Velukkumbo puzhayoru...* But *Alliyambal* turned out to be an all time hit for Yesudas. This song was later used in another movie, *Police Academy* in 2001



P Bhaskaran



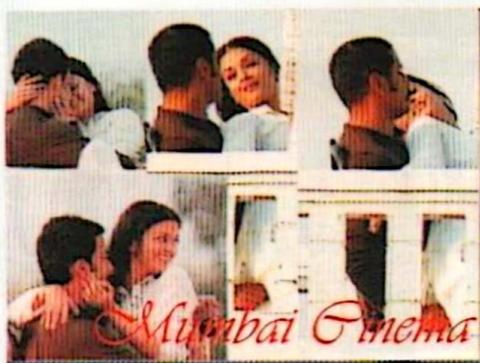
K J Yesudas



K V Job



P J Antony & Kaviyoor Ponnamma



A trailer of Mani Ratnam's bilingual *Raavan/Raavanan* was screened to the media at Cannes. Timed to coincide with the 63rd Cannes Film Festival, when journalists from the world over assembled there, the event was attended by the lead stars of the movie, Vikram, Prasoon Joshi, Abhishek Bachchan, Aishwarya Rai, and Reliance Big Pictures Amit Khanna. The actress turned up in a beautiful black saree, looking all Indian and quite different from her western avatars she wore earlier.

Amit Khanna of Reliance Big Pictures, which produced the films along with Madras Talkies, described Mani Ratnam as arguably the best Indian director living today, and said that he and the rest believed in taking such rare movies as *Raavan / Raavanan* across the globe. He hoped that this would help transcend barriers.

Suhasini Mani Ratnam represented her husband at the press conference of *Raavan* in Cannes. Mani and his cameraman Santosh Sivan are doing the final cutting and grading of the film at Adlabs in Mumbai. Suhasini is the film's co-producer and dialogue writer for the Tamil edition, said that it would help "us understand the grey parts that all of us have in us... None of us is completely white or black". She was all praise for A.R. Rahman's music, and said that it merged beautifully with the story. In fact, the music accentuated



Abhishek, Aishwarya

Mani Ratnam's **Raavan**

picture. Songs have a great role to play. They do take the plot forward.

Speaking at the press meet Suhasini said that through *Raavan*, Mani Ratnam was trying to blend Hindi and regional (Tamil) cinema. Says Suhasini: "It's the first time that a filmmaker has attempted to blend the two. *Raavan* has ten heads and ten conflicting thoughts, so there's a bit of conflict and *Raavan* in all of us."

Most Indian movies and stories can trace their origins to the two great epics, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, and *Raavan/Raavanan* was not different. It has been inspired by the *Ramayana*, though it really is not a take-off on that.

Incidentally, Ratnam shot both versions simultaneously, something he has never done before, and Vikram and Aishwarya play in both. Bachchan acts only in the Hindi version. He told the media that his part was his career's most challenging, most difficult and most stimulating. It was physically exhausting, and Vikram agreed.

Loosely based on Indian epic *Ramayana*, both the Hindi and Tamil versions of 'Raavan' are reported to open in 58 countries in June.

Mani Ratnam's films have always been a must watch as the filmmaker comes up with a fresh concept in every film of his. This time too Mani has come up with a 'never-thought-before' concept.

Vikram debuts in Hindi

We all know the star cast of his two versions. The Hindi version has Abhishek, Aishwarya and Vikram while the Tamil version has Prithviraj, Aishwarya and Vikram again. What we do not know is that Vikram plays 'Dev' in the Hindi version and 'Veera' in the Tamil version. It is the first time in Indian cinema that an actor is playing opposite shades in two versions of the same film. An elated Vikram said, "Here (Tamil version) I'm Veera and in Hindi, Dev. I hear that it's the first time in the world that an actor simultaneously plays two diametrically different roles in two languages of the same film*." Speaking about his role in Hindi, he said, "In Hindi my presence has been kept under wraps as of now. I'm the proverbial dark horse." Revealing that the movie is going to be released in Telugu as well, the actor says, "Audiences in Andhra are bound to be floored by the subject."

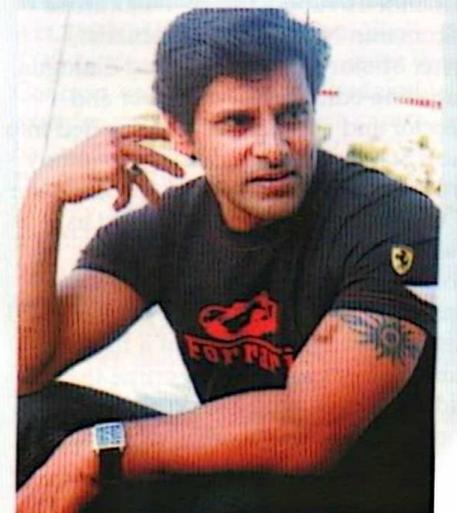
Working with Mani Ratnam was a dream come true for the actor. He says, "You know, I used to think one film each with



Mani Ratnam and Shankar and I wouldn't mind retiring in that blaze of glory." It would be interesting to know that Vikram went through a screen-test for Mani Ratnam's 'Bombay' released in 1995. The lead character, however, was played by Arvind Swamy.

Interestingly, although it is being called Vikram's launch pad in Bollywood, it may not be fully true as Vikram's 'Anniyan'(Tamil) was dubbed and released as 'Aparichit' in Hindi. The film of course did not do well as it lacked the Bollywood essence. Vikram, however, feels that this is his first Hindi film indeed. He says, "Though Aparichit didn't do too well, it's been telecast over 17 times so far. Yet *Raavan* is my first Hindi film."

When asked how he pulled off the two characters of Veera and Dev, considering the fact that the shooting took place simultaneously for both versions, the actor says, "I've played little tricks with my



Vikram

body language and expressions and they should work," he smiles cryptically. "I'm like a bull in one version tough, rugged and a man who lives for the moment. In the other, my character is poetic, philosophical, fun loving... just about everything." Asked about his look for the Hindi version, he said, "Surely not the clean shaven look. I don't intend to look like other heroes. I've plumped for a close hair-cut and moustache. "

Abhishek Bachchan

Looks for a hit

Abhishek Bachchan's last two solo hero films have flopped and he has not been seen on screen for a while. But, then again, he is doing director Mani Ratnam's "Raavan" and the combination has never failed so far.

Not surprisingly then, all eyes are on "Raavan".

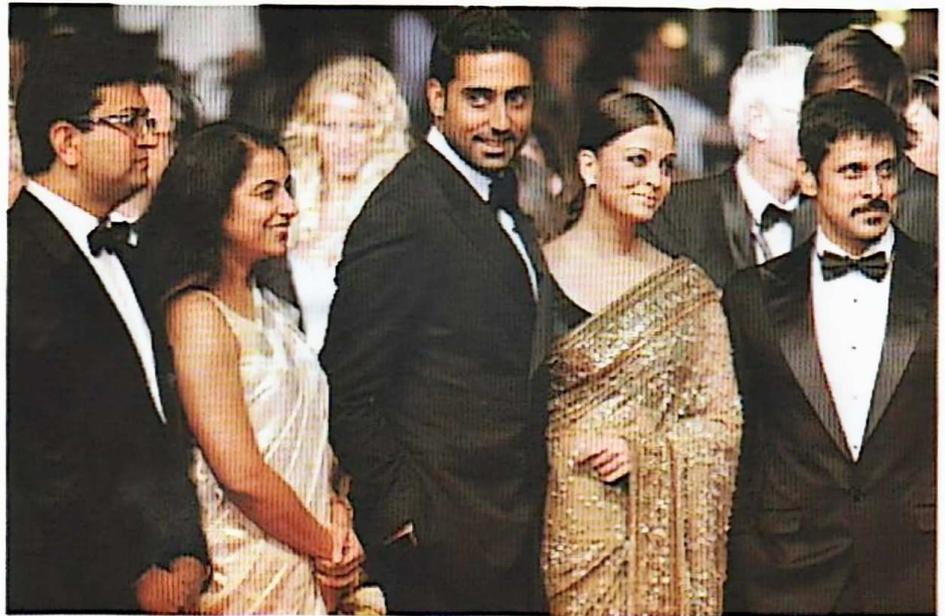
"The combination of Mani Ratnam and Abhishek is unbeatable. People are really looking forward to seeing them once again. With such a star cast and Mani Ratnam as director, the film is bound to work," said trade analyst Taran Adarsh. Made at a budget of about Rs.45 crore, "Raavan" is scheduled for a June 18 release.

Ratnam has played an important role in shaping Abhishek's career – the director's "Yuva" established him as an actor and their second venture together, "Guru", won him critical and commercial success. In the last two years Abhishek hasn't had any hits - both his solo hero movies "Drona" and "Delhi 6" bombed. Industry insiders feel "Raavan" might bail out the actor in the way as "Yuva" did in 2004 when he was under the weather after a string of flops.

"Mani Ratnam and Abhishek Bachchan will create a bigger magic with 'Raavan' than 'Yuva' and 'Guru'. Mani is an expert on dark themes and Abhishek pulls off such roles very well. 'Raavan' will do spectacular work," film critic Omar Qureshi said.

Abhishek bowed into Bollywood in 2000 with J.P. Dutta's "Refugee" and it was followed by duds like "Tera Jadoo Chal Gaya" (2000), "Dhai Akshar Prem Ke" (2000), "Bas Itna Sa Khwaab Hai" (2002), "Shararat" (2002), "Haan...Maine Bhi Pyaar Kiya" (2002) and "Mumbai Se Aaya Mera Dost" (2003). All these films saw Abhishek playing romantic roles. But it was rough, uncouth and ruthless goon Lallan Singh in Ratnam's 2004 movie "Yuva" that broke the jinx for Abhishek. Despite playing a negative role, he not only wowed critics but also impressed the audience.

After that there was no looking back for Abhishek. In the same year he scorched the box office with another hit, "Dhoom".



'Raavan' team at Cannes: Suhasini Mani Ratnam, Abhishek, Aishwarya and Vikram are seen here.

His winning streak continued in 2005, when the actor gave four hits - "Bunty Aur Babli", "Sarkar", "Dus" and "Bluffmaster" and he also did a cameo in the hit film "Salaam Namaste". Before 'Yuva', Abhishek didn't have an actor kind of image. After 'Yuva', people were like, 'Oh my god! This guy can act.' But Mani sir was convinced that Abhishek can really do it," said a source on condition of anonymity. Even Abhishek admits the film was a turning point in his career. Ratnam not only gave Abhishek pathbreaking roles but also presented him in dark roles.

In 2006, Abhishek teamed up again with Ratnam for "Guru", which was loosely based on business tycoon Dhirubhai Ambani's life. He landed the nomination for Filmfare best actor award for his performance in the film.

"Raavan" will once again see Abhishek as a villain and a lot of emphasis has been laid on his looks and body language. "It took 200 days to shoot the film. And it was not shot at one stretch. The film was simultaneously made in Hindi and Tamil. And then Mani sir fell ill. But Abhishek didn't do any work for two years because of 'Raavan'. Both Abhishek and Vikram kept their dates free for 'Raavan' because they knew the film is good," said the source.

Ratnam, who loves shooting on real locations, filmed "Raavan" at places like the Athirapally forests in Kerala, Ooty in Tamil Nadu, Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh, Kolkata, and the Malshej Ghats in Maharashtra.

From diving from a 90-ft cliff into water to standing under a waterfall for two hours and braving snakes and leeches in Kerala's forests, Abhishek did it all for

"Raavan".

"This is the most challenging film I have ever done in my life. I haven't done such a physically and emotionally challenging film in my life. And it's not about going to tough locations or tough scenes.

"The film drains you and you feel so good when you go home at night because you feel that you have done something. Getting a movie like 'Raavan' is so rare. You don't get such a role today," Abhishek has said.

With much hype surrounding the film, expectations are high and people are hoping that the Abhishek-Ratnam combo will strike bull's eye at the box office.

Mani Ratnam, the man behind

"We shot both versions simultaneously, something I have never done before. This part was my career's most challenging, most difficult and most stimulating. It was also physically exhausting," says Ratnam. It was taxing for Aishwarya as well, who plays a modern day Sita in the movie and shares screen space with her actor husband in the Hindi version.

"Apart from the intricacies of essaying the Hindi and Tamil heroine all at the same time, the inhospitable jungle terrain where we shot posed its own hazards," she said. Southern superstar Vikram, who acted alongside Aishwarya in both versions, has dubbed his own lines in Hindi as well as Tamil.

*Gemini Ganesan, hero of Tamil film 'Kalyana Parisu' switched his role with Nageshwara Rao in Telugu version.

Malayalam Movie World



'Christian Brothers' only for Onam

It seems like the big budget multi-starrer being directed by Joshy, 'Christian Brothers', would now make it to the theatres only for Onam.

While Mohanlal plays an informer Christy Brothers, Dileep plays his brother Joji. Suresh Gopi plays a cop



Joseph Vadakkan and Sarath Kumar plays an underworld gangster Andrews Bandra. Besides these stars, the film also has several other actors like Lakshmi Rai, Kaniha, Kavya Madhavan, Lakshmi Gopalaswami, Priyanka, Babu Antony, Devan, Saikumar, Vijayaraghavan, Biju Menon, Suresh Krishna, Salim Kumar and Suraj Venjarammoodu.

Santhosh Jogi's last film

More than one and a half months after Santhosh Jogi's sad demise, his fans could see him in action for one last time at the Cannes festival.

'You Can't Step Twice into the Same River', the short film that had Jogi doing the lead character was screened in the Marché du Film Section of the festival. Director Rupesh Paul said that Jogi was too excited about playing the main role in the film. He had even grabbed a DVD from the dubbing studio and had seen it fully.

Jogi plays a professional killer in the film who has been assigned the task of murdering a plus-two student. However he ends up killing the wrong person, and the film deals with what he has to deal with thereafter.

The story is by Indu Menon.

Jogi was found dead at Thrissur on April 13. He had acted in several small, but noteworthy roles in about 25 films.

Sreenivasan accused of plagiarism

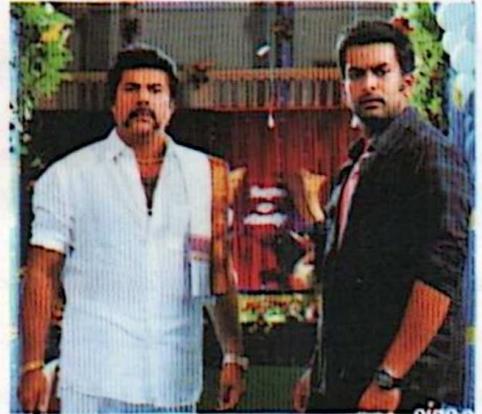
A native of Mukkam, near Kozhikode, K V Vijayan has accused that Sreenivasan has lifted his story and used the same for his new film 'Oru Naal Varum'.

Vijayan has approached the court that has stayed the release of the film till May 31. Earlier the film was expected to release on May 14 and later it was declared that the release has been shifted to June end as



'Pokkiri Raja'

The Mammooty - Prithviraj starrer 'Pokkiri Raja' is the first megahit of the year, while Sathyan Anthikkad's film 'Katha Thudarunnu' would also be a safe bet at the box office. The only disappointment was 'Alexander the Great' that has evoked a poor response. The producer of 'Oru Naal Varum' Maniyanpillai Raju said that with the monsoon about to start, they decided that it would be better to release the film by June end. Also there is a dearth of releasing centres as well. The film directed by T K Rajeev Kumar has been censored and has been granted a clean 'U' Certificate.



three movies had already been declared for release in May. Taking this into consideration, the court stay order is likely to be extended to June as well.

Vijayan says that he had approached Sreenivasan with his script, who had dismissed him saying that there was no comedy in it. Later Vijayan had also published his work under the title 'Ee Kaliveedil Ninnu'.

'Oru Naal Varum' stars Mohanlal, Sreenivasan and Sameera Reddy. Directed by T K Rajeev Kumar, the film has been produced by Maniyan Pilla Raju.

Dimple Kapadia finds Malayalam tough to learn

Dimple Kapadia who is currently shooting for 'Bombay Mithai' at Cochin, finds the Malayalam language to be a tongue twister. Though she finds acting in Malayalam enjoyable, Dimple says that the dialogue delivery is very difficult. She has always had the highest regard for Malayalam films, since they are often found to have solid stories, that can exploit the real potential of the actors.

Dimple said that she was keen on acting in more films in Malayalam, if the right scripts were forthcoming. 'Bombay Mithai' is directed by newcomer Umer Kaikkad, and also has Amar Singh, Vinu Mohan and Harisree Ashokan in key roles. Besides 'Bombay Mithai', she's also working in two other films, 'Patiala House' and 'Society'.

No qualms playing Nayantara's mom: Manisha Koirala

Manisha Koirala, the beauty from Nepal who had ruled over Bollywood for several years is amazed at the adulation that she receives from the people of Kerala. Manisha who is





currently shooting for Shyamaprasad's film, 'Electra' sounds all excited about the project.

In a tete-a-tete with a prominent English daily, she says that she has always adored Shyamaprasad's films. Malayalam as a language is quite tough, but with the director guiding her, she's enjoying every bit of her Kerala stint. Manisha who plays Nayantara's mother in the film says that she has no qualms doing so. She had played mother to ten year old kid way back in 'Bombay', and what matters to her is the depth and scope of her character. And she assures us that her role in 'Electra' is quite different. It has lots of grey, and though she plays wife to Prakash Raj, she is a mysterious character who almost leads a secret life.

On the personal front, Manisha is getting ready for her marriage with Samrat Dahlal, a business man based in Nepal.

Juhi Chawla to be Mohanlal's heroine



Bollywood actress Juhi Chawla who was last seen choosing between the two megastars of Malayalam, Mammooty and Mohanlal in 'Harikrishnans', is now back. She would be acting opposite Mohanlal in 'Gaatha', the film to be directed by Shaji N Karun, based on 'Kadal', a short story by T Padmanabhan. It is heard that Shaji finally zeroed in on Juhi after considering Jaya Bachchan and

Madhuri Dixit for the role.

The film is expected to start its shoot at Ladakh soon. 'Gaatha' would be a musical that would seek the services of a range of Hollywood technicians. It would also be shot on locations at Chennai and Vienna.

Blast at Malayalam film shoot sparks fresh row

An explosion occurred early Monday at a film shoot near Idukki damaging two vehicles, police said, triggering a war of words within the faction-ridden Malayalam film industry. The blast took place at a hotel at Kuttikanam. The damaged vehicles belonged to the crew of the film "Atmakatha", which stars popular actor Sreenivasan and Bengali actress Sharbani Mukherjee. Police recovered explosive materials, usually used in quarries, from the blast site.

The film industry has two umbrella groupings of technicians, representing 19 organisations of drivers to directors.

The two groupings are the Film Employees Federation of Kerala (FEFKA) and the Malayalam Cine Technicians

Association (MACTA). Director B. Unnikrishnan, general secretary of FEFKA, accused MACTA members of creating similar problems in the past and demanded that those behind the blast be punished.

FEFKA comprises all the big directors and has the support of the Association of Malayalam Movies Artistes (AMMA). MACTA is led by popular director Vinayan, who has been having a running feud with the superstars and top directors. "This blast has got nothing to do with MACTA... FEFKA always has the habit of blaming MACTA for anything and everything," Vinayan said. Incidentally, the producer of "Atmakatha" was roughed up last month at the same location. The police are probing that case too.

The Kerala government has now stepped in and formed a committee to look into issues plaguing the Malayalam film industry. The producers association is cut up with AMMA, which had reportedly failed to find a way to reduce production costs. Film artists later agreed to cut their remuneration by 25 percent.

Padmapriya would love to do comedy now

It seems like Padmapriya has had enough with serious films. The wonderful actress who has often been seen in real serious roles would love to go for a change now.

"I love fun and humour," says Padmapriya. "And I would love to be part of a totally fun film."

"I need to seriously change this image that has been tagged on to me, that I would only do serious film. For a change, I would love to do a romantic comedy." Padmapriya was last seen in the hugely successful 'Pazhas Raja' in which she had played the role of Neeli, an Adivasi warrior that had won her much acclaim. She is about to start working on 'Arjunan Sakshi' to be directed by Ranjith Shankar, in which she has been cast opposite Prithviraj.

Sanjay Dutt to debut in Malayalam films

After Amitabh Bachchan and Suneil Shetty it seems like Bollywood's Munnabhai would be making his entry into Malayalam films. Sanjay Dutt has reportedly given the nod to be a part of the film to be produced by U Pradeep. The director of the film is yet to be finalized.

Several Bollywood actors have expressed their wish to act in Malayalam films, of late. While Amitabh Bachchan and Suneil Shetty would play key roles in Major Ravi's 'Khandahar', Manisha Koirala, Dimple Kapadia and Juhi Chawla are also appearing before Malayali audience.



Priyadarshan returns to Malayalam movies

Fans of Megastar Mohanlal have a huge reason to celebrate. If reports are to be believed director

Priyadarshan is planning to make yet another move with Mohanlal soon.

Shooting of the film would start early next year. The heroine would be from Bollywood. As is the usual case, the Priyan-Lal combo would offer yet another

rollicking comedy before the audience. In all likelihood, this film would be scripted by the director himself.

Priyan is currently busy with almost five films in Bollywood. Priyan had been away from Malayalam films for a while now. The last film that he did in Malayalam was 'Vettam' starring Dileep, in 2004.



Malayalam Titanic

Titanic has heavily inspired many film producers and directors. Now the first Malayalam film to be shot entirely on a ship is getting ready. Titled 'Njanum Varunnu', the film has newcomer Aashiq doing the main role. Besides Aashiq, the film also has Suraj Venjaramoodu, Anoop Chandran, Harisree Ashokan, Bheeman Raghu, Narayankutty and Kochu Preman.

The film has as its theme a journey from Goa to Lakshadweep and back. Director Shaji Khalid hopes to shoot the film on board within one month of the journey. Produced by Cameo Films, the shooting of 'Njanum Varunnu' would start in June.

Uthuppante Kinar

Karoor Neelakantha Pilla's well known story 'Uthuppante Kinar' (Well of Uthuppan) is into a movie by Vijayakrishnan who earlier made

'Dalarmarangaal.' Karthik Films of R Rajesh produces the movie. The lead role of Uthuppan is played by

Kalabhavan Mani. Other actors are Vinu Mohan, Shruti, Indrans, Kochupreman, Poojapura Ravi, Kanakalata and Nimisha.

Screenplay, dialogue and lyrics are written by Vijayakrishnan himself. M G Anil scores the music.



Makara Nilavu

Suneer's Royal Cinemas is busy with the production of 'Makara Nilavu' based on a romantic story set against a rural background. Ajmal Ameer, Manikuttan, Arun, Suraj Venjaramoodu, Harisri Asokan, Indrans, Irshad, Matambu Kunhukuttan, Dhanya Mary Varghese, Mythili, Urmila Unni, Kanakalata and others



are the actors. Ajmal had earlier appeared in *Pranaya Kaalam* and *Madambi*. Tej Mervin provides music for the lyrics of Kaithapram and Prakash Marar. Story, screenplay and dialogue are written by Rajesh Poojari. P K Radhakrishnan is the director.

Swapnamaalika

Mohanlal plays the role of Oncologist Dr Appu Nair in this movie. This movie produced by Mohandas Karimbil and shot extensively at Kochi, Varanasi and Cherplasserri, is directed by K I Devaraj. Other actors are Innocent, Babu Namboodiri, Jagathi Sreekumar, Kottayam Nazir, Vidya, Sukumari and Urmila Unni.

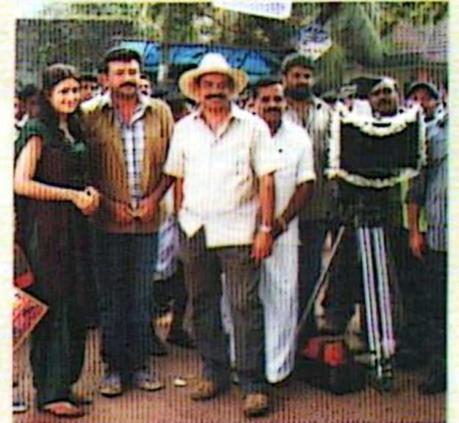
Amma Nilavu

M D Rajendran who wore the mantle of poet, lyricist, music composer, singer and novelist earlier is now turns to be director of a new movie *Amma Nilavu*. This movie produced by Sasi Ayyanchira has the producer himself in the hero's role. Rajendran entered moviedom through *Mochanam* and became popular after *Shalini ente koottukari*. Among his well known lyrics are *Rutubhedakalpana charuta nalkiya*, *Alliyilam poovo*, *vaachalam en mounavum nin mounavum* etc. So far he has written nearly a thousand songs for the films.

Katha

Thutarunnu

Jayaram-Sathyan Anthikkad movie *Katha Thutarunnu* (Story continues) was released all over Kerala on May 7. Asif Ali, Innocent, Mamu Koya, Mamta Mohandas, Lakshmi Priya, KPAC Lalita are the main actors.



The Gangster

After 'Daddy Cool', Aashik Abu has cast Mammooty in his next movie 'The Gangster'. This movie is made in Malayalam as well as Tamil and has Parthipan and Rohini Hathangadi among the actors.

Manushya Mrugam

Advocate Baburaj directs 'Manushya Mrugam' from his own screenplay. His earlier film was 'Black Dalia'. Sharat Kumar, Jagathi Sreekumar, Vijaya Raghavan, Devan, Salim Kumar, Zarina Vahab and Shravya Reddy are among the actors.

Traffic

Rajesh Pilla directs Vineet Srinivasan and Kunchacko Boban in 'Traffic' Srinivasan also has an important role in this film. Asif Ali, Vijay Kumar and Lalu Alex are other actors. Shooting is expected to commence during July.

Aatmakatha

Premlal, a new entrant, writes the story and screenplay and also directs 'Aatmakatha' (Autobiography) with Sreenivasan in the lead. Sharbana Mukherjee of 'Sufi paranja Katha' is the heroine. Jagathi Sreekumar, Kochu Preman and Sreelata are also in the cast. Alphonse provides music to the lyrics of Kaithapram.

Thaskara Lahala

Jayaraj Varier and T V Balakrishnan wrote the screenplay and dialogue of this film that is directed by Ramesh Das. Suraj Venjaramoodu, Jagathy Sreekumar, Salim Kumar, Suresh Krishna, Lakshmi Sharma and Sona Nair are the main actors. Shooting has already started at Kochi.

Shikari

This is Mammooty's first Kannada film. He comes in the role of a software engineer Abhijeet. This movie will have a simultaneous Malayalam version too. This film is directed by Abhay who got trained at Pune Film Institute.



Thilakan comes as Hero

Director Ali Akbar produces a film based on the story 'Achchan' by S R Ravindran. The story revolves around a character of an 85 year old and Thilakan is chosen to portray the role. There are no female characters in the movie.



Besides direction, Ali Akbar also does editing and cinematography while Aleena Akbar composes music for the film.

M T gets Bhaskaran award

M T Vasudevan Nair will receive the award instituted by P Bhaskaran Foundation. Wholesome contribution in the fields of literature and Cinema is criterion for selection. M T will receive Rs. 50,000, plaque and citation as the award.

Actress Sindhu Menon weds

Malayalam actress Sindhu Menon married Prabhu, a software businessman of London and native of Kunnamkulam at Srinivasa temple of Bangaluru Mahalakshmi Layout. Prominent Tamil and Kannada film personalities attended the wedding reception while none from Malayalam Cinema was present. The wedding ceremony was a low key function.



Her new Telugu movie was recently completed while her two English movies are in progress.

Sindhu Menon had acted in many Malayalam films including Rajamanikyam, Thommanum Makkalum and Detective.

MG University VC opposes honorary doctorates to film actors

Dr Rajan Gurukkal, Vice Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi University strongly condemned the doctorates bestowed film actors. His criticism came while delivering the key address in the seminar of State Purogamana Kalasahitya Sangham at Kollam.

"When an actor performs before the camera for twenty years, he would get money, fame and doctorate from universities. When their job is to ensure propagation of knowledge why should the universities be after stars?", he asked.

There are hundreds of artistes who dedicate their lives for decades but no one notices their contributions. Such personalities should be recognised before the film stars, he contended.

Thilakan barred from serials too

Following the ban by the Cine Actors' organisation "AMMA", the organisation of TV Serial actors "ATMA" also banned the veteran actor Thilakan. The information was given the actor himself.

Thilakan was invited for a role in a particular serial and the producers had promised to send the transport but just before he was to start for the location, ATMA informed him not to proceed, Thilakan said. In case he did not obey, other actors would not cooperate, he was warned.

ATMA's President K B Ganesh Kumar is also Vice President of AMMA and hence the AMMA's directive was being implemented indirectly, Thilakan alleged. However, Secretary of ATMA, Poojapura Radhakrishnan stated that they had not banned the actor but only informed the producers that in case he was allowed to participate, other artistes would boycott the shooting. This step was taken as Thilakan was abusing the artistes of films and TV serials.

Thilakan said that he would approach the Court for justice and for his right to employment.



K B Ganesh Kumar

BOOK REVIEW

GHOST STORIES FOR THE BELIEVERS

For all those who believe in the existence of ghosts, apparitions, ghouls and witches and those brought up on Harry Potter, here is now the totally Indian version of unearthly (or other-worldly) stories of such phenomena.

The author of GHOSTS, OCCULTS & EXORCISTS, Parur S Ganesan candidly admits that these ten stories are for the "believers". He claims all the ten incidents he narrates with great flourish are real life ones. To his credit, it must be said that they make good reading, even if you are a non-believer.

Most of the stories are of exorcism, not really the deprivations of ghosts or ghouls. Some of them are ghastly, very few ghostly. Exorcism is a common art in Kerala, practiced by professionals. They are called in for several manifestations of extra-terrestrial and inexplicable occurrences or behaviours of people.

Ganesan claims he has been witness to all the ten incidents narrated by him. He was himself involved in many of them. That perhaps makes the narrations gripping.

Some of the stories are ghoulish- like "Naidu's Ghost" where a one-breasted siren entices virile men and leaves them dead with their genitals scooped out.

The note worthy one among the ten is perhaps "Ghost at the Landlords" not precisely for ghostly deprivations, but for a sociological study of the social realities of Parur town, fifty years ago. Ganesan describes in detail how the Brahmin community in that town grew from riches to riches expropriating the land and jewellery of the poor by lending money for stipulated periods. Failure by even a day to return the loan entitles the money- lender to usurp the pawned property.

There is also an insight into how rich landlords of the Brahmin community would retain concubines from the Nairs and accept the progeny out of such unions as their wards. The Brahmin women saw nothing wrong in this.

Ganesan employs the same righteousness in describing the ghosts and apparitions he talks about, fully convinced that they do exist till they are exorcised.

The lawyer, administrator, worldly man

that he is, Ganesan rationalizes his faith "If the wronged person is a youth with many years of life cut short by some one, then the spirit (also referred to as negative energy) would relocate itself in the most promising person in the family and play havoc for years" till it is exorcised.

A retired Class I Officer of the Indian Economic Service, Ganesan has several books to his credit. All the stories in this volume are authenticated by Ganesan, who holds the copyright. To ensure that they do not end up as pirated or plagiarised film versions, he has registered the stories with the Film Writer's Association.

Not all ghosts are evil. Some of them can be benign and friendly, even if they cannot do you any good either. For the believer anything is good.

Published by the author, the book could have benefited by good editing. A good proof-reader could also have helped immensely. Priced at Rs. 170, this 123 page is available from the author at 28/103 Vidya, Pestom Sagar, Chembur, Mumbai 400 059.

-P.K. Ravindranath

FREEDOM FIGHTER HONOURED

Seventy four year old Ponnamma Paramu, who had participated in the Samyukta Maharashtra movement (1956-60) was honoured by various institutions in Mumbai in the first week of May.

The NCP Mumbai unit honoured her at a public function on May 1, at the Hutatma Chowk along with several other relations of non-Maharashtrian martyrs who had lost their lives during the movement. Ponnamma Paramu along with her husband, M Paramu, and six month old daughter, Soya, had gone to prison. Now settled in Kollam, she was brought to Mumbai to participate in the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of the founding of the unilingual state of Maharashtra.

The Governor, K Sankaranarayanan, presented her a shawl when he invited her to Raj Bhavan for tea.

The Maharashtra Kerala Cultural Centre honoured her at a public function at Kerala House at Vashi, where several



Maharashtra Governor, K Sankaranarayanan felicitates Ponnamma Paramu

speakers eulogised her services to various causes during her stay in Mumbai from the 50s till 1998, when Paramu shifted to Kerala.

Among those who paid tributes to

Ponnamma and Paramu were N K Bhupesh Babu, Kumaran Nair, P V Chacko, Sabu Daniel, E P Vasu, Rajan, P R Rajkumar, P K Ravindranath and others.



Dances of Kerala-4

Kathakali



Prof. Ammanath Vijayashankar

The art: *Kathakali* is the King among performing arts and the art of kings. A magnificent theatre of great imagination, *Kathakali* reigns supreme in the tradition of Indian stage arts. This pantomimic dance drama had its origin in 17th century in the narrow ever verdant beautiful strip of land called Kerala. Kerala, literally meaning 'land of coconut palms' is the home to many stage arts, both classical and folk. *Chakkari koothu* and *Koodiyattam* are well known ancient classical stage arts of over 1000 years of known history, while *Astapadiattam*, *Krishnanattam* and *Ramanattam* are relatively of recent origin. *Theyyam*, *Padayani*, *Kolam thullal*, *Mudiyettu* etc., are, to mention, only a few of the folk arts of the stage. *Kathakali* is the culmination of a long process of evolutionary assimilation from varied theatrical arts of Kerala. A discerning spectator can see in *Kathakali* traces of elements of most art forms that existed in Kerala since time immemorial. Local rituals, cult practices, socio-religious and martial dances, painting have all contributed to its growth. Face paintings, head-gears (*kereetam*), masks and dress we see in *Kathakali* today are all refinements of makeup and costumes of theatrical arts of Kerala, anterior to *Kathakali*.

The most striking features of *Kathakali* are the makeup of characters, gorgeous costumes, stylized *hastas* or *mudras* (hand symbols) as well as supremely refined movements of *nritta* (dance) in tune with lyrics (*padams*) sung by singers accompanied by complementary percussion. There is an overwhelming dramatic quality that enraptures *sahrudaya* (spectator) by transporting him to a supra-mundane world of myths and legends where

appear gods and great heroes in full splendor, and demons and spirits in frightening costumes and makeup (*chamaya*) yelling ghostly sounds. *Nritta* aspect of *Kathakali* has a charm of its own. The dance of female characters is tilted towards, though not exactly, *lasya* type while that of male characters is unmistakably *tandava* type. There is 'perfection' in the movements of body, head and limbs as also of eyeballs, eyelids, and eye brows. The body must be rendered totally malleable for the performance to be



Kottayam Thampuram

perfect. Whole body, both skeleton and muscles must be under perfect control. A good *Kathakali* artist (*kalikkaaran*) must have complete control over even the tiniest fascicle of facial muscles. Such an art, for its perfection, makes strenuous demands on its exponents, which makes *Kathakali* training extremely long and incredibly exacting. The martial tradition of Kerala, *Kalaripayattu* forms an integral part of training and has left an indelible mark in

body movements, especially in jumps and turning of body when airborne or not, and in fight scenes. The influence of *kalaripayattu* is so strong that school of *Kathakali* is called *kalar* (gymnasium).

Though the techniques and conventions are basically in conformity with ancient treatise on dramaturgy like *Naatya Saastra* of *Bharata*, *Abhinaya Darpana* and *Hastnalakshana Deepika* the art as such transcend their prescriptions. The tenets of stage settings of *naatya saastras* find no place in *Kathakali*. A table to keep the belongings of musicians and one or two stools, as required, placed conveniently complete 'stage furniture'. Other settings meant to re-create location or ambiances suited to situations are non-existent. The background, tempo and mood of situation are generated in the minds of *sahrudaya* by the performer through sheer power of *abhinaya*. To amplify expression of emotions facial makeup is made colorful with contrasting color codes, a concept that goes far beyond and is even contrary to prescriptions of *Natyastra*. *Pakarnaattam*, the technique of multiple transformational acting in *Kathakali* is contrary to the concept of *sattvikabhinaya* where the artist personally experiences the emotions expressed in *abhinaya*. In *pakarnaattam* artist expresses emotions experienced not only by self, but also imaginatively expresses emotions experienced by others. While *natya sastras* advocates restraint in the use of jewellery and costumes *Kathakali* is extravagant in their use. This transcendental art ignores regional variations in the complexion of characters specified in *Natyastra*. Rather than individual personalities there are only types of characters in *Kathakali*. *Kathakali*

is unique in being farthest from earthly realities in presentation. There is no attempt to represent mundane world as such. Only epic 'non-human' types are presented on stage which adds a mystic charm to the art. Traditionally, stories are from the epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* which deals with the eternal strife between good and evil, truth and untruth, in which truth always prevails reiterating one's faith in values of life and the ultimate good coming out of righteousness.

History *Ashtapadiaattam*, *Krishnanaattam* and *Ramanaattam*

While considering the origin of *Kathakali* it must be borne in mind that during mid-17th century, when *Kathakali* arose, Kerala was a conglomeration of many kingdoms, under independent rulers, who mostly were at loggerheads. The art originated from its immediate precursor *Ramanaattam* and owes its share of techniques to another contemporary dance form, *Krishnanaattam* and also to the more ancient classical

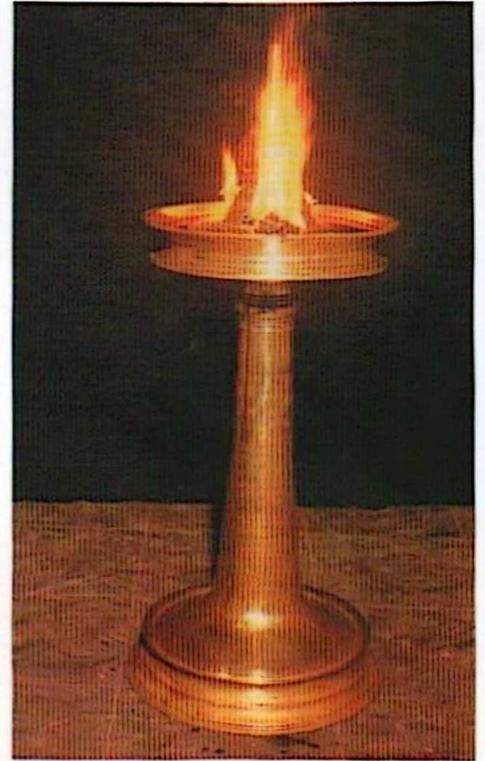


Vellaattu Chathunni Panicker

performing arts namely, *Chaakkiaar Koothu* and *Koodiyaattam*. *Aattam* is enactment or dramatization, and had its cradle at *Vettatthu Naadu*, near *Mattannur*, *Kannur* District. Since origin, *Kathakali* has gone through phases of progress, stagnation and even decline, before reaching the present status of universal acclaim.

Ashtapadiyaattam, a dance based on the Sanskrit poem *Geeta Govindam*, by Jaya Deva, from Bengal, (12th century) was popular in Kerala during 16th and 17th centuries. *Ashtapadiyaattam* used to be presented in temples as part of adoration, in *Vaishnava* cult. The singing of *Geeta Govindam*, *Ashtapadi*, in front of sanctum sanctorum, paved way for development of a musical tradition, *Sopaana Sangitam*, which influenced rendering of *padams* in *Kathakali*, at least initially. Depicting the celestial love of *Radha* and *Krishna* *Ashtapadiyaattam* soon gained popularity.

Krishnanattam: Inspired by the imagery of *Geeta Govindam*, *Maanaveda*, a 17th century *Zaamorin* of *Kozhikkode* (Ruler of Calicut) composed *Krishna Gita* in Sanskrit, based on *Srimad Bhaagavatam*. The repertoire covered eight stories based on legends of Krishna, - *Avataaram* (incarnation), *Kaaliya mardanam*, *Raasakreeda*, *Kamsa Vadham*, *Swayamvaram*, *Baana Yuddham*, *Vividha Vadham* and *Svargaarohanam* (ascension). They were choreographed into a new form of dance drama, *Krishnanaattam*, and set to be presented over eight days, one story per day. The *Zaamorin* decreed that *Krishnanaattam* be performed regularly at Sri Krishna temple, *Guruvaayoor*, then under his jurisdiction; a practice religiously observed even today. Interestingly, after the traditional eight-day performance, next day the artists perform, as a mark of tribute to the composer, an abridged version of the *attam* in *Saamoodiri Kovilakam* (*Za-amorin's* palace) compound, south of temple, where *Maanaveda* was cremated. (*Kerala Saahitya Charitram*'- Ulloor Parameswara Iyer). Devotional fervor and the glamorous



Pedestal Lamp

legends of Krishna in the *Bhaagavatham* stories made *Krishnanaattam* immensely popular, and with it *Ashtapadiaattam* lost its appeal. *Ashtapadiaattam* was pure delirious dance expressing ecstasy of devotion without much *abhinaya*. In *Krishnana attam* one can discern a technique of presentation of dance drama on stage that definitely is prototype of expressional features of *Kathakali*.

Ramanaattam: Hearing about *Krishnana attam*, *Kottaarakkara Tampuraan* (1625-1685), the ruler of *Elayidathu Svarupam*, a principality under erstwhile *Travancore* requested *Zaamorin* to send the artists to *Kottaarakkara* for a performance. *Zaamorin*, holding the troop as personal possession rejected the plea with a comment that people of *Travancore* were not enlightened enough to appreciate the sophisticated art founded on classical Sanskrit language. (Some hold that *Zaamorin's* reluctance to lend artists was his concern about their safety as they had to traverse *Cochin* territory with whose ruler he was not in good terms). *Tampuraan* (*Veera Kerala Varma*), took aesthetic revenge by composing musical dance drama *Ramanaattam*, based on eight *Ramayana* stories (*Putrakameshti*,

Sitaswayamvaram, *Vicchinnabhishekam*, *Kharavadham*, *Baalivadham*, *Thoranayuddham*, *Sethubandhanam* and *Yuddham*) counter to *Krishnanaattam*. Those days Tunchattu Ezhuthachan's '*Adhyaatma Raamayana*' used to be recited daily at homes, in Kerala, with ritualistic fervor. This must have prompted Tampuran, an ardent devotee of Rama, to compose *Ramanattam*. Though literati opine that from literary view point Tampuran's works leave much to be desired their dramatic potential, within the confines of the stories, is great. Their significance as pioneering effort in a new trend serving as source of inspiration and guidance for others can

maddalam and a circular brass gong, *chengala*, played by accompanying artists keeping rhythm.

Within a span of three decades *Ramanaattam* spread all over Kerala and many local performing troupes (*kaliyoagams*) were formed. When it reached *Vttathu Naadu*, the *Tampuraan* there effected certain refinements. Blue colour of face for Rama and Lakshmana was changed into emerald green. The head-gear of *pala* was substituted with gilded crown. The masks of demons and monkeys were discarded: instead faces were painted with designs. Costumes for body, and beards were introduced. Two

no aspect of *Kathakali*, be it *nritta* (dance), *abhinaya*, *aahaarya* (costumes and makeup) *sangeetha* (music) or *saahitya* (literature), to which he has not contributed. Both *Krishnanaattam* and *Ramanaattam* had *bhakti* as background. The artist in *Tampuraan* recognized great dramatic potential of *Mahaabhaarata* stories full of rivalry between *Pandavas* and *Kauravas*. He wanted to evolve a stage that could accommodate the heroic *Pandavas* and anti-heroes with human traits represented by *Kauravas*. He wrote four story-poems (*Kalyaana-saugandhikam*, *Kirmeeravadham*, *Bakavadham* and *Nivaata kavacha kaalakeya vadham*) based on *Mahaabhaarata*. Tampuran's compositions were perfect both from literary and dramatic angles, prompting poet *Venmani* to refer them as "faultless four Kottayam stories" (*kuttamatta nalu Kottayathu kathakal*). His stories brought emotive histrionics (*rasaabhinaya*), to prominence, and face became the prime field of *abhinaya*. To accentuate expressions face was given an elevated white border, *chutti*. This helped to confine and highlight subtle facial movements during *rasaabhinaya*. Eyes and lips, the focal points of *rasaabhinaya*, were made bright red in contrast with dark green of face to focus them. Tempo of performance was slowed and actions were made subtle and stylized. Tampuran, himself a versatile artist, was helped by his *guru* Govinda Dikshitar, and Vellaattu Chathunni Panicker, an exponent of *Ramanaattam*. With induction of *Mahabharata* stories the art could no longer be called *Ramanattam*, and Tampuran christened it *Kathakali*, meaning 'story play'. The word is a composite of two Malayalam words, '*katha*' meaning story and '*kali*' - play. Ardent lovers of the art (called *kathakali branthanmar* in vernacular) fondly call it *aattam* or *kali*. Definite ritualistic procedures before presentation of *Kathakali* on stage, on the lines of *Koodiyaattam*, were evolved, which are followed even today. As popularity of *Kathakali* increased



never be disputed.

When *Ramanattam* came into existence folk arts like *Padayani*, *Mudiyettu*, *Theyyam* etc., were already popular. *Ramanattam* absorbed elements of these arts with emphasis on dance, along with grains of *abhinaya* of *Koodiyattam*. Emphasis in *Ramanaattam* was on *nritta* and not on refined *abhinaya*. Its style was plain and rustic, with fast rhythm in dance. The makeup and costumes were relatively gross. Rama and Lakshmana had faces painted blue while demons and monkeys wore face mask. Head-gear was of palm-sheath (*paala*) with painted designs. Torso was bare. Dancers themselves sung, with

accompanying artists, exclusively for singing, were provided. Freed from the responsibility of singing the performing artist could now focus on *abhinaya*. *Chenda*, a percussion drum and *ilathaalam*, a pair of brass cymbals, were added to *maddalam* and *chengala* as accompaniments. Improvisations in the theatrics of *Ramanaattam*, till then more a rural art, completed the first stage in its evolutionary development into *Kathakali*. *Vettathu kalari*, is often called *Kottamattu*. **Kottayathu Tampuraan, (1700-1750) :** A decisive impetus to the evolving art was provided by Kottayathu Tampuraan, another ruler of *Vettathu Naadu*. There is

kaliyogams came up in many places like Kottayam in North, Palakkad, Cherpulasseri etc. After Tampuran's death, Chathunni Panicker settled at Kalladikkode Village, Palakkad Dist., and continued his mission. His *kalari* became *Kalladikkodan* school and the style *Kalladikkodan sampradaayam*.

Kaplingadan Namboodiri (1739-1789): Though *Kathakali* had attained the status as distinct art it really came of age only now under royal patronage from Karthika Tirunna Maharaja of Travancore and Veera Kerala Varma of erstwhile Cochin. This phase is marked by the innovations of the art by a great artist, a preceptor and reformer, Shri Kaplingattu Narayanan Namboodiri of *Kaplingattu Illam* at *Nedumbra* in Trichur District. He established *kalari* at *illam* and invited stalwarts like *Kavungal Unniri Panicker*, *Ittiri Panicker* and *Krishna Panicker* to join him. With their help *Kaplingadan* almost revamped *Kathakali*. Under his care the art steadily gained subtlety and dignity in style. Highly refined expressive histrionics and stylized elegant execution of movements became hall marks of the art. His, Mida's touch blessed all aspects of the art. He elaborated *chutti* making it multi pleated, and further beautified the face makeup of all characters (*pacha*, *kathi*, *thadi*, *kari* and *minukku*). Costumes and *kireedams* were made colourful and glamorous as seen today. He also introduced fixing *chuttippoo* (a white ball) at the tip of nose and centre of forehead (*lalaatam*), for aggressive character (*kathi*, *chuvanna thadi* and *karutha thadi*). For characters like *rishis* he introduced white *manayola* makeup, and also wig for hair wherever necessary. His renovation in

singing paved way for elaborate *chollyaattam* (acting during song) and *ilakiyaattam* (acting after a segment of *padam* is over, before beginning next). He also brought about perfect harmonization between vocal and accompanying artists.

The repertoire was expanded by including works of Karthika Tirunna and Aswathi Tirunna and others. Some popular additions were *Kiraatam*, *Kamsavadham*, *Poothanamoksham*, *Narakasuravadham*, *Balivijayam*, etc. New *kaliyogams* at *Thiruvana-nthapuram*, *Tripoonithura* and *Mattannur* Palaces and many other places came into existence.

After the death of Kaplingadan and of Karthika Tirunna (1798), for two decades the art remained dormant. Uthradam



Tirunna Maharaja of Travancore (1815-1861) ushered a new glorious era of *Kathakali*. With a galaxy of star performers like Ramanunni, fondly called *Nalanunni* for his inimitable portrayal of *Nalan*, in *Nalacharitham*, Eacharan Pillai, Kesava Kuruppu who could handle all roles with ease and consummate skill, Kochayyappa Panicker for *kathi vesham* to mention only a few, the quality of performance found new heights. With themes like *Nalacharitham* by Unnayi

Varrier (Akathuttu Variam, Irinjalakkuda, Trichur Dist., *Uttaraswa-yamvaram* by Irayimman Tampi and scores of other *attakkathakal* of exquisite lyrical charm the poetics of *Kathakali* reached its zenith.

Kaplingadan style spread to south Kerala, where influenced by *Koodiyattam*, it came to be known



as Southern style (*Thekkan sampradaayam*). *Kalluvazhi* school, a synthesis of *Kaplingadan* and *Kalladikkodan* styles, initiated by *Unniri Menon* from *Kalluvazhi*, *Palakkad* Dist., was patronized by *Olappamanna Mana*, *Palakkad* Dist. It spread to north Kerala as Northern style (*Vadakkan Sampradayam*). (Some opine that it is *Kalladikkodan* style that became *Vadakkan Sampradayam*). *Kalluvazhi* style was further nurtured by *Kalluvazhi Ittiraricha Menon*. When *Kerala Kalamandalam* was formed *Pattikamtodi Ravunni Menon* a disciple of *Ittiraricha Menon*, who became chief *Kathakali* instructor gave currency to *Kalluvazi* style with refinements. A *Kadathanadan* school, with discernable influence of *Kalarippayattu* is prevalent in north Malabar (*Kozhikkode*, *Kannur* and *Kasargod* districts). Several local *kalaris* were evolved by local teachers. They were of only temporal significance and vanished without making a substantial contribution or giving new directions to the growth for the art. Though *Vettathu Nadu* was its cradle the real playground of *Kathakali* was *Cochin*, central part of *Kerala*, where it grew up, and attained maturity and status.

After the death of Uthradam Tirunna in 186, till 1900 *Kathakali* was on the slope of decline, for want of patronage. Compelling politico-socio-economic reasons were behind it. Some royal families had lost power and money. Because of family feuds many affluent Namboodiri and Nair families were no longer able to lavish patronage. The general economic recession added to parsimony and the practice of patronage became a thing of the past. Further, the young generation, enchanted by western culture began to dub *Kathakali* as 'dumb show'. The art badly was in need of support for resurrection. Then came *Mahakavi Vallathol Narayana Menon*-the 'renaissance man of *Kathakali*'.

To be continued.....



Your Home



Krishna Kumar R Nair
Consulting Interior Designer



Bath Rooms

Close your eyes for a moment and imagine that the first place you visited in the early hours of a beautiful day is the best place in the world. Yes, what I mentioned here is nothing but your personal bath room, with state of the art facilities, in a most practical way with the best aesthetics, proportionate colour combination etc.

Unfortunately in most of the bath rooms, the sanitary fixture and bathing area orientation are very impractical, like the shower area just in the centre of the bath room and the wc in the extreme window side, and the wash basin on the other side. In these cases, the bath room remains wet for the whole day, since the shower is in the centre when having a bath the water is going to splash on the wc and the wash basin. In short, the whole bath room will be effectively wet after a shower, Bath rooms are the most critical rooms to

be made in a house as water is involved for 24x7. Unlike other rooms, once the bath room is made any additions and alteration become practically impossible due to the involvement of water, and concealed fitting covered with ceramic tiles etc.

In that case one has to plan the bath room in toto in advance and the orientations of the WC, bathing area; bath tubs and the wash basin etc. Let us see the construction sequence of a bath room.

Once we are ready with the layout:

Start removing the existing plaster and plumbing fittings, if any, without any heavy banging. Remember one thing: the flooring should not be demolished until the re-plastering of the wall is done. Once the plastering on the wall is done, the flooring can be removed. Afterwards the

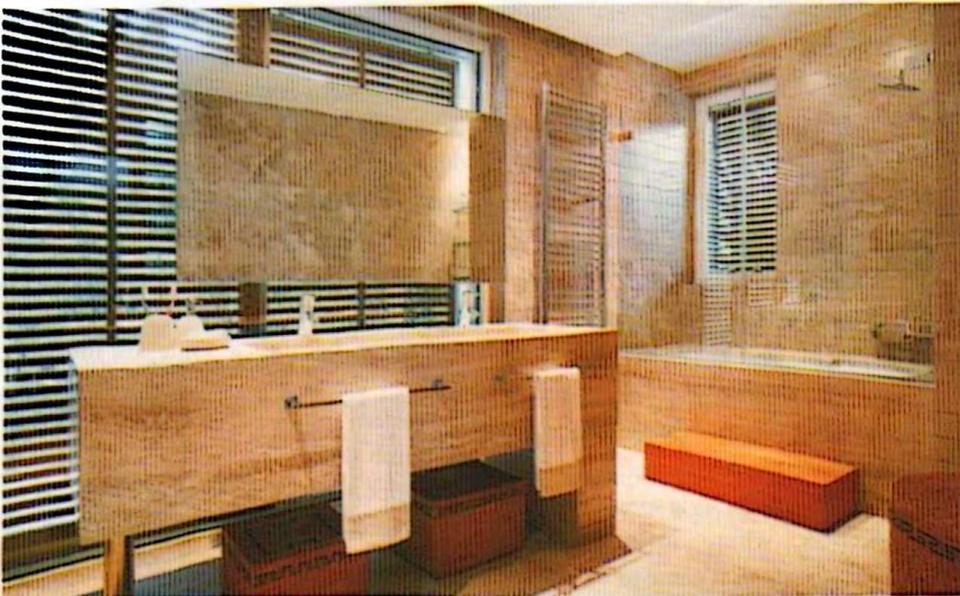
base coat of water proofing can be done. Thereafter start laying the desired piping for all the accessories such as geyser trap, wash basin, bath tub if any, and the shower area etc.

Yesteryear galvanized iron pipes are no more used since their life is only for 10 to 15 years. The best option for the same is the cpvc pipes which are cheaper and lifetime guaranteed. These pipes are easy to fit and don't get corroded at all. The other option of copper pipes is also good but it's an expensive affair. Once the laying of pipes gets over, a layer of brick bed can be done above the base coat water proofing, covering the pipes laid on the floor. It's important to continue the base coat of water proofing upto a height of 3-0', so that the water doesn't filter in for a longer period of time.

The geyser outlets have to be either made of GI pipes or copper ones since it emits hot water all the time, CPVC may give some problems in a longer period of time, to avoid that it's better to use GI or copper pipes.

Once the piping is done on the walls on pre-established locations as per the layout, the pipes should be clamped and water proofing compound should be applied below the pipes as an extra precaution.

Now the flooring should be decided as per the layout plan. The flooring can be in different levels, like the shower area can be minimum one inch lower than the





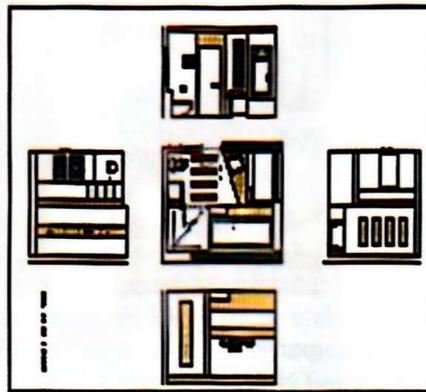
other floor levels so that if there is a slight water accumulation it will not flow out of shower area. The other option is to make a 4" to 6" curb between the shower area and the other floor area.

The state of the art imported shower cubicles are available now-a-days. This is very practical and sophisticated. Though they are very good looking, they are very delicate and out of reach of common man. Instead, we can custom make shower cubicles according to the space available there and as per our requirements. Some branded companies like Kohler, Hans grohe etc make shower fittings, that' can be customised according to ones need, taste and budget. This options are much cheaper and user friendly and easy to maintain. A toughened glass shutter on pivots will make your shower cubicle complete, since the glass doesn't cut the vision. The bath room looks bigger too.



There should be one spout approximately on the height of 24" from the floor and the nozzles can be fitted according to the height of the persons who will be the end user. The single lever mixer/diverter can be on a height of 39" to 42" from the floor level, and the shower should not be less than 7' in height.

The WC (water closet) should have a minimum of 15" space on either side if you measure it from the centre of the WC, the height with the seat has to be 16", and one definitely has a jet spray (health wash) on the right hand side and a spout too there. The options for the flushing system can be selected according to the size of the water inlet available. If the water inlet is more than one and a half inch in thickness, we can go for a flush valve. If it is only half inch in thickness,



one should go for an actuator tank which is available at all the sanitary shops. This pneumatic tank can be fitted above the loft and only a button which has to be placed behind the wc at a minimum height of 33". The beauty of this tank is that it is not visible in the toilet. It is hidden in the loft and it is almost maintenance-free, and flushes very efficiently. Best actuators are made by Commander and are approximately priced around Rs. 2000.

The shape-options for WC are in plenty. One can select a square, rectangle, oval or a round shaped.

Wash basins have to be on a minimum height of 32". When you are opting for a counter top basin (not an under counter one), basic height of the wash basin itself is 8". The counter has to be made at 27" to



28" in height. It is a good idea to have hot and cold water option on a basin mixer.

All connectors have to be made of copper. From the plastic connectors to the stop cocks all can give trouble after some time. The geyser or a boiler can be used for hot water in the faucets and as said earlier, in the wash basin too.

Now, the finishing materials can be selected from ceramic tile to Italian marble, according to one's budget and taste. Ceramic tiles are the most reasonably priced. One can select from the themes displayed by the ceramic tile vendors, or one can opt for a designer toilet by an architect or an interior designer. It is up to individual's class and mind set.

Pastel coloured ceramic tiles with darker highlighters are the hot themes happening in the market. Playing with back painted glass, little Italian marble, vitrified tiles LED lights etc in very good proportion is a classic way of doing up one's bath room since the major part being in vitrified tiles. It will not drain out our pocket. Bath room having a small cabinet for under garment and knick knack things like shampoos, body sprays, perfumery napkins etc, Incorporated with the colour scheme and symphony of the interiors is a visual treat.

The basin counter can have a few drawers and shutters below, leaving skirting of minimum 8" from the floor to keep brooms, bucket, lotions etc.

Your Health



The objectives of post natal care is to (1) to cleanse the womb, (2) to restore the womb to its pre-conceiving shape, (3) to increase quantum of mother's milk to meet the needs of the infant, (4) to increase the digestive efficiency of the mother and (5) to eradicate the stress of delivery.

Normally the contraction of womb happens in the first three weeks after delivery. Therefore there should not be any negligence or lethargy on the part of the mother and the people who are entrusted with the restoration of shape and health of the mother to the pristine level. If the delivery is normal, the procedure can be adopted from the very next day. The following medicines can be given from the second day to the fourteenth day:

(1) *Dasamoolarishtam* and *jeerakadyarishtam* in equal measure (15 ml each) twice a day i.e., morning and evening after meals.

(2) *Puli* (tamarind, *imli*) *leham* about 5 gms dissolved in warm water or butter milk, before lunch and supper.

(3) Garlic or small red onion (15 gms) fried in ghee or oil, before morning food.

(4) Butter milk boiled with dried ginger, curry leaves, celery (*ayamodakam*), turmeric and salt can be had during lunch.

Besides, ordinary oil for the hair and *Dhanwantharam* oil for the body to be applied. After half an hour, they can be removed by applying Bengal gram powder or green gram powder before

Post Natal Care

having bath. The water should be boiled with *nalpamara* or *Candramula* (*vatankolli*, *Karcurah*, *Kurinji*) and then cooled to room temperature.

Between 14 and 28 days, the following can be practised:

(1) Continue the mixture of *dasamoolarishtam* and *jeerakadyarishtam* and bath with application of oil as said above.

(2) Take *Dhanwantharam kashayam* (3 teaspoons) mixed with 10 times water (boiled and cooled), *Dhanwantharam* (101) 10 drops and a *Maha Dhanwantharam* tablet, twice in empty stomach at 6 a.m and 6 p.m

After 28 days, *Aja aswagandhadi leham* or *Vidaryadi leham*, and *lohasindooram* can be had. If the mother is not generating enough milk for the baby, she can have *Stanyajanana rasayanam*, one teaspoon each twice a day after meals.

A long cloth folded to have about five to six inches wide, can be worn like a belt at the navel level and the mother should lie down straight with face upwards for about 5 to 6 hours. This will prevent backache at a later date and also help contract the womb. But those underwent a caesarian section, should do this only after obtaining the gynaecologist's approval. Further, the above prescribed medicine should be taken after the allopathic drugs prescribed are exhausted.

Food intake

During the first 2-3 weeks, the food



Dr Indira Varier

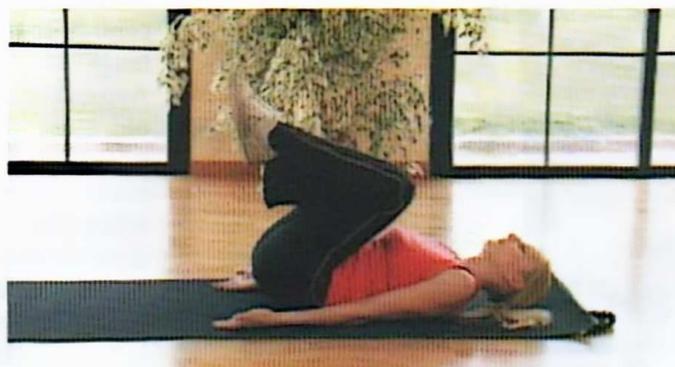
should be devoid of spices and easy to digest. During the early days when the milk is generated, leafy vegetables, fruits, milk, ghee are recommended. The food should be nutritional. To avoid constipation, fibrous vegetables and fruits would help.

Exercises

The mother should have good rest and



relaxation during the first four weeks. Those who are over-worked or stressed during this time, may suffer from continuous back ache and strain during later days. As per Ayurveda, post natal care should be emphasised at least for a period of 45 days since delivery. Ninety days are ideal. After this period, the mother may follow normal routines.



Eating Right And Staying Slim



we must bear a few points in our minds and adopt a judicious diet and exercise plan.

Diet Plans

Now that summer is closing and the holiday season is getting over, many of us, who feasted during their holidays sprinkled with marriages and reunions, will want

to get back to their old slim fit. They will look out for suitable gyms and diet packages. This is commendable since there are very reputed health centres that give good results. We

Everyone likes to be slim. But many tend to get overweight. And the battle of the bulge begins. However with a little effort and careful eating patterns, we can remain slim and healthy.

Today many newspapers and TV channels advertise miracle cures to fight obesity. There are powders and capsules to shed off the extra kilos. There are even special belts to be tied around the waist that help in reducing weight. Then of course surgical procedures are available to cut the flab. But all these have various side effects and are even harmful to the body. Most of them are not even scientifically proven.

We often make the mistake of going on crash diets or just going hungry to become thin. This is not a good thing to do. Once we return to our normal eating habits, we would put on the kilos we just lost. Or the intense dieting we've undergone without proper guidance would create havoc in our system and our body's immunity system would break down.

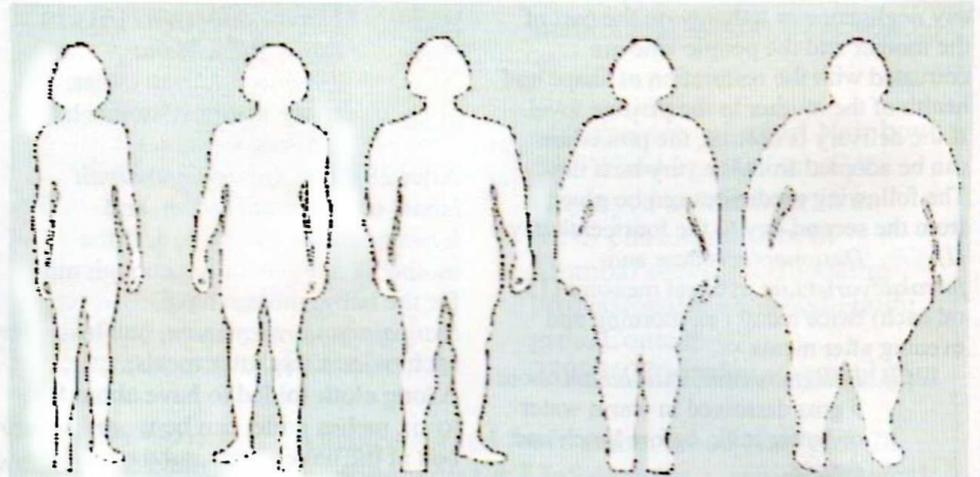
So whenever we decide to lose weight,

enroll ourselves in a neighbourhood gym and adopt a weight-loss diet plan. But we can not expect any miracle overnight. A weight management programme that promises instant weight loss is suspect and has to be considered

carefully for possible disastrous side effects. Short term weight-loss plans are okay for short term requirements. But to shed off our excess weight and still remain healthy and energetic requires a more judicious weight management programme. A reliable weight loss programme considers our medical fitness level and is tailored to suit our individual requirements. That is what we should look for.



Lakshmi Venkatachalam



People can be fat due to many reasons, the more common ones being lack of exercise, laziness, too much watching of TV soaps or sports. But there could be genuine medical reasons also. So the most sensible thing will be to undergo a medical check-up to rule out any medical problem. Then it is wise to consult a nutritionist who would advise on the most sensible way to eat so that we remain healthy. All weight loss centres do this. And exercises are also taught as per our body stamina. Aerobics may be good for a 28 year old, but yogic exercises are better for a 50 year old. A thirty year old is asked to jog while a sixty year old is told to walk for an hour so. And the diets are also prescribed accordingly. There are diet plans and still more diet plans. There is the Atkins diet plan. It is famous almost all the world over.



Avoidable food items

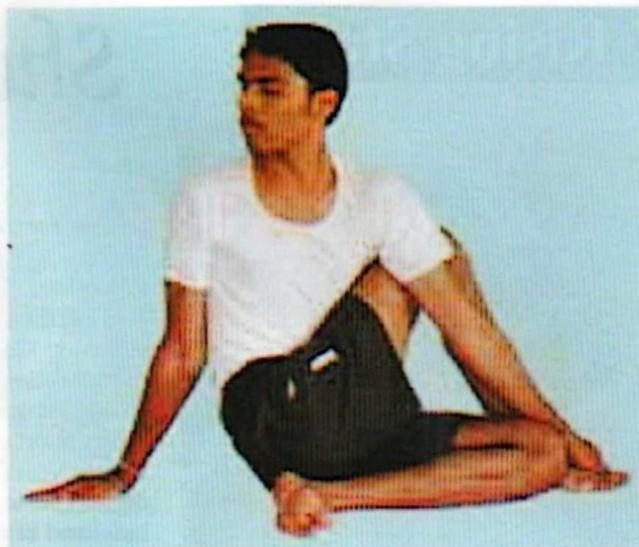
Its principle stress is on complete elimination of carbohydrates. Proteins and fat are unlimited. Initial weight loss is rapid here. But in the long run, it is not safe. As the brain needs carbohydrates to function and this diet may make people moody after some time.

There is the Glycaemic Index (GI) diet plan. This is also well-known and a healthy diet plan. The aim here is to eat foods that are digested slowly, so that energy is released in our bodies for a longer time. High fibre foods like brown rice, whole wheat, lentils, chickpeas, vegetables, fruits (not juices) are recommended here. Refined and sugary foods are avoided. This is a healthy and balanced diet plan.

The most balanced diet programme is one that includes carbohydrates, proteins and healthy fats. Here the emphasis is on wholegrain sources of

meals. That will keep up our energy levels and we can achieve consistent weight loss.” She adds that a fruit or a high fibre biscuit at tea time is very nutritious and an instant energy booster. According to Ms Tirtha, we should avoid refined foods and opt for whole wheat grains, millet, bajra and such items. Sprouts are very rich sources of proteins and can be prepared as salads or side dishes.

Vegetable juices like cucumber, tomato juices are fine. They cleanse our systems. All kind of fruits are very good for the body. For those who would miss the fried taste of

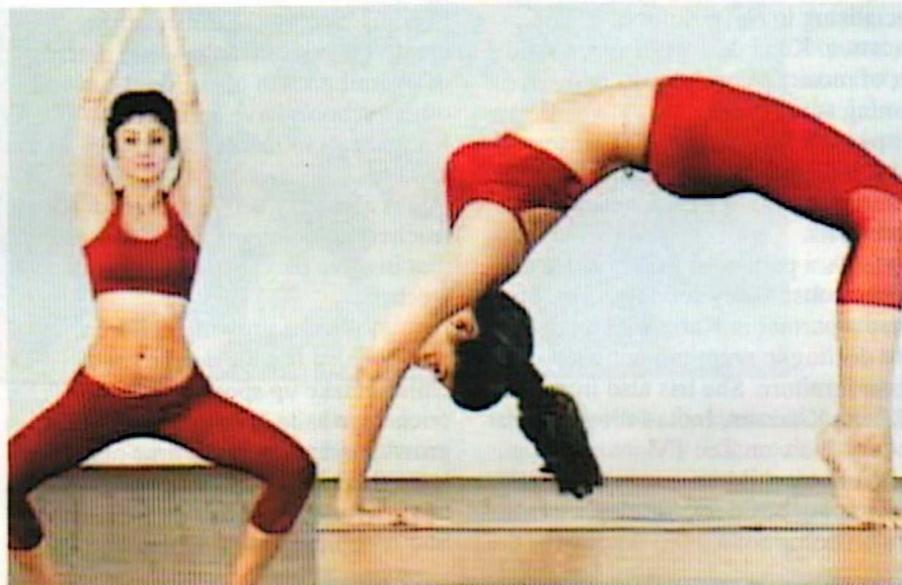


should take care of when we are on any diet plan is to drink sufficient amount of water. Water not only quenches our thirst but also cools the body and cleanses the system. Lack of water during the diet plan will result in our feeling tired or dehydrated. We can even suffer from constipation. Having enough water also covers our hunger pangs.

Sometimes we tend to overeat when we are bored or worried. There is one way to overcome this urge to gorge on food. We just have risen up and get actively involved in some physical work that we enjoy or even a creative work that is our passion. The urge will soon pass away and we will not have any guilt pangs later.

Exercise and physical activity

In addition to eating right, exercising is very important in any weight loss programme. Work-outs or jogging, walking or yoga, aerobics or dancing, some physical activity keeps our body flexible and our spirits high. If we spend a few minutes daily in eating right and doing some physical activity, the reward we get is a healthy and fit body without any disease.



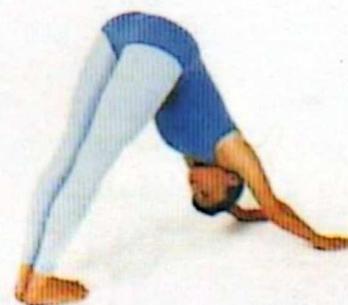
carbohydrates, five portions of fruits and vegetables per day, and healthy fats. Here the body is not starved of any nutrients and no meals are skipped. Combined with exercise this diet plan promotes weight loss.

Expert Speaks

Ms Tirtha Gala, Chief nutritionist at Anjali Mukherjee's Health Total, shares some tips on eating healthy food. “There is no need to skip any of the three important meals of the day—breakfast, lunch and dinner.” She says. “But we can reduce the quantity of food that we eat during mealtimes. It is better to have small and frequent

spicy foods like samosas, she assures that spices and herbs will give a genuine and healthy taste to our dishes. Dhania leaves, pudina leaves, pepper, chaat masalas, lemons and the ever so many spices we have, can give the dishes a delicious taste that is even better than the fried stuff. And these are gentle on the stomach. Ms Tirtha also suggests a juice of dhania leaves and pudina leaves with a dash of lemon that is a good diet drink. And amla juice which is very good for our immune system.

Water, water, everywhere
Another important thing that we



Rising Stars

Sherley Joseph Singh

-Aswati



Sherley Joseph Singh is one person who made it big in Mumbai. Her parents G Thomas and Thankamma moved from Kayamkulam near Mavelikkara to Mumbai. Her father was employed in the packaging industry and the family resided at Blossom Society, Marol. Sherley and sister Sherlyn were thus enrolled at Divine Child School and later transferred to St Joseph's School, Juhu when the family shifted their residence to Juhu.

Sherley obtained her degree in Commerce from Mithibai College in 1988 and continued her education in Management from NM Institute of Management Studies.

From her early life, she exhibited her inclination for innovative management and social service.

She has successfully established business firms single handedly or in partnership, a musical recording studio, education, sports while involving in community

service for the down trodden.

Sherley is a director of Hotel Samraj at Chakala, a three star hotel, a restaurant, JUST KERALA, with exquisite and authentic Malayali cuisine was introduced in the Hotel Samraj. This restaurant has earned high reputation in a very short time.

Fifteen years ago, she established a digital music recording adjacent to the hotel and serves the film industry. Many well known music directors and singers have recorded their music in Joshua Inc.

Sherley's contribution to the field of education is the establishment of Kangabeats Edutainment Private Limited, in collaboration with "Kangaroo Kids Education Pvt Ltd, specialising in early childhood education. Kangabeats is a synergistic mix of music, theatre, books and learning accessories.

Her passion for sports drove her to found Indian Tigers Football Alliance, an initiative with the Ex-Chelsea Footballers.

Sherley is a partner in Frazer & Haws, India, a consultancy services firm. She is also a partner in Karigiri, a retail store dealing in premium antique Indian furniture. She has also invested in Khana Khazana, India's most popular cookery show on Zee TV.

Work among children

While doing business, Sherley was also keen on doing something unique for the

children using her knowledge of the music industry. Her concern for the intellectual growth of children up to the age of ten, made her come up with music and plays which helped the intellectual development of children of that age group, through entertainment. Towards that end, she set up the Kangabeats and put up nearly 50 shows in different parts of Mumbai over the last one year, reaching out to over 50,000 children and their parents. The parents of these children have found the edutainment programmes of Kangabeats extremely beneficial for their children. The creative work of Kangabeats has now become a part of the syllabus in reputed educational instructions like Kangaroo Kids and Podar International Schools. Seeing the utility of the creative work of Kangabeats, in terms of overall growth of children, several others schools have approached Kangabeats to include their work in the syllabus.

She is also very active in the parent teachers associations and most activities that involve parents, students and teachers.

As a mother of growing children, Sherley also felt the need to help children take up sports, other than cricket, so as to help their physical growth and at the same time help them learn the benefits of team building, to take victory and defeat in their stride. She set up the Indian Tigers Football



Indian Tigers Footballers

Academy in association with ex-Chelsea Footballers from London, of which also she is the founder director. ITFA aims to give the best training in football to boys and girls at the grass root level in India.

Compassion

The comforts Sherley Joseph Singh has been enjoying do not prevent her from being concerned for the poor children. She became a part of Udaan Ghar, a Robin Raina Foundation-Project Crayons joint venture. As the President of Udaan Ghar, a home for the girl children living on the streets, she derived immense pleasure and satisfaction reciting poems



up the issue of cleaning up and desilting of storm water drains in JVPD and the clearing of debris in the area to ensure that the July 26 incident did not occur. The BMC was forced to take

appropriate action much to the relief of the residents.

As the honorary secretary of the Juhu Residents Association, she was in the forefront in taking up the issue of cleaning up of the area, widening of

of the Nagrik Satta, Sherley is on the Managing Committee of the BMC School, which is run by the Nagrik Satta. Sherley Joseph Singh is part of the core committee of the Save Our Suburbs, working with the government to see how underground metro could be made viable.

Interest in Politics

As a concerned citizen Sherley Joseph Singh realises that often lack of appropriate political empowerment is a hindrance to development. She feels the need to have a large number of elected representatives whose main concern should be the betterment of society at large.

Family

Shirley is married to Raju Singh, music composer (winner for best background music 2009, Mirchi Music Awards) and also music director of a Malayalam movie, Snehapoorvam Anna. Raju has scored background music for Houseful, a recent release.

The couple has two children, Joshua (15) and Rachael (13). Joshua is in X Standard while Rachael is in VIII standard. ■



for the girls whom she calls less fortunate. She took them out for picnics and celebrated festivals with them. Needless to say, she became very popular with them and the children always looked forward to her return. Through the Indian Tigers Football Academy she conducted a ten day workshop, where the Chelsea Footballers provide football training to over 50 slum children.

Giving Back to Society

While her work among children, from whichever financial status, gave her bliss, she always felt the need to give back to the society, since she had always had a comfortable life. Sherley was disturbed to see the destruction and havoc due to the July 26 flooding in Mumbai and that set her to ensure that precautions are taken by the civic authorities to prevent such situations from recurring. She became a part of the JVPD North Central ALM. A firm believer in action, Sherley took

the Irla nullah, the demolition of the encroachment by Trig on the Irla Nullah.

She is also active in taking up the issue of protection and restoration of the lakes in Mumbai.

As an active member and Zonal Head





MUMBAI NEWS DIGEST

KIM News Bureau

Kerala girls score high in civil Services examinations

T V Anupama of Ponnani, Malappuram district came fourth in the rank list of the Civil Services Examination, 2009. Three other Keralites also came in the first 100 ranks. And 13 Malayali rank holders are there up to 727 ranks. P I Sreevidya of Kottarakara got 14th rank while Devi Gopinath of Pappanamcode (TVPM) got 81st rank. Eldose Mathew Punnus of Chengannur got 96th rank. 126th rank went to S Lakshmanan of Manacaud, Thiruvananthapuram. Divya V. Gopinath of Medical College and G Vishakh of Thodupuzha won 131st and 146th ranks respectively. N M Veena of Vanchiyoor got 207th rank and K Nishanth of Thalassery got rank 261. Rahul of Thrippoonithura, Ernakulam won rank 303 while Jyothish Mohan of Kottayam got rank 358. Out of the 34 students enrolled at State Civil Service Academy, Thiruvananthapuram, 17 students came out successfully. Considering the fact that there are many who appeared directly or through other coaching centres of the state or outside the state, the success percentage of Kerala examinees can only go up. Till recently Kerala aspirants were lagging behind other states like Bihar, UP, MP, Jharkhand. Delhi etc.

Chief Minister V S Achutanandan, Education Minister M A Baby and Principal Secretary for Higher Education Kuruvila John congratulated the winners.

Sabu Daniel elected Municipal Councillor for the fourth time

Sabu Daniel elected as Municipal Councillor of Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation. It is the fourth time he is elected as corporator without a break. Sabu hails from Panthalam and for the last



twenty seven years, he was a resident of Navi Mumbai. He is Vice President of Maharashtra Christian Association and Chairman of Mata Mission besides working with various Malayali organisations. He was chosen the Best Corporator during 2003.

Aatmopadesha Shatakam Yagnjam

Nerul: Sree Narayana Samithi conducted Aatmopadesha Shatakam Yagnjam from May 15 to 27 at Gurudevagiri, Nerul. Aatmopadesha Shatakam is a philosophical work of Sree Narayana Guru. While Beena Ajayakumar recited the Shatakam, Dr Geetha Suraj gave the discourse.

Workshop on Malayalam Language at Sakinaka

Sakinaka: KKS Reorganising Committee and Kerala People's Education Society Golden Jubilee Committee jointly organise a workshop on Malayalam Language at Sakinaka on June 6 from 10 a m.

Kerala Malayala Mission Department Head K Balakrishnan will inaugurate the workshop. Well known writers of Marathi and Tamil will also speak on the occasion.

Challenges faced by Malayalam Language in School Education, Cyber Malayalam and expatriate Malayalees, Writing and Reading of Malayalam Literature of Expatriates etc are topics to be covered in the workshop. About 200 delegates representing various Malayali organisations from Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Thane, are expected to participate. The workshop will conclude at 7 p m, followed by variety entertainment programme presented by Malayali organisations of western zone.

Office bearers of Malayalee organisations may send their reports on their letter heads, signed by authorised persons, along with related photographs to: keraliinmumbai@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 / 29209959

ROTTEN FOOD ON TRAIN PANTRY

-KIM News Bureau

Nineteen passengers OF Turonto Express were admitted to Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode on May 17 due to food poisoning. They were travelling from Nizamuddin to Ernakulam Junction. On the previous day, they had consumed non-vegetarian food, mostly omelette, butter and bread, prepared in the pantry car of the train. The food is prepared and served by IRCTC.

The food poisoning was first detected before the train reached Madgaon. When the passengers complained, the authorities tried to offload the passengers at Madgaon without success.

Around 2.30 a m, the passengers felt uneasiness but the railway doctors and train superintendent did not take any action and this infuriated the affected persons and their relations. When the train reached Kozhikode at 11.40 a m,

the angry passengers obstructed its journey and forced the authorities to summon medical relief. Out of the 30 passengers, 19 were admitted to hospital by the Collector of Kozhikode Dr P P Salim.

When the health department officials of railways inspected the pantry car, they were shocked to find rotten eggs and stale food kept inside the refrigerator. Rotten carrots, green chillies, lemons, green peas and ice cream were found, all stored together inside. Ice cream, sweets and meat were kept in the same fridge. The inspection was conducted at Ernakulam when the train reached there at 6.15 p m.

It was revealed that the employees were all private workers who worked for the contractor. They did not have their identity cards nor had undergone any medical test. As per rules, only healthy persons can be appointed inside the

pantry car.

The Railway Minister of State E Ahmed, in a statement said that such things could be expected in railways. Hundreds of trains, thousands of stations and lakhs of passengers constituted the railways and in such a case, such incidents were normal, he said. He later announced a relief of Rs.15,000 to all affected persons and promised an enquiry. He assured that the guilty would be punished after the enquiry.

Later the Railways announced the appointment of a food inspection committee authorised to inspect railway kitchens in all railways stations.

There were continuous complaints from the passengers from the very inception of Turonto Express along this route but hardly any corrective action was taken by the authorities to provide relief.

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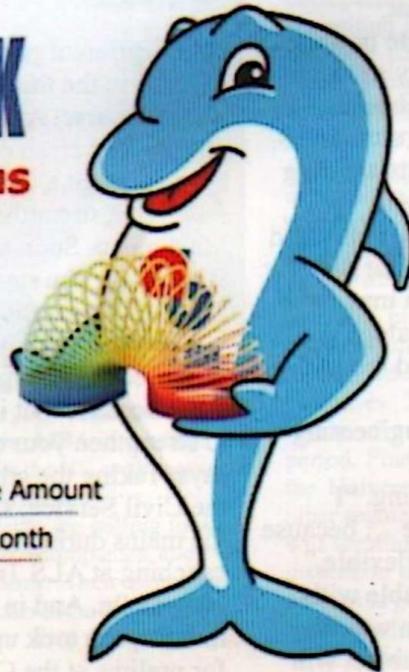
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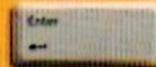
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HOW TO SUCCEED IN CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION?

Aim high. There is no end to what you can achieve." The words of T.V.

Anupama, who won the fourth rank in the Civil Services Examination, are loaded with emotion and earnestness. Years of hard work to achieve her goal reflect in her words as she speaks in her home at Maranchery, near Ponnani, in Malappuram district.

Anupama had set her goals when she was in school. Even when she joined BITS, Pilani's Goa campus, one of the premier engineering institutions in the country, her mind was fixed on the Indian Administrative Service (IAS).

Anything less would have left her dissatisfied. "I certainly would have written the examinations again if I did not get IAS," she says during an interview interrupted by the continual inflow of relatives, friends and local people to congratulate her. Although she was sure to crack the Civil Services Examinations, she did not expect a rank so high. In that,

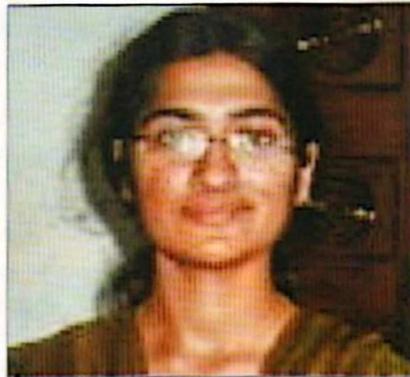
Anupama did the entire State proud. With a well-defined strategy to reach her high-set goals, this electronics engineering graduate looks sure to inspire thousands of students aspiring to go places on our campuses.

Anupama's selection of geography and Malayalam as her subjects for the Civil Services Examination may have surprised many. But her strategy paid dividends when she cracked the IAS with ease and élan.

According to her, taking engineering or science subjects for the examinations is like gambling. "I didn't want to lose a chance ... because I find humanities subjects flexible," she says. She was comfortable with geography. And Malayalam was her second language. But no subject will help you unless you have a genuine interest in it. She advises the students never to opt for a subject without an interest in it. "You won't be able to study for a year unless you have an interest," she says. An avid reader of Malayalam literature, she had enjoyed

reading almost all the 21 books prescribed for the mains second paper. What she needed was to strengthen her basics and knowledge about the history and development of the Malayalam language and literature.

Anupama started preparing for the examinations in earnest from June 2008. Her 11 months' preparation was focussed and intensive. She took the services of three coaching institutes,



all for different purposes. Even when she was in the third year of her BE (Hons) course, Anupama attended a month-long crash course in Malayalam at a coaching centre at Pala. That strengthened her basic Malayalam. Soon after finishing her BE (Hons), she started off with Civil Services preparations 11 months before the preliminary examinations. "I started preparing for the mains first. Because that is where you need to strengthen your concepts," she says. Taking the advice of many from the Civil Service, she concentrated on the mains during her six-month coaching at ALS Training Institute in New Delhi. And in the remaining five months, she took up the preparations for prelims at the Civil Services Academy of the State government in Thiruvananthapuram.

"You don't need to mug up everything for prelims. Your preparations for the mains will automatically help you for the prelims," she says. The library of the

Academy has been of great use for her. Foremost among those who helped her were Sankara Narayanan, former Principal of Sree Krishna College, Guruvayur, and Rajasekharan, faculty member of the Civil Services Academy. When the former helped her with Malayalam, Prof. Rajasekharan helped her strengthen her knowledge of geography. She depended on magazines for preparing for the general studies paper in mains, particularly *Frontline*. Apart from taking a glimpse at the local newspapers, she used to go through *The Hindu* from front to back. Since 2004, she used to spend a lot of time with the edit and op-ed pages of *The Hindu* and *The Times of India*. "I have been reading *The Hindu* completely and major articles in *The Times of India*," she says. Knowing facts are not just enough. "Not at all, in fact," she advises the students. "You must read the comments, opinions and analyses. Then only you will be able to analyse the issues. What you need is depth, particularly when you aim high," she says. During the 11 months of her preparation, Anupama used to spend 13 to 16 hours a day with books and journals. She slept six hours without break, and used to take a 10- or 15-minute nap during studies. Winning a rank is nothing new for her. She won the 13th rank in the SSLC examinations from Vijayamatha Convent High School, Ponnani, in 2002. She won the third rank in the higher secondary examinations from St. Clair's Higher Secondary School, Thrissur, in 2004. And she scored 92 per cent marks in her BE (Hons) from BITS. But Anupama believes that the real challenge is yet to come. Hopeful of getting an opening in her home State, she has set her mind on finding better ways and means of helping society

Foreign Educational Institutions Bill

-Revati

The Union Cabinet has approved the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill, 2010 (Regulation of Entry and Operation) paving the way for introduction of the bill in Parliament through which foreign universities would be able to invest at least 51 per cent of the total capital expenditure needed to establish institutes in India. The bill thus allows foreign educational providers to extend their campus facilities in the country and offer degrees too.

It suggests a time-bound format for granting approval to the foreign educational institutions within an eight-month period to set up the campuses. Each applicant institution will be judged and scrutinised through a registration process and other methods for allowing participation in the education sector beyond collaborations, especially for setting up campuses in the country.

However, the bill needs to be ratified by the Parliament to be turned into a law.

This step by the government would seek to expand options for the students seeking higher education in India's top B-school destinations which until now remained limited to India's premier institutes like IIT and IIM. This reform measure can go a long way in boosting the structure of higher education in India apart from making it competitive and more cost-effective.

Though 100 per cent foreign direct investment through the automatic route is permitted in the education sector since 2000, the legal structure does not allow granting of degrees by foreign educational institutions here. Other matters such as reservation policy will be in order according to the laws in the country.

According to Kapil Sibal, the HRD Minister, "This is a milestone which will enhance choices, increase competition and benchmark quality. A larger revolution than even in the telecom sector awaits us."

Around 50 foreign universities such as B-schools from Harvard, Stanford, Kellogg and Columbia are already interested in setting up campuses and are keenly awaiting the go-ahead by the Parliament. With 160,000 Indians studying abroad, spending US\$ 4 billion a year in fees, the Bill should help reverse both trends. Thereby, the brain-drain could be checked and foreign inflows through foreign students would also be attracted through the enhanced opportunities.

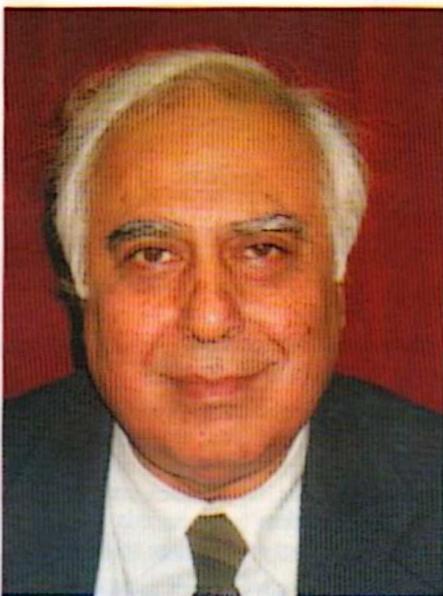
Most experts in the industry agree that Indian education providers would have to improve services and their best practices to stay ahead of competition that would come in form of the foreign universities. They point out that not only students travelling abroad stand to benefit but also, students studying here would gain from better benchmarked institutions. The only aspect worrying experts is the manner in which public institutions such as IITs and IIMs

would be treated in the long run vis-à-vis private or foreign institutions.

The measure would also protect the interest of students from sub-standard Foreign Educational Institutions (FEIs) and 'fly-by-night' operators.

Christy Trang Le, a first-year MBA student at MIT Sloan School of Management, is charged up about her internship with an event and entertainment portal thousands of miles away, as the next emerging Silicon Valley will be outside of the US, very likely to be in a developing country like India or China. Nearly 23 of her batch mates are interning with companies in five cities across India under an internship programme called 'India Lab', with projects in subjects as diverse as information technology and tourism.

The internship wheel has come full circle. Earlier Indian students aspired to train with companies in the US, but now these aspiring entrepreneurs and corporate leaders believe experience with young companies in India,



Kapil Sibal

some of which are yet to register revenues, is invaluable. Besides, MBA internships are not easy to come by in the US, with recession taking a toll on the job market.

Many overseas students are willing to work for small and mid-sized companies, and even voluntary organisations. Their experience, they say, has been richer in the interiors.

Foreign Varsities to Help India Save Rs 34500 crores

If all the processes go well, the world's best universities will soon be able to set up shop in India. Also, according to the industry body Assocham, allowing foreign universities to set up their campuses in India will help the country save up to \$7.5 billion (about Rs. 34,500 crores) on foreign exchange annually that students spend on studying abroad.

Students going abroad cost the country a foreign exchange outflow of \$10 billion annually and foreign universities' campuses in India could prevent at least three-fourths of students from leaving the country for higher education. It will not only dramatically enhance the profile of higher education in India, but will also help it save outflow of foreign exchange. The industry body says several foreign universities have plans to enter India, especially at places like New Delhi, Hyderabad, Chennai, Chandigarh, Pune, and Mumbai.

The reason for studying abroad is not just acquiring a foreign degree but to get exposure to the foreign culture and environment. Moreover, it is the work permit (an opportunity to work in a foreign country) after successful completion of the course that encourages the students to study abroad. Students will continue to go aboard for higher studies as foreign universities' campuses in India will neither provide foreign environment nor the work permit to them.

Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal said: "This is a milestone which will enhance choices, increase competition and benchmark quality. A larger revolution than even in the telecom sector awaits us."

The Foreign Universities Bill, 2010, has been pending for the last four years owing to opposition from various quarters, including the Left parties, and then HRD Minister Arjun Saingh over certain provisions. The new messiah of the down trodden and Muslims Arjun Singh wanted to incorporate certain percent of seats in the new universities in the bill prepared by his own ministry officials. Last year, it was referred to a Committee of Secretaries which brought modifications to certain provisions.

The Bill prescribes an eight-month, time-bound format for granting approval to foreign educational institutions to set up campuses. They will go through different levels of registration process during this period. Finally, they will be registered with the University Grants Commission or any other regulatory body to be put in place that will scrutinise the proposals of the aspiring institution as per India's priorities and will advise the government whether to allow it to operate in India. As for the reservation policy in the higher educational institutions, the law of the land will prevail.

If top-class foreign universities do not want to set up campuses as 'deemed universities', there is the issue of a level playing field for Indian institutions. Well-established, foreign universities may not like the deemed university status in India as they consider

such campuses as a dilution of quality.

The Foreign Educational Institution (Regulation of Entry and Operation) Bill, 2010, if passed in its current form without removing the existing anomalies in the higher education system, will lead to deterioration in quality and increased corruption in higher education. Unlike his predecessors, Kapil Sibal has made a sincere effort to improve the higher education sector, but he has unfortunately not been able to make the Bill attractive enough to get in enough foreign universities to help India improve higher education and achieve a gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 21 per cent.

Cent per cent foreign direct investment has been there in the education sector since 2000. However, as of now, foreign institutions can not enter the Indian market directly. They can operate only by collaborating with Indian partners. But once the bill becomes legislation, the foreign giants will be able to set up shops directly in the country.

Experts feel that it might impact the existing collaborations between Indian and foreign universities. Once the foreign universities get direct access, they will no longer need Indian partners. It will, perhaps, affect the lesser-known Indian universities as their foreign partners might consider them to be more of a liability.

If foreign universities come here with the intention of doing business, they will make it tough for the Indian institutions. With government help on the decline, the latter will find it tough to retain good faculty.

Some educationists feel that the new bill favoured foreign universities. Everything will be in favour of the foreign players in terms of fees, equity/access, restrictive guidelines, etc. Our institutions will not be able to match them as foreign institutions are financial giants. They have bigger brand value, better faculty and superior technology.

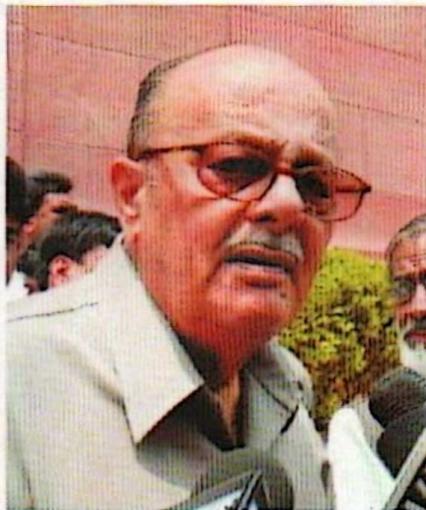
In India, most of not-for-profit educational institutions are serving public interest for "private gain", thus making higher education unaffordable. Malpractices like capitation fee exist because of the not-for-profit concept in higher education. Increasing private investments in higher education can produce greater benefits, including enhanced access to higher education and improvement in quality, with the increased competition in a level playing field.

But there is hardly any incentive in this Bill for genuine foreign universities to set up campuses in India. The big question is why a foreign university should use its own resources and capabilities to solve India's problem of higher education. What will they get in return?

In order to enter, universities need to invest in at least 51 per cent of the total capital expenditure needed to establish the campus. Getting a suitable, accredited Indian partner who is really not interested in profit for remaining 49 per cent investment will be difficult for an accredited foreign university. The university has to go through an elaborate

three-level registration process and will be granted deemed university status under Section 3 of the Universities Grants Commission Act, 1956.

According to the proposed NCHER Bill, universities will not be able to appoint vice-chancellors (VCs) on their own. It will be the prerogative of the NCHER to appoint VCs of all universities in India. Therefore, despite having a majority stake, foreign universities will not be able to appoint VCs on their own. Higher education in India has always been over-regulated and under-governed. Moreover, well-established accredited foreign universities/institutions may not like the status of a "deemed university" in India and may consider off-shore campus in India as a dilution of quality and something that can lower their brand image. Hence, most foreign universities will continue to explore



Arjun Singh

collaborations/ partnerships with Indian educational institutions rather than setting up campuses in India.

Healthy competition is good for growth of the economy and, thus, for the country. We have seen the positive impact of competition in many sectors like telecom, automotive, IT etc, and can thus presume this would hold good for the higher education sector also.

However, the government must ensure that only top-class foreign universities are allowed to set up campuses in India this will help Indian institutions come up to global education standards. The Bill should not lead to a situation where all types of foreign universities are allowed to set up campuses in India. The process for allowing these universities to set up their campuses needs to be absolutely transparent and objective-oriented without any biases otherwise, we will land up in the same situation as has happened with some approved private universities and institutions.

It is important that the foreign institutions entering India offer the same curriculum, quality of education and degrees that they provide in their own countries. Some issues, such as regulatory framework to look into dual degrees and the portability of credits,

have not been addressed in the Bill; hence, some guidelines on foreign institutions looking forward to partnership models will be a welcome move.

There are some apprehensions that the entry of such institutions may result in faculty members from top institutions and universities in India joining foreign institutions that may offer higher salaries. There may be some mobility of faculty members, but the majority would prefer to continue with their present institutions most professors have opted for academics as a career by choice, they can never be lured by salaries in dollars. The right academic and research environment is important and it will take foreign universities years to set up institutes of excellence.

It is anticipated that once foreign universities set up campuses here, this will stop Indian students from going abroad to study according to Assocham, over 500,000 students go overseas every year for education and, in 2008-09, \$2.25 billion was spent on this. There are three sets of students who go abroad those who get admission in top universities because of their high academic credentials; those who cannot get admission in top institutions in India but can afford to go abroad and stay there and the third are those who just want the foreign stamp. In short, those who want to go abroad for higher education will go irrespective of foreign institutions setting up campuses in India. However, after the arrival of top universities, these institutions may be able to attract some good students if their fee is reasonable otherwise only those students will prefer to join such institutions who are not able to make it to the top Indian institutions/ universities.

In addition, there has been some concern over the Bill's provisions that allow foreign educational institutions to have their own admission processes and freedom to fix fees. This rule should be applicable to the Indian institutions also.

The government policy should ensure the same rules are applicable to Indian as well as foreign institutions. They should be gauged by the same yardstick. If the government allows foreign institutions to take out some reasonable surplus, the same rule should be applicable to private Indian institutions also.

Similarly, if the reservation policy is not applicable to foreign institutions, it should not be applicable to private Indian institutions also. The rules of the game have to be the same for all.

It is going to be tough for the government to raise gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education from the present level of around 12 per cent to 30 per cent by 2020. The government alone will not be able to achieve the GER target and, therefore, will require partnership both with Indian and foreign institutions. ■



Kerala in Mumbai

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