

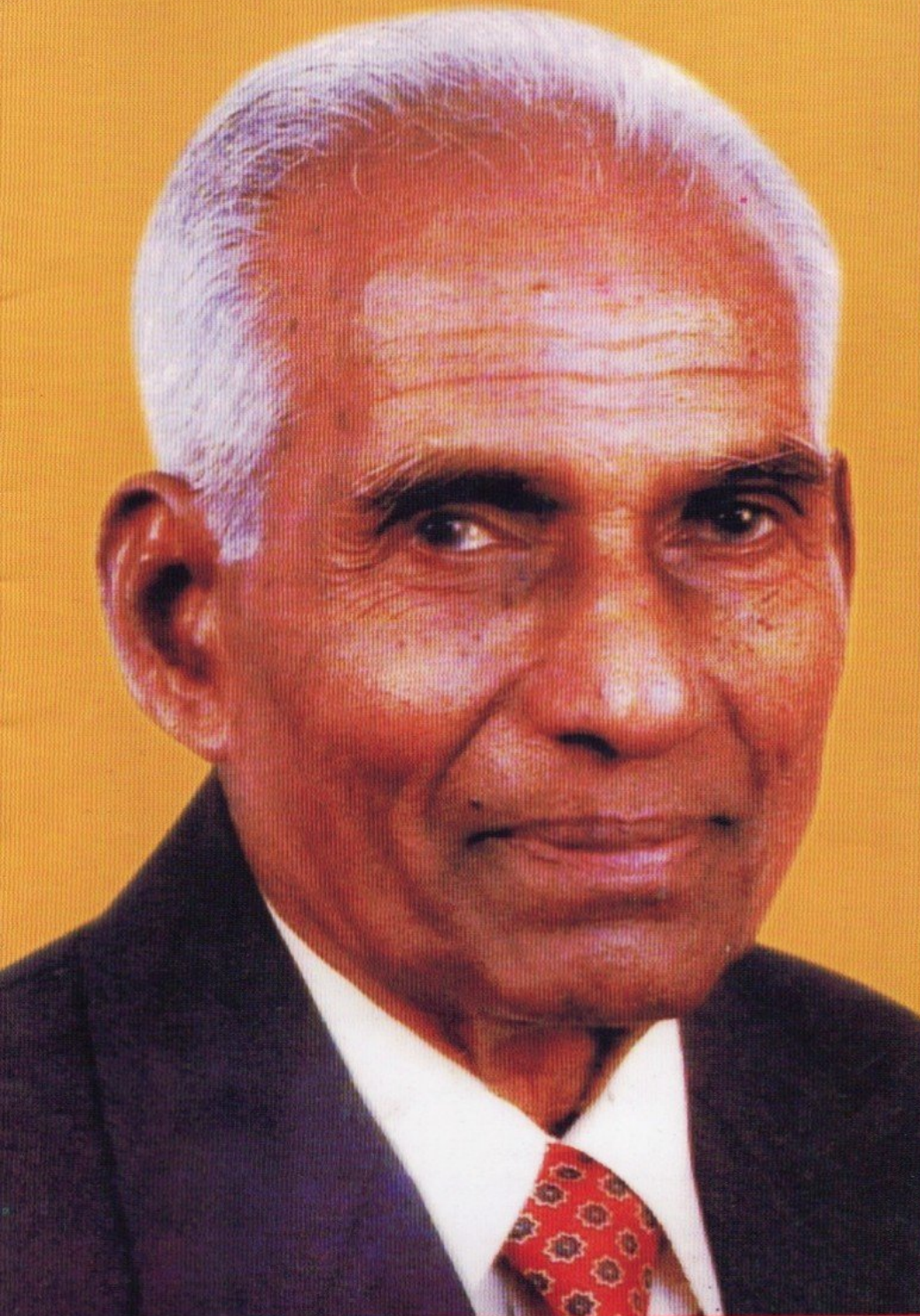
The one and only English/Malayalam Monthly Magazine connecting Mumbai Malayalees

# Kerala in Mumbai

Vol.2 No. 8

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November 2011



*Malayalee  
Literary  
Flourishes*



*Vasai:  
Mini Kerala  
of Mumbai*



*Vythiri:  
In The Lap of  
Mother Nature*

**EMPOWERMENT BY EDUCATION**

Kerala in Mumbai Vol 02, No.8, November 2011

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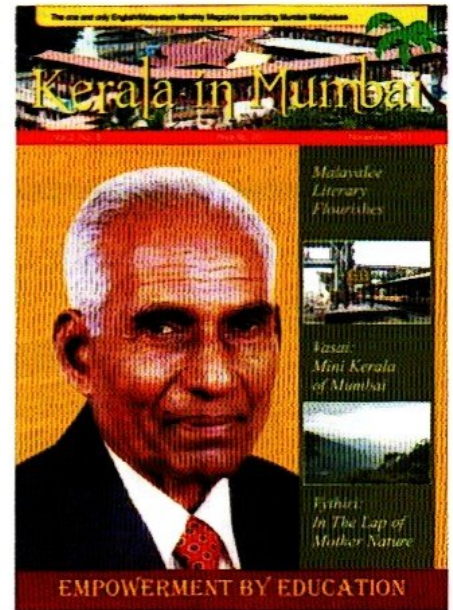
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## ESSAY COMPETITION

KERALA IN MUMBAI announces an Essay Competition for Mumbai

Malayalees under the age of 35 on the following subject.

**WHAT MALAYALEE SAMAJAMS SHOULD DO**

(Role of Mumbai Malayalee Samajams in today's context)

The essay should not be more than 2000 words.

It should be an original essay, either in Malayalam or in English.

The entry should be accompanied by

- 1) A certificate from the entrant that it is his/her original work.
- 2) A Xerox copy of a college leaving certificate, passport or birth certificate testifying age.

Three prizes will be awarded for the best three entries.

The prize winning entries will be published in the Anniversary Issue of

**KERALA IN MUMBAI (February 2012)**

Last date of Submission: 31 December 2011.

# UNSAVOURY CAMPAIGNS

Kerala has lately acquired notoriety as a State that consumes an inordinate amount of liquor, particularly during festivals. Then came reports that the people of the State consume tonnes and tonnes of chicken, mutton and beef. Now comes a spate of reports about molestation of women tourists at some of the prized tourist spots like Kovalam beach.

How is it that we do not get similar reports from any other State, even though all these factors are common to every State in the country. Gujarat has a prohibition policy in place, but has anyone taken note of the liquor (native and Indian Made Foreign Liquor) consumed in that State with impunity? Similarly, Andhra Pradesh has a ban on country liquor, but no such restriction on IMFL in that State.

Molestation of women, particularly backpacker tourists, who in the famous words of the Delhi Chief Minister "should not have been so adventurous," is not uncommon. Sheila Dixit made the comment when a young woman journalist, who after night duty was driving home alone, when she was attacked, robbed and killed. The State could not protect her young life.

Business and industry in this country is passing through a critical phase, competing with each other to grab the biggest slice of business, for which they often seek to besmirch the reputation of anyone coming in their way. This is an old trade practice and is often taken to be part of business promotion.

But when Malayalees themselves trot out inanities against their own State merely because they have been sanctified in newspaper and television channel "news" without any verification, it becomes a matter of concern. The story about long queues in front of liquor shops during the festive season in Kerala is now old hat. The increase in consumption of liquor could be ascribed to the improved standards of life. It is perhaps this better standard of living that has prompted the planners in New Delhi to fix Rs. 32 per day as the qualifying level for those living Below the Poverty Line.

Propaganda can be used to make the truth seem questionable while the untruth gains currency.

One thus heard a comment the other day from a head of a media organization that some words in Malayalam come easily in the mouth of Malayalees, but sound like tongue-twisters to others, because the Malayalee's tongue is well irrigated. Yes, there are few non-Malayalees who can correctly utter *Vazhapazham*, the first time.

For too long have the State Government traded on its favourite slogan of the State being "God's Own Country." Smug in their self-coined claim, they hardly notice when locally generated reports tarnish God's own name.



### Connecting Mumbai Malayalees

Yes, you do connect Mumbai Malayalees. You and Shri P.K. Ravindranath, together, motivate the young generation to dream big through your regular column titled "Man of the Month". There was a time when an average Keralite was happy to be working a stenographer or an office manager [preferably in a government organization or a reputed pvt. company]. Or if they were in business, they would be a restaurant owner or a tyre dealership owner. However, these people whom you've profiled as "Man of the month", scaled greater heights to encourage and motivate the other generations to make it big. Ravindranathji's way of writing, adds value to this coverage. Wish you all the best as you continue to inspire many more.

*Pratap Nair  
Marol*

### Dr Pattani deserved it

I am indeed happy to see the cover of the October Edition of "Kerala in Mumbai". For me, the Journal has served its rightful and just purpose, by "covering" "Dr. Abraham Patani" and "INGA" on its Diwali Edition, with a caption "Medicines for Masses at Affordable Prices". I believe that there is hardly a more qualified and worthy person than Dr. Patani among Mumbai Malayalees. The 'cause' he represents is also laudable.

I am sure that the youngsters, Bobby and Geo will continue to follow the golden footsteps of this worthy dad under the "firm" guidance of the graceful Mrs. Patani. I immensely admire the entire family including the doting daughters-in-law and the lovely grandchildren who dote on the grandpa (I wish you had covered them too, may be they are too busy in their schooling). Thank you very much, for the excellent article

*Dr. Gopakumar G. Nair  
Kandivli (East)*

### Wrong gesture

My thanks to Venugopal for his candid views on ISS-V in the October issue. I fully endorse them.

Being a renowned singer Yesudas is expected to be impartial in his assessment of talent.

The organisers of ISS -Season V as well as Asianet owe an urgent explanation to millions of viewers all over the world as to the basis on which Kalpana was chosen as No1 in performance to Mridula and Emmanuel.

*K S Nayar  
Ghatkopar*

### Uncalled for

This has reference to "A Question to ask...." under Music Corner written by Mr. Venugopal about the Finale of Asianet's Idea Star Singer Season 5, in your October issue.. I cannot but agree 100% or more with Mr. Venugopal with his observations. Like him, I was also glued to the TV and was surprised to see the bias and injustice demonstrated in the program. It is absolutely essential that the host and the judges remain as impartial as possible in the process and control their facial expressions and body language. I was especially surprised to see Sri Yesudas standing up and clapping after Kalpana's performance; however, I could hardly see the audience supporting him from behind, which clearly means that the latter is not in agreement. Sri . Yesudas should have avoided his comments singling out Kalpana , as this was totally out of context. His comments would have added value if he would have made those comments after the judgment. After seeing Sri Yesudas, the two lady judges Smt Chitra and Smt Anuradha also arose from their chairs and started clapping for Kalpana ( was it to please Sri Yesudas?). I was most surprised that Kalpana sang such a lengthy piece to appease her daughter and then went into the English piece for the competition. As I have seen several episodes of Season 5, Kalpana has always capitalized on her sob story whenever possible and her fear of discrimination due to her Tamil background and looks like the judges have fallen prey to this. In my opinion the Malayalee audience through out the world are knowledgeable, analytical and vocal and it is time that this type of injustice should not be practiced in a widely televised program. I do hope that there will be several letters such as this sent to your publication and that you forward them to Asianet so that they pay better attention to avoid such injustice done to the youngsters, who work so hard to take part in this program. Finally as Mr. Venugopal said my heart also bleeds for Mridula and Emmanuel. Kind regards,

*Dr G Ramakrishnan  
Chandivali*

**We welcome responses from readers. Please forward your responses and suggestions about various happenings concerning Malayalees residing in this part of India. You may send us your piece in either English or Malayalam. (We shall translate and publish it in English) You may send them via e-mail to [keralainmumbai@gmail.com](mailto:keralainmumbai@gmail.com) or by post to Editor, Kerala In Mumbai, 105-B, Twin Arcade, Military Road, Mumbai 400 059.**

### Attention Subscribers

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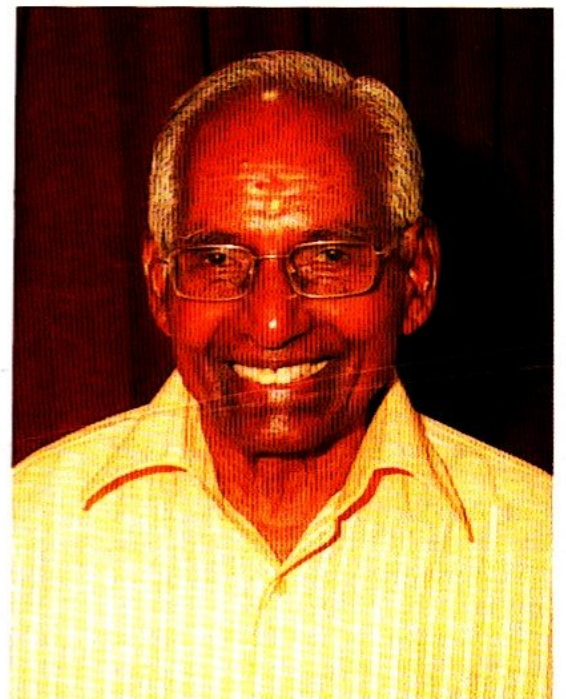


**Dr K K Damodaran**

# **PROLIFIC BUILDER OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

**-P K Ravindranath**

**Teacher, trainer, institution-builder Dr. K K Damodaran can look back to a life of fulfillment as he turns 90. He has done his bit to implement Sree Narayana Guru's injunction to establish equality of mankind, through education.**





**F**or a man hailing from a backward community of Kerala that had been socially and politically oppressed for centuries, Dr. K. K. Damodaran, the shackles that he shattered in his 65-year long stay in Mumbai are numerous. During this period he trained about 3750 nuclear scientists, many of whom later became chairmen of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre. Among them are Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Dr. A. N. Prasad, Dr. B. Bhattacharjee and Dr. R. K. Sinha.

Thousands of students who have passed through the Sree Narayana Guru Samithi School and college for the last forty years, are as grateful as the scientists to Dr. K. K. Damodaran as their Guru. It is their love and respect and affection for their mentor that keeps Dr. Damodaran active, alert and involved in social service and the maintenance of the several institutions he has founded.

In almost every major event in his life, Dr. Damodaran had a late start. He first went to school at the age of 7. He passed his Matriculation when he was 20. He passed his M. Sc. at the age of 27. Three years later he got his doctorate in nuclear physics and soon after his first job.

For a year after his M. Sc. he worked with SNDP (Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana) Yogam leader R. Sankar, who later became Chief Minister of Kerala. Sankar was impressed with the young man and when he expressed a desire to go to London for research in nuclear physics, he arranged for a loan-

scholarship of Rs. 12,000. This plus the University's scholarship of Rs. 2,000 enabled Damodaran to get his doctorate and a flattering recommendation from his professors at London University College addressed to Dr. Homi Bhabha, who was then planning the nuclearisation of the country and had just attained criticality for his reactor Apsara at Mumbai. Damodaran, 30, got a job as Scientific Officer at the Atomic Energy Establishment under Dr. Bhabha. The Establishment later became the Bhabha

Atomic Research Centre (BARC) named after its founder in 1967. Bhabha before his death in a tragic air crash on the Alps in Switzerland, had appointed Dr. Damodaran as the Head of the Training Division of the establishment. He was put in charge of drawing up the curriculum, appointment of faculty and selection of candidates for the courses.

The selection process was tough. He, however, got the cream of Indian scientists to undergo the training.

As with other important events in his chequered life, Damodaran got married when he was into his 39<sup>th</sup> year. His wife, Saraswati was his student when he taught for a year, at the Sree Narayana College at Kollam at the instance of R. Sankar. Saraswati had meanwhile done her M. Sc. in zoology.

Damodaran and Saraswati have two children: Asha (born on 27 March 1960) and Vinod (born 17 July 1962).

Asha and her husband, Pradeep Chandran are in Dammam (Saudi Arabia) where she works as a doctor and he as a Mechanical Engineer. Vinod is a software engineer based in California, US.

Saraswati, since her marriage, had her hands full, with visitors and guests and later with the upbringing of the children. They now have three grandsons and a granddaughter.

Enthusied with the revolutionary ideas of Sree Narayana Guru and with the experience gained by working with R. Sankar for a year, Dr. Damodaran



*Dr. Damodaran and wife Saraswati*

accepted the opportunity, when a group of other devotees of the Guru approached him to work as the President of the Sree Narayana Guru Samithi in Mumbai. He persuaded them to give up their idea of merely putting up a statue of the Guru on a five-cent plot of land in Chembur. He urged them to start an educational institution to further the teaching of the Guru and to empower the weaker sections of society through education.

From 1963, Dr Damodaran got fully involved in the activities of the Samithi, first as its Chairman and later as the President for 40 years. He now continues to be the President Emeritus of the Samithi, which can look back with pride on a number of institutions that it had set up.

By 1972 the Samithi had just about Rs. 2.75 lakhs in its kitty. When the Municipal Commissioner, J B D'Souza offered them land to put up a school, the Samithi invested all the funds it had to buy 14,288 sq yards. The foundation stone for the school project was laid in 1973, and K G classes were started in 1975. The school soon became functional up to SSC. Efforts are now on to raise it to a post-graduate training institute. The College already runs several professional courses including B MS and BMM.

To accommodate its growing activities, the Samithi bought 9,600 sq yards of land in 1996 for Rs. 65 lakhs. The Samithi besides has a flat in Goregaon, Bhandup, Ambernath, Kalyan, Thane, Dombivilli, Vasai and Powai, to run its Guru Centers, to propagate the basic teachings of Sree Narayana Guru. The Guru is one of the most revered social



*Asha, Dr Damodaran, Saraswati and Vinod*

reformers of Kerala who provided a platform for all oppressed sections of

society with his clarion call: "One God, one religion and one Caste." He had also urged his followers to set up educational institutions to draw the people into the mainstream of social and economic activities.

The followers of the Guru in Kerala form a distinct political force in Kerala. Dr Damodaran can take pride in being its most effective prophet outside Kerala.

The Samithi today runs a Marriage Bureau, Employment Bureau and an Accommodation Bureau. It has spawned two major housing societies in Chembur to provide shelter for needy people, at affordable prices. He continues to head and guide the largest educational and charitable organizations in the name of the Guru outside Kerala - all built up with dedication, hard work and a strong will that welded all followers of the Guru under his inspiring slogan.



*Dr. Damodaran inaugurating the Seagull Corporate Office at Andheri. Suresh Kumar MD Seagull group on his right*



# Pilgrimage Season At Sabarimala

*The Sabarimala temple in Kerala is unique in that it is open to people of all castes, creeds and religions. There is no distinction of high or low, rich or poor. It is one of the few temples of India that attracts the largest number of devotees from mid- November to December. Swamy Ayyappan is the main deity in this temple.*



Lakshmi Venkatachalam

**L**ord Ayyappan is one of the most popular Gods of Malayalees. Born of the union of Hari (Vishnu) and Haran (Shiva), according to legend, Hariharaputra or Ayyappan is an amalgamation of two important deities of the Hindu Trinity. *Swamiye Sharanam Ayyappa* can be translated as, "Oh Ayyappa! I seek refuge in you".

Cynics and critics often point out the oddity of worshipping a God who was born out of the union of two male deities, Shiva and Vishnu who transformed into a female form (Mohini). But with some thought this dilemma can be resolved.

Shaivites and Vaishnavites, worshippers of Shiva and Vishnu had their own differences. There was rivalry and sometimes confrontation between them. The cult of Ayyappa worship brought

them together. Shiva represents austere masculine force. Vishnu represents graceful feminine strength. Shiva is the ascetic, transcending the mundane while Vishnu participating in worldly affairs, preserves life and descends to the earth in successive avatars to sustain dharma in this world. The union of Shiva and Vishnu is symbolic of the union of the masculine and feminine power, a compromise of the 'other-worldly' and the 'worldly' needs of man that is the basis of harmonious existence. Ayyappan fights demons who trouble mankind, but He remains detached from the material world and leads a life of brahmacharya.

Sukumaran, now in his 80's, who has been going to Sabarimala ever since he was 15, recalls that in the olden days, the journey was arduous and it was genuinely believed that with only the Lord's blessing and proper observation of the rituals, the devotee could make the pilgrimage and return home safely.

A pilgrim had to follow strict discipline for 41 days. The Ayyappan as he was called, had to get up at 4 am, bathe and chant aloud the Lord's name *saranam ayyappa* both in the morning and evening. He had to avoid non-vegetarian food, eat rice only once daily, observe celibacy, keep away from women having periods, and wear black, dark blue or saffron dresses. He had to wear the tulsi mala and follow a guruswamy in his pilgrimage. He could not wear chappals and the Ayyappans would meet every Saturday evening at a devotee's house and conduct Ayyappan bhajans and pray to the Lord.

The journey itself was an arduous one.

## The significance of the 18 steps and *Tat Tvam Asi*



The sacred 18 steps



Pilgrims on the banks of the Pampa River

Vehicles were few and the roads were rough. In fact Sukumaran recalls that from Erumeli it was trekking all the way through the forests. Roars of animals could be heard, but the *saranam vilis* kept away them away. At night, the group of pilgrims would halt at some open ground in the forest, cook meals for themselves and keep awake the whole night with bhajans and chants of the Lord's name. Or they would take rest by lying on the open ground and gaze at the stars twinkling in the sky. A pilgrimage to Sabarimala took 15 to 20 days in those days.

Today there are several facilities built for the convenience of the devotees. Access is easy up to the banks of the Pampa River but after that they have to make their way by foot or in palanquins to the shrine.

The eighteen steps of Sabarimala to reach the doorstep of Lord Ayyappan are significant. The first five steps symbolize the five human senses of touch, hearing, sight, smell and taste, the next eight are symbolic of the emotions of anger, avarice, carnal love, lust, pride, unhealthy competition, jealousy, and boastfulness. Next three steps represent the three *gunas sattvic* (goodness), *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (inertia). The last two denote *vidya* (knowledge) and *avidya* (ignorance). A devotee uses these steps only twice - once to climb up and the other to leave the temple premises.

*Tattvamasi* is written at the entrance above the 18 steps. *Tat* means *that*, *tvam* means *you* and *asi* means *are*: *You are that*. Literally, it means 'the one you are looking for is none but you'. In other words, 'In your search for me, you have found yourself'.

## Rituals to follow before for the pilgrimage

Lakhs of devotees from the other Southern states, Maharashtra, Delhi, Calcutta and many other cities undertake the strenuous pilgrimage during the *mandala masam*. Women between the ages of 10 to 50 who still have periods are not allowed entry. The devotee starts with wearing a *tulasi* or *rudraksha* mala at a function called *maladharanam*. The necklace has 108 *tulasi* or *rudraksha* seeds strung together on a copper chain with an Ayyappan locket. He has to observe *vratam* for 41 days, chant the name of the Lord as many times as he can, especially morning and evening and have light food at night.

After 41 days of austerity, the devotee is ready to perform the *kettunira*, the filling of the *irumudi* bag that he has to take with him to the sannidhanam, under the guidance of a guruswamy. This is a specially designed bag with two compartments the front portion for puja articles and offerings for the Lord and the rear portion for his personal belongings on the way. The main offering to Ayyappan is the ghee-filled coconut and two coconuts, one for breaking at the time of entering the eighteen steps and the other for breaking while climbing down these steps after the pilgrimage.

## The Holy Trek

There are three ways to reach Sabarimala: the Erumeli route that is about 60 kms through forest and hill track, the Vandi Periyar route where the pilgrim has to trek for about 12 kms and the most popular route - the Chalakayam route which is motorable. From here the Sabarimala is 8 kms away. All the three

routes converge on the banks of the river Pampa. From here, the only way to reach the abode of the Lord atop the hill is by foot or in palanquins. The pilgrims first offer prayers to Dharma Sastha and the Vavar shrine at Erumeli followed by the frenzied *pettathullal*. The pilgrims then take a holy dip in the ice cold waters of the Pampa and start their trek to the shrine. They break a coconut at Pampa Ganapathay shrine and begin their journey.

On the way, the pilgrims cross *appacheemedu* where they throw two *ellu undas*, one towards the north and the other towards the south. Then they come across *Sabaripeetham* where the saint Sabari is believed to have lived during the Valmiki Ramayanam period, and the *saramkuthi aal* (Peepal tree) which is an important spot for Kanni Ayyappans (first timers) seeking the Lord's grace on their first visit to the shrine. Inside the temple there is the shrine to *Kannimoola Ganapathy* and after praying there he goes to the base of the sacred 18 steps. At the top of the steps he has the darshan of Lord Ayyappan in His resplendent glory a moment for which he has prepared himself with austerities and devotion. The devotee then proceeds to break the ghee filled coconut, offers the ghee to then Lord and the broken coconut he throws into the *homakund* symbolizing his ultimate surrender to Ayyappan. The devotee's pilgrimage will be completed only after he visits *Malikapuratham* and *Kaduthaswamy* on a nearby hillock on his return.

## The legend of Ayyappan

According to the Puranas, when the *devas* and *asuras* were churning the ocean for nectar, the *asuras* would not give the pot of nectar to the *devas*. So God Vishnu took the form of Mohini, enchanted the *asuras*, took the pot from them, cleverly distributed the nectar in it among the *devas* and gave the empty pot to the *asuras*. When Siva heard of this

## Ayyappan and Kaduthaswamy

According to *Bhhoodanatha puranam*, Kadutha was an expert in mountain warfare and helped the Pandalam Raja in fighting the Udayanan kings. He was asked to construct the temple at Sabarimala and he became so attached to the temple that he lived there even after the construction was over. One

## Ayyappan and Vavar

Any pilgrim who goes to Sabarimala first pays homage to the shrine of Vavar at Erumeli. Vavar was a saint, according to some, while others say he was a pirate/warrior who was defeated by Ayyappan and later became his most trusted lieutenant and friend. There is an old sword believed to be Vavar's at his shrine. This is an example of the communal harmony in Kerala.

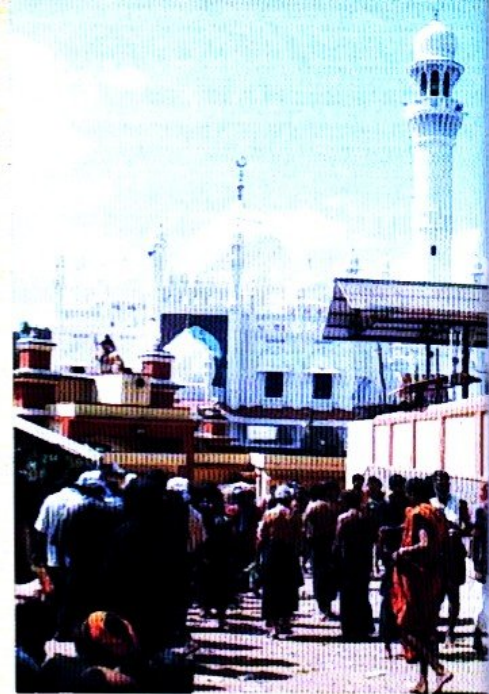
Ayyappans especially the *kanni Ayyappans* perform *pettathullal*. This spiritual dance is performed by devotees wearing black dhotis, smearing their bodies with colour powders and flowers and carrying toy bows and arrows and twigs and chanting '*swami thinthakathom ayyappa thinthakathom*', at Erumeli and they proceed to the Vavar's shrine and later proceed to the Dharmasastha temple called *valiambalam*.

episode he wanted to see Vishnu in his female form which the latter obliged. The form of Mohini impressed Shiva and out of their union was born Hariharaputra or Dharma Sastha.

Another versions says that Vishnu had taken the form of Mohini to kill Bhasmasura. Shiva wanted to see Vishnu in the female form and out of the union of Shiva and Mohini, the child Dharmasastha was born.

In Kerala this legend is the most widely believed one. The child was left in the forest and the Gods went to their separate abodes. This was the child whose wails the Raja of Pandalam, Rajasekhara Pandyan of the Pandya dynasty heard on the banks of the river Pampa, and was surprised to find a resplendent infant there. The beautiful baby with a radiant face wore a bead (*mani*) around his neck. The King, though pious, charitable, just, and God-fearing, had no children. He believed this child was God's gift to him and accepted him as his own son, named him Manikandan (after the bead round

night he was attacked by Udayanan's men but he hugged the deity and prayed to Him. Moved by his devotion the enemies retreated and left him. Pleased with his devotion the Lord wanted his devotees to worship him on their way back.



Vavar's shrine

Vavaraswami also highlights the relevance of Ayyappan worship by people of all faiths, and the equality of people of all faith before Him.

his neck), taught him all academic and martial skills and planned to make him heir to his throne. In the meantime his Queen gave birth to a son.

The Queen wanted her own son to become the king and in this she was aided by the corrupt minister who poisoned her ears about Manikantan. Together they plotted to get rid of Manikantan. They bribed the royal physician into becoming an accomplice of theirs. The Queen pretended to be afflicted with severe pain in the stomach, and the physician prescribed the milk of a tigress as the only cure. The youthful and valiant Manikantan stepped forth and volunteered to fetch the milk. Despite the worried protestations of his foster-father, he set out for the forests.

Days later, Manikantan entered the palace precincts riding a fierce tigress and followed by a pack of its cubs. The schemers were frightened into confessing their nefarious plot. They and others now knew that Manikantan was no ordinary being. They were convinced of His divine origins, and prayed to Him to be with them for their own salvation and for the safety of the kingdom. However, Manikantan was now determined to leave the palace.

Filled with happiness, grief, fear, devotion and self-surrender, the king prayed for the mercy and blessings of Manikantan. He entreated him to stay in the palace and teach him the path to



Pilgrims on their way

## Public Convenience

This year the Government and the Devaswom Board plan to improve the infrastructure facilities, like waste management, setting up of about 200 e-toilets, beefing up security, avoiding stampedes etc at the pilgrims' centres and transit camps.

The Government will start online booking for darshan at Sabarimala for this *Mandala Makara* from the first of the *vrischika Mandala masam* (Mid November). The Authorities claim that

with online reservations for darshan the devotee can reach the *sannidhanam* within an hour or so from the temple entrance. The devotees will have to carry a photo identity plus reservation booking print out. The authorities also assure that this system will in no way interfere with the *darshan* of the devotees who wait in the queues for *darshan*. More medical facilities will be kept in reserve at various points in case of emergencies.

Dumping of plastic articles into Pampa

River has been identified as a major pollution source not only for the immediate environs of Sabarimala but even for the downstream villages and towns. To keep the surroundings of Sabarimala hill shrine plastic free, the Government will set up check-posts at main entry points to stop pilgrims from carrying plastic articles. They would be provided cloth bags at a nominal price supplied by women self-help chain Kudumbasree, to take essential articles while going up. Also potable water would be supplied on the route to stop the use of plastic water bottles on the way. An average 30 million pilgrims visit Ayyappa temple during *Mandala pooja* and *Makaravilakku*, which culminates on Makarsankranthi on January 14. The *darshan* timings have increased by three hours from this *Mandala* season.

Sabarimala Aravana payasam prasadam is famous. The average daily production of *aravana prasadam* would be about 1.25 lakh containers, with a target of having an opening stock of 20 lakh containers. The hill shrine opens for the annual pilgrimage season on November 16, 2011.

The Devaswom authorities plan to set up nine prasadam counters near Malikappuram. At the same time, the existing *prasadam* counters at Lower Thirumuttam will function normally during the pilgrimage season.

attain salvation. But Manikantan said that the time had come for Him to leave

the family and that He would reside in His abode on the Sabari Hills, freeing

## Head Priests at Sabarimala and Malikappuram Shrines

N Balamurali of Edamana Illam at Manikanteswarom in Thiruvananthapuram and T K Eeswaran Namboodiri of Koramangalam at Attukal in Thiruvananthapuram, have been

selected as the new head priests (Melsanthi) at the Lord Ayyappa Temple and Malikappuram Devi Temple respectively at Sabarimala through a draw of lots.

Balamurali was formerly the head priest at the Puthiyakavu Bhagavathy Temple in Kollam. He had also served as the Melsanthi at the famous Attukal Bhagavathy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram in 2010.

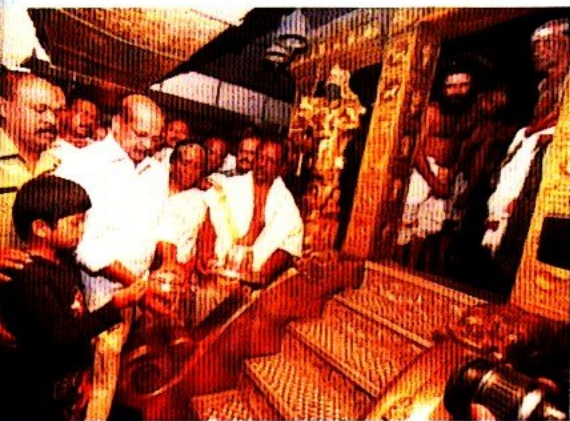
The TDB chief announced the selection of Eeswaran Namboodiri as the new Malikappuram Melsanthi from the temple *sopanam* itself. Eeswaran Namboodiri was formerly the assistant priest (Kizhsanthi) at the Attukal Bhagavathy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram.

His devotees from all worldly sorrows and worries and granting them deliverance. He further instructed the King to construct a temple at Sabarimala, north of the holy river Pampa and install Him there. Ayyappa also explained how the Sabarimala pilgrimage should be undertaken, emphasizing the importance of *vratham* and what the devotees could attain by His *darshan*.

Manikantan vanished to appear as Ayyappan in yoga mudra pose atop Sabarimala. The King duly constructed the temple at Sabarimala, dedicated to Him.

Another legend has it that Manikantan was the incarnation of Lord Dharma Sastha. Raja Rajasekhara was in his previous birth a rich and pious Brahmin by name Vijayan who was a very strong believer and devotee of Lord Dharma Sastha.

The Sakti cult is also inherent in His story. Like the virgin Devi who killed Mahishasuran, Ayyappan as a bachelor kills the demoness Mahishi. ●



Drawing of lots for selection of head priest

## G Sankara Kurup

# Malayalam poet of twentieth century

*This writer recalls a rare opportunity of listening to him during 1963. In an auditorium packed with around 1000 young men and women, he was heard with rapt attention during the 90 minutes he spoke. When he concluded, it took a few extra moments for the audience to sink in that the speaker had already sat down. The applause that followed was deafening. His oratory almost overshadowed the other two speakers who themselves were acclaimed orators.*



G Sankara Kurup

[This article is the concluding part of the one that appeared last month]

**T**hough he meticulously followed the tradition of Vallathol, 'G' became notable even during the days of his illustrious predecessor, the distinctive voice being a more refined diction, more careful artistry, more profound view of life and pervading intellectualism.

Critics of that era used to attribute symbolism and mysticism in G's poetry. When the poems are hiding the unrevealed secrets of nature, known only to spiritual leaders, they are said to be mystic or symbolic, according to the critics. The symbol he employed was gradually extended to convey even mundane ideas -like a spider as a monarch and its web as the empire, Gandhiji as a farmer sowing seeds of *Dharma* resulting in what was called symbolism which was nothing but the most poetic application of *Dhwani* (echoes).

*Ente veli* (My wedding), *Anveshanam* (search), *Sooryakanti*, *Pankajageetam*, *Sakshalkaram* etc are examples.

The publication of '*Surya Kanti*' in 1933 revealed subjective lyricism in its best form. Feelings conveyed through flowers, the ocean, the sky, the star, the cloud, were all surcharged with sublime human aspiration. It was a thrill but there was no

outburst of it as the diction always followed a classic discipline. Nevertheless, the economy of words was a positive achievement of symbols or image which replaced descriptive words.

Symbolism is not overt but covert in the written words. It is not explicit but implicit. To comprehend it, the reader needs knowledge, experience and wisdom and hence it is not necessarily instant popular unlike the poems of Changampuzha Krishna Pillai.

G has also translated two classic works *Rubāiyāt* (1932) of Omar Khayyām (*Vilasalahari*) and *Meghasandesham* (*Meghacchaya*).

'Pushpa Geethi' (Song of Flower), 'Azhimukham' (Harbour Mouth), 'Rakta Bindu' (Drop of Blood) and the like express G's intense nationalist spirit. 'Aeka Lokam' (One World) and the drama 'Irittinu Munpu' (Before Darkness) show his international interest.

In 'Pathikante Pattu' (Song of the Wayfarer) his universal humanism finds expression. In 'Nimisham' (Moment) and 'Viswa Darshanam' (Vision of the Universe) G has very felicitously interwoven the explanations of cosmic phenomena according to ancient Indian culture and modern science. Many poems are lyrics, while 'Moonnaruvium Oru Puzhayum' (Three Streams and a River), his longest poem, is a ballad, a simple story of the poor, in one hundred and seventy-two quatrains.

*Gadyopaharam*, *Lekhamala*, *Muthum Chippiyum*, *Rajanandini* and prosaic version of Ulloor's '*Umakeralam*' are some of his works in prose. For students, he wrote '*Sahitya Parichayam*', an introduction to grammar and literature. One act plays '*Sandhya*', *Marikkanum Pirhakkanum Peti* and '*Iruttinumunpu*' and life sketches of foreign poets '*Raakkuyilukal*' are his other works. He has written a few stories like *Harischandran* and a novelette *Radharani*.



You may find a long list of poetic works but almost all of them are compiled into one volume titled 'Patheyam' even during his life time. His other well known compilations are *Odakkuzhal* and *Viswadarsanam*.

G's prose is not merely statements of his thoughts but it emits a rare power, depth, inspiration, harmony and rhythm. His criticism is totally devoid of personal grudges but displays total balance. Though his words are passionate and meaningful, they are not harsh.

### Geetakam

*Geetakam* is a form of writing poetry in 14 lines, split into two parts; the upper part containing more lines than the lower part. It could be 12,2; 10,4 or 8,6. An idea is developed in the first section but it explodes into a conclusion in the second.

G Sankara Kurup, like many other Malayalam poets, wrote a number of *Geetakams*. He not only started writing them but established it as a powerful tool of poetry making and made them popular and challenging. They include *Nakshtra Geetam*, It is tough to contain an idea in 14 lines, compelling the poet to use less and most apt words to convey a powerful idea.

### G devotee of nature

Prof S Guptan Nair in his Introduction to *Odakkuzhal*, describes G as a worshipper of Nature. Unlike other poets, he does not show his amazement at the sight of various creations of Nature but bows down before it for its blessings and for benign nature. Critics draw their conclusion by pointing out the poem in *Sahityakautukam* Part I and cite the poem starting with "Neerandhraneela...". G cannot be seen as a lover of nature but as its worshipper. This aspect is not confined to a few poems but a majority of his poems.

ആ രത്നാചലത്തെക്കാൾപ്പൊങ്ങിനിന്നീടും കാലു-  
താരകത്തിനെപ്പോലിക്കൊട്ടുപുവിനെക്കൂടി  
നിത്യവും സമൃൽഫുല്ലശോഭയ്ക്ക് ലാളിക്കുന്നു  
സ്തുത്യമേ ഭവദീയമേകഭാവനാവതം. (പുഷ്പഗീതം)

ഏപ്തസാഗര, ഭവദ്രുപദർശനാലർദ്ധ-  
സുപ്തമെന്നാത്മാവന്തർലോചനം തുറക്കുന്നു,  
നീയപാരതയുടെ നീലഗംഭീരോദാര-  
പ്പായ, നിന്നാശ്രേഷ്ഠത്വമെന്തെന്നും കുളിർക്കുന്നു.  
(സാഗരഗീതം)

Gandhiji once said that when he saw a sunset or a moon surrounded by stars, he remembered the power behind them and therefore those sights were beautiful and we could not look at them as a space phenomenon. In his poem *Anveshanam* (Search), Kurup declares,

ആരെ ഞാനന്വേഷിച്ചതാ പ്രേമപുഞ്ജംതന്നെ  
തീരെയില്ലെന്നോതുന്ന നാവെനിയ്ക്കവിശ്വാസം.  
ആ മുഗ്ദ്ധമുല്ലപ്പൂക്കൾ മുകരുന്ന നേരം ഞാ-  
നാ മുഖമനോഹരസൗരഭം സ്വീകിക്കുന്നു.  
ചോലയിൽ സത്യസ്നാനായ് ചുണ്ടുറ്റിയിക്കെ സ്നിഗ്ദ്ധ-  
ലോലമക്കപോലത്തിൻ തണുപ്പു ഞാനോർമ്മിച്ചു.

### Love affair with Death

Death throws its shadows over several of his poems. Even his love poems mention death as villain snatching the loved ones. Mention was already made in this article about this aspect. In one particular poem, 'Innu Njan Naale Nee' (Today me



G with workers of Sahitya Parishad. Poet Edasseri (circled) on the left tomorrow the), G says,

ആ വഴിയ്ക്കപ്പോളൊരു ദരിദ്രന്റെ നിർ-  
ജീവമാം ദേഹമടക്കിയ പെട്ടി പോയ്.  
ഇല്ലാപെരുമ്പറ, ശുദ്ധയാം വിശ്വസ്ത-  
വല്ലഭതെന്നുടെ നെഞ്ചിടിപ്പെന്നിയേ!  
ഇല്ല പൂവർഷം വിഷാദം കിടന്നല-  
തല്ലുന്ന പൈതലിൻ കണ്ണുനീരെന്നിയേ!  
വന്നു തറച്ചിതെൻ കണ്ണിലാപ്പെട്ടിമേൽ-  
നിന്നുമാറക്ഷരം, ഇന്നു ഞാൻ, നാളെ നീ.  
ഒന്നു നടുങ്ങി ഞാനാ നടുകൊതന്നെ  
മിന്നുമുടക്കളിൽ ഏശ്യമാണിപ്പോഴും!

In *Sivathantavam*, G brings out the brutal face of death in an alluring style.

കടുമുദുരൂദ്രസൗമ്യതാമസസാത്വികഭാവ-  
ചടലമാം സന്നാതന നടനകേളി.  
തൂടരവേ യുഗാന്തര നൂപുരങ്ങൾ പൊട്ടിത്തകർ-  
ന്നടരവേ എന്തെന്താത്മാവിഷ്കാരശൈലി  
മരണത്തിൻ മസ്തകത്തിൽ കാലുവച്ചു പൊട്ടിച്ചിരി-  
യിരമ്പുന്ന വിശ്വാത്മാവ് നൃത്തമാടുന്നു.

Even if the reader does not follow the meaning of the words used, the sound emitted by the words, instill a kind of fear in him.

### G as an orator

Unlike his predecessors, he was an unparalleled orator, might be because of his teaching career. This helped him to be a prose writer also.

As stated earlier, G was a very shy person in his early career but his transformation to a highly volatile, powerful, inspirational orator was amazing. His talk was crisp and the flow of words was mellifluous, smooth, unhesitant and with meaningful pauses. To this, his persona of a clean shaved, well combed thickly grown glistening white hair, well starched and pressed milk white *dhoti*, shirt and *veshti* and a magnetic voice was an added attraction. His diction was perfect, without any regional accent and abbreviations or elongations. Having worked as a professor, long speeches were not strange to him. It was indeed a treat for the listeners.

This writer recalls a rare opportunity of listening to him during 1963. In an auditorium packed with around 1000 young men and women, he was heard with rapt attention during the 90 minutes he spoke. When he concluded, it took a few extra moments for the audience to sink in that the speaker had already sat down. The applause that followed was deafening. His oratory almost overshadowed the other two speakers who themselves were acclaimed orators.



**Excerpts from selected poems**

When we go through this poem, our immediate feeling is that of a girl waiting for her bridegroom. She is fully made up, with heart trembling in anxiety and taking solace that every girl has to get married at some time.

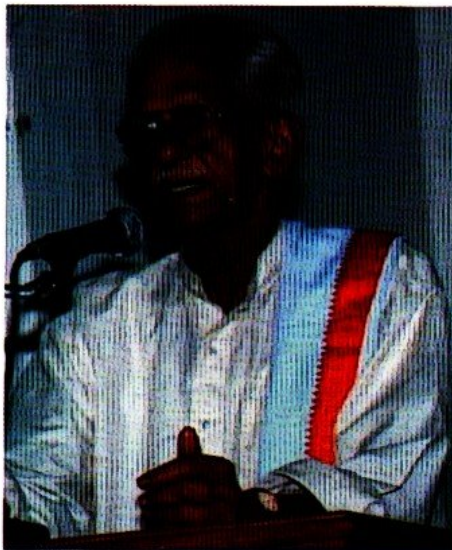
വന്നടുത്തെന്നോ വേളി മുഹൂർത്തം? പിടയ്ക്കായ്ക  
 സന്നമാം ഹൃദന്തമേ, ശാന്തമായിരുന്നാലും!  
 കാലമാം ശിരസ്സികലണിയിക്കയായ് മുല്ല-  
 മാല, ഫാലത്തിൽ ചേർത്തു കഴിഞ്ഞു വരക്കുറി.  
 വരണം വരൻ മാത്രം, ആസന്നമായിപ്പോയീ  
 വരണം, സന്നാതനനിയമം ലംഘിയ്ക്കാമോ?  
 (എന്റെ വേളി)

The only difference is that the bridegroom is not a human being but the Death himself. The bridegroom is well known and the world shivers on hearing his name.

ഹാ, വിറച്ചുപോം ലോകം നാമാത്രത്താൽ, ഞാനാ-  
 ജീവിതേശനെപ്പറ്റിക്കേട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു പണ്ടേ!  
 ഭൂവിലദ്ദേഹം നീട്ടും കൈ തട്ടിനീക്കാനില്ല  
 ജീവിതം, തടിച്ചയ്ക്കു തല ചായ്ക്കാണേ പറ്റും.

Like all brides who wish to stay a few more minutes in the same house where she grew up, this bride is no different.

കാൽ വിനാഴികകൂടി ഞാൻ പിറന്നൊരീ വീട്ടിൽ  
 മേവിടാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞെങ്കിൽ! ഇത്ര വേഗമോ യാത്ര!  
 മേനി മേ വിറയ്ക്കില്ല, ചുണ്ടിണ ചലിക്കില്ല,  
 ഗ്ലാനി വന്നുദിയ്ക്കില്ല, വിളറിപ്പോകില്ലാസ്യം,  
 സമയം വരുന്നേരം സർവ്വശക്തമാക്കെയിൽ  
 മമ ജീവിതം ക്ഷുഭ്രം സസ്മിതം സമർപ്പിയ്ക്കും



Prof S Guptan Nair

The poet has a piece of advice to those bitten by love.

പ്രേമത്തിൻ തിളക്കം കണ്ടതു ചെന്നെടുക്കായ്പിൻ  
 ഭീമമാം വഡ്ഗത്തേക്കാൾ മുർച്ചയേറിയതത്രേ.

In a celebrated poem *Vilambaram* (Declaration), G challenges the folly of death and exhorts the reader to lead a full life.

വേല നാളെ, ജഗത്തിനിന്നുത്സവ-  
 വേളയെന്നു വിളംബരം ചെയ്യുക!  
 വിക്രമിയായ വിലസുമൃത്യുകുല-  
 ചക്രവർത്തി വസന്തമെഴുന്നള്ളി,  
 ചിത്രവർണ്ണക്കൊടികളിളക്കിക്കൊ-  
 ണ്ടത്ര പാറിക്കളിപ്പൂ പൂമ്പ റ്റുകൾ.

വീണക്കമ്പി മുറുക്കു, മുറുക്കു മൽ-  
 പ്രാണപ്രേയസി, പാട്ടു മധുരമായ്,  
 ഗാനത്തിന്റെ ലഹരിയിലെന്നിലെ  
 ഞാനലിഞ്ഞലിഞ്ഞില്ലാതെയാവട്ടെ!  
 ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ നൂലിട്ടാലേത്താത്ത  
 ഭൂവിലയ്ക്കതിൽ മുങ്ങി ഞാനെത്തട്ടെ!

The poem given below is an poem written in a folk style, G shows his aversion for luxurious life styles.

വെമ്പ ലനാട്ടിലെത്തമ്പുരാന്റെ  
 തമ്പുരാട്ടിക്കൊരു കട്ടിൽ വേണം  
 കട്ടിൽ കടയുവാനാക്കിഴക്കൻ  
 കാട്ടിലെച്ചന്ദനം തന്നെ വേണം  
 ആനക്കൊമ്പ റവണം മേലാപ്പിന്  
 ആനമുഖം വേണം കാലുകളിൽ.  
 മേനോക്കിയച്ചനും മേനോന്മാരും  
 മേലെഴുത്തിന്നുള്ള പിള്ളമാരും  
 പത്തെൺപതിലേറെ നായന്മാരും  
 കൊത്തുപണിക്കാരും തച്ചന്മാരും  
 തമ്പുരാട്ടിക്കുള്ള മോഹമല്ലേ,  
 തമ്പുരാൻ കല്പിച്ചിരിക്കയല്ലേ,  
 വാക്കത്തി കോടാലിയൊക്കെയായി  
 വാക്കയ്യുപൊത്തിത്തൊഴുതിറങ്ങി. (ചന്ദനക്കട്ടിൽ)

What sin this unborn foetus did to be denied a life, G asks the government in *Anthyamalyam* and provoked his communist friends to go against him.

ഹാ, മരിച്ചുപോയ് മണ്ണിൽപ്പിറന്നുവീഴും മുമ്പി-  
 ലോമനേ, നീ നാടിന്റെ നിഷ്കരപാപത്താലേ!

നീതിയും നിയതിയും കേൾക്കട്ടേ, ഞാൻ ചോദിക്കും  
 പ്രീതി നോക്കാതേ. കൊല്ലപ്പെട്ടു നീ ഭടന്മാരാൽ?

എന്തപരാധം ചെയ്തിത്തമ്മതന്നുദരത്തിൽ  
 ശാന്തമായുറങ്ങുമ്പോൾ, നീതിതൻ വെടിയേൽക്കാൻ?  
 നീതിയും നിയതിയും കേൾക്കട്ടേ, ചോദിക്കുവിൻ  
 പ്രീതി നോക്കാതാവർത്തിച്ചാവർത്തിച്ചലകളേ!

നിങ്ങളെ നോവിക്കാത്ത നിത്യശാന്തിയിലേക്കു  
 നീങ്ങുക, ശപിക്കാതെ നിഷ്കരമനുഷ്യനെ!

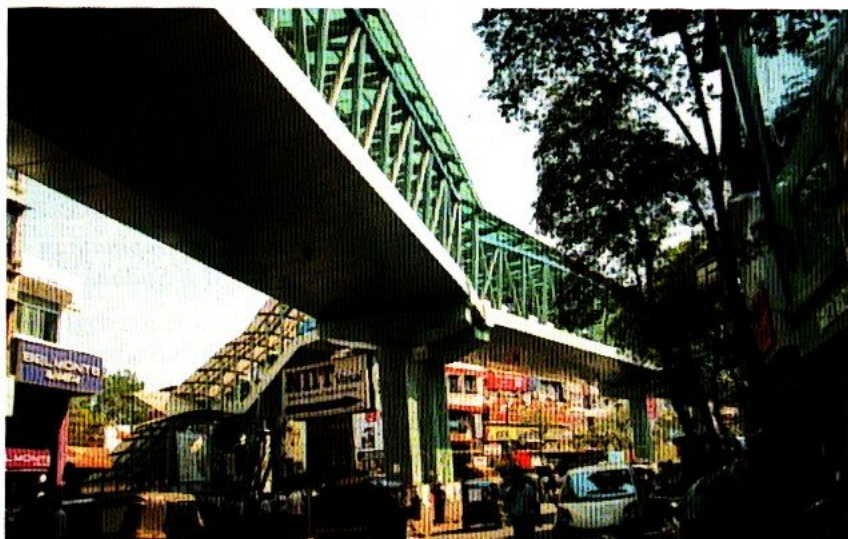
എന്റെ കണ്ണീരാലീറനായ വാക്കുകൾ കോർത്തു  
 നിന്റെ ജീവനീയന്ത്യമാലും ഞാനർപ്പിക്കട്ടെ!  
 (അന്ത്യമാലും)



# VASAI

## *Mini - Kerala of Mumbai*

*Vasai is part of Vasai-Virar Municipal Corporation in Thane District. The Municipal Corporation was formed in 2009 by amalgamating four Municipal Councils : Vasai, Nalasopara, Navghar- Manikpur and Virar along with several adjoining village panchayats. However the history of Vasai can be traced as far back as the third century. In the olden days, Vasai was a ship-building and trading centre for horses, timber, salt, quarried basalt and granite. It is believed that the teak wood used in the Church of Nativity at Bethlehem came from Vasai.*



*Vasai Skywalk*

**V**asai, also called Bassein, is located about 50kms north of Mumbai. It starts from river Ulhas on the South and ends with Vaitarna River in the North. On the Eastern side is Tungreshwar, Vajreshwari, the hilly tracks of Wada and Bhiwandi towns and on the West is the Arabian sea. Thus Vasai combines mountain tracks, shore-land, humidity and heavy rains. Early Malayalee migrants made Vasai their home in the 40s and 50s. In fact Vasai has about 6000 Malayalee families living there now. Since the 80s many builders have invested there and many co-operative Housing Societies, as well as industrial offices and business ventures have been set up. However, Vasai still has to develop better infrastructure for the convenience of the public. Electricity failures, stray dog menace, pot-holed roads, water shortage are some of its major problems.

## Bassein Kerala Samajam

On January 26, 1960, a handful of committed people formed the Bassein Kerala Samajam or BKS and elected I Mathew, G Joseph and C V Panicker, as its President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively. The Samajam covered the area from Dahisar to Virar. It was able to help Malayalees by providing regular supplies of drinking water, milk, kerosene, etc.

For 12 years, the activities of the Samajam were carried out from a small rented room and a library. In 1972, it decided to focus its attention on education, and started a Primary School with 30 children and a couple of teachers. Smt Rajamma Nair was appointed as the Principal.

Over the years, the primary school grew into a high school and last year it started its junior college.

BKS English School is rated among the best schools in the Thane district with cent percent pass in SSC exams for many years. There are about 1300 students in this school and junior college.

## Ayyappa Seva Samithi

The Ayyappa Seva Samithi was formed in 1977. C Venugopal, now settled in Kerala, is the Founder-President. In the 80s it purchased a plot of land where the present Temple Complex known as Sabarigiri, stands.

The temple construction was completed and *prana prathishta* was performed in 1995. Today the Sabarigiri temple complex is a huge place with shrines dedicated to the main deity, Ayyappan as also to Sree Krishna, Ganapathy, Murugan, Devi, Shiva, Nagaraja and the *navagrahas*. In February this year, *dwajasthambam* (flagstaff) was consecrated and the temple earned the title *mahakshetra*. The Mandala puja celebrations last for 41 days in the mandala masam (November- December) and there is the annual *Bhagavada saptaham* conducted during this period. KPC Narayanan Bhattathirippad is the present tanthri at the temple. The Samithi provides medical services through its free Medical Mission started in 1990. The Samithi conducts free homeopathic and acupressure consultancy and treatment facilities to all people without any distinction of caste or religion. It gives medical assistance, arranges medical camps and blood donation drives



*President of BKS P V K Nambiar addressing the audience*

Today the Samajam has about 1700 members. It has an Ayurvedic dispensary where consultation is free. The samajam has a library, reading room and conducts music, dance and Malayalam classes to nurture young talents. It conducts volley ball tournaments and other sports competitions where teams from Mumbai and Thane

districts participate. PVK Nambiar is the President while Chandrasekharan K Nair is the Vice President. The General Secretary is M K Vidyadharan, while Varghese Chacko is the Jt Secretary. The Treasurer is Ramakumar K Nair and Santosh D Tharayil is the Jt Treasurer. There are 17 Managing Committee members also.



*MC members:(Left to right) TSR Nair, Krishnankutty, P S Rajan, Gopinathan Nair, Santhosh, Raghu Iyer, Omanakuttan Nair, R P Kurup, M K Sudhakaran, Gopalakrishnan Kurup.*

regularly. It also conducts free yoga classes. The Ayyappa temple has constructed a Community Hall in 2010 in its own plot opposite to the temple complex. The Samithi proposes to add more constructions within the complex and improve the infrastructure facilities for the devotees. P S Rajan is the

President and A K Prabhakaran is the Vice-President of the Samithi. Other office-bearers include M K Sudhakaran, Secretary and R P Kurup Jt Secretary. P K Krishnankutty is Treasurer and MM Nair, Asst Treasurer. There are eleven Managing Committee Members.

# St Alphonsa Church

St Alphonsa Church in Vasai comes under the diocese of Kalyan and was declared a parish in 1985. The Church building was constructed in 2008. Father Sheen is the parish priest, assisted by two trustees P T Francis and Biju K Dominic.

Masses are held in Malayalam every Sunday followed by catechism classes. The Church celebrates St Alphonsa's feast for ten days in October culminating in St Alphonsa's Feast on Oct 9. Every Thursday Novena of St Alphonsa is held at 7.30 pm in both English and Malayalam. A relic of St Alphonsa is kept in the church and attracts a lot of devotees. According to Father Sheen, apart from Catholics, many people of several other faith also come for the novena and pray to her for getting their wishes granted. In January the Church celebrates St Sebastian's Feast for three days. St Sebastian is the patron saint to ward off epidemics and illnesses. There are 400 families in this parish, divided into 18 units and every month the units conduct prayer meetings. The Church celebrates Onam with mass, *pookalamalsaram*, cultural programmes and an *onasadya*. The youth wing comprising about 100 members is quite active and does social and charity work like visiting orphanages, hospitals. The youngsters are also given career counseling.



St Alphonsa Church

## Vasai Nair Welfare Association

Nair Welfare Association in Vasai was started in 1994. It has a marriage bureau that helps its members in finding suitable marriage partners. This year the Mannam Jayanthi celebrations were carried out with cultural programmes and a feast for all the members. The Association felicitates meritorious students of SSC, HSC and first rank holders of the various degree streams as well as Engineering, Medical and Management courses. The Association gives medical assistance to poor people and also assists in carrying out the last rites of persons who have no one to carry it out. PVK Nambiar is the President K M Chandrasekharan Nair Vice-President, K S Nair General Secretary, Shivadas V Nair Jt Secretary, Gopinath C Nair Treasurer of the Association. There are further ten MC members.

## St John the Baptist Malankara Catholic Church

In 1992, a Unit of Malankara Catholic Church was formed at Vasai for the faithful staying between Naigaon and Virar areas and Holy Masses were conducted on weekly/fortnightly basis. On 1 Nov. 1992, three personal parishes were set up for the Malankara Catholics under the Archdiocese of Mumbai and Vasai church became a Unit in the name of St. John the Baptist Parish under the parish of Borivli St. Thomas Malankara Catholic Church. On 8 Dec. 1999 a

separate parish was erected for St. John the Baptist, the parish under the Diocese of Vasai. However, this church is under the ecclesiastical control of Bishop Jacob Mar Barnabas, Bishop for ETRI (Extra Territorial Region in India), who is based at Delhi. This church is at Bahrapur in Vasai West and Father George Theckadayil is the current vicar. There are 70 families in this parish and mass is held every Sunday.



St John the Baptist Church



*Sabarigiri Ayyappa Temple*



*BKS English School and Jr College*

## History of Vasai

The Puranas suggest that in the sixth incarnation of Vishnu, Parshurama created the Konkan region. The Vasai-Virar region comprises the north Konkan region. During ancient times it was known as Sopara, and is mentioned in the Skand Puranas. The kingdom of Sopara is also referred in the Mahabharata. Pandu's son Sahadeva annexed this region to their Hastinapur Empire during the Rajasuya yagna of Yudhishtira. Vasai had two small sea ports, one at Arnala in the north and the second at Vasai in the south and access from anywhere, anytime.

During the 15th century Vasai came under the Sultan of Gujarat. The history of Vasai is closely connected with the history of Portuguese in India. In 1533 Malik Tughan, the commander of Bahadur Shah, the Sultan of Gujarat, built a small fort-like structure in Vasai. However the next year the Sultan was forced to surrender Vasai to the Portuguese who built the present Fort with its two entrances, water tanks, provisions for storing armoury and fields for growing grains, vegetables etc. Today the Fort is in ruins but continues to be a tourist attraction.

During the Portuguese rule, Vasai was their main naval base and a ship building centre. The decline of the Portuguese came in 1739 when Chimaji Appa stormed the Fort and captured it with great loss of life. The Portuguese surrendered. But the British started exerting power over Vasai and in 1774 they captured Bassein (Vasai) and Salsette from the Marathas. With the treaty of Bassein in 1802 Vasai came under the East India Company and by 1817 directly under the British rule till India became independent. The Portuguese influence is evident in Vasai in the churches, buildings, and the Catholic population.

## Personalities

### K O Devassy

K O Devassy came to Mumbai in 1960 and has made Vasai his home. He is one of the founder members of the Bassein Kerala Samajam. While he was the President of Bassein Kerala Samajam, the BKS English School was established and he was its Founder President. He is still actively associated with the activities of the Samajam and its school.

He was a Congress Party worker and the first Malayalee Corporator of Vasai. He was Councillor of Navghar Manickpur Nagar Parishad for five years, and member of Manickpur Gram Panchayat for 15 years.

On the educational front, Devassy has been Trustee / Managing Committee member of several colleges and institutes like Vasai Vartak College, Vidyavardhini College of Engineering & Technology, Vasai Vikasini Arts College, Holy Family Convent and others. He is a Special Executive Magistrate and a Lions Club member.

Devassy has been President and Secretary at various times of the Kerala



*K O Devassy*

Catholic Association and is involved with the charitable activities of St Alphonsa's Church in Vasai. He also lends a helping hand to the Ayyappa Seva Samithi in their social activities.

Kannampuzha Ouseph Devassy belongs to Chenthamangalam in Ernakulam District, his parents being the late Ouseph and the late Eliyamma. His wife, Mary, hails from Aluva and they have three daughters Suja, Suma and Sudha, all married. They have a son Joseph.

K O Devassy is proud of the peaceful co-existence among the Malayalees of Vasai irrespective of their faith or caste.

### George Ukken

George Ukken is the Youth animator at St Alphonsa Church. He came to Mumbai from Thrissur in 1984 and is working in a private company. His wife Roselin, also from Thrissur, works as a teacher in a school in Vasai. They have a son, Dennis, studying Engineering and a daughter Rhea studying in Plus two.

George is one of the Malayalees who formed Group 8.44, consisting of Malayalee commuters who travel to Churchgate from Vasai by the 8.44 local train. Formed in 1992, by a few



*George Ukken*

commuters, today there are more than 40 members in the group and for the past four years they have been celebrating Onam and New Year with their families.

## P S Rajan

P S Rajan is the President of the Ayyappa Seva Samithi in Vasai. He is actively involved in many social activities of the various Malayalee Associations of Vasai. A native of Kottappuram in Thrissur District, Rajan finished his XII and completed his graduation in Ahmedabad. He came to Mumbai in 1978 and has ever since been living in Vasai. In 1985 he joined the Central Excise Department. He is currently on deputation as Superintendent of Customs, Mumbai Airport. He has won several awards for meritorious service from the Central Excise Department.

Vasai, he says, is a quiet suburb and there is peaceful co-existence among different communities and religions. His wife Indu is from Enkakad in Thrissur District. They have two daughters Devika who is doing her First year Engineering at Pillai's College of Engineering in Panvel and Gopika who is studying in Std VII at Nazareth School in Vasai. Both his daughters have done their Bharatanatyam Arangettam and they have learnt to read and write Malayalam. Rajan's parents are the late Sankaranarayanan Nair and late Devaki Amma.



Rajan and Mrs Indu Rajan

## Anto Puthiry

According to Anto Puthiry of Asianet Communications, Vasai is second home for Keralites. There is more greenery, less pollution and less noise. There is communal harmony with people of several faiths living peacefully side by side. All festivals are celebrated. Anto Puthiry is the President of the Pravasi Association, Chairman of Trinity Co-op Credit Society, and active in many social organizations. He hails from Velur in Thrissur District and has been in Vasai for the past 16 years. His wife Beena hails from Puduruthy in Thrissur District and teaches at Holy Family School. They have a daughter. Trinity Co-op Credit Society covers Vasai East and West with a grading of A+ and is registered with the Thane Credit Bank. The main aim of Trinity Credit Society is to support Malayalees and does not look for profit alone. The founder chairman of the Credit society was Stanni Francis. Currently Damodaran is the Secretary and George is the Treasurer.



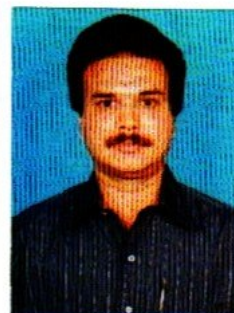
Anto Puthiry

## Smt. Nandini Madhavan

Smt. Nandini Madhavan is the Chairperson of the Mahila Vibhagam of Sree Ayyappa Seva Samiti, since its inception. She is well-versed in *Sreemad Bhagawatham*, *Narayaneeyam*, *Bhagawad Geeta* etc. and conducts regular classes and discourses not only at Sabarigiri Temple in Vasai but also in other temples and at the houses of devotees in other parts of Mumbai, purely as a devotional service. The



Nandini Madhavan



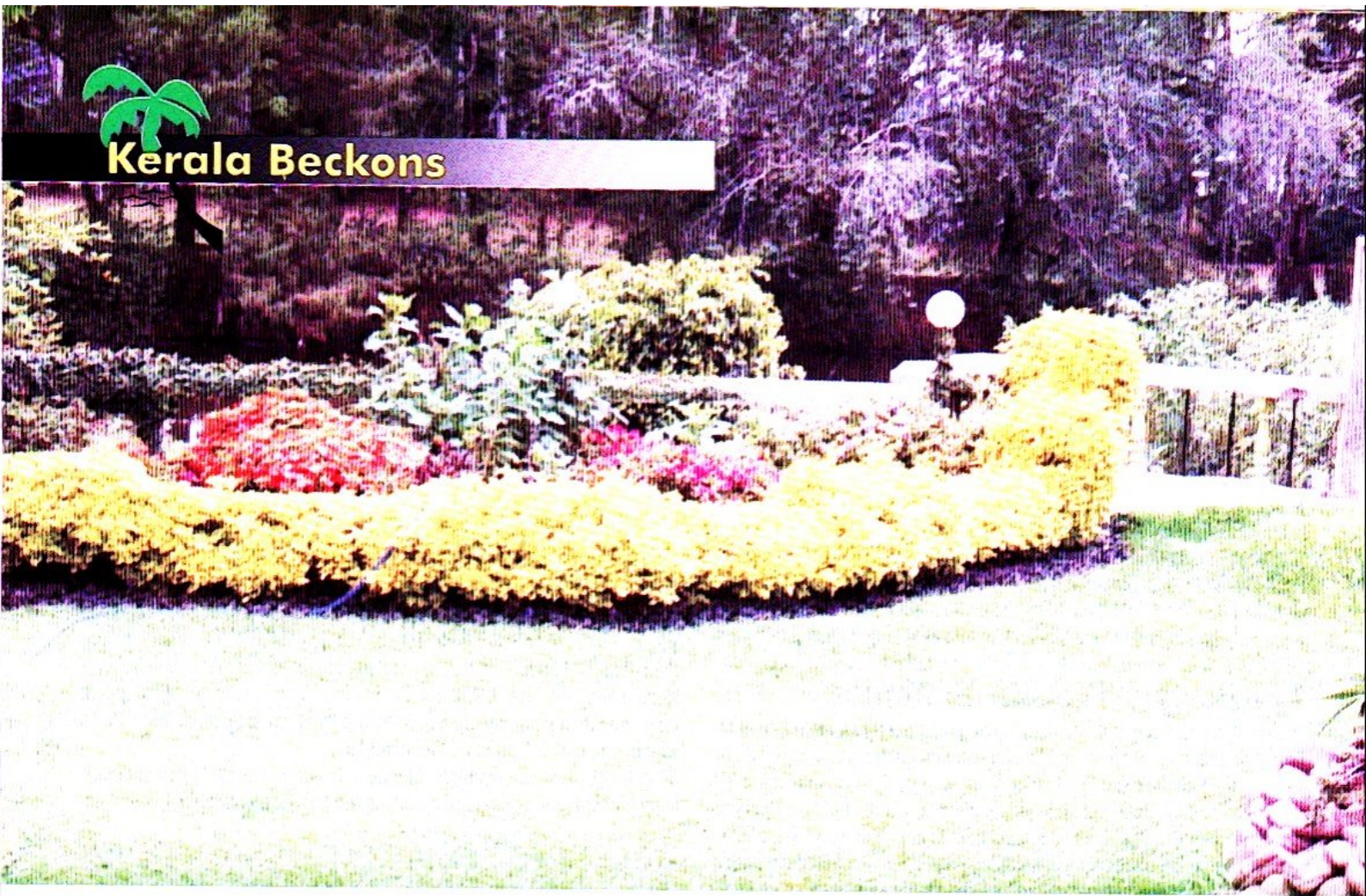
Dr Ajith Madhavan

Mahila Vibhagam looks after the spiritual and devotional functions at the Sabarigiri Temple.

Nandini teacher, as she is affectionately called, hails from Chentrapinny in Trichur District and is one of the earliest settlers in Vasai Road, having come here in 1962 after marriage. For some time she was teaching the students of Maharashtra English High School, Vasai Road. Her husband, Dr Madhavan is a well-known practising homeopath of Vasai. They have two children: Dr Ajith Madhavan who is also a practising homeopath and has his own full-time clinic and provides honorary services at the Medical Mission of the Ayyappa Samiti. He is also an approved panel doctor for Central Government employees. Nandini's daughter Anita Soman is married and settled in Powai, Mumbai.



A Main Road in Vasai



**-Traveller**

# IDUKKI

**This beautiful high range district of Kerala is known for its mountainous hills and dense forests.**

## **Thekkady**

### **Thekkady/Kumily/Periyar**

The very sound of the word Thekkady conjures up images of elephants, unending chains of hills and spice-scented plantations. In the Periyar forest of Thekkady is one of the finest wildlife reserves in India and spread across the entire district are picturesque plantations and hill towns that hold great opportunities for treks and mountain walks. Thekkady is the spice town and also home to the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary. The nearest airport is at Cochin and the journey takes around 5 hours.

Set amidst the splendour of the mountains, the Man-made Lake Periyar provides the ideal way to see the Wildlife Sanctuary, on a safari cruise. Early morning and late afternoon are the best times to see some of the wildlife. The partially submerged trees, scattered across the lake, provide ideal look out posts for a variety of birds.

The unique combination of climate, soil and terrain here, makes this one of the few places where so many varieties of spices can be grown. Here you will find pepper, cinnamon, vanilla,



nutmeg and ginger, to name a few. The tea and coffee plantations add to the scent in the cool air. A walk through the plantations is a fascinating experience as you learn the peculiarities and special needs of the plants.

## The Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary

Lying close to the plantations, in the rich jungles along Periyar, Thekkady is one of the world's most fascinating natural wildlife reserves - the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary. Spread across 777 sq.km, of which 360 sq.km is thick evergreen forest, the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary was declared a Tiger Reserve in 1978. Noted for its geomorphology, diversity of wildlife and scenic beauty, the Reserve attracts visitors from all over the world. The splendid artificial lake formed by the Mullaperiyar Dam across the Periyar adds to the charm of the park. This is the only sanctuary in India where you can have the unique experience of viewing wildlife at close quarters from the safety of a boat on the lake. The greatest attraction of Periyar, however, is the herds of wild elephants that come down to play in the lake.

## Kurisumala

A place for adventure tourism and trekking. This will offer a panoramic view of Kumily town and Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary.

## Kumily (4 km from Thekkady)

This plantation town, closely associated with Thekkady, is situated on the outskirts of the Periyar Sanctuary. An important shopping centre and spice trade centre, the main bus station and most of the medium range accommodation in the Periyar region are in Kumily.



*Kumily town*

## Murikkady (5 km from Thekkady)

Washed in fresh spice-scented air, Murikkady is a panorama of cardamom, coffee and pepper plantations. The place is a significant supplier to the many spice shops at Kumily.

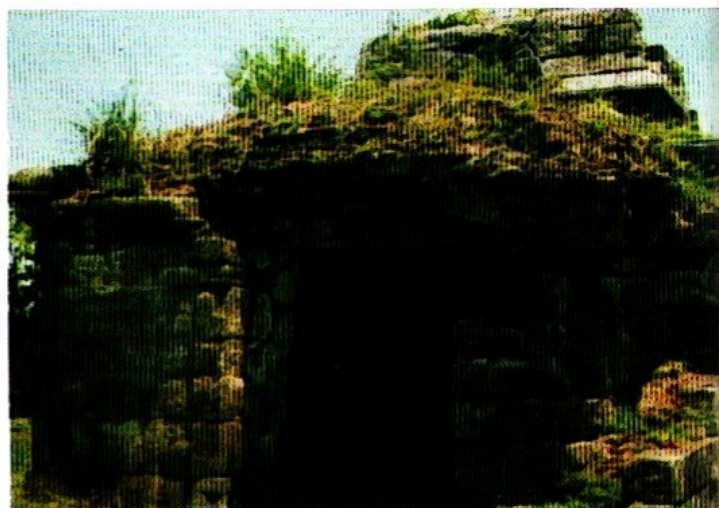
## Pandikuzhi (5 km from Kumily)

The beautiful location of Pandikuzhi is situated at the outskirts of the state. It is now growing to be a popular tourist destination and an enchanting picnic spot. Pandikuzhi is noted for the many species of bird and animal life and rare plants and herbs that thrive there. The landscape of the place makes it an appealing holiday venue for trekkers and adventure travelers as well. It is cradled between Chellarkovil and the Tamil Nadu border. A popular picnic spot, Pandikuzhi offers great opportunities for trekking and is a photographer's delight.

## Mangala Devi Temple (15 km from Thekkady)

This ancient temple is hidden in the dense woods at the top of a peak 1337 m above sea level. The temple is built in the traditional Kerala style of architecture. Visitors are allowed here only on the Chithra Pournami festival day. The peak commands a panoramic view of the eastern slopes of the Ghats and some hill villages of Tamilnadu.

The long way through the dense forest and up the dilapidated steps leading to the temple makes the trip a lovely trek.



*Mangala Devi temple*

## Chellarkovil (15 km from Kumily)

This sleepy little village with its breathtaking view of the plains and cascading waterfalls is a feast for the eyes. The village slopes down to the famous coconut groves of Cumbum in neighbouring Tamil Nadu.

The place presents visitors with a fantastic opportunity to observe the typical life of simple people settled in the villages at high ranges. The scenic extravaganza including acres of luxuriant fields, plains and gurgling waterfalls make it a much sought out tourist destination.

## Vandiperiyar (18 km from Thekkady)

The River Periyar flowing through the centre of this town nourishes its vast tea, coffee and pepper plantations. A major trade centre, Vandiperiyar is also home to a number of tea factories. The Government Agriculture farm and Flower Garden have a delightful array of roses, orchids and anthuria.



Tea estates at Vandanmedu

### **Vandanmedu** (25 km from Kumily)

This is one of the world's largest auction centres for cardamom. A walk through the sprawling cardamom plantations of Vandanmedu is a rich experience.

### **Pullumedu** (43 km from Thekkady, 26 km from Periyar)

The winding journey to this hill town, along the Periyar River, offers a stunning view of the rolling hills draped in lush greenery. Velvet lawns, rare flora and fauna add to the beauty of Pullumedu which can be accessed only by jeep. The famous Sree Ayyappa Temple at Sabarimala and the Makara Jyothi illumination at the shrine are visible from here. Since it is part of the restricted forest zone, special permission to visit Pullumedu has to be obtained from the Wildlife Preservation Officer, Thekkady.

### **Ramakalmedu**

(40 km from Thekkady and 75 km from Munnar)

Rolling green hills and the fresh mountain air make Ramakalmedu an enchanting retreat. The hills top also offers a panoramic view of picturesque villages of Bodi and Cumbum on the Eastern slope of the Western Ghats.

### **How to get There**

**Air:** nearest airport : Madurai (Tamil Nadu) 140 kms, Kochi (Nedumbassery - 185 km), Thiruvananthapuram (265 kms).

**Rail:** nearest railway station is Kumarakom 114 kms. Madurai station is about 136 kms.

**Road:** an excellent road network from Kumily (4 kms) links the to all major towns and cities in india

### **Munnar** (70 kms from Idukki)

Munnar, was the most popular summer resorts during the British reign and is still a very well known hill station. Located at an altitude of 1800m above sea level, this 'Kashmir of South India' is the first hill resort in the State.

The chilly climate here is ideal for cultivating tea. It is home to one of the biggest tea plantations in the world- the Kannan Devan Tea Plantations. The sight of mist topped tea plantations spread across Munnar, is indeed soothing to the eye.

The most splendid sight would definitely be that of thousands of the exotic blue flower-Neelakurinji, that inundate the hills every 12 years (the next bloom will be in the year 2018). There are many lovely spots that are ideal for rock climbing and trekking as well. The noisy waterfalls, gurgling streams and rows of tiny cottages add more life and colour to the vivid picturesque location that Munnar already is.

### **Devikulam** (7 km from Munnar)

This idyllic hill station with its velvet lawns, exotic flora and fauna and the cool mountain air is a rare experience. The Sita Devi Lake with its mineral waters and picturesque surroundings is a good picnic spot. The lake is also ideal for trout fishing.

The chill climate, fresh air exclusive to high

ranges, acres of green lawns, exotic wildlife, and the marvelous Sita Devi Lake, all attract tourists from all over the globe. Sita Devi Lake that is known for its mineral water also provides boating and fishing facilities.

### **Pallivasal** (8 km from Munnar)

This is the venue of the first Hydroelectric Project in Kerala and a place of immense scenic beauty

### **Attukal** (9 km from Munnar)

A panorama of waterfalls and rolling hills, Attukal, located between Munnar and Pallivasal, is a feast for the eyes. The place is also ideal for long treks.

### **Nyayamakad** (10 km from Munnar)

Located between Munnar and Rajamala, Nyayamakad is a land of breathtaking waterfalls. The waters cascade down a hill from a height of about 1600 metres. The enchanting surroundings make an excellent picnic spot and trekking point.

### **Chithirapuram** (10 km from Munnar)

With its sleepy little cottages, bungalows, old playgrounds and courts, Chithirapuram still exudes an old-world charm. Home of the Pallivasal Hydrel Power Project, this hill town is also famous for its picturesque tea plantations.

### **Mattupetty** (13 kms from Munnar)

Mattupetty, situated at a height of 1700 m, is specially known for its highly specialised dairy farm - the Indo Swiss Livestock Project. Over a 100 varieties of high yielding cattle are reared here. The Mattupetty also has a lake and dam, just a short distance from the farm. These are beautiful picnic spots and the boat cruises (Speed launch, slow speedboat and motorboats) along the dam are quite popular. The sprawling Kundala tea plantations and the Kundala Lake are other attractions in the vicinity.

### **Lock Heart Gap** (13km from Munnar)

This is an ideal place for adventure tourism and trekking. The fresh mountain air, the mistclad hills and panoramic view make it worthy of visit.

## **Rajamala** (15km from Munnar)

This is the natural habitat of the Nilgiri tahr. Half the world population of the rare mountain goat (*Hemitragas bylocres*) which is fast becoming extinct is now found here. The Nilgiri tahrs are today reduced to small herds found in the Eravikulam-Rajamala region. The total number of Nilgiri tahrs in Rajamala is estimated at 1317.

## **Echo Point** (15 km from Munnar)

This scenic place gets its name from the natural echo phenomenon here. Echo Point is on the way to Top Stations from Munnar.

## **Eravikulam National Park**

(15 km from Munnar)

The 97 sq kms area of Iravikkulam National Park embraces an exotic landscape complete with green meadows, dense forests, tall rock and mountains. The myriad species of animals and birds here include many rare ones as well. Many unusual plants can also be found in the park.

## **Anamudy**

This is the highest mountain peak in the state. The colossal mountain that stands as tall as 2694 metres is situated on the southern border of the Iravikulam national park. It provides excellent opportunities for trekking.

## **Power House waterfalls** (18 km from Munnar)

This waterfall on the way to Thekkady from Munnar cascades down a steep rock, 2000 m above sea level. The spot is enriched with the scenic western mountain ranges, and is an ideal place for a break on the way to the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary in Thekkady.

## **Kundala** (20 km from Munnar)

Kundala is a picturesque town on the way to Top Stations. The Golf Course, which belongs to Tata Tea Ltd., is located here. The Kundala artificial dam is another attraction. Aruvikkad waterfalls are also near Kundala.

## **Anayirankal** (22km from Munnar)

It is a lush green carpet of tea plants. A trip on the splendid reservoir is an unforgettable experience. The Tata Tea Plantations and evergreen forests surround the Anayirankal Dam. It is an ideal picnic spot.

## **Top station** (32 km from Munnar)

1700 m above sea level, this is the highest point on the Munnar-Kodaikanal road. The rare Nilakurinji (*strobilanthus*) belongs to this region. This plant blooms every 12 years bathing the hillsides in bright blue. Top Station also offers a panoramic view of the neighbouring state of Tamilnadu.

## **Marayoor** (40 km from Munnar)

This is the only place in Kerala that has natural growth of sandal wood trees. The sandal wood factory of the forest department, the caves (Muniyaras) with murals and relics from the new Stone Age civilisation and the children's park spread across a hectare of land under the canopy of a single Banyan tree are of great interest to tourist's. Thoovanam waterfalls and Rajiv Gandhi National Park are also near by.



*Cheeyappara waterfalls*

## **Cheeyappara**

The Cheeyappara and Valara waterfalls are located between Nariamangalam and Adimali on the Kochi Madurai highway. The Cheeyappara waterfalls cascade down in seven steps. It is a real feast for the eyes. This is also a great place for trekking.

## **Meenuli**

It is noted for two acres of evergreen forests upon a huge Rock. The rock is more than 500 acres in area and is an ideal spot for mountaineering.

## **Chinnar Wild Life Sanctuary**

(60 km from Munnar)

Situated on the Tamilnadu Boarder, The Chinnar wild life sanctuary is spread across 90.44 Sq.km.

## **The Sanctuary Watch Towers**

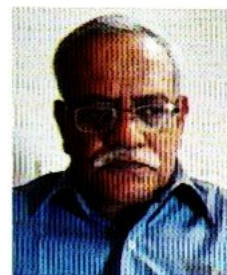
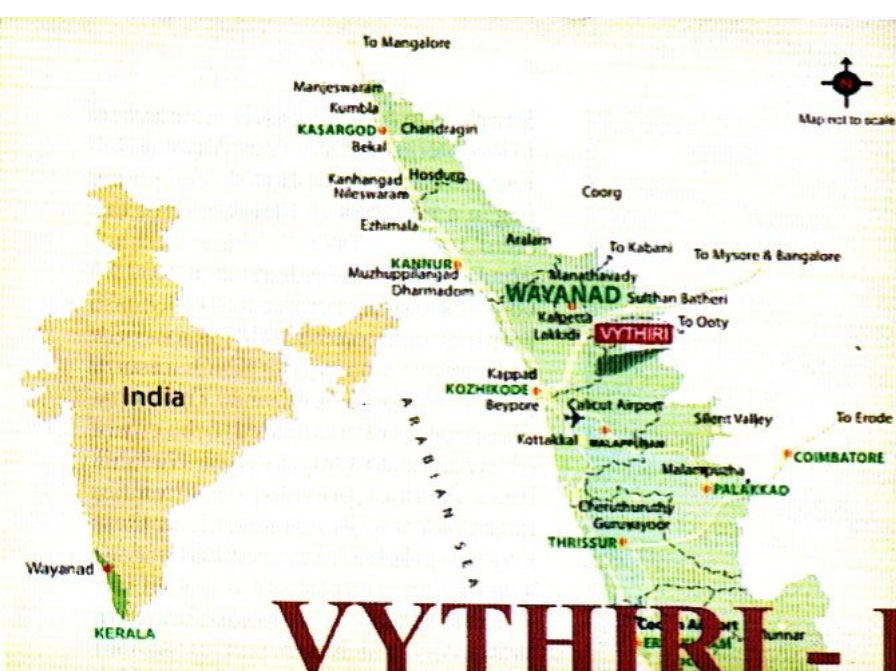
There are two watch towers in the interior of the Periyar forest. Reservations can be made at Forest Information Centre, Thekkady, and Plantations: Tea, Cardamom, Pepper and Coffee plantations surround the Periyar Wildlife sanctuary. Twelve Varieties of spices grow in the neighbouring villages, pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, vanilla, ginger, turmeric, nutmeg, cumin seed, garlic, starriness etc.

## **Obituary**



**Mrs C Kochammani Amma**  
aged 88 years, died on October 8, 2011.

*She belonged to Chittezhath House, Chentrapinni, Trichur Dist and is survived by her son Pushpangadan, daughters Mrs Ramani Nair, Mrs Vijayalakshmi Menon, Mrs Hemalatha Nair and their families.*



K. R. NARAYANAN

# VYTHIRI - IN THE LAP OF MOTHER NATURE

*'If there is a heaven on earth, it is here.. it is here!!',* said Emperor Jehangir about the Kashmir Valley. He did not know about Wayanad the Vayal Nadu of yore the land of paddy fields. This hilly tribal district of Kerala is located on a mountainous plateau in the Western Ghats, between north latitude  $11^{\circ} 26' 28''$  and  $11^{\circ} 48' 22''$  and east longitude  $75^{\circ} 46' 38''$  and  $76^{\circ} 26' 11''$ . This land is not far from urbanized locations; but a world apart from agricultural and industrial epicentres. It is a calm and quiet place where serenity and scenic beauty with its mountains, forests, heavy rains, diverse fauna and flora, and the sounds of birds, animals and natural streams all

woven into a music of the great mother earth. All these merge to form a divine world here.

It is an emerald green paradise that fringes the northern border of Kerala. Clean and pristine, enchanting and hypnotising, this land has mystery, history, and a distinct culture and social epistemology which have not been understood yet by the so called civilized man. Located in the Western Ghats, at a distance of about 76 km. from Kozhikode (Calicut), this major tribal belt is full of plantations, forests and wildlife. Wayanad hills are contiguous to Mudumalai in Tamil Nadu and Bandipur in Karnataka, thus forming a vast land mass for wild life to move about in its most natural abode.

Wayanad has the largest population of aborigines in Kerala. They mainly consist of various sects like *Paniyas*, *Kurumas*, *Adiyars*, *Kurichyas*, *Ooralis*, *Kattunaikkans*, etc. This is the land where the tribals live in houses made of thatched roof, mud, bamboo and bricks, set in swampy valleys and plateaus. The adivasis also have a rich legacy of arts and crafts. This includes music, dances, ornamentation and handicrafts that draw inspiration from natural themes, motifs and materials. Their indigenous streams of holistic herbal medicines are getting increasing attention in recent years. Though adivasis are basically Hindus, primitive forms of worship still prevail among them. Ancestral worship and offerings to propitiate the spirits of ancestors are still prevalent. The Kurichyas of Wayanad have a great



The hilly road with hair-pin bends



*Thamarassery Pass*

martial tradition. They constituted the army of Pazhassi Raja who engaged the British forces in several battles. The descendants of those warriors are still expert archers. The excellence of Kurichya archery is exhibited at various centres.

Situated at a height of 700 to 2100m above sea level, Wayanad is home to many species of animal and plant life. In addition to the mammalian macro-fauna, the place is full of different varieties (species?) of insects, worms (like the blood sucking leeches), slugs and snails, lizards, deadly poisonous snakes, mountain squirrels, etc. A layman - like me - has no count of the faunal and floral diversity of this place, as it can be justifiably understood only by the specialized taxonomists.

The population here (1991 Census) was 6,72,128 and the population density 316.2 per Km<sup>2</sup>. There was no urban population in Wayanad. However, life in Sulthan Bathery, Mananthavady and Kalpetta is in the process of gaining urban status. In the first three decades of the 20th century, the growth of population in Wayanad was less than 10% and was attributed to an influx of settlers to Wayanad after the Second World War. The economic slump, difficulties and miseries creeping into the life of the common people, as a result of the global war, compelled them to seek '*pastures anew*' on the virgin soil of Wayanad from all parts of Kerala and Karnataka. In the first year of settlement, it is said, thousands of them succumbed to malaria and the attack of wild animals. Those who survived these unfriendly conditions, cleared the forests and transformed Wayanad into a paradise of prosperity.

## History

In ancient times, this tribal land was ruled by the kings of the Hunting Tribes (*Vedar*). Later, it came under the rule of Pazhassi Rajas of (North) Kottayam. When Hyder Ali became the ruler of Mysore, he invaded Wayanad and brought it under his control. It was subsequently restored to the (North) Kottayam royal dynasty. But, Tipu had to hand over the entire Malabar to the British after the Sreerangapattanam truce. This was followed by fierce encounters between the British and Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja of Kottayam. Though the Raja was driven to the wilderness of Wayanad, he waged several battles with his Nair and *Kurichia-Kuruma* tribal soldiers against the British troops and humbled them on several occasions, through his guerilla type encounters. The British could get only the dead body of the Raja Kerala

Varma-who killed himself- somewhere in the interior forests. Thus Wayanad fell into the hands of the British, and with it began a new turn in the chapter of this area.

The Britishers opened up the plateau for cultivation of tea, coffee and other cash crops. Roads were laid across the dangerous slopes of Thamarassery passes from Calicut and Telicherry. These roads were extended to the city of Mysore and to Ooty through Gudalur. Road facilities provided opportunities for outsiders to flow and settle in these jungle regions of Wayanad and engage in agriculture and cash crop plantations. When the state of Kerala was formed in 1956, Wayanad was a part of Kannur district. Later South Wayanad was added to Kozhikode district and then on November 1, 1980, North and South Wayanad were merged to form the present Wayanad district.

## Land of Scenic Beauty

This mountain district is, in many ways, the most picturesque one in Kerala State, with its rolling hills covered with tropical rainforests. Wayanad also contributes richly to its fortunes, thanks to the flourishing cultivation of many spices, tea, coffee and cocoa. The atmospheric temperature ranges from 12° to 25° C. This district also has the added advantage of linking Kerala with the golden triangle of South India: Bangalore, Mysore and Ooty.

This high altitude district is characterised by the cultivation of perennial plantation crops and spices. The major plantation crops include coffee, tea, pepper, cardamom and rubber. Coffee based farming system is a notable feature of Wayanad. Coffee is grown



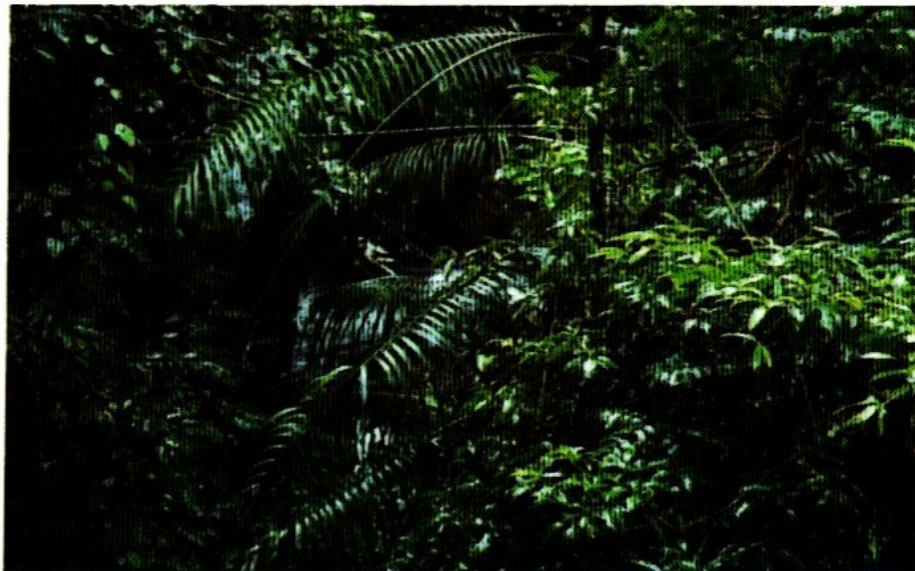
*A Pretty Waterfall*

both as a pure crop and as mixed crop along with pepper. Pepper is grown largely along with coffee in the north eastern parts of the district, especially in Pulpally and Mullankolly areas. Coffee in Wayanad (about 70,000 ha.) shares 33.65 % of the total cropped area in the district and 78 % of the coffee area in the state. Other major crops are rubber(63,015 ha.), coconut(59,452 ha.), cardamom (38,348 ha.), tea (31,792 ha.) cassava (tapioca) and ginger. A recent increase in the area under coconut cultivation is noticed in the lower elevations. Paddy is cultivated in 22,772 hectares. Ginger cultivation in Wayanad has also substantially increased in recent times. Homestead farming assumes importance in this district. Generally, the agricultural crops include coconut, arecanut, pepper, vegetables, tuber crops, drumstick, papaya, etc. and fruit trees like mango and jackfruit. The crop patterns/crop combinations prevalent in this district are not based on any scientific norms.

The most recent trend (as in any other place in God's Own Country) is the promotion of tourism, as this region provides ample scope for wild-life watching, bird-watching, trekking and, above all, its serenity, beauty, greenery and the landscapes. Many resorts have mushroomed in the mountains and valleys of Wayanad and they support the economy of this 'Malana' very much. Vythiri is one of the most prominent resorts.

## Vythiri Resort

Vythiri Resort is an exquisite eco-friendly jungle getaway about 5 Km. away from Wyanad. It is approachable



*The Emerald Green Forest*

from Calicut (70 kms), the Calicut International Airport, Karippur (85 kms), Kalpetta (18 kms), about 150 kms from Mysore on the way to Calicut, about 120 kms from Ooty and about 140 kms from Madikeri(Coorg). It is located in the Vythiri Panchayat, Kalpetta Block, Vythiri P.O. in Wayanad district. Situated in the lush embrace of a tropical rainforest, tourist cottages, specifically the tribal housing, are in perfect harmony with nature. Subtle sounds of big and small waterfalls and the innumerable streams originating from them provide an ambience of dense woods. Spread across either bank of a sprightly mountain stream that runs through the 150 acre property, the Vythiri Resort is a delightful jungle getaway and a naturalist's treasure trove. The Resort also enjoys a close proximity to a number of tourist destinations, including Pookot Lake (4 kms),

Banasura Sagar Dam (22 kms), Edakkal Caves (26 kms), Soochipara Waterfalls (26 kms), Muthanga Wildlife Sanctuary (43 kms), Kuruvadweep (45 kms) and Thirunelly Temple (95 kms).

Stone-lined pathways, canopied by majestic trees, lead to brick coloured cottages nestling in the cool rainforests, and built in the style native to the region. Built of brick with wooden rafters on the roof, furnished in cane, wood and fabrics of discreet elegance, the cottages are equipped with all modern amenities. The accommodations are designed so as to provide residents the pulse of the surrounding woods and their sounds. A rope bridge across the stream, restaurant overlooking the swimming pool at one end and a sweeping view of the forest all around, and the like, add beauty to the place.

Designed like the cluster- houses in a tribal village, the Vaithiri Resort attracts many visitors, as it provides opportunities for the tourists to see nature face to face in its different moods, like the the furious monsoons, the pleasant and serene winters, and also the bright, warm and tree-shaded summers.

Innumerable waterfalls, within the different regimes of this resort, beautify the landscape, and the pleasant sound of their flow adds to the music of the calm wilderness. I have had the privilege of enjoying the beauty of Vaithiri from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 (which were the days of the heaviest rain), along with my relations K D Skandan, K S Ramchandran, V Renganathan and K D Kumar. I also had occasions to revive the 'experience' of leech-bites here. As a student of Zoology, I had dissected innumerable leeches (*Atta* in Malayalam and *Hirudinaria medicinalis* in Science) and seen and collected many of



*A Cottage in the Vythiri Resort*



**Our team with C H Gopalakrishnan (Operations Manager), Vythiri Resort.  
(From left: K D Kumar, K R Narayanan, V.Renganathan, C H Gopalakrishnan,  
K S Ramchandran and K D Skandan.)**

them from the hilly regions of Central Kerala, but never had the "pleasure of their bite" and the resultant profuse bleeding.

The cottages with tiled roofs and wooden floorings reminded me of the good old residential quarters of the forest department of the erstwhile Cochin State. They are spacious, cool

and airy, and give a pretty view of the jungle around and the ever singing streams. There is a well laid out swimming pool, which no one feels like plunging into, due to the very low atmospheric temperature. The restaurant and dining halls are in harmony with the cottages, in regard to color combinations and wooden structures, and very

spacious.

Other than the lay-out and the wooded ambience, what we would grade the Vythiri Resort for, is its excellence in its (vegetarian and non-vegetarian) breakfast, lunch and dinner.

It was a matter of great surprise for us that young couples (mostly the newly-weds from Kerala, Tamilnadu and Karnataka) were the major occupants of the resort when we visited it in the heavy monsoons.

The great poet of yore, late Shri Kuttipuzha Krishna Pilla wrote many decades ago:

*"Sarasam Masrinam Manoharam,  
Saralam Charu Gabheeram  
Adbhutam, Param Eevakaye  
Samaharichu Ura Cheyunnithu  
Aranyam Ennu Jnan,"*

(I combine all the enjoyable, simple, grand, beautiful and wonderful things of the world and call it a forest.....).

The poet was very right in considering the forests as the greatest gift of Providence to man. We would go one step further and say that such homes in the rain-forests are perhaps the greatest boon to our modern life. ●

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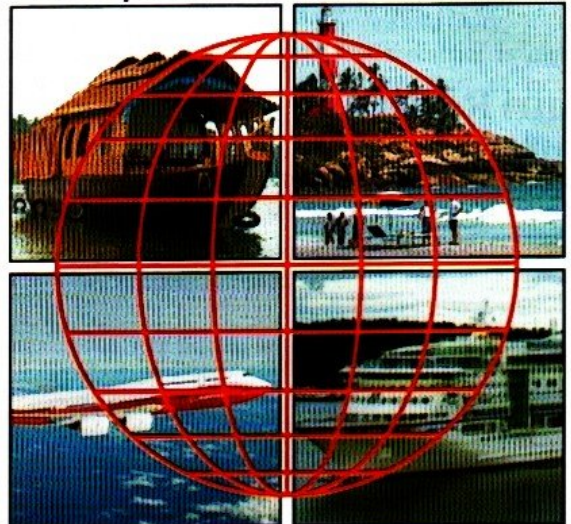
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# Iyers of Kerala- Mingling of East and West

*The author, a Kerala Iyer, traces some characteristics of Kerala Iyers.*

The Pattars or Tamil Brahmins or the Iyers of Kerala seem to have been holding both the east and west (of the Western Ghats) together in the best possible way. It is said that the Iyers have had a very long history in the princely state of Travancore. The Venad (present Kanyakumari district) and the southern parts of Kerala was part of the Pandyan kingdom. Many Iyers had been living from time immemorial in Venad, which later on transformed into the Travancore State. Travancore's earlier capital was Padmanabhapuram in the Kanyakumari region. There has been a continuous flow of Iyers from Tirunelveli and Ramnad districts of Tamil Nadu, as these regions were contiguous to the erstwhile Travancore. Some of these people also migrated to Cochin State and later to Palakkad and Kozhikode districts.

In addition, there were also regular migrations from Thanjavoor and Thiruchi regions of Tamil Nadu to Palakkad, as invitees of the ruling kings of Palakkad and Kollengode. All these Iyers are now collectively known as the 'Kerala Iyer'

community. There is not much of historical records of the migration from Thirunelveli and Ramnad districts. These are generally hearsay. But there are many historical evidences of the migrations of Tamil Iyers from Thanjavoor and its surrounding areas, like Thiruchi and Kumbakonam. Iyers have become a vital constituent of the Kerala fabric.

When asked whether we are Tamilians or Malayalees, many find it a little hard to answer. They wanted to know how to answer such a question. Many of us find it difficult to answer. I have experienced this dual rationality on many occasions. So have many of the so-called Palakkad Brahmins or Pattars or Iyers, as we are known.

It would be appropriate to classify us as Malayalees, who have not yet left their original Tamilian life style.

Our ceremonies, rituals and festivals are a mix of both Tamil and Kerala practices. We live like a true Malayalee - speak chaste Malayalam with the local Thrissur /Travancore/ Malabar) accents and twists. We celebrate *Onam*, *Vishu*, *Thirvathira* and many other Malayalee festivals. We are very enthusiastic in taking active part in the local *poorams*, *Vela*, *Utsvams*, *Kavoottu*, *Ayyappan Vilakku*, and scores of other functions of local importance. We celebrate them in the typical Malayalee Style. We receive *Ona Pudava* and *Vishu Kai Neettam* from the grand parents, uncles, aunties and other elders from both father's and mother's side.



*A traditional Iyer wedding*

We excel in Malayalam literature and poetry. One of the "Kavithrayam" (three great poets) - the *Ujjwala Sabdadyan* Ulloor Parameswara Iyer - of Malayalam was a Tamil Brahmin. There are many writers like Malayattoor, Karimpuzha, Justice Krishna Iyer and the like among Iyers. Many of the Iyers, especially in the southern Kerala, speak Malayalam in their houses. Some of the branches of our own family, settled in Cherpu, Thriprayar, Thrissur, etc. speak only Malayalam in their houses.

We have not so far been able to detach ourselves completely from the Tamil traditions. We celebrate *Deepavali*, by taking an oil bath early in the morning, wearing new dresses and bursting crackers. We light lamps on *Karthika* and carry rose water, tender coconuts and the like on slings (*Kavadi*) on *Thai Pooasam* (*Pooyam*) day. We celebrate *Pongal* and the Tamil New year, on the *Makara Sankranti* day. Our *Bomma Kolu* during the nine days of Navaratri festival is rather elaborate.

*Sambar*, *Rasam*, *Poricha Kozhambu*, *Vattal Kozhambu*, etc. still dominate our cuisines. Malayalee preparations, like *Olan*, *Aviyal*, *Erissery*, and sweet dishes like *Palada* and other *Prathamans*, also co-exist with them. These are all in addition to our own inventions clubbing Tamil and Kerala flavors -with ground coconut as the base like the *Keerai* (spinach) and other *Molagukuttals*.

Among ourselves, we refer to our relations living in the Tamil regions (like Thiruchi, Thanjavoor, Kumbakonam, etc) as *Kongans* (those of Kongunadu) or *Kizhakethukar* (those of the east). They, in turn, refer to us as *Malayalathan*. Marriages between the Malayalathan families and Kizhakethukar families are common. Very often quite a lot of clashes due to traditional differences do take place in such marriages.

*Pattaril Pottayilla* is an often heard statement in Kerala. I do not know how far this statement is true. It cannot be denied that members of this community had been holding prominent positions in the Government, the judiciary, the teaching and scientific fields.

However, historians have found that the original Keralites are only a few tribes in the forests of Western Ghats and all the present day Keralites are only migrants, like our Tamil Brahmins, from different regions of the Indian subcontinent and the nearby islands, at different chronological stages. ●



# MUMBAI NEWS DIGEST

KIM News Bureau

## Ninetieth birthday of Krishnan Parappally

Maharashtra's Governor, K Sankaranarayanan has said long after the politicians and leaders are forgotten, the writer and the poet will be remembered and their writings will continue to inspire readers.

Presiding over the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations of poet Krishnan Parappally, he said world literature bears testimony to the everlasting popularity and influence of the written word. Despite the profusion of television channels he said, people still turn to the daily

newspapers for the news, analysis and comments.

Television and the developments in the electronic media have not robbed the newspapers and books of their readership, he pointed out.

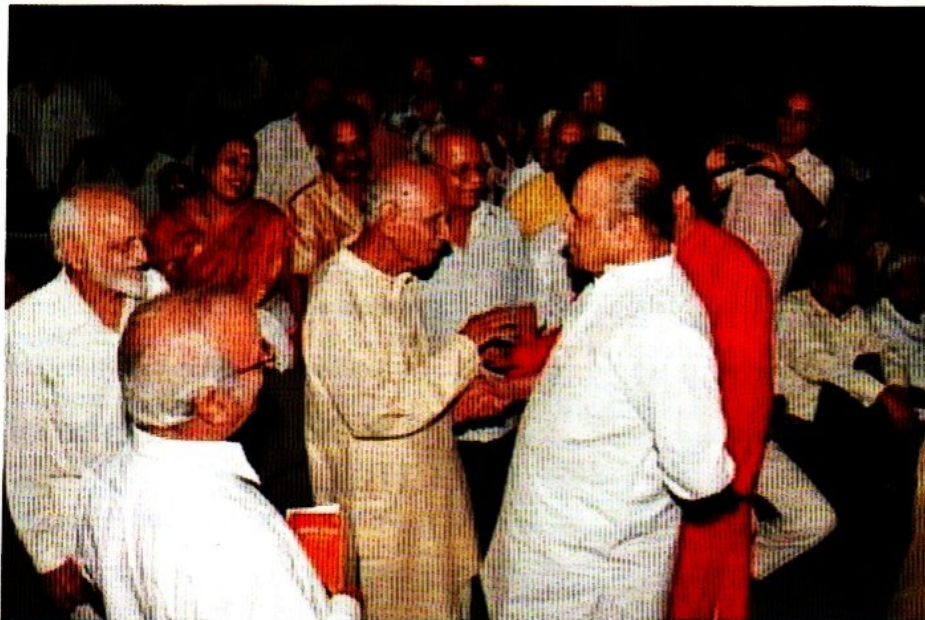
The President of the Kerala Sahitya Academy and prominent writer, Perumbadavam Sreedharan said Malayalam poetry has attained wide popularity and acceptance even among other language groups in the country. The wide variety of poems in the language has been the envy of some of the other language groups in the country, he said.

He said the poetry of Ezhuthachchan, Kunchan Nambiar, Unnayi Varier and Kumaran Asan continue to inspire readers in Malayalam decades after their death, he pointed out.

Several other prominent writers, politicians and others paid tributes to Krishnan Parappally, who has produced in the last sixty years a large volume of poetry dealing with philosophy, ethics, morality, daily lives and devotional lyrics. Recipient of several awards, Parappally is now engaged in transcribing the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi in Malayalam verses.

The celebrations were organised by FOMA and Whiteline Vartha, a Mumbai-based weekly magazine.

Parappally's outstanding works include *Krishnaleela* and several anthologies. He has written several *Geethakams* (sonnets) in Malayalam.



*Governor K Sankaranarayanan wishes Krishnan Parappally on the latter's birthday*

## Devi Navahasathram

The fifth All India Sreemad Devi Bhagavada Navaha Sathram was conducted from October 20 to 30 th October at Jagambapuri ( MIDC Grounds) in Dombivli under the aegis of Chief Priest Modappilappalli Vasudevan Nambudirippad along with other priests. Azhakath Sashtasarman Nambudirippad, Modappilapalli Parameswaran Nambudirippad, MLA Ravindra Chavan, Dr Anil Raghavan, N Sathesasan, O Pradeep, Kunnam Vishnu, Modappilapalli Vasudevan Nambudirippad graced the inaugural

function. The Sathram idol from Modappilapalli Mana and the Devi Bhagavatham (Devi Grantham) from Angadipuram Thirumandamkunnu Bhagavathy Kshetram were carried in a procession with *thalappoli* and *panchavadyam* and installed at the *sathravedi* as per tradition.

There were full day programmes on all the ten days from 4 am to 10 pm with different types of Devi pujas, Ganapathy homam, Bhagavathy seva, Sarpa Bali and the like concluding with a Gaja pooja on the last day. The pujas

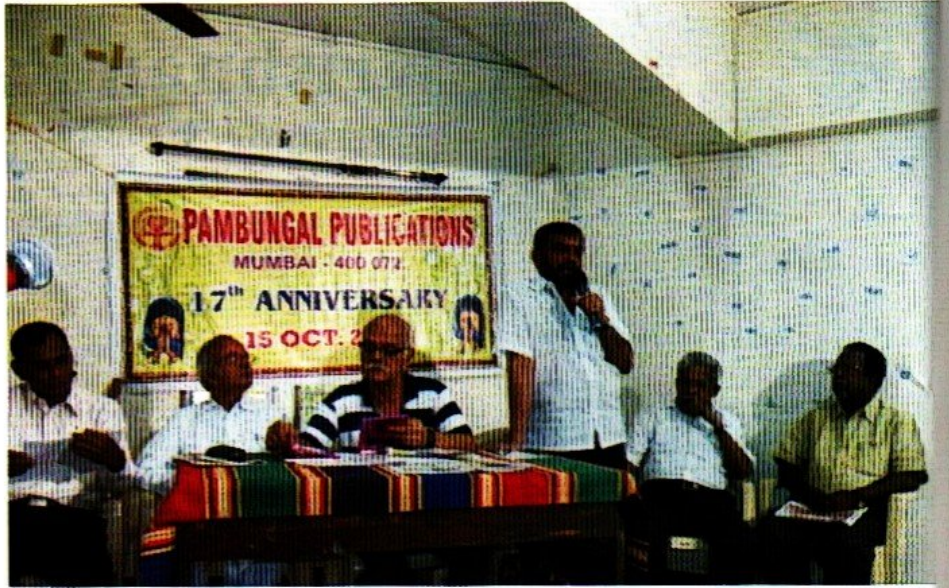
were presided every day by Thantris from Kerala and followed by spiritual discourses by learned pundits annadaanam and cultural programmes.

At the All India level the President of the Sathram was Thantri Modappilapalli Parameswaran Nambudirippad, Secretary C T Ramachandran, and Treasurer Gopidas Vanneri. The President of the Mumbai Unit was Kunnam Vishnu, Secretary Prasad Kongad and Treasurer Babu K Nair.

## Pampungal Publications' Anniversary

Pampungal Publications, Mumbai celebrated its 17th Annual Functions at Kerala Bhavanam Auditorium, Mumbai on October 15. Five of its new publications, were released along with a book exhibition. K D Chandran presided over the function while Mundur Rajan welcomed the audience. K D Chandran urged the book reading public to donate Malayalam books to the libraries at their native places in Kerala so that they would be remembered by the people there.

The books that were released were *Kattu Chennai* a novel by GG Chilambil, *Janapriya Kathakal* (a collection of short stories by several writers), *Kaviyum Vasanthavum*, *Ammaiyum Njanum*, both by Thodupuzha Shankar, *Manasinte Thalavum Olavum* (anthology of poems) by Lakshmy Mumbai. Rajan Nair and several personalities from the Malayalam literary field conveyed their wishes to Pampungal Publications. They included Rajan Kadannapally, Kaviyur Babu, C G Warriar, Manoj, Jayan Thanima, Viswanathan Palloor, Mavelikkara Radhakrishnan, G Anil Kumar and PD Babu.

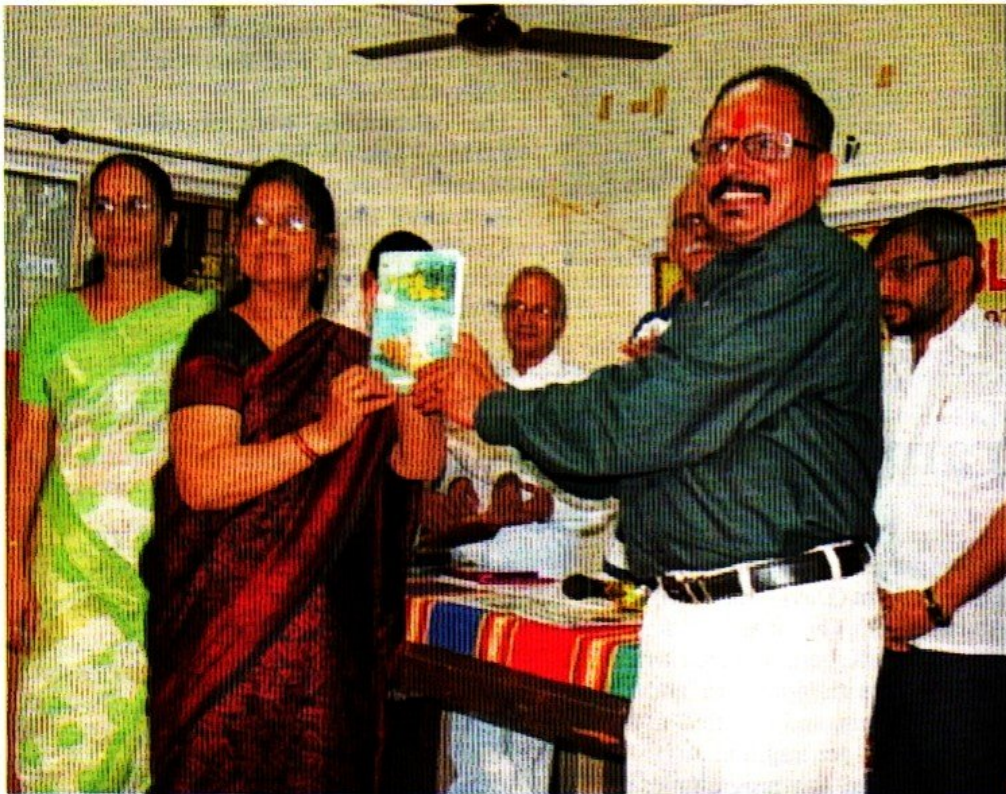


*Rajan Nair addressing the audience*

### Two outstanding women felicitated

During the event two social activists Smt Padma Divakaran and Smt Suma Mukundan were felicitated for their social work. Smt Padma Divakaran, (Retd IRS) has rendered medical assistance to terminally ill cancer patients and organized medical camps blood donation drives etc. She is the President of Malad Malayalee Samajam.

Smt Suma Mukundan is a well-known Malayalam Drama artiste and secretary of Kalwa Malayalee Samajam. She has acted in several Mumbai Malayalam plays with senior veterans like Anthappan and also in current productions like Swati Thirunal. They were felicitated with a citation, shawl and a bouquet.



*"Manassinte Thalavum Olavum" by Lakshmy Mumbai, released by Muthukulam Sunil and received by Jyothirmayi Sankaran. Seen on the stage are P R Krishnan and Rajan Nair.*

### M V Nair Chairman of CIBIL

M V Nair, Chairman and Managing Director of Union Bank Of India has been elected Chairman of Credit Information Bureau of India Ltd.

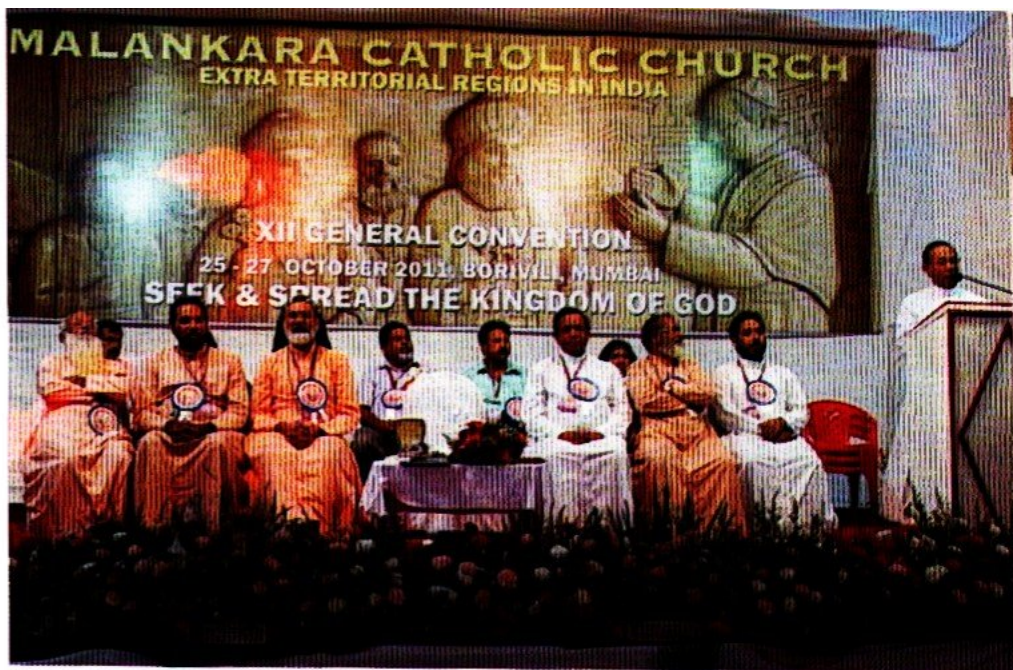
He is also a member of the Managing Committee of Indian Banks Association (IBA). Complete details of credit facilities in India are available with CIBIL. Currently it holds details of credits of more than 207 million individuals and establishments. Banks, finance institutions, Home loan companies and credit card companies etc come under its purview.

### Music and dance Show

Powai Fine Arts presented *Dev Navavarna Mahotsavam*, a unique program of music and dance on Sunday by the eminent teachers of music and dance from Powai and surrounding areas. On this occasion Powai Fine Arts felicitated a senior teacher of Carnatic vocal and veena Smt. Kalyani Sharma, a resident of Powai.

## Syro Malankara Catholic Convention

The Governor of Maharashtra K Sankaranarayanan inaugurated the 12th Biennial Convention of the Syro Malankara Catholic Church hosted by the St Mary's Malankara Catholic Church in Mumbai. The Convention of ETRI Malankarities was attended by 1500 delegates from 45 parishes across India. The Valedictory Session was held at St Francis D'Assissi School, Borivli West. Head Bishop Dr Thomas Elavanal exhorted the audience to do good to the community. "The Economically backward Christians would be provided all educational facilities", said Bishop Dr Jacob Mar Bernabas, head of the dioceses outside Kerala. Meritorious students of Sunday Schools, SSC, HSC from all over India were awarded and senior citizens above 65, were also felicitated.



*Bishop Dr Thomas Elavanal addressing the audience at the Valedictory function. From right: Fr Sam Pathackal, Fr John Berchmans, Fr Daniel Kuzhithadathal, Bishop Dr Jacob Mar Bernabas, Fr Mathai Iranathara, Fr Ignatius Thangalathil. Back row: Sr Bhavia, M D Jose, Neppolian, Sarah Mani, N C Philip.*

## ONAM EVENTS

### Last but one of the best

The Keraleeya Mahila Samaj's Onam celebrations, held on October 22, was hopefully one of the last in Mumbai this year. It however, turned out to be a slick affair, with a variety of items, which were highly creative and imaginatively presented. Problems of commuting and availability of persons

to assemble and present the show, compelled the Samaj to have the celebrations on a Saturday morning.

The M S Subbulakshmi Auditorium at Matunga was packed with an appreciative audience, which enjoyed the show. Among the highlights were the Kaikottikali staged by Leela R Menon and Jayashree Sudhakaran, "Onam Vannallo" by Angitha Menon and Pootha Pattu staged by Jayashree

Sudhakaran group.

A short skit, "Prakasha Dhara" written by Sulochana Achan and a delightful Hasya Kathaprasangam by Ram M Nair were well executed, and drew much applause. A fusion dance by Swathi Nair was appealing.

The Samajam's old time music teacher, Jeri Phatke and his students presented a jugalbandi between the tabla and the veena. It was tuneful and well staged. The Samaj did well to present seven specially skilled students of the Kamala Mehta School for the Blind. The handicapped children presented a neat and well-rehearsed dance item.



*President of NSS Chembur Unit Balakrishnan lighting the lamp at Onam celebrations in Chedanagar temple premises Chembur.*

### Wagle Estate Malayalee Association

The Wagle Estate Malayalee Association celebrated Onam with a Variety entertainment programme of traditional, folk and filmy music and dance programme organized by the ladies' wing. Thane Municipal Corporator Raveendra Phatak inaugurated the event, while President of the Association K V Kunhiraman presided over the function. The chief guest Manoj Shinde and social worker K Rajan spoke on the occasion. Toppers of SSC and HSC as well as toppers in Malayalam subject and teachers of Malayalam Mission were felicitated.



*Kerala in Mumbai Consulting Editor P K Ravindranath and Managing Director P V Vijaykumar greet Governor K Sankaranarayanan on his birthday*

## New Managing Committee

Malad West Mumbai Keraleeya Samaj has elected its new Managing Committee members. Padma Divakaran is the President, V S Nair is the Secretary, Rakhi Sunil is the Treasurer, Prabhakaran Nambiar is the Vice- President, P Balakrishnan Jt Secretary, T Madhavan Jt Secretary, B Radhakrishnan Nair, Jt Treasurer. There are also nine Managing Committee members.



Padma Divakaran  
(President)



V S Nair  
(Secretary)



Rakhi Sunil  
(Treasurer)



*Giants Group International Thane City distributed note books and stationery as part of Childrens Day celebrations at Daffodils English medium school Karjat. Upendra Menon handing over books. Prasad, Chairman of Daffodil School and Commodore BB Mistry also in the picture*

## Bhajanotsavam 2011

NAMASANKEERTHANA Dombivli conducted Bhajanotsavam 2011 on October 30 at Pragati College Hall. The Chief guest was Dr N Gopalakrishnan, Hon Director, Indian Institute of Scientific Heritage, and Guest of Honour Dr Bijoy Kutty, Director, Platinum Hospitals, Mulund. K A Narayan was Special Guest of Honour. It was a full day programme with *unchavruthy, thodaya mangalam* and *Guru keerthanam, abhangs* and *ashtapathy* and *namasankeerthana bhajans*. N K Neelakandan Bhagavathar of Mulund, S Venkateswaran Bhagavathar of Chennai and V Ramachandran Hon Secretary, South Indian Bhajan Samaj, Matunga were felicitated during the event. There was distribution of medical aid and release of souvenir on the occasion.

## Baala Samskaara

### Shibiram-2011

The Bombay Keraleeya Samaj, Matunga conducted its 4th annual Children's camp *Baala Samskaara Shibiram-2011* from 28th Oct to 30 Oct, at the Samaj's Hall, Kerala Bhavanam. The participants were from the age group 6 to 14 and was restricted to Malayalee children. The camp included sessions on personality development, leadership qualities, quiz, memory test, group activities, Kerala arts and culture, games etc. The participants were awarded certificates for attending the camp. The main aim of the camp was to make children independent, instill self confidence and leadership quality.

## Fund raising programme

Powai Fine Arts headed by Dr G Ramakrishnan, as part of its social responsibility, announces a Fund raising programme of Carnatic Music of Sikkil Gurcharan organized by Vasantha Memorial Trust, Powai, that is engaged in helping poor cancer patients. The programme is on November 5 at Chembur Fine Arts Hall and open to all. The proceeds will go the needy cancer patients. For more information and Donor Passes: Mrs. Jayalakshmi email [jayuvmt@gmail.com](mailto:jayuvmt@gmail.com); phone 9821-21993 / Subhalakshmi 9820045579.

## Mumbai Pooram

Mumbai Pooram Foundation a charitable Trust committed to the upliftment of art and culture of Kerala as well the general wellbeing of society will replicate the world famous cultural extravaganza of Kerala Pooram in Mumbai - Mumbai Pooram from November 11 to 13. The Trust is planning to specially bring in five gold caparisoned elephants from Kerala and present it to Mumbaitees, especially the younger generation of Malayalees who are born and brought up here. Besides the traditional *panchavadyam*, *melam*, *Thayambakam*, *kudamaattam*, there will be 35 traditional art forms of Kerala

being performed by artistes from Kerala. There will be a painting exhibition displaying works of Malayalee painters and artists, at the venue. The event will be a platform for cultural exchange between Kerala and Maharashtra. Kerala food festival and exhibition stalls will be added attractions. Over 6000 artists are expected to participate in this event which will culminate with a laser show and fireworks. The Trust expects more than 5 lakhs audience including dignitaries, entertainment and media world, businessmen as well as foreign nationals to witness this mega event.



*Reception to Girishan Naboodithiri at Vashi Vaikuntam Temple on his return from Guruvayur*

## Navathi Celebrations of Dr KK Damodaran

Sree Narayana Mandira Samithi will celebrate the Navathi (90th birthday) of its Founder Chairman Dr K K Damodaran on Sunday November 13 from 5 pm at the SNMS Complex Sree Narayana Guru High School and College Campus in Chembur. Shri Oomen Chandy, the Chief Minister of Kerala will be the chief guest and the Minister of Health, Adoor Prakash, N K Premachandran, former minister of Forest and Water Resources, R K Krishna Kumar, Director, Tata Sons Ltd, Swami Prakasananda, President Sree Narayana Dharmasanghom Trust Sivagiri Mutt will be the Guests of Honour. The function will be followed by a Variety Entertainment programme and Dinner. The Chairman of the Navathi Celebration Committee is Kumaran Nair and the Convenor is N Sasidharan.

## Kaikottikali

The Ladies Wing of Tru Indian Information & Guidance will host a Kaikottikali programme as part of its *Thiruvatiira aghosham* on January 1, 2012 at Sarvesh Hall in Dombivli, according to the creative Wing co-ordinator Smt Ambika Varasiar. All cultural organisations and ladies wings of organisations can take part in the function.



*Onam celebration at Wagle Estate Malayalee Association*

# Unique Anniversary

The First anniversary celebrations of Mumbai-based Malayalam monthly CHENDA, was unique in many respects. It dispensed with the conventional speeches eulogising the publication and its sponsors. It did away with all the other trite and tested items and offered its subscribers and well-wishers imaginative items of entertainment in full celebratory mood.

It offered the popular street singer of Maharashtra, Sambhaji Bhagat and his team with a loud and clear message for the capitalists that time is running out for them. In a 40-minute programme, Bhagat and his comrades offered a series of well-chosen songs in Hindi and

Marathi, with Bhagat himself offering English interpretations or additional punches in English.

Another well selected items was the ghazals by Shahbhaz Aman, 43-year old film music director, who has specialised in ghazal composition and singing. Keeping him equally compelling and commendable company were Roshan Haris on the tabla and Ustad Firoz Shah on the harmonium. Rarely ever did one imagine that the humble harmonium could be handled with such virtuosity as in hands of Firoz Shah. Picking up from Shahbaz's lyrics the harmonium appeared to repeat the very words of the lyrics- both in Urdu and Malayam.

While the musical treat was excellent the organisers honoured over a dozen persons who contributed in various ways to promote Malayalee art and culture in Mumbai and enrich its literature. They included political activist Paramu, stage enthusiasts A K Nair, Anthappan, T K Baburajan, writers Leela Sarcar, Manasi, Balakrishnan, scientists Dr K Venugopal, Dr K K Damodaran and others.

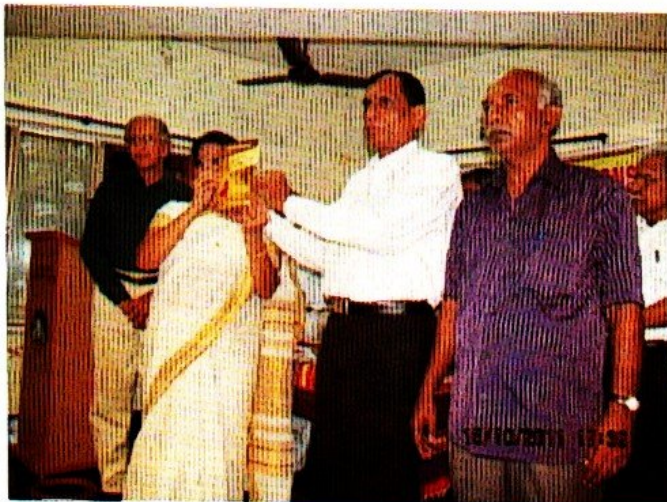
The editor and brain behind CHENDA P Jayaprakash appeared on the stage only briefly to present bouquets to the three artistes of the evening.



*Vidyarambham being celebrated at Malad-Kurar Sree Narayana Guru Mandira Samiti by Adv Padma Divakar*



*Anantharama Bhagavatar felicitating senior Carnatic Music teacher Kalyani Sharma at Powai Fine Arts event. Alamelu Mani (singer Hariharan's mother) and Dr G Ramakrishnan, President PFA on either side*



*Book release of Thodupuzha Shankar's 'Ammaiyum Njanum' during Pampungal anniversary Celebrations.*



*C N Kutty Ex-President of Odakkuzhal Marol being felicitated by President John Mathew during its Onam celebrations this year. Also seen K. Venugopal (left) and A. S. Sukumaran (right).*

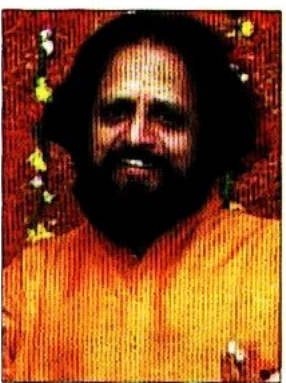
# Njaan Gandharvan (1991) ഞാൻ ഗന്ധർവൻ

**Lyricist:** Kaithapram **Music:** Johnson  
**Singer:** Chitra **Ragam:** Kappi

പാലപ്പുവേ നിൻ തിരുമംഗല്യത്താലി തരു  
 മകരനിലാവേ നീയെൻ നീഹാരകോടി തരു... (പാലപ്പുവേ...)  
 കാണാതെ മിന്നിത്തളയ് മായും മന്മഥനെനുളളിൽ  
 കൊടിയേറിയ ചന്ദ്രോത്സവമായ് \* (പാലപ്പുവേ...)  
 മുത്തിനുളളിലൊതുങ്ങും പൂമാരൻ  
 കന്നിക്കൈളിലേകി നവലഭകങ്ങൾ (2)  
 ആയിരം സിരകളിലുണർന്ന വിലാസഭാവമായ്  
 വിരഹിണിവിധുവായ്  
 ഞാനൊഴുകുമ്പേ ധർ... താരിളുകുമ്പേ ധർ... (ഞാനൊഴുകുമ്പേ ധർ )  
 രാവിലുണർന്ന വിലോലതയിൽ ഗന്ധർവവേളയായ് (പാലപ്പുവേ...)  
 നീലകാർമുകിലോരം വിളയാടുമ്പേ ധർ  
 മല്ലിപ്പൂംപുഴയോരം കളിയാടുമ്പേ ധർ (2)  
 മാനസം മൃദുലവസന്തമയൂരനടകളിൽ  
 തെല്ലിളംതുടിയായ്  
 പദമണിയുമ്പേ ധർ... കാവുണരൂമ്പേ ധർ ... (പദമണിയുമ്പേ ധർ)  
 മുത്തിളകുന്ന മനോലതയിൽ ഗന്ധർവരാഗമായ് (പാലപ്പുവേ...)

**Transliteration:** Ā, ā = ആ, ാ; Ē, ē = ഏ, ഐ; Ī, ī = ഇ, ി;  
 Ō, ō = ഓ, ൠ; Ū, ū = ഉ, ൂ, ũ = ൃ; C, c = ച, ch = ചര, D, d = ട,  
 Dh, dh = ഡ, Ḍ, ḍ = ഡ, Ḍh, ḍh = ഡ, jh = ജ, Ĺ, ĳ = ള; Ñ, ñ = ഞ,  
 ṅ = ണ, ṛ = റ, ṛ̣ = റ; Ṛ, Ṛ̣ = റ; Ś, ś = ശ; Ṣ, ṣ = ഷ, T, t = ട,  
 Th, th = ത, Ṫ, ṭ = ത; ṭh = മ

Pālappūve nin ṭirumangalyaṭṭāli ṭarū  
 Makaranilāve nīyen nīhārakkōṭi ṭarū (Pālappūve...)  
 Kāṇāṭe minniṭalāy marhayum manmaṭhanennuḷḷil  
 Kotiyēriya candrōṭṣavamāy (Pālappūve...)  
 Muṭṭinuliloṭuṇum pūmāran  
 Kannikkaikalēki navalōkaṇṇāḷ (2)  
 Āyiram sirakāliluṇarṇna vilāsabhavamay  
 Virahiṇi vidhuvāy  
 Nānozhukumpōḷ... ṭāriḷakumpōḷ... (2)  
 Rāviluṇarṇna vilōḷaṭayil Gāndharvavēlayāy (Pālappūve...)  
 Nīlakārmukilōram vilayātumpōḷ  
 Mallippūmpuzhayōram kāliyātumpōḷ (2)  
 Mānaṣam mṛḍulavasanta mayūranatakālil  
 Ṭellīlam ṭutiyāy  
 padamaṇiyumpōḷ... kāvuṇarumpōḷ...  
 padamaṇiyumpōḷ kāvuṇarumpōḷ  
 Muṭṭīlakunna manōḷaṭayil gandharvarāgamāy (Pālappūve...)



Kaithapram



Johnson

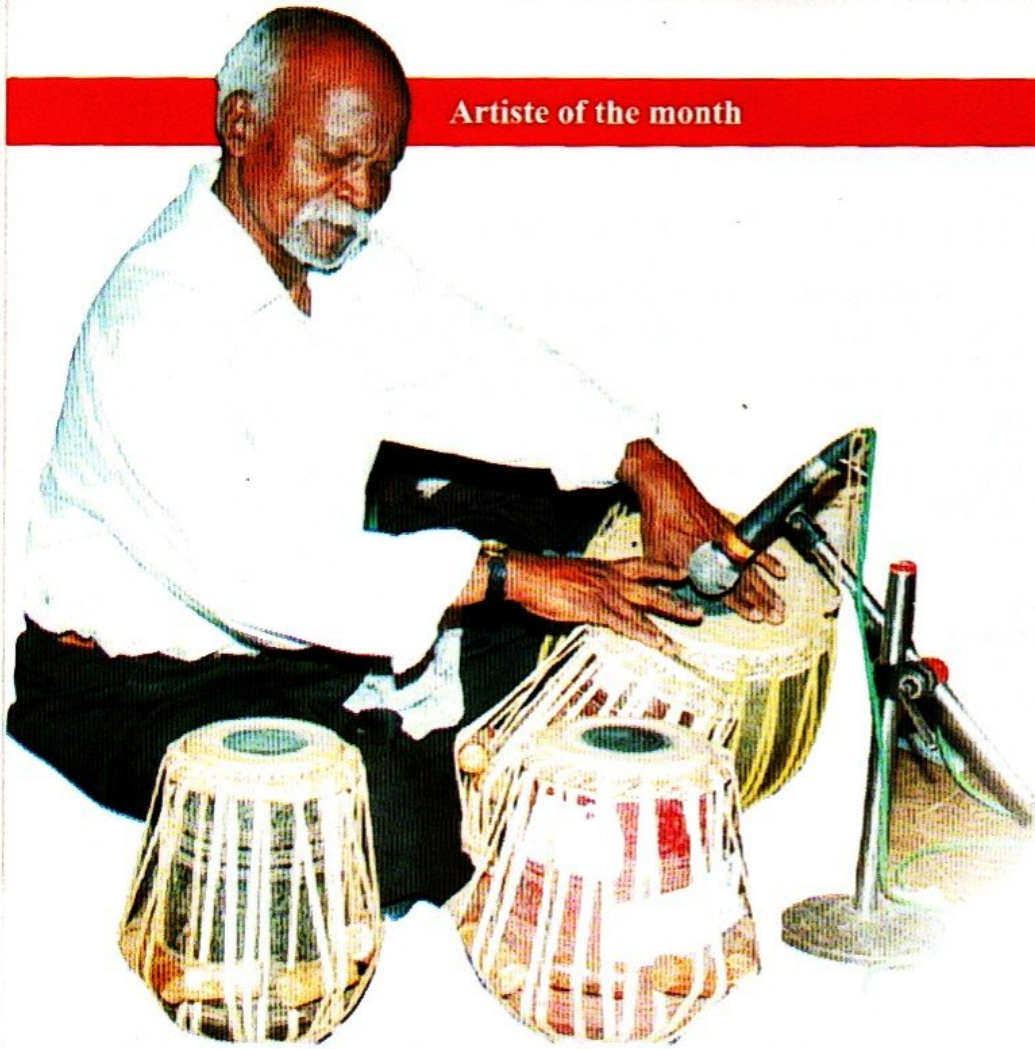


K S Chitra



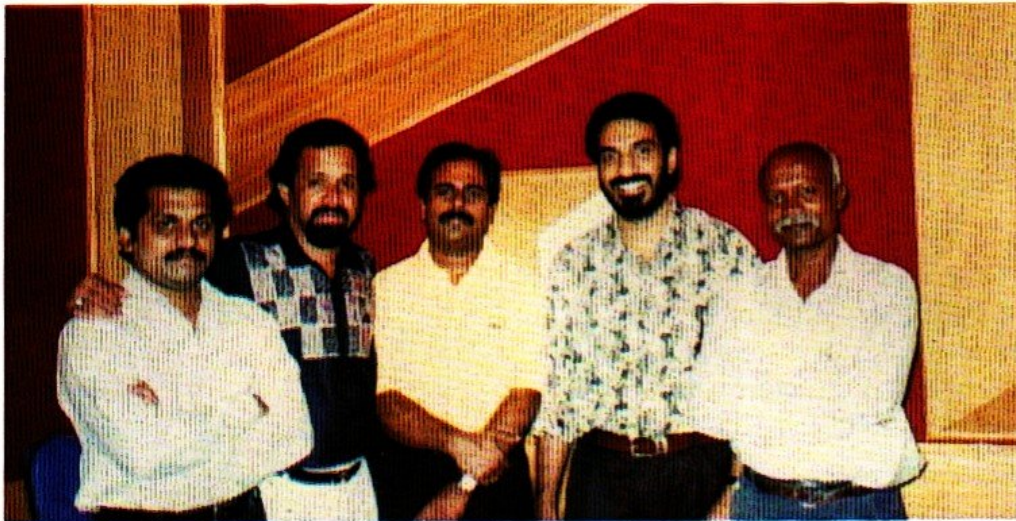
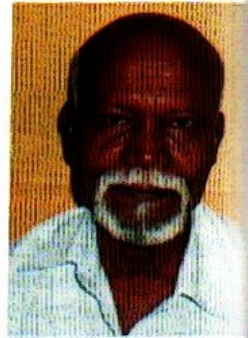
Padmarajan

This movie is considered to be a classic. Produced by R Mohan of Good Night Films and directed by P Padmarajan, its story, screenplay and dialogues were written by Padmarajan himself. Main actors were Nitish Bharadwaj, MG Soman, Suparna, Philomina and Ganesh Kumar.



## Sani Moses - Tabla Master

*Sani Moses is one of the senior tabla players of Mumbai. He has played the tabla in about 1000 stage shows for various musical orchestra groups of Mumbai.*



*Sani Moses with Santosh, Venugopal, Viswanathan and Unni Menon*

Coming to Mumbai in the early seventies, after having learnt to play the tabla and the flute in Kerala, little did Sani Moses realize that he would make a career out of music in this city. Like other Malayalees, Sani came to the city in search of a job. He got a job but he also came into contact with the music director and singer of the 70's, the late K J Kuruvilla. Sani Moses joined Kuruvilla's orchestra as a tabla player and was in his troupe for several years. Sani has played the tabla for semi classical, devotional, light, filmy music programmes as well as dance programmes and Malayalam dramas. Most of the Malayalee musical orchestra troupes and cultural organizations of

“Tabla is a tuned instrument”, he says. “The skill of the tabla player depends on the dexterity of his fingers. Tabla is an integral part of any light music orchestra because it gives the sense of rhythm to music”.

Mumbai, like *Tarangini*, *Sitara*, *Swaradhara*, *Krishna Music Circle* and others invited him to play tabla. He has played for *Raagalaya's* annual music competitions. He has also played the tabla for Malayalee singers who have come to Mumbai for programmes like late Smt P Leela, late Brahmanandan, Krishna Chandran, Jolly Abraham, Kottayam Alice, Ms. Minmini, Biju Narayanan, G Venugopal, Unni Menon, K G Markose and others. In 2009 Sani was felicitated by *Nadopasana Dombivli*. Recently he participated at a function organized by *Kalakshetra Dombivli* with Sangeetha Ratnam Kanhangad Ramachandran.

Sani Moses has recorded jingles and participated in releases of several Malayalam music albums, including devotional Hindu and Christian music albums.

Music is in Sani's genes. His mother and grandmother used to sing and he learnt



*Sani Moses with playback singer K G Markose and tabalist Kumar*

the basics of music from his mother Rachel Moses. Even as a child he had sung in church choir music, participated in choir competitions and won prizes. He has also participated in many singing competitions in school and received prizes.

As a child Sani's first lessons in music was to play the flute under P Y George, students of Kerala Kalamandalam

Cheruthuruthy. But due to physical strain he was advised to desist from playing the flute. So he joined tabla practice at Palakkad under Ustad Usman for two years and started playing the tabla for shows, first in Kerala and later in Mumbai after he came here. Sani's father is the late Moses.

Having been in the Mumbai light music field for about thirty years, Sani regrets that orchestra today is not given enough importance in any entertainment programme as it used to be previously. Moreover at any cultural function, when the orchestra begins their show, many from the audience start leaving the place or talk among themselves. Dedication to practice is also lacking. While thirty years back, the troupe members used to regularly practice before any programme, nowadays members do not have the time or patience to practise to perfection. All these actions are discouraging for the performing troupe.

“Tabla is a tuned instrument”, he says. “The skill of the tabla player depends on the dexterity of his fingers. Tabla is an integral part of any light music orchestra because it gives the sense of rhythm to music”.

Sani Moses works as HR head of a private company in Belapur. His wife Leelamma is a housewife and his only daughter Rachel with her husband Augustine George and their baby boy are living in Kalyan.



*President of Raagalaya P V Vijaykumar felicitates Sani Moses during Raagalaya annual music competition*

# PRESUMED GUILTY

## INCISIVE, REALISTIC, PENETRATING

The American legal system, which shares the same colonial legacy as the Indian system is however quirky in some respects. When we presume an accused to be innocent till proved guilty, the Americans hold any accused as guilty till he or she is able to prove her or his innocence.

Charges are piled upon an accused to ensure the maximum punishment in jail—a life term, which normally is for 91 years.

Gopi Kottoor's maiden novel "Presumed Guilty" is all about an Indian fashion designer in the U S on a life term, charged with sexual offences including with a teenager, who is short of two months to 18, when she becomes an "adult."

The young fashion designer, Roop Robinson, bears a strong resemblance to Anand Jon, who had recently been jailed in the U S for a life term on identical charges.

Roop is unable to prove his innocence, since his professional rivals have managed to delete all relevant matter from his personal computer and by using false evidence and perjury to get Roop out of the way.

Roop's or Anand Jon's are not solitary cases. There was Vikram Subbarao, son of Dr. Subbarao, an eminent nuclear scientist who is now languishing in an American prison for a life term, for an alleged threat to the life of the then American President. Mere presumption of his guilt has ensured that he stays in prison for decades.

Thirteen more persons of Indian origin have recently been arrested and charged with running a sophisticated racket in forged credit cards and identity theft. The problem is, thus, widespread. Gopi Kottoor needs to be commended for having highlighted this issue in "Presumed Guilty."

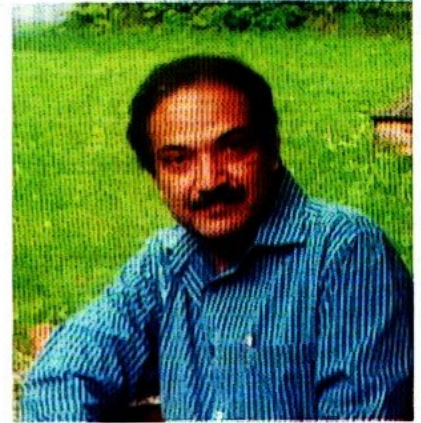
Roop, the protagonist of the novel, has become a hit in the fashion world of America and is headed for the status of an international celebrity. He has an assured \$12 million in his pocket from a multinational retailer for his creations, combining the best of Indian and Western styles and materials. Just then,

he is tripped by the Ring, his rivals using some of his own models, who during his heyday were all over him. Two of them who had shared his apartment and his bed, willingly and solicitously, turn out to be the most vicious of his accusers. They ostensibly, had been tutored by the Ring.

Roop sets out on his career using a pair of scissors his grandmother had gifted him way back in their ancestral home in Kerala. With that pair of scissors he conquers the fashion world with outlandish creations that become the envy of powerful fashion designers, worldwide.

In jail, he is befriended by the jailor who gifts him a laptop and urges him to write his story. "It was just a few months after the legendary pop icon, Michael Jackson died, that I was thrown into prison for the rest of my life." Roop recollects. "In a way both of us died that year. Michael died of an overdose of a drug meant to calm him, for which his doctor was charged with involuntary manslaughter ... I died from an overdose of jealousy, thrown like acid upon my life by the Ring, burning me down to incarceration for life."

Cut to November 21, 2070 when he is released from prison, aged 95, alone in



Gopi Kottoor

the world.

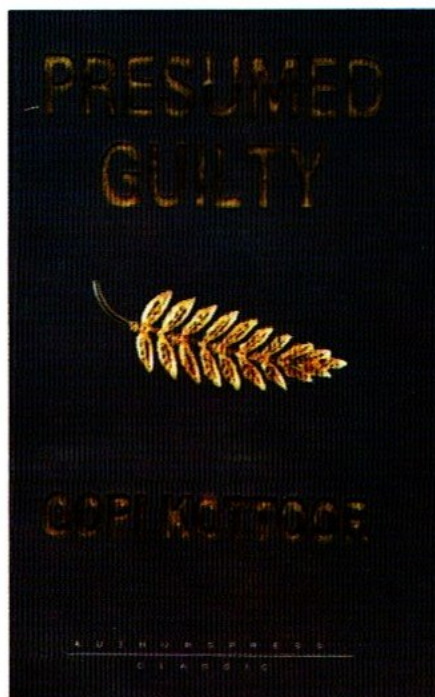
"Presumed Guilty" as it turns out has all the ingredients for a highpower, dramatic focus on an issue of global dimensions. The author has packed it with graphic, visual episodes like the deflowering of the 13-year Roop by "Aunty Mona Lisa" to the manner in which Cindy, in expectation of becoming the world's most sought after model throws herself all over Roop in his bedroom and turns out to be his final nemesis.

There is also a powerful courtroom sequence where Roop is finally convicted. Roop gets 91 years in prison, denied justice and condemned on framed charges that have not been proved. The court sought no evidence or proof of his guilt, denied justice in the name of liberty and equality. In Roop's case one suspects even a tinge of racialism. From the glamour world to solitary confinement, Gopi Kottoor makes "Presumed Guilty" a gripping story based on empirical data.

Gopi Kottoor is the pen name of Dr. R Gopalkrishnan Nair a senior officer in the Reserve Bank of India, Mumbai. With a P G Diploma in journalism and film certification, Gopi Kottoor has been a faculty in the English Department of South West Texas State University, Texas and founder editor of "Poetry Chain" since 1997.

In the context of the distinct miscarriage of natural justice in the case of young Indians in the U S, "Presumed Guilty" is topical, relevant and a spirited challenge to the Government of India to guard its citizens abroad against blatant injustice.

-P K Ravindranath



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# Maveli Mannan light, lucid and lyrical

Modern Malayalam poetry has taken a sharp turn in recent years and lovers of traditional poetry find it difficult to digest these trends. The modern poets are not bound by the scale, rhyme and rhythm, vocabulary and the grammar besides the power of vast images and imageries and figures of speech. The result is that the reader rarely remembers the poem and is never transported to another world created by the poet. Our old poets were taught poetry and grammar from the very beginning and they were familiar with the tricks of the trade. They believed that poetry was not every one's cup of tea but needed in-born talents.

While reading through 'Maveli Mannan' by Erumakkuzhi Kochukunju Pillai, the above thoughts were reinforced. The poet in his seventies now, has not revealed the time when he wrote these poems (in all, five) but his style indicates that he was moulded in the old tradition. The poet does not throw his sight all around but to within and tries to answer questions which disturbed him over the years. While doing so, he does not stop to find precise and apt words or search for words that would prove him a master of the language. It is quite and natural flow, very simple, lucid, light and lyrical and as the presenter Chunakara Janardhanan Nair states, does not bother for the adverse comments from the readers.

The first poem, Maveli Mannan is a take off on the legendary Maveli and the folk song 'Māvēli nātu vāneetum kālam...' and takes us through various incidents of modern Kerala, without being explicit. It gives the reader the opportunity to explore various events that happens today. If any quote is needed the entire poem needs to be quoted. Still a few lines are reproduced:

കള്ളം പറയില്ല കാര്യം കാണാൻ  
കൊള്ളയടിയ്ക്കില്ലൊരുത്തരേയും  
വിദ്യ വില പേശി നൽകിയില്ല  
വെദ്യൻ പ്രതിഫലം വാങ്ങിയില്ല.

പീഡനമൊന്നും നടന്നതില്ല  
പുംശ്ചലിമാരാടിപ്പാടിയില്ല

കേസില്ലാ കോർട്ടിലെ ബഞ്ചിലന്ന്  
ഫീസില്ലാ വക്കീലുമാരുമില്ല  
കള്ളവും കൊള്ളയും പീഡനവും  
ഇല്ലെങ്കിലെന്തിനു കോടതികൾ?

മാവേലിമന്നന്റെ നൽകിരീടം  
വജ്രവൈദ്യുതം പതിച്ചതല്ല  
അംഗം മുഴുവൻ പൊതിഞ്ഞു നിൽക്കാൻ  
ആരേണങ്ങളണിഞ്ഞതില്ല

രാജവജനാവിൽനിന്നു ചില്ലി  
കൊടു ചിലവില്ലെഴുന്നള്ളുമ്പോൾ  
വീഥിയൊഴിച്ചു നിറുത്തിയില്ല  
വേറൊരു യാത്ര മുടക്കിയില്ല



From the world of Maveli, we move on to Vrindavan where the eternal Radha is wailing for her beloved Krishna. 'Ente Krishnan Vannilla?' (Why did Krishnan not come?) looks like any ordinary poem without much substance as Radha remembers her past when she played with child Krishna, much younger to her and being left behind by him never to return to her. On a second reading, a new world opens before the reader. Those who had read Jayadeva's 'Gita Govindam' and listened to Swami Chinmayananda's oratory on Lord Krishna will definitely find this poem as an new exposition of Krishna as a man who leaves the field once the deed is done never to return or to remember. For him, the deed is important; not the doer or the participant. When she met the irresistible Krishna, the poet tells us,

അന്ത്യമില്ലാത്തൊരാഴ്ചതിലേക്ക്  
മന്ദമായ് രാധയലിഞ്ഞുചേർന്നു  
തന്നെ മറന്നൊരനുഭൂതിയിൽ  
അന്നേരം രാധയറിഞ്ഞതില്ല.  
നാളുകൾ പോകേ ലഹരി മാഞ്ഞു  
താളം വരാതെ വിളി രാധ  
അല്പനേരത്തേക്കു ലോകസത്യം  
വിസ്മരിച്ചെന്നവൾക്കോർമ്മ വന്നു.  
രാധ ചോദിച്ചു കാർവർണ്ണനോട്  
എന്തിനു നീയെന്നെ പാപിയാക്കി?  
കാന്തനെ വഞ്ചിച്ച പാപമല്ലേ?  
അന്തഃകരണത്തിൽ നീ വിതച്ചു?  
അയ്യൻ പിരിഞ്ഞ വിരഹദുഃഖം  
നിന്നോടു ചേർന്നപ്പോൾ ഞാൻ മറന്നു  
കഷ്ടമായ്പ്പോയിത്രതൃപ്തമായ  
വേഷ്ടകൾക്കെന്നെ നീ വസ്തുവാക്കി!  
ദൈവമായാലും നിഷിദ്ധബന്ധം  
നിന്ദ്യമായ്ത്തന്നെ ജനം കരുതും  
അന്യനുമായുള്ള ഹിതബന്ധം  
നിന്ദ്യമല്ല ദൈവമായാൽപ്പോലും?

The above lines are not in continuity but it gives the flow of thoughts of Radha adequately. This poem is not just for reading or discussion but to comprehend and absorb. You will be struck by its intensity.

Nevertheless, a few typographical errors have occurred and a careful editing also would have helped to enhance the impact.

Other poems are based on a dialogue between a saint and a fake believer who wanted the saint to do some miracle so that he could get everything without any efforts, and a treatise on meditation and physical hardship. Many would have come across similar thoughts while perusing philosophy but what differentiate these poems are their lucidity and simplicity. ,

The simple manner in which Kochukunju Pilla dealt with his subject is interesting and he never gives any mental hardship to the readers.

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# TRAVAILS OF KERALA'S AGED POPULATION

-KIM Bureau

The growing population of the aged (60 and above) has stated becoming an acute problem in Kerala. This is disturbing in the context of the Central Government's estimation that by 2020 the number of persons below the age of 25 would far outstrip those in the grade of senior citizens.

While the over-60 population was 5.1 per cent of the total in 1961, a half-century later in 2011 it is 10.5- more than double. The below -15 population during the same period has been 43.3 as against 26.1. This no doubt, reflects the success of the family planning programme in the State, but also projects a serious sociological problem.

The growing aged population finds fewer people to take care of them, when they need financial, physical and psychological support. Most of the people in the younger age group are either out of the country or live separately from their parents because of

employment compulsions.

The State Government, realising the gravity of the situation has provided for a payment of Rs. 1000 to next of kin to take care of their aged parents or relations. That has not solved even a fraction of the problem.

The Planning Commission's Kerala Development Report 2008, points out that the number of ageing people in Kerala is almost double that of the rest of the country.

In another five years from now, by 2016, the percentage of the elderly population is expected to grow to 14% from the present 10.1%.

It is not that the elderly are not being cared for, but the steep rise in their number poses several demographic and social problems. Kerala today has a fifth of the total number of the country's Old Age Homes, 260 of them that depend on government aid. There are a number of other old age homes run by philanth-

ropists, churches and mosques in various parts of the State. The government grant is Rs. 300 per inmate per month. This is not a luxurious amount by any reckoning, but it does help.

The Kerala Government has also launched its Vayo Mitram, friend of the aged, to take care of the aged through mobile clinics, health workers to take care of the palliative needs of the elderly, ambulance service and a helpline for the aged. The scheme is in force in about a dozen major cities and is due for extension throughout the State.

In the absence of younger workers more elderly people find employment in banks as guards or in other service industries which do not call for strenuous work. The Government has initiated a number of pension schemes for the elderly. But sociologists and the administration as well as gerontologists are worried.



*The elderly may be made aware of current happenings*



Rashma Anand



# Easy Ways for Weight Loss

*Losing those extra kilos and getting the fit and trim look is not difficult if we make a few changes in our lifestyle and eating habits. Here are a few hints that will help us avoid becoming obese.*

Maintaining a healthy body weight is necessary to remain fit and healthy. Overweight people are more prone to serious illnesses like diabetes, heart diseases and others.

## Have a Healthy Lifestyle

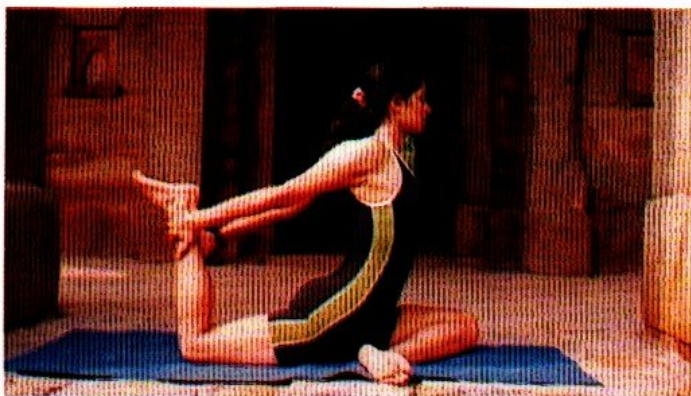
The best way to keep your weight under control is to develop an overall healthy lifestyle. That way, you do not have to resort to fad diets, which are not only harmful to the health, but also do not provide lasting results.

## Factors Contributing to Excess Weight

The two main factors that contribute to excess weight are inappropriate diet and inadequate exercise. Just by paying attention to these two factors, it is very easy for you to remain healthy. Let us examine each of these factors in detail.

### Exercise

Exercise is very important to lose weight. Make time in your regular routine to include some form of exercise. It is very easy



Yoga - a good exercise regimen

to make up excuses to miss your morning walk. But refrain from that. Do not look on your morning walk as a chore, rather look at it as some quality 'me time' that you invest in yourself. The rest of the day is going to be a whirlwind and this quiet 30-45 minutes will help you deal with the hectic day ahead much better.

## Go for Something Different

Gone are the days when exercise meant just a morning walk, jog or the gymnasium. Whether it is belly dancing or sports, cycling or even Bollywood dancing, today there are numerous forms of exercises that you can indulge in. Such options keep you interested as you are learning something new and losing weight at the same time. Pilates and zumba are newer exercise techniques which are now finding positive response among people. Of course the age old traditions of yoga that originated in India are also a perfect way to keep yourself fit and healthy. So offering the excuse that you are bored with your exercise routine will hold no water. Keep rotating between various forms. This keeps boredom at bay and also prevents the body from getting too used to any one routine.

## Benefits of Exercise

Besides helping you lose weight, exercise releases endorphins that make you feel good. This is the reason extreme sports like Formula One racing or bungee jumping make you feel good. Go ahead, exercise and release those endorphins.

## Diet

The term diet refers in general to what you eat. And what you eat plays an important role in keeping you healthy. There is a strong misconception that healthy food is not tasty. It is time to bust the myth. By making small changes in your diet, it is possible to eat healthy without compromising on taste.

## Some Simple Diet Strategies

### Have Smaller Meals Through the Day

Instead of packing in a large breakfast, lunch and dinner it is a good idea to have smaller meals throughout the day. Experts recommend having a snack every two hours. Eating every two hours ensures that at any point, you are not so hungry as to overeat.

### Make Breakfast the Meal of the Day

There is a general tendency to make dinners elaborate as that is invariably the time the family eats together. This is not a good idea, because post dinner, the body gets no exercise and thus no opportunity to burn the excess calories consumed. Make breakfast the meal of the day. You can safely indulge in your cravings at breakfast time. For instance, if you want to bite into a piece of rich chocolate cake, breakfast is the time to do it. As you are up and about the entire day, the cake would get burned more efficiently and chances of it getting converted to fat are very low.

### Consume More Fibers

Ensure that you consume a fiber rich diet. Fibers tend to give a feeling of fullness so that the hunger pangs are controlled. You can increase the fiber intake by making certain simple changes in your diet. For instance, consume fruits whole instead of fruit juices. Use whole wheat breads and pastas instead of the regular ones.

### Keep Dinners Light and Early

Avoid greasy and heavy dinners. As far as possible, try and



### Consume enough vegetables and fruits

finish your dinner early so as to give the body adequate time to digest the food before going to bed. A large bowl of salad or even soup should suffice for dinner. After all you don't loads of energy to sleep!

### Hits and Misses

Yes, it does happen at times, that you may miss your exercise routine or over indulge at a dinner party. That is OK. Just as you do not lose weight overnight, you will not gain weight just because of one indiscretion. The key is not to allow such incidents to occur too often and also not let such incidents dampen your motivation and enthusiasm.

### The Secret of Weight Loss

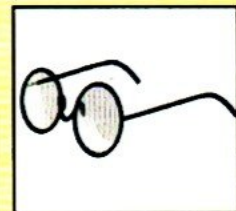
Always keep in mind that you are losing weight for yourself. Not because you have to conform to a particular kind of body



*Lose weight and feel fit*

shape or size and not because someone has asked you to. Losing weight is a personal decision that you make for your own good health and fitness.

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# HOME REMEDIES...

Here are some easily available kitchen ingredients that will tackle and free you from common ailments.

### DRY COUGH

Add a gram of turmeric (*haldi*) powder to a teaspoon of honey for curing dry cough. Also chew a cardamom.

### COLDS

Mix a gram of *dalchini*/cinnamon powder with a teaspoon of honey to cure cold. Prepare a cup of tea to which you should add ginger, clove, bay leaf and black pepper. This should be consumed twice a day. Reduce the intake as the cold disappears.



### STUFFY NOSE

Before you head to the drugstore for a high-priced inhaler filled with mysterious chemicals, try chewing on a couple of curiously strong peppermints. They'll clear up your stuffed nose.

### BLOCKED NOSE

For blocked nose or to relieve congestion, take a tablespoon of crushed carrom seeds (*ajwain*) and tie it in a cloth and inhale it.

### GINGER FOR COLDS

Ginger tea is a very good cure for cold. Cut ginger into small pieces and boil it with water, boil it a few times and then add sugar and milk to taste, and drink it hot.



### ACHING MUSCLES

Aching muscles from a bout of the flu? Mix 1 tablespoon horseradish in 1 cup of olive oil. Let the mixture set for 30 minutes, then massage it for instant relief from aching muscles.

### SORE THROAT

Add a teaspoon of cumin seeds (*jeera*) and a few small pieces of dry ginger to a glass of boiling water. Simmer it for a few minutes, and let it cool. Drink it twice daily. This will cure cold as well as sore throat.



Mix 1/4 cup of vinegar with 1/4 cup of honey and take 1 tablespoon six times a day. The vinegar kills the bacteria.

### ASTHMA

Boil *ajwain* in water and inhale the steam.

### Honey remedy for skin blemishes

Cover the blemish with a dab of honey and place a band-aid over it. Honey kills the bacteria, keeps the skin sterile, and speeds healing. Keep it on overnight.

### CRAMPS

You must do a self-massage using mustard oil every morning.

Just take a little oil between your palms and rub it all over your body. Then take a shower.

This is especially beneficial during winter. You could also mix a little mustard powder with water to make a paste and apply this on your palms and soles of your feet.

### HEADACHES

If you have a regular migraine problem, include five almonds along with hot milk in your daily diet. You could also have a gram of black pepper along with honey or milk, twice or thrice a day. Make an almond paste by rubbing wet almonds against a stone.



This can be applied on your forehead.

Eat an apple with a little salt on an empty stomach everyday and see its wonderful effects.

When headache is caused by cold winds, cinnamon works best in curing it. Make a paste of cinnamon by mixing in water and apply it all over your forehead.

### CURE FOR BACKACHE

Rub ginger paste on the backache to get relief.

### HICCUPS

Take a warm slice of lemon and sprinkle salt, sugar and black pepper on it. The lemon should be sipped until the hiccups stop.



### TO CONTROL BLOOD SUGAR

A tablespoon of *amla* juice mixed with a cup of fresh bitter gourd (*karela*) juice and taken daily for 2 months reduces blood sugar.

### VINEGAR TO HEAL BRUISES

Soak a cotton ball in white vinegar and apply it to the bruise for an hour. The vinegar reduces the blueness and speeds up the healing process.

### HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Have 1-2 pod garlic (*lasoon*) first thing in the morning with water.

Mix 1 table spoon and 1 table spoon ginger (*adrak*) juice, 1 table spoon of crushed cumin seeds (*jeera*), and have it twice daily.



### SINUSITIS

Mango serves as an effective home remedy for preventing the frequent attacks of sinus, as it is packed with loads of vitamin A.

Another remedy is consuming pungent foods like onion and garlic, as part of your daily meals.

Fenugreek/methi leaves are considered valuable in curing sinusitis. Boil 1 tsp of fenugreek seeds in 250 ml water and reduce it to half. This will help you to perspire, dispel toxicity and reduce the fever period. Tie a tsp of black cumin seeds in a thin cotton cloth and inhale.

### TONSILLITIS

Take a fresh lemon and squeeze it in a glass of water. Add 4 tsp of honey and ¼ tsp of salt in it. Drink it slowly sip by sip.

Milk has proved beneficial in treating tonsillitis. In 1 glass of pure boiled milk, add a pinch of turmeric powder and pepper powder. Drink it every night for about 3 days.

### VOMITING

Take 2 cardamoms/*elaichi* and roast them on a dry pan (tava). Powder the cardamoms and thereafter add a tsp of honey in it. Consume it frequently. It serves as a fabulous home remedy for vomiting.

In the mixture of 1 tsp of mint juice and 1 tsp limejuice, add 1/2 tsp of ginger juice and 1 tsp honey. Drink this mixture to prevent vomiting.

Lime juice is an effective remedy for vomiting. Take a glass of chilled lime juice and sip slowly.

To prevent vomiting, drink ginger tea.

In 1 glass water, add some honey and drink sip by sip.

### HIGH CHOLESTEROL

In 1 glass of water, add 2 tbsps of coriander/*dhania* seeds and bring to a boil. Let the decoction cool for some time and then strain. Drink this mixture two times in a day.

Sunflower seeds are extremely beneficial, as they contain linoleic acid that helps in reducing the cholesterol deposits on the walls of arteries.

### PILES

Radish juice should be taken twice a day, once in the morning and then later in the night. Initially drink about 2 cups of radish juice; once in the morning and then later in the night.

Soak 3-4 figs in a glass of water. Keep it overnight. Consume the figs on an empty stomach, the next day in the morning.

### WARTS

Apply castor oil daily over the problematic area. Continue for several months. Apply milky juice of fresh and medium ripe figs a number of times a day. Continue for two weeks. Rub cut raw potatoes on the affected area several times daily. Continue for at least two weeks.

Rub cut onions on the warts to stimulate the circulation of blood. Apply milk from the cut end of dandelion over the warts 2-3 times a day.

Apply oil extracted from the shell of the cashew nut over the warts. Apply papaya juice or pineapple juice.



Compiled by  
Naina Kuttappan

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*Suresh Kumar with his wife Geetha, daughter Ameya and son Shreyas*

## Suresh Kumar

### *Service with a human touch*

*Suresh Kumar Madhusudhanan runs the company his father started and devotes time to help society with his social work.*

“My greatest inspiration has been Sree Narayana Guru, Dr. K.K. Damodaran, Swamiji Saigon and my father ” says Suresh Kumar, Managing Director of Seagull Group of Companies. For the past 15 years he is a patron of the Sree Narayana Mandira Samithi and presently the Chairman of its Event Management Committee. Suresh's father was a Life member of the Samithi and Suresh also continues to be actively involved with its activities.

He has been a member of the Governing Body of the Bombay Keraleeya Samajam for six years and committee member of Antop Hill Ayyappa Seva Sangham and Sion Koliwada Ayyappa Mandal. He is one of the founder members of Antop Hill Sion Matunga Muthappan Seva Samithi and member of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) Yogam. He is one of the Directors of Sree Narayana Guru Institute of Medical Sciences in Kochi. Suresh Kumar is involved with a lot of social work. He sets aside a percentage of his profits for charity.

Suresh Kumar was born and brought up in Clappana near Vallikkavu (of Mata Amrithanandamayi fame) in Kollam District. He completed his education in Kerala and Mumbai. His father, the late Madhusudhanan, had come to Mumbai in the late seventies and was a travel

consultant working for a private firm in Worli. He opened his own business, Saritha Job Typing Centre, at Worli near the Passport office in the early eighties. That office is still active and runs as Saritha Centre. Suresh's father started this office more out of a social



*Suresh Kumar at his office*



**Suresh Kumar receiving the upcoming business person of Navi Mumbai award from Minister Ganesh Naik**

commitment to help Malayalees who came to Mumbai to go to the Gulf for better job prospects. Slowly Saritha Centre transformed from travel consultants into a small scale recruitment centre, Seagull Travels, helping Malayalees to get jobs mostly in the Gulf countries. Suresh joined his father's business and now heads the Seagull Group, Seagull Tours & Travels, Seagull Holidays, Seagull International and Triangle Enterprises Pvt Ltd. The former is an IATA, TAFI, TAAI recognized Travel Company, Seagull Holidays offers tour packages within India and abroad to the Far East, like Singapore, Malaysia, Turkey, Thailand, UAE, Europe, UK and other countries. Seagull International is an ISO certified Human Resource Consultants company approved by Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Government of India and is providing manpower for companies in UAE, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UK and other countries. Triangle is an export firm involved in export of various items to Middle East. Seagull has its corporate office in Andheri and three branches in Mumbai and one in Kochi. In 2009, he won the Upcoming Businessman of New Bombay instituted by the Dakshin Bharatiya Seva Sangh from the hands of Ganesh Naik, the Minister of Labour, Govt of Maharashtra.

One of Suresh's mission is to propagate the teachings of Sree Narayana Guru. "Sree Narayana Guru's philosophy is a lesson on life not just for one community but for humanity as a whole. His teachings must be known to people all over the world," he says. His spiritual master is Saigon Swami of Sree Narayana Dharmashram near Kalady in Kerala. Swami Saigon has influenced his life and every year he arranges a week-long class of the Swami in Mumbai through the Samithi. Dr Damodaran has always inspired him and encouraged in his business ventures and inaugurated all his three Mumbai offices.

Suresh's mother is Ratnamma. He has two brothers, all having their own business. His wife Geetha hails from Karunagapally, also in Kollam and came to Mumbai after their marriage in 1993. Geetha's father is the late K Peethambaran, a school master, Communist leader and also a *kathaprasangam* artist. Her mother is Thankamma. She has a sister and three brothers, all settled.

They have a daughter, Ameya studying in Std X at the SIES and a son Shreyas studying in Std VI at Don Bosco's, Matunga, Mumbai.



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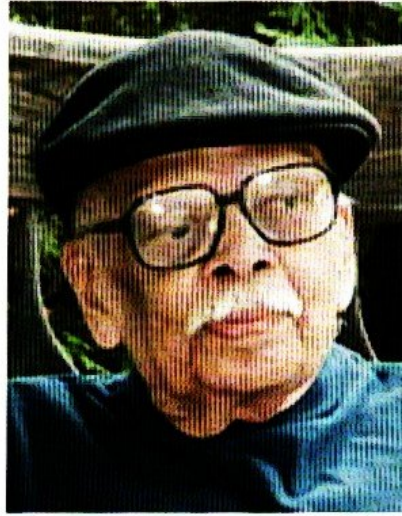
## Cartoonist Kutty, 90, passes away

Renowned cartoonist P.K.S. Kutty, popularly known as Cartoonist Kutty, passed away on Saturday in the city of Madison in the United States. He was 90. Mr. Kutty is survived by wife Gouri and two children. He had been staying in the U.S. along with his family since 1997.

Mr. Kutty, who was trained by cartoonist Shankar, had started his career with National Herald in 1941, and later worked for various newspapers during his long career.

Before joining the Ananda Bazar Group of Kolkata, he also worked for humour magazine Shankar's Weekly and Free Press Journal, Mumbai. While he was with the Ananda Bazar Group, his work appeared in the widely circulated newspapers Ananda Bazar Patrika (Bengali) and Hindustan Standard (English) and in Desh, the famous Bengali language literary weekly.

He remained the lead cartoonist for the Ananda Bazar Group until 1986. In 1987, he joined Bengal language



newspaper Aaj Kaal and remained there until 1997.

Mr Kutty's work was also syndicated, first in the Hindustan Times, and later in The Indian Express. He also used to draw for various Malayalam periodicals published by his friends. Mr. Kutty was born in Ottapalam, Kerala in 1921.

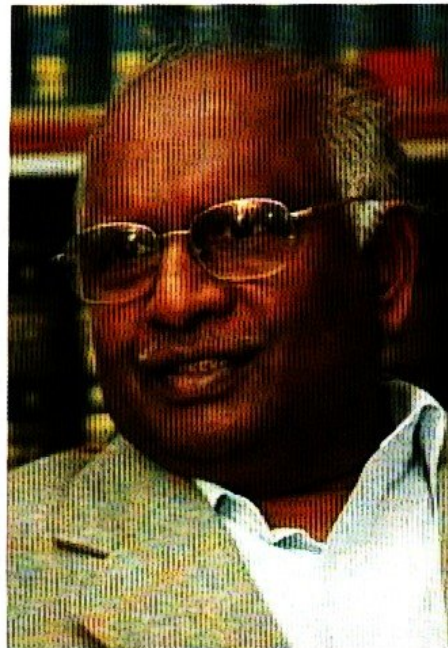
## Fresh petition against former Chief Justice

Advocate Manoharlal Sharma has filed a petition in the Supreme Court alleging that former Chief Justice K G Balakrishnan had acquired two plots of land in Chennai city and the matter should be investigated.

Sharma in his petition alleges that Balakrishnan applied in the name of his peon Kannabeeran to Chief Minister M Karunanidhi and the land was allotted immediately at Anna Nagar on February 7, 2008 and at Nolambur on April 3, 2008. At Nolambur the land was allotted the very next day after filing an application to the CM.

Sharma pointed out that Kannabeeran drew only Rs.10,000 as salary and the cost of land was beyond his means. The land at Nolambur cost about Rs.49 lakh, according to officials of Tamil Nadu Housing Board. Kannabeeran made the payment immediately and that was not possible unless Balakrishnan was involved.

Sharma alleged that Balakrishnan's relatives too bought land in Kerala and the matter was under investigation there.



Petitioner demanded that the court should order both the state governments to produce all relevant documents before the court.

## Novelist Neelakandan Paramara dead

Well known novelist Neelakandan Paramara (75) died on Oct 2 at his home in Bhuvanewari Nilayam of Puthur, Coimbatore. He was author of about 140 books including detective and social novels besides translations from other languages. During the 1950s and 60s, he had published a large number of detective novels.

He was a Sales Officer with Tatas. He is survived by his wife Namagiri Lakshmi, and daughters Parvathi Ganesan and Rajeswari Muralidharan.

Neelakandan was born to Puthan Madhathil Subrahmanya Iyer near Kochi Kaloor Paramara Temple. His brother retired Prof Hariharan Paramara (also a detective novelist) died four days ago.

## Vampires to fight Busters

Kaipamangalam near Thrissur is plagued by a bitter menace. People coming with marriage proposals to the village are misled or told horror stories about the prospective bride or the groom and sent back by an anonymous group of people. It is a pastime for some idle minds.

Concerned villagers have now put up boards cautioning people against the wedding busters. A girl's parents who came to see a match were told that the boy was a drunkard. Another family fled the village when told that the prospective bride had a sexually transmitted disease. Often the 'information' is passed on to the families by phone anonymously. A few families which came to Kaipamangalam with proposals were 'guided' by this gang to far off villages in different directions. More than 30 marriages have been scuttled by this group.

Now the villagers have set up the Vampire Club. They have put up a huge flex board at the village junction warning against the gang. They also warn the mischief mongers of severe action when caught. The pranksters apparently make no money out of it. They spend from their pockets for this vicarious pleasure.

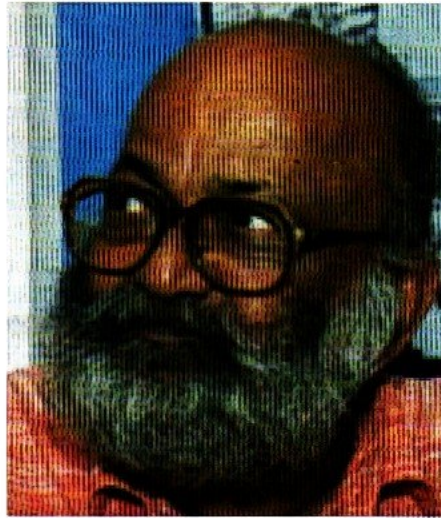
# Poet, lyricist Mullanezhi passes away

Noted Malayalam poet lyricist and actor, Neelakantan Mullanezhy, passed away at a private hospital at Thrissur on October 22 following a heart attack. He was 63. He is survived by his wife and three children. The poet, who had attended the memorial meeting of poet A Ayyappan at the Kerala Sahitya Akademi auditorium on 21<sup>st</sup> evening, complained of chest pain soon after he got home at Avinissery. He was rushed to the hospital, but the doctors could not save his life. The end came around 3 a.m. on Saturday.

Mullanezhy, popularly known as 'Mullan Mushu' among his friends, colleagues and disciples, firmly believed that poetry was not just for literary appreciation but should act as a catalyst for social reform. His poems were mostly celebrated on the stage and in social campaigns than books or literary gatherings. Their oeuvre exuded the aroma of folk culture and tradition.

A two-time Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award Winner, his simple and rhythmic verses were a huge inspiration for myriad social campaigns across the State. Mullanezhy's social commitment led to his association with great social reformers like V.T. Bhattathirippad and Premji. He entered theatre through Premji's 'Chaverpada'.

When Malayala Nataka Vedi celebrated its



anniversary, Mullanezhy played the role of 'Cherumi' in 'Adukkalayilninnu Arangathekkku', the path-breaking drama of V.T. Bhattathirippad.

After retirement from a government high school, he had actively participated in social work and literary activities.

Besides being a teacher, he had made rich contributions to cinema and theatre and he had won the Kerala Sahitya Academy's awards for his drama 'Samathalam' in 1995 and his anthology of poems in 2010.

His important works are 'Mohapakshi', 'Raapattu', 'Naaranathupranthan',

'Penkoda' Hrudayam Pushpikkunna Hrithu; Mohappakshi; and Anaaval Mothiram.

Mullanezhy had acted in several films successfully as also in dramas.

Having made his debut as a lyricist with the movie, *Lakshmi Vijayam*, in 1976, under the music direction of Shyam, Mullanezhy owns the pride of having worked with a variety of music directors like G. Devarajan, M. B. Sreenivasan, Raveendran, K. Raghavan, A. T. Ummer, Johnson, Jerry Amaldev and Vidhyadharan. His last film was *Indian Rupee*. He has penned more than 69 songs for 64 movies. He also enacted noted roles in the films like *Jhaval Pazhanagal*, *Piravi*, *Uppu*, *Kazhakam*, *Mela* to the latest Ranjith-film *Indian Rupee*. He presented many hit songs for Malayalam cinema including, *Karukaruthoru Pennane*; *Ambili Kombathe Ponnoonjhalil*; *Manasworu Manthrika Kuthirayayi*; and *Kodanadan Malayile*.

After retirement from a government high school, he had actively participated in social work and literary activities. His body was brought to the Kerala Sahitya Academy premises from his Illam from Avinassery. The body was placed at the KSA for paying tributes. The poet was cremated at his family compound.

## Promising director Mohan Raghavan dead

Mohan Raghavan, scriptwriter and filmmaker of the critically acclaimed film *T D Dasan Std. VI B* died at a hospital here on October 25, following a heart attack. He was 47.

He was taken to a private hospital at Mala following uneasiness and chest pain. He died at 3.30 p.m. One of the most promising new-generation filmmakers of Malayalam, Raghavan's maiden film *T D Dasan Std. VI B* was well-received by the audience due to the refreshing story and refined treatment.

The film, an honest and sensitive presentation of a simple story of a village boy T. D. Dasan, garnered many awards. Since then he was talked about as one of the talents to look forward to in Malayalam cinema.

The film is about a young boy's happiness and dreams brought by his estranged father, who in the end doesn't turn up, but he nevertheless gets a father. Mohan Raghavan's creative instincts are oriented towards films that can portray human lives and situations that are not usually identified in normal life.

He won the State film award for the best director in 2010 for the film. It was screened at the International Film Festival



of Kerala (IFFK), The Chennai International Film Festival (CIFF), Pune International Film Festival (PIFF) and the New York's Indian Film Festival.

Hailing from Mala near Thrissur, Raghavan had a rich theatre background. He had done his courses at School of Drama, Thrissur, and his post graduation in Theatre Arts at Kamaraj University.

Mohan's rural upbringing created barriers in the initial days, when he started exploring possibilities in the urban spheres of Kerala. By the late 1990s, Mohan made his mark in the local television industry as an award-winning script writer for serials. As a script writer, he grabbed national attention through the short film *Diary of a*

House Wife.

His major contribution was in the field of theatre. He produced the following well known plays such as *Antigone* of Sophocles, *Macbeth* of William Shakespeare, *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett, *Woyzeck* by George Buchner and *Stone* by Edward Bond. Besides he worked with Sri Sanal .R in his debut feature film 'Priyam' as Associate director and wrote many television serials which won state television awards: He also wrote many short film scripts and won National Award for best first non feature of a director: *Diary of a House Wife*, directed by Sri.Vinod Sukumaran. He was associated with a Tamil feature film that is under production for director Sri.Vinod Sukumaran.

He had worked with famous theatre persons such as B.V. Karanth, Kavalam Narayana Panikker, S. Ramanujam, Alakananda Samartha, John Martin and Maya Tangberg.

Opportunities to work as assistant director to some of the noted directors in the film industry like K. P. Kumaran, Siddique Shameer and Salim Padiyath had hugely helped him. He wrote scripts for films *Kanmashi* and *Nammal Thammil*.

# Censorable scenes from State Assembly

What has happened inside the legislative assembly of Kerala on October 17 and 18 was an unabashed show of vulgarity and cause for shame for all Malayalees who pride themselves about their traditions and culture.

It all happened with one 'humane' act of Chief Minister Oommen Chandy towards a government college engineering student Nirmal Madhav who stopped going to the college on account of ragging by the leftist SFI affiliated senior students. The student joined a private college, switched his stream and dropped a semester. In the government college at Kozhikode, Nirmal was in the second semester in engineering. In the private college under a different university, he joined for first semester in Civil engineering. He complained after some time that he was being threatened by SFI cadres and approached Chandy. The CM helped

move Nirmal to Government College and Nirmal joined fifth semester in his old stream.

This led to an SFI agitation in the college, police firing and later mob violence in several parts of the state. The CPM subsequently took it up and the Assembly witnessed stormy scenes.

Two of the CPM MLAs along with their colleagues entered the well of the house and allegedly attacked a female Watch and Ward, guarding the Speaker. She fell down and was admitted to the hospital. She lodged a police complaint. The videograph of the incident showed the MLAs rushing to the well and creating an uproar resulting in the confrontation with the watch and ward staff. However the videograph did not reveal the attack on the female guard.

Following the refusal of the concerned MLAs to tender an apology, the Speaker suspended the concerned MLAs and this

led to a 'Satyagraha' by the opposition inside the Assembly. A cabinet minister in the meanwhile raised his *mundu* and allegedly gesticulated in a vulgar manner. He later apologized for it. The opposition demanded his suspension also but the CM defended him since he had tendered an apology.

The government cited precedence of transfer of students from one college to another during the LDF government. The Speaker cited a precedence of a ruling by an LDF Speaker against the moving of the members into the well of the house. The opposition ridiculed both the precedents and continued their agitation.

While showing the videography of the incidences in the assembly, one prominent TV channel warned the viewers that the scenes had 'adult content' and children should not watch it.

## 5,000 tonnes of meat consumed a day in Kerala

Kerala - which leads the country in several indicators including literacy - is also the highest consumer of meat with a daily requirement of over 5,000 tonnes, according to the state animal husbandry department. Animal husbandry director R. Vijayakumar does not find the figure of 5,034.96 tonnes a day surprising as 80 percent of the state's residents are non-vegetarians. Of these, only 264.31 tonnes come from the state and the rest are brought from neighbouring states. Chicken is the most preferred. In fact, from a mere six percent share in 1990, it now accounts for 45 percent of the meat consumed in Kerala.

The eating profile of the people has undergone a huge change. With a large number of IT professionals working in key centres, the fast food habit grown.

In fiscal 2009-10, Kerala spent a staggering Rs. 2,844 crore on chicken, of which Rs. 1,752 crore went to poultry farms outside the state. There is immense potential to rear chicken, pig, goats and even rabbit, and if the farm owners are educated properly the state could earn a huge amount of money.

Kottayam, Thrissur and Malappuram lead the state's 14 districts in meat consumption. In fiscal 2009-10, a record 6.1 million cattle came into the state through various check posts; another 1.8

million are estimated to have entered unchecked.

Of the 33 million people in Kerala, Christians and Muslims together constitute around 47% and most of the meat eaters are from these communities. The need to develop animal husbandry seriously, is obvious.

It is generally believed that normally Malayalees eat vegetarian food during Onam season but it no more holds good. This year in four days prior to Onam, Malayalees consumed meat weighing 1759 tonnes, according to government

agencies. Among all meat, beef is in the forefront at 45%. Chicken takes the second place at 35%, mutton 14% and the rest is taken by pork (ham), duck meat and others.

In the consumption of beef, Thirur district leads other districts followed by Ernakulam and Kozhikode districts. From Kasaragod to Thiruvananthapuram, 791 tonne of beef worth Rs 11.86 crore was sold.

The quantity of eggs sold in Kerala during the same period is estimated at Rs.15 crore.



## Mohanlal to act with Aamir

Mohanlal is soon to be seen with with Aamir Khan in a new Hindi movie to be directed by Priyadarshan with a plot in the backdrop of AIDS. Mohanlal has already completed his role for another Hindi movie by Priyadarshan titled 'Tez'. This multistarrer thriller will be in theatres in a couple of months.

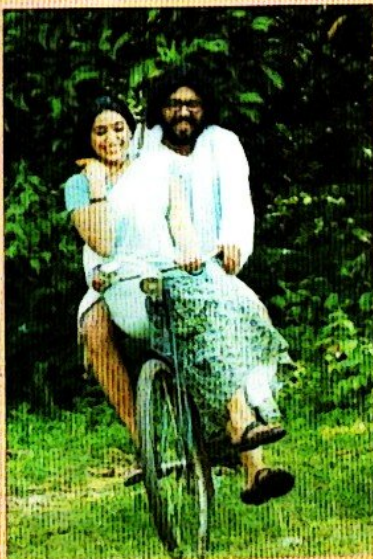
Priyan's new Malayalam film with Mohanlal is after a gap of seven years, 'Arabiyum Ottakavum P Madhavan Nairum' is also ready for release..



## 'Ivan Megharoopan' next month

A movie based on the life of the famous poet P Kunhiraman Nair titled as 'Ivan Megharoopan' will be released next month. The movie, directed by scriptwriter P Balachandran, has Prakash Bare ('Sufi Paranja Katha' fame) in the lead role.

The film also has Jagathy Sreekumar, Thampi Antony, Marggy Sathi, Padmapriya, Shwetha Menon, Remya Nambeeshan and V K Sreeraman and Kannur Sreelatha in important roles. The film is produced by Thampi Antony and Gopan Periyadan.



## Malayalam films in Indian panorama

As another list of selections to Indian panorama is out, Malayalam films once again shine with a total of seven out of 23 films. Santosh Sivan's magnum opus *Urumi* starring Prithviraj, Prabhu Deva, Vidya Balan, Genelia D'Souza and Arya, will be opening movie of the Indian Panorama section of this year's International Film Festival of India in Goa.



The jury headed by Sai Paranjpye who gave out the list also named India's Oscar contender and National Award-winner Salim Ahamed's *Adaminte Makan Abu*, Samir Thahir's 'Chappa Kurisu', Babu Janardhanan's *Bombay March 12*, V K Prakash's *Karmayogi*, Madhav Ramadas's 'Melvilasam' and Rajesh Pillai's 'Traffic' as the other films selected.

## Sreenivasan and Shwetha in 'Parudeesa'

Sreenivasan and Shwetha Menon will come together for the first time for 'Parudeesa' to be directed by art-house film maker R Sharath. The movie with the backdrop of a Christian family will be produced by Thampi Antony for Kaayal films.

ONV Kurup and Ouseppachan will once again team up for the music of the movie. The script is by Vinoo Abraham. Planned to begin by the first week of January, 'Parudeesa' will also feature Thampi Antony, Jagathy, Indrans, Shafna and Suraj Venjaarmoodu.

R Sharath had recently completed his Hindi-Chinese movie 'The desire'.



## Dileep, Mamtha again in 'My Boss'

Young director Jithu Joseph after 'Mummy and Me' has titled his new movie as 'My Boss'. Featuring Dileep and Mamtha in key roles, the movie will have the backdrop of the IT industry. Dileep will appear as a young software engineer working in Mumbai while Mamtha will appear as his boss. Produced by East Coast Vijayan under the banner of East Coast Communications, it will have Salim Kumar, Sai Kumar, Lena, Suresh Krishna and Valsala Menon. It will be shot at Mumbai and various locales in Kerala. Cinematographed by Anil Nair, the movie will have music by Sejo. Mamta and Dileep had earlier joined hands for Ranjith Shankar's 'Passenger'.



## Asif Ali and Mythili in 'Cowboy'



Asif Ali and Mythili, the hit pair of 'Salt 'n Pepper' will be seen in a film in a film directed by newcomer Balachandra Kumar, and titled 'Cowboy'. Swetha Menon will do an important role in the film. Jagathy, Kalashala Babu, Anil Murali, Siddique and Lena would also be seen in important roles. 'Cowboy' is produced by Dr. Sudhakaran under the banner of Cine Castle Movie Kingdom.

## Five heroes in 'Idukki Gold'

After 'Salt 'N Pepper', the same team will start working for their new film 'Idukki Gold'. Again scripted by Dileesh Nair and Shyam Pushkaran, the new movie will feature Lal, Ravindran, Babu Antony, Manian Pillai Raju and Shankar in the lead roles. The movie is expected to offer a comeback pad to Shankar and Raveendran who had never been cast in the lead roles. The film will be based on an element taken from Santhosh Echikkanam's story 'Idukki Gold'. After completing the scripts of the movie, Dileesh and Shyam will have



another big project, a Mohanlal starrer. This new movie to be directed by Shafi will be shot in 2012.

## Mammootty and Lal's Cobra to start

Mammootty's next film is *Cobra*, written and directed by Lal, who will also play an important role in it.

The film is being produced as a joint venture between Mammootty's Play House and Lal Creations.

Lal said: "I have acted along with Mammootty in a few movies (*Thommanum Makkalum* and *Best Actor*) and even produced a film with him. But this is the first time I am directing him."

*Cobra* revolves around the life of two brothers. Mamta Mohandas and Lakshmi Rai are the likely leading ladies. Music is by Alex Paul.

*Cobra* is expected to hit the screens in February 2012.



## Sharada in Reji Nair's 'Kalikaalam'

Script writer Reji Nair turns director with the film 'Kalikaalam'. It has Sharada playing the lead role. Sharada essays the role of a teacher in the film.

Lalu Alex, Ashokan, Shari, Lekshmi Sharma, Suresh Krishna and Krishna Prabha form the cast.

Reji Nair had scripted films like 'Pattalam' and 'Oruvan' earlier. He is also busy scripting V M Vinu's film in which Mammootty plays the lead role.

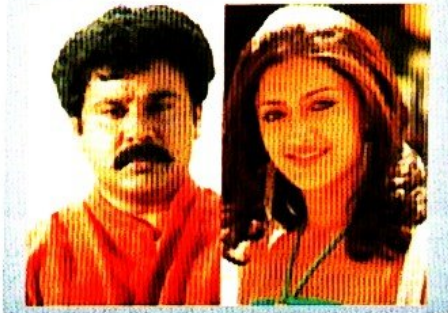
Sathar, veteran villain actor in Malayalam, will also be seen after a long gap in 'Kalikaalam'.

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## Siddique goes to Telugu



After creating a space in Malayalam with his hero and villain characters, Siddique is now moving to Telugu cinema. He will don his first hero role in Telugu under the direction of Rajesh Touchriver. It will be made simultaneously in Telugu and Malayalam.

The Malayalam version will be the first movie for the director who became famous in the festival circuits with 'In the Name of Buddha'. Scripted by Justine Pathalil, this new movie will be based on human trafficking and will feature Anjali Patil and a few others from Mumbai. Rajesh Touchriver will start the shooting by November at Hyderabad.

## Urvashi in 'Kunchiyammakku Anchu Makkal'

Urvashi has successfully handled the heavy duty female leads in Malayalam film. She did such roles in 'Mummy and Me' and 'Sakudumbam Shyamala'. Now she will be playing a hi-tech robber in 'Kunchiyammakku Anchu Makkal'. Her five children create problems and sleepless nights for the entire village. It is directed by Pappan Payattuville.



## Dileep's period film Vellaripravinte Changathi

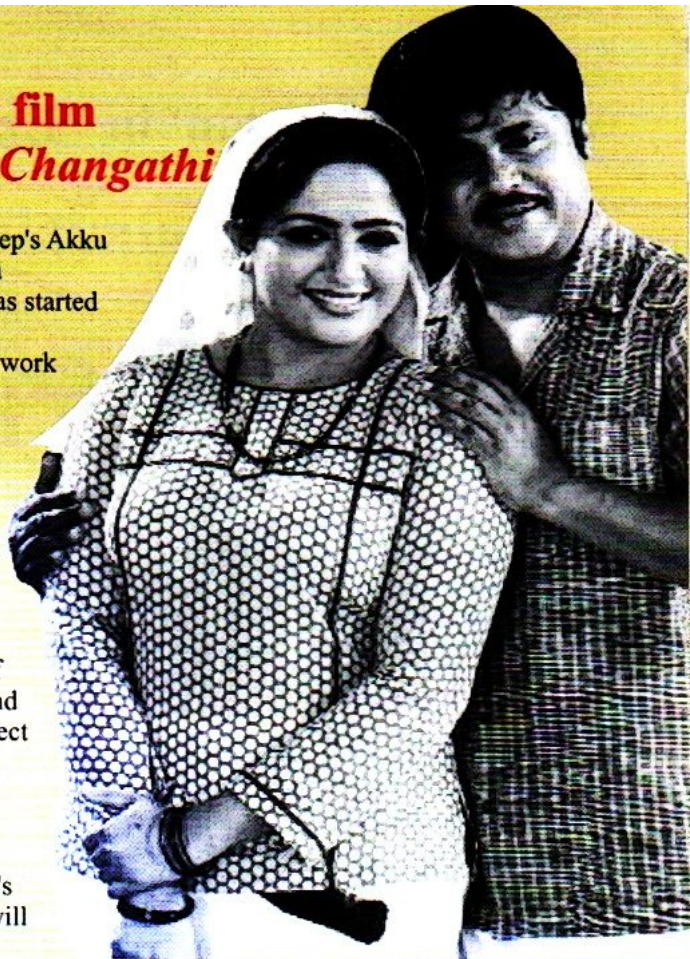
The second schedule of Dileep's Akku Akbar directed period drama *Vellaripravinte Changathi* has started in Pollachi.

Dileep, after completing his work for *Spanish Masala* and *Mr. Marumagan*, has shaved his moustache. He will be having a thin pencil line Prem Nazir look in the new film.

*Vellaripravinte Changathi* is about a filmmaker Augustine Joseph who was making a Malayalam film of 1970's which got shelved, and how his son revives the project and gets it released for 2011 Christmas. It was a period dominated by Prem Nazir, Sathyam, Sheela and others. Dileep will play Prem Nazir's role and Kavya Madhavan will play the heroine of 60's.

Manoj K Jayan will don the role of Sathyam. Others in the cast of this film are Indrajith, Vijayaraghavan, Sai Kumar and others.

*Vellaripravinte Changathi* is produced by Chandvi Creations, written by GS Anil, lyrics by Vayalar Saratchandra Varma and music by Mohan Sithara.



## First Stereoscopic 3D Animation in Malayalam

A group of ten animation experts from Kozhikode is getting ready with their first stereoscopic 3D animation film in Malayalam. Titled 'Circus Kaduva', this first of its kind venture in the state will use the traditional technologies common in European countries. This animation film can be watched in the normal mini screens and computer monitors using the Red-blue stereoscopic glasses.

Razak Vazhiyoram, director of the film, says that they are using Maya 3D software expert advice from abroad. Basically a children's film 'Circus



'Kaduva' will be produced under the banner of Carrot Creations.

## Ravindra Jain in Malayalam

Music composer and lyricist Ravindra Jain will be once again back to Malayalam. The blind composer, known for his melodies, has set the music for a new movie by Dr Biju, titled as 'Aakashathinte Niram'. Shot entirely in Andaman Islands, the movie will feature Indrajith, Amala Paul and Prithviraj in key roles. The lyrics are by O N V Kurup.

Ravindra Jain had earlier scored music for films like 'Sujatha' and 'Sukham Sukhakaram', which had some good songs. He has also composed music for the album "Aavani Poochendu" brought out by Tharangini Audios which had Dr K J Yesudas at its helm.

## Unni Mukundan' in "Ezham Suryan"

After his successful debut with 'Bombay March 12' and 'Bangkok Summer', young actor Unni Mukundan is currently playing the lead in 'Thatsamayam Oru Penkutty' by T K Rajeevkumar, Unni figures in the remake of 'Chattakkari' and "Ezham Sooryan" directed by Njanasheelan.

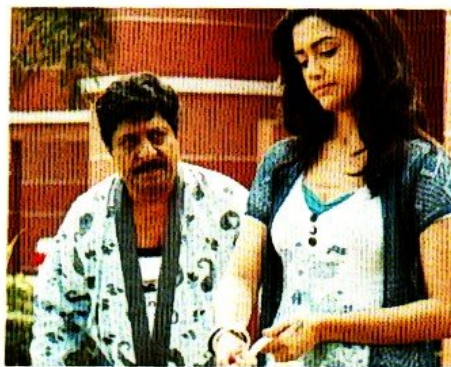
"Ezham Sooryan" scripted by V Vijayakumar will be produced by Ramesh Cholayil under Kaivalyam Creations. Sai Kumar, Jagathy Sreekumar, Salim Kumar, Suraj Venjarummoodu, Sreejith Ravi, and Kalpana are also in the cast. Music is by



M Jayachandran and Asha Ramesh while Cinematography is by Ashok Devaraj.

## Saroj Kumar starts at Vaikkom

The shooting of 'Padmashree Dr. Saroj Kumar' has started at Vaikkom. Directed by debutante Sajin Raghavan, the film is scripted by Sreenivasan, who is back in the title role. Mamtha Mohandas is the heroine of the movie which will also feature Mukesh, Salim Kumar and Jagathy Sreekumar in the same characters of Babykuttan, Rafeeq and Pachalam Bhasi. Suraj will be the new addition to the cast as Muttathara Sabu, the president of the Saroj Kumar fans association. Vinceth Sreenivasan and Fahad Fazil also play important roles in



this satirical movie which is produced by Vyshakha Rajan for Vyshakha films.

## We are happy together: Nayanthara

Rumours in the industry had it that the Prabhu Deva- Nayanthara relationship was heading for a split. A Telugu channel aired a one-hour programme on why Prabhu and Nayan are drifting apart, which garnered record TRP.

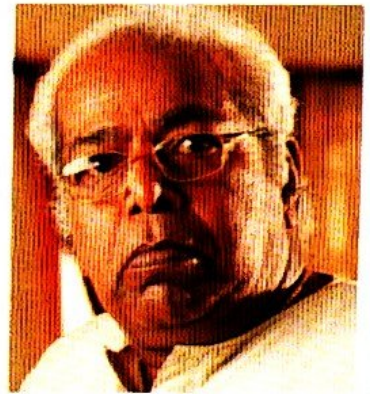
The story was later picked up by all leading newspapers and internet sites.

However, Nayanthara has now denied the news and reaffirmed that their relationship was stronger than ever. Nayan said that she was used to such "TRP driven stories." "We are happy together and if our marriage is of major concern for others, the date will be announced soon," she said.



## Thilakan with Mammootty's son

After the recent comeback of veteran actor Thilakan with 'Indian rupee', he is suddenly back with a bang. The character of Menon that Thilakan did in this movie with perfection has made the industry realise grave mistake it committed in ostracizing him from commercial films. After Renjith his former assistant Anwar Rasheed will cast him in a new film. Dulkar Salman, Mammootty's son, will be the hero of this thriller. Anjali Menon is scripting the movie to be produced by Listle Stephen, famous for his experimental hits like 'Traffic' and 'Chappakurisu'. This will be Dulkar Salman's second movie after his debut in 'Second Show'.



## Mohanlal with UTV

Mohanlal has signed up a project with UTV for a sky-high price. He has allotted priority dates for the movie to be directed by B Unnikrishnan.

Tentatively titled as 'Grandmaster' it will be a thriller with the star playing a cop, famous for nailing down his culprits with brain deals. This will be his immediate project after completing 'Casanova' for which he is shooting currently at Bangalore.

## Kerala fish species to get Malayalam names

More than 200 varieties of fresh water fish in Kerala were re-christened with local names in an effort to maintain a data base of the fish.

At a daylong meeting naturalists and local fishermen, 50 of the 208 fresh water fish got new names, while the names of other species were standardised as they had different names across the state.

The popular fishes that were named include *chenkuyil*, *velumpan kal nakki*, *iru pottan*, *chen kaniyan*, *kurudan mushi* and *aartu chempalli*.

The meeting was called 'Meenu Oru Peru' (A name for a fish) and it was organised by the Kerala State Biodiversity Board (KSBB) and Department of Aquatic Biology and Fisheries, University of Kerala. B. Madhusoodana Kurup, Vice Chancellor, Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, who inaugurated the meeting, said the re-christening would help the resurgence of taxonomy in Kerala. Finalising the local names would help conserve fish diversity of the state, especially in the context of the fact that

12 species of freshwater fish are endemic to Kerala, and most of them restricted to a narrow habitat. This process is expected to strengthen the ongoing fish monitoring programme initiated by KSBB in all the 44 rivers of the state.

The proposed names will be kept in public domain for public inputs and the finalised list of Malayalam names will be given to the State Institute of Languages and to the concerned government departments.

## Profit from pea (*payar*)

Mambatta Prakash Kumar of Pookkottumpadam, near Nilambur is a very excited person now. He earned a good profit this year also, from his agricultural land measuring about one and a half acre. On the first day of plucking the new crop, he could get more than 50 kg. and every alternate day he could still pluck. He started his chowli farming only last year. The result was encouraging and prompted him to repeat the feat. On account of rain, he could not pluck his crop for Onam but he is not disappointed.

Prakash Kumar is a full time farmer He gets assistance and advice from the agricultural department as well as from his relations Muthukad Prabhakaran and Sasidharan. He does not use much of chemical fertilizers. During sowing of seeds, he uses cow-dung and later 8-8-16 mixture fertilizer. He repeats this when the creepers start growing. Anti



rice bug powder mixed with ash can be used early morning to get rid of the pests, he says. Chowli farming could be done during any season but according to Prakash, during heavy rains it could be

avoided. He could get Rs 22 per Kg when sold in the market. Besides chowli, his farming includes coconut, cucumber, pumpkin, ash gourd, paddy on dry land etc. He plans to grow fish too next year.

## Green Police Station

The Vaikkom Police Station turns green without abandoning their khaki. The police personnel removed all the garbage and to discourage people from throwing further garbage, they converted the place into a vegetable farm. About 28 varieties of vegetables are planted and expect to have a harvest of 10 tonne.

A local vegetable enthusiast supplied the necessary seeds for this purpose. They also use the seeds obtained from Agricultural Research Institute of Thiruvananthapuram and IIHR of Bangaluru.



# Mohanan Pillai awarded Karshakothama

Mohanan Pillai of Perumbulikkal near Pandalam has been bestowed with the title Karshakothama this year. He had followed the footsteps of his father Narayanan Nair, 97, who spends most of his time even now, in their compound and paddy fields. They have nearly 5 acres of dry land and about two and a half acres of paddy field.

The main cultivation is vegetables, plantain, ginger, tapioca, yam, taro, discorea saliva etc. Mostly he uses bio-fertilizers and a bit of chemical fertilizers. He converts domestic garbage to compost and also grows earthworm for fast conversion. Cow-dung, cow urine, oil cake etc are mixed thoroughly to prepare a bio-compound of fertilizer that could be used for any cultivation, he says. Besides, pseudomonas, Trychoderma, baveria etc are also used to repel pesticides.

Bitter gourd, snake gourd, ladies finger, tomato etc are some of the vegetables he grows. Pumpkin grows along with plantain and tapico. Ash gourd creepers give company to all trees in his compound. Not even an inch of land is left waste. In a pit, unlike others, he



plants two or three plantain trees as he feels that would be more profitable. Ginger is his favourite crop as it gives a higher return. Last year he sold ginger worth of Rs.50,000.

Mohanan Pillai is also into animal husbandry and poultry farming. The

three cows provide him 10 litres of milk daily. There are about ten hens and cocks that move around his farm land and they add more fertilizer to the vegetables. Paddy is cultivated during two seasons and rubber trees occupy about half an acre.

## Cultivating paddy on dry land

When thousands of acres of paddy fields are lost to real estate and quarries, Kerala is steadily losing its own grains and has to depend on its neighbouring states to feed the people. Traditional farmers are giving up cultivating paddy citing shortage of labour, rising wages and inadequate profits, heavy losses, Abdul Hameed is expanding his hold to more and more acres of land, not traditionally wet land but to meadows and hilly terrains.

He gets the seeds from Krishi Bhavan and does not use chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Tree leaves, excreta of fowl, cow dung, ash etc are spread on the land. Ridges are built across the land to prevent water flow from the land. *Adathoda vasica (Aatalotakam)* is also grown on the ridges. He traps pests by hanging coconut shells filled with rice water mixed with sugar candy and a little poison to attract and kill pest, spread over his field. Neem oil is also sprayed for additional effect.



He also grows turmeric, ginger, pineapple etc.

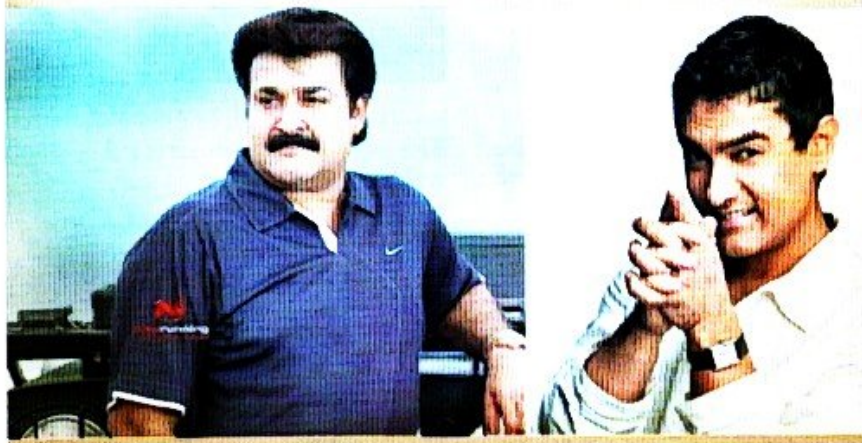
Hameed entered this field by accident.

In 1982, his parents left for Haj after entrusting the farms to him. He has never turned his head backward.

## Mohanlal to act with Aamir

Mohanlal is soon to be seen with with Aamir Khan in a new Hindi movie to be directed by Priyadarshan with a plot in the backdrop of AIDS. Mohanlal has already completed his role for another Hindi movie by Priyadarshan titled 'Tez'. This multistarrer thriller will be in theatres in a couple of months.

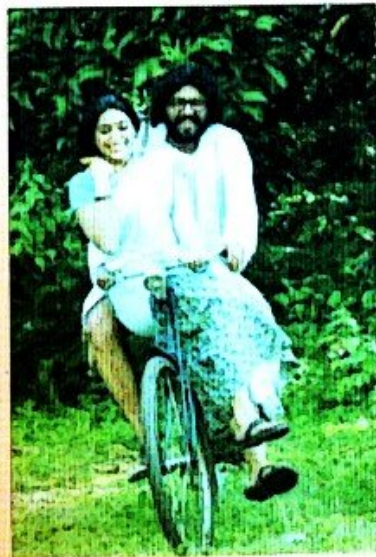
Priyan's new Malayalam film with Mohanlal is after a gap of seven years, 'Arabiyyum Ottakavum P Madhavan Nairum' is also ready for release..



## 'Ivan Megharoopan' next month

A movie based on the life of the famous poet P KunhiramanNair titled as 'Ivan Megharoopan' will be released next month. The movie, directed by scriptwriter P Balachandran, has Prakash Bare ('Sufi Paranja Katha' fame) in the lead role.

The film also has Jagathy Sreekumar, Thampi Antony, Marggy Sathi, Padmapriya, Shwetha Menon, Remya Nambeeshan and V K Sreeraman and Kannur Sreelatha in important roles. The film is produced by Thampi Antony and Gopan Periyadan.



## Malayalam films in Indian panorama

As another list of selections to Indian panorama is out, Malayalam films once again shine with a total of seven out of 23 films. Santosh Sivan's magnum opus *Urumi* starring Prithviraj, Prabhu Deva, Vidya Balan, Genelia D'Souza and Arya, will be opening movie of the Indian Panorama section of this year's International Film Festival of India in Goa.



The jury headed by Sai Paranjpye who gave out the list also named India's Oscar contender and National Award-winner Salim Ahamed's *Adaminte Makan Abu*, Samir Thahir's 'Chappa Kurisu', Babu Janardhanan's *Bombay March 12*, V K Prakash's *Karmayogi*, Madhav Ramadas's 'Melvilasam' and Rajesh Pillai's 'Traffic' as the other films selected.

## Sreenivasan and Shwetha in 'Parudeesa'

Sreenivasan and Shwetha Menon will come together for the first time for 'Parudeesa' to be directed by art-house film maker R Sharath. The movie with the backdrop of a Christian family will be produced by Thampi Antony for Kaayal films.

ONV Kurup and Ouseppachan will once again team up for the music of the movie. The script is by Vinoo Abraham. Planned to begin by the first week of January, 'Parudeesa' will also feature Thampi Antony, Jagathy, Indrans, Shafna and Suraj Venjaarmoodu.

R Sharath had recently completed his Hindi-Chinese movie 'The desire'.

