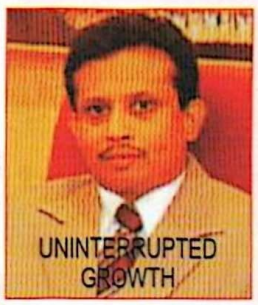
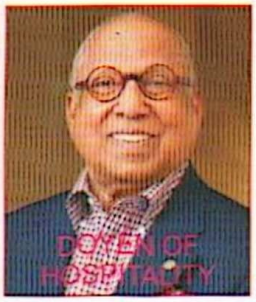
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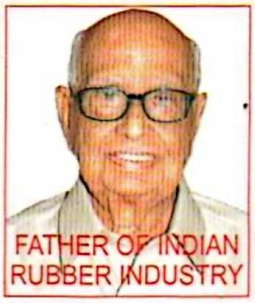
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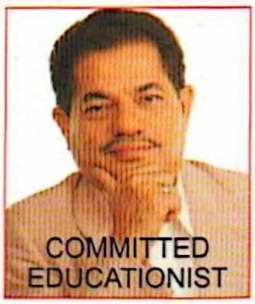
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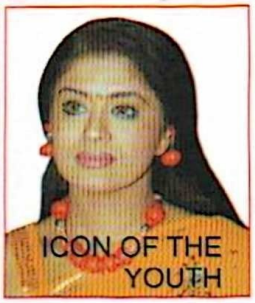


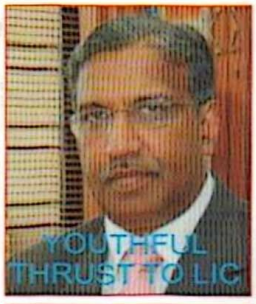






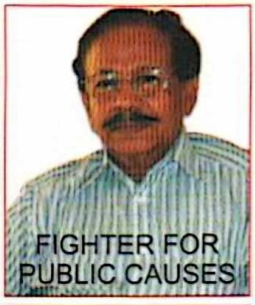






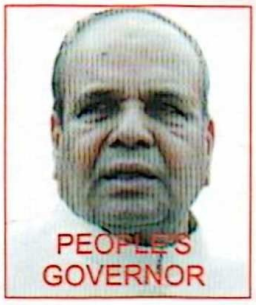


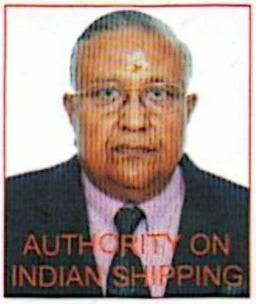


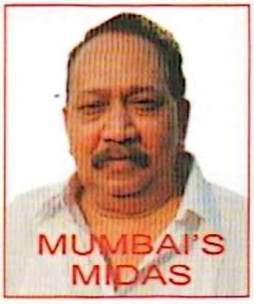


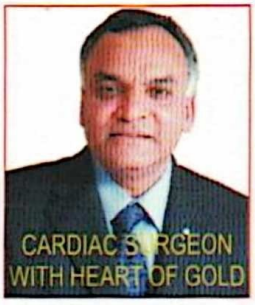


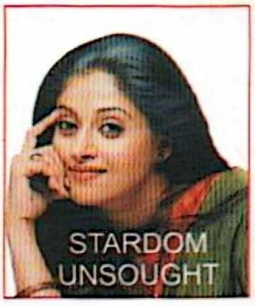




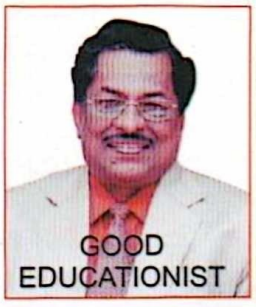


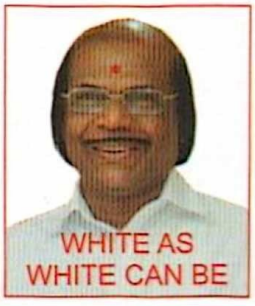


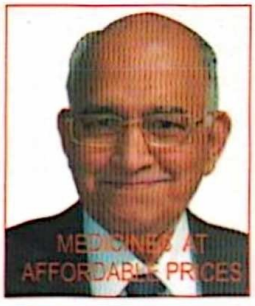


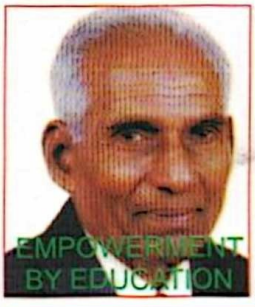


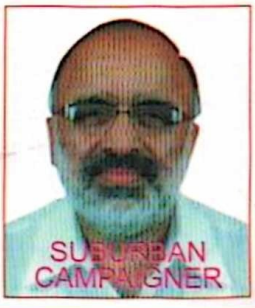




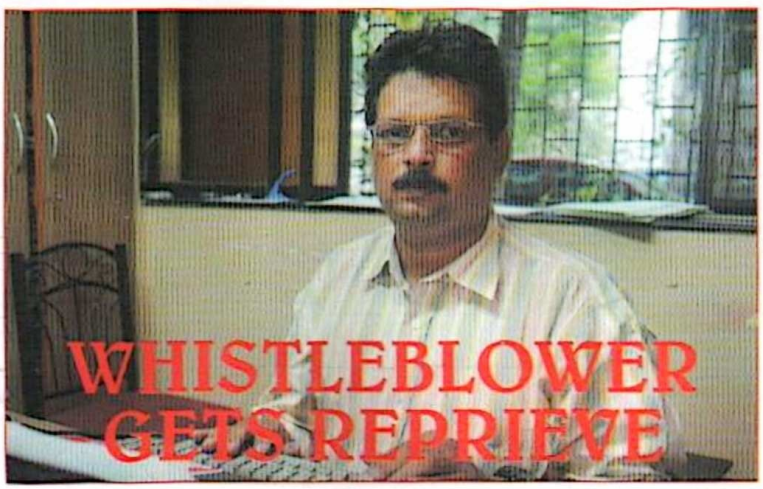


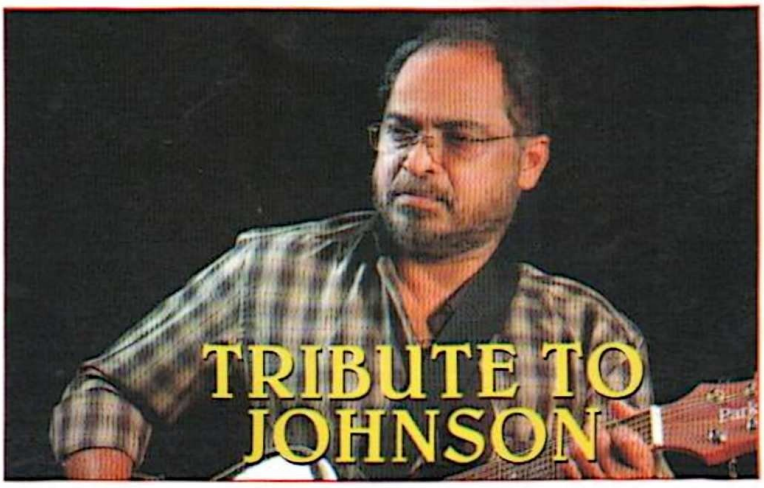












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EDITORIAL

CHALLENGES AHEAD

Ardent readers of Kerala in Mumbai tell us our editorial in our January issue was a little too optimistic. There are many more obstacles to a happy New Year that stare us in the face, they point out.

The situation world-wide, they point out, are forbiddingly despondent. Global warming and climate change, the inter-linked global economy that sends shivers down the spine of every country in the world, global recession that deprives millions of youth of their rightful opportunities of employment, onesixth of the world's population under-nourished, 42 percent of India's children under five suffering acute malnourishment, growing capitalist influence over corporates (including some in India), a sluggish economic system, which only rewards the greediest among us.

All this calls for repatterning our thought processes to acquire a more positive outlook.

Added to all this is the cramped thinking of the top political establishment of the country, which reveals traces of lack of self-confidence. This was all too-evident in the case of a pending suit in an obscure Siberian court, dubbing the Bhagavat Gita a terrorist manual or something to that effect. If the court had ruled in favour of the petitioner, future generations of Siberians and Russians would have been the losers. They will be denied access to one of the world's greatest philosophical treatises.

Instead of that, a politician who is in queue to become the Prime Minister of the country, advocated the Gita being declared the "National Book" like the peacock adorning that honour among our animals.

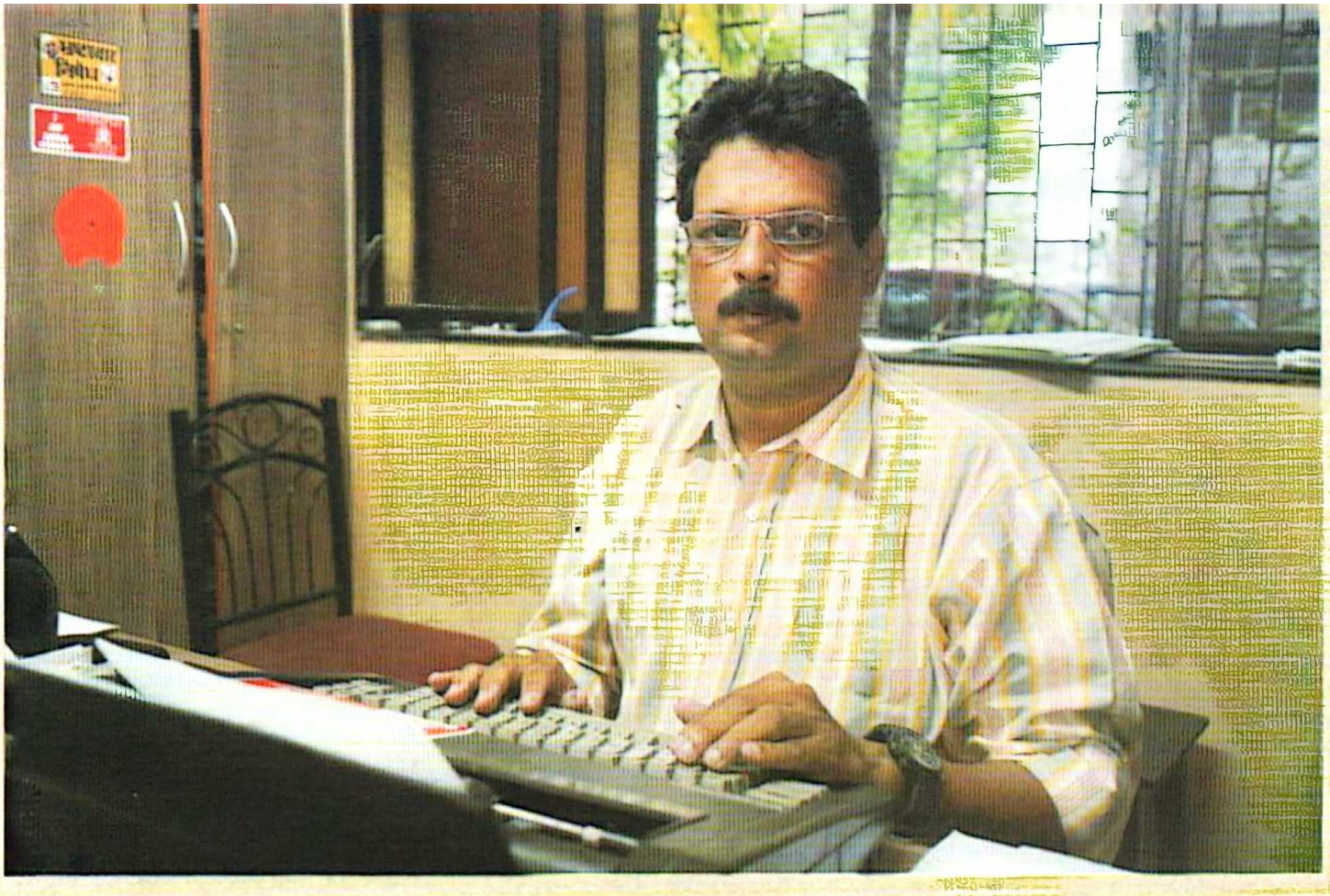
Hot on the heels of the Gita controversy comes another astounding knee-jerk reaction to a programme aired on BBC during Christmas, "mocking Indian culture." Who was the loser? In the eyes of educated, proud young Indians, the BBC has shed some of its grossly exaggerated claims of integrity and commitment to truth and fair reporting. Did that special programme hurt us in any way?

Or, did it actually mock dozens of British intellectuals and scholars like Sir Edwin Arnold, Sir James Haldwyn and others who found great virtues in Indian philosophy and science and took the trouble of translating the best of them into English? Or German scholars like Max Muller who spent a lifetime studying Indian religious texts and philosophy?

A large portion of the British Musuem is stuffed with Indian treasures, which our successive governments have been unable to retrieve. Even Mumbai has forgotten the sworn pledge of a former Chief Minister to bring back Shivaji's Bhavani talvar.

There are too many things we need to be ashamed of: the greed of the present political class that never seems satiated with the corruption they indulge in, their total neglect of their duties to the nation and future generations from becoming victims to malnourishment and total deprivation of what is due to them as honourable citizens of this country.

The only hope seems to be in the youth of the country, who, one could only hope would rise to put this country back on the rails.



MOHAN KRISHNAN

WHISTLEBLOWER EXONERATED

-P K Ravindranath

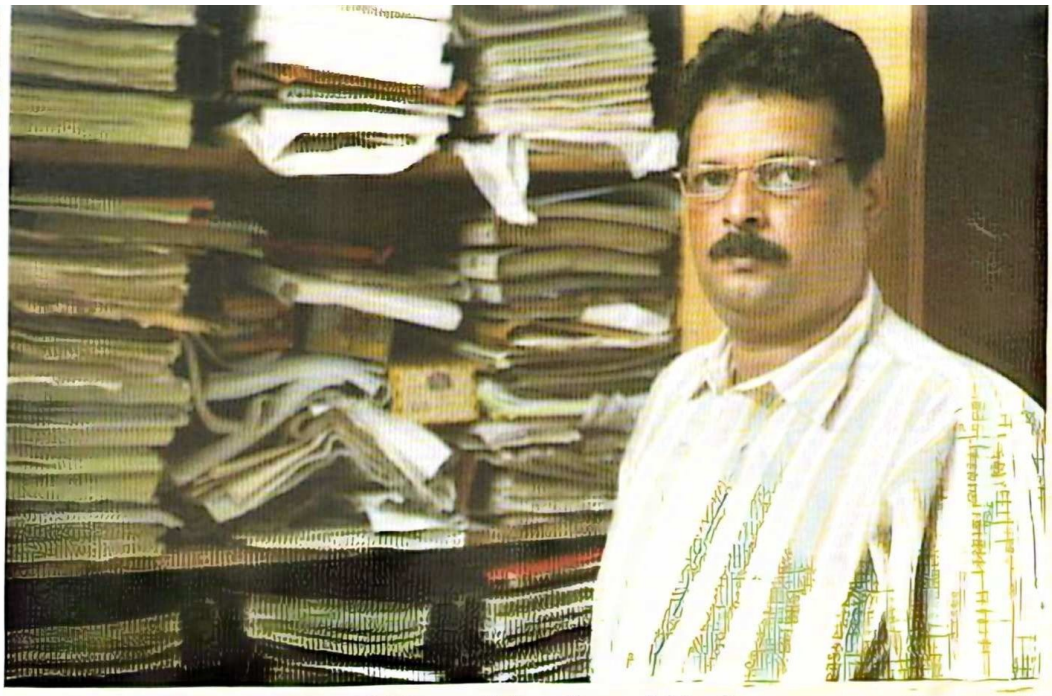
Never fall foul of the police even when you catch them on the wrong side of the law. For 16 long years the police in Borivali, Dindoshi, Malad and Kurar sought to drive home this point to 45-year old Mohan Krishnan Kurup. The one-time automobile engineer withstood torture, hounding, arrests, lock-ups, to finally come out clean from the Bombay High Court.



Mohan Krishnan on hunger strike during his student activism days

Mohan Krishnan's crime? Taking up the cudgels on behalf of adivasis, who had to give up their land to enable a politically well-connected builder to put up a golf course "of international standards" and a series of luxurious apartments and bungalows for the super-rich. All this from land which had been reserved in the halcyon days of the First Five-year Plan "for development of Aarey Milk Colony" in future.

Mohan Krishnan, President of the National Anti-Corruption and Crime Prevention Council, (NACCPC) thereafter found himself embroiled in case after case by various police stations on charges which have all been disproved in court. In one case it was found that the



Mohan Krishnan, fighter for social justice

complainant had furnished a false address and had vanished even though the police took Mohan into custody, held him in lock up for 15 days and tortured him.

His 74-year old father, Kallat Krishnan Kurup, died of brain meningitis in 2009, being bed-ridden since 2000. His mother, 67- year old Thangam, withstood humiliation, threats and long hours at the local police station but would not bribe the officer concerned to let her carry a tiffin carrier containing Mohan's lunch. The officer would ask her to taste every item in the carrier in his presence even though they were all cooked by her at home.

When the case came up in the High Court on writ petitions filed by Mohan, she, a simple housewife, who had not even seen Mumbai city in its entirety, would catch a local train from Malad, get down at Churchgate and find her way to the High Court to stand by her son, as the trial dragged on.

"Had it not been for her steadfast support, I might have broken down a long time ago," Mohan admits. He kept his wife, Malavika out of the scene, since with all the tension around, she had lost a four-day old child even as policemen ransacked Mohan's house.

To break him down and stop him from taking up issue after issue of local grievances, the police illegally detained him for 11 days, in 2001 and then again for 32 days in police custody, 13 of which he had to spend in Thane Jail.

Mohan rattles off a string of reporters, including the late J Dey who supported him throughout and reported on the cases against him. Several TV channels picked up stories about him. Members of the NGO he headed also stood by him. "Had it not been for all this support, I would have ended up in a mortuary, maybe as a result of a fake encounter," Mohan wryly recounts.

He also thanks some lawyers who stood by him throughout : Kishore U Doshi and Sushan Kunjuraman. There was also a case of one of the fraternity, who without any explanation absented himself during a crucial hearing of his case and brought avoidable misery on Mohan.

That was a time when externment proceedings were launched against him. Chapter proceedings against him earlier had failed.

There is no provision in law or outside the ambit of legal proceedings that the police had not tried against Mohan. Even a case under Sec.52 of the MRTP Act (Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices) Act was filed against him in 1991.

When Mohan went to the Borivali police station to bail out two members of the NACCPC he was detained and tortured. The case dragged on for ten years from 1995 to 2005.

Then, the Dindoshi Police Station registered a case of extortion against him in 1998 under Sec 387, 323, 304, IPC in 1998. This case was dismissed in 2003.

In 2002 when he complained against a threat from the underworld, the police took no note of it. Mohan's complaint was about unauthorised constructions in Malad.

The NGO had complained on several occasions about the existence of illegal matka dens, dance bars, and liqour dens in Malad East. This resulted in three false cases against him, prompted by local politicians and builders. These cases were heard over a full decade. And, ultimately dismissed. Mohan was acquitted in all three cases in 2011.

In 2001 externment proceedings were launched against him. The police failed in their attempt.

In 2002 Mohan was framed in two cases, which were proved false. But the police put him in their custody for 45 days. He was ultimately acquitted in both cases in 2011.

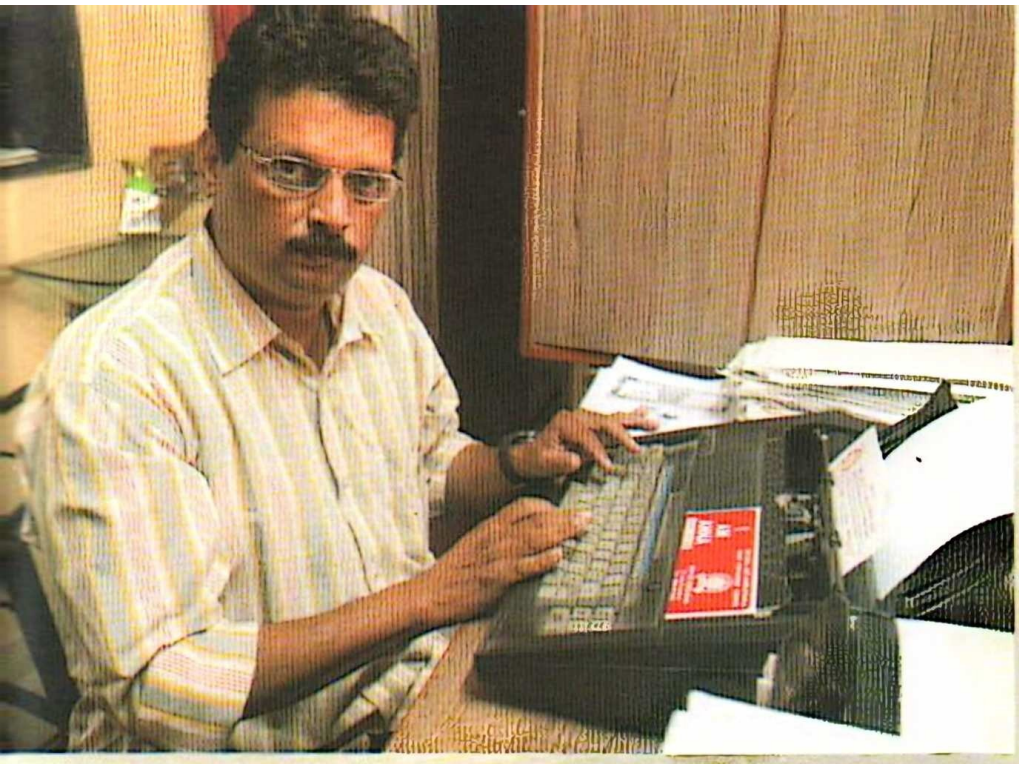
The Kurar Police filed charges against him in 2009. In this case also he was acquitted in 2011.

Not to be outdone, the Kashimira Police Station arrested him and charged him on a complaint by a Thane resident. When the case came up for hearing, there was no trace of the complainant, since the address was false.

Chapter proceedings were initiated against Mohan under Sections 107 to 110 even before he had committed any crime that would endanger "peace and tranquility" in the area. The Bombay High



Family photo: Venugopal Kartha (brother-in-law), Vijayalakshmi Kartha (elder sister), Vinitha Kartha (niece), Thankam Krishnan (mother),) Mohan Krishnan, Malavika M Kurup (wife), Late M K Krishnan (father), Leena S Kurup (sister-in-law), Shashi Kurup (brother).



The whistleblower Mohan Krishnan

Court had in 1992 ruled that non-congnisable complaints filed on the basis of quarrels could not be grounds for initiating such proceedings.

On one occasion a squad of 70 policemen marched to his house to arrest him, making it appear to the neighbours that he was a terrorist. "The terror tactics used by the police were many," Mohan recalls.

Mohan Krishnan irritated the police by raising inconvenient queries under RTI (Right To Information), which put the 86 police stations in the city to acute embarrassment. For example, he found out under RTI that 65 police stations executed only 2,676 non-bailable warrants out of 12,746 warrants issued by various courts between January 1 and October 15, 2008. In other words, they ignored 10,070 NBWs during the period. In a writ petition, his lawyer, Kishore Doshi alleged that the police were using the NBWs as bearer cheques. "They are executed in cases where the accused do not pay a farthing," he told the High Court. Very often the accused are shown as "absconding."

The NACCPC also provided an umbrella for whistle blowers in the suburbs, who often enough would be targetted by the police on behalf of criminals, builders and developers.

In another interesting case, NACCPC exposed editors of two small-time local journals, a beer bar owner and a self-proclaimed "social worker" who were blackmailing a suburban doctor who allegedly sexually exploited his patients, instead of reporting him to the police.

The Malad doctor ran five beauty clinics at Grant Road, Ghatkopar, Santa Cruz and Thane besides Malad.

Mohan Krishnan also found out through RTI that a former Municipal Commissioner had visited Hanoi, at a cost of Rs. 38,941 to the exchequer to present a paper there on the 2005 floods in Mumbai, which were primarily caused by chocked storm-water drains. The BMC had not cleaned the drains in time and a cloud burst and high tides contributed much to the devastation in Bandra East, Saki Naka, Santa Cruz and other suburbs.

He also unearthed a case of Western Railways selling off scrap worth Rs. 6 crores illegally. The "scrap" included 15 imported units of wood cutting machines all in good working condition.

The NACCPC has written over 15,000 letters, many of them RTI applications, to various authorities, including the Chief Minister, the Home Minister, the National Human Rights Commission and others.

Thanks to a clean chit given to Mohan Krishnan by the Court, clearing him of all cases foisted on him, he and his mother Thangam Kurup and wife Malvika lead a life free of police harassment. Mohan's life is hectic though, with hordes of aggrieved persons seeking his assistance and intervention to set injustices right.

How does he live? "I was running my own workshop. The lease on this plus some investments I had made early in life, fetch me enough to live comfortably." His wife ran a beauty parlour for some time. "It's gone now," he says.

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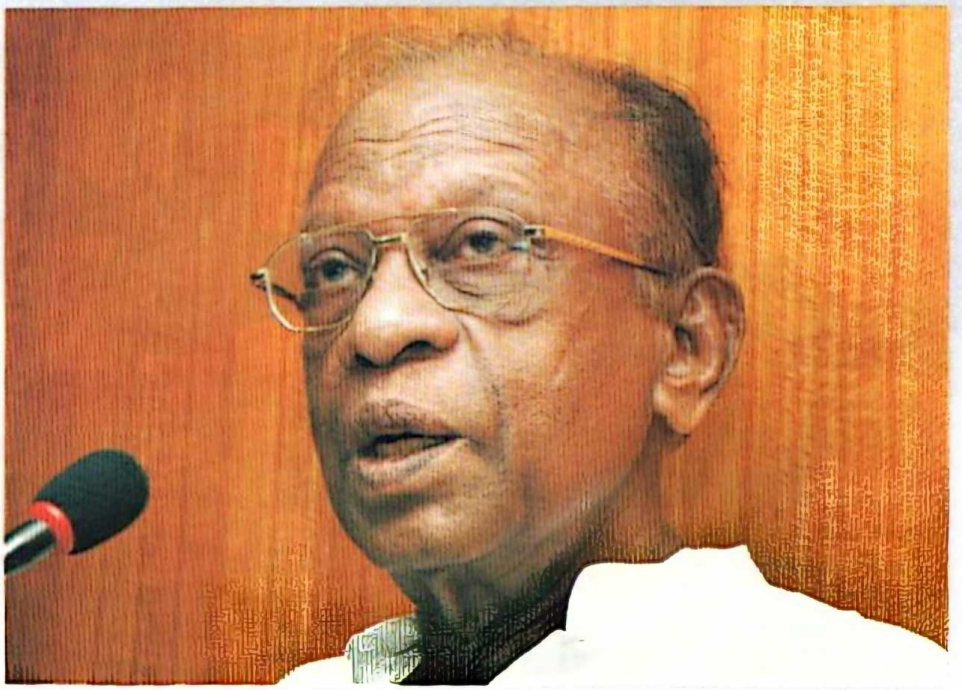
SCHOLAR, PHILOSOPHER AZHEEKODE DEAD

Kerala has lost one of its most profound intellectual, Prof Sukumar Azheekode, who passed away on 24 January.

An authority on the poetry of Changampuzha, Asan, Vallathol and G Sankara Kurup, Azheekode was also steeped in the writings and messages of Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi. He was a top critic of Malayalam literature and orator. He wrote profusely about all of them, particularly Malayalam poetry of the modern era, on which he produced several volumes.

His most valuable contribution has been "Tatwamasi" which embodied the quintessence of the Upanishads and the Vedas.

Beginning his career as a Professor of Malayalam, Azheekode rose to become the Acting Vice Chancellor of Calicut University. He had come to Mumbai several times to share his views with appreciative audiences in the city. He was scheduled to attend the 90th birthday celebrations of Krishnan Parapally, Mumbai-based leading Malayalam poet, on 7 October 2011. He had to cancel it since that was the time he fell ill, with suspected cancer.



Sukumar Azheekode was as controversial as he was an acknowledged scholar and intellectual. All those who had fallen out with him on various issues made up with him, during the time he was in hospital. These included Mohanlal, Vellapally Natesan, writer T Padmanabhan and others. Mohanlal was the last to visit him, hours before Azheekode died.

Krishnan Parapally, with whom he had a long and fruitful association, said in Azheekode's death Kerala has suffered the greatest loss on its literary and intellectual front.

KERALA LOTTERY HELPS LAUNDER MUMBAI MONEY

The Kerala State Lottery, one of the most successful State lotteries, is a good revenue earner for the State. The profits from the scheme has been steadily rising. In fiscal 2007-08 it was Rs. 48.28 crores and it rose in 2008-09 to Rs. 104.2 crores. This year (2011-2012) it is expected to be at least 50% higher than the last figure, according to reliable sources.

Along with this growth, it has emerged as great source for agencies in Mumbai to launder black money. In 2003-07 the State Lottery Department recorded that 576 prizes were won outside the State. This amounted to Rs. 27 crores. From 2008-2010 the outflow was over Rs. 130 crores.

According to official records, not one of the 1.5 crores of tickets that are printed each time, are sold outside the State. It has no agent outside the State. As many as 35,000 agents sell it within the State. And yet, between 2005 and 2007 as much as Rs. 30 crores went out to winners in other States mainly in Mumbai.

In the last three years as much as Rs. 1.8 crores went to 92 prize winners all with addresses in the heart of Mumbai in Thambakantta area, bearing the postal pin code 400 004.

Each lottery series has 111 prizes, including the bumper prizes which carry Rs. One crore or Rs. two crores on special occasions. On the days when the lucky winners are drawn, the prize winning ticket numbers are sent to the main agents in Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode.

In the last three years, about Rs. 75 crores had been claimed by winners in Mumbai. Most of them claimed that they bought the tickets while on a visit to Kerala for a pilgrimage or for a visit.

The Government has instituted an inquiry into the manner in which the winners from Mumbai are all confined to the C P Tank area. Even if addresses provided by the winners are all in different streets of the area, the same signature appears on papers provided by the winners, even where names differ.

Form an Umbrella Malayalee Organisation

-N K Premachandran

N K Premachandran, former Minister of Water Resources, ground water development water supply and sanitation from 2006 to May 2011, was in Mumbai recently.
Hailing from Navaikulam in Thiruvananthapuram District, he passed LLB with first rank and has served as Navaikulam Grama Panchayat Member, Thiruvananthapuram District Council Member, Lok Sabha Member from Kollam Parliamentary constituency (twice), Member Rajya Sabha, was elected to the Assembly in 2006 and became Minister for Water Resources. During his tenure as Minister, he took up the Mullaperiyar Dam Issue. He has innovated a number of steps in drinking water including the mega JBIC Drinking water project in five districts of Kerala. He began the Consultancy Wing of Kerala Water Authority called Wascon and mooted the bottled water plant and pipe factory. A gifted writer, he has contributed articles to several journals and has authored a book 'Oh Iraq', just before the Iraq war began . He and his wife, Dr Geetha have a son Karthik, studying Engineering.
In an interview with KIM, he spoke on several issues of the day.



My message to the Malayalees and Malayalee Organisations of Mumbai is to have a single unified platform so that they can do a lot of good work and welfare activities for Kerala, not just investments, but also charitable deeds for the poorer sections in that state.

Similarly, The Malayalee Samajams must take the initiative to teach the younger generation of Mumbai Malayalees about their land of origin and its language. This can be achieved only through cultural activities. The youth must be introduced to our classical dances like Mohinattam, kathakali, chenda, Bharatanatyam etc. If the youth become interested in the culture they will be eager to know more about the land they belong to and more about their folks back home. Even in the Gulf countries, Europe and America Malayalees are learning their mother tongue and the traditional dance forms. The Fokana festival, umbrella organization of Malayalees of America, is an instance of these third generation youth learning about Kerala. It even awards prize money, called 'Dollar Award' to literary excellence in Malayalam, both in America and in India. Joining the social and welfare activities of the Samajams is the natural next step for the youth who take up its cultural activities.

Fifty years back, our fathers came to Mumbai to set up organisations so that we can be in touch with our roots. It is now our duty to tell our youngsters about their land of origin.

Mullaperiyar Dam Issue

The only pragmatic solution is to have a new dam as agreed in 1979. The structural stability and safety of the dam are in question, strengthening measures have been carried out,still there is seepage and leaks in the dam walls. Several tremors have rocked the vicinity of the dam. The Indian Institute of Science, IIT Rourkee, Ecological and environmental studies have pointed out the need of building a new dam. In



Vijay Pillai, Premkumar, Harikumar Menon, S R Pillai, Vijay Kumar and A N Shaji with former minister N K Premachandran

case of continuous rainfall and earthquakes there is the danger of dam collapsing. This will wipe huge areas of land. In February 2006 the Supreme Court held that the dam was safe. When our Government came to power in May 2006, we took up this issue.

After 5 years now, the Supreme Court has asked for an inquiry into the safety of the dam, the validity of the Periyar lease, and height of water level in the dam.

We conducted several studies that highlighted the dangers of the old dam. After India became independant all covenants and agreements signed by the princes with the British became null and void including the Periyar Lease agreement. With the reorganisation of the states in 1956, earlier agreements had to be ratified within one year. Our statement is that when the original lease has become meaningless with India's independence, what is the value of the subsequent ratified agreements?

We have one of the best lawyers and his team representing us at the Supreme Court.

Our contention is that the Central Government has to play an independent role and take an impartial stand and find out whose cause is genuine. Tamil Nadu alleges that we are raising a baseless hue and cry. The State Government must make a serious attempt to discredit statements by Tamil Nadu before the situation goes out of control. As it is, Tamil Nadu is now insisting that Peermedu, Devikulam and parts of Idukki district should go to them. Let no one politicize the issue. My concern is that Kerala's case is not sidelined for political gains.

It is a question of safety of people. How long will this old dam stand? If Tamil Nadu wants water they must agree to build a new dam. A new agreement has to be made when the new dam is built. Sanction from Central Government Departments, Supreme Court permission etc are needed for constructing a new dam. An IIT report states that if there is continuous rainfall for two days, the dam will overflow and collapse and large areas of land will be wiped away. Let not such a situation ever happen.

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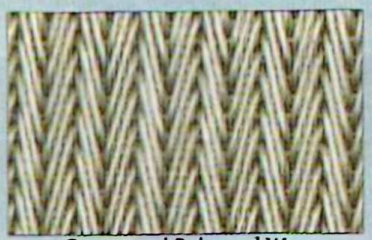


KIM Feature Editor Lakshmi Venkatachalam in conversation with the Ex Minister

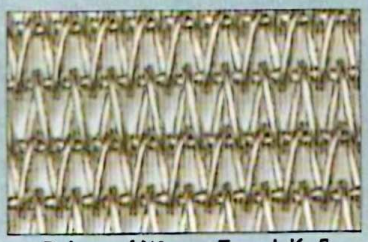
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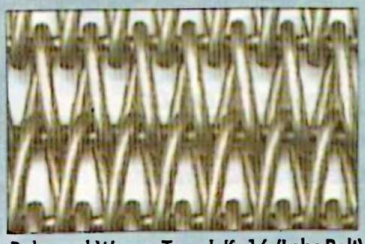
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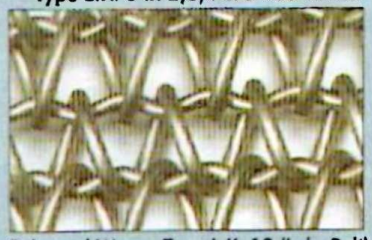
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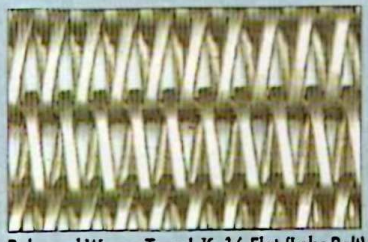
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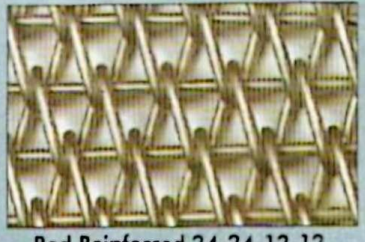
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Mahakavi Pandalam Kerala Varma

Poet who published a periodical exclusively in verses



-Satyanath

Mahakavi Ulloor Parameswara Iyer called him, "Pandalam-Poet who plays a ballgame with words". It was no exaggeration. Pandalam, as he was popularly known, had such mastery over the language, that the words came to him gushing, without any effort in a most appropriate form. Great poets of his time like Kodungalloor Kunhikuttan Thampuran, Venmani Mahan Namboothiripad, Ulloor, Asan, Vallathol and others also displayed such a trait that the present poets could only be jealous of.

Kerala Varma was born at Pandalam Palace on 1054 Makaram 10 ME (1879 AD). While some historians name Tanwangi Thampuratti as his mother, some others name her as Amba Thampuratti. According to family records, she was Amba Thampuratti. His father was Thrikothamangalath Peruncheli Vishnu Namboothiri, of Puthuppalli, Kottayam. Though he had two elder brothers and one elder sister, they did not live long. He had three cousins; two sons of his mother's eldest sister Ambalika and one son of the other elder sister Lakshmi Thampuratti, They are Kerala Varma, Veera Kerala Varma and Rama Varma. Since his birth, he attracted love and affection from everyone by his sheer personality. He was cute, bright and upright and had a good disposition.

His mother had a tremendous influence on him. She was a Sanskrit scholar and taught him all she knew.

His father was interested in *tantric* rituals.

Kerala Varma was initiated into the world of letters when he turned three. His initial education was under Pandalam Achuta Varier. The most important subject was Sanskrit and its literature, grammar, logic and philosophy. Mathematics, *parelperu, kaladeepam* etc were also taught. Later he learned *Siddharoopam,Amarakosam* and *Sreeramodantam* from Varier. On his teacher's death his elder brother Chathayam Tirunaal Rama Varma taught him. His cousin Veera Kerala Varma taught him grammar. Soon he exhibited the traits of a poet. Often he composed quartets and surprised his friends and relatives.

By the time he was 21, he learned all that was to be learned. The frequent performances of *Chakyarkoothu, Cholliyattam, Paathakam,* and music concerts at his palace helped him to understand the Hindu mythologies. Pandalam Palace had its own library and he devoured all that was available there.



Kerala Varma Valiya Koyi Thampuran

There are hardly any records about his personal life. The only article that throws some light was written by his wife Otuvil Kunjukutty Amma in Malayala Manorama in 1932, titled "Under Romantic Moonlight, a look back to widowhood Some reminiscences".

Kunjukutty Amma, known also as Ammukutty Amma, was the younger sister of well known poet Otuvil Kunjukrishna Menon. The close friendship between Kerala Varma and Kunjukrishna Menon led to the marriage.

In 1906, a peon from the office of Magistrate Kunjukrishna Menon brought a letter and she overheard her mother reading it. "Thampuran, husband (*Bharthavu*) of Lakshmi of *Kavanakaumudi* has come here and he wishes to have an alliance with Ammu. Therefore you should come here along with her immediately." She was aghast with the arrogance of Kerala Varma contemplating an alliance with her while married to another woman Lakshmi. The mother smiled and explained that Lakshmi was not a woman but a poem being published in the periodical *Kavanakaumudi* as well as its heroine. The word *Bharthavu* implied *Karthavu*, the creator.

Soon they left for Thrissur but Ammu being extremely shy, could not speak or go in front of him. Desperately, Kunjukrishna Menon sent her to a temple and there Kerala Varma saw her. After four months they were married. Thampuran was only 26 then and Kunjukutty Amma 17. Varma was staying with Kundoor Narayana Menon who was Tahsildar of Wadak-kancherry. Even after a



K C Kesava Pillai

week, the new couple could not exchange any words and Varma had to leave on hearing that his elder brother was sick. He sent a note to her and the reply was prompt: "I too am coming. But mother should not know that I said so."

Soon they were moving from place to place; Wadakkancherry, Thrissur, Panthalam and so on. While they were at Panthalam, Ulloor was transferred there as Tahsildar and became inseparable from Varma. Their residences were close to each other and were always crowded with friends, poets, students and relations. Yet Varma found time to teach students, discuss poetry and write poems for his as well as others' magazines.

During this period, Varma was engaged in writing poetry, reading, etc, bathed around eleven, ate lunch, had evening tea at 2'o clock and slept very late. There was no specific time for writing.

He had people to take down his poetry as he recited them. Often Ammu was also given the task. However, he insisted on her presence even if some one else was writing down. Often she complained as he did not speak for long intervals but he pacified her saying that it was difficult to recite poems and talk to her simultaneously. Nevertheless he enjoyed her company.

Kerala Varma and Ammu Amma had five children during their 14 years of married life; three girls and two boys.

Though a salaried job was not necessary for Kerala Varma for a comfortable life, he accepted the job of a Malayalam teacher in SNV High School, Thiruvananthapuram. The reason was that Ulloor was then working as Assistant Government Secretary and Varma enjoyed his company. Further, Travancore government also recognised him as a great poet and granted an honorarium of Rs.10 per month.

Kerala Varma bought a house at Kaithamukku and shifted there with his family. His brother in law Otuvil Sankaran Kutty Menon also stayed with them and Ulloor was a neighbour.

His end was unexpected and accidental. Before he celebrated his fortieth birthday, on Edavam 28, 1094 ME (1919 AD), he succumbed to Bombay fever. The entire Kerala was shocked. Many poets wrote poems on his death.

Ulloor wrote:

തേനായിടഞ്ഞ മൊഴി തൂകി മനീഷികൾക്കു
ഭൂനാകമാക്കിയൊരു പുഷ്കല പുണ്യശാലി
നാനാഗുണങ്ങളുടെ നർത്തനവേദി ഹാ! ഹാ!
ഞാനാരൊടെന്തു പറയുന്നു, ചതിച്ചു ദൈവം!

After his death, his wife had to shoulder the burden of the family. She left for Wadakkancherry and never returned to Pandalam.

Kerala Varma was younger to Ulloor by two years but Ulloor outlived him by thirty years and attained an enviable position. Had Kerala Varma too lived longer, he would have undoubtedly matched his peer.

Today there is only a library and reading room named after him, M C Road at Pandalam to perpetuate his memory. It celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 1988.

Kavanakaumudi

The greatest contribution of Kerala Varma to Malayalam literature was the publication of *Kavanakaumudi*, a periodical, a poetic presentation in its entirety. It was started as a fortnightly. Kerala Varma was its owner and editor while Kurur P K Narayanan Namboothiri was its publisher. An advertisement to this effect was inserted in other dailies, in verse form and it attracted responses from many people.

എന്നുംതീയതി മാസത്തി-
ലൊന്നിലും പതിനഞ്ചിലും
മന്നിൽ പ്രസിദ്ധി പെയ്തീടും
മാന്യാ, കവനകൌമുദി.

When many felt that such a periodical would not have a long life, some others encouraged it. Ulloor wrote:

പദ്യമയപത്രമാകില
വദ്യമല്ലാതെ തീരുവാൻ വിഷമം,
ഉദ്യമമിതു നന്നല്ലെ-
ന്നദ്യമനക്കാമ്പിലങ്ങു തോന്നുന്നു.

This was a considered attempt from Varma. There were a few periodicals such as *Bhashaposhini, Kavanodayam, Rasikaranjini, Lakshmibayi, Kerala Chintamani* etc, which had a couple of pages devoted to poetry.

Kavanakaumudi had, besides normal poetry, editorial, letters from readers, news, announcements about books received for review, book reviews, *Samasya*, advertisements and announcements, translations etc in verses only. Even the contents of the magazine published in the first page, was in verse. Since only a few persons could write poems incessantly, Kerala Varma himself had to devote all his time for it. He wrote in his own name as well as under pseudonyms. Through *Kavanakaumudi* he published his *Mahakavyams, Khandakavyams*, sonnets, quartets, poems written in collaboration with others, poems for kids etc.

While editing *Kavanakaumudi* he was judicious, courageous and forthright. We should compliment him for he worked more than one hundred years ago when the King and government were supreme and no one could challenge the person or institution. Yet, he was forthright in criticizing the *government* for its wrong doing. How he criticized the wastage of money on a reception given to a British official.

ധാരയുടെ വരവെത്ര കേമമാക്കി-
പ്പുരമതിലെത്ര പണം തൃണീകരിച്ചു!
പുരമതിലുകളൊക്കെ വെള്ളയിട്ടു
സ്ഥിരമതുകൊണ്ടു മഹത്ത്വമാർന്നിടുന്നോ?

How to run the administration, he points out to the Diwan, the highest government official:

നാനാജാതിമതസ്ഥരുള്ളൊരു മഹാ-
നാടാണിതീടാർന്നിതിൽ
ജ്ഞാനാധിക്യമിയന്നു സമ്മതികളോ-
ടാലോചനം ചെയ്യണം
താനാദ്യം ജനസമ്മതത്തിനു സദാ
യത്നിച്ചു വർത്തിക്കിലേ
സ്ഥാനാധീശത കൊണ്ടുവേണ്ടൊരു ഗുണം
മർത്ത്യയ്ക്കു സിദ്ധിച്ചിടൂ!

What should be the attributes of a king?

ജനങ്ങളെ ഞെരിച്ചുതൻനിണമെടുത്തു ഭക്ഷിക്കുവാൻ
മനസ്സുടയ രാക്ഷസപ്രകൃതിയില്ല തെല്ലെങ്കിലും
ജനങ്ങളുടെ തൃപ്തിതാനവനവന്റെയും തൃപ്തിയെ-
ന്നനന്യ മനസാ നിനച്ചരുളുമാചാര്യനാണീ നൃപൻ.

An excerpt from an editorial urging the government to provide education to girls to improve their lot in society:

ഒരു രാജ്യമഖണ്ഡവൃത്തിമത്തായ്
വരുവാനുള്ളൊരു മുഖ്യമാം നിദാനം
കരുതീടുകിലംഗനാജനത്തിൻ
ഗുരുവിദ്യാവ്യവസായമൊന്നുതന്നെ!

An advertisement inviting applications for the post of a teacher. Applicant should have the following qualifications:

ശാന്തശീല, മറിവേതിലും, മാര്യ-
സ്വാന്ത തൃപ്തികരധീരസികത്വം
ചന്തമോടിവ കലർന്നൊരു മാന്യൻ
സന്തതം ഗുരുപദത്തിനുയോഗ്യൻ.

A few decades ago it was thought that unless one was involved in court cases, he had no social standing. Kerala Varma berated them for squandering precious assets given by ancestors on frivolous cases.

വ്യവഹാര പിശാചു വന്നു ബാധി-
പ്പവനയ്യോ നില വിട്ടുകെട്ടുപോകും
ഭവനാത്മജ ദാരമൈത്രിയെല്ലാം
ശിവനേ, ദൂരെ വെടിഞ്ഞു മൂനനാകും.

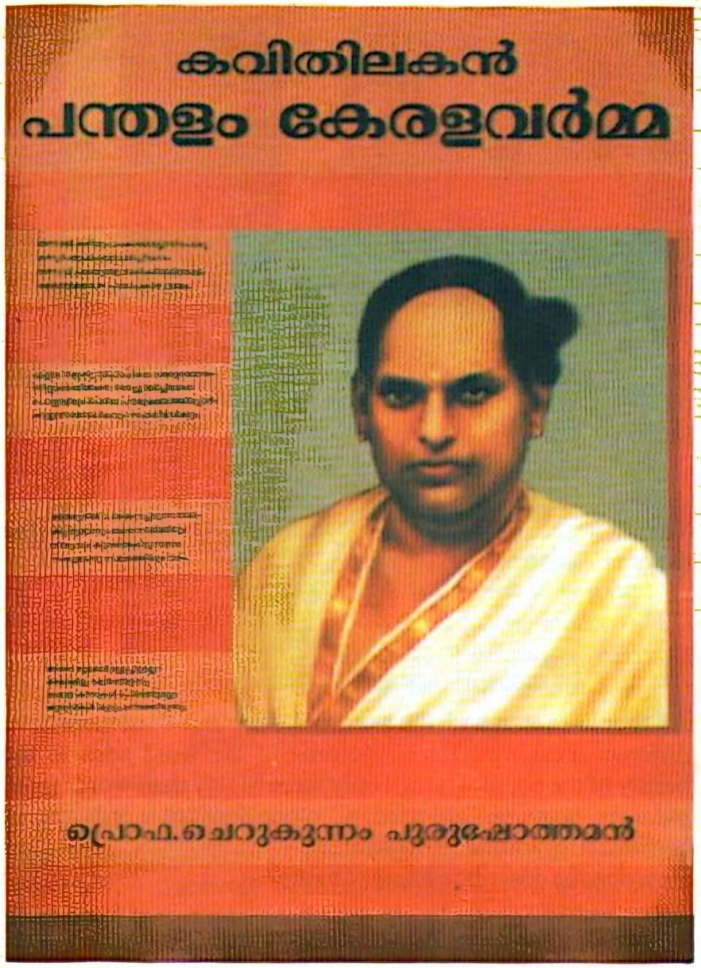
Besides the above, *Kavanakaumudi* contained many short poems, humour, puzzles and samasya. In Samasya, either editor or one reader provides the last line of a quartet and readers are invited to provide the first three lines. This gave a lot of encouragement to young poets. Vallathol, Ulloor, Kuttipurathu Kesavan Nair, Pattom N Kochu Krishna Pillai, Kunnathu Janardana Menon etc were among them.
All journalists appointed were budding poets and they reported on health, astrology, philosophy, morality, science, industry, literature, agriculture, education etc. An astrological forecast:

ദാനവും ധൈര്യമൗചിത്യ-
ജ്ഞാനവും പ്രിയവാക്യവും
നൂനം പഠിച്ചാൽ വന്നീടാ
താനേ നാലും വരേണ്ടതാം.

Though Pandalam Kerala Varma raised *Kavanakaumudi* to great heights, after his death, it folded up. However, Malayalees can never repay what he had given to them. It is to be remembered, many imitations of this magazine had appeared later.

Mahakavyams

Mahakavyam is a well defined form of poetry in Sanskrit. Unlike today, only poets who wrote poetry in that form were entitled to be called *Mahakavi* (great poet). The first *Mahakavyam* ever written was Ashwaghosha's *'Buddhacharitam.'* It was followed by *'Raghuvamsam'*, *'Kumarasambhavam'* (both by Kalidasa), *'Kiratarjuneeyam'* by Bharavi, *'Shishupalavadham'* by 'Magha' and *Naishadheeya charitam'* by Harsha.
A *Mahakavyam* should have a minimum of eight and a maximum of thirty sections. Each section is expected to have a different meter and the first section should be positive, submissive before god or describe an objective. The story is to be based on an epic or *purana,* or a historical theme. The hero is



to be a godly person, *kshatriya* or a person of upper class of society. Aspects like city, sea, mountain, seasons, moon rise, sunrise, aquatic games, garden, love (*vipralamba shrungara*), wedding, birth of a son, hero's prosperity etc should be described in great detail. Figures of speech and melodrama should be generously employed. These parameters are to test the caliber of the poet. This insistence finally led to the death of *Mahakavyam* in Sanskrit.
Mahakavyam appeared in Malayalam after several centuries. The first *Mahakavyam* in our language was *'Ramachandra Vilasam'*, based on Ramayana, by Azhakathu Padmanabha Kurup (1869-1932). It was followed by *'Pandavodayam'* and *Malayamkollam'* of Kodungalloor Kochunni Thampuran, *'Umakeralam'* of Ulloor, *'Chitrayogam'* of Vallathol, *'Sri Yeshu Vijayam'* of Kattakkayam Cheriyan Mappila, *'Raghava-bhyudayam'* of Vadakkumkoor Rajaraja Varma etc. Pandalam Kerala Varma's *'Rugmangatacharitam'* and *'Vijayodayam'* belonged to this genre.
Since the theme of a *Mahakavyam* is well known, for many critics, the origin of *Rugmangatacharitam'* was a puzzle. It is indeed adapted from *'Bruhannaradeeyam'. Rugmangata-charitam* is considered to be a classic example of *Mahakavyam.* Besides the prescribed rules, Pandalam has followed some modern concepts of neoclassism also. It contains 19 sections and one section is devoted to *yamakam*, a form in which the same sound recurs several times, providing palliative to the ear. *Shlesham* (pun), *padmabandham, rathabandham, chakrabandham, akanthyam, atalujam, goodhachaturtham, dwyakshram* etc are also used unlike in other *Mahakavyams*. No doubt, he played with words to earn the unique title of 'Poet of many words'.



Vallathol



Ulloor

The first section of '*Rugmangatacharitam*' starts with the description of city of Ayodhya.

അനന്ത സത്കീർത്തി പുലർത്തി നിത്യ-
മനന്തമേൽമേധ്യയയോദ്ധ്യമുന്നം
അനന്തശായീ പ്രിയരാജധാനി-
യനന്തരായം വിലസീ വിശാലം.

All four lines start with the word '*anantam*' but all of them have different meanings. Here repetition of the word adds to the beauty of the poem. Though only three Malayalam words (*mel, pularthy, munnam*) are used, all other Sanskrit words except '*medhya*' are familiar to Malayalees.

How does he describe a scene of battle?

കുലവില്ലുവലിച്ചുടൻ വിവസ്വൽ
കുലപാമഥാധി സുധാംശു സായകത്താൽ
കുലവാഴകൾപോലെ വൈരിഭൂഭൃത്-
ക്കുലമൊട്ടുക്കു മുറിച്ചു തള്ളിവീഴ്ത്തി.

Look how he portrays love in separation (*vipralamba shrungara*).

മാലതീകുസുമ തല്പജങ്ങളാൽ
മാല തീർത്തു വിരഹത്തിലാണവേൾ
മാലതീവ കളവാനണിഞ്ഞുന-
ന്മാല തീവ്രരുജ പേർത്തുപേർത്തുമേ.

Here the first word of all lines have, as pointed out earlier, connote different meanings.

No wonder later poets argued about the evil of rhyming in poetry and liberation from meters. It would be tough for them to stick to the stringent rules.

The ardent critic of poetry, Ulloor states that for a classic example of how the sounds add to the beauty of poetry, one has only one source, *Rugmangatacharitam'*. With one more example, let us move to the other works.

മന്ദരാഗത കൈവിട്ടു
മന്ദരാഗതടം നൃപൻ
കന്ദരാഗത ധാതുശ്രീ
കന്ദരാഗമണഞ്ഞുതേ.

Vijayodayam, his second *Mahakavyam*, is craft-wise better though Pandalam avoided certain aspects of that format. *Yamaka sargam* and *chitrabandham* were avoided. It has the minimum 8 sections. It is simpler and more compact. The theme deals with the penance Arjuna undergoes to gain *Pashupata*. While watching rain, he allows his imagination run riot.

വിയത്തിൽ വർഷാനടിയാടിടും വിധൗ
വിയർത്ത നീർത്തുള്ളി പരം പതിക്കയോ?
നയത്തിലൈരാവതമഭ്രഗംഗതൻ
കയത്തിൽ നീന്തിസ്സുലിലം പൊഴിക്കയോ?
തടിസ്സുരജ്ഞിഹവെളിക്കു നീട്ടിയൊ-
ന്നടിച്ചു വീക്കിസ്തനിതോഗ്രനിസ്വനം
തടിച്ച കാദംബരിയാം വിശാചിഭൂ-
മുടിച്ചിടാനായ് ശരമാരി പെയ്കയോ?

See the beauty of the following quartet.

കൊഴുത്ത രുദ്രാക്ഷ ഗണങ്ങളന്നുതൻ
കഴുത്തിലപ്പാർത്ഥനുമൗക്തികങ്ങളായ്
മുഴുത്ത ഭക്തിക്കയറാൽ ഭവാംഘ്രിയാം
തൊഴുത്തിലമ്മാനസഗോവുബന്ധനായ്.

One critic has called Pandalam 'male incarnation of Saraswati'

Joint ventures in poetry

Pandalam Kerala Varma had an intimate friendship with Ulloor and this relationship resulted in many joint ventures between them. Later this practice spread to other poets too.

Ulloor and Pandalam first agreed to do one *Mahakavyam* each; Ulloor to do '*Umakeralam*' and Pandalam '*Rugmangatacharitam*.' When Pandalam completed his work within a year, Ulloor because of his heavy official duties, took six years. Therefore Pandalam waited till Ulloor completed his work and both the books were published around the same time.

During his time, writing books of various forms jointly with other authors was in vogue. Completion of samasya, writing pre-determined portions of a book along with other poets, translating the same quartet by many, translating a book jointly with others etc were popular practices.Pandalam was part of about 15 such projects.

He did it with Ulloor for more than 6 books. *Devaki, Padmini, Satyavathi, Kalavathi, Thankamma* and *Ambarisha Charitam* are some of them. For *Kalavathi*, Kuttipurathu Kesavan Nair also joined them. *Ambarishacharitam* consists of 100 quartets and it was equally shared by Pandalam and Ulloor. It was completed in two hours, an amazing act! *Devayanee Parinayam* was done with three others; Ulloor, Otuvil Kunjukrishna Menon and Kundoor Narayana Menon. Each of them wrote one part. For *Shakuntala Kavyam*, he collaborated with Kuttipurathu Kesavan Nair. *Vishakan* was also done by them. *Thankamma* was written in pure Malayalam, with Ulloor. They also shared *Vishnumaya*. A work titled *Koman* was written with Nandyelathu Padmanabha Menon, Nalappattu Narayana Menon and Ulloor. The entire poem was completed in two hours.

The only Sanskrit play Pandalam translated into Malayalam was *Veni Samharam*, under pressure from Ulloor. He did partial translation of three other plays. Among them, *Mudra rakshasam* has an important part.

Short poems

Pandalam Kerala Varma wrote many *Khandakavyams* and sonnets. While *Mahakavyams* cover a vast canvas with stories from epics and historicals, *Khandakavyams* deal with one particular episode from the epics or a particular event. He wrote several of them. Among them are *Bheema Prabhavam, Soubhadra Niryanam, Ghatolkachan, Barbbarikan, Lakshmana Pravasam, Urmila, Subhadra, Martya Vaibhavam,*

Oru Sayujyam, Priyanunayanam, Oru Puravrutham, Bhageerathi, Oru Katha, Lakshmi, Nanikutty, Oru Mukthi, Kruthajnatha, Ente Sabarimala Yathra, Marthandadevodayam, Oru Vyamoham and *Chelapparambu* are *some.*

Light poems

Pandalam Kerala Varma has written poems about poems. Changampuzha might have been indirectly influenced by Pandalam while he wrote *Kavyanartaki*. Pandalam has set certain standard for his poems.

വായിൽത്തോന്നുന്നതെല്ലാം സപദികവിതയായ്
തീർത്തു കുത്തിക്കുറിച്ചും
വായിക്കാനല്ല, നോക്കുന്നതിനുമെവനുമേ
മാനസാനാസ്ഥ പേർത്തും
ഭൂയിഷ്ഠം കൈരളിക്കും കദനമനുഭവി-
പ്പിക്കുമപ്പാമരന്മാർ-
ക്കായിട്ടും പുത്തനായ് നാമിവിടെയൊരു പട-
ഹങ്ങർപ്പെട്ടുത്തേണ്ടതത്രെ.
(ഭാഷാസാഹിതിപരിഷ്കരണം)

Shlokathinte manorajyam (Aspiration of quartet), *Sukavita, Vaneepanchakam, Kavitamrutam, Kavyamrutam, Kavyam, Sahitya samrajyam* etc belong to this genre.

Whenever someone dear to him died, Pandalam used to write poems condoling the death. When the Samoothiri, Kodungalloor Kunjukuttan Thampuran, Natuvatthacchan Namboothiri, A R Rajaraja Varma and many others died, he wrote touching poems. When Kerala Varma Valiya Koyithampuran died, he wrote:

പാരം കയ്യുവിറച്ചിടുന്നു, തനുവിൽ
സ്വേദം പൊടിക്കുന്നു ഹൃ-
ത്താരയ്യോ തകരുന്നു കണ്ണുകൾ നിറ-
ഞ്ഞീടുന്നു ബാഷ്പങ്ങളാൽ,
ആരംഭത്തെ മറന്നു, നിശ്ചലതയിൽ
ച്ചേരുന്നു ഞാനീ വൃഥാ-
ഭാരത്താൽ തളരുമ്പോ ഴെന്തു ചരമ-
ശ്ലോകത്തിനാളാകുമോ?

Poems for children

Like Kerala Varma Valiya *Koyi* Thampuran, Ulloor, K C Kesava Pilla, Kumaranasan, G Sankara Kurup, Kerala Varma also wrote some poems for children. All his poems in this genre are simple to sing and to remember and also moralistic in nature. Some extracts:

പുല്ലു മെടഞ്ഞാൽ പായുണ്ടാകും
കല്ലു പണിഞ്ഞാൽ കെട്ടിടമുണ്ടാം
പഞ്ഞികൾ നൂറ്റാൽ നൂലുണ്ടാകും
നൂലുകൾ നെയ്താൽ മുണ്ടായീടും.

വേറെവേറെയിരുന്നാലുള്ളതി-
ലേറെക്കൂടും ഗുണമൊന്നിച്ചാൽ.

His *'Ambili Ammavan'* is a popular poem. In the fifties, there was hardly any school in Kerala that did not have a dance programme based on this song after it was incorporated in a Malayalam movie *'Achchan'* (1952) but it was credited to popular lyricist Abhayadev.

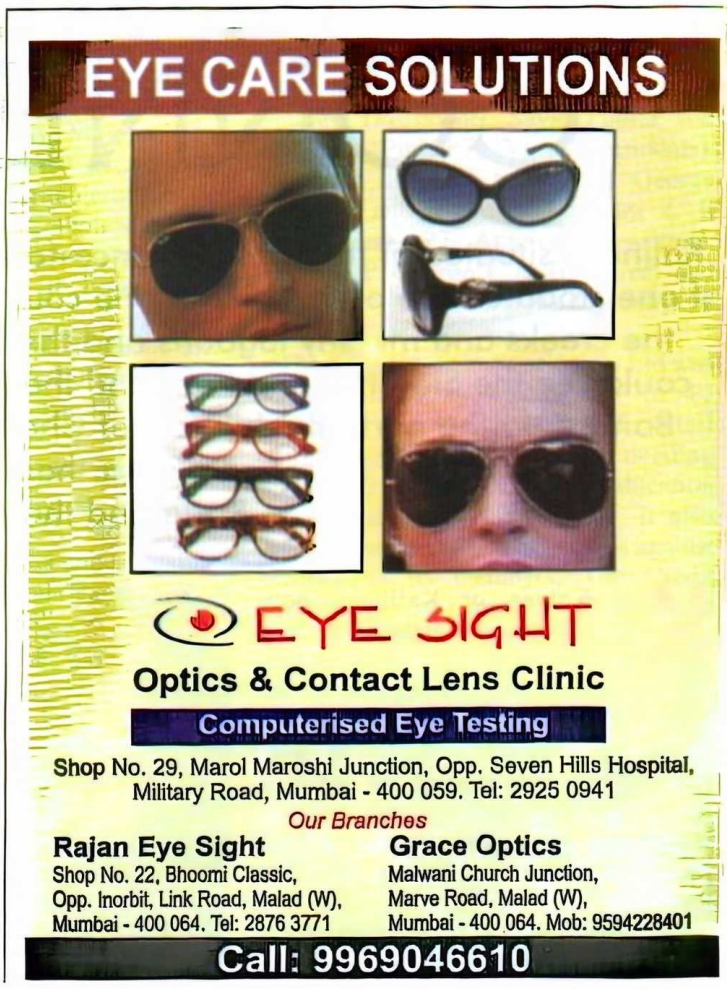
One of his other poems *'Daivame Kai Thozham'* is being sung even today in many schools in Kerala, as morning prayer. He wrote more than 100 poems for children but did not receive the recognition he deserved.



Oduvil Kunjikrishna Menon

Though Pandalam Kerala Varma wrote many poems, they were never published entirely. Scholars who studied his works are of the opinion that if compiled they would run more than 5,000 pages.

(Next issue: A R Rajaraja Varma)





THE KERALA CONNECTION

Kalina is situated at the foot of a once-forested hillock called the Rye. A century ago, if one stood on top of this hillock one could get a panoramic view of the Arabian sea, the creeks and marshy lagoons and the coconut groves of Juhu; to the south one could see the Sion Hill and Fort, and the Mithi River flowing into the Arabian sea at Bandra, to the north the hillocks of Chakala and Bamanwada, the small hills and forests of Marol and Sahar hamlet,and to the east the village of Kurla and the Western Ghats.

- KIM News Bureau

Kole-Kalyan or Kalliana, now called Kalina, lay at the foothills of the Rye on the eastern side while Vankola lay on the western side of the hillock. Vankola and Kole Kalyan means home of jackals and foxes and wolves.They once roamed the forested Rye. The East Indians, the original inhabitants of the place, gathered their fire woods, berries and fruits from the Rye Hill.

The British saw the importance of this hillock and promptly set up their military base there with training facilities for soldiers and rest houses for officers and medical camps. Today the Military Base at Kalina is a major landmark and stands proudly without any slums or housing colonies in the vicinity. A Military Tank is exhibited at the entrance, a tribute to our defence forces and a reminder of their dedicated service to our nation.



CD Oomachen Chowk

Another landmark of Kalina is the Mumbai University the sprawling campus and a pride to its residents.

Kalina was once an Anglo Indian

settlement, dotted with cottages of picturesque charm, peaceful and rural. Today there are several buildings, shanties, slums and the roads have become narrow as in other suburbs of Mumbai.

In the early 50's the Government acquired the lands to the north of Kalliana village, which were vegetable fields. Today in these lands stands the sprawling complex of the Air-India and Indian Airlines employees colony.

Kalliana village was divided into sections like, Bhatt Pakady, Matharpakady, Corderio Wadi, Desachi Pakadi and Ranwar Pakadi, and the other village of Kolavree across the south east. The oldest parish Church of Our Lady of Egypt sits besides the large fresh water lake, which was used by the villagers for washing clothes. Sweet drinking water was obtained from numerous wells in the villages. The main occupation of the people was agriculture.



Kalina Masjid where Malayalee Muslims pray

Today, Kalina is a cosmopolitan area, stretching from the Military Camp in the east up to the suburb of Kurla. It has several good schools and colleges. Apart from the University Campus it also has the Government College of Pharmacy.

Sunder Nagar is a large residential area, consisting of many row houses. Ambedkar Nagar and Kunchi Kurve Nagar are large slum settlements in the area. Kalina also has two major mosques. Many Kerala Muslims go for worship to these mosques. The old Airport Road is an arterial road passing through Kalina.

There is a strong Malayalee Christian presence in Kalina. The early Malayalee Christian migrants settled in Kalina in large numbers. Like in other suburbs there are Kerala stores and Malayalee restaurants serving Kerala fare.



Air India Staff Colony entrance

The Kalina Market Road is a busy road now named after the Late MLA CD Oomachen, and a Junction with his bust, called CD Oomachen Chowk

Kerala Catholic Association

Kerala Catholic Association was formed in 1959 under the guidance of Rev Fr Urban(OFM Cap). and within a year 17 Units were formed in the City of Mumbai. Today this 52 year old Association has 41 units with more than 1.5 lakhs Kerala Catholics spread over the city, Thane and Navi Mumbai. The Kalina Unit is also very active with various social and charitable activities. The KCA includes the Catholics of Syro Malabar, Syro Malankara and Latin faith. But its aim is to bring in all Christians by organizing seminars, interfaith meets, cultural functions etc. The Association has its Central Office at Santhome Centre Kalina and temporary Office at St Antony's Road in Vakola. Its Welfare Centre, KCA Bhavan, is at Assissi Nagar in Chembur.

The main motto of KCA is to promote unity, solidarity and better understanding among the Mumbai Kerala Catholics and works for their social, cultural and spiritual progress along with charitable work. At times of natural calamities the KCA contributes to State and Central Government Relief Funds and provides charitable service to people of all castes and creeds. KCA played an important role in the inauguration of the Diocese of Kalyan and consecration of Rev Father Mar Paul Chittilapilly as its first Bishop in 1988.In 2009 the KCA celebrated its Golden Jubilee on a grand scale. The KCA celebrates Christmas and New Year, Onam and Patron's day every year. It has its youth wing, social service that includes Poor Man's Fund, Death Relief (Financial aid to the family in case of a person's death), employment bureau, marriage bureau, and medical and educational assistance.

The Executive Committee includes P J Mathew (President), Savio Puthur and Abraham Puthur (Vice- Presidents), Jollychan Jacob (Secretary,) George Mathew and Babu Kalarithara (Jt Secretaries), PT Antony (Treasurer), Thomas P George (Jt Treasurer) and executive members and co-opted members.

The KCA Co-operative Society Ltd was formed under the leadership of PJ Mathew for the benefit of small entrepreneurs and members needing immediate finance for higher education and marriage of their children. It also gives personal and business loans against security to its members. The Credit Society has now completed 12 years and has 565 members. Johnson Therattil is the Chairman, KP Antony, Vice Chairman, PO Thomas Secretary and PK Cherian is the Treasurer. The Directors of KCA are Daniel Fernandes, M R Varghese, Daniel Fernandes, Savio Puthur, N K Paul, C A Lazar, Mrs Bridget George, Mrs Lily Johnson, KL Jose, and Mrs Lincy George.



P J Mathew
President



Jollychan Jacob
Secretary



P T Antony
Treasurer



Bhaktha Samaj Temple Complex

Kalina Bhaktha Samaj

The Kalina Bhaktha Samaj, established in the '50s, is a social, spiritual and cultural organization for the residents of Kalina. There is a temple with shrines dedicated to Rama, Sita Lakshmana and Hanuman, Ganapathy, Rajarajeswari, Balalayam of Ayyappan and Nagaraja and Navagrahas. The Samaj has plans to construct and consecrate an Ayyappan temple within the complex for which they are collecting funds.

The Bhaktha Samaj Halls on the first, second and third floors are available for weddings and other functions. Pujas according to Kerala traditions are performed in the temple. Apart from Lalitha Sahasranaman and Narayaneeyam, the Samaj regularly conducts music concerts of artistes of Kalina sponsored by the Samaj itself or Kalina Music Triangle. The Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Nilayam Correspondence Office of the Samaj was inaugurated by R Mohan (Good Knight). Weekly music and dance classes are also held within the Samaj complex.

St Baselios Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church



Fr George Abraham

Nestled in Kalina village, this church has had humble beginnings as a parish in the late 70's. It started as a small prayer group in 1958 and steadily as the number of parishioners increased, various spiritual organizations were created under its umbrella. In 1978 it celebrated its first Holy Qurbana. In 1988, the church got its own independent building and the same was consecrated as a full fledged parish.

Today the church has close to 100 registered families (not taking into account the floating population) spread across Kalina, Vakola and the adjoining localities. Spiritual organizations namely Sunday School, Student movement, Youth movement and Marthamariyam Samajam has helped in forming a strong, well-knit unit. The church undertakes various welfare activities and addresses social causes in and around the area, not just for its members but for people from all walks of life, without discrimination. Guided by Vicar Fr George Abraham, Secretary Paul Eapen and Treasurer Varghese Baby, the parish has grown from strength to strength. The church also maintains a chapel and a community centre in the locality.

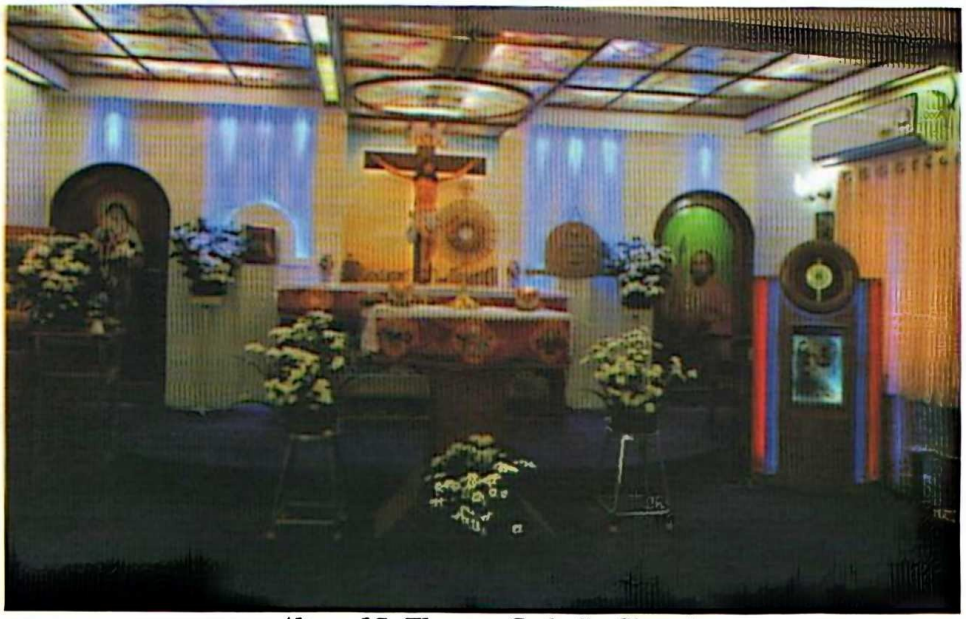
St Thomas Catholic Church



Fr George Vattemattom

The Syro Malabar Community came to Kalina as early as 1950's and they held their prayer meetings first at our Lady of Egypt Church and later had their own prayer Centre at Santhome Centre in Kalina. The Community was formed as a full-fledged parish and in '96 the foundation stone for the Church was laid by Rev Father Mar Paul Chittillapilly. The church was consecrated by Rev Fr Thomas Elavanal, Bishop of Kalyan diocese in 1998. The first vicar was Father George Vadekkethala. There are 200 families in this parish, and it is administered by the parish council of 32 elected members divided into different Units. All these Units have sports and cultural activities and competitions. This is one of the bigger parishes of Mumbai. The Units also have prayer meetings regularly and celebrate Onam, Diwali along with Christmas, Easter, and other religious days.

St Thomas and St Sebastian Feast days in the first Sunday of February every year, is celebrated like an *utsavam* with procession etc. This year it will celebrate



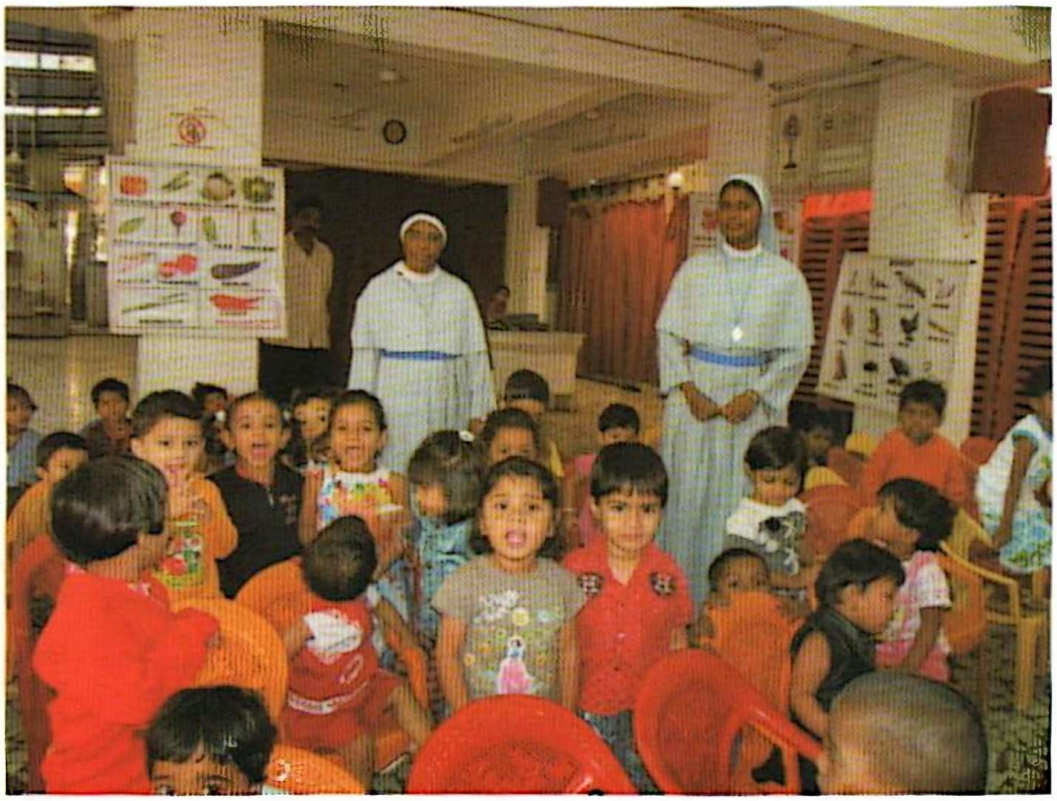
Altar of St Thomas Catholic Church

its Feast Day on January 26. The Church is a nodal Centre of Karunya Trust and helps in educational and health matters of the needy people. It also has a social security scheme to help in death / accident cases of those who do not have any relations or who are very poor. Matrusangham, pitruvedi, catechism classes, youth activities are all carried out by the parishioners if this Church. Classes are conducted in English and Malayalam.

At the St Thomas Catholic Church, a relic of St Faustyna from Poland is kept and every evening at 3 o'clock the faithful come and pray here.

Father George Vattemattam is the parish priest of this Church. Hailing from Pulpally in Wayanad District, Father George Vattemattam after his Std XII in Kottayam came to Mumbai and completed his seven year seminary studies at St Pius College, Goregaon. He did his graduation and postgraduation in sociology and is currently doing his Doctrate under Dr Wivek of Mumbai University on 'Excluded communities in Mumbai' with emphasis on the tribes like kohlis, mahars, etc living in Aarey Colony.

Next to the Church there is Assumption Convent run by SABS sisters (Sisters for Adorers of the Blessed Sacrament). The nuns here help in pastoral care of the Church and also run a nursery class.



Mother Merlyn and Sister Ranitt with the children of their nursery class

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Dr Abraham Mathai



Dr Abraham Mathai

Dr Abraham Mathai, till recently Vice-Chairman of the Minorities Commissison Maharashtra State and earlier Member, Minorities Commisson, has been born and brought up in Mumbai. Dr Mathai's father, P I Mathai hails from Thiruvalla. He came to Mumbai in the 50's and retired from Indian Railways. His mother, the late Annamma, worked in Central Government JCCIE department. Dr Abraham completed his education in Mumbai. He is the Director of a Travel Agency, runs an Overseas Recruitment Centre and is also the General Secretary of Federation of Christian Churches and Organisations of India and President of Indian Christian Voice. He is the President of Harmony Foundation that works for communal harmony, with the motto of one nation, one people and has among its members Tushar Gandhi, great-grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, film director Mahesh Bhatt, and former naval Chief Vishnu Bhaghavat. Harmony Foundations confers awards to people for outstanding social work for the community.

Dr Abraham is also the Chairman of *Prabhu Yesu Janmotsav* the largest Christmas celebration in Mumbai at Chowpatty beach. This Christmas celebration in which Christians of all faiths participate was started with 150 members by Tara Cherian, wife of former Maharashtra Governor Dr PV Cherian. In December 2011, over 25000 Christians gathered for the celebration. The organization also sends across social messages through hoardings and advertisements, during New year highlighting the dangers of drinking and driving.

Dr Abraham's wife Susan hails from Kozhencherry in Thiruvalla Pathanamthitta District. But like him, she was also born and brought up in Goregaon where her father T M Mathew and Saramma lived. They have a son Aaron doing his first year BMS at St Andrews College Bandra and a daughter Anna studying in Std X at Bombay Scottish School in Mahim.

K K Krishnan

K K Krishnan was born in 1931 near Thalassery in Kannur District. After completing his matriculation, he came to Mumbai in 1949 and started his career as a typist in a Government firm. Later he became a Junior Executive in Mahindra & Mahindra, Kandivli.



K K Krishnan

After seeing the pathetic conditions of the lower middle class he started his own company in 1973 that subsequently became K K Krishnan Construction Pvt Ltd, with the sole intention of constructing houses for the middle class. This company has constructed and given possession of flats to several lower and middle class purchasers in Kalina, Vakola etc.

After a successful career as a builder for the common people, Krishnan devotes much of his time for social service activities. Into his eighties, Krishnan wears khadi and is proud to call himself a Gandhian.

K K Krishnan has been working for objectives like grow more trees to check global warming and climate change. Recently he received a memento from the Governor of Maharashtra K Sankaranarayanan organised by the Santa Cruz Malayalee Samajam. His ambition is to build a charitable hospital and school for poor children. His Charitable Trust and Eye donation registration activities are being carried out under KK Krishnan Charitable Trust.

KK Krishnan lives in Kalina with his wife Sulochana and their three children, Mrs Sujata J Nair, Suresh Krishnan and Sudhir Krishnan who are all Directors of the Company.

Suresh Krishnan

Suresh Krishnan, son of KK Krishnan is one of the Directors and the CEO of KK Krishnan Construction Pvt Ltd. He studied in Mumbai and is now proprietor of Suresh Krishnan and Associates, Licensed surveyors, engineers, architects and consultants. He is also a PEATA Slum Committee member.



Suresh Krishnan

Suresh Krishnan is a trustee of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Vidya Mandir (SSRVM) at Dharavi and has built an elementary school in Innawadi, Dharavi, exclusively for slum children under the aegis of SSRVM. Along with free midday meals to about 380 school children and the regular school curriculum the children are taught music, dance and other extra curricular activities.

Suresh Krishnan's wife Sheeja is a graduate, originally from Kannur and they have three children, Divya, studying first year Junior College at Mithibai College, Tejasvi studying in Std VII at Immaculate Girls High School and Vinayak in Junior KG at Panbai International School.

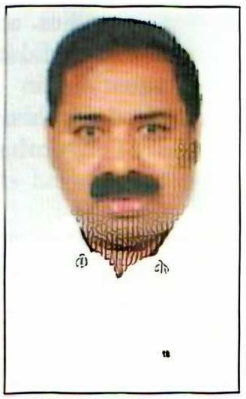
Alice and Johnson Therattil

Johnson G Therattil, a businessman, dedicated to social work and his wife, Alice Johnson Therattil, a Corporator of Kalina of Ward 84, make a dedicated couple working for social welfare.

Alice Therattil has brought about several improvements and developments in her ward. A major achievement has been cleaning and cementing clogged pipelines, putting up a pipe between the New Air India and Indian Airlines Colony and the Mithi river to prevent water logging in low lying areas and commissioning of an 18 inch water pipe to solve the water shortage problem in Kalina.



Alice Therattil



Johnson Therattil

The seven and a half acre pond in Kalina had become a hillock with rubbish and wastes being dumped in it. Alice cleaned the place and today parts of it have been converted into a garden, playground, football ground and a senior citizens' park. In 2010, she got the Green Mumbai Award at the hands of Medha Patkar.

She is also the General Secretary of the Mumbai Mahila Congress, District Observer Mumbai North Central and Mahila President, Kalina Taluka.

Alice is a life member and First Lady of the Kerala Catholic Association and is on the panel of KCA Credit Society scrutinizing and sanctioning loans to the weaker sections of society. She started her social service activities under the leadership of C D Oomachen (Ex MLA and former Chairman of Maharashtra State Pollution Control Board). She is also actively involved with the activities of the Lions Club, Kalina Unit. Alice studied at Thrissur and came to Mumbai after

marriage.

Johnson Therattil is Maharashtra State Convenor and Head Mumbai Region, Commerce and Industry Cell and Director of Nice Printing Inks and Coating Ltd. An AMIE from Kolkota, since 1974, he along with late Shri C D Oomachen, worked for the Congress Party. He has won the Shram Vir National Award from the President of India and Udyog Shree Award from Indian Institute of Economical Studies, New Delhi. Johnson is an active community leader, being member of the Lions Club, Bombay Industries Associaton, Indian Institute of Packaging, former President for several terms of the Kerala Catholic Association and currently Chairman of its Credit Society, General Secretary of the International Society For Harmony And Peace, Life Member of YMCA, Mumbai, Chairman of the Kerala Christian Council Bombay, and Chairman of Sunder Nagar Society, in Kalina. He was the immediate past President of the All India Printing Ink Manufacturers Association.

The couple's only son, Dr Justin Therattil is a PhD in Resin Ink Printing Technology and looks after his father's business. He is married to Sheeba who is an MBA.

P O Thomas

P O Thomas hails from Kaduppissery village,Thrissur. His father was the late Ouseph and mother the late Thressia. After his school education he joined Engineering Degree course in the Regional Engineering College Warangal (now renamed National Institute of Warangal). After his B.E he came to Mumbai and worked with various companies in the commercial and Marketing Department. Subsequently he obtained Management Degree in Marketing from Mumbai. Currently, Thomas is the Marketing Head of Benzy Food & Beverage Pvt.Ltd, sister concern of Akbar Travels Pvt Ltd.

Thomas is a member of Kerala Catholic Association of Bombay from 1968 and he has served as General Secretary, Vice president and is an active member of KCA Kalina Unit. He is serving presently as the secretary of KCA Credit Society Ltd, Kalina.

He is a member of the Lions Club of Bombay Kalina and has served as the Club President, Zone Chairman for Lions District, 323 A 3. Now he is a Trustee in the Kalina Lion's Club Charity Trust.

A life member of Santacruz Malayalee Samajam and Chairman of our Lady of Egypt CHS, he is also a Special Executive Officer.

Mrs Mercy Thomas, his wife, was born and brought up in Mumbai and worked with Oriental Insurance. They have two married daughters. The elder one Teresa is a housewife married to Joy working in Dubai as an engineer. The younger daughter Liz is an eye surgeon married to Ashley, also an eye surgeon who passed MCH from London with first rank and they have their own Mulammoottil Super Speciality Eye Hospital in Kozhenchery.

(We continue our focus on Kalina in our next Issue. Contributions about the suburb are welcome.)



P O Thomas



Mercy Thomas

Prof. K G Krishna Kurup

Educationaist, social activist



Prof. K G K Kurup

From quality higher education to social regeneration, there is hardly any field of activity that Prof. K G Krishna Kurup has not attempted with success in his 46-year-long association with Mumbai. "This city has given me everything I could want in life," he proudly declares.

For a man who came to see the city in 1965, Mumbai has benefitted much from all the activities of Prof Kurup involved himself in, first as Principal, Administrator, Trustee and Correspondent of the Patuck Polytechnic Trust, Patuck-Gala College of Commerce and Management and other Patuck institutions which he joined in 1967 as Assistant Engineering Superintendent and retired in 2002 with honours. In the course of his distinguished service he won the Samajshree Award in 1994 and Maharashtra State Award for the Best Principal in 1995 for vocational education.

Since retirement, Prof. Kurup has been functioning as the Administrator of the ICL Education Society, Vashi, which runs courses in BA, MBA and Systems Management.

More importantly, he has been active with the Nair Samskarika Sangh (Maharashtra) of which he is the President. He worked closely with the late CD Oommachen, the only Malayalee so far to get elected as an MLA in Maharashtra, besides the late Kamala Raman. Since Oommachen was also Chairman of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Kurup also began taking a keen interest in environmental and developmental issues concerning Kalina and Vakola in a big way.

The Nair Samskarika Sangh undertakes a number of social and economic activities for the betterment of the community. It recently organised the Mannam Jayanti and Nair Maha Sangamam, 2012 at Thane. He is also a member of the District Anti-Corruption Committee set up by the Government of Maharashtra. He is currently President of the Indo-Czech Friendship Council.

Married to Prasanna Kurup in 1976, Prof. Kurup has two sons. The elder, Deepak is Vice-President of the Deutsche Bank, in charge of its operations in South Asia. The younger son, Pradeep is a scientist with NASA in Washington DC and is currently doing his MS in Signal Processing Engineering.

Mrs. Prasanna Kurup herself was for long a teacher at the Dr. Ambedkar College at Wadala and retired as its Vice-Principal.

Kurup hails from Ambalapuzha, the hometown of the legendary Thakazhi Sivasankaran Pillai with whom he shared a close relationship. Among his schoolmates were Thakazhi's son, Dr. Balakrishna Pillai and the lyricist-film maker, Sreekumaran Thampi.



KOLLAM

Kollam district is well known for its temples, belonging to various religions and communities. There are a number of temples, ashrams and holy sites in the city, including Sree Subramanya Swami Kshethram Poojappura, in Keralapuram near Kundara. The Mata Amritanandamayi Math is situated at Parayakadavu in this district, about 20 km from Kollam. Sree Mahaganapathy temple at Kottarakara is about 25 km from Kollam city. Koonambaikulam temple is very popular. Its deity is Devi, named 'Koonambai-kulathu Amma'.

-Traveller

ıkhathala Murari
ee Krishna Swamy)
nple

Mukhathala Murari (Sree Krishna ny) Temple at Mukhathala is about n from the Kollam city.

only Duryodhana Temple is situated alanada.

ıvazhy Peruviruthy Malanada, ılarly known as Peruviruthy ınada or Malanada is located at ikad Ward (Kara) of Poruvazhy ge in Kunnathoor Taluk, in the ıern border of Kollam. The temple is ed equidistant from Adoor (M C l) on the Northeast and Sasthamkotta ıe Southeast. It is also approachable Kayamkulam and Karunagappally ıe N H 47 and Kottarakkara (via ıor or Enathu) on the M C Road oximately 25 km. from each centre).

ıira

ocated in the northern end of Kollam H 47 and is famous for the Ochira rahma Temple. Ochirakali is a al annual event at the *patanilam* ly fields) in the month of Vrichikam. ra Town Masjid (mosque) and the ra temple are situated close to one ıer and are proud symbols of nunal harmony. This temple is also a rimala *edathavalam*.

ıira Temple

known as Dakshina Kashi, Ochira nique pilgrim centre, situated 34 km of Kollam town on the way to puzha. There are many versions the origin of the name Ochira. 'Om' presentation of Parambrahmam, the f all gods and the word 'Chira' (piece nd) combine to form 'Om Chira' ing the 'land of Parambrahmam'. In e of time Om Chira became Ochira.



Mukathala Murari(SreeKrishna) Temple

The 50 feet high twin gopuram (tower) in front of the complex is carved with many ancient sculptures. These Gopurams, East Nada, West Nada, *Theerthakkulam* (sacred pond), *Ondikkavu*, Ayyappa Temple, Mahalakshmi Temple and Ganapathi temple are the points of worship at Ochira temple. Another interesting feature of the temple is associated with its offerings. Bulls are considered to be sacred in this temple and believed to be the vehicle of *Parabrahmam*. Hence offerings are made in the form of well decorated bulls named 'Ochirakkaala' (Sacred Bull). Devotees can also donate calves as an offering.

Ochira Kali (held in mid-June), For the last 60 years, the temple administration manages a social organisation named 'Annadana Mandiram' which serves daily free lunch for about 500 people.

Ochirakkali

Ochirakkali, a festival of martial arts, is the annual festival of Ochira temple. It commemorates the historical battle fought between the erstwhile rulers of Kayamkulam and Ambalappuzha. Celebrated on the first and second of the Malayalam month Mithunam (i.e in June), Ochirakkali is a mock fight between groups of men dressed as warriors on the patanilam (battle field). During the festival, young and old men from the east and west parts of Ochira, form themselves into two groups and perform their martial art i.e *Kalarippayattu* standing in knee-deep water, brandishing swords and shields and splashing water in every direction. Cattle and agricultural fairs are held on the following three days and they attract a large crowd.

Other festivals held in the Ochira temple are *Vrischikotsavam* and *Irupethettam* Onam. The 12 day carnival *Vrischikotsavam* also known as *Panthrandu Vilakku* (the festival of twelve lamps), starts from the 1st day of the Malayalam month *Vrichikam* (November-December). This festival draws thousands of pilgrims even from far away places. Huts called *'Kudil'* are specially made in the *Patanilam* and during the festive days devotees can stay here irrespective of their social status. Various entertainments like circus, magic, miniature gambling etc and several cultural programs including spiritual talks by famous personalities are held during the festival.

Irupethettam Onam, usually falls in the month of September- October, is celebrated on the 28th day of annual Onam festival with a procession known as *kālakettu*. *Kāla* is assumed to be the vehicle of *Parabrahmam*. During the festival, different groups of people from all the sides of Ochira will make dummies of *Ochirakala*. These are brought to the *patanilam* and a competition is arranged for the best model.





Kottarakkara Sree Mahaganapathi Temple

The Mahaganapathi Temple at Kottarakara, famous for its *Unniappam*, is one of the most venerated Ganesha temples in Kerala. The major offering of Kottarakkara temple is the famous *Udayasthamaya pooja*. The main deity of this temple is Lord Shiva, but Ganesha became famous and is now a Ganesha temple.

Asramam Sreekrishna Swamy Temple on the shores of Ashtamudi Lake is one of the most prominent temples in Kollam. Main deity is Lord Sri Krishna as a boy with butter in both palms.

Achankovil Dharmasastha Temple

Achencoil alias Achankovil is an important pilgrim centre in Kollam district located 42 kms from Punalur. Believed to be consecrated by Lord Parasurama, the Dharmasastha temple here, dedicated to Lord Ayyappa attracts pilgrims from Kerala and Tamilnadu throughout the year especially during the Sabarimala season. This ancient temple is located amidst dense forests of Kandamala, where God is said to have given *'Darshan'* to a worshipper who entered into a long penance. Here the idol of the main deity, Ayyappa is called Rudraksha Shila. The two important festivals of this temple are Mandala Pooja (December-January) and the festival held at 'Ravathi' (January-February).

The temple is also famous for treatment of snake bite. The sandal paste in the hands of the idol of Dharma Sasta is believed to be a miraculous cure for snake toxin. Apart from applying this paste on the bitten area, the victims are offered the water from the temple- well by the chief priest. The famous Achankovil river flows by this temple.

Attracting thousands of devotees, Parabrahma temple in Ochira is uniquely different from other temples in Kerala. The peculiarity of the temple complex, spread across 36 acres is that it does not contain a sanctum sanctorum nor is there an idol or deity for worship. This pilgrim center believes in the existence of universal consciousness or one supreme power known as Parabrahma. One can only find 'Aal thara's' (a peepal tree with a base foundation) where pujas are performed. There are no official *pujaris*.

Aryankavu Sastha Temple

About 73 km east of Kollam and 31 km from Punalur the beautiful place Aryankavu, is one of the important pilgrim centers of the district. The main attraction of Aryankavu is the Ayyappa Temple alias Aryankavu Sastha Temple dedicated to Lord Sastha, one among the five ancient Ayyappa temples. The unique feature of the temple is that it is built about 35 ft below the road level and has some fine structure and mural paintings. The legend behind Ayyappa of Aryankavu is similar to that of Sree Dharma Sastha of Sabarimala. The only difference between the two are that Sastha was brought up by the Pandi Raja of Madhura and not the Raja of Pandalam.

The two main festivals of this temple, Mandala pooja and Thrikalyanam festival, celebrated in December draws thousands of pilgrims. It is believed that Swami Ayyappan married Shri Pushkaladevi of Sourashtra community in Aryankavu. The marriage festival is held every year in Aryankavu and the marriage rituals are according to the Sourashtra community. Even now Sourashtrians reach here in groups during the time of 'Mandalapooja'. All trains towards Shencottah have a stop at Aryankavu. The Palaruvi waterfall is only 4 kms away from here.

Puttingal Temple

Centuries old Paravur Puttingal temple is located at Kurumandal in Paravur village, 13 kms south of Kollam. Dedicated to Devi (Goddess), the temple is named after the presence of goddess herself on an ant hill, known as 'puttu' in Malayalam. *Avil* (beaten rice) and *malar* (puffed rice) are the main offerings for the Puttungal god along with tender coconut and flowers. The annual temple festival which is also the birth day of the Goddess is celebrated on the day of Bharani in the Malayalam month of Meenam (March-April). *Aswathy vilakku, Kampadikali, Kathakali, Marameduppu* and other cultural events are associated with the festival. *Thottam pattu*, the main offering of the Puttingal temple begins on the 21st day of *Vrischikam* (November-December) and lasts till the principal festival of the Goddess.

Thrikkadavoor Mahadevar Temple

The Thrikkadavoor Mahadevar Temple is situated in Thrikkadavoor panchayath on the banks of the Ashtamudi Lake. Dedicated to Lord Shiva, it is one of the famous Shiva temples in the district of Kollam. The annual Kettukazhcha (exhibition of effigies) festival of the temple held during the months of February- March, December-January is a colorful event. Another major festival is the *Thiruvathira Utsav* celebrated in the Malayalam month of *Kumbham*. The temple, previously owned by some Nair families, is now under the administration of Travancore Devaswam Board. Thrikkadavoorappa Seva Sangam, a non-profit organisation formed by the youth, functions on the temple premises and it helps the devotees during the festival season.

Rameshwara Temple

With Pandyan influence in its design, the temple has inscriptions in Tamil, dating

from the 12th to the 16th centuries. The *vyala* monster sculptures give the impression that the creatures are actually climbing up the stairs with their out stretched paws.

Kottukal Rock Cut Cave Temple

This hidden gem is located in Kollam district. This temple situated on the Thiruvananthapuram - Kottayam MC Road is an idyllic example of rock cut temple architecture. Kottukal is about 10 kilometers from Jatayupara.

Jatayupara: A huge rock at Chadaya-mangalam derives its name from the mythical bird Jatayu in the epic Ramayana, who is believed to have collapsed on the rock after failing in his attempts to thwart Ravana's kidnapping of Sita.

Kollam Pooram

One of the most colourful festivals of Kerala, Kollam Pooram is associated with the 10 day long annual festival of the Ashramam Sri Maha Ganapathy Temple held in April. The Pooram, organised on the tenth day of the festival at the



Entrance to Ashramam
Sree Krishnaswamy Temple

Asramam maidanam, attracts a large crowd. Started off as Arattu Utsavam in late 70's, this festival, remniscent of Thrissur Pooram, shot to limelight and came to be in the present form in 1996 after the official inaugural ceremony by the Sree Marthanda Varma of the Travancore royal family.

The deities of the nearby temples partake in this festival and on Pooram day, in the morning, these deities come on caparisoned elephants to pay homage to the Sree Krishna deity at Ashramam. This is known as *cherupooram*. The grand spectacle of the festival, *Kudamattam* ceremony is carried out by late afternoon. It is a ritual in which 30 tuskers split into two groups of 15 each, representing Thamarakulam Sri Mahaganapathi Temple team and the Puthiyakavu Bhagavathy Temple. *Kudamattam* which is held to the beats of traditional *melam* is followed by a spectacular fireworks display. Several cultural programs like *ganamela*, *kathakali* etc are organised during the festive days.

Ammachiveedu Temple is situated in the town area. It was established by an aristocratic family called Ammachi Veedu. The annual festival falls in Dhanu of every year but it is to be done after the Mandala Pooja.

The Edavanadu Bhagavathi Temple is the major Durga temple situated in Mathilil Town area.

The Anchal Agasthyakode Mahadeva Temple is another major Mahadeva temple in Kollam district. It is situated in Anchal Panchayath. Every year during *Sivarathri*, people from every caste and religious background come here for the religious festivities, such as *Jikku Krishnalayam*.

The Thrikkadavoor Mahadeva Temple is the most famous Siva Temple in Kollam District. It is situated in the Thrikkadavoor Panchayath and on the banks of the Ashtamudi Lake. The annual Arattu festival attracts thousands of people, including foreigners. The festival falls in the month of Kumbham (February). The eight artificial horses, which represent the eight areas (*karas*) around the temple, is a special attraction for tourists.

Kolloorvila Bharanikkavu Devi temple is located in Madannada on NH 47. Its annual festival spans over 41 days. The annual festival is on Bharani nakshatra of Meenam month of the Malayalam calendar.

The Veerabhadra Swamy Temple at Ashtamudi is the only temple in the southern part of the country with Veerabhadra as the presiding deity. This belongs to Kuttiyazhikam, Karuva, a 250 year-old Ezhava Family.

Umayanalloor Sri Balasubramania (Murugan) Swamy Temple is situated on the NH 47, about 8 km from Kollam town. The temple is visited by thousands of devotees. Its *'Aana Vaal Pidutham' Mahotsavam* during the Malayalam calendar 'Meenam' attracts hundreds of devotees from all over the state. Devotees run after an elephant and catch its tail, symbolising the childhood pranks between the deities Subramanyan (Murugan) and Ganesha. *'Thaipooyyam'* is also celebrated in a big way. The lore is that the temple was built by the powerful lady ruler 'Umayammarani' of Venad Kingdom about 500 years ago. Aryankavu in the Western Ghats is the easternmost point in the district on the National Highway. One of the five ancient Ayyappa temples is situated here;



Kettu kala, an offering to god

two others are at Achankovil and Kulathupuzha in the district.

Shri Mahadevar Temple, Padinjattinkara, Sree Bhootha Natha Temple, Kulashekharanalloor, Sri Krishnaswami and Devi temple, Kottarakara, Chennamath Temple and Vilappuram Bhagavathy Temple at Chathannoor are well known temples. Polachira is a beautiful place near Vilappuram Temple and *Anathavalam* (elephants' shelter) at Chirakkara is also there.

Thalavoor Sri Durga Devi Temple, Thazhava, Pulimukham Devi Temple, Peroor, Karunalloor Bhagavathy Temple, Pattazhy Devi Temple, Kundara, Ilampalloor Devi Temple and Paravur Puttingal Devi Temple are among the important Hindu temples in Kollam District.

Another important temple is the Kottamkulangara Temple near Chavara, with its tradition of males participating in 'Vilakkeduppu' wearing women's dresses.

Koonambaikulam Temple is very popular. The presiding deity there is Goddess 'Koonambaikulathu Amma'.

Other temples in Kollam include Peroor Sree Meenakshi Temple at Punthala-thazham, Mangalathu temple at Punthalathazham etc.

Mata Amritanandamayi Ashram

World famous spiritual Guru Mata Amritanandamayi has her spiritual abode set on the beautiful shores of the Arabian Sea at Amritapuri in Karunagappalli taluk of Kollam district. Parayakadavu, a coastal village near Karunagapally, is the birthplace of Mata Amritanandamayi and is the headquarters of her Math.

Churches

St Peter's Church Moothakara

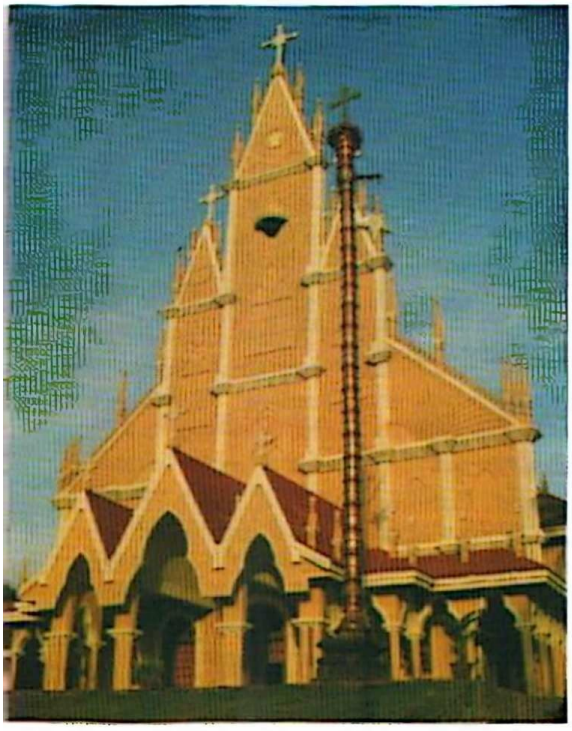
St Peter's Church is one of the first churches in Kollam .It was built in 1610. In 1771 De Clements Joseph S.J. the Bishop of Cochin who was not allowed to enter Cochin, settled down in Moothakara. A chapel and residence was built in 1780 by Fr. Salvador Dennis. Bishop Joseph stayed here and in 1791 he died and was buried in the Church. The feast of St. Peter in Moothakara is unique because on that day as the sea is symbolically opened with the keys of Peter by the Parish Priest. It is located at a walk-able distance from Civil Station.

St.Casmir Church

One of the important churches in Kollam, St. Casimir's church alias Kadavur Church is situated at Kadavur, a picturesque village on the banks of the Ashtamudi Lake. Built in 1873, it was renovated several times and the present structure was completed in the year 1993. The annual 14-day long festival of Saint George is held in the month of April.

St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Cathedral, Kundara

It is located about 200 meters from Arumurikkada junction (NH - 208) on Arumurikkada - Kuzhimathikadu - Nallila Road. The church in Malankara is an integral part of the Universal Syriac Orthodox Church with the Patriarch of Antioch. The local head of the church in Malankara is the Catholicose of India Aboon Mor Baselios Thomas I. His Beatitude Baselios Thomas I, ordained by and accountable to the Patriarch of Antioch. The Feast of Virgin Mary's birth is celebrated from 1 to 8 September every year. On 7th September evening a Rasa (Procession) is conducted from Church to Cheerankavu Junction (East) and Mukkada Junction (West), and back to Church.



St.Mary's Church, Kundara, Kollam



Our Lady Purification Church

Our Lady Purification Church

Popularly known as Kollam Port Church, the Church of Our lady Purification is believed to be one among the 'seven and a half' churches founded by the Apostle St. Thomas. Because of sea erosion, the church was reconstructed thrice. The present church, built in 1993, is located a few distance from the KSRTC bus stand, near St. Joseph's high school.

Velankanni Matha Shrine

The Marian Pilgrim Centre, Velankanni Matha Shrine is located in the heart of Kollam at Tuyyam. Built in the year 1986, this shrine is attached to the parish of St. Sebastian alias Tuet Church. Novena and masses are held every Wednesday at this shrine which attracts thousands of devotees.

Pullichira Church

The famous Marian pilgrim centre Church of Our Lady of Immaculate Conceptionalso known as Pullichira Church is located at a distance of 12 kms from Kollam. The shrine, situated in scenic surroundings on the banks of Pullichira lake in Mayyanad Panchayath, is the most ancient diocese of Kollam. The history of the church dates back to 16th century AD. The original church was built by the Portuguese in 1572, and a miraculous statue of our lady was installed at the top of the beautifully carved wooden altar. It is believed that this statue was washed ashore in a box. In 1974, a new church was built here preserving the altar. The church was declared a Marian pilgrimage shrine in 2004.

The feast of Our Lady of Immaculate Conception church, held every year during the second and third week of December, attracts thousands of devotees irrespective of their faith and religion. This is a 10 day long festival and during the last three days of the feast, the miraculous statue of Mother Mary is brought down from her position above the alter and taken around thechurch in procession. Besides this, other feasts celebrated here are St. Sebastian's feast (January), Lourdes Matha feast (February), St. Joseph's feast (March), St Antony's feast (June), Carmelite Matha feast (September) and Fathima Matha feast (October).

Mosques

Jonakappuram Valiyapalli

The 1400 year old Valiyapalli at Jonakappuram is believed to be the second mosque erected on Indian soil by Malik Ibn Dinar, after the famous Cheraman Juma Masjid in Kodungalloor. As the mosque was destroyed by sea erosion, it has been rebuilt several times and the present structure is said to be constructed on the remnants of the ancient mosque.

Juma-Ath-Palli

Juma-Ath-palli at Kuruva which is said to be 300 years old, houses the mortal remains of a Sufi saint Syed Abdur Rahman Jifri.

Karbala Palli

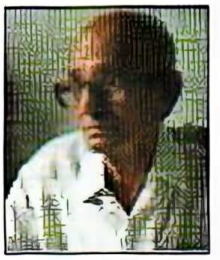
Serving as the Eidgah for the city's Muslims, the Karbala Maidan and the adjacent Makani mosque holds importance in the history of Kollam. It has been known as Karbala, ever since a Muslim Jamindar, the leader of 80 other Muslims in the army, was sent to the gallows after a rebellion alleging religious persecution in the British army. His martyrdom was compared to that of Imam Husayn at Karbala in Iraq.

Well known personalities of Kollam district are:
Literature: K. C. Kesava Pillai, Kakkanadan, Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai, Sooranad Kunjan Pillai, Lalithambika Antharjanam, K. Balakrishnan, Thirunalloor Karunakaran, O. N. V. Kurup, Pattathuvila Karunakaran, D. Vinayachandran
Politics: C. M. Stephen, T. M. Varghese, C. Kesavan, R. Sankar, Thangal Kunju Musaliar, M. A. Baby, P. K. Gurudasan, R. Balakrishna Pillai, Baby john, Shibu Baby John, K. B. Ganesh Kumar.
Theatre, art, music, cinema: O. Madhavan, V. Sambasivan, Kambisseri Karunakaran, Devarajan Master, Raveendran, Resul Pookutty, Shaji N. Karun, Rajeev Anchal, Kottarakkara Sreedharan Nair, Jayan, Thilakan, Murali, Suresh Gopi, Balachandra Menon, K. B. Ganesh Kumar.


C Kesavan


R Sankar

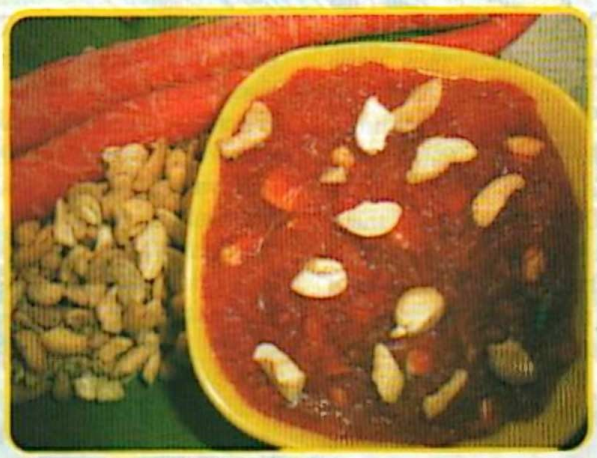

C V Kunjiraman


K Sukumaran

Recipe for Carrot Halwa


K S Narayanswamy

Winter is the season when carrots are available in plenty.
Carrots are rich in Vitamin A and helps the skin look younger. It encourages healthy skin, hair, bones and eyesight and cleanses the system. It also reduces the risk of heart disease and certain types of cancer.
Always choose deep orange carrots since they are rich in carotenoids that is a source of Vitamin A.
It is best to keep carrots in the fridge since it loses its freshness and crispness if left in the open.
With so much goodness in carrots, here is the recipe for carrot halwa that is easy to prepare and good for health and tastes delicious.


Courtesy: Mani's Lunch Home

INGREDIENTS:

1)	Carrot	0.500 gms.
2)	Sugar	0.300 gms.
3)	Ghee	0.200 gms.
4)	Milk	0.500 ml.
5)	Cardamom Powder	1 tsp.
6)	Cashew nuts	0.100 gms.

PREPARATION

Wash the carrots with clean water and peel the skin with vegetable peeler. Scrape and grate the carrot. Add milk to the grated carrot and cook thoroughly well. Add sugar to the cooked carrot and mix well. Continue stirring on heat by adding ghee till it becomes of thick consistency. Fry cashewnuts in one teaspoon ghee and add to the above mixture. Mix well and remove from heat. Add cardamom powder and mix well. Serve hot or cold.

GAUDA SARASWATS OF KERALA-II



K. R. NARAYANAN

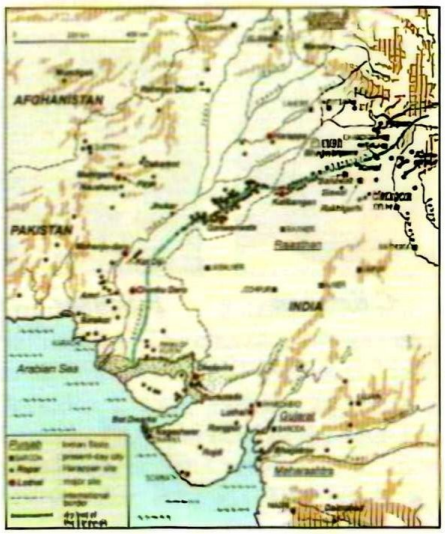
History of Saraswat migrations

The exact origin of the Saraswat Brahmins is difficult to ascertain. Saraswat Brahmins are mentioned in the Vedas, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Bhagavata and even the Bhavisyottara Purana. There is a very interesting reference to the fish-eating habit of Saraswat Brahmins in the Ramayana. Laxmana did not include them among Brahmins he invited for the Rajasooya yagna. He had observed them eating fish, which was non-vegetarian and therefore he said they could not be Brahmins. Laxmana told Rama that they would catch the fish, separate the head and tail, then using Vedic mantras rejoined the head and tail. They would then release the fish in water. The fish would live again.

The Brahmins ate the middle portion of the fish. Shri Rama said since they were not killing the fish, he felt that no sin was committed. Shri Rama instructed Lakshmana to invite Saraswat Brahmins to the Rajasuya Yagna".

According to the Puranas, they were Aryan migrants from Central Asia who came to the Indian sub-continent through the Hindu-Kush Mountains and the Khyber Pass to the south roughly during 2000-1500 B.C. Most of them settled along the banks of the Saraswati River. There were more than 1200 such settlements of migrants who led an agrarian life, supplemented by cattle grazing. These settlers came to be known as Saraswats.

Education was of great importance to the Saraswats and so they taught their young Sanskrit and enlightened themselves from the Rig Veda. The Sanskrit they spoke in public, later assumed a simplified version called Brahmani which they spoke at home. This language is considered the source of the present day Konkani language. Over the years (along the Saraswati), the Saraswats established the concept of Kuladevatas or family gods, and began



The dried up Saraswati River - From the Panjab ending in the Rann of Kachchh (Source: History of Saraswat Migrations)

worshipping them. They accepted the Great Sage Saraswat Muni (son of the Saint Dadichi), as their Guru. There were about 60,000 (Shatsahasara) Brahmins who were disciples of Saraswat Muni.

When a severe famine (which lasted for about 12 years) hit the region, the survival of the Saraswats was at stake. The Guru advised them to eat fish from the Saraswati River for survival. Thus they became the only fish-eating Brahmins ever known. (The Brahmins of Bengal were an offshoot of this group).

Their traditions are unique and tolerant in that they worship Shakti, Shiva and Vaishnava deities as well. The Gouda Saraswat Brahmins trace their origin to the Brahmins who lived on the banks of the now extinct river Saraswati of the Punjab. They belonged to the Smartha tradition and primarily worshiped the five deities: Shiva, Vishnu, Devi, Surya and Ganesh.

They concentrated on studying subjects like astronomy, metaphysics, medicine and allied subjects and disseminating knowledge. Due to geo-morphosis in the Himalayas, the Saraswati began to dry up and the Saraswats were forced to migrate to greener pastures. Some went to Kashmir in the north, others went eastwards. A few made their way to the Konkan and Goa.

The new immigrants were called 'Goud' because they were followers of Monism or Advaita as preached by Goudapada-charya, who was the guru of Govinda Bhagavatpada whose direct disciple was the great Shankaracharya, who resurrected Hinduism or Vedic religion in India. The first math of Saraswats dedicated to the memory of Goudapada-charya was established in Kaivalyapura or Kavale in Goa in the 8th century A.D. To this day, the swamis of Kavale math are known as Goudapadacharya.

In the 13th century, Dwaita (Vaishnava) philosophy advocated by Madhva-charya became popular and many Saraswats adopted Vaishnavism. They continued to worship the deities they brought with them from the North. These were 'Mahan Girish' or Mangueshi, Shakti or Shanta durga, Vishnu, Ganesh and Surya.

Attracted by his Dwaita philosophy, many Sasasthikar Saraswats converted to Vaishnavism. The conversion formalities were completed by Padmanabha Tirtha, who was appointed head of Uttaradi Mutt. During his chathurmasya, he converted a large number of the Saraswats residing in Sasasthi and Bardesh. His disciples converted Sasasthikars who had gone to Thane in the North and Calicut in the South. However, they did not discard their attachment to the Panchayatana and the Shaiva gods.

Major migrations

Throughout the course of history, the Saraswat Brahmins have migrated to different locations and are found mostly

along the west coast of India. Historians feel that after a few thousand years of flowing, the glaciers melted away, and the Saraswati began to dry out and became non-existent by 1000 BC. The entire region started becoming arid with no means of growing any crop. The Saraswats had no other alternative than moving away to better areas.

The migration happened over many centuries. The last of the exodus took place in about 350 BC, due to a wide-spread famine. The Saraswats migrated in three directions - mostly following the river routes - and moved to the South-West (Sind), North (Kashmir), and East (Bihar).



Major Migratory routes of the GSBs

The second route of migration was from the Punjab into Kashmir. Hence, the traditions of Saraswats of Kashmir assert that all Brahmins in Kashmir are Saraswats. There are some 32 sub-sects in Jammu and Kashmir, belonging to six classes and 133 gotras. Generally, the Kashmiri Saraswats were Devi worshippers.

In the 14th Century, the Muslim rulers of Kashmir commenced the persecution of the Hindus. The Saraswats left on a large scale, and only a few families remained in Kashmir. Many families both Brahmin and others were converted to Islam. Some of the families who had migrated southwards, returned to Kashmir when the circumstances became more favorable.

Though predominantly a Hindu region, Kashmir had, by that time, become a Muslim territory. Also, Kashmir was prey to the ravages of Afghanistan as well. These caused so much distress to the people that some prominent Kashmiris appealed to the Sikh Chief Ranjit Singh for help and he succeeded in getting rid of the Afghans. As powerful Kshatriya kingdoms came to power, a few Saraswats migrated to Indraprastha, Mathura, and Prayag, Kashi and other places. But as the Kshatriyas fell with the rise of Buddhism, a few Saraswats migrated to Rajputana and Sind, married local women and formed separate communities. Those Saraswats, who migrated to Kashmir, called themselves Kashmiri Pandits, while those of Sind, Kutch, the Panjab, Rajasthan and Gomantak are known as the Sind Saraswats, Kutchi Saraswats, Punjab Saraswats, Rajasthan Saraswats and Gowda Saraswats respectively.

The migrants to the west, by and large, followed the course of the River Saraswati, went up to Dwarka and by ship they sailed to Goa. Because of their stay in Dwarka, the Gouda Saraswats are nicknamed as Dorkes also. Along the route, these migrants left small colonies behind, and these settlements have been referred to as Saraswat Tirthas in the Mahabharata.

Eastward Migration

The Saraswats who moved South East followed the Ganges and reached Trihotrapura or modern Tirhut in Upper Bihar (400-350 BC). The major settlements were in Kanyakubja (Kanpur area), Magadha and Mithila. The then ruling dynasty were the Lichhavis followed by the Mauryas. With a strong ability to adapt, the Saraswats easily mingled with the locals. However, they did not compete with them in agriculture and other major occupations in their new home. Instead, they relied on their superior intellect and educational background to secure administrative positions in the Lichhavi Republic, based at Vaishali.

Life in Magadha became quite unbearable for the Saraswats, and so, by about 1000 AD, almost 1500 years after they left their original home, the Saraswats decided to move again, mainly in two groups. One group (from Kanyakubja) moved east and settled in Bangla (now Bengal), where in the course of time they assimilated the Bengali culture. Another group (from Mithila) moved southwards and reached the Godavari River, and then proceeded along the south bank towards the source of the Godavari near Nasik.

Thereafter, they moved to *Go-Rashtra* (present day Goa) and thence to *Gokarna Mandala* in Uttar Kannada area. Being originally from Trihotrapura in Gauda Desha, they called themselves Gouda Saraswats.

It is said that these Gouda Saraswat migrants, chose Goa, mainly for its fertile soil and flourishing overseas trade through its sea-ports. Another reason for their migration into Konkan is said to be the marital relationships between the Kadamba King Jayakeshi (1050-1080 AD) of Goa and a Saraswat king from Trihotra. Some historians believe that the king of Trihut sent ninety six families from ten Gothras to the new land to propagate religion and philosophy at the request of the Kadamba King.

Towards Kerala

The migrations of GSBs to Kerala were mainly in two phases - in 1294 AD and subsequently in 1560 AD. The Saraswat migrations reached its peak during the second exodus from Goa (in 1560 AD). Many of them came to Calicut, but were not welcomed by the Ruler Samoothiri of Calicut. So they moved still southwards. The first batch settled around Cherai (between Azheekal and Elankunnapuzha in the Vypeen Island).

In search of trading opportunities, some moved along the sea coast and settled in places like Alleppey, Purakkad and Kayamkulam. However, the major



Sri Varaha Swamy Temple, Cherai

concentration was in Cochin area. They called their place of settlement Gosripuram, which is derived from the word Goapuri. The Saraswats settled in Cochin set up temples of their Kuladevatas. The social life of the GSBs was inseparable from the temples and social exchanges with the locals were limited. Most of the new GSB settlers in Kerala were very poor. They took control of the temples and the vast lands associated with it.

The poor dispersed further in search of opportunities and doing petty business like pappad making and cooking. The GSBs thus belonged to three classes - the businessmen, the landlords and the poor.

Early Kerala Settlements

Stray members of the Saraswat community had their settlements in Cochin since the early part of the 13th century A.D. Owing to certain religious disputes, some Saraswats from Sasasti were forced to leave their native place in Konkan with their idols in 1294 A.D. Travelling southward they came to the territory of the Maharaja of Cochin and settled down there.

They formed themselves into a community which they named *"Konkanastha Mahajanam"*, which came to be known as Konkanis subsequently.

By 1360 AD, there were about 150 families of Saraswats at Tellicherry and most of them were engaged in trade. Other settlements were at Kasargode, Kumbala, Manjeshwar and Hosdrug. In fact, Saraswats were already there when Vasco-da-Gama arrived in Calicut in 1498. When the king of Cochin exempted Saraswats from the levy of poll tax, they came in large numbers and settled down in Cochin as traders. In fact, the 360 families of Saraswats that migrated to Cochin were the pick of the Goa Saraswats and eventually became rich and powerful.

The local Brahmins did not recognize Saraswats as Brahmins and did not allow them in the Kerala temples. This was mainly because many Saraswats were fish eaters and some of them came to Kerala by sea. (In those days crossing the sea was considered sacrilege by the Brahmins).

Cochin Tirumala Devaswom, at Cherlai (in the heart of Mattancherry town) in Cochin, is the biggest and most important socio-religious institution of Gowda Saraswat Brahmins and also the biggest temple in Kerala. The temple was established in the latter half of the 16th century. The history of GSBs in Kerala is inter-woven with that of this temple and its history.



Sri Varaha Swamy Temple, Cherai

A rent-free site was granted by the Prince of Cochin to build the temple; with Venkateswara idol permanently installed. This idol has a major role in the events to come. (Later, the Saraswats residing in other parts of Kerala also installed the images of Venkateswara as the presiding deity in their temples). In the early 20th century, the rich temple Devaswoms started schools near the temples at places like Cochin, Thuravoor, Alapuzha, etc.

However, it is believed that the Azheekkal Sri Varahaswamy Temple, at Cherai, (in the Vypeen Island) is the first Gouda Saraswat Temple in Kerala. It was established in 1565 by the Azheekkal Yogakkars of the Gouda Saraswat Brahmins of Vypeen.

The Kerala Gauda Saraswats

There are some differences amongst the present days' GSBs of Kerala. One of the marked differences (apart from their dialects) between the Cochin GSB's and their northern Kerala / Canara counter parts is in their food habits. Many northern Kerala / Canara Saraswat Brahmins are *pisco-vegetarians*. The inclusion of fish in the diet is not looked down as prohibited non- vegetarianism. The fish were euphemistically called Sea Vegetable or "*Jalkain*" from *-Jal Kaay*. Oysters for example are sometimes called *'Samudra Phalam' or* sea fruit. On the other hand, the Cochin GSBs have adopted vegetarianism in order to be accepted as Brahmins by Kerala society. This distinguishes them from the rest of the southern Saraswats. The Cochin GSB cuisine is, therefore, vegetarian though its Goan flavor is retained.

During and after the First World War, many GSBs realized the benefits of literacy and educated their children. Basically good in Mathematics and Commerce many of these children managed to get jobs as teachers, clerks and accountants. The founding of the Canara Bank (1910) and the Syndicate Bank (1925) by GSBs of Mangalore and Udupi, gave employment to most of the educated GSB youths of Kerala until the nationalization of banks. A majority of them became middle class by the sixties.

The introduction of the Kerala Land Reforms Act in 1963 relating to the fixation of ceiling on land holdings, the vesting of lands in excess of the ceiling in the Government, abolition of tenancy system and assignment of proprietary right on land to the cultivating tenants changed the fate of the temples and many GSBs. The landlords lost much of their land and the vast lands attached to the temples were taken over by the government. With deteriorating incomes most of the temples now struggle for existence.

Malayalam Poetry from Mumbai

-Ashwati

Literature induces knowledge and entertainment through thought provoking statements. This is different from an ordinary conversation or written statement. This can be mainly in three forms viz., prose, verse and a mixture of both. If a statement that can ordinarily be made in prose is made according to pre-defined meter, alliteration, rhyme and rhythm, it can be called a verse. Many verses that were made instantaneously during the period of Kodungalloor School, were of that genre. The letters written by Kodungalloor Kunhikuttan Thampuran, A R Rajaraja Varma, K C Kesava Pillai et al were of that type. The letter dictated by Thampuran to the book seller

"ബാലശിക്ഷക്കലട്ടുന്നു
ബാലപുത്രി സരസ്വതി
അലട്ടു തീർത്തു വിട്ടേയ്ക്കു
വില പിന്നെ തരാമെടോ."

was of this type. It is created in *Anushtuppu* meter with alliteration of 'ല' in all lines in the second syllable. Even if this was written in prose, it would not have made any difference. This is therefore not poetry but a mere verse. What makes it endearing is the speed with which it was dictated in a perfect meter keeping the alliteration in place without any effort.

"മടിയിൽപേർത്തു പേണാർന്നു
മട്ടിലംഗുലിവിഭ്രമം
തുടർന്നാലുടനേ രാഗം
കാട്ടീടുന്നു വിപഞ്ചിക"

It is an example of figure of speech *'Samāsokti'* given in *'Bhashābhooshanam'* of A R Rajaraja Varma. In the ordinary way, this also would have fallen into the category of a mere verse as it is a simple statement. What raises it to the level of poem is that the quatrain does not talk about the *Veena* but about the woman in the lap of her lover, giggling as his fingers moving over her body. The poet does not directly talk about what he really wanted to tell but symbolizes the whole idea indirectly.

When we move to higher levels, we come across a quartet that takes us to levels that no poet so far could do.

"ക്ഷണമിമകളിൽനിന്നു തല്ലി ചുണ്ടിൽ
കുളുർമുലമേലഥ വീണുടൻ തകർന്നു
വലികളിലിടറി ചിരേണ നാഭി-
ച്ചുഴിയിലിറങ്ങി നവീനവർഷബിന്ദു."

(കുമാരസംഭവം-കാളിദാസൻ)

At the first instance, it simply describes what happened to the first raindrop of the monsoon season. When you read a second time and ponder over, you find the beauty of the *nāyika*, Gauri indirectly described. Still ponder over the same quartet; you see how she posed herself for a rigourous meditation. Hence the world acclaimed Kalidas as the Emperor of Poets.

Jayadeva also did similar craftsmanship well fused with artistic imagination and philosophical shades when he wrote *'Geetagovindam.'*

Changampuzha Krishna Pillai, the much celebrated romantic poet, opens his work *Ramanan* with the lines,

"മലരണിക്കാടുകൾ തിങ്ങിവിങ്ങി
ഥരതകകാന്തിയിൽ മുങ്ങിമുങ്ങി
കരളും മിഴിയും കവർന്നു മിന്നി
കറയറ്റൊരാലസൽ ഗ്രാമഭംഗി."

This is a verse that falls into the category of a lyric as it has metric form, alliteration of first syllable and also in the ending note, making it quite musical, alluring to the ears. Calling it a poem would be an injustice but it is a good song.

M R Nair (*Sanjayan*) while reviewing the poems of Changampuzha wrote: "Even the lines were written in a straight line, without observing the meter and alliteration, it would have made a good reading. Cutting the characters according to a scale would not make a poem." Changampuzha took it in the right spirit and went on improving his craft. When Changampuzha used the Shakespearean declaration, "Frailty! Thy name is woman", into

"അങ്കുശമില്ലാത്ത ചാപല്യമേ, മന്നി-
ലംഗനയെന്നു വിളിക്കുന്നു നിന്നെ ഞാൻ",

M R Nair lamented that the poet killed Shakespeare's powerful utterance by adding unnecessary words and made the statement impotent. He was commending on the tendency of Changampuzha to add unwanted words to meet the meter. It is well accepted among poets that no word however pleasant to the ears, should be added if it does not add to the power of the poem. More words, verse becomes worse.

Prof Joseph Mundasseri was an ardent critic of Ulloor's poems but he acknowledged the pleasure of teaching his poems to the students of literature. To meet the needs of the meter, alliteration, rhyme, rhythm etc, no poet should drag unwanted words as they would only result in loosening the compactness of the poem.

Fundamentally a poet should have a colourful and thought provoking imagination, a grand treasure of words (vocabulary) from the language of his choice, the rules of meter used, discretion of words chosen before set himself to write the poem. Finally he should have the unstoppable urge to put down his thoughts onto the paper. If he tries to write out of necessity, the poem may come down to the level of verse.

Recently an 'acclaimed' poet who had a few compilations to his credit, presented one of them to this writer with a preface, "do not look for meters, alliteration, figures of speech in my poetry because I do not believe in them."

A man cannot feel the taste of food
If he has no hunger;
A man without teeth can't break
Solid food he devour
A man, without ideas and craftiness,
Should remain away from poetry
Lest the world would only use
The paper he wrote on for toiletry.

Continued on page 42

Two Legendary Elephants of Guruvayur Temple



G. H. Ananthanarayanan

In Central Kerala, elephants are an integral part of the 'utsavam.' (In temples like the one in Guruvayur, elephants are a daily feature in the Seeveli procession).

Every temple has an Utsavam or festival once a year, a practice of honouring the presiding deity in a special manner. In temples in Kerala, particularly in Central Kerala, elephants are an integral part of the 'utsavam.' (In temples like the one in Guruvayur, elephants are a daily feature in the Seeveli procession). The honour of carrying the *thidambu* (a golden image of the presiding deity in miniature) is given to the tallest elephant in the temple for the festival, which is flanked on either side by elephants which are a little less tall.

The elephants are gorgeously and splendidly caparisoned. The broad head of each elephant is covered with a *nettip-pattam*, a large fringed cloth on to which have been sewn around six thousand gold-plated metal shapes of various sizes. While there will be four men on the elephant carrying the deity, there will be three on those flanking him. The first man on the deity-carrying elephant supports the *kolam* with the *thidambu* resting at its base. Behind him, there are three, one supporting the long-stemmed silken parasol (kuda) as the other two precariously balance themselves on the elephant's sloping back as, in time to the music, one raises and lowers a pair of heavy, silver-handled yak-hair whisks called *venchamaram* and the other a pair of light, circular peacock feather fans called *alavattoms*. It is indeed hard and uncomfortable work for the three on the back. The elephants then move in procession, watched by hundreds of devotees as musicians play thundering drums, clashing cymbals and piercing horns.

Although there were and there are many elephants belonging to the Guruvayur Devasom, two stood out from the rest. They were Padmanabhan and Kesavan.



Guruvayur Kesavan statue at Guruvayur

PADMANABHAN

Padmanabhan was donated to the temple by Cherakunnath Nambudiri after going through the procedure called *nadayiruthal*, with the prayer that he may be blessed with progeny. At that time, the temple had only one or two elephants. After that, the progeny in the family of Cherukunnath and the number of elephants in the temple began to grow.

Padmanabhan was not only very tall but also had a majestic bearing. He was so proud and conscious of his position that he would not allow any other elephant to carry the *thidambu*. He would raise his head and keep it so high that he would always tower above the rest. Though mild by nature, he would give no quarter if anyone tried to harm him. There are many stories about his kindness, devotio unswerving loyalty to the Lo Guruvayur.

On one occasion on the sixth day annual utsavam Padmanabhan sto the centre of the array of elep carrying the thidambu. All on a sud became wild and started running a Those who were on his back carryi *kuda*, *alavattam* and *vencham* jumped down unhurt and scramb safety. But Manjara Nambudiri, wh holding the *thidambu* stuck to his unmindful of the danger to his lif limb, reposing his trust Lord. Padmanab circumambulated the t eleven times and then clock-wise. During tha run Manjara Nambudir miraculously save someone hiding in Gopuram. All the effo the mahouts to c Padmanabhan fa Padmanabhan at last c own went to the Sa compound and stood corner, not allowing an to go near him. Even i disturbed mood, he di hurt or harm anyone, t the whole of Guruvayur a sleepless night.

There was an incident a child of a maid servant of the te strayed out of the house, went Padmanabhan and began inno playing sitting underneath the ele Padmanabhan sensed it, though he not see it. He was anxious that no should befall the child by any u movement of his, and therefore still, holding all the while the lor heavy stalk of palm-leaf which it its trunk. Such maternal instinct co the envy of any mother. It was som later that the mother came in search child, and at the very sight of he playing under the elephant, she sw Soon others came. Padman beckoned them with his trunk to take away the child. Meanwhil mahouts also arrived on the sce

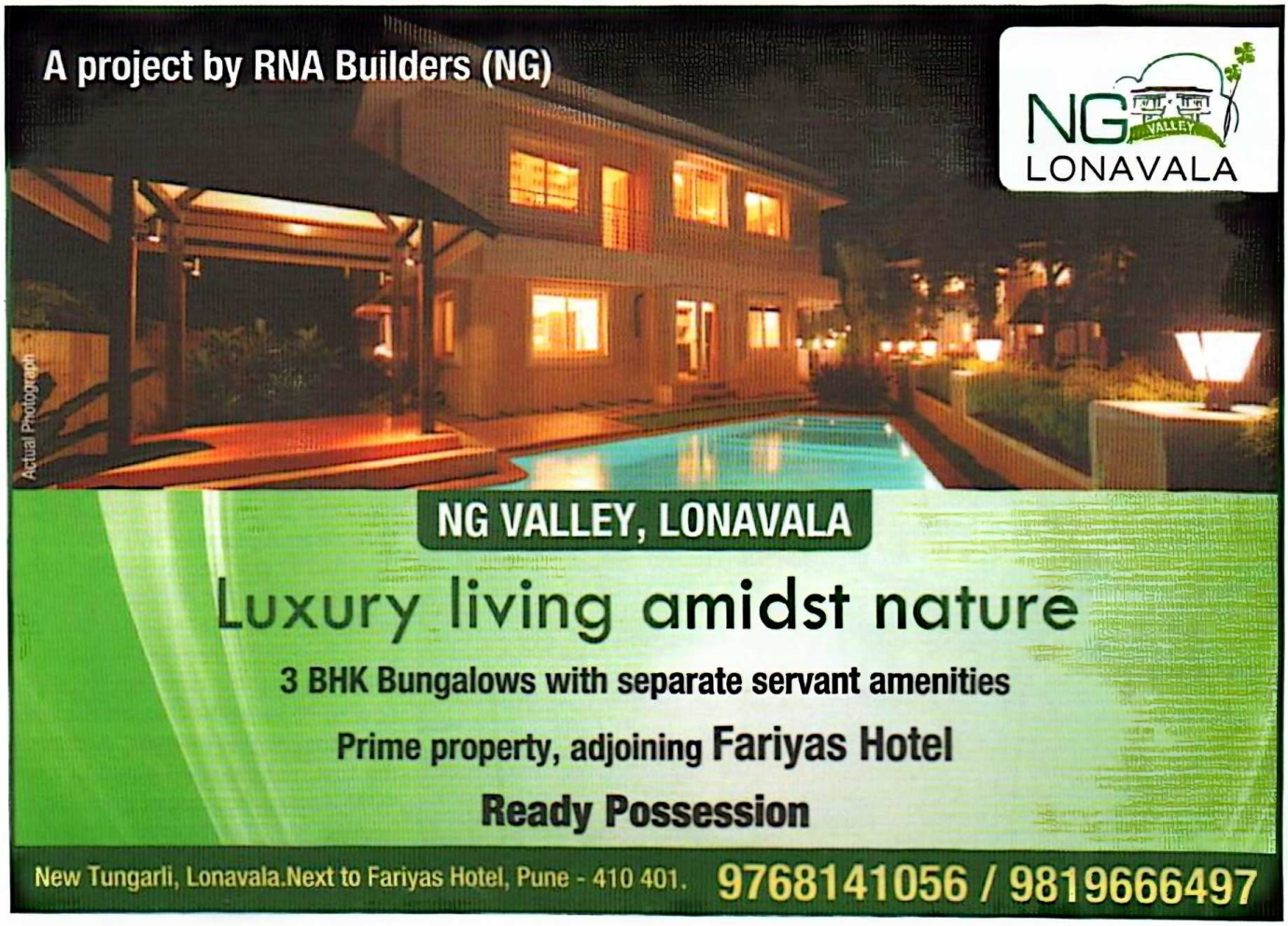
took away the child. It was only thereafter that Padmanabhan, who was standing motionless lest he should unwarily trample on the child, resumed eating the palm leaves which it was holding in its trunk for long.

Another noteworthy incident that took place was in the Perumanam Pooram. As was the custom there, two rows of elephants, seven in each row, stood face to face. Padmanabhan was in the centre of one, carrying the *thidambu* of Oorakathamma. Facing him stood Kirangat Kesavan in the opposite row. Kesavan felt that it was his prescriptive right to carry the *thidambu*, and was infuriated by the sight of Padmanabhan being given the honour of carrying it. In his blind fury, he started attacking the elephants to his right and left. In the melee that followed the mahouts lost control over the elephants and they ran helter skelter. Padmanabhan was not the one to be easily provoked and stood by the side of a wall. But blinded by pride and anger, Kesavan charged at him. Padmanabhan's patience gave way. He rolled off the end of his long trunk, slapped it repeatedly and furiously on the ground and screeched so ferociously that Kesavan sensed that murder was in the air, felt that discretion was the better part of valour and sneaked away to safety. The Pooram then continued peacefully.



Procession at Guruvayur Temple

The confrontation with Akkavoor Govindan and Ottakkomban (Single-tusker) was another noteworthy incident in his life. Padmanabhan had been taken to Ernakulam for the utsavam there. The practice there was to first give the elephants a bath in the backwaters. When Padmanabhan was taken thither, Akkavoor Govindan and Ottakkomban, two of the most mischievous and ferocious elephants of time were in the water. Their bath was almost over, but knowing their mischievous propensities, their mahouts told Padmanabhan's mahouts to wait a while and let Padmanabhan into the waters only after their wards had come out. But



Padmanabhan's mahouts were itching for a confrontation, firm in the belief that their ward cannot be worsted by anyone in a fight. They goaded him into the water. Ottakkomban was quick to respond, closely followed by Akkavoor Govindan. But before Ottakkomban could rise from the water, Padmanabhan charged at him, caught hold of his single tusk, twisted it and pushed him back to the water with such force that not only he but also Akkavoor Govindan who was behind him fell into the water with such force that they were unable to rise from there. Thus they had to give up the battle even before it had been joined. Padmanabhan entered the waters, helped himself to a grand bath. He was then led by his mahouts to the venue of the utsavam.

Having heard about the royal demeanour and exploits of Padmanabhan, the Raja of Ambalappuzha wanted to have him as the lead elephant for the utsavam there. His request was granted by the Guruvayur temple authorities. Padmanabhan did not make much of an impression in the beginning, but as the utsavam gathered momentum, he came into his own. He rose to his full stature. His majestic bearing, regal demeanour and towering height won the attention and admiration of all. The Raja was happy. He made it a point to witness the utsavam on all the fourteen days. On the concluding day, as a mark of his appreciation, before the *thidambu* was brought down, the Raja made a precious gift to Padmanabhan in the form of a *veerasringhala* (a gold chain given for extraordinary valour.), which he himself placed on the right tusk of the elephant.

Padmanabhan's end came in a tragic manner. On his way back from Ambalappuzha, when he reached Puzhakkal near Thrissur, orders were received by the mahouts that he was to be taken to Kannampra for the utsavam there. There he was asked to pull down a palm tree to be used for his food. He gave a good, hard knock, but the tree did not fall. The mahouts goaded him to give a harder knock. He did, but reluctantly. The tree fell: so did Padmanabhan, never to rise again. A strange spectacle was seen in the Guruvayur temple the following morning. The sandal paste with which the Lord was adorned the previous evening had split into pieces and fallen down. The year was 1931. Only the two tusks and teeth of Padmanabhan were brought to Guruvayur. There is a big golden kolam in the temple. It would be taken out and used only during the utsavam from its sixth day till the end. When this kolam is taken, as a mark of respect to the memory of Padmanabhan, the gold chain presented to him by the Ambalappuzha Raja would be put on it.

KESAVAN

Kesavan came to Guruvayur on the 4th January 1922, when he was 10 years old. He was donated to the temple by the Raja of Nilambur. The Raja and his consort were ardent devotees of Guruvayurappan. During the Mappilariots that raged in North Malabar, there was widespread destruction and devastation, but the property of the royal family of Nilambur was left untouched. This, they thought, could have been only due to the grace of Guruvayurappan. As a token of their gratitude, they donated Kesavan to the temple.

When Kesavan came to Guruvayur, Padmanabhan was at the zenith of his glory. He learnt from Padmanabhan how he should conduct himself as a servant of the Lord. In particular, he learnt from Padmanabhan how the head should be held high when the *thidambu* is mounted. He himself stood 11 feet tall, towering above the other elephants of his time. No one could rival him. It became an accepted practice that when Kesavan was there, the thidambu would no

Kesavan had some peculiar characteristics. He would raise the front leg only when the *thidambu* was to be mounted. All the rest holding the parasol etc. had to mount from the rear side through the hind leg. He would not allow even the mahouts to mount on him. Such was his pride in his position as the chosen one to carry the *thidambu*.

Once, Kesavan was taken to Pattikkad forest about 80 kms away to pull logs. He would have none of it. He broke the chain and ran back to Guruvayur with his mahout and temple authorities in desperate pursuit. He did not harm anyone on the way. Even in that surcharged mood, he obeyed the command of his mahout who was shouting from a distance. "Do not harm the cartman who is carrying bunches of ripe bananas." He reached Guruvayur at 6.30 in the morning. It was when the Srikoil was open for the *ethirettu* puja. To divert his attention from the temple and attract him to the palace compound in the South Nada, bunches of ripe plantains were hung all along the Nada but Kesavan would not succumb to such enticements. He was still seething with rage for being yoked to the task of pulling logs which, he felt was derogatory to his position. He went inside the temple precincts. Devotees and authorities ran helter shelter for dear life. None knew how to conduct the Seeveli for which it was time. At that moment, Achutan Nair the first mahout cried aloud in anguish; "Oh! Kesava, because of your dangerous pranks, it is the Seeveli of Guruvayurappan that is delayed. If that is your wish, so be it. We shall go. But, if you are willing to be chained, go near the pillar."



Punnathur Anakotta - Elephant's of Guruvayoor Krishna Temple

Kesavan realized the gravity of the matter when he heard this, moved towards the pillar and stood close to it. He was then chained. The Seveli proceeded as usual.

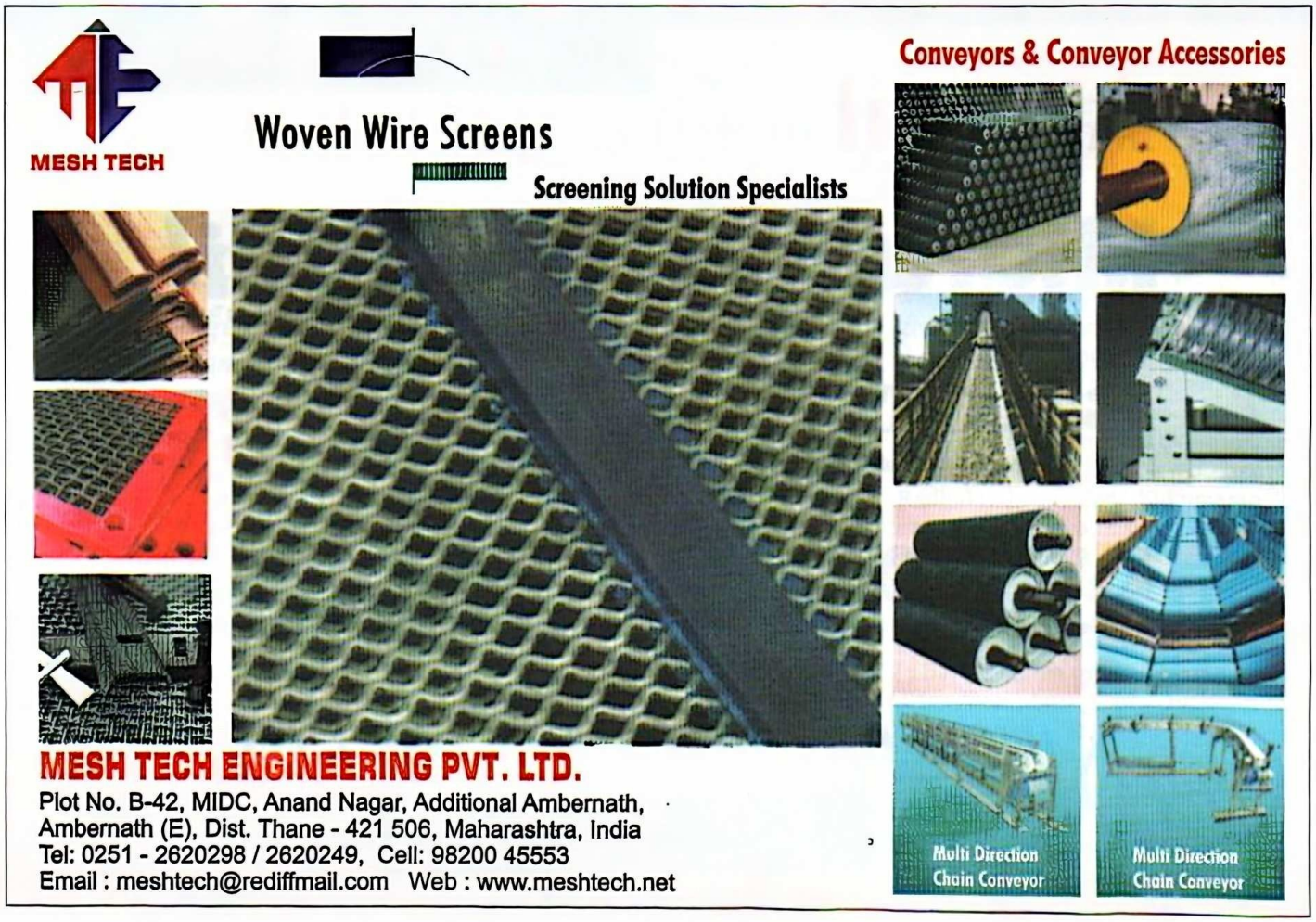
It was at that time the previous night that he was taken ill. He took the water from the pitcher in front of him, not for drinking but for bathing. He bathed, stood looking longingly in the direction of the deity whom he had served for so long. The morning dawned, heralding the Ekadasi day, the day hallowed by Lord Krishna giving the Vishwarupa Darshan to Arjuna, the day when the Lord gave Darshan to Melpattur when he sang, "Him I see" Kesavan lay prostrate on the ground with the trunk stretched towards the Lord. The resonant sound of the conch pierced the eerie silence of the morning. The Sri Koil opened. The Lord had by then given moksha to the Gajaraja- a gajaraja moksha in the true sense of the word. The year was 1976 and Kesavan was 64. Thus came the end to the saga of an elephant extraordinaire. A legend passed into history. The whole of Guruvayur and its environs went into mourning. It was as when a dear one had departed. Kesavan remains etched in the memory of several elephant-lovers even today.

Guruvayur Devaswom has perpetuated his memory by erecting a life-size statue of Kesavan in the precincts of Srivatsam, one of its important rest houses in the South Nada. Every year, on the dasami day before the annual Ekadasi festival, the elephants belonging to the Devaswom are taken in procession from the Parthasarathi temple to the statue. They stand before it in a line and offer their obeisance. One is given the honour of going up to the statue, garlanding it and circumambulating it. Lakshmikutty was a life-long companion of Kesavan in the temple and when she went up to pay her homage, recollections of the past and its associations would come crowding in her mind and tears would well up in her eyes. After the obeisance is over, the elephants are treated to a sumptuous feast.

Lakshmikutty came to the Guruvayur temple at a very young age and served the Lord for many years. She used to be given the honour of carrying the *thidambu* during the daily seevelis. She was shy, ever so gentle that even little children could go near her and offer her plantains.

At a time when elephants have fallen from a position of veneration to one of servitude thanks largely to the greed of some of the private owners, it resounds to the credit of the Guruvayur Devaswom that it has taken upon itself the responsibility of maintaining as many as 64 elephants (their present number) - indeed an awe-inspiring number in so far as pachyderms are concerned. They are housed in Punnathur Kota, about 4 kms away from the temple. Giving the elephants a feast is one of the offerings to the Lord, for which the current charge is Rs. 6000. The elephants are fed after 3.00 p.m.

The Devaswom authorities have also thoughtfully purchased a 100 acre estate, called Vrindavanam at Vengard in Malappuram Dt., about 55 kms away from Guruvayur. Palm trees and other vegetables for feeding them are grown here.

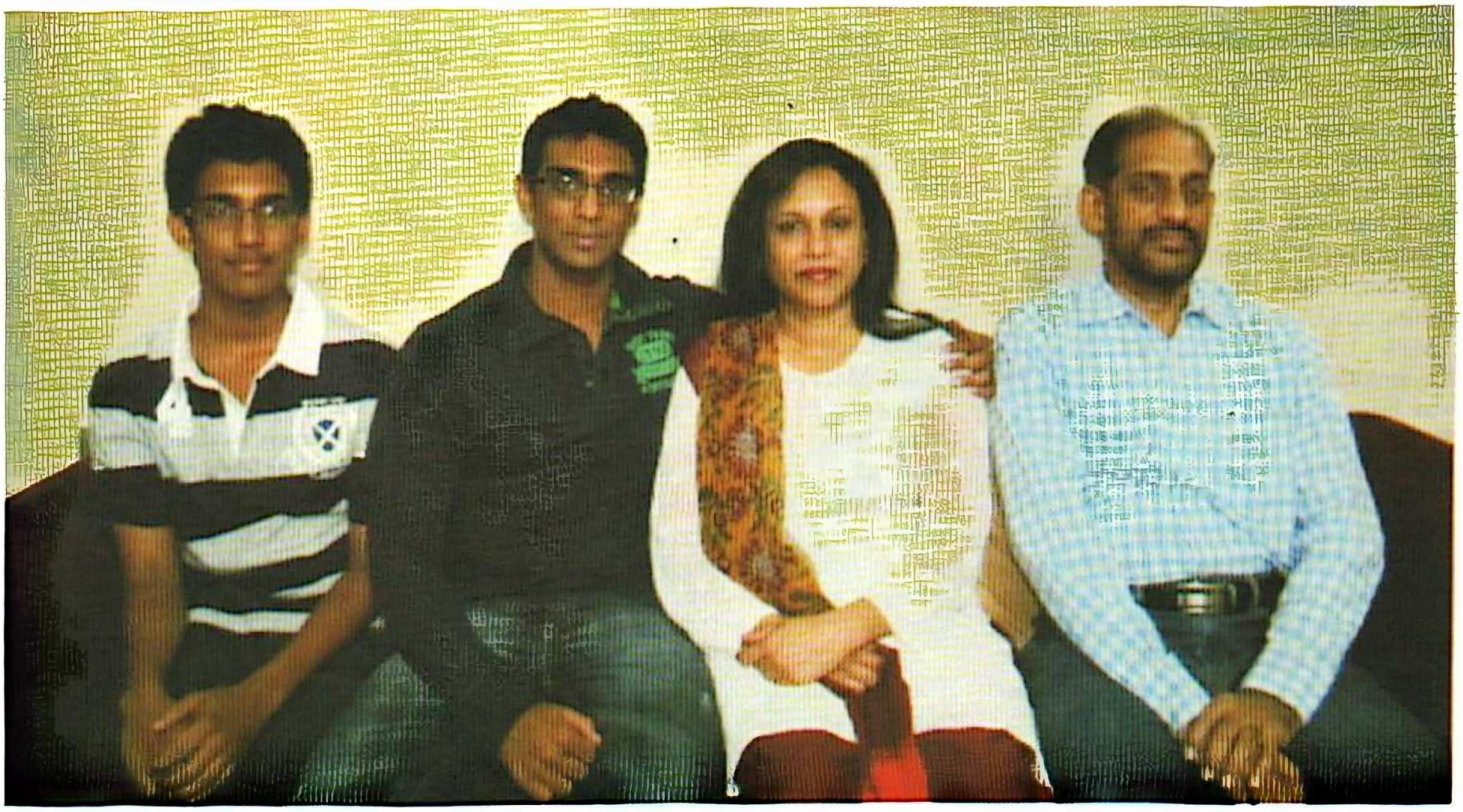


Family of the Month

K Balachandran Menon



Lakshmi Venkatachalam



Aditya, Akshay (sons) along with Lata Menon (wife) and Balachandran Menon

THE FINANCE COUPLE

A wooden caparisoned elephant with the image of the Lord, venchamaram, and muthukuda occupies the pride of place in the living room of the Menon household and reinforces its Malayalee identity. "I wanted to bring Guruvayurappan into my Mumbai home," Balachandran Menon explains, "and so I got this from Kerala."



Lata and Balachandran Menon

In fact the four feet *nilavilakku*, at the base of the staircase of his duplex flat, the hangings and paintings adorning the walls, and the antique pieces and puja shelf give an ethnic touch to the Menon home. Balachandran Menon hails from Cherpu in Thrissur district. His father, the late Raman Kutty Menon was a teacher. His mother Ammini Amma is living in Cherpu. Balachandran has two brothers Radhakrishnan and Sukumaran both abroad, and two sisters Nandini and Geetha. Nandini's husband was working in Saudi and now they have settled in Kerala. Geetha's husband is in New Zealand and she stays there and in Kerala.

Balachandran came to Mumbai in 1983 after completing his graduation in Chemistry at St Thomas College in Thrissur and stayed with his sister. He joined Law College but he knew it was not for him and he left it to complete Diploma in Financial Management (DFM) from KC College. He then joined as Assistant under a Financial Consultant. In 1986



Aditya, Akshay

Balachandran joined JK Steel, and was later with Orissa Synthetics for some years. In 2000 he joined JK Cement. Today Balachandran is General Manager (Finance) of JK Cement Ltd The company has completed a Unit at Belgaum and is putting up a Unit in Dubai.

Mrs Lata Menon hails from Kayamkulam in Alleppey District but she was brought up in Mumbai and Thane. She did her schooling in Ambernath and college in Ulhas Nagar. Her father the Late Gopalakrishnan Nair was Office Executive in Engineers India Ltd, located at Nariman Point while her mother the late Ponnamma, worked with the Income Tax Department. The youngest in the family of three, Lata's elder sister Rema and elder brother Prakash are in Mumbai and Ambernath respectively.

Lata completed her B Com, got a job and simultaneously did her MCom and later DFM from Mumbai University. Since 1989 she has been working with PriceWaterhouse and currently she is Senior Manager, Finance and Accounts and heads the Accounts of the western region. Recently she completed her Executive MBA from NMIMS.

In 1988 Balachandran and Lata got married at Dombivli. It was an arranged marriage with Balachandran visiting Lata's house along with his elder sister, brother-in-law and his aunt to 'see' her.

The couple has two sons. Akshay is doing his Final year Engineering at NMIMS Institute and has got campus placement in Infosys. He has plans to write the GMAT and do MBA in the US. His younger brother Aditya is studying in Std XI in Vani Vidyalaya in Mulund and his aim is to do Automobile Engineering. The brothers know Malayalam and like to watch Malayalam movies especially Prithviraj's, go to Sabarimala with their father every year, but they are more comfortable speaking Hindi and English between themselves like any other second generation Mumbai Malayalee youngster.

The family goes on holidays within India and abroad and visits Kerala every year to visit Balachandran's mother.

As part of JK Cement's CSR policy, Balachandran is involved in spreading awareness about education and identifying places to start schools in the southern region. He is also an active member of the Mulund Nair Welfare Society and involved with the Surya Foundation of Surya Krishnamurthi. His hobbies include watching Malayalam movies and reading while Lata likes to listen to music and to cook dishes for her family when she gets time from her busy office schedule.



The newly wedded couple- Lata and Balachandran Menon

Malayalam Poetry from Mumbai

Continued from page 33

Malayalam poetry has seen poets of different ideology and subjects besides some with a pet subject. Padmabhushan late Nalapat Balamani Amma used to write mainly on her pet subject, motherhood. The major number of her compilations, about 20 in number, deals with motherhood. Yet, she could keep her subject warm and endearing, instead of repeating the same idea. Critics and admirers called her mother and grandmother of Malayalam poetry. Recipient of India's and Kerala's greatest literary awards, Saraswati Sanman and Ezhuthachchan Puraskaram, she could raise her verses to poetry by superior allegories.

She describes the tears that rolled down from a poor, sick and starving child, in her poem '*Sahatāpam*' (Empathy) as follows:

"ഒന്നുരണ്ടശ്രുകണങ്ങളരക്ഷണം
നിന്നു തിളങ്ങി നിലത്തുതിർന്നു.
ജീവിതോഷസ്സിൽ വിരിഞ്ഞൊരത്താമര-
പ്പൂവിതൾ തൂകിയ മഞ്ഞുനീരിൽ,
ബിംബിച്ചുകാണായ്മേ മാനുഷാത്മാവിങ്കൽ
നിർമ്മഗ്നമായുള്ള ദിവ്യരശ്മി.
ഈ മൗക്തികങ്ങൾ പതിക്കട്ടെ നിസ്വരി-
ലോമനേ, നിൻ കണ്ണിൽനിന്നു വീണ്ടും.
അത്തലിരുട്ടിൽ വെളിച്ചമൊട്ടേകുവാ-
നത്ര ശക്തങ്ങളീ നക്ഷത്രങ്ങൾ
പ്രേമലുബ്ധങ്ങളാം ജീവിതഭൃംഗങ്ങൾ-
ക്കീമുകുളങ്ങൾ ഭാഗ്യാങ്കുരങ്ങൾ
പാരിൻവരൾച്ച തീർത്താകെത്തളിർപ്പിക്കാൻ
പോരുമീ ദിവ്യജലകണങ്ങൾ
ദുർല്ലഭമോയിരം വെള്ളിനാണ്യത്തേക്കാ-
ളുള്ളലിഞ്ഞോലുമൊരശ്രുബിന്ദു!" (അമ്മ)

She does not exhibit any weakness in finding allegories or appropriate words to express them unlike the present day poets who have to resort to 'prosaic poems' to hide their deficiencies. It is also to be noted that despite the basic idea of love of the mother to the children, the reader do not find her narration repetitive and the poetess could visualize all children as her own. To achieve this high vision, the poet needs a wide imagination.

A major part of writers of Mumbai are poets who contribute their creations to the periodicals published from the metropolis. Nevertheless there is a lot to be desired about their craftsmanship. The lack of facilities to refresh their memories and to widen their horizons could be reasons for the lack of expertise. Compared to other Indian languages, Malayalam is credited to have a large collections of classics in original as well as in translations would enrich their faculties. Malayalee organisations can arrange a large library and literary meets to discuss the classic and the contemporary literature besides analyzing one's own creations.



GIRIJA NAIR

INBORN TALENT AND GRACE

-Elvee

The entrance to the Geeta Nritya Vidyalaya at Mulund reminds one of the temple architecture of Kerala with its wooden door and small bells on it. Inside there is a huge hall which can accommodate the dance practice of several students at one session. There is a small shrine dedicated to Lord Nataraja, edakkas hanging on either side, a cluster of konna (laburnum) flowers on top at the centre, pictures of Saraswathi, Mahalakshmi and Ganapathy and the smell of agarbathis give a divine ambience to the space. Several photos of Girija Nair in different Bharatanatyam bhavas as well as kathakali pictures and Ravi Varma prints adorn the walls.

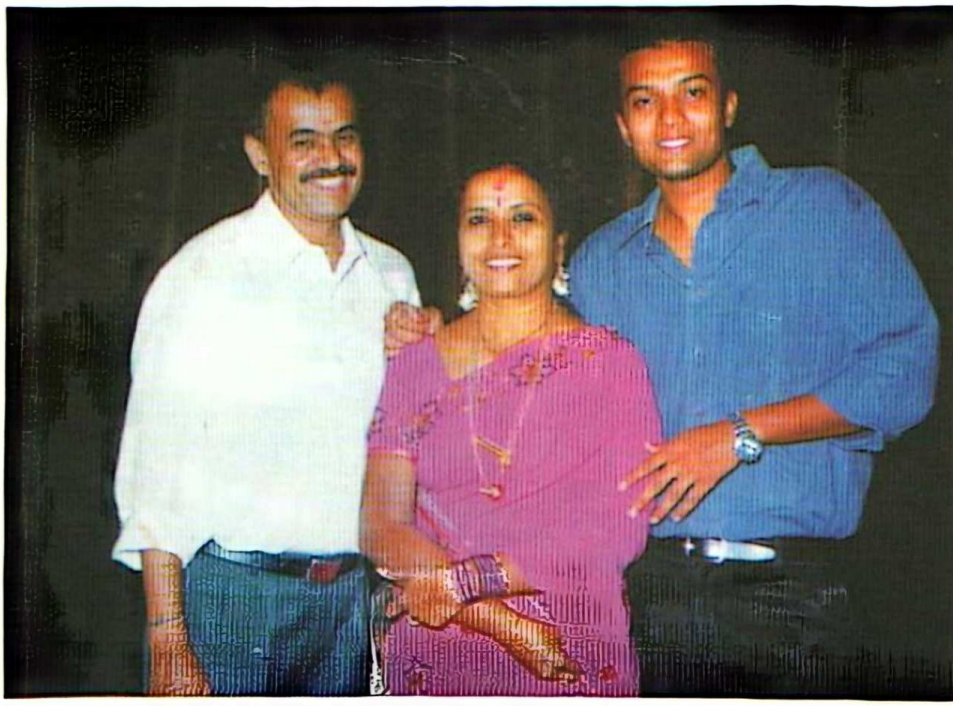
This is the dance class run by Girija Nair with a staff of ten dancers, teaching Bharata-natyam to about 500 students in Mumbai and the suburbs and spreading knowledge of this ancient classical dance form.

Girija comes from an artistic family. Her father,the late RK Pillai was one of the founder members of Arts Centre Mulund , and was actively involved with Prathibha Theatres, as an actor and director of Malayalam plays. He was LIC Development Officer, having come to Mumbai from Thiruvalla in 1945. Girija studied in Mumbai at Vani Vidyalaya, Mulund. Her mother the late Saraswathi Amma supported her father in all his artistic endeavours , even acting in a few plays when the need arose.

Geeta Nritya Vidyalaya, named after her elder sister who passed away at the early age of 27, was founded in the early 80s and Girija is its Founder- Director. Today it has 3 branches in Mulund, 2 in Bhandup, in Vikhroli, Hiranandani Powai, Airoli and Kalyan Ulhas Nagar. The institute is affiliated to the Nalanda Dance Research Centre Juhu and Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Miraj and offers 7 year Diploma course which is recognized by the Government.

"I give my 100% to my students when I teach them and I expect 100 % from them. Then they are sure to succeed in their dance."





Girija Nair with her husband Unnikrishnan Nair and son Sachin

It conducts its annual examination in July and about 78 students ha performed their arangettams through this Institute.

What started as a hobby for Geetha turned into a full time profession. S has done her graduation from Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya and currently doing her post graduation in Fine Arts at the same place. S started learning dance at the age of three under Kala Sadan Guru Ma Later she learnt under Gurus Kadirvelu and Soundararajan. She h choreographed 8 ballets which she and her students perform on vario occasions. Girija has plans to choreograph more dance ballets.

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Girija and her students have performed several times Guruvayoor, Kollur, and temples and organizations in t suburbs of Mumbai. They have also participated at t Shivali dance festival where she has been conferred with t Nritya Shivali Award. There is an annual day Programm where her students are encouraged to perfo Bharatanatyam.

This is in addition to the yearly *chelenga* festival which t Vidyalaya conducts where the students can exhibit th talents. There are solo dancing and singing competitio poetry and shloka recitation, drawing and painti competition as well as *mehendi*, cooking, *rango* handicrafts, solo singing and dancing competitions parents at the *chelenga* festival.

Girija got married to Unnikrishnan Nair who has his o business. He hails from Payyanur and his father the late Krishnavadyan Namboothiri was at one time the melsha of Sabarimala temple. Unnikrishnan points out that there about 25 temples in Kannur area where his extended fam do the pujas and rituals. Girija and Unnikrishnan have son, Sachin, who has completed his Maritime Engineer and is currently doing MBA in Port and Shipp Management at the Indian Maritime University in Kochi.

Girija Nair believes in the purity of the classical dance fo and does not like to mix it with current Bollywood sty She is sure that there is a future for it since many youngs are interested in learning it. Of course at the *chele* festival, her students can perform any type of dance bu the Annual Day performance, they perform the class style which she has taught them.

TRAVANCORE ROYAL PUSH TO LEARNING

-S Parameswaran

According to the eminent historian the late A Sreedhara Menon who has authored a comprehensive History of the Kerala University, Sree Chitra Thirunal, the reigning ruler of Travancore State offered the world famous Physicist and Nobel Prize Winner Albert Einstein the post of Vice chancellor of the newly formed University of Kerala. But it was politely declined and Einstein proceeded to America to join the Princeton University.This is one instance of the Royal family's efforts to improve the status of education in their state.

The contribution of Marthanda Varma's descendants to the cause of education in their kingdom of Travancore is remarkable.



Sri Chithra Tirunal Bala Rama Varma

The history of Travancore begins with Marthanda Varma who inherited the kingdom and expanded it into Travancore during his reign from1729-1758. In successive battles, he defeated and absorbed kingdoms upto Cochin including Attingal, Kollam, Kayamkulam, Kottarakkara and Ambalapuzha. He succeeded in defeating the Dutch East India Company at the decisive battle of Colachel in 1741 where he captured Dutch Admiral De Lannoy and later appointed him as Senior Admiral (Valia Kapithan) in his navy.

When Tippu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore attacked Travancore, the then Maharajah appealed to the British East India Company for aid, setting a precedent which led to the installation of a Resident in the state.

The descendants of Marthanda Varma continued promotion of education within their kingdom.

Uttirattadi Thirunal Rani Gowri Parvathy Bayi (1815-1829)

Famous for her proclamation of 1817 by which each Mandapathu vathukkal or District was directed to appoint one Malayalam and one Tamil teacher on equal footing. The salary was Rs 7 per month.

Her nephew Maharajah Swati Thirunal Rama Varma paid great attention to education. In 1834 the first English school came into being in Travancore. In 1835 Swati Thirunal had five more such schools established in Thukkalay, Alappuzha, Kayamkulam, Paravur and Chirayankil. The Observatory was set up by this king in 1836.

Sree Swati Thirunal's younger brother Sri Utram Thirunal Marthanda Varma became the next king. In 1866, the Maharajah's College, now the University College, was established. Special attention was bestowed on girls' education leading up to the setting up of girls' schools like Zenana Mission Girls' School. In 1874 a Law Class was opened.

Sir Visakham Thirunal Rama Varma brother of the Late Maharajah, became the king next. His reign was very short.

His nephew Maharajah Sri Moolam Thirunal ruled from 1885 to 1924. The Victoria Medical School with an attached hospital for women was established in Kollam. A female 'normal' school was experimentally started in 1887-88.

Pooradam Thirunal Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi took over as Regent for a period from 1924 1931.The provision of noon meals to poor pupils staying far away from their homes was sanctioned. It involved generous contributions from the public. The present site of the Maharajah's College For Women in Thiruvananthapuram was made available by the Regent to this College.

Sri Chithra Tirunal Bala Rama Varma assumed power in 1931. His reign 1931 1949, witnessed historic developments and progress. The prestigious Travancore University took its birth in 1937. He invited all the 14 Vice- Chancellors of other Universities including Dr S Radhakrishnan, Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar, Amarnath Jha, Fazil Hussain, and so on for drawing up a comprehensive syllabus.

The University Labour Corps was formed to inculcate dignity of labour and was the fore-runner to the present NCC.

Malayala Nadu (Kerala) can be proud at having a number of names as all India firsts among the ladies. The first lady Surgeon-General of India, Dr Mrs Ponnen Lukose, the first lady Magistrate Mrs Omana Kunjamma, the first Lady High Court Judge Mrs Anna Chandy, first lady Chief Engineer Kochu Thressia , First Lady Supreme Court Judge Ms Fatima Beevi, all hailed from this land.



MUMBAI NEWS DIGEST

KIM News Bureau



Artistes performing at the Keli festival

Keli Festival

Mumbai wakes to a new percussion music

Keli, is devoted to the revival of temple music and dances of Kerala in Mumbai, to bring to light the rich traditions of these forgotten performing arts. It deserves unstinted support in its untiring efforts in this noble endeavour.

To commemorate its 20th anniversary, Keli this time brought two well known percussion and allied instruments by two highly acclaimed troupes to Mumbai. Mumbaites literally awoke to this audio feast.

The venue of the performance was a specially prepared arena in Horniman Circle garden. The troupes presented the *thayambaka* with their special fervour and the large audience was not disappointed.

On 12th January evening Panamanna Sasi and his troupe started their feat in the most traditional way, after paying obeisance to their Gurus Malamakkavu Kesava Poduval, Madayikavu Sankara Marar and Kottakal Kuttan Marar. Vinu, Gopi, Satish, Ravi, Dipu Murali, Nikhil, Vinod, Mahesh and Vinisha ably supported Sasi and they played Adi tala on percussion with expert ascendance and descendance. The tabla Maestro Zakir Hussein was prominent in the highly appreciative audience.

On 13th, Sasi and troupe presented Lakshmi Tal, which is already forgotten in its home Kerala. Union Bank General Manager and head of their corporate communication department Aftab and artist Riyaz Komu also joined them in paying obeisance to the masters.



Aftab, General Manager and Ashok Nair, Corporate Communication Division, Union Bank seen in front among the audience.

Ambika Varasiar honoured

Amateur Artist Association Mumbai has awarded Ambika Varasiar, Ladies Wing Creative Co-ordinator of Tru Indian Information and Guidance Society, Dombivli, the Chairman Award for excellent choreography, make-up and costume designing for Swetha Warrier who bagged the first prize in Classical Dance and third prize in Western Dance at Jallosh Mumbapurika Mahasangram, the second All India Dance and Multi-lingual Drama Competition. Ambika has been conferred this award for presenting the traditional Kerala Folk Dance Thiruvathira and Malayalam semi-classical dance at a national level platform through her disciples. The Award function will take place on February 5 at Praghnabodhini High School in Goregaon(E).



Ambika Varasiar

GULF-BASED BUILDERS SET BASE IN MUMBAI

ELEMECS INDIA, which had confined its activities to the Middle East with huge projects to emerge as leaders in Electromechanical Contracting has now barged into "the world's only blooming market- India." It has set up its office at Wellington Business Park II, Andheri-Kurla Road, Marol. It had till now been operating from its offices in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Oman.

K D Gopalakrishnan, Managing Director and founder of the company told an elite group at The Leela on January 9 that the company expected sizeable business in India, with its booming economy which called for total customer satisfaction.

Founded in 1993, the company provides a wide variety of integrated engineering and contracting services to a diverse spectrum of clients. It is executing a turn-key electromechanical contract from design to engineering to execution of the 64-storied One Avighna Park at Lower Parel with residential projects and a 23-storied rehabilitation tower, with 538 apartments which has been completed on schedule.

It plans to bring foreign investments and expertise to India, particularly Kerala. It has launched Elemecs Wedding Castles in Kayamkulam and Kannur. It is now building a 350-bed Multi-Speciality In-house Hospital at Kayamkulam. The Group has set up the Elemec Charitable Trust to provide charitable and humanitarian services focused on educational and financial aid to the needy and community regeneration.



Kailash Agarwal, Chairman Avighna Group and Dr K K Damodaran, President Emeritus, Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti, inaugurating the Mumbai office. Suresh Kumar MD of Seagull and K D Gopalakrishnan, MD of Elemecs also seen in the picture.

Nair Welfare Society Powai organizes Nair Mahotsavam-2012

Nair Welfare Society (NWS), Powai organized the Nair Mahotsavam-2012 at the Open Grounds in front of the Hiranandani Foundation School, Powai on January 8, 2012. Surendra Hiranandani, Managing Director, Hiranandani Group inaugurated the mega event.

KK Nambiar, Chairman, Mumbai Province of the World Malayalee Council inaugurated the cultural events as the Guest of Honour. He offered the services of the Council for heart surgery for the economically weaker sections of the society.

The Navaratna Exellence Awards were presented to nine members of the community for their exemplary service to the society. Santhosh Pillai, Hon. Treasurer introduced the Awardees and the awards were presented to S R Pillai (Socio-cultural Service), SG Nair (Entrepreneurship), VN Gopalakrishnan (Journalism), Prem Kumar (Performing Arts), Smt Susheela Venugopal (Education), DR Nair (Professional), Shanthan Panicker (Sports), K R Pillai (active elderly member) and Smt Bhavani Amma (active elderly lady member).

A variety entertainment programme consisting of traditional performing arts by members and their families was a major attraction. A drama titled 'Avarohanam' was enacted. GK Vasu Pillai, Founder President and MKS Nair, President, KGK Kurup, President, Kendriya Nair Samskarika Sangh also graced the occasion.



Surendra Hiranandani, MD, Hiranandani Group inaugurating the Nair Mahotsavam-2012. Seen in the pic. are: Vijaykumar Pillai (Secretary), Santhosh Pillai, MKS Nair and KK Nambiar.

THIRUVATHIRA CELEBRATION AT DOMBIVLI

Under the aegis of Tru Indian Information & Guidance Society *Thiruvathira* was celebrated in Dombivli on January 1st 2012.The event was inaugurated by Malayalam film star Padmasri Sukumari and presided over by Ambika Varasiar, Ladies Wing co-ordinator. Baby R Nair delivered the welcome speech while Bina Thampi made the keynote address.

During the event, Malayalam drama actress Kozhikode Vilasini was honoured. Pune Kairali Charitable Trust handed over to her the first instalment of her pension.

From this year Tru Indian has instituted Samaj Sevak awards to persons for outstanding social work. This year's recipients are V K Mohammed (Bhilai), MV Parameswaran (Pune), PK Anandan (Shahad), Rajan V Nair (Thane) and Rugmini Sagar (Navi Mumbai). Mrs Usha Sasindran accepted the award on behalf of her late husband Sasindran. Divya K Iyer, Akhila S Nair, Aparajitha N Nair, Arunima S Shajayil, Anakha A Baiju, Mahalakshmi C K, Devika Unnikrishnan, Archana J Nair, Reshma S Panicker and Nityasri Swetha Warrier performed for the popular *Thiruvathira puthen thiruvathira* song choreographed by Ambika Varasiar. Uma S Nair proposed a vote of thanks.



Sukumari lighting the lamp at the inauguration



Sukumari joining one group of dancers

MULUND CHRISTIAN ECUMENICAL FELLOWSHIP

Nearly 300 parishioners of the twelve mainline churches under the Catholic,Orthodox and Protestant Churches from Mulund and neighbouring areas, gathered at St.Pius X Church, Mulund West, for a praise and worship fellowship for Christians to come together in unity and pray for Mumbai and the nation. This ecumenical movement gathered momentum with the Govt.sanctioning and starting of the Christian cemetery at Mulund, a few years ago. This fellowship has organized several events in the area for the sick and needy people.



Ecumenical fellowship which took place in Mulund St Pius X parish.

KASHMIR TO KERALA, IT'S ONE NATION

-Dr. Farooq Abdullah

Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Union Energy Minister, told an elite audience at the Hiranandani Keralite Association's annual day, that the vision and the common cultural heritage were the factors that bound every Indian to weld the Indian nation from Kashmir to Kerala. The new year Award Nite, 2011-2012 was organised by Prince Vaidyan, General Secretary.

Dr. Abdullah was given an award along with Capt. C P Krishnan Nair, Ramesh Chennithala, JNPT Chairman Radhakrishnan, Thermax M D, M S Radhakrishnan, Special Inspector General of Police Gulabrao Pol, Urvashi Sharada, Anupam Kher, Jayaprada and Film Director Blessy (all for their work in 'Pranayam,') and actor Mukesh Rishi.

Mukesh Rishi recalled his special association with Kerala since it was Malayalam films that had brought him recognition. Sharada acknowledged her debt to Malayalam films, speaking extempore in Malayalam after reading out a prepared text in English.

Gulabrao Pol said he was happy and proud that the Malayalees in the city had recognized his contribution in maintaining peace and order in sensitive Bhivandi, when riots engulfed Mumbai and several other parts of Maharashtra in 1993.



from Left: JNPT Chairman Radhakrishnan, Shardha, actress, Capt. Krishnan Nair, Leela Group Chairman, Dr Farooq Abdullah, Union Cabinet Minister, Ramesh Chennithala, KPCC President and Prince Vaidyan, HKA General Secretary.

The Chairman of HKA, SR Pillai, the President, Dr. P J Aprain, Treasurer A N Shaji and others spoke on the occasion. The violin Maestro Balabhaskar presented some items of his repertoire with his orchestra.

The Awards Nite was organised in a lavish manner, befitting the affluence of the members, as one of the office bearers remarked in his speech. The function was held in the Norita Gardens, Powai.



Left to right: Shruthi Menon, anchor, Prince Vaidyan, Vivek Nair, MD Leela Group, Jayaprada MP and Actress, Mrs Sharma, M S Radhakrishnan, JNPT Chairman, Ms Shardha, actress, Capt. Krishnan Nair, Chairman Leela Group, Dr Farooq Abdullah, Union Cabinet Minister, Ramesh Chennithala, KPCC President, Gulabrao Pol, IPS Spl Inspector Gen. of Police Law & Order Maharashtra, Unnikrishnan, C&MD Thermax Ltd, Blessy,Film Director, Mukesh Rishi, film actor.

Ayurvedic camp

Mulund Kerala Samajam conducted a free Ayurvedic camp in association with Arya Vaidya Sala Coimbatore . Dr Dinesan Nambudiri, Dr N V Rema Devi, Dr Sunil examined about 60 people in the camp and dispensed medicines. Samajam members Sujatha Nair, Lakshmi Narayanan, E Ramachandran, CKK Poduval, Suresh Babu, Mohan Kumar, Radhakrishnan, Girish Kumar, Sethumadhavan, KM Nair and others actively co-ordinated the camp.

SUPER SPECIALITY CARE CENTRE AT BANDRA

Eminent diabetologist, Dr. Vijay Panikar's Speciality Care Centre for Diabetes, Thyroid and Advanced Dental Care, opened at Siddhant, in a new residential complex behind Guru Nanak Hospital, Bandra East.
The Dental Care team consists of Dr. Arjun Panikar, Dr. Boskey Panikar, Dr. Aditi Athare, Dr. Jigar Nandola and Dr. Prachi Jariwala.
Dr. V R Bhimani declared the new speciality centre open on 22 January.

New MC of Bassein Kerala Samajam

Bassein Kerala Samajam has elected its new Managing Committee members. PVK Nambiar has been elected as President, KO Devassy Vice President, MK Vidyadharan General Secretary, Ajith Nambiar, Jt Secretary, Ram Kumar Nair Treasurer and PD Francis the Jt Treasurer.



PVK Nambiar



Ram Kumar Nair



MK Vidyadharan



The Shiv Sena honoured Social activist and Malad Malayalee Samajam President Advocate Padma Divakaran with an Award.

Mannathacharya Puraskaram 2010 to Dr K Vijayan

Thane Nair Welfare Association has chosen Dr K Vijayan for conferring the Mannathacharya Puraskaram 2010. The Association President K R Harikumar announced this during its 135th Mannam Jayanti Celebration. Dr. K. Vijayan, born in Pattambi, Palakkad district came to Mumbai after completing his medical studies and settled in Ambernath. He started his practice with people who were poverty ridden and had no medical care available. Even at 75 he spends his time in dispensary without expecting any monetary gains. He is actively involved in many social, spiritual and cultural activities. He has also held the positions of Chairman of Ayyappa Mission Ambernath, Secretary of Ambernath Medical Association and is also the Founder of Ambernath NSS.



Mannam Puraskaram presented to Dr K Vijayan by Dr Sanjay Naik, MP. Pratap Sar Naik, MLA, K Vijayakumar, KGK Kurup, K R Harikumar also seen in the picture.

Sports competition

Bassein Kerala Samajam is holding its 51st annual sports competition at Holy Family School Vasai East on February 5th. Those wishing to participate can contact the Samajam office on 0250 2382068, 9987006151/9322241617.

Mannam Jayanti Celebrations at Mira Road

Mannath Padmanabhan brought about far-reaching changes within a particular community but he himself was a representative of not just one community but humanity itself. He worked hard for the welfare of Nairs, taught them to rise above superstitions and blind beliefs and his ideals must be taught to the future generations to show them the path of right living. NK Premachandran, former Kerala Minister of Water Resources who was the Chief guest, stated the above in his speech at the Kendriya Nair Samskarika Sangh (KNSS) Mannam Jayanti Celebrations and Nair Mahasangamam 2012 at Mira Road. KNSS President KGK Kurup in his inaugural speech expressed the desire of KNSS to construct a Mannam Smarak Hall and sought the help of Narendra Mehta, former Mayor, Mira Bhayandar Municipal Corporation who graced the occasion. The latter in his speech, promised his support to KNSS on this matter. Parvathi Omanakuttan, former Miss World Runner up and Miss India, KNSS MC members Vijay Kumar Pillai (General Secretary), Prabhakaran Nair, NMS Menon spoke on the occasion. University of Mumbai B Pharm first rank holder Chitra Varma was felicitated. All the members from the various KNSS Units were welcomed.



Powai Fine Arts organised a rendering of Thyagaraja Pancharatna keerthanams by Carnatic music teachers and singers of Mumbai led by Alamelu Mani and Kalyani Sarma followed by a dance ballet Bala Ramayanam at Powai Olympia Quadrangle

Astrological Seminar and Carnatic Music Competition

An Astrological seminar will be held at in Vashi Ayyappa Temple in Sector 8 under the auspices of Mookambika Astrological Seva Sanstha on January 29. There will also be a Carnatic music competition open to all Carnatic music students of Mumbai. Kaithapram Viswanathan will be the chief guest at the event. Kanjangad Ramachandran, music Director Kaithapram Viswanathan, playback singers Snehaja Praveen are the judges of the music contest. At the astrological seminar the listeners can clear their dubts in the Question- Answer section. Astrologer and Vaastu consultant Cherupalli Narayanan Nambudiri, astrologer Vinod Panikkar, will participate in the seminar on Astrology. There will also be a discussion on Ayurveda and its healing effects by Kottakkal College Professor of Ayurveda.The event will start at 8.30 am with a dance programme by students of Navarasa Dance Academy. Eminent guests include N K Bhupesh Babu, Rajan Nair (Thane), KNSS president KGK Kurup, UK Menon (Kalwa), Vashi Ayyappa temple Secretary K Muralidhara, Salim Kumar Sree Narayana Mandira Samithi, among others.



The recently formed Kalina Ayyappa Seva Sangh Trust conducted Mandala Pooja celebrations on January 14 and 15 under the aegis of Mangulam Purushottam Namboothiri followed by Annadaanam. The Trustees are Soman Raghavan, Mohan Nair, Suresh Kakapoil, Prasannan Laxman, Jijesh Gangadharan, Mohan Kumar Pillai, Preman Nair, Sunil Parayath, Harish Salian, Balachandra Mestry, Umakanth Chawda, and Mohan Shetty.

Family Get together

Mumbai City and Western Region Unit of Varier Samajam is organizing a full day festival of Family Get together and Cultural programmes on February 5 at LIC Community Hall Santa Cruz (W).The programme will start at 10 am with competitions for children, music and dance items by members and buffet lunch. Chowallur Krishnan Kutty from Kerala is the Chief guest at the event.



Vapi Malayalee Welfare Association held its 35th annual day at Vapi. K D Chandran lights the lamp while P V Vijay Kumar and Committee members look on.



The seventh Anniversary of Goodwin Jewellery was held in Mumbai. Thrissur Mayor M P Paul inaugurated the event. Goodwin Group Chairman AG Mohanan, Sunil, Film actor Devan, Bhupesh Babu, Murali and Sudheesh seen in the picture.



Subhash Chandran art consultant, lights the lamp while Krishnan Nambudiri (Chairman, Keraleeya Samajam), Rajan Nair, Kunnam Vishnu (President, Kalakshethram) and K P Vinayan (Kalakshethram) look on.

Legal Seminar

Sree Narayana Mandira Samithi in association with Kerala Legal Services Authority is organizing an interactive seminar for providing free and competent legal advice to the general public on February 11. Justice C N Radhakrishnan, Justice P Mohandas, Bharat Shah Gopi, Adv Subhas Chand, and several leading experts from the legal field will address the audience at the seminar. Those interested in participation and entry passes can contact the Samithi's office on 27718282, 27724095.

Condolence Meeting

The Bombay Keralayee Samithi, Malad (W) held a condolence meeting on the sudden demise of Dr Sukumar Azheekode.

Advocate Padma Divakaran, president, presided over the meeting and expressed her condolences on behalf of the Samiti. T Madhavan, Rakhee Sunil, Anniyan and P Nambiar also paid their tributes to the late Dr Sukumar Azheekode.

Goodknight Soorya Festival

The inauguration of Goodknight Soorya Festival in association with Kalaskhetra, Kerala Festival was held in Dombivli on January 27. It is a five day festival of folk arts and dances of Kerala performed by well-known and upcoming artistes. Dr Krishnan Nambudiri, Chairman, Keraleeya Samajam inaugurated the event. The inauguration was followed by *Nrtithyashilpam 'sooryakala'*,directed by Guru Kalamandalam Gopalakrishnan and kathakali, *'kalyanasaugandikam'* presented by Margai kathakali group. MI Damodaran and Ravindra Chavan were also present at the event.



Nrtithyashilpam 'sooryakala' performed by students of Kalakshethram, Dombivli

D R NAIR

TRUST BEGETS TRUST

D R Nair, Vice President, Hiranandani Constructions recently received the Navaratna Excellence Award from Powai Nair Samaj for outstanding work in his field. He reveals the secret of his success and shares valuable insights on how to succeed in life.

Q: Can you tell us something about how you came into this field?

I was associated with M/s. Hiranandani Constructions since 1984 with a total experience of more than 26 years, after moving to Mumbai in 1978. So far, I have completed around 11 million sq. ft. of construction which includes both residential complexes and commercial structures. I am very grateful to both our Managing Directors, Shri Niranjan Hiranandani and Shri Surendra Hiranandani, for my growth from the grass- roots as a 'Foreman' to 'Vice President - Construction'.

I have always put in my best efforts and strive hard to meet targets set by the company and I have full job satisfaction in what I do to achieve them. I value this prestigious award. Being a senior and responsible person, I like to guide all my subordinates and colleagues for whom I am always available and I encourage them by putting my trust in their abilities.



D R Nair

I have received full support of my family members, especially my wife for adjusting with my long and busy work schedules.

Q : The secret of your success in this profession?

I have always believed in hard work, dedication and teamwork for achieving success in my professional life. You get back the trust and confidence you repose in your colleagues.

Can you tell us something about your childhood, your education, where you studied etc?

I was born in a village named Kalanjoor in Pathanamthitta district, on 28th Nov 1956 to Shri Damodharan Nair and Smt Sarasakshy Amma. Upto S.S.L.C, I studied at Govt. High School, Kalanjoor and thereafter at St. Stephens College at Pathanapuram. I did my Technical education (Electrical supervisor and wire man course) at Pune from 1977 to 1979. I also completed part time Construction Management course at Bhaghubhai Polytechnic in 2002.

Q: What are your hobbies?

I like listening to music, going on vacation with my family, watching movies etc. whenever I get any free time.

Q: Any New year message for KIM readers?

My New year Message to all the readers is that we should work with full team-spirit and harmony and one must learn to balance professional life with family life, without neglecting our health.

-KIM



D R Nair recieving the 'Navaratna Excellence Award' which was conferred by the Nair Welfare Society-Powai.



Care for Ageing Skin



Rashma Anand

As children, birthdays were occasions we looked forward to lots of presents and yummy food. With the passing of years, though the excitement of birthdays has abated, it does not stop the birthdays from coming, does it? And with each birthday, whether you turn wiser or not, you definitely turn older as does your skin.

Ageing can impact your skin in several ways. Gone are the days when wrinkles were considered a sign of maturity and wisdom. Women and men today want to look younger. There are several effective anti-ageing products available in the market. Besides, simple home remedies are also helpful in retarding the effects of ageing on the skin.

Please note that it is definitely not possible to reverse the effect of ageing, nor completely stop the process. All you can do is reduce the impact it has on your skin. And naturally, the earlier you start caring for ageing skin, greater success you will have.

Factors that Influence Ageing

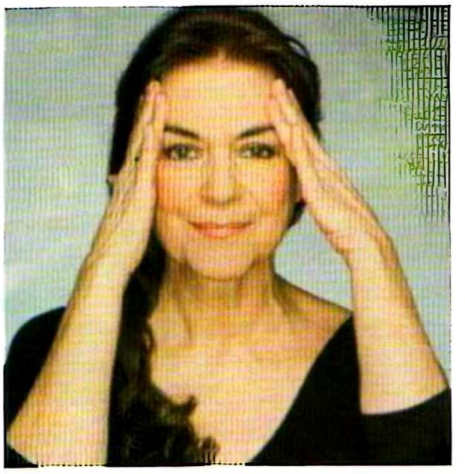
Ageing of the skin is influenced by primarily two kinds of factors intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic features include genetics, so the chances that your skin will look like that of your mother are very high. When the process of ageing will begin depends a great deal on genetic factors.

Extrinsic factors refer to factors over which you have some control like exposure to the sun, your diet and sleep patterns, your lifestyle etc. While you have no control over the intrinsic factors, you can and should manage the extrinsic factors adequately, if you want your skin to escape from the harsh impact of ageing.

Let us examine the most common signs of ageing and what can be done about them.

The Signs of Ageing

The most common signs of ageing on the skin include:



i. Appearance of fine wrinkles
ii. Appearance of age spots
iii. Sagging and loosening of skin
iv. Extreme dryness of the skin

Wrinkles

Wrinkles are fine lines and folds that appear on the surface of the skin. The most common cause of wrinkling is the changes in the skin structure that occur as one ages. The underlying network of elastin and collagen fibres that provide support to the skin begin to unravel. So when the skin is not held firmly in place, it loosens out and this is manifested as wrinkles. The loss of collagen and elastin is natural process that occurs with age, but it can be accelerated by factors like lack of moisturization, extreme exposure to the sun, cigarette smoking etc. Extreme stress can also manifest as permanent worry lines on the forehead.

How to Reduce Wrinkles

While wrinkles cannot be completely prevented, you can take the following steps to delay their appearance and the severity when they do appear.

i. Use appropriate sunscreen creams for protection from the harsh UV rays

ii. Keep skin hydrated by drinking water and use of appropriate moisturizing creams

iii. Quit smoking (if you do smoke) and maintain a healthy lifestyle with adequate sleep

iv. Reduce the stress component of life.

v. Several anti-wrikle products are available over the counter. These products typically contain Vitamin A antioxidants and other ingredients that have a beneficial effect in delaying onset of wrinkles.

vi. Prescription anti-wrinkle products are a recent line of treatment recommended by dermatologists or cosmetologists specializing in this area. These typically contain higher concentration of the active ingredient and should be part of a comprehensive anti-ageing skin care program. Do not use prescription anti-wrinkle treatment without proper medical advice.

Age Spots

Age spots, medically termed lentigines, are brownish discoloration that occur on the hands, feet, neck and the

face. Age spots are caused due to long term exposure to the sun and these are the areas that are most exposed to the sun.

Special cells called melanocytes are present in the outer layer of the skin (epidermis), which perform a protective function by absorbing the sun's harmful UV rays. As you age, the number of melanocytes produced by the skin decreases, as does the UV absorption capability of melanocytes. As a result, you observe age spots, which indicate an area of the skin damaged by UV rays.

How to Reduce Age Spots

As the reduction in melanocyte number and potency is a natural phenomenon, nothing much can be done to change that. However you can aim to prevent the occurrence of age spots by ensuring adequate sun protection through the use of sun screen products. Further use appropriate clothing like hats, scarves etc when you have to be out in the hot sun.

Home Remedies For Age Spots

The following home remedies are quite effective in reducing the severity of the age spots and making them disappear eventually:

i. Rub lemon juice directly into the age spots and let it remain for about 30 minutes before washing

ii. Aloe vera juice /gel has been used known as a 'skin healing agent' for a long time now. Aloe gel smeared on top of the age spots works to heal the skin beneath and aids in fading and eventual disappearance of the age spots.

Sagging Skin and Dry Skin

These are the effects produced by ageing on the skin and can be accelerated by unhealthy ,lifestyles and enhanced stress.

As the underlying skin structure of fatty tissue breaks down with age, the fillers that held the skin firmly in place disappear. Also gravity takes its toll, resulting in sagging skin in place of firm and tight skin.

With age, skin's ability to produce natural oils goes down, causing dryness. Extremely dry skin can be painful too.

There are products available over the counter or prescription based to tackle these problems. For instance, certain hormone based preparations have been found to be beneficial in reducing the visible effects of a sagging skin.



Area around the eyes show the first signs of ageing

Dry skin can be tackled best by hydrating the body and moisturizing the skin adequately. Drink lots of water and use moisturizing creams as appropriate.

As we have seen, ageing is a natural process and there is nothing much you can do to stop it or reverse it. But you can prevent an extremely visible impact of ageing on your skin by acting early.

Remember to take care of your skin today so that it looks good tomorrow.





Healthy Dates

The health benefits of dates are numerous, as this fruit is rich in natural fibres. Dates are also rich in several vitamins and minerals. They contain oil, calcium, sulphur, iron, potassium, phosphorous, manganese, copper and magnesium which are good for health. The consumption of dates daily is necessary for a balanced and healthy diet. Dates help in fighting constipation, intestinal disorders, weight gain, heart problems, sexual weakness, diarrhoea and abdominal cancer.

Dates contribute to muscle development. People consume dates in several ways, like mixing a paste of dates with milk, yogurt or with bread or butter to make the food tasty and healthy. This paste is beneficial for both adults and children, especially during times of recovery from illness. According to a modern medical survey, it has been found that dates are useful in preventing abdominal cancer. Muslims break their Ramzan fast by eating dates. This helps avoid overeating after the fast. When the body absorbs the nutritional value of the dates, hunger subsides.

Dates the crown of sweets

Dates are called the crown of sweets. It gives extra energy to a tired human body within half an hour. Dates are considered to be the best diet during confinement of women. The American Cancer Society recommends intake of 20-35 grams of dietary fibre in a day, supplied through dates. It is said that taking one date a day helps maintain healthy eyes for lifetime. They are quite effective in preventing night blindness.

Benefits of dates

Constipation: Date is a laxative food. This is the reason that dates are beneficial for people suffering from constipation. For full benefit, soak dates for one full night in water. Consume these soaked dates in the morning in syrup form to derive its full benefit.

Intestinal Disorders: The nicotinic content that is present in dates is said to be beneficial in curing intestinal disorders. Continuous intake of dates helps to maintain a check on the growth of the pathological organisms and thus, helps in the rise of friendly bacteria in the intestines.

Taking one date a day will help maintain healthy eyes for a lifetime. They are quite effective in preventing night blindness.



Weight Gain: Dates consist of sugar, fats proteins and essential vitamins. Date consumed with the paste of cucumber help one easily come out of the problem o over-slimming. One kilogram of date contains almost 3,000 calories. Thes calories alone are sufficient to meet th daily requirements of a human body.

Healthy Heart: Dates are helpful i maintaining the heart in a healthy condition. When soaked for a night an crushed in the morning and consumed they help weak hearts. They help fortify the heart, if taken twice in a week.

Sexual Weakness: Dates help increase sexual stamina. A handful of dates, when soaked in fresh goat's milk for the night and then ground in the same milk along with cardamom powder and honey becomes a very useful tonic for increasing sex endurance and during sterility due to functional disorders.

Diarrheoa: Ripe dates contain potassium which is beneficial for controlling diarrheoa.

Intoxication: Dates provide quick relief in the case of alcoholic intoxication. They should be washed and soaked overnight for getting more nutritious values.

Abdominal Cancer: Dates are beneficial for curing abdominal cancer. They provide a useful tonic for all age groups. They are easily digestible and supply extra energy.

Although dates carry great nutritional values, care should be taken in their selection because their sticky surface attracts impurities. Consume only dates that are processed and packed properly. Wash them thoroughly before consuming. This will help remove impurities present in them.

-KIM

-Sudhir Nair

Soursop the Cancer Cure Fruit

The soursop tree is low and is called graviola in Brazil, guanabana in Spanish and has the uninspiring name "soursop" in English. The fruit is very large and the subacid sweet white pulp is eaten out of hand or, more commonly, used to make fruit drinks, sherbets and such.



Soursop fruit

Soursop fruit known in Malayalam as athichakka and flourishing in southern Kerala and some tropical countries has powerful anti-tumor / cancer properties, and also acts as anti-bacterial, anti-fungus (fungi), effective against various types of parasites / worms, lowers high blood pressure, depression, stress, and normalizes the nervous system.

Soursop Cancer cure

A study published in the Journal of Natural Products at the Catholic University of South Korea states that one of the chemical elements contained in Graviola or soursop is able to distinguish and kill colon cancer cells LBH 10,000 times stronger in comparison with therapy and chemotherapy with adriamycin (chemo medicine). The most striking findings of the study are: Graviola can distinguish and kill cancer cells, while leaving the healthy cells intact. It is not like chemotherapy which can not distinguish between cancer cells and healthy cells; both are killed by chemotherapy giving the negative effects of nausea and hair loss. A Study at Purdue University showed that Graviola can kill cancer cells effectively, especially cancer cells of pancreas, prostate and lung cancer cells.

Nutritional value of Soursop

Soursop fruit is rich in vitamin C

It consists of 67.5 percent flesh, 20 percent fruit skin, fruit seeds 8.5 percent and 4 percent of the fruit core.

Apart from water, Soursop contains a type of carbohydrates which has the effect of reducing sugar (glucose and fructose) levels in our body.

The fruit contains very little fat (0.3 g/100 g), so it is good for health.

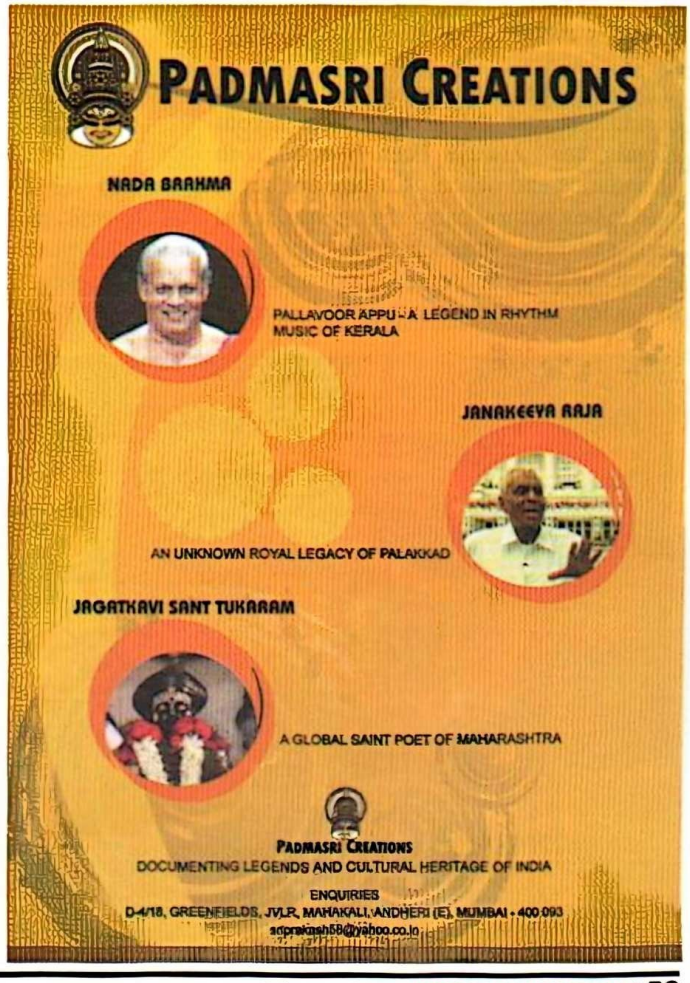
The sour taste comes from the non-volatile organic acids, mainly maleate acid, citric acid, and acid Isocitrate present in the fruit.

Besides its nutritional components, it is also very rich in dietary fibre.

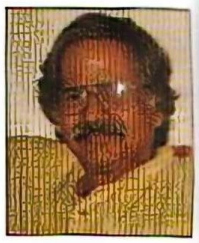
Once the fruit is peeled, it has to be kept under refrigeration for best results.



The soft pulp inside the Soursop fruit



VETTEKKARAN PAATTU



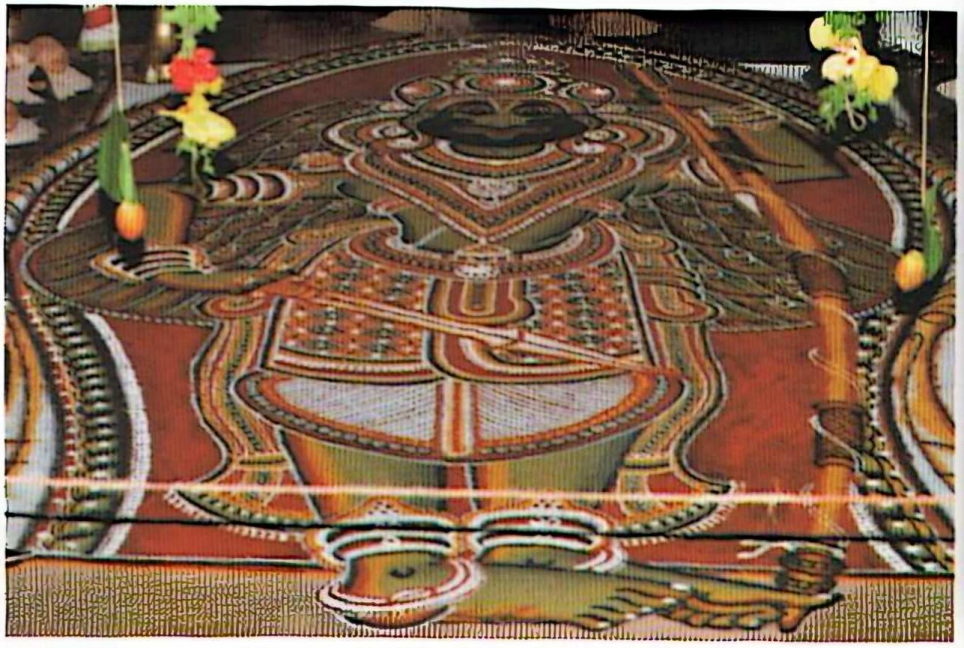
Kunnam Vishnu

It is not only the picture and the songs, there are dances and music, rhythm and rituals also. There are three types of Kalampattu Vettekkaranpattu, Sarpakkalam and Mudiyettu. They are performed by typical tribal communities

Recently I was fortunate to participate in an age old ritual. The mind boggling experience of the mysterious rituals and the extravaganza of the celebrations took me to a remote era of history. The occasion was the seventieth birthday of Brahmasree Mathoor Alarkan Namboodiripad living in the adjacent premises to the site where the Athirathrayaagam was held a year back at Paanjal of Thrissur Dist. The ritual was Vettekkaranpattu. Mathoor family is a staunch devotee of vettekkaran who worship the deity.

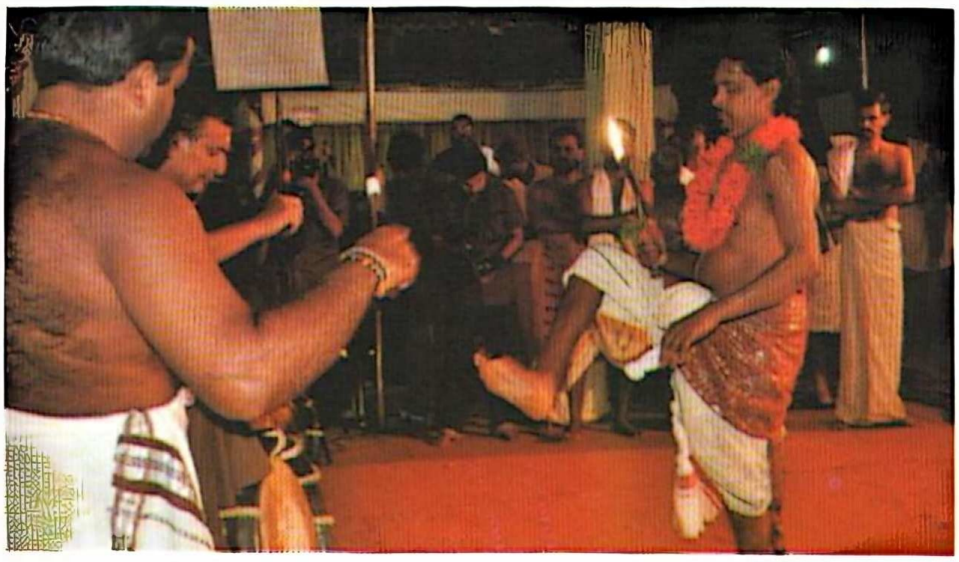
KERALA AND ITS RITUALS

Due to the really covetable climatic conditions and the geographical layout Kerala has always been blessed with abundance and peace. Culture and art is said to be a natural baby of a tranquil mind and satisfied stomach. It was not restricted to the contented upper echelons of society but seeped into tribal customs too. In those days art was no mere exhibition or vanity. It was always interwoven with the inevitable devotion to the powers of nature. Thus all traditional arts would take the form of, what is termed today as, 'ritual art'. However, due to foreign invasion, the traditional art forms faced decline and even ultimate extinction. The rulers came because of their greed for wealth and power, but what followed was the imposition of their culture.



The mural of Vettekkaran made on the floor

One of the very colourful ritual art form is the 'Kalampattu'. 'Kalam' literally means a picture drawn on the ground and 'pattu' means songs. However, in Kalampattu it is not only the picture and the songs, there are dances and music, rhythm and rituals also. There are three types of Kalampattu Vettekkaranpattu, Sarpakkalam and Mudiyettu. They are performed by tribal communities and not by Brahmins. Thus one can reasonably conclude that these art forms, would date back to the invasion of Aryans into Kerala. Let us look at the rituals.



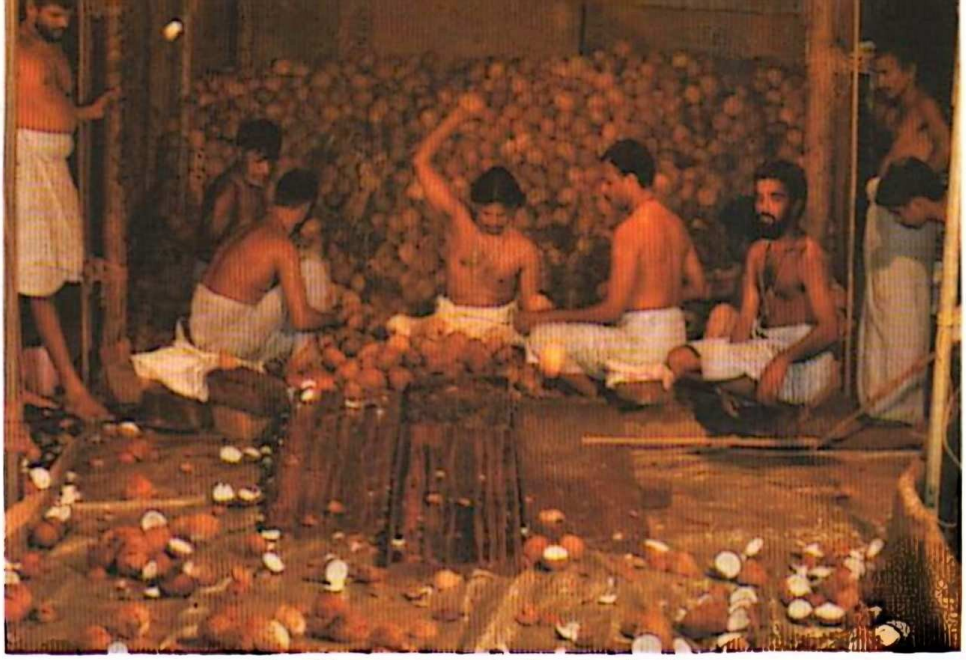
Dance of the oracle, Karo Panicker

THE LEGEND

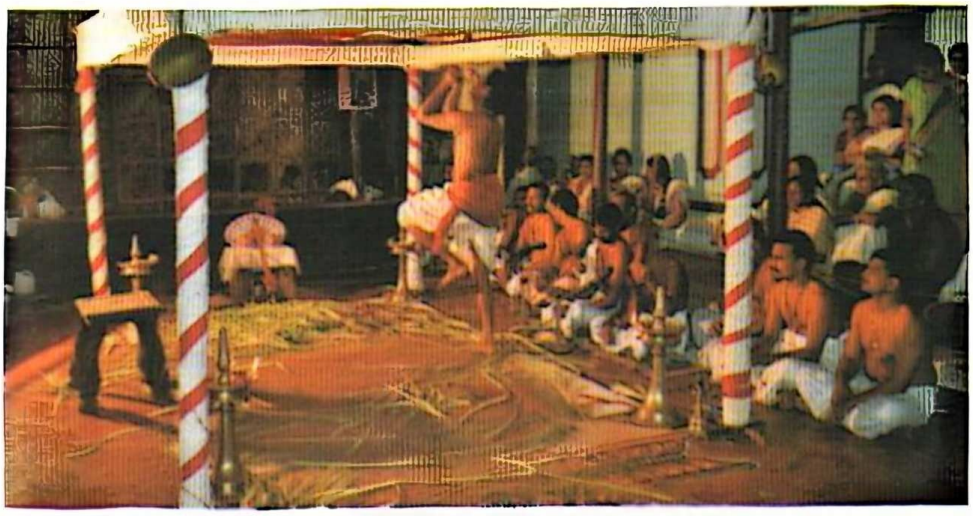
According to anthropologists, in the primitive days when worship of nature prevailed, heroes who feared nothing were worshipped. According to legend, Vettekkaran also was a hero. He ruled from the Nambumala in the thick forests of Western Ghats, near Gudallur in the border of present Kerala and Karnataka.

He hunted wild animals that bothered his subjects, and brought peace to them. According to Moothedam Aniyan, an authority on the subject, "Vettekkaraan had visited Thrikkalamgode near Manjeri, bathed after a tiresome hunting day in Kuttamkulam, and worshipped in Valliyankavu." One can historically conclude that it is Vettekkaran, who invaded the impregnable forests of Malabar and retrieved cultivable lands for his subjects. Vettekkaran is also called 'vettakkuorumakan' meaning a son for hunting.

Some believe that Vettekkaran is the son of Shiva. The story is a page out of Shivapuranam Pandavas, of Indraprastha lost their kingdom and wealth to their wicked cousins Kauravas through a loaded game of dice. Kauravas were powerful. To defeat them Pandavas needed some invincible weaponry. Therefore, prince Arjuna, who was overconfident of defeating anybody in a war, engaged himself in deep penance and prayed to Lord Shiva. Shiva wanted to test his battle tactics and prowess and mitigate his megalomania. In the garb of a hunter, he visited the forest of Arjuna's penance, along with his wife Parvathy. They engaged in an altercation, which grew into a fight. Arjuna with his proficiency in bow and arrow hurted the hunter-turned Shiva. The pain annoyed him. The play-fight turned into real duel. Arjuna was dismayed by the hunter's ability to check him. Later Parvathy pacified Shiva and disclosed their identity. Pleased, Lord Shiva showered blessings and offered Pasupathastra (arrow) and Parvathy gave him the bow, Gandeeva. Later the hunter and his consort mated and gave birth to Vettekkaran. It might be after the Aryan invasion and to establish their supremacy, Vettekkaran was depicted as the son of Lord Shiva or as the incarnation of Lord Shiva himself.



Breaking coconuts during the ritual



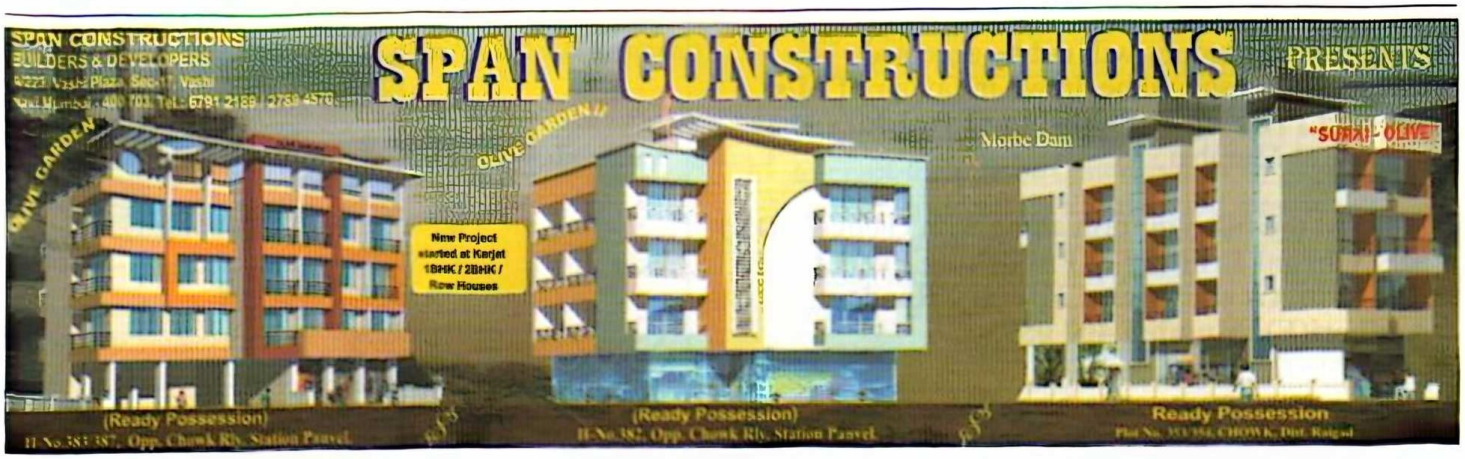
Wiping off the Kalam

THE RITUALS

The function starts in the morning. A rectangular spot of ground is earmarked by four pillars. On top of the pillars a string will be tied to mark the edges, decorated by tender leaves of coconut palm. On top three pieces of cloth will be laid to set the roof of the sanctorum. The middle piece, which will be red in colour (the other two are white) will be laid ceremoniously after sanctification of the venue by a pooja and with the nod of the offerer.

After uchapooja, the pooja at noon, the picture of the deity is drawn in the sanctified rectangle (kalamvarakkal) with simple colour powders from local sources. For example, white is rice powder, black is powder from ordinary kitchen carbon, yellow is turmeric powder, green is dried green leaves powdered, and red is tinted out of turmeric powder and lime powder. The picture ultimately made out is of a ferocious hunter. The perfection is fully felt when viewed from the bottom.

(To be continued)



- Rohini

Njān Gandharvan (ഞാൻ ഗന്ധർവ്വൻ) (1985)

Lyrics: Kaithapram **Music:** Johnson
Rāgam: **Singer:** K J Yesudas

ദേവാങ്കണങ്ങൾ കയ്യൊഴിഞ്ഞ താരകം...
സായാഹ്നസാനുവിൽ വിലോലമേഘമായ് (ദേവാങ്കണങ്ങൾ.....)
അഴകിൻപവിഴം പൊഴിയും നിന്നിൽ
അമൃതകണമായ് സഖീ ധന്യനായ്... (ദേവാങ്കണങ്ങൾ.....)
സല്ലാപമേറ്റുണർന്ന വാരിജങ്ങളും
ശുഭരാഗരൂപിയാം നവനീതചന്ദ്രനും... (സല്ലാപമേറ്റുണർന്ന.....)
ചൈത്രവേണുവൂതും.....
ചിത്രവേണുവൂതും മധുമന്ത്രകോകിലങ്ങളും
നീലമേഘവും ഇന്ദ്രനീലരാത്രി തേടവേ..... (ദേവാങ്കണങ്ങൾ.....)
ആലാപമായി സ്വരരാഗഭാവുകങ്ങൾ
സഗഗ.... സഗമപ.... മധപ.... മപമ....
മധനിസ നിധഗമ.... ധിനിമ.... സഗനധമഗ....
സനിധപ ധനിസ.... പമഗ....
ആലാപമായി സ്വരരാഗഭാവുകങ്ങൾ
ഹിമബിന്ദു ചൂടും സമ്മോഹനങ്ങൾ പോലേ.... (ആലാപമായി....)
വരവല്ലകി തേടും... ആ... ആ...
വരവല്ലകി തേടും വിരഹാർദ്രപഞ്ചമങ്ങൾ
സ്നേഹസാന്ദ്രമാകുമീ വേദിയിൽ (ദേവാങ്കണങ്ങൾ.....)



Kaithapram



Johnson



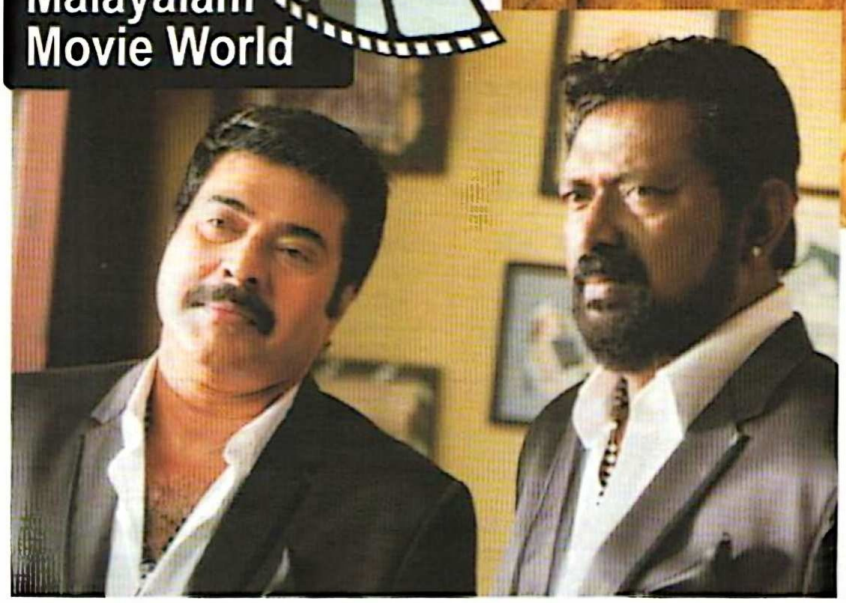
K J Yesudas

Transiliteration: Ā, ā = ആ, ാ ; Ē, ē = എ,േ; Ī, ī = ഈ, ീ; Ō, ō = ഓ, ോ ; Ū, ū = ഊ, ൂ, ു = ു ; C, c = ച, ch= ഛ, D, d = ദ, Dh, dh = ധ, Ḍ, ḍ = ഡ, Ḍh, ḍh = ഢ, jh= ഝ, Ḷ, ḷ = ള; Ñ, ñ = ഞ, ṅ = ങ, ṇ = ണ; rh = ഠ, ṯṯ = ള; ṟ = ഩ; Ś, ś = ശ; Ṣ, ṣ = ഷ, T, t = ട, Th, th = ഠ, Ṯ, ṯ = ത; ṯh = ഥ

Devāngaṇaṅṅaḷ kayyozhiñña ṯārakam
sayāhnasānuvil vilōlamēghamay *(Devāngaṇaṅṅaḷ)*
Azhakin pavizham pozhiyum ninnil
Amrŭṯakaṇamāy sakhī dhanyanāy *(Devāngaṇaṅṅaḷ)*
Sallāpameṯṯuṇarnna vārijaṅṅaḷum
Śubharāgarūpiyām navanīṯacandranum... *(Sallāpameṯṯu..)*
caiṯravēṇuvūṯum.... caiṯravēṇuvūṯum
madhumanṯra kōkilaṅṅaḷum
Nīlamēghavum indranīlarāṯri ṯētave *(Devāngaṇaṅṅaḷ)*
Alāpamāyi swararāgabhavukaṅṅaḷ
sa ga ga saga ma pa ma dha pa ma pa ma
ma dha ni sa ni dha ga ma dhi ni ma sa ga na dha ma ga
sa ni dha pa dha ni sa pa ma ga
Alāpamāyi swararāgabhavukaṅṅaḷ
Himabindu cūtum sammohanaṅṅaḷ pōlē *(Alāpamāyi)*
Varavallaki ṯētum virahārdrapancamaṅṅaḷ
Snēhasāndramākumī vēdiyil *(Devāngaṇaṅṅaḷ)*

The main actors of this movie were Nitish Bhardwaj, Suparna and Phinomina. Nitish acquired fame after his role of Sri Krishna in the Hindi TV serial Mahabharat and he was chosen to enact the role of Gandharva. Both Suparna and Nitish are non-Malayalees and acted in this Malayalam film. Nitish acted in a few Hindi and Telugu movies but could not benefit in the film world.

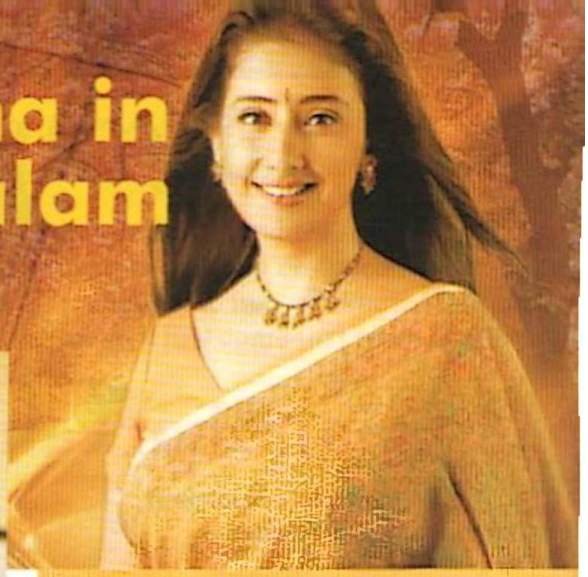
Malayalam Movie World



Mammootty and Lal in Cobra

Under the banner of Emperor Cinema, Anto Joseph produces 'Cobra' with Mammootty and Lal in leading roles. The story and screenplay written by Lal who also directs it. Padmapriya and Kaniha are the heroines. Other actors are Salim Kumar, Lalu Alex, Maniyan Pilla Raju, Jagathy, Babu Antony, Reji and Bindu Murali. Alex Paul composes music for the lyrics of Santhosh Kumar.

Manisha in Malayalam Film



Manisha Koirala is reported to have signed for another movie in Malayalam by Lenin Rajendran for his *Edavapathy*. Recently she appeared in a Tamil movie *Mappilai* with Dhanush. The movie will examine the subject of a relationship between an Indian and a Tibetan.

Sivan is also bringing a former child artiste Siddharth, who essayed the role of Rimpoche in Sangeeth Sivan's movie *Yoddha*, into this movie to enact the role of a Lama. Jagathy Sreekumar will also have an important role in the film.



Tatsamayam Oru Penkutty

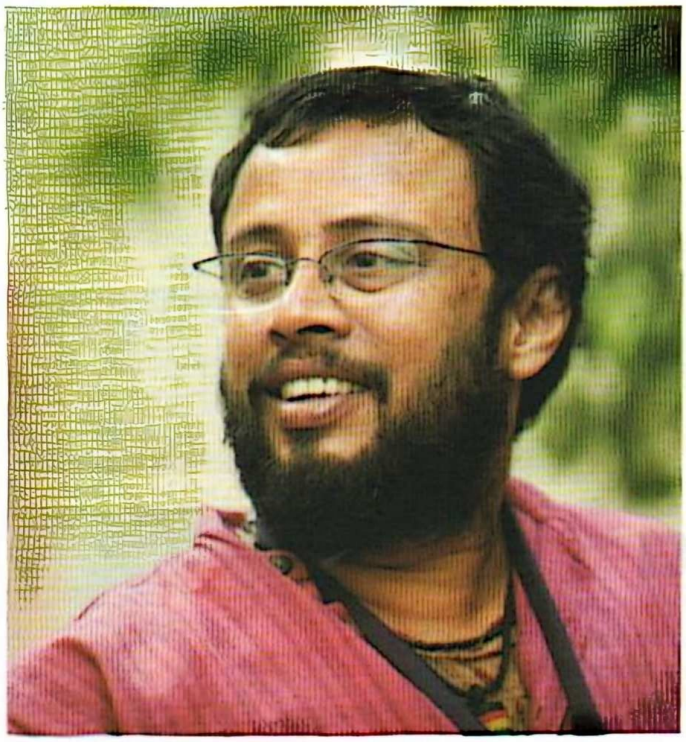
The shooting of *Tatsamayam Oru Penkutty*, produced by Reel to Reel Productions and directed by T K Rajiv Kumar, is complete. Its release is scheduled for February. The story revolves around a reality show in which the real life of a girl is presented. Unni Mukundan and Nitya Menon play the main roles while Shweta Menon, Siddique, Baburaj, Maniyan Pilla Raju, Suraj Venjaramoodu, Tini Tom, Baiju, Kalabhavan Nawaz, Kochu Preman, KPAC Lalitha, Devi Chandana, Shruti Menon also have important supporting roles. Screenplay and dialogue is his written by Sunny Joseoh and Manuel George while Sharat composes music for the lyrics of Murugan Kattakada and Beeyar Prasad.



Diamond Necklace

Now that 'Spanish Masala has hit the theatres on January 14, Director Lal Jose is getting ready to direct his next project 'Diamond Necklace'. The plot of the movie revolves around a young man and his three female acquaintances.

'Chappa Kurissu' fame Fahad Fasil is the hero while Samvruta Sunil, Amala Paul and Anusri are the female friends. Shooting will commence by February end at Dubai.



Samvruta Sunil to wed soon



Samvruta Sunil, one of the leading ladies of current Malayalam films is to tie the knot soon. The bridegroom is Akhil, an engineer from Kozhikode and working in California. It is an arranged marriage, Samvruta said. Samvruta came to the movie world through *Rasikan* directed by Lal Jose. She has acted as heroine with Mammootty, Mohanlal, Dileep, Jayaram, Prithviraj and others. Her soon to be released movies are 'Arike' of Shyama Prasad and 'King and the Commissioner' of Shaji Kailas.

Hero

The shooting of Hero has commenced at Kochi. After the successful movie *Puthiya Mukham*, Deepan directs this film. The story is based on unavoidable Dupe actors who are not adequately recognised in movies. Prithviraj and Yami Gautam share the stellar roles. Srimas, Bala, Nedumudi Venu, Tini Tom, Anil Murali, Indrans, Kochu Preman, KPAC Lalitha, Shobha Mohan and Kolappulli Leela are the other actors. Story written by Vinod Guruvayur. Gopi Sundar provides music for the lyrics of Anil Pachuran and Shibu Chakravarthy. Vijay Kumar produces the film for Seven Arts International.





Perinoru Makan

Produced by Hasraj Productions and directed by Vinu Anand from his story, the film has Bhagath, Innocent, Tini Tom, Suraj Venjaramoodu, Guinness Pakru, Sharanya Mohan, Vinaya Prasad, KPAC Lalitha and Lakshmi Priya as main actors. Berny Ignasius score the music for the lyrics of Santhosh Varma.

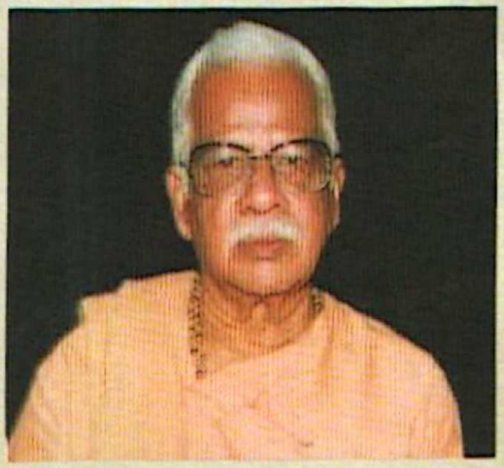
Ameya

Ameya is produced by New Face Cinemas' Rafique Veera and directed by debutant Ashraf Mohammed. Nishant and Ananya are in the lead.

Gautam, Salim Kumar, Kalabhavan Mani, Suraj Venjaramoodu, Vijaya Raghavan, Sadique, Mani Kandhan, Kalabhavan Niyaz, Sarayu and Lena are also in the cast. Lyrics: Rafiq Ahamed and music by Nasser Malik.



Thikkurissi Foundation Award for Mammootty



Mammootty has been chosen for the award instituted by Thikkurissi Foundation for the substantial contribution to Malayalam Cinema by an actor. The award includes Rs.1 lakh, a memento and a citation. It will be presented in March at Thiruvananthapuram. Other important awardees are *Adaminte Makan* (Best film), Salim Kumar (Best actor- *Adaminte Makan*), Kavya Madhavan (Best Actress-*Gaddhama*), Jagathy Sreekumar (Janapriya Actor), Nitya Menon (Janapriya Actress), Salim Ahamed (Best Director-*Adaminte Makan)* Anoop Menon (Screenplay *Beautiful*), Karthik (Male Singer *Gaddhama)* and K S Chithra (Female Singer *Gaddhama*), Rafiq Ahamed (Lyrics *Gaddhama*) and Bennett Chittarag (Music director *Gaddhama*).

Book Review

Rain outside the window

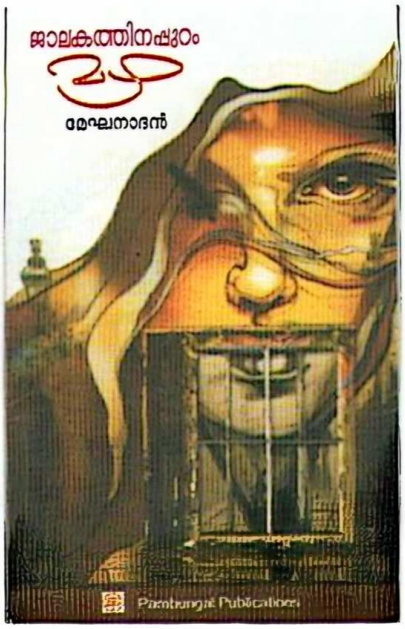
A welcome shower in draught

For sometime the lovers of Malayalam short stories had been lamenting the paucity of their favourite literature, short stories. Readers of fifties and sixties who feasted to the heart's content on S K Pottekkat, Uroob, Basheer, Karoor, Thakazhi, Ponkunnam Varkey and others were in for a shock as modern writers mixed their wares with neo-modernism which taxed the readers. Literary fans look for entertainment, enlightenment and enrichment in literature.

Writing short stories and poetry is tough for those who studied them but the ignorant assume they have an inherent talent. Since the genre of short stories evolved in the United States in the early twentieth century, it soon found its way to other parts of the world. For many, initially a short story was one that was short and printed in a few pages so that it could be read in one sitting. But to capture the attention of the reader and sustain it requires much greater skill. There are a number of books on the craft of Short Story and among them are: Introduction to the Study of Literature by Hudson, Short Story Writing and Freelance Journalism, Short Stories-How to write nthem etc. Prof M P Paul described this craft in his book 'Cherukatha Prasthanam'. According to him, the short story format can be divided into three prominent sections depending on their content. The sections are based on action, character and circumstances.

It is highly speculative how many of our short story writers read these books, written more than half a century ago when this branch of literature was in its infancy. Their theories are still relevant and irrefutable.

The recent publication of '*Jālakathinappurham Mazha*' (Rain on the other side of window') brings a refreshing shower when imaginative stories have dried up. The author, *Meghanādan, a well known writer, author and columnist is already known to the readers of Malayalam*. Most of the stories in this compilation are based on circumstances arising out of migration of Malayalees to Mumbai. The initial struggle to find a shelter over the head, acquiring a permanent residence and planning savings for the children are



major worries of immigrants and the author successfully captures these issues and paints their happiness, frustrations and struggles.

In all there are 15 short stories and a section of 6 tiny snippets. All snippets are humourous, thought provoking or awe-inspiring.

The main story that provides the title to the compilation is the best and it throws light on the minds of the female characters, plucked from a Kerala village and harnessed in the city. All of them are disappointed either due to lack of marital bliss, claustrophobic atmosphere existing in the chawls of the city or unhappy for not realizing their dreams. But in each of the stories, the sense of humour of the narrator stands out, a clear deviation from recent publications. Of late the city writers are imprisoned in a sense of despondency or skepticism. Meghanadan steers clear of them and attempts to laugh at the triviality of city life.

The negative aspect about the plots is that while we reach the end of the story, we may surmise if we had already seen a similar idea in the past. Influence, yes; not the original idea. As the Mahabharata claims whatever is in the world, it is in it and what is not in it does not exist elsewhere.

The book is well produced. The cover drawing gives the reader an idea of what is to be expected inside. A masked woman with a glimpse of her innocence from rural Kerala, looks at you, with her concern visible in her eyes, pleading for empathy. A couple of typographical errors can best be ignored.

[*Jālakathinappurham Mazha* by Meghanadan, published by Pambungal Publications, Sakinaka, Mumbai-400 072. Price:Rs.80.]

-KVS

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C Radhakrishnan's decision and its possible repercussions

C Radhakrishnan, the well known author, and his friends have decided to stop cultivation from next agricultural season.

Radhakrishnan along with seven friends, bought 8 acres of paddy field on the banks of River Nila eight years ago and engaged themselves in cultivating paddy when the traditional farmers were giving up farming. When agricultural labourers were few, they procured all necessary machinery required and used only bio-fertilisers while others used chemical fertilizers and were happy to receive a reasonable profit. Everything went according to their wishes and they had no problem in disposing the crop in the local market.

This year, following the new government's decision to provide rice at Rs.1 per kg to all BPL families, 25 kg per family, there is no demand for paddy from farmers as the quantity supplied is adequate for the family. Almost the entire population, including government officials, school teachers and private employees, falls under the BPL category.

At Rs.900 per ton for the paddy, Radhakrishnan and friends stared at their produce amounting to 16 tons, and



C Radhakrishnan

having spent about Rs.1.5 lakh, they were in for a loss. Unfortunately even the local merchants failed to purchase the commodity. The paddy harvested and kept in gunny bags, would rot. It was then news leaked about the group's decision. This sent the government into a frenzy and the minister for agriculture ordered procurement at Rs.15 per kg. Radhakrishnan and team may have found an escape route for now but it also raises questions for the future.

Soon there will be cries from farmers that their produce also procured at Rs.15 a kg. Will th government be ready to do that an after conceding that it can, for ho and after spending more mon transport, drying, boiling and con to rice only to sell at Rs.1 per kg. ?

Even as the government proclain paddy cultivation should be enco at any cost, its own welfare schem against it.

The unabashed declaration of v schemes are with an eye on w elections. It plays havoc on the economy while the entire fa community has to look elsewh appears that it would be economi everyone to turn poor so that they c from the welfare schemes destroying the character of the state

Since a decade, Kerala is facing a shortage of farm labour, or any r worker. Malayalee labour is replaced by labourers from othe like Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal an Bangladesh. As many of the c cultivators have abandoned pluck yield for want of pluckers, the pr coconut products have shot up.

Calicut accuses Kerala of mistrust

Pro Vice Chancellor of University of Calicut Prof K Ravindranath has accused University of Kerala selling the software that was provided to it by Calicut University. V T Madhu, Director of Calicut Computer Centre that helped the university in developing the software supported the PVC.

It was in the inaugural ceremony of the project of Calicut E-Governance that both of them accused Kerala of mistrust. It was Calicut that developed the software and supplied to Kerala and MG University free of cost and trained their officers in using it. Even their maintenance is being done by Calicut, even today, free of cost, Madhu stated.

It was in 1999, that Calicut University decided to computerize the administration and entrusted the work to Regional Engineering College (now National Institute of Technology), Kozhikode. Since REC failed to deliver, Calicut University borrowed a computer from their Finance Department and entrusted the responsibility to two science graduates. The entire process did not cost the University a *paisa*, Madhu said. Project E-Governance was initially entrusted to National Informatic Centre but it failed to keep pace with the Vice Chancellor and therefore they were removed from responsibility. Now Keltron is assisting the University. The software used in the project is still the same that was developed by the University.

Following the computerization of governance, the episodes of missing files are stopped. Earlier it was a regular phenomenon of files missing, may be overtly or covertly, Madhu stated.

PVC Ravindranath complimented Madhu for his praiseworthy efforts.

Surgery to Cob

Normally an innocuous water snal not escape if it caught the attent teenagers. Yet a cobra that was pier an iron nail while trying to climb rabbit cage, was rescued by Am Hasan Kutty, members of Ka Natural Club and was taken veterinary surgeon Dr Suresl removed the nail and operated u snake. In a surgery that went on an hour, the doctor could not sti internal wound as that part was s After medication and proper ban the doctor handed the snake ove Club activists.

It appears that the awareness ca on nature love has finally caught children too.



Remorseless Vishnu

When Panakkad Shihab Thangal and Public Education Secretary M Sivasankar were about to hand over the keys of the newly built house and the documents of the land respectively, to the children Dilshad (10) and Muhsina (6), the orphaned children of Arangodan Mujib Rahman, 21, Vishnu reached the venue and embraced the children. Vishnu came with a heart that displayed no sense of revenge or remorse.

Vishnu is the son of sub inspector P P Vijayakrishnan who was killed by Mujib Rahman on September 12, 2010 when he went to Rahman's house at Chokkad, near Karuvarakund in Malappuram district, to serve a warrant. Following a complaint by Rahman's second wife for non-maintenance, the inspector went to his house and Rahman shot him dead after an altercation. Rahman, his wife Khamar-unnisa and their two children ran away to the jungle and spent the night there. The children were sent down the hill and Rahman shot dead his wife and then shot himself with the same gun with which he killed the inspector.

The orphaned children were taken under the wings of Darunnajat Islamic Centre. Their school mates collected money from friends, teachers, parents and members of the public and built a house for them, where they had their earlier hut. It was at the handing over ceremony, that Vishnu arrived without notice and embraced the children. All three of them had lost their parents and the children were not guilty of any crime, Vishnu says. He asked the benefactors to continue their charity towards the children who would stay in the new house where their grand mother would give them company. Vishnu is now a graduate and expecting his posting in the police department by virtue of his father's death while in service.



Vishnu with Dilshad and Muhsina



The unfinished house built by the school children for their orphaned friends

Safe haven for animals

The winner of Animal Husbandry Department's Best Animal Welfare Activist award, K Bapputti is now desperately searching for a safe shelter for his 4 dogs, 15 cats, a kite and a mongoose, as he has been asked to vacate the three-room lodge at Mundakkal near Kollam. Bapputti, 47, has been asked to vacate his present lodge. He has dedicated his life for the welfare of abandoned animals.

Eight years ago his kind hearted friend Jagadeesan invited Bapputti to stay with him when he was evicted from his rented room where he was sharing the space with dogs.

Last year Jagadeesan died and the landlord asked him to vacate the room. His plea to allow him to stay till alternate accommodation is found was rejected and then he was forced to obtain an injunction from the district court.



Bapputti has rescued many injured dogs and looked after them till they had fully recovered. He also feeds some 40 dogs every day.

Bapputti, a driver by profession, has been rendered jobless as he cannot afford to complete the re-registration formalities of his old taxi car. He occasionally works as a driver for some well-wishers in the city. Meanwhile, the project to set up a shelter for injured and abandoned dogs at Kottiyam by the Animal Husbandry Department had faced hurdles following protests from the panchayat and the local MLA.

Bapputti had pitched his hopes on the shelter and had expected that he would be able to provide refuge to all the animals he rescued.

The Department of Animal Husbandry envisaged the project, the first of its kind in the state, inspired by the services rendered by Bapputti. The necessary funds have also been allotted to the District Panchayat for the project and it is on the lookout for land in other places to get the project going. For Bapputti, who claims to have rescued over 150 stray dogs and other animals over the past 14 years, a shelter for abandoned animals in the district is a dream. He is not worried about himself becoming homeless but is concerned about the dogs not having a sanctuary for themselves.

A THOUSAND WRITERS AND ONE BOOK



An ordinary Government Higher Secondary School of Keezhuparamb in Malappuram district is striving hard to enter the Guinness Book of World Records in a unique way. One thousand students of this school are working hard to complete the one book they are jointly writing. 'Thousand Writers and One Book' (*Aayiram Ezhuthukar One Book*) will be a record when completed. Last year they created history by undertaking a project 'Thousand writers, Thousand Books'.

The new attempt was started on June 19, 2011, Reader's Day. The book nearing completion will have more than 5000 pages of 56x70 cms size, weighing about 2.5 quintals and 1.5 metres high when bound. The expenditure in the making is met from grants of teachers. Total expenditure will be about Rs.25000, including paper (Rs.18000), wooden cover and binding.

Students of V std to X Std are participating in this venture and the contents include writing of articles, poems, plays, memoirs, short stories, screen play etc. Editing took several months. The cover page and illustrations are by the students under the supervision of drawing teacher P K Ramachandran.

This amazing idea came from Malayalam teacher M R Purushothaman and Principal C P Andrews gave his full support along with his entire team of teachers. This giant book will be released in early February.

Never harass your parents

By the time justice finally came, that parent did not live to appreciate but it would certainly teach all ungrateful children a lesson or two in parent care.

Late Vinnamchath Appu of Tavanur Thrikanapuram was misled by his only son who told him that the documents of their landed property and home had some errors and it needed to be rectified. Trusting his son, Appu signed some papers, which in fact was transferring the properties to the son. Thrown out of the house, Appu and wife Narayani found life miserable and none to support them. Appu then filed a complaint with the RDO of Tirur and on last December 30, RDO issued orders in favour of the complainant. He ordered that the official transaction be annulled and the properties be returned to the complainant, based on the 2007's Act for welfare of parents and old aged. But tormented by old age and illness, Appu (85) died last April. He and his wife had taken refuge with their daughter who was staying with her husband at Pallipuram, Palakkad.

Narayani is now to get back the land admeasuring 76.5 cent and the house thereon.

Idukki's pill-popping tribals don't menstruate anymore

It has been a while since tribal Adivasi women and girls in three villages of Kerala's Idukki district have menstruated. Reason? They have been popping contraceptive pills to avoid the inconvenience of those few days, say people from the area.

As a result - the practice begins from the time girls start menstruating - many have stopped conceiving in the villages of Marayoor, Vattavada and Kanthaloor, say activists.

According to Adivasi customs, on the days of menstruation the women have to stay away from their homes and remain for at least three days at a separate place called Valapurai. Since the facilities at these Valapurai are not good, they have found an easy way out - popping a pill and not menstruating.

Helping the women not to menstruate is Mala-D, an oral contraceptive pill produced by the central public sector Hindustan Latex Limited. Shops in these three villages have apparently been making a killing selling Mala-D and that too at an exorbitant price.

The sad part is girls start having this oral contraceptive right from the time they start to menstruate. And even sadder is the fact that it is the men folk who buy Mala-D and give it to the women.

According to the traditions of these Adivasis, at least for three days during the menstruation period they have to stay in the Valapurai and during those days they are not supposed to see the face of any man. The appalling conditions at the Valapurais compel them to do this practice. It has now become a trend among the Adivasi community. For them it is like chewing bubble gum. The sad thing is the strip with the oral contraceptive contains iron tablets as well, but they throw that away.

It has also been found that there are many women here who fail to conceive even after several years of marriage because they have been taking oral contraceptives. Around 29 percent of the population in these three villages are Adivasis - approximately 2,000 in each mostly belonging to the Muthuvan tribe. They are engaged in farming activities.

THE RARE GLITTER IN PANCHARATNA

The Mathrubhumi published very rare news that brings cheer to the heart of the readers. It is about the hardship faced by Rama Devi who gave birth to 5 children, four girls and one boy, in November of 1995 on Uthram day. It was news then, on almost all Malayalam papers next day, news that was forgotten in subsequent days. The children were named Uthra, Uthraja, Utharajan, Utthara and Utthama. Their home near Vembayam in Thiruvananthapuram district was named 'Pancharatna.' School admission of the children and their journey to Sabarimala etc were big news for the media.

After seven years of their birth, father of the children ended his life leaving behind his wife, Rama Devi, to look after the children. She was already a heart patient. She had every reason to end her own life but the responsibility of bringing up the five children weighed heavily on her and she was determined to pull through. She went for a pace maker.

Rama Devi received financial help from many individuals and establishments but when the government provided her a peon's job in a neighbourhood District Co-op. Bank, the individuals came back, seeking refund of their earlier assistance. She assured them return of money and gave the assurance on a stamped paper.



Rama Devi with her five children

Now she has returned that loan, amounting more than ₹4 lakh and started a fresh lease of life. Now the children are in X Std and all of them are in the same batch, enjoying each others' company.

Rama Devi has regrets that she could not take the children often out except a once in a year trip to Guruvayur Temple.

The report ends with the note wishing the children a great success at their examination and the readers to draw courage in adverse circumstances.

Money flies over bondage

Kittan, 91 years old, is a retired postman, living with a woman Lakshmi Kutty for the last 30 years, after abandoning his legally wedded wife. The couple has two children, a son who is employed in the collectorate and a daughter Valsala-kumari, 30, who is unemployed. Kittan draws a pension of Rs.8,000 per month.

What binds Kittan with his woman and daughter is his monthly pension. There are arguments and violence in his house about the division of his pension among the three. Kittan was banished to the portico (*Chayppu*) of his moderate home and has to pay the others Rs.1,500 as rent. He is not allowed to use the toilet or draw water from the well. A few days ago there were loud arguments and cries from their house, according to their neighbours, over division of money and Kittan was beaten up by the mother-daughter duo and thrown out. He was forced to spend his New Year eve at the Palinode Bus Shelter. Following a complaint by the neighbours, Gandhi Haven workers reached his home to seek permission to take him to the Haven.

When the workers sought Lakshmikutty's written consent, she shocked the neighbours by showing ready agreement but her daughter snatched the pen and moved away saying that anybody could take away her father but she should get Rs.3,000 every month for expenses. When the workers asked her about her readiness to look after her father, she shirked away saying that it was not her responsibility but of her mother.

It was only after the Gandhi Bhawan workers told her that they might consider her demand, she agreed to put her signature.

Before moving to his new abode, Kittan paid off all his sundry debts and wiped tears when finally he bid good bye to neighbours. He had no tears for his woman and daughter.

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Kannampuzha Vareed James

COLLECTOR OF ANTIQUES

- Dr C N N Nair

Most of us city dwellers are too pre-occupied with our sustenance efforts. With the city expanding into suburbs at a rapid rate, people are left with little time besides attending to work and considerable commutation period every day. At the end of the day, not many have an inclination or energy to look beyond routines and attempt self-enriching activities. We usually have little time to spend with our kids or for entertainment in the busy fast-track life in the city. It is also often that one sacrifices the comfort of family due to pressure of work. Amidst all these, it requires a super-human spirit to adhere to one's hobbies. Here is the strange case of one person's fierce passion inculcated from childhood days and which refused to be blunted by the merciless city routines. Not only has he managed to establish himself firmly in his chosen vocation, he has also been able to continue his passion to pursue and add more to his already vast collections of coins / currencies / stamps and other antique items. His own relations in India and abroad and his vast circle of friends help in filling up his 'coffers'. This is aided in no small measure by his own genial nature. Those who come in contact with James of Charkop will be tempted to share or even part with their surplus collections to him once the intensity of his passion is known or experienced.



James' collection of coins

It was sheer coincidence that we stumbled on his unparalleled and 'invaluable treasure'. Surely, it has surpassed all our expectations!



James and his family with their collection of antiques

THE COLLECTIONS

James' passion for collection of stamps and coins began at a very early age. His elder brother Timothy might have inspired him. (His younger brother Jose also followed the footsteps of his elder brothers.) He continued with his hobbies as a bachelor, as a husband and now as father to two girls. The result: an amazing collection of coins, currencies and stamps besides some antique items which ought to find a place in the books of records everywhere.

In order to appreciate the 'wealth' of material he has gathered over three decades or more, a glance at the following would suffice:



James' vast collection

CURRENCIES

Volume I contains 26 sheets which has different Indian currencies. Each sheet has three currencies on one side and both sides are separately filled up. Roughly, 26 x 3 x 2 = 156 Indian currency notes are packed here.

Volume II is the biggest collection of the lot. It contains 170 sheets. It is filled with foreign currency notes. As in the earlier case, at least three on one side and both sides filled up. Total notes preserved: 170 x 3 x 2 = 1020. This covers over 130 countries in the world. A typical example is a currency note of a country which has local value of 500,000,000 units. There are similar notes with values ranging 2 lakhs / 1 lakh unit values.

In Volume III, there are 83 sheets filled with both Indian and foreign currency notes but similar notes are stacked... Difficult to estimate the no. of notes which is [83 x 3 x 2] x N.

COINS

James' astounding coin collections defy description. There are coins from countries all over the world, packed in folders and preserved as albums. There are at least 15 such albums.

Amongst the rare collections are the 'Quarter dollar coins with 46 of the 50 States of the USA minted under the scheme '50 State Commemorate Quarters Program' or 'Statehood Quarters Program'.

STAMPS

The above opening statement also applies to his collection of stamps. 10 huge albums are filled with stamps from various countries in the world and issued at various times/dates. A curious collection is that of the stamps about Gandhiji issued in countries other than India. Another group of stamps (about 90) pertain to those issued by the department to commemorate great Indian personalities. The number of stamps would easily run into thousands.

Apart from the above, James and his wife Laly have has preserved old postcards, inlands and envelops from the past with varying denominations for more than three decades.

The couple share the same passion and complement each other.

An inventory of various items of these groups is under preparation. It would take quite some time to make an exhaustive one, considering the volume and number of the materials to be perused.

Here is an unusual collection of special items preserved by a seemingly simple person which does deserve great recognition. It is no hazard to predict that one day this would land in the great book of records not just in India, but perhaps in the world.

[James lives with his wife Laly and daughters Lija (20) and Lima (17) at Charkop, Kandivli (W). Professionally he is involved in mechanical, structural and fabrication activities like refrigeration body work at his own workshop at Goregaon. Both James and Laly are from Thrissur district.



James' daughters with their father's collections

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JOHNSON



Johnson was not only an established music composer in Malayalam cinema but he was loved by one and all. Perhaps, after Devarajan Master, he was the most prolific music director as he composed music for more than 300 films besides several music albums. His admirers bestowed on him their favourite title 'Master' as they did on K Raghavan, P Bhaskaran, Devarajan and Ravindran.

He was noted for his lyrical and expressive melodies together with simple but rich tonal compositions of thematic music. Johnson is a recipient of National Film Awards twice and Kerala State Film Awards five times.

Brief biography of Johnson

John was born in Nellikkunnu Thrisur on 26th March 1953 in a family musically inclined.

Johnson was a singer in the choir of Nellikkunnu St. Sebastian's Church. He obtained training in guitar and harmonium from his colleagues during his early periods itself. He used to sing in youth festivals and musical shows and joined the orchestra team of some local troupes and played harmonium in many concerts. He also used to sing in the female voice in *ganamelas* (a stage show where film songs are sung by local or professional artists).

In 1968, Johnson and his friends formed a club named Voice of Thrissur. Johnson was the main instrumentalist in the club where he played wide varieties of instruments - guitar, harmonium, flute, drums and violin.

Within a few years, the club became one of the most sought after musical troups in Kerala, and had more than fifty members. This club used to give accompaniment music to playback singers Jayachandran and Madhuri in their musical shows. Jayachandran introduced Johnson to G. Devarajan, one of the most prolific composers of South Indian cinema then. Devarajan literally adopted Johnson and brought him to Chennai in 1974. Johnson bought an accordion, during this period, from R. K. Shekhar (A. R. Rahman's father), and began assisting Devarajan in filmscoring and composing. The "Johnson effect" can be easily noted in Devarajan's songs and film scores of this period.



Johnson at a concert

He started his career as an assistant to G. Devarajan in 1970s, and debuted as an independent composer in late seventies with *Aaravam*. He was a recurrent collaborator for directors Padmarajan, Bharathan, Sathyan Anthikkad, T.V.Chandran, Kamal, Lohithadas, Balachandra Menon and Mohan. He has composed music for more than 300 Malayalam films, the most by any composer except Devarajan. He died in Chennai on August 18, 2011 at the age of

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Johnson with his family

58 due to a heart attack.

He is survived by his wife - Rani Johnson, daughter - Shan Johnson and son - Renn Johnson.

Film career

Johnson began his indpendent career by composing the film scores of Bharathan's *Aaravam* (1978), *Thakara* (1980) and *Chamaram* (1980). He composed his first soundtracks for the film *Inaye Thedi*, debut film of director turned still photographer Antony Eastman and actress Silk Smitha. It was Devarajan himself who suggested Johnson to the director. Then came Bharathan's *Parvathi* and Balachandra Menon's *Premageethangal*. *Premageethangal* was a notable success with four of its songs - "Swapnam Verumoru Swapnam", "Nee Nirayoo Jeevanil", "Muthum Mudipponnum" and "Kalakalamozhi" attaining cult status.

He came to prominence through his collaboration with Malayalam author and director Padmarajan. *Koodevide* was their first venture, which had one of the most famous songs of Johnson "Aadivaa Kaatte", a pathbreaking song in Malayalam music history. It was one of the first songs in Malayalam to have a grand orchestral score and the song was born out of Padmarajan's need for a western song for his innovative film. Song composition took place in Woodland's Hotel, Chennai. Another notable feature of this song was the lyrics by O. N. V. Kurup who for the first time wrote lyrics for a pre-composed song. Johnson worked for 17 films with Padmarajan, including his last film *Njan Gandharvan*. This productive collaboration saw the detailed screenplay and cinematography of Padmarajan become a fertile ground for expressive musical narration and thematic scores for Johnson. This is seen in some of the greatest motion pictures of Malayalam cinema, like *Namukku Parkkan Munthiri Thoppukal* (1986), *Oru Minnaminunginte Nurunguvettam* (1987), *Nombarathipoovu* (1987) and *Perumthachan* (1990). Another notable collaboration of Johnson was with director Sathyan Anthikkad, with whom he associated in almost 25 films. He was able to provide some of his most popular songs with Anthikkad and this combo is widely accepted to be one of the greatest director-composer collaborations in Malayalam cinema. Acclaimed Malayalam director Bharathan also collabrated with him in multiple films



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including *Parvathy, Palangal, Ormakkayi, Kattathe Kilikkoodu, Ente Upasana, Oru Minnaminunginte Nurunguvettam, Ozhivukalam, Malootty, Chamayam* and *Churam*. His major other collaborations with directors include Mohan (*Oru Katha Oru Nunakkatha, Sakshyam, Pakshe* and *Angane Oru Avadhikkalathu*), Sibi Malayil (*Kireedam, Chenkol, Dasaratham* and *Nee Varuvolam*), Sreenivasan (*Vadakkunokkiyantram* and *Chinthavishtayaya Shyamala*), Lohithadas (*Bhoothakkannadi* and *Arayannangalude Veedu*), Kamal (*Peruvannapurathe Visheshangal, Shubhayathra, Ee Puzhayum Kadannu* and *Paavam Paavam Rajakumaran*), and Balachandra Menon (*Shesham Kazhchayil, Premageethangal, Kilukilukkam* and *Kelkatha Shabdam*).

He is also noted for his collaboration with the Malayalam lyricist Kaithapram Damodaran Namboothiri. Their association began in 1989 with Sathyan Anthikkad's social satire *Varavelpu*. Most of Jonhnson's notable works came in late eighties and early nineties. In 1991, he scored a record number of 31 films, including 29 with Kaithapram. Johnson won National awards for two consecutive years. He won his first National Award in 1994 for the motion picture *Ponthan Mada* (1993). The next year he got his second award for *Sukrutham*. Both the awards were for the background score in films.



Johnson Master with his singers

After an extremely successful career of more than a decade, Johnson took a sabattical from film scoring by the end of nineties. The quality and quantity of his works began perishing during this time. By the beginning of 2000s, he didn't sign any new projects that even his most noted collaborator Sathyan Anthikkad had to find a new composer. In 2004, he sang the song "Theekuruvi" from *Kangalal Kaidhu Sei*, which was composed by A. R. Rahman. Perhaps it is the only song recorded by him for any composer. He returned strongly to the field with *Photographer* in 2006, which fetched him numerous awards.

Johnson has released four non-film albums. His first album *Sneha Deepika* was released in 1989 on Tharangini

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audios. It had nine Christian devotional songs - "Aathma Swaroopa", "Unni Yesu Pirannu", "Manninum Poovinum", "Thumbapoo Polulla", "Bhoomikku Pulakam", "Manassakumengil", "Kulir Choodum", "Arthungal Innoru" and "Vidarnna Punchiri". The featured artists were K. J. Yesudas, K. S. Chithra and Sujatha. His second album *Onathappan*, a collaboration with M. G. Radhakrishnan and Berny-Ignatius, consisted of nine festival songs. The track "Mundon Paadam" was composed by Johnson, sung by M. G. Sreekumar and had lyrics penned by Bichu Thirumala. His third album *Nannipoorvam Johnson*, consisted of twelve tracks - "Chandanakkavilinnu", "Panineeru Peyyum", "Vasundhare", "Virunnu Vanna", "Prapanjam Sundaram", "Enthe Nee Varathe", "Nilasandhyayil", "Veruthe Onnu", "Ponnazhikkuttu", "Pranayappirave", "Kalindhi", and an introductory speech by Sreenivasan. In 2009, he released his second Christian devotional album entitled *Parishuddhan*. It had eleven tracks - "Vazhiyum Sathyavum Nee Thanne (Vijay Yesudas), "Mullukal Kuthi" (Chithra), "Ariyathe Polum" (G. Venugopal), "Neethimanayavane" (Sujatha), "Traditional song" (Louis), "Mazhayum Veyilum" (Rimi Tomy), "Oru Viral Sparshathal (Sudheep), "Loka Palaka" (Chithra), Neethanthamam (Vijay Yesudas), and "Kannukalil Theliyum" (Manjari).



Johnson Master presents the award to Anoop at Swaramanjari programme on Surya Channel, produced by P V Vijaykumar

Johnson and his female playback singers

Johnson Master has given opportunities to almost all playback singers to showcase their talents. Janaki, Vani Jyaram, Chitra, Sujata and Latika are some of them.

After her pathbraking song 'bolere papi..' of Guddi in the early 70s, Vani was hoping to grab more opportunities but somehow, they eluded her. It was then that Johnson gave her some of her evergreen hits. During the 80s, AIR was regularly broadcasting her *Nanda sudhavara tava jananam,* a song from *'Parvati'* directed by Bharathan. This song was entirely different from all other Kirtanas on Sri Krishna by other composers. During his early days, he departed from his chosen style and created this pure Carnatic composition. It emotes dedication and total submission of the devotee.

After a few years, he gave her another classic, *'aetho janma kalpanayal..'* from *'Pālangal'*, again of Bharathan. The allurement of rendering and the perfect control of the voice made that song evergreen. Johnson raised the lines of Poovachal Khader to a level of beatitude and the music lovers were spell bound.

The number of songs Chitra rendered under the baton of Johnson is very high. It would be extremely difficult to choose the best from them as all of them looked better than the other: *'Rājahamsamē...'* of *Chamayam*, *'Mouna sarōvaramē...'* of *Savidham*, *'Madhuram Jeevamrutabindu...'* of *Chenkol*, 'Thankathoni..' of *Mazhavilkkavati* and how many of this genre! She also had a number of melodious duets with Yesudas and M G Sreekumar.

Chithra once stated that Johnson was very harsh regarding discipline and never allowed any liberty to the singers. Once notations are given, he was never agreeable for any change. He was also very miserly in complimenting the singers. Chithra remembers that only once he complemented her, after the recording of *'Madhuram Jeevamrutabindu...'* was over.

'Vaidoorya kammalaninju...' of *Ee puzhayum Katannu* was rendered by Sujata and Chithra together, one of their

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rare joint efforts. Sujata was also given one of her super hits when she rendered *Kākkakarhumban kantal kurhumban*.

Latika had a number of hit songs to her credit but she could never capture the hearts of muic lovers for long time. She was given songs like *Poo vēnam pooppata vēnam..'* with Yesydas and *Kanmaniyē aarirarō* of *Oru Minnaminunginte nurhungu vettam*, *choolam kuthum kaatte..* from *Ozhivukālam* of Bharathan.

Music style and impact

His skilful integration of textual rhythm of the lyrics together with rich tonal arrangement, redefined songwriting in Malayalam cinema, since the late 1980s. In his film scores, Johnson combines native South Indian melodic patterns with the harmonic structure of European classical music and this has attained an expressive form of narration through film score. He composed for about 300 films. Though he has obtained no formal training in classical music, he was able to incorporate the beauty of Carnatic ragas in his songs. Most of his songs were composed on Kalyani raga.

Johnson's favourite male singer was K. J Yesudas who has recorded many songs for him, while S. Janaki and K. S. Chithra were his favourite female singers. Chithra had some of her most noted songs with Johnson.

Johnson is fondly called Johnson Master (Johnson Mashu) by Malayalee audiences. He is affectionately described as the "John Williams of Malayalam cinema", after the Hollywood composer John Williams.

Awards

Johnson won the National Film Award for Best Background Score for the films *Ponthan Mada* (1994) and *Sukrutham* (1995). Johnson is the only composer to receive this rarely given award twice. He was the first Malayalee music composer to receive an award in music category and is also the only Malayalee music director who received two national awards in music category. Actually his first national award for Ponthan Mada, not only for background score but also for Best Music Composer. This film has one song *Adimarunge ayyayya* with lyrics by O. N. V. Kurup and sung by K. S. Chithra and chorus composed by Johnson. This is a folk song. National film award committee noted that he brilliantly conceived western folk tunes into this song. So award was given for best music direction and background score of this film. He has received three Kerala State Film Award for Best Music Director, for the films *Ormakkayi* (1982), *Vadakkunokki-yantram* and *Mazhavil Kavadi* (1989), and *Angane Oru Avadhikkalathu* (1999). He was awarded the Kerala State Film Awards for Best Background Music for the films *Sadayam* (1992) and *Sallapam* (1996). He has thus received five Kerala State Film Awards in music category, an achievement he shares with Devarajan. He has received the Kerala Film Critics Awards four times, the most recent in 2008 for *Gulmohar*. In 2007, he won the Mathrubhumi Award for Best Music Director for *Photographer* (2006). He won the Mullasserry Raju Music Award for the song "Enthe Kannanu Karuppu Niram", also from the same film. In addition, he has received numerous other awards and nominations including Devarajan Master Memorial Award and Raveendran Master Memorial Award.

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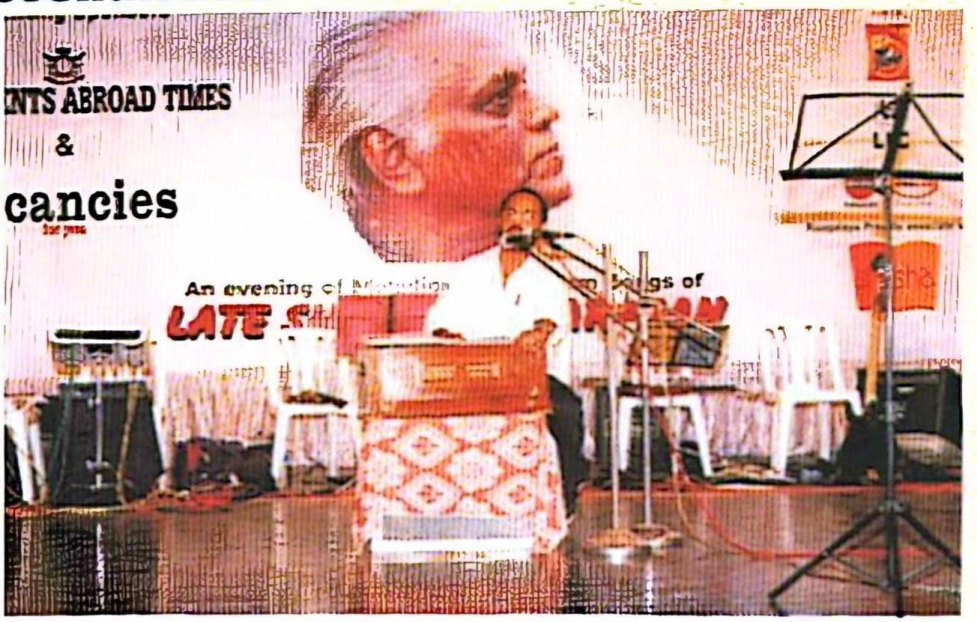
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1981
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Inaye Thedi
Raktham
Chaatta
Parvathi
1982
Football
Sooryan
Ithiri Neram Othiri Karyam
Kelkatha Shabdam
Palangal
Kilukilukkam
Swarna Gopuram
Ithu Njangalude Kadha
Ormakkayi
Thuranna Jail
1982
Koodevide
1983
Shesham Kaazhchayil
Kolakomban
Onnu Chirikkoo
Kattathe Kilikkoodu
Naseema
Thamburu
Thavalam
Ivide Thudangunnu
1984
Parannu Parannu Parannu
Sandarbham
Ente Upasana
Swanthamevide Bandhamevide
1985
Akkacheede Kunjivava
Nerariyum Nerathu
Oru Kudakkeezhil
Makan Ente Makan
Kadha Ithu Vare
Mounanombaram
Upaharam
Sannaham
Jwalanam
Oduvil Kittiya Vartha
Aa Neram Alpa Dooram
Ozhivukalam
1986
Namukku Parkkan Munthiri Thoppukal
Oru Katha Oru Nunnakkatha
Neram Pularumpol
Akalangalil
Kariyila Kattu Pole
Ice Cream
Malamukalile Daivam
Ente Entethumathram
Thidambu
1987
Oru Minnaminunginte Nurunguvettam
Sruthi
Athinumappuram
Ithente Needhi
Arinjo Ariyatheyo



Johnson performing at Raagalaya's Devarajan Nite

Onnam Manam Poomanam
Archana Pookkal
Kathirippinte Thudakkam
1988
Aparan
Unnikrishnante Adyathe Christmas
Ponmuttayidunna Tharavu
Isabella
1989
Peruvannapurathe Visheshangal
Varavelpu
Varnatheru
Radham
Nerunnu Nanmakal
Lal Americayil
Kireedam
Artham
Dasaratham
Vadakkunokkiyantram
Mazhavilkavadi
Pradeshika Varthakal
Pandu Pandoru Desathu
1990
Nanma Niranjavan Sreenivasan
Malootty
Paavakkoothu
Varthamanakaalam
Muppathi Randam Naal
Shubhayathra
Sunday 7 PM
Sandram
Dr. Pasupathy
Kalikkalam
Gajakesariyogam
Rajavazhcha
Kouthuka Vaarthakal
Ee Kanni Koodi
Cheriya Lokavum Valiya Manushyarum
Niyamam Endu Cheyyum
Orukkam
Thalayanamanthram
Pavam Pavam Rajakumaran
Kaattukuthira
Sasneham
Mridula
Mukham
Ananthanum Appukkuttanum Anayundu
Khalasi
1991
Kakka Thollayiram
Sundari Kakka
Nettipattam
Beli
Chanchaattam
Perunthachan
Kankettu
Ezhunnaallathu
Mimics Parade
Athiradhan
Arangu
Kanal Kaattu
Innathe Program
Karpoora Deepam
Aanaval Mothiram
Sandhesam
Apoorvam Chilar
Ennum Nanmakal
Njaan Gandharvan
Nagarathil Samsaaravishayam
Venal Kinavukal
Cheppukilukkana Changaathi
Nayam Vyakthamakkunnu
1992
My Dear Muthachan
Thalasthanam
Kunukkkitta Kozhi
Mahanagaram
Kasargode Khadarbhai
Snehasaagaram
Oottyppattanam
Aadharam
Maanthrika Cheppu
Ezharapponnana
Savidham
Kudumba Sametham
Neelakkurukkan

Sadayam
Poochaikkaru Manikettum
Aayaram Gayaram
Ambathu Lakshavum Maruthi Carum
1993
Addheham Enna Iddheham
Golanthara Vartha
Samooham
Ghoshayaathra
Ente Sreekuttiku
Maanavam
Samaagamam
Chenkol
Agneyam
O' Faby
Meleparambil Aanveedu
Chamayam
Naaraayam
Thalamura
Paamaram
1994
[[CID Unnikrishnan B.A.
B.Ed.]]
Rajadhaani
Pakshe
Ponthan Mada
The City
Kudumba Visesham
Sandanagopaalam
Manathe Vellitheru
Bhagyavan
Chakoram
Pingami
Malappuram Haji Mahanaaya Joji
Kunjikkili
Leader
1995
Ezharakuttam
Saadaram
Ormakal Undaayirikkanam
Kaattile Thadi Thevarude Aana
Mangalam Veettil Manaseswari Gupta
Sunny Scooter
Sakshyam
Thovala Pookkal
1996
Ee Puzhayum Kadannu
Kanchanam
Thooval Kottaram
Udhyanapalakan
Sallapam
Aayiram Naavulla Ananthan
Kalyana Sougandhikam
1997
Irattakuttikalude Achan
Killikurisiyile Kudumbhamela
Adivaaram
Bhoothakannadi
Manthra Mothiram
Kudamaattam
Sankeerthanam Pole
Guru Sishyan
Oral Mathram
Itha Oru Snehagadha
Churam
Maanasam
Nee Varuvolam



Singer Johnson

Snehasindhooram
Rishyasringan
Athyunnathangalil Koodaram Panithavar
Vachalam
Sammanam
1998
Aayushmaanbhava
Manjukaalavum Kazhinju
Vismayam
Chinthavishtayaya Shyamala
Ormacheppu
Kusrithikuruppu
Thirakalkkappuram
Mangamma
1999
Angane Oru Avadikkalathu
Veendum Chila Veettukaryangal
2000
Swayamvara Pandhal
Susanna
Ee Mazha Thenmazha
Oru Cheru Punchiri
2001
Narendran Makan Jayakanthan Vaka
Uthaman
The Gift of God
Police Academy
2002
Yathrakarude Sradhakku
Danny
Stop Violence
Suvarna Mohangal
2003
Paadam Onnu: Oru Vilapam
2004 ------
2005 ------
2006
Kisan
Photographer
2007
AKG
2008
Gulmohar
2009
Vellathooval
2010
Nirakazhcha
2011
Nadakame Ulakam
Anandhan Pillai Adhava Arjunan Pillai
Navagatharkku Swagatham
Bharyamar Adharikkapedunnu
Khilafath

Background score

Johnson composed the background scor

(but not songs) for the following films.
Aakaashakottayile Sulthaan
Aalorungi Arangorungi
Aaraante Mulla Kochumulla
Aaravam

Aaryan
Arabikkadal
Abhimanyu
Adimachangala
Agnisharam
Ambada Njaane
Amaram
Amrutham
Arayannangalude Veedu
Avidatheppole Ivideyum
Bharatham
Chamaram
Chithram
Chakravalam Chuvannappol
Chithrathoonukal
Dhanam
Dheem Tharikidathom
Ee Kaikalil
Ekantham
English Medium
Ente Hridayathinte Udama
Ente Kaanakkuyil
Ithum Oru Jeevitham
Iniyum Kurukshethram
Kaanaakkinaavu
Kaarunyam
Kaaryam Nissaaram
Kadathanadan Ambadi
Kadaksham
Kamaladalam
Kazhukan
Keli
Kaikudanna Nilavu
Kinnarippuzhayoram
Kodumudikal
Koodum Thedi
Krishnapakshakkilikal
Kudumbapuraanam
Kunjaattakkilikal
Maayamayooram
Madhya Venal
Manasiloru Manimuthu
Manichithrathazhu
Mankamma
Mizhineerppoovukal
Mukunthetta Sumitra Vilikkunnu
Mizhi Randilum
Mounanombaram
No. 1 Snehatheeram Banglore North
Nokketha Dhoorathu Kannum Nattu
Nombarathi Poovu
Nyayavidhi
Orma Mathram
Ottayal Pattaalam
Oru Cheru punchiri
Puzha
Paadamudra
Parinayam
Pooram
Post Box Number 27
Pradakshinam
Raagam Thaanam Pallavi
Shreeraagam
Snehapoorvam Meera
Sukrutham
Susanna
Soorya Gaayathri
Thalavattam
Thazhvaram
Thakara
Thaniyavarthanam
Theekkaattu
Thoovanathumbikal
Uncle Bun
Uthara
Utharam
Vadhu Doctoraanu
Vaadakaveettile Athidhi
Vandanam
Vasudha
Vellanakalude Nadu
Vedikkett
Venkalam
Vishnulokam

Non-film albums

Rajavu ezhunallunnu (2011)
Parishudhan (2009)
Nannipoorvam Johnson
Onathappan
Sneha Deepika (1989)

Johnson Master's favourite songs

"Aadivaa Katte" (*Koodevide*)
"Nee Nirayoo Jeevanil" (*Premageethangal*)
"Swapnam Verumoru Swapnam" (*Premageethangal*)
"Poo Venam" (*Oru Minnaminunginte Nurunguvettam*)
"Melle Melle Mukhapadam" (*Oru Minnaminunginte Nurunguvettam*)
"Gopike Nin Viral" (*Kattathe Kilikkoodu*)
"Devankanangal" (*Njan Gandharvan*)
"Swarna mukile" (*Ithu Njangaludey Kadha*)
"Thankathoni" (*Mazhavilkavadi*)
"Sundari Poovinu Naanam" (*Ente Upasana*)
"Shyamambharam" (*Artham*)
"Enthe Kannanu Karuppu Niram" (*Photographer*)
"Oru Naal" (*Gulmohar*)



With best wishes
to
Raagalaya

GNAS

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ജോൺസന്റെ വിയോഗം
തീരാവേദനയായി മാറുമ്പോൾ
ഗുൽ മോഹറിനുവേണ്ടി
അദ്ദേഹം ഈണമിട്ട
ആ വരികൾ
ഓർമ്മയിൽ ഉണരുന്നു...
ഒരു നാൾ ശുഭരാത്രി
നേർന്നുപോയി നീ...

മരയ്ക്കുന്ന മുഖം, മായാത്ത പാട്ട്

– ടി. പി. ശാസ്തമംഗലം



ഇളയരാജിന്റെ "ഗുൽമോഹർ" എന്ന ചിത്രത്തിൽ ഒ.എൻ.വി. കുറുപ്പ് എഴുതിയ ഒരു ഗാനമുണ്ട്.

"ഒരുനാൾ ശുഭരാത്രിനേർന്നുപോയി നീ
ഇതിലേ ഒരു പുക്കിനാവായ്വന്ന നീ
ശ്രുതി നേർത്തു നേർത്തു മായും
ഋതുരാഗഗീതിപോലെ
പറയൂ നീയെങ്ങു പോയ്?"

വിരഹത്തിന്റെ നൊമ്പരമുണർത്തുന്ന ഈ ഗാനം കേട്ടാലും കേട്ടാലും മതിവരാത്തത്ര മധുരമായ് ചിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തി വിജയ് യേശുദാസിന്റെയും ശ്വേതയുടെയും ചുണ്ടുകളിലൂടെ നമ്മുടെ കാതുകളിൽ എത്തിച്ചത് സംഗീതസംവിധായകൻ ജോൺസണാണ്.

അറംപറ്റി എന്നൊക്കെ പറയില്ലേ? അതുതന്നെ സംഭവിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു.

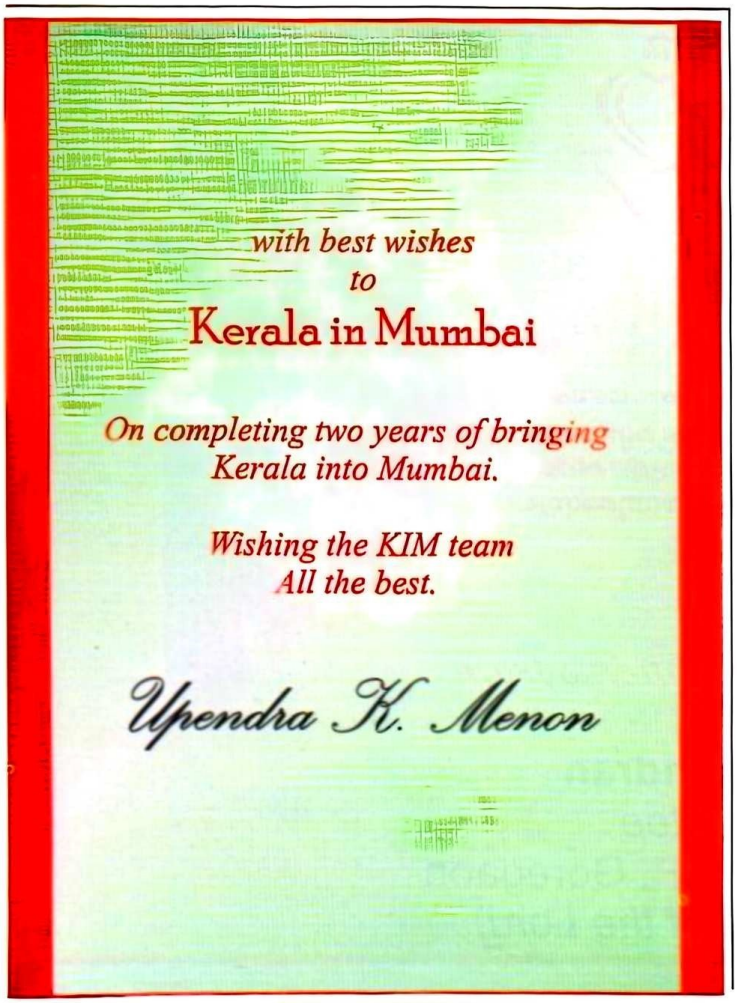
എല്ലാ അർത്ഥത്തിലും ഒരു പുക്കിനാവായി ചലച്ചിത്രഗാന സംഗീതലോകത്ത് നിറഞ്ഞുനിന്ന അദ്ദേഹം ശ്രുതി നേർത്തുമായുന്ന ഋതുരാഗഗീതിപോലെ ഒരുനാൾ ശുഭരാത്രി നേർന്ന് എങ്ങോ പോയി. ഗാനമെഴുതിയ കവിയോടൊപ്പം കേരളത്തിലെ ആസ്വാദകർ ഒന്നടങ്കം ആരായുന്നു പ്രിയസംഗീതജ്ഞൻ എവിടെയാണ് പോയത്?

ആഗസ്റ്റ് 18-ാം തീയതി വ്യാഴാഴ്ച പതിവു സായാഹ്ന



സവാരിക്കുശേഷം വീട്ടിലെത്തി മേൽകഴുകുമ്പോൾ ശ്രുതിലയങ്ങൾ ഓമനിച്ച അവസാനശ്വാസവും നിലച്ച് ഗാനപ്രണയികളുടെ ജോൺസൺ മാസ്റ്റർ കുളിമുറിയിലെ തണുത്ത തറയിലേക്ക് വീഴുകയായിരുന്നു. ജീവന്റെ അവസാനകണികയെങ്കിലും ബാക്കിയുണ്ടായേക്കാമെന്ന വിശ്വാസത്തോടെ അദ്ദേഹത്തെ അടുത്തുള്ള ആശുപത്രിയിൽ എത്തിച്ചെങ്കിലും അധികം താമസിയാതെ മലയാളികൾക്കാകമാനം ആ അശുഭവാർത്ത കേൾക്കാനായിരുന്നു വിധി.

"ഗാനമായി വന്നു നീ മൗനമായി
മാഞ്ഞു നീ മായുകയില്ലെന്നോർമ്മയിൽ
ചൈത്രമാസ നീലവാനം
പുത്തുലഞ്ഞു നിൽക്കവെ
പോവുകയോ നീയകലെ
എന്റെ ഏകതാരകേ
കാതരേ കരയുന്നതാരേ
കാട്ടുമൈന പോൽ"



ജോൺസന്റെ വിയോഗം തീരാവേദനയായി മാറുമ്പോൾ മുകളിൽ ഉദ്ധരിച്ച ഓരോ വരിയും വാക്കും അനാവർത്ഥമാകുന്നു. സംഗീതത്തിന്റെ അലകളുയർത്തിവന്ന അദ്ദേഹം മൗനത്തോടെ മറഞ്ഞിരിക്കുന്നു.

ആരുടെയും ഓർമ്മയിൽ നിന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം ഒരിക്കലും മായുകയില്ല. ആ ഗാനങ്ങൾ അലയടിക്കുന്നിടത്തോളം കാലം, മുന്നു പതിറ്റാണ്ടുകൾ തന്റെ സജീവ സാന്നിദ്ധ്യംകൊണ്ട് മലയാള ചലച്ചിത്രഗാന സംഗീതത്തെയും പശ്ചാത്തലസംഗീതത്തെയും ധന്യമാക്കി ജോൺസൺ.

തൃശൂർ നെല്ലിക്കുന്നിലെ സംഗീതപാരമ്പര്യമുള്ള കുടുംബത്തിൽ ബാങ്ക് ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥനായ ആന്റണിയുടെയും മേരിയുടെയും മകനായി 1953 മാർച്ച് 26 നാണ് ജോൺസൺ ജനിച്ചത്. സ്കൂൾ വിദ്യാർത്ഥിയായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾതന്നെ സംഗീതത്തോട് ആഭിമുഖ്യം പുലർത്തിയ ജോൺസൺ ആദ്യം നെല്ലിക്കുന്ന് സെന്റ് സെബാസ്റ്റ്യൻസ് പള്ളിയിൽ ഗായകസംഘത്തിലെ അംഗമായി. പിന്നീട് തൃശൂർ സെന്റ് തോമസ് കോളേജിൽ കോമേഴ്സ് ഐച്ഛിക വിഷയമെടുത്ത് ബിരുദ വിദ്യാർത്ഥിയായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ സംഗീതോപകരണങ്ങൾ പലതും ഭംഗിയായി കൈകാര്യം ചെയ്യാൻ തുടങ്ങി.

ഗാനമേളകളിൽ ഹാർമോണിയമോ ഗിറ്റാറോ വായിക്കുന്നതുകൂടാതെ ഗായികമാരുടെ അഭാവം മിക്കപ്പോഴും നികത്തിയിരുന്നത് ജോൺസൺ ആയിരുന്നു. ആദ്യകാല ഗായികമാരിൽ പലരുടെയും ശബ്ദത്തിൽ അതുപോലെ പാടാൻ അസാമാന്യ കഴിവുണ്ടായിരുന്നു അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്.

1968-ലാണ് ജോൺസൺ ഏതാനും സുഹൃത്തുക്കളുമായി ചേർന്ന് "വോയ്സ് ഓഫ് തൃച്ചൂർ" എന്ന കലാസമിതിക്ക് രൂപം കൊടുത്തത്. അദ്ദേഹമായിരുന്നു ആ ഗ്രൂപ്പിലെ പ്രമുഖ കലാകാരൻ. ഹാർമോണിയം, ഗിറ്റാർ, ഫ്ളൂട്ട്, കീബോർഡ്, വയലിൻ, ഡ്രംസ് എന്നുവേണ്ട ഏതു സംഗീതോപകരണവും അനായാസേന കൈകാര്യം ചെയ്യാനറിയുന്ന ഏക വ്യക്തിയായിരുന്നു അദ്ദേഹം.

"വോയ്സ് ഓഫ് തൃച്ചൂരി"ന്റെ യശസ്സ് തൃശൂർ ജില്ലയ്ക്കു പുറത്തേക്ക് ക്രമേണ പരക്കാൻ തുടങ്ങി. ജയചന്ദ്രൻ, മാധുരി എന്നീ പ്രമുഖ ഗായകരുടെ ഗാനമേളകൾക്ക് സംഗീതോപകരണങ്ങളുമായി അകമ്പടി സേവിക്കാനുള്ള അവസരം ആ ട്രൂപ്പിന് വന്നുചേർന്നു. ഏതു സംഗീതോപകരണവും വായിക്കാൻ കഴിവുള്ള ജോൺസൺ എന്ന അത്ഭുത മനുഷ്യനെക്കുറിച്ച് ഗായകൻ ജയചന്ദ്രനിൽനിന്നു കേട്ടറിഞ്ഞ സംഗീതസംവിധായകൻ ജി. ദേവരാജൻ 1974-ൽ അദ്ദേഹത്തെ മദിരാശിയിലേക്കു വിളിപ്പിച്ച് സ്വന്തം സഹായിയാക്കി.

ജി. ദേവരാജൻ ചലച്ചിത്രഗാനസംഗീതത്തിൽ വെന്നിക്കൊടി പാറിച്ച് മുന്നേറുന്ന കാലം അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ സഹായിയായി പ്രവർത്തിച്ചുപോന്ന ആർ.കെ. ശേഖർ (എ.ആർ. റഹ്മാന്റെ പിതാവ്) സ്വതന്ത്രസംഗീതസംവിധായകനായതോടെ ഒരു നിയോഗം പോലെ ജോൺസൺ ആ സ്ഥലത്തേക്ക് അവരോധിക്കപ്പെടുകയായിരുന്നു. ശരിക്കും ഗുരുമുഖത്തു നിന്നുള്ള ശിക്ഷണമായിരുന്നു ജോൺസന് ദേവരാഗങ്ങളുടെ രാജശില്പിയായ ദേവരാജനിൽനിന്നു ലഭിച്ചത്. ഏതു സംഗീതോപകരണവും നന്നായി ഉപയോഗിക്കാൻ അറിയാമായിരുന്ന ശിഷ്യന്റെ കഴിവുകൾ ആ ഗുരു വേണ്ടവിധത്തിൽ പ്രയോജനപ്പെടുത്തി.

ഈ ചെറുപ്പക്കാരന്റെ അപാരസിദ്ധിയെക്കുറിച്ചറിഞ്ഞ ഭരതൻ 1978-ൽ തന്റെ "ആരവം" എന്ന ചിത്രത്തിന്റെ പശ്ചാത്തല സംഗീതം ഒരുക്കാൻ അദ്ദേഹത്തെ ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തി. സംവിധായകന്റെ സങ്കല്പങ്ങൾക്കും അതീതമായി പ്രവർത്തിക്കാൻ അദ്ദേഹത്തിനു കഴിഞ്ഞു.

1980-ൽ വന്ന തകര, ചാമരം എന്നീ രണ്ടു ചിത്രങ്ങൾക്കുവേണ്ടിയും പശ്ചാത്തല സംഗീതം നൽകിയത് ജോൺസണായിരുന്നു. 1981-ലാണ് അദ്ദേഹം ആദ്യമായി ചലച്ചിത്രഗാനം ചിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തിയത്. ആന്റണി ഈസ്റ്റുമാൻ സംവിധാനം ചെയ്ത, "ഇണയെത്തേടി" എന്ന ചിത്രത്തിനുവേണ്ടി ആർ.കെ. ദാമോദരൻ രചിച്ച "വിപിനവാടിക" (പി. ജയചന്ദ്രൻ പാടിയത്) എന്ന ഗാനം.

ശരിക്കും ജോൺസനെ സംഗീതസംവിധായകൻ എന്നു പേരെടുപ്പിച്ചത് ബാലചന്ദ്രമേനോന്റെ "പ്രേമഗീതങ്ങൾ" എന്ന ചിത്രമാണ്. സ്വപ്നം വെറുമൊരു സ്വപ്നം, നീ നിറയൂ ജീവനിൽ, മുത്തും മുടിപ്പൊന്നും, കളകളമൊഴി എന്നീ നാലു ഗാനങ്ങളും ഹിറ്റായി.

അവിടന്നങ്ങോട്ട് ജനപ്രിയഗാനങ്ങളുടെ പരമ്പരതന്നെ സൃഷ്ടിച്ചു ജോൺസൺ. ഏതു ചിത്രത്തിലെയും ഒരു ഗാനമെങ്കിലും ജനകീയമാക്കുക, കഴിവതും സകല ഗാനങ്ങളും ഏറ്റുപാടാൻ തക്കവിധം ചിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തുക ഇതൊക്കെയായിരുന്നു ജോൺസന്റെ രീതി. നിത്യനൂതനമെന്നു പറയാവുന്ന അനേകം ഗാനങ്ങൾ അദ്ദേഹം സംഭാവന ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഏതോ ജന്മകല്പനയിൽ (പാളങ്ങൾ), സ്വർണ്ണമുകിലേ (ഇതു ഞങ്ങളുടെ കഥ), എന്നിട്ടും നീയെന്നെ അറിഞ്ഞില്ലല്ലോ (നസീമ), ആടിവാ

കാറ്റേ, പൊന്നുരുകും പുക്കാലം (കൂടെവിടെ), ഗോപികേ നിൻ വിരൽ (കാറ്റത്തെ കിളിക്കൂട്) അനുരാഗിണി (ഒരു കുടക്കീഴിൽ), എന്റെ മൺവീണയിൽ (നേരം പുലരുമ്പോൾ), പൂവേണം പൂപ്പട വേണം (ഒരു മിന്നാമിനുങ്ങിന്റെ നുറുങ്ങുവെട്ടം), കുന്നിമണിച്ചെപ്പ് (പൊന്മുട്ടയിടുന്ന താറാവ്), കണ്ണീർപ്പൂവിന്റെ (കിരീടം), മധുരം ജീവാമൃതബിന്ദു (ചെങ്കോൽ), ശ്യാമാംബരം (അർത്ഥം), തങ്കത്തോണി (മഴവിൽക്കാവടി), താനേ പൂവിട്ട മോഹം (സസ്നേഹം), പഞ്ചവർണ്ണപ്പൈങ്കിളിപ്പെണ്ണേ (സല്ലാപം), കാക്കക്കറുമ്പൻ കണ്ടാൽ കുറുമ്പൻ (ഈ പുഴയും കടന്ന്), മച്ചകത്തമ്മയെ (ചിന്താവിഷ്ടയായ ശ്യാമള), രാജഹംസമേ (പ്രമയം)..... വീണ്ടും വീണ്ടും ഇഷ്ടഗാനങ്ങൾ ഉള്ളിൽ ശ്രുതിയിട്ടുകൊണ്ടേയിരിക്കുന്നു.

ജോൺസന്റെ സംഗീതത്തെ പ്രശാന്തസുന്ദരമായി ഒഴുകുന്ന ഒരു നദിയോട് ഉപമിക്കാം. ആ ഗാനനദി നമ്മുടെ മനസ്സിലൂടെ ഒഴുകുമ്പോൾ ശരിക്കും കുളിർമ്മ തോന്നും. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ ഒരു ഗാനത്തിനും മുമ്പിറങ്ങിയ ഏതെങ്കിലുമൊരു പാട്ടിന്റെ ഛായ ആരോപിക്കാനാവില്ല. വെറുതെ ഒരു ഈണത്തെ കൂട്ടുപിടിച്ച് എങ്ങനെയും ഒരു പാട്ടുണ്ടാക്കുക എന്ന എളുപ്പപ്പണി ജോൺസൺ ഒരിക്കലും ഇഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നില്ല. വരികളുടെ അന്തസ്സത്ത വേണ്ടവിധം ഗ്രഹിച്ച്, കഥാസന്ദർഭം ഒരിക്കലും വഴിമാറാതിരിക്കാൻ പ്രത്യേകം ശ്രദ്ധിച്ച്, സർഗ്ഗാനുഷ്ഠാനപ്രക്രിയയുടെ ഈറ്റുനോവ് ശരിക്കും അനുഭവിച്ച് അങ്ങനെയാണ് അദ്ദേഹം ഓരോ പാട്ടും ചിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തുക. കല്യാണിരാഗത്തോട് പ്രത്യേക മമത പുലർത്തുമ്പോഴും ഇതരരാഗങ്ങൾ അദ്ദേഹം മാറ്റിനിറുത്താറില്ല. കഥയുടെ ഘടനയ്ക്കനുസൃതമായി രാഗം തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുക എന്ന ഗുരുവിന്റെ ദർശനം തന്റെ കലാജീവിതത്തിലേക്കും പകർത്തിയ സംഗീതകാരനാണ് ജോൺസൺ.

അവസാനം സ്വരപ്പെടുത്തിയ "നാടകമേ ഉലക"ത്തിലെ "പൂക്കില ചിതറി പൂമഴ വിതറി", "തേവാരപ്പൂമലയിൽ", "വനമാലീ നിന്നോടക്കുഴലി നിന്നൊഴുകുന്നു" എന്നിവ ഉൾപ്പെടെ എഴുന്നുറോളം ഗാനങ്ങൾ വിവിധ ചിത്രങ്ങളിലായി അദ്ദേഹം ഒരുക്കി. ഏതു ഗാനവും രാഗത്തിന്റെ പിൻബലവും മെലഡിയുടെ മാധുര്യവും അവകാശപ്പെടാവുന്നതുമാണ്. ഗാനസാഹിത്യത്തിന് തെല്ലും മങ്ങലേൽപ്പിക്കാതെയാണ് അദ്ദേഹം എല്ലാ ഗാനങ്ങളും ഒരുക്കിയത്.

രണ്ടുതവണ ജോൺസനെത്തേടി ദേശീയ ചലച്ചിത്ര പുരസ്കാരം എത്തി. രണ്ടും പശ്ചാത്തല സംഗീതത്തിന്. 1994-ൽ "പൊന്തൻമാട"യും 1995-ൽ "സുകൃത"വുമാണ് ആ അംഗീകരങ്ങൾ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന് നേടിക്കൊടുത്തത്. ശരിക്കു പറഞ്ഞാൽ "പൊന്തൻമാട"യിലെ പശ്ചാത്തലസംഗീതം സമ്മാനത്തിനുവേണ്ടി പരിഗണിച്ച പുരസ്കാരസമിതി അതിലെ ഏക ഗാനവും ശ്രദ്ധിച്ചു. ഒ.എ.വി എഴുതി ജോൺസൺ ചിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തി കെ.എസ്. ചിത്ര പാടിയ "അടിമരുങ്ങേ അയ്യയ്യാ" എന്ന ഗാനത്തിനു കൊടുത്ത നാടോടിസംഗീതം അവർക്ക് ശരിക്കും ഇഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടു. അങ്ങനെ രണ്ടിനുംകൂടി (ഗാനത്തിന്റെ സംഗീതത്തിനും ചിത്രത്തിന്റെ പശ്ചാത്തല സംഗീതത്തിനും) പുരസ്കാരങ്ങൾ നൽകുകയായിരുന്നു. മൂന്നുതവണ മികച്ച സംഗീതസംവിധായകനുള്ള സംസ്ഥാന പുരസ്കാരവും അദ്ദേഹം നേടി. "ഓർമ്മയ്ക്കായി" (1982), വടക്കുനോക്കിയന്ത്രം, മഴവിൽക്കാവടി (1989), അങ്ങനെ ഒരവധിക്കാലത്ത് (1999) എന്നീ ചിത്രങ്ങളിലെ ഗാനങ്ങളുടെ പേരിലാണ് അവർഡ് വന്നതെങ്കിൽ "സദയം"(1992), "സല്ലാപം (1996) എന്നീ ചിത്രങ്ങൾക്കു കൊടുത്ത പശ്ചാത്തലസംഗീതവും സംസ്ഥാന പുരസ്കാരത്തിന് അർഹത നേടി. വിവാദങ്ങളിലൊന്നും പെടാതെ, തന്നെ എല്പിക്കുന്ന ജോലി ഭംഗിയായി നിറവേറ്റുക എന്ന ഉത്തരവാദിത്വബോധത്തോടെ തികഞ്ഞ കലാകാരനായി ജീവിച്ചയാളാണ് ജോൺസൺ. അഞ്ഞൂറോളം ചിത്രങ്ങൾക്കുവേണ്ടി പാട്ടുകൾ ഒരുക്കാനുള്ള പണിപ്പുരയിലായിരുന്നു അദ്ദേഹം. ഇനിയും നാം അദ്ദേഹത്തിൽനിന്നും നല്ലനല്ല പാട്ടുകൾ പ്രതീക്ഷിച്ചു. പക്ഷേ, പെട്ടെന്നൊരുനാൾ ശുഭരാത്രിനേർന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം കടന്നുപോയി. കാലമെത്ര കഴിഞ്ഞാലും ആ കുറവ് പരിഹരിക്കാനാവില്ല.



ബാങ്കുർ നഗറിലുള്ളും ഗണപതി
വിഘ്നങ്ങളെല്ലാം അകറ്റിടേണേ.
കന്നിമൂലക്കൽ ഇരുന്നരുളിക്കൊണ്ട്
കാക്കണേ ഞങ്ങളെയെന്നുമെന്നും.

With best compliments from

V. Balachandran
Life Trustee
AYYAPPA MANDIR, Goregaon
(In the service of the Lord)



നിൽപ്പൂ, ജനിമൃതികൾക്കകലെ ...

കെ ജയകുമാർ IAS

പൂർവസൂരികളുടെ സംഗീതലാവണ്യസങ്കല്പവും പാശ്ചാത്യ സംഗീതത്തിന്റെ സമ്പന്നതയും തന്റെ ഗാനങ്ങളിൽ ഇഴചേർത്ത കലാകാരനാണ് ജോൺസൺ. ഒരു വർഷകാല സന്ധ്യയിൽ കാലം ആ പ്രതിഭയ്ക്ക് വിരാമം കുറിക്കുമ്പോൾ ബാക്കിയായത് ആർക്കും മായ്ക്കാനാവാത്ത ഒരു പിടി ഗാനങ്ങൾ...

മരണം അപഹരിക്കുന്ന വ്യക്തിയുടെ മൂല്യത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് ചിന്തിച്ച് നഷ്ടബോധത്തിന്റെ ഇരുണ്ട ഇടനാഴിയിൽ കുറെ സമയം കഴിയുകയല്ലാതെ, മൃത്യു ആവർത്തിച്ചു പറഞ്ഞുതരുന്ന പാഠഭാഗങ്ങൾ നാം ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുന്നില്ല. അകാലത്തിൽ വരുന്ന പൂർണവിരാമത്തിന്റെ അന്ധകാരത്തെ ഒട്ടു പഴിക്കുകമാത്രം ചെയ്യുന്നു. അതിനപ്പുറത്തേക്ക് മനോസഞ്ചാരം നടത്തിയാൽ സ്വന്തം

നശ്വരതയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള വിഹ്വലവിചാരങ്ങളുടെ നിരോധിത മേഖലയിൽ എത്തിച്ചേർന്നില്ലെങ്കിലോ എന്ന ഭയം, മൃത്യുവെ ഉപരിപ്ലവമായിമാത്രം കാണാൻ നമ്മെ പ്രേരിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

അമ്പത്തിയെട്ടാം വയസ്സിൽ വിചാരിക്കാതെ ഒരു വ്യാഴാഴ്ച വൈകുന്നേരം, സംഗീതംകൊണ്ട് തുടിച്ചിരുന്ന ഒരു ഹൃദയം നിശ്ചലമായപ്പോൾ, അവിശ്വസനീയതയും നഷ്ടബോധവും വിഷാദവും നമ്മെ വന്നു പൊതിയുകയായിരുന്നു. ഒരു നീലനിശാവസ്ത്രം കണക്കെ ജോൺസൺ എന്ന സർഗധനനും സൗമ്യപ്രകൃതിയുമായ സംഗീതസംവിധായകൻ അനേകമനേകം ഗാനങ്ങൾ നമ്മളെ ഏല്പിച്ചിട്ട് പോയ്മറഞ്ഞു. മുന്നറിയിപ്പില്ലാതെ, യാത്ര പറയാതെ. വിളക്ക് ഉടഞ്ഞുപോയിട്ടും വെളിച്ചം ബാക്കി നിൽക്കുംപോലെ ആ ഗാനങ്ങളിതാ നമ്മളോടൊപ്പം തന്നെയുണ്ട്.

വ്യക്തിത്വത്തിലെ സൗമ്യഭാവം ജോൺസന്റെ സംഗീതത്തിൽ അന്തര്യാമിയായിരുന്നു. ഒരു ഗാനത്തിന്ന് ഈണം പകരുമ്പോൾ ഭാവത്തെ വാക്കുകളിലൂടെയും വാദ്യങ്ങളിലൂടെയും മൗനത്തിലൂടെയും തുയിലുണർത്താൻ എന്നും ശ്രമിച്ചിരുന്നു.

'അനുരാഗിണി, ഇതാ എൻ കരളിൽ വിരിഞ്ഞ പൂക്കൾ' എന്ന ഗാനത്തിൽ നമുക്കിതു ബോധ്യപ്പെടും. 'ദേവാങ്കണങ്ങൾ കൈയൊഴിഞ്ഞ താരകം സായാഹ്നസാനുവിൽ വിലോലമേഘമായ്" എന്ന ഗാനത്തിലെ ഗന്ധർവ പ്രവാസത്തിന്റെ ഉദ്വിഗ്നത ശ്രോതാവിലേക്ക് അനായാസം സംക്രമിക്കുന്നത് അതുകൊണ്ടാണ്.

'പവിഴംപോൽ പവിഴാധരംപോൽ പനിനീർമുകുളംപോൽ' എന്ന മാലോപമയുടെ മധുരിമ പകർന്നുതരുന്നതിൽ ദീക്ഷിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന ഔചിത്യത്തിലും ഏകാഗ്രതയിലും ഈ സൗമ്യസ്പർശം തിരിച്ചറിയാം. ഒട്ടനവധി പ്രതിഭാശാലികൾ സ്വരമുദ്ര ചാർത്തിയ മലയാളചലച്ചിത്ര സംഗീതത്തിന്റെ അരങ്ങിൽ, ജോൺസൺ നറുമ വിതറുന്ന തുഷാരമാരുതനെപ്പോലെ കടന്നുവന്നു. പൂർവസൂരികളിൽനിന്ന് സംഗീതലാവണ്യസങ്കല്പവും ഭാവോന്മീലനപാരുതയും ജോൺസൺ സ്വാംശീകരിച്ചു. പാശ്ചാത്യസംഗീതത്തിന്റെ സമ്പന്നതന്റെ സംഗീതത്തിൽ സംലയിപ്പിച്ചു. ഭാവത്തിന്റെ സമുചിതമായ തരംഗദൈർഘ്യങ്ങളിൽ ഗാനങ്ങളെ വിന്യസിപ്പിച്ചു. ഭാഷയുടെ ആന്തരികലയത്തിന് എപ്പോഴും കാതോർത്തു. ഒരു പൂമൊട്ട് വിരിയുന്ന സൗന്ദര്യലാളിത്യത്തോടെ ഗാനങ്ങൾക്ക് ഉപകരണപശ്ചാത്തലമൊരുക്കി. അങ്ങനെ ജോൺസന്റെ ഗാനങ്ങൾക്ക് പൂവിതൾകൊണ്ടു തീർത്ത ശില്പങ്ങളുടെ സുഭഗത കൈവന്നു.

'ഗൃഹലക്ഷ്മി'യുടെ 'ഒഴിവുകാല'മായിരുന്നു ഞാൻ പൂർണമായി ഗാനരചന നിർവ്വഹിച്ച ആദ്യചിത്രം. ജോൺസണെ ഞാനാദ്യം കാണുകയായിരുന്നു. 'സായന്തനം നിഴൽ വീശിയില്ല, ശ്രാവണപൂക്കളുറങ്ങിയില്ല' എന്നാരംഭിക്കുന്ന ഗാനം പഹാഡി രാഗത്തിൽ ചിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തുന്ന ജോൺസന്റെ ചിത്രം എന്റെ ഹൃദയത്തിൽ പതിഞ്ഞുകിടപ്പുണ്ട്. മുപ്പത്തിരണ്ടോ മുപ്പത്തിമൂന്നോ വയസ്സേ ഉള്ളൂ. ചെറുപ്പമെങ്കിലും സംഗീതത്തിലെ വ്യുല്പത്തിയും കൃതൃതയും ആത്മവിശ്വാസവും റെക്കോഡിങ് സ്റ്റുഡിയോയിലെ മേധാശക്തിയും എന്നെ അതിശയിപ്പിച്ചു.

അന്നുമുതലാരംഭിച്ച സൗഹൃദം അക്ഷരാർത്ഥത്തിൽ അവസാന നാളുകൾവരെ നില നിന്നു. പിന്നെയും ഞങ്ങൾ ഏതാനും ചിത്രങ്ങളിൽ ഒന്നിച്ചു. ഒ.എൻ.വി, കൈതപ്രം, ഗിരീഷ് എന്നീ ഗാനരചയിതാക്കളുമായിച്ചേർന്ന് അനേകമനേകം നല്ല ഗാനങ്ങൾ ജോൺസൺ നമുക്കു നൽകി. ജോൺസന്റെ ഗാനസാമ്രാജ്യം അനുക്രമം വളർന്ന് വിപുലമായി. 1980 മുതൽ 2000 വരെയുള്ള ഇരുപതു വർഷങ്ങൾ ജോൺസന്റെ കാലമെന്ന് അടയാളപ്പെടുത്താം.



മുന്നൂറിലേറെ ചിത്രങ്ങളിലായി ആയിരത്തിലേറെ ഗാനങ്ങൾ അതാണ് ജോൺസൺ സൃഷ്ടിച്ചെടുത്ത ഗാനസാമ്രാജ്യം.

സംഗീതത്തിലെ അകൃത്രിമത്വം ജീവിതത്തിൽ ജോൺസൺ നിലനിർത്തി. അകവും പുറവും ഒരുപോലെയെന്ന് പറയാവുന്ന വ്യക്തിത്വം ജോൺസനെ വ്യത്യസ്തനും നിഷ്കളങ്കനുമാക്കി.
മലയാളസിനിമാസംഗീതം കഴിഞ്ഞ ഒരു ദശകമായി പിന്തുടരുന്ന ശൈലി തനിക്ക് സ്വീകാര്യമല്ലെന്ന് ബോധ്യപ്പെട്ട ജോൺസൺ കുറേകാലമായി സിനിമാരംഗത്തുനിന്ന് വിട്ടുനിന്നു. അത് ആ കലാകാരന്റെ ബൗദ്ധികമായ സത്യസന്ധതയ്ക്ക് നിദർശനം. പക്ഷെ, തന്റെ രീതിയിൽനിന്ന് വ്യത്യസ്തമായി സംഗീതത്തെ സമീപിക്കുന്നവരുടെ കഴിവുകൾ അംഗീകരിക്കാനും ജോൺസണ് കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്നു.

ആദ്യവും അവസാനവുമായി ജോൺസന്റെ വിധേയത്വം സംഗീതത്തോട് മാത്രം. ദേവരാജൻമാസ്റ്ററുടെ നേതൃത്വത്തിൽ മലയാളചലച്ചിത്ര സംഗീതത്തിന്റെ ജൂബിലി ഗംഭീരമായി ആഘോഷിച്ചു. മൂന്നു രാത്രികൾ നീണ്ട സംഗീതപരിപാടിയിൽ നൂറിലേറെ ഗാനങ്ങൾ അവതരിപ്പിക്കപ്പെട്ടു. ഈ ബൃഹദ്പരിപാടി സംഘടിപ്പിക്കാൻ ദേവരാജൻമാസ്റ്റർ നിയോഗിച്ചത് തന്റെ പ്രിയപ്പെട്ട ശിഷ്യനെയായിരുന്നു. അപ്പോഴെക്കും പ്രശസ്തനായ സംഗീതസംവിധായകനായി മാറിക്കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്ന ജോൺസൺ മറ്റുള്ളവർ പിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തിയ നൂറിലേറെ ഗാനങ്ങൾ റിഹേഴ്സൽ നടത്തിച്ച്, ഭംഗിയായി സ്റ്റേജിൽ അവതരിപ്പിച്ചു. വ്യർഥമായ തൻപോരിമയോ അഹന്തയോ വൈമുഖ്യമോ ജോൺസൺ പ്രകടിപ്പിച്ചില്ലെന്നു മാത്രമല്ല, അന്യാദൃശമായ അർപ്പണബോധത്തോടെ ആ ദൗത്യം ഏറ്റെടുത്തു.
മലയാളസിനിമാ സംഗീതവീഥിയിലൂടെയുള്ള ഒരു തീർത്ഥയാത്രയായി അതിനെ കാണാൻ ജോൺസണ് സാധിച്ചത് സംഗീതത്തോടുള്ള വിധേയത്വം കൊണ്ടും ഗുരുവിനോടുള്ള ആദരം കൊണ്ടും മുൻഗാമികളോടും സമകാലികരോടും പിൻമുറക്കാരോടുമുള്ള പാരസ്പര്യത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള അവബോധംകൊണ്ടുമായിരിക്കണം.

മരണം വന്ന് കൂട്ടിക്കൊണ്ടുപോകുന്നതിന് മുമ്പ് ഒരു ടി വി പരിപാടിയിൽ ജോൺസണോടൊപ്പം സംബന്ധിക്കാൻ സാധിച്ചത് ഇപ്പോൾ വേദന കലർന്ന വിസ്മയാനുഭവമായി മാറി. ഞങ്ങളുടെമാത്രം ഗാനങ്ങൾ വീണ്ടും പാടി കേൾക്കാനും അവ പിറന്ന ദിവസങ്ങളിലൂടെ ഒന്നുകൂടി സ്മൃതിസഞ്ചാരം നടത്താനും ഒരവസരം ഉണ്ടായത് നിയോഗം. അദൃശനായൊരു സംവിധായകൻ രൂപകല്പന ചെയ്ത ഒരു രംഗമായിരുന്നു അതെന്ന് അപ്പോൾ നിനച്ചതേയില്ല.
ആ പരിപാടിയിൽവെച്ചുതന്നെ ഞാനെഴുതിയ ഒരു ഗാനം ജോൺസൺ കമ്പോസ് ചെയ്ത് അവതരിപ്പിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. വെറുതെ എഴുതിയ ആ വരികൾക്കും ഇപ്പോൾ ഒരു പുതിയ നിറച്ചാർത്ത് കാണാനാവുന്നുണ്ട്.

'പാതിരാമേഘങ്ങൾ നമ്മളെ നോക്കി
മന്ദഹസിക്കയാണോ?
പാർവണചന്ദ്രിക പതിവായി നമ്മളെ
കാണുവാൻ വരികയാണോ?'

പതിനഞ്ച് മിനിട്ടുകൊണ്ട് പതിവ് മികവോടെ ഗാനം പിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തി പഠിപ്പിച്ചുകൊടുത്തു. ട്യൂൺ ചെയ്യുന്നതിന്നിടയിൽ ജോൺസണുമായി നടത്തിയ ആശയവിനിമയവും ആ രംഗവുമെല്ലാം ആമോദകാലത്തു കണ്ട ഒരു ചലച്ചിത്രത്തിന്റെ സ്മൃതിപോലെ മനസ്സിലുണരുന്നു.

രാത്രി വൈകിയതിനാൽ തിടുക്കത്തിൽ യാത്ര പറഞ്ഞു പിരിഞ്ഞു: അത്രയും നേരം ഒരുമിച്ചു കഴിഞ്ഞ്, ഒരു പുതിയ ഗാനവും പിട്ടപ്പെടുത്തി പിരിയണമെന്നത് മനുഷ്യർക്കതീതമായ ഏതോ ശക്തിയുടെ കല്പനതന്നെയായിരുന്നുവല്ലോ.

തനിക്കുള്ളതെല്ലാം നമുക്കു നൽകി ജോൺസൺ ആകസ്മിക മൃത്യുവിന് വഴങ്ങി. മരണം അനിവാര്യമെങ്കിലും നാം ദുഃഖിക്കുന്നു. ആ ദുഃഖംകൊണ്ട് ഇരുണ്ട രാത്രി മാനത്തിന്റെ വിതാനത്തിൽ ആ ഗാനങ്ങൾ നക്ഷത്രകാന്തിയോടെ ഉദിച്ചുനിൽക്കുന്നു.
അതിനുമപ്പുറമുള്ള ഗന്ധർവലോകത്തിന്റെ അഴകുള്ള സോപാനത്തിലിരുന്ന് ജോൺസണായി പിറന്ന് മടങ്ങിയെത്തിയ ആത്മാവ് പ്രകാശകാരമാർന്ന് ഗൃഹാതുരതയോടെ പാടുന്നുണ്ടാവണം:

'ദേവാങ്കണങ്ങൾ കൈയൊഴിഞ്ഞ താരകം
സായാഹ്നസാനുവിൽ വിലോലമേഘമായ്'...'

('മാതൃഭൂമി'യോട് കടപ്പാട്)



With Best wishes to
Raagalaya

C. S. CONSULTANCY SERVICES
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