



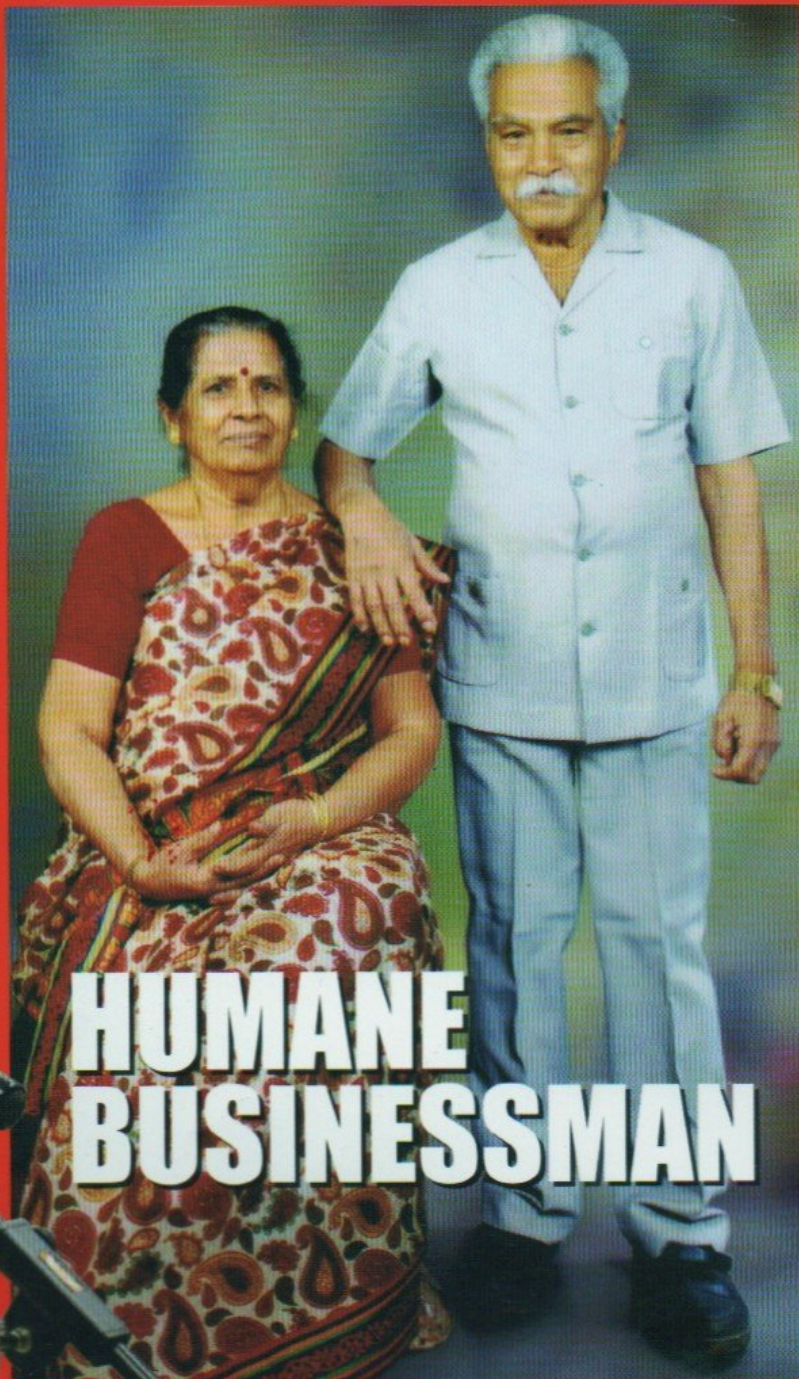
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Kerala in Mumbai

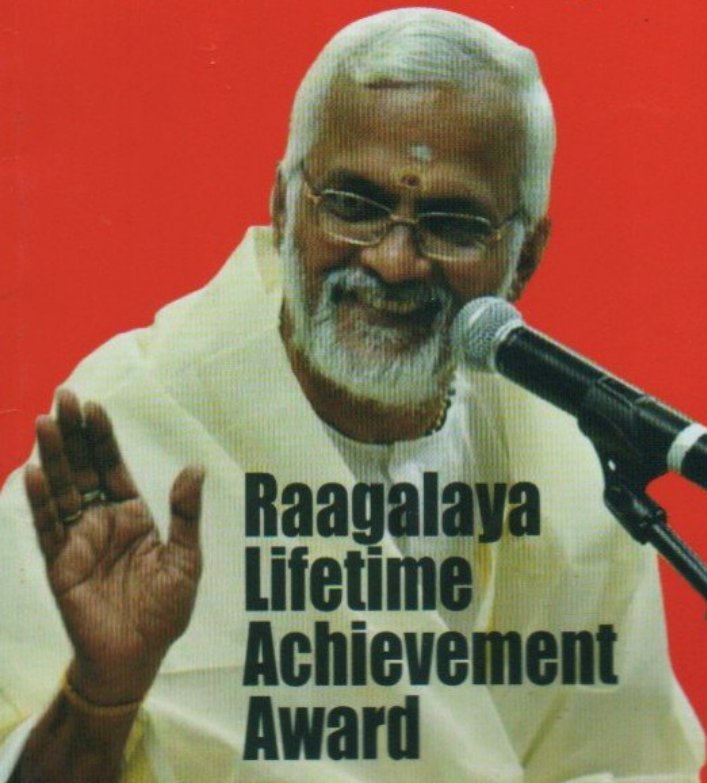
The Only English / Malayalam Monthly Magazine linking Mumbai Malayalees



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Attracting Investments
From The Business Capital**



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KIM 7TH ANNIVERSARY / RAAGALAYA 13TH ANNIVERSARY

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When Malayalam stage plays re-emerge

“This world is a stage for drama
Each has to perform the assigned role,”

proclaimed a great man centuries ago and others do repeat after him occasionally. Man always dreamt of writing the destiny of self and others but when failed, created an artificial stage and wrote the drama for others to adapt. Shakespeare was one of them. Rest borrowed ideas from around or from the past. Even in India the scenario was not different. We had Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti et al and they cleverly borrowed ideas from our epics. We thus had Abhijnana Shakuntalam, Mrucchakatikam etc.

Malayalees in the beginning saw only Tamil plays with a lot of songs and dances and then translations of Sankrit classics. It had its own social play when Chandu Menon's novel 'Sarada' was adapted to the stage and later independent plays from V T Bhattathiripad, MRB, M P Bhattathiripad (Premji) came. Stage play was a medium for social changes and entertainments for Malayalees. It was a source of entertainment for common people when movies, radios and televisions were either scarce or unknown.

When Malayalees migrated to Bombay in search of a living, some of them brought their dreams also along. Their nostalgia was atleast ten years old and that time gap was always visible.

Though Bombay stages have seen plays written and presented for the august crowds in Kerala, they were far and few. Many of our talented drama enthusiasts reproduced what they had seen or heard of from late comers. Thus Bombay also experienced some vibrant stage shows. We bow before those enthusiasts for bringing Malayalam drama to life in Bombay.

When the horizon of entertainment tools such as television and latest computer aided extravaganzas made their appearance, the audience turned away from theatre as the old has to make way for the new. Though Bombay is known for innovations in many areas, drama is one where she did not apply her mind. Occasionally we heard some drama lovers lamenting but they could do nothing to rebuild what was there.

We think a time has come for a revival. Since last couple of years, we had some opportunities to witness a few plays on the stage and some of them indeed passable. Recently we saw some 'Chayakkada Kathakal' and 'Khasakkinte Ithihasam.' It was a welcome change and probably we can build upon them and indeed we should. It is like returning to the epics after traversing through some modern novels. Sometimes we realize that the modern novels are nothing but rebottling of the old wine. We have read somewhere, “Whatever is there in this world, they are in it. And what is not in it, doesnot exist elsewhere.”

We submit a humble suggestion. All genuine drama lovers setting aside their egos should get together and find ways and means to stand together. New ideas should certainly emerge and drama will come closer to life.

We are aware that our motif could be misinterpreted. If they are in doubt, they need only to go back to the auto/biographies/ experiences of our early film actors. It was a Himalayan task for them to get out of the clutches of their stage experiences and come closer to life. Our living but old actors would vouch for their hard tasks when electricity and sound amplifiers were nonexistent in the forties and early fifties. Have you ever seen a situation when an actor does well, the spectators clamour with shouts “once more” and come forward with a four anna coin as reward to the actor for repeating his act? Sometimes more than one person might shout “once more” and the actor has to repeat his act that many times. Think of the fun if the wonderful act to be a dying scene. How many times the actor has to die to satisfy his fans!

The times for plays with a number of dances and songs are long over, unless the script demanded. To be close to reality, go for the 'key hole' dramas such as the one written by celebrated C N Sreekantan Nair and of his ilk. Change for change will not necessarily work always; though we should strive to find new paths. Remember, the classics (as the name suggest) outlive the contemporaries.

WHY I STILL LOVE KERALA

If Kerala is God's Own Country, and one of the most socially advanced state of India, then why do so many Malayalis leave? My parents moved out of the still, remote backwaters of Kuttanad and came to Bombay in the Fifties, to start new lives and make good in the City of Opportunity. As a conservative couple living in an alien land, they made every effort to preserve the customs of a village life and at the same time try to be modern and progressive. The kids were placed in convent schools and also dragged to church every week.

After growing up in Vasai for several decades, I felt nothing more than a fleeting connection to the land of my ancestors. Though I spoke good Malayalam, yet I was hooked on to Mumbai's languages, cultures and cuisine.

I have visited Kerala many times and also lived there for many months. Therefore I know personally that despite all the natural beauty of the landscape, Kerala was hardly heavenly. And as I grew up and visited more often, its flaws became increasingly evident. Social and mobility appeared virtually impossible because people computed your status in less than a minute, with a few invasive questions related to your family and ancestors. The economy was in a state of sclerosis, trapped in the dark ages of communist ideology.

When my friend sent a set of furniture from Goregaon to Kheezhvaipur, the driver and his cleaner were prevented from offloading the goods on arrival. Goons masquerading as trade union leaders appeared on the scene and dictated terms and conditions. They demanded that only local hands be hired, and at the price they demanded. It

is this perverse system of social intervention that had forced an exodus of Malayalis to the rest of the world. And for all its achievements in female literacy, Kerala was hardly a paradise for women. Most could not get good jobs inside the state, and when they ventured on to the streets, they were gawked at, commented at and even brushed up against.

Yet my spirit gets lifted the moment I catch sight of the thousands of palm trees that come into view while chugging into Kerala. Most of the year, Mumbai tends to be muggy and hot, Kerala, on the other hand, is cool, lush and wet. Things have changed, at least to some extent. Now I do not have to haggle with surly taxi drivers in dirty lungis. Instead, I am greeted by smartly dressed professionals, who will zip me past coconut lagoons, paddy fields, imposing bungalows, white churches, saffron temples and green mosques to a modest accommodation where I can be safe from touts, pimps, fixers, mercenaries and quacks. Here, if need be, I can spend days and nights, reading, writing, meditating and having long conversations, reflecting on issues with the kind of depth and insight that is impossible in Mumbai.

BIJU CHERIAN
Vasai Road

Some past elections in Kerala

After going through 'Fall of a ministry.....,' several memories come to my mind and I wish to share them with the present generation.

The famous Mr Chelat Achuta Menon, after losing in Trichur and at Pudukad with Mr T P Seetharaman, came to Irinjalakkuda to contest the first election to the Kerala Assembly in 1957 and I was the Ward V Secretary for the

Election campaign for Comrade Menon. For the first time the undivided CPI then came to power through the ballot box. This was a world record since normally Communists come to power through bullets and not by ballot!!

Then came the "Vimochana Samaram" what they call liberation struggle headed by Mannath Padmanabhan, Father Kundukulam of Trichur, the NSS and all other political parties and the Ministry was dismissed by using Article 357 (?) of the constitution.

Then came the best famous election in 1960. CPI was pitted against a conglomeration of all other parties. Out of 126 Seats then, CPI got only 30 seats but the party polled nearly 54 % of the total votes polled in the State!! The party lost about 25 seats by a margin of less than 1000 votes. Chelat Achuta Menon held on to his Irinjalakkuda seat by defeating Puthur Achuta Menon by a margin of 900 votes. All the CPI leaders and ex-Ministers like T V Thomas, Joseph Mudassery, T A Majid, K P Gopalan were trounced. Notable amongst the winners were EMS, Achuta Menon, K R Gowri, Veliyam Bhargavan (from Chadayamangalam). I distinctly remember the opposition parties using Odambally Chandrasekharan who had just returned from Rome after representing India at the Rome Olympics in 1960 for canvassing votes against Chelat Achuta Menon.

The famous CPI slogan for 1960 election was: "Janadipathya thirunenjil katara kayattiya khathakare janamunnetam kantolu" or "Pattam, Chacko, Panambally, attimarikkan nokkenta

Attimarikkan nokkenta chengoti tothu kalikkenta."

And the rest was history.

K D Skandan

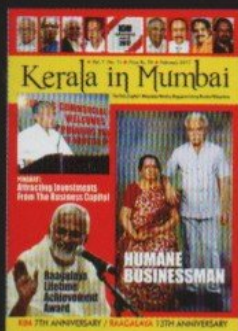
We welcome responses from readers. Please forward your responses and suggestions about various happenings concerning Malayalees residing in this part of India. You may send us your piece in either English or Malayalam. (We shall translate and publish it in English) You may send them via e-mail to keralainmumbai@gmail.com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

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MAN OF THE MONTH

MGA Menon

VETERAN BUSINESSMAN
AND PHILANTHROPIST

MGA Menon is a role model for the youth of today who can learn from him about persistence, commitment, sincerity, dedication, integrity and a determination to succeed in life.



Lakshmi Venkatachalam

■ Madappally Gopalan Aravindakshan Menon, popularly known as MGA MENON, has been living in Mumbai for more than 65 years and is an example of how the city welcomes people who come here to make a living and help them turn their dreams to reality.

He is one of the senior businessmen of Mumbai, a partner in Federal Engineers, a 100 crore turnover company that is a leading manufacturer of electric overhead cranes and its components, used mainly in steel plants. His products are supplied not only to clients in India but even abroad, to the Gulf, African and other countries.

This company set up with Menon, Dhun Buhariwala and Sylvester D'Souza as partners has seen a steady growth and today is a name to reckon with in the engineering field with the stamp of quality and has won SME Award for Exports every year for the past several years.

Starting with a small workshop on rented premises way back in the 70's, with several

"If you really desire for something and work with determination to achieve it you will definitely succeed,"



setbacks and challenges, today Federal Engineers has a big factory in Ambemath, office and factory in Mhape and another factory in Nerul apart from their first factory sites in MIDC Wagle Estate. Menon recollects the first welding machine they bought with Rs 5000/-, and is proud to say that all their dealings are realised with cheque payments and all taxes paid up to date. Quality consciousness is the company's motto.

The partners never used the company's money for their personal expenses for the first ten years since its inception to recover the capital they had invested in it. They lived frugally to improve the company's financial status.

Eighty year old Menon looks back to the period in the early 50s when he came to Mumbai as a seventeen year old from Kerala. His parents were the late Gopalan Nair and late Karthyayini Amma and he was born in Perumpilly village in Mulanthuruthy Taluk (Ernakulam District) near Chottanikkara. In the 40's, Menon's father came to Mumbai, started a tyre retreading shop and later shifted to Pune with the same business. After completing his SSLC and finishing a course in typing and shorthand, Menon came to Mumbai in 1952, in search of a job.

He stayed with his uncle who was working in Swastik Oil Mills and lived in Matunga.

"I owe a lot to my *ammavan* with whom I stayed and my cousin who was also staying with me there," he recalls. Then he went to Pune to join his father in the tyre business. But this job did not interest him. He got a state Government job in Pune in the office of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. Later he was selected in the Indian Railways in 1957 and was posted in Mumbai as a clerk at the Western Railways Headquarters in Churchgate. During this time he passed the DMS business management Course conducted by the British Council.

But Menon was ambitious. He wanted to do better things in life, try something on his own instead of getting stuck in a routine Government job. He even did a stint for the Times of India Group, Kamani Tubes, and in several other private companies. After about five years he joined Western Mechanical Industries Pvt Ltd and worked there for



Menon and Indira are an ideal couple who value human relationships more than material gains and their motto is simple living and helping those who require aid.

Menon with his wife Indira

twelve years from 1961 to 1972.

Menon started his job here as PA to the Managing Director. By dint of hard work and integrity, he rose in rank and became a Personnel and Administrative Executive, winning his employer's trust and confidence. "I learnt a lot from my boss here, I came to understand a lot about labour laws and clauses and dealt with union and management issues, sorting them out, a go between the union leaders and the management." There were troubling times also during that period when the communists tried to create trouble among the workers, but Menon came out of all this unscathed.

After leaving Western Mechanical Industries, Menon started Federal

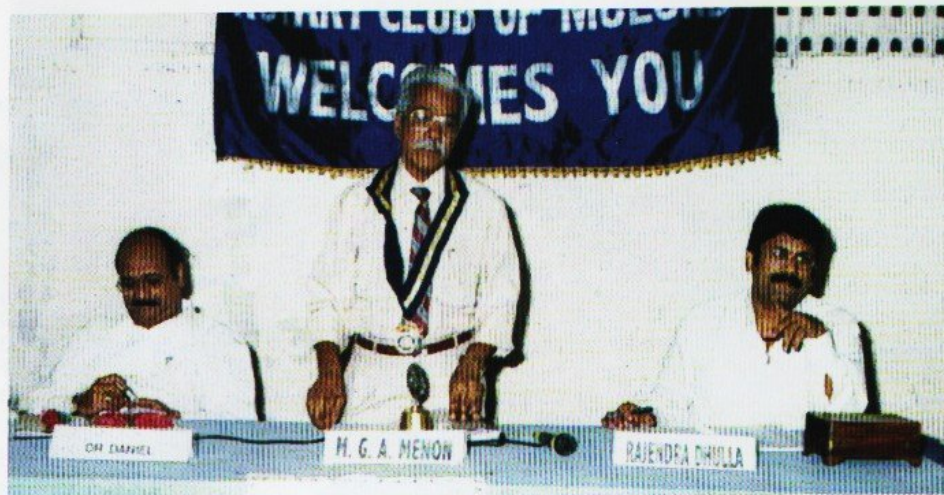
Engineers with two partners. "A Malayali, a Parsi and a Mangalore Christian - we formed this company at a rented place in Bhandup. Today our company is well settled," he says graciously.

As a human being

MGA Menon got married to Indira in 1966. Indira's parents are the late Kesava Pillai who was in the Police Department in Kerala and the late Kochukutty. She belongs to Piravom in Ernakulam District and completed her SSLC in Kerala. She came to Mumbai in 1961 to her elder sister's place, who was staying in Goregaon and completed her Graduation in Economics. For a short period she was working in the Central Excise Department. Later she joined the



Menon lights the lamp at Sree Ramadasa Ashram function



Menon at Rotary Club Meetings



Indian Railways (Central Railways) and continued there till her retirement. Menon says that his wife Indira has always supported him during his initial years of establishing and running his business. "She is my soul mate in all matters," he says.

Social Causes

Menon and Indira are closely associated with Sree Ramadasa Mission in Badlapur. They have formed a Trust, Indira Aravind Menon Charity Foundation, through which they do a lot of charity work for the ashram as well as others who are in need. They have constructed a building with ten self contained rooms in the Mission Complex for the inmates there. They have contributed to a large extent in the construction of steps to the riverbank and other facilities to conduct after-death rites. Many Malayalees make use of this to perform the rituals of their departed ones.

Education is another field where Menon and Indira donated generously. Menon is one of the five Trustees of Vidyadhiraja English High School & Jr College in Bhandup that is now seventeen years old. This school has won International School Award (2015-2018) from British Council, 'People Prize' at School Enterprise Challenge 2012 from 'Teach a Man to Fish', UK from among 800 schools from over 40 countries, global teacher accreditation

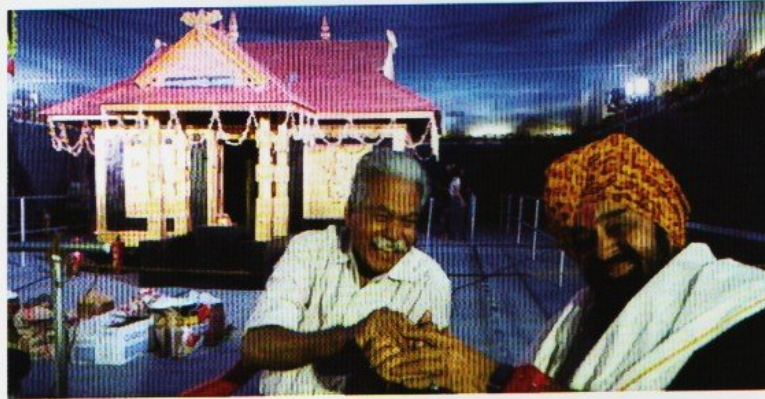
to its two teachers from the British Council, etc. The school achieved hundred percent pass in its SSC and HSC results in 2016. As a principle, the school does not accept donation from parents. Its students comprise of more poor Maharashtrian students than Malayalees.

He is also trustee of Cosmos English School Bhandup and has contributed generously to Vidyaben Gardhi English School in Mulund. Another school where he has helped financially for educational purposes is VPM School an English medium CBSE Syllabus School under administration of Kannada Society. The Society proposes to rename the school after Menon in the near future.

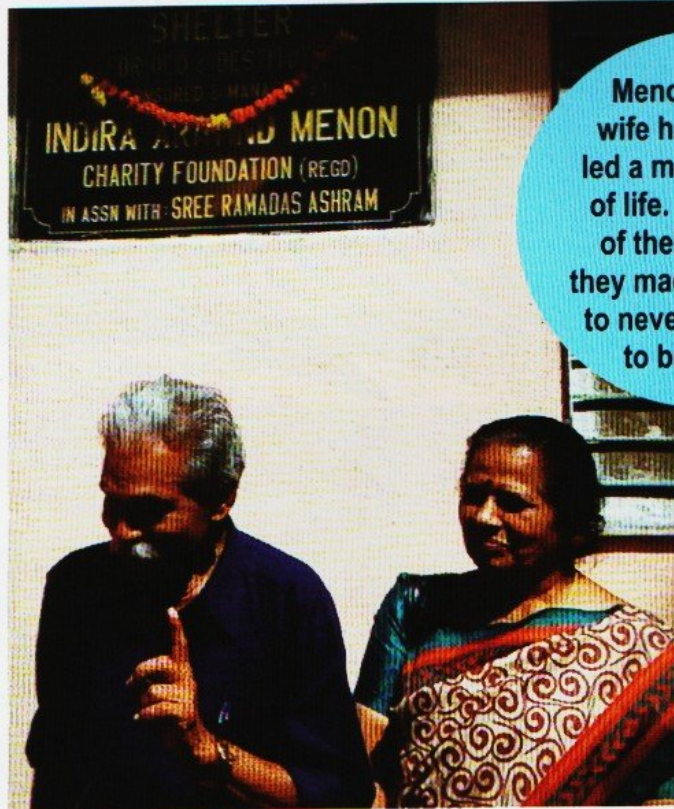
For a long time Menon was member of Rotary Club of Mulund as well as its President and through this organization he has done a lot of charity and social work in the health, educational and social welfare sectors for the poor and tribal people.

He was also a member of Lions Club doing a stint as Vice President.

He is active in the religious, social and



Menon with Tara Singh



Menon and his wife have always led a moderate way of life. At the time of their marriage they made a decision to never take loans to buy items.

charitable causes of the Malayalee organizations in and around Mulund and Mumbai such as Bhandup Usha Nagar Ayyappa Seva Sangham, Bhandup Malayalee Samajam etc. always extending a hand to those in need.

He and his wife have always led a moderate way of life. At the time of their marriage they made a decision to never take loans to buy items. They would work hard and earn to get what they wanted. He says that this lifestyle of spending money judiciously has helped him to do well in life. He has always had Indira's support in this. Menon and his wife

Indira hail from big families and both of them have helped their sisters and brothers financially on several occasions.

On January 26, 2017, Menon has been bestowed Man of the Year Award 2016 (Mannath Acharya Puraskaram) by Thane Nair Welfare Association.

A lover of music and Fine Arts, he sponsored the AIMA Mumbai Chapter Music Competition for children recently where Vidyadharan Master was one of the judges.

They are an ideal couple who value human relationships more than material gains and their motto is simple living and helping those who require support. This could be the secret of the calm and peace that radiate from these senior personalities who have made Mumbai their home for more than half a century.

"If you really desire for something and work with determination to achieve it you will definitely succeed," he asserts.

It was Menon's intense desire to start a business and become successful in it that has helped him reach this status. Undoubtedly he is a role model for the youth of today who can learn from him about persistence, commitment, sincerity, dedication, integrity and a determination to succeed in life. ■

With Best Wishes to
Kerala in Mumbai
on its 7th Anniversary

**DIVYA
ENTERPRISES**



St Mary's Forane Church

St Mary's Forane Church, situated in St Mary's High School ICSE, Andheri (W), is very active in its spiritual, educational, charitable and social causes.

Syro-Malabar Church, the second largest Oriental Church in the Catholic communion was founded by St. Thomas, the Apostle. The present Syro-Malabar Church is the continuation of that ancient Indian Church of the Thomas Christians. Since the Independence, many people from the South especially from Kerala migrated to big cities and other parts of our country, seeking employment and better prospects of life. St. Thomas Christians were not an exception to this phenomenon. Hundreds of thousands of Christians of the Syro-Malabar Church who thus migrated were in totally alien atmosphere with regards to their religious and spiritual life. The priests of the Latin Rite were taking care of them.

In the wake of the formation of the Eparchy of Kalyan, a parish covering the areas of Juhu, ESIC Nagar, D.N Nagar, Dhake Colony, Manish Nagar, 4 Bungalows, 7 Bungalows, Versova and Lokhandwala Complex was conceived in September 1988. The Parish was initially named St. Mary's Parish, Juhu



Fr Jerry Alex

Versova and subsequently it was renamed St. Mary's Parish, Andheri West. Today, this Parish has been elevated as St. Mary's Forane Church, Andheri West comprising six other parishes namely Amboli, Chakala, Mahakali, Marol, Sahar, and Vile Parle.

The church is situated in St Mary's

High School ICSE and is very active in its spiritual educational charitable and social causes

Origins

Rev. Father Vincent Parayil was the first Vicar of St Mary's Parish where he served from 1988 to 1990. A dedicated pastoral leader, through his untiring efforts, a firm foundation was laid for the Parish. The first Holy Mass was celebrated at Good Shepherd Church, 4 Bungalows and continued to be held once a month.

It was difficult for the parishioners because they did not have a place of their own for celebrating the Holy Mass. So when Rev. Fr. Antony Koottickal MCBS took charge as the Parish Priest in 1990, an application for the plot of land for a school project under World Bank Scheme was processed and submitted to MHADA. Within the same year a plot was allotted.

Under Fr. Xavier Kannat during 1998, the ambitious school project took shape as a multi storied structure. St. Mary's School, a beacon for



excellence in all spheres of its activity, started functioning on June 14, 2000 with strength of 100 students. Fr. Xavier Kannat was also instrumental in bringing Franciscan Missionary of Sisters of the Sacred Heart to the Parish in 1999, whose valuable and treasured efforts are still continuing.

Church Activities

The Church activities in St. Mary's School were initiated on August 15, 2002. In 2005, the St. Mary's chapel in the St. Mary's School was blessed and consecrated by His Excellency Mar Thomas Elavanal, Bishop of Kalyan. Today under the spiritual leadership of the energetic and dynamic young priest *Rev. Fr. Jerry Alex*, St. Mary's School and its Church continue its activities relentlessly. The Parish ensures the development of its Children, Youth and Parents through various associations and activities.

Just like in Kerala, here the Parish council takes the lead and oversees the overall performance and development of Parish and Parishioners. In addition to this, it also has groups like Catechism classes for children, Youth forum, Mathrusangham and Pithruvedi and they all work for the betterment of the members. The parish also conducts cultural programs, Feast days, etc. For instance, September 8, believed to be Mother Mary's birthday, is celebrated as Mother's Day. On Parish Day, all parishioners come together and celebrate the day as a means to bring people together and give thanks at the Holy Mass. After mass the community gathers for both entertainment and *Snehavirunnu*. This day highlights the importance of members belonging to

The Parish ensures the development of its Children, Youth and Parents through various associations and activities.

the parish as one family. Similarly the Feast of St. Sebastian is celebrated as the Parish Feast. St Sebastian is the patron saint to protect people from poverty, communicable diseases and war. The *Pitrusangham* and *Matrusangham* are also active in organizing events like Sports Day, Onam Celebrations etc.

Christmas

Christmas, one of the most joyous day to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ, is celebrated with devotion and vigour. Every year Youth of St. Mary's take pride in making the crib and decoration for the Christmas midnight Mass. After the mass, a cake cutting ceremony is held and thereafter parish priest gives the Christmas message and greetings to all the parishioners. Cakes are distributed to the faithful gathered. Thereafter, Parishioners participate in the games organised by the Youth as part of the Christmas celebration.

ONAM

Onam is celebrated in a grand manner with all the parishioners looking forward to it. Thiruvathira, Onapaattu, Skit based on Onam theme, Onasadya, song and dance programmes are the key events which they enjoy. Parishioners wear traditional Kerala dress, draw athappookkalam and enjoy the traditional Onasadya comprising 11-12 dishes served on banana leaves.

Malayalam Classes

To quench the thirst of those Malayalees who wish to see their children learn Malayalam language, St. Mary's with the help of Keraleeya Malayalee Samajam conducts Malayalam classes. The Parish gives a lot of importance to the traditions and values of 'being Malayalees' and *Malayalam Classes is one of the true achievements by which it upholds its Malayalee spirit.*

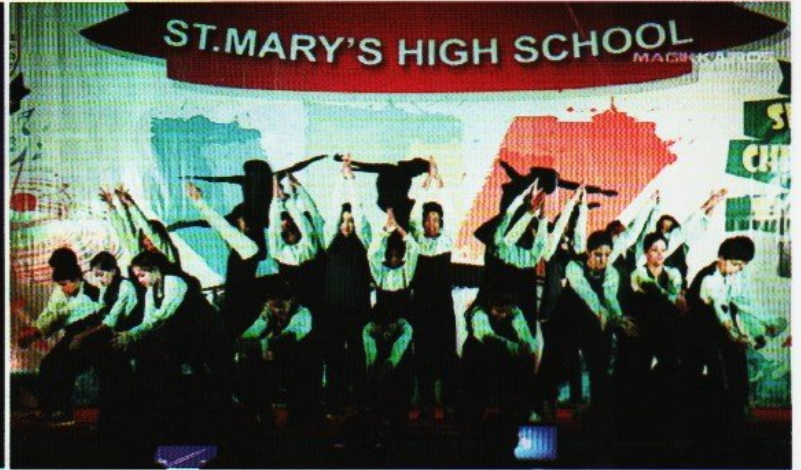
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A Scene from the School function



Christmas celebration by youth wing

St. Mary's Youth

To make young minds aware of their Christian obligations and commit themselves to Christ, the Youth of St. Mary's, come forward and work together. They are headed by animator who guides them to organise various activities and helps to cultivate and nourish their hidden and dormant talents. Fr. Sunny Choir Competition is one of the promising events that the Youth look forward every year to exhibit their singing talents. Rain Camp, a stress buster for the youth from their hectic lives, and Talentia, a platform for showcasing their talents, is a couple of main events where they participate actively. The parish Youth makes their presence at Diocesan Youth retreat and Diocesan Youth day.

According to Fr Jerry, parents ensure that youth are a part of Church programmes so that they are exposed to the real world of problems. Time and again, these programmes have motivated the youth to stand up for themselves and have developed a sense of belonging to each other.

Unit of Karunya Trust at St. Mary's

With the mission to create a just and harmonious society based on the Gospel Values of love, fellowship, freedom and peace, Social Action Karunya Trust has been formed at diocesan level. This trust is engaged in facilitating education, health, livelihood and shelter to the underprivileged people. A unit of Karunya Trust is also functioning at St. Mary's Parish.

Father Jerry Alex

Jerry Alex Joseph is the current

parish priest at St Mary's Forane Church and Manager of the St Mary's High School. A native of Calicut, he has completed graduation in Literature and Philosophy (Ujjain) as well as Degree in Law from Mumbai University. He is also Asst. Director of Kalyan Eparchy Youth managing the youth in about 75 parishes of the Kalyan diocese.

St Mary's High School ICSE

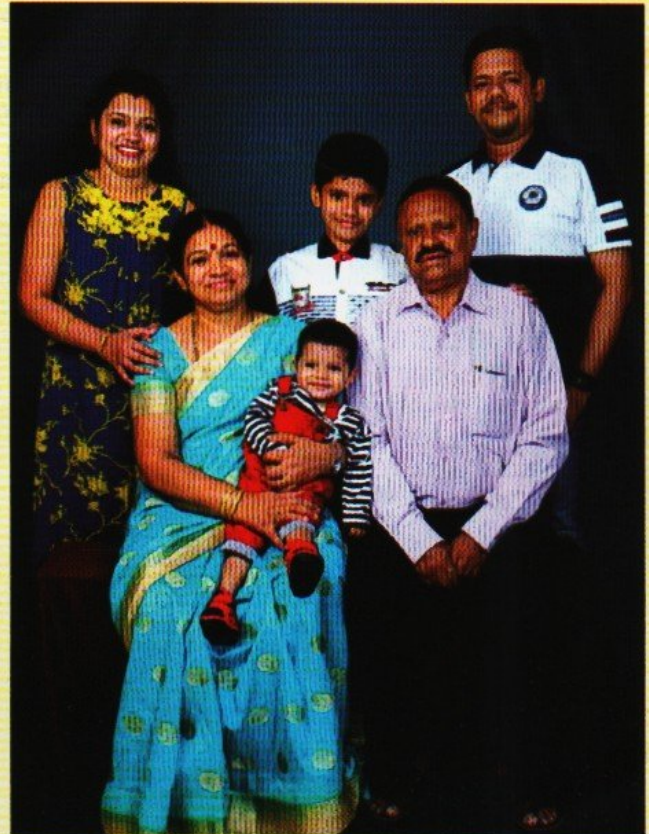
The school is managed by the St. Mary's Educational Trust. The motto of the school, "Love, Service and Truth", enshrines the principles and the values which the school stands for and intends to promote as part of its mission. The academic curriculum as well as myriad activities at school helps the students achieve their personal and social objectives. Well trained and experienced teaching staff, fully equipped laboratories, well stocked library and facilities for sports and games etc, help to provide academic and valued inputs to the children. Each child gets personalized attention to the learning and development process. Today

St. Mary's has a full-fledged ICSE school nurturing children from nursery to tenth standard.

Father Jerry Alex's aim is to impart among the students value education perspectives, emphasise 'learning by doing' motto and work towards their overall development. He has initiated better infrastructure facilities for the school and extension of the school building complex. Sr Anne Baby is the Head Mistress. ■

(With inputs by Fr. Jerry Alex)

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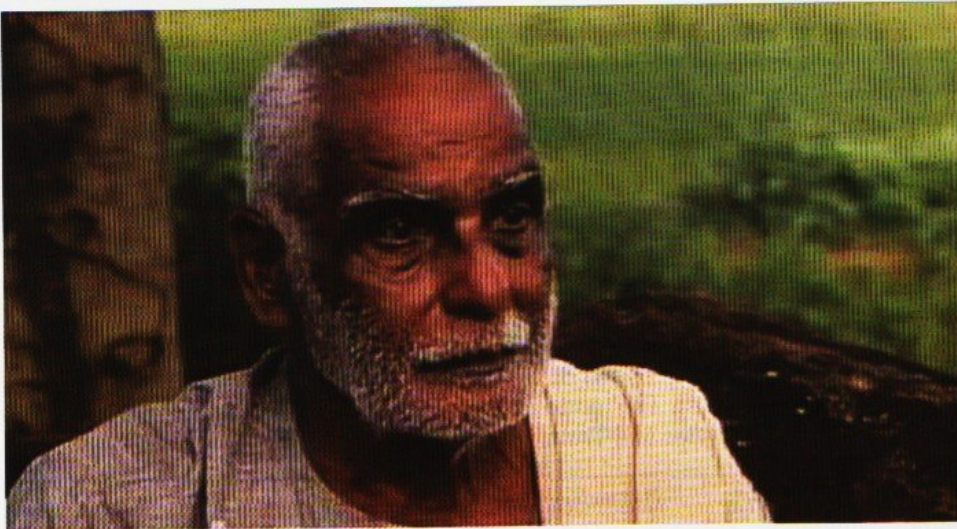


K G Vallabhan & Family, Bhandup

PREMJI

-Satyanath

One of the best actors of Malayalam stage and films, social reformer, dramatist, poet, stage director, artist, proof reader, translator and organiser; that was Mullamangalam Parameswaran Bhattathiripad alias Premji. His life was not his own but that of the evolvment of the society he lived in.



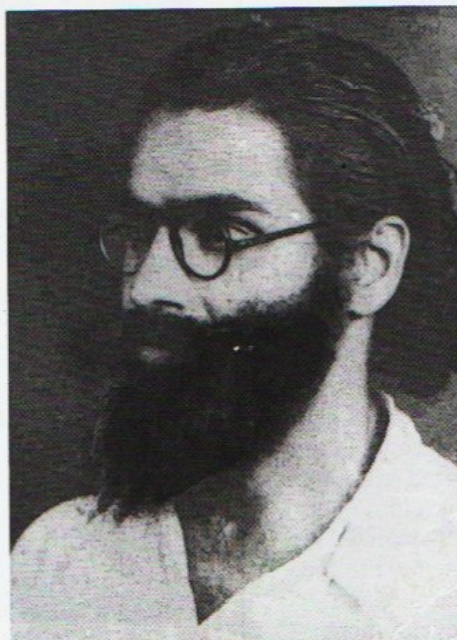
Premji in Piravi

Mullamangalam Parameswaran Bhattathiripad, M P Bhattathiripad or Premji had a rich childhood but on account of his progressive outlook and his marriage with a widow of his community against the prevailing practice made him suffer throughout his life allowing him to lead a penury life. He never demanded or bargained for money from the producers of his plays, films or publishers but if the promised amount was not either paid or only partially paid, he used to write letters to them. As a result of constant poverty, his family suffered a lot. Can anyone imagine a person after receiving an All India Award for the Best Actor walking to his workplace to carry on with his job as proof reader to get barely a hundred rupees a month?

Personal life

Premji was born in Vanneri and his Mana (ancestral House) was the pride of his village. Mullamangalam was rich and had a lot of land managed by their lessees. Traditionally *Bhattathiris* are

Vedic teachers. Premji was born to Mullamangalam Keralan Bhattathiripad and Devasena Antharjanam on September 23, 1908. His mother was from Polpakkara Illam. Keralan Bhattathiripad had two wives, the



Young Premji

second was from Vazhappalli Illam. Premji had five elder brothers Narayanan, Krishnan, Keralan, Vasudevan and Damodaran besides a younger brother Sankaran. Neelakantan and Raman were his step brothers. Raman was a writer (his pen name was MRB) and was very close to Premji. There were several male and female servants in his house to look after the external and internal activities.

The educational pattern of those days among the Namboothiries was restricted to learn the alphabets so that they can read and write. He was taught Malayalam alphabets by his mother. He was initiated to Vedic studies (*upanayanam*) when he was 8 and studied Rigveda as he belonged to the Bhattathiries sect till he reached 14 (*samavarthanam*). During this period the boys were to strictly follow celibacy and were allowed to wear only *Koupinam*, (a single piece of cloth to avoid complete nudity). This practice prevented them from attending normal schools. Since a 14 year old child could not sit with much younger children, Namboothiri boys could go only to those schools exclusively run for them. Here he studied Srikrishna Vilasam Part III, Raghuvamsam Sargam VI and Tharkkam (art of arguments).

Those days Poet Vallathol used to come to Mullamangalam since his wife's house was nearby and one day asked Premji what he was learning. After hearing his answer, the poet exclaimed, "How sad! The intelligent Namboothiries are yet to know that the time of Kakkasserri Bhattathiripad is over long ago." The comment touched Premji deeply and he left *Tharkkam* (science of logical argument) and started learning *Ashcharyachootamani* and *Sakuntalam*



Premji as Gandhiji



Receiving award from President R Venkataraman. Former Union Minister Krishnakumar is also seen

under Dr C Kunhan Raja. Soon Kuttikrishnan Marar became his teacher by accident. Marar was teaching Vallathol's children but he could not eat from the poet's house as Marar community was considered higher than that of Nair's in social status. Marar used to come to Mullamangalam twice a day for his meals and this opportunity was used by Premji to learn Sanskrit grammar from him. When Vallathol shifted Kalamandalam to Mulankunnathukavu, his family and Marar also moved there putting an end to Premji's studies. Afterwards Premji never had any formal studies. He became his own teacher spending time in reading and writing.

The acquaintance with Marar made Premji develop revolutionary ideas and he developed a trait of protesting against malpractices in his community. He and his step brother MRB once invited Marar to spend the night in their house. Early morning Marar got up and left. Even at 10 am, his bedding was left unfolded, Premji asked his servant the reason. Servant replied that he cannot do that as it was slept over by Marar. Without hesitation, Premji folded the bedding and kept at its proper place. During 1920s, Premji and MRB were attracted to Congress ideology and started working for the propagation of Khadi. During Guruvayur Satyagraha time, Premji opened a khadi store there where even the lower caste people also could come. When P Krishna Pillai (who later became a Communist leader) rang the bell and offered prayer, the supporters of 'Sanatani' paper run by the conservatives of Guruvayur, thrashed

him. Marar and MRB started a rival magazine 'Yuvadeepam' for which Premji worked as a correspondent.

Around this time V T Bhattathiripad addressed a Yogakshema Sabha meeting that was attended by MRB and Premji. He started his address with two lines of a poem written by him.

"Did God give men two heavy hands to sit behind closed doors of the house?"

The address lasted only five minutes but it changed the outlook of Premji for the rest of his life. When VT asked the audience to raise their hands if they were doing any work for a living, there was not a single hand raised. Premji decided to work for a living but was handicapped as he did not have any formal qualification. Finally with the

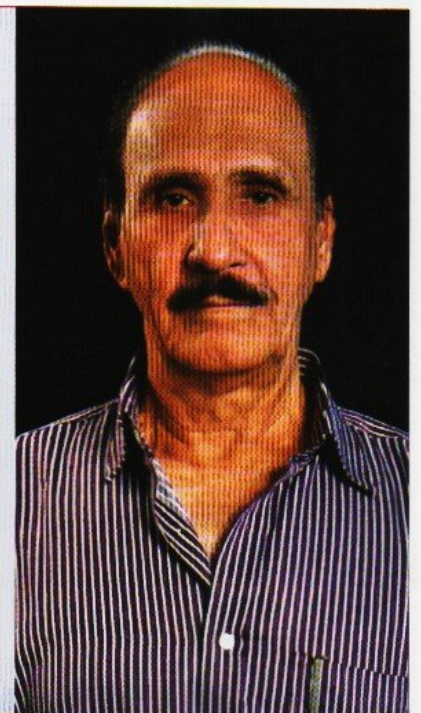
help of his nephew Keralan, he started a book stall in Guruvayur and once he was told by the press manager of Mangalodayam in Trichur, that they had a vacancy for a proof reader. He joined Mangalodayam and started working under V T Bhattathiripad who inspired him to work for a living.

He was reading three periodicals *Yogakshemam* paper, *Unninamboothiri* monthly and Vallathol's *Atmaposhini* monthly besides poems written by Vallathol, Kumaran Asan and Ulloor. Vallathol poems inspired him and he also started writing poems accepting Vallathol as his guru (Like Ekalavya to Drona). Shy of revealing his identity, he assumed the name Premji but soon Vallathol found out the man hidden behind that name.

Kerala in Mumbai on its 7th Anniversary

All the best to the KIM Team
& wishing to fly high & high

V. Balachandran
Goregaon (W)





Arya Premji with Son Neelan and grand daughter

MRB started writing short stories while Premji pursued poetry. When one of their sisters was married to an old Namboothiri as his third wife, Premji could not forget the frustration and helplessness expressed on her face. Soon a second sister was also to wed another old man as his third wife, MRB and Premji felt very helpless. Only a woman could help another woman, the brothers felt. Soon a new writer 'Vanneri K Savithri Antharjanam' started appearing in 'Unni Namboothiri.' This incidence inspired Marar and V T Bhattathiripad and they too wrote in the magazine complimenting her. Marar has recorded that it was Savithri Antharjanam who inspired Parvathi Nenminimangalam to provide leadership to women of Namboothiri community.

Soon a play 'Atukkalayil ninnu Arangathekkku' (From kitchen to stage) by V T Bhattathiripad started staging in various Namboothiri households and it had an enormous impact on

Namboothiri women and encouraged them to move away from traditions that was anathema to them. It encouraged them to form an Antharjana Samajam in its first meeting held at Nenminimangalam. The second meeting was held at Mullamangalam. Invitations were sent by Premji in his mother's name but without her knowledge. On the previous day he reached home and told his mother and other female members about the meeting and not to obstruct it in any manner. They obliged but soon after the meeting, in private, his mother expressed her disagreement and said she did not wish to see his face again. Soon his mother expired and by the time Premji reached home, the funeral was over.

The close proximity with EMS and job with Deshabhimani made Premji a sympathiser of Communist Party and he worked for it. (When the party was split, it hurt him immensely). During this period, a failed love drove him to

Karnataka and he started working as a casual labourer doing all kinds of sundry jobs for peanuts. However during the three year period he learned the basic things about motor vehicles and also acquired a driving licence. When a Malayali Association was formed, its workers entrusted the job of inviting Joseph Mundasseri for inaugurating it, Premji happily took the cudgels. He came to Kerala and met Mundasseri. When the professor saw the condition in which Premji lived in Bangalore, he persuaded him to return and take up the old job in Deshabhimani. Finally Premji conceded.

This was a time when only the eldest son was allowed to marry from the community and the remaining male members have to resort to *sambandham* (alliance) from other communities in order to prevent loss of properties of the clan. This practice resulted in young women remaining unmarried or had to marry much married old men as there was no limitation of wives a



Son Neelan with sister Sathi and daughter



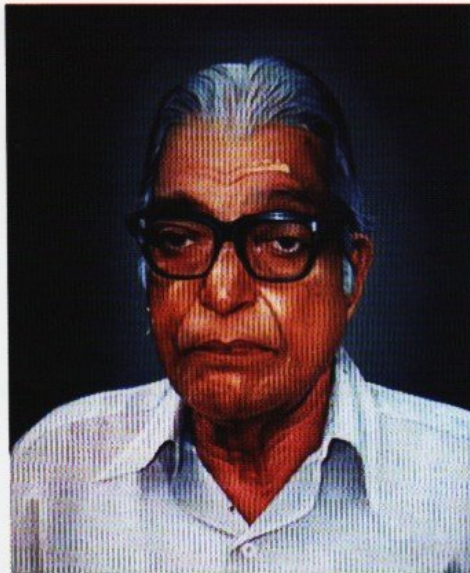
Son Premachandran



Col Induchudan with wife Mani

Namboothiri could have. Since there was dowry system prevailing, even for small monetary needs, men used to marry young girls but when the old husband died due to age, the bride became widows and the number of widows went on increasing. From a family only one boy was allowed to study to read and write and girls were never taught as they were meant to remain inside the house. All these unhealthy practices led to deterioration of the community values. When Parvathi Nenminimangalam asked young Namboothiries how many of them were ready to marry widows, Premji and MRB retorted saying the ball was in the court of widows and their parents. They wrote their willingness to marry widows if Parvathi Nenminimangalam brought willing widows. The first widow marriage was done by MRB when he married VT's young sister in law, a widow. This marriage resulted in heavy financial loss to the couple as MRB's wife did not get any share from her late husband's or MRB's houses. The couple was forced to live in poverty.

Premji stayed in Pariyarthu Kuriyedathu Mana while he was writing his play 'Rithumati.' The inmates of that Mana were Kuriyedathu Neelakantan, his wife and his diseased elder brother's widow Arya. She was a widow for twelve years. At Neelakantan's persuasion, Premji married Arya Antharjanam despite the heavy objections of her parents and brother. Premji was earning those days Rs.60 as proof reader in Deshabhimani. When Arya became pregnant, he resigned his job and the couple moved to Pariyaram. He was invited to join Mangalodayam as its proof reader. Mangalodayam was a highly reputed literary magazine as well as a publishing firm. They had published books written by Thakazhi, Changampuzha, Olappamanna, Mundasseri et al. Soon Kuriyedathu Neelakantan bought a house near Poonkunnam in the name of Arya Antharjanam and also kept aside a land that would fetch 5000 measures of paddy as lease rent. The land was lost later when Land Reforms Act was implemented. Though friends advised him to file a case in the court, Premji did not indulge in the court proceedings. Till his death, Premji stayed in that house and the road adjacent to that house is now known as Premji Road.



MRB

On account of widow marriage, Premji and MRB had to pay a heavy price. They were boycotted from all community functions. The boycott was withdrawn only when Premji's daughter Sathi was married. Premji-Arya couple has five children: Premachandran, Neelakantan (Neelan), Harindranath, Induchudan and Sathi. Premachandran died on March 25, 2003.

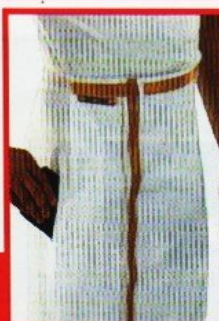
Mullamangalam Parameswaran Bhattachathiripad, nay, Premji went behind the curtain on August 10, 1998 and his wife followed him on May 22, 2016.

Premji, the human being

It is a travesty of destiny that even

after born in a rich family, Premji was destined to live in penury. Being a Namboothiri, he was denied a formal education. His thirst for societal justice, led him to act against the ban on widow marriage and unmatched marriage etc and thereby embracing poverty on account of excommunication. When he married Arya Antharjanam in 1948, his monthly income was a mere Rs.60. When his wife became pregnant, he had to resign from job in Deshabhimani and return to Pariyaram to attend to the needs of his wife. Later he joined Mangalodayam as proof reader for a salary of Rs.75 per month. When domestic expenditure mounted, instead of asking for a rise, he opted for more work. After his official work, to enhance his income he would go to Current Books and Geeta Press for their proof reading. Whenever any friend asked for help in rectifying the errors in their work, he used to help them too. However the income was very little. Some of them gave him only bus fare.

Premji was close to Prof Joseph Mundasseri. Though Mundasseri was a prolific writer, he hardly wrote anything. Either Premji would go to Mundasseri's place or the latter to the former's. Mundasseri would relax on a wooden easy chair and dictate while Premji like a pupil would take them down in his characteristic hand. However the monetary benefit out of this arrangement was hardly anything. Like a



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“ഒട്ടിച്ചോ കെട്ടിക്കോ വെൽക്രോ ദോത്തി പോക്കറ്റ് ഉൾപ്പെടെ”
ഫാക്ടറി വിലയിൽ ലഭിക്കുന്നതാണ്

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professional badminton player, Mundasseri would return all requests from Premji to unassailable corners.

Though the income was limited, its accounting was extensive. "We may not remember what we spent the money for. For everything, there should be proper accounting, he would say," his wife would remember later. His diary is full of accounts to the last paisa. Before retiring to the bed, he would write his diary and accounts.

Since the income was meagre, he used to borrow from acquaintances as well as from shops. Most of his friends were like him and so, borrowing money among them was routine. However, he was very punctual in returning them. All his income from movies was used for this purpose. His diary gives us a fair account of his financial transactions. There were occasions when he could not take materials he badly wanted to buy but could not take home as the shop keeper insisted on getting the previous balance. In an instance, he could not have lunch as there was no rice at home and had to manage the whole day with a cup of tea. He wrote down his sorrow when he could not give any 'kainecttam' to his wife and children during one Vishu. He had also written about his enormous pleasure when his eldest son Neelakantan gave his first salary of Rs.75. When he spent one entire month and two days to read the proof of 'Banabhattante Atmakatha', The



Premji and Arya Premji - wedding photo

Akademi sanctioned Rs.200 but he got only Rs.100 in hand. Many eminent people used his services for their writing, but paid him Rs.3 or Rs.10 etc. Premji never complained about such impropriety but only recorded in his diary. He used to take sick leave from Press and used to go to AIR or film shooting so that he could repay some loans. When he financial strain became too much to bear, he resigned from Mangalodayam and requested its MD to give him gratuity and other benefits. He

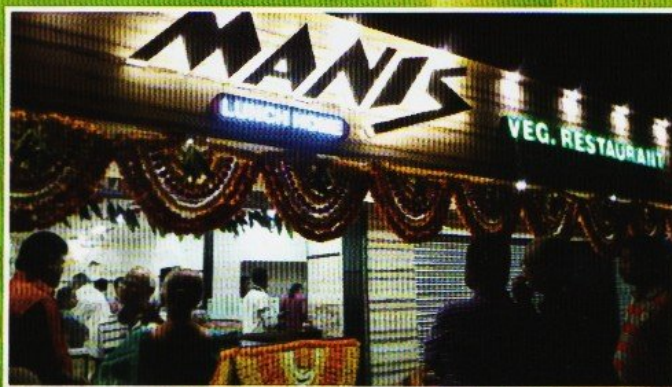
approached many influential persons for a job but he got only assurances and not the job. Then he started working on contractual basis. On one occasion, he dressed like Gandhi and stood stand still at an exhibition for Rs.100. He has also recorded that at some place that he received Rs.150 from Mundasseri for correcting the text of Mahabharata whereas the Akademi sanctioned Rs.250. He wrote in his diary, "May be he would give later."

Premji was very attached to his children and he never took any disciplinary actions against his children except once his third son put his father's signature on his school progress card. Premji held his son around his throat and pressed him against the wall and looked at him fiercely and warned him not to repeat his act.

Premji was highly respected by producer-director Kunchacko before whom only two persons had the privilege to sit on a chair. Actor Sathyan would pull a chair for himself whereas Premji would be invited to sit. Before each movie, Kunchacko would hold a pooja and Premji would be invited to perform it.

Once MT Vasudevan Nair asked him how he would react to Yama when approached to take him to the other world. His reply was, "Could I have another round of betel leaves?" It is said that he asked on the previous day of his final journey for his betel box (Chellam). ■ (To be continued)

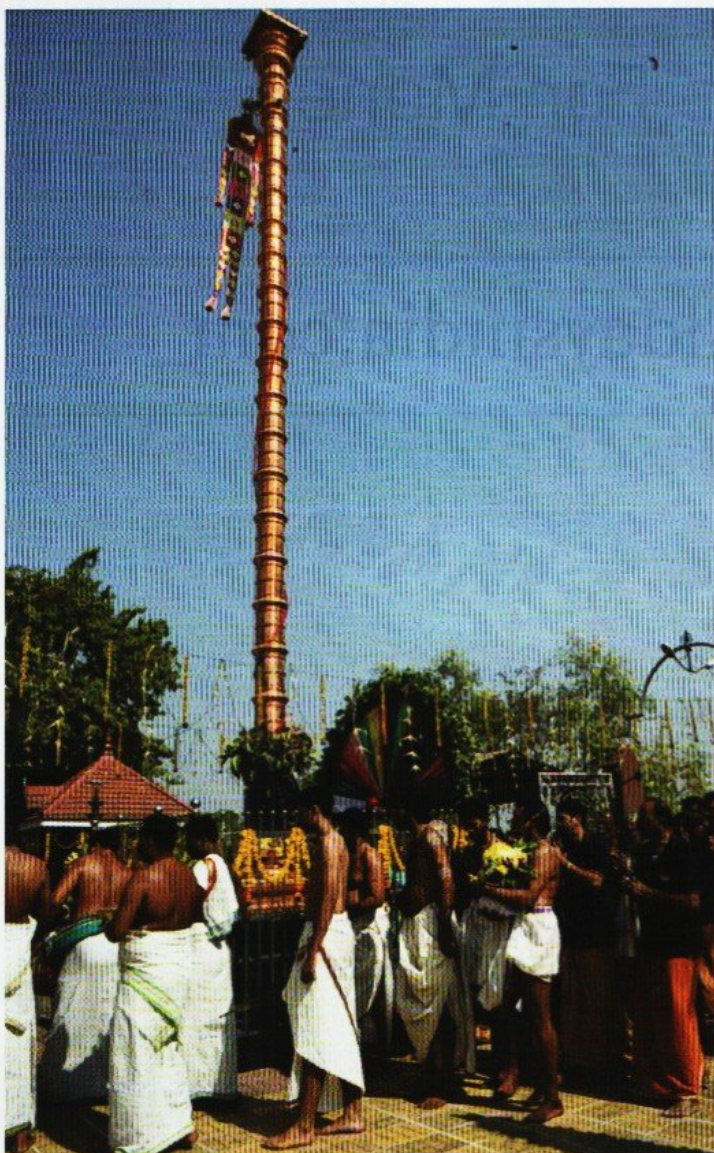
Mani's now at Chembur



MANI'S LUNCH HOME

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AYYAPPAGIRI TEMPLE AMBERNATH

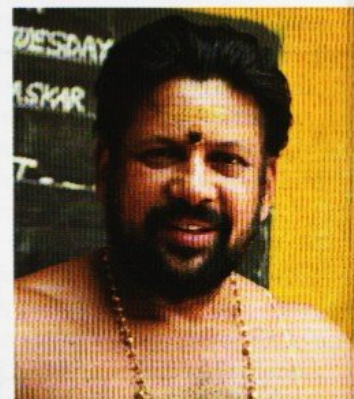


In the 60s Malayalees who settled in Ambernath and were devotees of Lord Ayyappa and who did regular pilgrimages to Sabarimala used to assemble in houses of devotees and they formed a Bhajana Sangam. This Bhajana Sangam decided to conduct Ayyappa Pooja in public and they began with a One day pooja at the Ordnance Grounds near Co-operative Society Store. As the number of participants swelled, the one day pooja got converted into five days Pooja and was performed in make shift temple (erected on a temporary basis). These five days pooja were conducted during Mandalam season, and on the last day Annadanam was offered where over a thousand of devotees took prasadam of Lord Ayyappa. Every year a group of devotees were taken to Sabarimala on pilgrimage. During this time a need for a permanent temple was felt and Shree Ayyappa Mission was formed in 1979.

Thereafter, search for a suitable land started and finally three acres of land was purchased from Government of Maharashtra on a Hillock in village Jawsai, Near Ordnance Estate, Ambernath West.

When land was being developed the members came across certain rocky areas and on 'Devaprasnam' presence of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvathi was found. The area was enclosed as 'Swayambhoo Lord Shiva & Goddess Parvathi' and prayers were offered.

One of the Mission members belonged to Pandalam Palace and he brought details of measurement of Sabarimala Temple. As a matter of fact, foundation stone for the temple was laid by a member of Pandalam Palace. The temple



Tantri Kandararu Rajivaru



construction began as per directions of Kanippayur Namboodhiri. In 1987 Lord Ayyappa was consecrated along with Lord Ganapathy, Devi and Naga Devatha by Brahmashri Kandararu Krishnaruru Tantri. As part of further temple development, 18 sacred steps were constructed and padi pooja was performed in 1990.

In 1995 Guruvayurappan Temple was constructed and consecration was done by Brahmashri Kandararu Rajivaru Tantri. As per the findings of the Devaprashnam conducted in 2005 Naga Devatha Prathishta has been shifted to a separate enclosure. Navagrahas were installed and consecrated in 2006.

The Mission members felt the need for a Dwajastambham without which the temple looked incomplete. In 2010, Dwajastambham was installed at the hands of Brahmashri Kandararu Rajivaru Tantri.

Thereafter, the project of building an auditorium was taken up, mainly for conducting temple functions and the same was inaugurated by the temple tantri on 28.10.2012. This auditorium can accommodate up to 700 people at a time.

Ayyappagiri

Ayyappagiri is a hillock situated 2 Kms from Ambarnath Railway Station (West). Treading to Ayyappagiri is not only an experience but a good exercise. When we reach Ayyappagiri, a pollution free cool and gentle breeze welcomes us. The breeze flow throughout the day and night and the entire environment is so serene that the area resembles a hill station. It has an extremely calm and quiet atmosphere.

Shree Ayyappa Mission, Ayyappagiri (SAMA)

Shree Ayyappa Mission has Life Members and Ordinary Members. General Body Meeting is held every year. Since 2015, Managing committee is elected for a term of 3 years. Managing Committee consists of 19 members and this Committee is responsible for the day to day affairs of the temple. The success of the mission is the selfless work of the mission members and whole hearted support of the devotees.

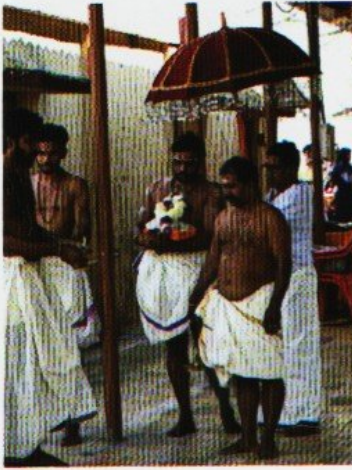
Rituals at the Temple

The temple complex consists of Lord Ayyappa, the

presiding Deity and temples for Ganapathy, Guruvayurappan, Shiva and Parvathi, Devi, Navagraha and Naga devatas. The temple opens in the morning at 6 and closes at 10 after Madhyanna pooja. In the evening it is open from 6 to 9, till completion of Athazha Pooja and recital of Harivarasanam. The rituals and poojas are conducted by learned priests specially coming from Kerala. Poojas, prasadam, etc are strictly as per instruction of the temple Tantri Brahmashri Kandararu Rajivaru who is attached to Sabarimala Temple. On special occasions Tantri from Kerala visits the temple to

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perform poojas.

Apart from regular and daily poojas, a number of special poojas and offerings are also conducted at the temple complex.

Mandala Pooja Festival: Special Mandala Pooja festival from 1st Vruschikam to 10th Dhanu (41 days) every year.

Aarattulsavam: Aarattulsavam is celebrated for 7 days from 23rd December to 29th December starting with Kotiyettam on the first day. On the last day before the Kotiyirakkam Para offerings from devotees are conducted in front of the *Kotimaram*, and large number of devotees come forward and offer it, as it is believed to be very auspicious time to offer Para to Lord Ayyappa. On the last day, Aarattu sadya (elaborate feast) is served to devotees at night after Deeparadhana.

Sarpa Bali: Sarpa Bali is conducted on the 5th day of

Aarattulsavam after Athazha Pooja on devotee participation basis by Priests specially invited from Kerala.

Sreebhootha Bali: On all 7 days of Ulsavam, Sreebhootha Bali is conducted in the temple by Priests specially invited from Kerala.

Ulsava Bali: It is proposed to conduct Ulsava Bali on one of the 7 ulsavam days, from 2016 with participation from devotees, as suggested in the Devaprashnam 2015.

Procession: On the last day of Aarattulsavam a procession is taken out carrying Lord Ayyappa Idol in a specially decorated chariot. Procession starts from Gaodevi Temple, near Wimco, 4 Kms away from the temple, covering different regions of Ambernath town. The procession is joined by chendamelam and thalapoli by female devotees dressed in traditional Kerala Dresses from Hanuman Temple located in Ordnance Estate. Hundreds of devotees take part in this.

Maha Annadanam: On 25th December every year (3rd day of Ulsavam) Maha Annadanam is served to all those who comes to the temple. Prasadoottu is carried out from 12 noon after Laksharchana and Maha Deeparadhana and it goes beyond 5 in the evening. Over 4,000 devotees are fed in this.

Makara Vilakku Celebration: On the day of Makara Vilakku a procession is taken out carrying Lord Ayyappa Idol in a specially decorated chariot. Procession starts from Hanuman Temple in Ordnance Estate which is 1.5 Kms from the temple. Procession includes two of the senior members of the mission carrying Thiruvabharanam of Lord Ayyappa on their heads in specially made boxes followed by chendamelam and Thalapoli by female devotees.

Prathishta Day: Prathishta day is celebrated in the month of June/July every year (Anizham star of Mithunam month). Annadanam is served on this day also.

Bhagavatha Sapthaham: Shrimad Bhagavatha Sapthaham is being conducted every year since 2005 by learned Acharyas from Kerala.

Festival Celebrations: Special poojas and programmes are held on all festivals, like Shivratri, Gokulashtami, Ganeshchaturthi, Vishu, Trikarthika, Vijayadashami, Navarathri, Paikuni Uthram, etc.

Vishukkani: On the day of Vishu, Vishukkani is shown to all devotees who come to the temple in the morning, by Melshanti.

Some of the regular activities of SAMA are:

Bhagavatham and Chendamelam Classes, Narayaneeyam Sahasranamam and Bhagavatham recitals, Bhajana sessions



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Kerala in Mumbai
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are held regularly and annadanam to the poor and needy on the first Sunday of every Malayalam calendar month, cooked by SAMA members is carried out in the temple. The food is packed and distributed in slums and orphanages. Approximately 250-300 packets are distributed every month. Fund for this is contributed by SAMA committee members and well wishers. Clothes are also distributed to the needy on the same day.

Social service

SAMA has conducted several free Medical camps in the past. Currently Dr. Sandeep Pillai (MD, Ayurvedic) is conducting Free Medical Check-up (Ayurvedic) on the first Sunday of every Malayalam calendar month between 9 & 11 am at Temple Auditorium. Basic medicines are also distributed free of cost.

During Ulsavam days in the month of December, cultural programmes, like, dance, Kaikottikali, Drama, orchestra, etc., are organized and performed at the Temple Auditorium. On 1st November 2015 SAMA organized Kerala Piravi Celebration in association with all Malayalee organizations of Ambarnath at the temple Auditorium.

SAMA felicitates students who top the classes of different schools in Ambarnath with certificate and cash prize. This is done during the inaugural function of the Ulsavam on 23rd December, every year.

It offers financial assistance for Medical and Education, to people who approach them and also in cases where it is genuine and deserving.

Medicinal plants are planted in and around the Ayyappagiri premises. An astrological park (Nakshatra Vanam) is also created in the temple vicinity. On completion of planting, devotees can make offerings and also sponsor the plants based on their star.

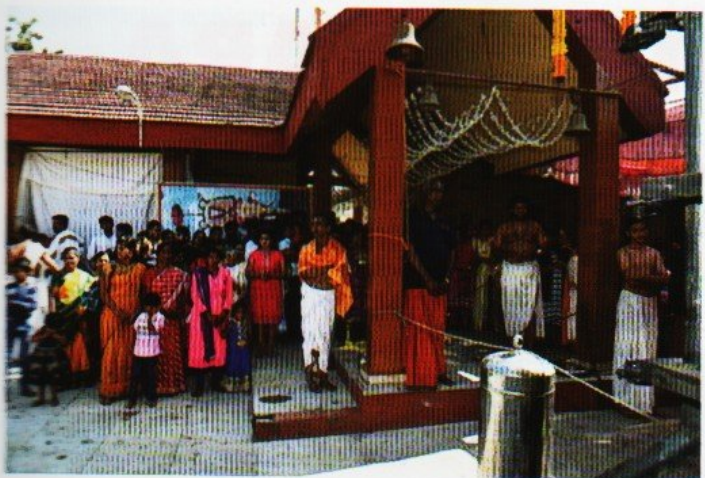
Kettunira, Choroonu, Marriage, and such other functions of religious/social importance are conducted on demand.

Sacred steps

After the installation of the main temple and Upadevatas the 18 sacred steps were constructed and pati pooja was performed by Brahmashri Kandararu Rajivaru Tantri in 1990. Patipooja requires elaborate arrangements and only the temple Tantri can perform it. At Ayyappagiri the 18 Sacred Steps are closed and kept under lock and key. On Sabarimala Pooja calendar days it is opened for Devotees, on request. Devotees who come with minimum 7 days of fast (in line with what is followed for Sabarimala Pilgrimage) can climb the 18 Sacred Steps by breaking a coconut at the foot of the steps.

Sabarimala pilgrimage

During the year many Pilgrim Groups and individuals use the temple facility for their Mala Dharan and Irumuti. Temple facilitates and makes necessary arrangements for the same. A Group of 50-60 Swamis from the temples go to Sabarimala, every year during Mandalam season under the guidance of temple Guruswami P G Kutty. During this pilgrimage one of the swamis will carry pitipanam (money from temple Hundi, two hands full and twice) in his irumuti for samarpanam at Sabarimala Sannidhanam Hundi. This is as per findings of Devaprashnam 2015. Similar practice is being followed at Lord Shiva temple, Ambarnath. ■





V N Gopalakrishnan

■ Mar Kuriakose Elias Chavara popularly known as Fr. Chavara or Chavara Achan is a Syrian Catholic saint and social reformer. He was the pioneer of popular education

in Kerala. A man of prayer and intense charity, Fr. Chavara carried out several religious and social activities for the betterment of the society. There is no area of human endeavour which he has not touched during his life time. On April 7, 1984, Pope John Paul II declared him *Venerable* and beatified him at Kottayam on February 8, 1986 during the course of a papal visit to India. On November 23, 2014, he was canonised at Saint Peter's Square by Pope Francis. He is the first canonised male saint of Indian origin who belongs to the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church.

Fr. Chavara was the co-founder and Prior General of the first indigenous religious congregation for men in the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church known as the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI). A similar congregation for women known as Congregation of the Mother of Carmel (CMC) was also founded by him.

SAINT CHAVARA VISIONARY FOR SECULAR EDUCATION AND SOCIAL AWAKENING

He is the first canonised male saint of Indian origin who belongs to the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church.



In the history of the Kerala Church, the contribution of Fr. Chavara is significant. In 1846, he started the first Sanskrit School at Mannanam. This has initiated an epoch-making drive in the form of a chain of schools that brought about an integration of the downtrodden people. He championed the cause of women empowerment by instituting the first boarding school at Koonammavu. He also initiated a model for social reforms like contributing a handful of rice (*pidiyari*) and setting apart a coconut tree (*kettuthengu*) and its yields for social cause.

In 1846, he endured immense hardships to start the first Catholic printing press named St. Joseph's Press

at Mannanam without the help of foreigners. It was the third printing press in Kerala. The first daily news paper in Malayalam, *Nasrani Deepika*, came out from this press besides several other publications. Syriac was first printed in Kerala and the early prayer books in Malayalam were also published, thanks to the efforts of Fr. Chavara. He also prepared the first liturgical calendar in the Malabar Church in 1862 which continued to be in use till recent years.

In 1864 Bishop Bernadine Baccinelli ordered to start a school along with every church when Fr. Chavara was the Vicar General of Syrian Catholics who inspired the community to start schools in every parish along with their churches. This has helped in making education free for all. Thus the schools in Kerala came to be known as *Pallikkootam* because it is a place for education attached to the church.

Fr. Chavara was accepted and referred to as a man of God, right from his early years. He started the first religious house at Mannanam followed by many in different parts of Kerala. She also started seminaries for the education and formation of clergy besides annual retreats for priests and laity. Forty-hour adoration, a house for the dying and destitute were also started under his leadership.

Kuriakose, as he was called in childhood, was born on February 10, 1805 at Kainakary near Alappuzha as the sixth son to devout Catholic parents of Iko (Kuriakose) Chavara and Mariam Thoppil. The name *Kuriakose* is derived from the Syriac Aramaic name *Quriagos*. The Chavara family is believed to be the descendants of the Pakalomattam family. They were one of the four that claim descent from the time of St. Thomas at Palayur in Central Kerala. Syrian Christians are believed to have been baptised by St. Thomas, an Apostle of Jesus Christ in the first century and are also known as Saint Thomas Christians.

Young Kuriakose was baptised on February 17, 1805 at the St. Joseph's Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, Chennamkary. On September 8, 1805 he was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Marian Shrine in Vechoor. At the age of five, he began his studies in the village school called *Kalari* under the guidance of a Hindu master called *Asan* (teacher). He continued to study



languages and elementary sciences there till the age of 10. Later Malpan Thomas Palackal invited him to his seminary at Pallipuram. Since he was too young, he spent about two years under the care of the parish priest. In 1818 he joined the Pallipuram seminary at the age of 13 to lead a monastic life. Bishop Aurelius Stabilini, Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly ordained him priest at the St. Andrew's Forane Church, Artungal on November 29, 1829 at the age of 24 and celebrated his first Holy Qurbana there and his First Holy Mass at Chennankari Church. After the ordination, he was engaged for some time in pastoral ministry. However, he returned to the Seminary to teach and officiate for Malpan Thomas Palackal during his absence.

During this period, an epidemic broke out in Kainakary and the surrounding areas. His father, mother and only brother fell prey to the epidemic. As there was no heir in the family, relatives compelled him to discontinue seminary life and come to the family. But he managed the family affairs without disturbing his priestly studies.

When Malpan Thomas Palackal and Malpan Thomas Porukara were planning to start a congregation, he joined them. The foundation for the first monastery named *Servants of Mary Immaculate* at Mannanam was laid on May 11, 1831 by Malpan Thomas Porukara. Fr. Chavara believed that intellectual development and the education of women was the first step towards overall social welfare. Hence, in co-operation with Malpan Palackal Thomas and Malpan Thomas Porukara, he founded the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) for men. Jacob Kanianthara, who later became the first professed brother in the congregation also co-operated with the three founding fathers.

After the death of Malpan Thomas Palackal in 1841 and Malpan Thomas Porukara in 1846, Fr. Chavara took up the mantle of leadership. On December 8, 1855 he and ten other priests took vows in the Carmelite tradition under the name 'Kuriakose Elias of Holy Family'. Subsequently, he was nominated as the Prior General of the Mannanam Monastery. Fr. Chavara introduced retreat preaching for the laity for the first

എന്നും നാടിനൊപ്പം...
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time in the Kerala Church. In 1866 with the co-operation of Fr. Leopold Beccaro OCD, Fr. Chavara started the Congregation of the Mother of Carmel (CMC) for women.

Amidst diverse and manifold activities, Fr. Chavara found time to write a few books, both prose and verse with unique spiritual vision. His counsels to the Christian families given in the form of a "Testament of a Loving Father" are universally applicable and are relevant till today. His notes were collected and edited into 4 volumes. They are: *Chavarayachante Sampoorana Kruthikal* (Complete works of Fr. Chavara. Vol I-IV), *Oru Nalla Appante Chavarul* (Blessed Chavara). Several of his biographies have been published in Malayalam, English, Hindi, Kannada and Gujarati languages. The Malayalam publications are: *Malankara Sabhamathavinte Oru Veerasanthanam athava Divyasree Chavara Kuriakose Elias achan*; *Pulakamaniyunna Bharatham*; *Vazhthappetta Chavara Kuriakose Eliasachan*; *Akasadeepangal Sakshi*; *Aroopiude Meloppulla Manushyan*; *Manassil Nirayunna*

Chavarayachan; Nanmayude Geethakangal; Chavarayachan Vividha Veekshanangalil etc. Perspectives of a Heroic Christian Life by Fr. Lucas Vithuvattical and *The Pastoral Vision of K.E. Chavara* by Rev. Dr. Joseph Kanjiramattathil are other works on Fr. Chavara. He also authored the first long lyrical poem, *The Martyrdom of Anastasia*, the first dramatic plays in Malayalam in the pastoral (shepherd) genre or *Eclogues of Italy*, the first biography and model chronicles. Other major literary works such as *Atmanuthapam* and *Marana Veetil Patunna Paana* also came out from his pen.

On January 3, 1871, Fr. Chavara passed away at the age of 66 after a short but painful illness at Koonammavu. He was buried at the St. Philomena's Forane Church first and later his mortal remains were transferred to St. Joseph's Monastery Church at Mannanam. Several miraculous favours were reported during Fr. Chavara's life time. Sister Alphonsa who later became the first saint of India has testified in 1936 that Kuriakose Elias Chavara had

appeared to her twice during her illness and relieved her suffering.

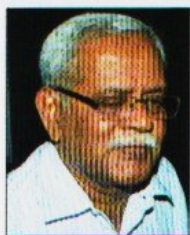
In 1955, Mar Mathew Kavukattu, Archbishop of Changanacherry, received instructions from Rome to start diocese-level procedure towards the canonization. Pope Francis canonised him at Saint Peter's Square on November 23, 2014.

Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara Chair has been instituted in the Mahatma Gandhi University in 2015 on the occasion of his canonization. The Chair has been established to commemorate his services and contributions in the field of education in Kerala during the 19th century. It is a tribute to the great man, who with limited opportunities had mastered six languages, improvised a press for printing and publishing.

Thousands of people visit his tomb at Mannanam every Saturday for the Holy Mass and Novena. The feast of Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara is celebrated with great devotion annually from December 26 to January 3. As per the Syro-Malabar liturgical calendar, his memorial is being celebrated on January 3 every year. ■



THE STORY OF THE **PARSIS**



K R Narayanan

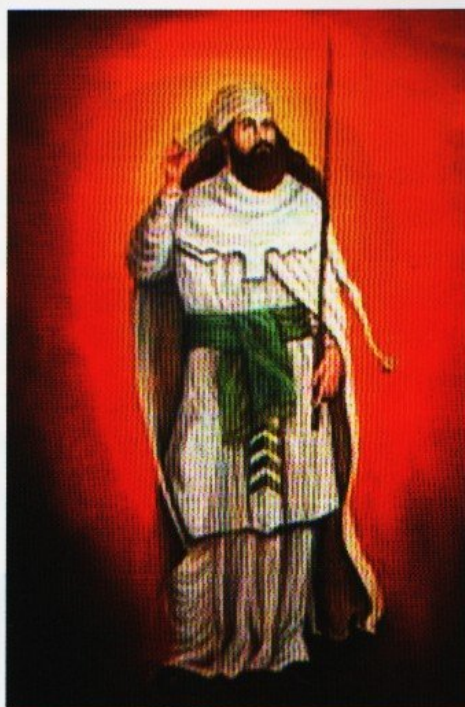
■ Bombay (the present Mumbai) owes quite a lot to its Parsi community for its growth into India's major economic hub and a principal metropolis. The Parsis played a major

role in initiating and promoting some outstanding industrial, social and nation building processes in India in general and the then Bombay in particular. This enterprising Aryan community has had a long story of migration from their original home in the good old Persian Empire.

Parsis, like the Jews, are a community, which migrated from their home land in Persia (Iran) to India's west coast in order to escape from the religious oppressions and to preserve their faith and culture. While the Jews belonged to the Semitic race, and took shelter in the then kingdom of the Perumals of Mahodayapuram, in Central Kerala, the Aryan Parsis sought asylum in the Southern Gujarat.

The Persian Empire

The historians say that the great Persian empire (550 BC - 330 BC) was established in the year 550 before Christ and was gradually expanded to the Mediterranean, Aegian, Black Sea, Red Sea, Caspian Sea and the Indian Ocean regions. Six major rivers Euphrates, Tigris, Sindhu, Jaxartes, Oxus, and the Nile - made this



kingdom very fertile and the kingdom grew to great fame under the great ruler, Cyrus. The Persian empire spread over to Asia Minor, Greece, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Northern Arabia, Mesopotamia, Persia, Afghanistan, Turkistan, Uzbekistan, parts of Soviet Russia, and the western

and Sind regions of the river Indus. In spite of the fact that the subjects were multiracial and belonged to different faiths, the rulers respected and honoured all the religions and faiths and treated all the subjects alike. Cyrus' successor, Darius, too was a noble and powerful ruler and followed the liberal policies of his predecessor. The kingdom flourished and the subjects lived happily and peacefully.

After the death of Darius, however, the Persian kingdom became weak and was subjected to many attacks by the Muslims and the Mongolians. This paved the way for the deterioration and the ultimately end of the Persian Empire and its culture and civilization. By about the 7th century after Christ, the Islamic faith started strengthening here and this territory, ultimately, came under the rule of the Muslim Khalifas. (It may be recalled here that, much later in 1979, the erstwhile Persian territories transformed into an Islamic State under the name Iran).

Migration to Indian Shores

When the Islamic attacks and forceful conversions increased, the

Persians or the *Parsees* started migrating eastwards over the seas, to the present Sind regions of Pakistan and the coastal Saurashtra regions of the present Gujarat. In India, their first settlement was in Diu, along the Saurashtra coast, where they landed through the sea route, with their Sacred Fire or *Iran*



Dadabhai Naoroji



Bhikaji Cama



Sir Pherozeshah Mehta

Shah. It was these Persians who are now known as the Parsis or the Zoroastrians of India.

They lived in Diu for about nineteen years and, thereafter, moved further south through the sea route and reached the erstwhile port of Sanjan (near Surat) in 936 AD. They obtained the permission of the then Hindu ruler, Jadav Rana, to settle down and establish their place of worship there. They established the first Sacred Fire temple - Parsi Agyari - of India in Sanjan and lived for about 300 years peacefully there, in great harmony with the people of Sanjan. Persia was well-known to the Indian community of those days and was referred to as *Paras*. As this Aryan community came from *Paras*, they were called Parsis in their new land.

There is a very popular and oft-repeated story in regard to the acceptance of the Parsis to the then Gujarati community by the ruler Jadav Rana of Sanjan. When the Parsis sought the Rana's permission to settle in Sanjan, the Rana is said to have sent a glass of milk, filled to the brim, indicating that the place was full and there was not much room left. But, the wise Parsi leader added/dissolved some sugar in the milk and returned it to the Rana to drink. His message was that they would dissolve or merge with the local people and live as an integral part of Rana's territory. Rana understood this, liked the message, drank the milk and invited the Parsis to be a part of his kingdom. Honourable and sincere as they are, the Parsis have kept this promise of their ancestors till date. Not only that, they contributed greatly for the socio-economic progress of their new homeland as well.

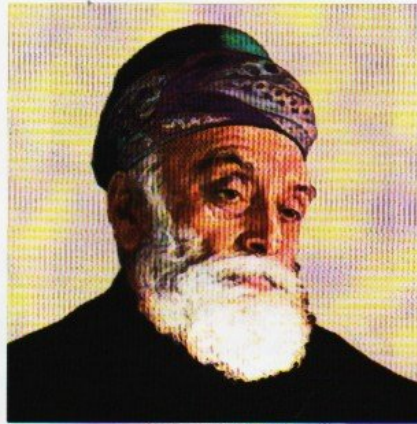
It is worth mentioning, in this regard, that the Parsis, who migrated to the Sind regions (in Pakistan) were humiliated and mostly annihilated by the then ruler Ibrahim Gusnavid and in Thane, north of the good old Bombay, it was the Christian Portuguese rulers that caused their destruction.

Later, when Sanjan was attacked by the Muslim invaders, many Parsees fought in the Rana's army to protect his

kingdom and faced heroic death in the battlefields. Those who survived, had to migrate for safety again, with their sacred fire, to Odawa (in the present Valsad district of Gujarat), and established a new Fire Temple -Agyari- there. In addition, one more fire temple was established later (1516) in Navsari (present Navsari district of South Gujarat).



Dr. Homi Bhabha



Jamshetji Tata

As their population increased, the Parsis migrated to Khambat (Cambay), Ankleshwar, Variyav, Wankaner, Surat, all in Gujarat, and to the then Bombay, Thane, Chavul, in the present Maharashtra, and also to the Punjab, Dehradun and the like in North India.

Having settled on the Gujarat soil, the Parsi community underwent a lot of social changes. They gradually shifted from the Persian language and adopted Gujarati as their mother tongue. The women started wearing saris in the Gujarati tradition and started using nose

rings and other ornaments like the Gujarati women. In short, they became real Gujarati Indians, in due course of time. As the good old Port of Surat grew to a trade and commercial hub, in the 16th century, many of the Parsis moved to Surat and established their trade in this commercial port town.

Parsis and Bombay/Mumbai

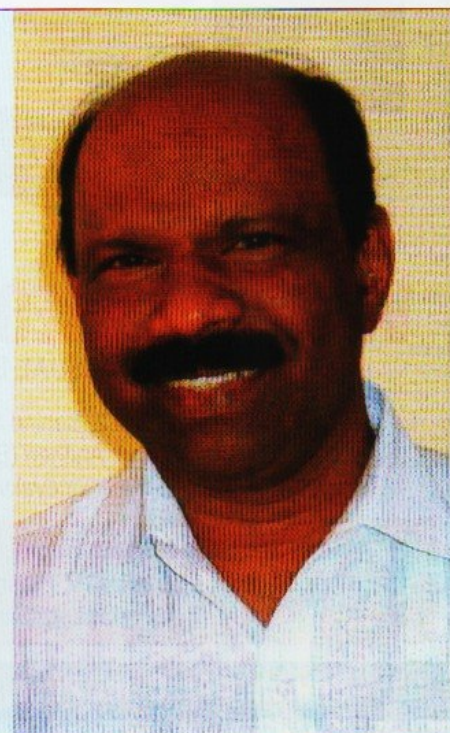
Similarly, as the trade facilities and the port of Bombay developed, many Parsis moved to Bombay and the nearby areas. Ever since Dorabji Nanabhai and others settled here, the Parsis grew to become a major business and trading community of Bombay. They played a major role in developing Bombay as a major commercial hub of India.

As per the records, the Parsis moved into Bombay by 1640, almost 25 years before the British assumed power. In 1673, the British handed over a piece of land in Malabar Hill to the Parsi community to establish their first Tower of Silence (Parsi funeral place).

Some of the top Parsi entrepreneurs like Lowji Nusserwanji Wadia (a shipbuilder from Surat), Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy (a reputed merchant), Cowasji Nanabhai Davar (a cotton mill

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**Sasi Damodaran
& Family**



entrepreneur) and the like entered the economic scene to boost Bombay's earnings. The then East India Company earned a very handsome income from India's first spinning mill the Bombay Spinning Mill - established in 1854.

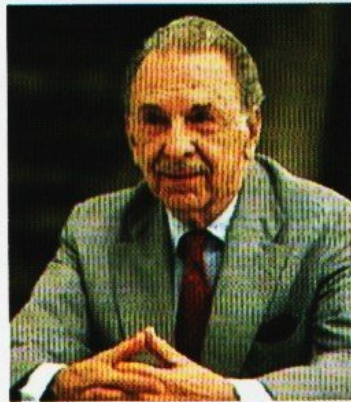
This had a great impact on the Lancashire mill owners, as the East India Company saw that they were making more income from Indian mills than from their own cotton mills in England. By 1870, Bombay had 13 spinning mills and by 1915, Bombay was among the top cotton mill cities with 83 spinning mills. It generated a lot of employment for the local Indians, who were changing from farmers to workers and traders.

Jamshetji Tata gave India its first steel industry and hydro-electricity taking the economy of the country to a new level.

One of Jamshetji's successors, J.R.D. Tata, took the pioneering steps to promote Indian aviation and was responsible for founding the first ever

aviation company in India. J R D Tata was the founder chairman of the Air India, which connected India with the outside world, and the domestic airways in the country.

Parsis also collaborated with the British to start new education and learning centres across Bombay and India. *Monstuart Elphinstone*



J.R.D. Tata



Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw

established the Bombay Native Education Society in 1820 and by 1860 the Parsi women started educating girls from middle and poor classes. Also, many young Parsis were regaining access to western education and, hence, liberal thinking of the Indian

Independence movement came to the forefront. Dadabhoi Naoroji, Madam Bhikaji Cama and Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and the like walked hand in hand with the Indians to free India from the British rule.

By the time India obtained freedom, Parsis were into almost everything. They had started their own medical centres, boys scout troops, ambulance corps, literature groups, newspapers, magazines, educational institutions, legal institutions, housing estates, art, music,

entertainment, and even governance. From petty traders and entrepreneurs that focused on shipbuilding, heavy industries, and cotton mills, the Parsis had strengthened the Indian economy in every possible way without dominating over other Indian communities.

This small community had also taken steps to boost art, culture, music and entertainment in India. While Dadasaheb Phalke is considered the Father of Indian Cinema, Ardeshir Irani directed the first Indian sound film, *Alan Ara*, in 1931. The Parsis adopted theatrical skills from the Europeans as well and blended them into a new style. In the 1850s, the students of Elphinstone College in Bombay formed a dramatic society to perform Shakespeare. Soon after the first Parsi Theatre Company called Parsi Natak Mandali was founded in 1853.

The veteran film actor-director of the early Indian film industry, Sorab Modi, achieved great fame in the then film world and the Indian conductor of Western Classical music -Zubin Mehta earned a name in the world of music. Many legal luminaries like Padma Vibhushan Fali S. Nariman (former Additional Solicitor General of India), and Soli Jehangir Sorabji (former Attorney General of India) and political leaders like Piloo Modi (former MP and founding member of the Swatantra Party) come from the Parsi community. The world famous physicist and atomic scientist Homi Jehangir Bhabha and the hero of the second Pakistan war (1971), Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw were the gifts of the Parsi community to modern India.

Generally, the Parsis do not allow any other community to enter the fire temples or any other religious place. Also, no one other than those born of Parsi parents could be initiated, through *Navjyot*, into their religion. No marriages between Parsis and non Parsis are permitted. In view of these restrictions, the marriages have been very much limited within the community. Therefore, the Parsi population in India has been reduced to a meagre one lakh. Some statistics indicate that this number could be reduced to even a mere 30,000 by about 2020. There have been great attempts to liberalize the conventions and traditions and strengthen the Parsi population in India, which are yet to bear fruit. ■

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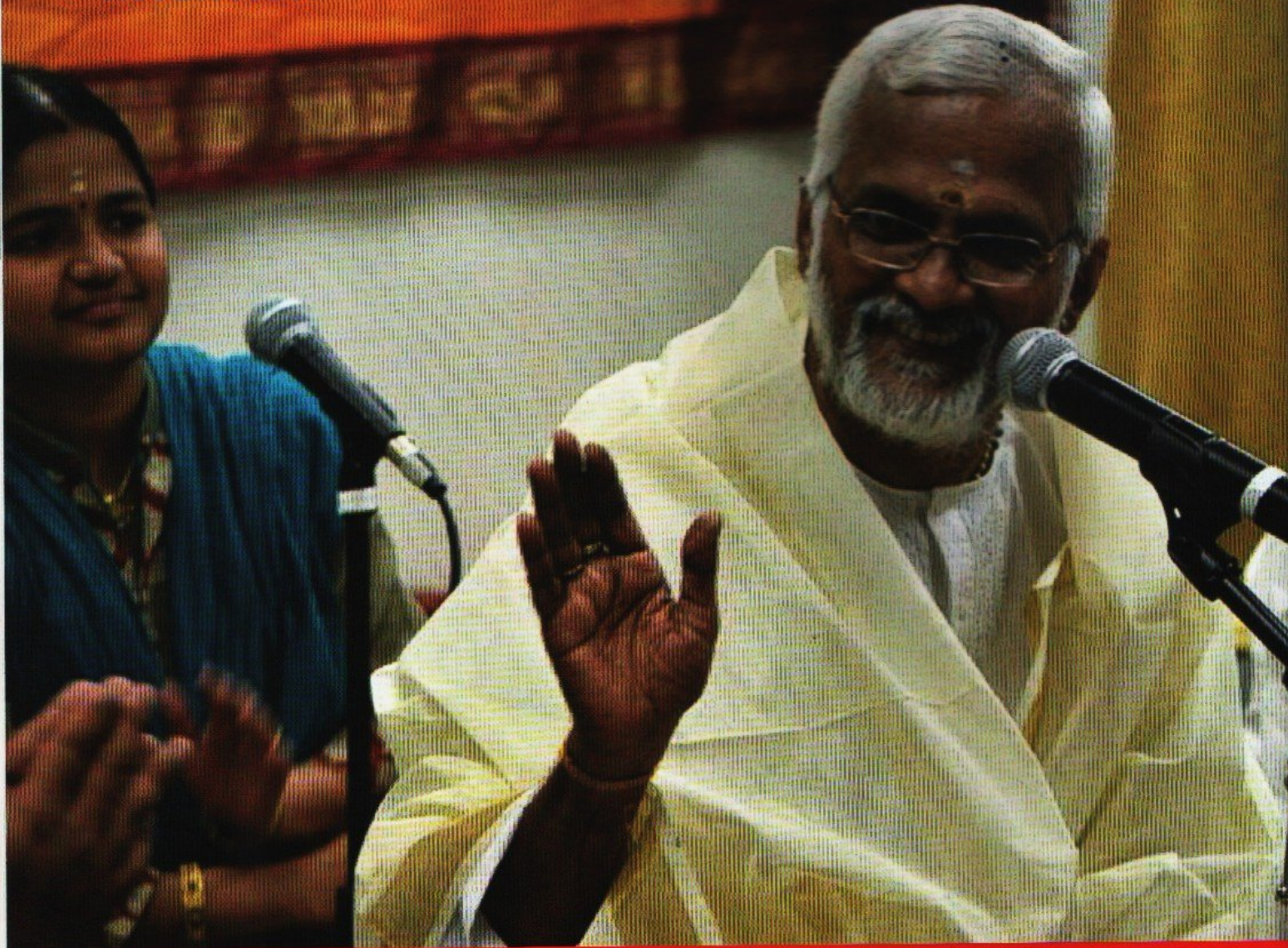
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T S Radhakrishnan

DEVOTION IN MIND AND MUSIC

An interview with T S Radhakrishnan who is being bestowed with Raagalaya Lifetime Achievement 2016

- Padmakumar

Just press your finger on the audio player and close your eyes; you would be swept away by the devotional song 'ഒരു നേരെമെങ്കിലും കാണാതെ വയ്ക്കുന്റെ ഗുരുവായൂരപ്പാ നിൻ ദിവ്യ രൂപം'... (Oru neramenkilum kanathe vayyente guruvayoorappa...) A bright image of that mischievous child would appear not only in your closed eyes but of everyone who listen to that song. Penned by Chowallur Krishnankutty and music composed by T S Radhakrishnaji this song had the signature of Guruvayurappan- its story

goes like this:

T S: Chowallur was then working in Manorama Cochin and I was very active in a devotional music troupe. With his Guruvayur connection we could present a devotional music nite there. It occurred to us that one special song also to be rendered besides our normal devotional songs. Chowallur wrote two songs and I composed their tunes. The song 'Ashtamirohini naalil...' was rendered by a girl and I myself sang 'Oru neramenkilum...' When I rendered that song before Lord himself, everyone

liked it and then lord also must have liked it. I have no other reason to cite why Yesudas still sings that song everywhere. He sings it even in classical concerts. I have composed so many songs before and after this song but the listeners demand this song first.

KIM: All songs in the album Thulasitheertham are good. How did you manage it?

TS: It is a long story. My father Krishnaji was not a musician but was a music lover. Dasettan used to address him as Swami.. Whenever Dasettan

came to Ganamela or concerts, father used to take me with him to meet him. Since I started composing music, like other composers, I also had a wish to get Dasettan to sing one of my songs. When I composed my first song 'Sree vaazhum pazhavangadiyile ganapati bhagavane..', I went to meet him and told my desire. He was then busy with the setting up of Tharangini and therefore excused himself, saying that until he was settled he wouldn't sing for other producers. Finally Jayachandran rendered that song and my friend Hari of Harisri banners produced Harisri Prasadam. Jayachandran sang three songs. Kanhangad Ramachandran and I sang the remaining songs. Afterwards he produced Harisri Abhishekam and Harisri Prasadam. Manjil Virinha Pookkal was just released then. Its music director Jerry Amaldev happened to hear one of those songs and sent for me to make me his assistant. That was how I entered movie world. My first film was 'Ethirppukal.' its director Unni Aranmula himself was the lyricist. This film had two heroes; Mammooty and Raatheesh. 'മനസ്സൊരു മായാപ്രപഞ്ചം - അതിൽ ആയിരമായിരം അവ്യക്തചിത്രങ്ങൾ

വരയ്ക്കുന്നു മായ്ക്കുന്നു കാല...' Fine wordings. We went to Tharangini for the recording and Dasettan sang that song. Vani Jayaram was given other two

returned to Thiruvananthapuram with that cassette. When Dasettan was listening to them inside, we were waiting anxiously downstairs. His PA came down and murmured that Dasettan liked the songs and probably we would get his response that day itself. Later we got his positive response, "Go ahead!" We made the orchestration and got the track recorded and returned to

The period of 80-90 was the golden era of devotional music. Yesudas, Jayachandran, Chithra, Unni Menon, Madhu Balakrishnan, Hariharan et al rendered my songs.



Thiruvananthapuram. Next four years were a period of prolonged waiting. There was no communication or any movement. I got busy with compositions and devotional songs. In 1985 Sri Kalyanasundaram (he was my guru as well as of Dasettan) decided to get his Vaikkathappan Suprabhatam rendered by Dasettan. He took me along during his journey to Thiruvananthapuram. This recording went on for five days. During this period I told my Guru about my dilemma. Guru confronted

songs. When I had an opportunity, I reminded him about my earlier request. He wanted me to compose the songs and let him hear them. I returned to Chowallur and prepared two songs. I

Dasettan, "Das, he is as dear to me as you are. Why don't you help him?" "It was only because of busy schedule. Since you are asking, I shall start today." That day first song Ganapati was



T S Radhakrishnan with family members

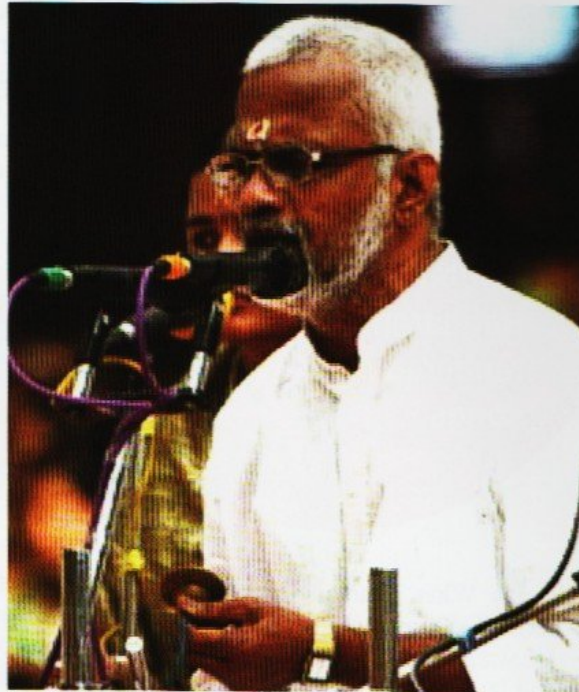
recorded. Then another long wait of one year. One day I received a call from Tharangini at my house in Ernakulam. I should reach there next day. I went along with Chowallur. Dasettan had a new recording mike. He rendered seven songs that day. Then he got it done by a female singer but the rendition was not liked by him. Finally he got it done by K S Chithra.

KIM: Afterwards there was plethora of devotional songs, right?

TS: Yes, it registered a record sale. None anticipated that the devotionals could have such a market. Chowallur and I got an offer to do one Ayyappa Devotional but we could not do that as we had already made a similar commitment to another producer. That was 'Karpooradeepam.' Swati Cassettes produced it and Jayachandran sang Ayyappa devotional songs. That too had a record sale. With the profits made by its sales, its producer bought a bus. Next year I did another Ayyappan devotional for Tharangini. Out of the twenty cassettes I did for Dasettan, eight were Ayyappan Devotionals. Among them were Gangatheertham and Pavizhamalli. The eighteenth Ayyappan Devotional of Tharangini was also done by me.

KIM: You may have some unforgettable experiences. Can you share some of them?

TS: This is about Chithra. When I was doing Ethirpukal, I happened to meet M G Radhakrishnan Sir. He wanted to know if the film had any songs for female. I told him that two songs were there but they were assigned to S Janaki. "How sad! I have a girl, Chithra. She can sing well. Very smart.



I expressed my helplessness. A new person has to obey the production house. Later Vani Jayaram rendered those songs. When Dasettan suggested that two songs of Thulasitheertham could be in female voice, I never expected that Chithra would sing them. She was such a busy singer. Earlier Tharangini got those song rendered by

another female singer. I had heard them. I was in Madras for some time. When I returned to Kerala, I saw an advertisement of Thulasitheertham with pictures of mine along with Dasettan and Chowallur. I was surprised when I saw the name of Chithra against two songs. Later Chithra narrated to me about those songs. Her father was hospitalised because of cancer. She during that period received a call from Tharangini asking her to render two songs soon. After hearing the earlier track, she gave her soul to the songs. The song was 'തിരുവാനന്തപുരം... (Thiruvananthapuram...)' Within half an hour of recording father died.

KIM: Where do today's devotional songs stand?

TS: Pathetic! My generation and I are lucky. Cassettes like Thulassitheertham, Gangatheertham and Pavizhamalli are still being released but hardly have any buyer. This year also we did a devotional but how many people listened to it! The period of 80-90 was the golden era of devotional music. Yesudas, Jayachandran, Chithra, Unni Menon, Madhu Balakrishnan, Hariharan et al rendered my songs. Only SPB is an exception. that is my big fortune. Since I could generate so many songs during that period, I am still remembered.

KIM: Have you done any experimentation in music?

TS: For my first song, I played the tune on a guitar and R K Damodaran wrote the lyrics accordingly. It was an experimentation then. Afterwards on a suggestion from Dasettan, I used two ragas, never used earlier. In Surya raagam, "ഹരിവരാസനം കേട്ടുമയങ്ങിയ ഹരിഹരപുത്രാ ഉണരൂ..." Then ശരം കുത്തിയാലിന്റെ മുറിവേറ്റ മനസ്സോടെ ശബരിമലയിൽ വാഴും അമ്മ..." in Samudrapriya raagam. The first song was recorded in Dasettan's studio in Madras. It was above his residential area. As soon as it was recorded, he called Prabha Chechi and made her listen to it.

This year's award for life time achievement by Raagalaya Academy of Music and Arts is being bestowed on T S Radhakrishnaji who consider music and devotion of utmost invaluable in life. Among the thousands of songs being played in houses and temples in Kerala during early morning and evening, at least one would be from T S. May be, that could be the reason why he is getting it! ■



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on its 7th Anniversary



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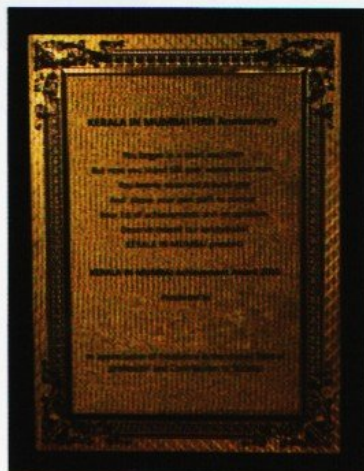
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KIM Achievement Awards 2017

As part of its seventh Anniversary Celebrations, **KERALA IN MUMBAI** felicitates several Malayalees who have made a mark in Mumbai and proved themselves achievers in their chosen field of profession.

Moreover they have also shared a portion of their wealth towards charitable activities and contributed to social growth and economic development in their own way. All these personalities have been featured in our columns.

However the list is not conclusive. There are more and more Mumbai Malayalees who are Mumbai's pride and in due course **KERALA IN MUMBAI** plans to recognize and felicitate each one of them.



P R Krishnan

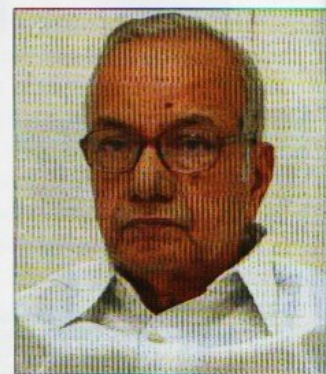
■ P R Krishnan is a senior labour leader of Maharashtra. Born into an agricultural family at Ellvally village in Trichur District, he had his primary education in his native place and came to Mumbai at the age of 16. While working, he studied in the night school run by Bombay Keraleeya Saksharata Prachara Sabha

He became a card-holder of the Communist Party of India in September 1953, at the age of 18. During 1960 to 1964 he was a member of AITUC Maharashtra State Committee. He played an important role in the formation of CPI (M) in Maharashtra and is its Bombay Committee member from its inception in 1964. His role in the formation of CITU in Maharashtra is equally significant. He is Secretary of CITU's Maharashtra State Committee from 1974. He is also the President of Bombay Committee of CITU since its formation. In addition, he was Vice President of Goa State committee of CITU for 9 years. He has been a member of the All India General Council of CITU for 20 years. During the past 62 years in Mumbai, Krishnan has worked in different capacities in the social, cultural, literary, educational, political, trade union and legal fields. As a labour law practitioner he has more than 1200 reported judgments to his credit.

He took active part in the movement for reorganisation of States on linguistic basis, and got arrested in the agitation for Samyukta Maharashtra. He was also an active participant in the movement for liberation of Goa-Diu-Daman, Pondicherry and Mahe.

The story of Krishnan's life is a story of the struggles of the working class which took place not only in Maharashtra but also in other parts of India in which he was an active participant. These are stories of struggles waged by the common people against capitalist onslaughts and Governmental repressions during the periods of globalization on the dictates of the World Bank, IMF, WTO, and multinational corporations. He is a source of inspiration to the younger generation in their struggle against injustice, for achieving the goal of an exploitation-free welfare Society.

He has authored *Atichamarthalam Cheruthunilpam* (Olivile Lekhanangal (Oppression Resistance Writings of Underground Days), *Olimagatha Ormakal Oru Pravasiyude Viplavajeevitha Smaranakal* (Unfading Memories of a Revolutionary Migrant) and *Milestones* (Revisited in English). His 'Flames from the Battle front' is a Collection of reports that he wrote for *People's Democracy*, the mouthpiece of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) published from Delhi and many of these have been translated and published in all major Indian languages through CPI (M)'s regional newspapers and weekly publications. Krishnan has also co-authored a book 'Survey of Pay packets in Mumbai Thane region' under the auspices of Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry and also published 'A booklet on some problems of Workmen'. P R Krishnan is a regular writer of features of current social and political issues in *Kerala In Mumbai*.



Karthyayani G Menon

■ Mrs Karthyayani G Menon, Secretary of the prestigious Jehangir Art Gallery is a pleasant personality, down to earth, loyal to the organisation whose interests are always uppermost in her mind and totally dedicated to her job.

After completing her education in Peralasseri and Thalasseri, she came to Mumbai in 1968 to join her elder sister who was settled here after marriage.

Soon she landed in a job with Jehangir Art Gallery as a clerk. During her school days, she was very keen to learn Hindi and had passed Hindi Praveen examination. This trait stood her in good stead to gain this job.

Six years later Karthyayani Menon was promoted to the rank of Office Superintendent through her hard work and



dedicated approach to the duties given to her by S S Batliwala who was the then Secretary of the Gallery. Her efficiency and dedication in carrying out any task before the allotted time would have influenced him in promoting her to this challenging position.

Prime ministers, governors, chief ministers, painters and performing artistes, actors, litterateurs and celebrities

always found time to visit Jehangir Art Gallery and Karthyayani Menon took them around and explained so that they remained informed and interested in the artefacts they saw and appreciated.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir, the Second Baronet, desired to have an Art Gallery of international standard in Mumbai and he set aside a fund of Rs.2,50,000 in 1956 and approached the authorities especially the then governor Sir John Coville and later Raja Sir Maharaj Singh and B G Kher the Chief Minister. The Gallery is situated in the plot of Prince of Wales Museum. It is named after the late son of Cowasji, Jehangir Cowasji Jehangir and was inaugurated by CM of the state B J Kher on January 21, 1952, and renovated in 1990 to bring it to international standards.

Dr Gopakumar G Nair

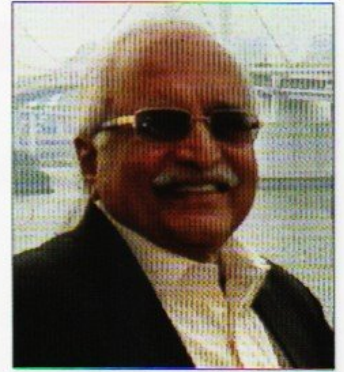
■ Dr Gopakumar G Nair is a veteran personality in the pharmaceutical industry.

In 2002, he founded his own IP Boutique firm, Gopakumar Nair Associates (GNAs) which is a premier intellectual property consultancy and legal advisory firm providing high quality legal and technical solutions for companies in the biotechnology, biomedical, chemical, healthcare, pharmaceutical and other knowledge based industries. The company provides support to wide range of companies for filing patents, domestic and internationally, as well as help start-up companies using technology licenses from Universities and other research centres. Later on he founded and helped to start a related LPO/KPO by name

Gnanlex Hermeneutics Pvt. Ltd.

Dr.Nair is associated as faculty in many institutes in and around Mumbai. Having started his own IP training institute by name 'Patent Gurukul'

(www.patentgurukul.com), he helped to generate awareness and proficiency among working professionals in the industry.



In 1978, Dr. Nair founded his own pharmaceutical company Bombay Drugs &Pharmas Pvt. Ltd. (BDPL) which subsequently became a public limited company in 1994 and established manufacturing facilities at Tarapur in Maharashtra and Panoli in Gujarat. In the meantime, he noticed the tremendous progress that his onetime colleague and protege Arun Kumar is making through Strides Arcolab Limited, Bangalore. Consequently, Dr. Nair merged his company BDPL with Strides Arcolab Limited and plunged into Intellectual Property arena to enable and equip himself as an Intellectual Property Practitioner. He became a law graduate from Mumbai University and became IP Lawyer and Advocate.

Beginning his career in the pharmaceutical drug industry, Dr Gopakumar branched out into research activities holding a doctorate in Nuclear Magnetic Resonance from National Chemical Laboratory in Pune. After his PhD he shifted to Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Powai, and worked on 'Mass Spectrometry'. Soon he joined Bombay Drug House Pvt. Ltd. (BDH), a Mumbai based pharmaceutical company originally started by G P Nair in 1935. He helped BDH evolve into a modern high-technology pharmaceutical formulation manufacturing organization.

He has been associated with Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association (IDMA) as General Secretary, Vice President repeatedly for many terms, culminating in his becoming the President of IDMA in 1999-2000. IDMA has over 750 members who are pharmaceutical manufacturers all over India.

He is an educationist too, being the President of Bharat Education Trust that runs Karthika High School & Jr. College and Vivek High School in Kurla and an educational complex in Neral called 'Matheran Valley Institute of Excellence'. A new school building was constructed at this new premise and is in the 6th year of operation.

R S Naman

■ R.Sahasranaman, abbreviated to R.S.Naman, has been associated with the Communist movement right from its inception and is President of Adarsh Vidyalaya in Chembur.

When the Samyukta Maharashtra agitation was gaining strength and momentum in the sixties, Naman involved himself in it and was severely injured in a lathi charge at Kamghar Maidan where the Police mercilessly hit him. An arrest warrant was issued and one of his close friends harboured him for several days avoiding police attention.

Naman, along with a number of Comrades, progressive and socially committed Keralites (then known as Fellow Travellers), of Chembur set up the Chembur Malayalee



Samajam. This soon evolved into Kerala Education Society under whose banner Adarsh Vidyalaya was started. Later it merged with Kerala People's Education Society (KPES) in 1961. Over the last 50 years the number of students and teachers of the School have grown tremendously, yet the basic philosophy of serving the economically weak, poor and down trodden has not changed.

As an activist attending several of such Marxism courses of CPI, Naman came in close contact with leaders and luminaries of the Party like Comrade A.K.Gopalan (AKG), EMS Namboodiripad (EMS), Ramamoorthy, Ranadive, K.Damodaran, S.S.Mirajkar and Ahilya Rangnekar.

His mission has always been to serve the community with particular reference to the weak, the down trodden, the underdogs and the deprived. Naman is also actively involved with several philanthropic activities.

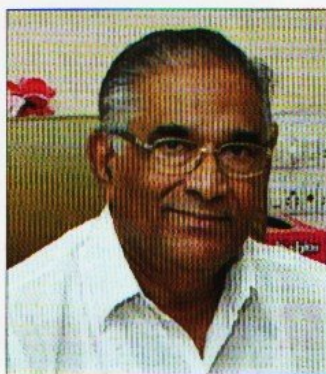
With the knowledge of typing and shorthand he had already learnt during school days in Kerala, he got a job as a stenographer in Sundardas Saw Mills followed by International Produce Corporation and Bombay Export Corporation.

He shifted his jobs quite frequently and later joined Aiyer's Advertising, LP Aiyers and International Advertising & Marketing - all owned by Aiyers.

In 1972 along with 14 of his colleagues who resigned from Aiyers, pooled their resources and set up a new agency- Chaitra Advertising. Over a period of time he became the Media Director and continued in the Agency until 1995, when he voluntarily retired.

Paul Parappilly

■ Paul Parappilly's success story is a significant one of spreading education through quality schools to thousands of young minds. He is the Chairman of Paulsons Society Group that has five schools in Dombivli - Kalyan region - Don Bosco School in Dombivli (W), Don Bosco School in Adharwadi Kalyan (W), another Don Bosco School in Dombivli East, Rita Memorial School in Kalyan West. In June 2014, the fifth one, Don Bosco School in Kachore, Kalyan East was opened with 90 students.



For Paul Parappilly every child is a gift of God, and in his group of schools he follows the preventive system enunciated by Don Bosco which involves Reason, Religion, and Love in bringing up God's children. According to him, in today's all-encompassing materialistic mentality, a dose of love of God will engender a greater sense of appreciation and love for fellow human beings.

Paul Parappilly is active in the World Malayalee Council

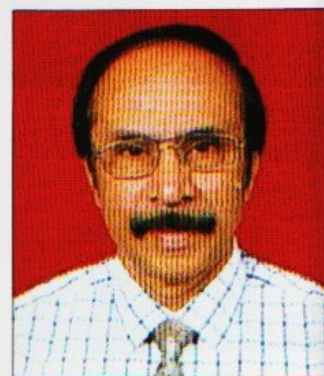
and is involved in Open Heart surgeries project for poor people. He is Member, Advisory Board of the newly formed Kalyan Malayali Federation.

On the educational front, Paul Parappilly is President of Private Unaided School Managements Associations Thane, Trustee of Ashraya Hospital in Dombivli, President Kalyan Central Kairali Samajam, Kalyan, Founder President of Associations of Christians for Social Welfare and former President Rotary Club of Dombivli.

A senior Mumbai Malayalee with an impeccable personality, Paul Parappilly's contribution to the educational and social arena in Dombivli, Kalyan and Mumbai is remarkable and that is his way of showing his gratitude to the city's generosity towards him and his family.

Upendra Menon

■ Upendra Menon hails from Palakkad and came to Mumbai, as he says, with Rs 150 in his pocket. Through hard work and determination, he has come up and today he heads two business ventures, is Central Committee member Giants International and office bearer in several Malayalee Associations of Mumbai.



From 1978 till date he is Chief Executive of Universal Engineers, an ISO company that is engaged in executing hot cold and acoustic insulations. In 1999 he started another company, Upendra Therms-Ins P Ltd and is its Managing Director. This company is in contract for thermal Insulation work for Government Undertakings and multi-national companies.

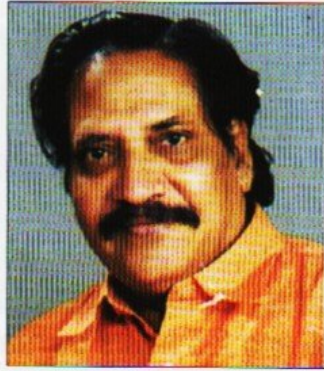
Upendra Menon is active in the social and charitable activities of Giants International, one of the world's largest NGO originating from India, and has been appointed as Member, Central Committee which is the international Governing body of Giants. Upendra Menon has received many awards and recognitions for his humanitarian service with Giants. He joined Giants Group of Dombivli as Jt Director of Administration in 1982. A leprosy camp at Sheelphata, project for the handicapped, etc, all these gave good mileage for the growth and development of Giants of Dombivli and helped its extension into other areas. He has won the prestigious Pride of India Award.

He is the Founder of Kairali Samaj Kalwe and was its Chairman for five years. The Samaj is still active and does a lot of social work. Financial help to the poor, free Malayalam classes, promotion of arts and culture, and conducting free Ayurvedic medical camps are some of its welfare activities.

Upendra Menon as President of Shree Ayyappa Bhakta Sangam has been the chief promoter in the construction of a Kerala temple in Kalwe with shrines dedicated to Ayyappan, Guruvayurappan, Ganesha and Devi. Under his leadership a marshy plot at Kalwe has been transformed into a beautiful temple complex with coconut trees and is situated close to Rajiv Gandhi Medical College and Shivaji Hospital.

Rajendran Padiyoor K Venugopal

■ At a time during the end of the last century, when the Malayalam theatre in Mumbai was losing the interest of viewers, there were a few artistes who held on to their passion and believed that the stage would revive. Rajendran Padiyoor is one such person. Coming to Mumbai with his parents in 1959, as a 10 year old school boy, he completed his education at St Joseph's High School and did a Certificate course in Interior Decoration. He got a job at Macmillan's British Publishing Company where he worked for 23 years and also took up various interior Decorations contracts as part time business.

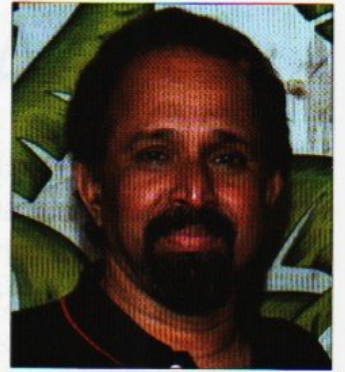


His love and interest in the theatre continued and today Rajendran Padiyoor is a renowned actor and director, a poet and socio cultural activist.

His first association with the stage took place when he was 13 years old and was chosen to act in a play in Kerala. But he fell ill and could not act on that day. Thereafter luck smiled on him and he acted in many dramas : to be precise - he has acted in more than 121 Malayalam plays on about 437 stages and a few ones in Tamil, Tulu, Kannada and Hindi as well. His first play 'Gandeevam' jointly directed by Madhavan Nair and Unni Variath was staged at Kurar village in Malad.

He has acted in plays directed by veteran Directors of the Malayalam theatre like Nanappan, Anthappan, Achuthan, PC Cherian, TKC Jose, Sundar Nadavarampu, Mundoor Rajan, Mukundan Menon, Kaimal and under director K J Rajan in Kannada plays and Balu in Tamil and V S Amir in Tulu. He has shared the stage with all time famous Mary Paul, K D Chandran, Sudha Chandran and many more artistes. He has also directed five dramas namely *Panchajanyam*, *Arada valiyavan*, *Divyabali*, *Saladabimbangal*, and *Punyabhoomi*. Recently he has started directing dramas that are presented by Malayali Samajams of Mumbai. He has been recipient of several awards given by prestigious cultural groups.

■ K Venugopal is a keyboard artiste familiar in Mumbai's music scene for the past 37 years. He has been the accompanying keyboard artist for Raagalaya's annual music competitions and orchestra troupe on many occasions. He has played the keyboard for many music programmes conducted by the various cultural organisations of Mumbai. He is one of the most



sought after accompanying artiste for musical shows across Mumbai and has accompanied on the keyboard for musical shows of well-known playback singers like late Brahmanandan, late P Leela, Biju Narayanan, G Venugopal, Unni Menon, K G Marcos, Krishnachandran, Jolly Abraham, Radha Ramchandran, Mahendra Kapoor, Udit Narayan and many other singers of Malayalam, Hindi, Tamil, Marathi and Kannada songs. He has accompanied Idea Star Singers' and Indian Idol stars' music stage shows.

He is also a music director and music arranger. He has directed music for many Malayalam, Tamil and Kannada dramas that have been staged in Mumbai and Kerala. The Malayalam drama *Makarakoith* in which he composed music won the first prize at Drama Competition held in Mumbai in 2011. This drama was directed by Studio Rajan and songs were sung by Madhu Nambiar. Other Directors with whom he worked as music director providing the music for their dramas are Achuthan, Rajendran Padiyur, KK Rajan, Rajan Kadannapalli, K R Parameshwar and Suvarna. He is also associated with Mundoor Rajan and Prathibha Theatres.

As music director and music arranger, Venugopal has several albums to his credit. To name a few - Ushapooja, Yamuna Teere, Kavya Kalasham in Malayalam, Namo Ashtavinayaka in Marathi and several Tamil albums on Lord Murugan produced by K D Chandran, Christian devotional albums sung by K G Marcos and Radha Ramchandran's devotional albums.

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K Jayachandran PALGHAR MENON

K Jayachandran Menon, 70, fondly called 'Palghar Menon' by his friends and relatives, came to Mumbai in 1958 with an SSLC certificate in his laps and now after 59 years feels good to be running an English medium school in Palghar for the last 48 years. Palghar, a popular township very near to Tarapur, which has its place on the world map for the Atomic Power Station, is 80 KM away from Borivli, 1 hour travel by rail and 2.5 hours by road.



T K Unnikrishnan

■ In 1968 Menon joined Voltas and later got a job with Bechtel Corp., an American Co which was constructing the Atomic

Power Plant in Tarapur. While at Tarapur, Menon started a typewriting institute with 10 typewriters, which he ran for almost three years. "The idea of starting a school of my own came to my mind as my father was a teacher", said Menon, who while working attended night colleges and passed his BA, MA and B Ed.

In 1969 Kenam School came into being as a Primary English Medium School and its first SSC batch passed out in

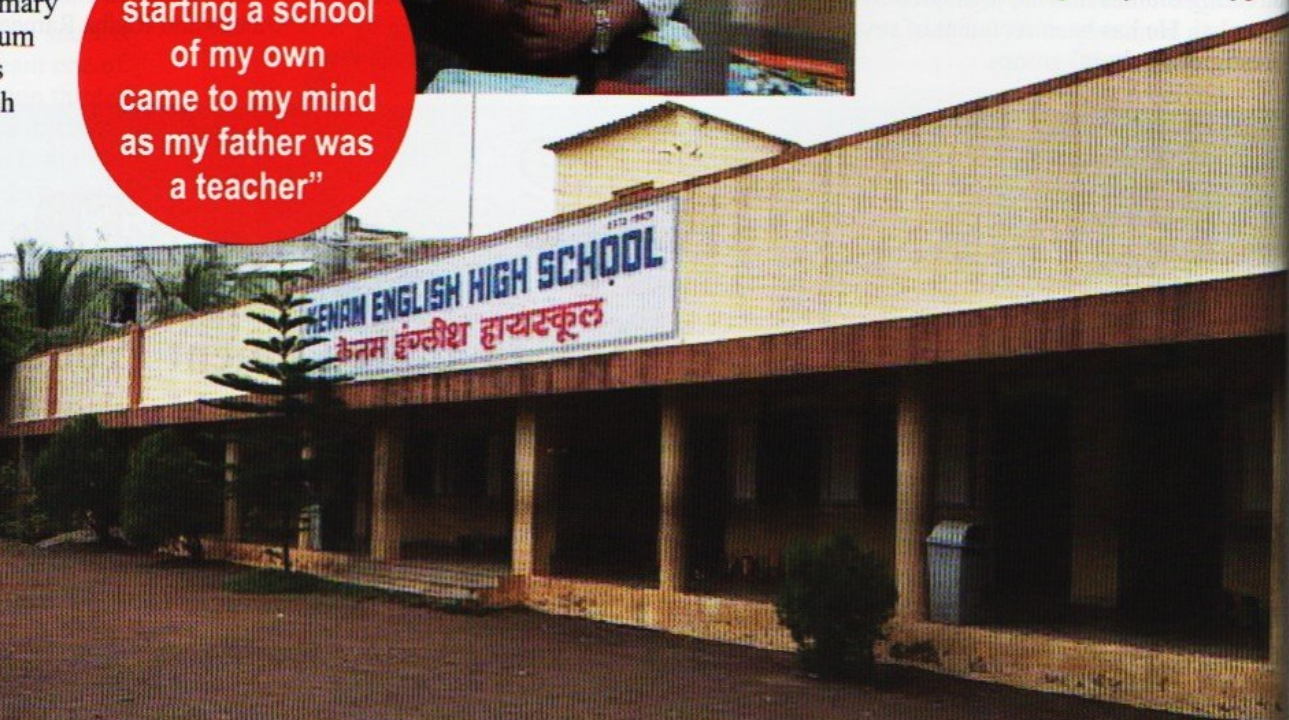
"The idea of starting a school of my own came to my mind as my father was a teacher"



1979 with 100% results. The 'Kenam' stands for K N M, Menon's father's initials. The school, which started with 3 students, has now more than 800 students and 25 staff, including teachers.

"Most of the Corporators of the locality were my students and many of my students are now doctors and engineers well placed in India and abroad", says Menon with a feeling of great satisfaction. Menon says his USP has been always his personal relationship which he keeps with all students and their parents. Most of his students send their wards to the same school which Menon feels is a feast for his school.

Menon, originally from Vypin





Scouts and Guides of Kenam School



Tree plantation drive

in Ernakulam district and an ardent worshipper of Lord Ayyappa has been going to Sabarimala for the last 35 years without break and now has discontinued because of bad health. While his wife is a homemaker, his son is a graphic designer who runs a designer studio with 5 star hotels, builders, developers and big corporates as his clients. His daughter is married and settled in London.

Menon proudly tells us that he had an adivasi student in his school, who passed the SSC this year with 76% marks and the school never charged him any fees from KG to SSC. Kenam School's Annual Day this year had a rare man as the chief guest, who was none but a school's alumni, who is now a reputed businessman of the locality.

Menon says he has no idea of starting a college along with the school as he says: "Space is a problem and there is already a good college in Palghar so why should I start one more?" ■

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COMPLEXITY AND SIMPLICITY DEMYSTIFIED



Dr A P Jayaraman

■ I took to teaching as a cat lapping milk. During a four decade long official life in Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, I painstakingly and profitably developed communication skills

for use after retirement. Migrating to Singapore, noted as a hub of educational excellence, I found my place lecturing as a teaching professor of technology management in a University.

Unteaching Professor

Why does the noun professor need a qualifying adjective teaching? Are there unteaching professors? Is it not an oxymoron? I saved the phenomenon by recalling Shavian definition of a teacher. 'Those who know, they do. Those who do not, they teach.'

The selection committee of professors in Singapore was not impressed with my credentials of documents which I thought would take them to dizzying heights. They rubbished my papers and asked me if I

would take a twenty minute class on technology management. I did not have an option. Tidying my professorial jacket I walked into the class and did my job to the best of my abilities. The committee waited for student feedback. I passed the trying test. It was a fiercely competitive screening with Chinese counterparts with double Ph.Ds. One favorable factor for me was my Mallu English accent and they wanted a specimen for diversity with deep domain knowledge.

What is your USP? My collaborator professor Nowacki asked me. I can make simple things complex and make complex things simple to make a professorial living. I can swing like a pendulum executing a simple harmonic motion between simplicity and complexity. The philosopher in him agreed with the other one in me.

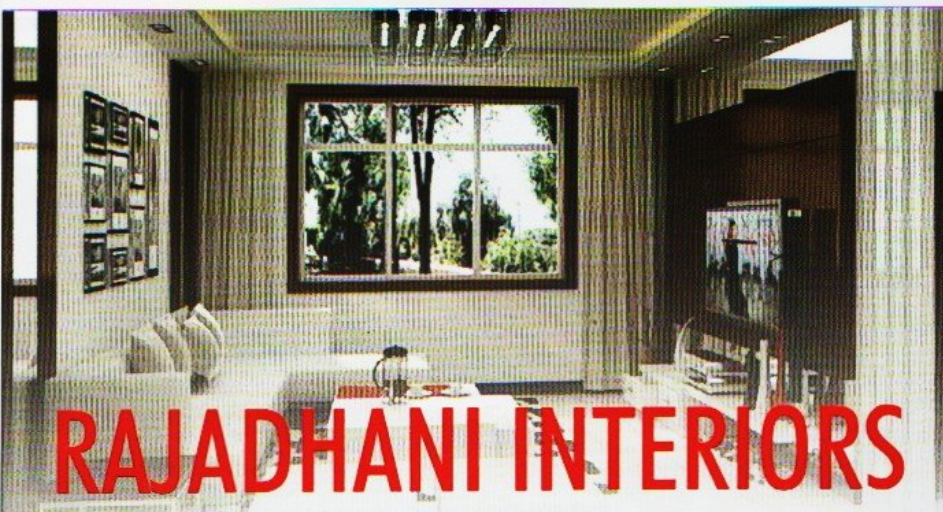
Single Sentence Passion

Some years ago, we had organized a cocktail dinner party in a seven star hotel in honor of Stephen Hawking. He is a brilliant theoretical physicist whose work on black holes and Big Bang made him a house hold name in science

literati. Paralyzed by motor neuron disease and confined to a motorized intelligent wheel chair the fragile body is tragic spectacle but an unforgettable glimpse of infinite potential of human cognition. We had cherry picked science literati and media glitterati. The party had advanced intoxicatingly. A celebrity media person noted for tantalizingly sexy vocabulary called me to a corner and whispered into my ears if I could simplify Hawking's work into a single sentence. The indescribable complexity of cosmology and the underpinnings of paradoxes menacingly crossed my mind. I looked around and ensured that there are no heavy weight physicists around us. Then with French courage I said, 'He simply derived the quantum integral for the total universe'. She asked me if I could repeat it and I did with professorial confidence. She walked away.

Chemistry's Holy Grail

In Physical Sciences we endeavor to reduce a complex whole to an irreducible minimum of components. An exploration into the knowledge area of physical sciences, we find the mindboggling diversity of substances and the infinite variety of mixtures of the material world brought down to one hundred and eighteen chemical elements. The disorder of diversity is neatly chiseled into aesthetic order in the Holy Grail of chemistry, the periodic table originally conceived by Dimitri Mendeleev. If I were to begin my lecture I could start in a simplistic style. 'The properties of elements are periodic functions of their atomic numbers.' I could as well start the same lecture to a batch of students studying theory of knowledge, TOK or Epistemology in International Baccalaureate differently. 'Out of the chaos caused by the confusion and indeterminateness of the diversity of chemical elements there emerged an orderly system of elements that reflected their dialectical unity and genetic interrelationship.'



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Little Uncuttable Atom

Let us look at the atomic theory. Stated simplistically it postulates that matter is made of atoms. But I would seize this opportunity to tell that there was Richard Feynmann, a physics Nobel of 1964, who said 'If, in some cataclysm, all of scientific knowledge were to be destroyed, and only one sentence passed on to the next generations of creatures, what statement would contain the most information in the fewest words? I believe it is the *atomic hypothesis* (or the *atomic fact*, or whatever you wish to call it) that *all things are made of atoms little particles that move around in perpetual motion, attracting each other when they are a little distance apart, but repelling upon being squeezed into one another*. In that one sentence, you will see, there is an enormous amount of information about the world, if just a little imagination and thinking are applied.'

Imagine the lackluster dirty coal, the lustrous slippery graphite and the expensive resplendent and gorgeous diamond. Emotion, faith and imagination will not help us to know their true nature, the stuff of which they are made. Reason aided by empirical evidence enables us to know that they are three different forms of the element Carbon with the same number of subatomic particles.

Imagination is not the exclusive privilege or the sole prerogative of poets and versifiers. It is also the working medium of scientists and technologists. The little imagination which Feynman referred to involves the difference between an object and the implications of the object. Applying thinking, the complex rainbow can be unwoven into simple white light.

Two Razors

Two beautiful minds probed the secrecy of simplicity. A priest by name William of Occam said that truth lies in ultimate simplicity. Scientific and social theories are evaluated by philosophers applying Occam's concept of minimalism. No obesity but just lean.

Albert Einstein created the amazing equivalence of matter and energy in quintessential simplicity in the equation $E=mc^2$. It ranks equal in poetic elegance to Keat's expression 'Truth is beauty and beauty is truth.' Einstein struck a note of caution to the brute irreducible minimum of Occam and stated "Make everything as simple as possible, but not simpler." He knew

the art of knowledge creation a shade better than the philosopher.

Blue Sky Research

Cancer is one of the most complex dynamic diseases human flesh is heir to. Researchers are looking for simplicity but are finding complexity. The eminent biologist Francis Crick lamented that Occam's razor is a useful tool in physics but is useless in biology. He cautioned against the use simplicity and elegance as a guide in biological research.

Research is search for complexity. In my younger days in the active frenetic rat race to climb the ladder I thought only of complexity. I needed it in large measure to get imported instruments, to get supporting staff, to select research problems, to attend international conferences, to attract the attention of bosses and to run the gauntlet of promotions. Inattention to complexity would have been suicidal and fatal. Relentless pursuit of complexity was the existential goal in a hostile and unforgiving world of governmental research.

When the fitful fever of official life is over and freedom of mind is obtained, the quest for the other side of the coin, simplicity begins.

The study of the sciences of simplicity and complexity integrates the two. That is a good recipe for a science communicator to juggle simplicity and complexity with graceful ease to break monotony of a discourse.

World of Art


Exploring the domain of knowledge related to the Art, we find the striking contrast of complexity emerging from simple components aesthetically integrated. Dots are the lowliest geometrical entities. Pointillism or art of dots has established as an exquisite form of art. Lines which define forms, create

structures and trace contours transform them into higher order complexity. A wide variety of line drawings such as cross contour, hatching, are in the armory of accomplished artists.

Leonardo da Vinci said that simplicity is the ultimate sophistication. The Vitruvian man is a magnificent artistic expression of the essential complexity of the human anatomy with magnificent simplicity. He presents an accurate and precise anatomical line drawing of the internal structure the human scalp, skull and eye.

Complexity at its zenith could be seen in the celebrated paintings, Vincent van Gogh. In this pen and pencil line drawing, 'Cottages with a Woman Working in the Foreground', we see the stylistic swirling of line in the trees and clouds that is so characteristic of his well-known paintings. Art which lies in concealing art is built up from simple bits and the complex architecture emerges by an aufbau principle.

The universe is admittedly a very complex and intricate place. Apparently unconnected phenomena are operating. The Standard Model of particle physics is one of the most strikingly successful theories of sublime simplicity woven from complexity. ■



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ENJOY THE BOUNTY AND WISDOM OF NATURE

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank: Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music Creep in our ears; soft stillness, and the night, Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice* 5;1



■ Nature is an inexhaustible fount of beauty and positivity. Hence man's irrepressible proclivity to be in close proximity with nature. This natural world of ours, this

intricate and magical ecosystem of ours, in spite of our scientific progress and rational understanding, is still a miracle - marvelous, amazing, inscrutable, magical and mysterious. It is essentially and intrinsically good, splendid, rich and magnificent.

Enjoy the Showers of Nature's Benedictions :

Walking on the earth is a miracle. You don't have to walk in space or on water or fly in the sky to experience a miracle. Walk on this green emerald, the earth, and realize the wonder and joy of being alive. After you wake up open the window and feel the rush of the cool air on your face. See the drops of dew glittering in the morning sun and you realize that life is infinitely marvelous and with this awareness our mind becomes clear and fresh like a calm

river. Remember that the earth delights to feel your bare feet in its brown bosom and the soft breeze loves to play with your hair.

The nourishing rains, the procession of the seasons, the pearly dew drops, the golden sunrise and sunset, the gentle breeze that softly whispers to the trees, the first bit of moonlight silvering the edges of tree tops, the night sky clad in the beauty of a billion stars - all these are showers of nature's benedictions to delight and enchant the hearts of man. These marvelous phenomena of nature fill our hearts with intense feelings of awe, wonder and reverence bordering on worship.

Nature has an inherent music of its own. The song of the birds, the whisper of leaves, the murmur of streams, the ripple of waters upon a sandy shore, the wail of wind or sea and the music of the heavenly spheres. Besides, the canvas of nature bursts with a riotous display of delightful colors. The most consummate Artist, the Divine Artist, with innumerable colors of all shades, has been spraying His Nature canvas with beautiful brilliant splashes of colour. O, Supreme Artist, your canvas belongs to

me too - the beauty, the splendor, the opulence of your hills and valleys, your trees, plants, shrub, flowers, and golden wheat fields are mine too. I have seen the glory of your woods and I have locked within the treasure - chest of memory the fine touch of your hand, on the vast canvas of nature.

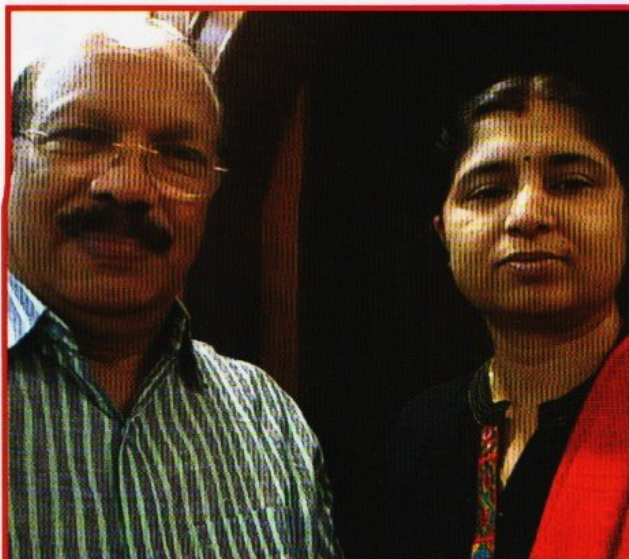
Be swayed by the procession of seasons and by the pageantry of this beautiful, splendid, vibrant nature. Just listen to a bird singing alone in the morning. Be swayed by it, be possessed by it, just dance with it. A lonely star just going to disappear early in the morning. Be possessed by it. Be connected with it. If you look at it just as an onlooker, you cannot be possessed, you cannot be moved. You may even say that it is beautiful but you are not moved by this disappearing star: there is no communion. You are not a participant in this beauty; you are just a spectator.

A person can be moved by things- by trees and the wind and the rain, by the music of life and the silence of it, by the sound of people - children giggling, laughing, by ordinary things - the smell that comes from the kitchen, the freshly baked food, the fragrance of wet earth; there are a thousand and one things! They always come, every moment they are there. If one can be swayed and moved by them, then one overflows and one becomes a mystical river. And only a river can reach the ocean.

Viewing the world from outer space astronomers have gone into ecstasy. To view the world from the outer space is to see it as a small, blue globe, beautiful in that eternal silence where it has been floating for five billion years. It is to see ourselves as frail and fragile inhabitants on the earth, together as brothers and sisters on this bright, blue loveliness spinning in the eternal silence of the infinite space.

Flowers

The exclamation of nature is a flower. Every rose is a beautiful love



Venugopal & Family, Antop Hill

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letter from the Divine Artist. He has inscribed his tender feelings of affection and care, his sensitivity to beauty on the soft, silky and glossy petals of the rose. The rose is the visible expression of that "Supreme Beauty ancient yet so new." It is the marvelous hieroglyphics of God's beauty, splendor, magic and mystery.

Trees

Trees are nature's magnificent cathedrals offering a perpetual adoration to her divine Lord. The tall trees stand like sentinels keeping a watch over the ever green forests stretching endlessly. The tall teak trees are the first to salute the rising sun. The slanting sunrays through the rainbow leaves are like sunshine through the rose - tinted windows of a Gothic cathedral.

I was walking in the woods on a summer day with sun light streaming through the trees when everything is seen in a new way. As I sat under the shade of a luxuriant tree, I was reminded of the inter- connectedness of all life. The tree closed over me in a complex dome of foliage; but the sun was so strong that it glared through the translucent leaves as if through coloured glass of green and gold. Colors seem richer. Trees and bushes stand out with a more vivid presence. Sounds are magnified and we smell fragrance we hadn't noticed before. The woods are suddenly magical and alive. In that instant, we enter a world that is usually unseen. Is it hallucination? Or is this how the world would always look if our senses were fresh, alert and awake?

Sunrise and Sunset

Goethe used to get up before the sunrise and wait for the rosy fingered dawn with great delight. He would absorb the first, faint rays of the golden sun. Every day after finishing work, the great scientist Faraday would watch the sunset with his wife, a practice he continued till the end of their days together. He would hold her hand in his and sit quietly in front of the twilight sky, watching the day sail into the darkness of the night. "How old and how beautiful is this figure of resurrection!", he once remarked.

Stars

The stars, "the blessed candles of the night" have been a perennial source of mystical wonder.

Nature is a vast, frameless mirror that reflects in indubitable ways the infinite wisdom, glory and power of God. Billions and billions of stars and planets out there, and behind them all we find the presence and power of God. Some of the most advanced modern physicists would even agree with Rene Guenon's claim that "the whole of nature amounts to no more than a symbol of transcendent realities. Nature is too thin a screen; the glory of the omnipresent God bursts through everywhere."

Some people have a mystical bent of mind. They believe that everything in the universe - a field of wheat swaying in the wind, a mountain, a cloud, the first snowfall of winter has a being, an intelligence and a soul of its own. When we can think of things in this way, it is easier to love them, and love is the prime ingredient of these experiences.

The pantheistic spirit of ancient religions may not be theologically sound, nevertheless, this spirit accentuates the omnipresence of the Divine in all things. There is a reverence for life, a feeling of awe and wonder in the presence of the divine, in the inner core of ancient paganism. They used to worship trees, rivers, mountains etc. This worship implies an inner spirit of gratitude, humbleness, egolessness. This is the conviction that God is the inner essence of everything.

Nature our Teacher

Live in close harmony with Nature and you will experience the profound wisdom inherent in Nature. Listen to Nature and you will hear lectures on Natural Philosophy. The great Shakespeare understood this and wrote in his play. As you Like it:

And this our life, exempt from public haunt,

Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks.

Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

Nature teaches us a lot. The innocent birds and trees are a fine example of interdependence and co-existence. Look at the trees, the flowers, the stars, the murmuring brooks the whole of creation is happy and joyful. They delight in just being themselves. We too can learn from nature. When we follow the intrinsic bent of our being, we too become happy. For the great Nature poet William Wordsworth, Nature was a vast, inexhaustible reservoir of profound wisdom and insight :

*Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.*

One impulse from a vernal wood

May teach you more of man,

Of moral evil and of good,

Than all the sages can.

The Wisdom of the River, the Sea

The sea can be a great philosopher. Shakespeare wrote, "As the waves make their way to the pebbled shore. / So do our minutes hasten to their end." Listen deeply to the deep growl of the sea. Think of its intensity, the stupendous rhythm of its incessant waves, the way its velvety bosom traps the moonlight. Its serene calmness and the white - fanged fury of its storms. It teaches you the lesson of patience. You have to wait for the tides. It makes you aware of the immense and inscrutable inter - dependence of all things in nature : wind



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and tide and current, calm and storm, all merging and harmonizing to trace the path of the birds above and the fish below. And the divine touch of it all, with all the shores of the sea being swept twice a day by the gigantic broom of the sea.

A river is the most human and companionable of all inanimate things in nature. It has a life, a vibrancy a dynamism, a character, a voice of its own, and is full of sweet cordiality and good fellowship as a ripe mango fruit is full of sweet juice. In Hermann Hesse's Novel Siddhartha the river becomes a philosopher and a sage for the character Siddhartha:

"He looked lovingly into the flowing water, into the transparent green, into the crystal lines of its wonderful design. He saw bright pearls rise from the depths, bubbles swimming on the mirror, sky-blue reflected in them. The river looked at him with a thousand eyes - green, white, crystal, sky-blue. How he loved this river, how it enchanted him, how grateful he was to it! In his heart he heard the newly awakened voice speak, and it said to him: Love this river, stay by it, learn from it. Yes, he wanted to learn from it, he wanted to listen to it. It seemed to him that whoever understood this river and its secrets would understand much more, many secrets, all".

Flowers and the Fragrance of Wisdom

After women and children, flowers are the most beautiful things in creation. If we could comprehend the magic and miracle of a single flower blooming in our gardens, we would understand the mystery of existence: its beauty, its splendor, its fragrance, its frailty, fragility and its transience. Wordsworth, the Nature poet, wrote the following unforgettable lines:

*To me the meanest flower that blows
can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep
for tears.*

Tennyson too saw nature as a vast fountain of wisdom and inexhaustible mystery. All the brilliance of man could not exhaust the mystery of a single flower:

*Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my
hand,
Little flower but if I could
understand
What you are, root and all, and all
in all.*

I should know what God and man is.

The Wisdom of the Sun and the Moon

The moon is very symbolic. The moon represents the feminine, the soft, the yin energy. It also represents the non logical, the poetic, imaginative mind. Shakespeare wrote, "the lover, the poet, the lunatic are of all imagination compact." The moon represents the intuitive part of your being. We can say the right hemisphere of the brain is represented by the moon and the left hemisphere of the brain is represented by the sun. The left side brain is male, aggressive, logical, prosaic, mathematical. Science comes out of it. The right side brain is intuitive, illogical, aesthetic; mystical. Religion comes out of it.

The female side is the receptive side. All that is great always happens through the female side. So the greatest art in life even if you are a man is how to continue to remain feminine inside. In fact, the feminine mind is the womb of all that is new. Even when great scientists come to discover something, they come to discover it from the feminine side, not from the male side. The male side formulates. It systematizes it, argues for it, but the insight, the intuitive flash is not from it; it comes from the other side. Many scientific discoveries have been made in dreams, in moments of reverie, fantasy. And all the great insights ever - religious, scientific, poetic, literary - all

the great insights have bubbled up from the feminine side. The feminine is the mother of all, and the moon is the symbol for the feminine.

The Wisdom of the Sky

The sky is mystical and symbolic. The sky unfolds different layers of meaning. It means many things. One: It is always present, everywhere yet absent. Its very way of presence is being absent. It exists by not being. That is how God exists. That is why you cannot show where God is; that's why you cannot pinpoint him. He is everywhere and nowhere. And that is the quality of the sky too. It is not just an accident that whenever people pray they look at the sky. Unknowingly, they raise their eyes to the sky, because God is like the sky: present and yet utterly absent. The sky contains all, and nothing contains the sky. God contains all, and nothing contains God. The sky penetrates everything and yet never interferes. It is a miracle; it penetrates without trespassing. It is so non-violent. It accepts all: the sinner and the saint, the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly. It makes no distinctions: it has no likes, no dislikes. It has no mind. It is simply open and available to all, whosoever wants to partake of it. It makes no conditions. It is unconditionally everybody's: man and woman, animals, birds, trees, rocks, stars and sun. It is available to all. It protects but it never patronizes. It surrounds you. And these are the qualities of God. ■

With Best Wishes to **Kerala in Mumbai** on its 7th Anniversary



M V Damodaran & Family, Marol

Shri Hari Saran

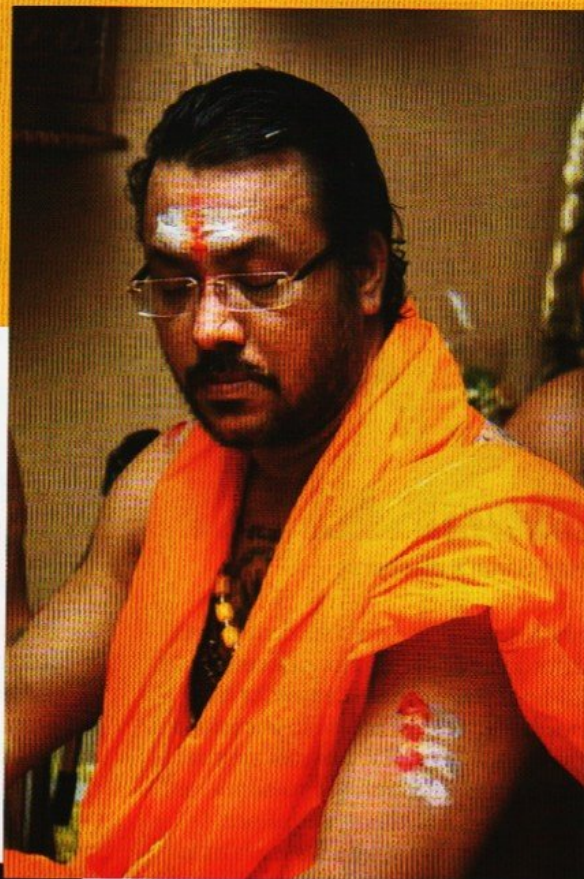
A HUMBLE SERVANT OF LORD AYYAPPA

As a servant to Lord Ayyappa Hari Saranji intends to open a fully equipped multi speciality / dialysis centre with affordable fees for poor patients and a 24 hour Annadanam centre for the needy.

Shri Hari Saran (Dr Siddharth Saxena) likes to describe himself as a humble servant of Lord Ayyappa. On the professional front he is Director, Sales & Marketing at Gewes Gruppe of Germany and lives in Dahisar Mumbai.

He runs two Trusts in the name of the Lord Ayyappa . One is 'Shree Swami Ayyappa Charitable Trust' of which he

is Chairman. His other Charitable society is called "S.A.I.N.T" (Society for Ayyappa Inspired New Transformation), which together work towards service of mankind. Hari Saranji personally believes that the core philosophy of Lord Ayyappa lies in the word



During an Ayyappa Puja Mahotsavam

'Thatwamasi' - 'Thou art that.'

"Before we try understand the creator we must first attempt to understand and love his creation, The human being. Only by engaging in constant service to mankind can one understand the true meaning behind Swami Saranam," he says.

He is Vice - President Maharashtra - Ayyappa Dharmasena and President of Akhila Bharatiya Ayyappa Seva Sangham Mumbai Dahisar. He has acquired Doctorate in Management Studies from Mumbai and has a management Qualification from IIM Lucknow.

Several years ago, he suffered some major setbacks and obstacles in life. A well wisher, his Guruswami Soman Nair suggested that he go on a pilgrimage to Sabarimala and Hari Saranji says that his life improved very much after the pilgrimage. Ever since he has been going to the temple several times a year. In fact as Guruswami, he introduces the younger generation to Lord Ayyappa and takes them to Sabarimala temple with 41 days of strict fasting.

As a servant to Lord Ayyappa Hari Saranji intends to open a fully equipped

Only by engaging in constant service to mankind can one understand the true meaning behind Swami Saranam



Hari Saran's discourse

multi speciality / dialysis centre with affordable fees for poor patients and a 24 hour Annadanam centre for the needy. He recalls multiple occasions in the past where HIV patients approached him as hospitals refused to admit and give dialysis to them, with Lord Ayyappa blessing he says each time he was able to find a solution and provide treatment to such patients. HIV patients recall when Hari Saranji would

hug them with love and affection asking them not to worry . Nothing can happen to one when his only focus is to spread the word of Lord and happiness all around, he says.

The society S.A.I.N.T is aimed with his personal focussed efforts to bring new transformations in the younger generation by introducing sanskaras through vedic medium and prescription. Hari Saranji is happy that with Lord

Ayyappa's blessings, youth have given up drugs and violence after they observed 41 days fasting and vows, gone on the Sabarimala pilgrimage and returned with faith in the Lord. This change has brought happiness and relief to many parents' hearts, he says.

Hari Saranji always gives patient hearing to his disciples' sufferings and sorrows, and provides them guidance to face hardships in life, through Ayyappa's blessings. People across India are connected with him on FaceBook as 'Ayyappa Bhakta' and on *whats app* seeking his guidance on day to day affairs.

Through his sermons and speeches, which he conducts regularly, he has been able to mould many young minds and bring them on the spiritual path and thus attain peace and harmony in their family.

He has been 'Servant Of Lord Ayyappa' since the last 17 years and has pledged his life and soul in the service of humanity till his last breath. His Charitable Trust in Dahisar East conducts annadanam every Saturday 'poorfeeding' regularly for poor children. Recently it adopted a child for her education. ■

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Jose Chemmassery

■ As A Man Thinketh In His Heart, So Is He. (Proverbs 23.7)

Learning to memorize randomly or think creatively to be original and productive is the question now confronting the students as well as their guardians. The art of thinking discreetly is the innate gift of human beings. Despite the advanced computer technology available in education and learning, thinking is the basic element of human existence.

Think you must; you are what you think; you become as you think. Thus goes the pristine and valuable sayings of erudite and elite writers, authors, philosophers etc. Even psychologists prescribe changes or alterations in attitudes and thoughts which can make variations in life perceptions enabling a dent in personality and style leading to a different view about life. Small changes can help bring out big differences in approach and attitude; small changes can fetch rich rewards in life. A person who is not accustomed to read the Holy Bible when resorts to reading it, may be influenced by the wisdom contained in the holy book helping him to be

humane, considerate and amiable. A prayer is a great means to transform the ways of life. Doctors consider and recommend prayer in critical cases of sufferings to invoke the divine blessings for the cure. In the final analysis a prayer is a deliberate alteration in the thinking process.

Feelings, thoughts, words and actions are the due process in which human activity and existence inhabit.

Congruence of these factors can converge to ideal pursuits and desirable results if they are followed in the right directions.

Definitely the thoughts which are negative, arrogant and selfish can harm others as well as the one who nourishes it in ignorance and darkness.

Suppose you have practiced and continue to cultivate baser emotions or vices like hatred, extreme anger, violence against someone who has hurt your feelings physically, mentally or financially. Your negative thought process can snowball and culminate in actions beyond your control which may become

questionable under law. From a law abiding citizen you may transform to a criminal under the spell of your negative thoughts. Your conviction before the law and the ensuing incarceration may open your eyes while you are behind the bars.

You may after foreboding, convict yourself by your conscience indicating a change of your heart. That is a change in your attitude after having experienced the bitter and unsavory effects of your actions. That what you call a change of heart occurs after repentance, meditation and contemplation of the results of your actions. A sin emerges from your corrupt actions and thoughts which need to be curbed and avoided. A genuinely religious or spiritually inclined person tries to avoid paths of sin which is a pernicious route to hell and abomination.

Wise men, sages and seers who have exposed, experienced and examined their lives say, "You have to be a master of your actions and not a slave of your passions". How can you be a master of your actions and marker of your destiny:

- Watch your thoughts
For they become words
- Watch your words
For they become actions
- Watch your actions
For they become habits
- Watch your habits
For they become character
- Watch your character
For they become your destiny.

(Author Unknown)

Nourish and nurture your thoughts in such a way that they can lead you to a sublime life where peace and harmony prevails. Your noble thoughts should transform to good deeds genuinely serving the humanity at large while satisfying your person in a spiritual bliss. Finally self-realization is the ultimate goal in life which can be achieved by cultivating your thoughts. ■



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The first birthday of Baby Siara, daughter of Divya and Sujit and grand daughter of Girija and Vijaykumar, Sathi and Sukumaran, was celebrated at Aishwarya Hall in Marol Education Academy on January 21. The event was attended by relatives and friends and a lot of children who enjoyed the games and gifts that was part of the celebrations. It was an evening of entertainment and fun.



An Unwanted Son

- Ramachandran

My son Devan was insisting on my shifting with him when he bought a new flat. I was determined not to move with him. This flat where I was living for the last forty five years was the only flat I bought with my hard earned money. As soon as my marriage to Revathi was fixed, I was worried where I would bring her to. To own a flat was a prestigious matter for everyone in the megacity. The money one earned those days was just enough to sustain and there was no excess amount to save for the rainy day.

Ramadas was my close friend in the office and we used to share our joy and sorrow with each other. When I opened my heart to him, he advised me to go for a small flat and offered me Rs.2000 from his savings to make the initial payment. He was of the opinion that a small flat was indeed a better option than a leased one and housing loan was available from State Housing Finance Corporation. Finally I heeded to his benevolent counsel.

Revathi was shocked to find such a small dwelling unit. In her house, the kitchen itself was bigger than our one room kitchen flat. Her apprehension was where we would accommodate when people from her or my family come on visit. I consoled her saying that seeing the size of our home, none of them would ever think of staying for long.

Devan was brought up in this flat. He was a bright boy and was very practical in life. He was in his final year

in college when Revathi left us two years ago, surrendering to Caner. With his brilliant marks and dominating personality, it was easy for him to land in a good private company. He completed his Master's degree in management sciences and changed his employer often with much bigger compensation than that I could ever dream of.

He is only twenty six and has already bought his first flat having three bedrooms and other paraphernalia. It was on the twelfth floor and had wonderful mind-blowing sights on all three sides; Arabian Sea on one side, greenery on the opposite side and a good shopping complex on the third. I was happy to see his new acquisition but was content to stay in my humble abode where we three had a memorable life. When I insisted on continue staying in mine, he stayed with me, keeping his proud possession under lock and key.

Now his marriage is fixed with Rohini, daughter of a well off businessman K N Menon and soon he is needed to shift.

When we went to Menon's duplex flat, he asked me when we were shifting. I told him that Devan could shift anytime he wanted. To my surprise, Devan then intervened, "No, I am not shifting. We would stay where my dad stay."

Menon sent me a glance inquisitively.

I kept my silence.

"I cannot leave my dad alone. We

will stay where he is."

I had no way to escape. Slowly I replied, "Of course I shall move with him when he wants me to."

An air of relief spread in the room.

Menon asked his next question. "Is your flat well furnished?"

"No, it is empty. Let Rohini decide what she wanted. She can furnish according to her taste."

The matter is well settled.

Now I am going through my proud possessions, things I wanted to take with me to the new home. When I was going through my old steel trunk, an old magazine caught my attention. It was a copy of my old school magazine containing my first literary creation, a poem.

I took it in my hands and perused through its pages. My eyes were stopped on a page in which a poem written by my favourite teacher, Malathi Teacher, appeared. I always remembered a couple of lines of that poem:

"In the dreams of an unknown couple

Bloomed that little beautiful boy."

That poem had created a storm in the school and in the household of Malathi Teacher. Her elder sister Parvathi Teacher who also taught in the same school, accused her of clandestinely publishing such poem behind her back. Both the teachers were unmarried and they had one elder sister, an unemployed spinster and one younger brother who was brought up by the sisters.

Their quarrel soon found its reflections in their mutual conduct in the Teacher's Room. Other teachers looked amusingly among themselves. Some elder school mates thought I knew something about it as my house was close to their residence and our families were known to each other. However, as a child of thirteen years, I knew nothing about the household affairs of these teachers.

After a couple of months of the release of the magazine, its echo reached my house also. One day I overheard my mother talking to one of



her friends during their usual afternoon chat, "Whatever it may be, Malathi should not have written it in the school magazine."

I went before them and asked mother what was the problem.

Mother admonished me saying, "What business you have when we elders talk. Go away."

I explained to her, "Many students asked me about it but I could not find anything wrong with it."

"Small children need not know all these issues. You go away," sternly she said.

This strange statement made me more inquisitive and I was determined to find out. Very soon I got the explanation that I sought.

Last year the entire school was abuzz with news that Parvathi Teacher adopted a child from an orphanage. What was wrong with that? Nothing, except that orphanage was far away whereas another orphanage was close by. If it was a matter of adoption, why not from the neighbourly orphanage? People knowing the teachers' family were asking that question.

Prior to the adoption, Parvathi Teacher was on medical leave for four months. She was complaining about some stomach ailment and went to a distant city for treatment and not to the neighbourly medical college hospital. The orphanage in question was also from that city. During her treatment, Malathi Teacher never went to see her

sister cum colleague. It was their eldest sister who accompanied Parvathi Teacher.

Much earlier than the expiry of the medical leave, Parvathi Teacher returned but after a few days she went back to that city and came back with an adopted son, who was only a few days old. People added two plus two and came out with the solution: the adopted child was her own son, outside a marriage. The rumours were strengthened when a very handsome sportsman who used to play badminton in a court adjacent to the teachers'

house, disappeared from the town.

Vinod the adopted child was a lovable boy and everyone who saw him adored him. When he was enrolled in the neighbourhood school, he wore the most expensive clothes which no other kid could aspire. Malathi Teacher's poem was about this boy.

After passing my SSLC, I joined a College in a distant place where my elderly relatives studied earlier. During those days, I found Malathi Teacher was pursuing a degree so that she could teach in higher classes. She herself told me this when we accidentally met in

railway station. Being neighbours we travelled together to our town and during the journey we discussed several issues about my education. She said soon she would go for higher educational degree as she was having only a diploma in teaching.

For the next two years we neither met nor I had any news about them.

When I was in my final year, I happened to see a wedding photograph of Malathi Teacher in one of the leading Malayalam weeklies that used to feature a wedding column. She was married to a colleague who was undergoing a B Ed course along with her in the same training college. We all wished her well.

Parvathi Teacher remained unmarried.

Not much later, I came to know that Divakaran Master, Malathi Teacher's husband, was already married and had a daughter. He divorced his wife to marry Malathi Teacher but was looking after his daughter's educational expenses.

Soon there was another bomb exploding.

Parvathi Teacher had another stomach ailment and history repeated. Parvathi Teacher adopted another son from the same orphanage.

The volcano erupted again but not through another poem. Malathi Teacher moved from her house and sought transfer to a distant school and forced her husband to follow suit. There were also rumours that Divakaran Master sought divorce from her but she refused to comply with his demand.

It was rumoured that he wanted divorce to marry Parvathi Teacher as Malathi Teacher was barren.



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Soon the inseparable sisters were moved away from each other. To meet the demand of Divakaran Master to have a child, Malathi Teacher adopted a girl child from the neighbourhood orphanage.

After being away from my native place for several years, I finally settled down in Mumbai. When I visited my place later, I came to know that Parvathi Teacher died of cancer of uterus. She never acknowledged Vinod as her own child but she was compelled to acknowledge Praveen as her own child. She also made it official that Praveen was her son from Divakaran Master. This information was given to me by Joseph Master who taught us science in standards IX and X. He later became District Education Officer. Towards her end once Parvathi Teacher requested him to call on her and at the meeting requested him to help make officially Praveen her own son and named him as her heir to inherit her properties after her death as well as to receive all her dues from the government if she died before retirement.

After a thought, Joseph Master hesitatingly stated that it was wrong on her part to disinherit Vinod wholly. She did not provide for his higher education

when he passed SSLC with a first class. She was exhibiting a kind of animosity towards him, probably because his real father never visited her nor enquired about him whereas Divakaran Master was providing financially for Praveen's education and other expenses, not that she needed it, without the explicit knowledge of his legally married wife.

Heartbroken with the neglect by his biological mother and not acknowledging him as her child unlike in the case of Praveen, Vinod joined Indian Navy.

Once surprisingly, Vinod came to my residence to pay a visit. My younger brother provided him with my address. He had lunch with us and he opened his heart before me.

During our talk he said he used to send money to Parvathi Teacher. Though she received it, she never wrote to him. She never expressed her desire to see him even once. This pained him to no end. He was telling me that after Praveen came to their life, he never received any affectionate gestures from her and he was having a mechanical life. Often he had to ask her for new clothes as he out grew them or they were torn. Of course she provided them to him but never expressed any

concern. All teachers in the school were very sympathetic to him but they were helpless to do anything about his condition.

While leaving he said, "I still do not understand why she brought me from the orphanage. I would have got a little more love and affection there. Probably I am an unwanted man in this world."

When I asked him if he did receive any support from Malathi Teacher, he said that she was more concerned about him. Whenever he was seen talking to his aunt, he was admonished at home.

Afterwards I never met him nor heard about him.

The last time I heard about Praveen, was informed that he sold the house he inherited and left the place. Now nobody seems to have any information about him.

"What are you thinking holding a very old magazine in hand?" I woke up when Devan asked.

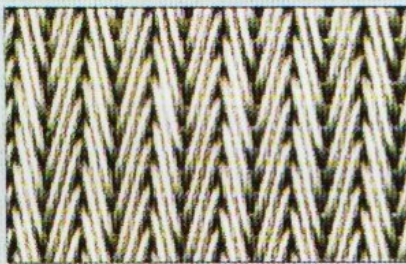
"Nothing. I just lost myself in my younger days." I told him.

All these old books and magazines are not useful to me anymore. They would only disturb my peace. I threw them into the basket to be discarded later and got up. ■

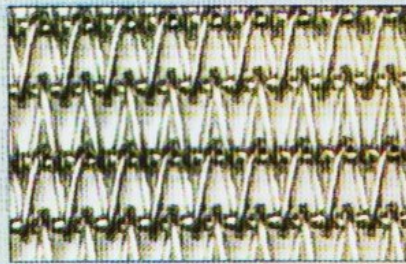
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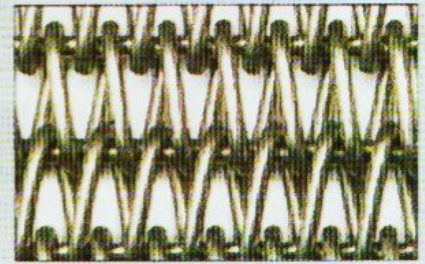
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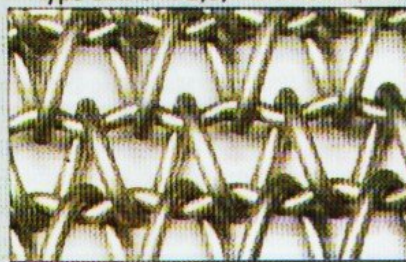
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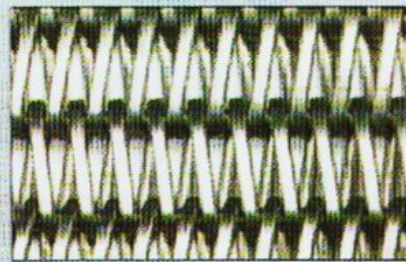
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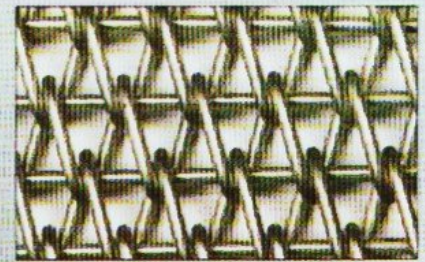
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IS DESTINY SUPREME?

■ “Long not for a dwelling in heaven and fear not to dwell in hell. What Will be, will, oh my soul, hope not at all.”- Kabir.

Ramana Maharshi left home as a boy of 17, in search of God. After many uncertain wanderings, he settles down in the Thuvannamalai Ashram set by him. His mother and brother having no clue of his whereabouts finally locates him in his Ashram. Maharshi was in the Ashram clad in a mere loin cloth, emaciated & forlorn from the worldly point of view. But the truth was Maharshi was seated immersed in ecstasy- in his own ecstatic experience.

When Maharshi's mother implores him to leave the depressing surroundings and return home, he Maharshi did not answer as he was under mouna vratha. His disciples ask him, if he would not speak, to write down his reply.

What is not going to happen will not happen. Paul Branton, the famous British journalist who was an ashramite by then and who was narrating this incident in his 'Search in secret India' explains that Predestination does not exclude the possibility of effort.

Ramesh Balsekar a disciple of Nsargadutta, a realised soul, echoes the same thought when he said that the entire human life is programmed.

Thomas Hardy one of the glories of English Literature joins the chorus of voices when he wrote “ What is human will against predestination.

But Rishi Aurobindo takes a contra view when a disciple Dilip Kumar Roy writes to him saying that he was going through Cheiro's world predictions and found them all true- is it not then that everything is predestined including his writing down that letter to him at 2.30am that day.

Arobindo replies that everything is not destiny or free will and meta physical questions cannot be solved so trenchantly.

Swami Ramdas said “As a certain cause produces an inevitable result which is true of most things perceptible to the senses, so through faith as the cause certain results are produced which though seemingly strange are perfectly natural to the inner workings of nature.”

All that has been said above is not to advocate fatalism, as a 'blind rigid and sterilising fatalism' but as one logically worked out on the basis of our own karma.

Let me conclude with Wordsworth's lines: "Poor humanity's afflicted will struggling in vain with Ruthless Destiny.”

- PV Ramanathan

With best compliments and Grand success of 7th Anniversary celebration of Kerala in Mumbai & 13th Raagalaya Music Award

From



Centenary Celebrations of Guru's proclamation

■ Gurudeva aimed at a single world wherein there is no differentiation among the people as they are brothers to each other, opined Minister Eknath Shinde. Gurudev attempted to transform the world to achieve this end through his writings and preachings. He was addressing the gathering of the followers of Sree Narayana Guru who gathered to celebrate the centenary year of the Guru's proclamation that 'We have no caste.' The activities of the Sangham should not be confined to Thane alone but should spread across the entire country, he said. There are no problems without solutions, he pointed out. He promised all sorts of help and assistance from the government of Maharashtra to achieve this end.

In his address during the occasion, Dr M A Siddique of University of Kerala remarked that the core of the declaration of the guru in 1916 was compassion and the proclamation was



Dr MA Siddique addresses the members of the Samiti during the centenary celebrations of Guru's proclamation.

an open war against the caste discrimination prevailing those times.

Chairman of Mandira Samiti M I Damodaran presided. Thane Municipal Corporation counsellors Vikram Chwhan, Amit Shinde, K Thulasidharan, Bala Raut and N S Salimkumar also

spoke on the occasion. Zonal Secretary M G Raghavan proposed a vote of thanks. Kalabhavan Ragesh and party presented a megashow and members of Samiti presented cultural programmes. About 3000 people attended the session, according to the organisers.



A scene from the cultural programme presented by the Samiti members.

Pilgrimage to Gurudevagiri

■ The pilgrimage to Gurudevagiri under Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti and the annual day of its consecration will be held from Feb 3 to 5 at Gurudevagiri Nerul, Navi Mumbai. Seminars on various subjects, exhibitions and cultural events will be the salient features of festivities.

The programme starts at 3 pm on Feb 3 with a seminar for the youth with the subject 'Science, Philosophy and Technology: The world Scientist Sree Narayana Guru'. There will be a scientific technical exhibition lasting three days. The seminar will be headed by former

Vice Chancellor of University of Calicut Prof G Sasidharan. At 6 pm, Sajiv Krishnan will talk on Education, cleanliness and Bhakti as promulgated by Guru. Vaikom Vijayalakshmi and troupe will conduct a music event at 7 pm. Second day will witness the rituals connected with the consecration of idols in various temples of Gurudevagiri. It will be followed by a magic show by Prof Samraj Kottayam. Cultural programmes by various units of SNMS will follow. At 5 pm, Human Rights Commission Chairperson Justice P Mohandas will talk on Human Rights and Family Ties. At 6

pm, miniscreen artistes Pratijnan and troupe will present comedy-magic shows.

On the concluding day, the holy relics of Guru's teeth will be placed for worship. Swami Sivaswaroopananda and Swami Ruthambarananda will guide the rituals. When the procession arrives at the venue, Mahagurupooja will commence. At 12 noon, a musical event based on the works by Gurudeva will be held culminating in Mahaprasadam. At the convention to be held at 1 pm, Maharashtra Minister for Revenues, Chandrakant Patil will be the Chief Guest. At 2 pm, Swami Sandeepanandagiri will hold a discourse.

Cultural Festival at Badlapur

■ The first Cultural Festival was organised in Ramagiri Sri Ramadasa Ashram by Tru Indian Dance Academy jointly with the Mumbai section of Guru Dharma Pracharana Sabha, Badlapur on December 29, 2016. Swami Krishnananda Saraswati lighted the lamp. Ashramam President Sundaresan S, Ambika Warasyar of Tru Indian, Dr Sajivkumar Nair, Roy J Kottaram, Adv Padma Divakaran, Suma Mukundan, Gangadharan Nambiar, Peethambaran Panicker and Madhu T Panicker participated in the event.

On the first day there was music concert by Sariga Music Academy, Melam, presented by women of Dhvani Sahrudaya Arts of Badlapur, variety entertainments by members of Central Kalyan Kerala Samajam,



Pinnal thiruvadira by Tru Indian Academy



During the presentation of skit by SNDP Kalyan West Unit

bhajan by Ayyappa Bhakta Seva Samiti of Mira Road, fancy dress by children, Mohiniattam, poetry recitation, dance by Kalanidhi Nruta Vidyalayam, Malayalam play 'Sujata Oru Pennpiravi' by Kharghar Kerala Samajam etc.

On Dec 30, Swami Rajiv Krishna presented Sopana Nrutham. It was followed by dance ballet by Grishma Gangadharan and party, a kathaprasangam by Shreedevi Sundaresan & party on Gurudevan's messages, variety entertainments by Badlapur Malayalee Samajam, group dance by Jayanthi Manoj Pisharody and party, Pinnal Thiruvathira by Tru Indian and Classical fusion dance by Shweta Warriar. Dr Sajeev Kumar Nair, Guru Jayachandran and Tru Indian's Ambika Warasyar presented Dance ballet *Sitapaharanam* for the first time on stage which received applause.

Mumbai Yatra Samiti Chairman M Sasikumar Nair, Ramesh B Unnithan, SNDP Union, Mumbai Thane President Padmanabhan PP, Social activist and businessman Upendra Menon, Adv Padma Divakaran and several eminent personalities attended the event. MLA Kishan Kathore, Christie Classes Director Christopher Jacob Chowallur, CP Sajeewan, Rajendran Padiyoor, and other persons attended the concluding function.

Happy Birthday to

Vaishnavi

**3rd Birthday on
8th February 2017**

**With Best Wishes
from
Parents Vidya & Rupesh**



UNARV

■ Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatna Mumbai is organising 'UNARV KKS Nagarolsavam' a platform and competition for the first time for the Malayalee Youth of Mumbai.

It plans to have 22 wide varieties of competitions ranging from photography to theatre. There is something for everyone from age 15 to 30 years.

The base language of UNARV competitions are in Malayalam, with a twist in each item. Those who wish to participate in UNARV are requested to contact their area Malayali Samajams where Registration Forms and detailed brochures are available. The zonal level competitions have started. Western Zonal Competitions was held at V.K. Krishna Menon Academy, Borivli (W) on January 8.

Shriraj Nair Borivli Malayali Samajam President as well as Vice-Chairman KKS Western Zone inaugurated the competitions by



During inauguration of Western Zonal competition

lighting the lamp.

There are 4 other Zonal competitions and a Grand Finale of "UNARV KKS Nagarolsavam 2017" will be held at central level.

For more details of "UNARV" contact KKS Kala-Samskarika Samithi Chairman Surendrababu, Tel.9820063617 or Convener Jyothishprasad Tel. 9820140075

Bhajan Sandhya



Guru Smt Lakshmi Padmanabhan and Mr Pamanabhan.

Top (L-R): Rahul (on mridangam), Suradha, Anushka, Nandana, Shankari.

Bottom Row: (L R): Vidita, Sanvi, Nityashree, Revathy.

■ Vashi Fine Arts Society celebrated their annual get-together on 1st of January 2017 with a purpose to promote young talent. BHAJAN SANDHYA was presented by students and disciples of Smt Lakshmi Pdmanabhan, a renowned teacher of Carnatic Music, in Vashi. This Student group (in age group 9-12 years) won the First Prize in the Swami Haridhos Giri Bhajan Festival organized

by Shri Gnananda Namasankirthan Mandali & supported by Shankar Mahadevan Academy, in Nov 2016. Smt. Lakshmi Padmanabhan has been teaching Music, for the last 54 years and has been awarded the 'Sangeetha Sikshamani'. The students trained under her able guidance, rendered light songs, bhajans and abhangs in multiple languages.

SNMS workshop on Cancer

■ Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti conducted a workshop on prevention of Cancer, in association with Tata Memorial Hospital. Dr Sailesh Sreekanth was the chief guest. Deputy Charity Commissioner Suvarna Khandelwal was the guest of honour.

Dr Shalaka Joshi talked on Breast Cancer and Dr Vikram Chowdhary about abdominal cancer. Dr Shrenik Oswal spoke on Palliative Care. Dr Sundar Raman, Dean of Hospital Administration, Tata Institute was moderator. The session was organised by N S Salimkumar, O K Prasad, Gopidas, Prithviraj, Maya Sahajan, K Mohandas, Sasankan, Sunil Sukumaran and V N Pavithran.

New School for Tribals

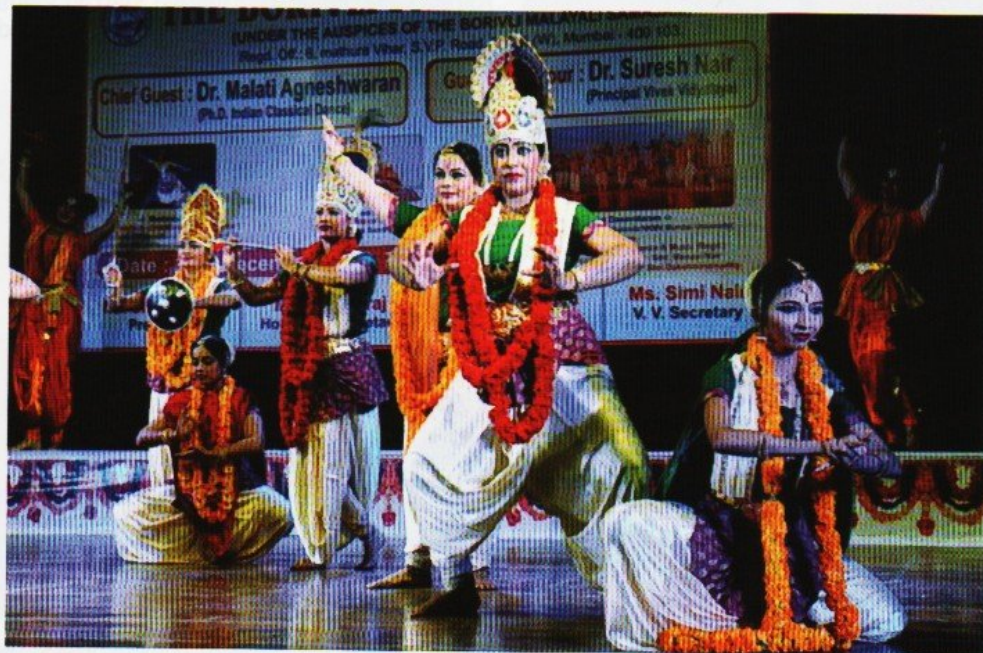
■ Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti is starting a school for tribals in Ambeshiv gaon, Badlapur, named Sivagiri Rajamma Memorial School. The foundation stone was laid on Jan 29 at 11 am. Vishnu Ramasavre, Minister for Tribal Welfare did the honours.

BMS Fine Arts Programme

■ Borivli Fine Arts Society under the auspices of the Borivli Malayali Samajam organised a visual treat of dance and songs on 27th December, 2016 at Prabhodhan Thackeray Auditorium in Borivli West. Smt Dr Malati Agneswaran (PhD in Indian Classical Dance) former Professor of Nalanda Nrityakala Mahavidyalaya graced the occasion as Chief Guest and the programme started off with a Mohiniattam Recital (ashtapadi - Chandana Charchita) by the students of Kalaradhana Institute of Fine Arts under the guidance of Smt. Uvika Aravind, followed by a Dance Ballet - Dashavatharam by Smt. Manasi Nair and team, Tapasya School of Classical dance and Music. The programme concluded with a beautiful rendition of songs by Smt. Sandhya Pisharody who gave a mixed platter of melodious Malayalam, Tamil and Hindi songs. President of Borivli Malayali Samajam Shriraj Nair, General Secretary J Baburaj, Vice Presidents Anup Chalakaran and Sashi Nair, Jt Secretaries of Arts and Organisation, Achuthan and Venugopal Kartha, Vanitha Vedi Secretary Simi Nair, its Jt Secretaries Ambika Kartha and Rejita Nair organised the event which was well attended by the members of BMS and the parents and children of the BMS run VK Krishna Menon Academy & Junior College. The event was hosted by Shraddha Sreedevi.



Dr Malati Agneswaran lights the lamp.



Dashavatharam by Smt Manasi Nair and her team

Sabarimala In Mumbai

■ Shree Ayyappa Seva Sangham, Mulund celebrated its 18th Annual Sarvajanic Ayyappa Pooja over a period of 4 days from 5th to 8th January, 2017. The highlight of this year's programme was a temporary temple exactly like the one at Sabarimala at first glance erected at Neelam Nagar, Mulund East with kotimaram, and the sacred eighteen steps, with provision for climbing them with irumudi under the able guidance of the Sabarimala tantr and assisted by the members of the sangham. A new Panchaloha vighram from Kerala was brought specially for this purpose which was installed on January 5 after two hours' procession from the local Shiva temple accompanied by velichapadu, thalappoli, chendamelam etc. Other programmes included an Ayyappan bhajan by Mahesh Jayaraman and party, Ganapathi Homam, Narayaneeyam recital, Rudrapooja and Padipooja (for the first time). More than 2500 people visited the site for Darshan during the four days' festival.



SNMS Women Wing new Jt Convener



■ SNMS Central Committee Women Wing has elected Smt Suma Prakash as Jt Convener. Suma who is staying in Ulhas Nagar is a native of Mullappally.

Tru Indian Social Welfare Wing Convenor.

■ Jose Varghese has been elected Convenor of Social Welfare Wing of Tru Indian Information and Guidance Society. For a long time Varghese has been working for social and charitable causes in and around Mumbai.



Jose Varghese

Jose was earlier working as a medical van driver with Bombay Medical Aids Foundation of Mumbai Hospital and the suffering of patients there inspired him to do social service. He is now working for a few private companies and most of his earnings goes to orphans, patients and mental patients. He also co-ordinates with Trusts to disburse funds for the deserving poor.

Jose' wife is Janeamma who is working in a private company and their son Jomon Jose is a Hotel Management Student. Their daughter Justie Jose is doing her Plus 2.



Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan being honoured by R S Naman, Founder President of Adarsha Vidyalaya, Chembur during the Diamond Jubilee year (60th year) of Kerala Piravi.



Bhupesh Babu inaugurating SNMS Vashi Unit Kudumba Sangamam by lighting the lamp.

With Best Wishes to
Kerala in Mumbai
on its 7th Anniversary

Avance Corporation

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Master Chef Kicha to be the Brand Ambassador for Double Horse Snacks

■ Master Kicha aka Nihal Raj, the 6 years old chef, who inspired the food lovers around the world with his mouth watering delicacies will be the brand ambassador for Double Horse Snacking Range. The charming talent got noted when he started his own YouTube cookery channel 'Kicha tube' at a very small age, hit the online audiences with various recipes and became an overnight international star after being the youngest guest in the famous Ellen DeGeneres Show where he prepared Puttu for the host.

With Master Kicha as the brand ambassador for Snacking Range, the Double Horse is all set to hit the "Snack market" with a new taste revolution. Double Horse has been enriching lives of Keralites with superior quality and tasty food products for the last 60 years, is now coming out with a number of snacking options so that Keralite traditional taste can be offered to the customers the world over.

After the launch of Kerala's very own snack, banana chips during this onam, the company is now getting ready to introduce a range of Healthy snacking options ranging from Cassava chips, potato chips, choco/vanilla/strawberry bites, peanut candy etc to name a few. Whether it is a festive season, special occasion or a regular day; Double Horse snacks can add more



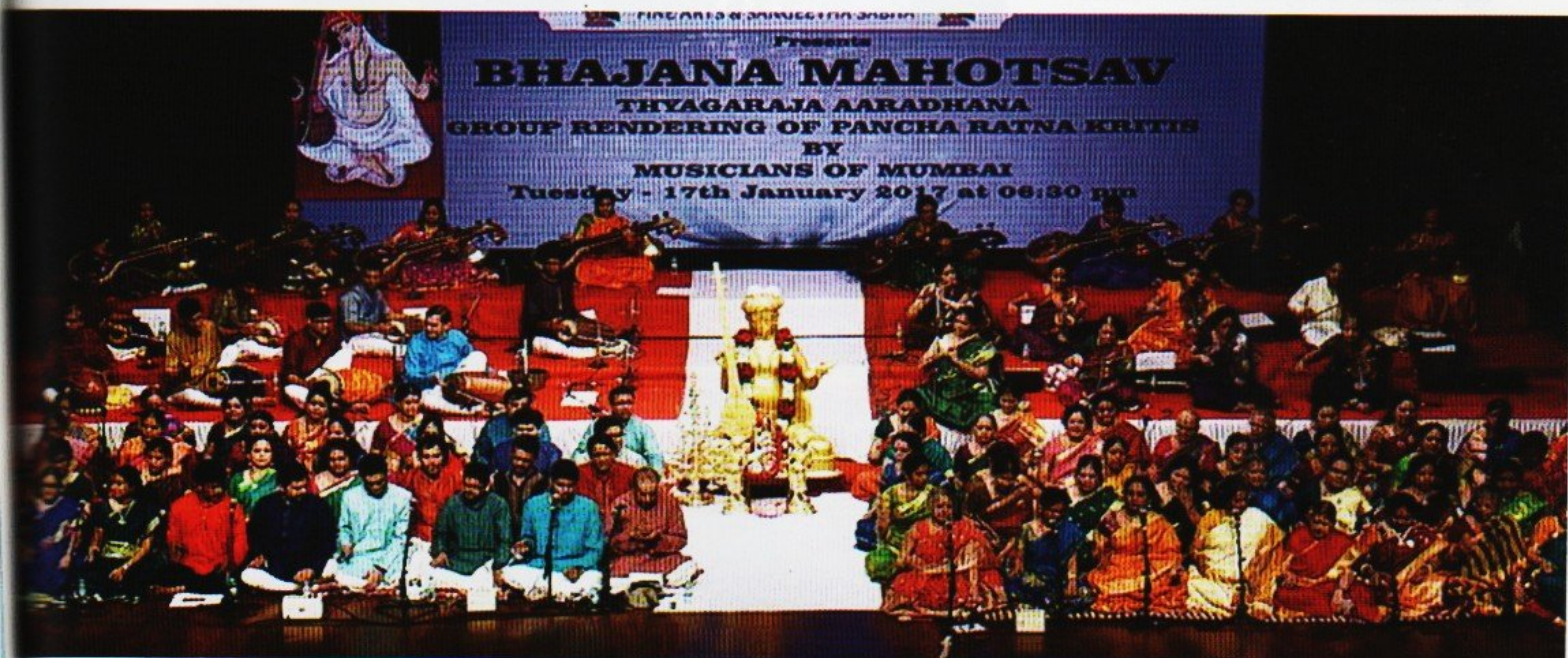
flavour to any of them. Apart from snacks, Double Horse intends to come out with a number of Ready to eat sku's also down the line.

Double Horse always gives utmost importance to the health of its valued customers and ensures maximum purity and quality in its food products. Pure raw materials, high quality processing and flavour-lock packaging ensure excitingly good taste every time.

Manjilas Group Managing Director

Vinod Manjila and GM Sales & Marketing Sunil P Krishnan officially announced the appointment of Master Kicha as the Brand Ambassador for Snacking Range, at a press meet held at Ernakulam.

Double Horse expects a great impact for the snacks range among the youth as Kicha has bowled over the kids and youths with his amazing cuteness and style.



Nearly 100 musicians from all over Mumbai with their instruments like, Mrudangam, Veena, Violin, Gatam besides vocal artists rendered in unison the Pancharatna Kritis (five gems) composed by the music Saint Thyagaraja joined by nearly 2000 music lovers from the audience at the Shanmukhananda auditorium on January 17 to mark the 170th Thyagaraja Aradhana festival.



During the release of Vishupooram logo

Vishupooram

■ SNMS Mira Road Youth wing is organizing Vishu pooram 2017 on April 16 at Ghodbunder Road. The logo for the Vishupooram 2017 was released at KK Damodaran Memorial Hall Mira Road in which SNMS Chairman M I Damodaran was the Chief Guest. Mira Road Malayalam Samajam Secretary Radhakrishnan Nair, Adv Padma Divakaran, Kerala Samskarika Vedi President Premadas, IP Saji, Mira Road Ayyappa Mandir Secretary Narayanan Nambiar, Bhayandar Malayali Samajam representative Jayanthan Nair, MK Soman, Youth Wing Zonal Convener Sumin Soman attended the event.



LIC Zonal Manager B Venugopal inaugurating Vismaya 2016, third anniversary of NANMA Charitable Foundation. NANMA Secretary Sunil Raj, Adv Pav Padma Divakaran, NK Bhupesh Babu, Prakash Padikkal O Pradeep also on stage

Maharashtra Dancers At Kerala

■ Lalitha Kalalayam - Mumbai and Ranjini Rasik Sabha - Nelluvaya, Kerala jointly organised a Dance Ballet 'Kumara Sambhavam' and traditional folk dances of Maharashtra on several stages at Guruvayur, Pattambi, Wadakkanchery, Ongallur in Kerala and at Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu during January 2017. The programmes were directed by Guru Kalashri Lalitha Kalalayam Nambisan.



A scene from Kumarasambhavam



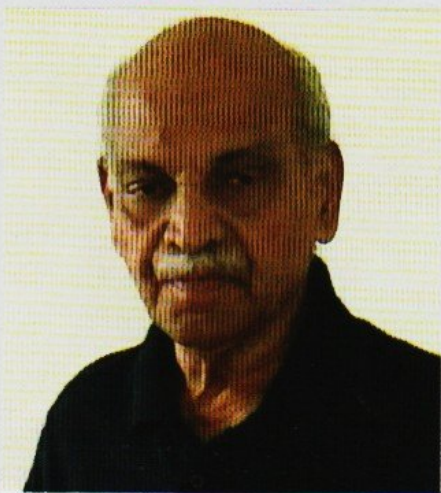
Kerala Dances at SIES

■ For the first time the Malayalam Association of the SIES College of Arts, Science & Commerce, Sion conducted the traditional Kerala dance (Kaikottikali) with 16 student-dancers

participating during their annual function held recently. Other programmes conducted were Mohiniattam, a margamkali-kaikottikali-oppana combined dance form and a

special group song which was a tribute to the late Malayalam actor Kalabhavan Mani. Dr. Uma Shankar, principal of the college was the Guest of honour.

OBITUARY



Karath Raghavan Nair (83) of Killimangalam Thrissur District passed away on December 30 at 65, Market Road, Kirkee Pune. He is survived by his wife Vinodini, his son Sivaram and his wife Mini daughters Lata and Devi and their spouses Priyadarshan and Vinod.

OBITUARY



Smt Padmavathy Amma (83), wife of Shorunur Kulappully Kunnanamgathu late Sri Govindan Nair's wife, passed at Arati Apts in Ulhas Nagar. She is survived by her sons and daughter Chandramohan, Ravindran and Sujatha and their spouses Renuka, Jaya and Manoj.

Sankaranthi - the faith of all communities

■ Makar Sankranti is the only festival people from every community celebrate. The festival always brings back fond memories of our childhood days from distributing *laddoos*, to gathering on building terraces and open grounds to fly colourful kites.

While dates of all Hindu festivals keep changing as per the Gregorian calendar, the date of Makar Sankranti remains constant on January 14. After this event, days start becoming longer and warmer and chill of winter declines. It is believed that any auspicious and sacred ritual can be sanctified in any Hindu family, from this day onwards. This is also traditionally the month of weddings.

At the Asthika Samaj in Matunga Malayalees gathered from very early morning to have the darshan of Lord Ayyappa and at Sri Shankara Matham devotees performed Surya namaskarams as a thanks giving to Lord Surya.

Sankranthi is one of the most auspicious festivals in India. It marks the transition of the Sun from Dhanu rashi (Sagittarius) to Makara rashi (Capricorn). It also signifies the movement of the Sun from the inauspicious Dakshinayana to the auspicious Uttarayana, according to astral positions.

Tamilians celebrate this festival for four days as Pongal Thiruvizha which is strictly a rural festival. However Tamilians who have migrated to Mumbai also follow the tradition of celebrating in the same manner. The name of the festival is derived from "Pongal" - a rice pudding made from freshly harvested rice, milk and jaggery with cashew nuts added to it.

In Dharavi hundreds of housewives gather before Sunrise and boil the rice and milk in a pot and a turmeric plant is tied around it and it is then symbolically offered to the Sun-God along with other oblations. All people wear traditional South Indian sari and red thilak on their forehead. The offerings include two sticks of sugarcane in background, coconut, betel leaves, nuts and bananas in the dish. Many people also wear new clothes and women decorate houses with *Kolam* (designs) using rice flour and red clay.

For Keralites, this is one of the most auspicious festivals like Vishu and Onam. Sri Ayyappa Bhaktha Samiti, at Dadar celebrates this for three days since 1950 at Napoo Garden at Matunga. Started by late V Krishnan Nair this organization has been conducting this festival which was then the first of its kind in Maharashtra. They make out of banana stems, four temples, which is a replica of all the temples in Sabarimala in Kerala and a mosque of Vavar, a Muslim confidante of Lord Ayyappa. In the evening a procession of Lord Ayyappa is taken out from the



Makaravilakku puja by Ayyappa Baktha Samiti at Dadar

nearby Shiva temple with *Velichapadu* (Oracle) carrying sword and dagger which are the weapons of the Lord and led by *Pancha Vadhyam* and Nadaswaram.

On Makar Sankranti evening, at the hill shrine of Lord Ayyappa's Sabarimala in

Kerala, lakhs of pilgrims witness a celestial light. It is believed that this brilliant flame of light is the *aarathi* performed by the Gods. Known as *Makar Jyoti*, this miracle occurs at the evening prayer time.

- KA Viswanath

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Hiranandani Keralite Association



Office Bearers and members at the inauguration

HKA Xmas and New Year Celebrations

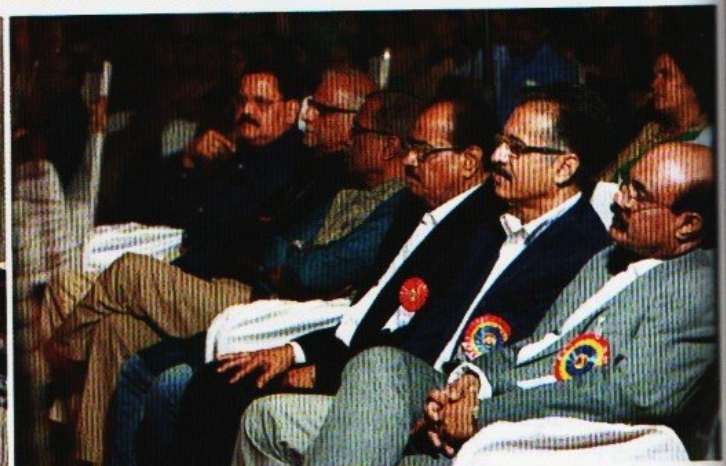
■ Hiranandani Keralite Association ushered in Christmas and New Year with cultural programmes on Jan 15 at Norita Grounds in Hiranandani Gardens. The programme was conducted by HKA Ladies Wing and Youth Wing. Music programme by Premkumar's Sapthaswara, a Malayalam skit, song and dance programmes by members and their families were the highlights of the evening. Prominent businessman of Hiranandani Gardens, MU Hariharan, was felicitated and bestowed with Best Businessman of the year Award. Office bearers S R Pillai, A N Shaji, Malbin Victor and Paul Peringat addressed the gathering.



M U Hariharan being bestowed Best Businessman Award



Participants of the programme



Section of audience

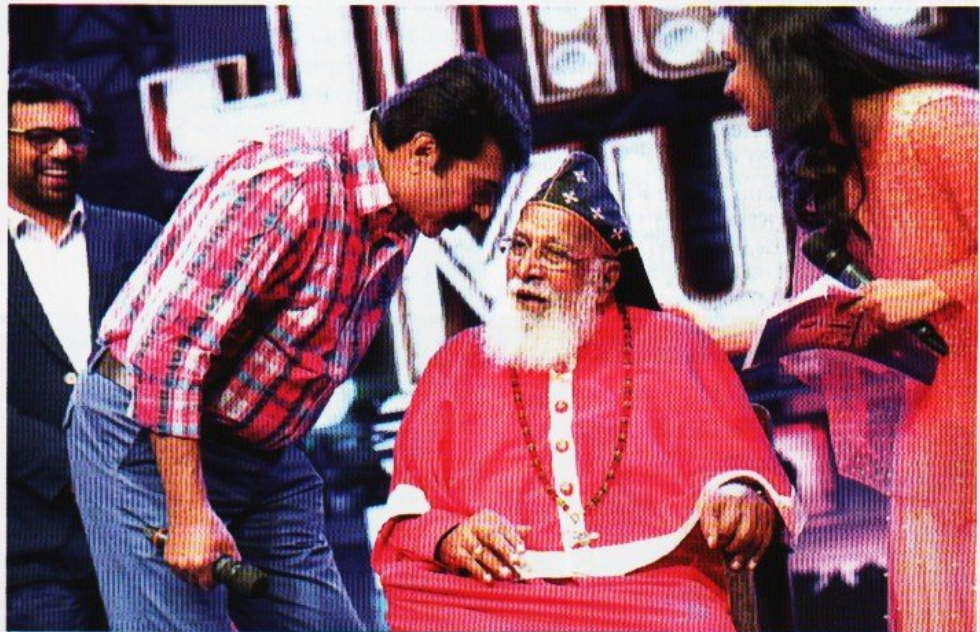
KNSS New MC Members

■ Newly elected Managing Committee members of Kendriya Nair Samskarika Sangh for the years 2016 -18: Sitting from left : R D Nair - Secretary , S R Pillai- Vice President, U Ramachandran- President, Harikumar Menon- General Secretary and C R Unny- Treasurer. Standing from left: V K Menon, Anilkumar Menon, K R Harikumar, Shrikanth Nair, Sunil G Nair- Secretary, D R Nair - Jt Treasurer, S S Pillai and Balakrishnan Nair. Besides the above K K Nambiar and A R Pillai were also elected to the Managing Committee.

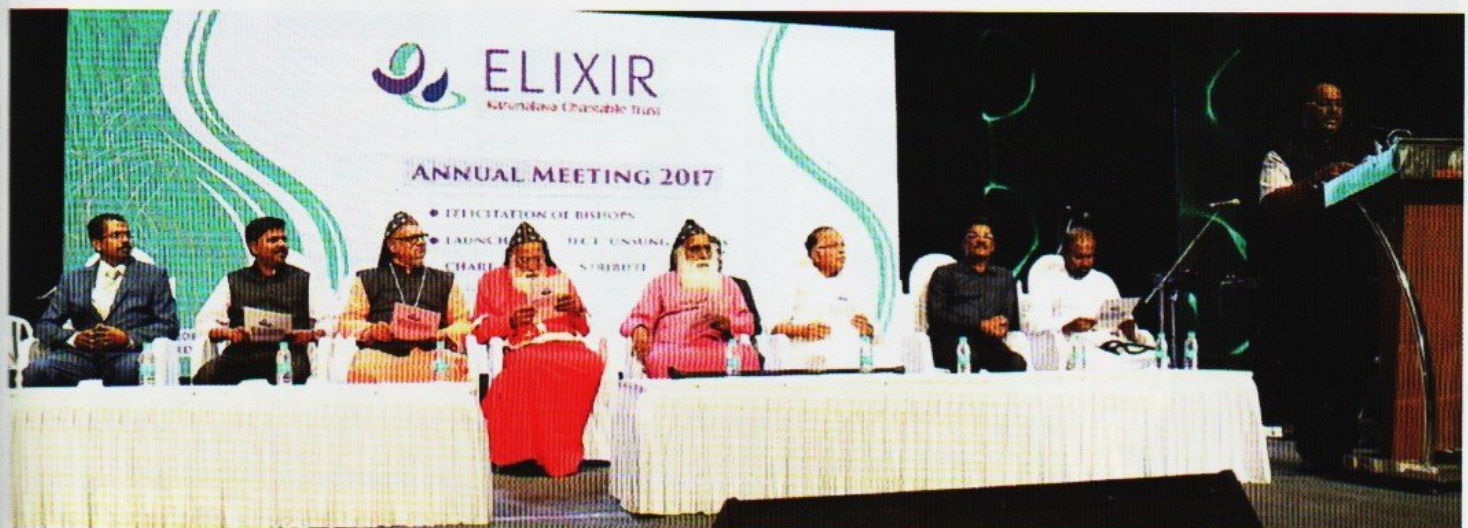


Elixir Karunalaya Trust Annual

■ Elixir Karunalaya Charitable Trust held their annual day and distribution of financial assistance at Shanmukhananda Auditorium. Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman P J Kurien was the Chief Guest. Philipose Mar Chrisostem who is celebrating his centenary and Head of Mar Thoma Community Joseph Marthoma Metropolita who is celebrating his sixty years as Pastor were honoured. Fr Dr Geevarghese, head of Mumbai Marthoma Sabha presided. The families of the four jawans who were martyred during the Uri attack were honoured. Several economically backward persons were given financial assistance during the event. Chairman of Elixir Karunalaya Trust Roy John Mathew was honoured by Mammooty. The event ended with a megashow of cine artists.



Mammooty with Philipose Mar Chrisostem



Chairman of Elixir Karunalaya Trust Roy John Mathew addressing the gathering

K & K Social Foundation Award Nite

■ K&K Social foundation (Kashmir to Kerala) celebrated their 6th Annual New Year Award function on 15th Jan. 2017 at Hotel Leela, Sahar, Mumbai.

Many dignitaries and VVIPs like Rajya Sabha Dy. Chairperson - Hon'ble P.J. Kurian, Kerala High Court Judge, Hon'ble Justice Kemal Pasha, who were the Chief Guests, BJP Spokesperson Madhav Bhandari, Under secretary External Affairs Ministry Rajesh Gawande, Former Assembly Speaker of Kashmir Mubarak Gul, Member Law Commission of India Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar, who were the Guests of Honour, Tamilnadu High Court Judge Hon'ble Justice Kulasekharan, Local M.L.A. from Chandivali Constituency Mohd. Arif (Naseem) Khan and many other dignitaries were present on the dias.

K&K Social Foundation presented their awards by the hands of the Chief Guests and Guests of Honour, to the following dignitaries from different walks of life in India, in recognition of their services to society. They are MP Ahammed (Malabar Gold & Diamonds), Madam Grace Pinto (Educationist), AM Arif (M.L.A., Aroor Constituency), Mrs. Bindu



Prince Vaidyan felicitating P J Kurian

Krishna (D.C.C. President Kollam, Kerala), Jaggu Swami (Administrator Amritha Hospital), Rajesh Mokashi (CEO - Care Rating Co.), Sunil Patodia (Chartered Accountants - S.K. Patodia & Associates), Kurian John Melamparambil (Social Activist), Dr. M.G. Pillai (Cardiologist & Cardio Surgeon), Dr. Oommen David

(Educationist) and John Daniel (Social Activist).

The celebration started with the famous flutist Rajesh Chertala from Kerala, followed by classical dance by the world famous Hari and Chetana from Bengaluru, Kashmiri folk dance, followed by presentation of the awards.



Prince Vaidyan felicitating Justice Kemal Pasha



Bindu Krishna being felicitated



Kashmiri folk dance



A section of the audience

Cultural Festivities of Badlapur Ashram concluded

■ The first cultural festivities organised by Tru Indian Dance Academy in association with the Mumbai zone of Gurudharma Pracharana Sabha in Ramadasa Ashram of Badlapur were successfully concluded. Sri Krishnananda Saraswati lighted the lamp signifying the end of the festivities. He appealed to the organisers of various Malayali organisers of the state to fully utilise the facilities in the Ashram for creative purposes. President of the Mumbai zone of Gurudharma Pracharana Sabha S Sundaresan, director of the Tru Indian Academy's of cultural wing Ambika Varasiar, Roy J Kottaram of Keraleeya Kendra Sanghatana, Adv Padma Divakaran, Suma Mukundan,



Swami Krishnananda Saraswati of Ramadasa Mission inaugurating Ahramam Samskarikolsavam 2016, by lighting the lamp.



Athira Thampi's Mohiniattam performance at Badlapur during Ramadasa Ashram's Samskarikalolsavam

Gangadharan Nambiar, Peethambar Panicker, Madhu T Panicker et al were present during the event. Music concert by Sariga Music Academy, Melam by women of Dhvani Sahrudaya Arts Badlapur, cultural items by Central Kalyan Kerala Samajam, bhajan by Mira Road Ayyappa Bhakta Seva Samiti, fancy dress by children, Mohiniattam, poetry recital, dances by Kalanidi.i Nruta Vidyalaya etc besides 'Sujata Oru Pen Piravi' by Kharghar Kerala Samajam were presented on the first day.

The second day witnessed Sopana Nrutham, dance by Greeshma Gangadharan and her troupe, a skit embodying the message of Sree Narayana Guru by SNDP Kalyan West Unit, mixed items by Kulegaon Malayali Samajam, group dance by Jayanti Manoj Pisharody and troupe, Mohiniattam by Athira Thampi, Kerala Dance by Archana Babu Marar, Kathaprasangam by Sreedevi Sundaresan, Pinnal Thiruvathira by Tru Indian Dance Wing, Classical Fusion Dance by Shweta Varier and dance drama 'Sita apaharanam' by Ambika Varasiar, Dr Sajivkumar Nair and Guru Jayachandran. There was a wild life photographic exhibition by Mohan Nair. Mumbai Yatra Samiti Chairman Sasikumar M Nair, Ramesh P Unnithan, Upendra Menon, Preman B Pillai, Babukuttan, Michael Jacob, Manoj G Pillai and President of Mumbai Thane Zone of SNDP Union Padmanabhan, P P Sreekumar of Nadopasana were felicitated. In the cultural meet held in the evening, Rajendran Padiyoor, Christie Classes Director Christopher Jacob Chovallur, C P Sajivan and I G Manoj Pisharody were present.

MUSICAL SALVATION THROUGH **GANANJALI**

Sundara Narayana began writing songs in praise of Lord Guruvayoorappan after his 60th birthday in 1999. It all began with a dream



Usha R Menon

■ It is yet again that time of the year when the blissful air of Irinjalakuda, the birthplace of many renowned artists and musicians, resonates with the mellifluous rendering of

Guruvayurappan kritis, all the more special because they come from children who are very dear to HIM!!

Youngsters from different parts of the country participate in the competition organised by Nadopasana a carnatic music association and Sundara Narayana Gananjali Trust. What is also unique about this competition is that the contestants have to select and sing a song from the Guruvayoorappan Gananjali Kritis composed by Late Sri V.P.Narayanan kutty Menon, Sundara Menon to the people of Irinjalakuda. Shri V. P. N. Menon was born in Nadavaramba, Irinjalakuda. He belonged to the Vadakke Palazhi 'tharavad'.

After graduation in Physics from Maharajas College, Ernakulam in 1956, he moved to Bombay, the land of opportunities, a practice very common during those days. He was with L&T till 1968 and then migrated to the US. The proverbial Mumbai spirit is



V P N Menon with his wife Dr Sreedevi Menon

something that can never wear off and Mumbai saw him and his family visiting their relatives, friends and ex-colleagues on their regular annual visits to India. This affection for his people continued till his last visit to India in 2012 but slowly ill health took over his body, though never his spirits.

Sri V.P.N. Menon was always fond of music, was conversant of the Carnatic ragas and kritis but what brought him very close to Guruvayurappan and

writing devotional songs in praise of the Lord was the result of a miracle which could stupify and stun any bhakth of the Lord.

Sundara Narayana began writing songs in praise of Lord Guruvayoorappan after his 60th birthday in 1999. It all began with a dream he had, wherein Guruvayoorappan instructed him to write classical songs about Him. Untrained in formal music, he dismissed the dreams at first.



Singers at Melpattur Auditorium Guruvayoor during Gananjali musical recital

However it became a recurring dream which compelled him to try. Inspired by devotion toward Guruvayoorappan he sat down to write his first song starting with "Hari Om Narayana". To his own wonderment words came out of his mind as if "a tap was opened". Since then he composed over 220 songs as well as a dance-drama. He also composed songs in praise of Poornathrayeesha, Ganesha, Devi and Ayyappa. Two songs were dedicated to Swami Chinmayananda too. Many of his songs were presented as dance dramas too by well-known classical dancers on various stages in US.

All his kritis are in Sanskrit, Malayalam or Manipravalam (Sanskrit-Malayalam). A few bhajans have been written in Hindi too. The music communities of New York and New Jersey gradually accepted these songs and many prominent musicians sang them at various kacheris.

Sundara Narayana's songs have been melodiously rendered by the doyenne of Carnatic music Dr Omana kutty, Dr Srivalan J Menon the well known vocalist and music director, Bombay Sisters, Shengottai Subramanyan, Muraleedharan Unni, P. Unnikrishnan, M K Sankaran Namboodiri (Pranavam) and Biju Narayanan at various musical recitals. These songs are also available as CDs under the 'Gananjali'- song offerings, by the above mentioned singers. As a matter of fact, there are 22 CDs available in the Gananjali series sung by all these stalwarts of Carnatic music.

Sundara Narayana has also published a book 'Guruvayoorappan Gananjali-Kritis of Sundara Narayana', a compilation of all his 200 kritis in Malayalam, Sanskrit and Manipravalam with their transliterations and translations in English which make it easier for a reader to absorb his passion and fervent faith in the Lord.

Sundara Narayana's ardent and intense devotion towards Guruvayoorappan is commemorated by a daylong celebration of his musical creations in February, the month of his birth at Guruvayoor. Teachers and students of Carnatic classical music offer songs in the form of musical recitals to Lord Guruvayoorappan in Melppathoor Auditorium, Guruvayoor. This has been a successful and popular endeavour for the past three years. It is interesting to note that with every successive year the number of teachers



P Jayachandran speaking during Felicitation ceremony in Guruvayoor.

who have taken up the mission of teaching Sundara Narayana kritis have increased just as the number of student participants too. The function is blessed by the presence and solo renditions of the same by leading musicians too. On February 23, 2017 the musical recital will be led by Dr Leela Muralidharan and Dr Chertala Ranganatha Sharma.

Sundara Narayana left for his heavenly abode at the age of 75, on March 31, 2013. He is survived by his wife Dr Sreedevi Menon who now has dedicated her days and nights to spread and propagate the musical offerings of Sundara Narayana to the world of music and music lovers.

His daughter Dr Lakshmi Menon Singh and son Jaykumar too are settled

in the U.S.

This year the Nadopasana Carnatic Music Competitions are going to be held on 11th and 12th of February. The teachers and the winners will be awarded with cash prizes.

The first prize winners will receive the title Guruvayurappan Gananjali Puskaram and an opportunity to sing during the Swathi Thirunal festival conducted by Nadopasana in April, in Irinjalakuda. The teacher of the first prize winner too would be honoured with a gift of a gold pendent of Guruvayoorappan from the Guruvayoor temple.

Details of the competitions are available on nadopasana@yahoo.co.in



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Aksharaslokam

- Guruji

Aksharaslokam, as it is known down south, is the forerunner of today's most popular pastime 'Anthakshari'. For the genuine participants, it was an opportunity to create a new poem in the most classical way, along with likeminded friends. A score of instant poets accompanied by their disciples, would get together at one place for a couple of days as the guests of local lord and people would come from all corners to witness the contest and cheer their heroes. The event was keenly watched to acquire new knowledge and camaraderie. The eldest among the assembled would start reciting a quatrain in Sanskrit metre (prosody, based on number of syllables in a line), avoiding the 'Anushtuppu' metre with eight syllables on each line, and the people, sitting in circular arrangement, would pick the first syllable of the third line and start his quatrain starting with that syllable (only vowel and not consonant and *Chillu* (special characters used in Malayalam alone). And the chain continues until people withdrew admitting their incapability to continue or the time allotted was over. By the time the event was over, all participants would have their respective poems completed. Kodungalloor Kunhukuttan Thampuram, K C Kesava Pilla, Mulloor Padmanabha Pilla etc were known to have attended such Aksharaslokam sessions.



Premji

Raman famously said, "Masters of numbers can master any subject."

Most of Indian philosophical lessons and epics such as Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagavatam etc, are written in quatrains. Other well known Malayalam literary classics are also written in quatrains.

When parents encourage their children to learn quatrains to memorise, they indirectly help their children to do well in their subjects in school and colleges as the children already mastered the art of memorisation.

We reproduce two quatrains below, written by M P Bhattathiripad (Actor Premji) to initiate the children to quatrains. Incidentally they are titled 'Vidyarambham.'

വിദ്യാരംഭം

ഉണ്ണിസ്സുരുന്നുണർന്നെണിറ്റു ശുചിയായ്,
 ശുഭ്രാംബരാഡംബരം
 വിണ്ണിൻകോവിലിൽ വന്നു നാദമയിയാമ-
 ദ്രേവിതൻ മുന്നിലായ്,
 മണ്ണിൽ സ്പഷ്ടതരം കരാംഗുലികളാൽ
 നാനാപദാർത്ഥമാക്ഷരം
 കണ്ണിൽക്കണ്ടെഴുതുന്നൊരീ പ്രകൃതി-
 വിദ്യാരംഭമേറെശ്ശുഭം.
 മുമ്പാകേ തറയിൽ വിരിച്ച മണലിൽ
 താട്ടിവ്യരൂപം സാരം
 ഞുന്മാ മമ്പതുമൊന്നുമക്ഷരഗണ-
 ത്താലേ വരയ്ക്കാമിവൻ;
 അന്മാൽ,ബ്ഭാരതി, വീണ മീട്ടിവരുമാ
 നിൻചെന്തളിർക്കൈവിരൽ-
 ത്തുന്മാലൊന്നെഴുതേണമേ 'കവിത'യെ-
 നെന്തറിവിൽ മുന്നക്ഷരം!

* When Malayalam alphabet was created, it had only 51 characters. Now it has 53 characters.

Literary lovers who were themselves not poets used to learn quatrains created by others and recite them in contests to win prizes. Among Indian languages, there are syllables made up of two or three consonants. In such cases only the last character is pronounced fully is taken as a syllable and not the earlier character/s half pronounced. Nevertheless, in different regions or groups, the rules vary. The participants should therefore be sure to get the rules clarified from the very beginning.

Before the prosaic poems came into vogue, poems in Malayalam were written according to certain metres, either Dravidian or Sanskrit metres. In quatrain recitations only four lined (hence name quatrain) sets written in Sanskrit metres barring Anushtuppu are used though words used could be purely of Malayalam. *Vasantatilakam, Shardulavikrititam, Mandakranta, Shragdhara, Vasantamalika, Indravajra, Upendravajra, Upajati, Kusamamanjari, Geeti, Prthvi, Harini, Malini, Shalini, Praharshini, Viyogini, Shikharini, Malabharani, Drutavilambita, Sammata, Totaka, Drutavilambita, Rathoddhata, Vamshastha, Atiruchira, Pushpitagra (Shrimannarayaneeyam used all these metres) are acceptable. Besides Vasatatilakam, Panchachamaram, Manjubhashini, and Viyogini are also used.*

Benefits of quatrains

A properly created quatrain is easy to remember because of its delivery, rhythm, rhetoric and all the more the message it conveys. It expands one's horizon of vocabulary and makes the learning of other languages easy. Moreover, rhythm it provides helps one to recite loudly for the benefits of others around. A habit of learning of quatrains early in life helps to reinforce one's memory so that one can start remembering other important things as well. Several poets used to convey numbers hidden in verses (we shall deal with it later) and they became masters in the science of numbers. Nobel laureate Dr C V

With Best Wishes to
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 on its 7th Anniversary



V K Santosh Kumar & Family

The Legend of Khasak

- Chankath Unnikrishnan

The flocks of O V Vijayan fans living in Mumbai, those who still inspire the ignition invoked by the legendary Malayalam writer (Late Shri. O V Vijayan - 1930 - 2005), had a wonderful visual treat beyond the imagination, during last week. Being postponed earlier due to some copyright issues, the dramatic form of his novel "*Khasakkinte Ithihaasam*" (The Legend of Khasak) was staged in three days at Tandel Ground, Seawoods, Navi Mumbai under the banner of Drishya Foundation. Directed by Mr Deepan Sivaraman, the young and challenging theatre director and scenographer, the three and half hours play performed with an irresistible continuity. The open air arena of a spectacular quadrangle of loose earth witnessed an inconceivable usage of the elements of '*panchabootha*' - soil, fire, water, air and sky. Unlike the conventional proscenium stage, the modern 'thrust' type of open area is exploited with extravagant experience of visuals, music, masks and folklore of great culture of Kerala, would be a trend-setter milestone to the contemporary drama shows, similar to the one which the writer set decades back in the Malayalam fiction literary by introducing the title.

O V Vijayan took almost 10 years to write his first novel '*Khasakkinte Ithihaasam*' (better known as Khasak) in 1968, which was supposed to be a new dawn to Malayalam fiction, which still is a best seller. It is said that literal attempts in Malayalam titles are classified as pre and post Khasak. It took a quiver in Malayalam literary



O V Vijayan

scene and reprinted into number of editions. Credit goes as it stood as the maximum sold fiction in Malayalam, apart from various translations to English, German and other languages, leading to one of the maximum sold fictions in South Asia. The novel depicts the philosophical and explosive sojourn of Ravi, an undergraduate who escaped from yesteryear sins, leaving his father and beloved away at home and comes to live in rural land of Khasak as a school teacher. Khasak, the land of mystical legends as the rural belief and its rustic entities (Allah Picha Mollakka, Aliyar, Maimuna, Appukkili, Sivaraman Nair, Kuppuvachan, Nizam Ali, Mungamkozhi, etc.) flutter Ravi in actuating his fussy pilgrimage of

philosophical thoughts, mixed with the frequent stumbles on engrossed elements of material world viz. lust, reminiscence, desire, decease, existence, all psychometric test of meaningless life. The story develops through such trajectory of guilt-driven thoughts and incidents touching the chores of communism, Vedanta and pitiful states of human mind. He commits suicide at the end, on a place where he start exploring Khasak. In other way, the writer creates the imaginary plot of Khasak to propagate his philosophies on life through symbolizing Ravi's volatile mental state. Several rounds of reading is required to get acquainted with these philosophies and understand the crux. By introducing dialects and scenes depicted with other characters, the writer gives the scriptural refinement of psychological superfluity of other ideologies. At the end of each round of interpretation, readers find it challenging to realise the nonlinear methodology and spheres adopted in the novel, while trying to isolate the plot and important role, precisely. Many people wished to get this epic done to celluloid or stage but feared the subject due to its versatile truth yield out of repeated reading.

One has to read the Novel to understand the drama, as the way it is presented. The dramatization of Khasak was really a questioning to Mr Deepan Sivaraman's skills, as the epic is not eligible for a typical story-line of a stodgy stage of drama. Mr Deepan is an acclaimed figure in the field of Scenographic and Academic product of School of Drama, Kozhikode. He is a highly qualified professor and have done his theater career of 20 years, across Europe and India with many travels to various festivals abroad. For Khasak, it took him several years of study, discussions and experiments before, as it took 6 months to shape the performance with the help of KMK Smaraka Kalasamithi, Trikarippur, Kasaragod district of Kerala, who have been in performing arts and cultural programmes for several decades. The plot, philosophies, production techniques were improvised many times. The open air quadrangle takes the audience through various plots, ideally stated in the novel, as the play progresses. Audience would be provided





Deepan Sivaraman


with stacks of seats in galleries at three sides. Fourth side is occupied with a widened ramp - also partly turns on lids to draw houses, khabarstans, origins of fantasies as well - on a backdrop of presentation screen and electronic subtitles above. The square shaped escalated single platform pathway is used to dilate various movements of characters, who are seems to venture through the stretch of land of Khasak - like school premises, bus stop, madrassa, khabarstan, fields, lands etc.. Mix of real life scenes like digging well, taking bath, serving tea from tea-shop (with real samovar for making tea), tailor taking measurements of

onlookers, distribution of food, selling beedis. Fire is playing important role in many scenes symbolically through fire-torches, rituals by the village oracle, small-pox cleansing fire, etc. Water appears from the hoisted sprinklers as the artificial rain wetting the artists in one of the scenes. In a blend of slush and mud, actors crawl upon rhythmically, in a resplendent scene of lurch and lust, the spectators will surprisingly leave their strangeness to become part of the crew. Actors perspire after such hard work of shoveling, crawling and digging scenes as calories of energy is burned out.. In many scenes, they appear in cleanly drawn attires and leave with full stains of mud on them. Scents of perfumes, talcum, food items, lighting of fire-wood and incense sticks also produce a different dimension sense to the audience for the touch of scenes..

Excellent rendering of raw music by Mr Chandran Veyyattummal comes up with vivid feeling of propulsion in appropriation to its magic. Lighting is

done by Mr Jose Koshy, which is fantastic to its best views of the mystic moods, it even twinkles the tear drops trickled when Ravi wept. Mighty puppets used in some scenes of fantasies and dreams are designed by Mr Anto Geogre. Perfection comes to the quality of rendering of light, music, narration, dialogues, visuals, subtitles which affiliates labour, technology and *Panchaboota*, all amalgamated at one place. The team work of large number of artists and technicians made the show an outstanding success. The first scene and last scene, presented with a haunting mood of idyllic music with all characters facing the audience coming out of nowhere with fire-torches and wet umbrellas, respectively and standing in the middle and going nowhere with a touch in your heart.

Yes, Khasak is once again read by its Mumbai fans, in a contrasting way. For them, 'The Legend of Khasak' was a definite and engrossing experience of mystical treat in mix with cognitive contents, which will stay remain in their minds for ages. ■

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If Sabarimala tradition is to be preserved, only we women can do it

- Preetha V Nair

One of the most loved gods of Kerala and the centuries old temple that's visited by over 50 million devotees every year is recently mired by a needless controversy - whether it is right to allow women into the temple or not? Many groups have voiced their opinion, both in favour and against; their voices have also reached the courts. But the question still remains.

Historical tradition: Sabarimala is the temple abode of 'brahmachari' Swami Ayyappa and a history of rituals that need to be adhered to by the devotees, before entering the temple and seeking his *darshan*. They are expected to get into a pious mood, take an early morning bath, undertake *vritam* (fast), pray religiously every day, eat only freshly cooked vegetarian food, abstain from tobacco and alcohol, not entertain unwanted thoughts and pleasures, maintain an austere life for 41 days and then seek salvation from the Lord. Similarly, menstruating women in the age group of 10-50 have been traditionally barred from entering the temple. Post-menopausal women are not barred even today. If we believe in the Lord, we must also believe

in the process prescribed to seek salvation.

Women power: Today in the day and age of technological advancement, better education, international exposure and financial independence (not necessarily in that order) women are asserting themselves and sometimes needlessly. Being active contributors to the growth of the economy; they feel it's their right to voice themselves with or without full understanding of the issue or purpose.

Questioning set beliefs: We take pride these days, to question all religious practices that have been long-standing. Because of our education and exposure to cosmopolitan culture, we feel that all established customs and rituals are mundane and being followed blindly. It need not always be so. In the Hindu system, customs and rituals are part of our belief system. We pray to god, because we believe in the power of the prayer. We undertake a fast because we believe that it is good for our family. We perform puja's because we believe in the power of the mantras. We make offerings at temples because we believe that appeasement of Gods is an important practise that would fulfil our dreams and aspiration. All of

these have been prevalent since ages. There have not been any changes to many of them. This history forms the basis of faith. It is also the right of the believer to be able to protect or practice his or her own faith.

Physical Discomfort: The process of getting darshan at the temple is physically challenging to women per se. The mammoth queues, long waiting (standing) period, lack of proper sanitation facilities, can be daunting to women. Not to mention of close proximity to other men and issues that could arise because of that.

Status Quo preferred: A whole lot of the ladies I know are of the opinion that the current system should prevail. It is part of the belief system and has benefited people who have sincerely adhered to it. Many pray to Ayyappa at home or a temple close by and are willing to wait till it's their time to go to Sabarimala. Like it is often said, *God resides in the heart and not in temples*, we can only pray that better sense prevail amongst women and continue to follow the traditional path for their own good unless they intend to invite his wrath.

Swamiye Sharanam Ayyappa! ■

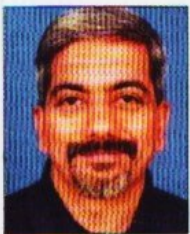
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PINARAYI - PITCHING PROGRESS FOR KERALA IN BACKDROP OF POLITICAL MURDERS

Soon after celebrating his 71st birthday on May 24, 2016, Pinarayi Vijayan, assumed as the chief minister of Kerala, the next day. Such a birthday gift not many politicians may get yet today he must be the most worried chief minister with huge economic challenges ahead. Steering the state out of economic mess seemed to be his priority and what could had been a better destination for him than to visit Mumbai - the city of Mahalakshmi.



Sriprakash Menon

■ Corporate honchos, industrialists, businessmen, technocrats and of course his well wishers from all walks of life gathered at an exclusive function recently to felicitate

Vijayan and also to 'informally' attract investments from the business capital of India. Pinarayi though a favourite of the business lobby kept a low profile knowing his party compulsions and limitations of Kerala politics.

Putting a brave front, the CM patiently heard "the pearls of developmental wisdom" flowing endlessly from the convention hall of The Leela. Several guests including Vijayan missed one person very badly Capt. Krishnan Nair whose presence could have made a "huge difference" to the entire event. Capt. Nair was one of the few entrepreneurs from Kerala who redefined 'hospitality and luxury hotel' business in India. His son Vivek Nair reminded how his dad would have been delighted to receive Pinarayi as the chief minister in his hotel. "I wished to see the completion of Kannur airport and Pinarayi becoming the chief minister,

Capt. Nair expressed his feelings during his last days in the hospital," recalled Asianet veteran Madhavan.

Being modest, Vijayan admitted to the august audience "we have not been able to progress despite being resource rich". Listing a wide spectrum of developmental activities, the chief minister said development of new airstrips to promote new destination for tourism, gas pipeline, national highway, waste disposal, sewerage system, reviving defunct wells, tanks, rivulets, preserving ecology (Haritha Keralam), hi-tech schools, housing for the poor, development of ayurveda and raising the standard of education in the state were among the vital aspects in which government intervention will be highly visible, he assured.

While Mumbai based rubber growers moaned about their economic slide and viability issues demanding rubber products and usage to be increased by the state government. He said use of rubber in road construction is being considered to create demand for domestic rubber produced in the state. Another section of people felt an airport at Pathanamthitta will not only serve the Sabarimala pilgrims but will boost tourism and travel activities in the area. Throughout his

response to the Mumbai audience, he reminded them that they can do a lot for the progress of their home state.

Solar scam might have engulfed the UDF in unending controversies during its last term yet no one can deny the immense potential of solar energy for the 60 year old state where infrastructure development is vital for its future development. Vijayan understands the predicament yet has no big plans in the near future for state's industrialisation. It was of course bad news for the liquor lobby, Vijayan said they have not thought about lifting of liquor ban in the state as of now and said not every tourist come to Kerala for alcohol and for those there are outlets in star hotels and in other convention centres.

Kerala's unique dilemma is being an agrarian state, it's food production output is nothing to rave about, even large quantities of vegetables come from outside the state. Coconut, marine food, spices, cashew, tea, coir and a few other cottage industries are the only few economic growth engines. A state which could have been the IT capital of the country (Keltron being the pioneer in the field of electronics) has only a few regions where such smart cities exist - the size of which is smaller than the IT parks



in Pune or Chennai leave apart the size of the IT industry in Bengaluru, Hyderabad or Gurugram. A state which was determined to develop non polluting industry have hardly any major steel, automobile or other heavy industry nor does it have large scale agro based or food processing units.

With deficient rainfall this year, Kerala may face a drought kind of situation in many parts. With the dwindling NRI remittances and fewer jobs in the UAE and no jobs in Kerala, Vijayan has a formidable task to discover new opportunities for the teeming unemployed youths who are reluctant to take up semi skilled, skilled blue collared jobs which a growing labour force from Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and UP are readily

willing to do the hard work for their economic survival .

Every five years for the last 60 years, CMs have led their left and right fronts by recurring promises only to happen in the unknown future. Party politics, ideological compulsions and lack of vision for the state have marred the development of the state for decades.

Chief minister candidly said the state had a reputation in the field of education and is now going to develop 'hi tech' schools though he did not elaborate on it much. Another myth which Kerala politicians have not realised yet is that literacy does make Kerala's education competitive. The standard of learning in the state is far behind many other states in India. The shadows of IIMs and IITs

fell upon Kerala after several decades. The state does not boast of a single "excellence of learning centre" known nationally in the field of professional and higher education. With so much of alcoholism and liquor in the state, it could have pioneered a global centre for wine or liquor management studies. Mobile, internet penetration or cyber cafes cannot be the benchmark for educational development. Kerala was among the only state where literacy and education including education for women was initiated by the rulers of Travancore and Cochin. The only silver lining in the campus region is the phenomenal discovery and nurturing of sports and cultural talents.

Will Vijayan bring about a radical change in the thinking and working of his government and influence his party cadre's attitude for development and progress. Let's hope. But what might have amazed the esteemed guests who attended the Leela function (just a few weeks before) was the chief minister himself spearheading a protest against demonetisation in the state capital. After all party policies and politics in Kerala takes precedence over development and growth.

A couple of guests at the Leela event murmured, "Vijayan saar is not like other leaders, he is like Modi, he is corporate and business friendly, he wants development and progress of the state above all". Like, Vivek Nair pointed Kerala should harness its tourism potential to its full and a lot can be done

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in the field of travel and hospitality. Pinarayi Vijayan is simple, soft spoken and growth oriented leader. Will the chief minister keep up his development agenda and weave a different story for the state, remains to be seen in this five years term. Only with a strong political will - socially and culturally progressive Kerala can become a self sufficient state.

But what baffled many was, not one person in the gathering asked the CM why there were so many political killings in Kerala supposed to be a very educated and cultured society.

Today, Vijayan must be very worried with spate of political murders in his

state. Recently a BJP worker was hacked to death in Kannur at 11 pm allegedly by CPM workers. This is said to be the third murder in his constituency of Dharmadam in Kannur. Not that CPM workers were not murdered in the past however it is a sad comment on the ruling party that they are unable to maintain political peace in the state.

Ever since the LDF came to power stand off between the RSS/BJP and CPM are on the rise and the sources said state administration ha not been very effective to check political violence in various parts of the state. Not taking any chance, the union government has provided high level security to top state BJP leaders.

On one hand when Vijayan is trying his level best to revive the economic fortune of state and also going to an extent of appointing international expert Gita Gopinath to advise the CM on economic development, the state is moving backwards by political unrest and increasing hooliganism in educational campus. All these are not happening without political support. CM should personally intervene to stop the politicization of educational campuses and restore peace and harmony for the development of the state. A government in power is more accountable to maintain law and order in the state rather than the party cadres. ■

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DENTURE, DANGER AND ADVENTURE



■ Amma, my mother-in-law, was writhing in pain caused by a few decayed teeth the remains of her dental wealth and of which she was proud once.

Adv A Viswanathan

Dr. Daniel, the dental surgeon suggested that the removal of all relics of Amma's dental wealth was the only option in such a situation. The dentist's suggestion, though not very appealing, was grudgingly accepted by Amma as Dr. Daniel promised Amma a new gleaming set of teeth capable of crushing even the hardest things. Amma was almost starving till Dr. Daniel's "gift" arrived. The dentist was a tad philosophical when she fixed the denture quoting Lord Tennyson "Old order changeth giving place to the new"

followed by some sage advice Now you can eat comfortably. Now you can smile confidently. Remove the denture before going to sleep and keep it safely in a bottle. Amma never failed to adhere to these pieces of advice in both letter and spirit. She ate more frequently and smiled more confidently. With a smile and song on her lips she went about doing the chores with a gusto never seen before. Soon the denture underwent some toughest tests when Amma, with the help of the denture, fondly called Daniel's teeth could crush chakli from Matunga or betel nut

from her farm in Kerala. She religiously adhered to the third advice post her dinner she always kept the denture in a bottle filled with water.

Everything went on smoothly till one day that terrible thing happened. Amma was horrified to see that her denture had disappeared without a trace. Hell broke loose soon when a fretting and fuming Amma rummaged the whole house in vain. Our persuasive skills proved equally in vain as she resorted to the Gandhian method hunger

strike. While we were groping in the dark about the mysterious disappearance of Daniel's teeth, Amma was quick to identify the culprit my son Rishi. She quoted the old adage, "the thief is in the ship". When we were somewhat sceptical about her belief, she shot back with a touch of Sherlock Holmes. "It is elementary, Viswam". She had good reasons to suspect her grandson Rishi in the disappearance of Daniel's teeth. Two things the five year old hated were milk and homework. By insisting on having milk to improve his health and finishing day's homework to improve his grade in the class, Amma became unwittingly Rishi's foe. This issue defied any sort of compromise and consequently became a case of running battle between them. When Rishi returned from his school, he realized that the game was up. He admitted to having hidden the denture to settle scores with Amma. He returned the denture only after incorporating a promise from Amma in the unwritten peace treaty. Hereafter she would not insist on his drinking milk and finishing his home work before going to bed. With the recovery of the denture her confidence returned. And also her smile. But Amma was sceptical of Rishi. He might repeat the prank she thought to herself. To pre-empt Rishi from repeating the mischief she acted against Dr. Daniel's third advice by not keeping it in the bottle before going to sleep. Needless to say, disaster followed. Deep slumber induced deep snoring dislodging Daniel's teeth which found a resting place in her trachea. We were facing an emergency situation. Amma's life was in danger. We took Amma to a nearby hospital. Timely surgical intervention retrieved the embedded technology from its tracheal abode and saved Amma's precious life. Amma learnt a bitter lesson. She vowed that she would strictly follow the dentist's advice - the inviolable THIRD RULE of Dr. Daniel.

In the early seventies, in the building which housed about thirty five flats, I had the dubious distinction of being the only occupant of having a T.V. set the

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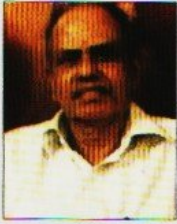
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The Athani (Stone-slabs)



■ Ever noticed the "Athani" stone slabs while passing through our native village roads? Probably not, in our busy and fast life.

Villages in

Kerala, like those in the rest of the country, had remained cut off and isolated till recent past, with hardly any roads worth the name; and consequently a nonexistent transport system. It was then that our well meaning and caring ancestors had put up "Athanis" at important junctions of our narrow village roads and pathways.

The thought behind this social service of putting up Athanis was to give the much needed rest and relief to those carrying heavy head loads of all kinds of goods, walking in sun (and rains), barefoot. These Athanis facilitated the tired head loaders to temporarily off load the sacks, rest for a while before resuming their journey onwards. Another interesting aspect is these Athanis were ergonomically designed and set up at a convenient height so that the unloading and reloading could be accomplished



without bending the body and with minimum of strain.

The Athanis were put up at the village "junctions" usually under a well grown tree, like a banyan tree which assured plenty of natural shade and breeze. In summer, small thatched sheds were

erected near these Athanis, providing cool drinking water, stored in large clay pots or drums, to the passerby. This was often supplemented with tasty butter milk (*sambharam*) though for a limited period of the day, as a charity service. And if one was lucky, he could even get a salty gooseberry (*Nellikka*) to go with it!

The Athanis were invariably erected in memory of a respected elder of a well to do family after his or her death, by a family member of the subsequent generation, with the relevant information interestingly engraved on the Athanis. There is also a superstitious belief that some Athanis were also meant to ward off the wandering spirit of a woman died in full pregnancy.

Surprisingly, the Athanis are still there by our village roads, silently proclaiming the useful part they played in the bygone era.

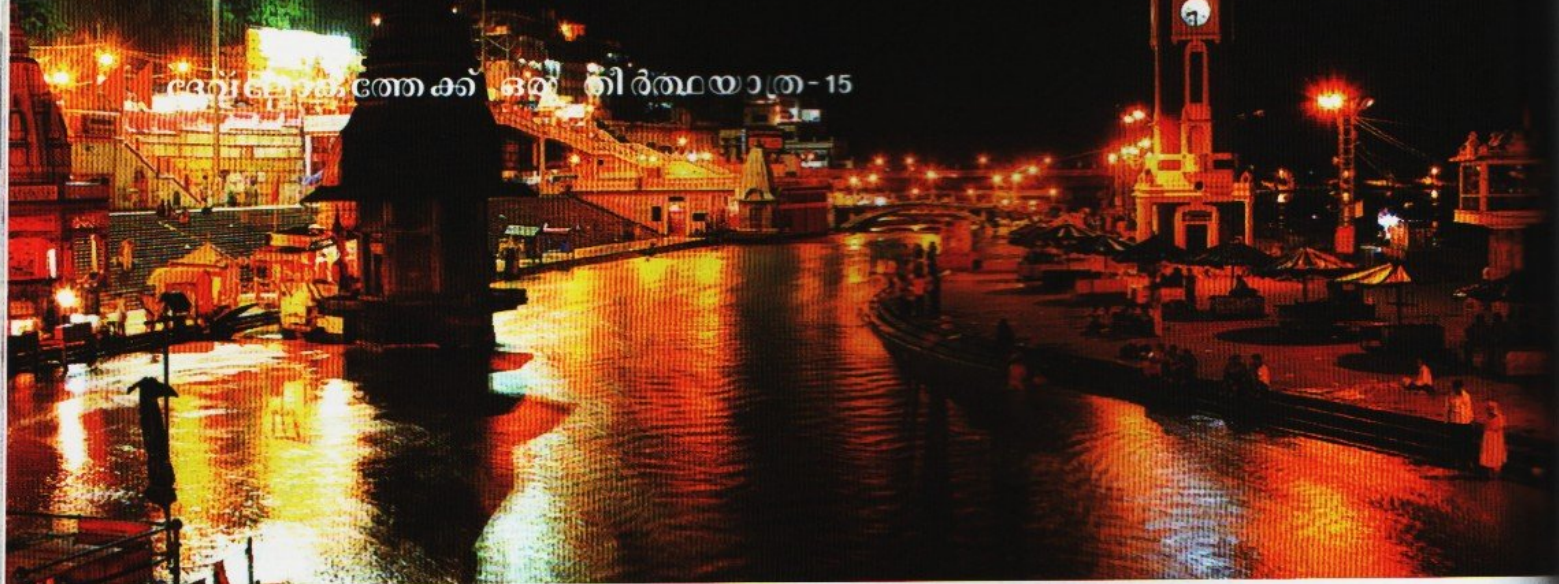
Do remember to look at them next time, with a dose of admiration!!!

neighbour's envy and the owner's pride, so to say. But my neighbours never showed any jealousy. They never failed to turn up to watch programmes telecast by the erstwhile Bombay D.D. Cricket matches often drew a crowd of gate crashing strangers. My "neighbours envy" on such occasion was a source of embarrassment. My office closed early on all Saturdays. Once my hope of watching the match was dashed when I found the entry to my flat was difficult as it was under the invasion of aliens. One of the "aliens" took me for another gatecrasher even admonished me for attempting to join them disregarding spatial constraints. Vrinda and her four daughters lived in the adjacent flat. They never came to us to watch cricket matches. But they were the first to join us to watch other programmes. "If winter comes can spring be far behind?" asked poet Shelley. Likewise if Vrinda came, her offspring were not far behind. They came in perfect pecking order the oldest daughter followed by the siblings. Amma, though resentful of their presence, silently suffered them. The other victim was Rishi. Hopelessly outnumbered by the intruders, he had no option but to yield to

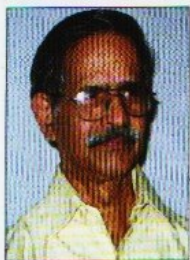
them when they asserted their might to occupy vantage points. One day, Vrinda did not come to watch her favourite program but her daughters, to Rishi's chagrin, trooped in. Amma was greatly disturbed when the kids started frolicking which was more of a simian nature. Amma's plea to keep quiet fell on deaf ears and her warning of severe punishment on Vrinda's return also met with same response. Amma decided to try some other methods in her repertoire to quieten the impish kids. She positioned herself in the dark corner of the corridor and started wildly gesticulating and making faces at the kids only to be disappointed to see that the kids seemed to enjoy her performing arts. But a resourceful Amma never gave up. She turned to Daniel's teeth as a desperate measure. She just took out her denture. With Daniel's teeth in one hand and with her tongue out and eyes rolling, her frail frame seemed to acquire demonic dimensions. Her macabre dance accompanied by screams lasted only one or two minutes. Amma's transformation into an apparition was unexpected. The kids, like frightened rabbits, sprinted off to the safety of their home, of course, not in

the same order they came in. Amma's "performance" had a salutary effect on Rishi also. Next day we saw a subdued Rishi, like Shakespeare's character Touchstone sipping the cup of misery (called milk) with all the gusto of an epicure. Now Rishi learnt whose writ ran in our house.

Tail piece: Recently myself and my wife paid a visit to our family friend. Incidentally it may be mentioned that my wife has dental support in the form of partial denture. A few days later we received a call from this friend who sometimes seeks legal advice from me. But this time we were informed of the discovery of a denture consisting of two teeth on the sofa seat. She politely enquired whether the said denture, by any chance, belonged to one of us. She was holding the phone while my wife was investigating the matter with the help of a mirror. After making sure that her denture was in its place I informed our friend that we were not the "careless owner" of the denture, followed by my advice typical of a lawyer the finder of a thing acquires the title thereto and the right to possession thereof. ■



ഹരിദ്വാർ



കുനം വിഷ്ണു

■ ഐതിഹ്യങ്ങളാലും കഥകളാലും സമ്പുഷ്ടമാണ് ഹരിദ്വാർ. അതിലൊന്നാണ് നിങ്ങൾക്കെല്ലാമറിയാവുന്ന പാലാഴിമഥനത്തിന്റെ കഥ. അമരതാനോടനുളള വഴി അന്വേഷിച്ച് ദേവകൾ ഗുരുവായ ബ്രഹ്മസ്പതിയെ കണ്ടു. അദ്ദേഹം നിർദ്ദേശിച്ചത് പാലാഴിമഥനമായിരുന്നു. പാലാഴി കടഞ്ഞാൽ അമൃത് കിട്ടും; അമൃത് അമരതാം നൽകും. ദേവന്മാർക്ക് ഒറ്റയ്ക്ക് അതിനുള്ള ശക്തി ഇല്ലാതിരുന്നതിനാൽ കിട്ടുന്ന അമൃതിന്റെ പകുതി നൽകാമെന്ന വ്യവസ്ഥയിൽ അവർ അസുരന്മാരുടെ കൂട്ട് പിടിച്ചു. മന്മര പർവ്വതം കടകോലായിട്ടും ദിവ്യസർപ്പമായ വാസുകി കയറാ യിട്ടും സഹകരിയ്ക്കാമെന്നും സമ്മതിച്ചു. കുറെ കടഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ, ക്ഷീണിതനായ വാസുകി തല പിടിച്ചിരുന്ന ദേവന്മാരുടെ കയ്യിലേക്ക് വിഷം ചർദ്ദിച്ചു. ബ്രഹ്മാണ്യനാശകമായ ആ

കാളകൂടം ലോകരക്ഷാർത്ഥം മഹാദേവൻ കുടിച്ചപ്പോൾ, കാളകൂടത്താൽ ശിവൻ നശിയ്ക്കാതിരിക്കാൻ പാർവ്വതി കഴുത്തിൽ കയറിപ്പിടിച്ചു. ഇറക്കാനും തുപ്പാനും ആകാതെ വിഷം കണ്ഠത്തിൽ ഉറച്ച് ശിവൻ നീലകണ്ഠനായി. പിന്നീട് പാലാഴിയിൽനിന്ന് ഐരാവതം, സർവ്വാഭിഷ്ടായിനികളായ കാമധേനു, കല്പവൃക്ഷം എന്നിവയും, ധനാധിദേവതയായ ലക്ഷ്മിയും ആഗതരായി. ഒടുവിൽ പാലാഴിയിൽനിന്ന് അമൃതകുംഭവുമായി ധന്വന്തരി പൊങ്ങിവന്നു. അമൃതകുംഭം കയ്യിൽ കിട്ടിയതും ദേവരാജാവായ ഇന്ദ്രന്റെ ഭാവം മാറി. ചതിയനായ ഇന്ദ്രൻ (എന്തുകൊണ്ടു ദേവകളുടെ രാജാവായ ഇന്ദ്രനെ ചതിയനും അസുയക്കാരുനും വിഷയലമ്പടനും വിശ്വാസമർഹിക്കാത്തവനും പേടിത്തോണ്ടനായും ആയി പുരാതനകഥകളിൽ മിക്കതിലും ചിത്രീകരിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത് എന്തിനാണെന്ന് ആലോചിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടോ?) അസുരന്മാർക്ക് നൽകിയ വാക്ക് പാലിയ്ക്കാതെ അമൃതകുംഭം മകനായ ജയന്തന്റെ കയ്യിൽ നൽകി

ഓടിയൊളിക്കാൻ ഉപദേശിച്ചു. വിവരം അറിഞ്ഞ അസുരന്മാർ ജയന്തനെ പിന്തുടർന്നു. അസുരന്മാർ ജയന്തനെ തോല്പിച്ച് അമൃതകുംഭം കൈയ്ക്കലാക്കി. അത് വീണ്ടെടുക്കാൻ തന്നെ കൊണ്ടാവില്ലെന്നു മനസ്സിലാക്കിയ ഇന്ദ്രൻ ഭഗവാൻ വിഷ്ണുവിന്റെ സഹായം തേടി. മഹാവിഷ്ണു മോഹിനിയുടെ വേഷം കെട്ടി അസുരന്മാരിൽനിന്ന് അമൃതകുംഭം വീണ്ടെടുത്ത കഥ എല്ലാവർക്കും അറിയാമല്ലോ. അതാണ് പാലാഴിമഥനത്തിന്റെ കഥ.

ജയന്തൻ അമൃതവുമായി ഓടുന്ന വഴിയിൽ നാലുതുളളി അമൃത് കൂടത്തിൽനിന്ന് തെറിച്ചു വീണത്രെ. (അമൃതകുംഭവുമായി ഓടിയത് ബ്രഹ്മസ്പതിതന്നെയാണെന്നും ഇന്ദ്രനാണെന്നും ഗരുഡനാണെന്നും അതല്ല, മോഹിനിതന്നെയാണെന്നും പലയിടത്തും പലരീതിയിലും പറയപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ട്. അതേസമയം നാലുതുളളി വീണതായി പറയുന്നുമില്ല.) ആദ്യതുളളി വീണത് ഹരിദ്വാറിൽ, രണ്ടാമത്തെ തുളളി തൃവേണിസംഗമത്തിൽ അഥവാ പ്രയാഗയിൽ, മൂന്നാമത്തേത് മഹാരാഷ്ട്രയിൽ



Haridwar Harki Paudi



Haridwar Bharatmata Mandir

നാസിക്കിൽ, നാലാമത്തെ ആ തുള്ളി ഉജ്ജയനിയിലും ആണത്രെ. അതിനാലാണ് ഈ നാലു സ്ഥലങ്ങളിലും പന്ത്രണ്ടു വർഷത്തിലൊരിക്കൽ കുമ്പളകുട്ടി നടത്തപ്പെടുന്നത്. അതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് പിന്നീട് വിസ്തരിക്കാം.

ദക്ഷയാഗം നടന്ന സ്ഥലം

മറ്റൊരു വിശ്വാസമനുസരിച്ച് ഹരിദാർ ദക്ഷപ്രജാപതിയുടെ തലസ്ഥാനനഗരം ആയിരുന്നുവത്രെ. ഹരിദാറിൽനിന്ന് നാലു കിലോമീറ്റർ ദൂരത്തിലുള്ള കൻഖാൽ ഗ്രാമത്തിൽ ദക്ഷപ്രജാപതിയാഗം നടത്തിയത്. ഇരയിമ്മൻതമ്പിയുടെ ദക്ഷയാഗം കഥകളി കാണാത്ത കഥകളിപ്രിയരില്ല. ഭാഗവതം ചതുർത്ഥസ്കന്ധത്തിൽ ശിവമാഹാത്മ്യം വിവരിക്കാൻ ദക്ഷയാഗകഥ പറയുന്നുണ്ട്. എങ്കിലും സ്കന്ദപുരാണത്തിലാണ് ദക്ഷയാഗകഥ വിശദമായി വിവരിക്കുന്നത്. നായാട്ടിനുപോയ ദക്ഷൻ താമരയിലിരിക്കുന്ന ശംഖ് കിട്ടുന്നതും അതെടുത്തപ്പോൾ ഒരു പെൺകുഞ്ഞായിത്തീരുന്നതും സതി എന്നു പേരിട്ട് ആ ബാലികയെ ഓമനിച്ച് വളർത്തുന്നതും സതി ശിവനിൽ ആകൃഷ്ടയാകുന്നതും ശിവൻ സതിയെ വരിക്കുന്നതും ശിവൻ ശ്യാശരനു അർഹിക്കുന്ന ആദരവ് നൽകാതിരുന്നതും തദരാ കോപിഷ്ടനായ ദക്ഷൻ തന്റെ മഹായാഗത്തിൽ ശിവസതിമാരെ ക്ഷണിക്കാതിരുന്നതും എന്തിട്ടും വന്നു കയറിയപ്പോൾ അപമാനിയായി സതി ദേഹത്യാഗം ചെയ്യുന്നതും വിവരം അറിഞ്ഞ് കോപിഷ്ടനായ ശിവൻ വീരഭദ്ര-ഭദ്രകാളിമാരെ അയച്ചതും അവർ യാഗശാല തകർത്ത് ദക്ഷന്റെ ശിരസ്സുരുത്തതും പിന്നീട് ആടിന്റെ തല വെച്ച് ദക്ഷനെ പുനർ ജീവിപ്പിച്ചതും മറ്റുമായ ദക്ഷയാഗകഥ നടന്ന സ്ഥലമാണത്രെ കൻഖാൽ. ശിവഭക്തന്മാർ ഒരിക്കലും വിട്ടുകളയാൻ പാടില്ലാത്ത ഒരു തീർത്ഥാടനകേന്ദ്രമാണത്രെ കൻഖാൽ.

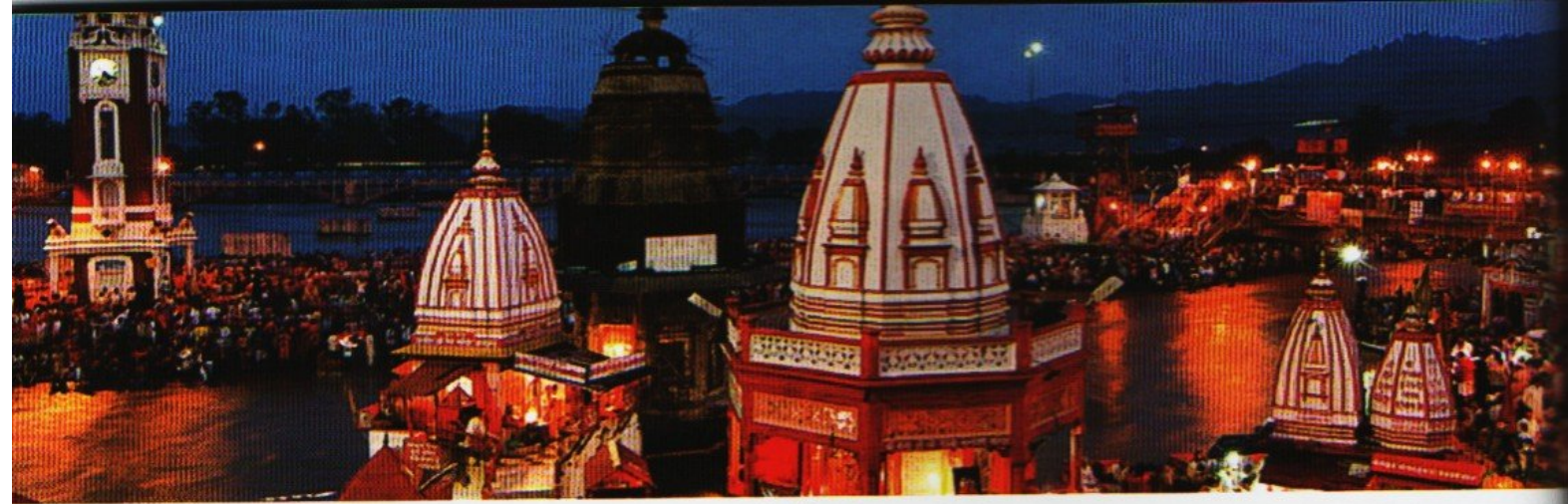
മഹാഭാരതത്തിലെ വനപർവ്വത്തിൽ യുധിഷ്ഠിരനോട് ഒഴിവാക്കാനുതാത്ത ഏതാനും തീർത്ഥാടന കേന്ദ്രങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റി ധൗമ്യമുനി ഉപദേശിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. അതിലൊന്നാണ് ഗംഗാദാരം. ഗംഗാദാർ ഹരിദാറാണെന്നാണ് വിശ്വാസം. ഹരിദാറിനുചുറ്റും

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കിന്നരന്മാർ വസിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. യക്ഷന്മാരും ഗന്ധർവ്വന്മാരും അപ്സരസ്സുകളും, രാക്ഷസന്മാർപോലും, അവിടെ മനസ്സിനും ആത്മാവിനും ശുദ്ധി ലഭിക്കാനായി തീർത്ഥാടനം നടത്താൻ എപ്പോഴും വരാറുണ്ട്. അവിടെ അഗസ്ത്യമുനി വളരെക്കാലം തപസ്സനുഷ്ഠിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ബ്രഹ്മർഷിമാർ സന്ദർശിക്കാറുള്ള കനഖലതീർത്ഥം ഗംഗാദാരമാണ്. മഹാമുനിയുടെ ഉപദേശം അങ്ങനെ പോകുന്നു. പുരാണലിഖിതങ്ങളിൽ ഹരിദാറിനെ കപിലസ്ഥാനം, കനഖലം, മായാപുരി എന്നെല്ലാം പറയുന്നുണ്ട്. ഇന്ന് മായാപുരി എന്നൊരു ഗ്രാമം ഹരിദാർ നഗരത്തിന്റെ തെക്കുഭാഗത്തായിട്ടുണ്ട്. ചരിത്രകാരന്മാരുടെ അഭിപ്രായത്തിൽ, മായാപുരി നഗരം 24 നൂറ്റാണ്ടുകൾക്കപ്പുറം മൗര്യചക്രവർത്തി മാർ പിടിച്ചടക്കിയിരുന്നു. പിൽക്കാലത്ത് കുശാനസാമ്രാജ്യവും മായാപുരിയെ അവരുടെ അധീനതയിൽ കൊണ്ടുവന്നിട്ടുണ്ട്. അവിടെ പുരാവസ്തുഗവേഷകർ നടത്തിയ ചന്ദനത്തിൽ കൃസ്തുവിനുമുമ്പ് പതിനേഴാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിൽ നില നിന്നിരുന്ന സംസ്കാരത്തിന്റെ അവശിഷ്ടങ്ങൾ കണ്ടെത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഹരിദാറിൽ പോകുന്നവർ സാധിക്കുമെങ്കിൽ മായാപുരിയും സന്ദർശിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

കുംഭമേള

കുംഭമേളയുടെ ഐതിഹ്യത്തെപ്പറ്റി മുകളിൽ പറഞ്ഞു വല്ലോ. ഹിന്ദുമതവിശ്വാസികളിൽ പ്രത്യേകിച്ചും ഉത്തരേന്ത്യയിൽ, കുംഭമേളകൾക്ക് വളരെ പ്രാധാന്യമുണ്ട്. ഹരിദാർ, പ്രയാഗ, നാസിക് ഉജ്ജയിനി എന്നീ നാലു സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ ഓരോയിടത്തും പന്ത്രണ്ടുവർഷത്തിലൊരിക്കൽ കുംഭമേള

നടക്കും. മനുഷ്യന്റെ പന്ത്രണ്ടുവർഷത്തിനു സമമാണത്രൈവകളുടെ ഒരു ദിവസം. ദേവഗുരുവായ ബ്രഹ്മസ്പതിയുടെ ഗ്രഹമായ വ്യാഴം കുംഭം രാശിയിലെത്തുമ്പോഴാണ് (മാഘമാസത്തിൽ) ഹരിദാറിലും പ്രയാഗയിലും കുംഭമേള നടക്കുന്നത്. എന്നാൽ വ്യാഴം സിംഹരാശിയിലെത്തുമ്പോഴാണ് ത്ര്യംബകത്തിലും (നാസിക്) ഉജ്ജയിനിയിലും കുംഭമേളകൾ നടക്കാൻ. അതിനാൽ ഇവയെ സിംഹസ്തകുംഭമേള എന്നും പറയുന്നു. ജ്യോതിഷം നോക്കി ഗണിച്ചാണ് കുംഭമേളയുടെ മുഹൂർത്തം നിശ്ചയിക്കുന്നത്.

കുംഭമേളയുടെ പ്രാധാന്യമായി വിശ്വസിക്കപ്പെടുന്നത്, ആ ദിവസം അവിടെ ത്രിമൂർത്തികളും മൂപ്പത്തിമുക്കോടി ദേവകളും യക്ഷ, കിന്നര, ഗന്ധർവ്വാദി അദൃശ്യരൂപികളും അതാത് സ്ഥലത്ത് സ്നാനം ചെയ്യാൻ എത്തുന്നുണ്ടെന്നാണ്. ദിഗംബരന്മാരായ (പൂർണ്ണനഗ്നരായ) നാഗസന്യാസികളാണ് പൊതുവെ ആദ്യം സ്നാനം ചെയ്യുക (ആർക്കാണ് ആദ്യം സ്നാനം ചെയ്യാൻ അവകാശം എന്ന തർക്കത്തിൽ അഖാവകൾ (സന്യാസിസമൂഹങ്ങൾ) തമ്മിൽ വഴക്കും രക്തച്ചൊരിച്ചിലും വരെ ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ട്). അതിനുശേഷം ഓരോരോ സന്യാസിസമൂഹങ്ങൾ സ്നാനം ചെയ്യുന്നു. ദേവ, യക്ഷ, കിന്നര, ഗന്ധർവാദി ദിവ്യപ്രജകളുടേയും സർവ്വസംഗപരിത്യാഗികളായ സന്യാസിമാരുടേയുംകൂടെ സ്നാനം ചെയ്യുമ്പോൾ മനുഷ്യരായ നമ്മുടെയും സകല പാപങ്ങളും അവിടെ കഴുകിക്കളഞ്ഞ് നാമും മോക്ഷാർഹരായിത്തീരുന്നു എന്നാണ് വിശ്വാസികൾ കരുതുന്നത്. ലോകത്തിലെ തന്നെ ഏറ്റവും വലിയ തീർത്ഥാടന സന്ദർഭമാണ് കുംഭമേള.

ഈയിടെ നടന്ന കുംഭമേളകളിൽ ഒന്നാംദിവസം മൂന്നു കോടിയിലധികം ഭക്തർ സ്നാനം ചെയ്തു എന്നാണ് കണക്കാക്കിയിരിക്കുന്നത്. ഒരു കുംഭമേളയിൽ പന്ത്രണ്ടു കോടിയിലധികം ഭക്തർ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നു എന്നും കണക്കാക്കുന്നു.

ആദ്യത്തെ കുംഭമേള നടന്നതെന്നാണെന്ന് ഒരു ചരിത്രകാരനും രേഖപ്പെടുത്തിയതായി അറിവില്ല. ചില സന്യാസി സമൂഹങ്ങളുടെ വിശ്വാസപ്രകാരം എട്ടാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിൽ ജീവിച്ച ആദിശങ്കരാചാര്യരാണ് കുംഭമേള ആരംഭിച്ചതത്രെ. ക്രിസ്തവ്ബത്തിന്റെ ആദ്യനാളുകളിൽ ഭാരതം സന്ദർശിച്ച ചൈനീസ് യാത്രികനായ ഹ്യൂൻസാങ് പ്രയാഗയിൽ നടന്ന ഒരു മേളയെപ്പറ്റി പറയുന്നുണ്ട്. അക്കാലത്ത് ബുദ്ധമതത്തിനായിരുന്നു കൂടുതൽ പ്രചാരം എന്നതിനാൽ, അതൊരു ബുദ്ധസന്യാസി സംഗമം ആകാനും സാദ്ധ്യതയുണ്ട്. ആദ്യകാലത്ത് ഹരിദാറിലും പ്രയാഗയിലും മാത്രമായിരുന്നു കുംഭമേളകൾ നടന്നിരുന്നത്. പതിനെട്ടാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിൽ ഭരണനടത്തിയിരുന്ന മഹാറാജാവ് റാണോജി

With Best Wishes to **Kerala in Mumbai** on its 7th Anniversary

C R Unny & Family, Mulund

ഷിൻഡെ ആണ് ഉജ്ജയിനിയിൽ കുടമേള ആരാദിച്ചത് എന്നു പറയുന്ന ചരിത്രകാരന്മാർ ഉണ്ട്.

ഹിമാലയത്തിൽ തപസ്സുമായി കഴിയുന്ന മിക്ക സന്യാസിസമൂഹങ്ങളും കുടമേളയ്ക്ക് മല ഇറങ്ങാറുണ്ട്. മിക്ക അവാധകൾക്കും കുടമേളയിലെ സാന്നിധ്യം അഭിമാന പ്രശ്നമാണ്. ആദ്യം ആർ സ്നാനം ചെയ്യണം എന്നതിനെ ചൊല്ലി 1760-ലെ ഹരിദാരിലെ കുടമേളയിൽ ശൈവരായ ഗോസായിമാരും വൈഷ്ണവരുടെ ബൈരാഗിമാരും ഏറ്റുമുട്ടി. നിരവധിപേർ മരിച്ചു. മറാഠാപേഷാമാരുടെ ലിഖിതപ്രകാരം 1789-ലെ കുടമേളയിൽ ശൈവവൈഷ്ണവ ഏറ്റുമുട്ടലിൽ 12,000 പേരാണ് മരിച്ചത്. ആർക്കാണ് ആദ്യം കുളിക്കാൻ അവകാശം എന്നതിലാണ് എപ്പോഴും തർക്കം. ഒരിയ്ക്കൽ വൈഷ്ണവരായ ഉദാസികൾ എന്ന സമൂഹം ശൈവരെ നേരിടാൻ സിഖ് ഖൽസകളുടെ സഹായം തേടി. അന്നും നടന്നു പൊരിഞ്ഞ യുദ്ധം.

ഇത്രയധികം ആത്മാഹങ്കാരം പുലർത്തുന്നവരെയാണോ സർവ്വസംഗപരി ത്യാഗികൾ എന്നു വിളിക്കേണ്ടത്? കഷ്ടമെന്നല്ലാതെ എന്തു പറയാൻ!

ഭക്തികൊണ്ടു വരുന്നവർ മാത്രമല്ല കുടമേളയിൽ എത്തുന്നവർ. പലവിധ കച്ചവടക്കാര്യങ്ങൾക്കും കൊയ്ത്തുകാലമാണ് കുടമേളകൾ. അവിടെ നടക്കുന്ന ചന്തകളിലും വാണിജ്യങ്ങളിലും പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ നാനാമതസ്ഥരും അവിശ്വാസികളും കൂടി എത്തിച്ചേരാറുണ്ട്. തിരക്കിൽ മുതലെടുക്കാൻ വരുന്ന അക്രമികളും മോഷ്ടാക്കളും സാമൂഹ്യദ്രോഹികളും അത് അവരുടെയും നല്ല കാലമായി കാണുന്നു. തിരക്കിൽപ്പെട്ട് മരിക്കുന്നതും അസാധാരണമല്ല. പ്രയാഗയിലെ മേളയിൽ 1954-ൽ എണ്ണൂറിലേറെ പേരാണ് കൊല്ലപ്പെട്ടത്. ഈസ്റ്റ് ഇന്ത്യാകമ്പനിയുടെ കാലം മുതൽ തിരക്ക് നിയന്ത്രിക്കാൻ ഭരണകർത്താക്കൾ ശ്രദ്ധിക്കാറുണ്ട്. എങ്കിലും സ്ഥിതി ഇന്നും ദയനീയംതന്നെയാണ്.

ഗംഗാ ആരതി

എല്ലാ ദിവസങ്ങളിലും സന്ധ്യയോടുകൂടി ഹരിദാർ സ്നാനഘട്ടിൽ ഗംഗാ ആരതി പതിവുണ്ട്. എന്നും ആയിരക്കണക്കിനു ഭക്തർ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്ന ഒരു മഹാസംഭവമാണ് ഈ മഹാ ആരതി. ഹരിദാരിലെ സ്നാനഘട്ടത്തെ ഹർ കീ ഫെറുലി എന്നാണ് പറയുക. നേരത്തെ എത്തിയില്ലെങ്കിൽ വെള്ളത്തിന്റെ അടുത്തെത്താനോ ആരതികാണാനോ സാധിക്കില്ല എന്നറിയാമായിരുന്നു. അതിനാൽ ഞങ്ങൾ സുര്യാസ്തമനത്തിനു വളരെ മുമ്പുതന്നെ പുഴയുടെ മറുകരയിൽ എത്തി. മറുകരയിൽ എത്താൻ ഒരു പാലമുണ്ട്. പുഴക്കരയിൽ രണ്ടു ഭാഗത്തും പടുത്തു കെട്ടിയ കല്ലടവുകളും വലിയ തറകളും ഉണ്ട്. ശന്ധ്യയായിട്ടില്ലെങ്കിലും അവിടേക്ക് ഭക്തരുടെ ഒഴുക്ക് നല്ലവണ്ണം തുടങ്ങിയിരുന്നു. പുഴക്കരയായിട്ടും ഉഷ്ണം തോന്നുന്നുണ്ട്.

ആരതിക്ക് സമയമുണ്ടല്ലോ. ആദ്യം ഞങ്ങൾ കുളിയ്ക്കാൻ തീർച്ചപ്പെടുത്തി. പുഴയ്ക്ക് എന്തെന്നില്ലാത്ത, അവിശ്വാസനീയമായ ഒഴുക്ക്. സ്നാനഘട്ടിൽ ധാരാളം ചങ്ങലകൾ സ്ഥാപിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. കുളിയ്ക്കാൻ ഇറങ്ങുന്നവർ ചങ്ങല പിടിച്ചു ഇറങ്ങാറു



Kankhal Daksha temple

എന്ന് അവിടെ നിർബ്ബന്ധമായി നിഷ്കർഷിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. വിവിധ അപകടസാധ്യതകൾ ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടി ധാരാളം ബോർഡുകളും വച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. വേഷം മാറാൻ വലിയ സൗകര്യങ്ങളൊന്നുമില്ല. ഞങ്ങൾ പുരുഷന്മാർ തുറസ്സായിത്തന്നെ വേഷം മാറി. സ്ത്രീകൾക്ക് വേഷം മാറാനും മറ്റും മറവുള്ള ഒരു സൗകര്യം കിട്ടി. ഓരോരുത്തരായി ചങ്ങല പിടിച്ച് വളരെ ശ്രദ്ധാപൂർവ്വം ഓരോരോ പടവുകളായി കുളിയ്ക്കാനിറങ്ങി. വെള്ളത്തിനു നല്ല തണുപ്പ്. ഒന്നു മുങ്ങി നിവർന്നപ്പോഴേക്കുംതന്നെ ചൂടും ക്ഷീണവും പമ്പ കടന്നു. ആദ്യത്തെ മുങ്ങലിനെ തണുപ്പുള്ളിപിനെ മനസ്സു നിറയുവരെ വെള്ളത്തിൽ കിടന്നു. റിമാലയദർശനത്തിന്റെ പുണ്യം മുഴുവനാകണമെങ്കിൽ ഹരിദാരിൽ മുങ്ങണം. ദൽഹിയിലെ വിനോദയാത്ര പോകുന്നവരായാലും, ഒരു നിവൃത്തിയുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ, ഹരിദാരിൽപ്പോയി കുളിച്ച് ഗംഗ ആരതികണ്ട് പോരേണ്ടതാണ്.

ഏഴുമണിയോടെ പുഴയ്ക്കക്കരെ (ക്ഷേത്രങ്ങളെല്ലാം ആകരയിലാണ്) പുജാരിമാർ നിരന്നു. ഭക്തിയുടെ നിറവിൽ എല്ലാവരും ഗംഗമാതാവിനും മഹാദേവനും ജയ് വിളിക്കാൻ

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തുടങ്ങി. നേരം ഇരുട്ടിക്കഴിഞ്ഞു. വലിയ വലിയ ദീപങ്ങൾ കയ്യിലെടുത്ത് പുജാരിമാർ ആരതി തുടങ്ങി. ആരതിയിൽ കൂടാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്ന ഭക്തർക്ക് ഒരു ഇലക്കമ്പിളിൽ ചെരാത് വച്ച് ദീപം കത്തിച്ച് വാങ്ങാൻ കിട്ടും. ഞങ്ങളും ആരതിയിൽ പങ്കു ചേർന്നു. ഒഴുകുന്ന വെള്ളത്തിൽ പ്രതിഫലിക്കുന്ന വലിയ ദീപനാളങ്ങളും ആയിരം കണ്ഠങ്ങളിൽനിന്ന് വരുന്ന സ്തോത്രവും ഈശ്വരന്റെ അനുഗ്രഹവും പേറി വരുന്ന കുളിർകാറ്റും ഒരു മാസമരിക പ്രപഞ്ചം തീർക്കുകയാണ്. നാം അതിൽ അലിഞ്ഞ് ഇല്ലാതാകുന്നു. ആത്മാവും പരമാത്മാവും ഒന്നായിത്തീരുന്ന നിമിഷങ്ങൾ. ദേവലോകഗോപുരത്തിന്റെ അനിഷേധ്യമായ ആകർഷണം. അതിരില്ലാത്ത അനുഗ്രഹം. ആരതിക്കു ശേഷം ഭക്തർ ഓരോരുത്തരും കയ്യിലുള്ള ഇലക്കമ്പിൾ പൂഴയിലൊഴുക്കും. വെള്ളത്തിൽ ഇരുട്ടിൽ അതിവേഗം ഒഴുകിനിങ്ങുന്ന ആയിരക്കണക്കിനുള്ള ദീപങ്ങൾ ഒരു അന്യലോകപ്രതിമയാണ്

നൽകുക. അതിന്റെ വശ്യത അവാച്യമാണ്. പിന്നീട്, പാപമോചിതരായ ഞങ്ങൾ ബാക്കി ക്ഷേത്രദർശനം കഴിച്ച് തിരക്കിൽനിന്നു പുറത്തു കടന്നു.

വരുന്ന വഴിയിൽത്തന്നെ ഞങ്ങൾ ശ്രദ്ധിച്ചതാണ്, പൂഴക്കരയിൽ ഭീമാകാരനായ ഒരു ശിവപ്രതിമ. നഗരത്തിന്റെ ഏറെക്കറെ എവിടെ നിന്നു നോക്കിയാലും അതു കാണാം. ഞങ്ങൾ ആ പ്രതിമ കാണാൻ പോയി. അതിന്റെ വലിപ്പത്തിലല്ലാതെ അതിനു പ്രത്യേകതയൊന്നും തോന്നിയില്ല. ഹരിദാറിൽ വേറെ പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് കാണാനൊന്നും ഇല്ലെന്നാണ് ഡ്രൈവർ പറഞ്ഞത്. ക്ഷീണിതരായി ഞങ്ങൾ രാത്രിത്താവളത്തിലേക്ക് മടങ്ങി.

പിറ്റേന്ന് കാലത്ത് നേരത്തെത്തന്നെ ഉണർന്നു. ഉച്ചയ്ക്കുമുമ്പെ ദൽഹിലെത്തണം. അന്ന് ഉച്ച തിരിഞ്ഞാണ് ഫ്ളൈറ്റ്. പ്രാതലിന്നുശേഷം പുറപ്പെട്ടു. നോയ്ഡയിൽ താമസിക്കുന്ന അനിയൻ എന്ന ഓമനപ്പേരുള്ള സഹോദരീപുത്രന്റെ വസതിയിൽ വന്ന് സാധനങ്ങൾ എടുത്ത്, ഏപ്രിലി ലെ തലസ്ഥാനത്തെ തിരക്കുപിടിച്ച, വറച്ചട്ടിയിലെന്ന പോലത്തെ, ചൂടുള്ള നിരത്തിലൂടെ നേരെ എയർപ്പോർട്ടിലേക്ക്. തിരിച്ച് മുംബൈ എന്ന മഹാനഗരത്തിലെ മനം മടുപ്പിക്കുന്ന, വിരസമായ നിത്യനിദാനങ്ങളിലേക്ക്. ഏതായാലും അവസാന ശ്വാസംവരെ, മനസ്സിനെ കുളിരണിയിക്കുന്ന ആ യാത്രാനുഭവം എത്ര അയവിറക്കിയിട്ടും മതിയാകുന്നില്ല. ഇതു വായിക്കുന്ന നിങ്ങൾ ഓരോരുത്തർക്കും ഹിമാലയൻ തീർത്ഥയാത്ര എന്ന മഹാഭാഗ്യം നേർന്നുകൊണ്ട്, ഒരിക്കൽകൂടി പറയട്ടെ, "ഹരഹര മഹാദേവ!"

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■ 'നാടകം എങ്ങനെയായാലെന്നാ, നാടകമായാൽപ്പോരേ,' എന്ന തുറന്ന ചിന്തയോടെയാണ്, 'നാടകം ഇങ്ങനെയും' എന്ന തലക്കെട്ട് ഈ അവലോകനത്തിന് നൽകുന്നത്. ജീവിതത്തെ ഒരു മഹാനാടകമാണെന്നിരിക്കേ, അതിൽനിന്ന് പകർത്തിവെച്ച ഏതൊരേടും അതിന്റെ ഉൾത്തൂടിപ്പുള്ളതായിരിക്കും. 'ചായക്കടകഥകൾ' ശ്രദ്ധേയവും സിങ്കാര്യവും ആകുന്നത് അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ. പോരാത്തതിന് "മലയാളത്തിലെ ആദ്യത്തെ റിയലിസ്റ്റിക്ക് കാർട്ടൂൺപരമ്പര" എന്ന വിശേഷണവും സൂര്യാകൃഷ്ണമൂർത്തി നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്.



നാടകങ്ങളിലൂടെ

ഭീമൻ രാവുണ്ണി, തീറ്റ റപ്പായി, അനാമിക, മുൻഷി വീരരാഘവൻ, അമ്മ തങ്കമ്മ, തൊരപ്പൻ ഗോൺസാൽവസ് എന്നീ ആറു ലഘു നാടകങ്ങളാണ് മൂന്നു നാടകരാവുകളിലായി സൂര്യ അവതരിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്. ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ നല്ല ഭാഗം മുഴുവൻ കഥകളിൽ ഭീമനായി നിറഞ്ഞാടിയിട്ടും ദാരിദ്ര്യം മാത്രം സമ്പാദ്യമായി ലഭിച്ച കലാകാരന്റെ ദുഃഖകഥയാണ് ഭീമൻ രാവുണ്ണിയിൽ ചുരുളഴിയുന്നത്. നിത്യവൃത്തിക്കായി ചായക്കട നടത്തിക്കൊണ്ടുപോകുവാൻ പാടുപെടുന്ന വേണുനായരും, താൻ പട്ടിണി കിടന്നാലും വേണ്ടില്ല, മറ്റുള്ളവർക്ക് മഹാവ്യാധികളൊന്നും വരുത്തല്ലേ എന്ന് ദേവിയോട് മനമുറുകി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുന്ന വെളിച്ചപ്പാടും ഇതിലെ നോസ്റ്റാൾജിക്ക് കഥാപാത്രങ്ങളാണ്. തയ്യാർക്കാൻ മേസ്തിരിയും, പോസ്റ്റുമാനും, കുഞ്ഞിനെ ഊതിക്കാ നായി വെളിച്ചപ്പാടിനെ തേടിയെത്തുന്ന കദീജയും, ഒരു മൂന്നാംകിട കോമഡിയായി മാറുന്ന ബാർബർവേലുവും, യാത്രക്കാരനും ചായക്കടകഥകൾക്ക് മോടി കൂട്ടാനായി ഏച്ചുകൂട്ടിയ കഥാപാത്രങ്ങളാണ്.

രണ്ടാമത്തെ നാടകമായ 'തീറ്റ റപ്പായി' ഒരു നിരാശയായി പ്രേക്ഷകനിൽ നിറയുന്ന കഥാപാത്രമാണ്. തീറ്റ റപ്പായിയെ തൃപ്തപ്പെടുത്താൻ ചാമുണ്ഡിപുരത്തു കാർ ഒത്തൊരുമിച്ച് ഒരുക്കുകുട്ടിയിട്ടും അതു സാധിക്കാതെ പോയ നിരാശയിലാണ് നാടകം അവസാനിക്കുന്നത്. ഗ്രാമീണത്തനിമയുള്ള ഇത്തരം കഥാപാത്രങ്ങൾ പ്രേക്ഷകരുടെ ഹൃദയം നോവിക്കുന്ന അനുഭവങ്ങളായി മാറുമ്പോൾ തിയേറ്ററിന്റെ പുതിയരൂപം പിറവിയെടുക്കുന്നു.

സ്ത്രീധനത്തിനു പകരമായി അനുജത്തിയെ ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ട ഭർത്താവിനെ നിർദ്ദാക്ഷിണ്യം കൊല ചെയ്ത അനാമികയുടെ ഭയപ്പെടുത്തുന്ന കഥയാണ് മൂന്നാമത്തേത്. "അനാമികേ, നീ ചെയ്തത് ശരിയോ തെറ്റോ എന്നെനിക്ക് അറിയില്ല; ശരിയാകാനേ തരമുള്ളൂ," എന്ന് വെളിച്ചപ്പാട് തൊണ്ടയിടി പറയുമ്പോൾ, ആ ഗ്രാമത്തിന്റെ നിഷ്കളങ്കതയും നൊമ്പരവുമാണ് വാക്കുകളിൽ നിറഞ്ഞു നിൽക്കുന്നത്.

നാലാമത്തെ നാടകമായ 'മുൻഷി വീരരാഘവൻ' ഒരുദ്ധ്യാപകന്റെ മാനസിക സംഘർഷങ്ങളിലേക്ക് പ്രേക്ഷകരുടെ ശ്രദ്ധ ക്ഷണിക്കുന്നു. പുതിയ തലമുറയുടെ പിഴച്ച ജീവിതരീതിയും തല തെറിച്ച പെരുമാറ്റവും മയക്കുമരുന്ന് വിതക്കുന്ന ദുരന്തവുമെല്ലാം ഈ നാടകം നമ്മുടെ ശ്രദ്ധയിൽ കൊണ്ടുവരുന്നു. തന്റെ മകൻ

നാടിന് മാതൃകയാവണമെന്ന് ആഗ്രഹിച്ച ആ അദ്ധ്യാപകന്റെ, ആത്മസംഘർഷത്തിന്റെ ഇടവേളയിൽ, സ്ഥലകാലബന്ധങ്ങളെ അതിജീവിച്ച് നാടകം മറൊരു തലത്തിലേക്ക് വികസിക്കുന്നത് ഒരു അത്ഭുതകാഴ്ചയായി മാറുന്നു. തന്റെ പ്രതീക്ഷയ്ക്കൊത്തു വളരുന്ന അനുസരണയുള്ള മകളുടെ സ്നേഹവും സാമീപ്യവും സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന സന്തോഷാന്തരീക്ഷത്തിൽ നാടകത്തിനു വിരാമമിടുന്നു.

സ്വന്തം ഭാഗിച്ചപ്പോൾ മകൾക്ക് ഒരു സെൻ്റ് ഭൂമി കൂടുതൽ കൊടുത്തുപോയതിന്റെ പേരിൽ മകന്റെ നിന്ദയും ശകാരവും സഹിക്കേണ്ടിവരുന്ന ഒരു മാതാവിന്റെ നിസ്സഹായത ചിത്രീകരിക്കുകയാണ് 'അമ്മ തങ്കമ്മ' എന്ന അഞ്ചാമത്തെ നാടകത്തിൽ. അപാരമായ അഭിനയത്തികവാണ് ഇതിലെ കഥാപാത്രങ്ങൾ കാഴ്ചവെച്ചത്. മകൻ അമ്മയോട് കാണിക്കുന്ന ക്രൂരമായ പെരുമാറ്റം കണ്ട് വേണുനായർ ഇങ്ങനെ വിളിച്ചുപറഞ്ഞു, "ഈ നിലയിൽ നിങ്ങൾ അമ്മയെ നട തള്ളുകയാണെങ്കിൽ എന്നോടു പറയണം; എന്റെ സ്വന്തം അമ്മയെപ്പോലെ ഞാൻ നോക്കിക്കൊള്ളാം." പ്രേക്ഷകഹൃദയത്തിൽ ഒരു തേങ്ങലായി ഇത് നിറയുന്നു. അമ്മയെ നടയിരുത്തുന്ന നികൃഷ്ടസന്തതികളുടെ നേർക്കു തൊടുത്തുവിട്ട അമ്പുകളായി വേണുനായരുടെ വാക്കുകൾ മുഴങ്ങുമ്പോൾ നാടകം അരസാനിക്കുന്നു.

'തൊരപ്പൻ ഗോൺസാൽവസ്' ആണ് ഒടുവിലത്തെ നാടകം. ചാമുണ്ഡിവിലാസം ചായക്കടയുടെ ചരിത്രത്തിലാദ്യമായിട്ടാണ് ഭക്ഷ്യപദാർത്ഥങ്ങൾ പരിശോധിക്കാനായി ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥർ എത്തുന്നത്. അതിനെക്കുറിച്ചൊന്നും അറിഞ്ഞുകൂടാത്ത വേണുനായരും രാവുണ്ണിനായരും പകച്ചുപോയി. അവരുടെ അജ്ഞതയുടെ നിഴലിൽ, അക്ഷരാർത്ഥത്തിൽത്തന്നെ ചായക്കട കൊള്ളയടിക്കുകയാണ് ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥർ ചെയ്തത്. പലഹാരങ്ങൾ വയറുനിയെ തിന്നശേഷം കടയിൽ ബാക്കിയുള്ളതത്രയും പരിശോധനയ്ക്കെന്ന് പറഞ്ഞു പൊതിഞ്ഞുകെട്ടി ഇൻസ്പെക്ടർ ഗോൺസാൽ വസ്റ്റും കീഴ്ദ്യോഗസ്ഥനും സ്ഥലം വിടുകയും ചെയ്യുന്ന വിചിത്രചിത്രീകരണമാണ് ഈ നാടകത്തിലുള്ളത്. കൃത്രിമത്വം നിറഞ്ഞ ഒരു മൂന്നാംകിട കോമഡിയായേ ഈ നാടകം അനുഭവപ്പെടുന്നുള്ളൂ.



ട്രേതിരിപ്പാടി(പ്രോജി)ന്റെ 'ഋതുമതി', എം ആർ ട്രേതിരിപ്പാടി(എം ആർ ബി)ന്റെ 'മറക്കുകയുള്ളിലെ മഹാനരകം', ചെറുകാടിന്റെ 'പാട്ടുബാക്കി' എന്നീ നാടകങ്ങളാണ് മലയാളത്തിലെ ആദ്യത്തെ യഥാർത്ഥ നാടകങ്ങൾ. ഈ ചരിത്രവസ്തുതകളെ നമുക്കു മായ്ചുകളയാൻ കഴിയില്ല. അന്നത്തെ നമ്പൂതിരിസമുദായത്തിലെ അനാചാരങ്ങളെ കൃത്യമായി തുറന്നുകാട്ടിയ നാടകങ്ങളായിരുന്നു അവ. എന്നാൽ സാമൂഹ്യപ്രവർത്തകരായ ആ നാടകകൃത്തുക്കൾ മലയാളത്തിലെ ആദ്യത്തെ യഥാർത്ഥ നാടകമെന്ന വിശേഷണമൊന്നും അരരുടെ നാടകങ്ങൾക്കു നൽകിയില്ല. ഒരുപക്ഷെ അങ്ങനെയൊരു കാര്യം അവർ ചിന്തിച്ചിരിക്കില്ല എന്നു വേണം കരുതാൻ.

അവലോകനം

ഭൂതകാലസ്മരണകളിലേക്ക് പ്രേക്ഷകരുടെ ശ്രദ്ധ തിരിയുന്നുവെന്നതിൽ കവിഞ്ഞ് പുതുമയുള്ള ഒരു സന്ദേശവും ചായക്കടകഥകൾ നൽകുന്നുില്ല. വെറും നേരമ്പോക്കിനുമത്രമുള്ളതാകരുതല്ലോ നാടകം. വിവർത്തനനാടകങ്ങൾ, സംഗീതനാടകങ്ങൾ, ചരിത്രനാടകങ്ങൾ, പുരാണനാടകങ്ങൾ, പ്രഹസനങ്ങൾ എന്നിങ്ങനെയുള്ള ഘട്ടങ്ങൾ പലതും പിന്നിട്ടശേഷമാണല്ലോ സാമൂഹ്യനാടകങ്ങൾ അവതരിപ്പിക്കുന്ന തലത്തിൽ മലയാളനാടകം വളർന്നെത്തിയത്. സമൂഹത്തിലെ അനാചാരങ്ങളെ അതേരീതിയിൽ തുറന്നുകാണിച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണ് സാമൂഹ്യനാടകങ്ങളുടെ രംഗപ്രവേശമുണ്ടായത്. യഥാർത്ഥ നാടകങ്ങളായിരുന്നു അവ. വി ടി ട്രേതിരിപ്പാടിന്റെ 'അടുക്കളയിൽനിന്ന് അരങ്ങത്തേക്ക്', എം പി

സ്റ്റീക്ക് കാർട്ടൂൺ നാടകപരമ്പര" എന്ന് ചായക്കട കഥകൾക്കു നൽകിയ വിശേഷണം, ശിരസ്സിനു ചേരാത്ത തൊപ്പി ധരിച്ചതുപോലെ, ഇണങ്ങാതെ നിൽക്കുന്നു! കാർട്ടൂൺനാടകമെന്ന വിശേഷണവും നിരർത്ഥകമായിരിക്കുന്നു. ഹാസ്യചിത്രം, വിനോദചിത്രം, പരിഹാസചിത്രം എന്നൊക്കെയാണ് കാർട്ടൂൺ എന്നതുകൊണ്ട് വിവക്ഷിക്കുന്നത്. അങ്ങനെയെങ്കിൽ 'യഥാർത്ഥ വിനോദ നാടകപരമ്പര'യെന്നോ 'യഥാർത്ഥ ഹാസ്യനാടക പരമ്പര'യെന്നോ അതുമല്ലെങ്കിൽ 'യഥാർത്ഥ പരിഹാസനാടക പരമ്പര'യെന്നോ ആണ് ചായക്കടകഥകൾക്കു നൽകിയ വിശേഷണംകൊണ്ട് ആസ്വാദകർ മനസ്സിലാക്കേണ്ടത്. എന്നാൽ ഹാസ്യമെന്നത് മേമ്പാടിപോലെ ചിലേടത്തു കാണുന്നുവെന്നല്ലാതെ, ഇപ്പോഴത്തെ വിശേഷണവുമായി ഒട്ടും നീതി പുലർത്തുന്നില്ല. റിയലിസ്റ്റിക്ക് നാടകം പലേടത്തും യാത്രികതയിലേക്ക് തല കുത്തി വീഴുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ട്. ഒരു മാർക്കറ്റിംഗ് തന്ത്രം എന്നതിൽ കവിഞ്ഞ് ഈ വിശേഷണം നാടകത്തിന് അനുയോജ്യമാകുന്നില്ല.

വിശ്വാസത്തിൻ നെയ്യപ്പം നൽകുന്ന- വർക്കൈനെന്നും കയ്യപ്പനായി

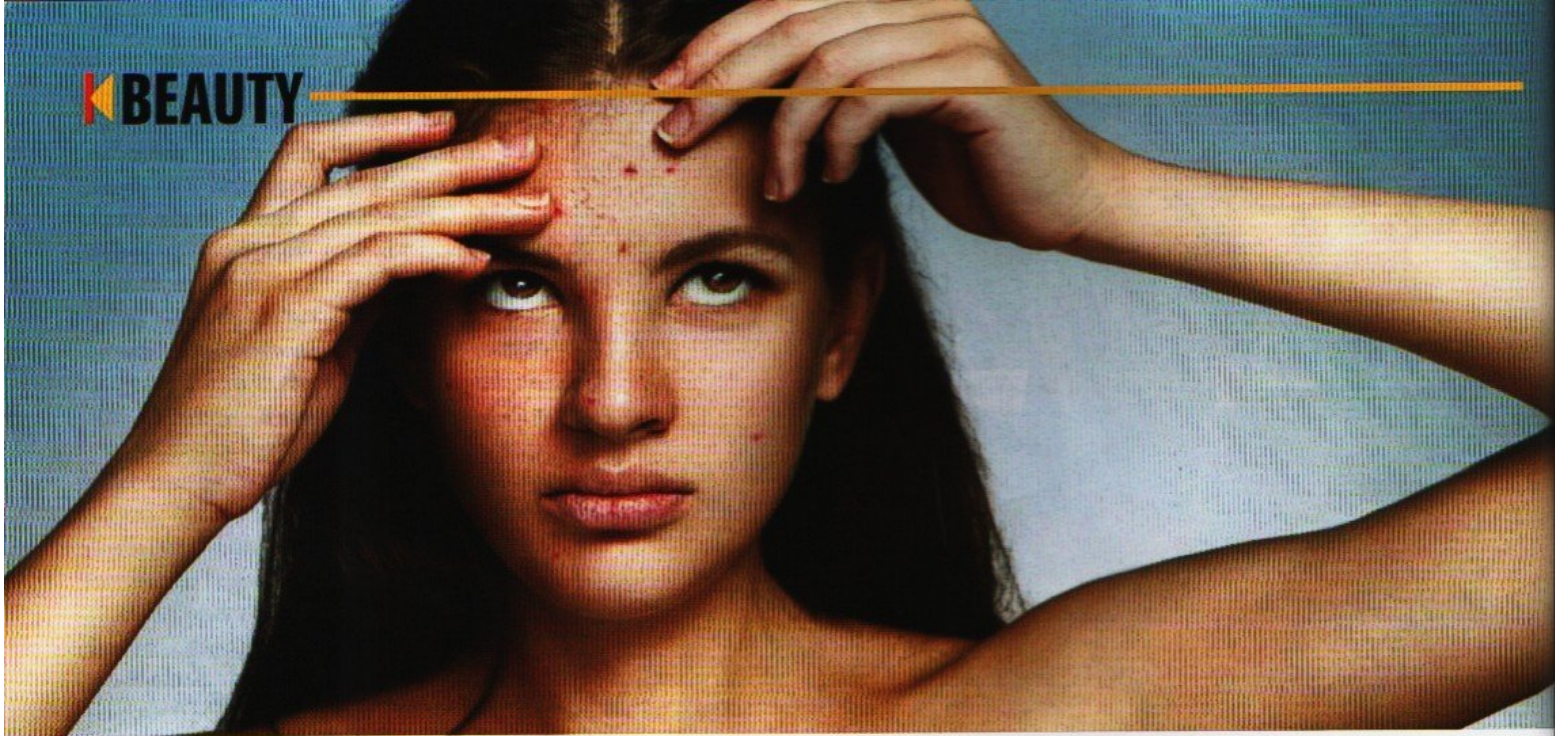


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സംഗീതത്തിന്റെയും വെളിച്ചത്തിന്റെയും മാസ് മരികമായ അകമ്പടിയില്ലാത്തതുകൊണ്ട് നാടകത്തിന്റെ ആത്മാവിന് കോട്ടമൊന്നും പറ്റിയിട്ടില്ല. നാടകത്തിന്റെ ചിലവ് ചുരുക്കാനും ഇതുപകരിച്ചേക്കും. എന്നാൽ ഗ്രാമീണസൗന്ദര്യം, പ്രഭാതത്തിന്റെ വശ്യത, പകലിന്റെ പ്രസരിപ്പ് എന്നിങ്ങനെ പലതും നാടകത്തിനു നഷ്ടമാവുകയും ചെയ്തു. ഒരു ശ്മശാനമുകതയാണ് ചാമുണ്ഡി വിലാസം ചായക്കടയ്ക്കു ചുറ്റും തളം കെട്ടി നിൽക്കുന്നത്. പാതിരാത്രിയിലാണോ അതോ പുലർച്ചയ്ക്കാണോ ചായക്കടസംഭവങ്ങൾ നടക്കുന്നത് എന്ന് പ്രേക്ഷകർ സംശയിക്കുന്നു. റെയിൽവെ സ്റ്റേഷനുകളെ, ഈ നാടകങ്ങൾക്കുവേണ്ടിമാത്രം നിർമ്മിച്ചതാണെന്നു തോന്നിപ്പോകും. വണ്ടിയുടെ കാതടപ്പിക്കുന്ന ചുളംവിളി പഴയകാലത്തെ സ്റ്റീംഎഞ്ചിൻറെതല്ലതാനും. ചായക്കടയിൽ ഒരു പത്രം കാണാത്തതും, ഭക്ഷ്യവസ്തുക്കൾ സൂക്ഷിക്കാൻ അടച്ചുറപ്പുള്ള ഒരു മുറിപോലുമില്ലാതെ സത്രംപോലെ തുറന്നുകിടക്കുന്ന ചായക്കടയും വേണുനായരുടെ ദാരിദ്ര്യത്തിന്റെ ദൃഷ്ടാന്തമായി കരുതാം.

തട്ടകത്തിൽനിന്ന് തറയിലേക്ക് നാടകത്തെ ഇറക്കിക്കൊണ്ടുവന്നപ്പോൾ, അരങ്ങും പ്രേക്ഷകനും തമ്മിൽ ഒരുടുപ്പം ഉണ്ടാക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞുവെന്നത് നല്ലകാര്യംതന്നെ. സുര്യാകൃഷ്ണമൂർത്തി നാടകത്തിൽ വരുത്തിയ ലാളിത്യവൽക്കരണംകൊണ്ടുള്ള നേട്ടവും അതുതന്നെ. അരങ്ങിലുള്ളവരും പ്രേക്ഷകരും ഒരമേണ്ണിൽ ചവിട്ടി നിൽക്കുന്ന സഹജീവികളാണെന്ന ബോധം! അതാണല്ലോ വേണ്ടതും.

മികച്ച അഭിനയം കാഴ്ചവെച്ച ഇതിലെ കലാകാരന്മാരും കലാകാരികളും പ്രത്യേകം അഭിനന്ദനങ്ങൾ അർഹിക്കുന്നു. ■



ACNE (PIMPLES)



Dr. (Major) Nalini Janardhanan

■ Acne (Pimples) is a common problem in teenage and adult life. Acne can be seen on neck, back or thighs but most commonly seen on face. It can be in the form of pustules (containing pus) or deep and tender lumps (nodules or cysts).

Causes

1) Genes: Some people may have clear skin while some may have more chances of getting acne. These are all due to the genes which we get from our parents.

2) Hormones: During puberty, menses and pregnancy your hormonal changes in the body are responsible for causing new acne and for exacerbation of your existing acne due to increased secretion of oily sebum on the skin. Diet, lifestyle and stress levels also affect your hormones.

3) Daily habits & lifestyle: Certain habits can make your acne worse. Changes in your lifestyle can improve

acne. Your diet is very important. It can affect sebum production also. Cleanliness of face is important so as the selection of cosmetics.

What happens in acne?

1) Elongated pores: Our skin is in the process of constant renewing skin cells may get stuck in the pores on the skin and clog them up. This may lead to white heads and blackheads.

2) Bacterial infection: Bacteria

oily skin may lead to more acne. Use of cosmetics containing too much of oil may worsen the acne.

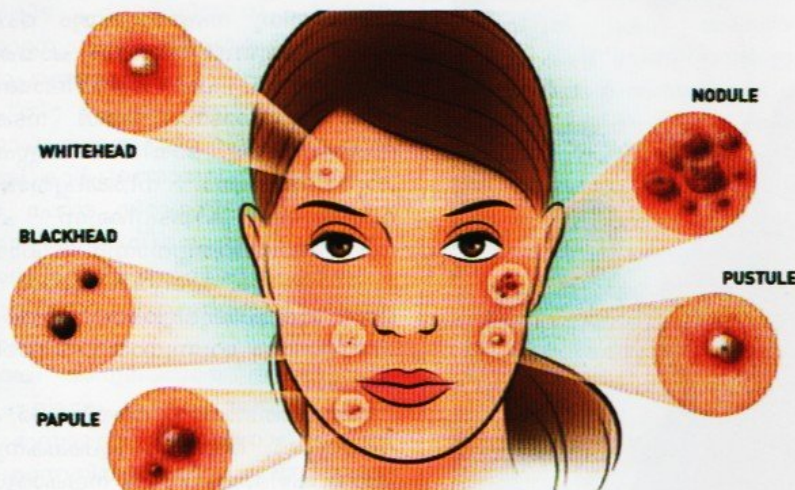
4) Treatment: Consult a dermatologist and take full treatment as prescribed by the doctor, be it for weeks or months. Occasional acne is usually self-limiting and it may go away. But recurring acne needs long-term treatment. Don't do self-treatment with over-the-counter medicines or somebody else's prescription or homemade medicines.

Topical products & medicines: Doctor prescribes topical medicines (creams or lotions) to be applied on the skin, to fight the four causes of acne i.e. a) Kill bacterial b) unclog pores c) control sebum and d) reduce inflammation. You have to be careful about the following, while using skin care products and medicines.

1) Be patient: - Use the right products and for the prescribed time. Results will come in about 2-3 weeks.

2) Use only a small amount. Using more may make your skin worse.

3) Be gentle: - Irritation may make you rub or scratch the skin. But the more irritated leading to more acne. So



getting inside a clogged pore leading to inflammation and swelling is the cause of redness in acne. Later it may become a pustule or a lump with pus inside (nodule or cysts).

3) Oily skin: Production of too much of sebum especially in those with

while washing or applying products, be gentle on the skin.

After washing the face dry with a soft towel.

Prevention

Some points to be taken care of to prevent acne are:

Daily Habits

1) Change your pillow cover 2-3 days. While washing them, use a fragrance free detergent and don't use fabric softener.

2) Protect against pollution.

3) Clean your face regularly with a gentle cleanser or face wash. Choose the right skin care products to exfoliate your skin and prevent clogging of pores.

4) Use only oilfree beauty products if you have oily skin.

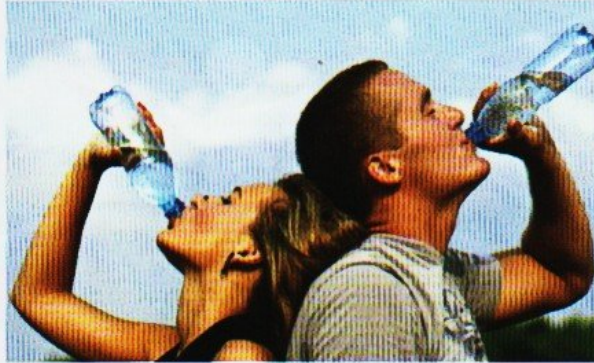
5) Don't use too much makeup. Avoid greasy or oily cosmetics for makeup.

6) Don't touch your face frequently.

If you have acne don't pick squeeze or rub them.

7) Wash off your sweat: After exercise, wash off your sweat from your face.

8) Stress: Stress can cause acne and



acne in turn can increase your stress. So reduce stress by the following methods:

a) Do meditation, prayers or yoga to keep your mind relaxed.

b) Avoid negative thinking. Only

positive thoughts are welcome.

c) Going out will improve your mood. A morning or evening walk is good for your mind and body.

d) Spend more time with friends and family.

e) Watch movies, listen to music, go for picnics or get-togethers.

f) Do regular exercise.

Diet

■ Avoid too much of sugar, bread, milk and milk products.

■ Avoid sugary drinks.

■ Avoid soda, artificial juices, candies, sweets, corn & potato.

■ Take a balanced diet with lot of fruits, vegetables, nuts, beans, dal and whole grains.

■ Take vitamin & mineral supplements only as per doctor's advice.

■ Drink plenty of water (minimum 8 glasses daily).

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Rare Day and Rare Disease

Dr (Major) Nalini Janardhanan

The last day of February is being observed every year as 'Rare Disease Day' all over the world. This is to create awareness among people about rare diseases and their impact on the lives of patients and families and also to improve access to treatments.

'Worlds Rare Disease Day' was created because treatment for many rare diseases is insufficient. The social networks to support patients and their families are also inadequate. So the rare disease day was created by European Organisation for Rare Diseases (EURORDIS) and its council of National Alliances in 2008. They sponsored the first rare disease day in Europe on 29 February 2008. This date was chosen because 29 February is a rare day! Later it became a world phenomenon with USA joining in 2009 and around 84 countries participating in 2014. NORD (National Organisation for Rare Disorders) helps the patients to get earlier diagnosis and appropriate treatment by raising awareness of rare diseases among doctors. Later Global Genes Project also joined the initiative to promote rare disease day. Thousands



of events are being organized every year around the world targeting general public and policy makers. Patients, their friends families & caregivers as well as doctors, scientists, researchers, health care providers and policy experts join this programme to raise awareness.

What is a rare disease?

A rare disease means a disease which is not common. There are various definitions of assessing rare diseases in different countries. For

example, a disease or disorder is defined as rare in Europe when it affects fewer than 1 in 2000 people. Whereas in USA fewer than 1 in 200000 and in UK fewer than 1 in 50000 is considered as rare disease.

Facts and Figures

- More than 7000 rare diseases have been identified with more being discovered every day.
- Rare diseases affect around 30 million Americans and 350 million people worldwide.
- 80% of rare disease are caused by faulty genes.
- only 5% of rare diseases have an FDA approved drug treatment.

In Children

50% of rare diseases affect children. It is noticed that rare diseases are responsible for 35% death in the first year of life. 30% of children with rare diseases will not live to see their 5th birthday.

Causes

80% of rare diseases have been identified as due to genetic origins. Others are the result of allergies, environmental causes or infections (viral

or bacterial). They may be of degenerative or proliferative in nature.

Symptoms

There may be a variety of symptoms which vary from disease to disease and also from patient to patient suffering from the same disease. There may be some common symptoms which can hide the underlying rare diseases leading to wrong diagnosis and delayed treatment.

Examples of rare diseases

A few examples of rare diseases are TaySach's diseases, Castleman disease, Evan's syndrome, Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis, Hypertrichosis, Ectodermal Dysplasia, Arthrogyrosis, Cystic Fibrosis, Biliary Atresia, Dextrocardia, cleidocranial Dysplasia, Ehlers- Danlos syndrome, Achondroplasia etc.

A disease that is rare in some populations may be common in others. eg: cystic fibrosis, a genetic disease which is rare in Asia, is relatively common in Europe.

With a single diagnosed patient only, 'Ribose5phosphate isomerase deficiency' is considered the rarest genetic disease.

Themes

Each year the global planning committee under the leadership of EURODIS and with NORD as the representative selects a theme to be used around the world on Rare Disease Day. The theme for 2016 was 'Patient Voice' and the slogan was 'Join us in making the voice of rare diseases heard!'

As they say, 'a rare say to put rare diseases in the spotlight' this year the 10th edition of rare disease day falls on 28 February 2017.

The 2017 Rare Disease Theme is 'Research' and the slogan is 'Research brings hope to people luring with a rare disease'.

Research on rare diseases is important in providing patients with answers and solutions they need, whether it is treatment, cure or improved care. Research can lead to identification of previously unknown diseases and can increase the understanding of disease. It can enable doctors to give a correct diagnosis and provide information to patients about their diseases. 'Research' is a good theme for rare disease day this year. Research can definitely lead to development of new innovative treatments and in some cases a cure also. So let us hope for the best! ■



പാവം, അസാധു!

(ഓട്ടൻ തുള്ളൽ)

നാരായണനമോ! നാരായണനമോ!

കരിഞ്ചന്തക്കാർ, രാഷ്ട്രീയക്കാർ, കൈക്കുലിക്കാരു ദ്രോഹസ്ഥർ, വിഘടനവാദികളൊക്കെയുമുണ്ട് കട്ടുമുടിപ്പിനാടു നശിച്ചു ഏഴുപതിരറാണ്ടങ്ങനെ തീർന്നു ഭാരതനാട്ടിൽ നിർമ്മനരേറി.

നോട്ടുകളായിരമഞ്ഞൂറുകളിൽ ഗാന്ധി ചിരിച്ചു, ഗാന്ധി കരഞ്ഞു സുഖശീതളമാം ലോക്കനിലങ്ങനെ നോട്ടിൻകെട്ടുകൾ നിദ്രയിലാണ്ടു കോടികൾ വെട്ടി കോൺട്രാക്ടന്മാർ റോഡുകളതുവഴി തോടുകളായി

കൈക്കുലിക്കാർ സർക്കാരമോൻ കട്ടുമുടിപ്പിവർ കോടീശ്വരരായ് മക്കളെയൊക്കെ കോടികൾ നൽകി മെഡിസിനുവിട്ടിവർ മാനുന്മാരായ് കെട്ടുകണക്കിനു 'കേഷ്യം' പൊന്നിൻ-നെററിപ്പട്ടോം പട്ടും നല്കി കെട്ടിച്ചവരുടെസന്തതിമാരെ ഞെട്ടിച്ചങ്ങനെ നാടിനെ മൊത്തം!

എട്ടുനവമ്പർ എട്ടുമണിയ്ക്ക് മോഡിസ്റ്റർക്കാർ വെടിപൊട്ടിച്ചു അഞ്ഞൂറായിരം നോട്ടുകളൊക്കെയും കടലാസായി, കടലോം പൊതിയാം കെട്ടുകണക്കിന് വ്യാജൻനോട്ടുകൾ പെട്ടിയിലാക്കി ആറിലൊഴുക്കി.




രാമകൃഷ്ണൻ കോമത്ത്

വിരുതന്മാരുടെ പുഴ്ത്തിയ നോട്ടുകൾ പാവങ്ങൾത 'നെക്കൊണ്ടി' ലൊളിച്ചു, നോട്ടിനുവേണ്ടി ക്യൂവിൽ നിൽക്കെ പാവം ചിലരുടെ കാരും പോയി. വട്ടച്ചിലവിനു വഴിയില്ലാത്തോർ 'ഏട്ടിയെമ്മി'നു മുന്നിൽ ക്യൂവിൽ വട്ടുപിടിച്ചു തിരിച്ചു നടന്നു, മുട്ടു കഴച്ചതുമാത്രം മിച്ചം..

രക്ഷകനായി വന്നുപിറന്നു സ്വച്ഛതയാർന്നൊരു 'പർപ്പിൾനോട്ട്' നോട്ടുകൾ മാറാൻ കടയിച്ചെന്നാൽ കേട്ടൊരു മറുപടി "ചില്ലറ തരണം" രണ്ടും കെട്ടൊരു പെരിയൊരു നോട്ടിനെ കണ്ടു രസിച്ച് വിട്ടിലിരിക്കാം. കുട്ടിനു വന്നു പിന്നിൽ നടക്കാൻ അഞ്ഞൂറിന്റെറു അനിയൻബാവ ഇക്കുള്ളൻസായ്പിനെ നേരിൽക്കണ്ടാൽ കുററം പറയാൻ തോന്നുകയില്ല.

ബന്തു നടത്തീം ചങ്ങല തീർത്തും കണ്ടു രസിച്ച് തുഴ്ക്കന്മാർ! നല്ലൊരു നാളിനെ സ്വപ്നം കണ്ടോർ ചൊല്ലി വാനിൽ നോക്കിനിരാശയിൽ, "അച്ഛേദിൻകണ് ആനേവാല? വോ, അച്ഛേദിൻകണ് ആനേവാല?"

നാരായണനമോ! ചാരായണനമോ!



“എല്ലാവർക്കും ഹൃദയം ശരീരത്തിലാണ് ഉള്ളതെങ്കിൽ, എ.കെ.ജിക്ക് ഹൃദയത്തിലാണ് ശരീരമുള്ളത്.

ഫാദർ വടക്കൻ

Courtesy: The Namans, Chembur



Dr Sujatha Nair

■ The youth of any generation are the clay of which future adults emerge.

The youth today are the special ones who have the world literally in the palm of their hands. There

is so much information bombardment. The minds that are already highly impressionable are spoilt for choice. There is also an excessive experimentation, use, abuse and addiction to drugs and alcohol seen amongst them.

The incidences of dependency and addiction to substance amongst them is increasing by leaps and bounds. In India the legal age for drinking hard liquor is on an average 21-25 years. But we see drinking beginning at as young an age as 14-15 years.

Probable reasons for use

Young kids begin drinking with the intention of doing something taboo, then they discover it lowers their inhibitions and it seems to be more fun. Many times seeing their parents drinking and getting intoxicated on a regular basis makes them think this is as a norm. Family history of addictions, dysfunctional families, childhood abuse, emotional traumas, a need to "fit in" may incline them towards using.

Effects on the Brain and Risks involved:

The brain of a human being develops till age 21 years. Adolescents tend to binge drink to begin with i.e. having large quantities of alcohol in a

YOUTH AND ADDICTION

short span of time. This results in affections of thinking, learning and memory as the hippocampus [the region that is responsible for this] gets damaged. The pre-frontal lobe of the brain gets damaged affecting the abilities of planning, reasoning, decision making and impulse control.

Risk behaviors increase in the form of being promiscuous and have unsafe, unprotected sex, fights, violent crimes, homicides, suicides, accidents due to DUI etc. Sexual assaults and date rapes increase. Grades are affected.

The patterns of drug consumption have also changed. Alcohol intake is not to savor the taste but to get completely "wasted". Marijuana today is no longer just "a herb" but comes in very potent forms and adulterated with chemicals too. We have treated too many young people with addiction to only marijuana and have their lives wasted by dropping off studies and being non productive.

Marijuana gets one acquainted with dealers and users who deal in other drugs, thus it becomes a "gateway" for further use. A naturally curious adolescent and young mind craving for new experiences does not even realize before it is engaged and engulfed in usage of drugs that are addictive even on single use.

Today heroin is laced with fentanyl,

Nbome is sold as LSD, mefedrone as cocaine etc and these are extremely addictive and potentially very fatal.

The young of today are thus looking for answers in drugs/alcohol, fanaticism etc... the world gets more virtual and real time communication with family diminishes. A grounding within themselves is lost. This intelligence, curiosity and drive if it can be channelized through meditative practices inwards, then there can be tremendous progress in every sphere in life, physical, mental and spiritual and the world can progress. Else it is going to be a zombie world where a substance is taken for everything from waking up [coffee], to work, to stay alert [adderall], to stay calm [alprazolam] to sleep [alcohol, valium] and would be apocalyptic.

We at AH look at helping our young clients to be self sufficient pro-life individuals who do not find the need to use drugs/alcohol through our Alternate Life therapy program involving meditation, introspection and counseling.

For any clarifications contact
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Film: Kannur Deluxe (1969)
 Lyrics: Sreekumaran Thampi
 Composer: Dakshinamoorthy
 Raagam: Kalyani
 Singer : K J Yesudas

എത്രചിരിച്ചാലും ചിരിതീരുമോ...

എത്ര ചിരിച്ചാലും ചിരി തീരുമോ - നിന്റെ
 ചിത്തിരപ്പുവിതൾചുണ്ടിൽ?
 എത്ര ചൊരിഞ്ഞാലും കതിർ തീരുമോ - നിന്റെ
 ശിലമനോഹരമിഴിയിൽ... (എത്രചിരിച്ചാലും)

എങ്ങിനെ കോരിനിറച്ചു നിൻ കണ്ണിൽ നീ
 ഇത്ര വലിയ സമുദ്രം - അനുരാഗ } (2)
 സ്വപ്ന നീലസമുദ്രം?
 എങ്ങിനെ നുള്ളിവിടർത്തി നിന്നുള്ളിൽ നീ
 ഇത്ര വലിയ വസന്തം - അനുരാഗ
 സ്വപ്തവർണ്ണ വസന്തം? (എത്രചിരിച്ചാലും)

എന്തിനെൻ കണ്ണിൽ തെളിയിച്ചു നീ നിന്റെ
 ചന്ദ്രസദൃശവദനം - മകരന്ദ } (2)
 മന്ത്രപുഷ്പവദനം?
 എന്തിനെനുള്ളിൽ പണിഞ്ഞു നിശ്ശബ്ദി
 ഇന്ദ്രലോകസദനം - മധുരാഗ
 മന്ത്രവാദസദനം? (എത്രചിരിച്ചാലും)

Eṭra ciriccālum ciri ṭirumō ninte
 Ciṭṭirappūviṭal cuntil?
 Eṭra corinnālum kaṭir ṭirumō ninte
 Śilpamanōhara mizhiyil... (Eṭra ciriccalum...)

Engine kōri nirhaccu nin kaṅṅil nī
 Eṭra valiya samudram anurāga } (2)
 Swapna nīla samudram ?
 Engine nullī vitarṭṭi ninnullīl nī
 Eṭra valiya vasaṅṭam anurāga
 Saptavarna vasaṅṭam? (Eṭra ciriccalum...)

Ēṭṭinen kaṅṅil ṭeliyiccu nī ninte
 Candrasadruśa vadanam makaranda } (2)
 Manṭrapuśpavadanam?
 Ēṭṭinennullīl paniṅṅu niśśabdamī
 Indralōkasadanam madhurāga
 Manṭravādasadanam? (Eṭra ciriccalum...)

T E Vasudevan of Jayamaruti Films produced Kannur Deluxe, a down to earth entertaining thriller. Main actors were Prem Nazir, Sheela, K P Ummer, Adoor Bhasi, Sankaradi, Jose Prakash, G K Pillai, Nellikode Bhaskaran, Paravur Bharathan, Kaduvakulam Antony, et al. Its lyrics were written by Sreekumaran Thampi and music

was scored by V Dakshinamoorthy. R K Sekhar provided the background score. Main singers were Yesudas, Kamukara Purushothaman, P Jayachandran, P Leela and P B Srinivasan. S L Puram Sadanandan wrote the dialogue for the story of V Devan. A B Raj was the director.

ALAMARA

■ Alamara comes to the screen in early February. It is directed by Mithun Manual Thomas. John Mantrikkal wrote the story. Sunny Wane, Aju Varghese, Ranji Panicker, Sadiq, Saiju Kurup, Manikantan, Sudhi Koppa, Aditi Ravi, Manju Satish, Seema G Nair et al give credence to the characters. Aditi is the heroine. Full On Movies produces the film and Suraj S Kurup provides the music.



GODSE

■ Vinay Fort and Mythili are the main actors of *Godse*, directed by Sherry and Shiju Govind based on their own screenplay for Snehanjali of E P Dinesh Nambiar and Santhosh Manikoth. Other artistes are Joy Mathew, Mamu Koya, Indrans, Vinod Koor, Santhosh Kizhattoor, Surjith et al. Anil Pachuran and Vijish are penning the lyrics for which Bijibal provides music.



KAMBOJI

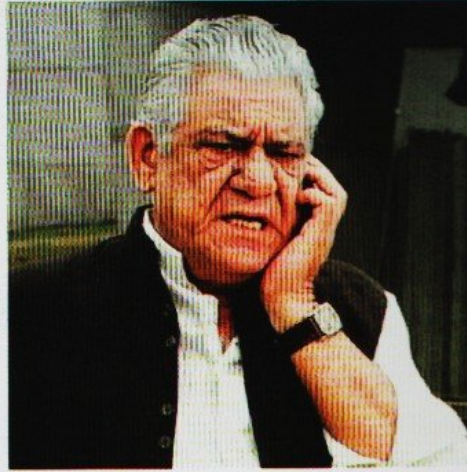
■ Vineeth, Lakshmi Gopalswami and Rachaña Narayanankutty join together for *Kamboji* written and directed by Vinod Mankara. Harish Peradi, Sivaji Guruvayur, Balaji, Prasad Kannan, Indrans, Sivan Namboothiri, Kalamandalam Easwaranuni, Kalaranjini, Sona Nair et al give support. Lakshmi M Padmanabhan produces this film for Padmalakshmi Productions. Songs are written by ONV Kurup and Vinod Mankara and M Jayachandran provides the music.



ACE ACTOR OM PURI IS DEAD

■ Ace actor Om Puri bade good bye to this world at a young age of 66. He did so on January 6 at his Andheri West residence. The end came on account of a cardiac arrest.

Om Puri was not a chocolate hero unlike other Bollywood heroes. Heroes then were needed to romance their heroines and dance on hillocks. Yet he captured the hearts of the discerning and donned the mantle of hero in a couple of films; Shyam Benegal's '*Aarohan*' (1981) and Govind Nihalani's '*Ardh Satya*' (1983). He also did then main role of Dukhi in *Sadgati*, a telefilms done by Satyajit Ray. His heroine was Smita Patil. For the first two films, he was chosen as the best actor of the year. All these roles were deviating from the run of the roles normally donned by other actors in commercial films. He was presented with a Padmashri by the nation in 1990. The British government honoured with a title Honorary Officer of the Order of British Empire. Tamas was a highly successful teleserial in which Om Puri had a major role and this was released as a movie after heavy editing to reduce its length. On many occasions he was nominated for the best actor of the year for his



contribution to parallel cinema.

Om Puri was born on October 18, 1950 in Ambala. Early in his life, he was enamoured to acting and joined National School of Drama, New Delhi. After completing his diploma there, he was persuaded by his friends and admirers to join The Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. However, he was not much impressed by their training. Adoor Gopalakrishnan was a member of the governing council of the institute, remembers him as a leader, along with Nazarruddin Shah, of most of the student agitations there.

Puri married Seema, sister of actor of

Annu Kapoor but the marriage lasted only eight months as he came close to Nandita, a journalist who came to him to write an authentic biography of him. As Seema left him, he married Nandita and has a son Ishan from her. Later the biography caused a flutter and they got divorced in 2014.

Om Puri's maiden film was '*Ghashiram Kotwal*' in Marathi and his last was *Bajrangi Bhaijan* with Salman Khan. In all he acted in over 350 films in 35 years in some Indian languages including Malayalam besides Hollywood and British films. Puri was not only at home with serious films but he was game with comedy too. His major Hindi films were *Jane bhi do yaro*, *Mirch Masala*, *Akrosh*, *Paar*, *Machis*, *Bhawani Bhavai*, *Dharavi*, *Gupt*, *Dhoop*, *Yuva*, *Don*, *Agnipath*, *Chachi 420* etc. Among his English films, Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi*, *The reluctant fundamentalist*, *Charlie Wilson's war*, *East is east* and *The hundred feet journey*. Hollywood and British producers always preferred Om Puri to enact Indian and Pakistani characters. He also acted in a Pakistani film.

Om Puri's Malayalam films include Lenin Rajendran's *Puravrutham*, *Samvalsaram* and *Aadupuliyattam*.

With Best Wishes to
Kerala in Mumbai
on its 7th Anniversary

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Kerala in Mumbai

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